

four days four pictures were obtained by setting up the camera and running a thread some distance to the cliff-edge and dropping it over. It was then necessary to make an ostentatious departure over the sand-hills in the opposite direction, and to watch for hours from a great distance until the birds returned. They always returned together. Then after sliding backwards for a hundred yards I made a detour of half a mile, and reached the end of my thread by climbing along the foot of the cliff. Then I made the exposure without having the slightest idea as to whether or not the birds were still at the nest or were in a satisfactory position. On two of the four occasions when pictures were obtained one bird was sheltering the eggs from the sun while the other bird stood close by. On the other occasions when the bird was sitting on the eggs the second bird, after accompanying the sitting one to the nest, had evidently left the locality.

I would be interested to hear from other observers, and from photographers especially, whether they have found the Hooded species so wary, or whether my experience was an isolated one caused, perhaps, by the freshness of the eggs.

Chestnut-eared Finches Near Melbourne.—Within the last twelve months a number of Chestnut-eared Finches (*Tæniopygia castanotis*), apparently escapees from private aviaries, have established themselves in the vicinity of Gardiner's Creek, on the outskirts of the eastern suburbs of Melbourne. They congregate in small parties of from four to eight birds, and usually prefer the open field to the tea-tree scrub along the creek. One cold day last August I noticed a pair take shelter in an old nest in a furze bush, and on being disturbed they returned to the nest almost immediately. Another nest was found during February this year with the female sitting on five heavily-incubated eggs. Five young ones were hatched out a few days later, and after remaining in the nest for nearly a fortnight they began to make short flights into the neighbouring bushes, but would always return to the nest at night to roost. The nest was built of dry grass, and placed in the centre of a furze bush, where it was extraordinarily well concealed, and it was only through seeing the female fly into the bush that the nest was discovered. These birds thrive remarkably well in captivity. Aviculturists in Europe have found them extremely hardy, especially in withstanding the cold winters of those countries. The male has a brighter plumage than the female, but both birds possess a bright orange-red bill.—D. DICKISON, R.A.O.U., Melbourne, Vic.