THE HALIFAX FIELD NATURALIST



No. 120 September to November, 2005



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Return address: HFN, c/o NS Museum of Natural History, 1747 Summer Street, Halifax, NS, B3H 3A6

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- **OBJECTIVES** are to encourage a greater appreciation and understanding of Nova Scotia's natural history, both within the membership of HFN and in the public at large and to represent the interests of naturalists by encouraging the conservation of Nova Scotia's natural resources.
 - **MEETINGS** are held, except for July and August, on the first Thursday of every month at 7:30 p.m. in the auditorium of the Nova Scotia Museum of Natural History, 1747 Summer Street, Halifax. Meetings are open to the public.
- FIELD TRIPS are held at least once a month, and it is appreciated if those travelling in someone else's car share the cost of the gas. All participants in HFN activities are responsible for their own safety. Everyone, member or not, is welcome to take part in field trips.
- HFN ADDRESS Halifax Field Naturalists
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- **MEMBERSHIP** is open to anyone interested in the natural history of Nova Scotia. Memberships are available at any meeting of the society, or by writing to: Membership Secretary, Halifax Field Naturalists, c/o NS Museum of Natural History. New memberships starting from 1 September will be valid until the end of the following membership year. The regular membership year is from 1 January to 31 December. Members receive the HFN Newsletter and notices of all meetings, field trips, and special programmes. The fees are as follows:

Individual	\$15.00 per year
Family	\$20.00 per year
Supporting	\$25.00 per year
FNSN (opt.)	\$ 5.00 per vear

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HFN NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

EDITORIAL

A dry summer, and a very short editorial! I feel that the important news items below take precedence over this column. Brian Bartlett's "Stranded on Bon Portage" account is on page six, and the final instalment of "HFN's Third Decade" is on page ten.

- Stephanie Robertson

POINT PLEASANT PARK

NN WW

"If you've seen or heard of the five finalists' proposals for the restoration of the Park, you know how major the proposed changes are to the pre-Jaun Park.

All five proposals include radical changes to the Park's urban forest, entrances, water aspects, and roadways. Several include parking within the Park and include construction of new buildings. These changes to the Park's interior and exterior environs with such things as amphitheatres, Saturday markets, day camps, cultural centres, and roadways to in-Park parking lots will have a negative effect on the tranguility of the urban forest of the Park we knew.

If you wish Point Pleasant Park to remain as an urban forest with only appropriate care and management of that forest and shoreline, with minimum other intrusions, please sign below."

If you did not sign this petition at August's HFN meeting, and would like to, it is available at the Point Pleasant Grocery, at the corner of Point Pleasant Drive and Tower Road.

MAYBANK BOOK LAUNCH

Blake Maybank's <u>Birding Sites of Nova Scotia: A</u> <u>Comprehensive, Year-Round Guide for Birders and</u> <u>Other Nature Lovers</u>, will be launched by Nimbus Publishing at the Nova Scotian Museum of Natural History on Thursday, 27 October, at 8:00 p.m.

Frog Hollow Books will be on hand with copies of his book for sale, and Blake should be willing to autograph them.

PARKS ARE FOR PEOPLE

There are still some exciting Provincial Park outings on DNR's Parks are for People schedule. The programme is available for free from DNR at 424-4321, at many museums, parks, and tourist bureaus, and on the web at <http://parks.gov.ns.ca/programs.asp>.

CPAWS TOUR FOR NAHANNI

The NS Chapter of the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society invites you to be part of coast-to-coast efforts to save a beloved example of Canada's wilderness heritage. The 'Celebrate the Wild Nahanni' Tour will stop in Halifax for an evening of entertainment and discussion about wilderness conservation. The tour is part of the '100,000 Canadians for the Nahanni' campaign, which seeks to expand the boundaries of the Nahanni to encompass the entire watershed of the South Nahanni River, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Expansion will ensure that the park and the wildlife and ecosystems it protects will be safely guarded against future development and the effects of a proposed lead/zinc/silver mine.

The event will run from 7:00 to 10:00 p.m., Tues., Nov. 29th at the McInnes Room, Dal Students' Union Bldg. Early bird tickets are available for \$10.00 each. Contact Alexander MacDonald, 902-446-4155, or <conservation@cpawsns.org> for tickets and more information.

ELIZABETH MAY AT THE 2005 KILLAM LECTURE SERIES

The theme of the Killam Lectures this year is "Toward a New Global Order?". One of the lectures, "Can Civilisation Survive Climate Change?", will be presented by Elizabeth May of the Sierra Club, on Tuesday, October 25th, Ondaatje Hall, Dalhousie University, at 8:00 p.m.

In 1988, Canada hosted an international conference on climate change. Its consensus statement began, "Humanity is conducting an unintended, uncontrolled, globally pervasive experiment whose ultimate consequences are second only to global nuclear war." But climate change is not really an environmental issue; it is about the survival of the human race. Elizabeth asks whether we are repeating the experience of past civilisations, which ignored the natural constraints and therefore perished.

May is an environmentalist, writer, activist, and lawyer. She has been Executive Director of the Sierra Club of Canada since 1989, is a member of the Board of the International Institute of Sustainable Development, and holds a law degree from Dalhousie. In 1999 it created a permanent chair in her honour, the Elizabeth May Chair in Women's Health & the Environment. She is the author of <u>The</u> <u>Cutting Edge: The Crisis in Canada's Forests</u>, and three other books.



SPECIAL REPORTS

FNSN 2005 AGM

24-26 JUNE

The Acadian Forest was the theme of this year's AGM at the Agricultural College in Truro.

On Friday evening, June 24th, Jim Drescher of Windhorse Farm talked about the Acadian forest of the Maritimes (beyond which it doesn't extend very much) with his "On the Ground of Nothing Missing: the Possibility of Uncovering Basic Nature in NS" (with ecologically sound forest stewardship rather than forest exploitation).

Our Acadian forests are in very sad shape. Less than 1/10 of 1% of old-growth Acadian forest is left and 98% has been severely degraded. Since a few hundred years ago, it has been hammered severely by repetitiive material extraction. But that process has accelerated over the last 50 years, and the last five years have been the worst in its 15,000-year lifetime (from the last glacial retreat). 'Big Forestry' is now harvesting twice as much as is growing back.

Jim recently visited the small country of Bhutan, nestled in the Himalayas between India and Tibet, to find out what they are doing to conserve their forests. Bhutan is one of the world's ten bio-diversity hotspots. The ministry of forestry is titled the Ministry of Conservation, and their aim is to have 60% of their forests protected as old-growth stands in the near future (presently 28% is completely protected). The Bhutanese government, in order to withstand modern forestry pressures, uses the tactics found in Sun Tzu's <u>Art of War</u>, attacking not all fronts at the same time, but instead attacking at only one place at a time to ensure success. Bhutan did have a plywood industry, but shut it down completely because of its deleterious environmental effects.

Jim and others, at a Council of Ngaya, decided on their first point of attack — the marketplace. The Council devised a scheme of 'Acadian Forest Families' (there are 23 so far); these families have woodlots and offer to the market only Certified Wood Products. The Forest Certification Council started in the early 80's and its mandate is that "...a wood product will have come from only an ecologically wellmanaged forest". These products, unlike those from Big Forestry, are never refused by the industry, and are increasingly more and more in demand.

Tom Miller and his wife and children are one of those 23 families. On Sunday, June 26th, he spoke about "Acadian Forest Restoration: One man's Vision".

Tom is President of the NS Woodlot Owners Association, and he recently won the Forester of the Year Award. Tom has been trained in traditional Big Forestry practices, but has now uses only truly sustainable forestry techniques. When his forested lands are fully restored (they are in fairly good shape now), he will be leaving areas completely untouched, and will only selectively harvest in other areas. All his actions will be based upon what the Acadian forest *should* be like. Tom says good planning is needed for sustainable forestry — with innovative research, technologies, good harvesting techniques, and especially good training of foresters and loggers who will be certified, and that at each step of sustainable wood production, there will be a marketing function.

On Saturday, June 25th, Alexander MacDonald from the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Service spoke on "A Biodiversity Conservation Vision for the Acadian Forest: the Cobequids to Chignecto (C2C)".

Alexander showed aerial human habitat density slides of the Chignecto isthmus, revealing the astonishing extent of the built-up areas there. The danger is that its Acadian wildlife corridors between New Brunswick and Nova Scotia are rapidly diminishing, which means that Nova Scotia will soon become an 'ecological island' if some corridors are not permanently protected. In N.S., a lot of the land in the isthmus is private; in N.B. it is 100% privately owned. Therefore the best way to keep this area open is to look for opportunities for land stewardship.

Also on Saturday, Judy Loo, a forester with the Canadian Forest Service, spoke on "The Historical Conditions of the Acadian Forest: The Impacts".

Judy detailed a useful synopsis of the main Acadian forest trees and significant habitat areas. Coniferous areas to have Red Spruce, Balsam Fir, black Spruce, and Jack Pine; mixed areas (usually on woody open ridge tops) contain Striped Maple, Beech, White Pine, Yellow Birch, Balsam Fir, and Hemlock; deciduous sites showed Basswood, Ironwood, Red Maple, and Red Oak; and open, boggy woodland sites contained Red, Black, and White Spruce, Eastern White Cedar, and White Oak. Acadian forests also contain boreal sections and wet forest areas.

Stephanie Robertson



HFN TALKS

COLORADO DELTA

7 SEPT.

Diane LaRue, with the NS Department of Transportation and Public Works and WildScape Restoration Nursery Services, went to the Colorado River Delta last winter to assist the Sonoran Institute and a Mexican NGO in ecological restoration efforts because of changes in river flow due to the dams and water diversions on the river.

The Colorado River drains 632,000 km² of land and once had a lush delta at the Gulf of California. Extensive cottonwood and willow forests along the river and its tributaries, marshes and coastal ecosystems supported a great diversity of animals and plants. The original delta was tremendously important for over 300 species of resident and migratory birds. Today the delta is reduced to approximately 10% of its original size following 65 years of vigorous water management to satisfy agriculture, industrial, and urban needs in the U.S. and Mexico.

As the population increased in the western US in the early years of 1900s, the demand for water increased. The Colorado River was seen as a great source of fresh water to meet these demands. In 1922, the U.S. 'Colorado River Compact' divvied up the river's water between the western states. The river was surveyed to determine the best location for a dam and Diane's grandfather, E.C. LaRue, was one of the surveyors. The first large dam was the Hoover, which created Lake Mead. In 1944, the Mexican Water Treaty guaranteed a certain amount of water to Mexico to satisfy the booming agricultural industry in the Mexicali Valley, and today there are 14 large dams providing guaranteed amonts of water to each state and to Mexico. Diverted water irrigates 1.5 million ha of agricultural land in the US and Mexico.

During the 20-year construction and subsequent filling of the dams, no fresh water flowed into the delta region. Without it, the land became saline. Salt Cedar (*Tamarisk spp.*) invaded and replaced native desert vegetation, mesquite forests, and riparian willow and cottonwood forests, and bird, fish and animal species became extinct or endangered. Since the mid 1980s however, the dams filled up and overflowed into the region.

Currently there is a large international effort, primarily between Mexico and the US, but also with Canadian involvement because of migratory birds, to restore the Colorado River ecosystems. There are 186,000 ha which are recovering, to be placed under conservation; and 341,000 severely deteriorated ha where ecological restoration efforts should take place. Two of the original native birds recovering are Brown and White Pelicans. Another endangered but now recovering indigenous species is the unique Palmer's Salt Grass, which was used by the native Cucupa peoples for grain.

Diane did her project in late February 2005 in Mexico, under the support of the Sonoran Institute and AEURHYC (a local landowners' and river users' organisation), at Campo Ramona on the Rio Hardy (a Colorado tributary). This river today consists of return flows from the Mexicali Valley's 200,000 ha of farmland, which is all irrigated from Mexico's allocation of Colorado River water, through an unbelievably vast canal system. The Rio Hardy area also now consists almost entirely of the exotic, invasive Salt Cedar.

The restoration project consisted of planting a site cleared of Salt Cedar and *Phragmities* (another salt tolerant species) with willow and cottonwood stems. These were sourced from the few remaining areas which had once supported huge gallery forests. The stems were inserted into the soft soil, which was wet below the surface. The idea was that the stems would root, and as the water levels decreased in spring and summer, these roots would continue to grow downwards into the moist soil and each stem would then establish, grow into trees, and eventually provide numerous stems for further restoration work. Diane had the opportunity to return to the site in late April and she observed that the willows were growing successfully.

The Sonoran Institute and AEURHYC are also engaged in other restoration efforts in the Rio Hardy area; Mesquite plantations to restore Mesquite forests, and installing hand-built dams to create wetlands. All these efforts are being monitored for long-term effectiveness. These organisations in collaboration with other international, national, and local groups are also addressing agricultural concerns and are involved in developing eco-tourism and economic development as strategies in restoration. For instance *La Ruta de Sonora* is a group that offers eco-tourist trips throughout the southwest and northern Mexico, including boat trips from the Gulf of California to the mouth of the Colorado River.

Even though conservation and restoration efforts hold special promise for the Colorado delta, the regional political situation around the problem is still very complicated, with many powerful stakeholders vying for exclusive water rights. A primary strategy proposed by conservation groups is to declare the Delta ecosystem itself a 'user', so that it too has the right to demand a certain amount of freshwater 'diversion'. Their calculations show that relatively modest flows of freshwater and appropriately managed brackish water could significantly stimulate ecological recovery. With the international efforts of many organizations and government agencies, recovery of the Colorado River delta seems very promising.

- Stephanie Robertson Diane LaRue



FIELD TRIPS

STORMBOUND ON BON PORTAGE MAY 20-27, 2005

On Friday evening at the start of the Victoria Day weekend, ten of us who arrived on Bon Portage Island for a Bird Society of Nova Scotia weekend dladly downplayed predictions of an impending 'big blow' cancelling the trip. Over half of us had made the crossing from Shag Harbour at least once before - some many times - and looked forward to the familiar patterns of exploration as well as unpredictable sightings. A few were seeing 'B. P.' for the first time, having heard about its great appeal for migrating birds and visiting birders. We were a motley crew - dentist, librarian, nurse, teacher, writer, boiler-room attendant, pastor, and geophysicist - with varied degrees of experience in exploring natural settings and phenomena. When we settled into the barebones bunkhouse with our knapsacks, coolers, binoculars, and field guides, we expected to spend three nights on the island and be back in our homes by the following Monday evening.

Friday's dusk brought us the voices of two Great Horned Owls, one with calls deeper in the bass range than the other. As dusk thickened, one of those owls - or another altogether - swooped above our heads, inciting exclamations from us, though it was only visible for a moment. At the time, one of our group had been looking elsewhere, inspecting a snail on the ground, soon to be kidded for 'missing the owl while you were crouching to the snail'. (Yet who's to say snails deserve our attention and curiosity any less than owls?) That night we also caught the dusky, aircharging smell of the island's best-known birds. Leach's Storm-Petrels, and heard their varied cries and chortles. The many we smelled and heard, it was humbling to recall, were only a fraction of the 50,000 pairs estimated to breed there. Thanks to Bon Portage regular Claire Diggins, our group coordinator, who gently pulled an adult petrel from its burrow, we got to smell the feathers close-up, a smell also detectable in owl pellets I'd gathered last Labour Day weekend during my first stay on Bon Portage. Other than owls and petrels, the moon made the night feel full of promise: it was three nights away from being a full moon, and now and then when we stepped beyond overhanging trees its illumination intensified, while seals barked in the distance.

Saturday brought sunlight and plenty of small birds - warblers (Chestnut-Sided, Wilson's, Parula, Blackpoll, Redstart), Golden-Crowned Kinglets, Blueheaded Vireos, and Fox Sparrows. A Great Egret, a breeze slightly lifting its fine neck feathers, was in plain sight for much of a half hour. After wandering away to find more warblers, we returned to the Egret from a different angle for further viewing of its immaculate white colour and its elegant, slow-motion stalking. Along the eastern shore we found a few Common Eider nests lined with dark eiderdown, each

holding five eggs. Herring and Black-Backed Gulls, diving at us, were plentiful and harsh-voiced. We saw their nests holding the typical three eggs, and also chicks in various stages of development: - some just starting to peck through their shell, beaks primally visible, and others soaked and slick from birth that morning; some fluffy-feathered, a few days old, and some scampering about, already graduated from the nest. We took our time wending our way through the gulls' nursery. The adult gulls' ferocious clamour reminded me that while Nova Scotians post signs and issue publicity asking visitors to respect nesting Piping Plovers and their sites, there's little difference between the parental instincts of an endangered plover and those of familiar, abundant gulls.

Later that afternoon it began to rain. During the night the sky continued to saturate the island. On Sunday, at least one of us (no confession here) learned the hard, blue-footed way that hiking boots sometimes won't do on Bon Portage, and that rubber boots are always worth packing. Despite brisk winds and both short bouts and longer periods of rain, we ventured outside. There were jokes that the birds ---staying sheltered and out of sight - had more sense than the representatives of Homo sapiens on the island. Eventually, our efforts were rewarded, and the bitter weather couldn't silence the flutings of Fox Sparrows or mute the colours of a Baltimore Oriole, though the Great Egret had moved from the water's edge back into the woods for a tree's shelter. Besides those on Saturday, more small birds - Bay-Breasted and Nashville Warblers, and a Boreal Chickadee — emerged from dripping leaves and branches. In the island's forested interior, where the wind was mildest, we found the least common bird of our stay, a female Hooded Warbler, thanks to the patience and expert eyes of Ken McKenna. At one point Ken was amused to find three of us on the wet earth, sitting or crouched, focusing our binoculars on that warbler moving restlessly from low branch to low branch. A few days before our arrival. Trina Fitzgerald, manager of the bird-banding station, had seen a Northern Wheatear, but we weren't so lucky.

First thing Monday, we knew that the gale-force winds would make a safe passage back to Shag Harbour impossible, so we cheerfully settled in for an unexpected extension to our stay. Trina dropped by to warn us that weather forecasts also suggested we might not get home for another two days. The ten of us accepted the news with a spirit of adventure, and Trina let us use the station's cell-phone to contact our families, friends, or employers. Maybe our most memorable minutes that day came when we faced the winds along the shore - for some of us the strongest winds we'd ever walked in - at times nearly forceful enough to make us lose our footing and to throw us around onto rocks or driftwood. At times, those with nylon hoods on their jackets could hardly hear anything except the wind's shrieking and

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the nylon's frantic flapping. Somebody shouted, "Now I know what 'gale-force wind' really means!" A Great Blue Heron, passing by, not strong enough to master the wind's whipping, was pushed down in downdrafts, up in updrafts. Gannets looked more able to keep on course. Even on such a wild day we did cross paths with some warblers, including Black-Throated Green, Yellow, and Parula. It was also cheering to find the Baltimore Oriole – we preferred to think of it as the same one – very close to where we'd seen it on Sunday.

Another oriole wasn't so fortunate. On the way to the lighthouse Tuesday morning we found it on the ground, a shrunken cluster of soaked feathers. "Frozen to death?" we wondered, but after checking it Trina reported that it must've starved to death after a period of scarce flies, with little fat or flesh left next to its bones. We guessed that some of the petrels must've been forced out of flooded burrows.

Both Tuesday and Wednesday were wet, cold days when we ventured out for walking and birding, but also days when we spent long hours by the woodstove reading, talking, knitting, writing, and painting. We were amused to find on the bunkhouse shelves a wrinkled paperback of Agatha Christie's Ten Little Indians, about ten people (our very number) on an island, killing each other off one by one. Remarkably, none of us grew morose, anxious, or restless, at least not enough to start making life miserable for the others. We figured we made up a sort of anti-Survivor, coping with the week by maintaining cooperation, good humour, and ingenuity (when the bread runs out, you can improvise various things with flour, salt, soda, and water). We would've been inhuman if we hadn't said things like, "It's too miserable for words.", "I miss my little ones.", and "Even the birds are walking, as the saying goes.", but complaining and self-pity weren't in the air. Trina supplied a different perspective, since for her the week wasn't an unexpected prolonging of a weekend sojourn, but simply "a time when I can't get my job done."

Clean clothes had become a distant memory, and we'd run out of bread, milk, and eggs. There was more than half-serious talk about stealing gull eggs and finding supper in washed-up lobster traps. Claire's duct-taped-repaired waterproof leggings came apart a second time.

On Wednesday the first Black-Crowned Night Heron of our stay was seen. In the evening we buoyed our spirits with a walk to the lighthouse and the Richardson house; a Grey Catbird flew over deep puddles, a Snowshoe Hare fled into the trees, and a White-tailed Deer hurried across the field below the house. That night we also had a singalong, going through the copies of a many-photocopied songsheet, finding new relevance to the title "Four Strong Winds."

Thursday was warmer, but the rainiest day since Sunday and Monday. That night Trina brought over one big onion and ten potatoes, and one of the Québécois student bird-banders entertained us by improvising on his banjo. If we didn't get off the island Friday, Trina said, a blue barrel of emergency food could be dropped from an offshore boat, to drift our way.

But we didn't need the emergency barrel. On Friday morning we did get into two fishing boats and make our journey back to the mainland, after a full week on Bon Portage. Sunlight even appeared, and near the dock flies were flicking through the air, even into our mouths. Winds change. Weather turns. The birds, at least the lucky ones, will be fed.

The ten of us who unexpectedly spent a rainsodden week on Bon Portage could give ten accounts of the experience, each different in emphasis and detail – though, I suspect, similar in gratitude for the days there.

This is just one account; its incompleteness is evident in my having named only 26 of the 56 species of birds seen during the week. I'd need much more space to give narrative contexts to our sightings of, say, Northern Harrier, Canada Goose, and Blackbellied Plover.

In the following month I drafted a long essay about two trips to Bon Portage and presented part of it at a conference on nature writing in Eugene, Oregon. The previous night, after a couple of beers in a bar, I did an imitation of the petrel's throaty, staccato-purr mating song, then the next day while reading the essay I spontaneously repeated the mimicry. One member of the audience seemed to enjoy this so much that at the end of the question-and-answer period he asked to hear the mating song again, so I repeated the performance, after asking everyone to shut their eyes this time. Maybe it struggled between the sublime and the ridiculous, that feeling of being like an ambassador for petrels, recalling their voices from one side of the continent on the other.

Though it's wise to be uneasy with our tendencies to literally 'take something home' from wherever we go, I brought back with me from Bon Portage a dead Great Horned Owl's claw, more owl pellets that contained petrel skulls (my young son enjoys taking them apart), two Green-Winged Teal feathers, and a rock that looks like a smiling or kissing face. More important, I brought home a powerful desire to return to the island for another visit, where all mimicry pales beside living things in the habitats they visit or make



Brian Bartlett

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PUBLIC GARDENS

DATE: Sunday, 19 June PLACE: The Halifax Public Gardens WEATHER: Partly cloudy, light winds INTERPRETER: Tracey Jessen PARTICIPANTS: ±15



19 JUNE

On Sunday morning a group of horticulturalists and history buffs gathered in front of the iron gates at the south east corner of the Public Gardens. These wrought iron gates from Scotland have welcomed visitors to the park since 1907. Although heavily damaged from Hurricane Juan, this entrance has been exquisitely restored.

Tracy, an HRM employee and our guide, led us in a counterclockwise fashion through this famous Halifax landmark that dates back to 1836. As we moved from one spot to another, she showed us the wide variety of shrubs, trees, and flowers and described what makes up a Victorian garden. We saw first-hand the tasteful blend of ornamental structures (birdbaths, footbridge, fountains, bandstand) within their beautiful surroundings. The well manicured lawns (thanks to the invention of the lawnmower; Victoria and Albert really enjoyed the ride-on), as well as the 32 beds of colorful flowers, make the Halifax Public Gardens a distinctive and treasured spot.

Tracy led us to the footbridge across a natural underground water course which surfaces only in this park (a filtration system for it was installed during the post-Juan renovations). She also pointed out the Mediterranean Bed of succulents whose Agave cactus blossoms only once every hundred years, and also the Soldiers Memorial Fountain with surrounding 'weeping' trees. (Is this why the park is always so wet?)

We discovered that Griffin Pond's duck house, originally a refuge for the ducks, now housed the filtration system instead. To keep the three species of ducks company, an Osprey can occasionally be seen perched in one of the trees on the island. The Titanic replica still plies local waters minus the icebergs.

As we continued our stroll, we saw the scroll and serpentine flower beds symmetrically positioned around a fountain commemorating Queen Victoria's first 60 years on the throne. Closer into the south west corner we saw the area where monkeys and peacocks had once been local attractions. A few patches of bare ground or recently seeded areas marked the spots where large trees had stood pre-Hurricane Juan.

Throughout the Gardens, we noticed plaques beside many of the more exotic trees; some of these

trees had been gifts from royal visitors. Tracy informed us that the HFN map of the numerous varieties of trees and plants is currently being updated and will be available to the public. After all, the Gardens are intended to be a teaching park.

As we passed the statues of the three goddesses in front of the bandstand, we learned of the plans to consolidate the male and female washrooms in one area and replace the office/canteen with an interpretive centre, a good spot to display the complete history of the park including rare pictures of the old indoor rink built in the Gardens in 1859 and the wooden pavilion that replaced it thirty years later. All of this material, presently scattered throughout the city, would then be more accessible to the public in one central location.

- Ken Belfountain

Ed's note: — In 1986/87, at Colin Stewart's instigation, HFN identified and installed signs for the 100± significant species of trees in the Halifax Public Gardens.



BUTTERFLIES II

DATE: Saturday, August 6, 2005 PLACE: Uniacke Estate Park and Pockwock Road WEATHER: Cloudy periods; light winds; high of 27" INTERPRETERS: Peter and Linda Payzant PARTICIPANTS: 8, including interpreters

The first butterfly trip of the season had to be cancelled due to inclement weather, so we were hoping that this trip would prove to make up for that in some degree. Unfortunately, while it was a delightful day, the butterflies were scarce. One of the best of the nectar sources, Black Knapweed, was blooming profusely, but perhaps due to a recent spell of dry weather, it wasn't attracting many butterflies.

As usual, we began our trip with a walk around Uniacke Estate Museum Park. The first stop is the field which has the bleaching whale skeleton in it (amazing how these animals get so far inland), and here, for the first time ever in these trips, we saw not a single butterfly. The field was loaded with knapweed and various goldenrods, but there wasn't one butterfly.

We carried on down the entrance road, and here we finally saw our first butterfly – a rather late Northern Pearly Eye. Shortly after, we came across another satyr, the Common Wood Nymph. As we began to ascend the drumlin hill, we could see dozens of Wood Nymphs, which turned out to be by far the most abundant butterfly of the trip. However, there were very few other species present; we had a few sulphurs (probably Clouded Sulphur), and two lonely Peck's Skippers.

With a hot sun beating down on us and very little to show for our efforts, we decided to move on to our second site, the access road to the Pockwock watershed. Things were somewhat better here. We had good looks at several Atlantis Fritillaries (including their blue-grey eyes) and there were a late and lethargic White Admiral, one Painted Lady, a few Northern Pearl Crescents, a probable Pink-edged Sulphur, and even a Common Branded Skipper. The usually-productive patches of knapweed near the bridge managed to produce two or three Atlantis Fritillaries, a far cry from the dozens we commonly see there.

An area which has had Bog Coppers in the past was completely dried out and there were no coppers present.

Earlier in the day we had set out a pie-plate with a sponge soaked in apple juice, but there were no takers for this bait.

We admired the Ebony Jewelwings from the bridge, and finally headed home, tired but content with the few butterflies we had managed to scare up.



BUTTERFLIES II SPECIES

Cabbage Butterfly Clouded Sulphur Pink-edged Sulphur Atlantis Fritillary Northern Pearl Crescent Painted Lady White Admiral Northern Pearly-eye Common Wood Nymph European Skipper Common Branded Skipper Peck's Skipper Pieris rapae Colias Philodice Colias interior Speyeria atlantis Phyciodes selenis Vanessa cardui Limenitis arthemis Enodia anthedon Cercyonis pegala Thymelicus lineola Hesperia comma Polites peckius



NATURAL HISTORY

Birch Trees, *Betula spp.* are found in Acadian forests. The word is very ancient, from the Sanskrit bhurga which means a 'tree whose bark is written upon'. There are about 40 species worldwide of this well-known and short-lived ornamental and timber tree. Grey birch, Paper Birch, River Birch, Sweet Birch, Yellow Birch, and White Birch are the best known. It is distributed primarily in the north temperate and arctic zones.

Birches were among the first trees to become established after the last glaciation. They are hardy and quick-growing and are relatively immune to disease and insect attack. They are valuable in reforestation, erosion control, and as a protective cover for more permanent plants.

As everyone knows, the white outer bark can be separated into layers and has been used in the past as oiled writing paper; but of course this characteristic makes it very flammable. The bark is also waterproof, and impervious to insects. It was used for roofing, canoes, tipis and wigwams, and shoes by early North Americans. Waterproof containers were also made from the bark, even by the Ainu of Japan.

Pale- to red-brown birch wood is used for flooring, furniture, cabinetry, interior finishing, plywood, pulp, railway ties, barrel hoops, and wood turning. Birch Tar Oil is almost identical to Wintergreen Oil and has the same uses.

Some birch produce a sugary sap which is fermented to make birch beer. In Lapland, Norway, and Finland, it is finely ground and used as a food.

A word to the ecologically considerate — don't peel the bark off live trees indiscriminantly. Removing more than the top few layers causes it to become black and unsightly, and can seriously harm the tree.



- Stephanie Robertson (from our 1990 Fall Programme)



PART III, 2002 - 2005

Spring/02 — After attending an owl monitoring workshop, HFNers Bob McDonald, Patricia Chalmers, and Suzanne Borkowski took part in an April owl count for the NS Nocturnal Owl Monitoring Survey, covering two of 47 different routes.

Summer/02 — After one of the coldest springs in many years, summer burst forth and HFN continued to advertise and support A. H. MacKay's phenological 'Thousand Eyes' project (evidence for any present Nova Scotian climate changes); WormWatch; the fourth year of the NSMNH's Herp Atlas programme; the two-year old project, MIDI — (the Marine Invertebrate Database Initiative); and HUGA — the Halifax Urban Greenway Association promoting a green belt trail along the railway cut from the Armdale Rotary to Point Pleasant Park. We also published information on how and where to report birds that had possibly died from West Nile disease.

The Province of Nova Scotia announced that it had acquired Cape Split and that it would remain a Park.

Degradation and lack of protective management practices were reported in Shubie Park by Colin Stewart.

In mid-June, the Friends of Point Pleasant Park (FPPP) led a walking tour in the Park, followed the next day by an incisive talk, "Beetles and Trees: Point Pleasant Park Partners", by entomologist Chris Majka. Chris is the local expert in PPP entomology, having spent three years collecting and identifying the insects there.

After the GPI's (Genuine Progress Index) damning report on NS Forestry, The Federation of Nova Scotian Naturalists, along with The Eastern Shore Forest Association, the Ecology Action Centre, the NS Environmental Forest Caucus, and the NS Woodlot Owners and Operators, withdrew from the Nova Forest Alliance. All groups claimed that they were coopted into the alliance, believing that DNR and its industry partners were to develop with them leadingedge ecological forestry in Nova Scotia, while in reality, they had no intention of doing so and did not fulfil that mandate to these groups.

The Federal Government drew up new rules that would prevent ships from harming Right Whales. A new shipping lane became effective in July.

The first report from Bangladesh was submitted by Layout Editor Stephanie Robertson, and a total of seven wonderful field trips were written up in our Summer/02 Issue #107.

Fall/02 — President Bob McDonald represented HFN in Halifax at the first regional Maritime Consultation Meeting of Bird Studies Canada (BSC) which was to explore ways to improve and facilitate communication and partnering with naturalist groups in Atlantic Canada. HFN vowed to support its programmes and to keep members aware of opportunities to participate in them.

Coyotes and deer were reported in Hemlock Ravine, but under pressure from over-development. Much fish-kill in the Little Sackville river was reported.

FNSN initiated a committee to prepare a new Policy on Forest Management for our province, and a new hiking trail was opened — the Bluff Trail near Exit 3 on Highway 103.

The Harriet Irving Botanical Gardens in Wolfville opened officially in the third week of September, representing nine natural Acadian habitats on 2.4 ha. They are a part of the K.C. Irving Environmental Science Centre, given to Acadia University by the Irvings.

The Programme Commmittee purchased a secondhand display unit in order to promote our activities at conferences and exhibitions, collecting photographs and other natural history subjects for this display.

Winter 02/03 — Along with the inauguration of a \$20.00 monthly rental charge for use of the NSMNH auditorium, the NSMNH also instituted paid parking at all times! This meant our meetings became more expensive for attendees and presentors alike.

After casting around for a suitable recipient for monies our club had earned at the 1994 CNF Conference (monies earmarked for protected land acquisition), HFN donated \$5,000.00 to the Nova Scotia Nature Trust to facilitate their purchase of the Captain Arnell Lands in Purcell's Cove from the Field family. In the future, HFN would conduct a bio-survey of the property. This area is still unspoiled, relatively wild, and had 'only been walked in'. The 12-hectare property features frontages on two lakes, exposed granite outcrops, Jack Pine Forests, and uncommon flora — including the threatened Lady-slipper Orchid.

Sadly, longtime supporter, Torontonian, and dear member Maud Godfrey died in October in her 90's. She was the head of the References Services section of the Provincial Library before her retirement. Maud took part in many club activities, including the railway cut plant survey with Joe Harvey, and was a volunteer teacher for many years at the NSMNH. She graciously left a generous donation for HFN.

A rare orchid, the Southern Twayblade, *Listera australis*, was found at the Halifax International Airport; a runway was diverted around its habitat. Also, cougars were in the news again; are they here or not? One sample of hair from NB was DNA analysed and confirmed as being of North American origin.

A Toronto, Ontario man won a court case to keep his natural garden (to the dismay of neighbours), thereby contributing cleaner run-off water from it into the local streams and Lake Ontario. In a victory for all Canadian natural gardeners, the judge urged Toronto officials to " ...develop and implement coherent plans with specific guidelines to deal with the critical issue of natural gardens and their enormous environmental significance."

The first of two parts on the history of Halifax's historic freshwater brook (now mostly underground) was published by Pat Leader in our Winter Issue #109; another article worth revisiting.

Spring /03 — The HFN Board of Directors remained the same as Spring /02 excepting: Elliott Hayes filled the vacant Vice-President post, and Judi Hayes took over Membership from Linda Payzant; Jean Sawyer, Wendy McDonald, and Jennifer McKeigan replaced Pat Leader for the Talks and Trips Programme Committee; and Bernice Moores replaced Elliott Hayes and Pat Leader for Newsletter Distribution.

A very cold Spring affected Nova Scotian flora and fauna. Insects were late as were migrating birds. Indeed it was reported that the terrible weather on May 10th hampered the results of the North American Migration Count (NAMC).

Via The Halifax Field Naturalist, Wendy McDonald pointed out to us that there were some very interesting naturalist websites out there to peruse; and that virtual field trips were possible at some of the better sites.

Fred Scott of the NSMNH produced a narrative report on the progress of the Herp Atlas to 2002. Specimens and records collected from a grid of equal-sized squares across Nova Scotia over a period of five years comprised the culmination of the Herp Atlas. This was to be the fifth and final year for the collecting of herpetological observations.

About 100 hectares of land around MacGowan Lake, Queen's County, was designated a conservation area for the Blanding's Turtle (protected under the Nova Scotia Protected Species Act).

Total membership for 02/03 was 128.

Summer /03 — The Marine Invertebrate Data Initiative (MIDI) held a one-day workshop on June 17th to instruct ten applicants in the identification of local amphipod crustaceans such as scuds, beach hoppers, and the mud shrimps, which fatten migrating shorebirds.

An informative and detailed history of the designation of Mcnabs and Lawlor's Islands as provincial parks was outlined by Colin Stewart in the Summer Issue #111, including a separate map of the islands. And the last of the Bangladeshi communiqués was also submitted in that Issue — part 2 of a river field trip to search out Royal Bengal Tigers in the Bengali Sundarbans.

Following a lecture and field trip by local expert Paul Brunelle, HFN decided to publish a field checklist of the Nova Scotian odonates (dragon and damselflies), similar to our 1989 Butterfly Checklist, to be ready for Spring /04. Fall /03 — Hurricane Juan flooded the NSMNH's basement, effectively cancelling our October meeting. Juan essentially shut down Halifax for almost a week with thousands of downed trees, damaged homes and cars, no power, and shorelines eroded and weakened by storm surge. Twenty Provincial Parks were devastated. Miraculously, only restorative measures were allowed by DNR, and forestry practices such as clear-cutting were not even considered. Paths were cleared for safety, and fallen trees were to be left to decompose naturally.

Entomologist Chris Majka, who collected and studied 6,911 insects from Point Pleasant Park, pointed out that studying these populations provides a lot of information about the changing nature of the Park, for instance after an event as devastating as Hurricane Juan.

In November, on behalf of HFN, Bob McDonald presented to the Voluntary Planning Task Force dealing with off-highway vehicle use in Nova Scotia an excellent submission outlining important criteria for regulating these environment-destroying machines.

For those of you who love feeding the birds, <u>The</u> <u>Backyard Birdfeeder's Bible:...</u>, by Sally Roth, was highly recommended by Ursula Grigg in our Fall Issue #112.

Winter /03/04 — HFNer Doug Linzey reported that the Atlantic Naturalists Network was formed as a segment of the Canadian Naturalists Network, the latter an idea of 'Future Search', an initiative of the Canadian Nature Federation (CNF). According to its President, Julie Gelfand, CNF was never a true federation of naturalist groups. The Atlantic Naturalists network was conceived to remedy this situation, and to empower and connect people and naturalists' groups in all regions of Canada in order to achieve their goals on a local level. He urged HFN to support it.

DNR announced that 200 Nova Scotians had purchased 'Piping Plover' license plates to help support Species at Risk Conservation. They cost \$70.00, but 50 of those dollars goes directly to the Species at Risk Recovery Fund.

On January 25th, a public meeting was held at Point Pleasant Park to explain HRM's immediate plans of action after the devastation of Hurricane Juan.

Spring /04 — Elliott Hayes stepped up to the Presidency replacing Bob McDonald; Bernice Moores became Vice-President; Peter Payzant became Secretary. The Membership post was given to Elizabeth Keizer; Jennifer McKeigan, Ingrid & Burkhard Plache, and Anne-Noreen Norton replaced the outgoing Programme Committee; Ursula Grigg stepped down from being Newsletter Editor, leaving the post temporarily vacant; and Suzanne Borkowski joined Colin Stewart on the Conservation Committee.

This year the North American Bird Count took place on May 8th. Ten species were added to the four-year list, which brought the total to 173 species. HFN established the Colin Stewart Memorial Award, and the first recipient was none other than Colin himself. Colin served on the HFN board for over 20 years. He initiated the labelling of the trees in the Public Gardens in 1985; established the Piping Plover Guardian Programme, the Nova Scotia Trails Federation, and the Federation of Nova Scotia Naturalists; and he ensured the establishment of 31 new Nova Scotian protected areas. He developed management plans for McNab's and Lawlor's Islands, Long Lake Provincial Park, Hemlock Ravine, and Point Pleasant Park; he also advised on the remediation of the latter after Hurricane Juan.

This year as well, Colin was awarded CNF's prestigious Dr. Pimlott Award for his continuing and strong support of biodiversity in the natural environment.

On March 15th, very soon after receiving the Colin Stewart Memorial Award, Nova Scotia lost a champion for nature conservation when Colin himself passed away less than one year after being diagnosed with pancreatic cancer. He was 50. HFN and all Nova Scotian naturalists miss him greatly.

At our May meeting, Peter announced the finished publication of the <u>Dragonflies of Nova Scotia</u> and brought a goodly supply to sell. Listed are 33 damselfly species, and 88 dragonflies.

Also in May, a Captain Arnell Lands celebratory event was held at the Purcell's Cove Social Club followed by a wonderful nature walk through the property.

Total membership for 03/04 was 119.

Summer /04 — A rainy summer ensured a healthy roster of flora and fauna in and around HRM. I noted it especially also in and around Melmerby Beach, Pictou County, where the wild flowers were in superabundance, and the bird species were more numerous as well, especially the Piping Plover.

Ursula Grigg submitted to Summer Issue #115 two more excellent book reviews on very useful publications: <u>Weatherwise</u>, a bi-monthly magazine available at Atlantic News on Morris Street; and <u>The Gardener's Weather Bible</u>, by Sally Roth, a companion for her <u>The Backyard Bird Feeders' Bible...</u> (reviewed in a previous issue).

Fall /04 — Many Nature NS postings decried DNR's aerial spraying programme of 'Vision', a glyphosate herbicide. Glyphosate has the potential to contaminate water supplies, and has been linked to respiratroy problems, birth defects, miscarriages, and cancer. It kills insects beneficial to ecosystems, inhibits nitrogen-fixing bacteria, and is toxic to fish.

In September, with \$100,000.00 donated by developer Jim Spatz, HRM announced an 'International Design Competition' to restore point Pleasant Park. A 16-member Steering Committee was established to develop terms of reference for the competitors. 350 public questionnaires about how people would like to see it restored were submitted to HRM — a record response from any HRM questionnaire. FPPP's President, lain taylor, expressed hope that the Committee would seriously attend to a restoration plan based on sound ecological principles. Chris Majka to date had collected 5,746 specimens of 484 species in 60 families of beetles!

HFN joined the Ecology Action Centre and the Birch Cove Lakes Wilderness Society to alert citizens to the value of the 1750 ha Blue Mountain/Birch Cove Lakes wilderness area just south of the Kingswood Estates off Hammonds Plains Road. Urban sprawl, land trade-offs by the province, and a highway proposal are just some of the threats this area faces. It contains the headwaters of several natural watercourses, many wetlands, barrens with many unique flora and fauna including the endangered mainland moose, remnant old growth forests, and the highest point in HRM — Blue Mountain at 152 metres. MLA Diane Whelan introduced a private members' bill in the Nova Scotian Legislature to call for its preservation and protection.

Winter /04/05 — Sadly, our President Elliott Hayes had to resign because of unavoidable extra stresses, travelling, and family estate affairs. Vice-President Bernice Moores agreed to play an interim role until our March /05 AGM.

FPPP learned that a helicopter pad was to be installed in PPP's lower parking lot.

Unilever Canada and Evergreen announced that their aquatic stewardship grants were to be offered again to Canadian community groups.

The Voluntary Planning Off-Highway Vehicle Task force report was released. There were recommendations for fee increases, licensing, and a driver age limit. It also emphasised enforcement of restrictions and regulations.

Due to the unavoidably short nomination period, no Colin Stewart Memorial Award nominations were received for 2005. The deadline for the 2006 Award nominations is November 30th, 2005.

Spring /05 — Allan Robertson was elected President; Peter Webster Vice-President; Christine-Anne Smith became Membership Chair; Allan Robertson joined Ingrid and Burkhard-Plache on the Programme Committee and Jennifer McKeigan stepped down; Stephanie Robertson assumed Editorship of the newsletter; Peter Webster joined Suzanne Borkowski on the Conservation Committee after Colin's passing; and Bob McDonald took over from Ursula Grigg as FNSN representative.

The Blue Mountain/Birch Cove Lakes area was threatened with a proposed land swap between Sobey's and the NS Government. Bob McDonald sent a strong letter of concern to the Minister of DNR and 15 other politicians opposing it.

The CFIA was still cutting on McNab's Island for the alleged Brown Spruce Longhorn Beetle.

Betty Hodgson reported that Shubie Park was threatened by a new interchange linking Hwy #118 with a new section of Burnside Industrial Park; there would be loss of parkland from Shubie. A 'Save Our Shubie' (SOS) citizens' group was formed to lobby against this.

ALMANAC * 🛃

This almanac is for the dates of events which are not found in our HFN programme: for field trips or lectures which members might like to attend, or natural happenings to watch for, such as eclipses, comets, average migration dates, expected blooming seasons, etc. Please suggest other suitable items.

"All the hills blush; I think that autumn must be the best season to journey over even the Green Mountains. You frequently exclaim to yourself, What red maples!"

- Henry David Thoreau, in <u>A Yankee in Canada</u> (1853)

NATURAL EVENTS

28 Sept. Second anniversary of Hurricane Juan.

- 30 Sept. Average date for first frost in Halifax (i.e. Env. Canada says there is only a 1:10 chance we will have frost before this date). Look forward to 210 days of frosty weather.
 - 17 Oct. Full Moon. Moon rises at 18:27 ADT.
 - 30 Oct. Daylight Savings Time ends (clocks are set back one hour, from Atlantic Daylight time to Atlantic Standard Time) at 2 a.m.
 - 22 Nov. Daily minimum temperature goes below 0°.
 - 15 Nov. Full Moon. Moon rises at 16:18 AST.
 - 7 Dec. Daily average temperature goes below 0°.
 - 8 Dec. -10 Dec. Earliest sunset of the year at 16:34 AST.
 - 13 Dec. & 14 Dec. Geminid Meteor Shower.
 - 14 Dec. -5 Jan. Audubon Christmas Bird Count Period.
 - 15 Dec. Full Moon. Moon rises at 16:11 AST.
 - 21 Dec. Winter Solstice at 14:35 AST: Winter begins in the Northern Hemisphere. But though the temperature drops, the days begin to lengthen.
 - 27 Dec. -31 Dec. Latest sunrise of the year at 7:51 AST.

 — Sources: Atmospheric Environment Service, Climate Normals 1951-80 Halifax (Shearwater A) N.S.; Blomidon Naturalists Society's 2005 Calendar; Burke-Gaffney Observatory, Saint Mary's University.

SU	NRISE AND SUNSE	T ON	AUTUMN A	ND EARLY	WINTE	R SATU	RDAYS
	3 Sept.	6:40	19:47	1	Oct.	7:13	18:55
	10 Sept.	6:48	19:34	8	Oct.	7:21	18:42
λ	17 Sept.	6:56	19:21	15	Oct.	7:30	18:30
	24 Sept.	7:04	19:08	22	Oct.	7:39	18:18
1 Martin				29	Oct.	7:48	18:08
v. 14 1 6 F	5 Nov.	6:58	16:58	3	Dec.	7:34	16:35
	12 Nov.	7:07	16:50	10	Dec.	7:41	16:34
	19 Nov.	7:17	16:43	17	Dec.	7:46	16:36
	26 Nov.	7:26	16:38	24	Dec.	7:50	16:39
1 . 1				31	Dec.	7:51	16:44
~ ~ - 0	ourtesy of David Lan	e, Bur	ke-Gaffney	Observatory,	Saint I	Mary's Ur	niversity

ORGANISATIONAL EVENTS

Blomidon Naturalists Society: Indoor meetings take place on the 3rd Mon. of the month, in the auditorium of The K. C. Irving Environmental S2cience Centre on University Avenue, Wolfville, at 7:30 p.m. Field trips usually depart from the Wolfville Waterfront, Front St., Wolfville. For more information, go to <http://www.go.ednet.ns.ca/~bns/>.

- 21 Sept. "New Kingstech Horticultural Facility", with leaders Tim Amos and Jamie Ellison. "Whither Human Society?", with Marjorie and Martin Willison.
- 17 Oct. "Hiking the Dream", with the Didkowsky family.
- 21 Nov. 12 Dec. "Work and Play in Thailand", with Dr. J. Sherman Boates, NS Department of Natural Resources.

Burke-Gaffney Observatory: Public shows at the Burke-Gaffney Observatory at Saint Mary's University are held on the 1st and 3rd Sat. of each month, except from Jun. through Sept. when they are held every Sat. Tours begin at 7:00 p.m. between Nov. 1st and Mar. 30th, and at either 9:00 p.m. or 10:00 p.m. (depending on when it gets dark) between Apr. 1st and Oct. 31st. For more information phone 496-8257, or go to <http://apwww.stmarys.ca/bgo/>.

Friends of McNabs Island: For more information, Dusan Soudek, 422-1045; or go to <http://www.mcnabsisland.ca/>. 17 Oct. "Fall Foliage Tours". ! Raindate 24 Oct. !

Nova Scotia Bird Society: Indoor meetings are on the 4th Thurs. of the month, Sept. to May, at the NSMNH, 7:30 p.m. For more info, Suzanne Borkowski, 445-2922, or <hr/>http://www.chebucto.ns.ca/Recreation/NS-BirdSoc/>.

30 Sept. -02 Oct. "Brier Island", with leaders J. Hirtle, 640-2173; <jrhbirder@hotmail.com>; and F. Lavender, 455-4966.

15 Oct. "Chebucto Peninsula...Rarities Birding" with leader Hans Toom, 868-1862; <htoom@hfx.eastlink.ca>.

16 Oct. "Anniversary Commemorative Planting in Point Pleasant Park", Lower Parking Lot, 3:00 p.m.

22 Oct. "Citizen Science Symposium", part of the Soc. of Can. Ornithologists' Conference, Delta Halifax.

27 Oct. "AGM & Book Launch" of Blake Maybank's new Birding Sites of Nova Scotia.

18 Nov. "...Common and Rare Birds in Pictou County", at the New Glasgow Library.

19 Nov. "Autumn Birding in Pictou County", with leader Ken McKenna, 752-7644(h), 752-0044(w); <kenmcken@pchg.net>.

26 Nov. "Canso and Area", with leaders S. Bushell, 366-2527, T. Kavanaugh, 366-3476; <terri.crane@ns.sympatico.ca>.

Nova Scotia Lighthouse Preservation Society: Monthly meetings, organised guided trips to lighthouses, incl. boat trips to islands. For more information, Dan Conlin, 424-6442; or go to <http://www.nslps.com/>.

24 Sept. "On the Water: Tours of Halifax Harbour Lighthouses". Includes a trip ashore on Sambro Island.

Nova Scotia Museum of Natural History: For more information, 424-6099, 424-7353; or <http://museum.gov.ns.ca/mnh/>.

1 Jul. -30 Oct. "Sable Island" exhibition.

1 Jul. -27 Nov. "Under the Weather", an exhibit on climate change produced by Musée de la nature et des sciences. **27 Sept.** "HRM's First Peoples: 10,000 Years Before 1749", with speaker David Christianson, Curator of Archaeology.

28 Sept. "So Much Weather! ... Weather Lore from Atlantic Canada", with Gary Saunders, writer and artist.

15 Oct. "Fall Colours Walks", with Curator of Botany Alex Wilson, Uniacke Estate Museum Park.

19 Oct. "Dreadnoughts of the Cretaceous: ... Armoured Dinosaurs of Alberta", with speaker Dal's Matt Vickarvous.

22 Oct. & 23 Oct. "Orchid Society Fall Show and Sale".

25 Oct. "Cart Tracks & Cartographers: ...18th-Century Halifax" with Danny Dyke, archaeologist and cartographer.

26 Oct. "Sable Island 2005...", with Zoe Lucas, museum research associate.

16 Nov. "The Grand Canyon: 2.5 billion years in eight days", with Dr. Helen Kosters.

22 Nov. "Original Bridges, Shipwrecks ... of Hfx Harbour", with Gordon Fader, marine geologist and historian.

Nova Scotia Nature Trust: 425-5263; or go to <http://www.nsnt.ca/>.

15 Oct. "Silent Auction and Dinner", with guest speaker Harry Thurston, Halifax Casino Hotel.

Nova Scotia Public Lands Coalition: Hosts the popular "Public Walks on Public Land" hikes series in late summer and early fall. Check the website for future hikes at <http://www.publicland.ca/home/index.html>.

25 Sept. "Herring Cove Backlands". Meet at 10:00 a.m. at the Herring Cove look-off on the Purcell's Cove Road.

2 Oct. "Ship Harbour Long Lake". Details to be announced.

Nova Scotia Wild Flora Society: Meets 4th Monday of the month, Sept. to May, at the NSMNH, 7:30 p.m. For more information, Barry Sawyer, 449-4938; or go to http://www.chebucto.ns.ca/~nswfs/.

16 Oct. "Looking for Seed Pods at Clayton Park and Belcher's Pond".

24 Oct. "Botanising in the Annapolis Royal Area", with speaker Gini Proulx from the Annapolis Field Naturalists.

12 Nov. "Lichens in Indian Path Common, Lun. Co.", with leader F. Anderson. !Register; Barry Sawyer, 445-4938!

28 Nov. "Endangered plants ...development planning processes", with speaker M. Elderkin, NS Government.

Nova Scotian Institute of Science: Meets 1st Mon. of the month, Sept. to Apr., at the NSMNH, 7:30 p.m. For more information, go to <http://www.chebucto.ns.ca/Science/NSIS/Index.html>.

3 Oct. "What's in a Name - ... if Yours is Mud", with chemist Dr. Gerry Marangoni, St Francis Xavier University.

7 Nov. "Brewing Science: Advances and Challenges", with speaker Dr. Alex Speers, Dalhousie University.

5 Dec. "Begging Birds & ... Animal Signals", with speaker Dr. Marty Leonard, Dalhousie University.

Photographic Guild of Nova Scotia: Meets 2nd Mon. as well as 1st and 3rd Sun. of the month, at the NSMNH, 7:30 p.m. Shows are held at SMU, Theatre. A, Burke Education Centre. For more info, go to <http://www.photoguild.ns.ca/>. 26 Nov. "Annual Fall Show".

Royal Astronomical Society of Canada (Halifax Chapter): Meets third Friday of each month in Room L176 of the Loyola Academic Building at Saint Mary's University, 8:00 p.m. For more information, http://halifax.rasc.ca/general.html

— compiled by Patricia L. Chalmers

TIDE TABLE

HALIFAX

P	m: 1	Octo	-	-	2			November-novembre									December-décembre							
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SU	0110 0715 1330 1930	1.0 5.6 1.3 5.6	0.3 1.7 0.4 1.7	MO	0125 0720 1405 1950	0.7 6.6 0.3 5.9	0.2 2.0 0.1 1.8		0140 0740 1415 2020	1.3 5.9 0.3 5.2	0.4 1.8 0.1 1.6	TH	0245 0820 1515 2105	1.6 6.2 0.7 5.6	0.5 1.9 0.2 1.7		0200 0750 1445 2040	1.6 6.2 0.3 5.2	0.5 1.9 0.1 1.6		0310 0845 1535 2130	2.0 5.9 1.0 5.6	0.0 1.8 0.3 1.7	
MO	0140 0745 1405 2005	1.0	0.3 1.7 0.3 1.7	18 TU MA	0215 0805 1455 2035	0.7 6.6 0.3 5.9	0.2 2.0 0.1 1.8		0215 0815 1500 2100	1.3 5.9 0.3 5.2	0.4 1.8 0.1 1.6	FR	0330 0900 1555 2150	2.0 5.9 0.7 5.6	0.6 1.8 0.2 1.7	SA	0250 0840 1535 2130	1.6 6.2 0.3 5.6	0.5 1.9 0.1 1.7	SU	0350 0925 1610 2215	2.3 5.9 1.3 5.6	0.7 1.8 0.4 1.7	
TU	0210 0815 1440 2040	5.9	0.3 1.8 0.3 1.7		0300 0845 1540 2120	1.0 6.6 0.3 5.9	0.3 2.0 0.1 1.8	FR	0300 0855 1545 2140	1.6 5.9 0.7 5.2	0.5 1.8 0.2 1.6	19 SA SA	0415 0945 1640 2230	2.3 5.9 1.0 5.6	0.7 1.8 0.3 1.7	SU	0340 0925 1625 2220	1.6 6.2 0.3 5.6	0.5 1.9 0.1 1.7		0430 1010 1650 2250	2.3 5.6 1.3 5.6	0.7 1.7 0.4 1.7	
WE	0245 0850 1515 2120	1.3 5.9 0.7 5.6	0.4 1.8 0.2 1.7		0345 0930 1625 2205	1.3 6.2 0.7 5.6	0.4 1.9 0.2 1.7	SA	0350 0940 1635 2225	1.6 5.9 0.7 5.2	0.5 1.8 0.2 1.6		0500 1030 1725 2315	2.3 5.6 1.3 5.2	0.7 1.7 0.4 1.6	мо	0445 1015 1720 2310	1.6 5.9 0.3 5.6	0.5 1.8 0.1 1.7		0510 1050 1725 2330	2.6 5.6 1.6 5.6	0.8 1.7 0.5 1.7	
	0320 0925 1600 2155	5.9	0.4 1.8 0.2 1.6	FR	0435 1010 1710 2250	1.6 5.9 1.0 5.2	0.5 1.8 0.3 1.6	SU	0445 1025 1735 2315	2.0 5.9 1.0 5.2	0.6 1.8 0.3 1.6	21 MO LU	0555 1115 1810	2.6 5.2 1.6	0.8 1.6 0.5	6 TU MA	0550 1110 1820	2.0 5.9 0.7	0.6 1.8 0.2	21 WE ME	0600 1135 1800	2.6 5.2 2.0	0.8 1.6 0.6	
FR	0355 1000 1645 2235	1.6 5.9 1.0 5.2	0.5 1.8 0.3 1.6	SA	0530 1055 1800 2335	2.3 5.6 1.3 5.2	0.7 1.7 0.4 1.6		0555 1115 1835	2.3 5.6 1.0	0.7 1.7 0.3		0000 0650 1205 1855	5.2 2.6 5.2 2.0	1.6 0.8 1.6 0.6	WE	0000 0655 1205 1915	5.6 2.0 5.6 0.7	1.7 0.6 1.7 0.2	TH	0015 0650 1215 1845	5.6 2.6 4.9 2.0	1.7 0.8 1.5 0.6	
SA	0445 1040 1740 2320	5.6	0.6 1.7 0.3 1.6		0630 1140 1855	2.6 5.2 1.6	0.8 1.6 0.5	TU	0005 0705 1210 1935	5.2 2.3 5.6 1.0	1.6 0.7 1.7 0.3		0050 0745 1255 1940	5.2 2.6 4.9 2.0	1.6 0.8 1.5 0.6	TH	0100 0800 1305 2015	5.6 1.6 5.2 1.0	1.7 0.5 1.6 0.3	FR	0100 0740 1300 1925	5.2 2.6 4.9 2.0	1.6 0.8 1.5 0.6	
-	0550 1125 1845	2.3 5.6 1.3	0.7 1.7 0.4	MO	0025 0730 1230 1945	4.9 2.6 4.9 2.0	1.5 0.8 1.5 0.6	WE	0110 0810 1315 2035	4.9 2.3 5.2 1.0	1.5 0.7 1.6 0.3		0150 0835 1355 2025	5.2 2.6 4.6 2.0	1.6 0.8 1.4 0.6	FR	0200 0900 1415 2110	5.6 1.6 5.2 1.0	1.7 0.5 1.6 0.3		0145 0830 1355 2015	5.2 2.3 4.6 2.0	1.6 0.7 1.4 0.6	
	0010 0700 1220 1950		1.5 0.7 1.7 0.4	45	0125 0830 1335 2040	4.9 2.6 4.9 2.0	1.5 0.8 1.5 0.6		0220 0910 1430 2130	5.2 2.0 5.2 1.0	1.6 0.6 1.6 0.3	FR	0250 0925 1500 2115	5.2 2.6 4.6 2.0	1.6 0.8 1.4 0.6	10 SA SA	0300 1000 1530 2205	5.6 1.3 4.9 1.3	1.7 0.4 1.5 0.4		0235 0920 1500 2110	5.2 2.0 4.6 2.0	1.6 0.6 1.4 0.6	
TU	0110 0810 1320 2050	2.3 5.2	1.5 0.7 1.6 0.4	WE	0240 0925 1445 2130	4.9 2.6 4.6 2.0	1.5 0.8 1.4 0.6	FR	0335 1015 1550 2230	5.2 1.6 5.2 1.0	1.6 0.5 1.6 0.3	SA	0345 1010 1600 2200	5.2 2.3 4.6 2.0	1.6 0.7 1.4 0.6	SU	0400 1055 1635 2305	5.6 1.0 4.9 1.3	1.7 0.3 1.5 0.4	MO	0325 1010 1605 2200	5.2 1.6 4.6 2.0	1.0 0.5 1.4 0.0	
WE	0230 0920 1440 2150	5.2	1.5 0.7 1.6 0.3	TH	0355 1015 1555 2215	4.9 2.6 4.6 2.0	1.5 0.8 1.4 0.6	SA	0435 1110 1655 2325	5.6 1.0 5.2 1.0	1.7 0.3 1.6 0.3	SU	0430 1100 1655 2250	5.2 2.0 4.9 2.0	1.6 0.6 1.5 0.6		0450 1150 1735	5.9 0.7 5.2	1.8 0.2 1.6	27 TU MA	0415 1105 1705 2300	5.6 1.3 4.6 2.0	1.1 0.4 1.4 0.0	
тн	0355 1020 1605 2250	5.6	1.6 0.6 1.7 0.3	FR	0445 1100 1650 2300	5.2 2.3 4.9 1.6	1.6 0.7 1.5 0.5	13 SU DI	0525 1205 1755	5.9 0.7 5.6	1.8 0.2 1.7	мо	0510 1140 1745 2335	5.6 1.3 4.9 1.6	1.7 0.4 1.5 0.5	TU	0000 0540 1240 1830	1.3 5.9 0.7 5.2	0.4 1.8 0.2 1.6	WE	0505 1155 1800 2355	5.6 1.0 4.9 2.0	1.1 0.1 1.2 0.0	
FR	0500 1125 1710 2345	1.3	1.7 0.4 1.7 0.2	SA	0525 1140 1735 2345	5.2 2.0 4.9 1.6	1.6 0.6 1.5 0.5	мо	0015 0610 1300 1845	1.0 6.2 0.7 5.6	0.3 1.9 0.2 1.7	20	0545 1225 1830	5.6 1.0 4.9	1.7 0.3 1.5	WE	0055 0630 1325 1915	1.6 5.9 0.7 5.6	0.5 1.8 0.2 1.7		0550 1245 1850	5.9 0.7 5.2	1.8 0.2 1.6	
	0550 1220 1810	5.9 1.0 5.9	1.8 0.3 1.8		0600 1220 1820	5.6 1.6 5.2	1.7 0.5 1.6	TU	0110 0650 1345 1930	1.0 6.2 0.3 5.6	0.3 1.9 0.1 1.7	WE	0025 0625 1310 1915	1.6 5.9 0.7 5.2	0.5 1.8 0.2 1.6	TH	0145 0715 1410 2005	1.6 5.9 0.7 5.6	0.5 1.8 0.2 1.7		0050 0645 1340 1935	1.6 6.2 0.3 5.2	0.5 1.9 0.1 1.6	
1					0020 0630 1300 1900	1.3 5.6 1.0 5.2	0.4 1.7 0.3 1.6					A	AN AN	6	(T	1	>	SA	0140 0735 1430 2025	1.6 6.2 0.0 5.6	0.5 1.9 0.0 1.7	

Nature Notes from HFN Monthly Meetings September Meeting

Stephanie Robertson reported finding a very large type of **horse/moose/deer/fly** at her cottage, by the door, at Melmerby Beach. It was a female. The museum identified it as not previously found in Nova Scotia before; species — **Tabanus catenatus**.

Shirley VanNostrand spotted a **fledgeling Osprey** on Dunbrack street walking along the sidewalk!

Jim Wolford reported many sandpipers at a sewer outfall in Windsor. At Hartlen Point he saw **200** \pm **shorebirds**; there were eight species in the flock. He also saw there a pair of **Merlins**.

Someone reported an **adult Osprey** behind the Maritime Museum.

! NEXT DEADLINE !

21 November for December Issue Contributions to the 'Newsletter', c/o NS Museum of Natural History Email submissions to sdhaythorn@ns.sympatico.ca.