

home of a kingbird, robin, or dove, the work of a Porcupine, the burrow of a badger. At intervals a sign written in poetic verse praises the wonder of nature and the beauty of the world.

Wood pigeons called one to another through the noon woods, the soft music punctuated here and there by the cry of a red-tail hawk in the blue above.

That afternoon, hiking back after a swim in the Qu'Appelle River, I saw a porcupine industriously barking a small tree, and a coyote run swiftly across the open slope of a hill, and with a great burst of speed, pass out of sight over the high ridge.

With the setting of the sun, the lengthening shadows of the hills stretched out, and filled all the coulees with darkness. The silence of the dark woods was suddenly broken by a long-drawn, deep-toned Whur-who-o-o, the voice of the Great Horned Owl from his home and nesting place in the upper ravine - a thrilling menacing sound, carrying with it all the mystery of night in the deep coulees.

I packed my tent and camping equipment, and as the moon, climbing the darkening dome of the sky, poured silver light on misty hills and solemn woods, I reluctantly left the sanctuary in Hidden Valley.

#### MAMMAL SECTION

Mr. C. Stuart Francis reports that a shortage of spruce and pine seed this fall in the Torch River area is causing the red squirrels to gather their winter stores in other quarters. A great many of these have been seen around the edges of harvested wheat fields, gathering up the stray heads of wheat for their winter needs.



ports that a shortage of spruce Torch River area is causing the stores in other quarters. A round the edges of harvested heads of wheat for their winter

#### BRUIN



Bears are very numerous in the same district. During harvest they were very partial to ripe oats. A neighbor of Mr. Francis counted six bears at one time in his oatfield. Needless to say they caused considerable damage in a short time.

All in all, Bruin has been having a hard time of it this year. Not long ago a very surprised bear got his face in the way of a pail of hot dish water and no less surprised was Mrs. Glen Shoemaker, of Hudson Bay, who hadn't expected to see a riled bear rear up when she tossed the water over the backyard fence into some bushes.

The bear sighted, she dropped the pail,

grabbed her two-year-old daughter by the hand and fled indoors. The bear made no attempt to follow her, but simply sat down and glumly mused over the nuisance values of human beings.

BEAVER MOVED

K.H. Deighton, game guardian at Yorkton, reports that twelve beaver have been transplanted from the Maple Creek district to the reserve at Theodore. The beaver are the first to be placed in the Theodore district, although about 40 have been transplanted within 80 miles radius since the work was first undertaken two years ago.

One of the beavers was the mother of two kits and two of the larger beavers weighed close to 80 pounds. Mr. Deighton reports that the project is building up very well. In one area near Norquay where the beaver have built a 175-foot dam, the muskrats have increased by nearly 40 percent.

MOOSE ON HIGHWAY

On October 6, J. E. Hockley, Yorkton, reported seeing two moose on number nine highway, fifteen miles south of Reserve. He said it was the first time he had seen moose in that area during the twelve years he has been driving to Hudson Bay Junction. The animals remained in the centre of the road until the car approached within about 75 yards.

GOPHERS ARE AMAZINGLY BRAVE

Doug Gilroy

One June day I was doing some work in a corner of the pasture field. The baby gophers were putting in an appearance above ground for the first time. Little groups could be seen standing up around their burrows like small straight pegs. Over in one section quite a commotion suddenly sprung up and I could hear excited squeals. At first I paid little attention, as it is quite common for gophers to chase each other around and perform other such antics. Suddenly I saw that it wasn't a gopher chasing a gopher, but a gopher chasing a weasel. I could hardly believe it; then I saw what was happening. The weasel was after the young gophers and mother gopher was bravely trying her best to protect her young.

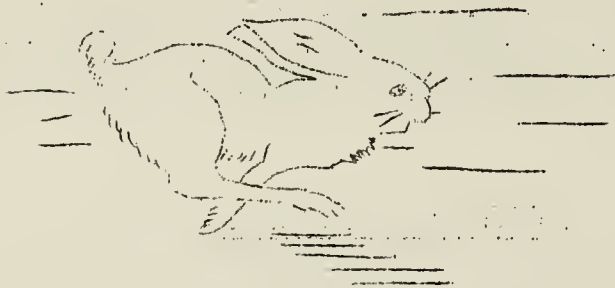
The young gophers appeared stupid, instead of dashing for shelter in their homes they stayed up on top as if there was nothing to worry about. The weasel would dart in and seize one, then off he'd go with it, with the parent gopher after him for a short distance. In a minute or two he'd be back for another tender victim. The old one would see him coming and charge him. The weasel, of course, was much faster, but once she ran right into him and they went rolling over and over together. However, the weasel seemed to pay little attention to her - was on his feet in a flash and away again with another young one in his jaw. I saw him catch four or five of the young gophers before he finally disappeared.

The odd fact about the whole incident was that a gopher actually tried to fight a weasel!

RABBITS ENJOY BEING PHOTOGRAPHED

Here is another of Doug's stories:

It is amazing just how close a person can get to a wild bird or animal by approaching very slowly, yet being out in plain sight. On October 26 I was passing along the road on a tractor when out of the weeds jumped a large Jack Rabbit. Instead of bounding away he suddenly crouched in the open field. Had my camera along so thought I would try for a picture. I approached the rabbit very slowly by shuffling my feet forward an inch or two at a time. Finally I got to within eight feet of him and took a shot. Then I started forward slowly again. At five feet I took another and expected him to go sailing away any second. However, my last picture was taken at only three and a half feet. He didn't move even then until I tried for a shot at a different angle, then he was gone like a streak of light.

A HIBERNATING BAT

On the 31st of March last, Mr. Yaki reports that a bat was caught as it was flying around in the Roman Catholic Church at North Battleford. He believes that it had hibernated somewhere in this building. As we have very few records of bats hibernating in Saskatchewan it would be interesting to learn if others have authentic records.



Similar bats were seen by Mr. Yaki on June 14, and again on September 3. He is of the opinion that the latter bat was migrating.

ARE WEASELS WHITE IN APRIL?

"On April 10 of this year," writes Mr. Yaki, "while out hiking, Ken Hamilton (who is also keenly interested in wild life) and I came across a pure white weasel. Most of the snow was gone at that time so it was readily spotted a quarter of a mile away. As the color of weasels' fur generally corresponds with that of its environment, I wonder if this one could have been an albino."

(It is our opinion that this was not an albino. The change is quite gradual and probably the early melting of the snow had "beat it to the punch." Ed.)

"A week before this on April 3, we came upon a porcupine, occupying

a broken tree, situated on an island in the Saskatchewan River. The tree, a large balsam poplar, was broken about fifteen feet from its base and the top, still joined, stretched to the ground. Along the upper surface there were many small peanut-shaped droppings, most likely those of the porcupine. Would this indicate the "porky" was using the tree as its home?

(Opinions wanted. Ed.)

"What is a good camera for photographing birds and other forms of wild life? Perhaps Mr. Gilroy, Mr. Bard or Mr. Shaw can tell us."

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### REPTILES

Leonard Dreger, a young man keenly interested in nature and photography, and now an employee of the Provincial Museum, while home for his holidays at Lang this fall, had an experience with Garter Snakes that he will remember for a long while.

It was a very nice quiet day on the 23rd of September. Someone called "Snakes," but when Len arrived on the scene he found that there were oodles of them, not just near the house but under it. He quickly pulled on a pair of gloves and began catching and dropping them, one by one, into a deep pail. At first he was quite careful about the whole thing and selected each one individually but there were so many that he changed his tactics and was soon grabbing them, two in each hand. He explains that they were all sizes ranging from young ones, about eight inches in length to full grown adults.

The ground where they were denning-up was very sandy and a spot among the leaves on the south side of the house seemed to be most suitable for them but the Dreger family thought differently. Len took the wriggling colony, about thirty in all, unharmed, to a sandy hill about six miles from their home and set them free, hoping that they would find the housing situation there to their liking.

### TURTLES

On November 6, 1,000 visitors passed through the Provincial Museum, and on November 13, 800 visitors were present. The extra attraction was a display of living turtles received from various parts of the province. A Snapping Turtle, weighing 28 pounds, was sent from Glen Ewen by Mr. E. R. Rodenbush on September 26.

Two Painted Turtles were received; one from Mr. Walter Trieber, of Regina and the other from Florence Brailean, also of Regina. The most interesting specimen is a Lesuer's Turtle, the only one of its kind recorded from Saskatchewan. It was found at Odessa, Saskatchewan, and was donated by Mrs. Roy Thompson, of Regina. All turtles are doing well.

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"Discover the gold nuggets you've been stubbing your toe against without even bothering to pick them up - the trees within a block of you; the birds that will flock to a feeding table and bath; the habits of the flowers in your garden; a weedy vacant lot on the corner."