

I noticed the absence of wings and could see only four curved yellow marks where they should be. As I watched, these yellow marks built themselves outward, fairly solidly, but thinning out as they grew. In a very few minutes they were about half an inch long and were becoming thinner and transparent. In another few minutes the gossamer wings were forming with a multitude of veins or ribs; they were an inch or more long and nearly complete.

Then that part of the dragon fly which had by now emerged, and which was much bigger than the nymph ever was, lurched forward, seized the chip above the nymph's head, and astonished me by commencing to pull out the tail, little by little, and then to drag it straight out behind. It was transparent like a glass tube, had parallel sides, and you could see the alimentary canal throughout its length.

As I watched, the tail lengthened, became thinner and commenced to change to a darker color, after which it built a bulbous end on itself. Gradually the whole tail turned brown, then black, and developed lateral yellow rings.

By now this marvellous insect was nearly complete and no further large change took place. It rested and fluttered its wings from time to time as though testing them out, and then further decorated itself with new colors.

In a little while it flew out of the tumbler and got on the wire screen and flew spasmodically a few inches at a time. The eyes, which at first were light green, were now blackish from constant wiping with the fore-legs. It began to fly greater distances and then took a long flight of 10 or 12 yards.

By now it was a fine-looking, powerful fellow, and as it had not yet had any breakfast I felt it was ready for the war on mosquitoes, so I opened the screen door and let it go.

It flew into a cedar tree about 10 yards away, and I have not seen it since. It might at least have bade me "good-bye" and come back once in a while to say "Hello".

Patterns of Joy: Jubilee Year, 1955

By ELIZABETH CRUICKSHANK

"Sound the Jubilee trumpets" said the swallows: barn, bank, cliff and tree swallows as they arrived on a cold gale-filled day in mid-May. Some of the sturdier continued to fly low in graceful rhythm but hundreds of them settled wearily on the rich brown earth or the dark green grass, an iridescent moving mosaic of steely blue-black, pure white, brown and chestnut.

So had come the companies of white-throats, white-crowned, the juncos and the thrushes, the myrtles, the yellow-heads in crowds, as if on special invitation to help Saskatchewan people celebrate.

We had always seen single thrashers. To our surprise one day we saw a whole family tumble from a nest and hurry through the grass.

To have never seen a dowitcher then have eight land on a slough before us, then ten, then twenty! Could we ring the bells this year 1955! Avocets phalaropes, rails, phoebes (Say's), towhees, blue-birds, sandpipers, all have made this year memorable.

And the dragonflies, were there ever such crowds of them! One we thought a bird as it plummeted down to swim in the creek, its gossamer wings glistening like beaten copper in the sunlight.

Of all the colourful parades this year none could surpass the cone-flowers' gay displays, their lavish golden banners flying, their brown standards straight and tall. And no parade could have been more orderly than a ribbon of black ants we followed as they marched up and down and round about the sandy hills in search of a new home.

Not all our golden experience had to do with crowds, however.

There has been an altered look about the land this year — so much water on the prairie and in the valleys; such lush growth; such haunting fragrance from sweet clover and thistle vieing with each other;

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Hudsonian Chickadee

By TONY CAPUSTEN, Prince Albert



One day in May on the west side of Christies's Lake about three miles north of Prince Albert we saw a Hudsonian Chickadee hopping from branch to branch on a spruce tree and making querulous sounds.

After a few minutes it flew into a hole in a decayed birch stump and proceeded to carry out pieces of the soft pulpy wood to drop them some distance away.

The birch stump was located where the spruce swamp merged with poplars at the foot of a sand ridge. It had broken off about fifteen feet above the ground and the entrance was about ten feet above the ground where the stump was about four or five inches in diameter.

After five or six trips it flew away. The excavation extended for about a foot down. Later in the season the bird completed its nest and laid eggs.

PATTERNS OF JOY

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so many birds in full song even in July; everything gathering joy only to dispense it with prodigal hand as did our pioneers of long ago.

No need for Omar's "jug of wine, the loaf of bread" this golden year for the Prairie is a "Paradise enow".

A Prairie Slouch

By J. H. GRANT

All the long, hot day we travelled in the teeth of a chinook that sent tumble weeds bounding over the searing plain and whipped grass tops and weed seeds into our blistering faces — and at evening arrived at a tiny lake on the edge of the scrubland.

The red sun sank behind a hill and down with it went the wind. Air, cool, soothing and laden with the smell of water crept out from the slough which mirrored dark-green clumps of choke-cherry bush and one patch of crimson sky. A pair of muskrats swam leisurely, leaving in their wake twin "v's" of tiny ripples. A robin sang from a silverberry bush, his inimitable liquid notes mingling with the murmur of the streamlet that fed the pond. From her nest on a cottonwood stump, a mourning dove crooned her plaintive lay, and from somewhere in the range lands beyond, faint and faraway came the lowing of cattle.

As dusk settled, the oxen, full-fed on the lush grasses of the lake shore, lay down by the wagon, drawing deep contented breaths and ruminating peacefully. We lay on the warm sand, the fresh vapor-laden air balm to our wind-chafed lips and nostrils, and the mellow gurgling call of the bittern lulling us to rest.

THE SAPSUCKER

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while Mom came in carrying him. He had fallen off the wall and was lying on the ground. He was so light we figured right away he was half-starved. We got some warm milk, mixed syrup with it and tried to feed the sapsucker with an eyedropper. He wouldn't drink he just spit the milk back. We made the sapsucker as comfortable as we could.

Within about one hour our sapsucker was dead. I guess hunger had made him so tame.