

Renowned photographer, Bob McCaw teaches the kids and Ted, too

These days, everyone is an environmentalist. It's fashionable.

But I ran into a person recently at Limehouse School, who, in my mind, represents the true meaning of the word.

Bob McCaw is a former Halton Hills area principal and has been taking nature photos since the late 70's. His work is well known and he is truly an artist with a camera.

I've talked to Bob on several occasions and seen his work at the Gallery when he has held an exhibition. I've envied his patience, dedication and time to capture those great images.

At those events I talked to Bob McCaw, the photographer.

However, this past week while he was the guest speaker at Limehouse School, I had the chance to listen to his other side; Bob McCaw, the environmentalist.

Oh yes, his photos were still prominent, but Bob was using them as a tool, a method of teaching our young.

I guess it could be said "Old teachers never die; it only seems that way," but I must admit, Bob's teaching to that young group of students was as important as anything he ever taught in his teaching career.

Limehouse School, like many others in the area, has embarked upon a teaching unit on the environment, trying to impress our kids at an early age of the dangers of pollution, garbage and the dis-

A TED BIT

By TED BROWN



truction of our wildlife, and ultimately the planet.

Bob uses those excellent pictures to show the children of the similarities of man and his counterparts in nature.

"The beaver, like man," says Bob, "has the ability to alter the environment with his development and construction of dams. Unlike man, he can't differentiate between helping and destroying the natural environment. Only man is able to understand right and wrong."

He sure gave the kids something to think about.

He likened the destruction of the natural habitat of frogs and fish and marsh birds to the kids coming home from school to find nothing left of their home.

"How long could you last?" Bob asks them, "With no food or water, and the cold rain falling on you. Just how long could you last if you came home to a hole in the ground where your house once stood?"

Just watching the kids, I could



Retired Halton Hills area principal Bob McCaw was the guest speaker Wednesday at Limehouse School as he spoke to the students on the environment and gave a slide presentation. McCaw,

a well-known wildlife photographer, made three separate presentations to the students showing them how vulnerable the marshes and forests are to destruction. TED BROWN Halton Hills Weekend

see he had the wheels inside their heads turning. He had hit a nerve. These kids actually understood how the destruction of marshes and forests can have an immense effect on the little creatures, no matter how insignificant, and they could actually become endangered.

The slide presentation showed the students a great variation of birds and animals. I'm sure more than most kids had never seen in their life, and they were all local wildlife.

I can relate to what he is saying. I have grown up beside a marsh on our property, and have

seen the red-winged blackbirds squawking on the cattails and even still enjoy the chorus of frogs signalling the start of spring.

I've also watched the snapping turtles as they made their long trek up our lane to the sandy area behind our house to lay their eggs in the loose gravel.

And every spring and fall, a pair of Canada geese have stopped over on the small protected water of that little marsh. One year, one pair even nested and raised their little ones.

Wood ducks come and go, and we always have a bunch of muskrats swimming around in it.

Yes sir, I could see where Bob McCaw was coming from, and saw his genuine concern for the environment around us.

He even made me feel a little guilty. One of my daughters was sitting there, taking in this great wealth on information, and it occurred to me.

She didn't have to come to school to learn about the marshlands; she only needed me to take her for a walk down to the marsh, and watch the birds and frogs. The same way I did as a kid.

I think it's about time to take another walk down to the swamp.

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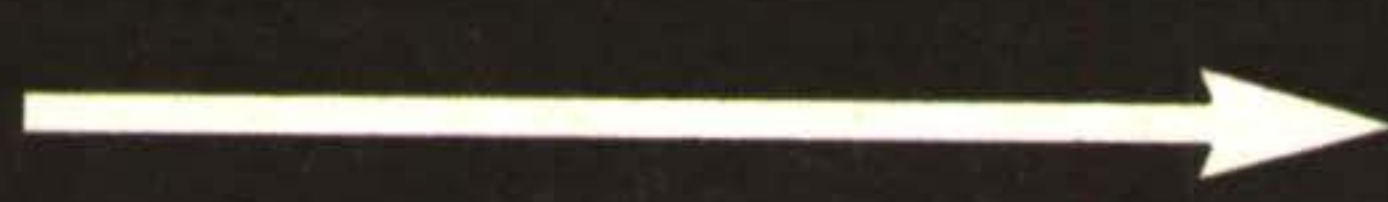
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