

have a peculiar "woody" quality about them. The seeds of the hemlock are occasionally eaten by the Chickadee and Red-breasted Nuthatch, and the White-breasted Nuthatch is said to sometimes eat beechnuts and acorns, but I have never found any trace of them. The Tree Creeper eats no vegetable substance whatever.

This little group of birds is of the greatest value to the fruit-grower, as they feed principally on the minute insects and their eggs, which are individually so small that they escape our observation until, having seen the damage done by them, our attention is called to their existence, and then it is too late to enable us to remedy the matter for the season.

THRUSHES.

We have in Ontario seven species belonging to this family, all of them migratory, arriving here from the south in early spring and leaving us in the autumn, as cold weather sets in. They are the Wood Thrush, Wilson's Thrush, Grey-cheeked Thrush, Olive-backed Thrush, Hermit Thrush, Robin and Bluebird. The Olive-backed Thrush, Hermit Thrush and Grey-cheeked Thrush pass on and raise their young to the north of us; the others remain throughout the summer and breed here.

The Wood Thrush and Wilson's Thrush, or Veery, as it is sometimes called, are strictly birds of the woodlands, and seldom venture far from the edge of the bush, though both species will at times select a garden where there are shrubs for their summer residence, if they find themselves unmolested, particularly if there are no domestic cats about the premises. The cats at all times prefer young birds to mice or rats, and are as much to blame for the decrease of our native birds as bird-nesting boys or anything else, perhaps, except the Cow bird. Wilson's Thrush is one of our most abundant species, but it has the faculty of concealing itself to such perfection that it is often overlooked though there may be many within a few yards of where a person is standing. The Wood Thrush is very rare with us, which is to be regretted, as it is a beautiful songster.

All these thrushes are very valuable birds to the agriculturist, their food consisting for the most part of grubs that live under the surface of the ground, and caterpillars. In the autumn they eat many wild berries, those of the Elder and Viburnum being especial favorites, but they never help themselves to the produce of the farm or garden. The best known and most familiar of the thrush family is the Robin, and opinion is very strongly divided as to its utility. Many fruit growers condemn this bird with great emphasis, stating that it is the worst enemy they have; others weigh its merits and demerits more carefully, and are inclined to think that it at least pays for the fruit it eats by the destruction of insects. No doubt it does take a large number of cherries, strawberries and raspberries, and some grapes, but it is open to question if it were not for the birds whether there would be any cherries, strawberries or grapes, or, indeed, whether any crop could be brought to maturity. The great merit of the Robin is that in the early part of the season it feeds itself and its young almost entirely on cut worms and on the large white grub, the larva of the May beetle. Of all our insect enemies the underground cut worm is about the most destructive, for in feeding it just comes above the surface and cuts off the entire plant, or if the plants are very young and the stems small it cuts off half a dozen or more at one