

## A New Feathered Friend

By JEAN MAYSON, Prince Albert

**T**EDDY came running into the house quite excited one day early in July. "Mother, you should have been on the golf-course with Dad and I. We saw a woodpecker almost as big as a crow, and its head was red. It has a nest in a hole in a tree." Dad confirmed the report. Then and there I decided I must see this unusual woodpecker. The following morning, quite early, Dad armed with cameras, Teddy carrying the extra photographic paraphernalia and I with my sketch book and pencil, drove to the golf course.

A short walk after leaving the car, brought us to the tall dead tree where a hole high up in the tree was presumably the woodpeckers' nest. "What I can't understand" Teddy kept telling me, "is how such a big bird could get into such a small hole." I was also puzzled and mentally decided my "men" were mistaken as to the woodpecker's size.

While Dad took position in front of the tree for photos, Teddy and I went back a few yards and stood behind a big spruce tree. In a short while Teddy excitedly whispered "Look Mother, the woodpecker's here, high on that next tree." To my amazement there was the big woodpecker, just as big as I'd been told. I watched eagerly for it to fly to the hole in the dead tree, but instead after some dalliance Madam Woodpecker or perhaps it was Father Woodpecker, flew to another tree near us, where we noticed a much larger oval shaped hole. Immediately, with a clamour which reminded me of home, out popped a little head, mouth stretched wide, then another and another. One thing is certain they made enough noise for a dozen. The hungry babies were fed by regurgitation, while we three gazed spellbound, and Dad took some pictures. Several times we watched the same feeding procedure take place. The parent bird and the young paid no attention to us, though we walked around the bottom of the tree.

I tried my hand at a quick sketch on one of these occasions. It had to be quick as the woodpecker stayed

on the tree only a short time before going into the hole. It sounded as if the feedings were repeated inside. Then shortly out popped that head with its ridiculously fiery red top, and away flew the woodpecker. Our bird book proclaimed our large woodpecker to be the Pileated Woodpecker, and according to the pictures it was the father woodpecker, though later seeing both parent birds together, they appeared exactly alike. By far the largest woodpecker in Canada, almost as large as a crow, coloured in broad masses of black and white, with striking pointed red crest, and loud characteristic cries.

It was a real thrill to meet you, Mr. Pileated Woodpecker and we hope to see you again. By the way the smallest hole in the dead tree proved to belong to a Black-capped Chickadee. Dad also took pictures of this bird.

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## National Bird Week

There are many observations throughout the years of national importance. The Western Red Lily and the Sharp-tailed Grouse have received some recognition. It is high time that the birds received some reward as God's working creatures, by giving them a safe conduct return pass to their winter quarters, rather than having them regarded as pot-shot ornaments.

The Wilson's Snipe, one of the most valuable birds of the continent, is to receive, after the 20th of September, a charge of buckshot from the sniper as a reward for services rendered.

I would suggest that at the annual convention this fall of the Saskatchewan Natural History Society, that we bring this up for discussion. I suggest that the Dominion Government be asked to institute a National Bird Week every year, so that thanks may be given to the Almighty for the fulfilment of His purpose in bringing the birds back in spring for the benefit of Mankind.

—Arthur Ward