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—August, 1921.—

By J. W. Mellor.

When laid up with influenza recently I was much interested in a Boobook Owl, which perched near my window each night and uttered its wierd call for a considerable time. These birds have been very noisy all the month, and also the Screech Owls. One of the latter species roosting at my back door.

Magpies have been busy nesting, and the old bird in one case could be seen sitting on the nest. During a recent storm an old nest blew down from a Norfolk Island Pine, and the quantity of wire that had been used in its construction was remarkable. Pieces of iron, steel, galvanized iron, copper, netting, binding, fencing, straw-bale, telegraph, and telephone wire were noticed.

A pair of swallows, building their mud nest over my front door, became a great nuisance owing to the quantity of mud they dropped (fully half of that carried in the building process). Every effort was made to dissuade the little builders from occupying this prominent position, but without avail, and it was decided eventually to allow the nest to be constructed. The feathering operations have been completed, and the nest made ready for laying in, when another pair of swallows came on the scene and literally turned the rightful owners out. A free fight ensued, and I was attracted by the loud chittering of many voices, and on going to the scene of action found that one intruder was actually in the nest, and feathers were flying in all directions. When the battle had ended, I noticed a quantity of feathers of all descriptions lying about, and all the swallows were gone.

A pair of Shrike-tits (*Falcunculus frontatus flavigulus*) have been calling loudly in a tall gum tree near the house, presumably they are selecting a site for building their nest, as every year they build nearby.

Pallid Cuckoos have been about all the month, and seem more plentiful this year than they have been for a long time past, both the "running scale" notes and the harsh grating calls have been uttered all the time.

Minahs (*Myzantha melanocephala whitei*) have been very pugnacious to other birds smaller than themselves, which points to their having started their breeding season.