

Report of Summer Meeting at Cypress Hills, June 15-16 '57

By MARGARET BELCHER, Corresponding Secretary

The third summer meeting of the Saskatchewan Natural History Society, held at the Cypress Hills on June 15 and 16, had a larger attendance than either of the two previous meetings. Over 100 registered from 34 points in Saskatchewan, Alberta, Manitoba, Ontario, South Dakota and California.

Field trips were the main feature of the programme of the two days' meet. They included:

(1) Saturday morning excursion on foot, led by S. A. Mann, to familiarize the group with the Park, with comment on the flora of the Park by A. C. Budd, B. De Vries, and G. F. Ledingham.

(2) Saturday afternoon excursion by car to the Lookout and Bald Butte. This replaced the scheduled trip to the West Block cancelled because of rain and bad roads. One party, travelling by jeep with the Conservation Officer, did get to the West Block on Sunday to see the Trumpeter Swans, and we have Frank Roy's account of the expedition.

(3) Sunday morning birding trip by car to Cypress Lake.

An evening programme was held Saturday at Camp Shagabec. Members were welcomed by the President, Frank Brazier, and by the Editor, G. F. Ledingham. Dr. Ledingham introduced Herman F. Chapman, former editor of the *South Dakota Bird Notes* who had come with his wife from Sioux Falls, S. D., to attend our meeting. Bruce McCorquodale of the Museum gave an illustrated talk on the fossil mammals of the Cypress Hills, Ralph Stueck of Abernethy showed coloured film, and recordings of bird calls were played. After the programme, lunch was served in the camp hall.

Special thanks are due the local members who worked with the programme convener, Dr. R. W. Nero, to make the meet a success. Mr. and Mrs. Mann of Skull Creek, with their neighbours and friends, played host to the visitors, assisted with arrangements for the programme, and planned the social evening and lunch at Camp Shagabec. George MacMillan of Maple Creek assisted Mr. Mann in organizing the excursions.

Leadership for the birding excursion to Cypress Lake was provided by Dr. H. Jenner of Fort San and F. G. Bard and R. W. Nero of the Museum to whom the society also wishes to express its appreciation.

Finally, we want to thank the United Church at Maple Creek for the use of Camp Shagabec, and Mr. C. S. Kerr at the Park for his untiring efforts in providing pleasant accommodation for our large group.

Operation Trumpeter

By FRANK ROY, Saskatoon

Our trip by Land-Rover to the West Block on Sunday, June 16, was indeed a thrilling one—the roads were next door to impossible; we had to be pulled out once by tractor—but what a pleasure to find the Trumpeters!

Bottley's Lake is an insignificant prairie lake with grassy shores and a marsh at the south end. It lies just at the eastern edge of the west block of the Cypress Hills which rise abruptly at this point to an elevation of well over 4,000 feet. We stopped at a rancher's place to determine which lake the Trumpeters were frequenting at the moment, since we

were aware of the fact that they remove to Adam's Lake every summer when the cygnets are old enough to stand the walk. They told us that they were still at Bottley, and that they had five young.

When they reached the lake, the two old birds were in full view, and trailing them were seven young—checked carefully with our 20x telescope. They were across the lake from us, and we never did get very close to them. One other adult had remained on the lake this year, and it followed us as we drove to the north end of the lake. So the total count was 10, three adults and seven

young. Richard Zapf was as pleased as we were, and says that this is the first time that more than two adults have been noted at the lake. Dr. Barnett took a number of pictures with his 400mm telephoto lens, although we doubt that in any of these all one be able to pick out all seven of the young. For purposes of the record, the observers were Dr. H. Barnett, Dr. R. Bremner, Bob Pravda, Richard Zapf (Conservation Officer), and myself.

Other records of almost equal interest from Bottley's Lake include 10 adult Canada Geese accompanied by downy young—these at the northern end of the lake; three Red-necked Grebe (one of them sitting on a nest at the west shore of the lake), not previously recorded from the Cypress Hills area; and two pairs of Ring-necked Ducks which Godfrey does not list in his publication.

List of Birds Recorded at the Summer Meeting in the Cypress Hills, June 15-16, 1957

The following birds were recorded by the observers at the summer meeting of the Saskatchewan Natural History Society in the Cypress Hills (June 15-16, 1957). Observers recorded birds seen as they travelled from Maple Creek into the Park and on trips to Cypress Lake and Bottley's Lake as well as in the Park itself. The area covered, however, was not as extensive as the area included in W. Earl Godfrey's *Birds of the Cypress Hills and Flotten Lake Regions, Saskatchewan* (Ottawa, 1950). Birds not listed by Godfrey for the Cypress Hills region are printed in italics.

As pointed out by Godfrey, the interest of the area for birders lies in the variety of ecological communities and in the affinity of the bird fauna to the higher parts of the area with that of the Rocky Mountains. Such typically western species as the Wright's Flycatcher, Rocky Mountain Orange-crowned Warbler, Red Crossbill, Audubon's Warbler, and Pink-sided Junco occur in the Cypress Hills; whereas Canada Jays, Bruce Grouse and Brown-capped Chickadees, so common in the coniferous forests of central and northern Saskatchewan, do not occur here at

Grebe, Western Grebe, White Pelican, Great Blue Heron, American Bittern, Trumpeter Swan, Canada Goose, Mallard, Gadwall, Baldpate, Pintail, Shoveller, Blue-winged Teal, Redhead, Ring-necked Duck, Lesser Scaup, American Merganser, Cooper's Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk, Swainson's Hawk, Ferruginous Hawk, Marsh Hawk, Pigeon Hawk, Sharp-tailed Grouse, Sage Grouse, Sora Rail, Coot, Killdeer, Wilson's Snipe, Long-billed Curlew, Willet, Spotted Sandpiper, Pectoral Sandpiper, Marbled Godwit, Wilson's Phalarope, California Gull, Ring-billed Gull, Franklin's Gull, Common Tern, Black Tern, Mourning Dove, Horned Owl, Long-eared Owl, Nighthawk, Belted Kingfisher, Yellow-shafted Flicker, Red-shafted Flicker, Hairy Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Eastern Kingbird, Arkansas Kingbird, Wright's Flycatcher, Horned Lark, Bank Swallow, Rough-winged Swallow, Barn Swallow, Cliff Swallow, American Magpie, Crow, Black-capped Chickadee, Red-breasted Nuthatch, House Wren, Catbird, Brown Thrasher, Robin, Olive-backed Thrush, Wilson's Thrush, Mountain Bluebird, Sprague's Pipit, Cedar Waxwing, Loggerhead Shrike, Starling, Orange-crowned Warbler, Yellow Warbler, Audubon's Warbler, Ovenbird, Macgillivray's Warbler, Yellow-throat, House Sparrow, Bobolink, Western Meadowlark, Yellow-headed Blackbird, Red-winged Blackbird, Brewer's Blackbird, Baltimore Oriole, Cowbird, Lazuli Bunting, Pine Siskin, Goldfinch, Red Crossbill, Spotted Towhee, Savannah Sparrow, Vesper Sparrow, Lark Sparrow, Pink-sided Junco, Chipping Sparrow, Clay-colored Sparrow, Song Sparrow, McCown's Lingspur.

List of Persons Registered at the Cypress Hills Meeting

Joyce Gunn, W. Anaka, of Spirit Lake; K. E. Baines of Tisdale; Mrs. Lucille Jenkins of Assiniboia; J. B. Belcher of Dilke; Mr. and Mrs. E. Symons, Mrs. M. Shaw, Mrs. H. Phillips of Rocanville; Mr. and Mrs. Charles Prince, Bobby Barradell, Donna Barradell, Kenneth Thompson, Keith Thompson, of Paradise Hill; Mr. and Mrs. G. C. Buchanan of Francis; R. P. Stueck of Abernethy; Mr. and Mrs. B. DeVries of Fort Qu'Appelle; Dr. H. D. Jenner, R. A. Nevard of Fort San; Mr. and Mrs. Fred Beveridge, Mr. and Mrs. G. MacMillan, Mr. and Mrs. L. I. Binkley of Maple Creek; Mr. and Mrs. S. A. Mann, R. Mann, Mrs. I. Benetto of Skull Creek; Kate Shuard of Carnagh; Pat Long of Melfort; Mr. and Mrs. S. Jordheim of White Bear; M. O. Bakken, Mrs. Laura Wright of Bracken; L. Martinovsky, T. Martinovsky, Mr. and Mrs. F. Hermansky of Gerald; Mr. and Mrs. J. C. Nichol, J. McGladdery of Marsden; W. W. Graham of Lloydminster; Mr. and Mrs. G. R. Binkley of Shaunavon; Mr. and Mrs. A. C. Budd, Mr. and Mrs. J. R. Caldwell of Swift Current; Mr and Mrs. Howarth of Prince Albert; Mr. and Mrs. A. C. Ellis, Mrs. F. B. Taylor, Dr. E. K. Schue, U. E. Steele of Moose Jaw;

Birds recorded (i.e. seen or heard by one more observer):

Red-necked Grebe, Horned Grebe, Eared

J. Shadick, Mr. and Mrs. J. D. Hogg, Betty Long, Helen Mann, F. Roy, R. Pravda, Dr. R. Bremner, Mrs. M. Evans of Saskatoon; Mr. and Mrs. B. Knox, E. Good, W. Baker, Mr. and Mrs. L. McK. Robinson, Dr. Frances McGill, Mrs. J. C. Black, Mrs. R. Williams, Gertrude Murray, Thelma Brady, Mrs. M. Willers, Marguerite Robertson, F. G. Bard, B. C. Shier, B. McCorquodale, Joyce Dew, Helen Rempel, Frances McKay, Wolfram Niessen, Mr. and Mrs. R. W. Fyfe, Dr. and Mrs. R. W. Nero, Dr. and Mrs. G. F. Ledingham, Mrs. E. Cruick-

shank, Dr. Lucy Murray, Mrs. G. Hodgins, Edna Colbeck, Kay Armstrong, Margaret Belcher, W. A. Silverthorn, Mr. and Mrs. D. Gilroy of Regina.

OUTSIDE SASKATCHEWAN:

Mr. and Mrs. L. H. Stokes of Winnipeg; W. Crossley, Grandview, Man.; T. Dutton, Gilbert Plains, Man.; Mr. and Mrs. E. Robinson, Wawanessa Man.; L. M. Lohr, Erskine, Alta. Kathleen Hodges, A. Hodges, Calgary D. H. Barnett, Toronto; Mr. and Mrs. Herman F. Chapman, Sioux Falls S. D.; S. A. Stueck of Ventura, Cal

S.N.H.S. SUMMER MEETING AT EMMA LAKE

The Saskatchewan Natural History Society has been invited by the Prince Albert Natural History Society to hold its 1958 summer meeting at Emma Lake. We are pleased to accept the invitation of the P. A. society, and we suggest that you plan *now* to be at Emma Lake next summer.

The BLUE JAY Bookshelf



Wild Plants of the Canadian Prairies

By A. C. Budd. Publication No. 983, Canada Department of Agriculture, Ottawa, 1957. \$1.50.

This is a revision in more convenient format of the mimeographed publication "Wild Plants of the Farming and Ranching Areas of the Canadian Prairies," Ottawa, 1952. As such, it remains the only usable flora of the Canadian Prairies. Those of us who had to learn to recognize our plants from Rydberg's confusing and often misleading writings will know what a need it fills. It could be, even, that the author has not been quite ruthless enough in eliminating the Rydbergian phoney species — I notice a few left in *Aster*, for example.

The keys seem eminently workable. Some people have regretted the necessity for keys saying, "Why aren't there more pictures?" The answer is that when over 1200 species are to be described there is no escape from written keys. The author has taken pains, as he says, to keep the language as simple and non-technical as possible; but a certain amount of work is yet required from those who would use this book. The utter novice would be well advised to begin by going over carefully the introductory material — the diagrams and descriptions of plant parts and the directions for using the keys. This explanatory text, one notes, has been enlarged and transferred to the front of the book in the new edition. Perhaps in the written text special mention might have been made of some plants which are hard to key out, e.g. a greenhorn could have quite a time trying to decide if members of the Ragweed subfamily have both calyx and corolla in the flowers.

The printing is clear and the line drawings (by the author) have charming quality. There are 6 species shown in the drawings; the number should give the novice foothold from which to study further. A hard cover might have been useful, considering the field usage many copies are destined for. — John F. Hudson, Regina.