

twenty, feeding upon seeds, berries and the larvae of insects. At other times frequenting the country roads, picking up the scattered grains from among the droppings of the horses, and often coming boldly to the very doors of the farm houses, in search of crumbs or scraps of meat. Its plumage is well calculated to resist the severest cold, the bird being a perfect bag of feathers, which, about the head particularly, are so loose and uneven, as to give it a peculiarly inelegant ragged look. Its colour is a dirty ash inclining to drab, the breast and belly dirty white.

The blue jay, (*Garrulus Cristatus*) is too well known to require description.

He is one of the noisiest tenants of our woods; and his screaming notes may be heard just as frequently in the depth of winter as in the middle of summer. He has fortunately a most accommodating appetite; so that when his summer fare of cherries, strawberries, caterpillars and grubs, and still worse, the eggs of small birds, for which he has a decided relish, are not to be had, he takes quite as readily to beech nuts, acorns, the seeds of the pine, or the berries of the mountain ash.

I come now to a bird which may be classed as among the handsomest, and at the same time the rarest of our winter visitors, the Pine Grosbeak, (*Pyrrhula Eucleator*.) This hardy species is found throughout Labrador, and the Hudson's Bay Territory; and it is only in very severe seasons that it visits us. It was very abundant in this neighbourhood in the winter of 1839, visiting our gardens and orchards in large flocks, feeding upon the tender buds of the cherry, the apple, and other fruit trees. To the seeds of the apple they appeared particularly partial, any withered fruit that might have been left upon the trees being stripped off directly, and cut in pieces in search of their favourite food. Having observed that a party of them paid frequent visits to some lilac trees growing against the verandah of my father's house, for the sake of the seeds that were still hanging upon the trees, I had a quantity of broken pieces of apple scattered about the verandah. The next visit the birds paid, the lilacs were speedily deserted, and the pieces of apple disappeared in a wonderfully short space of time. I continued to have fresh supplies provided for them, and by degrees the number of my pensioners increased, until there were sometimes as many as twelve or fourteen feeding at the same time, and they ultimately became so tame, as to allow any of the family to watch them while feeding from the windows, although they were hardly two feet from them. I may mention, however, that notwithstanding their daily feed of apples the lilacs did not escape, for not content with the seeds, they stripped the trees so effectually of their flower buds that the following summer there was hardly a blossom to be seen.

The general colour of the plumage of this bird is a blueish slate colour on the back and sides, deepening into black on the wings and tail. The head, neck, shoulders, and top of the rump in the male bird are of a reddish orange, varied in some specimens with very beautiful delicate tints of carmine. In the female these markings, are much less vivid, generally yellowish orange with lighter tints of dirty yellow.

Their note is peculiarly soft and full, and the call note which they utter when flying resembles slightly that of the blue bird.

In former days, when thick pine woods occupied the greater part of the space half-a-mile to the north of Queen Street, lying between Yonge Street and the Don, the Crossbill (*Loxia Curvirostra*.) was a constant and well known visitor. Even then it was a difficult bird to obtain a specimen of, as it generally frequented the tops of the loftiest pines, feeding upon the seeds contained in the pine cones, their strong crooked bills enabling them to force open the scales with ease.

The plumage of the male bird is exceedingly handsome, par-

ticularly towards the approach of spring, when the colouring becomes much more vivid.

The general colour of the body is olive, inclining to greenish grey, the head, throat, upper part of the back, and top of the rump a reddish orange, deepening into scarlet. The female is much plainer, the body being greenish grey, and the markings on the head and back pale yellow.

A frequent companion of the Crossbill is the Pine Linnet, (*Linaria Pinus*); it also feeds upon the seeds of the pine, as well as the buds of the alder, larch and poplar. It is a pretty, graceful little bird, the plumage greenish yellow, marked with dark olive brown, the breast and belly white with brown spots, the wings and tail brown, edged with yellow. In its flight it resembles the Goldfinch, rising and falling in deep curves like that bird, and emitting its call note at each fresh effort it makes to propel itself.

The lesser Red Poll, (*Fringilla linaria*) is not unlike the Siskin in some of its habits; and in the spring of the year the latter, deserting its friends the Crossbills, is often seen feeding very lovingly in company with the Red Poll and the Gold Finch. The Red Poll always flies in flocks, and is a hardy merry little creature, feeding upon the seeds of various grasses, berries, and the buds of different trees. In very stormy weather, when the snow is deep in the woods and fields, they may be seen about the streets of the town, often venturing into the outhouses in search of crumbs, or about our poultry yards, picking up any stray grains that the fowls may have left.

Their call note is almost precisely the same as that of the Goldfinch, which they also resemble in their flight. The rose colour on the head and breast deepens into crimson at the approach of spring. The bird, I believe, breeds here, although I have never been fortunate enough to find a nest.

The Goldfinch (*Fringilla Tristis*) remains with us all the year round, but in winter the Cuckbird doffs his gay summer plumage, and puts on the sober brown suit of the female. It feeds at this season of the year, like the Red Poll and Siskin, upon seeds of different kinds, as well as the buds of the Alder birch, and poplar. In flight and song it closely resembles its European namesake, rising and falling in long graceful curves, uttering at the same time its call note, and often singing sweetly while on the wing. Like its European relative, it is extravagantly fond of the seed of the thistle. It tears up withered petals of the ripened flowers with great dexterity, and leaning downwards upon them eats off the seeds, allowing the down to float away.

We come now to a merry little fellow, familiar to most of us, the black capped Titmouse, (*Parus atricapillus*.) or Chickadee, as the country people call him. The colder and more stormy the weather, the merrier does this hardy restless little bird appear. They keep together generally in little flocks of five or six, flying from tree to tree, and branch to branch, repeating their quick lively note, peeping into every little chink and crevice in the bark, frequently hanging head downwards at the extremity of a twig, with their feet almost up to their bills, pecking at a berry or a seed. They have a most accommodating appetite, feeding upon insects, their larvae and eggs, berries and seeds, and even upon scraps thrown out from the kitchen; indeed I have often seen a Titmouse pecking away at a dish of bones that had been placed in the yard for the dog. Although shy enough at other times, the Titmouse become quites familiar in winter, alighting close to you without hesitation, and if you remain perfectly motionless, will pick up a seed or a berry almost from between your feet. It is Audubon, I think, who mentions an anecdote related to him by a friend of his, who while out shooting, and passing through a newly felled wood