



Little Penguin (*Eudyptula minor*) on nest at The Nobbles, Phillip
Island, Victoria.

Photo by D. Dickson, Hon. Gen. Sec., R.A.O.C.



Young Horsfield Bronze Cuckoo, in nest of Superb Blue Wren.
Photo by D. Dickison, R.A.O.U.



Hooded Robin, in immature plumage, at nest.
Photo by Alex. D. Selby, R.A.O.U.

Camera Craft

Little Penguins on Phillip Island.—One of the interesting features of Phillip Island is the small rookery of Little Penguins (*Eudyptula minor*) along Shelly Beach, at the Nobbies. The birds nest there freely during November and December in each year, usually selecting a shallow burrow or the space under a drooping bush of marram grass, in which to lay their two dirty white eggs. When I visited the rookery early in December, 1925, I found the birds were in various stages of breeding. Some were still sitting on eggs, while in other instances fully feathered young were concealing themselves under the bushes. I have been informed by the Chief Inspector of Fisheries and Game (Mr. F. Lewis) that the rookery is being rapidly depleted by foxes, which make destructive raids upon the birds. Although efforts are being made to exterminate the foxes on the island, it is feared that the Penguins will be unable to maintain their existence in any numbers much longer. — D. DICKISON, Hon. Gen. Sec., R.A.O.U.

* * *

Horsfield Bronze Cuckoo and Blue Wren.—When a nest of a Superb Blue Wren (*Malurus cyaneus*) was found near Lilydale in November, 1925, there were four partly incubated eggs in it, but a fortnight later one young bird had been hatched and the other eggs were missing. The fledgling eventually proved to be a Horsfield or Narrow-billed Bronze Cuckoo (*Chalcites basalis*). It had apparently ejected the young Wrens from the nest as soon as they were hatched, though no trace of them could be found on the ground beneath the nest. The voracity of the Cuckoo kept its foster parents constantly engaged in supplying it with food. A week later the young Cuckoo was almost fully feathered, and had developed so rapidly that it had burst the entrance of the nest to twice its natural size. — D. DICKISON, R.A.O.U., Melbourne.

* * *

The Nesting of Hooded Robins.—Having spent much time in observing the nesting habits of Hooded Robins (*Melanodryas cucullata*), I was beginning to feel sure that the male bird took no part in the incubation of eggs or feeding the young. While photographing the female, however, I was pleasantly surprised to see a male arrive and feed the young while the female was absent. I snapped him, but was disappointed to find that the negative was a mere blur, though the exposure was only 1-60 sec. The following week I tried again, and succeeded in getting a fair picture, in spite of harsh lighting effects. It will be noted that this particular male is not in mature plumage, the deep black of the full-fledged male being shown only as a darker grey. He was very busy, and made many trips

to the nest while I was watching, though he knew I was there; in fact, I was not more than eight feet away when I released the shutter by means of a thread. The camera was 20 inches from the bird. The hen Robin was remarkably tame, and apparently indifferent to the presence of the camera, but the male was rather shy. The nest was low down in a grape vine. Since then I have startled a male from another nest, but this nest also had young birds in it, so now I am of opinion that the males sometimes feed the young. This second male was in full plumage, but I have never seen a male go to the nest when the hen is sitting. Perhaps other members have. —ALEX. D. SELBY, R.A.O.U., Quantong P.O., Vic.

* * *

The Little Wattle-Bird.—During the spring months the Little Wattle-Bird (*Lathochara chrysoptera*) is much in evidence among the gardens of the North Shore suburbs of Sydney. Many inquiries are made by local residents regarding the bird that makes "that awful noise," and it is not surprising that its persistent raucous squawks have made it more familiar than the many other denizens of our flowering shrubs. Mr. H. Wolstenholme has given an account of the nesting habits of a pair which reared their young in his garden at Wahroonga (*Emu*, XXVI., pp. 302-304). During September, a pair is often to be seen feeding on a clump of waratahs at my home. I had several attempts to photograph them in this situation, but in spite of my patience they always kept away from the particular flower on which my camera was focussed. At the time of writing, May, a pair came down every day to ripe persimmons in the garden. The large Red Wattle-Bird (*Lathochara carunculata*) is also there, but never in company with the former; and, whereas the large fellows usually denote their presence by their familiar cries, the others are comparatively silent at present. Then, again, I have tried my luck with the camera, but the same result with the waratahs has so far held true for the persimmons. In October, 1926, I spent a day at the nest in Mr. Wolstenholme's garden, mentioned above, but while I was there the parent birds visited the nest only twice, and then in bad positions for photography. In September, the following year, I found a nest far more conveniently placed than the former. It was situated about nine feet up in a slim sapling, near a frequented path. The clumsy structure was placed at the junction of a horizontal twig, and owing to the wind that was then blowing, I was doubtful if the birds would get their nestlings safely away. The nest, when found, contained a young bird and an egg, which hatched soon after. One afternoon a few days later I obtained a few pictures of the bird at this nest. The tree was tied firmly on account of a stiff breeze, and some of the near-by saplings were bent aside to expose the nest to the sun. The bird came readily, and when settled, had to be touched with a stick to be disturbed, although once or twice she stayed away



The Olive-backed Oriole eating a Pomegranate.



The Little Wattle-Bird at Nest.

Photos by H. C. Barry, R.A.O.U.

for a considerable time. Several other bird photographers visited the nest later, but with disappointing results. Perhaps the bird was aware of the frailness of her tree, and the wind blowing at first had the desirable effect of bringing her more readily to her home. — H. C. BARRY. R.A.O.U., Wahroonga, New South Wales.

Stray Feathers

Early Nesting of Birds in North-eastern Victoria.—The present early season has had a marked effect on the nesting of many birds. During the early part of May, I was surprised to observe in the Chiltern district, Eastern Rosella Parrots (*Platycercus eximius*) preparing nesting hollows in fence posts—a favourite site, since the available natural hollows have been polluted by Starlings. On 8th May, a pair of Eastern Shrike-Tits (*Falcunculus frontatus*) had a nest almost ready for eggs. Several nests of birds of prey, probably Whistling Eagles (*Haliastur sphenurus*), which were examined, contained fresh green eucalyptus leaves, indicating that the nests were soon to be occupied. Bird life was prolific in the district, a list of seventy species being made during a fortnight's observation. Twenty-four species were noted in an afternoon outing with the scholars of Cornishtown State School.—N. A. R. ARNOLD, R.A.O.U., Melbourne.

Migrants to Northern Tasmania in 1928.—Although the Welcome Swallows, Wood-Swallows and most of the Pipits left at the end of March (there was a spell of rain and cold during the first week of April), yet one pair of Welcome Swallows (*Hirundo neoxena*) remained about the streets right through the winter, and seemed to pick up a good living. The same species was also noted in Launceston. In Hobart one individual was seen on a building at the corner of two principal streets on 3rd July, so that a few pairs evidently winter with us throughout the island, and not only in the comparatively mild north-west. A Fan-tailed Cuckoo (*Cacomantis flabelliformis*) was heard in a Launceston garden at the end of June, and on 7th July, a warm, spring-like morning, one was sitting on my garden fence, uttering the double-whistle, which is the representative of the "Cuckoo" note of the British bird. This individual had a bright rufous throat and breast, much more so than the usual run of these birds. On 6th May, several Pipits (*Anthus australis*) appeared, feeding in a cultivated paddock, and on 25th June three more were seen in a rough grass paddock. On 28th July, a Fan-tailed Cuckoo was calling with the soft trill, as distinguished from the double-whistle previously heard. No Spine-tailed Swifts (*Hirundapus caudacuta*) were seen last summer (Dec., 1927, to April, 1928) by myself, although a friend told me that on 14th March he saw a small party pass over Devonport at 6.30 p.m., flying fast, and heading north-west, as if