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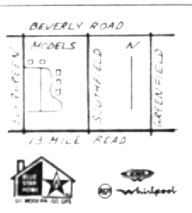
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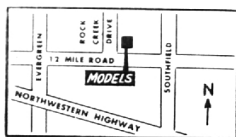
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## NATURE NOW

By LYDIA KING FREHSE  
Special Writer

## Audiences Wide-Eyed At Owls' Performance

On a recent visit to Cleveland's new Natural History Museum your scribe was much impressed by its striking display of owls.

Mingling with the crowd which never thinned, she was impressed once more not only with the unusual habits and manners of these odd birds but with the high degree of adaptation which their bodies show to their mode of life.

At first sight this exhibit passed as an unusually fine series of dioramas of the kind seen in all major museums. However, the entire effect was so real that when your columnist saw the small Asiatic owl in the first case slowly roll an eye, she became suspicious.

WITHIN A FEW minutes the "so still" and "so stark" barred owl in the next case took off and flew to a small house which was perched on a dead limb within the diorama.



Mrs. Frehse

Your scribe then tipped her hat to a very skillful museum preparator, recognizing that the entire unusual exhibit was done with live and not stuffed birds.

Altogether there were displays of eight owls from all over the world in their respective habitats, the most unusual of which was that featuring a small brown-spotted bird native to India. This cunning little fellow wagged his tail in a very owl-like gesture but in many ways resembled our own small pigmy owl of which there are six species in various parts of the United States. Several of these are less than seven inches long.

Michigan's owls range in size from the seldom seen saw-whet species which is only eight inches long, to the great horned owl which may measure as much as 22 inches in length with a wing spread of 60 inches.

THE COMMON NOTE of the saw-whet is frequently likened to the sound of a rasping saw. Other calls are described as faint screams and clicks. My husband, who heard one of these birds in the Canadian wilds, likened the sound to that of closely dripping water.

Hunters sometimes refer to the great horned owl as the "hoot" owl because its deep, booming and oft-repeated notes are all of the same pitch. They are among the loudest of sounds voiced by any of our avifauna. (Especially listening, one is intimidated by the terrific, screaming of this bird which, if heard in a deep woods on a dark night, is not easily forgotten.)

The great horned owl is the most fearless of our birds of prey. It will attack such varied creatures as the bald eagle, skunk and porcupine, and when provoked by hunger it may threaten dogs and even man.

PERHAPS MORE people recognize our small screech owl than any other of our Michigan species because it frequents dwellings and woodlots. This friendly bird comes in both grey and brown, two phases of the same species. If in the vicinity it answers readily to anyone who can imitate its plaintive call.

Another well-known species is the common barn owl which is sometimes called "the flying cat" because of its prowess as a mouse around barns and out buildings where it often nests.

The face looks like that of a toothless, hooded old woman, shrouded in a closely fitted hood and has a half-smile, half-shy expression that gives it a mysterious air so wiles an imaginative book maker.

There is a case on record of a half-grown barn owl which swallowed eight mice in rapid succession and attempted eating a ninth. He succeeded except that the tail of his last victim hung out of his mouth for some time. In three hours he was hungry enough to eat four more mice, thus demonstrating a truly adolescent appetite.

FIFTY-FIVE SPECIES of owls are recorded from North America. All are birds of prey, feeding upon small mammals, frogs, toads, larger insects and small birds. Larger owls may eat a few game birds such as ducks and grouse, but because of their fondness for rodents, they are generally a very beneficial group.

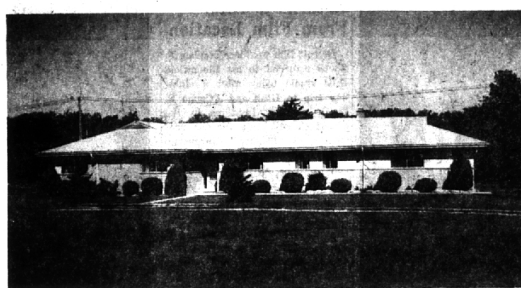
(More about owls in next week's column.)

## Cranbrook Initiates Astronomy Class for Junior High Pupils

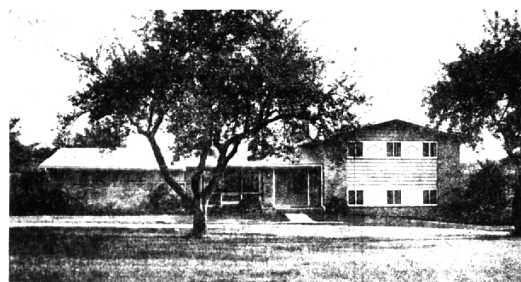
Basic concepts in astronomy for junior high students will be explained and demonstrated in classroom and museum during a seven-week course at Cranbrook Institute of Science.

The sessions meet from 4:50 p.m. every Thursday beginning Oct. 8. A portion of each session will be spent in the planetarium learning to recognize things seen in the night sky with the unaided eye. Weather permitting, the class will meet once in the evening in the observatory to use the six-inch refractor telescope.

Registration is limited to 15 and may be made by calling the Institute. The instructor is Doris N. McKillop of the Institute staff.



Pride of possession is evident both inside and out and quality is obvious. Unusually attractive and well planned kitchen with range, double oven and built in china cabinet. Three twin size bedrooms, three full baths (one off rear hall), delightful family room, large utility room, oversize 2 car garage. Membership in Wing Lake Beach Club. \$32,900.



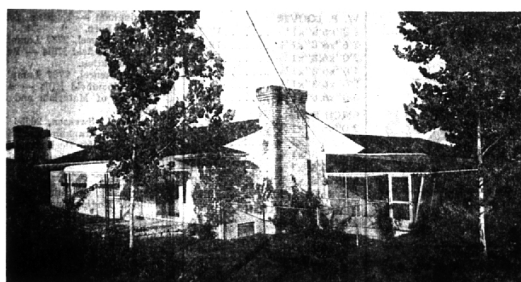
It has everything for an active family!—well, almost everything—Paneled Family room with fireplace, huge rec. room; membership in Walnut Lake Beach Club, rolling site large enough for baseball and such. The kitchen is outstanding with island range, oven, dishwasher and disposal. Four bedrooms, three baths; built-in stereo system and many other "extras" \$39,900.



Distinctive and unusual! A forty foot living-dining room; a huge paneled family room; a superb kitchen with walnut cupboards and white formica counters, screened and glassed porch; large slate patio; two large bedrooms with room for two more in unfinished upstairs. Beautifully decorated, unusual lighting, convenient "in" location. \$39,900.



A delightfully secluded setting with a stream crossing the property in the rear. In City of Bloomfield Hills on a cul-de-sac. Superbly built and interestingly arranged. Exceptionally large rooms throughout, including separate dining room, many-windowed family room, outstanding kitchen, three bedrooms and 2 1/2 baths (the master bath is 15x10). You'll enjoy its privacy and convenience. \$54,900.



An "L" shaped four bedroom ranch that, even from the rear, is deceiving as to size. Two covered patios—one off the family room. A most delightful rec. room is paneled in driftwood mahogany, has its own bar and is dramatically lighted. Bloomfield schools, near schools and shops. \$42,500.



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