

BOOK REVIEWS

NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY OF MANITOBA. 21ST
ANNIVERSARY BULLETIN. 1920 TO 1941.

Published by an Editorial Committee under the Chairmanship of Dr. A. M. Davidson.

This amply illustrated and well printed bulletin recounts the very considerable achievements of the Manitoba Natural History Society on the occasion of its 21st anniversary. The history of the Society is outlined, lists of its officers presented, as well as brief obituaries of deceased members. There are detailed accounts of the work of Sections dealing with Ornithology, Botany, Entomology, Geology, Mammalogy, Ichthyology, and Microscopy and brief notices of the activities of members interested in Conchology and Ethnology.

One important early activity of the Society was the erection of a clubhouse and collecting station at Victoria Beach in 1923. This clubhouse served as a centre for the Society's

botanical survey of Victoria Beach and its ornithological survey of Elk Island. The results of these surveys are presented in some detail. Other important contributions of the Society have been the initiation of mosquito control work in the Winnipeg area and a leading part in the establishment of the Manitoba Museum which was opened in 1932.

Among the important publications of the Society have been: A Colour Key to Manitoba Butterflies, Check List of the Manitoba Flora, and Geological Formations of Manitoba.

The Manitoba Natural History Society has long been affiliated with the Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club; its members use The Canadian Field-Naturalist as a medium of publication. The Canadian Field-Naturalist extends its warmest congratulations to the Manitoba Society both in token of its achievements throughout twenty-one years of service and on the publication of a fine anniversary bulletin. — HAROLD A. SENN, EDITOR.

THE BIOTIC PROVINCES OF NORTH AMERICA.

by Lee R. Dice. University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor. 1943. pp. 78 + 1 folded map. Price \$1.50.

For many years students have been attempting to replace Merriam's Life Zone concept. Dice offers a new set of concepts and divisions as an experiment. These biotic provinces are based chiefly on the vegetation, but also on peculiarities of the fauna, climate, physiography and soil.

The reviewer thinks that biotic provinces should be the next divisions below a region, and should take into account the age and evolution of the biota. Perhaps satisfactory divisions for all plants and animals cannot be worked out, but to be practical for any one group, the areas should delimit the natural ranges of a considerable number of species.

The provinces are sketchily outlined and characterized. A bewildering array is set forth for the southern United States. In Canada the union of Merriam's Hudsonian and Canadian Life Zones can be defended; but the inclusion of the lower Ottawa Valley, Gaspé,

and Cape Breton Island, in the same province seems indefensible, as does the uniting of the southern half of British Columbia, excepting the coastal area, into another province that includes such diversities as the desert-like valley bottoms, the wooded slopes, and the arctic-like alpine grasslands.

The contention that biotic provinces must be continuous except for marine islands, minimizes the fact that mountain tops may be biotic islands.

The terminology, as Hudsonian Province for Merriam's Canadian and Hudsonian zones, and Canadian Province for the eastern part of Merriam's Transition Zone would cause confusion.

Dice deplures the lack of detailed ecological studies, but does not use many of the more important available studies, such as: Halliday on the forests of Canada; Fernald on Eastern Canada; Nichols for Cape Breton Island; Raup for Wood Buffalo Park and the Peace and Liard River Valleys; Porsild on Alaska and Hulten on the Arctic Biota.

It seems that for birds and mammals this will not be a more useful scheme than that of Merriam. — A. L. RAND,



Senn, Harold A. 1944. "Natural History Society of Manitoba. 21st Anniversary Bulletin, by A. M. Davidson (ed.) [Review]." *The Canadian field-naturalist* 58(3), 105–105. <https://doi.org/10.5962/p.340725>.

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