

## Grounded



—Photo by Cliff Shaw

This Pied-billed Grebe was found waddling in the snow in Yorkton's residential district by H. Tecklenberg, 65 James Ave. on April 27. Apparently it had become forced down during the heavy snowstorm that day.

The grebe was in good health, but was grounded because this species is unable to take off from dry land. To take off, it has to run along the surface of water for a long distance beating the water with its small wings. It cannot even walk on land properly, as its legs are attached so far back on its body.

The bird was kept overnight until the storm abated, then banded by Dr. Stuart Houston and released at the Little Whitesand River.

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## It Can Happen to Geese

According to a radio report today, a civilian pilot in a private plane got lost in a snowstorm. He narrowly escaped disaster when his plane's undercarriage clipped a power line and cut the wires. He managed to regain altitude, and presumably, safety.

On Tuesday evening, April 5th, between six and seven, we had a heavy fall of snow here. The weather was mild, and the snow drifted down in large flakes, so filling the air with them that visibility over land was poor, and the ceiling not more than 100 feet.

Suddenly from behind the curtain of snow, seven Canada geese came coasting down with arched wings and the evident intention of landing.

Below them lay a row of vacant lots. Beyond to the eastward stretched open fields. Scattered dwellings on the remaining three sides were quiet. The village, for the most part, was at supper.

However, the presence of dwellings was enough to alert the wary honkers. They quickly realized the mistake they made, and headed for open country, still flying low and plainly anxious to find a resting place before the blackness of a stormy night closed in.

When I heard today about the pilot of the light plane which so nearly hit the ground, my thoughts went back to the seven surprised honkers. It can happen to geese.

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## Mr. Sparrow Versus Downy

M. M. Turnquist,  
Prairie River

The following episode took place on January 10, of this year. We have a bird-feeder in our yard, and of course several species of birds enjoy their daily meals there. A Downy Woodpecker was enjoying his afternoon lunch when along came Mr. Sparrow, who insisted on testing Downy's lunch. To my surprise the Woodpecker would not stand for it and took after the Sparrow who headed for a nearby spruce. When the sparrow could no longer keep away from his persistent pursuer he flew to some plum trees on the lot just north of ours — with Downy right on his tail. This kept up for some time until Downy figured he had won the battle — then he flew back and continued his lunch. I think that Mr. Sparrow got the worst of the deal.