

## THE BLUE JAY

With this issue "The Blue Jay", as the official organ of the Yorkton Natural History Society, will cease to exist. Those who have been responsible for its publication since the death of Mrs. Priestly, after much thought and serious consideration, have come to the conclusion that under the present set-up it would not be wise to continue.

Much credit is due to the Editor, Associate Editors and to the officers of the society, who have freely given so much of their time in order that each issue might bring something of worthwhile interest to nature lovers throughout the Province. Special mention must be made of the untiring efforts and splendid work accomplished by our Editor, Mr. Cliff Shaw. He has been keenly interested in the "Blue Jay" and it is due, in no small measure, to his personal enthusiasm that its publication has been made possible during the past two years.

With the assured assistance of Mr. Fred Bard, Director of the Provincial Museum, it is hoped that the publication of the "Blue Jay" will continue. The success of the venture will depend entirely on the active support given by the subscribers. We invite you to read the preface to the questionnaire on the last page of this issue then answer the questions and send your answers to the Provincial Museum by January 8, 1949.

### "WHAT IS THE BLUE JAY"

The seeds from which the Yorkton Natural History Society had its beginnings probably had their origin in July, 1942. At that time, Mrs. Priestly, with the help of several Yorkton bird enthusiasts, prepared a short annotated list of birds entitled "A List of Birds Identified in the Yorkton District in Recent Years." This list received very favorable comment in the columns of A. G. Lawrence's "Chickadee Notes" in the Winnipeg Free Press, and the demand for it exceeded all expectations. Encouraged by this, and by the interest shown by a number of Yorkton people during the preparation of the list, it was decided to formally organize a small nature group. To make up for the absence of a bird column in any of the Saskatchewan daily newspapers, it was thought a few pages of mimeographed notes and observations might be distributed from time to time.

The organization meeting was held in the home of Dr. C. J. Houston on September 11, 1942, and it was decided to adopt the name of the Yorkton Natural History Society. Mrs. Priestly was elected President; J. R. Foreman, Vice-President; C. Stuart Houston, Secretary-treasurer, and Miss Ethel Lloyd, Mrs. E. Johnson, Vernon Barnes and Harvey Beck, Directors. It is interesting to note that the secretary and two of the directors were collegiate students. The executive decided to begin publication of a quarterly bulletin, the "Blue Jay". Circular letters, soliciting subscriptions to the new publication, were sent out to all those who had written for copies of the bird list. The first issue of the "Blue Jay" came out that same fall, 125 copies being mimeographed. Though this number was deemed to be more than ample, it was exhausted in very short order. For the first two years, the membership fee, including a subscription to the "Blue Jay", was only 25¢ per year. The bulletin was written and edited by Mrs. Priestly, mimeographed by Stuart Houston and finally made ready for mailing by a "Bee" of members who stapled it together, rolled and addressed it. In fact, a number of members were even persuaded to revert to childhood for the time-consuming task of coloring in, with blue crayons, the title letters on the front page.