

Anyway I need not have worried, as a party with a dog frightened one of the young ones into the water that evening, and when I went over to have a look, there it was swimming without difficulty—and only four days old. The flood disturbed them a bit, but they are still around. They are timid, but certainly not excessively so, for I took four photographs of one bird on the nest with the camera set at 3 feet 6 inches away, and I was only 30 yards away in the boat, with nothing to hide behind. I set up the camera and took four pictures in two hours, and the hen did not take more than 10 minutes to come back to the nest on any occasion.

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**Bendigo Notes.**—Every autumn an Oriole (*Oriolus sagittatus*) visits my garden during the few days that it stays, and spends most of the time singing in an orange tree. Last year (1933) it arrived on April 5. A nest of the Chestnut-eared Finch (*Tæniopygia castanotis*) contained three fully-fledged chicks on May 21, 1933. The young birds flew strongly from the nest when disturbed. In Bendigo the White-plumed Honeyeaters (*Meliphaga penicillata*) say quite distinctly, "Look at your feet," "Look at your feet," and, after a pause, repeat the same double phrase. At Black Rock, near Melbourne, on June 4, 1933, the same species rendered the same phrase, but there was something different about it; it seemed to be more hurried and I had difficulty in fitting the same words. I have never heard the Bendigo birds call in the same way as the Black Rock ones did. The possibility that they were young birds was negated by the early date. I am sure of the identification.

I heard an Eastern Shrike-Tit (*Falcunculus frontatus*) emit a few scolding notes like a Willie-Wagtail (*Rhipidura leucophrys*). This was new to me, but may not be so to other members. While listening to these birds, a Bronze Cuckoo (sp. ?), which had been perched on the telephone wire overhead, flew down and picked a jet-black caterpillar from a tea-tree a few yards from me. He ate a second and a third before being disturbed by my presence. Afterwards I examined the bushes and collected several caterpillars for identification, but unfortunately mislaid them.

The Black-shouldered Kite (*Elanus axillaris*) has been mentioned much in papers and journals recently, and I was not surprised when I saw a pair hovering over the Ironbark Creek on August 6, 1933. One plunged into the creek, which is very shallow, and then flew with something in its talons to a telegraph pole. It ate its catch before I could get near enough to identify the victim. The water splashed up in the same manner as it does when a Gannet

dives into the sea. The mate flew but seldom, contenting itself with sitting on a pole until I drew near. It was a wonderful sight to see these birds hover and then side-slip. When hovering they did not remain perfectly still, as the Kestrel appears to do, but, by rapid movements of the wings, raised and lowered themselves about one foot at a time. After a few moments of this, they side-slipped with outstretched, motionless wings to a lower elevation and several hundred yards in one or another direction, or descended quickly to the ground. Then, with rapidly beating wings, they regained altitude and recommenced to hover. They were not about on August 8, nor since. A few days later I heard of a Black-shouldered Kite being shot at Bridgewater, and wondered if it was one of my pair. I saw a pair of these birds over the same creek last year.

As I walked through my front gate on August 19, 1933, a pair of Magpie-Larks (*Grallina cyanoleuca*) and several Honeyeaters were making a great commotion in an Iron-bark tree. I looked to find the cause of all the fuss, and found it to be a Barn Owl (*Tyto alba*), which was standing on one leg with the other showing from its breast-feathers in the manner pictured in Cayley's "What Bird Is That?" It seemed quite unconcerned at the attacks made upon it, except that they caused it to swing its body from side to side on the one leg. Strangely it never lost its balance, and looked rather absurd. For three days it remained in exactly the same attitude and place in the tree. Remembering the strange deaths of Barn Owls, I expected to find a corpse each day. On the second day the Magpie-Larks, which had frequented my yard for some time and were in the habit of drinking from my bird-bath, disappeared, and two pellets, each containing a skull of a bird about the size of a Magpie-Lark, were found under the tree. The Owl disappeared on the third day and the Magpie-Larks returned, much to my relief. The mystery of the pellets is still unsolved.

Seven Black Cormorants (*Phalacrocorax carbo*), which are not often seen in the town, were swimming on Lake Weeroona, an artificial lake, on October 7, 1933. They were not there on the next day, but I counted seven on the Kennington Reservoir, a few miles away, on October 8.

Cockatiels (*Leptolophus hollandicus*) being rare in the Bendigo district, I was pleased to see a pair near Axedale this year. About ten years ago I saw four birds at Huntly. —MARC COHN, R.A.O.U., Bendigo, Vic.

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