

I cannot close this article without referring to the kindness shown to me by those with whom I came into contact ; in fact, it will always remain one of my most grateful memories. In addition to the courteous help and open-handed kindness extended by persons who were until then perfect strangers to me, I have to acknowledge my indebtedness to the Queensland Government, and to those of its officials to whom I was accredited. The Acting-Premier, the Hon. Andrew Henry Barlow, afforded me every facility, and placed at my disposal every possible assistance which would further the objects of my mission of research. As one especial instance of this, I may mention that the Commissioner of Police instructed the various sub-heads of his department to render me all assistance possible, and the police themselves carried out the orders of their chief with hearty thoroughness, which was of the greatest value to me at more than one juncture.

Descriptions of Nests and Eggs of Five Species of Birds Found in the Atherton District, North Queensland.

BY SIDNEY WM. JACKSON, A.O.U., CHATSWOOD, NEW SOUTH WALES.

(1.) SPHECOTHERES STALKERI, Ingram* (Stalker Fig-Bird).

(*Identification*.—Taken by E. D. Frizelle and Sid. W. Jackson at Tinaroo, 70 miles south-west of Cairns, 8th November, 1908. Female identified.)

Nest.—Open, cup-shaped, loosely constructed of twigs, similar to that of *S. maxillaris* ; was placed in a bloodwood (*Eucalyptus corymbosa*), about 50 feet from the ground.

Eggs.—Four ; elongated oval in shape ; surface glossy ; texture, fine with slightly raised veins ; colour, pale olive-green, becoming olive-brown on the larger apex, and irregularly blotched with deep red-brown and purplish-brown markings, chiefly distributed over the larger end. On one specimen (*d*) the markings form a cap. Dimensions in inches :—(*a*) and (*b*) each 1.32 x 0.93, (*c*) 1.28 x 0.92, (*d*) 1.18 x 0.88.

(2.) OREOCICHLA CUNEATA, De Vis (Broadbent Ground-Thrush).

(*Identification*.—Taken by George Sharp, in the Evelyn scrubs, Herberton Range, 2nd November, 1908. Nest inspected *in situ* by Sid. W. Jackson.)

Nest.—Usual large, open, cup-shaped structure, similar to that of *O. lunulata* ; placed on top of the remains of a dead bird-nest fern adhering to a tree trunk, about 20 feet from the ground.

Eggs.—Two ; elongated oval in shape ; surface, slightly glossy ; texture, coarse, deeply pitted ; colour, pale greenish, covered with dark-red and pale-red blotches and purplish markings, distributed

* *Ibis*, July, 1908. *Vide Emu*, viii., p. 105.

over the whole surface, but predominating at the larger end. One egg (b) has a more bluish tinge in the ground-colour, and the markings generally are paler. Dimensions in inches :—(a) 1.38 x 0.92, (b) 1.28 x 0.97.

(3.) *PŒCILODRYAS ALBIFACIES*, Sharpe (White-faced Robin)

(*Identification*.—Taken by E. D. Frizelle and Sid. W. Jackson at Tinaroo scrubs, 2nd December, 1908. Female identified.)

Nest.—Deep, cup-shaped, constructed outwardly of green mosses interwoven with strips of bark and cobwebs, and lined with dry strippings of the lawyer vine (*Calamus australis*). Width $2\frac{3}{4}$ inches, depth 3 inches; egg cavity, width nearly $1\frac{3}{4}$ inches, depth $1\frac{3}{4}$ inches. Was placed at the intersection of the stalk and leaf of the lawyer vine, about 15 feet from the ground.

Eggs.—Two; swollen oval in shape; surface, glossy; texture, fine; colour, clear pale bluish-green, freckled with pale wood-brown, confluent in (a) and forming a distinct cap on the larger end, and sparsely scattered over the rest of the surface. In (b) the markings are more evenly distributed over the whole shell, forming a zone over the larger end. Both eggs are sparsely marked with black specks over the whole shell. Dimensions in inches :—(a) 0.77 x 0.57, (b) 0.76 x 0.58.

(4.) *ACANTHIZA SQUAMATA*, De Vis (Scaly-breasted Tit).

(*Identification*.—Taken by E. D. Frizelle and Sid. W. Jackson at Tinaroo scrubs, 11th November, 1908. Female identified.)

Nest.—Dome-shaped, constructed outwardly of thin strips of bark, grasses, mosses, and cobwebs, and lined with feathers. Length, 6 inches; width, nearly 4 inches. Was placed 20 feet from the ground in a river oak (*Casuarina*).

Eggs.—Three; elongated oval in shape; surface, slightly glossy; colour, white, freckled with markings of red-brown, which are scattered over the shell, forming a cap at the larger end. Nest and eggs closely resemble those of *Acanthiza reguloides*. Dimensions of eggs in inches :—(a) 0.67 x 0.47, (b) 0.64 x 0.47, (c) 0.67 x 0.47.

(5.) *EOPSALTRIA MAGNIROSTRIS*, Ramsay (Large-billed Shrike-Robin).

(*Identification*.—Taken by E. D. Frizelle and Sid. W. Jackson at the Tinaroo scrubs on 9th December, 1908. Female identified.)

Nest.—Open, deep, cup-shaped; constructed of dry flat pieces of a sedge-like rush (*Gahnia*, sp.) and strips of bark, and beautifully decorated outwardly with mosses, lichen, and a few pieces of white bark, all neatly fastened on with cobwebs; inside lined with sections of dead, flat, sedge-like rushes and the needles of the river oak (*Casuarina*). Width, 3 inches; depth, $2\frac{1}{4}$ inches; egg cavity, width 2 inches, depth $1\frac{1}{4}$ inches. Was placed on the horizontal branch of a tree, 21 feet from the ground, on the edge of the scrub.

Eggs.—Two; swollen oval in shape; surface, fine and slightly glossy; colour, pale apple-green, freckled with reddish-brown, and a few markings of dull purplish-grey, all becoming more confluent at the larger ends, where they form an irregular zone. Dimensions in inches :—(a) 0.88 x 0.63, (b) 0.89 x 0.63.

This Robin frequents forest country of the Atherton and Herberton districts. It seldom goes into a scrub, therefore the above discovery on the edge of the scrub appears an exception to the rule. In the open forest country I found five nests in November (1908); in each case the nest was built in a forest tree several miles from any scrub. Three nests contained each two young birds, while two were apparently nearly ready for eggs.

NOTE.—The foregoing five types of new eggs are in the collection of Mr. H. L. White, Belltrees, Scone, New South Wales.

OBSERVATION.—In my article, "The Barron River Valley," I omitted to mention the common Miner (*Myzantha garrula*), which I observed frequently in the forest tracts. I do not think this bird has been previously recorded for North Queensland.

Review.

[“The Confessions of a Beachcomber: Scenes and Incidents in the Career of an Unprofessional Beachcomber in Tropical Queensland.” By E. J. Banfield. With a map and 53 illustrations. T. Fisher Unwin, Adelphi-terrace, London. 1908.]

MR. E. J. Banfield is a member of the A.O.U., and has contributed valuable field observations on birds to this journal,* therefore his “Confessions” will, no doubt, be read with special interest.

“The Confessions of a Beachcomber” comprises a charming book written in a unique style, partly poetic and partly descriptive of the sights, sounds, and moods of Nature as she discovered herself to the author during his residence of eight years or so on a romantic islet on the border of the coral sea, North-Eastern Queensland. The name of Mr. Banfield’s island-home is Dunk.† It has an area slightly over 3 square miles, is verdure clad from the coral strand to the summit of the highest hill, and is situated $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles from the mainland, in Rockingham Bay—a district celebrated for its ornithological as well as its botanical wealth.

The book contains chapters on all branches of nature-study from ethnology downwards, but this review naturally will deal only with the ornithology of Mr. Banfield’s “Confessions,” which are written in popular and pleasing phraseology. The chapter on birds is divided into various suggestive sub-heads, such as “Birds and Their Rights,” “The Daybreak Fugue,” “The Nestful Tree,” “White Nutmeg-Pigeon,” “The Flame-Trees’ Visitors,” &c.

Here is a bit of the life of the beautiful and lively Varied Honey-eater (*Ptilotis versicolor*):—

“Once aroused, the Varied Honey-eater is wide awake. His restlessness is equalled only by his impertinent exclamations. He shouts his own aboriginal title, ‘Go-bidger-oo!’ ‘Put on your boots!’ ‘Which—which—

* One of his more important finds was the discovery of a colony of Swiftlets (*Collocalia francica*) nesting in a cavern on Dunk Island. *Vide Ému*, viii., pp. 146-148.—EDS.

† Discovered and named by Capt. Cook after George Montagu Dunk, First Earl of Sandwich, Second Baron and First Earl of Halifax, who was First Lord of the Admiralty at the time of its discovery.



Nest and Eggs of the Stalker Fig-Bird (*Sphecotheres stalkeri*).
Type, found by S. W. Jackson and E. D. Frizelle, Tinaroo Scrubs, 8/11/08. (Nearly natural size.)



Jackson, Sidney William. 1909. "Descriptions of Nests and Eggs of Five Species of Birds Found in the Atherton District, North Queensland." *The Emu : official organ of the Australasian Ornithologists' Union* 8(5), 283–285.

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