



Blue Jay Chatter

By LLOYD T. CARMICHAEL, Editor



This is the twenty-eighth consecutive time that I have had the privilege of writing "Blue Jay Chatter" from the "Editor's Desk". Those seven years have gone very quickly but they have been happy years. The associations which I have made with the naturalists of Saskatchewan have made an indelible impression on my mind — a pleasurable impression of new friends, of splendid co-operation and of an assured knowledge that we have been working together to stimulate interest in the natural life about us thus bringing increased happiness and contentment to all. Now that I am about to lay down the Editor's pen, my thanks go out to all who have assisted me in our attempt to make the Blue Jay more interesting, more readable, more worth while.

Our new editor is Dr. George Ledingham, an enthusiastic naturalist already known to the members of this Society, for he has been the Secretary Treasurer since October 1953, and has been very active in all other work of the society as a whole. I wish him the best of success and the hope that he will receive the same support from members as I have enjoyed in the past. Mr. Elmer Fox is the new business manager and treasurer — the man to whom you will send your dues and business communications. His is not an easy job, but the burden will be greatly lightened if all will back him "to the hilt" in an endeavour, not only to maintain, but to greatly increase our present membership.

One feature of the Blue Jay which has created a great deal of interest during the past two years in the Boys' and Girls' section. The nature essays submitted during the competition have been of a high calibre and great credit is due not only to the children but to their parents who have inspired them to seek enjoyment in the field of nature. The special congratulations of the Society are extended to Wilma Aim, of Bredenbury, who won the fifty-dollar camera — the grand prize offered for the entire contest.

I would like to impress upon the mothers and fathers of Saskatchewan both the desirability and the pleasure of teaching their children to love the birds and the flowers, the prairie, the forests and the lakes and all the creatures that inhabit those areas. In later years those children will thank you from the bottom of their hearts, for you have given them something that will bring them happiness for the rest of their lives.

I had the great misfortune this summer of losing my mother. She was an ardent naturalist throughout her entire ninety three years, and unconsciously succeeded in passing along to her family the great out-door pleasures which were hers. Her passing has brought to my mind the advise of an early Ontario naturalist, Mrs. C. P. Trail, who wrote in 1906:

"Mothers of Canada, teach your children to know and to love the wild flowers springing in their path; to love the soil in which God's hand has planted them, and in all their after wanderings through the world their hearts will turn back in loving reverence to the land of their birth, to that dear country, endeared to them by the remembrance of the wild flowers which they plucked in the happy days of their childhood."

John Burroughs said: "If I were to name the three most precious resources of life, I would say books, friends and nature; and the greatest of these is Nature. The born naturalist is one of the most lucky men of the world. Winter or summer, rain or shine, at home or abroad, walking or riding, his pleasures are always near at hand. The great book of nature is open before him and he has only to turn its leaves."