

Breeding of the Spiny-cheeked Honeyeater
(*Acanthagenys rufogularis*).

By S. Harvey.

In February, 1936, a number of Spiny-cheeked Honeyeaters were caught in the Pinnaroo District, and have been in my aviaries since that time. On 13th October, 1937, a pair was first seen building a nest in an ash-tree about 10 feet from the ground. On the 19th there were two eggs; and two young were hatched on 2nd November. Both birds were feeding white ants

and mealworms. All went well until 5th November, when it was noticed that one young was missing, and no trace of it could be found anywhere in the aviary. Possibly the parents thought they were not getting sufficient food for the two chicks, so decided to dispose of one. The remaining young bird continued to thrive until 6th November, when I thought its end had come. I returned home at 6 p.m. and took mealworms in. These could not be placed in a dish, as other birds would get them, so I stood about 15 feet away from the nest and threw the mealworms, which were caught in mid-air, to the parents. It was not an easy matter to find the parents, as there were nine Spiny-cheeked Honeyeaters in the aviary; the only way to recognize them was to watch if they ate the worms or held them in the beak; the parents were never seen to eat a worm, but would pack several in their beaks. On this particular day they secured the worms and went to the nest, but did not feed the young bird. After waiting some time I went to the tree and found the young one on the ground cold, but still alive. The nest was inspected and found to be loose on one side, evidently allowing the young one to slide out. The nest was then tied securely in two places with binding wire, and the chick replaced. Within a few minutes the old birds fed it, and yet they would not feed it while on the ground. The way they went to the nest with worms when the young one was on the ground appeared as if they were asking for something to be done. On the morning of the 14th November, eight days after falling out of the nest, and 12 days old, the young bird left the nest, well feathered and able to fly. The colouring appears to be identical with that of the old birds; the tail is about $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches long.

Feeding.—White ants, mealworms, yolk of egg and cake, bread and milk, honey-water with bread soaked in it. They were only seen feeding ants and mealworms.
