INTER BIRD OBSERVATIONS AT RANIUM CITY, SASKATCHEWAN, 69-1976

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W. Nero gave a detailed account, ding a review of previous work, e avifauna of the Lake Athabasca on.1 However, Nero's visits were ned to the summer; for informaon winter occurrences he had to on other observers.

anium City, including nearby ell and Eldorado, has a very cted winter bird life; my obserns made in the course of six trips een late November and late h over a seven-year period add species and suggest that the of a few others should be fied. My visits were as follows: 9-31, 1969; Jan. 27-30, 1970; Nov. 1971; Dec. 18-21, 1972; Jan 28-975 and Mar. 25-29, 1976. They made to secure live Willow Ptarn on a special permit for a conng research project.

s short list of birds is essentially ned to winter status with com-s on Nero's summary of this in where my observations suggest fication.

S. AWK: One seen successfully proring a Willow Ptarmigan on Nov. 27, a glimpse of a hawk, probably this H-s, perhaps the same bird, was made Cov. 29, 1971. Nero calls it a common nent resident.

DW PTARMIGAN: One or a few flocks of 4-8 birds seen on all visits in 1969 when only recent tracks een. I was driven on most visits over all roads in the area and, though has ptarmigan were commonly seen, birds were never numerous.

PTARMIGAN: Nero gives five s of Rock Ptarmigan shot in the area specimens were obtained) in the 1957-1961. In March, 1976, Mr. arl y" MacDonald, a Uranium City Inhowed me a frozen male Rock Ptar-

migan among nine Willow Ptarmigan which he had shot locally during the preceding November. The records in toto suggest that this species is a regular winter visitant in very small numbers.

DOWNY WOOKPECKER: The only woodpecker observed; single birds were seen in two different areas in late March, 1976.

COMMON RAVEN: The only winter bird which is truly common (for so large a bird) both in the settlements and at least for some miles from them. Among other activities they scavenge food from dogs in Uranium City. On my only visit to the town Garbage dump (Dec. 20, 1972) there were about 50 ravens there.

GRAY JAY: A few were seen in the course of all visits.

BLACK-CAPPED CHICKADEE: This is the only chickadee I saw in the area, one on Nov. 27, 1971 and several on Mar. 27, 1976. Nero gives its status as "a fairly common summer resident." No doubt the Boreal Chickadee is a winter bird of the area too but it appears to be even scarcer than the Black-capped.

BOHEMIAN WAXWING: One seen Jan. 28, 1970; this suggests that it may be a permanent rather than merely a summer resident.

NORTHERN SHRIKE: Not listed by Nero and thus there are presumably no previous records for nothern Saskatchewan. One seen at Eldorado, Nov. 27, 1971, flushed some Redpolls but did not pursue them.

HOUSE SPARROW: A few, up to 10 on one occasion, were seen on all visits but only in Uranium City, never at Eldorado or Bushell. It may have decreased since the early 1960's; Nero considered it a fairly common permanent resident. However, even then it only had that status at Uranium City.

PINE GROSBEAK: Five were seen by my

n,

companion, Mr. D. Dekker, but only heard calling by myself on Nov. 29, 1971, at Eldorado.

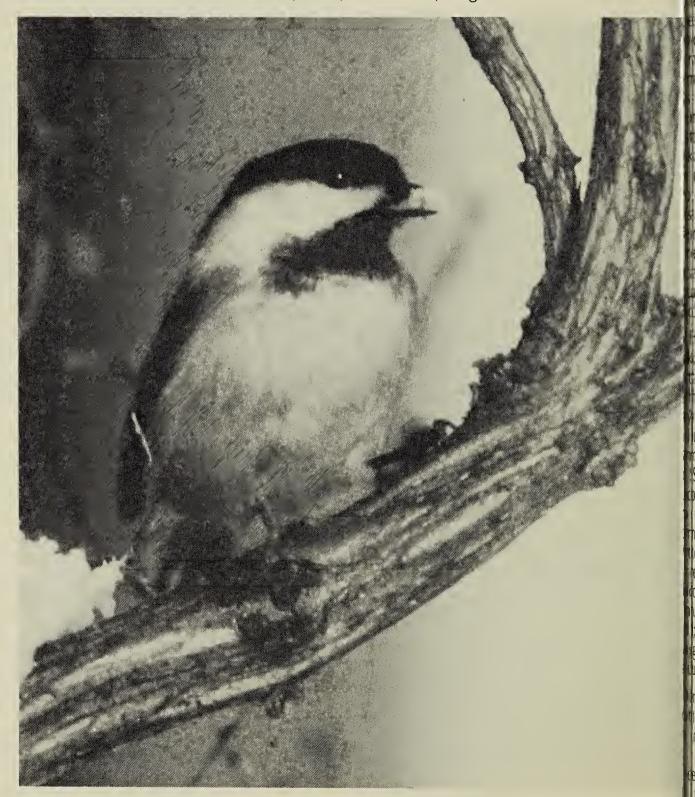
HOARY REDPOLL: At least three flocks, each of up to 20, were seen during a walk from Eldorado to Uranium City, Nov. 26, 1971. Nero rates this species a rare transient; it appears rather to be a frequent, probably even a regular, winter visitor. Redpolls, not seen at sufficiently close range to distinguish between this and the Common species, were also seen on Dec. 18, 1972, and a small flock and single birds in late March, 1976.

RED CROSSBILL: On March 27, 1976, I

caught glimpses of and heard the mistakable call of a few of these bird the edge of Uranium City. Nero report Mar. 7 record. They are probably per nent rather than only summer reside

SNOW BUNTING: A small flock was along the Uranium/Eldorado road, 129, 1971.

¹NERO, R. W. 1963. The birds of the L Athabasca region, Saskatchev Specl. Pub. No. 5, Sask. Natl. I Soc., Regina.



Black-capped Chickadee

Lorne