

SPRING

Helen Brewer

In the late spring and early summer when the birds began their nesting and laying eggs, as children we often listened to the red-headed woodpecker drilling a nest hole in the telephone post near our front yard, and saw the tiny humming birds on the honeysuckle vines along the fence at the edge of our property. There we watched in fascination their fast moving wings, almost invisible, as they darted from the side street by our home, though at the time it was no more than a lane. Passing the vegetable garden, we would come to a fencepost about halfway between the house and a ravine bordering the pasture. Year after year, a blue bird laid three or four light blue eggs in the hollow square post, and fortunately, for us it had a hole on the side so that we could see the nest. We never got too close nor touched anything, but stood very still, sometimes catching a glimpse of blue against the shadows when the mother bird was not there. Finally, the eggs hatched. On rare occasions we watched her feed the nestlings and to us their little beaks and open mouths seemed larger than their bodies. These visits continued until her brood was old enough to fly away. Sometimes we made the trip in our bare feet, kicking the dust as we walked along; other times we could feel earth oozing between our toes. On the way back we picked the lacy wild flowers along the fence, and holding tightly to the short stems we took the pretty bouquet to our mother.