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WELCOME THE THRUSHES.

These Birds Do The Farmer Little Harm and Much Good.

That thrushes—the group of birds which are included robins and blue birds—do a great deal of good and very little harm to agriculture, is the conclusion reached by investigators of the United States Department of Agriculture who have carefully studied the food habits of these birds. Altogether there are within the limits of the United States 11 species of thrushes, five of which are commonly known as robins and bluebirds. The other six include the Townsend solitaire, the wood, the veery, the gray check, the olive-back and the hermit thrushes.

The robin and bluebirds nest close to houses, and even the shyest of the other species are content with the seclusion of an acre or two of woodland or swamp. For this reason the thrushes are among the best-known and most carefully protected of native American birds, and at times their numbers become so great that it is feared they will do much harm to

rops and fruit. The recent investigations of the Department of Agriculture, however, show that there is very little ground for this fear. On the other hand, they destroy such a vast number of insects each year, that it is probable that without them many crops would suffer serious damage.

Of all the thrushes, the robin is probably the best known. It has been frequently accused of destroying fruit and berries, but it has now been ascertained that this only occurs in regions that are so thickly settled that there is no wild fruit upon which the robin may subsist. In some years the robin is a great pest in the olive orchards of California, but it is probable that they are driven to the orchards because of the scarcity of native berries at these times. Where wild fruit is available, the birds seem to prefer this to the cultivated varieties.

Like the robin, the bluebird is very domestic, but unlike the robin, it does not prey upon any cultivated product or work any injury whatsoever to the fruit grower. During the fruit season, in fact, five-sixths of its food consists of insects. It seems, therefore, that the common practice of encouraging the bluebird to nest near houses by placing convenient boxes in which it may build its home is thoroughly justified.

A detailed description of the habits of the robins and bluebirds is contained in Bulletin No. 171 of the United States Department of Agriculture, Bulletin No. 280, which has just been published, takes up the habits of the six other species of the thrush group, which are not quite so well known. These birds also feed principally on insects and fruit, but a great portion of the fruit which they consume is wild berries. Domestic fruits are eaten so sparingly by these species that the damage done is quite negligible.

The bird known as the Townsend solitaire is noted chiefly for its song, which is said to be at times the finest of any of the thrush family. This thrush, however, confines itself almost entirely to the mountains and gorges of the far West. The wood thrush, on the other hand, is distributed over the eastern part of the United States, and is a frequenter of open groves and bushy pastures. This thrush also is noted for its sweet song, especially in the early evening. It does not nest in gardens or orchards, however, and is seldom seen about farm buildings, so that many people who are familiar with its song would not know the bird by sight. The wood thrush consumes a number of very harmful insects such as the Colorado potato beetle and white grubs. The fruit which it eats, it usually picks up from the ground instead of taking it fresh from the tree. There is therefore no reason why the wood thrush should not be rigidly protected.

The food of the other varieties also seems to consist of little that it injures anyone to have the birds eat while on the other hand they destroy multitudes of harmful insects each day.

Great Educator Dies.

Nashville, Nov. 28.—Dr. Allen Gardner Hall, dean of the Vanderbilt University law department, and one of the South's foremost educators, died at 1:51 o'clock this morning at his home on the Vanderbilt campus after a long period of ill health. He was 53 years of age. Dr. Hall suffered from Bright's disease and had been confined to his bed for several weeks. He was born in Kentucky.

Where Drugs Fail

Many chronic diseases fail to respond to drug treatment, even in the hands of the best physicians, whereas acute diseases usually respond readily. When a disease becomes CHRONIC, drugs often seem to do as much harm as they do good, for the system rebels against them. It is just this class of cases which physicians send to the health resorts and which derive the greatest benefit from Shivar Mineral Water, for it dissolves and washes out the poisons from the blood, cleanses and purifies the whole system. If you suffer with chronic dyspepsia, indigestion, sick headache, rheumatism, gall stones, kidney or liver disease, uric acid poisoning or other condition due to impure blood, do not hesitate to accept Mr. Shivar's liberal offer as printed below. It offers you the equivalent of three weeks' visit to the spring with no charge for the water if you are not benefited. His records show that only two in a hundred on the average, have reported "no beneficial results." This is a wonderful record from a truly wonderful spring. Simply sign the following letter:

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**USE OF FORMALIN
TO PREVENT SMUT**

Botanist of Clemson College
Gives Simple Preventive
of Grain Disease.

FOR OATS AND WHEAT SEED

Formalin Solution Applied to Small Grain Before Planting Kills Spores of Smut Without Injury to Germinating Powers.

Smut is the most widespread and destructive disease of small grain and it occurs wherever oats and wheat are grown. When proper control methods are not practiced, it frequently causes serious loss. Fortunately, it is not hard to prevent this disease. In formalin we have an easily obtainable preparation that does the work efficiently. Before sowing oats or wheat, farmers should treat the seed with a formalin solution to prevent smut.

Smut is caused by a parasitic growth that lives in the tissues of the plant. The disease spreads by spores (very small, seed like bodies) which cling to the hulls or lodge in the creases of individual oat or wheat grains and are thus carried into a field with the seed. The spores germinate at about the same time that the plants come up and the disease grows directly into the tissue of the young plant.

Smut lives in plants apparently without doing serious damage until the plants begin to head out. Then the disease concentrates its efforts in the heads and black, sooty masses of spores fill the places where grain should form. As these masses break up, the spores are scattered over the field by wind. Many lodge in grains on healthy heads of oats or wheat and remain alive there until the seed are planted again. Some remain in the diseased heads and are carried to the threshing. In threshing, the smut spores are scattered everywhere and many find resting places in healthy grains.

Oat or wheat smut can be controlled by soaking the planting seed in a chemical solution that will kill the smut spores in the seed without injuring the germinating powers of the seed. The best chemical to use for this is formalin, which is a 40 per cent solution of formaldehyde. It may be procured from any reliable druggist. Treatment with it is made as follows:

Make up the formalin solution by mixing one pint formalin (40 percent solution of formaldehyde) with 40 gallons water. Sack the grain to be treated, about a bushel to a sack. Dip each sack of grain into the barrel of solution and let it remain there for from five to ten minutes, moving the sack up and down several times to make sure that all the grains are thoroughly wet. Finally, lift the sack and let the solution drain out, after which either pile the bags of treated grain together and cover with bagging or canvas, or pour the treated grain into a pile on a clean floor and cover with bagging or canvas. Leave the grain covered thus for from 12 to 24 hours. As a last step, spread the grain thinly over a clean floor to dry.

The grain seed should be dried as rapidly as possible to prevent sprouting. Naturally, grain thus treated should be put in clean bins or sacks so as not to be again exposed to the disease. Sacks and bins that have contained diseased grain may be disinfected by washing with a formalin solution made of one pint formalin to 10 gallons water.

H. W. BARRE,
Professor of Botany,
Clemson Agricultural College.

ARE YOUR COWS EFFICIENT?

Putting the efficiency test to cows with the milk scales and the Babcock tester is one of the essentials of conducting a successful dairy. When feed is high in price a farmer cannot afford to have boarders in his dairy barn who eat up more in feed than their milk yield is worth. The Babcock test will show these delinquent cows in their true light and the milk scales will put the clincher on the argument. Testing cows will give some farmers a big surprise. Sometimes the cow that looks like the poorest creature in the lot is the best butterfat producer. The dairy division of Clemson College offers to give any farmer advice about testing milk and keeping records. Test, don't guess.

EQUIPPED FOR LIVE-STOCK WORK.

The extension division of Clemson College is well equipped to assist farmers in any part of South Carolina with any problems in livestock that may arise. The college has two men giving all their time to beef cattle and swine extension work, three dairy extension experts and one extension poultryman. This is one of the largest and best equipped animal husbandry extension forces in the United States. South Carolina farmers should take advantage of their opportunities along this line to get expert help free of cost.

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