

killed on the rookery and most were not able to fly, so that it was not likely that they had flown out to sea to obtain this food and then returned to the rookery. Some observers have reported the young birds picking at the grass on the rookery at this stage of their lives and it is likely, therefore, that some of the macerated vegetable matter is of terrestrial origin, but that does not explain the presence of the marine forms. There seems to be no alternative other than to accept the fact that this marine vegetable matter has remained in the stomach after the last feeding by the parent birds. At the time the young birds were killed there had been no adult birds on the rookery for about ten days.

The main object of this investigation was to check the statements that young birds took in a supply of gravel to act as 'ballast' in their initial flights from the rookery. It has been shown that the 'stone' in every case is clinker from burnt coal and the amount, in almost every instance, was such a small proportion of the total weight of the bird that it could have no appreciable effect as 'ballast.'

Incidentally, it may be recorded that nematode parasites were found in several of the stomachs examined.

I am indebted to the following for assistance in this investigation and wish to express my thanks for their help—Miss Joyce Allan, Assistant Conchologist, Australian Museum, Sydney, for identification of the so-called egg teeth as the beaks of pelagic cephalopods of the family Ommastrephidae; Mr. A. Dunbavin Butcher, Biologist of the Fisheries Department, for analyses of stomach contents and identification of material.

**Australia's Most Widespread Species?**—I have frequently wondered what bird might be entitled to the distinction of being the most widespread, of species frequenting Australia. This does not infer it would be the greatest in actual numbers, but the one dispersed over the greatest part of the continent (including Tasmania). In my fancy I found it difficult to choose between a number of species possessing a comparatively wide range, such, for example, as the Willie Wagtail.

However, in compiling a convenient graph of what might be termed 'rather authentic lists' from approximately fifty diversified and conveniently-placed localities, mainly for the purpose of readily tracing each bird's Australian range, it was rather remarkable, yet convenient for the purpose of solving the 'most widespread species' query, to find only one species survived mention on every 'list.' It was the Black-faced Cuckoo-Shrike (*Coracina novæ-hollandiæ*), and I would venture to suggest that it might well merit the title of 'Australia's most widespread species.'—A. R. MCGILL, Arncliffe, N.S.W., 25/8/45.