

## MOOSE AT ESTLIN



Photo by F. W. Lahrman

Female moose 15 miles southeast of Regina, July 13, 1971

On the morning of July 13, 1971, Mr. Wilf Brandt phoned Mr. M. K. Baker, Curator of the Saskatchewan Museum of Natural History, to report a moose feeding in a slough on his farm, 1½ miles north of Estlin. Hoping to obtain photos of the moose, I soon arrived on the scene. Mr. Brandt's sons told me that the moose had left an hour ago and pointed north.

Recent heavy rains had left the fields in a very muddy condition so I checked the first east-west road one-half mile north for tracks which would reveal where the moose had crossed. I found them, surprisingly, right at a farm yard. The moose had crossed the road and walked right past the house.

I must have looked exactly like somebody looking for a moose for as I wheeled into the yard, the lady of the house stepped out and pointed to the shelterbelt of poplars. There was a cow moose, peering out from behind the trees with her big ears fanning. The moose then ran in a long swinging trot across the open fields, again heading north. Acting on a hunch, I drove to the next farm a mile away anticipating her arrival at their shelterbelt. I announced casually that a moose was

coming and that I was trying to get a photo. Immediately, people were running in all directions. Sure enough, the moose soon arrived, still trotting at a mile-eating pace. I was able to obtain a few photos but the moose was wary — probably sensing the activity — and shied away.

She continued travelling at the same steady pace for approximately six miles and I was able to keep track of where she went by travelling devious roads that surrounded the fields. At one point, she casually trotted past a farm where the startled farmer was loading grain. She was last seen when she stopped at a slough approximately two miles east of the Brandt farm.

Moose and elk have been seen before, but very rarely, on the Regina plains. Approximately 10 years ago, Mr. F. G. Bard observed two moose south of Regina Beach. An elk was photographed at Richardson, July 1, 1966, by Robert R. Taylor (see *Blue Jay*, 24:156). It is not known where they come from, but I assume that they may have strayed from the Moose Mountain area.—*F. W. Lahrman*, Saskatchewan Museum of Natural History, Regina.