

been observed in South Australia in such numbers as previously. From January to September, the weather was mostly dry, with only here and there some rain, only one or two months being described as wet. The Starlings were evidently influenced by the weather conditions, and where they occurred in numbers, fruit in season was attacked; figs and grapes suffered most, but with the exception of Roseworthy district, where flocks of thousands were seen, the damage was not great. Despite the dry season experienced, when it would be natural for Starlings to eat fruit so as to get sufficient moisture, many districts reported that caterpillars, grubs and grasshoppers formed a great portion of their diet.

Queensland.—Cards to hand so far show that there are no Starlings in the following centres:—Bowen, Bernleigh, Charleville, Cloncurry, Cooran, Eumundi, Longreach, Maroochy, Mareeba, Rockhampton, Sandford, and Woodford. At Cardwell, a small flock was seen in February. Brisbane reports no damage. At Roma, there are a few Starlings, eating grapes. They only appear when the grapes are ripening. Stanthorpe—Very few birds January and February; fruit not attacked. Townsville—A few pairs seen during January, but none later; no damage done. Warwick—A few pairs seen in January at Goondiwindi and a small flock in February. Regarded as insectivorous, the Sparrows being reported worse than Starlings. The Starling evidently never will invade Queensland to the same extent that it has other States, as it appears to like the temperate and cold climates.

My suggestion is that we must keep our eyes open, and cast aside our prejudices. This is an economic question, not an æsthetic one, and is a matter for ornithologists rather than bird-lovers. The latter is too apt to cast aside all introduced birds as bad, but biological problems must be met biologically to be solved. We all know that the Starling is a dirty nester, that it takes possession of the nesting sites of many of our native birds, and that it eats fruit, seed, grain and insects. Here our problem begins, because we have the Starling with us for all time.

---

**Observations on the Currawong.**—I have heard, at various times, the Pied Currawong (*Strepera graculina*) described as a rogue, a villain, and a thief. Until recently my personal observations did not include anything which could convict him of nefarious practices, although when birds' eggs and young nestlings mysteriously disappeared he was nearly always under suspicion. The following two observations (both occurring in National Park, Sydney) shed some light upon his character.

Discovering the nest of a Rock-Warbler (*Origma rubricata*), I touched it, whereupon two young birds and an adult flew out. I caught and returned one young bird to the nest, but the other could not be found. Some three hours later, as I was clambering down the hillside about one hundred yards from the nest, a young Rock-Warbler flew past, and landed on the ground about fifty yards ahead. A Currawong also flew past, and before I realised its intentions had landed beside the young Rock-Warbler. The next thing I saw was the young bird dangling from the Currawong's bill. I rushed down a small gully and up the opposite bank, but by that time the Currawong, with its prey, had disappeared.

Whilst walking through the bush in National Park one recent Sunday morning, I heard an unusual noise—a noise which suggested that some boy was playing with a toy by twirling it through the air and causing it to give off short, sharp, staccato-like notes. I soon discovered that this noise was being made by a Flying Squirrel (*Petaurus breviceps*) as it dodged round and round the trunk of a large eucalypt, in order to escape from an attack which two Currawongs were making on it. By little jumps it ascended the tree, until it was amongst the branches. The Currawongs continued the attack, and the Squirrel retaliated by making flying leaps at them. At last the Currawongs apparently knocked it off a limb. The Squirrel fell straight for a few feet, and then its wonderful little “wings” caused it to begin a glide which increased as it neared the earth. The glide terminated as the Squirrel attempted to land on the base of another tree trunk. It fell, however, a short distance to earth. The Currawongs flew down and continued the attack, but the Squirrel started up the tree, and I witnessed the same proceedings as before take place—again the fall from forty feet high, then the glide, and another safe landing.

In the meantime, I had made some strategic moves, and when the Squirrel landed for the third time I managed to capture him. He was a little bundle of righteous fury and beauty, measuring about twelve inches from his nose to the tip of his tail. After being christened “Herbert” by some colleagues to whom he was introduced, he was photographed and given his liberty in a safer portion of the park. These incidents are evidence of the Currawong's tendencies.—G. R. GANNON, R.A.O.U., Sydney.

---

The present number is the first issue printed by Brown, Prior & Co. Pty. Ltd., which company is now printing the magazine.