

CANADIAN WILDLIFE SERVICE  
WESTERN REGIONAL LIBRARY

THE BIRDS OF THE PEACE-ATHABASCA DELTA AND OF  
THE LAKE ATHABASCA REGION

by

E. OTTO HÖHN

Department of Physiology

University of Alberta

Edmonton, Alberta

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
LIST OF FIGURES .....	Cii
INTRODUCTION .....	C1
Ornithological Work in the Area .....	C2
Zoogeographical Comments on the Bird Life .....	C3
The Delta .....	C6
SPECIES LIST .....	C8
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....	C29
ANNOTATED LIST OF REFERENCES .....	C33

## LIST OF FIGURES

	Following <u>Page</u>
Figure 1. Boundary of Lake Athabasca Region .....	C2
Figure 2. Boundary between Mackenzie Lowland Forest and Boreal Forest, with edge of Tazin Highlands indicated by dotted line .....	C4
Figure 3. Soundings in Lake Athabasca about the interprovincial boundary .....	C6

## INTRODUCTION

In connection with the tabular account presented below, I would explain that my field work has been concentrated in the portion of northeastern Alberta east of Wood Buffalo Park and thus east of the Delta. Information about the birds of the Delta has therefore been obtained from the literature and from unpublished records made by Mr. T. M. Shortt of the Royal Ontario Museum and by Prof. W. R. Salt of the University of Alberta.

While the Delta is a well-defined region, the decision as to the limits of the Lake Athabasca region, which for the purposes of the table below, excludes the Delta, was more arbitrary and was influenced by the avifaunal publications available. As shown in Fig. 1, it includes all of Wood Buffalo Park (except the Delta), the northeastern corner of Alberta, and a zone around the shores of Lake Athabasca eastward as far as a point between Stony Rapids and Black Lake, Saskatchewan.

For a description of this area, the reader is referred to Soper's account (p. 20-27, Soper, 1942) of Wood Buffalo Park and Nero's account of Lake Athabasca (p. 12-23, Nero, 1963).

As the English bird names used in the table are those of the American Ornithologist's Union "Check-list of North American Birds," fifth edition, 1957, and as this and a number of recent bird guides give these names along with the accepted scientific names, the latter have been omitted in the table below. An asterisk following a bird name indicates that a specimen has been collected within the Lake Athabasca region, in this case

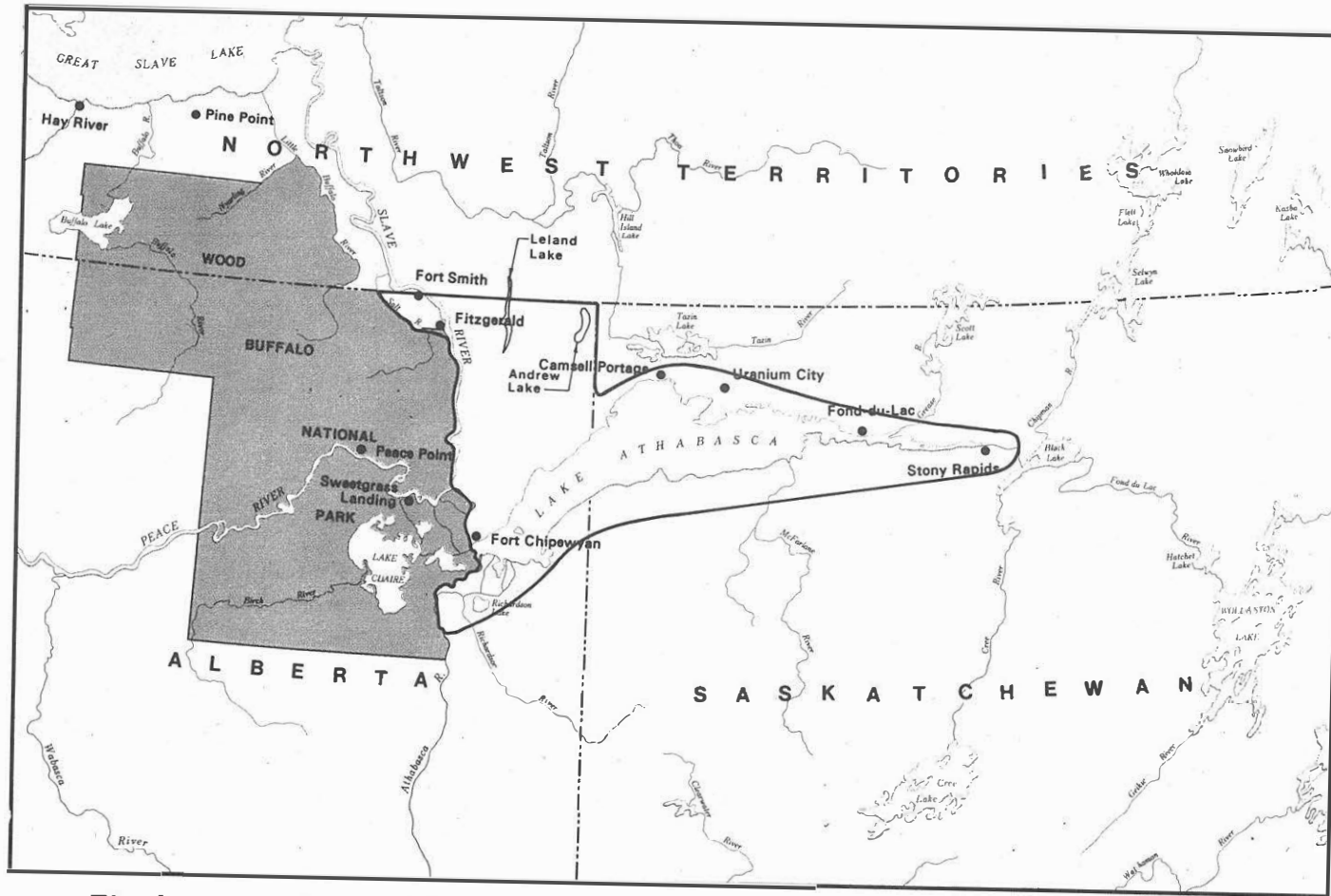
including the Delta. As to the terms used in the table: "migrant" indicates that the species in question only passes through the area on migration; "resident" that it is to be found in the area at all times of the year; "summer resident" that it is only present during the summer half of the year; "breeds" indicates that there are specific breeding records for the area; "local" indicates a patchy rather than a general distribution; a dash indicates that the species is not found in the area in question; while no entry merely indicates that there is insufficient information to indicate its status.

#### ORNITHOLOGICAL WORK IN THE AREA

The major facts about work by others published or unpublished are given in the annotated list of references. It should be added, however, that F. Harper, in addition to his 1914 journey described in his thesis of 1925, also worked on Lake Athabasca in 1920. His 1920 findings have not been published, but Nero was able to see those made in Saskatchewan and Nero's publications (1963 and 1967a) cite those of Harper's records he deemed noteworthy.

My own travels in the area can be summarized as follows:

1969 - Based at Chipewyan, June 2-6, boat journey to Fiddler Point where camped on the 3rd, return to Chipewyan next day. June 5 by boat to Poplar Island off old Fort Point.



**Fig.1** Boundary of Lake Athabasca region.

1970 - January 27-30, stay at Eldorado, Saskatchewan, with drives to Uranium City and Bushell. July 10-14, camped at Andrew Lake, Alberta.

1971 - June 22 and 23, based at Eldorado, camped on Lillabo Lake on the Alberta-Saskatchewan border south of Lake Athabasca. June 24 walked to south shore of Lake Athabasca. June 25 and 26 followed lake shore west as far as Stone Point, then back to a few miles east of Point Brule. July 2 and 3 by boat from Bushell west as far as Bustard Island with stops at various islands and islets en route. July 5-8, camped at Leland Lake, Alberta.

1972 - March 9-13, stayed at Chipewyan with local walks and drives to "Sweet Grass" near the Peace River and the "Dog Camp" west of Chipewyan.

#### ZOOGEOGRAPHICAL COMMENTS ON THE BIRD LIFE

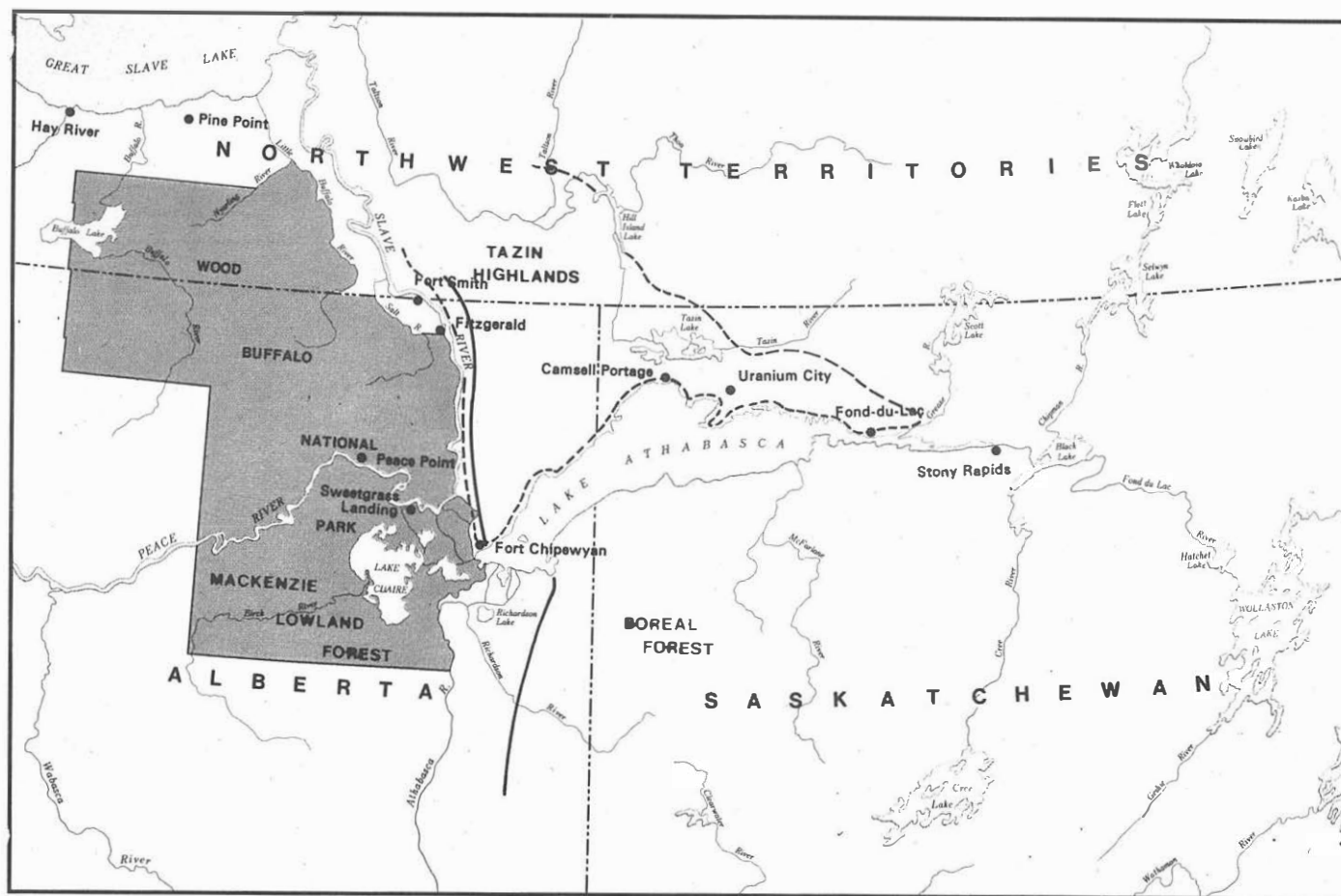
The floras and faunas over broad land zones, which are basically climatically conditioned, show great overall similarity within a zone, and contrasts with adjacent zones. Due allowance has to be made for small-scale local diversity due to different habitats, of which there may be several up to many in any zone. The concept of life zones as applied particularly to North America is due to C. H. Merriam (1893), and a general account of this topic as applied to Canada only is given by Anderson (1937). Some writers consider that a concept of biological communities is more appropriate. The writer, like Nero in his publication on the area under discussion, prefers to use the older system; but

the relationship between the two systems as applied to the area in question can be tabulated as follows:

<u>Community or Ecotone</u> (Ecotones are broad areas of overlap between two communities which may have a few distinctive species of their own)	<u>Life Zone</u>
Tundra	Arctic
Tundra-coniferous forest ecotone	Hudsonian
Coniferous forest	Canadian

The Lake Athabasca region as here defined lies entirely in the Canadian Zone; but in life zone maps published as recently as Anderson's (1937), the border between the Canadian and Hudsonian Zones is drawn at a slant from the northwest to the southeast across Lake Athabasca between its western one-third and its eastern two-thirds, i.e., much of the eastern part of our area was then considered to lie in the Hudsonian Zone. As this zone has no distinctive mammal species, its recognition depends mainly on key elements of the breeding bird fauna, characteristic species being the tree and Harris' sparrow and the gray-cheeked thrush. Due to the well-known recent climatic amelioration of the boreal region, life zone boundaries have now shifted so that the Canadian Hudsonian boundary in the area under discussion runs at the same slant as before but across the eastern corner of northern Saskatchewan (see map, p. 6 in Nero, 1967a), and thus beyond the Lake Athabasca area. Nevertheless, as Harper (1931) pointed out, there was evidence (much of it now changed due to climatic amelioration since he worked there) that a relatively higher-lying area (see sketch Fig. 2) which he called the Tazin Highlands, extending from the north shore of





**Fig. 2** Boundary between Mackenzie Lowland Forest and Boreal Forest, with edge of Tazin Highlands indicated by dotted line.

Lake Athabasca towards Great Slave Lake, partly in Alberta, partly in Saskatchewan, and also in the N.W.T., represented a fairly distinct faunal area characterized by a mixture of Canadian and Hudsonian elements. The climatic amelioration already mentioned has since allowed certain Canadian Zone bird species which he found absent there to invade it successfully; but even now there is something distinctive about this area in such features as the absence of the red-tailed hawk and, once one is well within it, of the white-throated sparrow. Future work is likely to add further distinctions between the Tazin Highlands and more evidently Canadian Zone areas to the west and south such as the Slave River lowlands, the Athabasca Delta, and the generally low-lying land south of the Alberta portion of Lake Athabasca.

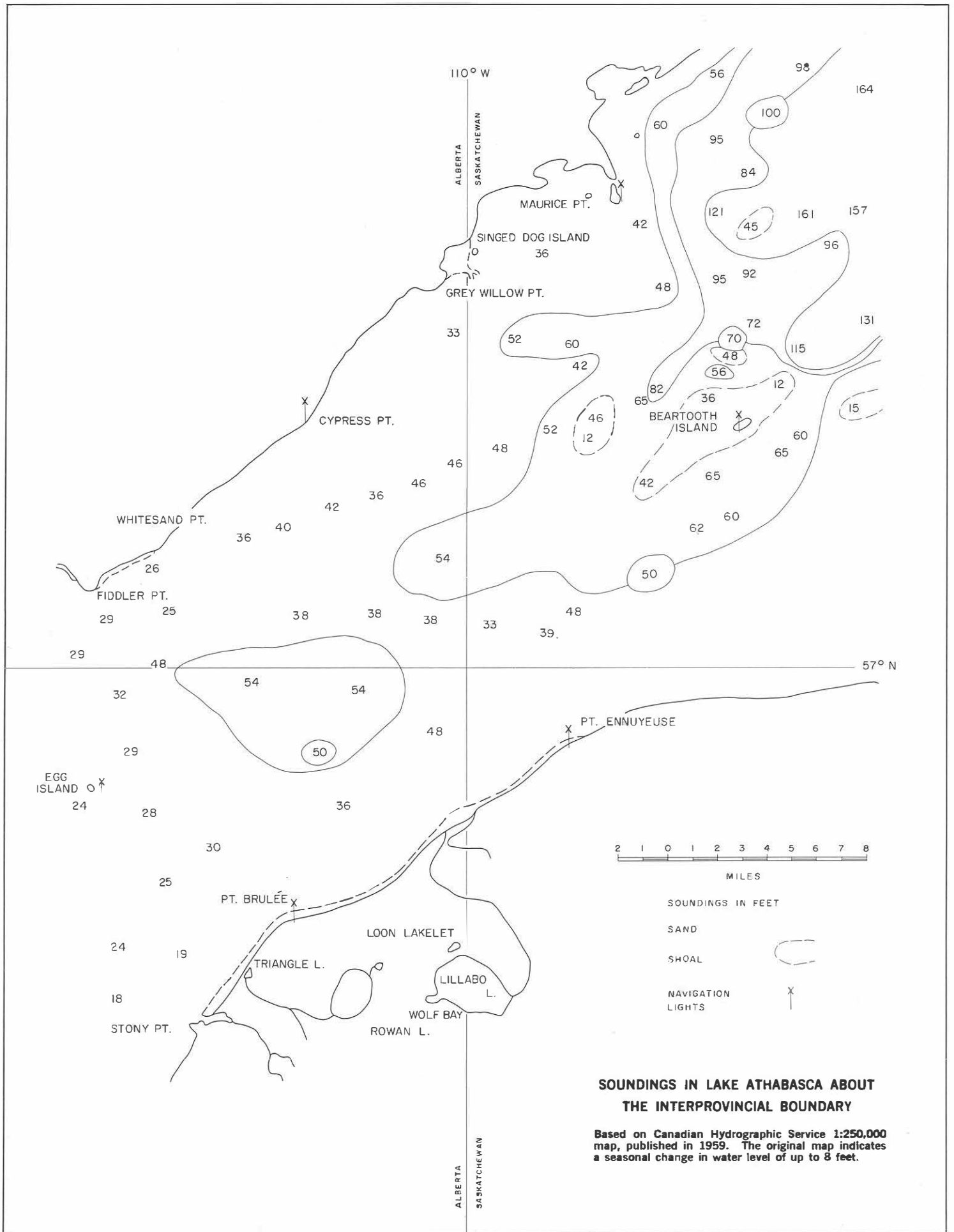
Although the whole region is now in the Canadian Life Zone, there are still certain broad differences between the avifauna of its western and its eastern portion. In the west is the Mackenzie lowland forest, mainly on lowland alluvial sand, and to the east, the boreal forest on the Precambrian Shield; there is also a climatic difference, the east being colder than the west and the dividing line following roughly the same line as the border between the features named (Fig. 2). A number of birds are summer residents and breed or probably breed in the western area and are either altogether absent or much scarcer in the eastern portion. They are: blue-winged teal, canvasback, ruddy duck, sora rail, least flycatcher, house and winter wren, starling, red-eyed and warbling vireo, black-throated green

warbler, ovenbird, northern waterthrush, mourning warbler, yellowthroat, Canada warbler, redstart, and the rose-breasted grosbeak.

Another east-west difference, the line of demarcation this time following the Alberta-Saskatchewan border, is shown by the Arctic tern. Apart from within an area well south of Lake Athabasca (Nero, 1963), this bird breeds freely on many islands in the Saskatchewan portion of the Lake as close to the interprovincial border as islets off Grey Willow Point; but, as my examination of most likely islands in the Alberta portion of the Lake in 1971 showed, it does not nest in Alberta. As Fig. 3 shows, this part of the Lake is generally shallower than the Alberta portion; it is also more muddy due to the inflow of the Athabasca and at times the Peace River. These features may affect the available food supply in a way that is important to Arctic but not common terns, for the latter breed over the whole Lake.

#### THE DELTA

The Peace-Athabasca Delta forms the northern limit of breeding of the redhead, Franklin's gull, long-billed marsh wren, and the yellow-headed blackbird. While it is of great importance as a waterfowl staging area and of considerable importance as a waterfowl breeding area, it is of less importance to shorebirds. Most species only pass through it as migrants and not in very large numbers. The most common breeding shorebird, the common sandpiper, breeds along rivers and water channels and would thus



**SOUNDINGS IN LAKE ATHABASCA ABOUT THE INTERPROVINCIAL BOUNDARY**

Based on Canadian Hydrographic Service 1:250,000 map, published in 1959. The original map indicates a seasonal change in water level of up to 8 feet.

**Fig. 3**

be little affected by changing water levels. Apart from waterfowl, the species which are adversely affected by low water levels are marsh breeding species like the bittern, rail and the coot, the common snipe and lesser yellowlegs, marsh wren, Franklin's gull, black tern, and yellow-headed blackbird.

	<u>PEACE-ATHABASCA DELTA</u>	<u>LAKE ATHABASCA REGION</u>
Order <u>Gaviiformes</u>		
Family <u>Gaviidae</u> , Loons		
Common Loon*	fairly common migrant	fairly common summer resident, breeds
Yellow-billed Loon*		rare migrant, one record Saskatchewan
Arctic Loon*	rare migrant	rare summer resident, breeds Alberta
Red-throated Loon*	rare migrant	rare summer resident, breeds Saskatchewan
Order <u>Podicipediformes</u>		
Family <u>Podicipedidae</u> , Grebes		
Red-necked Grebe*	fairly common summer resident, breeds	fairly common summer resident, breeds
Horned Grebe*	fairly common summer resident, breeds	fairly common summer resident, breeds
Eared Grebe*	summer resident, breeds	
Pied-billed Grebe*	fairly common summer resident, breeds	fairly common summer resident, breeds along Slave River valley but east of there only to south shore of Lake Athabasca
Order <u>Pelecaniformes</u>		
Family <u>pelecanidae</u> , Pelicans		
White Pelican*	rare migrant	summer resident, one breeding colony, only Alberta, elsewhere rare migrant

	<u>PEACE-ATHABASCA DELTA</u>	<u>LAKE ATHABASCA REGION</u>
Order <u>Anseriformes</u>		
Family <u>Anatidae</u> , Waterfowl		
Whistling Swan	regular migrant	rare migrant
Canada Goose*	migrant and summer resident, breeds	fairly common summer resident, breeds
White-fronted Goose	regular migrant	
Lesser Snow Goose	regular common migrant	migrant, Slave River Valley
Ross' Goose*	regular migrant	fairly common migrant
Mallard*	abundant summer resident, breeds	common summer resident, breeds
Black Duck*	rare vagrant	one sighting Saskatchewan
Gadwall*	fairly common summer resident, breeds	rare summer resident, probably breeds
Pintail*	migrant and common summer resident, breeds	fairly common summer resident, breeds
Baldpate*	migrant and fairly common summer resident, breeds	fairly common summer resident, breeds
Green-winged Teal*	fairly common summer resident, breeds	fairly common summer resident, breeds
Blue-winged Teal	fairly common summer resident, breeds	rare Slave River Valley, unknown further east
Shoveler	common summer resident, breeds	fairly rare summer resident, probably breeds
Redhead*	local summer resident, breeds	-----

	<u>PEACE-ATHABASCA DELTA</u>	<u>LAKE ATHABASCA REGION</u>
Ring-necked Duck*	common summer resident, breeds	fairly common summer resident, breeds
Canvasback*	fairly common summer resident, breeds	-----
Lesser Scaup*	fairly common summer resident, breeds	fairly common summer resident, breeds
Common Goldeneye	common summer resident, breeds	common summer resident, Wood Buffalo Park; fairly rare further east, breeds
Bufflehead*	fairly common summer resident on the rivers, breeds	common summer resident, breeds
Oldsquaw		scarce migrant Alberta portion of Lake Athabasca, as yet no good records for Saskatchewan portion
White-winged Scoter	rare summer resident, breeds	fairly rare summer resident, probably breeds
Surf Scoter*	rare summer resident	fairly common summer resident, breeds Saskatchewan
Ruddy Duck	fairly common summer resident, breeds	rare summer resident, Wood Buffalo Park; absent further east
Hooded Merganser	very rare migrant, one record	rare migrant
Common Merganser*	fairly rare migrant	common summer resident, breeds Saskatchewan, probably breeds Alberta



Red-breasted Merganser\*

PEACE-ATHABASCA DELTA  
fairly rare migrant

LAKE ATHABASCA REGION  
common summer resident, breeds  
Saskatchewan, probably breeds  
Alberta. This and the  
preceding species are rare in  
Wood Buffalo Park

Order Falconiformes

Family Accipitridae, Hawks  
and Eagles

Goshawk\*

rather rare resident, breeds

Sharp-shinned Hawk\*

rather rare summer resident,  
breeds

Red-tailed Hawk\*

summer resident, probably  
breeds

fairly rare summer resident,  
probably breeds

Swainson's Hawk\*

rare vagrant, only one record

Broad-winged Hawk\*

rare vagrant

rare vagrant

Rough-legged Hawk

regular migrant

regular migrant

Golden Eagle

rare migrant

very rare summer resident, one  
breeding record, Saskatchewan

Bald Eagle

regular migrant, some  
breeding

fairly common summer resident,  
breeds

Marsh Hawk

fairly common summer  
resident, probably breeds

fairly common summer resident,  
probably breeds Peace-Athabasca  
and Slave River lowlands,  
rare or absent elsewhere

Family Pandionidae, Ospreys

Osprey\*

rare migrant

rare summer resident, one  
breeding record Saskatchewan

Family Falconidae, Falcons

PEACE-ATHABASCA DELTA

LAKE ATHABASCA REGION

Gyr Falcon

rare winter visitor

rare winter visitor

Peregrine Falcon\*

scarce summer resident,  
breeds

scarce summer resident in  
Alberta, breeds, no records for  
Saskatchewan part of region

Merlin (Pigeon Hawk)

fairly rare resident, breeds

Sparrow Hawk\*

common summer resident,  
probably breeds

common summer resident, breeds

Order Galliformes

Family Tetraonidae, Grouse  
and Ptarmigans

Spruce Grouse\*

common resident, probably  
breeds

common resident, breeds

Ruffed Grouse\*

common resident, probably  
breeds

common resident, breeds Wood  
Buffalo Park but rare or  
absent further east

Willow Ptarmigan\*

common winter visitor

common winter visitor

Rock Ptarmigan\*

rare winter visitor,  
Saskatchewan only

Sharp-tailed Grouse\*

common resident, probably  
breeds

fairly common Wood Buffalo  
Park, only local further east,  
breeds

Order Ciconiiformes

Family Ardeidae, Herons and  
Bitterns

Great Blue Heron

rare vagrant

American Bittern\*

PEACE-ATHABASCA DELTA  
common summer resident,  
probably breeds

LAKE ATHABASCA REGION  
fairly common summer resident,  
breeds

Order Gruiformes

Family Gruidae, Cranes

Whooping Crane

very rare migrant

local summer resident Wood  
Buffalo Park, breeds, elsewhere  
very rare migrant

Sandhill Crane

migrant

local summer resident

Family Rallidae, Rails and  
Coots

Virginia Rail\*

a male in breeding condition  
collected at Chipewyan is the  
only record

Sora Rail\*

common summer resident,  
breeds

common summer resident Slave  
River lowlands, uncommon  
further east, probably breeds

Yellow Rail\*

rare summer resident,  
probably breeds

rare summer resident Wood  
Buffalo Park, may breed but  
unknown further east

Coot\*

fairly common summer  
resident, breeds

summer resident Wood Buffalo  
Park and further east as far  
north as south shore of Lake  
Athabasca, breeds

Order Charadriiformes

Family Recurvirostridae, Avocets

American Avocet\*

very rare vagrant, two  
collected late 19th century  
at Chipewyan

Family Charadriidae, Plovers  
and Turnstones

PEACE-ATHABASCA DELTA

LAKE ATHABASCA REGION

Semipalmated Plover\* regular migrant

fairly common migrant, summer  
resident, breeds sand dune area  
on south shore of Lake  
Athabasca, Saskatchewan

Killdeer\* common summer resident,  
breeds

fairly common summer resident,  
breeds, probably absent in  
Tazin Highlands

American Golden Plover\* regular migrant

migrant along Slave River, no  
records further east

Black-bellied Plover\* regular migrant

migrant as far east as Sand  
Point east of Ft. Chipewyan

Ruddy Turnstone\* migrant

migrant Chipewyan area, one  
record, Poplar Point, Lake  
Athabasca, Saskatchewan

Family Scolopacidae, Snipes  
and Sandpipers

Common Snipe\* common summer resident,  
breeds

fairly rare summer resident,  
breeds, one sight record,  
Saskatchewan

Whimbrel

one sight record, Saskatchewan

Upland Plover\*

rare summer resident between  
Hay Camp, Wood Buffalo Park and  
Ft. Smith, probably breeds  
there, absent elsewhere

Spotted Sandpiper\* common summer resident,  
breeds

common summer resident of the  
whole region, breeds

	<u>PEACE-ATHABASCA DELTA</u>	<u>LAKE ATHABASCA REGION</u>
Solitary Sandpiper*	fairly rare summer resident, probably breeds	fairly rare summer resident, probably breeds
Greater Yellowlegs*	regular migrant	no records for Wood Buffalo Park but fairly common though local summer resident further east, breeds
Lesser Yellowlegs*	common summer resident, probably breeds	fairly common summer resident breeds
Knot		rare migrant, Sand Point east of Chipewyan and two probable sightings, Lake Athabasca, Saskatchewan
Pectoral Sandpiper*	regular migrant	fairly rare migrant
White-rumped Sandpiper*	fairly rare migrant	fairly common migrant
Baird's Sandpiper*	regular migrant	fairly common migrant
Least Sandpiper*	common migrant	fairly common migrant and local summer visitor, possibly breeds
Dunlin*		rare migrant, one collected, Lake Athabasca, Saskatchewan
Short-billed Dowitcher*		rare migrant Wood Buffalo only
Long-billed Dowitcher*		one record, Lake Athabasca, Saskatchewan
Stilt Sandpiper*	migrant, sometimes in large numbers	fairly rare migrant
Semipalmated Sandpiper*	migrant	fairly common migrant

Buff-breasted Sandpiper*	<u>PEACE-ATHABASCA DELTA</u> migrant	<u>LAKE ATHABASCA REGION</u> scarce, migrant Wood Buffalo Park, no records further east
Sanderling*		fairly rare migrant
Family <u>Phalaropodidae</u> , Phalaropes		
Wilson's Phalarope*	rare summer visitant, possibly breeds	
Northern Phalarope*		fairly rare migrant and very rare summer resident, has bred Saskatchewan
Family <u>Stercorariidae</u> , Jaegers		
Pomarine Jaeger	very rare migrant	very rare migrant
Parasitic Jaeger*		migrant and fairly rare summer visitant
Long-tailed Jaeger	one sight record of a migrant	
Family <u>Laridae</u> , Gulls and Terns		
Glaucous Gull*		very rare migrant, Saskatchewan
Thayer's Gull*		very rare migrant, Saskatchewan
Herring Gull*	fairly common summer visitant	common summer resident, breeds islands on Lake Athabasca, Alberta and Saskatchewan
California Gull*	fairly common summer visitant	common summer resident, breeds islands on Lake Athabasca, Alberta and Saskatchewan

	<u>PEACE-ATHABASCA DELTA</u>	<u>LAKE ATHABASCA REGION</u>
Ring-billed Gull*	fairly common summer visitant	fairly common summer resident, breeds
Mew Gull*	fairly common summer visitant	common summer resident, breeds Saskatchewan, almost certainly also Alberta but no proof
Franklin's Gull*	common summer resident, breeds, most northern breeding colony in Canada	fairly common in areas, e.g. Chipewyan close to the Delta, rare elsewhere
Bonaparte's Gull*	fairly common summer visitant	fairly common summer resident, breeds Saskatchewan and probably Alberta
Little Gull*		rare visitant, one Saskatchewan record
Sabine's Gull*		rare migrant, one record each for Alberta and Saskatchewan
Common Tern*	common summer visitant	common summer resident, breeds islands, Lake Athabasca, Alberta and Saskatchewan
Arctic Tern*	fairly rare migrant	common summer resident, breeds Saskatchewan but only visitant and migrant in Alberta
Caspian Tern*	fairly rare summer visitant	summer resident, breeds, one Alberta colony, elsewhere only fairly rare summer visitant
Black Tern*	common summer resident, breeds	rare summer resident, breeds, probably only as far as south shore of Lake Athabasca

PEACE-ATHABASCA DELTA

LAKE ATHABASCA REGION

Order Columbiformes

Family Columbidae, Pigeons  
and Doves

Mourning Dove

vagrant, one Alberta and  
several records for one  
Saskatchewan locality

Order Strigiformes

Family Strigidae, Typical Owls

Great Horned Owl\*

fairly common resident, breeds

Snowy Owl

uncommon winter visitor

uncommon winter visitor

Hawk-Owl\*

rare summer resident

fairly common resident, breeds

Barred Owl

very rare resident,  
Saskatchewan one record only

Great Gray Owl\*

rare summer resident

fairly rare resident, breeds

Long-eared Owl\*

rare visitant

Short-eared Owl\*

fairly common summer  
resident, probably breeds

uncommon Wood Buffalo Park, no  
definite records further east

Boreal Owl\*

rare resident, breeds

Order Caprimulgiformes

Family Caprimulgidae,  
Goatsuckers

Common Nighthawk\*

common summer resident,  
probably breeds

common summer resident, breeds



	<u>PEACE-ATHABASCA DELTA</u>	<u>LAKE ATHABASCA REGION</u>
Order <u>Apodiformes</u>		
Family <u>Trochilidae</u> , Hummingbirds		
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	rare summer visitant	rare summer visitant, Chipewyan only
Order <u>Coraciiformes</u>		
Family <u>Alcedinidae</u> , Kingfishers		
Belted Kingfisher*	fairly common summer resident, probably breeds	fairly common summer resident, breeds
Order <u>Piciformes</u>		
Family <u>picidae</u> , Woodpeckers		
Yellow-shafted Flicker*	common summer resident, breeds	common summer resident, breeds
Pileated Woodpecker		uncommon resident, breeds
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker*	common summer resident, breeds	fairly common summer resident, breeds
Hairy Woodpecker*	common resident, probably breeds	fairly common resident, probably breeds
Downy Woodpecker*	fairly common resident, probably breeds	fairly common resident, probably breeds
Black-backed Three-Toed Woodpecker*		uncommon resident, breeds
Northern Three-toed Woodpecker*		uncommon resident, probably breeds

PEACE-ATHABASCA DELTA

LAKE ATHABASCA REGION

Order Passeriformes

Family Tyrannidae, Tyrant  
Flycatchers

Eastern Kingbird*	common summer resident, breeds	fairly common summer resident, breeds
Scissor-tailed Flycatcher		vagrant, one record Chipewyan
Eastern Phoebe*	common summer resident, breeds	fairly common summer resident, breeds
Yellow-bellied Flycatcher*	rare summer resident	rare summer resident, probably breeds
Traill's Flycatcher*	fairly common summer resident, probably breeds	fairly common summer resident, probably breeds
Least Flycatcher*	common summer resident, probably breeds	common in western, uncommon in eastern part, summer resident, breeds
Western Wood Pewee*	rare summer resident, probably breeds	rare summer resident, probably breeds
Olive-sided Flycatcher*		fairly common summer resident, probably breeds

Family Alaudidae, Larks

Horned Lark*	migrant	migrant and local summer resident, breeds in sand dunes south of Lake Athabasca
--------------	---------	---

Family Hirundinidae, Swallows

Tree Swallow*	fairly common summer resident, breeds	common summer resident, breeds
---------------	--	--------------------------------

	<u>PEACE-ATHABASCA DELTA</u>	<u>LAKE ATHABASCA REGION</u>
Bank Swallow*	fairly common summer resident, probably breeds	uncommon summer resident, breeds
Barn Swallow*	fairly common summer resident, probably breeds	common summer resident, breeds
Cliff Swallow*	fairly common summer resident, probably breeds	uncommon summer resident, breeds
Family <u>Corvidae</u> , Jays, Magpies, and Crows		
Gray Jay*	fairly common resident, probably breeds	common resident, breeds
Black-billed Magpie*	rare visitant	rare visitant
Common Raven*	common resident, probably breeds	common resident, breeds
Common Crow*	common summer resident, breeds	fairly common summer resident, breeds
Family <u>Paridae</u> , Chickadees		
Black-capped Chickadee*	common resident, probably breeds	fairly common resident, breeds
Boreal Chickadee	fairly common resident, probably breeds	common resident, breeds
Family <u>Sittidae</u> , Nuthatches		
Red-breasted Nuthatch*		fairly common summer resident, breeds

	<u>PEACE-ATHABASCA DELTA</u>	<u>LAKE ATHABASCA REGION</u>
Family <u>Troglodytidae</u> , Wrens		
House Wren	summer resident, probably breeds	summer resident, probably breeds Wood Buffalo Park but not further east
Winter Wren		rare summer resident, probably breeds Wood Buffalo Park, absent further east
Long-billed Marsh Wren*	fairly common summer resident, probably breeds	
Rock Wren		vagrant, one sighting Chipewyan
Family <u>Turdidae</u> , Thrushes		
Robin*	common summer resident, probably breeds	fairly common summer resident, breeds
Hermit Thrush*		fairly common summer resident, breeds
Swainson's Thrush*		fairly common summer resident, breeds
Gray-cheeked Thrush*		uncommon migrant
Mountain Bluebird*		rare summer visitant, possibly breeds
Family <u>Sylviidae</u> , Kinglets		
Golden-crowned Kinglet*		rare summer visitant, probably breeds Alberta, no Saskatchewan records
Ruby-crowned Kinglet*	summer visitor, probably breeds	common summer resident, breeds

	<u>PEACE-ATHABASCA DELTA</u>	<u>LAKE ATHABASCA REGION</u>
Family <u>Motacillidae</u> , Pipits		
Water Pipit*	fairly common migrant	uncommon migrant
Family <u>Empidonacidae</u> , Waxwings		
Bohemian Waxwing	resident, probably breeds	fairly common resident, breeds
Cedar Waxwing		uncommon summer resident, breeds
Family <u>Sturnidae</u> , Starlings		
Starling	uncommon summer visitant	uncommon summer resident, breeds Alberta, no Saskatchewan records as yet
Family <u>Vireonidae</u> , Vireos		
Solitary Vireo*	uncommon summer resident, probably breeds	uncommon summer resident, probably breeds
Red-eyed Vireo*	common summer resident, probably breeds	common Alberta, uncommon Saskatchewan summer resident, probably breeds
Philadelphia Vireo*	summer visitant	uncommon summer resident, probably breeds
Warbling Vireo*	common summer resident, probably breeds	fairly common summer resident Wood Buffalo Park, probably breeds, absent further east
Family <u>Parulidae</u> , Wood Warblers		
Black-and-white Warbler*		fairly common summer resident Wood Buffalo Park and Chipewyan, probably breeds, none further east

	<u>PEACE-ATHABASCA DELTA</u>	<u>LAKE ATHABASCA REGION</u>
Tennessee Warbler*	common summer resident, probably breeds	common summer resident, breeds
Orange-crowned Warbler*		local summer resident, probably breeds
Yellow Warbler*	common summer resident, breeds	common summer resident, breeds
Magnolia Warbler	local summer resident, probably breeds	local summer resident, breeds
Cape May Warbler*		local to rare summer resident, probably breeds
Myrtle Warbler	fairly common migrant	fairly common summer resident, breeds
Black-throated Green Warbler*	local summer resident, probably breeds	only summer records for upper Slave River Valley, absent elsewhere
Bay-breasted Warbler*		fairly rare summer resident, probably breeds
Blackpoll Warbler*	fairly rare summer resident, may breed	fairly rare summer resident, breeds
Palm Warbler*		fairly common summer resident, breeds
Ovenbird*	common summer resident, probably breeds	fairly common Slave River lowlands where it probably breeds, absent further east
Northern Waterthrush*	common summer resident, probably breeds	summer resident, common Wood Buffalo Park, uncommon further east, probably breeds

Mourning Warbler*	<u>PEACE-ATHABASCA DELTA</u> rare summer resident, probably breeds	<u>LAKE ATHABASCA REGION</u> summer resident, probably breeds, Chipewyan, absent elsewhere
Yellowthroat	fairly common summer resident, probably breeds	summer resident, probably breeds, southern half of Wood Buffalo Park and Chipewyan, none further east
Wilson's Warbler*	local summer resident, breeds	uncommon summer resident, probably breeds
Canada Warbler	rare summer resident, probably breeds	
American Redstart	common summer resident, probably breeds	fairly common summer resident Wood Buffalo Park but not further east
Family <u>Plocceidae</u> , Weaver Finches		
House Sparrow	summer resident, may breed	resident in settlements east as far as Uranium City-Eldorado, probably breeds
Family <u>Icteridae</u> , Blackbirds		
Yellow-headed Blackbird*	local summer resident, breeds	
Red-winged Blackbird*	common summer resident, breeds	common summer resident, breeds
Rusty Blackbird	fairly common summer resident, probably breeds	fairly common summer resident, breeds
Common Grackle*	common summer resident, breeds	summer resident, common in western, uncommon in eastern part, probably breeds

	<u>PEACE-ATHABASCA DELTA</u>	<u>LAKE ATHABASCA REGION</u>
Brown-headed Cowbird	common summer resident, probably breeds	rare summer resident, probably breeds
Family <u>Thraupidae</u> , Tanagers		
Western Tanager*		fairly common summer resident Slave River lowlands and Chipewyan, rare elsewhere, probably breeds
Family <u>Fringillidae</u> , Finches, Sparrows, etc.		
Rose-breasted Grosbeak*	summer resident, probably breeds	summer resident, probably breeds Wood Buffalo Park and Chipewyan, absent further east
Evening Grosbeak*		rare summer visitor, may breed Wood Buffalo Park, elsewhere uncommon migrant
Pine Grosbeak*	rare migrant	rare resident, may breed
Hoary Redpoll*		fairly common winter visitor Alberta, rarer Saskatchewan
Common Redpoll*		uncommon resident, breeds
Pine Siskin	summer resident, may breed	fairly common summer resident, probably breeds
Red Crossbill*	summer visitant	fairly common summer resident, probably breeds
White-winged Crossbill*		fairly common summer resident, probably breeds
Savannah Sparrow*	common summer visitor, breeds	common west but uncommon east, summer visitor, breeds



	<u>PEACE-ATHABASCA DELTA</u>	<u>LAKE ATHABASCA REGION</u>
Le Conte's Sparrow	summer resident, probably breeds	local summer visitor, breeds
Sharp-tailed Sparrow*	summer resident, may breed	summer visitor, Slave River and Chipewyan only, may breed
Vesper Sparrow*		uncommon summer resident, probably breeds
Slate-colored Junco		common summer resident, breeds
Tree Sparrow*	migrant	fairly common migrant
Chipping Sparrow*		common summer resident, breeds
Clay-colored Sparrow	summer resident	uncommon summer resident, probably breeds
Harris' Sparrow		regular migrant
White-crowned Sparrow*		fairly common summer resident, breeds
White-throated Sparrow*	common summer resident, breeds	common summer resident, breeds
Fox Sparrow*	local summer resident, probably breeds	very local summer resident, probably breeds
Lincoln's Sparrow*	fairly common summer resident, probably breeds	fairly common summer resident, breeds
Swamp Sparrow*	common summer resident, probably breeds	fairly common summer resident, breeds
Song Sparrow	fairly common summer resident, probably breeds	fairly common summer resident, breeds

Lapland Longspur\*

Smith's Longspur\*

Snow Bunting\*

PEACE-ATHABASCA DELTA  
fairly common migrant

common migrant

LAKE ATHABASCA REGION  
regular migrant

rare migrant

common migrant and probably  
also winter visitor

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My summer field work, 1969 to 1972, was supported by an annual grant during these three years from the Boreal Institute of the University of Alberta. I am greatly obliged to the Eldorado Nuclear Corporation (Eldorado, Saskatchewan) and particularly to the courtesy of its general manager, Mr. C. Smith, who enabled me to obtain air passage between Edmonton and Eldorado and accommodation at the company's quarters on the space-available basis.

ANNOTATED LIST OF REFERENCES, WITH NOTES ON  
SOURCES OF UNPUBLISHED MATERIAL USED IN THE REPORT

- American Ornithologist's Union. 1957. Check-list of North American birds. Fifth ed. Baltimore.
- Anderson, R. M. 1909. Nesting of the Bohemian waxwing (Bombycilla garrulus). Auk 31:10-12.
- Anderson, R. M. 1937. Faunas of Canada. Pages 35-52. In The Canada year book, 1937. King's Printer, Ottawa.
- Bard, F. G. 1956. Whooping cranes in migration. Blue Jay 14:39-42.
- Eaton, S. W. 1948. Bird distribution along the Peace, Slave, and Little Buffalo Rivers of Canada. Auk 65:345-352. (Based on a boat and raft journey made in June and July, 1940.)
- Godfrey, W. E. 1966. The birds of Canada. National Museum of Canada, Bull. No. 203, Biological Series No. 72. Queen's Printer, Ottawa.
- Harper, F. 1915. The Athabasca-Great Slave Lake expedition, 1949. Geol. Surv. Can. Depart. Mines, Summary Report, 1914. Sessional Paper No. 26, pp. 159-163.
- Harper, F. 1925. A faunal reconnaissance in the Athabasca and Great Slave Lakes region. Thesis. Cornell University.
- Harper, F. 1931. Physiographic and faunal areas in the Athabasca and Great Slave Lake region. Ecology 12:18-32.
- Höhn, F. O. 1956. Some ornithological records for Wood Buffalo Park and the Mackenzie district, N.W.T. Can. Field Nat. 70:144.
- Höhn, E. O. 1970. Pomarine and parasitic jaegers and Sabine's gulls in Alberta. Can. Field Nat. 84:402. (Notes on scope of unpublished field work, 1969-1972, are given in the introduction.)

- Jung, C. S. 1930. Notes on the birds of the Delta region of the Athabasca River. *Auk* 42:533-541. (Based on a stay there in June, 1928.)
- MacFarlane, R. 1908. Notes on the mammals and birds of northern Canada. In C. Nair and R. MacFarlane, *Through the Mackenzie basin*. Briggs, Toronto.
- Macoun, J., and J. M. Macoun. 1909. *Catalogue of the birds of Canada*. Govt. Printing Bureau, Ottawa.
- Merriam, C. H. 1893. Third provisional bio-geographic map of North America. Rep. Div., Ornithology and Mammalogy, U. S. Dept. Agr., Plate I. Washington.
- Nero, R. W. 1961. The Arctic tern in Saskatchewan. *Blue Jay* 19:60-67.
- Nero, R. W. 1963. Birds of the Lake Athabasca region, Saskatchewan. Spec. Pub. No. 5, Sask. Natl. Hist. Soc., Regina, Saskatchewan.
- Nero, R. W. 1967a. The birds of northern Saskatchewan. Spec. Pub. Sask. Natl. Hist. Soc., Regina, Saskatchewan.
- Nero, R. W. 1967b. Additional bird notes for Little Gull Lake, Saskatchewan. *Blue Jay* 25:11-14.
- Novakowski, N. S. 1966. Whooping crane population dynamics on the nesting grounds, Wood Buffalo National Park, Northwest Territories, Canada. *Can. Wildl. Serv. Rep.*, Ser. No. 1.
- Preble, F. A. 1908. A biological investigation of the Athabasca-Mackenzie region. U. S. Bur. Biol. Surv. N. Amer. Fauna No. 27.
- Salt, R. W., and A. L. Wilk. 1966. *The birds of Alberta*. 2nd ed. Queen's Printer, Edmonton, Alberta. (Professor Salt gave me a copy of his notes made on a stay in the Athabasca Delta in June, 1939. Mr. Wilk observed about Ft. Chipewyan in June, 1952, and inserted some of his observations into the first edition of "The birds of Alberta," but further details were not obtainable as I could not locate him.)

(Shortt, T. M.) Mr. Shortt of the Royal Ontario Museum observed and collected about Ft. Chipewyan in June, 1945, and later further east in Saskatchewan. He placed a list of the specimens collected in Alberta at my disposal and made full records on his work in northern Saskatchewan available to Dr. Nero.

Soper, D. J. 1942. The birds of Wood Buffalo Park and vicinity, northern Alberta, and the District of Mackenzie, N. W. T., Canada. Trans. Royal Canadian Inst. 29:19-97.

Soper, D. J. 1951. Waterfowl and related investigations in the Peace-Athabasca Delta region of Alberta. Can. Wildl. Serv., Wildl. Mgmt. Ser. No. 2, Ottawa. 63 pp. + illus.

Williams, M. Y. 1922. Biological notes along fourteen hundred miles of the Mackenzie River system. Can. Field. Nat. 36:61-66. (Based on a boat journey which left Peace River, May 14, and returned to McMurray, September 9, 1921.)