

NOTE ON A NEST OF *PETRÆCA LEGGII*, Sharpe.*The Scarlet-breasted Robin.*

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(Ornithologist to the Australian Museum.)

[Plate XX.]

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MR. JOSEPH GABRIEL, F.L.S., one of the most enthusiastic members of the Field Naturalists' Club of Victoria, has recently forwarded me a beautiful nest of the Scarlet-breasted Robin, built in a very well concealed situation. The nest was found by Mr. Gabriel at Bayswater, Victoria, on the 15th Novr., 1894, and is formed in a small cavity burnt out of the thin stem of a "Mountain Musk," *Olearia argophylla*, at an elevation of about six feet from the ground. The dimensions of this hollow in the stem of the tree, from its base to where it narrows at the top, were six inches and a half in height by three inches and a half in width on one side, and four inches and a half by three inches and a half on the other; and in this snug recess the nest is ensconced. It is composed of very fine strips of the inner bark of a Eucalypt, intermingled with the soft downy covering of the freshly budded fronds of a tree fern, and thickly and warmly lined inside with opossum fur; the rim and one side of the nest are ornamented with cobwebs collected from a burnt tree and to which still adhere small fragments of charred wood, making the nest assimilate closely to its surroundings. On one side of the cavity only a small portion of the rim of the nest is visible. The figure on the plate represents the nest as seen from above and looking into it: as viewed laterally very little of it is discernible. Eventually the nest, which has been presented to the Trustees, and contains three eggs of the usual type, will be mounted and placed in the Group Collection illustrating the life-history of our Australian birds.

The situation of the nest of this species is varied; sometimes it is boldly placed on a horizontal branch or in the forked limb of a low tree, but at all times the exterior portion of the nest is made to closely resemble its environment. In South Gippsland I have frequently found the nest of this Robin by tapping on the hollow trunk of some burnt out giant of the forest, or by watching the bird fly into one of the apertures made by fire in the bole of a large tree.