

## The Nesting of the Welcome Swallow

(*Hirundo neoxena*).

Written by Valerie Woodroffe, of "Valwood," Delamere, Fleurieu Peninsula, S.A. (aged 9½ years), 13th November, 1937.

Mr. Symon asked me to write you a few lines to tell you about some little Swallows that built their nest in our verandah. They started building their little nest on the 29th of August. They chose a spot on a narrow ledge about six inches from the iron roof. They brought wet mud and dry grass to build it, and patted it into shape with their tiny beaks. This went on for about a fortnight, and on the 12th of September I noticed they had started to line it. How busy the little birds were for the next two weeks, flying in with tiny feathers to make it soft and cosy for their little babies, and how very thrilled I was to find their first egg on the 27th of September. The next day another little cream-coloured egg, with brown spots on it, was laid. The following day the third egg was laid, and on the 30th the last egg was there. The mother bird then sat on the eggs, and a fortnight later imagine my joy when on the 16th of October I saw a little baby swallow. The next day two more little swallows were born. On the 18th the last little one was hatched but died (on the 19th and removed by the birds some time during the next day). How happy the mother and father bird were feeding them every day. Soon their little feathers began to grow, and it wasn't long before they were out of their nest flying around the verandah. It was on the 3rd of November they left their nest, and it was on the fifth that they ventured outside for the first time. They still fly away all day, but come home to sleep at night. They are bluish-black, with touches of grey and brown, and live on moths, flies, and other insects.

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