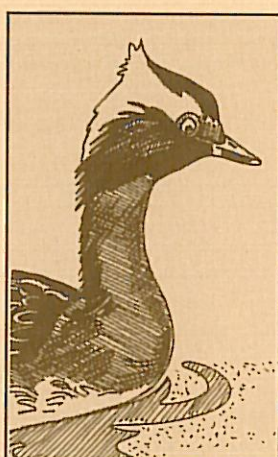
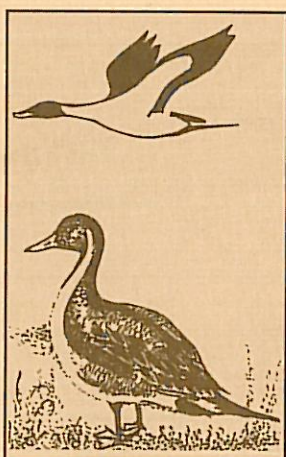


COMMON
SASKATCHEWAN
RIVER VALLEY
WATERFOWL, SHOREBIRDS
SONGBIRDS & RAPTORS



BY JOE MEEHAN
ILLUSTRATIONS BY JULIAN SADLOWSKI

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PUBLISHED BY:



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- Battlefords Wildlife Federation

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Once again, it is a pleasure to acknowledge the following:

- Julian Sadlowski and his magnificent artwork
- Keith Anderson, Horticulturist, City of North Battleford
- W. A. (Bill) Chappell, Field Biologist, Ducks Unlimited Canada
- My wife, Rena Meehan, for her encouragement and assistance with the dreaded typing.

Acknowledgements

It is a pleasure to acknowledge with profound gratitude the people who gave their assistance, resources, materials, or services. Their input has made this book a true community effort and of benefit to those interested in identifying the waterfowl and bird species common to the Saskatchewan River Valley.

Once again, it is a pleasure to acknowledge the following:

- Julian Salowski and his magnificent artwork
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Dedicated to:

Julian Sadlowski

A truly dedicated and unselfish citizen

INTRODUCTION:

Wetlands are the most productive ecosystems on the Saskatchewan landscape. Varying water depths, fluctuating water levels and seasonal changes provide the different habitats required to support a tremendous diversity of plants and wildlife. For example, areas of deep marsh emergent vegetation such as cattails, as compared to open water areas with submergent vegetation growth, provide very different types of habitat. As a result, the wildlife species that utilize these areas also differ.

Wetlands are a vital part of the water cycle. They serve as sources of groundwater recharge and evaporation and may contribute to the generation of rainfall. Wetlands are also a place for learning and recreation.

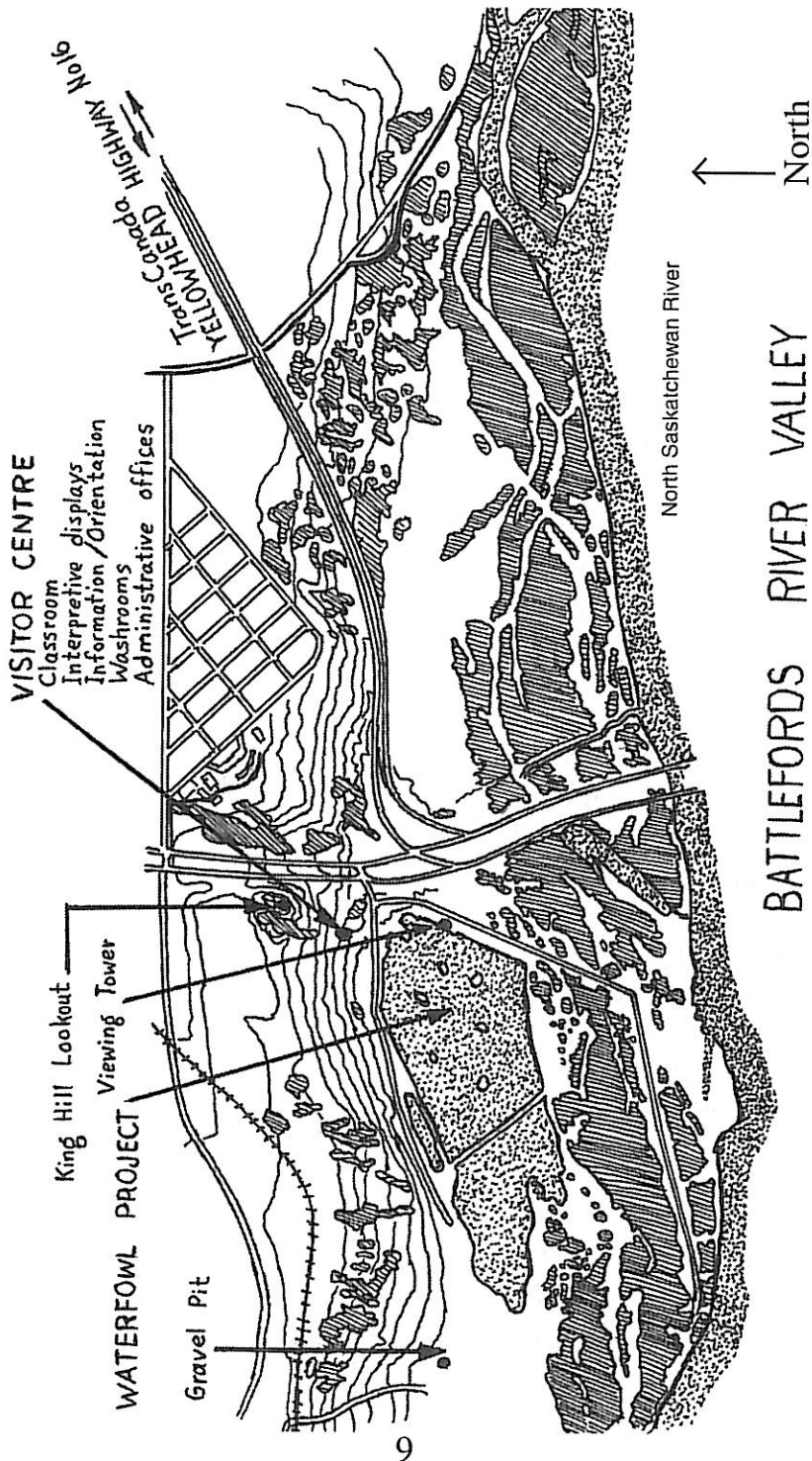
The Battleford's Goose Project is a cooperative venture involving Ducks Unlimited Canada, the Battlefords Branch of the Saskatchewan Wildlife Federation, the City of North Battleford and the McMillan family. Constructed in 1974, the project was designed to provide highly productive wetland habitat with a secure water supply and improved nesting conditions for waterfowl. Water is pumped from the North Saskatchewan River to fill the two basins that have been created by dikes. The east basin is predominantly open water with emergent vegetation around the edge whereas the west basin consists of interspersed wetland and upland areas created by the construction of channels. To prevent the flooding of waterfowl nests that are in the emergent vegetation or close to the water's edge, pumping is done in July when the nesting season is coming to a close. Additional pumping is done in the fall to ensure adequate water levels for the following spring.

Nesting sites for waterfowl, particularly ducks, are provided by the adjacent upland areas where concealing cover occurs as grasses, shrubs and trees. Nesting waterfowl also use the islands constructed within the project along with the numerous artificial structures.

Canada geese make extensive use of the nesting islands that were constructed within the wetland, although intensive grazing by the geese has removed much of the vegetative cover that is required by nesting ducks for concealment from predators. The emergent wetland vegetation along with the upland areas adjacent to the wetland also provide diverse nesting habitats for many species of birds other than waterfowl.

This booklet focuses on the species of birds that can be observed on the Battleford's "Goose" Project. Included are species that breed on the project such as Canada geese, ducks, coots, grebes, shorebirds and numerous perching birds including blackbirds, sparrows, warblers and wrens. Also included are many other species of birds that use the project for foraging or to meet the requirements of other stages of their life cycles such as post-breeding and migration. The Battleford's "Goose" Project provides excellent wildlife viewing opportunities from April to October with the species of birds present changing through the seasons but most of the species can be seen throughout the North Saskatchewan River valley.

Bill Chappell
Wildlife Biologist
Ducks Unlimited Canada



Species List

Note: Species identified with (m) are migrants through the area.

Aerialists (*forage by flying while looking for food*)

1. Ring-billed Gull (*Larus delawarensis*)
2. California Gull (*Larus californicus*)
3. Franklin's Gull (*Larus pipixcan*)
4. Forster's Tern (*Sterna forsteri*)
5. Black Tern (*Chlidonias niger*)

Swimming Birds (*Generally forage while swimming but some may also feed in uplands*)

6. Tundra Swan "Whistling Swan" (*Cygnus columbianus*) (m)
7. American White Pelican (*Pelecanus erythrorhynchos*)
8. Lesser Snow Goose (*Chen caerulescens*) (m)
9. Greater White-fronted goose (*Anser albifrons*) (m)
10. Canada Goose (*Branta canadensis*)
11. American Coot (*Fulica americana*)
12. Horned Grebe (*Podiceps auritus*)
13. Pied-billed Grebe (*Podilymbus podiceps*)
14. Red-necked Grebe (*Podiceps grisegena*)
15. Mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*)
16. Gadwall (*Anas strepera*)
17. Northern pintail (*Anas acuta*)
18. American Wigeon (*Anas americana*)
19. Shoveler (*Anas clypeata*)
20. Green-winged Teal (*Anas crecca*)
21. Blue-winged Teal (*Anas discors*)
22. Ruddy Duck (*Oxyura jamaicensis*)
23. Lesser Scaup (*Aythya affinis*)
24. Ring-necked Duck (*Aythya collaris*)
25. Redhead (*Aythya americana*)
26. Canvasback (*Aythya valisineria*)
27. Common Goldeneye (*Bucephala clangula*)
28. Bufflehead (*Bucephala albeola*)

Wading Birds (*forage in shallow water by wading*)

- 29. Great Blue Heron (*Ardea herodias*)
- 30. American Bitten (*Botaurus lentiginosus*)
- 31. Sora (*Porzana carolina*)

Shorebirds (*seen foraging on mudflats or in shallow water*)

- 32. American Avocet (*Recurvirostra americana*)
- 33. Greater Yellowlegs (*Tringa melanoleuca*) (m)
- 34. Lesser Yellowlegs (*Tinga flavipes*) (m)
- 35. Willet (*Catoptrophorus simipalmatus*)
- 36. Common Snipe (*Gallinago gallinago*)
- 37. Killdeer (*Charadrius vociferus*)
- 38. Wilson's Phalarope (*Phalaropus tricolor*)
- 39. Solitary Sandpiper (*Tringa solitaria*) (m)
- 40. Spotted Sandpiper (*Actitis macularia*)

Raptors (*aerial hunters taking prey over water or land*)

- 41. Northern Harrier "Marsh Hawk" (*Circus cyaneus*)
- 42. Red-tailed Hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*)
- 43. Great Horned Owl (*Bubo virginianus*)

Swallows (*strong fliers that catch insects in the air*)

- 44. Purple Martin (*Progne subis*)
- 45. Tree Swallow (*Tachycineta bicolor*)
- 46. Bank Swallow (*Riparia riparia*)
- 47. Barn Swallow (*Hirundo rustica*)

Flycatching Birds (*birds with broad bills that are proficient at catching flying insects*)

- 48. Eastern Kingbird (*Tyrannus tyrannus*)
- 49. Eastern Phoebe (*Sayornis phoebe*)

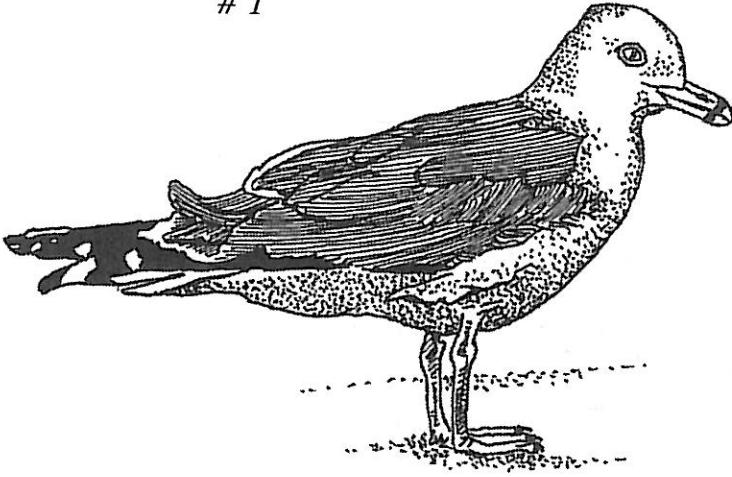
Edge Dwellers (*use the cattails, willows and grassy areas along the wetland edge*)

50. Marsh Wren “Long-billed Marsh Wren” (*Cistothorus palustris*)
51. Redwinged Blackbird (*Agelaius phoeniceus*)
52. Yellow-headed Blackbird (*Xanthocephalus xanthocephalus*)
53. Brewer’s Blackbird (*Euphagus cyanocephalus*)
54. Yellow-rumped Warbler (*Dendroica coronata*) (m)
55. Yellow Warbler (*Dendroica petechia*)
56. Common Yellowthroat (*Geothlypis trichas*)
57. Song Sparrow (*Melospiza melodia*)
58. Savannah Sparrow (*Passerculus sandwichensis*)

Unusual Species (*for the Goose Project*)

59. Double-crested Cormorant (*Phalacrocorca auritus*)
60. Common Merganser (*Mergus merganser*)
61. Red-breasted Merganser (*Mergus serrator*)
62. Hooded Merganser (*Lophodytes cucullatus*)
63. Ross’s Goose (*Chen rossii*) (m)
64. Wood Duck (*Aix sponsa*)
65. Cinnamon Teal (*Anas cyanoptera*)
66. Herring Gull (*Larus argentatus*)
67. Great Egret (*Ardea alba*)
68. Short-billed Dowitcher (*Limnodromus griseus*) (m)
69. Long-billed Dowitcher (*Limnodromus scolopaceus*) (m)
70. Semipalmated Sandpiper (*Calidris pusilla*) (m)
71. Merlin (*Falco columbarius*)

1



RING-BILLED GULL
(*Larus delawarensis*)

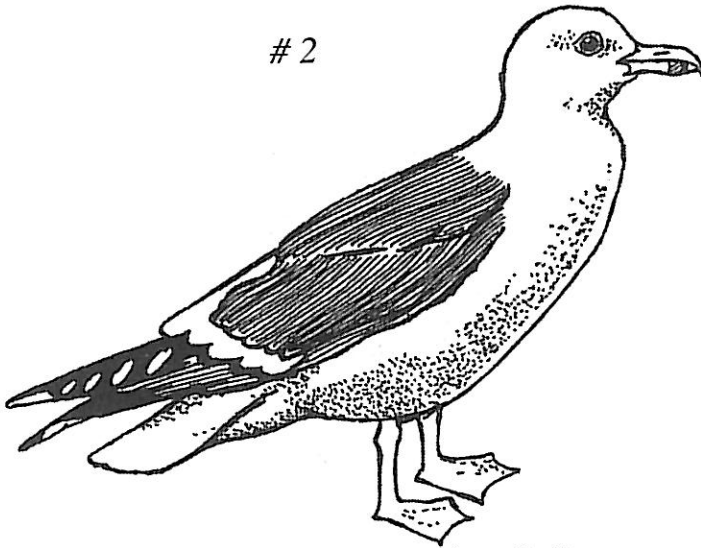
Ring-billed Gull (48cm.)

A common inland gull. The adult has a black ring on a yellow bill, a yellow eye and greenish-yellow legs. Plumage is white with a mantle of bluish-gray over wings and back. The ringed bill distinguishes it from the California gull.

Nesting: In colonies on the ground, usually on islands. Nests are of coarse grass and reeds, in a slight depression.

Voice: loud, clear, bugle-like *hyiah-hyak* or *yuk-yuk yuckle-yuckle*

2



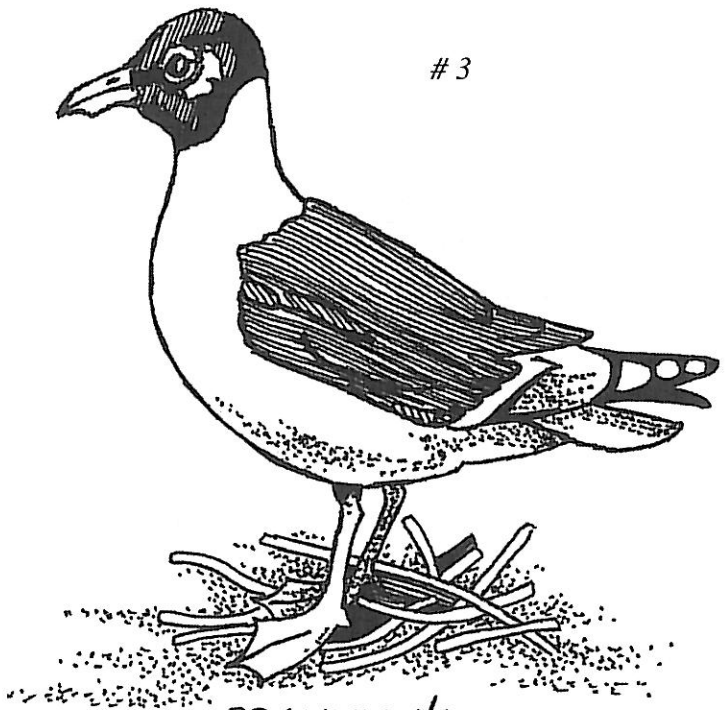
CALIFORNIA GULL
(*Larus californicus*)

California Gull (50-58cm.)

Adults have a dark eye and a yellow bill with red and black spots near the tip of the lower mandible. Its mantle is darker than that of the Ring-billed gull.

Nesting: On ground in colonies, in nests of grass and sticks.

Voice: descending *kiarr*



FRANKLIN'S GULL
(*Larus pipixcan*)

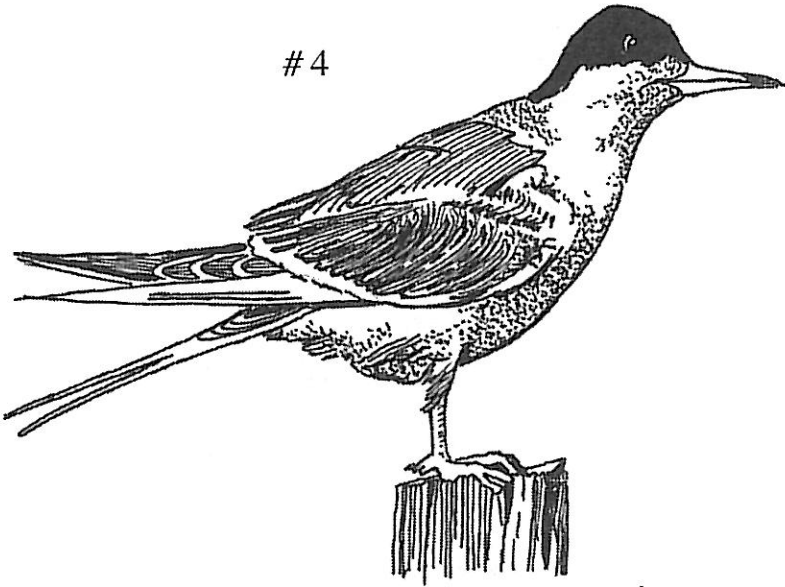
Franklin's Gull. (37cm.)

An interior North American species. It has a black head in the spring and a red bill. Its back is gray and its wingtips are white and black. All other plumage is pure white and its legs are red.

Nesting: In colonies over shallow water, on a large mass of reeds, or floating among reeds or rushes.

Voice: variety of chuckles *kuk-kuk-kuk*

#4



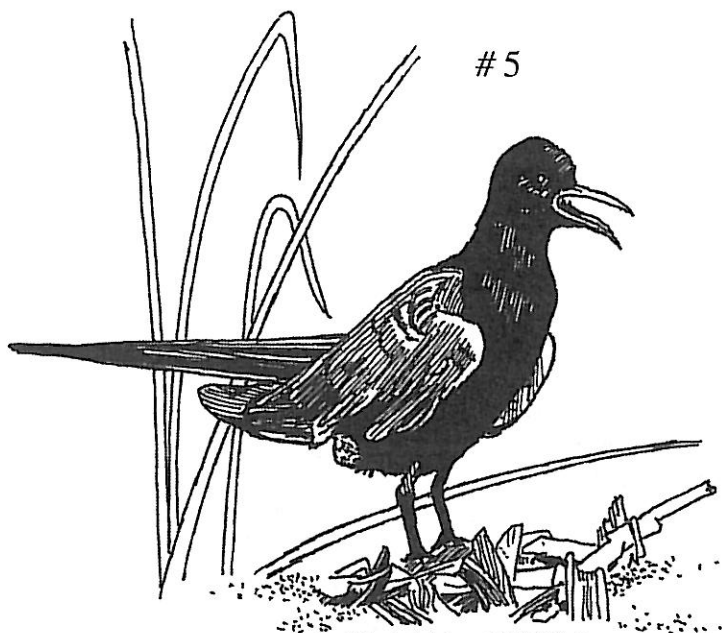
FORSTER'S TERN
(*Sterna forsteri*)

Forster's Tern (38cm.)

Top of head and back of neck are black in the spring, the mantle is blue-gray over the back and the wings. The rest of the plumage is white washed with a pale silver-gray on the underside. The tail is forked about 9cm., and silver-gray also and has white outer edges. Legs and bill are orange-red and the beak has black tip. It is similar in fall, but black is confined to a small streak through the eye, and a few feathers on crown and nape.

Nesting: On floating rushes, muskrat houses, or on islands. Sometimes in colonies.

Voice: low toneless *zurr*



BLACK TERN
(*Chlidonias niger*)

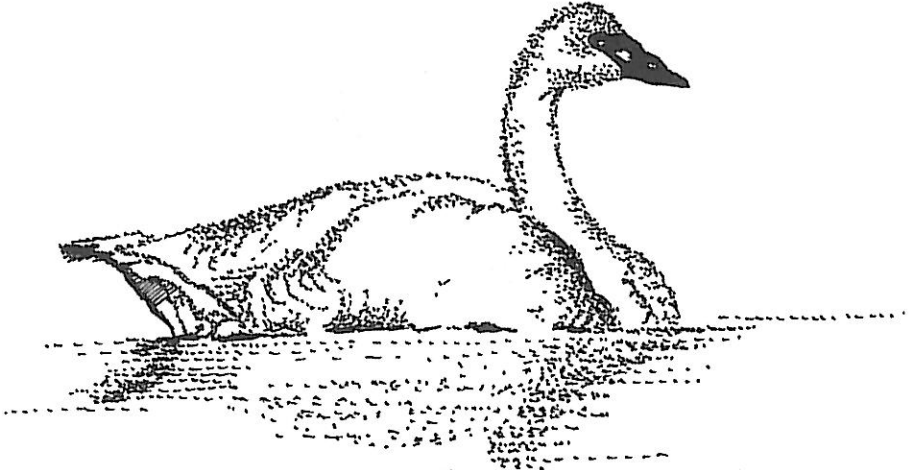
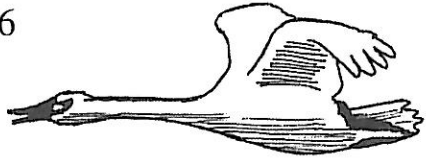
Black Tern (25cm.)

In spring the head, neck and under parts are black; the underside of the tail is white. The rest of the plumage is dark slate-gray. In fall the head and underparts are white except for dark plumage around the eye joining a black patch behind eye and dark gray cap over the head. The tail is slightly forked, beak is black and legs are dark red.

Nesting: In marshes and sloughs, on raft of reeds and grass in shallow water, or on wet hummocks in the water.

Voice: sharp *kick*, *keek* or *klea*

#6



TUNDRA SWAN "Whistling Swan"
(*Cygnus columbianus*)

Tundra Swan. (135-140cm)

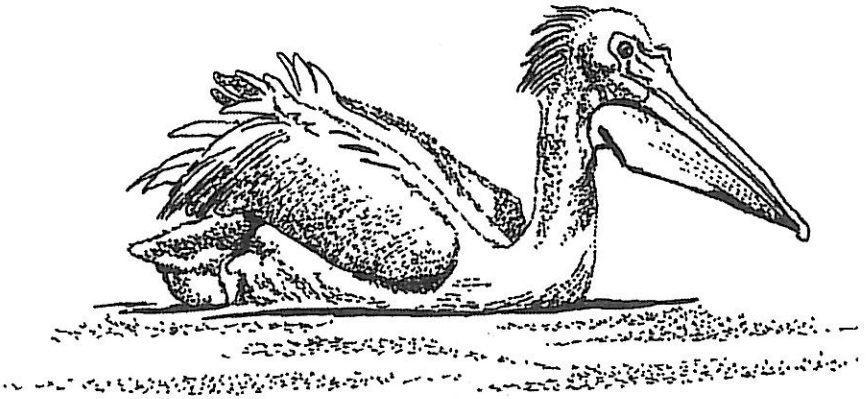
Formerly called "Whistling Swan." Large, long-necked bird (10-15kg).

White plumage, the black bill frequently shows a yellow spot in front of the eye. Its legs are black and short.

Nesting: On the ground in nest of moss and grass, lined with down.

Voice: high-pitched cooing *woo-ho woo-ho woo-ho*

#7



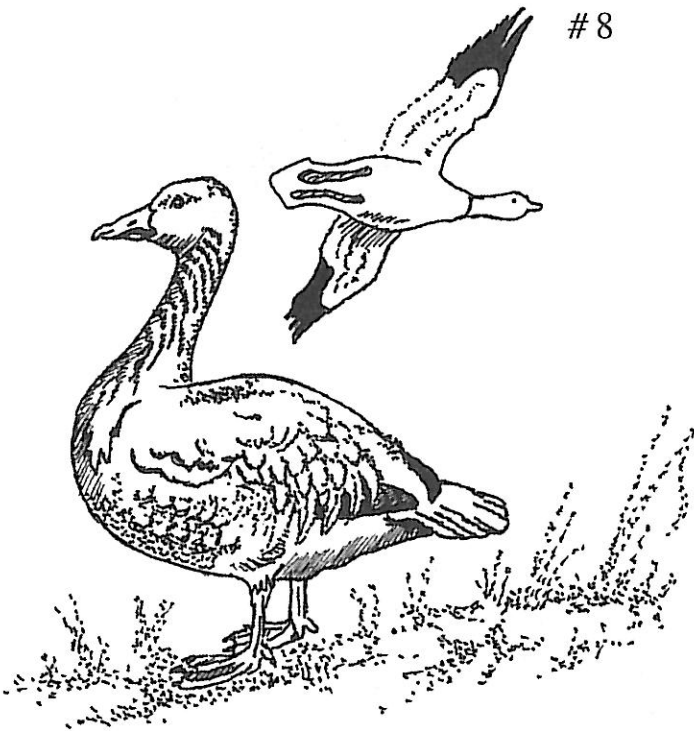
AMERICAN WHITE PELICAN
(*Pelecanus erythrorhynchos*)

White Pelican (155cm.)

Pure white appearance except for juveniles, which are dusky in colour. It has a long yellow bill that is somewhat flattened. During breeding season it has a horny crest half way to the tip, and a yellow pouch under the beak which extends to the throat. Its legs are orange.

Nesting: In colonies on islands, in large rivers and lakes. Nest is a depression, sometimes lined with grass or reeds.

Voice: adults silent



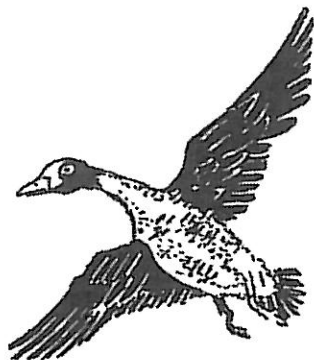
LESSER SNOW GOOSE
(*Chen caerulescens*)

Snow Goose (67cm.)

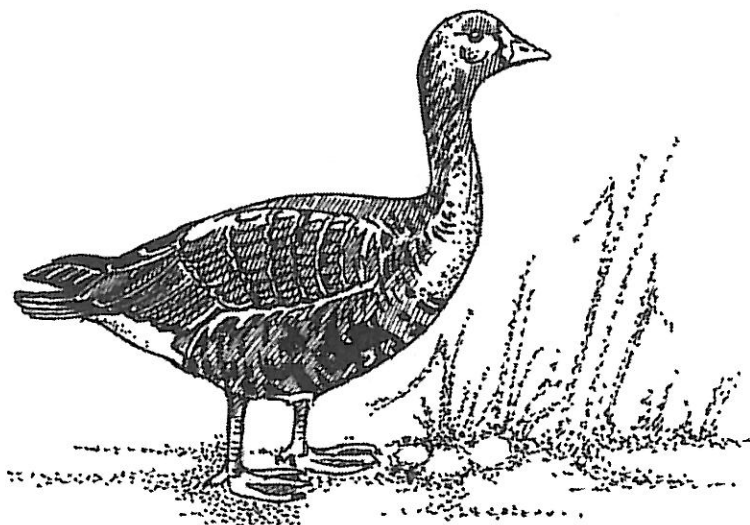
All white with black primaries, often rusty marks on head and neck. Bill is pink with black serrated edges. Legs purplish-red.

Nesting: On ground in tundra, in a mass of grass and reeds lined with down.

Voice: loud, nasal *houck-houck*



#9



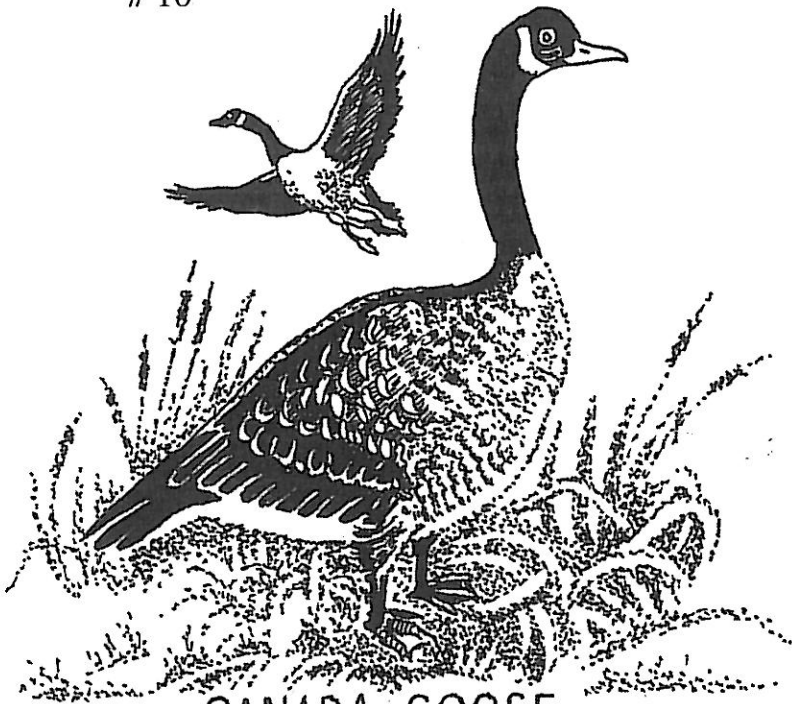
GREATER WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE (*Anser albifrons*)

White-fronted Goose (75cm)

Neck, head, back and wings are grayish-brown, darker on lower back. Has a white band across its face at the base of the bill. The breast and abdomen are light grayish-brown with blotches of black and white (hence it is often called speckled-belly). Tail brownish-black, bill pink, legs orange in adults while immatures' legs are yellow.

Nesting: On the ground in the tundra. Nest similar to other geese.
Voice: high, squealing *wah-wah-wah* or *tu-lu tu-lu*

10



CANADA GOOSE
(*Branta canadensis*)

Canada Goose (63-108cm.)

Head and neck black with white cheek patches usually meeting across the throat. Back and wings are grayish-brown, breast and sides are light grayish-brown, abdomen white, tail black, bill and legs black.

Nesting: On ground, prefers islands in lakes and rivers, occasional in trees. Nests similar to other geese.

Voice: honking or barking *ka-ronk* or *kalunk*



AMERICAN COOT
(*Fulica americana*)

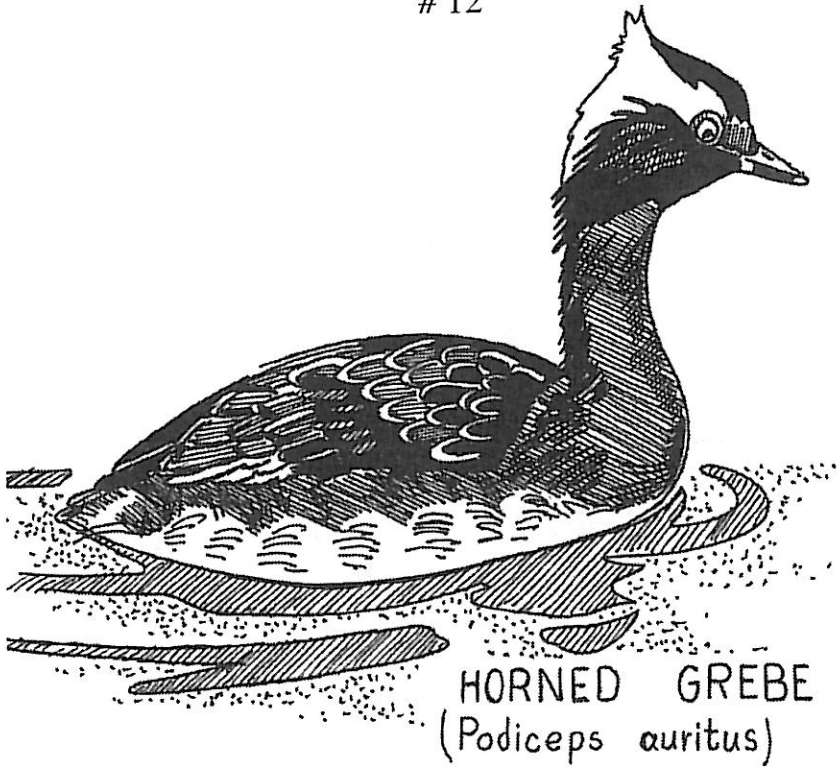
American Coot (38cm.)

Head and neck black, rest of body is slatey-black paler below. There is a narrow white line on the trailing edge of the wing which is only visible in flight. Bill white, extending up into the forehead with a brownish band near the tip. Legs green, toes have scalloped webs on each side.

Nesting: In a mass of reeds floating over shallow water, attached to vegetation.

Voice: *kuk-kuk-kuk-kuk* ; *kakakaka* and *ka-ha ka-ha*

12



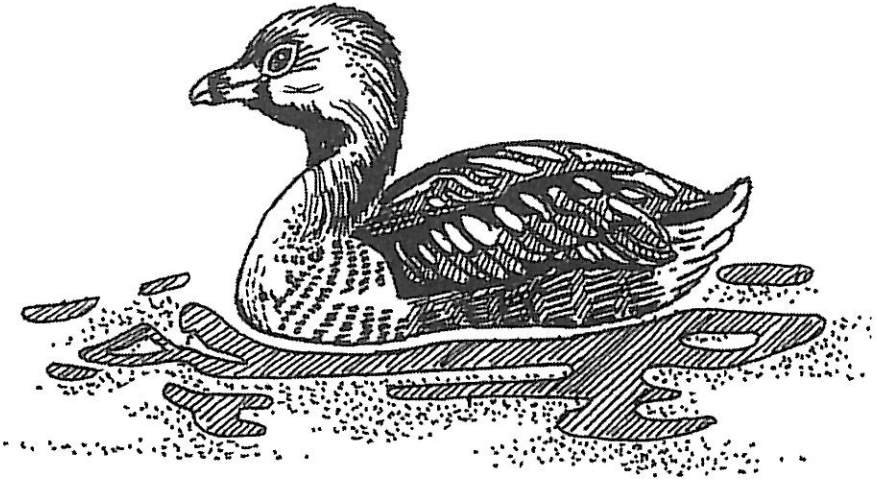
Horned Grebe (33cm)

Head is partly black and dense feathers behind cheeks form a 'ruff.' Long buffy feathers on sides of crown produce golden 'horns.' Back of neck, back and wings are brownish-gray except secondaries, which are white. Foreneck and sides are chestnut, chest and abdomen are white, bill is black.

Nesting: Solitary nest in reedy sloughs and lakes..

Nest is a mat of wet decaying vegetation anchored to reeds.

13



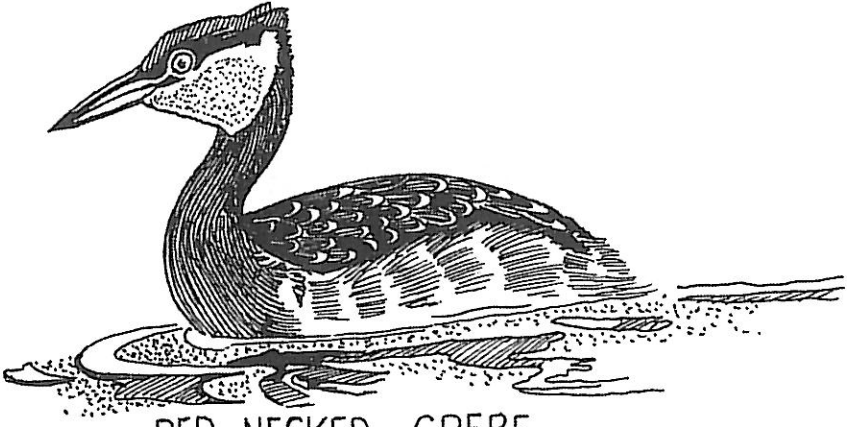
PIED-BILLED GREBE
(*Podilymbus podiceps*)

Pied-billed Grebe (33cm.)

Head, neck, back and wings brownish-black or grayish-black, darkest on crown. The throat is jet black. Breast and abdomen are silvery white, mottled with dusky-brown, most strongly on sides. The bill is short, stout, bluish-white with a black band near the tip. Legs are dark gray.

Nesting: Solitary nest in reed mats on water, similar to other grebes.

Voice: *kuk-kuk-cow-cow-cow-cowp-cowp*



RED-NECKED GREBE
(*Podiceps grisegena*)

Red-necked Grebe (48cm.)

Black crown, long feathers form a fluffy crest over each ear. Back of neck and wings are brownish-black. Secondary wing feathers form a white patch seen only in flight. Throat and cheeks are silvery-gray, foreneck and upper breast are reddish-brown, abdomen is grayish-white.

Nesting: In or near reed beds at lake edges, on a floating mat of reeds anchored to aquatic vegetation.

Surface-Feeding Ducks

These ducks frequent grassy sloughs, marshes and the shallow margins of lakes where they can feed by tipping up to reach the bottom rather than diving to feed. Many frequently feed on land. They spring up into flight.

Those found in this area are the following:

Mallard, Gadwall, Northern Pintail, American Wigeon, Northern Shoveler, Green-winged Teal, Blue-winged Teal.

15

Mallard (52-60cm.)

Male: Head and upper neck iridescent green, separated by a white band from chestnut coloured lower neck and breast. Wings and back brownish gray, speculum iridescent purple bordered front and back by inner band of black and outer band of white. Sides and underparts gray. Tail feathers whitish with black central tail feathers that curl up.

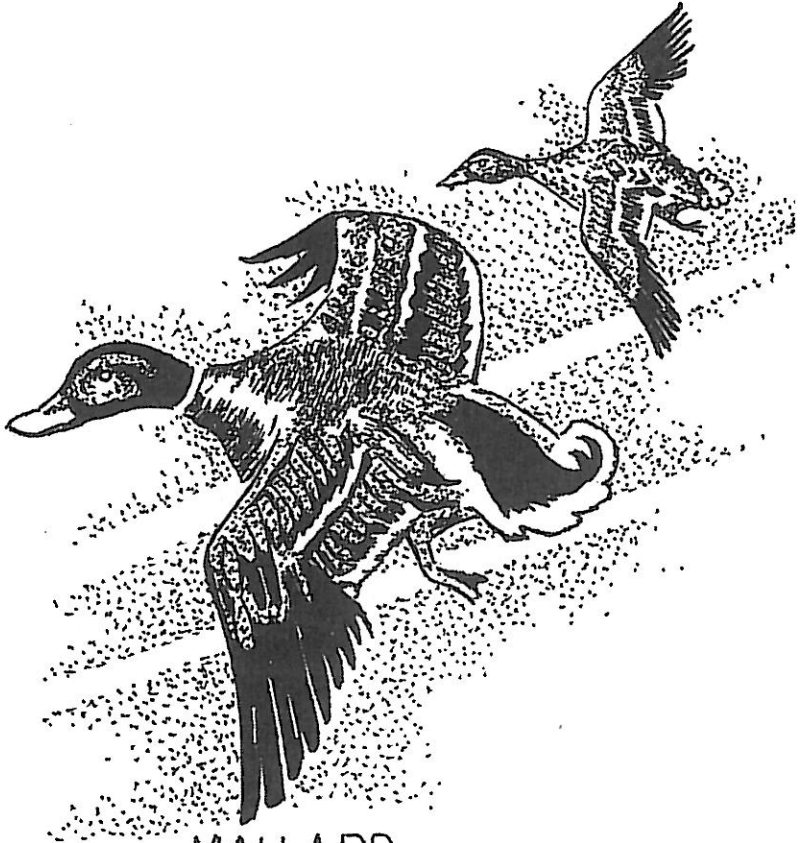
Female: Upperparts brown, streaked with black. Throat and foreneck buffy. Neck and sides buffy-brown, underparts buffy-gray. Wings same as male.

Nesting: In grass, sometimes far from water. Nests of grass lined with down.

Voice: male; *yeeb* or low *kwek*, female; loud *quack*

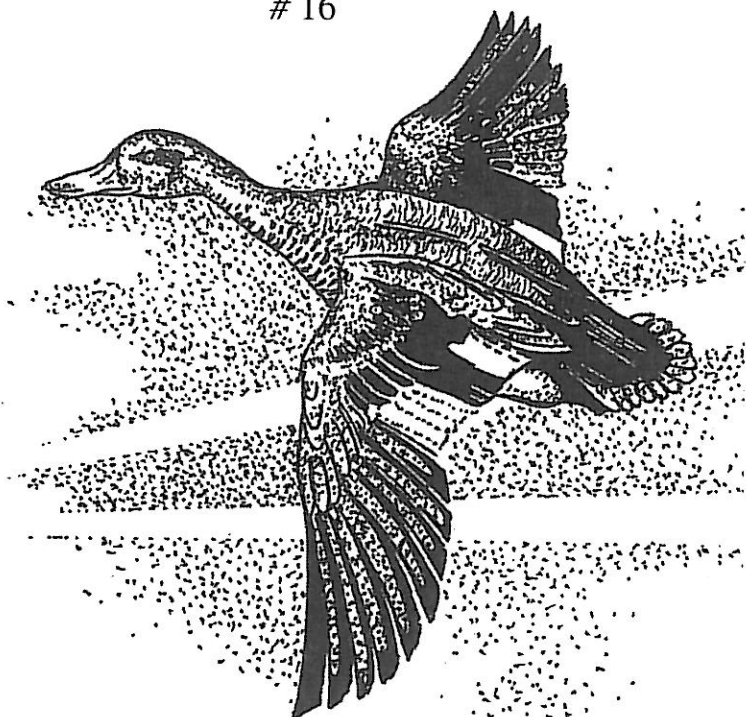
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15



MALLARD
(*Anas platyrhynchos*)

16



GADWALL
(*Anas strepera*)

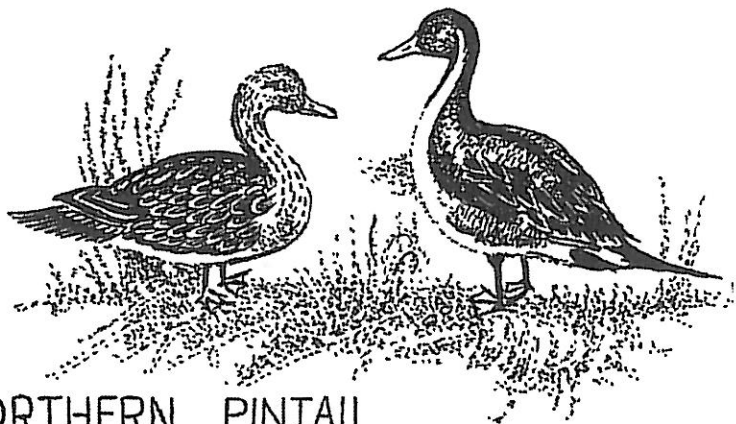
Gadwall (48-58cm.)

Male: Head and neck pale buff, streaked and spotted with brownish-gray. Black bordered white speculum on wing. Lower back black, abdomen white, legs yellow. The body appears gray and the head appears brown.

Female: Upper parts buffy-brown streaked with brownish-black. Wing similar to male. Throat, foreneck, sides and upper breast buffy, streaked with brownish black, remainder white.

Nesting: On ground close to water, in nest of grass lined with down.

Voice: male; *bek*, female; *quack*



NORTHERN PINTAIL (*Anas acuta*)

Northern Pintail (55-70cm.)

Large duck with long thin neck and pointed tail feathers.

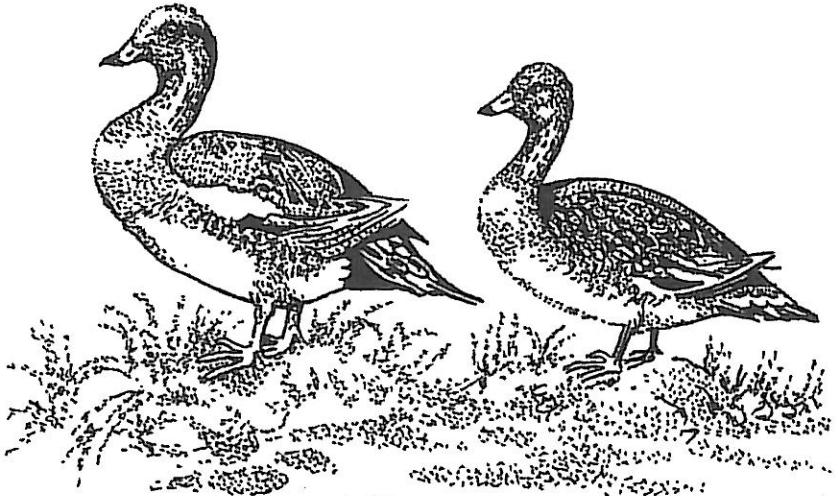
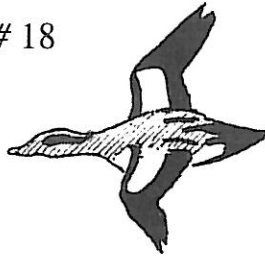
Male: Head and neck dark brown extending down back of neck as a dark stripe bordered with white. Back and sides barred black and white. Wings gray, speculum iridescent green bordered in front with cinnamon. Underparts white, tail black. The long black central tail feathers are the basis on which the bird is named.

Female: Head and neck buffy striped with brown. Upperparts brownish-black. Wing speculum metallic-brown, with a trailing white border. Upper breast and sides buffy-brown, rest of underparts whitish with brown streaks.

Nesting: On ground, nest of grass and reeds, lined with down.

Voice: male; whistled *prrip, prrip*, female; low *quack*

18



AMERICAN WIGEON
(*Anas americana*)

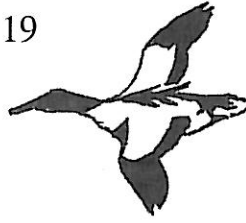
American Wigeon (45-58cm.)

Male: Crown white, rest of head and neck speckled black and white, iridescent green mark behind eye. Sides reddish-brown. Wing with large white patch at front and black speculum. Underparts white.
Female: Head and neck speckled grayish brown and white. Back barred with light and dark brown. Underparts white. Wings similar to males but white patch marked with gray.

Nesting : On dry ground near water, nest of grass lined with down.

Voice: male; whistled *whee whee whew*, female; *qua-ack*

19



SHOVELER
(*Anas clypeata*)

Northern Shoveler (43-50cm.)

Bill long, narrow at base becoming wide at tip (Spoonbill).

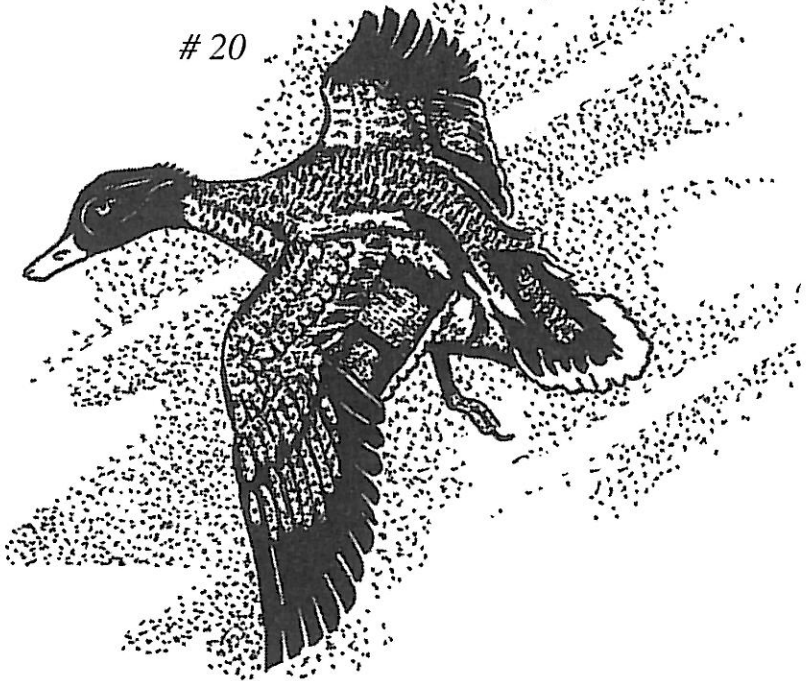
Male: Head and neck iridescent green. Back brownish-black, wing front is light blue and separated from iridescent green speculum by white band. Upper breast white, rest of underparts chestnut. Tail black with small white patch at each side of base, legs orange.

Female: Wings like the male. Has a long bill and overall brownish body colour.

Nesting: On ground near water, nests of grass lined with down.

Voice: similar to mallard and low clucking

20



GREEN-WINGED TEAL (*Anas crecca*)

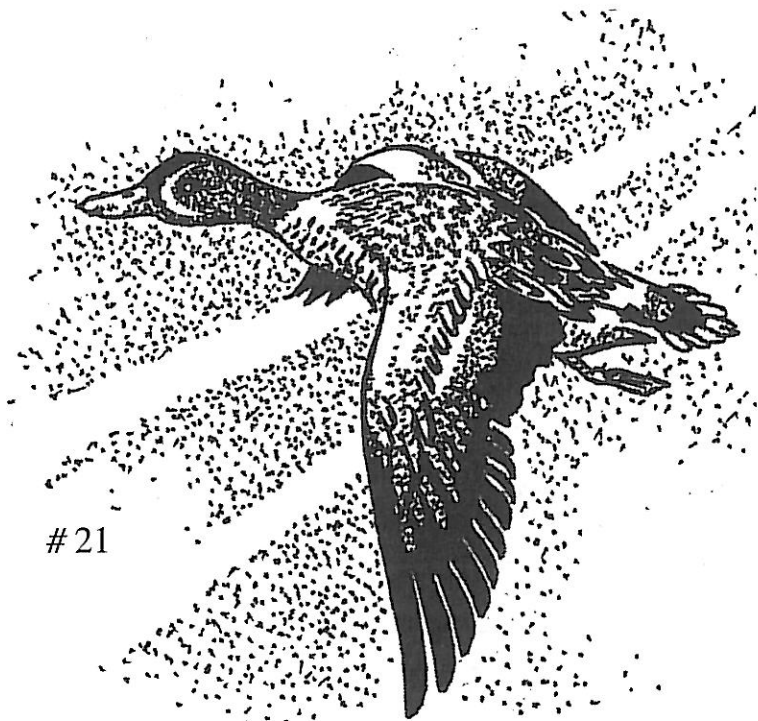
Green-winged Teal (36-38cm.)

Male: Head and neck chestnut with a iridescent green patch from the eye down the side of the neck. Back and wings are gray with many feathers, black and white barred. Speculum iridescent green. Upper breast pinkish brown with black spots. Sides have a vertical white stripe in the front of wing. The rest of the underparts are white.

Female: Wings similar to male but duller. Throat white, breast buffy, spotted with brownish-black. Sides grayish-brown, remainder of underparts white. A smaller bill distinguishes this bird from a female blue-winged teal.

Nesting: On ground close to water, in nest of grass lined down.

Voice: short whistle



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BLUE-WINGED TEAL (*Anas discors*)

Blue-Winged Teal (38-40cm)

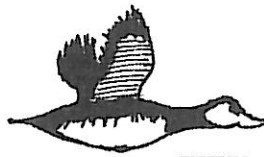
Male: Crown black, remainder of head and upper neck bluish gray, with a white crescent between eye and beak. The back is brownish-black. Large patch on front of wing is light blue, speculum iridescent green bordered by white on front. Underparts brown, spotted and barred with black. Tail black, with a white patch at base on each side.

Female: Upperparts grayish-brown. Wings similar to male but duller. Throat light, foreneck and upper breast buffy, streaked with brown. Remainder of underparts white streaked with brown.

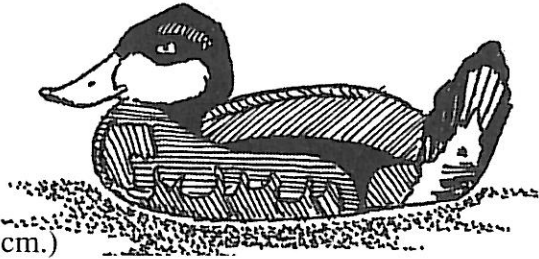
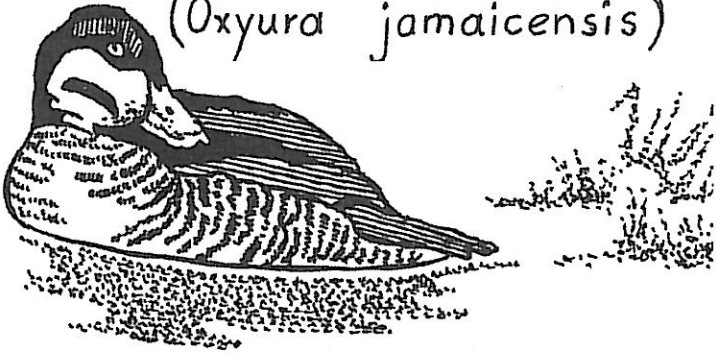
Nesting: On ground near water, in nest of grass lined with down.

Voice: male; *peep*, female; *quack*, softly

22



RUDDY DUCK (*Oxyura jamaicensis*)



Ruddy Duck (38-43cm.)

Male: Crown and nape black, cheeks and chin white, neck and upperparts reddish chestnut. Underparts grayish-white with wavy brownish bars on sides. White under tail. Bill large, bright blue. The dark tail feathers are often held erect.

Female: Upperparts dark brown. Darkest on crown with faint barring and speckling with chestnut. Face, cheeks and chin dull white, a dull dusky line from base of bill to ear. Foreneck and sides grayish-brown-barred-dusky. Rest of underparts grayish.

Nesting: Usually over water. Nest is a woven mass of reeds and rushes anchored to standing rushes a few inches above the water.

Voice: Usually silent

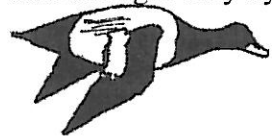
The Ruddy Duck is a "Stiff-tailed Duck".

They are small, chunky ducks which are usually found in typically permanent wetlands. Their rather stiff tails give them their name.

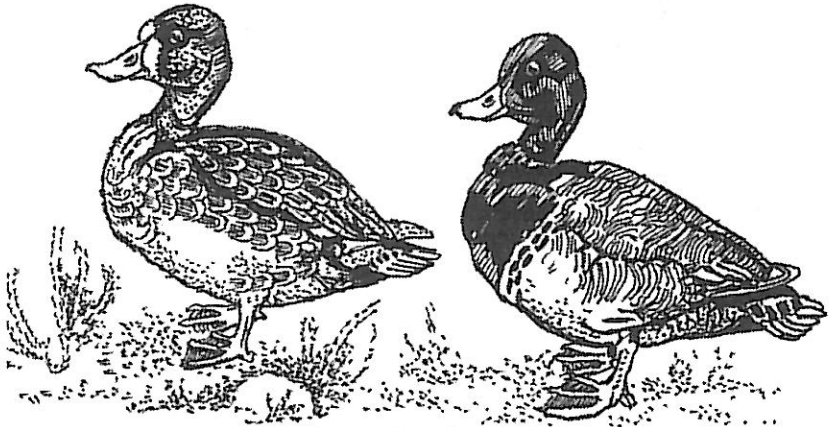
Diving Ducks

These are heavy bodied ducks which frequent larger lakes and rivers. They feed by diving beneath the surface. They take to flight only by pattering along the surface of the water.

They include the next six species in this book.



23



LESSER SCAUP (*Aythya affinis*) (41cm)

Lesser Scaup

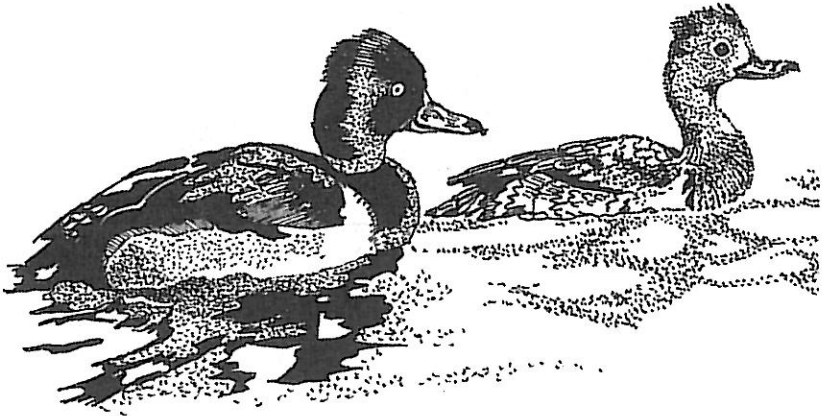
Male: Head, neck and breast black. Head and neck have purple iridescence. Back is finely barred with wavy lines of black and white, causing a gray effect. Flight feathers are dark grayish-brown, speculum white. Lower back and tail black. The rest of the underparts and sides are white, with fine wavy brown bars towards the tail. Bill is pale blue. In flight, bold white stripe on wing is apparent.

Female: Wide white area around base of beak, rest of head and neck brown, shading to grayish-brown on back and upper breast. Wings same as males. Sides brown, region around tail grayish-brown, rest of underparts white. Bill bluish.

Nesting: On dry ground near water. Nest of grass or reeds lined with down and hidden in grass or reeds, sometimes in emergent vegetation over water.

Voice: *scaup* and purring notes

24



RING-NECKED DUCK
(*Aythya collaris*)

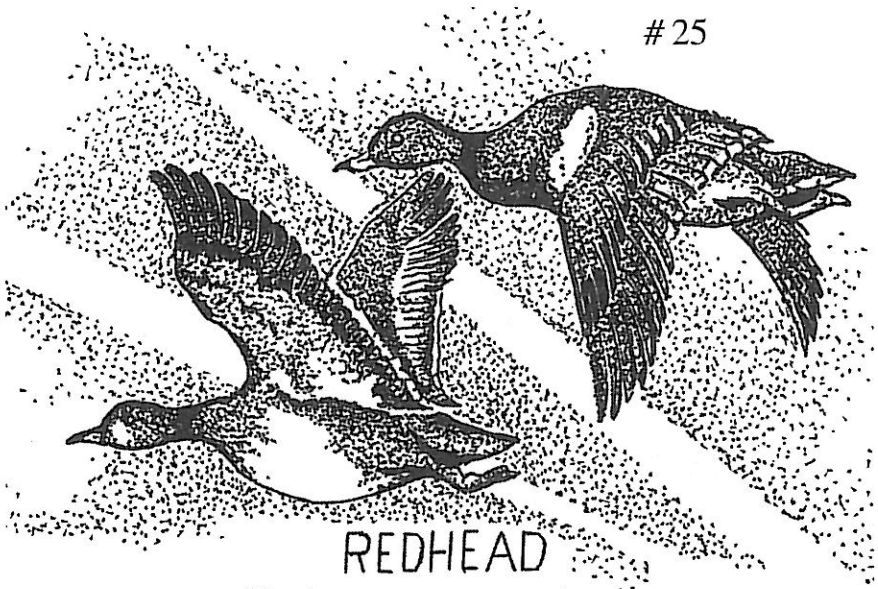
Ring-necked Duck (40-45cm.)

Male: Head and neck are black, with purplish iridescence. The upper parts are brownish black and the speculum is gray. The breast is black and the rest of the underparts are white with some dark barring on the sides. The bill is slatey blue with white at the base and a white band at the tip.

Female: Upperparts blackish-brown, browner at back of neck and upper back, black on rump. Speculum gray. The angular head shape, pale white eye ring and white ring near tip of bill, help to identify this species. Sides brown, rest of underparts white, with vague brown markings.

Nesting: In marshes or slough edges. Nest of grass, lined with down.

Voice: similar to Lesser Scaup



REDHEAD
(*Aythya americana*)

Redhead (48-57cm)

Male: Head and upper neck chestnut, lower neck and breast brownish-black. Back, wings and sides white with fine wavy, black bars, causing a gray appearance. Lower breast and abdomen white, tail and adjacent areas above and below, brownish-black.

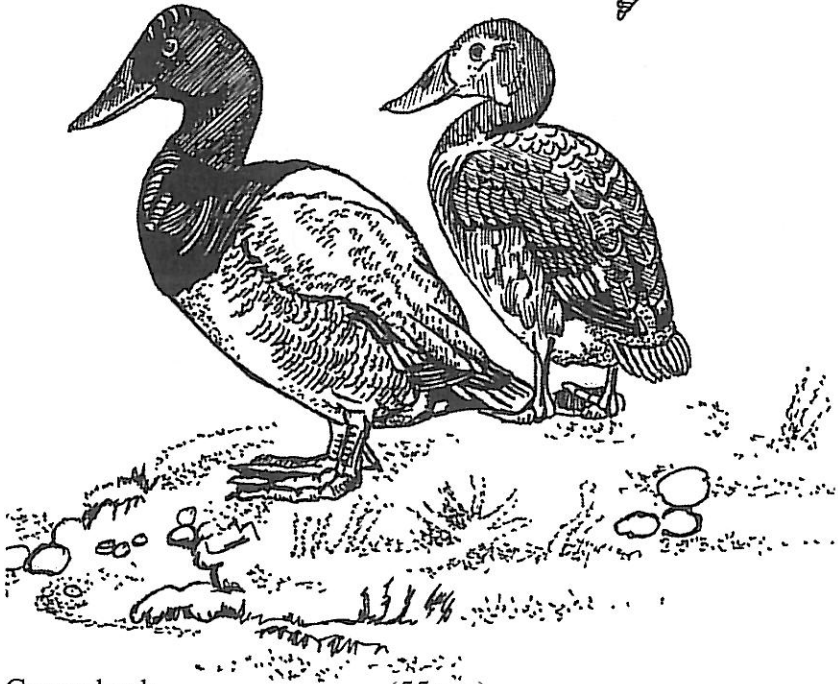
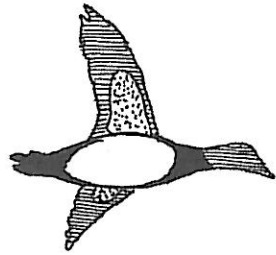
Female: Head and neck, dull reddish-brown, pale on throat and white on chin. Back and wings, dark grayish-brown, upper breast and sides brownish. Remaining upper parts white with some brown mottling.

Nesting: In clumps of rushes and reeds over water. Nest is a pile of reeds just high enough to keep the eggs out of the water, lined with down.

Voice: male; *meow*, deep *purr*, female; *quack*

CANVASBACK
(*Aythya valisineria*)

26



Canvasback (55cm.)

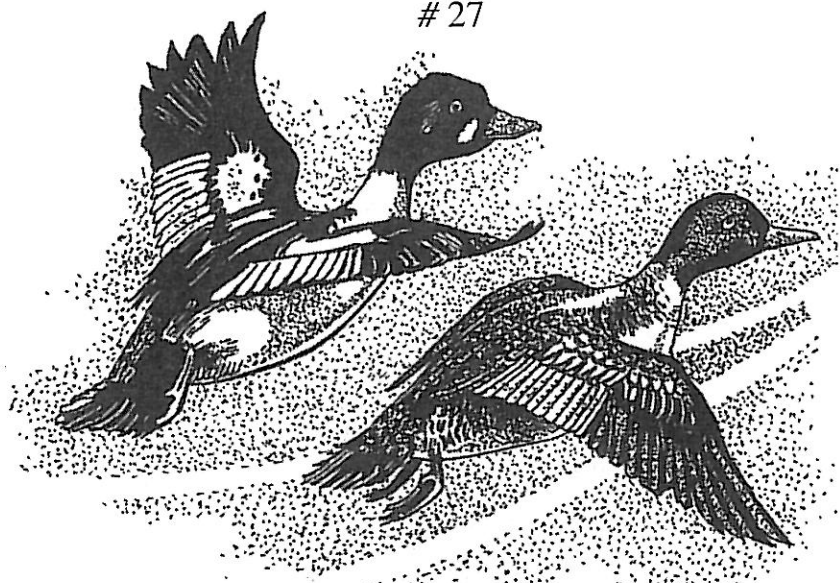
Male: Head and neck are dark reddish-brown. Lower neck and upper breast, black. Rump and tail black, rest of back white with fine black barring which produces a canvas effect. Sides and rest of underparts white.

Female: Head, neck and upper breast brown with tinge of buff on head, chest and chin. Back, wings and sides brown, with white edges on feathers, which produces a brownish-gray effect. Remainder of underparts, grayish-white, mottled dusky. The tail is brown.

Nesting: In rushes or reeds over shallow water. Nest is a bulky mass of rushes and reeds, held just above the water and lined with down.

Voice: male; *coo*, female; *quack*

27



COMMON GOLDENEYE
(*Bucephala clangula*)

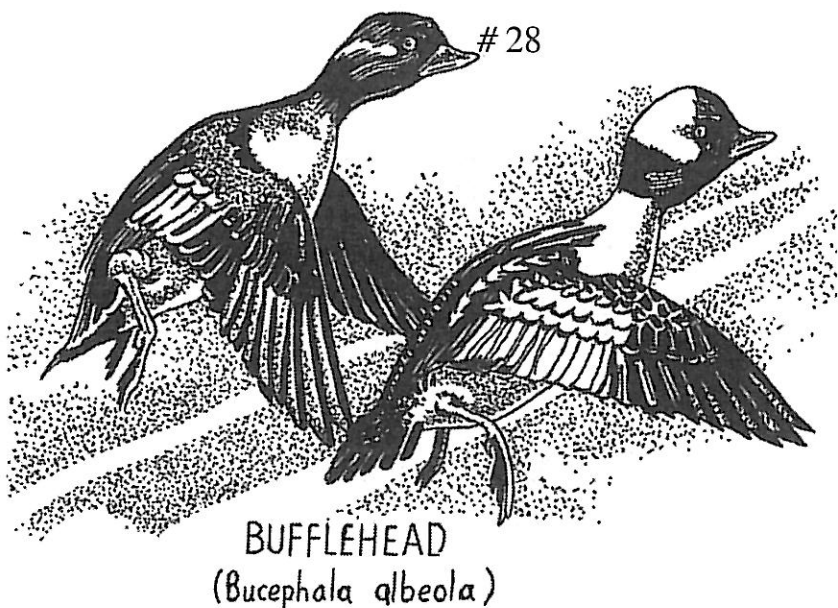
Common Goldeneye (40-50cm.)

Male: Head and upper neck black with a green iridescence, with a large white spot between the bill and the eye. The lower neck and all the underparts are white. The rest of the upper parts are black, with white streaks on the scapulars and a white area on the wing. In the fall it looks like the female.

Female: The head and neck are dark brown, rest of upperparts grayish-black. The wings have white on secondary feathers. The upper breast and sides are gray; the remaining underparts are white.

Nesting: In holes, in hollow trees or stumps.

Voice: male; nasal *pee-ik*, female; *quack*. Wings whistle in flight.



Bufflehead (35cm.)

Male: Long feathers on the head give a puffy appearance. Head black with purple and green sheen, and a white patch from the eye across the top of the head. The back is black, shading to gray on tail, and bordered with white at base of the wings. Black wings with a white patch on the coverts and secondaries. The neck underparts and sides are white.

Female: The head is less puffy. Head, neck, and underparts brownish-black, except white speculum. White patch in back of and below the eye. The underparts are grayish-white shading to dark gray, on sides and under the tail

Nesting: In hollow trees and stumps.

Voice: male; hoarse rolling note, female; *quack*.

29



GREAT BLUE HERON
(*Ardea herodias*)

Great Blue Heron

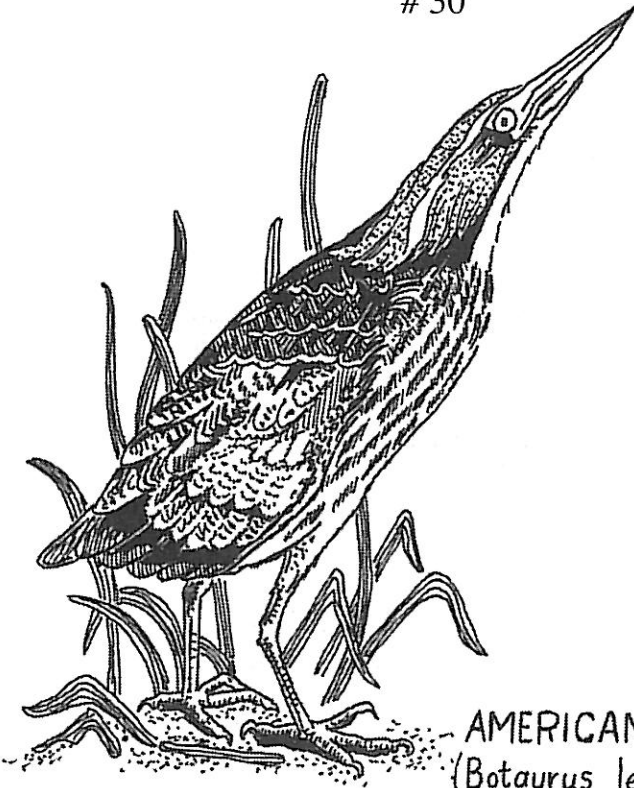
(80-105cm.)

The neck and legs are very long; the tail is short. The head is mostly white, with a black stripe extending from the eye into large back plumes. The neck is ashy-brown with black streaks on the underside. The back, wings and tail are bluish-gray. The breast is white, streaked with black. The abdomen is black, streaked with white, and the thighs are chestnut.

Nesting: In colonies in trees, in a bulky mat of twigs and reeds, near the top of the tree.

Voice: deep harsh croaks *frahnk, frahnk*.

30



AMERICAN BITTERN
(*Botaurus lentiginosus*)

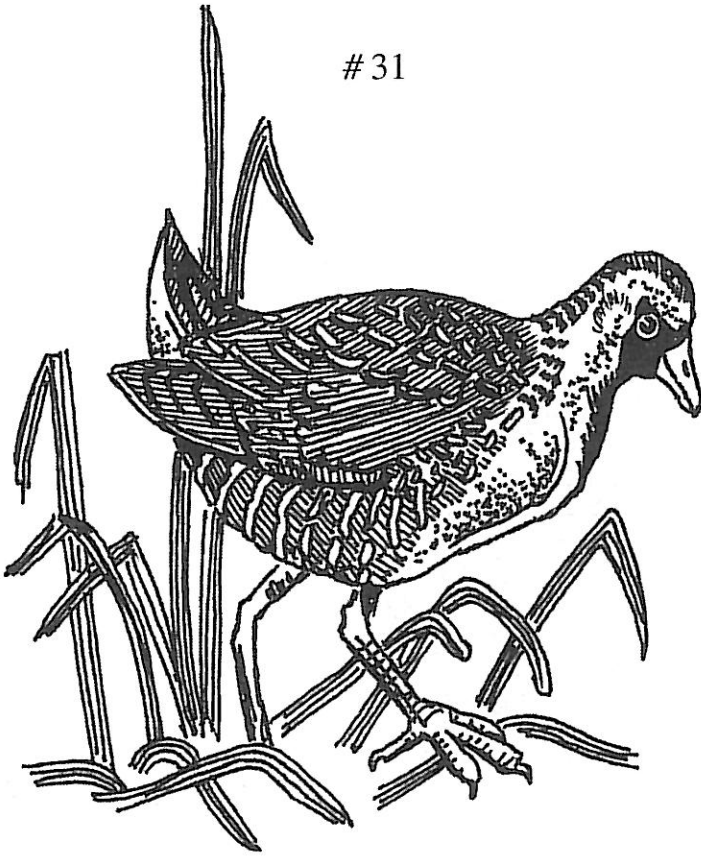
American Bittern (70cm.)

Heron-like but has a short, thick neck and shorter legs. Distinguishing field marks include: brown coloration with rich streaking, a broad black whisker behind the bill and dark flight feathers seen in flight. When alarmed, this bird often freezes with its bill pointing upward so as to blend in with surrounding vegetation. The bill is yellowish and the legs yellow-green.

Nesting: Solitary, on ground, near marshes. Nest of grass and rushes, lined with feathers.

Voice: slow, deep *oong-ka choonk*.

31



SORA
(*Porzana carolina*)

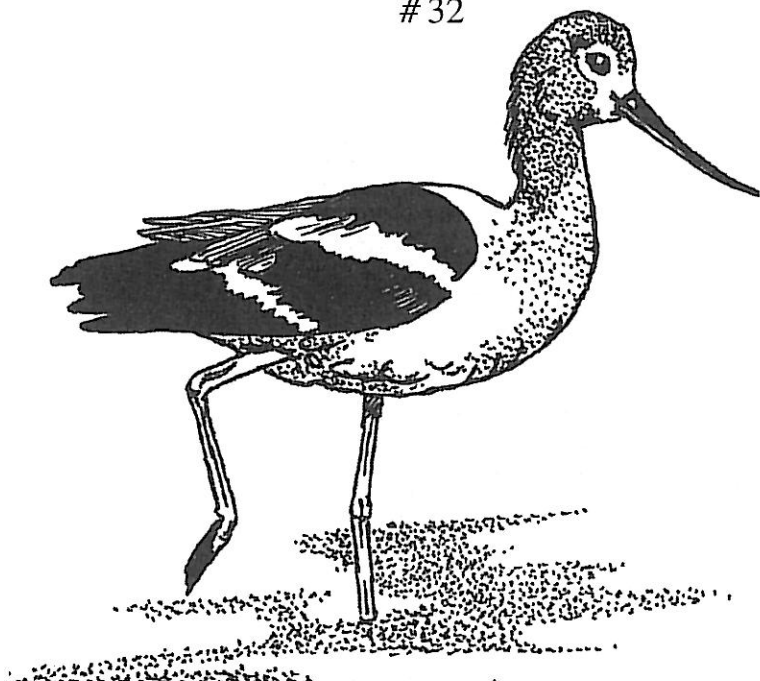
Sora (20cm.)

Crown and upper parts olive-brown, with a black stripe in crown and the back streaked with black and light-gray. The face as well as the central area of the throat and breast are black. The bill is short, stout and yellow. The legs are yellowish-green.

Nest: In marshes or sloughs, in nest of grass and reeds, attached to reeds a few inches or more above water.

Voice: plaintive whistle *ker-wee*

32



AMERICAN AVOCET
(*Recurvirostra americana*)

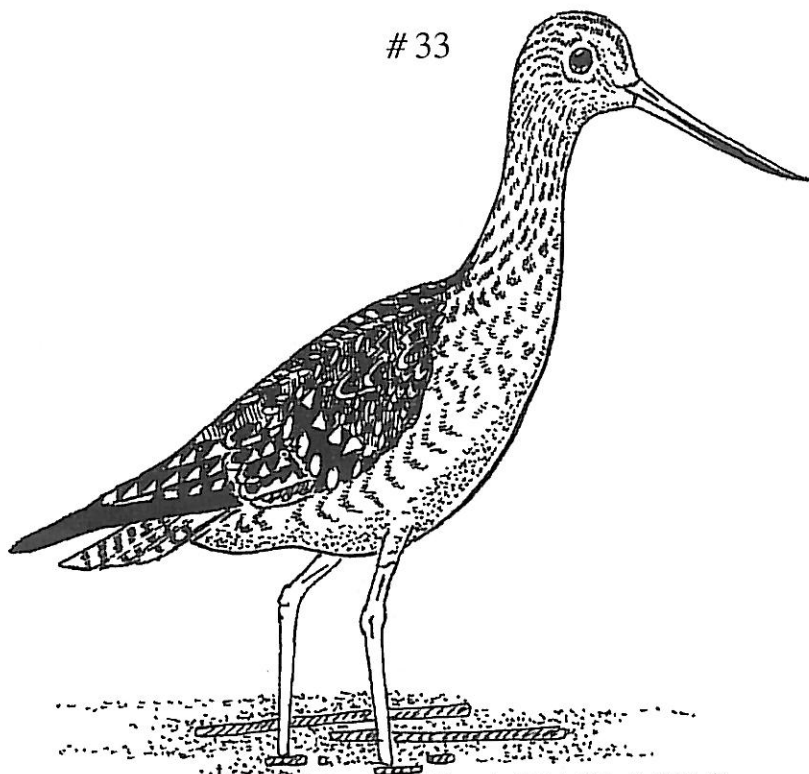
American Avocet (38-48cm)

Head and neck cinnamon, white ring around eye and base of beak. Long bill (9cm.), narrow, flattened and upturned. The upper back is white, with a brownish-black broad central V. The entire inner wing is white, with a black stripe. The rest of the body is white, tail is pale gray. Legs are long and light grayish-blue.

Nesting: On ground near water, in a depression in sand, lined with weed stems.

Voice: sharp *wheek* or *kleet*.

33



GREATER YELLOWLEGS
(*Tringa melanoleuca*)

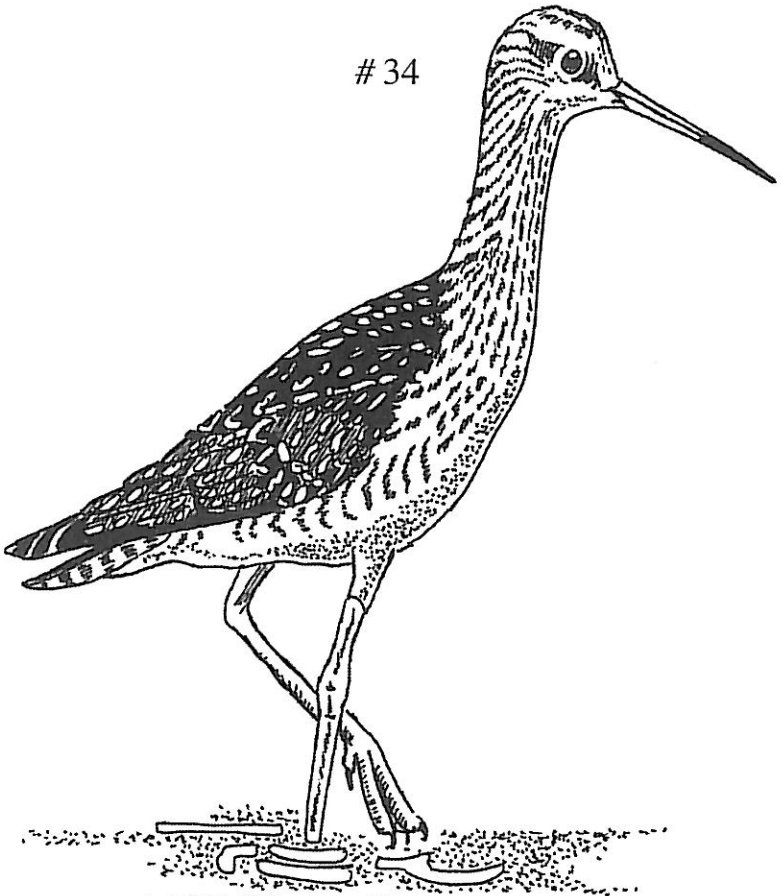
Greater Yellowlegs (37cm.)

Crown and back of neck black, streaked with white. Back and wings a mixture of black and grayish-brown, feathers spotted and edged with white. Rump and tail are white barred with light grayish-brown. Underparts white, face and neck with streaks and upper breast and sides with V's and bars of dark grayish-brown. Legs long and yellow. Bill 5 cm., black, slightly curved up.

Nesting: On dry ground in wooded areas, in a depression lined with grass and leaves.

Voice: three-note whistle *whew whew whew* or *dear dear dear*.

34



LESSER YELLOWLEGS
(*Tringa flavipes*)

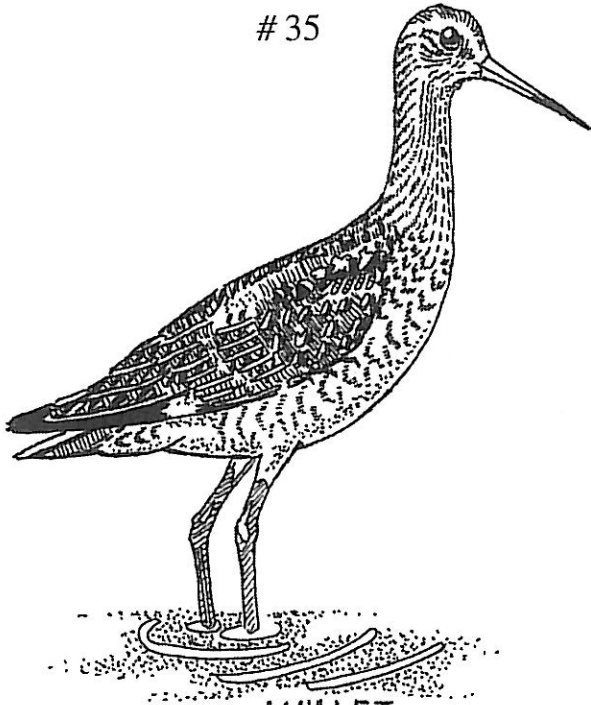
Lesser Yellowlegs (25cm.)

Crown and back of neck is dull black, streaked with white. The back and wings are spotted and barred with grayish-brown, black and white. The rump and tail are white, barred with light grayish-brown. A line from the bill over the eye is white. The underparts are white. The neck and upper breast have streaks, while the sides have V's and bars of grayish-brown. The legs are long and yellow, and the bill (3cm.) is black.

Nesting: On dry ground in woods not far from water, in a depression lined with leaves and grass.

Voice: *yew* or *yu-yu*.

35



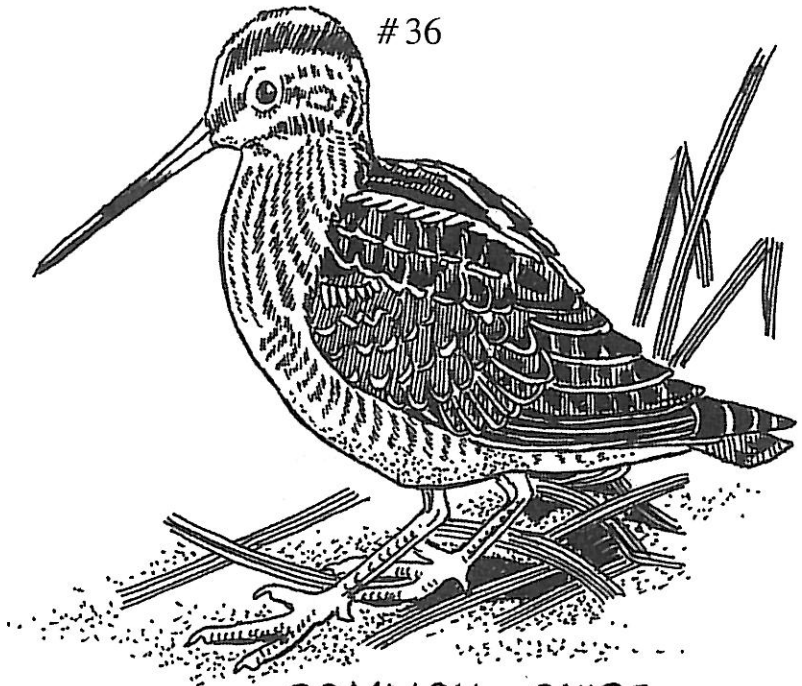
WILLET
(*Catoptrophorus semipalmatus*)

Willet (38cm.)

Underparts are light brownish-gray. The head is lightly streaked on crown and back with black. When folded, the wings look like the back but when opened, they show much white and are black towards the tip. The rump is white and the tail is pale brownish-gray. The underparts are white. The face and foreneck are spotted dusky-brown. The breast has V's and the sides have brown bars. Legs are bluish-gray, bill is 6cm., black.

Nesting: On ground, in a depression lined with grass.

Voice: repeated *pil-wil-willet*.



COMMON SNIPE
(*Gallinago gallinago*)

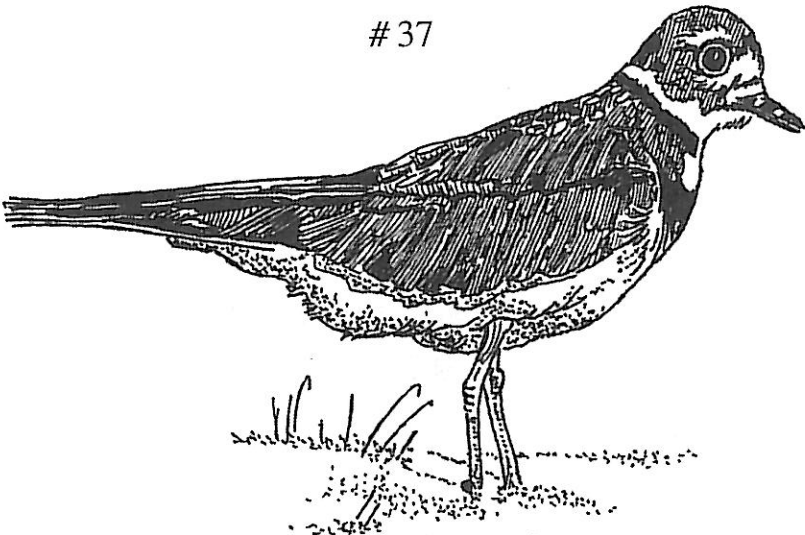
Common (Wilson's) Snipe (32cm.)

Straight, very long (7cm.), slender bill. Crown is brownish-black with a white central stripe. There is a pale buff stripe over the eye and a black stripe from beak to the eye. The back of the neck, back and wings are brownish-black, streaked and spotted with white and buff. The scapulars are edged with buff, forming four light lines down the back. The throat is buffy; the neck, breast and sides are buffy, barred and streaked with grayish-brown. The remainder of the underparts are white. The tail is reddish brown, barred with black.

Nesting: On ground, in marshes and muskegs. The nest is a grass-lined depression.

Voice: rasping *scaip* and song *chip-a chip-a*.

37



KILLDEER
(*Charadrius vociferus*)

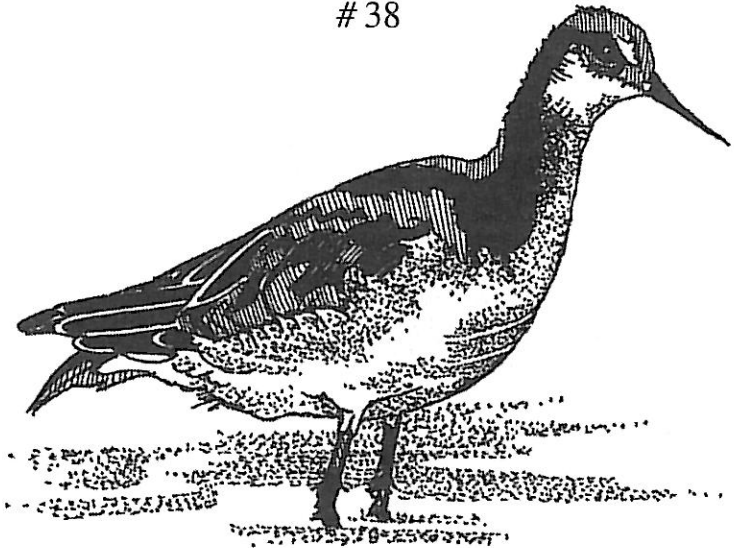
Killdeer (25cm.)

Crown and sides of head are grayish-brown, except a white band across the forehead, extending back over eyes with a black band above this from eye to eye. The throat is white and extends around neck in a band. The underparts are white with two black bands; one around the neck and one across the upper breast. The upper back and wings are plain grayish-brown with a white stripe seen in flight. Lower back is pale orange-brown; the tail is similar, becoming dark brown toward the tip and tipped with white.

Nesting: On the ground in meadows, cultivated fields, or gravel bars, often some distance from water. The nest is in a depression containing a few pebbles or dry weed stalks.

Voice: repeated *kill-deeah* and *dee-dee-dee*.

38



WILSON'S PHALAROPE
(*Phalaropus tricolor*)

Wilson's Phalarope (22cm)

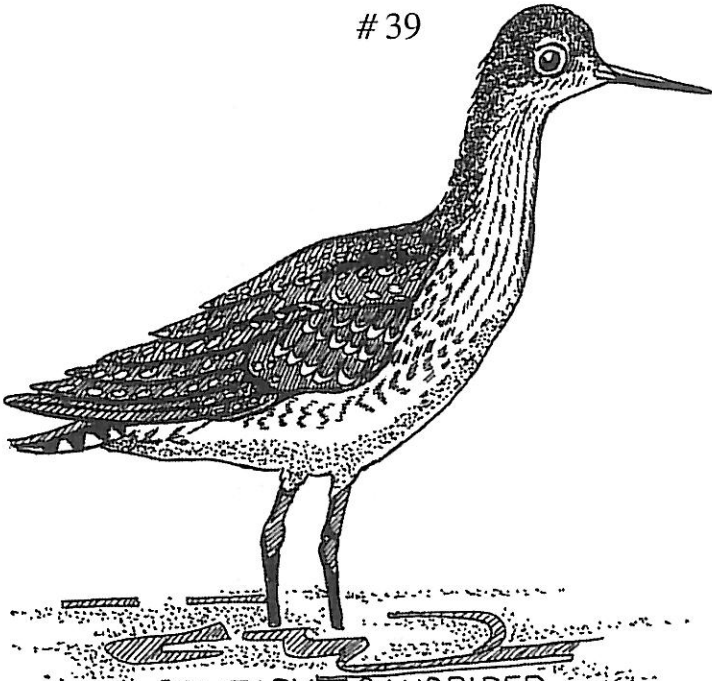
Female: Crown is pearly-gray, becoming white on hindneck. There is a white line over the eye, a heavy black line through the eye and down the side of the neck, where it is bordered by chestnut. The tail is pale gray and white. Underparts are white, except lined with chestnut on neck and gray on sides. Legs are black, toes have a long narrow web on each side.

Male: Upper parts are brownish-gray, flecked with dusky on crown and back. Underparts white, tinged with gray on neck. Sides of the neck are washed with rust. A distinguishing characteristic is the white line over the eye and a black line through it. In fall, both genders have light brownish-gray upper parts and white underparts with gray on sides of neck and breast.

Nesting: On the ground, in wet or dry meadows. Nest is in a depression lined with grass.

Voice: nasal *wurk* and *chek, chek*.

39



SOLITARY SANDPIPER
(*Tringa solitaria*)

Solitary Sandpiper (20cm.)

Upper parts are dark olive-brown, streaked on the crown and hindneck with white. They are lightly spotted on back and wings, with white or buff. There is a bold white ring around the eye (a distinguishing characteristic). Underparts are white, streaked on face, neck and upper breast with olive-brown and barred on sides with the same colour. The tail has broad bars of white and dull black. Legs are olive-green.

Nesting: In trees, near a stream or slough. Eggs are laid in an old nest of another bird.

Voice: *peet* or *peet-weet-weet*.

40



SPOTTED SANDPIPER
(*Actitis macularia*)

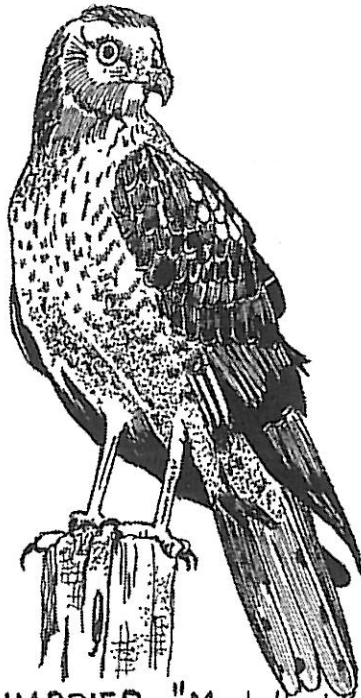
Spotted Sandpiper (19cm.)

Upper parts are dark greenish-gray, streaked on the crown and neck and barred on the back. They have a white bar visible in flight. The face is greenish-gray, with a white line over the eye. Underparts are white, with small dusky spots on throat and large black spots elsewhere. The bird bobs up and down almost continuously.

Nesting: On the ground near water, in a depression lined with grass or moss.

Voice: *peet* or *peet-weet*.

41



NORTHERN HARRIER "Marsh Hawk"
(*Circus cyaneus*)

Northern Harrier (Marsh Hawk) (45-60cm.)

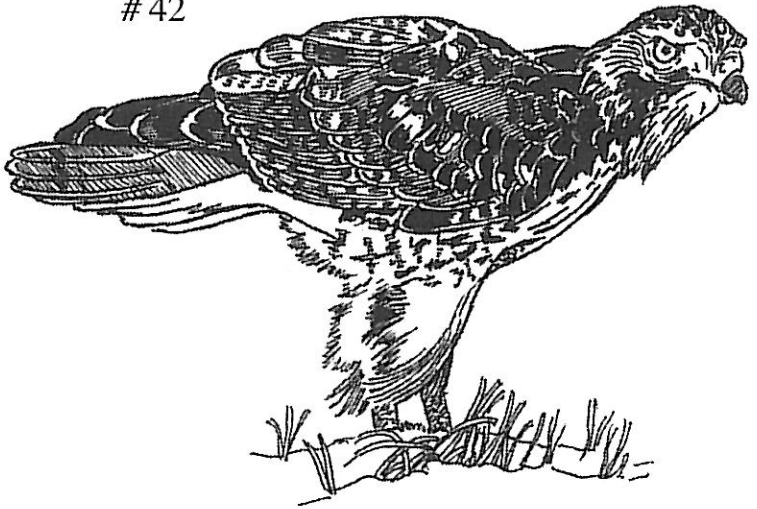
Male: Pale grayish-blue above, becoming black at tips of primaries, throat pale grayish-blue. Underparts white with light brown flecks. Underside of wings is white. White rump is a distinguishing characteristic in both males and females.

Female: Grayish-brown above, mottled with reddish-brown. The tail is barred with the same colours. The upper tail coverts are white, cream or buffy below, streaked with brown.

Nesting: On the ground, in a nest of reeds, grass or leaves, hidden in tall grass or low shrubs.

Voice: *weak pee, pee, pee.*

42



RED-TAILED HAWK
(*Buteo jamaicensis*)

Red-tailed Hawk (50-62cm.)

Dark grayish-brown above, streaked and barred with white, brown and dull black. The underparts are cream to buff, streaked with brown, especially on the abdomen and sides. The dark belly band is a distinguishing characteristic. The tail is brick-red, sometimes barred with black. There is great variability from light to dark in their body colouring.

Nesting: In trees, in a nest of twigs near the tree top.

Voice: squeal *keer-r-r*.

43



GREAT HORNED OWL
(*Bubo virginianus*)

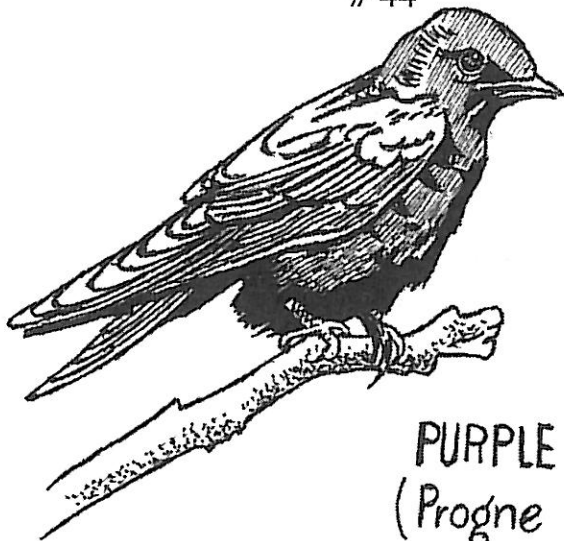
Great Horned Owl (50-60cm)

A large owl with long ear-tufts on its head. The upper parts are buffy or brownish, speckled with white and black. The face is grayish or buffy with a black border. The underparts are white or buffy with wavy black bars, especially on its sides. They vary in the amounts of brown, white and black.

Nesting: In old nests of hawks or crows, or in a hollow tree.

Voice: *hoo, hu-hu-hu, hoo, hoo.*

44



PURPLE MARTIN
(*Progne subis*)

Purple Martin (20cm.)

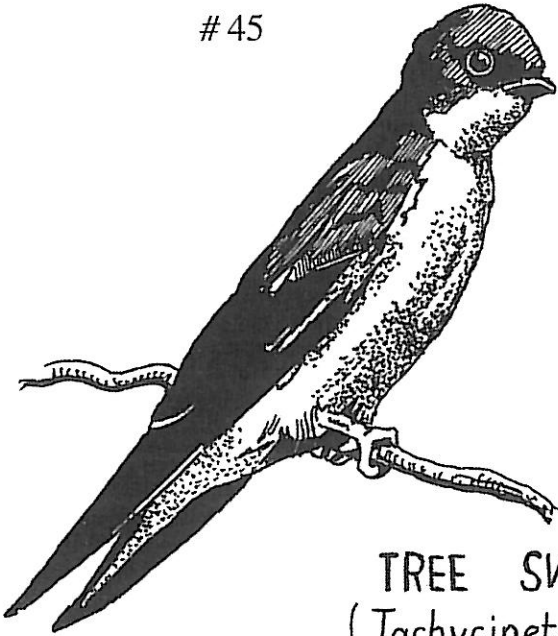
Male: The whole body is glassy blue-black with a purple hue, except the flight feathers which are brownish-black. The tail is forked about 1-1½ cm.

Female: Brownish-black above, with some bluish reflection and a gray band across the back of the neck. The throat, breast and sides are sooty-gray. The rest of the underparts are white.

Nesting: Martins prefer to nest in colonies.

Voice: *tchew-wew* or *pew, pew*.

45



TREE SWALLOW
(*Tachycineta bicolor*)

Tree Swallow (15cm.)

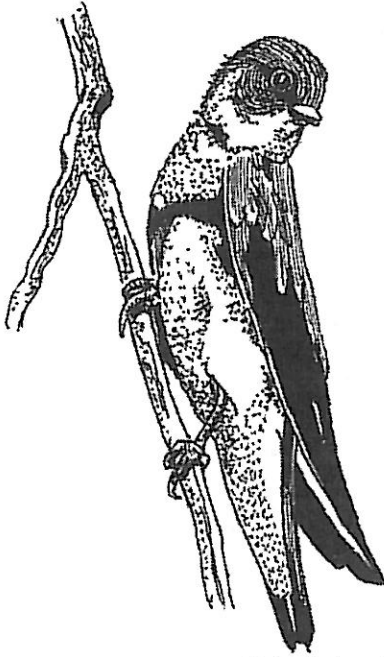
Male: Blue-black upperparts with a steely gloss on all but the flight feathers. The tail is brownish black, and slightly forked. The cheeks and underparts are white.

Female: Similar, but duller than the male.

Nesting: Nests in the cavities in trees or bird houses.

Voice: *cheet* or *chi-veet*.

46



BANK SWALLOW
(*Riparia riparia*)

Bank Swallow (11-14cm.)

The upperparts are grayish-brown, darker on wings and tail. The throat and underparts are white, except a definite band of grayish brown across the upper breast. The sides are lightly tinged with brown.

Nesting: In colonies, in sand or clay banks, in tunnels 30-60cm. long, which slope slightly downward towards the entrance to prevent flooding by rain.

Voice: *brrt* or *trr-tri-tri*.

47



BARN SWALLOW
(*Hirundo rustica*)

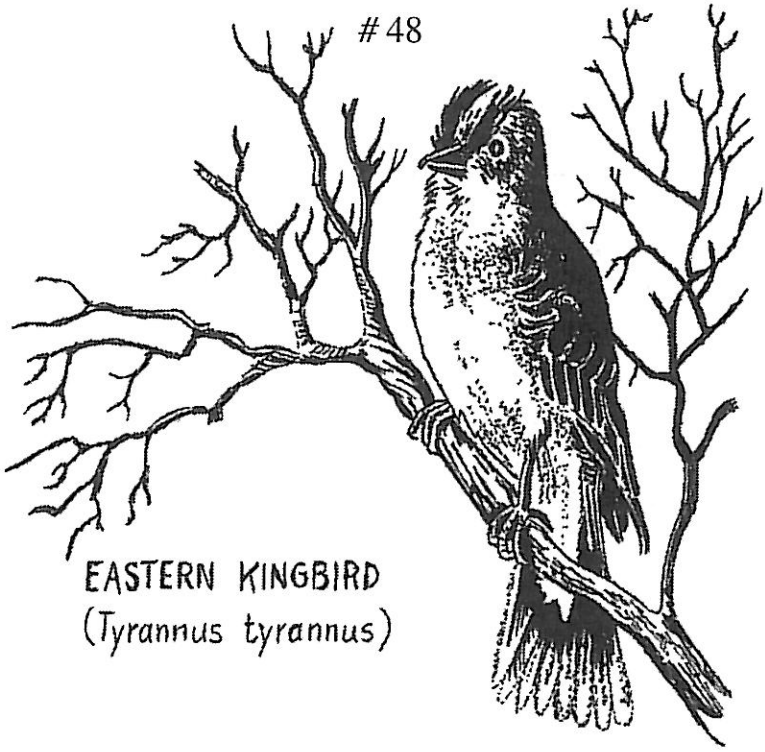
Barn Swallow (17cm.)

Chestnut forehead. Upperparts are dark steely-blue with a purple hue. The tail is deeply forked (3cm.) The throat and breast are chestnut, changing to buff on the rest of the underparts. There is a band of bluish-black on the upper breast.

Nesting: On beams or rafters, under bridges, in hollow trees or cliff crevices. Nest is a shallow cup made of mud plastered on the surface. It is always protected from above.

Voice: *vit* or *kvit-lvit*, *vit-vit*.

48



EASTERN KINGBIRD
(*Tyrannus tyrannus*)

Eastern Kingbird (21cm.)

Its upper parts are dull black, darkest on the head with a concealed patch of red feathers on the crown. Some wing feathers are edged with white. The underparts are white, with a light gray band across the upper breast. The tail is black, with a white band at the end.

Nesting: In trees and shrubs a few feet off the ground, occasionally on stumps and fenceposts. Nest of grass, string and feathers, lined with fine grasses.

Voice: *dzee-dzee-dzee* and *kit-kit-kitter-kitter*.

49



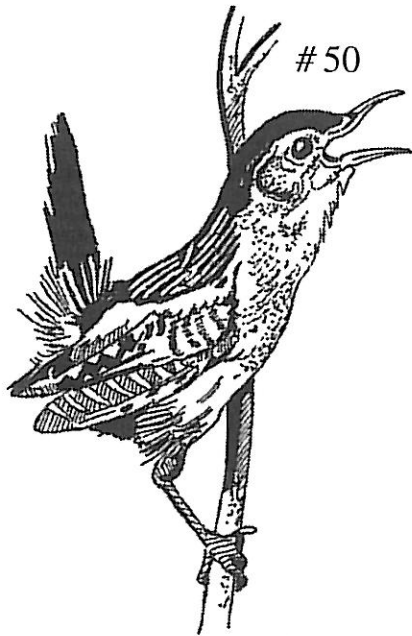
EASTERN PHOEBE
(*Sayornis phoebe*)

Eastern Phoebe (17cm)

The upperparts are dark grayish-brown, darkest on the crown and sides of the head. The secondaries and tertiaries are narrowly edged with white. The underparts are white or cream, with a dusky chin and sides. Unlike other flycatchers, it has no eye ring or wing bars. The bird has a habit of wagging its tail.

Nesting: In cliff crevices, on ledges of buildings or under bridges. Nest is made of mud, grass, and moss; lined with fine plant fibers and always protected from above.

Voice: *phoe-be* or *fi-bree*.



MARSH WREN "LONG-BILLED MARSH WREN"
(*Cistothorus palustris*)

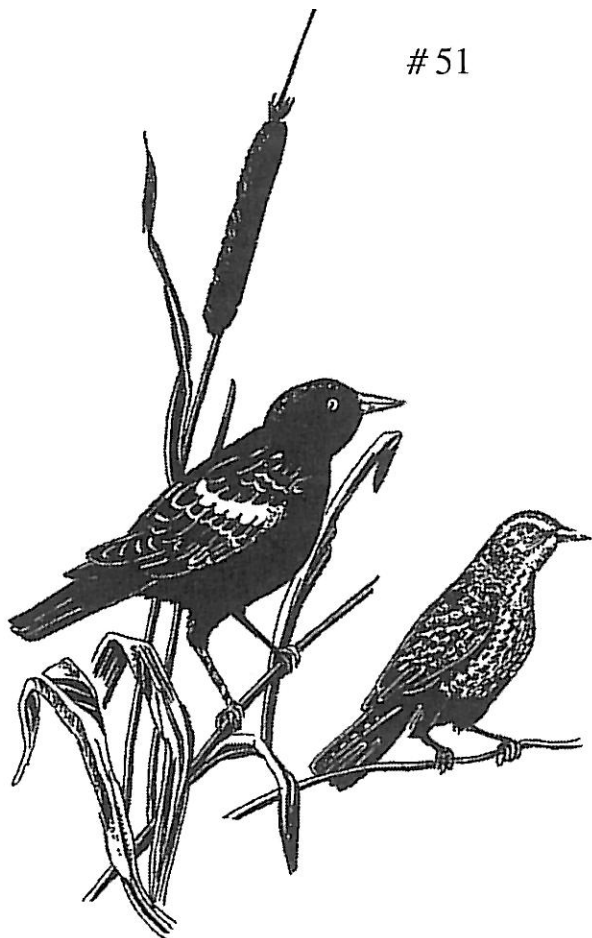
Marsh Wren (13cm.)

The crown and the nape are dark brown. The upper back is dark brown to almost black, with white stripes. The wings, lower back and tail are dark brown. There is a white line over the eye and ear. The cheeks and sides of the neck are buff. The underparts are white and the sides are washed with cinnamon.

Nesting: It nests over water in reeds, rushes, or cattails, in large globular nests made of reeds and grass, woven into the leaves of the reeds. Can be one to four feet above the water. The entrance is on the side and they build several dummy nests around the one they use.

Voice: *cut-cut-turrrrrrr-ur.*

51



REDWINGED BLACKBIRD
(*Agelaius phoeniceus*)

Red-winged Blackbird (24cm.)

Male: Entirely black, with a patch of red; a buffy border is on the bend of the wing.

Female: Brownish-black above, streaked with white, gray and rust. The underside is similar but lighter. There are usually a few reddish feathers on the bend of the wing.

Nesting: In bushes or reeds, over or near water. The nest is of coarse grass and reeds lined with grass.

Voice: *check* and *tee-err* and gurgling *konk-la-ree* or *o-ka-lay*.

52



YELLOW-HEADED BLACKBIRD
(*Xanthocephalus xanthocephalus*)

Yellow-headed Blackbird (25cm.)

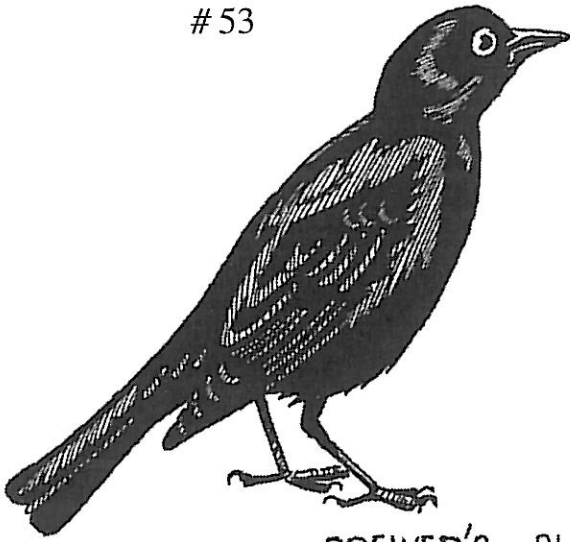
Male: Head, neck and upper breast are yellowish orange. There is a black patch around the eye and chin; the rest of the body is black, except for a white patch on the wing.

Female: The crown, wings, and upperparts are dusky-brown. The face, sides of the neck, throat and upper breast is pale yellow. The rest of the underparts are dusky-brown, with white streaking on the lower breast.

Nesting: In rushes or reeds, over water. The nest is made of grass and reeds which are woven to the stems of cattails or reeds, and usually locates in colonies.

Voice: *kruck* or *krack* (rusty hinges).

53



BREWER'S BLACKBIRD
(*Euphagus cyanocephalus*)

Brewer's Blackbird. (25cm)

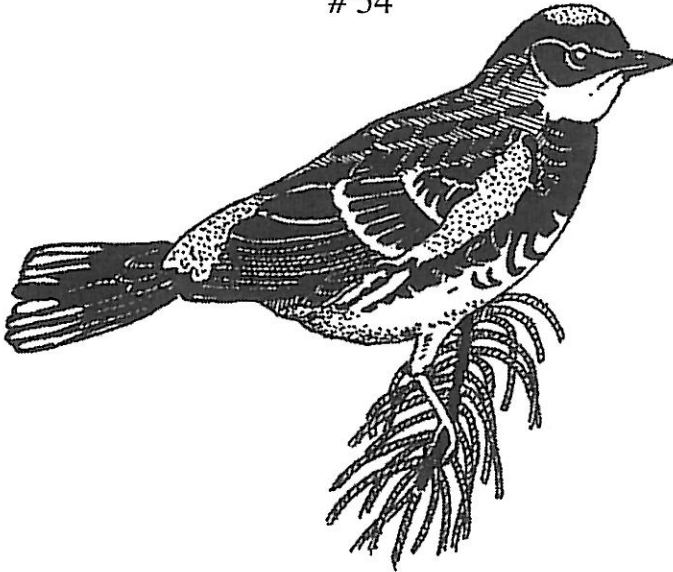
Male: Glossy black; the head and neck have a purple hue and yellow eyes. The rest of the body has a greenish-blue reflection.

Female: Dark grayish-brown, palest on the throat and dull black on the back, wings, and tail. Eyes are brown.

Nesting: Usually in trees, but also on the ground, or in low bushes in loose colonies. Nests are of twigs on coarse grass, lined with fine grass.

Voice: harsh, wheezy *ksh-eee, chak*

54



YELLOW-RUMPED WARBLER
(*Dendroica coronata*)

Yellow-rumped Warbler (13cm)

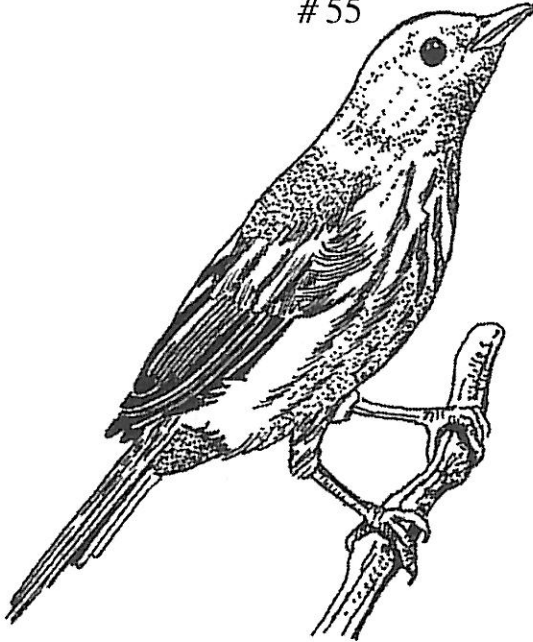
Male: Bluish-gray upperparts, with black streaks and a yellow patch in mid-crown and another on the rump. The wings have two white wing bars, and there is a white line over the eye. The face and ears are black. The throat and underparts are white, with a band of black across the breast and on the sides. There is a yellow patch near the bend in the wing.

Female: Similar to male, but paler; the back is lined with a brownish appearance and is identified by a yellow rump, with a yellow patch on side, at the bend of each wing.

Nesting: In evergreen trees, in a nest of twigs and grass, lined with plant fibers and hair.

Voice: rising and dropping *seet-seet-seet-seet-seet*, *trrrrrr* and a loud *check*

55



YELLOW WARBLER
(*Dendroica petechia*)

Yellow Warbler (12cm.)

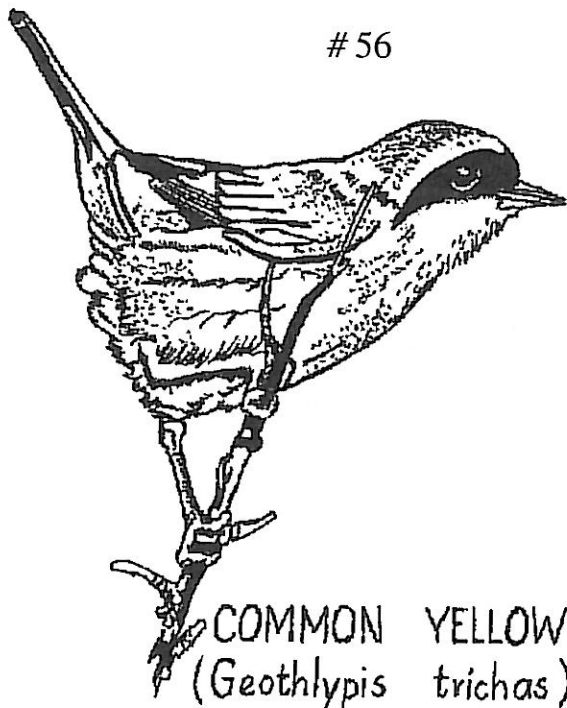
Male: Forehead, sides of head and the underparts are yellow; reddish streaks on breast and sides. The flight feathers are brownish, edged with yellow.

Female: Similar to male but olive-green above; reddish streaks are faint or absent. Elsewhere, it is yellow.

Nesting: In trees or bushes, in a nest of grass and fibers, lined with hair and feathers.

Voice: rapid *tsee-tsee-tsee-tsee-titi-wee* or *weet-weet-weet-weet-tsee-tsee*

56



Common Yellowthroat (13cm.)

Male: Face and forehead are black, forming a mask over the eyes and edged with white. The rest of the upperparts are greenish-olive. The throat, breast and undertail is yellow. The abdomen is white and the sides are slightly brownish-olive.

Female: Upperparts are grayish-olive; there is no black mask. The throat, breast and undertail are yellow. The sides are brownish-olive and the abdomen is whitish.

Nesting: Nests on or near the ground, near water. The nest is a bulky mass of grass, weeds and leaves.

Voice: rapid *witchity-witchity witchity-witch*, and a husky *tchep*.

57



SONG SPARROW
(*Melospiza melodia*)

Song Sparrow (16cm.)

Dark brown crown, with a mid-line dark gray stripe and bordered by a gray line over the eye. The underside of the head is streaked with black, brown and buffy, causing it to appear dark brown. The tail is dark brown; the cheeks are gray, edged with brown. The throat is pale gray, bordered with rust. The rest of the underparts are white or buffy, heavily streaked on sides and breast, with rusty-brown and the breast has a dark spot.

Nesting: On the ground, in nest of shredded bark and grass, and lined with fine grass.

Voice: *sweet sweet sweet* and a low *tchep*.

58



SAVANNAH SPARROW
(*Passerculus sandwichensis*)

Savannah Sparrow

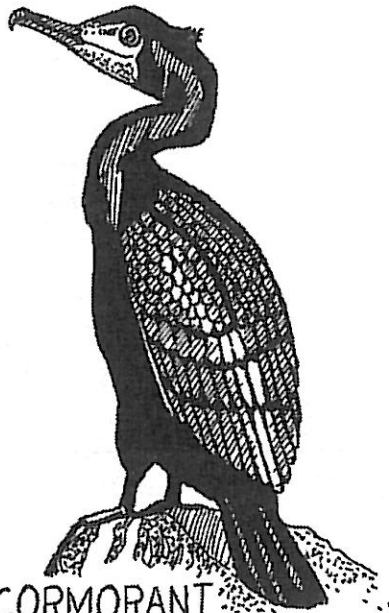
(14cm.)

The crown is brownish-black, lightly streaked with buffy-gray, with a narrow mid-stripe of buffy-gray. There is a pale yellow line over the eye; the cheeks and the rest of the upper parts are grayish-brown, streaked with dark brown. There are four distinct gray lines down the back. The tail is short grayish-brown; the throat is white bordered with dark brown. The underparts are white, streaked with brown across the breast and down the sides; there is often a central spot on the breast.

Nesting: On the ground, in a nest of coarse grass, lined with fine grass.

Voice: lispng *tist-tist-tist*, *tseeee-tsaay* and a light *tsip*.

59



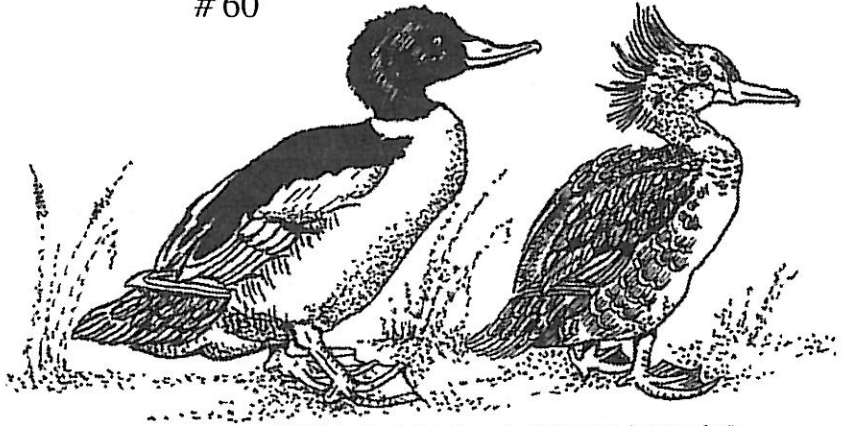
DOUBLE-CRESTED CORMORANT
(*Phalacrocorax auritus*)

Double-crested Cormorant. (90cm.)

Entirely black, with a greenish tinge over the head, neck and underparts. Elsewhere, it has a brownish tinge. In the breeding season it has a crest on each side of the crown. The throat pouch is orange. The bill is dark gray with yellow mottling.

Nesting: In colonies, on the rocks, or cliffs of islands and occasionally, in trees. Nests are a bulky mass of twigs, lined with coarse grass.

60



COMMON MERGANSER
(*Mergus merganser*)

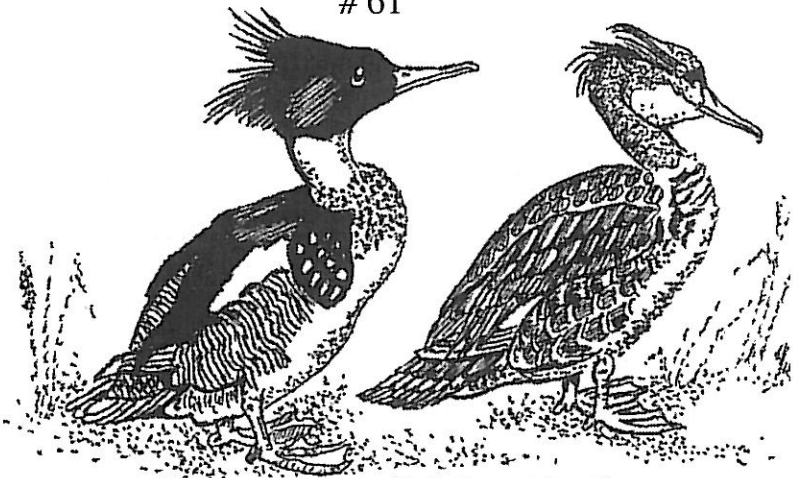
Common Merganser (60-63cm.)

Male: The head and upper neck are glossy, greenish-black, without a crest. The lower neck and underparts are white, with a slight pink blush. The back is black, becoming light gray on the rump and tail. Most of the wing is white, with a single black bar. The primaries are brownish-black.

Female: Feathers at the nape of the neck extend to form a crest. The head and neck are reddish-brown, with the throat being white. The upper parts are light gray. The feathers of the lower neck and sides are tipped with white. The rest of the underparts are white, tinted with pink.

Nesting: In a tree cavity, a hole in bank, or on the ground, in a nest of grass, lined with down.

61



RED-BREASTED MERGANSER (*Mergus serrator*)

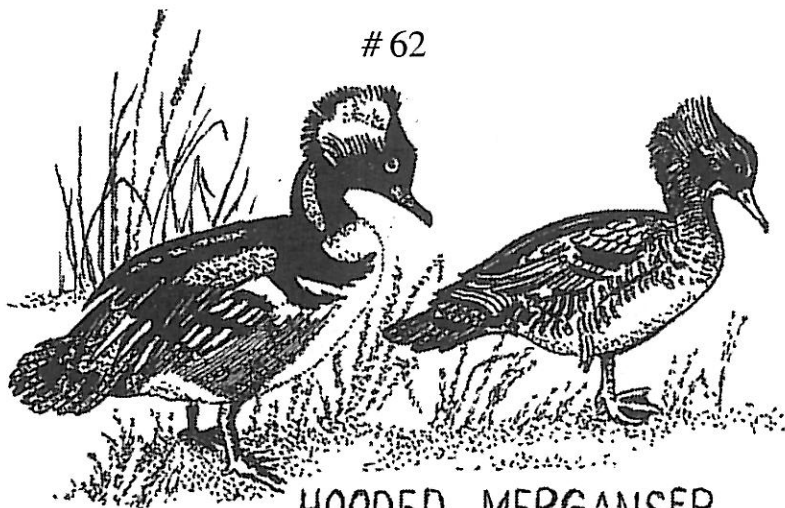
Red-breasted Merganser (50-60cm.)

Male: Head and upper neck are glossy greenish-black. There is a long double pointed crest on the crown and nape. The back is black, becoming gray on the rump. There are two rows of white spots near the bend of the wing. The wing is mostly white and has two black wing bars. There is a reddish-brown ring around the lower neck, separated from the head by a white ring. The rest of the underparts are white, with fine black bars on the side. The bill and legs are red.

Female: Has a ragged crest, the head and neck are brown, fading to whitish on the throat. The rest of the upper parts are grayish-brown. Has a white speculum, bordered on the front with black. The upper breast and sides are brownish-gray. The rest of the underparts are white.

Nesting: Nests in rock crevices, or in dense growth near water, in a nest of grass, lined with down.

62



HOODED MERGANSER
(*Lophodytes cucullatus*)

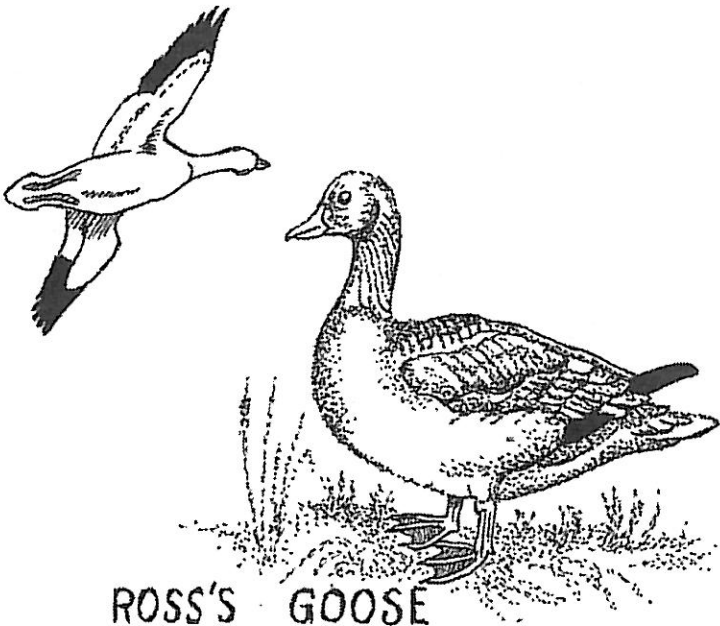
Hooded Merganser (44-50cm.)

Male: The head has a high rounded crest, it is black with a large white patch from the eye, over most of the crest. The back is brownish-black, becoming brown towards the tail. Underparts white, with two vertical black bars from the back to front of the wings. The sides are reddish-brown, with fine black lines.

Female: Head has a smaller crest of grayish-brown. The upper parts are dark grayish-brown, with a white patch on the secondaries. The throat to upper breast is grayish-brown. The sides are brown and the rest of the underparts are white.

Nesting: Nests in cavity in trees, or stumps, in a nest of grass, lined with down.

Voice: low *grunting* or *croaking*.



ROSS'S GOOSE
(*Chen rossii*)

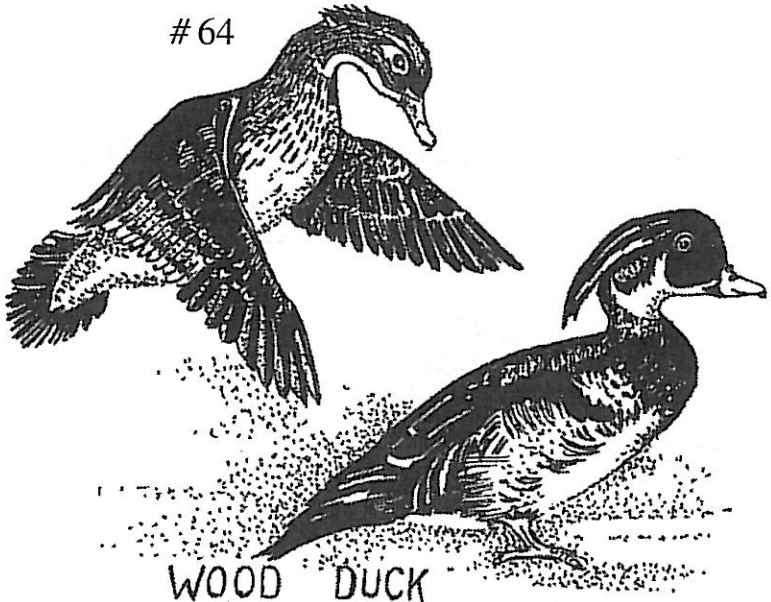
Ross's Goose (58cm)

Entirely white, except the primaries, which are black. The pink beak has a scabby appearance. The legs are purplish-red.

Nesting: Nest on the ground, in loose colonies, in the tundra.

Voice: no loud notes *luk-luk, luk-luk*.

64



WOOD DUCK
(*Aix sponsa*)

Wood Duck

(45-50cm.)

Male: The crown and crest are iridescent green, with bronze reflections. The speculum and much of the wing is iridescent blue-green. The face is metallic purple, with two white marks extending up from the white throat and foreneck. The upper breast is purplish-brown, edged with white in front of the wings. The sides are olive with black and white bars. The rest of the underparts are white.

Female: Dark brown crown, the rest of the upperparts are brownish-olive glossed with green. The wing is duller than the male. The face is brownish-gray, with a white ring around the eye. The throat is white; the upper breast and sides are dull brown mottled with white. The rest of the underparts are white.

Nesting: Nests in cavities in trees and stumps, in a down lined nest.

Voice: male; whistled *whee-whee-whew*, female; *qua-ack*.

#65



CINNAMON TEAL
(*Anas cyanoptera*)

Cinnamon Teal (37-40cm.)

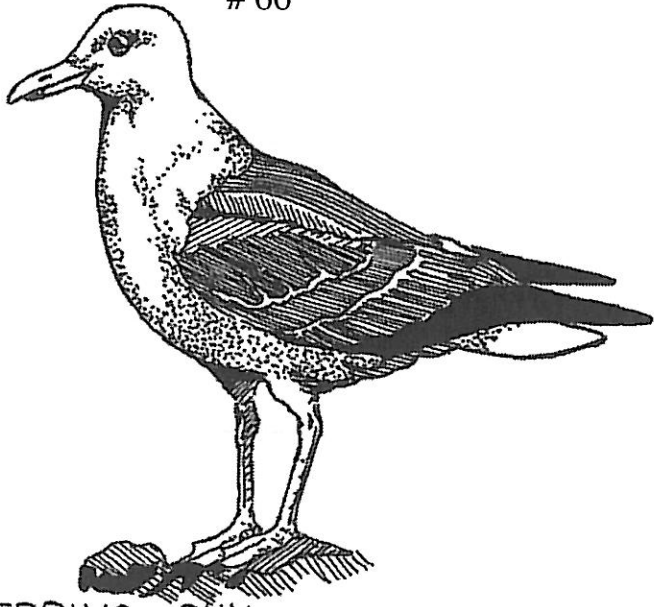
Male: The crown is brownish-black. The head, neck, underparts and sides are chestnut; somewhat grayish on the abdomen. The back and tail are brownish-black. The wing resembles the blue-winged teal's.

Female: Similar to adult female blue-winged teal.

Nesting: On the ground, near water, in a nest lined with down.

Voice: male; *peep*, female; *quack* softly.

66



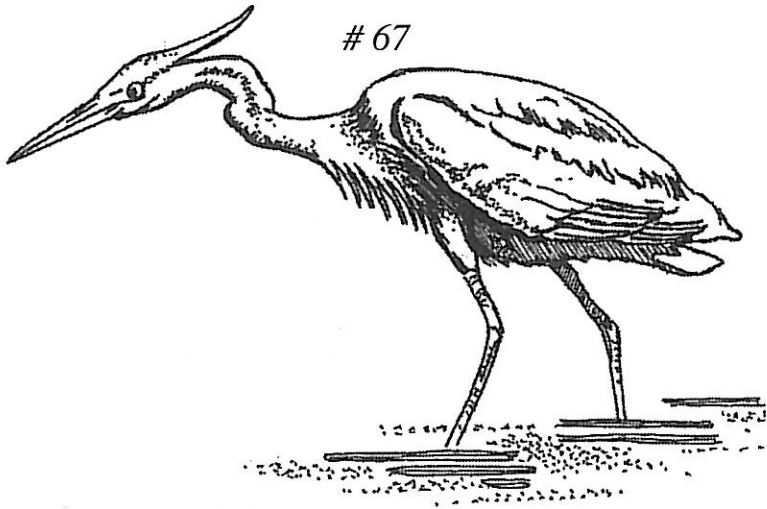
HERRING GULL
(*Larus argentatus*)

Herring Gull (60cm.)

Has a mantle of pale bluish-gray over the back and wings. Tips of wings are black with white spots. The rest of the plumage is white. This bird is distinguished by a yellow bill with a red spot and by pink legs.

Nesting: Nests on the ground, in a nest of grass and sticks.

Voice: loud *kiyak-kiyak* or *yuk-yuk-yuk-yucklr-yuckle*.



GREAT EGRET
(*Ardea albus*)

Great Egret

(92-105cm.)

A large heron with pure white plumage. The legs and feet are black. The bill is yellow.

Nesting: In colonies, in trees over water.

Voice: hoarse croak and *cuk, cuk, cuk*.

Dowitcher (Long-billed and Short-billed) (26-31cm.) *Opposite*

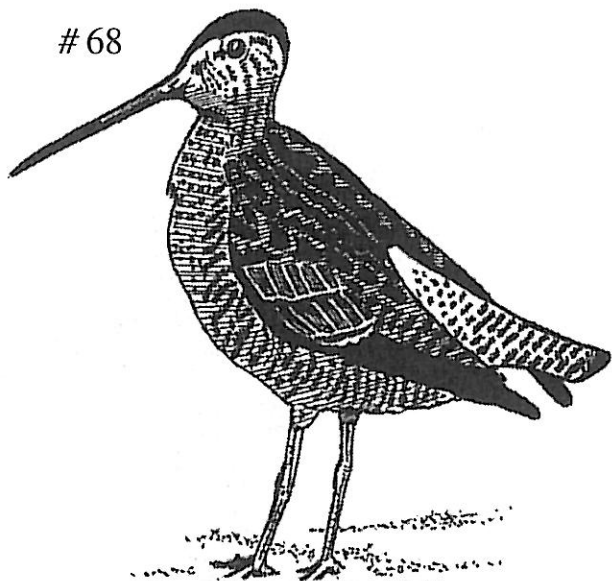
There are only slight variations between these two species.

The bill is straight and over 5 cm. long and slender. The crown is brownish-black, flecked with buffy colour. There is a dark line from bill to eye and a buffy line over the eye. The hindneck, back and wings are brownish-black; streaked and barred with buff and brown. There is a large white patch on the back, covered by wings when at rest. The lower back and tail are barred with black and white. All of the underparts are reddish-cinnamon; the neck and breast are spotted. The sides are barred with brownish-black.

Nesting: On a dry hummock, in muskegs, in a depression lined with grass and leaves.

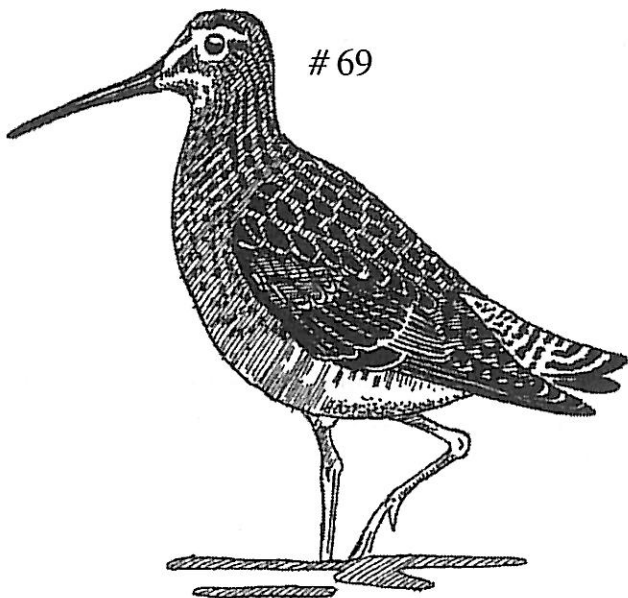
Voice: Long-billed; staccato *tu-tu-tu*, Short-billed; single thin *keek*.

68



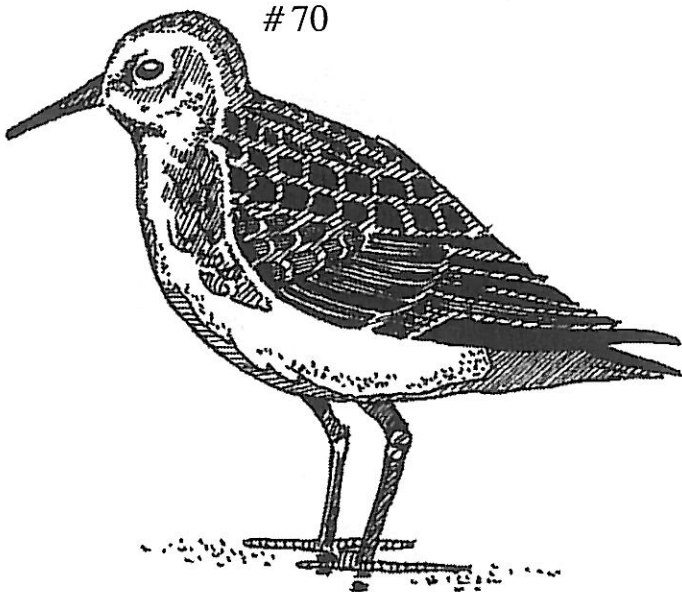
LONG-BILLED DOWITCHER
(*Limnodromus scolopaceus*)

69



SHORT-BILLED DOWITCHER
(*Limnodromus griseus*)

70



SEMIPALMATED SANDPIPER
(*Calidris pusilla*)

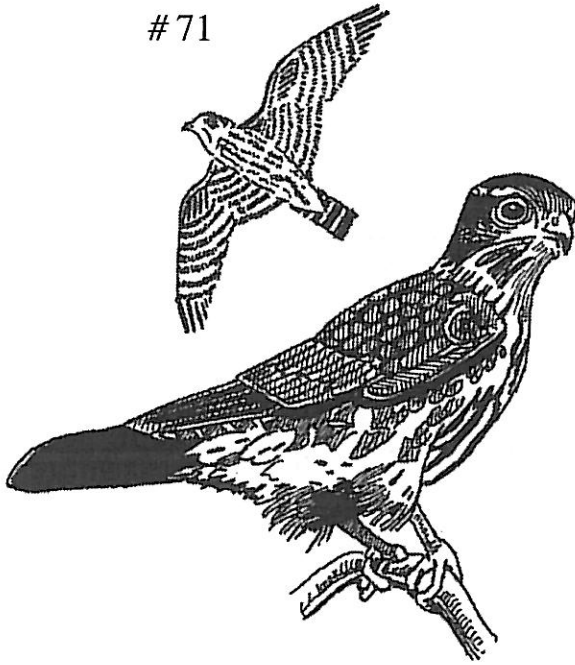
Semipalmated Sandpiper (15cm.)

The feathers on the upper parts are black with buffy margins, giving it a striped brownish-gray appearance. The lower back and central tail feathers are black, the outer tail feathers are gray. The underparts are white, with grayish-brown across neck and upper breast. The bill and legs are black.

Nesting: On the ground, in a nest lined with grass, moss, and leaves.

Voice: *chit* or *ch eh*.

#71



MERLIN
(*Falco columbarius*)

Merlin (25-30cm.)

A small compact falcon, the length of a jay. It looks like a miniature peregrine.

Male: Blue-gray above, with broad black bands on a gray tail.

Female: Dusky-brown with a banded tail.

Both genders are boldly brownish-striped below, on a whitish underside.

Nesting: Usually in an old nest of hawk or crow, in large tree, tree cavity, cliff ledge or on ground.

Voice: a series of sharp *bik's*.

Glossary

BARS: Narrow, transverse marks across the body, or across a feather, and not parallel with the shaft of the feather.

COVERTS: The feathers covering the base of the flight feathers on the wing, or the base of the tail feathers.

CREST: A more or less lengthened group of feathers on the top of the head, either permanently erected, or able to be erected at will.

CROWN: The top part of the head.

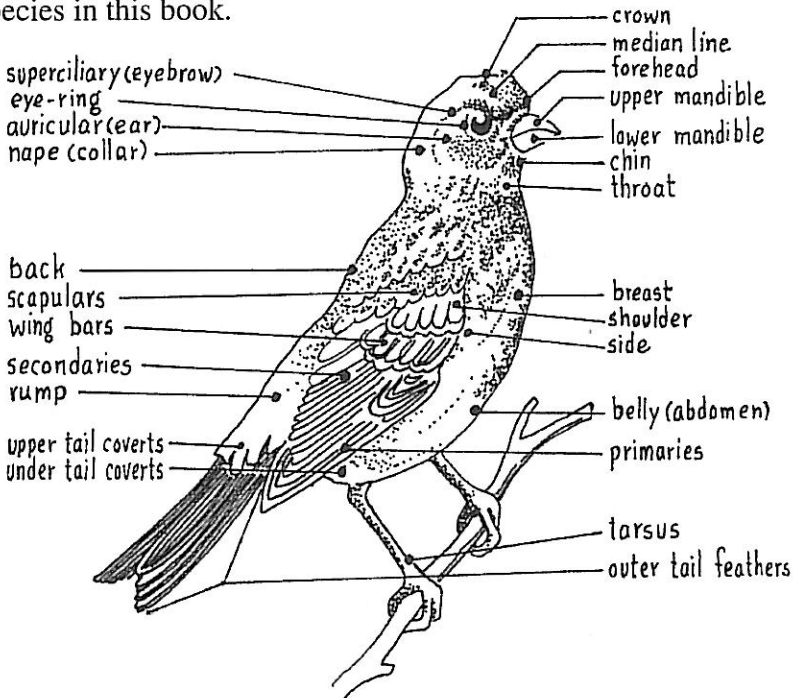
FORE-NECK: The front part of the neck, between the throat and the chest.

HIND-NECK: The middle of the neck behind.

IRIDESCENT: With bright, changeable colours, or tints in different lights.

IRIS: The coloured part of the eye surrounding the black pupil.

LENGTH: Measure from the tip of the bill to the end of the tail feathers. This length is given in brackets after the name of each species in this book.



TOPOGRAPHY of a BIRD

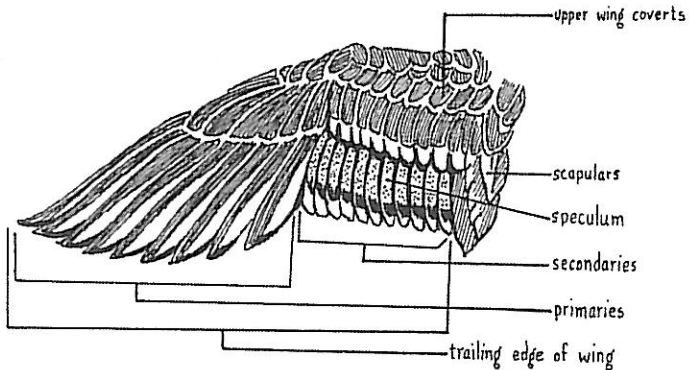
NAPE: The upper part of the hind-neck, just below the base of the skull.

PRIMARIES: The outermost and longest series of flight-feathers of the wing; attached to the part of the wing nearest the tip.

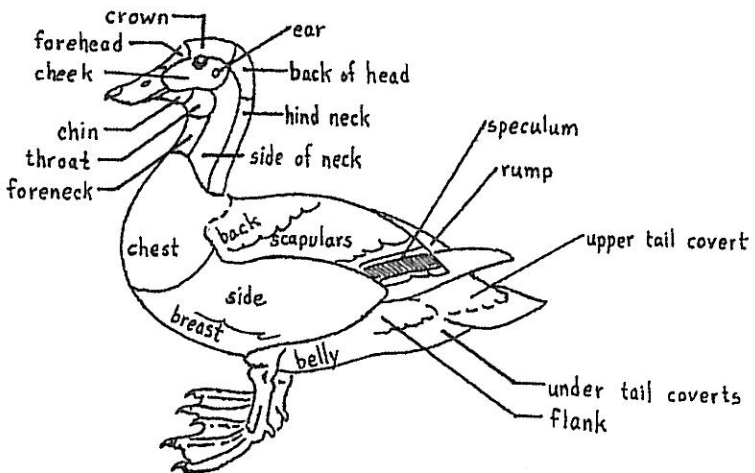
SCAPULARS: The group of feathers on either side of the back, on the shoulder just above the wing.

SECONDARIES: The series of flight-feathers attached to the second joint or "fore-arm" of the wing.

SPECULUM: The brightly coloured area on the secondary wing-feathers of many ducks, often with a metallic iridescence.



DUCK WING from above



TOPOGRAPHY of a DUCK

There are two companion books which also deal with Saskatchewan river valley natural history. They are:

Common Saskatchewan River Valley Plants

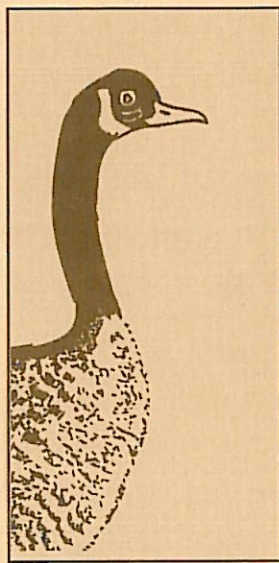
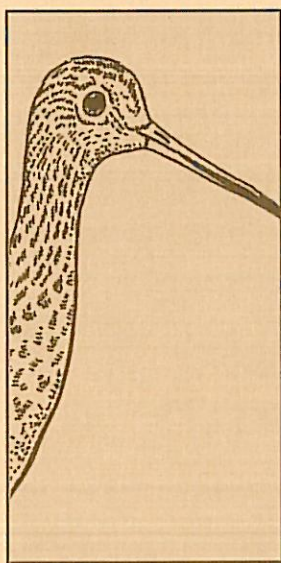
Common Saskatchewan River Valley Birds & Animals

Both of these books are available through the City of North Battleford Parks Department, and ASUPCA member bookstores throughout the province.

www.asupca.sk.ca

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- Peterson, Roger Tory, *Peterson Field Guides, Western Birds*, Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1990.
- Chandler, S. Robbins, Bertel Bruun, and Herbert S. Zim, *Birds of North America*, Golden Press, New York, 1983.



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