

## FLIGHT.

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Its usual flight is undulating, so characteristic of the Woodpecker family as well as the Crossbills, many of our Finches and some other species. While gaining headway its wings beat the air rapidly, producing a whistling sound which, upon gaining sufficient altitude and velocity, apparently ceases altogether, recurring only when about to alight. Perhaps this noise is only an audible manifestation of its almost perpetual bustle and restlessness, as I have known it upon rare occasions to take flight or alight within a few feet of me with the stealth and noiselessness of an Owl. When flying in flocks, which by the way are never compact, it does not act with the unity of action of the majority of our birds; still there is considerable regularity of length and inflection of the waves produced by the alternate opening and closing of the wings. During '96 I took the following notes: June 25, one flushed at road-side, rose twenty feet at a distance of seventy-five feet—just clearing the comb of a small barn—making five dips of about three feet or one dip every fifteen feet on an average. One flushed from creek bank and flew to ground again. Ten feet rise in forty feet, making two dips of less than one-half foot. August 1, several flushed from ground. Ten feet rise in forty feet, two dips of about three feet or one dip every twenty feet. It is capable of greatly increasing its usual speed and sustaining itself with little or no undulation but seldom rising to any great height above the tree tops except when migrating. Alighting is best accomplished by a slightly upward movement, and when at right angles to its perch the tail plays an important part in the rather awkward feat of balancing, suggesting a comparatively recent acquirement and one not attained by the true Woodpeckers.