

BLUE JAY CHATTER

A great many letters have been received in answer to the Editor's request in the last **Blue Jay** chatter that members take a greater interest in the activities of the Society. Not all of these letters can be acknowledged in the letter section, but I would like to thank all those kind people who took time from their busy lives to write words of encouragement and appreciation. Suggestions regarding the **Blue Jay** or the operation of the Society will be passed on to the executive for consideration.

The **Blue Jay** continues to receive the highest praise, and each year in his report the Editor explains that this is largely due to the many members who offer worthwhile and thought-provoking articles for printing in our pages. In addition to those who help by their contributions, every member who belongs to the Society and pays his \$2.00 dues helps to make a good magazine. Examination of our financial statement shows that nearly all of our money comes from memberships and that this money is all spent on printing the **Blue Jay**.

This year the good work which the **Blue Jay** is doing in conservation education was recognized when one of the awards of the American Association for Conservation Education was presented to the Editor by Mr. Doug Wade, Director of Conservation Information Service, Saskatchewan Department of Natural Resources. On behalf of the many people who help to make the **Blue Jay** possible, and on behalf of the Society which was formed 14 years ago to publish the **Blue Jay** and to encourage more people to take a greater interest in natural history, I am very happy to accept this award.

A second award was given by the Association to one of our faithful and well-known members, Doug Gilroy. This award recognizes the excellent work which he is doing by writing a weekly wildlife column in the pages of the **Western Producer**. Since Doug Gilroy is so well known to readers of the **Blue Jay** I need not explain how justly deserved this award of merit is.

The Society's most significant achievement of the past year was the publication of the **Blue Jay Index** (index to volumes 1-18, 1942-1960). We are very grateful to Mrs. Joyce Deutscher, editor of our Junior Naturalist section, for the countless hours which she spent combing back copies of the **Blue Jay** and arranging the items in index form. We are also deeply indebted to the Saskatchewan Museum of Natural History for the many ways in which they encouraged the project.

When I read the galley proof for the **Index**, before the 36-page (double-column) booklet was finally printed, I realized as never before what a wonderful contribution the **Blue Jay** is making. Each year many valuable items are recorded. The amateur naturalists of Saskatchewan have produced a journal which is accepted by people of professional competence, including scientists from the staffs of universities and government wildlife departments, who both contribute to it and use its records.

The **Index** is so much more than an index; it is a kind of history of the Society and of the things that naturalists in Saskatchewan have learned to appreciate in the past 18 years. It is a fascinating record of things that 20 years ago we did not know existed in the province—new animals, birds and plants that every year someone observes and reports in the **Blue Jay**. It is certainly worth the \$2.00, even if you do not have all the back copies of the **Blue Jay**. Since we have printed a limited number, you should send for your copy now to the **Blue Jay**, Box 1121, Regina.

MERRY CHRISTMAS

George F. Ledingham.