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Crows.



HAT crows are common and conspicuous, and therefore generally known by name, if no more, will be readily admitted. There is a large family connection, including ravens, jays, blackbirds, and magpies. The raven is often mistaken for a crow by untrained eyes; but he is about a quarter larger than the crow, his wings are longer than the tail and overlap it, the bill is thatched, with stiff bristles that hide the nostrils, and there are many other differences between the Common American Crow and the Raven of the eastern portions of North America. Their habits are very dissimilar. The raven is a solitary bird, choosing the deeper forests and the lone sea-shore, and away from the haunts of men. They have long been considered birds of ill omen, and our literature abounds with references to this reputation. However, they are readily tamed if taken from the nest when young, and may even be taught to speak a few words, as every reader of "Barnaby Rudge" must have learned, wherein a specimen of this kind is an important character. Emboldened by hunger, they will pick up a chicken. Crows are never alone, in the breeding season they are paired during a few weeks, and then the young are urged out of the nest to a friendly limb near at hand, fed, and tended a few days, and apparently instructed in early lessons of crow talk, for there