

## Nature subject of exhibit

*Scattered Essences of the Four Seasons*, an exhibition of watercolours by Canadian artist Frank de Matteis was on view at the National Museum of Natural Sciences in Ottawa this summer.

A keen observer, de Matteis works solely from field sketches and specimens. His only equipment consists of "a transport, a sketch pad and a photographic memory". As a naturalist and athlete who spends almost half his time out of doors de Matteis is scientifically excellent: detail perfect. But as an artist he is not always minutely detailed, being primarily concerned with the mood and over-all effect of each painting. In addition, there is his special ability to catch the life force of his subjects.

His youthful early paintings were fairly typical of the ever popular "bird portrait" — the almost backgroundless study or isolated anatomical illustration. They were nonetheless beautiful and his first one-man exhibition held in 1971 at the Pollock Gallery, when he was only 19, was a sell-out.

## Subjects in motion

A newspaper critic reviewing a later exhibition of de Matteis's paintings wrote of his work: "His creatures are not sitting placidly on a branch, like a taxidermist's model, but spend their days trying to evade the canvas, diving underwater, flying high above the clouds in a light out of a nineteenth-century German romantic painting, or peering through the branches of a tree in pursuit of food. These are



Painting of red squirrel was part of an exhibit of nature art.

action scenes, which make them exceptional for naturalistic painting, but they depend on a superbly coloured environment, which raises them above the general wildlife genre".

Since 1967, de Matteis's work has been exhibited in more than 25 one-man exhibitions at such institutions as the Royal Ontario Museum, in Toronto, the McMichael Collection in Kleinburg, as well as private galleries such as the Pollock Gallery and the Wildlife Gallery in Toronto. His one-man shows have also been featured at various American institutions including the Cleveland Museum of Natural History.



Blue wing teal, a water colour by Frank de Matteis.

## NFB films reap awards

The National Film Board production *Beginnings-Premiers Jours* won a special jury prize at the recent thirteenth International Animated Film Festival in Annecy, France.

The nine-minute film uses pastel drawings to show a view of the universe, tracing life cycles from birth to adulthood. The film was begun by the late Clorinda Warny and completed by her colleagues Suzanne Gervais and Lina Gagnon. The NFB presented ten films at the festival, six of which were in competition.

## Wins in New York

*Beginnings-Premiers Jours* was also one of four NFB films winning prizes at the American Film Festival, held in New York City in June. The film took first prize in the "Visual Essays" category.

*Nails*, directed by Phillip Borsos, won first place in the business and industry category. Two other NFB films, *Petroleum's Progress* and *Why Men Rape*, took second place prizes at the festival.

## Acadian writers lauded

Two young Acadian writers from New Brunswick — Dyane Leger and Clarence Comeau — have won the 1981 France-Acadie literary prize for their first books of poetry.

Leger, 26, of Notre Dame, near Moncton, won the prize for *Graines de Fees (Seeds of Fairies)*. It was the first book published by Editions Perce-Neige, a publishing firm formed a year ago by the Acadian Writers Association.

*Graines de Fees* was also Leger's first book to be published. She now has another book ready for publication. Leger, who is also an artist and photographer, works for the National Film Board, while pursuing part-time studies in business administration at the University of Moncton.

Comeau, 33, a native of Neguac, New Brunswick, is a writer now living in Montreal. His first book of poetry is *Entre Amours et Silences (Between Loves and Silences)*.

The France-Acadie literary prize, which was established in 1979 by the Franco-Acadian Friendship Association and the Foundation of France, carries an award of \$1,800 and an invitation to spend a week in Paris.