
EDITOR'S MESSAGE

On behalf of Nature Saskatchewan, the Associate Editors and myself, I would like to thank Margaret Belcher and Bob Nero for their support as Associate Editors. As I have consulted past Blue Jays I have developed an understanding and respect for how much these two people have contributed to the magazines success. They have asked to be relieved of their formal duties; a retirement that is well deserved. I am delighted to report, however, that both have agreed to retain their ties with Blue Jay. They will contribute, as they have done in the past, when the occasion demands their special talents. For me as editor it is important to have advisors who have a long history with Blue Jay. I want you all to take any opportunity to thank these individuals personally for the dedication, work, support and unfailingly cheerful advice they have given to Blue Jay editors, past and present.

Over the months I have had numerous questions on when submissions get published. After I receive material, I either load it into my computer or place it in a pile for typing. Once I have an electronic copy (much of my correspondence is by e mail) I send it off for review. Most reviewers return their comments within a few weeks, although some take a little longer. I then send a paraphrased version (reviewers remain anonymous) off to the author for comment or change. Once the submission is satisfactory I place it in the electronic version of the next issue. I try to get a balance of material - something on birds, plants, mammals and other - and produce an oversize issue. Once in final form, I use the grammar and spell check systems to proof the contents. I then print a draft - usually about 65 to 70 pages. This is manually proofed by my wife and me and, the marked up copy then goes to an independent reviewer. I rotate this job among several local people (Doug Collister, Don Stiles, Gus Yaki, Bill Walker and Howard Troughton are among those to be thanked for this essential help). After I get it back, I make all the corrections and print a second draft. This I proofread again. This draft goes to the printer and the contents page is coded. Articles that must be in the issue are given three stars. This includes time-sensitive material, notices, articles that have "seniority" and ones that provide balance. Articles that could be held over are given two stars and ones that have no time sensitivity are marked with one star. The publisher gets this hard copy and an electronic version. He uses the stars to aid in formatting the journal into its two-column format. Our objective is to put out a 64-page issue each time. Anything that gets cut becomes a three star item for the next issue. I also send additional material to be used whenever a partial white page becomes available. This includes photos, short notes and poems. This process lasts one to four months, depending on when the article arrives, whether or not it is in electronic format and how long the review takes.

In the last issue the cover photo credit should have read "Western Painted Turtles, by W.H. Koonz."

Roy John