

Carnivorous birds, such as hawks, owls and others have a very important part to play in nature. I have often marvelled at the denseness of many people in what we may call the gopher districts, and at the eagerness with which they will pursue their very best friend. As soon as a hawk appears some one is after him, either the farmer or his son, and they are not satisfied until he is caught and his wings set up as ornaments. I have observed that wherever we have a fair number of hawks and owls, gophers and mice are kept in check. I should like very much to see in some of the acts which regulate these matters that any person may be prosecuted for killing these. Even if the hawk does steal a chicken or two, he earns them, for we have often and often seen acres of land that would have been destroyed if it had not been for these birds.

I would like to mention here the badger as another great friend of the farmer although he is not a bird.

Then we have the insectivorous birds. Among these may be named the fly catcher, wren, chickadee and the black bird and others. These do a great deal of excellent work in spite of the bad character which they get and which they partly deserve. I was unable to put my hands upon some information I have somewhere about the result of an examination of the crops of a number of birds which had been killed, and the number of insects which they were found to contain was something immense, so that you see the number of insects which a good healthy bird, his wife and family will require is extremely great. Fly catchers live upon small insects generally. The wren and other small birds live largely upon the larvæ of insects and upon their eggs. Then there are others which keep in check the butterflies and other insects of that class. A curious thing is that certain birds eat certain butterflies and will drop any other kind they may happen to catch, and there are some butterflies that no bird will eat. A very large part of the work in killing insects is in looking up grubs that would eventually make butterflies. If you have watched the birds that follow the plow, you will