

ON AN UNUSUAL NESTING-SITE OF *SAULOPROCTA*
MELALEUCA.

By ALFRED J. NORTH, C.M.Z.S., Ornithologist.

A pair of Black and White Fantails (*Sauloprocta melaleuca*) has frequented the garden and the verandahs of my house at Roseville, for the past four years, usually breeding in the trees in the neighbourhood. This year Mrs. North remarked that this pair of birds was always under the wooden screen protecting the breakfast-room window and thought the birds were building there. On the 1st September, 1907, I saw both birds carrying nesting-material, and on making an examination found no less than four nests about one-third built, had been formed on the top of a smooth and painted wooden beam two inches and three-quarters wide under the screen. Three of these partially built nests were afterwards found on the ground, whether pulled off by Sparrows or Starlings, as I know of the destructive habits of these species, or blown off by the wind, I cannot tell. The birds completed the remaining structure, and when I examined it again on the 12th September it contained one egg; as the nest did not feel too firmly attached to the beam, I applied some thin liquid glue to its base. An egg was deposited on each of the two following days, and on the latter the female began to sit. Lowering down each day the upper sash of the window, the panels of which were filled with coloured glass completely obscuring the nest when closed, one could watch while seated at meals only a few feet away, or walking about the room, the birds sharing the duties of incubation. A revelation was the remarkably short time that each bird sat before calling to its mate to be relieved, and as I was just recovering from an accident met with in the field, I had ample opportunities for making observations. The average time each bird sat was a quarter of an hour; once it was as short as four minutes, and once its duration lasted twenty-five minutes. After calling, the sitting bird would keep a sharp look out for its mate, and directly