

we only stayed a few minutes, as we did not wish to disturb the birds more than we could help, we all thought it well worth the trouble of our long scramble through the scrub, and although some of the ladies of our party on more than one occasion mistook unfathomable mud for dry land, they would not have missed the sight for pounds.

It was a beautiful sunny day, and to see thousands of graceful swans swimming about the blue water of the Lagoon, numbers of them within a stone throw of where we stood; and further out, countless numbers of duck and other water fowl, with here and there the white plumage of a pelican, showing out clearly amongst his darker brethren, was a sight not easily to be forgotten.

This is the first season that the swans have had anything like adequate protection from marauding egg stealers, and, judging by what we saw of the hatchery, there will be thousands upon thousands of young birds this season. Trooper Sproule takes a keen interest in his duties, and is as proud of his "chickens" as he calls them, as any prize poultry keeper in the land. The thanks of East Coast residents and sportsmen throughout the island are due to the Commissioner of Police for sending a trooper immediately his attention was drawn to the subject, and there is not the slightest doubt that when the swan season opens next year there will be more swans than ever on the Moulting Lagoon.—"The Mercury," Hobart, 10/9/1921.

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Correspondence

To the Editors of "The Emu."

Sirs,—Some twenty years ago I contributed a paper on the plumage of Magpies (Roy. Soc. Vic. xiv., 1901), and it is now quite interesting to find Mr. C. F. Cole, in *The Emu*, xxi., pt. 1, page 51, confirming the observations.

The position of Magpies, as I now see it, is:—

Gymnorhina tibicen, Latham, The Australian Magpie.

A. B. Dimorphics.

A. Black-backed Magpie.

B. White-backed Magpie.

aⁱ Southern Race.

aⁱⁱ Northern Race.

aⁱⁱⁱ Western Race.

bⁱ Tasmanian Race.

bⁱⁱ South-eastern Race.

bⁱⁱⁱ Western Race.

Yielding to the law of priority, I put Latham's name, though I should have preferred Gould's *hypoleuca* for the more developed bird.

The matter of races is still an open one.—Yours, etc.,

ROBERT HALL.

Tasmania, 26/7/21.

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