

## FROM FIELD AND STUDY

**Remains of Great-winged Petrel found in a Wedge-tailed Eagle's Nest near Corrigin.**—On March 27, 1972 I examined a Wedge-tailed Eagle's nest 12 miles south of Corrigin. In it I found the upper mandible of a Great-winged Petrel (*Pterodroma macroptera*). I had visited the nest six weeks before and removed all food remnants then in it. The nest was occupied by the birds during the previous nesting season.

—J. A. ESTBERGS, Gooseberry Hill.

**An Autumn Record of the Pallid Cuckoo in the Perth Area.**—The Pallid Cuckoo, *Cuculus pallidus*, is usually regarded as a regular migrant in the South-West, arriving in the Perth area about the end of May and departing late November. An observation on 9 March 1972 at Osborne Park of a recently fledged Pallid Cuckoo being fed by a Singing Honeyeater, *Meliphaga virescens*, indicates that not all individuals follow this migratory pattern.

Pallid Cuckoos of similar juvenile plumage in the Western Australian Museum have been collected at: South Perth, 27 July 1903 and 27 January 1903; Welshpool, 21 October 1930; Kelmscott, 13 January 1900; Tambellup, November 1921; and Dirk Hartog Island, 20 October 1910.

—JOHN DELL, W.A. Museum, Perth.

**Singing Honeyeater Feeding like Bee-eater.**—Whilst it was clinging to the side of a *Banksia attenuata* blossom a Singing Honeyeater, *Meliphaga virescens*, snatched a bee from the air. Flying to a previous year's dried banksia cone, and again clinging to the side in a similar manner, the bird proceeded to emulate the bee-sting removing behaviour of the Bee-eater or Rainbow-bird, *Merops ornatus* as described by Misses C. A. Nicholls and D. A. Rook (*W. Aust. Nat.*, 8, 1962: 84). The bee was rubbed first on one side and then the other side of the cone before it was consumed. However the preliminary tapping to orient the sting, as described by Misses Nicholls and Rook, was not in evidence. This unusual behaviour was so pronounced that we stared in surprise and spoke in unison, "Rainbow-bird".

—J. and A. Y. PEPPER, Scarborough.

**Garden Snail, *Helix aspersa*, at Gibb Rock, via Narembreen.**—Gibb Rock is situated 61 km east-south-east of Narembreen and 32 km north-north-east of Hyden. Rainfall in that area appears to be about 330 mm annually. In August, when I last visited this area, my son, Malcolm gave me a specimen of *Helix aspersa* which he had found among produce from the garden of a neighbour, Mr. Wm. Lang. The following day, August 27, we had occasion to visit Mr. Lang and I found these snails well-established in his garden which is trickle irrigated from a subsidiary dam.

None of the snails which I saw was very large—few, if any, exceeding 25 mm in diameter. All were dark and seemed rather thin-shelled. The absence of really large specimens may indicate that the colony is relatively new and not, as I am inclined to suppose, that this population is somewhat dwarfed.

—ERIC H. SEDGWICK, Harvey.

**Copulatory Behaviour of the Pink-eared Duck.**—According to Frith (*Waterfowl in Australia*, 1967) copulation, and the display associated with it, have not been observed for the Pink-eared Duck (*Malacorhynchus membranaceus*). On Saturday, September 23, we observed this behaviour at Lake Claremont in the early morning, about 6.45 a.m. Unfortunately we were not able to watch the display completely. We were attracted by a commotion which suggested territorial display. One duck appeared at first to be driving another away, flapping close to the surface of the water. The male mounted the female on the water, clasping the nape of her neck in his bill. We will attempt to observe this species more systematically on



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