

The Spadefoot Toad is one of the least commonly seen of our tailless amphibians, since it spends a great deal of its time underground, emerging only at night. When disturbed on loose soil the toad crouches down, then with a shuffling motion of the hind legs, with the aid of its spurs, quickly digs itself out of sight.

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SNAKES

One of the largest Bull Snakes to be caught in Saskatchewan was brought to the Provincial Museum this spring by G.A. Carnie of Regina.

Mr. Carnie caught this snake at Estevan. It is 72 inches long and weighed 3 pounds, 7 ounces. It is now beautifully mounted and soon will be on display at the museum.

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On July 14th last, Albert Swanston, of the museum staff, caught a snake about twelve miles west of Gibbs, which answers a question of much interest. It was a Garter Snake, 37 and a half inches in length. The remarkable thing about it, however, was that when it was being prepared for mounting, 44 young were removed from its body. It does not lay eggs.

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PLANT SECTION

A Sunflower Freak

From Grenfell comes one of the most peculiar flower heads that we have ever seen. It is a double-decker wild sunflower. The upper flowerhead is borne on a distinct stem which protrudes through the very centre of the lower and larger head. The specimen was found by Mrs. John Hubbard's daughter, Elizabeth. It was growing near a dugout on the farm.



Columbines and Roses

While Mr. Francis was at Fishing Lake he noted many wild native columbines growing just a few yards from the shore. There also, on the banks, were wild roses in profusion, varying in color from deep red to pale pink. Fireweed, also was in full bloom there, July 4th.

Four years ago Mr. Francis found a pure yellow Western Lily. He and his family have watched it with interest ever since. This summer it bloomed again for the second time.

Jackpines, Native Maples and Conservation

TORCH RIVER -- C. Stuart Francis

"While on a recent trip to Fishing Lakes and the Narrow Hills, I could not help but observe the change in the appearance of some of the country travelled through since I was last there thirteen years ago. One stretch of the old Fishing Lake trail was mostly covered with small fire-killed Jackpine and was nearly bare of green trees more than one to two feet high. Now the fallen fire-killed trees have nearly all rotted away and disintegrated into the topsoil, while the young Jackpines have grown into a dense stand of fine trees, eight to twelve or more feet high. This gives a very good example of how nature quickly rebuilds its forests and, at the same time, rebuilds the soil below which has been damaged by earlier forest fires.

I also noticed on the return trip from the lakes, over the new west road, that more than one small forest fire had apparently been started by careless smokers or campers. Fortunately, in each case, the area burned was only a few acres before it had been extinguished. However, these fires appear to have been started adjacent to the roadway and were not in a area of farm settlement, therefore it is apparent that more effort must be made to educate the travelling public regarding the dangers of carelessly handled matches, campfires, etc.

It is quite interesting to note that there are quite large stands of native Manitoba Maple along the Torch River, above the confluence of White Gull, Caribou and Falling Horse Creeks. These stands of maple are quite extensive, appearing to be sometimes a mile or so long and a quarter mile wide. I have also noted fine stands of maples along the Missipuskiou River, still further north than the Torch River. It would be interesting to know just how far north native Manitoba Maples grow in Saskatchewan.

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We are very pleased to get another contribution from Mr. Arch C. Budd, botanist at the Swift Current Experimental Station. This time he describes the Anemonies of Saskatchewan. His series of articles is very instructive and will prove a great help to all interested in our flora. Unfortunately, due to rush of work, he was unable to illustrate these flowers.

Mr. Budd has had a very happy summer - one that will make all who love the out-of-doors, the mountains, the forests and the wild flowers, envious. He has been loaned as a botanist to the survey part of the Eastern Rockies Forest Conservation Board and worked in the area between the Crows'-Nest Pass and Waterton Park, from July 3rd to August 15th.

The party was first camped in tents on the banks of the Carbondale Creek in the Crows'-nest Park area. This is the heart of the grizzly bear country, and naturally our Botanist was a bit nervous. We can imagine his glancing furtively this way and that before retrieving a rare specimen on the bank of a brook in the thickets and hastily returning to his companions and safety.

Many of the mountain flowers were in spring-like bloom and Mr. Budd was fortunate in being able to collect hundreds of them in the prime of their beauty.