

The only recent record for the Yorkton district, is a lone Whooper noted in the fall of 1942 with a flock of sandhills at Rokeby Marsh, by John Domon.

Even more interesting is the following account written about July 14-15, 1859 in "The Canadian Exploring Expeditions in Rupert's Land" by Henry Youle Hind, M.A., F.R.G.S., in charge of the Assiniboine and Saskatchewan expedition. "The white or whooping crane (*Grus americana*) was first seen today. This beautiful bird is common in the Qu'Appelle Valley and in the Touchwood Hill range. It is a dangerous antagonist when wounded, striking with unerring aim and great force with its powerful bill. When the bird is wounded, the best way to avoid its attacks is to present the muzzle of the gun as it approaches, it will fix its bill in the barrel and may then be destroyed without danger. Instances have been known of this bird driving his bill deep into the bowels of a hunter when not successful in warding off its blow."

We would appreciate it if our "old-timer" members would write us concerning the status of the Whooping Crane in their district in the early days.

Review of a Field Guide to the Birds  
by Roger Tory Peterson.

The highest award in the field of ornithology is the Brewster Medal, presented by the American Ornithologists Union to outstanding works on North American birds. The second edition of Roger Tory Peterson's now classic Field Guide to the Birds, won this distinguished award, partly because of its original contribution to the field identification of birds and partly because it had interested more people in birds than any other book in recent years.

Now a third edition is off the press, and where the second edition was good, this one is even better. It is re-written, re-organized and every illustration is new. There are 1,000 illustrations and over 500 in full color. Mr. Peterson is already so well known for his paintings of birds, "especially those reproduced from time to time in "LIFE" that further comment as to the high quality of the illustrations should not be necessary.

We, of the Yorkton Natural History Society, feel that this book is a must for every member, as it is the last word in convenience and easy identification of birds. Peterson's famous system is based on pattern drawings, field marks, and comparisons between species. How many times have we noted a bird, and on being none too certain as to its identity, asked ourselves "What other bird could it have been?" Peterson's will give you the answer, and quickly, as all comparative species are shown on a single page with all identification marks clearly pointed out. It covers too, all species that one is apt to see in Saskatchewan, except for a few stragglers from the Rocky Mountains or beyond.

A feature is the full-color drawings of the Warblers in immature and autumn plumages, some so similar that they have always confused even the experts. The Gulls and Terns, other difficult species, are also remarkably well shown in immature, winter, and breeding plumages.

For the sportsmen, the ducks and geese, due to the fact that they are more easily identified by pattern than by color, are shown in black and white in flight overhead and on the water, as well as in color.

The book is  $4\frac{1}{2}$  inches by  $7\frac{1}{2}$  inches in size, and therefore easily carried afield in a good-sized pocket.

Members are cautioned not to confuse this book with "A Field Guide to Western Birds," a similar volume by the same author, which covers the Rocky Mountains and Pacific Coast regions (but not the prairies, as the title would lead some people to believe.) The dividing line between the ranges covered by the two books falls somewhere east of the foothills, and hence readers in Alberta, and possibly even extreme western Saskatchewan, may find that they need both books in order to cover their territory completely.

Peterson's "A Field Guide to the Birds" may be obtained through any book store for \$3.50. For beginner and expert alike, it cannot be recommended too highly.

### CHRISTMAS BIRD CENSUS

For the sixth consecutive year we shall again be taking our annual Christmas Bird Census, and we hope that all who have taken part in the past, will again be out in force, as well as our many new members. These winter counts have resulted in some very interesting data concerning our winter birds, as well as being an excellent pastime for all those who take part.

The count should be made on any one day between Christmas and New Year inclusive. Every species of bird seen should be recorded as well as the total number of each species. Notes should also be made as to weather, wind, temperature, depth of snow, number of miles travelled and the time the observer (s) spent afield. It would also be very interesting to make notes concerning the food conditions, i.e. the abundance (or scarcity) of hanging dried fruit, maple seeds and weed seeds, etc.

The previous five counts have resulted in 54 species, (or sub-species recognizable in the field) being recorded. For the convenience of members, the following is a list of all birds reported in our Christmas Census.

Mallard Duck	Artic Three-toed Woodpecker	Brewer's Blackbird
Goshawk	Amer. Three-toed Woodpecker	Evening Grosbeak
Common Rough-legged Hawk	Horned Lark	Pine Grosbeak
Marsh Hawk	Canada Jay	Gray-crowned Rosy Finch
Golden Eagle	Blue Jay	Hepburn's Rosy Finch
Prairie Falcon	American Magpie	Hoary Redpoll
Spruce Grouse	Raven	Common Redpoll
Ruffed Grouse	Black-capped Chickadee	Red Crossbill
Sharp-tailed grouse	Hudsonian Chickadee	White-winged Crossbill
Willow Ptarmigan	White-breasted Nuthatch	Slate-colored Junco
Hungarian Partridge	Red-breasted Nuthatch	Tree Sparrow
Ring-necked Pheasant	Brown Creeper	Song Sparrow
Great Horned Owl	Eastern Robin	Lapland Longspur
Snowy Owl	Golden-crowned Kinglet	Snow Bunting
Long-eared Owl	Bohemian Waxwing	
Short-eared Owl	Northern Shrike	
Saw-whet Owl	European Starling	
Pileated Woodpecker	English Sparrow	
Hairy Woodpecker	Western Meadowlark	
Downy Woodpecker	Red-winged Blackbird	