

Erwin Boeker Field-Checks Whooping Cranes



Saskatchewan Museum of Natural History Photo

Early in October Erwin Boeker, Flyway Biologist for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, was in the province to field-check Whooping Crane reports. He was particularly interested in establishing the whereabouts of the young so that their progress might be followed on their journey south. He left Saskatchewan to be at the Platte River in Nebraska to check the cranes upon arrival there. Then he went to the Aransas game preserve where he was when the **Blue Jay** went to press. In Aransas he will check each bird upon arrival, noting the date of the arrival and whether it is a single bird, pair, or

pair with young. This information he will relate to that gathered earlier in order to determine which birds were lost in flight and where.

Mr. Boeker is in the province twice yearly to field-check the Whooping Cranes. He is stationed with the Denver office of the Fish and Wildlife Service, and does goose and waterfowl counts in addition to his work with the Whooping Crane. Mr. Boeker and J. M. MaDock were the two pilots who flew Fred Bard and Fred Lahrman over the Aransas reserve to see the Whooping Cranes last spring.—S.M.N.H.

Woodcock Sighted in Qu'Appelle Valley

by Sylvia Harrison, Regina

Rather than return directly to Regina after our pleasant outing with the Moose Jaw birders at the Valeport dike, our driver Marguerite Robertson suggested that we round out the afternoon by following the trail which runs along the north side of the valley and eventually joins Highway #6. At one point the Qu'Appelle River winds within a few feet of this road. Here our attention was caught by a muskrat rippling through the otherwise still water. We drew to a stop to watch the mate on the shore, then we noticed a large heavy wader feeding on the edge of the south bank. "Why, it's a Woodcock!" exclaimed

Pearl Guest. The bird seemed unconcerned about being watched as it probed a long post-like beak into the mud, meanwhile displaying a rosy-tinged breast. We ventured out of the car to gain a better view and were rewarded as it took a short flight up the bank to the pile of dead willow in front of the standing scrub. Then, moving with an action which reminded me of a grouse, it crept over these fallen trees and disappeared from view just as nine Greater Yellowlegs, flying in formation, rounded the bend of the river and came to rest on our side of the stream, distracting our attention from the elusive Woodcock.