

GREEN DOVE.—Saw one 11th June; don't know it—probably *Chalcophaps chrysochloa*.

NATIVE COMPANION (*Grus australasiana*).—Very large flock (about 100) passed 23rd September; more 20th October.

DRONGO (*Chibia bracteata*).—A few about, 5th June; going south, 15th October. Two here all winter with flock of Jays (Cuckoo-Shrikes), stealing grasshoppers, &c., from them.

CUCKOO-SHRIKES (*Graucali*).—Here in large flocks (three kinds), 11th June; very few, 30th September; all gone, 2nd December. Think it unusual for them all to go.

BROWN KINGFISHER (*Dacelo gigas*).—Nesting 9th July.

FOREST KINGFISHER (*Halcyon macleayi*).—Noticed several pairs on beach, catching sand crabs, October, along with *Halcyon sordidus* (Mangrove Kingfisher).

BUTCHER-BIRDS (*Cracticus quoyi (rufescens)*).—Singing early morning, 15th July. Fancy the brown one is the male (?); some of the blacks say it is. The brown birds are apparently not so numerous as the black ones.

PHEASANT-TAILED PIGEON (*Macropygia phasianella*).—Here 16th July.

MASKED PLOVER (*Lobivanellus miles*).—Here 15th November.

ROBINS (? species).—Numerous all winter; all gone, October.

General Notes.—Birds singing stronger, 30th July, and some on the move. Did not hear any birds singing, 1st November; a few singing, 29th November; heard a Cat-Bird (*Aelurædus maculata*), 4th December, and calling loudly 10th December, early morning. Very few birds about from October. Have not seen any Wrens (*Maluri*) for months. The Honey-eaters have been fairly numerous. No Dollar-Birds (*Eurystomus*). Saw flock of large Swifts, 20th November. Have not seen any Fig-Birds (*Sphecotheres*) for months; none nesting. No water near here after October, except 600 gallons per day, which I have laid on to the garden in a palm gutter. Think all the birds took advantage of it every afternoon about 4 o'clock, the Honey-eaters and Starlings being the most numerous.

Bird Notes from Wilmot, Tasmania.

BY (MISS) J. A. FLETCHER.

THE Brown and Sparrow-Hawks (*Hieracidea orientalis* and *Accipiter cirrhocephalus*) are frequently about, and prove themselves a great nuisance to the chicken-yard. The lovely White Goshawk (*Astur novæ-hollandiæ*) is an occasional visitor to this district.

The Black Crow-Shrike (*Strepera fuliginosa*), or, to use its local name, the Black Jay, is truly an inquisitive bird. Wandering about in flocks with loud discordant cries, it is certainly not welcomed when it appears. Bold and curious by nature, these "Jays" will sit on a fence post, with head cocked on one side, examining with grave deliberation any unusual event or object. A stone thrown at them only evokes one of their "calls," and perhaps a removal to the next post. They are very fond of fruit, and often work great havoc in the orchards. Not content with

a plain diet, they have a liking for chickens or young ducks. I well remember watching a curious scene one October morning. About 5 o'clock I was awakened by the distressed cry of a hen with chickens, and also by what seemed to be the jubilant call of a dozen or more Jays. Pulling up the blind very carefully, I saw a hen sitting in a corner made by a paling fence joining a hut. She had her chickens safely tucked under her, much to the Jays' discomfiture. But I was surprised to find the birds were following the tactics of the Crows. One Jay was perched on the fence behind the hen, a second was on the hut roof, a third on the corner of the house above my window, another on a low tree-fern stump just in front of the hen; several more were perched on the clothes line and all were intently watching the proceedings of another rascal, who would hop close up to the hen and cleverly hop back again when the fowl made a dart at him. This was the signal for one of the outposts to make a dash down, but the wary old hen was backed well against the fence and exposed none of her nine tiny black chicks. Becoming vexed with the way they worried the hen, I threw a boot at them, but some only flew on to the line, while others remained where they were. While dressing I heard them at their worrying trick again, and as the poor hen seemed to be getting exhausted I seized a broom and chased the crowd across the hillside. I have since been sorry that I did not wait to see positively which would have conquered.

The Magpies (*Gymnorhina hyperleuca*) are very numerous, and many of them nest year after year in the same tree or man-fern.

Of Robins we have four varieties very common here. The Flame and Scarlet-breasted Robins (*Petroeca phoenicea* and *P. leggit*) are at present (March) both about. In the darker gullies and the secluded creeks the lovely Pink-breasted Robin (*P. rhodino-gastra*) is to be found. This bird appears to have the power of causing the sound of its rather mournful call to appear quite a distance away, when the bird itself is in reality a few paces off.

Out on the cleared lands the more homely Dusky Robin (*P. vittata*) is a familiar friend. On referring to some notes of the year 1891 I found this brief mention:—"Saw female Robin (Flame-breasted) sitting on nest. A Pallid Cuckoo (*Cuculus pallidus*) appeared to be trying to get to nest, but 'Cock Robin' kept flying at him, and eventually drove the intruder away." So far as observation goes, the female Robin does all the building of the nest; the male, who sits generally on a branch or stump near by singing, is a very good guide to its situation.

The Satin Fly-catcher (*Myiagra nitida*) is occasionally to be seen in our scrubs.

The Whistling Shrike-Thrush (*Collyriocincla rectirostris*) is in winter a particularly tame bird, even entering huts after crumbs. It is easily attracted about a place by bread or cake, or even potato crumbs, left in prominent places. One "wild" pet I

had was particularly fond of dough and oatmeal. Sometimes this bird would come early in the morning, sit on the verandah, and whistle away until his breakfast was placed for him. During the breeding season these birds occasionally utter a peculiar call resembling two pieces of tin struck quickly and sharply together. I was very much amused by the action of a Shrike-Thrush once. He was procuring bark for a nest. Some bee-hives stood near, covered with stringybark, and the bird seized a strip of bark in his beak and hopped backwards. The bark yielded as he hopped, but he miscalculated the length of the sheet of bark, and the last hop landing on nothing, he and the bark turned a somersault on to the ground. Nothing daunted, however, he seized the bark and flew away.

Cuckoos always seem to leave this mountain district about February. In April they return for a few days, and leave us again for a warmer climate. I think they must go down to the harvest fields on the lower lands.

A pair of Swallows (*Hirundo neoxena*) built under a corner of the verandah this season. A fact particularly interesting was their fondness for music. Whenever the piano was played they would become very excited, and would fly (singing) round and round the windows or dart into the schoolroom. Sometimes they were content to sit on the fence and would sing as if their little throats would burst. Another case worth mentioning was of a pet Magpie. He was particularly fond of the musical scales, and would try to run up them with his voice (?); several notes he got quite correctly. If lively tunes were played he would whistle his loudest, and if the tune were changed to a sad one his voice would drop to a gurgle.

To return to the Swallows. I once had two eggs, half incubated, of this species sent to me, as well as the female bird. Poor thing, she was dead, and had been taken off her nest with her wings tightly bound round with a cruel thread wound round and round her little body. Evidently she had selected the thread when lining the nest, and in some way when tucking her eggs under her she had got it fatally round, and being unable to move had starved to death. Unfortunately decomposition was so far advanced that I could not skin her.

(*To be continued.*)

Some Notes on Vernacular Names.

BY H. KENDALL.

As a preliminary step towards the work of the sub-committee appointed at the last annual meeting of the Aust. O.U. to consider and arrange for a revision of the vernacular list of Australian birds now in common use (Australasian Association for the Advancement of Science, Sydney, 1898) some notes have been gathered for consideration by members of the Union.