

## MAMMAL NOTES

### PRONGHORNS AT REGINA

About 1959 Wolfram Neissen reported seeing a Pronghorn at Pilot Butte, some 10 miles east of Regina (pers. commun.); unfortunately, the details of this observation have apparently been lost. Late in the evening of June 15, 1963, Jack Herbert, my wife, and I saw a male Pronghorn running a few hundred yards south of and parallel to Highway No. 1, just past the city limits on the east of Regina. Since it was running eastward it might actually have been within the city limits shortly before we saw it. Bob McCall told me that he saw a pair six miles west of Regina near the Saskatchewan Falconry Association "Coop" on September 14, 1963. These glimpses so close to a city of a native species which we associate with the arid range of the extreme southwest are exciting and we wonder who else may have seen Pronghorns hereabouts.

According to Thomas A. Harper\*, Assistant Director, Wildlife Branch, Department of Natural Resources, the Pronghorn has in recent years extended its range as a result of an increase in population coupled with a higher hunting pressure in its main range in southwestern Saskatchewan. Harper reports that there have been numerous records of Pronghorns in various localities in southwestern Saskatchewan, e.g., most recently a small group was reported east of Estevan. It has not been so long since there was considerable concern over the possible extirpation of this unique mammal in the province and it is heartening to see these signs of effective management. This species once ranged over all the prairie region of Saskatchewan; although there seems little possibility of it becoming established as a regular resident throughout this area, Tom Harper believes that there are some scattered rangelands in which it might persist in small herds. This would depend, of course, on complete protection and vigilance against poaching, such small groups being unable to withstand shooting.—**Robert W. Nero.**

\* Now Chief of Resource Programming, Dept. Nat. Res.

### FURTHER REPORTS OF LYNX

In the previous *Blue Jay* (p. 35) there appeared a comment on the 1963 "Lynx Invasion" of the Northern Great Plains, a phenomenon unfortunately not carefully recorded in Saskatchewan. We asked our readers to write us more about their observations.

Some of our readers have since submitted reports. From east central Saskatchewan—From ITUNA Mrs. **Mary F. Brennan** reports: "On December 30 [1963] my brother was going south from the town of Leross on Highway 35 through a fairly open area—that is, the poplar bluffs were well back from the road—when a large animal came from the bluff at one side. The bounding motion was unlike a deer, and when it crossed the road only a few yards ahead of the car, he easily recognized it for a lynx. On the return trip we stopped to look at the tracks. The animal had taken the distance from the edge of the grade to the top of the bank in three leaps, about six feet to each."

From FOAM LAKE **Clifford Kakish** sends this report for the winter 1963-64: "During the winter months about five to ten lynx have been seen in a fifteen-mile area (radius) of Foam Lake. One of these was seen about 6 miles south and 2 miles west. A majority of them were seen north of Foam Lake to Fishing Lake (12 miles north of Foam Lake). Four or five of these lynx were shot by the local farmers."

From west central Saskatchewan—From WHITE BEAR **S. O. Jordheim** (letter of March 16) gives the locations of several lynx shot or seen in the summer of 1963—first, a lynx killed 9½ miles south and 2½ miles west of White Bear. "This animal was approached with a car and it did not make any attempt to escape, so the driver ran over it to kill it. It was found in open country approximately 2½ miles from the river." There was also a report of a lynx killed 7 miles south and .2 miles east of White Bear, "discovered near a pig pen and destroyed," and a sighting 9½ miles south and 3½ miles east of White Bear where a lynx was shot at, but got away in a wheat field. "These sightings all took place during mid-

summer of 1963, and in all cases the lynx were miles from tree cover of any size."

From **DINSMORE Hughie Hedger** reports that he shot a lynx in the latter part of September, 1963, and since then "there have been about ten others shot in the surrounding district. When I took my lynx up to have it mounted at Rosetown, there were already six ahead of me to be done in the cold storage room. These lynx have never been seen in this area before"

From **SKULL CREEK, Steve Mann** writes (letter of Feb. 10, 1964) of the unusual number of lynx bagged and seen. "There have been two shot within a mile of here and one was seen by Harry Williams just across the creek from our feed lot. We heard of one man about 30 miles north of us who has shot three. He lives out on the prairie, but is not far distant from the Sand Hills where there is considerable brush, choke-cherry, wolf willow, etc., where rabbits could be plentiful, and as rabbits are the main food of lynx, this could be the reason for there being so many lynx around."

One report came from Alberta, from **Miss Edith M. Hanson** of **VIKING**: In late May or early June, 1963, when she was at home one evening she caught sight of what looked like a huge coyote going under the clothes line and disappearing into a grove of trees south of the house. When she opened the door to look at it, the lynx stopped and stared at her, and she could see that it was like a very large dog as to height, with a perky tail of 4" to 5" having an inch of solid black on the tip. His ears were perky with large ear tufts. Later, at harvest time, a lynx was observed on a neighboring farm, and there was a further fall report of a lynx being shot south of Viking.

In view of the interest shown in these animals and in view of the questions in so many people's minds about the reason for the 1963 invasion and whether these animals should be shot we think our readers might like to read this note by **Grant MacEwan** from the **Calgary Herald** on the invasion of Calgary by these unusual visitors in 1963, "lean year for the lynx." We quote in part—

"Calgarians might remember 1963 as the year of lynx invasion. Early in the season the appearance of the animals was sufficient to produce newspaper headlines but late in the year, reports about the big 'cats' being identified within the city limits were too commonplace to warrant more than the most minor attention.

"Of the 50 . . . caught in the district during the year, report officers of the Calgary Zoological Society, 36 were taken within the bounds of the city and either transported to more distant points or to the St. George's Island Zoo . . . A few of the animals were caught by means of nets but most were taken by a snare mounted on an aluminum collapsible fishing rod type of pole. The first one was caught on March 18 and the last on Nov. 3 . . . [Some] were sent to zoos in far parts of the world: Copenhagen, Dublin, Chester, Paris, Boston, San Diego, Salt Lake City, Seattle and other places.

"Although the lynx is powerful and quite capable of being dangerous officials of the zoological society could report that no mishaps occurred during the 1963 activities. Even cornered animals made no attempt to attack humans. The person seeing a lynx or encountering one in the wild state, however, will be inclined—very wisely—to give it a wide berth.

"But why did the animals descend upon the city in 1963? . . . Home is in the coniferous forests and there is no inclination to leave that habitat unless forced by reasons of extreme food shortage.

"For the lynx to take to roaming when struck by famine is not new, however. The animal chiefly responsible for lynx fortunes and misfortunes is the rabbit whose numbers have a habit of rising miraculously and then crashing. When rabbits are abundant, the lynx fares well and remains deep in its forest fastness. When rabbits, every 10 years, plunge to near-extinction, the hungry lynx has an urge to travel. Thus lynx numbers rise and fall with rabbit numbers and adhere to the same 10-year cycle, something which is shown clearly by the records of Western Canadian fur sales.

". . . In noting that most of the lynx taken in Calgary during the year

were young adults, Lars Willumsen, president of the Calgary Zoological Society, advanced the theory: 'As food becomes scarcer, the older adults with young drove the unmated animals farther afield.'

"It would be a simple matter to shoot all such wild things appearing

in settled communities but there is a growing belief that the lynx, like other predators, has a place in the natural scheme of things and its numbers are now only a fraction of what they were in frontier years. Unrestricted destruction could further threaten destruction."

## The Blue Jay Bookshelf

**THE NEW EXPLORATION: A PHILOSOPHY OF REGIONAL PLANNING.** By Benton MacKaye. 1962. With introduction by Lewis Mumford. University of Illinois Press, Urbana, Ill. \$1.75.

Here is a publication which, as Lewis Mumford says in his introduction, "had to wait a whole generation to acquire the readers that would appreciate it." Mr. MacKaye is known throughout the world as the originator of the Appalachian Trail, a foot path of 1,000 miles from Maine to Georgia, and as a founder of the Wilderness Society. He has also exerted influence on planning for "open space," "greenbelts," and park-like "ring" drives for large urban areas. Many of his ideas were in advance of most similar planning attempts. Perhaps his greatest contribution has been to alert more planners to give real consideration to retaining the essence and values of native (indigenous) landscape when planning a city, a park, a centre, or a region.

*New Explorations* is still remarkably modern in spite of the fact that it was originally published in 1928. Perhaps its timelessness is due to MacKaye's sense of values of native landscapes. When one observes the ugliness of "urban sprawl" and the manner in which we turn beautiful areas into "junkyards," the impact of planners of MacKaye's stature makes us wish there were thousands more like him in positions wherein large or small changes on the landscapes of the world are ordered. For the price of two movies I do not know of a better bargain that can lead us to an understanding of the arts of moulding and transforming the earth.—**Douglas E. Wade, Regina.**

**GOD'S OWN JUNKYARD: THE PLANNED DETERIORATION OF AMERICA'S LANDSCAPE.** By Peter Blake. 1964. Illustrated with 157 photographs. Holt, Rinehart and Winston, New York. Paper-back, \$2.95. U.S.A.

Most of us today are involved in a planned or unplanned way in vandalizing the landscape and we need not travel south of the International Boundary to see prime examples of how the native beauty of the land has been converted to ugliness. Blake's book, made possible by a fellowship awarded to him by the Graham Foundation for Advanced Studies in the Fine Arts, can be teamed up with MacKaye's *The New Exploration*. The two together should make you wonderfully angry.

Blake condemns the billboard business in the U.S.A. on the grounds of highway safety and esthetic arguments; he blasts suburbia and its standardized society; he clearly shows the squalid conditions of cities; and ends his written exposition with a hard-hitting chapter, "To Determine that the Community Should Be Beautiful." Blake is trying to revive "the art of seeing," and more importantly, to develop among more of us a feeling of caring enough to make the country about us "fit again to live in."

Five of his chapters are titled: Townscape; Landscape; Roadscape; Carscape; and Skyscape. I would like to have seen a chapter on *Waterscape* and another on *Chemioscape and Biocidescape*; so we could see the awfulness of water, air and soil pollution now exploding upon us almost universally like a gigantic cancer — leading more aptly to