

## Bird Notes.

By J. Sutton, Netherby.

September, October, November.

Golden Whistler (*Pachycephala pectoralis*).—The bird noted at the end of August was heard again on 1st, 3rd, and 4th September, but has not been heard since.

Galah (*Kakatoe roseicapilla*).—On 11th September, at 6.45 a.m., I saw four of these birds flying over in the direction of the foothills. On 21st September, at 7 a.m., I saw one Galah, and on 18th October, at 1.30 p.m., I saw a pair flying from the direction of the hills.

Reed-Warbler (*Acrocephalus australis*).—On 28th September, about 9 a.m., and shortly after rain showers, I was astonished to hear a Reed-Warbler singing in my neighbour's garden in an almond-tree, and then in my garden in a peachtree and rosebush. One associates with this species reeds, water, and furtiveness, but for two hours this bird was singing beautifully in the fruit-trees, which were just budding; twice I saw it pick something off a bud. There is a small clump of pampas grass in the next garden, but the only pool of water and reeds are over a quarter of a mile away.

Barn Owl (*Tyto alba*).—I heard a bird screech four times at 9.50 p.m. on the night of 2nd October. This species is an infrequent visitor; the Boobook Owl (*Ninox boobook*) is a resident.

Scarlet Robin (*Petroica multicolor*).—On 9th October a male was heard singing in the next garden. At one time this species was a regular visitor, but nowadays it is not often seen or heard.

Brown Songlark (*Cinclorhynchus cruralis*).—A bird was heard singing near the experimental wheat crops on Urrbrae on 25th, 27th, and 30th October, and on 9th and 30th November.

Willie-Wagtail (*Rhipidura leucophrys*).—A parent bird with two young was seen on 21st October at the Urrbrae Lodge, and in November one parent bird and one young one also in Urrbrae. The birds are still singing in the night, even when there is no moon, so evidently nesting is still going on. They were heard up to end of November.

Starling.—Four times lately I have had instances of their powers of mimicry. I heard one bird imitate a call of the Banded Plover (*Zonifer tricolor*), and another bird imitated a call of the Grey Shrike-Thrush. With regard to the latter call, I have heard it about Netherby for some two years off and on, but could never locate the bird until 21st September, when I heard the call beside my house and found it came from a Starling which was sitting on the telephone-wire. Another imitation I heard was that of portion of the call of the Superb Blue-Wren (*Malurus cyaneus*). At Kinchina on 25th September I heard a Starling imitating the call of the Whistling Eagle (*Haliastur sphenurus*)—this was well done.

Cuckoos.—Since my last paragraph the following have been noted:—Netherby—Pallid Cuckoo (*Cuculus pallidus*), 12th, 16th, 23rd September, 22nd October (7.45 p.m.). Horsfield Bronze-Cuckoo (*Chalcites basalis*) on fourteen days in September, six days in October, and 10th, 29th November. This species sometimes repeat the "See-you" call. I have heard "See-you" called 32, 25, 22, 17, and 15 times. Kinchina—Pallid Cuckoo, 25th September, 2nd October (two), Horsfield Bronze-Cuckoo, 25th September, 2nd October (four), 20th November. Wood's Point—16th to 18th October, Pallid Cuckoo, Horsfield Bronze-Cuckoo (four). Meadows Creek—12th September, Pallid Cuckoo, Horsfield Bronze-Cuckoo (two), Fan-tailed Cuckoo (*Cacomantis flabelliformis*); 10th October. Golden Bronze-Cuckoo (*Lamprocoryx plagosus*), Horsfield Bronze-Cuckoo (three). Sellick's Beach—24th October, Horsfield Bronze-Cuckoo (two). Near Adelaide—9th October, Pallid Cuckoo. Goolwa—17th to 18th September, Horsfield Bronze-Cuckoo (five), Pallid Cuckoo (six). One of the latter was a female which was noticed at first in a very low shrub, then in the grass, where she remained still whilst we were about 20 feet away and watching her. We moved towards her, and she hurriedly walked into the roots of a teatree. We searched the grass on the possibility of an egg, but did not find one. Blackwood—10th October, Horsfield Bronze-Cuckoo. Happy Valley

—3rd October, Pallid Cuckoo, Horsfield Bronze-Cuckoo (five); 28th November, Horsfield Bronze-Cuckoo (two). One of these was a young bird which was at first noticed in company with three Superb Blue-Wrens (*Malurus cyaneus*). After a time the young Cuckoo was calling incessantly and closely following one Blue-Wren. This is the first young Cuckoo I have seen this season, so I conclude that the Cuckoo species have missed the nesting season for this year.

## NESTING NOTES.

Kinchina, 25th September.

Nankeen Kestrel.—I saw a bird sitting on an old nest of a Crow or Magpie about 40 feet from the ground in a mallee. (On 13th November I went to this nest and the Kestrel was still sitting, but in the meanwhile a Diamond Firetail (*Zonaeginthus guttatus*) had built a nest about three feet higher up on a branch next to the Kestrel's nest, and another similar nest was built on the opposite side of the tree. On 27th November a young fully-fledged Kestrel was about, and whilst I was there a parent bird arrived with a big mouse in its talons, and although she called, the young bird, then in an adjoining tree, did not approach her. The parent bird flew up towards the nest, and, I think, dropped the mouse on it, as she left shortly after with nothing in her talons.

Black-winged Currawong (*Strepera melanoptera*).—Nest in a mallee and 30 feet from the ground. The bird flew from the tree.

Fairy Martin (*Hylochelidon ariel*).—Nesting site in a culvert about five feet high, under the railway line. Although five birds only flew out on my entrance, there were eight completed nests in the clump.

Kinchina, 2nd October.

Pipit (*Anthus australis*).—In a hole in the ground in wheat stubble, made outwardly of dried wheat-stems and lined with fine dried grasses and some rabbits' fur. Bird flushed from nest; three eggs, heavily incubated.

White-browed Babbler (*Pomatostomus superciliosus*).—In a melaleuca, and five and a half feet from the ground. One young one.

Hooded Robin (*Melanodryas cucullata*).—In a fork on a dead limb of a mallee, and four feet from the ground; two eggs, heavily incubated.

White-browed Wood-Swallow (*Artamus superciliosus*).—Ten feet away from the Hooded Robin's nest, and five feet up in a mallee; two eggs.

Willie-Wagtail (*Rhipidura leucophrys*).—Fifteen yards away from the two nests just mentioned was this one, six feet up in a pine (*Callitris*), almost completely built. (On 13th November this nest contained three big young ones.) Another nest of a Willie-Wagtail was found on that date, seven feet up in a pine; three eggs.

Kinchina, 13th November.

White-browed Wood-Swallow (*Artamus superciliosus*).—In a cassytha creeper on a mallee, and 12 feet from the ground. Both birds on the nest at times, and the male was seen with food in his beak. (On 20th November the female was seen near the nest, and on 27th November she flew there with food.)

Masked Wood-Swallow (*Artamus personatus*).—Nest in a fork in a mallee, six feet from the ground; ready for eggs. Nest in a fork in a dodonaea, three feet from the ground. Bird flushed off nest; two eggs. (On 20th November the nest was there, but the eggs were gone, and there were no signs of them on the ground about the nest. As I handled one of the eggs, possibly the bird herself destroyed them.)

Hooded Robin.—In the fork of a dead limb of a live pine, and five and a half feet from the ground; two eggs. (On 20th November there was one egg and one young one newly hatched; on 27th November the egg and young one were still in the nest.)

Willie-Wagtail.—On a horizontal fork of an overhanging branch of a mallee, and four feet from the ground, lined with rabbits' fur and two small feathers—one that of a Budgerygah; four nicely marked eggs. (On 27th November I could see the bird shuffling on the nest as I approached, and it was loath to leave. The nest contained three young, one just hatched out, as the shell split in twain was beside it. There was no sign of the fourth egg anywhere about, nor were there any parts of shells. As soon as I passed on the bird was back on the nest and shuffling about with its body.)

Masked Wood-Swallows.—One young bird was seen being fed by a parent bird, and another young one was seen with two parent birds.

White-browed Wood-Swallow.—Nest in the end of an upright stem of a broken limb of a mallee. The female flushed from the nest; one egg. One young bird was seen with two parent birds.

Meadows Creek, 12th September (with Dr. Morgan).

Yellow-faced Honey-eater (*Meliphaga chrysops*).—Nest four feet from the ground in a leptospermum; ready for eggs. (On 17th September this nest contained one egg.)

Black-capped Sittella (*Necositta pileata*).—We saw three of these birds fly to a dead limb in a live gum, and one went down

into the fork, where there was a nest half-finished, and screwed itself about in it and flew away. We waited a few minutes, and a bird came back with nesting material.

Meadows, 10th October (with Dr. Morgan).

Grey Shrike-Thrush (*C. harmonica*).—Nest with three eggs. Nest on top of two old nests of Ground-Thrush (*Oreocincla lunulata*) six feet up in a banksia; three eggs. Nest being built in a fork in a gumtree, and five and a half feet from the ground. Nest in a three-pronged fork of a gumtree, and two feet from the ground; a beautiful nest, and a splendid spot for a nest. One of the limbs was dead, with several dead branchlets, and the bird on the nest sat with its beak held perpendicularly. It was very difficult to pick the bird out; three eggs. A few bits of newspaper were used in the construction.

Yellow-winged Honey-eater (*Meliornis novae-hollandiae*).—Nest being built in bracken about two feet from the ground. Another in a patch of gorse, and two feet from the ground; two young. Another in a small patch of blackberry, and two feet from the ground; three young.

Grey Fantail (*Rhipidura flabellifera*).—Nest just started; "the stem of the wine-glass" was made.

Yellow-faced Honey-eater (*M. chrysops*).—Nest with two eggs.

White-plumed Honey-eater (*M. penicillata*).—Nest with two young.

Dusky Wood-Swallow (*Artamus cyanopterus*).—Nest in a hole in the side of a stringy-bark gum, 12 feet from the ground; there appeared to be young in it.

Black-faced Cuckoo-Shrike (*Coracina novae-hollandiae*).—Nest on a horizontal fork on a dead branch of a gumtree, and 25 feet from the ground. One bird flew off the nest, and the other bird took its place.

Crested Shrike-Tit (*Falcunculus frontalis*).—Two birds were up in a gumtree, with a few branches and thinly-leaved. Whilst we watched, five branchlets snapped off by the birds fell to the ground. No actual nest had been started.

Hooded Robin (*Melanodryas cucullata*).—Nest with one young.

Golden Whistler (*Pachycephala pectoralis*).—Nest with two young, female on the nest.

In one fairly open spot, 100 yards by 50 yards, six nests were found—White-plumed Honey-eater, Yellow-winged Honey-eater (two), Dusky Wood-Swallow, Black-faced Cuckoo-Shrike, Grey Shrike-Thrush, and the preliminaries for that of a Crested Shrike-Tit were noted.

Blackwood, 10th October (with Dr. Morgan).

Hooded Robin.—Nest with two eggs.

Yellow-winged Honey-eater.—Nest with two eggs.

Goolwa, 17th and 18th September (with Dr. Morgan and Mr. F. E. Parsons).

White-fronted Chat (*Epthianura albifrons*).—Nest with three eggs.

Red Wattle-Bird (*Anthochaera carunculata*).—Nest with two eggs. Nest with two young. Nest with one egg.

Striped Honey-eater (*Plectorhyncha lanceolata*).—A hanging nest in a teatree, and eight feet from the ground, constructed outwardly of rootlets, green spider-cocoons, and little bits of sheep's wool, suspended by a rim composed entirely of sheep's wool, lined with fine rootlets and a little wool. Nest contracted at the mouth; diameter of cavity, 10.5 by 4.5 cm.; depth, 8.5 cm.; height overall, 10.4 cm.; two eggs.

Willie-Wagtail (*R. leucophrys*).—Nest not quite completed.

Magpie-Lark (*Grallina cyanoleuca*).—A parent bird was seen with two young.

Laughing Kookaburra (*Dacelo gigas*).—Whilst sitting outside the hotel in the main street of Goolwa we saw a Kookaburra fly from the gable of a two-storied shop to a chimney, where we saw then another Kookaburra, who fed the first bird, which a little later flew to the gable and went into a hole, where a stone had dropped out. It stayed in for a minute or so, then flew again to the chimney, when the other bird flew over and went into the hole.

Welcome-Swallow (*Hirundo neoxena*).—A nest was found built against a rafter above an electrical light under a shop veranda. The bird was on the nest. Another nest was being built below a wooden rack in a deserted house.

Yellow-tailed Thornbill (*Acanthiza chrysorrhoa*).—Nest being built in a boxthorn. A bird was seen bringing nesting material. Another nest was ready for eggs.

Superb Blue-Wren (*M. cyaneus*).—Nest with three eggs.

Yellow-winged Honey-eater.—Nest with two eggs, and another also with two eggs.

Happy Valley, 3rd October (with Dr. Morgan).

Yellow-winged Honey-eater.—Eleven nests were found; in four the young had left, two were ready for eggs, two with two young in each, one with one dead young one in it, one with one young just outside the nest.

Tree-Martin (*Hylochelidon nigricans*).—Two birds were seen collecting mud and then flying into a hollow in a big redgum-tree.

Red-tipped Pardalote (*Pardalotus ornatus*).—Two birds were seen cleaning out a hollow in the same gumtree as the Tree-Martins, but their hollow was on the opposite side of the tree.

Yellow-tailed Pardalote (*P. xanthopygus*).—Two birds noticed carrying dry grass-stems, which they took into a burrow at the side of the main road two feet away from the actual track.

Rufous Whistler (*P. rufiventris*).—Nest with three eggs.

Dusky Wood-Swallow.—Nest with two young.

Painted Quail (*Turnix varia*).—A parent bird with two young was noted in some grasstrees: The young squatted under a shrub and were difficult to see, as their colours were similar to the surroundings.

Happy Valley, 28th November (with Dr. Morgan).

White-naped Honey-eater (*Meliphaga lunatus*).—A parent bird was noticed feeding three young.

Yellow-tailed Pardalote.—A bird flushed from the ground near the mouth of its burrow.

Purple-crowned Lorikeets (*G. porphyrocephala*).—Two birds were seen to go into two different hollows in the same tree.

Dusky Wood-Swallow.—Nest 30 feet from the ground in a gumtree, and built between a strip of bark and the bole of the tree; young in the nest.

Wood's Point, 16th to 17th October (with Dr. Morgan).

Black-shouldered Kite (*Elanus axillaris*).—Nest in a big redgum on the bank of the River Murray, and 60 feet from the ground. At first there were three birds near the nest; two flew away, and one bird remained above the nest and never left the tree. One of the other two birds returned later. The nest was not climbed to, as no bird at any time whilst we were about went on the nest.

Whistling Eagle (*Haliastur sphenurus*).—Nest in a big redgum, and 65 feet from the ground. A bird on the nest.

White-faced Heron (*Notophoxyx novae-hollandiae*).—Nest in a big redgum, and 45 feet from the ground. A parent bird flushed from the nest as we got near. Three young, who immediately stretched their necks out perpendicularly.

White-backed Swallow (*Cheramoeca leucosterna*).—The burrow was in a bank at a sandy place, and a stick inserted went in over 18 inches. A bird was seen flying above the place. A burrow six feet to the left of this one had been dug out from underneath by a fox, it was presumed.

Butcher-Bird (*Cracticus torquatus*).—Nest with three young half-grown; another nest with one young one.

Grey Shrike-Thrush.—Nest ready for eggs; another with two eggs, one addled, the other with a small hole in it.

Yellow-tailed Thornbill.—Nest not climbed to, but a bird flew out of it. Another in a creeper on a mallee, a very small nest with no cup nest on top; two eggs, heavily incubated. Nest in a creeper; ready for eggs.

Striped Honey-cater.—Nest 10 feet from the ground in the branchlets in the overhanging limb of a mallee; ready for eggs.

Common Bronzewing (*Phaps chalcoptera*).—Nest with two young; another with two eggs; and in a third case the nest was just begun.

A swamp near Adelaide, 9th October (with Dr. Morgan and Mr. F. E. Parsons).

Marsh (Little) Crake (*Porzana pusilla*).—Four nests were found just above the water. Three were empty, or had been under water; one was built in beardgrass (*Polypogon*) beside a dockweed, and contained two eggs. The deepest part of this large swamp, which we waded through, was not quite two feet. The swamp was covered in samphire, short reeds, and a little beardgrass.

Same swamp, 23rd October (with Dr. Morgan and Mr. K. E. Wills) (water still about two feet deep).

Marsh (Little) Crake.—Nest on a samphire, and four inches above the water; five eggs. Several other nests were found, but it was doubtful whether they were new or had been submerged.

White-headed Stilt (*Himantopus leucocephalus*).—Nest built on a samphire, and made of dead samphire-sticks. Interior of the nest about three inches above the water; one egg. (On 14th November all round this nest was dry, and there were three eggs.) Four pairs of the Stilts were about the swamp on each occasion, and seemed greatly excited at our presence. They were continually flying about and uttering their barking call.

Same swamp, 14th November (a good deal of the water had dried off, but the greatest depth of water was not more than a foot).

Marsh (Little) Crake.—Nest built of fresh dried rushes in a samphire, and six inches above the water. There was half an eggshell in the water at the foot of the clump; three eggs. Nest built in a very small samphire in a very small clump, made of dry water-weed and fresh dried grasses, four inches above the water. The reeds were bent over the nest to form a dome; four

eggs. Nest in a samphire with rushes growing through it, and loosely constructed of fresh dry rushes, three inches above the water; five eggs. Nest next to a samphire, but built in rushes which were bent over at the top to form a dome, constructed of fresh dried rushes and five inches above the water; six eggs. Nest constructed of fresh dried rushes in a samphire, with rushes growing through it, and eight inches above the water. A few dried rushes were bent over the nest, and a track of dried rushes from the water to the nest; seven eggs.

Spotted Crake (*P. fluminea*).—Nest in a samphire with rushes growing through it and five inches above the water, loosely constructed of dried water-weed and a few dried rushes; four eggs. Nest in a samphire with rushes growing through it, and eight inches above the water, loosely constructed with soft dried water-weed and a few dried rushes, a rather shallow nest. Green rushes were twisted over above the nest, making a sort of canopy; seven eggs.

Brown Songlark (*Cinclorhamphus cruralis*).—In the dried portion of this swamp. Nest in a deep sloping hoofmark amongst some barley-grass; four eggs.

Sellick's Beach, 24th October (with Dr. Morgan).

Striated Thornbill (*Acanthiza lineata*).—Nest with young.

Willie-Wagtail.—Nest four and a half feet from the ground; four eggs. It looked like a second clutch for the year, as there was much excreta about the nest.

Peaceful Dove (*Geopelia placida*).—Nest with two eggs.

Black-chinned Honey-eater (*Melithreptus gularis*).—Nest 18 feet up in the leaves of an overhanging branch of a gumtree, and just begun. The two birds were about, but only one was collecting material and making the nest. (On 21st November young were in the nest, and were being fed.)

Rufous Whistler.—Nest with two eggs.

Sellick's Beach, 21st November (with Dr. Morgan).

Willie-Wagtail.—Nest with three young, not fully fledged.

Dusky Wood-Swallow.—Nest with three young; another with two young.

Masked Wood-Swallow.—Nest with two eggs. Another nest was being built by the female, who was bringing material and shaping the nest.

White-browed Wood-Swallow.—Nest 30 feet up in the fork of a sheoak. The female was seen going on the nest.