

## PROVINCIAL NOTES.

The Ring-necked Pheasant now seems well established in the southern part of the province. Mrs. Marion Nixon, Wauchope, states that within the last ten years pheasants have become fairly common there and that "it is now not unusual to find a handsome cock bird stalking along the roadside, or to startle the quietly colored, but also long-tailed female into raucous flight." Although many young birds have been liverated in the Moose Mountain district, Mrs. Nixon thinks that some of the pheasants in their area may have worked up from North Dakota. And, from the other side of the province, Arthur Ward of Burnham wrote us about some birds which he had released a few years ago. "They settled", he says, "in the covers along the creek near the Highfield dam and scattered widely."

There is always an element of risk in introducing any alien bird and already complaints have been laid against the Ring-necked Pheasant. Some sportsmen claim that they are detrimental to native game birds. In other places they have become a pest devouring farm crops (tomatoes and berries are a favorite item with the pheasant), and still another complaint is that the male bird will sometimes come into the farmyard and engage the domestic rooster in deadly combat! It would be interesting to get more letters on the status of the Pheasant in Saskatchewan, perhaps our severe winters will keep them from becoming over abundant.

---

We have several times referred to Mitchell's Catalogue of Saskatchewan Birds. This was a list of the birds of the province compiled in 1924 by H. Hedley Mitchell, when he was curator of the Provincial Museum. It was published in the Canadian Field-Naturalist and reprinted by the provincial Department of Agriculture. Unfortunately the supply of this list is now exhausted, so copies are very precious. In it were listed some 304 different birds, twenty-nine of which were "hypothetical" (no actual specimen of the bird having been obtained). Mr. L.B. Potter's list of additions published in the last "Blue Jay", reports ten new species for the province eight of which have been supported by actual specimens. And of the former twenty-nine hypothetical species, sixteen have been definitely established by specimens. So at the present time the number of birds recorded for the province is apparently 314.

---

In connection with our reference in the last issue of the "Blue Jay" to "the famed filing notes of the Saw-whet Owl", M.G. Street, Nipawin, writes - "I am more familiar with the cries of this tiny owl than I am with the birds themselves as I have tried to track them down many times with the same result - failure, although this spring I was fortunate enough to find two nests for the first time. The Saw-whets seem to have several different calls; one is a raspy, jerky call of about three seconds duration, like a person cutting steel with a hacksaw. Another call, most like a saw being filed, has a somewhat resonant effect and is of about five seconds duration, with a pause of nearly three minutes between calls. Another note is made while the bird is on the nest - a low, barely audible moan, which increases in intensity for about two seconds and ends with a snap of the bill.

While on the nest these small owls are very tame and allow themselves to be handled without the slightest of fear. I visited one nest which is in an old flicker-hole in a large poplar stub today (May 23), and found it contained one young bird recently hatched and four eggs all "pipped". Neatly stacked to one side of the nesting hole were three Meadow Mice, apparently freshly caught. I found one egg in this nest on April 23 so apparently incubation in the case of the Saw-whet Owl takes a long time."

---

Please let us have reports of what is seen by members during the summer months, so we can get Volume 2 of the "Blue Jay" off to a good start.