

THIRD RECORD OF GLAUCOUS GULL IN ALBERTA

by **Wayne Smith**, 8220 Elbow Drive, Calgary

A second-year Glaucous Gull was seen on May 14, 1966, at Beaverhill Lake, Alberta, by Mr. and Mrs. Bruce Sparks, Kevin van Tighem, Richard Klauke, Bob Ipema, Bob Masters, some members of the Edmonton Bird Club and myself. Beaverhill Lake is about 50 miles east of Edmonton. The weather was cold, windy and rainy.

The Glaucous Gull was identified by its whiteness and by its large size. There appeared to be no grey or brown in the primaries. Sitting beside the second-year bird was a slightly smaller first-year gull. Identity of the first-year bird remained uncertain because identifying features such as bill colour and lighter primaries were not clearly seen.

The two previous Alberta records of Glaucous Gulls in Alberta from *Birds of Alberta* (Salt and Wilk, 1958 and 1966) are:

1. an immature shot west of Lacombe in 1915, preservd in the Provincial Museum in Edmonton.
2. "another . . . caught in a coyote trap near Youngstown in November 1940. This specimen is not preserved".

It is of interest to note that on May 8, 1966, a gull that was thought to be a Glaucous Gull or a Glaucous-winged Gull was seen within five miles of Saskatoon by J. E. Black (*Saskatoon Bird Review*, p. 15, June 20, 1966).

SCARLET TANAGER, A SURPRISE VISITOR AT NORWAY HOUSE, MANITOBA

by **S. C. Fowke**, Norway House, Manitoba

One of the joys of our bird watching at Norway House is discovering a new species in our area. We were therefore delighted this past spring with the arrival of several interesting strangers and the comparative abundance of some of the less common migrants.

On May 7, 1967 we were pleased to see an old friend from the prairies come to visit us in the "bush" in the person of a Western Meadowlark. It stayed all one evening and we had ample opportunity to study it closely. I checked and found that no one could remember seeing one here before.

Then on May 13 we were again surprised and pleased to hear that Mr. D. Allen, Conservation Officer at Norway House, had seen a Mourning Dove. He and one of his workers were able to observe this bird closely several times. Again no one could remember seeing this species here before.

A cold front moved in on May 18 and on May 19 there were hundreds of Harris' Sparrows, dozens of Horned Larks and numerous White-crowned and White-throated Sparrows. This influx was really a welcome change from the small numbers of each of these species that we usually see here in the spring.

The crowning touch of spring surprises came on May 29, 1967 at 9:30 a.m. when I sighted a male Scarlet Tanager while on a morning birding walk. When I was having a rest, I thought I saw a bit of surveyor's coloured ribbon up in a tree about 50 yards away. When I raised my binoculars to have a closer look the bird flew, and as I followed it with the glasses I knew at once that it was a male Scarlet Tanager. It landed again about 100 yards away where I observed it carefully for about one minute. I saw it very clearly and

there was no mistaking its identity. It flew away and I could not find it again. That was a thrill I will not forget for a long time.

A pleasant finale to the spring surprises was seeing a pair of American Goldfinches around our yard on July 6. These birds may not be uncommon here, but we have never seen them before.

In many ways this past spring was a late and discouraging one, but the bad weather was more than made up for by our unusual bird migration. I would be very interested to know how far north these species have been recorded in Saskatchewan and Alberta.

[EDITOR'S NOTE: Salt and Wilk (1966. *Birds of Alberta*) cite only one authenticated record of the Scarlet

Tanager for Alberta, that of a female that struck a window in Calgary on November 2, 1964, but they mention that sight records are occasionally reported. In Saskatchewan, the farthest north records of the species are sight records from Yorkton (1950), Young (1963), and Saskatoon (1965). See Margaret Belcher's article "The status of the Scarlet Tanager in Saskatchewan" (*Blue Jay* 23:117-119) and the report by Gollop, Slimmon and Folker "Some 1965 bird records for the Saskatoon district" (*Blue Jay*, 24:76-78).

Discussion of this Norway House record of the Scarlet Tanager with Dr. Robert W. Nero, now at the Manitoba Museum of Man and Nature, confirms that this must be considered the northernmost record known for the species.]

ANNUAL MAY BIRD COUNT, SASKATOON

by J. F. Roy, 120 Maple Street, Saskatoon

On May 27, 1967, 29 observers in six groups established a new record of 145 species seen in a single day in the Saskatoon study area, a square block consisting of 100 townships (3,600 square miles) centering on Saskatoon. The previous high had been set last year when 140 species were observed. It was an excellent day for field observations, with mostly sunny skies and the temperature ranging from 45° to 74°. Apart from a brief period of gusty southeast winds between noon and 2:00 p.m., the winds remained light.

Once again the southeast proved to be the most rewarding corner ornithologically; here, groups led by J. B. Gollop and J. A. Wedgwood observed 118 species. The southwest produced 113 species, the northeast, 102, and the northwest 98. Among the highlights of the count were a Common Loon on Moon Lake; a flock of eight late Whistling Swans on Rice Lake and one individual in the northeast; two separate sightings of the Piping Plover; a pair of Buff-breasted Sand-

pipers near Buffer Lake; and two new breeding records for the Saskatoon region: the Common Goldeneye and the Blue Jay, both nests being discovered by Jim Slimmon in the northwest sector. The Chukar was found near the Forestry Farm sitting on top of a barn.

Once again warbler numbers proved disappointing, only 11 species being identified. The count was just a few days too late to include the migrant sparrows. No White-crowned, Lincoln, Fox, Swamp or Harris' Sparrows were recorded, and only single individuals of the White-throated Sparrow and the Slate-coloured Junco.

On the day following this count, a new species for the district (McCown's Longspur) was found in an area not visited on May 27. This suggests that more thorough coverage, requiring more independent parties with at least one reliable observer in each, is required for a more complete enumeration of the birds present on the May count.