

Short Notes —

Eggs of the Double-eyed Fig Parrot. A polytypic species widely distributed throughout the New Guinea region, the Double-eyed Fig Parrot *Psittaculirostris diophthalma* is represented in Australia by three subspecies, each an isolate confined to one or other of the three major tracts of tropical rainforest along the northeastern coast. Marshall's Fig Parrot *P. d. marshalli*, discovered as recently as 1946, is restricted to eastern Cape York Peninsula and is quite common in rainforests along the Claudie and Lockhart Rivers. The Red-browed Fig Parrot *P. d. macleayana* occurs in coastal rainforest of north Queensland from near Cooktown south to Cardwell and possibly Townsville. The southernmost subspecies, Coxen's Fig Parrot *P. d. coxeni*, was formerly distributed in coastal rainforests from the Macleay River, northeastern New South Wales, north to the Blackall Ranges and possibly the Maryborough district, southeastern Queensland, but nearly all recent records of this rare subspecies are from forests along the Queensland-New South Wales border.

Little is known of the nesting of the species. The purpose of this note is to record descriptions of eggs of two subspecies and, on the basis of that information, reassess the identification of a clutch of 2 eggs referred to *P. d. coxeni* and collected at Urangan, near Maryborough, southeastern Queensland, on August 2, 1934.

In October 1974, at Iron Range, Cape York Peninsula, I obtained from a nest hollow an addled egg and a nestling of *P. d. marshalli*. The egg and nestling have been lodged in the Queensland Museum. As this is the first known egg of *P. d. marshalli* it is hereby designated as the type, and the following description is given —

QM 015689, type egg of *P. d. marshalli*.

Locality: Iron Range, Cape York Peninsula, Queensland.

Date: October 14, 1974.

Description: white, rounded, surface heavily stained from contact with nest lining; measurements 21.6 x 17.5 mm.

For a number of years I have had under study a captive pair of *P. d. macleayana*. The female has laid four clutches of eggs, each of 2 eggs. The majority have been fertile, but only one chick has been reared. The eggs are white, rounded and without gloss. One clutch has been deposited in the Australian Museum, Sydney (registered: AM 046187). Of the 8 eggs laid, measurements were taken from 5 and these are —

1 of 2: 20.6 x 17.6 mm.

2 of 2: 21.8 x 18.0 mm and 20.7 x 17.3 mm.

2 of 2: 21.2 x 17.4 mm and 20.8 x 17.6 mm.

Kinghorn (*Emu* 36: p. 31, 1936) recorded the discovery of the nest and eggs of *P. d. coxeni* at Urangan, near Maryborough. These eggs were taken by Mr. Valdie Christensen from a nest “. . . in an old, rotted-off, boomerang-shaped stump which was half buried in the ground, thus forming a hollow, and the eggs were laid about twelve inches from the entrance”. Specimens of “. . . *Opopsitta coxeni* and allied species . . .” were forwarded by Kinghorn to Christensen to assist identification, but always there have been doubts about these eggs.

The Christensen eggs are now in the Queensland Museum where I have examined them and concluded that they are not eggs of *P. d. coxeni*.

A description of the eggs is as follows: white, broad-elliptical with a smooth, slightly glossy surface; measurements, 15.1 x 13.3 mm and 15.0 x 13.4 mm. *P. d. coxeni* is appreciably larger than the other subspecies, so its eggs could not be so much smaller. Furthermore, the shape and surface texture of these eggs are not consistent with those same features in the eggs of the other subspecies. In view of these inconsistencies the nesting record of *P. d. coxeni* from Urangan, near Maryborough, southeastern Queensland, must be rejected.

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ABW

Scaly-breasted Lorikeets at Mount Eliza, Victoria. During April 1975 I wrote to "*The Bird Watcher*" about the habits of the Rainbow Lorikeets *Trichoglossus haematodus*, that occur where I live at Mount Eliza, Mornington Peninsula, Victoria. These birds first appeared in our garden in the spring of 1973 and have been visiting it until the time of writing, (February, 1979). They are not regular in their habits and it is difficult to ascertain just when they will appear, which is possibly due to other people feeding them in the district, and whether their artificial food supply is abundant or not. There are always more birds here from December until April and this could be due to the availability of the flowering eucalypt trees, their natural food source.

In January and February 1979, I have counted at least six immature birds, recognized by their brown bills and eyes, although I have not as yet found any of their nesting holes. Approximately 1½ km from our home there is a small reserve ¼ km square, where the Rainbow Lorikeets seem to be most prevalent and it is here that one of the residents who lives adjacent to the reserve, has regularly fed the birds for two years. At times he has between fifty and one hundred Rainbow Lorikeets coming to his feed table and these birds appear to be resident throughout the year.

The Scaly-breasted Lorikeet *Trichoglossus chlorolepidotus*, is also found here and I have watched ten birds of this species amongst the Rainbow Lorikeets. The two species arrive each night and the man who feeds the birds tells me that on many occasions he counts up to twenty Scaly-breasted Lorikeets visiting our garden to feed from supplied food. Although on six occasions from December 1978 to February 1979, I have watched this species feeding at the food supply adjacent to the reserve mentioned, I have not noticed any immature birds and therefore I cannot say whether the Scaly-breasted Lorikeets have bred in the district as yet. I venture to suggest that as they have most certainly multiplied since I first noticed single birds at Mordialloc and Keysborough, 20 km away, in 1969, they have now become established in this area on the Mornington Peninsula, south of Melbourne and should therefore be classed as a Victorian bird.

R.A.O.U. Atlas reports from four other bird observers: P. Lansley (Frankston), reported seeing three Scaly-breasted Lorikeets at Karingal, via Frankston, with Musk Lorikeets *Glossopsitta concinna* and Rainbow Lorikeets, in April 1977; J. Druce (Beaumaris) reported seeing Scaly-breasted Lorikeets in Beaumaris, feeding in flowering gums; several birds seen with Little Lorikeets *Glossopsitta pusilla*; Mrs. Kath Hough (Lower Plenty) reported seeing one Scaly-breasted Lorikeet with Rainbow Lori-