

1913 list. That author has emphasized the close relationship of the birds of Australia to those of neighbouring and even more remote lands, by classifying over 70 of the "Check-list" species as sub-species of extra-limital species (some with different names). Over 80 of the 751 species of the "Check-list" are regarded as worthy of sub-specific rank only by Mr. Matthews. Twenty-four of the "Check-list" specific names were preoccupied, while for 80 of them a prior name had been given. Ten names are fixed by the B.O.U. list, and 33 names require further consideration or more evidence as to validity as Australian species.

462 species names, 1913 list and "Check-list."

81 names valid; sub-species (G. M. M.).

61 names valid; sub-species of extra-limital species.

604 names common to "Check-list" and 1913 list.

10 names fixed by B.O.U. list.

24 preoccupied.

80 names for which there was a prior name.

33 names for further evidence.

751, total.

Camera Craft Notes.

Camera versus Gun.—Reviewing "Life-Histories of African Game Animals," by Theodore Roosevelt and Edmund Heller, *The Times Literary Supplement* (issue 14th May, 1915) says, *inter alia* :—"The numbers of those who abandon the rifle for the camera is steadily on the increase; it is becoming recognized that the work of the naturalist who can bring the living animals before the eyes of others is now of higher value to the progress of the science of natural history than the work of the collector of specimens. Each is, of course, complementary to the other, but the time has now come when the hunter must give way to the observer."

Shrike-Thrush Tamed.—Three years ago a pair of Whistling Shrike-Thrushes (*Colluricincla selbii*) began to come about the back garden of our residence. To encourage them, various scraps were placed in prominent positions, but the birds' preference for fat was soon noticed. They always took the larger pieces to a crack in the ridge of the wood-shed. This crack held the meat secure, and the birds were able to tug off pieces. Long-tailed Wren-Warblers (*Malurus longicaudus*) and Grey Butcher-Birds (*Cracticus cinereus*), discovering that the Shrike-Thrushes often left a reserve store in the "cupboard," paid surprise visits to it. During my sister's long illness, when she spent much time on the verandah, these Shrike-Thrushes became very tame, sitting on her head, running



Whistling Shrike-Thrush at Window.

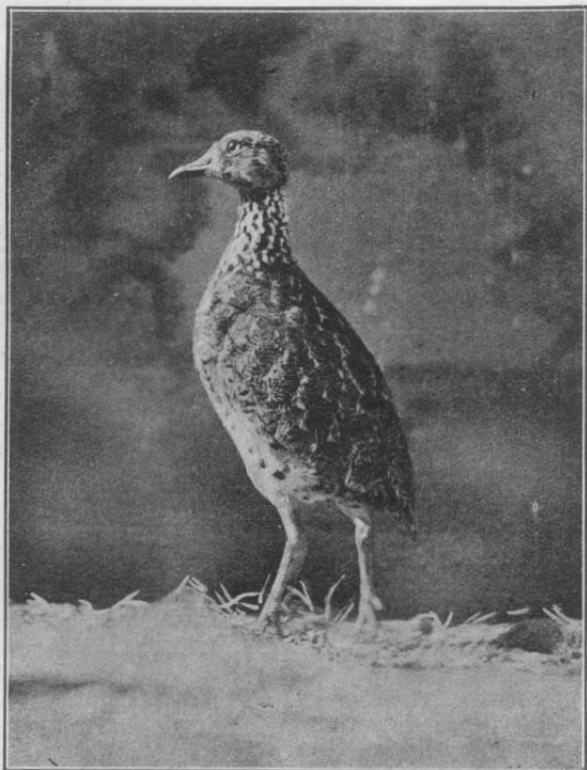
FROM A PHOTO, BY (MISS) J. A. FLETCHER.

along her arm, and flying down to take butter from her plate. The female is the tamer of the two birds, and will take food from the hand. Food is generally placed on the window-sill, and it is a pretty sight to see a Thrush perched there eating while we are at the table.—(MISS) J. A. FLETCHER. Springfield (Tas.), 18/8/15.

Plain-Wanderer in Captivity.—The Plain-Wanderer (*Pedionomus torquatus*) is now very rare, and is seldom seen in the field by the ornithologist. A friend of mine, who spends almost every spare hour in the field with his dogs, brought me in a female bird, which he had caught while it was being set by a dog. The bird made no attempt to fly, and allowed my friend to pick it up from the ground. Early next morning I arranged to photograph the Plain-Wanderer, and I placed it in a box which had a wire-netting front. Having made an opening in the side of the box for the camera lens to fit, I started to get the focus, for the bird would not stand quiet a second; it insisted on running, with head erect, round and round the box. After waiting for a while, I

secured six snapshots. It is most interesting to note that, in each picture, the bird is standing on its toes. Of course, it would be impossible to secure a photograph of this bird in a standing position in the field.

Early in August this year fresh footprints of the Plain-Wanderer were seen. They had been made in crossing a marshy swamp



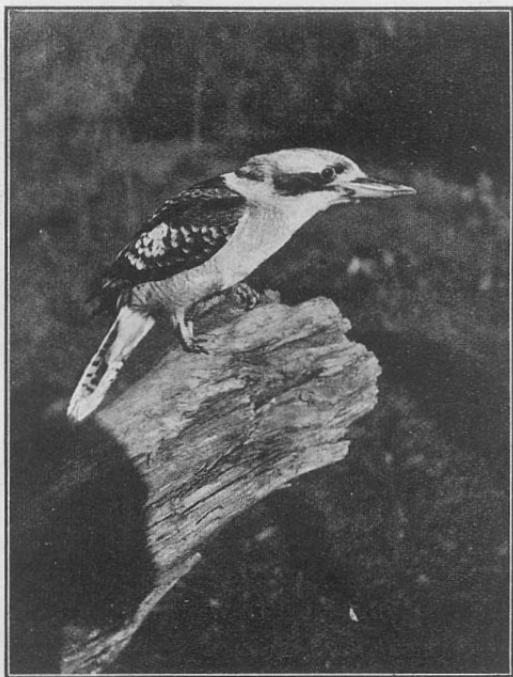
Plain-Wanderer.

FROM A PHOTO. BY H. A. PURNELL.

in the midst of country suitable as a haunt of the birds. Plain-Wanderers were at one time very plentiful around the Geelong district, but, on account of extensive cultivation, their natural feeding-grounds are fast disappearing. Last summer a dead bird (fresh) was found early one morning beside the pavilion of the football reserve, which is at the rear of the Botanical Gardens. It appeared to me that the bird had flown against the high wall during the night, and so met its death. The late K. H. Bennett

said that the Plain-Wanderer was nocturnal in its habits. This may be a fact, for I noticed that while I kept a bird in captivity it never seemed to sleep or rest. Whenever I looked into its enclosure at any time in the night the bird was always wide awake and running round. Mr. Gregory M. Mathews, who was staying with me at the time, was very interested in these habits.—H. A. PURNELL. Geelong (Vic.), 7/9/15.

Trustful Subjects.—It is remarkable how quickly most birds become accustomed to anything unusual in their surroundings. Particularly is this noticeable when one wishes to obtain photographs. If sufficient time is available, almost any bird will eventually lose its fear of camera and operators.



Great Brown Kingfisher.

FROM A PHOTO. BY R. T. LITTLEJOHNS.

Unusual trustfulness is shown by four Great Brown Kingfishers (*Dacelo gigas*), which depend largely for their food supply on the hospitality of some of the residents of Upper Ferntree Gully, Victoria. Very soon after our arrival at a week-end house there, the birds put in an appearance on the doorstep and accepted food

from our hands. It was easy to obtain photographs. A bird was enticed with pieces of raw meat to a stump near the back door, and the presence of the camera, at a distance of two feet, was not noticed so long as the meat supply lasted.

In November, 1914, we spent the whole of one day photographing a pair of Buff-tailed Tit-Warblers (*Acanthiza reguloides*). For three hours or more the birds could not be induced to face the camera, and the chance of obtaining a photograph seemed remote.



Buff-tailed Tit-Warbler.

FROM A PHOTO. BY S. A. LAWRENCE.

However, we persevered, and soon had the satisfaction of being able to expose a few plates. Once having braved the lens and met with no harm, both birds became much more trusting, and, before we left had become so tame as to feed their young on our hands. We obtained pictures of them in this position. We have also taken similar photographs of a female Mistletoe-Bird (*Dicaeum hirundinaceum*), but in that case more patience was required.—R. T. LITTLEJOHNS and S. A. LAWRENCE. Melbourne, 20/8/15.



Australian Ground-Thrush.

Among the Tea-tree.—One of my favourite haunts in early bird-observing days was the belt of tea-tree (*Leptospermum laevigatum*) along the coast of Port Phillip Bay, between Sandringham and Mordialloc. Fifteen years ago the scrub was much denser than it is now in some places, especially Black Rock, and many species of birds nested freely in the shady groves. Whenever I rambled through the tea-tree I saw numbers of Australian Ground-Thrushes (*Oreocincla lunulata*), and in early spring found many of their beautiful nests. The stream of settlement has flowed through the coastal districts, and in the last few years Ground-Thrushes have become comparatively rare. I have not found a nest along the coast for several seasons, and have seen the birds only on a few occasions. When week-enders come, birds which love quiet, secluded haunts depart.

I write of the Ground-Thrushes in the coastal tea-tree because they were the first birds that I stalked with a camera. I found it fairly easy, by stepping softly on the leaf mould, to approach close to a Thrush, but the light was not strong enough in the groves to permit of a quick exposure. However, one morning, aided by strategy, patience, and two friends, I succeeded in getting a good photograph. A Thrush was observed feeding in a little glade. Camera in hand, I walked slowly towards the bird, while my companions did the same from different points—we formed a triangle. When about 12 feet away I erected the camera, and then moved it forward a few inches at a time. The Thrush stopped hunting in the moss for insects, and looked round. It saw three motionless figures and the camera. When it turned its gaze on one or other of my friends I moved a step nearer, and so proceeded till I was only 6 feet from the bird. Then I focussed, and was able to give an exposure of nearly two seconds, during which the subject remained perfectly still. When I lifted the camera the Thrush ran daintily over the moss, and was soon lost among shadows.

Later in the season photographs of the young birds were obtained. Nests and eggs, of course, presented very little difficulty. The nests are usually composed externally of fresh, glistening, green moss, and are readily seen by eyes used to the twilight of the tea-tree groves. At Black Rock I have seen large areas of moss-covered ground which have been "ploughed" by Thrushes' beaks. In quest of food they turn over the moss or tear it up. It seems natural that they should use such material for nest-building.—CHARLES BARRETT. Melbourne, 9/8/15.

Roll of Honour.—The Council of the R.A.O.U. proposes to publish in the next issue of *The Emu* the names of those members who are on active service. Would members kindly forward any name known to them to the hon. secretary, Zoological Gardens, Melbourne?