

Grackle at all, so light is her colour, which resembles the tint of the female Cowbird, but is lighter and browner. The Florida Purple Grackles are elegant birds, slightly smaller than our Bronzed Grackle, but so tame and so common in some towns, and with such a brilliant iridescence reflecting the rays of the bright sun, that one is moved to think that there are few handsomer birds.

It was at Tarpon Springs, too, that we met the little Ground Dove—a true dove in manners, grace and habits, but just about the size of the Shorelark. There we found them, with the Mourning Dove (also common), feeding with bunches of Grackles, Mocking Birds and Towhees in the streets, and we all thought them one of the most charming of our new acquaintances. When they flew, the inner wing feathers displayed a bright brick red colour, contrasting vividly with the greyish fawn of the rest of the bird. It was truly ludicrous to see this little fellow, thinking evidently that he was a real pigeon, walking along with the stately and graceful dove-step; and nodding his head with each footstep.

Of all the birds I have seen, none stay on the wing so continuously and with such superlative ease as the Vulture. Regardless of wind, regardless of rain, regardless of sun, they could be seen at all hours of the day from about 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., soaring without a flap of the wing; sometimes singly or in couples, sometimes in groups of twenty or thirty, and when such a company appeared every onlooker was forced to admire their grace and beauty—at a distance. Both kinds, the Black Vulture and the Turkey Vulture were common at most points. They alight on the shade trees, on the houses, and even in the back yards, showing scarcely any fear of man, and they certainly do a most useful work in this hot climate where many of the inhabitants are too indolent to take the first step towards keeping their premises clean. The peculiar position occupied by these most useful scavengers, who are said to clean up all the back yards of Florida, is well illustrated by the following occurrence.

In Tarpon Springs I said to a little girl, "See, what bird is that?" "That aint a bird, that's a buzzard," came the reply.

Driving on the ocean beach in the Indian River district, I saw