

Prairie Nest Records Scheme

By E. L. Fox, Regina

In the spring of 1958, the Saskatchewan Museum of Natural History in co-operation with the Saskatchewan Natural History Society plans to initiate a scheme to collect information on the nesting of common birds in the Prairie Provinces. The nest records scheme is based on similar schemes operated successfully elsewhere. Since 1939, the British Trust for Ornithology has filed at a central repository some 60,000 nest record cards sent in by its members. Currently, some 10,000 cards are sent in each year. A similar scheme was organized by M. T. Myres at the University of British Columbia in 1955, and the Department of Ornithology of the Royal Ontario Museum started a nest records scheme in Ontario in 1956. These records have contributed valuable information to our knowledge of the breeding biology of birds.

An investigation of the breeding biology of any species of bird requires that a hundred to a thousand nests a year be reported on. This

may only be done by a co-operative effort. Nest record cards are being printed and will be available to anyone wishing to assist in gathering information. Co-operators are asked to record such things as clutch and brood size, nest site, habitat, cause of nest failure, etc. In addition, each visit to the nest is recorded and any changes that take place are noted. When completed, the card should be mailed to the Prairie Nest Records Scheme, c/o Mr. F. W. Lahrman, Saskatchewan Museum of Natural History, Regina, or to Mr. E. L. Fox, 1053 Gladmer Park, Regina. The cards will be checked by the committee and maintained at a central file at the Saskatchewan Museum of Natural History.

The face side of the British Columbia card is shown here. The Prairie nest record card will be similar. Instructions for its use are printed on the reverse side. However, a few additional remarks may be of assistance.

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|---|---|---------------------|-------|------------------|----------------|-----------------------------------|-------|-------------------------------------|---|--|--------------------------|---|--|---|--|
| YEAR 19 | | NAME OF OBSERVER | | | | | | A.O.U. NUMBER | | SPECIES | | | | | |
| NUMBER of EGGS or YOUNG | | | | | | | | LATIN NAME | | | | | | | |
| SINGLE NEST VISITED REPEATEDLY | | | | DATE | | SINGLE VISIT TO UNIFORM COLONY | | | | LOCALITY OR DISTRICT AS PRECISELY AS POSSIBLE | | CONDITION WHEN FOUND (delete whichever inapplicable) BUILDING EGGS INCUBATING YOUNG | | | |
| DATE Month: Day | | EGGS | YOUNG | TIME (P.S.T.) | NEST NUMBER | EGGS | YOUNG | REMARKS | | | | | | | |
| : | : | : | : | : | 1 | : | : | : | : | : | FOR OFFICE USE ONLY | | | | |
| : | : | : | : | : | 2 | : | : | : | : | | | | | | |
| : | : | : | : | : | 3 | : | : | : | : | : | FIRST EGG LAID | | | | |
| : | : | : | : | : | 4 | : | : | : | : | : | LAST EGG LAID | | | | |
| : | : | : | : | : | 5 | : | : | : | : | : | FIRST YOUNG HATCHED | | | | |
| : | : | : | : | : | 6 | : | : | : | : | : | LAST YOUNG HATCHED | | | | |
| : | : | : | : | : | 7 | : | : | : | : | : | FIRST YOUNG LEFT NEST | | | | |
| : | : | : | : | : | 8 | : | : | : | : | : | LAST YOUNG LEFT NEST | | | | |
| : | : | : | : | : | 9 | : | : | : | : | : | FULL CLUTCH SIZE | | | | |
| : | : | : | : | : | 10 | : | : | : | : | : | NUMBER HATCHED | | | | |
| : | : | : | : | : | 11 | : | : | : | : | : | NUMBER LEFT NEST | | | | |
| : | : | : | : | : | 12 | : | : | : | : | : | REF. NO. | | | | |
| IF MORE THAN 12 VISITS ARE PAID TO A SINGLE NEST FURTHER VISITS MAY BE RECORDED IN THE "COLONY" BLOCK. | | | | | | | | VEGETATION TYPE OF AREA (Note 7) | | NEST MATERIAL | | ALTITUDE | | IF ON SLOPE DIRECTION THIS FACES | |
| | | | | | | | |FT. | | POSITION OF NEST | | TYPE OF PLANT | | HEIGHT OF NEST FROM GROUND OR CLIFF-FOOT...FT. | |

Face-side of card (reduced) used in the British Columbia Nest Records Scheme.

1. One card should be completed for each nest found, even if only one visit is made. The only exception to this is for a single visit to a colony-nesting species. In this case (under visits), use one line for each nest.

2. Record all cowbird eggs or young.

3. Be accurate. Record only actual observations on the face side of the card. Any additional information such as the cause of failure, nest materials used, or food, may be put on the back of the card.

It is hoped that all professional and amateur observers will participate in this scheme by reporting their observations on a nest record card. A good example of the kind of accurate and detailed information that

amateur observers can provide is given in the informal Barn Swallow nest record that follows this article. We print Mr. Jasper's record to illustrate the kind of observations which can be usefully recorded on the nest record card. For a supply of cards or additional information write:

Prairie Nest Records Scheme
c/o Mr. F. W. Lahrman
Saskatchewan Museum of Natural
History
Regina, Saskatchewan

or Mr. E. L. Fox
1053 Gladmer Park
Regina, Saskatchewan

A BARN SWALLOW NEST RECORD

By **W. E. Jasper**, Struan, Sask.

The first Barn Swallow arrived here on May 2, about 10 days earlier than usual. In a few days he was joined by his mate. They soon got busy building in a bin I had left open for them, and it wasn't too long before they had two eggs. Then something happened. On going into the bin next morning I found one swallow dead on the floor. The other just sat around outside for about a week. As the eggs were deserted I took them out of the nest. I think it was the next morning that I noticed the swallow was gone.

In about two days the swallow which had left was back again with another mate. A day or two later, on June 12, I looked in the nest again and found one egg. On June 13 there

were two eggs, on June 14 three on June 15 four and on June 16 five. The eggs were laid each morning between 5:30 and 7:00 a.m. On July 1 swallows were out of the eggs, and on July 20 the first young left the nest. On July 21 four were out of the nest and the fifth left on July 22.

By August 1 the five young had moved off. But the old pair stayed. This time they took the notion to build a nest in the garage. As we did not want them building in the garage, we kept the doors shut most of the time. However, whenever the doors were open in the day time they went to work again. Even though the bin where they had raised the five was open for them they did not bother about it. As they could not get much done at the nest in the garage, they seemed to decide that it would be too late in the season by the time they got it built and so they left for the south.

New Plant Records for Saskatchewan, 1957

By **John Howard Hudson**, Regina

During the summer of 1957 I had my best results collecting plants in the southeastern part of the province, especially in the lower Souris River valley. I found eight species which seem to be new to Saskatchewan; at least they do not appear in Breitung's recent authoritative catalogue of our flora (*American Midland Naturalist*, Vol. 58, pp. 1-72, July 1957). Three species here reported (Nos. 2003,

2016, and 2021) Breitung specifically excluded from our flora on account of lack of recent verification of old reports. All eight plants are found in North Dakota or Manitoba; good descriptions of them will be found in Stevens' *Handbook of North Dakota Plants*, and Fernald's edition of *Gray's Manual of Botany*. The plants are:

1993. *Celastrus scandens* L. Clim-