

The Yellow Tufted Honeyeater.—This bird (*Meliphaga melanops*) is of an active disposition, especially during the breeding season, which commences late in July and continues until December or even later. The species often congregates in scrub flocks and delights in darting through the scrub incessantly chattering; it is an unforgettable sight to watch them playing on a quiet spring morning when the dew drops are still clinging to the foliage. In the autumn and winter months they leave their erst-while haunts for the wooded gullies; here among the outer foliage of the tall eucalypts they unobtrusively seek insects and blossoms. The bird seems to prefer for nesting haunts sloping hillsides covered with a thick under-scrub and an open growth of trees. Sometimes they will build close to the earth, though more often in a small shrub some three or four feet high. The nest is cup-shaped and composed of strips of bark, grass and spiders' cocoons, and lined with fine grass stalks and feathers. The two, occasionally three, eggs may vary somewhat in colouration; mostly they are marked with dark red spots, having an underlying colour of light purple on a white or pale pink ground.—K. A. HINDWOOD, R.A.O.U.

Stray Feathers

Swift Drinking.—When on the Snowy River, N.S.W., in February, 1929, I was interested in the actions of a Spine-tailed Swift (*Hirundapus caudacutus*). The bird was flying in an ellipse of about a quarter of a mile and on every circuit just touched the surface of the water. Careful scrutiny showed that the bird was apparently drinking. Its pace I judged to be not less than one hundred miles an hour, and I wondered at the precision which enabled the bird to take one sip each time at this tremendous speed. It was not picking up insects from the surface of the river, as on every contact with the water it touched exactly the same spot.—A. S. LE SOUEF, R.A.O.U., Sydney.

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Hawks in the Kosciusko District.—In February last, when in the vicinity of the junction of the Thredbo and Snowy Rivers, N.S.W., I saw an abnormal number of Hawks of several species. These were generally in open patches of grassy land, and were apparently attracted by an enormous number of grasshoppers, some of which (*Acridopeza* sp.) were about half the size of mice, and unable to fly. It is evident that these active predacious birds will not disdain easily-captured insect prey if available.—A. S. LE SOUEF, R.A.O.U., Sydney.



Yellow-tufted Honeyeater at nest.

Photo. by K. A. Hindwood, R.A.O.U.