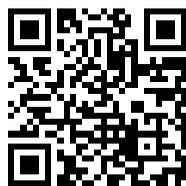

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J. B. Steere,

1880.

Mammals & Birds of Ann Arbor Mich. & vicinity.

FROM

A LIST
OF THE
MAMMALS AND BIRDS
OF
ANN ARBOR *Michigan* AND VICINITY.

BY PROF. J. B. STEERE.

1880.

3

MAMMALS OF ANN ARBOR AND VICINITY.

1. *Vulpes fulvus*. Red fox. Supposed by some authors to be identical with *Vulpes vulgaris*—the red fox of Europe. This animal still retains a foothold in the swamps and bluffs about the city, while its cousin, the gray fox, has entirely disappeared. In its food, the red fox is more or less omnivorous, eating green corn and wild fruits readily.

2. *Putorius Novboracensis*. White weasel. Ermine. This is now supposed to be identical with *Putorius ermineus*—the European ermine—though the two seem to differ greatly in the fineness of their fur. The white weasel sometimes enters the city, as is shown by its tracks in the snow. It is a solitary animal, and never plentiful anywhere, but very generally distributed.

3. *Putorius vison*. Mink. It still exists here along the river and smaller streams. I once found one living in the wall of the race of the lower town mills.

4. *Mephitis mephitis*. Skunk. This animal bears man's society well, and frequently enters the city in its search for food. Though the skunk is placed among carnivorous animals, it lives much upon insects. It is quite social in its habits, and from five to nine are frequently found living together.

5. *Procyon lotor*. Raccoon. This still retains its place in our swamps and timbered lands. A dark and nearly black variety is quite common. There is also a race of albinos in this part of the State. A fine one is mounted and on exhibition in the University Museum, and I have seen several skins of the same in the city of Jackson.

6. *Vespertilio subulatus*. Little brown bat.

7. *Atalapha Novboracensis*. Red bat.

8. *Scalops aquaticus*. Common mole. Rare in this vicinity.

9. *Condylura cristata*. Star-nosed mole. A much more abundant species in this vicinity than the last, if I can judge from the number brought into the Museum.

10. *Blarina brevicauda*. Mole shrew. I find no other shrew in the Museum from Ann Arbor, but half a dozen or more specimens of this species have been brought in within two or three years.

11. *Sciuropterus volucella*. Flying squirrel. Common. It is nocturnal in its habits and rarely seen. It makes long journeys after night in its search for food. It is social also, quite a number always living together. A large colony took possession of the attic of Prof. Frieze's house, a few years since, and were fed and petted until they became quite tame.

12. *Sciurus niger*. Fox squirrel. It seems that a black variety of this species from the Southern States was first named, and in this way this squirrel, which is usually of a fox color, gets the specific name of *niger* (black). It is quite abundant in this vicinity, and has been so long protected about the houses of Prof. Ten Brook and Mr. Scott, that it has become half tame, and is frequently seen in other parts of the city. It is usually solitary in its habits, but in the spring large numbers sometimes assemble for some unknown purpose. I saw at least fifty gathered together in this way, in the spring of 1877, I think, near Prof. Ten Brook's house, and others speak of still larger gatherings. It is hardier and, probably, more omnivorous, and hence less migratory than the black and gray squirrels. It goes abroad in quite severe weather in its search after food, and makes long excursions on

the ground. It has one peculiarity, well known to boy hunters, which I have never seen mentioned. When found in a tree, with no hollow in which it can take refuge, it can frequently be so frightened by blows on the tree and shouting, that it will make wild leaps and come to the ground. I have caught several in my hands that were stunned in this way.

13. *Sciurus Carolinensis*. Black and gray squirrel. Our black and gray squirrels, though so distinct in coloring, are known to be varieties of one species. They are still found in the high woodlands near the city, but, probably, rarely or never enter the city itself. In the back woods eight or ten of the black variety are usually killed to one gray one; but, in the older parts of the country, the gray variety becomes more abundant. The black ones are more easily seen by hunters, and the comparative increase in the number of gray ones is, probably, a direct result of this. It was supposed that neither this nor the fox squirrel laid up food for winter; but a more careful observation of the habits of this species has led to a change of opinion. Nuts and acorns are frequently found in the fall concealed, one in a place, on the ground under the leaves. These are found to be at a distance of three or four feet from the tree, and it is pretty well proved that they are hoards of the black and gray squirrels. These take a nut in the mouth, and, leaping from the tree to the ground, bury it on the spot. In the winter, while the ground is covered with snow, when a warm, thawing day calls them from their holes, they leap off of the trees into the snow, and dig down to the leaves, and rarely fail to find what they search for. Though having nothing to be compared to the regular migrations of the birds, this species is frequently driven in large numbers from one part of the country to another in the search for food.

14. *Sciurus Hudsonius*. Red squirrel. Abundant in all woodland, and frequently enters the city. The other squirrels, though much larger, stand in deadly fear of it, and it is amusing to see with what headlong haste they fly when pursued by it. It is the most provident of all our squirrels, laying up large hoards of nuts for its use during winter. It seeks the trees before

the frost has ripened the nuts, and cuts them off with its teeth, frequently biting off the end of the branch with the cluster fastened to it. This is allowed to fall to the ground, and others are cut off in the same way, and one red squirrel may throw down in one morning a bushel of nuts. Then they are carefully gathered together and buried; sometimes under the leaves, sometimes under the side of an old log, and often in some crevice in a log, or in an abandoned woodchuck hole. Here they are left, unless some boy finds them, until they have ripened, and the shucks loosened, when they are shucked and carried to some secure place. The red squirrel does not hibernate, and is abroad in all weather.

15. *Tamias striatus*. Chipmunk. Common; but rarely or never enters the city.

16. *Spermophilus tridecemlineatus*. Striped gopher. Plentiful on the University campus, and in the sandy fields about the city.

17. *Arctomys monax*. Woodchuck. Common. It is becoming a great pest to the farmers, by digging holes and raising mounds in the fields, as well as by tramping down and eating the grass of the meadows.

18. *Zapus Hudsonius*. Jumping mouse.

19. *Mus decumanus*. Brown rat.

20. *Mus musculus*. Common mouse.

21. *Hesperomys Michiganensis*. Michigan deer mouse.

22. *Arvicola Austerus*. Short-tailed meadow mouse. Abundant and injurious in meadows.

23. *Fiber zibethicus*. Muskrat. Builds its nests in the mill pond and along the river. Quite a part of its food is fresh water clamis (*Unios*), which it opens with its sharp teeth. Every spring heaps of several species of these shells can be found on the banks of the river.

24. *Lepus Americanus*. White rabbit. I place this animal in the list with some doubt. It is said to be still found in the tamarack swamp to the south.

Whatever additions are made to this list will, probably, be from the shrews and the mice.

Among the animals that should be found here, but of which I can find no account, are the following:

Putorius vulgaris. Least weasel.

Taxidea Americana. American badger.

Sorex Cooperi. Western shrew.

Hesperomys leucopus. Deer mouse.

Arvicola riparius. Common meadow mouse.

Didelphys Virginiana. Opossum.

These are all animals common to this latitude, and that bear the presence of man. Badgers are killed about Jackson, and I have killed opossums in Lenawee county.

Among the mammals that, without doubt, have inhabited this vicinity before its settlement by the whites, are:

Lynx rufus. American wild cat.

Canis occidentalis. American wolf.

Urocyon cinereo-argentatus. Gray fox.

Mustela Americana. Pine marten.

Lutra Canadensis. Otter.

Ursus Americanus. Black bear.

Cervus Canadensis. American elk. Mr. Chipman Smith dug a pair of elk horns from the marsh just south of the city.

Cariacus Virginianus. Deer.

Castor fiber. Beaver.

Erethizon dorsatus. Porcupine.

These last named animals have left this part of the State, either because their peculiar foods have been destroyed by the white

man and his domestic animals, or because they have been excessively hunted for their flesh or fur, or because from their nature they are not able to bear the presence of man. In the list we can, probably, find animals that have become extinct from each of these three causes.

There seems to be good reason for the statement, that those wild animals best bear the presence of man, which are not strictly confined to any one kind of food, but are in some sense omnivorous. The red fox, raccoon and skunk, among carnivorous animals, are examples of this, while the wild cat and gray fox, animals more strictly carnivorous, disappeared almost as soon as the settlers appeared.

The fox squirrels and musk-rats, among rodents, are also examples of animals which are not confined strictly to any one kind of food.

There is also some cause for believing that varieties, which, in a perfect state of nature, would have been destroyed, have been partially protected by man. The albino raccoons are examples of this, while we frequently hear of white red squirrels, and of other sports of the kind.

BIRDS OF ANN ARBOR AND VICINITY.

1. *Turdus migratorius*. Common robin. Abundant in the city, nesting in the yards and verandas.

2. *Turdus mustelinus*. Wood thrush. Common in the higher woodland to the south of the city, and nesting there in low trees; rarely seen in the quieter parts of the city.

3. *Turdus Pollasi*. Hermit thrush. Found in the low woods to the south of the city late in autumn, migrating.

4. *Mimus Carolinensis*. Cat bird. Abundant in thickets along the river.

5. *Harporhynchus rufus*. Brown thrush. Rather rare. A pair or two nest upon the University campus every year.

6. *Sialia sialis*. Blue bird.

7. *Regulus calendulus*. Ruby-crowned kinglet. Found in tamarack swamp to the south, and sometimes in company with the titmice, visiting the evergreens of the city during winter.

8. *Regulus satrapa*. Golden-crowned kinglet. Found with the last mentioned.

9. *Polioptila caerulea*. Blue-gray gnat-catcher. Abundant in the German park and to the south, and nests there.

10. *Parus atricapillus*. Black-capped titmouse. Rather abundant. Enters the city during autumn and winter with the following:

11. *Sitta Carolinensis*. White-bellied nuthatch. Common in the city and out. Abroad in the coldest weather.

12. *Sitta Canadensis*. Red-bellied nuthatch. I have never shot this bird here, but put it in on the authority of the specimens in the Museum.

13. *Certhia familiaris*. Brown creeper. Common in the city and out.

14. *Troglodytes Aedon*. House wren. Ra-

ther rare in the city, though a few are seen every season. This species, apparently, is abundant in the old pineries in the northern part of this State.

15. *Anorthura troglodytes*. Winter wren. A specimen shot late in the fall, in a deep swamp south of the city.

16. *Cistothorus stellaris*. Short-billed marsh wren. I find a specimen of this in the Museum, labeled Ann Arbor.

17. *Eremophila Alpestris*. Horned or Shore lark. Common along the roads near the city, feeding from droppings in roads. It nests early in the spring on the ground, in the streets or roads, sometimes within a foot of the traveled way.

18. *Anthus Ludovicianus*. Titlark. There are two or three specimens of this bird in the Museum, labeled Ann Arbor.

19. *Mniotilta varia*. Black and white creeping warbler. Not common. Shot in May, probably migrating.

20. *Parula Americana*. Blue yellow-backed warbler. Not common. Probably shot while migrating.

21. *Helminthophaga chrysoptera*. Blue golden-winged warbler. Rare. Taken while migrating.

22. *Dendroæa æstiva*. Summer yellow bird or Golden warbler. Common in the thickets along the river. Nests abundantly.

23. *Dendroæa caeruleascens*. Black-throated blue warbler. Rare. Shot during migration.

24. *Dendroæa coronata*. Yellow-rumped warbler or Myrtle bird. Several of the young shot late in the fall with sparrows, migrating.

25. *Dendroæa Pennsylvanica*. Chestnut-sided warbler. Next to the summer yellow bird, our most abundant warbler. Probably nests here, as it remains all summer.

26. *Dendroeca tigrina*. Cape May warbler. On authority of Museum specimens.
27. *Dendroeca discolor*. Prairie warbler. I give this also from authority of the Museum.
28. *Dendroeca palmarum*. Yellow red-poll warbler. Specimens in Museum, labeled Ann Arbor.
29. *Dendroeca pinus*. Pine creeping warbler. Authority of Museum.
30. *Seiurus aurocapillus*. Golden-crowned thrush or Oven bird. Not rare in deep woodlands and swamps to the south of the city, where it nests. It sings from the ground, but is so shy that it is rarely seen.
31. *Geothlypis trichas*. Maryland yellow throat. This seems to be the warbler next in abundance to the chestnut-sided warbler. It probably nests with us. Frequently seen in low bushes near the ground.
32. *Setophaga ruticilla*. Redstart. This bird is very abundant in early spring in the higher woodland to the south of the German park. Quite a number remain with us to nest.
33. *Pyranga rubra*. Scarlet tanager. Quite frequent in open woodland and along the river, where it nests. Rarely or never enters the city.
34. *Hirundo horreorum*. Barn swallow. Abundant near the city.
35. *Tachycineta bicolor*. White-bellied swallow. Given on authority of Museum specimens.
36. *Progne purpurea*. Purple martin. Specimens procured at the mill dam.
37. *Ampelis cedrorum*. Cedar bird. Waxwing. Cherry bird. Usually abundant during winter in the city, in flocks, feeding upon frozen apples and mountain-ash berries. A few seen during summer about the mill dam, probably nesting.
38. *Ampelis garrulus*. Bohemian wax wing. I put this bird in this list on Dr. Winchell's authority. It is driven down here from the north by stress of weather.
39. *Vireo olivaceus*. Red-eyed vireo. A very plentiful and musical species, found in all our woodland. Probably over half the birds seen in the tree tops during the summer are red-eyed vireos.
40. *Vireo gilvus*. Warbling vireo. Authority—Museum specimens.
41. *Vireo flavifrons*. Yellow-throated vireo. Apparently a rare species in this locality.
42. *Collurio borealis*. Great northern shrike or butcher-bird. This is the rarer of the shrikes here.
43. *Collurio ludovicianus*. Loggerhead shrike. Now and then seen along fence rows, and taking possession of solitary trees in the fields.
44. *Pinicola enucleator*. Pine grosbeak. There are several specimens of this bird in the Museum, labeled Ann Arbor. There is a tradition that they were driven down from the north one very cold winter, and were shot in the city.
45. *Carpodacus purpurus*. Purple finch. Shot in early spring on the river. Nests in the central part of the State.
46. *Aegithus linarius*. Red poll linnnet. Very plentiful, in winter, for a year or two past, about and in the city, remaining until late in April, and pairing, but, probably, none nesting with us.
47. *Chrysomitris tristis*. Yellow bird. Thistle bird. Common. Nesting in and about the city, and remaining all winter in fields, in flocks.
48. *Plectrophanes nivalis*. Snow bunting. In large flocks in the fields in winter.
49. *Poocetes gramineus*. Grass finch. An abundant field bird.
50. *Melospiza melodia*. Song sparrow. Abundant everywhere.
51. *Junco hyemalis*. Snow bird. Not rare in spring and autumn in the woodlands, and in winter seen in the evergreens within the city.
52. *Spizella monticola*. Tree sparrow. Abundant in late autumn and spring, during its migrations.
53. *Spizella socialis*. Chipping sparrow. Hair bird. Abundant everywhere. Nesting in the city.
54. *Spizella pusilla*. Field sparrow. Abundant.
55. *Zonotrichia albicollis*. White-throated sparrow. Seen in flocks in fall and spring.
56. *Zonotrichia leucophrys*. White-crowned sparrow. Rarely seen with the last named.
57. *Passer domesticus*. English sparrow. This bird in its spread over the United States reached Ann Arbor in 1875 or 1876. Two or three pairs domiciling themselves

about the University, and one pair nesting over the door of the post-office. They do not seem to have increased to any extent here. Any information as to their extending into the country about would be valuable, also any observations in regard to their migrations. It seems to be absent from the city during some of our severest weather.

58. *Passerella iliaca*. Fox sparrow. This seems to be a rare bird about Ann Arbor.

59. *Euspiza Americana*. Black-throated bunting. This appears to be a new comer in this vicinity. They have been quite abundant, for two or three years past, in the fields west of the city. I have a specimen, killed in Lenawee county in 1877, in which year it was first observed there.

60. *Goniaphea Ludoviciana*. Rose-breasted grosbeak. Abundant in the woodland, but probably never entering the city. Nests in low trees, the male assisting in incubation.

61. *Cyanospiza cyanea*. Indigo bird. Plentiful in the low woodland to the south where it nests. Females rarely seen.

62. *Pipilo erythrophthalmus*. Marsh robin. Chewink. Common in thickets along the river.

63. *Dolichonyx oryzivorus*. Bobolink. Reed bird. The bobolink seems to become more abundant as the country grows older and better improved. It is very abundant to the south of the city, nesting in dry marshes along the railway. Female is shy and rarely seen.

64. *Molothrus pecoris*. Cow bird. Abundant. Frequently entering the city. Makes no nest, but uses those of the smaller sparrows, vireos, etc. Several nests of sparrows have been found here, with two or three stories each, which have been built by the real owners over the eggs of the cow birds to prevent hatching them.

65. *Agelæus Phœniceus*. Red-winged black bird. Common. Nesting in the marshes and along the river.

66. *Sturnella magna*. Field lark. Not rare in the meadows and marshes about the city.

67. *Icterus spurius*. Orchard oriole. Not common, probably never entering the city.

68. *Icterus Baltimore*. Baltimore oriole. Golden robin. One of our most abundant

city birds, nesting in the maples along the streets, within a few feet of the passers-by. These birds, when nesting in the country, use the bark of milk-weeds in making their nests; but those nesting in the city use twine and bits of cloth. We have no bird which shows as many varieties of plumage in the adult male as this.

69. *Quiscalus purpureus*. Purple grackle. Common. Nests every year on the University grounds.

70. *Corvus Americanus*. Common crow. It is not abundant enough near the city to be troublesome.

71. *Cyanurus cristatus*. Blue jay. Abundant everywhere. Remains in the city during the winter. Nests on the University campus, using twine, bits of paper and cloth.

72. *Tyrannus Carolinensis*. Bee martin. King bird. Common in the fields and nesting in the shade trees.

73. *Myiarchus crinitus*. Great-crested flycatcher. Rare.

74. *Sayornis fuscus*. Pewee. Phœbe bird. Found nesting under the bridges on the river. Not common.

75. *Contopus virens*. Wood pewee. Common in woodland. It is never found in the tops of the taller trees.

76. *Empidonax minimus*. Least flycatcher. We seem to have two or more species of this genus in our woodland, but they are difficult to identify.

77. *Antrostomus vociferus*. Whip-poor-will. Rare. Found nesting in the oak lands along the river.

78. *Chordeiles Virginianus*. Night hawk. Not abundant.

79. *Chætura pelagica*. Chimney swallow. Chimney swift. Abundant in and about the city.

80. *Trochilus colubris*. Ruby-throated hummer. This is our only humming bird. It is quite abundant in the city in the spring and early summer, entering open windows to feed from house-plants. They frequently lose their way out, and are caught upon the windows.

81. *Ceryle alcyon*. Kingfisher. A few pairs are found along the river every year.

82. *Coccyzus erythrophthalmus*. Black-billed cuckoo. Not rare in the woodland to the south, where it is found with the

yellow-billed species. They sometimes enter the city, and, from their shy habits, may nest here without being observed.

83. *Coccyzus Americanus*. Yellow-billed cuckoo. Found nearly as abundantly as the first species and in the same localities.

84. *Picus villosus*. Hairy woodpecker. Common everywhere.

85. *Picus pubescens*. Downy woodpecker. Also abundant. Common in the city.

86. *Sphyrapicus varius*. Yellow-bellied woodpecker. Rare.

87. *Centurus Carolinus*. Red-bellied woodpecker. Common.

88. *Melanerpes erythrocephalus*. Red-headed woodpecker. Not an abundant bird here. Seen in flocks, in the spring, while migrating.

89. *Colaptes auratus*. Golden-winged woodpecker. Flicker. Unlike other woodpeckers, it frequently feeds on the ground. It is quite abundant here, entering the city.

90. *Strix flammea*. Barn owl. I give this bird on authority of Museum specimens, labeled from Ann Arbor. I never saw this bird here, nor heard of its being killed in this vicinity.

91. *Bubo Virginianus*. Great horned owl.

92. *Scops asio*. Screech owl.

93. *Otus vulgaris*. Long-eared owl.

94. *Brachyotus palustris*. Short-eared owl. The most abundant of our owls. It seems to be more or less social in its habits, or, perhaps, it hunts in packs, as four or more have been seen together about the swamps to the south.

95. *Syrnium nebulosum*. Barred owl. This species is also comparatively abundant here.

96. *Nyctale Acadica*. Acadian owl. Saw-whet owl.

97. *Accipiter fuscus*. Sharp-shinned hawk.

98. *Accipiter Cooperii*. Cooper's hawk.

99. *Buteo borealis*. Red-tailed buzzard. Hen hawk. Abundant. Feeds much on snakes, mice and frogs.

100. *Buteo lineatus*. Red-shouldered buzzard.

101. *Buteo Pennsylvanicus*. Broad-winged buzzard.

102. *Cathartes aura*. Turkey buzzard. Rarely seen.

103. *Zenaidura Carolinensis*. Ground dove. Carolina dove. Common. Entering the

city, and nesting on the lower horizontal branches of evergreens.

104. *Bonasa umbellus*. Ruffed grouse. A few still found along the river and in the swamps. Their being so continually hunted seems to have resulted in making them permanently shyer and quicker of flight than those of newer countries.

105. *Ortyx Virginianus*. Quail. Bob-white. A few of these make out to exist in the fields about the city.

106. *Agialitis vociferus*. Killdeer plover. Quite abundant at times on the marshes to the south of the city.

107. *Philohela minor*. American woodcock. Not rare in the swamps.

108. *Tringoides macularius*. Spotted sand piper. Tip-up. Killed on the river.

109. *Ardea Herodias*. Great blue heron. Now and then seen on the river below the city.

110. *Larus Philadelphia*. Bonaparte's gull. Given on authority of Museum specimens.

111. *Podiceps cornutus*. Horned grebe. Frequently seen on the mill-dam.

This does not pretend to be a complete list of the birds found about Ann Arbor; but, with the exception of a few, given upon the authority of labeled specimens in the Museum, it is the result of about three years' collecting and observation in this vicinity.

The list is especially lacking in ducks and waders, and several more hawks, warblers, sparrows and vireos will probably be added to it.

Quite a number of birds, that must have been abundant here before the coming of the white settlers, have been driven into the wilder parts of the State. I cite Dr. Williams, the first teacher of Zoölogy in the University of Michigan, as authority for the statement that since the establishment of the University here, prairie chickens have perched on the college fence, and a flock of wild turkeys have been seen crossing the campus.

It is probable that most of the species thus driven away since the settlement of the country, are game birds, and the cause of their disappearance is in their having been too closely hunted; but, without

doubt, several species have entirely disappeared for no other reason than their dislike to the presence of man. In this list can probably be placed the great black woodpecker or log-cock.

Our birds may be divided, from their habits of migration, into four groups. The first of these contains those which nest here, but migrate to the south to pass the winter. These are such birds as the robins, bluebirds, blackbirds and orioles. The second group contains those which nest to the north of us, but pass the winter to the south of us. They are only seen here during their spring and autumn migrations. The warblers, and some of the sparrows, are the best examples of this group. The third group is of those birds which nest to the north of us, but winter here, as in a more temperate climate. Among these are the snow buntings, the red-polls, and sometimes the snowy owls, Bohemian wax-wings and the cross-bills. The fourth group contains those birds that are permanent residents, nesting and wintering here. Among these are the titmice, the nut-hatches, a part of the woodpeckers, the quails and grouse, and a part of the owls.

The observation of the habits of such

species as are regular visitors or residents, is of much more importance than noting the appearance of birds that do not belong here, and may never return again. Such facts are curious, but are of little importance in the study of our birds.

Our most regular visitors differ among themselves in the number appearing each season. The cuckoos, for instance, are as regular in their appearance as the robins, but are not a tenth as many. It might be useful to form some scale by which this difference in numbers could be estimated, and a record kept. It is probable that the same species differs much in the number appearing in different years. It would be also a matter of interest to know and note the relative power of the various species of birds to adapt themselves to the presence of man in his various circumstances. The robins and orioles and jays are perfectly at home in the streets of our city. The English sparrow seems to much prefer a city to a country residence. The bluebird and pewee and barn-swallow love the presence of man, and nest close about the buildings of the farm, but dislike noise, dust and multitudes of men.



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