



Flicker at Nesting Hole

charm with me that I shall not soon forget.

I took the picture by remote control with a Portra 2 lens at 19 inches, at f/11 and speed at 1/100 of a second.

My Little Nature World

Madeline B. Runyan, Punnichy, Sask.

During the summer of 1953 I found a poor bird breathing its last under my clothesline. Evidently the unfortunate little thing had flown into the wire. It was an entirely new bird to me—and I have lived here all my life. Not having Peterson's Field Guide (I now have one), I did not identify it closely enough, but it was either an Olive-backed Thrush, or a Gray - checked Thrush. Peterson shows that there is a very slight difference between them, of which I was not aware at the time.

During the very severe weather of the past January, we found a tiny owl which had perished in the straw stack. I suppose even the mice were not out in such weather. The little owl measures only 6½ inches from beak to tail. Because of its black bill and other markings, we have identified it as a Saw-Whet Owl.

Our lunch counter in an elm near our kitchen window is constantly visited by the little Chickadees, who have to move off whenever the Downy Woodpecker arrives. He, in turn, makes himself scarce, when his big cousin, the Hairy Woodpecker comes.

A Survey of Birds Nesting in a Given Area

By E. H. Brooman, Prince Albert

This survey grew out of a class discussion on environment and adaptation. At the time we had been discussing the fact that some birds and animals favor environments near man while others prefer environments as far removed from man as possible.

It was decided to attempt to discover how many and what kind of birds nested in our own school district.

The Prince Edward School district is composed of some forty city blocks. Most of this is residential and there are few vacant areas. In addition to this there is an unimproved area which for the most part is cleared.

In much of the district the boulevard is well established. In some sections the trees are several decades old. Many of the homes are reasonably well landscaped. All-in-all, the district is excellent for this type of survey.

The purpose, then, was to make a count of all visible birds' nests. Only nests which could be seen from the sidewalk area were included. Each student was supplied with a mimeographed sheet and allotted a certain area to survey. So that there would be a minimum of errors, instructions were simplified and few.

The survey showed:

Total number of nests, 189.

Total in Boulevards, 64; those high, 24; medium, 35; low, 5.

Private Trees and Shrubs, 92; those high 30; medium, 34; low, 28.

Total in Hedges, 20. Others, 13.

It should be noted that no consideration was given to birds nesting in boxes nor was any consideration given to areas other than adjacent to sidewalks.

Considering the number of nests that had probably been destroyed we see that the bird population would be considerable. Assuming three young were raised in each nest, and two adult birds attended each nest, we would have a population of almost 1000 birds. Indeed, it is quite possible that there were at least twice this number.

Since all nests were roughly classified according to size, and since the types of birds nesting is known, a rough estimate of the different kinds of birds could be determined. The possible order might be: Robin, House Sparrow, Cedar Waxwing, Chipping Sparrow, Yellow Warbler, Purple Finch.

It was felt that this survey could become a general thing and perhaps could be used to estimate bird numbers in other places.

Jack—The Canada Jay

Mrs. W. D. Woolrich, Clair, Sask.



After reading Mr. Gilroy's article in the "Western Producer" on the Canada Jay, we thought perhaps the readers of the "Blue Jay" would like to hear of one who visited us last winter.

We first noticed it stealing the Chickadees' suet. After a few days it would come quite close when we called, "Jack!" It became so tame that before spring we were able to take the snap, shown on this page, of my son with Jack on his arm. It was after the bread he was holding.

Other visitors, Waxwings and Grosbeaks, enjoy the crabapples. A few days ago I noticed a woodpecker had filled quite a big crack in a telephone pole with suet.

I have a very warm corner for our winter birds—they help brighten our winter days and seem more like faithful friends than our summer visitors.

Some Butterfly Observations

Ronald Hooper, Somme, Sask.

There is something about butterflies that is unsurpassed in any other organism. Something that is found in the flitting of fritillaries, the sallying of meadow-browns, and the dashing of skippers as they bolt forth at your feet and make a swift, low flight, drop suddenly to the ground and remain motionless. Has God created another creature with the charm of a swallow-tail, or the beauty of a tiny blue?

Some butterflies are easily caught, but there is always some gayly coloured speeder who will test your skill with the net. What adds to the interest of butterfly collecting is the chance of catching wind-blown strays. These may be carried with the wind several hundred miles from where they were hatched. It often makes one wish he had a band on them so he could see how far they had travelled.

Like birds, butterflies have their times and their seasons of appearance, although their appearance depends more directly on the weather than it does with birds. Have we winter butterflies? Yes, we have, for every species must pass our bleak northern winters in some form or other, either as eggs or pupae, or in hibernation as larvae (caterpillars) or adults. The tortoise shells and commas hibernate in the adult form. We have found the Mourning Cloak hibernating in grain stocks, the American Tortoise-shell in lumber piles, and the Compton Tortoise in log buildings.

Like other things butterflies have their cycles. Last year the Cosmopolite was by far the commonest species. This year we didn't see one. The condition of the Red Admiral was similar. These species migrate to a certain extent, so perhaps that has something to do with it.

It is interesting to try to raise butterflies from caterpillars. What a big appetite they have! How fast it makes them grow! But make sure it is a butterfly caterpillar you are raising. We once ignorantly fostered a family of sawflies.

One day this summer I found a pupa-case on the under-side of a