

**BIRD NOTES FROM THE DARWIN AREA**

By H. T. CONDON

[In a letter dated January 31, 1945, Mr. Condon supplies the following notes on birds in the Darwin area.—Editors.]

The "Wet" has now set in in earnest and already the tall grasses are over five feet high. Some days the humidity is up to 92%. Bird life about the camp is fairly numerous, some permanent denizens being the Great Bower-Bird (*Chlamydera nuchalis*), which is a very charming bird—noisy but tame and confiding; Silver-crowned Friar-bird (*Philemon argenticeps*); Little Friar-bird (*P. citreogularis*); Golden-backed Honeyeater (*Melithreptus laetior*); White-winged Sittella; Red-winged Parrot; Northern Rosella; Treecreeper (*Climacteris melanura*); Butcher-birds (*Cracticus nigrogularis picatus* and *C. argentus*); Kookaburra (*Dacelo leachi*); Yellow Weebill (*Smicrornis flavescens*); and Banksian Cockatoo. There have been several visitations of the Spine-tailed Swift in the past month or two, and I have also examined a Great Bower-bird's bower (about 16 miles from the coast) filled with perhaps 200 large white shells of two species which I am sending for identification.

Soon after my arrival in October last year I came across a single individual of the

Rainbow Pitta (*Pitta iris*) in a patch of "rain forest" along a creek. It was very tame, and I watched what I presume was the same individual on two evenings for a considerable time, at the same spot (a clearing in fairly dense vegetation).

Species breeding at the moment include the Great Bower Bird (young seen), Black-faced Cuckoo Shrike (nest and young seen), Peaceful Dove (nest and young), and the Yellow-throated Miner (nests and young).

[The two species of large white shells found at the bower of the Great Bower-bird have been identified by Mr. B. C. Cotton as *Telescopium palustris* L. and *Pyrazus ebinus* L.—shells inhabiting mangrove and mud flats with a wide range in the Indo-Pacific region from North Australia to Borneo.]