

Blue Jay Chatter

Good news comes from Moose Jaw where a new natural history society has been formed. One enthusiastic naturalist, Mrs. F. Taylor, arrived there from Ottawa last fall, and found people who would co-operate in the formation of the Moose Jaw Natural History Society. Mr. John Walker is the president. We are hoping to meet some of the Moose Jaw members at our Summer Meeting in the Cypress Hills which is closer to Moose Jaw than it is to any other organized group in Saskatchewan.

The Summer Meeting and the Annual Meeting in October give us the only opportunities we have of seeing each other and making new friends. This is as important a reason for meeting in the Cyprus Hills as learning something new of the plants and animals of the area. We hope that some members will come from Alberta.

We have good news from Ontario, too, where legislation has been passed protecting all hawks and owls except when it can be proved that they are actually doing damage. Any farmer may kill birds preying on his domestic or confined birds, but no one may molest hawks or owls without such provocation. This also means that pole traps may not be used, for many innocent birds may alight on the pole. We are convinced that by not protecting all hawks and owls, we are endangering all hawks and owls, for few people can recognize the various rather confusing species. We agree with the idea expressed by members of the Edmonton Bird Club in their brief against repeal of Alberta Protection Laws. They felt that if it was generally agreed that any hawk or owl was too numerous, and was doing damage, "control measures should be exercised, but only by competent field men and within the limits of these predation areas." (**Blue Jay**, Vol. XIV, No. 1, March 1956)

When the Saskatchewan Game Laws were being revised a year ago the Saskatchewan Natural History Society decided at an executive meeting April 23, 1956, to request the Game Commissioner to include the provision that **all hawks, owls, and eagles be protected except that a farmer or landowner may destroy hawks or owls on the land he owns or occupies, when they are doing real damage to poultry or other domesticated animals.** This request has been turned down. Members of our society who believe in such legislation should send in all the evidence they can in support of protection. If we obtain adequate information we can support a resolution for a protection law and pass it at our annual meeting.

The Saskatchewan Fish and Game League is to be congratulated for putting less emphasis on predator control and more on such constructive projects as the improvement of habitat. There has been a marked reduction both in money spent in the predator control campaign and in the number of birds killed. We are happy to learn that only a limited number of schools will be asked to help in predator control. Money is to be spent instead in maintaining and developing wildlife habitat (*Wildlife Crusader*, III, 2, March 1957)

We think that our society, too, should be more active in conservation projects. If you notice examples of either abuses of our wildlife or of good conservation practices we should like to hear of them. Mr. Dickson tells about a fine conservation project (page 72). We have also from Mr. Dickson a longer article on Forestry Conservation. This is written especially for a series of conservation inserts.

We are now in the midst of an active membership drive under the energetic leadership of Dr. Stuart Houston of Yorkton. We hope that every member will do his part, and in a special effort to get others interested we are inserting in this issue a membership blank for your use. We need the new member that each one of you can bring into the society, in order to support the enlarged **Blue Jay** which was begun with the first issue of 1957.

We take pleasure in welcoming hundreds of new members. To the new members, as well as to the old, I should like to say again that the **Blue Jay** is what you make it. You are urged to send in material so that we can select a variety of interesting items for each issue.