

Once more the United States Senate has added to its fine and quite unbroken record in the enactment of sane and reasonable wild-life protection laws. The ratification of that treaty is the most important and far-reaching step in the protection and increase of birds that ever yet has been taken in any country! It extends the strong arm of federal protection over about 1,022 species and sub-species of the most valuable and interesting birds of North America.

The news of the event of 29th August will be read with thrills of pleasure by the millions of farmers, forest owners, bird-lovers, and sportsmen who are interested in the increase and perpetuation of the birds of North America.

Except to Senator Reed, the people of the United States owe to the President, the entire Senate, and above all to Senator M'Lean, a profound and lasting gratitude.

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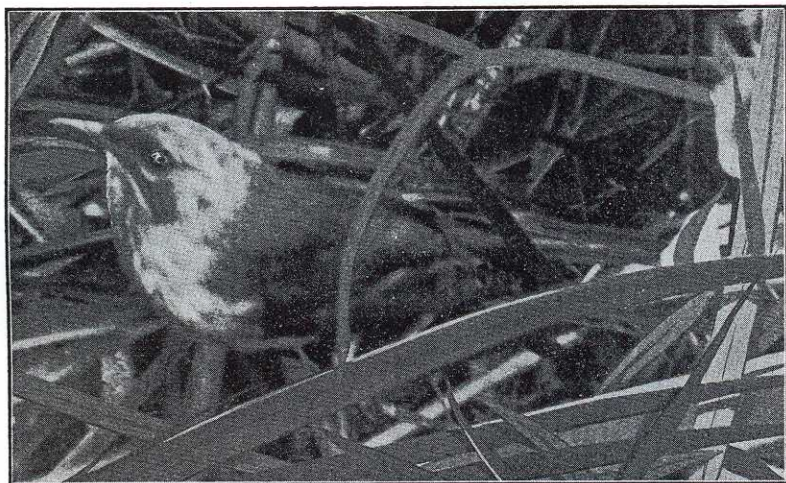
### Camera Craft Notes.

**White-shafted Fantail on Nest.**—Owing to its tameness, the White-shafted Fantail is one of the easiest subjects for bird-photographers, yet the accompanying illustration, taken by Mr. P. D. Montague, will not easily be beaten. The nest, with its characteristic tail beneath, was situated in a bush overhanging the Vasse River, near Busselton, Western Australia, and the water forms a background to the picture. The photograph was taken during a shower of rain, and drops of water cover the back and tail of the Fantail and hang from the twigs of the bush. The Western White-shafted Fantail was named *Rhipidura preissi* by Cabanis in 1850, but there can be little doubt that Mathews is correct in regarding it as merely a sub-species of the bird found all over Australia. Its nest and its habits, at all events, are similar on both sides of the continent.—W. B. ALEXANDER.

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**Nesting of the Yellow-throated Honey-eater (*Plilotis flavigula*) in Northern Tasmania.**—During the month of October, 1916, I had the pleasure of accompanying Mr. H. C. Thompson to a gum-tree hill which is used by several pairs of "Yellow-throats" as a breeding-ground. The bush thereabouts looked very beautiful with white clematis and blue *Comesperma* twining among the scrub, while maidenhair fern grew in profusion over the moist soil. The nests of the Honey-eaters were placed in large *Lepidosperma* tussocks, and were of the open cup pattern. A pair of adults fed their young on the ground close to us; the latter were lately fledged, and had yellow throats and ear-tufts, were of a yellowish tint on the upper surface, the head darker than in the adult, but a tuft or two of nesting-down still remained there. The parents were in beautiful golden plumage. The

female almost alighted on us when my friend took one of the youngsters in his hand, and the melodious call-notes of this species resounded through the grove. One of the nests found was suspended between the base of a white gum sapling and a bracken fern, being bound to a frond of the latter; it was of a coarse native grass, with finer kind within, and lined with sheep's wool. Some spider cocoons had been placed upon the outside of the nest, which practice is adopted also by the White-eye (*Zosterops cærulescens*). This structure was nearly a foot from the ground, and measured 4 inches across top over all,  $2\frac{1}{2}$  inches across top inside; the depth outside was  $5\frac{1}{2}$  inches, the egg cavity being 2 inches deep. Another, placed in the centre of a large *Lepido-*



Yellow-throated Honey-eater (*Ptilotis flavigula*) in tussock, just after leaving nest, N. Tasmania.

PHOTO. BY H. C. THOMPSON. R.A.O.U.

*sperma* tussock, was of the same material as the first, but had a fine wool lining to the rim, with tussock-blades interwoven, these blades extending 4 feet above the nest. Measurements:— $3\frac{1}{2}$  inches across top over all,  $2\frac{1}{4}$  inches across top inside,  $3\frac{1}{4}$  inches depth outside, 2 inches depth of cavity. A third was lined almost entirely with fine grass, just a tuft or two of wool, one or two spider cocoons on the outside; two or three blades of the tussock were woven into the sides. This nest was quite open to the sky, except for the slight protection afforded by small gum branches overhead. Measurements:— $3\frac{1}{4}$  inches across top over all,  $2\frac{3}{4}$  inches across top inside,  $2\frac{1}{2}$  inches egg cavity. The distance from the ground to the top of the nest was only 9 inches. The



last one found was 1 foot 7 inches from the ground to the top of nest; the material dry native grass, as in the others, with a wool lining. There were three eggs reposing upon the wool, of a creamy-white ground, with burnt sienna spots at the larger end. These eggs measured, approximately, 1 inch in length by  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch in diameter. The measurements of nest were:— $3\frac{1}{4}$  inches across top over all,  $2\frac{1}{4}$  inches across top inside one way by 2 inches the other,  $4\frac{1}{2}$  inches depth outside,  $2\frac{1}{4}$  inches depth egg cavity. Part of the rim was bound to *Lepidosperma* blades with strands of sheep's wool.—H. STUART DOVE, F.Z.S., R.A.O.U.

## Correspondence.

*To the Editors of "The Emu."*

SIRS,—The Executive Committee of the Advisory Council of Science and Industry have had brought to their notice the desirability of further knowledge as to the food of Australian birds. It has been suggested that if the stomachs of all wild birds shot were preserved and their contents identified by experts great additions to our knowledge would be made.

Mr. A. M. Lea, F.E.S., Entomologist of the South Australian Museum, is at present engaged on a research on this subject, with the assistance of other specialists in the identification of seeds, molluscs, &c. The committee consider that members of the Royal Australasian Ornithologists' Union will no doubt be glad to assist Mr. Lea in this valuable work by forwarding him the stomachs of any birds they may shoot; all such assistance will be acknowledged by Mr. Lea when publishing his results.

After skinning a bird the stomach should be removed and placed in methylated spirit, together with a label giving the following particulars:—Name of bird (scientific name, if known), collector's name, locality, month and year. If several stomachs are placed in the same jar or tube of spirits, each stomach with its label should be wrapped and tied separately in a piece of muslin or cloth.

Birds whose stomachs are specially wanted by Mr. Lea are the Emu, Bustard or Wild Turkey, Native Companion, and Crows, but Mr. Lea desires it to be emphasized that he does not wish birds to be specially shot for the purpose of securing their stomachs.—Yours, &c.,

GERALD LIGHTFOOT,

Secretary Executive Committee Advisory Council of  
Science and Industry.

314 Albert-street, East Melbourne,  
29th June, 1917.

[It is expected that R.A.O.U. members will heartily co-operate by providing material for this important scientific research.—EDS.]