

old tree, turning downwards and becoming larger until there is room enough for a safe and cosy nest for the little woodpeckers who are content to lie on a bed of fine wood chips, with which the bottom of the nest is lined. What a wonderful combination of hammer and chisel we find in their head and bill.

But there are no less than eight different kinds of woodpeckers to be found in our country, and how shall I enable you to know one from another, and know their proper names? Let me try.

First, we have two very much alike, the Hairy Woodpecker, figured above, and the Downy Woodpecker but little over six inches in length, while the former is about nine inches in length. Besides being smaller the Downy has its white outer tail feathers marked with black, while these feathers in the Hairy are generally pure white.

Then we have another two which are rather rare at present in these provinces. They differ very markedly from all the other woodpeckers by having only three toes, two in front and *one* behind. The first and more common is the Arctic Three-toed Woodpecker, about the same size as the Hairy, nine inches, but having no white on the back or the top of the head. For this last reason it is sometimes called the "Black-backed Woodpecker." The male distinguishes himself by a patch of yellow on the top of his head. The second is the American Three-toed Woodpecker, about an inch shorter than the other, marked with white bars or a white stripe on its back; for this reason sometimes called the "White-backed Three-toed Woodpecker." This last is very rare in Nova Scotia, having not been seen by many of its ornithologists. We are now half done.

Our fifth is a very common bird, the Yellow-bellied Woodpecker, about eight inches long. The upper parts of its body are black and white, but the lower parts instead of being all white are strongly tinged with yellow on the belly, chin scarlet and throat black in the male, but both white in the female. The crown is red in the adult male and often also in the female. A long white patch on wing. This is the species which is particularly injurious to trees, some say the only one.

Next comes a couple of relatives, most distinguished in appearance, but now becoming extremely rare, especially the latter one. These are the Pileated Woodpecker and the Red-headed Woodpecker. The former is a giant, being about eighteen inches long, black but with a broad white line running down from its head along the side of its neck beyond the shoulder and a brilliant scarlet crest. In the male this crest is more extensive and there is a line of scarlet running from the bill below the eye in addition. This is the

bird which sometimes selecting a resonant limb of decayed pine or hemlock and bracing itself by means of its tail, drums on the wood with its bill with such tremendous rapidity and force that the noise of its thunder can, in a still day, be heard miles away in the forest. The other species, perhaps a little over nine inches long, can be easily distinguished, if seen, by its head and neck being crimson to the shoulder, its under parts white and its upper parts blue-black with a large white bar across its wings.

Lastly we come to the most common of all, the Flicker, "Yellow Hammer" or "Golden-winged Woodpecker," as it is called by different people. It is twelve inches long, head ashy colored with a red crescent behind; back, drab and black; rump, white; below, pinkish brown shading into yellow; a black crescent on the breast; belly with numerous round black spots; and the under surface of its quills golden yellow. When flying in the sunlight this gold makes its wings appear to flicker like a flame. Hence the name. At the end of our lesson we shall give a specimen story of an observation made on these two last mentioned Woodpeckers, by an eminent ornithologist, Dr. Jasper, who made a drawing of the scene from nature, as well as a word description. But here let us recapitulate by writing down in order the names of our Woodpeckers as they are recommended to be used by that great authority on birds, the American Ornithological Union, with their length in inches, and any other short remarks.

1. Hairy Woodpecker, 9 inches, common resident, outer tail feathers white.
2. Downy Woodpecker, 6 inches, common resident, outer tail feathers white with black.
3. Arctic Three-toed Woodpecker, 9 inches, not common, black-backed, yellow head patch on male.
4. American Three-toed Woodpecker, 9 inches, very rare, white bars or patch on back.
5. Yellow-bellied Woodpecker, 8 inches, very common, red on crown, injurious to trees.
6. Pileated Woodpecker, 18 inches, uncommon, red-crested the largest of all.
7. Red-headed Woodpecker, 9 inches, rare, head and neck crimson to shoulders.
8. Flicker, 12 inches, most common, crescents scarlet and black.

"Teach the rising generation the science of music in all the schools, and you teach them the habit of closest thought, accuracy of expression and refinement of manner. Song is the language of gladness and the utterance of devotion. It is also physically beneficent—it raises the circulation—wakes up the bodily energies—and diffuses life and animation to all."—*Sel.*