

men taken October 31, 1945, by R. J. Fyfe at Carlyle (see **Blue Jay** 15:57).

In the **Birds of the Saskatchewan River** (1959) Mr. G. Street records scattered reports for the Nipawin area, including a female that he himself flushed with seven young on July 18, 1947, near Maywood, and a final record of a lone bird seen near Snowden, June 10, 1950, by Mr. and Mrs. Walter Matthews, Billy and Anne Matthews and James McCunn. In conclusion, Street comments that "these grouse are now believed to have disappeared from this area, if not from all Saskatchewan."

Street's comment, based on the dearth of records in the early 1950's, reflected a rather general feeling that the Greater Prairie Chicken had perhaps become extinct in the province. Sight records of recent date, however, have revived our hope that a few birds still exist. One was reported seen near Old Wives' Lake by Roger Tory Peterson and James Fisher on August 25, 1959 (**Blue Jay**, 18:13), and in a letter from John M. Pringle (**Blue Jay**, 19:55) two

birds believed to be Greater Prairie Chicken were reported at Stoughton. The mention of the pair at Stoughton brings a comment from one of the **Blue Jay** readers, Geoffrey Hewson of Langbank, who has not seen the Prairie Chicken in his area since around 1924 when he recalls them booming on the knolls. On the other hand, R. Folker, biologist with the Sask. Department of Natural Resources, reports an observation from David MacDonald of Manor who saw a single Prairie Chicken in the spring of 1954, three birds in 1958 (one or two of which may have been shot by hunters), and a single bird again in the spring of 1959 observed on a Sharp-tailed Grouse dancing ground. Finally, a report comes from Fred Sharp working with Ducks Unlimited in Alberta of three birds that were seen on the fourth day of the upland game season of 1959 approximately four miles north of Sidewood, Saskatchewan. The three Greater Prairie Chicken were with some eight or ten Sharp-tailed Grouse and flew north into the sand hills when Mr. Sharp's companion got out of the car.

## First Cardinal Specimen for Saskatchewan

by Elmer Fox, Regina

On December 29, 1960, a male Cardinal (*Richmondia cardinalis*) was collected at Craven, Saskatchewan, 20 miles northwest of Regina, thus adding another species to the official list of birds known to have occurred in Saskatchewan. The bird was collected by R. W. Nero and myself during a Saskatchewan Museum of Natural History expedition to Craven where the Cardinal had first been reported on November 23 by Mrs. Frank Luckey in whose yard it was regularly feeding. During the past 35 years, the Cardinal has on occasion been reported by competent observers; but until this date no specimen or acceptable photograph had been taken, and the Cardinal thus remained on the hypothetical list.

The earliest known record for western Canada is the observation of a Cardinal in Regina in the summer of 1926 by F. G. Bard. A few other records have been recorded since that time in the **Blue Jay**. A male Cardinal was seen feeding on table

scraps at a feeding station in Esterhazy in January, 1951, by Mrs. Bert Ford of Hazelcliffe (**Blue Jay**, 5:3:2); a single bird was observed on the May Day count, May 26, 1957, by five members of the Saskatoon Natural History Society, led by Frank Roy (**Blue Jay**, 15:102); and Mrs. Ted Scrivens saw a Cardinal at her farm home on July 9, 1957. In addition to these Saskatchewan records the **Blue Jay** has a Manitoba observation—W. F. Rosenbarker of Kelwood first saw a Cardinal in the summer of 1958. This bird was seen occasionally throughout the summer and on the date of writing, December 30, 1958, the bird was being seen every day at the feeding station (**Blue Jay**, 17:17).

The Cardinal is a non-migratory bird, and is resident wherever found. It is generally distributed in the United States, east of the Great Plains and north to southern Ontario along the Canadian border. In later years it seems to have gradually extended its range westward. Taverner

in his **Birds of Canada** (1934) indicated the western range as Manitoba, with one recorded observation.

In studying the range of the Cardinal in western Canada, I am greatly indebted to Angus Shortt of Winnipeg who reviewed the Manitoba records for me in order to give the history and present status of the Cardinal in Manitoba.

According to Mr. Shortt (pers. corres., February 22, 1961), the first recorded observation from Manitoba was in the fall of 1932 when Mrs. S. J. Jones of Middlegate, Winnipeg, observed one in her garden. In October of the same year, a pet Cardinal escaped from its cage in nearby Fort Rouge, and many observers assumed this bird to be the one recorded in Middlegate. The Cardinal was observed in the same Middlegate garden in February, 1933. In 1934, Angus Shortt, who lives at Deer Lodge, St. James, a suburb of Winnipeg, was host to a Cardinal at his feeding station from the 14th to the 17th of December, and saw the bird again on December 22. The next report of the Cardinal was in February, 1937, when B. W. Cartwright in his **Winnipeg Tribune** column "Wild Wings" reported an observation at a feeding station in Gladstone, Manitoba.

The first recorded information on the Cardinal nesting in Manitoba was reported by A. G. Lawrence in his **Winnipeg Free Press** column "Chickadee Notes." The nest was found by Mr. and Mrs. E. J. Humphries of Winnipeg on August 16, 1942. It contained two young and an egg that proved to be infertile. On August 23, the nest was destroyed, and the fate of the young was not learned.

In 1943 a pair of Cardinals again nested in the same area. I quote from Mr. Shortt's notes: "A pair of Cardinals returned to their old haunts along the banks of the Assiniboia River near the Humphries' home. They were first seen on July 1. They made two nesting attempts; both nests were found by Mrs. Humphries, the first was a failure and was found pulled down with one broken egg on the ground below. On July 18, the second nest was located, further down the river from the site of the first, eight feet up in a slender plum

tree draped with bittersweet. Nest placed on twigs in a bower of leaves contained three eggs on July 21, two young on July 28. These were well grown on August 2. On August 5, the nest was empty. Adults were heard in the vicinity until August 8, but no sign of the young."

A. G. Lawrence in "Chickadee Notes" reports that one or more birds wintered in the Winnipeg area from 1941 to 1945. He also reported that Mr. Ed Robinson of Wawanessa, Manitoba, saw one on November 8, 1946.

More recent records of the Cardinal could indicate that the birds are increasing in number in Manitoba. In 1957, a male appeared at the feeding station of Mr. C. R. Calder, St. Vital, in Winnipeg, and was almost a daily visitor throughout the winter. It was last seen in early April. It was seen by a number of Winnipeg ornithologists and was photographed in colour, stills, and movies. In 1959-60, a male Cardinal was a regular visitor at the feeding station of Mrs. C. F. Snarr, Morris, Manitoba. It was last seen on March 19, 1960. Coloured slides of this bird were taken by Mr. B. Stevenson, of Morris. The **Winnipeg Free Press** column, "Chickadee Notes," now written by H. Mossop, reports an observation by Stewart Criddle at Treesbank, Manitoba, in 1960. Mrs. W. Rickets (Mr. Shortt's sister-in-law), reports an adult male at her feeding station on July 5, 1958. From September 27 to 29 of the same year, a bird visited the feeding station. Again in 1960 Mrs. Rickets reported a bird feeding in mid-November. The 1960 Winnipeg Christmas bird count reports two birds, one from Deer Lodge, one from Douglas Park Road. Both of these locations are in St. James so one bird could have been reported twice. At the time Mr. Shortt wrote to me (February 22, 1961), an adult male was reported at a window feeding tray of Mrs. J. F. Blanchard, Selkirk, Manitoba. The bird had been a regular visitor for several weeks.

The increasing frequency of these observations makes us ask whether the Cardinal is gradually extending its western range. Certainly we have had more reports in recent years, but this could result from the increase in the number of bird watchers, and the fact that there are more outlets for reporting their observations. It

will certainly be interesting to see what happens in 1961. If you see a Cardinal make careful notes of your observations and send them to the Editor of the **Blue Jay**. As chairman

of the Prairie Nest Records Scheme, I should appreciate having anyone fortunate enough to locate a nest in Saskatchewan writing or phoning me at 3455 Rae Street, Regina.

## Clark's Nutcracker, Unusual Visitor to Saskatchewan

by Robert V. Folker, Saskatoon

On August 18, 1960, when I was hiking in the "hills" northwest of Ravenscrag, on the ranch of Billy Topham, I made what I considered a rather unusual bird observation. The bird was a Clark's Nutcracker (*Nucifraga columbiana*). This species of the crow family is common in the Rocky Mountains, and I first became acquainted with it while skiing in the mountains north of Boise, Idaho. While I saw it only briefly, the striking pattern of its black and white wings and tail against the uniform gray body colour made it immediately recognizable. To my knowledge, there are only two other records for Saskatchewan, and both are from this immediate vicinity. In 1919 Spencer Pearse observed several on his ranch and collected a specimen on September 19. Six years later Pearse saw another, again in September (Godfrey, W. E. 1950. Birds of the Cypress Hills and Flotten Lake Regions, Sask. Nat'l Mus. Canada, Bull. No. 120).

This bird was seen in a unique bit of eroded benchland, located at the right elevation and with the necessary moisture to grow fair stands of spruce. The main valley is drained by Conglomerate Creek, otherwise known as the Little Frenchman River; this stream joins the Frenchman River at Ravenscrag. Numerous side-drainages exist, most of them well wooded and with small, spring-fed streams flowing through them. The country offers impressive contrasts with semi-arid, sparsely-covered slopes merging with those that are overgrown with trees and shrubs.

Bird-life in this area appears to be as varied and interesting as the topography and the flora. On this particular trip I also noted a family of Rock Wrens flitting about over a pile of windcarved sandstone, daring to approach within thirty feet of me. A Turkey Vulture, catching the updrafts from bare, white hillsides, soared overhead. Mr. Topham reported he

had observed four of these scavengers through the summer, and believed they were nesting somewhere in the area. At the mouth of one large draw, a group of Red-breasted Nuthatches were feeding among the spruce, joined at intervals by a flock of wheeling Pine Siskins. Further up this same draw, I came across a family of curious but shy Ovenbirds. It is quite probable that this is a valid nesting record for this species. Chickadees were observed several times as were White-crowned Sparrows. A solitary Oregon Junco looked me over as I sat watching the Ovenbirds.

One can always look forward to seeing the unexpected in this intriguing valley and certainly this trip was no exception.

### ATTENTION! NEW PETERSON BIRD FIELD GUIDE

Roger Tory Peterson's new revised **Field Guide to the Western Birds** (1961) is now available. The new guide really answers the need of Saskatchewan birders because it extends the range to cover the whole of the province (in fact, as far east as the 100th meridian). Formerly we had to use the western guide to supplement the eastern guide; in the revised western guide, all our species are listed in the one book.

In addition, all illustrations are **new**, and almost all are in colour.

Support the S.N.H.S. by buying your copy of the revised **Field Guide to the Western Birds** from the **Blue Jay Bookshop**, Saskatchewan Natural History Society, Sask. Museum of Natural History, Regina.