

parents. Male parent still feeding his mate 1st February — Young feeding independently, and, except a trifle smaller, much like parents. Old male continues feeding mate, but not so frequently. 15th February.—Young ones practically mature. Old male inclined to drive young male away, but is still occasionally feeding mate. Old birds together and young ones by themselves in a group.

A Trip to the Tunnel District, Tasmania.

BY P. C. THOMPSON, LAUNCESTON, TAS.

THE following notes were made during a trip to that district in Northern Tasmania known as "The Tunnel," in the month of October, 1910. It was made in company with Mr. A. L. Adams, a fellow-member of the R.A.O.U., and an ardent bird-observer.

The first thing that struck us was the fact that, while in the Launceston district birds were hatching their young, at "The Tunnel" very few species were even building.

Spotted Owl (*Ninox maculata*).—This species seemed fairly plentiful, for a little after dark one would hear them calling from all sides. Their call-note, which some persons still think is uttered by the Frogmouth (*Podargus*), is between "Mopoke" and "Morepork," but more like the latter.

Pallid Cuckoo (*Cuculus pallidus*).—Not at all plentiful; a few pairs noted on the surrounding hills.

Fan-tailed Cuckoo (*Cacomantis flabelliformis*).—This Cuckoo was far more plentiful than the previous species.

Frogmouth (*Podargus strigoides*).—Could hear their notes coming from all sides of the hut after dark.

Australian Raven (*Corone australis*).—Plentiful.

Black Crow-Shrike (*Strepera fuliginosa*).—Fairly plentiful.

Hill Crow-Shrike (*Strepera arguta*).—Common. This species can easily be distinguished from the Black Crow-Shrike either by its white under tail coverts or by its cry.

"Summer-Bird" (*Graucalus parvirostris*).—Plentiful all along the hills near the station. They seem to prefer the small trees in fairly open country. Frequently they were within 8 or 9 feet of the ground, feeding in the young gums.

Whistling Shrike-Thrush (*Collyriocincla rectirostris*).—Very plentiful. They could be seen clinging on to the side of a large gum, pulling away pieces of bark, from under which they would seize some grub, hit it two or three times against the tree, then swallow it.

Lesser White-backed Magpie (*Gymnorhina hyperleuca*).—Not as plentiful here as in the more open country.

Grey Butcher-Bird (*Cracticus cinereus*).—One or two heard calling, but none seen.

Olive Thickhead (*Pachycephala olivacea*).—Plentiful. From almost any of the tree-fern gullies came their notes, which sounded

like "I'll a-wet you." We would stand quietly in the scrub and imitate their note. Within ten minutes or so one or two would come down to within 7 or 8 yards of us, have a look, and then go off into the scrub again. Sometimes their notes resembled that of the Grey-tailed Thickhead.

Grey-tailed Thickhead (*Pachycephala glauca*).—Plentiful. None noted with the yellow breast; all drab plumage. They were easily brought near by imitating their notes.

Dusky Fantail (*Rhipidura diemenensis*).—Plentiful.

Satin Flycatcher (*Myiagra nitida*).—Heard their notes coming from the tops of the large trees.

Scarlet-breasted Robin (*Petræca leggit*).—Very scarce.

Flame-breasted Robin (*Petræca phœnicea*).—Plentiful amongst the peppermints or burnt scrubs.

Pink-breasted Robin (*Petræca rhodinogastra*).—In almost every gully this species was met with.

Dusky Robin (*Petræca vittata*).—Fairly plentiful. Found nest containing two large young ones, also saw several young flying about.

Blue Wren (*Malurus gouldi*).—In the open country this little bird was seen, generally hopping around some fallen limbs or feeding amongst grass or tussocks.

Ground-Bird (*Cinclosoma punctatum*).—Only one pair noted amongst the bracken ferns.

Brown Scrub-Wren (*Sericornis humilis*).—Very plentiful. These and the Dusky Robins seemed to be the only birds breeding.

Scrub-Tit (*Acanthornis magna*).—When searching one of the dens^e gullies I saw two birds feeding amongst the ferns or looking for food on the trunks of large tree-ferns. I could not obtain a view of their breasts, so decided to shoot them, if possible. They seemed to know that, for they would not let me get close enough, but kept flying across the creek, which meant that I had to go around *via* some log. After a good deal of crawling I obtained one, which proved to be a female. Examination proved they were not nesting.

Brown-rumped Tit (*Acanthiza diemenensis*).—Very plentiful; their notes seemed to be coming from every eucalypt or bush.

Ewing Tit (*Acanthiza ewingi*).—Shot for identification two specimens which I took to be this species.

Yellow-rumped Tit (*Acanthiza chrysorrhoa*).—Not as plentiful here as in the lower country.

Spinebill (*Acanthorhynchus dubius*).—Not common; one or two noted.

Strong-billed Honey-eater (*Melithreptus validirostris*).—Very common. From all the tall peppermints came their shrill notes.

Yellow-throated Honey-eater (*Ptilotis flavigularis*).—Very few seen. They are more plentiful in the open country.

White-eye (*Zosterops ærulescens*).—Common.

Yellow-tipped Pardalote (*Pardalotus affinis*).—From all around came their notes, "Pick it up."

Swallow (*Hirundo neoxena*).—Plentiful around the station.

Tree-Martin (*Petrochelidon nigricans*).—Very few; one or two seen.

Wood-Swallow (*Artamus sordidus*).—More plentiful than the previous species.

Musk Lorket (*Glossopsittacus concinnus*).—This was the only one of the *Psittaci* observed here. They were moving in flocks of, say, 12.

Brown Quail (*Synæcus australis*).—One flushed off the ground; most likely this species.

Description of a New *Rhipidura*.

BY EDWIN ASHBY, R.A.O.U., BLACKWOOD, S.A.

RECENTLY I have received from my friend, Mr. C. E. May, Anson Bay, Northern Territory, two formalin specimens of a *Rhipidura* that appears intermediate between *R. dryas*, Gould, and *R. intermedia*, North.

It differs from the former in having dark spots or scale-like marks on the chest, as in *R. rufifrons*, and it differs from Mr. A. J. North's description of *R. intermedia* (*Vict. Nat.*, xix., p. 101) in that the orange-rufous colouration of the basal half of the tail feathers is absent, except for a wash of rufous on the basal portion of the outer web of the tail feathers (as in *R. dryas*); but this rufous wash barely extends beyond the upper tail coverts. Also, there is more white at the tips of the tail feathers. In fact, the bird under notice corresponds with Gould's description of *R. dryas* except for the black scaly markings on chest and its larger size. It therefore seems to link up the gap between *R. dryas* and *R. intermedia*, and suggests the probability that, if a sufficient series of skins were obtained round the coast of eastern and northern Australia, a gradual transition would be found from the typical *Rhipidura rufifrons*, Lath., of the Gippsland scrub, to the North-Western form of *Rhipidura dryas*, Gould.

Should the variety herein described be considered deserving of specific difference, I would suggest that it be known as *Rhipidura mayi*, after Mr. C. E. May, who has done so much good work in collecting the birds of the Northern Territory. The measurements are as follows.—Total length, 6.2 inches; length of wing, 2.8 inches; length of tail, 3.8 inches; tarsus, 0.7 inches.

[*Note*.—Since writing the foregoing I have learned that there are specimens in collections labelled *R. dryas* that have the black spots on the chest. My contention is that these are not *R. dryas*, because Gould expressly points out that the black spots are absent in that species. Secondly, there are also specimens in collections labelled *R. intermedia*, North, in which the tail feathers are not rufous, but are similar to *R. dryas*; and these may not be Mr. North's *R. intermedia*, as he states that in the type of that species the basal half of tail feathers is rufous.—E. A.]