



WINTER WILDLIFE



Excerpts from *Wildlife Images of the Adirondacks*

by Eric Dresser

*a*s a young boy fishing with my father, a seed of appreciation for the outdoors was planted. A fishing trip with my dad was more than fishing. He would always find the time to stop and point out wildflowers, birds, insects, and anything else that caught his observant eye. He taught me to do more than just look; he taught me to see.

Fishing trips in the Adirondacks were always my favorites. It wasn't because the fishing was better there; it was because of the places we went. Places like Raquette River, Saranac River, Black River and Taylor Pond to name a few. Places where you could find true wilderness. Places where you may not hear a vehicle for the entire day. Places where the landscape was rugged and spellbinding.

Vivid memories of the Adirondacks continued to draw me back to the area as I grew older. On one particularly memorable trip, my nephew Jeff and I were camping on Moss Lake. As the orange glow of another breathtaking Adirondack sunset faded, I told Jeff, "We had better get to sleep because we have to pack up early tomorrow morning and head back to everyday life."

The next morning we woke to the sound of thunder echoing off the hills in the pre-dawn light. We scrambled to get everything packed while it was still dry, and got our last gear into our backpacks just as a few sprinkles started. Then it happened.

As the thunder got closer and louder, two loons started their mournful yodeling. I was thinking, "It doesn't get any better than this," when a group

of coyotes chimed in. It was a magical serenade, and a perfect example of the Adirondacks' mystical draw.

I've been photographing the wild residents of the park for nearly four decades. And whether I'm successful in capturing on film what I set out to photograph, it's experiences like the one described above that inspire me to return time and time again.

Here are a few of the images I've been lucky enough to capture during my frequent visits to the Adirondacks. I'm often asked what my secret is for getting such interesting close-up shots. The best advice I can give is to spend as much time as possible out-of-doors. For, whether you are observing or photographing wildlife, luck is the product of persistence.

Top: A horned lark.

Left: Also called a varying hare, the snowshoe hare changes from brown in the summer to white in the winter.



Red fox near the entrance of its den.



River otters investigate my blind from a spring hole in the ice.

Bold and brazen, the red squirrel is the most plentiful squirrel in the wilderness areas of the Adirondacks.



With its breeding season winding down, this whitetail buck lost one antler a week after this photo was taken.



American wigeon, Utowana Lake in Hamilton County.



Pine grosbeak eating crab apples, Champlain Valley.

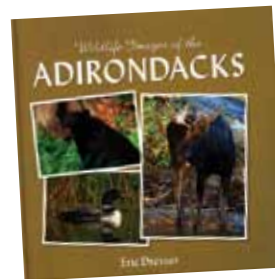




I photographed this springtime beaver north of Nelson Lake near McKeever.



A pileated woodpecker looking for a meal.



Editor's Note: The images presented on these pages are just a sampling of the fantastic wildlife photos found in Eric's new 144-page book *Wildlife Images of the Adirondacks*. To view the other beautiful, colorful pictures from every season, order his book from North Country Books at www.northcountrybooks.com or by calling 800-342-7409.

Eric Dresser is an internationally published photographer who has been photographing wildlife in the Adirondacks for nearly forty years. Visit his website www.NBNP.com to view more of his work.

(left) Loud in color and in voice, this blue jay was photographed near a bird feeder.