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SHORT NOTE

FEMALE BLACKBIRD DIVERTED FROM TASK

In September 1978, we found the old nest of a Song Thrush (*Turdus philomelos*) blown on to the path. We put it on top of a fence and placed in it two old eggs, one each of House Sparrow (*Passer domesticus*) and Starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*). A short time later a female Blackbird (*T. merula*) deserted her mate, with whom she had been building a nest in a nearby shrub, to sit firmly on the foreign nest and eggs. The male Blackbird uttered continuous cries of distress while fluttering, strutting and displaying along the fence between the shrub and his mate. After about 20 minutes, he was successful in persuading his mate to rejoin him in nest-building. The offending nest and eggs were removed to the rubbish bin.

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