The Cuckoo and the Red-capped Robins.—During the season 1922-23 I found six nests of the Red-capped Robin (Petroica goodenovii), all of which contained an egg of the Narrow-billed Bronze Cuckoo (Chalcites basalis). From the similarity of the eggs and the fact that I saw only one Cuckoo near these nests, I feel reasonably certain that the same Cuckoo laid all the eggs. The owners of the first nest were victimised twice; the Cuckoo laying again after I had removed her first egg. Apparently the Cuckoo laid every second day. On September 25th, I found the first nest, containing only a Robin’s egg. On the 26th, it contained only a Cuckoo’s egg, which I removed. On the 28th, the Cuckoo laid again in the same nest.

On the 29th, I found nest number two, containing two Robin’s eggs, and the 30th only one Robin’s egg, and also a Cuckoo’s. Later I found nests three, four, and five, also victimised. On November 5th, I found nest number six, which, owing to the advanced stage of incubation of the eggs, was the only one at which I had hopes of securing a picture. The tree, growing on the edge of an embankment, was in a poor position for photography, being capable of approach only from one direction. Several pictures taken during afternoons were spoiled owing to the sun being in an unsatisfactory quarter, but the accompanying photograph, obtained in the morning, was more satisfactory.

Marc Cohn, R.A.O.U., Bendigo.

Stray Feathers

North Tasmanian Notes.—On a recent trip in car and on saddle round the north-west coast of Tasmania, as far as Balfour, about fifty miles south of Cape Grim, I made a few memoranda which may be of interest to some of your readers. First, a single specimen of the Black and White Fantail (Rhipidura leucoptera), of whose presence in the Huon district I notified you some years ago, was seen brandishing his misfitting tail on the pasture at Black River, near Stanley. At the latter place, also, the Brush Wattle-bird (Anthochaera chrysopera) has now become common, though unknown there up to within the last few years. On the vast heathy plains about the mouth of the Arthur River, the plaintive piping of the Grass Bird (Megalurus gramineus) was much heard. This bird is rare in many parts of Tasmania. In the low coastal scrub south of Tenina a flock of about twenty White Cockatoos was seen. Forty years ago these beautiful birds could be seen in large flocks in the grain fields; now the verdict is: “We seldom see them.”—G. Murray Anderson, “Raggal,” New Town, Hobart.
Australian Sea-Birds.—Through the courtesy of Mr. J. A. Kershaw, F.E.S., Curator, I have been permitted to look over the bird-skins in the National Museum. I have noticed three species of sea-birds that are not on any Australian list, so far as I am aware, namely:—Two specimens of the Antarctic Petrel (Thalassarche antarctica), "from and identified by J. Gould"; one from South Australian seas, the other from Australian seas; one specimen of the Snowy, or Ice, Petrel (Pagodroma nivea), "from and identified by J. Gould," marked Australian seas; and a specimen of the Antarctic Skua (Megalestes maccormicki), taken by N. Batchelor, at Queenscliff, Victoria. When one considers the long Antarctic night and consequent frozen rigours of the far south, it is not surprising that the above-mentioned Antarctic-breeding species should occasionally make their way into lower and more temperate latitudes in the seas of Southern Australia.—A. J. Campbell, F.A.O.U., Melbourne.

Reviews.


The issue of Part XVIII completes a publication of the greatest value to all working ornithologists and bird-lovers. Originality in plan, practical utility and accuracy of detail are claimed for this work, which is the result of great labour and much research.

The information under each species being divided into sections and given in uniform order is easy of reference. All the birds on the British List are included.

Keys to the Orders, Families, Genera and Species are given as guides to identification.

Descriptions are more complete than any hitherto published in book form. They include in each species the plumages and mouls of both sexes from season to season, as well as the changes from nesting to maturity under separate headings.

Characters and Allied Forms is a useful section in which the chief characteristics of the species and how it differs from near allies on the British List are shown.

Field Characters.—In this section discriminating notes are given of points of distinction in the bird's appearance "in the field," of flight, notes and song, and other habits. The section dealing with breeding habits deals concisely with breeding habitat, nest, size and construction; eggs, colour, number in clutch and size; breeding season; incubation period and share of sexes, and fledgling period where known. The food, so far as is known,