

pattern was accompanied by a chattering noise. This behavior was displayed from their very first egg.

Perhaps my demeanor as a monitor had a calming effect on the Tree Swallows. The question remains, what caused the extreme differences in their reactions to me? These differences might be attributed to the age of the Tree Swallow pairs, their past experiences

with humans, the ability of some to sense my intentions, or individual bird personality traits. I can't answer that question but it certainly is an interesting area for further scientific research.

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Making Amends to a Carolina Wren

by Audrey Wiseman

We live out of town in a heavily wooded area where the bird song you hear most incessantly, any season, is the Carolina Wren (*Thryothorus ludovicianus*). He and she are on quite familiar terms with us, although I may be on their black list as of present. The story will unfold.

Suspended from the ceiling of our garage is our canoe, upside down, in a rope sling affair. It seems the upside down seats afford the ultimate in a building site to a wren's way of thinking, being protected from the elements and snakes and cats and dogs. The only hitch is when an unthinking householder forgets and closes the garage door.

We have had a succession of nests built there, as well as in funnels, on shelves in boxes, and in other places.

The householder's duty is to keep all dogs and cats inside when the young wrens fledge. The father or mother perches outside the garage on the tallest walking stick in the milk can and calls the babies to come out. This can sometimes take two days.

The evening of 4 September 1998 after dinner as my husband and I were reading the newspaper on the back deck we were honored to have the mother Carolina Wren join us. And with her were four babies. They lit along the edge of the deck and were soon hopping everywhere. The mother was very nervous and concerned, and we sat very still as the young hopped around our feet and on the pots of

flowering plants. As they grew bolder, she grew shriller. They paid her no attention.

Then, I felt an object on my head. "Do I have a baby Carolina Wren on my head?" I asked my husband. "You certainly do!" he answered. It remained there for probably 16 seconds. I felt very special, but luckily, not anointed.

And why should I be on their black list now, you may ask? On a recent Friday I went biking. When I came home I left my bike helmet upside down on the ladder that hangs horizontally in our garage and serves as a catch-all shelf. Wednesday when I again wanted to bike I reached for my helmet and found a completely finished Carolina Wren's nest in it! I carefully put it in a shovel, and took the helmet.

That evening from the back deck I observed a huddled bird on a dead tree branch not uttering a sound. It was the Carolina Wren in a completely uncharacteristic pose, quiet, dispirited. My heart sank. I had wrecked its plan. He had worked assiduously for three or four days, had probably wooed a mate, and had his plans all in place, and I had completely wrecked them with the removal of his nest from my helmet.

Now I am trying to find ways to make amends to a Carolina Wren.

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