

blackseed ricegrass (*Oryzopsis racemosa*), and prickly ash (*Zanthoxylum americanum*) are present in the ravine forests but elsewhere are usually restricted to the permanent stream and river valleys in extreme eastern and southeastern North Dakota.

The Prairie Coteau forest of North Dakota contains many plant species located on the western fringe of their ranges. Floristically and ecologically this region is unique, containing a flora uncommon in our state. It definitely should be studied more thoroughly.

#### LITERATURE CITED

- Stevens, O. A. 1963. *Handbook of North Dakota Plants* (with revision appendix). Fargo, N. Dak. Inst. Reg. Studies. 324 p.



## Note

DUCK MORTALITY CAUSED BY WIND. Avian mortality caused by collisions with man-made structures such as tall buildings, TV towers and transmission lines is considered fairly common and has been documented by many observers. This note records natural mortality caused by a bird being blown onto the ground by the wind. At 4 p.m. on May 18, 1967, I was making a breeding waterfowl census on a quarter-section of gently rolling land located 8 miles north of Goodrich, Sheridan County, North Dakota. I estimated the wind to be from the northwest at 20-25 mph with gusts to 30 mph. Visibility was unrestricted. As I approached from the south to within about 75 yards of a small pond, a pair of shovelers (*Anas clypeata*) flushed and flew east, the drake about 15 yards high and the duck about 5 yards high, slightly behind the drake. The duck suddenly lost altitude as she approached a low saddle of ground separating the watershed of the pond from which she flushed and an adjacent small pond. With wings beating normally, the duck struck the ground in a stubble field at a point just below the top of the saddle, bounced once, and rolled end over end for several yards. The drake began circling around the area where the injured duck lay. Just before impact there was no indication of any attempt by the duck to recover lost altitude and avoid hitting the top of the saddle. I picked up the bird, which died a few seconds later, apparently of a broken neck. I believe a gust of wind was directly responsible for the unusual death of this bird. A similar type of mortality was reported by Rate (1957, Auk 74:391) who witnessed deaths among redheads (*Aythya americana*) caused by a sudden downdraft which forced them onto the ice of a reservoir. —Harold Kantrud, Northern Prairie Wildlife Research Center, Jamestown, North Dakota 58401.