

**BIRD-LIFE: A GUIDE  
TO THE STUDY OF  
OUR COMMON BIRDS**

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Bird-Life: A Guide to the Study of Our Common Birds by Frank M. Chapman & Ernest Seton Thompson

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**FRANK M. CHAPMAN & ERNEST SETON THOMPSON**

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TO THE STUDY OF  
OUR COMMON BIRDS**





PLATE I.

BARN SWALLOW.  
CLIFF SWALLOW.      TREE SWALLOW.  
BANK SWALLOW.

# BIRD-LIFE

A GUIDE TO THE STUDY OF  
OUR COMMON BIRDS

BY  
*Chapman*  
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HISTORY; MEMBER OF THE AMERICAN  
ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION;  
AUTHOR OF HANDBOOK OF BIRDS OF EASTERN NORTH AMERICA, ETC.

*WITH SEVENTY-FIVE FULL-PAGE PLATES AND  
NUMEROUS TEXT DRAWINGS*

By ERNEST SETON THOMPSON

AUTHOR OF ART ANATOMY OF ANIMALS, THE BIRDS OF MANITOBA, ETC.



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1897

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TO  
DR. J. A. ALLEN  
THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED  
AS A TOKEN OF RESPECT AND AFFECTION  
FROM ONE WHO  
FOR NINE YEARS HAS WORKED AT HIS SIDE.



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## PREFACE.

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How unusual it is to meet any one who can correctly name a dozen of our birds! One may live in the country and still know only two or three of the one hundred and fifty or more kinds of birds that may be found during the year. Nevertheless, these gay, restless creatures, both by voice and action, constantly invite our attention, and they are far too interesting and beautiful to be ignored. No one to whom Nature appeals should be without some knowledge of these, the most attractive of her animate forms.

The scientific results to be derived from the study of birds are fully realized by the naturalist. But there are other results equally important. I would have every one know of them: results that add to our pleasure in field and wood, and give fresh interest to walks that before were eventless; that quicken both ear and eye, making us hear and see where before we were deaf and blind. Then, to our surprise, we shall discover that the forests and pastures we have known all our lives are tenanted by countless feathered inhabitants whose companionship will prove a source of endless enjoyment.

I would enter a special plea for the study of birds in the schools; for the more general introduction of ornithology in natural-history courses. Frogs and crayfish serve an excellent purpose, but we may not encounter either of them after leaving the laboratory; whereas birds not only offer excellent opportunities for

study, but are always about us, and even a slight familiarity with them will be of value long after school days are over.

Popular interest must precede the desire for purely technical knowledge. The following pages are not addressed to past masters in ornithology, but to those who desire a general knowledge of bird-life and some acquaintance with our commoner birds. The opening chapters of this book briefly define the bird, its place in Nature and its relation to man, and outline the leading facts in its life-history. The concluding chapters present the portraits, names, and addresses of upward of one hundred familiar birds of eastern North America, with such information concerning their comings and goings as will lead, I trust, to their being found at home.

After this introduction the student may be left on the threshold, with the assurance that his entrance to the innermost circles of bird-life depends entirely on his own patience and enthusiasm.

FRANK M. CHAPMAN.

AMERICAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY,  
NEW YORK CITY, *January, 1897.*

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