

was seen Xmas, 1924, by Mr. L. Maitland, taking dust baths on the road; it was recorded again 31st March, 1926.

*Passer domesticus*. House Sparrow.—(1) On Feb. 25th, 1926, a hen House Sparrow with a bright salmon pink collar was seen by Mr. McCaskill; (3) some partial and perfect albino specimens were observed at Taranaki; (4) a Sparrow with white head and remarkably long curved bill was observed; (a) a yellow Sparrow nested in the writer's grounds for two years, then it disappeared; when under field glasses it was observed to be a true sparrow in build with yellowish dust colouring; with the naked eye it appeared to be a canary, and was taken for one at first. No offspring noticed, though the bird mated with an ordinary Sparrow and built in a fir tree; the nest was too high to get at; in Nelson City the writer saw another bird with a yellow head; query whether these freaks were crosses between a Canary and a Sparrow; the writer has occasionally seen white Sparrows in Great Britain, but never this yellow shade, which undoubtedly was not due to albinism; (b) a Sparrow with many white feathers in its plumage may be seen every day in the street in the High Street of Blenheim; (f) two white Sparrows were seen for two years at Riverton.

*Sturnus vulgaris*. Starling.—(4) A black and white Starling was seen; (3) partial and perfect albinism in Starlings were fairly common in Taranaki; there are beautiful specimens in privately owned cases; (6) a white bird flew round with Starlings some years ago on Mr. Robertson's place near Kawhia; (11) white Starlings were seen on farm for two months at North Auckland.

## Camera Craft

**Nest of the White-throated Nightjar.**—Apparently the White-throated Nightjar (*Eurostopodus mystacalis*), which ranges throughout the heavily timbered parts of eastern Australia, is a rare bird in Victoria, but is more numerous farther north, particularly in Queensland. Some of the references to this species which have appeared in *The Emu* were evidently due to mistaken identity, the bird observed having been the Spotted Nightjar (*E. guttatus*), which inhabits inland areas with a lighter rainfall than the heavily-timbered localities. Two instances of White-throated Nightjars having been shot some years ago were brought to my notice, one near Mount Evelyn and the other near Whittlesea. The skin of the former was sent to Mr. Gregory Mathews, but the other was thrown away. In eastern Gippsland on 20th January, 1895, Mr. Charles French, the then Victorian Government entomologist, and father of the present occupant of that office, flushed a White-throated Nightjar from the ground, where it had been sitting on an egg. Doubtless several eggs have since been seen by workers in the bush, but I am not aware of any authentic record of another egg being found until 16th January, 1927, when Charles Taylor, when rabbit shooting near Killara, flushed a White-throated Nightjar from an

egg on the ground. Three weeks later in the same locality I was present with Messrs. F. E. Howe, F. Stanley, and others, when a Nightjar flew up almost vertically in front of F. Stanley, and sailed away at a height of about 30 feet. The bird had risen directly from an egg, which is shown in position in the accompanying photograph. The egg of the White-throated Nightjar is easily distinguished from that of the Spotted Nightjar, the former being coloured yellowish buff and the latter pale green, and the egg of the former is usually considerably larger than that of the latter. The egg which appears in the photograph measured in millimetres 40 x 29.6, and a typical egg of the Spotted Nightjar from County Weeah, in Victoria, measures 34.4 x 25.8.—J. A. Ross, Sometime President R.A.O.U., Malvern.

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**The Nest of the Painted Quail.**—Although the Painted Quail (*Turnix varia*) is a fairly common bird in suitable localities in the neighbourhood of Melbourne, it is remarkable how seldom a nest of this species is found. In company with Messrs. F. E. Howe and F. Stanley, I found the nest here illustrated on 4th, November 1928. The bird drew my attention to the nest by whirring up almost at my feet. These Quail favour lightly timbered country, where there is a plentiful growth of short, rough scrub and coarse grass between the trees. It is a frequent occurrence to flush one of these birds from the ground, and during October, November and December their rapidly repeated cooing notes, which are like those of a Common Bronzewing (*Phaps chalcoptera*) may frequently be heard. Usually it is not an easy matter to shoot a Painted Quail, for it will swerve in its swift flight so as to place a sapling between it and the person who has disturbed it.—J. A. Ross, R.A.O.U., Malvern.

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**Photographs of Grey Thrush.**—The original photograph of Plate 38, showing the Grey Thrush on its nest near Mr. Wolstenholme's front door, was taken by Mr. A. H. Chisholm, C.F.A.O.U., and that of Plate 39, showing the Grey Thrush taking cheese from Mr. Wolstenholme's hand, was taken by Mr. H. C. Barry, R.A.O.U.

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**The Grey Fantail** (*Rhipidura flabellifera*) is quite a familiar bird in the gullies of Victoria, where it may be found during the whole year. It is also found in small numbers in the dry Mallee portion of the State, being

generally confined to the tea-tree belts which border the saltbush plains. It is a very confiding bird, and during autumn and winter may be seen flitting about in suburban gardens. Usually it is a late breeder, as nests are mostly found during November and December. Its wonderfully-constructed nest is a model of bird architecture, being neatly made of fine threads of bark and covered with cobwebs. This bird will readily desert its nest, particularly if watched during building operations.—D. DICKISON, Hon. Secretary, R.A.O.U.

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The Yellow-winged Honeyeater (*Meliornis novæ-hollandiæ*) is one of the earliest nesters in this district, and nests of this species can be found at any time from July to February. The birds seem to prefer to build the nests in the furze bushes, and in any patch of furze can be found a number of nests. The nest is built of grass and spider webs, and is usually located in the fork of a clump of furze a few feet from the ground.—CLARENCE L. LANG, R.A.O.U., Ararat, Vic.

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The Fuscous Honeyeater (*Meliphaga fusca*) is one of the commonest Honeyeaters of the Ararat district, and one of the few Honeyeaters that remain with us all the year. The nests are easily found, and usually several can be located in a position suitable for photographing. The bird in the accompanying photograph built its nest about four feet from the ground, in a bunch of leaves of a eucalypt, situated at the side of a main road. The nests are generally built of sheep's wool, grass and spider webs, and the birds usually select the open timber for nesting.—CLARENCE L. LANG, R.A.O.U., Ararat, Vic.

### Stray Feathers

The Brush Turkey.—Though they take no interest in their progeny once they are hatched, it has always been accepted that Brush Turkeys (*Alectura lathamii*) remain about their nesting mounds during the period of incubation. Partly, no doubt, this is with a view to keeping off such marauders as the monitor lizard, but also, we are told, with a view to regulating the temperature of the mound, by piling on extra material should the heat unduly fall, or by scratching off some of the top layer should it rise above a certain point.

Something of this sort must, of course, be necessary to meet the changes caused by an unusual spell of unbroken sunshine or a long run of wet days.