

reason chiefly Crows should be kept within proper limits as to numbers. Of late years they have increased altogether too fast, and our small birds have suffered in consequence.

After the young birds leave the nest they move about with their parents and feed on a most varied diet. They will make a raid on the fruit grower, and demolish his cherries or raspberries if the idea strikes them, or they will prowl along the lake shore and enjoy themselves for a few days on fish fare, after which they will visit a pasture field and clear out all the wire worms, grubs and mice they may find there: in fact, very few things come amiss to them, as they roam about through the country until the cold nights warn them to get together in some place where they can get at least a bare subsistence to carry them over the winter.

As I have said before, Crows have increased too fast of late years, and we have now too many of them in the country: their numbers can easily be reduced if a little attention be paid to the matter in the spring. Just at nesting time they are less shy and wary than at any other season and can be approached in the trees within shooting distance. If one of each pair was shot off their numbers would soon be reduced to such an extent that the damage they could do would not be noticeable. These birds are so well able to take care of themselves that even more stringent measures might be adopted against them without any danger of extermination, their natural enemies being very few, and those, of that class against which man has carried on a most successful war. Of these the Great-horned Owl was the most noteworthy, but the Great-horned Owl will kill the poultry of a farmer who allows his fowls to roost out on winter nights, and so the Owl must go and the Crow has one enemy the less.

*Raven.* This species only occurs in the more northerly portions of the Province, having retired before the encroachments of civilization. To the pioneer it is sometimes a nuisance, poultry and young lambs falling easy victims to this bird's strength and rapacity. They also destroy a large quantity of game, but fortunately their number is so small, and the birds themselves so conspicuous, that it is not difficult to get rid of them.

*Blue Jay.* It is a pity that so beautiful and interesting a bird as this should be possessed of such mischievous propensities as it is, but I am afraid that neither its good looks nor its good acts can be said to balance its evil deeds. This bird, like the common Crow, seems to forget its usual shyness when spring arrives and will leave its wooded haunts and build its nest in gardens, orchards and shrubberies, close to houses and quite within reach of every person passing, nor does it affect any sort of concealment as a rule. I have seen many nests so placed that they were visible from public roads where people and vehicles were continually passing. The female could quite readily be seen sitting, yet the birds carried on their duties regardless of prying eyes. It seems a pity that their confidence should be abused, but I am compelled to say that in all cases that came under my observation the Blue Jays badly repaid the persons in whose gardens they were protected and allowed to raise their young. In the first place they steal a large amount of small fruit, and, further they rob and destroy the nests and young of other birds to such an extent that they are positively injurious to agriculture, the birds they destroy being all of that class whose food consists principally of insects, and without whose assistance I doubt if we could succeed in raising any crop to maturity.

The Blue Jays themselves, however, destroy no inconsiderable number of insects, and they do no damage to grain; they may occasionally pick off a little corn from the cob, but that is about the extent of the injury they do in that direction. Their unfortunate fondness for the young of other birds more valuable