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THE AMERICAN TOBACCO COMPANY

### BIRDS ARE INDISPENSIBLE

(Continued from Page 1)

damage to the growing grain when it bores for the worms is true, but it is slight compared to harm the worms would do if allowed to live.

The Red-winged Blackbird during the 7 months, September, October, November, December, January, February and March lives almost wholly upon weed seed. In April and May about 20 per cent of its food consists of the grain picked up from the fields where the farmer is sowing it and the rest of weed-seed and injurious insects. In June it lives almost wholly upon injurious insects; while in July and August one-half of its food consists of grain picked up in the harvest-fields where it has been scattered by the farmer when gathering his crops. According to these figures only 1-30 of this bird's time is spent in doing harm.

Of the Yellow-billed Cuckoo, 109 stomachs were examined. The contents consisted of 1855 caterpillars, 93 beetles, 242 grasshoppers, 37 saw flies, 69 bugs, 6 flies and 86 spiders. One stomach contained 250 tent caterpillars.

By the way, have you ever noticed where the greatest ravages of the tent caterpillars occur? It is in and about the villages and cities where the presence of man has frightened the birds away.

First a few words about the Robin, a bird that receives a good many curses from the cherry and strawberry growers. Only 8 per cent of the Robin's food consists of cultivated fruit but since this 8 per cent comes at the season when cherries and strawberries are maturing, it is a source of great annoyance to the farmers. However the farmer could easily prevent this for the robin prefers wild fruit to cultivated and two or three wild cherry trees planted near by will protect a whole orchard of cultivated cherry trees or a field of strawberries.

But can any good word be said for the Hawks! Those birds for whose destruction a gun always stands loaded in nearly every farm-house? Let us examine into the habits of the hawks found in the vicinity of Bennington. There are seven different species that are common. The Sparrow Hawk is most common. During the summer this bird lives upon grasshoppers, crickets, caterpillars, beetles and other insects and during the rest of the year upon meadow mice and house mice. No chicken meat at all.

The Marsh Hawk is the greatest mouser we have. It beats a dozen cats, for 95 per cent of its food is mice. The other 5 per cent consists of squirrels, rabbits and chickens. Speaking of cats, did you know that domestic cats average over 50 wild birds killed in each year?

The Red-tailed Hawk is the one usually called the "Hen Hawk" and is shot for that reason, but 90 per cent of its food consists of injurious mammals and insects, 8-12 per cent of wild birds and only 1-2 per cent poultry.

The Red-shouldered Hawk, a close kin to the red tailed, is more destructive to poultry making 7 per cent of its food consist of barn yard fowl.

The Broad-winged Hawk eats no chickens at all, living wholly upon small mammals, grasshoppers, crickets, caterpillars, and such animals. This bird does indirect injury because it eats many toads and frogs who are great insect destroyers.

The Cooper Hawk is pre-eminently a chicken hawk and is by far the most destructive species we have. It feeds chiefly upon fowl, wild birds and squirrels. Frequently the only part of its prey eaten is the heart.

The Sharp-shinned Hawk, miniature of the Cooper, is fully as destructive to bird-life as its larger cousin, but its small size, which is about that of a robin, prevents it from destroying fowl although it will take small chickens. It is very destructive to small wild birds which constitute, at least 90 per cent of its diet.

To sum up—of the 7 species of hawks commonly found here there are only two that are harmful. They, of course, should be killed, not only because they steal the farmer's chickens, but also because they destroy so many wild birds that are beneficial.

Does the farmer use discretion in his war of extermination against the hawks? By no means. To most farmers, a hawk is a hawk and all should be killed. The result of this foolish method is that the slow-moving leisurely-flying hawks are killed because they are most frequently seen and most easily shot. Since the five beneficial species are of this slow-moving type, they are the ones most frequently shot and in greatest danger of extermination. On the other hand the sly, quick moving harmful Cooper and Sharp-shinned hawks are rarely, if ever, shot by farmers. During the past 15 years, I have not known of a single Cooper or sharp-shinned hawk being shot by a farmer, while I have seen many of the beneficial hawks fall before his gun. It is only a few years ago that I saw a farmer bringing into the village 5 Marsh-hawks that he had shot on his farm. He would have shown much better sense if he had shot his best cow and left the hawks to keep his fields free from field-mice.

That this is not a fantastic statement, I can easily prove to you. As 8 meadow-mice have been found in the stomach of a single marsh hawk and as this represents but part of the day's food supply, it would not be unreasonable to suppose that each marsh hawk destroys at least 8 mice or their equivalent in other harmful creatures every day to supply its own needs. This would mean that 5 of these hawks would destroy 40 mice in a day or 6000 mice for the approximate 150 days of the summer which this hawk stays with us. It has been estimated that each meadow mouse on a farm causes an annual loss to the farmer of at least 2 cents by destroying grass-roots tubers, grain, and young fruit-trees. The destruction of 6000 mice would save the farmer \$120. The cow that brings to the farmer an annual income of \$120 is an exceedingly valuable cow.

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### STAMFORD

D. J. Morrissey & Co., have put in a new gasoline tank.

Fishermen are quite plenty in this vicinity, and the fish.

Charles Hewitt from Bennington was a visitor here Sunday.

Hort Sumner is ill with dropsy at the home of his son, George Sumner.

Mrs. Bert Cole has returned from a two week visit with relatives in Syracuse.

Miss Melba Wardwell returned to Encland Monday morning, where she is teaching.

Mr. Richmond and family have moved to their summer residence, the Fuller farm.

The church works are running on full time with D. G. Morrissey contractor for the church.

There is but very little snow to be seen on the mountains now, and the road through the valley is quite dusty despite the recent rainy weather.

W. A. Gallup has purchased the Russell place and is renovating the building, putting on colored shingles on the roof of house in place of slate.

The ladies of the Methodist church will give a Mayday supper next Wednesday night, May 3rd, the serving of which will commence at six o'clock.

Miss Jessie Foster returned to Shelburne Falls where she is teaching school, Sunday afternoon and Miss Mary Foster to Montague City, who is also teaching.

Rev. and Mrs. Abbott and little son went to Suffield, Conn., Monday where Mrs. Abbott expects to remain a while at her old home. Mr. Abbott will return Saturday.

H. W. Pritchard and family came to their summer residence last Wednesday after spending the winter in North Adams where he is employed in the National Bank.

Mr. Barrett, who teaches the north school will go to his home in Bennington on Wednesday night of this week, to attend the teachers' convention held there Thursday and Friday.

Next week Wednesday evening, May 29th, there will be a free entertainment given in the Grange Hall by the young people of Readsboro under the auspices of the Bennington County Improvement Association.

Mrs. A. J. Sanford and daughter, Miss Mary Sanford were called to Willimansett last Thursday morning by the death of Mrs. Sanford's daughter-in-law, Mrs. Norman H. Sanford. They will remain there several days.

W. M. Mansart of Clarksburg, has started an auto bus line from the end of the car line at Red Mills to Stamford. He has started with a small car for now, but expects to put on a large car about the middle of this month and run it from North Adams to Readsboro. The new bus will be made by "The White Motor Co.," and will be

### EAST ARLINGTON

capable of accommodating twenty passengers. It will be enclosed, suitable for all kinds of weather. Schedule time of the bus will be placed at each end of the car line, and at Morrissey's store. The advent of the Bus is greatly welcomed by people living along the route.

Mrs. Vernon Field was in Bennington Monday.

Mrs. Truman Martin passed Monday in Bennington.

Mrs. William Safford was in Bennington Saturday.

Mr. and Mrs. F. P. Webb passed Friday in Bennington.

Miss Era Grout passed the day in Bennington Saturday.

Mrs. Minnie Whitman was in South Shalsbury Thursday.

Mr. and Mrs. Frank Coyne were in Bennington Saturday.

Leah Cole was home over Sunday from the T. C. A. this week.

Harold Blair is home for a week from his business college.

Antin Schwarzkopf, of Brooklyn visited his family here last week.

Antin Schwarzkopf, Jr., visited friends at Hampton, N. Y., Sunday.

Mr. and Mrs. Seymour Hard passed Sunday to Manchester with relatives.

Mrs. John Squires of Bennington visited her son, Everett of this place Thursday.

Mr. and Mrs. Douglas Montgomery of Shaftbury passed Sunday in town with relatives.

District Supt. Kent is expected here Monday, May 8, to hold the first quarterly conference at the M. E. church.

Mrs. Pearl Hawkins, who has been spending a few days in Bennington with relatives, returned home Sunday.

A base ball meeting will be held Thursday evening at the home rooms. All interested in the team are requested to be present.

Mr. and Mrs. Herbert Rice, former residents of this place, now of Manchester, visited their daughter, Mrs. Lee Hewes over Sunday.

Mrs. Mary Gender, who has been spending the winter with her son, William Copping at St. John's, Canada, returned home last week.

Program of S. S. Conference, East Arlington, Congregational church, May 15th-16-17 9 o'clock. Devotional service, Rev. J. D. Gouthey pastor M. E. church East Arlington; The School a field for Evangelism, Rev. W. G. To-wart, Bennington; The Value of the School Cabinet, Mr. P. T. H. Pierson, Bennington; The Ideal Superintendent, Rev. C. A. Boyd, Burlington; Manhood and the Bible School, Rev. Peter Heller, South Shaftbury; The Place and Value of the Summer Institute, Miss Hilda Pratt; The Drama a method of Bible Teaching; Miss Martha Pratt. The regular quarterly meeting of the Bennington County Sunday School Association, will meet at 11:30 a. m.

Every farmer should learn to identify the different species of hawks so that he would not be shooting the beneficial ones and letting the harmful ones live.

A few words concerning the diet of the Crow will not be amiss for it is well known what a useless and destructive bird the crow is. The great-est harm the crows do is pulling the newly sown corn, but they may be stopped from doing this by tarring the seed which not only saves the corn, but forces the crows to turn their attention to insects. May beetles, June bugs and others of the same family constitute the principal food of the crow during the spring and early summer and are fed to the young in immense quantities. During August grasshoppers form the leading article of diet. On the whole the crows do more good than harm at least when ordinary precautions are taken to protect the newly planted corn against its depredations.

I have shown you how it is possible to learn upon what each species of bird feeds. In like manner we are able to find out how much an individual bird will eat in one day. Now if we can count the number of birds in the U. S. we shall be able to tell very accurately just how valuable the bird population is to us. "What! Count the birds!" you say. "Why that is impossible!" Yet it has been done and it is thought to be a fairly accurate census. It may interest you to hear how such a census is taken and as I am one of the census-takers I will tell you the method used.

In the first place it has been learned that nesting birds do not wander far from their nests. It is further known that while the male bird is on the nest the female is near by.

The counting is done upon a tract of land that, if possible, represents within its borders the average conditions of the neighborhood in the proportions of woodland, plowed land, meadow, etc. It should not be less than 40 acres nor more than 80 and should include the farm buildings, with the usual shade trees and orchard. The tract should be accurately described so that it may be used in future years and comparisons made in regard to the bird population of different years. Only birds nesting in the area are counted. Birds visiting there for feeding are not counted.

In counting, I begin at daylight some morning the last of May or the 1st week of June and zigzag back and forth across the area noting every male bird. At that season of the year every male bird should be in full song and easily counted. The census of one day is checked and revised by several days of further work in order to insure accuracy.

Last summer I visited the area upon 4 different mornings with these results:

1st day, 36 species, 85 individuals.

2nd day, 34 species, 79 individuals.

3rd day, 36 species, 88 individuals.

4th day, 29 species, 89 individuals.

After carefully comparing my notes

of the 4 different days and finally visiting the field again for the 5th time in order to correct any mistakes I had my complete census of 38 species, 90 male birds or a total bird population of 180. From this I figure that the total bird population of the town of Bennington on the 1st of June is about 75,000.

Such census as this is taken every year at the same time by many observers throughout the U. S. Another census is taken about Xmas time. On but one day is occupied in completing it and every bird seen is counted. This census gives the number of birds wintering in the U. S.

We have now learned three important things: 1st, what the birds eat; 2nd, how many individual birds eat; 3rd, how many birds there are. From these 3 facts we are able to learn many things and among them are 1st what birds are beneficial and what harmful; 2nd, in what sections of the country the birds are most numerous; 3rd, the most important of all—just how valuable in dollars and cents the bird population is to us.

It is impossible in a short paper to go into a detailed account of the value of each species but in a general way I can show you what ever present guardians of our safety the birds are.

From early morning until dark the swallows and swifts are continually on the wing sweeping the insects out of the air. On nearly every tree sits a fly catcher ready to dart out and snap up any insect that passes by. The warblers, cuckoos, kinglets and vireos are swarming in the tree tops searching out any insect life among the branches and leaves and while the woodpeckers, nuthatches and creepers go diligently over the trunks and larger branches picking up every egg or grub that threatens the life of the trees. Among the bushes and on the ground are the sparrows, grackles, crows, thrashers and a dozen other species picking up seeds and injurious insects. Even with all this there is more for all night long the owls, night-hawks and whippoorwills carry on the work of destruction to injurious animals. A certain German, Hans Van Berlepeck, has made a study of how to attract birds by the use of feeding stations and nesting boxes. It has been such a success that the German Government has already put up 40,000 of these nest-boxes in one forest—knowing that the birds attracted there will protect the timber.

"So," as Ernest Harold Baynes says, "making all allowance for a number of birds whose good deeds are offset by bad ones and for a few that are positively harmful, we shall see that we have working for us a great army of feathered workmen—many of whom work for us 365 days in the year without wages and without even the necessity of supervision. And never will we think that these workmen never loaf, never ask for a vacation and never go on a strike. It would seem that there should be, among all intelligent people, the keenest competition for their services."

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