

obtained either by digging the grubs out of the wood, or picking them out of the crevices of the bark in which they hide during the day. Sometimes during the winter I have found the stomachs of these birds filled with the seeds of the hemlock. These seeds seem to form a favorite food with many of our birds at this season; the berries of the sumach are also occasionally eaten by the little Downy, perhaps for the sake of the small beetles that are always to be found amongst them. These are the only two vegetable substances that I have ever known either of these species to feed upon.

Both these Woodpeckers are accused of injuring trees by boring holes in them to obtain a flow of sap, which they are said to drink. This is a mistake. The bird having the sap-sucking habit is the Yellow-bellied Woodpecker, an entirely different species, of which I shall speak presently. Nature has most perfectly fitted these birds for their task of ridding the trees of the grubs which bore into them. Their beaks are hard, sharp and chisel-like, so that they are enabled to enlarge the holes inhabited by these insects sufficiently to enable them to insert their long, barbed tongue, with which they extract the larvæ from their hiding places. In the winter these birds frequently visit the orchard, garden and shrubbery, and there they do most valuable work, by destroying the chrysalids of the moths that produce the leaf-eating caterpillars. The toughest cocoon ever spun by a caterpillar is no protection against the sharp beaks of these birds, even the strong case which encloses the chrysalis of the large *Cecropia* moth is soon torn open when found by a Downy Woodpecker and the contents devoured. Ants and borers in the trees are also greedily eaten by both species; in fact, nothing in the shape of insect life comes amiss to them, that can be found within their reach. The valuable work done by these birds for the protection of our trees should commend them to every lumberman, fruit grower and nurseryman, and though we cannot do very much to protect them from their natural enemies, we can cease destroying them ourselves and discountenance it in others.

*Red-headed Woodpecker.* This is the most beautiful bird of the whole Woodpecker family, the strong contrast of the glossy black and the white of its body and the brilliant crimson of the head of the adult birds render them very conspicuous objects of the country: their value from an economic point of view, however, is debatable. From the time of their arrival here in April until the first strawberry ripens these birds feed on insects entirely, and in pursuit of their food they often adopt the tactics of the fly-catchers by mounting to the top of a telegraph pole or bare limb of a tree, and from thence darting out at any passing insect large enough to attract their attention. If the location selected is a favorable one and food abundant, they will remain at the same spot for some time; but after the small fruits ripen their tastes change, and they then visit the strawberry patches, both wild and cultivated, and cherries and raspberries are also eaten by them, and carried to their young. When the season for small fruit is over they again resort to their insect eating habit, and so far as I have been able to observe, are not in this Province ever addicted to pilfering grain. I have occasionally seen an odd one make a raid on a vineyard and take a few grapes, and once or twice have seen them pick holes in apples, but the habit does not seem general.

There is no doubt that in the spring they do much good by destroying numbers of mature insects which, if allowed, would deposit eggs to produce vast numbers of injurious caterpillars. It is true also that in districts where small fruit is cultivated for profit they do much harm if they become sufficiently numerous. As the case now stands they are too scarce to do much injury and, except when they are too persistent in their visits to a garden or orchard, they may well be left alone. Although these birds are regular migrants, arriving here about the