
The Migration of Cuckoos.—In an article on migration by Sir William Beach Thomas in the *Spectator*, September 22, 1933, occurs the following:—"The habit may in the beginning have sprung from material needs of warmth, and sun, and nesting-room; but to-day the instinct itself prevails over all direct and immediate causes. It drives the young Cuckoo to migrate before its parents, and robs England of most of the Warblers, Flycatchers, Swallows and Swifts, and Turtle-doves, and of some of the Hawks and a score of species besides. They must come at a particular date and go rather less punctually, whatever the weather."

In the case of the mainland Cuckoos, which come over to us for spring and summer, the young certainly do not migrate before the parents. Young Pallid Cuckoos (*Cuculus pallidus*), easily distinguished by their beautiful silvery plumage, are often seen sitting about on wires and fences a month after the adults have departed. Again, with the Bronze species (*Lamprolaima placens* and *Chalcites basalis*) I have seen the young on the grassy banks of the Mersey estuary in the third week of April, whereas the adults have all departed by the end of February.

With the Fan-tailed Cuckoo (*Cacomantis yabelliformis*) the matter is more complicated, as a number of these stay about our north-west coast all the winter. It has always seemed to me strange that the entire body of Pallid Cuckoos should leave us at the end of summer, while some "Fantails" always remain. One would think that such a robust bird as the former would be quite as well qualified as the latter to brave our not too formidable winters.

Beach-Thomas, in the same article, just touches this subject of "resident-migrants", if we may use the term. He says, "Some migrants decide to become squatters" (an apt term!) "The Crossbill, lately become resident in Norfolk pine woods, is an example."

The Pallid Cuckoos, which have been excessively numerous during the past few years, seem much fewer in our district this spring. I do not hear nearly the number of "scale-calls" as was formerly the case—the dry season may have something to do with it, for our rainfall is a good deal below the average.—H. STUART DOVE, R.A.O.U., Devonport, Tasmania, November 13, 1933.