

plumage the birds had at that time, excepting the shortness of the tail; another was that I never saw the parents feeding them after they left the nest, although I was constantly passing and repassing the aviary; I think they must do so, unless they mature more quickly than the Bronze-wing does. In February they began to nest for the fourth time, and on the 14th were sitting on two eggs, in the same obscure corner; but misfortune was to overtake them again, in a somewhat similar way to that which befel their second effort. The grounds were about to be opened to the public again, for the benefit of a charity, and it was necessary that this aviary should be turfed, the only one in which the natural grass had disappeared; while this was being done, the bird got frightened by the constant intrusion, flew excitedly from her nest, and eventually deserted it on the 22nd of the month.

I bewailed the loss very much, and concluded the end of the season had arrived, but not so; in a few days I noticed the male bird curtsying and cooing to his mate, and nesting preparations being made for the fifth time, by the 2nd of March they had settled down to work again, and are sitting steadily enough at present.

I have not been able to supply any data as to the length of time each bird sits, or at what hours they exchange places. The sexes being so exactly alike in marking, I have found it difficult to tell which one was on the nest.

### The Coloured Plate (XIII.)

*Mirafra woodwardi* (Rufous Bush-Lark) was discovered by Mr. John T. Tunney, the collector for the Western Australian Museum, Perth, on the red sand tracts near Onslow in North-West Australia, although, according to Dr. P. L. Sclater, F.R.S., one specimen was received by the British Museum from the Gould collection, and registered as *M. horsfieldi*. Mr. Tom Carter, lately of Point Cloates, in his article entitled "Birds Occurring in the Region of the North-West Cape,"\* stated that his attention was first drawn to these birds on the 30th October, 1900, when they were seen dusting themselves in the red sand. Mr. Carter further states that the birds are tame in habit, and were only seen on the inland red sand plains, and that they sit close in the grass, but occasionally perch in the bushes.

The bird was described by Mr. Alex. Wm. Milligan,† the Honorary Ornithologist to the Western Australian Museum, Perth, and named in honour of Mr. B. H. Woodward, F.G.S., C.M.Z.S., the Director of the same institution.

Mr. Robert Hall, F.L.S., C.M.Z.S., described the nest and eggs of the species in the *Vict. Nat.*, xviii., page 80.

*Amytis housei* (Black Grass-Wren) was discovered by Dr. F. M. House in North-West Kimberley in the year 1901.‡ That gentleman,

\* *Emu*, vol. iii., p. 95.

† *Vict. Nat.*, vol. xviii., p. 25.

‡ Appendix F., "Report on Exploration of North-West Kimberley" (*Emu*, vol. i., p. 114).

in his field observations, remarked that the bird was first observed running over piled-up masses of red and black sandstone, with which the colouring of its plumage harmonized so perfectly that it might easily pass unnoticed. The bird was named by Mr. A. W. Milligan after Dr. House, who acted as naturalist to the North-West Exploration Expedition, led by Mr. F. S. Brockman. The nest and eggs are undescribed.

*Xerophila castaneiventris* (Chestnut-bellied Whiteface).—This species was also first discovered by Mr. J. T. Tunney at Pindar, in the Murchison district of Western Australia, but as he obtained only one skin, and that a bad one, it could not be declared a new species until further skins were obtained. These were eventually secured for the Western Australian Museum by Mr. Frederick Lawson, in the district named. The birds associate in small companies, and prefer the red soils. They are ground feeders. The bird was named and described by Mr. A. W. Milligan\* and the eggs by Mr. A. J. Campbell, C.M.B.O.U.†

### Obituary.

THE news of the death of Mr. Harry E. Hill, at Kalgoorlie, W.A., on 28th February last, from typhoid fever, has been received with the deepest regret by his friends in Victoria. Mr. Hill was a valued member of the A.O.U. He acted for several years as honorary curator of the Gordon College Museum, and in that capacity did excellent work in classifying the museum specimens for the first time upon a scientific basis. He was editor of *The Geelong Naturalist*, and later of *The Wombat*, and by his field notes published from time to time in *The Emu* and in the journals named he contributed much to our knowledge of the birds of the Geelong district and the Eastern Otway. He continued his ornithological work in Western Australia, and only a few weeks before he died he wrote to the editors to say that he hoped soon to be able to send over full field notes on the birds of Kalgoorlie. Mr. Hill was a man of a quiet disposition, who never sought popularity, but whose friendship was all the more valued by those who knew him best. As an ornithologist he was a painstaking and enthusiastic worker, one who put the science he loved foremost and himself last. The cause of ornithology can ill afford his loss.

### Corrections.

VOL. IV., p. 45.—Under heading Fairy Martin, 5th line—Transpose the months September and August, so as to read "from middle of August to early in September."

Vol. IV., p. 46.—Under heading Coucal, "east of Townsville" should read "west of Townsville."

\**Emu*, vol. iii., p. 70.

†*Emu*, vol. iii., p. 120.