

Bird Notes.

By J. Sutton, Netherby.

June, July, August, September.

Peaceful Dove (*Geopelia placida*).—Noted on 24th July and 16th August. Banded Plover (*Zonifer tricolor*).—Heard a bird call at 10 p.m. on 30th August. Boobook Owl (*Ninox boobook*).—One bird has been calling most frequently during the night and in the early hours of the morning, with the usual cry "Moh-poke," but on the night of 24th June it was varied for some time as "Moh-moh-moh-moh." A second bird only calls occasionally. Purple-crowned Lorikeet (*Glossopsitta porphyrocephala*).—Noted on seven occasions during the four months. Blue-Mountain Lorikeet (*Trichoglossus moluccanus*).—A pair was seen on 14th June. Black-faced Cuckoo-Shrike (*Coracina novae-hollandiae*).—Some birds have been here, and I counted twelve in Urrbrae on 8th August, but by 31st August the number had dwindled down to three. Flame Robin (*Petroica phoenicea*).—Noted on 4th, 6th, 8th, 9th, 21st, and 29th June; 4th, 24th, and 29th July. Last observed on 8th August, when a male and two females were seen on Urrbrae. Scarlet Robin (*P. multicolor*).—Noted during June and July and occasionally in August. Golden Whistler (*Pachycephala pectoralis*).—Noted on 8th and 30th June and 1st July. Rufous Whistler (*P. rufiventris*).—A rare visitor. One bird was singing for some time in the forenoon of 27th August. Its song did not appear to be as loud as that of the mallee birds. Little Wattle-Bird (*Anthochaera chrysoptera*).—Heard in the mornings of 10th June, 14th July, and 29th August. Horsfield Bronze-Cuckoo (*Chalcites basalís*).—Noted on 17th, 18th, 19th, 25th July; 12th, 17th, and 24th to 31st August. Fan-tailed Cuckoo (*Cacomantis flabelliformis*).—Noted on 24th, 26th, 27th, 28th July; 18th, 22nd, 23rd, and 27th August. Pallid Cuckoo (*Cucullus pallidus*).—Noted from 17th to 31st August inclusive. Jacky Winter (*Microeca fascians*).—A bird put in an appearance on 14th July, and has been heard singing frequently since that date. Blackbird (*Turdus merula*).—First heard giving its full song in the early

morning of 22nd May; now two of them are singing many times each day. The other species of birds which are heard or seen daily are Laughing Kookaburra (*Dacelo gigas*), White-naped Honey-eater (*Melithreptus lunatus*), Crested Shrike-Tit (*Falcunculus frontatus*), Black-chinned Honey-eater (*Melithreptus gularis*), Magpie-Lark (*Grallina cyanoleuca*), Superb Blue-Wren (*Malurus cyaneus*), Yellow-tailed Thornbill (*Acanthiza chrysorrhoa*), Grey Shrike-Thrush (*Colluricincla harmonica*), and the Red Wattle-Bird (*Anthochaera carunculata*). Noisy Miner (*Myzantha melanocephala*).—These still visit the food table. I saw 14 there on 20th June, but by 31st August the callers were reduced to three. Spinebill (*Acanthorhynchus tenuirostris*).—One was noted on 1st August.

At 7 a.m. on 18th August I saw a flock of 30 birds flying in a slightly irregular line south-westerly, at possibly 1,000 feet elevation. They were not local birds, and I thought they might possibly be an advance guard of the migratory Waders!

At 3.45 a.m. on 12th July I was awakened by Swans (*Chenopsis atrata*) calling as they passed overhead, seemingly in a south-westerly direction. The calls were loud, and were heard for some minutes. The sky was clouded over, yet, although the light from the moon (full on 15th) was good, I could not see the birds.

Kinchina.

I paid nine visits to the mallee during the four months. The country has been in a bad state for want of rain, and very few trees or shrubs have flowered. Red-backed Parrots (*Psephotus haematonotus*) have been in numbers, chiefly in the stubble paddocks. On 25th June I counted 222, but on 13th August there were only 13. Flame Robin (*P. phoenicea*).—Seen on 28th May, 18th June, 23rd July, and lastly on 6th August. Golden Whistler (*P. pectoralis*).—This is an unusual visitor, and a male was seen on 11th June, 30th July, and 13th August. The Rufous Whistler (*P. rufiventris*) is the usual species in that mallee, but that species have been very quiet during the winter months. White-backed Swallow (*Cheramoeca leucosterna*).—One was seen on 4th June. Laughing Kookaburra (*Dacelo gigas*).—A very rare visitor. One was seen on 11th June, at 4.40 p.m., flying towards the River Murray. The birds of prey seem to desert Kinchina in winter, but an Australian Goshawk (*Astur fasciatus*) was seen on 16th July. I flushed two Nightjars (*Eurostopodus* sp.) on 23rd July, and one near the same spot on 30th July. It is generally assumed that the species about this part is *E. mystacalis*, the White-throated Nightjar. What its call is I have been unable to ascertain. The usual reference

to it is given as "the well-known call." Anyhow, the call of the Nightjar at Kinchina—I have heard it several times—agrees with that mentioned by Keartland, in Campbell's "Nests and Eggs of Australian Birds," page 537, as the call of the Spotted Nightjar (*E. guttatus*), i.e., "Caw, caw, caw-caw-caw, gobble, gobble, gobble," etc. (I have counted up to 13 "gobbles"). The first two "caws" are drawn out, then three "caws" and the "gobbles" quickly. Horsfield Bronze-Cuckoo (*C. basalis*).—First noted at Kinchina on 6th August, and again on 13th August. The Cuckoos are late in arriving this year. Do they know that the season is bad and that the other birds are not nesting?

NESTING.

Kinchina.—4th June.—I found a nest of a Common Bronzewing (*Phaps chalcoptera*) built on top of the old nest of a White-browed Babbler, five feet from the ground, in a mallee on the side of a road. One egg was normal size, the other about one-fourth smaller. On the 11th the eggs were gone; evidently the farmer's son found them as the paddock was being tilled near to the nest. 30th July.—A female Red-capped Robin (*Petroica goodenovii*) was noticed building a nest in a fork of a live mallee. The base of the nest was constructed. On 6th August the nest was complete, but no birds were near then or on the 13th August, so it would appear to have been deserted. 6th August.—Yellow-tailed Thornbill (*Acanthiza chrysorrhoa*) was seen building a nest in a shrub at about 18 inches from the ground; on 13th August the cup at the top was only half-constructed. 6th August.—White-fronted Chat (*Epthianura albifrons*).—Flushed a female from a thick tuft of grass; three eggs. On 13th she flushed again from the eggs. This nest was about three feet from the road. 13th August.—Whiteface (*Aphelocephala leucopsis*).—A bird was evidently building a nest in a hole between two of the beams of the platform of the railway siding. This species has previously built a nest in this platform.

On 14th August, with Dr. Morgan at Happy Valley.—The only nest of the year found was one being built by a Hooded Robin (*Melanodryas cucullata*).

On 27th August, with Dr. Morgan and Mr. J. Neil McGilp at the Grange.—Fourteen nests of the season of the Spotted Scrub-Wren (*Sericornis maculatus*) were found. They were all built in samphire, and from two to five feet from the ground. One nest contained three eggs—two of the Scrub-Wren and one of the Fan-tailed Cuckoo (*Cacomantis flabelliformis*). Another

nest had three eggs of the Scrub-Wren; a third had two eggs of the species; and a fourth contained young (more than one). The other 10 nests were in various stages—four ready for eggs, five not lined, and one partially constructed. A Superb Bluc-Wren's (*Malurus cyaneus*) nest was found ready for eggs, and a White-fronted Chat's with three eggs. The only Cuckoo noted there was the Horsfield Bronze-Cuckoo (*C. basalis*).

On 28th August, with Dr. Morgan, near Williamstown.—Crescent Honeyeater: Three nests were found in grasstrees (*Xanthorrhoea*); one with three eggs (two and a half feet up); one just started (two and a half feet up); and a third (four feet up) built, but not lined. Yellow-winged Honeyeater (*Meliornis novae-hollandiae*): Five nests; one with young in it, one with a newly-hatched bird and recently dead, one complete (no eggs), one with a broken egg therein, and one with an infertile egg.