Wild Birds at Home

Fifth Series

London & Glasgow: Gowans & Gray, Ltd.
Presented by the Executors of
Norman Douglas Simpson
1890 – 1974
Nature Pictures

A Magnificent Volume, size of Page, \(12\frac{1}{2}" \times 10"\), containing SEVERAL HUNDREDS of ILLUSTRATIONS, every one from life, and quite different from those in our "Nature Books," by the best nature-photographers, of birds, animals, fishes, flowers, fungi, insects, etc.

Bound in Cloth Gilt, 7/6 net

Can also be had in Twelve 6d. Parts, which can be purchased separately.

Special Features of some of the Parts:


LONDON & GLASGOW: GOWANS & GRAY, LTD.
Gowans's Nature Books

The object of these little books is to stimulate a love for nature and a desire to study it. All the volumes of the series that have been issued so far have been very successful, and the publishers hope to be able to maintain the very high standard of excellence which has made this series so well known all over the country. Some of the photographs included in the different volumes are unequalled and unique triumphs of the nature-photographer's art.

No. 1.—WILD BIRDS AT HOME. Sixty Photographs from Life, by Chas. Kirk, of British Birds and their Nests.

No. 2.—WILD FLOWERS AT HOME. First Series. Sixty Photographs from Nature, by Cameron Todd.

No. 3.—WILD FLOWERS AT HOME. Second Series. By the Same.

No. 4.—BUTTERFLIES AND MOTHs AT HOME. Sixty Photographs from Life, by A. Forrester.

No. 5.—WILD BIRDS AT HOME. Second Series. By Chas. Kirk.

No. 6.—FRESHWATER FISHES. Sixty Photographs from Life, by Walford B. Johnson and Stanley C. Johnson, M.A.

No. 7.—TOADSTOOLS AT HOME. Sixty Photographs of Fungi, by Somerville Hastings, F.R.C.S.

No. 8.—OUR TREES & HOW TO KNOW THEM. Sixty Photographs by Chas. Kirk.

No. 9.—WILD FLOWERS AT HOME. Third Series. By Somerville Hastings, F.R.C.S.

No. 10.—LIFE IN THE ANTARCTIC. Sixty Photographs from Life by Members of the Scottish National Antarctic Expedition.
No. 11.—REPTILE LIFE. Sixty Photographs from Life, by Walford B. Johnson and Stanley C. Johnson, M.A.

No. 12.—SEA-SHORE LIFE. Sixty Photographs by the Same.

No. 13.—BIRDS AT THE ZOO. Sixty Photographs from Life, by W. S. Berridge, F.Z.S.

No. 14.—ANIMALS AT THE ZOO. Sixty Photographs by the Same.

No. 15.—SOME MOTHs AND BUTTERFLIES AND THEIR EGGS. Sixty Photographs by A. E. Tonge, F.E.S.

No. 16.—WILD FLOWERS AT HOME. Fourth Series. By Somerville Hastings.


No. 18.—POND AND STREAM LIFE. Sixty Photographs from Life, by Walford B. Johnson and Stanley C. Johnson, M.A.

No. 19.—WILD BIRDS AT HOME. Third Series. By Chas. Kirk.

No. 20.—ALPINE PLANTS AT HOME. First Series. Sixty Photographs by Somerville Hastings, F.R.C.S.

No. 21.—FOSSIL PLANTS. Sixty Photographs by E. A. Newell Arber, M.A., F.L.S., F.G.S.

No. 22.—ALPINE PLANTS AT HOME. Second Series. By Somerville Hastings.

No. 23.—OUR FLOWERING SHRUBS AND HOW TO KNOW THEM. Sixty Photographs by Chas. Kirk.

No. 24.—WILD BIRDS AT HOME. Fourth Series. Sixty Photographs by Peter Webster.

No. 25.—TOADSTOOLS AT HOME. Second Series. By Somerville Hastings.

No. 26.—WILD LIFE IN THE FALKLAND ISLANDS. Sixty Photographs from Life, by Arthur F. Cobb, B.A.

No. 27.—BIRDS AT THE ZOO. Second Series. By W. S. Berridge.

No. 28.—ANIMALS AT THE ZOO. Second Series. By W. S. Berridge.

Others in Preparation.

Price 6d. Net Each Volume; Postage 1d. Each.

GOWANS & GRAY, Ltd., London & Glasgow
Gowans's Colour Prints

In Germany during the last few years attempts have been made by some enterprising publishers to raise the standard of artistic taste of ordinary people with little money to spend in pictures, by issuing colour prints for wall-decoration, specially painted by the best artists in the country, at very cheap prices. These attempts have been attended with great success, and many hundreds of such prints can now be had. Messrs. Gowans & Gray have gone a step further still, and they have now issued the first three of a similar specially-painted series of pictures, 14" x 10" in size, which are sold in neat brown or white paper frames, ready to hang on the wall, at the unprecedented price of One Shilling each; post free, 1/4.

THE TITLES OF THE THREE ISSUED ARE—

No 1. "MY POOR DOG TRAY," by Charles Pears.
No. 2. "APPLE BLOSSOM," by Jessie M. King.
No. 3. "FAR FROM THE MADDING CROWD," by Stephen Reid.

They are all artistic enough to hang in any room, no matter how luxurious, and should supersede those oil-colour daubs and grocer's-calendar-pictures, which are so often to be seen hung up in British houses, where everything else, except the pictures, is in good taste.

Gowans & Gray, Ltd., London and Glasgow
Wild Birds at Home

Fifth Series
Nest and Eggs of Whitethroat

Nest und Eier der Dorngrasmücke

Nid et Œufs de la Fauvette
WILD BIRDS AT HOME

FIFTH SERIES

Sixty photographs from life, by Arthur Brook, of British Birds and their Nests

GOWANS & GRAY, LTD.
5 Robert Street, Adelphi, London, W.C.
58 Cadogan Street, Glasgow
1911
ANY of the photographs in this volume will be a revelation to bird-lovers and nature-photographers. Nothing finer has been done than the series of photographs of the jay, buzzard, sparrow-hawk, and kestrel which, with other fine snapshots, make up this wonderful collection. Indexes to the English and Latin names of the birds represented in the first five series of "Wild Birds at Home" will be found at the end of this volume. All bird-lovers are requested to complete their sets by purchasing such volumes as they do not already possess.

Enlargements and lantern-slides of the photographs in this book may be had of Mr. Arthur Brook, Wyeburn House, Builth Wells, Breconshire.
Nest and Eggs of Jay

Nid et Œufs du Geai

Nest und Eier des Eichelhähers
GARRULUS GLANDARIUS, L.
Young Jays

Jungk Eichelhähler

Jeunes Geais
Jay on Nest

Garrulus glandarius, L.
JAY ON NEST  EICHELHÄHER AUF DEM NESTE  GEAI AU NID
JAY ON NEST  EICHELHÄHER AUF DEM NESTE  GEAI AU NID
Jay sucking Eggs of Mistle-Thrush

Geai suçant les Œufs d'un Merle draine

Eichelhäh, die Eier einer Misteldrossel saugend
CORVUS MONEDULA, L.

Nest and Eggs of Jackdaw

Nid et Œuf de la Corneille choucas

Nest und Eier des Dohlenraben
CORVUS MONEDULA, L.

Young Jackdaw

Jeune Corneille choucas

Junger Dohlenrabe

Young Jackdaw

Jeune Corneille choucas

Junger Dohlenrabe
Jackdaw at Entrance of Nest

Corneille choucas a l'Entrée du Nid

Dohlenrabe am Eingang des Nestes
Nest and Eggs of Carrion-Crow

Nid et Œufs de la Corneille noire

Nest und Eier der Rabenkrähe
CORVUS CORONE, L.

Carrion Crow

Corneille noire

Rabenkrahe

Carrion-Crow
Carrion-Crow on Nest

Corneille noire au Nid

Rabenkrähe auf dem Neste
Carrion-Crow on Nest

Corneille noire au nid

Rabenkrähe auf dem Neste
Nest and Eggs of Nightjar

Nids et Œufs de l'Engoulevent d'Europe

Nest und Eier der Nachtischwalbe
Young Nightjar

Jeune Engoulevent

Junge Nachtschwäle
Young Nightjars

Jeunes Engoulevents

Junge Nachtenschwalben
Nightjar on Nest  
Nachtschwalbe auf dem Nest  
Engoulevent au Nid
ALCEDO ISPIDA, L.

28

Young Kingfishers

Jung Stiegl

Jeunes Martin-Pêcheurs

YOUNG KINGFISHERS
Kingfisher at Entrance of Nest

Eisvogel am Eingang des Nestes
Nest and Eggs of Buzzard

Nest und Eier des Mäuserrussards

Nid et Ùufs de la Buse vulgaire
Young Buzzards  Junge Mäusebussarde  Jeunes Buses
(Dead Rat in Nest) (Tote Ratte im Neste) (Rat mort dans le Nid)
Young Buzzard in Nest

Jeune Busé au Nid

Junger Mäusebussard im Neste
Young Buzzard  Junger Mäusebussard  Jeune Buse
Buteo vulgaris, LEECH. Falco Buteo, L.
Young Buzzard  Junger Mäusebussard  Jeune Buse
Buzzard (immature)  Buse (avant l'âge adulte)
Mauselbussard (un erwachsen)
Buzzard and Dead Rabbit
Mauserbussard und totes Kaninchen

Buse et Lapin mort
BUTEO VULGARIS, LEECH. FALCO BUTEO, L.

BUSE

MÄUSEBUSSARD

BUZZARD
Buzzard near Nest

Mäusebussard beim Nest

Buse près de son nid
Buzzard near Nest

Mäusebussard beim Neste

Buse près de son Nid
Buzzard about to sit

Buse sur le Point de couver

Mäusebussard, im Begriff zu brüten
Buteo vulgaris, Leech. Falco Buteo, L.

Buzzard sitting

Mäusebussard brütend

Buse couvant
Nest and Eggs of the Sparrow-Hawk

Nid et Œufs de l'Autour étrevier

Nest und Eier des Sperbers
Young Sparrow-Hawks in Nest

Jeunes Éperviers au Nid

Junge Sperber im Neste
Six Young Sparrow-Hawks in Nest

Six jeunes Éperviers au Nid

Sechs junge Sperber im Neste
YOUNG SPARROW-HAWK  JUNGER SPERBER  JEUNE ÉPERVIER
Sparrow-Hawk on Nest
Sperber auf dem Neste

Épervier au Nid
Nest and Eggs of Kestrel.

Nest und Eier des Turmfalken
Young Kestrels  Junge Turmfalken  Jeunes Cresserelles
FALCO TINNUNCULUS, L.

Young Kestrels  Junge Turmfalken  Jeunes Cressèreilles
FALCO TINNUNCULUS, L.

YOUNG KESTRELS

JUNGE TURMFÄLKEN

JEUNES CRESSERELLES
Kestrel on Nest
Cresserelle au Nid
Turmfalke auf dem Neste
Kestrel on Nest

Cresserelle au Nid

Turmfalke auf dem Nest
Kestrel near Nest

Cresserelle près de son Nid

Turmfalke beim Neste
Nest and Eggs of Common Heron

Nest und Eier des Fischreiher

Nid et Œufs du Héron cendré
YOUNG HERON  JUNGER FISCHREIHER  JEUNE HÉRON CENDRÉ
Young Herons in Nest

Jeunes Hérons cendrés au Nid

Junge Fischreiher im Nest
Mallard or Wild Duck on Nest

Canard sauvage au nid

Wildente auf dem Neste
Nest and Eggs of Black-headed Gull

Nid et Œufs du Goéland brun

Nest und Eier der Lachmöwe
Black-headed Gull on Nest with Young

Görland brun sur son Nid avec son Petit

Lachmöve auf dem Neste mit Jungem
FIFTH SERIES.

Some Notes on the Birds

OF WHICH

PHOTOGRAPHS APPEAR IN

THE FOREGOING PAGES...

BY

GEORGE GIRDWOOD

Buzzard (Pages 30-43).—The Buzzard occupies a place in nature between the Hawk and the Owl. It is somewhat heavy both in appearance and habit, though when in flight its long wings upbear it with great ease, as it circles round and round in graceful curves watching for its prey. Its food consists of young rabbits, field-mice and frogs, and occasionally it may destroy young birds. The colour above is ashy-brown, the under parts dull white, the breast clouded with a shade of brown, the wing and tail feathers dark brown crossed with bars of darker brown. The Buzzard is deserving of careful protection, but unfortunately its numbers have been very greatly reduced through lack of consideration on the part of game preservers. Originally this bird built its nest in trees, often a fir tree, but of late years it has retreated, during the breeding season at least, to more inaccessible spots where it nests in cliffs. The foundation of the nest is constructed of rough sticks, the upper portion of twigs, and a peculiar habit of the species is to line its nest with fresh green leaves. The eggs are usually three in number, though occasionally four may be found, and are often very handsome. They vary from a dull white without markings, to those where the ground colour is almost obscured by rich blotches and spots of reddish-brown.

Another view of a Buzzard's nest, this time on a tree, will be found on Page 34 of Wild Birds at Home, Second Series.

Chaffinch (Page 6).—This finch is one of the most brilliantly coloured of our British birds, and the male in spring, when the varied colours of his plumage are at their brightest, with his blue cap, and bright contrast of black, white, and saffron on wings and breast, presents a handsome appearance as he pours out his short but melodious song, or utters his characteristic cry of "pink-pink." The Chaffinch is a resident with us throughout the year, is widely distributed, and in many districts is abundant. The habit of this species, from which it derives its scientific name of "Bachelor-Finch," is that shown in the winter months, when the males and females separate, gathering at that season in flocks, each flock
composed solely of the one sex. The Chaffinch is a seed eater, but during the breeding season becomes largely insectivorous, feeding its young on caterpillars, flies, and grubs. The nest of the Chaffinch is exquisitely constructed of moss and lichen, and easily lined with hair and feathers, and it is not at all uncommon to find worked into the outside small bits of newspaper, oft-times the relic of a paper chase. The nest, often built in the lichen-covered fork of an apple tree, assimilates so closely to its surroundings, as to be difficult of discovery. The eggs are usually four in number, greenish in ground-colour, and streaked and marled with brown and black.

This photograph of the nest and eggs of the Chaffinch completes the series of this bird, as pictures of young will be found on Page 20 of the First Series and Page 21 of the Second Series of Wild Birds at Home, and of the adult bird on Page 22 of the latter. Larger photographs will be found on Pages 72 and 73 of Nature Pictures (Gowans & Gray, Ltd., 7/6 net).

Crow, Carrion- (Pages 18-22).—This bird is a resident, though in winter its numbers are enormously increased by an autumn invasion from the Continent and Scandinavia. Of the Carrion-Crow very little good can be said, while it is unquestionably the source of much trouble and loss to game preservers. In size it is slightly larger than the Rook, which it also resembles closely in appearance, the chief distinctions between the two being that, while the Rook is always gregarious, the Carrion-Crow is a solitary bird, and the latter has at all ages the face feathered, in contrast to the Rook, which in its second year loses the facial feathers, presenting that rough and uncouth appearance which is so familiar to all. The Carrion-Crow has deservedly earned persecution, with the result that it is now a shy bird and to be found in any number only in the more retired and inaccessible parts of our islands, where it resorts to breed. The nest is placed either in crevices amongst rocks, or perhaps more frequently in the branches of a tree growing from a cliff face, though now and again an odd pair may be found nesting in an unexpected situation, such as the corner of a coppice, quite near to human habitation, though in such cases it is unlikely there is a gamekeeper near. The eggs are four or five in number, of a bluish-green ground colour, thickly blotched, spotted and streaked with olive-brown. The Carrion-Crow is the nearest relative of the Hooded Crow, with which it not infrequently inter-breeds, the young in such cases partaking of the characteristics of one of the parents—that is, appearing either all black, as the Carrion-Crow, or with the plumage of the true Hooded Crow. In colour the Carrion-Crow is black, with a metallic lustre of dark steel-blue, which is particularly apparent in the spring months; its length is about 19 inches.

These photographs of the nest and eggs and adult of the Carrion-Crow complete the series of this bird, as pictures of the young will be found on Pages 22 and 23 of Wild Birds at Home, Third Series. See also Page 127 of Nature Pictures (Gowans & Gray, Ltd., 7/6 net).

Gull, Black-headed (Pages 62-64).—This bird should really he called the Brown-headed Gull, the feathers of its head being dark brown, though in contrast to the white of the rest of its plumage appearing black; or better still, the Common Gull, as it is this bird
which is most commonly to be seen of the Gull tribe. But this last name has been given by ornithologists to Larus canus, a comparatively rare bird which is to be observed only on our remoter coasts, and out-lying isles, and is not very plentiful even there. The Black-headed Gull is to be seen on our tidal rivers, feeding at such points as where the sewage of our towns enters, and in winter it haunts the neighbourhood of our riverside towns, where it has become very tame of late years, frequenting at that season even such busy places as the Thames Embankment, where it is fed by the benevolent. In spring this bird resorts to marshy moors and lochs where it breeds, usually in colonies, making a nest of rushes and grasses sufficiently high to raise its eggs clear of the water. The eggs, two, three, or rarely four in number, are variable in colour: a common type is darkish green in ground colour, spotted and blotched with black and brown. This bird is a good friend to man, and in spring and autumn may be seen following the plough, picking up grubs and worms as they are upturned, and by the contrast of the silver white of its plumage against the dark earth ever providing a pleasing picture.

Other photographs of adult Black-headed Gulls will be found on Pages 45 and 46 of the First Series and on Page 56 of the Second Series of Wild Birds at Home. For another fine series of photographs of this bird, see Pages 98, 99, and 114 of Nature Pictures (Gowans & Gray, Ltd., 7/6 net).

Heron, Common (Pages 57-59).—The Heron is resident with us throughout the year, though it changes its quarters according to the season. In the autumn months, when the trout run up to spawn in the head-water of the streams, the Heron follows them to the high moorland where these rise. It may frequently be seen in the winter months on the shores of our rivers and estuaries. It measures some 30 inches in length, has a yellow bill fully 5 inches long, and long legs of a dull yellowish colour. Its plumage is light ash-grey, the crown of head crested, white in the centre, with a band of black on each side, ending in the crest in two drooping black plumes. The face and neck are white, streaked with black, with drooping plumes of narrow white feathers on foreneck and chest. The under parts are white.

This bird was the favourite quarry in olden times of the falconer and was able, so far, to defend itself by means of its powerful bill against an attack of the Falcon which, however, was usually successful in the end, by reason of its superior power of flight enabling it to rise above the Heron and in that position to strike it partly from behind and thus beyond the range of the bayonet-like bill. It is probable that at one time the Heron nested in marshes, and it is indeed an unlikely bird to use its present site, which is usually the top of a high tree, where it builds a large nest some four feet in diameter.

Heron breed in colonies, which are not infrequent, but which usually occur in private grounds where the birds meet with some measure of protection. A visit to a Heronry is productive of much interest, and the peculiar flight of the bird made with legs extended straight behind it, and the neck drawn back and resting between the shoulders, is very similar to the pictures of Storks in flight so common in Japanese art. The wings of the Heron are long
and particularly broad in proportion to the size of the body, and its flight, though swift, does not appear to be so, owing to the slow-measured beats of its broad wings.

The Heron, while fishing, presents patience personified, as it stands knee deep in the water, often motionless for a long time. When, however, a fish approaches within reach, its motion is swift as it darts its beak on its prey, which it usually transfixes. In addition to fish, of which its favourites are trout and eels, it also preys on frogs and rats, which it swallows whole. The writer has taken from the stomach of a full-grown male Heron, a rat fully seven inches long, the skull of which had been broken evidently by the bird’s bill.

In certain districts in Ireland, where rivers and lakes are numerous but where trees are absent, the Heron is found nesting in the scrub or on the ground, on islands in lakes, and it has also been found nesting on sea cliffs. It is shy and wary at most seasons, but less so during the breeding-time. It is an early breeder, the eggs being in ordinary seasons laid by the end of March; these number three, four, or five, and are of a greenish-blue with dull surface. The young remain in the nest till fully fledged, when they clamber out, and, before taking flight, may be seen climbing among the branches near the nest, using their bill to hold on by and so prevent themselves from falling.

These photographs of the nest and eggs and young of the Heron complete the series of this bird, as pictures of the adult bird are to be found on Pages 33-39 of *Wild Birds at Home, Fourth Series*. Other fine photographs of nest, eggs, and young, will be found on Pages 10 and 11 of *Nature Pictures* (Gowans & Gray, Ltd., 7/6 net).

**Jackdaw (Pages 15-17).—** The Jackdaw is a near relative of the Rook, which it resembles closely in plumage, and with which it associates, mixed flocks of both species being frequently observed feeding together. It is smaller than the Rook, being only 13 inches in length. Its bill is of a similarly powerful type, but measures only 1 1/2 inches, while the outstanding difference between the two birds is that the black with purplish-greenish gloss of the Rook’s plumage is in the Jackdaw modified on the head, the crown of which shades off into grey, and on the nape and lower sides of neck into a dull white. The iris is of a bright grey, giving the bird an alert and penetrative look.

The species is widely distributed throughout the British Isles, and is resident, while each winter brings over to us from the Continent a large addition to its numbers in the shape of immigrants who leave again in the spring.

The Jackdaw is gregarious and usually nests in colonies. Its favourite site is a hollow tree, but it is also commonly found nesting in holes in cliffs, and in old buildings, while in districts where these do not occur, it frequently nests in rabbit-burrows. The nest is an untidy mass of sticks and moss lined with grass, wool, and sometimes feathers. The eggs number from three to six, and are of a pale-blue ground colour, with grey shell markings, and spotted and blotched with greenish-brown. In dry seasons the number of eggs is usually limited to three, and the difficulty the old birds find in procuring food leads often to a great mortality amongst the young.
In general character this bird is impudent and noisy. Its call resembles the word "chack." Its food consists of worms, grubs, the eggs and young of other birds, grain, peas and fruit, and, in their season, beech-mast and acorns, but it is not particular and preys upon carrion when occasion offers.

The Jackdaw makes an interesting pet, and is frequently kept in semi-captivity, where it invariably shows thievish propensities.

The writer believes that the disappearance of the Chough from many of its nesting-places is due more to the species being ousted by the Jackdaw than to any other reason.

For another photograph of the nest and eggs of the Jackdaw see Wild Birds at Home, Fourth Series, Page 23. A fine photograph of an adult bird will be found on Page 14 of Nature Pictures (Gowans & Gray, L.t.d., 7/6 net).

Jay (Pages 7-14).—The Jay was at one time common, but has been so much shot down by gardeners, and more especially by gamekeepers, that it is now comparatively scarce. In winter the numbers of our native birds are largely added to by immigrants from the Continent. As the Jay is undoubtedly responsible for the disappearance of a large number both of eggs and young birds it is ruthlessly destroyed by the gamekeeper, and, in addition, it bears the penalty of the bright blue feathers it shows on either wing, which are much in demand for trout flies. Naturally shy and wary, these characteristics have been intensified by the persecution it has met with, and it still manages to survive in certain districts, though in Ireland it is stated to be nearly extinct.

The Jay measures some 13 inches in length. Its bill is strong and powerful, being over an inch long. The general colour of the plumage is vinous-brown, the crown of the head streaked with black and distinctly crested, throat white with a broad black moustachial streak above, the forehead whitish with black streaks, while the outstanding features of the plumage are the wing-patches of a bright blue barred with black. The iris is pale blue, giving a keen alert look to the bird. The note of the Jay is a harsh chattering sound, resembling "Chack." The Jay feeds on worms, spiders, grubs, and, as above mentioned, robins freely the nests of other birds, devouring both eggs and young. See the remarkably interesting, and probably unique, photograph on Page 14. It is also fond of fruit and peas, and in the autumn consumes great numbers of acorns, its partiality for which is alluded to in the scientific name given to the bird. The flight is laboured, and performed with rapid beating of the wings; but the bird, though capable of extended flight, is seldom to be seen in the open, and is most usually to be observed flying from tree to tree. It frequents wooded districts, where, in the fork of a tree, the nest is usually placed at some distance from the ground; the persecution to which the species has been subjected seems to be encouraging it to build at an increasing height. The nest is formed of twigs and roots, lined with fine rootlets, and is strong and compact, though from the outside it seems to be loosely constructed. The eggs vary from three to seven, usually five or six, of a clay colour, so thickly clouded with minute pale-brown spots as to seem of a uniform brownish tinge. There are frequently thin black lines on the larger end.
Kestrel (Page 49-56).—The Kestrel is the commonest of our British hawks, and is a harmless inoffensive bird, but alas! to the undiscriminating eye of the gamekeeper, a hawk is a hawk, and the mouse-loving "windhover" has oft-times to fall the victim of his gun. The food of the Kestrel consists almost entirely of mice and beetles, and it is while in pursuit of the former, that it may so frequently be seen hovering high in air, there poised for a few seconds absolutely motionless, ere it darts down to seize the mouse it has been watching. The Kestrel is a handsome bird, the general colour above dull chestnut, with a black spot in the centre of each feather, in the male bird the head and neck are steely-blue, as is also the tail, the latter being tipped with white; the throat is buff, the breast and undersides reddish-fawn, streaked with black. In the female the blue of the head and tail is absent. The Kestrel is partially migratory, but is found in Britain throughout the year. In the winter it will leave the high lands and descend to avail itself of the less severe conditions of the lower lying parts. A number migrate to the Continent, while an immigration of a certain number takes place to the British Isles from more northern countries. The Kestrel nests in cliffs, old ruins, or even in the old and deserted nest of a crow or wood-pigeon. The eggs, four, five, or even as many as seven in number, are white in ground colour, but often this is so thickly blotched and spotted with brownish-red as to be barely visible.

A photograph of egg and young of the Kestrel will be found on Page 42 of the Second Series, and another of young on Page 33 of the Third Series of Wild Birds at Home. See also Pages 69 and 160 of Nature Pictures (Gowans & Gray, Ltd., 7/6 net).

Kingfisher (Pages 27-29).—The Kingfisher is probably the most brilliantly coloured of all our British birds. It is a small bird, measuring only 7½ inches in length. Its beak is disproportionately long, measuring 1½ inches. It's plumage is greenish-blue, and possesses in many parts a bright metallic lustre. The back is brighter blue, the crown on head has bands of dusky black, sides of head orange-red, with a cheek stripe of bright blue with dusky bars, while on each side of the neck there is a band of white. The under parts are a rich orange-red. The bill is black, and the feet coral-red. The species is widely distributed in Britain, and is resident, though largely migratory, within our isles. In summer the Kingfisher frequents rivers, streams, lakes, and ponds, but in winter usually leaves the latter for running water. It is especially fond of such pools as are fringed by small trees and bushes. Unfortunately the brilliant colouration of the Kingfisher makes it an attractive object to the so-called sportsman, while its feathers are in large demand for trout flies, with the result that its numbers are now much less than formerly, though it is found to be again increasing in districts where it is protected.

Its food consists of small fish, tadpoles, water-beetles, and other insects. If the Kingfisher does destroy a few small trout, the harm to the sport of the angler is surely compensated by the beauty and interest the bird presents, and it is a memorable sight to see a pair of Kingfishers quarrelling, which is not unusual, or to note the bird's rapid flight as, with shrill cry, it passes swiftly up stream with rapidly beating wings and bill held straight out in front. The
Kingfisher excavates a short tunnel in the sandy bank of stream or pool, in which it nests. The eggs are usually six or seven in number, though occasionally eight or even nine may be found. They are pure white, very glossy, and almost round.

The bird's habit is to sit on an exposed branch overhanging the water, watching for passing fish, which it captures by plunging with quite a loud splash, thereafter emerging usually with a small fish held across the middle. After regaining its perch its grip is shifted to near the fish's tail. It then bangs it on the branch, tosses it in the air, and, deftly caught, it is swallowed head foremost.

These photographs of young and adult Kingfishers complete the series of this bird, as pictures of its nest and eggs are to be found on Pages 29 and 30 of Wild Birds at Home, Fourth Series.

Nightjar (Pages 23-26).—The Nightjar rejoices in a variety of names, being known also as the Goat-Sucker, Fern Owl, Evejar, Night Hawk and Churn Owl. It is some 10½ inches in length, with a very short bill a little over half an-inch long, but very wide, as is indeed necessary to enable it to capture the large moths and other insects on which it almost entirely feeds.

In colour this bird is a dark ashy-grey, mottled with brown, and barred and spotted with streaks of dark cinnamon. The throat is brown, barred with darker brown and with white spots, while there is a white patch on either cheek.

The species is a summer visitor to our Isles, arriving about the end of May and leaving for warmer climes during September. It is widely spread, but by no means common. Its favourite haunt is moor and woodland, particularly where fern and bracken are found, and it seems to prefer those parts of the moor which fringe the woodland. It is to be seen only in the twilight and night hours, when its churring note may be heard as it flies back and forward bawking for cockchafers and moths. It is said to feed also on slugs and caterpillars. It makes no nest, but lays on the ground its two eggs, creamy-white in ground colour, marbled with violet-grey and light shades of brown. When on the nest the colour of the bird so closely assimilates to its surroundings as to render it almost invisible.

Two peculiarities of the Nightjar are a habit of striking its wings together over its back as it rises in flight, and its manner of roosting, which is always lengthwise instead of across the branch on which it rests. Two noticeable features in this bird are the strong rectile bristles surrounding the bill and the pectinated claw on the middle toe of either foot. The use of this claw has been the subject of many conjectures, the likeliest of which probably is that it is used to clean off from the bristles surrounding the bill any small insects which may have been caught thereon while the bird is bawking after the moths on which it mostly lives.

It is interesting to note the origin of its name of Goat-Sucker. Cattle browsing in the twilight disturb many insects from the grass, and as these are of much interest to the Nightjar, it may be seen flying closely round the animals, seizing the insects as they rise. The bird's close proximity to the animal gave rise to the ludicrous conjecture that it performed the act its name suggests.

There are two fine (and larger) photographs of the young and adult of the Nightjar on Page 147 of Nature Pictures (Gowans & Gray, 7/6 net).
Sparrow-Hawk (Pages 44-48).—This bold raptorial bird is resident with us during the year, and, despite the most persistent persecution of the species by the gamekeeper over the length and breadth of the land, still manages to maintain itself in considerable numbers. The female is, as throughout the raptorial family, considerably larger than the male, and it is unfortunately unquestionable that she destroys, especially at the breeding season, numbers of the young of the game birds near whose haunts she invariably nests. The site selected by the Sparrow-Hawk for nesting purposes, is frequently a corner of a wood or on the edge of a glade inside a wood, and so suitable a position does this site appear to be that pair after pair of Sparrow-Hawks may be shot from the nest only to be replaced each succeeding year by another couple. The male is blue black above, the breast white suffused with brown, harred with a darker shade of brown, while his mate is rather lighter in colour, the breast white barred with ashy-grey. The legs of both are yellow, with toes greatly developed, giving great grasping power, and ending in needle-pointed talons. The eggs, five or six in number, are of bluish-white ground colour, richly blotched and marked with reddish-brown.

Another photograph of nest and eggs of the Sparrow-Hawk will be found on Page 23 of the First Series, and of young and adult on Pages 31 and 32 of the Third Series of Wild Birds at Home. See also Page 160 of Nature Pictures (Gowans & Gray, Ltd., 7/6 net).

Whitethroat (Frontispiece).—The Whitethroat is a summer migrant, reaching Britain in April, is extremely numerous and very widely distributed, and rejoices in a bewildering variety of local names, such as "Chairlie Gabbie," "Whisky Tam," "Nettle Creeper," etc. The song of the Whitethroat consists of a medley, and gives the reader the impression that the bird is very fussy, and it is uttered in a hurried querulous twittering fashion, almost as though in anger. It is while uttering its song that the distinctive feature to which it owes its name becomes most visible, its head being raised and the pale coloured feathers of the throat distended. The Whitethroat is about five and a half inches long, is greyish brown above, the head ashy-grey, while the under surface of the body is white with the breast faintly washed with vinous colour. This species is insectivorous in habit, and is especially fond of the "Daddy Long Legs," but in the autumn months feeds on currants and berries. Favourite haunts of the Whitethroat are the tangled patches of brambles on the margins of the woodland, old country lanes, and overgrown hedgerows, where, in the tangled half-open growth of hramble and briar, its deep but slender nest may by careful search be discovered. It is built of dry grass, and lined with horse hair, is frequently placed amid the brambles, sometimes amidst nettle stems and contains four to six eggs, greenish-yellow in ground colour, thickly spotted with faint marks of violet-grey.

This photograph of the nest and eggs of the Whitethroat completes the series of this bird, as pictures of the young and adult will be found on Pages 12-14 of Wild Birds at Home, Second Series. See also Page 131 of Nature Pictures (Gowans & Gray, Ltd., 7/6 net).
INDEX
TO
BIRDS REPRESENTED IN SERIES I-V
OF
"WILD BIRDS AT HOME"

I. ENGLISH

Blackbird. I, 6, 7; II, 6-8
Bullfinch. IV. 18
Bunting, Reed-. II, 23, 24
Bunting, Yellow. I, 21
Buzzard. II, 34; V, 30-43
Capercaillie. II, 52; III, 46
Chaffinch. I, 20; II, 21, 22; V, 6
Chough. IV, 19
Coot. IV, 47
Cormorant. III, 34-38
Crow, Carrion-. I, 22, 23; II, 18-22
Cuckoo. II, 23; III, 27-30
Curlew. I, 43, 44
Dipper. III, 7-9
Dove, Ring-. III, 44, 45
Dove, Stock-. II, 51
Duck, Elder. III, 40-43
Duck, Sheld-. III, 39
Duck, Wild. See Mallard
Dunlin. II, 55
Flycatcher, Spotted. I, 17: III, 16
Gannet. I, 25-32; II, 43-47, 60
Goldfinch. IV, 12, 13
Goose, Solan. See Gannet
Grebe, Great Crested. II, 64
Greenfinch. III, 17-20
Grouse, Red. II, 53, 54
Guillemot. I, 48-62; II, 61, 62
Gull, Lesser Black-backed.
I, 48, 49; II, 57; III, 64
Gull, Black-headed. I, 45, 46;
II, 56; V, 62-64
Gull, Herring-. I, 47
Gull, Kittiwake. I, 50-53; II, 58, 59
Hammer, Yellow. See Bunting,
Yellow.
Hawk, Sparrow-. I, 23; III,
31, 32; V, 44-48
Heron, Common. IV, 33-39;
V, 57-59
Jackdaw. IV, 23; V, 15-17
Jay. V, 7-14

Kestrel. II, 42; III, 33;
V, 49-56
Kingfisher. IV, 29, 30;
V, 27-29
Lapwing. I, 38
Lark, Sky-. II, 26-28
Linnet. IV, 15, 16
Magpie. IV, 20-22
Mallard. I, 34; IV, 41-43; V, 60, 61
Martin, House-. IV, 2, 6, 7
Martin, Sand-. IV, 8-11
Merganser, Red-breasted.
II, 50
Merlin. I, 24; II, 35-41
Moor-hen. I, 37; IV, 45, 46
Nightjar. V, 23-26
Ouzel, Ring-. II, 9
Ouzel, Water-. See Dipper
Owl, Barn-. See Owl, White.
Owl, Little. IV, 31, 32
Owl, Long-cared. II, 29-31
Owl, Tawny. II, 32, 33
Owl, White. I, 22
Oyster-catcher. III, 50, 51
Partridge. I, 36
Petrel, Storm-. IV, 49-54
Pheasant. I, 35
Pigeon, Wood-. See Dove,
Ring.
Pipit, Meadow-. I, 16; III,
14, 15, 30
Pipit, Rock-. II, 20
Plover, Ringed. III, 47-49
Puffin. I, 63, 64; II, 63
Rail, Water-. IV, 44
Raven. IV, 24
Razorbill. I, 54-57; II, 60
Redbreast. II, 10, 11
Redpoll Lesser. IV, 17
Redshank. I, 41, 42; IV, 48
Redstart. III, 2, 6
Rook. II, 25; III, 24, 26
Sandpiper, Common. I, 40
Shearwater, Manx. IV, 55-64
Snipe, Common. III, 52-54
INDEX

Sparrow, Hedge-. I, 13
Sparrow, House-. I, 19; IV, 14
Starling. III, 21
Swallow. I, 18
Swan, Mute. I, 33; IV, 49
Swift. IV, 25-28
Teal. II, 48, 49
Tern, Arctic. III, 61-63
Tern, Common. III, 58-60
Tern, Sandwich. III, 55-57
Thrush, Mistle-. V, 14
Thrush, Song-. I, 1; II, 2
Titmouse, Blue. I, 15
Titmouse, Great. II, 15, 16
Titmouse, Long-tailed. I, 14;
III, 10-13
Warbler, Sedge-. I, 12
Water-hen. See Moor-hen
Whitethroat. II, 12-14; V, 2
Woodcock. I, 39
Wren. II, 17-19
Wren, Willow-. I, 8-11

II. LATIN

Accentor modularis. I, 13
Accipiter nisis. I, 23; III,
31, 32; V, 44-48
Acredula caudata. I, 14; III,
10-13
Acrocephalus phragmitis. I,
12
Alauda arvensis. II, 26-28
Alca torda. I, 54-57; II, 50
Alcedo ispida. IV, 29, 30; V.
27-29
Anas boscas. I, 34; IV, 41-
43; V, 60, 61
Anorthura troglodytes. See
Troglodytes parvulus
Anthus obscurus. II, 20
Anthus pratensis. I, 16; III,
14, 15, 39
Ardea cinerea. IV, 33-39;
V, 57-59
Asio otus. II, 29-31
Athea noctua. IV, 31, 32
Buteo vulgaris. II, 34; V,
30-43
Cinclus aquaticus. III, 7-9
Caprimulgus europaeus. V,
23-26
Caradelis elegans. IV, 12, 13
Chelidon urbica. IV, 2, 6, 7
Columba oenas. II, 51
Columba palumbus III, 44-45
Corvus corone. III, 22, 23;
V, 18-22
Corvus corax. IV, 24
Corvus frugilegus. II, 25;
III, 24-26
Corvus monedula. IV, 23; V,
15-17
Cotile riparia. IV, 8-11
Cuculus canorus. II, 23; III,
27 30
Cypselus apus. IV, 25-28
Cygnus olor. I, 33; IV, 40

Emberiza citrinella. I, 21
Emberiza schoeniclus. II, 23;
24
Erithacus rubecula. II, 10, 11
Falco æsalon. I, 24; II, 35-41
Falco buteo. See Buteo vul-
garis
Falco tinnunculus. II, 48;
III, 33; V, 49-56
Fratercula arctica. I, 63, 64;
II, 63
Fringilla coelebs. I, 20; II,
21, 22; V, 6
Fulica atra. IV, 47
Gallinago celestis. III, 52-54
Gallinula chloropus. I, 37;
IV, 45, 46
Garrulus glandarius. V, 7-14
Hirundo rustica. I, 18
Hæmatopus ostralegus. III,
50, 51
Lagopus scoticus. II, 53, 54
Larus argentatus. I, 47
Larus fuscus. I, 48, 49; II, 57;
III, 64
Larus ridibundus. I, 45, 46;
II, 56; V, 62-64
Ligurinus chloris. III, 17-20
Linota cannabina. IV, 15, 16
Linota rufescens. IV, 17
Mergus serrator. II, 50
Motacilla sylvia. See Sylvia
cinerea
Musciaca grisola. I, 17;
III, 16
Nettion crecca. II, 48, 49
Numenius arquata. I, 43, 44
Œglialitis hiaticola. III, 47-
49
INDEX

Parus caeruleus. I, 15
Parus major. II, 15, 16
Passer domesticus. I, 19; IV, 14
Perdix cinerea. I, 36
Phalacrocorax carbo. III, 34-38
Phasianus colchicus. I, 35
Phylloscopus trochilus. I, 8-11
Pica rustica. IV, 20-22
Puffinus anglorum. IV, 55-64
Podicipes cristatus. II, 64
Procellaria pelagica. IV, 49-54
Pyrrhocorax graculus. IV, 19
Pyrrhula europaea. IV, 18
Rallus aquaticus. IV, 44
Rissa tridactyla. I, 50-53; II, 58, 59
Ruticilla phoenicurus. III, 2, 6
Scolopax rusticula. I, 39
Somateria mollisima. III, 40-43
Sterna cantiaca. III, 55-57
Sterna fluviatilis. III, 58-60
Sterna hirundo. III, 61-63
Sturnus vulgaris. III, 21
Strix flammea. I, 22
Sula bassana. I, 25-32; II, 43-47, 60
Sylvia cinerea. II, 12-14; V, 2
Syrnium aluco. II, 32, 33
Tadorna cornuta. III, 39
Tetrao urogallus. II, 52; III, 46
Totanus calidris. I, 41, 42; IV, 43
Totanus hypoleucus. I, 40
Tringa alpina. II, 55
Tringa erythropus. II, 17, 19
Turdus merula. I, 6, 7; II, 6-8
Turdus musicus. I, 2; II, 2
Turdus torquatus. II, 9
Turdus viscivorus. V, 14
Uria aalge. I, 58-62; II, 61, 62
Vanellus vulgaris. I, 38
NOVELTIES, :: ::

CHRISTMAS, 1910.

1. MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS. A Poem by Henry Glassford Bell. With four photogravure illustrations after Robert Herdman, R.S.A. Paper Cover, 6d. net.

2. MASTERPIECES OF LYRICAL TRANSLATION. Uniform with "Lyric Masterpieces by Living Authors." Parchment Cover, 6d. net.

3. LES CHEFS-D'ŒUVRE LYRIQUES DE VICTOR HUGO. Choisis par Auguste Dorchain. Parchment, 6d. net; Cloth, 1s. net; Leather, 2s. net.

4. TURNER'S LIBER STUDIORUM. Miniature Edition, with all the unpublished plates. Paper 1s. net; Cloth, 1s. 6d. net; Leather, 2s. 6d. net.

5. CLYDE SONGS AND OTHER VERSES, by J. J. B., author of "Wee Macgreegor." Cloth, 2s. 6d. net. Limited Edition on Handmade Paper, 5s. net.

6. THE GARDEN OF SHADOWS. A Novel by James MacNab, 2s. 6d. net.

Also New Volumes in other Series (See Art Books, Nature Books, etc.).

LONDON & GLASGOW: GOWANS & GRAY, LTD.