

then get in the door can be closed and the entrapped occupants destroyed. It is said that sparrows so caught can be released again after a period of confinement and that the house is a trap to them thereafter, and their fear of it will be communicated to their companions. Though this may be true, for it is not out of keeping with the intelligence of our rowdy sparrows, who at times show an almost uncanny ability to take care of themselves, I will not personally vouch for it. A dead sparrow makes no nests, of that I am assured and I proceed accordingly. Where it can be used, a .22 rifle with shot cartridges is the most satisfactory sparrow eradicator. Its range is short and its fine shot harmless at very limited distances. In the hands of a man of ordinary intelligence it is to be highly recommended. Sparrows, however, soon grow very wary, precipitately retreating at sight of a man with a gun in the distance, only to return to hurl derision, from the bird house peak or entrance, at their baffled enemy. In such a case a set gun discharged from ambush is very effective. A couple of stakes driven into the ground within range of the perch usually occupied, nails for barrel and trigger-guard from which to hang the gun aimed at the spot, and a long string to the trigger passing through screweyes to an ambush, form an engine of destruction that will effectively discourage the wariest and most persistent of sparrows. It is of proved effectiveness against that last pair that continue to baffle more open methods.

If fortune smiles Martins may come the first spring, but if she is fickle it may not be until the second or even the third season. It was the third season before the writer got Martins in his house and then only a single pair came. What appeared to be a lonely female arrived first. The place seemed to appeal to her and she tried to induce friends to come with her. She would sit on the gable end and call vainly to them. Then, somehow, she succeeded in bringing a committee of investigation back with her. They swarmed all over the house, into all rooms, talking and criticizing and making comparisons. I gathered that one did not like the plumbing, some objected to the decorations, and others to the view, in fact none seemed satisfied enough to move in and after emphatic expressions of opinion all left; the single would-be tenant loudly protesting and vociferously calling them back. When she saw that they were actually deserting her off she flew after them and eventually brought them back for a fruitless reconsideration. Later she was joined by a mate—a juvenile or last year's male similar to herself in plumage—and they settled down to home-making by themselves. Through the brooding season friends from other colonies came and visited and it

was no uncommon sight to see ten or a dozen Martins taking an active and personal interest in the growing family, and when the young came out sometimes as many as twenty birds circled about the house. The next spring five or six pairs were in possession and the colony's welfare was established and has increased until, last summer, about twelve compartments were occupied.

As a rule, except where neighbouring colonies are broken up and made homeless, newly erected houses are filled by the overflow from neighbouring ones. Martins are conservative and probably as long as they can find satisfactory quarters in their ancestral mansion are loath to move to strange surroundings. The beginning of new colonies, therefore, depends upon the number of house-hunting birds in the neighbourhood.

#### SINGLE ROOM HOUSES.

In the following table the birds that can usually be induced to occupy nesting boxes are listed and a schedule is given of their specific requirements. Various ideas as to the forms that may be adopted to fulfil these requirements can be obtained from the accompanying plates.

	Floor size inches	Depth inside inches	Entrance from floor inches	Diameter of entrance inches	House from ground feet
Purple Martin ..	6x6	6	1-1½	1¾	14-20
House Wren ...	4x4	6-8	1-6	¾	6-10
Tree Swallow ..	5x5	6	1-6	1½	10-15
Blue Bird .....	5x5	8	6	1½	5-10
Crested Flycatcher	6x6	8-10	6	2	8-20
Chickadee .....	4x4	8-10	8	1½	6-15
Flicker .....	7x7	16-18	16	2½	6-20
Screech Owl....	8x8	12-15	12	3	10-30
Sparrow Hawk..	8x8	12-15	12	3	10-30

#### HOUSE WREN.

The bird most easily attracted to a bird house is the House Wren. Its tastes are so catholic as to raise the suspicion that it has no taste at all, or that it is so busy with other people's business that it is unmindful of its own. Anything that has an entrance and is hollow, that it considers safe from cats, and that can be filled with sticks, is taken on occasion—an old boot nailed up, a tin can, or even the pocket in an old coat have been repeatedly used. It is the only bird house that can be easily guarded from sparrows, for a small entrance ¾-inch in diameter will serve the wren and keep pests out.

The House Wren is a busy mite and the wonder is that so small a body can contain such an amount of nervous energy. It may contain but it cannot hold it long, for every few moments it seems to