

Letters

BIRD BOX SUGGESTIONS

I run a small line of bird houses, and have enjoyed birds and conservation for years. Here are some of my views on bird boxes.

If you have trouble with vandalism, place your boxes in a small amount of cover. Also have your boxes on the opposite side of a post, *not* facing the road. Generally the vandals are lazy gunners who shoot from vehicle windows. In this way they have less chance of spotting boxes and also less target if they do.

Our House Sparrow is a constant threat. I keep my houses low, below the top fence wire; this attracts few sparrows. Had only two out of 35 last week. These I try to catch and destroy.

Another thing I'm going to do is make two entrance holes for swallows and bluebirds. This will give them an escape route if danger threatens — *Ron Klimock*, Box 754, Russell, Manitoba. ROJ 1W0



"DO AS I DO"

Three young robins were perched on the 3-foot fence in my flower garden. The mother robin was obviously coaxing them to get down into the garden to look for worms, but the young ones did not want to move. After about 5 minutes or so, the mother robin flew up, and then came swooping down and bumped the first young robin with its head, and the youngster fell into the garden. She then repeated this operation with the second and then the third.

The young robins must have known what this was all about, as all three began to look for worms, and I might add that they were successful in their attempts. — *Mrs. Anne Andrusyshen*, 1120 Main St., Saskatoon.



BULLSNAKE NEAR KYLE, SASK.

On July 11, at approximately 11:00 a.m., Jim Goring and I were driving on a grid road 13 miles south and 3 miles east of Kyle, Sask. We encountered a snake sunning itself on the road and could not avoid hitting it. Upon comparing the snake to a photo, we found it was a Bullsnake, 5 feet in length. Another person confirmed our identification of the snake. Unfortunately, conditions for preserving the specimen were unfavorable, so we destroyed it. — *Rodney Wapple*, Box 1153, Biggar, Sask. SOK 0M0



30 Years Ago

From the July-September, 1946. *Blue Jay* (Vol. 4, No. 4): *Bird Watching from a "Jeep"*. By Farley Mowat. I arrived at Dundurn, Saskatchewan, on May 7, 1946, immediately set up a collecting camp, and prepared to devote a month to the study of migrational birds in the central part of the province. During the few days when it was warm enough for the birds and myself to brave the elements, I managed to make some very interesting observations. One record of particular interest was for a pair of Say's Phoebes noted on May 15. Although this seems to be a very northerly record, apparently the most northerly for the province, it is not unexpected since some Say's Phoebes nest along the Mackenzie River and are fairly common migrants through central and northern Alberta. Apart from the Phoebes, the best observations were made on wading birds which were very abundant on the few sloughs that remained alive in the Dundurn-Saskatoon area. On May 21, at a place called Proctor Lake, I was fortunate enough to observe 27 species of shorebirds in the space of five hours. These included Avocets, Hudsonian Curlews, Knots, Stilt Sandpiper and what was almost certainly a female