

The Meadow Lark occasionally winters in the province (though, for what reason, it is hard to imagine), and from an examination of the stomach contents of several specimens taken in the winter, it has been found that, even under stress of weather, they had not resorted to vegetable diet, but had succeeded in unearthing various grubs and beetles. The Meadow Lark is thus in everyway a decidedly beneficial bird in the agricultural districts where it makes its summer home ; yet, in spite of this and of the beauty of its plumage and of its clear ringing whistle, it not only receives no protection at the hands of the farmer whom it befriends, but, in many cases, either the birds themselves or their eggs or young are wantonly destroyed. A very slight knowledge of the habits of the birds would do a great deal towards preventing their destruction.

In connection with the recognition of the economic value of birds, a little study will do a great deal towards clearing up many false ideas concerning hawks and owls, which are usually subject to the most relentless persecution. A little study will show that while some hawks, like the Goshawk and Sharp-shinned Hawk, and some owls, like the Great Horned Owl and the Snowy Owl, are injurious ; nevertheless, the great majority of them are, not only not injurious, but even decidedly beneficial. A careful observation of the habits of the living bird by competent observers and an examination of the contents of thousands of stomachs afford the only satisfactory test of its economic value. In the case of hawks and owls, these methods have been carefully applied and go to show that most of them are of great economic value.

The value of these birds lies in the destruction by them of very large numbers of mice, rats, squirrels, gophers, and other destructive vermin. A good illustration of the value of such an owl as the Long-eared Owl, is afforded by an examination of the pellets which collect beneath the roosting places. As nearly every one knows, an owl swallows its prey whole, and the indigestible portions, such as fur and bones, become matted into pellets and are disgorged through the mouth. In the case of a roost occupied by a Long-eared Owl for some weeks during November and December, 1902, about one hundred and fifty pellets were found. These pellets were about the size of a small mouse and contained on the