

CONFESSION

KEITH BARR, 40 Richardson Crescent, Regina, Saskatchewan. S4S 4J3

I like to read and look at pictures and magazines that deal with nature. I have seen photos of animals trapped in the mud that are near exhaustion and no attempt has been made by the photographer to aid the animal in any way. Then in the next issue there is always criticism about not helping the animal, followed by the next issue, defending the photographer's actions as letting nature take its course. I don't want any criticism or defense about some actions of mine that took place several years ago. The way it happened is the way it happened and that is that.

Three friends and I drive into Pasquia Hills to go back-packing

along the Rue River. I like to consider myself an amateur wildlife photographer (heavy accent on the "amateur"). We take my station wagon, as I knew we would be spending the first night at a campsite. I have brought a 4-in. foam mattress with me so I can sleep in the back of the station wagon. Four inches of foam is much softer than the half-inch insulate pad that I will have to sleep on the following nights. My three friends set up their tents and turn in for the night. I nestle down on my 4-in. foam and am soon fast asleep.

I AWAKEN! I don't know why. The moon is full and it is quite bright



Black Bear

Frank A. Switzer

outside. I look around and lo and behold, about 2 ft. away from the back window is a bear standing up on his hind legs looking in at me. My first reaction is to kick the back door. The bear moves off about 5 ft. and stands up again. My second reaction is to grab my camera and take a picture of the bear. The bear moves off. I look all around to see if I can see him. I see nothing and hear nothing for a minute or two. Then from one of the tents, "Get the hell out of here!" Then I hear bushes rustle and some kind of large animal departs the scene. I keep looking from the safety of the car for the next half hour in hopes of getting more pictures. How-

ever, the bear does not return and I go back to sleep.

I never warned my friends who were sleeping in the tents that a bear was about. I was too interested in getting pictures. I guess I am like the photographer who never helped the animal in the mud. I never told my friends about our big visitor until the morning. You know, I haven't seen two of my friends since we got back from backpacking, which was some 15 years ago. Some people sure do hold a grudge for a long time!

- *Keith Barr*, 40 Richardson Crescent, Regina, Saskatchewan. S4S 4J3



A CLOSE ENCOUNTER OF THREE KINDS

KEITH BARR, 40 Richardson Crescent, Regina, Saskatchewan. S4S 4J3

I know that the title does not sound quite right but that's the way it is.

My first encounter was several years ago in the Pasquia Hills. It is the long weekend in May. A group of us had backpacked into the hills and get back to the car earlier than planned. We decide to do a little bit of Sunday driving to see some of the area by car. We have not gone very far when out of the corner of my eye something catches my attention. I look and see a young Moose calf in the tall grass. We stop the car, get out and approach the area where I

had seen the animal. The noise that we make walking through the tall dry grass must be frightening to the calf. We get to the area and find it lying as flat as possible. We keep advancing toward it until we have surrounded it. Still the calf does not move or twitch an ear. Everyone takes several pictures. We stay in the area for close to five minutes taking pictures and still the calf does not move. We go back to the car. We are lucky to see a Moose calf and get pictures. Our encounter could have been much different had the mother shown up!