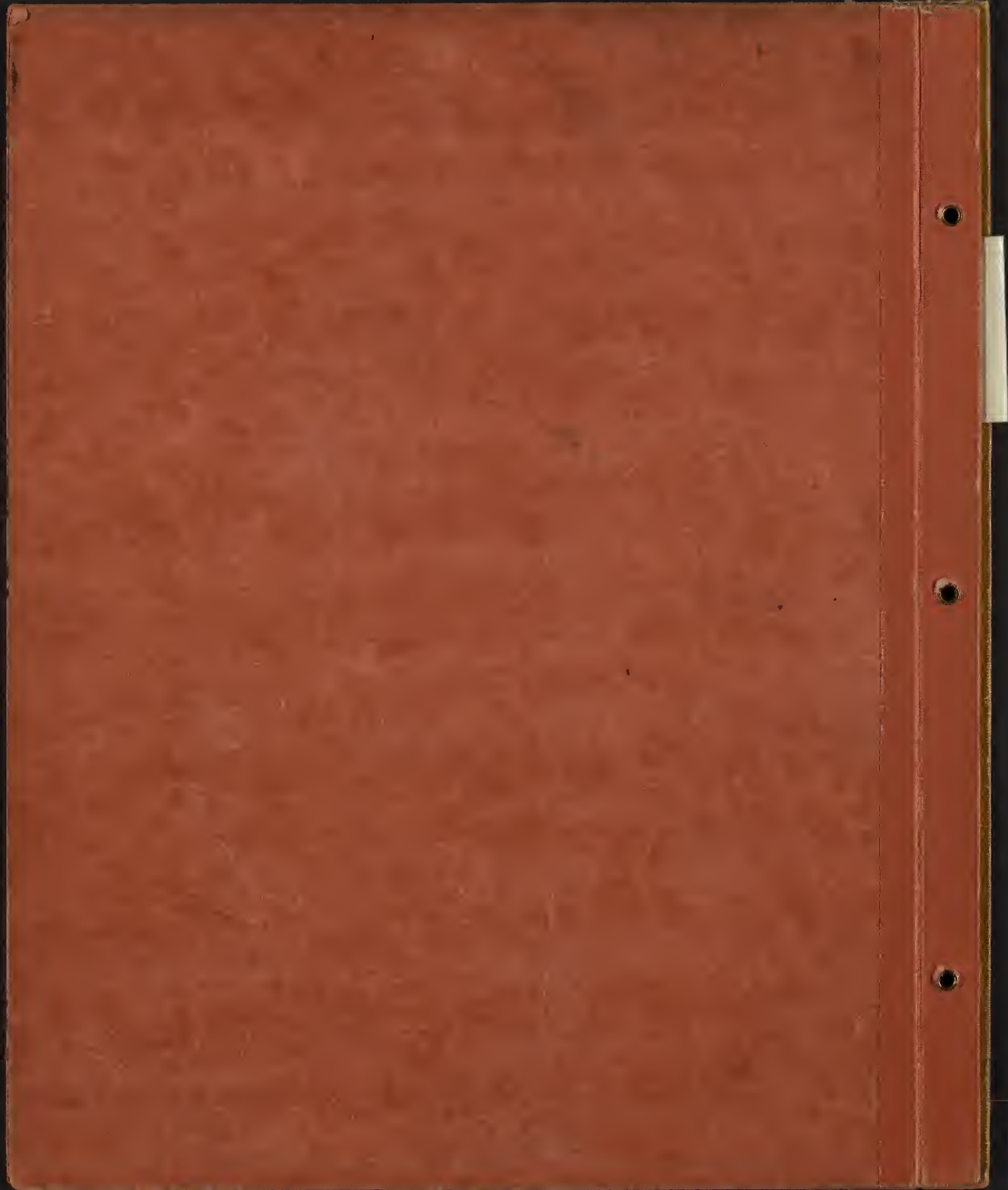


Journal, 1908.

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1908



Cambridge, Mass.

1908.

March 4

Love song
of
Screed Owl.

As I was walking up Buckingham Street this evening, about ten o'clock, I heard the love song of a Screed Owl repeated four or five times at intervals of perhaps a minute. Each consisted of a dozen or more notes (I could not count them) given very rapidly and evenly in the same key and forming a smooth yet somewhat tremulous or throbbing roll in some respects like, in other distinctly unlike, one of the autumn calls of the Screed Owl and having, I thought, a close resemblance to the "winnowing" or "drumming" of Wilson's Snipe. The bird's voice carried well in the still night air for I heard him faintly when I was at the corner of Sparks and Brattle Streets yet when I reached the head of Buckingham Street he was still further on, apparently in the pines on the hill by the Harvard Observatory. I think I heard him three two nights before this as I was in my room at Mrs. Cummings.

Covered, Mass.

1908

March 15

Forenoon partly cloudy, partly sunny. Raining most of afternoon with a thunder storm at 5 o'clock. Day warm with strong S.W. wind.

I came to Covered last evening to spend a couple of days at the old farm house. Found the snow practically all gone, the river open everywhere but with here and there fields of soggy ice drifting about over the flooded meadows, the roads dry in a few places but for the most part deep with slippy mud from the loosening frost.

All day birds this morning Song Sparrows were singing all about the house. I heard Cross Country, Bluebirds Robins & a Nuthatch calling, a Chickadee giving the Phoebe note. About seven or a Hairy Woodpecker called in a clear way very incident. Just after breakfast a Robin sang in full loud tones for half a minute or so. Bluebirds heard at intervals but were singing although the morning was then mild, sunny & nearly windless.

I spent the entire forenoon out of doors, taking a walk to Ball's Hill with "Lary". There was patches of ice in the woods but almost no snow anywhere. The river was over the meadows, yet remarkably low for this season. It has not been over the river bottom at the hill as yet. Heard a Hairy Gull calling near Ball's Hill.

The country was alive with birds chiefly Robins, Song Sparrows, Red-wings & Rusty Blackbirds. All these abundant in numbers at Lexington on the 12th I'ason tells me. He reports Bluebirds numerous there but I noted only a few here to-day.

I saw a solitary Phoebe perched in an alder on the edge of the little meadow at W. end of Ball's Hill. Sleeter & Porteridge near Barrett Spring. Red-shouldered Hawks seen very early forenoon. Saw three at once, two over Barrett woods ~~and~~ one over Holcomb's Hill.

Concord, Mass.

1908.

March 24

Clear and mild with fresh W. wind.

As I was strolling through Birch Field this evening about half an hour after sunset I started a Partridge from a group of poplars thickly hung with catkins.

Stepping as one I looked the tree over carefully and presently made out the form of another Partridge sitting erect and still among the branches about thirty feet above the ground and as many yards from me. She evidently saw me but after I had remained perfectly motionless for five minutes or more she began feeding again. I had her clearly silhouetted against the after-glow in the west and watched her through my glass for nearly fifteen minutes. During most of this time she was picking off and swallowing the poplar buds almost as quickly as a hungry hen can pick up & eat kernels of corn from a feed supply on the ground at her feet. This Partridge was somewhat less active than the birds I watched in the apple trees near the farm house in March a few years ago but she hopped from twig to twig quite nimbly whenever she found it necessary to get to a fresh supply of buds and once I saw her bend forward and devour with her tail pointing nearly straight upward as she reached for a terminal spray beneath her feet. She flexed her wings a number of times, too, to maintain her balance. I do not think that she felt quite at her ease under my observation for she reportedly stopped feeding and straightened herself up to look at me. It was getting dark among the trees when I started on & forced her to take wing.

Partridge
seen in
poplar,
"birding"

Concord, Mass.

1908
March 25

A Hairy Woodpecker was calling loudly early this morning in an elm in the door yard at the farm. Gilbert saw what, no doubt, was the same bird yesterday forenoon. It was in the elm at first. Half an hour later Gilbert found it in our wood shed or rather he saw it fly from somewhere - well back in the shed when he stepped down into it from the kitchen door. The front of this shed has two large arched openings. At the back we have recently piled up a quantity of sawed and split gray birch wood which the Woodpecker probably visited in search of cores. Hairy Woodpeckers come at all seasons into the old elms that stand close about our house but this is the first occasion when I have known one of them to enter a building of any kind.

Hairy
Woodpecker
in our
wood shed

Concord, Mass.

1908

March 28

Forenoon cloudy with light rain at noon. Afternoon sunny. Very warm all day with balmy southerly winds.

About 6 A.M. a Hairy Woodpecker called a number of times in the elms near the house giving over the Kingfisher-like rattle. Finally it drummed once on a resonant limb making a long, even roll exactly like those of the Downy, as far as I could detect.

Hairy W.
drums

A White bellied Swallow passed over the orchard flying due west about 10 A.M. Two hours later I saw what was probably the same bird circling about and finally alighted on the bird house in our garden.

White Swallow
arrives

At 4 P.M. I went to the swamp just below the orchard. Wood Ticks looking and making their although the little pond was more than half covered with thick winter ice. The surface of the open water was everywhere dotted with their heady Batrachians. They were swimming about rather listlessly or floating with only their heads showing. Some were already at an angle or at least attempting to close with and clasp one another. I saw one hopping deftly across a large cake of snow covered ice. The clatter they make was at times almost deafening & very duck-like in quality.

Wood Ticks
begin
croaking

Besides the Wood Ticks I heard two Pickering's Hylas piping, but rather feebly & listlessly - much as they call in autumn. (Dozens in full cry on afternoon of 29th)

Pick
Hylas

Big flock of Juncos. One Fox Sparrow in full song.

Concord, Mass.

1908

April 1

Brilliantly clear with warm sun but chill N. E. wind.
No snow left in woods but some ice in wooded swamps.

A pair of White-bellied Nuthatches are haunting the elm
about the farm house, as they have done every spring for years.
I saw them there this morning about seven o'clock when my
attention was especially drawn to them by an odd note
that the male was uttering. He gave it at least fifty times
at intervals of three or four seconds. It was a monosyllabic
call full and rather musical and wholly lacking the nasal
quality which is so characteristic of most of the notes of this
species. It resembled the flight call of the Bluebird for
which, indeed, I at first mistook it. I noted it at
the time as hee or phaw. As nearly as I can remember
I have never heard it before. The bird was in constant
motion all the time he was uttering it and apparently
devoting his attention solely to searching for grubs among
the upper branches of the elm while his mate was
seemingly engaged on one of the lower branches. At length
she took wing when the male pursued ^{in silence} her for a minute
or more during which both birds dived and twirled
through the tops of dozens of trees along the roadside
flying with wonderful speed the male never more than
two or three feet behind the female and sometimes within
six or eight inches. How the chase ended I did not
see for both birds passed out of sight towards the
Plethia pond still keeping up their erratic flight
as long as I had them in view. This behavior
led me to infer that they were amorously inclined
and that the note I heard was a love call. The ♂
has been calling woe-woe-woe every evening of late but
I did not hear him utter that cry to day.

Odd note
of male
White-bellied
Nuthatch

Love flight
of pair
of Nuthatches

Covecot, Mass.

1908

April 1
(No 2)

Yesterday forenoon I saw my first Cooper's Hawk
a small ♂ flying rather high over the river at ten P.M.
To-day, about the same hour, when was no doubt the
same bird appeared over the river flying low and in a
peculiar manner, flapping his wings slowly and with
long, deep sweeps each one of which seemed to lift
his body slightly. Thus his course was slightly
undulating with very now and then a longer and
deeper downward dip, that carried him down almost
to the tops of the trees. There was something about
this flight which reminded me of that of a butterfly.
It was not perfectly straight but curving slightly
towards the left. Whenever the bird swept decidedly
downward he uttered five or six shrill but rather
feeble screams which I should render kee, kee, kee,
kee, kee. I have seen this flight and heard these
notes only two or three times before. The calls are
very like those which the male Marsh Hawk makes
when "plunging" in early spring. I have little doubt
that they represent the low notes of the ♂ Cooper's
Hawk. I saw no other birds to-day but the
females may have been hidden somewhere among
the trees.

low notes
low flight
of male
Cooper's Hawk

Just before sunset the Bluebirds were singing
divinely in several directions. I saw a pair of them
eating berries a little later. I cannot recall ever
seeing them thus engaged when the weather was fine
& the fields free from snow or frost.

Bluebirds
eating
berries

Concord, Mass.

1908
April 6

Brilliantly clear with fresh W. wind. Deliciously warm at noon. Altogether a perfect early spring day.

At Ball's Hill where I spent the entire day there were very many more birds than I have seen at the farm of late. Two male Phoebe were in full song at once near the cabin & one last one of them had a note. A Pine Warbler sang half a dozen times or more on the crest of the hill about 10 A.M. and a Robin with a nearly good voice was singing there at 5 P.M. Fox Sparrows literally swarmed in the brush along the river path. I started fully fifty in one place. Their wings made as much noise as that of a full bag of Quail as they flew up from the ground into the trees. There were others scattered very often along this path. I heard only one song. At the farm we had no more than two or eight this morning.

Pine Warbler
sings.

Unusual
numbers of
Fox Sparrows

A pair of Red shouldered Hawks were soaring and hovering over the hill in the forenoon and in the late afternoon I saw a fine ♂ Marsh Hawk beating the flooded thicket across the river. Twice during the day a pair of Black Ducks flew about over the meadow & over Ball's Hill. Their wings were chirping together at five o'clock. A little later I saw a flock of 25+ water followed by another flock of 17 flying over the fields towards the N.E. as is their habit at this hour & season.

Red should
Hawks

Red wings

At rather frequent intervals through the day we heard the peculiar-like calls of two Field-billed Grackles. First one would call & almost immediately the other would answer. Both birds were in the flooded thicket opposite Benson's Landing.

Field bird
Grackles.

Common Trops in full song at noon, Hylas & Wood Trops in P.M. Hepaticas & Spring Beauty in bloom in front of cabin.

Common Trops
Hepaticas &
Spring Beauty.

Concord, Mass.

1908
April 7

Cloudy most of day. Very mild with light W. wind.

At sunrise this morning a Flicker alternately
drummed and thumped near the house. Keeping it up for
ten or fifteen minutes. The drumming invariably preceded
the thumping, the two sounds being separated by only the
briefest possible interval. After making both the bird
would remain silent for a minute or more and then
drum and thump again. I assumed that there was
only one bird but there may have been two. I was in
bed at the time so could not investigate this point.
I am quite sure that on former occasions I have
seen a Flicker produce both sounds. Both, I think,
are characteristic of the mating or love season and
probably love notes. If so the bird has two distinct
sets of love notes. The female Flicker sometimes
thumps & perhaps drums also. The drumming is a simple
even roll indistinguishable by my ears from that of the Downy.

Although I have seen Downy Woodpeckers about
the house almost daily for the past two weeks
I have not heard one drum until this morning
when a bird was making the usual even continuous
roll at short intervals for nearly two hours. His
drumming place was on a dead tree trunk in
the grove behind our barn.

Flicker
thumps &
drums
alternately

Drumming
of Downy
Woodpecker

Concord, Mass.

1908.

April 12

Brilliantly clear with cold N. W. wind blowing with tremendous violence from sunrise to sunset. It began yesterday afternoon and kept up through the whole of last night. Rarely if ever have I known the gale of such exceptional strength last so long. It silenced the birds so completely I actually did not hear one - not even a Song Sparrow - sing to-day although the sun was bright & warm. Hylas, however, were keeping nearly all day. I heard no Wood Frogs. Their singing season is probably over. It is brighter than that of any other N. S. Noctuidism except the Spade Footed Lizard.

I noted the Ruby-crowned Kinglet & the Kingfisher to-day for the first time. The former was in town broken on the sheltered side of Davis Hill. I got within a few feet of it but could see no crown patch. Instead it looked to me like a female. It gave the characteristic chatter once but did not sing.

The Golden-crests were singing rather freely. I found two birds together in two places and a little flock of seven (a very unusual number for this season) in the white pine in the Prescott wood lot.

Larry found a dead Gray Squirrel at Ball's Hill the other day & I picked up another this morning on Davis Hill. Both had the skin drawn nearly off from the head down to the neck and most of the flesh eaten. I wonder what did it. They had been dead for a week or more I judged.

I saw the pair of Nuthatches in the trees near our former home on the 8th. Yesterday the ♀ was found dead by Gilbert on the grass under the big elm in our close yard.

I skinned her to-day. She was in good flesh and her stomach was clean - full of larvae. Not the slightest trace of injury or disease could I find anywhere about her. Her ovaries were not more developed than in October specimens.

March
weather in
April
Violent
Gold-crests
birds

Wood Frogs

Arrivals

Seven
Gold-crest
Kinglets
in one flock

Gray Squirrels
Killed in
very

Nuthatch
found dead

Concord, Mass.

1908.

April 13

Partly cloudy with strong cold N. W. wind. Snowing thick & fast from 9 to 10 a. m.

While we were at breakfast this morning I noticed a ♂ Downy Woodpecker clinging to a stem of a tree very near the street. I expected to see him fly to it in a moment or two but he remained where he was for nearly half an hour. During most of this time he kept perfectly motionless with his bill pointing nearly straight upward. Even when one of my men began rolling leaves from around the clump of birch the bird did not move although the fallen leaves swept to & fro within eyes or ten feet of him. He seemed to be in a sort of trance and quite oblivious to everything that went on around him. This is not the first time I have seen a Downy behave in this manner but it does not happen often. When the bird finally changed his position he at once resumed his normal restless running activity up the trunk of an elm and then taking short flights from tree to tree.

Peculiar
behavior of
Downy
Woodpecker

Concord, Mass.

1908
April 17

Brilliantly clear with fresh W. wind. Ther. 14° at 5 a.m. A cold, April thus far has been a remarkably cold and disagreeable month with almost incessant gales of wind from the N. W. The thermometer has twice fallen to 16° and early this morning it was 14°. The ground was frozen hard at 8 o'clock.

Acrid,
harsh season

All the smaller ponds were covered with ice but it was no thicker than window glass. By noon it was comfortably warm in sunny, sheltered places and the Bearded Frogs were hearing all over the Great Meadows. As I walked the other day the Wood Frogs were heard croaking on the farm but there were hundreds of them in fact early this afternoon in the densely shaded pond behind Wall's Hill which is not as yet wholly free from its winter ice.

Frogs

Spring birds are coming later and only a few at a time. There was a mixed flock at Wall's Hill to day which included a Ruby-cranned Kinglet, 2 Pine Siskins, 3 Yellow-rumps, 5 Yellow Redpolls and two Tree Sparrows. The last named are the only representatives of their species that I have seen this spring in Concord.

Spring birds
coming later
& slowly.

Partridges appear to be rather numerous on the place this spring. I heard one drumming in the tree this morning & started another near the spring.

Partridge

On very long horns at evening I flushed three different birds in Prescott's pines.

During the cold weather which has preceded of late there has been almost no bird song. I heard a Robin singing well last evening but they were silent to day as were the Song Sparrows, also.

Concord, Mass.

1908.
April 18

Cloudy and boomer with fresh S. W. wind. Light rain at evening.

I have seen or heard Red-shouldered Hawks in the Holden Hill woods nearly every time I have been there this spring. This morning I flushed the ♀ from the nest in the big chestnut where the birds built and used a hood in last year. The nest looks just as it did when I first saw it last month. There was no down visible this morning. The bird started when I was 100 yards away and flew to the crest of the hill where she alighted in an oak. I kept on towards the nest. When I was nearly under it the female began screaming loudly, opening her mouth very wide as I could see through my glass. A few moments later she started and came straight for me on set wings, with great swiftness. When within twenty yards she turned slightly upwards & to our side passing me, however, within ten or fifteen feet. She then alighted within thirty yards and screamed again long & loud making the woods ring with her wild, musical clamor. Some afterwards she stooped at me again & a little later did again on each occasion steering over & to the left of me at the last moment. Her straight, silent onrush of the big bird was very impressive. All the while her mate was soaring high overhead, screaming now & then. He is in immature plumage like the ♂ of last year & no doubt he is the same individual. He, too, appears to be the same as last year, a fine long bird with deep ruddy breast & in fully mature plumage.

Red-shouldered
Hawks
occupy
same nest
as last year.

The ♀ swoops
at me.

The ♂ an
immature
bird as
he was
last year.

Concord, Mass.

1908
April 20

Early morning sunny & calm; remainder of day cloudy and cold with frequent flurries of snow. Wind west.

On arriving here about the middle of March I found a pair of White-bellied Nuthatches frequenting the eaves about our house as they are accustomed to do at this season. Not long after this we put up a hump of Suet in the eaves at the rear of the house. The Nuthatches soon found and visited it daily. I saw them there together on the morning of April 8 but the female did not eat any of the Suet then and I thought she seemed listless & ailing. On the morning of the 11th the female found her young dead under one of the eaves in our close yard. I skinned her next day. She was in good flesh and her stomach was full of the remains of larvae of insects. I could detect no trace of any injury nor of disease. Her ovaries were not developed no one of the oviducts being as large as the head of a pin. After the death of his mate the male continued to appear about the house but he did not stay there long at any one time. We were absent from Concord on the 15th & 16th and the Nuthatch was noted after our return (on the evening of the 16th) until the morning of the 19th when I saw him alone in the eaves. A little later that morning Gilbert saw two birds together at the Suet. They were there again this morning when I made sure that one of them was a female & evidently related to our male. It would be interesting to know how far from here he had to go to find her.

One ♂
Nuthatch
loses his
mate and
eight days
later appears
with a
new one.

One of the pair of Downy Woodpeckers drummed steadily for an hour this morning on the dead elm branch over our shed where there has been a nest these past two years.

Downy
drummed at
nest

Concord, Mass.

1908.

April 23

Sunny with fresh S. W. wind. Intensely hot. Ther. 85° at 2 P.M. Hot weather
Thunder showers having about at sunset but only a light shower
of rain fell here.

Birds noted for first time this season were: - Chaffy - a
silent bird on ground at rear of house; Purple Finch - a ♂ in
full song in orchard; White-throated Sparrows - three together near
house (one a fine adult, another with grey throat & dull head
wearings, the third was distinctly seen); Broad-winged Hawk -
♀ soaring low over our house; Night Heron, one heard at
7 P.M. flying over Ritchie's place towards the river.

The sudden change to summer weather set all the birds
to singing and the air was filled with their music most
of the day. The Parula's were especially noisy, especially
at evening when I heard multitudes of Hoopoes, several Wood Thrushes
(in the Barren run) and one Towhee.

During my evening walk through one berry pasture
I heard two Foxes barking in the distance towards the W.,
one regularly answering the other. They kept it up for
fully fifteen minutes. A Fox's bark is an indistinguishable
sound. It is not in the least like a dog's. As heard
to-night it reminded me of the gurgling sound of
a stream of hot pipes. As I stood listening to it
a Rabbit was sitting within fifteen feet of me. As far
as I could discern he did not notice the sound of
the voices of his deadly enemies. At least he kept on
nibbling at some springing grass with entire composure.

Soft Cedar birds appeared in the barberry bushes near
the house this evening & began eating the berries. A Robin
at once attracted them, flying jauntily at one after
another & finally clearing them all away. The Robins
have been eating the berries for a month or more.

Arrivals

Birds singing

Hoopoes,
Wood Thrushes,
Towhees

Foxes
barking

A Rabbit's
ignores
attention
to the sound

Robin
draws Cedar
Birds from
barberry
bushes

Concord, Mass.

1908
April 24

Brightly clear with cool east wind.

Birds noted for the first time this spring were as follows: - Arrivals.
Black-throated Green Warbler 1x Balls Hill (in Pine Park) 5 P.M.;
Solitary Tair 1x in oaks behind barn at farm about 3 P.M.
Rare Swallow 1 at farm 2 P.M. ③ at Balls Hill, 5 P.M.
Towhee, 3 all in elms rear of farm house 2 P.M.
Yellow-bellied Nuthatch, ♀ ad hickories rear of barn at farm, 8 A.M.
Belted 1 preening in Great Meadows at 5 P.M.

Saw swarms of Yellow Warblers and Yellow Palm Warblers but they were widely scattered. Three Hermit Thrushes together on Holden's Hill and two at the farm. On the west side of Balls Hill in Pine Park there were many Yellow Warblers & Yellow Red Wrens, a Ruby Crown, a Black-throated Green Warbler two Golden Crests & a Pine Warbler while a number of Swallows were darting about overhead.

As I was standing on the shore of our pond early this afternoon a ♀ Broad wing Hawk alighted on a fence post within 30 yards. I was concealed by some bushes & she did not see me. Just after closing her wings she uttered her loud Side-rings a dozen times or more. The note was always towards the light & sharp & emphatic. After this she remained motionless a long time watching someone's hand which was within a few yards of her feet. She sat so long that the body & head looked like an upward continuation of the post. I saw her yesterday for the first time & the birds began talking yesterday, too. I wonder if she timed her arrival by this first appearance!

Stated to a Red-shouldered Hawk from her nest at 4.30 P.M. She flew straight away and I kept this time when I found her nest at 5.30 then was not seen again.

Broad wing
Hawk

Red-shouldered
Hawk

Concord, Mass.

1908

April 24

(182)

The Kingfishers are evidently preparing to breed again in Mr. Harris' sand bank when they nested last year for the first time. Both birds were down together at 5:30 this afternoon flying about & rattling noisily as I approached by keeping well out of gun range. Half an hour earlier when I was on Ball's Hill I saw one of them coming from the direction of the bank at a great height (fully 100 yards) rattling incessantly. As I was watching it it suddenly set its wings and soared in a half circle, first inclining downwards and then upward. This I have never seen before. The evolution was closely similar to that which the ♀ Carolina Dove performs at this season. I wonder if it can be a love flight! After it was over the bird flew off over the meadows gradually descending. I was unable to ascertain its sex.

A pair of Chickadees have been coming regularly of late to sand bank in the place behind the farm house. This morning Gilbert had them digging a hole of a deeper place in the collection of the tree about 5 ft. above the ground & as soon as that place the digging began commenced. He says they both worked, talking to one another at the hole. Most of the chips were carried away for a few yards & then dropped. They kept at it all the forenoon but were not down in the afternoon.

Three Gray Squirrels in a swamp white oak at evening. I saw one of them bite off what looked like a Norway Lark's nest and apparently eat it. There were scores of these nests on the tree a week ago but only two or three left.

Concord, Mass.

1908.

April 25

Cloudy with light, mist S. W. winds.

I noted for the first time this spring
Bronze Thrasher.. a short bark in a bush back on Rutledge place.
Anna Warbler.. a ♂ singing in the Bowditch barn.
Black & White Creeper ♂ " " " " " "

Almonds

There was evidently only a small flight from the south
despite the favorable conditions for migration.

House Sparrows are swarming on the Rutledge place this
spring. They have taken possession of two of the bird houses
there. I have shot four females there but the birds
still continue to hang about the houses & to keep off
the few Swallows that try to go to them.

Concord, Mass.

1908.
April 27

Chase and women with light S. C. wood.

I noted to-day for the first time this season
Coat Flycatcher singing in one orchard at 6 A. M. & later
Bank Swallow - heard near Dennis at 5 P. M.
Cat bird - One seen by Gilbert by roadside, Purdum Hill

Acorns

This is the first day that the Chickadees have been
at work excavating their nest in the apple tree by one
during some windows. They begin soon after sunrise and
later especially through the forenoon but, as far as we have
observed, they never work at all in the afternoon although
they sometimes come to the hole as if to do that all is
light there. They are bringing wood straight down & have
already got to a depth of about five inches. The work is
done equally one bird succeeding the other the instant
the first has taken wing with a mouthful of chips.
Each bird usually makes a visit to the hole ^{at once} every ten
seconds, so rapidly as any work.

Chickadees
Building

There is a round hole about 3 1/2 inches in diameter six feet
above the ground in one big elm in which a pair
of Yellow-rumped Thrushes had a nest last year. It has
since been occupied all last season by Gray Squirrels. I have
seen these animals enter & leave it within a week. Yet this
morning about 8 o'clock one pair of White-bellied Nuthatches
were building a nest there. The ♀ did most of the work
& performed it with remarkable rapidity. She would run
out on a large branch peg off a stick of bark 5 or 6 inches long
take it into the hole & almost instantly replace it & go after
another. The ♂ occasionally got one & simply pushed it into
the hole without working himself.

Nuthatches
Building in
Spurred hole
high up.

Concord, Mass.

1908

April 28

Cloudy & mild with light E. wind. Showers last night.

I noted to-day for the first time this spring the following: - Arrivals
Chestnut-sided Warbler 2 ♂♂, one in Back Field, other in Bay Pasture & a. n.
Purple Martin 1, flying over Barrett Place at 4 P.M.
Green Swallow. ② flying high over farmhouse W. at 4.30 P.M.
making the call-in the latter sounds.
Spotted Sandpiper - 1 on shore of pond in our Bay Pasture & a. n.

The Chickadees worked at excavating for their nest Chickadees
in the apple tree at the rear of the house all day and excavating
even more energetically and ceaselessly in the afternoon hole
than in the forenoon. Thus far they have done nothing
but loosen and remove the decayed wood. I examined the
hole this evening & found it had been enlarged down about
six inches. At the bottom it tapered to a point. The
birds jump into it and out of it with surprising swiftness
and precision like foxes in a box near passing for an
instant at the entrance at least when going in.

As I was standing near our front yard about
10 a.m., a ♀ Sharp-shinned Hawk scolded low over
it coming from Lawrence's field. She kept straight on
following our cart path & passing the old barn within
a few yards & below the level of the corn, not once
while within my view did she wave her wings. There
was something very impressive about her flight - a swift,
even, noiseless glide suggesting great momentum
yet absolutely effortless. This is the characteristic method
of hunting of the Sharp-shin & to a less degree of
Cooper's Hawk, also. It must be a deadly method
for the victim can have little or no notice of the
approach of the Hawk until it is too late!

Sharp-shin
Hawk
hunting

Concord, Mass.

1908

March 14
to
June 1

Spring
Migration.

The spring flight of north-bound migrants was meagre and disappointing as a whole. In late March and early April I saw fair numbers of Fox Sparrows, Junco and Green-winged Warblers and exceptionally large numbers of Yellow Red-poll Warblers but almost no Tree Sparrows. The flight of migrating Swallows was much below the average although White Bellies were rather numerous for a time. Rusty Black-birds appeared in good numbers at first but towards the latter part of their stay they were unusually scarce. Blue-birds were less numerous than usual and strangely silent. Although I spent two entire Spring in their favorite haunts I did not once hear them sing freely and generally. Nor was there much Robin song before May. This no doubt was because of the exceptionally cold windy weather which prevailed through most of April, when there was more than one day brilliantly clear yet so frigid and tempestuous that I did not hear a single bird song from day break to dusk.

In May we had only one really noteworthy "bird wave". This came and passed on the 11th 12th and 13th the three warm days of which the first two were spent by me at Cambridge, where our garden, on the 12th, was literally alive with hostesses of various kinds. What happened at Concord during these two days I do not know but when I returned there on the evening of the second day (the 12th) I found only a few birds on Ball's Hill. There was a good evening at Concord on the next evening however. After that there was a general and really remarkable dearth of north-bound migrants. Of some species ordinarily abundant, such as the Black-poll Warbler and the Water Thrush, I noted only two or three individuals each, while others which I am accustomed to keep with considerable confidence of breed, as the Bay-breast Warbler, the Cape May, the Lutescent, Wilson's Black-cap, Lincoln's Sparrow & the White-crown Sparrow I did not meet with at all.

Concord, Mass.

1908.

March 14
to
June 1

Now did I see or hear Trinities Flycatchers, the Yellow-bellied Flycatcher or the Chim-labred Flycatcher. Such western birds as I had lost in winter were widely scattered as a rule and in no instance did I meet with a really good flock of them. They passed on northward before the close of the month the very last of them, a Gray-checked Thrush and a Black-bellied Warbler, being noted on the 28th.

Spring
Migration.

Most of our local birds arrived a fortnight or a month before many of the earlier comers among them were with work if not all behind their average dates. After they had all come and settled for the season in their breeding haunts they were, as a rule, as numerous as usual, although a few of them were rather less so and one or two apparently quite wanting, as will appear from the following notes.

Summer
Resident
Birds.

Wood Thrush:— A male singing in "the den" at the farm from May 10 to 25, two males there from the 26th to 31st, one there on June 18th.

Wilson's Thrush. Less common than usual in the Davis Hill region when there were two males in the den up behind the hill, one across the river near my stone boat house and one behind Davis Hill. At the farm we had one bird singing regularly in "the den".

Robin. There were at least five occupied nests at the farm at one time late in May although I never heard more than two male birds singing there at once. Most of the nests were in apple trees at the rear of our house but one bird nested on a beam in the barn cellar. Here she began nests in half a dozen places, finishing two of them but perching us and in cellar. She laid

Concord, Mass.

1908

March 14
June 1

two eggs in one of three nests and hatched & reared her young. Most of the nests in the orchard were robbed and dismantled by something - the Chipmunk Squirrels, I suspect. When the birds were building in late April & early May the water Song Bird called. In late May they sang freely & well. There on their pair nested on the Rietveld place & there was one pair established at Ball's Hill.

Summer
Resident
Pairs.

Cat bird. - Gilbert saw a Cat bird by the roadside on Parkersville Hill on April 27, an early date. After the migration was over I could find only two pairs on my land, one at Ball's Hill near "Norton's landing", the other on the Farm. The Ball's Hill birds were not seen after May 27. The pair at the Farm were noted as late as June 18 & 19. They evidently had a nest either in the Sycamore hedge behind the house or in the Forsythia bush in front of it for I saw them constantly in both places.

Brown Thrasher. - Less numerously represented than usual. At the Farm a male sang through the first half of May on the hillside below the old barn and during the same period I apparently saw a pair near Norton's hole and heard a male in song across the river behind my Farm boat house.

Bluebird. - I saw fewer Bluebirds than usual this Spring and heard literally no free, free, joyous singing, even in March. On April 1st I watched a pair eating barberries greedily in our lane although the weather was close at the time & there was no snow on the ground. On April 18 a pair began building in a bird house on the Rietveld place and on the 23rd another pair began their nest in a box in one flower garden. Song was heard in better than nests but I fear that a third pair set up bills in a box in an open tree across the road near our pond head but success for I did not see them

Concord, Mass.

1908
March 14
to
June 1

after the 1st of May. The ♀ parent of the nest on the Pittier place seemed to perform the whole work of caring for the young but this was shared equally by both birds at the nest in our garden to which they came collectively with food for their numerous young. When they left the nest the parents went off together and did not return but at the Pittier place I saw the ♂ parent on the 6th and the ♀ in the act of entering it on June 19th so I infer they must have laid in it a second time this season.

Summer
resident
Birds.

Chickadee. - We had found Chickadees there several times this spring, not above them or from pairs on my entire place, I fear. I found only one nest - in the apple tree that stands at the base of our house and stands its long. The birds began excavating their hole on June 24 and finished it probably by the 26th. They began carrying in nesting material on May 4 and continued to do so all the way up to the 9th. Soon after this they deserted the nest, probably because it was flooded by a heavy rain on the 14th for it entirely stopped downwind where an upright stem had been sawed off.

White bellied Nuthatch. -

1908

Birds noted on my land, chiefly at the farm

Concord, Mass.

June 18-19

- 1 *Furdus mustelinus* ♂ in many places on Barret Place, ^{June 18} 166 at ^{two} ♂♂ there in May.
- 2 " *fuscus* One calling near of Balls Hill June 18
- 3 *Mniotilta nigra* 2 ♂♂, four nests with eggs & young, all at farm.
- 4 *Galeoscoptes carolinensis* A pair in Strawberry near house. ♂ singing freely June 19
- 5 *Sialia sialis* (♂♀) Ricketts place June 19
- 6 [*Fregata aedon* ♂ singing in Parter's office window, West Bedford June 18]
- 7 *Mniotilta varia* ♂ " at farm June 19.
- 8 *Helminthophila ruficapilla* 2 ♂♂ singing June 18 & 19, Barret Place, the farm.
- 9 *Dendroica aestiva* ♂ singing in Spruce hedge at farm
- 10 " *junco* 2 ♂♂ at farm
- 11 " *blackburnii* 1 ♂ singing at Parter's Rock, another in Barret Place, June 18
- 12 " *virens* 1 ♂. N. Bed. off. Balls Hill, 1 ♀. at farm, both June 18.
- 13 " *virginia* ♀ on ground in deer yard Ricketts Place, June 19.
- 14 *Spinus europaeus* 4 ♀. June 18, 2 ♀. June 19.
- 15 *Geothlypis trichas* ♂ ♀. at Balls Hill June 18, another in Berry Pasture at farm 18th & 19th
- 16 *Setophaga ruticilla* ♂ ♀ in grass behind barn at farm.
- 17 *Vireo olivaceus* 4 or 5 ♂♂ both days.
- 18 " *solanus* ♂ singing June 18, Parter's Rock woods
- 19 " *flavifrons* ♂ " at farm in elms at farm June 18 & 19.
- 20 " *gibberus* ♂ " in elms at farm house June 18.
- 21 *Ampelis cedrorum* Call notes heard at farm June 19.
- 22 *Progne subis* " " " " " " "
- 23 *Chelidon erythrogaster* " " " " " " " No nest on our place this year.
- 24 *Tachycineta bicolor* 2 pairs feeding young in boxes at farm, two pairs at Ricketts place
- 25 *Parus erythronotus* ♂ singing in apple trees on Ricketts place June 19
- 26 *Spizella socialis* ♂ " at farm both days
- 27 *Pooecetes gramineus* 2 ♂♂ singing near house June 20.
- 28 *Spizella socialis* 2 " " at farm both days.
- 29 " *pusilla* 1 ♂. on Pine Ridge another in Berry Pasture at farm, June 18.
- 30 *Melospiza melodia* 2 ♀. at farm both days.

Concord, Mass.

1908

Birds noted on my land, chiefly on the Farm.

From 18.19

(No 21)

- 30 Heb. ludovicianus - ♂ singing June 18 off. North Hill, another June 19 at farm
31 Passer cyanea ♂ " " 19 at farm
32 Dolichonyx orizivorus ♂ " " 18 at West Bedford " " " " "
33 Agelaius phoeniceus Several in vine meadow off. North Hill June 18
34 Icterus galbula - One singing at farm, another on Ricketts place, 18 & 19
35 Corvus americanus . Several seen.
36 Cyanocitta cristata . One heard June 19 at farm.
37 Tyrannus tyrannus . Pair in Bowen's pasture June 18, pair & nest at farm June 19.
38 Mniotilta cinerea . One calling in orchard at farm June 19
39 Sayornis phoebe . Nest with 3 eggs in our barn allen, found with young out Ricketts place
40 Contopus virens . One singing in elms at farm June 19.
41 Empidonax minimus . " " " after orchard at farm " 19
42 Chaetura pelagica , Two flying over farm evening of 18 & 19
43 Dryobates villosus . ♀ in beech trees at farm house June 18, ♂ & ♀ there June 19.
44 Colaptes auratus . One heard calling at farm June 19
45 Coccyzus americanus . " " singing " " " "
46 " erythrophthalmus Two " " " " " 18 & 19
47 Megascops asio . Feathers of young bird killed & eaten by Fox found in orchard
48 Circus hudsonius ♂ ad. flying past our farm house June 19
49 Colinus virginianus ♂ calling "bob-white" in Bowen's field June 19. Heard
the call frequently from our house -

Cambridge, Mass.

1908.
June 20

Kingfisher
visits pond
in our
Garden.

About 1.30 P.M. as I was sitting on our
back piazza I heard a Kingfisher very near at hand.
After its rattle had been given there at intervals of
eight or ten seconds and always apparently in the same
place I began to suspect that the bird was perched
among the trees near our little artificial pond on
the edge of the jungle. This proved to be the case for
when a little later I approached the spot the Kingfisher
dashed off through the jungle in the direction of
Sparks Street rattling loudly & excitedly. It is true
I did not catch even a glimpse of it but the
sound of its voice was sufficient evidence that it
had been perched near the edge of the pond and that
it made off low down among the trees to the eastward.
I suspect that it has visited the place before this
month for when I was here on the 8th Gilbert heard
it or another twice about noon. He was in the
Museum at the time yet the sound was so loud
that he heard it very distinctly. The pond is only
a few yards square and so nearly enclosed in foliage
that it seems surprising a Kingfisher could have
discovered it. The bird was doubtless attracted to it
by seven small goldfish which were first in it
then or four weeks ago. He may have caught some
of them as I could see but two there after he left
to day.

" 29

James, our new gardener, tells me that he saw a Kingfisher
at the pond just mentioned early this morning & once or twice
last week. On one occasion last week he saw the bird perched
on the stone coping of the little pool in front of the Museum.
Both ponds still contain a few goldfish. There have disappeared from
the pond at the edge of the jungle but none as yet from the Museum pond.

Kingfisher
visits
pond
in our
garden.

Cambridge, Mass.

1908

June 1
July 6

The following list is based on observation made at our place in Cambridge June 1-9, 18, 22-22, 28-30 and July 1-. It includes all the species noted on these dates within sight and hearing of our house, chiefly in the garden and the lawns or in Hubbard Park.

Birds
noted in
& near our
Garden

Merula migratoria. - Only one pair established in our grounds in May or early June. I did not find their nest but saw young only just able to fly about June 20. Our cherry trees fruited heavily this summer but they failed to attract Robins in large numbers. Indeed I did not see one save those eight or ten birds in them. This was the first week of July at which time two Robins were singing within hearing of our house. As far as I can judge the number of Robins has been much smaller than usual every where in the North West Region but C. F. Babbal's tells me they have been exceptionally abundant along Hubbard Street. In May he & his boys found seven nests, six of which certainly had eggs, within the limits of his own grounds.

Dendroica aestiva. A male singing daily in our garden and another near Mrs. Goodwin's on Buckingham Street were the only ones heard by me anywhere in Cambridge. Our bird had a note which I saw frequently in our lilacs and occasionally bathing in the pond. No doubt they had a nest somewhere in our shrubbery but I did not find it, nor did I see or hear anything of their young as I fear they failed to see any this season.

Cambridge, Mass.

1908

June 1
to
July 6

Setophaga ruticilla. I do not think that any Redstarts
bred in or near our place this year. An adult male
was singing in the lindens on May 12 and an immature
bird on June 4th. On July 2 and again on the 4th of
that month I heard the first song in the lilacs but did not
see the singer. These were the only dates when the species
was noted at all. I attribute its disappearance as a
breeding bird from this part of Cambridge to the opening
of the elms & certain other trees during the past winter
summers.

Birds
noted in
or near
our Garden

Vireo olivaceus.— A male singing constantly at all hours
of the day in our lindens and another in Harvard Park.
I think I have heard still others a little further off, one
on Huntington Street, another on Brattle Street near Mason Street.
Our birds had a mate & I frequently see the pair together
as they perch in front of the museum where they come to
bathe after their usual fashion by flying down from a branch
and striking the water freely with their breasts. I have
not found their nest yet but I have or heard something of
them young as yet.

Cambridge, Mass.

1908

June 1
July 6

Vireo flavifrons. - This species appeared to be wholly absent from the Braintree Region in May and early June but on the 18th of the latter month I heard a male in full song in our bushes. This bird remained about the place during the remainder of June and the first week of July singing freely at all hours. I did not once see it accompanied by a mate and was inclined to believe that it did not have one.

Vireo gilvus. - A Hairy Vireo spent the season in Hubbard Park occasionally stopping with one ground. On June 21 I heard young calling in the trees at Meacham Circle so I infer that a brood was reared there.

Spinus tristis. - I heard the call notes of a Goldfinch in our garden on June 20 and 29. On the 30th and daily after that a male was almost constantly flying and hovering over the garden and jingling loudly and delightfully. From his behavior I have no doubt that he was established for the summer & preparing to breed. On several occasions I saw a female with him.

Spizella socialis. - A pair of Chipping Sparrows frequented the garden and lawn through May & June. Towards the close of the latter month I saw one or two young birds following them about.

Passerina cyanea. On June 2 I heard one Lutescent Vireo singing in the garden. As it did not suppose then I concluded it would have been a Colaptes auratus.

Cambridge, Mass.

1908

June 1
to
July 6

Icterus galbula. A pair of Orioles frequented our garden through May building their nest in one of the large elms in front of the cherry house. These trees were sprayed with arsenate of lead on June 6th. After that date the Orioles were seen or heard in our neighborhood until June 21 when I noted an adult in one of the cherry trees. On the 29th a young bird appeared in the garden. During the first week of July a family party haunted the cherry trees constantly feeding on the ripe fruit. I believe that the bird which nested in the cherry elm was killed or driven away by the spraying and that those seen later in the season came from a different brood than this, of course, is only conjecture.

Junco g. cinereus. Seen at intervals in the garden. A dozen or more assembled there on June 28, 29 & 30 to feed on the ripe cherries.

Corvus americanus. Seen or heard almost daily, usually on wing. They occasionally alighted in the hedges and on June 21 I saw two birds eating cherries in one of the trees in the garden.

Cyanocitta cristata. On June 4 & again on July 3, I heard a Jay screaming and far to the westward as I was strolling about in our garden.

Trochilus colubris. On June 4 I saw a ♀ Hummer in the garden, hovering about some *Shadblow* blossoms.

Chaetura pelagica. Chimney Swifts appeared over the garden at all hours through June but invariably at morning & evening. There were usually two or three in light at once. On the evening of June 28 at least a dozen appeared evening ^{at once}.

Cambridge, Mass.

1908

June 1
to
July 6

Dryobates pubescens. - Heard one in the Garden on July 4.

Colaptes auratus. - A single bird nested in the Garden on May 11, June 29 and July 2. I do not think the species nested anywhere in our neighborhood this year.

Ceryle alcyon. - On June 8 Gilbert heard a Kingfisher while he supposed to be flying over the Garden but being in the museum at the time he did not see the bird. On the 20th I heard one rather than times apparently in the same place. Following up the sound I started the bird from a tree near the little pond on the east wall. It flew off through the jungle rattling loudly. Although I did not see it I am sure it was perched close to the pond. The garden has its sweet times after this (the last occasion being the 29th.) usually at the pond just mentioned but once at the smaller pond in front of the museum, perched on the stem rising only a foot or so above the water. I put half a dozen small goldfish into each pond late in May. Three of them have disappeared from the jungle pond & I suspect the Kingfisher has taken them. It is remarkable also that he should have discovered these little ponds for they are only a few yards in extent & enclosed in foliage.

Coccyzus americanus. - One heard in the Garden on June 1 & 3 and one seen there on the 4th. After the last normal date I did not note the species anywhere in our neighborhood. A pair nested young in the bush on the edge of our house last year.

Cambridge, Mass.

1908

June 1

to
July 6

Coccyzus erythrophthalmus. - A pair of Black-bellied
Auauos frequented the Garden through June and early July.
On the 2nd of the latter month I discovered their nest.
Slightly exposed, it was within two yards of the site chosen
by the Killdeer-bills last year but in a different thicket,
a lilac, among very dwarfed sprigs, about nine feet above
the ground. As I could not reach it without disturbing
it I did not examine it closely. We frequently saw
the birds go to & from it as we sat on the bank nearby.
Sometimes they would look towards it by short flights
through the branches, but rather often would come gliding
~~forward~~ down on set wings and when just above it
drop through the foliage with a soft rustling sound without
alighting until they reached it. They often left it by
moving straight upwards briefly suddenly into light
above the cluster of leaves and flying off into the air.

Cambridge, Mass.

1908

July 4

Partly cloudy with thunder showers in afternoon.
Oppressively hot.

The birds bathe often during such weather as this, and the little artificial pond in front of the Museum is much resorted to by them. When I looked out my door on it this noon there was a Robin standing on the shallow water, engaged in throwing it over his back, and half a dozen House Sparrows perched on the stone coping near him. They seemed to be watching him anxiously yet to be afraid to enter the water themselves. I was wondering at this when a slight movement on the opposite shore caught my eye. It was caused by a big Green Frog who, coming from we know not where, appeared in the pond early in the day and had been living there ever since. He entered the water quietly & sank beneath its surface. Instantly the suspicion flashed across my mind that he had designs on the bathing Robin and this proved to be the case for he crossed the pond (a distance of some feet) so deep under water that I could not see him and on emerging sprang directly at the Robin who eluded him with some difficulty and flew off evidently badly frightened. At the same instant the House Sparrows took wing with loud cries of alarm. I wondered if they could hear freedom the danger. It is possible, of course, that the Frog was merely desirous of driving the birds away from the pond but much more probable, in my opinion, that he tried to surprise and seize the Robin & that had he been able to catch & hold him that he would have eaten him.

A big
Green Frog
tries to
seize a
bathing
Robin.

Cambridge, Mass.

1908

Sept 7

Brilliantly clear with fresh, cool north-west wind.

A pair of
Carolina
Wrens in
our Garden.

After an absence of eight days I returned to Cambridge from Concord this morning. As I was writing in my study in the Museum about 10 a.m. I heard a bird scolding among the rhododendrons just below the window and at once went out to ascertain what it was as its voice seemed unfamiliar. As I approached the rhododendrons closely I saw a Red-bellied and a Red-eyed bird flitting through them but I knew that neither of these birds could be the author of the low, insistent, grating chatter that continued to come from the heart of the thicket. At length I caught a glimpse of still a third bird which was hopping about in the deep shadow under the dense foliage on the surface of the leaf-strewn ground. The first glimpse I took it to be a House Wren but a moment later when it came out into a patch of sunlight & I got my glass on it I saw that it was a Carolina Wren. Soon afterwards it was joined by another bird of the same species and for a few seconds I had them both under my glass, in a good light, at a distance of not over ten feet. They were evidently feeding but one of them seemed ill at ease for it kept up the scolding chatter (very like that of a House Wren) at intervals. Both were on ragged, moulting plumage with patches of bright, new feathers appearing here & there among the worn & faded ones. One bird had a full tail, the other only a single tail-feather. I took both to be adults and from what I afterwards saw of them I believe they were a mated pair. They remained in the Garden through the entire day keeping at all times well together, one following the other closely during the short flights they took from place to place. Some of their flights were ordinary on their part, others due to the fact that they were especially disturbed for I hunted up Walter Dean & he and I followed

Cambridge, Mass.

1908.

Sept. 7

(No. 2)

them about together rather closely for half an hour or more. He drove them into the shelter of old elms on the rear of the house and into the crowded young bushes that screen one elms yard but they evidently preferred the rhododendrons when they were first seen and returned to them whenever they were permitted to do so. On one occasion, however, after they had been kept unmolested for a considerable length of time, we started them from the back corner of the Museum where above the windows they had been concealed among the leaves of the ivy that covers the entire eastern side of the building. One of them hopped downy along the eaves gutter or came through where it flew to the Hotel roof up which it ascended, closely followed by its mate, to the vine clad chimney which both birds ascended among the ivy nearly to the top stone.

About noon as Walter & I, after being kept of these birds, were still looking for them, it occurred to me to whistle an imitation of their song. To my no small pride and pleasure, as well as surprise, the male bird almost immediately answered me and soon with decided song almost certainly in hand full tones for several minutes varying his notes from time to time and going in all at least four different places.

It was delightful to hear his cheery voice, so closely associated in my mind with the various experiences that I have had in past years in our Southern States, ringing out again and again in the old Cambridge garden where I have spent so very much of my life. And when both birds were hopping about among the rhododendrons it occurred to me that a Cardinal had preceded them there only a few years ago & had even died on my windowsill. Besides their song & the holding clothes their birds gave only one other note the tick-tick-tick-tick-tick alarm cry, not unlike that of the warbler from our London. ^{They were cheerful & retiring but not entirely shy.}

A pair of
Cardinal
Birds in
our Garden

See-e-e-e-e, Tee-e-e-e-e soft, low, musical,
was uttered by one of them, many times
about dinner, after the above paragraph written

Cambridge, Mass.

1908.

Sept. 7

(No 3)

Visiting our Gravestone apple tree this morning I noticed that many of the ripe apples both in and beneath it (ie on the ground) had had holes pecked in their ruddy sides. Later in the day, I reportedly saw Crow Black birds, to the number of six or eight, flying into and from this tree. I have no doubt whatever that they were feeding on the pulp of these apples for I have actually seen them do it in former years and two holes showed unmistakable marks of birds' bills. But on this particular occasion I did not actually see them attacking the apples.

Crow Black-
birds eating
pulp of
Gravestone
apples in
the Garden.

Just before sunset four Chimney Swifts appeared over the Garden, flying at a considerable height but circling and darting back and forth many times over the same spot. I took them to be migrating birds which were passing for a brief time to some other evening meal. They were in sight two or three minutes.

Chimney
Swifts.

Cambridge, Mass.

1908.

Sept. 8

Clear and cool with dry bracing air and light west wind; altogether a brilliantly beautiful day.

When I entered the Garden about 9 a.m. I heard the Carolina Wren almost immediately calling te-e-e-e-e or tear-1-1 and giving the feeding notes. I soon found both birds in the neglected narrow corner of our place where they were hopping about on or near the ground in a tangle of golden rods, asters and other wild flowers. Soon after this the male began singing freely, keeping it up at intervals for ten or fifteen minutes. At length he flew up into a pine tree where he sat for several minutes on a dead branch in bright sunlight preening his feathers. All the while I was within six yards of him watching him through my glass. I heard both repeatedly later in the afternoon in various parts of the Garden. Within ten minutes after leaving them there about 10 a.m. I drove to Irving's Buggy Stable on Concord Avenue a little beyond Hemen Avenue. Scarcely had I reached there when a Carolina Wren began singing and giving the te-e-e-e call in a yard close to this stable. There were two or three large trees in the yard but no shrubbery. The bird seemed to be in one of these trees but I did not see it. It called or decided a dozen times or more very near me and I am absolutely sure that it was a Carolina Wren. On reaching the Museum of Comparative Zoology I saw Walter Faxon who told me that a Carolina Wren has been seen recently in Belmont by Mrs. Nelson, the Museum taxidermist and that two others have been noted of late in the Arnold Arboretum by Mr. Charles Faxon while still another has been observed on the grounds of the Benedictine Sisters in Brookline. Two more which Miss Blanche Kendall has had under observation, also in Brookline, (see her letter to me written last month) bring the total number of birds reported there for this season from the neighborhood of Boston up to nine.

Carolina Wren
in one
Garden.

A Carolina
Wren on
Concord Ave.
Cambridge

Carolina Wren
in Belmont

Two Wrens
at
Arboretum

Three more
in Brookline

Cambridge, Mass.

1908.

Sept. 8
(No 2)

As I was writing in my study this afternoon I heard a Water Thrush chirping excitedly in the jungle. I think there was a cat hidden there among the crowded oaks and Baptism for whom I got to the spot the Water Thrush was in a low tree believing as if something had disturbed him and was preventing him from returning to the densely shaded, weed covered ground beneath. Within a few yards of him was a bush (Viburnum lentago) was another bird which I have been long expecting to find in just this place but have never before noted anywhere in our grounds, viz a Commitment Warbler. It, too, seemed to be apprehensive of some hidden danger on or near the ground for he was regarding it intently with head bent down and was twitching and flitting his tail incessantly and incessantly but for a time he made no sound. I could not see him very well at first because of the density of the laburnum foliage but he soon flitted up into an apple tree and hopping out into the sunlight, within less than twenty feet of where I stood, gave me a splendid opportunity to study him long and carefully through my glass. I now saw his broad buffy eye ring, his yellowish throat, the brownish yellow of two breast and all the other details of his plumage which was entirely that of a very large, richly colored female or of a young male in fresh autumn plumage - the latter, I think. When at length he took wing and flew out of sight high among the trees he gave a bright loud, full chirp exactly like that of an autumnal Black-bell.

This call is not often uttered by a Commitment Warbler but I remember hearing it (and fully identifying birds that uttered it) during the early '70's when Henshaw & I gave a much attention to Commitment Warblers in the old Maple Swamp. It is interesting that the species has at length occurred in our jungle for whom I planned it I had especially in mind attracting them here if possible.

Commitment
Warbler seen
in the jungle
in our Garden

Cambridge, Mass.

1908.
Sept. 9

Brilliantly clear with light W. wind. Warmer.

H. A. Purdie came out this morning to see the Carolina Wrens. We soon found them among the rank herbaceous growth in the north west corner of the Garden. I drove them out from the Museum to the place where they remained most of the forenoon. Although less noisy than they were yesterday forenoon they called or scolded at intervals and twice the male sang a few times. At daybreak this morning I heard the t-c-c-c call three. Last evening they went to roost among the rhododendrons in the angle of the Museum wall just as twilight was falling. Before settling themselves for the night both birds scolded loudly and mixed with for two or three minutes. While listening to them it suddenly struck me that their chattering cries which I have compared to those of the Horn Wren were really quite different and much more nearly like (at least in quality) the rasping notes of the Katydid. Purdie, who has been hearing many Katydids of late, agreed heartily to this comparison when we were listening to the scolding of the Wrens this morning. Both birds continue retreating and chasing. One may approach them closely enough but they are past masters of the art of hiding and skulking in undergrowth and old woodpiles (such as that near our toolhouse). Hence it is difficult to get a good view of them. They responded quickly and satisfactorily to "scoping" the first day but since then they have paid little or no attention to it.

Carolina
Wrens
in the
Garden

Scolding
notes like
sounds
made by
Katydid

Cambridge, Mass.

1908.
Sept. 12.

Cloudless but densely hazy. Warm with light southerly winds.

Returning to Cambridge late yesterday afternoon (6 P.M.) I found both Carolina Wrens in the Garden. The first thing I saw in the place where I drop them into the jungle where I think they spent the night for I heard them scolding there just as it was getting dark under the trees. I searched the whole of our grounds for them this morning very carefully but without success. About 10 A.M., however, the male sang three, in quick succession, in the jungle.

Carolina
Wrens in
the Garden

As I was looking for the Wrens this morning I came upon a little party of Woodpeckers in the north-west corner of the Garden. There were three Black-jacks and a Yellow Warbler. The latter was a young male in bright autumn plumage, very rich, char yellow on the under parts, with fine chestnut streaking on the breast. He kept most of the time well up in the big willow where the Black-jacks were, also. I believe he is a Yellow Warbler in the Garden after the close of August.

Yellow Warbler
in the
Garden

There were eight Chimney Swifts flying over the Garden at one time last evening. They remained in sight only two or three minutes and then drifted off southward. I think they never have been migrating but I saw some here early in the week which acted like local birds. I have not observed any at Concord for a week or more.

Chimney
Swifts

Cambridge, Mass.

1908.

Dec. 20

I received a call this morning from Samuel Copeland Palmer whom I had never seen before but who wrote me last October about a Mockingbird that he had found near Fresh Pond. He is a young man who came here from Pennsylvania a year ago last September to take a two year's course in biology at Harvard. During his stay in Cambridge he has taken almost daily walks in search of birds, usually either to the Cambridge Cemetery or to Fresh Pond and the neighboring woods. That he has made good use of the opportunities afforded by these excursions is evident for he had many interesting things to tell me. He seems to drop a deep interest in birds and to know them well. Indeed he impressed me as being an exceptionally intelligent and careful observer.

The chief object of Mr. Palmer's call was to tell me about a Bald Eagle which he had just seen in Cambridge Cemetery and to get me to return there with him in the hope of finding it again for he had left it only half an hour before (about 9.30 a.m.) perched in one of the old trees that grow along the edge of the salt marsh at the south-eastern extremity of the higher land. Thither it had flown from near the middle of the cemetery when he saw it first in a large oak closely surrounded by a small mob of coloring Crows and approached it within about 150 yards before it took wing. He had a good view of it through his glass and describes it as a fulvous brown bird with a little white on the rump or upper tail coverts.

Samuel
Copeland
Palmer
calls on me

Bald
Eagle in
Cambridge
Cemetery.



Journal, 1908.

Journal
1908
Sept.

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