

The Blue Jay

Official publication of the

SASKATCHEWAN NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

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The aim of the society is to continue and extend the work and ideas of the Founder of the BLUE JAY, the late Mrs. Isabel M. Priestly, in forming a medium of exchange of nature observations of mutual interest, and in working together for the protection and conservation of the wild life in Saskatchewan.

HOW TO SUBSCRIBE

The BLUE JAY is published quarterly at a yearly subscription rate of one dollar. Anyone interested in any phase of nature will be a welcome member to this organization. All subscriptions will start and terminate on the first day of January.

All material for the BLUE JAY, as well as all subscriptions and business letters, should be sent to the Editor at 1077 Garnet Street, Regina.

Material for each of the four issues should be submitted not later than Feb. 15, May 15, Aug. 15, or Nov. 15, as the case may be.

THE EDITOR'S DESK

The year 1950 offers a challenge to all members of the Saskatchewan Natural History Society - a challenge to take a more active interest in the welfare and conservation of our wild life - a challenge to befriend and become intimately acquainted with our plants, our feathered friends and other animals, and an invitation to record interesting and unusual observations for publication in the BLUE JAY.

We have over five hundred members now, and if each will do his part, not only will his life be enriched by the fascination of the new world which he will discover, but our little magazine will become a worth-while and valued medium of exchange when these discoveries are shared with the other nature lovers of the West.

We welcome at this time over one hundred new members. We want you to feel that you are now an integral part of this Society and partners in its success or failure. We hope to hear from you often. Banish the idea that you will have to travel to some distant area for sights of interest. The Bluebird, you will remember, was finally found right at home. Carling's have this advice to offer: "Look around your own neighborhood at any time -- you will be amazed at the new world of nature to be found right on your own doorstep. Appreciation is the first step towards protection. Once you've discovered Nature you'll want to keep it unspoiled."

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With between forty and fifty days of continuous sub-zero weather during December and January -- temperatures averaging between fifteen and twenty degrees below zero at noon each day - it is a miracle that our wild animals have survived the ordeal. Reports received up to date have not indicated just what the toll of life has been, although in some areas certain January and February birds have been conspicuous by their absence. Provincial Game Commissioner E. L. Paynter has appealed to farmers and sportsmen to set out feed for upland game birds, many of which were facing starvation late in January. The game branch have received reports indicating that the lack of food along with the cold weather had already taken a serious toll of game birds, mainly pheasants and Hungarian partridges. Early in February the situation appeared to be most serious in the southwest part of the province. It is hoped that we will get widespread reports on the matter from various sections of the province.

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Before our next issue appears spring will have arrived. This is the period when nature enthusiasm always reaches its highest peak. The first flock of geese honking their way towards the north - the first blade of green grass, the first crocus and the first song of the Meadowlark, bring with them feelings of new life and hope that cannot be adequately described. We hope that our next issue will reflect this spirit and that it will be carried through to the end of the year.

Our readers will readily appreciate the fact that we cannot publish the northern migration record dates of all birds as observed by each individual. Such records are of great importance, but we hope that you send to us an account of only unusual records, along with those interesting individual stories which prove so keenly interesting to all our members.