

remarks in that connection was that American ornithologists also were not wholly in agreement in regard to the wholesale multiplication of sub-species, and I cited a very able article appearing in *The Auk*,* written by Mr. Joseph Grinnell, Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, California, who in summarizing at the end of his article declared that the present "Check-list" [American] was unsatisfactory to both the amateur and the specialist in respect to the sub-species problem, and further suggested that a new "Check-list," *with sub-species omitted altogether*, would be hailed with appreciation by the great majority of bird-students.

The Auk containing the article under notice was handed to me by the convener of our "Check-list" Committee on the point of my leaving for Tasmania to attend the Launceston session, with instructions to cite it as above, and I carried out my instructions faithfully.

I am at a loss to understand why Captain White introduced this phase of the matter at all, as it had nothing to do with the matters in issue between him and me.—I am, &c.,

Melbourne, 30th Dec., 1913.

ALEXR. WM. MILLIGAN.

The Editors of "The Emu."

SIRS,—In your number for October (*ante*, p. 103) of this year you credit me with saying, in my letter *re* the R.A.O.U. "Check-list," that "I will mix King Island birds with specimens from the mainland." This should be Kangaroo Island. It may have been my fault for most likely I have written "K.I.," which we South Australians have a habit of doing for Kangaroo Island.—I am, &c.,

Fulham (S.A.), 24/10/13.

S. A. WHITE.

Stray Feathers.

Double Clutch of Butcher-Bird's Eggs.—I lately received a curiosity in the shape of a seven-egg clutch of *Cracticus destructor*. The eggs were taken by a boy attending the Public School at Seaham, N.S.W., the teacher being Mr. S. A. Hanscombe, R.A.O.U., one of the best known writers upon ornithological matters in the Education Department of New South Wales. Mr. Hanscombe states that the clutch is *bona fide*, and that the nest and eggs were photographed *in situ* by him. The eggs are apparently laid by two birds, four of them being much larger and slightly different in shade and markings from the rest. The Butcher-Bird is so pugnacious that the fact of two females laying in one nest is most unusual, and hitherto unnoticed by me.—H. L. WHITE. Belltrees (N.S.W.), 30/11/13.

* Vol. xxix., pp. 561 to 565 (Oct., 1912).

Freak Colours of *Rhipidura tricolor*.—For three successive seasons a neighbour has sent me young white birds of the Black-and-White Fantail—rough skins on two occasions, and a live bird on the third. Becoming interested, I obtained some information from him. All the young mentioned appear to have been the progeny of the same birds, which built close to the house, and are normal in colour. They have been under observation for three years, in which time four clutches were reared—two white birds only on three occasions, the fourth clutch consisting of two each white and normal. None of the white birds appears to have lived long after leaving the nest, though during last winter I noticed a pure white one within four miles of my neighbour's house. In some of the white birds a darker shade was observable where the black usually exists. — H. L. WHITE. Belltrees (N.S.W.), 30/11/13.

Notes and Notices.

The late Dr. P. L. Selater, F.R.S. — Owing to unavoidably restricted space, a notice, with portrait, of this late distinguished ornithologist is held over until the next issue of *The Emu*.

A Correction.—In vol. xiii., page 100, of *The Emu*, under the heading "Charcoal in Finches' Nests," I made an error which I wish to rectify. The fact of charcoal being placed in the nests of *Poephila personata* was previously recorded by Mr. G. F. Hill (vol. x., page 289, of *The Emu*). My friend Mr. T. P. Austin, of Cobborah, N.S.W., drew attention to the mistake, he having received a clutch of eggs from me, the data mentioning the fact of charcoal being found in the nest. At the time of writing the note for *The Emu* I was in the midst of shearing, and I presume that my wits must have been "wool-gathering."—H. L. WHITE. Belltrees (N.S.W.), 30/11/13.

Charcoal in Finches' Nests.—In connection with the foregoing "Correction," Mr. G. F. Hill, Darwin, sends the following note, which was accompanied by a photograph of the Finch's nest, *in situ*, in scrub:—"Although this habit is common, if not general, in the species, I do not think it occurs in any other nesting in Northern Territory or North-West Australia. The large size of the pieces of charcoal, 'about the size of the eggs,' is somewhat unusual, I think. The charcoal is generally in the form of powder and small pieces about the size of grains of hemp seed. The habit is not confined to nests built on the ground, but has been observed in nests built in bushes in North-West Australia, also in bushes and on Termites' nests near Roper River, Northern Territory. Since some field notes on the situations chosen by *Poephila personata* for nesting were published in *The Emu* (vol. xii., Part 4, page 260), I have had some opportunities for observing their nesting habits further north (about 20 miles south of Darwin,