

## NATURE RAMBLINGS

By FRANK THONE



### *Cedar Waxwing*

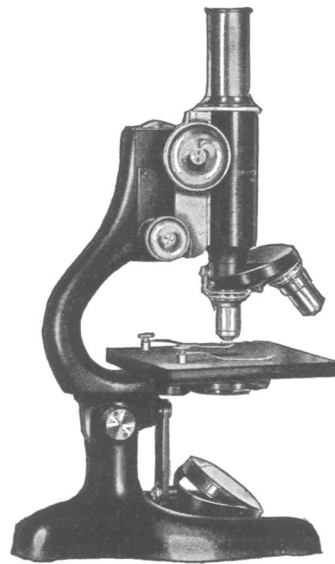
Of all our bird winter boarders, the cedar waxwing has, perhaps, the best claim to the beauty prize. His the most graceful shape, his the smoothest, silkiest feathers. Most of his coat is of browns and fawn shades in the most delicate nuances, but he breaks out in bits of bright color at just the right places. Black under his throat, and a narrow black mask about his eyes beneath his neat little crest; the black edged with a thin strip of white and this set off with just a suggestion of vermillion; could any bird's head be handsomer? Black and white and red again about the edges of his wings and tail—only this time a scarlet instead of vermillion; where does this bird achieve such *savoir faire* in the matter of clothes? And the tail always tipped with clear yellow.

What is more, Mrs. Cedar Waxwing is allowed a larger share in this sartorial splendor than usually falls to female birds. She even has a crest, though it lies back smoothly instead of standing erect like her husband's.

Elegant in dress, the waxwings are also courteous in their manners. They are social birds, always forming friendly little parties of six or eight, talking amiably in low tones, and politely passing refreshments. Several astute bird watchers state that they will pass a cherry from bill to bill, clear along a half-dozen of them sitting on a twig, without any member of the group offering to eat even a part of it. They destroy considerable numbers of insects, but for the most part they are vegetarians.

*Science News-Letter, December 14, 1929*

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