

Table 2
ROAD KILLS IN WESTERN ALBERTA

Richardson's Ground Squirrel	13
Porcupine	4
Crow	6
Magpie	2
Pintail	1
Small unidentified mammals (mouse size)	4
Small unidentified birds (sparrow size)	8
House Cat	1
TOTAL	39

I would like to thank Doris Coulton of Bentley and Cameron MacGregor of Red Deer for acting as observers on some of the journeys involved.

DONOVAN, JAMES. 1975. *Wildlife Road Kills*. Blue Jay 33:120.



30 Years Ago

From the October-December, 1945, *Blue Jay* comes the following report by Cliff Shaw, entitled, "A Wasp Episode":

On the Labour Day weekend, while hunting arrowheads on a sand blow along the Assiniboine, we watched one of the digger wasps hard at work.

When first noted the wasp had just begun to excavate a vertical shaft in the fine loose sand. The insect, black and scarcely half an inch in length, was rapidly digging similar to the manner in which a dog digs for a gopher. Working from one spot, the sand flew from between her front feet and was tossed fully 3 to 4 inches behind her, over the edge of the hole. As the incline became more steep and sand tumbled to the bottom of the hole, she would run backwards up the side and begin a new trough about an inch from the rim.

When the funnel-shaped hole was about 3 inches deep, and approximately the same in diameter, the wasp uncovered a smooth green caterpillar, apparently still alive.

Turning the larva over on its side the wasp grasped it by the head and pressed her abdomen against its thorax. We could not observe whether the wasp was administering a sting to paralyse the larva or was depositing an egg. This action was repeated several times.

Although the caterpillar was many times her own weight and over an inch in length, the wasp dragged it out of the hole. Then she got astride it! The wasp reminded us of a small plane with an oversized bomb load, the caterpillar being almost three times her own length.

By some unseen method the larva was underslung to the body of the wasp — probably being held in her strong mandibles. Running on all legs, the wasp struck out rapidly across the sand blow. Whenever she met an obstruction in her path she would drop the caterpillar and scout the possibilities of an easier route. At every 10 or 15 feet she would stop for a rest, remaining astride the larva.

After watching the wasp carry her heavy load for 40 or 50 feet, we lost sight of her when she ran into a clump of grass.