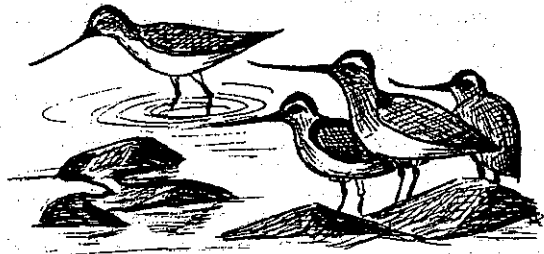


BLOMIDON NATURALISTS SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 15
NUMBER 3
SEPTEMBER 1988



BNS Fall Programme

MONDAY EVENING MEETINGS: All meetings will start at 7:30 p.m. and, unless otherwise indicated, will be held in Room 241 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. September 19 -- Zoe Lucas will present "Ocean Pollution and Sable Island".
2. October 17 -- Dr. Richard Stern will speak on his trip last winter to southeast Arizona.
3. November 21 -- Lawyer Robert Morrison will discuss the importance of environmental law in today's society. This and similar lectures are an outgrowth of the N.S. Bar Association involvement in Environment Week, May 28 to June 5, 1988.
4. December 12 -- Film-maker John Brett, of the National Film Board, Halifax, will discuss and screen two of his nature documentaries: "The Sea Raven", about cormorants, and a new release about migratory fish which utilize our coastal waters.

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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.

Address correspondence to:
 Blomidon Naturalists Society
 P.O. Box 127
 Wolfville, Nova Scotia B0P 1X0

Field Trips

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

1. Sunday, September 25, 12:45 p.m. or 1:00 p.m. at Grand Pre Park -- Late Shorebirds. Leader: Jim Wolford (542-7650).

2. Thursday, September 29, 8:30 p.m. at Grand Pre Park parking lot -- Stars, Planets and Harvest Moonrise with Sherman Williams (542-5104), and Larry Bogan (678-0446). No rain date.

3. Sunday, October 2, 1:00 p.m. or 1:30 p.m. at Kentville Research Station picnic grounds. Fungal Foray in the Kentville Ravine. Leader to be arranged.

4. Sunday, October 16, 9:00 a.m. -- Naturalists' free-for-all hike to picturesque Little River Falls near Sunken Lake. Leaders: Ruth Newell (542-2095) and Bernard Forsythe (542-2427). Bring your lunch.

5. Saturday, November 5, 1:30 p.m. -- Geology field trip (in cars) in Kings County. Leader: Dr. Jack Colwell.

Speakers

BNS Fall Programme

Zoe Lucas

Although Zoe has a Masters degree in Fine Arts from the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design and taught there for several years, most of us know her by her work as a biologist on Sable Island. She has participated in and conducted numerous zoological and botanical studies on that island and now spends six to nine months of the year there. Current research programs in which she is involved are concerned with the island's feral horses, vegetation, terrain restoration and plastic litter pollution.

Dr. Richard Stern

Dr. Stern is a Kentville physician, an avid ornithologist, a past president of the Blomidon Naturalists Society and current president of the Nova Scotia Bird Society.

Robert Morrison

Mr. Morrison, a native of Little Bras d'Or, Cape Breton, graduated from Dalhousie University with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Canadian Political Science in 1985 and a Law degree in the spring of 1988. Between his second and third year of Law School, he worked as a researcher/writer with the Public Legal Education Society of Nova Scotia preparing

pamphlets on various areas of the law. He is presently articling with the law firm of Taylor, MacLellan & Cochrane in Kentville.

John Brett

We were unable to obtain biographical information about John Brett before going to press but look forward to hearing about him at the December meeting.

SOCIETY NEWS

Acknowledgements

Many thanks to:

Peter Hicklin, for presenting his shorebird research in such an illuminating and entertaining way;
all our field trip leaders: Larry Bogan, Bernard Forsythe, Tom Herman, Reg Melanson and Jim Wolford;
and everyone who contributed to the Newsletter.

A special thanks this issue to the people who help publish the Newsletter:

Mary Pratt, for her excellent art work;
Larry Bogan, for laying the Newsletter out and getting it to the printer;
Bill Thexton, for picking it up from the printer;
and Lana Churchill and Brenda Thexton, for putting the Newsletters in envelopes and addressing and distributing them, often on very short notice since they're last in the long chain of people who handle the Newsletter.

And a very special thanks from Judy Tufts, seconded by all B.N.S. members, to:

Lana Churchill, for acting as backup Treasurer for Judy so often.

Cyril Coldwell Honoured by BNS

At the June 20 meeting, Bernard Forsythe, on behalf of the BNS, presented Cyril Coldwell with an Honourary Life Membership in recognition of his contributions to the Society. He was a founding member and President of the Society in 1975-76. In the early years of the Society, he lead numerous field trips and was a regular contributor to the Newsletter. Cyril has participated in several presentations at Society meetings, is a major contributor to the displays at the annual "Show and Tell" night and is an active participant in the Christmas Bird Count. He has always provided BNS members, and others, with full access to his Raptor Rehabilitation Centre.

Other recipients of Honorary Life Memberships are Dr. Robie Tufts, John Erskine, Dr. Kenneth A. Harrison, Rachel Erskine, Dr. Albert E. Roland and Jean Timpa.

Congratulations Cyril and we look forward to your continued participation in the Society.

December BNS Newsletter

To avoid the problems associated with publishing the Newsletter immediately before Christmas and to allow the inclusion of Christmas Bird Counts, the "winter solstice" Newsletter will be published in January.

Contributors, please see BNS Newsletter Submissions Deadline below.

BNS Newsletter Submissions Deadline - December 1, 1988

Please send or give all contributions to the Newsletter to:
George Alliston (542-3651)

R.R 3

Wolfville, N.S. B0P 1X0

or to other members of the BNS executive.

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

Biology Department

Acadia University

Wolfville, N.S. B0P 1X0

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

The editors would greatly appreciate all submissions, even those typed or word-processed, being at least double-spaced to facilitate both editing and word processing. Sketches or diagrams should be submitted in final form, preferably on a separate page.

Reminders

All you avid bird feeder watchers who have not already done so should consider signing up immediately for Project FeederWatch so you can start contributing observations during the winter of 1988-89. For details, see the Newsletter, Volume 15, Number 1, March 1988.

Primary school teachers and students. Are you participating in the Operation Lifeline program? If you aren't, you are missing out on an excellent conservation-oriented educational program. For details, see the Newsletter, Volume 15, Number 1, March 1988.

FIELD TRIP REPORTS

Poplar Grove & Yellow Lady's-slipper Orchids
June 19, 1988

by Jim Wolford
Wolfville, N.S.

A warm sunny day brought out about 25 people (including a tourist from Maryland) for this nearly annual walk into the gypsum-underlain vegetation. Thankfully, biting flies were not much of a problem this year -- a few mosquitoes, almost no deerflies.

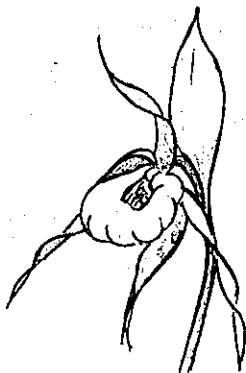
As usual, on the walk to our favourite spot, we saw, on balsam firs, witch's-brooms that were ripe with spores of the rust fungus. John Pickwell pointed out various kinds of mosses and ferns. One fly-agaric mushroom was being eaten by slugs. Also noted were abundant growths on cherry leaves from gall mites.

Someone noticed a couple of pink moccasin-flowers before we found the yellow lady's-slippers, of which there were many hundreds, often in showy clumps. On top of a knoll we found the much smaller and very rare ram's-head lady's-slippers for which the blooming dates are late May and early June.

Our birding highlight was a pair of hairy woodpeckers that were carrying food and were clearly distressed at our presence. We saw deer and raccoon tracks plus a fresh burrow, probably of a star-nosed mole. Also a dead red-bellied snake was found on the path (perhaps a victim of a trail bike?).

After lunch at the cars, some of us drove along Highway 14 through Brooklyn to look at a steep gypsum bank with conspicuous clumps of yellow lady's-slippers. Then, further along Highway 14 near its junction with Highway 101, we looked at another site for ram's-head orchids. There we also noticed lots of blooming gypsum ragwort.

Following refreshing ice cream cones at Sweet's Corner, three of us viewed the tidal bore at the nearby Meander River bridge. It was only a mere hint of a wave that day, but lots of people were there to be bored by it!

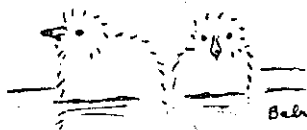


yellow lady slipper



Ram's head
Lady Slipper

Bird Atlasing in the Frog Lake Square
July 9, 1988



Baby black gulls

by Larry Bogan
Cambridge Station, N.S.

Four BNS members gathered in the morning to spend a half day looking for breeding birds near the western edge of Kings County. The area is undeveloped crown land covered with mixed forest and lakes. There is easy access via gravel roads that lead past the major lakes. The morning was sunny and warm with a light breeze.

A party of two slowly explored the northern boundary of the square from an old woods road that is passable by car but at times looks more like a foot path. Here the woods were close and branches frequently brushed both sides of the car. Typical woodland species were sighted with one of the more interesting sightings being a young Gray Jay in its dark plumage.

The other party (of which I was half) canoed around Peter Lake, then out through a marsh to Shell Camp Lake. Besides seeing a family of three Common Loons, there was a colony of approximately 75 Great Black-backed Gulls on an island formed from one huge granite rock. Swimming around the island were a dozen gray, downy gull chicks. Upon returning to the land this party walked the woods roads near the lakes to observe woodland birds, especially groups of young warblers flitting among the trees.

After eating lunch under the trees beside Mistake Lake, we continued our atlasing. The afternoon was very hot and the birds had settled down, making sightings less frequent. We followed the Shell Camp Stillwater and only saw two Great Blue Herons feeding in the shallows of the stream. The other party returned to finish the woods road tour and explore other roads in the area.

The final count for the day was 45 species of birds sighted with 16 confirmed breeding and 5 probable breeding.



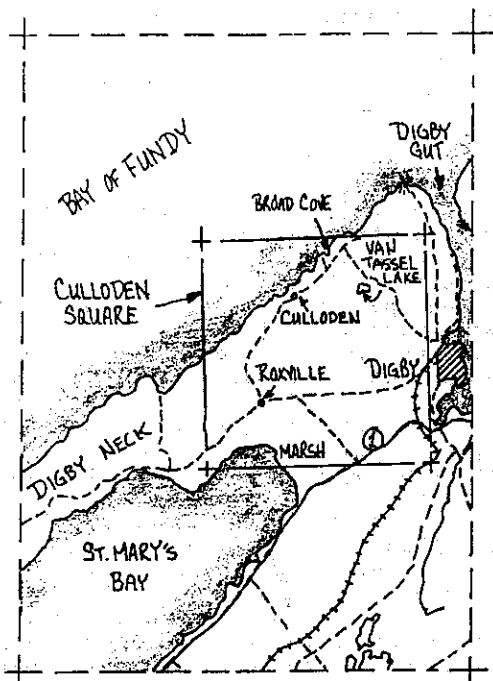
Atlas Day in the Culloden Square
July 9, 1988

by Sharon Hawboldt
Clementsport, N.S.

Marsh Hawk

"It's a beautiful square. There's the North Mountain, the marsh on St. Mary's Bay and shoreline along the Bay of Fundy." Jean Timpa, Regional Co-ordinator for the Maritimes Breeding Bird Atlas, tried to entice me to tackle this priority square in Digby County. It was enticing but also somewhat daunting.

After scouting out the square, we were enthused not only with the potential for breeding birds but also by the sheer beauty of the area. We decided to organize a birding blitz of the area for Atlas Day, July 9, 1988.



Early morning fog soon cleared to warm sunny weather for the remainder of the day, making our task a thoroughly enjoyable one. Five members of the Annapolis Field Naturalists met at 8:00 a.m. at the Digby Pines Golf Club and then drove to a woods road. We split into two parties, one following the road inland, the other hiking along the margin of tiny Van Tassel Lake. We met about noon to compare and tabulate results, then drove to Broad Cove in Culloden for a picnic lunch. It would have been easy to linger there all afternoon, just watching the water and the many swallows swooping around us. However, dedication prevailed and on we went to the end of the paved highway and over the North Mountain following the dirt road to Roxville. (Later in the month, Jean and I weren't quite so lucky when a heavy rain had washed the road out so badly we had to turn back - small cars do have their advantages!) In Roxville we followed the road down to St. Mary's Bay marsh where we were able to watch bobolinks carrying food and a female northern harrier settle into the grasses. We spotted a male northern harrier nearby. We walked through pastureland (being cautious of the bull) to see sparrows and warblers.

Our final stop was a quick one at a gravel pit along Highway 101 to check for bank swallows. Early in the morning, Gini Proulx had scouted the trail behind the pit for warblers.

It was now time to head home. We had collected data on many of the common breeding birds - a respectable start on a very interesting square.

Methal's Lake Bog
July 17, 1988

by Bernard Forsythe
Wolfville, N.S.

Ten parties with canoes turned out on a perfect day for this outing -- an overcast day with no wind and very few flies. To reach the bog we had to navigate through an area of old stumps, some just under the surface of the water. All were navigated around and over with only a few scrapes.

At the bog we were greeted with mass destruction. Inchworms had stripped the leaves from most of the plants over a large area leaving the area a drab brown and gray colour. At the edge of the denuded area the ground seemed alive as the yellow and gray striped caterpillars crawled through the low cover. Hundreds of inchworms had drowned while trying to cross an inch or two of water that had accumulated in an old deer trail.



There was a well-defined line separating the area of devastation from the unaffected portion of the bog. Beyond the devastated area we spent some time marvelling at the varied life found in such an interesting habitat. The pink of calopogon and rose pogonia and the snow white of white-fringed orchid contrasted sharply with the greens of Labrador tea, sphagnum moss, rhodora, larch, black spruce and various other plants in this rich bog.

Many birds were in and around the bog, some, no doubt, attracted by the inchworms. There were many palm warblers and swamp sparrows with young, and an olive-sided flycatcher flew from the treetops after insects. Various warblers, thrushes and blackbirds worked the forest edge while swallows and crossbills were overhead. The "best" bird seen was the Lincoln's sparrow. On previous visits to this bog I had seen and heard Lincoln's sparrows so we pushed our way deeper into the scattered black spruce in an attempt to find one. Soon its musical, finch-like song was heard and most of us got a look at one. The Lincoln's sparrow breeds in northern Nova Scotia but is usually found in Kings County only during migration and then only rarely, as it is shy and stays well hidden. This year's observations at Methal's Lake bog suggest that this species could be nesting, something that should be checked in future years. A striking monarch butterfly was also seen flying from one white-fringed orchid to the next.

We returned to the canoes and set out to explore the various sections of Methal's Lake. At the far end of the lake we stopped for lunch on an island. An osprey with a fish was seen circling overhead and was soon joined by three other ospreys. After a bit, the one with the fish broke away and headed inland only to return shortly without the fish.

There may well be an osprey nest at this end of the lake; however, it must be in heavy forest back from the shore.

The trip back to our cars at Methal's Dam was pleasant and ended a most enjoyable outing with a very interested and interesting group.

Akin Marsh
July 23, 1988

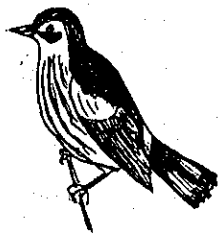
by Jim Wolford
Wolfville, N.S.

On a partly cloudy, humid and warm day, Reg Melanson of the N.S. Dept. of Lands and Forests, Wildlife Division, led about ten of us to this 130-acre area near Falmouth. This plot is being managed to improve waterfowl habitat and for educational purposes, by Ducks Unlimited, Wildlife Habitat Canada and the N.S. Dept. of Lands and Forests.

Reg gave us maps and information sheets about wildlife uses of plant species; he explained what work had been done since the autumn of 1986. We gathered first at the water-control structure on Black Brook; upstream of the dam is a 40-acre marsh. At the dam we noticed lots of bladderwort foliage in the water and saw adult and juvenile swamp sparrows. Later we saw a brood of American black ducks.

Then we followed the cleared trail on a leisurely and very pleasant two and one-half hour stroll through a variety of habitats: open marsh and ponds, alder swamp, coniferous, mixed and hardwood forests, an open meadow, and a cleared area of brush piles and young oak trees (that will one day, hopefully, be an oak forest). The hardwood forest contained some quite large oaks and aspen poplars. In particular, one beech and one striped maple were impressively large. The large poplars adjacent to a beaver lodge showed many signs of use by the beavers. Surprisingly, to me, the beavers had killed some of the large poplars by just removing the bark.

Interesting "plants" seen were "coral slime" slime-molds (which had tiny springtails, visible with a hand lens, on them), good numbers and many species of mushrooms (including a "comb tooth" and "scaly vase chantarelles"), lots of mosses, lichens and ferns, and many species of flowers: Indian pipe, white-flowered pyrola, spotted coral-root orchid, purple fringed orchid, wild rice (planted at the dam), etc. We snacked on ripe blueberries and serviceberries (shadbush, also known locally as bilberries).



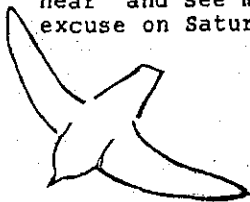
Magnolia warbler

Birders found a fair number of species, two of which (veery and magnolia warbler) were feeding fledged young. Along the forestry road were muddy puddles of water in which we saw many metamorphosed green froglets and a wood froglet.

The newest woodland trail back to the parking lot produced two highlights. Inside a rotten log, Sherman Bleakney found a red-backed salamander that had about six, large, yolky white eggs (we created some "bear signs" by ripping apart a few logs). We also found some definite signs of real bear activities: lumpy scats that were fuzzy with fungus growths, then long black hairs on a small tree trunk (from rubbing and/or climbing) and then several areas where rotting wood on the forest floor had been dug up (by a bear or more naturalists?).

This was a half-day trip that ended with lunches at our cars. We all agreed that this is a good spot for a birding walk in either fall or spring.

Saturday morning excursions leave me with two regrets: (1) I miss "Quirks and Quarks" on CBC Radio; and (2) we all hear and see more when Bernard Forsythe is with us; his excuse on Saturday mornings is a pretty good one - work!



Chimney Swifts and some Bats August 2, 1988

by Tom Herman
Port Williams, N.S.

~~Swift~~ The evening was calm, hazy and warm. Approximately 25 participants gathered at the swift roost on Front Street shortly after 8 o'clock. To kill time, until swift activity picked up, we ambled down to the Wofville Wharf. The tide was well out, revealing an expanse of mud revealed; this was occupied by one lone willet on the far side of the marsh, joined later by a great blue heron. After a perfunctory look at some of the wharfside, seedy vegetation and at a hatch of tiny planthoppers in flight, we walked back to the parking lot adjacent to Farmers Dairy building chimney.

Swifts began to amass shortly before 9 o'clock. A few dropped into the chimney early, but most circled for some time. A discussion ensued concerning whether swifts beat their wings alternately, as they appear to do (at least to me).

A number of participants readily agreed to "count" (loosely speaking) the swifts entering the chimney. Independent counts by the thirteen volunteers ranged from 284 to 550 with an average of 400. Just for fun, I compared the counts by male and female observers, to test the hypothesis that males exaggerate. Would you believe that the average by the males was nearly 120 greater than the average by females (440 vs. 321)? I'm sure Bleakney could provide us with some interesting and no doubt controversial alternative explanations!

After the swifts were safely bedded down (about 9:30 p.m.), we moved to Hennigar's Pond, with decidedly fewer people - a case of vespertiliophobia? There were disappointingly few bats about. We were able to see and pick up on the bat detector, the vocalizations of several at close range, but activity died down quickly. The group disbanded at about 10 o'clock, just missing the last call for ice cream at Hennigar's. I accept full responsibility.

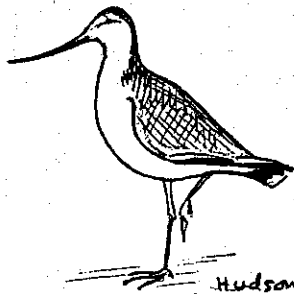
Grand Pre and Evangeline Beach Shorebirds
August 13, 1988

by Jim Wolford
Wolfville, N.S.

Eleven of us gathered at high tide on this sunny, hot, very humid afternoon and started driving as a caravan across the dykelands looking for shorebird roosts in open fields. It was unusual that we saw no hawks at all. But we did find shorebirds in three different fields. "Peeps" (semipalmated sandpipers and semipalmated plovers) were separate from the larger shorebirds (black-bellied plovers, dowitchers, ruddy turnstones). The gulls in several fields included numbers of adult ring-billed gulls. Mosquitoes (salt-marsh?) and "greenheads" (salt-marsh deerflies) were a bit of a nuisance on the dykelands.

Then, as usual, we drove to Bob Bearne's cottage east of Evangeline Beach. (I would like to thank him and his family allowing us, on many occasions, access to good viewing via their property.) There the roosts and flying flocks of "peeps" were impressive but not as huge as those seen earlier in the season -- the peak of migration had passed. We walked the beach, hoping to see a hunting merlin or peregrine falcon, but none was observed. What we did see were least sandpipers, sanderlings, ruddy turnstones, lots of black-bellied plovers many dowitchers (still with orange bellies) and one Hudsonian godwit.

We also looked across the Guzzle at Boot Island where the dead "nesting-trees" held lots of double-crested cormorants.



Hudsonian Godwit

 NATURE REPORTS AND ARTICLES

Weather Summary - Late Spring & Summer 1988

by Larry Bogan
 Cambridge Station, N.S.

Summer Weather Data, 1988
 Data from Kentville Agricultural Research Station
 (numbers in parentheses are 30-yr. averages)

	May	June	July	Aug	Total
Mean Temp. (C)	12.4 (10.4)	14.5 (15.9)	19.8 (19.2)	19.9 (18.4)	NA NA
Rainfall (mm/month)	44 (77)	75 (71)	154 (70)	81 (98)	354 (316)
Degree-days (above 10 C)	100 (55)	139 (178)	303 (284)	306 (262)	848 (779)
Bright Sunshine (hours/month)	221 (202)	208 (217)	179 (239)	190 (225)	798 (883)

I don't think anyone living in the Valley would disagree if I were to say that we have had a hot summer. (People living in some coastal areas of the province have, however, experienced a very foggy, cooler summer.) The statistics from the Kentville Research Station support this observation. Except for a cool June, the other months of the late spring and summer were above average in both mean temperature and growing degree-days. Note that May had nearly twice the average growing degree-days and a mean temperature two full degrees above the average. August was 17% above normal in growing degree-days and had an average temperature 1.5 degrees above average making it the warmest month of the summer; that honor usually goes to July. There is still September left in the "summer" which normally has an 134 growing degree days.

But note that the bright sunshine hours in July and August, both above average warm months, were 75% and 84% respectively of the average. This reflects the fact that the humidity was high and we had a lot of hazy and cloudy days even though temperatures were high. The evaporation for August illustrates this fact. This year the evaporation was 119 mm of water where as August 1987 (an average month temperature-wise) had higher losses of 152 mm.

In July we had twice the 30-year average precipitation but, if it had not rained on July 24, the rainfall would have been nearly average!! (i.e. almost half the rain in July occurred on July 24). In fact, during the week from July 21st to the 28th, we had 134 mm of rain or 87% of the total rain for the month or 190% of the 30-year average for this month! As you can see August rainfall was below

normal and the summer-to-date has had 112% of its normal rainfall.

All in all, if you are a gardener or just love to watch the trees grow, this has been a good summer.

Scarlet Tanager's Nest Found in Nova Scotia

by Richard Stern
Kentville, N.S.

The Scarlet Tanager is a woodland bird, slightly smaller than an American Robin. The male is brilliant scarlet with black wings (in the breeding season) but the female is a much duller yellow-green and thus is well camouflaged in the treetops. The species is rare in Nova Scotia, with most sightings being on the outer islands during spring and fall migration. However, every year one or two birds are seen during the breeding season, particularly in the Annapolis Valley and Kejimkujik areas. The species has long been suspected of breeding but, until this summer, no nest or newly-fledged young had been found in the province.

During May and early June of 1988, I found two different singing male Scarlet Tanagers in the Kentville area, both in mature mixed woods very close to town. One of these males was also seen by other local birders and by some birders from the Halifax area. By mid-June this male was accompanied by a female and we presumed that the pair was nesting. By following the birds' movements, I was able to narrow the potential location of the nest down to one tree. The two adults were observed carrying food into the tree. On June 22, a group of B.N.S. members actually found the nest, situated some 35 feet off the ground, in the outer branches of a White Pine. Bernard Forsythe climbed the tree and peered into the nest where he saw four nestlings - the first record of successful nesting of the species in the province.

For the next four days both adults continued to bring food to the nest and, on June 26, one downy young could be seen out on the limb of the tree. Two days later the nest was deserted and the young had fledged. Later, the limb, with nest attached, was carefully removed from the tree and placed in the Biology Department Museum at Acadia University for all to see. Like all nests of this species it is a flimsy affair, made mostly of pine needles, with a very thin base.

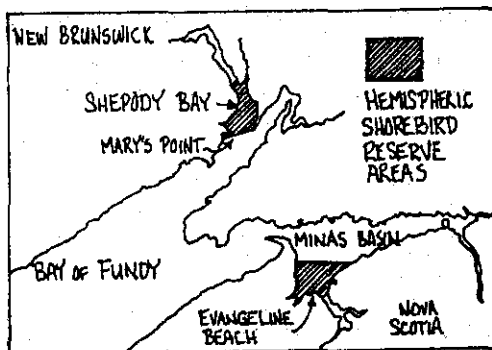
Hopefully, these birds will return and become more regular members of our local avifauna.



Dedication of Minas Basin as a Western Hemispheric Shorebird Reserve

by George Alliston
West Brooklyn, N.S.

On the hot, hazy and humid morning of 10 August 1988, a group of about 200 conservationists, naturalists, biologists, bureaucrats, politicians, ElderHostelers and interested area residents gathered at Evangeline Beach for a dedication that officially made Minas Basin (South Bight) a part of Canada's first Western Hemispheric Shorebird Reserve. The other portion of this Reserve, Shepody Bay in New Brunswick, was dedicated in 1987. Together, the two areas constitute the Bay of Fundy Hemispheric Shorebird Reserve.



As the group of humans assembled, many thousands of shorebirds, principally semipalmated sandpipers, milled around in the adjacent narrow intertidal strip exposed by the ebbing tide. A peregrine falcon flew over the assembled group and, minutes later, a merlin attempted, unsuccessfully, to capture a shorebird. Conditions could not have been better for the ceremony. Speeches were

made, gifts were exchanged, a plaque was unveiled and the biological importance of the upper Bay of Fundy, and Minas Basin in particular, achieved a greater degree of international recognition.

The Western Hemispheric Shorebird Reserve concept has evolved only in recent years in reaction to an increased knowledge and awareness of the seasonal distribution and biology of shorebirds and their vulnerability to environmental threats as well as the alarming population declines (some exceeding 70 percent) noted in some species over the past 15 years.

Western hemisphere shorebirds breed in the arctic and winter as far south as Tierra del Fuego, at the southern tip of South America. While shorebirds are generally widely distributed on their arctic breeding grounds, they tend to concentrate in great numbers in a few locations along their migration routes (staging areas) and on their wintering grounds. These concentrations place large numbers of birds, sometimes entire populations of some species, at risk from relatively small-scale environmental threats. Furthermore, it appears that functional alternatives to existing staging areas are very unlikely.

During the past 10 to 15 years, internationally coordinated research programs have identified key areas used by shorebirds throughout their ranges and have demonstrated movements of birds between these areas. Each key area forms an essential link in a chain of sites from breeding grounds to wintering areas. Each of these areas provides the resources needed by the birds to proceed to the next phase of

their annual cycle. For an effective conservation program it is essential that all links in the chain be maintained since the removal of even one link could lead to a breakdown of the entire system. The objective of the Western Hemispheric Shorebird Reserve Network is "to create a system of reserves linking all the critically important areas throughout the ranges of the birds and thus maintaining the integrity of their migration pathways."

The upper Bay of Fundy is particularly important to the world population of semipalmated sandpipers. Of the estimated 1.4 million shorebirds that stage in this area on the way from their arctic breeding grounds to their wintering areas, 95 percent are semipalmated sandpipers. About one-third of these sandpipers stage in Minas Basin, the other two-thirds in Shepody Bay. During their short stay in these staging areas, huge flocks forage on the abundant invertebrates that live in the extensive mudflats. During their stay, the birds may double their weight. This increase in fat reserves is needed as fuel for their non-stop, 40- to 60-hour (or longer) transoceanic flight to their wintering grounds on the coast of South America. The tidal flats of Shepody Bay and Minas Basin thus constitute only one link, but a most important one, in the annual cycle of the semipalmated sandpiper. Other key areas for this species are its wintering grounds, on the coast of Surinam, which were granted Hemispheric Reserve status in 1987 and an important spring staging area in Delaware Bay, New Jersey, which attained Hemispheric Reserve status in 1985.

Because of its international importance to shorebirds, Minas Basin has also, in 1988, been added to the Directory of Wetlands of International Importance under the Ramsar Convention of 1971. As of June, 1987, 45 countries had signed this Convention.

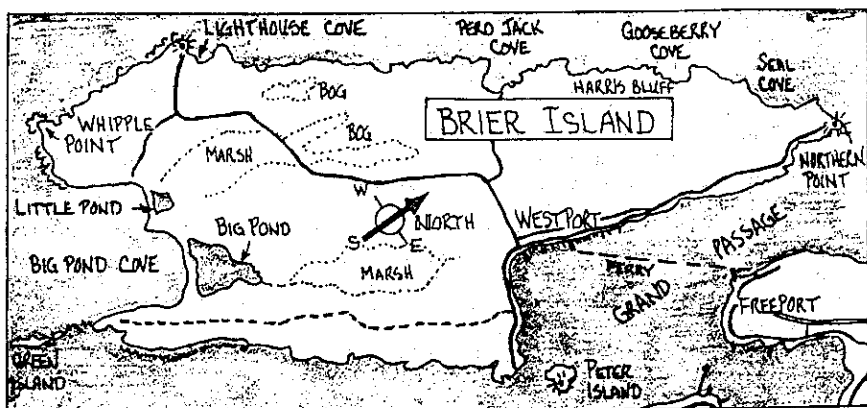
While the designation of Minas Basin as a Western Hemispheric Shorebird Reserve and its listing in the Ramsar Convention Directory have not been accompanied by legislated protection, its identification provides international recognition that should result in support for local conservation and management efforts.

The Buying of Brier Island

by Richard Stern
Kentville, N.S.

Over the last few years, Brier Island, which lies off the western tip of Digby Neck, has become better known to both naturalists and tourists. This has been largely due to the efforts of Carl Haycock and his team of whale researchers as well as the new availability of bed and breakfast accommodations on the island. By now, many B.N.S. members have visited there and know of the wide variety of interesting natural history to be found on the island, and in the ocean around the island. B.N.S. members have frequently visited the island for field trips and Acadia University has conducted numerous biological studies there over the years.

Many visitors have asked who owns what land on the island. In fact it is nearly all privately owned, much of it by individuals who live in the village of Westport. However,



a tract of 1200 acres, approximately one-quarter of the island, was sold several years ago by a local man to an American living in Florida. This tract consists of most of the western end of the island, including all of Pond Cove, Whipple Point, the lands around the western lighthouse and much of the bog and marsh in that area. This site includes many important habitats for all kinds of flora and fauna; for example, most of the Mountain Avens (*Geum peckii*) on the island is found here. The Mountain Avens is a yellow-flowered plant found nowhere else in the world but here and in the White Mountains of New Hampshire. Various bog orchids are common here and there are at least one insect and three algae species that have been recorded here but not elsewhere in eastern Canada. The area includes important fall staging areas for shorebirds and, in the woods around the bog, for migrating passerines. There is, in addition, an enormous mixed breeding colony of Great Black-backed and Herring gulls located largely on this tract of land and Pond Cove offers shelter to wintering sea-ducks, Brant, etc.

A few years ago the 1200 acres of land was offered for sale by its American owner. Various people tried to persuade groups such as the Province of Nova Scotia, the Canadian Nature Federation, etc. to put up money for the purchase of this property or, in some other way, protect it from development. However, the price was high and sources of funds were limited. There was considerable concern expressed at rumours of real estate companies being interested in developing the land. There have recently been other potential threats to the area as well. Recent activity by all-terrain vehicles is cutting up the bogs and meadows. The rapid increase in tourism during the summer could cause damage to the marine life as well as the migratory and nesting birds. Other islands off Nova Scotia have been sold; for example, one has recently been turned into a hunting preserve for wild boar!

The Nature Conservancy of Canada has now successfully completed the purchase of this 1200-acre tract of land. The acquisition was negotiated by the Nature Conservancy in Maine since that facilitated offering the American owner excellent tax incentives. The title was then transferred to

the Nature Conservancy of Canada. The total cost, including legal and administrative fees, was approximately \$350,000 U.S. Several organizations have so far agreed to commit money to the Nature Conservancy to help fund this project. They include Wildlife Habitat Canada, the Province of Nova Scotia, Ducks Unlimited, Bowater Mersey, Friends of Nature and the Nova Scotia Bird Society.

The Nature Conservancy's goals are to bring under protection an island identified by the Province of Nova Scotia as a potential ecological reserve, to protect the numerous species of flora and fauna that exist on and around the island, to develop a reserve where the public can visit a unique and diverse natural area for educational, scientific and recreational purposes and eventually to pass title to a conservation agency who will direct and regulate the traffic of visitors at this fragile site.

The people of Westport are extremely interested in how this land is to be used since they have traditionally had unimpeded access to it. Nevertheless, with the proliferation of all-terrain vehicles, campers, etc., some restriction may have to be placed on access. A research fellow at Dalhousie University is currently attempting to establish the reactions of Westporters to the acquisition of the site and trying to find out how local manpower and input could best be used to manage the site to the best advantage of the natural environment, the flora and fauna and the people who wish to visit there.

Let us hope that what has up to now been a unique and glorious place to visit for all those interested in nature will remain that way.

Cape Blomidon Peregrine Releases - 1988

by George Alliston(1)
West Brooklynn, N.S.

As part of the Upper Bay of Fundy Peregrine Release Program (see article in the Newsletter, Vol. 15, No. 2, June 1988), nine peregrine falcons were to be released at Cape Blomidon in 1988. The releases were to consist of two "hacks": one of five birds, the other of four.

On 21 June 1988, five very healthy and alert four-week-old peregrine chicks arrived at the Halifax International Airport from the Canadian Wildlife Service's raptor breeding facility in Wainwright, Alberta. The hack site attendant, Peter MacDonald, was at the airport to receive and check the condition of the birds. Peter then transported the birds to his home where they were fed and placed in a cool, quiet location to recover from the traumas of their trip. The next morning the birds were moved to the hack site in Blomidon Provincial Park. Interested members of the public were given an opportunity to view the young birds briefly at the park campground gate and about forty people, including television crews and reporters, were on hand to see them. The birds were then installed in their hack box at the cliff edge on Cape Blomidon. From then on their contact with humans was kept to an absolute minimum.

The four male and one female nestling peregrines progressed well on their diet of quail, so well that their

scheduled release date was moved forward from 7 July to 5 July. At 8:24 a.m. that day the bars were removed from the hack box. At 10:09 a.m. the first fledgling flew from the hack site. Between 1:36 p.m. and 2:16 p.m. the other four birds flew from the site. None of the birds returned to the site that day. It is during this period, when the birds are just learning to fly, that they are the most susceptible to predation and accidents.

The next day four of the fledgling peregrines returned to the hack site where a feeding platform had been made and stocked with freshly-killed chicken. The fifth fledgling peregrine could be seen on the cliff about 100 feet below the hack site. An adult male peregrine was also present at the hack site. This adult male was extremely aggressive toward the young peregrines, chasing them away from the hack site and mercilessly harassing the young peregrine perched on the cliff (we will call this bird by its tag number - 4T3). The adult peregrine remained in the area and continued to harass the young birds, in particular the rather docile 4T3. One of the young peregrines was sighted for the last time on 7 July. On 10 July the adult peregrine was observed to dive at and strike 4T3 who was still perched on the rocks below the hack site. (2) Peter MacDonald and Peter Austin-Smith immediately descended to the place where the attack occurred in hopes of finding the young peregrine. Their search was unsuccessful and it was feared that the young peregrine was lost. This story does, however, have a happy ending.

On 17 July a Parrsboro resident alerted the Nova Scotia Department of Lands and Forests to the presence of a weak but live peregrine falcon in the area. Bruce Johnson, of the Canadian Wildlife Service, who is in charge of the Upper Bay of Fundy Peregrine Release Program, was notified of this sighting. He travelled to Parrsboro where he found and captured the emaciated bird -- none other than 4T3. The bird was treated and fed and then moved to its own hack box at Five Islands Provincial Park and, after a few days of rest and dining on chicken, it regained its health and was again released.

On 11 July Peter MacDonald was successful in reading the tag on the adult male peregrine. This bird (6N2) had been released at Cape d'Or in 1983 and had been identified again at Cape d'Or in 1987. He was the first identified returning bird from the Upper Bay of Fundy releases. In 1987, the extremely aggressive behaviour of this bird was believed to have caused the loss of three of the five young peregrines released at Cape d'Or. A second hack of five peregrines at Cape d'Or in 1987 was transferred to Five Islands because of the aggressive actions of this bird.

On 12 July 1988, the second shipment of peregrine chicks, consisting of three males and one female, arrived from Wainwright. These birds were installed in the hack box at Cape Blomidon on 13 July. At this time three of the young peregrines from the first release were present in the area of the hack site as was the aggressive adult male. The young hacked peregrines had learned how to minimize their exposure to assaults from the adult bird and one of the young birds was even observed defending himself from an aerial attack by the adult male.

The second group of peregrine chicks also did well in the hack box. The scheduled release date for this group was 28 July. At this time two birds from the first hack were still frequenting the feeding platform and the adult male was still present. Fearing more problems from the adult male, Peter MacDonald set up a mist net to catch the bird, if it became necessary, and, on 27 July, undertook a program of frightening the adult peregrine from his perches. The latter approach appeared to work and the adult peregrine left the hack site on 28 July.

On 28 July, thick fog and the threat of bad weather prevented the scheduled release from taking place so it was rescheduled to the next day. On the morning of 29 July one of the young peregrines was missing from the hack box. An examination of the area indicated that the bird had been dragged from the cage by an unknown predator. A second bird, still in the hack box, was seriously injured. This bird was treated by a veterinarian but ultimately had to be euthanized.

The hack box was opened at 9:40 a.m. on 29 July and the remaining two birds (one male and one female) given their freedom. The male did not fly until 8:20 p.m. and the female had not taken flight by dark.

When Peter returned to the hack site on the morning of 30 July the fog was thick but intense screaming could be heard from the cliffs below the hack site. The assumption was that the adult male had returned and was terrorizing the young birds. Preparations were made to open the mist net when the fog lifted. When the fog did lift, the culprit was found to be one of the young peregrines from the previous hack. Although this bird was a noisy nuisance he did not pose a real threat to the newly-fledged birds.

On 2 August the aggressive adult male returned to the hack site and chased the young birds. However, the young from the second hack had gained valuable flying experience during the adult bird's absence, making them less vulnerable to his attacks. The adult male remained in the vicinity of the hack site but, with the breeding season coming to an end, his territoriality began to diminish and by 17 August the one juvenile peregrine remaining at the site elicited no response from the adult. Indeed on 21 August this young bird is believed to have chased the adult! The adult peregrine was last seen at the hack site on 28 August and the last sighting of the 1988 released birds (the female from the second hack) was made on 29 August. The hack site was closed on 1 September.

During the 1988 hacking project two other peregrine falcons were observed at Cape Blomidon. A sub-adult peregrine (3T5) from the 1987 releases at Fundy Park landed on the feeding platform on 4 August and, on 5 August, a male young-of-the-year, but not one of the Blomidon releases, flew by the hack site.

While the 1988 peregrine release project at Cape Blomidon encountered some difficulties and disappointments, seven of the nine young peregrine falcons were believed to have been successfully introduced into the wild. The presence of the aggressive adult male, while creating difficulties with the release of young birds, demonstrates that some of the birds released in the Upper Bay of Fundy will return and establish territories in this area. With time, effort and perseverance, this project stands an excellent chance of succeeding in establishing a breeding population of peregrine falcons in the Maritime Provinces.

- (1) Based on notes provided by Peter MacDonald.
- (2) Under normal circumstances, with a mated pair of adult peregrines attending their young, interloping peregrines would be summarily driven from their territory.

Nova Scotia Bald Eagles Nesting in Massachusetts

by George Alliston
West Brooklyn, N.S.

For the first time in more than 80 years bald eagles are again nesting in Massachusetts. In 1988 three mated pairs of eagles have been observed and two of these pairs constructed nest structures. Five of the six mated birds were taken as nestlings from wild eagle nests in Cape Breton and released (hacked) in Massachusetts as part of a program to reestablish the bald eagle as a breeding bird in that state.

Plans for the Eagle Hacking Project were formalized in 1981 by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife. The Quabbin Reservoir, a 39.4 sq. mi. area in central Massachusetts that provides water to the greater Boston area, was chosen as the release site and a 30 foot high hack tower was constructed. In 1982 two eaglets were obtained from Michigan and in 1983 four eaglets were obtained from Manitoba. From 1984 through 1988 all eaglets (a total of 36) were obtained from Nova Scotia.

The Nova Scotia Department of Lands and Forests (NSDLF) agreed to provide Massachusetts with the young birds since studies indicated that the provincial bald eagle population, particularly the portion on Cape Breton Island, was reproductively healthy. Studies have suggested that a healthy donor population may be "cropped" to a maximum of five percent of its annual production of young without affecting the population.

The NSDLF conducts annual studies of bald eagle nesting populations and productivity. Data are gathered during two aerial surveys of known eagle nest sites. The first survey is conducted in late April when pairs have occupied nest sites, laid their clutches and begun incubation. During this survey data are collected on site occupancy and clutch size. About a month later, after the young have hatched, a second survey is conducted to determine which of the occupied nest sites have successfully produced young and the numbers of

young per successful nest. Estimates of nest success and eaglet production are obtained from these data. These data provide the basis on which biologists evaluate the status of the population and judge if, and how many, eaglets may safely be removed from the population.

For example, since 1985, Massachusetts has annually requested eight eaglets for their program. In 1988, although the Nova Scotia bald eagle population was judged to be healthy, estimated eaglet production was only 124, down from an estimated 177 in 1987. Therefore, in 1988, NSDLF provided only six eaglets (representing five percent of known production in the province) for the Massachusetts program.

Only nests known (from the surveys) to contain more than one eaglet are considered as potential donor nests. Only one eaglet is taken from a donor nest. This is done in mid-June by NSDLF staff who band the birds and transport them to the Sydney airport from which they are flown by chartered aircraft to Orange, Massachusetts. Upon arrival the birds are given coloured alphanumeric leg identification bands and placed in hack boxes on the hacking tower. While in the hack boxes the birds are fed a diet consisting primarily of fish and are kept under 24 hour per day surveillance. Hacking success during this project has been truly phenomenal. Of the 42 eaglets placed in the hack boxes in the seven years of this program, only one has died before fledging.

Before fledging the birds are equipped with radio-transmitters. The birds are ready to fly by early to mid-August. Food is provided in the vicinity of the hack site for the newly-fledged birds. The movements of the birds are monitored daily, using a radio-telemetry receiver set up in the vicinity of the hack site, from the time they are hacked until early September. By this time the birds are generally fully independent and have begun to disperse from the hack area.

With the construction of nests by two of the mated pairs of bald eagles in 1988 the objectives of the hacking phase of the project have been met; hence no further hacking of young birds is planned. In future years the program will focus its efforts upon monitoring existing and (hopefully) subsequent nest sites and studying the seasonal movements of the marked bald eagles.

Only the final paragraphs in this, to date, very successful project have yet to be written. Bald eagles "mate for life" and typically establish a pair bond and construct a nest a year or two before laying eggs and rearing young. The two mated pairs that constructed nest structures in the Quabbin Reservoir in 1988 did not lay clutches. It is anticipated that, all being well, the first young eagles will be produced by these birds in 1989 or 1990.

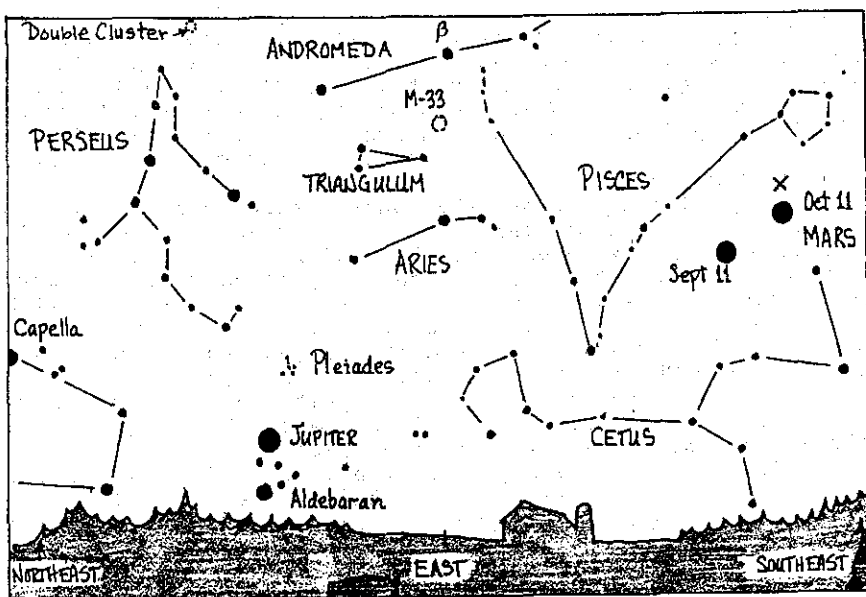
Celestial Happenings for Autumn 1988

by Larry Bogan
Cambridge Station, N.S.

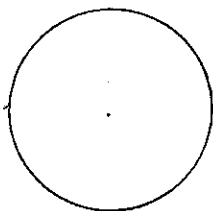
Mars, meteor showers, and celestial objects in the eastern sky are the topics for autumn.

As mentioned in the previous issue of this Newsletter, Mars will be moving rapidly across the sky during the autumn and will provide the best opportunity in years to view its features through a telescope. The BNS will be having an observation session on September 29th to view Mars using small telescopes.

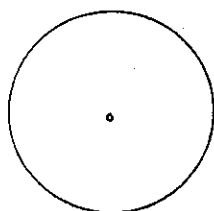
The diagram below illustrates Mars' position among the stars in the eastern sky during autumn. Mars is observed in the constellation Pisces and moves westward during this period (positions shown for Sept. 11 and Oct. 11). Jupiter rises later than Mars and is of comparable brightness. These planets will be the brightest "stars" in this region of the sky and hence will be easy to find. Jupiter will be just west of the bright star, Aldebaran, and will be brighter than this star.



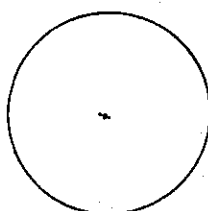
To give you an idea of the magnification needed to see the disk of Mars, I have sketched the views you will see through a pair of seven-power binoculars and a typical small telescope at its highest magnification of 200. For comparison, I have also provided a drawing of the same views of Jupiter and its brighter satellites. Note that, even at the highest power of the telescope, Mars does not appear very large. You have no chance at all of seeing any detail on Mars with binoculars, whereas at least Jupiter's satellites can be seen.



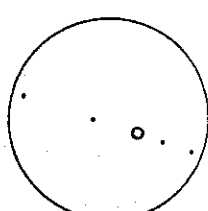
MARS 7x50
BINOCULAR



MARS 200x
TELESCOPE



JUPITER 7x50
BINOCULAR



JUPITER 200x
TELESCOPE

There are, however, some nice celestial objects in the eastern sky that are worth looking at with binoculars.

Pleiades: This small but bright star cluster has been recognized by many civilizations throughout history (see, for example, the discussion of the constellation Taurus in Burnham's Celestial Handbook, by Robert Burnham, Jr.). This small group of dazzling blue stars seems to be made for binocular viewing with its two-degree size fitting nicely within the viewing field of binoculars. It is a young cluster, only 20 million years old, and is only 410 light years away.

Hyades: This star cluster is just below the Pleiades and surrounding the reddish star, Aldebaran. It is larger (over six degrees in diameter) than the Pleiades and easily recognized by its V-shaped grouping of "naked-eye" stars. It is only 130 light years distant making it one of the nearest star clusters. It is an older star cluster - about 400 million years old.

Double Cluster: Above the constellation Perseus is the remarkable Double Cluster. It is best seen using a small telescope at low power, but binoculars will clearly show this as two clusters of stars very close to each other. Both clusters are about the angular size of the moon with real diameters of 70 light years. The nearer of the two is 7000 light years away, and 1000 light years closer than the other. The stars in the clusters are young, hot and blue. These are some of the youngest stars in the sky, being only seven to twelve million years old (compare with the age of the Sun at five billion years!).

M-33: This is a nearby companion galaxy of our own Milky Way Galaxy. On a clear night with dark skies, the dim center of this galaxy can be seen. Since its angular size is twice that of the Moon, very little magnification is needed to see it clearly with binoculars. It is 2.2 million light years away and only slightly nearer than the Andromeda Galaxy (M-31). Compare M-33 with M-31 which is brighter and located nearby, slightly above the star beta in Andromeda. The disk of the spiral Andromeda galaxy is positioned so that we see its edge, whereas M-33 faces us directly.

Vernal Equinox: This is not an object one can see but an important reference point in the sky. It is the reference point for the celestial coordinates (zero hours of right ascension and zero degrees declination) used by astronomers to measure the positions of celestial objects. It is also the place the Sun will be in the sky on the first day of spring. At the end of October, Mars will be only two de-

grees south of the vernal equinox location.

Between 3 and 6 a.m. on September 2nd, the Moon occulted the Pleiades, and will repeat this event every 27-1/3 days thereafter. However, North America will be turned toward the Sun at that time of the day in late September. However, on October 26, we should be able to see the event again between 7:15 and 7:45 AST in the evening. The nearly full Moon will move across the cluster and block out the light from some of the stars of the Pleiades.

On Sunday, September 25, the Moon will be full and near the autumnal equinox. Because of its motions at this time of year, which I do not have space to explain, the Moon will rise due east at about sunset every night during the last week of September. This effect is given the name, Harvest Moon.

There are two meteor showers in the late autumn that are worth observing. The first (called the Leonids) occurs on November 17 when the meteors will radiate from the constellation of Leo. The second (the Geminids) occurs during a two-day period about December 14; their radiant is in the constellation of Gemini. The Geminids are as frequent as the better known Perseid shower that occurs in August. Since both showers occur when the Moon is still young (before first quarter), dark skies will make it easier to see the meteors.

Autumn is an excellent time to observe the Milky Way. The brightest part of this band of light across the sky is up during the summer months and it passes through the zenith at this time. In the autumn, however, there are more nighttime hours and the Milky Way moves to the western sky where it is easier to view without contracting a case of "warbler's neck".

I know that there is considerable inertia to be overcome to get in the car and drive to a dark site and then stand out in the cold and view the sky. I have found that observing from the car can be a more comfortable alternative if one can find the right site (dark skies, no lights, and a good horizon). Park the car so that the side window faces the sky you wish to see, lean back with your binoculars and just scan the sky. The peace and solitude of that time adds to the atmosphere. In such a situation one can get a better feeling for the immensity of the universe and mankind's relatively minor role in its evolution.

BOOK REVIEW

Dancing on the Shore, A Celebration of Life at Annapolis Basin, Harold Horwood, McClelland and Stewart, Toronto, Ontario. 1987. 219 pp.

by Margaret Alliston
West Brooklyn, N.S.

Harold Horwood, naturalist, journalist, a former chairman of the Writers' Union of Canada and author of 18 other books, believes that Dancing on the Shore is "without doubt the best thing I have written". Any thoughtful author should

be proud to have produced such a book.

Horwood's evocative portrayal of the Annapolis Basin area is a naturalist's delight. He lovingly describes the land- and seascapes around his home at Upper Clements with a convert's zeal (Horwood moved to the Annapolis Basin in 1979), conveying to the reader his deep sense of belonging to this special, beautiful part of Canada. Those who know the area will recognize how well he evokes its particular magic. Those who don't may recognize their feelings for some other special place.

The depictions of the area's non-human inhabitants are always interesting. Horwood's descriptions of their behaviour are often insightful and moving. Sometimes the area's human inhabitants fare less well. Horwood's comments about sport hunters, for example, may offend some readers.

If the above were all that could be said about Dancing on the Shore, it would still be recommended reading for anyone interested in nature. However, there is another complete dimension to this book. From his observations of the Annapolis Basin and its inhabitants, Horwood develops his personal synthesis of the laws of nature, how the universe evolved and where we humans fit in it. His ideas are intelligently presented and thought-provoking. Since Horwood challenges some widely-held beliefs about man's place in the universe, some readers may find it difficult to agree with some of his conclusions. Once presented, however, his ideas are impossible to avoid considering.

Overall, Dancing on the Shore is a pleasure to read even if occasionally disturbing to our conventional ideas of how the universe has evolved and where it's going.

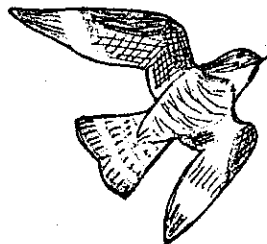
TRIVIA: TID-BITS

Local Natural History
June 1 to September 1, 1988

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

<u>Date</u> (1988)		<u>Obs</u>
Jun 1	-in a pond (of a brook) south of Gaspereau, green sponges common; also giant water bugs and water scorpions (bugs) present	JW
	-at Kentville Research Station lily pond, a small kind of giant water bug had its back covered developing eggs	JW
Jun 2	-a tree swallow with a brown back and dark smudges on underparts	GF, MT, JW
	-an upland sandpiper at Windsor	PM
Jun 3	-a cat-killed blue jay in Wolfville had been banded at Gaspereau by Cyril Coldwell on 13 Oct 77	EK
	-the Frails at the Centreville Nursery report that wood ducks were seen and heard there again this year	BBT
Jun 4	-a male eastern bluebird inspecting a nest box at Advocate	ME

- Jun 5 -the released black vulture (see May 27) was re-captured near Sunken Lake (then kept in a cage until Jun 17, when it was released again at Gaspereau) CKC
- Jun 6 -a female northern oriole gathering nest material in Wolfville GT
- Jun 7 -a common merganser and a singing winter wren at Black River Lake MZ
- Jun 8 -a Ross's gull at Canso (stayed 3 days) SB,NP
-a female eastern bluebird at Middleton LL
-a rose-breasted grosbeak, with its beak full of elm fruits, singing in Wolfville JW
- Jun 9 -near Sunken Lake, a Virginia rail heard, a dozen common nighthawks seen, a double rainbow and a red sunset, all at the same time! BLF,RS



Nighthawk

- Jun 10 -a sora at Canard Poultry Pond JGT
-at least 60 chimney swifts departing from chimney of Acadia's Univ. Hall at 3 p.m. (drizzly day, later cleared) JW
-2 or 3 great crested flycatchers in Bedford FF
-a common nighthawk and a pair of white-winged crossbills at Black River Lake MZ
-a merlin chasing a sharp-shinned hawk in Canard Valley MZ
- Jun 11 -air full of cottony parachute-seeds of bigtooth aspen-poplar in Wolfville JW
-a cattle egret in Wolfville GD,MT,JW
-a killdeer on 4 eggs next to helicopter landing spot at Windsor Exhibition DH
- Jun 12 -3 black-crowned night-herons at Cape Sable Is. JGT
-in Kentville, 1 + 2 scarlet tanagers, a great crested flycatcher, a northern goshawk nest with one youngster, a Canada warbler, a tiny bobbing chick of a spotted sandpiper, a cliff swallow NSBS
-2 northern shovelers, lots of other ducks, and a singing sharp-tailed sparrow at New Minas NSBS
- Jun 13 -a cattle egret at Starr's Point SJ
-a very probable northern mockingbird in Windsor PY
- Jun 15 -a storm-petrel about 1.5 km up the Annapolis R. PC
-mallards still paired - New Minas/Port Williams JW
- Jun 16 -7 willets perched on overhead wires at Windsor JGT
- mid or late June -a northern mockingbird nest with young at Yarmouth PC
- Jun 19 -a bat flying in Wolfville in mid-afternoon (a migrant?) EEE
-2 Lincoln's sparrows at Methal's Lake BLF

- Jun 20 -2 soras at Harris' Pond in Canning JGT
 -a winter wren at a nest with young
 near Blomidon JGT
 -a raccoon walking across the Acadia campus
 at 5:30 p.m. JW
 -spring peepers now peeping again in Wolfville
 (after a period of silence) (also Jul 1 - JSB) HT
 Jun 21 -a short-eared owl nest with young discovered
 by hay mowing at Grand Pre; 4 young then placed
 in another nest with 6 young BLF



- Jun 22 -a cat in Wolfville had in its mouth, at the same
 time, a living red squirrel and a living eastern
 chipmunk! DT, BBT
 -in Kentville, nests of eastern phoebe, eastern
 kingbird and northern oriole LC, BLF, SJ, RS, BBT, MT, JW
 -a big raccoon sleeping on the roof of the Wolf-
 ville Museum in late afternoon JB, BBT
 Jun 23 -a white-tailed deer munching in a neighbour's
 garden on Wolfville Ridge JGT
 Jun 24 -dozens of American white pelicans and a loudly
 ticking yellow rail at Tofield, Alberta! JW
 -a killdeer on a gravel nest in Wolfville JGT
 Jun 25 -a scarlet tanager seen in Paradise! JGT
 -a common loon in pond near Kinsman Corner
 (northeast of Kentville) JC
 -20 common nighthawks circling and diving over
 Gaspereau River at dusk EG
 -a 7.5-foot porbeagle or mackerel shark tangled
 in a net 100 m. offshore at Baxter's Harbour JSB, RH
 Jul 1 -a sandhill crane seen well at Mosherville SAC
 -a northern bobwhite (quail) (escapee?) seen
 along road to Hall's Harbour JSB
 -a common nighthawk seen & heard over Wolfville JSBo
 Jul 2 -awesome tidal bore at Mosherville (Kennetcook
 River): "river fills... behind the bore so quick-
 ly that the water forms an actual slope for
 about 100 feet." SAC
 Jul 7 -a beech tree loaded with ripening fruits in
 Smiley's Park near Brooklyn; also a newly-emerged
 adult firefly beetle JW
 -a pretty pink primrose moth inside an evening
 primrose flower, on Wolfville Ridge BLF
 Jul 9 -a luna moth seen along the White Rock canal GW
 Jul 10 -2 wood ducks at Canard Poultry Pond BBT
 -cliff swallows nesting in White Rock area BLF

Jul 11	-5600 "peeps" + 80 dowitchers on Starr's Point mudflat	JSBo
	-a lesser yellowlegs at Harris' Pond (Canning)	JGT
	-a spotted sandpiper with 3 fluffy young on Wolfville Ridge	JGT
	-5 probable purple martins in Wolfville	JSB
Jul 12	-a blue-coloured road-killed green snake at White Rock	RRN
	-a chimney swift nest in a barn and a broad-winged hawk nest, with 2 nestlings, at East Dalhousie	DC
	-a solitary sandpiper and an American wigeon at New Minas pond	JGT
Jul 13	-a white-tailed deer and a red fox in Aylesford sand-bog complex; lots of big freshwater mussels in small river near Aylesford	JW
Jul 14	-a bullfrog calling in a pond south of Gaspereau	RM
	-big larvae of predaceous diving beetle common in pond on Wolfville Ridge; one bit me very painfully	JW
Jul 15	-a wild turkey seen and then caught by "Charlie", a dog, at the end of Digby Neck	RRN
Jul 16	-a male redhead (duck) at the New Minas riverside pond	RS, JGT et al
	-in Wallace area, an adult little blue heron, a Caspian tern, 150 short-billed dowitchers, 2 red knots and red crossbills feeding young	JGT, NSBS
Jul 17	-at Methal's Lake, a single soft-shelled green snake egg lying on peat moss, a savannah sparrow	BLF, BNS
Jul 19	-20 lesser yellowlegs at a Sheffield Mills farm	JGT
	-lots of people digging for "bloodworms" on Kingsport and Starr's Point mudflats	JW
	-lots of salt-marsh sea anemones in a Kingsport pool	JW
Jul 20	-at Advocate, a ringed turtle-dove seen, then captured by hand, then it died overnight	GT
	-a good variety of fungi, including purple coral fungus and dark cup fungi, near Black R. Lake	JW
	-a three-legged juvenile green frog (only one hind leg) caught near Black River Lake	JW
Jul 21	-lots of tiny baby American eels in Black Hole Brook near Baxter's Harbour	JW
	-a meadow jumping mouse seen and, surprisingly, a flying squirrel active on the forest floor at noon near Baxter's Harbour	JW
Jul 22	-a yearling, all white, glaucous gull near Blomidon (was there until at least Aug 11-JGT)	MG et al
Jul 23	-495 chimney swifts "counted" going into Front St. dairy chimney in Wolfville at dusk	MT, JW
Jul 24	-a sandhill crane and 2 common moorhens near Tatamagouche and a laughing gull at Wallace	DM
Jul 25	-20 pine siskins in Wolfville	JW
	-a rusty blackbird carrying food near Sackville	JW
	-a probable coyote crossing hwy. 101 in late afternoon north of Sackville	JW's class

- Jul 25 -at N.S. Museum, a pink-eyed, albino adult male leopard frog, found by Dempsey Goreham in meadow at Shag Harbour, May 29, 1988 JW
 -evening grosbeaks with fledged juveniles at a feeder in Wolfville MH
- Jul 26 -at Cherry Hill Beach, 2 snowy egrets, 4 Hudsonian godwits and 12 piping plovers (including 8 chicks) JGT, NSBS
 -no-see-ums very abundant and hungry at Canning JW
 -2 single mourning doves near Canning and Port Williams JW
- Jul 27 -a long-horned wood-boring beetle, yellow with black edges, flitting around shredded bark (at Mosherville?) SAC
 -a forked fungus beetle under a shelf-fungus and 3 large fishing spiders (one carrying eggs) at White Rock JW
- Jul 28 -at Grand Pre, 14 whimbrels, 4 white-winged scoters, 1 common eider JGT, BBT
 -hundreds of ladybird beetles in a recently seeded meadow at Mosherville SAC
 -at Lakeville, red larval mites common on water scorpions, and grass blades folded into lairs containing clubionid spiders and their eggs JW
 -surprisingly, a molting male common eider at Lakeville JW
 -a strange large duck (domestic escapee?) at New Minas BLF
 JGT
- Jul 29 -a wood duck south of Canning
 -at Grand Pre, bobolinks in flocks and lots of gronking/clunking male green frogs in ditches JW
 -a short-eared owl and a northern harrier interacted a few times in the air at Grand Pre BLF, BBT
- Jul 30 -a dead young weasel, caught by a cat, had many ticks in its scalp, at Mosherville SAC
 -sandhill crane still at Tatamagouche JGT
- Jul 31 -chimney swift nest in barn at E. Dalhousie now had 4 or 5 large noisy nestlings & attending adult (fledglings were hanging on the wall on Aug 10 - DC) MT, JW
- Aug 1 -a white-marked tussock moth caterpillar found in Wolfville, made a cocoon that night, emerged as a wingless female Aug 11 or 12 MT, JW
- Aug 2 -chimney swifts going into Wolfville dairy chimney at dusk "guesstimated" at 250 to 550 birds (I guessed 440) BNS
- Aug 3 -a family of shrews, probably cinereous shrews, in a leaf-filled hollow of a fallen trunk in Blomidon Park JW
- Aug 4 -large winged ants, attended by tiny black ants, swarming out from under a sidewalk in Wolfville MT
 -migration of warblers (4 kinds) and vireos under way in early morning on Wolfville Ridge (also noted Aug 6 & 7, with 6 more kinds of warblers) JGT
- Aug 5 -a pied-billed grebe in pond NW of Port Williams JGT
- Aug 6 -a peregrine falcon seen south of Blomidon BBT
 -hundreds of semipalmated plovers roosting in an open field at Falmouth GL, BBT

- Aug 6 -huge numbers of "peeps" at Evangeline Beach, estimated at 400,000 to 500,000! (mainly semi-palmated sandpipers); also 2 northern harriers at Grand Pre JGT
- Aug 7 -6 brown creepers (family?) with migrating warblers on Wolfville Ridge JGT
- Aug 8 -bats along Kennetcook River, at Mosherville, calling audibly SAC
-a Wilson's phalarope and 2 stilt sandpipers at West and East Chezzetcook marshes JGT
- Aug 9 -incredible numbers of tiny tan adult planthoppers in Wolfville salt-marsh and in the air in Wolfville; lots of hungry "greenhead" deer-flies in both places; and oodles of hungry mosquitoes around Wolfville (from salt-marsh?) JW
-1 Canada goose (tame?) in pond NE of Kentville JGT
-55 lesser yellowlegs at Canning, 2 pectoral sandpipers at Sheffield Mills, 5 Hudsonian godwits and a white-rumped sandpiper at Evangeline Beach JGT
- Aug 10 -at Evangeline Beach, an osprey, 5 common terns RS,JGT,BBT,JW
- Aug 11 -a Caspian tern seen at Porter's Point RS
-at West Brooklyn in early evening, several groups of common nighthawks, totalling at least 99 birds GA
- Aug 12 -a few hundred chimney swifts still at Wolfville dairy chimney BLF
-at Mosherville, a katydid on a purple petunia SAC
- Aug 13 -tidal bore at Mosherville a mere ripple SAC
- Aug 14 -an immature northern goshawk seen near Chipman's Brook on the Fundy coast BBT
-an immature northern gannet and lots of white-sided dolphins seen from the Digby - Saint John ferry PC
- Aug 15 -52 chimney swifts went into Wolfville dairy chimney at dusk FF,GF,HF,BLF,JW
-at Greenwich, a young red fox was hand-fed some sardines and 9 raccoons and 5 skunks were recently live-trapped HF
- Aug 16 -recently in a flower show at Annapolis Royal, a display containing living helleborine orchids which were found at a cemetery at Lequille GP
-a skunk rooting up a residential lawn with its snout at mid-day in Kentville JSB
- Aug 18 -a Caspian tern and an upland sandpiper at Grand Pre BLF
- Aug 19 -mosquitoes worse than ever at Mosherville (one dissenter says 1967 was worse) SAC
-several seals with long heads (probably gray seals) seen at St. Catherine's River Beach (Cadden Beach) GTh
- Aug 21 -a Wilson's phalarope at Canard Poultry Pond (present to Aug 28) BLF,MG
- Aug 23 -a rose-breasted grosbeak eating chokecherries at Mosherville SAC
- Aug 24 -a red eft (of a red-spotted newt) in Wolfville JSB
- Aug 25 -an iridescent marine blue wasp at Mosherville SAC
-a merlin caught and ate a sandpiper on Grand Manan Island JW

Aug 26	-a skua (probably a great skua), a Manx shearwater, northern gannets common, 10 common murre, and a Wilson's storm-petrel seen from Grand Manan to N.B. ferry	JW
	-a yellow crab spider or flower spider with red marks seen at Mosherville	SAC
	-winged ants all over cars in Wolfville	MT
Aug 27	-a probable peregrine falcon at Black River Lake	MZ
	-60 sunflowers, randomly planted by blue jays, at bloom in Mosherville	SAC
Aug 28	-an adult northeastern sawyer beetle (grayish with very long antennae) found at Canning	MZ
	-a changing male wood duck at Canard Poultry Pd.	BBT
Aug 29	-lots of obvious white aggregations of alder woolly aphids on trunks & branches of alders in Wolfville	JW
	-a plant bug found on a cat's back (normally on grasses) at Mosherville	SAC
Sep 1	-2 whimbrels and 6 pectoral sandpipers at Grand Pre	BBT

Contributors

Thanks to everyone, but particularly to Judy Tufts and Sheila Connell for their written observations. I welcome feedback, from you readers out there, concerning what's good or bad about this section of our Newsletter.

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PA	Peter Austin-Smith	EK	Elsie Kehler
JB	Joan Bromley	GL	Gloria Lyons
SB	Stephen Bushell	LL	Len LeGard
JSB	Sherman Bleakney	DM	Don MacNeill
JSBo	Sherman Boates	PM	Peter MacLeod
DC	Donna Crossland	RM	Rosaleen McDonald
JC	Joe Clifford	PMa	Peter MacDonald
LC	Lana Churchill	RRN	Ruth & Reg Newell
PC	Peter Comeau	GP	Gini Proulx
CBC	CBC Radio	NP	Nancy Peters
CKC	Cyril Coldwell	RS	Richard Stern
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GF	George Forsyth	MT	Miriam Tams
HF	Harold Forsyth	GTh	Gordon Thorpe
BLF	Bernard Forsythe	BBT	Brenda & Bill Thexton
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MH	Maxine Hill	PY	Paul Yates
RH	Russell Houghton	MZ	Marion Zinck
JPH	J.P. Huang		

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(due September 1, 1988)

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Mrs. Judy Tufts
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Sources for Local Natural History Information
(compiled by Blomldon Naturalists Society)

<u>Information</u>	<u>Source</u>	<u>Office</u>	<u>Home</u>
Rocks & Fossils	Geol. Dept., Acadia Univ.	542-2201	
Fish	N.S. Dept. of Lands & Forests	678-8921	
Flora - General	Ruth Newell	542-2201	542-2095
Flora - Trees	Merritt Gibson	542-2201	582-7569
Flora - Fungi	Darryl Grund	542-2201	542-9214
	Kenneth Harrison	542-2201	678-4890
Flora - Seaweeds	Darryl Grund	542-2201	542-9214
Flora - Mosses & Ferns	John Pickwell	542-2246	678-8281
Birds - General	Bernard Forsythe		542-2427
	Richard Stern	678-4742	678-1975
	Peter C. Smith	542-2201	542-5998
	Gordon & Judy Tufts		542-7800
	Jim Wolford	542-2201	542-7650
	Jean Tlmpa		542-5678
Birds - Hawks & Owls	Bernard Forsythe		542-2427
	Cyril Coldwell	542-2201	542-2854
	Mark Elgerki:	542-2201	542-3731
Birds - Falcons & Eagles	Peter Austin-Smith	678-8921	542-2109
Mammals	Tom Herman	542-2201	678-0383
	Francis Schwab	542-2201	542-3473
Amphibians & Reptiles	Sherman Bleakney	542-2201	542-3604
	Jim Wolford	542-2201	542-7650
Seashore & Marine Life	Sherman Bleakney	542-2201	542-3604
	Jim Wolford	542-2201	542-7650
	Graham Daborn	542-2201	542-5373
Indian Prehistory & Archaeological Sites	Michael Brylinsky	542-2201	582-7954
	Ellis Gertridge		542-2816
Astronomy	James Legge		542-3530
	Roy Bishop	542-2201	542-3992
	Larry Bogan	542-2201	678-0446
	Sherman Williams	542-5137	542-5104