

February. The average mean annual temperature can be safely set down as 70° F., which figures, together with the above, may be verified from government meteorological reports.

But these are not the only advantages that our birds enjoy on the islands. There is one still to be added and it is that of a good and wise protective legislation which, it may be said with pride, is most rigidly enforced throughout the whole colony.

Here, then, is truly a garden of Eden for birds, an avian El Dorado, a haven of bird bliss, a veritable ornithic paradise. It is, therefore, not surprising that millions of birds visit these islands every year on their flights north and south at two periods of migration, some to remain for only a few hours, others to stay for months at a time.

About the beginning of March the returning tide of bird life commences to set in strongly from the South. The first arrivals are for the most part waders and shore birds, such as the curlews, plovers, sandpipers, snipes, etc. They are exceedingly shy, and one can seldom view them well except from a distance, as they run up and down hurriedly along the smooth edges of the sand beaches in search of food in the thick beds of brown seaweed which the tides have washed up in great quantities. A little later on toward the end of March or beginning of April, numbers of herons, cranes and ducks pass by, and about this time one may see night hawks skimming swiftly over the low marshes and swamps just about the dusk hour. Next follow the spring birds of the woods and orchards; the scarlet tanagers, the indigo birds, the rose crested grosbeaks and the American cuckoos. These last remain a great part of the summer and although not often seen, their joyous call may be heard in the quiet dells and woody hillsides of the country. Then come the long list of summer birds, among them being the cardinals, kingfishers, bluebirds, mocking birds, woodpeckers, warblers, finches, tropic birds, and a host of others too great to mention here.

The tropic birds (*Phaeton americanus*), or long-tails, as they are called on account of the one long white feather in the tail, come to stay throughout the entire summer. They can be seen in countless numbers at certain places where they assemble every year to nest, flying up and down, up and down, ceaselessly in the bright sunshine, all day long, constantly on the lookout for fish. A great number of the summer visitors stay behind during the warmer months of June, July and August to brood, and their presence in the parks, gardens and orchards as they flit here and there, gives one a source of real joy and happiness. Among these may be mentioned the cardinals, catbirds, rice buntings, blue-

birds, finches, vireos, humming birds and many others.

The ground doves, (*Chaemepelia passerina*), are indigenous to Bermuda. They are like miniature pigeons, very compact, soft grey in colour, with blue black spots on the wings; short bare legs, feeding on small seeds and insects, gregarious in habit, and always on the ground. Their note is a low, sweetly-plaintive coo, similar to that of the ring-dove. They are very tame, but if disturbed suddenly they quickly rise, making a strange beating sound with their wings and fly to some other spot nearby. The goldfinches (*Carduelis carduelis*), found so plentifully throughout the islands, although not natives, have become established there within the last 25 years. It happened that a passing vessel put into St. George's harbour for repairs, and while there, by some chance a large number of finches on board were liberated. These birds flew to the mainland, to Castle Harbour, St. David's Island and the neighbourhood, and found there a most hospitable refuge in the wooded dells and quiet, secluded places where they settled. Since then they have spread to all other parts.

The noisy, chattering, ubiquitous house sparrow is there in flocks of thousands. It is without doubt the most undesirable immigrant and a source of great annoyance to all who own fruit and vegetable gardens. These birds were introduced many years ago by Mr. Thomas Reid, a prominent citizen of Hamilton, who conceived the brilliant idea of importing several pairs of sparrows in the hope that they would be of great benefit in controlling insect pests. He lived to regret this, for the birds multiplied prodigiously and soon flocked into his lovely gardens and ate up the sugar apples, cherries and grapes, doing incalculable damage. They played havoc with crops everywhere, attacked and killed many of the native birds. The Legislature passed laws to destroy the pest. Rewards were offered for collecting the eggs. However the sparrows could not be done away with and to-day are as great a nuisance as ever. Undoubtedly they are the worst enemy of the song birds. It is not an uncommon sight to see half-a-dozen pugnacious cock-sparrows attacking a cardinal; the result is generally the death of the songster.

A large number of the feathered visitors, apart from their beauty and song, are of the greatest economic importance and benefit to the farmers and gardeners. Some feed exclusively on seeds during winter, like the shore larks and sparrows; others, such as the woodpeckers, nuthatches and warblers prefer insects only; the cuckoos find the hairy caterpillars a palatable dish. Bluebirds are indefatigable grub hunters. The white-eyed vireo (*Vireo griseus*) or chick-of-