

VARIOUS

BIRDS, ILLUSTRATED BY
COLOR PHOTOGRAPHY,
VOL. 1, NO. 1

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**Birds, Illustrated by Color
Photography, Vol. 1, No. 1**

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Vol. 1, No. 1 / January, 1897

KNOWLEDGE OF BIRD-LIFE

“With cheerful hop from perch to spray,
They sport along the meads;
In social bliss together stray,
Where love or fancy leads.

Through spring’s gay scenes each happy pair
Their fluttering joys pursue;
Its various charms and produce share,
Forever kind and true.”

PREFACE

IT has become a universal custom to obtain and preserve the likenesses of one's friends. Photographs are the most popular form of these likenesses, as they give the true exterior outlines and appearance, (except coloring) of the subjects. But how much more popular and useful does photography become, when it can be used as a means of securing plates from which to print photographs in a regular printing press, and, what is more astonishing and delightful, to produce the real colors of nature as shown in the subject, no matter how brilliant or varied.

We quote from the December number of the Ladies' Home Journal: "*An excellent* suggestion was recently made by the Department of Agriculture at Washington that the public schools of the country shall have a new holiday, to be known as Bird Day. Three cities have already adopted the suggestion, and it is likely that others will quickly follow. Of course, Bird Day will differ from its successful predecessor, Arbor Day. We can plant trees but not birds. It is suggested that Bird Day take the form of bird exhibitions, of bird exercises, of bird studies – any form of entertainment, in fact, which will bring children closer to their little brethren of the air, and in more intelligent sympathy with their life and ways. There is a wonderful story in bird life, and but few of our children know it. Few of our elders do, for that matter. A whole day of a year can well and profitably be given over to the birds. Than such study, nothing can be more interesting. The cultivation of an intimate acquaintanceship with our feathered friends is a source of genuine pleasure. We are under greater obligations to the birds than we dream of. Without them the world would be more barren than we imagine. Consequently, we have some duties which we owe them. What these duties are only a few of us know or have ever taken the trouble to find out. Our children should not be allowed to grow to maturity without this knowledge. The more they know of the birds the better men and women they will be. We can hardly encourage such studies too much."

Of all animated nature, birds are the most beautiful in coloring, most graceful in form and action, swiftest in motion and most perfect emblems of freedom.

They are withal, very intelligent and have many remarkable traits, so that their habits and characteristics make a delightful study for all lovers of nature. In view of the facts, we feel that we are doing a useful work for the young, and one that will be appreciated by progressive parents, in placing within the easy possession of children in the homes these beautiful photographs of birds.

The text is prepared with the view of giving the children as clear an idea as possible, of haunts, habits, characteristics and such other information as will lead them to love the birds and delight in their study and acquaintance.

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THE NONPAREIL

I am called the Nonpareil because there is no other bird equal to me.

I have many names. Some call me the “Painted Finch” or “Painted Bunting.” Others call me “The Pope,” because I wear a purple hood.

I live in a cage, eat seeds, and am very fond of flies and spiders.

Sometimes they let me out of the cage and I fly about the room and catch flies. I like to catch them while they are flying.

When I am tired I stop and sing. There is a vase of flowers in front of the mirror.

I fly to this vase where I can see myself in the glass. Then I sing as loud as I can. They like to hear me sing.

I take a bath every day and how I do make the water fly!

I used to live in the woods where there were many birds like me. We built our nests in bushes, hedges, and low trees. How happy we were.

My cage is pretty but I wish I could go back to my home in the woods.

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SWEET warblers of the sunny hours,
Forever on the wing,
I love thee as I love the flowers,
The sunlight and the spring.

They come like pleasant memories
In summer’s joyous time,
And sing their gushing melodies,
As I would sing a rhyme.

In the green and quiet places,
Where the golden sunlight falls,
We sit with smiling faces
To list their silver calls.

And when their holy anthems
Come pealing through the air,
Our hearts leap forth to meet them
With a blessing and a prayer.

Amid the morning’s fragrant dew,
Amid the mists of even,
They warble on as if they drew
Their music down from heaven.

How sweetly sounds each mellow note
Beneath the moon’s pale ray,
When dying zephyrs rise and float

Like lovers' sighs away!"

THE RESPLENDENT TROGON

A Letter to Little Boys and Girls of the United States

Is it cold where you live, little boys and girls? It is not where I live. Don't you think my feathers grew in the bright sunshine?

My home is way down where the big oceans almost meet. The sun is almost straight overhead every noon.

I live in the woods, way back where the trees are tall and thick. I don't fly around much, but sit on a limb of a tree way up high.

Don't you think my red breast looks pretty among the green leaves?

When I see a fly or a berry I dart down after it. My long tail streams out behind like four ribbons. I wish you could see me. My tail never gets in the way.

Wouldn't you like to have me sit on your shoulder, little boy? You see my tail would reach almost to the ground.

If you went out into the street with me on your shoulder, I would call *whe-oo, whe-oo*, the way I do in the woods.

All the little boys and girls playing near would look around and say, "What is that noise?" Then they would see you and me and run up fast and say, "Where did you get that bird?"

The little girls would want to pull out my tail feathers to put around their hats. You would not let them, would you?

I have a mate. I think she is very nice. Her tail is not so long as mine. Would you like to see her too? She lays eggs every year, and sits on them till little birds hatch out. They are just like us, but they have to grow and get dressed in the pretty feathers like ours. They look like little dumplings when they come out of the eggs.

But they are all right. They get very hungry and we carry them lots of things to eat, so they can grow fast.

Your friend,

R. T.

THE RESPLENDENT TROGON

RESPLENDENT Trogons are natives of Central America. There are fifty kinds, and this is the largest. A systematic account of the superb tribe has been given by Mr. Gould, the only naturalist who has made himself fully acquainted with them.

Of all birds there are few which excite so much admiration as the Resplendent Trogon.

The skin is so singularly thin that it has been not inaptly compared to wet blotting paper, and the plumage has so light a hold upon the skin that when the bird is shot the feathers are plentifully struck from their sockets by its fall and the blows which it receives from the branches as it comes to the ground.

Its eggs, of a pale bluish-green, were first procured by Mr. Robert Owen. Its chief home is in the mountains near Coban in Vera Paz, but it also inhabits forests in other parts of Guatemala at an elevation of from 6,000 to 9,000 feet.

From Mr. Salvin's account of his shooting in Vera Paz we extract the following hunting story:

"My companions are ahead and Filipe comes back to say that they have heard a quesal (Resplendent Trogon). Of course, being anxious to watch as well as to shoot one of these birds myself, I immediately hurry to the spot. I have not to wait long. A distant clattering noise indicates that the bird is on the wing. He settles – a splendid male – on the bough of a tree not seventy yards from where we are hidden. It sits almost motionless on its perch, the body remaining in the same position, the head only moving from side to side. The tail does not hang quite perpendicularly, the angle between the true tail and the vertical being perhaps as much as fifteen or twenty degrees. The tail is occasionally jerked open and closed again, and now and then slightly raised, causing the long tail coverts to vibrate gracefully. I have not seen all. A ripe fruit catches the quesal's eye and he darts from his perch, plucks the berry, and returns to his former position. This is done with a degree of elegance that defies description. A low whistle from Capriano calls the bird near, and a moment afterward it is in my hand – the first quesal I have seen and shot."

The above anecdote is very beautiful and graphic, but we read the last sentence with pain. We wish to go on record with this our first number as being unreconciled to the *ruthless* killing of the birds. He who said, not a sparrow "shall fall on the ground without your Father," did not intend such birds to be killed, but to beautify the earth.

The cries of the quesal are various. They consist principally of a low note, *whe-oo, whe-oo*, which the bird repeats, whistling it softly at first, then gradually swelling it into a loud and not unmelodious cry. This is often succeeded by a long note, which begins low and after swelling dies away as it began. Other cries are harsh and discordant. The flight of the Trogon is rapid and straight. The long tail feathers, which never seem to be in the way, stream after him. The bird is never found except in forests of the loftiest trees, the lower branches of which, being high above the ground, seem to be its favorite resort. Its food consists principally of fruit, but occasionally a caterpillar is found in its stomach.

THE MANDARIN DUCK

A Letter from China

Quack! Quack! I got in just in time.

I came as fast as I could, as I was afraid of being whipped. You see I live in a boat with a great many other ducks.

My master and his family live in the boat too. Isn't that a funny place to live in?

We stay in all night. Waking up early in the morning, we cry Quack! Quack! until we wake the master.

He gets up and opens the gate for us and out we tumble into the water. We are in such a hurry that we fall over each other. We swim about awhile and then we go to shore for breakfast.

There are wet places near the shore where we find worms, grubs, and roots. When evening comes the master blows a whistle. Then we know it is time to come home.

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.

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