

# Red-Bellied Woodpecker at Regina

by Robert W. Nero, Saskatchewan Museum of Natural History



Photo by B. C. Shier

Red-bellied Woodpecker (*Centurus carolinus*) taken at Regina, May 26, 1959.

On May 23, 1959, George F. Ledingham observed a female Red-bellied Woodpecker (*Centurus carolinus*), a species not previously reported for the province, in the grounds at the Legislative Buildings in Regina. The bird was seen again on May 25 by Frank H. Brazier and Dr. Isabelle Coleman. A number of others tried but failed to see it on that day, but in the early morning of May 26 Ledingham found it again among some small trees on the edge of Lake Wascana. He telephoned me at once and with his co-operation the bird was collected, thus providing a permanent and positive record. The specimen has been prepared as a

study skin for the collections of the Saskatchewan Museum of Natural History, where it may be examined. The specimen was an adult female in apparently good health although the rectrices were noticeably abraded. It was moderately fat, had well-developed ova (largest ovum — three mm.), and weighed 80 grams. The gizzard contents included fragmentary parts of numerous insects including coleoptera and diptera (adult and sub-adult forms), several very small feathers, several particles of grit (quartz) and surprisingly, five whole fish vertebrae (about two mm. in size) and several bony fragments. The whole mixture had a decidedly

fishy odor suggesting that the bird had dined on all or part of a minnow. There are a great many dead minnows along the shores of Wasicana Lake at this season.

The Red-bellied Woodpecker is a species of the southeastern United States woodlands, breeding west to Texas and eastern Nebraska and north to southern Minnesota and New York (**A.O.U. Check-list**, 1957). It occurs "very rarely in extreme southern sections" of Ontario (Snyder, L.L., 1951. **Ontario Birds**, p.142), and has been reported in Manitoba: a female seen at Brandon (200 miles east of Regina) on January 1, 1956 (Bird, R. D., 1956. **Blue Jay**, 14:7); a pair at Winnipeg throughout the month of June, 1941; and a male at Sanford in January, 1942 (Cartwright, B. W., 1942. **Can. Field-Nat.**,

56: 45-46). It is known accidentally in Colorado, South Dakota and North Dakota. A specimen was taken in Nelson County, North Dakota in September, 1897 (Wood, N. A., 1923. A preliminary survey of the bird life of North Dakota. Univ. Mich. Mus. Zool., Misc. Pub. No. 10, p. 48). A Red-bellied Woodpecker was seen in South Dakota on May 12, 1958 at Mitchell, (**Audubon Field Notes**, August, 1958, Vol. 12:364); and during the winter (Dec. 1, 1958—March 31, 1959) three were seen at Sioux Falls and four along the Big Sioux River near Brookings, South Dakota (**Audubon Field Notes**, Vol. 13:303). We are indebted to W. Earl Godfrey, Curator of Ornithology, Natural History Branch, National Museum of Canada, for assistance in locating the above records.

## A Report on Spring Migration in the Regina Area, 1959

by Fred W. Lahrman, Saskatchewan Museum of Natural History

Last year members of the Museum staff and of the bird group of the Regina Natural History Society submitted records of the spring migration in the Regina area to the Museum where I kept a list of first arrival dates. Records submitted up to April 30, 1958 were published in the **Blue Jay** (Vol. XVI, 59). A similar co-operative study was made this year. Using the records of many interested field observers in the Regina area, the following list of first arrival dates has been prepared. The list includes records submitted up to June 1, 1959 when Ralph Ostoforoff and I saw two flocks (ca. 12 and ca. 30) of Buff-breasted Sandpipers in a dry field 10 miles east of the city.

### FIRST ARRIVAL DATES, SPRING 1959

Date	Species
April 20	Horned Grebe (1)
April 29	Eared Grebe (2)
May 1	Western Grebe (1)
April 18	Pied-billed Grebe (1)
April 25	Double-crested Cormorant (1)
April 11	Great Blue Heron (2)
May 8	American Bittern (1)
March 31	Whistling Swan (9)
March 22	Canada Goose (2)
March 27	White-fronted Goose (small flock)

Date	Species
March 27	Snow Goose (1)
April 11	Blue Goose
March 21	Mallard
April 3	Gadwall (3)
March 22	Pintail (20 plus)
April 1	Green-winged Teal (2)
April 18	Blue-winged Teal (1)
March 21	American Widgeon (2)
March 22	Shoveler (1)
April 2	Redhead (12)
April 1	Ring-necked Duck (3)
April 6	Canvasback (10 plus)
April 6	Lesser Scaup (several)
March 24	Common Goldeneye
April 6	Bufflehead (2)
April 26	Ruddy Duck (2)
March 22	Common Merganser (3)
April 6	Red-breasted Merganser
April 29	Sharp-shinned Hawk (1)
March 21	Red-tailed Hawk (2)
May 3	Broad-winged Hawk (1)
April 25	Swainson's Hawk (2)
March 21	Rough-legged Hawk (1)
March 11	Bald Eagle (1)
March 22	Pigeon Hawk (1)
April 9	Sparrow Hawk (1)
April 9	Sandhill Crane (flock)
April 16	American Coot (2)
April 27	Semipalmated Plover (4)
May 19	Piping Plover (1)
March 26	Killdeer
May 5	American Golden Plover (flock)
May 18	Black-bellied Plover (2)