

## From Magazines, &c.

AVICULTURAL SOCIETY'S AWARDS.—The April, 1910, number of *The Avicultural Magazine* contains a list of awards of the Society's medal to members for having bred foreign birds in captivity. The list of medal winners includes Mr. W. A. Fasey, for the Blue-winged Grass-Parrakeet (*Neophema venusta*), and Mr. H. D. Astley, for the Pileated Parrakeet (*Porphyrocephalus spurius*).

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INCUBATION AND FLEDGING PERIODS IN BIRDS.—An interesting note on these subjects is contributed to the March, 1910, issue of *The Zoologist* by Mr. S. E. Brock. He gives records for the Mistle-Thrush, Song-Thrush, Blackbird, and other familiar European species. In the Blackbird he has found the period of incubation to extend over 13-14 days; fledging period, 13-14 days. Starling.—Incubation, 12-13 days; fledging period, 21-22 days. Sparrow-Hawk.—Incubation, 30-32 days; fledging period, 28-30 days. Swallows and Starlings are stated to be "notable exceptions to the average small bird in the period required by their young to fledge." It would be interesting to have similar records regarding some of our native birds.

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FOR AGRICULTURISTS.—A series of articles on insectivorous birds is being published in *The Agricultural Gazette* of New South Wales. The series promises to be of value to agriculturists, who are too often ignorant of the services done by birds in keeping injurious insects in check. In the opening article of the series under notice, which appears in the April issue of the *Gazette*, reference is made to the value of insectivorous birds as "the farmers' friends." The Hooded Robin (*Melanodryas bicolor*) and the Yellow-breasted Shrike-Robin (*Eopsaltria australis*) are the two species dealt with. A description of the bird is followed by notes on habits, &c., and the kind of food on which it chiefly subsists. The coloured plates accompanying the article are reproduced from Gould's "Birds of Australia." They are excellently printed by the three-colour process.

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BRITISH ORNITHOLOGIST IN AUSTRALIA.—In the March, 1910, issue of *The Avicultural Magazine*, Mr. D. Seth-Smith, F.Z.S., continues his pleasant "Notes on my Visit to Australia." He describes a visit to Stanwell Park, New South Wales, in company with Mr. S. Le Souëf. The two bird-lovers had interesting experiences among the Waxbills (*Egitha temporalis*), Rock-Warblers (*Origma rubricata*), and other species. Mr. Seth-Smith heard the notes of the Butcher-Bird (*Cracticus destructor*), and he thought the song the finest he had heard since his arrival in Australia. "The loud, flute-like notes, answered in the distance by a rival bird, gave a special charm to the whole countryside."

In the May number of the *Journal* Mr. Seth-Smith describes his visit to Brisbane. He deals with the railway journey from Sydney, and speaks enthusiastically of the beauty of the Darling Downs. In the Botanic Gardens at Brisbane the visitor "watched with much delight a lovely Blood-red Honey-eater (*Myzomela sanguinolenta*) sucking at the flowers (of a scarlet hibiscus) and flying from one to another, almost putting the brilliant flowers themselves in the shade by his brilliance." He visited the Museum, and was not well pleased with the arrangement of some of the cases.

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ARBOR AND BIRD DAY IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA. — A supplement to *The Education Gazette* of South Australia, August, 1910, deals with Bird and Arbor Day. Reference is made to school bird protection clubs, the plume sales in London, the action taken in England by the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, &c. Dr. A. M. Morgan contributes an interesting lesson on "The Bird's Egg," Mr. Robert Crompton writes on "Where to Find Birds' Nests," and Mr. A. G. Edquist deals with "The Destruction of Birds." The articles are brightly written, and calculated to interest children in bird-life and lead them to a right attitude in relation to the species that should be protected. A number of half-tone illustrations, from photos. by Mr. Edquist, enhance the attractiveness of the publication. A copy of the *Birds Protection Act* 1900 is also included as a supplement to *The Education Gazette* for 10th August, 1910.

The July issues of *The Children's Hour* (a school paper) contain special Bird and Arbor Day matter. Mr. J. W. Mellor, A.O.U., contributes an illustrated article, entitled "Our Native Birds and their Food." "Much," he writes, "has still to be learnt about the feeding habits of Australian birds before we know all the good or harm our birds do in seeking their food." A lesson on "The Mallee-Hen or Native Pheasant" appears in the *Hour* for Class II., also simple stories about a Swallow and a Dove. Capt. S. A. White, A.O.U., in the issue for Classes IV. and V., writes about the Pelican and its ways. He expresses the hope that "Australia will not allow the Pelicans that are left in our land to be destroyed, but that it will act soon, or, as in America, it may be almost too late to save these noble and quaint birds from being exterminated." The birds of South Australia have good friends, who are concerning themselves for their preservation. Mr. A. G. Edquist contributes to the same number of *The Children's Hour* an open letter to boys and girls on the Children's Bird Protection Club.

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NOTES ON BIRDS-OF-PARADISE.—Mr. Walter Goodfellow, who has had enviable experiences among New Guinea birds, commences in the July, 1910, number of *The Avicultural Magazine* a series of articles which promises to be of great interest and value. He has succeeded in bringing living specimens of several species of these

beautiful birds to England. He states that he has constantly read remarks about the Birds-of-Paradise which are altogether wrong, and some purely imaginative and needing correction. The cult for the birds commenced in 1904, when Mr. Goodfellow brought over a consignment for Mrs. Johnstone, consisting of one Greater Bird, two Lesser Birds, two Kings, and a pair of Black Manucodes. The importations have proved conclusively that the Birds-of-Paradise are "by no means so delicate as they were at one time supposed to be"—in fact, it may safely be said, Mr. Goodfellow thinks, that they are generally hardy birds. So far, none have bred in captivity.

Mr. Goodfellow intends to confine his notes to those species which he has imported alive, with the Gardener Bower-Bird—a total of 20. He deals in the present paper with the Greater Bird-of-Paradise (*Paradisea apoda*), whose chief home is the Aru Islands, off the south-west coast of New Guinea; but it also inhabits "the mainland in the interior, south of the Charles Louis and the Snow Mountains, which form the dividing line, north and south, between the Greater and Lesser Birds." The Greater Bird-of-Paradise, the author states, is by no means distributed equally over the islands of the Aru group. It is confined to the deepest jungle of the extreme interior, where the trees are tallest. Mr. Goodfellow first visited the Arus in December, 1903, and was at the time the only European in the country. The natives looked upon the birds absolutely as their own property, and the white bird-hunter had to come to an understanding with them before he could make any collections. His description of the first hunting party is interesting, and his field notes on the habits of the Birds-of-Paradise extremely valuable. The nesting season apparently commences in December. The males start to assemble irregularly in the dancing-trees before the moulting season is completely over. Occasionally a recognized dancing-tree is tabooed by the birds for a whole season, or even longer. The Malay trade name for the *Apoda* is "burong mate"—dead bird.

### Bird Protection.

DEPUTATION OF THE COUNCIL, A.O.U., TO FEDERAL MINISTER OF CUSTOMS.

THE MINISTER SYMPATHETIC.

A DEPUTATION from the Council of the Australasian Ornithologists' Union waited on the Minister for Customs to-day to ask for the introduction of a bill to prohibit the importation and exportation of the plumage and skins of certain birds, framed on lines similar to the bill now before the House of Commons.

Mr. A. J. Campbell, Col. M.B.O.U., president of the Union, said that a deputation had waited on Mr. Deakin when he was Prime Minister in regard to the subject. Bird protection and other societies in all the States were represented. It was desired that a bill to prohibit the sale or exchange of the plumage and skins of certain wild birds and the importation and exportation of plumes and skins of