

seems to have but one song (at least for one day), which he repeats at short intervals throughout the spring months. However, in a large field one can hear a dozen Larks all singing a different tune at the same time.

Now if we were to take these songs, put them together, and assume that they were given by one bird we would have quite an interesting one-sided conversation. It would run something like this: We see the Meadowlark standing on a post repeating, "*Oh, yes, I am a pretty-little-bird*" (the "*pretty-little-bird*" winds up with a trill). In a moment he says, "*I'm-going to-eat pretty-soon.*" Then, suiting the action to the word, he drops out of sight into the grass, and presently we hear him say, "*I cut 'im clean off, I cut 'im clean off*" (this is often followed by "*Yup*"). He flies back to his perch with a bug in his bill, and when he has deliberately eaten it, he—in a fast, sing-song and unmusical voice—says, "*It makes me feel very good.*" From another portion of the field a voice calls, "*Hey, come here, you red-headed Coolie!*" It is probably the irate "Mrs." After hastily cautioning us, "*You needn't shoot my brother Bill,*" the hen-pecked (we imagine) husband flies away with a sputtering note, leaving us with a good opinion of his work as a bug destroyer and musician.*

The average bird's song is given so rapidly and is of such a bird-like quality that an attempt to put it into words is quite impossible if the writer would have his readers understand them as he writes them. With the Meadowlark it is different; the notes are given plainly and with about the same speed as the human voice talks, so are easily put into words.

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ARE BIRDS WEATHER PROPHETS?

In looking through an old record book, I found a curious note about birds oiling their feathers before a storm. It is of an interrogative nature, and I pass it on to the reader with the hope that it will at least be of interest, even though no conclusions are reached.

It seems I had heard some one say that birds were endowed with remarkable powers of observation, could tell when a storm was approaching, and had forethought enough to use their secretion of oil on their feathers to make them more waterproof. This wierd and, as perhaps I should say, unreasonable story, interested me. One lady told me that she had watched Mourning Doves industriously oil their coats before a mid-summer rain, but further

* Many other phrases are in common use with Meadowlarks, but the ones given above are the ones most frequently heard and easily understood.

than this I could get no information, and after making a note of it the subject was forgotten.

Birds would be as likely to preen their feathers before a storm as at any other time, and it might be easy to imagine a connection in this respect, while a definite answer would be very difficult to obtain. If any reader has ready information on this subject, I should be very grateful if he would impart it.

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CARDINALS AT WAYALUSING, WISCONSIN

Mr. Howard Clark Brown's notes on the Cardinal lead me to offer my experiences with the species here. While I was making a bird count in the woods in summer I found fully as many cardinals as we find here in winter. They were about their nesting activities, and of course secretive and not easy to find. In the winter they find the food easier to get and more abundant at the lynch counters than in the woods, therefore one finds them plentiful in places where they are easily seen. They break up the big kernels of corn with a sort of churning movement of their bills. I once saw a male cardinal feed his mate while she was sitting on the nest. He broke the kernels of corn up and then fed the pieces one by one to the female, putting them into her bill. In the winter one is sure to find cardinals about corn cribs where the corn can be gotten at. Cardinals also like nut meats and squash and pumpkin seeds. Like many of our native birds they are tormented by the English sparrow. A pair tried to nest in the vines on my neighbor's porch. Three eggs were laid before the sparrows found the nest. Then the sparrows broke one of the eggs. The cardinals succeeded in hatching one young, but the sparrows killed it and tore the nest to pieces. Another pair of cardinals tried to build a nest in some grape vines near the house, but as fast as the cardinals would build it the sparrows tore it down. The cardinals finally got discouraged and went away. Three pairs of cardinals nested near my house last summer. Senator Robert Glenn found the first cardinal here in 1906. Now there are dozens of them.

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