

Notes and Descriptions of Some Rare Eggs of Australian Birds

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In *The Emu*, Vol. XXVIII., 1929, p. 299, Mr. G. M. Mathews published a list of "Unknown Eggs of Australian Birds." Comparing this list with the "H. L. White Oölogical Collection" in the National Museum, it has been found that the eggs of the following four species have already been described and are represented in that collection.

Priocella antarctica Steph. Silver-grey Petrel. *Thalassoica antarctica* Gmel. Antarctic Petrel.—The eggs of both species were exhibited by A. J. North at a meeting of the Linnean Society, N.S.W., and described in its Proceedings, XXXVIII., 1913, p. 255. They are represented in the "H. L. White Collection" by one and two eggs respectively.

Psephotus chrysopterygius Gld. Golden-winged Parrot. Both the nest and eggs of this Parrot were described by the late H. L. White in *The Emu*, Vol. XXII., 1922, p. 98.* The type and two other clutches are in the collection.

Cyanoramphus novæ-zeelandiæ Sparrm. Red-fronted Parrot.—Presumably the intention here is to refer to the closely allied species of this Parrot from Norfolk Island, the eggs of which were described by A. F. Basset Hull (Proc. Linn. Soc., N.S.W., XXXIV., 1909, p. 676) under the name given to the bird by Gray—*C. cooki*. The single egg referred to in the same paper, taken at Mount Pitt on February 28, 1909, is in the "H. L. White Collection."

The opportunity is here taken to describe the egg of *Lamprococyx russatus* Gld. (Rufous-breasted Bronze-Cuckoo) and the nest and eggs of *Gerygone insularis* Ramsay (Lord Howe Island Fly-eater).

Lamprococyx russatus Gld. Rufous-breasted Bronze-Cuckoo.—Egg: Pointed elongate-oval in shape; texture fine; surface glossy; the colour is not uniform, varying between light buffy olive and buffy olive and is minutely freckled with very dark brown. The latter colour is more pronounced at either end, and is in the form of a narrow band round the pointed end. Dimensions, 20 x 12.5 mm. Taken with two eggs of *Gerygone magnirostris* Gld. by H. G. Barnard at Cardwell, N. Queensland, October 17, 1925.

*A letter has just been received from Mr. Mathews stating that he has noted this description.—Ed.

Writing to Mr. White regarding this clutch H. G. Barnard states (4/12/25) :—"In view of the fact that the only Bronze-Cuckoo I have seen here is *C. russatus*, and then having seen one of these birds clinging to the nest of *G. magnirostris* in which was a freshly deposited egg of a Cuckoo, and later obtaining a young bird being fed by a Gerygone, I consider there is not a shadow of a doubt that the egg already sent in the set of *G. magnirostris* belongs to this bird."

Gerygone insularis Ramsay. Lord Howe Island Fly-eater.—Eggs: Clutch three; slightly pointed ovals in shape; texture fine; surface almost without gloss; ground colour white, faintly tinged with pale pink and liberally freckled with reddish-brown, more particularly at the larger end where it forms a cap varying in size and density. Dimensions in millimetres.—A, 18 x 13; B, 17.5 x 13.5; C, 18 x 14.

Nest.—A compact, well made, domed structure closely attached and suspended from a twig. There is a lateral entrance hole near the top, and at the bottom a very rudimentary tail-like appendage measuring only 20 mm. The nest is composed of dry soft bark, fibre, leaves, a little grass and moss, and an amount of wool-like material, all bound together with spiders' web, and lined with feathers. It is very similar to the nests of some of the genus *Acanthiza* of the mainland, such as *Acanthiza lineata*, the only difference in construction being the short tail-like appendage. Measurements (approx.).—Length, 130 mm. Diameter, 7 mm.

Nest and eggs collected by J. B. Waterhouse, Lord Howe Island, September 23, 1913, and both were exhibited by A. F. Basset Hull (Proc. Linn. Soc., N.S.W., XXXVIII., 1913, p. 657).

Thornbill's Double Nest. — The Yellow-tailed Thornbill (*Acanthiza chrysorrhoa*) evidently must have the double nest no matter what the position. During September, 1928, a pair of these Thornbills took possession of the nest of a Diamond Firetail (*Zonæginthus guttatus*) from which the young had already flown. They built a complete nest inside it and then balanced a shallow little cup outside on the grass of the Finch's nest. I have noticed that the two species often build in close proximity to each other; in fact, on two occasions the nests have been side by side.—E. L. HYEM, R.A.O.U., Mernot, Barrington, N.S.W.