

Intermediately, there have been the usual periodical outcries against particular birds that have proved temporarily troublesome. First it was the "Currawong" (*Strepera graculina*), whose collective head was demanded to be served up on a (metaphorical) charger to certain men on the land; then the "Red-bill" (presumably *Porphyrio melanonotus*) was roundly abused by sugar-growers—Halifax farmers actually were found to be paying 9d. a head for this *protected* bird; and, thirdly, various apiarists raised a shout of execration against the Bee-eater (*Merops ornatus*)—chiefly, one suspects, because of its unhappy name. However, *Porphyrio* and *Merops* continue to enjoy whatever protection the law affords, but the *Strepera* has to look after its own welfare—a thing the vigorous bird is not at all incapable of doing.

Reverting, in conclusion, to the personal note, it may be mentioned that, in addition to Mr. Campbell, two travelling members of the Union were welcomed to Brisbane during the year. These were Colonel T. Anderson, formerly of Ballarat, who is now on transport duty, and Mr. F. L. Berney, formerly of Western Queensland, who has been in England for two years. This absence has in no way lessened Mr. Berney's interest in Australian bird-life.

It is worthy of note also that, on the occasion of a Field Naturalists' outing to Oxley, an outer suburb of Brisbane, we made the acquaintance of Mr. Daniel O'Connor, a venerable gentleman who had been a friend of John Gould's mother. Mr. O'Connor\* is over 90 years of age, but still takes a healthy interest in things of the outdoor world, and still retains a vigorous memory. He told us that, on the last occasion he saw Mrs. Gould, she spoke of her son John, who had left for Australia a short time before "to study birds." Mr. O'Connor was also to leave for Australia in a few days' time, and the lady expressed the hope that he would meet her son. Unfortunately, he never did.

Brisbane, 1st December, 1916.

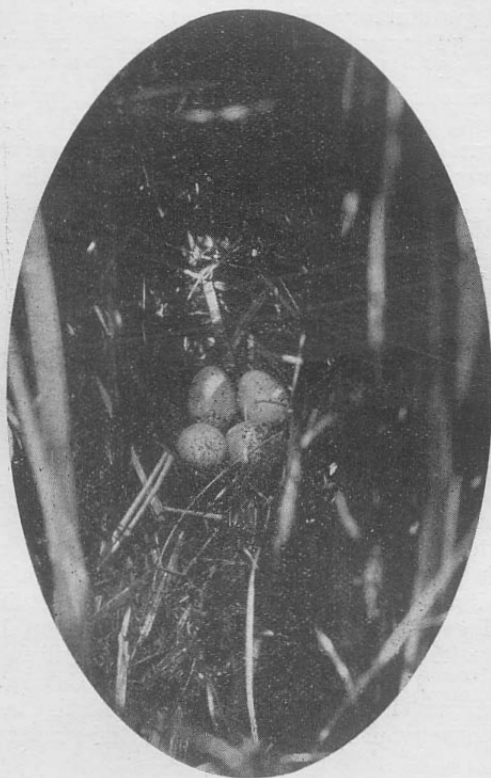
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### Camera Craft Notes.

**Crested Pigeons.**—Crested Pigeons (*Ocyphaps lophotes*) are common in Northern Victoria in open country, being usually found feeding on the ground. They make a loud whirring with their wings when they fly, and, as a rule, are not shy. They generally nest on salt and other bushes. They are easily kept in captivity, and breed every year in the aviaries at the Melbourne Zoological Gardens, where I took the photograph.—D. LE SOUËF. Melbourne.

\* Mr. O'Connor passed peacefully away on 5th December, aged 91.

**Nest of Lewin Rail.**—This interesting photograph of a Lewin Rail's nest shows the "staging" plainly. This staging was 2 feet long to the level of the water. One nest I found was built  $3\frac{1}{2}$  feet up, and had a remarkably long ladder or stairway.



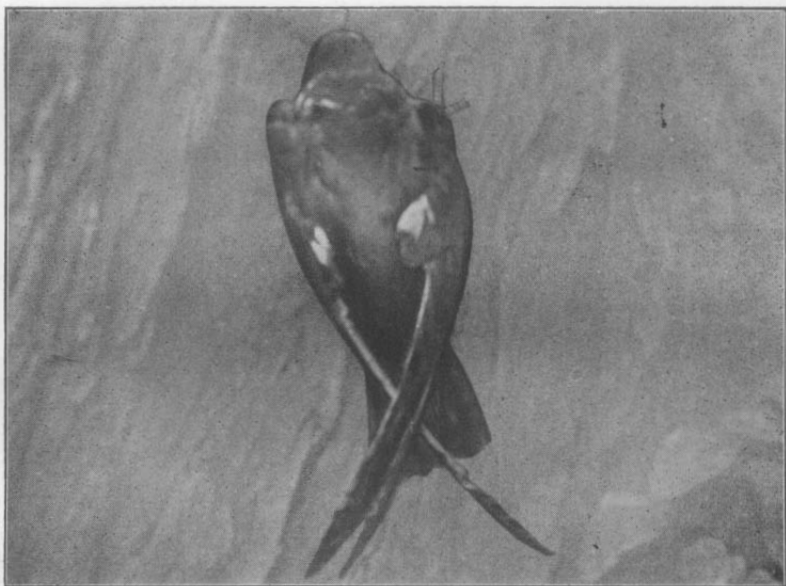
Nest of Lewin Rail, showing pathway.

PHOTO. BY MISS J. A. FLETCHER, R.A.O.U.

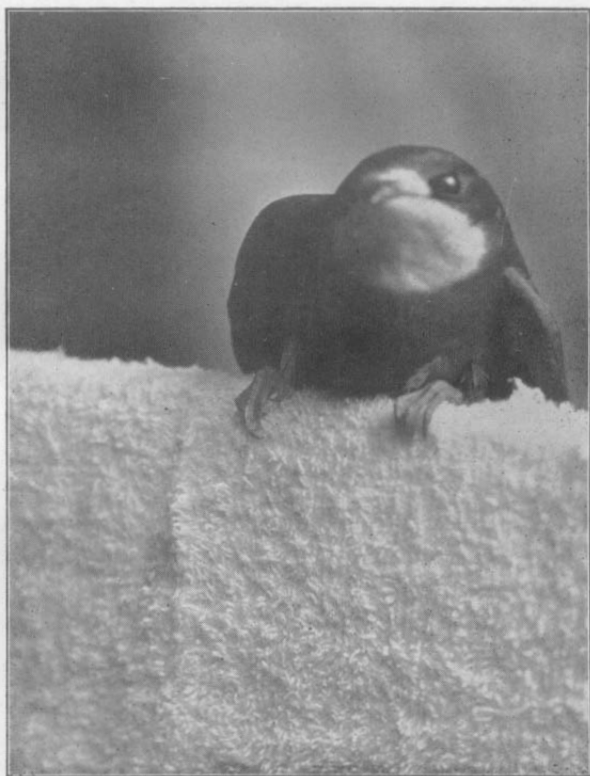
This, instead of going straight down, wound in and out, and I was unable to get a satisfactory photograph of it. The enclosed was taken on 28th August, 1915. — (Miss) J. A. FLETCHER, R.A.O.U. Boat Harbour, Tasmania.

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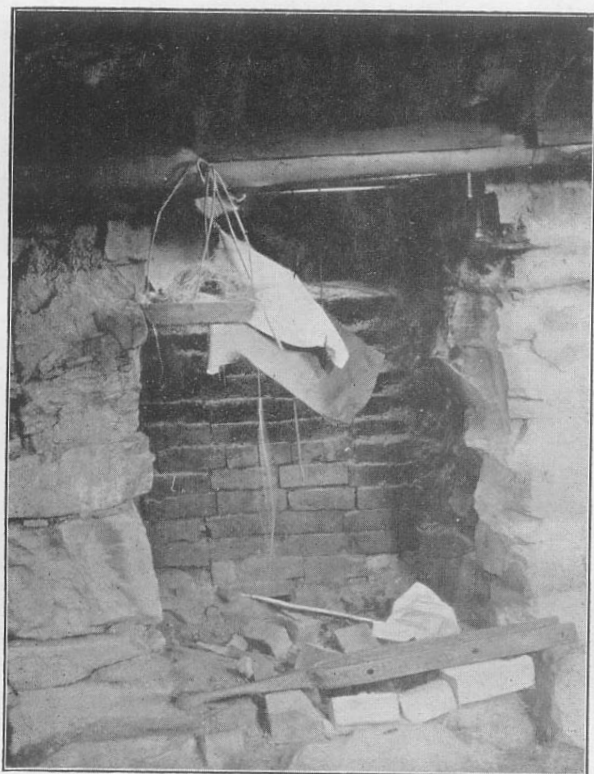
**Spine-tailed Swift.**—The photograph of the Spine-tailed Swift (*Chaetura caudacuta*) was from a specimen which was picked up on the ground under some telegraph wires. It must have struck one of these, probably in partial darkness. It had quite recovered when I had it, but naturally could not fly off the ground. I took the photograph as it clung on to the rough bark of a tree,



Spine-tailed Swift on Tree.

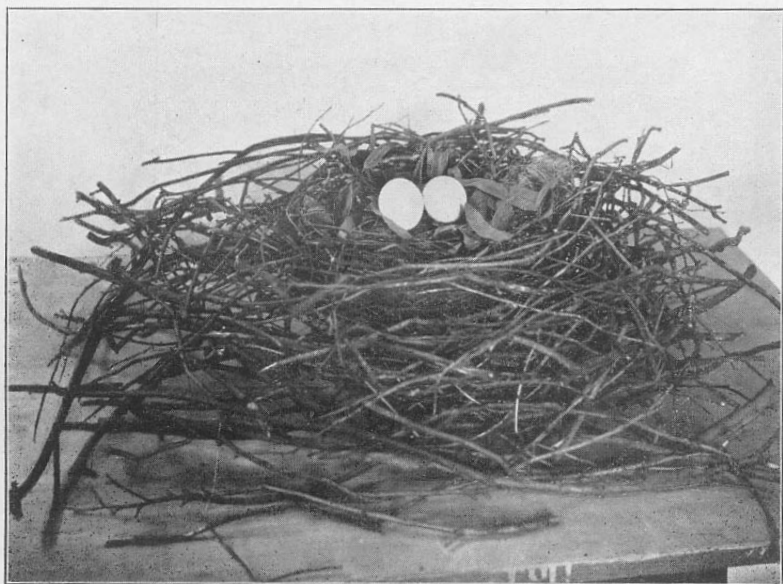


Spine-tailed Swift.



Photograph of *Sericornis* in an old frying-pan in a hut.

PHOTO. BY A. H. E. MATTINGLEY, R.A.O.U.



Nest and Eggs of Frogmouth (*Podargus*) in old nest of Magpie (*Gymnorhina*).

PHOTO. BY J. A. KERSHAW, F.E.S., NATIONAL MUSEUM, MELBOURNE.

its natural perching place. Unfortunately, the photograph was slightly out of focus. When I had finished I threw the bird into the air, and off it flew.—D. LE SOUËF. Melbourne.

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**An Unusual Nest of the Frogmouth** (*Podargus strigoides*).—During the recent stormy weather a nest of this bird, with the unusual clutch of three eggs, was blown down. The birds then went higher up the gully to a more sheltered spot, and, for greater stability, built in an old nest of the White-backed Magpie (*Gymnorhina leuconota*). It was in the fork of a manna gum, about 30 feet from the ground. The bird was on the nest when I discovered it, and was also on it the following day, when the eggs were taken. It may be of interest to state that this nocturnal bird flew apparently at its usual speed through several trees, and appeared to have no difficulty in alighting, in the broad daylight.—J. M. MOLESWORTH, R.A.O.U. Ballark, Morrisons (Vic.)

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**Flight Aviary, Melbourne Zoo.**—The birds shown in the photograph, taken in the Flight Aviary at the Melbourne Zoological Gardens, are nearly all Honey-eaters. We find they are very hardy birds to keep, and live for years, and are a constant source of attraction; and so they should be, with their beautiful, graceful forms and lively, engaging ways.

Last year a pair of White-plumed Honey-eaters (*Ptilotis penicillata*) hatched and reared two young, which early assumed the same phase of plumage as their parents, but the young White-naped Honey-eaters (*Melithreptus lunulatus*), of which several were reared, had the top part of the head green, like the back, and only assumed the black head and white crescent when well over six months old.—D. LE SOUËF. Melbourne.

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**Pilot-Birds.**—In December, 1911, whilst camping near Olinda, in the Dandenongs, Victoria, with two other enthusiastic bird-lovers, we were fortunate enough to locate a nest of the Pilot-Bird (*Pycnoptilus floccosus*) in rather a strange way. While scrambling down a dense, scrubby hillside, one member of the party, on stepping over a log, was startled by a loud clamouring suddenly arising from a tangle of dry bracken at his feet. We excitedly searched for what we thought must be a nest of some kind, and almost immediately located a dome-shaped nest of grasses, bark, and leaves firmly woven together. It was lined very snugly with feathers, and contained two fine half-fledged youngsters. Although the nestlings called lustily every time the nest was disturbed, no parent bird put in an appearance for some considerable time. Eventually a beautiful chocolate-coloured bird came hopping quite close to where we were sitting, and, proceeding to the nest, fed the young birds with a large moth. Having had no previous

experience with the Pilot-Bird, we were rather mystified as to what it could be. It was not till we reached the camp and consulted Dr. Leach's "Bird Book" that we discovered what our find was. We decided to try next day for some photographs of the adult birds. Daybreak found us at the nest determined to secure pictures at any cost. Having fixed one of the cameras in position, we patiently waited for the parents to visit the nest. After about twenty-five minutes the female appeared, and, without taking any notice of the camera, which was focussed only some 18 inches from the nest, fed the young and departed without giving us a good position. As we received similar treatment on four or five visits, occupying roughly an hour, we grew weary of waiting, and decided to keep the parents around the nest by preventing them from feeding the young. This method proved effective, and we succeeded in securing several exposures without delay. During the day we had unlimited opportunities, the birds becoming so tame as even to allow themselves to be handled. We were also fortunate as regards the light, but, owing probably to our inexperience of photography at that time, the two photographs reproduced were the total result of many exposures.—S. A. LAWRENCE and R. T. LITTLEJOHNS.

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## Stray Feathers.

**Some New Zealand Bird Notes.**—I wonder if the following notes are of any interest? The Waiuku district consists mostly of small dairy farms, and most of the original forest has long ago disappeared. It was mostly kauri, puriri, and rimu on the low, rolling hills, and kahikatea or white (butter-box) pine on the rich swamp land north of the Waikato Heads. Starlings are here in thousands, and where they can find an old puriri are well off for nesting-places, as the puriri "pipes" just as eucalypts do. But standing timber is scarce, and these birds have taken to nesting within a foot or so of the ground. You see, nearly all corner-posts and gate-posts are of puriri in the round. These have, as usual, "piped," decaying down the middle and leaving sufficient space for a Starling to descend, and sometimes for a human arm to follow and even reach the nest. Perhaps the same thing happens in Australia, but I think it would be novel in England—I mean, of course, for the nest to be so near, if not sometimes on, *terra firma*. Besides Starlings we have several other acclimatized birds. Blackbirds and Thrushes are common; there are probably three nests of each in my grounds of a couple of acres. Skylarks also are very numerous, so you can see we get plenty of music. Goldfinches, Chaffinches, and Greenfinches are in about that order of frequency. (I leave a corner of the orchard waste *pour les encourager*.) The Yellow Hammer is also a common bird—and the Sparrow!