

Oriole and Dove in December

Photos from kodachromes, by DR. STUART HOUSTON, Yorkton.



Mourning Dove

A female Baltimore Oriole had been feeding at the tray of Mrs. A. Kryski for three weeks before it entered Dr. Stuart Houston's trap half a block away on Dec. 17, and was banded. A robin was banded the same day. The average last fall date for Orioles in Yorkton is Sept. 3, and the latest previous date was for Sept. 6 (in 1939). The Oriole was last seen by Mrs. Kryski about three days later. We hope it reached Central America where it should have been — but we doubt it.

The Mourning Dove had been present at the farm of R. A. Maddaford, south-west of Saltcoats, from mid-November. At first it stayed in a sheltered depression on the south side of a haystack and fed at the pigpens, chiefly eating chop. On the night of Dec. 26th (the bird having been undisturbed until that day), included in the Saltcoats bird count, it was found sleeping in a burrow in the straw on top of the pigsty. It was bitterly cold and presumably



Female Baltimore Oriole

the heat rising from the pigs below may have helped keep it warm. Although pitch dark, Mrs. Stuart Houston was able to capture the bird in the butterfly net when Brian Bjarnason and Dr. Stuart Houston caused it to fly out. A color flash photo was taken, a band placed on the bird, then it was returned to its little shelter. A light was shone in its eye as it was released; then when the light was turned off, it remained where it was. The dove disappeared a few days later, and has not been seen since.

Not As Innocent As We Had Thought

MRS. ELLEN AVERILL

House Wrens had always been among our favorite birds, but alas, during the last two or three years we have had to confess that they are not as innocent and friendly as we had thought. Indeed they are almost as blood thirsty as the Purple Grackles, which have been seen to drag the young of Eve Swallows out of their nests on the barn, carry

them up to the roof, tear them in pieces and devour them. The Wrens have been known to pierce the eggs of the Bluebird and Tree Swallow, and drag young Tree Swallows out of a nest box and drop them to the ground. They wanted the box for their own use, and where out to get it by any means — fair or foul.