

NATURAL HISTORY NOTES—MAY, 1896.

May 7th—During the evening large numbers of plover and sandpipers were on the wing, and till midnight their shrill notes were audible as they were apparently circling round in the vicinity of the Rideau river. Evidently a very large flight of the late arrivals was passing over. Night, sultry and thunder to the south.

May 10th—The whip-poor-will was heard in the vicinity of Ottawa, and had been heard above Aylmer a few nights previous.

May 14th—Night-hawks appeared in numbers. I could get no reliable data of their appearance prior to this. Last year they were seen on 5th May, and in 1894 on 15th and in 1893 on 21st. This shows how variable is the time of their arrival, dependant, doubtless, on the temperature.

May 21st—A pair of yellow-billed cuckoos were flying round among some large elm trees on Wilbrod Street. A few years ago they built in that vicinity but the nest was unfortunately destroyed. They had not been seen there since till this date.

H. B. SMALL.

ORNITHOLOGY.—I think I have never seen pine gross-beaks as plentiful as during the past winter. From the beginning of December until nearly the end of March, they were to be seen any day almost, in the groves and small woods, and even in the trees about the houses ; sometimes in large flocks, sometimes three or four together—the latter being the case more in the earlier part of the winter.

Chick-a-dees have been more than usually numerous this winter in this locality ; there have been the usual number of blue-jays to be seen, crows in abundance, and wood-peckers a few. I saw a flock of red-polls once or twice through the winter, but that was all.

I usually learn of the presence of a few owls in the neighbourhood during the winter, either by their being driven by un-