

A few may be said to be beneficial, in consequence of their feeding on troublesome weeds, such as thistles, etc., while a few others are decidedly injurious. Among the common birds in this second class I would mention the yellow warbler or spider bird, *Dendroica æstiva*; the red start, *Setophaga ruticilla*; the red-eyed and yellow-throated vireos, *Vireo olivaceus* and *V. flavifrons*; the various species of woodpecker, *Picidæ*, and the blue bird, *Siala sialis*.

The birds comprised in the third class are only partially insectivorous. Among the common species are the cat-bird, *Galeoscoptes Carolinensis*; robin, *Turdus migratorius*, and brown thrush, *Harporhynchus rufus*; the sparrows, *Fringillidæ*; the cuckoos, *Coccidæ*; the nuthatch, *Sitta Carolinensis*; chickadee, *Parus atricapillus*; kinglets, *Sylviidæ*; meadow-lark, *Sturnella magna*; Baltimore oriole, *Icterus Baltimore*, and the wren, *Troglodytes ædon*. Besides these there are the blackbirds, *Icteridæ*, which in the spring devour more or less insect food, but feed chiefly on grain and seeds during the remainder of the year. Nearly all birds, excepting the rapacious species, feed their young on such soft food as worms, caterpillars, soft-bodied insects and fruit, and from the time that young birds are hatched until they acquire the power of flight, a very large quantity of insect food is undoubtedly consumed; but the question of the greatest practical importance to the agriculturist is how far are the birds a help in keeping in check *injurious* insects. With the object of obtaining light on this point, I have, with the help of my son, W. E. Saunders—who has for some years paid special attention to this matter—examined the contents of the stomachs of a large number of birds, and I must frankly confess that the larger the experience gained in this direction the more I have been convinced that but comparatively little help is got from birds in keeping in subjection *injurious* insects.

When the cut worms were so common with us this spring that any bird with a very little effort might have had its fill of them, the contents of a number of stomachs were examined, especially those of the robin, but not a single specimen of this larva was found in any of them. It has been urged that some birds devour the larvæ of the plum curculio by picking them out of the fallen fruit, but I have failed to find any confirmation of this statement, indeed never found a curculio larva in the stomach of any bird excepting once in that of a robin, who had evidently swallowed it by accident when bolting a whole cherry. As for the robin having any claims upon the sympathies of man for the good he does, I