

necessary with the increase in the settlement of our Province. He was a great naturalist of an old-time school that has practically disappeared in modern-day specialization, a conservationist of note, and an educationalist, who reached and touched the grown-ups as well as the youth of our Province, and whose influence extended beyond its boundaries. Ontario, particularly, owes him a debt for his work along these lines, and yet to some of us he meant more than a naturalist, for he was a warm-hearted and true friend—HOYES LLOYD (*with the kind assistance of The Toronto Field-Naturalists' Club*).

Notes on the bibliography of the late Charles William Nash. By J. H. Fleming:—

"Although the field notes and scientific data gathered by Mr. Nash are now in the library of the Royal Ontario Museum of Zoology, Toronto, it has been found impossible to bring together a complete bibliography. The collection consists of a series of scrap-books each with a special heading containing notes and references in pencil together with articles cut from publications, often without definite indication of authorship. The official publications are as follows and the list is believed to be complete:

"*The Birds of Ontario in Relation to Agriculture*, published by the Department of Agriculture Toronto, 1898 (Reprinted from the Report of the Farmer's Institutes of Ontario, 1897-8). This is a pamphlet of thirty-two pages and thirty-two full page plates of birds from drawings by the author. A second edition was published in 1901 with some slight changes, a third edition, published in 1904 is unaltered from the second. Largely rewritten, a fourth edition appeared in 1909 as Bulletin 173, Ontario Department of Agriculture, followed by a fifth edition in 1913, revised as Bulletin 218.

"*Check List of the Birds of Ontario and Catalogue of the Birds in the Biological Section of the Museum*, Department of Education, Toronto, 1900. This is a pamphlet of fifty-eight pages containing an annotated list of 304 species and subspecies of birds.

"*Check List of the Vertebrates of Ontario and Catalogue of Specimens in the Biological Section of the Provincial Museum; Birds*, Department of Education, Toronto, 1905. This is a pamphlet of eighty-two pages, more fully annotated and with illustrations in the text by the author, it lists 324 species and subspecies of birds.

"*Check List of the Vertebrates of Ontario and Catalogue of Specimens in the Biological Section of the Provincial Museum; Batrachians, Reptiles, Mammals*, Department of Education, Toronto, 1905.

"*Check List of the Vertebrates of Ontario and Catalogue of Specimens in the Biological Section of the Provincial Museum; Fishes*, Department of Education, Toronto, 1908, with thirty-two full page plates by the author.

VERTEBRATES OF ONTARIO, *Department of Education, Toronto, 1908*. This consists of the last three titles bound together with new title page glossary and index.

A series of articles in *Farming World* beginning June 15th, 1904, and ending January 15th, 1908, show the versatility of the author in matters of benefit to the farm.

Nature about the farm, farm forestry and tree planting, planting for fence posts, farm wind-breaks, grazing the woodlot, the relation between forestry and water power; are a few of the subjects written about.

There are articles scattered in various publications, one at least in *Forest and Stream*, Vol. 38, 1892, page 77, *Shore Birds Near Toronto*, one in *Report of Bureau of Forestry of the Province of Ontario, 1903, on Farm Forestry*. There are two contributions to the *Auk Bird Notes* from Toronto, Canada, 1896, page 347. *Nelson's Sparrow* at Toronto, Ontario, 1899, page 277. The list of articles is unfortunately incomplete and in addition Mr. Nash contributed manuscript lists to the Committee on bird protection of the American Ornithologists Union beginning with observations on the birds of Portage la Prairie and vicinity, 1884-5, and followed with regular yearly reports to the Biological Survey at Washington on the birds observed at Todmorden, Ontario (a suburb of Toronto) and later from Toronto."

## NOTES AND OBSERVATIONS

A NOTE CONCERNING FUR FARMING.—Fur farming in Canada is a comparatively new line of business and much concerning it has yet to be learned. The industry presents many attractive possibilities and on that account it is apt to attract many to it, as a means of making an easy livelihood without their having the experience necessary to success. As a matter of fact, there are a number of pitfalls to be avoided among which must be reckoned the danger of introducing diseases and the weakening of our northern stock by bringing in less hardy animals. A recent letter from a correspondent whose name I have been

requested to withhold, puts the matter very clearly and it is, therefore, quoted at length:—

"A number of people throughout Canada are interested in stocking marsh areas with muskrats. It is very desirable for many reasons to use the local native stock for this purpose, rather than to bring in breeding stock from a distance which is thought at the time to have some advantage or other.

"Animals like the muskrat exist as different varieties in each part of their range and these local varieties or subspecies are almost certainly better adapted to meet local conditions than an outside strain would be.

"It may be that extra dark rats are in demand



at the moment but it would be distinctly harmful to secure a strain of dark rats from another section of the country just because of this. Fashion is fickle and some other colour, phase or variety may be the popular one next year. If the local stock has been mongrelized in the meantime it is quite possible that the mongrels are of far less value than the pure local stock and they are almost certain to be less suited to the local conditions.

"The transfer of stock from one section of Canada to another, or bringing stock from outside has a distinct disadvantage as well in the likelihood of disease being carried and infesting the local animals.

"These points are thought to be of greater importance in the case of muskrats than in the case of other animals, for muskrats can be expected to escape from complete or partial confinement and intermingle with the native local stock.

"Our native breeds of wild animals should be kept pure and not intermingled haphazardly with stock from distant points."

It might be added that our northern animals average a thicker and finer quality of fur than can be obtained elsewhere and on that account alone care should be taken to avoid polluting our stock with inferior strains. Moreover local colour phases are usually due to climatical conditions and it is probable that such colours will speedily disappear when the animals are transferred to another locality.

The whole matter is one that vitally affects fur farmers and it is hoped that they will exercise all possible precautions before introducing animals which may prove less suitable to our condition and before intermixing seriously endangers the health of the native stock.—NORMAN CRIDDLE.

---

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS REGARDING MALLARDS WINTERING AT BUFFALO LAKE, ALBERTA, 1923-24.—Mr. Frank Farley\* has recorded the wintering of a large number of Mallards at Buffalo Lake, Alberta, and Prof. Wm. Rowan has discussed this to some extent in a recent paper on photoperiodism and migration. As some additional information on this unusual occurrence is available it is felt that it ought to be placed on record in order to supplement, as far as possible, the printed word.

By letter of February 6, 1924, Mr. George Cook than Sanctuary Caretaker who was in charge of the feeding of the ducks reported the birds all strong except that fifteen dead ones were found in the opening in the ice described by Mr. Farley. He was asked by letter of February 13th to ship a box of the dead birds to Mr. P. A. Taverner, Ornithologist of the National Museum at Ottawa, to be used as specimens, and he accordingly sent ten in the flesh. They were in very poor condition and according to Mr. Taverner had apparently starved to death.

On February 24th, when Mr. Cook visited the hole in the ice he found forty-seven dead birds and others in the open water which were paralyzed and attempting to swim. Having in mind the previous request for specimens and the unusual death of so many birds he collected and sent to the National Museum, a box containing twenty-seven of these birds. Mr. Cook suspected that they had been poisoned because there had been some criticism of the feeding of these birds which are known to damage crops at times.

Dr. Frank T. Shutt, Dominion Chemist at the Central Experimental Farm, Department of Agriculture, Ottawa, kindly had the stomachs and crops of four specimens examined for strychnine and arsenic but the results were negative.

Mr. H. M. Lancaster, for the Laboratories of the Department of Health, Ottawa, reported that the two birds they examined had been feeding on wheat, lamb's quarters, black bindweed, dock, wild oats and flax. A complete examination for volatile and non-volatile poisons, organic and inorganic, did not disclose positive results.

Dissection of specimens by the pathologist of the Poultry division, Department of Agriculture, Ottawa, showed no pathological condition, and no evidence of acute poisoning. The birds here examined and those I prepared as specimens were apparently gaining in flesh and had a fairly good layer of fat next to the skin.

All attempts to account for the sudden death of nearly fifty of these Mallards on February 24th have been unsuccessful, and although I have often considered the problem in the intervening time, it seems advisable even if unsatisfactory to record the facts and to deliver an open verdict. These birds, even though given ample foods, may have succumbed to exposure after a valiant effort to weather the rigors of an Alberta winter.—HOYES LLOYD.

---

UNUSUAL SONG FROM A CAROLINA WREN.—At long intervals in the life of a bird student come opportunities to hear something exceptional in the way of bird songs, and a recent occurrence goes to show that even good singers have periods of super-excellence in their music. Such an experience happened on the morning of Sunday, June 26, 1927, when I was awakened shortly after dawn by a loud song of magnificent quality and one that puzzled me completely. It was something after the style of a Super-Chewink with an Oriole quality, but immediately he changed to another song and hardly ever repeated himself. I got up, of course, but could not find him. But around seven o'clock he sang again and this time I got a fleeting glimpse in a pear tree of a bird





Criddle, Norman. 1927. "A Note Concerning Fur Farming." *The Canadian field-naturalist* 41(6), 137–138. <https://doi.org/10.5962/p.338824>.

**View This Item Online:** <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/item/89260>

**DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.5962/p.338824>

**Permalink:** <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/partpdf/338824>

#### **Holding Institution**

Harvard University, Museum of Comparative Zoology, Ernst Mayr Library

#### **Sponsored by**

Harvard University, Museum of Comparative Zoology, Ernst Mayr Library

#### **Copyright & Reuse**

Copyright Status: In copyright. Digitized with the permission of the rights holder.

Rights Holder: Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club

License: <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/3.0/>

Rights: <https://biodiversitylibrary.org/permissions>

This document was created from content at the **Biodiversity Heritage Library**, the world's largest open access digital library for biodiversity literature and archives. Visit BHL at <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org>.