

How Birds Withstand Winter's Blasts

By EDWARD B. CLARK



THE greater battalion of the army of the birds is in the southland for the winter. The warblers were the pioneers in the march to escape the cold. The naturalists of the world would give much to know what it was in the torrid time which told these daintiest of the feathered creatures that they must be moving on.

There is a puzzle for the scientists even more complex than that offered by the spectacle of migration. It is to get the solution of the problem of why some birds with the recurring autumn invariably seek warmer climes while others apparently much more poorly fitted by nature to withstand cold weather conditions, stay about the familiar nesting scenes when the snow lies deep and the cold is like that of "St. Agnes Eve."

The titmouse, the Concord chickadee of Emerson, is a little feathered gem which looks as though a breath of cold would set it all a-shiver. Yet this little fellow sticks by his Northern friends all through the winter, when bigger, more heavily feathered, and apparently more hardy species have sought out the orange and the magnolia groves of the gulf. There are scores of other birds which remain with us to pipe a cheerful note over the snow wastes while their southern-flying friends are silent amid their congenial surroundings.

One of the most interesting bird studies is that which leads to a personal knowledge of how the feathered species care for themselves during a time when exposed man, even though heavily clothed, at times freezes to death. It is a question if many people know how the despised English sparrow, whom we always have with us, manages to pull through a Northern winter without offering himself up as a sacrifice to Jack Frost. It is a matter of current but mistaken belief among those who have noticed the great bulky nests which the sparrows have built in almost every tree that these bunches of straw, dried grass, and feathers form the abiding places of the sparrows during the coldwinter nights. As a matter of fact, a sparrow seldom goes near a tree nest in winter. If he has found a lodging for his summer home in a cornice of a building he may go there to sleep away the long, cold nights, but the tree nest is deserted from the moment the last brood is hatched.

If one wishes to know where thousands of the sparrows sleep in winter let him on some cold night take a stout club and rap with all his might upon an electric light pole that is fitted with an overhanging hood. There is a little platform in some of these hoods directly over the glass globe. Upon this as many sparrows as can conveniently crowd together roost throughout the cold weather nights. A club rapping experiment on an electric light pole at a Chicago avenue corner near the North Side water works lot during a howling blizzard one winter night resulted in the dislodgment of twelve frightened sparrows. They fluttered about in the storm and hung like so many fascinated moths. When the pounding ceased they made their way back to their resting place and doubtless remained undisturbed until morning. Their flat was certainly modern in its appointments, for it was heated and lighted by electricity.

Take a trip through a thistle field in July and there will be seen scores of goldfinches feeding on the seeds of the prickly plants. These little creatures have the appearance of the birds of the tropics. It would seem that barely a breath of the north wind would send them scurrying southward. In truth, however, these birds, frail though they appear, stay with us all winter, yet not one person in fifty outside of the ranks of the bird students knows the fact.

In late August the goldfinch drops his gold and black livery and puts on a sober sparrowlike garb. This is the reason why people think that the little thistle seed lover has left them and that another bird has taken its place. In the Chicago Academy of Sciences there is pathetic evidence of how the goldfinch keeps warm during the winter nights. The curator has there an oriole's nest from the outside of which hangs the body of a goldfinch caught by the neck and literally hanged by one of the cords with which the oriole has fashioned its home. The goldfinch has sought refuge in the nest from the weather and on leaving it in the morning has thrust his head through the fatal noose. These birds utilize the deserted homes of all their brethren who build deep nests. The goldfinches return night after night to a nest which an oriole has swung from the tips of an elm in Western Springs, Ill.

The chickadee of which something has been said, builds its nest somewhat after the manner of the woodpecker, but if observation goes for much, the bird does not use this absolutely safe and warm retreat for its winter night lodging. They have been started time after time just after sunset on cold nights from the vacated nests of many species of birds, the chickadee simply burying itself in the warm linings in which the summer before the young of its friends had been cradled.

By mid-September the swallows one and all had disappeared. It may be that if the appearance of one swallow does not make a summer, the absence of the entire tribe may not make an autumn, but it is certain that the birds must feel something that bids them begone, for they go in a body and they go in the twinkling of an eye. The swallows live upon insects, and there is no reason as far as food is concerned, why they should not stay at least two weeks longer, for their homes are in sheltered nooks. The hummingbirds, despite its delicacy, stay longer than the swallow and complain not.

If one can catch sight of a saucy little woodpecker going into a hole in a tree on his lawn at this season of the year he may hope to have an interesting neighbor during the entire winter. All the downy woodpeckers remain in the north the years through. Some of the red heads stay too, but most of them go a few score of miles to the south. All of these birds that remain pass their nights in holes in trees, and at the time of the first fall month they are busy locating proper cold weather habitations. If enough interest in



the woodpecker is felt to keep him as a companion throughout the winter a piece of suet bound firmly to the limb of a tree and occasionally renewed will insure his presence as a guest as long as the snow flies, and with him, tempt-ed by the suet, will be a goodly company of Jays, chickadees, and golden crowned kinglets.

The kinglet, smaller than any of our birds, save the ruby throated humming bird alone, manages to live through all the cold Northern winter and be all the while as cheerful as a robin in April. The kinglet, as far as the experience of one person is concerned at least, prefers to get his summer food in the thick bushes, and seemingly has a preference for those which are near clambering vines. The kinglets cast about for likely places in which to pass the winter. As far as can be ascertained they simply get into the heart of some thickly twigged bush through which run vine branches and there all night long they defy both cold and snow.

The great northern shrike, which is due in the northern states from its summer home in the British possessions about October 1, spends his nights close to the bole of an evergreen tree. There is a little clump of evergreens well within the limits of the city of Chicago where a half dozen of these birds roost nightly from October to March. Inasmuch as they live on a diet of English sparrows and spend all the daylight hours in the laudable vocation of killing the imported feathered pest, the exact location of their roosting place will not be given for fear some champion of the sparrow might disturb the rest of these feathered friends, whom many are unkind enough to call butcher birds.

As a matter of fact one need feel little anxiety for the welfare of the birds that stay with us in winter. The nursery ditty of "What will the robin do then, poor thing?" is tear-compelling, but the robin, the bluebird, the jay, and the chickadee will all care for themselves and will feel no envy of man in his steam-heated flat.

During the bitter weather of winter while people with hearts in the right places are scattering crumbs and seeds at their doorsteps for the little feathered land visitors, the great city of Chicago as a whole is doing its best to feed the storm-blown birds of Lake Michigan. Not all the sewage of the city, notwithstanding the completion of the drainage canal, is sent towards the Mississippi. Some little of it still finds its way into the lakes with its burden of garbage, and there the gull scavengers, by eating much of the output that from their point of appetite is edible, do their best to aid in purifying the water supply.

In the dead of winter when the cold is so intense that it seems that no exposed creature can live, the waste of water between Chicago and St. Joe, Mich., is peopled with strange feathered visitors, who shun the same water stretches when the wind blows soft out of the south. A storm which once rose and preceded a "spell" of zero weather brought with it from the north scores of strange, beautiful arctic visitors known as long-tailed ducks. They may be seen all through the winter well into the open water of Lake Michigan. They fairly revel in cold weather and in cold water. It is highly probable that they would never come to the great lakes at all were it not for the fact that everything northward is frozen solid. The male "long-tail" is a beauty, with his strongly contrasted black and

white plumage and the two great sweeping tail feathers that give him his name. With his wife he does not lack other names, and they are known in various places as "old Injun," "old wife," "old molly," "old granny," "old squaw," and "old south southerly." Because of the oily nature of their flesh these ducks are unfit for food, and yet the gunners on the Chicago breakwaters and on the government pier used to kill dozens of them in the pure wantonness of sport.

When the sloping stone abutment that protects the outer Lincoln Park driveway, Chicago, from the waves is piled high with ice during the winter the venturesome person who will scale the side of the pile may see in the dark water only a few yards beyond one of the most beautiful ducks known to the bird kingdom. The golden eye, or whistle wing, frequents the cold waters of Lake Michigan all through the winter, and comes close to the shore. It is seldom that more than four or five are seen together, and often a single pair will be found. If the protection which the male apparently tries to extend to the female during all times of the year be a basis for judgment, these birds remain mated for life.

The golden eye almost invariably places himself between his gentler companion and danger, and when they are swimming or flying to new foraging places he invariably leads the way. The movement of their wings is so rapid that it produces a musical whistling audible at a great distance. Because of the rapidity of their flight the Indians call them spirit ducks, believing that some supernatural aid is given them to add to the swiftness of their journeyings.

The best of the bird scavengers acting as the allies of the Chicago health department in winter are the herring, the ring-billed gulls. The herring gull is a big grayish creature, almost pure white if he is three years old, with black tips to his wings. The young of the first year are mottled gray, entirely different in appearance from their parents. The result of this difference is that people looking at a winter flock of the gulls think that it contains several species. The lagoons in Jackson and Lincoln Parks are often fairly covered with these birds, provided a heavy storm is coming in from the eastward.

A delicate-looking bird is the kittiwake gull. It does not look as if it could stand the rigors of lake winter weather for a day, and yet neither storm nor cold succeeds in chilling its optimism or in abating its industry. The kittiwakes have been in the lake off Chicago in winter, and here they doubtless occasionally have remained until March.

A bird lover considers it an ornithological epoch when he sees a great black-backed gull. The persistent and careful observer who cares nothing for weather conditions may find this rare creature, perhaps the largest of our gulls, if he will but keep a constant watch along the lake front. The bird has been seen here on several occasions in winter. Its name gives a good description of it. It is sometimes known gressomely as the "coffin carrier."

DEFIES SPANISH KING

Infanta Eulalie Quarrels With Nephew Alfonso.

Princess Who Was Conspicuous in America During the Chicago World's Fair Is Again in the Limelight.

Chicago.—Americans who are old enough to remember distinctly the Columbian exposition of eighteen years ago in this city will recall the coming of Infanta Eulalie of Spain as a guest of the nation. At that time she was about thirty years old and she created a sensation here by snubbing the leaders of American society most royally. In Chicago she refused the hospitality of Mrs. Potter Palmer on the ground that she could not be the guest of an "innkeeper." Frequently since then Eulalie has figured in the international dispatches in a more or less sensational way. She is a woman of independent spirit and thinks no more of defying court etiquette than of snubbing American women.

Alfonso, the youthful king of Spain, who is her nephew, has found her far from complaisant when he has issued his orders and she has never hesitated to criticize him openly. He objected strenuously when she divorced her husband in France, a thing illegal in Spain; she called him an ingrate when he did not reward her son for fighting in Africa; and for some time she has preferred to live in Paris.

Recently she published a book in which she justifies divorce as a natural support to morality under certain circumstances, and when Alfonso



heard of it he telegraphed a command for the suppression of the book. Then Eulalie exercised her woman's prerogative and talked back, expressing herself in no uncertain terms. She defies her kingly nephew and says she will sell her Spanish estates, give up her place at court and live as she pleases in Paris. At the same time she bids Alfonso a curt farewell.

Of course all European royalty is scandalized and in circles which are not royal expectations are nursed that before long Eulalie, now that she has "kicked over the traces," will be doing things to keep the sensational press busy.

Alfonso had trouble enough trying to govern his somewhat rebellious subjects. He might have known better than to try to boss a woman.

NOW A PENSION FOR MOTHERS

Homes May Thus Be Kept Up and Children Reared by Mother and Sent to School.

Chicago.—The new Illinois state law pensioning deserving poor mothers with families recently became operative. The first week forty mothers, most of them widows and the sole support of that many broods of children, received checks for amounts ranging from \$18 to \$120.

The pension act allows \$5 to \$10 a month for each child. Nearly all the mothers were tearfully grateful. The pension allows them to keep the family together and exercise the care necessary for growing children.

The deserving mothers and children are investigated by officials of the juvenile court. When the home influences are found to be good and the mothers deserving the money is paid to the mother. Before the law was passed the mothers who found it impossible to support their children turned them over to the juvenile court and that institution placed them in other homes. For the support of each child the county paid ten dollars a month in the new homes. The pension law authorized the county to leave the children with the parent and pay them the ten dollars a month for each child.

A Boy's Miraculous Escape.

Grand Junction, Colo.—At the risk of his own life an unidentified tramp saved Willie Stevens, twelve years old, from death. The boy, on his way to school, jumped upon a moving freight train. He slipped and fell under a car. The tramp, who was riding on the rods beneath, grabbed him and held him from the ground until the train stopped. The boy's leg was fractured and two of his fingers were smashed beneath the wheels.

METHOD OF KEEPING YOUNG

Remarkably Sound Advice for the Woman Who Has Some Years of Life to Her Credit.

The way to ward off old age is not to fear it, not to allow one's self to be oppressed by the dread of advancing years. Use only legitimate preventives and avoid trying experiments with preparations not indorsed by physicians. Do not wear toilettes intended for young girls, they only add years to the appearance. Keep up your interest in the young, but do not envy them. Retire with dignity from the struggle, do not pose as your daughter's rival. Above all, surround your life with sweet, true affections which prevent the heart from growing bitter. Do not lose interest in the growing events of the day, do not fall behind the times and do not harp on other and better days. To those who come to you for advice be always kind and sympathetic. As you advance in years preserve carefully your personal appearance, for once lost it may not be regained save by strenuous effort. Your costumes should be simple and unpretentious, yet graceful. These rules, carefully and sensibly followed, will keep you young and attractive.—Exchange.

A Little Off.

Senator Penrose was talking in Washington about the dreadful hunting accidents of last month. "When buck fever seizes a man," he said, "he goes as far off his aim as the old lady went in her definition of the word 'bell-ringer.'" She was talking with a friend about a bishop.

"He's a fine man," said the friend, "a fine, handsome man. His only trouble is that he's a little bell-ringer." "Bell-ringer?" said the old lady with a surprised frown. "He must have changed, then. The last time I saw him he was tall and rather slender."

Important to Mothers.

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Signature of *Dr. J. C. Fletcher* In Use For Over 30 Years. Children Cry for Fletcher's Castoria

Physical Proof.

"I saw you double on the street today." "Impossible, madam. I'm a single man."

Constipation causes and aggravates many serious diseases. It is thoroughly cured by Dr. Pierce's Pleasant Pellets. The favorite family laxative.

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You'll generally always find that the person who is most suspicious of others, himself needs watching.

Mrs. Winslow's Soothing Syrup for Children teething, softens the gums, reduces inflammation, allays pain, cures wind colic, 25c a bottle.

What has become of the old-fashioned man whose word was as good as his bond?

Lewis' Single Binder, straight 50—many smokers prefer them to 10c cigars.

A woman falls in love gracefully, but a man usually stumbles into it.

Knees Became Stiff

Five Years of Severe Rheumatism

The cure of Henry J. Goldstein, 14 Barton Street, Boston, Mass., another victory for Hood's Sarsaparil. This great medicine has succeeded in many cases where others have utterly failed. Mr. Goldstein says: "I suffered from rheumatism five years, it kept me from business and caused excruciating pain. My knees would become as stiff as steel. I tried many medicines without relief, then took Hood's Sarsaparil, soon felt much better, and now consider myself entirely cured. I recommend Hood's."

Get it today in usual liquid form or chocolate tablets called Sarsatabs.

44 Bu. to the Acre

is a heavy yield, but that's what John Kennedy of Edmonton, Alberta, Western Canada, got from 40 acres of Spring Wheat in 1910. Reports from other districts in that province show yields of 40, 45, 50, 55, 60, 65, 70, 75, 80, 85, 90, 95, 100, 110, 120, 130, 140, 150, 160, 170, 180, 190, 200 bushels per acre. Such a yield is a record for the province of Alberta. Write for more particulars to the Canadian Government Agent, Ottawa, Ont., or to the Canadian Government Agent, Edmonton, Alberta.

at the recent Spokane Fair was awarded the "Last Best West" lent for its exhibits of grain, grasses and vegetables. Reports of excellent yields for 1910 come also from Saskatchewan and Manitoba in Western Canada.

Free homesteads of 160 acres and adjoining pre-emption of 160 acres (at \$3 per acre) are to be had in the choicest districts. Schools convenient, climate excellent, soil the very best, railroads close at hand, building lumber cheap, fuel easy (get and reasonable in price, water easily procured, skilled farming a success. Write us to best place for settlement, settlers' low railway rates, desirable "Last Best West" lent for on application and other information, to Dept. of Immigration, Ottawa, Can., or to the Canadian Government Agent, (30) W. V. BENNETT, Room 4 See Sign. Omaha, Neb. Please write to the agent nearest you.

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