

trees of different kinds but in the same tree at different seasons. The summer and winter condition of twigs and buds of

deciduous trees are so different that one can scarcely identify a tree in winter from a knowledge of its summer appearance.

tion of its wings, not far above the ground, towards some nearby post or bush, on the top of which it alights after an upward sweep which is very noticeable.

The shrike's nest is not exactly a high-class model of bird architecture, but it is a strongly put together structure of sticks, strips of bark and straw-grasses, lined with rootlets and wool or such other fine material as is available. In it are deposited five or six eggs of a greyish or creamy white color, dotted and marked chiefly at the large end with various shades of brown.

The birds are very pertinacious in keeping to a suitable nesting place, usually returning year after year to the chosen locality if they are not disturbed, and as their food consists principally of insects and field mice, they are decidedly beneficial to the farmer. The only objection that can be urged against them is that they do occasionally destroy other small birds. In the case of the summer shrike this does not occur very often, and as those killed by the northern shrike in winter are chiefly house-sparrows, but little fault will be found with that.

He who plants a tree is a benefactor of mankind. For more than a hundred years we have been destroying trees. We must now quickly plant other trees to take their places or we and our children will suffer from famine. We should plant fruit trees along the roadside and educate the school children to respect them and to care for them. We should plant all our rough hillsides with useful trees, both for the growing value of the trees and because that is the only way to control flood of waters.

Nature About the Farm

A Day in July

A few days ago the Entomological Society of Ontario held their annual summer meeting at the Agricultural College at Guelph, where the members from a distance were most hospitably entertained by President G. C. Creelman and members of the faculty.

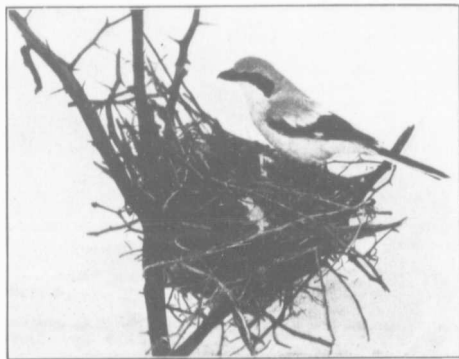
The meetings were well attended, many members of the Society from a distance being present. On the last day of the meeting the naturalists, together with the members of the large Nature Study class now attending the College, had a most enjoyable field day at Puslinch lake. The collections made during the day produced nothing particularly rare, but much that was both interesting and useful was seen and discussed.

On the way to the lake, perched on the telegraph wires by the roadside, a brood of young shrikes were patiently, or perhaps impatiently, awaiting their parents, which were industriously seeking food for their ever hungry offspring.

The shrikes, or butcher birds as they are more commonly called, are peculiar and very interesting creatures. The family is a large one and widely distributed over the world, yet their characteristics are so strongly marked in all cases, that they are readily recognizable. In Ontario we have two forms. One, the Great Northern shrike, is a winter visitor only. The other, the Migrant shrike, is a summer resident, arriving here usually in April and leaving us about the end of August. In length, this species is rather over eight inches. Bluish ash colored above, whitish on the lower part of the back and scapulars; below, white. On each side of the head is a black bar which meets across the forehead; wings and tail black with white markings, which are very conspicuous when the bird is flying. The head is large and the beak strong and hooked at the end. They usually frequent roadsides or pasture fields where thorn bushes or locust trees are growing, upon the thorns of which they impale their prey when captured. Since the introduction of barbed wire fences, I have frequently found shrikes taking advantage of the facilities afforded by the barbs and stringing insects, mice, etc., along the wires in a manner which is probably very convenient for them when they wish to make selections from their larder.

When hunting, the shrikes usually perch themselves on the top of a bush or post from which they can obtain a clear view all round them. When a large insect, mouse or small reptile shows itself within range, it is promptly pounced upon and with a few vigorous blows of the hooked and toothed bill is killed. If the bird is very hungry at the moment, it is then and there devoured, or if young in the nest require to be fed, the kill is immediately carried to them, but if food is abundant, the prey is carried to some convenient bush, where it is impaled upon a thorn or sharp twig. It is sometimes said that the structure of the bird renders this habit necessary, because, while it has much the same habits as the smaller hawks, yet it has feet and legs similar to those of the perching birds, and therefore is incapable of grasping its prey in its claws and holding it firmly, while with its beak it tears it to pieces. This is probably correct, but the bird can and does sometimes devour even field mice without first spiking them, and, on the other hand, unless food is scarce, does not seem often to resort to its stored-up victims for food but leaves them hanging on the bushes to decay.

When on the wing this bird is easily distinguishable from all other small species by its peculiar method of flight. It rarely strikes out across country, but usually when it leaves its perch drops downward and progresses with a steady but rapid mo-



SHRIKE AND NEST

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