

BIRD NOTES

Numerous reports of Golden Eagles have been received during the past year, and from Mrs. John Hubbard, Grenfell, comes another report of this large bird of prey, Mrs. Hubbard, writes: "Several members of our family were picking potatoes in our garden this fall when they suddenly noted my spring pullets coming hurriedly in from a nearby stubble-field. Before the pullets reached the shelter of their pen and some small willows, an immature Golden Eagle, coming in over the buildings, suddenly swooped down and seized a pullet. The eagle evidently intended to alight nearby on a fence post but shouts of the men, and the barking of a dog, caused the bird to depart hurriedly, leaving the pullet behind, and still alive".

Starlings are reported from the South-western part of the province. Several were noted by Arthur Ward, at Burnham, the first Mr. Ward has seen in that district. R.M. Blakely, assistant horticulturalist, Experimental Station, Swift Current, reports from two to six feeding on the Russian Olive trees in his front yard in downtown Swift Current. Mr. Blakely also writes, of having received a letter from Thomas R. Baker, Wellesley Park, Moose Jaw, reporting three having been seen there for the past three months. From the South-east, Mrs. John Hubbard reports that Starlings are becoming quite plentiful about buildings, in the bluff country north of Grenfell and are also seen all winter in the town of Grenfell. Unfortunately, Starlings appear to be fairly well established in the greater part of Southern Saskatchewan. It is interesting to note, however, that few are reported from the more Northern areas. At Nipawin, Starlings have decreased greatly in the past 18 months, in fact, none have been noted since September, 1946.

The exceptionally heavy snowfall of this winter is proving a great hazard to our game birds in obtaining food. The depth of snow apparently causes no great concern to our native game birds; those that habitually "bud", - (Ruffed Grouse and Prairie Sharptailed grouse take enormous quantities of poplar and other buds at times and can survive on this diet for long periods). However, to our "prairie chicken" that inhabit the more or less treeless prairies, and our imported game birds - Pheasants and Hungarian Partridge - deep snow is a very serious matter. According to a report carried in the Regina Leader-Post under dateline, Weyburn, Jan. 7, Pheasants, Grouse and Hungarian Partridge are having great difficulty in obtaining food in that district. One Weyburn farmer reported having seen Hungarian Partridge following a team of horses through the deep and crusted snow and stating that birds were getting into the tracks made by the horses, and by doing so were able to dig through to earth. Another farmer reported Pheasants in such starving and weakened condition that they could be caught and picked up without difficulty. Herb Comstock, Game Warden, said many farmers were feeding the birds as they had done in the passed years, and added, that game birds were now coming in the farm yards, they were unable to secure food by themselves, due to the deep snow. Mr. Comstock also stated the Department of Natural Resources is willing to help take of the wildlife, and has authorized him to purchase grain to be distributed where needed in his area.

C. Stuart Francis, Torch River, reports that during 1946 he noted four species, which had not previously been recorded for the Nipawin district.

Double-crested Cormorant: One noted flying south at no great height, Sept. 7, 1946.

Baird's Sandpiper: Noted Sept. 7, 1946, about the Francis pond.

Stilt Sandpiper: Noted at same place as above species, Aug. 31, 1946.

Hawk Owl: Noted between the Francis farm and Love, Sask. Dec. 10, 1946. Also an individual of this species was noted during the winter of 1931.

Northern Phalarope: Noted by Roy Crawford at Saskatoon, Sask., June 8, 1946. Roy sent in a list of some 85 species that he had observed at Saskatoon during the year.