

## ALBINO RED SQUIRREL COLLECTED IN WOOD BUFFALO PARK

by Thomas J. Wood, Saskatoon

In December 1963, a local trapper-mink rancher shot an albino Red Squirrel (*Tamiasciurus hudsonicus*) on his trapping area in Wood Buffalo Park in Alberta. Mr. Saloman Lacaille, whose trapping area is on the west side of the Athabasca River, 65 miles south of Fort Chipewyan, Alberta, near the Embarras Portage Post Office, froze the squirrel and sent it to Mr. N. S. Novakowski of the Canadian Wildlife Service, then at the University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon. The squirrel, a juvenile female weighing 167 grams and measuring 337-141-23 mm, is now in the University collection.

Occurrence of albinism in Red Squirrels is not a frequent event. Hatt (1929) reported it in Ontario, New York, Michigan, Indiana and at Fort Resolution, N.W.T., but most of these were only partial albinos, with normal coloration on part of the body. Mearns (1898) cited a population on an island in the Hudson River, which for several generations had a number of complete albinos. There have been few reports since Hatt's monograph. Engles (1933) reported a pair of albinos in Indiana, and Dapson (1963) observed a partial albino at Ithaca, New York.

The specimen taken from Wood Buffalo Park was pure white, with pink eyes. From conversations with trappers in Wood Buffalo Park last summer, I concluded that albinism is a rare event in that area. The squirrel collected by Mr. Lacaille was the first albino he has ever trapped in his 40-odd years of trapping in northern Alberta.

I would like to thank Miss Sharon M. Haggerty for supplying some of the references.

### LITERATURE CITED

- Dapson, R. W. 1963. Color aberration in the red squirrel. *J. Mammal.*, 44: 123.
- Engles, W. L. 1933. Notes on the mammals of St. Joseph County, Indiana. *Amer. Midland Nat.*, 14: 1-16.
- Hatt, R. T. 1929. The red squirrel: its life history and habits with special reference to the Adirondacks of New York and the Harvard Forest. *Roosevelt Wildlife Ann.*, 2: 11-146.
- Mearns, E. A. 1898. A study of the vertebrate fauna of the Hudson highlands. *Amer. Mus. Nat. Hist. Bull.*, 10: 303-352.

## LYNX ALONG THE CUTARM CREEK

by A. J. Hruska, Gerald

Reports on the occurrence of Lynx in the prairie region are of recent date. It is only in the last two or three years that numerous records have been reported in the *Blue Jay*. Few reports have been made from this Parkland area of the province (about 130 miles east of Regina). Beck in his *Guide to Saskatchewan Mammals* notes that, "they are found in the wooded sections of the province." It would be logical to expect their influx into this area at a much earlier date than in the prairie as it contains a considerable amount of wooded cover. However, it is only about three years ago that reports of their presence were first noted in the local press. There are also some reports that young have been killed along the Cutarm Creek. Ingersoll in his *Life of Mammals* states, "... it varies in abundance from year to year according to the local plenty or scarcity of food—especially hares." In view of this note it is hard to correlate the intrusion of the lynx into this region at a time when the rabbit population is on the ebb and nearly extinct these last couple of years.

It is over 60 years ago that my father with some other pioneers "treed" a large cat with long whiskers. Since that time few signs have been observed by us. My first observation of tracks in this region was in the late winter of 1963-1964, when there was a large influx of lynx along the Cutarm Creek. There was a considerable diminution of the number of tracks in this area this year. My first sighting of a lynx occurred on February 2 last. This animal was observed casing my brother's herd of feeding cows and these actions were not too highly appreciated by him with the result that he destroyed the lynx.