

J. A. GUNN,
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THE

BULLETIN - JANUARY

Official Bulletin
Of The
YORKTON NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

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OBJECTS:

To foster an active interest in every branch of nature study, and to promote the conservation of all wild life; also to act as a connecting link between nature lovers in Saskatchewan.

SECRETARY'S ADDRESS:

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Membership fee 25¢ per year

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Freeze-up took place earlier than usual last Fall. After several weeks of mild sunny days the weather suddenly turned cold on Tuesday, October 20, and by the following week-end all the smaller sloughs and ponds were frozen over. All that week a heavy migration of ducks and geese was in progress as the birds hurriedly made a "get-away" before winter gripped the northern lakes. Since then the weather has been fairly cold with no great extremes of temperature up to Christmas. Some observers have reported a larger number of winter birds around than were noted last year. In November and early December, Snowy Owls were unusually plentiful all through this part of the country, but the majority seem to have moved on elsewhere now. The question whether the "ten year decrease" in prairie chicken has started is discussed in another part of this bulletin.

Before the next number of the "Blue Jay" appears many of the first spring migrants will have already winged their way back to the prairies, in fact less than six weeks from now the tinkling song of the Horned Lark should be ringing over the open fields. Some species of birds, when they come north, advance rapidly and reach widely distant points on almost the same day, while others move more leisurely and take their time. We should like to get as many migration dates as possible sent in from different localities and, in this way, we should gradually be able to build up a picture of the manner in which the migrant birds spread across the province. The Christmas Census shows how much of interest can be learnt regarding the distribution of different species through reports collected from various corners of the province.

It is a very great pleasure to announce that our Society now numbers well over one hundred members, some forty of these are in Yorkton and the others are from all over the province. We are most grateful for many encouraging and friendly letters received after the appearance of the first issue of the "Blue Jay," and have great hopes that, with everybody's help, we can make it a worthwhile clearing house for nature records in Saskatchewan. Will every member try to bring the "Blue Jay" to at least one other nature lover?

And one thing more, we realize that some may feel too much attention is paid to birds, but birds seem the subject in which there is the greatest interest taken and it was as a bird club that the Yorkton Natural History Society started. However we want to hear from the botanists and entomologists and hope to give more space to them in the future. Incidentally we chose the name "Blue Jay" for our little paper because it was "Sammy" Blue Jay, in the Burgess Bedtime Stories, who always carried the news round to the "Little People of the Green Forest and the Green Meadows", and "Sammy" has long been a very real personage to some of us.

Isabel M. Priestly,
President,
Yorkton Natural History Society.