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## BROWN THRASHER AT ISLAND LAKE, MANITOBA

by A. E. Wilson, Island Lake

A Brown Thrasher found by 12-year-old Norman Wood is a new species record for Island Lake, Manitoba. The bird was found almost dead from cold under a boat on November 1, 1968. The bird undoubtedly was a straggler and not a local resident, for its breeding range lies far to the south. Godfrey (1966. *The birds of Canada*) gives Dauphin as a northern breeding locality in Manitoba. Incidentally, this is a species unfamiliar to the boy's father who is a life-long resident of Island Lake.

R. W. Nero informs me that J. R. Ehl, Jr. and Mrs. I. Smith list the Brown Thrasher in their revised account of the birds of Churchill vicinity, far to the north of Island Lake. Its occurrence at both places must be regarded as accidental.

The date of its occurrence is late for this species in any case. Bent (1948. *Life histories of North American nuthatches, wrens, thrashers and their allies*) mentions dates in September and early October as late departure dates for Canadian localities; November 13 is the latest date given for Washington, D.C. The specimen will be given to the Manitoba Museum of Man & Nature in Winnipeg.

**Editor's Note:** Because late fall departure dates are unusual for the Brown Thrasher, it is worth mentioning here that Al and Betty Binnie recorded a Brown Thrasher seen at Regina as late as December 21, 1968.]

## OWL AND HAWK NESTS

Anyone finding an active nest of any bird of prey in Saskatchewan, is asked to contact Dr. Stuart Houston, 863 University Drive, Saskatoon, who will notify the nearest bander. Nests within 50 miles of Saskatoon, Regina, Indian Head or Yorkton will be visited and the young banded; nests at a greater distance may be visited, including most of those within 100 miles of Saskatoon, depending on numbers, and time available. With the declining numbers of many birds of prey, including now the Marsh Hawk, it is important to learn all we can of nesting success and migration routes. Experience has shown that banding visits do not adversely affect nesting success, but have contributed greatly to our knowledge.

### PRAIRIE NEST RECORDS SCHEME

Contributors are reminded to send 1969 nest record cards to Dr. Robert W. Nero, Prairie Nest Records Scheme, Manitoba Museum of Man and Nature, Winnipeg 2. If you have not previously contributed to the scheme but are interested in keeping records, write to Dr. Nero for information and nest record cards. Also available from him is the summary of the scheme's first 10 years operation (1958-67).

### GREAT GRAY OWL CONCENTRATION

Great Gray Owls appeared unexpectedly in southeastern Manitoba in late October and early November, 1968. They have since been seen in a number of localities in an area of about 45 miles by 75 miles extent bordering the west side of the Whiteshell Provincial Park east of Winnipeg. Largest numbers have been seen near extensive stands of lowland black spruce, but they have been sighted in a variety of habitats and



near habitations. As many as 13 have been counted in one day and it is believed that at least a few hundred must be involved in this unusual concentration.

In order to document the arrival, movement, and spring departure of

these birds (there being as yet no evidence of this species nesting in this part of Manitoba) persons with information are urged to contact Dr. Robert W. Nero, Manitoba Museum of Man & Nature, 147 James Avenue, Winnipeg 2, Manitoba.



Photo by Robert R. Taylor,  
Manitoba Museum of Man and Nature

Great Gray Owl, East Braintree, Manitoba, December 8, 1968