

Nice Weather for Ducks

Mrs. J. HUBBARD, Grenfell, Sask.

In this area we have been blessed these last few years with an overdose of water. Fields have become lakes, roads have submerged, sloughs, dugouts and ditches are full and overflowing. This unusual abundance of water has made many changes in vegetation.

Things like Cat-tails and Water Plantain have moved from big sloughs right into the yard. Last fall instead of the usual common blue Smooth Aster and the little white Many-flowered we had numerous kinds gracing the roadsides with masses of mauve, pink and white flowers — a real show. This spring (or early summer) Slender Fleabane, usually found in small patches, was making the roadsides and pastures white with its nodding heads. In wet fields and pastures huge plants of Sneezeweed towered

over the other growth first with showy tree-like yellow bloom followed by fluffy white seed heads.

Trees are dying in many places from too long flooding, even willows giving up the ghost. The water has been good for new plantations of trees except where they were flooded.

And as the saying goes "It's great weather for ducks". Ducks by the hundreds of thousands, of every kind, shape and description. And all manner of water-fowl — Bitterns, Terns, Sandpipers, Grebes, not to mention one coot to every square-yard of water. The latest thing in this district, Black-crowned Night Herons. At first we just saw a pair along the creek to the south of us, but lately we've seen four more (suspected to be a family party) on our north land.

The Hummingbird

By LILLIAN MONA SMITH.

MacDowall, Sask.

Throat of vivid ruby,
Shimmering feathers green,
Shot with tinge of brownish —
A metallic glossy sheen,
Longish bill and slender
To sip the nectar sweet
When darting here and backing there
On lacy wings so fleet.
Just humming with vibration
Like a motor's ring
That's the only melody
You smallest bird on wing,
Swinging high and swinging low
O'er the flowers' bloom —
Perhaps your dance of courtship
And prospective honeymoon.
Not a worry, always shirking —
Never lend a bill
To wee-wifey with the caring
Of little mouths to fill.
Flitting 'round about and preening
Probably you gloat,
And no doubt you have reason —
Such a shining coat!

Wheatfields

PETER GRANT

Who can forget the glow of wheat
That ripples in the sun,
So heavy, languid, hanging down
As if its work were done.

Rich wheaten gold, with darker bars
And caves of shadow dim,
That rolls for miles and miles of
plain,
To far horizon's rim,

Moist odors of the harvest field,
So heavy after rain;
Far-drifting pollen essence blown
From ripe and ripening grain.

That swaying, whispers soft and
slow,
Of secrets of its own,
Free gifts a kindly earth bestowed,
Warm rains let gently down.

As if it knew that far and near,
Men waited to be fed,
And whispered to a hungry world,
"Behold! Here is your bread."