

INTERNATIONAL ORNITHOLOGICAL CONGRESS

The Permanent Committee for International Ornithological Congresses has instructed the Ornithological Society of Sweden to organise the 10th International Congress. It is to be held at Uppsala on June 10 to 17, 1950.

Ornithologists from all countries are cordially invited to attend. The Congress fee is 25 Swedish crowns, and applications should be sent in before the end of February, 1950. Applicants will be furnished with a detailed programme.

Pigeons undoubtedly feed on these small seeds.

I have known up to sixty of these birds flush from a crop of Wild Oats (*Avena fatua*):

Unfortunately, some illicit shooting of Common Bronzewings apparently still takes place in remote Murray Mallee districts, and dams and stock-troughs are the places where shooters lie in wait at about sunset. Three or four birds are thus secured from a flock with a single shot.

Breeding takes place chiefly in late winter and the spring months, but some nests with either eggs or young may be found in summer and autumn. The cooing of the males is a deep, penetrating call which can be heard up to half a mile away in calm weather. Nests are built of thin sticks and are really only platforms with scarcely enough depression in the centre to hold the two white eggs. Indeed, many eggs are knocked off the nests by the birds when leaving hurriedly upon being disturbed. Often a sitting bird will allow an observer to approach within a few feet before it flies away. The nests are frequently built within 6 to 10 feet of the ground in a tall shrub or small tree. Occasionally, a nest may be seen at a greater height from the ground. Old nests of Babblers (*Pomatostomus*) and Magpies (*Gymnorhina*) are sometimes used as foundations for nests by the Pigeons. Not infrequently an old mud nest of the White-winged Chough (*Corcorax melanorhamphus*) is utilised and it undoubtedly makes a snug brooding place for the Bronzewing.

Sometimes, a brooding bird that has been disturbed will fly low over the ground with the clumsy flight of a young one just able to fly, or will even flutter to the ground and feign injury.

At times the Pigeons nest in exceptional situations, such as in the stub of a hollow tree trunk, a foot or more down from the entrance; or upon sticks lying across a stump, where scrub has been cut down, and within only a foot of the ground.

Two white eggs are the normal clutch, but occasionally only one partly-incubated egg or one young is found in the nest. In the latter cases, it seems that one of a pair of eggs had been accidentally broken.

Common Bronzewings sometimes gather in numbers to roost on branches sheltered by thick foliage in a limited portion of a patch of scrub. Excreta accumulated in heaps indicate that some roosts have been used for a relatively long period.

In its haunts among the trees and scrub litter this Pigeon is wonderfully protected by its coloration, but seen in bright sunlight in an open patch the male in particular appears very attractive indeed. The iridescent bronze patch on the wings then simply glows with color; the chest takes on a brilliant pinkish tint; while the head of the male, with its large cream cap contrasting with the rich brown nape, adds to the striking appearance of the bird.

Although European occupation of the country has resulted in considerable reduction of the forest and scrub lands, the Common Bronzewing is still to be seen in suitable patches of growing timber, even near Adelaide.

PARROTS IN THE ADELAIDE ZOO

In the 70th Annual Report of the Royal Zoological Society of South Australia, the President (Alan Lendon) records the exhibition and breeding of Australian Parrots in the Society's Gardens since records were first kept. Of the 59 species listed in the R.A.O.U. Checklist, there have been 30 successful breeding species, although it is surprising to note that such common birds as the Purple-crowned Lorikeet and all except two species of Rosellas have never produced young. The writer supplies histories of three Ground Parrots (*Pezoporus wallicus*) which were exhibited between 1937 and 1949. The first specimen came from the Melbourne Zoo in 1937, and another from the same source arrived in 1938. In 1940 two birds were obtained from the Port MacDonnell district, but one did not long survive. Two birds were killed by rats in 1944, while the bird obtained in 1938 has since died. No nesting was ever attempted.