

C. M. J.

During September when the hazelnuts are ~~ready~~ ripe, I often see the jays gathering the crop. A few days ago, I saw one fly down the hillside with a nut in his beak and tuck it under a tussock of grass. Back he came four times and buried as many more nuts. One might wonder if he could ever locate the nuts again. If not, the nuts will sprout and grow in the spring, producing more bushes and a larger crop.

Certain species of birds and mammals are an important factor in spreading plant life. The dogwoods are now covered with red berries. The robins and flickers are gathering in the harvest. Later on, the seeds are excreted here and there, and this is the real reason why dogwood trees grow abundantly in our wooded sections.

The red squirrels and chipmunks are a real influence in planting seeds and in the distribution of our forest trees. The red squirrels gather and bury many cones of the Douglas fir.

One day when a red or pine squirrel was very busy, I sneaked through the trees to the bottom of the hill. He was making regular trips about fifty yards up to some hazel bushes. I marked the spot where he was storing nuts in a hole in the ground. When I thought he had finished, I sneaked over, cleared away the covering of dry leaves and dug out 23 nuts.

Before I could replace these and get away, I was discovered and the squirrel was as mad as an old hen when her chicks are bothered. He sputtered and chattered. When I retreated a few yards, he ran down, uncovered the store and got the nuts out in a hurry. He was so excited that he grabbed one, ran off a short distance, shoved



it under the leaves and grass and went back for another. Soon he had nuts scattered in a dozen different places. I was satisfied that he would never find them all again, yet he stood to win in either case. Those he found later he could eat when he needed them, and those he failed to find would produce more bushes for a future harvest.