

FEATHERED FRIENDS: THE MIGRANTS OF MARCH WING NORTHWARD AGAIN



AMONG THE WARBLING HERALDS OF SPRING, none is earlier nor more joyous than Robin Redbreast. This fat, merry fellow and his relatives should be arriving in force from the south about the latter part of this week, fluttering importantly about the lawn and bursting with song. Actually, of course, the robin is never absent from Chicagoland; he is reported here and there even in bitterest winter; yet he is universally accepted as the official harbinger of spring.



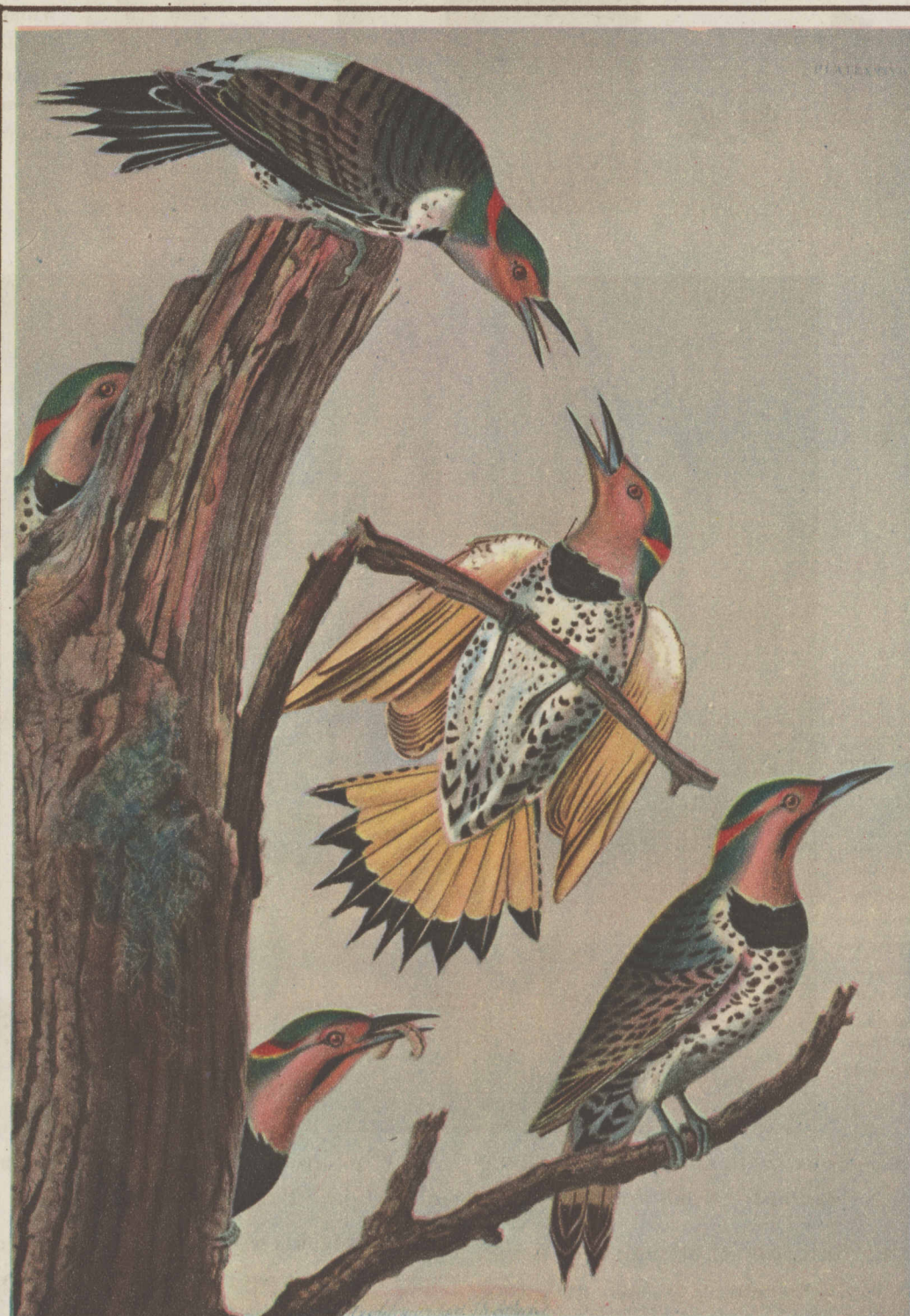
A HANDSOME CHAP WITH RED EPAULETS, the red-winged blackbird is little behind the robin in his arrival in Chicagoland; he usually makes his advent about the middle of the month, and sometimes is even earlier. Perhaps you are not so well acquainted with his wife, who is comparatively drab, poor thing. Marshes are the favorite nesting places of these birds, and there they may be found in numbers. Unfortunately, they are distinctly unpopular with the grain grower; but they do make away with vast quantities of harmful insects and worms.



SYMBOL OF HAPPINESS, the bluebird is likely to be welcomed to Chicagoland only a day or so later than the robin. Beloved for the association of legend as well as for its soft song, it is one of the most popular visitors to farm and lawn; and it loses nothing in popularity from the fact that it makes its diet principally of insects and leaves the crops alone. It will make its nest almost anywhere—it isn't at all particular—but is most appreciative of boxes nailed up in the trees.



"THE COMMON CROW BLACKBIRD," this somber fellow is called; his other name, "the purple grackle," is considerably more high sounding. He'll be along almost any day now. Aside from the fact that he's as stately as the raven that sat upon Poe's pallid bust of Pallas, there isn't much to be said for him. He's forever in the corn, as portrayed here, and is a ruthless despoiler of other birds' nests. Yet even he is a lusty destroyer of insects.



A CARPENTER AMONG BIRDS, the flicker, or golden winged woodpecker, is one of the late arrivals of March. It is likely to appropriate a ready-made house, or almost any hole in a tree; but sometimes its bill is heard beating a tattoo as it digs its nest in soft wood. Insects form the chief part of its diet, and ants are its favorite delicacy; more than 5,000 ants have been found in the stomach of one of the birds. It is a most useful friend, consequently, one the farmer may trust completely and protect from harm; and it is beautiful as well, in its bright plumage if not in song.



WHEN YOU HEAR ITS CRY, "CHEWINK," you have heard the chewink, or towhee bunting, announce itself. It will be seen in Chicagoland about the end of the month, if early, or during the earlier part of April. The ground robin, it is sometimes called, because it spends most of its life on the earth. Its flight is typically jerky and heavy when it is frightened from its thicket home.