

in the dry rotten wood of a decayed tree, which they line with the hair of some animal, and lay from six to twelve eggs, white, speckled with brownish red. The young, as soon as they are fledged, chatter and skip about with all the vivacity of their parents, and through the autumn and winter, the whole family continue to associate together, roving through the woods, or entering familiarly into our gardens and yards in search of their multifarious food, which consists not only of insects, their larvæ and eggs, and of seeds of various kinds, but of crumbs, and even scraps of meat, which may have been dropped about the yards or the door-steps.

The note of the Black Cap Titmouse (it can scarcely be called a song) possesses but little variety. Besides the well-known "*Chicka-dee-dee*," however, it has one or two clearly whistled and rather melancholy notes, which it frequently utters when flitting from tree to tree in search of its insect prey. The plumage of this bird is black on the throat, head, and back of the neck; the cheeks, and a line to the base of the bill, white. Upper part of the body greyish-brown; the wings darker, edged with white. The lower part of the body white, tinged with greyish brown; bill, black; legs, bluish-grey.

Frequently associated with the Titmouse at this season, and forming with them a busy, active, noisy group, are the Nuthatches and Brown Tree Creepers. There are two species of Nuthatch met with in our woods—the white breasted and the Red-bellied Nuthatch. The Red-bellied Nuthatch (*Sitta Canadensis*) is the more common of the two, more especially in the Pine woods, for which it seems to have an especial predilection. It may be met with there all the year round, moving restlessly from tree to tree, examining every hole and cranny in the bark, frequently rapping against it with its bill, and detaching small fragments, in order to get at the insects hidden underneath. Its monotonous *kank, kank, kank*, is heard at almost every hop, as it diligently pursues its search up to the very top of the tallest pines.

The nest of this Nuthatch is generally made in the bottom of some dead stump, at no great height from the ground. The eggs, four in number, are small, white with a deep blush, and sprinkled with reddish dots. The general

colour of the plumage above is a light leaden gray; the under parts brownish-red. The top of the head is bluish-black; a long white line passes over the eye, a broader line of black from the bill to the eye and down the neck; the throat white, primary quills dusky, margined with greyish-blue; tail feathers blackish, the two middle ones leaden colour, the lateral ones white towards the end.

The White-breasted Nuthatch (*Sitta Carolinensis*) is not so numerous as the one just described, although, like "the Red-bellied," it is found in most parts of Canada. It, too, during the summer, gives a preference to the most secluded parts of the forest, but comes about our orchards and farm-yards at the approach of winter. It shows but little fear of man; frequently, when watching one of them searching for insects on the trunk of some huge pine, the little fellow has crept down till almost at the bottom of the tree, and only a few feet from me, and clinging to the bark, head downward, regarded me with a quaint look for several seconds, before flying off to the next tall pine or hemlock. This species hollows out a place for its nest in the branch or trunk of some decayed tree; sometimes it contents itself with a deserted hole of a Woodpecker.

The eggs, five or six in number, are dull white, spotted with brown at the larger end.

The notes of the White-breasted Nuthatch are louder than those of the Red-bellied, but they resemble the same monosyllables, *kank, kank, kank*, uttered with a peculiarly nasal sound.

The plumage is deep black, glossed with blue on the upper part of the head and back of the neck. The back, wing and tail coverts, and middle feathers of the tail, light greyish-blue. Quills black, edged with bluish grey; three lateral tail feathers black, with a broad band of white near the end, the rest black, excepting the middle ones. The sides of the head, space above the eye, foreneck and breast, white; abdomen and lower tail coverts brownish red, with white tips; under wing coverts, black.

When November arrives, and the weather becomes still colder and more ungenial, another dweller in the forests makes its appearance, and like the Nuthatches and Titmouse, pays occasional visits to our orchards and gardens.