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**Courtship of Wedge-tailed Eagles.**—A sight not often recorded is that of intense courtship behaviour, culminating in copulation in raptorial birds. At Ginninderra, A.C.T., on August 23, 1966, I watched this in a pair of Wedge-tailed Eagles, *Aquila audax*.

The birds were first seen flapping slowly at a low altitude above a treeless, rounded hill. One of them was falling acrobatically with closed wings, then stalling, then flying higher and repeating this.

Suddenly they flew down together and landed on the hillside. The female ran uphill with the horizontal waddle eagles have, picked up a stick and immediately dropped it. Then she hopped onto a fallen tree. The male followed, offering a tuft of dry grass. This was taken by the female in her bill, then dropped.

Both flew to a dead tree and perched side by side. Throughout this time I could hear a monosyllabic call resembling the distant yelping of a dog. I could not determine which of the eagles was calling. It might have been both.

The birds were restless on their perch, and they soon flew to another dead tree, where their excitement seemed to increase. A large stick, apparently broken from the tree itself, was proffered to the female, accepted, and discarded. The female dropped to the ground, followed closely by the male, who circled her, seemingly trying to get behind; but she kept turning round to face him. The male stopped, picked, nibbled and dropped a short stick; then he mounted suddenly.

Copulation lasted about seven seconds, during which a high-

pitched whinnying sound was uttered. Immediately it was over, the female ran uphill, the male took off to chase a Raven which had been watching the proceedings from a few yards away.

Both eagles then returned to the second tree. At my last view of them, they were being harried by six Ravens and a magpie.

The observation was made from a distance of about 200 yards, using 7 x 50 binoculars. The male bird, as distinguished in copula, was smaller and had a golden-brown nape which was almost dazzling in sunlight. The larger, darker female had a dark-brown nape no different in colour from the rest of the plumage.

The time was close to noon of a fine day.—A. D'ANDRIA, 9 Torrens Street, Braddon, A.C.T.

**Courtship Feeding in Parasitic Cuckoos.**—The final paragraph of the interesting article "Who Feeds the Fledged Pallid Cuckoo?" (J. Kikkawa and P. D. Dwyer, 1962) states "Courtship feeding is not known for the parasitic cuckoos and it is doubtful whether they ever normally feed another bird." The need for further observations is also noted.

I was prompted to look up a field-note of mine relating to the feeding of one cuckoo by another. On October 13, 1963, I saw two adult Horsfield Bronze Cuckoos, *Chalcites basalis*, suddenly alight on a branch only four feet from me, and one fed the other with a small smooth green caterpillar. They then sped off in rapid flight out of my sight, one chasing the other. Whether this was actually courtship feeding is of course not proven, but it seems the most likely explanation.

In the recently published *A Field Guide to the Birds of New Zealand*, a note on page 181 on the Shining Cuckoo, *Chalcites lucidus*, states—"Breeding: Needs intensive study. Courtship feeding occurs."

It is possible that if courtship feeding occurs in these two species it may also occur in the Pallid Cuckoo, *Cuculus pallidus*.—Mrs. ELLEN M. McCULLOCH, 6 Bullen Avenue, Mitcham, Victoria.

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