
Order Passeriformes, Family Ploceidae,
Genus *Aegintha*.

Aegintha temporalis. (Red-browed Finch)—Mr. G. M. Mathews has divided this bird up as follows, the type—South Queensland and New South Wales:—

A. temporalis tregellasi (Victorian Red-browed Finch)—Victoria.

A. temporalis minor (Little Red-browed Finch)—North Queensland.

A. temporalis loftyi (Mountain Red-browed Finch)—
South Australia.

Description—All. Upper Surface—yellowish olive brown; head, dark slaty grey; under surface, grey, darker on flanks, almost white on throat; centre tail feathers, grey tipped with black, next two feathers almost black, remainder grey; primaries, dark brown, edged with grey; bill, deep red, with ridge down centre of both mandibles, black; feet, yellowish flesh colour; iris red.

Distribution—Fairly wide, comprising the greater part of Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria, and South Australia.

Habitat—Found in almost any situation, mountains, plains, near the coast, inland for a considerable distance; open and bush country alike.

Habits—Like other members of the family, this bird is gregarious, moving about in parties of a dozen to a hundred or more; in the open country they obtain much of their food upon the ground, hopping over the low seed-bearing, creeping plants in a very quiet and confiding manner. In the bush country they feed upon tall grass seeding heads and small berries of shrubs; they pair off at nesting time.

Flight—Fairly strong for so small a bird, and they shift considerably, according to food supply. When moving to another district, they will rise to a great height, with strong and straight flight.

Note—Rather weak, but pleasing, short, plaintive call.

Nest—The nest is a large pear-shaped structure, with the hole of entrance at the narrow end, leading by a narrow tunnel about three inches long to the nest proper, which is globular. It is very strongly built of fresh grasses, and lined with soft grass tops, and a few feathers, or a little rabbit's fur. It is usually placed within reach of the hand, but occasionally as high as 14 or 15 feet from the ground. Favourite nesting sites are the *Melaleuca* bushes, bordering the streams in the hills, and growing in damp gullies, but nests are also to be found in *Bursaria* and Kangaroo thorn bushes; usually several nests are found close together. Building begins at the end of October, and continues until January, two broods being often reared. The eggs are from five to eight in number, and pure white in colour.

Average measurement: of 13 eggs—1.70 c.m. x 1.20 c.m.
Largest egg—1.80 c.m. x 1.20 c.m. Smallest egg—1.60 c.m. x
1.20 c.m.
