

in this way. Then at the end of May I once noticed one bird start to warble in front of a second bird when another appeared. The birds sing sub-songs from both the ground and bushes.

The White-backed Magpie (*Gymnorhina hypoleuca*) is a persistent tormentor of the Pipit about Wellington, but it appears that they attack the Pipits mostly at the Magpies' mating times. The mating activity of Magpies was intense in April 1951, judged by the frequency of displays, and they chased the Pipits a great deal from then on. The Magpies appeared to indulge in less mating activity in the autumns of 1952 and 1953, and they did not interfere with the Pipits so much at that time. They started to chase them at the end of July, however, with the arrival of nesting time.

Though I have never seen a Pipit killed by a Magpie, the odd bird may fail to get away, judged by a corpse found with its skull bitten through. Usually the Pipits, when being attacked, fly up in spirals or make slide-slipping movements, and are deft at evading the Magpies. It is of interest that I once saw a Pipit and a European Goldfinch (*Carduelis carduelis*) fly off casually when a Magpie attacked them; they were not persistently chased. However, a Skylark (*Alauda arvensis*), which flew away in a great fuss from an attacking Magpie, provoked the latter to chase it persistently. Another Magpie was seen to ignore a Pipit which sought to evade its attacks by alighting on the ground.

REFERENCE

- 1950 Bent, A. C. 'Life Histories of North American Wagtails, Shrikes, Vireos and Their Allies'. Washington.

Golden Plover Inland in South Australia.—The Golden Plover (*Pluvialis dominicus*) has generally been observed only near the coast in South Australia. An exceptional record is of a single bird seen on a mud flat along Caves Valley, near Naracoorte, by A. R. Attiwill, in November 1952. Ref.: Brian Glover, 'Recent Observations on South Australian Migratory Waders' (*Emu*, 54, 51-57, 1954).

A Golden Plover was seen by me on a mud reef in a swamp in the Murray River Valley, near Morgan, on January 30, 1955. It was solitary in habit, but a few times, when disturbed, it settled among a flock of Sharp-tailed Sandpipers (*Erolia acuminata*). The contrast in the sizes and length of legs of the two species was then pronounced. Apart from its larger size, the Golden Plover had a very conspicuous broad, pale eyebrow, there was a fine mottling of buff on the brown shoulders and mantle, and the chest was lightly mottled with rufous-brown. In flight, the rump and tail were dark coloured, and the wings did not show any conspicuous light markings.—E. F. BOEHM, Sutherland, S.A., 10/2/55.