

wary. They would run to one side to permit the passage of the automobile but rarely moved farther than 20 m away and (after a brief period) would resume feeding. My use of high-beam headlights on the vehicle did not seem to affect the animals differently.

I was unable to observe any sign of conflict — or other social interaction — amongst the hares. Each seemed more intent on feeding than on the presence of observers or other jack-rabbits.

- <sup>1</sup>ACORN, J. 1980. 83A-6 Gull Lake, in D. Spaulding (Editor), A Nature Guide to Alberta, Hurtig Publishers, Edmonton.
- <sup>2</sup>BANFIELD, A. W. F. 1974. The Mammals of Canada, University of Toronto Press, Toronto.
- <sup>3</sup>JACKSON, J. W. 1980. More Jack Rabbits. Blue Jay 38:267.
- <sup>4</sup>KREBA, R. 1980. Fearless Jack Rabbits. Blue Jay 38:130-131.
- <sup>5</sup>LAHRMAN, F. W. 1980. A Concentration of White-tailed Jack Rabbits. Blue Jay 38:130.

## RIVER OTTER SIGHTINGS IN SOUTHERN SASKATCHEWAN

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Two separate sightings of River Otters were made in the prairies of southern Saskatchewan in summer 1980. Glen Suggett observed a single River Otter on August 25 at the north end of Moose Mountain Lake in the southeastern corner of the province. He and Brian Keating observed another on October 4 at the mouth of Swift Current Creek, where it enters the South Saskatchewan River. Otters are easily distinguished from mink, which they resemble in colouration, by their larger size and characteristic loping gait when running on land.

Banfield's *Mammals of Canada* suggests that the River Otter is extirpated in the prairie region of Canada, but otters have been known to travel great distances in search of suitable habitat. The north end of Moose Mountain Lake, where Moose Mountain

Creek enters, and the mouth of Swift Current Creek both provide habitat that fulfills the otter's needs. Moose Mountain Creek, interrupted by several Beaver dams, retained a good supply of water, in spite of the drought experienced last summer. The lake, creek, and adjoining marshlands provided an abundance of amphibians and fish, the mainstays of the otter's diet. Numerous White Pelicans, Double-crested Cormorants, and Great Blue Herons were also observed partaking of this source of protein rich food. Swift Current Creek similarly supplied a healthy population of Leopard Frogs, Minnows and other coarse fish, in addition to an assured supply of water. It lacks the concealment of the emergent vegetation found in Moose Mountain Creek, but it is an isolated spot characterized by steep valley sides, patches of dense brush, and a thin band

of trees along the length of the creek. Otters will utilize former Beaver and Muskrat lodges or bank burrows, available along both creeks, as denning sites. They are usually most active at night, but may be observed during the day in areas where they are seldom

disturbed. The two sightings this past summer were made in mid-morning.

If anyone has observed other River Otters on the prairies, or would like further information about the River Otter, please contact the junior author, Brian Keating.



*Lightning*

*F. W. Lahrm*