

NATURE STUDY LESSONS

2. APPEARANCE OF BIRD.

(a) Observations to be made by pupils.

Describe the color of each woodpecker you see, as follows: top of head, sides of head, back of the neck, the back and upper part of the tail, the throat, the breast and belly, the wings.

If two are seen together see in what respect they differ. Notice particularly what parts are red. Study the shape of the beak, the number of toes, the position of each when hanging to the tree. Also notice the curvature and sharpness of the claws. When climbing a tree, is the end of the tail rounded, straight or concave? If there is a specimen in the museum or a dead one is found by any pupil let these points be studied more carefully.

(b) To the teacher.

The facts regarding the colors of each species can be found in The New Canadian Bird Book.

3. THE CLIMBING HABITS.

(a) Observations to be made by pupils.

What is the position of the tail, and of the toes as it climbs a tree?

Does it usually go straight up, spirally, or irregularly?

Does it ever back down? Does it ever slip?

Does it always have the head up?

Is any noise produced as it moves?

What seems to be its purpose in moving up a tree trunk?

(b) To the teacher.

In moving, the tail is held firmly against the tree as a prop and the outer and inner toes are backward, the two middle ones being forward, the four with their sharp claws seizing the foothold with great force. They usually light near the bottom of a trunk and move gradually up in a somewhat irregular manner. They seldom back down as the stiff spines of the tail, held firmly to the wood, prevent it. They never slip as they move forward with steady foot, and are as much at home with head down as up. As they move gaily in searching for food, they give a joyous grunt with every advance.