

for example, has heard of Coyotes hunting in pairs, one animal driving the game toward another Coyote lying in wait. The deliberate attempt to hold attention of prey or to lure it within range as described above is especially interesting in view of its indirectness. Coyotes have several times been recorded working in pairs, one attracting the attention of the prey by performing antics like those reported above, while another sneaks up unnoticed. J. F. Dobie (1949. *The Voice of the Coyote*) cites good examples of this: ". . . noticed a coyote silently jumping up and around. Then he saw a second coyote off some distance slinking slowly and carefully forward. Between the two a sitting jack rabbit appeared to be fascinated by the didos of the first coyote and to be unaware of the approach of the other . . ." In another case he recounts how coyotes caught some pelicans, one coyote attracting their attention by ". . .

catching up bits of wood and throwing them into the air, chasing her tail, crouching and making sudden springs into the air." Even a Sandhill Crane was caught in this way by another couple of coyotes, one of which was turning somersaults and running round and round. This behavior of a wild species has close similarity to an old method of luring ducks called "tolling" and much favoured in Europe. The same method is being used at present with great success at the Delta Waterfowl Research Station (Delta, Manitoba). A well-trained dog is directed by his concealed trainer to go through a complicated series of maneuvers, performing play-like movements in full sight of a flock of wild ducks. The latter are strangely attracted by the antics of the dog and are thereby lured into a trap. Thousands of ducks have been trapped and banded at Delta by this means.

Gray Squirrel (*Sciurus carolinensis*) in Sask.

By Robert W. Nero, Saskatchewan Museum of Natural History

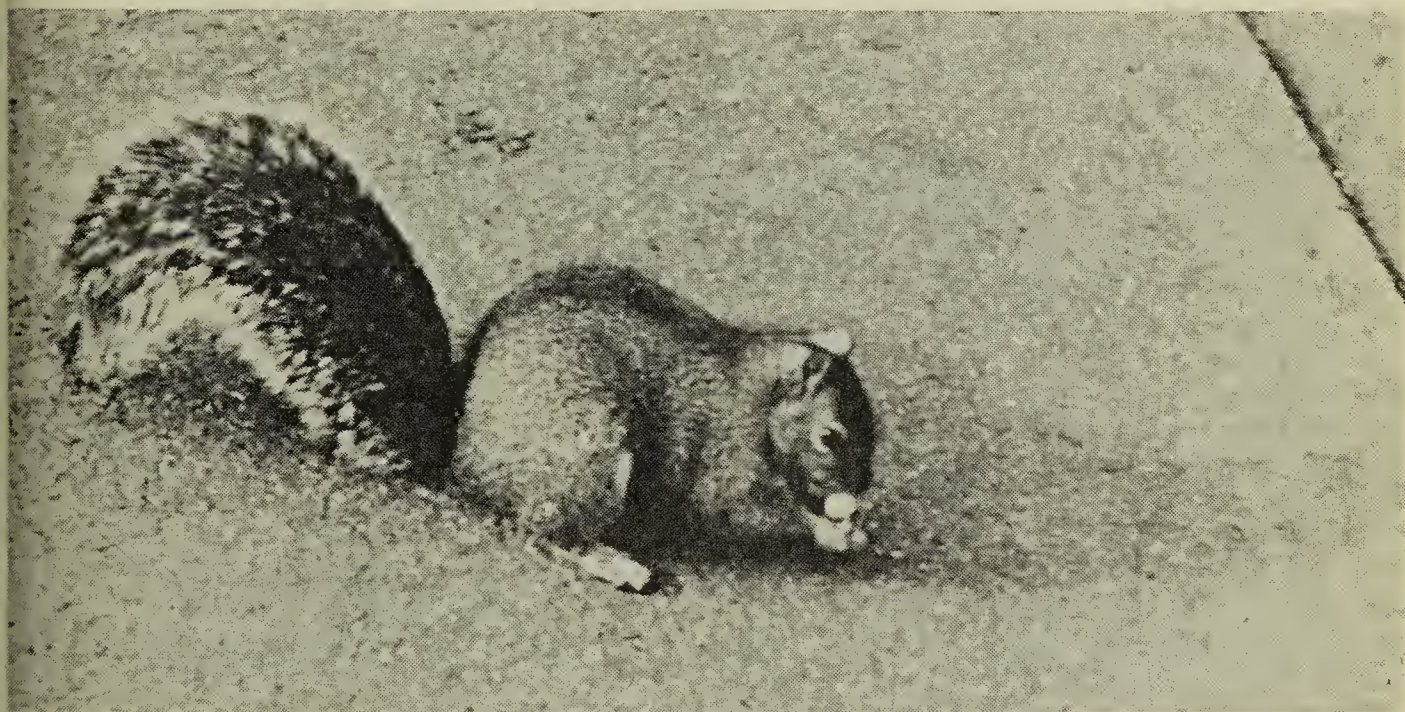


Photo from a kodachrome by John Bergsteinsson
Gray Squirrel feeding on a Saskatoon sidewalk.

The occurrence of the Gray Squirrel (*Sciurus carolinensis*) some 70 miles north of Regina is unexpected considering its known range and habits, and it seems likely that it has been introduced into this area.* It is known to occur normally in southeastern Manitoba west to Ninette according to R. W. Sutton (pers.

commun.) but it is rare and only locally distributed in this area. In the United States it is found as far west as eastern North Dakota. There are also isolated occurrences in north-central North Dakota along the bottom of the loop of the Souris River (Mouse River in the U.S.) which probably represent introductions (Hibbard, 1956). The follow-

ing data are worth recording because of the possibility of establishment of the species where now known and their possible appearance in future years in extreme southeastern Saskatchewan along the Souris River. Since the species is limited in its distribution to areas with oak trees (*Quercus* sp.) which occur there only sparingly, it is not likely ever to become common in this province.

On August 31, 1957 Mr. Edgar Bookhammer turned over to A. E. Swanston, museum assistant, a live male Gray Squirrel captured on the same day at the Bookhammer farm home near Strasbourg, Sask., about one-half mile from Last Mountain Lake. The squirrel had suddenly appeared in the yard and was trapped with the aid of a dog. The species had never before been seen by the Bookhammers and they were anxious to obtain an identification. The animal was later sacrificed and prepared as a study specimen for the scientific collections of the Museum. On September 20, 1957 Mr. Bookhammer phoned the museum, reporting the capture and later release of another Gray Squirrel in his yard. He added that a close neighbor, Mr. H. E. Barber, had news of several Gray Squirrels. Accordingly, Fred Lahrman, museum assistant, visited the Barber residence on September 24 and obtained some further information. Gray Squirrels were first observed by Mr. Barber in the fall of 1956 when two appeared in his shelter-belt grove of trees. During the summer of 1957 as many as nine squirrels, two of which drowned in a rain barrel, were observed by the Barber family. According to Mr. Barber, although these squirrels regularly came near the house to feed on grain which was deliberately set out for them, they were never really tamed and were usually difficult to locate in the trees. The squirrels also obtained grain from feeding trays erected for them at a nearby Bible Camp. It was assumed by Mr. Barber that this grain was their main food. Four squirrel nests were observed by Lahrman; all were bulky, leafy-twig nests about the size of a crow's nest and were situated high in the topmost branches of willow and poplar trees. As is usually the case in Gray Squirrel nests, the leafy twigs comprising the nests had been

cut while green; the leaves would thus remain permanently attached to the twigs and the nest.

The shelterbelt on the Barber farm is fairly extensive and densely wooded. It contains some very tall Russian poplars, willows, maples, ash, elms and caragana. Undoubtedly the squirrels obtained food from the fruits of some of these trees. The general area on the east side of Last Mountain Lake where these squirrels were found is rather open country; the farm shelterbelts in this vicinity offer the maximum amount of cover and habitat for Gray Squirrels, although completely lacking any mast or nut trees. The Bookhammer home which is about a mile from Barbers' is treeless. It would seem that the two squirrels which appeared there had been forced to leave the Barber woods—possibly as a result of social pressure because Gray Squirrels, like most mammals, require a certain extent of home range or territory. On the other hand, since the first squirrel captured by Mr. Bookhammer was an adult male, the squirrels may simply have been making exploratory excursions. This species of tree squirrel has been known to make extensive movements across country, even swimming across rivers, usually as the outcome of an increase in population or a decrease in the food supply. During Lahrman's visit no squirrel were observed although considerable effort was made to locate them. Mr. Barber stated at that time that none had been seen during the previous two weeks.

Evidently the increase in population observed by Mr. Barber indicate actual breeding, probably two or more litters having been produced. The number of nests as well as a known den in a woodpecker cavity in a tree support this conclusion. There is, however, the possibility that several squirrels were introduced. It seems likely that at least one pair of Gray Squirrels was released near the Barber residence in 1956 or earlier, possibly at the Bible Camp which attracts a great many visitors each summer. Owing to the limited wooded area in this vicinity it is unlikely that the Gray Squirrel will become permanently established as a result of this presumed introduction. They have been successfully introduced into British Columbia

Anderson, 1946:122) and the British Isles; in the latter case introduction has been regretted since the Gray Squirrel has since become a major pest, even evidently causing the disappearance in many areas of the native species of squirrel. There are many examples of catastrophes resulting from the uncontrolled introduction of plants and animals into new environments, but there are also other reasons for opposing this practice. "In recent years the faulty reasoning behind the introduction of animals has become increasingly apparent. Biologists now are generally opposing the liberation of exotics into the wild, because of the unpredictable nature and possibly unfavorable economic consequences of such action, and because of an aesthetic objection to mixing diverse faunas." (De Vos, Manville, Van Gelder, 1956:163)

* Franklin's Ground Squirrel (*Citellus franklinii*), a common species in Saskatchewan, is frequently locally known as the "Gray Squirrel." It is gray and does have a slightly bushy tail but can hardly be confused with the Gray Squirrel (*Sciurus carolinensis*) of eastern North America. The latter is considerably larger, inhabits forests and is a tree squirrel.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Since the above article was received, the Museum has had a report from Harvey Beck of Gray Squirrels at Saskatoon. Harvey Beck knows of at least three squirrels there, two gray and one black in colour (a colour phase of the Gray Squirrel). One of the grays is considerably smaller than the others. The larger gray was first noticed in the fall of 1955 and the others appeared during the summer of 1956. The Poplar Crescent area where they live is well treed. Elm predominates, with maple and caragana also present. Last summer the black squirrel made a nest in a maple tree, using branches with green leaves. Apparently no young were raised. The squirrels have remained fairly active this winter (1957-58), appearing two or three times a week. Last winter they were seen only once or twice during the whole winter. During the summer they "free-load" around the neighbourhood and several families put out nuts for them.

Who's Who In Gophers?

By R. W. Fyfe, Saskatchewan Museum of Natural History



Photo by R. W. Fyfe

Pocket Gopher. Note claws, small eyes and ears.

The Pocket Gopher, found throughout southern and central Saskatchewan, ranges in North America from the central prairies south to Panama. The name Gopher comes from the French "gaufre", meaning honeycomb, which suits this

animal whose underground home honeycombs the soil. Anyone having one of these animals in his garden will mostly certainly attest to this. Because of its subterranean life the Pocket Gopher often receives the misnomer of "mole". (It is worthy