

**Upper Chamber of Thornbill Nests.**—The top chamber of the nest of the Yellow-tailed Thornbill (*Acanthiza chrysorrhoa*) has provided much speculation amongst ornithologists as to its utility, but so far no one has brought forward conclusive evidence as to its purpose. The generally-accepted theory is that it is built by the Thornbills either to deceive Cuckoos when they are depositing their eggs in the nest, or for the male bird to rest in at nights when the female is hatching the eggs. After a rather extensive experience with these birds I am extremely doubtful whether it is possible to accept either theory as a solution of the problem. Of the many nests I have examined during the breeding season I have only once found a Cuckoo's egg in the upper chamber and yet in some years nearly every Thornbill's nest will be found to contain an egg of one of the Bronze-Cuckoos, but all these eggs are deposited in the egg chamber. As a means of deceiving Cuckoos the top chamber utterly fails its purpose. In order to ascertain whether the male bird uses the top story to "camp" in at night I have frequently visited nests after dark, and in every case, although I have flushed the female off the eggs, I have been unable to disturb the male either from the nest or the bush in which the nest is placed. Further observations should be made by students who are fortunate in having these birds breeding near their homes.—D. J. DICKISON, R.A.O.U., Melbourne, Vic., 14/6/33.