

In the spring phoebes always nest under the eaves of our house.

One day in mid April our garden, mostly silent all winter, is filled with the repeated call of *Fee-Bee! Fee-Bee! Fee-Bee!*

They use the same nesting site.

And when they have laid and hatched their eggs (this is well into spring by now), they feed on the insects in the garden, bringing flies and caterpillars and bees to their nestlings.

All day long the phoebes dart through the air catching insects or swoop on caterpillars on leaves, carrying them back for their hungry growing young.



Some years when we have a milk snake in the garden, we have to watch for it, because it climbs the wall to get the baby birds in the nest. A leaf rake usually brings it down with a wriggling thud to the ground.

Every year we try to catch the moment the nestlings leave.

And every year we see them standing at the edge of the nest ready to go.

And every year we miss the moment of departure.

One day, a noisy little nest of young birds...the next an empty quiet nest.

Each year a phoebe couple raises its young and, with luck, sends them out into the world to flourish.

Each year, from below, sometimes with the leaf rake to hand, we stand or sit watching the phoebes creating new life.

Thanks be to God.

Lorne Ellaschuk