

Junior Naturalists

Edited by **Joyce Deutscher**, 7200 6th Ave., Regina

NATURE HOBBIES

by **Helene R. White**, Red Deer, Alberta

Summer at last! The birds are back, the flowers are blooming, moths and butterflies flit about, adding their own special magic to the summer scene.

Should you be spending the entire summer at home, put out some water for the birds; otherwise wait until you have returned from your holidays. Why? Birds need drinking and bathing water just as much as humans and as a result choose their new homesite close to an adequate supply. If you allow the water supply to dry up, they and their young will suffer, possibly die. It is better to have fewer birds at a later date, when the migrants come in the fall, than to cause a tragedy.

Choose a clear spot for the bath. Your bathers must be able to see that the area is free of predators at all times. Even a low growing shrub or bank of flowers can provide cover for a marauding cat. A tree or safe perches must be fairly handy. The home-made feeder tree mentioned in the September 1968 issue of *Blue Jay* would do.

If you have a flying saucer, one of those disc-like sleds that you used during the winter to slide down the hillsides, put it to summer use as a bird bath. It makes a dandy. Prop it up with stones or bricks to prevent wobbling and accidents. A large flat boulder could be placed in the centre for the timid. Pour a bed of gravel, coarse sand, or pebbles into the bottom of your bath for safe footing, then add water to a depth of one inch. If the bottom slopes toward the centre as with the saucer, the central depth should not exceed two and a half inches, birds are afraid of deep water.

An old enamel or aluminum roaster makes a good bath too. Keep the bath clean, changing the water regularly.

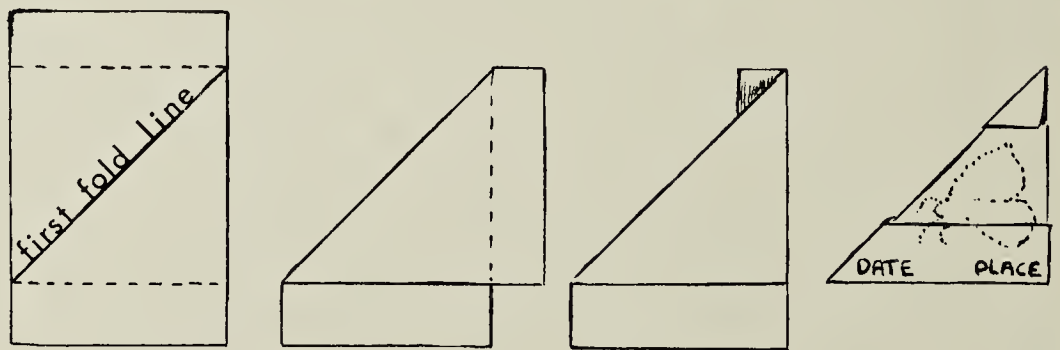
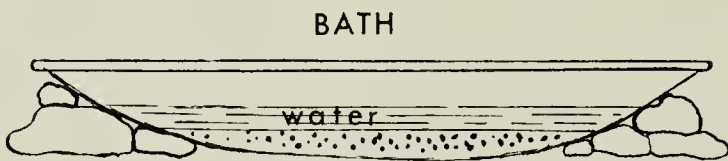
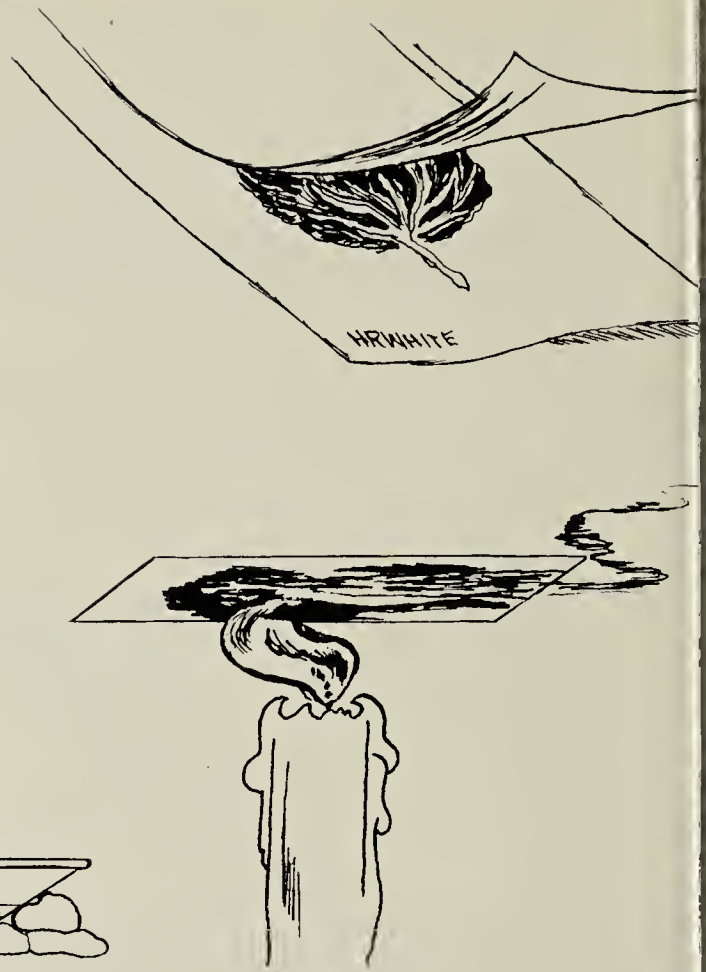
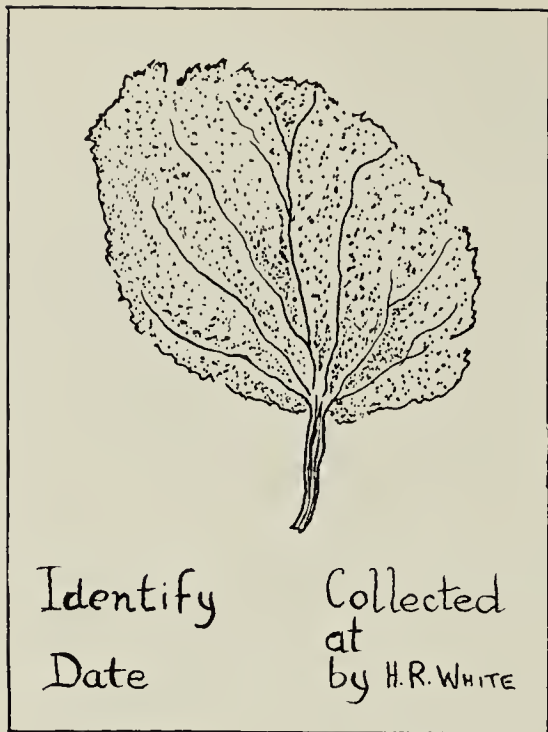
CAUTION: Do not invite birds to the summer garden if you use any insecticides, sprays or poisons whatsoever.

Prepare for fall and winter activities now. Keep your eyes open for butterflies, moths and dragonflies that have died due to natural causes. Please do not kill any. It is not necessary, because insecticides have killed a large number. I found three butterflies on our front lawn and I wasn't even searching. Place your find in an envelope, made as shown, and label it. Store them in a box with a mothball or two. I will tell you how to relax and mount them in September.

Instead of gathering pressed plants for a herbarium or maybe to supplement it, you could make a scrapbook of plant prints. It is easy, inexpensive, and can be done while camping. You'll need some paper for the prints, a brown paper bag, a candle, a bit of grease and your green leaf. Cut a good size piece of brown paper, grease it lightly, and pass over the candle flame rapidly, this way and that, almost putting the flame out. Do use caution. When your paper is coated with good black soot you are ready. Lay your leaf on it, back down, and rub. Once the leaf back is well coated with this carbon, carefully lay it on your paper, carbon side down, cover with a second sheet and rub again to transfer the print. If you are afraid the carbon print might smear, give it a good squirt with mom's hair spray.

If there is any hobby subject you would like me to deal with, just write to me at 7732 Jasper Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta.

Have a happy summer holiday and I'll see you in September.



Insect Envelope

Illustrations by Helene R.

BIRD BAND RECOVERY AS SCHOOL PROJECT

by Gerald Laliberte, Buffalo Narrows

[Editor's Note: Mr. Don McLeod, who teaches at Buffalo Narrows, has sent us a letter from one of the boys participating in his school project of recovering bird bands. Mr. McLeod tells us that there appear to be a number of bird bands in settlements near Buffalo Narrows that have been held for years, and he is having the school children collect these in order to report them to the Canadian Wildlife Service.

We are studying about bird banding and we are interested in finding out what kind of birds the bands came from.

We are collecting bird bands to to the Canadian Wildlife Service. They send us reports back telling which bird the band came from. We already have 35 bird bands and would like to get 50.

We would like them to send us films about bird bands. The birds are coming from all over the country. The Redhead was banded in Montana. The Mallard was banded in Montana. All the students from all classes are bringing bird bands and letting Mr. McLeod take the number off them and he sends them out.

According to Mr. McLeod, the Red-banded in Maryland came the first. In addition, they had a King Swan from near Inuvik, N.W.T. and a Lesser Scaup from Fort Yukon, Alaska. Mr. McLeod concludes "there appears to be a definite gradual 'drift' of waterbirds going south during fall migration. This will be better defined as more reports are received. The rough statistics we have at present show that about 20% of our discoveries have been from birds drowned in fish nets."—Ed.]

DUCK NEST DISCOVERED

by **Nicholas Shurvin**, Whitewood

Last spring we went to Pipestone looking for frogs. My brother and I found a tiny island and a mother duck flew off her nest. In it were two ducklings already out and four crack-open their shells, and two shells cracked. After a while we left so another would come back. Next spring we went back with our camera. We found a dead duckling and a cracked egg. We took the egg to the teacher who found it was in-

It was caught some frogs and they were all summer in our garden.

MYSTERY BUTTERFLY

by **Debra Hamilton**, Shellbrook

Last fall I found a butterfly among the leaves of our cabbages. It appeared to be dead but when I brought it into the house it came alive. I put it in a small jar and left the lid partly open and put it downstairs among the tables. Now being the month of November it is still downstairs but I can't tell if it is dead or alive because it appears motionless. I have looked in all places but can not find what it is.

Its wingspread is approximately 2 inches across. It is a dark velvety brown, white fringe on edge of wings, blue, green, oval dots above the white fringe, black tufts of hair on the underside of body. It has four legs,

two antlers or feelers with fuzzy balls on top of feelers.

If you know the species could you please tell me.

A RARE EXPERIENCE

by **Derwent Mazur**, Yellow Creek

Last year while recording nests for the Prairie Nest Records Scheme I was fortunate enough to find a nest of a Common Goldeneye. This was the first goldeneye nest I had ever found. When I found the nest it was already abandoned for some reason but there were two eggs in the nest. I left the nest in this state for about two weeks. I then told Mr. Isinger about my find and he was interested in seeing it. We visited the nest one day after school.

Since the nest was useless just being left alone we cut the tree down and took the nest with part of the tree.

The nest and eggs are now in the possession of Mr. Isinger.

SUMMER EPISODES

By **Derrick Edmundsen**, Shoal Lake, Manitoba

Last June we were out at our farm in the country. There was a stack of bales in the yard from which flew a young Great Horned Owl. It seemed rather weak as it flew into the poplar bluff. I ran after it, and when it landed on a low branch I grabbed it. Its wing span seemed to hinder it when flying through so many trees. It was quite light in weight. I begged my parents to let me take it home.

We phoned Dr. Houston to ask him to meet us at Yorkton to have it banded; as it was on the weekend we couldn't contact him. We banded it ourselves with an old dog tag which had our Box No. 89, Shoal Lake, on it.

I fed it canned dog food and oatmeal which it gobbled whole. I kept it two days and then let it fly away.

Also during the holidays I made a humane trap to catch rodents. Our



Derrick Edmundsen and owl.

town garden was bothered with pocket gophers. I trapped three and in the evening we would take them far out into the country and let them go.

NOTES FROM LETTERS

Mrs. White would like to hear from boys and girls and get their reaction

to the stories she has been writing for them. She would also like to get suggestions for future articles. Her address is Mrs. Helene R. White, 7732 Jasper Avenue, Edmonton 2, Alberta. Mrs. White tells us that she has discovered that Bohemian Waxwings are very fond of Sunny Boy Cereal. She buys it in 20-pound bags for them. She also keeps brandy and water on hand (50-50 solution) and gives a few drops of it to birds who have knocked themselves out against her window. She tells us this prevents clots from forming on the brain surface and keeps them from going into shock.

Garry, from Brownfield, Alberta (sorry Garry, you forgot to give your address) has been counting magpies and chickadees this last winter. He also tells us that he finds the *Blue Jay* very interesting. Thomas Shurvin who doesn't tell us where he lives, writes that one night he and his dad saw about 100 deer in one field.

CONTRIBUTIONS WELCOME

Please send letters, photos, and drawings for use in the next Junior Naturalists Section to Mrs. Joyce Deutscher, 7200 6th Avenue, Regina, Saskatchewan, to arrive not later than July 15.

Letters and Notes

ATTRACTING BIRDS

When we came to our present farm there were no trees and no birds. By planting caragana hedges, Manitoba maples, elm, ash and poplars, and later willows and a few spruce trees, by growing a garden of beautiful flowers, by establishing a bird bath, and finally, by hanging up attractive bird nests like gourds, we have encouraged more varieties of birds to come to our farm and to stay and nest here. By this fall we hope to build a large dugout, and to plant willows

around it to attract other kinds of birds, especially waterfowl. On our place, we only need to look around us to see antelope, deer, or nesting wild geese.

One of the species that has taken up residence since our arrival is the Baltimore Oriole. About six years ago several orioles arrived but stayed only a day. The next year, orioles returned in spring and stayed three days; the following year they were here for a week, and so on. Two years ago they stayed until the end of June, and last