

across the bay and zealously work over the infested areas. On one large paddock at Marcus, more than 600 birds were counted, and on the same day a flock of over 1,000 birds was observed on Mr. Heath's property at Drysdale. In all, at least 5,000 Ibis were counted for the day, and, allowing for many other parts of the peninsula that were not visited, a very conservative estimate would be in the vicinity of 10,000 birds.

After feeding all day, large flocks would commence their journey back over the bay to their roosting areas along the Werribee River and in the plantations on the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works farm at Werribee South, whilst smaller flocks flew west to roost along the Barwon River.

Assuming that one Ibis would consume 400 grubs in a day, and that 20 grubs weighed half an ounce (equalling 10 ounces per bird per day), then 1,000 birds would consume 625 lb. and 5,000 birds would eat 3,125 lb. (over  $1\frac{1}{4}$  tons) in a single day.

Other birds beside the Ibis helped to destroy the insects. As the farmers re-cultivated infested areas in an effort to check the pests, large flocks of Silver Gulls followed every plough and tractor, and Ravens and White-backed Magpies also took toll by consuming large quantities of grubs, particularly after heavy rain when the pests were forced to the surface.

Now that the infestation has eased, the Ibis have departed for their northern breeding grounds and the Gulls have returned to inland waters and seashores.—*J. R. Wheeler, Leopold, Victoria.*

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**Rufous Fantail nesting in Monbulk Forest, Vic.** During the nesting season of 1957-1958, a pair of Rufous Fantails (*Rhipidura rufifrons*) were observed nesting in the Monbulk Forest, which is part of the Dandenong Range.

On December 29, 1957, the actions of the male and the female Fantails enabled me to locate their partly constructed nest, which was placed on a horizontal limb some three feet from the ground. At this stage only the stem and base of the nest had been built.

On January 4, 1958, the nest was completed, but it was not until January 8 that the female was observed brooding.

The nest was kept under observation, at daily intervals, until the 23rd, during which day the young birds hatched. Both birds fed the young.

At 7 a.m. on February 3, one fledgling left the nest. The next morning both young birds were observed in the trees adjacent to the nest and were being attended by the parents.

Allowing one day for the construction of the base and tail of the nest, it would appear that these birds take 40 days from the commencement of nesting until the young birds leave the nest.

—*Rev. A. deQ. Robin, Kallista.*