

your section? How many of them grew in the woods? What are the five earliest flowering forest-trees?

Begin a collection of pressed plants. Arrange them according to their botanical families. Make a collection of galls. Also, collect the insects that come out of these galls. Collect twigs of our native trees. Collect evergreen herbs. Collect mosses and ferns. Study your collections. In short, study Nature. The collections are of secondary importance. Hold a local school Fair at any convenient season, and exhibit your collections. Parents will be interested in seeing them.

#### NATURE STUDY OF ANIMALS.

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##### Attractions of Birds.

Our spring migrants are returning, and many of them are already selecting sites for their summer nests. If you wish to have them locate near your home or school now is the time to advertise. In general they choose a place with trees and shrubbery, and are fond of hedges, particularly if they are evergreen. The arbor vitae and spruce hedges are among the best, for they give protection to both summer and winter birds.

Given general conditions, it takes but little extra thought and effort to attract birds around a place, and even then you are the gainer, for through their cheery manner, merry song, and the fun of watching their peculiar little habits, they more than repay you a hundred-fold; not to mention their great economic value in keeping down insect pests, and, in the case of the purple martin and King bird, in driving off crows, eagles and hawks. Among the more simple artificial devices for their attraction may be named protection, food and feeding boxes, bird baths and drinking places, and houses and holes for nesting in.

Protection is a prime necessity. Birds must be made to feel your friendship, and to know that no harm will come from you or your home. If you cannot claim their confidence all your efforts will be vain. Nothing in the line of attractive premises will compensate for the presence of a vicious cat in the back yard.

The best bird students recommend turning the cat into fertilizer, and that you warn your cat-keeping neighbors that all trespassing cats will go the same way. The red squirrel is another animal that should be banished from your lot. Even the small boy must be taught to respect your friends. The people most successful in attracting birds and animals are very careful to win and keep their confidence.

Food and feeding boxes are also among the necessities. There are many kinds of feeding devices recommended by bird students, varying somewhat for different species, and ranging from food scattered on the ground, or on the top of a packing case, to the weather-vane house, so contrived as always to shelter feeding birds, and the automatic food bell, designed by the German bird lover, Baron von Berlepsch. A good simple device is a board about sixteen inches square, with raised edges, fastened to the top of a post, about five feet high. In feeding put out a variety of food, allow none to become stale. Note the kind of food each species prefers. By using several small feeding boards each with a different food you will soon be able to learn their likes and dislikes.

A good bird-bath and drinking fountain (for they bathe and drink in the same dish) is made by placing a shallow dish of water upon a support about five feet high. A large flower-pot saucer makes a good dish. Fasten to the supporting post the branch of a tree so that it extends up alongside and above the bath; this is a kind of "bathing house at the beach," where they prepare for the dip, and later arrange their toilet. Watch them. Notice how often they drink and bathe during the day, and what satisfaction they seem to take in the bath. Change the water daily, be observant, and you will soon find out things not recorded in books.

Bird houses of necessity vary with the varying habits and size of different species. The "martin house" is a familiar object, in many parts of our provinces. The purple martin appreciates this thoughtfulness and returns year after year to his summer home. Each room should have a floor space about six inches square, and a height of eight inches, with a door about two inches in diameter. Similar houses with the door about an inch and a quarter in diameter will be occupied by the tree swallow. The