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WHAT OUR WINTER BIRDS EAT.

With the approach of winter, the summer birds betake themselves to warmer climes, and new ones come to take their places. These visitants have interesting habits and behavior. Most of them have nested in the mountains or northern climates, and some years they will winter in a region in great numbers, although they may later fail to visit it again for several seasons.

They show varied appetites, and some have brought themselves under suspicion as being destructive. Extensive studies, however, by the Biological Survey of the United States Department of Agriculture in the case of a number of these birds show that while most of them are not markedly beneficial none of them is harmful in its feeding.

The results of these investigations have just been published by the department as Department Bulletin 1249, Food Habits of Some Winter Bird Visitants. The winter birds studied were the evening grosbeak, pine grosbeak, red crossbill, white-winged crossbill, hoary redpoll, pine siskin, snow bunting, lapland longspur, Smith longspur, common pipit, and Sprague pipit. The chestnut-collared longspur and the McCown longspur, while not strictly winter birds, are included in the bulletin to make the account of the food habits of the longspurs complete.

Copies of the bulletin may be had free upon application to the Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C.