

adult, young, and variants, the moulting and the ecological conditions are given for the different birds. Special attention is devoted to the feather and moulting conditions.

["Golden Wattle: Our National Floral Emblem." By A. J. Campbell, C.M.B.O.U., author of "Nests and Eggs of Australian Birds" and Life Member Wattle Day League of Victoria. Osboldstone & Co., Temple Court Place, Melbourne. 63 pages, quarto, with 28 illustrations, 5 coloured. Price, £1/1/-.]

Though this is a bird journal, yet there is a close connection of birds with trees, rendered closer in this case by the author being for years Hon. Editor of this Journal, and also life member of the Wattle Day League of Victoria.

The author, a pioneer in Australian nature study, particularly in bird and tree study, has, after many years of study and photographing, produced a handsome, well-illustrated volume of our beautiful often heavily scented wattle, a work worthy to be a companion volume of the valuable "Nests and Eggs of Australian Birds."

The dedication reads: "To all who love our National Flower—with its flossy wealth of golden glory and leaves of loveliness—the wattle, this work is humbly dedicated by A Wattle Lover."

The foreword by Sir William J. Sowden, K.C.M.G., Adelaide, President Federal and South Australian Wattle Day Leagues, draws attention to the author's efforts in promoting the cult of the wattle blossom, in developing Australian sentiment for the wattle, and in securing the recognition, already practically Empire-wide, of Wattle Day. Sir William concludes with "an expression of the great gratitude which is due to the author from Australia's sons and daughters in general, and members of the Wattle League in particular for the patriotic and national inspiration which he has imparted."

The letterpress is developed from the interesting lecture given by the author in arousing interest in the Wattle Day movement. It is beautifully and appropriately illustrated by selected pictures by the author—an expert photographer. A symbolic meaning has been added by the inclusion of draped figures in many of the pictures.

Printer, block-maker, and binder have done their parts well, and the book deserves the support of all interested in Wattle Culture, and the development of an Australian national sentiment.

State Secretaries' Reports

TASMANIA.

Considerable progress has been made in Tasmania recently as regards bird protection, and the "Animals and Bird Protection Act," which is controlled by the Police Department, is of great assistance in this direction. Reports were received that the Silver Gulls and other sea birds were being molested in

the estuary of the Derwent, and upon the attention of the Department being drawn to this matter, certain action was taken which should have a good effect.

The question of reservations is a very live one in Tasmania. The National Park of 38,500 acres is an absolute sanctuary for the native fanna, and at the present time we are conducting a campaign in favour of the reservation of some 200 square miles of mountainous country in the Cradle Mt.—Lake St. Clair district as a National Reserve. If proclaimed, it is proposed to manage the reserve more as a tourist resort than a sanctuary, but the animal life will be afforded every reasonable protection. The mountain and lake scenery within this area is magnificent, and, properly managed, the area should become one of the most famous National Reservations in the world. The proposal has been sympathetically received by the Government, and the details are now being considered by Ministers.

The Tasmanian Field Naturalists' Club is also moving in the direction of having part of Mount Wellington declared a bird sanctuary.

Attention was drawn to the depredations usually inflicted upon the Black Swans during the nesting season, particularly so as regards the Moulting Lagoon on the East Coast. The Commissioner of Police, who is also Chief Inspector under the Animals and Birds Protection Act, detailed a man for special work in protecting the breeding grounds, and the success of this is amply demonstrated by the following article extracted from the *Hobart Mercury*:—

THE MOULTING LAGOON SWANS IN THE NESTING SEASON. A VISIT TO THE SANCTUARY.

(From Our East Coast Correspondent.)

By the courtesy of Trooper Sproule, the police officer in charge of the swan sanctuary in the Moulting Lagoons, a small party, including the writer, was invited to visit the hatchery, where thousands of birds are now nesting. The spot selected by Mr. Sproule for our visit is situated on the northern end of the Lagoons, and to reach the hatchery we had to make our way through half a mile of dense titree scrub, which in this locality fringes the water for some three or four miles. Between the titree and the water there is a narrow strip of tussocky land, intersected by countless mud channels, forming hundreds of islets, and in these islets the swans have built their nests.

The swans had become so used to the presence of the trooper that we were enabled to approach to within quite a short distance before they left their nests, and it was a quaint sight to see their long necks and heads peering at us over the high grass. On our near approach they took to the water, and swam leisurely about, some 50 yards distant, whilst we inspected their nests. On one islet, not more than 60 yards in circumference, we saw over 20 nests. Most of them contained from five to seven (the swans evidently believe in odd numbers), and in one we counted nine eggs. A few cygnets were seen swimming with the old birds, for some are already hatched; but the trooper told us that, although he has seen several nests where they had been hatched, he has not seen them in the nest. He thinks they must take to the water immediately they break the shell. Although

we only stayed a few minutes, as we did not wish to disturb the birds more than we could help, we all thought it well worth the trouble of our long scramble through the scrub, and although some of the ladies of our party on more than one occasion mistook unfathomable mud for dry land, they would not have missed the sight for pounds.

It was a beautiful sunny day, and to see thousands of graceful swans swimming about the blue water of the Lagoon, numbers of them within a stone throw of where we stood; and further out, countless numbers of duck and other water fowl, with here and there the white plumage of a pelican, showing out clearly amongst his darker brethren, was a sight not easily to be forgotten.

This is the first season that the swans have had anything like adequate protection from marauding egg stealers, and, judging by what we saw of the hatchery, there will be thousands upon thousands of young birds this season. Trooper Sproule takes a keen interest in his duties, and is as proud of his "chickens" as he calls them, as any prize poultry keeper in the land. The thanks of East Coast residents and sportsmen throughout the island are due to the Commissioner of Police for sending a trooper immediately his attention was drawn to the subject, and there is not the slightest doubt that when the swan season opens next year there will be more swans than ever on the Moulting Lagoon.—"The Mercury," Hobart, 10/9/1921.

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Correspondence

To the Editors of "The Emu."

Sirs,—Some twenty years ago I contributed a paper on the plumage of Magpies (Roy. Soc. Vic. xiv., 1901), and it is now quite interesting to find Mr. C. F. Cole, in *The Emu*, xxi., pt. 1, page 51, confirming the observations.

The position of Magpies, as I now see it, is:—

Gymnorhina tibicen, Latham, The Australian Magpie.

A. B. Dimorphics.

A. Black-backed Magpie.

B. White-backed Magpie.

aⁱ Southern Race.

aⁱⁱ Northern Race.

aⁱⁱⁱ Western Race.

bⁱ Tasmanian Race.

bⁱⁱ South-eastern Race.

bⁱⁱⁱ Western Race.

Yielding to the law of priority, I put Latham's name, though I should have preferred Gould's *hypoleuca* for the more developed bird.

The matter of races is still an open one.—Yours, etc.,

ROBERT HALL.

Tasmania, 26/7/21.

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