

The White-fronted Robin and the Flower-pecker.

BY F. R. ZIETZ.

The White-fronted Robin (*Littlea chrysoptera phœnicea*).
—These handsome birds are regular visitors to this State during the wet season, making their appearance in April, and departing in July. Last year three males paid daily visits to our garden, but this year only one has been noticed. He was first seen during the latter part of March, which is rather earlier than previous records. They have never been found breeding in this State, and apparently come here so as to avoid the severe winter of Tasmania and South Gippsland.

The Flower-pecker or Mistletoe Bird (*Austrodiaccaum hirundinaceum*)—We kept a male of this species in captivity for about three months. Its food during that period, with the exception of three of four days, when it was given berries of the mistletoe, consisted of the berries of the introduced Pepper Tree (*Schinus molle*) of South America. When a bunch of fresh berries was placed in the cage it picked one berry, peeled off the outer red skin by means of the sharp cutting edges of the basal part of the bill, and swallowed the seed. These seeds are surrounded by a sweet sticky substance from which nutriment is derived, and which evidently takes the place of the glutinous coating of the Mistletoe seed. When passing the Pepper Tree seeds they often adhered to the feathers of the vent, and to free itself of these the bird assumed a jerky motion; if not successful in thus removing them it rubbed them off on the perch. One morning we found it dead. Although it always appeared in the best of health it was in rather poor condition. (The Pepper Tree berries did not seem to have supplied sufficient nutriment.)
