

and high-pitched, and its song is very like that of *S. malachurus*, but much weaker, and is only to be heard in very calm weather. The bird is extremely timorous, and after being once disturbed it takes refuge in the porcupine, and is then very difficult to locate again, but if quietness is maintained for a sufficient length of time, it becomes curious, and gently mounts to the top of the tussock to survey the intruder. In boisterous weather it was rarely seen, feeding low down in the porcupine. It is probably entirely insectivorous, and in its range it is, so far as is known, confined to portions of Victoria and South Australia. When pursuing it I have often remarked the marvellous rapidity with which it threads its way through the porcupine tussocks, and running and flying across intervening spaces, is soon out of range. It is a stationary species and is local in its habits, and in all probability double-brooded, nesting from September to December or January. For further field notes see *The Emu*, Vol. XII, p. 36, and Vol. XIV, pp. 71-84.

**The Pallid Cuckoo in Tasmania.**—One of the main features of bird life in the Devonport district this season is the prevalence of Pallid Cuckoos (*Cuculus pallidus*). They appear to be getting more numerous each year, until this summer they must outnumber the Fantailed (*Cacomantis flabelliformis*) by at least five to one; and as to the Bronze-Cuckoos, they completely disappeared after arriving in October, having probably made their way farther inland. The first bird-call heard in the morning just now is that of the Pallid Cuckoo—at four o'clock—and his is also the final note of evening, just as darkness is falling. After arrival in the spring, the "running up the scale" goes on practically all day, but from midsummer onwards the scream-note is greatly in evidence, although the "scale" is still occasionally heard, much subdued in comparison with that of a couple of months ago. As this species has a strong preference for open nests in which to deposit its egg, it is possible that the great increase in the number of Goldfinches\* (*Carduelis carduelis*), which are quite as plentiful here as House-Sparrows, is responsible for the plenitude of Pallid Cuckoos. Many years ago its egg was taken from the nest of the introduced Greenfinch and Blackbird (Campbell, *Nests and Eggs*, p. 565), and twenty-five years ago G. E. Shepherd recorded in *The Emu* (Vol. VI, p. 129) that he had collected an egg of the Pallid Cuckoo from the nest of a Goldfinch.—H. STUART DOVE, R.A.O.U., West Devonport, Tas., 12/1/33.

\*But Goldfinches (seed-eaters) are not exceptionally successful foster-parents for Cuckoos.—Ed.