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THE

BULLETIN JUNE J A Y

Official Bulletin
Of The
YORKTON NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

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OBJECTS:

To foster an active interest in every branch of nature study, and to promote the conservation of all wild life; also to act as a connecting link between nature lovers in Saskatchewan.

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With the best few weeks of the year for bird lovers lying immediately ahead one has little desire to look backward at the winter scene. So we will merely mention that, in the season just past, while the winter birds which come around our homes were, for the most part, scarce, out in the open country the larger birds - Snowy Owls and Goshawks were more abundant than usual. A marked decline in the numbers of Sharp-tailed Grouse has been noted in most districts.

Up to the end of April migration this spring has presented some interesting features. A very cold March kept back the early migrants. Then warmer days the first week of April brought the birds back with a rush, particularly on the 3rd and 4th. Since then a return of chilly weather has again put a check on migration and we have been looking in vain for several old friends which, most years, put in an appearance before the end of April.

A highlight for our Society was Dick Bird's visit to Yorkton in February to give his talk "Camera Trails Along Nature Trails." Mr. Bird is an ardent conservationist and, apart from the vivid memories of his lovely nature pictures, two points in his talk stand out in our mind. Firstly his explanation to the school children that "standing on guard for Canada" means protecting everything that goes to make this Canada of ours, right down to the little yellow warbler on its nest, or the first silky "crocus" in springtime. One wishes everyone who preaches conservation to children could have Mr. Bird's gift for presenting this subject.

And then there was his plea to his adult audience for greater appreciation of the beauty to be found in our province. Mr. Bird feels there has been too much stress laid on the "bald headed prairie" and that we have failed to build up, in our children, sufficient love and pride in the western landscape. Certainly Mr. Bird's lovely films were proof enough of the beauty that lies right at our very doorstep or in the poplar bluff just down the road.

We are most grateful at the increasing number of letters and reports coming in. Owing to lack of space it is not possible to include every item in our bulletin, but all records received are filed for future use or reference. We should be glad to get any suggestions for improving the "Blue Jay". Realising that there is so much more known about the birds than the animals of our province we have been wondering if it would be a good idea to devote one page of each issue to notes on animal life, or if we might concentrate on information regarding one particular species each issue, just as we have collected this time quite a lot of information about bats. Please let us know.

We are honored to be allowed to print Mr. Potter's list of bird records made in the province since the publication of Mitchell's "Catalogue of Saskatchewan Birds" in 1924. We have placed this list on the back page of this number of the "Blue Jay", so that it may be easily detached for inclusion in files.

Mrs. I.M. Priestly,
President,
Yorkton Natural History Society.