

THE MOCKING-BIRD AT MOORES HILL, IND.

BY A. J. BIGNEY.

The purpose of this brief article is to show how this bird acts on entering a new community, and to give evidence of its enlarging field of activity.

In Mr. Butler's catalogue of the Birds of Indiana¹ in 1897, they were reported in twelve counties in small numbers. In recent years they are migrating in large numbers into the counties of southern Indiana. In 1905, about April 1st, the first mocking-bird was seen in the outskirts of Moores Hill. It was rather shy, but made its whereabouts known by its incessant singing, not only in the daytime, but also during most of the night. Such singing had never been heard by our citizens. It continued this behavior for about ten days, then left the community. The next season a pair returned to the same place and the air was again filled with their music. Their usual imitation of the notes of other birds was a marked characteristic. This season they nested in the honeysuckle vine alongside a neighbor's house. They remained until late in the fall and then migrated southward. During this season one other pair was seen about two miles from town.

The following season several pairs were seen in and about town. The last two seasons the numbers have gradually increased, so that now they constitute one of our regular bird inhabitants.

The question naturally comes up, why have they begun their rapid advance into the north during the past few years? I can not answer this question. I have heard that a kind of ant is troubling them in their nesting and so they migrate to get rid of them. If any positive information can be given, I should be glad to know of it.

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¹ Amos W. Butler. The Birds of Indiana. Twenty-second Annual Report of the Department of Geology and Natural Resources of Indiana, 1897.