

A Perfect Afternoon

Mrs. H. RODENBERG, Kinlock, Sask.

Our Purple Martins left for the south August 25th. The Tree Swallows left shortly after. Today is September 17th. The Barn Swallows are busy feeding another brood of young. There are Goldfinches everywhere. My duck families will spend a lot of time at our dugout.

This morning I heard the "tut-tut" of the Robins. There were fourteen in a bluff near by. Soon they will two with us on their way south.

I am looking forward to our migrating birds moving in from the north. There are so many little songsters as well as the beautiful Evening Grosbeak, who spend a day or two with us on their way south.

One afternoon in August I decided to do a little bird watching within our own yard. It was a beautiful day. All morning I watched the Barn Swallows feeding their young on the barn roof. I counted as many as 54 at one time. Most of these were young birds, as the parent birds kept flying down to feed them. We have from three to four Swallow nests in our outdoor buildings. When they all fly around one can't begin to count them.

Next I walked down to our dugout where there were three families of ducks. Between them they had 23

young. At first when we went down to see them, the mother ducks would give their warning and all the baby ducks would dive and hide in the rushes until we walked away. Now they took no notice of us as we stood and watched the wee ducks scoot across the water for flies and bugs. Near the dugout we had Song Sparrows, nesting. For the first time we had a pair of Redstarts nesting near here. They are such busy little birds!

When I came back to the yard I watched the Goldfinches for awhile feeding on weed seeds. There were also four young Bluebirds sitting on the wagon box, waiting to be fed. I think Bluebirds are one of the most beautiful birds we have. Later, as I came back to the house, there were five Cedar Waxwings in our Honeysuckle — they really go for those berries.

As I sat on the veranda watching them, a Sharp-tailed Grouse began calling and ran across the lane. As she entered the bluff she called again. Soon nine half-grown grouse ran across the lane to join her.

For me, this was a perfect afternoon as the birds seemed to be making the most of one of our far too few sunny days this summer.

Lending a Helping Hand

LEWIS WAJCIECHOWSKI, Brightstone, Man.

I had a dislike for geese, because when I was eight years old I got such a wing beating from the barnyard gander that my elbows were quite blue. However, what I had observed about the wild Canada Goose in October, 1950, changed my feelings towards geese greatly.

October 15th was a dull, cool day. I went to look for Indian arrowheads on summerfallow land. When I reached the place I looked only towards the ground. I walked about a hundred feet when I heard the honking of geese. I did not bother to look but the honking seemed to be in the same place for a few

moments. Then I did look and saw clearly two adult geese and two smaller ones, tree-top high. They were about a thousand feet from me but flew another four hundred feet only and settled down. That seemed odd to me.

When I reached the end of the field I saw an object in the spot where the geese had risen. I recognized it as a goose. The closer I came the slower I walked. The last few steps I tip-toed. To my disappointment she did not struggle as I picked her up. I first noticed that

(Continued on Page 35)

LET'S DO IT!

E. SYMONS and FREDA E. SYMONS, Rocanville, Sask.

To the Editor, and all our good friends of the Blue Jay:

Let's put the Blue Jay over! It can be done.

Last April, when the bills were out for Ralph Stueck's delightful evening here, it occurred to us "maybe there are some memberships to be picked up." Result: Between then and now we have gathered in no less than 151 new members, merely by invitation except for the very odd case.

Admittedly we are fortunately placed, in that the repair business brings in visitors from over quite a wide area, including Western Manitoba, and nearly all over South Eastern Saskatchewan. Through this we find that a surprising number of folks have a latent (if not active) interest in natural things. Out of our total, no less than 38 are from outside the immediate district; Wapella, Moosomin, Welwyn, Whitewood, Tantallon, Spy Hill, one from Saskatoon, one from Regina (3 blocks from our Editor's home!) and several from Manitoba.

Equal or better results are waiting in every area and district, for we really haven't "covered" the territory. There are still many more to be picked up. The majority of folks, we find, just have to be invited to join us: our usual approach is; "So-and-So, I think here is something you would like to share with us," or similar words, stressing that it is entirely non-profit to anybody; an invitation affair, and that most are contributing rather than "getting" from it. Very frequently parents will mention how interested their children are in wild things.

This could simply mean that, within a matter of months only we could have a Membership and Subscriber list up in the Tens of Thousands, and this is no dream. All we need to "put it over" is one or two enthusiasts in each area, folks who are fairly well known and are sold on the thing, to talk to their friends and acquaintances.

Seems to us, more and more, that the primary need, key to the success of our Natural History Society is, to **get a Blue Jay into every home!**

Let's do it, and "drown" our Editor and Secretary in new subscriptions!

Editor's Note: Congratulations to the Symons. The Society appreciates the splendid work you have been doing. It is our hope that the example you have set will be immediately copied by other enthusiasts throughout the West.

LENDING A HELPING HAND

(Continued from Page 23)

she was very light and then saw that both eyes were completely closed.

Poor, blind goose! What should I do with it? I took it home and showed it to the folks. They told me that it might be diseased and that I should take it back. It would not eat wheat or barley. I put it on a creek bank. Two hours later that evening it was in the same place.

Next morning I could not find it, but while walking around the spot I heard geese honking. I could see one adult goose rise, then

another, but as if they were tied to something. Up they would rise about six or seven feet, then down a little — honking all the time.

Soon two other smaller ones were up. Finally a smaller one yet arose. It looked to me as if they were lending a helping hand (or should I say, a helping wing) to the blind one. When they reached fifty feet they all headed west. This all took place about four hundred feet from the spot on the creek bank where I placed it.

I stood on the bank bewildered, marveling that the Canada Goose — wild we call it — should take such great care of its handicapped offspring.