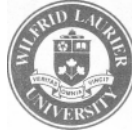


NEWS RELEASE

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SHARING A ROBIN'S LIFE wins Edna Staebler Award for Creative Non-Fiction

Wilfrid Laurier University announced today that a remarkable book about a Nova Scotian artist's relationship with a robin has won this year's **Edna Staebler Award for Creative Non-Fiction**.

The winning book is *Sharing a Robin's Life* by Linda Johns, published by Nimbus Publishing out of Halifax, NS.

For more information about the book, the author, and the **Edna Staebler Award for Creative Non-Fiction**, please turn over . . .

Contacts:

To receive a review copy of *Sharing a Robin's Life* and/or photographs; or to arrange an interview with Linda Johns, please contact:

Hilary Graham

Marketing and Promotions Co-ordinator

Nimbus Publishing

Phone: 902-455-4286

FAX: 902-455-3652

For information about the award, please contact:

Alexandra Wright

or

Lynne Hanna

Award Co-ordinator

Wilfrid Laurier University

Phone: 519-884-1970, extension 3067

FAX: 519-884-8848

more . . .

Wilfrid Laurier University



Founded 1911

What's been said about **SHARING A ROBIN'S LIFE . . .**

"This is an absolutely enchanting story of a remarkable human-bird relationship."

Publishers Weekly

"Linda Johns writes with sensitivity, compassion, understanding and delightful humour . . . Her book has a moral message for our own time, when mankind see themselves as clearly superior to the animal world and so entitled to pollute and destroy."

*Marian Fowler, Biographer
Jurist, 1994 Edna Staebler Award*

"After reading Linda's book, some readers will accept that robins can think, reason, have emotions, and communicate through vocalizations, "looks," and displays that can actually be learned by other species; even humans. Others will conclude that we are daft . . . I can offer no explanation by current science; only the assurance that I know the two people involved, as well as the birds, and that it happened."

*From Wildlife Specialist Bob Bancroft's Introduction
to Sharing a Robin's Life*

"I will never see a robin again without feeling privileged to have read this book."

*Sandra Woolfrey, Director, Wilfrid Laurier University Press
Jurist, 1994 Edna Staebler Award*

"Reading the book, one gets the impression that the author, rather than being simply a witness to nature, became a partner in wild life."

Canadian Library Association

"Some might scoff at Linda John's dedication to her robin . . . but there's no gushiness or excess of emotion here. Johns writes with quiet good humour and observation."

The Chronicle-Herald, Halifax

"Johns' intensity, depending on your outlook, is either bizarre or intriguing. Cynics may not be nearly as fascinated as Johns is by every tiny detail of robin life. But it is just such an eccentric, open attitude that makes unusual discoveries possible."

Magill Book Reviews for Dow Jones News

more . . .

Sharing a Robin's Life by **Linda Johns** is the winner of the
1994 Edna Staebler Award for Creative Non-Fiction

About the Edna Staebler Award for Creative Non-Fiction

The Edna Staebler Award for **Creative Non-Fiction** was established by Edna Staebler in 1991 to give recognition and encouragement to new Canadian writers; it is administered by Wilfrid Laurier University.

The \$3,000 award is given annually to a work of creative non-fiction which has a Canadian location and significance. Entries must be the writer's first or second published book. The judges particularly look for work distinguished by first-hand research, well-crafted interpretive writing, the writer's personal discovery or experience, and creative use of language or approach to subject matter.

Edna Staebler is an award-winning journalist and the author of *Cape Breton Harbour, Places I've Been and People I've Known*, and the *Schmecks* cookbooks. Ms. Staebler says she endowed the award "to recognize the inspiration, determination, patience, and self-sacrifice that a creative writer brings to their work." The rules of the competition reflect Staebler's interest in giving the award to an aspiring writer early in his or her career, to boost their exposure with the public and with publishers and to give them moral and some financial support. This was Ms. Staebler's experience early in her publishing career and it gave her the confidence *to* continue writing. She would like to give today's new writers the same opportunity.

more . . .

Sharing a Robin's Life is the winner of the
1994 Edna Staebler Award for Creative Non-Fiction

About the book . . .

SHARING A ROBIN'S LIFE is a story that challenges our preconceptions about the lives of birds and the way that humans relate to the natural world around us. It is the story of County (a robin) and Linda Johns (an artist) who developed a truly unique relationship. The lives of robins, although they live in close proximity to humans, are virtually unknown to us. But through the remarkable friendship these two individuals created, we can better understand these creatures in our midst.

When Linda found County, the robin was an ailing baby crouched at the side of the road. When no parents appeared to claim her, Linda brought County home and gave her all the help she would provide to any bird needing care. But this bird refused to leave when she was well enough to be returned to the wild. *Sharing a Robin's Life* describes the amazing relationship that developed between County and Linda.

During their time together, Linda was able to replicate all the rituals that robins go through in the wild. She provided appropriate food and allowed County the freedom to be a regular robin but in the most irregular of settings—her own house. Every fall she went through a simulated migrating pattern and in the spring Linda would help County build a nest. Their increasingly symbiotic relationship helped to create a bond that allowed Linda entry into a mysterious yet intelligent world—one that has never been described before.

Linda John's story is remarkable in itself, but it also offers valuable insights into nature and robin behaviour—insights that challenge our assumption of being the only animal capable of conscious thought. It also challenges many other premises about the way humans co-exist with nature.

About the author . . .

LINDA JOHNS is an artist and naturalist who lives and paints in rural Nova Scotia, surrounded by woodlands, meadows, and birds, in a house she built herself.

SHARING A ROBINS LIFE by Linda Johns is published by **Nimbus Publishing**

Introduction by Bob Bancroft, Wildlife Specialist

164pp, 24 colour photographs

ISBN: 1-55109-055-4

Price: \$12.95 (paperback)

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