

Nature's Osteopathy

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Burrowing Owl.



Sketch by Lawrence Ostoforoff

On September 28, 1958 a Burrowing Owl (*Speotyto cunicularia*) casualty was picked up on highway No. 1 near Pilot Butte by W. Nielsen, staff member of the Saskatchewan Museum. Upon examining the specimen we found that its right leg had been broken but had healed into a nearly natural position (see sketch). Note that although the bone is not properly aligned, it healed in such a way that the toes still face forward.

Similar cases of natural healing have been observed by F. W. Lahrman of the Saskatchewan Museum. A Western Willet (*Catoptrophorus semipalmatus*) was observed to have one wing broken and dangling. Approximately one month later the bird was seen to fly perfectly.

In his field notes, Mr. Lahrman writes about a Canada Goose (*Bran-ta canadensis*) at the Wascana Sanctuary. August 14, 1954, "Left tibia broken — was able to swim and move about on land by hopping on one foot." August 29, "Bearing some weight on left foot but limps while walking." September 13 (32 days after fracture), "Completely healed and in natural position."

While doing taxidermy at the Museum I have noticed in several cases that birds' bones had been broken and amazingly healed in natural position while the bird undoubtedly was trying to use the limb. From this information one can conclude that if a bone is broken (tendons and veins still being intact) the pieces will often knit together quickly and in a natural position.

SASKATCHEWAN NESTING RECORDS OF THE COOPER'S HAWK

Compiled by Dr. Stuart Houston, Yorkton.

The Cooper's Hawk was listed as "hypothetical" in Mitchell's "Birds of Saskatchewan" in 1924. The fifth edition of the A.O.U. Check-list in 1957 failed to include Saskatchewan

in the breeding range of this species. Both of these publications overlooked the records of Thomas Blakiston who found a nest with two eggs and collected the adult female near

Carlton on May 21, 1858—one hundred years ago.

In actual fact, the Cooper's Hawk is a regular nester, at least in eastern Saskatchewan, where there are medium to large clumps of poplar. Indeed it is one of the hawks most commonly banded in Saskatchewan! By contacting good observers in likely areas, I was able to compile the following list of representative Saskatchewan breeding records:

Armley (4 miles east of): May 24, 1935. Nest, 3 eggs, 28 ft. up in white poplar. — M. G. Street.

Armley (6 miles SSE of): June 28, 1936. 3 young out of nest, thought to have come from nest over 20 ft. up in white poplar. — M. G. Street.

Sheho (3½ mi. NW of): July 26, 1948. Nest, 4 young, 20 ft. up in white poplar. 3 banded; one flew. — M. G. Street.

Sheho (3¾ mi. NW of): July 26, 1948. Nest 16 ft. up in white poplar. 1 young able to fly; amount of down suggested 2 or 3 nestmates. — M. G. Street.

Spirit Lake (NW ¼ of sec. 11, twp. 29, range 5 w. 2nd mer). May 14, 1951: nest 20 ft. up in white poplar. 4 young on July 4. — W. Anaka.

Spirit Lake (SW 13-29-5w2). May 12, 1955: nest 20 ft. up in balsam poplar. 4 downy young banded on July 6. — W. Anaka.

Spirit Lake (NW 11-29-5w2). May 30, 1956: nest 20 ft. up in balsam poplar. 4 young banded on July 15. — W. Anaka.

Spirit Lake (SW 13-29-5w2). May 26, 1957: nest 25 ft. up in balsam poplar. 1 young banded on July 25; one or two flew away. — W. Anaka.

Spirit Lake (SW 13-29-5w2). June 1, 1958: nest, 5 eggs, 22 ft. up in balsam poplar. 3 downy young on June 30; 2 full-grown young out of nest banded July 23. — W. Anaka.

Yorkton (Leech Lake, 10 miles south): Nest, 3 eggs, found May 28, 1945 by J. H. Wilson. Visited June 8, 1945 by W. H. Carrick.

Yorkton ("muskeg" at west city limits): June 10, 1947. Nest, 3 eggs, 22 ft. up in balsam poplar. 2 young banded July 11. — S. Houston.

Yorkton (York Lake, 4 miles SW): May 31, 1953. Nest 20 ft. up in balsam poplar. 2 young banded July 12. — S. Houston.

Saltcoats (½ mile NE). 1956. Nest, 3 eggs, in white poplar.—Bill Horseman.

Bredenbury (9 miles SW). 1956. Nest 4 eggs, in white poplar. — Bill Horseman.

Saltcoats (1 mile N.): May 23, 1958. Nest, 3 eggs, 20 ft. up in white poplar, 1 of the 2 young banded on July 19. — Bill Horseman.

Saltcoats (¾ mile E): May 28, 1958. Nest, 1 egg, 20 ft. up in white poplar. Egg then disappeared, and she re-nested with 3 eggs on July 18. Only one young was raised; it was banded Aug. 12 and was still in nest on August 31.—Bill Horseman.

Saltcoats (3 miles NW): June 17, 1958: nest, 2 young, 25 ft. up in white poplar. Banded June 22 (by Houston). — Bill Horseman.

Round Lake, Qu'Appelle Valley (½ mile west): May 27, 1945. Nest, 4 eggs, 15 or 20 ft. up in poplar at northern edge of marsh. — E. M. Callin.

Qu'Appelle (Pasqua) Lake (few miles west): May 18, 1954. Nest ready for eggs, 20 ft. up in poplar near bottom of north slope of valley. One adult present and quite agitated. — E. M. Callin.

Fort Qu'Appelle (Echo Creek, west town limits): June 12, 1955. Nest 1 egg and 1 newly-hatched young 20 ft. up in balsam poplar (climbed by Houston). — E. M. Callin.

Qu'Appelle Lake, Pasqua Indian Reserve, N.W. of Muscow: 1925. 3 young, 2 of which were banded July 16, 1925. — R. H. Carter.

Boggy Creek, Lumsden (11-19-21w2): Nest, 4 or 5 young, about 1944. — Doug Gilroy.

Boggy Creek, Lumsden (12-19-21w2): Nest, 2 downy white young 20 ft. up in maple, July 5, 1955. Next day young had disappeared. — Doug Gilroy.

Boggy Creek, Lumsden (26-19-21w2): Nest, 4 or 5 young, June 30, 1956: 3 young out of nest banded by Houston on July 15. — Doug Gilroy.

I have found the Cooper's Hawk to be a rather secretive and wary bird—it is not likely to be found during "roadside birding" from an automobile. Indeed, I have not identified it during the breeding season **except** at its nest. Like the Long-eared Owl if you see the bird at all in June or July, you will almost always find it nest. The Cooper's Hawk is undoubtedly much commoner in Saskatchewan than has been generally realized.