

spring traps set by rabbiters seem to capture incidentally a good many birds. I found a White-backed Magpie caught by the leg, which was almost severed. I completed the severance without protest from the bird, and it flew off; but in another instance I found one of these birds with its beak cut clean off, not far from the root. It could not eat, and died a day or so after discovery. In another instance a fairly large black snake, furious at its detention, was found imprisoned in the jaws of a rabbit trap.

The Soldier-Bird.—Professor Newton, "Dictionary of Birds," page 428, makes a curious misstatement regarding the Sanguineous Honey-eater or "Blood-Bird" (*Myzomela sanguinolenta*), which, he says, is "called 'Soldier-Bird' by the colonists owing to the colouring of its plumage—crimson or scarlet." It is, of course, the Garrulous Honey-eater (*Myzantha garrula*) which is known as "Soldier-Bird," from its pugnacious disposition. By the way, at a time when the whey from cheese factories was allowed to remain outside in open barrels, &c. (to be subsequently fed to hand-reared calves), the "Soldier-Birds" in some South Coastal (N.S.W.) districts manifested a strange fondness for this by-product, and many of the birds fell into the receptacles and were drowned. This winter—a very dry one—these bold birds, with Magpie-Larks, Common Magpies (Crow-Shrike), Black-and-White Fantails, &c., are drinking from my horse's water-tub.

Stray Feathers.

Migration of Crows.—Lately I have noticed an exceedingly interesting migration of Crows. As many as 2,000 of these birds were seen in one flock, all flying in one direction. They all seemed to be cawing at the same time, and made a noise like a train going through timbered country in gloomy weather. I have never noticed such a large flock apparently migrating before. It is probably due to the dry weather and the consequent lack of water.—J. R. CHISHOLM. Prairie, North Queensland, 25/4/20.

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Native Companions.—Probably owing to the severe drought in New South Wales, two fine specimens of Native Companions (*Antigone australasiana*) visited Mr. R. Sammon's farm, Boorhaman, during September, 1919. These two birds became very tame, strutting about the homestead paddocks, and were a source of pleasure to the Sammon family, who fed them with wheat. Early in December one of the birds disappeared, probably being shot. The remaining bird is still to be seen gracefully strolling around. The writer, on 31st May, 1920, drove within 15 yards of this lonely bird. The Native Companion was a common species in this district years ago, Mr. Sammon informing the writer that these two birds are the first he has seen for 16 years or so. What

a pity this only Australian species of Crane is becoming extinct in Victoria—so graceful of movement, so interesting to watch!—
C. F. COLE. Wangaratta (Vic.), 5/6/1920.

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Albatrosses at Sea.—My friend Dr. Macgillivray has given some very valuable notes on sea-birds, and I wish at once to draw attention to his records of the Flat-billed Albatross in Australian waters. I have just questioned the occurrence of this species, and I note that under date 14th June (p. 171) he wrote:—"The bill is black, with culmen yellow to the tip. One also had a good deal of yellow along the lower border of the mandible." This last is characteristic of *chrysostoma*, but this specimen was not near Australia. Then, on 20th June (p. 173), about 300 miles S.E. from Cape Leeuwin and directly south of King George's Sound, he recorded *T. chrysostoma*, and, giving a good description, stated—"Broad yellow stripe on culmen; no yellow on mandible except at base." This is diagnostic of *chlororhynchus*. On the 23rd June (p. 175), near Kangaroo Island, he added for the first time *T. chlororhynchus*, giving distinguishing features as to coloration of head, &c., and also notes *T. chrysostoma*. In view of the discrepancies noted above, it is urgent that some sea expeditions should be undertaken to procure specimens, as there is still a strong doubt as to the status of the Flat-billed Albatross in Australian waters.—GREGORY M. MATHEWS. Foulis Court, Fair Oak, Hants., England, 28/2/20.

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Correction re Cuckoos.—Mr. Gregory M. Mathews writes:—"I am gratified that Mr. A. J. Campbell has drawn attention to an apparent oversight with regard to the identification of a Cuckoo by his son, whose note I published in "The Birds of Australia," vol. vii., p. 316. Wherever possible I have introduced original notes in preference to copying already published ones, but I have found that many cases of duplication occur, as there is in this instance. Mr. A. G. Campbell sent me the original note which I published, and he also introduced the same matter into a paper which was published in *The Emu*. Apparently, in the latter place he reconsidered the matter, and gave the correct identification of the Cuckoo, which he had wrongly identified in the note he sent to me. I am dependent upon the accuracy of the worker for the identification of birds when they are good enough to send me notes of habits, &c., and I cannot accept any responsibility for errors, but always try to correct such when pointed out."

Mr. Campbell replies:—"Mr. Mathews is welcome to the correction. My son was reared amongst the Square-tailed Cuckoos, and not likely to confuse these birds with the Fan-tailed species, which he also knows well. Moreover, I was present when the specimen in question (nestling of the Square-tailed) was procured on the Upper Yarra Ranges. Therefore, any error in identification most likely has occurred on Mr. Mathews's side of the world, and not here."



Cole, C F. 1920. "Native Companions." *The Emu : official organ of the Australasian Ornithologists' Union* 20(1), 37–38.

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