

that had sheltered it for probably three weeks, and from there the cuckoo must have flown some distance away, for I never saw it again.

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES.

By R. H. D. Stidolph, Masterton.

It was my good fortune to be on holiday at Kapiti Island when the above nest was found and before Mrs. Wilkinson took her photographs several days later, I made a few random observations of the feeding and brooding of the young cuckoo.

When the nest was found (January 16) the young cuckoo filled it completely and rested with its head over its shoulder.. Its rat-like eye, enormous orange-coloured gape and hawk-like bill were conspicuous features of its make-up.

The adult whiteheads approached the nest very quietly and without haste and fed the youngster without making a sound, but immediately the bird was fed one adult bird sang and twittered before departing.

On January 17 the weather was very windy after heavy rain. I arrived at the nest late in the afternoon. At 4.13 p.m. the cuckoo was fed by one whitehead, which slipped quietly on the nest and brooded the youngster for 25 minutes when the other adult arrived and fed the chick. Both whiteheads then left and returned 12 minutes later, at 4.50 p.m., when one bird fed the cuckoo, sat on it for a minute and then left when the other adult arrived to feed the youngster. A cicada was seen amongst the food fed to the cuckoo.

The next day, January 18, the cuckoo, during a short period I spent at the nest, was fed by one adult at intervals of five minutes (three periods) and after a lapse of ten minutes it was fed by both adults which arrived at the nest together. A caterpillar was noticed among the food fed to the cuckoo. Unfortunately I had to leave the island that day.

DUCKLINGS FALLING OVER CLIFF.—In October, as Mr. Corkran was working in the Woodhaugh Quarry, beside the Leith, Dunedin, he saw a wild duck walking backwards and forwards quacking at the foot of a 60ft. cliff in the quarry. Hearing a "plop" near him he looked around, and discovered that it had been made by a young duckling landing on the ground at the foot of the cliff. The adult duck guided the young one to the safety of a bush about three yards away, and then returned to resume her quacking at the foot of the cliff. Presently another duckling appeared from the top of the cliff, and, on landing at the bottom, it too was guided to the sheltering bush. In all, five ducklings estimated to be no more than three days old, made this hazardous trip. With wings spread, down they came at short intervals, and when about two and a half feet from the ground, the tiny creatures turned in the air and landed on their backs. Three made the landing safely, one was stunned but soon recovered, and one was killed. The adult waited for a while as if to see if the dead duckling would recover from its fall, but it showed no signs of life, and the adult collected the other four young ones, which on their descent had been led one by one to the safety of the bush. The family made its way to the waters of the Leith.—Mrs. I. Tily, Dunedin.