

SOME GYRFALCON SIGHTINGS IN SASKATCHEWAN.

by FRED W. LAHRMAN*

On November 25, 1973, I had a splendid view of a black phase Gyrfalcon at the Wascana Waterfowl park area.

I immediately reported the sighting to other Regina birders. Gary Seib, Dr. and Mrs. Jim Jowsey and Frank Brazier located it on Wascana Lake feeding on a small duck on the ice near a patch of open water. It flew to Spruce Island nearby carrying the duck with it and was not seen again. On the same date Bob Turner saw a white phase Gyrfalcon flying over the town of Ogema.

On December 9, R. J. Long sighted a dark Gyr near Valeport.

A more recent sighting was reported by Sue Rockwood, who saw a white phase Gyr on April 13, 1974, flying west over Regina city.

Ronald and Donald Hooper in "A Preliminary List of the Birds of the Somme District, Sask. April 1954" reported the following Gyrfalcon observations:

"Regular but uncommon in early winter. Most common from Oct. 18 to mid-December, 1951 when several birds of the white colour phases were seen."

On recent inquiry Ron reported that the white phase Gyr were seen only in 1951 but the black phase falcons were seen in the early part of the winter of 1951-1952 and 1953 but have not been seen since.

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THOUGHTS OF A BACKWARD FLYING DUCK LANDING AT A BIOLOGIST'S STUDY AREA

by BEV CHIPPING*

I can tell by the sound
At the local duck pound
That they've put out the grain once
again.

It amazes me still
That they get such a thrill
From watching this plain little hen.

They think I'm quite odd
When I land on their sod
With my tail ahead of my beak.
And they scurry to hide,
I note with great pride,
To catch a wee little peek.

They'd bust if they knew
How I tried and construed
To develop my different approach.
There is none to compare
As I land from the air
Like a footman just leaving his coach

I got tired, you see,
Of the same drudgery
Of being like orthodox ducks
So I thought I would try
Some new ways to fly
And develop some interesting clucks.

I can tell by their look
And that net on that hook
That they'll try to catch little old me.
So I'll take a low bow
And quickly leave now
Or I'll end up one more researchee.

Too bad they can't see
That if they catch me
They'll destroy my developing tail.
I'm one of a kind
So, if you don't mind,
I'll go find a compatible male.

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2,199 fish eggs were found in an adult male mallard, May 17, 1974 Wintago Lake, Churchill River system. Suckers and walleye were spawning at the time.

Dale Hjertaas and John Poulson