

## Stray Feathers.

**Yellow-faced Honey-eater** (*Ptilotis chrysops*).—While staying on the Tyldesley River, East Gippsland, I found a nest of this species in a slender tea-tree about 12 feet from the ground; it contained (21st September) two young in light grey down, eyes not yet open. The parents came close to my head while I was examining the nest, making a "rut-ut-utting" noise with the wings while flying, in the same manner as the Spinebill and others of the *Meliphagidæ*.—H. STUART DOVE. Cunninghame.

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**Spinebill** (*Acanthorhynchus tenuirostris*).—A nest just finished of this pretty Honey-eater was found near Tyldesley River on 21st September, in young swamp tea-tree, about 6 feet 6 inches from the ground. Both birds, in fine plumage, practically identical, came close up to me. One egg was laid on 24th September, another on 25th, when the female began sitting. Next morning she allowed me to touch her before she would leave the nest, and then just sat quietly by on a twig while I examined the eggs.—H. STUART DOVE. Cunninghame.

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**Cape Barren Goose on Nest.**—This photograph (Plate V.) was taken at the Public Gardens, Launceston. The nest is composed of a general collection of rough material, some of which must have been gathered from a distance. The nest is only slightly raised above the ground, the top being flat, with a hollow only large enough to hold the eggs (three). This hollow is lined with fine pieces of roots, grass, and the soft down plucked from the birds' own bodies. On leaving the nest at feeding-time the eggs are carefully covered with this material. These birds show a good deal of defence. The male bird will rush at any intruder with considerable force.—W. M'GOWAN. Launceston.

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**Cleveland (Tasmania) Notes.**—20th September, 1910.—My sister found a nest of the Striated Field-Wren (*Calamanthus fuliginosus*) with three eggs of owner and one egg of Fan-tailed Cuckoo (*Cacomantis flabelliformis*).

24th September.—Observed two pairs of Red-capped Dottrels (*Ægialitis ruficapilla*) on the edge of a brackish lagoon about a mile from the Macquarie River. Subsequently I noticed that the birds remained at this lagoon (about two acres in extent).

15th October.—In company with two ornithologists, was searching the flats of the South Esk for Native-Hens (*Tribonyx mortieri*), when one of the party found a nest with a clutch of fourteen eggs. Again (29th October), when exploring banks of the South Esk with one of my scholars, we found a Bush-Chat's (*Ephthianura albigrons*) nest containing three young ones and



Cape Barren Goose (*Cereopsis*) on Nest.

FROM A PHOTO. BY W. M'GOWAN, JUN.

two eggs. Also observed nest of Native-Hen with set of sixteen eggs. Bird was sitting.

29th October.—In Diprose Lagoon found Bald-Coot's (*Porphyrio melanonotus*) nest with set of eight eggs. This proved to be a "combination clutch"—five of *P. melanonotus* and three of *Fulica australis*.

1st November.—Cuckoo-Shrike (*Graucalus parvirostris*) sitting on four eggs.

2nd November.—Another nest of same, with four eggs.

19th November.—In small lagoon on way to the Macquarie River observed a Swamp-Hawk's (*Circus gouldi*) nest with five eggs. Grebes (*Podiceps poliocephalus*) were also present. At Macquarie River, amongst other nests, one clutch of the Native-Hen contained twelve eggs.

3rd September.—Flushed Snipe (*Gallinago australis*) on edge of Sister's Lagoon, 4 miles west of Cleveland.

23rd November.—Charlie Challis, one of my scholars, found a Coot's (*Fulica australis*) nest with three eggs. Flushes sitting bird from nest.

27th November.—Found another Coot's nest in Diprose Lagoon. Set four eggs. 1st December, another bird on three eggs in small unnamed lagoon. These Coots' nests are more tidy and more compact than those of the Bald-Coot.

6th November.—A Musk-Duck (*Biziura lobata*) made a nest underneath a Swamp-Hawk's nest, and two eggs were in it on above date. The Hawk's nest had been last inspected on 1st November, when it was apparently ready for eggs, but no Duck's nest was underneath. This Hawk's nest was started on 4th October, and the first egg was laid on 22nd November. The clutch was subsequently destroyed by the Crows (Ravens).

6th November.—Disturbed a Tawny Frogmouth (*Podargus strigoides*) which was sound asleep on the ground at the foot of a tree.—(Miss) J. A. FLETCHER. Springfield (Tas.), 23/2/11.

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**Nesting of the Red Wattle-Bird** (*Acanthochæra carunculata*).—A good many pairs of this large Honey-eater remained in our district to breed, their favourite site for a nest being one of the bunches of mistletoe (*Loranthus*) which grow so plentifully in the big box trees (*Eucalyptus*) of Gippsland. Out of five nests which we visited, four were so placed, and were at a height of 18 to 25 feet; the exception was built at a height of about 10 feet from the ground in a small sheoak (*Casuarina*) close to our paddock fence on one side and to the road on the other—a road along which timber-waggons, drays, and springcarts, besides pedestrians, daily passed. The nest was placed in a niche where a small branch sprang upwards and outwards from the main stem, and was so secluded among the slender, drooping branchlets that it was quite invisible until one mounted the top rail of the fence and thrust one's head in among the branchlets. I timed the period

of incubation, and made it 16 days. Two eggs appear to be the invariable clutch in this locality. The young, when born, had reddish skin, and showed some dark grey down on head and body. On seventh morning after hatching the eyes were opening: there was long dark-grey down on the head and back; the wing-quills were sprouting well. I noticed that, while one of the young had a yellowish bill, the other (probably a male) had a larger reddish-tinted one. This clutch had left the nest on the fourteenth morning from hatching, after considerable heat on the previous day, which may have hastened their departure. In another instance the Wattle-Birds had nested in a small clump of *Loranthus* sprouting from the upper side of a box limb (*Eucalyptus*) about 20 feet from the ground. They appear to prefer the parasite while still in the young state, with the leaves somewhat stiff and upright, before it develops the long, drooping habit of the mature bunch, although occasionally a nest is placed in one of the latter type. The female was sitting on two eggs on 15th October, the incubation in this case occupying 15 days. The young were sparsely covered with dark grey down on head and body. The eyes were opening on seventh morning; a long, dark down covered heads and bodies, and the feathers were sprouting, noticeably the wing-quills. At ten days from hatching some down still remained, although the feathers were developing well. When the camera was taken up the box tree to get a picture of the nest the old birds became wildly excited, dashing from branch to branch with harsh, grating cries, the female occasionally sailing to the ground and "shamming wounded," after the manner of the Yellow Robin, but in this case the deception was not nearly so long-continued or effective, the wild excitement which reigned in the bird's breast apparently preventing her from a long continuance in any course of tactics. The attempt to lure from the nest in this manner was a new trait to me so far as the Wattle-Bird is concerned. When 14 days old these two young had a plumage of streaked light and dark grey, much resembling the parents, although a little down still showed through. One of them, when touched, left the nest and sailed to the ground with outspread wings. Next day they left the nest altogether, giving a period of 15 days from hatching to fledging, as against 14 days with the sheoak nestlings.—H. STUART DOVE. Cunninghame.

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**Death of a Distinguished Ornithologist.**—In *The Proceedings of the Ornithological Society of Bavaria*, vol. x. (issued March, 1911), there appears the following *in memoriam*:—"On 28th January, 1911, in the evening, after a brief illness, our greatly esteemed first president, Herr Dr. (med.) Carl Parrot, the founder and for many years leader of the Ornithological Society of Bavaria, departed this life. We mourn his loss deeply, and reserve ourselves to refer to his works and his merits in an extensive necrologue later.—THE COUNCIL."