

the feral state before climatic influences had a chance of working against them.

Coloured charts or maps of life-size rare birds, with names and descriptions, could be displayed at all police stations, public schools, shire and municipal offices. The charts should not show more than a dozen of the rarest birds to be found in any particular district. Thus the chart for the police district of say Bourke, N.S.W., could include birds which frequent that area. It is unreasonable to expect the police to administer the law in relation to the protection of several hundred birds.

Finally, pets, the keeping of which occupies man's leisure, have a humanizing influence on him, bringing before him many of the problems associated with the living things about him, and while governments of the day restrict his actions by legislation and regulation in many directions, they should afford him substitutes by inculcating and providing instructive hobbies, and aviculture is one of them.

Food of Podargus.—Dr. D. L. Serventy's excellent paper on this subject was read with very great interest and enjoyment. A note from F. Lawson Whitlock is quoted in support of the opinion that the Frogmouth sometimes attacks soft fruits. Bunches of grapes near the ground were being damaged, and on a rabbit trap being set by Mr. Whitlock, he was surprised to find a Frogmouth caught by the foot next morning. But is it not possible that the grapes were damaged by some small rodent and that the bird was making a dive to capture it when he was himself caught? We know how attractive fruit is to some of the rodents—ripe apples, for instance, will bring in rats from quite a distance.—H. STUART DOVE, Devonport, Tas., 7/10/36.

Magpies Interbreeding.—Mention is made in *The Emu*, October, 1935, of Black-backed and White-backed Magpies (*Gymnorhina tibicen* and *G. hypoleuca*) interbreeding. That practice has seemingly been the means of losing to the Wilton district, between Appin and Picton, New South Wales, the White-backed bird as a definite, clear-cut form. About twenty-five years ago, I understand, the two forms were present in about equal numbers but since then they have interbred to such an extent that true White-backed birds are now seldom seen, although birds showing intermediate colouring are frequently met with. Apparently the "Black-back" is the more fixed type of the two, for true specimens of them are very common.—ELLIS MCNAMARA, Cordeaux River, N.S.W.