

Pasture Plants. In 1913, Norman was appointed entomologist to the Canadian government and they soon built him a laboratory on the Criddle farm. Norman published 125 papers about birds, mammals, flowers and especially insects, and studied the life cycle of more than 70 species of grasshopper. He had "remarkable biological judgement which was controlled by study and guided by a great breadth of mind nurtured upon wide and thoughtful reading in science, literature and art." No less an authority than Hoyes Lloyd stated in his obituary that "Canada in losing him has lost her best field-naturalist."

The entire family had an affinity for nature. Chickadees came and ate from their hands, and the book includes a photo of redpolls swarming over Maida. Percy's diaries recorded some firsts, including the first raccoon for the area in 1883 and the first house sparrow in 1897. However, this book tells us much more about the Criddles themselves than about their observations.

Additional research might have corrected a few omissions and errors. Although his knowledge of Canadian birds was decidedly limited, Percy began sending migration dates to Washington in 1884, a fact omitted from this book. Norman was an Associate of the American Ornithologists' Union, not a counsellor and Past President, an error which was copied from his obituary in the *Canadian Entomologist*.

We owe Alma Criddle a debt of gratitude for her skillful use of Percy and Norman Criddle's diaries as the main source of material for this book. Carol Scott provided the initial encouragement for writing it, and the surviving members of the family contributed their reminiscences.

The unusual title of the book, *Criddle-de-diddle-enis*, is explained in chapter 19. In 1883, Percy Criddle was visited by English naturalist and author R. Miller Christy, and his young friend Ernest E. Thompson (Seton). These men admired Percy's already creditable butterfly collec-

tion. After their departure, Percy humourously recorded in his diary that his "new friends anticipate brilliant future and immortality, owing to my possible discovery of some new insect or other in this unexplored district which will be of course called Criddle-de-diddle-enis or some other fancy family name."

This interesting book may be obtained through the Blue Jay Bookshop, Box 1121, Regina. —C. Houston, 863 University Dr., Saskatoon, Saskatchewan S7J 0J8.

THE AMERICAN ROBIN

A Backyard Institution

LEN EISERER, with line drawings by Martha R. Hall. 1976. Nelson Hall Publishers, 325 W. Jackson Blvd., Chicago 60606. 165 pp. \$12.50 US.

This book is a readable description of the life style and natural history of the American Robin. The feeling of the author and others who strive to live in harmony with the natural world is well expressed in the dedication, "To Robins everywhere, may they continue to prosper beyond the human reckoning of time, and California Condors, that they may forgive us for what we have done."

Under the heading "Hey, Wait! That a Robin?" Chapter 1 describes the range of the robin's contact with human beings in North America at various times of the year and at various geographical locations. The following chapters treat differences between the six races of robins, migration to nesting areas, and stages of the life cycle, again with special reference to contact with human beings and their "nests" or "territories".

The diet of robins is discussed in detail, with particular regard to variations at different times of year and stages of maturity of fledglings. The fact that robins cultivate fruit is discussed separately without accepting all the claims of crop damage that are made.

The discussion of robin behaviour includes group roosting, territorial tolerance on feeding grounds, changes of behaviour at different seasons of the year and overwintering. The care of injured birds is treated briefly.

The author's clear style, not burdened with excessive detail, makes his book readable from Grade level up. His reference to studies of the natural history of robins inspire the reader's confidence. There are several colour photographs of robins — nestlings, juveniles and adults — these are excellent. But the use of

very wide margins in the text seems a waste of paper hardly in keeping with thrift in use of natural resources.

By its general tone, this book emphasizes the sacredness of life and the fragility of the relationship between human beings and the wild animals which we meet at close range. It repeatedly conveys the thought expressed in the final chapter in the description of a young robin shot by a boy with an air rifle, "A little lame Robin who lived in the hands of human compassion but died at the hands of human callosity." — J. R. Jowsey, 2635 - 19th Ave., Regina, Saskatchewan S4T 1X2



Robin

Fred W. Lahrman

AVAILABLE FOR YOUR INFORMATION . . .

NO TRESPASSING — the proceedings of a seminar held by the Conservation Council of Ontario on the problems of public access to private land. The 16 page booklet is available from the Council office at 45 Charles Street West, Toronto, Ontario M4Y 1S2, for \$0.50.

YOU AND PESTICIDE USE — a new pamphlet available from the Plant Industry Branch, Saskatchewan Department of Agriculture, Room 101, Administration Building, Regina S4S 0B1.

ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COUNCIL 1976 ANNUAL REPORT —

a 21 page report outlining the activities of the Council during the past year. Available from the Council at Sub P.O. Box 40, Regina, Saskatchewan.

THE RECLAMATION STORY — a glossy, 12 page brochure that tells the story of the Saskatchewan Power Corporation's efforts at reclaiming strip mined land in the Estevan area. Available from SPC Head Office, Regina, Saskatchewan.

LAND FOR WILDLIFE AND PEOPLE — an attractive brochure that introduces Manitoba's Wildlife Management Areas. Available from the Department of Renewable Resources and Transportation Services, Box 22, 1495 St. James Street, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3H 0W9.