

Animals travel familiar routes



The red squirrel travels the same routes in its home range, familiar with the quickest way to reach to safety.

A VISITOR has returned to our yard — one have not seen in a couple of years.

It reminds me very much of a Fur-rari. Its color is reddish like a Fur-rari. It has a "racing" stripe along the side like a Fur-rari, and it is constantly racing around like a Fur-rari.

Our visitor is a little red squirrel. Though it is much smaller (11-13 inches) than the more common fox squirrel (20-22 inches), it is very noticeable as it bounds from branch to branch.

Most of its time is spent in the trees. When it does reach the ground, it promptly takes care of business and then dashes for the nearest tree.

AFTER WATCHING it traverse the length of our yard through the



nature

Timothy Nowicki

trees several times, I noticed that it frequently took the same route. Without hesitation, it leaps and bounds in its characteristic spring-like manner from twig to twig.

Just as people drive to work along the same route most of the time, so do animals travel the same routes in their home range. Traversing the same route can be advantageous. Man becomes familiar with traffic

signals, gas stations, particular stores and such.

Animals become familiar with their areas also. If a predator should approach, animals familiar with their route know the quickest place to safety. Arboreal animals like the red squirrel know which branches are safe to use, and which provide the safest route.

IN NORTHERN Michigan, when snow becomes very deep, deer gather together in cedar swamps.

Within these yarding areas there are many pathways around the area.

Packing down the snow to a path makes it easier for the animals to walk, or run, if danger should approach.

During the winter it is easy to find the common routes of mice or squirrels in the snow. Each of our trees in the backyard reminds me of a wheel's axle, while squirrel paths radiating to other trees look like the spokes.

Law seminar covers custody and visitation

Rights of grandparents and step-parents to seek custody of children will be discussed in a seminar for lawyers and judges at 4 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 19.

Scheduled for the Michigan Inn at 16400 J.L. Hudson Drive, Southfield, the seminar is sponsored by the family law section of the State Bar of Michigan. Fees are \$35 for members, \$40 for non-members and free for judges.

Registration information is available from Richard S. Victor, legal education chair, at 646-7177 in Birmingham.

The seminar also will cover third-party visitation disputes and the impact of the Michigan Supreme Court

decision in Ruppel vs. Lesner in custody cases.

Moderator will be Ronald H. Foon, Oakland friend of the court referee, Jan. 19.

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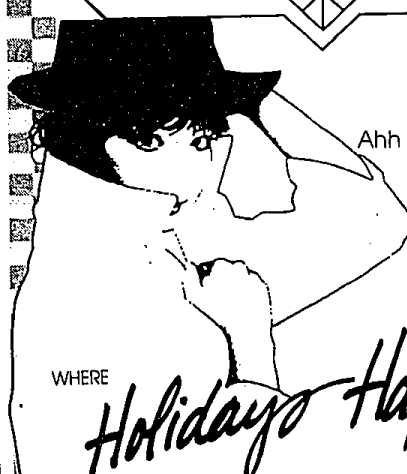
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