

on the crown of the head, but the upper wing coverts, and the lower part of the body, are grey instead of brown, and the throat and breast are a lighter grey. The chipping sparrow builds early in May. Its nest, which is composed of fine dried grass, and lined with horse or cow hair, is placed sometimes in an apple tree in the orchard, sometimes in an evergreen bush or shrub near the house, and occasionally it may be met with, snugly built in among the creepers covering our verandahs. The eggs are generally four or five in number, of a light greenish blue colour, slightly marked with brown spots towards the lower end.

Although the Song Sparrow (*Fringilla Melodia*) most frequently arrives during the first mild days of March, yet if the weather become cold and stormy, they seek the shelter of the woods and the thickest recesses of the shrubbery, and their notes are not heard until returning warmth and sunshine call them forth again.

In April, if the weather is fine, the fields and gardens resound with their song at all hours of the day. Though not very prolonged, their notes are very sweet and varied, and unlike many other birds, they continue to sing throughout the whole summer. The plumage of the Song Sparrow is of a very sober hue, dark brown and grey are the prevailing tints. The upper part of the head is reddish brown, mottled with dark brown, sides of the head bluish grey, with a broad line of brown running back from the eye. The neck and breast spotted with dark brown, the back grey, streaked with brown, wings and tail dark brown. This bird builds sometimes in low bushes, but more frequently on the ground. The nest is made of fine grass and lined with horse-hair. The number of eggs is from five to six, of a light greenish white, speckled with dark umber.

No sweeter song is heard in "grove or wood" at this season of the year, than the warbling of that handsome bird, the Purple Finch (*Fringilla Purpurea*), which, although they may occasionally be seen in a very mild winter in company with the Siskin or the Crossbill, flying over woods or orchards, yet are sufficiently rare visitors during the cold weather, to make their advent the more marked when April comes, and we catch a sight of the handsome cock bird, on some bright morning, in his full livery of crimson, perched on the topmost bough of an apple tree, and pouring forth a succession of sweet warbling notes, sometimes for half an hour together. Like the Pine Grosbeak or the Bullfinch of the old world, the Purple Finch occasionally commits great depredations on the buds of our fruit trees, and later in the season, when the cherries are ripe, it rivals the Waxen Chatterer or the Robin in its devotion to that fruit. The plumage of the adult male is very handsome. The head, neck, breast, back and upper tail coverts are a rich deep lake, approaching to purplish crimson on the head and neck, and fading into rose colour on the belly. The

quills and larger wing coverts are deep brown, edged with purplish red, and the tail feathers are deep brown similarly margined.

The young birds and the females have a very sober attire of brownish olive, streaked with dark brown.

As the month advances, fresh notes from new arrivals continually strike upon the ear. Strolling through the garden or the orchard, we may hear a low, sweet, soft call note, like that of a tame canary, followed immediately by a rapid, joyous warbling—it is the American Goldfinch (*Fringilla Tristis*).

This pretty, elegant, little creature, like the Purple Finch, sometimes, though rarely, will linger with us through a mild winter, but generally they move off in large flocks to the south, at the approach of autumn, and do not return to us until towards the middle or end of this month. The cock bird, when in full plumage, is one of the handsomest of our songsters, and, unlike many other of our gaily plumaged birds, sings with great sweetness.

Indeed, both in its song and in its peculiar mode of flight, rising and falling alternately, in deep curved lines after each motion of the wings, and uttering one or two notes at the same time, it closely resembles the European Goldfinch. Like that bird also it is exceedingly fond of the seeds of the thistle. It tears up the down and withered petals of the ripening flowers, and leaning downwards upon them eats off the seed and allows the down to float in the air.

The general colour of the summer plumage of the male of the American Goldfinch is a rich lemon yellow, the forepart of the crown of the head black, and the wings and tail black, the quill feathers and larger wing coverts edged with yellowish white. The inner webs of the tail are white.

The female wants the black spot on the head, and, instead of the brilliant yellow, the general colour of the plumage is brownish olive. The younger males do not put on their yellow livery until the second year, and in winter the old ones lose their beauty and assume the duller tints of the female, so that at that season young and old of both sexes very closely resemble each other. The nest of the Goldfinch is beautifully formed of various lichens fastened together by saliva and lined with the softest substances. The female lays from four to six eggs, which are white and marked at the larger end with reddish brown spots.

Little parties of the Cow Bunting or Cow Blackbird (*Emberiza Peccoris*) may now be seen on fine mornings, visiting our pasture fields and lawns, running about the grass in search of insects, larvæ, and worms, and betaking themselves at nightfall to roost among the tall reeds and sedges, on the margin of some swamp or river.

This bird, like the Cuckoo of Europe, follows the singular custom of not making a nest of its own, but deposits its eggs one at a time in the nest of some other bird, leaving them to the care of a foster parent. When the female is about to