

Nursing Notes

By STEPHANIE PRESTON

Well, here's to my first stab at writing a weekly Brunswick column. I hope that won't be indicative of my sensitivity as a future nurse. Perhaps a little more tact...

If there's anybody out there expecting this splatter of ink to evolve into a minor research paper about the latest developments in hemolymphangioma studies - STOP reading! How much can one expect a first year Nursing student to know, anyway? What I'll be writing will be along much simpler lines.

At the recent Nursing Cornboil a friend commented that it seems whenever the Nursing students - or nurses in general - get together they consistently talk shop. Informative, yes; but, potentially monotonous. This is something I think we, and specifically the faculty's freshmen, should try consciously to avoid. Undoubtedly, it will seem that 95% of your time will be centered around Nursing studies. But, don't let that 5% slide. The program does allow for some diversity of study.

So, if you've already adopted the what-am-I-doing-wasting-my-time-on-Sociology/Psychology/English attitude it's time to reconsider. These courses are intended to be enriching (pardon the cliché). As a former Arts student I've had the chance to really concentrate on several of these courses. As a result, I realize the possible gain. Hey - I'm not scratching for Brownie points here. I just hate to think that a lot of people may be assuming very negative attitudes towards some classes and, thus, are restricting themselves. Look - don't be afraid to learn something different.

Besides, who would want to appear ignorant when asked to comment on Emile Durkheim's Suicide, or B.F. Skinner's radical behaviorism, or T.S. Eliot's "The Hollow Men" or...

P.S. Thanks to those who attended the Carwash 1000 tutorial Saturday. Rumour has it that rewards were gained Sunday afternoon! Right?

Have you seen a cougar?

By J.M. OUELLETTE

The UNB Wildlife Society is interested in hearing from students who have seen, 'The Eastern Ghost', a large member of the cat family commonly referred to as the cougar, *Felis concolor*, assumed to habit the Maritime regions.

Although it has never been officially documented as a Maritime species, many claim to have observed this specimen in both New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. Some professionals believe we have the eastern ghost in our mists, others disagree. Government and private funded expeditions have failed to prove the species indeed roam the forests of the Maritime region.

A book entitled "The Eastern Panther" by Bruce Wright lists close to one hundred sightings of cougar in the Maritimes. After reading this well written book it is difficult not to believe in the eastern ghost; however some books are also convincing about U.F.O.'s.

The following information was extracted from Bandfield's "The Mammals of Canada":

Large male cougars have been measured up to 8 feet in

total length and have weighed up to 272 pounds. The cougar's body is long and lithe; its head is quite small; its ears are small and rounded. The cylindrical tail is about 30 inches long, the pelage is short and coarse. The overall adult color varies from tawny brown to greyish brown.

Cougars are solitary animals except during the mating season or on those occasions when the female is accompanied by larger mammals such as white-tailed deer. Detailed studies of stomach contents and scats have revealed the following diet: deer 77 percent, porcupine 8.8 percent, domestic animals 4 percent, beaver 3.4 percent, hares 2.1 percent, and trasses of other items such as grass.

They inhabit a wide variety of habitats including mountainous terrain to swamp and river valley and dense coniferous forests.

This species does not have a restricted breeding season. Gestation period is between ninety and ninety-six days, and the average litter size is two to four. The cougar is one of the top predators in the ecological pyramid of numbers. In wilderness areas it serves the

useful role of assisting to keep the large herbivores within the carrying capacity of their food supply.

There are a small number of records of cougar attacks upon man, especially children. On Vancouver Island, between 1949 and 1952, there were several cases, including mauling and fatalities. The animals involved were usually small, starving individuals."

I would like to emphasize that statistically you are more liable to get hit by a Boeing 747 while travelling in a pink Volkswagen on a Sunday afternoon than being killed by a cougar (if they exist in the Maritimes).

I have never had the pleasure of observing this animal in the wild. I have taken plaster casts of what appeared to be their tracks in two separate locations: one immediately north of Magnetic Hill, N.B. and the other at Amherst Point, N.S. The Natural Museum of Ottawa was unable to confirm the casts as the eastern ghosts; since they were unclear prints.

If you were to observe a cougar, please contact the UNB Chapter of the Wildlife Society.

DAVE CLARK

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