

Of course, no one observer, or group of observers in any one locality ever expects to see more than a small number of the species mentioned in the above list. In fact, in some Saskatchewan localities, a long intensive search may yield only two or three species.

If every member takes part, we should obtain a very good idea of the status of each species in the province this winter, and possibly we may even be able to add one or two species to the already lengthy list as printed above. Don't forget those Y.N.H.S. Field-checking Lists will be very handy in recording the birds you see.

How many of our members are familiar with the beautiful long-necked Western Grebe, the largest of our prairie Grebes? We would like any information concerning their distribution and status throughout the province.

The Sparrow Hawk seems to have shown a definite decrease in the Yorkton district in recent years. Is this true of other districts in the province?

HUNTING WOOD BUFFALO.

By W. A. Fuller, Fort Smith, N.W.T.

I have recently had an experience which comes to few men in this day and age - the thrill of taking part in a Buffalo hunt. Each fall, a number of buffalo from the herd inhabiting Wood Buffalo Park is slaughtered to provide meat for the missions, schools, hospitals and needy Indians. Except for the limited use of trucks on a badly delapidated military "highway," the hunt is carried on under primitive conditions. The animals must usually be stalked, like moose, over miles of open prairie or through jack-pine forest. At the end of a successful stalk, the shooting commences, with the ever-present danger of a charge by a ton or more of wounded, enraged buffalo. Following the kill, the skinners take over. Five men skin and butcher a large bull buffalo in a little more than half an hour, using only skinning knives and an axe.

One of my jobs is to gather statistics such as size, age, measurements, parasites and diseases. To date, 8 old bulls have been shot. Some of their measurements average approximately as follows - total length, 10 ft; height at hump, 6 ft; circumference of chest, 8 ft; circumference of abdomen, 10 ft. One was suffering from a disease producing large white spots on the liver. The same animal had three broken ribs, undoubtedly a souvenir of the recent mating season. Another had an unhealed sore high on one shoulder, but aside from this, all appeared to be in good condition.

The highlights of the hunting so far observed have been the stubbornness and toughness of the old bulls. The latest estimate of the size of the herd, based on an aerial count, places it at over 8,000 individuals. Range conditions are excellent and the animals generally healthy and increasing.

The Provincial museum wishes to obtain records and specimens of Painted Turtles found in Saskatchewan. Further records are needed to determine their distribution, though, it is thought the main areas in which they occur are the tributaries of the Qu'Appelle, Souris and perhaps Assiniboine rivers.

A specimen was found early in June in a summerfallow field about half a mile from York Lake by Mr. W. Hodgson, who farms in that district. The turtle was taken to the farm home and kept in a rain barrel. During the first week in September it laid five eggs. Mr. Hodgson donated the specimen to the Provincial museum and when shipped it appeared to be as lively as the day it was found.

A second specimen was found October 13 at Round Lake by Mr. Jack Willis of Yorkton.

BOTANY SECTION
by Lloyd T. Carmichael.

WILD ROSES

"I fed on scarlet hips and stony haws" --- Cowper

The wild rose is one of our most beautiful and fascinating flowers, recognized by old and young alike. To the nature student, however, the term "Wild Rose" is not sufficient. Curiosity urges him to determine, if he can, what kind of a wild rose he is admiring.

We have six species of wild roses in Saskatchewan, and of these, I have found four to be common in the vicinity of Regina and the Qu'Appelle Valley. These roses may quite easily be recognized during the winter months, so I am writing this in the hope that some enthusiasts may turn aside during their bird census hikes to determine more positively those flowers which give them such a thrill in June and July.

The Prairie Rose (*R. alcea*) is the easiest to identify. Growing on the open prairie, it is seldom more than twelve inches high and many plants have a height of only three or four inches. The red or orange coloured hip is large, often a half an inch in diameter. It is almost spherical and is covered with fine bristles. The entire stem is covered with fine sharp bristles. I have counted sixty on half an inch of the stem.

The Prickly Rose (*R. acicularis*) is well named for its branches are protected by hundreds of thorns, ranging in length from 1/16 to 5/16 of an inch. These are very irritating and it is almost impossible to hold the stem between thumb and fingers without several painful reminders of its protective adaptation. Unlike most of our roses the hips are not spherical, but are pear-shaped; most of them with a distinct neck. They are large -- half an inch broad and 5/8 of an inch long. Ordinarily they grow in clusters of from two to four. The plant, which is common in and around bluffs, averages about three feet in height.

Wood's Rose (*R. Woodsii*) is our most beautiful roadside decoration in the fall of the year. The bright spherical-shaped fruit is in clusters of from six to twelve. Among trees, it may grow to a height of six feet or more. Its stem is smooth between the thorns, which are arranged opposite each other, the pairs being from three quarters to an inch apart. These bone-coloured thorns are about 3/8 of an inch long and show up very clearly against the dark brown or reddish stem.