

LOCAL NOTES

For several years Mrs. J. Meekma, Tupper Ave., has offered hospitality to a number of Purple Martins in a "house" made from a large cheese box set up on a pole in her garden. This last spring she decided to offer her tenants better accommodation in the form of a brand new martin house, Spanish bungalow style, based on a design from a popular handicraft magazine. After some hesitation the martins, when they came back in May, finally took up residence in their new mansion but, as so often happens, the new home was not as satisfactory as the old one. The chief drawback was that owing to a shelf at the front the young birds were tempted to creep out on this platform before they were ready to fly, and as a result, two or more fell to the ground and met an untimely death. Once the young ones had fallen into the garden the parent birds took no more notice of them and feeding these insect-eaters by hand was out of the question.

Incidentally, after watching her martin guests very closely, Mrs. Meekma is convinced that it is quite a common occurrence for a male bird to have more than one mate.

An early and sudden freeze-up this Fall probably overtook some of the birds which lingered till the last minute on the larger northern lakes. On October 26 a lone Pelican was circling low down over the town about six o'clock in the evening, apparently looking for open water. On one particular street, some of the most youthful members of the community were just a little scared at the sight of "a simply enormous bird" flying round right over their heads! On the following morning a mallard was discovered resting in the center of Broadway but managed to get away when an attempt was made to capture it.

An open meeting of the Yorkton Natural History Society was held in the Council Chambers, December 4, when films of the Yukon and Canadian north-west were shown by Constable Cross, R. C. M. P.

These films, all in technicolor and taken by Constable Cross himself brought home to a most appreciative audience the wonderful beauty and grandeur of Canada's northern scenery. An added note of interest was the fact that many of the places shown in the films are now traversed by the new Alaska Highway.

From F. Baines, of Saltcoats, comes an interesting bit of Indian lore. We were asking Mr. Baines if he often saw Goshawks around his farm, and he related how, a few weeks ago, he happened to shoot one when Peepch - an Indian - was standing nearby. The latter immediately asked for the dead Goshawk saying "Dat's berry strong bird so I eat him to make me strong."

CORRESPONDENCE

We were delighted to get a long letter from Pvt. J. Culver, United States Army Air Force, thanking us for the first issue of the "Blue Jay." Jack is in California and, after describing a long hike he took over the mountains near San Francisco on Thanksgiving Day, remarks that "On the whole this corner of the world has much less to offer in the way of wild life than Saskatchewan." Well, Pvt. Culver ought to know, for he certainly scoured the country round Yorkton thoroughly enough a few years ago. Best of luck, Jack.