

to have an instinctive consciousness of the danger to which his beauty subjects him; nevertheless they will frequently build their little nest and rear their young in the most populous places. Several broods are reared annually in the Botanic Garden at Sydney, and I saw a pair busily employed in constructing their nest in a tree close to the door of the Colonial Secretary's Office in that town. The short and rounded wing incapacitates it for protracted flight, but the amazing facility with which it is enabled to pass over the surface of the ground fully compensates for this deficiency: this mode of progression is scarcely to be called running, but is rather a succession of bounding hops, performed with great rapidity: while thus employed its tail is carried perpendicularly or thrown forward over the back; in fact, except during flight, this organ is rarely, if ever, carried horizontally.

The breeding-season continues from September to January, during which period at least two, if not three, broods are reared: the young of one being scarcely old enough to provide for themselves, before the female again commences laying: independently of rearing her own young, she is also the foster-parent of the Bronze Cuckoo (*Chalcites lucidus*), a single egg of which species is frequently found deposited in her nest; but by what means, is, as in the case of the European Cuckoo, unknown.

The nest, which is dome-shaped, with a small hole at the side for an entrance, is generally constructed of grasses, lined with feathers or hair: the site chosen for its erection is usually near the ground, in a secluded bush, tuft of grass, or under the shelter of a bank. The eggs are generally four in number, of a delicate flesh-white, sprinkled with spots and blotches of reddish brown, which are more abundant, and form an irregular zone at the larger extremity: they are eight lines long by five and a half broad.

The song is a hurried strain impossible to describe, but somewhat resembling that of the Wren of Europe, a bird to which the *Maluri* also assimilate in many of their actions.

The stomach is muscular, and the food consists of insects of various kinds, collected on the ground, the trunks of fallen trees, etc.

The male in summer has the crown of the head, ear-coverts and a lunar-shaped mark on the upper part of the back light metallic blue; lores, line over the eye, occiput, scapularies, back, rump and upper tail-coverts velvety black; throat and chest bluish black, bounded below by a band of velvety black; tail deep blue, indistinctly barred with a darker hue and finely tipped with white; wings brown; under surface buffy white, tinged with blue on the flanks; irides blackish brown; bill black; feet brown.

The female has the lores and a circle surrounding the eye reddish brown; upper surface, wings and tail brown; under surface brownish white; bill reddish brown; feet fleshy brown.

The Plate represents two males and a female with the nest, the former engaged in feeding a young Cuckoo.