

Suburban Howls: Tracking the Eastern Coyote in Urban Massachusetts

By Jonathan Way. 2007. Dog Ear Publishing, 4010 W. 86th Street, Ste. H, Indianapolis, Indiana 46268, USA. US \$23.99 plus shipping and handling via www.easterncoyotereseearch.com.

Here is a fabulous journey into the life of the eastern Coyote in the northeastern United States. If you've ever wanted to know these canine inhabitants of wildlands and rural and suburban zones better, this book is for you.

Author Jonathan Way started studying Coyotes when he was in high school. *Suburban Howls* encompasses his life and studies beginning then, and continuing through his university years to the present. He is a scientist who loves his subject, loves the very beings of his subject.

Way's presentation of his studies, largely through radio collar tracking and observations, is densely packed with different kinds of information. He takes the reader into the field to watch Coyotes leading their lives, then through the trials of trapping, measuring, collaring and tracking. We experience the very frustrating process of trying to get study permits from government agencies, and confront the challenges of loving and studying an animal that others would happily shoot in numbers. We share the author's grief and consternation when a whole group of his wild study animals are poisoned to death by rodenticide. We're invited to wonder how his grandmother felt when he temporarily moved five Coyote pups into his basement apartment in her home.

A large section of the book is devoted to Way's experience creating and studying a group of captive Coyote siblings in a zoo. Here we learn more about observed Coyote behaviour through the author's intense bonding with his subjects. We are given cause for reflection both about the ethics of this project, and on the poignancy of his eventual, permanent separation from the group.

The book is brimming with observations not only about Coyote ecology and behaviour, but also about wildlife management and politics, humans' perception of wildlife, and human behaviour. It includes black-and-white and colour photos showing both the coyotes and the author, often together.

Way treats his study Coyotes as individuals, taking great care to show their distinct personalities. He has

a fierce and obvious commitment to helping people appreciate, rather than fear and revile, Coyotes. I completely respect his determination to include his own emotions as he presents his work, as an intentional means to deliver a message. If I have one, tiny reservation about the book, it is that the author is perhaps too present, making it too emotionally rich for me. I found it difficult to read for that reason.

But that is a trivial complaint, related to a reader's taste rather than the quality of the book. The work is remarkable, thorough and heartfelt. It is a lively read. On the occasional attempts I made to skim through some parts, the author's story telling instead drew me in to read voraciously in spite of myself. I also admire Way's candour. He tells a straightforward story, not making apologies or excuses where other authors might. My favourite example is when he describes watching a Coyote contemplate making a meal of somebody's pet cat. The cat is at large in Coyote-land, taking its chances on the rough edge of town, but still — it's obvious Way doesn't intend to intervene. That is simply stated, with no rationalization offered. (The cat gets away, no doubt to make its own meal of some smaller wildlife.)

Suburban Howls is well designed and organized, complete with a table of contents, tables, maps and several appendices. The author includes a bibliography of his journal publications, and a thorough glossary and index. The book will be of interest to students of wildlife biology, wildlife management, and of human-wildlife interactions and ethics. It is definitely readable for a general audience with an appreciation for adventure and a curiosity for wildlife. If you know someone (cat owner or otherwise) who could benefit from feeling more at home with their neighbouring Coyotes, you might sneak this book onto their coffee table. Follow Way's work into the future via his Internet site: www.easterncoyotereseearch.com.

BEV MCBRIDE

574 Tweedsmuir Avenue, Ottawa, Ontario K1Z 5P2 Canada

BOTANY

Les Orchidées indigènes du Québec/Labrador [in French]

By S. Beausejour. 2009. Les Editions Nature, 645 Boulevard Manseau, Joliette, Québec J6E 3E7 Canada. 176 pages, 49.99 CAD, Cloth.

Also visit <http://www.orchideequbec.com/fra>

You may not initially buy this book as a field guide. It is so beautifully laid out you will buy it for its artistic value. The photographs are simply remarkable. Any one can get a nice photo a Showy Lady Slipper,

but to make a helleborine look as stunning as a commercial cymbidium takes great skill. The same can be said for most of the photos in this book. For example the *Goodyera pubescens* and *Platanthera dilatata*

are beautifully portrayed. Even the little green *Malaxis*, *Piperia* and *Listera* look good.

The author has used a dark background throughout, throwing the flowers into bright relief. The effect is dramatic and very artistic. I know how difficult it is to get photos of this quality. It must have taken a lot of time and patience and culling through many photos to pick the best. The left-hand page has a full frame portrait of a single flower for the larger species and an ultra closeup for the tiny ones. The right-hand page shows the plant in habitat. Overlaying these large photos are further vignette photos, a distribution map and text boxes.

Once you have ogled your way passed all the pictures, you should read the text. This has been written with care so that it provides the basic information you need, without compromising the layout. The species names are given in French, English, and Latin. So *Calpogon tuberosus* is called the Grass Pink, Swamp Pink or *Calapogon gracieux* [the French name sounds so much more elegant for this graceful flower]. A text box gives the origin of the scientific name, the flowering season, the size and the scent. The remaining text gives background on varieties, the species preferred habitat and its abundance. Fifty-one species in twenty genera are covered, starting with the charming *Amerorchis rotundifolia* and ending with *Spiranthes*. *Platanthera* has the largest representation. Generic distribution maps are also included.

There is a section at the back of the book which is largely a translation of the French text into English. Unfortunately this was not proof read by an English editor so there are some rather odd sentences. For example under *Cypripedium reginae* it says "As opposed to what said Marie-Victorin ..." instead of "As opposed to what Marie-Victorin said" [Brother Marie-Victorin championed the formation of a botanical garden in the City of Montréal in 1931, and wrote *Flore laurentienne*, the first botanical treatise for southern Quebec's indigenous species.] Similar problems occur in other parts of the text – Under *Epipactis helleborine* it says "From it was introduced ..." and under *Goodyera tessellata* the French *venimeuse* is incorrectly translated as poisonous. Despite these errors [presumably introduced by the author's English collaborator as the author speaks little English himself] you should have no trouble understanding the text [and you can always refer back to the original, better French].

Any person interested in Canadian wildflowers, Orchids in particular, will be delighted to own this book. It will make a superb present, as it is a joy to see and French text is pleasant to read. Gardeners and orchid growers and even people who are not into wildlife will still get a thrill from the photos.

ROY JOHN

2193 Emard Crescent, Beacon Hill North, Gloucester, Ontario
K1J 6K5

The Rare and Endangered Plant Species in the Area of Three Gorges Dam

By Wu Jinqing, Zhao Zien and Jin Yixing. 2009. China Water Conservancy and Hydropower Press, I-D, Yuyuantan Rd (S), Haidian, Beijing, China. 280 pages. 128.00 CNY.

The Three Gorges Dam is a hydroelectric river dam that spans the Yangtze River in Sandouping, Yichang, Hubei, China. It is a man-made miracle, a jumbo construction at one and a half miles wide and more than 600 feet high. Its completion made a list of at least 10 world records, including the creation of a reservoir hundreds of feet deep and nearly 400 miles long. As the world's biggest producer of electricity from hydropower, its turbines are expected to create as much electricity as 18 nuclear power plants. However, the electricity generated by the large dam was not regarded as renewable by many environmentalists because of the social and environmental damage or catastrophes that followed the project. The dam has flooded archaeological and cultural sites, displaced some 1.24 million people, and is causing dramatic ecological changes, including increasing the risk of landslides, deforestation and water pollution, and the danger of extinction of some valuable, rare, and endangered species, a consequence of their living habitats being flushed. Although some preventive measures could have been taken to avoid further deterioration of the ecological, environ-

mental and geological issues, the future is not very optimistic, since some environmentalists predicted that the impacts caused by such a large dam located at a place with a history of geological fragility might be irreversible.

The Three Gorges area alone accounts for 20 percent of Chinese seed plants—more than 6000 species. Many precious plant species near extinction in the area of Three Gorges Dam are on the national-level protection list. Some of them grow within the area submerged by water when the reservoir is full, so their disappearance is assured by the dam. Some other species might have to face the hidden dangers imposed by the reservoir in that their reproduction patterns tended to be altered by the dramatic landscape change. The reservoir could also break up land bridges into small islands, isolating clusters of animals and plants. The effects of disturbance of the dam on the whole ecosystems could reverberate for decades. In the short term, these species might still be there, but in the long term, they may disappear. Thus, the biodiversity in this area is being threatened as the dam floods some