

birds are almost extinct in south-western Ontario, where they were formerly tolerably common, it would seem an excellent policy to encourage them in the Ottawa district while you have them there".

Two of the woodpeckers may be attracted by the use of nesting boxes. The Flicker (*Colaptes auratus*), which occurs in and around Ottawa, feeds largely on ants; a single stomach has been found to contain over 5000 ants. In another instance 28 white grubs, one of our worst pests of grass land and certain crops, were found in the stomach of a flicker which feeds largely on the ground. It also feeds upon wild fruits, such as the wild black cherry. The Downy Woodpecker (*Dryobates pubescens*) is a most valuable ally, as it feeds largely on beetles that destroy trees by boring into the bark and timber. An examination of 723 stomachs showed that 76 per cent. of the diet was animal food, consisting chiefly of insects.

Reference has already been made to the weed-destroying habits of our native sparrows. One of the first birds to arrive in the spring, breaking the long winter silence with its welcome little song, is the Song Sparrow (*Melospiza melodia*), which is very domestic in its habits. About three-fourths of its food consist of weed seeds and one-fourth of insects. Beetles, especially weevils, form the greater portion of the insect food. A thick hedge, dense shrubs or piles of logs provide suitable nesting places for this most welcome of our sparrows. The Chipping Sparrow (*Spizella passerina*), whose confiding ways give it a warm place in our affection, has somewhat similar nesting habits to the former. It is, moreover, the most insectivorous of our sparrows. About 42 per cent. of its food consists of insects and spiders, and caterpillars make up the major portion of the insect food, especially when the young are being reared, when as many as 17 feedings per hour, on an average, for a brood of our nestlings have been recorded. The retiring and sombre Junco or Snowbird (*Junco hyemalis*), destroys insects and feeds on weed seeds. An examination of 500 stomachs gave 23 per cent. animal food (caterpillars, bugs and beetles), and 77 per cent. vegetable food, of which over 61 per cent. consisted of weed seeds. In September the proportion of weed seeds may rise as high as 95 per cent. of the food.

Before discussing the details of the proposal for the protection of the Ottawa birds, it will be of interest to refer to the results of certain schemes of bird protection which have been adopted in other countries.