

They are stout ovals in shape, the surface of the shell being very fine and glossy. The three eggs are very uniformly marked, and measure as follows :—(a) 0.85 x 0.67, (b) 0.89 x 0.67, (c) 0.85 x 0.66 inch.

*Observation.*—Writing to Mr. H. L. White on the new and interesting find, Mr. F. L. Whitlock states :—"To-day (23rd August, 1909) I planned to have a thorough search in the favourite place for the nest of this species. I picked up a stick and systematically beat the bushes and every tuft of spinifex. I had nearly gone through the most likely tract of ground when I spied what looked like the rim of a nest in a thick salt-bush. I parted the branches, and there was a fine open cup-shaped nest, with three handsome eggs, of a character totally new to me; they resembled large eggs of *Artamus venustus* or giant eggs of *Xerophila*, but the markings are more vinaceous. This was a puzzle. There was not a bird about whose eggs I thought I did not know. As for *Amytornis*, all the time I have been looking for a semi-domed structure or something akin to it; this nest was massive and cup-shaped. The only thing to do was to watch. I walked away, and was about to sit down, when I heard the alarm note of *Amytornis*, promptly replied to by the other partner; I knew what I had then found. However, the sitting bird would not go on, so I decided to finish my work in another locality, and then return, and, if necessary, spend the day in watching. I came back in about two hours' time, and, the ground being sandy, I came very stealthily up to the bush and peeped into the nest; there sat an *Amytornis*. Of course, the bird was off in an instant, but I saw sufficient to prove it to be the male bird of Milligan's *Amytornis gigantura*."

### Description of a New *Acanthiza*.

By EDWIN ASHBY, BLACKWOOD, SOUTH AUSTRALIA.

ACANTHIZA (GEOBASILEUS) FLAVIVENTRIS, sp. nov. (Plain-fronted Tit).

*Adult.*—General colour above buff-brown; lesser, median, and greater wing coverts drab-brown, centres broadly margined with buff; primaries drab, narrowly margined with yellow, becoming a mere line towards extremities, but tipped with buff; secondaries, outer broadly margined with yellow, inner with buff. Tail blackish-brown, inner web shading to drab at base; inner web narrowly edged with whitish-buff, the outer web edged with yellow, which broadens at the base. Two central feathers pale brown at tip, others with a large white spot near extremity on inner web, shading to buff at tip; upper tail coverts yellow, slightly shading to buff; lower rump buff. Lores and eyelids buffish-white. Head.—The whole upper portion of head, neck,

ear coverts, and cheek, including forehead and crown, uniformly buff-drab; chin and upper throat buffish-white. Upper and lower back.—Centre of feathers buffish-drab, in many a mere broadened line; outer and larger portion of feathers rufous-buff. Lower throat, neck, and chest buff; lower breast, abdomen, and thighs creamy-yellow; under tail coverts yellow; under portion of wings grey-drab. Bill and feet brown.

Measurements of dried formalin specimens.—Total length, 111 mm.; culmen, 9 mm.; tail, 40 mm.; tarsus, 18 mm.; wing, 65 mm.

*Remarks.*—*Acanthiza flaviventris* differs from *A. chrysorrhoa* in the typical white spots on the forehead, face, and ear coverts being entirely absent; in the general buff colouration, yellow abdomen and under tail coverts. A specimen of *A. chrysorrhoa* in the Adelaide Museum, obtained in the M'Donnell Ranges, while having the somewhat faded appearance usual to desert forms, does not materially differ from the normal type, and is considerably smaller than the species under review. The specimen now described was kindly given me by Mr. Francis E. Starr, of Adelaide, who had received it in September last, with other specimens in a like bad state of preservation, from Lake Frome, in the interior of South Australia. I suggest the name of *A. flaviventris*, as being descriptive of the yellow abdomen; and the vernacular name of Plain-fronted Tit, as being descriptive of the absence of the freckled markings on the forehead that are so characteristic of this genus.

## Notes on the Great-billed Heron (*Ardea sumatrana*).

(Compiled from the Log of the "Lassie" and Mr. Henry Nielson's Field Book.)

BY E. M. CORNWALL, MACKAY, Q.

MR. Nielson first observed the Great-billed Heron (*Ardea sumatrana*) on 5th April, 1908, when, with Messrs. G. White and E. M. Cornwall, he was in a boat drifting with the tide up Slade Point Creek, a tidal gutter bordered with a dense fringe of mangroves, and running into the sea a few miles to the north of Mackay, Q. At low tide the creek runs nearly dry, and the muddy flats offer food to the Heron's taste. It is a shy bird at all times, and haunts quiet reaches of the many creeks and gutters which intersect the immense belts of mangroves along our coast. When disturbed it flies with a lazy, slow, and rather ungainly undulating motion, shunning observation by disappearing into more secluded spots. It was just 12 months later, on 8th April, 1909, that Mr. Nielson was able to make a determined effort to discover the much-desired nest and eggs of this rare and interesting bird. On that day, accompanied by