

Meliphaga lewinii. Lewin or Yellow-eared Honey-eater.—A common bird with a great range of notes; it was breeding at the time of our visit.

Meliphaga chrysops. Yellow-faced Honey-eater.—Often met with, but not nearly so common as the preceding species.

Meliphaga leucotis. White-eared Honey-eater.—Not a common bird.

Meliornis novæ-hollandiæ. White-bearded Honey-eater. A common bird.

Meliornis niger. White-cheeked Honey-eater.—Met with in many localities.

Myzantha garrula. Noisy Miner.—This bird of wide range was plentiful, and was also breeding at that time.

Anellobia chrysoptera. Brush Wattle-Bird.—Plentiful.

Tropidorhynchus corniculatus. Friar-Bird.—The strange calls of this bird were often heard.

Anthus australis. Australian Pipit.—This bird was breeding also.

Stagonopleura guttata. Spotted-sided Finch.—Seen in the more open grass country.

Ægitha temporalis. Red-browed Finch.—A common bird in many classes of country; they were nesting.

Oriolus sagittatus. Australian Oriole.—Reported by several members as well as seen by the writer; they were breeding.

Ptilonorhynchus violaceus. Satin Bower-Bird.—Many birds of both sexes were observed feeding in the early morning on the edge of the scrub.

Ailuroedus crassirostris. Cat-Bird.—Fairly numerous. The strange call of these birds breaking the stillness of the scrub often startles one. The writer observed quite a large party moving from one tree-top to another; they were high up, and in search of berries and fruit.

Sericulus chrysocephalus. Regent-Bird.—We often watched these lovely birds from the camp, in the early morning. The gorgeous male birds came to the edge of the scrub, then flew down into the clearing to feed upon the Ink-Weed (*Phytolacca octandra*) and wild raspberries; a sight once seen never forgotten.

Corvus sp. Crow.—Crows were seen, but which species we do not know.

Strepera graculina. Pied Bell-Magpie.—These birds were often seen and heard and were found breeding.

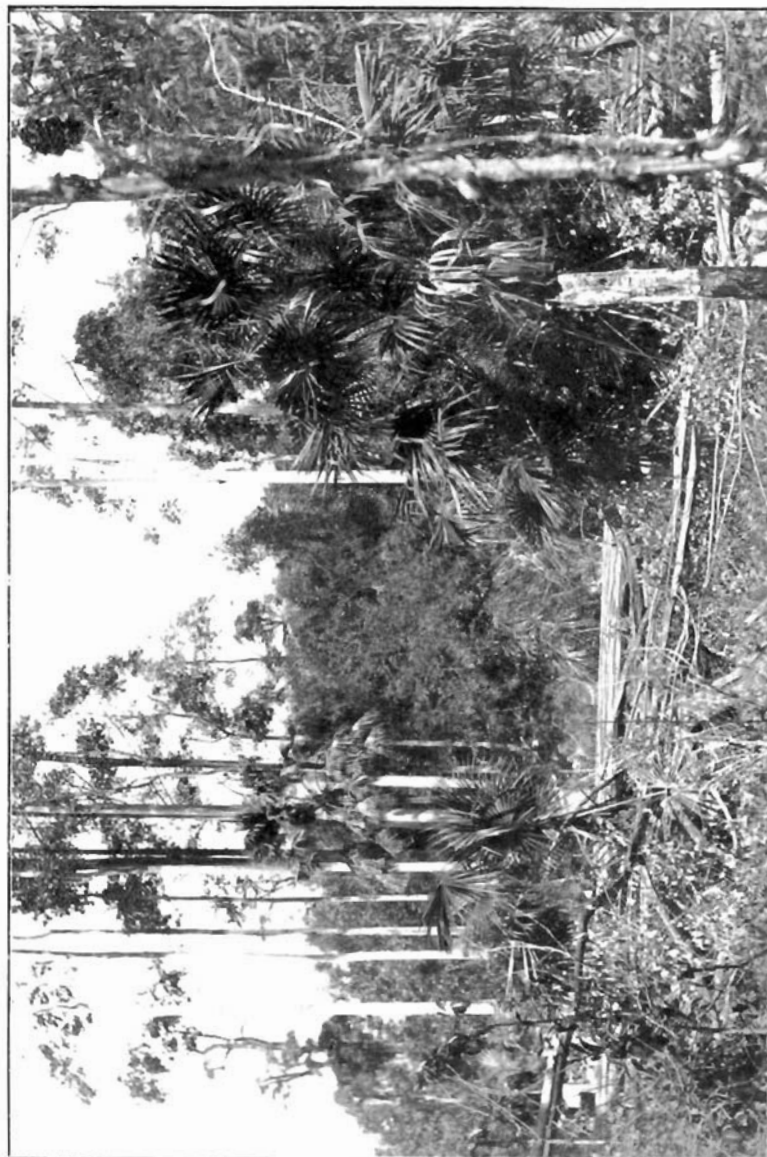
Cracticus torquatus. Collared Butcher-Bird.—These birds were also breeding.

Gymnorhina tibicen. Black-backed Magpie.—Observed in many localities, and were breeding.

Early Breeding of Ground or Low-nesting Birds

By H. GÖGERLEY, R.A.O.U., Lake Wallis, N.S.W.

For some years I have been making a study of Lyre-Birds, and it struck me as strange that they should breed in June and July, the middle of winter in fact. After a few years' observa-



The Edge of the Jungle ; Cabbage Palms (*Livistona australis*) in the foreground.

Photo. by Charles Barrett, C.M.Z.S.

tion, I find that the majority of low-nesting birds nest early in the year on the north coast of New South Wales, in the Cape Hawke district. I have come to the conclusion that natural instinct makes them breed in winter or early spring, so that the young will be on the wing before September, when the Gohanna (*Varanus varius*) makes its appearance after its long torpor.

I find that the young birds fall an easy prey to the big lizard if in the nest after the second week in September, the nest being so low that they have no chance. The fox is an introduced enemy, and cannot be guarded against in this way; but, fortunately, the fox is rare as yet in the northern brushes, so that the Lyre-Bird is fairly plentiful about this district.

To support my theory, I will give the experiences of a pair of Coachwhip Birds (*Psophodes olivaceus*). This year, 1920, while clearing some forest land, on the edge of the brush, I discovered a nest in a tangle of wild vines, 18 inches from the ground, with two nestlings about two weeks old. This was on 20th July. Before seeing the nest, I had cut away a small thick patch of saplings which screened the nest. I intended to put some bushes over nest to guard it, but forgot to do so.

Coming back after lunch, I was just in time to see a Jackass (*Dacelo gigas*) fly away with the second of the young birds. Blaming myself for not covering the nest, I wondered if the birds would build again or still use the old nest.

About a week later I saw the same birds building in a small thorn tree close to my stockyard. It was three weeks before the nest was finished and the eggs laid, and after 21 days' incubation one egg was hatched. I took the other egg, it being infertile. When the nestling was a few days old, about 20th September, a Gohanna took it. The Gohannas were just then showing out. This shows that the young birds are destroyed if the nesting is late. This pair of Coachwhips had a feeding range in a belt of brush left for a breakwind.

Another pair of birds ranged next, and they were fortunate in rearing their young, the young birds being fully fledged (with the exception of the white throat, which I think they do not get until the first moult) by the end of August. If any of the young birds or parents came on to the other range, they were driven off by male bird, when he would utter his whip call very fiercely.

All the young birds that I have seen since are plain brown without a white throat. I think they get this at the first moult.

This is a list of birds that I found nesting early:—Lyre-Bird (*Menura nova-hollandiae*); Coachwhip Bird (*Psophodes olivaceus*); Spotted Ground-Bird (*Cinclosoma punctatum*); Little Tit (*Acanthiza nana*), young on wing in August; Scrub Wren (*Sericornis magnirostris*); Field Wren (*Calamanthus campestris*); Spine-tailed Log-runner (*Orthonyx temminckii*).