

for a few seconds on the rock to survey the position. I know of few other birds which have contours as pleasing as that of the Silver Gull (*Larus novæ-hollandiæ*) of Australia, Tasmania, New Caledonia and New Zealand.—R. T. LITTLEJOHNS, Melbourne.

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**Australia's Tailor Bird.**—Though it is not generally known, in the Golden-headed Fantail-Warbler or Corn Bird (*Cisticola exilis*) of Australia, Tasmania, and the islands to India and Formosa, we have a bird which sometimes adopts methods of nest-building closely similar to those of the Tailor Bird of India, a related species. One nest which I found, instead of being securely woven in the centre of a tussock, after the style of most other nests of the species, was placed within two inches of the ground, and was without the protection of any tussock whatsoever. Instead, the nest was carefully camouflaged with the broad leaves of a common weed, whose seed stalks formed the main support of the nest. Several leaves had been drawn round the nest and fastened on with cobweb till almost the whole of the downy exterior of the nest was hidden from view. A casual spider's cocoon and a few dead leaves and stalks completed the deception. — T. V. GIVENS, R.A.O.U.

## Stray Feathers

**Spine-tailed Swifts Perching in Victoria.**—A specimen of the Spine-tailed Swift (*Hirundapus spinicaudus*) was found dead beneath the telephone wire at 7 a.m. on the morning of the 10th February, 1925. Almost underneath the wire were several scarlet flowering gums, both *Eucalyptus calophylla* and *E. ficifolia*. They were just covered with blossom, and hundreds of moths were attracted to them by the quantity of honey. Apparently, the Swift struck the wire when hawking for his breakfast. It was the first I had seen at close quarters, though we were then used to seeing them in great numbers, especially before a storm. We used to marvel at the late hour they were flying round, even after the stars were out. Perhaps they had a roosting place in the tall timbers near the house. In February, 1898, was the only time we saw a Swift perch. That year, for days, one could see no distance for the smoke of bush fires. There was more standing dead timber then, and the Swifts, doubtless confused by the smoke, perched or propped themselves on the trunk of the trees. We have noted that Swifts are much rarer than they were formerly, though this year they have been unusually numerous.—C. C. CURRIE, R.A.O.U., Lardner, Gippsland (1928).

**Bird Protection in New Zealand.**—It is the policy of the Authorities in New Zealand to issue no permits to collectors resident outside the Dominion. Further, no permits are granted to take birds on sanctuaries, except for very special purposes, such as transferring a species to another sanctuary or locality. When any skins are granted to outsiders, it is the policy of the controlling department to collect these themselves for the applicant. This policy has been adopted as most fitting after past experience. Stewart Island is nearly all sanctuary. Fines in New Zealand are very heavy for shooting rare native birds.—E. V. SANDERSON, Hon. Secretary, N.Z. Native Bird Protection Society.

**Deception Among Birds.** — For the information of your correspondent, Mr. Otho Webb, R.A.O.U., not once only but many times have I been amused by the efforts of a panting oarsman to catch the black duck, which was "moulting, and cannot fly," but which, after floundering along for a few hundred yards just out of reach, rose easily aloft and winged its way back (but never directly, be it noted, always by a round-about way) to its nest. Surely there cannot be any possible doubt of this kind of deception among birds being purposive and protective in object.—J. MURRAY ANDERSON.

**Snowy Albatross in Tasmania.**—A specimen of the Snowy Albatross (*Diomedea chionoptera*) was forwarded to the Tasmanian Museum on March 27th, 1928. The bird was found dead at Eaglehawk Neck by Miss J. A. Fletcher, R.A.O.U.

## News and Notes

**Editor of the Emu.**—On account of ill-health, Mr. A. H. Chisholm, C.F.A.O.U., tendered his resignation as Hon. Editor. In accepting this with sincere regret, the Council expressed appreciation of the work done by Mr. Chisholm, and hoped that his approaching visit to Queensland will assist in the complete restoration of his health.

**Foundation of an Advisory Council for Fauna and Flora.**—Those interested in the preservation of the unique fauna and flora of Australia will be pleased to know that, after a long period of agitation, the Chief Secretary, Hon. G. M. Prendergast, M.L.A., has constituted the Victorian Advisory Council for Fauna and Flora. This consists of two representatives from each of the following seven societies:—The Royal Australasian Ornithologists' Union, The Bird Observers' Club of Victoria, The Field Naturalists' Club of Victoria, The Royal Zoological and Acclimatisation Society of Victoria, The Gun Clubs' Association, The Sporting Dogs' Club, and The Game Protection Society of Victoria. Dr. J. A. Leach was elected Chairman and Mr. N. Arnold, Hon. Secretary.