



No Trespassing!

► SMALL birds singing lustily in the springtime are not caroling hymns of praise, as a former generation of rather sentimental poets once declared. Neither are they sweetly wooing their mates, as other bards liked to imagine. At the outset, at least, their mates-to-be simply aren't there. In the spring migrations of most species, males come first, and females follow in a later wave.

In the meantime, the males have staked out their respective claims on hunting areas, that will later yield caterpillars, or insects, or whatever it is that the hungry brood will need. They proclaim title by singing as loudly as they can, and if a claim-jumper appears, assail him with fierce little wing-buffetings and pecks. Thus small birds' singing, though more melodious, serves pretty much the same purpose as the crowing of roosters or the gobbling of tom-turkeys.

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There may be three generations of gnats during a summer, with each generation having three or four broods.

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THE WOUNDED GET BACK—Albert Q. Maisel—*Harcourt, Brace*, 230 p., \$2.50.

VOLCANOLOGY

Eruption of Vesuvius Has Taken 26 Lives

See Front Cover

► CONTRIBUTING its bit to the destruction of lives and property in Italy, Mt. Vesuvius has been belching forth molten lava that destroys everything in its path as it flows down the sides of the ancient volcano.

The official U. S. Navy photograph on the cover of this *SCIENCE NEWS LETTER* shows the volcano with its billowing clouds of black smoke.

At the latest count the death toll from the eruption totalled 26. Although residents of the Vesuvius area probably would be reluctant to believe it, the current eruption is not a very big one, from the long-range geological point of view. (See *SNL*, April 1)

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