

The Blue Jay Bookshelf

99 RANGE FORAGE PLANTS OF THE CANADIAN PRAIRIES

By J. B. CAMPBELL, K. F. BEST and A. C. BUDD.

Canada Department of Agriculture. Publication 964.

POISONOUS PLANTS OF THE CANADIAN PRAIRIES

By J. B. CAMPBELL, R. W. LODGE, and A. C. BUDD.

Canada Department of Agriculture. Publication 900 (Revision).

These companion publications came off the Queen's Printer's presses in June, 1956. The authors are J. B. Campbell, Officer-in-Charge, K. F. Best, Range Ecologist, R. W. Lodge, Agricultural Research Officer, and A. C. Budd, Range Botanist, all of the Pasture Division, Experimental Farm, Swift Current, Saskatchewan.

Nearly 4,000,000 cattle, half a million horses and the same number of sheep derive summer pasturage and a fifth of their winter feed supply from the fifty million acres of rangeland on the prairies.

The first publication deals with grasses, sedges, rushes, shrubs, and trees, describing their growth characters, nutritive values, palatability, reaction to grazing and drought tolerance. Grasses are the most important livestock food; there are more than 140 reported growing in the prairie area. They also serve to protect the soil against wind and water erosion.

Generally plants with poisonous characters are found in association with others of fine forage properties. They are a hazard in native grasslands. About sixty plants with poisonous properties have been reported in the prairie provinces; some are plentiful and widespread. Fifteen of these make up the second bulletin; two, according to the text, may affect adult humans and four are dangerous to children.

Both publications contain excellent line drawings to simplify identification. Each of the 63 species of grass described are illustrated by Keith Best; the other illustrations are by Archie Budd.

These bulletins are not only important to ranchers and farmers, they make valuable additions to the library of anyone who is interested in the land. They may be ordered by

number from the Canada Department of Agriculture, Ottawa, or from the Dominion Experimental Farm at Swift Current.

Reviewed by ELIZABETH CRUICKSHANK

BIRD SONG RECORDINGS

Reviewed by MRS. STUART HOUSTON

There are a number of excellent bird song recordings available which reproduce the songs of many of our local birds. With Christmas coming soon, these offer an ideal solution for the bird watcher's gift.

One series, "**Bird Songs of Door-yard, Field and Forest**," (Volumes 1 and 2) contains 275 authentic songs and calls of 96 different North American birds. Each record, 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ rpm, plays for 45 minutes. The songs were recorded by Jerry and Norma Stillwell. Records are available at \$7.95 per volume from:

**Ficker Recording Service,
425 Arcadia Road,
Old Greenwich, Conn., U.S.A.**

Another series "**American Bird Songs**" (Volume 1 and 2) also 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ rpm was prepared by Drs. A. A. Allen and P. P. Kellogg of Cornell University. This series presents 111 bird songs. More marsh and game birds are included in this group than in the preceding one. These are available at \$7.75 per volume from:

**Cornell University Records,
124 Roberts Place,
Ithaca, New York, U.S.A.**

"**Music and Bird Songs**" produced by Dr. Kellogg and James Fassett, Music Supervisor of CBS Radio, is also available from Cornell University Records. This record specializes in variations in bird songs—increasing or decreasing the speed of the sound with most interesting results.

Another series produced in Canada by a Canadian, Dr. Wm. Gunn, is "**Sounds of Nature**." Volume 1, "**Songs of Spring**", presents 25 common Ontario songbirds. This record compares very favorably with similar American records. Volume 2, "**A Day in Algonquin Park**", presents voices of forest, marsh and lake through a summer's day. These records are 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ rpm. Vol. 1 is \$3.95 and Vol. 2 is \$4.95. They are available from

**Federation of Ontario Naturalists,
1156 Bay St., Toronto 5, Ontario**