

CO-OPERATIVE BIRD MIGRATION STUDY

The **Blue Jay** is again participating in the U.S.A. Fish and Wildlife Service Co-operative Migration Study. Members who have kept spring migration records are reminded that information is submitted on first seen dates and peak migration for a specified list of species. For the list of species (which is the same for 1958 as for 1957) see **Blue Jay**, June 1957, p. 65. Send records, if possible by June 10, to Dr. Stuart Houston, Box 278, Yorkton.

Further Information on Certain Unusual Saskatchewan Bird Records

In the process of revising the Field Check-list of Saskatchewan Birds, some additional information was obtained pertaining to certain old records. The committee revising the field check-list (C. S. Houston, F. G. Bard, R. W. Nero) has made this information available for publication.

YELLOW-BILLED LOON

The Yellow-billed Loon, *Gavia adamsi*, was listed by Mitchell (Catalogue of the birds of Saskatchewan, 1924) as hypothetical, on the basis of Preble (Athabaska-Mackenzie Report, North America Fauna No. 27, 1908) who said: "He (MacFarlane) informs me that a fine example was killed by an Indian at Fond du Lac, Athabaska Lake, in the spring of 1885, and sent to J. J. Dalgleish."

MacFarlane, in *Through the Mackenzie Basin* (1908) worded the report this way: "In the spring of 1885, a hunter belonging to Fond du Lac, Lake Athabaska, shot a fine specimen of the beautiful loon, which was forwarded to Mr. John J. Dalgleish of Edinburgh, Scotland."

Dr. A. S. Clarke of the Royal Scottish Museum, Edinburgh, in a letter of March 4, 1958, to Dr. C. S. Houston states in part: "We received . . .

from Dalgleish in 1886. We have it registered (1886/47) as having come from Ft. Chipewyan but this was no doubt, the headquarters of MacFarlane rather than the locality at which the bird was shot. Unfortunately it was destroyed in 1901 owing to its rotting condition. I do not think there can be any doubt about the original identification. Not only was the specimen accompanied by one of the species with which it would be most likely confused, but it would be compared, on arrival, with another specimen of *Colymbus adamsii* which we still have and which is certainly correctly identified, which came in 1861 also from MacFarlane, when he was up around Ft. Anderson."

LEAST BITTERN

The Least Bittern, *Ixobrychus exilis*, was also listed by Mitchell (1924) as hypothetical, on the basis of a sight record at Crane Lake, June 1894, by Spreadborough. There is, however, a specimen record for Saskatchewan. On July 25, 1927, F. G. Bard examined a Least Bittern specimen in the collection of the Biological Department at the University of Saskatchewan. This specimen had been taken some years before Moon Lake (southwest of Saskatoon and east of Vanscoy) by Mr. H. . .

Gordon, the curator of the collection. Mr. Gordon, in conversation with Mr. Bard, was unable to give the exact date of the specimen record.

HARLEQUIN DUCK

The Harlequin Duck, *Histrionicus histrionicus*, is not listed by Mitchell (1924). However, there is a mounted male Harlequin Duck in the Swift Current Collegiate Museum which was taken in Saskatchewan. F. Bradshaw, Annual Report, Provincial Museum, 1935, states: "Several pairs of the Harlequin Duck were reported at the Saskatchewan Landing Ferry. A beautiful male specimen was taken on May 31 (1934) and mounted by Mr. Warren, a taxidermist at Swift Current." In a letter to R. W. Nero, George Warren gives the circumstances of its being taken. "This duck was shot at Saskatchewan Landing where the new bridge is north of Swift Current, by one of Dick Hamilton's boys. Dick used to run the ferry."

DIPPER

The Dipper, *Cinclus mexicanus*, does not appear in Mitchell's list (1924). There is a reference to it, however, in Laurence B. Potter's Bird Notes from Southwestern Saskatchewan (Can. Field-Nat. 57: 69-72. April-May, 1943), where the Dipper is listed with these observations: "A dipper in Saskatchewan sounds improbable, but there are on the southern slopes of the Cypress Hills sev-

eral streams, swift-flowing and with gravelly beds that are well suited to this particular bird. No specimens have been secured, but there have been several reports of the Dipper, nearly always in the coldest winter weather, by persons familiar with the bird in the mountains. There is no doubt that the Dipper will be taken eventually in this part of Canada." Further information on these reports of the Dipper comes from the Saskatchewan Museum of Natural History. Their records show two reported seen at Ravenscrag, May 22, 1917, by Spencer Pearse (whom F. G. Bard knows to have been a careful observer, cautious in making statements).

In correspondence with F. G. Bard (Feb. 3, 1936), L. B. Potter made the following reference: "Spencer Pearse and Neil Pratt, who both are familiar with the Dipper in B.C., have seen the bird in the coulee behind Pearse's house." In the same letter, Potter told of two other men who formerly lived in the coulee but did not know birds as Pearse did, describing the Dipper as being seen by them.

What appears to be an additional sight record was reported by L. B. Potter to the Museum, and appears in the Museum records as follows: "Bob Friel reporting to L. B. Potter, Feb. 8, 1941, says he has watched one 'popping in and out of the water' on Farwell Creek. One of the Gilchrist brothers was there at the time."

SEND FOR COPIES OF THE REVISED FIELDCHECK-LIST

available free from the Saskatchewan Museum of Natural History, Regina.

PRAIRIE NEST RECORDS SCHEME

by Elmer Fox, Regina

The Prairie Nest Records Scheme outlined in the March 1958 *Blue Jay* appears to be off to a good start. At the time of going to press, we have had a considerable number of requests for nest record cards. Because of the questions which have been asked by people requesting record cards, I would like to make two points clear. Many people seem to think that a complete record is required. This is not so. Any nest

found, even if visited only once, should be recorded on a nest card.

The other question asked is whether records of common species should be reported. We want reports for all species.

The Prairie Nest Records Scheme is a co-operative effort. Only by the participation of many careful workers in all parts of Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta will it be a success. Reports from Alberta and Manitoba are as important as those from Saskatchewan in covering the prairie area and bridging the gap between the British Columbia and Ontario Nest Records Schemes.