

Some Unusual Sask. Bird Records

By Fred W. Lahrman, Saskatchewan Museum of Natural History

The dry weather of this past spring has caused the rapid drying up of the flooded fields and sloughs near the city of Regina, causing large areas of mud flats to be exposed. This provides ideal feeding and resting conditions for shore birds which appeared in unusually large numbers during the spring migration period. Among these were the Dunlin (*Erolia alpina*) and the Buff-breasted Sandpiper (*Tryngites subruficollis*) which are rarely seen in this area.

On May 6, 1958, two Dunlins were observed by Dr. R. W. Nero and myself, one of which was collected. Two were again observed by Dr. G. F. Ledingham on May 10, and three on May 18 by F. H. Brazier.

The Museum has one other Dunlin specimen, a female, taken June 8, 1914, at Churchill River by A. Buchanan. Other Museum records include a specimen taken August 9, 1920, Lake Athabasca, U.S. Biological Survey party; three males seen May 23, 1931, Round Lake, Broadview, F. G. Bard; reported seen 1932, Wascana Lake, Regina, F. Bradshaw.

On May 28 twenty Buff-breasted Sandpipers were observed by Dr. R. W. Nero and F. H. Brazier, and on May 29 Dr. Nero and I saw 94, three of which were collected. On May 31, four were seen. Other Museum records are: one male collected, August 26, 1921, Old Wives Lake, H. H. Mitchell; two males collected, August 27, 1921, Old Wives Lake, H. H. Mitchell; three taken at Old Wives Lake, May 23, 1922, by C. G. Harold; one female

taken May 29, 1930, Unity, by R. D. Symons; 19 collected, May 23, 1932, Imperial Beach, Last Mountain Lake, George M. Sutton; one reported to F. G. Bard June 2, 1937, caught by a dog. Identified as a Buff-breasted and made into a study skin.

Two other observations are of interest. A Snow Bunting (*Plectrophenax nivalis*) was observed June 15 on the shore of a large marsh approximately 12 miles east of Simpson. Although it was easily recognized as a Snow Bunting, it was strangely different in appearance, being much darker on the head and back than any I have ever seen. I presume that it was a female since it was so dark, and that this is how they appear when they arrive on their breeding grounds, where this one certainly should have been at this date.

The other unusual bird was a Black Duck (*Anas rubripes*) seen June 16 in the Regina Waterfowl Park. This is the first one I have observed on the Wascana Marsh. Other Museum records are: a specimen taken Oct. 25, 1917, Last Mountain Lake, R. Lloyd, Davidson; a specimen taken in the fall of 1918, Last Mountain Lake; one taken, Nov. 20, 1923, J. A. M. Patrick, Yorkton; one seen Oct. 5, 1932, Regina, F. G. Bard; a pair seen May 4, 1935, south of Lumsden, F. G. Bard; a male taken, Oct. 24, 1935, Cymric, K. Ross of Regina; a male taken, Oct. 28, 1936, Penzance, M. F. Parrott, Regina; 4 observed summer, 1957, Old Wives Lake (F.W.L.).

The Black Duck in Saskatchewan

By Lucy H. Murray, Regina

The report of a Black Duck on the Wascana Marsh (June 16, 1958) after an absence of twenty years or more is interesting. It has appeared in Saskatchewan in the past at intervals of about twenty years (1917-18; 1932-36; 1958). Only two regions have been favoured, Last Mountain Lake (into which the Wascana drains) and Yorkton. The one record from Yorkton (1923) is strengthened by a second report in 1945 that four black

ducks were banded there by J. H. Wilson (C. S. Houston, *Canadian Field Naturalist*, Vol. 63, No. 6). Are these sporadic appearances in limited areas true of its appearance in other regions, such as Minnesota and Manitoba?

The Black Duck has over the last forty years gradually extended its range from eastern North America westward, in Canada, over Ontario and Manitoba, and is now straying