

♀, 58, 59; bill, ♂, 20.1-21.9 (20.8), ♀, 19.5, 21.8; bill index, ♂, 28.2-30.2 (29.1), ♀, 28.5, 32.3.

There is also considerable variation in the relative length of the tail. Birds from the Solomon Islands have the longest tail, those from south New Guinea and North Queensland the shortest.

Tail length in per cent of wing length: Solomon Islands, 89-94.5 (92.0); New Britain, ♂, 89.7-95.0 (93.0), ♀, 88.4-94.7 (91.9); South New Guinea, ♂, 88.0-91.5 (89.8); Anggi Lake, ♂, 95.2; Sumba, 91, 93.5; North Queensland, 85.5-88.3 (87.1). The North Queensland birds seem to have an even shorter tail than typical *australis* which have a relative tail-length of 86.5-90.5 (88.5).

It is apparent from these figures that each population has slightly different measurements, but that there is too much overlap to justify further subdivision into subspecies. A population from north New Guinea (Rand collection, Mamberano Riv.) is apparently even smaller, but all of the specimens are too worn to give reliable measurements. The series from North Queensland is slightly larger and with a smaller bill and a larger tail index. In fact, it is in every respect almost exactly intermediate between *cervinus* and *australis*. This is well illustrated in the graph.

The nomenclature of this subspecies is troublesome. The New Guinea race was described by De Vis as *cervinus*, with the following measurements: wing 80, tail 76, culmen 14.5. These figures are impossibly large for a New Guinea specimen, but De Vis measurements have often been found to be wrong. A re-examination of De Vis' type in the Brisbane Museum would be highly desirable. When Stresemann quickened the manuscript name *meyeri* of Neumann, he noticed that New Britain birds did not seem to differ conspicuously from *sumbae*. I can only confirm this observation. It seems desirable, for the stated reasons, to include all the tropical *Acrocephalus* populations of the Australian region in a single subspecies, the oldest name of which appears to be *cervinus* De Vis.

Abnormal Eggs of White-plumed Honeyeater.—Early in July, 1943, I discovered a pair of White-plumed Honeyeaters (*Meliphaga penicillata*) building a nest in a Bougainvillea vine. When it was completed a pure white egg was laid instead of the usual spotted pinkish-white egg. Later this disappeared and the birds deserted the nest, so I was not able to ascertain whether or not the egg was fertile. There was no doubt as to the identity of the birds.—R. A. LEEDS, Wyandra, Qld., 7/8/43.