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## TRAPPED SWALLOW LEADS TO GRISLY DISCOVERY

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On 1/10/88, I was alerted to the sounds of a trapped bird, scratching and fluttering in its attempts to escape from inside a wall cavity. Access had been gained via an opening at the top of the wall, measuring 200 x 400mm and at 2300mm above ground level.

The wall cavity measured 80mm in width, 740mm in length and 600mm from the opening to the bottom of the cavity. It was obviously too narrow to allow for flight, and the vertical surfaces too smooth to climb. On removing the outer cladding of the wall, the trapped swallow, *Hirundo neoxena* flew away, leaving its freshly dead companion to add to the carpet of mummified corpses within.

The total count of dead birds was 23, and included 17 Dusky Robins (*Melanodryas vittata*) 5 Welcome Swallows (*Hirundo neoxena*) and a single Flame Robin (*Petroica phoenicea*). The specimens were all adult and had presumably accumulated over 14 years of the buildings existence, possibly becoming trapped whilst searching for nesting or roosting sites.

Specimens were lodged with the Queen Victoria Museum, Launceston Reg. No. 1988/2/83.

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