

# WORDS WORDS BIRDS

## Nigel Prentice

When you've danced the clinking currawong  
after a short-toed lark and a long-toed stint,  
a trembler, you need to slip out of the throng,  
take a sandwich tern. I was intent  
with the northern cardinal on Muriel's chat  
and Hyacinth Macaw. (How people eat!  
You get your variable seedeater, gull,  
shoveler, and swallow, swift.) I got back  
after adjusting my spangled drongo, to the bleat  
of squeaky voices, like a pygmy owl:  
"Ruddy turnstone!" "Violaceous trogon!"  
To snipe, so! But good to get back to caviare,  
harlequin duck, and grouse in the salon:  
dance the boobook, then home for a nightjar.