

HOUSES FOR SONGS
HOME OWNERS, ATTENTION!

Apr 17-1933 - 371 J. M. G.
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by

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There are a lot of wild birds, including the Eagle, that never will know anything about the Home Owners Loan Corporation at Washington. When spring comes, they build their homes, use them during the summer, get the children out on their own, then fly south to pass the winter where the days are sunny and worms grow fat.

(Scenes - Bird nest and eggs in tree. Eggs have hatched, mother feeding young birds in nest.)

Among the "so called" lower animals, birds are the only real home builders, and they never go in debt. The Flycatcher chooses a shady nook in some bush among the ferns. The nest is built for family needs. When the three children leave home, the parents don't have to worry the rest of their days about a mortgage and a lot of spare rooms.

(Scenes - Flycatcher on the edge of nest feeding young, then hovers young. The three flycatchers on limb after breaking home ties.)

A gull takes squatter's rights on a sandy beach. He is surrounded by a bunch of good-natured neighbors and has a front door overlooking the lake where the fishing is good. He has no coal bill, is free from economic conditions and can "Ha! Ha!" out loud because he has no state or federal income tax.

(Scenes - Gulls in the water. Small nesting colony of gulls. Gull goes on nest, beak open as if laughing.)

The Flicker or woodpecker has a beak like a pick-axe to drill himself a home in some dead tree trunk. When spring comes, his fancy turns to love. But the lady flicker is like most birds of the feminine gender, just plainly dressed. She doesn't have to be beautiful or even different to attract two suitors and keep them guessing.

(Scenes - Flicker or woodpecker at nest hole. Flicker inside nest hole. Two male flickers courting.)

But the songsters in your back yard have their troubles. It is not high rent that drives the bluebird out. One year he takes a hole in an old apple tree; the next some tree surgeon has filled it with cement.

(Scenes - Bluebird at natural nest hole in apple tree, goes in.)

Other songsters that live in our gardens and orchards.

are driven out when we cut the trees. But here is where the children come in and build modern bird houses and rent them for songs.

(Scenes- Two children looking at a number of bird houses ready to put up in the woods.)

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Negatives listed above forwarded today. 118 fh

Following data to go with 371 feet of negative sent April 17, 1933.

WRENS

The simplest type of a bird house brings the best tenants. The house wren wants a single-room apartment. That's generally too large, for the wrens always have difficulty moving in, insisting on using long timbers and filling the house cram full of sticks. There is just a tiny space left for nest and eggs.

Mr. Wren pays promptly, singing continually on the front porch or in the trees about the garden. Both pay by policing the premises and bringing in an untold number of worm and insect culprits that chew up the vegetables and plants.

Jenny Wren lighting on the doorstep sometimes got suspicious of the noise of the camera and didn't want to go in.

(Scenes- Bird house. Wren taking long sticks into house to build nest. Roof of house removed showing nest and eggs. Wren singing on doorstep of house.)

WHITE-BREASTED SWALLOWS

The white-breasted or tree swallows return at the beginning of spring, flashing in and out, lighting on telephone wires. They are short on songs but long on house flies and mosquitoes. A house on a pole or even at the door strikes their fancy because they are companionable birds. When the nestlings are grown and ready to break home ties, that's the time to really get acquainted. Any boy or girl can really gain the friendship of the swallows if they have a little patience. They don't have to putt salt on their tails.

(Scenes- Swallow on wire. Bird house outside door. Children and swallows, etc.)

CHICKADEES

If we have a free lunch counter during the winter and put out nuts, seed and sawt for the birds, the little

chickadee or tit-mouse stays in snow time destroying insect eggs tucked away in crevices of limbs and tree trunks,- regular patrolman service.

Very soon the chickadee family is increased by seven, a set of triplets and two pairs of twins. The mother and father serve the meals of grubs and worms, one meal a day, but that lasts from daylight till dark. All is grist that goes to the chickadee mill. Before long there are nine chickadees instead of two, eating their own weight in insects every day.

(Scenes- Chickadee on limb. Bird house. Seven young chickadees fed by parents, etc.)

ENGLISH SPARROWS

Many years ago someone made the bad mistake of transporting English or European sparrows to America. They stick around, especially in the cities, all winter and move into the first bird house before our native songsters arrive from the South. They are called English, perhaps because they are slow in getting the point. It takes something more than an ordinary notice to move a sparrow out once he has possession. He is persistent. If you throw him out bag and baggage one day, he moves back the next. You can't mistake the identity of a male Englisher because of his black cravat and white collar points. He wears a gray cap and red-brown on the back of his neck. The female has no bright colors. Her coat is plain brown.

(Scenes- Bird house with "For Rent" sign. Sparrows on roof. Another sign, "No English Sparrows Wanted." Sparrows move in anyway.)

NUTHATCHES

Nuthatches sometimes select a modern bungalow, use the roof for a doorstep, and go into the house on their ears. The female would make a good steeple-jack. Equipped with feet like a woodpecker, she can walk up or down the trunk of a tree, or stick onto the under side of limbs searching the bark for insects and their eggs.

Raising the roof of the house, you see five young nuthatches crouched in the corner.

Cut-worms are the destroyers of corn and other kinds of vegetables. To a nuthatch, life is just one blamed cut-worm after another. Both mother and father kill enough cut-worms in a day to pay for a month's rent.

A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush, especially if it is a live bird.

(Scenes-

Home owners' attention! It's better to build houses for songsters about the garden and rent them for songs than to have the bugs get all your flowers, fruit and vegetables.

(Scenes- Bird Bungalow- nuthatch comes in from roof. Roof of house removed- five young nuthatches showing. Roof replaced. Old birds bring in worms. Young nuthatches in hand, etc.)

October 10, 1933