

P R E F A C E

Birds have always been the favorite topics for nature study work in the public schools. The methods used have not always been above criticism. The chief aim in teaching the pupils these lessons, is to develop an interest in bird life. The only way to develop this real and vital interest is by getting the pupils to observe the common birds in their natural habitat. The purpose of this little book is to assist the teacher in this useful work. Thirty-one topics have been selected which cover all departments of bird study. The birds chosen for treatment are those that are easy to find, and suitable for observations by school children. Not only have individual birds been dealt with, but other topics, such as bird food, the beaks, the eggs and migration have been covered. Each bird selected is typical of a large number. I have felt that it is much better to treat a small number fully, than to give a smattering of a larger number.

One of the most irritating things that a teacher meets in a book is a series of questions where he looks for information. I have tried in every case to ask no question for which an answer will not be found in the text. Each lesson is divided into two parts; first a series of observations to be made by the pupils, in which questions are asked; secondly directions to the teacher. In this last part, complete statements of the facts to be observed by the pupils are placed, so when the teacher gives the direction to the pupils, the answer to each direction is to be found in the text, so that the teacher can at once state whether the pupils' observations are correct or not.

It is not expected that each pupil will succeed in making all the observations indicated, but the work of the combined members of the class should supply a fairly complete answer to all the observations asked.

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