

It resembles the genus *Turdus* in general form and size, the most tangible points of dissimilarity being the relative length of the tarsus in each. In *Turdus*, the tarsus is longer than the middle toe. In *Sialia*, the tarsus is about equal to the middle toe. This is surely a very trifling difference, to separate the birds so widely.

Briefly then, the genus *Sialia*, may be recognized by the blue coloration and thrush-like tarsus and beak.

The Common Bluebird, — *Sialia sialis* (L. *sialis* = plump.) L 6½. All above, bright blue; breast rusty chestnut; belly, white; ♀ duller. Young shew the adult colors, but are spotted all over.

Nest, of twigs, hay and feathers; in a knot-hole or bird-house.

Eggs, 4 — 6; .8 × .65; pale blue.

Abundant all over E. N. America.

The Arctic Bluebird, — *S. Arctica*. Differs from the last, in color only, being all over of a pale sea-blue; ♀ duller and with drab on the breast.

A rare and beautiful species, found only in Central N. America.

The Bluebird is among the very first of our feathered friends to return from the south. He is truly the harbinger, the 'army herald,' for he is foremost in the van of the bird host, hardly waiting for the spring at all, for in Ontario he comes about the end of February; in Manitoba his time is in April; and in the Maritime Provinces about the end of March.

The manner of his coming is still rather shrouded in mystery; — does he travel with a host of his kin or alone?

Does he come by day, or by night? Often during a space of fine weather, he comes, mysteriously, as usual; but he disappears, as mysteriously, if for a time, it again turns cold; and the questions, 'Where did he hide?' or 'Whither go during those cold days?' have not yet been satisfactorily answered.

Let no reader neglect to record any facts coming to his knowledge, that will cast light on these matters.

For long the Bluebird held undisputed sway over the bird-houses and eave-holes of our cities; his were the gables and chimneys, or at best a few gentle swallows came and offered slight opposition, a month after the Bluebird had again taken possession. But of late years there has been a change. Imagine a scene, if perchance you have never beheld it: — 'The wind is soft in a March morning, when northward the Bluebird comes flying back to his native pole-house, his ancestral home for generations now he thinks to be at rest and gaily alights, and lades the wind with his warbling, musical to the ears of all as the first lisping of new-born spring, ere yet she gains power to speak in the eloquent gushing of the Thrushes, Larks and the Finches. But scarcely has he alighted, when a brown bird emerges from the door and meets him with furious chattering; a number more gather from the neighborhood and they unite in attacking the bright newcomer; and the spring bird, the 'sky-robin,' gentle by nature, but valiant is forced to fight, and barely escapes