

## Feeding Trays

JOYCE GUNN, Spirit Lake



*Chickadee sunning himself on a cold winter morning after feeding on a tray.*



*Downy Woodpecker feeding on a piece of fat on the tray. Reflection across lower half of body from window.*

The birds are back at the feeding tray. This fall such words were in order the very day the tray was put up again for the winter. The chickadees, so tame that we were sure they were old "customers", were sampling the wares before the tray had time to settle itself down to its long winter task of keeping the birds satisfied.

Our main feeding tray is attached right to the kitchen window on the east side of the house where the sun strikes it on rising and the birds are able to eat and sun themselves at the same time. The birds become so used to people gazing through the window at them that it is possible to work at the sink indoors with only the double windows between you and the birds on the tray, without the birds flying off in alarm.

The tray itself is a shallow wooden box cut down on three sides to leave only about an inch of a rim and the higher fourth side is used to nail it securely to the storm window. Last winter when the woodpeckers came more often and pecked a bit harder than the smaller birds, I added a brace from the bottom to make it completely solid.

I have tried taking a number of

photographs but with not too much success. The double window reflects a certain amount of light and most birds end up as "two-tone" models—lighter on the lower half and their natural color in the higher part where the frame of the window does not interfere. I did manage to photograph chickadees, downey woodpeckers, a junco and even a tree sparrow last winter but the only unusual visitor to the tray, an Artic-Three-toed Woodpecker, contented itself with picking the crumbs off the ground below the tray itself. It was in plain view of the window but at an angle that was impossible to pick up with the box camera.

With only a few minutes work erecting a tray such as we use on the window it is possible for the rest of the winter to watch the birds feeding from before sunrise until after sunset and, after a few weeks, it is possible to pick out the individual birds, the little chickadee with the slightly crooked tail feather and the other one with a few body feathers tattered. You get to the stage where if they don't turn up for a day you wonder what happened to them and when they do come on the tray again it is like greeting old friends, and if there

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## A Rare Fish

By CLIFF SHAW, Yorkton



This odd-looking fish has the distinction of being the first of its kind taken in Saskatchewan. The fisherman was Emil Quinn of Yorkton who caught it in the White Sand river east of Canora, early in September.

Dr. D. S. Rawson, head of the biology department at the University of Saskatchewan, said that judging from the photo the specimen is one of the catfishes, probably the Black Bullhead "*Ameiurus nebulosus*." Dr. Rawson is hoping Mr. Quinn, or another fisherman, will catch a similar specimen and preserve it in 10 percent formalin so as to be sure of the specific identification.

### FORT ESPERANCE

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lake. Difficulties with the Indians seem to have begun in earnest during MacDonal's administration and he may not have fully recorded the misfortunes. There is some evidence to presume the fort was destroyed and the inmates massacred.

About two years after the Hudson's Bay Company entered the picture and built in the same area as the North West Company, both parties agreed to move to a new site and live in harmony.

Only the first part of the agreement was carried out. A field of lodged grain, when the site was visited last fall, showed the outline of the North West Company fort where cannon were aimed at their rivals. The Hudson's Bay Company fort was eventually burned in the absence of the owners. It has vanish-

ed completely and thought to have been washed into the river.

Arthur Kelly of Welby reported recently that correspondence from the provincial and federal authorities indicated steps be taken to establish the site of Fort Esperance. He said if present plans mature a 25 acre park will be established and a cairn in the form of a fort chimney with a commemorative plaque built.

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are any special crumbs around they are taken out immediately to add variety to their diet of rolled oats, bread crumbs, and pieces of fat. Cake crumbs seem to be the general favorite but with a couple of Downy Woodpeckers and the Chickadees feeding continually during daylight hours the choice crumbs are soon gone.