

BLUE JAY CHATTER

A significant step forward in natural history in the Prairie Provinces was taken during 1962 when the Natural History Society of Manitoba released its first Ornithological Section Newsletter. This is a nine page mimeographed bulletin containing reports of rare or unusual bird observations, migrant bird casualties at TV towers, hawk banding by the Hamerstoms at Big Point and results of the nest box project. Congratulations to the Manitoba Society and best wishes for their continued success. I hope that this ornithological newsletter is the beginning of a regular quarterly publication and that reports will soon come from other sections of the Society as well. I hope, too, that the Society whose main support now comes from Winnipeg can soon be extended to include all people in Manitoba who are interested in wildlife and its conservation.

The first newsletter makes no plea for membership and does not mention a subscription price, but I think that all those interested in a truly provincial organization in Manitoba should make inquiries of Harold V. Hosford, 4110 Roblin Blvd., Charleswood 20, Manitoba. Additional members throughout the province could help support such publications both by sharing costs and by contributing reports, for people living in the country are in a position to make worthwhile contributions in natural history. The **Blue Jay** welcomes material from Manitoba, but we realize that we cannot handle all the Manitoba reports that **should** be published. For the same reason, we feel that a similar development in Alberta would complement the **Blue Jay** rather than competing with it. Three provincial natural history societies working hand in hand could greatly strengthen the cause of natural history on the Prairies.

In Saskatchewan there is a move afoot to form a Saskatchewan Archaeological Society. The first newsletter has been distributed (February, 1963) and the interim committee is planning to hold an organizational meeting at the Saskatchewan Museum of Natural History, Regina, on Saturday, April 20, 1963, with sessions through the day. Officers will be elected at that time. If you are interested write to Bruce McCorquodale at the Museum for the newsletter and programme. The proposed yearly membership fee is one dollar.

There is a great need for more active workers in natural history. Some projects already under way offer examples of what might be done. In the Moose Jaw Natural History Society, for example, young people are being involved in the activities of the society in a way that teaches them to appreciate and understand wildlife. Another scheme that is beginning to do good work is our Prairie Nest Records Scheme to which we can contribute by reporting on the nesting of our native birds. These records are being filed systematically and are even now yielding valuable information. We must keep up the good work of sending in reports because it is the combined contributions of many observers over a considerable period of time that constitute the value of such a scheme.

Apart from these special projects, there is always another way to help the Society. We can find new members—are there people in your area who do not get the **Blue Jay**? Since the membership fee barely covers the cost of printing the magazine, you could help by sending a donation to the Treasurer. No donation is too small to help improve the **Blue Jay**.

There are two other ways in which you could help the Society. First you could contribute to the Research Grants Fund and encourage your people to do research in natural history. The awards for 1963 will be made at the June meeting. Second, you could contribute to our Special Conservation Fund which is to be used for the purchase of wetlands or other lands needed by wildlife. We hope that our society can soon make a start in this field but we need your financial support. Research Fund and Conservation Fund donations are income tax deductible so please send instructions with your donations. Donations to special funds may be sent to the **Blue Jay** Editor, Box 1121, Regina.