

NOTES & LETTERS

FIRST MARBLED MURRELET RECORD FOR ALBERTA

The Marbled Murrelet carcass pictured below was found by the author on the shore of Saskatoon Lake (NE/6-72-7w6) on 8 July 1994. No apparent cause of death could be determined. The carcass was forwarded to the Alberta Provincial Museum in Edmonton where it now resides as a skin.

- Gavin Moore, RR#1, Wembley, AB.

A DIFFERENT DRUMMER

The author has analyzed the crazy-flight phenomenon of the Ruffed Grouse in several articles, including nine grouse collisions with our farm home in the 1960s and 1970s.^{2,3,4,5,6,7} The conclusion was that more than a dozen distinct conditions may contribute to the flight or even initiate it but they are always complemented by the underlying

reason — the grouse's natural rocketing take-off and limited manoeuvrability. After a hiatus of 20 years, another grouse collided with the same house, and survived.

On 25 May 1995, shortly after 9:00 p.m. (the sun had already set), I entered our vacated, darkened farmhouse, three miles east of Rosthern. Scatter rugs askew on the living-room floor caught my attention, but not nearly as much as some movement up a far wall in the semidarkness. I was thinking "raccoon," but the fan-shaped tail identified the creature as yet another Ruffed Grouse.

I immediately went out, rather gingerly, not wishing to agitate the grouse into making a further "crazy" flight within the house. I left the living-room door and outer porch door open for its departure. My examination of the house's exterior revealed that the bird had gained entrance



Marbled Murrelet carcass found at Saskatoon Lake, AB

Dave Robertson