

BLUE JAY POLICY

With this issue of the *Blue Jay* I resign an editorship which has been continuous since January, 1956, except for an 18-month period (1965-66) when R. W. Nero replaced me. It has been a pleasure working for the society in this capacity but now I am looking forward to a period of extensive travel and an increased amount of time for study and research.

During the past few years I have been constantly frustrated by the fact that I could not give as much time to the *Blue Jay* as it deserved. It seems appropriate, therefore, at this time to thank the many contributors and correspondents of the *Blue Jay* for their tolerance and understanding of my editorial problems and to make a general explanation of the editorial policy which I have tried to follow. I should like also to thank the many people who have helped with the editing, typing and proof reading of the magazine. Though I take full responsibility for any errors which have appeared on *Blue Jay* pages, I recognize that the conscientious work both of my assistants and of the contributors themselves has led to the publication of an increasingly worthwhile and readable magazine.

When the *Blue Jay* began, it was the idea of the founder, Mrs. I. M. Priestly, that the magazine would (like Sammy Jay in the Burgess stories) be a news carrier. If a person had some nature news to share, he sent it to the *Blue Jay*. Over the years our membership has grown and the magazine has become widely read far beyond the boundaries of our province. In other words, it has gradually become evident that the *Blue Jay* has two functions: the recording of observations by contributors and the providing of information about nature for the reader.

The editor's first responsibility is to select from the material contributed those items which he considers of most interest to the greatest number of readers. Experience has proven that, generally speaking, most people have an interest in birds and certainly the greatest number of contributions published have been on the topic of birds. We have also tried, however, to have reports on a diversity of topics and for this reason I have tended to favour many items which do not feature birds and have even written a number of such items myself.

Though most of the articles to date have been bird, or plant or insect oriented, I hope that the *Blue Jay* will eventually become a true natural history magazine. No organism lives in isolation. True, we must first know what kinds of birds, plants or insects live in our area and for that reason our magazine must contain fact-containing lists and data, but as we become better naturalists we should consider inter-relationships between different organisms and we should become knowledgeable about the habitat requirements of each organism. We must understand what forms of nature live in our area and what their habitat requirements are in order to assess the problems which currently face us.

It seems to me that since we are in the midst of an environmental crisis, it is the responsibility of magazines such as the *Blue Jay* to examine and report on the environmental impact of all projects envisioned by man so that our members can both understand the long-term effects of these on nature and also, individually and as a group, exert some pressure on governments to conserve our human environment. I agree with R. Dasmann in *Destruction of California* when he says: "My definition of conservation includes the ecology of man's environment and the social organizations that he uses to achieve a state of well-being within that environment. Conservation problems thus range from city organization to the preservation of wilderness areas. To me they cannot be dissociated. We cannot save a wilderness or a wild species without paying attention to the problems of life in the cities; we cannot have a satisfactory life in a city without wild country and wildlife accessible on the horizon. We cannot plan for land and resources without consideration of human population problems." It is my belief, then, that the *Blue Jay* must emphasize both the specific and the general and that worthwhile articles dealing with any aspect of the natural world should be considered for publication.

At the moment of going to press the new editor of the *Blue Jay* has been named; he is V. Bernard Gollop of Saskatoon. We wish him well in his undertaking.