

BLOMIDON NATURALISTS SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 16
NUMBER 4
DECEMBER 1989

BNS Winter and Early Spring Programme

MONDAY EVENING MEETINGS: All meetings will start at 7:30 p.m. and, unless otherwise indicated, will be held in Room 244 of the Beveridge Arts Centre at Acadia University. All lectures and field trips are open to the public and BNS members are encouraged to bring friends and neighbours. Any changes in the date, time or subject of meetings are announced on posters, the Kings Kable notice board and in The Kentville Advertiser and The Hants Journal.

1. January 15 -- "Tell and Show" in Room 308, Patterson Hall (Acadia University Biology Building). Share your natural history interests and eccentricities with others. Bring interesting finds, stories, slides (10-15), display collections, books, etc.

2. February 19 -- "Hawks, Eagles and Owls" by Peter Austin-Smith, Peter MacDonald and Soren Bondup-Neilson. This familiar crew will present shortened versions of their talks presented during the Nova Scotia "Birds of Prey" lecture series.

3. March 19 -- "Motion in the Heavens" by Sherman Williams. On the fifteenth anniversary of the founding of the Society, Sherman will use computer images and slides to illustrate events and changes in the evening sky. This program will be followed up with a field excursion on March 21st (see Field Trips).

4. April 16 -- "Impact of People on the Maritime Fishery" by Mike Dadswell. A fisheries biologist and Associate Professor of Biology at Acadia University, Mike worked for many years with the Department of Fisheries and Oceans. You will surely find his vast experience and interesting ideas stimulating.

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The BNS Newsletter is published on equinoxes and solstices.

Editors: George and Margaret Alliston
 Art: Mary Pratt
 Production: Larry Bogan
 Distribution: Lana Churchill and Brenda Thexton

"The primary objective of the Society shall be to encourage and develop in its members an understanding and appreciation of nature. For the purpose of the Society, the word 'nature' will be interpreted broadly and shall include the rocks, plants, animals, water, air, and stars."

from the BNS constitution

The Blomidon Naturalists Society is an Affiliated Member of the Canadian Nature Federation and a member of the Nova Scotia Trails Federation.

Address correspondence to:

Blomidon Naturalists Society
P.O. Box 127
Wolfville, Nova Scotia
B0P 1X0

Field Trips

Unless otherwise noted, all times given are for meeting at the Acadia Gym parking lot. Leaders' telephone numbers are included to allow those without access to local news to confirm trips.

1. Sunday, January 21, 1:00 p.m. -- Walk, Ski or Snowshoe to Moosehorn Lake. Leader: Sherman Bleakney (542-3604).

2. Monday, January 29, 6:30 p.m. -- Patterson Hall, Acadia University. A young peoples' introduction to museum study skins, bird identification and taxidermy with Cyril Coldwell.

3. Sunday, February 4, 10:00 a.m. -- Raptor Tour of Kings County. A repeat of our popular bus trip with Merritt Gibson (582-7569). Bring warm clothes, binoculars, lunch, a window scraper and a free will offering.

4. Wednesday, March 21, 7:30 p.m. -- Star Night at Stiles Park with Sherman Williams (542-5104). Follow-up to Sherman's Monday night meeting presentation, "Motion in the Heavens". Meet at the Park. Storm or cloud date: March 22.

5. Tuesday, March 27, 7:30 p.m. -- Goose Flypast at Wellington Dyke with Sherman Bleakney (542-3604).

6. Saturday, April 28, 8:30 a.m. -- Mosses and Ferns in New Minas with John Pickwell (542-2246). Alternate meeting place: parking lot at Exit # 12 of Highway 101, at 8:45 a.m. Rain date: April 29.

Acknowledgements

Thanks to:

Robert Ogilvie for describing to us the Nova Scotia Special Places program;

Staff of the Kentville Agricultural Centre for providing us with an overview of orchard pest management procedures in our area;

Stuart Tingley for an entertaining global bird-watching "tour";

our field trip leaders: Roy Bishop, Larry Bogan, Twila Robar-DeCoste, Bernard Forsythe, Ruth Newell, Nancy Nickerson, Fred Scott, George Stevens, and Sherman Williams;

all of our Newsletter contributors;

and, a special thanks to Liz and Richard Stern for hosting the chowder supper after the Wolfville Christmas Bird Count.

SOCIETY NEWS

From the Editors

Starting with this Newsletter, we will be publishing summaries of the BNS Executive meeting minutes to keep members better informed.

Also, to help defray another postal rate increase and increased production costs, we have decided to accept a limited amount of suitable advertising in the Newsletter. The first advertisement appears in this issue. If you purchase advertised items, please make sure to let the firm know where you saw their ad. We want our advertisers to know that we support those who support our Society.

Summary of Minutes - BNS Executive Meeting November 15, 1989

by W. George Alliston
West Brooklyn, N.S.

Ten members of the executive were present at the November 15th executive meeting, chaired by the new President, Peter Austin-Smith.

Business Arising from the Minutes

The President reported that the editing of the book, The Natural History of Kings County, is proceeding and it is probable that the book will be ready for printing in 1990.

The President reported on the formation of the Federation of Nova Scotia Naturalists (see this Newsletter).

Sherman Boates reported on the progress of the Wolfville Chimney Swifts Project (see this Newsletter).

New Business

The new Program Committee (George Forsyth, Sherman Boates and Miriam Tams) and the Robie Tufts Award Committee (Sherman Williams, Pat Clifford and Harold Forsyth) were formed.

The Treasurer, Judy Tufts, presented the 1988-89 audited financial statements (see this Newsletter). The Treasurer pointed out that, while income for 1990 will increase through increased membership fees, Society costs will also increase. The major expense the Society incurs is the publishing and distribution of the Newsletter. The Newsletter Editor, George Alliston, advised that, after the cost reductions of the last two years, the only way costs can be further reduced is to reduce either the number of pages per issue and/or the number of issues per year.

It was agreed that other sources of funding be pursued; these included limited advertising in the Newsletter (George Alliston to investigate), "raffles" (Harold Forsyth to investigate), and grants from government or other agencies (Peter Austin-Smith and George Alliston to investigate).

The need for a Conservation Committee was discussed and agreed upon (Peter Austin-Smith to assemble the Committee).

Harold Forsyth reported that a request had been received from the Nova Scotia Trails Federation for trails information for our area. As BNS representative to this Federation, Harold compiled and submitted a list of 15 trails.

BNS Newsletter Submissions Deadline - March 1, 1990

Please send or give all contributions to the Newsletter to:

George Alliston (542-3651)
R.R 3
Wolfville, N.S. BOP 1X0

For "Trivial Tidbits" only, send your written observations (in chronological order) to Jim Wolford at:

Biology Department
Acadia University
Wolfville, N.S. BOP 1X0

Last-minute observations can be phoned in to 542-2201, ext. 334 (leave a message).

The editors would greatly appreciate submissions being at least double-spaced to facilitate both editing and word processing. If you are able to submit articles in word-processed form, please contact the editors for technical details. Sketches or diagrams should be submitted in final form, preferably on a separate page.

The Formation of the Federation of Nova Scotia Naturalists

by W. George Alliston
West Brooklynn, N.S.

On October 22, 1989, 19 representatives of 12 Nova Scotia naturalist and environmental groups, as well as a representative from the provincial government, met in the Acadia University Biology Building to consider the formation of a provincial federation of naturalists. Represented at this meeting were: Annapolis Field Naturalists, Blomidon Naturalists Society, Brier Island Ocean Study Society, Canadian Wildflower Society, Chignecto Naturalists Club, Cole Harbour Rural Heritage Society, Halifax Field Naturalists, Kings Environmental Group, N.S. Dept. of Lands and Forests (Parks Group), Les Amis du Plein Air, Nova Scotia Bird Society, Spryfield Long Lake Provincial Park Association, and Tusket River Environmental Protection Association.

The impetus for this meeting came from the "Provincial Action Committee" of the Halifax Field Naturalists. In the winter of 1987-1988, this group put considerable effort into preparing a presentation to a N.S.D.L.F. steering committee whose purpose was to advise government on a major revision to the Nova Scotia Park Act. However, the legislation, which was enacted on January 1, 1989, was "profoundly weak and flawed" (also see June 1989 Newsletter). After this disappointing and frustrating experience, the HFN began to contacting other naturalist groups throughout the province in an attempt to get province-wide support calling for better parks legislation. As this process proceeded, it became increasingly apparent to this group that what was required was a permanent provincial naturalists federation that could, amongst other things, be quickly mobilized to provide a strong collective voice for naturalists throughout the province. Nova Scotia is the only province in Canada that does not have such a federation. During the summer of 1989, the HFN group redirected its efforts to laying the groundwork for the formation of such a federation. The October 22nd meeting was the culmination of this phase of their efforts.

At the meeting, chaired by Michael Downing, president of HFN, it was agreed that a provincial federation be formed and the name of the group be the **Federation of Nova Scotia Naturalists**. The objectives of the Federation will be:

- to stimulate public interest in natural history
- to act as advocate for conservation issues
- education (information to the public)
- to encourage the formation of local clubs
- to foster communication/cooperation among local groups
- to foster communication/cooperation between local groups and federal and provincial agencies
- to act as advocate for wilderness protection and expansion.

It was also agreed that there be four categories of membership:

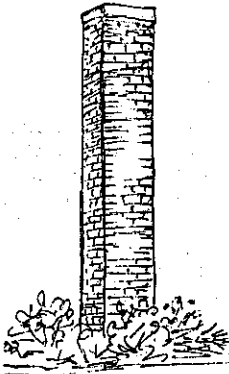
- 1) Individual - one vote per member
- 2) Federate - natural history clubs in Nova Scotia - one vote per member of each club (no proxies or duplication of "individual" votes)

- 3) Affiliate - non-profit organizations that do not qualify for or do not want federate status. No vote.
- 4) Associate - profit-making organizations including government departments. No vote.

A constitutional committee, responsible for drafting a constitution and bylaws, was appointed. The BNS representative on this committee is Sherman Williams. The first annual general meeting of the Federation will be held in late May or early June 1990 (possibly in Environment Week) and will be hosted by the Blomidon Naturalists.

Will Swifts and People Flock to a Chimney in the Middle of a Parking Lot?

by J. Sherman Boates
Wolfville, N.S.



According to Tufts (1986) chimney swifts winter in the upper drainage basin of the Amazon. Let us hope that the extensive habitat destruction that is occurring in this area is not creating problems for this species. Although we can do little about habitat problems in their wintering areas, we have been able to preserve a small but valuable piece of swift habitat here in Wolfville: the chimney of the former Farmers Dairy building. In this note I want to update the Society on how the proposal to save the chimney has progressed since the Farmers Dairy building was demolished.

Jim Wolford attended a meeting of the Wolfville Business Development Corporation in October and was asked for advice on how to proceed with the development of the "swift site". Jim then called an open meeting for those interested in the swift project. At this meeting we had a very lively discussion about the possibilities for the site and it became obvious that, to discuss our ideas fully and do some research, it was going to take some time. Following this meeting Harold Forsyth, Peter MacDonald, Jackie MacDonald, Joan Bromley, Jim Wolford and I met regularly. After some debate, we thought it best that the small building attached to the chimney be refurbished and serve as some sort of natural history centre. Ron Peck, a local architect, kindly drew up some sketches showing how the building could be modified. Several weeks later, after consulting with many resource people, we decided that, although a natural history centre was a great idea, it was a huge project that would take a lot of planning. We finally agreed that, if the chimney would safely stand on its own, the building (which is not really much of a structure) be taken down and the "swift site" consist of the chimney, a surrounding green space with grass, shrubs, trees, benches and an interpretive sign. We also asked Ruth Newell to put together a list of shrubs and trees that would be beneficial to wildlife. This list has been passed on to the landscape architect who will incorporate these plants into the parking area development. So, hopefully, the parking area may turn out to be a good

spot to "bird" for more than swifts.

Chuck Richardson of the Wolfville Business Development Corporation has, from the start, been a strong supporter of the "swift project" and should be congratulated. He is also keen on ensuring that other wildlife considerations are incorporated into other business developments in Wolfville. Anyone with concerns or ideas should contact him.

I'm sure that, in 1990, people (especially Jim Wolford) will again flock to see the swifts perform their evening ritual and that many more people will realize that a peculiar-looking chimney, sticking out of a green patch in the middle of a parking lot, is a valuable piece of wildlife habitat that has been saved from destruction. See you at the chimney in May!

Robie Tufts Young Naturalist Awards

by Sherman Williams
Avonport, N.S.

Each year, in memory of Robie Tufts, the Blomidon Naturalists Society seeks out and gives recognition to a promising young naturalist. This year, the Award Committee selected two young men who have clearly demonstrated a genuine and active interest in natural history - Simon Onyschuk of Kentville and Jason Jolly of Cambridge.

Simon is a Grade 2 student at Port Williams School. Last year he participated in the Kings County Science Fair where his project, Bugs from around My House, attracted considerable interest. In addition to being well praised, he won the award for best project in the life sciences, primary to Grade 3 section. It wasn't just that his project was a prizewinner that caught the attention of our Committee. They were won over by the consistent active interest, knowledge and enthusiasm that he brought to his chosen topic. Simon already has the ground work well under way for another project involving the study of the life stages of several species of moths.

Jason is a Grade 10 student at Central Kings High School. He is a member of Ducks Unlimited and the Canadian Wildlife Association. Jason is very much respected in his community for his hard work and neighbourly spirit and for his caring and compassion for animals. He likes reading about wildlife and conservation and enjoys hikes in the woods whenever time permits. Last year, from money earned while performing service in the neighbourhood (shovelling snow, etc.), he donated \$250 to Ducks Unlimited. Jason is very conscientious about the environment. It is his belief that we all must become stewards of the environment if the things we now enjoy are to be preserved for our own and future generations.

During the October 16th, 1989, meeting, both boys were brought before the Society to be recognized. They were presented with books featuring an area of natural history particular to each boy's interest. In addition, each was given a one-year membership in the Society.

Congratulations to Jason and Simon! We wish them well as they pursue their interests in the wonders of the natural world.

SOCIETY BUSINESS

President's Annual Report October 1988 - October 1989

by Sherman Williams
Avonport, N.S.

1988-1989 was a very active year for the Blomidon Naturalists Society. Our regular evening meetings enjoyed excellent attendance; on a couple of occasions there was standing room only. Judging from the feedback, all our topics were well received.

Field trips throughout the year were varied and many: approximately 36 in total. Some were so well attended that we formed a long caravan winding along the back roads of the South Mountain. Twice this year we used a bus to accommodate everyone; it worked very well. Extra field trips were held for Environment Week and Mud Creek Days.

This year our Society joined the newly formed Nova Scotia Trails Federation. This group is dedicated to co-ordinating the use of trails in the province as the new Nova Scotia Trails Act is implemented.

In addition to planning field trips and evening speakers, we have undertaken other projects.

The Natural History of Kings County, begun a few years ago under the guidance of a special BNS Committee, is still ongoing and nearing completion. Committee members meet regularly to proofread and edit the book.

Perhaps the highlight of this year was our involvement in the Save the Chimney for the Chimney Swifts Project. In particular, we thank Jim Wolford and Tom Herman for the effort they put into this project on our behalf.

The Society has continued to have a major involvement in organizing and co-ordinating the annual Wolfville Christmas Bird Count.

A successful Show and Tell night was held where several in attendance gave brief presentations and shared some of their favourite photographs.

Membership has grown (over 200 paid members) and, unfortunately, so have costs for producing and posting the Newsletter. As a result, it has been necessary to increase membership dues for 1989-1990. Individual membership is now \$10, up from \$7.

In recognition of his life-long interest in and contributions to natural history, an honorary life membership was awarded to C.R.K. Allen. Complimentary 1989-1990 memberships were awarded to the two recipients of this year's Robie Tufts Young Naturalist Awards: Simon Onyschuk and Jason Jolly.

Plans are being made to have a Society crest available in the near future.

The executive and directors of the BNS met approximately every two months to conduct the affairs of the Society. These meetings were productive: filled with lots of discussion, ideas, planning and airing of problems.

The outlook for the Society is challenging. The new

executive, board of directors and their committees must provide a variety of topics for evening programs and field trips. In addition we have been asked to be further involved in the Chimney Swift Project. In the year ahead, there is a need for the Society to clarify what its response should be to the growing challenge that environmental concerns place on us. We must also consider some alternate ways to boost the Society's funds. Some time early in the new decade, we wish to publish The Natural History of Kings County. These are a few of the issues that will be requiring our attention in the year ahead.

In conclusion, I would like to thank all the people who have given their time freely on behalf of the Blomidon Naturalists Society, making possible the success that the Society has enjoyed over the past year. Especially, I thank on your behalf, the Directors: Sherman Bleakney, Pat Clifford, Harold Forsyth, Bernard Forsythe, Nancy Nickerson, John Pickwell and Marion Zinck. Also, thank you to Merritt Gibson and his Special Publications team for their excellent BNS Nature Notes that appear weekly in the Kentville Advertiser and for labouring away on The Natural History of Kings County.

The Newsletter team has done a super job! Special thanks to our editors, George and Margaret Alliston, and their team: Mary Pratt, Larry Bogan, Bill and Brenda Thexton, Lana Churchill and Judy Tufts. The same can be said about the Program Committee: John Pickwell, Bernard Forsythe and Jim Wolford. These two groups provide the core of what the BNS has to offer. Thank you for a job well done!

Fortunately, I had a dedicated executive who kept the Society organized. I want to thank them especially: Bill Thexton (Secretary), Judy Tufts (Treasurer and "other extra duties"), Tom Herman (Vice-President and "thanker of guest speakers").

I would especially like to extend a vote of gratitude on behalf of the Society to our retiring Past-President, Jim Wolford. Jim has put his heart and soul into serving the interests of the BNS. He has been our ambassador on many fronts. Jim, we want you to know that we have very much appreciated your efforts and enthusiasm.

I have been pleased to serve as your President these past two years and look forward to continuing to work for the Society as Past-President and assisting our new President, Peter Austin-Smith, whenever possible.

Blomidon Naturalists Society
P.O. Box 127
Wolfville, Nova Scotia B0P 1X0

Audited Financial Statements - 1988-1989

STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE
September 1, 1988 - August 31, 1989

INCOME

Membership Dues	\$1357.00
Bank Interest	13.64
Bank Charge - reimbursement for returned cheque	4.00

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Mr. Bill Thexton
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FIELD TRIP REPORTS

Mushrooms at Kentville Ravine

September 24, 1989

by Twila Robar-DeCoste *
Aylesford, N.S.

Despite September 24th's unusual cold and wind, about 45 hardy, interested people braved the chill and followed Nancy Nickerson and me down the slope to the Kentville Ravine.

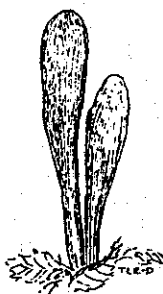
Pickings seemed quite slim at first, but before long everyone was finding something of interest. Baskets soon filled with specimens (some quite mushy) for us to look at and an attempt was made to identify as many as possible.

Numerous genera were eventually identified; among those were species of *Russula*, *Lactarius*, *Collybia*, *Clitocybe*, *Pleurotus*, *Armillaria* and *Cortinarius*. A rather fine specimen of *Clavariadelphus* was found. This fungus is club-

shaped, about 8-10 cm in length, and flesh-coloured. The most abundant fungus was the *Armillaria mellea* or honey mushroom. It was found in numerous clusters at the base of many of the older hardwood trees along the ravine floor.



Armillaria mellea
Honey Mushroom



Clavariadelphus pistillaris

Some of the collections were taken back to the picnic area and spread out for examination on a picnic table. A few more specimens were identified and taken by collectors for photographing. As it was quite cold we didn't spend a lot of time there.

After a slow, cold start the participants really "got into" the mushroom hunt and, despite the shivering and chilled hands from holding damp specimens, we enjoyed our mushroom foray in this beautiful ravine. I believe everyone left with some new knowledge and an appreciation of the many and varied species of fungi that can be found in the local area.

* drawings also by Twila Robar-DeCoste



Hayes Cave and Bats October 1, 1989

by Fred Scott
Natural History Section
Nova Scotia Museum

Field trip members began to rendezvous at the South Maitland general store before 10:00 a.m. and by 10:15 a convoy of vehicles set out for the cave, about 5 km west. In the grassy parking area beside the river, I gave a short orientation on the cave's origin and structure and pointed out some of the hazards as well. Then, thoroughly booted, helmeted and flashlighted, all 23 of us set out across the river and up the side of the cliff to the cave entrance. Getting everyone in took about ten minutes and as soon as eyes were dark-adapted we all went down the steep inner slope to the first pond. Here I pointed out the water flowing into the cave from the outside pond. We spotted several small sticklebacks which had made their way in by the same route. The amount of garbage, mostly beer cans and bottles, in the cave surprised many people. Only a few bats were visible near the entrance but as the party moved towards the rear of the main chamber, more and more bats were seen. When we entered Zone B (see map), where the ceiling is much

lower, many of the bats were nearly at eye level and we could get a good look at them.

The going got a lot muddier here and remained so for most of the cave's length. When we got into Zone C, the middle of the cave's five zones, the bats were very numerous and I briefly discussed counting them and demonstrated some of the difficulties involved.

There was another stop at the end of the last pond, where we saw the organic debris and glacial till that had come into the cave through a connection to a surface sinkhole. Rainwater washes through this debris and carries nutrients such as phosphorus into the pond. At this point we also found some bats tucked into crevices but unfortunately they didn't appear to be Long-eared Bats.



The final stop was just inside the last zone, below the passage that extends upwards and opens out on the side of a large sinkhole. Here we all turned off our lights for several minutes to experience total darkness. On the way out we did the same thing just as we entered the main chamber, but here daylight lit the slope up to the entrance and reflected off the big pond, and it was possible to see how really large the chamber is. Then we all climbed out and headed back to the parking area for lunch.

An hour later five or six of the people left but the remaining ones headed back across the river and climbed up past the cave entrance all the way to the top of the gypsum cliff. The land between the cliff edge and the line of large sinkholes is a classic karst landscape, being sinkholes varying from 3 or 4 to 15 or 20 feet deep, separated by narrow ridges of gypsum only a foot or so wide. Trees, often quite large, grow in and between these sinkholes, but walking on this terrain was a bit scary for some with no head for heights, because there wasn't always a tree to hold on to. Some of us went inland to find easier walking and to look at the big sinkholes, of which there are five. Some are really spectacular. A couple of people went down to the bottom of the middle one, and six to eight of us went to the bottom of the next-to-last sinkhole, where we found two natural drainholes leading down into the gypsum which obviously kept the sinkhole from turning into a lake. About 20 feet above the bottom of this sinkhole is the back entrance to the cave. Some of us climbed up to look down into it. At first there was no detectable air movement, but a few minutes later we could hear the wind strength increasing in the trees above and cold air suddenly started blowing out of the hole, fast enough to carry out dead leaves with it.

We took the easy route back (nobody wanted to climb down the way we came up), going along the south side of the sinkhole line until we struck an overgrown woods road that took us in a long loop to the north and east, around the millpond and back to the river, where we arrived about 3:30 p.m.

The results of the radon testing arrived on October 3 and the values were very low. The highest was 23.8 picocuries/litre (20 is the action level*) and the rest were half that or less. In the middle of Zone C, where two years

ago we got a level of 567, the level was only 3.2 The low values were probably because all that week the weather had been very windy and air circulation in the cave was good.

Those who are interested can find more information on the cave and the surrounding site in the Museum's Curatorial Report No. 50, "The Hayes Cave Site, South Maitland, Nova Scotia", edited by Linda Morris and available from the Acadia library or from one of five or six people (Jim Wolford is one) in the Acadia Biology Department.

* in Canada. In the U.S., the action level is 4 picocuries/litre. Ed.

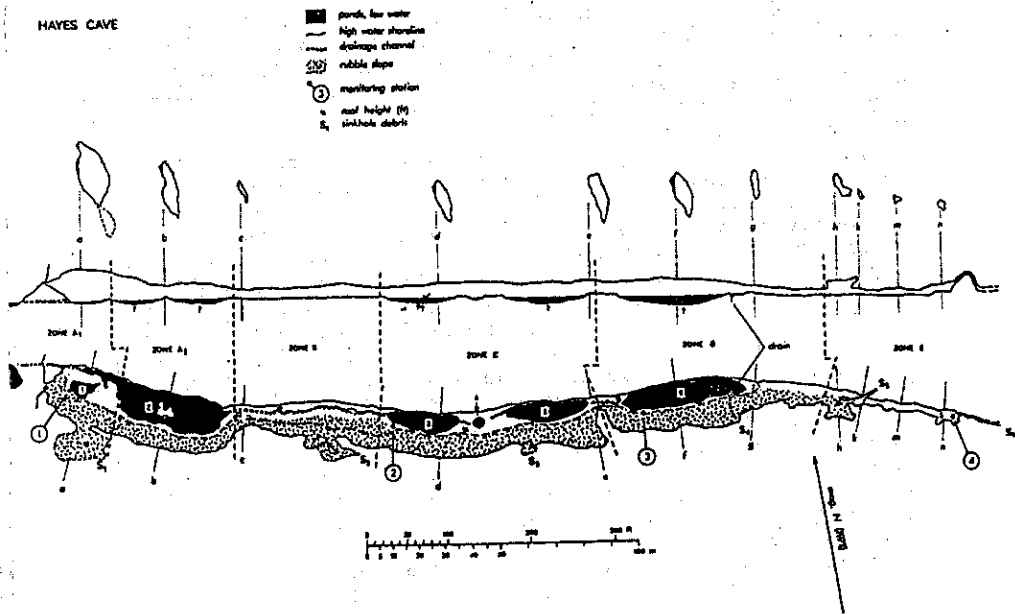


Fig. 52. Map of the interior of Hayes Cave showing bat counting zones and major physical features.

A Trip to Black Hole
October 14, 1989

by Sherman Williams
Avonport, N.S.

Twenty-seven hardy hikers of all ages turned out for an autumn day adventure to Black Hole. The sun enhanced the autumn colours while the strong breeze whipped up white caps on the Bay.

Black Hole is a small Bay of Fundy community near Baxter's Harbour. In particular, the name refers to a narrow cove that is etched into the shoreline cliffs of the area. The erosion forces of stream and tide have worked on cracks in the North Mountain rock over many years. The effect on this Bay of Fundy location has been to produce a deep narrow cove that is cut well in from the regular shoreline. The Fundy tide reaches into the outer half of the cove; the upper end of the cove is extra narrow, steep-sided and above tide level. A stream rushes along its floor. In this dark reach of the cove, a spectacular waterfall cascades over the cliff.

Viewed from the seaward side, this feature no doubt looks like a "Black Hole" in the side of the North Mountain. The reason for the name is further enhanced by a number of smaller "sea caves" in the cliff face. These literally appear as black holes in the shoreline rock of the cove. One can see that the holes began as cracks in the basalt cliffs and, through erosion by wave and running water, became the "black hole" sea caves that extend into the cliffs for eight to ten metres.

Getting to the cove was a bit rugged and rough. We did attempt to very carefully peer down into the "Black Hole" from above and then picked our way over the stream and down... down... into the steep ravine that led us to the pool and stream at the foot of the waterfall. From here the group viewed the waterfall from a variety of vantage points and took many pictures. Eventually we made our way to the tidal opening of the cove. The ebbing tide gave us access to the cove. Stepping over stone, seaweed, and gravel piles, we explored and hiked down the cove to the main shoreline. The pace was not hurried. Several ventured into the large sea-cave openings or black holes. Most everyone took time to just sit on the rocks to enjoy the scene and sound of the Fundy. We took in the wonderful mix of rugged rock patterns, blue-green waves being whipped by wind and white caps catching the rays of late afternoon sunshine.



Another, much gentler, route was taken on the return trip to the cars. Enroute we took time to examine different tree species and enjoy the autumn colours. Judging by all comments, it was a unique adventure, much enjoyed by all and well worth doing again.

Canoeing Shell Camp Stream Stillwater

October 15, 1989

by Larry Bogan
Cambridge Station, N.S.

October 15th dawned cold, clear and still. There had been a frost overnight in the Valley and heavy showers were forecast for the day. Undaunted, I packed my raincoat and was determined to enjoy myself. Fortunately, I did not have to use that coat and had one of the nicest canoe trips of the season.

I selected the Shell Camp Stream stillwater because it passes through lowland areas of Red Maple, is an easy paddle and has many pleasant meanders.

The stillwater and many nearby lakes are at the western edge of Kings County on Crown Land. On the drive to the put-in site west of Mistake Lake, we flushed some Ruffed Grouse and three White-tailed Deer. It was calm almost all morning and, as we paddled downstream, there was not a ripple. All the trees and bushes alongside the stream were perfectly mirrored in the water. It seemed a shame to disturb the water with our paddling. Unfortunately, the Red Maples along the stream had dropped their leaves and the colours were not what we might have seen a week earlier. Most of the colour came from the abundant reds of the shrubs growing along the stream bank.

When we stopped paddling, the quiet of the day was similar only to that found on a calm winter day in the midst of a forest filled with snow. We could hear nothing but the falling of the last few leaves from the trees - the peace was nearly absolute. Along the way we roused the same three Black Ducks a couple of times and encountered the same Great Blue Heron four times. The only other birds noted were the calls of the nuthatches and chickadees in the trees.



After one and a half hours on the water we returned to land and had a snack by the side of Mistake Lake. A Mink came searching for food and, as far as we could tell, didn't notice us. It searched the bank then swam to a rock in the center of the lake outlet. There it would dive to search for food, come back and shake its fur free of water, then go back into the water. Finally, it found a morsel of some

sort and left to eat in private. All this time we were no more than a couple of meters away.

Before we left the area, we explored a couple of old woods roads that lead through varying habitat but saw little animal activity. On the way home we followed a narrow gravel road where we stopped to look at Fox Lake. This is one of the more remote lakes and one must walk to it. Here we found a large granite rock and enjoyed the warmth of the sun, the scenery and the solitude of the location.

As we drove down off the South Mountain, with the Valley stretched before us in the bright sunshine, I was wondering how the weather predictions could have been so wrong.

Cape Split Shoreline Geology

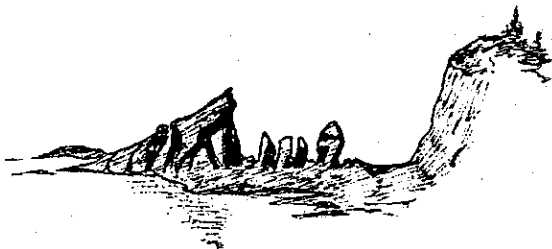
October 22, 1989

by George Stevens
Wolfville, N.S.

Under cold, threatening Fundy skies, twenty hardy souls met to trek the shoreline westward from the Scots Bay wharf towards Cape Split. I interrupted the heady freedoms of my current sabbatical leave from the Acadia Geology Department to lead my favourite field study, centered on the volcanic geology of the peninsula. Most of the Society's members are familiar with the overland trek through the woods to the Split, but few have faced the spectacular challenges and rewards waiting for those who take the shore route on the intertidal shelf.

The Cape Split Peninsula, like all of the North Mountain, is a cuesta, a slightly tilted tableland underlain by thick layers of resistant rock. Nearly 200 million years ago, in Jurassic time when the Fundy region was a desert landscape, basaltic lavas were extruded through fissures and faults, which activated as North America began to slowly split apart from Europe-Africa. These lava flows eventually piled up to a thickness ranging between 200 and 400 meters, blanketing much of eastern North America. The main activity of the separating continental blocks was to the east, however, where the Mid-Atlantic Rift marked the centerline of a widening, newly-born, Atlantic Ocean basin. The Fundy volcanic activity marks the initial stages of this "continental drift" (or as now understood, "Plate-Tectonic" activity).

Today, on Cape Split, the uppermost of the thick pile of lava flows have been uncovered by marine erosion. This made it possible for the group to see and examine details of the internal zones within a single lava flow and of the features formed by flowage, gas-emission, and cooling. In addition to these things, the route we took also showed us two (of several) volcanic collapse structures (analogous to large sink-holes). In modern volcanic terranes like Iceland and Hawaii, such collapse features are common; the roofs of subterranean tunnels (lava flowage-tubes) have collapsed, creating a series of "sink-holes" arrayed along the direction of the tunnel. On Cape Split, even more recent lavas flowed into the collapse basins and their tilt can be seen and measured yet today. Given the passage of nearly 200 million years, it's sure that no open spaces remain in the subterranean flow-tube network, even though one can actually walk for miles (as I have) through such tubes within modern lava flows. We walked for miles on our trek, but above ground.



Hot spring and hydrothermal activity are common with active vulcanism, and spectacular crystals and minerals can result in cavities and veins. Several of the members were tuned in to finding them (and some did). Veins of amethyst, agate, jasper, and of the zeolite family of minerals are well-known in our area and Nova Scotia specimens are found in the great museums of the world.

The twenty who braved the elements and made the trek seemed to enjoy the geological aspects of the Cape as something new (200 million years is new?). All who started out managed to return, more or less dry, more or less still supple, certainly enthusiastic, each knowing that their more timid stay-at-home colleagues would be envious. I was very glad for my MacIntosh and as much stimulated by new (and not so new) friends as by the geology. I look forward to the inevitable popular demand that calls for a repeat trip in the spring.

FREE OFFER!!!

For those who might become converts, a copy of George Stevens' GSA (Geological Society of America) Field Guide to the Area, published two years ago. There is also his more complete, somewhat older GAC version (Geological Association of Canada) available, for patriots. If you're among those who can't resist free offers (and quality), telephone George at 542-3426, his official sabbatical leave headquarters, and convince him of your interest, deep sincerity, and passion to receive the Geo-Gospel. But...you have to collect it yourself.



KINGLET

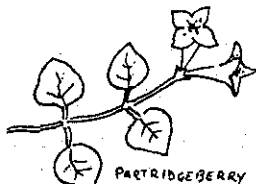
Little River Falls
October 29, 1989

by Ruth Newell
White Rock, N.S.

There were approximately twenty people present for the walk to Little River Falls. Under sunny skies, in exceptionally mild weather conditions, we casually made our way to the falls along a leaf-lined woods road, taking the time to investigate and enjoy nature's many intriguing facets. John Pickwell provided us with names for the mosses and liverworts that seemed to be in great abundance everywhere. These included pin cushion moss, hair cap moss, step moss, plume moss, red-stemmed feather moss (also known as Schreber's moss), and woolly liverwort plus many more. Sherman Williams patiently tutored everyone on the distinguishing features of the various trees and shrubs. He then, with a twinkle in his eye, proceeded to quiz us at regular intervals throughout the day to make sure some of the information would be retained. Sherman also fielded questions about the various mushrooms and other types of fungi discovered.

Bird activity was minimal. If we listened carefully, however, from time to time the high pitched, faint calls of the diminutive kinglets could be heard. Also, a few black-capped chickadees were occasionally detectable amongst the upper branches of the white birch and trembling aspens.

Some of the plants in evidence on the forest floor were: several species of clubmosses, twinflower, partridge berry, prince's pine (pipsissewa), teaberry, mayflower, various wintergreens including one-flowered shinleaf, goldthread and a plethora of ferns including Christmas fern, several of the ubiquitous wood ferns, marginal fern, the fertile stalks of the sensitive fern, rock polypody, royal fern and interrupted fern.



We ate our lunch at the falls and then ventured further downstream to where Little River flows into the Gaspereau River. Here we delighted in the picturesque scenery which included a flock of common mergansers fishing a short distance downstream.

We then slowly made our way back to the vehicles, content and feeling that the day had been more than well spent.

November Astronomy November 1, 1989

by Larry Bogan
Cambridge Station, N.S.

The most difficult aspect of setting up an observation session of the sky is getting a good cloudless night. We were lucky on the night of November 1 because, although the sky was completely overcast all day, by sunset it cleared rapidly; for the observation session we had excellent clear skies.

Planets are usually of most interest at observation sessions. Unfortunately, Saturn was setting as the session started and Jupiter did not rise until the session was over for most participants. We did get glimpses of both planets but there was lots of atmosphere to look through which distorted the view of them.

Roy Bishop, Sherman Williams and I were able to show the 20+ participants (it's difficult to count people in the dark) many constellations and special celestial objects. At this time of year and time of night, the Milky Way covers the sky from Aquila in the southwest to Auriga in the northeast. The summer triangle whose vertices are defined by the bright stars, Deneb, Altair, and Vega, is high in the west.

We used three telescopes with different diameter lenses (20 cm, 12 cm and 6 cm) to show magnified views of many celestial objects. We were able to show examples of all types of objects, from open clusters (such as the double clusters in Perseus), to globular clusters (such as M-13 in Hercules), to planetary nebulae (such as the Ring Nebula in Lyra and the Dumbbell Nebula in Vulpecula), to galaxies (such as the great Andromeda galaxy in the constellation of Andromeda). Many more celestial objects were also viewed.

Some potential participants were probably confused by the weather and did not come to the session at the proper time. If November 1 had been clouded out, the session was to have taken place on November 2, if it had cleared. November 2 was a bright clear day and, if one had not looked careful-

ly at the sky on the evening of November 1, one might have thought the session was postponed to the next night. In fact, the sky clouded over on the evening of November 2 and no session would have been possible despite the day's having been so clear.



NATURAL HISTORY REPORTS

Project FeederWatch Update August 1989

Long Point Bird Observatory
Long Point, Ont.

If you noticed a big drop in the numbers of birds at your feeder last winter, you weren't alone. Thousands of observers contributing data to Project FeederWatch documented a decline in feeder activity that extended across the entire North American continent.

Pine siskins remained in their normal haunts in the 1988-89 winter, after an amazing invasion the previous year to all parts of North America. Over 85 million siskins were estimated to visit feeders that winter, while the numbers in 1988-89 nose-dived to less than half that figure.

In eastern regions, conspicuous decreases at feeders were also seen for Common Redpoll, Evening Grosbeak, Purple Finch, White-breasted Nuthatch, Northern Cardinal and most blackbirds. Pygmy Nuthatch and White-Crowned Sparrow were in short supply west of the Mississippi.

How do we know all this? Over 7,000 people across North America brought their hobby of bird feeding to new heights, by participating in Project FeederWatch. They recorded bird sightings from their feeders for ten two-day periods between November and April, and sent data to the Long Point Bird Observatory. LPBO coordinates the project in Canada, in cooperation with the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology.

FeederWatchers also determined which bird was most likely to visit your feeder -- Dark-eyed Junco (seen at 73 percent of all feeders continent-wide). House Sparrow was the most abundant species, averaging ten birds per feeder throughout the winter. Which bird species are most abundant at feeders varied considerably from one region of the continent to the other -- only five species visited more than half of all feeders. Besides Dark-eyed Junco and House Sparrow, this list included Black-capped Chickadee, American Goldfinch and Downy Woodpecker.

But Project FeederWatch documents not only the numbers and kinds of birds at feeders, it also looks at the effects of weather, habitat and food supply. Many people in the eastern part of the continent blamed last winter's lackluster feeder attendance on the weather, suggesting that mild temperatures and lack of snow gave birds access to natural foods which reduced their dependence on feeders. Early indications from 1988 Christmas Bird Counts, however, are that the birds simply weren't there -- even "in the wild".

Where were they? We know that tree-seed eaters such as

siskins, redpolls and nuthatches exhibit large annual variations in winter range. And, in some cases, we know where these birds were last season. There was no lack of Pine Siskins in western regions, which also hosted grosbeaks and American Goldfinches in abundance. In addition, generous tree-seed crops in certain parts of Canada may have kept many finches in the northern boreal forest.

Most of the other birds missing from feeders last winter eat weed seeds, grain and insects, and these birds do not appear to have moved elsewhere. It is possible that the severe droughts of the last several years reduced breeding populations by diminishing the abundance of their usual foods. The six-fold increase in avian predators at feeders last winter might support this hypothesis. If prey was lacking away from the feeders, Sharp-Shinned Hawks and other raptors might have been forced to concentrate on feeders. FeederWatch's 1989-1990 data may help answer this and other questions.

Although dated August 1989, this update arrived too late for inclusion in the September 1989 Newsletter. Information on joining Project FeederWatch for 1990-91 will be included in the June 1990 Newsletter. Ed.

Autumn Weather in the Valley - 1989

by Larry Bogan
Cambridge Station, N.S.

Autumn 1989 weather appeared to regress month by month from "better-than-average" to "worse-than-average".

September, which is usually a good month anyway, was even more delightful because it was warmer, sunnier, and drier than usual. We had 20 percent more sun than normal and were a full 1.7 C warmer than the 30-year average.

October was just slightly "better" than average with more sun and less rain but slightly lower temperatures than the average. We got no snowfall in October while in many years we can expect some towards the end of the month.

November shows the trend to the bad weather with cooler, rainier, snowier, and cloudier weather than the average. It was "worse" in all categories. November was phenomenal for the extremes that existed in a short period. The maximum for the month occurred on Nov. 16th at 19.5 C and by the 20th the minimum was -6 C. The extreme minimum for the month occurred on the 25th with a value of -11 C. The maximum and minimum were only nine days apart. It's as if someone decided to go directly from summer to winter and threw the switch. By November 27th we had 27 cm of snow on the ground from over four times the long-term average snowfall for the month.

The extreme cold of November continued into December and stayed until the end of the month. As a result it was one of the coldest in history with the mean temperature being over 6 C (11 F) below the norm. This resulted in December having as many heating degree days (825) as all the other months of Fall put together. Even January, which is the coldest month

of the year usually has only 713 heating degree days. It was a dry December because we had only half the expected precipitation and only 1/3 the expected rain. The snowfall was a little above average and the depth on the ground reached 30 cm by the end of the month. This provided some excellent skiing during the Holiday Season. Fortunately, the sun came out more than it usually does in December and we had some very cheery but cold weather to ski in.

As with November, December had a sudden change in temperature, late in the month and in the opposite direction. The extreme minimum of -21 C occurred on Christmas morning and the extreme maximum for the month of +9 C came nearly seven days later on New Years Eve day.

Weather Statistics, September through December, 1989
from the Kentville Agricultural Centre
(30-year averages reported in parentheses)

1989	Mean Temp. (C)	Heating Degree Days (C)	Precip. (mm)	Snow fall (cm)	Bright sunshine hours
Sept.	14.8 (13.1)	107 (123)	121 (85)	0 (0)	211 (175)
Oct.	8.9 (9.1)	283 (278)	75 (99)	0 (3)	141 (131)
Nov.	3.6 (4.0)	438 (422)	128 (106)	52 (12)	66 (81)
Dec.	-8.6 (-2.4)	825 (631)	67 (130)	68 (57)	77 (56)
Total		1653 (1454)	391 (420)	120 (72)	495 (443)

TRIVIAL TIDBITS

TRIVIAL TIDBITS
of Local Natural History
September 1, 1989 to November 30, 1989

selected and compiled
by Jim Wolford
Wolfville, N.S.

Date
(1989)

Obs

I Astronomy/Weather/Climate/Geology

- Sep 3 -aurora borealis over Wolfville
- Nov 16 -extremely warm day, high of 19.5 C (see Sections III and IV)
- Nov 17 -a good show of northern lights seen over Port Williams

JW
KARS
GF

<u>Date</u> (1989)		<u>Obs</u>
<u>II Plants/Funqi/Seaweeds etc.</u>		
Sep 3	-Japanese knotweeek ("bamboo") in bloom in Wolfville	JW
Sep 8	-red bartsia in bloom near Avonport	JW
Oct 1	-very lush growth of liverwort (Marchantia) at bottom of large sinkhole at Hayes Cave, South Maitland	BNS
	-harebells, twinflower, gypsum ragwort, etc. still in bloom on gypsum-karst topography, at Hayes Cave	BLF, JW
	-poison ivy and an elderberry plant with very wide leaflets, at Hayes Cave	GF
Oct 7	-on Bon Portage Island, herb Robert, sea rocket, mayweed, rose, wild radish, bull thistle, lady's thumb and sea lungwort still in bloom	
Oct 14	-at Baxter's Harbour, a few strawberry flowers	BNS
Oct 19	-at Delhaven, lots of shaggy-mane mushrooms	JG, JW
Oct 20	-at Greenwich, swamp white oak trees	GF
Oct 24	-at New Minas, a giant puffball	JRB
Nov 1	-in Wolfville, oyster mushrooms on a maple trunk	JW

III Insects and Other Invertebrates

Sep 4	-at Sheffield Mills, several alder trunks covered with colonies of alder woolly aphids	JW
Sep 5	-in Wolfville, an adult male northeastern pine sawyer beetle	KWC
Sep 6-7	-in Wolfville, a few winged ants	JW
Sep 8	-at Grand Pre, several clusters of sulphur butterflies around puddles or mud	JGT, MP
Sep 10	-on Wolfville dykes, lots of small adult katydids	JW
Sep 12	-on Starr's Point mudflat, 2 very long "blood-worms" found by worm-diggers	JSBo, JW
Sep 14	-in Wolfville, a very impressively wide span of a cross spider's web (at least 3.5 m horizontally between shrubs)	JW
Sep 18	-at Grand Pre dykelands, oodles of sulphur butterflies	JW
Oct 7	-on Bon Portage Island, about 10 monarch butterflies migrating	JW
Oct 9	-on Bon Portage Island, a few red admiral butterflies	BM, JW
Oct 14	-in Kentville, many red oak acorns on ground show holes from weevils or moths and red oak leaves on trees and ground show heavy mining by oak skeletonizer moths; also butternut leaves very heavily eaten by insects (caterpillars?)	JW
	-on Wolfville Ridge, two larvae of long-horned or round-headed borers found when splitting maple wood	BLF
	-on the Fundy coast at the mouth of Black Hole Brook, on the basalt well above the high tide mark, lots of puzzling emergence cases (old) of mayflies - from the brook in summer?	BNS, JW
Nov 16	-at 19.5 C, crickets chirping	BNS
Nov 22	-in Port Williams, a cluster of tiny spiderlings just inside the door of a home	MT


Date
(1989)

Obs

IV Fishes and Herptiles

- Sep 5-6 -near Kingsport, 9 + 1 bluefish (not "Boston bluefish", which is really pollock) caught by fishermen CKC,MD,JW
- Sep 7 -at Sambro, a large mako shark (reported by press as a great white) SS
- Sep 17-18 -spring peepers peeping at Old Annapolis Hiking Trail and at Gaspereau BNS,EG
- Nov 1 -near White Rock at midday, a large yellow-spotted salamander crossed road BLF
- Nov 16 -on extremely warm day (19.5 C), several spring peepers heard calling at West Brooklyn, on Wolfville Ridge and elsewhere GA,BLF, et al

V Mammals

- early Sept. -many reports from New Minas, and especially Wolfville, about skunks, either their presence or damage to lawns JW
- Sep 6 -from Port Williams to Canard Valley, three road-killed skunks JW
- Sep 8 -between Windsor and Avonport, three skunks and two juvenile raccoons, all road-killed JW
- Sep 9 -on Wolfville Ridge, six dark gray mice and a nest discovered while splitting wood; one mouse "froze" and had to be coaxed to move JGT
- Sep 11 (approx.) -at Gaspereau, two bats in a split crotch, about 8 m up, in a poplar (which was cut down) EG
- Oct 1 -north coast of P.E.I., 6 sperm whales beached CBC
- Oct 3 -north of Halifax, a probable coyote PT,JW
- Oct 14 -in Kentville, a red squirrel has gathered butter-nuts in piles both on the ground and in butter-nut tree crotches JW
- 3 mole pushups (piles of dirt) 
on Fundy shore at Black Hole - strange habitat for star-nosed mole? BNS
- Oct 15 -at Lumsden Reservoir, a raccoon was sleeping on a great horned owl nest-platform 8 m up; when awakened, it jumped to the ground and ran away! BLF
- Oct 25 -at Delahven, a dead harbour porpoise JG
- local orchards have heavy mouse (vole) populations this fall OO
- early Nov -in Wolfville, a red squirrel repeatedly carrying acorns from an oak to an apple tree and caching them in a hollow DHS
- Nov 22 -on North Mountain, a snowshoe hare has been in residence for 3 months in an empty chicken house; house cats completely ignore it GC

VI Birds - Reports of Rarities

- Sep 1 -at Cape Sable, an American avocet and two snowy egrets JGT,NSBS

Date
(1989)

Sep 2-4 -on Bon Portage Island, 7 species of heron including great egret, little blue heron, snowy egret, cattle egret, and black-crowned night heron; also 3 Baird's sandpipers, a black-billed cuckoo, a blue-winged warbler, and a blue-gray gnatcatcher

JGT, NSBS



- on Brier Island, a Philadelphia vireo, a Connecticut warbler, and a dickcissel PC, BLF, ALL
- Sep 9 -on Brier Island, a long-billed curlew RBA
- Sep 16-17 -at Amherst Point, 2 snow geese (1 blue phase) and 3 immature black-crowned night herons GF
- Sep 24 -on Brier Island, a buff-breasted sandpiper and an immature field sparrow BLF
- Sep 29 to Oct 1 -on Bon Portage Island, a yellow-breasted chat and an indigo bunting ABD, CN
- Oct 3 -a peregrine falcon flew over Wolfville with prey in its talons BLF
- Oct 4 -in Kingsport Sanctuary, an immature snow goose DTO
- Oct 7 -on Bon Portage Island, a northern mockingbird, 2 marsh wrens, a scarlet tanager, a yellow-breasted chat, 2 grasshopper sparrows, 2 field sparrows, a white-crowned sparrow, a clay-colored sparrow, and an indigo bunting NSBS
- Oct 8 -on Bon Portage Island, 3 snow geese, a house wren, a white-eyed vireo, a blue-winged warbler, 2 orange-crowned warblers NSBS
- Oct 9 -west of Berwick, a yellow-billed cuckoo BLF
- Oct 14 -at Medford Beach, one snow goose JGT
- Oct 15 -at Evangeline Beach, a horned grebe in breeding plumage JGT
- near Habitant, an adult white-crowned sparrow JGT
- Oct 16 -on Wolfville Ridge, a brown thrasher JGT
- Oct 26 -at Hartlen's Point, Dartmouth, three indigo buntings JGT
- Oct 27-29 -on Bon Portage Island, 3 white-eyed vireos, 1 orange-crowned warbler, and a yellow-breasted chat
- Oct 29 -near Advocate, a fork-tailed flycatcher RBA
- Nov 8 to end of Nov -in Wolfville, a male northern cardinal CY
- Nov 9 -in Wolfville, 2 possible sandhill cranes (sightings inadequate but intriguing - JW) EM
- Nov 11 -on Brier Island 2 turkey vultures, black-legged kittiwakes, a northern mockingbird and a grasshopper sparrow; on Digby Neck, a western kingbird BLF

<u>Date</u> (1989)		<u>Obs</u>
Nov 13	-in Halifax, a Eurasian jackdaw, with most of the lower part of its beak missing, the same bird as last winter; also a lesser black-backed gull	GF, HF, BLF
Nov 15	-over Port Williams/Greenwich, a turkey vulture	GF
Nov 16	-east of Wolfville, an eastern meadowlark	BBT
Nov 18-19	-in Kingsport Sanctuary, a barnacle goose with 400+ Canada geese	JGT
Nov 20	-in Wolfville, a northern mockingbird	GF et al
Nov 26	-in Port Williams, a male house finch	PCS LC

VII Birds - Migrational or Seasonal Reports

Aug 31	-at Canning and Canard Poultry, 2 single soras	JGT
Sep 1	-at Canard Poultry, a sora and a solitary sandpiper	BBT
Sep 5	-at Grand Pre, 12 lesser golden-plovers and 3 red knots	JGT
Sep 6	-New Glasgow, 3 chimney swifts entered an old school chimney	HB
Sep 9	-off Evangeline Beach, 30 moulting male common eiders	JGT MG
Sep 13	-in Canning, a Wilson's warbler	
Sep 16	-in Wolfville, my last sighting of chimney swifts (1 or 2) at Front Street chimney	JW
Sep 16	-at Amherst Point, 75 Canada geese and a peregrine falcon	GF
Sep 19	-at Port Williams sewage ponds, a pied-billed grebe	GF
Sep 25	-at Canard Poultry pond, a northern shoveler	PCS
Sep 29	-at Grand Pre, a peregrine falcon	BBT
Sep 29 to Oct 1	-on Bon Portage Island, 8 northern saw-whet owls and 34 Leach's storm-petrels netted and banded	ABD, CN
Sep 30	-at Sheffield Mills, 5 lesser scaup and 25 <u>juvenile</u> ring-billed gulls (from?)	JW
	-near Kingsport, at least 200 Canada geese, very early for such numbers there	DTo
Oct 2	-near Wellington Dyke, 10 gray partridge	DTo
Oct 3	-at Canard Poultry pond, 8 northern pintails	JGT
Oct 4	-near Canning, 20 gray partridge	MG
Oct 7	-on Bon Portage Island, 4 peregrine falcons and a northern gannet	JW
Oct 8	-at Canning, 2 willets	JGT
	-in Black River system, 49 common mergansers	JGT
Oct 15	-at Evangeline Beach, 3 red-throated loons and 2 pine grosbeaks	JGT
	-a very large flock of about 1200 cormorants flying west over Wolfville.	HF
Oct 16	-report that this fall there are more "moose-birds" than usual along highway from Chester to Wolfville (moose-birds = gray jays)	MD
Oct 18	-over Kingsport, 4 large V's of cormorants, total of 1500, all flying west	DTo
Oct 19 to Nov 6	-on Wolfville Ridge, 1 or 2 fox sparrows	JGT

Oct 22	-at Scots Bay, a northern shrike	HF
Oct 24	-in Wolfville, a black-and-white warbler	JSB
	-at Canard Poultry pond, a lesser scaup	JGT
Oct 27-29	-on Bon Portage Island, netting for banding yielded 9 Leach's storm-petrels, 11 northern saw-whet owls, 1 long-eared owl, 6 gray catbirds, 4 hermit thrushes, 2 Swainson's thrushes, 30 golden-crowned kinglets, 9 ruby-crowned kinglets, 34 yellow-rumped warblers, 1 blackburnian warbler, 1 black-throated blue warbler, 2 fox sparrows, 1 white-winged crossbill, etc.	ABD
Oct 29	-in Canning, 5 Bohemian waxwings (grew to 12)	MG
	-at Delhaven, 5 oldsquaws	MG
Oct 31	-in Wolfville, 20 Bohemian waxwings	BLF
Nov 2	-at Grand Pre, 90 white-rumped sandpipers, 1 sanderling, several red knots and a dark-phase rough-legged hawk	BLF
	-at Canning, 2 gadwalls	JGT
	-in Wolfville, a yellow-rumped warbler	JSB
	-at Grand Pre, 8 Lapland longspurs	BLF
Nov 4	-in Wolfville, a swamp sparrow and 4 American tree sparrows	JSB
Nov 5	-at Kentville, a killdeer sitting in the centre of the road at 9:00 p.m.	MZ
	-at Starr's Point, a great horned owl in a small woodlot	BLF
Nov 8	-in Canning, an American bittern, a great blue heron, a gadwall, and 10 American wigeons	GF
Nov 9	-in Kingsport area, about 700 Canada geese	DT
	-on Wolfville Ridge, 2 yellow-rumped warblers	BLF
Nov 10	-near Sunken Lake, 5 hooded mergansers courting	BLF
Nov 12	-near Chipman's Corner, 6 hooded mergansers	JW
	-in Canning, 60 Bohemian waxwings	MG
	-on Wolfville Ridge, 6 pine grosbeaks	BLF
Nov 13	-on Wolfville Ridge, 2 pine siskins	JGT
Nov 15	-at Kingsport, 12 great blue herons	JGT
	-at Grand Pre, 30 dunlins	BBT
	-in Wolfville, 9 pine grosbeaks	JSB
Nov 16	-small flocks of American tree sparrows "everywhere"	JGT
Nov 18	-at Drain Lake near Sackville, 2 hooded mergansers	JW
	-at Grand Pre, 1 red-throated loon, 35 white-winged scoters, 1 American robin, and 4 snow buntings	BBT
	-in Wolfville, a chipping sparrow	JSB
Nov 19	-in Canning, 1 gadwall and 1 American wigeon	JW
	-at Black Rock (Canada Creek), 6 purple sandpipers	BLF
	-at Kingsport, 200 ring-billed gulls, nearly all adults	JW
	-on Wolfville Ridge, a northern flicker	JGT
	-in Wolfville, both red and white-winged crossbills	PCS
Nov 20	-in Wolfville, pine siskins	JSB
Nov 22-23	-all day long, many flocks of Canada geese flying over Wolfville from the direction of Truro and heading southwest	DT, MG
	-in Wolfville, 50+ Bohemian waxwings eating snow off maple branches	LR

Nov. 22-23

- (cont'd)-in Wolfville, a chipping sparrow JSB
-on Wolfville Ridge, 34 evening grosbeaks JGT
Nov 23 -in Wolfville, 6 white-throated sparrows JGT
Nov 24 -in Wolfville, a palm warbler JSB
Nov 25 -at Wolfville, an American bittern CB
-in Wolfville, a Nashville warbler JSB
-at Grand Pre, a huge flock of several thousand
snow bunting was flushed by a male northern
harrier BLF
Nov 26 -in Melville, 2 chipping sparrows JW
Nov 27 -at Melanson, a badly injured, adult Bonaparte's
gull PH,CKC
Nov 29 -at 8:00 p.m., lots of Canada geese heard going
over Wolfville flying south SVK,JW
-in Wolfville, 10+ American robins CB
Nov 30 -at Grand Pre, a dark-phase gyrfalcon BBT

VIII Birds - Nesting Activities

- Sep 3 -at Clementsvalle, 50 white-winged crossbills,
including streaked juveniles GP
Oct 4 -a large dead nestling rock dove found on campus
of Acadia University TM,JW

IX Birds - Miscellaneous (Behaviour, Predation, etc.)

- Sep 3 -at Grand Pre, a male northern harrier flew falcon-
like, fast and low, flushed a flock of peeps, but
did not chase any - all for fun? JW
Sep 4 -at Horton Bluff, lots of "cliff doves" (rock
doves) flying along shore cliffs TM
Sep 5 -at Port Williams, a colour-banded juvenile
peregrine falcon found badly injured; it was one
of the captive-bred birds released in Blomidon
Park in July 1988 PA,CKC
Sep 9 -at Grand Pre, a sharp-shinned hawk and an Amer-
ican kestrel, not together, but both being har-
assed by European starlings JGT
Sep 10 -lots of European starlings high in the air, fly-
catching, over Wolfville at dusk JW
Sep 11 -a weak Wilson's storm-petrel photographed on
Lake Kejimikujik; a victim of Hurricane
Gabrielle? PBM
Sep 24 -dozens of Leach's storm-petrels close to shore
near Digby and at Port George BLF,MDo,MT
-near Digby, lots of feeding northern gannets
offshore BLF
Sep 25 -the oiled and very weak Leach's storm-petrel
found at Aldershot (see September 1989 News-
letter) - a victim of Hurricane Hugo? -
released on Bon Portage Island FB
Sep 30 -on Wolfville Ridge, blue jays chasing a sharp-
shinned hawk JGT
Oct 1 -at Canning, blue jays chasing a sharp-shinned
hawk. (Are these two reports coincidental?
What's going on here? JW) MG
Oct 9 -on Bon Portage Island, at 11:00 a.m., a Leach's
storm-petrel flew ashore, hovered, then disap-
peared down a burrow! (extremely unusual

- daytime behaviour) SB
 Oct 12 -at Port Williams, a blue jay pulling strips of MT
 white paint off a house and eating them!
 Oct 20 -on Gaspereau Mountain, several blue jays steal-
 ing acorns (from a human-gathered bagful); one
 observed pushing an acorn into the ground with
 its beak and then covering it with 3 leaves RMc
 Nov 8 -on Wolfville Ridge, a downy woodpecker entering
 a roosting cavity at dusk BLF

X - Weird and Unclassifiabls

- Nov 12 -a Sunday - at Harris' Pond in the town
 of Canning, 2 hunters actually stalking and
shooting at ducks! (They pleaded innocence
 and then departed.) BLF, JGT



Contributors

GA	George Alliston	ALL	Andree & Lance Laviolette
PA	Peter Austin-Smith	BM	Bob McDonald
RBA	Rare Bird Alert	EM	Erich Muntz
CB	Calvin Brennan	TM	Terry Murphy
FB	Fred Bond	RMc	Rosaleen McDonald
HB	Harry Brennan	PBM	Pat & Bill Martell
SB	Shirley Brothers	CN	Chris Naugler
JRB	Joanne and Ron Bezanson	OO	<u>Orchard Outlook</u> (bulletin)
JSB	Nancy & Sherman Bleakney	GP	Gini Proulx
JSBo	Sherman Boates	MP	Mary Pratt
GC	Gordon Callon	LR	Ladny Richmond
LC	Lana Churchill	SS	Sean Smith
PC	Peter Comeau	BNS	Blomidon Naturalists Soc.
CBC	CBC Radio	DHS	David Hope-Simpson
CKC	Cyril Coldwell	PCS	Peter Smith
KWC	Karen and Warren Clement	KARS	Kentville Agricultural Centr
MD	Mike Dadswell	NSBS	Nova Scotia Bird Society
MDo	Martha Dodge	JT	Jean Timpa
ABD	Acadia Biol. Dept.	MT	Miriam Tams
GF	George Forsyth	PT	Peter Thomas
HF	Harold Forsyth	MTh	Merrill Thorpe
BLF	Sandra & Bernard Forsythe	DTO	Dan Toews
EG	Ellis Gertridge	BBT	Brenda & Bill Thexton
JG	Jamie Gibson	JGT	Judy & Gordon Tufts
MG	Merritt Gibson	JW	Jim Wolford
PH	Paulette Harris	CY	Carolyn Yuill
SVK	Sam VanderKloet	MZ	Marian Zinck



Bird Nesting Survey - 1989

by Bernard Forsythe
Wolfville, N.S.

Several years have passed since my last report on the nesting records that I contribute to the Maritimes Nest Record Scheme. Although other interests, especially orchids, take up a lot of my time I still manage to find a fair number of bird nests each year. Orchid trips resulted in some of my best nest finds this year. On several such outings to Methals Lake Bog the nests of common loon, common merganser, bald eagle, black-backed woodpecker (my first ever), olive-sided flycatcher, eastern kingbird, common yellowthroat, and rusty blackbird were all found at or near the bog.

Tending nest boxes can be time consuming; however, the rewards are many. This year common mergansers, eight pairs of barred owls, tree swallows, and black-capped chickadees nested in my boxes. An example of how hard some cavity nesters have to search for a home occurred at one of my owl boxes at Black River Lake. This box is 35 feet up in a red spruce in mature woods half a mile from the lake. Over the years it had been used by both red and flying squirrels but not barred owls. On May 31 I climbed to this box and upon looking in could hardly believe my eyes. Inside was an incubating female common merganser. She had "puffed up" her body to about double its normal size while making a snake-like hissing noise and refused to leave the box. I wondered how long she had explored the surrounding woods before stumbling on my box. With all the harvesting of our forests the cavity shortage is very real and putting up boxes could become necessary to provide homes for some species of birds and mammals, especially the larger ones.

A lone cliff swallow nest on a house at Black River failed when it was taken over by house sparrows. After an absence of many years cliff swallows are slowly returning to the Wolfville area but the house sparrow problem will certainly hinder their reestablishment. Another nest of special interest was a white-breasted nuthatch nest in woods near Sunken Lake. Although I often see this species in our towns, I rarely see it in the woods where it is replaced by the red-breasted nuthatch. On June 3, I watched as the adult white-breasted nuthatches fed six young in the nest located in an old pileated woodpecker feeding cavity dug four feet from the ground in a balsam fir tree.

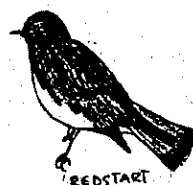
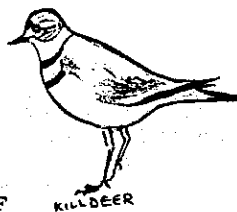
Below is a list of nests I found in 1989 and their fate. Because of lack of time some nests were not revisited so their fate was unknown. For those interested in statistics, I sent 89 nest cards representing 47 species of birds to the Scheme in 1989. In 15 years I have submitted 1,912 nest cards for 116 species of birds. With a bit of luck maybe the 2,000 mark will be reached in 1990.

Bird Nests Found in 1989

Number Species

Outcome*

1	Common Loon	S
1	American Black Duck	S
2	Common Merganser	2S
1	Bald Eagle	?
1	Northern Harrier	S
1	Northern Goshawk	S
2	Red-tailed Hawk	2F
1	Killdeer	?
1	Mourning Dove	?
1	Great Horned Owl	S
8	Barred Owl	7S, 1F
1	Hairy Woodpecker	?
1	Black-backed Woodpecker	S
1	Olive-sided Flycatcher	?
2	Alder Flycatcher	2F
1	Least Flycatcher	F
1	Eastern Phoebe	S
2	Eastern Kingbird	??
3	Tree Swallow	2F, 1?
1	Cliff Swallow	F
2	Barn Swallow	1S, 1F
3	Blue Jay	1S, 2F
1	American Crow	?
4	Common Raven	2S, 2?
2	Black-capped Chickadee	1S, 1?
1	White-breasted Nuthatch	?
1	Brown Creeper	?
1	Swainson's Thrush	?
1	Hermit Thrush	F
5	American Robin	3S, 2?
6	European Starling	3S, 3F
2	Red-eyed Vireo	2F
3	Yellow Warbler	1F, 2?
1	Yellow-rumped Warbler	?
1	Black-and-white Warbler	?
1	American Redstart	S
1	Common Yellowthroat	S
1	Savannah Sparrow	?
1	Song Sparrow	S
1	Swamp Sparrow	?
4	Dark-eyed Junco	1F, 3?
2	Red-winged Blackbird	2S
1	Rusty Blackbird	S
2	Common Grackle	2F
4 #	Brown-headed Cowbird	1S, 3F
3	American Goldfinch	2S, 1?
1	House Sparrow	?



* S - successful, F- failed, ? - fate unknown

Nests of other species that contained parasitically-laid eggs of the Brown-headed cowbird.