

confines itself almost entirely to the wooded country, where they sit about in pairs on the trees or stumps watching for mice, shrews and grasshoppers, and save for occasionally dropping down on a small bird they are wholly beneficial, as out of 90 stomachs examined only 2, or less than 3 per cent. contained birds, none of them poultry, while the remainder contained mice and other mammals, insects and reptiles. This hawk is a stupid bird, allowing of a near approach, and are consequently shot down wherever the wandering shooter chances to come upon it.

The Red-Shouldered Hawk, *Buteo lineatus*, is also an inhabitant of the more wooded country, and is, consequently seldom met with in this part of the province, being even more secluded in its retreat than the broad-wing. On an examination of 220 stomachs, only 3, or about 1½ per cent., contained poultry, while about 5½ per cent. had small birds, the balance containing mice and injurious mammals, insects, fish and reptiles. Two contained offal, showing the species to be almost as fond of offal as of poultry.

The Red-Tailed Hawk, *Buteo borealis*, is the largest of our common hawks and is universally called the hen hawk by farmers. It frequents the vicinity of woods or fresh clearings, where it sits upon a branch of stump diligently watching for mice and shrews, which are so common about old stumps and logs in such places.

Occasionally, should one of these spots be near the house or the farmyard, and the poultry stray in that direction, he will steal a hen, but it is usually the old and enfeebled veterans who are not quick enough to escape his awkward pounce. Even the proportion of such cases amounts to about 10 per cent. of the 562 stomachs examined, consequently like his brother *Buteo*, were it not for the small birds he drops on occasionally he might be placed in the beneficial class.

The remaining number of the mainly beneficial class is possibly the most commonly known of our large hawks, and is also familiarly dubbed the "Hen-hawk" (*Buteo Swainsoni*). It is doubtful, however, if Swainson's hawk would ever chase a chicken past a gopher, or could catch good healthy poultry or small birds. As in the case of his brother *borealis*, it usually happens to be the old rheumatic straying fowl that he catches and which are not worth much more than the cost of the powder and shot to shoot the hawk.

The usual position for this bird is bolt upright on a hummock of earth or the hill thrown up by a gopher or badger. Here it will sit for hours scanning the field, and woe to the gopher or mouse

who will stray from home when Swainson is on the alert. He usually only makes one or two sudden pounces and rises with the animal in his claws, carrying it either to his young or alighting on a prominence to devour it himself. It is estimated that a Swainson hawk would catch and eat at least five gophers a day, and where one pair are at work they would destroy ten gophers a day for their own food, and at least as many more while feeding the young for about three weeks. At this rate they would feed the young 210 gophers in the three weeks, and during the six months, at least, that these birds are with us they would destroy a great number of these pests.

If the amount of grain eaten by gophers be taken into account it will be seen what a friend to the farmer *Buteo Swainsoni* is. Should not this be more than sufficient to place protection on this hawk? Yet he is a robber and a hen-hawk. If we give each bird one hen a week while with us, which I am satisfied, is double the average taken anywhere by these birds, the value of the poultry thus stolen is, at a liberal estimate, of 25c. a head, for each pair of hawks, \$13.50 for the entire season, thus leaving a cash balance to their credit of ten times that amount at the end of the season.

Of this species Dr. Coues speaks in his "Birds of the Northwest," observations of 1883:

"The quarry of Swainson's Buzzard is of a very humble origin. I never saw one stoop upon a wild fowl or grouse, and though they often strike down rabbits, like the red-tails, their prey is usually nothing larger than gophers. Though really strong and sufficiently fierce birds, they lack the snap of the falcons, and I scarcely think they are quick enough to catch little birds very often. I once saw one make the attempt at a lark-bunting. The hawk poised in the air about twenty yards for fully a minute, fell heavily with an awkward thrust of its talons and missed its prey. The little bird slipped off between its feet, badly scared, no doubt, but still uninjured, while the enemy flapped away sulkily to prow about a gopher hole for his dinner, or take pot luck at grasshoppers."

HARMFUL HAWKS.

Now that we have reached the group which may be considered harmful and for whose depredations the majority of hawks and owls suffer, as did the children of Israel for the sins of one family, it will be necessary to show to what extent they are