

TUI NESTING AT CLEVEDON, 1946-47.

By Fraser Murray, Clevedon.

Mr. A. E. Blundell, North Road, Clevedon, on November 11, 1946, saw a tui (*Prosthemadera novaeseelandiae*) carrying nesting material into a pine tree by his house. He climbed the tree on November 17, and found the nest with two eggs. It was well concealed and could not be seen from the ground.

The nest was visited on November 20 by Mr. H. R. McKenzie (H.R.McK.) and myself. It contained two eggs and no more were laid. The height of the nest was measured and found to be 35ft. from the ground. The tui was very tame and it was difficult to get her to leave the nest. The male did not appear, but Mrs. Blundell reported that he sang frequently from the top of a tall Norfolk pine. On the opposite side of the nesting tree I found another tui's nest, which was unlined. It was certainly one of the season as it had hardly any pine needles in it. On the 21st we put a sheathing of tin round the trunk of the tree to keep vermin from climbing it.

The tree was climbed again on December 3 by Mr. Blundell, when he found one chick apparently two or three days old and the other egg addled. With H.R.McK. I visited the nest on December 4. The tui left it very reluctantly, scolded me from a few feet away, flew into a gum tree at 15ft. and carried out a demonstration to lead me from the nest. She fluttered feebly about the outer branchlets of the gum tree with her feathers ruffled, but made only a few guttural squawks. She had done this with Mr. Blundell also. It was noted that some feathers were missing from her tail. Mr. Blundell reported that the chick had left the nest on December 15.

Mr. Blundell saw the bird again building on 5/11/1947 in another pine tree. He climbed the tree on January 18, and found the nest with one egg. She did not lay any more. I measured the height with H.R.McK. and found it to be 48ft. This nest, like the previous one, was lined with the scale of young punga leaves and the egg lay on a solitary piece of wool. On January 21 the bird was still sitting. She had now lost all of her tail feathers, no doubt owing to moult. On January 24 she was not sitting but returned to the tree before I left. On January 29 and 31 and February 3 she was absent, though it was noted on January 31 that the position of the egg had been changed. Apparently the nest had been deserted.

OCCURRENCE OF TREE MARTIN (*Hylochelidon nigricans*) IN WAIRARAPA.—An Australian species of swallow, a tree martin, was seen in this district in 1946. First noted by neighbours in May, I saw the bird on September 9 and 10. It was about the size of a sparrow, light fawn-grey in colour, with a black mantle, black head, black wings and black tip to the tail. The black may have been a steel blue but it appeared black to me. There was a light fawn-grey area almost right round the neck, also a small patch of the same colour on the forehead. The tail was slightly forked. When the bird was at rest the wings extended to the length of the tail or longer. The bill was like that of a fantail.—I. E. Barton, Whareroto, Featherston.