

## Bird Notes.

By R. F. Brown and G. L. Fewsdale.

7th August, 1938.—Overways Bridge, Dry Creek, S.A. At 9 a.m. a Magpie-Lark (*Grallina cyanoleuca*) was heard squawking from the top of a telegraph-pole where a Nankeen Kestrel (*Falco cenchroides*) was standing on its back. The Kestrel remained there for some fifteen seconds, flapping its wings all the time. Although we could not see whether the Kestrel was pecking the Magpie-Lark, the latter seemed dazed for a few seconds before flying in the opposite direction and uttering the customary plaintive call.

7th August, 1938.—In a paddock between Waterloo Corner and Virginia eight nests of the Banded Plover (*Zonifer tricolor*) were found—one nest with five eggs, four nests with four eggs each, two with three eggs each, and one with two eggs. Every nest found was a scrape in the ground placed amongst a patch of horse manure. With one exception they were lined with horse dung, sheep dung, and pieces of dry grass. The nest with five eggs was lined with horse dung and two or three pieces of sheep dung. The nest with two eggs had no lining at all, and as the nest could not be found on subsequent visits it could not be ascertained whether any more eggs were laid, but the nests with three eggs were full clutches. One of the eggs in a clutch of three had a distinct green-shaded band around its larger end. In only two nests, one of which contained the clutch of five eggs, were the narrow ends of the eggs pointing inwards.

21st August, 1938.—All the nests, except two, were empty; one of the latter contained one egg, either infertile or deserted; and the other nest held two chicks and a chipping egg, whilst a third chick was crouched in the grass with its head and neck stretched flat on the ground about a foot away. The chick in the egg was cheeping in the same way as a domestic fowl chick. As I wanted to photograph the newly-hatched chick I went away for about an hour. Whilst returning I found an egg-shell from which a young bird had hatched. The shell was not broken in two, but had a large hole in the side and was about 200 yards from the nest from which a chick was missing. The chick about to hatch out did not seem any further advanced towards hatching, so I assisted the chick out. There was a fair amount of blood between the enclosing membrane and the shell. The chick was too exhausted to hold its head up or to cheep, so I went away for five minutes. When I returned again I found that the parent birds had removed every particle of the many tiny pieces of shell and membrane that had been

scattered about the nest by me, also the hatched egg-shell I had found. Three addled eggs I had also left alongside the nest had not been touched, but another of the chicks was missing. After photographing the drying chick and its remaining companion I left and returned about five hours later, when the only chick left was the one I had taken from the egg, and it was about two feet from the nest and still had some pieces of shell adhering to its down. The parent birds approached to within fifteen feet and stood calling while I was at the nest. Description of young birds:—Head and back buff with deeper buff spots and black feathers; back of head black; nape white. Underneath white, with the black breast band outlined by black bases of feathers. Beak—upper mandible horn-coloured; lower mandible whitish with base horn-coloured; egg-tooth pure white; irides dark brown; pupil, dark blue; legs and feet horn-coloured; soles of feet flesh-coloured; nails, black with white tips; wings whitish; shoulders like the back; skin shiny jet black.

At Dry Creek a Banded Plover's nest containing three eggs was placed on the ground in the samphire and was lined entirely with dry grass. At the same place a Red-necked Stint (*Trotila ruficollis*) was seen and was loth to fly.

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