

<i>Circus gouldii</i>	<i>Tringa canutus</i>
<i>Megalurus gramineus</i>	<i>Thalassogeron cautus</i>
<i>Ephthianura albifrons</i>	* <i>Pelagodroma marina</i>
* <i>Zosterops caeruleascens</i>	<i>Stercorarius crepidatus</i>
<i>Anthus australis</i>	* <i>Gabianus pacificus</i>
* <i>Hypotaenidia philippinensis</i>	+ <i>Larus novæ-hollandiæ</i>
<i>Hirundo neoxena</i>	<i>Sterna bergii</i>
<i>Micropus pacificus</i>	" <i>nereis</i>
* <i>Notophoxyx novæ-hollandiæ</i>	* <i>Sula servator</i>
" <i>pacifica</i>	* <i>Chenopsis atrata</i>
* <i>Pelicanus conspicillatus</i>	<i>Biziura lobata</i>
<i>Ægialitis ruficapilla</i>	<i>Anas superciliosa</i>
<i>Lobivanellus lobatus</i>	<i>Nettion castaneum</i>
* <i>Charadrius dominicus</i>	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>
<i>Hæmatopus longirostris</i>	" <i>hypoleucus</i>
* <i>Limosa novæ-zealandiæ</i>	<i>Podicipes poliocephalus</i>
+ <i>Numenius cyanopus</i>	" <i>cristatus</i>
* <i>Arenaria interpres</i>	<i>Eudyptula minor</i>
+ <i>Limonites ruficollis</i>	And the introduced Starling
+ <i>Heteropygia acuminata</i>	and Sparrow.
+ <i>Ancylochilus subarquatus</i>	

A. H. E. M.

### Stray Feathers.

A TRIO OF BANK-BUILDERS.—Last December I found in holes in the bank of the Talbragar River, Cobborah, N.S.W., the nest of a Sacred Kingfisher, that of an Owlet Nightjar, and that of a Red-tipped Pardalote, all within a space of about 20 yards.—THOS. P. AUSTIN. Cobborah, 30/1/07.

\* \* \*

NEW FOSTER-PARENT FOR FAN-TAILED CUCKOO.—I have to report the taking of an egg of *Cacomantis flabelliformis* in the nest of and accompanied by two eggs of *Meliornis australasiana* (Crescent Honey-eater) at Ringwood, Victoria, on 21st October, 1906. Incubation well advanced.—F. E. HOWE. Melbourne, 11/2/07.

\* \* \*

MACKAY (QUEENSLAND) NOTES.—I have taken several sets of the Brown-breasted Fly-eater's (*Pseudogerygone brunneipectus*) eggs this season. On three occasions the nest contained an egg of the Bronze-Cuckoo (*Chalcococcyx plagosus*). Each pair of *P. brunneipectus* eggs varied a good deal, one egg in each set being of a much darker flesh-pink than the other.

Under date 8th January my notebook contains this note, which may be of interest:—"Noted a White-bellied Sea-Eagle in immature plumage (all brown) flying over the house. It was chased by two Crows and a smaller bird (species not dis-

cernible). The smaller bird repeatedly perched on the Eagle's back, and seemed to be pecking at it, the Eagle emitting complaining cries all the time."—E. M. CORNWALL. 31/1/07.

\* \* \*

A BIRD TRAGEDY.—A friend from Mt. Dandenong told me recently of a little tragedy in bird life he witnessed last December, which illustrates the predaceous nature of the Jackass. A pair of Magpie-Larks had built their nest in a dead blackwood tree by the roadside. A pair of Jackasses cast evil eyes upon it, and one day, when the young ones were about a week old, they laid siege to the solitary mud home. For some hours the Magpie-Larks, by their wailing cries and their pretence of attack, managed to keep the Jackasses at bay, but at last the poor birds succumbed to the strategy of their wily opponents. While one Jack drew off the two tired Larks by feigning a retreat, the other dashed in and secured the nestlings one by one.—A. G. CAMPBELL. Melbourne, 30th January, 1907.

\* \* \*

NOTES NEAR THE MURRAY.—23rd January.—Saw Bitterns at two tanks on the run—single birds in each case—very tame, just flying across the water and watching proceedings while my horse had a drink. In size that of a small Heron, and plumage variegated, giving the impression of green to the prevailing mottled brown. Have only once before seen these birds in the open.

31st January.—About mid-day a large flight of Spine-tailed Swifts passed over here, going north. As far as one could see, in all directions, these graceful visitors were wheeling in the air. Half an hour and this interesting exhibition was over, and not a bird to be seen.

1st February.—Ducks very plentiful, and large numbers killed by the numerous shooting parties. Only saw one flapper. Last year Pink-eyed species outnumbered all other Ducks—there were few Black Duck; this season the latter are numerous, while the former is totally absent. Very few Shovellers. Saw White-eyed Duck also. Two Painted Snipe shot by one of our party, and a few Jack Snipe seen.—JOHN G. GRAY. Kentucky, near Corowa, N.S.W., 6th February, 1907.

\* \* \*

PARRAKEETS MOULTING.—In the neighbourhood of the Adelaide Hills the Red-rumped Grass-Parrakeet (*Psephotus hæmatonotus*) was up till the years 1887–8 one of the commonest representatives of the family *Psittacidae*. One of the early settlers in the Mt. Barker district, who settled there in 1839, says that they were most numerous in that neighbourhood until the years

named. I can endorse this as regards the years 1885 and 1886, when I first visited the colony. In the years 1887-8 a disease, if such it can be called, attacked this species. When the birds moulted they did not get their feathers again; a number of naked Parrakeets were running about the paddocks. I caught a number of them, and they appeared to be quite healthy, except being destitute of feathers. I conclude that the practical extermination of this species, as far as the Adelaide Hills were concerned, was due to their falling any easy prey to predaceous animals. So complete was the destruction that neither my friends nor myself observed this species in the Mt. Barker district for several years. Even now, 20 years afterwards, this species is still comparatively scarce, although there are a few scattered throughout the district, but no large mobs. It would be interesting to learn how wide was the area affected, what was the cause of the trouble, and to what extent it has been observed in other birds. Although not uncommon in cage birds, I have never noted it amongst wild birds except in the instance cited. Perhaps Sparrows and Starlings might be infected, and thus turn the epidemic to some practical use.—EDWIN ASHBY. Blackwood, S.A., 4th March, 1907.

\* \* \*

BASS STRAIT NOTES.—The season dating from August until now has been an exceptionally rainy one, and as the islands are of a dry, sandy nature, the vegetation benefited much. The smaller birds, such as Honey-eaters, Robins, &c., are much more plentiful than during the dry seasons of former years. The Brush Bronze-wing Pigeon appears to be increasing very rapidly here, and I have found numbers of their lightly-constructed nests. These birds are practically undisturbed, which apparently accounts for their increase. In nesting they are not particular as to site, in many cases preferring the ground to the trees. Their nests are very rudimentary, consisting of a few sticks laid one on the other, and I have often seen a parent roll an egg out of her flat nest when disturbed suddenly. The Brown Hawk, which had almost deserted us a few years back, has returned again, and I have noted many of their nests with young. Their eggs are very handsome, being rich chocolate, with occasional patches of grey. They frequently usurp an old Raven's nest, in preference to building a new one. The Brown Quail is to be seen everywhere, and the little fledglings are now commencing to try their wings; however, only a week ago I found a nest with ten hard-set eggs. In a month or two, when they are all fledged, we will have them in thousands. They are fine, large birds here—larger, I think, than on the other islands.\* I was on Three Hummock Island some time

\* Probably *Synæcus diemenensis*.—EDS.

back, and it was fairly alive with Brown Quail, but noticeably smaller than on Clarke Island. I have not seen any specimens of the spotted variety (Painted) this season, but they lie much closer than the Brown Quail, and may so be missed.

The rarest bird here is the White-bellied Sea-Eagle. I saw one the other day—a magnificent specimen. I am told they are destructive to lambs, but we do not find them so to our flock; the Wedge-tailed Eagle is, as we know to our cost. Cape Barren Geese have nested fairly well this season, but not to the extent of last year. Teal have laid here in numbers, and flappers are plentiful in the small lakes on the various islands. Their nests are hard to locate, as they often lay a considerable distance from water. I noticed a clutch of the Spur-winged Plover's eggs in November; the eggs were, as usual, laid on the bare ground among short green grass, and very difficult to locate. Silver Gulls have a rookery on a precipitous rock near here, which is so steep as to be difficult to climb. It was quite surrounded at low water; we had to jump from rock to rock to get to it. On examination I found that the young were mostly hatched, but for some reason they were nearly all dead. On looking over the rookery I soon found the apparent cause, in the shape of two large black snakes; these savage reptiles were soon killed. It is difficult to say how they got there, as in the first instance they must have swum in the salt water, and, secondly, must have climbed up an almost bare face of rock.

Oyster-catchers do not seem as plentiful as last year, the Pied variety being the most numerous. The Pacific Gull is scarce here, although laying on the surrounding reefs. I only saw two Wood-Swallows (*Artamus*) last season. They do not remain long with us.

The Mutton-Birds seem to hold their own, in spite of the annual drain on them, and they are now to be seen flying about in flocks of many thousands. Black Swans have been remarkably late nesting this year; I noticed last week a clutch of young ones only a few weeks old.—J. D. MACLAINE. Clarke Island, 6/2/07.

\* \* \*

AUSTRALIAN BIRDS IN LONDON.—The following Australian birds may now be seen alive in the London Zoological Gardens:—

Wedge-tailed Eagle	..	<i>Uroaetus audax</i>
White-headed Sea-Eagle	..	<i>Haliastur girrenera</i>
Winking Owl	..	<i>Ninox connivens</i>
Crow	..	<i>Corvus coronoides</i>
Pied Crow-Shrike	..	<i>Strepera graculina</i>
Grey Jumper	..	<i>Struthidea cinerea</i>
Satin Bower-Bird	..	<i>Ptilonorhynchus violaceus</i>
Cat-Bird	..	<i>Aelurædus viridis</i>
Regent-Bird	..	<i>Sericulus melinus</i>

White-backed Magpie	..	<i>Gymnorhina leuconota</i>
Warty-faced Honey-eater	..	<i>Meliphaga phrygia</i>
Banded Finch	..	<i>Stictopera bichenovii</i>
Yellow-rumped Finch	..	<i>Munia flaviprymna</i>
Red-faced Finch	..	<i>Bathilda ruficauda</i>
Long-tailed Grass-Finch	..	<i>Poephila acuticauda</i>
Gouldian Grass-Finch	..	.. <i>mirabilis</i> (red and black faced)
Brown Kingfisher	..	<i>Dacelo gigas</i>
Blue-bellied Lorikeet	..	<i>Trichoglossus novæ-hollandiæ</i>
Red-collared Lorikeet	..	.. <i>rubritoquis</i>
Red-crowned Lorikeet	..	<i>Ptilosclera versicolor</i>
Black Cockatoo	..	<i>Calyptorhynchus funereus</i>
Gang-Gang Cockatoo	..	<i>Callocephalon galeatum</i>
White Cockatoo	..	<i>Cacatua galerita</i>
Pink Cockatoo	..	.. <i>leadbeateri</i>
Bare-eyed Cockatoo	..	.. <i>gymnopis</i>
Rose-breasted Cockatoo	..	.. <i>roseicapilla</i>
Long-billed Cockatoo	..	<i>Licmetis nasica</i>
Dampier Cockatoo	..	.. <i>pastinator</i>
Cockatoo-Parrakeet	..	<i>Calopsittacus novæ-hollandiæ</i>
Alexandra Parrakeet	..	<i>Polytelis alexandræ</i>
Red-winged Lory	..	<i>Ptilistes erythropterus</i>
King Lory	..	<i>Aprosmictus cyanopygius</i>
Crimson Parrakeet	..	<i>Platycercus elegans</i>
Adelaide Rosella	..	.. <i>adelaidæ</i>
Yellow Parrakeet	..	.. <i>flaveolus</i>
Pale-headed Parrakeet	..	.. <i>pallidiceps</i>
Smutty Parrakeet	..	.. <i>browni</i>
Yellow-cheeked Parrakeet	..	.. <i>icterotis</i>
Yellow-vented Parrakeet	..	<i>Psephotus xanthorrhous</i>
Golden-shouldered Parrakeet	..	.. <i>chrysopterygius</i>
Red-backed Parrakeet	..	.. <i>hæmatonotus</i>
Betcherrygah	..	<i>Melopsittacus undulatus</i>
Little Dove	..	<i>Geopelia cuneata</i>
Little Green Pigeon	..	<i>Chalcophaps chrysochloræ</i>
Bronze-winged Pigeon	..	<i>Phaps chalcoptera</i>
Brush Bronze-winged Pigeon	..	.. <i>elegans</i>
Naked-eyed Partridge-Pigeon	..	<i>Geophaps smithi</i>
Brush Turkey	..	<i>Catharturus lathamii</i>
Brown Quail	..	<i>Synæcus australis</i>
Native Companion	..	<i>Antigone australasiana</i>
Spur-winged Plover	..	<i>Lobivanellus lobatus</i>
Black-breasted Plover	..	<i>Zonifer tricolor</i>
Straw-necked Ibis	..	<i>Carphibis spinicollis</i>
Pelican	..	<i>Pelecanus conspicillatus</i>
Black Swan	..	<i>Chenopsis atrata</i>
Pied Goose	..	<i>Anseranas semipalmata</i>
Cape Barren Goose	..	<i>Cereopsis novæ-hollandiæ</i>
Wood-Duck	..	<i>Chenonetta jubata</i>
Shieldrake	..	<i>Casarca tadornoides</i>
Black Duck	..	<i>Anas superciliosa</i>
Emu	..	<i>Dromæus novæ-hollandiæ</i>
Cassowary	..	<i>Casuarius australis.</i>

GREGORY M. MATHEWS. Watford, England, 27/11/06.

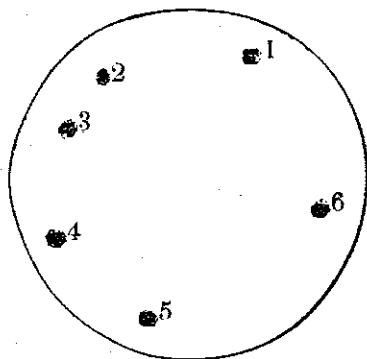
ANNOTATIONS.—*Mesocalius palliolatus* (Black-eared Cuckoo).—Mr. Gerald F. Hill has kindly sent me an egg of this species. It was taken with three eggs of *Malurus cyaneus* (Blue Wren)—a new foster-parent for this Cuckoo—together with an egg of *Chalcococcyx basalis* (Narrow-billed Bronze-Cuckoo). This extremely interesting set was discovered at Dunneworthy, near Ararat, by Mr. L. Mooney, on the 25th November 1906. The Black-eared Cuckoo's egg may be described as elongated in form (more tapered towards the smaller end than known examples), surface slightly glossy, and colour of a uniform rufous-brown. Length, .91; breadth, .55 inch.

*Cacomantis flabelliformis* (Fan-tailed Cuckoo).—While the Field-Wren (*Calamanthus albiloris*, North) has been recorded as one of the foster-parents for the Narrow-billed Bronze-Cuckoo, I was not aware that the Field-Wren was also a foster-parent of the Fan-tailed Cuckoo until I saw recently an interesting combination clutch in the collection of Mr. G. E. Shepherd, Somerville—season 1905.

*Eurystomus australis* (Dollar-Bird).—These birds have been frequently noticed in the north-eastern province of Victoria. But some have appeared more westward this season, notably on the Goulburn, at Mount Macedon, and at Eltham, near Melbourne. At the last-mentioned locality, in January, one bird was shot out of nine which were said to be attacking peaches.

*Lipoa ocellata* (Mallee-Fowl).—In a back number of *The Australasian* (15/12/06), Mr. Charles H. M'Lennan, writing under the *nom de plume* of "Mallee-Bird," contributed a most interesting and valuable article on the "Haunts and Habits of the Lowan" or Mallee-Fowl. While giving us so many interesting notes of his field observations of the bird, Mr. M'Lennan omitted to touch on the disposition of the eggs within the hatching-mounds, a matter which is somewhat perplexing to oologists. In reply to my queries Mr. M'Lennan has promptly and kindly sent the following remarks:—"I find, as a rule, the Mallee-Fowl lays its eggs in the mound in the following manner:—Three or four eggs are always laid at the bottom of the egg chamber, the large end of the egg being placed upwards, with from 6 to 12 inches of sand, &c., between each egg. The next egg is laid from 4 to 6 inches above these—in fact, the rest of the eggs are laid here and there around the egg chamber, with from 4 to 10 inches of material separating them—no two eggs being placed directly over each other. The eggs are always found near the side of the egg chamber. I have often noticed what you could term tiers or circles, of 4, 6, and 4; 4, 5, and 3; 3, 5, 4, and 3 eggs respectively in odd mounds; but, as stated, the Mallee-Fowl lays its eggs without any respect to regular formation of tiers or circles. I am sending you a

rough diagram of a mound I opened on the 9th of this month (December), which contained six eggs, one freshly laid. The size of the egg chamber was 20 inches wide and 18 inches in



depth. The eggs marked from 1 to 4 are what you would term the top tier; from number 1 to 2 there were 7 inches of sand dividing them; from 2 to 3 there were  $2\frac{1}{2}$  inches between them; from 3 to 4 there were 5 inches of sand between them; from 4 to 5 there were 8 inches of sand; and number 5 egg was on a plane about 4 inches below that of number 4 egg. From 5 to 6, 7 inches of sand intervened, and number 6 egg was about 3 inches below number 5 egg. The eggs marked from 1 to 4 did not vary in depth from each other more than 2 to 3 inches. I took six eggs out of this mound a few weeks previously.\* At the start of the season for laying, the Mallee-Fowl is most regular,† but from the middle of the season to the end the period between the laying of one egg and another varies considerably." Supplementing Mr. M'Lennan's valuable notes, I venture to add a recent personal one. On the 2nd December last I visited an egg-mound over the South Australian border. It was situated in Mallee scrub (*Eucalyptus incrassata* and *E. oleosa*), with a ground scrub of *Melaleuca uncinata*. The mound was composed of dark greyish sand, was about 45 feet in circumference, and open on the top like a miniature extinct volcano. The removal of about 2 feet of sand revealed the apices of three beautiful pinkish eggs within a kind of egg-chamber 14 inches across. The eggs were on the same plane, and formed a rough triangle, 1 and 2 being separated by  $5\frac{1}{4}$  inches of sand, 2 and 3 by 5 inches, and 3 and 1 by  $4\frac{1}{2}$  inches. Immediately underneath these was the formation of a bottom tier containing one egg. For more complete information I regretted there were not more eggs in the mound, which probably had been visited by other persons earlier in the season. I should mention that it was shortly before noon when we visited the egg-mound, which, if it were heaped in its usual pyramidal form, would be

\* This may account for the irregularity.—Eds.

† Usually one egg every third or fourth day.—A.J.C.

about 3 feet high. A local friend subsequently visited the mound, which was conical-shaped on that occasion. It contained a single egg, at a depth of about 18 inches, where the thermometer registered 93°, the temperature of the sand on the top of the mound being 121°.

*Psephotus hæmatorrhous* (Red-vented Parrakeet).—The true "Blue Bonnet" is one of the most interesting of elegant Parrakeets, and makes an endearing aviary pet. Mr. J. A. Hill (Victoria), who was spending a holiday near Wellington, about 170 miles inland or westward of Newcastle, N.S.W., kindly brought me a skin of the Red-vented species from that locality. It distinctly differs from the Victorian and South Australian bird—*P. xanthorrhous*—by having (1) the under tail-covert crimson-red instead of primrose-yellow; (2) point of the shoulder verditer-green instead of blue; and (3) the centre of the greater wing-coverts reddish-chestnut instead of saffron-yellow. For other details see Gould's "Handbook," vol. ii., pp. 62–65. Wellington is about 160 miles south of the Namoi, where Gould obtained his type of *P. hæmatorrhous*. It would be interesting to know how much further south it extends, or where it intergrades with *P. xanthorrhous*. As there has been some confusion about the two varieties, I do not think authentic eggs of the former have yet been described, although, doubtless, they are similar to those of the Yellow-vented Parrakeet.—A. J. CAMPBELL.

### From Magazines, &c.

CLOSE SEASON IGNORED.—The close season for game throughout the Northern district seems to be little better than a farce. Game is almost openly shot, and wild-fowl is a common article of diet in several quarters. Land-owners in the vicinity state that shooting parties are numerous, though the most common game is that named in the Act.—*The Argus*, 13th December, 1906.

\* \* \*

HAWK AND WILD DUCK.—A strange scene was witnessed at Mooroopna on Monday evening, when a wild Wood-Duck was chased about the township by a Hawk. The latter was gaining rapidly on it, when the Duck darted under the verandah of a store, and darted through a frosted window-pane. Inside it caused great consternation, narrowly missing a table covered with kerosene lamps. Eventually it was caught, and was found to be cut on the head and feet. The Hawk flew into a tree near the footpath, and waited for the Duck to reappear.—*The Argus*, 2nd February, 1907.