Mirafra rufescens.* Rufous Bush-Lark.—Very common on the plains. A number of nests found, both with eggs and young.

Cinclorhamphus erubalis (rogersi). (Northern) Brown Song-Lark.—A few birds were seen on the plains, where they were breeding.

Cinclorhamphus rufescens (horsfieldi). (Northern) Rufous Song-Lark.—A few birds seen about small bushes near the plains.

Haleyon obscursus. (Northern) Red-backed Kingfisher.—Common about the gidgea; the only Kingfisher seen out here.

Turnix pyrrhotherax. Red-chested Quail.—Several birds seen with young; one nest found on plain, with eggs.

[The foregoing list has been kindly supplied by Mr. H. L. White, R.A.O.U., Belltrees, New South Wales, for whom Mr. Barnard is collecting.—Eds.]

Search for Eggs of Colluricincla woodwardi.

By Harry G. Barnard, R.A.O.U.

Having searched the sandstone hills for miles around Borroloola (N.T.) in vain for the “Sandstone Thrush” (Colluricincla woodwardi), I determined to try further afield. I heard that at the junction of Western Creek with the Macarthur (20 miles west) there was much high sandstone country, and determined to try that locality. My assistant not having returned from the table-land, I went alone.

I left Borroloola on Wednesday morning, the 10th December, taking with me a small tent-fly, a mosquito net, and enough flour, tea, and sugar for four or five days. Beef I could not carry, but depended on my gun and the rock wallaby “venison.” I reached the edge of the sandstone country, one mile from Western Creek junction, at mid-day, and, finding water in the Macarthur River, I decided to camp. It was not known if there was water further on. After lunch and a couple of hours’ spell, I took a turn for a few miles through the sandstone. All the sandstone seen was of the same class as that round Borroloola—namely, the columnar variety. This sandstone outcrops from the flat, sandy country, and rises in columns from a few feet to 50 or 60 feet in height, and is intersected in all directions with narrow passages which one may in places wander through for miles. The columns at a short distance resemble huge beehives. I saw no sign of the bird I was in quest of, but saw a single specimen only of a Grass-Wren (Amytornis woodwardi). As the sun was getting low I returned to camp, and after supper crept beneath the net, to be lulled to sleep by the howling of the dingoies, which are apparently very plentiful hereabouts. Thursday morning I was early astir, and after a hasty breakfast I took a south-west course to see if I could not reach the same class of country as that in which we found the bird when at Macarthur Station. After going about

three miles I climbed a sandstone hill to get a view of the country. I was on the edge of a wide valley, which stretched before me for about two miles. On the far side, and rising abruptly from the valley was a range of red sandstone rising to a height of 700 to 800 feet, the high cliffs and dark ravines being perfectly visible. Here, I thought, is the country I am in search of. Descending to the valley and making my way across it, I suddenly came to a rocky depression, through which flowed a beautiful spring, the water being like crystal. Its course formed numerous small holes, which were covered with purple water-lilies—a transporting sight in this barren land of stunted timber and spinifex. After a good drink and a short spell I again went forward. Signs of a recent storm, in the shape of broken boughs and uprooted trees, became visible, and a little further on pools of water were seen among the rocks. On reaching the sandstone I made my way up a ravine till a large overhanging rock on my right attracted my attention as a likely place for a Thrush's nest. On approaching it and looking round I observed a nest partly hidden behind a jutting ledge of rock, and, placing my hand therein, was delighted to find a pair of eggs. Lifting them carefully out, I at once saw they belonged to a Thrush. Replacing the eggs, I retired to the shelter of a rock, and, after waiting a few minutes, heard the clear whistle of a Callubicincla, and a few seconds after a female C. woodwardi flew on to the ledge beside the nest, and, after a careful look round, sat quietly down on the eggs. The instant I moved, however, she was gone like a flash. Carefully packing the eggs in a collecting box, I resumed the search, and by mid-day had located five more nests, none of which, however, had eggs. While the quar-t pot was boiling I reviewed the situation, and came to the conclusion that the distance from camp was too great to allow of good work, so decided to shift it. After lunch I made a bee-line for camp, which was reached about 3 o'clock. I at once dismantled and re-packed the outfit, and once more turned my face towards the sandstone ranges. As a storm was brewing, I lost no time on the return journey, and by sundown was under the friendly shelter of the rock from which I had taken the Thrush's eggs in the morning. Cutting some saplings, I wedged them between the floor and roof of the rock and swung my net between them. By this time the storm was sweeping over the hills, and, although the thunder and lightning were very severe, I was quite secure in my rocky refuge. My supper consisted of Johnnie-cake and roast rock wallaby. Friday and Saturday were spent in searching the ranges, and, although many nests of the Thrushes were seen, both new and old, no further eggs were taken.

A fair number of Amytornis woodwardi was seen, and two old nests of last season were observed in the top of spinifex clumps, but they do not seem to have made a start for this season, probably the delayed rain and great heat (the thermometer averaging 105° for the whole of November at the police barracks in
Borroloola) being the chief cause. Several nests of the Little
Wood-Swallow (Artamus minor) were found in holes in the
sandstone cliffs, but they all contained young. Also numbers of
old nests of the Fairy Martin were seen in caves or under over-
hanging rocks. Realizing that I was too early for the birds, I
decided to revisit the locality in about 10 days’ or a fortnight’s
time, when I shall hope to do much better. When I returned to
Borroloola I had tramped over 70 miles for a single pair of eggs!

A Visit to the Gosford Scrubs.

By Sidney Wm. Jackson, R.A.O.U., Chatswood, New South
Wales.

In company with my brother, Mr. Frank T. A. Jackson, I spent
a few days camped on his property near Gosford, N.S.W., during
the last Christmas holidays. Notwithstanding the then unusually
dry state of the country, in all 62 species of birds were noted in
and about the bush close to our camp, the more elevated portions
of which are covered with blackbutt (Eucalyptus pilularis), blue
gum (Eucalyptus, sp.), sweet-scented wattle (Acacia pruinosa,
a late flowering species), forest oak (Casuarina), &c.; while in the
beautiful scrub-clad gullies below the camp were tree-ferns,
bangalow and cabbage-tree palms, stag-horn ferns (Platycerium
grande), &c. Here the water-vines (Vitis hypoglaucu) drooped
over the moss-covered logs, and climbed up and linked together
the tall and shady scrub trees, such as the maiden’s blush tree
(Echinocarpus australis), bean-ball tree (Castanospermum australe),
black apple tree (Sideroxylon austral). The moss on everything
in the scrub was parched, and not of its usual beauty when
glistening with moisture. Many broken land-shells—snails (Helix
greyi, Helix strangei, &c.)—were strewn about on the ground in
the scrub, and these fragments were no doubt the result of the work
of the Lyre-Bird (Menura), which, like the beautiful
Dragoon-Bird or Pitta (Pitta streptians) of our more northern
scrubs, is a great snail-eater, and usually breaks them on a stone.
We observed a female Regent Bower-Bird (Sericulus chryso-
cephalus) frequently fly over our tent into a clump of mistletoe
(Loranthus) growing in a forest oak (Casuarina) on the edge of the
scrub. In this parasitical growth the bird had its nest, which
contained young. The female alone was noticed feeding them,
and the male was not observed near the nest. Several beautiful
nests of the White-shafted Fantail (Rhipidura albiscapa) were
found, with the birds sitting on eggs or chicks. It was most
pleasing to watch the little birds going to and from their nests,
which were built on dead limbs of wattle (Acacia pruinosa) and
turpentine-trees (Syncarpia laurefolia) on the recently burnt-off
land beside the scrub. Other nests were found, but none of any
importance; in fact, most birds had, no doubt, finished breeding,