



were accustomed to do. He began to enjoy the freedom and a bath in the warm sunshine. It was amusing to hear him try to imitate the call of his elders; he seemed to think he was plenty old and large enough to leave the narrow confines of his home and start out in the world for himself.

The other young birds, one by one, tamed with considerable patience, and each in his turn posed for a picture. Finally, all were placed on the stump together to get a group picture, but this was a big undertaking. One little fellow was exceedingly ambitious and insisted on climbing to the top of everything he touched; another was anxious to try the strength of his wings, and still another was satisfied, in trying to peck a hole in the top of the camera. It took a long time to get them quieted. One little fellow, that seemed to be the eldest, was very dominating and he would peck and fight with the others, when they came too close, just as if he owned the whole tree.

Good Negatives Secured.
The light began to fall at the critical time, and the exposures had to be longer. Many plates were spoiled, in trying to get a good picture, but patience was finally rewarded and a couple of good negatives of the bird group were secured. This little household clearly illustrated that the fittest survive among the birds. Two of the family were large and strong and generally secured the lion's share of the food; the other two took what they could get. The fifth bird was more unfortunate. He was younger and weaker than the rest, and had succumbed in the struggle, and had died in the nest. Two of the seven eggs that had been laid failed to hatch.

It was a task to get the birds back into the crowded nest, after enjoying their freedom. The home must have seemed like a prison house, for after the window was closed, they started to climb out the front door, but were restrained by the scolding of the parents.

After a few days we visited the place again and found the old home deserted. But in different parts of the grove we heard youthful calls and we watched the old birds teaching the many lessons of food-seeking and self-protection that makes it possible for birds to thrive in their world of many enemies.

Rufous Humming-Birds.
Some of the pleasantest and most interesting work of the bird photographer is gathering a series of humming-bird pictures. This little creature that seems more "like a gem or a blossom on a pinion," than a mere bird, builds where it can be photographed to good advantage, its nests being generally in bushes, not far from the ground. The bird is quite common about Portland and in the surrounding woods and ravines. Many of them build their homes in the yards about town, often selecting a convenient spot in a bush or vine about some piazza. Here, as it comes and goes in the sunlight, it seems more like the flash of a diamond than anything else.

Fond of the company of human beings, the little hummer can be made very tame by one who seeks bird friends. The male bird of this neighborhood has a cinnamon red body, with a fiery red gorget, while its mate is plainer-colored. A favorite nesting site with them is on the side of a bank, where a little bush overhangs. I have found them frequently in railroad cuts, a few feet from the track of a passing train or electric car. They pay no attention to the trains, for they soon learn that, with all the noise, there is no accompanying harm.

Humming-Bird Nests.
One nest that was photographed was built in a wild blackberry bush, under a railroad trestle. This nest, on the outside, was covered with green lichens, so as to conceal it and make it look like the surrounding bushes; the interior had a soft lining of cotton. Even this white lining and the two little white eggs were hardly noticeable among the clusters of white blossoms that covered the vine. Nests of this kind are not often found, except by the careful observer, but, by watching the bird, it will often lead you to

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We all love the beautiful. We are all enticed by Nature. Some drink at deeper fountains than others. To some people Springtime means only a change of weather—a spell of cold and rain giving way to a season of sunshine and warmth. To others, it is a life-renewing season—a time to molt the old winter garb and let our thoughts and ideas feather out into broader vision. We grow tired of the city and its people, and the soul longs for the green fields and shady hills. The boyish ardor for a wild and free life turns as the birds arrive from the Sunny South and pour out their praises of joy at sight of their old haunts. We drink the inspiration with deeper enthusiasm each returning Springtime. The ennobling influences of Nature form a fountain of perpetual youth welling up in our souls.

What a source of unending pleasure—the trees, the flowers, the brooks, the hills! But they do not breathe; they cannot talk to us. Nothing in Nature breathes to the soul like the wild bird's song, nothing touches our sense of beauty like the delicate plumage, or the graceful and easy flight of a feathered friend.

The Camera's Use Abroad.
Nature study has received a great impetus within the last few years through the use of the camera in the field. Employed in this way, it affords not only a pleasing pastime, but encourages the closest study, and is of considerable scientific value. But of the thousands who use the camera comparatively few employ it for any valuable purpose. Much time is spent and effort made by the amateur photographer on what has been termed "romantic photography"—in the taking of scenes and views of only momentary interest. This serves as an amusement, but it cannot compare in in-

terest with the gathering of a series of pictures of Nature's creatures in their native haunts. The fascination of getting a picture of a bird in its wild state is something that not many people have experienced; to be successful, it requires a knowledge of birds and a close study of their actions, ways and habits.

The successful bird-photographer must, of course, possess a good camera, with a first-class, rapid, rectilinear lens, and a proper knowledge of its use. Ropes, climbing-irons, etc., are also necessary, for working in the trees or among the cliffs. A ladder, hatchet and nails often save considerable time in the woods. A small green tent, or some method of hiding, is essential in getting the picture of a shy bird.

Natural Requisites.
The greatest natural requisites are a big store of patience and perseverance, a good eye and a level head. Without great patience, little can be accomplished. Some birds are friendly and unsuspicious, but many are shy and wild and can only be photographed by using some skillful device for hiding and, perhaps, by waiting a long time for the coveted opportunity. Many birds nest in the wildest places—high up in the trees, among the cliffs of the mountains, or on the rugged rocks off the seashore—but there are few nests that cannot be photographed, if the photographer has the proper requisites, a true love for the study and a desire for natural history picture-making.

The difficulties of getting a good bird picture are exceedingly numerous, but the ability to overcome the many obstacles and secure a true representation of the bird in its wild state places a true value upon the results and gives the subject its fascination. Nature has provided her creatures with wonderful protection as to coloring, and the camera

is utterly incapable of showing some birds to any advantage, unless a suitable background can be secured. Besides the difficulty of background, there is always an equal one of getting the proper light at the proper time. In a time exposure, the subject often makes some slight move at the critical moment and spoils the plate.

Some Guesswork.
In order to catch a bird in a good position, one often does not have a chance of focusing, but has to do considerable guesswork. Sometimes the camera is focused on the place where the bird is expected to return, as, for example, a perching place or feeding ground; or, if it is during the nesting season, the nest is then the best place to get a focus and wait for the bird's return. In cases where the bird is shy, a picture may sometimes be secured by setting the camera and covering it all except the lens with green branches, and then using a long hose and bulb attachment.

It is early June, and these are the rarest of all days. Let's take a ramble through the field or woodland, or better still, down through the grove by the old pond. Everything has awakened to new life. We turn our condensing glass upon the bird world and recognize all the old friends of former years.

There is the same old woodpecker—the red-shafted flicker—on the side of the dead stump. He gradually climbs to the top, peeping around at us from the opposite side of the tree, and his loud call of "cheer-up! cheer-up!" echoes through the trees and over the pond and seems to awaken everything into joyous response. All through the winter's season of snow and rain he remained here, for he is a loyal Oregonian, and refuses to migrate with the other birds. But his food supply ran low during the cold weather, and we now see him digging his daily supper

level with the eggs themselves, a neat saw, giving a good view of the interior. The dead tree limbs were not strong, nor were they in a position to permit of the camera being fastened or focused. A small board, about four feet long, was therefore secured, and to the end of this, the camera was firmly fastened. The focus was then made with a mirror reflecting from the ground glass. A mirror often comes in handy for focusing in the treetops, or for reflecting the light into a dark nest.

Difficult Photography.
It was all that two of us could do to retain our position in the tree top where the flickers had their nest and hold the camera out at the proper distance, on a horizontal line, a little above the nest. The exposure was necessarily very short, and several plates were used, each in slightly differing positions, so as to get a good view of the eggs. Fitting back the artificial window and fastening it securely, the mother soon had the pleasure of returning to her eggs, apparently un-mindful of the change the home had undergone.

After one or two more visits to the scene of operations, we could tell that the stump contained a thriving family, by the store of worms that the old birds continually carried to the nest. By knocking on the stump and placing the ear close, you could hear the buzzing noise that the youngsters made. It did not take many days of feeding for the little fellows to develop and feather out. They had one meal a day, and that lasted from dawn till dark; in the meantime, they slept and grew. It was a busy season for the old birds.

The little ones were soon able to climb up the side of their wooden home and

meet the parents at the door. Then, as soon as the old birds alighted in the tree, there was a scramble for the entrance, and the door was filled with gaping mouths that never seemed to get enough. The moment the old birds departed from the tree, was the sign for the young birds to crouch back into the bottom of the nest where they would never say a word until the parents appeared again. The lesson of crouching close and remaining quiet is the first lesson that is taught young birds; it is an important one, for many enemies are always near at hand.

The time was ripe now for another picture of the household, so we again ascended the tree. When we reached the nest, we were greeted by that peculiar buzzing noise that young woodpeckers always make. It sounds like the humming of a swarm of bees, and is one of the numerous devices of bird protection.

A Family Party.
Removing the window from the little log cabin, what a scene presented itself! There was a whole family of full-grown birds. We took out one of the little fellows, but he did not like the idea of leaving the nest at first. Young birds are instinctively afraid of man, but, with a little care and patience, they can be tamed very readily.