

Bird Notes.

June, 1922.

By Alfred Crompton.

Wood Swallows (*Artamus sordidus*) have been clustering round the stem of a Pine tree in Statenborough Street, Upper Kensington, since June 3rd, the date on which they were first noticed this season. Most evenings the stem was covered for an estimated length of about 10 feet, and at a rough guess I reckon that at least 1,000 birds assembled every evening until the end of last week, when the number seems to have dwindled. On cold stormy days they began to cluster about 3.30 p.m., but on bright warmer days not until 5 p.m. On the latter days the birds began to arrive in the neighbouring trees about 3 p.m., and continued to do so until sundown.

The early birds settled on the tree stem some 30 odd feet from the ground, and the later arrivals attached themselves to the tree touching and above those already clustered.

On leaving the roost on fine mornings the top half of the tier usually left some 10 to 15 minutes before the lower half, and apparently swept right away to the feeding grounds in a south-westerly direction. The lower half went north-easterly. The tree was usually cleared a few minutes after 7 a.m., and by 7.30 a.m. none of the species could be seen.

Unfortunately I am not at home during the daytime, but I understand that none of the birds was seen about during the morning or early afternoon.

On Friday the 23rd June the birds were very restive, leaving the tree three or four times after they had first clustered. This was the first time they were noticed to do this.

I was not at home on the following Saturday or Sunday, but on Monday there seemed to be fewer birds than had been observed previously, and my family report there were fewer still on Wednesday, 28th, and Thursday, 29th, although the weather was so rough.

The birds were observed to cluster in the same tree for a few nights in 1919 and 1920, but were not noticed to do so in 1921.