

Some 1963 Bird Records for the Saskatoon District

by **J. B. Gollop** and **M. A. Gollop**, Saskatoon

The following is a list of unusual observations of birds made during 1963 in the Saskatoon district. For purposes of this report, the area included is approximately a 30-mile radius of the city (Township 31 through 40, Ranges 1 through 10, West of the Third Meridian). Records were made by one or both authors, except where noted otherwise.

Nine species were recorded for the first time, at least in recent years: **Surf Scoter**, 1 on May 18 at Rice Lake on Saskatoon NHS field trip (J. F. Roy and R. V. Folker); **Broad-winged Hawk**, 1 soaring north over city on May 4 (JBG), a second report by Ross Lein, this fall; **Osprey**, 1 watched for several minutes at Pike Lake on April 27, Saskatoon NHS field trip (Roy, Folker, R. Mills); **Pileated Woodpecker**, 1 flew overhead on April 14 near Smuts (MAG); **Black-backed Three-toed Woodpecker**, 1 in evergreen, studied for at least five minutes on September 21, 3 miles southeast of city (MAG); **Common Raven**, 1 by Dr. John Gerard on December 26 at P.F.R.A. Tree Farm; **Sage Thrasher**, 1 studied for about ten minutes on June 23 near Porter Lake; **Connecticut Warbler**, 1 picked up dead at CFQC-TV tower on September 1; **Golden-crowned Sparrow**, (listed as straggler, Saskatchewan Check-list, 1959) 1 in city limits on May 18 on Saskatoon NHS field trip (Folker and Roy).

Other birds, rare in this district, were also noted: **Common Loon**, 1 dead possibly 2 weeks on August 11; **White-winged Scoter**, 1 on May 18; **Hawk Owl**, 1 on April 21 (V. Gimbel); **Hooded Merganser**, 2 on April 15; **Mockingbird**, 1 on May 18 (J. D. Hogg and J. Shadick); **Red Crossbills**, 4 on October 30 (Mrs. J. M. Pepper and Mrs. C. S. Houston) and 8 on December 26 (Folker).

Flocks larger than normally reported for this area were as follows: **Bald Eagle**, on the evening of March 31, two roosts, less than five miles apart, along the South Saskatchewan

River south of Saskatoon, 11 and 6 eagles, including one immature in each group; **Gulls**, between 7.20 and 8.30 p.m. on April 20, more than 10,000 white-headed gulls (probably Ring-billed) flew into the south part of old Rice Lake from the east to roost; on May 7, there were fewer than 2,000 gulls using the area and most of these were Franklin's Gulls; **Mourning Dove**, during the morning of August 21 flocks of 340+ and 150+ were counted in the vicinity of two dugouts, three miles apart, about 12 miles east of Swanson; **Swallows**, at least 2,000 at Pike Lake on May 12 and 18, about three-quarters were Tree Swallows, the remainder Bank and Barn, a few Cliff (on May 18); **Black-billed Magpie**, (flocks were smaller but more numerous than in 1962) between August 3 and September 15, 14 observations of flocks containing 50 or more birds were noted; **Mountain Bluebird**, 115+ on September 11, five miles south of Saskatoon.

First nesting records were recorded for the following: **Great Blue Heron**, at least four of eleven nests near Radisson were occupied on June 18, young in at least two nests were almost fully feathered (Roy); **Long-eared Owl**, nest with five eggs, found on May 20 (MAG and J. A. Slimmon); **American Redstart**, nest with five eggs on June 12 at Pike Lake (Slimmon and Roy); (**Cliff Swallow**, five miles west of the district defined above, a small colony along Eaglehill Creek found by Folker).

W. S. Richards found a partial albino female Brewer's Blackbird near Kinley. On May 20 the bird was incubating six eggs and was associating with several normally plumaged birds of the same species. She had about as much pure white on her head as there is yellow on a male Yellow-headed Blackbird. There were also two small white patches on her back. The remainder of the plumage was normal. She was tamer than the other blackbirds and several kodachromes were taken.