

several Petrels. Possibly, they had been captured by a pair of White-bellied Sea Eagles, which are occasionally seen in the vicinity. It is now deserted by the Petrels. Foxes are now plentiful, and, no doubt, they have killed off the birds which nested there.

From the camp at Sandy Cape to the north head of Jurien Bay, a distance of seven miles, are the sites of eight Ospreys' nests, several however, are very old, and have not been used for years. Owing to the absence of trees close to the coast, several pairs of Ravens have built their nests on small ledges and crevices on the cliffs, both at Sandy Cape, and the North Head of Jurien Bay.

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**Notes on Cuckoos.**—An unusually large number of double Cuckoo combinations have been discovered by Sydney ornithologists during the breeding season now terminating (January, 1931). No less than five such combinations have been observed, some of which probably have the distinction of being unique. When seeking reasons for this curious phenomenon, there arise two questions: Is there a superabundance of Cuckoos about Sydney this season or, on the other hand, is there a comparative scarcity of suitable foster-parents?

My own observations suggest that the common passerine birds nesting appear to be less numerous (especially migratory visitors from the north), but the occurrences of all species of Cuckoos—with the possible exception of the Fan-tailed Cuckoo (*Cacomantis flabelliformis*)—are exceedingly rarer also.

The Yellow-throated Scrub-Wren (*Sericornis lathamii*) and the Fan-tailed Cuckoo furnish rather an interesting point in this respect, for, of over 50 nests examined during the 1929-30 season, only one contained the egg of a Cuckoo, whilst among the 30 nests examined during the current season, no less than five Fan-tailed Cuckoos' eggs were discovered. This may suggest that the Fan-tailed Cuckoo, finding that the more difficultly-located nests of the White-browed Scrub-Wren (*S. frontalis*) and Rock Warbler (*Origma rubricata*) were much scarcer than previously, has resorted more to the more openly-situated Yellow-throats' nests for its parasitic attentions.

The combinations previously referred to are as follows:—

(a) 2 Brown Thornbill (*Acanthiza pusilla*); 1 Fan-tailed Cuckoo (*Cacomantis flabelliformis*); 1 Golden Bronze Cuckoo (*Lamprolaima placens*).

NOTES:—(R. Gannon's), 21-9-30. Eggs were present; nest appeared to have been deserted. Entrance slightly larger than normally. 27-9-30. Nest deserted; nest and contents collected.

An almost identical combination was observed in a deserted nest of *A. pusilla* in 1916; the only dissimilarity being an egg of *Chalcites basalis* instead of *L. plagosus*. See Stone, page 108, Vol. XVI., *The Emu*.

(b) 1 Rock Warbler (*Origma rubricata*); 2 Fan-tailed Cuckoo.

NOTES:—20/9/30. Found by J. N. King in the Picton district.

(c) 1 Red-eyed Bulbul (*Otocompsa emeria*); 2 Pallid Cuckoo (*Cuculus pallidus*).

NOTES:—16-12-30. Observed at Penshurst.

(d) 1 Blue Wren (*Malurus cyaneus*); 2 Narrow-billed Bronze Cuckoo (*Chalcites basalis*).

NOTES:—18-12-30, noted by Miss C. Sharpe at Beralla.

(e) 1 Yellow-throated Scrub-Wren (*Sericornis lathamii*); 2 Fan-tailed Cuckoo.

NOTES:—23-12-30. Observed by J. N. King, at Lilyvale, eggs heavily incubated.—A. J. MARSHALL, R.A.O.U., Penshurst, N.S.W.

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**Kingfisher Ejecting Pellet.**—On January 22, 1931, while watching a pair of Sacred Kingfishers (*Halcyon sanctus*) feeding their young in a hole in a termite's nest on a dead gum tree, I saw the female alight on a bare branch near me and watched her through my glasses. After sitting still for three or four minutes she opened and closed her bill three times and the last time ejected a round dark pellet. After a careful search I found the pellet, about the size of a large pea, but oval, dark brown and moist. I carried it home and examined it through a powerful magnifying glass, and found it to be composed of minute fragments apparently of beetles' wing cases, some red and some purple, also some gauzy bits of wings and some thread-like fragments resembling antennæ, as well as many straight pieces that might be parts of insects' legs—all very minute and hundreds of them altogether. This is the third species of bird I have seen eject pellets, but it is the first pellet I have been able to find. I have several times seen Rainbow-Birds (*Merops ornatus*) eject them, and once a Bittern (*Botaurus poiciloptilus*) perched on a tree above a creek into which the pellet fell.—E. COMRIE SMITH, R.A.O.U., Brisbane, Queensland.

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