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Bird Children  
The Little Playmates  
of the Flower Children

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# Bird Children

The Little Playmates  
of the Flower Children

By

Elizabeth Gordon

Drawings by

M.T.Ross



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*Sixth Edition*

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*To all children who love Birds and  
Flowers, and especially to my little  
friend Dorothy Virginia, this book is  
lovingly dedicated.*

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## FOREWORD



BIRDS are only another expression of God's love, and we are told that not even a sparrow shall fall to the ground without the notice of the Father.

Birds are poetry come to life and set to music. If you should stand at the edge of a forest at sundown and hear the birds singing their good-night songs, hear the sleepy little notes grow fainter and fainter until the silence came,—then when the dusk had deepened, you should hear the night birds begin their plaintive songs, you would realize what a different place our beautiful world would be without birds.

Even in great cities we have always some birds. The saucy little sparrow, who comes so boldly begging crumbs at your window, likes the cities best.

Only very thoughtless people, or those who do not understand, would harm or frighten a bird.

They are real little people, and I am sure that when you have come to know them you will love them as much as you have learned to love the Flower Children.

The publishers and the author have received so many letters from parents commending Flower Children for its instructive features, and from children, demanding "more" delightful play-mates, that they offer "Bird Brothers and Sisters," believing that "The little playmates of the Flower Children" will prove as welcome visitors as "The Little Cousins of the Fields and Garden."

The author and the artist wish to thank the children for their many expressions of interest and for their loyal support.

ELIZABETH GORDON  
M. T. ROSS

---



**S**IR ROOSTER is a noisy chap,  
He wakes you from your morning nap;  
He sleeps but little all night through,  
Crows at eleven, one and two.

11



BIRD CHILDREN



**M**RS. HEN, the kind old dame,  
Always dresses just the same;  
She talks all day about her joys  
And lays nice eggs for girls and boys.

12



BIRD CHILDREN





**S**AID GUINEA HEN: "I like to eat  
Three-cornered grains of nice buckwheat;  
I only want good, simple food  
To feed my Huffy little brood."

13



BIRD CHILDREN



**D**EAR little, downy GOSLING said:  
"I can't get learning through my  
head;  
I really don't see what's the use—  
When I grow up I'll be a goose."

14



BIRD CHILDREN





**S**AID FATHER GOOSE: "I think I 'll take  
A stroll this morning to the lake."  
MOTHER GOOSE said: "Then I 'll go, too,  
And maybe take a swim with you."

15



## BIRD CHILDREN



**S**AID YELLOW DUCKLING to his brother:  
"Come on, let's hide away from mother,"  
But he replied: "Oh, dear me, No!  
We'd better not, she'd worry so."

16



## BIRD CHILDREN





**"HONK-HONK, Honk-honk,"** old SNOW GOOSE said,  
"I think tonight we 'll go to bed  
A hundred miles due south from here,—  
The snow is on the way, I fear."

17



## BIRD CHILDREN



**I**N SHALLOW water MALLARD DUCK  
At fishing sometimes tries his luck;  
At other times he thinks it's nice  
To nibble at the sweet wild rice.

18



## BIRD CHILDREN







**M**ADAM SWAN'S a graceful lady,  
Likes to float where banks are  
shady;  
When Father Swan goes out to swim  
He takes the cygnets out with him.

19



BIRD CHILDREN



**G**OLDEN PHEASANT took a notion  
To take a trip across the ocean,  
Got a nice room at the zoo  
And said he'd stay a year or two.

20



BIRD CHILDREN





**T**AKING his family for a walk  
We see old Mr. TURKEY COCK;  
He dresses up in colors gay,—  
His wife wears quiet tones of gray.

21



## BIRD CHILDREN



**O**LD DOCTOR STORK, the kind old bird,  
Brings the new babies, I have heard;  
If you should ask him, he may bring  
You one to keep, beneath his wing.

22



## BIRD CHILDREN





**S**IR ROOK is English, don't you know?  
Says: "Do not confound me with the Crow."  
His family tree is large and old,  
Which makes his manner proud and cold.

23



## BIRD CHILDREN



**P**ARADISE BIRD, in her new clothes,  
Said: "They're expensive, goodness knows!  
I 'spose, because they were so dear,  
I 'll have to wear them all this year."  
*(Red Paradise Bird)*

24



## BIRD CHILDREN





**P**EACOCK'S a bird of much renown  
And wears a lovely cap and gown;  
They say he's very, very vain  
And likes to show his sweeping train.

25



## BIRD CHILDREN



**S**AID NIGHTINGALE: "It's not my way  
To practice singing in the day,  
But wait till all the rest are through  
And I will gladly sing for you."

26



## BIRD CHILDREN







CANARY-BIRD said to his mother:  
"Is that bird in the tree my brother?"  
Mama Canary said: "Oh, no!  
He's just a cousin—wild, you know."

27



## BIRD CHILDREN



O RIOLE, flashing wings of flame,  
In the spring like sunshine  
came,  
Hung his nest away up high  
So his babes could see the sky.  
(*Orchard Oriole*)

28



## BIRD CHILDREN





**B**ALTIMORE ORIOLE, pretty thing,  
Builds his nest of bits of string;  
He's sociable and likes to stay  
Where people live and children play.

29



## BIRD CHILDREN



**M**EADOW LARK has a flute-like voice,  
Sings a song that's very choice;  
Builds his nest low, near the  
ground,  
With woven grasses arched around.

30



## BIRD CHILDREN





**B**LACK, solemn-looking Mr. CROW  
Steals the good farmer's corn, you know;  
If you ask why he breaks the laws,  
He answers, wisely: "Caws, caws, caws."

31



## BIRD CHILDREN



**F**RIENDLY little CHICKADEE  
Is just as cunning as can be;  
Upon your window-sill he 'll come  
And thank you kindly for a crumb.

32



## BIRD CHILDREN





**C**ARDINAL BIRD wears vivid red,  
He's very amiable, 'tis said;  
He likes fresh fruits and seeds to eat  
And has a song that's very sweet.

33



BIRD CHILDREN



**M**AGPIE'S a gossip—that's the truth—  
A naughty, disobedient youth;  
We must not judge him, but  
suppose  
He does the very best he knows.

34



BIRD CHILDREN







**G**REAT BLUE HERON likes to fly,  
And so he builds his house up high,  
Way in the tops of tallest trees  
Where he lives, happy as you please.

35



## BIRD CHILDREN



**B**OB-O-LINK, among the clover,  
Tells his name over and over;  
He doesn't stay North very long  
And when he goes we miss his song.

36



## BIRD CHILDREN





**I**NDIGO BUNTING comes in May,  
Saying cheerfully: "I'm here to stay."  
He's a nice, friendly little thing,  
Willing at any time to sing.

37



## BIRD CHILDREN



**E**AGLE has piercing yellow eyes,  
He's very strong and very wise;  
He's king and master over all  
The other birds, both great and small.  
*(Golden Eagle)*

38



## BIRD CHILDREN





**T**URKEY BUZZARD, on the wing,  
Is a most graceful-looking thing;  
Like scavengers, who come each day,  
He does much good in his own way.

39



BIRD CHILDREN



**V**ERMILION FLYCATCHER'S a beauty,  
You'll always find him right on duty;  
Searches for food early and late,  
Bringing it to his pink-clothed mate.

40



BIRD CHILDREN





**Y**ELLOW WARBLER comes to stay  
Along about the first of May;  
He likes to live by pond or rill  
And builds his nest with care and skill.

41



## BIRD CHILDREN



**C**URLEW runs along the shore,  
To him, perhaps, it's like a floor;  
Whistle, and he will answer you  
Something like this: "Kerloo, Kerloo."  
*(Long-Billed Curlew)*

42



## BIRD CHILDREN





**S**IR PARTRIDGE is a drummer bold,  
You'll hear him drum when days are cold.  
He says the nicest things to eat  
Are red thorn apples, ripe and sweet.  
*(Ruffed Grouse)*

43



BIRD CHILDREN



**T**HE SNOWY HERON'S used to be  
A very fine, large family;  
I tell you this with great regret:  
Men hunt the birds their plumes to get.

44



BIRD CHILDREN







**S**AID KING-FISHER: "The choicest dish  
I know of is a fresh caught fish;  
I love to fish, and, if you'll wait,  
I'll get you some—I need no bait."

45



## BIRD CHILDREN



**B**ROWN THRASHER is a cheerful bird,  
His sweet, clear carol may be heard  
All through the pleasant summer day;  
We're sorry when he goes away.

46



## BIRD CHILDREN





**S**AID GOLDFINCH: "I believe in weeds;  
I live all winter on the seeds;  
In my snug coat of black and gold  
I really do not feel the cold."

47



## BIRD CHILDREN



**"C**HEER UP, cheer up, it's going to rain,"  
Sang plump SIR ROBIN, "but 'tis plain  
We need some moisture for the  
ground,  
So dinners may be better found."

48



## BIRD CHILDREN





**F**LITTING 'round the swimming pool,  
Where the air is nice and cool,  
Red-winged BLACK-BIRD sings in glee:  
"Gloogle-ee, Gloogle-ee-e."

49



BIRD CHILDREN



**Q**UAIL sings a song of sheer delight:  
"Bob White, Bob White, Bob-Bob-Bob  
White."

I wonder who Bob White may be  
To whom he calls so merrily.

50



BIRD CHILDREN







**K**ING-BIRD, like some other boys,  
Likes to make a lot of noise;  
He's a bit boisterous in play  
And sometimes quarrelsome, they say.

51



BIRD CHILDREN



**C**ATBIRD is good at imitations,  
He mimics all his small relations;  
And, safely perched upon a bough,  
He imitates the cat's "Me-ow."

52



BIRD CHILDREN





**S**AID PURPLE MARTIN to his lady:  
"Here's a house all cool and shady;  
I surely am a lucky swallow—  
This beats my building plans all hollow."

53



## BIRD CHILDREN



**"C**HE-WEE, che-wee, che-wee-che-wee,"  
Said REDSTART, "Will you look at  
me?  
I do not sing so well by note  
But see my black and orange coat!"  
*(American Redstart)*

54



## BIRD CHILDREN





**W**ITH a flash of bright-hued wing,  
BLUEBIRD comes to say it's  
spring;  
Sets about to build his nest  
Upon the tree which suits him best.

55



## BIRD CHILDREN



**L**ITTLE SIR SCREECH OWL and his wife  
Live such a cheerful, useful life;  
They nest among the apple trees,  
Saying: "May we eat the bugs here, please?"

56



## BIRD CHILDREN





“WHO, WHO, who, who?” asks SIR BARN OWL,  
When he comes out at dusk to prow!;  
He has great shiny yellow eyes,  
And looks so very, very wise.

57



BIRD CHILDREN



OSTRICH'S cousin, CASSOWARY,  
Wears a coat peculiar, very;  
It's half like feathers, half like hair,  
—  
There's not one like it anywhere.

58



BIRD CHILDREN





**O**STRICH grows to be immense  
But has so very little sense,  
For when an enemy's at hand  
He covers up his head with sand.

59



## BIRD CHILDREN



**S**AID PENGUIN, pensively, one day:  
"Come, fishie dear, come out and play,"  
But fishie answered, in a fright:  
"I 've heard about your appetite."

60



## BIRD CHILDREN







**A**LBATROSS has wings so strong  
That he could fly the whole day long;  
But if he's tired, he can float  
Upon the waves, just like a boat.

61



## BIRD CHILDREN



**T**HE dainty MISSES PARRAKEET  
A Dress all in green and look so sweet;  
From South America they came  
And "Love Bird" is their other name.  
*(Red-Faced Lovebirds)*

62



## BIRD CHILDREN





**H**UMMING BIRD, the dainty thing,  
Has no voice and cannot sing,  
He lives daintily, and sips  
Honey from the flowers' lips.  
(*Ruby Throated Humming Bird*)

63



## BIRD CHILDREN



**H**ERE's a good joke about SPOONBILL:  
Never had hair and never will;  
His head is absolutely bare,—  
He's happy though—he doesn't care.  
(*Roseate Spoonbill*)

64



## BIRD CHILDREN





**M**ADAME IBIS, stately bird,  
Stands and thinks without a  
word;  
She can't forget that long ago  
She was a sort of queen, you know.  
*(Scarlet Ibis)*

65



## BIRD CHILDREN



**S**ANDPIPER lives beside the water  
With her little son and daughter;  
Shows the cunning little brood  
Exactly where to look for food.  
*(Least Sandpiper)*

66



## BIRD CHILDREN







**S**AID STORMY PETREL: "This is fine!  
I do enjoy the gale called 'line';  
No matter how the storm may thicken  
It just suits 'Mother Carey's Chicken.'"

67



## BIRD CHILDREN



**S**AID fussy MADAM COCKATOO:  
"I always find enough to do;  
I'm such a busy, useful dame,  
I know these folks are glad I came."

68



## BIRD CHILDREN





**P**ARROT'S a very wise old bird,  
She can speak English well, I've heard;  
Laughs and says in manner jolly:  
"Have you a cracker for Miss Polly?"  
(*Gray Parrot*)

69



BIRD CHILDREN



**A**DREADFUL thief is old BLUE JAY,  
He robs the other birds, they say;  
He wears a handsome suit of blue,  
And calls a gay "Good-day" to you.

70



BIRD CHILDREN





**S**PARROW'S an Englishman, I'm told,  
His manners are both rude and bold;  
Other birds wish he'd go away,  
But he says: "No, I've come to stay."

71



## BIRD CHILDREN



**A**T EVENING, when the world is still,  
Mournfully sings the WHIP-POOR-WILL  
In his brown suit, all trimmed with white,  
He slips so softly through the night.

72



## BIRD CHILDREN





**H**AUSE SWALLOW, in his nest of clay,  
Always has lots of things to say;  
He and his brothers often race,  
Catching the insects 'round the place.

73



## BIRD CHILDREN



**S**EA DOVE, sometimes called "Little Auk,"  
Flies very little, likes to walk;  
He wears a coat of feathers warm  
And doesn't seem to mind the storm.

74



## BIRD CHILDREN





**L**OON is a fearless diver bold,  
He does n't mind the heat or cold;  
He dives and swims—oh, very far,  
And then bobs up and laughs "Ha-Ha!"

75



BIRD CHILDREN



**M**OCKING BIRD is very clever,  
Uses her own notes hardly  
ever,  
But saucily sings bits of song  
Which to the other birds belong.

76



BIRD CHILDREN







“O DEAR, dear me!” WOOD-PECKER said,  
“The birds all shout at me, ‘Redhead’;  
It makes me feel so very sad,  
No wonder that my temper’s bad!”

77



## BIRD CHILDREN



TO SAVE his little home from harm,  
CRESTED FLYCATCHER has a charm:  
He finds and places in his nest  
A piece of Mr. Snake’s old vest.

78



## BIRD CHILDREN





**I**VORY-BILLED WOODPECKER SAID: "Dear me!  
They're cutting down my family tree;  
Where can I live, I'd like to know,  
If men will spoil the forest so?"

79



## BIRD CHILDREN



**N**IGHT HAWK is lazy, sleeps all day,  
And then comes out at night to play;  
He always wears his evening clothes  
And when it's daylight, home he goes.

80



## BIRD CHILDREN





**B**ARN SWALLOW is a graceful thing,  
Catches his food upon the wing;  
Perhaps that's why he is so fond  
Of skimming lightly o'er the pond.

81



## BIRD CHILDREN



**L**AUGHING GULL seems free from care,  
He's always laughing everywhere;  
He never tells what it's about  
And no one yet has found it out.

82



## BIRD CHILDREN







**S**TARLING'S a pretty little dear,  
He lives in Europe, too, we hear;  
The folks in Ireland, so we're told,  
Think that he's worth his weight in gold.

83



## BIRD CHILDREN



**S**AID busy little JENNY WREN:  
"I like to live where there are men;  
I come each year to the same place  
So I can see some friendly face."

84



## BIRD CHILDREN





**M**OURNING DOVE is very sweet,  
She likes nice grains and seeds to eat;  
In her soft voice she calls: "Coo, coo,"  
Which means in Dove talk, "I love you."

85



## BIRD CHILDREN



**R**ED-SHAFTED FLICKER hops around,  
Eating the ants upon the ground;  
He builds in any hollow tree  
Where he's as snug as snug can be.

86



## BIRD CHILDREN





**G**REEN JAY lives in Rio Grande,  
A member of a robber band;  
He's very beautiful, but oh!  
We wish he would n't plunder so!

87



BIRD CHILDREN



**C**OW-BIRD is lazy, sad to say,  
She lives in quite a selfish way;  
She's neither pretty nor polite  
And never tries to do what's right.

88



BIRD CHILDREN





**C**UCKOO'S a quiet, useful bird,  
He eats the naughty worms, I've heard,  
And from the woods he calls to you  
His simple song:—"Cuckoo, cuckoo."

89



## BIRD CHILDREN



**T**HE SNOW BIRD said: "Let's have some fun,  
The storm is over—there's the sun."  
He rolled and tumbled in the snow,  
Like other little ones you know.  
*(Snow-Flake)*

90



## BIRD CHILDREN





**U**NDER a bridge, where all day long  
The brooklet sings its happy song,  
PHOEBE BIRD builds her nest of clay  
To which she comes each year to stay.

91



## BIRD CHILDREN



**S**CARLET FLAMINGO said: "Just think!  
I really thought this gown was pink,  
But when you see it in this light,  
It's red—I fear it's rather bright."

92



## BIRD CHILDREN







**H**ERE is old MR. PELICAN,  
He is a famous fisherman;  
Said he: "I do not mind wet  
feet  
If I catch fish enough to eat."

93



## BIRD CHILDREN



**P**UFFIN walks better than he flies,  
He has red feet and queer white eyes;  
He's such a funny little fellow  
With his great beak of red and yellow.  
*(Sea Parrot)*

94



## BIRD CHILDREN





**L**YRE BIRD'S an Australian child,  
She lives in lonely places wild,  
And builds upon the rocky ground  
The queerest nest which can be found.

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