
LETTERS

FEMALE CARDINAL NEAR TISDALE, SASKATCHEWAN

At approximately 0930 on 10 January 1995 a female Cardinal flew to our feeder mounted on the outside sill of our dining room window. The temperature was -20°C . We live 13 miles northwest of Tisdale.

Although we had never seen a female Cardinal previously, she was easy to identify. As she alighted on a shrub, her underwing and tail feathers appeared dull orange. Her crest and wide, bright orange beak were distinctive. Joyce Mohr, a bird-watching friend, informed us that occasional Cardinals have been counted on Saskatchewan Christmas Bird Counts.

Unlike the chickadees, woodpeckers, grosbeaks and squirrels which are regulars at our feeder the Cardinal never appeared to become at ease. She spent ten days enjoying sunflower seeds and a birdseed mix. She left on 18 January with the temperature at -10°C .

We have fed birds for thirty years. This is the first time we have hosted such a special guest. We wonder if other birdwatchers will report a similar visitor and if we may be able to trace her journey. Although we miss the Cardinal we hope that her ten-day sojourn here helped her gain enough fat energy to successfully continue her travels.

- Marjorie and George Currey, Box 725,
Tisdale, SK. S0E 1T0

A CHICKADEE'S LARDER

During fall 1992, after all the leaves had fallen, I noticed a wasp

nest hanging from a branch of the maple tree in front of my picture window. I thought at the time I was lucky I hadn't got stung as I watered my flowers on the lawn below the nest.

In early February 1993 I noticed one chickadee hopping around on the maple branches. I was looking for more than one as I had often seen two in the previous few weeks. Then I saw this little bird was in the wasp nest. He went up through the nest entrance at the bottom. I could just see his tail. He went in and out as I watched.

I saw him regularly for about three days. He had eaten all the wasps and left just the shell of the nest. I didn't see him again: he may have found another wasp nest to clean out.

- Nina Cross, Box 302, Saltcoats, SK.
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EARLIER USE OF THE NAME CANADA GOOSE

When I wrote the article, "How did the Canada Goose get its name before there was a Canada?" in *Blue Jay* 52:141-143, I accepted the statement made by all six consecutive American Ornithologists' Union Check-lists, 1885 through 1993. Each stated that the Linnaeus name was "based mainly on" Mark Catesby's plate 92, published in 1729-32 and quoted by Linnaeus in 1758.

My article prompted Alan Brown of Oakville, Ontario, through a number of visits to the Royal Ontario Museum and the Thomas Fisher Library at the University of Toronto, to research the even earlier use of the

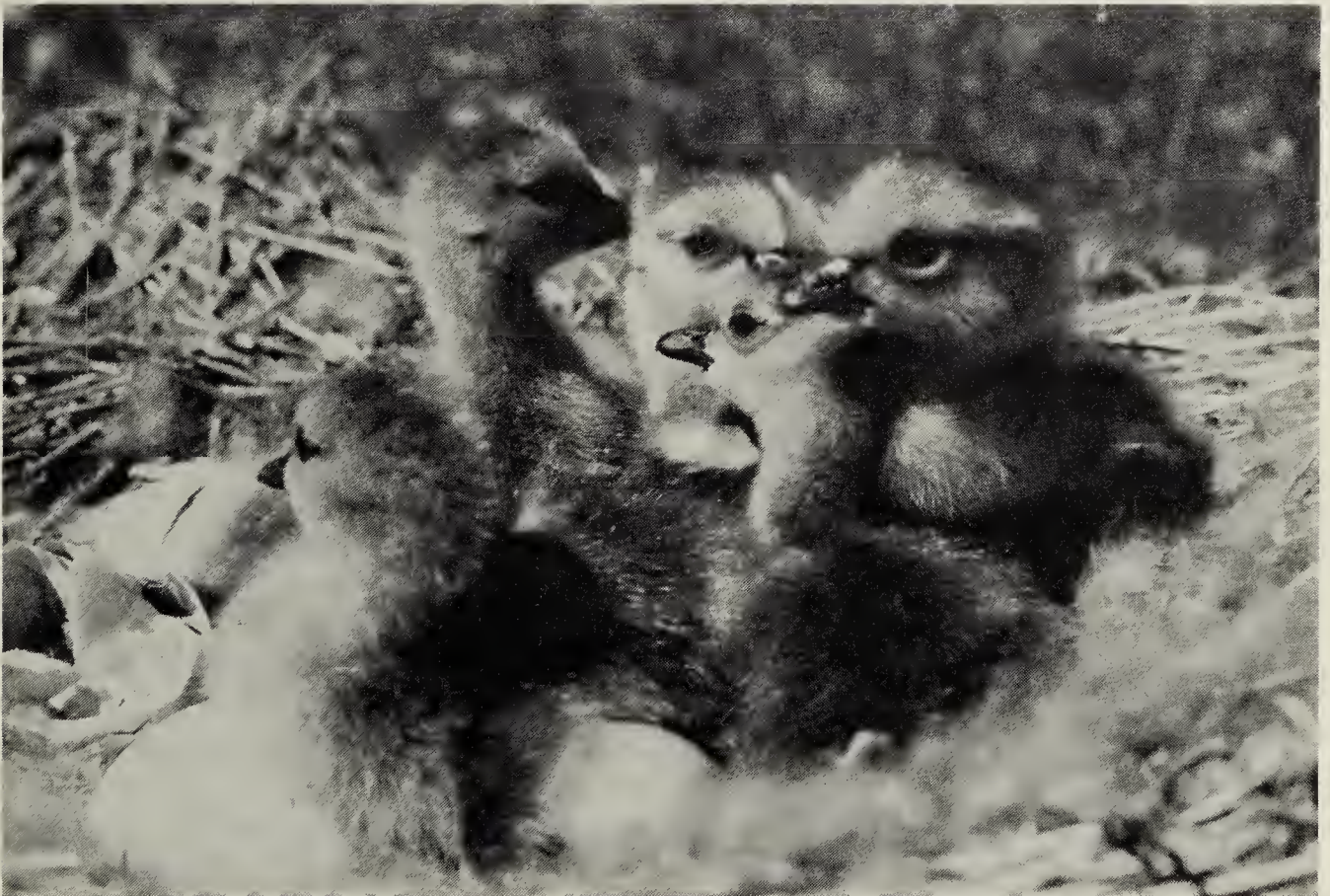
name by Francis Willughby and thus document his recollection of prior usage. With some difficulty, Brown gained access to a precious volume of Francis Willughby's great work, *Ornithologiae*, published posthumously in Latin in 1676, and seen through the press by his friend, John Ray.¹ C.E. Raven notes that Willughby's book "laid the foundation for serious scientific progress" and thus began "a new epoch in its special field."² Willughby named and described the Canada Goose (p. 276) and illustrated it (plate 70), 56 years before Catesby and 82 years before Linnaeus. Although use of Latin binomials had not yet been standardized, Willughby named the goose *Anser canadensis*, followed by the terse phrase "*Locum titulus indicat.*" John Ray, in his 1678 translation of Willughby into English, rendered this as "*The title shews the place whence*

it comes,"³ thus inferring that the bird illustrated by Willughby came from "Canada." As Alan Brown said in his letter to me: "What could be plainer? Or more obscure?"

Only in 1957 did the AOU committee make a ruling that, in this instance, "Canada = the city of Quebec," making Quebec City the official type locality for this species.

1. WILLUGHBEII, FRANCISCI. 1676. *Ornithologiae* (3 vols.). London, John Martyn.
2. RAVEN, C.E. 1986. *John Ray, naturalist: his life and works*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.
3. WILLUGHBY, FRANCIS. 1678. *The Ornithology of Francis Willughby* (3 vols.). London, John Martyn.

- C. Stuart Houston, 863 University Drive, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. S7N 0J8



Canada Goose goslings

Lorne Scott

FALCONS HUNTING ROCK DOVES

On Tuesday 29 November 1994 I once again had the opportunity to witness a Rock Dove pursued by a Peregrine Falcon, much the same as I wrote about in the March 1966 issue of *Blue Jay*. At four different times I saw the Peregrine unsuccessfully attempt to catch pigeons.

Later in the day it appeared again and, while it was pursuing pigeons that were flying around the farm buildings, a small flock of 20 birds climbed to a height of perhaps 400 feet. While they were circling, the falcon flew perhaps a quarter of a mile eastward and then began to ascend. The pigeons, on seeing this, began also to climb in tight spirals in order to stay higher than the falcon. All the birds climbed until they were mere specks directly above and I guess this would be about 4,000 feet as I can see a flying pigeon at 3/4 mile which is 3,900 feet on the level without the use of binoculars.

At this time I noted the larger speck which was the Peregrine moving toward the flock and it was soon in pursuit of one pigeon that was coming down. Both the Peregrine and the pigeon were descending at a tremendous speed, flying straight down. Four times the Peregrine overtook the pigeon, but each time the pigeon dodged the falcon. At last the pigeon reached the shelter of the farm trees where it took refuge in a large elm in front of the picture win-

dow and sat motionless for at least two hours. The Peregrine sailed on in a southerly direction. Then about 4 o'clock in the afternoon it again was seen pursuing pigeons when four mallards flew up and immediately it left the pigeons to go after these ducks. In less than a minute all were out of sight so I do not know the outcome.

On 13 January 1995 I was walking east to my big dam. Over a quarter mile from home I saw, at a height of some 200 feet, a Gyrfalcon chasing and gaining on a pigeon. Just as the gyr was about to seize it, the pigeon made a twist and dropped about fifty feet. The pigeon then flew west and came directly over me. I put my binoculars on them and watched the homeward race. Soon the pigeon appeared to tire and the gyr again closed in, about to grab the pigeon. At that moment the pigeon seemed to explode; with a sudden burst of speed it plunged downward leaving the falcon behind. The falcon overtook the pigeon and got above it but the pigeon once more outmanoeuvred the gyr and gained the safety of our farmyard trees. The gyrfalcon settled on top of my lookout tower.

It seems pigeons have a remarkable ability, often, to move quickly and give the necessary extra burst of speed. Not always are they this fortunate, but they don't give up.

- Sig Jordheim, Box 544, Kyle, Saskatchewan. S0L 1T0.

The Audubon Christmas Bird Count for December/92-January/93 had over 43,000 participants. 637 species, totalling 54,000,000 birds, were found on over 1,600 counts in North America. In Central and South America, 1,405 species were found on 47 counts. *American Birds* 47:478.

BOHEMIAN WAXWING NURSED BACK TO FLYING

A huge mountain ash grows only 3 m from our living room picture window. Toward the end of March 1995 large flocks of Bohemian Waxwings feasted on the plentiful orange berries. On 28 March 1995, at dusk, I saw a Bohemian Waxwing on the ground beside the driveway. It must have been sitting there for some time because the snow underneath it had melted. When I approached her and crouched down for closer inspection, in a nearly beak to nose encounter, she did not hop away. When I stood up it hopped through the fence into the backyard, one wing dragging in the snow. A telltale smudge on the picture window indicated the bird had become injured while crashing into it.

When I approached the bird again, now equipped with a cardboard box, she offered no resistance. Not shy nor fidgety, "Betty" fed eagerly on proffered mountain ash berries, probably her first meal in several hours. For the night I placed the box, with the lid open, into a spare room where the heat was turned off and the temperature about 12°C.

The next morning I found she had escaped from the box and was inspecting her guest room, hopping about the shag carpet. Bob Ewart of the Wascana Centre, Regina advised me to tape the wing onto the body with masking tape, making sure it was loose enough for breathing, and to provide food and water at room temperature for two days. Then I was to take the bandage off and let the bird flap its wings within a cage for another day. If the wing had only been bruised or sprained the bird might be able to fly again.

My wife and I carefully taped the wing into a near normal position and nailed some window screens to-

gether into a cage measuring about 135 x 145 x 70 cm high. "Hospital food" consisted of mountain ash berries and water provided fresh several times a day. The bird ate and was "regular" enough that I had to clean the cage several times a day. I don't think Betty enjoyed her hospital stay for she hopped onto the screen and hung onto it for a few moments again and again. Outside her window noisy, restless flocks of Bohemian Waxwings cleaned up the remaining berries. I wonder whether she sensed or saw them. She spent the following two nights on the floor in the darkest corner of the cage.

On 31 March I covered the cage with screens to prevent the convalescent from flying into the window and possibly re-injuring herself and took the tape off with only a few feathers sticking to it. Now she became really active. I placed a 30 cm high log of firewood into the cage. Betty climbed onto it and later flew back and forth from it to the screen. After about 10 minutes of this activity she would rest for about an equal period before resuming her exercise. Her injured wing still drooped slightly but she flapped it vigorously. The next night she perched on the log.

The morning of 1 April was sunny. At 11:50 a.m. I sat Betty on the ground, in the midst of black berries from a nearby buckthorn bush, in Wascana Park. The temperature was about 7°C. She flew immediately onto a branch about 3m from the ground in a blue spruce 15 m away. She remained in the tree for more than 4.5 hours shifting between adjacent branches. Using a stepladder I took Betty's picture from less than 1m distance. After 4:30 p.m. I lost sight of her and on three later visits, the last one about noon on 2 April, I could not see her anywhere in the vicinity.

Obviously the bird could fly again. But why did she sit in the spruce tree for 4 1/2 hours? Can a Bohemian Waxwing only function within a group and is lost and doomed when not flying or feeding in a flock of its own kind? Could she keep up with a whirling and migrating flock? I saw

and heard Bohemian Waxwings several times in the vicinity on the day my patient was released and until 7 April. I hope she was able to join a flock.

- *Diether P. Peschken*, 2900 Rae Street, Regina, Saskatchewan. S4S 1R5



Bohemian Waxwing ("Betty")

Diether Peschken

Out of the cradle endlessly rocking,
Out of the mocking-bird's throat, the musical shuttle.
Walt Whitman



John Dubois found another unusual bird Oct. 3 [1993] on Alexander Road in Quyon. It was an immature wheatear, seen later by other birders. *Elizabeth Le Geyt*, 1993. *Bird Watching. The Ottawa Citizen*, 16 October.