

them of the sticky seeds. Bill-wiping, then, is surely an important factor, in Australia, as in other countries.

Mistletoe-birds have favourite fruiting clumps to which they return to load up after feeding nestlings and removing excrement sacs.\* In some instances a tenacious sac will be wiped off in the same tree, and as the adults are feeding themselves they too will defecate. This explains why there are so many infestations on one tree, whilst nearby trees are unaffected. Excrement sacs are distinguished from droppings. One sees scores of the latter on vegetation beneath an infested tree, often consisting of strings of two or three large or five or six smaller seeds.

Mr. Littlejohns' observations appear to have been made chiefly on gum tree mistletoes. There are many Australian species which have been less studied, the fruits of which vary in size, shape and colour, some being orange, red, white, semi-transparent, etc., and, doubtless, the number of mistletoe-loving birds has been as little studied. Of the 550 species of mistletoe, which extend to countries in which no *Dicaeum* exists, it is certain that other birds disseminate the seeds. Why not in Australia? Germinating embryos in hundreds have been seen on telegraph lines in several countries. How did they get there other than by bill-wiping? Certainly not by droppings. Thousands were seen by Gosse on both upper and lower surfaces of sour-sop leaves. How did they become attached to the under surface except by bill-wiping, as the birds moved between the twigs? These observations were made by researchers whose achievements in their various fields entitle them to have their views read with an open mind.

\* How often are sacs seen to fall from the parent's bill?

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**Nocturnal Bird Song.**—E. F. Boehm (*Emu*, 50, p. 62) presents a useful basic list of diurnal birds which sing at night, remarking that the list is almost certainly incomplete.

There may be some difference of opinion as to the connotation of the term 'sing,' but I would suggest that at least some of the following species which I have heard at night should be included, namely—Masked Plover (*Lobibyx miles*), Banded Plover (*Zonifer tricolor*), Green-shank (*Tringa nebularia*), Black Swan (*Cygnus atrata*), Musk Duck (*Biziura lobata*), Horsfield Bronze-Cuckoo (*Chalcites basalis*), Koel (*Eudynamys orientalis*), Channel-billed Cuckoo (*Scythrops novæ-hollandiæ*), Pied Butcher-bird (*Craicticus nigrogularis*), Western Magpie (*Gymnorhina dorsalis*).—ERIC H. SEDGWICK, Leonora, W.A., 20/9/50.