

The Cuckoo and the Red-capped Robins.—During the season 1922-23 I found six nests of the Red-capped Robin (*Petroica goodenovii*), all of which contained an egg of the Narrow-billed Bronze Cuckoo (*Chalcites basalis*). From the similarity of the eggs and the fact that I saw only one Cuckoo near these nests, I feel reasonably certain that the same Cuckoo laid all the eggs. The owners of the first nest were victimised twice; the Cuckoo laying again after I had removed her first egg. Apparently the Cuckoo laid every second day. On September 25th, I found the first nest, containing only a Robin's egg. On the 26th, it contained only a Cuckoo's egg, which I removed. On the 28th, the Cuckoo laid again in the same nest.

On the 29th, I found nest number two, containing two Robin's eggs, and the 30th only one Robin's egg, and also a Cuckoo's. Later I found nests three, four, and five, also victimised. On November 5th, I found nest number six, which, owing to the advanced stage of incubation of the eggs, was the only one at which I had hopes of securing a picture. The tree, growing on the edge of an embankment, was in a poor position for photography, being capable of approach only from one direction. Several pictures taken during afternoons were spoiled owing to the sun being in an unsatisfactory quarter, but the accompanying photograph, obtained in the morning, was more satisfactory. MARC COHN, R.A.O.U., Bendigo.

Stray Feathers

North Tasmanian Notes.—On a recent trip in car and on saddle round the north-west coast of Tasmania, as far as Balfour, about fifty miles south of Cape Grim, I made a few memoranda which may be of interest to some of your readers. First, a single specimen of the Black and White Fantail (*Rhipidura leucophrys*), of whose presence in the Huon district I notified you some years ago, was seen brandishing his misfitting tail on the pasture at Black River, near Stanley. At the latter place, also, the Brush Wattle-bird (*Anthochaera chrysoptera*) has now become common, though unknown there up to within the last few years. On the vast heathy plains about the mouth of the Arthur River, the plaintive piping of the Grass Bird (*Megalurus gramineus*) was much heard. This bird is rare in many parts of Tasmania. In the low coastal scrub south of Temma a flock of about twenty White Cockatoos was seen. Forty years ago these beautiful birds could be seen in large flocks in the grain fields; now the verdict is: "We seldom see them."—G. MURRAY ANDERSON, "Raggal," New Town, Hobart.

Australian Sea-Birds. — Through the courtesy of Mr. J. A. Kershaw, F.E.S., Curator, I have been permitted to look over the bird-skins in the National Museum. I have noticed three species of sea-birds that are not on any Australian list, so far as I am aware, namely: — Two specimens of the Antarctic Petrel (*Thalassoica antarctica*), "from and identified by J. Gould"; one from South Australian seas, the other from Australian seas; one specimen of the Snowy, or Ice, Petrel (*Pagodroma nivea*), "from and identified by J. Gould," marked Australian seas; and a specimen of the Antarctic Skua (*Megalestris maccormicki*), taken by N. Batchelor, at Queenscliff, Victoria. When one considers the long Antarctic night and consequent frozen rigours of the far south, it is not surprising that the above-mentioned Antarctic-breeding species should occasionally make their way into lower and more temperate latitudes in the seas of Southern Australia. — A. J. CAMPBELL, F.A.O.U., Melbourne.

Reviews.

["A Practical Handbook of British Birds." — Edited by H. F. Witherby, M.B.E., F.Z.S., F.R.G.S., M.B.O.U., assisted by authors of the various sections: Dr. Ernest Hartert, Miss Annie C. Jackson, H.M.B.O.U. (Mrs. Meinertzhagen), Rev. F. C. R. Jourdain, M.A., M.B.O.U., and Messrs. C. Oldham, F.Z.S., Norman F. Ticehurst, M.A., F.R.C.S. It contains over 1500 pages of letterpress, with 30 plates coloured and monochrome and over 350 text figures. Demy 8vo. 2 vols. (bound as 3) £4/10/- net.]

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Field Characters.—In this section discriminating notes are given of points of distinction in the bird's appearance "in the field," of flight, notes and song, and other habits. The section dealing with breeding habits deals concisely with breeding habitat, nest, site and construction; eggs, colour, number in clutch and size; breeding season; incubation period and share of sexes, and fledgling period where known. The food, so far as is known,