

old or deserted. A climb up the trees revealed in one a beautiful pair of Wattle-Bird eggs, and of the other two one contained two eggs of the Brush Wattle-Bird, while the second had a pair of young with a little down upon them.

During one ramble in the past season I found a nest of the Brush Wattle-Bird with three fully-fledged young ones. One seldom comes across three in a clutch.

In all the nests of the Yellow Wattle-Bird which I have found the builders have exhibited a great fancy for sheep's wool, not as lining, but in the construction of the nests; and it was woven in most untidily. Pieces of all lengths and sizes could oftentimes be seen hanging from sides and bottom, the sterner fabric of the nest being branchlets of wild "thyme," with shredded bark and fine rootlets for the lining. Only in one instance did I find a Brush Wattle-Bird using wool as building material. This species delights in soft shredded bark as the inner lining, which is built into a framework of "thyme" twigs. Both species of birds are very "touchy," and they frequently desert their nest if it is inspected during the process of building. Twice last season there came under my notice the remarkable instance of the Brush Wattle-Bird removing the nest completely because it had been touched by me. The first nest was taken piece by piece and rebuilt some distance off. The second nest removed was added to the top of another nest in the next tree, the whole forming a most remarkable structure. In the bowl of this strange pyramid the usual pair of eggs was laid.

Both species are close sitters, and do not readily leave their nests. In fact, when sitting on chipping eggs or young they will almost permit of being touched by the hand. They fly off with a quick, nervous call, to which the mate speedily answers.

Both male and female birds assist in the incubation of the eggs, which, from my observations, lasts 12 days, and also in the feeding of the nestlings. I also noted the second egg was laid after the interval of a day, and the bird generally commences to sit that evening. Three weeks was the longest period which I observed a finished nest to be left before it was used, but generally only a few days pass ere the first egg is laid.

These general observations, unless specially mentioned under a particular species, refer to both Wattle-Birds. I believe the sitting bird is fed while on the nest by its mate, but could not say with certainty.

Food of Cockatoos. — The Chief Inspector of Fisheries and Game in Melbourne (Major Semmens) would like to know from country members what is the principal food of Cockatoos throughout the year. His address is Railway Buildings, Flinders-street. He wishes to find out whether the good they do in eating the roots of detrimental plants, such as the *Romulea* or onion weed, &c., is compensated by the damage they do in eating freshly-sown grain.