

During harvest, when they can get grain easily, they leave the shelter of buildings and, by thousands, pillage the fields, causing great damage. At this time, very few weed-seeds were found in their stomachs, grain being evidently preferred to weed-seeds when available.

It appears, therefore, that there is little to be said in favour of the English Sparrow. Its weed-seed eating habits are creditable, as far as they go, but they are insignificant because the damage done to grain far overbalances the benefit derived from weed-seed destruction. Adding to this the injury it does about buildings by its filthy habits, and the fact that it drives away other birds beneficial in their habits, there is no escape from the conclusion that this bird is a serious pest, the extermination of which would be an unmixed blessing.

The Chipping Sparrow is not so well known generally as the English Sparrow, but is of much greater benefit to the farmer. Much service is rendered in destroying weed-seeds, but the greatest utility of the species is shown in its animal food, the greater part of which consists of noxious insects. Practically no grain was found in the stomachs examined, although the birds were shot in grain-fields. This, therefore, proves conclusively that they are not injurious to our grain crops.

The Vesper Sparrow, like the Chipping Sparrow, is also very beneficial. Its diet varies with the season. During spring and Fall, when insects are scarcer, its food consists to a large extent of weed-seeds, but during the summer months, its work as a destroyer of injurious insects is very great, measured by the sparrow standard.

Unlike the English Sparrow, it feeds farther out in the field, and hence the weed-seed consumption is a direct benefit. Its value to the farmer is beyond question, and should secure for it the fullest protection. It may be easily distinguished from the injurious English Sparrow by the 2 white feathers in the tail, and it is hoped that people will soon learn to distinguish these two birds, and thereby save many of these useful little songsters from an untimely death.

The Song Sparrow also, taking the food habits as a whole, this bird does much more good than harm, and is worthy of protection and encouragement. Its food is composed chiefly of insects, the greater part of which are injurious; it is, however, also a weed-seed destroyer, particularly in autumn.

Experience has also shown that while this bird will not refuse grain during harvest, yet the injury caused in this way is inconsiderable.