

# BLUE JAY CHATTER

This past year has been, in many ways, a memorable one for the Saskatchewan Natural History Society. The summer meeting in June in the Moose Mountain Provincial Park gave us some unexpected bird records and, more important, many interesting new friendships. In August our botanists helped entertain a group of international botanists on a grassland tour, and many of our birders attended the meeting of the American Ornithologists' Union in Regina. Now we have just had one of our best annual meetings, thanks to the organizing ability and the hospitality of the Moose Jaw Natural History Society.

One of our members, Dr. C. Stuart Houston, was signally honoured this year by being elected an elective member of the A.O.U. Later, at our annual meeting, our society gave Stuart its Conservation Award. Stuart's finest achievement to date is the 205-page book *The Birds of the Saskatchewan River, Carlton to Cumberland* (Special Publication #2, Saskatchewan Natural History Society, August, 1959) written in collaboration with Maurice Street, who contributed records and prepared the items for Nipawin from his exceptionally complete field notes.

This year the cost of printing the **Blue Jay** alone has exceeded our income from memberships. That means we must either reduce the size and quality of the **Blue Jay** or find more money in some way. After careful consideration it was decided at the annual meeting to raise the membership fee. The regular membership is now two dollars a year, but all school and junior memberships will remain at one dollar. This increase may be a hardship to some people but we hope that no one will have to drop his membership because of the increase in fees. We hope that the increase will give us a little more money and allow us to improve the **Blue Jay**, with special consideration being given to making it of more interest and value to children. We should like to see an increasing number of memberships taken out by or for young people (at the special student rate of \$1.00).

There have been bereavements during the past year and some of these have been noted in the pages of the **Blue Jay**. In memory of the **Blue Jay's** special friend Cliff Shaw, the executive decided to establish an annual memorial prize. Cliff Shaw not only served as the second editor of the **Blue Jay** but he was almost the sole worker for the magazine following the death of Mrs. Priestly. It was Cliff Shaw who kept the **Blue Jay** alive until the Saskatchewan Natural History Society was finally organized to help him out. Cliff not only had many interests in natural history himself but he encouraged young people in those interests. The Cliff Shaw Memorial Prize will be awarded each year to someone who has made a contribution to the **Blue Jay** meriting special recognition. The first award was made to Glen Fox of Kindersley for his careful observations of the Horned Lark. The conscientious way in which Glen went about his study and the way in which he recorded his findings deserve commendation. We think that this is just the sort of contribution to the **Blue Jay** that Ernst Mayr, past president of the A.O.U., and E. Eisenmann, past editor of the **Auk** (with whom we had pleasant and worthwhile discussions during A.O.U. week) feel we should make a special effort to encourage. We congratulate Glen and hope that he will do more and better work each year.

Finally, I wish on this page to thank all those who have sent in articles, letters and suggestions. Although we are not always able to answer all the letters, we do appreciate your sending us your ideas. This is what keeps the society alive! Season's Greetings to you all and may the New Year bring a better society and a better **Blue Jay**.