

# THE OTTAWA NATURALIST

VOL. XXIII.

OTTAWA, FEBRUARY, 1910

NO. 11

## EVERYDAY ORNITHOLOGY.

BY NORMAN CRIDDLE, TREESBANK, MAN.

The following notes are made up simply of observations recorded in my note book at Aweme, Man., supplemented with additional remarks to make the whole appear less disjointed and more complete in detail. They are mere extracts from a mass of material covering a period of four years, commencing in 1906. They are given in the original form, not only because that saves labor, but chiefly because it gives them the appearance of having been made in the field, which is indeed the case.

1906.

JANUARY 10.—It seems remarkable that partridges (Ruffed Grouse) should have a preference for certain clumps of trees upon which they make their evening meal by eating the buds, but such is the case. Not only do they return to the same locality week after week throughout the winter months, but the same clumps seem to be selected year after year.

About one hundred yards from the farm buildings there is a bluff which contains a few hundred trees, all aspens of medium size, with smaller ones and hazel brush beneath. The larger trees are those selected, and every evening shortly after sunset five or six partridges appear, sometimes flying from a considerable distance. About the same number turned up last year, and also the previous winter. That they are gradually stripping the trees of their buds and consequently preventing the growth of leaves there is no doubt, but fortunately they confine themselves largely to those buds that in the course of time would produce catkins, so that the injury is not as great as might be suspected, though it is very evident when the leaves appear. During the day these birds content themselves with eating hazel catkins, rose-berries and such other fruits as appear above the snow. Consequently aspens and other poplars only suffer once in 24 hours.