

# ***Blomidon Naturalists Society Newsletter***



Summer 1996

Volume 23, No. 2

*Lazy & hazy....*

Perseid Meteors - August 11/12

## **1996 Summer Programme**

### **MONDAY EVENING MEETINGS**

Unless otherwise noted, meetings are held on the third Monday of the month and start at 7:30 p.m. at Acadia University in Room 244 in the Beveridge Arts Centre. All meetings are open to the public and BNS members are encouraged to bring friends and neighbours.

#### **Monday September 16, 7:30 pm**

Natural history with a difference! There is a cash crop of considerable value cultivated in our area that few, if any of us, know much about. Brian Stones of the New Minas Detachment RCMP will tell all. His subject: **Marijuana**.

### **SUMMER-EARLY AUTUMN 1996 FIELD TRIPS**

#### **Saturday August 3 - SHOREBIRDS OF THE MINAS BASIN**

Meet Sherman Boates at the Robie Tufts Nature Centre, Wolfville at 11:30 a.m. or at 12 noon at the Windsor Visitors Information Centre at the Windsor causeway. Bring a lunch, rubber boots and wear clothing suitable for a muddy beach. The trip is on rain or shine.

## Editorial Board

**Chair:** Susan Montonen

**Committee:** Merritt Gibson, Nancy Nickerson, Terry Power, Sherman Williams, George Alliston, Mark Elderkin

**Production:** Phil Taylor

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*"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 a member of the Federation of Nova Scotia Naturalists, the Nova Scotia Trails Federation, the Brier Island Ocean Study (BIOS), and an Affiliated member of the Canadian Nature Federation.

The Blomidon Naturalists Society is a registered charity. Receipts (for income tax purposes) will be issued for all donations.

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## Notes from the Editor

This issue of the newsletter provides some interesting summer reading. Read accounts of field trips along the Gaspereau River, and searching for waterfowl throughout Kings Co. For exotic adventure cruise Scotland and Ireland, and the Antarctic with Jim Wolford.

Heather Forsythe provides a model for reaching sustainable planning decisions when conflicting interests meet, and the model is tested using the Wolfville dykelands issue.

"What's in the Sky?", a new feature focussing on astronomical events-to-come in the next season was written, this time, by Roy Bishop.

Reports from the conservation committee, the Federation of Nova Scotia Naturalists, and the Robie Tufts Young Naturalist Award committee, are included with the regular birds, weather, and natural history sightings. Happy summer, and happy reading!

Susan Montonen

smontone@ace.acadiau.ca

**The deadline for the Autumn newsletter is September 30, 1996.**

### **Sunday August 11 - THE SUMMER NIGHT SKY**

The sky will feature 'shooting stars' and lots of other interesting objects to look at. The Perseid Shower is at its height on the night of 11-12 August. Meet at the Grand Pré parking lot at 9:00 p.m. Roy Bishop, Sherman Williams and Larry Bogan will be your guides. The cloud date is Monday August 12, same place and time.

### **Saturday August 17 - WALK TO LITTLE RIVER FALLS**

Ruth Newell will guide walkers along a woodland trail by a stream to Little River Falls. Meet at the Robie Tufts Nature Centre at 10:00 a.m. Bring lunch. The emphasis is on vegetation but birdwatching is allowed. The trip should wind up by mid-afternoon.

### **Saturday September 14 - BIRDS, BIRDS, BIRDS**

Richard Stern will conduct a tour of birding points of interest from Blomidon, to local ponds and the shores of Minas Basin. Meet at the lower parking lot at Blomidon Provincial Park at 8:30 a.m. Join with members of the NS Bird Society for this interesting tour. Bring lunch.

### **Saturday September 21 - POTLUCK PICNIC & MORE**

If you find some field trips a bit too structured, here is one for you. The South Shore Naturalists have invited us to join them on a field trip to Blomidon Provincial Park. Bring something for a picnic pot luck. Unstructured walks on the park trails will follow. Attendees will be asked to help with interpretation. Meet at Robie Tufts Nature Centre at 10:30 a.m.

## **Announcements**

### **FALL NORTH AMERICAN MIGRATION COUNT DAY SEPTEMBER 21, 1996**

The second annual Fall North American Migration Count Day will take place on Saturday September 21, 1996 this year all over North America. YOUR HELP is needed. Would you be willing to spend part of or the whole day participating in monitoring the return of your local Nova Scotian County migrating bird populations on that date, either as a field observer or from the comfort of your own home as a feeder watcher? If you are willing to participate in this Fall North American Migration Count project as a counter please contact your local County coordinator or area representative; names are available in the April issue of Nova Scotia Birds magazine or from the Spring Provincial Coordinator Judy Tufts at 1-902-542-7800.

It is important that all those wishing to participate contact the local coordinators or reps. to prevent overlaps of areas being surveyed, and to

help the coverage to be as thorough and widespread as possible. I am looking for a volunteer who will take over the Fall count as I am unable to coordinate both annual counts but will gladly assist anyone who takes over the Fall job in any way I can.

## Society Business and Notices

### ANNUAL MEETING & ELECTIONS

by Roy Bishop, President

The October 21 meeting of the Blomidon Naturalists Society is the annual meeting. At this meeting we elect the members of the Board of Directors for the coming year: President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer, plus up to 6 Directors at large. The total number of Directors (minimum 5, maximum 10) is determined by the membership at the annual meeting.

In accordance with By-law 31 (a), the Board of Directors at its meeting of June 13 appointed a Nominating Committee, consisting of Bill Thexton, Lorna Hart, & Tom Herman -- the same group who carried out these duties a year ago! Two of the Directors at large are to be nominated and elected by the membership at the annual meeting, but all other nominations are the responsibility of the Nominating Committee. However, as specified in By-law 31(b): "Any two members of the Society who wish to have someone nominated by the Nominating Committee may do so by submit-

ting the name in writing to the Committee at least two weeks before the Annual Meeting." I encourage members to make use of this provision, both to assist the Nominating Committee and to become involved in the running of your Society.

#### 1995-96 Directors of the Blomidon Naturalists Society

*President*

Roy Bishop 542-3992

*Vice-President*

Larry Bogan 678-0446

*Past President*

Tom Herman 678-0383

*Secretary*

Neil Cloghesy 542-4525

*Treasurer*

Harold Forsyth 542-5983

*Directors At-Large*

George Alliston 542-3651

Sue Bissix 542-9138

Lorna Hart 542-4470

John Harwood 582-3320

Randy Milton 542-1761



## WHAT DO THE DIRECTORS DO?

by Roy Bishop

According to By-law #40 of the Blomidon Naturalists Society: "The management of the activities of the Society shall be vested in the directors . . .". Accordingly, the Directors (presently ten in number) hold four to six meetings per year to attend to the business of the BNS. A list of the directors appears above.

I reported on the November 30 meeting of the Directors in the winter newsletter. Two subsequent meetings have taken place, on March 14 and June 13, held at the home of Bill and Brenda Thexton. Both meetings included reports of the officers (President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer), and reports from the chairpersons of the various committees: Conservation, Editorial (Newsletter), Program (monthly meetings and field trips), Robie Tufts Nature Centre, and the Robie Tufts Young Naturalists Award (although the latter committee usually reports only in the autumn).

Among the items considered at the March 14 and June 13 meetings:

- Consideration of upcoming monthly meetings and field trips (reported elsewhere in this newsletter);
- Formation of a Nominating Committee (Bill Thexton, Lorna Hart, & Tom Herman);
- Review of the latest financial statements of the Society;
- The Society's application to become a "Designated Conserva-

tion Organization" (currently on hold pending a policy review by the Provincial Government);

- Hiring of an employee to work at the Robie Tufts Nature Centre during the summer of 1996 (Monica Young, our employee in 1995, was again the successful candidate);

- A proposal for a children's program (by an ad hoc committee: Robert Emerson, Karin Robertson, and Wendy Skeard);

- Meeting with an Acadia class in Recreation concerning the development of a Management Plan for the Gaspereau River Ravine (relevant to the Society if it becomes a "Designated Conservation Organization");

- The Society's report on a Parks Management Plan for the Grand Pré Park (prepared by Larry Bogan and Neil Cloghesy);

- A report on the possible construction of oil storage tanks near the Kentville Ravine;

- A report on the May cormorant "cull" on the Gaspereau River;

- Possible fund-raising projects for the BNS (a committee has been formed: Roy Bishop, Neil Cloghesy, and Harold Forsyth);

- Proposed improvements to the appearance and content of the Newsletter;

- Reports on developments in the Federation of Nova Scotia Naturalists (BNS members are becoming increasingly involved in the operation of the Federation);

- Letters of support from the BNS for: (a) funding requests by the Friends of the Cornwallis; (b) the

(successful) proposal to hold the 2001 Canada-Wide Science Fair in Wolfville;

- A report on plans to develop

nature trails on the Elderkin farm west of Wolfville;

- Consideration of use of the BNS logo on a crest, pin, or T-shirt.

## CONSERVATION COMMITTEE REPORT: WINTER AND SPRING 1996

by Larry Bogan, Acting Chairman

### *1. Gaspereaux River Valley Gorge Recreational Planning Parks and Open Space Resource Management (Recreation 4263)*

The recreation class in Park Resource Management at Acadia has prepared a plan for the 'development' and use of the Gaspereaux River Gorge west of the White Rock bridge. The BNS conservation committee was acting as the client and provided information and guidance during the preparations. This was an academic exercise but the final report will contain valuable information and ideas for possible use by the BNS.

In the first step, each member of the committee was interviewed to ascertain her expectation for the area. Later we were presented with a wide range of possible developments for the area and asked which ones were closest to our vision of use of the area. We recommended that the river valley be used only by foot traffic and be used for natural history and aesthetic enjoyment by the nearby community. Vehicles of all type should be discouraged because of the fragility of the area to erosion. Since the natural environment of the gorge needs protection, activities that can be enjoyed just as well elsewhere, and do not use the

special attributes of the area, should be discouraged.

The class next presented information collected by study groups made up of the members of the class, and the committee commented on their results. A final meeting, included other resource people such as Ruth Newell, botanist, and Scott Cook, member of the Kings County Wildlife Association. In this meeting, various conflicts and strategies were discussed and certain conclusions drawn.

### *2. Wildlife Problems Workshop*

Dr. Alistair J. Bath with the Department of Geography at Memorial University of Newfoundland is heading up a project called "Human Dimensions in Wildlife Management (HDWM) in Nova Scotia". Members of the Society's Conservation Committee participated in a workshop led by Dr. Bath on February 1, 1996, along with representatives of the Department of Natural Resources. During the evening of discussions the group was to identify key wildlife issues in Nova Scotia and, in the end, selected habitat fragmentation as the problem of most concern for our area. This was only one of many workshops

across Nova Scotia and makes up part of Phase 1 of the project. Other groups included later will be the Nova Scotia Wildlife Federation, Professional Fishing and Hunting Outfitters Association, the Department of Tourism, and other environmental groups.

In the final phases of the study there will be more interviews with groups (called stakeholders) identified in phase one. In addition other stakeholders and their concerns will be identified by holding public meetings. The goal of the study is to list the beliefs of the public with respect to wildlife management, and learn why they hold those beliefs.

### 3. *Parks Planning and Grand Pré*

On February 1, the BNS was invited to send representatives to a presentation of the Proposed Plan for the Grand Pré National Historic Park. There had been an earlier meeting with the public on December 5, 1995 at the Horton Community Centre. The major proposed change is a new visitor's centre to replace the aging facility. The current centre is inadequate for the annual 100,000 visitors. Acadian organizations are proposing construction of a multipurpose facility for accommodating visitors, as well as to provide interpretation and promotion of Acadian cultural activities. Most of the discussions were centred on these considerations. Assurances were given that no lights would be put in the parking lot and destroy the excellent sky observing site that exists there. I asked if perhaps park interpretation could include more natural

history of the surrounding area, but the limitation of the size of park lands restricts this to a view over the dykelands. The BNS was asked by Park personnel and by members of the Acadian Organizations to submit ideas for consideration. Three suggestions were drafted by Neil Cloghesy and myself, on behalf of the Society, and sent to the consultants preparing the plan for Grand Pré Park.

1) The western end of the park beyond the blacksmith's shop is an excellent place to locate a structure for natural history interpretation of the dykelands and, at present, is not being used. It would provide an excellent view over the dykelands to Cape Blomidon.

2) The Park needs to expand the collection of plants in the gardens that Acadians introduced to North America. This would be attractive to botanists and horticulturalists as well as visitor who are interested in the plants that the Acadian's valued.

3) Many of us enjoy using the grounds of the Park during off-season and after-hours and would hope that the park remains accessible.

### 4. *Current Concerns concerning dangers to the Kentville Ravine.*

Irving Oil has applied to Kings County for a zoning change in order to build an Oil Bulk-Storage across the road from its Big Stop Station and Restaurant. The committee is collecting information on the possible impact to the area. The location poses a danger to the ecology of the Kentville Ravine. The proposed site is on

the drainage into the Kentville Ravine. Irving seems adamant in using this site rather than one they have in the industrial park in Kentville. The committee is examining its natural history files on the Ravine to show how important it is to keep the Ravine unspoiled and protected from possible damage. Attempts have been made to get the Ravine designated a protected site but so far

that has not happened. Even the section owned by Agriculture Canada is not protected. Much of the area considered as part of the Ravine is not government land. Irving Oil not only owns the site around the Big Stop but also a strip of land across the access road to route 101, down into the Kentville Ravine near to the brook.

## FEDERATION OF NOVA SCOTIA NATURALISTS NOTES FROM THE PAST PRESIDENT'S DESK...

by Alice White, Past President FNSN

*AGM Election of Officers.* The new officers of FNSN for a two year term are: Tom Herman, Vice President; Ruth Newell, Secretary; Jim Wolford, Treasurer; and Larry Bogan, Individual Members' Representative. The position of President has not yet been filled. At the AGM it was agreed the Board would share/manage the duties of the president until the position is filled. This void is not being taken lightly and will affect efficiency and continuity. All members need to be concerned and assist your newly elected Board.

### *Representatives from Membership Societies.*

Annapolis Field Naturalists:

Andrew Hardy

Blomidon Naturalists Society:

George Alliston

Cape Breton Naturalists Society:

Mary Williams

Chegnecto Naturalists Club:

Gladys Mazeroll

Eastern Mainland Field Naturalists:

Ken McKenna

Halifax Field Naturalists:

Pat Chalmers

Les Amis du Plein Air:

David Lawley

N.S. Wild Flora Society:

Christoph Sensen

South Shore Naturalists:

Jill Comolli

Tusket River Environment Protection Association:

Peter Terry

Members at Large:

Larry Bogan

The FNSN will be sending a representative to a consultation meeting with the Canadian Nature Federation in July in Winnipeg.

### *New FNSN Member Organization.*

The Cobequid Naturalists Club, Truro, is now a member of the Federation. Jeff Ogden is the representative on the Board.

*Member Contributions.* In the past year, Reg Newell became our representative to the Trails Federation, Doug Linzey advisor to



Mines and Minerals, and Calvin Brennan represented the Federation at a consultation workshop presented by the Canadian Working Group of the Forest Stewardship Council. Members volunteering their time and skills continue to make the Federation vital and effective.

*Endangered Spaces.* The Federation has been active in all stages urging the acceptance of the Proposed Systems Plan and continue participation in the management phase. About one-third of the areas will be included in the management process this year.

*Endangered Species.* Endangered Species remains prominent on our agenda provincially and nationally. At a spring workshop in Ottawa, Colin Stewart communicated FNSN's position on Endangered Species. We have been actively pursuing the Endangered Species Act with three major concerns: 1) habitat be given more importance, 2) act should extend to private land, 3) species list be expanded.

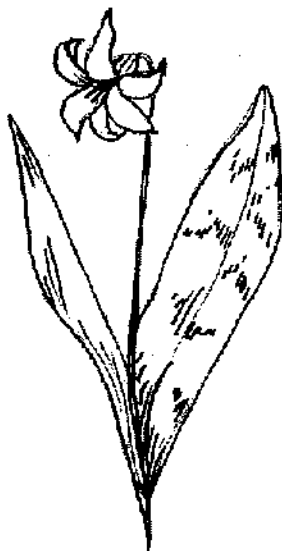
*Conservation Easement.* The Federation has been designated as an official organization under the auspices of the Nova Scotia Conservation Easement Act.

*Speaker's Roster.* A Speaker's Roster is in the making and will be on-going for future updates. Pat Chalmers (HFN) has drafted a form for speakers to fill out which has been distributed throughout the Federation. She is now await-

ing the return of the forms in order to compile a roster which will be helpful to all member organizations and our communities. We have many potential speakers within and outside of our naturalists' societies. All Pat needs to do is compile the information you send to her.

*Field Activities.* FNSN has been asked to participate in field projects. Supporting this have been many from member organizations busy in the field observing and counting for Plantwatch, Frog Watch, Butterfly Census and Piping Plovers.

Exciting News from Cape Breton Naturalists Society: "Two UCCB students, working with our Biodiversity Group, discovered a land snail new to Nova Scotia. What a thrill for the two of them. Their find was well documented by an expert in the field."



## 1995 ROBIE TUFTS YOUNG NATURALIST AWARD by Sherman Williams

Since 1984, the Blomidon Naturalists Society has honoured the memory of Robie Tufts, by seeking out and giving recognition to promising young naturalists.

During the November 1995 meeting of the society, the selection committee introduced two new Robie Tufts Young Naturalists, Louise de Mestral Bezanson and Mitchell Guilderson. Each was presented with a certificate and a one year membership in the society. They also received books on topics of natural history that would be of interest to them.

Louise is the 12-year old daughter of Donald Bezanson and Jacquie de Mestral. Louise lives on the North Mountain, near Harbourville, Kings County. During the current school year, she has been a grade 7 student at Cambridge and District Elementary School. Prior to that she was a student at Somerset and District Elementary School where she was known for her keen interest and awareness of nature and the environment.

While at Somerset School she was instrumental in forming a group called "Kids for Saving the Earth". Fostered by many of her ideas and leadership, this group enthusiastically promoted recycling and fun activities in the out-of-doors. The group did much to develop environmental sensitivity and awareness among students of the school.

At home on the North Mountain,

Louise enjoys watching and feeding the birds. She has discovered that it is also a good place to go for nature walks. She desires to learn all she can about nature and wishes especially to develop skills in observing animals.

When she heard that the BNS may form a group especially for the interests of the young naturalist, she had this to say, "I think that a group for young people would be very interesting. I have thought over some possible ideas I think would be interesting and fun. Here they are:

1. Nature walks where plants and animals are pointed out, so young people can learn how to observe nature better. (Possibly to Cape Split)
2. A session on how to count birds, and then doing a bird count with our new-found knowledge.
3. How to draw OK diagrams and pictures of animals.
4. Ways to track animals (in the winter, summer etc.).
5. How to maintain a good bird feeder, that birds will come to.
6. Ways to help nature, for example: (decrease) garbage, (minimize) loss of habitat.

When the Young Naturalists group starts up (or if you need some help) please get in touch with me!"

Mitchell, is the 15-year old son of Colleen Guilderson and lives on Belcher Street, between Port Williams and Kentville. He has been a

grade 9 student at Horton District High. To the students and teachers who know Mitchell, he is known as Mister Biologist. According to his mom, "From the time he was a small boy, when other children were noticing toy cars and things, Mitchell would be finding bugs and frogs and other creepy crawlies and be about making friendly acquaintances with them." He has a great enthusiasm for knowing about nature's creatures. He has several field guides and he knows what is in them. His special passion is for amphibians and reptiles. Regarding the details of many of these animals, his knowledge is impressive. He is a keen observer. From his observations of the real animal and through reading, he has taken note of subtle little details that many of us would have overlooked. He has much of this knowledge at his fingertips. He knows where the best places are to observe different kinds of frogs, turtles and sala-

manders, whether it be near Amherst, Kejimikujik or in his home territory. Mitchell has been a keen participant and prize winner in science fairs. His current project, titled "The World of Axolotls", was quite successful in the 1996 Kings County Science Fair. When asked what it was about, he replied, "It was a study of repressive metamorphism in Urodes, that is, salamanders, newts and the like". In addition to his interest in natural history, Mitchell enjoys the martial arts, Japanese Anime, art and computers. He has his own page on the World Wide Web where he features some of his art. His plans for the future are to be a herpetologist.

The Blomidon Naturalists Society is pleased to recognize and congratulate Louise and Mitchell for the great beginning they have made in developing their individual interests in nature.

## Natural History Articles

### AN INTERDISCIPLINARY APPROACH TO COMMUNITY-LED DECISION MAKING: A KEY TO LOCAL SUSTAINABILITY by Heather Forsythe

*Who controls the dykelands, the Town of Wolfville or the Marsh Bodies? Although the Marsh Bodies received a ruling in the fall that the Marshland Reclamation Act had priority over the Planning Act, in May of this year, the Town of Wolfville on appeal regained control of the marshlands. Wolfville Mayor Gwen Phillips was quoted as saying that the town, "is committed to continuing*

*the dialogue with the Marsh Bodies to resolve outstanding concerns." Heather Forsythe, recent graduate of the Environmental Sciences programme at Acadia University, looked at the issue of sustainable land use planning and conflicting interests for her honours thesis. She used the dykelands issue to demonstrate the application of the model. Although the recent deci-*

*sion may seem set, the Marsh Bodies have time to appeal, and perhaps the model could be used to try and gain a win-win result.*

Communities can play an indispensable part in creating a securely based sustainable society if they are permitted to contribute to the decisions that affect them. Yet too often, community members are excluded from making important decisions about their community. Frequently, decisions are based on a narrow range of factors and therefore do not equally consider conflicting interests within the community. Making decisions that are acceptable to entire communities and are yet sustainable, is a very difficult task, but one that needs to be addressed.

For my honours thesis, I developed a decision making model that would allow community members to make sustainable management decisions concerning their common resources. A case study of land use planning in Wolfville, Nova Scotia was used to demonstrate the application of the model. This article will present a brief overview of the events of the case study as well as a simplified introduction to my model.

The Grand Pre and Bishop-Beckwith Marsh Bodies are two of 84 marsh bodies in Nova Scotia. Over half of the Bishop-Beckwith acreage falls within Wolfville town boundaries. In 1988, The Town of Wolfville rezoned sections of marshland to allow for industrial and commer-

cial development. Although this decision was made publicly, the Marsh Bodies were recognized as absentee landowners and were not permitted to vote.

After rezoning, the Town and Wolfville Business Development Corporation (WBDC) purchased bordering properties on the Bishop-Beckwith marshlands. The Town proceeded to build on the land what has become the most expensive public works building in Atlantic Canada, and the WBDC began planning the construction of a light industrial park and an open space park. When plans for this development became known, the Marsh Bodies passed a land use regulation that restricted the use of all marshlands to agricultural land use only, with the exception of those lands already being used for non-agricultural use as of June 1, 1994.

In 1993, the WBDC and the Blomidon Naturalists Society hired a consulting company to commission a study to develop an open space plan for Wolfville. The area for the proposed park incorporated part of the WBDC lands as well as other privately owned lands, including the dykes themselves. These plans progressed without the knowledge of the Marsh Bodies, the private land owners, and so it seems, some of the WBDC members.

When the Marsh Bodies finally heard these plans, they quickly expressed their objections. However, their concerns were not addressed. Although they had passed a land use regulation in

1993, their cooperation was not considered crucial. The Town assumed that the Nova Scotia Planning Act would have precedence over any authority granted to the Marsh Bodies by the Marshland Reclamation Act, thereby giving the Town ultimate jurisdictional power.

Until the matter of jurisdiction was resolved, no openspace or any other development was possible within the Wolfville dykelands. Eventually a legal battle began for control over the marshlands within town boundaries. The Town of Wolfville initiated legal action arguing its Planning Act took precedence over the Marshland Reclamation Act.

As a result of the legal battle, a special interest group, the Dykeland Preservation Society, formed with the intent of bringing together all those who had an interest in preserving and protecting Wolfville's agricultural heritage. Some community members feared commercial encroachment on the fertile dykeland soils -- a valuable resource of the community. However, the use and appreciation of the dykelands extends beyond its agricultural purpose. Other community members recognized that the proposed changes could prove to be detrimental to the numerous species currently using the land as habitat. Another concern was a depreciation of aesthetic value of the marshlands. Not only would an industrial park interfere with relaxation and exercise on the dykeland, but would also result in changing the character of the

town, potentially affecting the tourist industry.

Whether directly involved or not, most everyone had a strong opinion concerning development on the dykeland. However, the Town of Wolfville went to the Nova Scotia Supreme Court, instead of its community members to reach a decision. On September 19 1995, the Nova Scotia Supreme Court ruled that the Marshland Reclamation Act of 1949 would take precedence over the provincial Planning Act, thus giving ultimate control of the land to the Marsh Bodies. However, the ruling did not lessen the tension between the two major stakeholders, the Marsh Bodies and the Town of Wolfville. In fact, the town has since applied for an appeal of the court ruling.

By examining these events, it becomes clear that an ideal decision making process was not utilized. Instead of having community members work towards a common goal to improve their community, a small number of stakeholders prepared their own business-oriented goal that excluded interests from other sectors of the community. An important land use planning decision that would ultimately affect every citizen in the community was to be made by a select few, who had their own vision for Wolfville. This "back-door" approach to planning was not only unwise, but unethical. The outcome of community conflict indicated that Wolfville was not using a sustainable framework for planning.

The model, which I have proposed, provides a sustainable framework for community decision making by combining a philosophy that incorporates ecology, economics and ethics with the following tools of implementation: education, public participation and consensus. The purpose of linking ecology, economics and ethics is to support integrated objectives. Because everything is interrelated, a community cannot possess one kind of sustainability. It must be ecologically sustainable, economically sustainable, and ethically sustainable. The adoption of an interdisciplinary philosophy such as this could provide for ecologically sound, economically viable, and morally consistent decisions.

However, linking these disciplines cannot be left solely in the hands of government and industry. Individuals have a personal responsibility to become involved. This is made possible with the tools of implementation: education, public participation, and consensus. Together, these tools build confidence, capability, equity and respect among community members. Integrated with an interdisciplinary philosophy, these tools are essential for implementing an effective plan for

sustainable community resource planning. As a whole, they produce a paradigm that represents the essential input to any community decision making process.

After introducing the interdisciplinary approach as the proper input to the process, the model guides community members through important steps of decision making. Starting with the creation of a common vision or goal for the community, community members can then identify problems, propose strategies, assess their impacts and monitor their implementation. The simplicity of the model permits flexible usage to any community, as sustainability must be defined locally.

The fundamental goal of this model is to empower community members to make ecologically sound, economically viable and morally consistent decisions affecting their own communities. For a more in depth look at the concept of sustainable communities and the model presented in this paper, "An Interdisciplinary Approach to Community-led Decision Making: The Key to Local Sustainability" by Heather Forsythe can be obtained at the Acadia University Library.

## CORMORANT "CULL" QUOTES

(selected by Roy Bishop)

In May this year, coincident with the release of salmon smolt into the Gaspereau River, several dozen cormorants were shot. The

following lines are taken from *The Advertiser*:

"Man has meddled with nature so

badly he's upset the balance. Sometimes he has to interfere to right the balance." (*Lloyd Duncanson, Kings County Wildlife Association*)

"Cormorants have the same right to life as salmon smolt and members of the Kings County Wildlife Association." (*Alf Gerritse*)

"Why introduce one species and kill another?" (*A student from the Gaspereau Elementary School*)

"No one group should decide which species may live there and which ones must be destroyed." (*Merritt Gibson*)

## WOLFORD'S WANDERINGS

by **Jim Wolford**

(previously printed in the AUFA Communicator April, 1996)

*Jim Wolford will be presenting a talk at an upcoming BNS meeting on one of these trips.*

Over the past three years I've indulged in several package-tours, which are widely advertised in magazines, newspapers, travel agencies, etc. Such tours appeal to my lazy nature (I dislike shopping and planning); I'm then paying professionals to make most of the decisions about when and where and how to go, to arrange for excellent guides and lecturers, to facilitate getting into countries and parks, etc.

First I booked a cruise of the coasts and islands of Scotland and Ireland with Toronto-based Adventure Canada, a company that has now provided me with two fantastic tours (really!). This cruise was called Celtic Quest, and its theme was ancient human history. My tour actually began with a two-day trip by bus from Edinburgh to Aberdeen, where we boarded the Russian ship that was to be our home for about twelve days in mid-September. It accommodated about 95 tourists

plus hotel staff plus crew plus numerous excellent guides and resource-people who were on the ship for all or most of the cruise.

On the ship was a fleet of inflatable Zodiac vessels, for the usually twice-daily visits to the mainland or islands along the carefully chosen route. Three things made my cruise perhaps more hectic than for most other tourists (by the way, another perk of such tours is the wonderful people you meet from diverse geographies and backgrounds): (a) I was trying to identify birds and plants while learning about the ancient cultures and monuments; (b) lots of optional activities were offered on the ship all the time (lectures/slide-shows, concerts, parties, and to mention incredible meals), and I wasn't going to miss anything I had paid for!; and (c) nearly all my free time was spent in writing notes in my journal or reading about the places and history.

Here is a chronological list of the places we stopped: Helmsdale (ne. mainland), Fair Isle and Mousa in

the Shetlands, Kirkwall in the Orkneys (and a bus-tour), Isle of Lewis and Harris of the Outer Hebrides (another bus-tour), St. Kilda archipelago, Rhum, Skye, Staffa (Fingal's Cave), Iona, and Islay; then in Ireland, TORY ISLAND (yes!), Achill Island and Westport, Inishmore of the Aran Islands, the Cliffs of Moher, the Skellig Islands, the Dingle Peninsula (another bus-tour), and finally we disembarked near Shannon/Limerick.

Highlights along the way included a diversity of very ancient standing stones, stone circles, tombs, churches, brochs and forts, and stone fences and dwellings, all of dry-stone construction; monoliths were especially concentrated at Orkney and Harris. (Castles, worth only glances, were too numerous and much too recent for our quest.) A few biological spectacles were wonderful shows from nesting colonies of gannets at St. Kilda and the Skelligs; at the latter were two very approachable basking sharks --- these SHARKS created avid interest from all spectators, regardless of the truth that these are very sluggish plankton-feeders and harmful only to very tiny crustaceans!

Another highlight worthy of mention was a Scotch distillery on the Isle of Islay, followed by several free wee drams! (none of us was driving!)

My second recent trip took place in the first half of February. I booked a trip to Antarctica with Quest Nature Tours. It began in Toronto and included two days in

Santiago, Chile, and another two days in Ushuaia, Argentina, at the southern tip of Tierra del Fuego. At Santiago and Ushuaia there were several optional mini-tours (including a Chilean winery), both on foot and by bus. My itinerary did not include the Falkland Islands, South Georgia, nor the South Orkneys. Missing those is perhaps my only regret; but seeing those requires another week or more and lots more money!

At Ushuaia my tour-group of 31 boarded a relatively small and tipsy Russian ship. A half-day of smooth sailing in protected channels is then followed by the legendary Drake Passage, which is very seldom calm. Several of us were "under the weather" during the first of two days crossing the Drake (and the return trip included another two days there, but by then most of us had "sea-legs").

During that crossing, there were a couple of lectures per day, plus time on deck watching for wildlife, a tour of the ship, assorted videos to watch, etc. One of our lecturers was fantastic, and he really excited and informed us about the history of Antarctic exploration--he also made us realize what comfort-freaks we are! Concerning videos, if you get a chance to watch David Attenborough's six-part series called "Life in the Freezer", don't miss it!

But the weather for most of the cruise was OK, and several days were super (sunny, calm, and warm). The objectives of most of us (certainly mine) were penguins,



whales, seals, other wildlife, and general scenery of mountains and ice. All of these became fulfilled quickly as soon as we reached the South Shetland Islands and, later, the northern part of the Antarctic Peninsula --- everyone get out your atlases or globes.

We had a couple of good shows from humpback whales, which looked and acted just like ours in the Bay of Fundy. Icebergs were "old hat" to me, thanks to two Acadia Biology excursions to the Arctic with the Navy. But bergs and all their smaller forms never get boring; there's endless variation and beauty in the sizes, shapes, textures, colours (especially gorgeous blues), and sometimes crystalline transparency. Also the glaciers and snow on the land are worthy of wonder, and we saw lots of patterns of green snow and red/pink snow (from algae).

As mentioned for my Celtic Quest, our ship was equipped with three Zodiacs as well as staff-people who were very good at handling both them and us land-lubbers. Early in the cruise we were taught some guidelines for behaviour of tourists in the Antarctic (to minimize our impacts). Emphasized were our actions toward wildlife: under no circumstances were we to approach any more closely than five metres (fifteen metres for the fast and sometimes aggressive fur seals). However, if a curious, oblivious, hungry, or protective critter decides to approach us, that's perfectly OK (except for any danger involved -- several of us

were dive-bombed by gull-like, nasty skuas that presumably had chicks to protect).

On most days we had two landings either in the South Shetlands or along the Antarctic Peninsula, which of course is part of the continent. Our southernmost visit was a bit south of the 65th parallel of latitude; therefore we didn't quite reach the Antarctic Circle (A few acquaintances who know me poorly have asked, "Did you get close to the Pole?" , to which I said, "Who would want to?!")

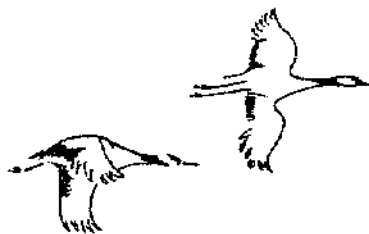
Among the islands and on the Peninsula, we visited a few research stations belonging to the U.K., the Ukraine, Poland, and Argentina, and saw others that were Russian, Chinese, and Chilean. Also we stopped at a British-abandoned cabin that was scheduled to be removed, along with its garbage, in the next summer.

The last sentence reminds me of two more points to make. First, the Austral tourist-season is from sometime in November to late March. As I write this, in late April, I've read recently that some Russian scientists are worried about not being replaced before the beginning of Austral winter. Funding problems are preventing a ship now in Africa from getting to them with supplies and more scientists. Second, most of the many countries with research bases are now committed to a continent-wide clean-up of garbage abandoned for many years. An option available to participants in my tour, on a volunteer basis

and at one's own expense (and every-thing is very costly down there), is to spend four days at a research base doing various activities such as clean-ups, assisting in research, sight-seeing, etc. We dropped off four participants at a Russian station and picked up several others who had just finished that option.

I'll end this indulgent essay with some very brief comments about the biology of the Antarctic. Like the Arctic, but even moreso, there's a night-and-day contrast between the land and the sea. The land is severely icy/snowy (and windy in winter), with such a brief summer, that it is very barren; "lush" areas of mosses and lichens and only two kinds of native flowering plants are strictly coastal and sparsely distributed. On the other hand, the edge of the sea teems with life. There's not a lot of diversity, but the obvious seabirds and seals are very abundant, and very approachable (hence the guidelines mentioned above). The seals are mostly seen sleeping on shore or on floating pieces of ice. We saw large numbers of fur, elephant, Weddell, and crabeater seals; the latter are specialized feeders on the shrimp-like krill which form the basis of most food-chains in the Antarctic. Many of us were disappointed that we didn't see that nasty killer of penguins, the leopard seal.

The seabirds include various kinds of petrels, gulls, terns, skuas, cormorants, and strange chicken-like white-colored sheathbills. But most of us wanted to get intimate with the penguins. We saw six kinds during the entire trip, but mainly we saw chinstraps, gentoos, and Adelies -- these three are all closely related and fairly small in stature. The two kinds of large penguins (not seen) are found on South Georgia (kings) or further south on the Antarctic continent (emperors). My trip took place in the first half of February, and most of the penguins had large to huge chicks that were very entertaining in appearance and behaviour (although they spent a lot of time standing or lying in groups called creches while waiting for parents to return with food). Many of the big chicks were at various stages in molting from their coats of fuzzy gray-brown down-feathers to the adult plumage of more streamlined black-and-white formal wear. These chicks that were bored, curious, and/or hungry would approach any potential "parent". And one gentoo chick attached itself to me, standing between my legs and pecking at my pants. I think there were many cameras aimed at that chick and my rear for several minutes. I hope this has given you some idea of where I've been. Now run for your life when you see a slide-show announced!



## SPRING NORTH AMERICAN MIGRATION COUNT DAY

MAY 11, 1996

by Judy Tufts, Spring NAMC Coordinator

Unfortunately May 11, 1996 turned out to be another wet day throughout the province with early morning fog, offshore winds 30-50 kms, gusting to 80 in some parts, overnight and daytime precipitation of 10-30 mm... not exactly prime conditions!!! But the birding fraternity were not about to be defeated by this for the Spring NAMC day, as the list indicates. This is an almost complete provincial picture minus Antigonish and Guysborough counties whose counts were unavailable at this time.

Some of the more noteworthy occurrences: a fallout of birds in the Digby/Fundy Shore area that began that afternoon (and continued over the weekend) and brought in unusually high numbers of White-crowned Sparrows, Red-breasted Grosbeaks and Baltimore Orioles. A Glossy Ibis, a Warbling Vireo, and a Blue-winged Warbler were among other interesting birds driven inland by stormy winds, and a smattering of unusual-to-rare members of the Heron family: a Snowy and a Little Egret found feeding together in the same *barachois* in Cape Breton, two Snowy Egrets and a Tri-coloured Heron in Shelburne, a Snowy Egret in Yarmouth, a Great Egret in Queens, and a Little Blue Heron up in Richmond. Pictou enjoyed having a Great Egret and 84 Great Blue Herons while Cape Breton county had 62 (Kings had 24). Twenty-one species of ducks

were recorded with a spectacular showing of 17000 Surf and 600 White-winged Scoters gathering at Green Bay, Lunenburg Co. in the a.m. prior to departure in the evening. Small rafts of scoters were also seen along the Fundy Shore and near Louisburg. One Bald Eagle was counted, and among other raptors a quarter of them were falcons, mostly American Kestrels with two Peregrines; one in Yarmouth and the other in Pictou. Three Caspian-Terns flying over a local lake were a nice surprise for a birder in the Kejimikujik National Park area. No doubt our very cold wet spring had much to do with the low numbers of hummingbirds, flycatchers and swallows that day (Kings hosted 2/3 of them mostly around the New Minas Sewage ponds); and although the robins showed up in great numbers the other thrushes did not, which may be indicative of declining numbers in these species. Twenty species of Warblers, however, did manage to make an impression that day with the Myrtle (yes, this is our old Yellow-rumped controversially renamed Myrtle again) leading the way with 1500 - a third of which were seen in Pictou; 13 species were seen locally - an Orange-crowned Warbler lingered in Cape Breton. Cardinals held their own once again in Yarmouth, along with a Rufous-sided Towhee, while a pair of Blue Grosbeak were found in Pictou and a smattering of Indigo Buntings remained in the counties

adjoining the Bay of Fundy.

Among the 10 species of sparrows - Juncos and Song Sparrows each registered around 1300 individuals - the highlight was the spectacular appearance of so many White-crowned Sparrows seen travelling through the province this spring. Two Lincoln Sparrows were seen in Hants Co. Our bird-feeder friends, the finch-family, were well-represented too all across the province as can be seen by the high numbers shown, but the most unusual visitors were the 400 Red Crossbills in Lunenburg, Kings, Hants and Pictou, mostly around feeders; quite a sight to remember, as was this wet, soggy day, for

everyone.

Thanks to all the participants for your wonderful efforts in making the Count results so worthwhile. In spite of the dreadful rainy day many of you persevered and managed some excellent results as can be seen by the data presented. I wish to thank Sherman Williams for all his invaluable work and patience in showing me how to set up spreadsheets and organize a useful NAMC format. I, a novice computer student when this began, am most grateful for all his assistance and encouragement, and for his presentation of the Count figures presented here.

#### NOVA SCOTIA NORTH AMERICAN MIGRATION COUNT

Species	Total	Gadwall	3
Red-throated Loon	9	American Wigeon	49
Common Loon	152	Ring-necked Duck	230
Pied-billed Grebe	22	Greater Scaup	336
Red-necked Grebe	2	Common Eider	835
Horned Grebe	4	Oldsquaw	28
Northern Fulmar	200	Black Scoter	193
Greater Shearwater	18	Surf Scoter	17094
Sooty Shearwater	50	White-Winged Scoter	801
Northern Gannet	31	Scoter sp. *	75
Great Cormorant	291	Common Goldeneye	101
Double Crested Cormorant	2432	Bufflehead	6
Cormorant sp. *	5	Hooded Merganser	5
American Bittern	15	Common Merganser	167
Great Blue Heron	347	Red-breasted Merganser	695
Great Egret	2	Osprey	55
Snowy Egret	4	Bald Eagle adult	91
Little Egret	1	Bald Eagle imm *	20
Little Blue Heron	1	Northern Harrier	38
Tricolored Heron *	1	Sharp-shinned Hawk	29
Glossy Ibis	1	Northern Goshawk	2
Brant	74	Broadwing Hawk	4
Canada Goose	86	Red-tailed Hawk	44
Wood Duck	42	Rough-legged Hawk	1
Green-winged Teal	174	American Kestrel	57
American Black Duck	1127	Merlin	27
Mallard	142	Falcon sp. *	1
Northern Pintail	10	Peregrine Falcon	2
Blue-winged Teal	59	Ring-necked Pheasant	194
Northern Shoveler	4	Spruce Grouse	5

Ruffed Grouse	134	Empidonax sp *	1
Virginia Rail	2	Eastern Phoebe	3
Sora	12	Eastern Kingbird	5
Common Moorhen	1	Purple Martin	14
American Coot	1	Tree Swallow	3459
Black-bellied Plover	81	Cliff Swallow	9
Piping Plover	8	Barn Swallow	160
Killdeer	93	Gray Jay	63
Greater Yellowlegs	299	Blue Jay	1038
Lesser Yellowlegs	21	American Crow	2813
Eastern Willet	301	Common Raven	510
Spotted Sandpiper	31	Black-capped Chickadee	2080
Least Sandpiper	38	Boreal Chickadee	152
Purple Sandpiper	18	Chickadee sp. *	8
Peep sp. *	1	Red-breasted Nuthatch	395
Short Billed Dowitcher	1	White-breasted Nuthatch	24
Common Snipe	105	Brown Creeper	10
American Woodcock	17	Winter Wren	22
Bonaparte's Gull	10	Golden-crowned Kinglet	106
Ring-billed Gull	155	Ruby-Crowned Kinglet	289
Herring Gull	5976	Kinglet sp. *	1
Iceland Gull	145	Veery	9
Glaucous Gull	5	Swainson's Thrush	5
Great Black Backed Gull	4509	Hermit Thrush	135
Black-legged Kittiwake	375	American Robin	4068
Gull sp. *	284	Gray Catbird	8
Caspian Tern	3	Northern Mockingbird	5
Common Tern	95	Cedar Waxwing	2
Arctic Tern	2	Northern Shrike	1
Sterna sp. *	2	European Starling	4670
Black Tern	3	Solitary Vireo	82
Common Murre	1	Warbling Vireo	1
Thick-billed Murre	1	Red-eyed Vireo	13
Razorbill	4	Vireo sp. *	3
Black Guillemot	292	Blue-winged Warbler	1
Atlantic Puffin	5	Orange-crowned Warbler	1
Rock Dove	837	Nashville Warbler	26
Mourning Dove	577	Northern Parula	43
Great Horned Owl	13	Yellow Warbler	24
Barred Owl	49	Chestnut-sided Warbler	1
Long-eared Owl	1	Magnolia Warbler	6
Northern Saw-whet Owl	1	Cape May Warb.	1
Common Nighthawk	1	Black-throated Blue Warbler	4
Chimney Swift	41	Myrtle Warbler	1581
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	9	Black-throated Green Warbler	33
Belted Kingfisher	156	Blackburnian Warb	5
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	25	Palm Warbler	97
Downy Woodpecker	218	Eastern Palm Warbler *	41
Hairy Woodpecker	87	Bay-breasted Warbler	2
Black-backed Woodpecker	3	Blackpoll Warbler	1
Yellow-shafted Flicker	436	Black & White Warbler	98
Pileated Woodpecker	40	American Redstart	5
Least Flycatcher	2	Ovenbird	16

Northern Waterthrush	37	Rusty Blackbird	49
Common Yellowthroat	4	Common Grackle	3487
Scarlet Tanager	3	Brown-headed Cowbird	220
Northern Cardinal	7	Orchard Oriole	1
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	52	Baltimore Oriole	22
Blue Grosbeak	2	Pine Grosbeak	32
Indigo Bunting	13	Purple Finch	1122
Rufous-sided Towhee	1	Finch sp. *	37
American Tree Sparrow	27	Red Crossbill	410
Chipping Sparrow	174	White-winged Crossbill	76
Savannah Sparrow	335	Common Redpoll	4
Fox Sparrow	15	Crossbill sp. *	27
Song Sparrow	1378	Pine Siskin	1784
Lincoln's Sparrow	2	American Goldfinch	2306
Swamp Sparrow	96	Evening Grosbeak	1573
White-throated Sparrow	773	House Sparrow	568
White-crowned Sparrow	122		
Dark-eyed Junco	1442	Total Species: 187	
Bobolink	13		
Red-wing Blackbird	1479	Individual Birds: 81864	

## FIELD TRIP - APRIL 14 1996 - WATERFOWL EARLY MIGRANTS, KINGS CO.

by Judy Tufts, Trip Leader

Fifty-two species was the final tally on this combined BNS and NSBS field trip of 'pond hopping' around eastern Kings County, under cold, dry but overcast conditions. An extended cold spring had slowed migration, even of waterfowl. The previous day's scouting by the leader had revealed that few species were around, but one had to remain optimistic.

Thirty-two participants set out in 14 cars from the Robie Tufts Nature Center in Wolfville shortly after 9 a.m. Usually our first stop on this trip is to the Port Williams sewage ponds but due to construction on the pumphouse building, and lowering of the pond level, this had to be abandoned. Several Lesser Scaup had been sighted there recently, the third

year in a row, and had taken flight when work crews moved in. It was most disappointing; we were not to find them that day. We headed to Canard pond to find Green-winged Teal, a pair of Common Mergansers, Black Ducks, and Mallards. On to Saxon Street pond where the highlight was a pair of Killdeer (more were seen later) on the muddy banks of a lowered water system; Black Ducks and Green-winged Teal were also there. At Sheffield Mills marsh ponds a large flock of Bohemian Waxwings brightened up our morning while a pair of Blue-winged Teal dazzled us with their elegant plumage as they swam nervously nearby.

Our route to Van Nostrand's pond took us past a lingering Rough-legged Hawk on his familiar

winter hunting territory at Wellington Dyke (we saw two of these lovely winter hawks that day), a sure road-stopper for all, and ended up with a pair of Buffleheads which had taken up temporary residence at the pond. Porter's Point proved to be disappointing with the tide being so high and hardly a bird to be seen so we left for Kingport via the Canning Aboiteau. The large gathering of Canada Geese usually there was not to be, but later we observed them further up river. We passed three very recent spring arrivals in one of the tidal inlets -- three Great Blue Herons standing in a group looking majestic (and cold). We headed towards the village of Kingsport, past the cottages which adorn the bluffs above the Minas Basin and set up scopes to view the tidal swells in search of waterfowl. With the stiffening cold winds at this point even watching through a scope became a challenge. However, we were rewarded with sightings of Black Scoters, White-winged Scoters, Common Eiders, and some Common Mergansers, bobbing in and out of sight among the constantly shifting waves. A break for lunch took us to Canning to the Front Porch Cafe overlooking Harris' Pond (which was too quiet for inspection this year). Despite the cold winds some hardy souls sat outdoors eating their lunch at picnic tables provided while other went searching for warmth and food indoors.

The best birding area was left for

the afternoon when we visited the sewage ponds in New Minas. All birders know that sewage ponds are often productive, where birds are concerned, and this was no exception. Leaving our cars outside the gates, armed with key and special permission for entry, we found a wonderful assortment of waterfowl: a pair of American Wigeon, a couple of Common Goldeneye, six Ring-necked Ducks, Common Mergansers, Green-winged Teal, Mallards and Blacks. Time to leave so we headed to Greenwich for the viewing of the resident nesting pair of Bald Eagles from the parking lot of the church on Main St. We could see one of the adults sitting on the huge nest in the pines behind Noggins Corner Farm. The group was very happy at this sighting; for many this was the first time they had ever seen such a nest.

At this point rain began falling lightly and most of the participants decided to head home. A few, however, expressed an interest in seeing the lingering Iceland, Glaucous, and Ring-billed gulls at the Wolfville Sewage Ponds and were led there by my husband Gordon, where they were successful. Although this was primarily a trip to find waterfowl there were other species seen including merlin, Northern Harrier, Northern Flicker and Red Crossbills. Considering the spring we have been experiencing, this trip turned out to be a fairly successful one in the end.

## FIELD TRIP - JUNE 15, 1996 - GASPEREAU RIVER WALK by W. George Alliston - Trip Leader

By 1:00 p.m. about 30 people had gathered at the White Rock bridge for an afternoon of exploration. The day was pleasantly warm and the showers that had been forecast had not materialized. We began by viewing the general topography from the bridge and discussing how the Black River, which thousands of years ago had flowed along what is now Deep Hollow Road to its delta where Horton District High School now stands, had been "captured" by the GasperEAU River as it slowly eroded its way southwestward.

As we entered the trail we paused to identify the trees that dominate this mature Acadian forest: red maple, red oak, American beech, white ash, yellow birch, hop-hornbeam (ironwood), striped maple, mountain maple, hemlock and white pine. Among the understory plants at the trail entrance we noted particularly the "purple-blotched" hawkweed, common here but rarely found in most of Nova Scotia, and the white (when ripe) strawberries that had been introduced by the Acadians.

As we approached the robust foot bridge, built in 1993 through the efforts of Nova Scotia Power, the Kings County Wildlife Association, the Nova Scotia Youth Corps and the BNS, we could see the effects of the spring freshet. Once again the bridge had been knocked from its pylons by the action of water and ice. Further along the trail other evidence of the freshet

was found in large clumps of royal ferns that had been moved by ice from their preferred watery habitat to higher and drier locations in the intervale where they appeared to still prosper. It soon became apparent that the timing of the trip was not good for seeing plants in flower. Spring flowering species such as red trillium, Clintonia, spotted coral root and hobblebush were long past and summer blooming species such as joe-pye weed, meadow rue, partridge berry and shinleaf were not yet in flower. Flowering specimens of tall leafy green orchids and jack-in-the-pulpits were found, and Alison Bogan's sharp eyes provided a real treat when she discovered a small colony of the one-flowered cancer root. This small whitish parasitic member of the Broomrape family is rarely revealed to the prying eyes of naturalists.

Ferns are a highlight of any naturalist's walk along the GasperEAU River. The species diversity and abundance of ferns in this area are truly spectacular. John Pickwell was on hand adeptly providing beginners with advice on differentiating among the 14 species identified on this trip, and pointing out to those with more advanced knowledge wood fern hybrids and morphological variants of other species.

Birders on the trip were not treated to any spectacular finds but enjoyed seeing and hearing species characteristic of this habi-



tat, such as northern waterthrush, Eastern Wood Peewee, Blackburnian Warbler, Northern Parula Warbler and Red-eyed Vireo (the latter species being particularly abundant).

By late afternoon, other appointments, fatigue, heat and mosquitoes (they really weren't bad) had reduced the group to eight. At this point John Pickwell decided that to visit a colony of the rare rattlesnake fern we would have to pick up our rather modest pace. John disappeared at warp speed along the trail leaving only singed vegetation in his wake. As we straggled along well behind John we were treated to the sight of some amphibians (several wood frogs and a green frog) and, in due course, a familiar and beautiful smell - that of the tall leafy white orchid. As we gathered to examine and smell this

species that we had first found with our noses, Bernard Forsyth pointed out that we were standing among, but fortunately not on, the rare pointed-leafed trefoil.

Eventually we caught up with John who had found and was conducting a census of his colony of rattlesnake ferns. While examining the ferns, and resting prior to our trip back, we observed a just-emerged luna moth drying itself and later embarking on its first flight in this brief but spectacular phase of its life cycle.

As we hiked back along the trail enjoying the soothing sound of the flowing river and the beauty of this lush, mature Acadian forest, we reflected upon the importance of maintaining such areas for the intrinsic value of the species they contain and for the enjoyment of future generations.

## BNS SPRING 1996 BIRD SIGHTINGS

**Richard Stern, Kentville**

**YELLOW-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON** - An adult was found in a front yard in the middle of Kentville on 26 March, apparently present several days, wandering around the lower part of the Agriculture Canada Research Station. It was very tame, and may have been weak or exhausted. There are only a handful of records of this rare visitor for Kings Co. Of course, their usual habitat is wetlands, well to the south of us. (fide ME).

**BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT-**

**HERON - MAG** had one visit his backyard, overlooking the river in Canning, late May. This is of course another rarity for the area, although a little less unusual for the province as a whole than the former species.

**GREAT BLUE HERON**- The first birds I have heard about this spring were 2 at Kingsport 14 April (JCT etc.).

**DABBING DUCKS** - as expected, **GREEN-WINGED TEAL, MALLARD** and **BLACK**

**DUCKS** were well in evidence on local ponds by early April. There was a pair of **BLUE-WINGED TEAL** at Sheffield Mills 14 April (JCT etc.). A female **SHOVELLER** was near Vaughan, Hants Co. May 9 and 11 (JMcC). A male **WOOD DUCK** was on "Woolaver's Pond", Brooklyn, April 17.

**DIVING DUCKS** - 4 **LESSER SCAUP** were present on Port Williams sewage pond early April (AAM) - a male and 3 females on the 4th (RBS). This species is distinguished from its more marine Greater scoup cousin mainly by the head shape, and these birds were very obvious. Several **RING-NECKED DUCKS** were around the area by early April as expected.

**AMERICAN WOODCOCK** - SSC saw an adult with 4 young, walking, at Sherbrooke Lake, May 14.

**TURKEY VULTURE** - I received a report of one flying over the Harbourville area on several occasions in May.

**NORTHERN HARRIER** - An adult male was seen in the Gasperau Valley April 1 (GA), and another of these beautiful silvery-gray birds flew by JCT's BNS field trip caravan near Starr's Pt. 14 April. This species takes 3-4 years to reach full adult plumage, and the silvery adult males migrate back to their nesting areas, to establish territories, before the females.

**BALD EAGLE** - A nest that was

being used at White Rock fell down after a heavy snowfall, and the pair then built a new one, and were occupying it early May (BLF).

**MERLIN** - HF noticed a pair flying in and out of some trees at the Kentville Research Station, where they nested last year, in late April. MA saw a female with goldfinch prey standing in the middle of Highbury Road in New Minas. JWW also noted 2 together on the Acadia campus on April 24, where they too nested last year. They have also started again to hunt Chimney swifts!

**RED-BELLIED WOODPECKER** - One, presumably a lingerer from the winter's influx, was still in Wolfville April 19 and 21 (BBT, SMcC), and another showed up at CZ's feeder in Harbourville on the late date of 29 May.

**CHIMNEY SWIFT** - 380+ were seen to enter the Middleton High School Chimney prior to dusk May 23 (JWW)

**TREE SWALLOW** - JCT reported "several thousand" feeding on newly hatched insects at the New Minas Sewage plant May 9. JWW estimated approx. 2000 there 2 days later.

**COMMON RAVEN** - SM saw a pair incubating on a nest near University Hall, Acadia University April 12. May 10th "all the crows on campus" were mobbing a raven that was standing on and pecking at a crow. The raven appeared to have destroyed the

crow's eyes; the crow would struggle out from under the Raven from time to time, but was dazed, and unable to see. A second Raven joined the first after a few minutes, and both attempted to feed on the (still live) crow. After about 15 minutes, the Ravens flew off. The crow was still alive, but did not get up or move around.

**BROWN CREEPER**- EU had one visit her suet feeder all winter. CR saw 2 on a tree trunk outside her office window in Kentville early April.

**AMERICAN ROBIN** - The first obvious migrants were back on territory and singing by the last week in March (sev. obs.). An albinistic bird, with large white patches on the back of the head, coverts, flight feathers and breast, has been hanging around Palmeters' sub-division, Kentville, this May - probably the same bird that was around last summer (RBS).

**WHITE-BREASTED NUTHATCH** - RBS found an active nest, in a cavity in the trunk of an oak tree in Kentville, near the hospital, 24 May.

**BOHEMIAN WAXWING** - JT saw a leucistic bird in a small late flock of 4 in Wolfville on April 4. It had a white crest and tail, and was otherwise very pale, but still recognizably this species. She described its appearance as "stunning". BLF then saw the same bird in Neary Pines, Greenwich 2 or 3 days later. There was still a rather late flock at Sheffield Mills on April 14.

**GOLDEN-WINGED WARBLER** - AAM found one along the trail behind Evergreen Nursing Home, Kentville, 25 May. This is a first for Kings Co., and a rare vagrant for the province. It is a species that is apparently in decline, with its close genetic cousin, and frequent hybridiser, the Blue-winged, taking over its niche in many areas.

**MOURNING WARBLER** - One was singing well into June along the power line near Duncanson Brook (PT).

**FOX SPARROW** - a few started to appear at feeders and along roadsides late March, as usual, on their way to more northerly breeding grounds (SW).

**WHITE-CROWNED SPARROW** - Several people reported visits to feeders and backyards mid-May. This coincided with a record-breaking 600+ appearing on Brier Island on Migration Day, May 11, and the following day. (BLM).

**NORTHERN CARDINAL** - After the winter's bumper crop, a male was still in Wolfville April 2 (NPC), and a female appeared in New Minas in early June (GT).

**BLUE GROSBEAK** - 2 of these attractive and exotic-looking "regular vagrants" appeared at PG's backyard on April 18, coincidentally just a day after one had appeared on Brier Island. Some springs they are more regular than others, and a few years ago one over-wintered in Bridgetown.

**BALTIMORE ORIOLE** - Now "re-split" as a full species from the western, Bullock's Oriole, this has so far been a bumper spring, with individuals and pairs being noted all over our area, including areas recently abandoned, and even coming to fruit put out at feeders. There were well over 100 on Brier Island, and also large numbers in Yarmouth Co., on May 11 and the subsequent few days.

**RED CROSSBILL** - There were still plenty being reported coming to feeders etc. by mid-May, from all over the area.

1st DATES FOR LONG-DISTANCE MIGRANTS that I have been made aware of, in our area, are:

**RUBY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD** - May 14;  
**CHIMNEY SWIFT** - May 9;  
**ALDER FLYCATCHER** - May 25;  
**SWAINSON'S THRUSH** - May 14;  
**HERMIT THRUSH** -

May 16; **WARBLERS** - **TENNESSEE** May 26; **NORTHERN PARULA**, May 3; **YELLOW-RUMPED** May 5; **BLACK AND WHITE**, May 13; **PALM**, April 24, **WILSON'S** May 25; **BLACKBURNIAN** May 26; **OVENBIRD** May 13; **BALTIMORE ORIOLE**, May 14

GA	George Alliston
MA	Margaret Alliston
SSC	Susan Spence Campbell
ME	Mark Elderkin
BLF	Bernard Forsythe
HF	Harold Forsythe
MG	Merritt Gibson
PG	Pat Giffin
AAM	Angus MacLean
JMcC	Jane McConnell
BLM	Blake Maybank
SM	Susan Montonen
CR	Christine Ross
RBS	Richard Stern
PT	Phil Taylor
GT	Greg Tynski
BBT	Bill/ Brenda Thexton
JT	Jean Timpa
JCT	Judy Tufts
EU	Eva Urban
SW	Sherman Williams
JWW	Jim Wolford
CZ	Carl Zaedow

## TRIVIAL TIDBITS OF LOCAL NATURAL HISTORY

selected and compiled by Jim Wolford,  
 Site 1, Comp. 61, RR#3, Wolfville, N.S. B0P-1X0  
 542-7650

The following reports are from mid March to late mid-July, 1996.

I'll renew my **PLEA FOR WRITTEN REPORTS** of sightings, or even just some feedback on this column, as evidence that someone out there is reading this and is interested! If this compiler doesn't detect some interest and

effort soon, the column will quickly self-destruct. Thanks in anticipation.

### SKIES/ASTRONOMY

mid March to late April/96 - Comet Hyakutake, the brightest comet seen in 20 years, was closest to Earth on Mar. 25-26

(RB, LB, SW, et al.).

Apr. 3 - lousy weather prevented local observations of the evening's **total lunar eclipse** (JW and everyone else?).

Apr. 21 - an extremely heavy and loud deluge of rain fell for several minutes in the Wolfville area in the morning (followed by lightning and thunder) (JW et al.). (This very quickly jump-started our spring amphibians.)

## FUNGI

May 25 - three **morels** seen together along first mile of Cape Split Trail (PH, NM, JW, SW).  
**FERNS**

June 15 - three species of **grape ferns** (*Botrychium*) found on BNS field trip: 48 *B. lanceolatum* and 12 *B. virginianum* in the Kentville Ravine, and 4 *B. virginianum* and 2 *B. matricariifolium* in New Minas woods across from water tower (JP).

## FLOWERING PLANTS

Mar. 30 - three flower-heads of **coltsfoot** open on a south-facing bank west of Gaspereau (JW).

Apr. 7 - some catkins of **alder** just opening at Greenwich (JW).

Apr. 9 - **Daphne** flower-buds just opening on a small bush planted outside Acadia Biology Greenhouse (JW).

Apr. 9 - **hazelnut** catkins of both sexes barely open outside Acadia Biology Greenhouse (JW).

Apr. 9 - one flower-head of **common dandelion** half-open next to Acadia Biology Building (JW).

Apr. 20 - flowers open on **English elm** trees in Wolfville (JW).

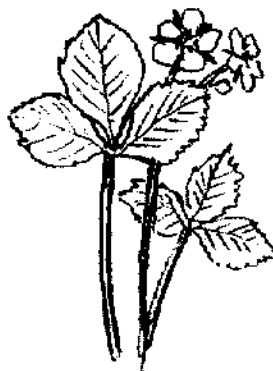
Apr. 21 - (see Apr. 9) some **Daphne** flowers fully open now at Acadia Biology Greenhouse (JW).

Apr. 21 - **aspen poplar** catkins of flowers open in Wolfville (JW).

Apr. 23 - flowers open on healthy **American elm** trees on Acadia Univ. campus (JW).

May 1 - **Dutchman's breeches** flowers open adjacent to Acadia Biology Greenhouse (JW).

May 2 - a few **trout lily** (or "dog-tooth violet") flowers open and lots of distinctive leaves up, at Acadia Biology Greenhouse (JW).



May 3 - **wild strawberry** in bloom along west Grand Pre dyke (BBT).

May 22 - **red oak** in bloom on Acadia Univ. campus (JW).

June 18 - **rough comfrey** common and in bloom along RR tracks at Hortonville, near the expulsion cross (JW).

## WORMS

mid March - after a rain, numerous tiny (baby?) **earthworms** on top of the ground along Wolfville dyke (DB).

Apr. 3 - large **earthworms** noted on top of new wet snow, after a cold steady rain on previous afternoon and overnight, along Wolfville dyke (DB).

## ARACHNIDS

June 19 - a **black widow** (probably an immature female) arrived among grapes from California at the New Minas Superstore (JM,JW).

## INSECTS

Apr. 1 - an adult **mourning cloak** butterfly flying at Wallbrook on a very warm sunny day (JW).

Apr. 20 - two living adult **ladybird beetles** found in a Wolfville home: one was a **2-spot ladybird**; the other a **southern ladybird** (latter is an immigrant from SE Asia and seems to be displacing native ladybird species --- see current issue of *Nature Canada* and phone 1-800-267-4088 to obtain survey-form plus identification kit) (BBT,JW).

Apr. 22 - an adult **stonefly** seen at Grand Pre (JW).

Apr. 29 - lots of adult **stoneflies** along streams near Gaspereau Lake (JD).

May 3 - an adult **paper wasp** (*Polistes*) flew into Acadia Univ. Biol. Bldg. (FS,JW).

May 15 - a **mourning cloak** butterfly seen at Canard Pond (JGT).

May 15-16 - clouds of **blackflies** very much of a nuisance, but very few were biting (nearly all males?), at Sherbrooke Lake Camp (JW).

June 2 - two adult **black swallowtails** seen along Grand Pre dyke (JW).

June 14 - lots of **tiger swallowtails** seen in Wolfville (JT).

June 15 to 23 - dozens of adult **luna moths** emerging from captively-reared cocoons, from caterpillars from eggs laid by one female in late June, 1995 ; these new adults were all released in Wolfville (JT).

June 15 - adult **luna moth** at porch lights in Gaspereau Valley (PT).

June 28 - several **fireflies** seen lighting up after dark at Murphy Lake (MT).

July 2 - **fireflies** seen along Wolfville dyke after dark (DT).

## FISHES

Apr. 18 - spawning run of **smelt** started at Melanson (RMM).

Apr. 29 - lots of **white suckers** (for spawning) in stream near Gaspereau Lake (JD).

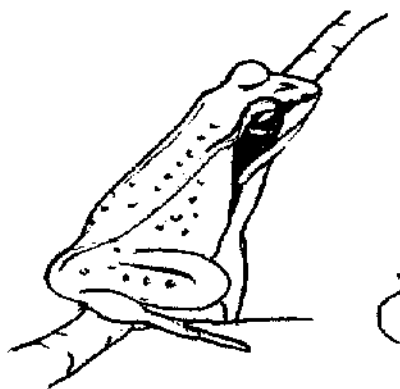
May 6 (approx.) - spawning run of **gaspereaux** began in Gaspereau River at Gaspereau! (EG).

## AMPHIBIANS

Mar. 21 - earliest date of **FROGWATCHERS** hearing spring peepers - today by Amber Townsen at Lower Wedgeport, Yarmouth Co. Subsequently, calls were heard in various localities including Cape Breton from Mar. 21 to 27 (fourteen separate reports).

Apr. 7 - one **wood frog** calling at Cambridge Station; by Apr. 14 a good chorus of **wood frogs** could be heard (LB).

Apr. 13 - some **wood frogs** calling at Avonport (SW).



Apr. 21 - a few white spermato-phores (sperm-packets) from **yellow-spotted salamanders** in a pond and a roadside ditch west of Gaspereau (JW).

- both **wood frogs** and **spring peepers** calling on Wolfville Ridge (JGT).

Apr. 22 - lots of both **wood frogs** and **spring peepers** calling at Gaspereau (JW).

- one **leopard frog** calling at Port Williams skating pond (JW).

- several **American toads** trilling on dykelands at Wolfville (JF).

Apr. 26 - a small **yellow-spotted salamander** (probably a yearling) was dug up in a Wolfville Garden (JSB).

- lots of adult **yellow-spotted salamanders** seen in a pond near Lumsden Reservoir after dark (JSB,JF,BNS).

Apr. 29 - several **leopard frogs** calling at noon in cattail pond along Hortonville dyke (JW).

May 1 - lots of eggs of **yellow-spotted salamanders** in pond near Lumsden Reservoir (JW).

May 12 - a **redback salamander** found underground among roots of prince's pine (under former pine forest) in the Woodside area (GMG).

## REPTILES

autumn?/95 - a **wood turtle** seen on a slope between the White Rock Canal (at east end of White Rock Pond) and the Gaspereau River (GW).

May 21 - Darren Davidson saw a large **turtle** floating down the Gaspereau River, upstream from

Gaspereau Bridge (EG).

June 12 - a **wood turtle** was found at the White Rock Bridge by a boy (ME,BF).

## MAMMALS

Apr. 7 (approx.) - a small **harbour seal** seen stranded by the tide on the muddy bank of the Gaspereau River at Hortonville; it was trying to get back to the water (PM)

Apr. 10 - a **harbour porpoise** seen in Cornwallis River, upstream from Port Williams (MP).



mid Apr.? - five **porpoises or dolphins** seen near Hantsport? (someone at a BNS meeting? HELP!).

Apr. 17 - a **skunk** active just east of downtown Wolfville at 11:30 p.m. (JW).

May 6 - 4 **flying squirrels** seen on Wolfville Ridge -- one was eating black-oil sunflower seeds, other three were flying between trees of back yard (JGT).

May 9 - an adult **red fox** with six pups or kits near Prescott House Museum (DD). (On May 12 JW saw the male fox.)

May 9-10 - a probable **little brown bat** sleeping during the day high in a corner above the entrance to the Wolfville Public Library (BBT,JW).

May 12 - a freshly-killed **woodchuck** (groundhog) on Saxon St. east of Blueberry Acres (JW).

May 28 - a nearly albino **white-tailed deer** (all white with brown ears) seen with two normally-coloured deer, west of Aylesford (IJ).

June 11 - a **moose** was seen along the Windsor-to-Chester highway, near the boundary of Hants and Lunenburg Counties (EF).

June 17 - an injured young **red fox** found on road by Port Williams School at night; it was taken to Dept. Nat. Resources in Kentville, with hopes that it could later be released (HT).

June 20 - a **red fox** seen on dykelands between Wolfville and Port Williams (HT).

July 2 - a **chipmunk** seen in Thextons' yard in east Wolfville; first one seen there in many years of observations (BBT,JW).





- a large, freshly road-killed **skunk** found and smelled at Hortonville (also several others noticed from Grand Pre to Port Williams from early spring to early summer)(JW).

#### CONTRIBUTORS

DB - David Burton  
 JSB - Sherman Bleakney  
 LB - Larry Bogan  
 RB - Roy Bishop  
 DD - Debbie Daigle  
 JD - John Davies  
 ME - Mark Elderkin  
 BF - Bernard Forsythe  
 EF - Eric Frank  
 JF - Jeff Franklin  
 EG - Ellis Gertrige  
 GMG - Glenys & Merritt Gibson  
 HCH - Halifax Chronicle-Herald

PH - Pat Hawes  
 IJ - Ian Jonsen  
 JM - John MacMillan  
 NM - Norm McGuinness  
 PM - Pat McLeod  
 RMM - Reid's Meat Market  
 JP - John Pickwell  
 MP - Mary Pratt  
 BNS - Blomidon Nat. Soc.  
 FS - Fred Scott  
 BBT - Brenda & Bill Thexton  
 DT - David Timpa  
 HT - Heather Thorpe  
 MT - Miriam Tams  
 JT - Jean Timpa  
 PT - Phil Taylor  
 JGT - Judy & Gordon Tufts  
 GW - Gisela Westphalen  
 JW - Jim Wolford  
 SW - Sherman Williams

### SPRING 1996 WEATHER SUMMARY

**Larry Bogan**

Cambridge Station, N.S.

Monthly Averages of Weather Statistics  
 for Kentville Agriculture Research Centre  
 March, April, May 1996

	Mean Temperature (°C)	Snowfall (cm)	Rainfall (mm)	Precipitation (mm)	Sunshine (hours)
March 1995	-1.7	31	35	76	127
30 year mean	-1.0	46	57	104	135
April 1996	5.5	40	102	140	126
30 year mean	4.5	15	64	81	156
May 1996	9.2	0	113	113	166
30 year mean	10.2	3	77	80	198
<b>PERIOD</b>	<b>4.3</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>249</b>	<b>329</b>	<b>418</b>
<b>30 year mean</b>	<b>4.6</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>198</b>	<b>264</b>	<b>488</b>

This year we had a cloudy, cool and rainy spring. The jet stream seemed to hang over Nova Scotia most of the period and regularly guide low pressure systems over us. From the table of weather statistics above, you can see exactly how the weather varied over the period of March, April, and May.

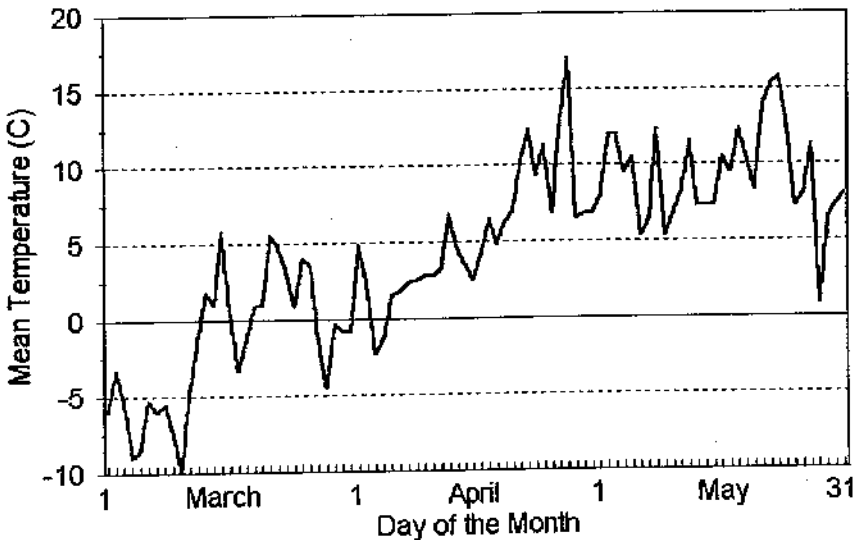
**Mean Temperature:** Overall, the spring of 1996 was only slightly cooler than the norm. However, the beginning and end were decidedly cooler than average while April was a full degree above average. If you look at the day-to-day temperatures throughout the period, there is an interesting quick rise from the middle of March to late April, then the temperature remained

constant around 9°C to late May. The last week in May turned cooler with temperatures closer to 5°C.

**Rain:** Total Precipitation for the period was 25% above average for the period. However, April and May were significantly rainier than normal. In April, we got 73% more rain than the same monthly averages over the previous 35 years and in May we got 41% more. March was dry with only 3/4 of the expected precipitation.

**Sunshine:** The wet spring should have produced a cloudy period and the number of bright sunshine hours reflect that fact. All three months were below average in sunshine received. April was the

**Mean Daily Temperature  
March, April, May 1996**



cloudiest, as expected from its high rainfall. It is interesting to note that April had fewer bright sunshine hours than March even though the days were longer in April. The whole spring period

had 86% of the expected sunshine.

Let's hope the weather is not as extreme during the summer months.

## WHAT'S IN THE SKY?

by Roy Bishop

### Jupiter

is the bright, star-like object in the southeastern evening sky in July, in the southern sky on August evenings, and in the southwestern evening sky during September. Jupiter is at opposition (opposite the Sun and closest to Earth) on July 4.

### Venus

is the very-bright, star-like object in the eastern pre-dawn sky this summer. Around 4:00 to 4:30 am on the morning of Friday, July 12th, Venus lies unusually close to the crescent Moon. Use binoculars to fully experience this beautiful sight. In a small telescope, Venus will show a crescent like the Moon.

### Tides

Blomidon Naturalists Society members are most fortunate in having the largest tides on Earth nearby. I grew up within metres of these immense tides but did not appreciate that they are one of the wonders of the world until I spent time in central Canada, the Vancouver area, the USA, and the Caribbean.

This summer Minas Basin tides will be particularly high near the

end of each month: July 30 - August 3, August 28 - September 1, and September 26 - 29. These are "perigean spring tides", occurring when the Moon is particularly close to Earth in its elliptical orbit (perigee tide) and also near its full phase (spring tide). In the latter instance the tidal effects of both Moon and Sun are acting together.

### Meteors

The best meteor shower of the year, the Perseids, takes place on the nights of August 11/12 and 12/13. 1996 is an especially good year to see these meteors because moonlight does not interfere. If the sky is clear, pick an observing site in the country away from streetlights and farm yard lights. The BNS has scheduled an observing session on August 11 at the Grand Pré Park parking lot, beginning at 9 p.m. (August 12 is the cloud date).

Meteors are best seen with the unaided eye. A lawn chair, pillow, warm blanket, and a thermos of hot chocolate add considerably to one's enjoyment of the shower. The Perseid meteors radiate from the northeastern part of the late evening sky, but may be seen in

any part of the sky. Their numbers will likely increase after midnight, although stronger peaks in the shower itself may occur at any time on these two nights. Perseid meteors are fragments of Comet Swift-Tuttle. These small bits of dust and rock strike Earth's upper atmosphere at a speed of about 60 km/s (over 200 000 km/h), and part of their kinetic energy is converted into a brief streak of light.

### **An Eclipse:**

On the night of September 26/27, the Full Moon passes through Earth's shadow. There was a similar eclipse last April 3rd but Nova Scotia was clouded out, like we were for the preceding lunar eclipse in November 1993! The last lunar eclipse visible from Nova Scotia occurred in December 1992.

On Thursday September 26, the Moon begins to enter the dark umbra of Earth's shadow at 10:12 p.m. Atlantic Daylight Time. For over an hour, the Moon slides into the shadow, reaching total eclipse at 11:19 p.m. Mid-eclipse is at 11:54 p.m. At 00:29 a.m. on the 27th, the Moon starts to emerge into sunlight, and by 1:36 a.m. the obvious umbral part of the eclipse is over.

There is no danger whatsoever in viewing a lunar eclipse. The eclipse may be enjoyed with no optical aid, but binoculars or a small telescope will greatly enhance the view. The prettiest part of the eclipse will be within 5 or 10 minutes of when the Moon completely enters or begins to

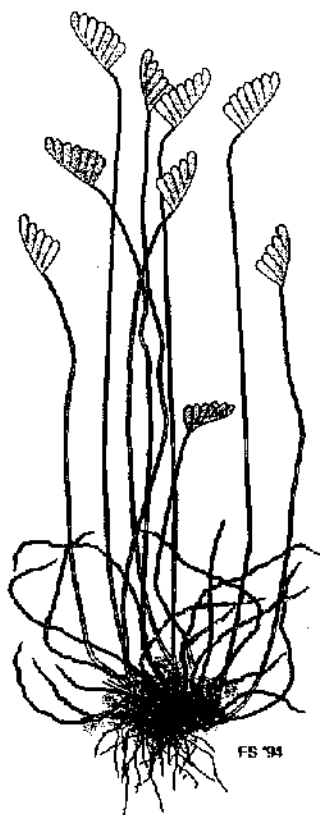
leave the umbral shadow (near 11:19 p.m. and 00:29 a.m., respectively).

If there were an observer on the Moon looking back at Earth on September 26/27, he or she would see Earth pass in front of the Sun -- a total solar eclipse. At mid-eclipse Earth would completely cover the Sun and a colourful circular sunset would surround Earth, illuminating the dark lunar surface with a red or orange light.

As seen from Earth, the colour of the Moon during the 70 minutes it is totally eclipsed will depend upon the amount of cloud and dust in Earth's atmosphere. The colour can range from a rather bright orange to so dark that the full Moon may disappear from naked eye view! Earth has been relatively free from major volcanic eruptions in the past few years, so this should be a bright eclipse (the prettiest type). Apparently the April 3rd eclipse was of this type, although I have not spoken to anyone who saw it.

Share the evening of September 26 with a child. A total lunar eclipse is an uncommon and beautiful celestial event, happening perhaps only once in a clear night sky during a child's formative years.

If you miss this eclipse (because of cloud, or forgetting to mark it on your calendar), you will have to wait more than three years, until after midnight on the cold night of January 20/21, 2000 to see another.



FS '94

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**Sources for Local Natural History**  
(compiled by Blomidon Naturalists Society)

Information	Source	Office	Home
Rocks & Fossils	Geology Dept. Acadia U.	542-2201	
Fish	NS Dept. of Natural Resources	679-6091	
Flora - General	Ruth Newell	542-2201	542-2095
	Fungi Darryl Grund	542-2201	542-9214
	Nancy Nickerson	679-5333	542-9332
	Lichens Karen Casselman	424-7370	633-2837
Seaweeds	Darryl Grund	542-2201	542-9214
Mosses & Ferns	John Pickwell		681-8281
Birds - General	Bernard Forsythe		542-2427
	Richard Stern	678-4742	678-1975
	Gordon & Judy Tufts		542-7800
	Jim Wolford	542-2201	542-7650
	Jean Timpa		542-5678
Hawks & Owls	Bernard Forsythe		542-2427
Falcons & Eagles	Peter Austin-Smith		542-2109
Mammals	Tom Herman	542-2201	678-0383
Amphibians & Reptiles	Sherman Bleakney		542-3604
	Jim Wolford	542-2201	542-7650
Seashore & Marine Life	Sherman Bleakney		542-3604
	Jim Wolford	542-2201	542-7650
	Michael Brylinsky	542-2201	582-7954
Indian Prehistory & Archeology	Ellis Gertridge		542-2816
	James Legge		542-3530
Astronomy	Roy Bishop		542-3992
	Sherman Williams	542-3598	542-5104
	Larry Bogan		678-0446

July 1996						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15 New Moon	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30 Full Moon	31			

August 1996						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3 Shorebirds
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11 Summer Sky	12	13	14 New Moon	15	16	17 FT-Little River Falls
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28 Full Moon	29	30	31

September 1996						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12 New Moon	13	14 Birds, Birds, ...
15	16 BNS Meeting 730pm	17	18	19	20	21 - Picnic & NAMC Day
22 Autumn 3pm	23	24	25	26 Full Moon & Eclipse	27	28
29	30					

# Blomidon Naturalists Society

## 1996 Membership Fees

Each member receives four issues yearly of the BNS Newsletter. The Blomidon Naturalists Society is a registered charity. Receipts for income tax purposes will be issued for all donations. The membership fee itself is not tax-deductible. Members may also join the Federation of Nova Scotia Naturalists through the BNS and will receive their quarterly newsletter; the membership is not tax-deductible.

Please enclose a cheque or money order payable to "Blomidon Naturalists Society" and forward to:

Harold Forsyth  
RR #2, Wolfville, NS. B0P 1X0

Number	Membership Classification	Price	Total
_____	Individual Adult	\$12.00	\$ _____
_____	Family	\$15.00	\$ _____
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_____	Federation of NS Naturalists Membership	\$5.00	\$ _____
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Type of membership

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Yes

No

Is this a gift subscription?

Yes

No