

# Letters and Notes

## NOTE TO MEMBERS

We are anxious to keep a growing membership but increases in postage rates and other costs have forced us to raise the membership fee to a minimum rate of three dollars. Many members will be tempted to drop out and the *Blue Jay* cannot be sent to anyone in arrears. We do especially need all our members this year so if you know anyone who did not get a *Blue Jay* please urge him to pay at once. We have much conservation and anti-pollution work to do so let us all get at it.

## THE PRAIRIE DOG BARKS AGAIN

In 1962 Mr. George Hooey\* of Swift Current accompanied me in making a survey of the Black-tailed Prairie Dog colonies in the Val Marie area of southwestern Saskatchewan. The report of that survey is in the September 1962 *Blue Jay*. At that time there were six active colonies in fair to very good condition.

In mid-June of this year, Mr. Hooey and I attended the summer meeting of the Saskatchewan Natural History Society in the Val Marie area. The program included the dedication of the cairn to the Prairie Dog. The cairn is on crown land formerly leased to Mr. Purask but now leased to the society.

On June 14 we found that this colony had increased greatly since 1962, no doubt due to the protection and publicity given to it by the society. On Sunday, June 15, we followed most of the trail of 1962 again. The only area showing a decrease in Prairie Dog population was on the property of Mr. Larson. His foreman assured us that they had maintained a program to keep the Prairie Dogs under control.

Mr. Murray Dixon on whose property there are two colonies stated that they were giving him some concern as they were spreading considerably but that he had not taken any control action. We did not have time to inspect the colony in the Dixon pasture, but Mr. Hanson told Mr. Hooey that it was spreading to the extent that considerable vegetation of value to livestock was being consumed by the Prairie Dogs.

It is my opinion that Black-tailed Prairie Dog is maintaining its population in Saskatchewan. I have an aerial map with the colonies we visited marked thereon. Anyone interested is welcome to see it.—*E. L. Paynter*, Regina.

\*We have just learned with regrets that Mr. Hooey died at his home February 6, 1970.

## BLUE JAY BOOKSHOP

*The Broken Snare* by R. D. Symons will probably be released in April. The price will probably be \$6.95. Order your copy from the Bookshop now if you are not a member of the Book-of-the-Month Club. We will have a review in the next *Blue Jay*.

*The Atlas of Saskatchewan* compiled and produced by the University of Saskatchewan as a centennial project is receiving high praise. The editor is Dr. J. H. Richards and the cartographer is Professor Kalu Fung. The printing was done by Modern Press in Saskatoon. \$15.00.

## SNHS SUMMER MEET, 1970

The June meeting this year will be held in and around Waskesiu, June 12, 13, 14. Those interested in accommodations should get their reservations in early. Details on accommodations and programme will be in the April Newsletter.