

readily as the first and returned to business just as promptly as the first time. For a while Tomtit watched her swinging in mid-air, tug-tugging in desperate attempts to wrench a piece of green moss from the trunk of a huge rimu. When success rewarded her efforts, it was to the knot hole in the broadleaf that she bore her prize.

For quite two hours at a time the hen bird worked. Mostly green moss at first—nearly all of it taken from the small patch growing on the rimu—she carried to the broadleaf. As the walls of the nest rose, she shaped it by turning round and round inside, wings protruding over the sides, throat and breast against the inner walls. And now, as the home took its cup shape, she began to add a lining of velvety brown tree-fern down, cunningly bound and rebound with spider webs. For ten minutes at a time she fossicked in the forest for those spider webs.

While she was busy with the home-making, Tomtit brought her food. Everything he found, with the exception of very small particles, he carried to her. When she wearied of the work, the two birds went off on a mad, food-questing frolic among the trees. But the hen bird could not stay away long. She had to keep returning just to assure herself that the wonderful nest really was still there. On such occasions, Tomtit accompanied her. With every sign of true male awkwardness, he peered within the magic palace before drawing hurriedly back as though in mortal fear of knocking over or breaking something. Within an hour the building was resumed.

Six weeks later, Tomtit was again perched on the miro, wondering if he could possibly add yet another insect to the bulging load in his beak. With three sturdy, husky youngsters to help feed, he had no leisure for day-dreaming. They were always hungry, no matter how hard he hunted. Grubs, insect lava, moths, small flies and now and again big flying ants with evil-looking blood-red bodies—his family devoured them all.

Tomtit didn't catch another insect just then. He felt that he hadn't time. Just once the bright eyes, a trifle weary now, perhaps, took in the glorious panorama of Curio Bay. And it may be that deep down in his heart he sighed. Next instant, with the speed of a thrown stone, he was heading for a certain small broadleaf.

**South Island colour of Tomtit*

FRIENDS of ALBATROSS

APPEAL FOR FUNDS

THE DUNEDIN CASE

A FEW nature-lovers have responded to the Forest and Bird Protection Society's appeal for subscriptions to reimburse expenses incurred by generous public-spirited Dunedin enthusiasts in their efforts to exclude vandals from the area where Albatross are trying to nest. The establishing of an Albatross nesting-ground on the New Zealand mainland, close to a city, will be a unique happening in the world. The birds are attempting to do their part.

The Dunedin Protectors, recognising the need of quick action, paid for the cost of a man-proof fence, about £100. We believe that many more bird-lovers will appreciate the opportunity of making a contribution in such a worthy cause. It would be surely unfair to leave those Dunedin enthusiasts to bear the brunt of the cost of that protective fence.

All subscriptions sent to the Forest and Bird Protection Society, Box 631, Wellington, will be gratefully acknowledged in the Journal and applied immediately for the purpose indicated.

The following is a list of gifts received toward the albatross fund to date:—

	£	s.	d.
Well-wisher	2	0	0
Mrs. A. J. Du Pont	1	0	0
Miss T. E. N. Johnston	5	0	
Miss Pengelly	5	0	
Mr. D. H. Wilkie	10	0	
Mr. L. W. McCaskill	10	0	
Master A. Klatt	1	0	
Mr. G. W. Graham	2	6	
Master W. H. Mabbett	1	0	
Dr. E. E. Porritt	5	0	
"F.L.N."	10	0	
Miss S. Waddell	3	0	
Mr. E. F. Friedrick	2	6	
Miss D. D. Baker	5	0	
Mr. P. Barnes	10	0	
"Anonymous"	1	0	
"L.S.F."	10	0	
	£7	1	0