

PREFACE.

While strolling through a piece of woodland, or perhaps along the marsh or seashore, we see a bird, a strange bird,—one we never saw before. Instantly, our curiosity is aroused, and the question arises, "What is it?" There is the bird! How can we find out what kind it is? The Ornithologist of a few years ago had but one course open to him, that is to shoot the bird, take it home, then pore through pages of descriptions, until one was found to correspond with the specimen. Obviously, such methods cannot be pursued today, both humane and economical reasons prohibiting. We have but one alternative left us: We must make copious notes of all the peculiarities and markings of the bird that is before us. On our return home, we get down our bird books, and there are many excellent ones. After carefully looking through the whole library, we find that, although many of our books are well illustrated, none of them have the picture of what we seek, so we adopt the tactics of the "Old-time" Ornithologist, before mentioned, and pore over pages of text, until finally we know what our bird was. It is for just such emergencies as this—to identify a bird when you see it, and where you see it, that this little pocket "Bird Guide" is prepared. May it be the medium for saving many of today's seekers for "bird truths," from the many trials and tribulations willingly encountered, and hard and thorny roads gladly traveled by the author in his quest for knowledge of bird ways.

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