

plumaged birds (5th March, 1910), while another of 6 birds contained 2 adult males and 4 dull-plumaged birds.

The nest from which the eggs (type set) were taken (14th December, 1909) was placed in a dead branch lying amongst the rocks, and built of acacia leaves on the outside and grass on the inside. The eggs rested on a layer of rootlets, while the upper part of the egg chamber was thickly lined with kangaroo fur. Many old nests were found in similar positions and built of the same materials.]

### Stray Feathers.

A LONG WAY FROM HIS BEAT.—On the 17th instant an opossum-hunter brought to my camp for identification a magnificent White-bellied Sea-Eagle (*Haliastur leucogaster*), which he had shot while it was making a meal, in company with some Wedge-tailed Eagles (*Uroaëtus audax*), at a heap of skinned opossum carcasses. My camp on the Burnett River—a small stream here—is 90 miles from the nearest point of the coast. I carefully measured the span from wing-tip to wing-tip, and found it to be 6 feet 10 inches.—F. B. C. FORD. Survey Camp, *viâ* Bayswater (Q.), 22/5/10.

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CUCKOO NOTES.—Cuckoos have visited us in large numbers this season. They are especially plentiful around Frankston and Ringwood at present. In company with Messrs. F. E. Wilson and H. Cowderoy recently I found a nest of the White-eared Honey-eater (*Ptilotis leucotis*), containing an egg of the Pallid Cuckoo (*Cuculus inornatus*), and in a nest of the White-throated Thickhead (*Pachycephala pectoralis*) a Fan-tailed Cuckoo (*Cacomantis rufulus*) had deposited her egg. The nest also held an egg of the Thickhead. The latter is probably a new record of a foster-parent.—L. G. CHANDLER. Malvern, 12/9/10.

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WOOD-SWALLOW AND CUCKOO.—On 10th December, 1909, I discovered, on a branchlet of a tall red gum overhanging the Namoi River at Manilla, a nest of *Artamus superciliosus*. My attention was attracted by the squeaking and fluttering of a young Cuckoo (*Cuculus inornatus*). I saw the Wood-Swallow (female) leave the nest, fly from the tree, and return again to the young bird and feed it. After satisfying the fledgling's wants she returned to her nest. As soon as the Wood-Swallow was nicely settled the Cuckoo would again commence calling and fluttering its wings. The foster-mother once more satisfied the voracious appetite. These trips were repeated six times within about 40 minutes. The male Wood-Swallow kept well away from the nest, calling and flying from bough to bough.—H. BURRELL. Manilla, N.S.W., 17/5/10.

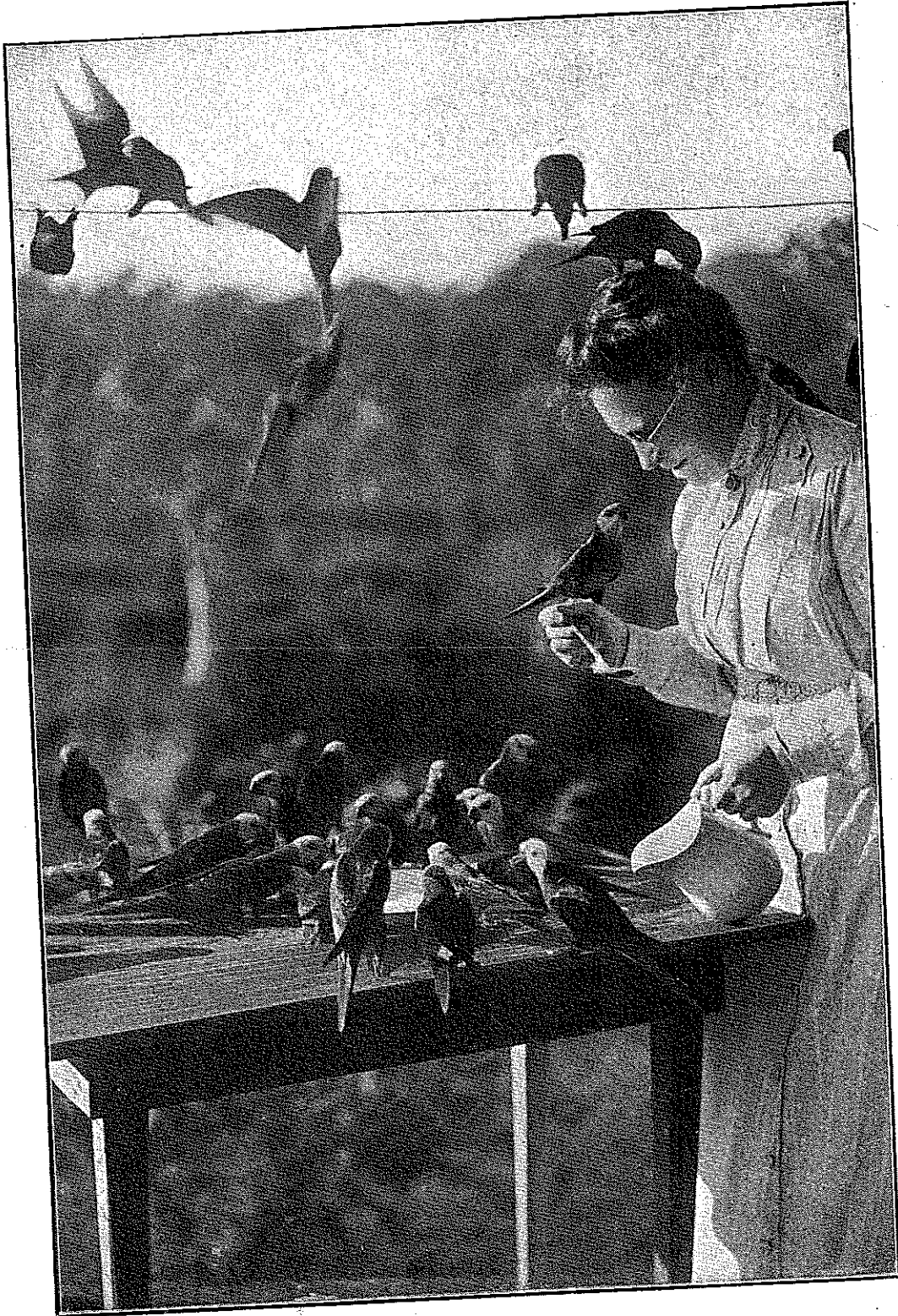
SWAMP-HAWKS (*CIRCUS GOULDI*).—On 14th December, 1909, I found and photographed, in a wheat-field at Manilla, a nest of the Swamp-Hawk (*C. gouldi*). The nest was composed of twigs, which measured from  $\frac{1}{8}$  inch to 1 inch in circumference. It was placed in the centre of a 100-acre paddock, situated 2 miles from the town and about 1 mile from the nearest water. The farmer stripped the grain with a harvester without injury to the fledglings, and was unaware of their presence until he had driven the machine over their heads, when he discovered them huddled together on the twigs in the standing stubble, the nest being only slightly disarranged.—H. BURRELL. Manilla, N.S.W., 17/5/10.

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MOVEMENT OF WOOD-SWALLOWS.—A great spring migration of Wood-Swallows (*Artamus tenebrosus*) is taking place to-day, from about E.N.E. to W.S.W.; light breeze off the sea (south) during morning. I first noticed them shortly after 9 o'clock this morning, and at mid-day they are still passing, in small parties, at varying heights, the lowest apparently about 150 feet; others at double that altitude; some higher yet, so as to be almost invisible. They are not steering a direct course, but sailing about in deliberate circles, perhaps capturing some winged prey as they go; nevertheless there is a general drift in the direction stated above, and eventually the parties disappear in that quarter, apparently following the coast-line, by which route many will by-and-by pass over Melbourne, and so to the interior of Victoria. This agrees with an observation made at Essendon about three years ago, and recorded at the time, where this species appeared to be coming in numbers from the south at springtime. This was explained by their having followed the coast-line from New South Wales along East and South Gippsland until they approached Port Phillip, and then steered north-west, passing over Essendon on their way.—H. STUART DOVE. Cunninghame (Vic.), 5/9/10.

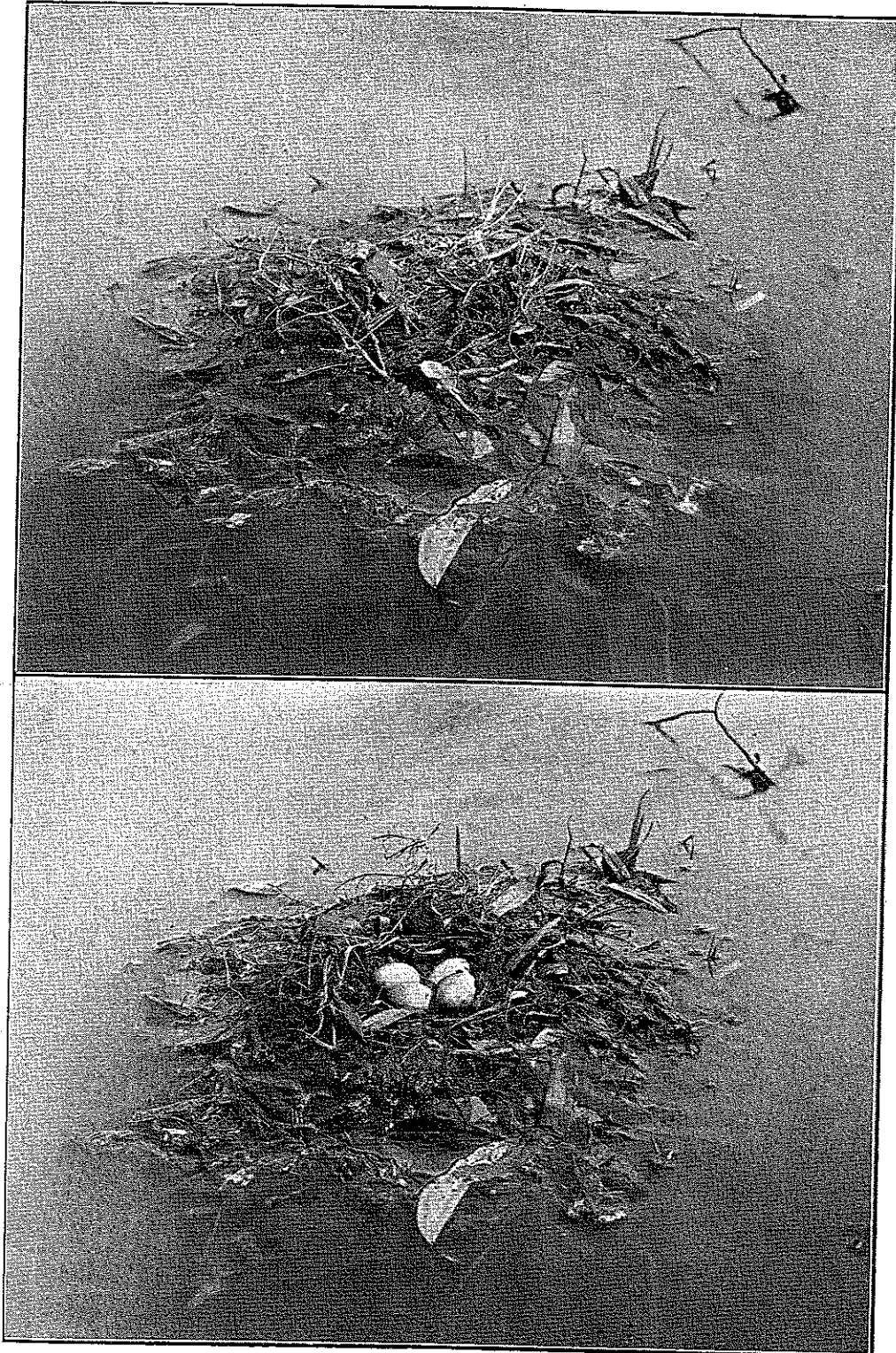
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WILD PARROT PETS.—The picture (Plate XI.) shows a lady (Mrs. Alex. Innes, of Pratolino, Louisa Creek, Mackay) engaged in her daily pleasurable task of feeding a number of Blue-bellied Lorikeets (*Trichoglossus novæ-hollandiæ*). The birds are all absolutely wild—none of them have ever been confined in any way—but they have learned that no harm can happen to them at this house, and when the lady calls they come by the dozen for the food she offers them, and settle all over her shoulders, head, hands, &c., and on the table, which is placed on the verandah for their special benefit. Needless to say, Mrs. Innes loves the birds, and they have learned to trust her implicitly. They nest in the trees in the vicinity of the homestead, and it is intensely interesting to note that the very first flight of the young birds is to the bountiful table supplied by the gentle lady who loves them so. Mrs. Innes delights to see the young birds come; they are a bit shy at first, but soon become



Wild Lorikeets (*Trichoglossus novæ-hollandiæ*) being fed on Syrup.





Nest and Eggs (covered and uncovered) of *Podiceps novaehollandiae*.

acquainted with their new friend, and thereafter come regularly at the dining hours. When I went to take the photograph I arrived about 8 o'clock on a most beautiful morning. The birds were there in scores, all clamouring for their breakfast, which had been delayed until I arrived. Mrs. Innes feeds them on a syrup made of milk and sugar.—E. M. CORNWALL. Mackay (Q.). 2/6/10.

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PROLIFIC PODICIPES.—On 21st November, 1909, while on a visit to Mr. Hill, of Caermarthen station, Upper Manilla, I went to a dam close to the homestead, where I discovered a Grebe's (*Podiceps novaehollandiae*) nest floating on the surface of the water about 20 feet from the land. I waded out to the nest, removed the covering, and found it contained a clutch of four eggs. I then returned, and mentioned the fact to Mr. Hill, who quietly informed me that it would not remain there very long, as he was starting to plough the following day, and the horses when coming to drink would soon trample it down, so I at once decided to go back and photograph and collect the clutch of eggs. After securing and successfully blowing them I found that they were partly incubated. I made another visit to the dam a fortnight later and found the nest still intact and a Grebe sitting close thereon. When I got within about 100 feet from the spot the bird stood up, covered the nest, and dived into the water and disappeared from view while I walked a dozen paces. (Plate XII.) I examined the nest again, and discovered, to my surprise, a second clutch of eggs (five). On making inquiries later, I was informed that the birds were holding their own against the horses. On the Sunday following I went out again to examine the nest for the third time, but found it deserted by the birds; only one egg remained, the nest was very dilapidated, and the covering was nowhere to be found.—HARRY BURRELL. Manilla (N.S.W.), 17/5/10.

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BIRD NOTES FROM CUNNINGHAME.—Swift Lorikeet.—Several times during my stay here this autumn (1910) I have noticed companies of the Swift Lorikeet (*Euphema discolor*) dashing by overhead, and going to the north. One afternoon, the wind being north-west, light, and the day fine and sunny, many parties passed over at a considerable height, my attention being attracted to them by the sharp chattering notes they utter while on their flight. All came from the south, apparently from the sea, which is about half a mile distant, and went away northward. It is possible that they are migrating from Tasmania, where for many weeks past the weather had been rough and stormy. Shrike-Thrush.—A Shrike-Thrush (*Collyriocincla harmonica*) was observed to capture a large hairy caterpillar, which he battered considerably on a log, taking care that all the life was out of it before he swallowed the tit-bit. Hairy larvæ are usually said to be the Cuckoos' perquisites, and

to be avoided by other bush-dwellers ; but the Thrush certainly relished this one, which was red on the under surface and legs, covered with black hair on the upper surface and with grey along the sides. Coachwhip-Bird (*Psophodes crepitans*).—Several times during my stay I have heard the fine note of this species resounding through the bush. On one occasion a friend and myself managed to creep between the male and his consort when calling, so that the whip-crack was distinct on one hand and the soft immediate response on the other.—H. STUART DOVE.

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THE LITTLE PENGUIN (*Eudyptula minor*).—I have some photographs of this species, showing the manner in which the tail is bent at a sharp angle, acting as a rudder, when the bird wishes to change its course in the water. The action is very quick, and Mrs. Carter (who took the photographs) had some trouble to snap the birds making the movement, and the tails were frequently bent at a much sharper angle than appears. I have not read of this peculiarity, and I notice that Mr. Ogilvie Grant, in the "Guide to the Gallery of Birds, British Museum, 1905," states that the "legs are used as a rudder." Although the tail of this species appears very small and short externally, yet when skinning the birds in question I was much struck by the way in which the caudal vertebræ were extended and lengthened, resembling those of some mammals. The pair of birds (both males) were sent to me from the South Coast, and for some time they were kept (except when having an occasional walk in the garden) in a circular boiler. Although adult birds, they resolutely refused to eat, refusing pieces of meat and live frogs regularly offered to them. I was obliged to feed them by force as long as I had them, usually getting well bitten while doing so. They began to pine away after two weeks' confinement, and as we were leaving home for twelve months, and it would have been, of course, subjecting them to certain death to turn them out inland, in the height of summer, I reluctantly made specimens of them.—TOM CARTER. Broome Hill (Western Australia), 30/7/10.

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CLEVELAND (TAS.) NOTES.—Fulvous-fronted Honey-eater (*Glycyphila fulvifrons*).—This bird is an inhabitant of the banksia and bracken fern-covered tracts round about here. I have found its nest on two occasions, and each time built in a banksia. The second nest found had been partly destroyed by some enemy, but the eggs (two) had not been touched, though the nest was torn about. Evidently the sitting bird had been attacked.

18/8/10.—Spring is later this season when compared with last year, and the birds seem correspondingly later. For instance, compare :—7/7/09, male Wren in full plumage. This year the date for first notice of same is 7/8/10.

For the first time since this district has been under my observa-

tion, a flock of 20 White-fronted Chats (*Ephthianura albigrons*) has spent the winter around the slopes of the lagoon. They camp in the shelter of the gorse bushes.

14/8/10.—Black-breasted Plovers (*Zonifer tricolor*) with young ones following them.

16/8/10.—Spur-winged Plover's (*Lobivanellus lobatus*) nest and eggs destroyed by sheep.

17/8/10.—Black Duck (*Anas superciliosa*) disturbed from her nest in rushes. The nest contained eight young ones.

17/8/10.—Swallows (*Hirundo neoxena*) have returned.

The Ground-Parrakeet (*Pezoporus formosus*) was observed last December in a paddock 3 miles from here. — J. A. FLETCHER.  
18/8/10.

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THE SOUTHERN LIMIT OF *ROSTRATULA AUSTRALIS*, GLD.—The Painted Snipe may now be recorded as found in Tasmania. Mr. W. Richardson (per favour Mr. W. L. May) sent a specimen in the flesh to the Museum at Hobart, obtained at Sandford, south of Hobart, on 23rd July, 1910. Mr. Richardson believes he has previously seen this species in the midlands, Lake Woods, in the spring of 1909. It is a young male of last year's breeding, having the superciliary mark and line behind the eye slightly rufous, the hind-neck and mantle being faintly fasciated; the legs and feet bluish-grey, nails deep brown; bill blackish-brown on proximal half and tip, the remainder being pale brown. Gould\* colours these parts yellow on the bill, and with a flush of pale greenish-yellow on the legs and feet.

Mr. A. J. Campbell† speaks of our want of knowledge of the movements of this rare bird, saying "it is probable that after rearing their young in the south they retire into more interior quarters during the year." With our limited knowledge, this holds good, the present species being probably a southern wanderer. If it were usual for the Painted Snipe to annually or periodically come so far south, I am not surprised at its choosing so early a date this year, because the signs of early spring were heard and seen on the 23rd July. The voice of the Pallid Cuckoo I heard in the Botanical Gardens, Hobart, while *Malurus cyaneus (gouldi)*, *Myzantha garrula*, and at least one of the *Acanthizæ* were nesting 15 miles south of Hobart. This in July in Southern Tasmania! It is a winter month under ordinary conditions.—ROBERT HALL. Hobart, 10/8/10.

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TASMANIAN NOTES ON THE COOT.—During some of my rambles last season I was fortunate enough to come across several clutches of the eggs of the Coot (*Fulica australis*). The lagoon in which they were found is a small one close to the Cleveland township.

\* "Birds of Australia," folio, vol. vi.

† "Nests and Eggs of Australian Birds," p. 827 (1900).

About half the surface is open water, and all round the edges grow tall dark brown rushes. Out in the centre these give place to smooth, round, green reeds, which grow only a few inches above the water. They are inter-tangled one with another, and occasionally the Bald-Coots (*Porphyrio melanonotus*) build their nests upon them. Before deciding on a particular spot, the Coot, like the Bald-Coot, makes a great number of starts or commencements, treading down the rushes and partly building nests. The nest itself is neater and more basket-like in shape than the Bald-Coot's, from which it can be readily distinguished. All the nests found by me last year were made of the coarse rushes, bitten into lengths, and were without any lining. They were built in reeds standing in from 1 to 2 feet of water, and about 6 inches above the surface of the water. Generally, the clumps containing the nests were close to open sheets of water, and the birds, when disturbed, slipped quickly through the rushes and disappeared. In one instance a platform was constructed to a nest. My experience last year showed that these birds are particularly sensitive, and immediately desert their partly-made nests if they have been startled whilst at work upon them. Several nests from whose vicinity a bird was flushed were never finished or used, the owners evidently resenting the intrusion.

Of the many nests discovered, five only contained eggs. The following is the data respecting them:—

26/9/09.—Last year the season was earlier than usual, and on the above date I took two clutches of five eggs each of the Coot. The first nest found was built in reeds standing in 1 foot of water. The bird slipped off her nest when she heard the intruder coming. These eggs were about four days incubated. The second nest was found on the opposite side of the lagoon in clumps of tall reeds bordering open water. The eggs had the vein system just commenced.

11/10/09.—One of my scholars, while riding through the lagoon after cows, came on a Coot's nest with three eggs. The bird was sitting. This nest was a neat basket-shaped one. The eggs were a nicely-marked set.

30/10/09.—The same boy discovered a nest with one egg in. This was left for several days, but only two eggs altogether were laid, and then the bird commenced to sit.

17/11/09.—I came across a Coot's nest containing two eggs. This was not looked at for five days, when the bird was disturbed from her nest and was found to be sitting on the two eggs. The nest had a platform, and quite a long track leading to it. This pair of eggs was smaller than the others. Measurements in inches of a pair sent to the Hobart Museum:—(1) 1.9 x 1.4 inches, (2) 1.8 x 1.3 inches.—J. A. FLETCHER. Cleveland, Tasmania, 18/8/10.

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ERRATUM.—Vol. x., p. 69, *Emu*, sixth last line, read "Nimrod" for "Discovery."