

Notes upon the Brush Wattle Bird

(*Anthochaera chrysoptera intermedia*).

(By J. W. MELLOR, B.A.O.U.)

[The following Notes came to hand too late to be included in the description given of this bird in the last number. Ed. Committee.]

A comparatively few years ago the Brush Wattle Bird was only an occasional visitor to the Reedbeds, coming for a short time only, and then departing; but about ten or twelve years ago a pair took up their quarters in our front garden at Fulham and nested. They were strictly protected, and from then onward they have kept with us throughout the year, and so increased that they are now quite a common bird, and each year several pairs breed in the garden or orchard, they prefer an orange or lemon tree to any other, although they do not keep to these trees, they place their nest quite close to where we are working the ground, and sit upon their nest until any one passes close to them, then they merely slip off to a neighbouring tree or bush, and back again in a few minutes. The clutch is invariably two eggs here, but in other parts I have found occasionally three eggs, I have known a pair to start early, and end late in their domestic duties, and bring up three broods. The young are seen about in the trees near to where they were bred, and feed on insects, etc., although the food of the old birds consists chiefly of honey obtained from the flowers. The young for some time after leaving the nest make a peculiar plaintive squeaking note while being fed. I have noticed them both in the hills and plains country, but always when it is well bushed, as they are not long flyers, merely going from tree to tree. They are very noisy birds, especially in the spring time, when the eucalypts are in blossom, and like other members of the family, will drive all other birds from a particular feeding tree. Their call is a harsh guttural one uttered often when in a tree, but not upon the wing: