

FLIGHT OF A BUSH HAWK

On 9/10/60 I watched a Bush Hawk (*Falco novaeseelandiae*) flying high over the Mamaku forest near Rotorua in an area which had been worked over and was therefore fairly open. It first went into a long glide with angled wings and then carried out an exercise flight, high in the air; a fairly slow flight alternating with sharp side-slips, shallow swoops and quick lifts. During this flight the Bush Hawk uttered a series of 'hek' notes, not in rapid succession, but singly with pauses between. The same type of flight, with the same call, was repeated about an hour later.

A. T. EDGAR



UNUSUAL NESTING OF FANTAILS

In September, 1962, a pair of Fantails (*Rhipidura fuliginosa placabilis*) built their nest on a strand of No. 8 fencing wire hanging from a rafter in a woolshed some miles out of Gisborne. The nest was situated about twelve feet above floor level, and about twenty feet from the shed door, which a sympathetic owner carefully kept open for a period of some months. Early in October, the eggs were found broken beneath the nest. The pair then built on top of the old nest and hatched successfully, but it is not known whether the clutch survived after fledging. Re-nesting took place almost immediately, the new nest again being built on top of the old one, and a clutch of five left the nest in mid-December. Shearing had taken place in the meantime, but the parent birds were apparently indifferent to the noise and bustle beneath them. I visited the place on 27/1/63, and found three young birds about seven days old, in a further addition to the nest, which at this stage measured about 6½ inches from the rim to the base, excluding the tail. Insect life was extremely abundant inside the shed, and although the open door was a wise precaution, it appeared that its only function was to provide a final exit for the fledged young.

A. BLACKBURN



LETTER

On the 8th of April Mr. W. R. Gibson, honorary ranger of the Otago Acclimatisation Society, forwarded to me an immature Spotted Shag (*Stictocarbo punctatus*) which had been shot by an unknown person on the Leith Stream, Dunedin, at a distance of about a mile upstream from the harbour. This bird had been noticed by the local inhabitants to have been in the area for some four days previous to its death. It had been shot with a 0.22 gauge rifle in the wing and leg; neither of these wounds would be fatal, so that death was probably due to shock owing to its inability to move.

Having previously noted a few immature birds of this species at distances inland from the sea, I was curious to know what they had been eating. So I opened the stomach of the bird and carried out an analysis on the contents.

I found no flesh at all in the stomach, which suggested that the bird had remained alive for some time after being shot. There were a number of bones which I identified as coming from a small (5")