

birds, we paddled off to the home of the White Egrets. *En route* I managed to creep on to some fully-grown young Nankeen Herons that had just left the nest for their first outing, and I obtained a picture of them as they perched on the limb of a fallen tree, awaiting the dainty morsels of food which their parents brought them from time to time, and which they besought their offspring to take from them, encouraging them to do so with a chuckling, purring expression of parental affection. Some of the larger eucalypts contained as many as 9 or 10 nests of these birds, and as we paddled under these trees the young birds, in their excitement at being disturbed, rained down on us a heterogeneous supply of extraneous matter in which yabbies and frogs were in predominance.

Stray Feathers.

A RARE MALURUS.—It may interest you to know that I found the Purple-crowned Wren (*Malurus coronatus*) very numerous on the small rivers between Turkey Creek Telegraph Station and Wyndham. This is a rare bird on the Fitzroy.—J. P. ROGERS. Fremantle, W.A., 20/11/07.

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BROWN KINGFISHER AND SNAKE.—Whilst on official duty at Brandy Creek, in the Buln Buln district, Gippsland, one morning last summer I experienced a pleasure which I had long looked for. I noticed a Laughing Jackass perched on a stump about 12 feet high. He was looking very serious, and turning his head from side to side. Suddenly he made a dive into a patch of bracken, and about two seconds later rose in the air with a snake between 2 feet 6 inches and 3 feet in length. He held it by the head and tail, and in its contortions it was forming the figure 8. The bird flew to a limb on a tree about 40 feet high without much effort. Unfortunately, owing to my having to catch a train at Warragul, which I heard whistling out of Drouin, I could not wait to see how the Jackass despatched his prey.—M. C. LECKIE, Inspector of Board of Public Health, Melbourne.

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"A KEY TO THE BIRDS OF AUSTRALIA."—Referring to Mr. T. Carter's criticism in the last issue,* Mr. Robert Hall intended no discourtesy in holding over publication of the suggestions of Mr. Carter, meaning that they should in twelve months' time form the basis of a supplement to the distribution in areas 9, 8, 1, as collectors were in the field. The supplement is as under, being mainly from the published report of Dr. Ernst Hartert,

* *Emu*, vii., p. 99.

Novit. Zool., 1905; by Mr. Collingwood Ingram, *Ibis*, July, 1907; by Mr. Carter, *Emu* (last issue), partly a repeat of *Novit. Zool.*, 1905; and by Mr. Hall himself, in *Emu*, through collections made by Mr. J. P. Rogers. Certain of these are now on record for the first time. With regard to Mr. Carter's correction of "black pectoral collar" in *Pachycephala gilberti* (Gould), the error appears in the Brit. Mus. Cat. Birds, vol. viii., p. 184, and, unfortunately, found its way into the "Key," remaining uncorrected till Mr. Carter observed it. Mr. Carter's list showed 56 species in areas 9 and 8, thus totalling 132 species in areas 9, 8, 1 (31 species appearing in area 1).

Species. Areas.	Species. Areas.	Species. Areas.
4 ... 9	373 ... 8	609 ... 9, 8 (N.W. Cape)
8 ... 1	375 ... 1	610 ... 9
13 ... 8	381 ... N.W. Cape	611 ... 9, 8
16 ... 1	388 ... N.W. Cape	612 ... 9, 8
18A... 9 (not 8)	389 ... 8, 1	614 ... 8
22 ... 1	390 ... 1	615 ... 1
26 ... 1	393 ... 8	620 ... 1
36 ... 8	394 ... 8, 1	621 ... 8
40 ... 8	404 ... 9, 1	622 ... 8
44 ... 9	408 ... 8	628 ... 9, 8
44A... 8	409 ... 8	640 ... 9, 8 (N.W. Cape)
67 ... 8	422 ... 8	643 ... 9, 8 (N.W. Cape)
75 ... 8	429 ... 8	644 ... 9, 8
80 ... 8	430 ... 8, 9	645 ... 8, 1
81 ... 9	437 ... 9	646 ... 9, 8 (N.W. Cape)
89 ... 1	438 ... 8	647 ... 8
93 ... 1	441 ... 8, 1	648 ... 9
104 ... 8	449 ... 9	650 ... 8
112A... 8	453 ... 9, 8 (N.W. Cape)	652 ... 9
122 ... 9, 1	488 ... 9	655 ... 8
126 ... 9	492 ... 9	659 ... 8
133 ... 1	505 ... 8	703 ... 9
139 ... 1	507 ... 2 or 3	704 ... 9
141 ... 8	521 ... 9	705 ... 9
180 ... 8 (N.W. Cape)	533 ... 8	706 ... 8, 1
195 ... 8 (N.W. Cape)	546 ... 9	716 ... 9, 8
214 ... 9	547 ... 9, 8 (N.W. Cape)	717 ... 9
229 ... 9	550 ... 8	718 ... 9, 8
230 ... 9	552 ... 9	720 ... 9
236 ... 8	557 ... 8	725 ... 1
237 ... 1	558 ... 9	727 ... 1
242 ... 8, 9	560 ... 9	728 ... 1
247A... 1	562 ... 9	729 ... 9, 8
255 ... 1	572 ... 8	731 ... 8
264 ... 8, 9	574 ... 9	733 ... 8
289 ... 8	579 ... 8	735 ... 9, 8
295 ... 8	595 ... 1	736 ... 9, 8 (N.W. Cape)
296 ... 8	596 ... 9, 8	739 ... 9
305 ... 8, 9	598 ... 9, 1	745 ... 9
318 ... 1	599 ... 1	755 ... 9
319 ... 8	602 ... 8	759 ... 1
345 ... 1	603 ... 9	760 ... 1
347 ... 1, 8, 9	607 ... 9, 8 (N.W. Cape)	761 ... 1
367 ... 1	608 ... 9, 8 (N.W. Cape)	764 ... 8

I use this opportunity to include in the "Key," area 5, the following species :—29, 67, 183, 235, 265, 392, 463—to be marked as resident or visiting birds I do not know. Evidently I quite overlooked including 265, as recorded in Colonel Legge's list.

The following may be marked as having been observed in areas 2, 3, 4, 6, while further additions will be noted in Mr. North's work, now in the press. Certain of these records were the observations of Mr. S. W. Jackson, communicated to me, the bulk of the remainder having already appeared in *The Emu*. There still remain other records to be collected.

Species.	Areas.	Species.	Areas.	Species.	Areas.
51	...	286	...	463	...
52	...	296	...	487	...
65	...	307	...	525	...
102	...	348	...	527	...
113	...	353	...	597	...
117	...	354	...	616	...
156	...	358	...	644	...
160	...	365	...	651	...
186	...	375	...	754	...
205	...	412	...		

Certain of the birds, under varying climatic conditions, change for a time their stations, and in the drouthy spring of this year we have much evidence of it. The eruption of species from the dry areas into the coastal areas may well be recorded, but for irregular rather than permanent residence.—ROBERT HALL.
10/10/07.

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QUEER NESTING PLACES.—Three weeks ago, while driving into the outskirts of Stawell, a town of 6,000 inhabitants, a little Black-fronted Dottrel (*Ægialitis nigrifrons*) was seen to rise from some pebbles and run off. A clutch of three eggs was found placed on the hard stones not 2 feet away from the wheel track, where scores of vehicles passed daily. In fact, the rubble had been put by roadmenders into a rut, but passing drivers, as is often the case, avoided it. Whether the daring little bird will successfully rear a family in such surroundings is hard to say. A much more suitable nesting place could be found along the margin of a small lake in the public gardens not many yards away. The same day, while visiting a farmhouse, I was surprised to hear a Brown Tree-creeper (*Climacteris scandens*) scramble up the hessian lining of a room and out through a hole in the outside wall. It had a nest in the bottom corner containing several young ones.—A. G. CAMPBELL.
Pomonal, near Stawell, 12/12/07.

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SCONE (N.S.W.) NOTES.—On the 9th October I took three slightly incubated eggs of the Butcher-Bird (*Cracticus destructor*) from a nest in a small yellow box tree, 20 feet from ground;

on the 14th November I noticed a pair of fresh eggs of the Bronze-wing Pigeon (*Phaps chalcoptera*) in the same nest. On the 10th October I took one fresh egg of the Goshawk (*Astur approximans*); on the 15th November I took one heavily incubated egg and one addled egg of same bird from the same nest. The White-browed (*Artamus superciliosus*) and Masked (*Artamus personatus*) Wood-Swallows are now visiting us in thousands, and placing their nests in all sorts of curious places. The Dollar-Bird (*Eurystomus australis*), usually very plentiful here in summer, is very scarce this season; I know of one pair only in the vicinity. Friar-Birds or Leatherheads (*Philemon corniculatus*) are breeding very freely; the same applies to the Pied Crow-Shrike (*Strepera graculina*). I never knew *Ephthianura albifrons* so plentiful before; they have been breeding since June. I saw one full clutch of four eggs. I have seen one only *Scythrops novæ-hollandiæ* this season; this bird is usually plentiful here. On the 18th September, at Belltrees, found an egg of the Black-eared Cuckoo (*Misocalius palliolatus*) in the nest of the Little Field-Wren (*Chthonicola sagittata*) along with a pair of eggs of the last-named bird.—H. L. WHITE. 17/11/07.

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LAUNCESTON (TASMANIA) NOTES.—While returning from a long ramble down the banks of the Tamar, at the end of October, I was fortunate enough to come upon a small party of five Sandpipers or Sharp-tailed Stints (*Heteropygia acuminata*), feeding quietly upon a little mud-bank at the edge of a swamp. They were by no means wild, and allowed me to approach within a few yards before taking wing with their plaintive cry. This was within a mile of Launceston Post-Office, which is unusually close to town for these long-distance migrants to appear. The same afternoon I heard great numbers of Grass-Birds (*Megalurus gramineus*) uttering their weird little calls, and saw one or two. This interesting little bird, although shy in the sense of keeping itself out of sight, yet does not at all object to the proximity of human beings, so long as there is cover for concealment. One is calling frequently in a thin patch of reeds close to the Tamar ferry, just opposite the wharf, and with people passing to and fro within a few yards; there are dozens in the reeds alongside a footpath which caps the embankment. I have frequently brought them up almost to my feet by imitating their call, and then have not been able to see them, owing to the thick growth of reeds. The call is usually a plaintive double whistle, but some individuals use three or even four notes instead of the usual two.

The Reed-Warblers (*Acrocephalus australis*) were much in evidence that same day, flying excitedly from the dense growth of the riverside into the wattle trees, then chasing each other

from the trees back into the reeds. I noticed they have a harsh, somewhat guttural call note, not unlike one occasionally employed by the Crescent Honey-eater when a cat or other enemy is in the vicinity. The beautiful Canary-like song of this waterside dweller was heard unusually early this spring; when Mr. Thompson and myself were crossing the North Esk on 22nd September on our way to the bush, one of these songsters was heard in the dry reeds of last season close to the Butts Bridge; usually we do not notice them until well on in October, and they do not nest here until November. Like the Grass-Bird, they have no objection to the proximity of our species provided there is cover, and their rich warble may be heard close to the railway sheds, with trains passing and repassing, and the dense engine smoke flying over their haunts.
—H. STUART DOVE.

From Magazines, &c.

"A TRIP TO MOUNT ARTHUR" is a pleasant account of a nature study outing undertaken by Messrs. H. Stuart Dove, F.Z.S., and H. C. Thompson, A.O.U., to the Lilydale district of Tasmania, where a number of birds was noted. The notes are published in *The Examiner* (Launceston), 19/11/07.

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BIRDS OF SPENCER GULF.—Mr. J. W. Mellor, one of the vice-presidents of the A.O.U., has contributed to *The Evening Journal*, Adelaide (18/5/07), a popular account of the birds he noted on the islands about the Gulf during an excursion by members of the Australasian Association for the Advancement of Science, January, 1907.

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BIRDS OF BOROONDARA.—Under the title of "Some Birds of Hawthorn District," Mr. C. F. Cole, A.O.U., has contributed a short but interesting article to *The Victorian Naturalist* (vol. xxiv., No. 5). Having been born and reared in the district, besides being a close observer of bird-life, Mr. Cole's records, especially "old-time memories" are valuable.

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PARTRIDGE-PIGEONS.—In *The Avicultural Magazine* (vol. v., No. 10, New Series), Mr. D. Seth-Smith, F.Z.S., contributes aviary observations on the two species of "Squatter Pigeons" forming the genus *Geophaps*. Because of their terrestrial and other habits, Mr. Seth-Smith does not agree with any attempt to separate these birds from their natural order Columbæ.