

when they flew from one end of the lake to the other the Little Gull fell 100 to 200 yards behind the Bonaparte's Gull. This may be only when the birds are flying to escape danger. Probably in migration flight and as we saw in feeding flight, the Little Gull had no difficulty in keeping up with the flock of Bonaparte's that it must have arrived with.

Special thanks go to Bob Luterback, the person who first spotted the bird and my co-identifier. Thanks are also due Jim Jowsey, Margaret Belcher, Frank Brazier and, especially George Ledingham for confirming the identification.

¹GODFREY, W. E. 1966. *The birds of Canada*. Nat. Mus. Canada Bull. 203. 428 pp.

²NERO, R. W. 1963. *Birds of the Lake Athabasca region, Saskatchewan*. Sask. Nat. Hist. Soc. Spec. Pub. 5. 143 pp.

³PETERSON, R. T. 1947. *A field guide to the birds*. Houghton-Mifflin, Boston. 290 pp.

⁴ROBBINS, C. S., B. BRUUN and H. S. ZIM. 1966. *Birds of North America. A guide to field identification*. Golden Press, New York. 340 pp.

Editor's Note: A few Little Gulls were found nesting in Ontario in 1962!

HOUSE FINCHES SIGHTED IN REGINA

by FRED G. BARD*

At approximately 1:45 p.m. on April 26, 1973, my wife, Phyllis, called me outside to see three birds which she was sure she hadn't seen in Regina before. To my surprise, they were House Finches — all three rosy-coloured males. They were feeding in our neighbour's adjoining backyard on the ground and later on the buds of seedling plum trees. They afforded us an excellent view as they fed for about 10 minutes. In recent years during several rather lengthy visits to New Mexico and California, we had

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become familiar with House Finches which are common residents there. They could only be confused with the Purple Finch which was a frequent visitor to our neighbourhood this spring but the song and call notes are quite distinctive from those of the Purple Finch. As well, the reddish colouring on the House Finch is a different shade, being more scarlet than the wine red or purplish red of the Purple Finch which also has a light cheek streak. However, to make certain of the identification we were able to compare field marks with the aid of Robbins' field guide, "Birds of North America" with the birds before us. The brown streaking of the breast, side and flanks confirmed the identification. Suddenly, they flew away and, although I placed mixed seeds in the area in hopes of attracting them back, they were not seen again.

L. G. Saunders reported seeing a male House Finch at Saskatoon, October 15, 1959 (*Blue Jay*, December 1959:158), but because not all field marks were noted at the time the record has not generally been accepted. Note that this species has not appeared on the official list of Saskatchewan birds.

W. Earl Godfrey in "Birds of Canada", 1966, describes their range as follows: "Southwestern and central southern British Columbia, Idaho, Wyoming, and western Nebraska south to southern Mexico." Included in the range description for Canada is the notation quote, "casual in southwestern Alberta (Jasper Park May 29, 1944)."

A FURTHER SIGHTING OF WANDERING TATTLERS IN ALBERTA

by E. OTTO HOHN*

The second edition of *Birds of Alberta*¹ states that Wandering Tattlers have been recorded in the province on three occasions, each report involving a single bird. Professor W. Ray Sal

as informed me that to his knowledge there have been no additional reports of this species in Alberta. The breeding range is northwestern British Columbia, Yukon, Alaska and probably Siberia.

It is, therefore, of interest to record that on September 2, 1973, I had good views of four tattlers accompanied by two Pectoral Sandpipers on the south shore of Beaverhill Lake, about 40 miles east of Edmonton. Observation through 10-power binoculars showed the tattler to be considerably larger than the sandpiper. They were grey above and white below though one of them still showed faint dark bars on the side of the breast. They had black beaks and greenish legs and in flight showed no wing bars or white markings on rump or tail.

These four birds not only represent the largest number of their species so far seen at one time in Alberta, but they were also observed further east, i.e., further from the main route of migration of the species, than those previously reported.

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ALT, W. R. and WILK, A. L., 1966. *The birds of Alberta*. 2nd Ed. Dept. Ind. and Dev., Edmonton, Alberta. 511 pp.

PRAIRIE NEST RECORDS SCHEME

Cards and information for the 1974 nesting season are available from:

Prairie Nest Records Scheme,
c/o Manitoba Museum of Man
and Nature,
190 Rupert Ave., Winnipeg,
Manitoba. R3B 0NZ

A summary for the 1973 season is available on request. More participants are required throughout the Prairie Provinces.

H. W. R. Copland, Coordinator.

DANCING SHARP-TAILED GROUSE AND PREDATORS

by DALE HJERTAAS*

In the spring of 1973, while censusing Sharp-tailed Grouse dancing grounds with Saskatchewan Department of Natural Resources field crews, I noted several cases of predation and attempted predation.

On May 3, at Hafford Community Pasture, 8 miles south of Hafford, George Duff and I surprised a Goshawk feeding on a dead grouse in the middle of a dancing ground. The Goshawk carried the grouse toward the nearest trees, ¼ mile away, but dropped it half way. We recovered the grouse and later photographed it to show the partly eaten right breast.

The next day at the same dancing ground we observed a male Marsh Hawk harrassing grouse. Five times, it chased all 20 or so sharp-tails off the dancing ground but did not have the speed to capture a flying sharp-tail. Each time the grouse flew 40 or 50 yards, landed and almost immediately ran back part way; most then flew the remaining distance to the dancing ground.

On May 16, near Redvers, I observed another case of apparent attempted predation on courting sharp-tails. My view of this dancing was obscured by tall grass and weeds, although I could hear grouse dancing and calling vigorously. I observed individual birds flushing, flying about 10 or 15 feet and then landing. When I approached to count them, I caught a glimpse of a mammal disappearing into the weeds on the far side of the dancing ground. Its size, shape and slow speed, as indicated by moving grass, convinced me that it was a skunk, and that the unusual flushing by single sharp-tails was caused by this skunk endeavouring to capture a bird. The individual grouse flushed when approached closely, but were not frightened enough to leave. This reac-

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