

—August, 1922.—

By J. W. Mellor.

The warming up of the weather and the quick advance of spring has hastened mating and the seeking of nesting quarters. The early birds have their nests well in advance. The Cuckoos have instinctively known this, and all through the

month two species have been about Lockleys, much to the discomforture of the various birds that are forced to become foster-parents.

The Pallid Cuckoo (*Heteroscenes pallidus*) I noted again on August 1 calling loudly. The Honey-eaters were much concerned and were chasing the Cuckoo. On various occasions throughout the month I have noted different birds trying to frighten the Cuckoos away, but without avail.

On the first of the month, at Lockleys, I also noted the Narrow-billed Bronze Cuckoo (*Neochalcites basalis mellori*). It was perched on the same tree that I noted it on last year, a white cedar, growing on the red sand dunes, and surrounded by thick boxthorn bushes, in which several Blue Wrens were threading their way and twittering. I visited one of the market gardens at Lockleys on the first day of the month, and was pleased to see several pairs of Flame-breasted Robins (*Littlera chrysoptera phoenicea*) flying about amongst the fruit trees, and at times settling on the ground, picking up some insect or worm, and flying to an adjacent fruit tree to eat it. The owner of the garden, Mr. S. Lewis, I am glad to say, takes a great interest in the birds, and will not allow them to be disturbed. He stated that the Robins had been about for a long time, and were in the habit of entering the glass houses amongst the young tomato plants, where flies and gnats were plentiful. The Willy Wagtails, or Shepherd's Companions, were also his friends in this respect, and one pair last year actually built their nest on a post in the glass house,

Red-backed Grass Parrots (*Psephotus haematonotus*) have been in evidence amongst the old gums, and I am hopeful that they will breed this season. In company with them has been the Pale-headed Rosella (*Platycercus adscitus palliceps*), which has been about all the winter, but having no mate of his kind, I am doubtful whether he will stay much longer.

On August 5 I had a good look at the Southern Grass Bird (*Poodytes gramineus dubius*) recorded last month, and which have been about ever since, and may stay to breed. They were calling loudly in the thicket of boxthorn, and on my answering them gradually came right up to me at the edge of the bushes. On the same day I noted a little South Australian Fantail (*Rhipidura flabellifera whitei*) in the garden.

The White-fronted Herons (*Notophox novaehollandiae*) have been coming into the large red gums right at the back door.

On August 10 I noted a pair of Black and White Fantails (*Leucocirca tricolor*) carrying bits of bark and cobweb to make

their nest. On the 20th inst. two pairs were gathering material to built with, both making their nests close to the house.

On August 10 a White-backed Magpie (*Gymnorhina hypoleuca leuconota*) was seen lining its nest. On the same date a Pallid Cuckoo (*Heteroscenes pallidus*) was being chased by several Southern Black-headed Minahs (*Myzantha melanocephala whitei*). The Minahs have started to nest, and no doubt this was the reason for driving the Cuckoo away.

On August 19 a pair of Magpie Larks (*Grallina cyanoleuca*) had finished building their neat mud nest high up on a red gum.

On August 23 several Southern Ravens (*Corvus coronoides perplexus*) were flying over high in the air, and going in a northerly direction and calling loudly. On the same date I noted a Southern White-plumed Honey-eater (*Ptilotula penicillata whitei*) carrying bits of shreaded bark and cobweb to build its nest. During the end of the month a pair of Welcome Swallows (*Hirundo neoxena*) started to build their mud nest right above the front door in the same spot as last year.