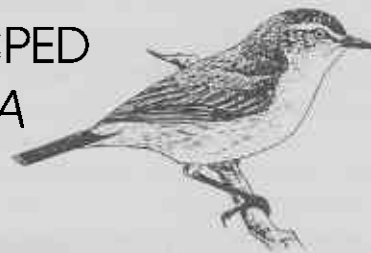


NESTING IN THE WHEATBELT - YELLOW-RUMPED THORNBILL, *ACANTHIZA CHRYSORRHOA*

Heather Adamson



ONCE again these common but possibly overlooked little birds have constructed their bulky nest in *Acacia colletioides* (wait-a-while wattle). Weather-beaten remains of last year's nest still hang in this large old wattle alongside this season's one. It is built with the typical 'false nest' at the top, and the small side entrance to their actual nest concealed underneath. Used in the construction are curly windmill grass, feather speargrass, wind grass, white tops, wool (seems to be the main binding factor - shearing shed nearby), galah and ring-neck parrot feathers, bark, hay, grass seeds, spiders egg sacs (but no cobwebs at all), stubble, very small twigs, and what looks like old clover or capeweed leaves. All of which all sits on the outer branches, about one to two metres above the ground.

One female with several males will rear up to four broods in a good season. All members assist with feeding the young but only the female incubates.

After recent overnight heavy rain and wind the nest became a bit shabby, resulting in three off-whitish eggs with faint speckles on the large end found on the ground - she may have pushed the eggs out after they became wet or cold. Anyhow, the little female was soon back in her nest obviously getting on with it.

Yellow-rumped Thornbills forage in trees, shrubs and on the ground for seed and a variety of invertebrates. If disturbed their flight is 'undulated and jerky' and exposes their characteristic yellow feathers on their rump as they fly away. The group chatters with a high-pitched tinkling song.



Yellow-rumped Thornbills nests in Acacia colletioides. Upper nest, current, bottom nest 2002 season.



False entrances at the top of the nest.