

For two or three days before leaving the nest the young birds climbed up to its edge. In fact it appeared as though there were not sufficient room for the four of them. Some two evenings before the young Gnatcatchers left the nest an Indigo Bunting, just learning to fly, alighted in the tree. The parent Gnatcatchers flew around the young Bunting, scolding, and nearly striking it, until it moved on to another tree.

May 26, late in the afternoon, the young birds left the nest. Just before dark all were seen on the fence or on the lowest twigs of *Crataegus* shrubs. The following morning three of the young Gnatcatchers were located in small trees or shrubs near the nest, none of them over five feet from the ground. They had already learned to fly a few feet. The fourth young bird was not located, but from the actions of the parents it appeared probable that it was in some of the bushes farther from the lane.

BERYL T. MOUNTS.

#### HOUSE WREN NESTING IN RURAL MAIL BOX

It is a well known fact that the House Wren will nest in any available nook or cavity that strikes its fancy regardless of what the object's use in the world happens to be. Hundreds of seemingly unsuitable places have been selected by this eccentric species as desirable home sites. I have heard of many of these unusual home selections and have seen a few, but on one occasion only have I known them to appropriate a rural mail box for this purpose.

A farmer with whom I am acquainted owned a mail box with a bad fitting cover. The receptacle was of the oblong box type, with a long hinged cover on the top, and when the cover was shut there was a large crack between it and the box.

This box chanced to catch the eyes of a pair of home-making House Wrens and presently the owner of the box found it partially filled with sticks. The sticks were a nuisance and were unceremoniously removed. But the wrens were not in the least daunted by this interference in their plans and continued to fill the box with more sticks as fast as they were removed, loudly berating any intruder in appropriate language, known only to the wren's spiteful vocabulary. After this state of affairs had prevailed for some time, with neither defensive nor offensive force giving way, the farmer's son built a nice little wren house and placed it on the mail box post. This cured the trouble immediately. The wrens' labors were apparently transferred to the new structure with no misgivings and, so far as I know, they return each year to nest in the little house, as they have now done for a number of years.

The bird house on the post attracted considerable attention from people passing by. One tourist, possessed of an abnormal "bump" of curiosity, drove in off the Grant highway, upon which he was passing, to inquire what the little box on the mail box post was for. He went away carrying his first bird protection lesson.

FRED J. PIERCE.

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