

The Bird that Nests in the Snow.

SIDNEY S. S. STANSELL, Edmonton, Alberta, in *Bird Lore*.

The Canada Jay has almost as many local names as the Flicker. Those who do not know him by the name of Canada Jay, recognize him at once when you call him "Moose Bird," "Camp Robber," "Whiskey John," "Whiskey Jack," or "Lumber Jack."

When you are travelling through the woods he is almost always your constant companion, and when you light a camp-fire or discharge a gun, he is always there, should he be within hearing or seeing distance, chirping contentedly and looking for what he may devour.

I was travelling through the woods one day in early spring and fired a small rifle, the report of which was not very loud, but almost immediately a jay came and lit on a small tree near by and chirped as though asking for his share of the game. I soon threw him a morsel and he immediately took it and flew away, probably to his nest to feed his mate—a fact which I know he does.

A certain pair of Canadian Jays lived all winter long in the immediate vicinity of two small cabins in a clearing. Whenever a crumb or scrap of meat was thrown from either door they would pounce upon it and devour it at once, hide it in a cavity of some tree, or stow it snugly away between two branches to be eaten later when food became scarce.

These birds became quite tame. I have had them come and take food from my hand; at other times they have entered the cabin through an open window and helped themselves to food placed purposely on the table for them.

About the first of March these birds began to show signs of wanting to nest, although the mercury registered more than forty degrees below zero; nevertheless, a nesting-site was chosen in a clump of "diamond" willows within two hundred yards of one of the cabins, and house-building began. On March 31, one egg was deposited. I visited the nest daily afterwards until April 8, then as no other egg had been laid I proceeded to photograph the bird and her home.

At first the bird seemed quite shy, and flew away several times while I was making preparations for the picture. Each time when she returned she would alight on the edge of the nest, look around for a second or two, then place her beak gently on the single egg, as if to make sure it had not been disturbed, all this time uttering a low not unmusical chirp; then quietly settle down on the nest. Once

only did her mate return with her, then they both carefully examined the egg, after which they gently and lovingly rubbed their beaks together, then he flew away, and she took her place on the nest again.

The nest was situated eight feet from the ground, the lower portion was composed of twigs, the upper very closely woven with grasses, shredded bark and fine twigs. The cup-like interior was neatly and warmly lined with rabbit fur, hair and fine feathers.

Warm this beautiful home is, and warm it should be, for nesting as they do, in winter, it would take but a moment's exposure of the very severe winters here to chill the tiny birds to death or freeze the unhatched eggs.

Snowbirds.

Along the narrow, sandy height
I watch them swiftly come and go,
Or round the leafless wood,
Like flurries of wind-driven snow,
Revolving in perpetual flight,—
A changing multitude.

Nearer and nearer still they sway,
And scatter in a circled sweep,
Rush down without a sound:
And now I see them peer and peep
Across yon level bleak and gray,
Searching the frozen ground

Until a little wind upheaves
And makes a sudden rustling there,
And then they drop their play,
Flash up into the sunless air,
And, like a flight of silver leaves,
Swirl round and sweep away.

—Archibald Lampman.

A Neglected Duty.

A fact overlooked by many teachers and one which accounts for many poor lessons, is this: The great majority of pupils do not know how to study. If teachers would spend the necessary time in instructing their pupils in the art of study, lessons would be better learned, less time would be used in their preparation, the teacher would be better satisfied with the results obtained, and be spared much useless worry and labour; and, too, in consequence of better recitations, the pupils would be more interested in their studies, and in much better humour with their teachers. If account could be kept, and a report made, teachers and pupils alike would be amazed at the loss of time while the average lesson is being prepared. Many pupils think they are studying when they are not. They are not interested; their mind wanders; a paragraph will be