

ing for the eggs of that species in 1911 (*Emu*, 1913, 12: 172-178, pl. 21-24). Frizelle remarks (p.175): "I know now that the male bird never visits the nesting country [presumably the nest-site is meant — K. A. H.], but keeps within warning call of it. When anyone approaches he utters his deep-sounding 'Bōōm bōōm'; or else, if taken by surprise, a short 'Heûgh, heûgh, heûgh'. He may also stamp his feet on the ground as he goes away."

Observations on the nesting habits of captive birds could clear up the problem indicated.

My thanks to Mrs. Gill for her interesting field notes and for details of the Cassowary's eggs.

Nest usurpation in scrub-wrens.—In early August 1960 a companion and I were hunting birds in the jungle-clad ranges 25 miles east of Allora, Qld. We were in the habit of inspecting any nests of the Yellow-throated Scrub-Wren (*Sericornis lathamii*) that we found. Approximately one-third of them contained an infertile egg, and all nests found were old.

One nest containing a number of broken eggs was pulled apart for closer inspection. To our surprise we found three eggs of the Yellow-throated Scrub-Wren and two eggs of the Large-billed Scrub-Wren (*S. magnirostris*). All the eggs were broken. Evidently the nest had been deserted by both species.

This interesting case of nest usurpation invites the question: which parent was the first to lay. It would seem less likely that *magnirostris* had laid after *lathamii* as the latter should have been brooding, but still less likely that the Large-billed would have laid in a deserted nest of the other species and containing three eggs, as there were many empty nests nearby. The fact that there were two eggs of *magnirostris* in the nest emphasizes the bird's intention, perhaps, to lay its full clutch and incubate; but if it was driven off by the larger bird, why did the rightful owner desert its eggs?—LLOYD NIELSEN, Jandowae, Qld., 18/2.61.