

Breeding of the Gang-Gang Cockatoo.

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IN 1920 a pair of Gang-gang Cockatoos (*Callocephalon fimbriatus*) were obtained from Mme. Lécallier's aviaries, of which I was then in charge. The cock was a bird newly imported from Australia, the hen an acclimatized bird from the Marquess of Tavistock's aviaries.

On arrival they were placed in separate cages while an aviary was being built for them. This was 16 feet long and 14 feet wide, with the centre 12 feet high. The reason for this extra height in the centre was to allow them to get high up out of reach, and to enable a nesting-barrel to be fixed high up, as I believe it is their natural habit in the wild state to nest in very high trees. This arrangement evidently pleased them, as they were nearly always in the higher part, in which was a dead pear tree on which they perched. This part of the cages was covered about 3 feet square with board and zinc, to give protection from the sun and to form a dry shelter for them.

Under this shelter was placed a five-gallon wine-cask, the end of which was covered with one-inch board and zinc, with an entrance hole $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches in diameter. The zinc covering was to prevent them from cutting a larger hole. They also had a covered shelter 14 feet long and 3 ft. 6 in. wide, with a perch and a dead pear-tree. This was covered in front with boards about 3 feet down from the roof.

The birds were placed in this aviary in May, 1920, but did nothing that season in the way of nesting. Early in May, 1921, I saw them mating, and as they were now using the nesting barrel, I began to have every hope that they would breed. On June 1st I looked to see if there were any eggs, but found none. On June 3rd the barrel was still empty, but on the 4th I saw the first egg. On the 6th I saw a second egg, and this completed the clutch. The birds seemed not to be disturbed in any way by my looking into the nest. During incubation, whenever the hen came off to feed the cock took her place. She always came off in the afternoon for an hour and a half or two hours.

The first egg hatched on July 4th. The young bird died next day and I removed it and have it preserved in alcohol. When I was removing the dead chick I saw that the second egg was about to hatch, and this took place on July 6th. The newly hatched young were covered with rusty red down. Eight days later I again looked into the nest and could see that the young one had grown and was being well attended to. The birds were left quiet and I did not look into the barrel again until the young one was a month old, as I could hear it in the nest. At this age the young bird was covered with feather-stubs of a grey-blue colour, those on the wings, tail and chest being longer than those on the body. When it was six weeks old red colour began to appear in the crest, showing that it was a cock bird.

After this the young bird gained feathers very quickly, and during the eleventh week I saw him looking out of the nest. On the morning

of Sept. 4th I found him sitting on the dead pear tree, and was pleased to see that he was a fine strong bird, not specially wild. He resembled the hen bird in form and colour, except that he had a red crest, not so bright as that of an old cock, and only a few red feathers on the cheeks, with a dark streak on each side of the beak. He could fly well and could often be seen with his parents at the feeding tray. If a stranger entered the aviary the hen would cry loudly, and the cock would fly to the young one as if to guard it from danger. During October I caught the young bird and placed it in the larger bird room, where it did well. The complete scarlet helmet was obtained when a year old.

As cage-birds, the Gang-gangs appeared to be hardy, and in no way affected by the cold, provided they had a good dry shelter to go into. Mr. A. S. Le Souef afterwards brought over two more pairs from Australia, so that Mme. Lécallier had three pairs in addition to the young bird reared. They are very interesting birds when in a large aviary. Their amusement seems to be cutting up all the woodwork and perches that they can get at. They were fed on sunflower, wheat, oats, hemp and canary seed, white boiled maize, bread and milk, and a little pear or apple.

Most of the foregoing information was published in the *Avicultural Magazine*, Jan. 1922, but I think it may prove of special interest to ornithologists in Australia.

Birds of Murrayville.

BY REV. W. WALTERS, TH. SCHOL., R.A.O.U., Cowangie, Vic.

Now that the party under the leadership of Mr. J. A. Ross has rendered service to the Murrayville district and to the R.A.O.U. by compiling the main body of a permanent bird list of a typical Mallee district, it would be well to extend it from time to time and to keep it up to date. With that end in view the following notes are supplied. Some of the birds mentioned are well distributed through the district although they cannot be looked upon as common. Others are rare specimens or occasional visitors.

Emu (*Dromaius novae-hollandiae*). In *The Emu*, Vol. XXV. p. 177, Mr. Ross mentioned the new tracks of a pair of these birds. At times they visit even the settled parts of the district in great numbers. On one occasion, about September or October of 1924, Mr. Burzacott, a farmer at Walpa, north of Murrayville, noted upwards of 50 birds feeding in his paddocks. Their arrival in large numbers at this time was probably due to the settlement of the Millewa Country. Occasionally they are seen near the Ouyen-Pinnaroo railway, and even within a few chains of a township.