

bill (c. 9 mm.), which answers to Mathews's species *belcheri*, which is lumped with *desolata* in the R.A.O.U. "Checklist."

Cape Petrel. *Daption capense* (*Daption capensis capensis*?).—A wing only was found which measured 258 mm. in length. Mathew and Iredale give 177 mm. as the wing measurement in their *A Manual of the Birds of Australia*, which is obviously a typographical error for 277, the figure given in Mathews's *The Birds of Australia*, vol. II. In his "Checklist of the Petrels," Mathews refers the Australian-frequenting forms to *D. c. australis*, probably breeding in the New Zealand area. This may be the case with the eastern Australian birds, but on the western coast one expects the Southern Indian Ocean form, *D. c. capensis*, breeding on Kerguelen and Heard Islands.

White-capped Albatross. *Diomedea cauta* (*Diomedella cauta*, sub-sp.?).—In *The Emu*, vol. XXXV, 1935, p. 32, I gave particulars of an undetermined Albatross which was photographed in the Great Australian Bight by Captain L. W. Claxton, of the trawler *Bonthorpe*, and referred to Mr. W. B. Alexander's suggestion that the bird was *Diomedea cauta*, a species not usually met with near the Australian coast farther west than Kangaroo Island. Mr. Gregory M. Mathews has confirmed the identification and Mr. Falla writes that the photographs, including the bird on the right bottom of the big flock on plate 2, are undoubtedly of *D. cauta*. "The wing pattern is unmistakable," he writes. "Another distinguishing character, well shown on your single bird in plate 2, is the straight line of dark marking from the base of the culminicorn across the top of the eye. I did not notice *D. cauta* at the western end of the Bight from the *Nestor* in September, but saw one about 500 miles SW. of Cape Leeuwin from the *Discovery* in March, 1930." In view of that we may accept *Diomedea cauta* as a definite addition to the Western Australian avifaunal list, such a record probably being unique in being based on photographs.

Stray Feathers

Painted Quail.—The Painted Quail (*Turnix varia*) was once fairly numerous in the neighbourhood of Sydney. Mr. Henry Newcombe speaks of being able to shoot fifteen or twenty brace before breakfast within a few miles of the metropolis (North: *Nests and Eggs*, vol. IV, 1913, p. 190). That was eighty years ago. Settlement, shooting, cats and foxes have since reduced the numbers of the birds to such an extent that now they are rarely seen, although occasionally breeding birds are reported. The call-note of the species is a deep booming note repeated several times, and not unlike the call of the Brush Bronze-winged Pigeon (*Phaps*



Painted Quail brooding.

Photo. by K. A. Hindwood.

elegans). It is low in tone and may be easily unnoticed; moreover, it seems to be much farther away than it is in reality.

The Painted Quail inhabits dry forest areas or open heath for the most part, particularly where there is an absence of thick ground growth. In areas where dead leaves litter the ground the presence of small, more or less circular, patches of exposed earth is often a good indication of the proximity of the birds, which make these marks when scratching.

Four eggs are usually laid to a sitting and the nest is made in the shelter of a tuft of grass or at the base of a sapling. It seems that all the young birds hatch at about the same time, because the neatly-separated shells, otherwise unbroken, are always found in the nest. If the young hatched over a period it is reasonable to assume that the parent bird would remove the empty shells. Young birds are protectively coloured, and will squat and remain motionless. Painted Quail are said to be largely nocturnal in habits. They rest during the day in family parties or small coveys. In the shale country west of Sydney, they are to be found sheltering in blackthorn thickets. Brooding birds sit closely and will not rise until almost trodden on—for that matter non-brooding birds are hard to rise, and when they come to earth will run for a considerable distance.—K. A. HINDWOOD, Sydney, N.S.W., 31/5/37.

Migrants and Others.—All the Welcome Swallows appeared to leave this district during the first week of April, as did the Cuckoos (except the few individuals which remain with us) the Pipits, and the Tree-Martins, but a party of Dusky Wood-Swallows was noted as late as April 20 circling at a fair height preparatory to leaving. Some "Summer-birds" (*Coracina novæ-hollandiæ*) also remained until the third week of April. Not one Spine-tailed Swift was seen by me this season along the stretch of coast (thirty miles) between Burnie and Devonport.

A Queensland bird-observer who toured portions of the "apple-isle" at Easter-time was struck by the number of Spur-winged Plover which he saw while travelling, especially in the vicinity of townships, and by the pensive way they stood about as if waiting, like Mr. Micawber, for something to turn up. I have frequently noticed this habit of the Plover: they seem to stand about in the grass-paddocks for hours, not feeding or doing anything in particular, but in a quiet contemplative mood, recalling the well-known lines of the tramp-poet:

"What boots this life if, full of care,
We have no time to stand and stare."

Since instructions were sent out to country police-stations from the head-office in Hobart, that the Plover were to be strictly protected, there has been a gratifying increase in

the number of this fine species.—H. STUART DOVE, Devonport, Tas., 5/5/37.

How Many Forms of *Diomedea epomophora* are there?—

This bird, the most beautiful of the big Albatrosses, is the latest to be recognized. In *Oceanic Birds of South America*, 1936, p. 324, Dr. R. C. Murphy says that during this century there have been confusing and disgraceful results of building intricate systematic structures, with wholesale manufacture of generic and sub-specific names, in advance of sound fundamental work.

I wonder if Dr. Murphy can help us by telling us where we can find "sound fundamental" work. I have never seen such work in ornithology, perhaps because it is not an exact science. On page 582 Murphy says that "it might be easy to find existing names for such small sub-species of both the Royal and the Wandering Albatross, but the tagging on of names from the slap-dash taxonomic amusements of recent years has no relation to the painstaking solution of an interesting problem in geographic variation." This paragraph is explained on page 584, where the author prefers to tag on a name of his own to a sub-species of the Royal Albatross, given to a single sea-shot example collected on the other side of the Pacific from its alleged breeding locality, and named before "sound fundamental work" could be done.* On page 579 it is stated that "from data now at hand, we are justified in regarding the Royal Albatross as mainly a sedentary species."

Accepting Murphy's argument we have three forms of the Royal Albatross.

Diomedea epomophora epomophora Lesson. Breeding on Campbell and Auckland Islands.

Diomedea epomophora sanfordi Murphy. Breeding on Forty-four Islands in the Chatham Group.

Diomedea epomophora longirostris Mathews. [Breeding the interior of Tierra del Fuego? Murphy, 1936.]
—G. M. MATHEWS, St. Cross, Winchester, England.

* But Dr. Murphy states that acceptance of *D. e. sanfordi* is conditional upon an interpretation there mentioned, and in any case had already stated (*op. cit.*, p. 576) that *D. sanfordi* was mistakenly described as new by him.—ED.

Changes in Australian Bird Names.—The following changes are suggested by Dr. Ernst Mayr:

***Sericornis beccarii beccarii*.** Little Scrub-Wren.

1874—*Sericornis beccarii* Salvadori, *Ann. Mus. Civ. Gen.*, vol. VI, p. 79. Wokan, Aru Island. (Fig. Gould: *Birds of New Guinea*, vol. 3, pl. 5.)

Distribution: Aru Islands.

Sericornis beccarii minimus Gould

1875—*Sericornis minimus* Gould, *Birds of New Guinea*, pt. 1, Dec. 1, 1875. Cape York. (Fig. Gould:

ib., vol. 3, pl. 7; Mathews: *Birds of Aust.*, vol. x, pl. 455.)

Distribution: Cape York (northern part).

Sericornis beccarii dubius Mayr

1937—*Sericornis beccarii dubius* Mayr, *Amer. Mus. Novit.*, no. 904, p. 9, Jan. 13. Cape York.

Distribution: Cape York (southern part?).

In *The Ibis* (1932), pp. 149-150, changes to the above genus considered necessary (after the *Systema Avium Australasianarum* appeared) were published. As each worker makes drastic changes, we should perhaps leave our nomenclature as it is for the time being.

Neochmia evangelinae evangelinae d'Albertis and Salvadori
1879—*Neochmia evangelinae* d'Albertis and Salvadori, *Ann. Mus. Civ. Gen.*, vol. xv, p. 89. Fly River, southern New Guinea.

Distribution: Southern New Guinea.

Neochmia evangelinae albiventer Mathews

1914—*Neochmia phaeton albiventer* Mathews, *South Austr. Ornith.* vol. I, pt. II, p. 13, April 1. Claudie River, north Queensland. (Fig. Mathews: *Birds of Aust.*, vol. XII, pl. 577.)

Distribution: North Queensland.

—G. M. MATHEWS, St. Cross, Winchester, England.

Notes on Nesting Holes of a Megapode.—Among the numerous species of *Megapodius*, some have the peculiar habit of laying their eggs, for self-incubation, in deep holes in volcanic sand, instead of carrying out the usual method of scraping up large mounds of dirt and vegetation. On the flats, slopes and steep sides of a volcanic mountain a few miles from Rabaul in New Britain I found a number of Megapodes indulging this method of excavating deep holes. I was, however, unable to handle the adult bird.

During a walk on August 7, 1935, to a blown-out volcanic crater there, I suddenly found myself walking on hollow-sounding, flat, hard ground, which, over an area of several square yards, was studded with deep holes about a foot in diameter, going down more or less vertically. Some looked like deep, well-defined post-holes, with a filling of loose, decomposed granitic sand to within a foot or so of the top, others slanted down at an angle, with the hole between the loose sand and the upper wall passing out of sight. Many showed signs of human visitation in the imprints of natives' naked feet. That was about all I could see, and, after coming on other similar areas, I felt very puzzled. They were in groups surrounded by thick bush, with sometimes an isolated one or two holes against a bush or half covered by a tuft of tall grass. I had obtained glimpses of many birds and had noted some to be Megapodes, but as all my previous experience of the latter had been in association with mound-

building and as I knew nothing of any as excavators in hard ground, I had not connected the holes with the birds. A mile or so farther on, however, I came upon a native and asked him the explanation. He said, "Big feller pigeon put'im kiau along'im"—and I began to see light.

He then produced some eggs which I recognized as undoubtedly those of a Megapode—large, symmetrically-oval, rough-shelled and of a pinkish-buff colour, with a good deal of chalky deposition. He also had a couple of young birds, which he said were just hatched and which he had caught in the holes. The plumage was dark blackish-brown; the wings, showing light chocolate-coloured bars, were large and rounded and reached beyond the end of the short tail. The bill was black, the legs grey-black, the eye chocolate. On releasing one with string attached to its foot, it at once flew, fell with the pull of the string, and fluttered to cover very actively. I afterwards heard that when the eggs cracked open the birds "flew" out. It is hardly so expeditious a procedure as that, but I doubt if it is a very great exaggeration.

On another occasion when climbing the side of the crater I came on a steep sand slide, one hundred yards or more long, excavated all over with several score of these Megapodes' holes, but there, as there was no firm surface soil, the holes were more ragged. Some were fallen or trampled in. A few birds, flushed from the holes, had evidently been excavating or laying. A boy searching for eggs reached down the full length of his arm and shoulder in the loose sand and produced two eggs from one hole.

The crater and surroundings where the holes are found have not been in violent activity in recent times, but show moderate activity.* The fresh water seepage in places is quite hot and many of the beaches to the neighbouring harbour are steaming on that account. The salt water also is in places as hot as the hand can comfortably bear, and many of the rocks in the bay are stained yellow and green by sub-marine sulphur jets. In many places the beaches are honeycombed with hollow cylinders of hard mulch and sand from a half to one inch in diameter, due, I think, to escaping steam jets with mineral deposition. These cylinders, four or five inches long, also get worked out and are strewn over the beaches like the litter of a mechanic's shop. The blown-out side of the crater also shows several sulphurous jets and visitors coming to Rabaul by ship will therefore often smell it before they see it. I think all this volcanic heat must be a big factor in assisting incubation and in determining the habitat of the birds. I took a couple of eggs on board and had them boiled and found them excellent eating. Lack of

* These notes were received from Dr. Pockley before the recent volcanic disturbances.—ED., 2/6/37.



Nesting holes of Megapodes in volcanic sand slide near Rabaul.
Photo. by Eric Pockley.



Fairy Tern brooding.
Photo. by D. J. Dickison.

time prevented my making many further observations, but I hope to do so on a future occasion. Although Megapodes are recorded in northern Australia, New Guinea and numerous islands in the surrounding seas, I can find few notes on the various species. I think the distribution of birds laying their eggs in such localities might be confined to areas of some volcanic activity.

R. W. Shufeldt, in *The Emu*, vol. XIX, gives notes on the genus and many references. He records seventeen species according to Sharpe's classification. A full account of the Megapodes is that by J. J. Lister (*Proc. Zool. Soc. Lond.*, 1911, pp. 749-759).

The photograph of the holes in the sand slide does not give a good idea of the sharply-defined appearance which is so in evidence when the holes are in hard ground. The native serves to indicate the size of the holes.—ERIC POCKLEY, Sydney, N.S.W., 26/9/36.

EDITOR'S NOTE.—The form noted by Dr. Pockley would be *Megapodius eremita*, inhabiting the Bismarck Archipelago, Echiquier Island and the Admiralty Islands (Peters). Mathews includes *eremita* as sub-specific to *reinwardt*, of which *tumulus* is the Australian sub-species.

Fairy Terns.—A small colony of Fairy Terns (*Sterna nereis*) nests annually on the sandy beaches of Mud Island, which lies just inside the heads of Port Phillip Bay, Victoria. For years they have been known to breed on the island but of recent years their numbers appear to be on the decrease. They betray the presence of the rookeries by becoming extremely agitated whenever an intruder approaches and it is only a matter of waiting a few minutes before they will settle down on the beach and go back to the nests again. Most of their food is obtained from the shallow waters surrounding the island and they do not appear to go far from land in search of it.—D. J. DICKISON, Melbourne, Vic., 19/3/37.

Adelie Penguin in Western Australia.—When I was in Perth recently the Chief Inspector of Game and Fisheries told me that a strange Penguin had been found alive on the beach at Cottesloe and was in the Zoological Gardens at South Perth. The next morning (April 18) I visited the Zoo and the Superintendent showed me a fine example of the Adelie Penguin (*Catarrhactes adeliæ*). The bird when found would take food readily and the Superintendent assumed that it had been brought to Fremantle, as a pet, on one of the ships of the Japanese whaling fleet which had lately passed through that port on its way north on the conclusion of a hunting expedition to the Antarctic seas.

However, the record of its occurrence at Cottesloe is interesting. Probably the Penguin will not live long at the Zoo. A specimen of the Crested Penguin (*Eudyptes cristata*

tus) which came from Denmark, south Western Australia, died shortly after its arrival at the Zoo last year, and I have been given to understand that, when examined post mortem, all Penguins dying at the Zoo are found to have a peculiar fungoid affection of the intestines.—H. M. WHITTELL, Bridgetown, W.A., 30/4/37.

A Rare Bird for the County of Cumberland, Sydney.—Recently (March 20, 1937) I had the pleasure of examining a collection of bird skins in the possession of Mr. John Waterhouse, of 13 Archer Street, Chatswood, near Sydney. Many of the specimens were collected in the neighbourhood of Newington, Parramatta River, some fifty years ago. The outstanding specimen in the collection was a skin of the Striped Honeyeater (*Plectorhyncha lanceolata*), taken on July 13, 1881, at Newington. Mr. Waterhouse remarked that it was the only bird of its kind he had seen: it is also, to my knowledge, the only record of the species for the Sydney district. I have a sight record for Ettalong, Woy Woy, some thirty miles north of Sydney, on April 5, 1930, when a single bird was observed being harried by Brush Wattle-birds (*Anthochaera chrysoptera*) and Noisy Friar-birds (*Philemon corniculatus*) in an area of coast banksias, then in flower.—K. A. HINDWOOD, Sydney, N.S.W., 31/5/37.

Little Cuckoo-Shrike.—During several years of field observations of birds in the County of Cumberland, which lies within a radius of about forty miles from Sydney, I have not seen a Little Cuckoo-Shrike (*Coracina robusta*). On many occasions birds were observed which had the appearance of adult Little Cuckoo-Shrikes, but they were all, I believe, Black-faced Cuckoo-Shrikes (*C. novæ-hollandiæ*) in immature plumage. My interest in the species was aroused by a specimen in the collection of Mr. John Waterhouse, of Chatswood, near Sydney, taken at Newington, Parramatta River, about 1881, the exact date being unobtainable.

A. J. North (*Nests and Eggs*, vol. I, pt. 2, 1902, pp. 103-5) records the species as breeding near Penrith, which is some forty miles west of Sydney, and also gives several sight records. There are but four skins, and one clutch of eggs, from the County of Cumberland in the Australian Museum collections. They are:

Eggs.—Clutch: 3. Nos. O. 19430-2. Collected by E. P. Ramsay at Dobroyde. No date available, though probably between 1860 and 1870.

Skins.—

O. 17336 juv. ♀, Dobroyde, June 29, 1867.

O. 22790 juv. ♂, Rope's Creek, Jan., 1873.

O. 22791 juv. ♀, Rope's Creek, Jan., 1873.

O. 11276 juv. ? sex., Campbelltown. Presented Aug., 1889.

The above four skins, together with the specimen in Mr. Waterhouse's collection, have one thing in common—they are all in immature plumage.

In certain plumage phases the Little Cuckoo-Shrike might easily be confused with the Black-faced Cuckoo-Shrike, which is well distributed throughout the County of Cumberland, and is a common breeding species in open forest country. The plumage pattern of the Little Cuckoo-Shrike closely resembles that of the adult Black-faced Cuckoo-Shrike, which species, when immature, has the appearance of an adult Little Cuckoo-Shrike. In other words the immature of one species resembles the adult of the other species in both cases. This would indicate that identification of such birds in the field is a most difficult matter. Certainly one species is smaller than the other, yet size is deceptive in the field. Cabinet specimens of immature birds of both species can be readily separated, particularly on the size of the legs and bill.

Apparently the Little Cuckoo-Shrike is a rare bird anywhere near Sydney, and in view of the above facts sight records should be regarded with caution, especially as North remarks that the note of the Little Cuckoo-Shrike resembles somewhat that of the Black-faced Cuckoo-Shrike.—K. A. HINDWOOD, Sydney, N.S.W., 31/5/37.

Parrot at Sea.—There appeared in the Sydney "*Sun*" of May 10, 1937, the following paragraph which should be of interest to ornithologists:

"PARRAKEET NINE MILES AT SEA

"ENTERED MESSROOM ON STEAMER

"The American freighter *Golden Bear*, on her way up the coast from Melbourne to Sydney, saved the life of a small green parrakeet on Saturday night.

"Blown to sea by a high westerly wind, between Gabo Island and Green Cape, the bird was attracted by the lights of the ship and flew through the messroom porthole, hitting one of the men on the head. . . . When the *Golden Bear* entered Sydney Heads to-day the Master, Captain C. M. Olsen, ordered that it be released."

A description of the bird was not given in the paper and, as it could have been one of several species occurring in south-east Australia, I went to the ship with skins of five species of Parrots. The member of the crew who was struck by the bird when it flew through the port-hole, the captain, and the chief officer, all singled out the Swift Parrot (*Lathamus discolor*) as being the bird. On checking over the position of the ship at the time the bird was captured an inaccuracy in the newspaper account was apparent, although that was not the fault of the press reporter, who had been wrongly informed.

Actually the ship was between nine and ten miles off Cape Everard, which is near the most easterly point of the Victorian coastline, and heading about NE. by E. The time

was 8.15 p.m. on May 8, and the night "pitch" dark, with a mild gale (between thirty-five and forty miles an hour) blowing from the west, that is, in the same general direction as the ship was then travelling. The Parrot entered the port-hole from the landward side. How long the bird had been at sea or how it happened to be over the ocean three hours after sunset are matters of speculation. Normally Swift Parrots do not move about at night. No doubt the bird was hungry—did it not board ship by the messroom port-hole?

Captain Olsen told me that quite frequently land birds alight on his ship. Such a happening he considers an omen of good luck: for that matter so do most of the members of the ship's company. Whilst many land birds, either migrants or stragglers, find temporary shelter or rest on ships or islands, a far greater number must fly on till they drop exhausted into the sea. Sometimes birds when blown to sea reach islands, or localities far from their usual range, in sufficient numbers successfully to colonize such places, providing a suitable habitat is available to them. It can scarcely be doubted that wind is an important factor in the dispersal of birds, a fact which is generally recognized.—K. A. HINDWOOD, Sydney, N.S.W., 31/5/37.

Nest Hygiene.—The accompanying photos. were taken whilst I was studying three species, viz., the introduced Blackbird and Song-Thrush, and the White-plumed Honey-eater or "Greenie" (*Meliphaga penicillata*) with regard to nest hygiene.

Last season (1935-36) I saw excreta of young Song-Thrushes swallowed at the nest by the adults, but not once were the capsules taken directly from the cloaca of nestlings. They were always voided into the nest. This season (1936-37) I have had three nests of Thrushes under very close observation, myself and camera being perfectly screened. In every instance the voided substance was taken by an adult bird directly from the cloaca of a nestling. In no instance—and I saw the removal over a hundred times—was excrement carried away from the nest—but was always swallowed as soon as received by the parent. Often a parent bird fed two nestlings at a visit, disposing of both excrement capsules in the same way. I think that as both camera and observer were entirely hidden we must assume that this is the usual procedure, and that the actions of the birds last year were influenced by a knowledge of my proximity.

Another habit suggests that, in the mind of the bird, nest hygiene is of great importance. Dead nestlings are, apparently, always removed but infertile eggs are allowed to remain. This suggests that the birds are aware of the unpleasant consequences (discomfort for the nestlings) that would follow the possible breaking of an addled egg whilst



Song-Thrush removing excreta direct from cloaca of nestling.
Photo. by Edith Coleman.



Male White-plumed Honeyeater feeding young with scale insects and nectar. From this position it reached over the nestlings to take excreta.

Photo. by Edith Coleman.

being removed or the presence of a decomposing dead body. In the garden at the present time neglected eggs lie in each of two old nests of the Song-Thrush and three nests of Blackbirds.

Last season both parent birds of the Thrush were at the nest together, feeding young and attending to nest hygiene. This season I only once saw both adults at a nest at the one period.

Just as effectively screened, I have watched the Blackbirds, but my camera was not equal to the dense shelter they chose. However, I was able to become very familiar with their domestic doings for my tent was often within eighteen inches of a nest. In two instances the female parent only fed the nestlings. Closely screened I watched two nests for a month—for more than a month, as I saw their construction, too. The male never appeared. In one nest there were four nestlings. Except for excrement I doubt if the mother bird could have had much food herself. Many times I saw her remove—and swallow—three capsules at a visit. A peerless forager, she fed the young with great bunches of worms, when I was finding a difficulty in procuring a worm for goldfish.

With regard to the "Greenie" (*Meliphaga penicillata*), an interesting feature in nest hygiene was that the male bird frequently, not always at feeding times, put its head well down into the nest, and shook the structure violently and swiftly, its bill spearing the floor of the nest so that the tip of the bill was sometimes visible through the bottom of the nest. Occasionally he clung to the nest and speared it so violently from the outside as to leave it quite ruffled and untidy. I assumed the action was something akin to our airing and turning beds and was probably useful in disturbing and dislodging vermin.

Like the other two species the Honeyeater actually removed the capsule of excreta direct from the cloaca. The process followed, in nearly every case, feeding the young. The nestlings would raise the body and the adult stretch down to touch the exit and to assist the voiding of the excrement.—EDITH COLEMAN, Blackburn, Vic., 31/5/37.

[For further notes on this subject see also same author (*Proc. Linnæan Soc. N.S.W.*, Oct. 2, 1936), and Dr. Donald Thomson (*Proc. Zool. Soc. Lond.*, 1934, pp. 701-7).—ED.]

Singing Honeyeater at Frankston, Victoria.—The occurrence of the Singing Honeyeater (*Meliphaga virescens*) on the eastern side of Port Phillip Bay is rare, and a search through a number of volumes of *The Emu* has revealed only one record. That is to be found in volume XVIII, wherein Mr. J. G. Mann, of Frankston, records the species as nesting regularly in the district. On April 25, 1933, a visit was made to the heath-lands at the rear of the Peninsula Golf

Club, Frankston. During the day Honeyeaters were seen in large numbers, but four birds particularly held my attention. My first thought was Yellow-faced Honeyeaters (*M. chrysops*) but a closer examination revealed that the birds were distinctly different. The faintly striated breast, black line through the eye and yellow patch behind and below the eye are good field marks for the Singing Honeyeater, as I then suspected the birds were. The birds were distinctly larger than the Yellow-faced form and the calls were unlike any I had previously heard. Enquiries as to the possibility of the birds' being found in this locality were not encouraging and the birds were placed on the doubtful list. There they remained until early this year (1937), when a visit was made to Point Roadknight, near Anglesea, outside the Bay "Heads" on the western side. At Anglesea the Frankston birds were there by the dozen, busily engaged feeding on the berries of the coast beard-heath (*Leucopogon parviflorus*), and taking the nectar from the coast banksia (*Banksia integrifolia*). There was no possibility of mistake as the birds in both localities were closely examined with the glasses at close range. On March 29, 1937, I had further opportunity of watching the species near Loch Ard Gorge, between Port Campbell and Princetown. There the birds were feeding on nectar from the dwarf coast banksia and the common heath (*Epacris impressa*). As on previous occasions, I was able to approach quite close to the birds and watch them feeding.—W. HEATHCOTE, Glenroy, Vic., 1/6/37.

The Yellow-throated Miner.—A study of the geographical range of most birds is very interesting. Under some conditions the partiality of certain species to a particular type of vegetation is puzzling. I have in mind, in particular, the Yellow-throated Miner and the Noisy Miner. In the red gum and box gum flats of the river one finds the Noisy Miner, and, a few hundred yards away in the mallee gums, the Yellow-throated species. At no time have I seen the two in company, or either species infringing the other's domain. Evidently it is a question of a certain type of food supply. Away through the dry mallee country the Yellow-throated Miners are plentiful, and in the nesting season they spend a lot of time chasing other birds. In company with the Yellow-plumed Honeyeater, they are the "watch-dogs" of the mallee scrubs, quickly giving the alarm when anything unusual is sighted.—L. G. CHANDLER, Red Cliffs, Vic., 2/3/37.

The Annual Congress will be held in Brisbane in October, and the Camp-out in the McPherson Ranges. Details will be supplied later with the Annual Notice Paper.



Yellow-throated Miner at nest.

Photo. by L. G. Chandler.