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NEST BUILDING BY LOGRUNNER

Contradictory statements appear in current field guides as to the building of the nest of the Logrunner *Orthonyx temminckii*. Beruldsen (1980) suggests dual building by saying 'when building the nests, the birds first lay down a platform', but Reader's Digest (1986) and Simpson and Day (1984) state that only the female builds.

I watched a pair adding to a half-completed nest at Binna Burra in the Lamington National Park, Queensland, on 18 April, 1990, for one hour in midafternoon. At approximately half-minute intervals, each bird carried twigs to the nest in its bill. Often the visits overlapped; sometimes both were in the nest together. They always followed the same route to the nest irrespective of where the twigs were gathered, and they always built from the front. Both birds worked in silence.

Some unknown interruption caused the male to move (I did not observe whether he ran or flew) to a more open area about 20 m distant, where he uttered a series of rapid staccato chattering calls while running round in an obvious distraction display. The female froze beside the nest for about a minute, then entered and sat facing outwards, but shortly after continued

building. The male continued the distraction display for about five minutes, then rejoined the female and proceeded as previously.

Twice the female tried to affix a leaf the same size as herself to the nest entrance before discarding it. Two leaves placed on top of the nest stayed in place.

The nest was situated along the line of a shallow valley in the damp, dark rainforest. The symmetrical nest was about 15 cm deep, constructed of twigs latticed almost vertically and placed on the ground beside a small sloping rock with a single stemmed plant behind it. The dome was unfinished and there was a step at the front, with the entrance facing downhill.

The pair ignored people passing along the track and talking quietly. The times of incidents quoted are approximate only, as I did not wish to distract the birds by any movements. Similarly, close examination of the nest was brief.

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