

**Unusual Nesting Site of a Black Duck.** Mr. G. W. Broughton, of Berrigan, New South Wales, reports having found the nest of a Black Duck in a very unusual position. It was



placed in a nest of either a Crow or a Hawk, some 50 feet from the ground, close to a small pond. The young were safely hatched, and are now, with the parents, in the water. The nest contained 9 eggs, and was lined with a deep layer of down.

### Stray Feathers

**Bush-Fires in National Park, Sydney.** National Park has seriously suffered last season through widespread bush-fires and will take a long time to recover. The birds most affected were the ground-living birds, who have been deprived of shelter, as well as food, and, no doubt, many must have perished. Another regrettable fact due to the bush-fires is the removal of much top-soil containing seeds by the rain, since the water, owing to the destruction of small plants and shrubs, found no resistance in sweeping the soil off. Naturally this must react on bird life. It has also caused some changes in the habitats of some birds, whose food supply was destroyed, and which, therefore, had to look for other localities not affected by the fires. Satinbirds still form the main interest in my bird studies. Recently I have been able to show Dr. Ritter, from California, a Satinbird at work at his bower. The summer visitors have gradually arrived one after another, but some are still missing; on the other hand, I have noted a few not usually found in the Park.—E. NUBLING, R.A.O.U., Sydney.

**The Cuckoo Problem.**—With Mr. Stuart Dove, I can also say that the domed nest offers no trouble to the Cuckoo. In several instances I have found a Fan-tailed Cuckoo (*Cacomantis flabelliformis*) in the nest of the White-browed Scrub-Wren (*Sericornis frontalis*), and once in that of the White-

throated Warbler (*Gerygone albigularis*). In the latter case, I was lucky enough to see the Cuckoo with its own egg in its bill place the egg in the nest. On going to the nest at once, I found only one egg there, that of the Cuckoo. Returning some days later, I found the Warbler had laid a full clutch of three eggs. When the young hatched out, the Cuckoo soon got rid of its nest mates. Later, growing too big for the tiny nest, it burst its way out with no trouble, but left the beautiful little nest in rather a bad state. Now the *Gerygone* makes a close woven nest, and when a young Cuckoo can tear its way out of such a nest it can escape from any nest made by small birds. With the Scrub-Wren, also, the Cuckoo had no difficulty in making an exit.—J. F. H. GÖGERLEY, R.A.O.U., Ellerslie, Wallis Lake.

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**The Pipit in Elevated Regions.**—Our modest-plumaged little Pipit (*Anthus australis*) appears quite indifferent to altitude, as it is found from the coast at sea level to the mountain plateaux, and seems equally at home everywhere. The New Zealand species (*Anthus nova-zealandiae*), closely allied to ours, is equally hardy. When near the top of McKinnon's Pass, on the overland track from Lake Te Anau to Milford Sound, I observed one of these little travellers on the cold, wet, spongy soil, amid patches of snow still unmelted, although the season was midsummer. Dr. Lutz, the American naturalist, while insect-collecting on the mountains of Colorado, U.S.A., noted Pipits breeding in the Arctic-alpine zone, at 11,000 feet, where snow lies for the greater part, or all, the year. He says that they, together with the Whitetailed Ptarmigan and Brown-capped Rosy-Finches, breed nowhere else, so the Pipit family is evidently a hardy one all the world over.—H. STUART DOVE, F.Z.S., W. Devonport, Tas., 3/12/23.

### Obituary.

W. H. DUDLEY LE SOUEF, C.M.Z.S., C.F.A.O.U.

The R.A.O.U. celebrated its 21st anniversary, or attained its "majority," at the Adelaide meeting last year. Since, there has passed away one of its prominent founders.

Not every person lives to see the fulfilment of his labours. Yet, the late Mr. W. H. D. Le Souef did so. The achievement was the greater because the R.A.O.U. is not a parochial, or even a State affair, but an Australasian association of persons interested in the birds of a wide area of the earth's surface. The success of the movement was largely due to Mr. Le Souef's energy, tactfulness, and withal, never-failing courtesy. Fortunately, from the beginning he has been in office—twice for long periods as Hon. Secretary—and for two years he filled the important office of President.

In his official capacity as Director of the Zoological Gardens, Melbourne, he went much abroad, and it goes without saying