



Museum Sandhill Cranes Habitat Group

by Dave Green, Regina

More wild and intractable than their environment, the Sandhill Cranes of North America lend to the spring and autumn skies above Saskatchewan a flavor of timelessness. To see Sandhill Cranes passing overhead in spring and fall migration and to hear their purling cry is to be a party to an unforgettable encounter, and at their resting place on Last Mountain Lake the birds present a

spectacle that people have travelled thousands of miles to see.

Fortunately for the cranes, the flocking of the Sandhills at "The Fingers" on the northern end of the lake was not lost upon the early settlers in the area, who recognized it as an outstanding natural phenomenon. The area was set aside as a sanctuary in 1887.



Photo and preparation of group by F. W. Lahrman.

Because the cranes are so much a part of the Saskatchewan scene, and because the sight of them and sound of their calling leaves the beholder with an ineffable sense of wonder, whether he is "for 'em" or "agin 'em," the Saskatchewan Museum of Natural History, Department of Natural Resources, now beginning a long-range program to enlarge and standardize exhibits in the habitat gallery, has prepared the above Sandhill Cranes exhibit. The new display is roughly one foot higher, deeper and wider than the old exhibits.

Museum artist-preparator F. W. Lahrman, whose name is well known to readers of the **Blue Jay**, has been in charge of the preparations of this new exhibit. It depicts a part of the sanctuary on Last Mountain Lake, looking southward across "The Fingers." It includes a number of Sandhills returning to the lake from the autumn fields in which they have been feeding. Before the case was completed the public was able to see a scale model and on week-ends to see the week by week development of the exhibit.