

The best footwear is tennis shoes that fit your feet tightly. You may like to wear a hat too.

You won't need much in the way of equipment unless you

want to take some of the creatures out of the water to have a good look at them before you put them back. You could take a kitchen sieve and a plastic container of some sort. And your lunch.

My next article will tell you about the plants and animals you will find—from sea lettuce to seagulls, from cat's eyes to crayfish. And many types of animals you have never even heard of before. ■

## BIRDS I HAVE MET

By Avis Acres

### 15. The tui — a fine songster

WHEN WE moved to Taupo, I planted a flax bush near the kitchen window in the hope it would attract tuis. It grew quickly. After the flowers appeared I looked out each morning hopefully. Perhaps a tui would not notice my young flax bush.

One day while I was preparing breakfast I heard a cough followed by a few grunts, a chuckle, then a glorious burst of bird song. My tui had arrived!

I peered out of the window. Yes, there it was, greedily gorging itself on the nectar from the flax flowers. It paused

occasionally to sing a few bars, then returned to the feast. It was far too busy to notice me.

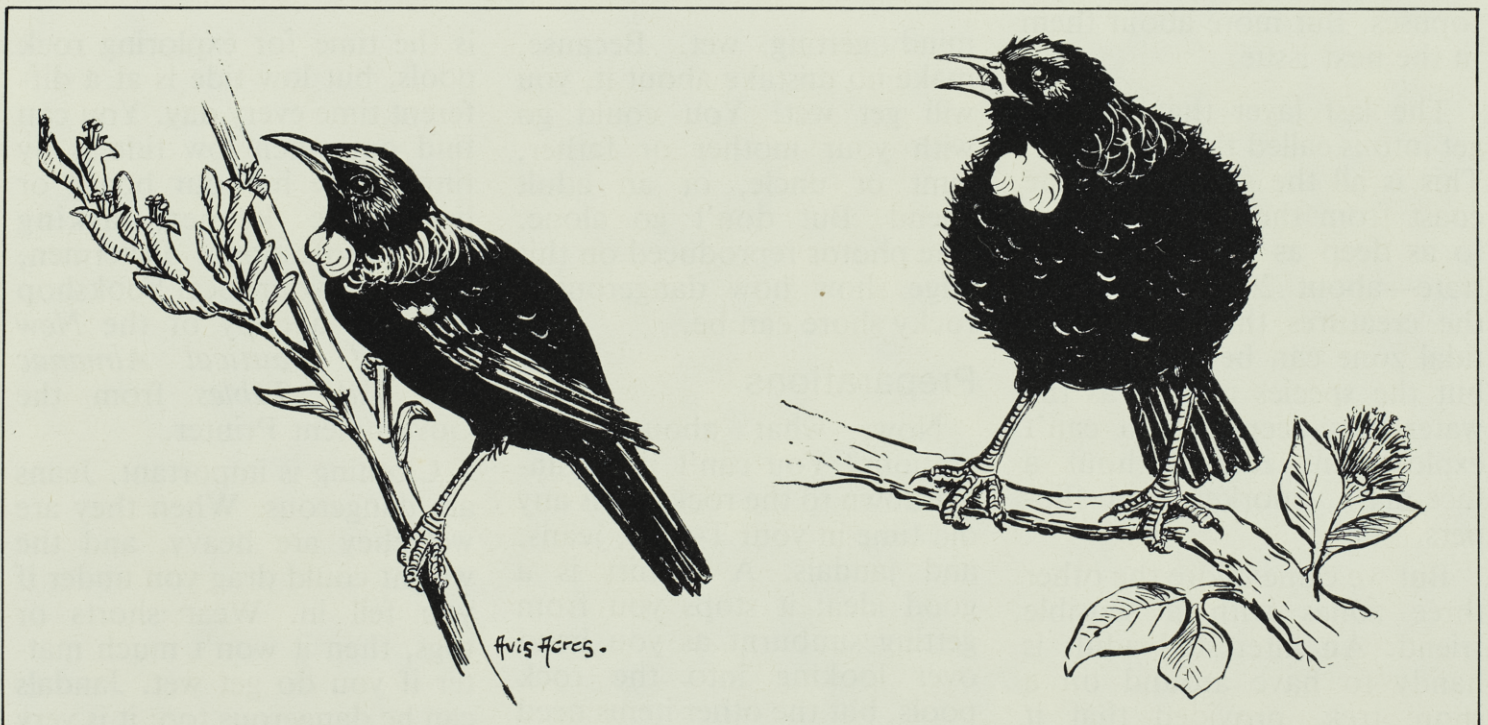
#### Glorious plumage

This was the first time I had seen a tui in bright sunlight. Before I had seen it feeding only against a background of foliage, when it appeared as a bluish black bird with a white tuft of throat feathers. Now I was able to see the glorious metallic greens and purple, blue, and bronze plumage.

Apart from earning the reputation of being our finest

songster, the tui is a remarkably handsome bird. And it knows it. It is constantly grooming itself and takes meticulous care of its appearance from its gleaming head, spotless neck ruffles, and lacy collar to the tip of its shining tail feathers.

Master Tui took sole possession of my flax bush and would not share his meals with any other birds. They were all chased away smartly. Unfortunately this is characteristic of the tui. I have often seen a tui installed in one large kowhai tree fiercely chasing off any other bird who dared



The tui does not share its meals with other birds, but chases them away.

The white throat feathers do not appear on the young birds for 6 weeks.