

BIRD HOUSES

Arthur Ward, Swift Current



Often we see bird houses in gardens constructed with the idea of certain birds in mind—some with several holes, hoping that the Purple Martins will become interested—some, intended for the Wren have the entrance much too large, and so are taken advantage of by the House Sparrow.

It is well to have a lid for inspection purposes. One of these boxes in the garden has a nailed-down lid and was not occupied last year. On prying up the lid a mummified Wren was discovered, so this has been provided with a hinged lid. Seven-eighths of an inch will keep out the sparrows.

With the intention of enticing a robin, a box sufficiently large to hold the nest was built with the front end left out. This was placed in a tree last year so that the household duties could be observed from the window. The box was occupied by a robin and the foundation of the nest was laid on the 19th of April. The male called, perhaps to give its approval. Otherwise it did not aid in any way with the construction of the nest, except momentarily to see how the work was progressing. It was completed in four days, then the robin was not seen near for the next four days. As the inside of the nest had not been plastered as usual with mud, it was concluded that that would be the next operation. However, this procedure was discarded and the first egg was laid at 11 a.m., May 2nd. Rain and snow with low temperatures prevailed from then on. The female sat on the eggs twenty-one days after the fourth egg was laid. The male turned up to see what was going on and they decided to abandon the nest. Examination showed that the eggs had been frozen. Now we are waiting for another tenant.

