

# OWL WASN'T CAMERA SHY

BY RACHEL THRELKELD

Great Horned Owls are not uncommon on PEI, but it isn't too often passers-by can get a good look at the glorious bird.

Kings County Conservation officer Spud Stewart was contacted February 14th by a couple of Brudenell residents who had spotted the bird feeding on an animal along the roadside. Mr. Stewart said that at first they thought the animal was perhaps a cat or small dog, but a closer look by the conservation officer showed that it was a skunk.

"A skunk's only natural predator is the Great Horned Owl," Mr. Stewart pointed out, adding however, that it's not often they can be so easily seen in their natural environment. The conservation officer speculated that the owl could have tackled the skunk, but more likely, he said, due to the location the animal was probably hit by a car.

While the owl was feeding on the skunk, crows gathered at the site, swooping down to interfere with the owl's feast. Eventually the owl decided to take a rest and remained perched on a small tree close by.

"He's going to be here for a while," said Mr. Stewart. "He won't go too far leaving a skunk around." Sure enough, a check back to the site later in the afternoon showed the owl had gone back to its feeding grounds.



GREAT HORNED OWL



## THIS MONTH'S COVER

It may be a bit early to see a beaver yet, but with the advancing warm weather a diligent watcher should be able to catch sight of one in the early morning or as its getting dark in the evening. (*Castor canadensis*) A rodent about 40" long, dark brown with orange teeth. Mainly nocturnal.