

Rare White Ravens Spotted In Western Canada

Vancouver, B.C., photographer Mike Yip first saw a pair of white ravens in 2007 when a farmer called him. They were too far away to get good photos, but he was able to get close-up photos the following year. In 2011, he got photos of a young white raven and its 3 black siblings.

Recently there have been reports of white raven sightings in Saskatchewan, which

made headlines in Canadian newspapers.

Bird experts say albino ravens are very rare, partly because their color makes it more difficult for them to hide from predators.

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Photo courtesy Mike Yip/www.vancouverislandbirds.com

Rare albino ravens have been spotted in Saskatchewan and British Columbia.

Lantern Experts Repair, Sell New

Workers at W.T. Kirkman Lanterns had a special reason for getting together to watch the new "Lone Ranger" movie. Two hundred of their lanterns were part of the show's props. Dawn Kirkman, who owns the business with her husband, Woody, says they have provided lanterns for many movies.

Other lanterns end up in restaurants, businesses and theme parks like Disney World. The company offers a variety of styles to meet everyone's budget.

"A lot of people like to have them on the porch for a dinner, or use them for camping. They're a fairly inexpensive light and heat source. With a lantern and gallon of oil you're set for a long time," Kirkman says.

For those who love the charm and style of old lanterns and lamps, but prefer the

convenience of modern day lighting, Kirkman Lanterns customizes and electrifies to customers' requests. They also make parts to restore several models of old lanterns including Dietz, Adlake, Embury and other popular manufacturers.

Kirkman Lanterns manufactures many styles of lanterns and accessories in the U.S. and is the only U.S. tubular oil lantern manufacturer. Tubular refers to the lantern style that takes air down the side tubes to the flame. The company offers premium grade lantern models, which are made by the same overseas company that makes Dietz lanterns. The lanterns are unique because they are made of galvanized steel so they resist rust.

It was the love of Dietz lanterns, the premiere U.S.-made lantern from 1860 to



W.T. Kirkman Lanterns, Inc., manufactures many styles of lanterns and accessories and also does repair work.

1956, that got Woody started collecting when he was in high school. The Kirkmans opened their business in 1984 and went worldwide when they set up a website in 1998.

"We have one of the largest collections of Dietz lanterns in the U.S.," Kirkman says, noting that many of the 1,000+ lanterns are in the couple's living room and spill into every

room of the house.

Prices start as low as \$10 for an oil lantern and \$30 for an electrified version.

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Old Glass Bottles Climbing Fast In Value

A bottle shaped like an ear of corn recently came up for auction and sold for \$1,600. Other antique bottles have recently sold for as much as \$25,000.

"Figural bottles", shaped like corn, cabins, barrels, fish and Indian queues are popular among bottle collectors, says John Pastor, publisher of Antique Bottle & Glass Collector magazine, and owner of American Glass Gallery, which sells bottles through direct sales and absentee auctions.

Priced according to color, condition and rarity, bottles made between 1860 to 1880 start around \$300. Some earn substantially more such as a sapphire blue figural barrel whiskey bottle a woman found at a thrift store near Chicago. The price tag said \$1, and she had a coupon to buy it for 70 cents.

"It brought \$25,760 at our auction last fall," Pastor says. "She said she probably wouldn't have bought it if it had been \$3."

The most desired and valued bottles are historical flasks, such as the eagle on a Coffin & Hay flask (c. 1838) that sold for \$11,200. Historical flasks were made from 1815 to 1875, and the bottles generally had whiskey in them, while National Bitters bottles contained bitters, considered a medicinal drink though it also contained alcohol.

Pontiled medicine bottles made prior to 1860 are also sought out by collectors. Pontil refers to the rough scar on the base left from when the glass blower removed the bottle from the pontil (iron) rod. The high bid at Pastor's May auction sale for a "Dr. Guysott's Compound Extract of Yellow Dock & Sarsaparilla" medicine bottle was \$3,162.

Black glass — early wine bottles that are very dark green — is another category of bottles valued as high as \$15,000 or more.

But Pastor emphasizes that there are many categories of bottles that are very affordable (under \$20) and attractive to young collectors. Some specialize in specific categories such as ink, soda, milk, or even nursing bottles.

"We often see new collectors or ones who come from other collecting disciplines," Pastor says. "They get hooked by finding an old bottle in the crawl space of a home they are renovating, or in a fruit cellar or barn."

It doesn't happen as often as it used to, but people also find bottles along fencerows or streams, and construction workers find them in old dumps that have been buried.

Besides bottles, collectors sometimes get sidetracked with glass pieces such as blown glass tableware, including sugar bowls and creamers. Other unusual items include glass



Photo courtesy Antique Bottle & Glass Collector

Barrel bottle (left) recently sold at an auction for \$25,760; National Bitters figural ear of corn sold for \$2,185; Holtzermann's Patent Stomach Bitters figural cabin bottle sold for \$1,792; and Scroll Flask recently sold for \$1,380.

target balls (early clay pigeons) and glass fire extinguishers.

Pastor encourages anyone interested in bottles to purchase a sample magazine issue at his website. Every month experts in a variety of collecting categories write articles for Antique Bottle & Glass Collector magazine. Pastor's magazine/auction website also includes information about upcoming auctions and how to consign items for his

catalog auctions. Another good source of information is the organization for collectors, Federation of Historical Bottle Collectors (www.fohbc.org).

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Teen Built Motorized Bicycle

"I live at the bottom of a hill so every direction is up," says Glenn Sherwood, 19, about the reason he built a motorized bicycle. "I threw it together for transportation before I had a car."

With a father who loves to fix things, a well-equipped workshop and a stash of old parts, the teenager only spent \$40 for an old 8 hp Tecumseh engine to build it.

Sherwood rebuilt the framework, put in the engine, removed the pedals and put in a 7/8-in. bolt for a shaft. "I put a pulley on one end for the drive and the clutch, which converts to chain drive on the 53-tooth, type 40 sprocket I put over the old 18-speed sprocket."

He explains he beefed up and rebuilt the center frame to accommodate the engine,

which he found while attending an old steam engine show. Altogether the bike weighs about 100 lbs.

The 1-cylinder engine will go about 25 mph and gets 50 to 60 mpg. The only thing Sherwood plans to change is the braking system. The double-padded brakes on the front wear out fast, so he wants to install disc brakes.

"I use it for short distances around 10 miles or so," Sherwood says, though he doesn't use it as much now that he has a car.

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Glenn Sherwood built this motorized bicycle that's powered by an old 8 hp Tecumseh engine. It belt and chain-drives the bike's rear wheel.

