

## The Rockwood Review.

their vociferations, and the same remark holds true of the warbling vireos, which were daily in evidence for several weeks after their usual time of departure. And as the autumnal frost kept off longer than normal, wild and garden flowers remained longer in blossom, and as a consequence the humming birds continued their daily visits to the flower plots until the middle of September, one of their favorite flowers being as usual the Morning Glory and nasturtion, also the cultivated geraniums, and potted flowers on the sills of open house windows were by no means neglected. One of these little brilliant feathered birds came to an unfortunate end about the first hot days in September last. The trochilus—it was the hen-bird—came to explore the recesses of some geranium and begonia flowers that flourished in their pots on a window sill of our dwelling, which window was daily kept open. With their usual propensity to soar aloft, the bird after examining several of the pot-flowers, buzzed up violently against the room ceiling, and quickly exhausted itself by its hysterical flutterings, in a few minutes fell dead, and with its slender beak fractured on the floor of the room.

This was a second or third instance in our experience where humming birds had entered our dwelling, and so conducted their movements in a nearly similar irrational manner.

An acquaintance who is a lover of birds, and also a vigilant observer of their proceedings, tells that in his opinion the humming bird rarely if ever succeeds in rearing its young in latitudes as far northward as our Province of Ontario. For he avers that, having a number of times found the nest of the humming bird rubythroat containing eggs, he never knew any to be successfully hatched in these regions, never has seen them taking care of the immature young, and has also questioned a number of

well qualified observers on these points, and whose opinions and assurances were in unison with those that his long searches and investigations had caused him to entertain. Who can settle this moot point?

One morning late in August, some bluejays were noticed in our orchard, mobbing a screech owl that sat blinking and much perturbed in the main forking branches of a big apple tree. The owl's whinnings had been noticed among the shrubbery around the house for a number of nights previously, and marauding among the nests of the yellow finches which were numerous in the orchard was suspected, but pressing work on the farm prevented closer observances at the time. However one or two evenings later, just as lamps had been lit in the house, an inexplicable commotion of booming sound seemed to proceed from an open barrel about half filled with cold water, that stood on the ground just outside the kitchen door. The children were somewhat scared, and their father Arthur (my son), came presently forward with the lantern to sift the explanation of the hubbub. On looking out over the edge of the barrel, there appeared the big round yellow eyes, also the threatening panicky beak head and mottled brown gray outspread wings, of a screech owl on the surface of the water. "Lift the bird out immediately," said Arthur, "for it is at its last gasp through drowning." "Not much of that," replied the party of the first part, "I would as soon think of handling poison ivy." "Then bring me the tongs," said Arthur, and the ill-omened owl was lifted out of his chill bath vessel, only to close his eyes in a dying tremour. His too eager pursuit probably of a large moth had brought him to grief.

One of our neighbors last June removed a young heron from the parental nest on a tall tree, in a cedar swamp not far from here.