



Common Merganser

Bob Mitchell

SCARLET TANAGER REPORTED AT KATEPWA

by MANLEY CALLIN*

Two observations in 1973 of this rare and beautiful visitor from the southeast have been brought to my attention. The details are as follows:

On May 21, 1973, Bernard De Vries of Fort Qu'Appelle was driving along the highway a short distance east of the village of Katepwa when he saw a bright red bird at the roadside ahead. He immediately slammed on his brakes and quickly realized that he was watching a male Scarlet Tanager and another bird which was apparently the female. As the birds flew leisurely from one roadside shrub to another, Bernie slowly moved the car ahead and at times was within 15 or 20 feet from them. He states that he followed them in this manner for several minutes before they disappeared into the dense thickets lining the roadside.

On May 28, 1973, Margaret Belcher kindly mailed a note to me to the effect that Elizabeth Cruickshank had notified her that Larry Shaw had recently seen a Scarlet Tanager at Katepwa. By telephone and by correspondence Larry advised me that on May 22, 1973, he was driving along

Fort Qu'Appelle, Saskatchewan.

the highway a short distance west of the village of Katepwa (north of the Salter's Beach cottages) when he saw a flaming scarlet bird by the roadside. He stopped immediately but the bird flew into the shrubs. As he waited, the bird re-appeared and he had a perfect view as only the width of the road separated them.

The observations by De Vries on May 21 and by Shaw on May 22 were only a short distance apart and this strongly suggests that they had both seen the same bird.

We wish to express our appreciation to those who were involved in the reporting of these records. It would also be appropriate to mention that Larry Shaw is a brother of the deceased Cliff Shaw of Yorkton, whom a large number of members of our Society will remember with affection.

Readers are referred to a review of Scarlet Tanager Records in Saskatchewan by Margaret Belcher in the September, 1965, *Blue Jay* (p. 117-119).

SUMMER FLOCK OF COMMON LOONS IN MANITOBA

by ROBERT W. NERO*

Recently, while examining files of the Manitoba Department of Mines, Resources and Environmental Management, I found an unpublished record of a large flock of Common Loons. In view of the considerable interest in the phenomenon of summer flocking in this species (*Blue Jay*, June and December, 1972) this information is worth recording.

Daniel Bushree of Wayne, Michigan, reported that while on a fishing trip he observed and filmed 250 or 300 loons in one flock in the

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southwest corner of Second Cranberry Lake on June 25, 1962. This is less than 25 miles southwest of Flin Flon. As noted above, large numbers of Common Loons have been seen in summer within 50 miles of Flin Flon in 1943, 1946, 1963, 1970, 1971 and 1972. Bushree's record provides further evidence that the lakes in this region attract large numbers of loons.

In correspondence with Bushree dated August 27, 1962, C. H. D. Clarke, then Chief of the Ontario Fish and Wildlife Branch, stated: "During the summer months, loons may be seen along the Hudson Bay coast in groups of ten and fifteen, but none of us has noticed any flocks as large as two hundred and fifty to three hundred birds. Since the mature male and female birds both engage in nesting and brooding of young, it is probable that the birds you saw were non-breeding birds. I do not believe that we are entirely sure at what age the loon becomes active in breeding, but it is possible that they do not breed until their third or fourth year of life and that the flocks of loons which are seen are non-breeding birds of one and two years. During the early spring there are large flocks of loons on the southern portion of Lake Huron but these are birds seen in migration. In addition, the same flocks occur occasionally during the fall."

ALBERTA ORNITHOLOGICAL RECORDS COMMITTEE

The Federation of Alberta Naturalists are pleased to announce the establishment of the Alberta Ornithological Records Committee under the chairmanship of Dr. W. Ray Salt. The Committee is composed of seven members, five from Alberta and

one each from British Columbia and Saskatchewan (Dr. C. S. Houston). The Alberta members will constitute the main working group of the Committee, with the out-of-province members being called upon to provide an opinion on submitted records where required.

The Federation believes that the Committee will fill a need and will provide a degree of authenticity to records of sighting and breeding of birds in Alberta. We wish to encourage Albertan naturalists and visitors to our Province to submit details of observations of species of birds seen in various areas of Alberta and especially rare and unusual species of birds.

There are two main functions of the Alberta Ornithological Records Committee (AORC):

1. The AORC will serve as a repository for records of birds from any and all parts of Alberta. The Committee welcomes reports on Alberta birds in any form but a report form called by the Committee an Area List will be printed and will be available for distribution early in 1974. All records should be sent to: The Secretary, Alberta Ornithological Records Committee, Provincial Museum and Archives of Alberta, 12845 - 102 Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta, T5N 0M6.

NOTE: It should be emphasized that in this form, the Area List, is not intended to replace, nor to be used as a substitute for, the individual record cards currently being used by several Societies of Naturalists in Alberta.

2. The AORC, when requested to do so, will examine the documentation of records of rare and unusual species of birds in Alberta. When serving the role as an adjudicating body, the Committee will place each record in one of the following categories: I. Substantiated Record, II. Documented Observation, III. Documented Nesting Record, IV. Unsubstantiated Observation, and will advise the observer of its decision.

A list of species and the zones of the Province in which a record would be considered unusual will shortly be published by the AORC.