

The Blue Jay Bookshelf

THE VIOLATED VISION — THE RAPE OF CANADA'S NORTH. 1972.
By James Woodford. McClelland and Stewart, 25 Hollinger Road, Toronto 374, 136 pp. \$5.95.

Environmental concerns about the development of northern Canada are increasing, although most Canadians probably remain indifferent. *The Violated Vision* by James Woodford successfully challenges this indifference by attacking past and present government policy (or lack of policy) on several fronts. Most strongly criticized are federal legislation for the protection of the Arctic environment, damage to the environment by mineral exploitation (especially by the oil industry), and the failure of the federal government to recognize the aboriginal and treaty rights of Indians and Eskimos.

The federal government has attempted to control environmental damage in the north by proposing land use regulations (these have not yet been made public) and by Bill C-202, The Arctic Waters Pollution Prevention Act. Of the former Woodford maintains, "There are too many legal loopholes in the Arctic Land Use Regulations to make them effective, even if the government were serious about enforcing them." The drafting of northern land use regulations (NLUR) began in 1969 with the formation of an advisory committee which included representatives of industry and at least six prominent conservationists. Woodford comments, "Evidently the full NLUR Advisory Committee met only once or twice and virtually none of the recommendations made by the conservation representatives were added to the draft Regulations." Essentially the government's environmental program in the north has been to let industry police itself. The situation is further complicated (or simplified from the point of view of government and industry) by the fact that development, conservation and Indian affairs in the north are all handled by one govern-

ment department, the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. The objectives within this department are frequently in conflict and all too often the conflict is resolved in favour of the developers and to the detriment of the native people and the northern environment. Woodford recommends dissolving the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and distributing its responsibilities among other government departments.

Bill C-202 is criticized because it contains a curious definition of waste (pollution itself is not defined). According to the bill, "waste" is "any substance that, if added to any waters, would degrade or alter or form part of a process of degradation of the quality of those waters to an extent that is detrimental to their use by man or by any animal, fish or plant that is useful to man." Woodford correctly points out that, in law, the usefulness of a particular organism to man may be very hard to establish. The bill perpetuates the unfortunate attitude of technological man that the earth and its life were placed here solely for the purpose of human exploitation and nature is only of value if man can use it in some way. Many conservationists and others believe that this attitude, perpetuated by present governments, is leading us even closer to self-destruction. Now we find it enshrined in pollution prevention legislation.

The book discusses damage to the north by the oil industry in some detail. The greatest immediate threat is damage to the fragile surface of the tundra by seismic exploration. Oil spills, wildcat wells, and the effect of seismic blasting on whales are also discussed. Considering that the industry is only starting operations in the north, its environmental record there is discouraging. Many accidents are mentioned by the author and in the short time that the book has been available, three fuel spills have occurred from broken pipelines and a stor-

age tank at Resolute. Either the oil industry conducts its northern operations with inadequate safety precautions or petroleum technology is not sufficiently developed to cope with temperature changes in the north.

Most northern Indians are covered by Treaties 8 and 11 which guarantee hunting, trapping, and fishing rights (this guarantee has since been broken) as well as reserves in the amount of "one square mile for each family of five, or in that proportion for larger or smaller families." No reserve lands have ever been set aside. No treaties exist between the Eskimo people and the Canadian government.

A federal commission headed by Walter H. Nelson was established in 1959 to review Treaties 8 and 11. It found that about 4,502 Indians were covered by the treaties and that they were entitled to 576,016 acres of land. Since the Indians did not want to live on reserves, the Commissioner recommended that some other means of fulfilling the treaties be found. Specifically he recommended a cash payment of \$11,520,320 plus an annual royalty from mineral resources of 1% of revenues. These recommendations were never adopted. Since the treaties have never been fulfilled, the Indian people probably still possess much of the north. We as immigrants have a choice. We can steal the north as our forefathers stole most of southern Canada in the last century or we can develop the north with the approval, advice, and help of the native peoples in some mutually beneficial way. All development so far — oil exploration, mining, oil and gas drilling, and the Mackenzie highway — has been instigated without prior consultation with the native peoples. The white man simply took what he wanted.

In the concluding pages, the author recommends a halt to Arctic development. "A moratorium would allow time for the development of long-range plans: for an ecological survey, for the settlement of the status of the Original Peoples and their rights, for the setting aside of adequate parks and scientific reserves, for the nego-

tiation of fair taxes and royalties on resource production, for study of the best means of retaining Canadian ownership and control over northern resources, and for a Northern Environmental Policy Act. It would also allow time for an assessment of the effects, to date, of resource exploration and development, time for research to determine the parameters of the northern environment, and time to establish administrative and enforcement programs and personnel to control development."

In the current array of books on the environment, there are few Canadian books dealing with Canadian problems. This is an excellent one and should be read by all interested in conservation and the future of this country.—*David H. Sheppard, Regina.*

HOW TO TALK TO BIRDS, and other uncommon ways of enjoying nature the year round. 1972. By Richard C. Davids. Alfred A. Knopf, New York. 242 pp. Price \$8.25

Do you want to know how to raise moths? Or one of the easiest ways to attract birds to your yard? Or what a fox will do when presented with the choice of opossum, live, or dog biscuit for dinner? This book will tell you. And if you haven't the initial enthusiasm to want to know these things, this book will try to arouse it in you. Mr. Davids is, as he says in his first chapter, a missionary for nature, and his book aims to make converts to the cause of conservation, not by quoting gloomy statistics and trying to scare people into being conservation-minded, but by arousing their interest in the world around them, and nurturing a love for it that will prevent the thoughtless destruction that so often takes place.

The book is full of interesting anecdotes from Mr. Davids' travels on the continent and in other parts of the world. For instance, he mentions the reaction he got when, at a construction site in Egypt, he raised his binoculars to look at a yellow wagtail. Or his own

reaction when he discovered how the Japanese grew the extra large strawberries he had so enjoyed on a visit to Japan.

Mr. Davids' home is in Minnesota, and he has also lived on the eastern seaboard of the United States. The book naturally deals with the wildlife of those areas, so that many of the animals and birds that he mentions will not likely be seen here. However, his chapter on bird identification for beginning bird watchers is valuable wherever one may live, and his concern for the preservation of natural habitat, especially swamps and wetlands, is one that should be shared by prairie people at the present time.

Some people may feel a twinge of suspicion when they come across a report of the sighting of a flock of Canada Geese within easy shotgun

distance of the train in which he was travelling. Mr. Davids grew up on a farm where hunting rounded out the food supply, and he acknowledges the necessity of harvesting game animals. But apart from that, he draws an interesting distinction between hunting game and shooting it, and while he feels that the hunt is probably an instinctive thing with man, the urge to shoot may in most cases eventually be satisfied by the use of a camera.

The author's style becomes a little monotonous if the book is read from cover to cover in a short period, for not everyone will respond favourably to being constantly cajoled and exhorted to do this or that, but most will find something of interest or something to marvel at, no matter where they may dip into its pages.
—*Lucy Eley, Regina.*

Letters and Notes

LONGEVITY IN A CAPTIVE SPARROW HAWK

On April 18, 1971 a banded Sparrow Hawk (*Falco sparverius*) died in the home of A. R. Campaner in Surrey, B.C. The bird had been taken in captivity as an adult on or about July 1, 1960 at Yellowknife, near the species' northern limit of its breeding range (Godfrey, *Birds of Canada*, 1966). The bird carried band No. 633-03903 at time of capture and had been banded by W. L. McDonald of Yellowknife, N.W.T. The date of banding of this bird and of its three almost fully feathered clutch mates, was reported by the Banding Data Processing Unit, Migratory Bird Populations Station in Laurel, Md., to be July 24, 1960. This date and that of the day the bird came into the possession of Mr. Campaner appear to conflict. Unfortunately, I have been unable to confirm the date of banding partly because of Mr. McDonald's death on October 30, 1971.

The captive Sparrow Hawk was mostly fed a diet of calves' liver but

sometimes ate cooked chicken, pork or beef. The bird liked fresh peas as well as an occasional string of cooked spaghetti and would nibble at a section of orange. When exercising in the garden, it would eat insects, especially grasshoppers, an important part of the diet of many wild Sparrow Hawks. For a week prior to its sudden death, the bird had been fed a solid diet of raw beef.

Band recovery listings for this species received from the Canadian Wildlife Service Banding Office in Ottawa reflect a paucity of records. Only 22 recoveries were listed for Sparrow Hawks banded or recovered in western Canada. The longest known life span of any of the recovered birds was that of one recovered four years after having been banded as an adult in B.C.

At the time of its death, the captive bird discussed here was almost 12 years old. Data on longevity of raptorial birds, even in captivity, are sufficiently rare to be of interest.—*E. Kuyt, Canadian Wildlife Service, Fort Smith, N.W.T.*