

Lesson 1.

THE WISE OLD CROW

1. INTRODUCTION.

The crow is probably the best known bird in Canada in respect to both its appearance and its call. It is well adapted for nature study work as it is accessible and easy to observe. Almost any season, except the middle of winter, is a good time to begin. It is probable that some member of the class has or has had a tame crow and can provide some interesting information about its habits. A crow's nest can be provided for the school museum by some of the boys and it should be no difficult task to develop much interest in this most intelligent member of the feathered family.

2. FORM, SIZE AND COLOR.

(a) Observations to be made by pupils.

How many times as long as a robin is a crow?

The robin is 10 inches long—estimate in inches the length of the crow.

What is the color of the crow?

Is there any part of it—beak, eyes or feet—that is a different color?

Notice any metallic reflections.

Look out for birds similar to the crow and mingling with them but much larger.

Is the beak strong or weak?

Describe the feet.

(b) To the teacher.

The crow is about 19 inches long—twice as long as a robin. The whole body is a proverbial black even to the beak and feet. The eyes themselves are black. The upper parts have metallic reflections of a steel blue color. The under surface is duller than the back. The beak is so strong that the crow has no successful enemies. The feet are also strong, with four toes—three in front and one behind. The northern raven, very much larger than the crow, is often seen amongst his smaller cousins.