

found or had the opportunity of examining myself in the open. This nest was most picturesquely situated, protected in front by some dead weatherbeaten branches. Close behind was a small dry box-tree (eucalypt) standing with green suckers sprouting from its base. The nest was simply a flat bed (about 4 feet in length by  $2\frac{1}{2}$  feet in breadth, and 2 inches in thickness) composed of dead leaves, grass, and a few feathers of the bird, but chiefly eucalypt leaves, evidently plucked from the branchlets immediately above. What a subdued setting for the circle of eggs of matchless green! There were eight, and a fractured shell. Total, nine, an average clutch.

I think I have somewhere already mentioned that the day will come when the exportation of Emu eggs for commercial purposes will be prohibited. Having due regard for the proper protection of this noble, ornamental, and purely Australian bird, is the time not now ripe for legislation? More national work ahead for the Australasian Ornithologists' Union. There has always been a demand for Emu egg-shells in the great market of the world—London—where thousands of eggs are yearly sent. It is stated on the authority of a Sydney newspaper that in one season a single station hand in Queensland gathered no less than 1,123 Emu eggs, which realized in the local market 12s. per dozen. The majority, no doubt, found their way to London, where they would be worth 5s. or 6s. each.

## A Young King Penguin at the Melbourne Zoo.

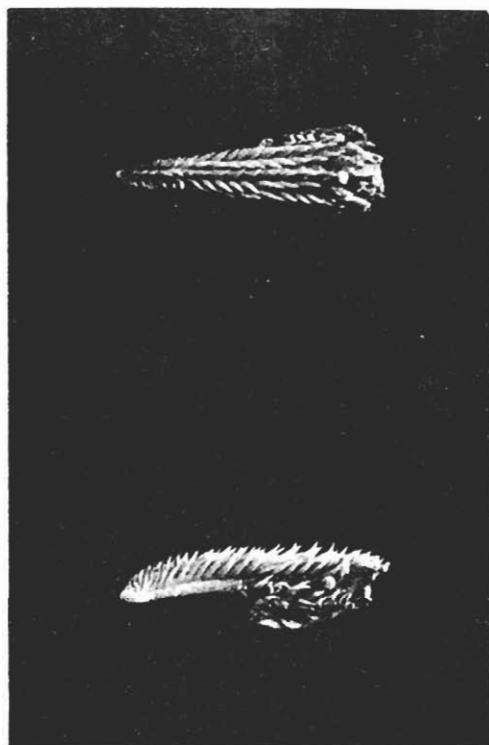
BY D. LE SOUËF, C.M.Z.S., &c.

A SPECIMEN of this interesting species (*Aptenodytes patagonica*), about six months old, was secured by Captain Douglas, of the s.s. *Damascus*, when visiting the Crozet Islands in the southern seas in search of some supposed castaways. The bird is covered with very dense soft down, of a dark greyish-brown. The beak is black, and measures 3 inches in length from the gape and 2 inches from the forehead. The tongue is very curious, being white in colour and almost round, and on the upper surface has three rows from near the point and four rows from half-way down of soft white spines, inclining backwards, and they extend to the back of the entrance to the windpipe. The tongue is .25 inch in thickness, and the spines the same length. The sides of the roof of the mouth have also serrations about the same size, and a row of serrations on each inner side of the lower beak, so that when the tongue is pressed down the rows of serrations are in contact with it on each side. Those towards the front are white, but the hinder ones darker. The length of wing is 11 inches, and length of the leg from the thigh joint



Young King Penguin.

FROM A PHOTO. BY D. LE SOUEF.



Tongue (top and side view) of the King Penguin.

12½ inches. The length of the foot is 6 inches, and its breadth 2 inches. The feet and toes are black, and the under surface of the foot deeply serrated, evidently to prevent the bird from slipping on the smooth, wet rocks or ice. There are three long toes and one small one, half an inch in length, on the upper inner side, just at the commencement of the toes, and which is practically useless. The tail feathers are about 2½ inches long, and are strong and bristly and light bluish at the tip, the rest being dark. A few feathers are also sprouting, principally above the tail, about an inch long, and are also light blue at the end. From the tip of almost each of the segments of these young feathers a thread of down springs, to the length of 1¾ inches. The down from the end segments of the new feathers is mostly intact, but the barbs from the lower ones are not so numerous, having either been broken off through abrasion or possibly not having grown. On the feather I have before me there are 32 filaments of down, but they vary in the different feathers. The eyes are dark brown, and the birds are able to partially protect them with a transparent covering, which they can close over the eye from the front under the eyelid. They frequently seem to do it—sometimes right over, and at other times half-way. The ears are large, with an almost circular patch of dark bare skin round them, on a level with but 1½ inches back from the gape. The total length of the bird, from the tip of the beak to the end of the tail, is 2 feet 2 inches.

Young "Kings" in captivity are very sociable, often following anyone about who may be near, having no fear of man. They are often silent when by themselves, but on seeing anyone approaching at once keep uttering their squeaky, high-pitched note, and moving their heads freely about, possibly expecting food. They have various ways of resting. Occasionally they will lie flat down, but generally stand up, sometimes bending forward until their head rests against their body about half-way down; at other times they just bend their head over until it rests on the upper portion of their body, either on the front or on the side—it seems immaterial which—and so go to sleep. They never seem to duck their head under their scanty wing. The least unusual sound will quickly wake them.

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### Stray Feathers.

A LAUNCESTON NOTE.—During the first week in February Starlings appeared for the first time in our and several other gardens in Launceston. In all probability they came from the flocks down the West Tamar district. English Skylarks, which until lately could be heard every morning at Invermay, a suburb of Launceston, have been all destroyed by "pot-hunters."—FRANK M. LITTLER. 10/3/02.