

AN INTERESTING OBSERVATION ON THE FOOD
HABITS OF THE YELLOW-BELLIED
SAPSUCKER (*Spyropicus varius*).

While visiting Mr. R. W. Shepherd, Como, Que., on July 20th, 1907, the writer was attracted by the large number of leaves which were lying on the ground beneath a specimen of the Cottonwood (*Populus deltoidea*, Marsh) which was growing near the house.

The leaves were green and healthy looking from a distance, and as there had been no storm to blow them off we were puzzled at first to know what had caused them to fall. On enquiry we were informed that the dropping of the leaves was caused by birds. The leaves were examined and it was discovered that on every petiole, close to the blade of the leaf, there was a gall of the species known as the Poplar Stem Gall (*Pemphigus populicaulis*, Fitch). Each of these galls when perfect is the home of a colony of slate-colored plant lice, the species being known as the Poplar Stem Gall Louse. These galls had been opened and not an insect was left inside. On looking up into the tree a Yellow-Bellied Sapsucker (*Spyropicus varius*) was seen busily engaged in picking holes into the galls and evidently eating the insects which were inside. The galls grew, as described above, on the petioles of the leaves and the tearing apart of these by the bird caused the leaves to fall. Almost every leaf on the tree was affected by this gall, and we were informed by Mr. Shepherd that the almost constant falling of the leaves on the ground had made this bird a very undesirable visitor, as it was practically impossible to keep the lawn in order. This note is published in the OTTAWA NATURALIST as it is believed there have been few records of this kind made before.

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ASPLENIUM RUTA-MURARIA, L.—This plant was recorded in THE OTTAWA NATURALIST, Vol. XX., p. 135 from Southampton, Ont., as new to Canada. The Rev W. A. Burman has since shown me specimens collected by him at Banff, Rocky Mountains, in July, 1893. It must be very rare there, as few places in Canada have been so well botanized as Banff, during the past ten years, and no one else has reported it.

J. M. M.