

Perhaps a solitary one can be heard at times, but the majority have gone and no one has seen them leave. One presumes they withdraw in a succession of short journeys, for otherwise their unusual movements would have been noticed. Doubtless they return in the same manner, as in September we shall hear their excited cries one spring morning and find that they are back again to nest in Nelson City.

Black-faced Cuckoo-Shrike.—Early in March this year (1931) I had the good fortune to observe the change of plumage in Cuckoo-Shrikes (*Coracina novæ-hollandiæ*). Towards the end of January the birds seemed to disappear from my district, but about six weeks later they returned. When I observed them for the first time after they had returned, that is, on March 7, I noted that they had lost the black feathers on their heads, and had only a faint black mark around the eye. The following week-end I observed them again, and found that the black had widened out above and below the eye, and also from the bill to about half an inch behind the eye. From March 14 to April 4 I observed the birds two or three times a week until at the end of about five weeks from their coming the birds had the full black face.—W. HEATHCOTE, R.A.O.U., Pascoe Vale, Vic.

Grey Butcher-Bird.—It is not often one sees this bird committing a predatory act, and it was not until one day recently that I was witness to a tragedy in which a Sparrow fell victim to old *Cracticus*. I happened to be at one of the local (St. Mary's) garages, having a minor detail attended to on my car, when I saw a Butcher-Bird swoop down on the footpath close at hand, and seize one of a pair of Sparrows that were on the ground hopping about in search of food. The robber flew with his prey up on to the high paling fence bordering the footpath, when the prey escaped temporarily, fluttering down into some tall grass in the vacant allotment on the other side. After the lapse of a few seconds the Butcher-Bird flew down, and again seized its already disabled victim, and departed with it across the main road to the seclusion of a row of *Lambertiana*, about 80 yards distant. From what I managed to see of the larger bird's first onslaught, he must have been watching from the boughs of a tall wattle standing on the bank of the rivulet some 50 yards away at the rear of the spot where the Sparrows were. *Cracticus* is, as most poultry keepers know to their cost, a notorious chicken-stealer, but this is the first occasion in 32 years of fairly close observation of the bird around my home, that I have actually seen him take live prey.—ROBT. W. LEGGE, R.A.O.U., Cullenswood, Tasmania.