

House Wrens and Arsenate-dusted Currant Bushes.—For three successive years the House Wrens have abandoned their nests in the writer's yard when their young were partly grown. The dried remains of the nestlings were found when the nest boxes received a cleaning in the fall. At the time that the nests were abandoned the currant bushes had become infested with the small green currant worms and had been dusted with finely powdered arsenate of lead. It was shortly after the old birds were observed carrying the arsenate-covered worms to their nests that they disappeared and were not seen again. No other birds were seen feeding on these worms. As there is nothing conclusive in these notes, it would be interesting for those observers who note any sudden decrease in the House Wren population to also make a comparison with arsenate-dusted bushes, if any, to which the birds have access.

The writer has not observed any of the so-called bad habits of the House Wren, the only instance of nest robbing noted being when a Song Sparrow's egg was found on the sidewalk directly after a Cowbird had flown over the same spot. The Song Sparrow's nest was not found, but later a much harassed Song Sparrow was followed about the yard by a young Cowbird twice its size. (Banded with numbers 149536 and 262630).—E. C. HOFFMAN, *Lakewood, Ohio*.

A Marauding Blue Jay.—On the afternoon of May 11, 1925, while sitting out on the lawn of the Sioux City Boat Club, idly gazing up in the tree tops, I saw a Blue Jay harassing a Mourning Dove, eighteen or twenty feet up in a tree. He would pluck out a mouthful of feathers and then retreat for a moment. When the dove had settled down, back would come the jay to torment her again. On closer observation I discovered the nest, wonderfully well hidden for a Mourning Dove's nest. The jay kept up his attacks for several minutes and finally the dove left the nest and went to her mate sitting on a limb farther out. This was just the opportunity the jay was waiting for. He hopped to the nest, pecked a hole in the egg and carried it off. Excepting once or twice, the male dove did not come to the defense of his mate.—MRS. MARIE DALES, *Sioux City, Iowa*.

An Observation on the Behavior of the Chimney Swift Under Unusual Circumstances.—A large flock of the Chimney Swift (*Chaetura pelagica*), gathering for the fall migration, roosted in the brick stack of the Lincoln School in Atlantic, Iowa, from approximately September 12 to 22, 1925. The flock left the stack after the air warmed in the morning usually about 7:30 to 8:30 A. M., depending upon the temperature and sunshine, and began to re-assemble over the stack about 6:00 to 6:30 P. M., coming from all directions, by ones and twos and threes, until the air over the building was full of the twittering little birds. It would be difficult to estimate the exact number, but probably at least one thousand birds were present for several evenings. Owing to the fine fall weather, and also to repairs to the heating system, firing of the boilers was not begun until the afternoon of September 22. This was a cool, cloudy day, and the flock of swifts assembled earlier than usual. The procedure of going to roost was the formation of a great ellipse of birds, inclined at an angle of about 45 degrees, the lower edge being on a level with the top of the stack. A rapid rotation of the birds in the ellipse would go on for perhaps half an hour, when one or two would drop in, others following, and this would continue faster and faster, until the whole line of birds had passed into the stack. On the last evening, the whirl went on

through the smoke and gas arising from the stack, and, when the first few attempted to descend, they were of course immediately driven back by the upward current and the lack of air. Others tried, but none could descend, and soon agitation and uncertainty was plainly diffused through the whole flock. The twittering was loud and incessant, and the birds bunched together, passing over the stack so that their wings could be plainly heard striking together. The ellipse became a dense mass of struggling birds, but none could stay in the stack. The flock wheeled away from the building, only to return in the gathering twilight, uncertain where to go. Finally, a solitary bird returned from the west, with loud calls, and a considerable portion of the flock joined it, and passed westward out of sight. The remaining birds desperately circled the stack for some minutes longer, but soon broke up and also disappeared, when it was almost dark. The next evening a few again appeared over the stack, but could not enter for the smoke, and after that the great flock was seen no more.—T. H. WHITNEY, *Atlantic, Iowa.*

The Prothonotary Warbler at North Bristol, Trumbull County, Ohio.—On May 12, 1925, a pair of the Prothonotary Warbler (*Protonotaria citrea*) began a four days' visit about our yard, this being the first appearance of the species in this locality. Our yard is the upper slope on Norton's ravine—an open, sunny, swampy ravine through which flows a brook fed by springs. The male warbler seemed very much taken with this environment, and, singing madly, he explored over and over again every nook and corner of the place, even flying onto the screen door and also examining the porch lighting fixture. He finally singled out a tin can hanging against the house near the back door, and began, on the second day to carry into it small quantities of dead leaves and rootlets, some of which he picked up on the lawn within ten feet of my chair. At times he stood on the can and sang vigorously, then flew into the can and sang again.

Early on the morning of the second day, the male bird dashed down to the brook for a hasty bath. At this moment the female warbler made her first appearance. Interrupting her mate's toilet, she led him away in a merry chase. The female was very shy about the house, appearing only as an occasional gleaner among the apple blossoms, and keeping well up in the tops of the trees. She showed no such enthusiasm for her surroundings as did her mate, and if she approached his tin can I failed to see her.

The male warbler was extremely tame at first, paying almost no attention to us as we trailed him about the place, only stopping occasionally to give us a sharp scrutinizing look, much after the manner of the Maryland Yellowthroat. On the third day, he wandered a block away to the center of the village, and was identified by Hilda Robinson. He still returned at intervals to his tin can and carried in a little more material, but it was easy to see that his ardor had cooled. My last sight of the pair was towards the evening of the fourth day, when both of the warblers were observed on the ground near the back door confronted by a House Wren. Upon my approach they made their final departure.

The wrens had resented the presence of the warblers and had attempted to chase the male on several occasions, but the chief clerk held his ground. However, some of the nesting material disappeared from the can, and after the departure of the warblers I saw the wren enter the can and throw out some of the material. Can it be that the loss of such interesting tenants was due to the infringements of the wren?—MARCIA B. CLAY, *North Bristol, Ohio.*