

YELLOW-BREASTED CHAT AT MOOSE JAW

by John Horton, Moose Jaw

A very boisterous and conspicuous male Yellow-breasted Chat was observed at close hand on June 7, 1963, right across the road from the Swing-Inn in Moose Jaw's River Park. I had been walking south along the first path up the river valley's west wall, past the end of the Swing-Inn parking lot, when a bird's peculiar gurgling whistles and other sounds like "gooh!" first attracted my attention. After searching for about five minutes I gave up and started down the hill, dismissing the noises as those of a Brown Thrasher. But at that moment the bird's cacaphony burst out in a crescendo; I looked back and there it was, right on the tip of a small, dead tree. The distinctive markings of the Chat were unmistakable. A few minutes later, returning the same way I had come, I saw the Chat a few yards farther north. It was quarrelling vigorously with a pair of House Wrens and this behaviour made me suspect that it had been "singing out" a nesting territory. However, on subsequent visits to this spot I was unable to find it, and, in fact, Mrs. C. V. Stokins, who went there shortly after I first saw the Chat, could not find it. Perhaps it was just letting off a little steam on its northward journey. I know of no other records of Yellow-breasted Chats in the Moose Jaw area. It may be of some interest to refer to the observation on June 2, 1963, of a Chat at Roche Percee, near Estevan, reported in the *Blue Jay* (21:93) by Dianne Fahselt.

MOCKINGBIRD AT ELBOW

by G. K. Greene, Elbow

There was a Mockingbird in our yard for a short time late in June in the summer of 1963. It was a few days before we discovered the source of the numerous bird calls that were heard. Since none of our family had ever seen or heard a Mockingbird before it hadn't occurred to us to look for one. We heard it give perfect imitations of crows, meadowlarks, blackbirds, orioles, and other birds which

we knew, as well as others which were unfamiliar to us. On the evening of June 26, a date which my daughter had recorded in her diary, the Mockingbird entertained us till 11:00 p.m. from an elm tree a short distance from our front door. If it stopped for a short rest I would just need to whistle a few notes and it would be away again. As my daughter said, it was slightly eerie to hear crows, etc., in the middle of the night. We had hoped that it would stay here and nest, but as near as we could ascertain it was a lone individual of its kind. Our farm is 11 miles east and four miles north of Elbow.

Ed. Note: A Saskatoon record of the Mockingbird appears in this issue on page 9, and there have been several previous reports in the *Blue Jay* in recent years. The status of this species in Saskatchewan and adjacent regions, actually the whole of the Northern Great Plains, has been studied by Frank H. Brazier. We hope to publish his paper in our next issue. Readers who have records of Mockingbirds, and who have not been in contact with Mr. Brazier, should submit their information to him as soon as possible at Box 1121, Regina.

AN OBSERVATION OF THE WESTERN RACE OF THE GRAY-CROWNED ROSY FINCH

by R. V. Folker, Saskatoon

On October 30, 1963, during a short trip into the rolling country north of Glentworth, Saskatchewan, Bob Caldwell and myself observed a Gray-crowned Rosy Finch (*Leucosticte tephrocotis*) which we identified as the form previously known as Hepburn's Rosy Finch, now considered a subspecies (*L. t. littoralis*), but still illustrated as a distinctive form by Roger Tory Peterson (1961. *A Field Guide to Western Birds*). This colorful bird, which nests above timberline in Alaska and south to northern California, was observed at some length with field glasses as it sat along the roadside about 50 feet from the car. The Gray-crowned Rosy Finch is observed sporadically in Saskatchewan and evidences of its occurrences were summarized in 1963 by Manley Callin (*Blue Jay*, 21: 57). Observers ought to be alert, however, to the possibility of seeing two races, and these should be reported.