

It is significant that these birds were found at the same time as the small wreck of Antarctic Fulmars (*Fulmarus glacialisoides*) by Mr Les Henderson.

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FANTAIL RE-USING A TILTED NEST

At Belmont, Lower Hutt, a Fantail (*Rhipidura fuliginosa*) nested 3 m up on a long, slender branch of a mahoe (*Melicytus ramiflorous*). The nest, with two eggs on 20 October 1973, proved too heavy and bent over the twig it was built on. The photograph (Fig. 1a) was taken on 4 November, and both eggs were found broken below the tilted nest a day or two later. The bird(s) re-levelled the nest by adding material to the rim at one side (Fig. 1b), and it contained four eggs on 10 November. Three chicks fledged on 10 December, the day after the second photograph was taken.

Fantails may build six or seven nests in a season (Philpott 1919, Blackburn 1965), but "the second use of a nest is quite exceptional" (Blackburn 1966), although also recorded by Coates (1966). The nest is usually on a slender horizontal fork, so engineering it to be level when completed must be a normal skill. (The asymetry of the first nest appears to compensate for a 15° dip in the twig during construction, but the sag continued for another 15°.) It is interesting that this pair bothered to re-level a marginal site rather than build afresh, and re-laid so soon after losing the first clutch.

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FIGURE 1a — Fantail (*Rhipidura fuliginosa*) incubating two eggs in tilted nest, 4 November 1973.



FIGURE 1b — Feeding three chicks in re-levelled nest, 9 December 1973. Note new material on left edge, and the distorted “tail” of the nest.