
MYSTERY PHOTO

MARCH 2003 MYSTERY PHOTO



Who would fill such tiny nests as these? The spruce needles lying on the ground will give you an idea of the scale. Each 'nest' is about 1 cm in diameter. The 'nests' were photographed on the ground beneath an apple tree 20 km east of Saskatoon in the fall of 2002.

ANSWER TO DECEMBER 2002 MYSTERY PHOTO

The creature eyeing the grassland is a toad. There are several kinds of toad in the southwest part of SK where this photo was taken. The horizontal pupil rules out the spadefoot toads which have a distinctive vertical pupil. This eye could belong to either the Great Plains Toad (*Bufo cognatus*), or the Canadian Toad (*Bufo hemiophrys*) though the larger picture shown below suggests that it is a Great Plains Toad based on the shape of the head between the eyes.

Several readers came as close as possible to identifying the toad's eye. Thank you for your comments. The editors would also like to thank Keith Roney and Andy Didiuk for their assistance in identifying the toad to species, and Joanne Marchand for providing the photograph.

The Latin name *Bufo* was given to toads by Linnaeus in mockery of his equally famous contemporary, French naturalist George-Louis LeClerc, the Count of Buffon, who he intensely disliked.



CORRIGENDUM

WHERE HAVE ALL OUR ASTERS GONE?

By Vernon L. Harms, September 2002.

Under 'NEW LATIN NAME' in the table included with this article, *Symphyotrichum* was misspelled as *Symphotrichum*. In all 11 instances where this name appears it should be spelled *Symphyotrichum*. The name is correctly spelled elsewhere in the article.



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