

Journal. <sup>18)</sup>  
1902-Jan-May.

1902

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Boston, Mass. to Bethel, Me.

1902.

January 2. Forenoon sunny; afternoon cloudy.

Left Boston at 9 A.M. and reached Bethel about 5 P.M.

All the way from Boston to Yarmouth small flocks of Crows were seen feeding in the fields which were everywhere nearly or quite free from snow or ice. At Oxford we began to see sleighs and at Bryant's Pond and Bethel the entire surface of the country was buried under a spotless robe of snow which, however, nowhere exceeded a foot in depth.

As our train was slowly climbing the steep grade beyond West Paris I saw, from the car window, three birds which must have been Pine Grosbeaks. They were flying over an opening in some birch woods, rising and falling in long, graceful undulations.

Bethel, Maine.

1902.

January 3. Clear and cold with moderate N.W. wind.

Immediately after breakfast the Doctor and I, with several of the ladies of the household, took a walk on snow shoes in the woods below the house. As we were passing under some tall gray birches the call of a Chickadee attracted our attention to five of these birds which, in company with a goodly number of Lesser Redpolls, were clustered in the tops of two of the trees directly over our heads. They were all feeding on the birch seeds which were scattered in showers over the surface of the snow about us. I counted twenty-two Redpolls of which only two were fully adult (i.e. rosy-breasted) males.

1902.

January 4. Clear and cold with strong N.W. wind. Ther. -6 at day-break, +6 at 2 P.M.

In the forenoon the Doctor and I took a long tramp on snow shoes in the Glen Woods revisiting all the old familiar haunts. It was reassuring to find these beautiful woods wholly unchanged or at least unmarred. The numerous sheltered openings were as sunny and attractive as ever, the little brooks murmured and gurgled beneath their coverings of snow and ice, the tall white and red pines, the sturdy rough-barked hemlocks, the needle-pointed balsams, and the olive-green arbor vitae had simply added the growth of another year to their already generous proportions.

There seemed to be more birds than there were at any time last winter. We saw no less than four flocks of Chickadees containing respectively 2, 3, 5 and 6 birds. Some of them were in evergreen woods, others among gray birches. I saw them eating both birch and hemlock seeds. In each flock there was a bird (why is there never more than one?) which quickly responded when I gave the phoebee whistle and after a little while became excited and eager, flitting close about me, alighting within a few feet of my head and answering all my calls with spirit and promptness. I see no difference in habits, behavior or general appearance between these

1902.

January 4. Chickadees and ours at home.

(2).           The flock of 3 birds contained also a Hudsonian Chickadee, two Kinglets and a Canada Nuthatch and there was another Nuthatch in the flock of six Chickadees.

The Hudsonian Titmouse kept his black-capped cousins close company during their rambles through some rather open woods of gray birches intermingled with balsams. Like them he was chiefly feeding on birch seeds which he obtained by pecking the cones to pieces, sometimes perching just above them and bending forward to strike down at them, at others hanging back downward beneath them and striking upward. Two or three strokes were usually sufficient to demolish the cone and most of the seeds appeared to be scattered over the surface of the snow beneath and lost. The little bird worked busily and cheerily after the manner of all Titmice. I did not notice that his attitudes or motions differed in any way from those of the Black-capped Chickadee but he was perhaps more restless than they.

I was surprised at the number of Partridge tracks which we saw in the Glen Woods this morning. They were literally everywhere and most of them appeared quite fresh. The birds must be much more numerous than they were last year.

Bethel, Maine.

1902.

January 5. Sunny and mild with fleecy clouds drifting slowly before a light west wind. Ther. 16° at sunrise, 28° at 2 P.M.

At 10 A.M. Dr. Gehring, Miss Anna Almy and I started for a walk. On snow shoes we crossed the clearing south of the house and entered the woods beyond where we found what was probably the same flock of birds that we saw there yesterday. It consisted, this morning, of three Chickadees, two Kinglets and a pair of Canada Nuthatches, the Hudsonian Chickadee being missing.

At this point we left the path and turning to the eastward picked our way slowly through the dense growth of gray birches and young balsams until we came out on the logging road which we used to traverse so often last winter. Here we took off our snow shoes for the roadway worn hard and smooth by frequent travel afforded excellent walking save in a few places where it was icy and dangerously slippery.

For a half mile or so beyond where we struck it the road passes through swampy thickets of birches and alders, in which we heard nothing but a Kinglet or two but at the point where it leaves the low ground and begins to ascend a ridge covered with mixed evergreen woods of balsam, spruce, hemlock and arbor vitae an interesting experience awaited us. We had stopped for a moment to look about us and listen when the

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January 5. all-pervading silence was suddenly broken by a prolonged,  
(2). varied, and exquisitely sweet and tender song. In form it resembled that of a Goldfinch but it was decidedly longer and much less loud and obtrusive as well as infinitely wilder and more aetherial in quality. Some of the notes suggested the tinkling sound of ice. Although the song was practically continuous from beginning to end it did not flow quite smoothly but tripped or halted in places after the manner of the song of the Winter Wren, to which, indeed, it bore some slight general resemblance. From the first I felt sure that the bird was a Crossbill, probably a White-wing since the notes were unlike any that I have ever heard from Loxia minor; but just after the song ceased I thought I heard the pip call of the latter species uttered faintly but distinctly in the cluster of tall balsams whence the song had seemed to issue. We scanned these trees long and closely but without discovering the bird nor did we again hear his voice. Thus the question of his identity is left practically undecided.

Proceeding on our way we heard, at frequent intervals, in the dense balsams and hemlocks which bordered the roadway on both sides, the slight tzee-tzee-tzee of Golden-crested Kinglets and the nasal, whining calls of Canada Nuthatches. Blue Jays occasionally screamed in the distance and we saw



1902.

January 5.       one flitting about a pile of logs in an opening.

(3).           As we rounded a bend in the road we caught a glimpse of a Pileated Woodpecker just disappearing around the next bend beyond. Stealing silently on we soon heard him tapping among some dense young evergreen trees. I imitated the sound by striking the palms of my hollowed hands lightly together and presently the big fellow came flying directly towards us just above the surface of the snow giving us a clear view of his black and white plumage and flashing scarlet crest before he caught sight of us and turned back into the woods.

At the lumber camps half a mile further on we heard another Log Cock hammering and shouting among some large yellow birches on a hillside. There were also a number of Canada Nuthatches immediately about the camps.

On our way back we came upon a pair of Pine Grosbeaks among some low, dense alders. The male was a superb fellow, as deep rose red as any that I have ever seen. Both birds kept close together, flitting from place to place among the alders, frequently alighting on some soft, yellowish-colored ice at which they pecked industriously evidently in the hope of getting at the water beneath. The finding of this solitary pair of Grosbeaks interested me greatly for I suspect that they were local birds whose summer home is on some of the

Bethel, Maine.

1902.

January 5. higher mountains of this immediate region.

(4). Dr. Gehring tells me that they are the first that he has seen in Bethel for several years.

I was surprised at the number of Partridge trails seen today. They were simply everywhere along the logging road as far as we traversed it. Evidently the birds had come out into the open to bask in the sun for their trails followed the sides of the road for considerable distances before <sup>turning</sup> back into the woods. There were also innumerable tracks of Rabbits, many of Red Squirrels and Mice, a few of Foxes.

During most of the time that we spent at the lumber camp the hard-wood trees on the neighboring hill side were snapping like pistol shots. The reports averaged at least one per minute and sometimes two or three came in quick succession from different directions. They were fully as loud as the reports of a 32 cal. revolver loaded with black powder. The sun was shining rather feebly at the time, the temperature was not far from 23°, and there was practically no wind. Dr. Gehring found a small, dark colored spider crawling feebly on the surface of the snow.

Bethel, Maine.

1902.

January 6. Cloudy with light S. wind.

The Doctor and I spent about an hour this forenoon in the woods below the house. After traversing the paths we left them and followed up the course of the brook for upwards of a quarter of a mile. The walking was rather open and very level and smooth for the way led over a narrow interval covered with large black ashes and yellow birches which stood well apart with almost no undergrowth. It was difficult to understand what could attract Partridges to such woods but we found the trails of at least two different birds which had apparently been rambling about over a very large extent of ground.

In the woods nearer the house we saw four Chickadees and a flock of about twenty Redpolls. The latter were in larch trees apparently eating the seeds. We also heard a Pine Grosbeak whistling high in air overhead.

Bethel, Maine.

1902.

January 7. Snowing most of the day but at no time heavily, only about 2 inches falling. Calm with now and then a breath of air from S.E. Thermometer  $\begin{matrix} 18^{\circ} \\ 24^{\circ} \end{matrix}$

Spent most of the forenoon cutting down sapplings along the path in the woods below the house. While thus engaged I heard a Woodpecker tapping near at hand. From the rapidity and vigor of his strokes I suspected that he was a Hairy but to my delight he proved to be an Arctic Three-toed, the first I have ever seen in Bethel. He was in a piece of balsam woods on the trunk of a balsam that had broken off about 25 feet above the ground and was far gone in decay. For fully an hour he did not change his position by more than a few inches although he worked <sup>almost</sup> unceasingly, making the chips fly and drilling several irregularly shaped holes deep into the stem of the tree. I stood almost directly beneath him for ten or fifteen minutes without apparently causing him any alarm although he stopped his work once or twice to peer down at me giving me, as he did so, a good view of his rich yellow crown patch. He looked very large - almost as big as a Flicker - and I was strongly impressed with his exceeding grace of movement and superabundant vigor. Without question this is the most energetic and spirited of all our Woodpeckers with the possible exception of the Pileated.

1902.

January 7. Among these same balsams I heard every now and then the (2). tzee-tzee-tzee of Golden-crested Kinglets and twice what I was sure was the distant creep of a Brown Creeper.

The flight calls of Lesser Redpolls passing high overhead also came faintly to our ears at intervals and a solitary Pine Grosbeak attracted by my answering whistle descended from a great height and alighted in a pine near us, balancing himself on its topmost spray and uttering his clear, penetrating note incessantly. I could not make out his coloring against the white light of the cloudy sky but I do not think he was a red bird.

In the afternoon we went to the Glen Woods. A Pine Grosbeak was heard calling soon after we left the house. As we were passing through the first long opening and descending the slope to the second brook a faint chirp attracted my attention. It proved to be the note of a Chickadee whom I presently called to me by alternately "screeping" and whistling "phoebee". He was quickly followed by three others of his kind and by two Red-bellied Nuthatches. All six birds hopped and flitted close about us until they had satisfied their curiosity when they moved on. To my surprise they were almost immediately succeeded by what seemed to be a second flock consisting of eight Black-capped Chickadees and one

1902.

January 7. P.hudsonicus. These birds collected in the middle of a (3). dense, low cluster of arbor vitae where they remained for a long time hopping about excitedly and uttering incessant scolding cries which at first led me to think they had found a little Owl of some kind but which I finally decided were directed at myself.

Standing within a few yards of the birds I had an excellent chance to watch the Hudsonian Chickadee and to compare his attitudes and behavior with those of his black-capped cousins. I must confess that I could discover no differences of any importance although the Hudsonian seemed to be rather more active and excitable than any of the other members of the flock. He was unquestionably the most voluble making almost as much noise as all the others put together. Although like all the Hudsonian Chickadees which I have ever met he had only two or at most three really distinct calls he combined the notes of which they were composed in so many different ways as to give one the impression that he possessed a somewhat varied repertoire. I noted the following variations on the spot:-

1. Tzi (a simple lisping chirp)
2. Tcheè-tcheè (emphatic yet husky, at times wheezy and broken)

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- January 7. 3. Ti-ti-tcheè (two chirps combined with one husky note)  
(4). 4. Ti-tzi-tcheè-tcheè (two chirps and two husky notes)  
5. Ti-tcheè-tcheè (one chirp and two husky notes)  
6. Tsip or t'chip - a sharp, abrupt challenging call.  
7. Tsip-tsi-tchee - The sharp challenge combined with one  
chirp and one husky note.

All these notes are perfectly distinct from anything that the common Chickadee ever utters.

The Hudsonian Chickadee seen on this occasion remained in the thicket of arbor vitae, flitting about and calling, long after all the other members of the flock had departed.

Continuing on our way we found two Golden-crested Kinglets among some dense young balsams and flushed a Partridge from a little glen through which flowed a brook encased in a thick covering of snow and ice. The Partridges of the region about Bethel are simply the wildest birds of their kind that I have ever met. They fly the moment they see or hear a man no matter how far off he may be.

On our return we did not see or hear a bird of any kind.

Bethel, Maine.

1902.

January 8.      Weather precisely like that of yesterday.

The Doctor and I spent the greater part of the forenoon in the woods below the house. Strange to say we did not either see or hear a bird of any kind. Indeed the only animate creature noted was a Red Squirrel that indulged in an outbreak of snickering among some balsams near where we were at work.



Bethel, Maine,

1902.

to Boston, Mass.

January 9. Clear and mild with scarce a breath of wind.

Started for home this morning by the 8.45 train. At the Grand Trunk Railroad Station in Bethel I saw a flock of fully twenty English Sparrows feeding on some grain that had been scattered about and under one of the freight cars.

In some young sprout woods near the railway station at Oxford I noticed this morning a number of white oaks from 15 to 30 feet in height, some smaller black oaks, and a good many low clusters of bear oak, all these species being readily identified by the leaves of last season's growth with which they were still more or less thickly covered. There were also some rather extensive tracts of pitch pines in the same neighborhood. The last-named tree extends commonly as far to the westward as Norway. None of the oaks just mentioned are known to occur at Bethel.

Birds noted at Bethel, Maine in December 1900,  
January, February and March 1901 and January 1902.

1. Parus atricapillus. December 8<sup>③</sup> 13<sup>③</sup> 15<sup>③</sup> 16<sup>③</sup> 17<sup>②</sup> 18<sup>hd.</sup> 19<sup>④</sup> 21<sup>③</sup> 30<sup>③</sup> 31<sup>③</sup> 1900  
 January 1<sup>②</sup> 2<sup>hd.</sup> 3<sup>③</sup> 4<sup>③</sup> 5<sup>③</sup> 6<sup>③</sup> 7<sup>③</sup> 8<sup>③</sup> 9<sup>③</sup> 10<sup>②</sup> 11<sup>②</sup> 12<sup>③</sup> 13<sup>⑤</sup> 14<sup>③</sup> 15<sup>③</sup>  
 " 16<sup>③</sup> 17<sup>②</sup> 18<sup>hd.</sup> 20<sup>hd.</sup> 23<sup>hd.</sup> 26<sup>⑦</sup> 31<sup>④</sup>. February 1<sup>3 females</sup>  
 (February) 4<sup>④</sup> 12<sup>②</sup> 14<sup>⑤ hd.</sup> 16<sup>②</sup> 17<sup>hd.</sup> 19<sup>③</sup> 21<sup>hd.</sup> 23<sup>④</sup> 24<sup>③</sup> 26<sup>③</sup>  
 March 1<sup>③</sup> 3<sup>2 females</sup> 7<sup>♀</sup> 1901.  
 January 3<sup>③</sup> 4<sup>②</sup> 5<sup>③</sup> 6<sup>④</sup> 7<sup>②</sup> 1902.
2. Parus hudsonicus January 4<sup>1</sup>, 7<sup>1</sup> 1902.
3. Sitta carolinensis. February 24<sup>③</sup> 1901.
4. " canadensis. December 16<sup>hd.</sup> 19<sup>②</sup> <sup>1901</sup> January 6<sup>②</sup> 7<sup>hd.</sup> 9<sup>hd.</sup> 12<sup>2 notes</sup>  
 (January) 13<sup>2</sup> 14<sup>1</sup> 16<sup>②</sup> February 23<sup>1</sup> 26<sup>hd.</sup> March 3<sup>hd.</sup> 7<sup>hd.</sup> 1901.  
 January 4<sup>hd.</sup> 5<sup>7 on</sup> 7<sup>②</sup> 1902.
5. Regulus satrapa. December 11<sup>1 hd.</sup> 16<sup>②</sup> 18<sup>hd.</sup> 20<sup>③</sup> 31<sup>1 hd.</sup> 1900.  
 January 1<sup>hd.</sup> 3<sup>hd.</sup> 6<sup>hd.</sup> 8<sup>hd.</sup> 9<sup>hd.</sup> 18<sup>hd.</sup> 20<sup>1</sup> 23<sup>hd.</sup> February 2<sup>1</sup> 3<sup>1</sup> 17<sup>hd.</sup>  
 (February) 19<sup>1</sup> 21<sup>2</sup> 26<sup>③</sup> March 1<sup>②</sup> 1901.  
 January 4<sup>③</sup> 5<sup>②</sup> 6<sup>④</sup> 7<sup>②</sup> hd.
6. Certhia f. americana December 19<sup>1</sup> 20<sup>1</sup> 1901.  
 January 1<sup>1</sup> 3<sup>hd.</sup> 6<sup>1</sup> 9<sup>②</sup> 13<sup>②</sup> 18<sup>hd.</sup> 20<sup>hd.</sup> February 21<sup>hd.</sup> 1901.  
 " 7<sup>1 hd.</sup> 1902.
7. Banus borealis December 7 (choosing an English Sparrow) 1901.
8. Pipilo canadensis January 5<sup>② hd. ♀</sup> 6<sup>hd.</sup> 7<sup>①</sup> <sup>hd.</sup> [2<sup>③</sup> <sup>hd.</sup> White Parula] 1902
9. Loxia leucoptera? " 5<sup>♂</sup> <sup>hd.</sup> <sup>hd.</sup> but <sup>not seen.</sup> 1902.

Birds noted at Bethel, Maine in December, 1900,  
January, February & March 1901, and January 1902.

10. ✓ Spinus tristis. December 8 <sup>flight note</sup> <sub>hand.</sub> 21 <sup>flight note</sup> <sub>hand.</sub> 1900.

11. ✓ Acanthis linaria. January 3 <sup>(22)</sup> <sub>noting</sub> <sup>(23)</sup> <sub>birds</sub> 4 <sup>(2)</sup> 6 <sup>(20)</sup> 7 <sup>(1)</sup> 1902.

12. ✓ Spizella monticola January 9<sup>1</sup> 20<sup>2</sup> 1901.

13. ✓ Passer domesticus December 4 <sup>(1)</sup> 6 <sup>(2)</sup> 7 <sup>(1)</sup> 1900.  
January 9 <sup>(20)</sup> 1901.

14. ✓ Cyanocitta cristata December 4<sup>hd.</sup> 6<sup>3</sup> 7<sup>1</sup> 8<sup>3</sup> 19<sup>1</sup> 20<sup>(2)</sup> 21<sup>(3)</sup> 30<sup>hd.</sup> 31<sup>noting</sup> 1900.  
January 3<sup>hd.</sup> 4<sup>(3)</sup> 6<sup>(3)</sup> 8<sup>hd.</sup> 9<sup>hd.</sup> 13<sup>1</sup> 14<sup>1</sup> 15<sup>1</sup> 18<sup>1</sup> 21<sup>1</sup> 22<sup>1</sup> 23<sup>1</sup> 24<sup>1</sup>  
" 25<sup>(2)</sup> 26<sup>1</sup> 27<sup>1</sup> 31<sup>hd.</sup> February 1<sup>(2)</sup> 2<sup>1</sup> 3<sup>3</sup> 4<sup>hd.</sup>  
17 February 10<sup>hd.</sup> 12<sup>3</sup> 14<sup>1</sup> 16<sup>5</sup> 17<sup>(1)</sup> 18<sup>(3)</sup> 19<sup>(3)</sup> 24<sup>1</sup>  
March 3<sup>1</sup> 5<sup>3</sup> 7<sup>hd.</sup> 8<sup>(2)</sup> 1901.  
January 5<sup>1</sup> <sup>down</sup> <sub>hand</sub>, 1902.

15. ✓ Dryotates villosus December 6<sup>1</sup> 22<sup>3</sup> 1900. February 28<sup>1</sup> 1901.

16. ✓ " rusticus medianus. January 22<sup>1</sup> March 3<sup>1</sup> 1901.  
" 3<sup>1</sup> 1902.

17. ✓ Picoides arcticus January 7<sup>3</sup> 1902.

18. ✓ Ceophloeus pileatus January 5<sup>3</sup> 1902.

19. ✓ Bonasa u. togata. December 16<sup>(2)</sup> 18<sup>hook</sup> <sub>in</sub> <sub>1900</sub>.

January 6 <sup>hook</sup> <sub>hand</sub> 7<sup>1</sup> 18 <sup>hook</sup> <sub>hand</sub> February 19 <sup>hook</sup> <sub>hand</sub> 21 <sup>hook</sup> <sub>hand</sub> 1901  
" 4 <sup>hook</sup> <sub>hand</sub> 5<sup>1</sup> <sup>hook</sup> <sub>hand</sub> 6 <sup>hook</sup> <sub>hand</sub> 7<sup>1</sup> <sup>hook</sup> <sub>hand</sub> 1902.

✓ Hawk? Feathers of Buteo taken & preserved by John Linnell Bird of  
New York. Feathers of the latter found in Glen Wood Feb. 21, 1901  
& taken from bird which was seen on Glen Wood Feb. 21, 1901.

Concord, Mass.

1902

March 9

Cloudy with S. E. wind and light but steady rain beginning about 9 a. m. and lasting until night. The ground is still nearly everywhere covered with snow to a depth of five or six inches.

I came to Concord late yesterday afternoon and spent last night and most of to-day at the farm returning to Cambridge late this afternoon. The weather was so bad and the walking so difficult that I did not get into the woods. A few Chickadees appeared about the house in the forenoon and I heard Jays screaming in the distance. The only birds seen on the drive to Concord were a Crow and a flock of seven Robins.

When I was at the farm a week ago my foreman, Christian Hansen, told me that he had seen five Partridges the evening before (that of March!) in a wild apple tree that stands within about thirty yards of the barn just beyond the big elm. Gilbert saw four there and a fifth in another apple tree near by, last evening, soon after six o'clock, but they also saw him and flew off in quick succession a few moments later.

He called me at six o'clock this morning to say that they were again in the tree near the barn. I went into the east chamber of the farm house where I had an excellent view of them. At first I could make out only four or five but before many minutes had passed I counted no less than nine. Scattered all over the tree, a few lay down on large branches near the main trunk but the greater number among the smaller boughs near the ends of

Partridges  
"budding"

Concord, Mass.

1902

March 9  
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The longer upper branches which one or two were perched on the very topmost twigs of the tree, boldly outlined against the gray sky and looking as big as Hen-hawks. All were busily engaged in "budding" an operation which I have never before witnessed to good advantage. It was most interesting as well as surprising to see birds ordinarily so shy and retiring, and so very stately and dignified of bearing, hopping and fluttering about in the top of a leafless, isolated tree near a house with the utmost activity, sprightliness and apparent fearlessness. There were times, however, when they would all sit erect and motionless for a moment avidly looking about and listening.

Those feeding near the ends of the slender branches maintained their foothold with no slight effort, pulling up their tails and fluttering their wings to preserve their balance as they stretched forward or even, for an instant, bent almost straight downwards after the manner of Redpolls or Pine Siskins, pulling off and swallowing the buds in rapid succession with much the same quick, bobbing motion of the head as that of a Hen pecking up corn. The supply within reach (at least of such birds as they chose to take) seldom lasted more than a minute or two; when it became exhausted the Partridge would either walk its way still further out among the terminal twigs or fly to another part of the tree.

The birds which resorted to the larger branches behaved somewhat differently and with much greater

Partridge  
"budding"

1902.

March 9  
(no 3)

dignity and deliberation owing, no doubt, to the fact that such birds as they were able to obtain grew on short twigs within easy reach of the firm and comparatively broad surfaces of the branches on which they could walk or stand as securely as on the ground.

Just when these Partridges arrived at the tree this morning I am unable to say. I saw them first, as I have already stated, about six o'clock; they began departing some twenty minutes later, one or two at a time, at intervals of a minute or less, flying straight to the neighboring woods but in three or four different directions, suggesting that they had come from several different places. I feel very sure that all which visited the orchard this morning assembled in the tree near the barn although to reach it they had to pass one or near fifty or more apple trees <sup>which stand</sup> between it and the woods. It would be interesting to know whether they have exhausted the supply of palatable buds (they were taken there all or in sufficient numbers, even, to appreciably injure the trees) elsewhere in the orchard or have only just discovered that the buds on this particular tree are especially abundant or savory.

Partridges  
"budding".

Concord, Mass.

1902.

March 15

Clear with light S. E. wind. A mild but somewhat chilly day.

Robins were singing and calling in the Garden at Cambridge this morning and small flocks of Crow Black-birds flying over it. There was also a Flicker "thumping".

I took the 2.05 P.M. train for Concord where Hansen met me at the Station. On the way to the farm I saw nothing but three Bluebirds, one of which was singing. There was a fourth warbling most delightfully at the farm soon after I got there. A little later a Flicker thumped several times in the big elm where I saw both it and its mate.

Just before sunset when the raw east wind had <sup>Bird music</sup> held the air for fifteen or twenty minutes was filled with bird music of that exquisitely sweet, tender quality <sup>of early</sup> peculiar to early spring. Most of it was contributed by two Bluebirds in the old orchard and several Song Sparrows in the alder thickets across the road but there were also one or two Robins singing softly in the distance and Rusty or Red-winged Blackbirds passing overhead at frequent intervals. Besides a few Tree Sparrows which, however, gave only their low twittering call notes which always remind me of the clinking of broken fragments of ice. The only *Batrachium* voice was that of a Wood Frog who croaked doubtfully a few times in the swamp below the house.

I started two Partridges in the woods but none <sup>Partridges</sup> came into the orchard at evening probably because the snow has wholly disappeared & they can get warmer places now.

1902.

March 16

(182)

more in the Ball's Hill woods. Several of them rose from scanty clusters of leafless bushes well outside the wood edges.

There is no snow save an occasional wadded drift remaining, even in the densest woods, and the frost is well out of the ground in the open fields and the air wholly free from ice. The season indeed, is decidedly further advanced than is usual at this date.

Late in the afternoon I took a walk in the woods near the house remaining out until dark. There was a violent south-west wind and this with the densely cloudy & very gloomy sky was no doubt the cause of the general silence of our birds. I did not, indeed, hear a single one singing.

As I was entering the woods from the Brick Field I started a dozen or more Robins from a dense young hemlock in the top of which they had evidently gone to roost for the night as it was nearly dark at the time. They went blundering off in every direction making a prodigious fluttering as they forced their way through the thickets of birches which surround the hemlock.

Benson tells me that very many Muskrats have been shot this spring and that George Holden got seventeen yesterday but Benson's statements are not always quite accurate. I heard only two shots in the direction of the river yesterday afternoon.



1902.

March 16

Cloudy most of the day with strong S.W. wind  
in the afternoon.

Went to Ball's Hill in the forenoon walking down  
through the woods. Saw or heard my many birds.  
A Thriller perched on an oak near the spring was  
singing steadily in the usual Thrasher-like strain.  
Red-wings were scattered everywhere over the flooded  
meadows perched on the trees and bushes uttering  
their "kalees". Rusty Blackbirds were flying back &  
forth rather high in air as is their wont. There  
were few Song Sparrows near the river and I  
saw no waterfowl of any kind but the eye could  
not range far over the water because of a light  
fog or dense mist. There was no wind until  
later in the day and the birds sang almost as  
freely at noon as at sunrise. Sharp-shooters were  
numerous and noisy. I saw a flock of 20 Robins  
in Bussey's orchard, no doubt the same birds which  
Gilbert noted there yesterday. There was a Hairy  
Woodpecker with them.

The rush of migrating Song Sparrows has either passed  
by or not arrived as yet. They were not numerous  
anywhere to-day. I saw two flocks in one place &  
then in another. Bluebirds were singing everywhere.  
There were two walking near the farmhouse when I  
left in this morning & the same two, apparently,  
were trying to feed one another when I returned  
at noon. One of them was accompanied by its  
mate.

I started four Partridges on the farm and four

Concord, Mass.

1902.

March 17

Cloudy with E. wind & light rain in the forenoon.

Bluebirds, Robins, Song Sparrows and a Flicker sang near the farm house for half-an-hour or more early this morning.

At 7.20 A. M. Gilbert and I closed the house and started for Cambridge. On the way to Ball's Hill (we walked down) we heard only a few birds - two Flickers ("chattering"), one or two Song Sparrows and several Bluebirds. Two or three Red-wings were singing along the river.

On the opposite (Bedford) side Song Sparrows were simply swarming in Poellner's field and we saw two pairs of Bluebirds near together at the station and then more from the car windows as our train was passing Study Hill Nursery.

The most interesting bird of all, however, was a Phoebe. As we were walking along the railroad track approaching the station I heard, faintly but unmistakably, the whee-tut note apparently in an orchard just beyond the fence. The next moment the bird appeared flying close past us down into the fenced meadow where it alighted on the topmost twig of a small willow. This is the earliest date on which I have ever noted a Phoebe at Concord.

An early  
Phoebe

There was a Tree Sparrow in full song (the only one I have heard sing this spring) in some bushes near the railroad embankment.

I forget to note in the appropriate connection that as we were approaching Ball's Hill from Brewster's we saw a flock of 9 Golden-eyes flying high over the Hill.

Golden eyes

Concord, Mass.

1902.

March 21

Forenoon cloudy; afternoon clear; light N. wind.  
Maximum temperature about 50°.

Took the 2.05 P.M. train for Concord getting off at West Bedford where Gilbert met me. He had just seen 5 Meadow Larks in Mr. Gauthier's field. He crossed to Ball's Hill in the large boat. The river has fallen a foot or more since Monday but the water is still deep over the meadows. It was nearly calm this afternoon and the shores and distant hills, softened by the faintest suggestion of haze, were very beautiful. The whole landscape, indeed, wore a look of tenderness and peace most soothing to the senses. There were no birds, however, at least here. Nor did I see any about the cabin, where we landed and spent half-an-hour. Gilbert tells me he saw a Gull flying over the river this forenoon.

We walked to the farm. Benson, whom we found at work splitting wood, told me that he saw a Deer in the road near the school house early this morning as he was driving up with the milk. It stood watching him for a moment and then leaped the wall into Mrs. Ritchie's field. Benson's dog followed and drove it into the Barrett woods. I found its tracks (perfectly fresh-looking) in the mud within twenty yards of the school house. They were those of a yearling animal & I think, a doe. Christian Hansen saw what was probably the same Deer in the road about half-a-mile north of the farm last Tuesday (18<sup>th</sup>). He has heard that it has been in the Estabrook woods

A Deer  
at the  
farm.

Concord, Mass.

1902.

March 21  
(the 2)

for two weeks or more and that the days have been chasing it a good deal.

A Mongolian Pheasant is also frequenting this neighborhood again this year (there was one here last Spring). It was seen by Benson last Monday (17<sup>th</sup>) in Mr. Howe's pasture very near the school house and by Hansen a few days before this. It is a male bird they say.

A Pheasant  
at the farm

Two Bluebirds were singing close to the farm house when we reached it. Robins were calling and Song Sparrows singing at sunset. Soon afterwards First Hyla a Pickering's Hyla peeped a few times in the meadow across the road. It is the first I have noted this season but Dr. Peagh heard one in West Roxbury on March 1<sup>st</sup> of this year, an extraordinarily early date. A single Wood Frog was croaking here on the evening of the 15<sup>th</sup>.

Gilbert saw an Anthopa Butterfly at the farm this evening and he and I found another fluttering about in the wood near Benson's this afternoon.

First  
Butterfly.

As I was returning to the house this evening after a walk through the orchard, I heard the sound of a Woodcock's wings at first faintly but finally with great distinctness. The bird seemed to be mounting upwards in a spiral nearly over the house and I felt sure that it was about to sing, but the whistling soon ceased and no song succeeded it nor did I hear the bird again. This happened about half-an-hour after sunset.

Concord, Mass.

1902.

March 22

Clear with light N. wind. Forenoon rather cool, afternoon oppressively warm. I did not have a thermometer out but the temperature must have risen nearly to 70°.

Bluebirds and Song Sparrows began singing soon after daybreak; Robins not until sunrise; Flickers and a Phoebe still later. The Bluebirds warbled almost continuously all day long. I do not think that I have ever before had such a positive surfeit of this music - if anything so delightful can be so-called. They are at their very best now. A couple or two later they will not sing so often nor with such spirit and fervor. There were two males near the house all the forenoon one of them accompanied by a female who inspected all the holes & bird houses flying to the entrance of each and calling in but not entering any of them.

Birds singing  
at daybreak.  
Phoebe.  
Bluebirds

The Robins were silent through the day but one song for nearly half-an-hour at evening in the top of an elm nearly over the house. He had a strong, pure and very perfectly modulated voice.

Robins

The season is wonderfully forward - I might perhaps say, without gross exaggeration, unprecedentedly so. Certainly I cannot recall a year when at this date everything was so far advanced.

Early season

Mosquitoes were numerous and actually troublesome in the woods this afternoon - something unheard of if I am not mistaken in my recollection. One of them bit me sharply and a dozen or more tried to do so. All these I caught & examined were of the malarial kind (*Anopheles*) with spotted

Mosquitoes  
biting in  
March!

1902.

March 22

(No 2)

wings. There are many in the upper rooms of the farm house & the cellar is swarming with them. All, of course, must have lived through the winter.

I saw Butterflies of three different kinds to-day, Anthopa and two reddish brown ones of different sizes, one with deeply scalloped wings. I also started a small moth.

Butterflies

✓ Noth.

Several Wood Frogs were croaking in the afternoon and a dozen or more Hylas puped for a short time just before sunset.

Wood Frogs

✓ Hylas.

As the sun was setting below the horizon and sometime before the Robins and Song Sparrows had ceased singing a Woodcock began puffing in the brush grown pasture beyond the brook on the eastern side of the road. He did not go up, however, for fifteen or twenty minutes later, after which he rose and sang at unusually short intervals. I do not think that I have ever before heard a bird that had so rich and powerful a voice. Considered critically and comparatively it was without question highly musical, much more so I thought than the voice of any Starling. I watched the bird through one entire flight but noted nothing new. It was, in fact, the regular thing in every way. I do not think, however, that I have ever before known a Woodcock when singing regularly to alight and puff in a different place after each descent as this bird did. He invariably chose a grassy opening of

Song of the  
Woodcock.

Concord, Mass.

1902.

March 22  
(no 3)

which there are many among the blueberry bushes in this pasture. Perhaps I should note that on one occasion when he was descending, I was nearly certain that I heard the wing whistling & the long notes at one and the same time.

I found perfectly fresh deer tracks on the edge of the woods just below the orchard to-day. They were of the same size as those seen yesterday.

Dendroica  
on the farm

Humming birds were about all the morning. I did not see them but heard their piping flight calls a dozen different times.

There was also a Red-shouldered Hawk hovering in the distance towards Sumner's woods.

In the afternoon I heard a Purple Finch (the call note only) in the orchard.

The grass is faintly green on sunny banks. It was evidently to see some of the Cambridge Crows yesterday.

At evening I heard several Fox Sparrows hissing among some young white pines near Pulpit Rock but I listened in vain for the song. The birds were apparently seeking nests for the night.

Concord, Mass.

1902  
March 23

Brilliantly clear with light N. W. wind.

At sunrise this morning I heard the same birds noted yesterday morning & in about the same numbers. The crows were very loquacious cawing lustily in the trees near the house.

Just before breakfast I saw a Blue Jay hopping about on the ground in a ploughed field. very now and then passing to utter the bell note which he accompanied by an abrupt bobbing motion of the head. His brilliant coloring showed to great advantage against the rich brown earth.

After breakfast I walked up the road for a distance of nearly a mile. The farming country on both sides of the road was simply alive with birds. I have never seen more under similar conditions at this season. There were Robins, Bluebirds, Song Sparrows, Tree Sparrows (2), Junco (12) (5) / Cow-birds, Flickers (3) & Meadow Larks, all in full song, and two Downy Woodpeckers, one of them drumming. I also heard two Phoebe's singing (one on a bird at the farm). Bluebirds were seen for an instant out of sight or hearing. I counted eight pairs besides two odd males. The Juncos were talking but I did not hear their madley-singing. The Meadow Larks were in a field just this side of the Swift farm. I did not know before that there were any in that neighborhood. Red-shouldered Hawks were screaming almost incessantly & I saw one soaring high in air.

Twice this morning I saw a ♀ Bluebird alight in an old Robin's nest and cuddle down in it as if about to lay an egg her mate sitting near at hand singing the while. On



1902.

March 23

(no 2)

each occasion the ♀ remained in the nest for two or three minutes. I am very sure that the two birds were not the same as the locations were half-a-mile apart. All the ♀ Bluebirds that I saw seemed to be looking for nesting places. The males were warbling through the entire forenoon but with the greatest spirit and frequency from 8 to 9 a.m.

After I went to bed last night I heard the Woodcock peeping and singing until I fell asleep or from about 10 to 10.30 P.M. He rose and sang every two or three minutes. It was bright moonlight at the time. I do not remember ever hearing one sing in the middle of the night before.

Woodcock  
sings at  
10 P.M.

He was peeping this evening when I got to the pasture at 6.15 although the Song Sparrows were still singing. He made his first ascent at 6.25. I had him continuously within the field of my glass through this and four succeeding song flights. He invariably rose and flew for 200 yards or more (rising at a very slight angle) directly against the wind which was north and rather strong at the time. Then he would turn and begin mounting on a steep spiral incline. Once he turned to the left, from time to time right. He regularly rose to a height of fully 300 ft before beginning to descend. During the entire ascent his wings vibrated incessantly & his whistling was continuous. When it became broken I saw with absolute distinctness that during each pause or interval his wings ceased beating for an instant. I do not think they were moved at all during the

1903

March 23

(No 3)

time he got his song fairly started to think when he reached the earth but they were vibrated a few times at the beginning of the song and I could distinctly hear their whistling sound mingling with the vocal notes. During the song the bird was constantly descending, at first on long, easy, inclines, finally by a succession of short, steep, pitches at the end of each of which he checked himself suddenly for a moment just as the Skylark does. The song ceased when he was about eight feet above the earth & his final & definite descent to it was made on set wings, nearly vertically and with airy lightness.

While this bird was in the air, rising for his second song flight, I was surprised to hear another peep once just beyond a stone wall & very near me. When the first bird returned to the earth and began peeping again the second answered him several times in precisely the same tone. After this it peeped intermittently, a dozen times perhaps, always when the other bird was on the ground and peeping steadily. At first I thought it was another male & that it would presently mount into the air & sing but as it did not do so and as its peeping was at no time steady or persistent I finally concluded that it was the single note although I have never before suspected that the ♀ Woodcock utters the night-hawk like peep.

This bird also gave the preliminary peep as well.

If I am right in thinking that it was a ♀ both these sounds must be really only call notes. I

once heard a wing broken Woodcock utter the peep just as I was about to hear it - or perhaps

Evidence  
indicating  
that the  
♀ Woodcock  
utters both  
peep &  
the notes

1902

March 23  
(no 4)

just after I had taken it in my hand. I cannot now remember which.

I spent most of the afternoon in Palfin Rock woods. The wind blew rather strongly & the birds were very quiet. In the pool on the edge of these woods & just below the old orchard a dozen or more Hooded Mergansers crowded through most of the afternoon. Their scolding of their combined voices was exceedingly like the quacking of ducks. They became silent before sunset after which the Hylas took their places and in such numbers as to make the air ring with their clear peeping.

Shortly before sunset a Great Horned Owl began hooting beyond Birch Field in the direction of Lawrence's old pine woods.

There was a ♀ White-breasted Nuthatch in the big den by the house just before noon and again in the late afternoon.

The grass was vividly green in many places to-day. I saw winged insects of many kinds including Blue Bottle Flies, House Flies, and several species of Butterflies.

Concord, Mass.

1902

March 29

Rained heavily through the forenoon; afternoon and evening cloudy, at times misty. Wind S. W. mild.

Took 2.05 P. M. train for Concord. Gilbert met me at West Bedford and rowed me across the river. The water has fallen so that some of the higher points on the meadows are exposed.

At the cabin I found Hepatica nearly ready to open (they were in full bloom in the garden at Cambridge on the 16<sup>th</sup>). Heard a Fox Sparrow hopping on the hillside and saw one & heard another beyond the hill. Found deer tracks on the conveyance that crosses the swamp.

There were five or six Robins in Berwin's field and a Hairy Woodpecker in the dens near his house. Saw one Blotbird & heard another on our way to the farm.

Late in the afternoon I walked about the outskirts of the cultivated fields near the house. Heard a Bluebird, a Robin, several Song Sparrows and a Phoebe singing and started a big cock Partridge and a large Woodcock both in the Barrett Run. Crows were cawing and two were working about in the cow pasture. Heard a Kinglet & several Chickadees in the woods.

In the opening behind Ball's Hill Gilbert & I noticed this afternoon that most of the branches of a large ground juniper had been cut cleanly off at a height of about 2 ft. above the ground. All the cuts were made diagonally across the branches. In the Barrett run I found a willow apple tree whose lower branches had been pruned

1902

March 29  
(no 2)

at their tips in the same manner. One branch which stretched out horizontal at a height of about five feet had all the terminal twigs cut off. I take this to have been the work of the deer that was seen in the lane last week & no doubt the juniper at Ball's Hill was also clipped by the same animal.

Branches  
clipped off  
by deer.

I was in the brush grown pasture west of the road before six o'clock. At 6.05 a Woodcock began peeping keeping it up intermittently until 6.20 when he made his first long flight. During the next half hour he went up at short intervals many times always re-alighting in the same place, a circular, grassy opening surrounded by bushes. I hid behind a cedar & saw him alight and peep but it was so dark at the time that I could not make him out at all clearly. From 6.15 to 6.45 there was another bird peeping continuously within twenty yards of the first but during this period it did not once leave the ground although when the other bird was in the air it sometimes kept silent. Its peep was a little fuller & flatter I thought than that of the first. I was sure at the time that it must be the mate of the other & I still believe this to have been so but after I had returned to the house I distinctly heard two birds sing in quick succession. One was just on the verge of our range, the other over the field just across the road. Several times earlier in the evening I thought three were peeping at once, two were on, the third far off & this was probably really so.

Woodcock

Concord, Mass.

1902.

March 30

Early morning cloudless & most of forenoon sunny but late afternoon cloudy. Day warm at noon. Light N. & E. winds.

At sunrise Robins, Blue birds & Song Sparrows were singing and a Quail calling near the house. The Phoebe did not begin singing until nearly 7 a.m. A little later I saw it & its mate together at the barn. As we were at breakfast a flock of five Juncos came into the lilacs behind the house & began scratching among the leaves. Two Parula dyers were drumming in the tree at 2 P.M. At about the same time a Golden-crowned Kinglet was in full song in the pine near Pulpit Rock where I also saw a little company of five Fox Sparrows on the ground among some small pines. Red-shouldered Hawks were seen in the whole forenoon in the direction of the river and to the westward. Bluebirds sang through the greater part of the day but their songs are not equal to what they were earlier in the month. I saw flying over the farm Tow-birds, Red-wings, Robins and two Blackbirds. At evening all but the first named species were passing N. E. in scattered flocks or singly - to some roosting place I suppose.

Starting at 8 a.m. I walked up the road to the Swift farm, noting every bird seen or heard on the way out, but not on the return. This is the list: - Bluebirds 500 2 ♀♀, Robins 12 (3 ♂), Song Sparrows 18, Juncos 5 (3), Grass Finch 1 ♂ (in full, regular song in Lawrence's field), White-bellied Swallow 1 (flying about near Swift's house), Phoebe 2 ♂♂ 1 ♀ Flicker 3 (2 ♂♂) Tree Sparrow 1 ♂. Crow 1.

1902.

March 30

(no 2)

At 9 a. m. I started for Concord when I drove about for an hour or two seeing a number of Starlings, Song Sparrows & Robins.

There were a dozen or more Cedar Birds in some open trees on the lawn at the Edwin Rowell place and most of them were engaged in catching flying insects humdrum which I do not remember ever observing before on this season.

Gilbert tells me that he saw a Crow flying into the pines on the Bedford shore opposite the cabin yesterday forenoon carrying building material in its bill. It was raining hard at the time.

During the day I heard four male Phoebe's singing & saw a ♀ with one bird on the farm. The latter thus far has not begun singing much before seven o'clock during the morning that I have spent at the house here.

I heard the first Leopard Frog at Concord this afternoon—a dozen or more of them singing lustily in White Brook meadow. Great numbers of Wood Frogs were croaking all day long in the pool at the foot of the hill east of the house. They do not seem to croak often after sunset and never I think after dark. When a number are engaged at once their voices sound exceedingly like those of Duells. The Hylas began jumping a little before sunset and for an week half hour hundreds of them were croaking in every direction.

1902.

March 30

(No 3)

Walter Dean came from Cambridge and Raymond Emerson from Concord later this afternoon to hear the Woodcock. He went to the pasture soon after 6 o'clock. Raymond was telling us that his brother Kirkham had seen a large flock of Green Herons northward this morning when I heard faintly but distinctly in the direction of Punkotammet Hill the note of a Canada Goose. The sound increased in volume & frequency until the air was filled with the strangely thrilling, hoarse clamor. A moment later the flock appeared at an height so great that its members appeared scarce larger than Swallows. There were one 100 of the noble birds (I counted 112 roughly) arranged at first in a dark barrow, later they are in a line hundreds of yards in length. They were moving directly northward and long after they had passed beyond our vision their heading came distinctly to our ears.

Raymond also told us that he saw five White-bellied Swallows & his brother four, on the river meadows to-day, & that on the 28<sup>th</sup> he started a Snipe below F. Lewis' Bridge.

I saw six Black Ducks early this afternoon. Raymond says that Herring Gulls were very abundant on the meadows a week or two ago. He saw upwards of 100 in an afternoon. He has seen only three Shorelarks this spring. I saw a flock of six (3 ducks, 3 gray birds) on the meadows near Haverhill, Mass. on the 27<sup>th</sup> of this month.



Concord, Mass.

1902

March 30

(no 4)

Soon after the third Geese had disappeared we heard the Woodcock. He began popping on Eastern Gray & Virginia intervals among the alders & then flew to his regular station in the little spring, where I saw him last evening. His first long flight was upward & we watched him through the whole of it without difficulty. For second time he rose he flew about 50 yards and dropped into an opening beyond a stone wall where another bird, probably his mate, had been popping intermittently. A few seconds later he rose again & performed his usual long flight. This was repeated three or four times in succession as for three or four times in succession he flew from the popping station and alighted for an instant beyond the wall before making his next ascent & landing. Each of these preliminary flights was low and direct (just high enough to clear the tops of the bushes) and during each the bird uttered a low but distinct & incisive grating sound almost exactly like that made by a Red Squirrel which engages in being through the shell of a hickory nut. Both of my companions thought this the best comparison that could be suggested. There can be no question that this sound was produced by flying bird which, as I could see distinctly by his small size, was a male. Our impression was that it was a low call addressed to his mate, but we did not see the other bird at all. She (if it was a ♀) popped a good deal this evening but at no time very regularly. She seemed to us to be in a grassy opening about 50 yards from where the ♂ popped. I have never heard this grating call before. It lasted perhaps two or three seconds on each occasion.

Some notes of  
The Woodcock

According to the middle of the night at about 2 a.m. I should say by the  
I heard the Woodcock pop three or four times in the position described on the road.

Concord, Mass.

1902.  
April 3

Brimbantly clear with light E. wind.

I took the 2.05 P.M. train for Concord this afternoon. On reaching Ball's Hill I found the woods and openings as bare and leafless looking as they usually are at this season. Two hepatica flowers were open in the bed in front of the cabin, however. There is a great field of snow-covered ice in the swamp at the northern foot of Pine Ridge but no snow remaining elsewhere in any of the woods in this immediate neighborhood. The frost is wholly out of the ground in the fields but there is a good deal still remaining in the woods.

The snow

The ice & high water combined played havoc with the pine meadows last month. Nearly all the bottom bushes around Stone Dam Lagoon were uprooted & drifted off and patches of them covering a space as large as the cabin were deposited in the wooded area of Ball's Hill.

Bushes uprooted by ice.

The snows of the past winter have also damaged the pines & cedars greatly breaking off the tops of many of the finest of the younger trees.

Pines injured by the winter snows

There were few birds this evening. Indeed I heard none singing save a Robin and a Flicker.

Concord, Mass.

1902.

April 4

Early morning clear & calm. Remainder of day cloudy with chill S. E. wind. The surface of the ground frozen slightly last night and everything was white with hoar frost early this morning.

The three Fox Sparrows which Gilbert saw here on the 2<sup>nd</sup> & which I found on my arrival last evening were about the cabin most of the forenoon feeding on the millet seed which we put out for them. One of them sang lots o'ee (almost in a whisper & low was most of the notes) at intervals and two were in full song for fifteen or twenty minutes at about eight o'clock. It was a great treat to hear their wild and superbly rich and perfectly modulated voices once more for I was beginning to fear that I should miss the privilege this year. I also heard the trill call and the low, chiding chatter they make while feeding besides, of course, the strong, copying chirp.

Fox Sparrows

There was a Phoebe in full song near the cabin, another at Newsum's, a third across the river and a fourth at the farm. As I was lying in bed this morning the Ball's Hill bird sang several times near the open windows of the upper room and a moment later entered it and perching on a pile of magazines on a shelf near my bed uttered his sweetly-harsh phoe-bl-c-c, phoe-be several times. I have repeatedly, in former years, known either this bird or another to enter the lower cabin and on one occasion Gilbert saw him alight on an iron rod on the fire-place.

A Phoebe alights & sings on a shelf in the cabin.

Concord, Mass.

1902.  
April 4  
(No 2)

The Song Sparrow migration seems to be over but Bluebirds are nearly if not quite as numerous as ever. I saw three flocks (two were together) and an odd male and heard three other males singing this forenoon.

Bluebirds  
abundant

The weather has been cold for the past four days and I do not think that many of the birds which were here on the 1<sup>st</sup> have departed or that many fresh arrivals have come up from the south. There are a few juncos about but I have not seen more than a dozen during any one day thus far. Robins, Flickers, Red-wings & Ravens are present in about the usual numbers.

A lull in  
migration

Shortly after eight o'clock this morning 4 Black Ducks passed over Balls Hill at a moderate elevation heading westward & I think on migration.

Partridge  
drumming on  
Balls Hill

I heard the Balls Hill Partridge drumming to-day for the first time this season & in the usual place on the Hill wood was the big waffle.

Heard Frog-horn nearly ceased croaking; Hylas were peeping by hundreds this evening; the Leopard Frog has apparently not fairly begun as yet for I heard only two to-day.

Balteschian

1902  
April 5

Cloudy most of the day with strong & piercingly  
chilly N. E. wind.

Walked to the farm in the early morning  
and back after sunset. Spending most of the  
day planting.

A ♀ Hairy Woodpecker appeared in the large  
elm at the eastern end of the farm house at about  
9 a. m. and remained there for nearly half an hour  
hammering away at some decayed branches evidently  
searching for grubs. She was much tamer than birds of  
this species usually are here permitting me to stand  
directly beneath her without showing much alarm  
although she did, at first, hide behind the branch  
for a half minute or so before venturing to resume  
her work. I heard her utter the chick call repeatedly,  
and once she made a sound which I do not  
remember to have noted before - a rapidly enunciated  
kik-kik-kik-kik-kik-kik which was not unlike  
the "Ho-ho" of the Flicker but shriller and more  
slowly given. This cry may have been a variation of  
the Kingfisher-like rattle of the Hairy but it did  
not seem on all like it.

The Phoebe and one or two Fox Sparrows were  
singing near the cabin early this morning but  
the woods were silent as the grass during most  
of the day. I did, however, hear a Grass Finch  
singing feebly in the orchard in the forenoon.

1902.

April 6

Forenoon clear & dead calm; afternoon cloudy with chill east wind.

I spent the entire day in the woods on or near Balls Hill rambling slowly from place to place and giving most of my attention to trees & birds. In the latter part of the day I observed several and went into the forenoon but I heard nothing of any particular interest. I saw no less than ten Black Ducks, two pairs and a flock of six. All were flying rather low down and directly northward. As the flock passed one or two of the ducks kept up a continuous low, wherry quacking (the voice of the duck is not really a quack at all).

For an hour or more at about noon the Great Frogs were croaking by hundreds all over the Great Meadows producing a volume of sound that equaled anything I have ever heard from them here before. It is the first time this season when they have been in nearly full cry.

I was mistaken in noting the other day that the Wood Frogs had about closed their spring croakings for this year. They were croaking by scores this afternoon in both of the little ponds just behind Balls Hill.

Hubert Holden told Gilbert that on his way down river this morning he saw a Great Blue Heron & three Ducks.

1902.

April 7

A November-like day with heavily clouded sky and cool east wind.

At day break I heard one Ball's Hill Phoebe singing jocosely and a Fox Sparrow also uttered a few bars of his glorious song very near my window. There was a Flicker skimming in the distance & one or two Red-wings song for a few minutes. Just after breakfast I heard a Meadow Lark on the opposite side of the river.

During the remainder of the day the birds maintained a peevish silence and I saw only a very few. At evening there was absolutely no singing save even of Robins. Just before sunset several small flocks of Red-wings & Rusties passed over towards the N. E. This has happened regularly at about the same hour for the past few evenings. I think these birds must have a loose formation in the direction of Corbett bridge but it is possible that they are migrating.

Bowcord, Mass.

1902.

April 8

Cloudy with violent and piercingly cold N.E. wind which brought heavy rain in the afternoon & evening.

We are having one week in April this year. It would be difficult to imagine a more gloomy and forbidding day than this has been and rarely have I known one when the woods and fields seemed more barren of animal life. I cannot understand where the birds conceal themselves at such times. I do not think I saw and heard more than a dozen in all to-day although I was in the woods and openings from early morning to late afternoon. At daybreak the first bird to sing was a Robin followed, some fifteen minutes later, by a Phoebe. A 7<sup>o</sup> Sparrow sang once still later. After breakfast I heard a Red-wing and at about ten o'clock the phoebe note of a Chickadee. These were actually all the birds I heard during the entire day besides a few Crows cawing, some Jays screaming and a Golden-creed Tanager. I saw one Song Sparrow, a Bluebird, and a few Robins. One might easily get a longer list of species during a fine day in mid-winter.

I cannot understand where the White-bellied Swallows are keeping themselves. During cold, cloudy, stormy weather they usually congregate under the lee of Hall's Hill but there were none there either yesterday or to-day. Perhaps only a very few have come as yet.



Concord, Mass.

1902

April 9

The storm which began yesterday afternoon increased in violence through the night reaching its climax early this morning. The north-east wind blew a living gale and the rain for hours after hours came down as heavily as it often does at the height of a thunder shower.

In spite of the noise & turmoil of the elements our Bells Hill Phoebe began singing soon after daybreak and with but few interruptions kept it up until well into the forenoon.

The Fox Sparrows also sang freely & well near the cabin but I heard no other birds until later in the day.

The rain ceased about noon but the N. E. wind blew with only slightly abated force and the air was thick with driving mist until nightfall.

I went to the farm in the afternoon having a Carolina Dove cooing in Peasants' Pine and a Partridge drumming in the Bassett Run.

On the way back I heard three Robins singing and saw a Marsh Hawk (a ♀ I thought) flying over Pine Park.

Concord, Mass.

1902.

April 10

Cloudy with cold N.E. to N. wind and frequent showers of fine rain. In the forenoon it cleared for a few minutes. The wind fell at evening and the air seemed warmer.

One Phoebe and a Fox Sparrow were singing near the cabin shortly after day break. An hour later I saw two White-bellied Swallows flying over the river. A Chickadee was also whistling near at hand.

On reaching Birch Field at about 9 a. m. I found two Carolina Doves cooing near the spring. They were perched on the tops of large oaks about fifty yards apart and seemed to be answering one another. Both flew as soon as they saw me going off in different directions. An hour later one began cooing in the woods on the opposite (N.) side of the field.

A Partridge drummed most of the forenoon in the woods just mentioned. This is a new drumming station although I have frequently heard birds on the south & west side of Birch Field.

The strong, cold N. wind seemed to have banished nearly all the birds from the immediate neighborhood of the farm house where I spent the afternoon. Indeed I noted there only a solitary Junco, a Robin or two and a Bluebird. I heard two Song Sparrows singing, however, in the distance towards Lawrence's.

Concord, Mass.

1902.  
April 10  
(no 2)

My walk back to the cabin this evening proved exceptionally interesting. It was nearly six o'clock when I started. The mist-laden air seemed comparatively warm but this was perhaps due chiefly to the fact that the wind had lulled to a mere breath. Robins were singing in every direction, far and near. There seemed to be a dozen or more of them calling & a few singing, among the dense pines behind Ball's Hill.

As I was passing through Birch Field two Great Horned Owls began hooting. They kept it up for about ten minutes during which I remained in one spot listening to them. One which was evidently in Lawrence's pine woods beyond the Green Field regularly uttered five notes (hoo, hoo-hoo, hoo, hoo) in slow, measured, impressive tones. The voice of the other bird was pitched much higher and the eight notes which he invariably uttered (hoo, hoo-hoo-hoo, hoo-hoo-hoo, hoo) were given more rapidly. I have repeatedly noticed a sensible difference in the number and arrangement of notes when two of these Owls are answering one another and I believe that one form is characteristic of one sex and the other of the opposite sex although I have no impression as to which is peculiar to the male and which to the female. On this occasion the deep-voiced bird with but five notes invariably hooted first. The other always began hooting immediately after the first had ceased and several times it cut in on the latter before it had finished its hoost.

Hooting of  
Great Horned  
Owls.

Concord, Mass.

1902.

April 10  
(no 3)

As I have just said I listened to three Owls until they ceased hooting. Indeed I could not tear myself away for the sound of their voices thrilled and fascinated me as it always does. It was peculiarly impressive this evening owing to the perfect keeping with the gloomy weather and to the fact that it had a wide margin of silence the distant notes of a Robin being the only other sounds that broke the otherwise perfect stillness.

As I was crossing Barrett's pasture my attention was attracted by a light silvery whistling of wings & looking up I saw a pair of Black Ducks speeding low down over the land towards the Great Meadows. They were closely followed by a flock of four Golden-eyes whose wings made a similar but decidedly louder sound and a few minutes later I saw a flock of four Black Ducks pursuing precisely the same course.

On reaching the causeway that crosses the brook behind Ball's Hill, I stopped to listen to the Robins that were singing & calling all about me. Suddenly, almost at my feet, a Meadow Mouse started out from the bank and swam across a broad space of open water a foot or more in depth. It moved with great rapidity (certainly much faster than a muskrat) and nearly its whole body seemed to be out of water giving me the impression that it was running on the surface rather than swimming.

Concord, Mass.

1902.

April 11.

Cloudy most of the day but the sun shone for a brief interval in the forenoon and again at sunset. Light rain in early morning. Wind N. to N.W. light. Temperatures higher than for several days past.

Early this morning I heard singing near the cabin and Phoebe, one or two Fox Sparrows, a Robin, a Song Sparrow and a large flock of Red-wings. The last-named made a tremendous noise although they were at some distance and I think on the opposite side of the river.

At the farm, where I spent the day transplanting trees, I saw or heard several Robins, a pair of Bluebirds, a White-bellied Swallow (which alighted on one of my bird houses & perched into the hole), a Field Sparrow (singing in the pasture west of the house), a Grass Finch singing (I heard elsewhere near Pine Park), a Dove cooing near the Spring, several Crows and one or two Blue Jays.

The Phoebes were flitting about the barn all day and shortly after noon I saw one of them take several bill-fuls of building material to the ledge under the eave where the pair nested last year. Apparently they had only just begun the new nest to-day for it had not advanced sufficiently to be visible from the ground below.

Phoebe  
building  
at the farm.

Gilbert reports seeing a Robin beginning her nest on the same branch of the isolated pine near the West Bedford Station where a bird nested last year

Robin  
building

Concord, Mass.

1902.

April 11

(No 2)

The Phoebe at Ball's Hill appears to have chosen the Stone Stable (built last autumn) as his summer home but I do not think that he has as yet secured a mate. He is, as I have already noted, a cheerful and persistent singer, more so, I think, than any of the other birds in this neighborhood. The songs of different notes of this species do not vary appreciably in either form or tone. All of them have two notes which are usually given alternately - phoe-oh-c? (with rising inflection), phoe-oh (in lower key & falling inflection). The first note is invariably of three syllables, the middle one being the least conspicuous & uttered in a rolling tone. One Cabin bird sometimes repeats the second note three or four times in succession before alternating again.


Three Partridges were drumming at the farm to-day one near the head of the run, another on the Stone wall east of Pulpit Rock, the third on the north side of Buck Field. I also started a pair of birds from beneath a low spreading apple tree near the middle of the orchard, this happening at about 9 a.m.

Shortly after sunset, as I was nearing the Cabin, following the run path, I saw about 60 yds ahead of me standing erect in the middle of this path a fine cock Partridge. He had evidently come down from the hill to drink for he was on the very edge of the water which had partly covered the path to-day. I stopped & watched

1902.

April 11

(no 3)

him for several minutes. He evidently saw me for he seemed it at once & for some time kept up the peculiar low growling sound which Partridge makes when disturbed or displeas'd. Presently he began walking away from me keeping in the middle of the path & following the water's edge closely. He carried his tail raised  and frequently twitched his expanded wings in an abrupt nervous manner suggesting irritation. After growling for half a minute or more he called quet, quet a number of times and then began making the chattering or tickling sound which is closely resembles that of the Red Squirrel. At length he left the path and began making his way up the steep hillside. I now increased my pace and he at once did the same until he finally made a short quick gliding run & then took flight. While in the path his gait was a rather slow and highly dignified walk. Altogether I had him in view for fully three minutes. The Ball's Hill Partridges are so accustomed to our presence & so fully assured that we mean them no harm that we often see them on the ground but it seldom that I have as prolonged a view of one as I enjoyed on this occasion.

I have heard very few Hylas of late & none proper to day. The Loops have not begun breeding as yet.

1902.

April 12

A bright, beautiful day sunny the greater part of the time but the sky filled with masses of dark clouds driving rapidly before the strong west wind.

Our Balls Hill Phoebe began singing at sunrise this morning and at breakfast time he appeared at the old cabin accompanied by a mate. Both birds kept flying up under the eaves examining every nook & crevice evidently looking for a nesting site. I think, however, that they will probably nest in the stone stable where I have put up a shelf for them.

The 7 of Sparrows were gone this morning but a single Tree Sparrow was flitting about in the bushes in front of the cabin and while we were at breakfast he sang a number of times.

Robins appear to have greatly increased in numbers within the past few days. The whole Balls Hill region was swarming with them to-day and at evening they were singing in every direction.

Pat Flanagan reports seeing a flock of ten Black Ducks which he started this morning near the railroad embankment on the south side of the meadows.

A Grass Finch was singing very sweetly at evening in Mason's pasture.

Hepatica in full bloom in front of the cabin -  
Blood Root almost in blossom at the farm yesterday.



1902.

May 1

Partly cloudy with light showers in forenoon.

Took the 5.01 P. M. train for Concord. As we passed the S. Dixington station I was surprised to see that a considerable part (more than one half, seemingly) of the upper reservoir was bare mud flats. The pumping station there was discontinued more than a year ago but the water was kept at its normal level through last summer and autumn and I think the Grebes bred there in their usual numbers. They will probably have to go elsewhere now that the water has been drawn off although there are still some broad ditches full to the brim and apparently an acre or two of pond on the northern side of the reservoir.

Passing of  
the Grebes'  
breeding place  
at S. Dixington

The vegetation is remarkably far advanced. At Cambridge pear trees are in bloom, cherry trees shedding their petals, and hawthorn in nearly full leaf. Here the shrub bushes have unfolded a few blossoms, the willows and poplars as well as the white maples are covered with leaves perhaps one quarter grown & even the leaves of the oaks have burst their buds & tinged the trees with pink and salmon.

Vegetation.

Bank Swallows, Chipping Swifts, Brown Thrashers, Black & White Cuckoos are all here. I heard two Carolina Ricks this evening out in the Great Meadows which are still partially covered with water.

Hyles, Leopard Frogs and Pickered Frogs are making frogs & a tremendous din as I write. I heard Toads in Cambridge today. Toads.

1902.

May 2

Brilliantly clear, the early morning cool with light north wind, the middle of the day calm and hot, the afternoon cool again with fresh E. wind.

With the first signs of daybreak a Thrasher began singing near the cabin. Before the light had become at all strong he was followed successively by a Phoebe, Song Sparrow, Robin, Swamp Sparrow, Towhee, Pittman, Blue Jay and Chickadee. With broad daylight Crows and Red-wings joined in. Still later I heard Yellow-rumps & a Peewee Bird. There was but little singing between sunrise and 7 a.m.

I spent the forenoon at the farm, walking both ways, the afternoon in the woods between Boell's & Davis's hills. The country was alive with birds. I noted all the Swallows, and heard singing from Mourner Thrashers, four Towhees, three Field Sparrows, two Grass Finches, a dozen or more Black & White Cuckoos, two Black-throated Green Warblers, three Oven-birds and three Song Sparrows.

There was a Quail at the farm somewhere in the Blueberry pasture east of the road. After calling a few times he gave a dozen or more exhibitions of bob, whit.

I saw no less than four Black Snakes, two of them large ones. One of them glided swiftly down a hillside into a swamp and after I had kept still for a few minutes returned passing very near to them and raising his head at least a foot above the ground to look and listen.

1902.

May 2  
(No 2)

The Ball's Hill Phoebe has built a nest in a tray made of a wireless box which I put up for them in the stove house-shed. Gilbert tells me that they began this nest on April 18<sup>th</sup>. It looked finished to-day but the bird was not sitting. The pair at the farm have a nest under the eaves of the barn where they built last year. They seem to have abandoned the barn cellar perhaps because there are so many rats there. There is a third pair at Benson's shed (where they usually nest on the outside of the high foundation wall) and a fourth at my stove box house across the line where they began a nest about a week ago on the deck of a corner that did cling to one of the beams. This nest is still unfinished & I fear they have deserted it.

One Ball's Hill bird sings only in the early morning now. Last evening and again at noon to-day I heard him utter many times in succession a low, exquisitely plaintive and tender pit-c, apparently a note of endearment to his mate (who was with him on both occasions) and wholly new to me.

The air rings and pulsates this evening with the piping of hundreds of Myers and the trilling of dozens of Toads but the Boopord Flogs, are much less noisy than they were last night.

I heard a Tree Toad in the old orchard at the farm this morning.

One of the apple trees at the farm opened a part of its blossoms to-day - a very early date.

Phoebes

Flogs &  
Toads.

First apple  
blossoms.

1902.

May 3

Cloudy clearing about 4 P.M. Light rain in early morning. Wind S.-W. - Cool.

Arrivals - Yellow Warbler, 1 singing at 6 P.M. on W. Bealford shore opposite Ball's Hill; Nashville Warbler, 2 singing in woods on farm; Lesser Warbler, 1 singing in Prescott's pen; Least Flycatcher, one at Ball's Hill, another in apple orchard at the farm, both calling whit. Maryland Yellow-throat, 1 singing at morning & evening near the Stern boat house.

Birds sang freely through the forenoon. They did not seem to be as numerous as they were yesterday. At evening only a few Robins & a Swamp Sparrow sang.

While at the farm this forenoon I heard a Dove cooing and presently saw the bird perched in the top of a tall tree on the road just below the house. He was surrounded by his mate who was feeding on the ground in the ploughed field in front of the house. As I stood listening to the male it struck me that the solemnity and impressiveness of this Dove's cooing is due not so much to the quality of his voice as to the carefully measured intervals between the notes. I noted this rendering of the cooing: - oo-ink-oo; oo, oo. Sometimes the bird gave only the first three notes and occasionally only the oo-ink. While cooing he sat rather erect but in an easy attitude. I could not see that he accompanied the notes by any movements of the head or neck.

The Phoebe at the farm was sitting to-day.

Several apple trees had opened many of their blossoms.

1902.

May 4

Forenoon brilliantly clear; afternoon cloudy with  
chill S. E. wind; light rain 5-7 P. M.

I did not awake until nearly seven o'clock this  
morning & then the birds had nearly ceased singing.  
At breakfast time I heard a Redstart in front  
of the cabin and soon afterwards saw the bird, a  
fine old male no doubt the one that has nested  
here for several years past.

First Redstart

Another arrival was a Yellow-throated Vireo which  
I heard singing fitfully in the large oaks on  
Holden's Hill.

First Yellow-  
throated Vireo

Still another was the Spotted Sandpiper of  
which Herbert Holden saw six on his way down  
river

First Spotted  
Sandpiper

Mr. Holden also tells me that I saw a numerous  
this Spring in the eastern part of Concord. I  
hear only one in this neighborhood - the bird  
at the farm.

I saw

Red-shouldered Hawks were making the air  
ring with their wild voices this morning in  
the direction of Holden's Hill but I looked in  
all the large trees there without discovering a nest.  
I do not think they have bred there or, indeed,  
anywhere on my land for several years past  
yet they visit my woods daily. I started one  
the other coming from the pines in the Glacial Hollow.  
It was so nearly dark at the time that I think  
the bird had gone to roost there.

Red should'd  
Hawks.

Small birds were unmistakably scarce this  
morning, more so, indeed, than for several days past.

Few small  
birds about.

1902.  
May 4  
(no 2)

Of the species which arrive at about this time or a little earlier only the Brown Thrasher, Black & White Creeper and Towhee seem to have come in any numbers. Of the others such as the Nashville, Wren, Black-throated Green and Yellow Warblers, the Redstart, the Maryland Yellow-throat, the Yellow-throated Vireo and the Least Flycatcher only the advance guards have as yet reached us.

Migration

There are apparently as many Red-wings as usual but I see them oftener still in large flocks about the inland fields and not along the river, where the meadows are still covered with water.

Red-wings

Robins have been very abundant all through the Spring, as they were last year. They sing but little now except in the early morning. Pat reports seeing a nest with two eggs yesterday.

Abundance of Robins

Neither Gilbert nor I has seen or heard a mouse of any kind about the cabins since we came here three days ago. We have had no rats at Kelli Hill for two or three years but they are simply swarming this Spring on the farm.

Mice & Rats

The Hylas were jumping by hundreds in the meadows at the west end of Kelli Hill and all over the Great Meadows last evening and this. European Frogs do not seem to have been very noisy of late. I have heard neither Bull nor Green Frogs as yet.

Frogs.

1902.

May 5

Heavy rain just before daybreak, most of day cloudy with cool W. wind. Calm and pretty at evening.

Red breasted Grosbeak, ♂ sang once rather freely & hollowly at 9 a.m., in swamp behind Boll's Hill; Solitary Vireo, one in full song at 8 a.m. on Boll's Hill; Vireo one seen by Gilbert near cabin, one calling at evening in Boll's Hill swamp; King bird one performing song flight at evening near cabin; Swarson's Thrush, one giving the peck note and the whining call away down young pines on Pine Ridge at 5 P.M.

Arrivals.

Of the birds which have been noted before there seemed to be no increase in numbers to-day.

Birds sang freely most of the day. Two Thrushes gave me almost a buffet of their fine music. One was across the river near the stone boat house, the other on the edge of Pine Point.

Gilbert discovered the remains of a ♂ Red-wing which had evidently been killed and eaten by a Hawk & which lay scattered about on the ground in a cluster of dense white pines behind Boll's Hill. There were nearly all the feathers (including some of the scald ones from the epaulettes) and the head or, at least, the bill and fragments of the skull which had evidently been crushed to expose the brains which had been removed & no doubt, eaten.

Although the evening was perfectly calm & oppressively warm upwards of thirty Robins assembled to roost in the swamp behind Boll's Hill. They kept up a constant fluttering as they settled themselves among the flowering brooms & fir or hup of the males was given singing at once

1902.

May 5  
(no. 2)

In Holdens Hill meadow I heard the other evening (May 3) a double note something like the phew-c of a Quail or the crave of a Cowbird Rail but yet different from both these calls. It was given only once & my nose was within twenty yards certainly. At the time I set it down for some unusual call of a Hyla. To-night I heard it again - six or eight times at intervals of half-a-minute or more, in the little meadow at the western end of Bolls Hill. On both occasions it mingled with the voices of hundreds of Hylas but this evening I had a good chance to study it critically and I quickly came to the conclusion that it was the note of some bird that was in the marsh. It was distinctly Rail-like yet too different from any Rail ever known to me to be referred to any of our common species. I cannot imagine what it could have been made by unless by a Yellow Rail. I certainly have never heard it before.

A strange  
bird note.

The Hylas were making a tremendous din this evening. There were also a good many Sussex Tree frogs moving and a few Toads trilling while a Bull Frog trumpeted over in low tones.

Frog  
Frogs  
Bull Frog

I saw the first Dragon Fly to-day. It was skimming about in a pasture & looked like the big Horn to common in upland fields & wood groves in late August.

First  
Dragon Fly

Strange to say I have heard no Rails since the 1<sup>st</sup> of the month was silent to-day. My quarters remain the same.



1902.

May 6

Brilliantly clear. Wind light from N. in A. M., fresh from E. in early P. M., strong from S. W. at evening. Early morning & late afternoon cool; middle of day warm.

Chestnut-sided Warblers arrived last night. I heard one singing near the cabin at sunrise and at least two others in the swamp behind the Hill later in the day.

Arrivals.

There was also a fresh flight of Peewee Birds. I saw two near the cabin, two more at the E. end of the Hill and three near Bensons.

The Yellow-rumped Warblers were also more numerous than they have been for several days past.

As I was standing on the edge of an opening on Pine Ridge early this afternoon all the small birds within my hearing (they were a Black-throated Green Warbler, Chipping, Song Sparrow, Vesper Sparrow and three White-throated Sparrows) suddenly ceased singing and joined in a chorus of those peculiar, low, gut shrill and incisive, cries of warning which are as surely indicative of the near presence of a Hawk as are the well-known notes which domestic fowls make when similarly menaced. Looking up I saw a beautiful Luteal & Sharp-shinned Hawk. He passed nearly overhead giving me a good view of his slaty blue back and alternately flapping and gliding on set wings was soon lost to sight among the pines. It was several minutes after he had passed before any of the luteal birds began singing again. Quite evidently they distinguish the dangerous from the harmless birds of prey. They paid not the slightest attention to a Marsh Hawk which skinned equally

1902.

May 6  
(No 2)

low over the thickets at the east end of Hall's Hill a little later and the Red-shouldered Hawks which soar and scream every morning over the Hall's Hill woods were apt to alarm them.

I was somewhat surprised to hear a Wilson's Thrush sing three or four times at about ten o'clock this morning on Pine Ridge for I noted the first bird of this species yesterday and it is unusual for them to begin singing for several days after their arrival which they are sometimes silent for a week or more.

At 4.30 P.M. a flock of four Black Ducks passed over Pine Point in the direction of Great Meadows where I think they alighted for they lowered their flight abruptly just as they passed beyond my sight (I was on Pine Ridge at the time) over the belt of trees that line the river bank.

This must have been some of our summer resident birds. I am by no means sure that they breed in this neighborhood but incline to think that they come from the Cambridge Region. Walter Deane tells me that a Black Duck's nest with 13 eggs was found at Rock Meadow, Belmont about two weeks ago. It has been visited by many people interested in birds and among them by George Deane.

1902.

May 7

Cloudy most of the day clearing at sunset.  
Forenoon cool with strong S.W. wind. Afternoon calm  
and sultry. Evening cool again with brisk N.W. wind.  
Heavy rain before day break this morning.

Birds continue to straggle in a few at a time  
from the South. The only arrivals noted to-day were  
a Tanager which began singing soon after 1 P.M. on  
Kalli Hill and kept it up at intervals until evening  
and two Cat birds, one of which was singing, that  
I found after sunset in Pine Park. The numbers  
of Yellow-rumps remained about the same as  
yesterday but all the White-throated Sparrows  
which were here yesterday had departed this morning.

Arrivals

One Phoebe has become almost totally silent  
these past few days. I heard him singing to-day  
for only a few minutes in the early morning.  
On examining the nest this afternoon I found  
that it contained three eggs.

Phoebes  
nearly  
silent

During the calm, sultry period this afternoon  
all the birds in the Kalli Hill region seemed  
to be singing at over and with exceptional  
spirit and joyousness.

I have thought for several years past that our  
Grass Finches do not sing nearly so freely and well  
in Spring as during the month of July but the bird  
in Bussard's posture has been pouring out his song loud  
from early morning to late evening ever since I arrived  
here on the 12<sup>th</sup> of the present month.

Grass Finches  
singing  
freely all  
day long.

1902.

May 8

Brilliantly clear with light N. W. wind. Cool at morning & evening, a perfect day.

From shortly after day break to 8 a. m. and again Arrivals just before sunset a Bobolink was in full song in the meadows across the river. This is the third consecutive year when this species has arrived in Concord on May 8.

Bathurist Orioles also came to-day. One was flitting the whole forenoon near the farm house and Gilbert saw another in Benson's apple tree.

The only other arrival was the Wood Thrush of which I saw a silent and remarkably tame individual among the oaks on Davis's Hill.

Oven birds have increased greatly in numbers since yesterday. On my way to the farm this morning I found no less than twelve singing.

Partridges were out in force this afternoon. Shortly after five o'clock I heard no less than three drumming near Pulpit Rock one on the stone wall at the foot of Barrett Run, another on the wall at the western end of Birch Field, the third near the Spring. I also started several others. One, a Cape Cock Bird, uttered just as he flew from a stone wall and for the first thirty yards or more of his flight a guttural wee-e-e, wee-e-e, wee-e-e. This is the ordinary flight note of alarm.

I stalked the drummer at the W. end of Birch Field with the utmost care & espied him sitting in a crouching clefted posture on his drumming stone. As I was well concealed by dense young pines & had made no noise I felt sure

1902.

May 8  
(No 2)

that I had at length succeeded in starting on a Massachusetts Partridge unaware and that I should presently see him drum. But after sitting perfectly motionless for a minute or two with his head turned away from me he suddenly straightened himself up, gave his tail a sharp upward flit and jumped down on the further side of the wall. Crafty bird! He was no doubt watching me keenly from the very first moment that I got sight of him.

The wild apple tree in front of the barn at the farm which the Partridges bred to persistently (every night & morning for a week or more) last March was in full bloom to-day and I have never seen a tree more crowded with blossoms. This confirms what I have long believed viz. that Partridges were injured either the trees or their crops of fruit despite the popular impression (among the farmers especially) to the contrary. It is certainly a tough difficulty to understand why they do not do so for on the morning when I watched the nine birds actively engaged in this pastime they it seemed as if they could not be bearing many buds of any kind on the branches which they visited.

Two Bitterns were pumping to-night on Great Meadow. I find that I was in error in stating in my article in the April number of "Bird Lore" that the third syllable of the Bittern's pumping carries to the greatest distance. It is really the second although when the bird is near at hand this note does not sound so loud as either of the other two.

1902.

May 9

Brilliantly clear with north west wind which blew a living gale from about 9 a.m. to 5 P.M. Looking southward from the farmhouse I could see clouds of dust kicked up by the wind from the sandy fields beyond the Fitchburg station in covered driving crosswise about the green slopes of Fairhaven Hill. What is very unusual for a cloudless day at this season the temperatures fell steadily from about noon to sundown. At evening the air seemed almost frosty.

The only arrival noted to-day was a Water Thrush which was singing across the river at sunrise and later (I'd assume that it was the same bird but it may have been another) in front of the cabin.

Accidents.

Birds of all kinds sang freely up to about eight o'clock after which the wind silenced most of them for the remainder of the day. They were congregating in great numbers in the sheltered swamps behind Ball's Hill when I passed it on my way to the farm shortly after breakfast. So far as I could discern these respective numbers of the various species present have not changed since yesterday. Indeed the counts which I made on both mornings came out almost exactly the same for nearly all the different kinds.

I have heard no Field Sparrows for several days and had begun to suspect that all had left this neighborhood but I found a pair in Birch Field this afternoon. When one flew the other followed it closely making that peculiar low cheeping sound peculiar to this species.

1902.

May 10

Brilliantly clear with high N.W. wind. Water in tube at the farm as well as across the river (at Mr. Grath's) was skimmed over with ice this morning. The vegetation does not seem to have suffered, however.

I spent the entire day in and about the cabins. There seemed to be only a few birds even on the sheltered side of the Hill where the sun beat down warmly enough. There was almost no singing.

At evening I walked along the river path with Mr. Bennett. The weather had moderated & the air felt rather warm but the birds continued almost totally silent. The Northern was pumping, however.

More than 100 Swallows, of which Gaves constituted about seventy, Boons twenty and Banks ten per cent, were skimming about over the Beaver Dam meadow. There were also numbers of Chimney Swifts, probably not less than 100, flying over the tops of the neighboring oaks.

At Benson's Landing we saw three Rose breasted Grosbeaks, two fine males and a female, feeding in company in the top of a small gray birch less than ten feet above the ground. They kept close together, much of the time within six or eight inches of one another, and the two male birds seemed to be on the best of terms. The ♀ is the first I have seen this season. As I was watching these birds I could not help wondering why they are equipped with such ponderous & massive bills. So far as I know they never eat other than soft food.

1902.

May 11

Brilliantly clear with light N. W. wind. Cool at morning and evening, pleasantly warm through the middle of the day.

Birds are coming by dates this month without much regard to weather. It is true that there were no arrivals yesterday but although the recent cold wave can scarcely be said to have passed before this forenoon a number of new birds appeared to-day. The list is as follows:—  
Golden-winged Warbler, one singing at S. end of Ball's Hill early this morning, another in the apple orchard at the farm at about 10 a.m.

Arrivals

Black & Yellow Warbler, a beautiful male flitting about in gray birches in the cedar hollow near the Bannock Spring at 5 P.M.

Black-throated Blue Warbler, a male among some dense young winter pines in the Bannock woods (on the eastern side of the cow pasture) at 4 P.M.

Red-eyed Vireo, a ♂ in full song on Ball's Hill (west end) at 12 M.

Yellow-winged Sparrows, one in full song at 4.15 P.M. in the mowing field on the Bannock farm just north of the boundary wall of the Bannock farm (very near my hen house) I have never known one to occur in this field before.

Hummingbird, one darting away from a bird cherry tree in bloom in front of the barn at the farm. It looked like a female but I could not certainly distinguish the sex.

The Tanagers, Grosbeaks, Chestnut-sided Warblers, Ovenbirds, & Black & White Cuckoos have perceptibly increased in numbers since yesterday. Yellow-winged Warblers & White-throated Sparrows have not changed in numbers for several days



1902.

May 9  
(No 2)

There were two pairs of Phoebe at the Farm in early April but of late I have seen only the birds which are nesting under the eaves of the old barn. Yesterday, however, I saw a Phoebe flying in and out of the cellar under the new barn and the same thing happened again to-day when I made an investigation and discovered a nest apparently nearly if not quite completed built on a brace between two rafters. It certainly had not been begun on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of this month for on that day I put up a box within a yard of the brace hoping that a Phoebe might be tempted to nest in it.

As I was skimming ~~the~~ Green Field this morning I discovered a ♂ Sparrow Hawk hovering about thirty feet above the ground beating the strong winds and evidently working for prey. It remained poised less than a minute and then passed out of sight over the woods to the westward. Although the Sparrow Hawk and the Pigeon Hawk closely resemble one another when on wing I think that the former may be readily distinguished from the latter by its more buoyant and erratic flight. It rarely proceeds far in a perfectly straight line but is ever inclining to one side or the other as well as rising and falling, at least slightly. Its wings, also, look longer than those of the Pigeon Hawk. The latter flies very straight and when it has occasion to vary its course does so in a long, smooth curve not abruptly. I cannot recall ever seeing it hover or loiter as the Sparrow Hawk is so given to doing.

1902.

May 11  
(no 2)

At the farm early this afternoon the ♂ Phoebe was perched near the end of a low drooping branch of the big elm which his mate was sitting on the nest under the eaves not twenty feet away. Harold Bowditch and I were standing about thirty feet from the ♂ bird watching John J. Nichols who had crept to within eight feet of it behind the trunk of the tree and was getting his camera ready for a snap exposure. Had he been a few seconds sooner he might have secured a most interesting picture for a bird which we took at first for a Robin but which proved to be a ♂ Pigeon Hawk suddenly appeared from an heavily wooded whither and with the speed of an arrow glided on his wings, on a slightly declining plane, directly at the Phoebe. That trustful little bird, swaying at ease on his slender perch, seemed so wholly unconscious of his fearful peril that we all thought him lost but when the Falcon was within a foot of him he did the only thing that could possibly have saved him - dropped like a life fruit nearly to the ground and then started directly for the barn cellar. The Hawk overshoot him scarce more than four feet & stopping & turning short about with truly marvellous quickness followed & overtook him before he had gone three yards but the Phoebe doubled short & abruptly and the little Falcon apparently disgusted at his ill success darted off down the hillside towards the eastward giving us a fine view of his ash-blued back.

Only a few minutes later the Phoebe was back on the same perch again. The whole episode was most impressive happening, as it did, at what might be called the very threshold of the Phoebe's home and during a really beautiful & powerful May afternoon.

1902.

May 11  
(No 3)

While passing through the opening between Ball's & Davis's Hills we saw (at 2 P.M.) a female Black & White Creeper tearing bark from a poplar vine. After she had obtained as much as she could carry in her bill she flew with it to the ground at the base of a cluster of birches where, no doubt, she has begun a nest.

Mniotilta  
nest building.

The Phoebe's nest in the house shed at Ball's Hill had five eggs to day but the bird has apparently not as yet begun sitting.

Early this afternoon we found an immature ♂ Purple Finch in the birches on Birch Island and later heard another among red cedars near the Bonnet Spring. Both were singing lustily & well. I have noted the species before this season but never - on March 22. It is evidently fast disappearing from the Ball's Hill region.

At evening we went to Beane Dam Meadows. The wind had lulled and there was a young moon high in the star-lit sky. After the Northern crowd pumping a Virginia Rail began his atta-atta cry. A Green Heron flew above and calling down. Only a few Hogs & Leopard Frogs were calling. When it had become nearly dark two Wilson's Snipe rose from the marsh across the river scarping. I was hoping that one of them would drum when suddenly the weird, tremulous, thrilling sound came distinctly to our ears. We heard it only once but I was satisfied at that for I had supposed I should have to miss it this year.

1902.

May 12

Forenoon clear and warm with light S. W. wind.  
Afternoon at first hazy, finally becoming cloudy, with  
S. E. to S. W. wind.

Tennessee Warbler, a male singing freely at the usual  
short intervals in the Bossett run nearly opposite the foot  
of the barn, that crosses from the barn. The beginning of the  
song (pitchey - pitchey - pitchey) was normal but its terminal  
half was so like that of a Nashville Warbler that I did  
not feel quite sure of the bird until I got my glass  
on him. He was in high plumage with very blue head  
& face white (ie ashy-white) under parts. He was in  
the top of a gray birch at first; soon afterwards he  
flew into a tall oak and finally into the blossoming  
oak overhead where he lost him. This is the  
first Tennessee Warbler I have ever noted in the Balls  
Hill region.

Arrivals

Bay-breasted Warbler. - Among the old oak woods  
which lie between the Bossett farm & the road that leads  
from the school house to Bensons are a few good-sized  
white pines. As we were passing one of these trees at  
about 9 a. m. I heard the unmistakable zee-zee-zee  
of a Bay-breasted & presently discovered the bird, a fine  
male, not as it turned out, in the pine but in  
a neighboring oak the leaves of which were just beginning  
to unfold.

The third & last arrival for the day was the  
Canadian Warbler of which we heard a ♂ singing in Davis's woods.  
Perhaps I should add to this list a solitary Cedar Bird  
seen in the blueberry pasture at the farm the first day in March

1902.

May 12  
(no 2)

The apple orchard at the farm was at the height of its glory yesterday. This morning the blossoms had lost something of their fresh beauty & many of the petals were falling - like big snow flakes. There were Warblers there both days but as so many as I have seen in former years - several House Warblers, a Golden-wing (yesterday), one or two Mockers & a Yellow Warbler being the full list. There was also Least Flycatcher & Chipping, the latter hopping about under masses of snow blossoms at the tips of the branches apparently doing nothing but luxuriate the beauty of their surroundings. Most fitting & attractive of all the sounds of the old orchard was that of the droning of the innumerable bees.

At about 8 a. m. as Bowditch, Meade & I were standing near the cabin we heard a sound which we at first mistook for that of a Pigeon's wings. The next instant a bird which looked, through the trees, like a whitish Pigeon, appeared over the crest of Bald Hill. It proved, however, to be a ♂ Marsh Hawk. He was flying in an unusual manner and continued to do so until he had passed beyond our sight over the Great Meadows. Passing an almost perfectly direct course and beating his wings with a continuous loose, easy, Gull-like motion, never over soaring or inclining to either side he would nevertheless dip downward on a rather long & gentle decline very few hundred or so, <sup>the beginning of</sup> at each sweep turning over on one side and at its termination on the other, without for an instant ceasing flapping. However, at each descent he made the sound already

1902.

May 12  
(no 3)

mentioned but after the first repetition it ceased to remind us of the whirring of wings (it was no doubt softened by distance & intervening trees the first time) for it possessed an unmistakable nasal & rather vibrant quality & seemed to be of vocal origin.

Nichols thought it resembled the grating sound of a Squirrel's teeth on the shell of a hickory nut but to me it suggested rather the ka-ka-ka-ka-ka of a White-bellied Nuthatch. There were I think at least seven syllables and they were given very rapidly & all on the same key. It is many years since I have seen a Marsh Hawk dive & chatter before but as I recall the previous experiences the birds have plunged much more readily vertically & wavy than our wavy ten some spot. This bird simply kept straight on, as I have said. His manner of flight reminded us all strongly of that of a Night hawk.

The young were seen two Great Blue Herons flying over high towards the N. E. early this morning. Nichols shouted at them when they turned back & circled. He says they will waddy always do this when shouted at.

Nichols & Bowditch also found two Chickadee nests this morning, both in low stumps, the holes descending nearly straight from the top. One was about 100 yards east of the cabin, the other as far to the westward, both being close to the river on the edge of the path. One contained 5 eggs the other either

1902.

May 12  
(no 4)

5 or 6. We could see the eggs distinctly from above. The bird was sitting on an nest made of twigs  
forenoon with her tail pointing straight up & pressed  
flat against the side of the cavity.

I have not heard a Field Sparrow sing since  
the 5<sup>th</sup> yet I see them almost daily. There was  
two hopping about on the ground on an opening  
in the orchard at the farm (where oats have been  
sown) yesterday & another this morning in the  
blueberry pasture across the road from the farm  
house. Apparently they have all become utterly  
silent for the time.

Gross Finches are still singing but not so  
freely as they were a week ago.

Vegetation has advanced slowly of late. Indeed  
the general aspect of the woods & thickets has  
changed but little during the past week. Sawn  
on the white willows and pine woods the foliage  
is not as yet sufficiently dense to afford concealment  
to a small bird and the songers are conspicuous  
enough in the oak woods where the leaves are  
still in that exquisite pink & salmon stage  
which follows their first unfolding.

The shrub bush is one of them; the red ones  
nearly so. I saw the first Cedar Sucker yesterday.

1912.  
May 13

Brilliantly clear with strong N. W. wind in P. M.  
Early morning calm and warm; evening cool - almost frosty.

Black-poll Warbler - A male singing in the junos behind  
Bald's Hill this morning.

Arrivals.

Wilson's Black-cop. - A high plumaged male in alder  
thicket behind Bald's Hill, singing freely at 8 A. M.

These were the only two birds new to the Spring but  
but several of the species which arrived before were perceptibly  
increased in number to-day. This was especially marked  
in the case of the Grosbeaks and Cat-birds.

The Cat-bird which nests in the thickets just to the  
eastward of the cabin arrived yesterday and this morning  
he was joined by his mate. At about 8.30 A. M. I saw  
four birds of this species together near the back gate. They  
were in the trees on the edge of the vine & berry in a singular  
manner. When one flew he was followed in quick succession  
by all the others. The first bird would alight in the top  
of a small tree, usually a birch, & the others would cluster  
closely about him when all four would lengthen out their  
necks & point their bills almost straight upward at  
the same time spreading their tails and uttering a variety  
of low wheezy sounds with an occasional harsh squeak  
none of them notes being like any ordinarily used  
in the bird's song. After posing in this absurd fashion  
for a minute or two during which they would sometimes  
hop about a little among the twigs working their way  
slowly upward though the branches they would fly to  
another tree & continue the singular performance.



1902.

May 13  
(no 2)

I saw another Creeper collecting grapes since back for her nest at about noon to-day, directly in front of the cabin. She flew several times to the foot of a cluster of oak sprouts near the base of the hill.

A female Downy Woodpecker flew from a poplar stub on the west end of Kall's Hill as I was passing. I could see a fresh and very neat-looking hole near the top of the stub but it was too high up to be easily investigated without a ladder.

On a ridge covered with dense second growth oaks between the Green Field and Birch Island I started a ♀ Partridge. Although she rose in the usual manner and at a distance of fully twenty yards I somehow felt instinctively that she had flown from her nest, which proved to be the case. The nest was at the foot of a small oak and was simply a hollow lined with dry oak leaves. It contained 11 fresh-looking eggs. It was near the middle of one of the densest corners in this neighborhood & remote from any path or opening.

Shortly after sunset this evening I heard the creaking calls of four Swallows at the farm & looking up saw 31 of these birds flying in a compact flock like Black-birds & at a considerable height. After creaking over a time they went off rapidly in a straight course towards the north-west. Were they migrating or working for some distant roost?

1902.

May 13  
(no 3)

The Field Sparrows are not the only birds it seems that have become silent of late. Although the country is simply flooded with Robins this season I have not heard one sing since the 9<sup>th</sup> and for several days before that date I heard them only for a brief period in the early evening & late evening.

A Robin at Balls Hill was busy at work this morning apparently repairing an old (last year's) and very dilapidated - looking nest in a small white pine near Gilbert's cabin.

Although the Phoebe and Bluebirds practically ceased singing a week or more ago I still hear them both in the early evening.

1902.

May 14

Brilliantly clear with light N. W. wind. Everything white with hoar frost at daybreak but middle of day pleasantly warm.

Black-burnian Warbler - One singing this morning in white pines on the left of the path near Pulpit Rock.

Great-crested Flycatcher - One in the old orchard near the barn. First heard at about 8.30 a. m.

Black-billed Cuckoo - One heard in the afternoon in the blueberry pasture west of the house.

Whippoorwill - One singing at evening in the white pine woods west of Lawrence's.

Arrivals.

We moved to the Farm yesterday evening and intend staying there for several days. At sunrise this morning only a few birds were singing, at evening I heard very many. At 7 a. m. I noted, as I stood on the door step of the house, Robins, Starlings, Yellow Warblers, Chestnut-sided Warblers, Redstarts, Maryland Yellow-throats, Oven-birds, Black & white Cuckoos, Usnea Warbler, Song Sparrows, Field Sparrow, Chipping, Goldfinch, Towhee, Golden Robin, Least Flycatcher, Phoebe and Partridge.

During a walk which I took an hour later I heard two Black-burnian and in the same woods among some dense young white pines found a Black & Yellow Warbler singing. A Black-throated Blue Warbler was also in full song in the sun.

A Partridge drummed at intervals through the day & steadily at morning & evening on the wall at the foot of the sun.

1902.

May 14  
(No 2)

The House Wren was in the apple orchard which is still glorious with pink & white blossoms.

His song was so very peculiar that I suspected at first that it was that of some bird little known to me. I noted it as ur-r-r, ur-r-r, ch. It was given very hurriedly & the termination was oddly abrupt.

A Robin sang for a short time at sunrise and I heard a Field Sparrow at about 7 a.m. and again just after sunset. The Phoebe sang a few times during the day & Bluebirds were heard ~~repeatedly~~ in the forenoon.

Sometimes after sunset as I was in the blueberry pasture a Golden-winged Warbler uttered his flight song very near me. I suppose that he was in the air at the time but I did not see him nor did I receive any very distinct impression as to what the song was like beyond the fact that it began with a medley of unusual notes, some of which were decidedly musical, and ended with the ordinary zee, zee-dee-dee.

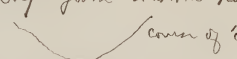
As twilight fell a Whippoorwill, the first that I have heard this season, began singing in the distance west of Lawrence's house.

Hyles were peeping by hundreds in the pool east of the old orchard both last evening & this. I have not heard so many before for some time.

1902.

May 15

Sunny most of the day, and warmer with light S.W. wind. Late afternoon dead calm & brilliantly clear.

As I was starting for a walk at 8 a.m. I saw a ♀ Hummer about the blossoming bird cherry trees near the barn. A moment later she alighted on a low branch close to the head and the ♂ appeared darting down close over her, rising ten or fifteen feet above her and swooping again without pause in the usual loop-like course  course of ♂. His throat glowed in the daylight like a coal of fire. He made the usual incessant shrill chirrup which rising and falling. The ♀ remained but motionless & appeared wholly inapparent.

In the apple orchard near the barn I heard a Black-poll and saw a ♂ Black & Yellow Warbler. The latter was singing to the breeze as he moved slowly from twig to twig among the clustering sunny & pink blossoms. In the Purple Rock woods there were but few birds & the only water thrush migrant I found there was a Black-throated Blue Warbler which was singing in the usual drowsy, listless way.

On my way back from these woods I heard a Tennessee Warbler singing. He was in the very top of one of the tall oaks that form the row of trees on the south side of the orchard but I did not see him until he started on a long flight. I heard him sing eight or ten times. His song, although of the usual shrill, incessant character or quality, was peculiar in form tip - tip - tip - tip - ti - tchip - tchip - tchip. Evidently he was a different bird from the one noted in nearly the same place on the morning of the 12<sup>th</sup> of April.

1902.

May 15  
(No 2.)

Listening to him it occurred to me that one of the most marked characteristics of the Tennessee Warbler's song is that it is delivered at shorter intervals than that of almost any other of our Warblers. At least this is usually the case when the bird is singing steadily.

Our Bluebird was in full, rapturous song all day long and early in the forenoon I saw him carrying his mate to the bird box on the shed into which she carried a large mouthful of fine dry grass. I supposed at the time that his first nest must have been broken up but in the afternoon while driving to Concord I passed directly under a young Bluebird that was perched on a telegraph wire. It started a moment later & flew off easily enough although rather feebly. This is a very early date for young Bluebirds to leave the nest. During a walk of about a mile up the road this evening I saw six or eight Bluebirds but all were adults & alone.

Early this afternoon I heard a House Wren singing in the Holden orchard near the little brick school house at the entrance to the road that leads to Thoson's. It is the first I have ever found anywhere in this part of Concord. I wish it would settle in one orchard.

Three Partridges were drumming late this afternoon within hearing of the house on near the head of the run, another at its foot, the third at the western end of Birch Field. All three of these stations were frequented by drummers last year.

1902.

May 15  
(No 3)

I saw a ♀ Chestnut-sided Warbler at work on her nest this afternoon (1 P.M.). It was in a hole by the roadside just below the house. It had evidently been begun to-day as there was only a thin film of snow which the caterpillar like down about the hole of the slender twig. The bird seemed to be gathering this material only. I saw her take it out of the nests which were all about on the room chimney trees.

Shortly before sunset I could hear one of the Bitterns jumping in Great Meadows as I stood in the road just below our farm house.

Starting at about 6.30 P.M. I walked up the road about a mile. There are many large apple orchards in this direction and they were glowing this evening with their domed masses of white & rose tinted blossoms. They were also swarming with birds. Robins, Bluebirds, Chipping, Orioles, Yellow Warblers and Least Flycatchers seemed to be the most numerous. Swifts were coming overhead & I saw several House Wrens & a pair of White Bellied. The fluttering of the Golden Robins was near for a full minute out of my ears. Several of these birds had apparently rich and mellow voices but I rarely now hear the rich song of my boyhood days. They have quite as utterly gone out of fashion as the steel cars of those times. From the pasture lands along this sweetly peaceful bit of country road come the songs of Song Sparrows, Field Sparrows, Grass Finches &

1902

May 15<sup>-</sup>  
(204)

every now & then the "scatter call" of a Quail.  
Altogether the walk was a delightful as well as  
memorable one.

On my way back I stopped at Edwin Lawrence's  
place. I found the proprietor smoking a cigar in the  
garden just behind the house. Twilight was falling as  
I stood talking with him. A Thrasher was singing  
gloriously in the position near at hand. Suddenly  
I heard the light, silvery whistle of wings and  
looking up saw two Wood Ducks flying at us  
great height directly overhead. Although the light was  
dim I distinctly made out their white bellies  
& characteristic shape & manner of flight. They  
came from the westward (directly over an extensive  
tract of upland woods) and disappeared in the  
direction of Birch Island. I should have been  
severely surprised had a pair of Canada Geese  
flown over me.

It was nearly dark when I reached the  
farm house. Two Whippoorwills were singing, one  
to the westward, the other just below the orchard  
to the south-east & somewhere near Pulpit Rock.

Hylos were purring in fair numbers this  
evening.

When at Lawrence's I heard a Solitary Sandpiper  
calling high overhead & earlier in the day a Winter  
Yellow-legs high over Pulpit Rock woods.



Concord, Mass.

1902

May 17

Brilliantly clear. The warmest day of the month thus far despite the fact that a strong N. to N.W. wind was blowing.

The birds sang with the utmost freedom and spirit from sunrise to late evening. Indeed there has been no such a prodigal feast of their music before this season. Everything seemed to be singing, even the Robins and Field Sparrows. Our Bluebird briefly worked incessantly all day long while his mate continued to work on the nest in the bird house on the shed.

During my morning walk I noted only a very few migrants. There was a ♂ & ♀ Black-poll Warbler in the orchard near the barn, a ♀ Black-throated Blue Warbler in the woods near Back Field and two ♂ Magnolia Warblers singing within two rods of our another among the dense young white pines just to the southward of Pulpit Rock. I had expected to find at least one Black-brown Warbler in those woods but failed to do so.

On the 14<sup>th</sup> a Great Crested Flycatcher was calling in the orchard nearly all day for the first time this season. I supposed at the time that he was the bird which breeds there every season but I have not heard him since until to-day when he was very much in evidence. About the middle of the afternoon I heard two birds, no doubt the pair, & finally saw them in one of the elms near the house.

1902.

May 17  
(hw 2)

Although I saw a Wood Thrush at Davis's Hill on the 8<sup>th</sup> and heard another singing gloriously yesterday near the stone boat house of post at Ball's Hill I have not as yet detected one on the farm (where I have been living for the past four days).

I was out this evening for a couple of hours - from 5.30 to 7.30 - in the blueberry pasture to the westward of the farm house. It is always attractive and just now charming beyond description. The blueberry bushes are thickly hung with the bell-like creamy white blossoms and the bushes, veiled in a most exquisite gauze-like covering of tender green. It is, moreover, the most "birdy" place that I know anywhere in this immediate region. Just before & after sunset to-night it seemed like a great aviary. The air fairly rang with the songs of birds & at times I was fairly bewildered by their voices coming from far & near in a volume of sound as continuous and ear-filling as that of Hylas. There were Robins, Cat-birds, Thrushes, Golden-winged, Nashville & Chestnut-sided Warblers, Field Sparrows, Song Sparrows, Towhees, and a pair of Quail. The last named flew from a wood near me and afterwards called to me another while it was nearly dark. I examined the wooded spots along the brook for Woodcock signs but could find none. I wonder if the birds that I heard them in March passed on westward. I was here on the train that they were killed & preparing to breed.

1902.

May 17  
(no 3)

There were two Golden-winged Woodpeckers singing on the farm to-day, one at the foot of the hill to the eastward of the barn this forenoon, the other in the strawberry pasture across the road all day long. The latter bird ceased singing this evening at about 7.20 or before it had begun to grow dark and some time before the Song Sparrows, Field Sparrows & Larks ceased. Between 7 and 7.20 he gave the flight song three times, presumably in the air although I did not ever see him in the act. I noted this song carefully on this occasion.

Either my previous impressions of it have been based on casual observation (as I think was the case) or it varies considerably on different evenings. On each occasion this evening it consisted of either two or three short periods sets of twittering notes, ecstatic rather than musical & each followed by the usual zee-c-e. I should write it thus: - twi-twi-twi-twi-ti-zee-c-e; twi-twi-twi-twi-ti-zee-c-e, twi-twi-twi-twi-ti-zee-c-e. There were also connecting their repeated phrases one or two short strutting notes so low as to be scarcely audible.

For several evenings past a number of Robins - at least a dozen I should say - have assembled soon after sunset in the chosen strawberry & brick thickets below the field in front of the barn, evidently to roost. They make a great clamor calling excitedly for fifteen or twenty minutes but not singing.

Robin roost  
at the  
farm.

The Bats are back in the loft over the shed. I saw one come out of it last evening & found ten in a cluster there to-day. Bats in the shed 89

1902.  
May 18

Cloudless with light N. W. wind. Warmer even than yesterday.

As I strolled about through the orchard and near the house for about half an hour immediately after breakfast this morning I noted the following birds singing: Robin 1, Bluebird 1, Thrasher 1, Chickadee 1, Creeper 1, Nashville Warbler 1, Golden-winged Warbler 2, Yellow Warbler 2, Black & Yellow Warbler 1 (in apple orchard), Chestnut-sided Warbler 4, Black-throated Green Warbler 1, Black-poll Warbler 1, Cowbird 2, Redstart 2, Red-eyed Vireo 1, Yellow-throated Vireo 1, Woodring Vireo 1, Chipping 1, Song Sparrows 1, Grosbeak 1, Indigo Bird 1, Oriole 2 ♂ & 1 ♀, Least Flycatcher 1, Great-capped Flycatcher 2, The only birds in this lot which were obviously bound farther north were, of course, the Black Poll & Black & Yellow Warblers and the only new arrival was the Indigo Bird migrants.  
Arrival of Indigo Bird

In the afternoon I drove to Balls Hill and drove them up mine to the Shulcricks. I heard at least six Robins singing and saw them notes together. There was a good many Spotted & Solitary Sandpipers and I saw five Least Sandpipers, two singly & three together. A Green Heron was perched on a willow over the river near the mouth of Country Brook & a Bittern standing on the edge of the water some distance. A White-bellied Swallow has a nest in one of the island shrubs just above the Hall & was looking out as I passed. I also saw a pair of Black Ducks flying over the meadows. Red-wings were unaccountably scarce. I do not remember seeing or hearing more than two or three.

1902.

May 18

(No 2.)

I have no doubt that the pair of Hummingbirds which I have seen almost daily about the farm house during the past week are the same birds that nested in the big elm last year & raised their brood in safety. As I was watching the male this morning I was surprised to see him visit a number of dandelion blossoms in succession putting each into his bill as he passed just over it.

It has never occurred to me until this season that the restless, warbling song of the Chestnut-sided Warbler, which we hear oftener late in June but occasionally at this season, is very like the song of the Myrtle Warbler. I had several opportunities a week or so ago to make direct comparisons between the two and really I could not certainly distinguish them.

The House Wren was in full song early this afternoon in the orchard near the brick schoolhouse where he has apparently settled for the season.

The conditions which govern the singing of birds are a constant puzzle to me. Yesterday, as I noted in this journal, they sang all the day though while the coverlet in the Blueberry Pasture last evening was something to long remember. To-day they sang with equal freedom and spirit through the forenoon but only fitfully & sparingly in the afternoon. I was in the Blueberry Pasture from 6.30 to 7.30 and during the greater part of this period it was as bright as the grass. Yet

1902.

May 18  
(no 3)

The evening, as far as I could see, was a perfect duplicate in every way of that of yesterday. That the birds were all there is a matter of no doubt for I either saw most of them or heard them chirping among the shrubs.

The Phoebe nest in the cellar under the corn bin held three eggs yesterday. I have never over seen more than a single bird near this nest. He sang a little to-day & at evening I found him perched on one of the branches of the cedar post that supports the piazza roof. The other Phoebe was feeding this young in the nest under the eaves of the old barn this afternoon.

Gilbert showed me a nest of a Yellow-throated Vireo to-day. It is in the crotch at the east end of the house near the extremity of a stone branch about thirty feet above the ground. I saw the bird enter it with her bill full of building material which she worked into the lining.

Robins are not much given to nesting on buildings in this region (certainly much less so than on Cape Cod) but we discovered one this afternoon sitting on an exceptionally small nest built on a ledge just under the eaves of the farm house on the left side of the front door.

Concord, Mass.

1902.

May 20

Clear with light N. E. wind. We had a heavy rain yesterday, the first for several weeks.

I heard a Yellow-billed Cuckoo and a Nighthawk this morning, both for the first time this year. The Nighthawk was peeping, apparently in one of the elms near the house, although I did not see the bird.

Arrivals

I discovered the Hummingbird's nest this forenoon. It is within ten feet of where the nest was last year and on the same side of the same big elm but on a different branch. The female was at work on it.

Hummingbird's  
nest at same  
in same tree  
where pair  
nested last  
year.

She kept darting to & fro between it and one of the large branches of the elm from which she was gathering what I took to be bits of lichen although I could see nothing in her bill. Alighting in the nest she would turn around and around at the same time applying the tip of her bill to the exterior many times in succession. Then she would fly to one of the large branches & perch in front of it moving from place to place & just touching the bark with her bill. I did not see the male to-day.

Bancaster, Mass.

I used to think that Downy Woodpeckers seldom drummed at any season other than that of early spring but I have heard them repeatedly at Concord during the past ten days and this evening two birds were drumming at short intervals, one answering the other, in large sugar maps about 100 yards apart on the river interval here. They kept it up for nearly half-an-hour.

Downy W.  
drumming  
in May

Lancaster, Mass.

1902.

May 20  
(no 2)

I went to Lancaster by the noon train. On reaching Miss Holman's I heard a Wood Pewee in the elm in front of her house, the first that I have noted this year. The other birds settled immediately about the house were the same that we had last year viz. Robins, a Warbling & a Yellow-throated Vain, a Least Flycatcher, several Chipping and a pair of Orioles. There were also King birds & Yellow Warblers and at least one Redstart. Meadow Larks & Robins were singing in the fields across the road and great numbers of Chipping Swifts were coming about over the trees & houses at evening.

The Robin who reared two broods successfully last year under the eaves of the piazza roof directly in front of the side door, laying both times in the same nest, has built a new nest on the old one (using the latter merely as a foundation) and has already hatched her first brood of young.

Robin nests  
three under  
piazza roof.

Later this afternoon I walked through the lane to the river. The bank has crumbled afresh nearly back to the big elm and a large colony of Sand Swallows has settled there. There were many birds in the country, among them a Black & Yellow Warbler & a Canadian Flycatcher, both females. In the woods beyond the immediate pasture several Wood Thrushes were singing. In the same direction I heard, at a great distance, evidently, a Patterin jumping. A Thrasher was perched in the very top of a tall hillory flanking the whole surrounding country with his song.

Birds singing  
at evening  
in river  
intervals.



Lancaster, Mass.

1902.

May 20  
(No 3)

Bobolinks are quite as numerous here (I have seen comparatively few at Concord) as they were last season and, as on that occasion, at least three out of every four of those which inhabit the fields near the house and ~~there~~ bordering the lake utter at the very beginning of their songs (or rather just before beginning to sing) a note which, at a distance, sounds exactly like the word gee, but which near at hand is more like gee-ab. This is so loud or, at least, penetrating that it can be heard at distances at which all the other notes of the song (which is in other respects quite normal) are inaudible. Coming from different directions, far and near, over these wide grassy fields it has a peculiar effect on the ear of the listener. If I remember rightly I heard it in other parts of Lancaster last season but most frequently in this immediate neighborhood. It is, I believe, peculiar to the birds of this region (since I have never noted it at Concord which is only twenty miles distant) and the fact that it is quite as generally used this year as it was last is interesting evidence that I am now hearing the same individuals (with, no doubt, some of their offspring) that I listened to last season.

Bobolinks,  
Peculiar note  
Characteristic  
of Lancaster  
birds

Last year a Yellow Warbler built her nest in a certain cluster of Spirea ovata on the borders of the lake, laying from eggs all of which disappeared soon after the set was completed. On examining these bushes to-day I found in the same fork of the same stem a freshly completed but empty nest of a Yellow Warbler. I can scarcely doubt that it is the same individual that nested here last season.

Yellow Warbler  
nests two  
years in  
same bush.

Lancaster, Mass.

1902.  
May 21

Brilliantly clear with light N.W. wind.

Growing near together in a hollow in the country are three or four tall and exultantly flourishing balsam firs which seem to possess great attraction for Hoopoes, Trees, Flickers & various other of the smaller birds. I remember seeing in them last year among other things a Bay-breasted and a Black & Yellow Warbler. Nesting this morning I found them simply swarming with little birds. Most of these were of the commoner kinds - Chipping, Purple Flickers, Yellow Warblers, Orioles, Goldfinches, Redstarts etc. but among them I presently discovered a Lincoln's Finch. For some time he kept among the dense foliage at a height of forty thirty - five feet above the ground but at length he descended to a low branch along which he hopped slowly picking rapidly at the bark as if he found an abundance of food of some kind. He was one of the tamest birds of his kind that I have ever seen. Indeed he scarcely seemed to notice me at all even when I stood within two or three yards of him & directly in the open.

Balsam firs  
peculiarly  
attractive to  
small birds  
of various  
kinds.

Lincoln's  
Finch feeding  
in Balsam.

Mr. Harrington tells me that Mr. John S. Thayer & he found a Carolina Dove's nest in Lancaster last Sunday (18<sup>th</sup> May). It was on the branch of a pitch pine & contained two well-grown young. In a sandy field a mile or two distant from the place they started a flock of a dozen or more of these Doves.

Early nesting  
of Carolina  
Dove

Lancaster, Mass.

1902.

May 22

Clear and warm with strong S. W. wind.

Visiting the cemetery this morning I found in the cluster of balsams a Wilson's Black Cap, a female Canadian Warbler, a pair of Goldfinches, two or three Purple Finches, a Redstart and an Oriole.

Wing  
in Balsam

This quiet old town with its broad, elm-embowered streets is a perfect paradise for Warbling Vireos and these birds are more numerous here than I remember to have ever found them elsewhere. Where the elms are continuous the birds occur at intervals of about one hundred yards. There must be nearly or quite a dozen pairs scattered along the main street between Miss Holman's and the depot. The males have been singing to-day from day-break until nearly dusk - more continuously, indeed, than any other birds. I should characterize the song briefly as an evenly-flowing warble, too rapid and strong to be called listless and (rather joyous) than the reverse yet without somewhat pensive in quality as if the bird were indulging in reverie. It bears an unmistakable resemblance to the song of the Purple Finch but is much less emphatic and ecstatic as well as more leisurely. It lasts from three to four seconds and when the bird is singing steadily is delivered at intervals of from three to four seconds for hours in succession. Although by no means a song of the highest musical order it is nevertheless one of the most pleasing as well as soothing of the bird voices of early summer.

Warbling Vireo

As I have said the Warbling Vireos have sung chiefly in the elms but Mr. Harrison tells me he has found their nests in sugar maple only.

Cambridge, Mass.

1902

May 24

Partly cloudy, oppressively warm & sultry; heavy  
thunder showers at evening.

I went to Cambridge this morning. On the way  
to the Station at Somerville I heard a number of Black-bills  
singing in the big elms that shade the village streets.  
Several others were singing in the elms over Mount Street  
in Cambridge as I walked up from the Stages. There  
was a Wood Pewee in the Sumner place and I heard  
one Yellow-throated Vireo there & another in the big elm  
in front of Mr. Brown Higgin's house.

One	is gl	* *	Norwood
where	, dog	* *	Dedham
etc. It	is gl	* *	Roslind
		* *	Forest
		* *	Boston

was north-bound migrants. Besides the resident Robins  
(one, possibly two, pairs), Cat birds (one pair), Yellow Warblers  
(one pair), Redstarts (one pair in the lindens), Red-eyed Vireo  
(one singing in lindens), Chipping (one pair, the ♂ singing, the ♀  
sitting on her nest in one of the little blue spruces on the  
lawn), Orioles (one pair), Rose-breasted Grosbeak (♂ in full  
song in the juniper where W. Deane has heard him daily for  
some time) and Yellow-billed Cuckoo (one singing in the juniper  
& presumably a settled bird) there were a Gray-chested  
Thrush, a Louisiana Thrush, a Black & Yellow Warbler (apparently  
a ♂ but silent), a Black-bill Warbler (singing), a Wilson's  
Black-capt (♂ in full song), a Canadian Warbler (♀,  
and a King bird (perching on the top of the taller tree  
in the juniper & very noisy). Besides these six ten species  
a ♀ Black-throated Blue Warbler had been seen earlier in  
the morning, bathing in the pond, by W. Deane.

Cambridge, Mass.

1902

May 24

Partly cloudy, oppressively warm & sultry; heavy  
thunder showers at evening.

I went to Cambridge this morning. On the way  
to the Station at Somerville I heard a number of Black-bills  
singing in the big elms that shade the village streets.  
Several others were singing in the elms over North Street  
in Cambridge as I walked up from the Stages. There  
was a Wood Pewee in the South place and I heard  
one Yellow-throated Vireo there & another in the big elm  
in front of Mr. Brown Higgin's house.

Our garden was glorious with blossoming hawthorns (both  
white & pink) lilacs, dogwood, red bud, and *Hibiscus*, *Asclepias*  
etc. It was also swarming alive with birds many of which  
were north-bound migrants. Besides the resident Robins  
(one, possibly two, pairs), Cat birds (one pair), Yellow Warblers  
(one pair), Redstarts (one pair in the lindens), Red-eyed Vireo  
(one singing in lindens), Chipping (one pair, the ♂ singing, the ♀  
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Black-cap (♂ in full song), a Canadian Warbler (♀),  
and a King bird (perching on the top of the taller tree  
in the juniper & very noisy). Besides these six ten species  
a ♀ Black-throated Blue Warbler had been seen earlier in  
the morning, bathing in the pond, by W. Deane.

Cambridge, Mass.

1902.

May 24  
(no 2)

The Gray-chinned Thrush, an exceptionally large bird, looking, in fact, almost as big as a Robin, was so tame that it allowed me to approach within fifteen or eighteen feet without showing the slightest alarm or nervousness. Early in the afternoon W. Deane & I heard it singing and following up the sound found the bird perched on a low branch of the cedar tree near the pond. It sang at short intervals of ten or fifteen minutes but always ditto over the notes being to come from a distance although we were standing nearly under the tree. The song was so very like that of the Veery that I should have attributed it to that bird had I not seen the singer so distinctly. It fell at the end, as does the Veery's song, but the notes were given less smoothly and continuously than those of the Veery & the tone was perhaps somewhat harsher & more metallic. The bird also called a few times much after the manner of the Veery.

The Swainson's Thrush also sang a little in low tones. W. Deane tells me that it has been in the garden for several days and that it was in full song yesterday afternoon at about five o'clock.

Gray-chinned  
Thrush singing  
in the Garden

Swainson's  
Thrush singing  
in the Garden

Concord, Mass.

1902.

May 25

Cloudy most of the day & very drizzly. Light rain in the evening.

I went to Concord Lake yesterday afternoon with Ernest Seton Thompson who passed the night with me at the cabin. There was a heavy thunder shower shortly after eight o'clock. During its continuance the Garden Frogs along the river kept up their harsh (hummed) croaking without the slightest cessation.

Later in the night the moon (nearly full) came out for brief intervals during which I occasionally heard a Northern Junco or an Oven-bird sing on my directly over the cabin.

I was awake at daybreak this morning when the birds began singing in the following order: - Phoebe, Bluebird, Robin, Veery, Red-wings, Black & White Cuckoo as soon as the light showed in the East; Tanager, Bobolink & Red-eyed Vireo at sunrise; Rose-breasted Grosbeak shortly after sunrise.

Seton and I spent the whole forenoon in the woods walking to the farm by way of Davis' Hill and Birch Island, returning through the oak woods past the Spring & over Pine Ridge. Tanagers & Grosbeaks seemed to me less numerous than usual but all the other summer residents were in about their usual numbers. There was a good many Black-bellied Woodpecker singing, especially in the orchard at the farm. He heard three Canadian Waxwings, one in Davis' Hill Swamp, the other two behind Davis' Hill, both feeding grapes for their chicks. There was a least Water Thrush by the river and a Yellow-bellied Flycatcher among the pines on Pine Ridge.

Concord, Mass.

1902.

May 25  
(No 2)

The Yellow-bellied Flycatcher was shy or, at least, elusive for we failed to get a light at him although we followed him for some distance through the patch woods near the crest of the ridge. He called, however, almost incessantly uttering a low, plaintive tee-e which reminded us both of that of a young Goldfinch, but which seemed to be merely an individual variation of the usual pee-e of S. flaviventris.

I had confidently expected to have Wood Thrushes at the farm for the weather was exceptional favorable & the Veeries were singing all the forenoon but not a Wood Thrush could we find although we visited all their usual haunts. I begin to fear that something has happened to the birds which have frequented this locality every summer for the past six or eight years at least.

We also listened vainly last evening for Raids. The Great Meadows are now in perfect condition for them and the Red-winged Blackbirds have returned to their breeding grounds there in force.

There were two Belted Kingfishers jumping in those meadows last evening and this morning while, as I have already noted, I heard one of them several times during the middle of the night.

The Black & White Osprey nest which I found built on the hillside in front of the new cabin was empty to-day & the disordered condition of the lining indicated that it had been robbed. Both of the



1902.

May 25  
(No 3)

Chickadee-Adel Warblers' nests on the roadside at the farm had evidently suffered a like fate.

The ♀ Hummingbird was on her nest in the big elm and apparently sitting steadily (at 11 a.m.). I was mistaken in stating that this nest is not on the same branch as the one last year. It is on a different fork of the same branch on about the same level and some six feet from the site of the former nest. The latter was in situ when I left the farm last autumn but it had disappeared when I returned this spring (in March).

On putting my hand into the Phoebe's nest in the storm horse shed at Hollis Hill this morning I could feel young apparently several days old. The young in the nest under the eaves of the barn at the farm are well-fledged & apparently nearly ready to fly. There were four storm-cold eggs in the nest in the new barn cellar and a fifth broken on the ground beneath which the birds were not here.

We examined the Chickadee's nests to-day. From one in a rather neatly-dished hole in a pitch pine stem in the woods at the farm the bird flew when we rapped on the trunk. We could not see into this nest without enlarging the entrance hole which entered the side of the stem about four feet above the ground and resembled that of a Downy Woodpecker save that its edges were more ragged - a characteristic, I believe, of holes made by the Chickadee.

The other two nests were the ones near the cabin found by Banditch and Nichols on the 12<sup>th</sup>. At that date the birds were laying, one nest containing at least five eggs & the other

1902.

May 25  
(No 4)

about the same number, as nearly as we could ascertain by looking into the holes which entered almost directly downward from the tops of the stumps. Both birds were sitting to-day at about noon. We could see their tails pressed against the sides of the stumps pointing straight upward. As I was peeping into the first hole with my eye almost touching its edges Seton tapped the stump with his knuckles. The result surprised, not to say startled, us both for the light blow was immediately followed by an explosion prof ending in a prolonged hiss, the whole closely resembling the sudden escape of a compressed jet of steam. My first idea was that there was a snake in the hole and I jumped back instinctively and precipitately. Possibly the sound so really intended to simulate that of a snake's hiss. This bird repeated it only two or three times when we continued to tap or scratch on the outside of the stump but the bird in the other nest emitted it in perfect volleys, peeping six or eight times in rapid succession whenever we provoked her to do so. It must be a regular habit of sitting Chickadees to thus threaten those who disturb their nests but possibly they indulge in it only after their young are hatched for I cannot remember ever having had an experience similar to this before.

There were fourteen Bats in the loft one on the shed at the farm to-day, all in one cluster clinging to the rough surface of the boards directly under the peak of the roof. Seton seemed to be more interested in them than in anything else that he saw while at Concord.

1902.  
May 25  
(no 5)

Partridges were drumming freely and steadily all the forenoon. We heard all three of the birds at the farm and a fourth in the Davis Hill Swamp. The drummer last mentioned must be the mate of the hen whose nest I found on the 13<sup>th</sup> on the ridge near Birch Island although when sitting she could scarce hear the sound of her bird's wing, partly owing to the distance (about 300 yards), but chiefly to the presence of an intervening knoll covered with dense woods. He visited this nest to-day. The bird sat much closer than on the 13<sup>th</sup> allowing us to get within fifteen feet when she rose directly from the nest and towered up & off through the tree tops. There were, as on the first occasion, eleven eggs.

On the edge of the Barrett Run, within easy hearing of two cock birds which were drumming at the time, and about midway between them, we came upon a hen Partridge with eight or ten young. The mother flew a few yards and then began tumbling about on the ground making the usual whirring outcry. The young, which appeared to be only a day or two old, ran fully off in every direction calling peep, peep, peep in low shrill tones. They went only a few yards before stopping & hiding. Selton walked on & I another. Both crawled in under dead leaves where they concealed themselves & slept. But with their eyes wide open. We lifted one of them gently. It made no effort to escape but sat contentedly & untroubled in the palms of our opened hands. When we put it down on the ground it remained exactly where it was placed. The mother, meanwhile, was arching about whirring but concealed from our sight among some bushes.

1902.

May 25-  
(no 6)

We then withdrew a few rods and lay down behind a knoll from whence we could see the place where the young were scattered about. For about ten minutes the old Partridge made no sign. Then she walked forth from her cove and standing erect & ~~motionless~~ began calling quie - quie - quie, kr - r - r - r, kree - ar - r - r, kree - ar - a - a, quie - quie - quie, kree - ar - a - a etc. The quie note was somewhat metallic in quality, the kree - ar - a - a rather hoarse & not unlike the bark of a Gray Squirrel. Seton thought that the bird was so and was cautioning the young to remain quie. Certainly no one of them moved a peep until some time later when the mother changed her call to the low, nasal, metallic-like qua - qua - qua - qua - qua - qua (repeated rapidly & without cessation very many times) which I heard a hen Partridge use under similar conditions a year or two ago. As on that occasion it was almost invariably assumed by the father peep - peep, peep - peep (invariably doubled now but I think given singly in peep, peep when the young were scattering) of the young two of which we saw huddling towards their mother pecking their way rather slowly through the fallen branches & other obstructions that littered the ground. The largest of them joined the old bird but there were probably others with her when she started off into the bushes. Hearing to her right of her we followed at once & at a run but we heard nothing further for she rose & flew to some distance before we got sight of her again.

1902.

May 26

Morning clear with strong, cool S.W. wind.  
Afternoon cloudy with violent thunder storms just  
before dark.

Started off with John E. Thayer & his assistant  
Mr. Hensman at 9 a.m. We drove directly to  
the family farm on the road to Still River & tying the  
horses descended the hillside to the meadows where Puerin  
& I heard two Horned Larks Sparrows last summer.  
These meadows border a brook for then a few  
hundred yards. They are full of springs & the ground  
is broken into many little hollows covered with  
low blammy bushes & carpeted with Sparganium mosses.  
Between them & the road lie well-drained intervals  
fields in English grass & clover but still covered in  
places (especially in the hollows) with tufts of very  
wild grasses.

In the brook meadows proper we found a pair of  
Horned Lark Sparrows, and in the intervals fields we heard  
at least three different males singing. We spent the  
greater part of the day looking for nests but without  
success. Three times we flushed the female of the pair  
nearly underfoot and within a few yards of the  
down place among some of the bushes just mentioned.  
Thinking that the night has run on ahead of us on  
having no nest we charged at full speed into the  
place during our second & third visits but no nest  
could we find when we finally got the bird on  
wing. One of the other males was singing in the  
middle of a large patch of clover. The ♂ by the brook  
usually perched in a bush when singing. All the males

1902.

May 26  
(1902)

Saw at intervals for a few minutes at a time during the middle of the day. Some of them lay very close and on several occasions we heard one of them singing very close at hand among short grass but could not either see him or flush him when we came to the spot where his st-ye had seemed to come.

At noon we drove to the old white pine woods where the Black-brown Nuthatches breed. There were at least four or five of these birds singing in the tops of the trees.

In these pine woods Mr. Thayer Howard saw a Great Horned Owl nest. When he found it on May 18<sup>th</sup> it contained <sup>any</sup> ~~any~~ <sup>one</sup> bird. ~~It~~ <sup>It</sup> ~~did~~ <sup>did</sup> which would raise its head & look down at him when he rapped the tree with a stick. He rapped it hard to-day but could see nothing of the young Owl. Neither of the parent birds was seen or heard on either occasion. The nest was very small (not larger than a Green Heron's) & in the fork of a white pine about 40 ft. above the ground within 30 yards of a traveled horse road & in plain sight of the latter. At the foot of the tree lay the remains of a water snake (about 2 feet long) a portion of which had evidently been eaten by either <sup>the</sup> old or young bird. There were no other fragments of food but several pellets composed chiefly (if not wholly) of Rabbit's fur & bones also lay scattered beneath the tree.

1902.

May 26  
(no 3)

We found fresh tracks & droppings of Deer in the meadows along the creek. Thayer tells me that they have become really numerous in Lancaster. When they first appeared two or three years ago the fact that one had been seen was thought worthy & noted in the local paper. Now it hardly excites comment. During the present Spring there have been seen together on one occasion on Mr. Herbert Parker's place & five on another. Mr. Harrison says that while hunting Foxes in the Lancaster woods last winter he found deer tracks in the snow almost everywhere.

On Friday (May 23<sup>rd</sup>) Mr. John E. Thayer found the nest of a Red-billed Nuthatch in Mr. Parker's woods at South Lancaster. His attention was attracted by a small, neat hole in a beech stub about 17 feet above the ground. When he struck the tree the bird flew out and was shot. There was a good deal of pitch on the trunk just under the hole. The nest contained six young birds about two days old. The parent bird killed was the male. The female parent visited the hole & fed the young after her mate had been shot. Mr. Thayer has seen three Nuthatches before in the breeding season in Lancaster.

Lancaster, Mass.

1902.

May 27

Cloudy with heavy rain all through the afternoon.

Our walk this morning led up the road towards John Thayer's place - the "Back Road" it is locally called. Birds were numerous and singing freely but I heard only the species that are residents here through the summer.

There were very many Robins along this walk. Every one that I studied closely uttered the grice - ah note more or less freely and frequently, usually just before beginning to sing, sometimes intercourse in the middle of the song, occasionally just after its termination, not very infrequently in the intervals between the songs & either as a single call or repeated twice or thrice in quick succession. On the other hand the birds that used it oftenest would sometimes sing several times in succession without uttering it at all. On the afternoon of May 23<sup>rd</sup> I heard it ~~coming~~ coming from every direction in the meadows on Mr. Nat. Thayer's place at South Lancaster (about a mile from here in an air line) but the only two ♂ Robins which we found in the extensive fields at the fancy farm (about three miles east of here) yesterday did not once produce it although we heard them sing very many times.

The Least Flycatcher whose mate is sitting on her nest high up in a maple near my bed room window occasionally utters his chebe during the darkest hours of the darkest nights. Indeed I am rarely awake for half an hour between 10 P.M. and daybreak without hearing him. He gives the note only once at a time & in low, sleepy tones without the usual sharp emphasis.



Lacon, Mass.

1902.

May 27  
(no 2)

Last year a Wood Pewee built in a horizontal fork of a tall elm high above the driveway that leads past Miss Holman's side door. The nest was robbed and partly torn from its foundations soon after the eggs were laid. The birds remained but if they built a second nest I failed to find it. They were back again in the old haunt when I came here this year on May 20<sup>th</sup>. At least I heard one of them on that day and saw the pair together on the 23<sup>rd</sup>. This morning I saw one of them, presumably the ♀, at work on a nest in the same fork where the nest was built last year. She had already completed the outer walls and was putting in the lining. While thus engaged she went through the most violent contortions, twisting her neck & body and spreading her wings as she turned around and around in the nest.

Two of the young Robins left the nest under the piazza roof yesterday forenoon and the third & last this forenoon. One of the ladies said the third bird go. She says that the mother Robin went to the nest and soon after left it when the young bird followed fluttering first into the wood bin that hangs in front of it and then flying feebly but evenly to the roof of a neighboring shed. Miss Foster tells me that the Robin was apparently incubating the eggs on May 1<sup>st</sup> and that the nest was examined (by a Mr. Fossitt) on May 16<sup>th</sup> when it was found to contain three young apparently only just hatched.

1902.

May 29

Clear with high, cold north-west wind.  
Thermometer fell to 40° last night.

Spent the day hunting birds' nests with John Hooper Second and Harriman. Drove first to the Parry farm where unsuccessful we worked over two hours beating the entire tract of hunt for meadows occupied by the Henslow's Sparrows with nests of the utmost thoroughness. In the lower meadow we Henslow's started a pair of birds and in the upper one two Sparrows. single birds. All four rose almost under foot and two of them acted as if they had nests. One was flushed twice (at intervals of several hours, the second time late in the afternoon) with a yard of the same spot; the other flew only three or four yards at a time and very feebly. Once she fluttered past Hooper so close that he nearly caught her in his hand. We searched every inch of the ground for many yards about each place from whence a bird rose but without finding any signs of a nest. None of the nests were heard singing to-day. We are quite at a loss as to whether the eggs have been laid as yet or not.

In this same meadow we started a Savannah Sparrow. Savannah I had a good view of it & saw the yellow head Grasshopper stripe. Hooper has never found it in the breeding Sparrows. season before.

The Yellow-winged Sparrow is evidently not uncommon here. We flushed one in a clover field on the Parry Farm & heard another singing a mile or more to the southward in an upland mowing field.

Launceston, Mass.

1902.  
May 29  
(No 2)

At noon we drove to Pine Hill. It has been burned over since last year and there were few birds in the oak scrub where we found so many last June. The Prairie Warblers seem to have altogether deserted the locality but there were a few Towhees & Field Sparrows singing in patches of scrub that had escaped the fire. In one of these we found a Towhee's nest with four eggs.

Pine Hill.

Prairie Warbler

Towhee's nest

The chief object of our visit to Pine Hill was to try to find a pair of Cardinal Grosbeaks which Harriman saw there yesterday afternoon. He started them in a dense thicket of white haced bushes at the eastern base of the hill and followed them for several hundred yards. They were not at all shy & he repeatedly got within twenty or thirty yards of the male and saw him raise his crest and sing as he followed the female about among the thickets. The locality is a rather favorable-looking one for Cardinals but on searching it carefully to-day without getting either sight or sound of the birds. Harriman described both the song & the shape alone chief to accurately that I cannot distrust the correctness of his identification.

A pair of  
Cardinal  
Grosbeaks.

There was a Hairy Woodpecker's nest in a poplar stub on the hillside near a little pond hole. Harriman says he heard the young calling in it yesterday. One of the old birds was near it to-day. The woods are almost continuous on the hill which we were in its neighborhood. This is the third breeding pair that Harlow & Harriman have found this season.

Hairy  
Woodpecker's  
nest with  
young

Lancaster, Mass.

1902.

May 29  
(no 3)

On the place adjoining the Parry Farm is a field of about five acres sloping gently from the road to the edge of an interlock meadow. A portion of it has been recently ploughed; the remainder is lying fallow at present and is devoid of vegetation save for scattered tufts of viny grass and regular rows of dead corn ~~stubs~~ left after the harvesting of last years crop. This field appears to offer unusual attractions for the Carolina Doves. Indeed it is probably visited at one or another hour of each day, but thickest at morning and in late afternoon, by most of the birds which inhabit the surrounding region for miles in every direction. They come to and depart from it almost invariably in pairs and the mated birds keep near together when feeding although when six or eight are started at once they sometimes fly off together for several hundred yards in a rather compact flock after which they separate into pairs again and pursue different directions each pair choosing, no doubt, the course which leads directly to its nesting haunts and keeping straight on over woods and fields, passing just above the tops of the higher trees, until lost to sight in the distance. It is difficult to see them when on the ground for their backs are of very nearly the same faded, reddish brown as that of the Savory Quail and although almost constantly in active motion they follow the furrows and other depressions among the hills and tufts of weeds and carry their heads & necks lowered to nearly the line of their <sup>lower</sup> bodies. Walking rather rapidly but very smoothly and evenly, turning alternately to the right and left every few steps, picking up small seeds or grains of sand with a quick bobbing motion

Habits &  
haunts of  
Carolina Dove

1902

May 29  
(No 4)

of the head and usually without stopping, in short behaving much like all Pigeons (including our domestic ones) when engaged in feeding they ramble about over the whole field covering wide areas in the comparatively dense spaces of trees. Carriages passing along the neighboring road do not seem to alarm them but at the approach of a man on foot they cease feeding and, after standing erect and watchful for a minute or two, take flight sometimes all at nearly the same moment sometimes two or three at a time, each bird announcing his departure to the others by the pecker, hollow, whistling sound of his wings (sometimes but not usually emitted after he has settled on a distant flight) but never I believe by any vocal note.

One or two of the males will frequently fly to the neighboring woods and coo at short, regular intervals in the upper branches of the pines or oaks for fifteen or twenty minutes at a time and occasionally one of them will coo on the ground in the open field standing on some mound or clod of earth slightly higher than the general surface.

The number of birds which one may find at this season in this field varies considerably, as I have already indicated, according to the time of day and also, probably, according to conditions of weather. On May 18<sup>th</sup> Mr. J. E. Thayer counted twelve there at one time; on the 26<sup>th</sup> he & I saw, no doubt, several pairs but never more than two birds at once (we spent most of the day in sight of the flock); To-day there were at no time less than six or eight in the field during the forenoon and at 4 P. M. we counted eighteen at once. Mr. Thayer found a nest with two young nearly able to fly on May 18<sup>th</sup> in a pitch pine grove about a mile from the field.

Habit of  
the Carolina  
Dove

Eighteen  
Doves in  
one field  
at the same  
time.

1902.

May 29  
(No 5)

I have frequently heard that the Carolina Dove is addicted, during its breeding season, to soaring like a Hawk, and, if I remember rightly, Chapman mentions the <sup>habit</sup> ~~fact~~ in one of his books but this has never come under my personal observation until this afternoon when Mr. Thayer and I witnessed it under the most favorable conditions possible. We had just started the eighteen birds above mentioned and they had flown out of sight in different directions when Mr. Harriman who was with us exclaimed "see that Hawk!" Looking up we saw what we all took at first to be some Sheep-skinned Hawk passing overhead at a height of perhaps 200 feet. Flapping its wings quickly a few times and then holding for several rods on set wings, repeating the alternate flapping and gliding at short, regular intervals it had nearly crossed the field in the direction of the woods before we began to suspect the truth, which was, of course, that the bird was not a Hawk but a Dove.

On reaching the woods it resumed its normal flight and we heard its wings whistle distinctly as it disappeared among the trees. A moment later it reappeared and mounting to a height of fully 300 feet came back over the field alternately flapping and gliding as before. During these Hawk-like flights its wings emitted no sound. Nor did the bird once soar in circles although on one occasion it turned slightly to the right and then action abruptly upward before beginning to flap again. It was the only Dove in flight at the time & after the second crossing of the field it flew steadily off towards the south-west.

Carolina  
Dove  
flying in  
the manner  
of a Sheep-  
skinned Hawk

Lancaster, Mass.

1902.

June 3

Clear and hot with short but sharp thunder storms  
at 3 P.M.

Started off with John B. Hooper & his assistant Harriman  
at 9 a.m. We drove directly to the fine old forests of  
white pines beyond the Parry Farm on the road to Harvard.  
Tying the horse in the usual place we spent the entire  
forenoon looking for nests of the Black-burnian Warbler but  
without success. The birds were even more numerous than  
last year. I counted eleven different males singing within  
a space of less than fifteen acres and at one time heard four  
within twenty yards of one another. I do not think that I  
have ever found a greater number in an area of similar  
extent even in the most favored localities at Cambridge.  
No females were seen. The males kept in the tops of the  
largest or, at least, tallest pines and sang almost continuously  
through the entire forenoon. The song of the Black-burnian  
has two regular variations which I noted to-day as follows:—  
We-we-we-we-we-we-<sup>e-e-e</sup> (running up the scale towards the end like  
an House Warbler's song) and we-chee, we-chee, we-chee, we-chee,  
we-chee very like that of Mniotilta varia. The same individual  
bird often used both forms, repeating one a dozen times or  
more in succession and then changing to the other. All the  
notes of both songs have a peculiar metallic quality by which  
the voice of their author may be at once distinguished from  
that of any other of our Warblers although in form his  
song resembles that of the House Warbler<sup>2</sup> of the Black & White Creeper  
very closely at times, as I have just indicated. Or, to put  
the matter in another way, his song, whatever may be its form,  
never possesses the guttural quality of the House Warbler nor  
the fine winy character of the Black & White Creeper.

Visit to a  
breeding ground  
of the  
Black-burnian  
Warbler

Lancaster, Mass.

1902.

June 3  
(No. 2)

The day was so oppressively warm that we lingered long at our lunch in the grateful shade of the grand old pines. From their luxuriant canopies of sombre foliage came not only the songs of the Black-burnians but those of almost equally numerous Black-throated Green Warblers. There were also several Pine Warblers a few Olive-birds and Red-eyed vireos, one Solitary Vireo, a Woodchuck Warbler (singing in oak scrub across the road), two Tanagers and a few Blue Jays.

Harrison climbed to a large nest of sticks, made originally, he thought, by a Hawk, which proved to contain a family of Flying Squirrels. The mother emerged from the top of the nest when Harrison put his hand in it and flew to a neighboring tree. Her young, which were three-quarters grown, appeared in quick succession, to the number of five, through the bottom of the nest. Three of the latter remained in the tree while the other two sailed down on wide-spread "wings" alighting in the tops of some low bare oaks where we caught them without difficulty. They did not attempt to bite until we had held them for some time. I kept them now in a box and they have already begun eating bread & milk.

In the afternoon we beat the Newton's Sparrows under with some care. At least four different nests Sparrows were singing and we flushed them birds directly under foot but, as on former occasions, could find no signs of their nests. Two of the birds chirped sharply a number of times just as they were alighted again after flying a few yards. Still another flushed directly beneath for nests of Newton's Sparrows.



Cambridge, Mass.

1902.

May 31

Clear and cool with fresh E. wind.

Went to Cambridge from Lancaster by the early evening train. Walking from the Museum Camp. Zoology to one place I heard singing a Red-eyed Vireo near the Museum, an Oriole on Channing Street, a Yellow Warbler on Concord Avenue, a Least Flycatcher in the Parlor place on Craigie Street (there was one settled there last June) and a Woodbury Vireo also on the street last named.

As I entered our garden I was greeted by the feel, singing notes of a Wood Thrush issuing from the lilacs near the cluster of large hemlocks. I afterwards heard the bird at frequent intervals and once saw him. He was as fine a singer as I have ever witnessed to and he made the garden fairly ring with his glorious voice. Walter Dean tells me that he has been there since the 29<sup>th</sup>. This is the first Wood Thrush I have ever found in our garden but one was noted there by Mrs. Ketchum a year or two ago, and also in May if I remember rightly.

There were also in the Garden to-day 2 Robins, the pair of Cat Birds, a pair of Redstarts, a ♂ Yellow Warbler, a pair of Red-eyed Vireos, a Chipping, a Golden Robin and a King bird. The last, I suspect, the same bird that I noted there a week ago (on the 24<sup>th</sup>).

The migration seems to have come to an end. Indeed I think it closed early in the past week for I have seen no northern birds since the 25<sup>th</sup>.

Close of  
Spring  
migration

1  
02  
74

Journal

110

Jan.