

## Notes and Notices.

THE RABBIT PEST IN AUSTRALIA: Its Cause and Its Cure. By W. Rodier. The Council of the A.O.U. have received this pamphlet from the author. This system of destroying the pest certainly commends itself to bird-lovers, because no birds are destroyed by the method, as is the case with the various poison formulæ.

Mr. J. A. Kershaw, F.E.S., Curator National Museum, Melbourne, writing on behalf of that institution, states:—"Any birds or mammals which show any variation from the usual type are always welcome additions. We are particularly in want of albino forms of all kinds. I would esteem it a favour if you let our wants be known among your country friends and others."

BIRDS OF ITALY.—To hand from the publishers (Rebeschini di Turati and Co., Milan) is the prospectus of a work entitled "The Birds of Italy, Described Popularly and Figured," by Professor G. Martorelli. It is to be published in parts, and will contain about 500 pages, with 200 illustrations (photo. and water-colour). The British Museum classification is to be adopted.

A REMARKABLE PARROT.—At the Prahran poultry and dog show, Mrs. Hoffner exhibited a handsome and lively variety of the Pennant or Crimson Parrakeet (*Platycercus elegans*). The general colour is bright scarlet relieved with white, the white seemingly taking the place of the blue parts in the normal coloured bird—cheeks, shoulders, wing coverts, &c. The eyes are ruby. It was found in Gippsland, thrown out of a nest, and was taken home and reared by the finder.

THE Nature Study Exhibition held at Geelong last Easter was a decided success, and a departure in the right direction. It is hoped that similar shows will follow, at not too distant intervals, in other provincial centres. The exhibitors in ornithology at Geelong were Mr. W. Shaw (gold medal and special prize), Mr. J. Hammerton, jun. (silver medal), Mr. J. F. Mulder (special prize for best local collection), Mr. Neil Campbell, besides a loan collection from the Department of the Government Entomologist. With the exception of the Government collection, none, or very few, of the specimens were named, nor were habitats given. From an educational point of view these omissions were detrimental, notwithstanding many of the species were life-like and artistically set up.

THE second monthly meeting of the Bird Observers' Club was held at the residence of Mr. D. Le Souëf, Royal Park, on the evening of 25th April last, the host occupying the chair. Dr. Bryant, Messrs. G. E. Shepherd, A. J. Davidson, J. M. Thomson, and E. J. Christian were elected members. The following papers and notes were read and discussed:—"Shore Birds," by Dr. Bryant; "Young White-bearded Honey-eaters," by Mr. Donald

Macdonald; "An Autumn Ramble," by Mr. A. J. Campbell; and "Autumn Notes," by Mr. A. G. Campbell; while Mr. F. E. Howe exhibited a male Red-capped Robin (*Petroeca goodenovi*) with a partially scarlet throat, thus showing affinity to *P. ramsayi*, and Mr. Le Souëf exhibited and explained many fine series of his oological specimens.

INTERESTING returns of "birds striking the light" continue to come in from the lighthouse observers. Mr. D. Le Souëf is tabulating these returns, which so far chiefly relate to sea-birds. But Mr. Geo. Johnson's last report from Cape Wickham, King Id., mentions several small land-birds—Cuckoo, Fantails, Robins, &c. He also has been the means of recording a new bird for the Tasmanian "region"—namely, the White-browed Wood-Swallow (*Artamus superciliosus*), which appeared in numbers for the first time on the island about the 9th April last. In Mr. Johnson's subsequent notes it will be interesting to learn how long these migratory Wood-Swallows remained—not long, possibly. Probably the birds had recently flocked on the adjacent mainland previous to a northern move, and making a southern wheel, touched King Island. One of the Wood-Swallows shot by Mr. Johnson accompanied his schedule.

### An Autumn Ramble.

BY A. J. CAMPBELL, Col. M. B.O.U.

BIRD observations are usually made during the spring and summer months, in this country at least, when bird-life is more plentiful and interesting.

In this short sketch I propose to mention 34 species of birds identified in autumn (6th May, 1905) during one day's outing on the Mornington Peninsula, which divides the waters of Port Phillip from those of Western Port.

The locality may be generally described as open forest country, consisting of swamp or grey gums (*Eucalyptus*), fine-leaved peppermint gums and manna gums, mixed with *Casuarina*, *Exocarpus*, blackwood, &c., with a ground scrub of *Leptospermum*, *Melaleuca*, &c.

My bedroom window being partly open, before dawn I can hear the "Boobook" call of the little Brown Owl. The spring of day is heralded by the laughter-like notes of a family of Great Brown Kingfishers camped in a tree about 150 yards away. Then follow the cheerful carols of Magpies. When it is broad daylight a familiar Black-and-White Fantail calls at my window as if to say "Good morning, sir." Afterwards I detect the voices of Wattle-Birds, Spotted Pardalote, Magpie-Lark, Grey Thrush (harsh notes, peculiar to winter months), and Noisy Miners. I can hear the "quick-quick, quick-quick" notes of Rosella Parrakeets passing by