

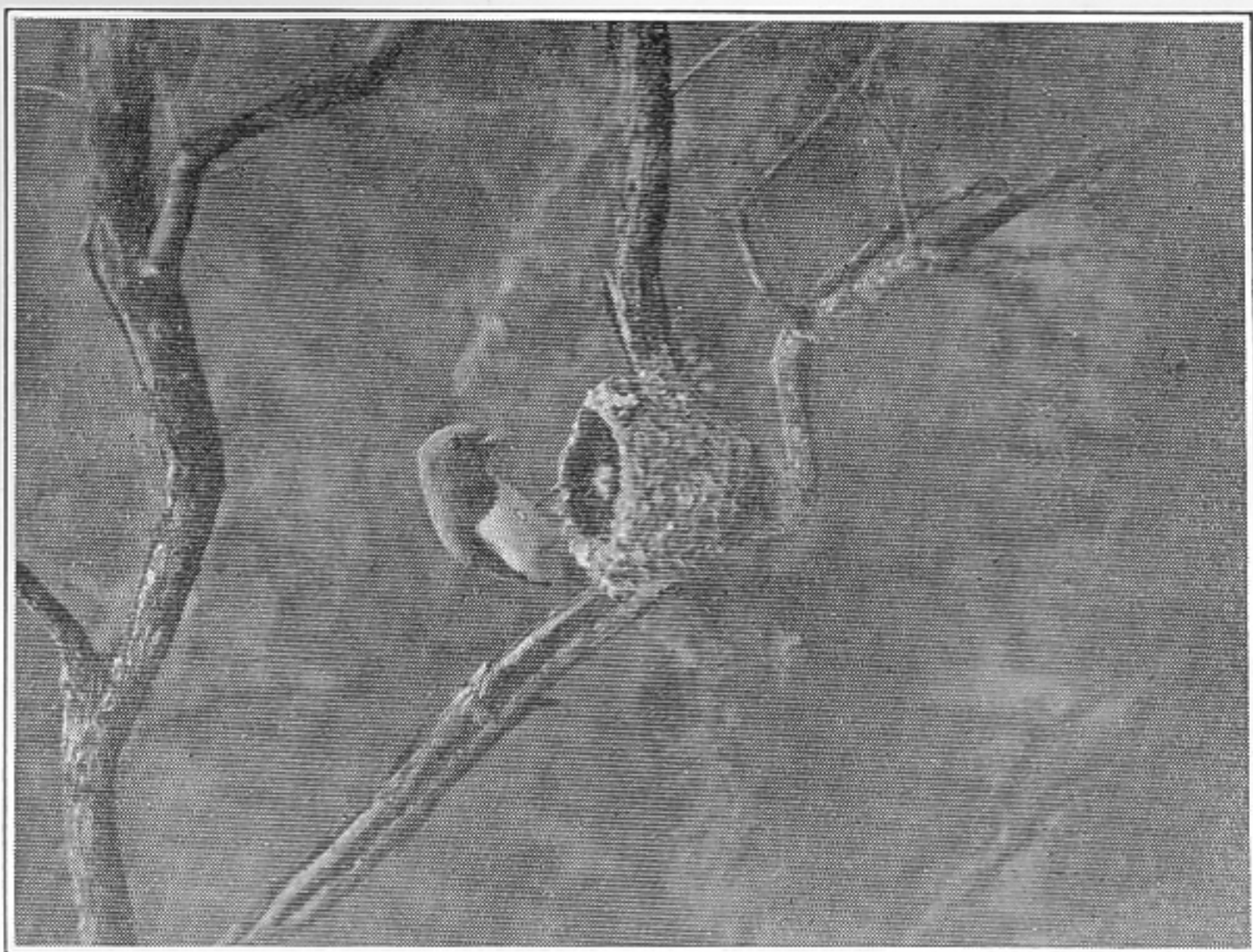
Realising from the size of these young ones that they would not leave the nest for some days, and anticipating that the photos. taken would not be too successful, I intended again visiting the nest the following week-end. On the Friday afternoon, however, a vagrant Kookaburra, I am informed by Mr. Hanks, discovered the nest, and before anything could be done to prevent him, dined on the young Leaden Flycatchers. The parent birds have now built again in an inaccessible position nearby.—C. E. BRYANT, R.A.O.U., 21/1/30.

Notes on Swifts.—One warm morning, February 6, 1930, chancing to look up, I observed an unusual flight of Swifts. There were hundreds of them, far overhead, in a dense party, each bird circling in and out of the flock like gnats playing in the sunshine. But the whole mass kept moving steadily southward as well.

For about a month past a party of Spine-tailed Swifts (*Hirundapus caudacutus*) has come each afternoon to feed in the vicinity of Mt. Dandenong. I have not noted such regularity before. Flying "white ants" and other winged forms have been plentiful since the early rains. On one occasion, from a large sugar ants' nest in the ground, thousands of mature insects streamed out, ascended an adjacent stump, and took wing. Circling above, so low that the swish of wings could be heard, the Swifts accounted for them all.

One bird struck a telephone wire and was found clinging to a tree. Beyond a small mark it was uninjured, but made no attempt to fly. It was in plump condition and good feather. The bird ran upwards with great agility, progressing, not by hopping as a tree-creeper does, but by rapid steps. The feet are very powerful, the claws strongly recurved and sharp enough to make tiny punctures when the bird clasps the hand. The bird seemed to prefer resting under some projection like a piece of bark, a knot, or against an overhanging branch. It ascended a clean dry pole with the greatest of ease. Placed in a cardboard box, however, it was not comfortable, and scuttled about continuously. But in a kerosene case it clung to the smooth side for hours and appeared to rest all night without changing position.

In a clinging position the tail is spread fanwise for support. The natural adaptation of the extraordinary spine point for this purpose is obvious. When handled the Swift called frequently, a querulous note something like that of the Little Tern. In calm weather I have heard this call from birds on the wing.—A. G. CAMPBELL, Kilsyth, March 15, 1930.



Leaden Flycatcher at nest.



Spine-tailed Swift.

Photo. by C. E. Bryant, R.A.O.U.