

"black" cat-like animals, often with white chin and chest. Estimated length varies from four to eight feet including the "long, upturned tail". Several refer to seeing the mystery animal in pursuit of deer. There is no mistaking the sincerity of most of these informants. Among them are hunters, anglers, farmers, loggers and forest rangers, many with years of experience in the woods. They are convinced that they saw eastern cougars in the flesh. And yet...

A truly clear photograph, attested by reliable witnesses, would go far to establishing the presence of the species in the Atlantic Provinces. Skeptics point to the fact that none of the cougar reports on file is backed up by an acceptable picture. Most casts or photos of tracks have been indistinct, inconclusive; some have turned out to be the tracks of dogs or coyotes. The characteristics of a fur sample sent to the forensic laboratory in Sackville for analysis turned out to be consistent with skunk hair, not cougar.

Trained to accept only scientific evidence, many biologists remain frankly disbelieving. Says one, "It's the UFO syndrome. If you want to see flying saucers, you'll see flying saucers. People who want to see cougars, see cougars."

And yet...

## Nature steals the show

Touch Nature, the theme of this year's tourism campaign, is in full swing and rated six pages in the 1988 Tourism Guide. In the guide, tourists will be able to read about nature on P.E.I., and how to share in its beauty.

The exquisite colour photographs steal the show, and make it the most beautiful section in the guide. A woman on the ice very close to a white-coated harp seal, a red fox, a man fly-fishing, a Great Cor-

morant on its nest and a Great Blue Heron highlight the pages. A Blue Jay, starfish and Lady's Slipper add to the effect. The P.E.I. bird checklist is reprinted in the section.

The Great Blue Heron is also featured on a large tourism poster that is available to everyone and it is quite a work of art.

Wayne Barrett, Geoff Curtis, Anne MacKay, Bob Semple and John Sylvester are the photographers who help bring nature to tourists and Islanders alike in Touch Nature '88.



## Island Wings set to take off

Island Wings, the Natural History Society's colouring book of Prince Edward Island birds, is finally at the printer. There is still work to do on once the typesetting is done, but it is a great relief to at least get it to this stage. Connie Pound-Gaudet donated the drawings for the colouring book, while NHS director Geoff Hogan added the text. Gary Schneider handled the design. To get it for a reasonable price, we will have a thousand copies printed (gulp!) but they should be a hot item with Islanders and tourists alike.