Roberts, J.S. The winter birds of Minnesota.

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THE WINTER BIRDS OF MINNESOTA.

BY THOMAS S. ROBERTS.

Prof. N. H. Winchell:

The question is often asked "How many kinds of birds are there in Minnesota in the winter time?" and supplemented not infrequently by the remark "not many, I suppose." There seems to be no more appropriate place for the answering of this question at length as it deserves than in the annual report of the survey. The present article is therefore respectfully submitted as an attempt to list our winter birds so far as they are known to the writer at the present time, with the introduction of such brief notes, mainly of a popular nature, in regard to the occurrence, habits or appearance of each species as may assist in its identification or be of interest otherwise.

The much greater abundance and attractiveness of birds in the summer season is very apt to entirely absorb the attention of the casual observer and to lead to the almost complete neglect of our winter birds; especially as the latter are greatly diminished in numbers, are comparatively silent and are largely shielded from observation by the many drawbacks to outdoor investigation in the winter time. But because the birds do not force themselves upon our attention in winter as they do in summer we ought not to conclude either that there are no birds present or that they are of little interest. The fact is that while birds are generally far from abundant in the cold season, particularly in respect to individuals, there are yet a goodly number of species to be found within the limits of the State. And among these every lover of birds cannot fail to find a number which are of much more than average interest. Birds which are attractive either in themselves on account of their beautiful or varied plumage, or by reason of

curious and perhaps little known habits, or through having interesting personal histories recorded in the pages of our ornithologies.* The only opportunity to become acquainted with such birds as the handsome and little known evening grosbeak, its relative, the pine grosbeak, the elegant northern waxwing or the more common but little less interesting red-poll linnet, snow bunting and Lapland longspur, is during their sojourn here as visitors from their far northern summer homes. Moreover those birds that are present in the summer, have, in winter, to live and gain their livelihood under greatly changed conditions which presents them to the observer in new and generally very different aspects. The winter then offers a field for study peculiarly its own—not a rich and almost endlessly varied one like that of the summer and transition seasons, but yet a field amply repaying the outlay of time and effort necessary to become acquainted with its prominent features.

A word may be said here in reference to a noticeable trait of many winter birds which renders their observation all the easier if one is but looking for them. It is the preference often shown for the vicinity of dwellings, towns or even busy cities over the wild and unsettled country. The jays, grosbeaks, waxwings, sparrows and even hawks and owls are more likely to be found in the near vicinity of human habitations than elsewhere. The greater ease and certainty with which food and shelter can be obtained is no doubt the reason for this.

The probable number of birds constituting the avi-fauna of Minnesota is in the near neighborhood of three hundred. Of this number about two hundred and seventy-five species have thus far been collected or otherwise identified. About fifty species are known to occur in the State in the winter months. Of these a few are accidental; some are rare birds everywhere and at all times; while others are found only during occasional winters. There is scarcely the least probability that all would occur at any one locality; nor is it very probable that the whole number occur within the limits of the State during a single winter. An experience extending through several winters differing in character, together with a residence in different parts of the State, would therefore be necessary to form the winter acquaintance of all these birds.

*Entertaining accounts of all the birds so briefly mentioned below may be found by reference to such works as Audubon's, Wilson's, and Nuttall's Ornithologies, Cone's Birds of the Northwest, Baird, Brewer and Ridgway's Birds of North America and numerous other minor works of a more popular nature, among which may be mentioned the writings of John Burroughs. The latter's "Wake Robin" is a little book full of charming bird biographies.

For the purpose of showing at a glance the manner of their occurrence, our winter birds may be divided into groups somewhat as follows: *First*—Permanent residents, or those birds found in the State the year round; *Second*—Winter visitants, including such birds as come into the State from the north to pass the winter season; *Third*—What might be called, adopting a florist's term, "Half-hardy species," embracing those birds found regularly during mild winters or which appear during mild weather in the latter part of January and in February; and lastly, a few species that are purely accidental.

In the following lists, the species belonging to each of these groups are given in their natural order. It should be said, however, that in the case of two or three species the positions they hold are only provisional; as for example it is quite possible that both the hawk, owl and goshawk may breed in the northern part of the state, in which case they should be placed among the permanent residents instead of with the winter residents as below.

PERMANENT RESIDENTS.

1. **Parus atricapillus**, (*Linn.*) (BLACK-CAPPED CHICKADEE.)—A common, cheery little bird found almost everywhere, and known by sight and name to nearly every one who notices birds at all. They spend the winter in small companies which rove through the woods and thickets and not infrequently appear in the very centers of our cities and towns. The severest cold seems only to increase, if possible, their activity and bustle.
2. **Sitta carolinensis**, (*Lath.*) (WHITE-BELLIED NUTHATCH.)—A small, bluish, black-capped, white-bellied bird sometimes, though incorrectly, called "sapsucker." In common with the following species it spends its time creeping over the limbs and trunks of trees in search of food, wood-pecker-like, and so is often regarded as a small member of that family. It is not, however, related to the woodpeckers, and even its scansorial habits it will be found by a close observer to differ very much from those birds. The nuthatch is a common bird, of confiding and familiar habits and may be seen regularly about our streets and yards as well as in more retired localities. They are almost always in pairs and apparently remain constant throughout the year.
3. **Sitta canadensis**, *Linn.* (RED-BELLIED NUTHATCH.)—Smaller than the last and rusty colored beneath. Seldom found in winter in the southern part of the state where, however, it is frequent in fall and

spring. Mr. T. M. Tripple has recorded it as common in the central part of the state in December 1870.

4. **Loxia leucoptera.** *Gm.* WHITE-WINGED CROSSBILL.—Apparently much less common than the next, from which it may be distinguished by the presence of two white bars on the wing.
5. **Loxia curvirostra americana.** (*Wils.*) *Cones.* RED-CROSSBILL.—The crossbills are birds found almost exclusively in or near the coniferous forests of the State, as their food is largely obtained from the cones of evergreens. The name comes from the fact that the upper and lower mandibles are curiously crossed somewhat like the parts of a pair of scissors. It is this structure of the bill that enables the bird to remove the seeds from among the rough scales of the cones. The present species is common and a small flock of stragglers is sometimes seen in the neighborhood of Minneapolis and St. Paul, away from their usual habitat.
6. **Passer domesticus.** *ENGLISH SPARROW.*—This unwelcome alien appeared in Minnesota in the fall of 1876, having been previously introduced into St. Paul, I understand. It has not increased here in its usual extraordinary manner, owing in great part, doubtless, to our severe winters and late springs. At Minneapolis they have confined themselves, as yet, entirely to the business part of the city, where they build their large unsightly nests in all conceivable situations.
7. **Corvus corax.** *Linn.* RAVEN.—Common in the northern and central part of the State.
8. **Cyanurus cristatus.** (*Linn.*) *Sw.* BLUE JAY.—In the southeastern part of the State, a common bird familiar to every one. Of a bold and inquisitive disposition the Jay forages about our door yards and outbuildings, prying into every nook and corner, but never forgetting for an instant to be on his guard against any impending danger.
9. **Perisoreus canadensis.** *Bys.* CANADA JAY.—Abundant and well known in the pineries and more northern parts of the State under the various names of moose bird, whisky jack, carrion jay, meat bird, etc. It is even more bold and fearless than its blue-coated brother, and lives about the lumber camps and farm houses on the most intimate terms with all connected with the culinary department. It is possessed of a ravenous appetite, and is quite omnivorous in taste, though scraps of meat of any kind are always preferable morsels. It seldom, if ever, appears in the southern part of the State.
10. **Hylotomus pileatus.** (*Linn.*) *Bp.* PILEATED WOODPECKER.—The largest of our woodpeckers, and with a single exception, the largest found in North America. It is nearly the size of a crow, mainly black and with a gorgeous scarlet cap and crest. "Logcock" is its common appellation. In heavy timber throughout the State it is a rather common bird and stragglers are likely to occur whenever the country is not actually prairie or brush land.
11. **Picus villosus.** *Linn.* HAIRY WOODPECKER.—Common. Colors, black and white, with red on the head in the male.

12. **Picus pubescens**. *Linn.* DOWNY WOODPECKER.—Common. In marking almost exactly like the last, but only about one half the size. These two woodpeckers perform a service of incalculable value to man by the untiring warfare they wage upon the insects destructive to shrub and tree. All winter long they may be seen beside the walk, upon the lawn or in the more retired groves of the suburbs industriously at work upon the infected tree; and their very presence proves the existence of the insects or their eggs. The name Sapsucker is applied to these birds, but it is not deserved. They are naturally neither sap or bark eaters. The real culprit is the yellow-bellied woodpecker, *Sphyrapicus (various)*, a bird that drills large holes entirely through the inner layer of bark and thus allows the sap to run out, often in considerable quantities. I have seen sugar maple trees tapped in this way and the whole lower part of the trunk of the tree saturated with the sap that oozed out. The bird is fond of the sap and may be frequently seen clinging to the hole of the tree and drinking the liquid that collects in the punctures. The yellow-bellied woodpecker is not a winter resident, but is common in the timber at other seasons of the year.
13. **Picoides arcticus** (*Sw.*) *Gray.* ARCTIC WOODPECKER.—A rather common bird in some parts of the State, but only a straggler in the vicinity of Minneapolis. It displays a preference for old tamarack swamps in more or less heavily timbered country. It may be known by the uniform black of the upper parts, a square yellow patch on the crown in the male and the fact that it has but three instead of four toes. Its congener, the banded woodpecker (*Picoides Americanus*) is also a three-toed species but the back is banded with white. It has not yet been reported from Minnesota, though it probably occurs here rarely.
14. **Bubo virginianus** (*Gm.*) *Bp.*—GREAT-HORNED OWL.—The largest of our owls with "horns"—tufts of lengthened feathers on the head. Frequently met with in heavy timber.
15. **Scops asio** (*Linn*) *Bys.*—SCREECH OWL.—A small horned owl, about nine inches in length. Apparently not common.
16. **Nyctale acadica** (*Gm.*) *Bys.*—ACADIAN OR SAW-WHET OWL.—A diminutive bird only about seven and a half inches in length. Not common.
17. **Aquila chrysaetus**, *Linn.*—GOLDEN EAGLE.—A rare bird and but little is known of its occurrence here winter or summer. It is introduced here since it is known to occur in the summer and is usually resident where found.
18. **Haliaetus leucocephalus**, (*Linn*) *Sar.* WHITE-HEADED OR BALD EAGLE.—Occasionally occurs in the winter. An adult bird seen flying over Minneapolis, Jan. 1, 1879. (The two eagles may be distinguished in any plumage by noticing the feathering on the legs; in the golden eagle it extends to the base of the toes, while in the bald eagle the lower part of the tarsus or "shank" is bare.)
19. **Tetrao canadensis**. *Linn.* CANADA OR SPRUCE GROUSE.—Found in the evergreen woods of the northern and central parts of the State.

where it is rather common. It is generally unfit for food, owing to the rank taste and odor imparted to the flesh by the leaves of spruce and other evergreens upon which it feeds.

20. **Pediœcetes phasianellus columbianus.** (*Ord.*) *Cones.* SHARP-TAILED GROUSE.—Common, except in the southeastern part of the State. Not found about St. Paul and Minneapolis, except accidentally. It is an excellent food bird, the flesh being lighter in color than that of the prairie hen or pinnated grouse. It may be readily distinguished from the latter, not only by the marked difference in the pattern of coloration, but by the presence of two lengthened feathers in the centre of the tail, from which character it takes its name. Great numbers of the sharp-tailed game are sold in our markets every season.
21. **Cupidonia cupido** (*Linn.*) *Bd.* PINNATED GROUSE.—Found throughout the State where not timbered, except, perhaps, a small area in the northwestern part. As winter approaches the pinnated grouse collect in vast flocks, called "packs", and during severe seasons many apparently retire to the corn fields and milder climate of Iowa.
22. **Bonasa umbellus** (*Linn.*) *Steph.* RUFFED GROUSE.—Common, and well known by both the names pheasant and partridge, neither of which, however, belong properly to this bird. The ruffed grouse has greatly decreased in numbers in the more settled parts of the State during the last few years.
23. **Ortyx virginianus** (*Linn.*) *Bp.* QUAIL BOB-WHITE.—Rather common in the southern part of the State, but our severe winters and continuous snows prevent them becoming very numerous.

WINTER VISITANTS.

24. **Ampelis garrulus** *Linn.* NORTHERN WAXWING.—An irregular, though at times abundant visitor from the north. It usually appears in the northern part of the State from November 15, to December 15, and remains until the middle or latter part of April. (April 25, 1876; April 12, 1877; April 14, 1880.) * It sometimes appears in abundance in March and April, when it has not been seen during the previous winter, as in the spring of 1877.

They associate in flocks often of large size, and during their sojourn here live chiefly about our towns and cities, being quite tame and unsuspicious. Their beautiful crest and rich, smooth plumage gives them a jaunty, trim appearance, which has brought them into more general notice than perhaps any other one of our winter birds. The resemblance between the northern waxwing and the common cedar or cherry bird is so close, that many persons are only convinced that they are distinct after a close comparison of specimens. The present bird is larger and darker than its summer representative and has on the wing, in addition to the red wax-like appendages, common to both species, considerable white and often some yellow markings. The two species may sometimes be seen in early spring associating together in

* When no locality is specified, dates refer to the vicinity of Minneapolis.

the same flock. The food of the northern birds while here consists of mountain ash berries, wild grapes, smilax berries, wolf-berries, high-bush cranberries, decayed fruit, especially apples, thrown out from stores or kitchens and such other palatable vegetable substances as they can find. But as spring opens, their food becomes largely insectivorous, and their habits accordingly undergo a marked change. They are no longer so familiar or such frequent visitors to back yards and alley ways; but are instead much more retiring and refined in habits. They capture the insects on the wing in the manner of flycatchers, and a whole flock may often be seen thus engaged for an hour or more at a time. Examination has shown that the insects just taken consist mainly of minute coleoptera, thousands of which must appear in the air with the disappearance of the snow.

25. **Hesperiphona vespertina.** (Coop.) Bp. EVENING GROSBEEK.—A quite regular visitant but rather local in distribution and limited in numbers. It generally arrives in the southeastern part of the State in the early part of December, but sometimes much earlier, as in the fall of 1880, when the writer saw a flock of five in Isanti Co., on Oct. 28. It is one of the last of the winter birds to retire, remaining usually until the second or third week in May. (May 17, 1876, May 6, 1877, May 18, 1879.)

The male evening grosbeak is a beautiful bird being arrayed in a plumage of black, white, yellow and a peculiar "dusky olive," the colors handsomely contrasted or evenly shaded the one into the other. The female is much plainer, but the species may always be recognized by the short but very large conical bill, which is generally greenish horn color.

Like the wawings the grosbeaks appear to court rather than shun the society of man. They are very tame and will spend an entire season about a city, having their headquarters at some central grove and frequenting the busiest thoroughfares to feed with entire unconcern upon the box-elders planted by the walk as shade trees. It is from the keys of the box elder and sugar maple that they derive their chief sustenance, and it is surprising to see the adroitness with which they remove the tiny kernel from its dry husk with their clumsy looking bill. Their principal utterance is a clear piping note delivered with much energy by male and female alike. They have also a weaker, screaming note which usually serves as an accompaniment or undertone to the general choral performance which is their most common way of expressing themselves when settled in some quiet spot. As a friend remarked upon listening for the first time to one of their united efforts, the general effect is very much like that produced by a lot of frogs piping in a woodland marsh on a still summer evening. There is an unread chapter in the history of the present bird, which, together with the fact that it is nowhere very common, causes it to be of more than usual interest to the ornithologist. Its nest and to a great extent its summer home and habits are as yet unknown.

26. **Pinicola enucleator** (Linn) Cab.—PINE GROSBEEK.—A bird a little less in size than the robin; slate colored, with brassy yellow or reddish

on the head and rump in the female and immature birds, but the adult male carmine red nearly throughout when in full plumage. It is of irregular occurrence, being quite numerous some winters and then almost entirely absent for several winters together. During the winter of 1874-5 they were common in flocks about Minneapolis and were quite well represented during the winter just passed (1880-1). They appear in the latter part of November or early in December and leave in March (Mar. 13, 1875; Mar. 7, 1879). They have a mellow, sweet whistle, and while here, a low, subdued song. Their food consists largely of sunnch berries, mountain ash berries, high-bush cranberries, etc., but it is the seeds not the pulp of the berries of which they are fond. They reject entirely the pulp of the high-bush cranberry, simply pressing out and eating the single broad, flat seed.

27. **Ægiotus linaria** (*Linn*) *Cab.* RED-POLE LINNET—A sprightly little bird with a black chin patch and a dark crimson on the top of the head with sometimes a rare red plush over the entire head. It is very abundant some seasons, appearing in large flocks and frequenting weedy fields and tamarack swamps. They appear about the first of November and remain until the middle of April (April 18, 1875).
28. **Plectrophanes nivalis**, (*Linn.*) *Meyer.* SNOW BUNTING.—Common. Generally most numerous in late fall and early spring. Arrives in the latter part of October (one taken Oct. 16, 1875) and generally leaves in April, though stragglers are sometimes found in May (a pair, male and female, apparently mated, taken at Minneapolis May 14, 1875, and one seen May 5, 1876). A bird a little less in size than a bluebird, plumage much variegated with black, white and reddish brown in the fall and winter but becoming mainly black and white in sharply defined areas in spring. Breeds within the Arctic Circle.
29. **Plectrophanes lapponicus**, (*Linn.*) *Selby.* LAPLAND LONGSPUR.—Similar to the last but much darker in color. The hind claw is very long, from which comes the name. The snow bunting and Lapland longspur are highly gregarious birds and during the fall, early spring and mild winters they often occur in countless thousands, frequenting prairies and fields where they feed upon the ends of grasses and weeds. The longspur appears in Hennepin Co. as early as September (taken Sept. 29, 1875; seen Sept. 30, 1880) and leaves in late April, though like the snow bunting it is occasionally found in May (three taken May 3, 1875, and a flock seen May 11, 1877).
30. **Spizella monticola**, (*Gm.*) *Bd.* TREE SPARROW.—A small, brownish bird with a dark spot on the breast and an unbroken rufous crown patch. An abundant migrant spring and fall, and some of the hardier birds remain here in sheltered places through the winter, though they are most noticeable mild seasons.
31. **Surnium cinereum**, (*Gm.*) *Aud.* GREAT GRAY OWL.—An immense, hornless owl occasionally taken in the state, but far from common.
32. **Nyctea scandiaca**, (*Linn.*) *Newt.* GREAT WHITE OR SNOWY OWL.—A well-known and wary bird which, while not exactly common, is yet generally and regularly distributed in open country. Taken at

Minneapolis Oct. 15, 1876, and stays sometimes in the southern part of the state until the second week in May.

33. **Surnia ulula hudsonia**, (*Gm.*) *Cones.* HAWK OWL.—A medium-sized owl of diurnal habits. So far as noticed it is uncommon in the southern part of the state, though it may be more numerous and breed in the northern, timbered part. Taken at Minneapolis Oct. 31, 1876, and again Dec. 1, 1876.
34. **Astur atricapillus**, (*Wils.*) *Jard.* GOSHAWK.—The hawk generally seen in winter. A bold and powerful bird that preys largely upon grouse and hares. Seen at Minneapolis Oct. 9, 1876, and young of year taken in Lake Co., Aug. 26, 1879.
35. **Bucephala islandica**, (*Gm.*) *Bd.* BARROW'S GOLDEN-EYE.—A beautiful black and white duck likely to occur wherever there is suitable open water. Several years ago, before the noise and activity became so great about the Falls of St. Anthony, a flock of these ducks used to spend the winter in the pool below the cataract. There is in the University Museum a female specimen of *B. islandica* taken at Minneapolis Jan. 13, 1877. Heretofore the *Bucephala* occurring in winter has been regarded as *clangula*, and while it is highly probable that that species does occur during the winter months, the only winter specimens that I have examined thus far is referable to *islandica*.
36. **Harelda glacioides** (*Linna.*) *Leach.*—LONG-TAILED DUCK—Occurs on Lake Superior. I have in my collection two specimens kindly sent to me by Mr. Thos. W. Mayhew, of Grand Marais, Cook Co. They were taken at that place, one April 12, 1880, and the other about March 1, 1881. In answer to an inquiry in regard to the occurrence of the species, Mr. Mayhew replied: "They are not considered rare here in winter. They make their appearance about October nearly every fall, and will remain all winter if the Lake is open; where they go when the Lake freezes I cannot say. I think they generally leave here about May. The Indians call them 'jack owly.'"
37. **Ædemia fusca**, *Snaith.* VELVET SCOTER COOT.—On two occasions I have seen ducks, evidently this species, in the river at Fort Snelling, once in January and once in April.

" HALF-HARDY."

All the species (except *Lanius borealis*?) here included under this head breed in the State, and when the winters are mild occur throughout the year.

38. **Certhia familiaris**, *Linna.*—BROWN CREEPER.—A very small, inconspicuous bird that is quite generally overlooked. May be known by its small size, dull markings, and habit of creeping up the trunks and limbs of trees. In its search for food it always begins at the base of the tree and passes spirally upward, probing every small hole and crevice with its fine, curved bill. Although sometimes found when the weather is quite severe, it is never numerous in the winter. (Dec. 10, 1874; Jan. 19, 1877; Feb. 23, 1878.)

39. **Eremophila alpestris** (*Forst.*) *Boie*.—HORNED LARK.—A bird of the prairie and open country, recognizable by the black and yellowish-white markings on the head, and black crescent on the breast, together with its quiet and unsuspicious nature. It frequents roads along which it collects a large part of its food. When the season is favorable, the sometimes larks appear in January, and by the last of February, have become numerous and are even paired and attending to nesting duties, as in the mild February of 1878. They can endure severe cold, and their absence in early winter, or sometime the entire season, is due mainly, in seems to me, to a scarcity of suitable food while the snows are so frequent and continuous. As soon as the ground becomes bare and slightly mellow in patches, however small, they return and then have the coldest weather that comes.
40. **Lanius borealis** (*Vieill.*).—GREAT NORTHERN SHRIKE OR BUTCHER BIRD.—A bird about the size and general appearance of a mockingbird, except that it is stronger built and has a powerful hooked and toothed bill. More commonly seen in spring and fall, but occasionally occurs during winter.
41. **Carpodacus purpureus** (*Gm.*) *Gray*.—PURPLE FINCH.—Present at Minneapolis during the mild winter of 1877-8 and occurring rarely colder seasons (Feb. 20, 1876). Male purplish red, except wings and tail; female and young dull-colored streaked; about six inches in length.
42. **Chrysomitris pinus** (*Wils.*) *Bp.*—PINE LINNET.—A small dull colored bird with concealed sulphur yellow markings on the wings and tail. Sometimes common in December and occurring occasionally throughout the winter. (Dec 25, 1877. Feb. 2. 1878.)
43. **Chrysomitris tristis**. (*Linn.*) *Bp.*—THISTLE BIRD GOLDFINCH.—In winter a brownish bird with black wings and tail, but becoming bright yellow in spring. It has a querulous note, oft repeated, and toward spring a varied, pleasing song. It sometimes occurs during rather cold winters and is generally common until the middle of December. (Dec. 11, 1875, Jan. 4, 1877, Feb. 10, 1877.)
44. **Juncus hyemalis**. (*Linn.*) *Sol.* SNOW BIRD.—Dark slate-colored, sharply contrasted on the breast with the bright white of the under parts. Seldom seen during winter. (Feb. 10, 1876. Jan. 21, 1880.)
45. **Corvus americanus**, *Rud.* CROW.—Sometimes appears in considerable numbers in February.
46. **Buteo borealis**. (*Gm.*) *Vieill.* RED-TAILED HAWK. HEN HAWK.—Uncommon in winter, but after a week of mild weather in January or February it may sometimes be seen sailing about high up in the air.

ACCIDENTAL.

47. **Turdus migratorius**, *Linn.* ROBIN.—Have heard of one hardy-dispositioned bird that successfully passed the winter of 1877-8 about the farm of Mr. J. D. Grimes, near Minneapolis. The season, however, was unusually mild.

48. *Anothura troglodytes hyemalis*. (Vieill.) Coues. WINTER WREN.—I am not quite positive about this species as a winter bird, but think that I have somewhere a record of its occurrence in February, which I cannot now find.
49. *Quiscalus purpureus æneus*. Ridg.—CROW BLACKBIRD. Occasionally appears in the midst of cold winters, seeming much more at home than would be expected. (Flock of four, Jan. 13, 1876.)
50. *Pica melanoleuca hudsonica*. (Sab.) Coues. MAGPIE.—A single bird of this species was seen by Mr. Nathan Butler of Minneapolis, in the south-eastern part of Stearns county, about 1858. Other than this, I have been able to learn nothing definite in regard to its occurrence, although it is a bird not easily mistaken or overlooked; being fifteen to twenty inches in length, mainly black with white markings on sides below, and with an exceedingly long tail, the feathers of which differ much in length.
51. *Gallinago wilsoni*. (Temm.) Bp.—WILSON'S SNIFE. JACK SNIFE.—Individuals sometimes remain about spring, runs until the middle of December or even into January the coldest winters. (Dec. 15, 1875. Dec. 15, 1877, Jan. 17, 1879).
52. *Anas boschas*. Linn. MALLARD DUCK. I have been informed that this duck often remains in spring lakes along the Minnesota River, and I have myself seen it as late as Nov. 28, (1875) after a month of severe weather.

In addition to the fifty-two species of birds mentioned above, there are several others which it is more than probable are found in Minnesota in winter, but as the writer has no knowledge of their actual occurrence here, they are not included in the present list. Among these are the following three of which have already been attributed to the state:—banded three-toed woodpecker. Tengmalius owl, red-shouldered hawk, ptarmigan and two or three waterfowl that probably occur on Lake Superior. But even though this list be not entirely complete, it may serve, perhaps, to convey some idea of the nature of our winter avi-fauna or to fix the proper names of a few of the birds around us.

THOS. S. ROBERTS.

Minneapolis, Minn., March, 1881.

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