

this is the first year I have noticed them nesting here during the winter. On 29th May I observed a nest with two young birds almost ready to leave their home. During July I noticed four pairs of birds breeding, and up till the present date (9th August) four nests this month. I have noticed the following birds nesting during the last six weeks:—Ravens (*Corone australis*), Whiteface (*Xerophila leucopsis*), Miners (*Myzantha garrula*), Brown Tree-creepers (*Climacteris scandens*), Red-tipped Pardalotes (*Pardalotus ornatus*), Red-backed Parrakeet (*Psephotus hæmatonotus*), Spur-winged Plovers (*Lobivanellus lobatus*), and the Black-breasted Plovers (*Zonifer tricolor*). In the last issue of *The Emu* (vol. vii., p. 30), I made the remark that the Warty-faced Honey-eaters (*Meliphaga phrygia*) appeared to be going to winter with us; this they have done, also the Cockatoo-Parrakeets (*Calopsittacus novæ-hollandiæ*) and the Red Wattle-Birds (*Acanthochaera carunculata*). With regard to the latter, I am not sure that this is the first year that I have known of any to remain the winter, but never before have I seen them in such large numbers; they are not only to be seen by the river, but throughout the district. I notice in Mr. A. J. Campbell's "Nests and Eggs" he remarks that in the years 1853-1860 Wattle-Birds were very plentiful at Frenchman's, Amphitheatre, Warrnambool, and other places in the Western District of Victoria, where 70 birds might be easily shot in a morning. In certain localities within a few miles of here just now I am sure it would be no very difficult matter to shoot 170 in a morning. I had occasion to drive to Dubbo and back this week, and the whole way along the road these birds were to be seen in great numbers; even in Dubbo an odd bird was to be seen. Upon my return journey I stopped in a thick pine scrub about 17 miles from here for lunch. At this spot the birds appeared to be exceptionally numerous. I walked about a mile into the scrub to see if any of the birds were yet breeding, and although I saw no nests, I noticed most of the birds were in pairs. A great many varieties of birds have wintered with us this year in much larger numbers than I have ever known before. Why this should be I cannot understand. Perhaps it is on account of the severe drought in other parts of the State. This month I have also seen young White-winged Choughs (*Corcorax melanorhamphus*) and Babblers (*Pomatorhinus temporalis*) which had already left the nests.—THOS. P. AUSTIN. Cobbora (N.S.W.), 9/8/07.

\* \* \*

ANNOTATIONS.—*Mesophoyx plumifera* (Plumed Egret).—Mr. A. H. E. Mattingley's articles ("Heronries" and "Plundered for Their Plumes") in this issue will be read with interest and shame—interest, because bringing to our knowledge the breeding place of a rare bird, with eggs hitherto undescribed;

and shame, because of the ruthless destruction of breeding birds by vandals. The Plumed Egret was found breeding in company with its larger cousin, *Herodias timoriensis*, in the tall red gums (eucalypts) standing in the backwaters of the River Murray. *Eggs*.—Clutch, three or four; broad ellipse in shape; texture of shell somewhat coarse; surface slightly glossy, with here and there tiny nodules, and in some examples creases; colour, bluish-green, more or less besmeared with bird-lime. Dimensions in inches of two clutches:—A—(1) 1.86 x 1.37; (2) 1.86 x 1.4; (3) 1.9 x 1.38. B—(1) 1.86 x 1.39; (2) 1.87 x 1.42; (3) 1.94 x 1.4; (4) 1.95 x 1.4. Mr. Mattingley exhibited these eggs at the August meeting of the Field Naturalists' Club of Victoria. (See *Vict. Nat.*, xxiv., p. 84.) For description of the nests see his article (in this issue), p. 69.

*Ptilotis sonora* (Singing Honey-eater).—This fine species enjoys a wide range, and is evidently a hardy bird. My son, Mr. A. G. Campbell, brought home a clutch of three fledglings from the Anglesea coastal district (south-west of Port Phillip), where he described these Honey-eaters as very plentiful, welcoming in all directions the break of day with their merry calls. The youngsters were readily reared on sifted "Lark-food," moistened with honey-water, and flies. They became great pets in the aviary, and when anyone entered they would perch on the shoulder or bare head, and readily take flies from the palm of the hand. They did not sing in the way that their name would suggest, but uttered lively calls, and occasionally mimicked the alarm note of their cousin, *P. penicillata*, which occupied the same aviary. When the cold weather arrived only one Singing Honey-eater remained. It was transferred to Miss Bowie's aviary, where, with other Honey-eaters, it received regular attention. I think this is the first occasion that this bird has been kept in captivity. It makes a most charming pet, and assumes almost adult plumage from the nest.

*Hylacola pyrrhopygia* (Chestnut-rumped Ground-Wren).—This rare bird was recently found in the Dandenongs, near Melbourne. Mr. W. E. Molesworth forwards another specimen, which he procured at Lethbridge last May. He states:—"I have flushed this bird in a piece of country a few acres in extent, in the centre of a stringy-bark forest, where grass-trees (*Xanthorrhœa*) are growing quite alone on sandy soil. The birds are hard to flush, but can be traced by their singing or calling to each other."—A. J. CAMPBELL.

\* \* \*

ACANTHORNIS MAGNA.—On page 210, vol. vi., of *The Emu* the following question is asked—"Did Union members—as to *Acanthornis magna*—kill the last of the tribe, or was it the



Campbell, Archibald James. 1907. "Annotations." *The Emu : official organ of the Australasian Ornithologists' Union* 7(2), 91–92.

<https://doi.org/10.1071/mu907087j>.

**View This Item Online:** <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/item/34860>

**DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.1071/mu907087j>

**Permalink:** <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/partpdf/379445>

**Holding Institution**

American Museum of Natural History Library

**Sponsored by**

Biodiversity Heritage Library

**Copyright & Reuse**

Copyright Status: NOT\_IN\_COPYRIGHT

This document was created from content at the **Biodiversity Heritage Library**, the world's largest open access digital library for biodiversity literature and archives. Visit BHL at <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org>.