

Journal, 1910.



Cambridge, Mass.

1910.
Jan 1

About eight o'clock this morning I was looking out over our garden through one of the windows at the rear of the house when an English Sparrow came in sight, closely pursued by a Northern Shrike. The two birds were some a yard apart when they reached the lilacs which were bent and broken down beneath heavy masses of snow that fell nearly a week ago. Under them the hunted Sparrow at once sought and found safe refuge. For although the Shrike made repeated attempts to discover or to dislodge his prey, hovering over the thicket on rapidly vibrating wings—presently as a Kingfisher perches on water—and occasionally even plunging down headlong, apparently quite at random, through the branches, scattering up jets of snow dust that glittered in the sunlight, he had finally to abandon all hope of securing this particular Sparrow and to go elsewhere, probably in search of another

Northern
Shrike
chases
a Sparrow
into one
lilac &
breaks it
down.

Boston, Mass.

1910
Jan. 12

Telegraph to Boston
Jan 12. 1910

Ducks in
Severett
Pond,
Brookline.

Dear Mr. Brewster,

There is an extraordinary opportunity to see ducks at close range at Severett Pond near Brookline village a few steps from Huntington av. Wright called my attention to it & I went there this morning.

Besides 16 or 18 Mallards there are 3 ♂ Baldpates and 1 ♀ or young. 1 ♀ Redhead, 1 ♂ Cawwack, 1 ♂ Ringneck. All at times can be seen within 20 feet. The sea ducks were all diving this morning and it was very interesting to watch them.

Yours
Charles W. Townsend.

Tell Dana

Cambridge, Mass.

1910.
Jan'y 30

A Northern Shrike seen in the Garden this morning was certainly not the one noted on Jan. 12th for it was a fully mature and very handsome bird with pure blue-gray upper parts, nearly white lower parts and jet black wings and tail. When I first noticed it (about 8.30) it was flitting through the lilacs with a dead House Sparrow held firmly in its bill, evidently looking for a place to suspend its prey. Presently it found one in the fork of a branch which, however, proved too spreading to answer the purpose although the Shrike did not seem to realize the fact until it had worked for fully five minutes trying to draw the head of the Sparrow sufficiently far back to make it hold in the angle made by the abruptly diverging boughs. Another similarly wide spreading fork a few yards off was next tried

Northern
Shrike
suspends
House
Sparrow in
fork and
then eats
a portion
of it.

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1910.

Jan. 30

(no 2.)

with less persistence and equally poor success.

Shrike &

House Sparrow

After this second failure the Shrike left the Sparrow entangled among some twigs and went on a prospecting tour through the lilacs, examining critically every fork that attracted its attention. After flying from branch to branch it passed around a jutting corner of the house and was lost to my view for several minutes.

When it returned I knew at once that it had found what it was seeking for it picked up the Sparrow in its bill and again flew around the corner of the house, this time in a direct, decided course. Following the line of its flight I came upon it in the eastern cluster of lilacs near the gate that opens into the head of our driveway. Here it was engaged in pushing the neck of the Sparrow into a fork which proved sufficiently narrow at the base to prevent the head

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(no 3)

from slipping through. It tugged hard at this hook, pulling the Sparrow's head towards it with a succession of vigorous jerks leaning well backward the while but not making any use of its wings as I have known Shrikes to do when similarly employed. After securing the Sparrow to its satisfaction it began devouring it first plucking most of the feathers from the head and neck and then eating the entire head and most of the neck well down to the body. After the head had been so reduced in size that it threatened to slip through the fork the Shrike drew the Sparrow up and across the two diverging tines when it finally left it lying after eating the parts I have mentioned. After this it flew off into the jungle but soon came back to flit about about me acting as if it feared I might not let it go when removed of its prey. The Sparrow had disappeared when I next visited the place about 5 P.M.

Shrike &
House Sparrow

Cambridge, Mass.

1910.

Feb. 6

Clear and cold with fresh N. W. wind.

Nothing
seen of
Gray Squirrels

During the past two or three weeks the Gray Squirrels on our place have been acting as if this winter season had begun or was close at hand. I have frequently seen them toying with one another in the trees in a suggestive way (this they do more or less at all seasons, however) and twice or thrice have watched a protracted chase in which two or three took part and which was conducted chiefly over the snow-covered surface of the ground, the leading animal keeping a yard or two in advance of her pursuer or pursuers and running at top speed for several minutes at a time, during which almost every part of the garden was traversed. All this has hitherto ended in nothing definite, as far as I could observe; but early this morning I saw the act of copulation performed, probably as the termination of a rather long pursuit.

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1910.

Feb. 6

(No 2.)

Although when I first noticed the pair (from the windows of my dressing room) they were making for the elm that stands at the head of our driveway. On reaching it the female started up the trunk but after ascending only a yard or two she stopped and allowed the male to overtake her net, however, without making at the very last a palpably sham attempt at containing her upward flight. On reaching her the male at once covered her, first clasping her body in his fore arms with his feet pressed in under her shoulders and then almost instantly securing sexual connection, apparently without much difficulty. At its beginning the act was rather calm, for the female remained passive with her tail hanging down limply and her head pointing straight upward. While the male showed comparatively little ardor; but as the affair progressed and the male wound to his coils the female

Gray
Squirrels
engaged in
copulation

Cambridge, Mass.

1910.

Feb. 6
(No 3)

began to respond to his vigorous and rapid masculine
thrusts with reciprocal movements and at length, apparently
exhausted beyond control, by passion, ran up the trunk for
a distance of a yard or two and then stopping abruptly
let go the hold of her hind feet. During the next few
seconds which, I think, probably marked the period
when the final, supreme orgasm was taking place and
the seminal fluid was discharged, the bodies of the
two Squirrels were so closely welded together that they
looked like one animal of abnormally elongated shape
for the head of the male was flattened on the back
of the female about at her shoulders and their only
points of mutual attachment to the trunk were
afforded by the fore paws of the female above &
by the hind feet of the male below. The latter fact
was unmistakable for during the period to which

Gray
Squirrels
Copulating.

Cambridge, Mass.

1940.
Feb. 6
(No 4)

I am now referring the two bodies, looking and moving as one, were alternately flattened against the trunk and sprung out from it in a strongly outthrust arch which obviously touched the trunk at two points only. Thus they swung out and in with rhythmic, jerky dips until the sexual ecstasy was over and the sexual act finally accomplished. During its continuance I heard no sound from either squirrel. After it was ended they separated at once and rambled off in different directions through the branches of the alder. I do not recall ever witnessing any act of cohabitation among the so-called lower animals which has interested me so much as this.

Gray
Squirrels
copulating

It is perhaps somewhat over-charged with salacious suggestions it impressed me on the whole simply as a natural and perfectly wholesome manifestation of admirable sexual vigor on the part of two creatures engaged in a

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1910.
Feb. 6
(Ms)

timely and legitimate endeavor to fulfill the duties
of preservation. Only once before have I seen Squirrels
of any species thus occupied. That was many years
ago when I watched a pair of Red Squirrels copulating
in a Norway Spruce near the head of Buckingham
Street, Cambridge. For nearly half an hour, if I
remember rightly, their sexual contact was not once
broken nor the sexual movements of the male suspended
for more than a few seconds at a time. I think,
however, that I found and left them thus engaged
and that they kept up a constant low whining or
chattering cry. But I am writing now from
memory. Probably the observation is recorded
somewhere in my journal. The experience happened
~~during a session~~ when we were taking our meals at

Gray
Squirrels
copulating

Mrs. Scudder, certainly in summer or early autumn, &
probably from 12 or 15 years ago.

Cambridge, Mass.

1910.

Feb. 14

The only birds that have visited our place with any regularity this winter and the only ones I have seen there at all there for in the present month, are Flickers. One I noted four and on several occasions three together but ordinarily there has been only one or two seen at any one time. Their visits have been made oftentimes in the morning about 8 or 9 o'clock. For a time they contented themselves with fasting on the berries of one holly berry & Portulaca after trees. About two weeks ago they began working on the trunks of two large pear trees. After knocking off the lower scales of outer bark they pecked and pushed at the inner bark until the cambium layer was exposed in many places over spaces as large as the palm of one's hand. All this was done in a leisurely and dexterity way as if the birds were merely amusing themselves which, indeed, I suspect

Flickers
in the
Garden.

Cambridge, Mass.

1910.

Feb. 14
(no 2)

was really too bad for they did not seem to be
obtaining anything in the way of food. After they had
done really serious damage to the tree (one of which is
a sound and valuable seedling from the other an old & nearly
worthless tree) I protected the trunks from further injury
by wrapping them in burlap. A few days after this
I heard the sound of intermittent tapping about my
study in the museum & very soon and then a heap
of mortar fell into the fireplace from above. I think this
happened first on the 12th and am certain it happened
yesterday (13th). To-day it began again and I at
once went out taking my spare gun. As soon as
got a clear view of the museum chimney I perceived
a ♂ Flicker clinging to its eastern face about 50 ft.
below the top, busily engaged in plugging & prying
out the mortar between the bricks. He would work

Flickers
barking
near trees

Cambridge, Mass.

1910.

Feb. 14
(183)

at it for half a minute or so, alternately pecking
and prying with his bill, and then rest for a somewhat
longer period before beginning again. I watched him
for ten or fifteen minutes. More than once I thought I
saw him swallow a small fragment of the lead mortar
- it is years since the chimney was re-pointed - but of
this I could not make sure. That he had already
done considerable damage was evident enough for
with the aid of my glass I could see that the
lines of "pointing" were broken in many places
by the recent removal of worm or less mortar.
He must have been working at the mortar as capping
on the top of the chimney when he sent the
fragments down into my fireplace but that I did
not see. Truly "the devil finds mischief for idle
hands [and bills] to do."

Flicker
pecking &
prying off
mortar from
Museum
chimney

Cambridge, Mass.

1910.

Feb. 16

Roland Thaxter told me this evening of watching Flicker
a Flicker picking out mortar from the vertical face eating
of the brick wall of the Museum of Comparative mortar
Zoology within a few feet of his windows. I at Mus.
understand him to say that this happened within Comp. Zool
the past two or three days. He was so very near
the bird that he could see, without possibility of mistake,
that it ate small pieces of the mortar. I was very
sure that any bird was doing the same thing on the
14th/. It would be interesting to know whether the
mortar is eaten for the sake of the lime it
contains or as a substitute for gravel which may
be rather difficult to obtain near that the gravel
is largely covered with snow.

1910
Feb. 24

Arlington, Mass.

Brant
taken in
Arlington,

Dr. A. M. Tuttle tells me that a mounted specimen of the Brant Goose, now on exhibition at the Middlebury Sportsmen's Show in Arlington, has the following interesting history. In company with half-a-dozen or more birds of its own kind and about an equal number of Canada Geese it alighted, during a heavy storm, late last autumn (in November, he thinks), in a cultivated field not far from Robbins Spring Hotel near the brook & the tracks of the Lowell Railroad just to the eastward of Arlington Heights Station. Some laborers discovering the birds chased them about and captured two or three of the Brants but all the Canada Geese took flight and escaped. One of the captured Brants was given to a Mr. Farmer, the owner of the land on which it was taken. He had the specimen preserved and it is still in his possession. Dr. Tuttle has examined it and vouches for the fact that it is a typical Brant.

Cambridge, Mass.

1910

Feb. 28

At intervals through the day, from 8 a.m. to 4.30 p.m., and not less than ten or a dozen times in all, I heard, as I sat writing at my desk in the Museum, with the windows closed, the shrill clar-clar-clar-clar of a Sparrow Hawk.

The sound came to my ears distinctly, evidently from a bird flying low overhead, but when I went out to look for him it usually crossed before I left the door. At length I got a good, if rather

brief, view of him as he circled swiftly just above the tops of our windows. After this I repeatedly heard him in the direction of Harvard Park and to the west & north of the Museum. He seemed to be making repeated tours of the entire neighborhood

about our place & to be proclaiming his presence vociferously. I fancy it may have been a love flight (the bird looked like a male) but why should he come here for that purpose?

Sparrow
Hawk
flying over
our Garden
at intervals
through day

1910.
March 2

Cambridge, Mass.

Clear, calm & mild but chilly.

Sparrows
Hawks

About 8 a. m. I was looking out of one of the north windows of our house when a ♂ Sparrow Hawk appeared, coming low over the garden towards me, flying nearly straight and very sluggishly with long, slow, irregular wing beats. On reaching the house he rose and apparently passed over it although that I could not see.

At 9.30 a. m., as I was writing in the Museum, I heard his shrill screaming. Rushing out I again saw him pass over the Garden taking nearly the same course as at first but at a greater height so that when he came to the house he cleared the tops of the big lindens above it without rising perceptibly. Thus far he had flown nearly straight and very swiftly, vibrating his wings incessantly; but on reaching Hubbard Park and turning to the westward he began soaring in circles, still screaming at intervals. I now saw for the first time a ♀ Sparrow Hawk circling in silence about 100 yards from the ♂. Keeping about this distance from our position the two birds drifted off towards the south-west & were soon lost to my sight.

About 10 a. m. the ♂ again appeared circling about our lindens with loud cries (kleeu - kleeu - kleeu), swooping downward nearly to the eaves from an elevation of 50 feet or more and then rebounding as it were to this height to immediately descend and rise again. These evolutions may be represented by a series of deep curves UU. They were not unlike those which I have repeatedly seen the Marsh Hawk & the Cooper's Hawk perform in early spring but even more spirited & frequent. Hubbard doubts they were low flights. I saw no female this time, however.

Cambridge, Mass.

1910

March 19

A Northern Shrike spent fully two hours this morning (8-10 a.m.) sitting on a twig in the top of a large apple tree ^{[in our garden,} singing almost continuously. Not once during this time did it change its perch or even its position although it moved its head freely keeping, as I thought, a keen look out all around for possible prey. It was a fully mature bird with black markings, chest-bluish gray back and white under parts. Its voice was strong and clear and some of its notes decidedly sweet and musical. It often repeated one of them several times much as the Brown Thrasher repeats its notes. Its song had some general resemblance to that of a Thrasher in other respects but was decidedly less continuous or flowing and older, of course, less pleasing. It is surprising that a bird ordinarily so nervous and restless as a Shrike should have remained so very long in one place. It was probably there this evening for I heard its singing about 7 o'clock when

Northern
Shrike
Spends two
hours on
one perch,
singing.

Cambridge, Mass.

1910.

March

19

(No 2)

Not long after the preceding journal entry was made and about 5 P.M. the Shrike began another outburst of song in the Garden, keeping it up for nearly half-an-hour. Either his voice was louder now than before or it sounded so because the air was stiller & less disturbed by the noise of city traffic. It seemed to fill the entire neighborhood being, indeed, almost, if not quite, as dominant and conspicuous as the voice of a Robin in full song. Never before have I heard a Northern Shrike sing anything like so loudly continuously and melodiously.

Song of
Northern
Shrike on
evening

Speaking of Robins I wonder when they are! A heavy flight was reported from country districts (such as Arlington, Dedham etc.) early in the month but no birds have invaded our city as yet. Yet conditions have been apparently right for them to appear for a week or more past.

Robins
late

Cambridge, Mass.

1910.

March 26

A Northern Shrike in the Garden most of the latter Northern
Shrike.
half of the afternoon - an old ♂, apparently the same in the
which I noted on the 19th. As on that occasion he Garden
was in full song much of the time to-day, at first (for 10
minutes) in
the top of a little tree by the pond in front of museum,
next (for 5 minutes) in the upper branches of one by
catwiper tree, finally in the Parkman's apple. His
Song
song was quite as loud as on the 19th but less musical
and very much less varied, the same note being repeated
over & over, sometimes as many as six or eight times
in succession. There when this happened the bird He quivers
crouched low on the branch with lowered & extended his wings
head and neck, quivering his half-opened wings as if quite isolate
carried away by emotional feeling. It seemed as if there singing.
must be a ♀ near at hand to account for this unusual
display (quite new to me) of feeling on the part of a

Cambridge, Mass.

1910

March 26
(No 2)

Belted-bird bird I saw none. The note given Northern
Shrike.
at this particular time was not unusual but by no means
one of the Shrike's best - to my taste, at least. When He chose
he was in the Catalpa tree a number of birds alighted, a Downy
 Flicker &
Grackles
one after another within a few yards of him. A cock
House Sparrow (apparently oblivious of danger) was quite ignorant
he
bird, drove from the tree in succession a Flicker, a
Downy Woodpecker and three more Brown Grackles,
flying at them aggressively and chasing two (two Downy &
Flicker) several rods but not showing any indication of real
murderous intent. One and all of these birds behaved
towards him as they might towards any harmless bird
of similar size, evincing little fear of him and apparently not
suspecting his true character, I thought. After reaching
the Postwoman's apple he sang for awhile in its top &
then dove down into the tangle of closely imbricated

Cambridge, Mass.

1910.

March 26
(No 3)

branches and twigs near the ground. The next instant I heard what seemed to be the agonized cries of some small bird in extreme pain or terror. Feeling sure that a Sparrow was undergoing torture & death I rushed out only to find the Shrike hopping about in the thickest parts of the tangle just by himself flapping his wings & jutting his wide-spread tail much in the manner of an excited Towhee. He kept uttering the wounded-bird cries at intervals, usually loudly at first, then more & more & more feebly until they could scarcely be heard. So perfectly did they resemble the outcry of a small bird when caught and rather strongly killed by a Hawk or Shrike that I could not help thinking that they represented a deliberate imitation of such cries, based on long personal experience on the part of the Shrike and that they were designed by him on this occasion to entice little birds to the spot by exciting on their sympathy or curiosity if so they failed to serve that purpose.

Northern
Shrike

imitates
outcry of
wounded bird
in clutches
of birds of
prery

Cambridge, Mass.

1910.

March 27

Clear and cool with light N. W. wind.

Crows have been haunting our place for the Crow's nest
in
Hubbard Park
past two or three weeks coming occasionally in the
linden at sunrise and appearing in the Gorseon later
in the day. I saw one on the lawn this morning
(8 a.m.) engaged in a search for nesting material.
After picking up & discarding several sticks which
seemed not to its liking it finally got something
that looked like a strip of grape vine bark three or
four feet long and flew off with it (in its bill)
across Brattle Street to a cluster of Norway Spruces
in Hubbard Park where I could see it at work
adjusting the bark in what looked like a nest near
the top of one of these trees. Another Crow, probably the
mate of the nest builder, was flitting about in some trees
fifty or sixty yards away.

Pudie tells me he hears Crows nearly every morning
now in Louisburg Square, Boston.

Crows in
Louisburg Sq.
Boston.

Concord, Mass.

1910.

March 31

Cloudy with chill east wind.

Balls Hill

I came to Concord late this afternoon to spend a week or so at the cabin which I have not visited since last November. As I walked down to the boat house from the West Bedford Station I heard Robins, Song Sparrows, Red-wings and Rusty Blackbirds singing in every direction. A Thrufled Goose was just as I entered the woods bordering Mr. Groth's field. The river proved to be low for this season, indeed almost down to average summer level, nearly all the meadows being exposed but dotted with pools of water which has not had time to drain off or to evaporate. After crossing the river I went around behind the hill where I located another Goose and saw the remains of several more drifts. I found Hepatica, Blood root & Claytonia in thorn in front of the log cabin.

I settle at
Cabin

Robins,
Red-wings,
Rusties,
Song Sparrows

River low

Hepatica
Blood root
Claytonia
in thorn

Concord, Mass.

1910.

April 1

Brilliantly clear. Bright, cool N.W. wind in forenoon;
afternoon calm and very warm.

Were I to judge of the date by the general aspect
of the country here just now I should not set it earlier
than April 25th. Never before have I known vegetation
so far advanced at this season. The fields are vivid
green, the sprouting "blue joint" (Phalaris) on the river
meadows is five or six inches high, hepaticas, blood root
& Claytonia are in full bloom in the woods, a few
blossoms on the big Forsythia bush in front of the
Barnett house opened this forenoon, the gooseberry bushes
are green with small, newly-unfolded leaves, the Wood
Frogs have nearly ceased croaking, the Hylas and
Scopied Frogs are in full cry both by night & day.

I went to the Farm this morning & spent the
day there. Blue birds, Robins, Song Sparrows, Chickadees

Exceptionally
early spring.

Vegetation

Fields green

Blue joint
6 in. high

Forsythia in
bloom.

Gooseberry
bushes in leaf

Frogs

Concord, Mass.

1910

April
(No 2)

a Purple Finch and a White-bellied Nuthatch were
singing, a Flicker shouting & a Downy drumming near the farm
house. A single White-bellied Swallow was flying about
the bird boxes. I heard a Pine Warbler at Balls Hill
& Phoebe there, at Pine Park, at the Ritchie place &
at our old barn. The Fox & the Sparrows seem to have
gone by but I saw a solitary Junco. Red-wings &
Rusties were flying to & from over the uplands & singing
along the river. Heard a Hairy Woodpecker at the house
& another in Birds Field. Heard a Phoebe crossing in
the direction of the pond in our Betty Pasture; James
reports hearing him there daily for a week or more.
Heard Red shouldered Hawks screaming on Balls
Hill & at the Farm. Started a ♂ Cooper's Hawk from
the brook behind the hill and saw a Marsh Hawk
soaring over Purple Thrush woods.

Common
birds.

Concord, Mass.

1910.

April 1
(No 3)

Saw deer tracks almost everywhere to-day, James tells me that the numbers of Deer present during the past month has positively alarmed him because of the menace to our crops. He saw two at our turn in the Reuben field about a week ago, & Benson reports that mine crossed his field together at about the same time. James saw four file through our deer yard and four looking through the wire fence of the partly yard. They show little fear of man and none whatever of bird dogs. Our flower garden is covered with their tracks & I actually found two rather fresh foot prints in our bean cellar.

Partridges are said to be more numerous than for several years past. I flushed at least five different birds to-day between Bow's Hill and the farm, without leaving the roadway that leads there through the fields and woods.

Deer
abundant

Partridges
numerous

Concord, Mass.

1910

April 2

Clear and warm with light, variable winds chiefly from N. W. and N. E.

Arrivals Kingfisher; one, seen first at 7 A. M. and many Arrivals
times later in day, flying past cabin.

Bittern; one, seen first at 8 A. M. flying low over meadows opposite Ball's Hill. Afterwards seen there or four times in same locality. It uttered a guttural oc-oc-oc but did not "jump".

Wilson's Snipe. As twilight was falling this evening Snipe
a Snipe began drumming over the meadows directly opposite the cabin on Ball's Hill, keeping it up for nearly half an hour. During this period I heard several others uttering the scrape note as they rose from the meadow and flew about over it, unseen in the gathering gloom. As nearly as I could tell by their cries there were as all or more five or six different birds. The music of the drumming was unusually strong & loud & abrupt. It is among the loudest of all bird sounds.

About 10 A. M. we heard the wild clamor of Canada Geese Canada
coming from the far distance towards the south-west. A minute Geese
or two later we saw the birds advancing directly towards us over Great Meadows. There were 2 flocks, one following in the wake of the other, perhaps 300 yards behind it. I counted 85 birds in the first flock & 28 in the second. Rarely if ever have I seen Geese flying so very high. When directly over us they looked no larger than Robins seen near at hand. Up to this time they had been heading north. Just before reaching Davis Hill they turned sharply to the right and made off out of sight due eastward. Just before this change

1910

April 2
(No 2)

Change of direction was made a remarkable thing happened. Canada Geese.
One of the birds in the smaller (rear) flock left its companions and rising above them made a complete circle apparently on set wings. Just as it regained them the small flock and the large one turned simultaneously towards the east. It looked as if the bird I have just referred to was the leader of the whole assemblage but if so why was he with the lagging? He apparently rose above the others to look for some Canadian which could not be seen from their position. He must have been fully 100 feet above the rest when he described the circle which was about 100 feet in diameter. During the whole time these Geese were within hearing they gave tongue as incessantly as a flock of hounds following a hot scent. Their sonorous voices seemed to dominate all other sounds and to fill the whole air with thrilling music more suggestive of this period season than any other I know. My men & I were alike impressed by the brevity of the period during which these Geese were in sight. I doubt if it exceeded three minutes yet we must have watched them for a distance of fully three miles. Pat Fleming heard Canada Geese passing over Covered bridge at 8 o'clock last night and at the same time James heard them at very far. It is probable that both heard the same flock. Neither had seen or heard any before this date.

Pat Fleming has seen only one flock of ducks this spring. They flew past Ball's Hill as he was taking down about two weeks ago. He thinks they were forsters.

Ducks

Concord, Mass.

1910.

April 3

Clear with fresh north-west wind. The ground from last night but it was deliberately soaker through the day.

Spent most of forenoon soaring about in the woods visiting Holden's Hill & Davis Hill. The Red-shouldered Hawks were near the nest in the big chestnut where they have bred for several years past. I saw only the ♂ (was in fully adult plumage) but both birds were filling the air with their wild, ringing music (to my ears their screaming is highly musical besides being very thrilling) as I entered the woods.

Red-shouldered
Hawks at
Holden's Hill
again!

A Brown Creeper was singing on Davis Hill.

Brown
Creeper in
song.

I wonder if he is the same bird that had a nest there last year under a scale of ^{live} bark on the big dead pine.

Chickadees, Song Sparrows, Phoebe, Red-wings, a Pine Siskin, a Flicker & a Robin singing at Balls Hill.

Concord, Mass.

1910
April 3
(No 21)

Raymond Emerson called at the cabin two for us.
He gave me the following interesting notes:

On March 23 he started a flock of nearly if not
quite 100 Black Ducks from the river a little below

Large
flock of
Black
Ducks

Parish Island. He saw a second flock of Winters
near the lower place last same day and counting

Golden
eye Ducks

in the number 25 or 30 of them on the flooded Great

Meadows. On the 23rd March he saw a Wilson's

Early date
for
Wilson's
Snip

Snip just below Collier Bridge. It was flying
about & came nearly over him. Further down the

river he saw what may or may not have been the same

Snip. He tells me that 2 Otters were seen near

Otters

Clare Shell Hill and one just below Washburn

Bridge, last summer and then or four years ago

one was killed in Mason's Ice Pond on Spruce Brook.
Muskrat have been rather scarce this spring. Gray Herons
got only 36. The best skins have sold as high as \$1.05

Concord, Mass.

1910.

April 5

The Hon. Mr. Dexter of Concord, who is deeply interested in birds and apparently a careful and trustworthy observer, called on me at the cabin this afternoon. He says that Wilfred Johnson saw a flock of about 25 Snow Geese in Concord last autumn. They were flying southward. A flock of Canada Geese were in sight at the same time, moving in the same direction. Their flight was so much slower than that of the Snow Geese that the latter passed them and were lost to sight in the distance some time before the Canada Geese disappeared. I wonder if these Snow Geese may not be the same birds that Mrs. Bridge saw.

Snow Geese.

Mr. Dexter says that Richard ⁵⁰⁰⁰ has seen a flock of four Goshawks during the past week and that one or two good sized flocks were seen about the middle of March.

Goshawks

Concord, Mass.

1910.

April 6

This phenomenally early season moon steadily on
without a set back thus far. Yesterday was very warm
and to-day like summer with a moist balmy S.W. wind.
Burrain is on the point of showing its blossoms & the white
willows show just a trace of green foliage. The river
meadows are bright green in many places. They are in
perfect condition for Snipe which are here in numbers
apparently and drawing away every evening. I heard one this
morning at daybreak and again from 8 to 8.30 A.M. when
the sky was clouded over and the air thick with mist.
This bird was circling over the meadows opposite the cabin
when I heard him again this evening from 7 to 8 o'clock.
Walking up along the river path to Holden's Hill I heard
him faintly still and very distinctly another one over
Great Meadows when I saw a Snipe circle & alight this
afternoon

Progress of
the season.

Wilson's
Snipe
drawing.

Concord, Mass.

1910
April 6
(No 2.)

For several seasons past whenever I have been staying
at Ball's Hill I have heard at morning and evening,
coming from the open fields and meadows on the West
Bedford side of the river what I have taken to be
Ginnia Hens calling. On several occasions I have thought
that the sound was not quite like that made by Ginnia
Hens but as it usually comes from the direction of
Mr. Groth's poultry yard and as he keeps (or used to keep)
a pair of these birds I did not give the matter any
particular attention. For the last three or four evenings this
calling has ^{been} frequent and insistent for half an hour or more
after sunset and again about sunrise or before. Last
evening I heard it to uncommonly good advantage and
studied it attentively. I soon satisfied myself that it
was not the call of a Ginnia Hen. The voice is less
harsh, the notes given more slowly. They have a peckish

Evening
Call of
Ring neck
Phasian

Concord, Mass.

1910.
April 6
(Ms 31)

quality which I find rather pleasing because of its plaintiveness. Sometimes they remind me of the shrilling notes of a Flicker heard in the distance, & those of of the Hawk, resembling the whistling of a Coarcted Rail in late autumn. The bird heard last evening was at first in the direction of Mr. Grath's but he afterwards changed his position twice and finally called several times just across the river near my Stone Boat house. Although I have as yet no positive clue to the author of these sounds I am nearly convinced that they are made by the Ring-necked Pheasant which are now numerous in the fields & meadows on the bank of Bedford Haven. I picked up one of the long tail feathers of a cold Pheasant on my own land yesterday but as it was among the combes & brush just at high water mark it is probably floated there

Pheasant
calling.

Concord, Mass.

1910.

April 7

Forenoon cloudy & calm; afternoon sunny with fresh W. wind changing to N. at sunset. Another summer-like day, less warm than yesterday, however, & pleasantly cool at evening.

A Yellow Red-bell Warbler singing near cabin at 6 a.m. Arrivals
At 7 I heard a G. Wood-scorp and later still found three notes of the latter species flitting about in the oaks on the hillside.

At 7 a.m. a Bittern jumped once (giving but one note); Bittern
just before sunset he went through the whole performance, begins
repeating it at the usual intervals for fifteen or twenty minutes. jumping.
This is the first time I have heard one this spring. The bird was in the meadow directly opposite my cabin.

No Snipe were heard this morning (although I was awake Snipe
at daybreak) but at evening two drummed for half an drumming
hour or more over the meadow across the river from the
cabin and I heard a third scraping as it rose from
Great Meadow opposite Beaver Dam Rapids

Concord, Mass.

1910.

April 7
(No 2)

A Kingfisher is haunting the river by day, flying back & forth past the cabin at all hours, ranging as far as Dean's Hill in one direction and at least to Bolles' Hill in the other. He regularly goes to roost about sunset in the dense young pines on the south side of Bolles' Hill midway between the cabin & Birch gate and some thirty yards back from the river. I have started him from there thus no less than three evenings this week. He takes wing in silence and after flying out over the river doubles back and alights in some taller pines near the crest of the hill where he usually utters his rattle a number of times as I pass on along the road that skirts the base of the hill. It is odd to hear his familiar cry issuing thus from thick woods. The smaller pines where I first started him have been the favorite roosting place of Kingfishers at all

Kingfisher
roosting
in dense
young pine on
hill!

seasons for years past but only one bird (perhaps among the same individual) is to be found there on any one evening

Concord, Mass.

1910.
April 7
(No 3)

The Cowardin bush near the cabin was in full bloom to-day. The shrub bushes look as if they might open their blossoms at any moment. The common saxifrage & a few ground pink blossoms appeared on the south side of the hill. Bostwick bushes have unfolded small leaves and the tender young foliage of the white willow is apparent at considerable distance. The red maples are still very beautiful but their blossoms are beginning to fade. The country looks as it usually does about May 1st

Progress
of
vegetation

About 10 a. m. we heard Canada Geese laughing in the distance. Benjamin ran to the river bank to look for them. Presently the flock appeared at an unknown height (fully 4000 ft. I should say). Gilbert counted 42 birds. They passed to the east of Balls Hill & kept on in a perfectly straight course towards the north-east. They looked no larger than Pigeons. No sound came from them after we first saw them

Still
another
flock of
Wild Geese

Concord, Mass.

1910.

April 17

Brilliantly clear and bracingly cool with strong, Remarkable
Keen East wind. behavior of
American
Boitron

The marsh on the south side of the river directly opposite Ball's Hill looks, at present, almost as smooth and verdant as a well-kept lawn. It was all mown ^{over} late last summer and having been free from flood water for upwards of a month past, is now covered everywhere with young grass three or four inches in height. Although this affords no cover for birds much larger than a Snipe the marsh has been frequented much of late by Boitrons. At morning and evening I have heard them pumping their or have seen them flying to and fro in striking erect with heads and necks stretched up on the watch for danger but previous to to-day have paid but little attention to them

Boncord, Mass.

1910.
April 17
(No 2)

Two which I saw this morning, however, presented such a strange appearance and acted in such a remarkable manner that I watched them for half-an-hour or more with absorbing interest. When I first noticed them they were on the further margin of the little permanent lagoon where the Red-wings breed so numerously, moving first eastward almost if not quite as fast as a man habitually walks on smooth, firm ground, one following directly behind the other at a distance of fifteen or twenty yards. Thus they advanced not only rapidly but with very even, with a smooth, gliding motion, which reminded me of that of Gallinaceous birds and was very crane-like. Occasionally they would stop and stand erect for a minute or so but when walking they invariably

Remarkable
Behavior of
American
Boobies

Concord, Mass.

1910.

April 17
(No 3)

maintained a crouching attitude, with the back strongly arched, the belly almost touching the ground,

Bitterns
with white
plumage.

The neck so shortened that the lowered head and bill seemed to project only a few inches beyond the breast. This in general shape and carriage, as well as in gait, they seemed to resemble Pheasants or Geese much more than Herons. But the strangest thing of all was that both birds showed extensive patches of what seemed to be pure white on their backs between the shoulders. This made them highly conspicuous and quickly led me to conclude that the birds must be something quite new to me and probably - because of their attitudes and swift, gliding movements - Pheasants of some species with which I was unfamiliar. Thus far I had been forced to view them with unassisted eyesight but when I had reached the cabin and they too

Cornwall, Mass.

1910.

April 17

(No 4)

edge of our boat canal directly opposite, I secured Bitterns
my opera glass and by its aid quickly convinced with white
myself that despite their unusual motions and plumage
the conspicuous white on their backs they could be
nothing other than Bitterns.

I was now joined by Miss E. R. Simmons Bitterns
Miss Alice Eastwood (the California Colonel) and fighting
my assistant Mr. R. A. Gilbert, all of whom became
at once deeply interested in the birds which were
now standing erect by the canal about twenty
yards apart. Suddenly both rose and flew
straight at one another, meeting in the air at
a height of eight or ten feet above the marsh.
It was difficult to see just what happened at
this precise instant but we all agreed that
the birds came together with the full force of

Bowcord, Mass.

1910.

April 17
(No 5)

The momentum of rapid flight then clinching
in some way, apparently with both feet and bills,
descended nearly to the ground. Just before reaching
it they separated and sailed (not flopped) off to
their former respective stations. After resting down
a few moments the mutual attack was resumed
in precisely the same manner as at first, only
~~shorter~~ less vigorously. It was not repeated after this.

Bitterns
fighting.

Although a most spirited tilt (especially on the
first occasion), by antagonists armed with
formidable weapons (the dagger-like bills) we
could not see that any harm resulted from it
to either bird. When we crossed the river in a boat
some fifteen minutes later both Bitterns were still

standing near the Canal. Up to this time both had
shown the white continuously but it disappeared as we
were approaching them. One took flight when we were in
the narrow dell of the river. We got within 20 yards of the other
before it would again be much called off from the river.

Bowcord, Mass

1910.

April 18

Cloudy with fine, steady rain. Forenoon cool with
chill east wind; afternoon warm with light, soft, south wind

Bittens

Gilbert kept a close watch for the Bittens during
the forenoon (when I was at the farm) but nothing
was seen of them until about 2 P.M. when both
birds appeared on the marsh near the canal but
on its eastern side. H. G. Purdie was now with
us (having come to Bass' Hill yesterday forenoon). He,
Gilbert and I had the Bittens under observation
for more than an hour, using our glasses freely, of
course. During this time the birds rambled about
over ~~a~~ several acres in extent of the lawn-like
marsh, keeping for the most part, however, near the
edge of the river, here about 150 yards in width.
There was no tilting on this occasion nor did they
ever approach each other nearer than thirty yards while

Concord, Mass.

1910.

April 18

(No 2)

not infrequently they were more than 100 yards apart. Bitterns
As was the case yesterday they carried their bodies
very low and at times so flattened to the ground
that they resembled big, snuff-crawling tortoises
rather than birds, as they wound in and out
among the tufts of grass for on this occasion they
pursued devious courses which usually ended near
the starting point. They did not seem to be looking
for food but rather to be inspired by restlessness
or perhaps, as I was inclined to think at the
time, by a spirit of rivalry. For as both birds
"jumped" at frequent intervals I concluded that
both must be males and this was much connected
with their behavior which suggests that they were
chiefly engaged in "showing off", apparently to each
other solely, for if there was a female anywhere

Concord, Mass.

1910

April 18
(no 3)

near at hand I failed to see her. Whenever one of them "jumped" the other was seen to respond within two or three seconds, sometimes facing his rival, sometimes turning in another direction. During most of the time when they were in this marsh together both birds showed the white which we saw yesterday but when one of them finally flew away the other ceased altogether to display it although we had him in view for a considerable length of time (fully 20 minutes) during which he jumped repeatedly. I will never succeed to describe it more fully than I was able to do yesterday. It was seen much better and for a longer period to-day with the added advantage that on this second occasion I was able to check as well as supplement my own

Bettens

Bowcord, Mass.

1910.

April 18
(no 4)

observations and impressions by those of Purdie & Billings
Gilbert, both of whom were with me the whole
time and paying equally critical attention to the
matter. At first we differed with respect to certain
minor details but all these differences of opinion
were finally harmonized and what I am about
to say is now subscribed to by all three of us.

The white first appears at or very near the shoulders
of the folded wings and then expands, sometimes
rather quickly (never abruptly, however) but otherwise
very slowly until, spreading simultaneously from
both sides, it forms two ruffs ~~and~~ fully equal
in length and breadth (apparently) to the hands
of a large man but in shape more nearly like
the wings of a Gannet or Frigate. Their tips
point sometimes nearly straight upward, sometimes

Concord, Mass.

1910
April 18
(no 5)

more or less backward, also. As they rise above Butternuts
the shoulders they spread towards each other
at right angles to the long axis of the birds
body until at their bases they nearly meet
in the center of the back. They may be held
(without apparent change in area or position,
though for many minutes at a time, during which
the bird may move about over a considerable
space of ground or perhaps merely stand or crouch
in the same place. We frequently saw them
fully displayed when the Butternuts were pumping
but not more so nor in any different way than
at other times. When the bird was moving
straight towards us with his body carried back
and his wings fully expanded he looked like
a big white fowl having only the head and
breast dark-colored the breast often looking nearly

Concord, Mass.

1910.

Opis 18
(no 6)

black) ~~for in this aspect and at the distance~~ Bitterns
at which we viewed him (perhaps 200 yards) the
broad ruffs, rising above and reaching well out on both
sides of the back and shoulders completely masked
anything on their rear while the head and the
throat neck were carried so low that they were
seen against the breast and hence added nothing
to visible area of dark plumage. When he was
moving away from us in the same waddling
attitude the ruffs looked exactly like two
white wings nearly as broad as those of a domestic
pigeon - but less long - attached to either side of
his back just above the shoulders. When we
had a side view of him the outline of the
ruffs was completely lost but there seemed
to be a band of white as broad as ones hand

Concord, Mass.

1910.

April 18
(No 7)

afternoon between the shoulders quite across Bitterns
the back. Thus whichever way he moved ~~or~~ faced
the white was always shown. Most conspicuously,
however, when he turned towards us. It was
not ever dull or faint or even yellowish, whether
seen in bright sunlight, as on the morning of
the 17th, or under dark coverings skin, as
on the afternoon of the 18th. On the contrary
at all times and under all conditions when
we saw it at all it appeared to be pure
white. When the bird was travelling through the
short, rich green grass or over blackish mud, at a
distance of two hundred yards or more, the
white was often the only thing we could see. It
made an odd impression on the mind, as it
moved about without visible means of propulsion

Concord, Mass.

1910.

April 18

(No 8)

and had we not known just what it was it Bellard
might well have persuaded us to account for it.

When the bird was standing or crawling
rather than under the same conditions of
environment it looked exactly like a
small patch of snow or a good-sized
sheet of white paper, lying in the marsh.

It was to my conception that any one looking
out casually over the marsh could not
have failed to notice it at the first glance.

As I have said it opened out rather slowly
as a hole and never very abruptly. Its
disappearance was effected in a corresponding
manner. With the help and under the criticism
of Purdie & Gilbert, & with the birds showing it
conspicuously at the time, I made a model of it

Covehead, Mass.

1910.
April 18
(no 9)

cut from a sheet of brown paper as on Picture
shown by the wire in front of the cabin. This
model I now paste on this sheet of the journal
folding it of necessity. When opened it shows
the eggs fully expanded & of their actual size
as they looked to us; ie making no allowance
for the distance at which they were seen.



Covead, Mass.

1910.

April 18

(no 9)

cut from a sheet of brown paper as on Billam.
stand by the wire in front of the cabin. This
model I now paste on this sheet of the journal
folding it of necessity. When opened it shows
the ruffs fully expanded & of their actual size
as they looked to us; it makes no allowance
for the distance at which they were seen.



Concord, Mass.

1910.

April 18

(No 10)

Bitterns.

On reaching home, late this afternoon, I at once examined all the Bitterns in my collection. Most of them unfortunately are females or males killed in autumn, none of which have white or whitish any where save on the throat. But two or three adult males taken in spring possess tufts of yellowish white feathers of peculiar & apparently ^{somewhat} special structure which are attached to the sides of the breast just under the shoulders. By cutting & spreading these I have been able to produce something resembling what we saw at Concord only very much smaller and not pure white. Gilbert, who has just looked at them, agrees with me that the Concord birds (he saw them showing again on the morning of the 19th)

Coveaud, Mass.

1910.

April 18
(no 11)

Bitterns
must have had plumes more than double
the size of those in my skins and feet,
not yellowish, white. When I gave an
account of the matter at a meeting of
the North Ch. this evening one of the
members (Mr. Freeman) suggested that the
Bitterns may increase the effectiveness of
the display of these feathers by inflating
the skin to which they are attached and
thus causing them to stand out much
farther than they otherwise would. Even
if this be so I doubt if feathers as large
or more numerous than those possessed by
my specimens could be expanded into the
broad, full, sunny ruffs shown by the
Bitterns seen yesterday & to-day at Coveaud.

Bowcord, Mass.

1910.

April 18
(No 12.)

It is conceivable, of course, that the Bitterns ruffs displayed by the living birds were much less large and white than they appeared. I should certainly suspect that this may have been the case were it not that the observations I have just noted were made with such care by five different persons and under widely varying conditions of light and shade. Hence I have felt justified in recording our mutual impressions of what we saw despite the fact that my skins of Bitterns do not seem to confirm it altogether. One thing, however, is quite sure viz. that the plumes, be they long or short, white or yellow, are used for display in the interesting way I have described.

Cambridge, Mass.

1910.

April 20

A flock of 13 Cedar Birds in the Parkman's apple tree in our garden early this forenoon. They are the first that have appeared here this spring. As I was watching them two birds perched on the same twig about six inches apart, passed one of the tiny apples (no larger than blueberries) back and forth a dozen times or more in quick succession, each holding it but for a second or two in the tip of its bill. One stood erect and still the whole time; the other on receiving the apple regularly made a complete turn on its perch before passing it back again. This movement was accomplished so quickly and deftly that it was difficult to follow

with the eye but as nearly as I could make out the birds simply gave a slight upward hop and then turned in the air without opening its wings. It was one of the very prettiest things I ever knew I have ever seen. I

Cedar Birds
passing
a berry
back &
forth.

do not know how the apple was finally disposed of. One of the birds was seen eating it or it may have been dropped. I know not which it did offend.

Concord, Mass.

1910.
April 20
(No 2)

Clear & warm with fresh S. W. wind.

I came to Concord late this afternoon provided Bitterns with a gun and prepared to shoot a Bittern if I could but find one showing white ruffs. Three males were jumping at 6 P. M. & later, one in Pullen's meadow below the cabins, one near the middle of Great Meadows, the third was at the edge of the river in the marsh directly opposite Bensen's Landing, and was accompanied by a smaller, darker-plumaged bird which, without doubt, was a female & his mate. I watched the pair for more than half an hour. Although the male jumped at frequent intervals he showed no trace of the white ruffs. During most of the time the female was within twenty yards of him and for ten or fifteen minutes within three yards. He invariably faced her about the time when he was jumping but neither bird showed any trace

Concord, Mass.

1910.

April 20
(No 3)

of sexual order or excitement and there was nothing Bitterns
suggestion of the demonstrations of courtship on the part
of either. Both behaved altogether differently from the
Bitterns seen on the 17th & 18th and, indeed, quite
after the usual manner of their kind. When they
walked it was with dignified slowness standing well
up with bodies raised lifting and putting down their
feet with marked deliberation. They croaked a few
times once a hour of water remaining thus for many
minutes, evidently on the watch for prey, ~~in an attitude~~
closely similar to that of the Night Heron & Great Blue
Heron when similarly engaged. Once then I plunged
her head suddenly under water & drew out something
which she first shook violently & then swallowed.
She spent very much of the time with her bill pointing
straight upward, her neck elongated, her body plump

Bowen, Mass.

1910.

April 20
(No 4)

Compressed, the head, neck & body looking all about of Bitterns
a size and was much larger around than a woman's
wrist and the whole bird resembling very closely a
stake nearly a yard in length being straight up
out of the marsh & of a weathered grayish color.

The ♂ did precisely the same thing but less often
and for shorter periods. It was perfectly evident
that both birds were apprehensive of danger of
some kind and ^{almost} constantly on the watch for it.

Indeed they appeared much more alert and suspicious
than any of the shy Herons, such as the Great Blue
or the Great White Egret when seen under similar conditions.

I was somewhat surprised at this and altogether
delighted by their wonderful grace of form and

movement. Seldom if ever before have I had so favorable
an opportunity to watch Bitterns which were pursuing
their usual avocations wholly unaware of my near presence.
For I was wholly concealed from these birds

Coward, Mass.

1910.

April 20
(No 5)

Bitterns

During the time I had them under observation they moved around in a nearly straight course along the edge of the river but so very slowly that the total distance covered was not more than forty yards. At length the male rose and flew down river two or three hundred yards. Although he jumped a number of times in this new station the female did not follow him. .

Concord, Mass.

1910.

April 21

Sunny but hazy; forenoon calm; fresh S. wind in afternoon

Spent almost entire day watching Bitterns. Three Bitterns.

One two males pumping in Great Meadow sometimes within 50 yards of one another, sometimes 200 to 300 yards apart. Whenever they approached one another within 100 yards they acted like the two seen on the 17th & 18th crawling about over the meadow and showing the white ruffs. One or two conspicuously. One appeared to have small ^{yellowish} ruffs, the other large pure white ones. When the latter bird was facing away from me the ruffs looked exactly like a pair of white wings shaped much like those of a Domestic Pigeon but smaller (perhaps two-thirds as large). They seemed to ^{lie} ~~seem~~ to ~~lie~~ ~~to~~ lie nearly flat on the back with the tips pointing straight backward thus.



Concord, Mass.

1910.

April 21
(No. 2.)

But whenever Tom Bottom turned his side towards me the ruffs seemed to stand almost straight up on each side of the neck just above the shoulders thus:



When he faced me the effect was like this: -



When in the last mentioned position the ruffs made neck less show than those seen on the 18th which were more like this



I tried in vain to shoot the white-ruffed birds seen to-day. They would not let me get nearer than 100 yards before taking wing. Neither attempted to hide but merely stood looking at me until long

White
ruffed
Juncos of
the Bottom

Concord, Mass.

1910

April 21
(No. 3)

thought I was getting dangerously near when they flew to a distant part of the meadow returning to their original stations soon after I went back to my course. There was simply no cause of any kind and it was impossible to stalk them.

As I was talking a walk through Pine Park just after sunset I heard something making a loud continuous rattling among the dry leaves on the bark of Beech trees. Presently a very small horned Partridge appeared walking singly down the hillside. On coming under a wind of the trees that stands on the edge of the woods she flew straight up into it without making the slightest sound of wings and began "Cudding". Standing within thirty yards of the tree I watched her closely through my glasses.

Partridge
"Cudding"

Concord, Mass.

1910.
April 21
(No 4)

She worked very busily for about 15 or 20 minutes, ^{Partridge} "bedding"
 pecking at the ends almost as fast as a hen pecks
 up corn and molting, as nearly as I could average it,
 about two pecks every three seconds. They were made
 in every direction, straight up and down as well as
 to all sides. Every minute or two the bird changed
 her perch, walking, sometimes, a yard or two among
 the smaller twigs just as if she had been on the
 ground. When reaching for buds below her feet held
 the world bird for forward and downward with
 outstretched neck but I did not see the tail
 cocked up above the line of the back as happened
 with the birds observed at Ten Town in March
 eight or ten years ago. This Partridge seem to sight

called every few minutes kret, kret, ker-r-r, ker-r-r.
 in rather peevish tones. After finishing her supper she
 flew down to the ground with a heavy fluttering sound &
 I saw no more of her. It was there surely dead (7.05 P.M.)

I do not think the bird caught sight of me. I was behind a tree
 or can suspected my presence. During the whole time she
 kept steadily at work never pausing to look about her or
 fly or I could see.

Bowcord, Mass.

1910
May 8

Morning sunny & warm; afternoon cloudy & cool with showers.

As I was crossing the opening behind Ball's Hill this morning I heard a rustling in the dry leaves on the edge of the woods near a large woodpile; the next instant I saw a small hen Partridge scuttling off in a peculiar manner with her body flattened close to the ground, her head & neck curved low, her wings partly open & their tips trailing. She moved very quickly and erratically in a decisive course, winding in & out among the stems of the trees. After going about ten or fifteen yards she took wing in the usual manner & flew off over the shrubs. Feeling sure she had started from a nest I advanced cautiously & presently caught sight of the eggs, wholly unincubated, in a depression on the foot of a gray birch on the very edge of the cover about 15 yards from where I had stood when I first saw the bird & about 20 yards from the mountain laurel in which a Partridge would last year hold her brood. There were 12 eggs in the nest found to-day; two on top of the others.

Nest of
Partridge
Grouse

Concord, Mass.

1910.
May 8
(No. 2)

When I last visited the Farm on April 18 there were no Nests in the loft over the wood shed. To day I found 12 these in a cluster in the usual place. Judging by the quantity of dung on the floor beneath they must have been there about a week.

Nests in
wood shed.

The Broad-winged Hawk on back in this usual haunt at the Farm. I heard her of this afternoon and soon afterwards saw her soaring over the sun. Half an hour later I saw a bird which I took to be the ♂ although I was not sure it was not the female. It was flying over the oak woods near where the nest was last year, screaming.

Broad wing
Hawk.

Deer are said to have been numerous of late. Our farm hand, Harry Adams, saw two near Buden's house this morning. I found a fresh track in the cart road behind Boole's this

Deer.

Concord, Mass.

1910.

May 8
(No 3)

The discomfort of lying awake the greater part of last night was compensated for in large measure by the interest of hearing Scout Sparrows singing almost incessantly for two or three hours before daybreak. There were at least two and I think three of them. During the period just mentioned (probably from 1 to 3 a.m.) I heard one or more of them every few or five minutes, and often there would be two or three songs uttered within the minute.

Scout Sparrows
singing
freely in
middle
of night

Billows, also, were heard every five or ten minutes during this same period. It is very unusual, according to my experience, to hear them jumping in the middle of the night or indeed at any time when there is not at least some daylight.

Billows
jumping
in middle
of night

The stars were shining brightly all night but there was no moonlight. The air was calm & warm.

Concord, Mass.

1910
May 10

Clear and cool with fresh N. W. wind.

I walked by the Partridge on her nest this morning within 20 Partridge
yards seen from without starting her but when I stopped and turned about nest.

To look for her with my glass she left her eggs at once (although
I was then forty 40 yards away) and scuttled off in exactly the
same manner as on the 8th rising on wing after going down
twenty yards. As she was running she reminded me of a Wood
chuck by her general appearance & movements.

As I was strolling through Pine Park this evening I Partridge
started a Partridge from the wild apple tree when I watched building (?)
our building on April 21st last. - Indeed I have no real
proof that the bird seen this evening was (or had been before
I started her) similarly engaged I do not doubt that such
was the case. If so it is the latest date in spring when
I have known a Partridge to "bud". I did not see the
bird to night very distinctly, as it was late & the light was poor.
She made a loud noise with her wings as she left the tree.

Concord, Mass.

1910.

May 8
(No 4)

Shortly after breakfast I noticed enormous numbers
of newly-hatched larvae of the Gypsy Moth crawling up
the trunks of the trees along the south side of Rolle Hill.
Some of the gray birch stems were literally black with
them. Large numbers were following our footsteps closely
along three strands of spider web that led from a
cluster of small hemlocks to the roof of the cabin
across an intervening space of nearly 20 ft. The strands
were several feet apart and eight or ten feet above
the ground. They swung slightly in the light breeze
but this motion did not check the tiny caterpillars
which kept steadily on in endless procession, one their
fine gossamer suspension bridges. Of what avail com-
"tough foot" be on a tree trunk against such daring
& unscrupled invaders? My cotton night shirt hanging
on a nail on the cabin's hoop was quickly covered with them.

Newly hatched
larvae of
Gypsy moth
follow a
single
strand of
spider web
to roof
of cabin

Concord, Mass.

1910

May 15

Morning clear & warm up to 50 o'clock. Remainder of day cloudy with frequent light showers of fine rain.

Two Yellow-bellied Cuckoos, the first seen here this spring, appeared in the trees in front of the cabin about 9 a.m. I think they were a mated pair. One in a leafy maple uttered the long call ending with tan-tan-tan. The other in an oak but thinly foliated gave the single coo and also a peculiar low, wailing cry which I do not remember ever hearing before and which in quality (but not in form) reminded me of the continued voice of the Screech Owl. Both birds remained nearly motionless on the same perches for eight or ten minutes uttering their different notes, one answering the other.

Notes of
Yellow bell
Cuckoos.

A Thrasher sang garrulously all the morning in the thickets across the river. Near the cabin we had a Grackle, a Phoebe, two Song Sparrows & a Nuthatch. We also saw a very imperfect Jay & a Whippoorwill across the river. A Winter Wren came over the marsh & river at 10 a.m. - stridling.

Birds
singing
near Belle's

Coxsack, Mass.

1910

May 15
(No. 2)

Yesterday afternoon and to-day at the farm house I saw a pair of Spotted Sandpipers feeding along the margin of the little pond dug last year in front of the horse shed on Ball's Hill.

Spotted
Sandpipers

They were very tame allowing me to approach within 20 yards. As they "teetered" along the margin of the water this motion obviously tended to conceal rather than to reveal them. I saw them pull out several long worms (earth worms, apparently) from the mud and swallow them. One bird looked a trifle larger than the other. This one I took to be the male. He "showed off"

Showing off

every now and then by spreading his tail, half opening his wings and ruffling the body plumage so that he looked even larger than before. Both birds kept up a low conversational whistling in exquisitely sweet & luteal tones using the ordinary spring call, subdued as to volume.

Dorchester, Mass.

1910.

May 15th
(the 3)

Harry O. Adams, our farm hand, found a Hawk's nest in the Barrett run. It contained one egg about noon. He said the bird came about "working a whistling noise", I visited it this evening about 7 o'clock. As I had expected it proved to be a nest of the Broad-winged Hawks which have bred in these same woods for several years past. It was fully 300 yards from the site of their last year's nest (in which they reared 2 young) on the south side of the run in a straight, rather slender, young ^{white} pine having dead lower branches nearly down to the ground. The nest is scarce larger than a wide beavered felt hat & is about 18 ft. above the ground. The tree stands on the edge of a wood road. As I approached it, walking slowly along the road, the bird, I thought, left the nest when I was some 20 yards away & flying about 30 yards alighted in a maple when the last looking down at me in silence. I then walked quietly off & left her.

Nest of
Broad wing
Hawks

Bozrah, Mass.

1910
May 15
(No 4)

As I was returning from the farm about seven o'clock this evening I was not a little surprised as well as delighted to hear a Hermit Thrush in field, continuous song in Bush Field or rather in the larger trees which border it on the South side near the Spring. As I stood listening to his glorious music another Hermit began chattering on the other side of me and out among the Birches. There can be no question that this was not the singer for his liquid notes continued to come from the deeper woods of old trees all the while that the chattering was coming from the birches in the opening. I cannot help hoping that the presence of these Thrushes here, with ~~one~~ in song, or at least a note, means that they are a wooded pair which have settled for the summer in what is really a haunt admirably adapted for a breeding ground.

A Hermit
in Bush Field
✓ another
bird chattering
in Bush
Field in
evening

Two birds song were heard this evening

Concord, Mass.

1910

May 17

Clear & warm with southerly winds. Noon frost in early morning.

Two Red-eyed Vireos (in song) were the only arrivals noted. There

should have been a good bird hoard with this warm one.

As Gilbert & I were at breakfast this morning (about 7.30) we saw what we took at first to be a Muskrat swimming across the river. When it first attracted our attention it was out two or three rods from the Bedford shore opposite the mouth of our boat canal. It came directly towards the cabin swimming very fast with its head held high. As it approached more we caught sight of a broad fluffy tail held a little above the surface and by this recognized that the creature was a Gray Squirrel. It landed near our canoe first. As it emerged from the water its legs feet belly & the tip of its tail were soaking wet but its head, back, sides & most of the tail looked perfectly dry. For a minute or more after reaching firm ground it remained in one spot lifting up its feet one after another, & then stamping them down as if they were chafed. Finally it hopped to the trees & disappeared. It was a rather small "Gray". Although its general course across the river was straight I noticed that it kept zig-zagging a little by inclining alternately to ^{the right & left} ~~the right & left~~. I have never seen a Gray Squirrel ^{swim} ~~swim~~ ^{in the water before}.

Gray Squirrel
swims across
Concord River

Concord, Mass.

1910
May 17
(No 2)

Fish of nearly every kind appear to be very scarce in the river this Spring. We have tried for them repeatedly but have caught only a few Pike, an Eel and three Perch. No Brown nor Shiners have taken our hooks. Ravel thinks that the chemicals discharged into the Aqueduct at Maywood are killing the fish here as well as above. He tells me the river banks were lined with dead ones last summer. It may be that he is right but the river has been fished very hard for several seasons past & I suspect that has had something to do with it. I have looked in vain along our shore for nests of the Brown or Sun Fish. There was one for every yard or two of gravelly bottom only a few years ago. We caught the last fish of this species in 1908 trying for them without success last year.

Scarcity
of Fish

Due to
chemical
waste from
mills at
Maywood,
perhaps.

Concord, Mass.

1910.

May 19

Clear & cool with fresh N. W. wind.

Left yesterday afternoon and early this forenoon I went over the farm very thoroughly with a view to getting as nearly complete a list as possible of the birds that have settled here for the summer for purposes of comparison with a list to be made a few days after the grounds have been sprayed. The men began this work this morning, using a handpump barrel sprayer in a wagon and a mixture of lead mixed with well water in the proportion of

Birds at
Farm

. I have never known birds more numerous or in greater variety (save for the almost entire absence of north-bound migrants) than they have been on both these days. I noted only those which were seen or

heard within 100 yards or so of the house, mostly in the elms, the orchard, the lines of trees along the lower the berry pasture & the outskirts of the boundary woods. The list follows on the next page.

Concord, Mass.

1910.

May 18-19

(No 2)

Birds noted on Barrett Farm just before it was sprayed

Census of

1. Merula migratoria. - About 8 pairs. Two new nests one birds at the on house, four in apple tree (1 with young 1 with 2 eggs). Farm
2. Galuscoptes Carolinensis. - One singing in shrubbery front of house 18th the pair together in garden, 19th
3. Harporhynchus rufus. - One singing in second growth behind old barn (near hen house)
4. Sialia sialis. - One in field across road where I think there is a nest in the box in old apple tree.
5. Panes atricapillus. - One whistling perch in orchard
6. Sitta carolinensis. - Pair feeding young in nest in hole in big elm front of old barn.
7. Mniotilta varia. - Two singing along wood edges.
8. Helminthophila chrysoptra. - One singing in Berry Pasture on afternoon of 18th (possibly migrant)
9. Coroposthlypis a. ussuri. - One singing in oaks near old barn (doubtless a migrant).
10. Dendroica aestiva. - Two nests singing near house on morning of 19th, one afternoon of 18th
11. Dendroica maculosa. - One singing in the thorn on 18th & 19th (a migrant, of course)
12. Dendroica pennsylvanica. - One singing behind barn, another on edge of cone.
13. Dendroica blackburni. - One singing near Puffer Rock on 18 (doubtless a settled pair)
14. Dendroica virens. - Two singing along wood edges.
15. Seiurus aurocapillus Two singing in woods.

Concord, Mass.

1910
May 18-19
No 3/

Birds noted on Barrett Farm just before it was sprayed.

16. Setophaga ruticilla. - ♂♀ in grass behind barn, another
♂ singing at foot of lawn. Census of
birds at the
Farm
17. Vireo olivaceus. One singing near barn.
18. " solanus. Pair with nest in wood apple tree
in front of old barn. One bird on nest. Nest empty.
19. " flavifrons. Pair at wood on nest in elms
just behind wood shed.
20. " gilvus. - One singing in bay elm front of house
morning of May 19. Possibly not settled here.
21. Troglodytes didon. Silent bird in wall by end of shed
on 19th
22. Hirundo erythrogaster. Two flying about.
23. Tachycineta bicolor. Pair with nest in bay at hen house,
another in bay near house. Two pairs at Retchin place.
24. Piranga erythronotus. One singing at edge of woods.
25. Cardinalis purpureus. One singing near house. It
has been here ever since April.
26. Spinus tristis. A pair eating dandelion seeds (15th)
A male in full song (19th)
27. Poocetes gramineus. At least one pair in field
across road (Lawrence's field)
28. Spizella socialis. At least four pairs with two
more at Retchin place. Nest 1 egg, May 19. in
apple tree just behind our house.
29. " pusilla. One singing in Berry Pasture,
another in Retchin place (both May 18/)

Concord, Mass.

1910

May 18-19
(No 3)

Birds noted at Barrett farm just before it was sprayed.

Census of
Birds at the
Farm

30. Melospiza melodia. One pair along lane, another in garden at rear of house.
31. Pipilo erythrophthalmus. A pair in thicket front of house & in berry positions also.
32. Hydromela ludoviciana. One singing in orchard & in trees along lane. Several notes.
33. Cyanospiza cyanea. A ♂ singing in elm over lane on both days.
34. Delichonys orisivorus. A ♂ singing in (Lawrence's) field across the road from my house.
35. Molothrus piceus. One heard.
36. Sturnella magna. One singing in (Lawrence's) field just north of our hen house.
37. Icterus galbula. Two males singing & flushing through thin elm foliage in pursuit of a ♀.
38. Corvus americanus. Several flying about.
39. Cyanocitta cristata. Heard in distance. (Bird on nest in deep hollow hole to barn)
40. Tyrannus carolinensis. One in orchard front of barn on May 18.
41. Myiarchus cinchus. One in orchard front of barn, very noisy. (Heard first May 12.)
42. Sayornis phoebe ♂ singing, ♀ sitting on nest in barn cellar. (Same nest as last year). Another pair nesting at Plinth's place.
43. Empidonax minimus. Pair in orchard on rear of barn.

Barnard, Mass.

1910

May 18-19
(no 4)

Birds noted at Barnett farm just before it was sprayed.

Census of
Birds at the
Farm

44. Trochilus colubris. ♂ perch on dead twig of apple
tree in flower garden (his old stand) on 18th
45. Chaetura pelagica. Two flying above house.
46. Dryocetes pubescens. Pair nesting in elm over shed
47. Colaptes auratus. One in orchard on 18th
49. Buteo calurus. Pair nesting in elm. One bird
heard was west on 18th
50. Bonasa umbellus. At least one pair in elm.
51. Phasianus colchicus. One among in flower field
opposite Retkin place, another on
road to Barnard.

Omitting as certainly migrants the Parula Warbler
and the Magnolia Warbler we have left 49 species
which may be safely classed as summer residents of
this farm. Allowing most of them to be, probably
noted the total number of individual birds would be
about 130.

To the above list I added this evening (19th)

52. Geothlypis trichas. - One singing in Berry Pasture
53. Turdus fuscescens - " calling " " "
54. Antrostomus vociferans One singing in Barnett Thicket.

Concord, Mass.

1910.

May 19

On May 12th I visited the cellar under the little shop on the Ritchie place finding there a Phoebe's nest with four eggs. I examined the nest again yesterday afternoon when it held five eggs. On both occasions the eggs were cold. On neither did I see or hear a bird about the place. But as I was approaching the shed this afternoon (about 5 o'clock) a Phoebe came flying swiftly towards me from the direction of the cellar closely followed by another. After several sharp turns & twists the two birds came together in the air at a height of about 15 ft. and there descended rather slowly to the earth chucked together and whirling around and around. At first I thought it was a fight between rival males but when I got within 15 or 20 feet I saw that the birds were copulating. Never before have I seen the sexual act performed in anything like the same manner by birds of any kind. It lasted at least five minutes during which the contact was

Remarkable

sexual act

by pair of
Phoebes

Bowdoin, Mass.

1910

May 19
(No 2)

not over broken. Moreover the motions of the male were very
unlike those of other birds I have seen similarly engaged and
very like those of certain mammals, consisting of a great number
of rather slow, deep thrusts given, however, with exceeding vigor.
Indeed his sexual order seemed to amount almost to frenzy,
and to suffer no abatement as the minutes passed. Throughout
meanwhile lay prone on the ground with wings half spread
and tail under spread, his body heaving & pulsating. The
male held her firmly by the feathers of the occiput, with
his bill. Every now & then he would shake her violently
when she would flutter her wings. Once when he did
this she two birds rolled completely over without separating.
Even when at length she freed herself and flew off to
a telegraph wire he pursued her readily & attempted to again
unite with her his passion evidently not sated. Altogether
it was a most surprising exhibition for a pair of birds.

Sexual act
of
Phoebastria

Concord, Mass.

1910
May 19
(No 3)

A line of tall oaks with undergrowth beneath them ascends the hillside on the north of our farm orchard ending, a little below the barn in a cluster of larded apple trees. As the men were spraying one of these this morning I noticed a pair of Solitary Vireos flitting about, keeping just beyond the cloud of poison-laden mist, whirring in low, querulous tones as they are given to doing when disturbed. After the men had passed on my eye was caught by a bird's nest suspended in one of the apple trees just mentioned at a height of about 9 or 10 feet above the ground. On it a Solitary Vireo was sitting quietly. I went to the house for my nest examining mirror. When I returned the Vireo was gone. The nest proved to be empty but neatly finished inside. No doubt the Jays have completed this pair of birds but their eggs are not safe in least words such as they can be.

Nest of
Solitary Vireo
in apple tree
near barn

Saw a pair of Yellow-headed Vireos at a nest in the elm behind our wood shed where they had one last year.

Nest of
Yellow-headed
Vireo

Concord, Mass.

1910.

May 20

Clear & warm (about 80°) with light southerly winds.
The most summery day of the month thus far.

No signs as yet of any ill effects on the birds from
the spraying of one orchard & other trees yesterday. It is
true that the Solitary Tanager was not seen near this estate
& that the Golden-winged Warbler was not heard but pretty
much all of the other birds noted yesterday were observed
in the same places to-day. I noted nothing new to my
May list and the only north-bound migrants seen or heard
were two House Wrenblers and one dull-colored White-throated
Sparrow. Where are the Black-poll, Bay-breast, Black-throated
Blue and Canadian Wrenblers, the Wilson's Black-caps and
the Water Thrushes? Not one of them* has as yet come
under my observation and the month is now passing
it out. Richardson, whom I saw this morning, says that
birds of almost every kind are scarce at Concord. So
are they hereabouts except on this farm.

Effects of
spraying

* Mr. Plumb, Mr. Doyler of Concord has just telephoned
me that no one of these species has been
heard by him to date. He is a keen observer
& much in the fields & woods near the village.

Council, Mass.

1910
May 20
(No 2)

Robins are unusually numerous about the farm house but strangely silent. Not once have I heard near them one singing at any one time and during some days I have failed to hear even one; yet yesterday & to day I have found no less than seven new nests [#] within 100 yards of the house on six of which I saw birds sitting. Two of these nests are in leafy apple trees; the other two are on the front of the house at its opposite ends and have only about 25 feet apart, on corners just under the projecting eaves. One nest has three eggs, the other three or four young about a week old. I have seen the old birds on both nests at the same time, or rather one was on just as the other was flying off, which comes to the same thing. I doubt if there is a single Robin's nest anywhere in the woods on the farm nor do I know of one at

Abundance
of Robins
at Farm

* On May 22 I found two more nests one with young the other with just hatched birds. I found one of these nests on a fence post and the other on a house corner. I saw a pair of Robins on the house corner.

Boys' Hill, The Jays have taught the Robins a little lesson or two years & they have clung close to the neighborhood of town

Lowell, Mass.

1910.

May 20
(No 2)

A pair of White-bellied Nuthatches have frequented our
porch from ever since I have known it. During most springs
they have withdrawn to the woods to breed but this year I
have seen them in the large trees about the house up to the
present time. Yesterday and again to-day I observed them
taking food to a large horizontal branch of the big elm that
stands in front of the bird. First one and then the other
bird would come from the orchard with a small grub in the
top of its bill and alighting on the branch would lean slightly
to a certain place on its upper side and then drop down out
of sight, soon reappearing without the grub. There must be
a nest there but from the ground I could see no hole of course.
Repeatedly the ♀ did a very odd thing, usually when the ♂ was

in the supposed hole, or out of sight. Standing in our place on
the upper side of the branch very near the hole (?) she would
swing her head from side to side just as a mouse swings
his body, her bill just touching the bark. This movement was
kept up for half a minute at a time with great vigor, always
when the ♂ was in the hole. Sometimes she would uncover a deep
groove of the bark, exactly as the mouse does.

White-bellied
Nuthatches
feeding young
in nest

Concord, Mass.

1910
May 21

Cloudy with light southerly to easterly winds & increasing misty rain.

Arrivals Water Thrush 3 ♀, Geothlypis trichas (?) 1 ♀. No other notable birds
migrants of any kind seen or heard. I had expected a
big bird show to-day following the warm weather yesterday (last
night was very warm) but it did not come.

Arrivals

No less than three pairs of Orioles are building in the elms
on the Farm, a number never before equalled, I think, since I
have owned the place. One nest (found to-day) is in an elm
in front of the Bungalow at the back end of the garden, another
in the young elm just at the rear of the house, the third in
the big drooping elm in our clove yard (about 20 yards from
the second nest and 100 yards from the first). The first two
nests were begun, I should judge, on the 19th. I saw the bird
begin the third yesterday morning about 8 o'clock. As I was
standing under the tree she came with a single strand (it


Orioles
nesting at
Farm

looked like a strand of wool fiber) and looped it between two
twigs not far from my head. I could see distinctly that
it was the very first. The bird knotted one end about the twig
& pulled at it long & hard several times, then placed the other end in
the same way. She worked at least 5 minutes before she descended
it was most interesting to see her push & draw the end under & over the strand & bring

Concord, Mass.

1910.

May 21
(M22)

using her sharp bill most deftly. When she pushed at the strand to lighten the knot she put forth her utmost strength tugging & tugging and every now & then flopping her wings as she threw her head & body backward. When finally released the strand hung in a wide, deep loop like this  She worked nearly all day yesterday and quite all of to-day in the rain. The nest looked like a very flimsy affair this evening. The male occasionally accompanied her to the nest showing off & "flirting" but he gave her no help. The other two birds worked through to-day also & their notes heard in the same way. There was only better singing on the part of any of the couples either yesterday or to-day. All the apple trees were sprayed with arsenate of lead on the 19th but none of the crows have been sprayed as yet. All these

Crows
building
nests.

male Crows are fine singers of the old-fashioned type. All are new to this place & I judge by their voices.

Concord, Mass.

1910.

May 21
(No 3)

As I was on my way to the 7 o'clock train from Ball's Hill, on
May 18th, I saw a Blue Jay sitting on her nest in a small
white pine within 20 feet of the road where it dips down
into the hollow just this side of Benson's. To-day I
visited the nest in company with the Messrs. Dexter. The
bird was on sitting with her tail perpendicularly over one side
of the nest and her bill pointing upward at an angle of
45° over the opposite side. He stood directly beneath her for
several minutes, talking, without disturbing her. Then by
flourishing an up-to I reached up and touched her tail with
my fingers at first stealthily to under side gently, then touching
it hard finally pushing it up and sideways with some
violence. I failed in this way to elicit any mark of alarm or
even notice on the part of the bird; but when one of the Dexters
attempted to touch her bill she bounded up into the air &
flew off with a loud scream.

A flock of six Blue Jays ranged back & forth over the whole
farm & neighboring woodlands through the entire forenoon seemingly
lovely & jingling their harsh notes. They acted like a band of noisy concord migrants off

nest of
Blue Jay.
I touch
the bird
on the nest.

Concord, Mass.

1910.

May 22

Morning sunny & warm; afternoon cloudy with chill east wind.

No arrivals noted, no north-bound birds of any kind seen or heard. It looks as if the migration were practically ended. The woods dense with foliage and very many of the trees, such as maples & birches, in full leaf.

About 7 o'clock this evening I hear from our former home, faintly but with perfect distinctness, the song of a Hermit Thrush coming from a considerable distance towards the westward, apparently from the young oak woods on Bonner's land beyond my Berry Pasture. The bird continued singing as long as I remained listening or about five minutes. I wonder if it was the same Hermit I heard in Birch Field a few evenings ago.

Hermit Thrush
singing near
Berry Pasture

Gilbert found a Yellow Warbler's nest this morning. It is very conspicuously placed in the very top of a thin-folaged snow-berry bush just behind our house within five feet of the paring window. Soon after he showed it to me I heard the birds making a loud, continuous outcry similar to that of a small bird in the clutches of a hawk or cat, e-e-e-e-e-e very shrill and plaintive. Hurrying to the window I saw the ♀ Warbler flitting excitedly above the nest & turning in it her wing, tail spread, her bill wide open. Within two feet of her was a ♂ Baltimore Oriole sitting motionless regarding her with what seemed to me a cynical expression. A moment later the Oriole fluttered to the nest and the Yellow Warbler left us precipitately. Just as the Oriole began tearing at the outer cover of the nest, evidently to penetrate it of course to work into her own in the due season, I rapped on the window loudly & frightened her away. Soon after this the Warbler came back & inspected the nest carefully. It is practically furnished but empty.

Oriole tries
to steal
bird's
material
from nest of
Yellow Warbler

Coucord, Mass.

1910.
May 23

Cloudy with storm, strong S. W. wind.

The migrations will "hang fire" if, indeed, they be not over after having shown us the merest trace of what we usually see during the month. Not a single northern breeding species has come under my notice since the 21st & Mr. Dexter reports the same experience in the neighborhood of Concord Bridge.

No migrants
passing now.

As I listened, this morning, to a Redstart singing in the oak grove behind our barn it occurred to me that a movie might well have thought he was having at least three or four throats. For the bird kept varying his song and it was sufficiently varied in character to seem to come from several different directions in the course of a minute or two.

Song of the
Redstart.

Carolina Doves have been very scarce here this spring and I have not yet heard one coo. But I had the pleasure of seeing a pair and a single bird flying low over Green Field this afternoon.

Carolina
Doves
in
Green Fields.

There is much freshly ploughed land there now & that always attracts them.

Bowcord, Mass.

1910.

May 23

(No 2)

The single bird made a continuous, rather hoarse, whistling sound with its wings which I could hear distinctly at a distance of over 100 yards but the other two flew close past me in perfect silence. They alighted in a tall tree with the same remarkable abruptness that is so characteristic of the Passenger Pigeon checking their great speed only at the last moment, when within a few yards of the chosen perch, they swooped furiously vigorous & pronounced wing strokes. As the single bird passed me it looked exactly like a Passenger Pigeon and quite as large, I thought. Indeed for an instant I was thrilled by the suspicion that it really was a Pigeon & then I heard the hoarse whistle of wings which, of course settled the matter the other way. I know of few more graceful and attractive birds than these Doves, especially when seen in flight circling over an open field.

Carolina
Dove.

Concord, Mass.

1910.

May 24

Clear and very warm (about 85°) with light S. W. wind.

There was evidently a light bird wave of north-bound migrants passing to-day. Soon after breakfast I heard singing in the sun at the farm a Wilson's Black-cap (not previously noted this spring) and two Black & Yellowthroats (of which I have found but one individual before). Mr. Dyer reports by telephone that two or three Blackpolls and four or five Black-throated Green Warblers were singing in the village elms at Concord in the early morning. During his morning walk he found a Heermann's and a Savannah Sparrow singing in the fields near the Post Farm where I found both species breeding in 1886 or 1887 (I have not looked for them there since).

A light
bird wave
arrives.

Heermann's
Savannah
Sparrows.

Concord, Mass.

1910.

May 25

Cloudy with strong, warm, humid S.W. wind which brought
light rain in late afternoon.

A Black-face Woodpecker singing in the oaks & elms near the
house was the only north-bound migrant noted here to-day.

Only one
north-bound
migrant.

As I was strolling through the garden about 8 o'clock
this morning I heard the shrill squeak of a Hummingbird coming
from our Syringa hedge. Approaching this I was not a little
surprised to see a ♂ Hummer in hot pursuit of a ♀ who
was dodging about through the dense foliage of twigs
in the very heart of a large Syringa bush. For nearly a minute

Love flight
of Thryothorus
Hummingbird
He chases
female about
in dense
bushes.

The two birds kept up their game of hide and seek without over
they took very short flights - often not more than two feet - from twig to twig
showing themselves fairly. Then the ♀ engaged with the ♂ in

He makes
three different
sounds at
once.

close chase. She must have returned to the Syringa bush after

doubting back (although I did not see her again) for the

next quickly came back and began the pendulum low flight
directly over it swinging down and up in a deep curve a

1960

May 25
(No 2)

down time or more his gape appeared and glowing like
a burning coal or a big ruby. Standing within two yards of
the bush (which he just brooded at each downed twig) I
distinctly heard him make three different sounds at once.
One was the shrill squeaking made at all seasons, by
both sexes, when disturbed or excited, another the loud
bee-like droning sound of wings (sometimes varied to
a sharp buzzing rather than a droning sound), the third
a humming-like sound very like that made by Isidore
Geotycos as I heard it in Colorado years ago. The
squeaking & buzzing were incessant or nearly so; the
humming-like sound was emitted most of the time when
the bird was rising & falling but it ceased for an
instant when he was perching. I have never heard

T. colubris make it before perhaps because I have never seen
near enough to a flying ♂. The mystery is how could the
bird make this sound & the humming or droning one at the same
time. That he does it is beyond all question

Concord, Mass.

1910.

May 26

Partly cloudy. Warm with fresh S. W. wind changing to N. W. at evening.

Arrived - Night-hawk 1 perching in our big elm at 8 a.m.
A Black-poll ♂ & a Black & Yellow Warbler ♂ of the only northern migrants noted.

Migration

Since our apple trees were sprayed (on May 19), I have not noticed any falling off in the numbers of our local birds.

Barnet Farm
sprayed a
second time
(Culls, elms etc)

Indeed I feel reasonably sure that there has been no harm done.

I have been affected by the poison to any extent. To-day I had the large elms about the house, the oak grove behind the barn, the hickories between the barn & the Bungalow, the lines of tall oaks, elms etc. leading from the Orchard down towards the woods, and the borders of the wood roads leading to the Rabbit place and to Bush Field, very thoroughly sprayed with a strong solution of arsenic of lead. This, I fear, may lead

to a good deal of damage to the birds. Gilbert picked up a dead ♂ Oriole this morning in the road in Corlies where spraying by the town has just been done.

Dead Oriole
found in
road.

Concord, Mass.

1910.

May 26
(no 2)

When the men were spraying the large elm in front of the barn this morning the pair of Nuthatches, were greatly disturbed flying close about them & calling loudly. Harry Adams examined the nest and reported that he could see several young birds in it. The hole enters directly in from the upper side of a horizontal branch as thick as a man's thigh & then runs back nearly level for a distance of about 12 inches. Both old birds carried food into it after the men had gone.

Visited a Field Sparrow's nest with 5 eggs found yesterday by G. L. H. It is in a little red cedar on the knoll at the Beech place about 12 inches above the ground. I do not remember ever finding one in a cedar before.

The young in one of the Robin's nests on the front of our house were out of the nest in the breast this to day. The other Robin has hatched her young. It was pretty to see her fondling them this morning as she sat on the nest. Rising slightly she would peep beneath & thrust her bill in under her breast at the same time calling cac-cac-cac very like a Blackbird (in Agassiz). I do not ~~remember~~ ever hearing a Robin make this sound before.

Robins
with young

Coxsack, Mass.

1910.

May 26
(No 3)

Although during the past week I have seen some more than two male Orioles about the farm on my own farm I found, in the chow near the house, two nests well begun on May 20 and a third which the ♀ was already beginning with the very first string, on the 21st. All three birds have been at work more or less constantly ever since up to to day when they seemed to have all finished their labors. Later day they were leaving the nests with day goes. I think the two found on the 20th must have been begun the day before that. There it would seem that the time required for completing the nest varies somewhat with different birds, ranging at least from four to six days.

These nests
of Baltimore
Oreos built
in from
4 to 6 days

Concord, Mass.

1910.

May 27

Early morning clear with cool N. wind. Afternoon cloudy & warm. Light thunder shower about noon & heavy one at 5 P. M.

Arrived. Wood Thrush 1 singing at morning & evening in Boquet Run.

Arrived

Wood Pewee 1 " near stem boat house opp. Ball's Hill, same.

1 " at farm behind barn at 7 P. M.

North-bound migrants (formerly noted) were Bl. & W. -tail Warbler 1 ♀,

North-bound

Usua Warbler 1 ♀, Wilson's Black. cap 1 ♀, Horn Thrush 1 ♀.

migrants

A Maryland Yellow-throat at Ball's Hill, regularly began his song (otherwise normal) by a peet-weet as very like that of the Spotted Sandpiper that I thought for some time that there was a Sandpiper calling whenever the Yellow-throat sang.

Maryland

Yellow-throat

was old

song.

None of the Orioles settled at the farm seem to have suffered any injury as yet from the spraying. I have seen a pair at the nest one on one damaged this afternoon. As sunset I saw all their nests within a foot or two of one another in the top of a large white oak that has been half-stripped of its foliage by brown tails. They were feeding on large hairy caterpillars which looked like brown tails. I saw them pick them off the leaves and then shake & batter them against the twigs just before eating them. One bird descended from the top of the caterpillars which I was watching him. The oak stands near the road just behind our house. I saw the same house sparrow delay it with food and water yesterday but none of this great reached the twigs when the Orioles were at work this evening.

Orioles

eating caterpillars

of brown tail

worms in

sprayed oak

Concord, Mass.

1910.

May 28

Partly sunny, partly cloudy; cool with high north wind.

Arrived. Tennessee Warbler, a ♂ in full song 7.30-9 a.m. in the oaks behind our house and in the line of winged oaks, elsewhere on north side of orchard. In these same trees on two former hours I heard singing 2 Black-jacks, a Wilson's Black-cap, an Oven-brooder and a Black & Yellow Warbler. Another Black & Yellow was singing upon Ball's Hill in the swamp behind Norman's Knoll. Thus there has evidently been another light flight of north bound migrants.

On Ball's Hill, where I spent most of the day, there were only a few birds although more than I have found there before this month. A pair of Grosbeaks, a ♂ Starling, a Red-eyed Vireo, two Maryland Yellow-Throats (♂♂), a Black-throated Green Warbler, an Oven-bird, the pair of Phoebe's, two or three Robins, three Blue Jays & two Yellow-billed Cuckoos make up the full list of those noted actually on the hill or at its base.

Concord, Mass.

1910
May 30

Cloudy & cool with fresh E. wind

At Balls Hill a Water Thrush was singing near the cabin at 9 a. m. and a night-hawk keeping somewhere in the distance about 3 P. M. These were the only north-bound migrants noted to-day.

On May 8 I recorded in this journal the finding of a Partridge's nest within a few yards of a large woodpile on the edge of the opening behind Balls Hill. A few days later Harry O. Adams, our intelligent farm hand, reported finding what we both supposed was the same nest since he said it was very near the woodpile. His count of the eggs, however, was 11 whereas I had made the number 12. Since then I have visited the nest a number of times always finding the bird sitting until to-day. He has not been there again until to-day. At 4.30 this afternoon I stumbled on a hen Partridge with a brood of young on the crest of the hill behind the cabin & was over 80 yards from the woodpile. Meeting Harry a few minutes later I said "I think our Partridge has hatched her eggs", telling him what I had just seen. He suggested a visit to the nest to make sure. As we approached the woodpile he turned in to the right of it, I to the left. Instantly a dispute arose as to just where the nest was each of us maintaining he was headed straight for it: I knew its exact position to a foot & Harry thought he did. I had difficulty to get him to look in my place & when he saw the eggs (there were 11, not 12, & very well on my chance as if about to hatch) his face expressed utter astonishment & mine, no doubt, triumph. After looking keenly about him for a moment he said with great assurance "Mr. Brewster that is not my nest, let me now show you mine." He then led me straight past my nest to a distance of not over 30 or 35 yards where by the side of a disused foot path on the edge of the woods,

A colony
of breeding
Partridges

Covered, Mass.

1910

May 30
(No 2)

among thick bushes, under a clump of ferns ~~was another nest~~,
also with 11 eggs. These looked brighter and fresher but it is now
over two weeks since he found them. The bird was not seen at this
time (ie when he showed them to me) nor was my bird seen.
But a half hour later I found my bird on the nest as she
was yesterday afternoon. I did not go to Harry's nest a second
time to-day as the light was poor. Then I found I could
not see her without disturbing her as the spot is very densely
shaded.*

In all my life I have never before found one heard of,
two nests of the Partridge, any time later he was together. Then,
too, there was the hen with the brood of young. Although
apparently several days old they must have been hatched in
the immediate neighborhood of Balls Hill (Harry saw a brood on
the 26th May in Pine Park about 100 yards from where I met
with them to-day). To add to the mystery it is several
years since I have heard a cock Partridge drum anywhere
in the Balls Hill region (on April 2, 1910 Gilbert heard one
on the South side of the hill just far from the cedars but
he heard it only a few times, all the same morning). I
have reportedly seen an old cock drum, however. He
must be an odd bird if he can manage to attract to
himself & to keep three wives without ever giving them
a denude. And if there be more than one cock it is
hardly strange that I have heard no drumming especially as
I have been living at the hill a long part of the past
Spring. Taking it all together I am sorely puzzled to
understand the matter at all. It certainly looks as if
the two hens which still have eggs must belong to a single
cock however the cock may be with the hen which has
young.

Colony of
breeding
Partridge

* Harry visited
the nest again after I started for the
farm. As the bird was not there he
examined the egg case & found that
my own hen's egg was almost a week
older than the Partridge's egg.

Concord, Mass.

1910.

May 31

Morning rainy; afternoon fair with occasional glooms of twilight.
Cool with wind at first easterly, afterwards W. to N.W.

The only north-bound migrant noted was a Black-bellied Warbler
singing in the oak grove at the farm.

I spent most of the day rearranging things in one barn
cellar with the help of two men. The Phoebe has a nest there
in the usual place on a shingle nailed to a beam over an open
window, at a height of about seven feet. At first they were greatly
disturbed by our presence but they became reconciled to it as the
day wore on. They were feeding five young almost fully grown &
fledged but still in the nest. Both birds came with food in
their bills every two or three minutes & sometimes very minute,
Sometimes they came together, sometimes singly. Nearly half the
time they brought Dragon-flies some of the largest size. These
were given to the young just as they were caught with the long
gawny wings, the long body etc. intact. They were swallowed
almost at a gulp by the ravenous young which kept up a low

Phoebe
feeding young
in nest on
Dragon-flies

Lowell, Mass.

1910.

May 31
(No. 2.)

Chirping sound suggestion of unappetized hunger. The old birds usually alighted first on a box and then flew up to the nest joining in front of it on rapidly beating wings for two or three seconds. Once I saw one of them fly off with a white element back. At one time when two of my men were working almost directly under the nest an old bird went to it & fed the young. The old ♂ (I ~~assume~~ assume it is the ♂) roosts regularly in the wood shed attached to our house, flying into it as twilight is falling.

The Nuthatches are still feeding their young in the nest in the elm in front of the barn. I watched them for nearly half an hour this morning. They usually came to the nest once every two or three minutes. When one came just after the other had fed the young & was apparently about to leave the branch it often transferred its morsel of food to the bill of its mate who at once turned about & entered the hole with it for the young. Moreover I watched this closely it was the ♀ who brought & the ♂ who received & took in, the food. This was always a small rounded object like a beetle or its larva.

Nuthatches
feeding young
in nest.

Concord, Mass.

1910

June 7

Cow-birds

On June 4 I saw three Cow-birds, 2 males & 1 female, flitting through our orchard apparently looking for birds' nests. These were there together there again this morning but with the proportion of sexes reversed i.e. there were 2 females and only 1 male. The 3 sat packed close together on a dead branch for several minutes. Shortly after this I saw a ♀, presumably one of this trio, fly straight to a chest nut's nest of Boris floriflorus in one of our large elms. Alighting on its rim she looked down into it intently and then flew away in apparent disgust closely pursued by a female Redstart and one or two other small birds that I could not identify. They made a rather loud outcry such as would have been the case had they been disturbed by the presence of a Jay or Hawk. This seemed to me to indicate plainly that they were quite aware of the indirect danger due to the presence of the Cow-bird. I had not known before that her real character is thus known to any of the birds she visits on.

Dorchester, Mass.

1910.

June 9

Clear & warm. Cloudy in late P. M. with distant thunder.

Helminthophila
leucobranchiata
♂ & ♀ nest
5 egg-yung.

I went to Dorchester this morning to see a nest of Helminthophila leucobranchiata. Walter Foxon & his friend Dr. Tyler found it on June 5 when the ♀ was sitting on 5 eggs and when they saw, fleeing about in the trees nearby, singing and chasing one another, a ♂ H. leucobranchiata and a ♂ H. chrysoptera, both typical birds. The nest was not visited on the 6th but on the 7th Foxon went to it & found the ♀ sitting. He did not disturb her. The next day (8th) he went again & found her flushing for young apparently only just hatched. On this last occasion he saw the ♂ leuc. near the nest but the ♂ chrysoptera was not there.

Then he, Perkins & I went to the place about 10.30 this morning we found the nest undisturbed & the birds near it on guard.

It was built well up above the ground on the side of a dry ditch

between a clump of meadow ree and one of Golden rod (S. rugosa.)

Beaumont, Mass

1910

June 9
(No 2)

The spot was rather closely shaded by a big white pine but just beyond the cutbank which formed one side of the ditch lay a comparatively open, sun-bathed space growing up to bushes Blackberry, Berries etc. On the other side was an extensive tract of lumpy woodland with large trees, chiefly maples, beneath which fawns of various kinds grow in great luxuriance and profusion. From this latter side we made our first approach to the nest. I saw it almost at a glance from a distance of fifty or ten yards for it was a belly affair (green or gray on an orange nest of Wilson's Thrush) and only imperfectly concealed by the foliage of the red & golden rod there was above it while the bottom of the latter was high in front of it was covered only with a patch of short, firm grass. The young raised their heads & spread wide their mouths when I looked down at them. They were about double the size of the eggs of a Helminthophila & although chiefly washed

Helminthophila
leucostriata

Lexington, Mass.

1910

Jan 9
(No 3/)

showed a few patches or tufts of light yellowish down which *Holmiv.*
leucophaea

Faxon tells me he saw us twice of yesterday.

Within two or three minutes after I had looked at the young
the ♀ parent came with food in her bill. We were then standing
by the trunk of the pine about 15-feet from the nest. The bird
saw us and began chirping very like a Marshland Yellow-throat.
A few moments later she began making a wholly different
noise, very harsh and abrupt sounding, like the harsh grating
chatter of a Marsh Wren. Evidently she was now greatly disturbed
by something, apparently a Chipping Sparrow which appeared on the bank
just above the nest. He kept steadily on & as soon as he was
out of sight the bird ceased chattering & began chirping again.
We saw her now to the best possible advantage as she hopped &
flitted about among some low shrubs close to the nest, especially
alighting on the top strand of a wide fence in full sunlight
& showing her upper & under parts & her sides, by turns.

Lexington, Mass.

1910.

June 9

(No 4)

She was unmistakably a leucostriata having no trace of Helmin
leucostriata
ashy at the throat or cheeks. Her entire under parts looked uniform
dull white save over the breast which was lightly suffused with
pale yellowish. There was a narrow well defined line of blackish
through the lores but it did not seem to reach back of the eye.
The crown was dull yellow, the back greenish olive. There
was a double wing band of yellow rather bright and pure
for a female bird. The line of separation between the two
yellows bars being distinctly marked. The bird was very
restless and active keeping constantly on the move, ~~and~~
flashing her tail (which she carried rather high) and wings.
She did not go to the nest at this time & after carrying the
food for several minutes it disappeared. At length she was joined
by a ♂ H. chrysophus who had food in his bill. This he gave
her almost at once, both birds meeting on a low branch & flashing
their bills as the morsel was passed from one to the other. The

Lexington, Mass.

1910.

June 9
(1904)

failed to see where one of said birds is. The male was a perfectly Helmis
leucotrachealis.
typical Chrysopygus in high plumage with jet black throat & cheeks.

Soon after this we heard the song of what I should
have unhesitatingly called a Golden-crowned Kinglet coming
from a solitary oak tree stood in the open being there
about 30 yards from the nest. After looking about this tree
for several minutes we finally saw the bird and he proved to
be the ♂ leucotrachealis an exquisitely beautiful and
ultra typical one. There was not the slightest trace of yellow on
his under parts which seemed to be everywhere clean, silky
white from the chin to the crotch including the sides. The black
line through the eye was very strongly marked, the yellow of the
crown deep & rich, the ~~upper~~ back clean ash. The yellow bars
on the wings were broad & well - high contrast. All this
we saw distinctly for the bird was in full daylight much of the
time. He sat for minutes on a dead twig clinging among trees westward

Lexington, Mass

1910.

June 9
(no 6)

morning anything but his head. At first he sang the
ti-ti-ti-ti, Zeeee Song (which The Golden-wing also uses).
repeating it a score or more times without variation. It
reminded me very strongly of the Song of the Yellow-hammer
of Europe. At length he changed to the Zee, dee-dee-dee-dee
Song which as far as I could make out was exactly
like that of Chrysomitris. Altogether he spent at least
ten minutes singing in this oak and then flew away
over an open meadow to distant woods. After he began
singing he neither sang nor heard anything of the other birds
birds, at least until sometime later. When on returning to
the place from visiting the opposite side of the swamp, we
found her of sitting quietly in the nest. She was so close down
in it that one had to stand directly over it to see her. She
frowned her bill well upward & her long dark eyes looked
straight into mine as I bent low over her. We did not speak

Holmies
leucobranchialis

Lexington, Mass.

1910
June 9
(No 7)

One sitting down on the bank of the river waited quietly in hopes one of the birds would come. At the end of a very few minutes the Chrysomitris appeared with food in his bill. For at least ten minutes he flitted about the water looking for something to which a couple of yards and evidently wishing to visit it and feed the ♀. But he could see us and he was suspicious. At length he settled on a log twig & sat there almost motionless for a long time. Still holding the food in the tip of his bill. Finally he flitted off through the shrubbery & we saw him no more. We all agreed that he must be the mate of the ♀ "Leuco". Although up to this morning the evidence had all seemed to indicate that the ♀ "Leuco" was her mate. The latter looks exactly like the bird Foxen found three years ago on the other side of the branch about 150 yards from where the nest is this year (see birds record).

Helmin-
leucobronchialis

Bevington, Mass

1910
June 9
(Ms 8)

In the afternoon Foxon took us to the Golf Links on the north side of Davis Hill where he & Dr. Tyler have seen two pairs of Prairie Horned Larks of color and heard them sing. They were first noticed there by Dr. Tyler two years ago. He saw only one to-day a typical ♂ without trace of yellow on throat or legs. He was feeding on a broad sward of clover and turf & allowed us to approach within about thirty yards.

We had him under observation for ten or fifteen minutes. During this time he made us sound was did he call when he finally took wing and flew to a distant part of the grounds. A number of people were playing golf on the links & several parties of them passed near this spot when he was feeding without disturbing him. "There can be no question of course

that these larks are breeding here, probably in one or another of the patches of sweet birch very scrubby grass scattered over the open hills.

Prairie
Horned Lark
Breeding in
Bevington

Concord, Mass.

1910

June 11

For nearly if not quite a week the Downy Woodpecker
 nesting in the elm over our shed have been feeding their young
 at the mouth of the hole. Yet I have failed thus far to see
 anything of the young even when the act of feeding took place. I
 do not think it is over done by negotiation, after the manner
 of the Flicker, for whenever one of the parent birds comes
 to the nest the food held in the tip of its bill is very
 obvious and usually of the size of a red beetle or Cyn. Moreover
 the bird disposes of it very quickly & without any peculiar motions
 of the head merely thrusting its bill into the hole and a few
 seconds later withdrawing it & flying off.* From morning to night
 the young keep up a ceaseless clatter doubtless in volume when
 the parents appear. It is unlike the sound made by young
 Hairy Woodpecker or Flicker and very similar in a general way
 to the chirping of black field crickets only louder & more
 insistent. It is exceedingly tiresome & is getting on my nerves.

Nest of
Downy
Woodpecker

* On June 12 I saw the parent feed the young under conditions
 so favorable for accurate observation that I can very truly
 positively state regarding their way of feeding. The bird simply thrusts
 the food as a Flicker or a Chipping nuthatch have done, straight in
 all five short feeds into the entrance hole. I saw it enter the
 hole with the bill, and saw it withdraw the bill with the
 food in it. The bird then flew off.

Concord, Mass.

1910

Jan 11
(No 2)

This is the sixth consecutive year that the Downy Woodpecker nest of
Downy
(presumably two same pair) have bred in the same long, much horizontal
decayed branch of the elm by our shed. A fresh hole has
been made every year so that there are now six of them
in a long straight line on the under side of the branch
which is nearly horizontal. During the time when the birds
have eggs and young the entrance hole is invariably so when
it was first made and so very small that the Woodpecker
can only just manage to squeeze in & out by wiggling head
for a second or two. But sometime the following autumn
(I do not know just when)
or winter, the hole is nearly doubled in size so that one
might mistake it for that of a Hairy. This at least has
been the case with all the nests but one which is, I think,
the last left open & which still remains as it was at
first. I have little doubt that all Downies regularly enlarge

their nesting holes in autumn to provide sleeping quarters during
the winter when it does not matter if the entrance is commonly large
as an adult bird can in little or no degree of activity on their backs

Cowdell, Mass.

1910.

June 2

The young left one of the Robin's nests under the eaves on the front of our house on May 26. Since then I have seen them with their parents about the place almost daily but not until this morning have I seen either of the parent birds at the nest. The female came to it with a bird full of dry grass which I was chasing this morning, however, and after that I saw her make repeated trips of the same kind. Six days she is relining the nest preparing to lay a second clutch of eggs in it.

Robin
relining nest
for second
clutch

Blackburnian Woodpeckers are breeding as numerous on our place here this season as they do in the main woods. There are two males singing in Phelps' Rock woods, one in Prescott's pines, one on Davis Hill, one on Pine Ridge and one at North Hill. None before have I known so many here in summer. I attribute their increase to the crowding in of

Unusual
abundance
of breeding
Blackburnian
Woodpeckers

birds driven from nearby localities by the cutting or thinning of the pine woods which has been so general in Cowdell of late.

Dorset, Mass.

1916

June 16

Within the past three or four weeks we have sprayed practically every tree and shrub within 150 yards of the farm house besides some thirty acres of woodland at Birch Field, Purple Rock, Bulls Hill & Davis Hill. As far as I have been able to determine no harm has resulted to the birds. They continue as numerous as usual in the sprayed woodlands and they are much more numerous than I have ever before known them to be at this season in the orchards, shade trees and woods on the farm. Although I have kept the closest possible watch on them in the immediate neighborhood of the house when almost every leaf is blue with alarvae of leaf hoppers (as has been so for weeks) I have found no dead birds nor missed any living ones. Here they are having exceptionally good success thus far with hatching & rearing their young for the frogs, Crows & Red Seminals have neglected them but little if at all. I see them getting food (consists of various kinds) among the poisoned foliage and feeding it to the young

Lonsand, Mass.

1910.

June 16
(no 2)

in the nests apparently without its effects. The only evidence to the contrary thus far secured is that furnished by a ♂ Oriole which Gilbert found dead in the road in Colchick under down trees which had just been sprayed.

Over three pairs of Orioles at the farm are all busy now with the care of their young in the nests. I see the ♂♂ as well as the ♀♀ bringing food to the young, chiefly small, smooth, green caterpillars which look like garden weevils. The ♂♂ bring food when their bills are filled with them.

The Redstarts have young in the nest in the Hawthorn opposite the in the garden. I saw the ♂ (a fine adult bird) feed them this afternoon. (Afternoon (June 17, 18) saw this many times.)

The brood of young Downy Woodpeckers apparently left the nest in the elm over the shed yesterday or the day before. Gilbert found the remains of one of the young (fully fledged) under the tree yesterday morning. One (or both) of the old birds descended persistently to day in the nesting tree & behind the barn. I saw it only once & then it was the female. I could not find the young -

Concord, Mass.

1910.

June 18

A hot, sultry day, calm for the most part, clear but with clouds gathering in late afternoon and thunder thunders booming about, some coming near us.

Most of the numerous birds which are nesting close about our house are having exceptionally good success in hatching and raising their young. The Crows, Jays and Red Squirrels are not molesting them at all this season perhaps because the locusts of the brown tailed & gypsy moths supply them with abundant food in the woods. I hear both Crows & Jays daily in the distance but I have seen them only occasionally along the wood edges of the farm and not once near any of the bird-nests. A Red Squirrel appeared in the elms in the clove yard yesterday

& spent an hour there. I thought at first he was just hunting food he searched every branch from base to tip with the closest attention. But he caused no alarm among the Orioles, Robins, bees etc. and after getting out the gun I fired at him again when I saw him reportedly take from the under side of a leaf & eat what I am nearly sure was a larva caterpillar.

Concord, Mass.

1910.

June 18

(No 2)

Whenever I pass very near the apple tree in which the
Crested Flycatcher are nesting one of the birds is sure to
fly out of the hollow branch which I first saw two years
ago & in which I found a nest at the close of last
summer after the Flycatcher had gone. To day I approached
the tree very carefully making our nearly ploughed road
where my footsteps made no sound. Yet the Flycatcher
must have heard us coming for before I got under the
branch (which hangs about 15 feet above the ground) she
appeared at the mouth of the hole. For a few seconds
she remained there motionless and then flew to another
tree in perfect silence. This behavior is quite characteristic
of her and her mate. They flit about unobtrusively when very
near our working under a mass of trees which shelter the
nest but I never hear them utter any sound there although

Behavior
of
nesting
Crested
Flycatcher

they can still sing enough at times (last spring there was a wood a
two or three miles away, in other parts of the orchard or in neighboring woods.

1910.

June 18
(No 4)

over. The ground is so covered with lopped off branches
as to be impossible except by means of the car paths
and ancient wood roads along which one may walk with
perfect ease. I traversed several of them this afternoon.

Over a tract at least 1000 acres in extent there are fine
trees standing which are to a greater height than the
fifties feet but sparse growth due to their years of open
sprung up comparatively, though the wreckage left by the
wood choppers. As I had anticipated could be the case

the entire region literally swarmed with Junco & Chondestes - Junco
abundant.

Several Theridion and I heard one or two Maryland Yellow throats
although the land is cleared & exceedingly dry. I had not

thought of Hirundo Theridion but they were there in numbers Colony of
equal to anything one might expect to find in the wood Hirundo
forested parts of western Maine & New Hampshire. At one Theridion
time I heard their notes in full song and in walking
half a mile I must have heard as many as four or five
all told. One bird was a perfect singer. Without doubt
the bird (or birds) I have noted occasionally on the farm of
late come from this colony lying less than a mile to the westward.

Brushwood
Country

Concord, Mass.

1910.

June 18
(No 3)

Late this afternoon I walked up the road as far
as Everett Mason's and then turned in on the left crossing
his farm and the back pasture where his fine old
chestnuts formerly stood. Only two or three of them remain
standing and the lumbermen who cut them have utterly devastated
the beautiful fine woods left them on Abbott Lawrence's farm.
In cutting the branches and other waste they have seriously
injured if not quite ruined the great black oak which
a black bear was once shot and which Lawrence would not
permit them to cut. Its lower branches are scorched &
burned and it stands alone in a grassy & blackened waste.
The big chestnut and a fine white oak are the only
other trees of any size that were spared in this once
secluded and most attractive piece of woodland.
Most of the country beyond was cut over about the
same time or shortly before that but it was not burned

Devastated
woodland

The big
Bear Oak
burned

Concord, Mass.

1910.

June 19

Clear & warm with light westerly wind.

A nest of the Red-eyed Vireo containing three eggs of the rightful owner and one of the Cross-bird was found (by Gilbert) in an apple tree in one orchard on June 8. When I next looked into it on June 17th it held a young Cross-bird, newly hatched, and the three Vireo eggs. To day (at 2 P.M.) there were two young Vireos, an unhatched Vireo's egg, and the young Cross-bird. A few years ago a Red-eyed Vireo not only hatched but reared two or three of her own young birds a young Cross-bird, in a nest in this same orchard. I wonder if this will be repeated. The nest now just referred to is the only one that has ever come under my notice when any young of the rightful parent were found with a young Cross-bird.

Red-eyed
Vireo
hatched 2
of her young
besides a
Cross-bird.

Concord, Mass.

1910.

June 19
(No 2)

White-bellied Swallows are now feeding young almost wholly fledged in two boxes at the Farm and two on the Ritchie place. Both sexes share this labor equally, and keep at it steadily from morning to night one or the other coming to the box every two or three minutes. As a rule they go no further from it than fifty to one hundred yards, hovering for insects just above the tops of the trees in & about the garden and orchard. The grace and precision with which the becoming bird alights just below the hole with its wide spread tail pressed against the front of the box & its feet clinging to the lower rim of the hole are admirable to watch. The young now show their heads and twitter when they hear the old one approaching. She does not enter the hole except every now and then to remove a small white excrement sac which she carries fifty or sixty yards before dropping it. Altogether I know no more attractive birds than nesting the Swallows with young.

White-bellied
Swallows
feeding
young.

Concord, Mass.

1910

June 19
(No 3)

One of the Wood Pewees (the male I suppose) of the pair which always nest in the big trees about our farm ^{has} appeared at sunset this evening at a height of about fifty feet above the open space formed by the flower garden flying in small, irregular circles on a perfectly level plane calling fee-ee-e, wut'l + wut-l; fee-ee-e, wut'l - wut'l a dozen times or more. I have no doubt this was a true flight song which I cannot remember ever seeing the Wood Pewee perform before although I may have done so & forgotten it. While circling and calling thus the bird beat his wings rather slowly & steadily and kept his tail wide-spread. I hear his sweet, plaintive fee-ee-e (and sometimes the impatient wut-l also), or the "dying fall" form of it, in our tall elms at all hours of the day from dawn to late

into the evening twilight. Perhaps there is no sound more pleasing & restful to the senses in all nature.

Flight Song
of
Wood Pewee

Concord, Mass.

1910.

June 19
(No 4)

While Gilbert and I were at Ball's Mill this morning he called my attention to a nest which he had just seen a ♂ Red-winged Blackbird enter and then fly from, a female being within a yard or two of it at the same time. The ♂ was singing near it when I saw it. It looked like a Red-wing's nest but was built on the horizontal branch of a white maple over our boat pit and at least 15 feet above the water. The branch was leafy at the end but not where the nest rested on it. The nest was, indeed, as conspicuous as that of a Robin. Recent heavy rains have flooded most of the river woods to the depth of a foot or more. This fact may account for the peculiar situation of the nest just described if, indeed, it be, as Gilbert & I think, a Red-wing's. We could not examine it closely to-day.

Nest of a
Red-wing
Blackbird
in a
peculiar
situation

Concord, Mass.

1910.

June 20

Clear & very warm with light W. wind.

As I was strolling through dense woods (in the Pine) Coe
this afternoon I heard the shrill clatter that Tree Swallows
make when in pursuit of a Hawk and perhaps on no
other time. The next instant as I lay forward Cooper's Hawk
came over me from the direction of our home, flying
just above the tops of the trees at amazing speed with
five or six Swallows trailing along behind but keeping up
fairly well.

Cooper's
Hawk

For the first time this year I heard a Dove coming
not far from the home in a large oak by the cow pasture.

Cassina
Dove

I cannot quite understand why these chasing birds
have so persistently avoided our woods for the past few
years unless the Hawks & Jays have driven them
off. But old Cooper's Hawks have been in our woods
this year & I have seen them there only a few times.

Lowell, Mass.

1910

June 20

(No 2)

On June 16 I found the nest of a Great Flycatcher in an orchard built in the normal way in the fork of a rather stout twig (as thick as my finger) and not closely surrounded by leaves. The bird was sitting & I did not disturb her. Three days later I found another nest in a very unusual situation - about 25 ft. above the ground at the extremity of a very slender branch of an apple tree in a cluster of leaves so dense that I could scarcely see the nest from anywhere on the ground. My attention was called to it by seeing the bird enter it. She did not come out again which I was sure. On going to the first nest (the trees were only about 30 yards apart) I found it lying on the ground under the tree. As I was looking at it a Flycatcher came and looked at the fork where it had been very closely. I think we have only one pair of Chicks on the tree.

Nest of
Great
Flycatcher.

Barnesville, Mass.

1910.

June 20
(No 3)

A "creaky" Robin has been at work recently in the open shed at Tom Ritchie's place where, on a long, low beam that supports the roof, I found to-day no less than eight nests, each occupying the space between two rafters that rest on the beam. The central nest of this interesting collection was completely finished & neatly lined but empty. In both directions from it the other nests became less and less complete the outer ones being merely loose piles of dry grass & wood shavings. Just evidently this was still another case of a straggled bird (Faxon calls such "creaky") who could not remember from trip to trip where she had left her last load of building material since the spaces between the rafters were all exactly alike or, at least, essentially so. A similar instance came under my observation years ago at Haverhill, N. H., & others have been reported elsewhere.

A
"creaky"
Robin.

Concord, Mass.

1910

June 28

For the past three or four weeks I have been living at the farm and have visited Ball's Hill only during the brighter hours of the day.

Happening to linger there this evening beyond my usual time of departure I was not less pleased than surprised, on stepping out of the cabin, to hear the familiar, if half-forgotten, notes of a "Kicker" coming distinctly from the marsh on the opposite side of the river. This was about six o'clock. I stand listening to ^{the} call or song for some twenty minutes. It ^{was} ~~continued~~ ^{continued} at short, regular intervals during the whole of this period, and I left the bird still singing when I started for the farm. Twice or thrice I heard a second bird not far from the first.

Both gave the normal ki-ki-ki, ki-guee notes.

The evening was calm & warm. Mr. Dexter went down to the cabin & sat on the river at 9 P.M. but failed to hear the Kicker.

"The Kicker"
reappears
in Great
Marshes.

Concord, Mass.

1910

June 24

Clear with cool northerly wind.

Written
quest for
"Killers"

Mr. Dexter and his brother came from Concord in a canoe this evening hoping to hear the "Killers". I stayed with them at Ball's Hill up to 9 o'clock. We ranged up and down the river bank, from Ten Cabins to Holden's Hill, without hearing anything of interest. The meadows were unusually quiet, probably because the air was rather chilly. Only one Bull Frog trumped & no Raids of any kind called. The Dexters heard them or from Short-billed Marsh Wrens in Great Meadows opposite the head of Ten Hill on the way down & Mrs. Smith O. Dexter (the one who lives in Concord) heard down (he thinks as many as three) from the river opposite Ten Cabins on the night of the 22nd

Concord, Mass.

1910.

June 25

Clear and rather cool with light easterly winds changing to south-west at sunset.

Evening on
the river

Walter Faxon and Dr. Tyler came up this afternoon in the hope of hearing the Killdeer. After a walk in the woods and supper in the old log cabin we went out on the river in the flat boat at 7.30. The evening seemed favorable for our purpose, although a trifle too cool, but for more than an hour we rowed up and down, going as far as the head of Brown's Dam beyond, without hearing anything more interesting than some or five Blue Ticks, a number of Green Ticks, a few Fowler's Toads, a Marsh Wren (at the rapids) and a Chipping Sparrow. The last named bird was, no doubt, the one that had sung opposite the cabin for the past four or five years. He has there in May but not since then. He heard him to-night on the south side of Great Meadows near Three Mile Island.

Concord, Mass.

1910.

June 25

(No. 2)

About 9 o'clock, as we were drifting before the light more
winds down the middle of the broad reach opposite "Killed"
the cabin, a Thrasher began calling on the Halfpint
there were the entrance to our boat canal. We
peaked over the side at once and got very near him,
within twenty yards, I thought. For a time he
called only at long and irregular intervals and
gave only the queer note sometimes doubling it
the second syllable having a falling inflection
queer - queer. His voice sounded very loud
and squeaking as ^{the} close range. After awhile he
was answered by one after another bird further
off towards the middle of Great Meadows until
at least four and in thought five different
Thrashers were singing at once, more or less synchronously.
Soon gave only the squeaking cry which was frequently

Concord, Mass.

1910.

June 25
(No 3)

doubled, sometimes tripled and twice repeated as ^{notes of} the "Kicker"
but then five times without pause thus: quee-quee
or quee-quee-quee or quee-quee-quee-quee-quee.
One or two birds uttered what was very nearly
the normal song as I remember it in former
years but with less than the usual number of
kie-kies. Thus it was either kie-kie-quee
or kie-kie-kie-quee. The bird nearest us
used the kie-kie notes only a very few times and
never uttered more than two of them at a time.
Evidently he was not in full song and we
thought that he was calling rather than
singing as, indeed, was apparently the case with
one or two of the others. Neither T. or I
can remember ever hearing the quee used so much
in this way before or that we ever heard it given

Concord, Mass.

1910.

June 25th
(No 4)

more than ten during any one afternoon of the Observation
day, in the earlier years. Although I have just ^{on an} "Killer"
characterized it as a "Squeaking" cry it is
so cheery and bright in quality as to be almost
musical especially when heard very near at hand
as it was repeatedly to night. At a considerable
distance it was sometimes so faint as to be nearly
inaudible when the tic-tics came distinctly to
our ears; whereas the reverse of this occasionally
happened, i.e. in hand the tic-tics but very
imperfectly and the Squeaking quack very plainly,
both notes being evidently given at the same time
by the same bird. That a bird of some kind
was the author of these sounds we are feet
convinced this evening (Dr. Tyler hearing them for the
first time). The bird near us apparently moved his

Concord, Mass.

1910.

June 25th
(No 5)

position a distance of fifteen or twenty yards
which we were listening to him. It seemed to be
at first in a bed of fallen wood at the entrance
to the canal, after which we went further back among
the grass. The water near where the
kettles were heard is flooded (and has been
for the past week or more) to a depth of from
six to ten inches, the grass rising above the
water (and concealing it perfectly), to a height of
from one to two or three feet.

Observation
on the
Kettles

Faxon & Tyler left me at 10 P.M. to return to
Boston. After sculling back across the river I
landed at our boat pit and was standing there
talking with Harry, with a big lantern on the
ground between us casting a brilliant light around
when, to my great astonishment, a Kettle began

Concord, Mass.

1910.

June 25

(No 6)

singing (ki-ki-ki-greak) apparently within
fifty or twenty yards of us and unmistakably
on the Ball's Hill side of the river somewhere in
the fringe of bushes beneath the big maples that
grow along the edge of water just to the westward
of the entrance to the boat pit. I heard him
a dozen times or more before I left the place
and Harry tells me he kept it up for an hour
or more later into the night, never before here
I heard one with such distinctness as to
apparently hear at hand. Just outside the
bushes is a broad belt of pebbled sand growing
in water now two or three feet deep. I often
see Quadrax tracks along this shore in early
autumn, sometimes half walking, half-swimming through
the pebbled bed.

A Hesperis
heard in
front of
the cabana
on the
Ball's Hill
shore

Concord, Mass.

1910

June 25th
(No 7)

A sound wholly new to all of us was heard many times to night between 9 and 10.0'clock. It seemed to come from an isolated or island bed of pebbled sand on the edge of the river directly across from the Cobble. It bore some resemblance to the single oo of the Yellow-billed Cuckoo repeated eight or ten times but was unlike it in quality having a singular whistling or oscillating tone. When we were near the place (20 to 30 yards) it seemed rather loud but on retreating we found it did not carry to a distance greater than 75 to 100 yards. Beyond 50 yards it was so indistinct as to be unrecognizable. It puzzled us

completely at first but we finally noticed that every time it was uttered several Bull Frogs answered it in great discussion and that the tone was essentially the same as that of the Bull Frog's "croak". So we decided that it must be merely the uttering of a Bull Frog that had something wrong with his voice. (I learned afterwards, however, on June 30. that Mr. Sweet O. Deane heard it on subsequent evenings at several places along the river between North Hill & the Big Spring. That can be heard it answered by another similar voice coming from a spot 50 yards or more away. These facts seem to disprove the theory that it is made by a Bull Frog.)

Boncord, Mass.

1910.

June 26

Clear and warm with light westerly winds: - a perfect June day.

Birds of many different kinds continue to be exceptionally numerous at the Farm despite the fact in the cultivated grounds that almost every leaf within an hundred yards or more from the house and throughout a large part of the neighboring woods or well, has been coated with a deposit of lead for two or three weeks. Indeed as far as I have been able to observe this extension and very thorough spreading, necessary to prevent the myriads of gypsy caterpillars from eating up all the vegetation on the place, has not resulted in the slightest harm to bird life. It may be that a very few birds have perished but if so their places must have been quickly taken by others of the same species for of all these seen here before

1910.

June 26
(No 2.)

the Springing began and certainly settled for
this season (There were some water band migrants
passing them) I have not missed one although
I have kept a close watch on all the usual
spots. These numbers have exceeded anything I
have ever known here before and their singing
has been a constant source of delight to me.
Never before, I think, have I heard such a
force of bird number, in one season, in eastern
Massachusetts. It still contains almost unaltered
although a few species like the Chestnut-sided
Warbler, the Redstart, the Grosbeak and the
Orchard are fast taking into comparative decline.
But their defection is largely if not quite made
good by the fact that the Starling, the Robin
the Catbird, the Song Sparrow & the Field Sparrow

1910.

June 26
(L.S. 3)

with a few others, are now at the height of their annual second period of song. Thus from early morning to late evening, through even the very hottest hours of the day, the air rings and sounds clearly on every hand with bursts of delicious melody.

Abundance of both species are far more common this year than I have ever known them to be before in any part of New England. I hear them every few minutes, everywhere I go, whether in cultivated grounds or woodland. No doubt the abundance of hairy caterpillars (tussock, gypsy & brown tortle) accounts for this.

It is a great year for Robins, also. I have never known them more abundant. Yet I hear no chorus singing whatever (I have heard none), although they come from literally dozens with them.

Cowdoy, Mass.

1910.
June 26
(No 4)

In my journal for the past season I have made occasional reference to our beloved Cat-bird. From the time of his arrival in early May to the present date I have had him under almost constant observation but up to within the past two or three days I have not once heard him in full song and only a very few times have I heard him utter anything more than a low call to his mate. Their first nest was in the Syringa hedge in the garden where they raised their brood without mishap the young leaving the nest several days ago. They have now moved to denser cluster of bushes by the old well in front of the house. Here the male has been singing almost constantly at all hours for the past two days. He is a fine performer and does his best to excite himself in his song.

A Cat-bird
seen in
May &
early
June
long family
in later
June

Concord, Mass

1916

June 26
(No 5)

Both Robins were sitting on the nests under the eaves on the front of our house on the same tree this morning. I saw one rebuilding its nest about a week ago but if the other has made similar repairs to hers they have escaped my notice. When I looked into the nests (by the aid of a small mirror on a pole) yesterday or the day before there were four eggs in one and three in the other. The birds are a good deal disturbed by our comings & goings past the house and in & out the front door but they settle in the nests soon after sunset and do not seem to mind the lights after dark although the chamber windows are very near these nests (within a few feet). As I have previously noted full broods of young were reared in these nests earlier in the season & the old birds are now sitting on their second clutches. I see only a very few young others the place, none more than 2 or 3 at any one time.

Two Robins
by second
clutches in
nests in
which they
reared young
this season.

Boncod, Mass.

1910.

June 29

Brilliantly clear with fresh, cool N. W. wind which died away before sunrise.

As H. A. Purdie and I were sailing past North Island ^{Still}
^{another}
^{"Killer"}
late this afternoon a "Killer" sang a dozen times or more
in the meadow grass a little back from the river and
about 200 yards to the north of the island (i.e. down river
from it). He used the normal song ki-ki-ki, ki-gee.
It struck me for the first time, as I was listening to
him on this occasion, that the terminal note is very
like in general quality that of the closing ree of the
Red-winged Blackbird. It was about six o'clock when
we heard him and the river and meadows were still
flooded in bright sunshine. No Killers were heard opposite
North Hill although in front west of the day there
and did not show on our return to the farm
until early 7 P.M.

Concord, Mass.

1910
June 29
(No 2)

The number of Cuckles present here this season surpasses anything I have ever noted in former years. They seem to be increasing as the month goes by. I see or hear them everywhere I go - from farm to farm of each species every day. Apparently they are evenly distributed over the whole country, in remote woodlands, river banks and farm outlands, instead of being confined to a few localities only as has nearly always been the case hitherto. There can be little doubt, I think, that their unusual abundance is due to that of the gypsy & brown tail caterpillars although that of the latter caterpillar are also exceptionally numerous this year. The Yellow-bills seemed to be more numerous, especially than the Black-bills early in the season but of late it has been the other way.

Unusual
abundance of
Cuckles
of both
species

Lonsdale, Mass.

1910

May-June

My observations on the Bats in the loft over
the wood shed at the Point this season were as follows:—

Bats in
wood shed

May 1. First date of inspection. No Bats in shed.

" 2 Second " " " " " "

" 3 Third " " " " " "

" 4 A single Bat clinging to the eave in the usual
place. It was a large brown one, however, evidently belonging
to a species different from the kind we usually have in summer
in this shed.

May 5. Two Bats of the usual summer kind in the wood place

" 6 Four " " " " " " " " " "

" 7-17 No observations

" 18. Sixteen Bats of the usual kind in the wood place

" 19-20 No observations

" 21. Eighteen Bats of the usual kind in the wood place

For a month or more after this the number ranged from twelve
to eighteen. I have no record this year

Cambridge, Mass

1910.

July 4

I returned to Cambridge on July 1. Since then I have noted no less than twelve species of birds in the Garden viz. Robin, Red-eyed vireo, Chipping, Goldfinch Crow, Blue Jay, Kingbird, Wood Pewee, Oriole, Flicker Downy & Cherry Swift. As far as I have been able to learn no Yellow throats, Redstarts, Cat-birds, or Cuckoos and no vireos except the Red-eye, have bred in or near our grounds this year. As was the case last year we have had only one pair of breeding Robins and they with two or three of their young are the only representation of their kind that I now see in our cherry trees, located just at present with ripe fruit. This would seem to indicate that there are few Robins in this part of Cambridge now. The only other birds I see in the cherry trees are Orioles (a pair with young), Crows, and House Sparrows - the last named in large numbers

Birds in
the Garden

Scarcity of
Robins

Cambridge, Mass

1910
July 24
(No 2)

Ever since my return to Cambridge I have seen
or heard Goldfinches at all hours in the Garden.

Often there have been four and occasionally as many
as five, males flying round to a single female,
chattering about her in down the top or following her
short flights from tree to tree, all singing at once
and producing a perfect flood of melody. This melody
seems to be shown only by persistent attempts to
outrun one another for there is no fighting or
even chattering. Sometimes when all are on wing
together they wheel about one and through the
trees in a cluster so compact that a basket basket
would enclose the whole of them and when they
alight they make a row so closely about the female
that it is difficult to see her. This behavior reminds

Some of the
Goldfinches
singing a
long note

me of that of House Sparrows in spring. I do not remember
ever seeing Goldfinches behave in this fashion.

Cambridge, Mass

1910.
July 4
(No 3)

Cambridge swarms to an extent hitherto
unknown with noxious mosquitoes. When I
go into the Garden they rise in clouds from the
bushes bordering its walks. They are literally
as "bad" here as I have ever found them in
the Maine woods and worse than they ever
are at Concord. My neighbor Mrs. Harris tells me
that the people living along May Street Road in
Boston are complaining bitterly about them there.
He suggests that their unprecedented abundance
may be due to the fact that Charles River is
now a body of fresh water as far down as the dam
at Craigie Bridge. I saw Dragon Flies hatching over
it opposite the forest of Spruce Street for the
first time on July 2nd of this year.

A plague
of mosquitoes
in
Cambridge

1910.

July 8.

The five male Goldfinches continue their pursuit of the single ♀, day after day, from morning to night, in the garden and through the jungle, singing ^{rapturously and almost} without pause. The female seemed timid and nervous to-day. When she settled on a perch in some leafy tree the males scattered about in neighboring trees, leaving her unmolested for a time but singing ceaselessly. Whenever she took flight they followed her closely, like so many golden stars in the tail of a comet. As they were chasing her this noon in a blazing sun she sought refuge in the trumpet vine growing over the old Porter apple stump by the pond. She entered it near the top and worked downward through the middle. The five males alighted all over it and fluttered down over and through the outer leaves, suggesting a shower of golden fruit as their bright yellow forms shone in the sunlight and glanced among the foliage. All the while they sang like mad - everyone of them. What does it mean? this incessant, never ending courtship, on the part of so many rival males.

Concord, Mass.

1910.
July 10

Clear & intensely hot with fresh west wind.

I came to Concord yesterday afternoon and spent most of the day going over our place to ascertain what the gypsy cat-fellows were doing. A very small proportion were in the pupa state and a still smaller number had become moths and were beginning to walk and creep. But fully 90% were still crawling about or spinning the first threads of their webs. They had nearly all ceased feeding much partly because there is little left to eat for except about the ash & in a few other places they had stripped most of the oaks and birches with many of the other trees. Indeed in most directions, as far as the eye could reach, the country presented a scene of ruin and desolation with here and there a pine or maple or cluster of them showing

1910

July 10
(182)

green in contrast with the generally brownish gray coloring of the nearly leafless woods. On my own land the woods on the Blackmore ridge, on the whole of North Hill except close about the Coburns and at the edge of the river, on Davis Hill, on the slope behind Bensons', and the rear of North Island and along the road that leads from the school house to Bensons', were practically and indeed almost completely naked - even more so than in winter for very many of the *pinus foliosa* had not escaped. The few old ~~stubs~~^{pinus} on Davis Hill have been ~~very~~ seriously injured, I fear, although only a few of them have been completely stripped & even these may recover as ^{has} been the case with a number which was decimated at the farm last year. The swamps have suffered very

1911

June 10
(No 3)

little or not at all for the last samples which
form the chief growth in them seem to be practically
immune from destruction even when growing on
high land. The ferns ^{also} ~~seem to~~ escape when they
stand near
~~together~~ together in large bodies but whenever they
occur singly, among oaks or birches, they suffer
almost as badly as those deciduous trees. The
oaks suffer more of all and of the oaks the
white oak is the tree first attacked and
most severely injured. Many of my finest
white oaks are already dead and many others
are obviously doomed to speedy destruction
if the brown tails attack them again this autumn.
The large, old trees go first of course but even
the younger ones perish in numbers in certain
places. In others they bear their trials very well.

1910
June 10
(No 4)

I found to day that several which I had thought
dead were beginning to again. In some parts of
the woods the tender green & brown tints of the
numerous unfolding leaves suggested early spring.
If ^{the trees} they receive extensively the worst may now be
over for I found that the gypsy caterpillars were
dead or dying by billions, of the "wilt" or "with chlora".
In some of the worst devastated woods I
failed to discover, after long & careful search, a
single living and obviously healthy caterpillar
and in most places that I visited the mortality
exceeded 75% and often reached 85% to 95%.
The only ~~places~~ ^{woods} where healthy caterpillars were at
all numerous were in ~~strong~~ ^{these} ~~places~~ which have
not yet been ^{excessively} ~~much~~ infested and in ~~places~~ ^{these} where
I spanged everything last month. ^{Among} In the former

1910
July 10
(no 5)

~~place~~ I include Hutton's Hill, which is rather badly eaten this season for the first time yet weather completely stopped. There I found only from 25% to 50% of the complanata diseased. They were mostly free from disease on those parts of Hutton's Hill where the spraying had been apparently thorough and effective to some extent of the foliage. Apparently it had killed just enough of them to keep the survivors in prime condition for propagating their kind this month and making me some trouble next year. Thus it would seem that Prof. Riley was fully justified in what he said to me in 1894 to the effect that the best way to fight gypsy moths is to let them alone. I have felt all along that it might be so both when, this year,

1910

July 10
[ha 6]

I found everything in my cherished woods going
to opposite final ruin I could no longer ~~stay~~
my hands. How would it have been wholly
wise to do so for I had to leave the foliage
in at least a few ~~of my~~ favorite spots
else there would have been no shade nor
any attractiveness left for present enjoyment,
however well the trees may look ~~except autumn~~.
The truth of this consideration was born in
one way to day when, after leaving the Coburns,
where the oaks & pines looked as green and
vigorous as in days of yore, I walked &
walked through woods where the sun beat
down on me as mercilessly as if I had been
crossing open fields. Born in such devastated woods
there were brims songers & other birds singing & flying about.

1910

June 10

(227)

The "will" began to show itself this year in June, at least than works earlier than was noticed it last year, ~~and~~ when I left Concord at the end of the month it had done very great and general service. Since then it has wrought fearful and almost universal havoc, over most of my land. On ^{the crest of} ~~the~~ ^{the} hills here and in the woods east of the Pavilion place I found the "willed" caterpillars ~~to be~~ ^{to be} hanging in solid masses as broad as my two hands on the trunks of some of the oaks. If but lightly touched they would burst open sending down a trickling stream of chocolate-colored liquid having a peculiarly offensive odor. In this and other places there ~~would~~ ^{would} be not enough left to do the least harm another year.

Concord, Mass.

1910.

July 17

I went over one entire place to-day, studying Gypsy Moth conditions. Some of the larvae are still feeding and many are yet in the pupa cases but the majority have hatched and mated and the females are laying or have just laid, their eggs. The males were to be seen everywhere but not numerously except where there were females. When the latter were abundant the males were in thousands, literally filling the air and tiring one's eyes and senses by their ceaseless flickering flight. They seemed to greatly outnumber the females.

The general results of my observations may be summarized as follows:-

Ball's Hill.-- Multitudes of willow caterpillars but not many healthy ones and comparatively few nests of either sex. I doubt if the trees will be stripped again next year even if nothing be done to protect them. The oaks have suffered badly and the pines considerably, this season, especially along the crest of the ridge and on its northern slope.

Gypsy Moth
Conditions

Bowcord, Mass.

1910.

July 17
(No 2)

Blackman Ridge. - The "wilt" ragged here, also; swarttholes

Eggsy mett
Conditions

I found plenty of female moths laying their eggs on the trunks
of the oaks and multitudes of moths hovering about them.

The woods will surely be defoliated next year unless
vigilant measures are taken to protect them.

Holden's Hill. High colony of laying females, hard to
deal with because the trees are so tall and slender. The
"wilt" has evidently done little good here.

Davis Hill. - Conditions desperate. Immense & thriving colony
of apparently healthy insects. Upper branches of the giant pines
white beneath with clusters of laying female moths and the
masses swarming everywhere. The pines evidently much
injured many of them being half stripped and some almost
wholly bare and apparently dying. Most of the oaks completely
stripped and dozens of them already dead. As far as I

can see all the trees on this hill are doomed to perish next year
unless protected on forest exposure.

Concord, Mass.

1910.

July 17
(no 3)

Prescott's Pine. Badly infested in spots but safe, I think, ^{by the} Concord
for another year especially if the few deciduous trees be removed.

Birch Island Woods. - Almost completely defoliated yet
largely free from moths or living larvae. Laying females
were numerous in a few places, however. It looks as if
the woods might recover another year although many trees are dead.

Birch Field. - Very few male moths flying and almost
no laying females seen except along the north edge of the
lot, next Lawrence's, where the line of tall trees is badly
infested and along the south edge next the barn where there
is lighter, yet rather dense, infestation.

Purple Rock Woods. Nearly clean except for a few white
oaks just to the westward of the rock and others on the ledge
slope towards the cow pasture which are rather badly
infested and also injured by repeated stripping which has
caused more or less of the upper branches to die.

Concord, Mass.

1910.

July 17
(no 4)

Woods east of Tuleh's place on road to Burrows. - then

July 17
Conditions

I found the infestation general but light save in a few places. It is evident that the "weil" has been most actively at work in these woods and has done splendid service for last year the conditions were as good as could be.

Barrett Run. Infestation bad in spots but on the whole less so than last year.

Outskirts of the Farm. The large oaks forming the row along the road below the peach orchard and those in the cluster just behind the barn were white with laying needles. The birches on the slope towards the end of pasture appeared to be nearly free from moths or larvae. The berry pasture was badly infested along the wall which crosses it from east to west but not elsewhere.

Cambridge, Mass.

1910.

July 18

I noticed, this morning, that quantities of fresh earth had been thrown out from between the stone flags in the walk in front of the Museum in our garden and wondered what could have done it. The mystery was quickly explained for early in the afternoon I saw a Flecker busily engaged at the walk. Hopping slowly along sideways on the flags he made a dozen or more holes, which I was watching him, in the earth between them. It was packed hard on the surface and he had to work vigorously at first to make any impression on it. The cracks were narrow (not more than $\frac{1}{4}$ inch wide) in places and more than once he raised his arm and struck his back forcibly against the edge of a stone, making an audible sound. After making these holes he visited and revisited them and others which he had made previously, spending some time at each of them and

A Flecker
makes
earth traps
for ants

Cambridge, Mass

1910.

July 18
(no 2)

extracted from some of them a quantity of food which I could see him swallow although I could not make out first what it was. But after he had gone I examined the holes, which averaged an inch or more in depth, finding that most of them contained living ants that had fallen in and were unable to climb up the crumbling sides. Evidently the bird dug the holes not so much to get at the ants (I did not see him get any of them immediately and he invariably moved on and began a fresh hole just after completing one) as to enter them. They were continually running about over the surface of the logs in numbers but he paid no attention whatever to those thus exposed. When he revisited the holes he did not over throw one more earth but simply thrust his bill down slowly into them swallowing bisulph as he descended it.

Cambridge, Mass.

1910
July 19

A Flicker on our lawn this morning attracted my attention by remaining perfectly immovable for many minutes. At length I walked towards him. As I approached he gave no sign that he was aware of my presence. Even when I got within a yard of him he continued to maintain his statuesque pose. His breathing sound normal and his eyes looked bright and alert but his gaze was directed towards some distant object, I know not what, and he completely ignored me. Although I could detect no evidence of any external injury I felt sure that he must be either seriously hurt or very ill until I advanced my foot when it was within six inches of him he started, as if awoken, from a trance, and flew up into one of the cedars. After this he behaved like a perfectly sane and vigorous Flicker. I am at a loss to explain his behavior on the lawn. He seemed to be indulging in a very profound day dream.

Strange
behavior
of a
Flicker

Cambridge, Mass.

1910.
July 22

On entering the Botanic Garden this afternoon I was not less surprised than interested to find, near the lily pond, a family of Red-winged Blackbirds, consisting of an adult ♂ and ♀ and at least two, if not three, bob-tailed young which seemed unable to fly more than a few rods at a time although they kept well up in the trees. One of the gardeners told me that he had seen the old birds about the pond for three or more weeks. My attention was first drawn to them by the anxious calling of the male who was evidently disturbed by the mere presence of a Crow. After the Crow had flown among

the Red wing betook himself to the top of a lilac bush where he sang a dozen times or more. Soon after this I started the female and young from some bushes on the farther side of the pond. In it are growing two large clusters of cut-leaved flaps quite extensive and dense enough to conceal a Red-wing's nest. That the young I saw were hatched & reared here I consider sooner open to reasonable doubt.

Red-wing
Blackbirds
breeding?
in the
Botanic
Garden.

Leicester, Mass.

1910
Aug. 15

I came to Leicester on the afternoon of the 13th to spend Sunday with John E. Hooper. He met me at the station and drove me to his home. As we were ascending the hill just below it a dozen or more Kingbirds, disturbed by our approach, rose from some shrubbery by the roadside. When I expressed some surprise at the presence of so many in such a place Mr. Hooper alluded to it gently by assuring me that they had been there constantly for days past and that the attraction was the berries of a number of Viburnum dentatum bushes which he had reportedly ~~noticed~~ noticed them eating. Before he told me this I had noticed that they flew from these bushes only. We found them there in undisturbed numbers

on the morning of the 14th but all flew up before we got very near & I did not see any feeding there. This morning, however, I distinctly saw one pick a berry from the stem and after holding it in the tip of the bill for an instant swallow it. The bushes are fairly loaded with ripe fruits of the usual dull blue color & very bitter to human taste.

Kingbirds
eating fruit
Viburnum
dentatum

Concord, Mass.

1910.

Sept. 20

Early morning cloudy, misty, chilly, & calm. Remainder of day clear and warm with light west wind & north-easterly, blown with violent wind and moderate rain last night.

I have been living at the cabin on Ball's Hill and out of doors practically every hour of daylight since September 1st. Up to to-day birds of all kinds have been exceedingly scarce. Most of the summer residents had apparently departed for the South before the beginning of the month and migrants from farther north have appeared only in the lowest numbers and at infrequent intervals. It is apt to be thus when, as has been the case this year, the first half of September is warm and dry with little or no cloudy weather. But this season has perhaps been more nearly "birdless" here than any that I remember for a long time.

Despite the heavy north-easter during the first half of last night - or perhaps rather because of it - the first large bird wave of the season arrived sometime before

Concord, Mass.

1910.

Sept 20

(No 2)

day back and the woods on Ball's Hill and those across
the river were showing with Woodpeckers at sunrise and all
through the day. Practically all the Woodpeckers I was able to
identify were Black-polls. Indeed I saw no others except 2
Herald-antwrens Green, one on about 5 in full plumage.

About 7 a.m., as I was standing by the river in the
meadow on the east end of Ball's Hill, the singing, forlorn
flight call of a Golden Plover came distinctly to my ears
half-a-dozen times or more. The bird was evidently flying
southward to the east of the hill but I strained my eyes
in vain in the attempt to catch sight of it. I surely had
its voice dead away in the distance when I heard and
at once recognized the queet, queet of a Sandpiper. The
next instant two birds of this species flying in company
low (about 10 ft.) over the water passed in within
100 yards and disappeared around the bend opposite

Concord, Mass.

1910.
Sept 20
(183)

Road's boat house. I had an excellent view of them through my glass making out their characteristic color & markings (especially the generally white color & the narrow white bars on the wings) to my entire satisfaction. This is the first time I have ever met with the Sandling on Concord River.

About 3 P. M. I saw a Field Hawk flying S. W. at a considerable height, evidently on migration, and in the evening watched a Great Horned Owl pass over the river, haunting loosely.

Several days ago I put up a pole in the marsh by our boat house for a bird perch. There was a Kingbird on it on the 18th & a Kingfisher to-day. The Kingfisher sat there for many minutes evidently securing the date below.

At length he plunged into it with folded wings unspiring with a pedicel only 3 or 4 inches long, & doming his tail in triumph as he rose from the water.

Bowcord, Mass.

1910.

Sept. 21

Clear and warm with light W. wind. Heavy rain just before daybreak lasting half an hour or more.

Small woodland birds of every kind were scarce again to-day.

Evidently the great flight of Black-bellied Nuthatches which began yesterday passed on further to the southwest last night for I saw only two or three of them to-day.

The sunset here was calm, mild & very beautiful & refreshing. Being on the river

I passed it on the river in my canoe. At Port Island I saw 2 Rusty Blackbirds go to roost in some bottom bushes and heard 2 Swamp Sparrows chirping. At the big bog, where I spent half an hour or more watching & listening I heard at least four more Swamp Sparrows, a Song-bird Marsh Wren and a Night Heron. Then, with a young Song Sparrow, were literally all the birds I noted along this stretch of river other than this.

One of the Swamp Sparrows passed on with the

Concord, Mass.

1910.

Sept. 21
(No 2)

Beautiful song, repeating it six or eight times at short intervals. It consisted of the ordinary trill preceded, as well as followed by a number of additional notes some of which were especially liquid and tender. This song, which the Swamp Sparrow gives not infrequently in late summer and early autumn, is not unlike the flight song used in May and June and it may be essentially the same although as I listened to it attentively this evening I thought it appreciably different and decidedly superior to anything one ever hears from the bird in Spring. As far as I could make out the particular bird to which I have just referred was perched among the reeds every time he sang.

Autumn
Song of
Swamp
Sparrow

The Marsh Wren was in a bed of flags at the edge of the Bogus. For some time he remained concealed among a low caec which I mistook at first for that of a Red-wing. At length he showed himself within a few yards of me and I had him in plain sight for several minutes during which, to my surprise, he did not once cock up his tail - a very unusual omission.

Marsh
Wren

Concord, Mass.

1910.

Sept. 23

A brilliantly clear and delightfully warm day following a sharp, frosty morning.

About 7 A.M. a Black-poll Warbler sang thrice in the woods near the station. It must have been an adult bird for its song was nearly as strong and given as prolonged as that which we ordinarily hear in Spring.

Black poll
warbler
in woods
first song

Just before sunset this evening I heard Blue Jays making a lot of noise in a woods of young red maples on the edge of the Swamp behind the house. On going to the place I found a dozen or more of them flitting about in the tops of these trees apparently looking loose for the night. I watched them for sometime & finally left them there. They made out lots of low conversational chattering & chuckling sounds but did very little singing. This is the only occasion I remember when I have seen Blue Jays thus congregating to roost.

A Jay
roost?

Concord, Mass.

1910.

Sept. 24

Cloudy & cool with fresh N. E. wind which brought rain this evening (about 8 P.M.).

About seven o'clock this morning I saw two Blue Jays passing over Ball's Hill very high in air (at least 600 feet).

Blue Jays
migrating
at 7 a.m.

Heading due south they kept steadily on until they were lost to my sight in the distance. That they were migrating at the time I feel quite certain.

Ringed Pheasants have begun crowing again after an interval of two months or more of complete silence.

Pheasants
begin
crowing
again

I heard one over yesterday morning early, in the meadow to the eastward of Ball's Hill. In the same place where was probably the same bird crowed down, if not scarce, of times this morning between seven and ten o'clock. Several times he either gave a double crow or else another bird crowed just after him. The second crow followed the first so closely that there was little or no pause between the two. This I have never heard before.

Pheasant
crows double

Bowcord, Mass.

1910.
Sept. 25

A fairly heavy north-east rain storm began soon after dark last evening and continued well through the night but to-day was clear and uncomfortably warm & luscious with light southerly winds.

Birds of most kinds were scarce yesterday but the whole region lying between Balls Hill and the Town was alive with Black-birds to-day. They were so noisy and generally disturbed that I had them almost constantly in sight wherever I went. In all I must have seen forty or so of them. Thus for the second time this month an exceptionally heavy flight of these Woodpeckers has appeared here on a morning following a night of north-east wind and heavy rain. I saw also (at the Town) eight White-throated Sparrows, noted to-day for the first time this autumn. Many of the Woodpeckers left almost as soon as it was dark this evening. At least I heard them chirping at frequent intervals high in air over the town about 7 P.M.

Heavy flight
of Black-birds
during
stormy night

Redstart, White
carrion

Dorchester, Mass.

1910.

Sept. 26

A summer-like day, unfortunately, warm and humid with light southerly to easterly winds. Partly sunny, partly cloudy.

Between sunset and eight or nine o'clock this evening a number of birds were singing with a freedom and frequency even in deed as this season. Among the number were Black-bell and Pine Warblers, Solitary Tanager, Song Sparrow, Swamp Sparrow, Phoebe, Flicker and Meadow Lark. For upwards of half-an-hour (7.7.30) I heard Black-bells in full song, at frequent intervals, in various directions. Evidently at least two or three adjacent males were cutting back in this concert which, as far as I could ~~hear~~ see, was very like what we hear from them during their Spring migration. One bird, in an oak near the cabin, sang once or twice a minute, for at least ten minutes, and his song at least was of normal strength and quality. The Phoebe, also, sang quite as well as in Spring and so did the Pine Warbler and the Song Sparrow. The Flicker's throat (given them time) was as loud and free as it ever is in March or April.

Bowcord, Mass.

1910.

Sept. 26
(No 2)

Whenever during this month the evening hour has been still and calm I have rarely failed to hear, between eight and ten o'clock, some creature making a great splashing in the river directly in front of the cabin. The sound is fully equal to that which a large dog would make by leaping well out from shore into deep water. Usually there is but a single splash at a time followed, after an interval of half a minute or more by another with still others at equally long intervals. From this I have inferred that the beast is engaged in diving and that it must leap well out of water just before taking the downward plunge. I heard it to excellent advantage only a few minutes before I began writing these lines. If I go out of the cabin the sound invariably ceases & seldom is renewed again that night. This leads me to conclude that the creature is rather shy or timid, I think it must be an Otter.

Am Otter?
in the
river at
Plover's Head

Certainly it is something aquatic and very much larger, & heavier, and more active, than a muskrat.

Concord, Mass.

1910.

Sept 27

Cloudy & rather warm with light easterly winds and a drizzle of rain for an hour or two in the middle of the day.

The sounds everywhere about Balls Mill were literally booming again with Black-falls to-day. Mr. Dexter of Concord says the village has been alive with them of late. I noted no other boaters to-day except the Yellow-rumps of which I heard one or two near the cabin this morning.

Black-falls
this morning

Yellow-rumps
alive.

About noon I found a Sapsucker in the cluster of tupelo trees ~~near~~ over boat landing and saw it eat what I took to be one of the tupelo berries on which several Robins, also, were feeding.

Sapsucker
eating berries
of
tupelo.

As Mr. Dexter & Gilbert were rowing across the river about eleven o'clock they saw what they both took to be four Fish Hawks soaring in company at a great height making their whistling cries.

4 Fish Hawks
soaring in
company

Gilbert tells me they certainly were not Red-shouldered Hawks & that their notes sounded to him like those of the Fish Hawk. About an hour after this I saw a single Fish Hawk flying low over the river just the cabin towards the west & still later another pursuing the same course.

Lowell, Mass.

1910.

Sept. 29

Clear and cool with light easterly winds. Early morning calm and brilliantly clear with warm sunlight.

As I was on my way from the landing across the river to the West Bedford station about eight o'clock this morning I heard at least a dozen Song Sparrows singing at short, regular intervals. All seemed to be old birds yet their voices were subdued and pitched low although their notes were clear and sweet. One followed another so closely that there was almost a continuous volume of melodious sound seeming to come from every direction, far and near, over the grass, bushy fields that border the railway line. It was much like the singing we hear in late March and early April when the Song Sparrows first arrive in force, having then been tender, delicate young with a touch of plaintiveness and very unlike the full, strong singing of late spring & early summer. I do not remember ever hearing anything like it before in autumn. A Phoebe was in full song near the cabin & a Phoebe coming up for a fly, creaked in the morning.

Several &
dozens
singing of
many
Song Sparrows
in early
morning.

Bozwell, Mass.

1910.

Sept 30

Briefly done with Cygnus ~~concordensis~~.

We had an interesting experience with a Skunk at Nobs Hill
not long after dark this evening. He was a young one about two-
thirds grown and was first noticed by Henry when down from our chimney
as he crossed the path in front of the cabin. After supplying
ourselves with a portable lantern and two candle lamps we
followed him with a stick of broken boards at the edge of
the river. Here he kept slowly back and forth, showing little
fear of us and never over threatening us in any way although we
repeatedly stood within a yard of him holding up the lantern directly
over him as he glided smoothly and noiselessly over the ground
moving at a snail's pace with body & tail flattened close to the earth.
At length we forced him out of the thicket into a bed of
pressed wood. Crossing this & coming to the very edge of the
river he entered it and swam several yards just outside the
pressed wood, his white tail trailing out behind and showing only
continuously on the dark water. When he landed he went back into
the bushes where we finally left him.

Experience
with a young
Skunk.

Concord, Mass.

1910.
Oct 1

Partly cloudy, partly sunny. Very warm with S. W. wind which blew a little gale most of the day.

About 7 a.m. before the wind rose I was strolling through the
opening behind Morris Hill when I heard a sharp, metallic, fish-like
note, not unlike that used occasionally by Dendroica maculosa but
much louder and stronger. This I recognized at once as the characteristic
alarm note of the Conventional Warbler. It was repeated several times
at short intervals. Presently I saw the bird flitting about in a
thicket of young black spruces on the western slope of the hill only a
little below the crest. When I got within 20 yards or so it flew to
another cluster of spruces. For several minutes more it continued chirping
and acting as if it were much excited although I could see nothing
to alarm it. Eventually I was near the distant crest for I was 100 yds off
at the back of the hill, when I first heard it. The bird then quivered down
and began rambling about over the ground walking with a dainty,
gliding motion much like that of our own bird. I now got within
ten yards & had an excellent view of it. It was either a ♀ or a juv. ♂,
having a plain gray throat. Its call note was invariably the same
and clearly similar to that of the Mountain Warbler. I know no other
warblers which make such a loud note, as I have heard, D. maculosa

Conventional
Warbler on
Morrill Hill
Its call
or alarm
note

Bowcord, Mass.

1910.
Oct. 11

Cloudless and warm with fresh S. W. wind. A delightful day.

As Purdie & I were strolling through the orchard at the farm early this afternoon a Sapsucker started from an apple tree one one head & flew into a large oak. Presently it returned and resumed a task which we had evidently interrupted viz. that of completing a ring of holes in the bark of the apple tree. Standing within 15 feet of it I saw it drill two fresh holes. First it did very quickly first striking its bill forcibly through the bark in the same place two or three times and then dragging out shreds of the Cambium Layer until the hole looked deep & round. I could not see where it ate any of the bark or lifted any of the sap if, indeed, any amount of which I saw no sign. As soon as the first hole was completed it began the second. There were eight or ten holes all fresh looking evenly spaced and extending in a circle around the main stem of the tree where it was perhaps 12 inches in diameter yet still enclosed in rather smooth bark. The holes seemed to be

Covered, Mass.

1910
Oct. 11
(No 2)

exactly like those which our friends in several very oldish
apple trees in one Massachusetts orchard and which are popularly
supposed to be made by the Downy Woodpecker. This Sapsucker
was a young female showing us traces of red on either crown or
throat. She was lively and very tame. This is the first
time I have ever seen a Sapsucker or any other Woodpecker-
kind a hole in the bark of a living apple tree.

Early this morning Poodin & I saw a Green
Marsh Hawk soaring over Great Meadows about 40 feet above
the ground. It passed directly through a large flock
of Titmice which were flying at the same level without
paying any attention to them or causing them the least
perceptible alarm. yet several of them seemed to pass (or
be passed) within a distance of only three or four feet.
The Hawk was evidently not looking for prey at the time and
the Titmice did not seem to regard it as a source of alarm.

Marsh Hawk
passed
directly
through a
flock of
Titmice

passing danger

Concord, Mass.

1910
Oct. 29

Clear & cool with strong N.W. wind. Country white with
hoar frost & surface of ground frozen, at Amherst.

About 9 a.m. a flock of Bronzed Grackles, containing, as
nearly as I could count them, approximately 40 birds, passed just
above the tops of the tall elms in front of the barn and thence
due south as far as my eye could follow them. About fifteen
minutes later a second flock containing about 30 birds followed the
first at the same elevation, over the same trees, & in exactly the
same direction. There was no regular or general calling but only an
occasional low, throaty ack unlike the usual flight call & softer.

Bronzed
Grackles
migrating

Both flocks had nearly the same formation, moving in a broad, widely
extended front and very swiftly. Indeed the speed was nearly
if not quite double that usually maintained by Grackles during their
breeding season. Moreover the birds flew on a perfectly level plane
with uninterrupted wing beats, not rising & falling in undulations.

with intermittent wing strokes as is their ordinary custom. I have
no doubt that they were engaged in a hurried migrating flight.

Dorchester, Mass.

1910

Oct 31

Brilliantly clear with light contrary winds. Early morning cool (20°)

We had a most interesting experience to day with a Saw-whet. Owl.

H. W. Henshaw discovered it about 11 a.m. perched in a dead wood
apple tree in the Boarder Run within thirty yards of the wood road.
His attention was called to it by Louis Chickadee and Junco
that were feeding close about it. They showed little or no excitement
and seemed to be merely curious about it, as was a Blue Jay
who approached it within a yard, apparently hungry to have a good
look at it. When H. took me to the place some fifteen minutes
later all these birds had departed and the Owl was left in place.
He was sitting in full sunlight in a rather open part of the
wooded swamp about 4 feet above the ground. He seemed rather
alert and quite wide awake, keeping his eyes open most of the
time and frequently moving his head, occasionally directing his
gaze towards the ground as if watching for prey. We took
Purdie there at 11.30. The Owl was then still on the same perch.

Colebrook, Mass.

1910.

Oct 31

(No. 2)

but his eyes were tightly closed and he seemed to be taking a nap.

Our next visit was made about 2.30 P.M. when we found that the Saw-whet had changed his position a little having moved a foot or more higher up on the branch. He was now as wide awake as any diurnal bird of prey and evidently was watching the ground beneath in the hope of discovering some mouse or beetle there. A few minutes later he suddenly spread his wings and descended smoothly and silently to a spot about 15 ft. off where he rose almost immediately, evidently without any delay, and returned to his former perch. A moment later he swooped again, this time to a spot a few yards further off where he was lost to sight among ferns and ferns. Nearly a full minute passed before he reappeared when he flew off through the swamp with a flutter of young pins. Whether or no he captured anything we could not see. We did not follow him but at once returned to our former haunts.

Concord, Mass.

1910.

Oct 31

(No 3)

At 3 P.M. we went again to the "Cave", accompanied by
Mr. S. O. Dexter of Concord whom I had notified by telephone
of the discovery of the Owl. We all felt doubtful about finding
him again but when we came in sight of the apple tree
there he was back on his old perch and once more enjoying
a dose in the warm afternoon sunlight. Walking slowly in
single file we approached within 12 or 15 feet without seeming to alarm
him. It was the chance of a lifetime for a perfect photograph
but no camera was available. He was now looking at us
fixedly with wide open eyes but apparently with more of curiosity
than fear. Presently I left my friends and circling around through
the swamp walked quietly up to the Owl from behind. Slowly
stretching up my arm until my fingers were within three inches
of the bird I made a quick cluck at him. It was necessity
and but a single question would have existed in his capture
had he not opened his beak wings just as my fingers were

1910

(Oct. 31

(no 4)

about a case around his plump little form. By this action he suddenly presented from behind his breast and feet a surface that I could not grasp him although my hand struck him squarely and hard. He flew about 30 yards into some red cedars where we found him again shortly afterwards, perched in one of these trees about 5 feet above the ground. This time he showed before I could get my hand nearer than five or six feet and after flying some twenty yards alighted only about 3 feet above the ground in a bushy young white pine. Here Henderson had a try at him getting his hand within three feet of the bird before he flew. After a rather long search he was discovered 100 yards further on perched in a pine tree just above a low stone wall. Henderson again attempted to catch him but he was too alert and when he took wing was too late to get above it and could not again be found. His flight on all these occasions

1910.

(Oct. 31

(No 5)

was noisier and almost as leisurely and effective as that of a big snipe, remaining un, also, of that of a Whippoorwill flushed by day in dense cover for the bird skinned low over the ground and rarely for more than a few yards without making a rather abrupt turn. I was surprised at his choosing to invariably fixate his feet about the ground and also by the fact that he did not once assume the stiff, erect pose, with feathers down in tightly and eyes reared to breast level, to which the Saw-whet and many other Owls is so given. The attitudes taken by this bird were, indeed, all easy and natural (in the sense of being like those of ordinary birds). Frequently his back was nearly horizontal and he never once sat perfectly erect while his form was plump & rounded. His eyes were very beautiful and beautiful and even gentle during in their expression. His plumage seemed to me grayer than that of most of his

1910.

Dec 31
(M 6)

kind, and he looked especially gray about the head.

When on the water for prey he assumed an attitude very like that of a Bute regarding first of numbers beneath a big oak with his head lowered and gaze directed downward.

As twilight was falling this evening Pender & I went to the "run" and remained there until dark hoping to hear the Snows when dark. But the woods were silent as ten years ago although the air was perfectly still and comparatively mild.

I have just stated that this Owl's eyes had a gentle and confiding expression. As we were watching him in the pine, standing within two yards of him, I remarked to my companions "He looks like a gentle little pet bird, escaped from its cage & not actually unwilling to return to it." To this all the others agreed.

Saw. owl

Owl.

Concord, Mass.

1910

Nov. 2

Cloudy & mild with light southerly winds.

During the first three weeks of October there was a
 good many Pine Squirrels about. I heard them almost every
 morning and saw several small flocks feeding on birch seeds
 near Ball's Hill. Elsewhere on any place there are few or no
 gray Squirrels which have any fruit this year and the Pine Squirrels
 soon stripped the trees at Ball's Hill. I am inclined to
 think that they have all left this region as I have not
 seen or heard any since October 27. Late in that month
 I noticed a few Lesser Redpolls & Doves seen on good-
 sized flocks. These birds with the Goldfinches are likely
 to go hungry if they remain here this winter, because
 of the scarcity of birch cones. I saw ten or a dozen
 Goldfinches in one orchard to-day feeding on the ground in
 a patch of weeds with fifty or more Juncos. They Sparrows
 have been rather numerous of late.

Pine
Squirrels

* H. B. Bailey tells me that a number of
 Pine Squirrels alighted on the stems on which
 he came to look for them from Ball's Hill. (The
 high mass of branches) when the bird feeds on
 Cedar Oct.

Concord, Mass.

1910.

Nov. 3

Cloudy with strong, westerly chilly north-east wind.
Rain, which began early last night, continued falling steadily through the forenoon.

About three o'clock this afternoon my attention was attracted by one of the men (Pat Flannery) to a great ^{unprecedented} number of Herring Gulls soaring in circles, in a loose ^{flight of} Herring Gulls. scattered flock at an immense height (fully half-a-mile I thought) directly over the farm house. Several counted 62 and I 63. Rising higher & higher as we watched them they drifted off towards the south west until we could see them no longer. The sight of so many, behaving in such a manner, is common enough near Boston or Cambridge at this season but wholly without precedent in my experience here. I am inclined to think that they may have been seeking for the great reservoir at Clinton 18 or 20 miles distant & nearly in the direction they were taking.

Cambridge, Mass.

1910

Nov. 21

Clear and cool with light westerly winds. Ther. fell to 25° Fahr. last night.

Orange-
Crowned
Noddy in
the Garden

Yesterday forenoon I saw in our Garden what I took to be an Orange-Crowned Noddy getting, however, only a brief glimpse at it from the windows of the Museum as it was flitting about in the Suckle pear tree. That was doubtless the same bird appeared again to-day (about 2.30 P.M.) in the pear tree just as I came out of the house on my way to the Museum. I followed it about for ten or fifteen minutes. Although restless and close apparently rather shy I had it repeatedly in the field of my opera glass in leafless trees and clear sunlight at distances of twenty to twenty five yards, making absolutely sure of my identification that it was H. celata and a typical specimen, very dark in general coloring and almost as greenish and far from yellow on the under

Cambridge, Mass.

1910
Nov. 21
(no 2.)

Orange Crown
Wobbler

as on the upper parts. On leaving the pen the it flew first into a tangle of frost-brighted stalks of asters, golden rod etc. in the flower garden, thence to the very topmost branches of one big white willow, next into a cherry tree on the middle walk, and finally into the Pookmann's apple tree where it disappeared somewhat mysteriously, giving me no further view of it. It remained longest (perhaps then or four minutes) in the willow where, in company with two Chickadees, it hopped and flitted actively about among the terminal twigs once hanging for an instant back downwards beneath what looked like the webbed end of a brown tail with which it tugged at vigorously with its bill & I think, opened. During all the time I had it under observation it was constantly in motion, I heard it utter no sound of any kind. Later - After the above notes were

Cambridge, Mass.

1910.

Nov. 21
(no 3)

written and about sunset I heard the sharp chirp of the Orange-crowned Warbler repeated several times and looking out through my study window saw the bird within ten feet of it in a Japanese Barbary bush. Here he remained for several minutes in company with a female Ruby-crowned Kinglet. The two birds appeared curiously alike in general coloring and also in behavior but the Orange-crown lacked, of course, the light eye ring and wing bars of the Kinglet and was fully one-third larger when unlike the Kinglet it did not incessantly quiver its wings.

late
occurrence of
Ruby-crown
Kinglet.

The Garden literally swarmed with birds to-day, especially in the afternoon. Besides the Warbler and the Ruby-crown I noted a Golden-crowned Kinglet, a Brown Creeper, a White-bellied Nuthatch (♂), 2 Chickadees, 2 Blue Jays, a Goldfinch, 6 Fox Sparrows, 4 or 5 Juncos, a ~~dozen~~ or more House Sparrows, and several Crows (on wing) - in all twelve species.

Cambridge, Mass.

1910.
Nov. 24

Clear & mild with little or no wind.

Ruby-crown
Kinglet
again noted
in Garden

On November 21st last I saw a female Ruby-crowned Kinglet in our Garden, in company with an Orange-crowned Warbler, in a Japanese Bony Bush under my study window where I had a close & close view of it. This, I think, was then the latest autumnal date on which I had ever noted the species personally in Massachusetts. I got a slight later one, however, this morning when I first heard the unmistakable low chattering call of a Ruby-crown near the Museum and then saw the bird in the old red cedar at the rear of our house. It was so high up that I could not make out its sex but it looked like a ♀ I thought.

Cambridge, Mass.

1910.

Dec 7

A week or more ago I learned from Roland Thayer that Night Herons have been frequenting Norton's Woods of late. He has just given me (by telephone, this evening) the following interesting information regarding them.

Night
Herons
in
Norton's
Woods.

They were first noticed in the summer of 1909 when only one or two were seen. Several appeared early in the following summer (that of 1910), remaining well into the autumn when Mr. Thayer heard them quavering in the evening twilight for a week or more, after his return to his home in Irving Street the last of September. The neighbors told him that they had been about all summer. Mrs. Dr. Weeks, who seems to have especially interested in them, says that there were at least five birds and that they were accustomed to spend the day roosting in the cluster of tall pines where they flew off at night to distant feeding grounds. She

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1910.

Dec. 7

(No. 2.)

Thinks they must have bred in that tree for near
them, late in the season, she found a young bird
perched on a fence. Apparently it had not been long
out of the nest for when she approached and flushed
it it flew off very feebly after first trying in vain
to rise into the pines.

In the earlier days of my acquaintance with
Norton's Hawks, when ^{they were} of considerable extent, essentially
primitive and comparatively little disturbed, they were
never visited by Night Herons at any season as far
as I could learn. That their first remaining trees
should now for the first time attract and harbor
these birds is not a little surprising. It would be
still more extraordinary if as Mrs. Mearns believes,
but I seriously doubt, a brood of young Herons
were really hatched and reared there last summer.



Jewon
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Jewon