

Stray Feathers

Occurrence of Large Sand-Dotterel in South-west Australia.—In August, 1932, I found several Large Sand-Dotterels (*Charadrius leschenaulti*) feeding on seaweed just uncovered by the sea at Augusta, S.W. Australia, and shot one for identification. On looking up records of the occurrence of this bird in South-west Australia, I found that, although they have been reported as occurring on the North-west coast, no record appears to exist of their occurrence further south. The Perth Museum, whilst it has several skins of this bird from Onslow and other localities in the North-west, has no specimen from the South-west. That the bird wanders right to the south-west corner of Australia is only to be expected from the fact of its normal occurrence in the North-west, but a definite instance of its occurrence near Cape Leeuwin is worth recording in *The Emu*.—H. M. WHITTELL, R.A.O.U., Bridgetown, W.A., 22. 11/33.

The Helmeted Honeyeater.—An extension of the known range at present of the Helmeted Honeyeater (*Meliphaga cassidix*) is to be recorded. Last year, while fishing in the upper reaches of the Woori Yallock Creek, my son, John K. Campbell, stated that he saw birds answering the description of this species. In September, 1933, in company, we visited the spot, and came across four birds disporting themselves by the creek, and others further up. The Woori Yallock runs through wooded hills in a northerly direction to join the Yarra. The locality is about two miles south of Parslow's Bridge. As far as I can discover, this is the only other instance, in addition to a record from Hoddle's Creek, the next upstream tributary of the Yarra, of this rare Victorian Honeyeater being seen in the Yarra watershed since the time when the type nest and eggs were taken on the Olinda Creek, near Lilydale, in 1884.—A. G. CAMPBELL, R.A.O.U., Kilsyth, Vic., Sep., 1933.

Erratum.—In my list of birds seen in my garden at Roseville, I listed *Smicrornis flavescens*. That is wrong, and should read *Acanthiza nana*. Since the list was published I have removed to an adjoining suburb a little further north, viz., Lindfield. Here I am a little closer to one of our North-shore gullies, and I find birds more numerous in the garden. On November 25 I heard the Koel (*Eudynamis orientalis*), or "Flinders Cuckoo," as it used to be called, working its way down south via the coastal scrubs. The "coo-ee"-like cry is uttered for about an hour after sunrise. This bird I have heard as far south

as Sussex Inlet. The late A. J. North, in *Birds Found Breeding in Australia and Tasmania*, Vol. III, p. 29, states that a specimen was taken at Hunter's Hill, a nearby suburb to mine, on January 20, 1898.—E. A. D'OMBRAIN, Lindfield, N.S.W.

Notes on Incubation Period of the Lyrebird.—Strolling along the bank of a creek on the morning of June 11 this year (1933), I became interested in a particular patch of scrub about 20 feet across, which had been scratched practically clean, except for small trees, etc., obviously by Lyrebirds in search of food. On a ledge of rock some 4 feet above the ground on the high side were a few sticks, forming the first stages of the walls of a nest. A week later (June 18), the nest was very nearly completed. The bird was by this time putting the finishing touches to the lining. It remained apparently unchanged, except for a very few feathers, until the egg was laid on or just before July 2. Thus, from the time of commencing to build until the laying of the egg was about 21 days.

During the building operations, the bird did not appear to object to my presence, and allowed me to watch as she went about gathering material and placing it in position. Once the egg was laid, however, she became very shy, and however quietly I approached I was fortunate if I as much as caught a glimpse of her as she left the nest.

On visiting the nest on July 22, the bird was sitting very closely, and after securing a photograph of the female sitting, I decided to try and get one of her off the nest, but calling, shouting, and even throwing sticks almost on to the nest itself failed to disturb her, and she allowed me to approach to about 7 feet, directly in front of the nest, before leaving. Returning later, she was seen to be carrying a feather, which she placed in the nest, and, selecting another from the inside, departed again, dropping it as she went. Outside the nest were a number of these discarded feathers, indicating that she apparently kept changing them, thus keeping the lining fresh. Also there were a lot more feathers than when the egg was laid.

On August 5 the bird was not nearly so tame. On approaching to within about 8 feet it suddenly took wing from the edge of the nest, and, with a laboured flight, flew for a distance of about 60 yards, and attained a height of about 40 feet over the gully, uttering a succession of alarmed calls as she flew.

Incubation occupied seven weeks, as the chick was estimated to be about a day old on August 20.—E. L. BRADFORD. R.A.O.U., Roseville, N.S.W.. 25. 9. 33.



Female Lyrebird, sitting.

Photo. by E. L. Bradford, R.A.O.U.

Notes from "Coomooboolaroo."—In looking over the article, "A Review of the Birds on Coomooboolaroo", *The Emu*, Vol. XXIV, Part 4, page 252 (April, 1925), I find that during the eight years since those observations were recorded, the numbers and habits of some of the species mentioned have considerably altered, so that the former records need revising to bring them up to date. As this will apply to only a few of the species recorded, I propose in comparison, to include the former record in quotations so that readers can see at a glance the alteration that has taken place during that period.

Plain Wanderer (*Pedionomus torquatus*).—"One was shot over 30 years ago." Recently a dead one was picked up close to the house, apparently having been run over by a motor car. No others have been seen.

Squatter Pigeon (*Geophaps scripta*).—"A plentiful species until about two years after the 1902 drought, when they almost suddenly disappeared from all over this part of the country. They are still to be seen along the coastal roads about 60 miles north of Rockhampton (about 130 miles from here)." They are apparently making their way back towards these parts again as they have been recorded from several places about thirty miles away. Only single specimens so far have been seen about here, but last year a bird was flushed from a nest on the ground containing four eggs. As the "Squatter" lays only two eggs, it looked as if two birds had laid in the same nest.

Jacana (*Irediparra gallinacea*).—"A very rare visitor on the water-lily leaves on the lagoon." During the last year or two quite a number have frequented the Homestead lagoon, as many as five being seen together.

Bustard (*Eupodotis australis*).—"Only occurs as a visitor when drought conditions prevail further west, and the Plain Turkeys travel towards the coast." More continuously seen of late years, probably on account of more country being ring-barked, making more-favourable living conditions.

Winking Owl (*Ninox connivens*).—"Fairly common. Several nests have been found." For some reason has neither been seen nor heard for some years.

Shell Parrot (*Melopsittacus undulatus*).—"Appeared during the 1902 drought. Still seen occasionally." Has been quite plentiful for the last year.

White-backed Swallow (*Cheramæca leucosterna*).—"Only seen on occasion a few years ago when a flock was flying about for one day." Quite recently saw a few near the Homestead.

Orange-backed Wren (*Malurus melanocephalus*).—"Previous to the big drought of 1902 this Wren was plentiful everywhere where there was long grass, and one family

was always close about, if not in, the garden. After the break-up of the drought it was about three years before any were seen in the neighbourhood, and now, over twenty years since the drought, are still very scarce. In 1903 I noticed that they were very plentiful in the long grass a little north of Rockhampton, less than a hundred miles away." Still scarce, but becoming more plentiful. The run of poor seasons that has prevailed for some years now has been against their increase, as the grass has not grown long enough for shelter from their enemies.

Blue-faced Honeyeater (*Entomyzon cyanotis*).—"A common and useful species, frequently seen busily picking scale off the garden shrubs. It usually meets in deserted homes of Babblers, but occasionally builds its own nest." Has become troublesome as a fruit-eater of recent years, picking a round hole in ripe mandarins and sucking the juice. It is also eating grapes.

I have nothing further to add about all the other species mentioned in the 1925 record.—C. A. BARNARD, R.A.O.U., "Coomooboolaroo," Qld., 14/10/33.
