

shining cuckoo remained the whole winter in the bush reserve on my section. We all knew the screech of the grey warbler and what it meant—that a cuckoo was molesting it.

Not only did I find the eggs of shining cuckoos in the grey warblers' and fantails' nests, but my elder son did the same. Where there were many leaves below we frequently found a complete and unbroken egg of the grey warbler below a grey warbler's nest, showing that the shining cuckoo does not always destroy or eat the egg of the host, nor does it always tip all the grey warbler's eggs out of the nest. From the verandah of the house we have watched a grey warbler feeding a young cuckoo. My younger son's birthday is in November, and for years it was his birthday wish that I show him the egg or the young of a shining cuckoo in a grey warbler's nest, or in that of other birds.

Many times my three children and I would patiently watch a shining cuckoo perched above a grey warbler's nest, but though we waited long we did not witness the actual placing of the egg within the nest, though the cuckoo egg would be there next morning.

Just what the mention of Dr. Falla's information about the time when young cuckoos appear in Wellington has to do with my observations in the Bay of Plenty, I cannot imagine.

The colour, the size and the notes of young cuckoos are enough to distinguish the young from adults, surely—at least to one who had closely observed these birds, their eggs and their young over fifteen years alone.—I am, etc., DAVID H. GRAHAM, 28 White's Line East, Lower Hutt. August 14, 1950.

REVIEWS.

Some South-Pacific Sea-bird Logs, by C. A. Fleming. (Based on observations by R. A. Falla, C. A. Fleming and R. B. Sibson). *Emu*, Vol. 49, 1950, pp. 169-188, eight figures.

Written with the chief object of recording northward limits of southern sea-birds, this informative paper will be welcomed by ornithologists who may be making ocean voyages, especially as reprints are available, as long as the supply lasts, to intending travellers. Useful aids to identification are given, notably in the diagrammatic sketches of some of the species encountered. After introductory matter, logs are included of five voyages on which the paper is based, and then follow a summary of the distribution limits of selected species and a discussion.—R.H.D.S.

The Opening of Milk Bottles by Birds.—James Fisher and R. A. Hinde, *British Birds*, XLII, pp. 347-357. (A publication of the British Trust for Ornithology.)

This paper records the result of an investigation in which 126 members of the Trust and many of the public took part, through the medium of a questionnaire, and is an admirable example of this method of inquiry. The habit of prising open the waxboard tops of milk bottles and drinking the milk was first observed near Southampton in 1921, and since then it has become widespread in England and some parts of Wales, Scotland and Ireland. A series of maps shows at a glance the spread of the habit, which seems to have arisen spontaneously in many areas, and which is then copied by other birds in the district. It may not develop in a district until several years after the introduction of bottled milk, and it is unknown in Holland, where metal foil stoppers are widely used: these, however, are also opened in England. It seems possible that birds learn of the association of food and bottles through leaky tops, but L.S.V.V. in "The Ibis" (Vol. 92, 2) suggests that the habit may have originated through birds pecking at the waxed covers for their fatty content. The habit has been observed mainly in blue and great tits, but it may become of particular interest in this country as it has also been recorded in small numbers in the house sparrow, blackbird, starling, robin (*Erithacus melophilus*), chaffinch, song thrush and hedge sparrow, all of which, with the exception of the robin, are found in New Zealand.—J.M.C.