

# A Tribute to Bob Waldon, a Great Naturalist

By Gerry & Maureen Recksiedler

The Nature Manitoba community lost a strong voice for nature on March 27, 2020 with the passing of Bob Waldon. Born in Killarney, Manitoba, Bob spent most of his life living and working in Manitoba. As a freelance writer, he contributed to a number of periodicals, including Harrowsmith, Macleans, Nature Canada and the MNS Bulletin.

During the 1960's to 1980's Bob was an active member of the Manitoba Naturalists' Society and the Canadian Nature Federation. He was president of both of these organizations during this period. Bob was an invaluable resource to the MNS Parks Committee. He helped anchor the committee through the Master Plans for Riding Mountain National Park, Nopoming and Atikaki/Woodland Caribou. With assistance from Bob, the Parks Committee became well-organized and effective. His P.R. firm, Howes Waldon, produced a

full color brochure titled Atikaki - A Proposal for a Viable Manitoba-Ontario Wilderness Area East of Lake Winnipeg, a document that was ahead of its time and ultimately successful. As an MNS member, one of Bob's priorities



was to revitalize the outdoor program. His philosophy was that through canoe trips, skiing, hiking and other outdoor activities you could get more people interested in nature. Bob led many outdoor trips himself. The goal was to offer something for everyone no matter what the season. For this and other initiatives to promote nature in Manitoba, Bob was presented with the Ralph Bird Award for...."Outstanding Contributions to the Natural History of Western Canada".

Bob was an avid canoeist and cross-country skier. Both he and his wife Carole spent many interesting times exploring the wilderness rivers and lakes east of Lake Winnipeg. He was instrumental in establishing the Rae Ski Trail, one of the first cross-country trails to be established in the province. He then moved on to getting cross-country ski trails established in Spruce Woods Park. He introduced many people to these activities.

In the mid 1980's Bob sold his partnership in the PR firm Howes Waldon and spent five years as an interpretive naturalist at Riding Mountain National Park - a job he really enjoyed. He proved to be very popular with his great stories and sense of humor. He always had his set of groupies who came out every summer to join him on his nature treks on the various trails in the park. The group wolf howls and elk bugling trips were unforgettable experiences. During this period Bob had more time for writing. He was the author of five best selling books on Feeding Winter Birds for various parts of Canada and the US. After spending 18 years in Alert Bay, BC, Bob and Carole returned to Cartwright, MB, close to his childhood home and his beloved Patch.

Bob described himself as "a writer with an abiding case of excitement about nature and an incurable desire to infect others with it."

With grateful thanks to our contributors:

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