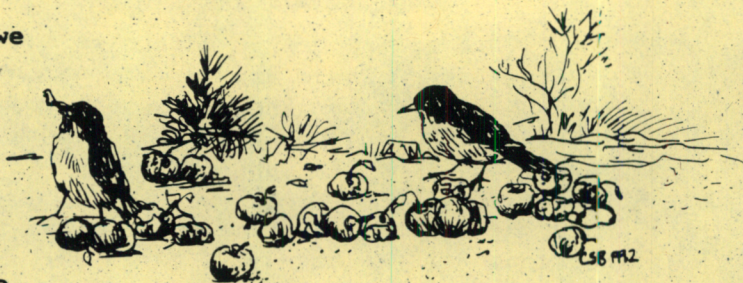


When the robins start to return we put out cull apples for them and, as usual, we had large numbers feeding on the fruit in several locations. On April 12th, a Sharp-shinned Hawk appeared on a willow tree overlooking one of the feeding areas. The robins promptly disappeared. The hawk stayed in the tree for about 20 minutes before leaving to look for his lunch elsewhere.



For most of the winter, we had five mourning doves coming to our feeders. Late in February, we noticed one could not feed because of hardened snow completely around its beak. After several days, Everett was able to catch the bird (with the help of a jute bag) and brought it into the house. We thawed the icy ring off, put the bird in a carton with a dish of cracked corn and kept it there for some hours. Later we put it on a feeder tray attached to a verandah post. It fed there, vigorously, for some time before flying down to join the other doves on the ground below a second feeder. The next day it was back on the verandah feeder with its beak iced up again. We repeated the catch and thaw procedures, then rubbed its beak (below the breathing holes) with shortening in the hope of preventing ice build up again. Then after a period in the carton, we put it back on the tray. We went away for a few hours, when we returned there were a few dove-coloured feathers on the door step. We are presuming the bird was too weak to escape a well rested cat.

From April 12 to 15 a woodcock visited our yard each evening and stayed from dusk in the same general area near our little lily pond. Everett went out to check the greenhouse each night about 11 o'clock and the bird would still be on the ground.



A Saw-whet Owl had been calling in our area for some weeks. Several nights after doing his greenhouse check, Everett walked around the trees behind our garden and found the owl's location, which we later checked in day-time. There is a perfectly round hole about 12 feet up in a white birch snag from which he did his calling, but we hesitate to investigate further at present.

The winds of the past winter brought down a great many birch twigs with their seeds onto the front lawn. One evening in early April, a large flock of red-polls arrived and began feeding. Only when their heads came up to flash the red markings could we make out individual birds. Otherwise their colourings blended so well with the dry grass and twigs it appeared that the lawn itself was moving. They stayed only about 10 minutes before leaving en masse.