

Some Stragglers at the Moose Mountain Field Meet

by **Rose McLaughlin**, Indian Head, Sask.

Birders at the Kenosee gathering in June were surprised to spot a Scarlet Tanager and a nesting White-breasted Nuthatch, both of which had strayed far beyond their customary boundaries. Some other notable stragglers from distant habitats whom we welcomed to our field meet were Francis Cook of Wolfville, N.S., Dr. Doane of Halifax, Dr. Gunn of Toronto, and Tim Dixon of Bournemouth, England.

Francis Cook is spending the summer in southern Saskatchewan, collecting amphibians and reptiles for the National Museum, and arranged his work in the Moose Mountain area to coincide with the field meet. Studying for a degree in biology, Mr. Cook plans to base his thesis on this field of research. Small fry at the meet were fascinated by his netting operations and became his eager assistants for the day.

Dr. Doane of Dalhousie University was attending sessions of the conference of Learned Societies, held this year at Saskatoon in connection with the Saskatchewan University's golden jubilee activities. An enthusiastic birder, he inevitably fell in with Frank Roy who brought him to Kenosee.

Dr. Gunn of Toronto, field secretary for the Federation of Ontario Naturalists, has been in the west this spring doing bird recordings at the Delta Waterfowl Station, Delta, Manitoba, and he made a point of being at Kenosee for the SNHS field meet.

Tim Dixon, a young English lawyer, was on his way home from Australia. Being a member of the birding fraternity, a letter of introduction to Dr. Ledingham brought him to the field meet. Tim has a wager with his fiancée that he will have identified 600 birds by the time he gets home again, and Kenosee added a welcome number to his list which is now climbing through the 400's.

Also straying well to the west of their customary range were a number of Manitoba people, including Mr. and Mrs. A. G. Lawrence, Mr.

and Mrs. P. Stokes, and Mr. W. Adams of Winnipeg, and David Hatch of Oak Lane. Mr. Lawrence is well-known because of his "Chickadee Notes" column which ran in the Winnipeg Free Press for 33 years. At Kenosee Hall on Saturday night he had on display a collection of bird photos, of which one set was taken many years ago in England.

Mr. Stokes is president of the Winnipeg Natural History Society, which he claims is the only one on the continent to hold weekly meetings. Later this summer the Stokes plan to attend the Indian "Mosaics" in Manitoba's White Shell forest reserve; this is a colourful spectacle of native dances which they have witnessed on several occasions and photographed for the newspapers.

Mr. Adams spends his winters at the coast where in recent years he has made a number of winter bird counts for the government of B.C.

Fledgling David Hatch is still going to school, but despite his youth he had the opportunity last summer of spending a week at Brooks, Alberta, with Bill Carrick who is known for his nature photography, especially his work in the outstanding wildlife film "Life in a Marsh."

A notable "first" at Kenosee, though very much on her native range was Mrs. Marion Nixon of Wauchope whose nature column ran for 19 years in the Saskatchewan Farmer.

Also in this class were the guests of the evening session, snowy-haired Peter McLellan of Arcola who has spent his life in the Moose Mountain country, and Judge Percy Gordon, a native of Qu'Appelle who lost his father at an early age and suffered a further blow of fate when in his teens he lost his right arm in a hunting accident.

The pictorial record of a canoe trip which these two oldtimers took through the Moose Mountains in 1947 made a perfect conclusion to a day spent in hiking and driving through the beautiful parkland area of our province.