

The species enjoys a very extensive range, although on my own personal observations, as well as from authenticated records, I cannot yet admit the extent of range mentioned or suggested by Mr. Campbell in his work on "The Nests and Eggs of Australian Birds," page 296. (But it is just possible that his more northerly range may turn out to be occupied by my new species.) The farthest limits, so far as I have observed or have records of, are as follow :—

Southern	..	Cape Naturaliste, distant 150 miles from Perth
South-Eastern		Stirling Range, distant 274 miles from Perth
Eastern	..	Kellerberrin, distant 133 miles from Perth
North-Eastern		Jack's Well (Lake Way), distant 815 miles from Perth
Northern	..	Moore River, distant 79 miles from Perth

I believe, however, that the above limits will in time require to be enlarged, more especially in the North. The birds are dwellers of the woodlands and open country and appear to shun the forests. In the south of this State the karri forests appear to act as the line of demarcation.

Descriptions of the Nests and Nestlings of Certain *Acanthizæ*.

BY ALEX. WM. MILLIGAN

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ACANTHIZA ROBUSTIROSTRIS (Milligan), (Thick-billed Tit).

Nest.—In considering this species previously to describing it,* it appeared to approach nearer to *Sericornis* (*Pyrrholæmus*) *brunnea* (Gould) than any other member of its genus, by reason of its sombre upper surface and its bill. In the latter respect and in its general contour it looks like that species in miniature. The nest (which Mr. Fred. Lawson only discovered after hours of patient and vigilant search) supports in a degree my early impressions. The structure itself is globular in form, but with the upper portion elongated and gathered to a point at the top. The same portion also is very fragile, and upon its being held up at the height of the eyes daylight may easily be seen through it. The lower portion is of a stronger and closer structure. The nest, in size, form, and materials, very much resembles that of *Malurus leucopterus*, except that the lipped threshold present in the latter is wanting in the former. The materials of which the nest is composed are old stems of grasses, with which are interwoven a few spiders' webs, the latter still bearing the body cases of devoured insect prey. The outside of the lower portion of the nest is profusely adorned with spider cocoons and with what

* *The Emu*, vol. iii., p. 71.

appears to be a small white cup-lichen; much resembling the excreta of small birds. The entrance to the nest is circular, and well and neatly constructed, the inside being lined with a casing of hair-like material. The nest was taken from a shrub about 6 feet from the ground.

Nestling.—In securing the nest Mr. Lawson was also fortunate in obtaining with it three nestlings, although perhaps the eggs would have been a greater prize. They, however, are distinctly helpful in the respect that they confirm the points of separation from the nearest ally of this species, *Acanthiza uropygialis*, and other members of the genus. The most notable feature in the nestlings of the new species is the absence of the "shell" or "scale" markings on the forehead, which are present in the nestlings of *A. uropygialis* and *A. tenuirostris*. On the other hand, the "ripple" markings present on the cheeks of the adult of the new species are also present on the nestlings. Another point of distinction between the latter nestlings and those of *A. uropygialis* is the colouring of the tail feathers. In the nestlings of *A. uropygialis* these feathers, which protrude out of their enveloping sheaths fully a quarter of an inch, are wholly black, except at the ends, which are burnished with chestnut, while in *A. robustirostris* the same feathers are, excepting a very narrow black transverse band, wholly of a very pale snuff colour. Further, there are present in the nestlings of the species under notice the buff sides of the body, which are a characteristic of the adult female, but which are not present in either the adult or young of *A. uropygialis*. The bills of the nestlings of *A. robustirostris* are also very much smaller than in the latter species. The nestlings of both species have the feathers of the lower breast and abdomen well developed and silky white. The description of the nestling is as follows:—General colour of upper surface, brown; rump and upper tail coverts and tail feathers very pale snuff with black transverse band across the middle of the latter; wings blackish-brown, secondaries with pale buff margins; throat white; chest ashy grey; abdomen pure silky white, with sides of body clear buff; under surface of tail feathers slightly paler than upper surface; iris dark brown; beak, legs, and feet dark leaden-grey.

Since the publication of my description of the above species Mr. Lawson has forwarded me a second parcel of skins. The features which caused me to separate the species from the other members of the genus are constant in these skins, and I have not anything to add to the description already given.

ACANTHIZA TENUIROSTRIS (Zietz), (Small-billed Tit).

Nest.—The nest of this species is neatly woven and compact, and about the size and shape of a large Lisbon lemon. It is domed, and has a neat circular entrance, which is nearer the top than the bottom, and making the lower section a spacious pocket. It is composed of narrow strings of the bark of, apparently, large

shrubs, and old, bleached grass-stems. The outside is adorned with spider cocoons. The inside is well lined with the feathers of larger birds, and with hair and fur. It was taken from a branch of stunted, woody samphire bush, which is usually found on the margins of salt and brackish lakes, and at about 18 inches from the ground.

Nestling.—The nestlings, although well feathered, showed down feathers on the neck and head. The general colour of the upper surface, including the rump, is olive-brown; the forehead a little lighter, with distinct white edgings to feather tips; the tail feathers protruding from the sheaths, uniform blackish-brown; the sides of the face and throat whitish with darker margins, and producing in the latter the indistinct freckled appearance occurring in the adult; breast and abdomen of a light yellow tint, the former with minute freckles of a darker colour, the latter uniform yellow; iris deep brown; bill grey; legs and feet pale grey. The bill is much more slender than that of *A. robustirostris*, and more slender and much shorter than *A. uropygialis*.

ACANTHIZA UROPYGIALIS (Gould), (Chestnut-rumped Tit).

Nest.—Mr. A. J. Campbell's description of the nest,* except in one or two minor instances, agrees with the nest taken by Mr. Lawson at Day Dawn. The latter one is adorned with small downy flower-heads. The entrance to the nest is placed equidistant between top and bottom and between side and side. Over-all length is $13\frac{1}{4}$ and girth $9\frac{1}{2}$ inches.

Nestling.—The bill of this nestling is very much longer than those of the preceding species. The rump and upper tail coverts are much deeper in colour than in *A. robustirostris*, and, as already stated, the visible portions of the tail feathers are blackish and the tips burnished with chestnut. Down feathers are still present on the head. The "scaling" of the forehead is very pronounced, and is also apparent under the eyes and on the chin. The throat and chest white, but with minute dark tips to feathers. The breast and abdominal feathers are close, well developed, and white. The sides of the body show a very faint tinge of buff; bill black; iris dark brown; legs and feet greyish-brown.

Some Notes from Brookton, W.A.

BY H. E. HILL, GUILDFORD.

HAVING been kindly asked by Mr. Chas. Crossland to spend a couple of weeks in his survey camp during a recent holiday, the 4th of July last found me at Brookton, a railway siding on the Albany line, about 100 miles south-east of Perth, in company with Mr. Crossland's two sons.

* "Nests and Eggs," p. 236.