Nesting habits of the White-collared Kingfisher (Halcyon chloris humii, Sharpe)

(Plate VIII)

The accompanying photograph was taken on 20th June, 1928, by the late Mr. V. G. Bell of the Federated Malay States Forestry Department in the Matang mangrove forest reserve near Port Weld in Perak. Mr. Bell wrote "We saw, 15 feet up a *tumu*[1] tree, an ant's nest with a round bore-hole in its side. It seemed that some bird had been at work, either a Woodpecker after ants' eggs or else a Kingfisher pecking out a nesting gallery. Three minutes after this the forest guard reported two elliptical white-ants' nests,[2] only a few feet above the mud, both with holes bored in them. One was badly weathered and the top was falling in but it still contained swarms of ants. In its centre was a scooped-out circular depression containing unmistakable egg-chips, the remains of last year's Kingfisher's nest."

The second ants' nest found by Mr. Bell contained a Kingfisher's nest with three newly hatched young in addition to "ants in thousands".

Mr. H. C. Robinson[3] has commented on the paucity of published information concerning the nidification of this Kingfisher but he mentions an account of its breeding in holes excavated in large termites' nests on the Selangor coast near Morib.

Writing of the Siamese race (*armstrongi* Sharpe) Mr. E. G. Herbert[4] records—"The nest is nearly always made in a black ants' nest which is situated in a hollow tree at a height of about twenty feet from the ground" but he mentions that the nest is occasionally placed in a dead tree stump and also records a nest in a white-ants' hill about three feet high.

1. One of the mangrove trees (*Bruguiera gymnorhiza* Lam.).

2. According to Mr. H. M. Pendlebury these are the nests of a species of *Eutermes* (Order *Isoptera*: Termites).

3. "The Birds of the Malay Peninsula", I, 1927, p. 100.

4. Journ. Nat. Hist. Soc. Siam, VI, 1924, p. 310.

Termitarium in Mangrove forest containing Kingfisher's nest.