

The Gannets appear to breed all the year round. The Grey and the Red-legged Gannets make their nests in the shrubs. The White Gannet lays on the coral, just above high water mark. These birds feed their young for about four months before they fly; the youngsters seem to make no attempt to learn to fly for the first three months. It is heavy work for the mother birds to feed them, as the young birds are very voracious. The Gannets have difficulty also in bringing the food home, owing to the Frigate-Birds, which are continually on the watch and fly out to meet them, catching them by the tails with their beaks and shaking the Gannets until they disgorge food. They then let go, and swoop down to recover the disgorged food before it reaches the water.

The Frigate-Birds do not fish for themselves, but live wholly on food pirated from the Gannets. There are only six Frigate-Birds on the Island, and they mainly roost on the wireless aerial, which is a splendid point of vantage for them. I shot one of these Frigate-Birds, which was 6ft. 7in. from tip to tip of wings.

The small white Gulls on the Island I cannot classify, having never observed the species anywhere else about the Pacific islands which I have visited. This bird does not nest on Willis Island. The small birds similar to Snipe frequent the beaches, but are few in number and are not very strong fliers. They do not appear to breed on the Island.

The Land-Rails are evidently of the same species as the Land-Rail on the mainland. They do not fly, but are very fast runners. They are very fond of water and drink great quantities if it is given to them; but as there was no fresh water on the Island before it was inhabited, these Rails evidently secured moisture from the eggs of the Sooty Terns. This they do at the present time, even if supplied with water. They will eat almost anything. I brought three of these birds alive to Melbourne.

The Land-Rail has a dangerous enemy in the bird of the Snipe variety. This bird can almost kill a Rail with a single peck, but will not attack unless it corners a Rail where it can be easily tackled. The Rails are continually fighting amongst themselves. The method of killing is by pecking in a vital spot under the wing. There are only about thirty Rails on the Island. These birds start breeding in April and each pair has only one brood.

Eggs on the Island in the breeding season are so abundant that we found it necessary to lay duck boards between the quarters and the station.

---

**The White-backed Swallow.**—In an article by Mr. W. B. Alexander in last October's issue of *The Emu*, it is stated that no record of the White-backed Swallow (*Cheramæca leucosternum*) has been made east of the main dividing range. I have seen these birds on a number of occasions, in this district (the Upper Hunter Valley) and on one occasion, during the spring of 1924, a pair nested in a creek bank not far from my home.—M. THOMPSON, Anticne, N.S.W.