

BLUE JAY CHATTER

Recently a letter from the president went out to **Blue Jay** readers who have not yet renewed their membership to remind them how important membership is this year. Since the fee for 1960 has been raised to \$2.00 we feel that it is particularly important to explain why the Society needs support. To some of you, the S.N.H.S. is the **Blue Jay**; but the Society has other important functions too, and we hope that the \$2.00 fee will make it possible to finance both the publication of the magazine and some of the Society's other activities. There are still junior members and schools paying \$1.00, so the number of adult members paying \$2.00 must be maintained if we are to have more money for these worthwhile projects.

Through the **Blue Jay** magazine we can exchange notes and ideas and study the wildlife of the prairies and what is happening to it under the pressure of man's activities. The executive however has always felt that the Society should be active in the field of natural history in a number of different ways. We should be spending some of our money and energy on research to seek answers to important conservation problems. We should be expressing ourselves forcefully when we see our wildlife heritage threatened. This winter the Society has tried to bring to the attention of appropriate authorities certain abuses which our members have commented on in the **Blue Jay** or at our meetings. One example of this was the Society's protest against the proposed drainage project at Warner Lake. At our last annual meeting we recommended that the Dept. of Natural Resources purchase the land to maintain it as a natural marsh, and that the government set up a wetlands committee to coordinate the activities of the various departments involved. Our resolution was followed up by a personal representation to the government re: wetlands management. Dr. Houston, Dr. Nero, V. Jackett of the Sask. Fish and Game League, and your editor, met and discussed the wetlands problem with the three ministers Mr. Nollet, Mr. Kuziak and Mr. Sturdy. Following this, we were asked by the Conservation and Development Branch to submit a brief stating our views on the drainage of Warner Lake. Then, on March 23, six members of the S.N.H.S. (Houston from Yorkton, Brownlee from Rose Valley, Yanchinski from Naicam, and Joyce Dew, Mrs. Anne Blakeney and myself from Regina) went to the meeting of the Conservation Area Authority at Kelvington to present our case again. Since the landowner vote approved the drainage, although only by a slight margin, we expect the drainage will proceed; but we feel that voicing our views in this way will in the long run influence thinking on these important conservation questions.

We are happy to announce in this issue a new project that will help further the aims of the Society—a special fund for research and educational purposes (see page 100). This fund began with a little money left over from the A.O.U. committee, and we hope that it can be kept up from year to year by donations.

Certain funds of the Society have been tied up in special publications, but these booklets should pay for themselves if all members help to publicize them. There is one publication, however, that we should print even though it will not be offered for sale. This is a cumulative index of the **Blue Jay** for which most of the work has already been done by Joyce Dew of the Museum staff. If we begin with such an index, each succeeding volume of the magazine can be indexed annually. Publication of the index will probably not be undertaken until it has been discussed at the annual meeting. We should therefore appreciate comments on this project or any other activity that you think we as a Society should undertake.