

## Nature's Schoolhouse

Boys and girls will still have an opportunity of winning a nature field guide, Peterson's Field Guides (birds, mammals or butterflies) or Wherry's Flower Guide. Each contestant must write an original story on some nature observations. The story should contain less than 500 words. Send your name, address, age, grade and school to the editor, **Blue Jay**, 2335 Athol St., Regina. The prize-winning story will be printed in the next **Blue Jay**. Entries for the next issue should be in before April 15, 1956.

The following story came in too late for last year's contest. As her prize Valerie has chosen Wherry's Flower Guide.

### Goliath, my Mouse

By Valerie Johnson, Sturgis, Sask.

Age 13, Grade 8.

One day in the school yard, while I was eating my lunch with two of my friends, I happened to notice a half-gown mouse run past us. Taking a piece from the sandwich I was eating, I placed it in front of the mouse. The mouse stopped, sniffed at it, and started to nibble the piece of sandwich. When my friend came to look at him, the mouse became frightened. When the mouse started to run away, I ran and picked him up, for it seemed I suddenly took a fancy to the mouse. My friend had to feed me the rest of my lunch while I held my mouse. When I showed the mouse to the teacher, he thought it was a homely, half-dead thing, but that didn't matter to me.

Some children brought a jar, put grass in it, and I put my mouse in it. The children thought he was very interesting, that is everyone except the big boys. The teacher thought a suitable name for the mouse would be Goliath. At hometime, I carried my mouse home in a matchbox.

When I reached home, I put Goliath in a fishbowl. He seemed to be thirsty. When I put some water in a vinegar cap, he drank some. After Goliath had a drink, he washed himself. It is very interesting to see a mouse wash himself. First he'd lick his paws, then rub both paws across his face. Mice lick their legs, stomach, and other parts of the body. They resemble a cat when they wash themselves.

The fishbowl seemed too small for Goliath, so I took a double quart sealer, put grass in it, and put him in it. Goliath liked to hide among the grass. I kept bread and water in the sealer.

There was an old tank lying around, so, next day, I put grass in the bottom of the tank and put my mouse in it. Goliath seems quite happy in the tank, so I left him in the tank all the time.

Goliath is very fond of dandelion seeds. I keep him well supplied with them. When I first found him, he was a weak, bedraggled mouse; now Goliath is an active, sleek mouse. That was some time ago, and I still have my mouse.

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** Valerie has made the wonderful discovery that when you get better acquainted with something you become more interested in it. How many ever thought of making friends with a gopher? Our president gave us some very interesting pictures of gophers which were printed in the last **BLUE JAY**. Mrs. W. E. COOPER of Gravelbourg sent us the accompanying picture of her brother and his pet gopher, Go-Go. This gopher would come when called and would jump up into his friends hand and eat bread as he is shown doing in the picture.



## Strictly for the Little Ones

By MARJORIE MANN

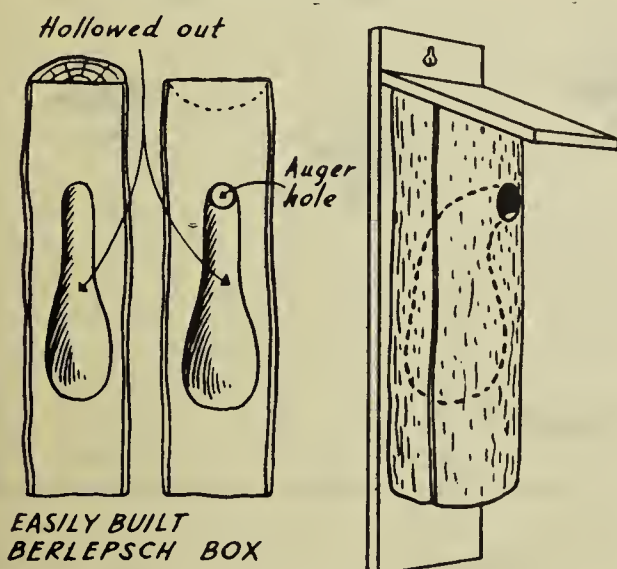
It was the Friday before Christmas. There had been six weeks of bitterly cold weather, and Mr. and Mrs. Hungarian Partridge had spent most of it in a stubble field partly covered with snow. There their brownish coloring did not show against the golden colour of the stubble, and this protected them from hawks, owls, and coyotes. They had a family of eight. The boys were called Chumpy, Choppy, Choosy and Chow. The girls were Betsy, Bumpy, Botsy and Boo.

Dusk was falling. It was cold and stormy and the young folks were getting hungry, so Mr. and Mrs. Partridge decided they would get supper at a pile of grain down near the creek. So all together, they took off with a strong whirring of wings and a flash of reddish tails. Then suddenly Mr. Partridge gave a warning cry, "Look, that truck is going to cross our line of flight. We must land." So down they came, but not on nice soft snow. What do you think? They were on a sheet of ice. Father and Mother, being wise, landed on a

rough spot on the farther side, but the poor children lit right on the slippery part. Poor Bumpy slid for a whole foot on her tail. "Oh! Oh!" she cried, "my seat hurts." Then Chumpy, who was always falling anyway, came down awfully hard. Tears were running down his cheeks as he said, "Mummy, I've broken two of my feathers. Just look how I've spoiled my nice red tail." Then Boo, who was the smallest, took a real slide and skinned her legs. Poor little bird; she was really hurt. All the others had a slide too, but they did not hurt themselves. Luckily, the man in the truck had to stop to open a gate so mother and father had time to go back and soothe the hurt ones and get the other frightened ones into the air again.

I'm sure that down the road they found a good feed of grain and a spot sheltered from the cold winter night. I know they would make sure they'd never land on that slippery ice again—or maybe they would learn to slide. What do you think?

### BIRD HOUSES



EASILY BUILT  
BERLEPSCH BOX

Dear Boys and Girls:

If you would like to build bird houses this spring send to the Royal Bank of Canada for their folder **Bird Houses are Fun to Build**. We show an example of one type illustrated in the folder. We hope you will write us about your experiences with the bird houses. Perhaps you could make a story, for our story contest, about your bird houses and the birds who live in them.

### CONSERVATION GOOD TURN

The Boy Scouts of Canada are this year placing a strong emphasis on conservation. The boys will be trying to earn one or more of the four conservation badges which have been designed. Although the requirements overlap considerably the boys may concentrate their activities as forest, soil, water, or wildlife conservationists and may earn one badge at a time. If you are called on to help teach boys anything about conservation I hope you will be able to take time to help them.

### CANADIAN NATURE

Published by Audubon Society of Canada, Toronto, Ontario. Editor is Jean Hart Whittemore. Executive Director: John A. Livingston. Special stress is on conservation and education. The work of the society is well known but it deserves even more support from us than it is getting. There is perhaps no greater contribution that each of us could make to the future of Canada than

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limestone object displayed. This was a heavy rough block of limestone with a neat hole of fair diameter drilled right through it, and was found in the Rocanville district. Due to the neatness of the hole some were of the opinion that this object was the work of some early settlers rather than aborigines, and no possible use for it could readily be imagined.

It would be interesting to hear of other limestone tools in the possession of Blue Jay readers. Let's keep the "Spade and Screen" pages going, and enlarged.

A. M. Provick.

**Mr. W. J. McDONALD** of Yorkton has written the editor to say that the "plate" shown on page 27 of the last issue of the Blue Jay (top of picture) is from his Indian Relic collection. He is indeed fortunate to own such a rare specimen.

**Mr. THOS. H. DUTTON**, Gilbert Plains, Manitoba sent in the accompanying picture of several Pemican Hammers and you will notice another one of the strange stone "Plates" shown in the lower right of the picture. This also has an image and outline of a hand cut in the stone. It was found at Gladstone, Manitoba in 1889. Although these

relics are very rare, they are nevertheless widespread as they have been found here and there over the plains. Each museum seems to be able to acquire one or two.

### 1955 BIRD BANDING

(Continued from page 11)

Thue. The 14 new species banded this year brought the all-time total to 106 species — this apparently is the first time that 100 species have been banded in Saskatchewan. (And only because of my earlier start; Street and Matthews are close behind in number of species and probably ahead in the number of individuals).

I would appreciate learning of the locations of nesting colonies (where the actual nests have been seen) of Pelicans, Cormorants, Gulls and Herons. Write me at 416 - 11th St. Sutherland, or phone collect to Saskatoon 25736 (before July 1st).

### CANADIAN NATURE

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the starting and guiding of an **Audubon Junior Club**. Excellent material is sent to each child, who pays only 25 cents per year. The instructions to the leader are so good that any of us could lead a group. Find ten children or more and start a Junior Club now.

