paler beneath and shaded to buffish yellow on the rump. The immature male is like the female, but paler above and with a yellow tint on breast and belly. In habits our two species are similar, though the white-winged is more northerly in distribution, and while the American is more abundant in Ontario its congener is in the majority in the more Eastern Provinces.

Their crossed bills—both mandibles are curved at the points and cross or overlap—separate these birds from their fellow finches, but they have still another distinguishing characteristic, that of hatching their young during the winter—in February usually. The nesting site is a coniferous tree in the midst of a thick grove, generally in a deep forest. The nest is placed amid the thickest foilage and is made as warm as twigs, shreds of bark, moss, hair and feathers can make it. The walls are high and thick, and are made firm and compact, so that the frost is well excluded. The birds evidently realize that care is required to protect the eggs, for as soon as one leaves the nest the mate at once steps on. Three or four eggs are laid, of a pale blue ground color, marked near the larger end with streaks and spots of reddish brown and lilac. These birds are gregarious and a number of nests are generally found in a grove, with several on the same tree. As soon as the broods are able to fly the parents and young join in large flocks and proceed northward, where they spend the warmer months.

The song of the crossbill is a sweet, cheerily whistled strain, very similar in tone and theme to that of the thistle-bird—American goldfinch—and like the latter's song is delivered on the wing, the voices sinking and swelling in rhythm with the undulations of their flight. When heard from mid-air, on a clear winter's day, as a flock goes sailing by, the effect is delightful.