

To conclude, changes are rapidly going on in many districts, altering the whole face of the country, and it is only by closely watching, and where possible, mitigating the effect of influences detrimental to native birds, that we can expect to help them. The question is a large one, and to a great extent beyond our control at the present time, but by interesting station owners and other property owners, much may be done.

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**The White-Eyed Duck.**—There appears to be some confusion about the colour of the eyes of the White-eyed Duck (*Nyroca australis*). It is a well-known fact that the male has distinctive white eyes, but it is not so generally well-known that the female has black eyes. Gould in his "Birds of Australia" describes the female as only differing from the male in its plumage; Mathews does the same. Phillips, in a "Monograph of the Ducks," goes further, and shows the female with white irides in a plate.

The young of both sexes are born with black eyes and retain these till after the fledgling period. I do not know the exact age at which the transition to white takes place in the male, but the black persists in the female throughout life. The accompanying photograph, although of semi-tame birds, nevertheless shows the difference clearly.—H. PAYNE, R.A.O.U., Creswick.

**The Cicada Bird.**—One of the most interesting visitors to our State during the breeding season is the Cicada Bird (*Edolisisoma tenuirostre*). Usually several pairs may be seen in the Dandenong Ranges and about Bayswater during the latter part of October, all through November, and early December. Several nests of this comparatively rare bird were taken by Messrs. G. Shepherd and A. J. Campbell at Somerville many years ago, but there are no recent records of nests being found in Victoria, although there is no doubt whatever that the birds breed annually within 30 miles of Melbourne. A well-preserved and beautifully-built nest, taken at Somerville in 1896, and presented to the Union by the executors of the late A. J. Campbell, measures over all  $3\frac{1}{2}$  in. x  $1\frac{1}{2}$  in. in depth, and internally  $2\frac{1}{2}$  in. x  $\frac{3}{4}$  in. in depth. The structure was built into the fork of a leaning limb. It is composed of dry grass, bark, and spiders' webs, being lined within with a very soft layer of thin fibres and root-lets.

Last season the Cicada Birds made an unusually early appearance, and were observed by Mr. N. Richardson and myself as early as September 7.—N. J. FAVALORO, R.A.O.U., Melbourne.



Male.

White-eyed Ducks.

Female.

Photo by Harold Wheeler.