

chickens have to contend against. Of course, only the young chickens are captured and they at this time are only partly fledged and, therefore, by no means strong on the wing, consequently they fall an easy prey and make an excellent meal. They are captured as they rise and before they have time to acquire speed. As they become older they naturally get stronger and the hawks learn from experience that the grouse are no longer available for food, and so devote themselves to smaller, but more easily captured prey; having once learnt the lesson they appear never to forget it, and in future like their parents adapt their tastes to rodents and small birds, though occasionally an old bird will attack and capture a partly grown grouse or even domestic fowl. To me this habit seems a remnant of bygone days, a revival of an older instinct when the birds' feet were better adapted for capturing big game. This is no isolated instance; many animals can be traced backwards through the habits of their young, which in later life they loose.

Marsh Hawks are expert hunters. They may be seen at all times of the day, but especially late in the afternoon, skimming low over the ground in search of their favorite food—gophers and mice; they also seem to know that those rodents are more often to be met with round the edges of cultivated ground, as they are often seen to follow a field right around.

As the season advances into October, gophers become scarce and the hawks in consequence, are obliged to depend more upon mice and small birds, and it is while after the latter that they show their greatest skill, beating every bush as they go along, first one way and then another. Those bushes encircling the edges of fields being particularly attended to as it is in such that small birds congregate. The patience and assiduity these hawks show at this time is remarkable to behold, and one cannot help admiring their skill, though feeling all the time for the hunted.

In Manitoba, Marsh Hawks reach us from the south towards the end of March and leave again for warmer quarters in late October and early November. They usually arrive singly, the males coming first, followed in a few days by the females.

I have already indicated the general food habits and it is therefore sufficient to add that a thorough examination of stomachs at Washington, fully bears out the evidence as supplied from field observation. Marsh Hawks unquestionably do some harm, by destroying immature grouse, this is particularly so of the young; they also occasionally help themselves to young poultry, but this latter habit is seldom indulged in. On the other hand they devote by far the greater portion of the season to hunting rodents such as gophers, chipmonks and mice, all