

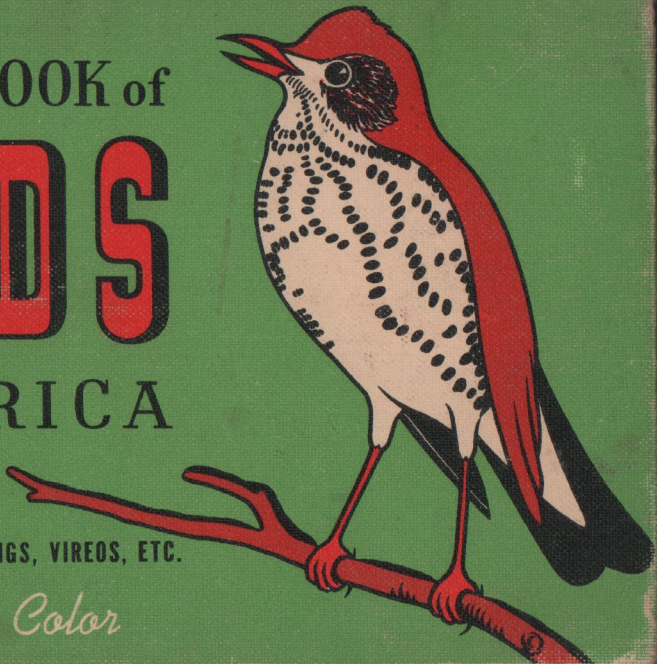
The GREEN BOOK of

BIRDS

OF AMERICA

WARBLERS, CHICKADEES,
KINGLETS, NUTHATCHES,
TANAGERS, THRUSHES, WAXWINGS, VIREOS, ETC.

Illustrated in Color



Smyth

Happy Birthday
Bruce & Bobby
from

Aunt Catherine
& Uncle Frank

1952



This is One of a Series of Four Bird Guide Books

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The GREEN BOOK of

Birds of America

*Warblers, Chickadees, Kinglets, Nuthatches, Tanagers,
Thrushes, Waxwings, Vireos, etc.*

Text by FRANK G. ASHBROOK



Illustrations by PAUL MOLLER

WHITMAN PUBLISHING CO. • RACINE, WISCONSIN

P R E F A C E

BIRDS are beautiful and graceful creatures. Not only do birds satisfy our esthetic sense through their handsome plumage and their sweet voices, but they are marvelously adapted to their respective fields of activity. They are a valuable asset because they depend largely for their food on insects which are injurious to plant life. No other creatures are so well fitted to capture flying insects as swallows, swifts, and night hawks. The wrens, trim of body and agile of movement, creep in and out of the holes and crevices and explore rubbish heaps for hidden insects. The woodpecker, whose whole body exhibits wonderful adaptation of means to end, is provided with strong claws for holding firmly when at work, a chisel-like bill driven by powerful muscles to dig out insects and drag forth the concealed larvae safe from other foes. The game birds furnish sport for great numbers of people who love to go afield with dog and gun. Certain kinds of game birds such as quail, pheasants and ducks are raised in considerable numbers on preserves and on farms

because of their value for commercial purposes.

This book is designed to furnish some knowledge of birds and to encourage more interest in their habits. Forty-eight birds that inhabit various parts of the country are described. A colored illustration of each is given so as to enable the reader to identify the bird. The descriptions of the birds are necessarily brief, but they are believed to be sufficient to acquaint the reader with the most prominent characteristics.

Special acknowledgment is due the Bureau of Biological Survey, the National Association of Audubon Societies and the American Ornithological Union for the liberal use which has been made of their publications. Much material has also been taken from the two volumes entitled "Birds of New York."

Every picture represents a male of the species, the measurements being given from tip of bill to tip of tail.

SCARLET TANAGER

(*Piranga erythromelas*)

Length, 7 inches

THIS gaudy bird, the male scarlet tanager, is distinguished from other birds with red plumage by its black tail and wings. With its brilliant red body and head, it resembles a glowing live coal. The female's garb is olive green. This dull color makes the female almost invisible when seated upon the nest. Open woods are the usual haunts of the scarlet tanager but it is seen in parks, fields and orchards. In addition to berries and seeds, the tanager eats many insects. Its song resembles that of the robin but is harsher, less varied, and higher in pitch. Its call is a sharp *chip* or *chip-churr*. The tanager's nest is a loosely-made affair of twigs and rootlets hung on one of the lower branches of a tree. The eggs, four in number, are pale bluish green dotted with brown. The scarlet tanager spends the nesting season in the northern part of the United States between the Atlantic Coast and the Plains. It winters in the tropics returning north about May.



Scarlet Tanager



Western Tanager

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WESTERN TANAGER

(*Piranga ludoviciana*)

Length, 7½ inches

THIS bird is common on the mountain sides of the Sierra Nevada Mountains in California and in the river valleys of Oregon and Washington. It is a forest bird and often builds its nest in firs or pines. The nest is a flat saucer-shaped structure, generally low down on a horizontal branch. It is constructed of twigs, grass, and bark strips lined with similar finer material and horse hair. Three or four pale bluish-green eggs, lightly spotted with brown are laid. Although the western tanager is a retiring bird, it can hardly be called shy, and, like the scarlet tanager, it often leaves the forest for the clearings. It is handsome and striking in plumage and elegant in form. Like the robin this bird sometimes becomes a nuisance in the orchard. There are times during migration when it fairly swarms in some fruit-growing regions just at the time cherries are ripe. It also consumes insects and under ordinary conditions these form the greater part of their food.

SUMMER TANAGER

(*Piranga rubra*)

Length, 7½ inches

ALTHOUGH more generally found in the south, the summer tanager often invades the range of its scarlet brother of the north. Being similar they are often classified as members of the same family. In the south, the summer tanager is more abundant and less retiring than is the scarlet tanager in the north. To distinguish it from the cardinal, which is known as the "winter red bird," this bird is often called the "summer red bird." It is less vivid in color than the northern bird. The male summer tanager is rosy red and the female, greenish yellow. The song is sweeter and clearer than that of the scarlet tanager and more nearly resembles that of the robin. Its nest, which is made of twigs and rootlets, usually rests on an outer horizontal branch of a tree in the open woods or in a grove. Its eggs are bluish-green in color and are spotted with brown. It winters in Central America, and summers east of the Rocky mountains, from New Jersey to Florida.



Summer Tanager

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Olive-Backed Thrush

10

OLIVE-BACKED THRUSH
(*Hylocichla ustulata swainsoni*)

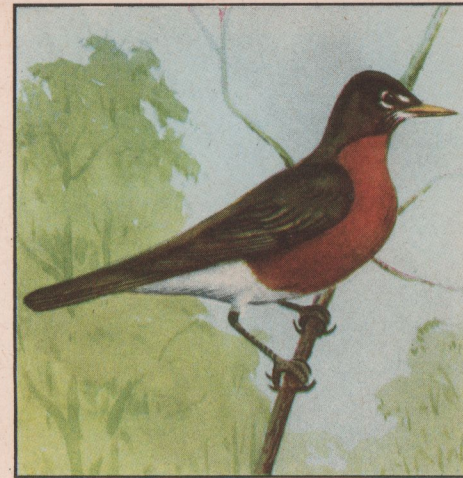
Length, 7¼ inches

PROBABLY no bird family is as popular as the group containing the thrushes, robins, and bluebirds. The olive-backed thrush breeds chiefly in the Canadian forests and when seen in the central and eastern States is no doubt on his way north. It is, therefore, known as a migrant. Eastern North America, extending from the northern part of the United States to New Brunswick and Manitoba is the breeding and nesting territory for this bird. During May, olive-back flies northward and in September and October it returns to the south. The upper parts of this thrush, as indicated by its name, are wholly olive gray. The sides of its head, its eye rings, and breast are buffy. The breast is spotted with black. Olive-back's four greenish-blue eggs, spotted with brown, are laid in a nest built in bushes or low trees. It is made of leaves, grasses, and strips of bark. The food of this thrush is mainly worms, snails, and insects.

ROBIN
(*Turdus migratorius*)

Length, 10 inches

THE robin is the best known of all our birds, probably closer associated with our lives and our history than any other bird. Charges of destructiveness have often been made against the robin. There is hardly any question as to its partiality to cherries, and the fruit growers have good reason for complaint. The robin as an insect destroyer more than makes up for this pillage and when wild fruit ripens he eagerly turns to that. The male robin has a black head, while the female's head is gray and her breast is paler red than her mate's. The robin breeds far north through Canada and is found even in Alaska. The robin builds its nest on brackets of porches, on projections about the sheds, or under the eaves of the barn. Materials used to make the nest are invariably grass stems and weed stalks for a foundation, and upon it a shell of mud made more secure by blades of grass carefully worked out by the mother bird. The eggs are usually four, and are bluish green in color.



Robin

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Cedar Waxwing

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CEDAR WAXWING (*Bombycilla cedrorum*)

Length, $7\frac{1}{4}$ inches

THE name waxwing is derived from the curious wax-like appendages attached to the tips of the feathers of the secondary coverts and rarely, to the tail feathers of this bird. Waxwings are sociable birds and travel in small flocks. The plumage of the cedar waxwing is very soft brown in color. It has a black line running from the eyes around the back of the head. The tail is tipped with yellow. The cedar waxwing lives chiefly on fruits and is especially fond of cherries, for which reason it is sometimes called the cherry bird. The note of the cedar waxwing is an insignificant *tse—tse—tse*, a high thin call. It is one of the latest birds to nest. It hardly ever begins to construct its nest before June. The nest is a sturdy structure of twigs, mosses, and twine. It is placed in a cedar tree when in the woods, or in an orchard tree when near buildings. Its four or five eggs are dull bluish-white, speckled with black. The cedar waxwing ranges from Virginia, Missouri, and northern California to Labrador and southern Alaska during the nesting season. It winters throughout the United States.

BOHEMIAN WAXWING (*Bombycilla garrula pallidiceps*)

Length, $7\frac{1}{2}$ inches

THE Bohemian waxwing is not nearly so well known as the cedar waxwing. He is larger and grayer than the cedar waxwing. The yellow and white marks on wings and tail can be seen for a long distance as one watches them in flight. Not much is known as to the breeding habits of this bird as it nests within the Arctic circle and only a few nests have been found. These indicate that they are fashioned of small twigs and moss and are lined with feathers. Usually they are placed at a low elevation in some cone-bearing tree. The eggs are similar to those of the cedar waxwing but are larger and are speckled with black. In winter the Bohemian waxwing is found in restless flocks in Massachusetts and west; he has been found east and west of the Alleghenies and as far west as Kansas and even California. The Bohemian waxwing has a passionate fondness for berries and other ripe fruit. He is a fearful scourge to insects, a great exterminator of them. Because of this, he should be considered a useful bird.



Bohemian Waxwing

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Red-Eyed Vireo

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RED-EYED VIREO

(*Vireo olivacea*)

Length, 6½ inches

THE red-eyed vireo is an olive green bird with white under parts, and a slaty gray crown bordered with black. Above each reddish-brown eye is a white stripe. This bird is constantly peering about in search of caterpillars, beetles, and other insects. Its call note is a petulant *whang*. Its warble is endless and often becomes so loud as to drown out the songs of other smaller birds. Its singsong refrain seems to call attention to itself. It seems to say, "*See, here I am, here I am.*" The range of this bird is east of the Rocky Mountains, everywhere from the Gulf of Mexico to Labrador and Manitoba. The red-eyed vireo goes to Central and South America for the winter. A basket, woven from strips of bark and fibers, often with bits of newspaper worked in, serves as a dwelling place for this bird. The nest is lined with fine grasses and hung from a crotch in a tree at elevations ranging from five to forty feet from the ground. Late in May, the vireo lays three or four white eggs, unmarked save for a few blackish-brown specks at the larger end.

BLUE-HEADED VIREO

(*Vireo solitarius*)

Length, 5¼ inches

KNOWN chiefly as a migrant, the blue-headed vireo is one of the earliest of the group of small wood-haunting birds to reach us in the spring. The top and side of the head are of a bluish slate color, with white eye-rings and under parts, greenish-yellow back and flanks, and white wing bars. The throat and the central portion of the abdomen are clear white. It is found in the deep woods apart from other birds. The song is similar to the red-eyed vireo, but is more leisurely and rich toned. The blue-headed vireo nests late in May, laying its three or four creamy white eggs spotted with black, umber, and reddish brown at the large end. Its nest is a finely woven basket. The outside is covered with spider webs and often with lichens. It is suspended from the fork of a tree. Eastern North America, from South Alberta, Southern Mackenzie, southern Quebec, and Cape Breton Island southward to North Dakota, Michigan and the mountains of Pennsylvania is its breeding ground. During the winter, these birds migrate to the southern United States and Central America.



Blue-Headed Vireo

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Yellow-Throated Vireo

16

YELLOW-THROATED VIREO

(*Vireo flavifrons*)

Length, 6 inches

OFTEN confused with the red-eyed vireo, because of similarity of song, the yellow-throated vireo is less common than its cousin but is found in the same kind of localities. It haunts the woodlands, orchards, and gardens. Its upper parts are green. In addition to its yellow breast, the bird also has a yellow line above the eye and two prominent white wing bars. Although its song is like that of the red-eyed vireo, it is louder, more nasal, less varied, and is not uttered as often. The nest, outwardly covered with lichens, is the familiar basket-shaped structure common to this family and is hung from a fork of a tree. Strips of barks, grasses, and other available materials are used in its construction. Late in May the female bird deposits from three to five creamy or rosy-white tinted eggs specked with reddish brown. Eastern United States is the breeding ground of the yellow-throated vireo. Its winter home is in Central America.

WARBLING VIREO

(*Vireo gilvus*)

Length, 5½ inches

EVEN in the hearts of large cities, the warbling vireo may be found, its nest swinging high up among the branches of a convenient shade tree. It is much less frequently seen than heard. The distribution of this representative of the vireo family is less general than that of the others. It may be common in one locality and absent from another. Its nesting habits are much like those of the red-eyed vireo. The male bird has the peculiar habit of singing while it sits upon the nest. The song of the warbling vireo follows the style of the purple finch and is much different from that of the red-eyed vireo. This song continues for about four seconds; then, after an interval of silence, it is repeated. It is an unbroken strain running up and down the middle of the scale. Olive-green is the color of this bird. Its crown is gray without any black border. The warbling vireo breeds throughout the United States and southern Canada and winters in the tropics.



Warbling Vireo

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Black and White Warbler

BLACK AND WHITE WARBLER

(*Mniotilta varia*)

Length, 5½ inches

THIS bird is sometimes called the black and white creeper, because of its habit of creeping along the branches and trunks of trees. It hops about continually always searching for plant lice and small insects. Unlike any of our other birds, the warbler is clad in a striking, striped garment of black and white. The female is somewhat less conspicuous than her mate. After wintering in northern South America, the black and white warbler comes north for its nesting season, which begins in April in the south and May in the north. All of eastern North America from Virginia and Louisiana to Labrador and the Hudson Bay country, is included in the breeding ground of this bird. The song of the black and white creeper is a thin, wiry *tsee, tsee, tsee*. Its nest is placed on the ground, at the foot of a stump or tree trunk, or beside a rock, and is made from grasses and strips of bark. Four or five eggs are laid in this nest. They are white with a wreath of reddish brown around the large end.

YELLOW WARBLER

(*Dendroica aestiva*)

Length, 4¾ inches

THE yellow warbler is one of the most familiar members of the warbler family. Its cotton padded nest may be found in shade or fruit trees or in the shrubbery below. The yellow warbler comes north soon after the first of May. As its name indicates, this small warbler is yellow with chestnut streaks on its sides. The female bird is duller in color than the male and is not streaked. The nest is a beautiful, compact structure of vegetable or plant fibers, firmly woven together and suspended from upright forks of bushes or trees at low elevations. In this nest, its bluish-white eggs, thickly marked with shades of brown, are placed during the latter half of May. Its song is a sharp and vigorous *che-wee, che-wee, che-wee*. The song period lasts from late in April through the month of July and at times until nearly the middle of August. From the Gulf of Mexico to Labrador and Alaska, this bird is found during the breeding season. In the winter it flies southward to Central America.



Yellow Warbler



Blue-Winged Warbler

BLUE-WINGED WARBLER

(*Vermivora pinus*)

Length, $4\frac{3}{4}$ inches

WHEN a loud, rapid and distinct *chir-rup* is heard coming from a thicket or a clump of weeds, it is likely that the blue-winged warbler will be found there busy at its task of cleaning the bushes or weeds of insect pests. Blue wing is a ground bird and frequents the open woods, thickets and gardens. Across its blue wings, this bird wears two broad white bars. Its crown and under parts are yellow and a narrow black line runs through the eyes. The nest is built on the ground, often in clumps of weeds or among blackberry vines. The structure is deep, rather loose in texture, and is characterized by having its sides formed of dead leaves which curl inward helping to conceal it. In this nest Mrs. Blue Wing lays four or five white eggs which are sparingly spotted around the large end with reddish brown. During the nesting season, this warbler resides in the eastern portion of the United States. In the winter it migrates to the tropics.

GOLDEN-WINGED WARBLER

(*Vermivora chrysoptera*)

Length, $4\frac{3}{4}$ inches

Two large yellow wing bars account for the name given to this bird. Its crown also is yellow but its throat and ear patches are black. The rest of its plumage is gray and white. The female bird has less black than her mate. It shares many of the habits of its blue-winged relative. Leaves, rootlets, strips of bark and grasses are used by this bird in building its nest which is placed on the ground, usually in some moist place and among a clump of weeds. But when migrating, this bird is found in woods with other members of the warbler family. Its eggs, white with brown specks, are laid late in May or early in June. The Brewster warbler is a related bird that strongly resembles golden wing but has a yellow patch on its breast instead of black and has a narrow black line through the eye instead of the larger black eye patch that marks the golden wing. The songs of these two birds are much alike—a buzzing *swee-ze-ze*.



Golden-Winged Warbler

BLACK-POLL WARBLER

(*Dendroica striata*)

Length, 5½ inches

BLACK-POLLS are excessively fat and move rather slowly for warblers. Perhaps this accounts for the fact that this bird is one of the latest migrants to arrive from its winter home, reaching the northern part of the United States about the last of May but coming in such numbers that members of its tribe are found everywhere. Again in the fall black-poll seems loath to leave, waiting behind the other warblers and not leaving the northern states before October.

While black-poll's plumage resembles that of the black and white warbler somewhat, the habits of the two birds are entirely different. The male black-poll has a wholly black crown, white cheeks, and a gray, black-streaked back. The female, without the black cap, has a greenish-gray back, streaked with black.

A good description of these birds is as fol-

lows: In spring the adult has a black crown, the back is grayish, streaked with black. The cheeks are white, and the under parts are also white, while the sides are heavily streaked with black. The outer tail feathers have white patches on the inner webs near the tip. The female in its upper parts is grayish with olive green streaked with black. The under parts are dingy white, at times tinged with yellow, and slightly streaked with black on the sides of the throat and breast. In the fall, both sexes are olive green on the upper parts streaked with black on the top of the head and on the back while the under parts are a dull yellowish white here and there, streaked on the sides. The young are paler than the female.

Black-poll's song is a high-pitched, hissing whistle, uttered deliberately and with an in-

Black-Poll Warbler—Continued

stant's pause between successive notes. The thin, wiry song is frequently heard about the city streets and in the groves and parks.

During the nesting season, these birds are found everywhere in North America from northern New England, Minnesota and Wyoming to the Arctic regions. Their nests, usually hung at low elevations in thick cone-bearing trees, are made of slender twigs, rootlets and lichens, and are lined with hair or feathers. Black-poll's eggs are white, thickly spotted with brown.

The black-poll is not very easily perceived, as are the other warblers; first, because it arrives so late in the season when the leaves have partially, or even entirely, completed their growth. Then again the bird frequents the higher points of the trees and it is hard to make it out, especially so since its plumage, as stated above, somewhat resembles that of the black and white warbler.



Black-Poll Warbler

CHESTNUT-SIDED WARBLER

(*Dendroica pensylvanica*)

Length, 5 inches

IN NEARLY every swamp or bush-covered pasture, one or more pairs of chestnut-sided warblers may be found. It is an attractive bird, gentle and easy to approach. Roadside borders of trees and bushes and the bushy margins of woods also are favored resorts of the chestnut-side. Adults are easily identified by their yellow crowns, black lines through the eyes and on the sides of the throat and broad chestnut stripes on the sides. The young, however, are much different, having yellowish-green top coats and silky white under parts. The female's dress is paler than that of the male and has smaller chestnut markings. While chestnut-side sometimes feeds in the tree tops, it is a

bird of the lower foliage and most frequently is found hunting insects on the low bushes.

Its song is a full-voiced warble. It has a liquid sound. It is hard to describe this song although the end seems quite clearly enunciated and has been said to sound like *tit-a-wit-a-wit-we-chew*. It is a cheery little song that the chestnut-sided warbler sings, and it may be heard in all the orchards and among the shade trees.

It nests about the edges of woods, neglected roadsides, usually locations which are wilder and more deserted than those of the yellow warbler. An increase of brambles anywhere is sure to make it a chosen spot and the home of

Chestnut-Sided Warbler—Continued

many of these birds as summer residents. Its nest is usually placed in low bushes or weeds and often is found among the sweet fern and briars. In appearance the nest is somewhat like that of the yellow warbler, but, being made of grasses instead of fibers, it is coarser in texture and is attached to an upright fork or to several weed stalks.

The nests are usually along old wood roads or close to the open spaces or the bushy edges of woodlands. The nests are hidden in briars and bushes, usually from two to four feet from the ground. The eggs of the chestnut-sided warbler are white, speckled around the larger end with reddish brown. This bird is found during the breeding season in North America from New Jersey and Ohio and even as far south as Tennessee and South Carolina, north to Saskatchewan, Manitoba, and New Brunswick. It winters south of the United States.



Chestnut-Sided Warbler



Orange-Crowned Warbler

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ORANGE-CROWNED WARBLER

(*Vermivora celata*)

Length, 5 inches

THE orange-crowned warbler breeds only in the territory north of the United States and winters in Mexico. This bird, however, is fairly common in the Mississippi Valley and also is found occasionally in Georgia and Florida in the winter. Dusky olive green is the garment of orange-crown. Its under parts are obscurely streaked and it lacks wing-bars and white patches on its tail. Although orange-crown nests on the ground like most other warblers, it spends much of its time in the upper branches of trees. Its call note is a sharp *chip* and its song is said to resemble that of the chipping sparrow. In common with other members of the warbler family, orange-crown is an expert flycatcher. Grasses, rootlets and twigs are used in building the nest, which usually is concealed beneath some overhanging rock or under a tuft of grass and weeds. Four to six white or creamy eggs, speckled with chestnut are laid.

PARULA WARBLER

(*Compsothlypis americana americana*)

Length, 4½ inches

IN THE summertime parulas usually are found in wet swamps where there is only a carpet of moss on the water-soaked ground. To form its nest, the parula turns up strands of long, drooping moss, which covers a dead tree, and forms a deep cradle, within which its eggs are laid. The northern parula is a small bluish warbler with a yellow patch on its back, a dark band on the breast and white wing-bars. Its southern cousin is slightly smaller, less brightly colored and has less black on its breast. Its cradle nest is formed from long festoons of Spanish moss that hang from the branches of most southern trees. Both birds winter from the Gulf States southward. The northern bird breeds in the northern half of the United States and southern Canada while the southern parula breeds in the southern portion of the United States. In the latter half of May, four or five white eggs, marked with brown, are laid.



Parula Warbler

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Ovenbird

OVENBIRD
(*Seiurus aurocapillus*)

Length, 6 $\frac{1}{4}$ inches

SO LITTLE does the ovenbird resemble other wood warblers in color and habits that it might easily be mistaken for a member of some other family. Its plumage lacks the bright colors, white wing bars, and tail patches that mark most other warblers, although it does have an orange-brown crown bordered with black. Its name is derived from its queer dome-shaped nest which looks like an old-fashioned outdoor oven. The ovenbird's song is a peculiar ascending call, best described as the word *teacher*, repeated five or six times and gathering strength and volume with each repetition. Its call note is a sharp *chip*. It has another extremely melodious song used only in flight. Its nest is placed on the ground in the woods and is made of strips of bark and grass arched over so as to leave a very small opening. Here the female lays from four to six white eggs spotted with reddish brown. The ovenbird gathers its food from the ground, collecting insects from weeds and low bushes.

WATER THRUSH
(*Seiurus noveboracensis*)

Length, 5 $\frac{3}{4}$ inches

BECAUSE of its habit of nervously flitting its tail as it teeters on a bush, the water thrush is sometimes known as the water-wagtail. Although a member of the warbler family, the water thrush is a walking bird and spends much of its time on the ground. Yellowish tinged under parts, with narrow but prominent stripes, identify this bird. When nesting, it frequents the borders of streams in deep woods. There it builds its home on the ground or in the roots of an upturned tree. The nest is formed from bits of moss and the lining is of the red moss stems. The nests are usually snugly hidden in thick beds of moss at the bases of trees or stumps or decayed moss-covered logs. In the latter part of May or early June, four or five eggs are laid. The eggs are white with numerous brown spots about the large end. The call note of the water thrush is a short, metallic *chink*. Its song is a loud, liquid *quit—quit—que—quewe-u* uttered in a hurried rush and ended abruptly. The water thrush winters south of the United States and breeds from the northern edge of the United States northward.



Water Thrush



Myrtle Warbler

30

MYRTLE WARBLER

(*Dendroica coronata*)

Length, 5½ inches

FORESTS of cone-bearing trees are the favored dwelling places of the myrtle warbler, although during migration, other woodlands frequently are literally flooded as large flocks of these pretty birds alight to feed. A rather large warbler, the myrtle, because of its yellow rump, is often called the yellow-rumped warbler. It also has yellow patches on the crown and sides. In autumn and winter, its plumage is duller and the yellow patches on crown and side are less marked. The myrtle warbler subsists on bayberries when insects are not available.

Eastern North America, from northern New England and Minnesota northward, is the home of the myrtle warbler during the nesting season. It winters to the south of the United States. Four or five white eggs, spotted and blotched with reddish brown, are laid. The nest is fashioned from plant fibers and grasses and is usually placed at a low elevation in some coniferous tree.

AUDUBON'S WARBLER

(*Dendroica auduboni*)

Length, 5½ inches

IN THE winter season, Audubon's warbler frequents orchards, gardens, and dooryards, where it follows its business of hunting insects with praiseworthy energy. This bird is well distributed over the western United States east to the Great Plains. It breeds in the mountains and descends to the valleys and plains in the winter. At this time it is very tame and is easily approached. By far the major portion of this bird's diet is animal matter, mostly insects. The small portion of vegetable food taken consists of fruit, weed seeds, and a few other substances. Most of the fruit that the bird eats is wild. In the fall it probably feeds to some extent on what fruit is found in the orchards. Since the bird does not visit the fruit-growing regions in season, it cannot injure cultivated crops. The largest item of its vegetable diet is weed seeds. One of the most important seeds eaten by the Audubon's warbler is that of the poison oak.



Audubon's Warbler

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MARYLAND YELLOW THROAT

(*Geothlypis trichas*)

Length, $4\frac{3}{4}$ inches

BELOW and above the Mason-Dixon line, you will find the Maryland yellow throat, a fidgety, inquisitive bird that will peek at you from behind some leaf or shrub as long as you remain in sight. This is one of our most common swamp dwellers, but it may also be found in the shrubbery along roadsides and walls, the edges of moist woods, the margins of wooded streams, or dense tangles in damp, open woodlands. It is not a bird of the dense forest.

The Maryland yellow throat is one of the most useful members of the warbler family, as well as one of the most dominant species of this family. It is one of the very best known of all the warblers. It is quickly identified by its rattling call note *chack chack* and its energetic *witchity witchity witch* song. Its song is

a full-voiced performance but rather irregular in form, and of endless variety.

The male bird is both picturesque and conspicuous, with its bright yellow waistcoat and the black mask drawn over its eyes. Grapevines and grasses are used by this bird in making its nest, which usually is located in a clump of weeds either on the ground or very slightly above it. It is rather bulky in construction, being composed of dead leaves, coarse grasses, and strips of bark, lined with finer grasses, tendrils, and roots. Its eggs are usually three to five in number and of a shiny white ground color, speckled, spotted, and blotched with reddish brown, purplish black, umber, and a few spots of lilac color.

Maryland is not the exclusive habitat of this

Maryland Yellow Throat—Continued

bird. It breeds from North Dakota, northern Minnesota, northern Ontario, and southern Labrador, to southern and central Texas, and the northern parts of the Gulf states and Virginia. The spring migration of this bird begins the last half of April and even early in May. When the fall comes, and it is time for it to think of its winter home, it travels as far south as Central America.

A relative, the Florida yellow throat, is found along the Gulf coast and the South Atlantic coast. Another relative, the western yellow throat, which is brighter in color, is found chiefly west of the Rocky Mountains but also east as far as the plains. Still another cousin, larger and deeper in color, the northwestern yellow throat, ranges over the northeastern part of the United States and southeastern Canada, west to Dakota, and south, through the Mississippi valley, to the Gulf.



Maryland Yellow Throat

YELLOW-BREASTED CHAT

(*Icteria virens*)

Length, 7½ inches

CHATS might well be called the clowns of the bird world, as they are mimics of the highest order and can produce any kind of whistle or squawk. All their vocal efforts, however, seem to require a great deal of flirting of the tail and twisting of the head. Both in action and in song, the chat is one of the oddest of birds. It even jerks its tail up and down while flying which makes the bird seem very comical.

The best places to look for chats are on dry hillsides or ravines covered with underbrush. The chat, though not belonging to the dense woodland, yet seeks its home in the thick covers of shrubs, vines, and young saplings. It is seldom far from dense tangles of vines and shrubbery or thick growths of brush. It will be supposed from this that the chat is averse to being seen, but it will be found quite frequently

in towns and villages where suitable thickets of some extent are found. Here its loud song is frequently heard.

The yellow-breasted chat, as its name indicates, has a yellow breast. Its lores are black, with a line over the eye, and the under parts are white. There is no white on wings or tail. When present, this bird makes itself heard long before it is seen. Its song, of course, is a medley of whistles and calls. Nevertheless, the voice of this bird is extremely flexible. No notes that the chat has would suggest that it has a place among the warblers. The song is almost impossible to describe. Its love song is a flood of musical gurgles and whistles that drop in silvery cascades to the ground, like sounds of fairy chimes.

Near the ground in a tangled thicket the nest

Yellow-Breasted Chat—Continued

of the chat will be found with its whitish eggs plentifully speckled with brown. The nest of the chat is placed in the midst of some thicket or tangle of vines or briars close to the ground, usually no higher than three feet. It is quite a bulky structure composed of dead leaves, grasses, weed stalks, strips of bark, and is lined with fine grasses. The eggs number three to five, and are pure white evenly spotted with reddish brown, chestnut, and purplish lavender, rather sharp and clearly outlined, but sometimes forming a wreath nearer the larger end.

The yellow breast ranges over the eastern sections of the United States, breeding north to Massachusetts and southern Minnesota. Central America is its winter home. The long-tailed chat, a relative, is found from the Plains to the Pacific in the United States.



Yellow-Breasted Chat

REDSTART

(*Setophaga ruticilla*)

Length, 5¾ inches

FLAME-COLOR is the best term to use in describing the bright-plumed male redstart. Black, orange, and white are blended in his brilliant garb. The female bird is grayish, yellow, and white. It requires from two to three years for the female to attain the black of the male. In the intermediate stages, she sometimes is curiously mottled. As graceful as it is brilliant, the abundance of the redstart makes this bird the most conspicuous as well as one of the most attractive of the woodland warblers.

Both the male and female seem to be proud of their handsome plumage and continually spread and close their tails. They appear equally happy in the tree tops or on the ground. The

redstart prefers a woodland with plentiful undergrowth of saplings and low trees. It nests in low, damp woods as well as in dry, well-drained upland woods. The redstart is almost as expert a flycatcher as the wood pewee; in fact, in the shape of its bill and the bristling of the rictus, it has led many to believe it one of the flycatcher family. In its flitting about, the redstart has many of the characteristics of the butterfly.

The redstart breeds in the territory from Central British Columbia east in Canada to Quebec and Newfoundland. In the United States, we will find the species as far west as Washington and Colorado; and eastward as

Redstart—Continued

far as North Carolina. From this it can be seen that the bird is widely distributed. Migration in spring begins the latter part of April. Late in September the redstart departs for its winter home which is usually from Mexico south.

Authorities have pointed out the fact that the nest of the redstart is more than neatly constructed; no other warbler matches it in that respect. The materials used are fine shreds of plant down, the thin gray outer covering of milkweed stalks, spiders' webs, the inner bark of vines, and grasses, woven into a thin but compact and shapely cup. The nest is usually found in an upright fork of a sapling from six to twelve feet high. The eggs are three to five in number, of a creamy white ground color marked with specks and blotches of cinnamon brown, reddish, lilac, and occasionally a few dark umber spots.



Redstart



Pipit

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PIPIT

(*Anthus spinoletta rubescens*)

Length, 6½ inches

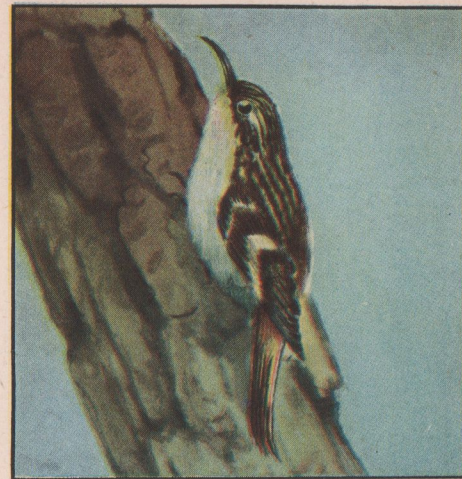
WHEN the cold north winds blow down across the United States, the pipit comes along from his Arctic summer home to spend the winter in the relatively warmer climes of the United States. Then these birds are found in flocks along the roadsides or in fields, feeding on weed seeds. They are shy and take wing quickly when alarmed, uttering sharp whistles as they mount into the air. They are restless birds and remain in one place but a short time. Were it not for the fact that it walks, wags its tail and has a slender bill, the pipit might be mistaken for a sparrow and, indeed, often is at first glance. The pipit has a gray back and white outer tail feathers. Meadows, pastures, plowed fields, are among the places frequented by this bird during its winter visits to the United States. It nests on the ground in Canada and winters from Maryland to Florida and Mexico. Its eggs are grayish white speckled with brown.

BROWN CREEPER

(*Certhia familiaris americana*)

Length, 5¾ inches

FROM the foot of the tree to the top the brown creeper crawls, scanning every crevice in the bark for larvae or grubs. Its long, slender, curved bill makes it possible for the creeper to remove insects from the crevices in the bark. It does not dig into the bark with its bill, as does the woodpecker, but simply picks out and eats the insects and their eggs which it finds in the crevices of the bark. It is a somber-colored bird, its color serving as an excellent concealment, since its somberness and color match its surroundings and the trees in which it makes its home. This bird not only gathers its food from the bark, but it also makes its nest behind loose bark on a dead tree or stump. The nest is usually at a low elevation and is made of twigs, moss, and bark. In May, from five to eight eggs are laid. They are white, speckled with reddish brown. Its song is a very faint trill. Its call note is a weak *tseep*. Eastern North America is the brown creeper's range, and it breeds from northern New England and Minnesota southward. It winters throughout the United States.



Brown Creeper

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White-Breasted Nuthatch

40

WHITE-BREASTED NUTHATCH

(*Sitta carolinensis*)

Length, 6 inches

WITH perfect ease the white-breasted nuthatch clammers among the branches or up and down the trunk of a tree head first. This agility and disregard of gravity gives it the name "upside-downbird." Its tail is short and square with white outer feathers. The male bird has a bluish black crown. The female's crown is gray. Both birds have gray upper parts, white breasts and chestnut under the tail coverts. The call note of the nuthatch is a nasal *yank yank* and a repeated *ya ya* all the same pitch. The white-breasted nuthatch is resident of the eastern portion of the United States. Its breeding area extends from the Gulf of Mexico to southern Canada. The nest is a cavity in a hollow tree trunk, filled with leaves or lined with feathers. In April from five to seven eggs are laid. They are white, spotted with reddish brown. The Florida white-breasted nuthatch found in Florida, is somewhat smaller.

RED-BREASTED NUTHATCH

(*Sitta canadensis*)

Length, 4½ inches

ALTHOUGH much smaller than its cousin, the red-breasted nuthatch has similar habits, except that birds of this branch of the family frequently are found in flocks instead of in pairs as in the case with the white-breasted nuthatches. This bird is seldom seen in the United States until late summer or early autumn, since its breeding area lies north of the northern tier of states. In the winter, however, red-breast migrates south nearly to the Gulf coast and southern California. Usually it is found in some cone-bearing tree where its nasal calls or a shower of bark shows that red-breast is busily engaged in its quest for grubs. Its call is a *yank yank*. In a hollow stump or limb, this bird builds its nest and coats the area about the opening with balsam. Grasses and feathers are used to line the cavity selected as a home. Here the female bird lays from four to seven white eggs, thickly spotted with reddish brown.



Red-Breasted Nuthatch

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Pygmy Nuthatch

PYGMY NUTHATCH

(*Sitta pygmaea*)

Length, 4½ inches

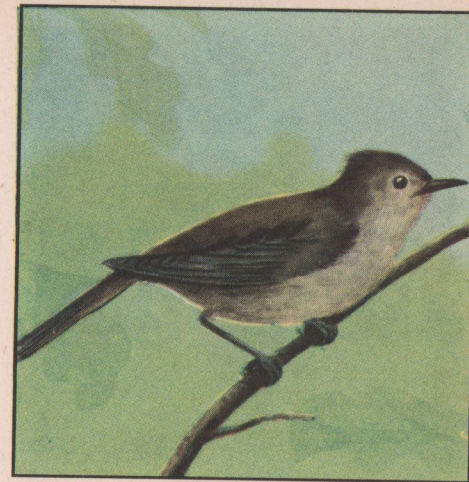
THE pygmy nuthatch has the upsidedown habits of its immediate relatives, but in a more pronounced form. It is smaller and more bob-tailed than they are. In fact, pygmy hardly has a tail at all and is not dependent upon it when going either up or down a tree. This bird travels in small but noisy flocks through the woods creating a great disturbance. This nuthatch has a grayish-olive crown, upper parts gray and buffy-white under parts. The nest is located behind bark crevices or in holes in trees, usually in coniferous trees and mountain sections. It is constructed of feathers, plant down, bits of wool, and animal fur. Six to nine white eggs speckled with Indian red are laid. Their food consists chiefly of insects and their eggs. In the autumn and winter they have a habit of wedging acorns and nuts firmly in crevices and hacking them with the bill until they break open, to obtain the kernels and grubs which they contain.

PLAIN TITMOUSE

(*Parus inornatus*)

Length, 5 inches

THE plain titmouse resides in the Pacific Coast country of California and Oregon. It is a plain unmasked bird with brownish or olive-gray upper parts and under parts of gray with a white belly. If one observes closely the live oak trees, he may see this small creature or hear its *tu-whit, tu-whit*, clearly enunciated. Though small in size, birds of the titmouse family are far from being insignificant in the matter of food habits inasmuch as they are very numerous. As against one place being occupied by the larger birds, ten are being searched for food at the same time by groups of these smaller birds. The character of the food eaten gives peculiar value to the services of these birds since most of it is composed of small insects and their eggs that wholly escape the search of the large feathered hunters. The titmice remain within their range throughout the year, continuing their search for insects during the winter.



Plain Titmouse



Tufted Titmouse

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TUFTED TITMOUSE

(*Baeolophus bicolor*)

Length, 6 inches

THE tufted titmouse inhabits the whole of the eastern part of the United States and usually remains in the vicinity of its nest throughout the year. In winter small flocks assemble and scramble about the trunks and branches of trees in search of insects and their eggs. When spring approaches, they separate into pairs. About two-thirds of the volume of food eaten by this bird is animal matter composed of caterpillars and wasps. Wild fruit and weed seeds form a large part of the vegetable food eaten. Nuts, too, are part of their diet. The common notes of the titmouse are a reiteration of a frequent, loud whistle, clear and quite sharp. Gray is the predominant color of this bird, which has a conspicuous crest, a black forehead and brownish flanks. The wings are quite short and round out, and the tail is long. The bill is short and stout and is practically straight. The range of the tufted titmouse extends from the Gulf to southern Iowa and New Jersey. Its eggs are laid in soft nests of down and feathers, usually in a hollow stump. From five to eight brown-marked white eggs are laid in April.

CHICKADEE

(*Penthestes atricapillus*)

Length, 5¾ inches

THE chickadee inhabits southern Canada and comes as far south as New Jersey to Missouri. It is easily taught to come to a window for food. In winter suet and oily seeds are its favorite food. In the spring the chickadee returns to the swamp and woodlands. A hole in a decayed stump, a knot-hole in a tree, or in an elm some distance from the ground, a deserted home of a woodpecker, or a nesting box may serve the chickadee for its home. The nesting materials used by the chickadee are soft grasses, mosses, cottony down from ferns and other plants, and feathers. The eggs are five to eight in number, white spotted with reddish brown, with a tendency to form a wreath near the larger end of the egg. This common chickadee is gray and black on the upper parts and white and black underneath. It has no crest and the bill is shorter than the head. Its food consists largely of the small insects and their eggs that wholly escape the search of larger birds.



Chickadee

45



Mountain Chickadee

46

MOUNTAIN CHICKADEE

(*Penthestes gambeli*)

Length, 5¾ inches

THE chickadees belong to the titmouse family and are highly serviceable to mankind. The mountain chickadee of the west moves in short, fluttering flights from tree to tree and clings to twigs upside down and shows the same friendly curiosity about humans in its surroundings as does its eastern cousin. It is a trifle larger however and of slightly different coloration. The crown and hindneck of the western chickadee are a uniform black with a faint bluish gloss. There is a white stripe over the eyes and the cheeks, chin and throat, and upper chest are a uniform deep black. The chickadee has named itself and repeats its name often. It loves the coniferous regions of the mountains. It uses for its nest a natural cavity or a deserted woodpecker's hole. Grasses, rootlets, sheep's wool, cattle hair, and very frequently rabbits' fur are used in building the nest. Five to nine eggs plain white, unmarked, or spotted with reddish brown, are laid.

BUSH-TIT (*Psaltriparus minimus*)

Length, 4¼ inches

THIS fearless little mite, about as big as a man's thumb, is another member of the titmouse family. It hurries along in a business-like way. A close observer, even though he did not know this bird was related to the chickadee, might easily draw this conclusion after closely studying the actions of the bush-tit. The tail of the bush-tit is as long as its body. Its coat is of moderate gray and brown with no touch of bright coloring. This bird is quite a builder and constructs a gourd-shaped home about ten inches long with a small round entrance at the top. The inside of this nest is lined with feathers, where four to six pure white eggs are laid. The bush-tit searches the leaves, twigs, branches and trunks of trees for insects. It eats caterpillars, moths, daddy-long-legs, spiders, plant-lice and many more varieties of insects. The bush-tit's home is on the Pacific Coast principally on the west slope of the coast mountains in Oregon and California.



Bush-Tit

47



Verdin

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VERDIN
(*Auriparus flaviceps*)

Length, 4½ inches

HIGH, dry portions of the country, such as southern Texas, Arizona, and lower California, where cacti and thorny bushes predominate, are favored dwelling places for the verdin or yellow-headed tit. It is one of the smallest of North American birds, and is very slender. The adult male bird has a yellow head and throat with some orange brown on the forehead and reddish brown lesser wing coverts. The color of the female is very much like that of the male but somewhat duller. This tiny bird resides in a flask-shaped nest with a small circular opening near the top. The nest is made of an interwoven mass of thorny twigs and stems and is lined with feathers. In this nest are deposited the bluish white eggs speckled around the large end with reddish brown. The verdin makes use of its home not only during the summer to raise a family but keeps it in repair after the young have left the nest for use as winter sleeping quarters.

BLUE-GRAY GNATCATCHER
(*Poliophtila caerulea*)

Length, 4½ inches

INSECTS form the chief item of food for this dainty little gray bird which is especially expert in catching its prey on the wing. The slender, blue-gray gnatcatcher has a black forehead, a black tail with white edges and white-tipped outer feathers. Surpassing even that of the hummingbird, the nest of the blue-gray gnatcatcher is the most beautiful structure built by birds. On horizontal limbs, at medium heights, the nest is placed. It is fashioned from plant fibers, woolly substances and cobwebs and is adorned with handsome lichens. The walls are high and thick and when the female bird is sitting in the nest only her tail is visible. Four or five bluish-white eggs, speckled with brown, are laid. The range of this bird is the eastern portion of the United States and its breeding ground extends north to New Jersey and Illinois. This fussy little bird, which does not hesitate to attack a bird five times its size, has a very sweet song.



Blue-Gray Gnatcatcher

49



Golden-Crowned Kinglet

GOLDEN-CROWNED KINGLET

(*Regulus satrapa*)

Length, $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches

THE golden-crowned kinglet during the winter is not quite as common as the chickadee, though as common as the brown creeper. But during the migrations, it is exceedingly abundant. It begins to arrive in strong force in April. It does not leave for the south, its winter home, until late in October or early November. Golden-crown does not fear mankind and permits one to approach close enough to see the black-bordered orange and yellow crown of the male bird and the yellow crown of the female. Both birds have olive green bodies. In the underbrush on hillsides and along the banks of brooks, golden-crowned kinglets may be seen searching for insects' eggs and larvae. As the bird flies about, it often utters a high *ti—ti* which is not easily heard. The bird's nest is a large ball of soft, green mosses and feathers usually hung from twigs in the top of cone-bearing trees. Six to nine creamy white eggs speckled with many tiny brown spots, are laid. In North America this bird ranges northward from the northern part of the United States.

RUBY-CROWNED KINGLET

(*Regulus calendula*)

Length, $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches

A STURDY, courageous, proud little creature is the ruby-crowned kinglet. The male bird, with a red patch on its crown, provides the name for this family. This red patch is lacking in the female bird. Ruby-crown usually is found in pine and other cone-bearing trees, being very abundant in the spring in open pine woods or parks. A ball of moss, grass and feathers, deeply cupped, serves as a nest in which the white eggs, sparingly speckled with brown, are laid. From the northern border of the United States northward, the ruby-crowned kinglet is found during the breeding season. When winter comes, these birds migrate to the southern half of the United States. They also go as far north as Alaska and in Canada from New Brunswick and Nova Scotia to the extreme far west. In fact the ruby-crowned kinglet will stay in almost any territory summer and winter, moving south only when the cold is extreme. A clear warble, surprisingly loud and varied for so small a bird, is the kinglet's song.



Ruby-Crowned Kinglet



Townsend's Solitaire

TOWNSEND'S SOLITAIRE

(*Myadestes townsendi*)

Length, 8 inches

THIS sweet and elusive singer of the mountain solitudes lives in western North America. It is the loftiest dweller of all the North American thrushes. Its plumage is brownish-gray on top and paler below, especially on the chin, throat, and abdomen. The various members of this family present wide differences in general appearance, form, coloration, and habits. Some live among the trees, others on the ground, and others among rocks. Townsend's solitaire may be found along the steep mountain slopes, where streams from melting snows pour downward to join the river below. It is sometimes seen running along the ground over rocks like the robin. In such places the nest, which is made of twigs and pine needles, is well concealed. It is generally on the ground, on a log or stump or in a rubbish pile. The pretty spotted eggs number from three to six. Since the solitaire's home is in mountain regions its food consists largely of wild berries.

WOOD THRUSH

(*Hylocichla mustelina*)

Length, 7¾ inches

RICH and flute-like is the song of the wood thrush which is recorded among the best of our bird songsters. Its song is most often heard just before nightfall. It is said that it sings from the date of migration in April until far into August. The call notes are a sharp *pip-pip-pip* and also a shrill *tsee, tsee*, and also a *tut-tut*, similar to that of a robin. The wood thrush has reddish brown upper parts, the head feathers being more brightly colored than those of the body. Beneath, it is white spotted with black. It feeds to some extent among the branches of the trees, but most of its food is gleaned from the ground. Here its brown back matches extremely well the dead leaves among which it seeks the beetles, bugs, and snails which are its principal fare. It also feeds on wild fruit. The nest is made of grass, weeds, leaves, and some mud, and is placed on a horizontal bough of a bush or tree not more than ten feet above the ground. In it are laid three or four bluish-green eggs.



Wood Thrush



Veery

VEERY
(*Hylocichla fuscescens*)

Length, $7\frac{1}{4}$ inches

THE veery is a thrush. It is essentially a bird of the woods. In places where ferns are luxuriant, the veery or Wilson thrush, as it is sometimes called, will be found in abundance. It is recognized by its uniform coat of reddish brown, its soiled white under parts, and its faintly marked breast. The veery is a shy bird with a beautiful song. Its song has been described as sounding like whistling in a large metal tube. The call notes are a sharply whistled *pheeu* which is often heard during migration. During the breeding season, which is usually from May to early June, the veery is common in the northern sections of the United States and southern Canada. The nest is usually on the ground or close to it. It is built of leaves, strips of bark, and weed stalks, and is lined with small roots. A layer of rotted wood or mud is usually placed between the lining and the outside of the nest. The eggs are usually four in number, greenish blue, sometimes spotted with brown near the larger end. The veery eats beetles, snails and a great variety of insects. It also likes wild fruit.

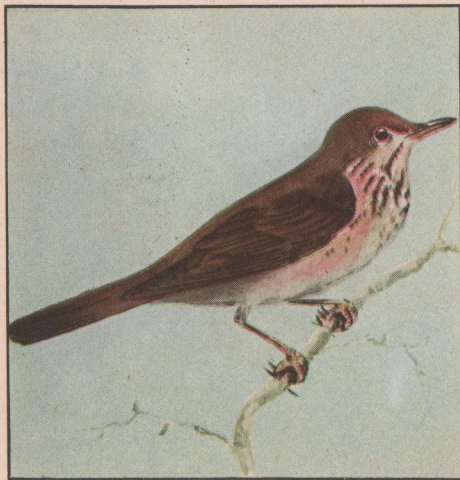
VARIED THRUSH
(*Ixoreus naevius*)

Length, 10 inches

THE varied thrush, or Alaska robin, dwells in the spruce forests on the mountains of the Pacific Coast. It is more serene and mild than the other members of the thrush family. This beautiful bird has under parts of rusty brown and the black bands crossing on the throat resemble a necklace. The belly is mixed with white and the upper parts are a dark bluish slate. The late Mr. Fuertes, in describing the song of the varied thrush as he heard it in Alaska, says that it is "most unique and mysterious, and may be heard in the deep, still, spruce forests for a great distance, being very loud and wonderfully penetrating." The varied thrush is fond of mast and holly berries. It also consumes considerable quantities of insects. The nest is placed in bushes and small trees, always on or near the banks of a stream. It is rather bulky and made of grass, a few small rootlets, and moss. Four pale greenish-blue eggs, speckled with brown, are laid.



Varied Thrush



Gray-Cheeked Thrush

GRAY-CHEEKED THRUSH

(*Hylocichla minima aliciae*)

Length, $7\frac{3}{4}$ inches

THE gray-cheeked thrush, and a smaller form of this bird called Bicknell's thrush, are often seen in eastern and northern North America. They are known chiefly as visitors which pause in their migration to Central and South America where they dwell in tropical surroundings during the winter. The gray-cheeked thrush breeds in northern Canada and Alaska. Mr. Burroughs observed in Alaska one member of the species singing in flight. The bobolink, the yellow-breasted chat, and the ovenbird have this habit but thrushes generally sing from a perch. The top coat of this thrush is uniform olive drab and it has white eye-rings, buffy sides and throat. In the spring the gray-cheeked feeds chiefly on insects, but in the fall it prefers wild fruits and berries. The nest is generally placed in low trees or bushes but is sometimes found on the ground. The eggs, three or four in number, are greenish-blue spotted with brown.

HERMIT THRUSH

(*Hylocichla guttata faxoni*)

Length, 7 inches

ALTHOUGH it rarely sings during migration, the hermit thrush is regarded as a remarkable musician in its summer habitat. The song is sweet, varied and pure in tone but is not especially strong. It arrives early in April and takes about a month to complete migration. The hermit thrush is known by the season in which it visits us. It has a reddish brown tail, much brighter than the back and head, which also are brown; its breast is quite heavily spotted with black; the manner in which it slowly raises and lowers its tail after alighting and the low *chuck* note which usually accompanies this movement are characteristic. The hermit nests on the ground, laying three or four plain, greenish-blue eggs in the latter part of May. During the nesting season this bird is found in that territory extending from the northern part of the United States northward. It winters in the Gulf States.



Hermit Thrush



Western Bluebird

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WESTERN BLUEBIRD
(*Sialia mexicana occidentalis*)

Length, 7 inches

THE western bluebird, or California bluebird, so strongly resembles the common bluebird of the eastern states that only a trained observer might distinguish the color difference between the two birds. Its beautiful blue plumage and soft warbling voice make it one of the most attractive and charming of our bird friends. Quite often bird boxes which have been erected for the bluebird are occupied by sparrows and starlings and unless it is protected from these pests there is little chance of having it around in the garden. The nest of the California bluebird is similar to that of the eastern bluebird but the eggs are somewhat deeper in shade. It is often seen along the roadsides and on ranches where it may be observed picking up insects. In habits, disposition, and economic value the western bird resembles its cousin of the east. It is the general belief that none of our native birds deserve protection more than does the bluebird.

BLUEBIRD
(*Sialia sialis*)

Length, 7 inches

TO MANY the bluebird is the favorite of all birds. It is one of the most domesticated of our wild birds and readily takes possession of boxes erected for its accommodation or builds its nest in crannies about farm buildings. The nest is composed of grass, weed stalks, a few bits of bark, and is lined with fine grass. Usually five plain, light blue eggs are laid. The bluebird, during its breeding season, ranges throughout the United States east of the Rocky Mountains and remains in winter as far north as the southern parts of Illinois and Pennsylvania. Study of this bird's food habits shows that the bird deserves man's friendship for economic as well as sentimental reasons. In the spring and early summer when berries and small fruits are at their best, the bluebird feeds on insects to the extent of five-sixths of its food. The bird's fruit-eating period is from late fall to early spring when insects are scarce and waste fruits are available. The bluebird's warble is a mellow, cheery song, a low-pitched lay of four or five notes.



Bluebird

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