

catches a little food for itself, because I have seen it eating a young rat and several small lizards, and also chasing dragon-flies along the creek. It is rather scared of a pair of Whistling Eagles which are always about the house, and which chase it as soon as they see it fed. But the Goshawk usually beats them by going under the house. These Whistling Eagles also chase the dogs and fowls for scraps, but, strangely enough, the latter do not seem to fear them. My object in keeping these Hawks was to note any changes in plumage which the birds might undergo, but apparently they leave the nest exact replicas of their parents, though I think the wavy bars on the breast become less pronounced with age.

Bird Protection.—Acts of Parliament are most beneficial and necessary for the protection of birds, but I feel that in the long run greater good will arise from educating the public to take an interest in our birds and to realise the *immense importance* they are to our welfare. Much towards this end can be done by lecturing to children in school.

In my travels in the bush I have always found teachers very willing to spare me half an hour of school time to talk to the youngsters about birds. Every member of the R.A.O.U. can in this way do his bit, for it requires no power of oratory, and your audience is not critical; on the contrary, they are—I have always had to deal with bush children—generally very interested, and if you overcome their shyness you will be asked many questions.

Points to stress readily arise: the beauty and interest of our birds, the wonder of their nests, different forms to suit different conditions, brush-tongues for honey-eating, long legs for wading, webbed feet for swimming, our mound builders, bower builders, wingless birds, mimics, etc.; but above all, I impress on the children the importance, the *immense importance*, that birds are in keeping in check the myriad hosts of insect pests that, without the aid of the birds, would destroy all plant life and bring about our starvation.

A lot of good can be achieved in this way, much more than is generally realised.

Arrangements should be made with the teacher that later the children shall each write an essay on what they have heard, plus their own experience of birds.

Dividing the school into seniors and juniors, and offering prizes (books) for the two best essays, quickens the children's interest, and assures their attention.

I would again impress on our members the importance of doing all they can in this simple but urgent matter. Try it, and it will be found a very pleasant task.—F. L. BERNEY, R.A.O.U., Longreach, Queensland.