

Long-billed Marsh Wren, and the Short-billed Marsh Wren, as their name implies, frequent our marshes and low swampy meadows, where they assist in keeping down the hordes of mosquitos that are bred in such places. The Winter Wren is a more transitory visitor, the great bulk of them only passing through here in the spring and fall migrations. A few, however, remain here through the summer and nest in some secluded ravine in the woods.

The pert little House Wren takes up its abode right in and around the farm buildings, and even in our cities it will find a resting place, if it can get access to sufficient garden room to give it a hunting ground, and as it is quite satisfied to place its nest in a crevice or hole at no great height from the ground, it is not so likely to be dispossessed of its home by the European House sparrow as are birds that prefer a higher location. They are most indefatigable insect hunters, and should be encouraged to build in every garden. All that is necessary is to furnish them with a small box having a hole about one and one-half inches in diameter. Nail this up to a fence or building, about eight or ten feet from the ground, so that cats cannot get at it; and if any wrens come that way in the spring they are almost sure to take possession of it, and having once occupied it, they will in all probability return every year. The domestic cat is their worst enemy, and they seem to know it, for as soon as they catch sight of one of these detested creatures they start such a scolding that they arouse the whole feathered tribe in their neighborhood. In the autumn they eat a few elderberries, but this is the only vegetable food I have known them to take.

*Cuckoos.* These birds do not seem to be very well known in our Province, though we have two species, one of which is not uncommon. They are known as the Black-billed Cuckoo and Yellow-billed Cuckoo. Both of them are slim birds about twelve inches in length, of an olive brown color above, and white beneath. The Yellow-billed may be distinguished from its relative by the light chestnut color of the inner webs of part of the wing feathers. This is quite noticeable when the bird is flying. It also has the under mandible of the beak clear yellow. In the Black-billed species, the beak is all black, sometimes showing slight dull yellow marks below. Although the birds themselves are not known, most residents of the country must have noticed the loud harsh notes of 'kow kow' uttered by them, most frequently heard before and during rain, by reason of which the birds are in some localities called "rain crows."

The well known Cuckoo of Europe has the bad habit of laying its eggs in the nests of other birds, but although I have heard our birds charged with the same thing, I have never yet come across an instance of it, but have always found their nesting habits to be quite orthodox, though the nest they build can hardly be considered a model of bird architecture.

These two species of birds are the only ones, that to my knowledge habitually eat hairy caterpillars, and of these noxious insects they must destroy a large quantity, an examination of their stomachs generally showing a considerable number of them. On one occasion I found the stomach of a Black-billed Cuckoo packed with the spiny caterpillar of *Vanessa antiopa*, an insect that feeds in colonies and does much damage to the elm and willow trees. The habits of the two Cuckoos are much alike; the only difference I have noticed is that the Yellow-billed species seems to prefer the upper branches of tall trees in which to obtain its food, while the Black-billed resorts more to orchard trees and shrubbery. I have not found any evidence of habitual fruit-eating against either of them, so that from an economic standpoint they must be considered as purely beneficial, even if they do occasionally deposit an egg in the nest of another bird.