

Stray Feathers.

The Rufous Bristle-Bird (*Sphenura broadbenti*).—With regard to this bird in the Otways, what is the extent of its range? From personal observations I find this bird at Anglesea, extending round the coast past Airey's Inlet, from there on to Lorne, and as far as the Jamieson River, 10 miles from Lorne. At the back of Mount Defiance, near the Cumberland River, I have seen and heard numbers of these birds. Again, along the Lorne coach road these birds are plentiful, extending over the top of the range to within a few miles of Dean's Marsh. In nearly every gully along the coast-line mentioned several pairs can be found, and I fancy they are increasing in numbers.—J. K. RUSSELL. Barunah Plains, Hesse.

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Habits of Cockatoos.—Lately, when staying at Tallarook, I noticed that a flock of about 200 Sulphur-crested Cockatoos and Corellas that lived in the neighbourhood always seemed to have their regular beat, which they go over every day, and roost in the same place at night. They also visit other places during the day in search of food. My father, W. H. D. Le Souëf, noticed the same thing with Crows in Queensland, and also that the same individual bird acted as leader every time; as it had two or three white feathers on one wing it was easily identified. It is probable that the Cockatoos and other birds, when flying in companies, have their recognized leader. I know it occurs in mobs of cattle, sheep, &c., and the leader may be either a male or female.—CECIL J. LE SOUËF. Melbourne.

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Gang-Gang Cockatoos.—During a few weeks' stay at Lorne I was surprised at the number of Gang-Gang Cockatoos (*Callocephalon galeatum*) close to the township. Every morning numbers of these birds could be heard, and also seen feeding, among the gum-trees along the foreshore. I have been at Lorne for every summer for many years past, but never remember these birds being so plentiful. My brother also mentions seeing a flock along the Barwon River, at Geelong. Another note I have from Whoorel, near Birregurra, saying that the birds were very numerous, feeding among the sugar-gum plantations. The birds had never been in that locality before. While at Inverleigh some days ago I noticed four birds flying over the cricket ground, and I also saw a single bird here on the plains. Has the food supply in the Otway Ranges anything to do with the birds appearing in these unusual places?—J. K. RUSSELL, R.A.O.U. Hesse.

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Osprey Aerie, Cape Mentelle, W.A.—I was interested in this "historic nest" (*vide Emu, ante*, p. 126) and Mr. Hurst's picture on the opposite page (pl. xv.), and, being further inland at the time, I was not with the R.A.O.U. party. Thirty-one years

previously I photographed the same aerie (see "Nests and Eggs," p. 42). The fine figure at the nest represents Mr. A. J. Bussell, brother of the "Australian Grace Darling"—Miss Grace Bussell. Eleven years subsequently Mr. C. P. Conigrave visited the nest (see *Emu*, i., pl. ix.) It is satisfactory to learn that these noble birds are still in possession of that ancient isolated rock, which has been made a permanent reserve by the Lands Department. It is probably the smallest reserve on record, and was made on the representations of Mr. A. W. Milligan and the late Mr. Woodward (see *Emu*, ii., p. 70).—A. J. CAMPBELL, C.M.B.O.U. Box Hill (Vic.)

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Terns at Bunbury.—It was my privilege, during the Union's W.A. trip, to visit the port of Bunbury, and among some of the interesting bird-notes I made there was one on a company of Crested Terns. A very cold and strong wind was blowing in from the sea, and these birds had discovered that the old piles of a one-time bath-house inside the breakwater afforded them a veritable haven of rest. Protected from the wind by the higher land on the sea side, and from human disturbers by the dilapidated state of the structure, these birds had collected in great numbers to take it easy, and thus demonstrates how typically Australian they were. I counted no less than 360 in the lot, and not one was within pecking distance of its neighbour, and every one faced the same direction, head to wind. A noticeable feature was the diversity of marking of the different birds. The crests varied from black to grey, and other dark markings were equally variable; the greys of the backs and wings also ran through many grades, no doubt due to variable ages.—G. H. BARKER, R.A.O.U. Brisbane.

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Cuckoos' Eggs.—Does the Cuckoo lay its egg in a nest only before the foster-parents commence laying? This question has repeatedly occurred to me when I have noted that the Cuckoo egg is further advanced in incubation than the eggs of the foster-parents. In every instance I found that in combination clutches the egg of the Cuckoo was first laid, or the incubation of the Cuckoo's egg was of shorter duration than those of the foster-parents. Even a clutch of one Fantail Cuckoo and one of Blue Wren, taken on Kangaroo Island, bears this out, as, though the Blue Wren's egg was quite fresh, the Cuckoo's was slightly incubated. Mr. J. W. Mellor has records of Bronze-Cuckoo (Narrow-bill) hatching out two days before Blue Wrens' eggs. Has a nest been found containing young of foster-parents and egg of Cuckoo? Two or even more eggs of Cuckoos have been recorded in one nest, but, I understand, only one Cuckoo's egg was with foster-parents' eggs, the others being embedded in lining of nest. Has an authentic record been made of a Cuckoo's egg being added to eggs of foster-parents?—J. NEIL M'GILP, R.A.O.U. "Origma," King's Park, S.A.



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