

# In this issue

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## Published by

Canadian High Commission  
Public Affairs Section  
Canada House  
Trafalgar Square  
London SW1Y 3BJ

## Design

Christopher Stanbury

## Production

Barry Wright

## Printing

Pegasus Print & Display Ltd

## Typesetting

Type Out

## Acknowledgements

Carol E Mayer  
UBC Museum of  
Anthropology

Paul Labbé  
Investment Canada

Ontario House

## Subscriptions

Any change of address  
should be notified to our  
subscription secretary,  
Keith Vines, at Canada  
House.

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Acknowledgement to  
*Canada Today/d'aujourd'hui*  
magazine would also be  
appreciated.

ISSN 0226-6685

Other Canadian  
government offices in the  
United Kingdom

Canadian High Commission  
Macdonald House  
1 Grosvenor Square  
London W1X 0AB  
Tel: 01-629 9492

## Front cover

*The polar bear, indigenous  
to Canada, is a majestic but  
fierce animal; sometimes  
invading towns and  
airlifted back to the wild.*

Photo: R.E. Schweinsburg,  
Fish and Wildlife Service,  
Government of the NWT

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## Editorial

When explaining Canada's size encompassing some 5½ time zones, a number of British colleagues and friends mention the difficulty of appreciating just how vast a country Canada is, and just how much wilderness it still contains.

Here in Britain, it is possible to believe that the environment has been tamed. There are no wild animals that threaten human life; and anyway, help is seldom more than a few miles away.

This is not the case in Canada, where there are still literally thousands of square miles of uninhabited wilderness, and where wildlife exists untouched by mankind.

This wilderness is an integral part of the Canadian psyche. It shows itself in much of our art and literature. And it intrudes into many aspects of our everyday lives: even in major cities like Toronto, raccoons and skunks are frequently seen in urban backyards.

But Canadians have never squandered their wildlife inheritance. It's true that the first Europeans who went there to trap saw Canada as an unlimited source of skins and furs that could be exploited. But the settled Canadians very soon realised that they were custodians of a resource that was worth conserving.

As our main feature in this issue explains, it is

nearly 200 years since legislation was first passed in Canada to preserve and protect the country's wildlife. Concern for the environment can therefore be said to be considerably older than the country itself.

Since 1966, that concern has been formulated in Canada's National Wildlife Policy, under which the federal government — along with the provinces — is pledged to make every attempt to enforce sound conservation policies for all wild species. It is little wonder that Canada is seen to continually be on the leading edge of wildlife management and scientific research.

Canada may enjoy an abundance of wildlife. But it has every intention of seeing it preserved.



*Richard Starks*