

trees, and about the garden, we find silver-eyes that appear to be dying, not so much from hunger as from cold. Every cold day throughout the winter there are a dozen or twenty of them placed on the hearth before the fire. Many of them recover and are liberated as soon as they are able to fly. Others will utter a sudden cry and fly half way across the room, to suddenly crumple and die. Life for the silver-eyes in the winter-time is indeed hard and cruel.

But, see. A new day has dawned. The warm sun shines down from a cloudless sky. The cold damp earth has dried up and the grass has a new, unmistakeable green tinge. Tiny buds appear on the fruit trees. The elderberries show miniature green buds every foot or so on their previous dead branches. And see what is happening. Once again the trees show green with birds. Once again their cries, plaintive no longer, fill the air. As one bird they rise and circle round the house. With feelings of regret, we listen to their sweet, wild music; joyful, joyful, beyond words; for they are going home.

BIRD MONTH.

The available food supply in winter is the deciding factor in the carrying capacity of any area, whether it be in connection with birds, sheep, or other life. Large numbers of birds die each winter owing to lack of food and shelter. It has, moreover, been demonstrated by careful and accurate field observations that birds, which are well fed and have access to cover, can easily avoid predatory enemies. They are wary and have the dash and vim to beat their enemies in the flight to safety. On the other hand, it was found that ill-fed birds fall an easy prey and many drop off their roosts at night dead with cold and hunger. Then let us remember, as we sit up to our well-filled tables, with a glowing fire nearby, that our feathered friends are sore beset for sustenance and shelter. We can help them in their dire need by putting out sweetened porridge, cooked potatoes, marrow, beef suet, damaged fruit, or indeed most of that refuse which usually goes into the garbage tin, but put all food out of the reach of pussy, lest you merely feed the cat on birds. We shall need the assistance of the birds in the spring to help rid us of grass grub and countless other ever increasing pests which now take an excessive toll of, and would quickly totally destroy our food supply were it not for the activities of birds. The loss caused by insect pests even now in New Zealand is estimated to exceed £1,000,000 per annum. Thus food given the birds in winter can be made to return the quantity a hundred fold and more, thereby helping our own needy in their distress. August has been designated "BIRD MONTH" because it is usually the hardest of all winter months. Help those who help us.