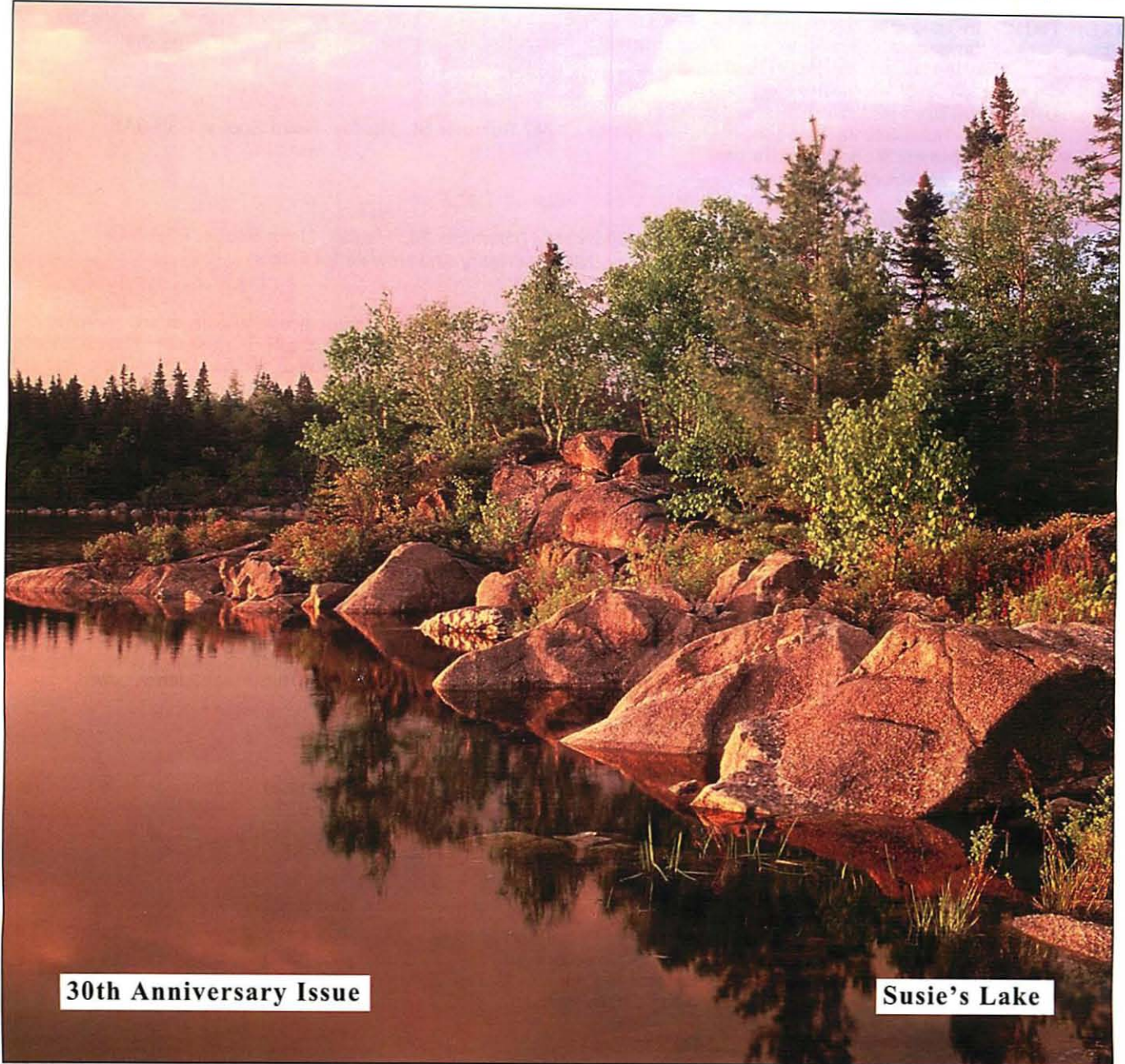


# THE HALIFAX FIELD NATURALIST



No. 122  
March, 2006 to May 2006



30th Anniversary Issue

Susie's Lake

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



is incorporated under the Nova Scotia Societies Act and holds Registered Charity status with the Canada Revenue Agency. Tax-creditable receipts will be issued for individual and corporate gifts. HFN is an affiliate of Nature Canada and an organisational member of Nature NS (Federation of Nova Scotia Naturalists), the provincial umbrella association for naturalist groups in Nova Scotia.

**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.

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**WEBSITE** <naturens.ca>

**MEMBERSHIP** is open to anyone interested in the natural history of N.S. Memberships are available at any meeting of the society, or by writing to: Membership Secretary, Halifax Field Naturalists, c/o N.S. Museum of Natural History. New memberships received from September 1st to December 31st of any year will be valid until the end of the following membership year. The regular membership year is from January 1st to December 31st. Members receive the newsletter, notices of all meetings, field trips, and special programmes. The fees are as follows:

<b>Individual</b>	\$15.00 per year
<b>Family</b>	\$20.00 per year
<b>Supporting</b>	\$25.00 per year
<b>NNS (opt.)</b>	\$ 5.00 per year

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Editor .....	Stephanie Robertson .....	422-6326
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# HFN NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

## EDITORIAL

This is our end-of-year reports issue, and a good year it was with timely talks and walks, and lots of accomplishments and hard work in the conservation corner. The Colin Stewart Conservation Award was presented to a very deserving Jim Wolford at this year's March 2nd AGM (*see p. 8*).

This issue celebrates our 30th Anniversary with full-colour covers and reminiscences and bio's from both original and early members (*p. 9*) — seven pages of them!

There's also a new type of submission, about Northern Bayberry candle-making, from a St. Mary's biology student (*p. 19*).

— Stephanie Robertson

## HIKERS AND WALKERS...

...we need your feedback. The Halifax North West Trails Association will host an **Open House** for public input to a **Draft Regional Trails Plan** concerning the area bounded by St. Margaret's Bay Rd., Hammonds Plains Rd., and the Bedford Hwy. Some CNR lands may come up for consideration as well. Blue Mountain/Birch Cove Lakes, considered as one of six new Regional Parks, is also included.

There's a lot of approved housing construction still happening in what, until very recently, was wilderness! Check our maps to see if your hiking loop is included for preservation. If you're a regular hiker in HRM Districts 10, 15, 16, 21, or nearby, please join us. **Open House, Tues., May 2nd**, at Keshen Goodman Library, Lacewood Drive, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m., with a brief presentation at 7:00 p.m. **All welcome.**

For map input/more info, contact Bob or Wendy McDonald, 443-5051; or <[bobathome@hfx.eastlink.ca](mailto:bobathome@hfx.eastlink.ca)>.

— Bob McDonald

## YOUNG NATURALISTS

An exciting and new **Halifax Young Naturalists' Club (HYNC)** will give children eight years old and up a chance to really connect with nature, learning about the natural world from hands-on experiences and interactions with mentor experts. Starting in September, 2006, the Club will meet once a month where engaging speakers will present nature-related topics and instructions in natural history skills.

There'll be least one field trip per month to nearby wild areas led by expert naturalists, where members can use their observation, identification, and environmental stewardship skills. It will be a lot of fun!

There will be a **HYNC Open House Day, Saturday, June 3rd**, at the Nova Scotia Museum of Natural History. Local experts on Nova Scotian birds, wildflowers, animals, and plants will be on hand, giving talks, displaying specimens, and leading fun activities. There'll be a hike at Mt. Uniacke Estate

Park Museum in the afternoon; a great opportunity to see what Halifax Young Naturalists' Club members will experience on field trips.

For more info, go to the club's email update list, <[youngnaturalistsns-subscribe@yahoo.com](mailto:youngnaturalistsns-subscribe@yahoo.com)>.

— Karen McKendry

## NATURE NS (FNSN) 2006 AGM

The Annapolis Field Naturalists Society will host the **2006 Nature NS (NNS) AGM and Conference, May 26th - 28th**, at the Annapolis Basin Conference Centre, Cornwallis Park. The theme will be "**Our Natural 'History' — Changing Lands and Waters**".

We'll be highlighting how our natural habitats and wildlife populations have changed over the past 400 years, and also focusing on the many natural features that make Annapolis Co. and SW Nova such an exhilarating and enjoyable place to live and to visit.

**Highlights:** **Bob Bancroft** will be our keynote speaker on Friday evening, with "**Acadian Forests and Wildlife — the Past 400 Years**"; **Graham Daborn** of The Academy of the Environment at Acadia is our Banquet speaker on Saturday, with "**Paving Paradise: the Changing Face of Fundy**".

For more details, go to <[www.naturens.ca](http://www.naturens.ca)>. For information about the Conference Centre, go to <[www.abcc.ca](http://www.abcc.ca)>.

— Jon Percy,

Annapolis Field Naturalists Society (AFNS)

## STANDING TALL CAMPAIGN

Since the 60s, Nova Scotia's Acadian Forests, once a healthy, diverse mix of hardwoods and softwoods, have been cut and transformed into softwood tree farms. Driven by pulp and paper mill demand, they are being clearcut at the rate of 500 square kilometres a year. We've put all our eggs in the softwood basket; now the paper sector is teetering on the brink of disaster across Canada. We need to change our approach to forests and forestry. Over the next 12 months, the N.S. government will develop a new 10-year forest strategy. Joanne Cook and Minga O'Brien of the EAC's "Standing Tall Campaign", have some fresh ideas about how we can all speak for our trees. For more information, go to <[www.novascotiaforests.ca](http://www.novascotiaforests.ca)>.

## NEW AND RETURNING

Kay Crinean  
Kimberley Griffon  
Ginny Guthrie  
Bill Lewis

Dorothy and Arthur Morris  
Oliver Thunken  
Keltie Lewis and Rod Waller



# SPECIAL REPORTS

## FROM THE PRESIDENT

Our key activities over the past year continued to be the presentations at our regular evening meetings and our field trips. The Programme Committee provided us an excellent blend of interesting, illustrated talks covering a multitude of topics; we enjoyed a total of fourteen hikes, both locally and further afield. Another key element is our newsletter, published at each equinox and solstice, with reports on our talks, field trips, local and provincial natural history news, a seasonal natural and organisational event almanac, and special articles. Kudos to Stephanie Robertson, Ursula Grigg, Patricia Chalmers, Bernice Moores, Doug Linzey, and to those who write up presentations and field trip reports; the Newsletter wouldn't be possible without your efforts — you know who you are.

Our meetings are made more enjoyable and social by refreshments afterwards; Regine Maass is the stalwart here, and has been skilfully organising 'tea and cookies' for well over ten years. Thank you very much, Regine.

The annual conference of Nature Nova Scotia at the Nova Scotia Agricultural College in Truro was well-attended and a worthwhile experience. Arranged by volunteers from different regions, the focus of the conference was on old-growth Acadian forests and sustainable forestry approaches in Nova Scotia. The student resident facilities were just fine, the food was very good, and the programme was great.

About your Board of Directors and the volunteers who keep the organisation humming... HFN is lucky to have such a dedicated group. Our Vice President, Peter Webster, coordinates conservation activities for HFN, working with HFNers and other organisations to remind government of their obligations to conserve our natural areas. Janet Dalton, our Treasurer, continues to take good care of our financial affairs: banking; paying bills; preparing financial statements; and maintaining our charitable status with the Canada Revenue Agency. Our Secretary, Peter Payzant, is a model of completeness and timeliness. His Board meeting minutes arrive the next day, and contain a list of tasks to remind members of what they agreed (but may have forgotten!) to do. Burkhard and Ingrid Plache spend a fair bit of time arranging the talks and hikes we so enjoy, and Christine Anne Smith looked after membership issues.

Jim Wolford and Bob McDonald are very active in the conservation area, along with Brian Bartlett and Suzanne Borkowski. Key conservation issues this year were work on the Off-highway Vehicle Task Force (Jim sat on the Task Force and played a critical role in its findings), and on the Birch Cove Lakes/Blue Mountain area where Bob has represented HFN in a number of briefings to government to keep a planned highway from being built. Other conservation initiatives in which HFN were active included representing citizens' in the Point Pleasant Park International Design Competition; helping other groups in planning issues in Long Lake Provincial Park as well as the Five Bridges area; and giving input to HRM regarding the Regional Plan; and planning for flora/fauna surveys in the Captain Arnell lands which the

Halifax Field Naturalists helped the Nova Scotia Nature Trust to purchase in 2004.

I should note the passing of a former HFN Board member who led several field trips for us in the 1980s, David Lawley. Both David and his partner, Elaine, were very active HFN members when David was pursuing graduate studies at Dalhousie, and both wrote for our newsletter, even after moving to Cape Breton. David co-founded Shunpiking Magazine, and published two major books, A Nature and Hiking Guide to Cape Breton's Cabot Trail (Nimbus, 1994), and A Guide to Whale Watching in the Maritimes (Nimbus, 1997).

The Board committee which oversees the Colin Stewart Conservation Award unanimously approved award of the honour again this year. We all remember Colin for his many years' contribution to conserving Nova Scotia's natural history. He served on our Board for over twenty years and was essentially our one-person Conservation Committee. He was instrumental in getting The Halifax Public Gardens' significant trees identified, and then signed; and establishing the Piping Plover Guardian Program, the Nova Scotia Trails Federation, and the Federation of Nova Scotia Naturalists (now Nature Nova Scotia). He was the WWF Endangered Spaces Coordinator for the Province; helped to set aside Nova Scotia's 31 new Protected Areas; developed management plans for several parks and other natural areas; and was a spokesperson for the naturalist community in dealing with various levels of government. HFN established the Colin Stewart Conservation Award to recognise Colin's many contributions. Colin himself was the first recipient of the award before he died in 2004.

There were no nominations for the award in 2005, but in 2006 we received a nomination for Jim Wolford. The nomination was unanimously approved, and Jim was awarded his certificate and plaque at the Annual General Meeting in March. Jim has been actively working on behalf of nature and conservation for several decades. He's an active member of both the Blomidon and the Halifax Field Naturalists, an on-going advisor to the Town of Wolfville on a project to conserve over 700 acres of forest and wetlands on the Valley's South Mountain, and was the major force behind the creation of the Robie Tufts Nature Centre (the Chimney Swift park). Jim works tirelessly on behalf of bird-watchers, naturalists, and conservation groups. Apart from his regular contribution as an HFN Board member, he gives illustrated talks to school classes, various youth and adult groups, and takes Scouts and Guides on field trips to help them see the world around them. Congratulations, Jim — you really deserve this award.

This year marks the 30th anniversary of the founding of the Halifax Field Naturalists! We asked over 50 original members to tell us about their experiences of starting the group, and to send us some of their recollections from the early days. Take a look at the Newsletter (p. 9) for a few excerpts from the replies we received. We celebrated our 30th at our March AGM and Members' Slide Night meeting with a social, delicious sweets, and a large birthday/anniversary cake. (cont'd on p. 6)

**Halifax Field Naturalists  
Financial Statement (Balance Sheet)  
As At December 31, 2005**

	2005	2005	2004	2004	2003	2003
<b>Assets</b>						
<b>Cash</b>						
Royal		\$1,820		\$2,085		\$3,593
<b>Accounts Receivable and Accrued Income</b>		\$322		\$337		\$473
<b>Inventories and Prepaids</b>		\$825		\$825		\$832
<b>Investments</b>		\$11,960		\$11,881		\$9,787
<b>Fixed Assets</b>						
		<u>\$14,927</u>		<u>\$15,128</u>		<u>\$14,685</u>
<b>Liabilities and Surplus</b>						
<b>Accounts Payable</b>						
General		\$0		\$0		\$101
FNSN		\$0		\$0		\$540
<b>Surplus</b>						
Restricted		\$5,960		\$5,881		\$5,787
Unrestricted		\$8,967		\$9,247		\$8,257
	\$14,927	<u>\$14,927</u>	\$15,128	<u>\$15,128</u>	\$14,685	<u>\$14,685</u>

**Halifax Field Naturalists  
Statement of Income and Surplus  
Year Ended December 31, 2005**

	2005 Actual	2004 Actual	2003 Actual	2002 Actual
<b>Revenues</b>				
Membership	\$1,690	\$1,927	\$1,837	\$1,925
Product Sales	\$0	\$8	\$3	\$18
GIC	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$4,599
Interest	\$140	\$121	\$37	\$202
Donations	\$35	\$746	\$530	\$50
DF List	\$48	\$65		
	<u>\$1,913</u>	<u>\$2,866</u>	<u>\$2,407</u>	<u>\$6,794</u>
<b>Expenses</b>				
Field Trips	\$0	\$0	\$15	\$0
Special Projects	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$269
Socials		\$0	\$21	\$21
Grants/Donations	\$125	\$125	\$125	\$5,225
Insurance	\$225	\$200	\$175	\$85
Meetings	\$400	\$254	\$278	\$229
Memberships	\$425	\$405	\$485	\$463
Miscellaneous	\$0	\$37	\$0	\$204
Newsletters				
Postage	\$388	\$318	\$611	\$421
Production	\$619	\$442	\$687	\$551
Office Supplies & Expenses	\$10	\$96	\$23	\$47
	<u>\$2,193</u>	<u>\$1,877</u>	<u>\$2,421</u>	<u>\$7,515</u>
<b>Net Income</b>	<b>-\$280</b>	<b>\$989</b>	<b>-\$14</b>	<b>-\$722</b>
<b>Surplus, beginning of year</b>	<b>\$9,246</b>	<b>\$8,257</b>	<b>\$8,271</b>	<b>\$8,993</b>
<b>Surplus, end of year</b>	<b>\$8,966</b>	<b>\$9,246</b>	<b>\$8,257</b>	<b>\$8,271</b>

— Janet Dalton  
Treasurer

One of the more exciting developments this year was the establishment of a Junior Naturalist programme linked to HFN and to the Museum of Natural History by new member Karen McKendry. Karen is pursuing graduate work at Dal's School for Resource and Environmental Studies. As a youngster, she was a member of the Macoun Field Club in Ottawa, a popular junior naturalists' group, so she proposed to help to establish a similar group in Halifax. Museum management is enthusiastic, as are your Board members. An initial meeting at the Museum last February led to plans to hold an open house on June 3rd, where local experts on Nova Scotian birds, wildflowers, animals, plants and other natural phenomena will be on hand, giving talks, displaying specimens, and leading fun activities. In the afternoon, leaders of Nova Scotia's natural history groups will guide a hike at the Uniacke Estate Museum Park.

Notwithstanding HFN's focus on things natural, you may be interested to know that its Board is reasonably hi-tech in its approach. Almost all Board business is handled by email — so much so that we've needed only two Board meetings over the entire year — not bad for a group who would rather talk about and experience nature, rather than attend long meetings!

— Allan Robertson  
President

## MEMBERSHIP

During the five-year period from 1997 to 2001 total memberships averaged 143. Our decline in memberships seemed to begin in 2002 with 128 members, continuing in 2003 with 119 members. Membership numbers are not available for 2004 but the 2005 tally shows that the numbers seem to be holding steady at around 123. Analysis of the membership figures reveals that about 21 members each year fail to renew and this number in the past has been made up by new members coming in.

Thanks to Doug Linzey for maintaining the membership database.

### TOTAL MEMBERSHIPS BY YEAR

1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
149	146	138	145	139	128	119	n/a	123

— Linda Payzant,  
Membership Secretary

## PROGRAMME

In 2005 we had nine talks presented at the monthly meetings, covering local (e.g. Urban Forests); regional (e.g. NS Theme Regions; Orchids of N.S.; Sharks (of Atlantic Canada); and international (Colorado Wildflowers, Antarctica) environments.

Our 14 field trips led us to places in urban HRM (Sewer Stroll, Arlantic Gardens, Halifax Public Gardens); in the surrounding areas (Old Coach Road, Captain Arnell Land, Susie's Lake, Pennant Point, Blue Mountain); and further away (Waterfalls, Cape Split, Uniacke Estate, Kingsport Mud Flats, Cranberry Pick).

The evening talks were always well attended.

The popularity of the field trips, on the other hand, varied, sometimes due to the weather, sometimes due to

the distance of the destination.

Six of the 14 field trips were repeat events, six were offered by members, and the remaining two were suggestions by members.

Continued suggestions by members will be crucial in maintaining a schedule of regular HFN activities.

— Burkhard Plache,  
Programme Committee

## NEWSLETTER

Four issues of the Halifax Field Naturalist were churned out again this year, each with its interesting topics and excellent submissions by our members and othes, and plain, good hard work by all its support staff. We had one 24-pager, a 20-pager, and two 16-pagers. There were a total of ten HFN Talk write-ups, and 12 Field Trip reports with their concomitant and all-important species lists.

Former Editor Ursula Grigg continues to contribute to our quarterly monthly lunch meetings, when she can make it in from New Minas. Her health is continuing to improve, and she is very happy about that.

The most important conservation issue this year, besides Point Pleasant Park, is the fate of the Blue Mountain/Birch Cove Lands area (*see p. 7*). Chris Miller and Bob McDonald continue their hard work to get this important and beautiful area protected from a proposed new highway extension and more housing development.

Much appreciation to stalwarts Pat Chalmers for her Almanac; Bernice Moores for timely distribution; Doug Linzey for mailing labels; and Peter Payzant for instant field trip reports. Many, many thanks to all the others who have contributed this year as well.

— Stephanie Robertson,  
Editor

## CONSERVATION

### 2006 REPORT

HFN has been involved in a number of important conservation activities over the last year. Several members of the Executive submitted comments on proposed amendments to the Nova Scotia Off-highway Vehicle Act, and contacted their legislators regarding the amendments. Amendments to the act did not achieve all the hoped-for changes, but they are a significant step forward for environmental protection in the province.

At the request of the Nova Scotia Coastal Guardianship Program, members of the HFN Executive contacted the Barrington Municipality to oppose proposed development on the Barrington Coastal Wetlands. Several members of the HFN Executive also provided input and attended public forums on the Halifax Regional Plan in several parts of the city.

Allan Robertson served on the Point Pleasant Park Design Competition Steering Committee which has overseen the selection of a park restoration plan. The committee has selected a park plan based on submissions from Ekistics Planning & Design of Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, and NIP paysage of Montreal. Point Pleasant Plan documents can be viewed at <<http://www.pointpleasantpark.ca/inside.asp?cmPageID=86>>.

Suzanne Borkowski served on the McNab's and



Lawlor's Islands Provincial Park Management Plan Committee and also on the Long Lake Provincial Park Management Plan Committee. The McNab's and Lawlor's Islands Provincial Park Plan, which defines a vision and philosophy to guide future management decisions for the park, was completed and released to the public in August 2005. The plan can be viewed at <<http://www.gov.ns.ca/natr/parks/mcnabs/mcnabslawlor.pdf>>.

I have taken over participation on the Long Lake Provincial Park Plan Committee. It is hoped that the draft plan will be ready for public consultation by late summer 2006. I am also participating in a joint community/Department of Natural Resources long range planning initiative for Crown Lands on the Chebucto Peninsula.



— Peter Webster,  
Conservation Chair

### BLUE MOUNTAIN/BIRCH COVE LAKES

In Nova Scotia, new four-lane highways that are 10km or more in length are required to undergo full environmental assessments, using a public hearing in front of an independent environmental assessment board. The proposed Highway 113 near Halifax, which will bisect the magnificent Blue Mountain/Birch Cove Lakes wilderness, was designed to be 9.91km in length. That's a mere 0.09km less than the 10km mark, or roughly the equivalent of 3 seconds of driving time for someone travelling at normal speed for a 100-series highway.

What's more, that 9.91km figure does not include the length of the overpasses at either side of the proposed highway, where Highway 113 will cross Highway 102 near Bedford and Highway 103 near Timberlea. The Provincial Government, for some reason, has subtracted the bridges from the distance calculation for the highway because the word 'or' was used instead of the word 'and' in a clause for the environmental assessment regulations for transportation projects. This manoeuvre dropped the distance calculation below the ever-so-important 10km mark, despite the Public Highways Act clearly defining highway as 'roadways and bridges thereon'.

So, because of the loopholes and technicalities described above, the controversial Highway 113 project is poised to receive environmental approvals this spring without ever having gone through a public hearing process or engaging experts sitting on an independent environmental assessment board. All of this is happening despite the environmental sensitivities of the lands in which the proposed highway is intended to cross. Indeed, it is no ordinary piece of real estate.

The Blue Mountain/Birch Cove Lakes wilderness is home to over 150 different species of birds and a small remnant population of the endangered mainland moose. It is also the largest intact wilderness near the city and contains 22 lakes and ponds and over 50 different wetland areas. The Blue Mountain/Birch Cove Lakes wilderness also contains the only canoe loop near the city, where someone can paddle nine lakes in roughly three hours and end up at exactly the same spot where they started without back-tracking. This back-country experience is second-to-none for areas near the city and easily rivals some of the canoe routes in Kejimikujik

National Park.

The proposed Highway 113 will partially fill six wetlands in the Blue Mountain/Birch Cove Lakes wilderness, including the largest wetland in the area known as 'The Promised Land'. It will also come within 100m of approximately a dozen other wetlands and will pass through an exceptional stand of old-growth Red Spruce forest at the base of Blue Mountain Hill. According to environmental assessment registration documents, prepared by the Department of Transportation and Public Works for the Highway 113 project, Blue Mountain Hill itself is even proposed as a potential source of aggregate for roadbed construction. That means that the top of metro's highest point of land could be blasted away for this project, all without ever having gone through a rigorous environmental assessment process.

The current environmental assessment application does not contain an analysis of the Federal Species at Risk Act legislation, the Migratory Birds Act, or toxicity associated with road salt application, a substance recently listed as toxic by the Federal government. Although the application discusses impacts to the endangered mainland moose, it focuses mostly on reducing vehicle collisions without substantial discussion of potential cumulative effects associated with on-going habitat fragmentation in this important area.

So, what can be done? Well, an opportunity exists this spring to tell the Department of Environment and Labour exactly what you think about the highway and the shenanigans associated with avoiding a full public hearing, possibly as soon as April 15th. That's when the Minister of Environment and Labour will likely be requesting public input about the highway when making the big decision whether or not to approve the proposal. That's the best time to have your opinions heard.

Comments can be made using the following government websites:

<<http://www.gov.ns.ca/enla/ea/highway113.asp>>;

<<https://www.gov.ns.ca/enla/ea/comments.asp>>.

Or, written submissions can be sent to the following mailing address:

**Highway 113 Environmental Assessment,  
N.S. Department of Environment and Labour,  
Environmental Assessment Branch,  
P.O. Box 697, 5151 Terminal Road,  
Halifax, Nova Scotia, B3J 2T8**

It's extremely important that the Nova Scotia Department of Environment and Labour hears from members of the public who may have reservations about Highway 113 and, in particular, the bizarre environmental approval process that led to the public being largely shut out of this review. It's also important that they hear over and over again that the legal protection of the Blue Mountain/Birch Cove Lakes wilderness is imperative.

The Halifax Field Naturalists, through the Conservation Committee, has been following the developments of Highway 113 very closely over the past few years. The committee has undertaken a number of guided hikes into the wilderness and have carried out plant inventories and lichen inventories near Susie's Lake and Blue Mountain Hill. For the upcoming field season, targeted wetlands and old forest areas will be visited to assemble additional biological information about the Blue Moun-



tain/Birch Cove Lakes wilderness.

The Halifax Field Naturalists, in conjunction with the Birch Cove Lakes Wilderness Society, the Halifax North West Trails Association, Canoe Kayak Nova Scotia, and the Ecology Action Centre, have been requesting an official wilderness area designation be placed on the Crown lands of the Blue Mountain/Birch Cove Lakes area using the Wilderness Areas Protection Act.

Progress is being made. A Private Members Bill that would achieve this goal currently sits before the House and the government is very much aware that protecting this area would be a very positive thing for the environment and the community.

At the Municipal level, this spring the Halifax Regional Municipality is poised to zone a good portion of the Blue Mountain/Birch Cove Lakes wilderness as regional park, through its regional planning process. That designation should help encourage the Provincial Government to follow suit, and place a similar conservation designation on these public lands.

The Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources has considered the Blue Mountain/Birch Cove Lakes area to be a candidate Provincial Park since the late 1980's, and the Protected Areas Branch of the Nova Scotia Department of Environment and Labour recognises the important wilderness recreation opportunities of this natural area in a near urban setting. An official designation, however, has never been placed on these lands and, without such a designation, developments such as the Highway 113 proposal will continue to fragment the Blue Mountain/Birch Cove Lakes wilderness until the area is too small to protect its rich biodiversity. Last year, the Halifax Field Naturalists successfully disrupted an attempt to quietly trade-away a portion of the public lands in this area to a private developer.

Given the developmental pressures on these public lands, it is imperative that we continue to demand that the Provincial Government officially protects the Blue Mountain/Birch Cove Lakes as a wilderness area.

Time is of the essence.

For additional information, please send an email to <[birchcovelakes@yahoo.ca](mailto:birchcovelakes@yahoo.ca)>.



— Chris Miller

### 2006 COLIN STEWART AWARD

Jim Wolford of Wolfville, Nova Scotia, is a strong believer in helping others gain an appreciation for nature; indeed, helping others understand and appreciate the natural world may be Jim's greatest contribution.

Jim has covered a wide variety of subjects and places in the many talks and field trips he's so willingly carried out for HFN. He enjoys sharing his knowledge of subjects ranging all the way from bacteria to whales, and seems often to be leading groups to see the world of amphibians. Slide shows of his travels have included The Galapagos, egg-laying sites of Leatherback Turtles, and Polar Bears in Canada's north.

Here are some other of Jim's many contributions:

### Annapolis Valley Bald Eagles

His talks, always illustrated with an abundance of slides, are given to school classes as well as youth and adult groups. Every winter he is heavily involved in the Annapolis Valley's Eagle Watch weekends. He is easily found giving presentations on Bald Eagles, and explaining the study skins loaned by Acadia University.

### Wolfville Chimney Swifts

These birds are one of Jim's special interests. Swifts have roosted in Wolfville since at least the late 1800's, but in 1989 the Town decided to remove the old building and its swift chimney. After due consideration however, the Town, the Business Development Corporation, and the Blomidon Naturalists Society arranged to save the chimney and move it to a new location. In 1990 it became the centrepiece of the Robie Tufts Nature Centre. Jim was one of the leaders throughout this rebuilding project.

The Centre is now a major attraction for both town people and tourists. The performances of 600 swifts entering the chimney, sometimes more, dazzle the spectators, and Jim is present on many evenings to share his knowledge of the birds and their behaviours. Chimney Swifts are now in sharp decline. Jim has maintained a record of the Wolfville roost since 1979, and coordinates a provincial monitoring program.

### Off-highway Vehicles

As a committee member, Jim took part in public discussions throughout the province and helped prepare reports. These reports and the public hearings provided wonderful publicity, and the resulting excellent submission to government listed 30 recommendations. To date, a dozen new enforcement officers have been appointed.

### Wolfville Conservation Project

The result of this fairly new project will be the conservation of 737 acres of forest and wetlands on the Valley's South Mountain, providing a major asset to both the community and nature. Jim shows his commitment to this project by organising and taking part in surveys of plants, birds, etc.; there's no doubt he will make public presentations informing the community about it all, and also be involved in preparing final submissions to both the Town of Wolfville and the Nova Scotia Nature Trust.

A few years ago, Jim's considerable work on behalf of nature and the community earned him the title 'Wolfville's Nature Ambassador'. In recognition of Jim's work and dedication, in 2003 the Town of Wolfville named Jim its 'Volunteer of the Year'.

It is with great pleasure that the Halifax Field Naturalists accepts Dr. Merritt Gibson's nomination of Jim Wolford, and presents him with the second Colin Stewart Conservation Award.

— Bernice Moores







# HFN's 30th ANNIVERSARY



The first meeting of the Halifax Field Naturalists was held in October, 1975. To commemorate and celebrate our 30th Anniversary, the 30th Anniversary Committee (Regine Maass, Bob McDonald, Bernice Moores, and Stephanie Robertson) sent letters to founding and other early members, asking for favourite reminiscences and brief biographies. We received some wonderful replies filled with warm memories, with instructions to edit as we see fit. We are hoping for more for the next issue; here's what we have to date:

## NAN ARMOUR

I received your invitation to participate in the celebration of the 30th anniversary of the Halifax Field Naturalists on March 2nd. Unfortunately, I will not be able to attend — I am currently travelling in Cambodia. I wish you well in the celebration and hope there is a good turnout of some of the old guard!

Here is a brief update of my activities since the mid-seventies...

My initial involvement with HFN was as a young Biology and Environmental Studies teacher at QEH; at that time I was Nan Hennessey. My experiences with HFN and its many field trips — often led by Paul Keddy — took environmental issues off the pages of the text books and into real life for me. Those were important days for me and I'm sure they had an impact on my students too.

I left Halifax in the early 1980s and lived in Newfoundland and Labrador, first doing environmental education work with the Whale Research Group at Memorial University. I then moved to an Inuit community on the north coast of Labrador and learned much more about the environment than I taught!

I returned to Halifax in the late 1980s and began a small consulting business focusing on science and environmental education.

Most recently, my energy and passion have been directed toward gender issues in science and technology. I now work with a not-for-profit organisation, the Hypatia Association, promoting the full participation of women in science, technology, and trades in Nova Scotia.

It's been a long journey for me from the early days of HFN, but those days played a role in formulating a value system for me which remains today. Even here in Cambodia, I am seeking tropical birds and endangered river dolphins!

Again, my best wishes for your 30th anniversary celebration. Congratulations to all.

— Nan

## DEBRA BURLESON

Paul, Winnie, Don, Scott and Nan. It lifts my heart to see those names. Mary Primrose was there, too.

I don't remember who had the idea for a field naturalists club in Halifax, except that it wasn't me. Paul, was it you? A group of grad students began to gather and plan in the Dalhousie Biology lounge. I'm not sure what I had done to get an invitation. I do remember vigorous debate about whether we would be primarily an advocacy group, or an enjoyment/educational group. As to who was on which side of that one, I'll let the readers who know the players try to pick the line-ups.

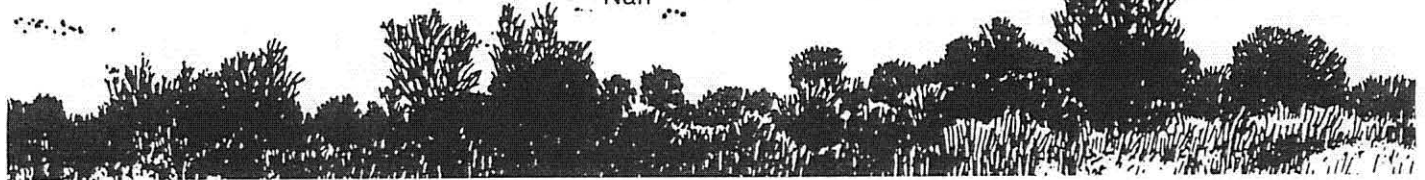
From the beginning, the Nova Scotia Museum was so helpful with meeting space, photocopying, mailing and other services. I did the newsletter for several years. In HFN's early days, I found myself in the office of Lynton Martin, Director of the Nova Scotia Museum, being interviewed for a job as Environmental Educator. I had big notions about Environment and Ecology; Lyn took that all in, then leaned back in his chair, took out his pipe, and said, "That's fine, Debra. What about someone who just enjoys seeing a hawk fly?" And I could reply, "Mr. Martin, that's exactly what we do in the Halifax Field Naturalists."

Anne used to talk about her work picking through storm petrel vomit on Pearl Island. When the little birds hit the mist nets, they throw up. Anne studied the stomach contents. I remember neither of us was too thrilled with the sampling method, for both the birds' sake *and* the students'.

When I went to work for the Nova Scotia Museum in 1975, nature work and nature play became a joyful blur. For ten years I had the best job in the world, as the first (and only) Director of the Nova Scotia Museum of Natural History. From the managerial sidelines, I watched HFN prosper.

In November of 1998, to my surprise, I had an undeniable encounter with the presence and love of God. A friend has said, my heart was "stirred, disturbed, and set on fire". I now serve as parish priest to five Anglican congregations in Lake Echo, Porter's Lake, and the Chezzetcooks. My enjoyment of creation is magnified and deepened by my enjoyment of my Creator, Redeemer, and Friend.

— (The Reverend) Debra Burleson





**DORIS BUTTERS**

Reminiscences of HFN... too many to recount of the early years of a group of very special, super friendly people; of talks which opened my mind to Nova Scotia's natural heritage; of interesting walks — some nearby in areas now 'developed' and built over — others to distant corners of the province — but all eye-openers to the stunning variety of wildlife in forest, field, and foreshore of our small province. There were day-long hikes when few wanted to go home, when Lesley and I liked to ride with Mary Primrose or Tim Randall and those others who stayed out a little longer, to show us 'something special' tucked away in some quiet corner; days that lasted from 9:00 a.m. to dusk, and concluded with a friendly and satisfying meal at a favourite restaurant.

But Patricia Chalmers' slide presentation of a few of Mary Primrose's flower slides at our March 2nd 30th Anniversary AGM brought memories tumbling back, and as I watched, I realised how privileged I had been to have known Mary.

Mary saw beauty or something special in everything around her, and as a professional and skilled photographer knew also how best to present her snapshots. Pat had chosen a mere handful of some of Mary's best flower slides: a gracefully arching stem of goldenrod; the minutiae of a single bloom against a black background; light on a sprig of Dutchman's Breeches; curving lines of light and shade on the veins of a leaf; an exquisite arrangement of a cluster of golden Coltsfoot. I could go on — even 'stinkin' Willie came up looking good! And, the times on a hike when we 'lost' her, stretched out on the often cold, damp ground waiting for that right moment to snap a tiny flower, a bud, a patch of fungus or some other treasure she had noticed — and she'd join us again on our way back. Even the depths of winter didn't daunt Mary. Not only did frost patterns, snow, and ice-glazed stems of last summer catch her eye, but even the mist rising from the frozen North West Arm. On one occasion, in the middle of a snow-covered open field while waiting for the breeze to stop faintly disturbing her subject she looked up to see a man running towards her — he had seen her from the road and wondered if she was dead, drunk, or disabled! Everything had to be just right before she would press the button, and she didn't mind how long she waited for that particular moment of special light or stillness.

Dear Mary! Wherever you are I'm sure you've found something to catch your photographer's eye.

— Doris

**KATHY BRAUN ALDOUS**

Thank you for your kind invitation to the 30th Anniversary of the Halifax Field Naturalists. Time seems to fly by faster and faster — who could imagine that it has been 30 years since we founded HFN! I had hoped to join you on March 2nd to celebrate. Unfortunately I have a work commitment that evening, but I will include a brief summary of my activities for the past 30 years.

The Halifax Field Naturalists came into existence as the result of the enthusiasm of fellow ecology students Paul Keddy, Cathy Keddy, Anne Linton, and Winnie Cairns. We organised lectures, slide shows, and field trips, as well as lobbying the government to take an ecological approach to the Spruce Bud Worm infestation in Cape Breton. It was a fun and informative addition to our studies at Dalhousie. I believe that I was Treasurer for a couple of years, and President for one year from 1977-78.

I graduated from Dalhousie University in 1976 with a BSc majoring in Ecology. I married Don Aldous in 1976 and we moved to Albion Road in Jollimore, where we lived for three years. During that time, I worked at the Nova Scotia Museum. In 1979 we bought a 45-acre farm in Lower Burlington, Hants County. Don commuted to Halifax where he worked with the Dept. of Fisheries. I stayed home to tend sheep, goats, and a huge vegetable garden. For several years we sold vegetables and lamb, but we quickly realised that small scale farming was not a paying proposition and so Don continued to work with DFO and then as a Fisheries Consultant while hobby farming. Every year, I preserve enough garden produce to feed us until spring. Our daughter, Cory, arrived in 1980 and her brother, Nick, in 1982. In 1986, Don took a contract in the Solomon Islands and the four of us had many adventures in the South Pacific over the next two years. We returned to the farm and have lived here ever since.

While the children were growing up, I volunteered in the school and community, and served on the Annapolis Valley Regional School Board for ten years.

Five years ago, I took a part time job as Health Promotion Coordinator at the Hants Shore Community Health Centre, about 10 km from home, doing health promotion and community development. One of my projects is the development of a community park around the elementary school. The park includes a vegetable garden which is planted each spring by the students. They harvest the produce in the fall for use in their healthy lunch program.



Cory now works with the Ecology Action Centre and we are delighted that she is involved in a salt marsh restoration project in our community. The community now plans to develop an interpretation centre near the salt marsh and an adjacent beach. Our shore has the world's highest tides, and although I have watched them for nearly 30 years, I never cease to be amazed by their dramatic rise and fall. Throughout the years, we have enjoyed swimming, hiking, beach walking, canoeing, and cross country skiing in our community.

Congratulations on the continuing success of the Halifax Field Naturalists and best wishes on your 30th Anniversary.



#### WINNIE CAIRNS WAKE

Thanks for your note. It has been lovely to be in touch with you and I wish you and HFN all the very best in your anniversary celebrations. I hope that our paths may yet cross.

#### HFN Beginnings

The early days of the Halifax Field Naturalists were a heady time. In the mid-1970s, environmental concerns were increasingly catching public attention, and it was becoming fashionable to take an interest. The cause was especially embraced by the younger generation. In the biology department at Dalhousie, mentors such as Ian McLaren encouraged graduate students in this direction by ensuring they had lots of opportunities to get out into the field to learn about the natural world and the issues at hand. A number of these students joined the Nova Scotia Bird Society, a venerable fraternity of skilled birders and naturalists.

Before long, the student contingent decided it was time to strike out on its own. With youthful exuberance, it envisioned a group that would embrace all aspects of natural history, encourage environmental activism, educate the wider community, and draw its membership from a broad spectrum of the public. It was a rather ambitious mandate for a handful of supposedly time-pinchd grad students to adopt. But one of the advantages of youth is a sometime inability to discern when a goal is unrealistic, and to simply go about achieving it.

As with any undertaking, leadership was crucial. In the case of HFN, the catalyst was Paul Keddy. Paul was intelligent, articulate, persuasive, passionate, organised, and committed. He was good at enlisting support and delegating tasks, and he soon had a nucleus of assistants to help out. Paul had ideas, and Paul made things happen. Others with energy and ideas gathered round.

By definition, grad students are always short of cash, so the new organisation was launched on a shoestring.

The founding meeting of the Halifax Field Naturalists was held in October, 1975. Paul Keddy was elected president. With the aid of a small executive committee, Paul capably ran the organisation during its first two years — 1975/76 and 1976/77.

The new club was instantly popular with the public, and people from all ages and walks of life rushed to join. By its second winter, the little group of grad students, by then with help from others, was kept ever more busy servicing a community-based membership that had passed 300!

In keeping with the original plan, a full range of programmes and activities was implemented almost immediately. The first field trip, an all-day outing to Martinique Beach, was held on the Sunday following the club's organisational meeting. After that, trips were held at the rate of about one per month through the winter. Some of those early destinations included Cape Split, Conrad's Beach, the old Annapolis Trail (near St. Margaret's), Admiral Cove, Avonport (stargazing), and East Mapleton (maple syrup outing). In July a weekend camping trip visited Johnston's Pond and the coastal systems that would later become the Kejimikujik National Park adjunct.

Meanwhile, meetings were held on the second Tuesday evening of every month throughout the winter season. Widely varied topics relating to natural history and conservation were presented, with speakers drawn from club ranks or wherever they could be found. In keeping with the shoestring mentality, no one even thought of offering an honorarium. At meetings, members were also updated on conservation issues, learned of the positions HFN was putting forward, and were urged to write letters or to take other action. On a Saturday night in February, an HFN movie night (offering nature movies, of course) was organised. This was so successful that two more were scheduled during the club's second winter.

To support the busy schedule of activities and the growing membership ranks, a good communication system was essential. A newsletter was produced regularly and flyers were created and posted about the city to publicise events and attract potential participants.

It wasn't long before the fledgling Halifax Field Naturalists began to garner attention from various quarters. Most significant was interest from the Nova Scotia Museum, which approached the group offering a meeting venue and assistance with newsletter production. Both were accepted with gratitude. The museum's comfortable auditorium was a much more welcoming and appropriate gathering place for a community group than was an out-of-the-way room in an obscure corner of the Biology Department, tucked away in the maze of campus buildings. Still, the number of people from outside the university community who took the trouble to find this location in the club's earliest days attests to the intense interest there was in the new group and in the programmes it was providing.



In the fall of 1976, HFN was entering its second season of operation. The core of grad students who had been supplying much of the group's energy was still in place. Knowing that they would soon be completing their studies and leaving the city, they began to plan for a turnover of personnel. A nomination committee was established and a constitution drafted.

On Saturday, January 22nd, 1977, an all-day celebration marked HFN's very successful first year of existence and put in place the machinery for orderly transition. Taking advantage once again of its campus connections, the executive picked the Biology Department as the venue. Most of the day was devoted to a symposium, "Nature Preservation in Nova Scotia", at which a number of thought-provoking presentations addressed various aspects of this topic. At HFN's first annual general meeting later in the afternoon, the constitution was adopted and a new executive elected.

A gigantic pot-luck supper attended by more than 100 people rounded out the day. This was held in the seventh-floor student lounge, where the host biology students whisked away arriving casseroles to be reheated in lab ovens all over the building! All food eventually reappeared, and everyone enjoyed a marvellous repast and time of good fellowship and reminiscing. A vibrant energy pervaded the room. People knew they were part of something exciting. They looked forward to growing with HFN as it led the way into the future in the enjoyment and protection of Nova Scotia's wonderful natural heritage. Heady times indeed!

### HFN Highlights

In October 1975 I naively agreed to become secretary-treasurer of the about-to-be-formed Halifax Field Naturalists, though I knew little or nothing about the duties of either office. I recall the kindness and patience of Anne Linton's father as he initially instructed me in the fine points of double-entry book-keeping. Then, at intervals, he audited my efforts and made certain I stayed on the right track. His assistance was always given graciously and with great generosity.

Field trips were a highlight of the early HFN days, and we seemed to have no limits to how far we were willing to go. One April Saturday we travelled to a sugar bush near Springhill to experience sap gathering and maple syrup making, as well as to enjoy the sights and smells in a late-winter woodland. The day concluded with a sumptuous pancake supper at a local community hall, and it was long after dark when we returned to Halifax.



Two field trips to Cape Split (one in November, one in May) were memorable outings for me. It was an exceedingly long, cold walk along the trail to the split, but well worth it for the breathtaking views. Also, on the spring outing, I was introduced for the first time to an array of wondrous woodland wildflowers the likes of which I had never seen in my growing-up years on Prince Edward Island.

Outings of shorter duration around Halifax went to more familiar places, such as Martinique and Conrad's beaches. My favourite, however, was a visit to Hemlock Ravine. The feathery hemlocks, sheltered microclimate, thin February sunshine and romantic tales of a prince and his lover remain in my memory to this day.

Paul Keddy stands out as the driving force behind HFN's founding. His energy and enthusiasm for the cause were boundless. As the leader of many of the early field trips, he overflowed with information and insight about wild creatures, their habitats, and the workings of the natural world. At executive meetings and regular club meetings Paul displayed an astonishing grasp of all the major conservation issues, whether national, provincial, or local. Paul's wife, Cathy, also deserves credit, for she was always there, knowledgeable and supportive, working beside Paul.

Many others worked hard in the early days to get HFN off the ground and make it a success. I could name a number of these, but know I am likely to leave out some who might feel hurt by my omission. Therefore, I will not get into naming names at all.

I recall after-hours visits to the print and paper room in the Biology Department to create and run off flyers or newsletter pages. These stints would inevitably be followed by collating and addressing, or running around town making deliveries.

The grad students who were running the HFN operation from the Biology Department tried to keep a low profile, especially when it came to use of departmental resources such as paper, printing equipment and meeting rooms for the benefit of HFN, which was not a university-sponsored organisation. Despite their best efforts, it seemed the department administration had a pretty good idea of what was going on and chose to turn a blind eye.

Some time in 1976, I remember the university and the Halifax media getting into a high-profile public debate about the relevance to the general public of institutions of higher learning. Many Dalhousie departments launched into frantic soul-searching and scrambled to invent rationale or activities to justify their existence to the man-in-the-street. Meanwhile, the Biology Department smugly announced that it had been assuming such responsibilities all along. It pointed out that for some time, the department had been running from its premises an organisation, namely the Halifax Field Naturalists, whose purpose was the enjoyment and education of the citizens of the city.



The students who were actually running the HFN show were somewhat taken aback at this news, but found it a relief to no longer have to be discreet when using paper and other departmental resources for the benefit of HFN.

In February 1977 Dalhousie decided to reach out to the public through a massive university-wide open house known as "Intro Dal". The Biology Department made sure that HFN's activities were well represented in its displays.

For HFN's first birthday celebration in January 1977, it was decided to have cake in honour of the day. I volunteered to be the baker. Those being the days when Bundt pans and a back-to-the-land granola mentality were in vogue, I settled on an oatmeal cake (with brown sugar and coconut icing) made in such a pan. More specifically, I made seven oatmeal cakes, as it was important to have enough for everyone, and a large crowd was expected.

In summing up my memories of the early days of HFN, what stand out are the idealism of youth; joy in the discovery of new features, creatures, and understandings in the natural world; and a belief that we really could make a difference to the well-being of natural spaces. Thirty years later, my youthful idealism has grown a bit faded, but I still find joy in nature and still work hard in the cause of conservation. In addition, I retain fond memories of my association with HFN and keep in touch with three good friends from those far-off days — Harriet Rueggeberg, Anne Linton Greene, and Kathy Braun Aldous.

### Biography

After two happy and rewarding years as a member of HFN, in the spring of 1977, I graduated from Dalhousie with an MSc in Biology and a thesis on Piping Plovers. I then returned to my home province of P.E.I., where I acquired a BEd and taught elementary school. While in P.E.I., I was involved in the Natural History Society, the Island Nature Trust, and the Canadian Nature Federation.

Through my association with CNF, I met David Wake of London, Ontario. We married in 1984 and I have lived in London ever since. In London, I have continued my interest in natural history and conservation through extensive volunteer involvement in the local naturalists' club, as well as a number of environmental and related causes. Here are a few recent examples:

For the past several years, each fall I work with a volunteer crew to identify and monitor all London chimneys that are serving as Chimney Swift roosts from late August to early October. Results are compiled and forwarded to the team assessing the Chimney Swift for possible species-at-risk listing.

In January and February of this year, I was active in a public education initiative at the local library, which consisted of a six-evening weekly lecture series entitled "Nature in the City". This was extremely well received by an audience that had few or no connections to the naturalist community.

Last winter I was involved in helping to edit and

refine a master plan for one of London's publicly owned, designated Environmentally Significant Areas.

I serve on the editorial committee of the local naturalists' club's quarterly magazine and have recently completed an article on the role of the London club in the establishment of the Federation of Ontario Naturalists in 1931.

Being an inveterate Maritimer, I make sure I go back home to P.E.I. for a portion of each summer to reconnect. Best regards,



— Winnie

### SHIRLEY COHRS

You ask for an update on my activities since 1975 — I thought about this and made a list which seems far too long! However, here are a few highlights:

- Editor of Nova Scotia Birds for 22 years.
- President of the Nova Scotia Bird Society for two years, in one of which I organised the formation of the Raptor Rehabilitation Programme.
- Served on the Sanctuary and Scholarship Trust Fund of the Nova Scotia Bird Society several times, and am at the moment Secretary of same.
- **Breeding Bird Survey in Shelburne County (with John) for 20 years.**
- Christmas Count for 30 years.
- Atlantic Canada Shorebird surveys for 29 years (Crescent Beach, Shelburne County).
- Led many NSBS and some HFN field trips to Crescent and Cherry Hill beaches.
- Participated in the first Maritimes Breeding Bird Atlas.
- Birding Nova Scotia — Where to find the Birds in Nova Scotia; asked birders in different areas to submit descriptions of the province's best birding spots, and directed publication of the book.
- Sat on the Provincial Board of the SPCA for 17 years.
- Taught music to young children for 12 years.
- Volunteered at Sir Frederick Fraser School for the Blind.

John and I moved to Green Bay permanently in 1998. He died the same year and I continue to live in our 'beach house', and am still doing shorebird surveys and Christmas Counts. I also hope to do a square or two for the second Breeding Bird Atlas. I paint in watercolour and volunteer at the local elementary school where my grandchildren are in Primary and Grade One.

I look forward to the March issue, not to read about myself, but to hear what others have been up to during all those years.

— Shirley



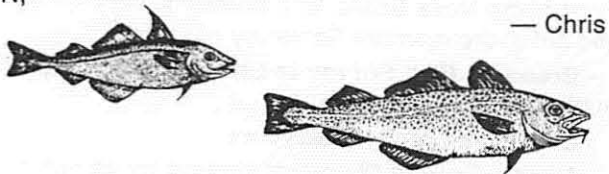
## CHRIS CORKETT

One person I remember well from those early days is Paul Keddy. He is at Southeastern Louisiana University and might be pleased to give you his reminiscences.

In 1981 I was appointed an Instructor in the Biology Department of Dalhousie responsible for the laboratories of our Marine Diversity class.

This year (05/06) I took on the new task of looking after the laboratories of a new, second-year class on Evolution. Here the students have to rear large and small populations of *Drosophila* (fruit flies) through four generations to investigate the occurrence of genetic drift and selection. I was very pleased to find that the fruit fly is a lot easier to deal with than rearing plankton, a rearing experience I used in my early research with Ian McLaren on copepods! I'm involved in two research programmes for the world's fisheries, and have authored and co-authored several publications.

Art: I take an interest in the English School of painting and the Canadian Group of Seven, and occasionally paint oil landscapes. All the best to HFN,



## ANNE LINTON GREENE

Thank you for your letter and interest in the founding members of HFN. It's good to know that what a few graduate students at Dalhousie started 30 years ago is still going strong. Congratulations!

My first memories of HFN are of meetings on Paul and Cathy Keddy's livingroom floor. There were five of us I think: Paul and Cathy, Winnie Cairns, Scott Cunningham, and myself. In our infinite wisdom, we felt we weren't getting the field experiences we craved in our science classes at Dal, and the 'Dalhousie Field Naturalists' would be the remedy. I remember our first meetings were held in the fifth floor lounge of the Biology Building (space to burn in the new Biology Building!) Our membership shot up and by November 1975 we were the 'Halifax Field Naturalists', busy putting together meetings, finding speakers, writing newsletters and by-laws, and responding to what was to become our first major conservation effort, the outbreak of Spruce Budworm in the forests of Cape Breton and the province's plan for widespread spraying.

We took a stand opposing the spraying of Fenitrothyon in Cape Breton and tirelessly argued that it would set Nova Scotia on the track taken by New Brunswick — that of endless spraying to control an insect that would never go away. I particularly remember spending many long nights in the company of an ancient hand-operated printer, running off hundreds of brochures Paul and Cathy had written

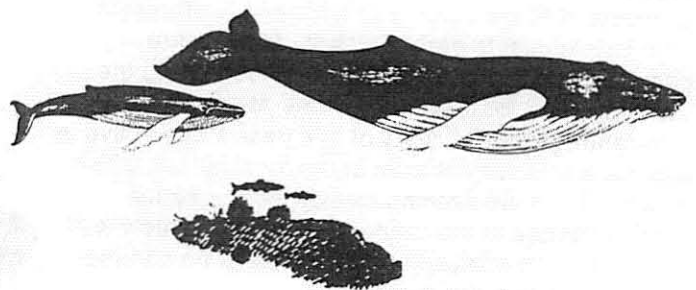
presenting arguments against spraying. But it wasn't until Scott found out about research which linked Fenitrothyon to Reye's Syndrome that we made the local news, and the province immediately backed down.

My job with the Canadian Wildlife Service took me north to Lancaster Sound to study seabirds between 1976-78. My issues of the HFN newsletter were air-dropped to me on the island I worked on! I came home with my field assistant Erick Greene who was welcomed into the HFN family and later became my husband. The Arctic and seabirds became something of a focus of the organisation while I served as Vice-president, President, and Editor of the newsletter between 1978-82. I was especially proud of a symposium I organised at the Bedford Institute of Oceanography on the "Future Development of the Canadian Arctic", with a speaker invited all the way from Ottawa! Throughout this time, Joe Harvey contributed immensely to the organisation with a series of mini-natural history surveys, first of the south-end railway cutting, and then of the Public Gardens (which would be of great interest I should think, now that many of the trees he described are gone).

Erick and I left Halifax in 1982, and moved to Princeton, N.J., where Erick pursued his doctoral degree. We travelled to southeast Arizona and central California before settling in Missoula, Montana, where Erick joined the faculty of the University of Montana's Biology Department. His career has taken us to Botswana, Tanzania, Costa Rica, and dare I say it, Texas, not far from the Bush ranch! Our two daughters, who are both biologists (herp freaks) are all but fledged. Erick is serving his second year as interim Dean of the Biology Department, and I have had to re-invent myself at the age of 50 and teach Science Writing in the Wildlife Biology Department. I'm also crazy enough to be training for a triathlon in April.

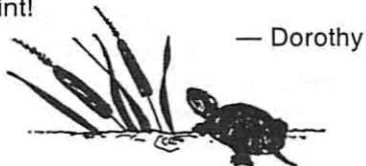
Looking back, those years spent in graduate school and developing HFN were some of the best of my life. I will never forget some of the field trips: 'sugaring off' in Northumberland Co.; watching the salamanders breeding in Julie's Heart-Shaped Pond; and exploring the peat bogs around Peggy's Cove. I wonder if the graduate students I know today would pour the same amount of energy into something they believed in. There are definitely some here who are equally passionate and tireless.

Have a great celebration! Wish we could be there.  
— Anne



### DOROTHY MORRIS

I was delighted to receive your letter and the copy of HFN's winter programme, and am looking forward to attending the AGM on March 2nd. I look back with great fondness on the many field trips I made with the best bunch of enthusiastic companions one could hope to have. The meeting will be a perfect opportunity to renew my long-lapsed membership — a gap of 20 years! This can be explained briefly by my telling you that my husband Arthur and I set sail on our boat, Cabot's Matthew', in September 1986 to experience the cruising life for one year, but — we eventually sailed home again *thirteen* years later — too long a tale to go into at this point!



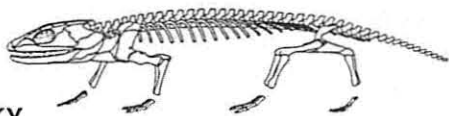
— Dorothy

### DAVID PATRIQUIN

My recollections of the earlier days of HFN are of (i) Paul and Cathy Keddy's enthusiasm and activism, stimulating a lot of university student involvement in conservation/natural history issues; (ii) Joe Harvey's guidance and initiatives, particularly in documenting the flora of the Peggy's Cove area barrens, and the composition and health of city trees, both reported in The Halifax Field Naturalists' newsletter, I believe. I worked with him to successfully oppose city spraying of trees for elm leaf minor circa 1979; I think they never sprayed trees at all after that; (iii) hosting, with Basil and Lillian Aldhouse, a field trip of about a dozen HFN members to look at weedy plants at Tunwath farm (near Lawrencetown, Annapolis Co.), I think circa 1980.

My recent re-involvement in HFN is a pleasure. It's good to see the large attendance at meetings, a good cross section of people, and lots of interesting talks and field trips. Paul Keddy, as you may know, became a very prominent plant ecologist in Louisiana.

— David

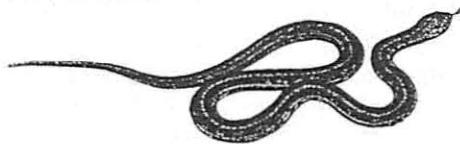


### NORMAN PINSKY

I am happy to report that I am happily married with four children. I have been a family doctor in Halifax since 1981, and worked in New Zealand in 2004.

I am heavily involved in medical research, was a prison doctor for nine years with Nova Scotia Correctional Services, and was also a volunteer in Honduras with World Vision after hurricane Mitch.

— Norman



### BARBARA SHAW

I am happy to respond to your letter about early membership in the Halifax Field Naturalists organisation. I am doubly prompted to do so now that I have also received the notice of meeting for March 2nd.

With Gertrude Pitcher, also of Bridgewater, I used to enjoy the field trips with the group and we always enjoy the newsletter. We seldom go to the city now and never at night so we hope you have 'many-remembered' in attendance with lots of good stories, along with the Members' Slides show for Thursday's programme. Many thanks and all the best to HFN. Sincerely,



— Barbara

### ELIZABETH SURRETT

Lovely to get your letter. I would love to be there on March 2nd.

There is nothing to write about in terms of biography. I am well and truly retired, with the Gift Shop at the new Queen Elizabeth II Health Sciences Centre being the main extra-curricular activity. In recent years, health problems have prevented participation in field trips and meetings. I used to see Doris Butters occasionally when in Halifax, but such trips are now confined to gift shop days and walks on the Dartmouth boardwalk in the summertime. I last saw Lesley Butters in Point Pleasant Park on the day it was re-opened to view the damage from Hurricane Juan and the subsequent clean-up (June 4th, 2004).

I have many memories of our field trips to various places. Keji, when we camped out at Lesley's place in Caledonia; visits to a restaurant in Canning/Kentville after Cape Split; some of the bird sightings; what was the name of the young man from Belgium who led some of our trips? He was at Dalhousie for a few years. (*Filip Volckeart - Ed.*); Tim Randall taking some of us on a side trip to a park on the Shubenacadie River where at the right time of year it was possible to see eagles diving for Tom-cod; Tim's slides of church steeples in N.S.; also the slides of Mary Primrose. Both Tim and Mary are gone now, but they are definitely not forgotten.

So many others as well — all very nice people

— Elizabeth



### JOHN VAN DER MEER

I was delighted to receive your timely letter because Nellie and I had been discussing our need for renewed external activities now that I am retired. HFN is a natural for us!

My most vivid memory of an HFN outing was a long walk to the end of Cape Split. At the end, I suffered immediate vertigo when nearing the cliff drop-off and eventually had to approach it on my stomach to peer over the edge (and even then was feeling quite uncomfortable). I also remember many executive meetings, and meetings with Colin Stewart reporting on the multiple HFN projects he'd undertaken. I don't remember many details, but I do recall that HFN

made an important contribution to the Halifax in identifying the significant trees in the the Public Gardens. The signs HFN placed during the summer of 1987 have been enriching for tourists and citizens alike. It was one of HFN's most valuable contributions and apparently set a precedent; new signs are to be installed over the next two or three years as part of the renewal necessitated by damage caused by Hurricane Juan.

Hope to see you March 2nd!



#### Curriculum Vitae

- 1966, BSc in Honors Botany, U. of W. Ontario,
- PhD in Genetics, Cornell University.
- 1971-74, biochemistry post-doctoral fellow, Best Institute, U. of Toronto; research on protein biosynthesis.
- 1974, joined the NRC Institute for Marine Biosciences (IMB), (then the Atlantic Regional Laboratory (ARL)), Halifax; Research Officer conducting genetic studies on seaweeds from 1974 to 1991.
- 1989, a member of the NRC Management team as Director of Marine Biology at IMB.
- 1995, developed a new aquaculture research program, and fostered the development of IMB's genomics effort. 1998, Director of Research for the Institute.
- 2004, retired from NRC.

Professional associations — President of the American Phycological Society (1992-1994); honorary positions in the Biology Department of Dalhousie University from 1980-2003, initially as Research Associate, and from 1992-2003 as Adjunct Professor; served for a number of years on the Academic Committee for The Experimental Marine Biological Laboratory, Academia Sinica, Qingdao, People's Republic of China; an active member of HFN during the first half of my career at NRC, before the demands of work kept me away; and currently, President of the Pan-American Marine Biotechnology Association.

I was born in The Netherlands in 1943, came to Canada in 1949, and became a Canadian citizen in 1955. I was married in 1966 and have two grown children, Lawrence and Deborah. I enjoy natural history, birding, gardening, reading (especially science fiction), corresponding with international pen pals, and enjoying computer games.

Since retirement I'm becoming increasingly active in volunteer work and am looking forward to rejoining the activities of the Halifax Field Naturalists.

— John



#### FILIP VOLCKEART

It was somewhat unexpected to receive a letter from your 30th Anniversary Committee. But unexpected can be really nice. Thanks for keeping me updated on what is happening at HFN. As requested, I will write below this message a few lines of reminis-



cences for the March, 2006 issue. It's fun here in Leuven, but I have to admit that the sea, the woods, the canoe trips and hikes, and the old friends are missing.

I joined HFN in 1982 during my studies in Oceanography at Dal. Don't ask me exactly how I became a member or who introduced me (maybe Colin Stewart), but I do remember that it was definitely an activity I was very fond of. Life is more than studying and as a biologist I always wanted to know more of the local nature. I have vivid memories of the days and field trips such as to Keji, Cape Breton, and Purcell's Cove. The annual pilgrimage to Cape Split stands out in my memory. The hiking through the woods and the final grand view of the 'split' and the magnificent Bay of Fundy were always a very satisfying reward, no matter how bad the weather.

I also remember becoming so involved that we coordinated with a few friends Canada Nature Week for Nova Scotia.

At the moment I'm a member of the local field naturalists' group here, who are called the Friends of Heverlee Forest. The activities are comparable to HFN, and I became quite involved after my return from Nova Scotia in 1988.

But with the increasing duties at work (I'm now a junior professor of marine ecology and evolutionary genetics) and family responsibilities, hiking in nature was one of the first victims. Fortunately, my son Tobias (9 years) has become very fond of cycling and hiking, which provides an extra stimulus to discover our local nature.

I'm also a member of the environment team at the local primary school; we assist with activities on nature education and sustainable development.

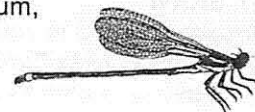
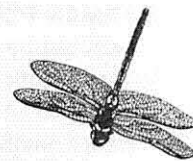
Since 1988 I've been only twice back to Halifax, in 1990 and in 1992, but I do regularly meet or write to old friends. Some have visited our family here in Leuven. We plan to visit N.S. with the whole family for a holiday in two to three years. The 'anchor in the Atlantic' is too nice for not sharing with my relatives.

See you then! Meanwhile, I express my sincere congratulations to the HFN and I wish them a fine future!

#### Curriculum Vitae

- BSc Biology (Ghent, Belgium, 1979)
- MSc Oceanography (Dal, 1983)
- PhD Oceanography (Dal, 1988)
- Researcher U. of Leuven, Belgium (1989-2000)
- Junior professor, U. of Leuven, Belgium (2000-)
- Professional interests - biological oceanography and evolutionary biology.
- Family: married to Joke (professional textile restorer and teacher); children - Kaat (12 years), Tobias (9 years), and Pieter (7 years).

Greetings from Belgium,



— Filip



# HFN TALKS

## SCENIC NOVA SCOTIA 5 JAN.

One of Len Wagg's philosophies is that photography is about sharing — and on this evening he shared the results of his love of photographing Nova Scotia from an airplane. Len is a pilot, but of course when he does his aerial photography, someone else is in the pilot's seat. Len's idea of photo-documenting Nova Scotia came after a glider flight over a Nova Scotian lake that was gradually filling in. Years later, he looked for it again, but it was gone. This inspired him to capture things before they were lost forever. His book, Nova Scotia Landmarks: Portrait of a Province from the Air (Formac, 2004), does just that, and he has future plans for another photo-documentation project about his time in the woods and wilds of N.S.

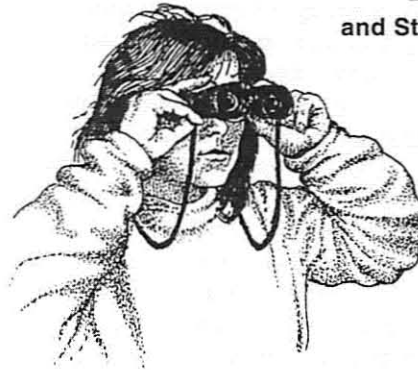
The first set of slides was drawn from his book, and there were beautiful and breathtaking shots of birds and Cape Split from the air that some of us will never be able to experience. There were also aerial slides of places which revealed our province's geology from this new perspective. Five Islands and Partridge Island were particularly good, and there were aerial slides of Parrsboro, Lunenburg, and the Aspotogan Peninsula — the latter all gone now to private ownership. Aerials of Gabarus wilderness were shown; also interesting shots of Louisburg, Prospect, and Point Pleasant Park pre- and post-Juan.

The next sequence was from a collection of slides commissioned for and by the Shubenacadie Watershed Environmental Protection Society. Its intention was documentary — to record pictorially how close we are to this valuable and beautiful river, but also to record how people are doing it harm. There was a sharp contrast between its beauty and what people who lived nearby were doing to it. Another purpose was to show how the river shaped the communities, both historically and in the present, and how the quality and aesthetics of the river in the future will depend upon how we treat it.

Len also talked about the gradual change from film to digital cameras. His book was produced from 35-mm slides, but now all those images have been digitised. The National Geographic magazine was the last bastion of conventional photography, now it too has 'gone digital'. In light of the digital movement, Len talked about Digital Asset Management — DAM (the organising and cataloguing of digital pictures) — and its problems. But, we still want and need prints, he said, the 'hand-held artifact'.

The presentation finished off with shots of Shubie Park, and then some of the results of Hurricane Juan in and around Halifax. Thank you Len, for these views of N.S. from this unique perspective.

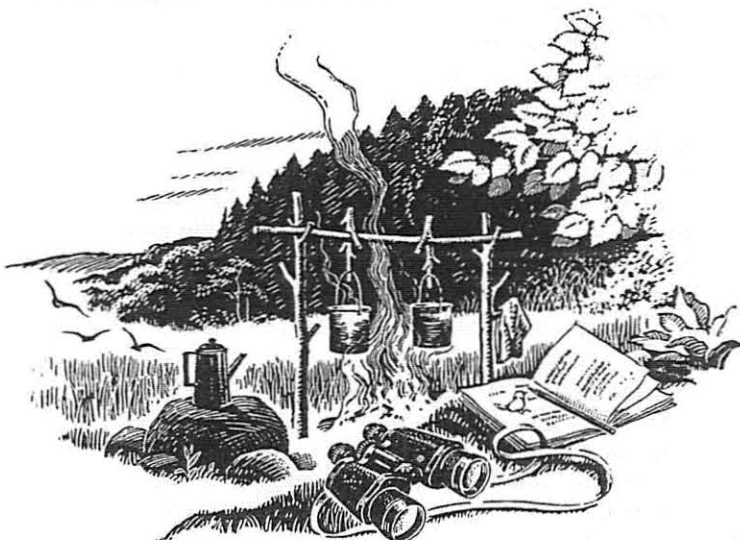
—Patricia Chalmers  
and Stephanie Robertson



## TRANS CANADA TRAIL 2 FEB.

Teacher Kathy Didkowsky, from West Gore, Hants County, had a dream to hike across Canada on the Trans-Canada Trail, after attending the first 'Rails to Trails' meeting in 1992. She wanted to introduce all of Canada to her children, she loved hiking, and she became interested in the history of the railway that had been utilised in the making of the trail. She approached her extensive extended family, and they *all* wanted to come! But by 2000, there were only five who were able to go, and each of those stuck with it all the way to the Pacific. (Interestingly, two boys along their route quit jobs and joined them for awhile; and an 80-year old was with them for a day.)

In 2000, with her children (she says she got to know them really well), using the Trans-Canada Trail built on abandoned railway lines, she did hike right across Canada — something no one else had done. They aimed for 20k per day, and her son, then age 13, is the youngest to have ever hiked the Trans-Canada Trail 'all the way'. Also along for the trip were her two university-aged daughters, a family friend, and her cousin Bill who drove the support van which carried all their extra gear to pre-appointed places, a 15-passenger van with a trailer. Along the way she sought out railway employees who used to work on the now abandoned portions. From their reminiscences, and her hiking experiences, she wrote a book, Hiking the Dream, from which she read some excerpts.



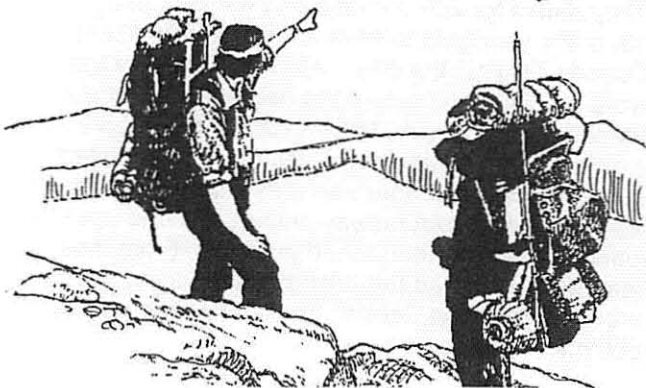
Pre-trip, they had phoned ahead re the trails and all its sections and routes.

They began in Cape Spear, Newfoundland, in May of 2000, and there was a lot of snow. It was moose calving season in Nfld., and they saw many — 18-19 per day. There were some lovely slides of wildflowers in Quebec. Northern Ontario was mosquito country, and there were some encounters with bears there. They were in Southern Ontario for Canada day; there were zillions of shad flies! The prairies presented great heat and consequent dehydration; there were also tornados. They didn't experience any directly, just heard of some that had been nearby. At one sand desert in Manitoba, it was >50°C! They saw lots and lots of elk, and further west there were rattlesnakes and Grizzly Bears and signs about Grizzlies; a man on the trail behind them was attacked. The west was wet and approaching autumn, and they ended their hike in Victoria, in August. Kathy felt that she had hiked through all four seasons!

As for the trail itself, it is complete in Prince Edward Island and New Brunswick, the rest is only partly finished, and the prairies are a real problem. Northern Ontario is difficult as well; the trail is still being built by volunteers.

Kathy had no funding but did get some sponsorship. (Also, they'd had an auction at a local Hants pub for gas money, and a genuine Russian quilt had been raffled for food money.) Valhalla Outfitters supplied a lot of the necessary gear. Olympus supplied a camera, and Rogers a cellphone and a 'Go for Green' computer. Pharmasave donated a lot of footcare supplies, and 4 large boxes of maxi hygiene products when they learned that three of the hikers were female! They were indispensable for absorbing water in wet shoes, and for using as protective pads for heavy back pack straps. The biggest problems were foot problems. A lot of foot care and preventive maintenance was required, painful blisters and wet footwear being the main problems.

Kathy had one strong guiding principal regarding the amount of travel gear — there had to be five uses for each item taken. Their first concerns were health and safety, and their food had to be deemed chock full of energy in order to be taken along. The party camped and tented most of the way, but locals provided shelter when the weather was bad, the most hospitable also offering food and music!



A website was set up; retrospectively, they discovered that most of their entries were about food.

Kathy set out thinking that Canada's natural beauties would be the highlight for her, but she discovered that the warmth, hospitality, and depth of the Canadians they met along the way were to have the biggest impact. She was very sorry when the trip ended, she had become enamoured with the hectic travelling lifestyle. On the last day in Victoria they took their last slides, and flew back to Nova Scotia while Bill drove the van back.

— Stephanie Robertson



## MEMBERS' SLIDES 2 MARCH

Our first slide set was of Nova Scotia moths, by Peter and Linda Payzant. There are, very approximately, 1,000 large moths and 2,000 very small moths native to N.S. Most of the stunning close-ups were taken on the side of their house or on their screen door. We saw a *Polyphemus* the size of one's hand — a silkworm moth. It had very large feathery antennae, one of the uses of which is to detect pheromones from possible mates. Then — a beautiful Azalea Sphinx moth, a Curve-tooth Geometer, and a Pistachio Emerald moth (the size of a thumbnail; its antennae were folded under its wings for sleeping). Other splendid moths shown were a Wavy-bordered Emerald, an Arched Hook-tip Moth, a Horrid Zale Moth, and a Rosy Maple Moth; the latter was bright pastel pink and yellow, with conspicuous pink legs (the Dolly Parton of the moth world, someone commented). We also saw a Pterophorid (Pterophorids are 'plume' moths); a Splendid Palmeta; several Geometer (inchworm) moths (some others above are Geometers); and lots of other beauties of infinite variation and colour.

Chris Miller, of 'protecting Blue Mountain/Birch Cove Lakes' fame, showed some truly breathtaking slides of this area's little known places. Some of the highlights of this jewel on HRM's doorstep are 150 species of birds, 22 lakes, and old-growth and boreal forests — a lot of 'bang for the buck' within only 15 minutes of the city. Susie's Lake was shown, and some of the fen-like ecosystems. Chris had snapped masses of Huckleberry (sometimes called firebush) in all its autumn red glory. There are lots of Black Spruce and many boreal areas, and there were truly beautiful, beautiful slides of the lakes and forests in rain, mist, evening, and brilliant sunshine. Chris likens this area to a miniature Keji, but one that is a lot closer for people to enjoy. There are lots of canoeing routes, and most convenient — one can

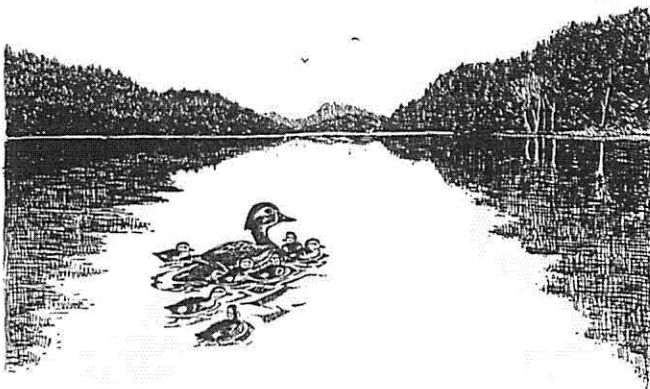
start and finish at the same place, a three- to five-hour 'loop' route. We also viewed a school class on a nature hike, Quarry Lake diving rock, and Big Ash Lake — one of largest lakes in Halifax.

**Dave Patriquin** showed some slides of Point Pleasant Park post-Juan. David has become fascinated with the different regeneration that is recurring in all the now treeless areas, such as fields of grasses, masses of Blue-bead Lily, and a Hydrangea (an escape?). There were beautiful pink Ladyslippers, and he had an interesting slide of a typical, old storm-ravaged White Pine that looked like a Saguero cactus.

**Bob McDonald** brought some of Etta Parker's slides — pictorial records of HFN field trips, birding trips, camp fires, canoeing trips, and hikes from long ago. We had good fun and some good laughs trying to recognise our younger selves, and our children, in canoes, with binoculars, or just plain collapsed after long hiking and paddling.

**Ian McLaren** brought lovely slides of Arctic birds: a Great Plover photographed at Churchill; Rock Ptarmigan, both a female and a male (from an eight-month stint in Cape Dorset); a Red Knot; and Snow Bunting in black and white breeding plumage — which we usually see in winter here with their their brown and white summer feathers. A Lapwing Longspur in breeding plumage was shown; and the Northern Wheatear — it nests in Atlantic Canada and migrates to Africa. There was an immense Walrus about to be tagged at Coates Island, Northern Hudson's Bay. Ian had also snapped a Polar Bear and a young Arctic Fox. Ian's slides ended with a very woolly-looking group of musk-ox!

**Jim Wolford** and Pat Hawes spent six weeks in Churchill to see Polar Bears in mid-October and also to visit a friend at Arveat. The very flat terrain, with a dusting of snow, sported Polar Bear Alert signs. There were beautiful splashes of rusty-red lichens on the exposed bedrock. Huge, white 'tundra buggies' with lots of tires were used for people to travel safely in to see the bears; the buggies can be strung together and used as a long hotel as well! Jim snapped an Arctic Hare, a running Caribou, and a small Polar bear. They saw a total of five to seven bears.



At Wapusk National Park, south of Churchill, a Museum is sited in the railway station. Jim photo'd a diorama of a mother and her cubs denning. Because of global warming and consequent disappearing ice pack effects on hunting, the mothers, who go eight months without food throughout this process in this southern range, are getting thinner and thinner and producing less cubs. The last slide showed a gigantic, stuffed bear, rearing over Pat and friend.

**Pat Chalmers** showed some of Mary Primrose's wonderful nature slides, courtesy Alex Wilson of the NSMNH. Mary had a special, quiet, and different way with her photography, and the results were always spectacular and revealing. Pat shared some warm reminiscences about her unique and dedicated approach to taking pictures.

There were a few west coast rainforest slides with hanging mosses; Mary's famous flower close-ups; northern landscapes; Dwarf Rhododendrons; Dwarf Willows; colourful lichens; and Crowberries. There was an idyllic scene of the Mersey River in Keji; an intense yellow close-up of Coltsfoot; a delicate Mayflower; and an exquisite Bloodroot bloom (probably taken at Smiley's Park).

My favourite slide was of a late afternoon scene — purple *Rhodora* amongst clumps of brilliant white flowers of short and shrubby *Amelanchier*, echoing the white of clouds in a cerulean blue sky.

— Stephanie Robertson



The Seed Shop

Here in a quiet and dusty room they lie,  
Faded as crumbled stone or shifting sand,  
Forlorn as ashes, shrivelled, scentless, dry —  
Meadow and gardens running through my hand.

Dead that shall quicken at the call of Spring,  
Sleepers to stir beneath June's magic kiss,  
Though birds pass over, unremembering,  
And no bee seeks here roses that were his.

In this brown husk, a dale of hawthorn dreams;  
A cedar in this narrow cell is thrust  
That will drink deeply of a century's streams.  
These lilies shall make summer on my dust.

Here in their simple house of death,  
Sealed in their shells, a million roses leap;  
Here I can blow a garden with my breath,  
And in my hand a forest lies asleep.

— Muriel Stuart

# FIELD TRIPS

## SEWER STROLL

**DATE:** Sunday, January 29

**PLACE:** Various locations around Halifax Harbour

**REGION:** 833; Eastern Shore beaches

**WEATHER:** Partly cloudy, calm, high of 4°C

**INTERPRETER:** Peter Payzant

**PARTICIPANTS:** 26

Unlike last year, the weather was beautiful, with almost no snow on the ground. The only problem was the darn eagles, but more about that later.

As usual we started in Eastern Passage. We spent a few minutes at the end of the wharf at Fisherman's Cove, and the highlights were several Long-tailed Ducks and a couple of White-winged Scoters, well-lit by the early morning sun. We also had our first of many Red-breasted Mergansers, and one Black Guillemot in quite close.

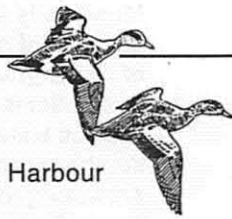
Because there was so little snow cover, we were able to park at a tanker wharf opposite the Tim Horton's in Eastern Passage. The lighting is excellent here — we were looking North, for the most part — and we were able to get a good look at more Red-breasted Mergansers, and also our only Scaup sp. of the day.

Our stop at the North Woodside Community Centre has traditionally been good for Black-headed Gulls, and we were in luck again this year. We look down on a sewer outfall from a great height, and as usual there were lots of Black Ducks, as well as five species of gulls: Great Black-backed; Herring; Iceland; Ring-billed; and Black-headed. While we were admiring a Black-headed Gull standing on the shore, all the gulls suddenly took flight. Looking up, we saw three Bald Eagles flying up the harbour — a great sight — but it certainly made pointing out a particular gull in the swirling mass a problem.

We carried on to Dartmouth Cove, which had only a few Red-breasted Mergansers and more guillemots. Then it was off to the Dartmouth Ferry Terminal for coffee and a bathroom break, followed by a period in the shelter of the Peace Pavilion watching the gulls and ducks in the sewer outfall just south of the ferry route. Here we saw our first American Wigeon of the day, plus perhaps our only teal sp., seen only by the leader. Just as we were getting comfortable with the gulls and their positions (curiously, the Iceland Gulls seemed to be almost exclusively on the Halifax edge of the mob) they all took off — eagles again — probably the same ones.

At Sullivan's Pond, we searched for and found an expected Catbird in the brush beside the canal, as well as a female Redhead. There were no Northern Cardinals for the first time in several years.

Tufts Cove had lots of American Wigeon. A reported Eurasian Wigeon was not located, and the very few Common Goldeneye were far out and right in the sun. We did get good looks at some Buffleheads and a Gadwall, and there were more



Black-headed Gulls.

At Bedford Basin, the bridge over the Sackville River was under construction, so there was no traffic and we were able to scope the birds in peace. Once again the sun was in our eyes, but we did at least watch the old reliable Mute Swan, feeding in the shallows. There were some Goldeneye in the basin, but too far away and backlit.

Carrying on around to the Halifax side, we visited the sewer outfall at Mill Cove and the Richmond Terminals pier, neither of which contained anything of interest. By this time, we were down to two cars, and we decided to press on to Tribune Head in Herring Cove. This can be a great location, and it's always at least picturesque. We heard Boreal Chickadees, and we had good looks at lots of Iceland Gulls, Common Eiders, and Black Guillemots in the water. We spent some time trying to decide if we had an immature Glaucous Gull, but in the end the consensus was that it was just another Iceland Gull. While we were discussing it, all the gulls took off — yet another Bald Eagle! This time it was clearly a subadult, so it was at least our fourth of the day.

We drove out a little further to Chebucto Head, where we had lots of eiders, and finally our first Great Cormorants of the day. The white flank patches were perfectly obvious in the setting sun. On the way home we stopped at some feeders in Portuguese Cove for a few minutes, and saw some Boreal Chickadees, a White-throated Sparrow, and some Mourning Doves.

So, rather more eagles than really necessary, but a good selection of birds and a delightful day.

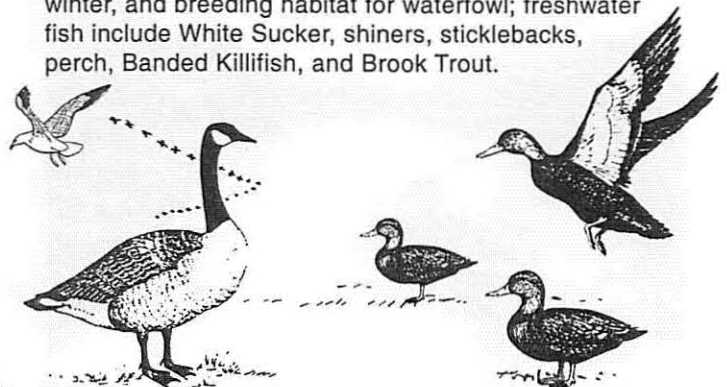
— Peter Payzant

### REGION 833 — EASTERN SHORE BEACHES

**Soils** — The Halifax Peninsula, which is underlain by slate except in the extreme north end, has mostly Bridgewater soils. Wolfville drumlin soils are common in Cole Harbour.

**Flora** — Coastal White Spruce and Balsam Fir forest with maple and birch predominates; on drumlins, pure stands of White Spruce; further back — spruce, fir, and pine.

**Fauna** — Fresh and salt water areas for migration, winter, and breeding habitat for waterfowl; freshwater fish include White Sucker, shiners, sticklebacks, perch, Banded Killifish, and Brook Trout.



## SEWER STROLL SPECIES

Great Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>
Mute Swan	<i>Cygnus olor</i>
Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>
American Black Duck	<i>Anas rubripes</i>
American Wigeon	<i>Anas americana</i>
Gadwall	<i>Anas strepera</i>
Redhead	<i>Aythya americana</i>
Scaup sp.	<i>Aythya</i> sp.
Common Eider	<i>Somateria mollissima</i>
Long-tailed Duck	<i>Clangula hyemalis</i>
White-winged Scoter	<i>Melanitta fusca</i>
Common Goldeneye	<i>Bucephala clangula</i>
Bufflehead	<i>Bucephala albeola</i>
Red-breasted Merganser	<i>Mergus serrator</i>
Bald Eagle	<i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i>
Black-headed Gull	<i>Larus ridibundus</i>
Ring-billed Gull	<i>Larus delawarensis</i>
Herring Gull	<i>Larus argentatus</i>
Iceland Gull	<i>Larus glaucoides</i>
Great Black-backed Gull	<i>Larus marinus</i>
Black Guillemot	<i>Cephus grylle</i>
Rock Dove	<i>Columba livia</i>
Blue Jay	<i>Cyanocitta cristata</i>
American Crow	<i>Corvus brachyrhynchos</i>
Black-capped Chickadee	<i>Poecile atricapilla</i>
Boreal Chickadee	<i>Poecile hudsonica</i>
Gray Catbird	<i>Dumetella carolinensis</i>
European Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>
White-throated Sparrow	<i>Zonotrichia albicollis</i>
House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>



## BEHIND THE SCENES 5 FEB.

**DATE:** Sunday, 5 February

**PLACE:** Nova Scotia Museum of Natural History

**WEATHER:** An indoor trip

**INTERPRETER:** Alex Wilson

**PARTICIPANTS:** 13

Taking a break from uncertain winter weather, the Field Naturalists went indoors for a fascinating trip behind the scenes at the Nova Scotia Museum of Natural History. Thirteen people attended the tour of the Museum's research and collections space. The Museum's Manager of Collections, Alex Wilson, conducted the tour, in what would be one of his last public presentations before his retirement after a long and successful career with the Museum.

Alex began by recounting the History of the Nova Scotia Museum, founded in 1868. Its collections began with materials displayed in the Nova Scotia Exhibit at the 1867 Paris World's Fair, as well as with collections from the Nova Scotia Mechanics' Institute, and the Nova Scotia Institute of Science.

The museum now houses over 500,000 specimens and over 1,000,000 collected objects, as well as over 30,000 slides.

He talked a little about the techniques of museum collecting and preservation. He explained the neces-

sity to keep museum collections and specimens protected in a climate-controlled environment, and the need to keep research space and people separate from collection spaces. He talked about the museum's careful record keeping, and how records were traditionally kept in paper files but are now largely housed in the sophisticated Museum Information Management System (MIMS) database.

The focus of the tour was the museum's collection space. Here, in cabinet upon cabinet, specimens of all types are housed; a remarkable selection of insects, animals, plants, and more. 'Wet specimens' are preserved in ethyl alcohol, not formaldehyde, as is commonly thought. The shelves were stacked very high, and along their tops were a great array of stuffed birds and animals.

The group was pleased to see an important recent donation to the museum from Pictou County. Two rare and antique display cases of seabirds included loons, gannets, and terns. The birds are mounted in the style of John James Audubon, 1785-1851, and are therefore very valuable. They were found to be from part of the collection of famous Nova Scotia naturalist Thomas McCulloch. McCulloch's large collection formed the basis of the Thomas McCulloch Museum at Dalhousie University. The new donation will soon become an important addition to the McCulloch House Museum in Pictou County itself.

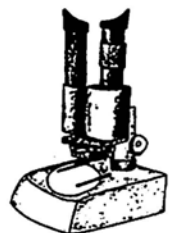
We discussed the importance of these collections as a record of the species which have lived in Nova Scotia. Alex displayed a collection of longhorn beetles with the dates and the places they were found carefully documented. He continued by explaining that this 'provenance' and the context of a find is often as important, scientifically, as the specimen itself.

Some of the highlights of the behind-the-scenes tour included several-hundred-years old walrus skulls from Sable Island that had been scoured by winds and blowing sand, and then buried and unearthed by natural processes. Tour members were very interested to see a collection of Lorenzen's ceramic mushrooms.

The highlight for my wife, Jill, was a huge cross-section of a 700-year-old oak tree found near Canning, which had been buried in a salt-marsh and thus beautifully preserved, until a farmer found it twenty-five years ago and sent this sample to Alec Wilson at the museum.

Alec has been with the Museum for 31 years, so he has an intimate knowledge of many of the items donated or collected.

— Jill and Peter Webster



# NATURAL HISTORY

## CANDLES AND NORTHERN BAYBERRY — A HISTORY

The use of candles has been documented in Egypt as far back as 3000 BC. They were made from beeswax and burned with a sweet aroma. It was not until the Middle Ages that candles were made from tallow, an animal fat. Tallow was typically rendered from the carcasses of sheep, cows, or pigs and then formed into candles. The smell of burning animal fat was terrible, but finally, in the 18th century, the colonists of North America found that Northern Bayberry (*Myrica pensylvanica*) berries were coated in a thin layer of wax which could be boiled down to produce candles (Creekmore, 1968). These candles burned with a spicy aroma and were very popular.

With the discovery of paraffin in the mid-1800s, the use of bayberries and beeswax for candles become fairly uncommon. Then, the invention and widespread use of the light bulb quickly replaced candles as the main source of light in homes, and candles became more decorative than functional.

Today, Northern Bayberry still thrives in Nova Scotia, and with a little time and patience anyone can make one's own candles. Northern Bayberry is a dioecious, semi-evergreen shrub which is hardy to USDA Zone 2a and is found to Zone 9a (Gilman and Watson, 1994); field identification is fairly straightforward.

The plant was surveyed at two sites, Lawrencetown Beach, 44°38'41.00"N 63°20'39.72"W and Chebucto Head, 44°30'16.92"N 63°31'21.91"W.

Lawrencetown Beach is a large site, divided by a highway. It is composed of a dune ecosystem on one side and a tidal salt marsh on the other. The Northern Bayberry occurs between the two ecotypes. Chebucto Head is a drastically different area, composed of bogs and fens, with exposed granite bedrock dropping into the sea.

However, at both sites the plants were smaller than would be expected inland. The average shrub height at Chebucto head was 45cm, while at Lawrencetown plants averaged 38cm. The plant can reach a height of up to three metres (Sievers, 1930); the small size was attributed to the salty coastal environment found at both sites. As well, the cool wind from the Atlantic Ocean is known to be fairly strong at both locations, resulting in overall stunted growth in the majority of plant species (Mitsch and Gosselink, 1993).

*Myrica* species are well adapted to living in the nitrogen-poor soils which occur in Nova Scotia due to the last glaciation having scoured the topsoil from the bedrock. They share a symbiotic relationship with a strain of N<sub>2</sub>-fixing actinomycetes known as *Frankia* sp. (Clawson and Benson, 1999). Being actinorhizal enables the plant to rely on the nitrogen fixation abilities of the *Frankia* instead of having to use available nitrogen within the soil. This opens up many typically stressful habitats such as seashores, sand dunes, and even arctic tundra (Benson and Silverster, 1993).

Simple and alternately arranged (Sievers, 1930), the leaves of the plant are aromatic when broken and have

an almost waxy feel, again attributed to the fact that there is a higher than average amount of wind coming from the ocean compared to the interior of the province.

Northern Bayberry is ideally suited for a maritime climate. Near the seashore, there is very little in the way of plant growth larger than a shrub to block the wind, which would result in increased transpiration. Waxy leaves reduce water loss through the stomata (Campbell and Reece, 2002) and several of the plant species found near the ocean in Nova Scotia, including Sea Rocket (*Cakile edentula*), Beach Pea (*Lathyrus japonicus*), and Seaside Goldenrod (*Solidago sempervirens*), share this evolutionary adaptation (Roland and Smith, 1969). It should be noted that Northern Bayberry is found within the continental United States far from the ocean and therefore has not specifically evolved to live near the seashore.

After examination of photographic specimens from the United States it was seen that our local Northern Bayberry plants are not nearly as physically large or productive in the fruiting stage as their inland southern counterparts (Fig. 1 & 2).



Fig 1: *M. pensylvanica* plant near Lawrencetown Beach. This plant had more than the average amount of berries for our area.

Because the plant is dioecious, the berries are found only on female specimens. The plant displays a green flower in the spring and grey berries in the fall. Clumps of berries are found close to the branches, in groups of five to ten. Some shrubs were observed to have larger amounts of berries near the terminal ends of branches but these were in smaller groups of two to five. The large clusters were more common in the forks of branches. They are coated in a waxy material consisting primarily of saturated long-chain fatty acids which are digestible by few birds, including the Yellow-Rumped Warbler (*Dendroica coronata*), and the Tree Swallow (*Tachycineta bicolor*) (Place and Stiles, 1992). Many other birds eat the berries however, including the Tufted

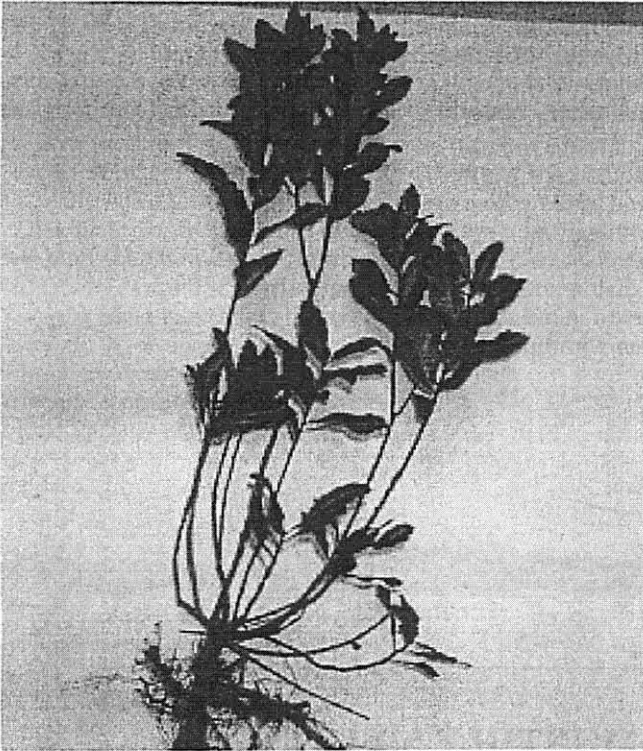


Fig 2: Typical size of *N. Bayberry* in N.S. (specimen is 40cm tall)

Titmouse (*Bolophus bicolor*), the Carolina Wren (*Thryothorus ludovicianus*), and the Red-Bellied Woodpecker (*Melanerpes carolinus*) (Hunt and Flaspohler, 1998).

Since the shrub is semi-evergreen, it provides shelter for those birds which graze on it, and the berries persist well into the winter (Gilman and Watson, 1994). This provides a good available food source long after other plants such as the High-bush Blueberry (*Vaccinium corymbosum*) and Small Cranberry (*Vaccinium oxycoccus*) have lost their fruits (Roland and Smith, 1969). The seeds of the plant are typically scattered in the faeces of the birds which consume the berries. The berries for the author's candle were harvested in the fall, before snow fell and covered the shrubs (fig 3).

It takes between 2.5 and 4kg of berries to yield one

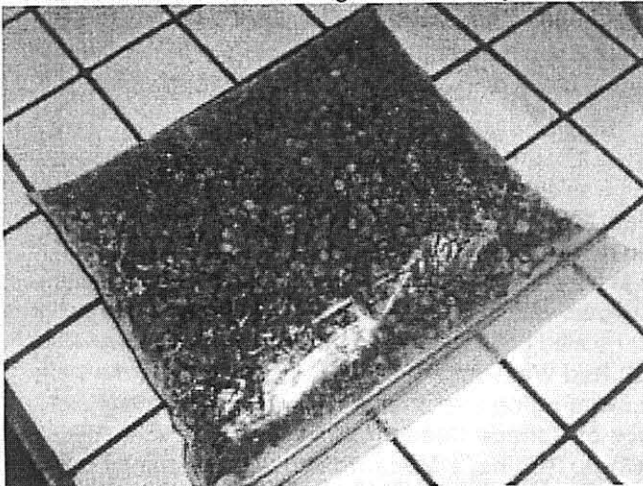


Fig 3: Collected Bayberries after picking. They were kept in the fridge in Ziploc bags until processing.

kilogram of pure wax (Creekmore, 1968). After picking, the berries were put in cold water which made the small

twigs and leaves float to the surface (Greywing, 1997). (Alternatively, the berries could be strained within semi-fine mesh, such as cheesecloth, which would contain the berries but remove the 'dust' which accumulated on the berries while on the shrub.) They were then put in a small plastic container within a pot of slowly boiling water (Fig 4).

Bayberry wax melts between 47°C and 49°C (Creekmore, 1968) and floats to the surface where it can be skimmed and moved to a storage container. The



Fig 4: Crude 'double-boiler'. Plastic worked better; the wax stuck to the metal pot and was impossible to get off easily.

berries could not be placed over direct heat or in rapidly boiling water, as they would burn quickly and the wax would simply evaporate away at a high temperature. It was found that the berries had to be heated several times and let cool, since not all of the wax would float up each time.

The author used a fairly small, one-litre vegetable pot for the water and approximately a cup of berries at a time, resulting in a lengthy amount of processing time. The procedure was repeated until enough wax was collected to remelt and put into a mold to form a candle (Fig 5). (Tapered candles could have been made as well by dipping a wick into the melted wax — Greywing, 1997 —, and the wax would be allowed to cool between dipping. This is done repeatedly until a candle of the desired diameter is created.) Unfortunately, the bayberry wax candles do not burn as brightly as

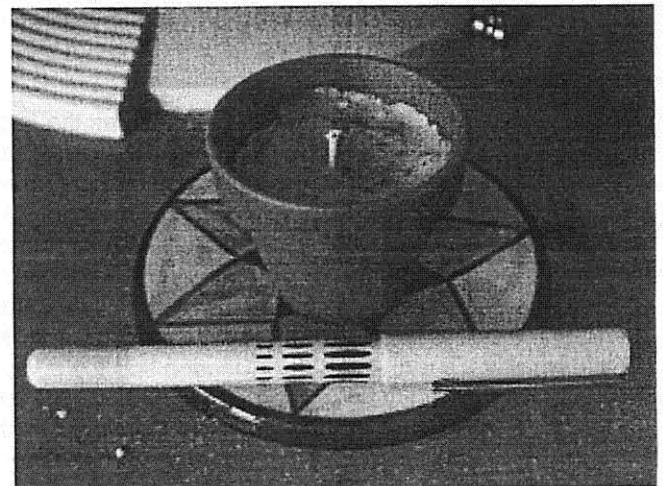


Fig 5: Finished candle in a 4cm diameter terracotta pot. This is the result of almost 1.5kg of raw berries.

beeswax candles. However, they are smokeless when burning (Bown, 1995).

After spending approximately eight hours collecting berries from several hundred shrubs, it could be surmised that berries from Nova Scotian *Myrica pensylvanica* are not especially suited to being used for the making of bayberry candles. The plants from the United States generally appear to have a much larger coverage of berries and overall larger physical size, which would make them better suited for the commercial harvest of berries in the 18th and 19th centuries.




In our climate, the shrubs seem to be much smaller and have fewer berries, making collection extremely

time-consuming and therefore less rewarding overall. In these two sample locations there seemed to be significantly more male shrubs, contributing to the decreased availability of berries.

If there were an increase of berries in the area, it would be a worthwhile activity to harvest these berries and make your own candles. The 1.5 kilograms of berries that were collected at the two aforementioned sites yielded what is considered by the author to be a small amount of wax. Although the candle was not large, it did burn, and the overall experience was a memorable one!

— Joseph Poissant  
St. Mary's Biology Student





## NATURE NOTES FROM HFN MONTHLY MEETINGS

### January Meeting


Karen McKendry saw a **Pheasant** outside of Truro and Elliott Hayes, in Queen's Co., a **Barn Owl**, **32 Evening Grosbeaks**, **several pairs of finches**, and a few weeks ago a **Blue Indigo Bunting**. Shirley McIntyre spotted a **blooming Primula** in her garden, while Regine saw a **Dandelion** in flower (frozen) on January 1st. Jim Wolford spied **75 eagles** in one place near New Minas Road, exit 12, on Jan. 4th; also, **eight Short-eared Owls** in Grand Pré. Patricia Chalmers notes that there are lots of interesting birds still. A **Baltimore Oriole** eating fresh grapes was seen by Jean Hartley; **Redpolls** were reported at feeders.

### February Meeting

Christine-Anne Smith had a **Pileated Woodpecker** in her back garden; she wondered if it was sick, as it was sitting with all its feathers fluffed out, despite the weather being not too cold. Peter Payzant saw an **Ermine** outside his kitchen window. Lesley Butters spotted approximately **1,000 Crows** roosting in trees, and in flight, and saw a lone **Loon** on the NorthWest Arm on Jan. 4th; also a skein of **Canada Geese** flying low over the same water, accompanied by much honking. Pat observed that the birds seemed to be scarce until the snow came, now there are lots to see. On Beech St. she spotted a large brown bird, then saw a **Crow** in a tree and a large **Sharp-skinned Hawk**. The Crow pursued it! The hawk dropped its prey, but a cat on the ground was the winner for the prize. She saw the hawk once again in the same neighbourhood. She reported that Jean Hartley had a **Baltimore Oriole** (this was very late in the season) at her feeder. It has learned to eat peanuts. Peter reported that there were no **Loons** seen on the sewer stroll (Jan. 28th), but, a day or two before the stroll, there was one spotted on Lake Banook.

### March Meeting

On Feb. 22nd, Lesley saw the sun rise as the fingernail moon was setting (waxing moon) in an orange-coloured southern sky. She also saw some **Snowdrops** on the same day. On March 2nd, she saw at the Waegwoltic Club on the Northwest Arm, **2 mergansers**, one very ruffled and in disarray. In the early morning sky, the two planets she saw were identified by new member Bill Lewis as **Mars** and **Venus**. Jim Wolford saw **Ravens** in the valley working on nests; they will be laying soon; he also saw **Crows** with sticks as well. Bill reported lots of **Chickadees** and other small birds at his feeders in Dartmouth; he also noticed a very large **Red-tailed Hawk** around the feeders. Wendy McDonald saw **two Robins** and **50 Red Waxwings** on Franklyn St. Pat heard a **Downy Woodpecker drumming** (courtship) and **Song Sparrows singing** Feb. 24th/25th, and saw **Witch Hazel** in bloom in Jollimore. Betty Hodgson spotted a **very large flock of Canada Geese** in Cole Harbour; Peter spied a **Red-breasted Nuthatch**, a **huge flock of Bohemian Waxwings**, **Robins**, a **Mockingbird** with a Robin or two eating rosehips, and heard a **Brown Creeper singing**. Ian McLaren saw **squabs** (young Rock Pigeons) on the Aliant Building on North St., and Allan Ruffman spotted **Peregrine Falcons** atop city buildings.





# 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.

"Last night the ten thousand massed musicians shattered the darkness without any advance notice or rehearsal. For private reasons of his own, every frog in the swamp just decided at the same moment to serenade the spring. We lay abed and listened to Canada's old, unchanging concert. [...] Canada would be inconceivable if frog music were stilled; and if we have lacked great poets and musicians, we hardly needed them so long as the native troubadours appeared at our doors every spring, on schedule."  
 — Bruce Hutchison, "Final Nocturne", in Canada: Tomorrow's Giant (1957)

## NATURAL EVENTS

- 20 Mar. Vernal Equinox at 14:23 AST. Spring begins in the Northern hemisphere.
- 23 Mar. Daily average temperature rises above 0°.
- Apr. Jupiter is low in the southeastern sky as evening twilight ends, for most of this month.
- 1 Apr. The crescent Moon passes in front of the Pleiades in the night sky.
- 2 Apr. Daylight Savings Time begins at 2:00 AST. Turn clocks ahead one hour.
- 13 Apr. Full Moon. Moonrise at 20:14.
- 16 Apr. The daily minimum temperature at Shearwater is above 0°.
- 22 Apr. Earth Day.
- 13 May North American Migration Count Day.
- 13 May Full Moon. Moonrise at 21:33.
- 28 May The date of last spring frost in Halifax (Env. Can. says there is only a 1:10 chance that a spring frost will occur after this date); look forward to 155 frost-free days.
- 8 Jun. World Oceans Day.
- 10 Jun. -20 Jun. The earliest mornings of the year. The sun rises at 5:29 ADT.
- 11 Jun. Full Moon. Moonrise at 21:38.
- 21 Jun. Summer Solstice at 9:27 ADT. Summer begins in the Northern hemisphere. The longest day of the year, with 15 hours and 33 minutes of daylight at Halifax.
- 22 Jun. -30 Jun. The latest evenings of the year. The sun sets at 21:04 ADT.

— Sources: Atmospheric Environment Service, Climate Normals 1951-80 Halifax (Shearwater A) N.S.; Blomidon Naturalists Society's 2006 Calendar; Burke-Gaffney Observatory, Saint Mary's University.

## SUNRISE AND SUNSET ON SPRING AND EARLY SUMMER SATURDAYS



4 Mar.	6:47	18:06	1 Apr.	5:56	18:42
11 Mar.	6:35	18:16	8 Apr.	6:43	19:51
18 Mar.	6:22	18:24	15 Apr.	6:31	19:59
25 Mar.	6:09	18:33	22 Apr.	6:19	20:08
			29 Apr.	6:08	20:17
6 May	5:58	20:25	3 Jun.	5:32	20:54
13 May	5:49	20:33	10 Jun.	5:29	20:59
20 May	5:42	20:41	17 Jun.	5:29	21:02
27 May	5:36	20:48	24 Jun.	5:30	21:04

— courtesy of David Lane, Burke-Gaffney Observatory, Saint Mary's University

## ORGANISATIONAL EVENTS

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

- 9 Apr. "Pond Life Through a Microscope", with leaders Todd Smith and Helene D'Entremont, Acadia Biology Department.
- 17 Apr. "National Synchrotron Facility", with Tom Ellis, chair of the Beamline Advisory Committee.
- 23 Apr. "Early Spring Birds", with leader Jim Wolford, 542-9204.

**Burke-Gaffney Observatory:** Public shows at Burke-Gaffney Observatory at St. Mary's U. are held the 1st and 3rd Saturday of each month, except from Jun. - Sept. when they are held every Saturday. 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 info, 496-8257; or go to <<http://apwww.stmarys.ca/bgo/>>.

**Maritime Museum of the Atlantic:** For more info, 424-7490; or go to <<http://museum.gov.ns.ca/mma/>>.

**4 Apr.** "Our Coastal History as Seen From a Sea Kayak", with Dr. Scott Cunningham of Coastal Adventures.

**Nova Scotia Bird Society:** Indoor meetings take place on the 4th Thursday of the month, Sept. to May, Nova Scotia Museum of Natural History, 7:30 p.m. For more info, 445-2922; or go to <<http://nsbs.chebucto.org/>>.

- 23 Mar.** "Where are the Birds?", with Blake Maybank, author of *Birding Sites of Nova Scotia*.
- 1 Apr.** "Baccaro and Blanche Peninsula", with leader James Hirtle, 640-2173; email <[jrhbirder@hotmail.com](mailto:jrhbirder@hotmail.com)>.
- 8 Apr.** "Martinique Beach", with leader Ian McLaren, 429-7024; email <[iamclar@dal.ca](mailto:iamclar@dal.ca)>.
- 23 Apr.** "Wolfville Area", with leader Jim Wolford, 542-9204; email <[jimwolford@eastlink.ca](mailto:jimwolford@eastlink.ca)>.
- 27 Apr.** "Greetings From Panama", with speaker Richard Stern.
- 6 May** "Cape Sable Island", with leader Murray Newell, 745-3340; email <[dowitcher@esatlink.ca](mailto:dowitcher@esatlink.ca)>.
- 13 May** "Spring Migration Counts"; contact your regional co-ordinator to participate.
- 14 May** "Beginning Birders Field Trip", with leader Patricia Chalmers, 422-3970; email <[Patricia.Chalmers@ukings.ns.ca](mailto:Patricia.Chalmers@ukings.ns.ca)>.
- 19 May -22 May** "Bon Portage Island", with leader Claire Diggins, 825-6152; email <[claire\\_diggins@hotmail.com](mailto:claire_diggins@hotmail.com)>.
- 20 May** "Amherst Point Bird Sanctuary", with leader Terry Paquet, 452-3622; email <[terrypaquet@hotmail.com](mailto:terrypaquet@hotmail.com)>.
- 22 May** "...Historic Hants County", with leader Suzanne Borkowski, 445-2922; email <[sborkowski@hfx.eastlink.ca](mailto:sborkowski@hfx.eastlink.ca)>.
- 24 May** "The Fred Dobson Warbler Walk", with leader Joan Waldron, 477-4273; email <[waldrojo@ns.sympatico.ca](mailto:waldrojo@ns.sympatico.ca)>.
- 25 May** "Tips on Digital Photography", with speaker Peter Steeper.
- 27 May** "Lewis Lake Warbler Walk", with leader Hans Toom, 868-1862; email <[htoom@hfx.eastlink.ca](mailto:htoom@hfx.eastlink.ca)>.
- 3 Jun.** "Canso and Area", with leaders Steve Bushell, 366-2527, Tom Kavanaugh, 366-3476; email <[terri.crane@ns.sympatico.ca](mailto:terri.crane@ns.sympatico.ca)>.
- 3 Jun.** "Kejimikujik Seaside Adjunct", with leader Gary Hartlen 354-7250; email <[garych@eastlink.ca](mailto:garych@eastlink.ca)>.
- 4 Jun.** "Crystal Crescent Beach Provincial Park", with leader Hans Toom, 868-1862; email <[htoom@hfx.eastlink.ca](mailto:htoom@hfx.eastlink.ca)>.
- 9 Jun. -11 Jun.** "2nd Annual Tern Festival", Acadian Museum, W. Pubnico, Yar. Co., N.S. To register, 762-3380; email <[bernice.dentremont@ns.sympatico.ca](mailto:bernice.dentremont@ns.sympatico.ca)>.
- 10 Jun.** "Conquerall Mills", with leader James Hirtle, 640-2173; email <[jrhbirder@hotmail.com](mailto:jrhbirder@hotmail.com)>.
- 11 Jun.** "Shubenacadie", with leader Rob Woods, 261-2122; email <[rwtwoods@yahoo.com](mailto:rwtwoods@yahoo.com)>.
- 17 Jun.** "Cumberland County", with leader Clarence Stevens, Sr. 464-1664.
- 18 Jun.** "Dawn Chorus on the Salt Marsh Trail", with leader Cindy Staicer, 494-3533, 478-3635; email <[cindy.staicer@dal.ca](mailto:cindy.staicer@dal.ca)>.
- 25 Jun.** "Pockwock Watershed", with leader Suzanne Borkowski, 445-2922; email <[sborkowski@hfx.eastlink.ca](mailto:sborkowski@hfx.eastlink.ca)>.

**Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources:** Many outings in Prov. Parks are listed in the "Parks are for People" Programme (free), 424-4321; also at museums, parks, tourist bureaus, and on the web at <<http://parks.gov.ns.ca/programs.asp>>.

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

**25 April** AGM and "Update on Cape Forchu", with Nancy Knowles.

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

to 17 Apr. "Bug World", with giant robotic insects.

**22 Mar.** "Gateway to Canada: The Story of Halifax Harbour", with Gordon Fader and Charles Doucet.

**28 Mar.** "A Walk in the Park: Point Pleasant Park after Hurricane Juan", with Fred and Lynne Schwarz.

**22 Apr. -4 Sept.** "Northern Jaws: Sharks of Canada", produced by Musée de la Nature et des Sciences.

**17 May** "Sharks, Sharks Everywhere ...", with Dr. Steven Campana, Canadian Shark Research Laboratory, BIO.

**24 May** "Beginner Digital Photography", with photographer Glen Sentner.

**3 Jun.** "Inaugural Meeting & Open House"; the 1st public event of a new Young Naturalists Club in Metro

**7 Jun.** "Marine Mammal Conservation/Rescue in the Maritimes", with Tonya Wimmer, Marine Animal Response Society.

**8 Jun. -4 Sept.** "Endangered Marine Animals of the Atlantic", an exhibit of nature art by Jeff Domm.

**11 Jun.** "Happy Birthday Gus"; celebrate Gus the Gopher Tortoise's 84th birthday!

**13 Jun.** "Rock Walk at Peggy's Cove", with geologists Martha Grantham and Bob Grantham.

**1 Jul.** "Canada Day: Butterfly Social"; the Butterfly House opens for the season.



**Photographic Guild of Nova Scotia:** Meets 2nd Monday of the month, as well as the 1st and 3rd Sundays of the month, Nova Scotia Museum of Natural History, 7:30 p.m. Shows are held at St. Mary's U., Theatre A, Burke Education Centre. For more info, go to <<http://www.photoguild.ns.ca/>>.

**2 Apr.** "N.S. Bird Society Trophy Competition" and "Atlantic Geoscience Society Trophy Competition".

**22 Apr.** "Annual Spring Show".

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

**27 Mar.** "Nature Conservancy of Canada", with Dr. Bill Freedman, Regional Chair.

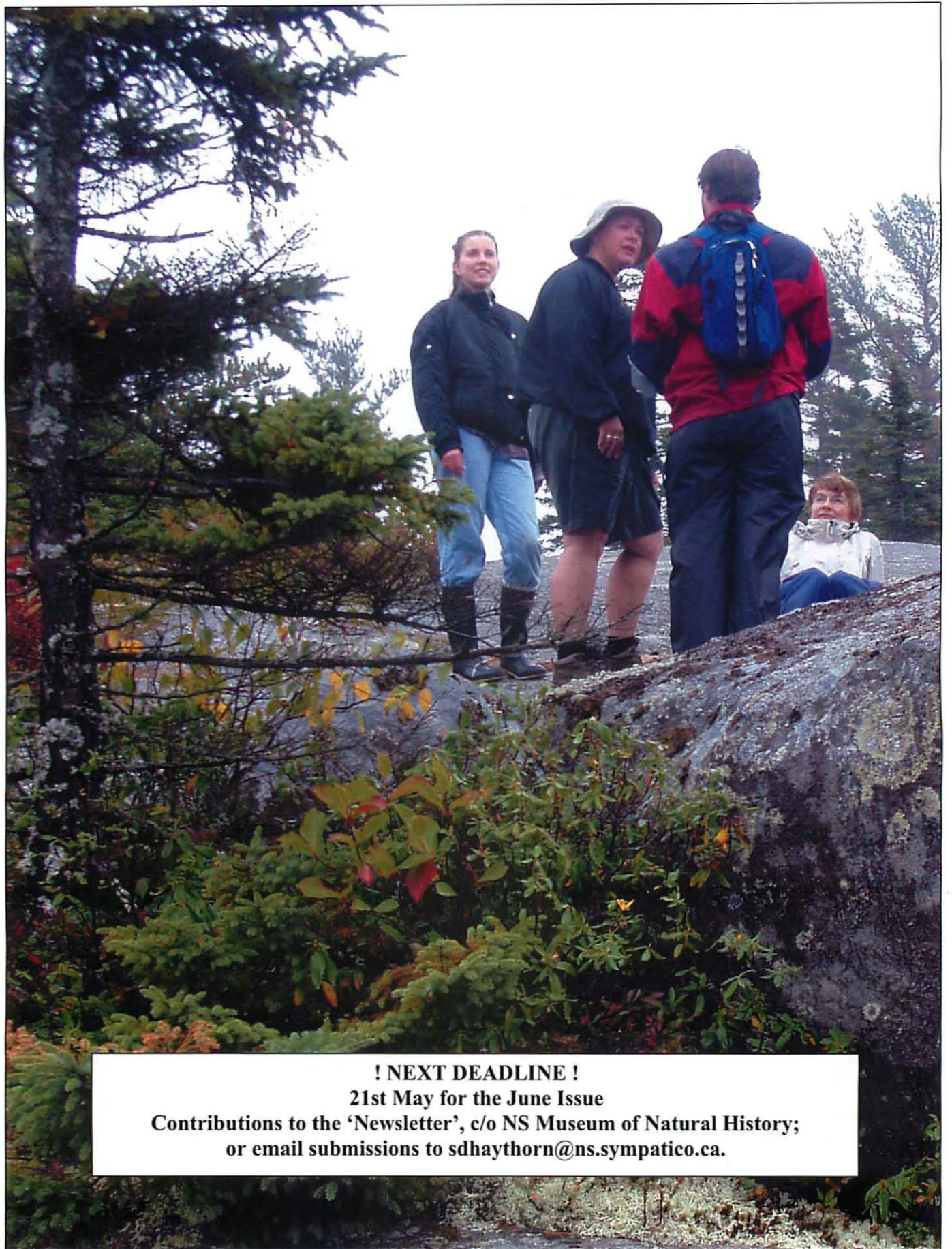
**24 Apr.** AGM and "Coastal Plain Flora: Last Summer's 3-day Field Trip to the Southwestern Counties of N.S.".

**21 May** "Spring Wildflowers in Wentworth Provincial Park"; contact Heather Drope, 423-7032.

**5 Jun.** "Ram's Head and Yellow Lady Slippers: Evening Field Trip"; contact Charles Cron, 477-8272.

**Royal Astronomical Society of Canada (Halifax Chapter):** Meets 3rd Friday of each month in Room L176 of the Loyola Academic Building at Saint Mary's University, 8:00 p.m. For more info, <<http://halifax.rasc.ca/>>.





**! NEXT DEADLINE !**  
**21st May for the June Issue**  
**Contributions to the 'Newsletter', c/o NS Museum of Natural History;**  
**or email submissions to [sdhaythorn@ns.sympatico.ca](mailto:sdhaythorn@ns.sympatico.ca).**