

THE BLUE OR FAIRY WREN

Jaunty little Blue - Cap!
 To our garden welcome;
 Whither hast been roving?
 From what distant dell come?
 Miril - Yiril - Yiri,
 All thy ways are winning;
 Welcome with thy brown mate,
 Modest Minning - Minning.

If in early summer
 Thro' the wild we ramble,
 We may spy thy grass-nest,
 Hidden in a bramble;
 Miril - Yiril - Yiri,
 When the bushwood's thinning,
 Seek ye then our hedges,
 Thou and Minning - Minning.

Darting thro' the bushes;
 O'er the green sward hopping;
 Chattering low - sweet love-notes;
 Scarcely ever stopping;
 Miril - Yiril - Yiri
 What tales art thou spinning
 All day to thy dainty
 Mistress, Minning - Minning?

Thou'rt of wrens the fairy,
 Bonnie azure - bonnet;
 Elf or Sprite of Birdland;
 Theme for song and sonnet.
 Miril - Yiril - Yiri;
 Here, no noises dinning,
 Rear in peace a russet
 Brood with Minning - Minning.

But beware the Cuckoo,
 Kurruling the lazy!
 Lurking round the thickets,
 Driving small birds crazy.
 Miril - Yiril - Yiri,
 Don't give her an "inning,
 Else there'll be an "outing,"
 Mark that, Minning - Minning.

Should an egg she drop in,
 Thro' your open doorway,
 By and bye your nestlings
 Will be in a poor way!
 Miril - Yiril - Yiri,
 Right at the beginning,
 Chase the sly intruder;
 Chase her Minning - Minning!

Dusky vanished people
 In far inland places
 Gave those names soft-sounding,
 Suitsing well your graces:
 Miril - Yiril - Yiri,
 Thou and Minning - Minning
 Gained their love, gain our love,
 By your ways so winning.

NOTE:

Mrs. Daisy M. Bates, of Ooldea, on the Trans-continental Railway line, where she is located for the philanthropic purpose of caring for the aborigines of Central Australia, and all the regions thereabouts, and upon whose language and customs, she is a recognised authority, in her lists of aboriginal words, including the names of many native birds, plants etc., gives the very euphonious ones of the Blue or Fairy Wren and his little brown mate. The name of the former is "Miril - Yiril - Yiri" and of the latter "Minning-Minning". There is also the Cuckoo, "Kurrguling", which makes a practice of laying an egg in the little grass nest of the wrens, who, after their own nestlings have been shouldered out by the selfish and greedy intruder, after the manner of young Cuckoos, have to supply its voracious appetite. Whether or not "Kurrguling" is the smaller bronze Cuckoo, which usually makes use of the Wren's nest, may be arguable, but it matters not much, for it is a Cuckoo, though it appears that the "Mopoke" and some species of Owl (perhaps the Boobook) are sometimes called "Kurrguling".

with compliments
 by the writer to
 Mrs. Daisy M. Bates,
 whose word-list inspired
 the verses published, in part, by
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