

centre tail feathers carmine above, brown below; bill black, slightly curved; legs, blackish brown.

Total length without bill, 3·65 inches; wings 2·23 inches; tail 1·6 inches; tarsi 0·53 inch; bill from forehead 0·6 inch; from gape, 0·68 inch.

*Hab.* Duke of York Island.

This beautiful species is closely allied to *M. chermesina*, of G. R. Gray, and is of the same rich carmine tint. It is smaller, however, and is of a uniform carmine above and below.

The present specimen is said to be a female, which I am inclined to think correct. The male will doubtless prove to be of a much richer tint.

#### MYZOMELA ERYTHINA, SP. NOV.

*Male, juv.* Crown, sides of the head, and all the upper surface dull red; the basal portion of the feathers, dull brown the red tint being brighter on the back and upper tail coverts; the throat is of a lighter and brighter tint; the remainder of the under surface, dull brown washed with dull red, a little stronger on the under tail coverts; wings and tail, dark brown, the outer webs of the feathers margined with dull red of the same tint as the body; bill black; legs and feet blackish brown.

Total length, without bill, 3·1 inches; wing, 1·9 inches; tail, 1·3 inches; tarsus, 0·54; bill from forehead, 0·5 inch; from gape, 0·6 inch.

*Hab.* New Ireland.

This species is smaller than the preceding, and the bill is comparatively stronger and stouter, otherwise I should be inclined to consider it the young of the former.

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#### Description of some rare Eggs of Australian Birds, and a note on the Eggs of certain Species of *Megapodius*.

By E. P. Ramsay, F.L.S., &c., Curator of the Australian Museum, Sydney, N. S. Wales.

It is now over two years since my friend, Ralph Hargrave, Esq., forwarded to me for description, several rare nests and eggs



of some of our Australian birds, among them those of Smith's Cat-bird, a description of which, I have been for a long time under the impression I had forwarded to the Zoological Society of London. However, as it has not appeared in any of the Society's "Proceedings," I presume I must have forgotten it, or, what is more likely, that it has miscarried, as I find I had described both nest and eggs in my note book a few days after receiving them.

AILURÆDUS SMITHII. *Vig. and Horsf.*

*Smith's Cat-bird.*

The nest of this species is not unlike that of *Oreocincla lunulata*; it is rounded, open above, and placed between upright forks of trees in dense scrubs and thickly wooded parts of the country; it is composed of rootlets, moss, and shreds of fern bark, &c., and ornamented with green mosses, chiefly a species of *Hypnum* found in the dense and damp scrubs; the lining is chiefly composed of fine rootlets. Height, 2 inches; diameter, 6 inches; depth inside,  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inches; diameter inside,  $3\frac{1}{4}$  inches.

The eggs are three to four in number, comparatively small for the size of the bird, being in length 1.2 inches by 8.5 inches in breadth; the ground colour is of a delicate bluish green, sprinkled all over with light reddish brown dots and spots, larger and more crowded on the thicker end, and with also a few irregular linear scratchy markings or hair lines.

The nest and Eggs were taken at Stanwell, in the Illawarra district.

HYLACOLA PYRRHOPYGIA. *Vig.*

*The red-rumped Hylacola.*

The nest of this species is usually hidden at the base of a clump of bushes and grass, or in some bushy shrub near the ground; sometimes resting on the ground, and at all times very difficult to find. I first found them breeding on the Dobroyde Estate, in 1860, where I procured both adults and young. The



nest is a loose structure, composed of narrow strips of bark, grass, and rootlets, (which can scarcely be said to be interwoven), and with which it is chiefly lined with the addition of a few feathers. It is dome-shaped in form, and a little larger than that of *Malurus lamberti*.

The full number of eggs were in every instance three, the ground colour of a pinkish salmon tint, fading after being emptied to a dull white, tinged with chocolate pink, in tint not unlike those of a *Sericornis magnirostris* or *S. fontalis*. They are blotched with irregular markings of light chocolate brown at the larger, and a few dashes and spots of the same tint on the thinner end, the blotches forming a zone near the thick end. Length, 0.76 inch, by 0.57 inch in breadth.

ELANUS AXILLARIS. *Lath.*

*The black-shouldered Kite.*

During the last six years several pairs of these hawks have been known to breed on the Iindah Estate, on the Mary River in Queensland, but it was only in November last that a pair gave my brother Mr. John Ramsay, an opportunity of taking their nest and eggs, which was not lost.

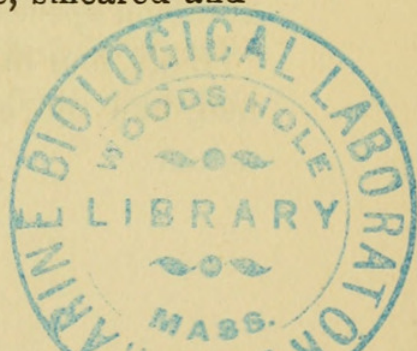
The nest in question was placed among the topmast forked branches of a *Flindersia*, and as usual, composed of sticks and twigs; it was not, however, a bulky structure, as is often the case with the Australian hawk's nests.

The eggs were three in number, but my brother assures me that four is the correct number for a sitting. The ground colour where visible is of a dull white, but it is mostly obscured by blotches and smears of dark reddish chocolate.

Length of "a," 1.6 inches; breadth, 1.25 inches.

„	"b,"	1.72	„	„	1.25	„
„	"c,"	1.58	„	„	1.27	„

One specimen, "a," is reddish rusty chocolate, smeared and clouded with a darker tinge.





*PARDALOTUS RUBRICATUS, Gould.*

From recent letters received from Mr. William E. Armit I learn that this species is by no means rare on the Norman River, and is also found rather plentiful on the Etheridge River. It comes as far south as Georgetown, where Mr. Armit obtained the nest and eggs. Like *Pardalotus punctatus*, *P. melanocephalus*, and *P. uropygialis*, this species digs holes or tunnels, in the banks of creeks, &c., making a long narrow tunnel from two to three feet in length, at the end of which it excavates a chamber large enough to contain the nest, which is about four inches in diameter. This round chamber is lined on all sides both above and below with fine grasses, except a small hole for exit opposite the tunnel. The eggs are four in number, pearly white, 0·8 inch in length by 0·6 inch in width towards the thicker end; those at present under consideration are rather pyriform, and more pointed than those of any other species I have seen. Some specimens are a little larger than others.

*PARDALOTUS UROPYGIALIS, Gould.*

This species is also an inhabitant of the Gulf of Carpentaria district. I have seen it in collections from the Norman River, and also received the head, wings, and tail, accompanied with eggs, from Mr. William E. Armit, taken on the Etheridge River, where this gentleman found it breeding in tunnels dug in the banks of creeks and water-courses, &c., in company with *P. rubricatus*.

I can see no difference in the eggs of this and those of the preceding species, except that they are a trifle smaller. The foregoing remarks on *P. rubricatus* are equally applicable to this species also, Mr. Armit assures me that they breed and nest in the same way, and often accompany each other in small troops, searching for insects among the leafy tops of the trees. Both species seem to be confined to the inland districts. I searched diligently for them at Rockingham Bay, but found only the common species, *P. melanocephalus*.

Eggs, four in number. Length, 0·7 inch, by 0·55 inch in breadth, and, like the eggs of all the other species, of a pearly white colour.



As I remarked above, *Pardalotus uropygialis* belongs to the same section as *P. melanocephalus*, *P. rubricatus*, *P. xanthopygius*, and *P. punctatus*, all digging tunnels in the soft banks of creeks, water-courses, &c., to nest in. On the other hand, *P. affinis*, and *P. striatus* (and, according to Mr. Gould *P. quadragintus* also), select holes in hollow branches of lofty trees, where they construct a dome-shaped nest of grasses, just as the other species do at the end of their tunnels. The eggs in all instances are white, oval, and rather pointed. Of *P. quadragintus* I regret to say I know nothing, having never met with it in a state of nature. *P. striatus* and *P. affinis* sometimes select the mud flask-shaped nests of the Fairy Marten, *Lagenoplastes ariel*, which they line afresh with grass and feathers. Their eggs are from four to five in number.

ENTOMOPHILA RUFIGULARIS, Gould.

This species is found commonly dispersed all over the Gulf country. It has been found breeding in the neighbourhood of Normantown and Georgetown, during the months from September to March. The nest is a round, open, and neat cup-shaped structure, usually slung by the rim between forked twigs. The one before me, sent by Mr. Armit, was taken from a branch of an *Erythrina*. It is composed of fine grasses, matted outside with white "cobwebs," and lined with fine grasses alone. It is rather a deep nest, being  $3\frac{1}{2}$  inches long by 2 inches in diameter.

The eggs are usually two, but sometimes three in number, of a pearly white, rather thickly spotted with bright reddish brown. Length, 0.65 inch, by 0.49 inch in diameter at the thicker end.

The young on leaving the nest have all the upper surface brown, and all the under surface white; the outer webs of the wing quills margined with olive yellow.

POEPHILA ATROPYGIALIS, Diggles.

This fine species is distributed over the country between the Gulf and Georgetown, and its neighbourhood, where it is said to be common, along with *Donacola pectoralis*, *Poëphila leucotis*, and *P. personata*. Its nest is an oval structure of interwoven grasses, having an opening at one end partly concealed by long



grasses drawn over the entrance. It is placed among the stronger grasses, or small bushes which grow here and there on the grass flats, or amongst the leaves of the *Pandanus aquaticus*.

The eggs are from five to six in number; in length from 0·6 inch to 0·64 inch; diameter at the larger end from 0·44 to 0·46 inch. The shell is white outside, with a faint greenish tinge inside.

### Note on the Eggs of MEGAPODIUS CUVIERI.

#### *Talegallus Cuvieri* of Lesson.

Colour of a deep rich bright salmon buff, brighter than that of any other *Megapodius*' eggs I have seen, and resembling most, those of *Leipoa ocellata*. They are also of a greater diameter and not so elongate as is usual with the eggs of birds of this family.

Total length, 3·95 inches; breadth, 2·5 inches.

This specimen was taken from the oviduct of a bird shot at Port Moresby by Mr. Goldie, in 1876.

By way of comparison I give the following measurements of eggs of other species, taken from my note book:—

	LENGTH.	BREADTH.
<i>Megapodius cuvieri</i> ... ..	3·95 inches	2·5 inches.
<i>Megapodius tumulus</i> , a very elongate specimen ... ..	3·63    „    ...	2·2    „
<i>Megapodius</i> , sp. from Island of Kera, one of the Solomon group ... ..	3·2    „    ...	1·9    „
<i>Megapodius</i> , sp. ( <i>M. brazeri</i> ) from Island of Savo, Solomon group, laid by a bird brought on board H.M.S. "Beagle" by a native ... ..	3    „    ...	1·95    „
<i>Megapodius Macgillivrayi</i> ? from New Ireland, from the Rev. George Brown's collection ... ..	"a" 3·18    „    ...	2    „
	"b" 3·04    „    ...	1·84    „
	"c" 3·04    „    ...	1·85    „
	"d" 2·92    „    ...	1·86    „



Ramsay, Edward Pearson. 1877. "Description of some rare eggs of Australian birds, and a note on the eggs of certain species of Megapodius." *Proceedings of the Linnean Society of New South Wales* 2, 107–112.

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