

and are visible as a voluminous fume. The gases are exhausted to the atmosphere, and are carried away from the town by the prevailing south-east wind. Because of the sulphur dioxide content, the fumes are distressing to humans, if a period of calm, coupled with a change in wind direction, brings the fumes over a populated area. The effect upon domestic hens or other animals was not noted by me.

On a number of occasions single Black Kites and White-breasted Wood-Swallows (*Artamus leucorhynchus*) were noticed apparently deliberately flying in and out of the fumes. Unfortunately I did little but record the fact, and it was not until I read A. H. Chisholm's 'The History of Anting' (*Emu*, vol. 59, p. 101) that I realized the possible significance of the observations.

This last section is appended in the hope that future visitors to Mount Isa might be able to obtain further information. The practice was comparatively rare, and something more than a casual visit might be necessary to witness it.

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#### **Yellow-tailed Thornbill and Zebra Finch Nesting Record.**

—During the 1957 breeding season, a pair of Yellow-tailed Thornbills (*Acanthiza chrysorrhoa*) attempted to breed near the house in a Bunya pine tree. A nest was completed early in the season but it was taken by a pair of Zebra Finches (*Taeniopygia castanotis*). The Finches laid eggs in the nest, but, while the female was brooding, the pair of Thornbills pulled the nest to pieces and re-built it a few yards away. The Finches' eggs fell to the ground and were broken.

The female Zebra Finch laid another clutch of eggs in the second nest of the Thornbill, upon which the latter set about re-building—again. In all, the Thornbills built four nests, all of which were usurped by the same pair of Finches. After the fourth clutch was destroyed, the female Zebra Finch died and the Thornbills reared a brood in their fifth nest. In July 1958, the same pair of Thornbills built a nest in the tree but it was blown down by a strong wind. In August, a second nest was built. Four eggs were laid by the Thornbills in the bottom chamber, and five Zebra Finch eggs were laid in the top cup of the nest. Possibly the male in this case was the same bird that robbed the Thornbills in 1957. The Thornbills' nest was built so that the leaves formed a hood over the top cup, making it ideal for the Finches. The birds brooded their respective eggs for three days until a strong wind again blew the nest from the tree. The Thornbills built another nest and reared two broods from it, and the Finches reared young from a nest of their own a few yards away.—LLOYD NIELSEN, Allora, Qld., 12/5/59.