

FORESTRY

By C. Stuart Francis

We have been warned many times during this present winter of the very serious prospects regarding a great Grasshopper infestation this coming summer.

In my opinion this kind of threat could be greatly eliminated if a very serious attempt were made to plant and maintain forest areas and shelterbelt areas all over the West and on every section of land, and on every quarter section of land. I believe that if this Tree Planting were an actuality, every farm would have its quota of bird life, consisting of many species of insect-eating birds, which, if they were regular summer residents, would prevent insect pests from ever getting enough start to become a plague.

Up here in the North, where we have much forest and parkland, grasshoppers sometimes become quite numerous in certain fields such as alfalfa. However, in these same fields one will see many species of insect-eating birds and consequently very little damage is done. So I say, take time and plant trees on every farm and lots of them, and it will prove to be the best investment that any farmer can make.

I also wish to sound a warning to the residents of the northern part of our province. Many acres are being cleared on too many farms. Many quarter-section farms have not even enough trees left for shelter around the homes and not a stick for firewood; yet these same quarters of land were covered with forest a short 25 years ago.

We must all remember that our land belongs to the future generations to come after us, as much as it belongs to us today. And to those of us in the north, it must not be forgotten that our soil is very apt to erode from both wind and water. No land owner can afford to let that happen on his farm.

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CONSERVATION COMMITTEES

At a very recent meeting, held at Torch River Forestry headquarters, a start was made towards organizing a local Conservation Committee, in which the local farmer-trappers and the Department of Natural Resources would endeavour to cooperate in every way possible to conserve all our resources in forest, water and wild-life. It is hoped that the average rural resident will be encouraged to become more conservation conscious and that in the near future Local Conservation Committees will be organized all over the province.

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"When man, in his ignorance, upsets the balance of nature everybody and everything suffers. Man is progressing far too slowly in his knowledge of conservation. It is true that today Conservation is a Science and a recognized profession. Yet we are just beginning to grasp the fundamental inter-relationships between animals, plants, the soil and the climate."

The Whittier branch of the National Audubon Society, California.

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"Among our birds and other animals there is no such thing as 'good' or 'bad' species; each has a role to perform in nature's economy; no species is in itself destructive in its ecological function."

Audubon News Letter.

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