

## NOTES.

The eminent American ornithologist, Dr. Robert Cushman Murphy, is due to arrive in New Zealand early in November. He intends to visit the Snares with a party of New Zealand scientists.

**BREEDING OF WHITE-EYE (*Zosterops lateralis*).—**During the past season in my fruit garden in Leith Valley, Dunedin, four or five pairs of white-eyes have nested among the raspberry canes. The last nest found was as late as at least the third week in February. Four eggs were laid and during the incubation period one side of the nest began to sag. By the time the young were hatched, the nest was so perilously tilted that two of the young fell out and perished. The parents managed to rear the remaining two though the nest was tilted almost completely sideways by the time the young vacated it.—W. Davidson, Dunedin Naturalists' Field Club.

**BREEDING HABITS OF BLACKBIRD.—**Strange behaviour probably connected with shifts from original song-posts was seen among a garden population of blackbirds (*Turdus merula*) at Karori during September, 1946. Three young were found on September 22 in a karamu bush. On September 28 fierce fighting continued all day in the vicinity of this nest, and loud "tsup" notes were heard. Three male birds were observed, one of which was unmarked, and until its appearance threat displays were uncommon and no abnormal disturbance was seen. The brooding female rapidly became exhausted as her flight-line lay across a lawn beside a hedge in which a second nest was placed several metres from the original one. Birds fought in this hedge until noon on September 29 when two decapitated young were found and the second nest was deserted.—H. Secker, Wellington.

**NOTES OF BLACKBIRD.—**On August 20, 1946, at 7.45 a.m., a pair of blackbirds (*Turdus merula*) was seen flying swiftly round a hedge of ngaio trees; when the male ceased pursuit it uttered high-pitched clucking noises similar to those heard when birds are fighting. To my ear these notes are similar to those which are heard in sub-song, and a male which wished to roost in a small yew tree at 17.45 on August 1, while making these noises seemed to be verging on sub-song. This type of call occurs also in the autumn from single birds, one record existing in my notes being for March 7, 1947.—H. Secker, Wellington.

**BIRDS AT ARTHUR'S PASS, CANTERBURY.—**On 10-11/11/1945 keas (*Nestor notabilis*) were apparently mating; groups of 3, 2 and 6 were flying about excitedly and chasing one another. Two black-backed gulls (*Larus dominicanus*) were circling over Avalanche Peak at over 6,000ft. A long-tailed cuckoo (*Eudynamis taitensis*) was seen at the edge of the bush line. Black-billed gulls (*Larus bulleri*) seen on river-beds of Bealey and Upper Waimakariri. On 24-25/11/45 three solitary keas were seen. A pair of paradise duck (*Tadorna variegata*) on Upper Bealey and many warblers (*Pseudogerygone igata*) seen and heard singing in the bush. Occasional chaffinches (*Fringilla coelebs*), blackbirds (*Turdus merula*) and starlings (*Sturnus vulgaris*) seen in lower fringe of bush.—G. Guy, Christchurch.