

BIRD NOTES FOR JANUARY, FEBRUARY AND MARCH.

The following persons have kindly consented to co operate in order to make the records of the arrivals, departures, nesting and other habits of our birds more accurate: Miss G. Harmer, Mr. H. B. Small, Mr. Geo. White, Mr. A. G. Kingston, Dr. J. Fletcher, Mr. W. A. D. Lees and Prof. J. Macoun. The assistance of all others who are interested in birds is earnestly requested.

CROW.—This is a winter bird at Ottawa. A few forsake the dense woods at intervals throughout the winter in search of food. They have been seen all winter at the Experimental Farm. A flock was observed by Mr. Small on the 6th of March, and by Mr. White on the 11th of March.

PINE GROSBEAK.—For the past few winters this bird has visited Ottawa in large numbers. In the opinion of Mr. Small the reason they have been so abundant of late years is that the European mountain ash, of which many have been planted about Ottawa, are now fruiting heavily, thus providing this bird with food. They seem to enjoy eating the buds of the spruce, and the fruit of the green ash at the Experimental Farm. The first flock of these birds, recorded, was one of ten seen by Mr. White on the 1st of January. They were shot by Mr. G. Muirhead in the Rideau Hall grounds on the 30th of March. Dr. Fletcher contributes the following interesting notes on this bird:

"The winter of 1896-97 must undoubtedly be characterised as having been a remarkably mild one and yet the large numbers of the beautiful Pine Grosbeaks which enlivened our streets were a conspicuous feature of the season. The usual statement with regard to these birds is that they frequent cities most in cold winters. During January and February the mountain ash trees in the city attracted large flocks of these pretty, gentle birds, and, owing to their well-known tameness, which is referred to by several writers, large numbers were caught or killed by thoughtless boys and idle men. This is much to be regretted, for, although these winter visitors have a very sweet plaintive song, they are not at all suitable birds for domestication in cages. They are greedy and untidy feeders, scattering their food through the bars of their cages, and besides this they live, as a rule, only a few months in captivity, generally getting thinner and pining away during the hot summer months."