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HOUSE SPARROWS *PASSER DOMESTICUS* BREEDING IN NESTS OF THE RED-RUMPED SWALLOW *HIRUNDO DAURICA*

The House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*, a member of the family Passeridae, has a worldwide distribution and colonized all continents and many oceanic Islands (Cramp *et al.* 1985). However, a large decrease in House Sparrow populations is reported from a variety of countries worldwide (Crick *et al.* 2002, Prowse 2002, Summers-Smith 2003). The species receives more attention in urban areas and can play a vital role in conservation of natural ecosystems (Yahaghi *et al.* 2011). The nest is build mainly in human settlements, in wall holes, roof spaces, or other undisturbed locations in houses, especially windows. In this note we report the first known case of nests of the Red-rumped Swallow *Hirundo daurica* used for breeding by House Sparrows in southern India.

On 25 December 2015, five occupied nests of Red-rumped Swallows were found in an unused motor shed in the Sigur plateau, Tamil Nadu, Southern India. Three months later, on 18 March 2016, two of the nests were used by House Sparrows (ssp. *indicus*) while the three remaining had fallen down. Of the two nests occupied by Sparrows, one had three nestlings and the female was frequently feeding.

Newton (1998) assumes that nest occupation by another species usually arises when suitable nesting sites are limited and the two species involved have similar ecological requirements. Furthermore, breeding success of a pair occupying another species' nest can be lowered by having to move to another site or to build another nest, probably in a less favorable habitat (Newton 1998). However, advantages may include that the nest another species is more durable and weather resistant, as shown for the Tree sparrow *Passer montanus* (Pinowski *et al.* 2006), and has a lower risk of predation.

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