

is to be thought of? To say nothing of the unification of idea that would be lost by omitting the hyphen, it would be very inconvenient to make so many changes in our list as such an alteration would involve, even though by doing so we should fall into line with our American brethren, who in their Check-List print Vesper Sparrow, Duck Hawk, Ring Plover, &c. The name of the bird, apart from its distinguishing adjective (or adjectival noun-prefix), might perhaps stand out more clearly in indices, &c., but to those familiar with bird-names would this be a compensating advantage? My own opinion is that the hyphen should be retained.

Re the use of capital initials where "Bird," or "Hen," or "Fowl," or any similar word, forms the second number of a name-combination, would it not be well to treat it as equivalent to a proper name, such as Hawk or Duck, and use a capital initial? It is hard to see why it should not be so treated.

A final suggestion is that when issued the list be interleaved with plain paper, or so arranged that there should be a blank page opposite each page of names, for the purpose of recording remarks, dates of arrival and departure, and the many other references a bird-student wants conveniently to hand. This would aid in gathering material on which in the near future our Check-List might be based.

Descriptions of Birds'-eggs from the Port Darwin District, Northern Australia.

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PART III.

RHIPIDURA PHASIANA (Pheasant Fantail).

This attractive little bird is found in the scrub-covered country of Northern Australia. Its habits are similar to those of the White-shafted Fantail (*R. albiscapa*), and it seems to nest principally in January, several nests being found in that month. Its delicately-constructed, open nest is composed of soft shreds of bark and lined with a few fine vine tendrils, and it is well covered on the outside with cobwebs. They are placed on a horizontal bough, generally by a fork. Measurements—internal breadth, $1\frac{1}{4}$ inches; external, $1\frac{3}{4}$ inches; internal depth, 1 inch; external, $1\frac{3}{4}$ inches. The clutch appears to be two eggs. They are of a very pale cream—some sets are almost white—with an irregular zone of brown markings round the larger end, but varying in different eggs as to its exact position, and in some cases being much more irregular and lighter in colour. Two clutches measure—A, (1) .60 x .48, (2) .59 x .48; B, (1) .65 x .49, (2) .66 x .49 inch. I do not think these eggs have been described before, and all those of the Australian *Rhipiduræ* are now known.

RHIPIDURA DRYAS (Wood Fantail).

Gould, sp. 137; Cat. B. Brit. Mus., vol. iv., p. 322.

The eggs and nest of this beautiful Fantail are very similar to those of its near ally, the Rufous Fantail (*R. rufifrons*). The nest was found on 18th November, situated on a thin fork near the end of a branch and about 10 feet from the ground; it was composed of fine shreds of bark and lined with fine grass seed-stalks and lightly covered outwardly with cobwebs, and measures—internal depth, 1 inch; external, $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches; internal breadth, $1\frac{1}{4}$ inches; external, 2 inches. The nest contained two fresh eggs, which are light buff in colour and marked on the larger end only, where the small reddish-brown and greyish markings form a confluent zone. The eggs measure—(1) .66 x .48 inch; (2) .67 x .49 inch.

PTILOSCLERA VERSICOLOR (Red-crowned Lorikeet).

Gould, sp. 447; Cat. B. Brit. Mus., vol. xx., p. 66.

This Lorikeet is found in Northern Australia, and they generally live in flocks, except when nesting. They lay their eggs in a hollow limb, generally at a considerable distance from the ground, and the rotten wood on which the eggs are laid usually soon discolours them. The eggs are white, without gloss, and one taken on 27th January measures .98 x .78 inch. The clutch is either one or two eggs.

PLATYCERCUS AMATHUSIA (Blue-cheeked Parrakeet).

Gould, sp. 420; Cat. B. Brit. Mus., vol. xx., p. 548.

This bird ranges over Northern Australia, and is very similar to the Pale-headed Parrakeet (*P. pallidiceps*). It was nesting in the Port Darwin district in July, two clutches of eggs being taken, one on the 10th and the other on the 14th of that month. They are pure white and glossy, and measure—A, (1) .99 x .79, (2) 1 x .78; B, (1) 1.01 x .78, (2) 1 x .80. The two nests each had two fresh eggs in, evidently uncompleted clutches.

Stray Feathers.

LATE CLUTCHES OF LARKS.—On 8th February I noticed a nest of the Black-breasted Song-Lark (*Cinclorhamphus cruralis*) containing four eggs. On the 14th of same month I saw another nest containing five eggs—a record clutch, I think, for this species. On 26th I found a nest of the Bush-Lark (*Mirafra horsfieldi*) with three eggs on the point of hatching.—FRED. L. BERNEY. Richmond (N.Q.), 4/3/03.

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NUDE COCKATOOS.—I have a tame white Cockatoo (*Sulphur-crested*) which is a bit of a puzzle. He most persistently refuses to grow feathers. Eighteen months ago I took him from the nest