AN UNUSUAL NESTING OF THE WHITE-WINGED CHOUGH. In 1995 I observed a group of White-winged Choughs *Corcorax melanorhamphos* in a mallee block at Monash, South Australia (34°16'S, 140°37'E). The birds had a nest on a horizontal branch 5 m above the ground and under the canopy of a red mallee *Eucalyptus oleosa*. In August two young were fledged from the nest, bringing the group's size to seven birds. These young birds were always together, both when feeding and resting. They periodically huddled together on a tree limb about 1 m above the ground for anything up to half an hour.

In October the choughs were breeding again and using the same nest. I made detailed observations of them on 9 November. The sky was overcast and by 0915 h the temperature was about 30°C. There were three young in the nest and only three of the seven older birds were involved with their feeding, two red-eyed and one brown-eyed individual. One older bird remained close to or on the nest while the other two scavenged within an area of a 50 m radius from the nesting tree. When a bird approached the nest with food, the attendant bird left the nest and all the young poked their heads up. The birds took turns at tending the nest and looking for food. In a one-hour period on 9 November, the chicks were fed eight times at 5-14 minute
intervals. Faecal sacs were removed some distance from the nest area by the older birds and on one occasion one of the older birds ate a faecal sac. The older birds did not fly direct to the nest, but seemed to have a well-established route, which entailed hopping from branch to branch.

I left the nest site at 1015 h and at 1245 h a very strong gust of wind blew through the area. At 1400 h I checked the nest and found it on the ground with all three chicks alive but covered in ants. We removed the ants and placed most of the nest and the chicks in an ice-cream bucket, which we wired about 3 m up in the same tree, but not immediately below the original nest site. The older birds were nearby, but did not appear alarmed by our handling of the chicks. We watched from a distance for about an hour, but the birds did not feed the young. At 1600 h we saw two birds at the nest feeding the chicks. The chicks were estimated to be about 10 days old, as their eyes were open and pin feathers were evident on the wings and tail (Figure 1).

At dusk the older birds were not brooding the chicks, and as the night was cool, we took the bucket and the chicks into the house, returning them to the tree early the next morning. On the next two nights the bucket was left in the tree but the chicks were covered with a soft cloth. They continued to be fed by the older birds and, as the new nest site was in full sun for part of the day, older birds would sit on the nest with outspread wings to provide shade for the chicks. During the middle of the day, the young were not fed, but one bird always remained close by while the rest of the group was feeding. When a group of Little Ravens Corvus mellori entered the area, all the choughs returned to the nest site in response to a single-note call from the attendant bird. All three chicks fledged successfully on 24 November.

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