

Description of Nest and Eggs of *Turnix olivii* (Robinson)

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With the exception of the searches made by Sid. W. Jackson for the eggs of *Atrichornis rufescens* (Rufous Scrub-Bird) and F. L. Whitlock for those of *Eremiornis carteri* (Desert-Bird), I know of nothing so remarkable as the work put in by W. McLennan in his long hunt after the elusive *Turnix olivii* (Buff-breasted Quail).

His labour and perseverance were rewarded by three clutches of eggs of this previously practically unknown bird; one of the sets goes to Messrs. Bettington's "Terragong" Collection, while the others remain in my own.

The locality worked over is near Coen, at the base of the Cape York Peninsula, and about 180 miles north-west from Cooktown; a district not easy of access, but rich in bird life. In his very full daily notes, McLennan first mentions the bird on October 31st, 1921. He kept in touch with it up to April 5th, 1922.

Types.—Clutch, four eggs, roundish in shape, much compressed and pointed at one end, forming quite a dumpy pyriform shape, more so than any others of the Quail family that have come under my notice. Ground colour whitish, minutely speckled, spotted, and blotched all over with markings of reddish-brown, bluish-grey, and black, the last two colours being the most pre-



Upper—Class of country frequented by the Buff-breasted Quail.

[Lower—A nest with eggs *in situ* Coen, Cape York Peninsula, Queensland.

Photos. by W. McLennan, R.A.O.U.



A.—Nest of Buff-breasted Quail (*Turnix olivii*), undisturbed.

Photo. by W. McLennan, R.A.O.U.

dominant. (Incubation heavy). Shell fine, and surface rather glossy. Measurement in inches:—A, $1.13 \times .93$; B, $1.13 \times .92$; C, $1.13 \times .89$; D, $1.17 \times .93$.

Taken by W. McLennan at Coen, Cape York Peninsula, North Queensland, on March 22nd, 1922.

Nest.—Ovate, with entrance at side, placed in a shallow depression in the ground in short fine grass between a stool of a few stalks of long grass, and a small shrub; composed of soft, dry, narrow blades of long grass and stalks of fine grass. Outside measurements: Width $5\frac{1}{2}$ inches, depth 5 inches, length 6 inches, entrance $3\frac{3}{4}$ inches wide by 3 inches deep; inside width 4 inches, depth 4 inches; length $4\frac{3}{4}$ inches; depression in which placed 1 inch deep. (For nests see Plates 2 and 4).

Co-Types.—Clutch, four eggs, more heavily blotched than the Type clutch (especially Spm. D), and not quite such pointed specimens. (Incubation fresh.) Measurement in inches:—A, $1.12 \times .93$; B, $1.17 \times .93$; C, $1.12 \times .93$; D, $1.08 \times .93$.

Taken by W. McLennan at Coen, Cape York Peninsula, North Queensland, on March 24th, 1922.

Nest was situated in a very thinly grassed patch—thin stools of long grass widely scattered, with short fine grass growing between, placed at the base of a stool of long grass amongst short, fine grass. Nest spherical, composed of narrow blades of long, dry grass and short, dry grass, and a couple of dead leaves of ironbark tree with the grass in the egg chamber.

Measurements.—Outside: Width 5 inches, depth $5\frac{1}{4}$ inches, length $5\frac{1}{2}$ inches; a few ragged ends of grass project 5 inches beyond the entrance. Entrance: Width $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches, depth 3 inches. Inside: Width and depth $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches, length $4\frac{3}{4}$ inches; depression in ground $\frac{1}{2}$ inch in depth.
