

Robert N. Smith of Seebe are to be commended for their efforts. I hope that they will be further rewarded when the area is afforded some protection. Their report documents well the recreational and interpretive values of this area, as was recognized by the Alberta Environment Conservation Authority in their "Land Use and Resource Development in the Eastern Slopes: Report and Recommendations," September 1974, page 134. John M. Powell, Northern Forest Research Centre, 5320 - 122nd Street, Edmonton, Alberta.

## OWLS

by Tony Angell  
University Washington Press,  
Seattle, Washington.  
1974. 80 p. \$12.95.

Angell's *Owls* is not for "bird lovers" only; it is a book that can be appreciated and enjoyed by almost anyone. Angell has combined his talent as an artist, his personal interest in owls and his sensitivity as a teacher to form a book that fully brings out the fascination of these amazing birds.

As an artist, he has the unique talent of capturing every detail of his subject. For example: his marvellous drawing of the Snowy Owl shows the covering of this bird as furry textured rather than the expected feathery effect in such amazing detail. Round deep eyes with the slight tilt of the head; low, lid-drooped looks; sleepy squints; the various attitudes of the owls thus bringing out these birds' beauty and intelligence more fully than any photograph could.

The sketches effortlessly draw one's attention to the text. What is this? An owl thrown on his back in the struggle with a rat!

His writing is not an accumulation of cold scientific data but, pleasant, easy reading. In narrative form he describes their habitats, and lifestyle and relates his experiences with the various types of owls. Even his reference to the intricate sensory

systems that aid the owl in hunting is exciting reading.

I would suggest that this book be placed in school libraries so that the young can have easy access to it and, thereby, gain an appreciation of these beautiful birds.

Certainly, Tony Angell is an immaculate perfectionist.

A delightful book for all! — *Esther Solsberg*, 2434 Cairns Avenue, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan.

## Letters

### ANOTHER SASKATOON WOOD THRUSH

by PAT O'NEIL\*

It gave me great pleasure to see, again, a Wood Thrush which visited my back yard three days in a row — April 27, 28, 29, 1974. It seemed to be travelling with a fairly large group of Hermit Thrushes. Unfortunately, they did not stay in the yard for periods sufficiently long for me to notify other birders.

It may be of interest to recall that it was this same back yard that drew the Wood Thrush May 24, 1973, when he stayed feeding for a couple of hours. There was sufficient time to call in several well-known birders all of whom identified the bird as a Wood Thrush. The sighting was reported as the first authenticated record for Saskatchewan (*Blue Jay*, March, 1974, Vol. 32, No. 1).

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\* 1125 Elliott Street,  
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan.

## BUFFALO RUBBING STONE

I am enclosing a picture of a buffalo rubbing stone. The size of the black Lab dog will give you an idea of the size of the stone, which was used for generations by buffalo with mud and sand on their hides. It became smoothed and polished and it still glistens in sunlight. There are no other rocks this size on the prairie where this one stands.



North of the above stone about 40 feet there is an old hearth or ceremonial stone ring about 3 feet in diameter, indicating the rubbing stone had some religious significance to the people who occupied this particular part of the country where buffalo were so abundant in their day. To the south one can still discern an old path leading to a spring 60 feet from the rubbing stone. The spring is still active, no doubt the buffalo came to drink at this spring and to wallow at the rubbing rock.

This site has been assigned Borden site FA NA 1 by the government. The location is about 1/2 mile south and 1/2 mile west of Clair. The rock is situated a few hundred yards from road that leads by a land fill and can be spotted from road quite easily. Interested parties may contact me and I shall assist in any way I can. — *J. H. Yerex*, Clair, Sask. S0A 0N0.

## LEN KOFFSKI'S GROSBEAKS

I wondered if the following observations would be of interest to the *Blue Jay*:

In this neck of the woods — Nipawin, in northeast Saskatchewan, several people have been putting out food for the Evening Grosbeaks. Mr. Len Koffski, 88 years old, is one. He places sunflower seeds on a picnic table in the backyard opposite the window and watches the birds feed while he, himself, eats breakfast.

The visitors number from about 25 to 50 or 60, with a few English Sparrows, and occasionally three or four little redpolls picking up the chips of the kernels that fall while the grosbeaks are eating.

A dozen or so Bohemian Waxwings were also around at intervals eating the fruit on the ornamental crab, and the grosbeaks would light on the snow beneath and pick up the bits, presumably of the pits, that fell as the waxwings stripped off the fruit. Two Blue Jays also visited the seed table occasionally. When they did, they were monarch of all they surveyed and the grosbeaks beat a hasty retreat.

The interesting part about the grosbeaks was that, occasionally, there was an apparent albino among their number. It was an off-white, with faint lemon yellow on the back of the head and neck, and just a little faded gray on the wings and tail. Another oddity was a female grosbeak with a tuft-like growth on the top of its head, a little to the side, which must have been the result of an injury. And during the last few days that the birds were around, there was one which had lost a leg at the hock.

Mr. Koffski has had a great deal of pleasure and entertainment from observing his visitors. — *Mrs. Lucy Britton*, Box 2142, Nipawin, Sask. S0E 1E0