
NATURE LIBRARY

SASKATCHEWAN'S BEST HIKES AND NATURE WALKS.

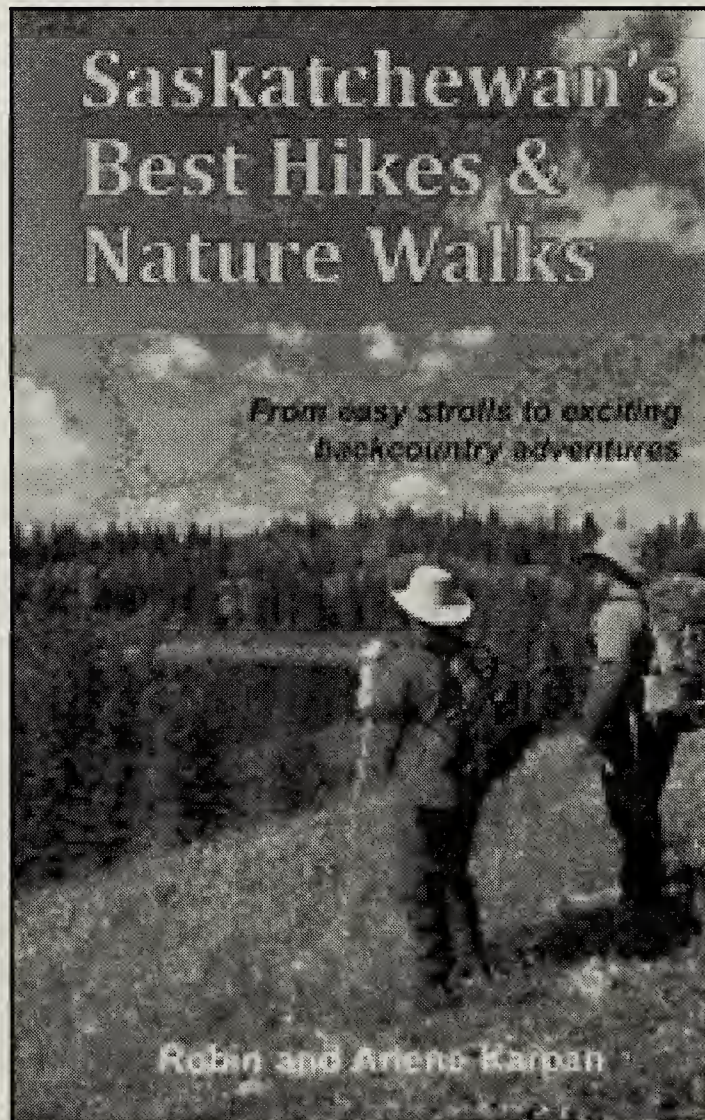
Robin and Arlene Karpan. 2011. Parkland Publishing. Saskatoon, SK. \$19.95 CDN. Soft Cover. ISBN: 978-09809419-2-0. 272 pages. 183 black and white photos. 89 maps. 14 cm by 21.6 cm.

Saskatchewan's Best Hikes and Nature Walks is the latest book by well-known Saskatchewan nature and travel writers and photographers Robin and Arlene Karpan. This book is an updated version of the Karpans' earlier *Saskatchewan Trails - Nature Walks and Easy Hikes*. This updated version does include more challenging backcountry hikes. There's something for everyone in this book, with hikes of varying lengths, terrain, accessibility, and difficulty across the province. This handy and comprehensive guide contains over 150 of the best trails for hiking and nature watching in Saskatchewan. Most hikes in this book follow well-marked and maintained trails suitable for anyone with average ability and experience.

First-time readers of this book should read carefully the introductory chapter, as it contains key information about using the trail accounts in this guide and important cautions that hikers need to heed in order to have an enjoyable, safe, and injury-free nature adventure. These cautions discussed here include bears, snakes, poison ivy, cacti, stinging nettle, ticks, mosquitoes, blackflies, and hunters. In the trail accounts, other cautions discussed include grazing cattle and bison, wet conditions, steep slopes, and terrain obstacles such tree roots and stumps. This introductory section also includes common-sense advice about having sufficient water supplies, proper footwear, sun protection, and letting others know where you are. Distance

and times listed in the volume are merely guideline suggestions. Maps in the book provide a simple overview of trail systems and do not show scale or topography. As the authors note, more information can be obtained from Tourism Saskatchewan, detailed maps can often be obtained from the responsible park, and municipality or trail authority and topographic maps are available from the Information Services Corporation.

After the introduction, the book is divided into 23 recognizable geographic regions



to help readers find trails more easily. Each geographic section begins with its approximate location in the province. Most trail accounts contain critical information about distance or length, time, facilities, cautions, landscape features, views, wildlife, and other fascinating facts about the trail. Overview maps are included for 89 trail systems. One or more black and white photos enhance many trail accounts. These photos would have been spectacular in colour.

This volume is very well written and researched by the authors, who visited and inspected each trail discussed in the book. Of the trails in this volume that I have personally visited in recent years, I found the information to be extremely accurate so I have confidence that information throughout the book is accurate at the

time of writing. The authors do place a key disclaimer at the beginning of book stating that trail conditions change over time due to weather and other factors and that readers should do their research and contact the authority responsible for the trail before hiking.

As the Karpans say on their website "Whether you prefer an hour's stroll along an easy path or a week hiking in remote backcountry, there's never been a better time to take a hike", I agree. Therefore, I highly recommend this extremely useful and reader-friendly guidebook to anyone interested in hiking and nature watching in Saskatchewan.

- Reviewed by Rob Warnock. E-mail: <warnockr@accesscomm.ca>



Adopt the pace of nature: her secret is patience.

- Ralph Waldo Emerson



Are they coming or going? Canada geese over Last Mountain Lake, SK.

Lowell Strauss