

and Sparrow Hawk; there are two or three others, but they are only occasional visitors. Of these eleven, the Sharp-shinned Hawk, Cooper's Hawk, Goshawk, Duck Hawk and Pigeon Hawk are the species which occasionally make raids upon the poultry yards, and which at all times seem to prefer feathered game to either fur or insects; these should, therefore, be shot whenever the opportunity is given. The Sharp-shinned Hawk and Cooper's Hawk are the two species which most frequently attack the poultry. They are both small hawks, but make up for their lack of size by their boldness and dexterity. It is but seldom that they attack a full-grown fowl, but if they once find an accessible lot of chickens they will continue to visit the flock until they have taken them all, or are killed in the attempt to do so. The mischief done by these two species has been the principal cause of the prejudice existing in the farmer's mind against all the hawk tribe, and is usually given as the excuse for the slaughter of all the valuable species whose constant work inures to man's benefit. The food of the Duck Hawk and the Pigeon Hawk consists chiefly of wild birds, but they rarely visit the farms, their usual resort being the marshes and shores of lakes frequented by water fowl. The Pigeon Hawk is not so named because it has any preference for pigeons, either wild or domestic, but because it slightly resembles a pigeon in shape both when on the wing and when at rest.

The Goshawk fortunately does not visit the cultivated portion of Ontario in any numbers regularly; it is a winter visitor only, and rather an expensive one to entertain when it does come. The winter of 1896-97 was one of the seasons in which it was particularly abundant throughout southern Ontario, and poultry owners suffered greatly from its destructive powers in consequence. This hawk is a large, powerful bird, quite capable of killing and carrying off a full grown hen. The adult is dark, slaty blue above, blackish on the head, the breast and belly barred pale slate and white with sharp black streaks; the young, dark brown above, white beneath with oblong brown spots; length, about two feet. Owing to its boldness and strength it is capable of doing a good deal of damage, and should consequently be killed whenever seen. As previously stated, this hawk only occurs in winter, and therefore it is not likely to be mistaken for any of the hawks whose food habits are of benefit to mankind. As a general rule, if a hawk is seen about the farm-yard during the winter it is safe to assume that it is there for no good purpose, and the gun should be brought into requisition at once, as all our beneficial hawks migrate southward when cold weather sets in.

From the above species, all of which are undoubtedly injurious to the interests of the agriculturist by reason of the destruction they work in the poultry yard, and amongst our insectivorous wild birds, we turn to the remaining six species of the hawks frequenting this Province, every one of which spends the greater part of its time and devotes its energies to work the destruction of the animals and insects which are known to be amongst the greatest pests the farmer has to contend with; these are the Marsh Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk, Red-shouldered Hawk, Broad-winged Hawk, Rough-legged Hawk and Sparrow Hawk.

Nearly everyone knows the Marsh Hawk and has seen it gracefully skimming over the low meadows, occasionally hanging poised over one spot for a second or two, and then dropping down into the long grass; this drop generally means the death of a meadow mouse, sometimes, but more rarely, a frog; of these two creatures its food principally consists, and the number of meadow mice destroyed by each of these birds in a season must be something enormous. As many as eight have been found in the stomach of one of these hawks, and four or five quite frequently. The hawk's digestion is very rapid, and their hunting and feeding is continued with but few intermissions from daylight until dark.