

Table 4: Comparison of Feeding Stations

Feeding Stations	Percentage of Observations			
	Jan. 1964	May 1965	Aug. 1963	Nov. 1965
Canopy foliage ----	30	13	17	20
Understorey foliage ----	5	3	6	16
Dead foliage ----	5	4	8	8
Fruit ----	14	8	1	1
Branches, limbs, twigs ----	18	34	29	9
Branch axils, holes, dead branches ----	5	14	4	12
Trunks ----	5	4	11	12
Ground ----	18	15	21	22
Other stations ----	0	5	3	0
	100	100	100	100
	88 obs. 28 days	242 obs. 10 days	205 obs. 10 days	286 obs. 10 days

While the percentage of ground feeding observations remains fairly constant, a trend towards feeding in the canopy and understorey during the warmer months, when larval and flying insect life would be more abundant there, is apparent. Generally this trend appears to be away from searching the branches, limbs, and twigs for pupae, etc., which would appear to provide a major proportion of food in the colder months.

REFERENCES

1. BLACKBURN, A. (1967): Notes on Breeding Behaviour of N.I. Saddleback, *Notornis* XIII, 185-188.
2. MERTON, D. V. (1966): Feeding Stations, Food and Behaviour of N.I. Saddleback on Hen I, in Jan., *Notornis* XIII, 3-6.
3. ATKINSON, I. A. E. (1966): *ibid* 7-11.
4. (1964): *Notornis* XI, 93-97.
5. REISCHEK, J. (1886): *Trans. N.Z. Inst.* 19, 188-189.



LETTER

Sir — In your review of *Dusky Bay* in the March issue, you postulate that the Black Rat may have caused the Tui to become so scarce in Fiordland; but I think the reason must be sought elsewhere, perhaps in the later invasion of Fiordland by mustelids. That the Tui is capable of defending itself and its nest against the Black Rat is amply demonstrated at Big South Cape Island. When I visited the island in February, 1965, two years after the tragic invasion of Black Rats, many native species had already been exterminated, and others, except for the Tui and Weka, reduced almost to the point of extinction. Of the Tui I then said (*Notornis* XII, 199) "both adults and birds of the year were extremely abundant. The Tui, being an aggressive bird, is probably a match for the rat during the crucial nesting season." To describe them as extremely abundant gives little idea of the picture, for they were literally in hordes in all suitable habitat, with birds of the year seemingly in greater numbers than adults.

—A. BLACKBURN