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The

# BLUE JAY

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FOR SASKATCHEWAN AND ADJACENT REGIONS

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Saskatoon, Saskatchewan

September, 1965



American Coot

Photo by Robert R. Taylor

Published quarterly by the  
SASKATCHEWAN NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY  
Regina, Saskatchewan



# PLANNING FOR WILD LANDS

What would the world be, once bereft  
Of wet and of wildness? Let them be left,  
O let them be left, wildness and wet;  
Long live the weeds and the wildness yet.

Gerard Manley Hopkins (1844-1889)

Recently we read a strong re-statement of the case for wilderness areas in a Canada Department of Forestry pamphlet written by J. S. Rowe and entitled "Nature protection — wilderness and natural areas" (Ottawa, 1962). Mr. Rowe feels that there is little *public* interest in wilderness and natural areas in Canada as compared to the United States, and that there is less incentive for governmental agencies in Canada to get deeply involved in study of this particular land-use question. This statement reminds us how vital it is for organizations like the Saskatchewan Natural History Society to press for planning for wild lands.

"The planning of land use," concludes Mr. Rowe, "is the most significant type of national planning, for in the long run the health and prosperity of the people depend on it. Man creates his own environment; he can be wasteful and destructive or far-sighted and conserving, he can surround himself with unplanned ugliness or with planned beauty.

"Fortunately in Canada we can afford to preserve Wilderness — primitive areas set aside for those forms of recreation founded on appreciation of scenic splendour. But by their very nature, Wildernesses will always be remote from centers of population and will be accessible only to a minority of users. They need to be supplemented by Natural Areas — smaller fragments of the primeval landscape preserved for aesthetic, cultural and scientific value.

"Natural Areas should be established in large numbers across the country, preserving representative samples of native plant and animal communities on typical terrain as well as in uniquely interesting habitats. They will serve many purposes, not least of which may be that of introducing town and city dwellers to the native landscape, nurturing that affection for the land of which conservation and tasteful environmental planning are the ultimate expression."

This philosophy of land-use has been implicit in the efforts of our Society over the years toward the establishing of a grassland park, and we look forward to seeing an example of Mr. Rowe's advocated "natural areas" take shape in the new national park being planned now for the Canadian prairies. In a letter to the *Blue Jay* Editor Mr. Rowe himself has written warmly of the proposal for a national grassland park: "Years ago I worked for P.F.R.A. out of Swift Current, on the Community Pasture Survey, and recall with pleasure many happy days of rambling through the Great Sand Hills, the Cypress Hills and the unbroken grasslands to the south. It was quite an experience to find large tracts of prairie where one could stand and look in all directions and see no signs of telephone posts or fences; the feeling that a herd of buffalo or antelope might suddenly appear was strong and, indeed, one could still discern faintly the old buffalo trails leading down to the water holes."

PROF. WILLIAM A. S. SARJEANT

674 UNIVERSITY DRIVE

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 Founded in 1942 by Isabel M. Priestly

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## BRIEF FOR A BUFFALO PARK

by **Allen Ronaghan**, Consort, Alberta\*

The story of the efforts of the Canadian government to save the Plains Bison from extinction used to be well known. While the Wainwright Buffalo Park was maintained a curious public could visit the area and see the buffalo for themselves. Articles about the park and its buffalo appeared constantly in newspapers and magazines and circulars were distributed to visitors to the park. Best of all, thousands of people went home realizing that an animal, once in danger of disappearing forever, had been spared. Conservation in its broadest aspects was brought to the public mind most forcibly, and the lesson applied to other species of animals as well as the buffalo.

Not so now. The buffalo are in the almost inaccessible Wood Buffalo Park. Out of sight, out of mind. A public that needs constantly to be educated about the need for conservation has almost forgotten about the buffalo and the successful effort to preserve them. Except for an article about anthrax killing some buffalo or a news item about a commercial company wishing to develop mineral resources in the Park, little is heard about the buffalo or their park.

The Wainwright Buffalo Park was closed during World War II and the area devoted to the training of military personnel, a decision dictated by national necessity in a time of emergency which can be excused on those grounds. The decision to leave the buffalo in banishment for 20 years after the war's conclusion cannot be so excused. The government's investment is lost on one hand; the public's education is neglected on the other.

A more thorough banishment can hardly be imagined. True, a few head of buffalo may be seen in the wooded confines of Elk Island Park, or in the tiny paddock at Banff. But in neither of these places do the buffalo appear in their typical natural habitat mentioned so often in the writings of the explorers and early prairie travellers. Nowhere can a boy or girl thrill to the sight of herds of buffalo like those

that once roamed over the broad grassy sweep of the prairies.

We now have to persuade our children that the buffalo once existed here. Even the dinosaurs of remote ages have fared better in this respect. In the Steeveville area a deliberate and successful attempt is being made to show the public that the area in which we live was once the home of these giant reptiles. In Calgary an imaginative effort has been made to recreate this remote age by means of dinosaur models. The impact of Dinosaur Park in Canadian education has been tremendous.

But the dinosaur is extinct. One can come away from Dinosaur Park without having been taught a lesson in conservation. The buffalo was rescued from extinction, as many species nearly extinct today might be if the general public could be aroused to assist in the work. However, with the buffalo out of sight in Wood Buffalo Park, the lesson is forgotten.

The buffalo were the mainstay of the primitive economy which flourished here before the white man came; careless slaughter caused the near extinction of the plains buffalo and finished forever the primitive culture that depended upon it. Our children should know this. An accessible buffalo park in the Great Plains region, the buffalo's natural home, would remind us of their part in our prairie culture.

Now there is, in my opinion, an area admirably suited to the establishment of such a park—the area in eastern Alberta near the Neutral Hills and Sounding Lake. This area has many advantages. First, and most important, it has the elements basic to buffalo survival, grass and water. A herd of buffalo could be kept there as easily as at the Wainwright Park. Also, this area retains much of the appearance of the virgin prairie. Second, the Neutral Hills to the west of Sounding Lake and another range to the south of Sounding Lake would provide a natural grandstand for visitors to the park. Furthermore,

\* This brief supporting the establishment of a Neutral Hills Buffalo Park was submitted several years ago to provincial and federal government departments. We print it here because it represents an individual's active concern about the preservation of our natural heritage.





Sask. Govt. photo

From the buffalo habitat exhibit, Sask. Museum of Natural History

there are historic reasons for the establishment of a park here, reasons connected with the disappearance of the primitive Indian economy mentioned above. Finally, the area is very sparsely settled at present. The establishment of a park here would make less disturbance to an established economy than in any other place in Alberta accessible to the travelling public.

I remember a feeling of disappointment when I was taken as a child to the Wainwright Park. It seemed that my father drove up and down and around endless little hillocks in search of the buffalo. Then, suddenly, without warning, we were right among them, and curiosity turned to fear as I wondered what these large beasts would do to us. I realize now that I was watching in vain for the view of the buffalo that my reading in school had led me to expect.

From the Neutral Hills one can see for miles. A herd grazing would be clearly visible from a number of directions and at a considerable distance. A person who takes the trouble to climb any of the hills is rewarded by a view similar to that from a low-flying aircraft. The Indians realized the hunting advantages these hills offered, and remains of their signal-fire places may be found on certain of the high hills to this day. Incidentally, the name Neutral Hills is said to come

from a Cree legend that Manitou set the hills in place as an area in which Blackfoot, Assiniboine and Cree could hunt but must not molest each other while hunting. When they were in the hills they must act as though they were in neutral territory. Hence the name.

It is worth noting that both Nose Hill, some miles to the west, and Flagstaff Hill, many miles to the north-west, are visible from the Neutral Hills. To the south lies open prairie for many miles.

There is an historical reason for establishing a park in this area. East of Sounding Lake part of Treaty Number Six was signed with the Crees in 1878. The spot was chosen as it was often the gathering place for the Crees in certain seasons of the year. Big Bear was there, Lieutenant-Governor Laird was there from Battleford, and Assistant Commissioner Irvine and a detachment of Mounties came north from Fort Walsh for the signing. Good supplies of wood and water were available there so the Mounted Police chose a spot for the building of a barracks, whose remains may still be found. Also, ruts of the trail to Battleford may still be seen. Very few people know that such an historic site exists in eastern Alberta. Its development as part of a park is appropriate to remind our people of these events in our country's history.



An incidental result of the setting aside of a park here would be the creation and maintenance of a sanctuary for birds. The Sounding Lake area is near the flyway of a number of species of birds including, I understand, the Whooping Crane. Such a sanctuary is badly needed by many species. The area to the south and west is becoming well known as "goose country" and attracts hundreds of hunters each fall. The country to the east in Saskatchewan is fairly intensively cultivated, leaving all too few places of safety for migrating birds. It should be noted that many birds of no real interest to the hunter are killed each year simply because they are migrating while hundreds of armed men are about, attracted by "goose country." Protected areas of the kind envisioned here provide places for birds to stop and rest in safety on their long trip south.

Population is sparse in the 12 townships under study. One township (37-4 w4) in which Sounding Lake is located contained no population at all when the survey was made in 1961. Seven of the 12 suggested townships have fewer than one person per square mile. Indeed, the average population for the 12 suggested townships is .756 persons per square mile. The chief activity is ranching, and much of the land is crown land available for lease to local ranchers. It is recognized that the presence of any population at all presents a problem in a proposed park area, but the difficulties presented by such a small density of

population should not be insuperable.

A natural gas pipeline grid underlies much of the area, but there is no reason why this development, already complete, should inhibit the use of the area as a park, any more than it now inhibits the use of land for grazing.

Alberta Highways #12 and #13, and Saskatchewan Highways #14, #31 and #51 give access to the area. Several good gravelled roads pass north and south through the area. What is particularly important, at least two of these bring the visitor into the Neutral Hills where excellent views of the surrounding country may be obtained.

In this brief I have laid stress on bringing the buffalo back to the prairies where our people can see them. I have stressed the importance of teaching conservation and of reminding Canadians of important incidents in their country's history. May I close with the suggestion that Indians be employed where possible, both as workmen and as guides. It may also be possible to find Indians who would be interested in the administration of the park. Including Indians will ensure that the part the Indians played in our country's past — and are playing today — will be suitably acknowledged as a living reality.

Indians, Mounties, the buffalo — basic ingredients in the history of the Canadian West. What better place for Canadians to see them together than at a Neutral Hills Buffalo Park!



Photo by Robert R. Taylor

Buffalo at Banff National Park



# STATUS OF THE SCARLET TANAGER IN SASKATCHEWAN

by **Margaret Belcher**, Regina

Perhaps no bird in Saskatchewan has been observed and reported more often without being officially recognized than the Scarlet Tanager (*Piranga olivacea*). Ordinarily, a species is given only hypothetical status on the provincial list until a photograph or, preferably, a specimen establishes its occurrence. In the absence of these two forms of evidence the Scarlet Tanager remains a hypothetical species on the *Field check-list of Saskatchewan birds* (4th ed. Revised June, 1959. Stuart Houston, Fred G. Bard and Robert W. Nero). Yet the many observations of this conspicuous bird by experienced observers through the years suggest that the Scarlet Tanager should be given full status.

The breeding range of the Scarlet Tanager as given by the A.O.U. *Check-list of North American birds* (1957) includes eastern North Dakota (Fargo, Grafton) and southeastern Manitoba (Winnipeg, Indian Bay), and it is described in the *Check-list* as accidental or casual in Saskatchewan (Indian Head).

References to the Scarlet Tanager in Saskatchewan go back to the end of the last century. When Seton (1886) was describing the range of the bird in Manitoba, he added the note "rare at Qu'Appelle", and subsequently (1891) he attributed this information to Guernsey, an early naturalist resident in the area. Again, in Macoun (1900) the Scarlet Tanager is described (on the strength of Seton's statements) as "seen as far west as Qu'Appelle in eastern Assiniboia".

At Indian Head, the Scarlet Tanager was reported by George Lang in May, 1891; Mitchell (1924) quotes from Lang's letter, "Harvey found one dead after a snowstorm in late May, 1891, at Indian Head, which he mounted." J. Alden Loring of the U.S. Biological Survey listed the species in a report of field studies at Indian Head from June 19 to July 10, 1895 (unpublished field notes now in the file of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service). His report reads simply: "One heard. A specimen was seen that had been found

dead in the vicinity." Loring does not say that the specimen was a recent bird; it may well have been the bird found dead in the district in 1891, reported by Lang. Again on May 22, 1908 a Scarlet Tanager was reported seen at Indian Head by George Lang (In Annual Report of the Department of Agriculture of the Province of Saskatchewan, 1908).

Mitchell (1924) also noted the Scarlet Tanager as "reported seen at Estevan and Moose Mountain", and a note in the Saskatchewan Museum of Natural History files adds the comment "reported as seen occasionally at Carlyle by Mr. Roe (Ranger)." These latter observations are given without date or other supporting data, but they are of interest because this is the part of the province in which we should expect the Scarlet Tanager. On July 19, 1956 George Blanchard reported seeing two males and one female in the Moose Mountain Provincial Park (*Blue Jay* 14:119), and in June, 1959, when the Saskatchewan Natural History Society summer meeting was held in the Park, an observation of a Scarlet Tanager was again reported (*Blue Jay*, 17:132). On the latter occasion, the bird, a male, was first seen by Mrs. A. G. Lawrence, and its identification was confirmed by A. G. Lawrence and E. Manley Callin. I wrote to Manley Callin for further particulars of this sighting, and he replied as follows (letter of June 23, 1965):

"I remember the details as if it were yesterday and I can still 'see' the bird and the setting. The meet was held June 12-14 and the date of observation would be June 13 as we were in a cavalcade of cars and nearing Jabe Lake where the entire group had noon lunch. Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence were riding in my car and we were moving along leisurely at the very end of the line. Suddenly Mrs. Lawrence said in a very excited and breathless manner, 'Oh Manley, look!' Looking in the direction she pointed I saw a male Scarlet Tanager (my first) perched on the tip of a shrub not many yards ahead of the car and



to our left. I brought the car to a sudden stop almost abreast of the bird and fortunately, it did not fly immediately. Conditions of observation could not have been better. The bird was in plain view about 15 feet off the roadway and probably about 30 feet from the car, and not a twig or leaf marred our view. All essential details could be clearly noted and seeing this scarlet and black bird against the back-drop of tall, green trees lining the roadway was quite startling and is a scene I shall never forget. All three observers were quite spellbound and who can measure time under such circumstances? Certainly the bird did not linger and I would guess that it sat quietly for only about 10 or 15 seconds before flying off into the trees. Both of the Lawrences had seen the Scarlet Tanager on at least one previous occasion in Manitoba but, as you can imagine, it was still a big thrill to them." This record has special validity, representing the careful observation of two experienced and well known observers, Manley Callin and A. G. Lawrence.

Three other localities in eastern Saskatchewan have reported observations of the Scarlet Tanager in recent times — Fort Qu'Appelle, Rocanville, and Yorkton. A male was noted on May 21, 1950 at York Lake, four miles southwest of Yorkton, by Nancy Morrison and seen later that day by Henry Beck and on the following day by Stuart Houston and Mary Belcher. It was very tame and allowed observers to approach within 10 feet of it (Houston, 1950).

At Rocanville a male Scarlet Tanager was seen about seven miles northwest of the town (SW 13-17-32 w1) in June, 1956 and reported to the *Blue Jay* by Mrs. D. Sutton (*Blue Jay*, 14: 119). The particulars of the observation are worth recalling — both Mrs. Sutton and her eleven-year-old daughter, who first sighted the bird, were able to get very close to the bird when it flew to a branch about six feet from the ground on the exposed edge of a bluff. Mrs. Sutton's description of the bird in her letter to the *Blue Jay* supports her identification: "Plainly he was a male Scarlet Tanager in all his spring glory. The bright even red head and body contrasted sharply with clear cut, wholly black wings and tail. Complete absence of any

yellow assured me it wasn't a Western Tanager and the red head eliminated any chance of him being an oriole. In size he was between a sparrow and a robin." Mrs. Sutton also recognized that the local stands of poplar interspersed with large oak trees and sprinkled with underbrush, in a favoured corner bordered by the Qu'Appelle River on the north and the Scissors Creek on the west, provided suitable habitat for this species.

The following year, 1957, Errol Cochrane of Fort Qu'Appelle reported to Manley Callin that he had seen a male and female Scarlet Tanager on June 3 in a nearby coulee. Callin visited the spot with him later that day and together they watched a bird which was almost certainly the female, but neither bird was seen again (pers. corres., June 23, 1965).

Further west, and therefore extending the range of observations of the Scarlet Tanager in Saskatchewan, there are sight records for both Regina and Moose Jaw. In 1940 or 1941 a male was seen by Dick and Ada Bird in willow brush at a slough northeast of Regina, but it was not reported at the time because the Birds did not think of it as rare, having just returned from Florida where Scarlet Tanagers were commonly seen (Belcher, 1961). On May 18, 1959 a female Scarlet Tanager was seen in Regina by George F. Ledingham, and later in the day by Frank Brazier and Elmer Fox (Belcher, 1961). Since then, I have heard on two occasions of birds seen in Regina by inexperienced observers, that were believed to be Scarlet Tanagers. At Moose Jaw a male Scarlet Tanager was seen by George F. Ledingham at his farm six miles west of the city on May 19, 1951 (Belcher, 1958).

At Young, some 100 miles northwest of Regina there is a record of a male Scarlet Tanager seen July 19, 1963. Charles F. Southey, who saw the bird, states that he had a very good look at it (pers. corres., January 19, 1964).

Salt and Wilk (1958) list the Scarlet Tanager as hypothetical for Alberta. However, on November 2, 1964 in Calgary, a female struck a window and died; this recent specimen provides the first authentic record of this species for Alberta (Myres, 1965). Meanwhile, the evi-



dence of observations in Saskatchewan, assembled from the records with the help of E. Manley Callin, C. Stuart Houston and Robert W. Nero, would lead us to define the status of the species in this province as follows: uncommon summer visitant in the south, possibly even breeding in the extreme southeast. It would be most desirable to get a definite breeding record for the species in Saskatchewan.

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## NOTE ON THE WESTERN Tanager AT REGINA

by Hugh C. Smith, Regina

On May 12, 1965 I observed what I took to be a male Western Tanager (*Piranga ludoviciana*). The bird was seen flying about in the trees that line the square of the RCMP barracks in the city of Regina, and it drew my attention away from the Baltimore Orioles in the vicinity because of its vivid orange-red head which contrasted sharply with its yellow body and black wings. Because I was on my way to work I was unable to pursue the bird for any length of time. Once at work I telephoned my wife and gave her a verbal description of the bird I had seen. After consulting Peterson's *Field guide to western birds*, she confirmed my thoughts that it was a Western Tanager. She also advised that it was recorded as being in Saskatchewan in Peterson's guide and in the *Field check-list of Saskatchewan birds*, but that no mention of it was to be found in Belcher's *Birds of Regina* (1961). Here the matter rested until another observation of a male Western Tanager was brought to my attention.

On May 20, 1965, again at the RCMP barracks, a number of persons called my attention to a strange bird that was flying about the trees outside their office window. I was able to identify it as a male Western Tanager in spring plumage. On this occasion it was very carefully observed and was easily compared to the Baltimore Orioles with which it was associating. The next day I brought my Peterson's guide to work and showed the illustration of the Western Tanager

to those who had seen the strange bird and they agreed that this was the bird that they had seen the day before. It is to be noted from the December 1964 issue of the *Blue Jay* (p. 155) that the previous early date for recording this species in Saskatchewan was May 13. These two observations could have been observations of the same bird, but because of the time difference between the two sightings I am inclined to think that two separate birds were observed.

**Editor's Note:** The Western Tanager is not listed in the *Birds of Regina*, but the reporting of Smith's 1965 observations makes this an appropriate time to refer to a sight record for Regina reported to the author just as the book was going to press. On June 1, 1961 Mrs. Helen Tobin saw a bird drinking at her bird bath on Angus Crescent which she believed to be a male Western Tanager, having known this species in the United States. There was no way of verifying this observation, since other observers were not able to locate the bird, and this isolated and unverified record was therefore not included in the *Birds of Regina*. The following year, 1962, a male Western Tanager was reported as seen by Marion Goudie on May 15, and on May 17 Mrs. Holly Wallace reported a second observation, describing the bird she saw to Frank Brazier as a brilliantly plumaged bird with yellow body, black wings and red head. Again, other observers who went to look for the bird were unable to find it.



# FIRST SASKATCHEWAN RECORD OF THE RUFF

by Frank H. Brazier, Regina

At 4:30 p.m. Saturday, May 8, 1965 I chanced to stop by a slough at Monica Farm, near Richardson, Saskatchewan, about six miles east of Regina. There were a few shorebirds there, mainly Lesser Yellowlegs (*Totanus flavipes*), and as I scanned a small flock of these about 100 feet away an unusual wader walked into the field of view of my 10x50 binoculars—a pigeon-like bird on long thick orange legs with a bright yellow bill, and thick barred neck. It was evidently very hungry as it fed from the surface of the shallow water with the utmost concentration, never pausing. I hadn't the faintest idea of what it was although the shaggy feathers on the neck made me think of a Ruff. I dismissed this thought immediately as altogether too improbable, both because of the range and because I remembered that Peterson's Field Guides had shown a dark bill. All the pictures I had ever seen of a Ruff showed the neck ruff raised and thus I did not know what it looked like with the ruff in repose.

Knowing I needed help in identifying this bird I drove furiously back to Regina. Although Elmer Fox was at home he could not come out at once, but I found Dr. Robert Nero and Robert Taylor setting up a mist-net on Wascana Marsh, and they returned with me. Back at the slough we were relieved to find the stranger still there, still avidly feeding on the abundant insect life of the slough. Dr. Nero was immediately convinced it was a male Ruff (*Philomachus pugnax*). Leaving Taylor to try and get photographs we went in search of a gun and eventually borrowed one. Then Elmer Fox, his wife and son, Doug, arrived.

For a long time the bird remained out of range, occasionally raising its ruff in display to a yellowlegs, and twice we thought we had lost it when the whole flock took wing, but finally it was shot, the specimen providing positive proof of the occurrence of this species in Saskatchewan.

I found I had a number of books describing the Ruff. Each stressed the wide variety of neck ruff patterns, Benson (1960) being typical: "The

Ruff has suffered persecution and is now only a migrant [in U.K. - Ed.] seen chiefly in spring and autumn. It is a remarkable bird with greatly varying plumage. The ruff and ear-tufts of the male are worn only in spring and vary in colour. They may be red, yellow, black or white, barred or plain, and are extended in display. At other times of the year the plumage resembles that of the Reeve (female). She is 2½ inches shorter and her plumage is mottled grey-brown shading to white beneath. The colour of the legs varies from grey-green to bright yellow or orange." The pictures indicate a resemblance between the reeve and the yellowlegs, and Peterson (1947) comments that this species: "usually associates with Yellowlegs."

The breeding range of the Ruff is northern and central Eurasia. It winters south to southern Africa, Ceylon and Borneo. The birds turn up in America fairly regularly. Peterson (*op. cit.*) says: "Over thirty records; recorded almost annually on coast in recent years." The A.O.U. *Check-list of North American birds* (1957) notes occurrences inland to southern Ontario, Ohio, Indiana and Iowa. Since 1957 there have been at least two records well inland, *viz.* one on May 15, 1959, reported by Robbins (1959) near Norway Grove, Wisconsin, and one on May 23, 1964 near Alberta, Minnesota reported by Strubbe (1964), but our bird is the only record west of the Mississippi and thus for western North America, if we disregard the occasional occurrence of Siberian birds on the Alaska coast. It is also the first European wanderer ever recorded for Saskatchewan.

It is fascinating to speculate on how a European bird came to be so far off course as this one. Possibly it crossed the North Atlantic during fall migration, worked south to spend the winter in its accustomed latitude, then associated with the reeve-like Lesser Yellowlegs and accompanied them up the Mississippi flyway to Regina this spring; or it may have been wind-blown across the South Atlantic while going north from wintering in southern Africa, and then



fallen in on the American side with the northward moving Lesser Yellowlegs, which winter as far south as Argentina.

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## SIBERIAN RECOVERY OF PECTORAL SANDPIPER

by C. Stuart Houston, Saskatoon \*

A Pectoral Sandpiper (*Erolia melanotos*), number 502-86246, was shot on May 28, 1963 near Yanskij (110 km. N of Verkhoyanski), Yakut, U.S.S.R., about 68°30' N. and 134°45' E. I had banded this bird while mist netting at dawn for Common Snipe (*Capella gallinago*) on Sept. 20, 1961, 18 miles east and 3 miles north of Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. I was assisted on that occasion by J. Bernard Gollop, waterfowl biologist with the Canadian Wildlife Service, and Robert Folker, upland game biologist with the Saskatchewan Department of Natural Resources.

Yanskij is some 1560 miles west of the westernmost tip of Alaska, on the Yana River just north of the Arctic Circle; via the Bering Straits it is about 3800 miles northwest of Saskatoon.

Since the breeding grounds of this species (A.O.U. *Check-List*, 5th edition) extend across northern Siberia to the Taimyr peninsula, one thousand miles further west, it was quite possibly on its breeding grounds when shot. Its wintering grounds extend from Peru, southern Bolivia, northern Argentina and Uruguay south to Patagonia, whereas it is only casual in Samoa, Australia and New Zealand. It seems possible that Pectoral Sandpipers nesting in Siberia regularly travel up to 2500 miles east before beginning their long southward journey, which may extend another 7200 miles beyond Saskatoon, into South America. The largest migratory movement is east of the Rocky Mountains and the Pectoral is one of the common sandpipers in migration in Saskatche-

wan each spring and fall. If allowed to indulge in even more speculative theorizing, one could estimate that the total round trip might approach 22,000 miles, rivalling that famous traveller, the Arctic Tern, (*Sterna paradisaea*). Extensive banding on the breeding and wintering grounds might prove fruitful.

Allen J. Duvall, then head of the Bird Banding Laboratory, informs me that 1008 Pectoral Sandpipers were banded up to and including 1960, and that the only two previous recoveries were from the state or province where banded (Illinois and Manitoba).

I have had only one other Siberian recovery—a Pintail (*Anas acuta*) banded June 26, 1957 at Beaufield Marsh near Kerrobert, Sask. and shot May 21, 1961 near Anadyr', Chukotka, U.S.S.R.

\* Reprinted from *Bird-Banding*, 36:112-113, April, 1965.

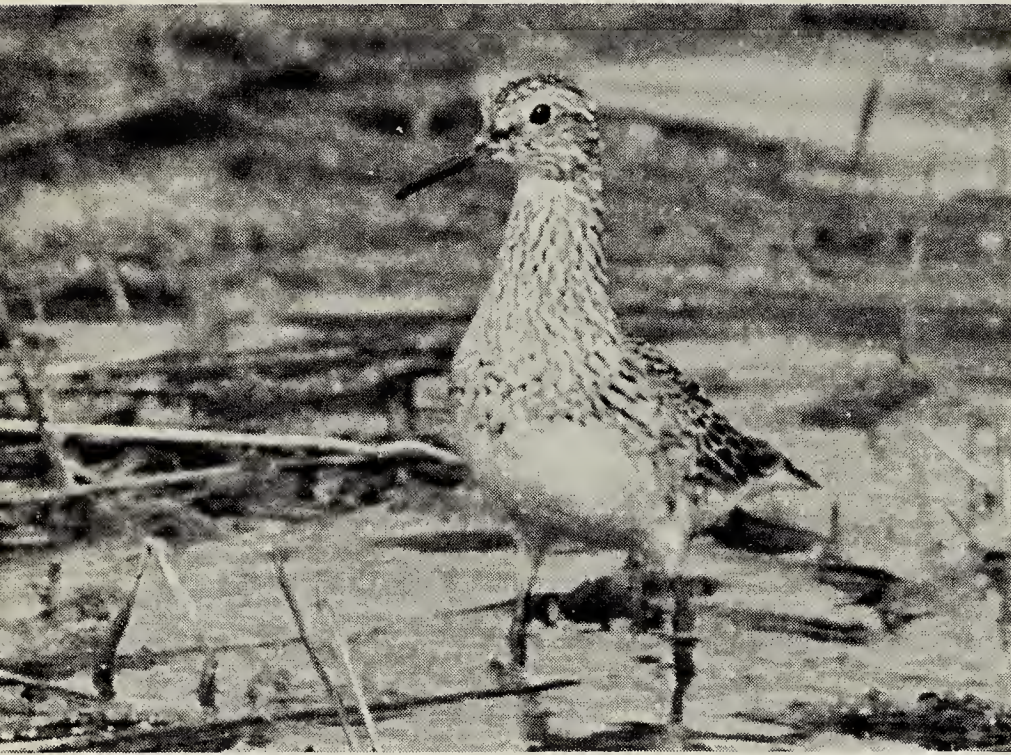
## SANDHILL CRANES FLYING WITH FEET DRAWN UP

by Fred G. Bard and Fred W. Lahrman,  
 Saskatchewan Museum of Natural History

On April 13, 1961 we visited the north end of Last Mountain Lake to get prairie sod for a coyote habitat group. It was a bitterly cold day with a strong northwest wind, rain and snow flurries. We found numerous Sandhill Cranes resting in flocks at a frozen spring. As we watched, cranes arose and circled overhead, and we were surprised to see nine cranes flying with their feet drawn forward in such a way that they appeared to have no legs. Instead of flying with their legs extended, trailing behind their tails in the usual manner, they had their feet drawn forward and tucked into the belly plumage. On two occasions we saw such birds suddenly straighten their legs out, assuming their usual appearance. We guessed that they were flying with their feet tucked up in order to keep them warm. In very cold weather Canada Geese have been observed to tuck their feet forward and under their feathers in a similar fashion instead of carrying them back under their tail as they usually do when in flight, but we know of no previous report of this interesting habit in Sandhill Cranes.

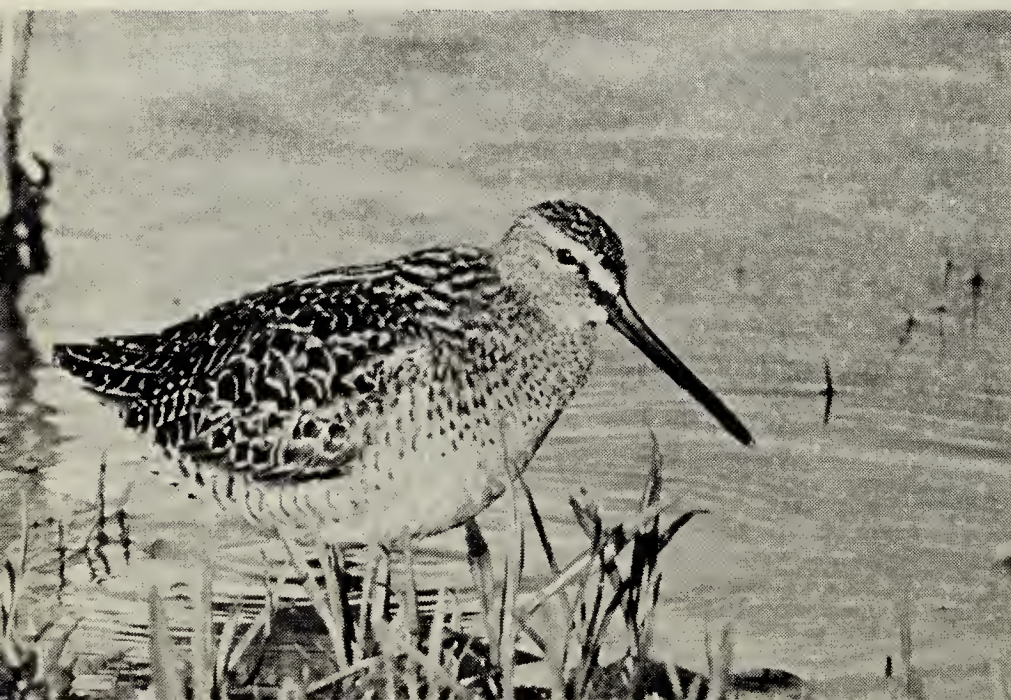
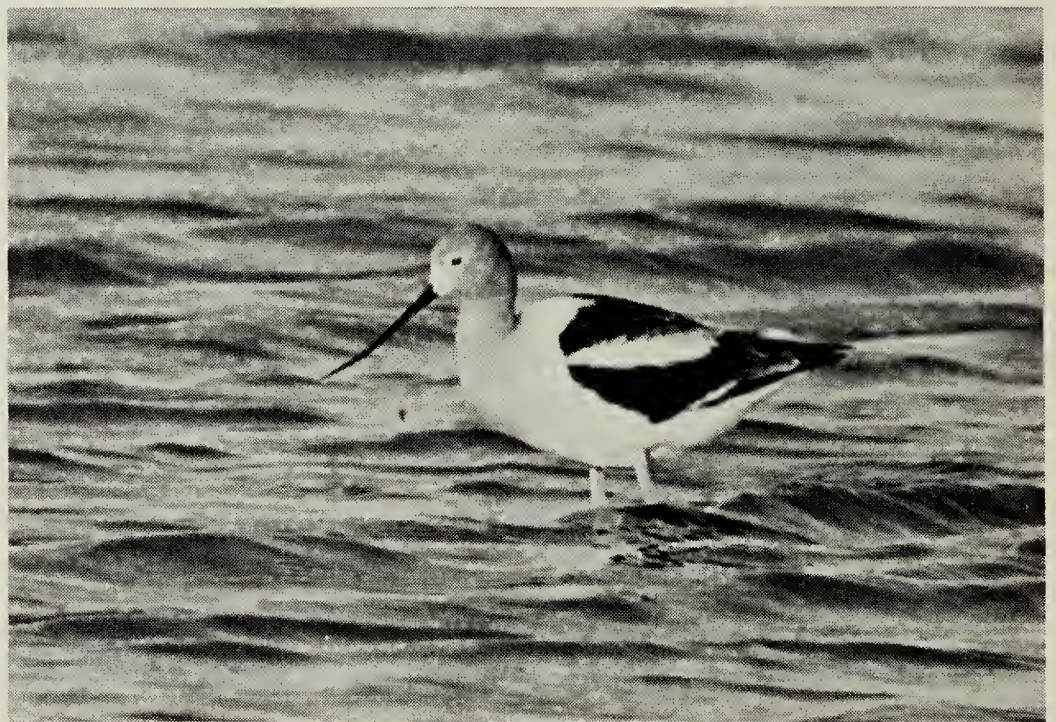


# THREE SHOREBIRDS . . . by Robert R. Taylor



A stalwart  
Pectoral Sandpiper  
. . . Siberia  
bound?

American  
Avocet . . .  
elite of  
prairie  
residents.



Another Arctic  
traveller . . . a  
Short-billed  
Dowitcher.



# WILLIAMSON'S SAPSUCKER FOUND IN SOUTHEASTERN SASKATCHEWAN

by **Robert W. Nero**, Regina

A twelfth species of woodpecker was added to the Saskatchewan checklist when a Williamson's Sapsucker (*Sphyrapicus thyroideus*) was found and collected on May 30, 1965 at Kenosee Lake in the Moose Mountain Provincial Park in extreme southeastern Saskatchewan. Both a male and a female of this species were sighted on May 29 by Spencer Sealy, but they were extremely wary and were soon lost to sight. On the next day Mrs. Richard Sanderson and, independently, Miss Marty Cook, found the female in mid-afternoon, feeding quietly and slowly in a mature grove of introduced yellow pines on the north shore of the lake. In late afternoon, in the same place, they were able to find it again and point it out to Robert R. Taylor, who recognized it as a Williamson's Sapsucker. An adjacent cabin served as headquarters for a field party conducting a survey of the birds of the area, and shortly after Ross Lein was summoned to collect the bird. The specimen is now in the collections of the University of Saskatchewan, Regina Campus. The male was briefly seen again by Sealy on June 2 in the same general area.

The male Williamson's Sapsucker, which is in the same genus as our

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, is a strikingly-marked woodpecker with a black crown and black back and long white shoulder patch. The female is quite different, having a brown head and back with narrow white stripes on the back and sides, making it appear, as Roger Tory Peterson says, "zebra-backed." This woodpecker is an inhabitant of coniferous forests in the high mountains of western America, from "southern British Columbia south in mountains through central and eastern Washington, Oregon . . . western Montana . . . to southern California . . . and northern New Mexico" according to the A.O.U. *Check-list of North American birds* (1957).

Salt and Wilk in *The Birds of Alberta* (1958) list the species as hypothetical for Alberta, but so far as we can determine there are no other records for Canada outside of British Columbia, nor has it been listed for the states beyond the mountain ranges (with the exception of a record for Nebraska). Thus, although the species has been recorded for this province, it must be recognized as an accidental visitor. No doubt this record will cause us all to inspect sapsuckers with a little more care than formerly.

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## BLACK-THROATED GRAY WARBLER — A SASKATCHEWAN FIRST

by **Frank H. Brazier**, Regina

Recently I found myself in southwestern Oregon staring at a "lifer"—a fine Acorn Woodpecker (*Melanerpes formicivorus*) which was flycatching, sailing out from the spire of a tall dead pine and returning. I was thus engrossed when I heard a strange buzzy song nearby and, turning, noticed a movement in a densely foliated tree. A head popped up, then neck and throat were revealed as the bird craned to get a better look at me, giving me a better look at him. He then flew off, but not before I was satisfied I was seeing a Black-throated

Gray Warbler (*Dendroica nigrescens*). This was only the second time that I had seen this warbler, but this second sighting, in the bird's normal breeding range, was not nearly so exciting as my first view of it.

On May 3, 1965 as I entered the lane leading to Rotary Park in Regina shortly after noon I noticed a small bird moving vigorously on a foodhunt in a tree about 100 feet away. My first thought was that it was a Myrtle Warbler but as I got closer I could see no rump patch when it flew. Then the pronounced white in the facial



area made me think of a chickadee, until I stopped within a few feet and noticed the black bar across the face, throat and crown. This was a stranger to me. I thought of the Golden-winged Warbler (*Vermivora chrysoptera*) but close examination revealed no trace of gold in the plumage, although the face was similar; by this time I was examining it through 8x40 binoculars. I gave up and walked home; there I checked Peterson's *A Field Guide to the Birds* and found nothing, but his *Field Guide to Western Birds* solved it — a male Black-throated Gray Warbler, Saskatchewan's first record of this species!

I telephoned both Elmer Fox and Ruth Tempel, hoping for confirming sightings, then drove to the University of Saskatchewan, Regina Campus, where I was fortunate in locating Dr. Robert W. Nero, Robert Taylor, Spencer Sealy and Richard Sanderson, who converged on the area. By this time it was nearly 1:00 p.m. At 1:15 p.m. the bird was discovered and my identification confirmed. After I left to go back to work the warbler was collected, thus adding this species to the official Saskatchewan Check-list, as a straggler.

The Black-throated Gray Warbler is native to Canada only in south-western coastal British Columbia (except Vancouver Island), according to the A.O.U. *Check-list of North American birds* (1957). Its breeding range continues south to include western Washington, central Oregon, southwestern Idaho, northern Utah, southwestern Wyoming and north-western and central Colorado, south in the mountains to northern Baja California, northwestern, central and southeastern Arizona, and eastern and southern New Mexico.

The Regina record appears to be the fourth for Canada outside of British Columbia, according to Dr. W. Earl Godfrey, Curator of Ornithology for the National Museum of Canada. The other records he cites are: (1) J. B. Foster recorded the first for eastern Canada in the Don Valley, Toronto, from December 7 to 17, 1952, and photographed it (*Wilson Bulletin*, 66:222); (2) Dr. Donald R. Gunn photographed one in Lorne Park, Ontario, May 5, 1962; (3) J. L. Baillie mentions one seen on September 11, 1955 at Point Pelee, Ontario, by Willard Schaefer and Horace

Dahmer (*Ontario Field Biologist*, 11: 1-3).

The Zoology Department of the North Dakota State University at Fargo, North Dakota, advise they have no record of this bird in that state.

The A.O.U. *Check-list* does not mention any Montana occurrences, and Dr. C. V. Davis, Professor of Zoology, Montana State College at Bozeman, Montana, advises that they have no records of this warbler in Montana. A letter to me from Mrs. Carol L. Boyd, of Stevensville, Montana, dated June 12, 1965 is therefore most interesting. Mrs. Boyd writes:

"I haven't seen a Black-throated Gray Warbler in western Montana (yet), but have three records from our ranch north of Two Dot [Stevensville is in the Bitterroot Valley in extreme western Montana, while Two Dot is in central Montana.].

"June 22, 1955 — a pair was carrying food to a nest in a Mountain Maple a short distance from a small mountain stream.

"May 6, 1957 — several Black-throated Gray Warblers were calling their zzzzz's in the fir trees on the west slope. They were searching for insects on the trees, constantly moving. As I lay in the shade one flew to the ground within a few feet of me.

"Sept. 14, 1957 — saw a Black-throated Gray Warbler near the willows."

Peterson (1947) notes this bird as accidental in Massachusetts, South Carolina and Florida. It is on the hypothetical list for Alberta (Salt and Wilk, 1958). Ron Huber, of St. Paul, Minnesota (pers. corres.) informs me that a specimen was taken in 1956 along that state's western boundary, and mentions several South Dakota occurrences. He added that it has occurred east of its regular range often enough, according to the literature, to give the impression of fairly regular periodic irruptions, but being small and drab it may be easily overlooked.

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# A MYRTLE WARBLER NESTING RECORD FOR REGINA

by Frank H. Brazier, Regina

We in Regina are well acquainted with the Myrtle Warbler (*Dendroica coronata*) which comes through in large numbers in spring and fall migration. However, the Myrtle normally nests in the coniferous forest of central Saskatchewan, the nearest locality being at Madge Lake, 160 miles northeast of Regina.

At noon on July 8, 1965 I was walking in the shade of tall spruce trees, perhaps 35 feet high on the average, which border our Legislative Grounds along Albert Street in Regina. Thus strolling I was amazed to hear the sharp "check, check, check" of a Myrtle Warbler and to find a female of that species flitting restlessly among the spruce. She was still flitting about when I returned after lunch, and my first thought was that she must be a very late migrant. The next day she was still there and this time I watched her for quite a long time; I was astonished to see that she was not feeding but gathering insects in her bill and that when she had a good billful she would disappear, shortly to reappear with her bill empty. She was feeding young!

I enlisted the help of Elmer Fox and Margaret Belcher to ensure some sort of continuity for the watch. Elmer discovered what appeared to be the nest site, some 30 feet up near the top of a spruce, on the evening of July 9th, but because of its inaccessibility we never did actually see the nest. The female warbler continued to visit this site with food throughout the day of July 10th. It rained heavily during the night of July 10-11, and when Margaret visited the scene at 9:00 a.m. July 11th the focus of the Myrtle's feeding forays had shifted to a nearby elm where Margaret saw a large young bird being fed. We abandoned the watch at noon, July 12th, but not before I found that the birds had moved to another tree about 100 feet north of the nest site, where feeding continued, and where I was able on one occasion to see the young bird and satisfy myself that it was a Brown-headed Cowbird (*Molothrus ater*).

During all this time we had neither sight nor sound of a male Myrtle Warbler. However, when I discussed the matter with Fred Lahrman of the Saskatchewan Museum of Natural History, he volunteered the information that he had heard a male Myrtle Warbler singing in that immediate area on June 10 or 11, but had simply dismissed it as a late migrant. It seems the male Myrtles are active in the task of raising the young so probably this Myrtle came to an untimely end.

This spring was generally late and cold, and the early summer wet and relatively cool. We shall probably never know what induced a pair of Myrtle Warblers to breed in Regina this spring, but it may have had something to do with the unusually cool spring and the large number of tall spruce trees in the Legislative Grounds, both factors producing an approximation of their normal breeding habitat. Delayed migration may have found them in such an area at a time when it was normal for them to take up breeding territory. Whatever it was, it resulted in a first breeding record for Regina, in the heart of the plains, a long way from coniferous forest.

**Editor's Note:** The Myrtle Warbler, as stated, is normally a resident of the northern coniferous forest, breeding from the southern limits of this forest north into the subarctic, but not usually nesting within the Transition Life Zone to the south. There are a few other extra-limital breeding records for Saskatchewan. At least one Myrtle Warbler pair nested in 1965 in the Moose Mountains in southeastern Saskatchewan where a party consisting of Ross Lein, Richard Sanderson, and Spencer Sealy undertook an ornithological survey. They noted a singing male apparently on territory in spruce trees near their cabin on May 10. On May 30 Robert R. Taylor found a female near the spruce trees building a nest in the crotch of a birch tree about 20 feet above the ground; the outside structure of the nest was completed but the nest was



never lined and was not used. At least one singing male was found in the same area as late as June 14, and on the next day a female was seen near their cabin. The coniferous trees in the Moose Mountain Provincial Park have all been introduced; although the area has a northern aspect because of its altitude, there are no native conifers, the major tree species being Aspen. In this same season, E. Manley Callin reports a sporadically singing male Myrtle Warbler was noted in the planted evergreens on the Fort San grounds (in the Qu'Appelle River valley) up to June 27. He suspects that it was nesting, inasmuch as this is the area in which he reported

finding a nest on June 17, 1956, and the area in which he believed a pair to have nested in 1955 (*Blue Jay*, 14:88). Miss Joyce Gunn reported, in the same brief note, a pair of Myrtle Warblers nesting in an introduced spruce tree at Spirit Lake; two young warblers and a cowbird nest-mate still being present on July 20, 1956. Fort San is 45 miles east-northeast of Regina, Spirit Lake, about 125 miles northeast of Regina. These extralimital breeding records are of considerable interest, showing a tendency for this species to nest occasionally in appropriate habitat where available outside of the usual geographic limits of its range.

## ASSOCIATION OF A PINTAIL DRAKE AND A MALLARD PAIR

by **W. Harvey Beck**, Regina

A male Pintail (*Anas acuta*) was observed by me on four occasions in close association with a pair of Mallards (*Anas platyrhynchos*), on Morgan Creek, approximately eight miles southwest of Killdeer, Saskatchewan. The first observation was made at 8:00 p.m. on May 15, 1965 when the trio was flushed. The three birds flew up together, circled, and landed as a group a short distance upstream. The following morning, May 16, between 6:25 a.m. and 6:35 a.m., the birds were observed feeding on the creek in the same location. No aggressive behaviour was noted between the males of the two species, and the hen demonstrated no preference for either male. When the trio was flushed, they again flew up together with both males remaining close to the female, circled, and landed as a group 100 yards upstream. As I left the area, they returned to the spot from which they had been flushed, and resumed feeding. Later the same day (4:00 p.m. and 4:30 p.m.) the birds were flushed twice and repeated the morning's performance each time.

Sibley (1957) has pointed out that there are a number of isolating mechanisms which curtail or prevent interbreeding between species. In ducks, the time of pair formation, male plumage characters, and nuptial display or "courtship" serve as isolating

mechanisms. Hybridization, however, is proof that interbreeding does occur. Interspecific hybrids among ducks are well known (see Cockrum, 1952; Childs, 1952; Sibley, 1957; Dzubin, 1959; Martz, 1964). A number of Mallard x Pintail hybrids have been reported. In addition, the Saskatchewan Museum of Natural History has two male Mallard x Pintail hybrids from Saskatchewan in its collection: SMNH 4161 was collected near Imperial, SMNH 6315 at Horizon. Dzubin (1959) reported an association between a drake Pintail and a Mallard pair, and Nero (1959) reported an association between a male Green-winged Teal and a Mallard pair. Both authors suggest that associations of this type may provide an explanation for the production of hybrids in the wild.

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## TWO POSSIBLE RECORDS OF BARROW'S GOLDENEYE IN SASKATCHEWAN

by **Robert W. Nero**, Regina

Records of the Antapa Shooting Club include notes since 1929 on ducks killed on Pasqua Lake in the Qu'Appelle River system. Recently, while examining the Club records, which were kindly made available by Mr. R. J. Balfour, secretary of the Club, I noticed references in five places to the Common Goldeneye and in one, to a Barrow's Goldeneye. Upon enquiry to Mr. Marsh Young, Regina resident who had made the notation on the Barrow's Goldeneye in the Club journal, some further information on this note on the latter species, which has not been reported for Saskatchewan, was obtained. The duck in question was shot on October 12, 1964 by Mr. Young's son Jamie Young. The duck was recognized as an unfamiliar one and was checked on that date by referring to an illustrated booklet on waterfowl identification by A. H. Shortt and B. W. Cartwright, *Know your ducks and geese* (1954. Reprinted from *Sports Afield*, New York). According to Young, the duck had the characteristic features described in that guide for the adult male Barrow's Goldeneye, particularly the purple head color (rather than green as in the Common Goldeneye) and the distinctive white area between the bill and the eye. Although self-admittedly not even an amateur ornithologist Mr. Young felt certain that their identification was correct. Unfortunately, the importance of reporting the incident and verifying the identification was not recognized and no part of the duck was saved.

A more substantial record of Barrow's Goldeneye was recently brought to our attention by E. Manley Callin who has had a record of this species in his files since 1956. This was a single male sighted near Morse, Saskatchewan (75 miles west of Moose Jaw) on April 6, 1956 by John M. Nelson of Moose Jaw. Field notes submitted to Manley Callin on April 15, 1956 by Nelson included the following information:

"*Barrow's Goldeneye* (Morse)—This is my honour item. I spotted a single male on a fair-sized slough south of Morse. I managed to sneak within a very few yards of him and identifica-

tion was quite positive. He didn't appear to be very wary and after watching it for some time I stood up; but he didn't appear very perturbed and didn't fly."

Before sending us this record, Manley telephoned John Nelson on June 17, 1965 and obtained the following additional details:

1. He recalled the occasion very well as it was quite an exciting incident to him.
2. He watched the bird with binoculars for varying distances, mostly at very close range, for approximately one-half hour.
3. He had his "Peterson guide" with him and had ample time to refer to details; the bird was exactly according to the book.
4. He distinctly remembered the white crescent instead of the round spot and the larger amount of black on the sides, but he did not remember whether or not the purple instead of the green gloss on the head was noted.
5. He was still positive that it was a Barrow's Goldeneye.

Manley has noted that even in 1956 John Nelson had been familiar with the Common Goldeneye for 20 years or more. It should further be noted that Nelson is an experienced observer who has been a regular contributor of field notes for many years.

According to the A.O.U. *Check-list of North American birds* (1957), Barrow's Goldeneye (*Bucephala islandica*) breeds in widely scattered localities from Alaska and northern Mackenzie south to California, in the mountains of Colorado, in northeastern Quebec and northern Labrador. In addition, it is listed as a fairly common resident of the mountainous area of west-central Alberta, with scattered records of migrants from Calgary to Wood Buffalo Park (Salt and Wilk, 1958, *The Birds of Alberta*). Not unexpectedly, it has been reported as a migrant in northern Montana and elsewhere in the interior plains, but to date there seem to be no published records for Saskatchewan or Manitoba. The value of this brief note may lie chiefly in calling attention to a species which may be of occasional occurrence in this region.





Photo by Robert R. Taylor

Cattails in winter



# A BRIEF NOTE ON BIRDS FEEDING ON THE CAT-TAIL MOTH

by Robert W. Nero, Regina

When male Red-winged Blackbirds reach their northern breeding grounds in early spring, the marsh is often cold and snowbound and food is noticeably scarce. Consequently, territorial males regularly leave the marsh to search elsewhere for food. Occasionally, however, blackbirds may be seen industriously pecking at the heads of cattail, and this has led some observers to report cattail seeds as a food item for this species. These seeds are minute and it is doubtful that they are eaten at all. Numerous observations (especially in the period from 1948 to 1955 in Wisconsin) have convinced me that blackbirds do, however, prey upon larvae of the Cat-tail Moth (*Lymnaecia phragmitella*), which regularly overwinter in cattail heads. These small larvae occur in abundance and may be found by carefully breaking open cattail heads. I have found them active in mid-winter, even in Saskatchewan, presumably being kept warm by the insulating effect of the packed cattail down or pappus. They may be found close along the central stalk, where they feed, often two or more occurring in one head. The down is kept from blowing away, once it is released by their feeding activities, by an abundance of silk which the larvae spin, thereby tying the down together (noted by: Comstock, J. H. 1947. *An introduction to entomology*. Comstock Publ. Co., N.Y. pp. 629-630).

In the process of searching for these concentrated bits of protein blackbirds loosen the down, which then readily blows free, often clinging to their bills and heads. It is the feeding activity of the blackbirds which serves in large measure to bring about the characteristic puffing out of the cattail heads in the spring. On a hot afternoon in July, 1964 at Regina, I was surprised to see dozens of cattail heads literally exploding, a cloud of down bursting forth with each slight gust of wind, in the absence of blackbird activities, and I wondered

whether these were infested with maturing larvae. Red-winged Blackbirds, it seems to me, must derive considerable sustenance from this food source, especially in the early spring when insects are otherwise unavailable to them.

The Yellow-headed Blackbird also is aware of this food source. I noted several males pecking open cattail heads, and evidently feeding on the Cat-tail Moth larvae, early in the morning of May 10, 1958 at Regina. And in October, 1958 I watched a Black-capped Chickadee studiously working on a cattail head, presumably also hunting for this insect, near McLean, some 25 miles east of Regina. Later that year, John E. H. Martin, entomologist with the Canada Department of Agriculture, told me that he had observed a Hairy Woodpecker or a Downy Woodpecker feeding in the winter on cattail heads in eastern Canada.

Observations of birds preying upon the adult Cat-tail Moths, which visit the cattail heads to lay eggs, or which emerge after transforming in the heads or stems, are probably rare. Fortunately, we have the following record made by Frank Brazier (1958. Observations of the birds of Candle Lake. *Blue Jay*, 16:161) in late June or July, 1958: "Yellowthroats were common near water, one adult male observed carrying food. (This one systematically attacked the cattails, tearing the seed heads apart until a small white moth flew from one which was seized.)" This seems likely to have been a Cat-tail Moth, and the Yellowthroat's behaviour suggests again an awareness of a distinct source of food.

Doubtless others have observed birds feeding or picking at cattail heads. It would be interesting and useful to record such observations and I hope that this brief note will elicit some further comments.







Barn Swallow	My 5	My 5	My 1	My 19	My 13	My 2	My 2	My 2	My 1	My 9	My 29	My 9	My 13	My 5
Purple Martin		My 9			My 3	Ap 30	Ap 30	Ap 30	My 15	Ap 14			My 4	
Common Crow	Ap 1	Mr 10	Ap 1	Ap 16	Ap 1	Mr 29	Ap 3	Ap 3	Mr 31	Mr 29	Mr 27	Mr 29	Ap 1	Ap 3
House Wren		My 9	My 14		My 10	My 12	My 15	My 15	My 13	My 14			My 14	My 16
Catbird		My 16			My 25	My 15	My 22	My 22	My 15	Jn 1	Jn 2		My 29	My 20
Brown Thrasher	My 15	My 10	My 18		My 20	My 10	My 15	My 15	My 12	My 25	My 15			My 24
Red-eyed Vireo		My 29			Jn 3	My 24			My 22	Jn 11			My 18	Jn 2
Black-and-white Warbler				My 22		My 4	My 9	My 9	My 6				My 14	
Tennessee Warbler		My 14				My 4			My 13					My 16
Yellow Warbler	My 21	My 13	My 9	My 29	My 15	My 4	My 9	My 9	My 5	My 16	My 31	My 14	My 18	My 16
Myrtle Warbler		My 8	My 9	My 16	Ap 28	Ap 26	Ap 25	Ap 25	Ap 30	My 7	My 6		My 7	Ap 26
Blackpoll Warbler		My 20			My 22	Ap 28	My 9	My 9	My 15				My 21	
Ovenbird		My 24			My 17	My 18			My 7	Jn 4			My 30	Jn 1
American Redstart		My 22		My 22	My 14	Jn 3			My 15				My 26	My 27
Bobolink		My 24	My 20			My 29			My 24	My 28				
Redwinged Blackbird	Ap 15	Ap 22	Ap 14	My 5	Ap 22	Ap 13	Ap 14	Ap 14	Ap 18	Ap 25	Ap 23	Ap 24	Ap 22	Ap 24
Baltimore Oriole	My 19	My 9	My 16		My 14	My 13	My 15	My 15	My 13	My 20	My 21		My 17	My 16
Rose-breasted Grosbeak		My 16	My 18		My 15	My 14	My 9	My 9	My 14		My 27			My 15
American Goldfinch	My 21	My 14	My 18		My 27	My 15	My 15	My 15	My 30	My 19	My 30	My 13	My 24	My 22
Slate-colored Junco	Ap 12	Ap 8	Ap 3	Ap 27	Ap 9	Ap 1	Ap 14	Ap 14	Ap 7	Mr 5	Ap 11	Ap 7	Ap 9	Ap 9
Chipping Sparrow		My 1	My 9	My 12	My 8	Ap 14	My 1	My 1	My 5		My 13		My 14	
White-crowned Sparrow		My 1	My 9	My 14	My 4	Ap 28	Ap 30	Ap 30	My 1	Ap 30	Ap 30	Ap 30	My 1	My 12
White-throated Sparrow		My 3	My 11	My 28	My 5	Ap 28	My 9	My 9	My 5	My 7	My 5		Ap 30	My 1



## FIFTH ANNUAL MAY DAY CENSUS, REGINA

On May 15, 1965 teams from the Regina Natural History Society spent the day in the field making a census of birds seen in the Regina district, an area bounded by a circle 30 miles in diameter (defined for the *Birds of Regina*, 1961). On May 14, the day preceding the count, great numbers of warblers and particularly of shorebirds were noted by R. W. Nero and R. R. Taylor, but the May 15 count produced much reduced numbers of these species, indicating that there had been a large migration *out* of the area on the evening of May 14-15. Nevertheless, 143 species were observed.

SPECIES LIST: Red-necked Grebe (2), Horned Grebe (19), Eared Grebe (135), Western Grebe (24), Pied-billed Grebe (3), Double-crested Cormorant (1), Great Blue Heron (5), Black-crowned Night Heron (3), Mute Swan (5), Whistling Swan (11), Trumpeter Swan (1), Canada Goose (331), Mallard (293), Gadwall (71), Pintail (185), Green-winged Teal (13), Blue-winged Teal (157), Cinnamon Teal (2), American Widgeon (83), Shoveler (85), Red-head (53), Ring-necked Duck (2), Canvasback (78), Lesser Scaup (213), Common Goldeneye (2), Bufflehead (3), Ruddy Duck (61), Red-breasted Merganser (1), Sharp-shinned Hawk (1), Red-tailed Hawk (11), Swainson's Hawk (5), Marsh Hawk (23), Pigeon Hawk (1), Sparrow Hawk (1), Ring-necked Pheasant (3), Gray Partridge (11), Virginia Rail (1), Sora (16), American Coot (311), Semipalmated Plover (3), Killdeer (153), American Golden Plover (62), Spotted Sandpiper (19), Solitary Sandpiper (1), Willet (49), Greater Yellowlegs (1), Lesser Yellowlegs (12), Pectoral Sandpiper (137), Baird's Sandpiper (266), Least Sandpiper (36), Dowitcher (species?) (38), Semipalmated Sandpiper (10), Marbled Godwit (25), Hudsonian Godwit (2), Sanderling (12), American Avocet (30), Wilson's Phalarope (43), California Gull (2), Ring-billed Gull (78), Franklin's Gull (24), Common Tern (81), Black Tern (375), Rock Dove (64), Mourning Dove (126), Great Horned Owl (10), Belted

Kingfisher (7), Yellow-shafted Flicker (21), Red-shafted Flicker (1), Yellow-bellied Sapsucker (1), Hairy Woodpecker (2), Downy Woodpecker (2), Eastern Kingbird (11), Western Kingbird (44), Say's Phoebe (2), Traill's Flycatcher (1), Least Flycatcher (probably includes other empidonax flycatchers) (39), Western Wood Pewee (3), Horned Lark (900), Tree Swallow (48), Bank Swallow (29), Barn Swallow (50), Purple Martin (35), Black-billed Magpie (55), Common Crow (193), House Wren (16), Rock Wren (1), Catbird (2), Brown Thrasher (70), Robin (164), Hermit Thrush (3), Swainson's Thrush (53), Gray-cheeked Thrush (15), Veery (15), Mountain Bluebird (1), Ruby-crowned Kinglet (1), Sprague's Pipit (5), Loggerhead Shrike (16), Starling (28), Philadelphia Vireo (2), Warbling Vireo (25), Black-and-white Warbler (4), Tennessee Warbler (2), Orange-crowned Warbler (13), Yellow Warbler (40), Magnolia Warbler (1), Cape May Warbler (1), Myrtle Warbler (132), Bay-breasted Warbler (1), Blackpoll Warbler (18), Palm Warbler (5), Ovenbird (8), Northern Waterthrush (50), Yellowthroat (5), House Sparrow (1000+), Western Meadowlark (307), Yellow-headed Blackbird (227), Red-winged Blackbird (1077), Baltimore Oriole (29), Brewer's Blackbird (442), Common Grackle (118), Brown-headed Cowbird (146), Rose-breasted Grosbeak (13), Purple Finch (1), American Goldfinch (12), Rufous-sided Towhee (9), Lark Bunting (13), Savannah Sparrow (79), Baird's Sparrow (1), Sharp-tailed Sparrow (2), Vesper Sparrow (53), Lark Sparrow (2), Slate-colored Junco (2), Chipping Sparrow (542), Clay-colored Sparrow (485), Harris' Sparrow (33), White-crowned Sparrow (92), White-throated Sparrow (142), Lincoln's Sparrow (47), Swamp Sparrow (4), Song Sparrow (35), McCown's Longspur (46), Lapland Longspur (10,000±), Chestnut-collared Longspur (310).

Of special interest for the area was the sighting of the two Cinnamon Teal (♂ and ♀) on the Boggy Creek below the Condie Dam, by R. W. Nero and R. R. Taylor—Frank H. Brazier, compiler.

## NINTH ANNUAL MAY DAY CENSUS, SASKATOON

On May 15, 1965 the Ninth Annual Saskatoon May Day census was held. Groups of members of the Saskatoon Natural History Society, under the co-ordination of Jim Slimmon, participated in the dawn to dusk count. A

total of 22 people spent 247 man-hours in the field and counted 137 species.

Two new species were added to the Saskatoon list during the count. The Short-billed Marsh Wren was a first, found by J. Hogg. The Smith's Long-



spur was also a first; five were seen by Stuart and Mary Houston and Jonathan Gerrard.

SPECIES LIST: Red-necked Grebe, Horned Grebe, Eared Grebe, Western Grebe, Pied-billed Grebe, White Pelican, Whistling Swan, Canada Goose, White-fronted Goose, Mallard, Gadwall, Pintail, Green-winged Teal, Blue-winged Teal, American Widgeon, Shoveler, Redhead, Ring-necked Duck, Canvasback, Lesser Scaup, Common Goldeneye, Bufflehead, Ruddy Duck, Cooper's Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk, Swainson's Hawk, Ferruginous Hawk, Marsh Hawk, Peregrine Falcon, Sparrow Hawk, Ruffed Grouse, Sharp-tailed Grouse, Gray Partridge, Sandhill Crane, Sora, American Coot, Semipalmated Plover, Killdeer, American Golden Plover, Black-bellied Plover, Ruddy Turnstone, Common Snipe, Long-billed Curlew, Upland Plover, Spotted Sandpiper, Solitary Sandpiper, Willet, Lesser Yellowlegs, Pectoral Sandpiper, Baird's Sandpiper, Least Sandpiper, Stilt Sandpiper, Semipalmated Sandpiper, Marbled Godwit, Sanderling, American Avocet, Wilson's Phalarope, Northern Phalarope, California Gull, Ring-billed Gull, Franklin's Gull, Common Tern, Black Tern, Rock Dove, Mourning Dove, Burrowing Owl, Common Nighthawk, Yellow-

shafted Flicker, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Hairy Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Eastern Kingbird, Western Kingbird, Eastern Phoebe, Least Flycatcher, Horned Lark, Tree Swallow, Bank Swallow, Barn Swallow, Purple Martin, Blue Jay, Black-billed Magpie, Common Crow, Black-capped Chickadee, Brown Creeper, House Wren, Short-billed Marsh Wren, Catbird, Brown Thrasher, Robin, Swainson's Thrush, Gray-cheeked Thrush, Veery, Mountain Bluebird, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Water Pipit, Sprague's Pipit, Loggerhead Shrike, Starling, Black-and-white Warbler, Tennessee Warbler, Orange-crowned Warbler, Yellow Warbler, Myrtle Warbler, Blackpoll Warbler, Bay-breasted Warbler, Palm Warbler, Ovenbird, Northern Waterthrush, Yellowthroat, Wilson's Warbler, American Redstart, House Sparrow, Western Meadowlark, Yellow-headed Blackbird, Redwinged Blackbird, Baltimore Oriole, Brewer's Blackbird, Common Grackle, Brown-headed Cowbird, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Rufous-sided Towhee, Savannah Sparrow, Baird's Sparrow, Vesper Sparrow, Lark Sparrow, Slate-colored Junco, Chipping Sparrow, Clay-colored Sparrow, Harris' Sparrow, White-crowned Sparrow, White-throated Sparrow, Lincoln's Sparrow, Song Sparrow, Lapland Longspur, Smith's Longspur, Chestnut-collared Longspur.—Jim Slimmon, Compiler.

## SOME INTERESTING BIRD RECORDS FOR CENTRAL SASKATCHEWAN

From about July 22 to August 12, 1961 *Dr. Mary M. Tremaine*, microbiologist on the faculty of the University of Nebraska and a well-known amateur ornithologist, travelled in Saskatchewan on a bird-finding tour. Although she made detailed notes these have since been lost. However, a few of her observations, which were reported in correspondence with the editor shortly after her trip and recently, are noteworthy even though precise data are lacking.

Wood Duck, one, Duck Lake, near Carlton.

Arctic Tern (?), five, seen flying over Montreal Lake (south of La Ronge) during a mile walk along the east lake shore. "In spite of my experience, or perhaps because of it, I will always hesitate on Arctic Terns in late summer. These had the greyer mantle, greyer side of head, *red* bills, but with some black. I think they were Arctics, but who knows?" (pers. corres. to R. Nero, August 16, 1961). "I questioned the Arctic Terns because they didn't perch and I couldn't verify the short legs . . . We had them on Cape Cod and Nova Scotia, too, so I've had pretty good looks at them."

(pers. corres. to R. Nero, 1965).

Caspian Tern, one, flying over Montreal Lake.

Barred Owl, one, Little Sandy Lake, near MacDowall.

Great Gray Owl (?), two, near Torch River. "I saw two very large owls at night on a bridge rail—not Great Horned and not Barred—absolutely immense. I thought they were probably Great Gray Owls. They flew off down the road ahead of my lights and disappeared." (pers. corres. to R. Nero, 1965).

Townsend's Solitaire, one, east side of Fishing Lake, Nipawin Provincial Forest.

Evening Grosbeak, some along the road north of La Ronge.

### 1965 NEST RECORDS

You are reminded that nest records for the 1965 season should be sent to the Prairie Nest Records Scheme, c/o Robert R. Taylor, Box 1121, Regina. If you need more nest record cards, write to the same address.



# THREE MAMMAL RECORDS FROM THE THELON GAME SANCTUARY, N.W.T.

by **Ernie Kuyt**, Fort Smith, N.W.T.

The interior mainland barrenland in the N.W.T., including the Thelon Game Sanctuary, is a relatively unexplored region. Most of the visits to the area have been made only by aircraft. Since 1950 only a few geological and biological survey teams have descended the river by canoe. Fairly recent accounts of flora and fauna found in the region are contained in Canadian Wildlife Service field reports by Kelsall (1952) and Tener (1952). Earlier information can be found in Clarke (1940), based on field work in 1936 and 1937. Generally speaking, the area bordering the Thelon River is well forested. White spruce (*Picea glauca*) is the predominant tree, with black spruce (*Picea mariana*) of lesser importance. Black poplar (*Populus balsamifera*) and tamarack (*Larix laricina*) are only encountered in discontinuous small clumps along the river. Willows (*Salix* spp.) are abundant along the entire length of the Thelon River as far as Beverly Lake. From the air, the immediate area along the Thelon appears to our eyes as a huge, green, strip-like "oasis" projecting into the barrens of east central Mackenzie District.

The purpose of this note is to record evidence of the occurrence north of their known range of two mammals previously unreported in the area concerned and to record the occurrence of one mammal from the Lookout Point, Thelon River area, where its presence is of interest although this mammal has been collected in coastal situations east (on Hudson's Bay) and north (on Coronation Gulf) of Lookout Point.

Porcupine (*Erethizon dorsatum*)—On July 22, 1962 I visited the old cabins in the "Warden's Grove" on the Thelon River, about seven miles below the junction of the Hanbury and Thelon Rivers. The cabin and warehouse were built some 35 years ago and have fallen into disrepair. In the corner of one of the buildings I noticed a considerable pile of droppings. The droppings were dark brown, somewhat elongated and immediately suggested those of Porcu-

pine. Several of the pellets, measuring about 20 mm., were collected and forwarded to the National Museum of Canada, where my tentative identification was confirmed. On July 28, 1963 while examining an abandoned wolf den on the north shore of the Thelon River about halfway between Hornby's bend and the Warden's Grove, I observed fresh Porcupine cuttings on nearby white spruce and willows.

I have not been able to find any reference to the occurrence of Porcupine in the area. It seems likely that the range extension of the Porcupine has been a recent one and that it has taken place following the Thelon drainage from more heavily forested areas to the south.

Moose (*Alces alces*)—Moose have been reported straying out on the barrens and Anderson (1924) and Clarke (1940) record several observations of them. Tyrrell (1902) describes the finding of two Moose antlers imbedded in the sand of the Thelon River bank, but postulates that the antlers might have been carried down by spring ice. Preble (1908) records D. R. Hanbury's statement that Moose were found in the Thelon River below its junction with the Hanbury River and that fresh tracks were numerous, especially in places where the animals had browsed on willows. If Moose are present there today at all, they are extremely rare; I have flown over the area on numerous occasions since 1960 and have not seen any moose. Muskox however are common on the willow covered banks of that section of the Thelon. Hornby (1934) reports no sign of Moose on the Thelon River.

On June 30 I discovered fairly recent evidence of Moose along the Finnie River about one mile south of Lookout Point. The Finnie River has sizable stands of white spruce near its confluence with the Thelon and scattered clumps of spruce as far as 50 miles to the south. Willow growth is abundant along the Finnie and its tributaries. I discovered two groups of droppings which were apparently those of Moose along a game trail parallel to the Finnie River. The



National Museum verified my identification. The two piles of droppings appeared to have been deposited in different years. In August 1963 I found another group of pellets in the same area. Earlier that year, Moose droppings were found at an old Eskimo "logging" site on the east bank of the Finnie about one mile away. Finally on 20 July 1964, an old group of Moose droppings was seen in the spruce grove near the cabin at Lookout Point. Also, again on the Finnie River's east bank I picked up several strands of long deer-like hairs from tall willows. The height of the willows precluded the hair being that of a caribou. The National Museum identified the hair as that of a Moose. Although we still have not seen Moose in the area, I am convinced that they are present, although rare, in the lower part of the Finnie River.

Masked Shrew (*Sorex cinereus ugyunak*)—The Lookout Point area falls well within the range of this shrew as indicated by Hall and Kelson (1959). It was first described by R. M. Anderson in 1945 (Anderson and Rand, 1945) on the basis of 13 specimens examined (type specimen collected in 1909 at Tuktoyaktok, N.W.T.). On August 10, 1964 my assistant Roy Murray caught two young shrews in snaptraps placed below white spruce in the grove near our cabin at Lookout Point. Two additional shrews were taken there on August 11 and August 14. The shrews were identified as *Sorex cinereus ugyunak* by the National Museum of Canada.

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## THE CALL OF THE KIT FOX

by David Chandler, Masefield

I have discussed the question of the vanishing Kit Fox (or Swift Fox) with old-time ranchers from the area south of Shaunavon and they tell me that they have not seen one in 30 years. However, the question is often raised as to whether the Kit Fox is really extinct in Saskatchewan, and certain reports that have come to the *Blue Jay* suggest that this question still has to be answered (see, for example, the article in the *Blue Jay*, 14:63-65, June 1956, by R. D. Symons and the Editor's note that accompanied the article).

On the evening of May 20, 1964 I heard what I believe to be the call of the Kit Fox, coming from the direction of some old abandoned coal mines northeast of Shaunavon. I had not heard it in this area before, but at Masefield, back in the 1950's we used to hear this call almost frequently—always in the spring of the year and in the stillness of the evening. Each year the sound came from the same direction. In mentioning this to an uncle who was a former rancher in that country, I learned that it was from the exact location where the Kit Fox was consistently heard in the early days of his ranching.

Once familiar with the call (assuming that this is the call of the Kit Fox, as I believe), you could not mistake it. It is always difficult to capture the essence of sound by mere description, but heard in the distance this call can be described as soft and plaintive, somewhat suggestive of the Mourning Dove. It can be imitated by whistling through the nose and mouth at the same time, while shaping the tongue as though saying "KOoo KOOooo" (abruptly stop the first KOoo and let the last trail out).

Has anyone heard the call of the Kit Fox?



# THE POSSIBILITY OF GRIZZLY BEARS STILL EXISTING IN SASKATCHEWAN

by Thomas White, Regina

The Grizzly Bear or Grizzly was thought to have been extirpated from Saskatchewan before the turn of the century, but there now appears to be a possibility that a small remnant may remain. I have found it of interest to collect historical references to the former existence of this bear within or adjacent to the province and to relate stories of persons who claim to have seen them recently.

The Grizzly was named by George Ord of Philadelphia in 1815 following descriptions given by Lewis and Clarke after their expedition along the Missouri River to the Pacific Coast. Their experiences of its ferocity prompted Ord to give it the scientific name *Ursa horribilis*. The widespread publicity given the Lewis and Clarke expedition made the existence of this bear well known, but it is interesting to note that it had already been described for over a century by many British explorers in Canada and that the term "grizzly bear" was in current use at that time. Later, the Grizzly became subject to controversy; the Plains Grizzly, which is larger, has been considered by some a subspecies, *Ursa horribilis horribilis*, while others believe that it may be a separate species. The Grizzlies of southern Saskatchewan were believed to be of the Plains Grizzly type, and this identification is supported by a number of skulls in the National Museum in Ottawa. Whether all Saskatchewan Grizzlies were Plains Grizzlies is unknown.

In early historical times the Grizzly ranged over large areas of western North America, from Mexico to the Arctic. It was subsequently extirpated over much of its earlier range, just as the buffalo was, by the settlers and ranchers. The most recent survey of the Grizzly in North America, which is a preliminary study by Victor H. Calahane (1964), shows that the vast majority of the remaining Grizzlies are in the western mountains north of the 49th parallel, though there are a few in Yellowstone and Glacier National Parks, and in small pockets as far south as Mexico. In Canada,

Grizzlies are numerous in British Columbia, Alberta, and the Yukon, and they are increasing in the Northwest Territories. The nearest of these known locations is several hundred miles from the Saskatchewan border, and it would therefore be of considerable interest should a remnant be found within the province. It should also be noted that a few years ago a population of Plains Grizzly was discovered north of Edmonton in the Swan Hills of Alberta. As the Plains Grizzly previously was considered extinct, this discovery was of considerable interest.

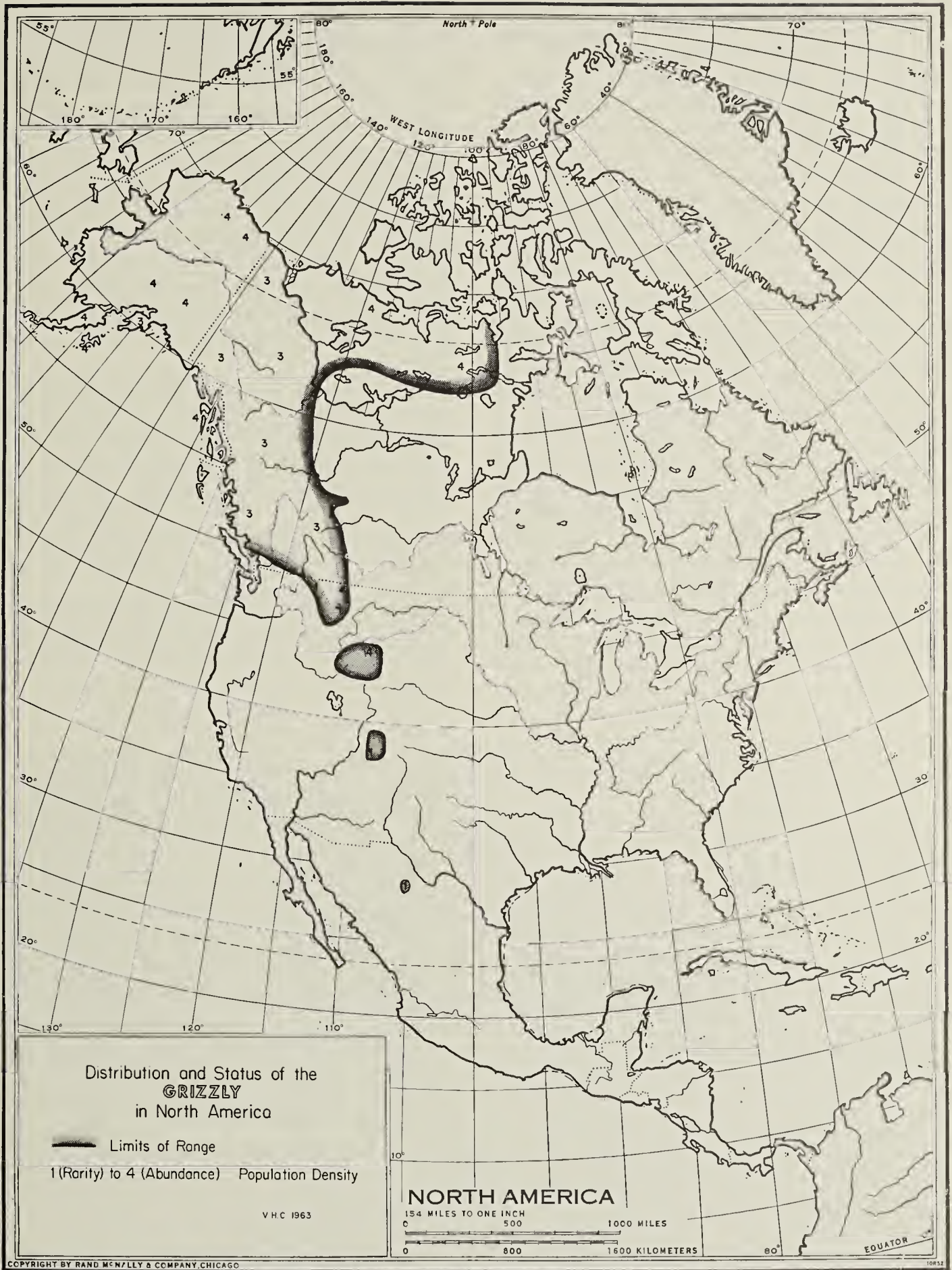
## Early records of Grizzlies in Saskatchewan and adjacent regions

In 1690 Henry Kelsey was sent by the Hudson Bay Company from its post at the Bay on a voyage of exploration to the Canadian prairies, and as such he was the first known white man to see the Canadian section of the great plains. His journals contain references to many animals which he saw and there is a strong tradition that he killed two Grizzlies, for which the Indians named him "Little Giant." There are references in his journal *Doughty and Martin* (1929) to these bears. An entry for September, 1690 refers to "an outgrown bear which is good meat" whose hide the Indians discouraged him from keeping because "they said it was God", and on August 20, 1691 Kelsey wrote:

"Today we pitcht to ye outtermost Edge of ye woods this plain affords nothing but short Round sticky grass & Buffillo & a great (sort) or of a Bear wch is Bigger than any white Bear & is Neither White nor Black But silver hair'd like our English Rabbit, ye Buffillo Likewise is not like those to ye Northward their Horns growing like an English Ox but Black."

Kelsey was therefore the first white man to describe the Grizzly and to kill one, though his diary was not published for many years after, in 1929. The white bear to which he





Map from Cahalane (1964) showing the distribution and status of the Grizzly in North America, based on a preliminary study sponsored by the New York Zoological Society and the Boone and Crockett Club.



alludes is the Polar Bear of Hudson Bay where he started his epic journey.

In 1754 William Henday (or Hendry) was travelling in the area south of the North Saskatchewan River near the Alberta border when one of his men was killed by a grizzly and another was attacked (*Burpee, 1907*). Edward Umpreville, when wintering at Cumberland House in 1784, reports Grizzly on the Saskatchewan River and states that many Indians were maimed (*Wallace, 1954*). Sir Alexander Mackenzie on his first crossing to the Pacific, having passed through Saskatchewan, found them on the Peace River in 1793 (*Sheppe, 1962*). Grizzlies were apparently not uncommon in the area to the south of Brandon, and probably extending as far as Moose Mountain and southern Saskatchewan, e.g., Alexander Henry (*Coues, 1897*) in 1800 has reports of Grizzly skins being taken from the Pembina Mountains, Pembina River, Portage la Prairie, Salt River, Devil's Lake, Cheyenne River and Reed River. He describes the local distribution as varying from "not numerous along the Red River" to "very numerous and dangerous" at the Cheyenne River. It would seem that between 1800 and 1805 there was a considerable number of these bears in this general area. In 1808 Alexander Henry (*Coues, 1897*) wrote that Grizzlies were common in the Nipawin area, which is on the Saskatchewan River within 50 miles of the Pasquia Hills. Sir John Richardson (1829) saw one killed at Carlton House in 1820 and said that their range extended from the Rocky Mountains to latitude 61° on the Saskatchewan. The Palliser Expedition (1863) came upon two at the Elbow of the Saskatchewan River in 1865 and succeeded in killing the smaller one, which was 92" long and had a head 16" broad. Isaac Cowie, who carried out a survey over several years (1867-1874), writes (1913) that there were incredible numbers of Grizzlies in the Cypress Hills and that the Indians did not hunt there owing to their fear of them. In the summer of 1872, 750 skins were taken out of the Cypress Hills at Chimney Coulee. The Fort Pelly journals (*Klaus, 1961*) report skins being turned over in considerable numbers in 1857 and more came when the carts from Fort Qu'Appelle, Fort Ellis and the Touchwood Hills arrived. In the 1880's

there were horses still bearing claw marks from Grizzly attacks in the Cypress Hills, according to Corky Jones (*pers. commun.*) and at the same time they were still being killed in the Eagle Hills south of Battleford, according to an Indian interviewed by R. D. Symons (*pers. commun.*). In the 1890's Grizzlies were killed in the sand hills north of Maple Creek; and, according to Steve Mann (*pers. commun.*) there is a story of one being lassoed in the Cypress Hills at the turn of the century. It would seem that there are no records after this date, and so the Grizzly has been written off as extirpated from the province.

In addition to these recorded occurrences, Grizzly skulls found near Shaunavon and Maple Creek are deposited in the National Museum in Ottawa. Two other skulls are exhibited in a museum in Maple Creek, and another skull, found near Prince Albert, is exhibited in Lund's Wildlife Exhibit in that city.

One undated reference attributed to Ernest Thompson Seton (*MacFarlane, 1908*) mentions Grizzlies occasionally being found in the Pas Mountains of Cumberland House and the Touchwood Hills of Manitoba. The "Pas Mountains" of which Seton speaks are the Pasquia Hills and Wapaweeka Hills in Saskatchewan, and it is in this area that rumours of Grizzlies have persisted.

The Pasquia Hills and Wapaweeka Hills are one of the roughest and wildest parts of the province and are very thickly wooded. At the Red Earth Hudson Bay Post, Mr. Hutton, the son of the factor, says there are stories of Grizzly skins being handed in before the First World War. Stanley Holloway, who laid out the trails for The Pas Lumber Company, says bears have been shot, the skins of which cover a barn door and which were known as Grizzlies. The Indians in that area have a separate name for a large bear which is said to live in the Pasquia Hills; it is supposed to be different than a Black Bear and has a reputation of being fierce. Sixty years ago, according to Joe Fournier (a resident of the area and a trapper-naturalist) a Saulteaux Indian was killed by a bear in the area; on another occasion an Indian who is still living at Red Earth was maimed by a bear. Even today there is a taboo



in this area of the Pasquia Hills, and Indians will not enter the area unless they are in a large group and well armed. There are persistent rumours among Indians, trappers, loggers, and woodsmen of great cinnamon-colored bears in the Nipawin area being slain from time to time.

Ansgar Aschim, a forester and at this writing President of the Saskatchewan Natural History Society, while flying over the Porcupine Hills in 1960 saw a very large bear with a high hump on its back and a large nose, which Aschim is certain was a Grizzly (pers. corres.) The helicopter pilot, who was used to flying over the Swan Hills of Alberta where he had been accustomed to seeing Grizzlies, was also sure it was a Grizzly. As the helicopter was only 100 feet over the bear and both observers had a clear view, this sighting under perfect conditions by experienced woodsmen has real value.

In the mid 1950's, Joe Fournier is certain he found a Grizzly in the east portion of the Pasquia Hills. According to his story, he was approaching a ravine when he saw a large animal

on the other side which he first thought was a moose. As he drew near he saw that it was a huge bear which did not walk like a Black Bear and which had a different shape and profile. It moved off when he tried to track it. When he reached the place where the bear had been, he found the foot prints were over a foot in length and three to four inches in depth in dry earth.

In the wilder parts of the Pasquia Hills there is a high area called Wildcat Hill, near which is a fire tower and hut. I have been told that some years ago a local towerman was besieged in the hut for a number of days by a large bear which came every evening and tried to force its way in. The towerman finally escaped by leaving some food outside of the hut and running towards Shoal Lake Indian Reserve. The size of the bear, its apparent intention toward the towerman, and its daily visits are unusual for the normal Black Bear.

On the May 24th weekend, 1964, I organized an expedition to the Pasquia Hills, consisting of members of the Regina Natural History Society,



Bear killed by set-gun in 1939 at Veillardville, possibly a Grizzly



to search for information about Cougars and Grizzlies. The Conservation Officer at Carrot River, Mr. J. G. Cockwill, remembered an unusual bear which had been shot by a Mr. Gerry Murdock in 1939. I was able to obtain photographs of this bear and these were submitted to Dr. Philip M. Youngman, Curator of Mammals at the National Museum of Canada at Ottawa. Dr. Youngman states (pers. corres., 1964) that, judging by the photograph, the bear shot by Mr. Murdock was almost certainly a Grizzly. The story of the bear shot by Mr. Murdock is thus of interest: while he was homesteading to the south of the Pasquia Hills at Veillardville, a giant bear broke into the home, drank a five gallon crock of cream and caused much damage. The Murdocks were in terror of their lives and so stayed with neighbors. A gun was left on a trip wire behind the door of the storage shed, and when the bear opened the door it was shot between the eyes and died immediately (see photograph).

In the summer of 1964 Ansgar Aschim landed on an esker, which is a ridge formed during the ice age, in northwestern Saskatchewan north of the Clearwater River trying to locate a fire tower. He came upon many signs which he took to be of Grizzly. There were very large footprints and trails along the crest of the esker with all of the branches on nearby trees broken off to a five foot height. Droppings found on the esker were not Black Bear type. There were lakes on both sides of the esker with well-worn trails leading down to them, which suggests that these bears were doing some fishing.

All stories of large and exceptional bears seen in the woods have to be carefully appraised and considered, since mistakes and unintentional exaggerations are common. Any naturalist can give examples of reports which when checked do not conform to the details supplied. On the other hand, it is an historical fact that Grizzlies were widely distributed in Saskatchewan and that they occurred up to the 1890's in considerable numbers. There are historical references to Grizzlies in the Nipawin area and Pasquia Hills region. I have heard of many other stories of Grizzlies, but those mentioned above are largely from trained and experienced woodsmen.

Since the bear shot in 1939 was described by a professional mammalogist as almost certainly a Grizzly, the other stories seem more credible. The wilder parts of the Pasquia Hills have been little known for there have been no roads into the Hills until recently. This is probably the only area in central Saskatchewan where a small population of Grizzly could remain undetected. In the northern part of the province there are large uninhabited areas where other populations might still exist. This bear has long been written off as extirpated from Saskatchewan, but there would seem to be a definite possibility that a few still remain alive. As it was in Saskatchewan that the Grizzly was first described, and as so many of the early explorers who first described it have Saskatchewan connections, it would form a valuable link with the past if it could be shown that a few of these great bears still remain in our province.

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## SANDWORT (*Arenaria peploides*) ON FRESHWATER BEACH, BEVERLY LAKE, KEEWATIN

by Ernie Kuyt, Fort Smith, N.W.T.

On July 24, 1961 while examining wolf tracks near the carcass of a bull caribou on the sandy beach south of the Canadian Wildlife Service cabin on Beverly Lake, Keewatin, my attention was drawn to a fleshy-leaved plant on the shore. The plant was quite common in the immediate area, growing in a matted form with stems much branched and frequently tinged with light purple. Flowers were small, white and borne on the terminal parts of the stems. Seed capsules, light brown and globular, were also observed. I had not previously found the plant in the Lookout Point area, Thelon River, about 100 miles to the west, where most of my plant collections have been made. Upon checking A. E. Porsild's "*Illustrated Flora of the Canadian Arctic Archipelago*" (1957), I tentatively identified the plant as *Arenaria peploides*. The distribution map of the Sandwort *Arenaria peploides* var. *diffusa* indicates its occurrence is limited to seashores. A duplicate specimen was forwarded to the National Museum of Canada where Porsild verified my identification.

## SHAGGY MANE MUSHROOMS EATEN BY CRICKETS

by Joyce Deutscher, Regina

For the past four years I have collected hundreds of Shaggy Mane (*Coprinus*) mushrooms for eating and have always congratulated myself that they were free from insect damage. I was surprised then to find that mushrooms collected on September 19, 1964 along Highway No. 19 near Lawson showed signs of having had holes eaten through the cap before the mushroom appeared above the ground. In one instance I saw a black field cricket scurrying away from a mushroom. My suspicions were confirmed when I found a cricket in a hole in the side of a freshly eaten mushroom. This mushroom was not yet above the ground.

I have collected Shaggy Manes as far north as North Battleford and The Pas and as far south as Lawson but this is the first time I have found any evidence of insect damage.

## SCARLET GAURA OR BUTTERFLY WEED

by Keith F. Best, Swift Current

One of the most interesting plants of the open prairies is the Scarlet Gaura (*Gaura coccinea* Pursh). Common on dry prairies and hillsides across the southern portion of the area, this perennial grows from four to 12 inches in height. The much-branched stems generally lie prostrate on the ground with the tips reaching upwards. The numerous small leaves have no stalks, range from wavy-margined to toothed, and are covered with short grey hairs. The drier the soil in which this plant grows, the heavier is this protective covering.



Drawing by K. F. Best

Scarlet Gaura generally flowers during the latter part of June, and the flowers are in terminal racemes. When the buds first open, there appear four pure white petals which quickly turn pink, and then become a brilliant scarlet. Thus we often find flower clusters with white flowers above and bright scarlet clusters beneath. In addition to this startling color scheme, the flowers have eight prominent stamens with white filaments and large brick-red anthers, giving the flower the appearance of a butterfly. The fruits are small capsules about one-quarter inch long and contain from one to four seeds.



## RED BANEBERRY



*Actaea rubra* (Ait.) Willd.

Photo by the late Dr. W. C. McCalla

Common in rich woodlands, attractive in flower and fruit. Flowers are white and fruits red and berry-like. A white fruited form has been called forma *neglecta*. Flowers are fragrant like Lily-of-the-Valley but more delicate; the berries are said to be poisonous.



# Junior Naturalists

Edited by **Joyce Deutscher**, Regina

## COMMENTS AND PRIZE WINNERS

The letter writing prize, a year's subscription to the *Blue Jay*, is awarded to a young contributor, Lynne Bordass, for an excellent description of a bittern's defence attitude (below). Congratulations, Lynne.

We are pleased to hear that Bohdan Pylypec is part of a scientific bird study expedition this summer in northern Saskatchewan. We understand he was asked to take part in this expedition because of the quality of his reporting which has appeared regularly in the *Junior Naturalists*. He tells about some of his impressions in a letter on page 143. Perhaps from now on Bohdan will be submitting articles to the adult section?! Good luck, Bohdan, as you move up!

Juniors may send letters and other contributions to Mrs. Joyce Deutscher, 1332 Edward St., Regina. The deadline for the next issue of the *Blue Jay* is October 15.

## BITTERN OBSERVATION

by **Sylvia Lynne Bordass**, age 8, LeRoss

One day last summer we saw something funny across the road. The dog was barking and running around it, so we just went to see what it was. When we got closer we could see it was a bittern. It was all crouched down and its neck was all crimped down to its back. Its beak was stuck up in the air. It had its wings all spread out. Even when we went close and poked the hoe at it it would not fly. We gave it some grain and water, but it only pecked at our hands. After we moved away it started wandering all over the yard. Every time we came near, it would spread out its wings and flatten out on the ground. The last time we saw it, it had not yet flown away.

## SHOVELER BEHAVIOUR

by **Brian Irving**, age 14, Kelvington

On the evening of May 4, 1964 I was walking in a pasture that had several shallow sloughs. I soon noticed two Shoveler drakes, one on the shore and the other farther out. Soon the latter started pumping its head up and down and as it came nearer the

shore the other started the same thing. This bird made croaking noises as it swam. As they came close together they started quarreling, ducking under water and slapping each other with their wings.

I was quite sure this was a mating performance but I was puzzled to find I could see no female. They now raced to the other end of the pond, quieted down and came back bobbing their heads and on the return a female flew up from the tall grass with the males in hot pursuit. The males took dashes at each other in the air until one proceeded with the female to another slough and the other came back to the same pond to rest.

## A LETTER FROM REINDEER LAKE (JULY, 1965)

by **Bohdan Pylypec**, age 15, Yellow Creek

This summer I was an assistant with an ornithological field party consisting of Ross Lein and Richard Sanderson working in the Reindeer Lake region, under the direction of Dr. Robert Nero. I found the area very different from what I was used to.

The Reindeer Lake region is in the Pre-Cambrian Shield zone and therefore there is much exposed rock. Jack pines grow on this rock where there are small crevices with some soil. There are many lakes surrounding Reindeer Lake and many islands in these lakes. There are black spruce muskegs where black spruce grow on the moss found there. Jack pines thrive in the sandy areas.

The bird life is very much different here than in the south. Birds such as Myrtle Warblers, Slate-colored Juncos and Tennessee Warblers which are seen in the south only during migration can often be seen or heard, sometimes even with young. Mew Gulls, Herring Gulls, and Ring-billed Gulls fly over the water and look for fish. Common Terns and a few Arctic Terns do likewise. Common Mergansers can be seen fishing with Common Loons, the latter making their cry which is so characteristic of the north woods.

In quiet bays Red-winged Blackbirds, Rusty Blackbirds and Common Grackles can be seen. Sometimes a



Belted Kingfisher or an Osprey fly over the water looking for fish. Along some of the grassy lakeshores and in swamps Solitary and Spotted Sandpipers, Lesser and Greater Yellowlegs, Common Snipe and Swamp Sparrows can be seen. In the deep spruce or jack pine woods Swainson's and Hermit Thrushes are heard. Spruce Grouse, Gray Jays and Boreal Chickadees can be seen in the woods. Crows and Ravens can often be heard. Once in a while you can see a Bald Eagle, a Pigeon Hawk, or Sparrow Hawk flying in the air. In the evening Common Nighthawks fly over and once in a while the Long-eared Owl is seen.

The great north woods are indeed a beautiful and interesting region!

### A RARE DISCOVERY

by Irene Pylypec, age 12, Yellow Creek

I live on a farm where there are many wild flowers, but never before have I been lucky enough to see a large lady's slipper on it.

I found about eight flowers of the yellow lady's slipper in our bush. Cows do not pasture there because it is too dense. The flowers were found in a shady place near a slough. The flower was yellow and very fragile.



Drawing by Irene Pylypec, Yellow Creek  
Yellow Lady's Slipper

The sepals were a greenish-brown color and had curly tips. Its leaves were quite large and parallel veined. The lip of this flower had brownish spots which attract insects. The lady's slipper is a member of the orchid family and is quite rare.

Since I had never seen lady's slippers before, this was quite a thrill and I deeply hope that I can see these beautiful flowers again.

### NEWS IN BRIEF FROM JUNIOR MEMBERS

Juniors have been busy as usual spotting rare birds and flowers, observing old familiar ones, camping in a bed of cacti and in general getting the feel of the great outdoors. Meanwhile *Marian Clark* sneaked up on a porcupine and photographed it with



Photo by Marian E. Clark, Flaxcombe  
Porcupine in late March, 1965

her 127 Baby Brownie camera. We even have a request for a pen pal from *Betty Ternier*, age 13, Cochin. Her hobbies are reading, photography, and nature—especially birds.

Several letters were received from the grade 5 class at Yellow Creek. These children are fortunate in having a teacher who is interested in natural history. *Marie Sheremata*, age 10, tells about watching a robin's nest. She waited until the young were safely out of the nest and then took it home. Meanwhile *Oli Oleksyn*, also 10 years old, had an encounter with a muskrat and ran a race with it to its hole. He and his friend Gary followed the muskrat's tunnel under the ice.

*Gerald Wilke*, age 13, of Montmartre was fortunate enough to go on a



camping trip to Beechy last summer. He tells us, "We slept in tents. It was not too warm. The cacti were very hard to sleep on but are very nice when in bloom. He appreciated very much that Professor Ledingham took him along on the trip.

*Alfred Jones* of Beechy has a different story to tell. While riding the river hills he came upon a lynx eating a dead deer.

Juniors always seem to appreciate help from older naturalists. *David Riome* of Nipawin thanks Maurice Street for helping him with his bird observations. He reports having seen a Northern Shrike and adds, "We also have an immature Harris' Sparrow coming to our feeder every day. We were surprised to know that there hadn't been one wintering around Nipawin since 1938."

*Donald Wajichowsky*, age 11, Yellow Creek, reports having seen Black Tern nests. "Last summer Oli and I went to Yellow Creek slough. As we were walking, a Black Tern flew off the nest. Then it made a loud cry and all the other terns flew off their nests. They started to swoop at us. They came so low that Oli hit one with his jacket.

"At first we found one nest. After a while we found fourteen nests in all. Their nests were very close together. They like to build their nests on very small patches of ground. Their nests are made out of cattails and other marsh plants."

*Linda Nemeth*, age 9, kept watch over a Barn Swallow nest until one day she found it on the ground with only two young swallows left. She took them home and fed them until they were able to look after themselves.

Some House Wrens observed by her sister *Elsie*, age 10, suffered a similar fate. One day *Elsie* found only two of four birds left in the nest. "I was very disappointed. I don't know what happened to the other two. They were not old enough to fly. They probably fell out. In about two or three days there was not a bird left in the nest."

A bit of mystery surrounds a hornet's nest according to *Richard Hogg*, age 11, Carnduff. *Richard* tells us, "One day last fall we saw a hornet's nest. It was about 10 inches in diam-

eter and was in a caragana tree on the bank of our creek. Being very careful not to go too close we kept watching it every day. One morning we were very surprised to find it partly torn down. There were just a few pieces on the ground.

"We think it must have been a skunk or a 'coon that did the damage."

*Keven Van Tighem*, age 12, Calgary, noted some interesting bird behavior one day. He reports, "Last year on May 5, some robins, House Sparrows and White-crowned Sparrows were eating bread crumbs which I set out for them. As I sat at the window watching them they stopped eating and seemed to turn into statues. I looked up and suddenly I saw a big gray goshawk. It flew by and soon the robins and sparrows resumed eating.

"I occasionally saw the goshawk after that, usually around 6 o'clock in the evening, but after June did not see it again."

*Brian Irving's* spring experiences included bird watching. *Brian* is 14 and lives at Kelvington. "On the evening of May 11, 1964", he writes, "I took my binoculars and note book and went to a marshy area surrounded by summerfallow. The first bird I saw of interest was a Magnolia Warbler in an aspen. It kept flying out a few feet, doing acrobatics in the air and singing a melody of songs at the same time. I decided he must have been letting off a little steam over the thrill of spring."

Juniors are always thrilled when they spot something rare and unusual. *Dan Ferguson*, age 7, of Ft. Vermilion, Alberta, reports just such an experience. He saw some Whooping Cranes as they settled in a field near some water just before sunset. *Dan* continues, "We saw them in the middle of their dance. They were near a slough. We read about Whooping Cranes."

*Oli Oleksyn* sends us several more reports, one of seeing thirty-two ground squirrels running around on some cut-down bush. He was also thrilled at the sight of a hummingbird and tells us, "One day I was walking on our sidewalk and I heard a humming sound. At first I couldn't see it. Then out of a flower came something. It was a Ruby-throated Hummingbird."



# The Blue Jay Bookshelf

**COMMON WEEDS OF THE CANADIAN PRAIRIES, AIDS TO IDENTIFICATION BY VEGETATIVE CHARACTERS.** By K. F. Best and A. C. Budd. Publication 1136, Research Branch, Canada Department of Agriculture, Ottawa. 1964. 70 pp. \$1.00 paper bound, \$2.00 cloth bound from Queen's Printer, Ottawa, Canadian Government Bookshops or local booksellers (including our own, Box 1121, Regina).

About 180 common introduced and native weeds are described in non-technical terms and illustrated with small black-and-white line drawings. A key consisting of a succession of contrasting statements about easily-observed vegetative characteristics (mostly concerning root, stem and leaves) enables the user to arrive at the Latin name of his unknown plant. In the second part of the book the plants are arranged in alphabetical order by their Latin names. There the user will find the corresponding common name, a word description and an illustration of each plant. If these do not match his unknown plant he must return to the key and re-examine every step until he finds the pair of contrasting statements at which he made the wrong selection. By this method he will ultimately arrive at the correct name for his plant if it is among the 180 included in this book. Although not applicable to all small seedlings or to the rosette stages of some tall-stemmed plants, the chief advantage of this book is its aid in identification of most of the common weeds before they reach flowering or fruiting stages.—*Jack F. Alex, Regina.*

**GREAT ARC OF THE WILD SHEEP.** By James L. Clark. 1965. University of Oklahoma Press, 246 pages, illustrated, \$6.95.

This book will probably become the standard work of reference upon wild sheep. It lists the many species and links them in a great arc which starts in the Mediterranean and curves through Turkestan, Tibet, Siberia into the Rockies and down to southern

California. Each subspecies is described in detail and illustrated, and many interesting stories are retold. It would appear that the big rams are the most coveted prize of the big game hunter, and as they inhabit the highest peaks in the wildest areas, it is very difficult to locate and obtain specimens. The descriptions of Marco Polo in China in the 13th century and Coronado in the United States in the 16th century give an historical connection with the ages of exploration, as do the hunting stories in the 19th century by Rudyard Kipling and Theodore Roosevelt in the remote mountainous and hill areas of the great arc. The author is eminently qualified as he is the director emeritus of preparation and installation in the American Museum of Natural History, one of the best American animal sculptors, and has hunted for wild sheep in the Russian Pamirs and other areas. This book is a must for any library, but it is unlikely to be read as widely as books of a more general nature.—*Thomas White, Regina.*

**WILD CATS.** By C. B. Colby. 1964. Duell, Sloan & Pearce, New York, illustrated, \$3.95.

Mr. Colby is a well known writer on natural history subjects. This book gives general information and descriptions of members of the cat family and concentrates upon the better known species. Each cat is described and illustrated in side view with photographs largely taken from the records of the New York Zoological Society. There are tracks which he has tried to make typical for each species, and also descriptions of how variations can occur. There are interesting stories about the largest tigers, which live in Siberia, as well as the smallest ocelot and jaguar of Central America, and the serval of Africa. The common characteristics of many of these cats are frequently described and the reader discovers more about the feline family. Although the photographs are not as good as they might be, this book is a good reference.—*Thomas White, Regina.*



# Notes from Letters

## SHOULD RARE SPECIES BE COLLECTED?

### Collecting questioned

I read with interest in the last September *Blue Jay* (1964) the account by Mr. and Mrs. Wade of their Buck Lake trip and the sighting of the Snowy Plover. The narrative was very stimulating but I can't help feeling that the ending was rather tragic.

I suppose that the pros and cons of "collecting" species have been argued countless times. In my opinion, it is definitely important for the biologist to obtain specimens for his examinations, particularly when his work is directed to the conservation of the species. I am not convinced, however, that the collection of a rare species is justified solely on the grounds that the bird is rare (or even locally rare).

About two years ago, a colleague of mine reported a possible sighting of the rare Short-tailed Albatross near the coast of Oregon. More than one well known American ornithologist urged that the bird be collected to establish its identity definitely, if it were seen again. Yet, according to the latest statistics on this bird, it would take only about 40 "identity establishments" to render the species totally extinct. I realize, of course, that the Snowy Plover is not generally rare and that collecting the Buck Lake bird did not endanger the species. However, it was locally a "rare find", to quote Mrs. Wade, and it hardly seems in the spirit of the "protective hand" (symbolised in the S.N.H.S. crest) to rush out and kill it just to prove that it was there.

If there are other reasons for making such a collection, I would be pleased to hear about them. It might also be good for the younger members of the Society to find out why it is "scientifically desirable" to kill rare or unusual species. — *Robert K. Lane*, Corvallis, Oregon.

### Collecting defended

In a paper on "Collecting birds and conservation" (reprinted from the

Ontario Field-Biologist, No. 12, 1958, pp. 16-18, by the Royal Ontario Museum for distribution among friends of the Museum) Dr. L. L. Snyder of the Department of Ornithology, ROM, deals in a general way with the value of collections, and then discusses the collection of regional rarities. This part of his paper attempts to answer the same question that has been raised by Mr. Lane:

"It is presumed that there are people who would endorse the foregoing [i.e., the need for scientific collections] but would question the value of collecting regional rarities<sup>1</sup> which excite so much popular interest. This attitude is understandable if we acknowledge that the interest of most bird observers is more pronouncedly stimulated by the unusual. It is also evident that this interest has a value but there is no way of measuring and weighing it against the value of a collected specimen. What are the values of a collected rarity, those extralimital erratica of the bird world?

a) An erratic collected, labelled and preserved proves beyond all doubt, both to us and to posterity, that a representative of a given species did occur extralimitally at a certain time. No other evidence is as absolute and the specimen can be referred to again and again. This is the simple demand of a science especially when dealing with the unusual.

b) A collected specimen can be weighed and measured; its sex determined by dissection; its age class established; its normalities or abnormalities observed, the latter including starvation, injury, disease, parasites, hybridity and other matters. Such biological data may indicate why the bird occurred extralimitally and critical examination may even indicate whence it came.

c) A specimen taken extralimitally often marks the occasion when some biological event is taking place far away in the heart of the range of the species involved. The specimen is simply an undeniable basis for correlation, now or at some time in the future.

<sup>1</sup> Vanishing species, such as the whooping crane, are not included in any reference to rare occurrences. The welfare of such species is as much a concern of scientific collectors as anyone else, probably more so.



d) A regional rarity is not always a waif or stray. It may prove to be a pioneer of range change and thus a collected specimen becomes historically important. Certainly the collecting of a pioneer will not thwart population expansion if it is under way any more than Indian massacres stopped the settlement of this continent.

e) It is well known that many waifs and strays do not survive displacement. A specimen in a research collection will be useful for an estimated thousand years or more. Its remains on a beach or field make small contribution to the scavenger or soil.

It is on these premises that the Department of Ornithology of the Royal Ontario Museum has conducted its work and will continue to do so. . . . Perhaps the following comments will be the most informative of all, to critics of our procedure: Over the past ten years the Museum has collected exactly 13 specimens which would classify as regional rarities, waifs and possible pioneers. One proves the first and only occurrence of a species for the whole of Canada. Two represent European species having no breeding outposts in the New World and the chances of these individuals reaching home would seem slight. Five were hybrids, the living existence of which could have meant nothing to the parent species. Two proved that previous field identification of them by local observers was incorrect. The other three were important for various reasons including sole age and plumage representation for the province."

#### Alternatives to collecting, as proposed by other authorities

a) Distinct, clear photographs through which the bird may be identified by anyone wishing to establish the species at the time or on a later occasion.

b) A Rarities Committee responsible for evaluating sight records. The British, who are not allowed to shoot rare birds, submit their records to the Rarities Committee of the magazine *British Birds*. This committee has stringent rules, but their certification or non-certification of sight records is accepted as if it were law. Detailed notes, written in the field, must be submitted in substantiation of the

records. Dr. M. T. Myres, urging the strict examination of all sight records in an article in *The Ontario Naturalist*, June, 1963 entitled "Ontario naturalists, science, and sight records", quotes some of the British Rarities Committee's pronouncements: "notes taken on the spot and before a book has been consulted are the only ones of real value", "we should be given an opportunity of considering the observer's *original notes* as distinct from an edited or abridged version", "no observer should allow himself to imagine that he can see a shape, colour or pattern when distance, poor light or movement prevent certainty, just because he thinks a particular feature should be shown by the species he believes he is looking at," "all field-notes should be included in the record when it is submitted, even if it is thought some points militate against the identification claimed." No one, however expert, is exempt from these requirements if he wishes his record to be published. Indeed it is increasingly frequent for a rarity record to be submitted under several names with several field descriptions by different observers — meaning, as Myres points out, that the most satisfactory means of substantiating a record is to have another ornithologist come and see the bird as well, if this is at all possible.

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### SPARROW HAWK MIGRATION

While travelling in southern Saskatchewan and Manitoba during the week of April 19, 1965, I was struck with the number of Sparrow Hawks which were seen. On the rail-liner at Hanley I finally started counting them and between Hanley and Dundurn saw 20. Between Dundurn and Indi I counted a further 12, then they dwindled out while we were passing through the bushier type country. A further four were seen around Grasswood, bringing the total to 36 in about 30 miles. Telephone wires and poles were their favorite perches. They seemed to prefer the open field type terrain rather than bluff country, and also each pair seemed to have an area staked out as they were sighted at fairly regular intervals.—  
*Colin Ward, Saskatoon.*



## FALL BIRDING IN ENGLAND

Some readers may recall that the SNHS summer meeting at Moose Mountain (1959) was visited by an enthusiastic birder from England, *Tim Dixon*, returning through Canada from a world birding tour. Last year's fall migration in England was described by Tim Dixon in a letter to Mrs. Cruickshank part of which read: "My first success came in mid-September at Radipole Lake, which is a very reedy lake almost in the middle of the town of Weymouth. After several fruitless visits I was at last lucky enough to see a Spotted Crake which had been there for a considerable time. Although Peterson's map indicates it may be found anywhere in Southern England it is in fact extremely rare and difficult to see. The bird I saw emerged at dusk at the muddy fringe of a reed bed and at one time I had a Water Rail and a rat in the same binocular view. Unlike the Water Rail it has a short bill. Its lower breast is strongly speckled with white and this is quite a characteristic feature. At about the same time other interesting birds were present at Radipole—two Little Gulls, Ruff (in winter plumage, alas), Greenshank and Black Tern.

As early autumn was very fine and sunny there was not a good fall of passerines at our observatory at Portland Hill. For the same reason, sea birds kept well off-shore and few skuas (jaegers) were seen. However, on one occasion I was very lucky to see a Dotterel there. Like the Spotted Crake, the Dotterel was a completely new bird to me. It was a bird I had visited Scotland to search for in late May 1956 on its breeding territory in the Cairngorm mountains. Unhappily the snow remained late that year and despite the fact that a friend and I climbed to the high tops on several occasions we did not see a single one. The bird at Portland was in the drab plumage of a juvenile male but its thick-necked plover shape and incipient breast band gave its identity away. It was very tame, as members of this species usually are. It was keeping company with a Golden Plover.

Waders came through in normal numbers. There were Green Sandpipers at several local places including Fordingbridge (R. Avon), and Ware-

ham Sewage Farm, Greenshank at Christchurch and Poole Harbours, Black-tailed Godwits (up to 40) at Poole Harbour, and a very few Little Stints—one at Wareham Sewage Farm and two at Christchurch."

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## PRONGHORN SIGHTING

On May 28, 1965, I was driving down the road five miles south of Yellow Grass when I came upon a Pronghorn feeding at the side of the road. It ran down the road forty feet in front of the car and then into the field. When I stopped the car it was about one hundred feet away in side profile and alternated grazing with watching. The two white rump patches were very distinct, as were its brown back and white underside.—*Thomas White, Regina.*

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## CLUSTERED BROOM-RAPE OR CANCERROOT

This summer while walking over our sage meadows I noticed a pink object on a sage plant. I expected it to be a piece of feldspar or a stone artifact washed up on the sage by run-off water, but was surprised to find it was a flowering plant. There were, in fact, two plants growing from the sage, one on each side of the root-stalk and both in flower. There were five beautiful flowers on each, on separate stems. Later flowers were smaller but more numerous. The trumpet-shaped flower opened into five dainty rounded petals, pink to purple, with purple veins. The calyx had pointed sepals, beige-brown in colour. The hairy stems came from a bulb with a thick scale-like leaf on each side. Two roots grew from this side of the bulb into the sage root. I felt it was parasitic. Mrs. W. K. Cruickshank, of Regina, confirmed details and added to them from Budd and Best (1964. *Wild Plants of the Canadian Prairies*. Queen's Printer, Ottawa.) This plant which was new to me and to everyone I had asked, turns out to be a common parasite on sage known as clustered broom-rape or cancerroot (*Orabanche fasciculata* - Nutt.) I found it blooming on our sage from late June to mid-July.—*Esther A. Clappison, Rose-dale, Alberta.*



## OBSERVATIONS OF NESTING SHORT-EARED OWLS

On April 30, 1964 while driving through flax stubble I flushed a Short-eared Owl from a nest with seven eggs (five eggs is the most I had ever seen before). Several days later I found that the last egg had just hatched and one young was still in the nest; two more young were found in the stubble close by. I was disappointed that I could not see any evidence of mice having been brought in for food, for most nests that I have seen always have several dead mice close by. In this case, I found only the remains of what must have been a meadowlark. This is the only time that I had ever seen a Short-eared Owl take a bird for food.

A few days later, I was checking my irrigation water about five o'clock in the morning when a Short-eared Owl dropped down into the alfalfa about 100 feet away. I expected that it would fly up with a mouse in its claws, but in a couple of minutes it flew up without carrying anything. It repeated this twice before flying away, and while this was going on two sparrows were making a terrible commotion. I didn't connect the owl and the sparrows until I was coming down a ditch through the field when I noticed on the ditch bank a small immature bird which, though dead, was still warm and limp. This was about 500 feet from where I had watched the owl 20 minutes earlier, so I wondered whether the owl had caught the young bird.—*Sam Alberts, Brooks, Alberta.*

**Editor's Note:** The following information on the Short-Eared Owl from A. C. Bent's *Life Histories of North American birds of prey* (Dover reprint, 1961) may be of interest to Mr. Alberts. The Short-eared Owl may lay anywhere from four to nine eggs, and rarely even more; but the commonest numbers are five, six, or seven. Rodents of various kinds, particularly meadow or field mice, are the favourite food, but there are many recorded instances of birds being found in examinations of stomachs and pellets, including meadowlarks, and some observers have reported cases where these owls were apparently feeding entirely on small birds!

## I.U.C.N.

The above initials stand for the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources, an independent international body. IUCN represents those who are concerned at man's modification of the natural environment through the rapid spread of urban and industrial development and the excessive exploitation of the earth's natural resources, upon which rest the very foundations of his survival.

Individual membership is available at the modest sum of \$3.00 per year, in return for which members receive four bulletins a year, keeping them posted on conservation developments throughout the world. A long time member of the Saskatchewan Natural History Society, Dr. William A. Fuller, Department of Zoology, University of Alberta, Edmonton, is now a member of the Executive Board of IUCN.

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## EARLY PURPLE MARTIN SPRING ARRIVAL

On April 14, 1965, a lone male Purple Martin—the first record of a martin ever seen on our ranch—was sighted here. It was reported to me first as a swallow, which I said was a mistake as swallows weren't due for nearly a month; however, I saw it myself that evening and identified it as a Purple Martin. The bird remained for several days, and perched on an insulator under the eaves one night, sitting all morning of the next day on one of the kitchen window frames. It looked rather bedraggled and let us get quite close, making no attempt to fly. I don't know just when these birds are supposed to arrive back from wintering quarters, and so I should like to request others to give dates of arrival in their localities.—*Steve A. Mann, Skull Creek.*

**Ed. Note:** The earliest arrival date given in the *Birds of Regina* (1961) for Purple Martins in the Regina area is April 29, 1958 and 1959, but this spring (1965) Bob Taylor recorded one on April 20. An interesting note on the spring migration of Purple Martins appears in A. C. Bent's *Life histories of North American flycatchers, larks, swallows, and*



*their allies* (1942) where it is observed that there is not the marked regularity of appearance with martins that is characteristic of many other northward-bound species. The martin moves northward rather leisurely, with the vanguard of the spring migratory hosts from South America crossing the Gulf of Mexico in late January, followed by a leisurely northward movement from late January to early May. However, "April appears to be *the* time throughout much of the northern half of the whole range across the country." It is also noted, as in Mr. Mann's observation, that as a general rule, the males arrive in advance of the females.

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### WHOOPING CRANES REPORTED SIGHTED

I would like to report a sighting of Whooping Cranes at noon on July 3, 1965, at Turtle Lake, Saskatchewan (about 60 miles north of North Battleford). There were three of us who saw them and we counted 21 in the flock. They circled overhead for about five minutes and were not so very high so we got a real good look at them. As we are very familiar with geese, Sandhill Cranes, and other birds we feel very strongly that there was no mistaking these birds. They were large white birds with black wing tips, and also had long necks and legs. They circled in much the same way as do Sandhill Cranes. These birds were seen at the south end of Turtle Lake; after circling overhead they flew off in a westerly direction.—*M. A. Rindero, Acadia Valley, Alberta.*

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### WHOOPING CRANE NEWS CLIPPINGS WANTED

If there is any reader of the *Blue Jay* who would be interested in sending me news items from any of the western papers with information on Whooping Cranes, giving the name and date of the paper, I would gladly send him or her stamped and self-addressed envelopes. I would also like to hear from any member who would

care to write to me on the subject of Whooping Cranes. I have been a member of the Saskatchewan Natural History Society for quite a number of years and am a member of the Whooping Crane Conservation Association.—*C. S. Williams, P.O. Box 119, Orangeville, Ontario.*

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### UNUSUAL MIGRATION OF RED-TAILED HAWKS

What may well be the largest number of migrant Red-tailed Hawks yet reported in Saskatchewan was observed at Indian Head by Mrs. K. H. Skinner who recorded 768 Red-tails between 1:00 and 6:00 p.m. on April 14, 1965. We wish that we had been there to see them!

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### NATURE NOTES FROM FAIRY HILL, QU'APPELLE VALLEY

Spring birds arrived almost on schedule; Bluebirds, which for many years have come on March 26, were not seen until April 1. Crows and two Starlings appeared on April 2. Geese, ducks, cranes, and meadowlarks arrived from April 17 to April 24. Great flocks of Sandhill Cranes made vocal the upper air on May 9th. On the 12th of May the Brown Thrasher sounded his syllabic song. On June 1st I heard the Baltimore Orioles' plaintive calling as they wait for the females to appear a week after they arrive. Today, June 12, "summer is here", for the cuckoo perched in the ash tree and called twice.—*Clarissa Stewart, Fairy Hill.*

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### LONG-BILLED CURLEW NOTED

On May 16, 1965 I saw a Long-billed Curlew in Ernest Tedford's pasture two miles north of Outram. As I haven't seen one in years I thought this might be worth reporting.—*Mel Adair, Torquay.*

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### BIRD NOTES FROM ARRAN

A swamp begins in our yard and cuts through our farm, hence our place is a haven for wildlife: deer,



bear, rabbits, coyote, fox, etc. We have had some very interesting experiences with nature since we moved to this land about three years ago. And certainly we have learned to identify birds: the Pileated Woodpecker is perhaps one of our greatest thrills. We feed the birds the year round. Last fall a pair of grackles stayed with us until early winter. The previous winter a pair of Brown-capped Chickadees fed with our regular winter birds—Hairy and Downy Woodpeckers, Gray and Blue Jays, Black-capped Chickadees, a very shy Magpie, and others. This year the number of red polls, juncos, and Purple Finches increased tremendously. We counted over 50 *male* Purple Finches at one feeding. One day we'd like to make a sanctuary of our farm; but in the meantime, we must get it "on its feet." *Mrs. J. R. Collard, The Oasis, Arran.*

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## FERRETS DISCOVERED IN SOUTH DAKOTA

Paul F. Springer writes to tell us that several Black-footed Ferrets have been discovered in South Dakota (August, 1964). The South Dakota Cooperative Wildlife Research Unit, of which Dr. Springer is leader, is now conducting a study of the life history, ecology, and distribution of this species. We understand that movies made by the Research Unit and shown at the Mammology Society meeting at Winnipeg in July were considered outstanding. We urge readers of this journal to help in this study to save this endangered species. If you see this native ferret dead or alive, please report it as soon as possible to: *Russell Robbins, State Game, Fish, and Parks Dept., 3305 W. South St., Rapid City, S. Dakota 57701; telephone: 343-8532.*

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## CALGARY BIRD CLUB ACTIVITIES

From the *Bulletin* of the Calgary Bird Club comes frequent news of the active programme of this organization of 80 members under the presidency of Dr. M. T. Myres, Department of

Biology, University of Alberta at Calgary. Dr. Myres is both President of the club and Editor of the newsletter, which appears frequently enough to direct the activities of the society as well as to report on them.

When a field trip is being planned, members are notified of arrangements through the bulletin, even if the Editor has to tie up a long weekend to get the announcement into their hands in time for a meeting the "coming Saturday." The warmly personal tone adds to attractiveness of the *Bulletin*, but doesn't obscure the scientific interest of the observations recorded.

Myres is well known for his zoological studies and his championing of conservation programmes, so it is not surprising to find that he and his Calgary Bird Club have given such strong support to the Prairie Nest Records Scheme. Robert R. Taylor's report of the 1964 operations of the scheme shows that the Alberta group submitted the largest number of nest record cards for the season.

The Calgary Bird Club has involved itself in other scientific studies. For example, they are co-operating with Dr. Otto Höhn at the University of Alberta at Edmonton in supplying information on Wilson's Phalarope, even though the questions for which Dr. Höhn is seeking answers are often sophisticated ones—which sex arrives soonest in the spring, the exact incubation period, descriptions of display behaviour and territorial behaviour, whether an individual phalarope always spins in one direction, etc. Such a project gives members of the Club, and especially the younger people, a real insight into the why's and wherefore's of biology—the kind of processes that biology consists of, and the kind of enquiries which a biologist seeks answers to.

Some of the projects for which the Club's assistance is solicited are of course Dr. Myres' own study projects at the University. This year he is requesting information on observations of Harlequin Ducks, locations of Cliff and Bank Swallow colonies, the habits of Starlings at the Inglewood Bird Sanctuary roost, and breeding sites of grebes, since grebes are among the species in which very high levels of pesticide residues have been discovered.





Photo by Robert R. Taylor

Society outing, June 12, White Swan Lake

## SUMMER MEETING AT CANDLE LAKE

### June 11-13, 1965

by **Mrs. Elizabeth Cruickshank**, Regina

The glowing beds of stemless raspberry "candles" were not essential to the warm welcome provided for the SNHS members on arrival at Candle Lake for their summer meeting. The weatherman cooperated. Skies and lakes could not have been bluer, beaches more glistening, nor the countryside greener. So much for the setting. Beyond that, the thorough planning and thoughtfulness of a tireless Prince Albert committee left nothing to be desired.

The opportunity afforded in a park to observe wildlife under natural conditions is a great attraction. In Candle Lake northern species of birds and plants delighted everyone, as did the freshness of the primeval forest of

birch, pine and spruce. Fishermen had fantastic luck.

Samples of species in the lakes were enjoyed at a most satisfying fish fry. The food was delicious and meal time made possible the renewal of friendships—friendships that have stood the test of many meetings and are eagerly enjoyed. Mosquitoes planned blood-thirsty attacks on each new arrival, but smudges and shared repellents kept discomfort to a minimum.

At 6:30 a.m. on Saturday, keen birders assembled at Fisher Creek, or were on their way with an alternative expedition to the Torch River. Sounds of birds heard as cabins were located the night before made early risers anxious to make their daylight



acquaintance. No one was disappointed. The trek to President Aschim's homestead in the Birch Bark Creek area was most exciting. Originally it was planned for plant and photography enthusiasts, as the beds of calypso orchids and other rarities are really out of this world! Beauty seekers trod on spongy bog and deer moss, over squirrel middens, beside honeysuckle, blueberry, bearberry, northern comandra, stemless raspberry, mertensia, orchids and Labrador tea. Encompassed by sounds, sights and songs of this unspoiled woodland the explorers hoped they might return often to revel in the refreshing environment. Interest reached a high pitch when a pileated woodpecker inadvertently led watchers to its nest.

The short visit to the Forest Pathology Laboratory on Saturday proved most illuminating. One wondered if ever before so many curious persons had crowded around the scientific establishment. Generously, Director and field men gave information and answered innumerable questions.

The drive to White Swan Lake Saturday afternoon, led by the conservation officer, was dusty due to the number of cars in the caravan. However, its destination made up for unpleasant travel conditions. Here was another gem of the north, a clear sandy shore and a lake teeming with fish. A field staff member got a whiff of smoke to discover an enemy of the forest. While this fire was found in time, the officer brought the danger of dire consequences home to the caravaners. They might have, had the fire made headway unobserved, been marooned for a week.

It would have been a disaster, too, to have missed the barbecue that night in front of the Lodge. Never did tender steaks have more flavour! Conversations mingled with laughter rose from the tables under the trees, and it was clear that David Chandler's friends were refusing to take him seriously when he tried to describe for identification strange birds seen flying in the dark by the ranchers at Val Marie!

Afterwards the crowd gathered for pictures in the hall. Everyone enjoyed the excellent kodachromes that showed the varied activities of the members over the past year. A former SNHS president, Mr. W. Yanchinski, had

been on safari to Africa and had brought back pictures of wildlife taken there, an interesting complement to those taken by other members closer to home.

Even on Sunday morning our gracious hosts rose at dawn again to tramp woodland trails to disclose bird haunts and orchids. Regrets were expressed when the meeting came to a close, regrets at parting but also for friends who had not been able to share the delights.

While suggestions were discussed for next summer's meet, most grateful and hearty thanks were tendered our President, Mr. Aschim, and his associates Ross Homer and Tony Capusten, for all the arrangements made. Hospitality, good guides and excellent cooks will long be remembered. They were all jolly good fellows!

#### List of Persons Registered

*Beechy*: W. Peters, D. Redley, D. Santy; *Bracken*: Mrs. Dorothy Harris, Nancy Stuart, Elaine Wright, Mrs. Laura Wright; *Candle Lake*: A. Freemont; *Dundurn*: Edith Stait, E. Sullivan; *Erinferry*: Mrs. E. A. Dodd, G. Dodd; *Indian Head*: C. Ashmore, Mrs. F. Fisher, Mr. and Mrs. K. Skinner; *Kelvington*: Mr. and Mrs. Harrison, B. Irving, Mrs. C. Irving; *Lanigan*: G. Chandler, E. Halsey; *Maymont*: Mr. and Mrs. O. Beamish; *Montreal Lake*: Margareta Pauls, Margaret Siemens, Phyllis Siemens; *Moose Jaw*: Mrs. Ann Davis, Mrs. Nancy Dunn, Patricia Kern, Mollie Ritchie, Barbara Seed, J. Seed, Nerita Steele, Mrs. F. Taylor, Mr. and Mrs. C. West; *Naicam*: W. Yanchinski; *Nipawin*: D. Riome, S. Riome, M. Street; *North Battleford*: Marion Fletcher, Mildred Huff; *Prince Albert*: Mr. and Mrs. A. Aschim, Lorna Black, E. Brooman, A. Capusten, J. Capusten, Edna Eastwood, Mr. and Mrs. B. Gordon, R. Homer, Mrs. Pat Homer, Jean MacKenzie, Cecily Seaman; *Regina*: Nellie Ballantyne, Mrs. M. Barnard, H. Beck, Margaret Belcher, Mr. and Mrs. F. Brazier, Dr. and Mrs. C. Clark, Mrs. E. Cruickshank, D. Dexter, Lucy Ely, Pearl Guest, Sylvia Harrison, Gwen Jones, J. Jowsey, Helen Keay, Ferne Lawrence, Christine MacDonald, Loraine MacPherson, H. Moulding, Connie Pratt, R. Taylor, T. White; *Rose Valley*: J. Brownlee, Mr. and Mrs. W.



Brownlee, Mrs. Minerva Roberts; *Saskatoon*: J. Black, Mr. and Mrs. Bluett, Mr. and Mrs. D. Bocking, Dr. and Mrs. R. Bremner, Mr. and Mrs. W. Cant, G. Hardy, Mr. and Mrs. V. Harper, Mr. and Mrs. Hodgekinson, Mr. and Mrs. J. Hogg, Dr. and Mrs. S. Houston, Mr. and Mrs. Lotochinski, Mr. and Mrs. T. McMurchie, Margaret Mahon, Mr. and Mrs. M. Martin, Mr. and Mrs. G. Porteous, Mr. and Mrs. J. Shadick, Mrs. E. Shannon, Mr. and Mrs. R. Shemko, Mr. and Mrs. J. Slimmon, Lillian Strom, P. Walmsley, J. Wedgwood, Lucy Young; *Shaunavon*: D. Chandler, Ruth Chandler; *Wolseley*: D. Hayward; *Yorkton*: Mr. and Mrs. F. Switzer. *From Moose, Wyoming*, were Betty Wright and F. Wright.

#### List of Birds Recorded

A composite list was made of birds recorded in the Candle Lake - White Swan Lake area from June 11-13 by SNHS members attending the meeting. Species:

Common Loon, Red-necked Grebe, Horned Grebe, Great Blue Heron, Canada Goose, Mallard, Pintail, Green-winged Teal, Blue-winged Teal, American Widgeon, Shoveler, Ring-necked Duck, Lesser Scaup, Common Goldeneye, Bufflehead, White-winged Scoter, Ruddy Duck, Common Merganser, Red-breasted Merganser, Broad-winged Hawk, Marsh Hawk, Sparrow Hawk, Ruffed Grouse, Sandhill Crane, Killdeer, Common Snipe, Spotted Sandpiper, Lesser Yellowlegs, Herring Gull, California Gull, Ring-billed Gull, Franklin's Gull, Bonaparte's Gull, Common Tern, Black Tern, Great Horned Owl, Common Nighthawk, Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Belted Kingfisher, Yellow-shafted Flicker, Pileated Woodpecker, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Hairy Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Northern Three-toed Woodpecker, Eastern Kingbird, Eastern Phoebe, Traill's Flycatcher, Least Flycatcher, Western Wood Pewee, Olive-sided Flycatcher, Tree Swallow, Bank Swallow, Barn Swallow, Purple Martin, Gray Jay, Blue Jay, Common Raven, Common Crow, Black-capped Chickadee, Boreal Chickadee, Short-billed Marsh Wren, Robin, Hermit Thrush, Swainson's Thrush, Veery, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Sprague's Pipit,

Cedar Waxwing, Starling, Red-eyed Vireo, Black-and-white Warbler, Tennessee Warbler, Yellow Warbler, Magnolia Warbler, Myrtle Warbler, Black-throated Green Warbler, Blackburnian Warbler, Chestnut-sided Warbler, Bay-breasted Warbler, Ovenbird, Northern Waterthrush, Mourning Warbler, Yellowthroat, American Redstart, House Sparrow, Western Meadowlark, Red-winged Blackbird, Brewer's Blackbird, Common Grackle, Brown-headed Cowbird, Purple Finch, Pine Siskin, American Goldfinch, Savannah Sparrow, LeConte's Sparrow, Vesper Sparrow, Slate-colored Junco, Chipping Sparrow, Clay-colored Sparrow, White-throated Sparrow, Swamp Sparrow, Song Sparrow.

Note that the weekend sightings for June 11-13, 1965 did not include 19 species seen at Candle Lake in 1958 in a two week period, June 28 - July 13, when Elmer and Reg Fox and Frank Brazier were birding in the area (see report by Brazier in the *Blue Jay*, 16:160-162). The additional species seen in 1958 were: Western Grebe (one adult with young), Pied-billed Grebe, White Pelican, American Bittern, Canvasback, Cooper's Hawk, Osprey, Bald Eagle (nest on island), Virginia Rail, Sora, American Coot (with young), Greater Yellowlegs, Black-backed Three-toed Woodpecker, Red-breasted Nuthatch (one only), Brown Creeper (one only), Mountain Bluebird, Cape May Warbler (one only), Wilson's Warbler (one); Red Crossbill (one).

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#### DONATION RECEIVED

In accordance with my established tradition, please find remittance of \$15.00 which would have at least been my expense money had we been able to make the trip to the Candle Lake Summer Meet. Use this in the "cause", and put it up to the first meeting that an effort be made to persuade others to do likewise. After all, we are working for a cause which is a mighty worthwhile one even though we do enjoy it. If we make it to the annual events we pay our costs and forget about it. When we didn't spend it on the trip — let's contribute it where it is needed.—*Ernie Symons, Rocanville.*



# S.N.H.S. ANNUAL MEETING

Saskatoon, October 15-16, 1965

Place: University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon

## Friday Evening Programme October 15

**Registration:** Beginning at 7:30 p.m., in Convocation Hall, University Campus. Registration fee for adults — \$1.00. Children — no charge. Saturday dinner tickets extra.

**Reception** for members and friends. Time: 8:30 p.m. Hosts: Saskatoon Natural History Society.

## Saturday Programme October 16

**Early morning bird trip:** Meet at the Visitors' Parking Lot, University Hospital, at 7:00 a.m.

**Registration (continued):** From 9:00 a.m. through the morning. Please arrange for dinner tickets.

**Business Session:** 9:30 to 12:00 noon.

**Recess for lunch:** 12:00 to 1:30.

**Programme Session:** 1:30 to 5:00, with coffee available at 3:15.

**Dinner:** Place to be announced. Tickets at registration desk. Time: 6:30 p.m.

**Evening Address:** Address by guest speaker at 8:00. Public invited.

## NOTE RE: MEMBERS' CONTRIBUTIONS

Members with kodachromes are invited to notify the Programme Committee, c/o Mr. James Slimmon, 2526 Hanover Ave., Saskatoon, by October 1, so that an hour of slides can be arranged for Saturday afternoon.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION** write to Mr. James Slimmon, 2526 Hanover Ave., who will pass your inquiries on to the Committee of the Saskatoon Natural History Society who is making arrangements for the programme.

## NOMINATIONS AND RESOLUTIONS

Nominations and Resolutions should be sent to the Recording Secretary, Mr. James Slimmon, 2526 Hanover Ave., Saskatoon. Please give thought to the resolutions and forward them in advance of the meeting.

## NOTICE OF MOTION

At the Executive Meeting, April 10, 1965, it was agreed to give the following notice of motion in the September *Blue Jay*, as required by the constitution:

Moved that the following scale of SNHS membership fees be adopted:

Adult — 1 year, \$3.00; 2 years, \$5.00; 3 years, \$6.00.

Junior — 1 year, \$2.00; 2 years, \$3.00.



# THE SASKATCHEWAN NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

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Honorary President.....	President J. W. T. Spinks, University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon
Past President.....	Steve A. Mann, Skull Creek
President.....	Ansgar O. Aschim, Box 1481, Prince Albert
First Vice-President .....	Herbert C. Moulding, 90 Dunning Crescent, Regina
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**Three-year directors:** William Brownlee, Rose Valley; Ray Elmore, Hanley; Mrs. E. Jonescu, Regina; Ernie Kuyt, Fort Smith, N.W.T.; Mrs. K. H. Skinner, Indian Head.

**Two-year directors:** Bernard Haysom, Regina; George MacMillan, Maple Creek; Robert W. Nero, Regina; Mrs. F. B. Taylor, Moose Jaw; C. Ward, Saskatoon.

**One-year directors:** Dave Santy, Beechy; Robert Mills, Red Deer; John Lane, Brandon; Robert Folker, Saskatoon; David Chandler, Shaunavon.

## PRESIDENTS OF LOCAL SOCIETIES

John Nelson, Moose Jaw; Ansgar O. Aschim, Prince Albert; Tom White, Regina; James Slimmon, Saskatoon.

## CHAIRMEN OF COMMITTEES

**Crest Committee:** Ruth Chandler, Shaunavon; **Greeting Cards:** Mrs. E. Jonescu, University of Saskatchewan, Regina; **Membership:** Frank Brazier, Box 1121, Regina; **Newsletter:** Robert R. Taylor, University of Saskatchewan, Regina; **Prairie Dogs:** David Chandler and Ruth Chandler, Shaunavon; **Prairie Nest Records Scheme:** Robert R. Taylor; **Publications:** C. Stuart Houston, 863 University Drive, Saskatoon; **Research Awards,** Elmer Fox, 3455 Rae Street, Regina; **Wilderness Areas:** James Wedgwood, 610 Leslie Avenue, Saskatoon.

## THE BLUE JAY

**Acting Editor:** Robert W. Nero; **Assistant Editor:** Margaret Belcher; **Junior Naturalists' Editor:** Mrs. Joyce Deutscher.

All articles and letters for publication should be submitted to Robert W. Nero, University of Saskatchewan, Regina Campus, Regina, Sask. **Material for the December issue should be received by October 15, 1965.**

## MEMBERSHIP

Membership in the Saskatchewan Natural History Society is open to all persons interested in any aspect of nature. The classes of membership are as follows: *Regular*, \$2.00; *Supporting*, \$3.00; *Sustaining*, \$5.00; *Junior* (including schools), \$1.00. The *Blue Jay* and *Newsletter* are sent without charge to all members not in arrears for dues.

Send all renewals and new memberships to Frank Brazier, Treasurer, SNHS, Box 1121, Regina, Sask.

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## REPRINTS

Requests for quantities of reprints of any article printed in the *Blue Jay* should be sent to Printcraft Ltd., Regina, Sask., within one month of publication. Contributors wishing a few extra copies of the current *Blue Jay* may get them at cost. Requests for these should be made to the Editor when material is submitted for publication.



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