

THE CHILDRENS' PAGE

PETER

By Mrs. F. Bilsbury,
Grenfell, Sask.

Helping his dad drive cattle to pasture, my son Gary noted a tiny rabbit hop directly in front of the tractor. He scooped him up and put him in his coat pocket. On getting home he placed the ball of fluff in the palm of my hand. He was very tiny. We taught him to drink warm milk from a saucer. This he managed very well after falling nose-first in. His little legs seemed very trembly.

Being a decided brown we came to the conclusion that he was a bush-rabbit, so called him "Peter Cotton Tail." However, a neighbor insisted he was a Jack -- and he was. He grew, and how he grew! His ears became silver grey, tipped with black. His tail got longer and pure white. His body grew grey too.

Though we could never take Peter in our arms, he was remarkably tame and knew his name, especially when it was time for supper. He ate almost everything; bread and butter with jam, buttered potato, carrots (if cooked), candies, cookies, cake (if iced). His favorite dish was macaroni and cheese. One day a large grasshopper got into the house, so to tease Peter, I offered him the hopper. To my astonishment he ate it. Later he ate a couple more. He was a wonderful pet and very playful, also very gentle unless tired of play; then he would scratch and growl.

Peter was not a very big rabbit and of course got into mischief, namely, he pulled pages from school books. So it was with regret that we felt Peter should have his freedom. On the first of September we released him. He was feeding on some green stuff that had grown up on a little piece of summerfallow, left for the cows. We feel sure that had we called him he would have come to see if we had his favorite cheese.

Perhaps when I write again to the BLUE JAY there will be another little item for our young readers about Peter.

A MOURNING DOVE

By Beverley Janet Sharp

I live on Sec. 6, T. 25, R2, W 2nd and go to Rokeby School. I am in Grade VII and in Nature Study at school we talk about birds, so keep a watch for anything different.

One morning, at breakfast time, we looked out of the window and saw a plump bird that at first glance seemed to be a pigeon. On looking more closely we decided it was a Mourning Dove. This was a great surprise as no one had reported seeing this bird in this district before. The colour on the back and wings was blue-grey. It had a rusty head and breast.

BALLS OF YELLOW FLUFF

By E.K. Jones, Raymore.

On June 30th while driving into town we saw what appeared to be a group of butterflies on the road. However they turned out to be a flock of prairie chickens, not more than two or three days old and appearing like tiny balls of yellow fluff. We stopped quickly or we would have run over them.

There were twelve in all and the mother was fussing and running around trying to get them safely across. They were a wonderful sight and when they had all passed safely we drove on leaving behind the happy family.

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QUISCULUS QUISCULA

Quisculus Quiscula, Yorkton's one-legged tourist, is dead. Quis was a one-legged bronze grackle who for the past four consecutive years has spent his summers hopping around the city hall lawn.

Early this fall, caretaker Alex Yacina found Quis stretched out at the bottom of a tree. He took Quis to the city hall basement for treatment, but the old fellow failed to recover.

How Quis lost his leg is a mystery but the good leg carried a small metal band. The band was sent to the American Fish and Wild Life Service, where Quis' obituary will be recorded for science.

Word has been received back that this bird was a female, banded September 4, 1946, by Stuart Houston, of Yorkton.

THE FEATHER-LINED NEST

By Doug Gilroy

I have read of people finding bees asleep in flowers. Here is one about a mouse under similar, yet different conditions.

Around our yard at the farm, the fence posts are of cedar. One of the posts split open, revealing a hollow chamber near the base. A little House Wren wasn't long in finding it and immediately turned it into a summer home -- or should I say, a maternity home, for five young wrens were raised there. As summer waned the wren family packed their grips and departed for the south lands.

A week or so after the departure I was passing by, and for some unknown reason stopped at the post and peered into the opening. What did I see looking at me, with big sleepy eyes, but a white-footed mouse, all curled up snug and warm in the feather-lined nest. This, no doubt, is a common occurrence all over the country -- but I thought it kind of cute.

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YELLOW HORN

This story comes to us for Cowican, British Columbia:

Yellow Horn, a four-year old deer, is getting as domesticated as a cat. For one thing, he's sleeping on a bed most of the time.

The buck had moved in with Mr. and Mrs. G. C. Boyd in this Vancouver Island village. He started by sleeping on the veranda. He didn't take too well to the hard floor and later sneaked into the house at every chance and snuggled down on the bed.

After that, it wasn't long before he was nipping into the kitchen to nibble at a loaf of bread, or a bowl of fruit in the dining room.

Loggers who first adopted him painted the horns yellow for easy identification by hunters.

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