

The eggs are three. Ground colour white, with a zone of red, irregular-shaped spots round the larger end, and these spots also sparingly distributed over the rest of the surface. Dimensions—16.5 x 11 mm.

This clutch also contained the egg of *Chalcococcyx minutillus*, which is a lighter colour than the eggs of *C. plagosus*. The measurements are 19 x 12 mm.—GREGORY M. MATHEWS. Watford, England. 3/2/11.

From Magazines, &c.

The Outer's Book for January, 1911, contains, among articles of interest to sporting readers, a pleasantly written account of a camp-out at Clam Lakes, a charming locality in the United States, where nature is still wild and free.

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JOURNAL OF THE NEW YORK ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY.—We are glad to see that the New York Zoological Society is bringing out a most useful publication, entitled *Zoologica*, and it is to be heartily congratulated on the work. The whole "get-up" of the journal is excellent, and it deserves all prosperity. The articles by Mr. C. W. Beebe, both on the habits of the Hoatzin and on the tail feathers of the Motmot, are of much interest, as well as the field notes of the birds he found in North-Eastern Venezuela, and the photographs with which each article is illustrated are of value.

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THE PHILIPPINE BIRDS.—The first and second parts of the "Manual of Philippine Birds," by Richard C. MacGregor, published by the Bureau of Science, Manilla, have lately been issued. The birds mentioned in part i. that are found in Australia are *Cisticola exilis* and *Hirundo javanica*. The two numbers deal with 739 birds, fully described, 360 birds being mentioned in part ii. The numbers are well indexed, both with vernacular as well as scientific names. The books are of great value to ornithologists, and the Bureau of Science is to be congratulated on bringing out this important work.

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NEW AUSTRALIAN BIRDS.—*The Bulletin of the B.O.C.*, No. clxiii., mentions that Mr. G. M. Mathews exhibited a new sub-species of Tree-creeper which had been collected by Mr. Tom Carter, who proposed to describe it as follows:—*Climacteris obscura*.—Differs from typical examples of *C. rufa*, Gould, in being very much darker in colour, both above and below. The bill is longer and more curved, and the measurement of the wing is less, being 86 mm. In an example of *C. rufa* from Broome Hill the wing measures 93 mm. *Habitat*.—Warren River, South-West Australia.

Mr. Mathews also exhibited and described a new species of Ground-Bird, which he named *Cinclosoma alisteri*. *Habitat*.—Western Australia.

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DISTRIBUTION OF AUSTRALIAN LAND-BIRDS. — On this very fascinating subject Mr. Robert Hall, Col. M. B.O.U., has contributed a thoughtful paper to the Royal Society of Tasmania (read 8/8/10). Mr. Hall expresses the opinion that the Australian Passerine birds had their origin in the old Papuan sub-region, and distributed themselves down Cape York Peninsula, some turning to the north-west, and others continuing southward to Victoria, then sheering west in lesser numbers of species; but the westward extension does not join the north-west stream, because of the Great Desert barrier. For the same reason the water barrier of Bass Strait limited the southern flow into Tasmania. However, the present-day Parrot families do not lend themselves to these lines of expansion, a recent evolutionary centre appearing to have occurred in the great interior of the continent. Mr. Hall supports his views with comparative tables and many details concerning genera and areas, which are most interesting to follow for students concerned in geographical distribution. Want of space alone prevents Mr. Hall's article being mentioned at greater length.

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CURIOUS NESTS.—Nearly all the native birds now and then build what may be called freak nests. Sometimes, for example, the Magpie (*Gymnorhina*) builds her nest actually on the ground, and sometimes she uses fencing-wire with which to construct the main edifice. I have just got a curious note, with reference to the present nesting season, regarding the *Grallina picata* or Mud-Lark. Two of their nests have been found built on an ordinary post-and-rail fence, where they were, of course, conspicuous as well as curious objects. The district, however, is unsettled, although there is a certain amount of traffic along the roads. This is the first time that I have heard of the *Grallina* building its nest on a fence. Some time ago I referred to the habit which the Yellow-rumped Tit (*Acanthiza chrysorrhoa*) has of building its nest beneath that of a Magpie. The Tit's nest is joined on to the Magpie's nest, and from a distance seems to be part of it. This season I found one Magpie's nest underneath which were built no fewer than three Tits' nests, all adjoining. The curious thing is that in no case which I have observed has the Magpie objected to this close companionship. On the other hand, the Magpie, apparently, encourages the practice, and acts as a protector to the little Tit. There is no doubt at all that the Tit could not very well have hit upon a safer situation in which to build her nest.—"F. R.," *The Australasian*, 24/12/10.

DESTRUCTION OF PELICANS.—Under the caption, "Pity the Pelican," the following article was published in the *Adelaide Evening Journal* of 9th February, 1911:—

"When Pelicans were removed from the protected list the Ornithologists' Association expressed its strong disapproval and indignation that what amounted to the first step towards the destruction of this quaint Australian bird should have been taken. Led by Capt. S. A. White, every effort was made to induce the authorities to reconsider their cruel decision. The effect of the withdrawal from the protected list of the Pelican has now been brought home with dastardly force. The reason given for permission to destroy the bird was that it ate enormous quantities of fish, to the detriment of fishermen's livelihood. Capt. White informed a reporter on Thursday morning that, from what he had heard from the Coorong, it appeared that blood-money was now being paid for Pelicans, and that so much a head was given. 'Some scoundrels,' he said, 'allowed the whole rookery on Pelican Island to hatch, to the extent of 2,000 birds. The rookery has now been swept away, because somebody has secured the heads of the 2,000 fledglings. There are only two rookeries in South Australia, and this means that if wholesale destructions like the one so brutally perpetrated are repeated once or twice it practically amounts to the extermination of this remarkable bird. It is one of the most dastardly acts I have ever heard of, and the Ornithologists' Association is going to take prompt action. The Pelican is a very timid bird, and is easily destroyed. We can prove that Pelicans do not consume the enormous quantities of fish they are alleged to do. The same thing has been said about Cormorants—that where they are fish decrease. It has been found that where Cormorants have been destroyed fish have diminished in number. In America they allowed the Pelicans to be almost exterminated; but about 3 or 4 years ago the authorities awoke to the fact that these birds were not injurious to the fishermen's trade, and the authorities set to work to re-establish the birds. Only a few were found on an island on one of the rivers. This was proclaimed a bird sanctuary, and latest reports show they are multiplying most satisfactorily.'"

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GAME PROTECTION IN THE UNITED STATES.—The United States Department of Agriculture Bureau of Biological Survey has issued a series of circulars dealing with game protection. Circular No. 72, "Private Game Preserves and their Future in the United States," is of special interest to Australian ornithologists, in view of the number of landowners in the Commonwealth who have had their estates declared sanctuaries for wild life. Of course, the private game preserves in North America are formed primarily for owners' exclusive enjoyment of the sport to be obtained within their boundaries, and "opposition to them has frequently been mani-

fested in the form of hostile legislation ;" but these preserves "constitute a very important factor in modern game protection, and, as the country becomes more thickly settled, may become one of the chief means of preserving game for future generations."

Circular No. 71 deals with "National Bird and Mammal Reservations in Alaska." Seven reservations, it is stated, have been set aside and placed in charge of the Department of Agriculture. With one exception, the reservations comprise small islands at several points along the coast of Alaska and in Behring Sea. All the reservations are used as breeding places by sea birds, or Ducks and Geese. All the species are protected by the Alaska game law, and the birds on the reservation are protected by Act of Congress.

Circular No. 73 is entitled "Progress of Game Protection in 1909." The year in question, it is stated, was marked by a general awakening "in the movement for the increase of game, both in experiments in propagation and in the establishment of game refuges and private preserves. Several States made provision for the establishment of State preserves, or game farms." Minnesota and Ontario set aside adjoining tracts, comprising altogether over 2,000,000 acres. No fewer than 26 bird reservations, distributed in 14 States and Territories, were created in 1909, making the total 51. Two reservations in Florida were enlarged during the year. On most of the reservations the birds bred successfully. Nearly half a million birds were imported into the United States during the year. Of this number 371,910 were Canaries. Of the remaining hundred thousand, more than half were non-game birds, and 37,511 were game birds.

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"THE AGRICULTURAL GAZETTE OF NEW SOUTH WALES."—This journal is still giving prominence to "Insectivorous Birds of New South Wales." Vol. xxii., part 3 (March), gives two excellent three-colour blocks (after Gould)—namely, Diamond-Bird (*Pardalotus punctatus*) and Shrike-Tit (*Falcunculus frontatus*), with appropriate letter-press.

The same journal has an article, "On a New Genus of Australian Birds," by A. J. North, Col. M. B.O.U., Ornithologist of the Australian Museum, Sydney.

Mr. North's own words are:—"In December, 1910, Mr. Edwin Ashby, of 'Wittunga,' Blackwood, South Australia, wrote to my private address and asked me to examine a skin of a bird he had sent to the Curator of the Australian Museum, and to pass an opinion on it. This I did, replying, 'A new bird, possibly allied to *Ephthianura*.' Early in February, 1911, I received from Mr. Ashby a printed 'Description of a New *Ephthianura*' (in galley form), in which he had described the specimen in question under the name of *Ephthianura lovensis*, thus associating it with the name of its discoverer, Mr. J. R. B. Love; but there is nothing in the description to indicate whether

it is a reprint from any publication.* Mr. Ashby hesitatingly referred it to the genus *Ephthianura*, and states it 'may, after further investigation, exhibit generic differences.' I beg to state emphatically that it is not an *Ephthianura*, and I have much pleasure in substituting for it the generic distinction of *Ashbyia*, thereby connecting with it the name of Mr. Edwin Ashby, who, for a number of years past, has been doing good work in Australian ornithology.

"ORDER.—PASSERES.

"Family.—TIMELIIDÆ.

"Sub-Family.—Timeliinæ.

"ASHBYIA, *gen. nov.*

"*Generic characters.*—Like *Ephthianura*, to which it is possibly allied, but it is easily distinguished from that genus by its larger and more robust bill, especially at the base, and its longer and more pointed wings.

"*Type.*—*Ephthianura lovensis*, Ashby. *Habitat.*—Leigh's Creek, South Australia."

Reviews.

[*"Protected Native Birds of South Australia"*: Special Bulletin, Department of Intelligence, South Australia.]

THIS bulletin, which was compiled by Mr. T. Duffield, secretary and intelligence officer, with introduction and descriptions by Mr. A. G. Edquist, lecturer in nature study to the Education Department, is a brochure of 30 pages, with a dozen coloured plates from drawings by Mr. C. Wall, Government artist. Both letter-press and illustrations are good, and the pamphlet should prove useful to young South Australians who are beginning to take an interest in the bird-life of their State. A copy of the Bulletin and two wall-plates of the illustrations have been sent to each school in South Australia for the help and guidance of teachers and scholars. It is hoped that they will foster a love of native birds and develop the spirit of protection in the young. In his introductory remarks Mr. Edquist says:—"Fortunately, we have in South Australia an ever-increasing number of bird observers, who regard bird protection not only from the point of view of the bird-lover, but also from that of the economist, and do all that lies in their power to prevent the extinction of our most valuable birds; yet it is feared that, unless the importance of bird-life be made more widely known, the extermination of some of the species will become inevitable."

A list of protected species is given, and also one of those species which are not afforded protection by law. In the latter it is surprising to notice that Silver-eyes (*Zosterops*) are included. The statement that the plates in the Bulletin are good must be

* Reprinted pages (251, 252) of *The Emu*, vol. x. Mr. North is correct in stating that the reprint should have shown its origin, but, in his official capacity, it was his business to ascertain the source of any such matter.—EDS.

qualified in regard to the colouring of some of the figures, which is not quite satisfactory; but with the process of reproduction used this was probably unavoidable. Perhaps the best plate is that depicting a pair of Spotted Bower-Birds (*Chlamydodera maculata*) and their bower.

[“Foreign Birds for Cage and Aviary,” 2 vols., 4to, in cloth. Part I., “Smaller Foreign Birds,” post free, 6s. 4d.; Part II., “Larger Foreign Birds,” post free, 7s. 10d. The Feathered World Office, 9 Arundel-street, Strand, London, W.C.]

No author having come forward to do similar work for British aviculturists to that performed by the late Dr. Karl Russ for their German brethren, Dr. A. G. Butler, F.L.S., F.Z.S., &c., decided to supply the long-felt need. He has kept and studied in captivity more than 200 species of foreign birds, and is therefore eminently qualified to undertake a task of this kind. That Dr. Butler has succeeded admirably may be easily judged by an inspection of the work, which consists of two quarto volumes of closely-printed matter, describing about a thousand species of birds.

In order to render the work instructive as well as useful to bird-keepers, Dr. Butler treats the relationships of the various families, indicating their structural peculiarities. He has devoted a considerable time to collating information respecting the wild life of the various species, which necessarily entailed much research, not to mention expense, on his part.

The plan of this work has been carefully thought out—each family is first treated, every group follows in its natural order, each species is represented by its popular and scientific name, a careful description, the various habitats, an account of the wild life (when obtainable), and, lastly, observations on its behaviour and treatment in captivity. The text is interspersed with about 140 illustrations, mostly from the pencil of Mr. A. F. Lydon, but a few by the author, and others reproduced from photographs, with a frontispiece in colours to each volume, the coloured plate to vol. ii. being an Australian bird—the little “Budgerigar” (*Melopsittacus undulatus*). However, the illustration represents the birds as being more yellowish than they usually seem in the open—the yellow is probably accounted for by in-breeding in captivity. Another interesting and artistic plate is “A Group of Cockatoos,” while many other Australian birds are figured.

In their proper places, the following groups or species of Australian birds are treated comprehensively:—

Vol. I. — Spotted Pardalote (*P. punctatus*), called “Panther-Bird”; Honey-eaters (*Meliphagidæ*), Grass-Finches, &c., Ground-Thrushes (*Geocichla*), Pied Grallina (*G. picata*), White-eyes (*Zosterops*), and Wood-Swallows (*Artamidæ*). Vol. II. — Bee-eater (*Merops*), Bower-Birds (*Ptilonorhynchidæ*), Cockatoos (*Cacatuidæ*), Crow-like birds (*Corvidæ*)—including *Strepera*, Mag-

pies, and Butcher-Birds, and even the unique White-winged Chough (*Corcorax*)—Kingfishers (*Alcedinidæ*), Lorikeets, Birds-of-Paradise (*Paradiseidæ*), and the numerous and glorious families of Parrakeets, Pigeons, and Pittas.

Dr. Butler, in his letter-press, has liberally quoted from Australian authors and ornithologists, and has as liberally made due acknowledgment of the same, much to the credit and value of his work.

Every bird-lover, whether field observer or aviculturist, should possess Dr. Butler's pair of well-got-up volumes. Perhaps aviculturists should be ranked first, because the author himself forcibly writes:—"Bird-life can only be partially studied by the field naturalist, owing to the skulking nature of many birds and their amazing cunning in not only concealing their nests but in enticing the investigator from the neighbourhood of the same. Of such birds the habits can only be studied in aviaries; and any seeker after self-advertisement who strives to prevent such a means of acquiring knowledge is an offender both against God and man, and deserving of the severest punishment."

Mrs. Comyns-Lewer, editor of *The Feathered World*, has been so good as to send, for the library of the R.A.O.U., Dr. Butler's two valuable books; but those members desiring copies for themselves, especially at such moderate cost, will do well to apply to the London office, at the address given above.

[“An Australian Bird Book” (Introduction by F. Tate, M.A., I.S.O., Director of Education, Victoria), by J. A. Leach, M.Sc., First Class Honourman and University Exhibitioner in Geology and Biology, University Scholar in Biology, Organizing Inspector of Nature Study (Education Department), Member of Council of R.A.O.U., Vice-President Field Naturalists' Club of Victoria. Published by arrangement with the Education Department. Whitcombe and Tombs Limited, Christchurch and Melbourne. 1911.]

CONNOISSEURS never judge by size. Art and excellence may be found in small pictures as well as in pictures great in size; so in the case of the little volume—"a pocket book for field use"—at present under review. Its small size by no means limits its usefulness, nor are its small illustrations of less value than the classical plates of Gould and others. This little "bird book" is probably the best of its kind extant—a compendium of ornithology, showing Australian birds in their proper setting and treatment among the birds of the world.

Mr. Leach follows the system of classification laid down in the late Dr. R. Bowdler Sharpe's "Handlist of Birds," which commences with the lowest forms of avifauna (Emu, &c.), building up to the highest (Bower-Birds, &c.) Australia thus possesses both top species and bottom. The comparative reference of figures and letters with each family and species in Mr. Leach's

work may at first sight be confusing to students, but the explanatory "Notes" after the preface will make the connections clear, thus:—

"Where one number is placed over another at the left side of the page, the lower number denotes the number of species of that genus found in the world; the upper denotes the number of species found in Australia and Tasmania. The number at the right side of the page is the length of the bird in inches (from the tip of bill to the tip of tail). The families are numbered consecutively—F. 11, F. 12, and so on. The number after a family name denotes the number of species recorded from Australia and Tasmania. The distribution of the species of each family amongst the six zoo-geographical regions is also shown:—

"F. 17. COLUMBIDÆ (2), WOOD PIGEONS, Passenger-Pigeon, Rock-Dove, 119 sp.—41 (40) A., 25 (17) O., 18 (10) P., 19 (17) E., 4 (0) Nc., 24 (20) Nl.

"This should read:—Family number 17 of the world's birds, COLUMBIDÆ (two of which are found in Australia and Tasmania) contains the Wood-Pigeons, including the Passenger-Pigeon of North America and the Rock-Dove of Europe. It comprises 119 species, of which 41 are found in the Australian region, 40 of them being confined to this region; 25 are found in the Oriental Region, 17 being confined to it; 18 are found in the Palæarctic Region, 10 of which are not found outside the region; 19 have been recorded from the Ethiopian Region, 17 being peculiar to that Region; 4 have been recorded from the Nearctic Region, none of which is restricted to the region; 24 have been recorded from the Neotropical Region, 20 being peculiar to it."

The accepted vernacular name of the species in bold type readily catches the eye; synonymous vernaculars—many of them trivial, however—are given less conspicuously in brackets. Then follow the technical name, distribution, chief points or marks of plumage, and size, for identification, food, &c. No reference is made to nests and eggs, which are designedly omitted, in case school-boys and scouts should be tempted to lay up treasures of eggs.*

Instead of the usual "Remarks" or "Observations," a "Popular Lecture,"† runs through the work, which, in a clever manner, fits the pages where the particular order or families of

* It is a matter of history that nearly all famous ornithologists were egg-collectors in their youthful days. It is feared that, from his wonted enthusiasm, Inspector Leach is no exception to the rule.—A. J. C.

† *Victorian Naturalist*, vol. xxvii., No. 8. Lecture subsequently delivered at Brisbane (*Emu*, vol. x., p. 176) is amplified and brought up to date. Here is one interesting amplification:—"It is interesting to note that Australia contains representatives of twenty-eight families of Song-Birds. Representatives of but nineteen families have been recorded from Britain. The Indian Empire, including Burmah and Ceylon, contains representatives of twenty-two families, North America, also, of twenty-two families, while in South America twenty-three families are represented in this highest division of birds. Again, while only 89 Song-Birds have been recorded as permanent residents of, or regular visitors to, Britain, almost 500 species of Song-Birds have, so far, been recorded from Australia and Tasmania. Of these, 157 have been recorded from Victoria, and are illustrated in this volume. And yet we are told this is a land of songless birds."

birds are considered. Thus, the heavier or more technical matter is agreeably sandwiched with racy and interesting non-scientific writing which captivates the reader.

Photography is fast establishing itself as an indispensable hand-aid to the sciences. Illustrations (set in groups, and most excellently engraved in half-tone) are given of over 400 Australian birds, while 20 "tricoloured" blocks depict 177 species in natural colours—a complete triumph in photo-mechanical skill by the etchers, Messrs. Patterson, Shugg and Co., from paintings by Miss Ethel M. Paterson. The only drawback noticed is that the birds appear stuffed and mounted—none the less valuable as illustrations than skins and mummies in an ornithologist's cabinet or museum.

How this ornithological compendium, or "Australian Birds in a Nutshell," was written and published for 3s. 6d. is marvellous. Its author and his enterprising publishers have indeed given to the world a unique book. Australians especially will be greatly indebted to Mr. Leach for his untiring labours, and to the long-sightedness of his department in sanctioning the publication of such a useful "bird book," the just reward of which must surely be many editions.

South Australian Ornithological Association.

THE usual monthly meeting was held at Dr. Pulleine's rooms, North-terrace, on Thursday evening, 2nd March, when Capt. S. A. White presided. There was a large attendance. The secretary (Mr. J. W. Mellor) reported having liberated Mallee-Fowl on Kangaroo Island, and stated that he had examined the country composing the reserve on the west end of the island. He found it very sterile and rough, and quite unfit for grazing, much less agriculture. The Government should extend the area of the reserve. Votes of thanks were passed to the Marine Board for having conveyed the birds to Kangaroo Island, and to the lighthouse officials for their assistance. The good service rendered by Mr. Mellor for his care of the birds was much appreciated. Dr. Morgan stated that sufficient money had been promised to procure another batch of Mallee-Fowl. The subject of the Pelican was discussed, and it was agreed to invite other scientific bodies to send representatives to wait upon the Government, requesting that the bird be placed upon the partially protected list, at least. All deeply deplored the wretched slaughter of young Pelicans on the Coorong. Mr. Robert Zietz was of opinion that the Australian Crane, or Native Companion, should be protected, as it was becoming very scarce. Mr. Edquist, of the Education Department, reported that 116 bird clubs had been established in conjunction with the schools, and the roll showed over 4,000 members, who had pledged themselves to protect our native birds. He also stated that he wished to start a competition in the schools for the best essays on birds. He would like to have a silver cup to be competed for as first prize. A subscription list was started, and the money required was raised in the room.