

mice and other small rodents of the grain fields. The cowbird ousts many of the more useful birds from their homes, and prevents them from raising families, and so is not a helper.

Most of our birds, however, are wholly beneficial, and should be protected and encouraged. Their nests should not be disturbed. They can be encouraged to nest about the homes and gardens by setting up nesting places for them under the eaves, upon poles, or in trees. The variety of useful birds is very large, and includes the meadow-lark, robin, wren, woodpecker, cedar waxwing, snowbunting, kingbird, junco, vireo, nuthatch, warbler, thrush, butcherbird, and different varieties of swallows, hawks, and owls.



FIG. 76. THE KINGBIRD.

FUNGI

Fungi are a low type of plant organism or plants that reproduce by spores, and not by seeds as our crop plants do. They do not contain chlorophyll, which is the medium by which the higher plants manufacture food from the materials secured through the roots and leaves. One class of fungi