

## 30 Years Ago

An unusual contribution to ornithology in Saskatchewan was published unpretentiously in the April-May-June, 1943, issue of the *Blue Jay*. Laurence B. Potter of Eastend, Saskatchewan, submitted an article entitled "Saskatchewan Bird Records Made Since The Publication Of Mitchell's Catalogue Of Saskatchewan Birds In 1924". There were 27 species in the list, including 12 records that were still sufficiently noteworthy as to be referred to, either specifically or generally, in W. E. Godfrey's "Birds of Canada" in 1966. Taken verbatim from the article, the 12 are:

AMERICAN (COMMON) EGRET. — Specimen taken at Davidson by Reuben Lloyd, August 7, 1937.

MOUNTAIN PLOVER. — Sight record, J. Dewey Soper near Bracken, June, 1939.

BARN OWL. — Specimen obtained from Aylesbury, May 5, 1924.

RUFIOUS HUMMINGBIRD. — Specimen picked up at Eastend in dying condition, Aug. 10, 1929 by Henry Clarke. Sent by L. B. Potter to Provincial Museum.

CALLIOPE HUMMINGBIRD. — Specimen taken by Charles Guiguet at Shaunavon, August 22, 1935.

PINYON JAY. — Sight record by L. B. Potter at Eastend, September 16, 1910.

BULLOCKS ORIOLE. — Sight record by Potter at Eastend, May 27, 1937. Specimen of young bird taken by Potter, July 10, 1937.

HEPBURN'S (GRAY-CROWNED) ROSY FINCH. — Specimen taken by Spencer Pearse, Ravenscrag, March 1, 1933.

GREEN-TAILED TOWHEE. — Specimen taken by Norman Clarke at Tregarva, June 6, 1929.

BLACK-THROATED BLUE WARBLER. — Specimen taken by John Nelson at Percival, October 21, 1936.

SAGE THRASHER. — Specimen taken south of Shaunavon on Frenchman River by Charles F. Holmes, June 24, 1933.

MOCKINGBIRD. — First seen by Potter at Eastend, May 31, 1928. Specimen collected June 4. Second specimen collected by S. A. Mann, Skull Creek, Nov. 1, 1929.

Four of the other records were:

HUDSONIAN CURLEW. — Specimen taken by Mitchell at Last Mountain Lake, May 29, 1924.

BLACK VULTURE. — Sight record, E. M. Knowles, Regina, September 19, 1939.

SCREECH OWL. — Specimen taken by Mitchell, Souris Valley, 1926.

CHIMNEY SWIFT. — Two specimens secured by F. G. Bard from the Pasco Hills, May, 1939.

The other 11 species were: Caspian Tattler, Blue Goose, Little Brown Crane, Yellow Rail, Knot, Cooper's Hawk, Crested Flycatcher, Lazuli Bunting, Rough-winged Swallow, Connecticut Warbler and Golden-crowned Kinglet.

### JUNCOS WINTERING NEAR THE CHURCHILL IN SASKATCHEWAN

According to "Birds of Canada" by Godfrey, the Slate-colored Junco has been recorded wintering as far north as the Nipawin area. It might be of interest to note that there has been one Slate-colored Junco here on the banks of the Churchill this winter. I observed it on Feb. 13, 14, and 15, 1973, for a few minutes on each of those dates, always between 9:30 and 10:30 a.m. It was on a wooden platform which was leaning against the side of a plywood shed in our yard, about 14 feet from the windows. As these mornings were cold, the bird was obviously taking advantage of the morning sun's rays which shone against the shed, and were reflected by the plywood.

Seven years ago in Pine House Lake (about 15 miles south of the Churchill) in December, 1966, I had seen a flock of perhaps a half a dozen of these juncos near our house a few times, but being a relatively new bird watcher I did not realize they were out of their supposed winter range. — Mrs. Theresa Zaitsev, Stanley Mission, Saskatchewan

### WINTERING RAVENS AT SYLVAN LAKE, ALBERTA

On December 20, 1972, I sighted a Raven, which is not a common sight in this part of Alberta. Then, on New Year's Day, I saw a pair of these birds flying across the road. Again on January 14, 1973, while I was having breakfast a Raven flew past my house. I went outside to investigate and saw two more birds flying above the tree tops. A

later, while snowmobiling near a grove along the lake shore, I found five Ravens flying near the shore. Upon investigation, I found the birds had been feasting on a pine carcass and had roosted in the brush overnight. Toward the end of the year it was not at all unusual to sight Ravens in the area . . .

We are having a very mild winter this year, as a result of the wet fall, grain is growing on the swath under the snow. The Raven population has increased on the swathed fields so the Ravens may be feasting because there is no lack of food for them. — *Helge S. Abrahamson*, 1968, Sylvan Lake, Alberta.

### DISTRACTION DISPLAY BY A FEMALE RING-NECKED PHEASANT

In the afternoon of June 6, 1971, on one of my frequent nature walks I was walking home through the tree grove on our ranch, when a female Ring-necked Pheasant ran past me. She stopped walking and she stopped a short distance away, she then made a running start around me back to her starting point. She stopped and uttered a loud chuck. She then circled around again about 2 feet of me, stopping at the same place and uttering another loud chuck. I walked slowly to the place where she always stopped and several fluffy baby pheasants, not more than a day or two old ran in all directions. The mother Pheasant came close to me, holding one wing and limping slowly, trying to lure me away too. I ran quickly away in the opposite direction of the baby pheasants leaving the mother pheasant to gather her brood again.

This is the first time that I have seen a female Ring-necked pretend to be crippled in order to lure someone away from her young. Usually the mother pheasant flies off leaving the baby pheasants to flatten themselves to the ground, where they are almost invisible, until a person looks for them very carefully. — *Daisy D. Meyers*, Leader, Saskatchewan.

### RED FOXES IN ALBERTA AND SASKATCHEWAN

Your story about the red fox making a comeback in Alberta prompted me to write a few lines, as the same thing seems to be happening in this area.

In the 1930's, there was nowhere near the wildlife there is in the area today. Beaver were gone completely and the fox as well. The Canada lynx and mink were very rare and deer and moose were scarce.

Last winter there were many beaver, fox, lynx and mink taken in this district. Deer are much more plentiful and occasionally a moose is heard.

I don't pretend to know the reason for these changes. However, I think the government's policy of conservation has certainly helped and there are fewer farms in this area and less than 1/3 the people living here now.

Another rare animal for this district is the raccoon which I saw on Sept. 15, 1968, about 3 miles south and 1 mile west of Mullingar. — *Ralph Cowell*, Mullingar, Saskatchewan

### BARBED WIRE AND A BAT

In September, 1972, when I was on a bicycle ride with a friend, we saw a bat hanging on a barbed wire fence. When we looked closer we found it was caught by its tail on one of the barbs. The photograph was taken with an instant camera.

Before removing the bat, I went home to fetch a pair of leather gloves in case we got bitten and caught rabies. The bat was so badly injured that it died. — *Ian Dayes*, (Age 9), Box 193, Unity, Saskatchewan

