

FIFTH ANNUAL MAY DAY COUNT SASKATOON NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY, MAY 22, 1961

Ordinarily May 22 should be an ideal day to record warbler and shore-bird migrants. This year, all but a few stragglers had moved north by that date. Since few ponds contained water, most of the duck, shorebird and yellow-headed blackbird records are from the Hudson Bay Slough and Moon Lake.

Twenty-one observers in four parties, covering the Christmas Count area, recorded 100 species, one more than last year, 12 fewer than the record of 112 established in 1959.

The list of birds seen follows. Last year's totals are given in brackets.

Horned Grebe, 20 (21), Eared Grebe, 3 (6); Western Grebe, 5 (0); Great Blue Heron, 1 (0); Mallard, 165 (92); Gadwall, 11 (5); Pintail, 23 (23); Green-winged Teal, 17 (4); Blue-winged Teal, 78 (10); American Widgeon, 32 (19); Shoveler, 38 (25); Redhead, 16 (2); Canvasback, 30 (17); Lesser Scaup, 52 (50); Common Goldeneye, 5 (0); Bufflehead, 3 (0); Cooper's Hawk, 1 (0); Red-tailed Hawk, 2 (1); Swainson's Hawk, 4 (0); Marsh Hawk, 7 (5); Sparrow Hawk, 4 (2); Sharp-tailed Grouse, 25 (2); King-necked Pheasant, 9 (6); Gray Partridge, 6 (0); Sora, 1 (2); Coot, 114 (55); Semipalmated Plover, 2 (0); Killdeer, 28 (12); Golden Plover, 1 (0); Spotted Sandpiper, 6 (1); Willet, 19 (9); Lesser Yellowlegs, 2 (5); Baird's Sandpiper, 1 (60); Silt Sandpiper, 10 (0); Semipalmated Sandpiper, 50 (0); Marbled Godwit, 16 (1); Sanderling, 2 (1); Wilson's Phalarope, 15 (18); California Gull, 4 (50); Ring-billed Gull, 66 (110); Franklin's Gull, 11, (76); Black Tern, 82 (119); Rock Dove, 65 (24); Mourning Dove, 69 (29); Yellow-shafted Flicker, 15 (3); Hairy Woodpecker, 1 (1); Downy Woodpecker, 2 (0); Eastern Kingbird, 11 (14); Western Kingbird, 4 (0); Eastern Phoebe, 3 (2); Say's Phoebe, 1 (0); Least Flycatcher, 70 (26); Western Wood Pewee, 1 (0); Horned Lark, 15 (14); Tree Swallow, 22 (16); Bank Swallow, 42 (6); Barn Swallow, 36 (41); Cliff Swallow, 4 (0); Blue Jay, 1 (2); Magpie, 37 (34); Crow, 79 (71); Black-capped Chickadee, 4 (10); House Wren, 20 (14); Catbird, 6 (7); Brown Thrasher, 28 (26); Robin, 44 (33); Swainson's Thrush, 1 (18); Veery, 3 (1); Mountain Bluebird, 33 (7); Ruby-crowned Kinglet, 3 (1); Sprague's Pipit, 9 (4); Loggerheaded Shrike, 13 (3); Starling, 53 (29); Philadelphia Vireo, (?) 1 (0); Warbling Vireo, 9 (4); Black and White Warbler, 1 (0); Tennessee Warbler, 4 (2); Yellow Warbler, 129 (49); Myrtle Warbler, 4 (0); American Redstart, 1 (3); House Sparrow, 480 (162); Western Meadowlark, 51 (49); Yellow-headed Blackbird, 75 (39); Red-winged Blackbird, 227 (111); Baltimore Oriole, 28 (18); Brewer's Blackbird, 134 (79); Common Grackle, 28 (24); Cowbird, 37 (28); Rose-breasted Grosbeak, 3 (0); Pine Siskin, 37 (0); American Goldfinch, 1 (12); Rufous-sided Towhee, 8 (9); Lark Bunting, 1 (0); Savannah Sparrow, 34 (26); Vesper Sparrow, 131 (59); Chipping Sparrow, 24 (24); Clay-colored Sparrow, 360 (67); White-throated Sparrow, 1 (3); Lincoln's Sparrow, 1 (0); Song Sparrow, 74 (73). Compiler: FRANK ROY, Saskatoon.

FIRST ANNUAL SPRING BIRD CENSUS REGINA NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY, MAY 13, 1961

As a continuing feature of the R.N.H.S.'s summer field trip program the Annual Spring Bird Census, to take place on the Saturday nearest May 15th, was inaugurated on May 13, 1961. We kept to the area of the Christmas Bird Count, deploying the teams in the main in accordance with the country water. We chose the more difficult census rather than the simpler count of species as being of more value as time goes on; also, it will tie in well with Saskatoon's now well established census taken about ten days later. The six teams turned up 131 species (an estimated 11,478 birds) including such notables as Upland Plover (1), Bonaparte's Gull (1), and a flood of migrant sparrows unprecedented in numbers.

SPECIES LIST: Horned Grebe (108); Eared Grebe (26); Western Grebe (18); Pied-billed Grebe (22); White Pelican (8); Great Blue Heron (7); Black-crowned Night Heron (8); American Bittern (2); Mute Swan (4);

Whistling Swan (12); Canada Goose (126); Mallard (372); Gadwall (56); Pintail (138); Green-winged Teal (141); Blue-winged Teal (457); American Widgeon (175); Shoveler (216); Redhead (63); Ring-necked Duck (2); Canvasback (35); Lesser Scaup (1110); Common Goldeneye (1); Bufflehead (16); Ruddy Duck (107); Common Merganser (15); Red-tailed Hawk (3); Swainson's Hawk (12); Rough-legged Hawk (3); Marsh Hawk (22); Ruffed Grouse (1); Ring-necked Pheasant (5); Gray Partridge (8); Sora (10); American Coot (1630); Semipalmated Plover (16); Killdeer (49); Golden Plover (49); Black-bellied Plover (2); Common Snipe (6); Upland Plover (1); Spotted Sandpiper (14); Solitary Sandpiper (12); Willet (60); Greater Yellowlegs (19); Lesser Yellowlegs (42); Pectoral Sandpiper (270); Baird's Sandpiper (77); Least Sandpiper (106); Long-billed Dowitcher (40); Semipalmated Sandpiper (67); Marbled Godwit (24); American Avocet (42); Wilson's Phalarope (67); Ring-billed Gull (236); Franklin's Gull (59); Bonaparte's Gull (1); Common Tern (28); Black Tern (20); Rock Dove (105); Mourning Dove (55); Great Horned Owl (2); Burrowing Owl (4); Short-eared Owl (7); Belted Kingfisher (3); Yellow-shafted Flicker (8); Eastern Kingbird (1); Western Kingbird (9); Say's Phoebe (2); Least Flycatcher (48); Horned Lark (120); Tree Swallow (165); Bank Swallow (12);

Barn Swallow (39); Purple Martin (13); Black-billed Magpie (21); Black-capped Chickadee (6); Common Crow (91); House Wren (2); Brown Thrasher (1); Robin (43); Swainson's Thrush (179); Grey-cheeked Thrush (23); Veery (1); Ruby-crowned Kinglet (1); Sprague's Pipit (2); Loggerhead Shrike (7); Starling (57); Philadelphia Vireo (3); Black-and-White Warbler (2); Orange-crowned Warbler (38); Yellow Warbler (51); Magnolia Warbler (1); Myrtle Warbler (135); Blackpoll Warbler (9); Palm Warbler (9); Ovenbird (1); Northern Waterthrush (33); Yellowthroat (6); House Sparrow (520); Western Meadowlark (128); Yellow-headed Blackbird (222); Redwinged Blackbird (497); Baltimore Oriole (6); Rusty Blackbird (13);

Brewer's Blackbird (119); Common Grackle (85); Brown-headed Cowbird (48); Rose-breasted Grosbeak (1); Purple Finch (8); Pine Siskin (1); Rufous-sided Towhee (10); Savannah Sparrow (89); Baird's Sparrow (11); Vesper Sparrow (36); Lark Sparrow (2); Slate-colored Junco (5); Oregon Junco (1); Tree Sparrow (6); Chipping Sparrow (43); Clay-colored Sparrow (188); Harris's Sparrow (217); White-crowned Sparrow (265); White-throated Sparrow (454); Fox Sparrow (6); Lincoln's Sparrow (328); Song Sparrow (45); McCown's Longspur (5); Lapland Longspur (475); Chestnut-collared Longspur (63); Snow Bunting (20). Compiler: FRANK BRAZIER, Regina.

A MANITOBA RECORD OF THE CATTLE EGRET

by David Plews, Brandon

On May 27 of this year (1961), Mr. Lane and I were down at the Big Marsh that extends from Alexander to Griswold, known by some as "Ashbury Marsh." Our trip was mainly to search for nests of American Avocets.

As we were motoring by an arm of the marsh, we spotted a fairly tall white bird, standing in the high grass beside the water. It was a startling sight, because as you know, we have no local birds with this appearance.

We both gave the stranger a long scrutiny through our glasses, then dug into our Peterson's for guidance. Nothing seemed to quite fit this particular bird, as it was evidently too short to be an American Egret and too slim to be a Snowy Egret. We gave some thought to it being an albino Black-crowned Heron, as it had about the same silhouette. However, this bird was not all white, having light brown patches on the pate, lower neck and lower back.

A few days later Mr. and Mrs. Cleveland Grant arrived to spend the summer in bird photography. Mr. Grant is well-known in that field, and is also a lecturer for the Audubon Society. We described the strange bird to both the Grants and also to Dr. Bill Gunn, the bird-song recorder for Toronto. Fortunately, the Grants saw the bird soon after, and at once said it was a Cattle Egret. Dr. Gunn had a copy of Peterson's **Birds of Texas** and sure enough, there was a coloured picture of the very bird!

About a week later we were back at the marsh again with a group of junior birders and some of the group saw the white bird again. Now, it is no longer at that spot in the marsh, but has probably moved to a more remote section where there may not be so many inquisitive bird-watchers!

Ed. Note—This is believed to be only the second Canadian record.

PARTIAL ALBINO SANDHILL CRANE

by Richard S. Miller, University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon

On Thursday, April 27, I visited Last Mountain Lake with Doug Stephen. At the Leland Greenfield farm 4 miles west and 2 miles south of Hatfield I observed a partial albino Sandhill Crane. This bird was feeding with a flock of about 200 other Sandhills. From its size it appeared to be a first year bird.

The head, neck, breast and anterior portion of the back of the bird were pure white. This made the red on the head very noticeable. The posterior

portion of the back and wings were the typical gray of a Sandhill Crane, although there was some mottling in the areas where the white blended into the gray.

I watched the bird from about 200 to 250 or 300 yards for about 20 minutes with 8-power binoculars. There was no question of the coloration as the bird was seen at every angle in good light, and it was unquestionably a Sandhill by its size and appearance.