

gaillardia, and harebell—are at their peak, one could still find late blossoms of violet and white anemone in the long grass under the trees, while at the same time goldenrod and sunflower were budding along the sunny railroad grade.

Besant had other attractions too. The creek, twisting dankly under a loose canopy of willow, widened into a wimming hole at one point, at another, just beside the velvety lawn rickles where the wee ones splashed. Excursions along its bank yielded a handful of wild strawberries, a hatful of raspberries or saskatoons. Girls gathered wild flowers along the grade, and little boys loved to roam the pitchy hills—but woe to the bare

foot that came down on a cactus! There was, too, an open pasture where an impromptu ball diamond could be laid out.

Here, I remember, in the dry, dry summer of 1948 a Sunday School picnic lunch lay spread, to its last detail, when a sudden splash of rain sent us running to the cars. Late that same summer we came to Besant once again for a cornfeed which almost didn't come off, because the cooks arrived with two coffee pots and no kettle for the corn. However, we cooked it in relays, packed upright in the larger coffee pot, and had a wonderful time. Food, fire, and friends by a sheltered stream still work their ancient, elemental spell.

## Seen by a Seer

By J. BOSWELL BELCHER, Dilke, Sask.

This time I have three items to report which I thought were of some interest.

Considering the name of our magazine, I should probably first report the appearance of two Blue Jays in our shelter belt early in October of this year. They were the first I had ever seen, and the only ones I have heard of in our district.

The second incident occurred before the first, on a Saturday afternoon early in August. I had stopped cutting grain in order to make an adjustment on the swather, and I heard a most unusual chirping about me. Although there were many crickets in the fields, I thought it was a rather strange chirping for a cricket. However, I knew it wasn't my machine and surely wasn't interfering with its operation, so I gave it no more thought and went about my swathing. Monday when I stopped in the field the strange chirping was there again. It sounded so much like house sparrows that I glanced about to check, but no bird was in sight. As I walked around the swather I noticed the sound on the other side of me so I became curious and traced the sound right to its source, which seemed to be the heavy pipe frame at the back of the swather. When I realized I had a family of house sparrows with me which could not be reached without disassembling part of the machine. Each morning

after that I noticed the parents feeding the young as the swather sat in the yard. They had found the swather, though it was left standing at night some distance from where it had been when the nest was built. One day at noon I even noticed Mr. Sparrow sitting on the post with his beak full of insects waiting for me to come home. I was never home at night till after dark, so the little birds must have gone quite hungry. Fortunately for the sparrows, however, the crop was not maturing too fast and I only swathed during the afternoons most days for the first week. The sparrows kept on chirping as they rode around and around the fields until near the end of the week when they had cut over 200 acres and decided to leave their home on wheels.

Oddly the third incident occurred first. It was shortly after the middle of July and Dad was cutting hay in a very rough slough about a mile and a half from home. He was quite surprised when a little fawn, by its size and actions obviously only days old, scrambled up from behind the cutter bar and scampered into the wheat on his wobbly little legs. Quite aware of the probability of other fawns being near at hand. Dad thought he'd keep a more careful watch and not have that happen again. But a few rounds later he ran the cutter bar over another tiny fawn, again so well hidden in a

little depression in the ground that Dad saw no sign of it till it got up and hurried into the wheat as the first one did. Each had let out a cry when the mower went over it, so he was afraid to leave the team standing while he went into the wheat to see if the fawns had been hurt. However, they appeared unharmed when they ran away. About a month later we saw one run out from the willows and cattails in a

large slough nearby. And how it could run by then—no more wobbly legs. It was the first fawn I had seen, although the adult white-tailed deer have not been too uncommon a sight here in the last seven or eight years. Then about mid-September Dad again saw the pair as they ran out from the high weeds in a vacant yard near the cattail slough when he drove into the yard to empty a load of wheat in the barn.

## Bird Notes

### A QUICK-WITTED YELLOWLEGS

By FRED W. LAHRMAN, Saskatchewan Museum of Natural History

While out observing birds on the Wascana Waterfowl Park at Regina at noon on September 4, 1957, I saw a Prairie Falcon (*Falco mexicanus*) come swinging over the marsh, scaring hordes of shorebirds and ducks. It suddenly swooped swiftly down at a Lesser Yellowlegs (*Totanus flavipes*) which was standing alone in shallow water approximately 50 yards from me. The Yellowlegs remained motionless until the hawk was almost upon it, then it suddenly dove

beneath the water in a duck-like manner, submerging completely, and the lightning-swift talons passed harmlessly over. The Yellowlegs bobbed up a moment later, then flew quickly away. The Falcon did not press the attack and continued on its way. Although shorebirds frequently bathe and swim, I have no previous observation of one actually submerging in water. This unusual escape behavior may have saved other Yellowlegs.

### BROAD-WINGED HAWK NESTING RECORD AT SPIRIT LAKE

By WM. ANAKA, Spirit Lake

On May 12, 1957, I identified a Broad-winged Hawk in flight over an extensive wooded area near home. At the time I thought I was fortunate to have seen a rare migrant and a new life species. On May 26 I again located a Broad-winged Hawk in the same area. This time it called and circled, but refused to leave. However, a search failed to locate a nest. Returning on June 2 I did find the nest in a balsam poplar, about 20 feet above the ground. The female flew as I started to climb the tree. In the nest were two eggs.

During the succeeding weeks I visited the nest at weekly intervals. On June 18, the nest contained one egg and one newly-hatched young. At no time during my visits did I find any food in the nest. The nest itself was always freshly lined with aspen poplar leaves. One or both adults were always present, protesting my intrusion.

On July 17 there was a severe wind storm, and on the following day only one almost fully grown young hawk was in the nest. The second one was missing from the immediate area. The one in the nest flew as I climbed up, but was unable to maintain altitude, so landed on the ground. I replaced it in the nest. Returning on July 21, I found one young hawk in the nest and the second one perched on a tall stump nearby. Both flew away at my approach.

I did not visit the nest after that date but often observed one or more hawks in flight over the area. My last record for this species was September 1.

Checking with Dr. Stuart Houston, who compiled the list of the Birds of the Yorkton area (*Can. Field Naturalist*, 63:215-241), I find that this is a new species and a new nesting record for the Yorkton district.