

MAMMAL NOTES

MORE WINTER BAT RECORDS

by Spencer Sealy, Battleford

In the June, 1959, issue of the *Blue Jay* there is an article by Dr. R. W. Nero which points out the scarcity of winter records of bats in the province. Recently, I obtained the following records of Big Brown Bats (*Eptesicus fuscus*) in the basement and classrooms of a school-house in Battleford:

November 6, 1959—1 female, alive.

November 16, 1959—2 females, alive.

November 19, 1959—1 male, dead.

January 4, 1960—1 female, dead.

February 18, 1960—1 male, dead.

February 22, 1960—1 female, alive.

March 3, 1960—1 female, alive.

The live bats were awake when found and were kept alive in captivity for three to nine days. Following correspondence with Dr. Nero I went up into the attic of the school on March 12 and found seven live Big Brown Bats which were hibernating, six dead ones and one skeleton. The dead ones were frozen and thus were well preserved. The temperature of the attic was 0° Fahrenheit. I looked carefully for food remains but was unsuccessful; four preserved stomachs taken from live bats and sent to Dr. Nero were found to be empty. There were several piles of droppings in the attic which were from one to six inches deep.

There were still several live bats in the attic when I was last up and from my observations I know that most of them lived right through the winter. I saw one bat flying around the outside of the school at 7:00 p.m. on April 4. The same evening at about 6:30 I observed a bat flying around the bridge over the Battle River about one and one-half miles south of Battleford. It occurred to me that this could be a spring arrival date for this species. I also saw another bat flying around the school on April 11.

ED. NOTE.—Spencer Sealy is one of our younger naturalists who has already contributed a large number of nest records and bird notes. This recent work in mammalogy indicates his interest in another phase of natural history. In addition to the above information Spencer submitted some well-prepared bat skins for the Museum's collections. His data provides positive evidence of indoor hibernation of the Big Brown Bat and

suggests a new line of enquiry for mammalogists. Nursery colonies of bats of this species (as well as the Little Brown Bat *Myotis lucifugus*) are often found in attics in summer. Mating is supposed to take place in the fall, viable sperm being retained within the female over winter and then released to provide fertilization in the spring; hence females are already fertilized upon arrival or upon emergence. Location of a large wintering colony would provide a valuable opportunity to study this physiological aspect and many behavioral problems.—R.W.N.

MOUNTAIN LION AT TORCH RIVER, SASK.

by C. Stuart Francis, Torch River

On July 1, 1960, my two sons, Stuart J. Francis and Stanley Francis, my half-brother, Ben Maddaford of Saltcoats and I had the good fortune to observe a good-sized Cougar or Mountain Lion (*Felis concolor*) for about 10 minutes. We saw this animal on NW¼ 7-54-15 W2 in the northwest part of the Torch River district. There have been several reports of Cougars seen in this area for several years, and they have been definitely established as inhabiting the Pasquia Hills area, east of Nipawin. Harvey Beck (1958. *Guide to Saskatchewan Mammals*) refers to the specimen in the Saskatchewan Museum of Natural History taken at Connell Creek in the Carrot River district.

WOLVES FEEDING ON WATER BUGS AND MINNOWS

by C. Stuart Francis, Torch River

An interesting observation regarding Timber Wolves (*Canis lupus*) was made last winter by a neighbour of mine, Walter Kratz, who traps up in the Narrow Hills about 35 miles northwest of Torch River. Walter Kratz has a cabin on a lake named Otter Lake at the foot of the hills, and one day he noticed six Timber Wolves some distance out on the lake in front of his cabin. The wolves had been there for three days when he decided to go out and find out what was keeping them there. The wolves left at his approach and he found a water hole in the ice where the water was alive with giant bugs and minnows, so numerous they were almost crowding each other out of the water. The wolves had been scooping them out of the water and feeding on them, and the ice around the hole was covered with dead bugs and minnows.



Photo by James G. Beatty

Red Squirrel, May 10, 1960, Gunnar Mines, Uranium City.

Photo by Dr. James Beatty, medical doctor at Uranium City who enjoys photography, likes to paint, and is an avid fisherman. Dr. Beatty practises medicine at Gunnar Mines but flies to Uranium City for three days each week. He is married and has four young children. Their home at Gunnar overlooks St. Mary's Channel on the southernmost tip of the peninsula which extends out from the north shore of Lake Athabasca—a wonderful setting for wildlife studies.