

THE SPRING MIGRATION OF BIRDS AT OTTAWA OF THE YEAR 1906, COMPARED WITH THAT OF OTHER SEASONS

By C. W. G. EIFRIG.

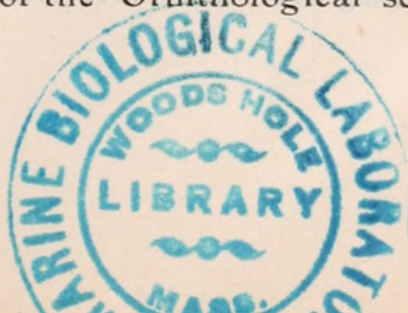
The winter of 1905-06 was in several respects a remarkable one. There was less snow and fewer days of severe cold weather than for many preceding winters. It was more open and mild, than for many past seasons. All this was somewhat changed at a time when one expects to see the end of winter come in earnest, in March. There was more snow and cold then, than apparently had been in the previous winter months combined, or as someone told the writer : Winter only commenced in March. That such unusual weather conditions would naturally tend to modify biological conditions in the plant and animal kingdoms, was to be expected. All nature-lovers, the botanists, entomologists, etc., therefore eagerly looked forward into the now sadly retarded spring, to see how this would be made manifest in their several lines of observation. In no class of biota, however, would the effect of such unusual climatic conditions be more noticeable than in the birds, as that fascinating, mysterious natural phenomenon of their migration is in many species greatly dependent on the weather. The ornithologist therefore was especially on the alert this spring to see how the coming of his feathered friends had been affected by the queer ending of the winter and beginning of the vernal season.

One somewhat unexplainable fact was noted by them already in winter. One would think, that in such a mild winter as the last was for its greater part, there would be more of our usual permanent residents amongst birds, or of the erratic Canadian winter birds seen, or at least as many, as in the more severe winters. But the reverse was true. While in the severe winter of 1903-4 pine grosbeaks were plentiful here all winter, and 1904-5 Canada jays and sharpshinned hawks, together with, as the appended list shows, occasional downy woodpeckers, pine siskins, redpolls, brown-breasted nuthatches, and the everpresent jolly little chickadee, these and similar birds were last winter conspicuous by their absence in the silent wintry woods.

Quite a number of the birds included in this list are irrelevant to the scope of this article, but are included for completeness' sake, to show about when they may be looked for and what birds come this way at all. Such birds that do not show anything in this connection are e. g. the redpoll, pine siskin, brown-breasted nuthatch, crow, blue jay, etc., because they may be considered permanent residents, or because they do not follow any apparent rules in their coming and going, their presence or absence. Other such erratic birds are the pine grosbeak, Canada jay, evening grosbeak, arctic-three-toed woodpecker, etc., which are here omitted. Others, such as the ducks, rails, herons, hawks are not quoted to prove much in this connection, because they are not easily observed or are rare, so that they may be for days or even weeks in their chosen haunts, before the ornithologist, who can not always go to such difficult places, may see them.

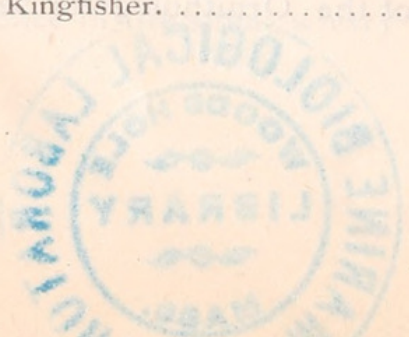
The effect that we would expect the severe outgoing of the winter and incoming of the spring to have upon the migration of birds, is that the birds would be retarded to a greater or less extent. And this is what the following list shows. The first commonly observed migrant in our parts is the prairie horned lark. That comes at the end of February. Now, because last winter up to that time was unusually mild, the coming of this little bird was earlier than usual, Feb. 20, or at least no later. Then came the snowy and cold March, the effect of which can be seen by the lateness of arrival of such birds as the purple finch, robin, bronzed grackle, song sparrows, red-winged black bird, bluebird, and junco, which here are the first of the real and regular migrants. These were this year kept back for a time of from several days to two weeks. Then came warm, May-like weather in April, which made the date of arrival of the species falling into this month again normal, or may have even accelerated it with some, whereas the somewhat raw weather of the first half of May again had the contrary effect. It may be said, that a single, dejected-looking robin was this year seen as early as March 9th in a garden along the Rideau, and again on the 17th, but the real robin migration did not begin before the date given.

I must also state that much material in the line of dates has been furnished to me by other members of the Ornithological sec



tion, by the Messrs. G. and E. White, Kingston and Gallup, and by Mrs. R. D. Brown and Miss Lees of Ottawa East.

	1906.	1905.	1904.
Sharp-shinned Hawk .....	.....	Feb. 18	Jan. 3
Crow	Jan. 28	Feb. 18	Mar. 3
Prairie Horned Lark	Feb. 20	Feb. 28	Mar. 7
Brown-breasted Nuthatch	Mar. 10	Mar. 1	Jan. 14
Great Gray Owl	Feb. 1	.....	.....
Cedar Bird	Mar. 17	Mar. 28	May 26
Purple Finch	Mar. 29	Mar. 1	May 4
Golden-eye (<i>Clangula Am.</i>)	Mar. 29	Apr. 17	Jan. 4
Robin	Mar. 31	Mar. 19	Mar. 24
Bronzed Grackle	April 2	Mar. 27	Mar. 28
Song Sparrow.....	April 2	Mar. 18	Mar. 24
Red-winged Blackbird.....	April 2	Mar. 24	Mar. 25
Bluebird	April 3	Mar. 24	Mar. 24
American Herring Gull	April 3	April 10	Mar. 24
Red-shouldered Hawk.....	April 1	April 24	April 25
Canada Goose	April 4	April 4	.....
White-breasted Nuthatch	April 4	Feb. 28	Jan. 30
Meadowlark	April 5	April 3	April 5
Blue Heron (<i>vulgo</i> Crane)	April 5	April 27	April 18
Junco.....	April 6	Mar. 23	Mar. 26
Hooded Merganser	April 7	April 17	April 14
Sparrow Hawk	April 7	April 18	April 21
Cowbird	April 8	Mar. 29	Mar. 30
Downy Woodpecker.....	April 8	April 11	Jan. 14
Tree Swallow	April 8	April 3	April 8
Black Duck.....	April 7	April 13	.....
Wood Duck.....	April 7	.....	.....
Phoebe	April 9	April 8	Mar. 28
Tree Sparrow.....	April 9	Mar. 24	April 15
Red-tailed Hawk.....	April 9	April 25	April 15
Marsh Hawk.....	April 12	April 1	April 17
Golden-crowned Kinglet	April 14	April 8	April 14
Hermit Thrush.....	April 14	April 10	April 14
Brown Creeper.....	April 15	Mar. 30	Mar. 12
Vesper Sparrow.....	April 15	April 12	April 15
Savanna Sparrow.....	April 15	April 11	April 18
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker.....	April 15	April 10	April 9
Chipping Sparrow.....	April 15	April 12	April 23
Flicker (<i>Colaptes auratus</i>).....	April 16	April 10	April 18
Migrant Shrike.....	April 16	Mar. 30	April 6
Killdeer.....	April 16	Mar. 28	April 8
Kingfisher.....	April 16	April 8	May 5



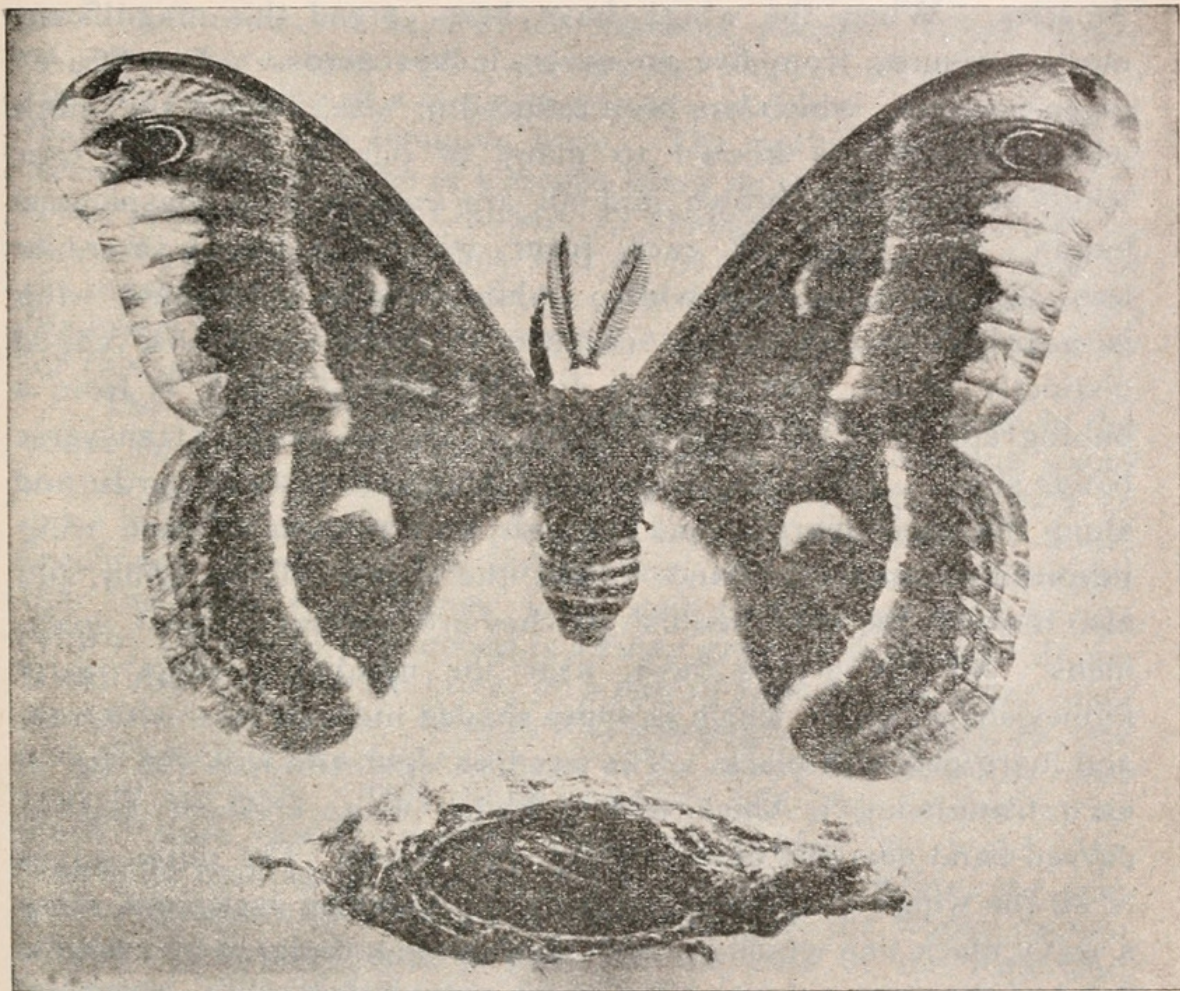
	1906.	1905.	1904.
Bittern	April 16	May 24	May 3
Blue Jay	April 16	Feb. 18	Mar. 17
Goldfinch	April 17	Mar. 13	May 26
White-throated Sparrow	April 15	April 23	May 7
Osprey, Fish Hawk	April 18	April 17	.....
Winter Wren	April 18	April 27	.....
Swamp Sparrow	April 18	May 8	April 26
Wilson's Snipe	April 20	May 4	April 14
Pied-billed Grebe	April 20	.....	April 29
Barn Swallow	April 21	April 25	April 26
Hairy Woodpecker	April 21	May 5	May 17
Loon	April 21	.....	.....
Purple Martin	April 22	April 23	April 16
Chimney Swift	April 30	May 2	May 7
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	May 1	April 27	.....
Brown Thrasher	May 1	May 6	.....
Whippoorwill	May 1	May 13	May 5
House Wren	May 2	April 28	May 5
Spotted Sandpiper	May 2	May 4	May 5
Myrtle Warbler	May 2	May 1	May 4
Black-and-white Warbler	May 4	April 28	May 4
Fox Sparrow	May 4	April 27	.....
Yellow Warbler	May 4	May 1	May 7
Bobolink	May 5	May 2	May 7
Connecticut Warbler	May 5	.....	.....
Cooper's Hawk	May 6	.....	Feb. 16
Warbling Vireo	May 6	May 10	May 12
Veery	May 6	May 6	May 7
Black-throated Green Warbler	May 7	May 1	May 10
Parula Warbler	May 7	May 10	May 7
Nashville Warbler	May 7	May 7	May 10
Pine Warbler	May 7	May 6	.....
Black-throated Blue Warbler	May 7	May 10	May 16
Kingbird	May 7	May 5	May 7
Rusty Grackle	May 7	April 10	April 18
Sora	May 8	.....	May 26
Blackburnian Warbler	May 10	May 1	May 7
Cliff Swallow	May 9	May 17	.....
Waterthrush	May 11	May 8	May 26
Great Crested Flycatcher	May 11	May 12	May 7
Yellow-throated Vireo	May 11	.....	.....
Least Flycatcher, Chebec	May 11	May 5	May 6
Woodcock	May 11	.....	May 26
Maryland Yellowthroat	May 11	May 4	May 10

	1906.	1905.	1904.
Cape May Warbler	May 12	May 22	.....
Rose-breasted Grosbeak.....	May 13	May 11	.....
Olive-backed Thrush	May 13	May 16	.....
Chestnut-sided Warbler.	May 13	May 7	May 10
Ovenbird	May 13	May 6	May 10
Baltimore Oriole.	May 13	May 6	May 8
Bank Swallow.....	May 13	May 18	.....
Yellow Palm Warbler	May 14	May 1	.....
Grey-cheeked Thrush.....	.....	May 14	.....
Red-eyed Vireo	May 15	May 6	May 12
Blue-headed Vireo.....	May 15	May 7	May 7
Catbird.....	May 15	May 6	May 12
Redstart	May 15	May 5	May 5
Hummingbird	May 15	May 11	.....
Bay-breasted Warbler..	May 16	May 19	May 23
Magnolia Warbler	May 16	May 10	May 10
White-crowned Sparrow.....	May 16	May 6	May 10
Nighthawk.....	May 16	May 14	May 11
Tennessee Warbler.	May 17	May 24	May 23
Scarlet Tanager.....	May 17	May 14	May 21
Wood Pewee.....	May 17	May 4	May 17
Solitary Sandpiper.....	May 18	.....	May 12
Mourning Warbler.....	May 19	May 12	May 23
Canadian Warbler	May 19	May 12	May 26
Yellow-bellied Flycatcher.	May 19	May 23	.....
Alder Flycatcher.	May 19	May 24	.....
Least Sandpiper.....	May 21	.....	.....
Blackpoll Warbler.....	May 21	May 17	May 23
Wilson's Warbler	May 21	May 19	May 26
Red-headed Woodpecker.	May 26	.....	April 26
Olive-sided Flycatcher.....	May 28	May 24	May 26
Broad-winged Hawk.	May 28	April 25	.....
Philadelphia Vireo	May 30	May 17	.....
Indigo Bird.....	.....	May 24	May 26

NATURE STUDY No. XXXVII.

THE CECROPIA EMPEROR MOTH (*Samia cecropia*, LINN.)

BY ARTHUR GIBSON, Assistant Entomologist, Experimental Farm, Ottawa.



Cecropia Emperor Moth and Cocoon, reduced in size.

Among our native insects, probably none attract greater attention from those who have made no study whatever of entomology than the large Emperor Moths, the caterpillars of all of which are true silk-worms. These moths are the largest we have in North America, and, being of such a size and also of striking beauty, they always command admiration. Unlike many other moths, their mouth parts are aborted and consequently they are unable to eat. In their caterpillar state, however, they are very voracious eaters and during that period of their existence will consume many times their weight of food. When full grown these





Eifrig, Charles William Gustav. 1906. "The Spring Migration of Birds at Ottawa of the year 1906, compared with that of other seasons." *The Ottawa naturalist* 20(7), 144–149.

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