

morning than at any other period, when probably the coveted sweetness would be thicker and sweeter than in the full heat of the day. I have frequently speculated on the utility or necessity of the brush tongue with which these engaging birds are furnished, but never before have I noted them using it for practical honey-eating purposes.—A. H. CHISHOLM. Maryborough (Vic.), 16/1/09.

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THE LYRE-BIRD AT POOWONG.—There is a matter in connection with the nesting habits of the Lyre-Bird that has completely baffled any attempt on my part at a solution. It is this: Is it regarded as an indisputable fact that each female bird has her individual nest and lays an egg each year? All the male birds that have come under my notice have invariably had two or three females as consorts, yet I can find no proof that all three build nests and lay. On the contrary, considerable evidence is forthcoming to show that of their number only one lays, though probably the others assist in incubation. I can form no opinion of any value as to whether the male bird sits or not, but hope to decide the matter next season by watching the nest from daylight till dark. I have never known a male bird to be flushed from a nest. A short distance from where I live there is a patch of about two acres of the virgin hazel scrub, and at least three Lyre-Birds live in it. Each year they breed, yet, search as I will, only one nest can I find. A little further off is another isolated patch of virgin scrub, containing about one acre, and three females and one male bird inhabit it. This season one nest was built in it; last year there was but one, and one only the year before. As a boy I did a good deal of trapping and 'possuming in my spare time, and a favourite place to set a "springer" was just where a wallaby would land after leaping over a gully. The gullies then were always resorted to by those engaged in trapping; and as a gully is a favourite nesting-place of the Lyre-Bird, it would naturally follow that the trapper would frequently come across their nests. We used to take quite a paternal interest in the ungainly young nestling, and would every day lift it out of its feathery nest, and when it called out the mother would soon appear beside us, greatly disquieted. But of the father bird on these occasions we saw very little; a flash through the undergrowth was all we would ever see of him. I never knew the female to desert her young, however much we handled it; and I have often handled their eggs in the nest, but the birds invariably returned to them. I have also flushed birds from their nests after their eggs have been handled by others. Mr. D. C. Miller, late of Nyora, told me that he once examined an egg in the nest, and found that the bird did not return to it, and it was ultimately destroyed by a lizard. I have known a bird desert her nest before the egg

was laid because some children had felled undergrowth right against the nest. She did not build again that season. A Lyre-Bird has also been known to feed and attend to her young after the nest had been moved bodily to a place of safety by some scrub-cutters. Mr. A. W. Freeman, of Nyora, told me he once took home a young nestling, intending to rear it, but changing his mind after keeping it away all night, he took it back to its nest, and caused it to call out, when the mother bird appeared, and he left them together. In this case the young bird was eventually safely reared. Mr. Freeman also informed me that a friend of his found a nest containing two eggs at Binginwarri, Victoria. My supposition is that the second egg was laid by another female. I have on three occasions seen these birds shot at night in mistake for opossums, while perching high up in the eucalyptus trees. A peculiar habit I have noticed in this interesting bird is its propensity for building, and sometimes roosting, in most unlikely places. For example, in the acre of scrub before mentioned they have nested for the last three years, not in the most secluded part—so rough, indeed, that cattle are unable in many places to penetrate it—but, on the contrary, right on the outskirts of the scrub, and within some 10 yards from the road. This year's nest is plainly visible to anyone passing, although the traffic is considerable. Indeed, it was a cream carrier who first drew my attention to the exact whereabouts of the birds this season, and he assured me he rarely passed without seeing them. The trees they roosted on this year are also on the outskirts. From the road the two females could be very distinctly seen on their perches, one of them 150 feet up.—L. C. COOK. Poowong (Vic.)

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BIRDS OF INVERLOCH (VIC.)—During the Christmas vacation I had an opportunity of visiting Inverloch, which lies 12 miles south of Outtrim, on Anderson's Inlet, and while there found much to interest an ornithologist. Generally speaking the country in that locality is undulating, the highest parts being covered with a somewhat stunted growth of eucalypts and bracken fern, and the lower portions with heath, tea-tree, sword-grass, &c. In the former birds were numerous, though not representative of many species, those most frequently met with being the Butcher-Bird (*Cracticus destructor*), Buff-rumped Tit (*Acanthiza reguloides*), and Wood-Swallow (*Artamus sordidus*). In the heath country the dearth of bird-life was very noticeable. Black-faced Cuckoo-Shrikes (*Graucalus melanops*), Pallid Cuckoos (*Cuculus pallidus*), and Wood-Swallows were numerous, and very busy amongst the caterpillars which were to be found on the grass and low bushes. In the dense fringe of banksias and tea-trees along the ocean coast, Red and Brush Wattle-Birds



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