

# HALIFAX FIELD NATURALISTS NEWSLETTER

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MAY - AUGUST, 1982

No. 28

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MINI-SURVEYS SERIES

No. 3

HALIFAX PUBLIC GARDENS.

(P.14).



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MEETINGS are held on the first Thursday of every month at 8 p.m. in the Auditorium on the ground level of the Nova Scotia Museum, 1747 Summer Street, Halifax.

FIELD EXCURSIONS are held at least once a month.

MEMBERSHIP is open to anyone interested in the natural history of Nova Scotia. Membership as available at any meeting or by writing to: Membership, Halifax Field Naturalists, c/o N.S. Museum. Individual membership is \$5.00 yearly; Family membership is \$7.00. Members receive the newsletter and notices of all excursions and special programs.

## DIRECTORS FOR 1982-83

Co-Presidents . . . . .	Doris Butters John vanderMeer
Vice-President . . . . .	Bill Freedman
Membership Secretary . . .	Colin Stewart
Treasurer . . . . .	Bernice Moores
Directors . . . . .	Joe Harvey Pierre Taschereau Edna Staples

<u>NEWSLETTER</u> . . . . .	Edna Staples Doris Butters
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## MAILING ADDRESS

Halifax Field Naturalists  
c/o Nova Scotia Museum  
1747 Summer Street  
Halifax, N.S. B3H 3A6.

HFN is a member organisation of the Canadian Natur Federation.  
HFN is incorporated under the Nova Scotia Societies Act.  
HFN NEWSLETTER is produced by courtesy of the Nova Scotia Museum.

# hfn news



## PRESIDENTIAL MESSAGE -

By the time you receive this Newsletter, Anne and Erick Greene will be on their way to Princeton. As in the case of all the original group who initiated and worked so hard to develop HFN but eventually went their several ways, Anne and Erick will be very much missed, and on behalf of the membership we would like to thank them for the efforts, dedication and expertise which they put into HFN. Thank you both and good luck in the future. We hope one day you will return - meanwhile, keep in touch.

Erick, you may not wish this, but please accept our congratulations on the life-saving Award you received in recognition of your gallant efforts during last summer's traumatic experience in the far north.

For the immediate future John vanderMeer and Doris Butters as Co-Presidents will try to keep the machinery oiled and running smoothly.

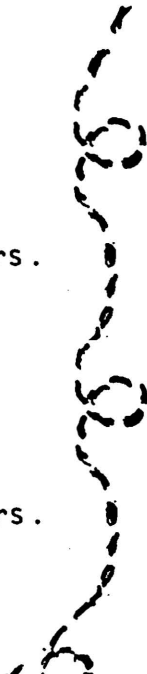
This is probably a good time to remind you all that we welcome suggestions for talks and field trips, and that we are always looking for contributions to the Newsletter; you don't have to be a professional scientist to be interested in your environment. Short reports of field trips; nature notes, book reviews; your own observations; highlights from other publications; notices; seminars attended, and pen-and-ink drawings to illustrate an article or to stand alone - anything pertaining to the natural history of Nova Scotia.

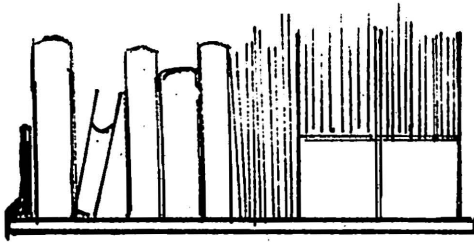
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Send mail c/o N.S. Museum.  
Deadline for November issue:  
25 October 1982.

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ON THE SHELF -

Have you checked the Library Shelf in the N.S. Museum lately? Government 'bumf' on the environment, newsletters from natural history societies, periodicals and Nature Canada Magazines are available.

- The current issue of Nature Canada includes a story on wildlife artist George MacLean, illustrated by some of his fine paintings; the conflict between loggers and conservationists on Ogopé-Albany, a proposed provincial wilderness park in northern Ontario and an item on the proposed national park reserve on Ellesmere Island.

- There are two bits of local interest, one on the Atlantic Canada puffin colonies, the other on the Fundy Tidal Power Project. There is even a book review on Sable Island by Nova Scotian author Bruce Armstrong.

- The Catherine Traill Naturalists Newsletter offers some timely tips for nature photographers.

- June issue of "Conservation" contains Erick's article on Ospreys, illustrated by gorgeous colour shots.



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MEMBERSHIP NOTES -

The membership year corresponds to the calendar year, hence everyone should renew for January 1st.

If a NEW MEMBER joins after November 1st, the membership will run until December 31st of the following year.

Traditionally we have continued sending fliers on upcoming events to past-due members. Two years ago we found that we were sending more fliers to out-of-date members than to paid-up members! At that point we sent renewal notices to them all and dropped all of those who didn't renew.

Now our policy on those who do not renew is to send two fliers and one newsletter, then drop them. We circle the expiry date on the label (top right-hand corner) and add a "Please renew" above it.

Our current membership is about 115 members in good standing. We have recently dropped 51 non-renewals. We also have a free mailing to 48 other naturalist groups and school and city libraries.

We are working with the smallest membership base in years. Please help us increase membership by recruiting people of similar interest, and by giving YOUR incentive suggestions so this club can fill YOUR NEEDS.

Colin Stewart.



"The Naturalists Role in the Conserver Society" by Rosemary Fox is the title of a Canadian Nature Federation policy paper recently published. Copies may be obtained by writing to:



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PRIVATE PROPERTY, WILD LANDS AND THE LAW IN  
NOVA SCOTIA.

In an age less obsessed with the language of democracy and social relevance, Bill 71, "An Act to Protect Property", would have been titled simply "The Nova Scotia Petty Trespass Act", and in order to understand the controversy it has caused in the past few months, it is necessary to consider that Nova Scotia, being until now without such a piece of legislation, has been in a very unusual situation. My own understanding of this comes partly from comments made to a special meeting of the Halifax Wildlife Federation on May 5 by Hugh Fairn, chairman of the Land Resources Co-ordinating Committee, representing a variety of land use interests in the province.

Essentially, without provincial legislation against trespass as such, a landowner's only recourse against a trespasser is a civil action. This can lead to an award of damages against the trespasser, but first there must be some damage. If the trespass is clearly repetitive and annoying, the trespasser would likely be ordered to pay Court costs, but in general, unless someone has done more than simply walk across the land, the owner would be suing him for nothing. In the words of Bill 71, the real job of "protecting property" is done by other laws, laws protecting specific land uses such as farming and regulating specific activities, such as hunting, and especially by criminal laws against burglary, vandalism, breaking and entering, etc.. However, these laws are considered to be inadequate to do the job by many Nova Scotians including shop-keepers and operators of hotels and plazas.

The fact is that throughout most of North America the petty trespass act is used to cover a multitude of sins. Groups of louts hanging around

strips, suspicious-looking characters in apartment garages with no visible business there, can all be removed under the authority of a petty trespass act. Without one, nothing can be done until a theft, assault or vandalism has taken place and evidence has been obtained. Anyone in the business of managing property will tell you that this is a security problem. Though the bulk of pressure for a petty trespass act here has been urban based, there is also support from rural interests threatened by theft, vandalism and plain carelessness - farmers and Christmas tree growers for example, and wood cutters whose equipment is frequently damaged or stolen when left in the bush.

All these are valid concerns. However, in the attempt to meet them with a petty trespass act, something is lost as well as gained.

A law against trespass as such implies a tightening of the whole philosophy of private property which has not yet happened in Nova Scotia. Without it, a complaint against a trespasser requires the justification that something he has done has interfered in some way with some use that the owner is making of his property. Access to land which is not in active use is not a matter for law at all, unless some damage is being done. Ownership, in a way, is the right to the use of a property, rather than absolute possession in the sense that the land is totally withdrawn from the sphere of the community. But with such a law, action against a trespasser can be arbitrary. Its absence (until now) reflects the survival in Nova Scotia of a "gentle" philosophy of land ownership which was common in North America in earlier, less urbanised times, but has lately given way almost entirely before excess human population, the desire for private rural retreats, and the great

enjoyment of anything he can get by any means short of outright theft, regardless of any other private or public need.

In practical terms, the effect of the absence of a petty trespass act to Nova Scotia's outdoorsmen, including naturalists, has been a tradition of free access for so-called recreational purposes to all the wild lands of the province. My neighbours, for example, have always hunted and wandered about freely in the scrub country behind Indian Harbour, where you have to get back about a mile to reach Crown lands, without even thinking about whose boundaries you cross, and the notion that anyone should want to complain about this would seem odd and pointless to them. Though we might like to think of our purposes as something more than merely recreational, for the purpose of Bill 71 our interests pretty well parallel those of hikers, skiers, canoeists, hunters and fishermen. In Nova Scotia there is no such thing as a posted wilderness estate, a private salmon stream or a closed forest. And I, for one, like it that way!

All this increases in importance with the fact that of the eighty-odd percent of Nova Scotia which is forest, only 25% is Crown land, and three-quarters of that is leased out. In a province like Ontario, where 90% of the forest is Crown forest, a trespass act is a little easier to live with.

Bill 71, as read before the Legislature in early May, would have provided the legal structure for the owner, or occupier of any land, wild or otherwise, to forbid trespass on it. Trespassers would then be automatically guilty of an offense - maximum fine on summary conviction, one thousand dollars.

This would not have meant, of

But once posting starts, it has a way of spreading. It is a lot simpler to forbid all trespass than to try to distinguish between harmless and destructive persons. And the sort of people who want and can afford to buy large tracts of scenic land tend to like exclusivity. There is little reason, on the other hand, to take down the "no trespassing" signs once they have gone up. All over the continent the trend is towards a decrease in public access to land.

These concerns were discussed at the May 6 meeting of the Halifax Field Naturalists society, and the following motion was passed:

*"Be it resolved that the Halifax Field Naturalists recognise the need of owners of agricultural, commercial and residential land for better protection against interference with the legitimate use of their property. The group is also more than aware of the need for some control over the activities of motorised off-road vehicles in order to protect fragile eco-systems and the rights of recreationists who require a quieter environment. Without prejudice as to the appropriateness or adequacy of Bill 71 with respect to either of the above, we protest that it clearly contains the necessary legal machinery to do away with the relative freedom of access to wild lands which Nova Scotians have enjoyed in the past. We feel that a hardening of the philosophy of private property in this respect is particularly dangerous where most of the wild lands are privately owned, and most that are not are privately occupied. We request that Bill 71 be either withdrawn, or amended so that it no longer compromises the position of those who peacefully pass over wild lands to enjoy their natural and aesthetic values."*

*privately occupied. We request that Bill 71 be either withdrawn, or amended so that it no longer compromises the position of those who peacefully pass over wild lands to enjoy their natural and aesthetic values."*

There were no opposing votes, though not everyone present voted. A copy was duly sent to Harry W.

to attend a meeting or representatives of the Legislature and state any feelings they might have about it. Notice was too short to make a detailed study of the bill. Our president (Anne Greene) telephoned me, as the mover of the motion, the night before, and we were able only to talk briefly and get a copy of the bill from the Government Book Store before the meeting started.

Bill 107 is very like Bill 71, forbidding trespass outright on certain types of property and providing the legal structure for the posting of all other land. However it contains the following words near the end: (Section 15, part 2)

*"No person may be prosecuted for contravening any notice given pursuant to the act prohibiting entry or prohibiting activity on forest land if that person is hunting, fishing, picnicking, camping, hiking, skiing, or engaged in another recreational activity."*

Earlier in the section (Article 1) "forest land" is defined to include underbrush, barren ground, marsh and bog, thus extending its effect to most land not in active use, all be it at the expense of some violence to the English language.

At the meeting we expressed satisfaction with the apparent intent of Section 15, to protect public access to wild lands. We also reiterated our fears of a hardening line on private property, and expressed some reservations not related to our initial complaint. (The Bill has provisions regarding recreational vehicles which did not seem adequate from the point of view of environmental protection, and in general the position of an owner or occupier who wants to protect the natural integrity of his property is rather nebulous). But

with neither political and legal expertise, nor time to study the matter thoroughly, we did not think it wise to commit HFN to a position on the new bill. We finished by thanking the Study Committee for its response to our interest.

Bill 107, with some changes which I believe were minor, became law at the beginning of July. I should matter thoroughly, we did not think it wise to commit HFN to a position on the new bill. We finished by thanking the Study Committee for its response to our interest.

Bill 107, with some changes which I believe were minor, became law at the beginning of July. I should point out that it is a seven-page document with 16 sections and many sub-divisions. This division deals only with a few lines which seemed to me to be central to our interests.

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This makes rather a too neat story of a political action, and I want to make it clear that HFN really had very little to do with the course of events.

The bill was changed because of strong public opposition which, I suspect, took the Legislature by surprise, though it shouldn't have. The Land Resources Co-ordinating Committee, representing over a dozen groups including holiday resort owners, organised hunters, certain forestry interests and the Boy Scouts, took a loud and solid stand against it from the start. The Atlantic Salmon Foundation fought it, and sport salmon fishing is backed by very big money. Civil rights people were concerned. Organised labour was worried about the right to picket when on strike, and their representation is high powered and professional. On the other hand there was little pressure not to change. The bill was designed to satisfy urban-based pressures from commercial and residential interests, with little input from agriculture and from forestry. Its effect on wild lands was almost incidental.

By excluding wild lands from the Act the government was able to largely satisfy pressure from organised recreation groups and the businesses supported by outdoor recreation without really offending most of the people who had wanted the Act in the first place. Other areas of discontent were met with a few more inoffensive changes. There was no political reason not to respond to this widespread protest, and the addition of our voice to it made no difference to the outcome.

Alone, our input would have rated little more than a polite letter ("Thanks for your interest - we have every respect for your activities - sure your worries are unfounded - people aren't really going to post wild lands - bill certainly not intended to interfere with folks like you - keep up the good work, etc. etc:etc." The files of active environmentalists are glutted with such stuff).

I'm going though all this partly because I fear that some of our members, not used to much politicking in the meetings and newsletters, might be tempted to make too much of the apparent success of this business. (Also, since it has involved the group's taking a formal position and representing itself before the government, the matter should be reported to the membership anyway.) The real value of this involvement lies in the collecting of a little experience and the putting of our position (and our existence!) on record.

But had there been any really irreconcilable interests involved, it would have been a totally different story. Think of uranium mining for instance. Or spruce budworm spraying. Or the question of whether we are to have a balanced natural

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Which brings me to my final point  
- SOME DAY IT WILL BE.

- - - - -

The very existence of large tracts of undeveloped free space in Nova Scotia, never mind public access to them, is mainly due to the fact that until now no one has wanted that space. Elsewhere, the demand for summer cottages, large private estates and such facilities as ski lodges and resort hotels has given wild land a real cash value. We are aware of this here, but we haven't yet felt the full political impact of it.

Elsewhere, it has lead to increasing development on wild lands and the closing of much of what is left for the sake of privacy. More importantly it has polarised political pressure against any controls on land use for the sake of conservation or any other public interest. It is inconceivable that a meeting like the one we attended could be held in the more urbanised parts of the country without a strong delegation protesting that any compromise of the absolute right to keep trespassers off any property amounts to theft, and suggesting that the environmentalists, outdoor recreation groups, labour unions and all other groups with different ideas on the subject are "a bunch of damned communists". A look at the history of Ontario's attempt to protect the remaining natural and scenic values of the Niagara escarpment would be of interest to those who might think I exaggerate. It is a story of bitter, well-financed and largely successful opposition by developers, land own-

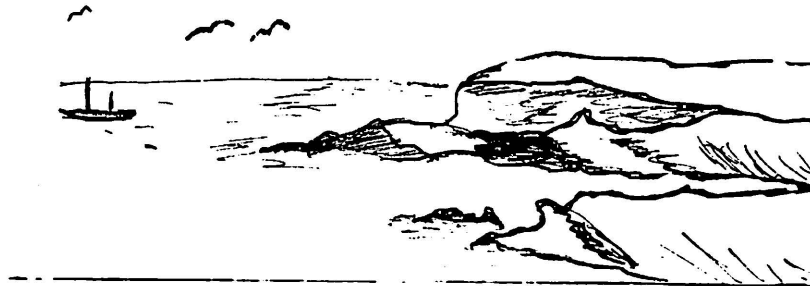


improve their tax bases, against the whole idea of controls on land use for the sake of the environment, public needs, or even orderly development. If something doesn't crack in this civilisation beforehand and knock the whole question of environmentalism and development into the realm of past history, our most wild and beautiful free spaces will eventually be threatened. Cape Split, for example, might profitably be subdivided into a good number of cottage sites with access by one private road, and the site on the trip from which we watch the nesting sea birds would fetch a premium price in the right market. Or, one man could buy the whole thing, and plant a six-foot strip of something or other across the base to give him legal authority to post it. There are a lot of nice spots in Nova Scotia, a comfortable distance from industrialised North America, yet easily accessible by road from the airport,

to people who can afford to travel. They are privately owned and prices, as yet, are relatively low. So are taxes. A lot has already been sold to investors and wealthy individuals from outside.

The real value of the Bill 71 controversy is that it should wake us up to the fact that we have something of value here in Nova Scotia which can no longer be taken for granted. The last generation never had to think about it, but the next generation will watch it erode unless this generation takes a stand. If we want a concept of wild land ownership which involves responsibility to the environment and the community the time to make that clear is now. Once the interests that stand to profit from the increasing cash value of wild lands have seen their danger and rallied themselves, it is almost impossible to take any but a rear-guard action.

Michael Downing.



CAPE SPLIT WALK -

This year's spring classic - the hike to Cape Split - was led by Joe Harvey on 29 May; unfortunately no one came up with a report for the Newsletter. I did hear that the path through the bog

This year's spring classic - the hike to Cape Split - was led by Joe Harvey on 29 May; unfortunately no one came up with a report for the Newsletter. I did hear that the path through the bog was the driest anyone remembered it for that time of the year!

But the usual highlight - that

was a big disappointment that day. The magnificent view was shrouded in fog - not even the seabird nesting sites on the jagged 'tooth' at the end of the peninsula could be clearly seen.

Cape Split is such a wonderful example of different habitats that it would be very nice if one (or a group) of enthusiastic HFN'ers would ing sites on the jagged 'tooth' at the end of the peninsula could be clearly seen.

Cape Split is such a wonderful example of different habitats that it would be very nice if one (or a group) of enthusiastic HFN'ers would write up a description of the area - geology, cliff walk, woodland trail, bog, flora, fauna, grassy plateau. Were there ever any homes there?



# field trips

## EARLY BIRD WALK THROUGH NOVA SCOTIA'S WOODS -

Site: somewhere along the Bicentennial Highway between Halifax and Bedford.

Guide: Erick Greene

Date: Saturday, 26 June 1982.

Weather: overcast, humid, 20°C.  
light wind.

Well, it wasn't really early. If it had been early, the birds would have been singing, of course. If it had been later, they wouldn't, but the people would have been there. So, Erick settled on an intermediate time - 7.00 a.m.

That morning, not a bird, particularly a warbler, escaped our attention. Armed with Erick's home-made "Key to the common warbler songs", binoculars and our attentive ears, we discovered a selection of Nova Scotia's warbler wealth (especially contrasting with European avifauna).

It took us a while to distinguish between all those songs, sub-songs, calls, alarms, etc., but parula, black-throated green, black-throated blue, American redstart, yellow-rumped, Canada, chestnut-sided, yellow warbler and ovenbird displayed their 'language'. The sweet "please-please-please to meet'cha" song of the chestnut-sided warbler was unforgettable. So was the ovenbird song. Did you ever have a chance to listen to the nightingale-like song of the hermit thrush? We did.

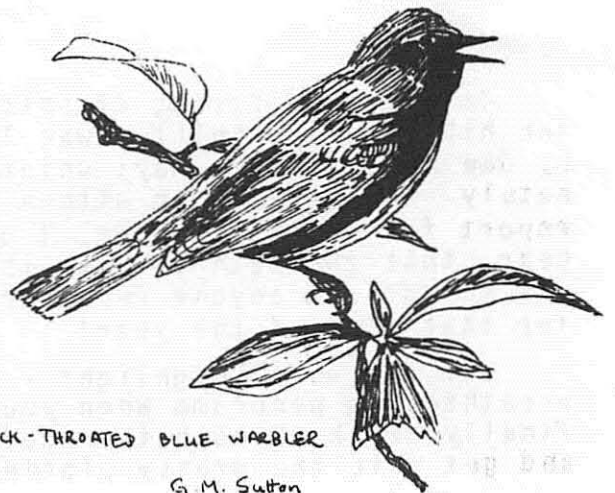
A pair of black-and-white warblers nervously brought insects to their young in an old woodpecker's nest; an ovenbird with a mouth full of insect goodies disappeared into its "oven" in the brush. Common flicker, eastern peewee, a young hermit thrush, which had recently fledged from its nest, and a flash of a red-tailed hawk completed the bird observations.

We also spent some time looking downwards - to the marvellous pink lady's slipper, which was at its best, the striped and the mountain maple, the tall meadow-rue, the strange sundew and pitcher-plant and the beautiful Arethusa orchid.

We discovered many difficult-to-catch red-backed salamanders under rotten logs.

A group photo rounded off this wonderful morning trip.

Filip Volckaert.



BLACK-THROATED BLUE WARBLER

G. M. Sutton

11

## RHODODENDRON FIELD TRIP -

Our mid-June field trip to Kentville to see the Rhododendrons and Azaleas at the Research Station started off poorly enough, heavy overcast and 5°C temperature at 9 a.m., but about 20 enthusiasts went anyway and appeared to be glad that they did.

Joe Harvey led us among the Rhododendron bushes on the bank above the lily pond explaining some of the intricacies of hybridising to achieve such exquisite clusters of bloom.

At the bottom of the bank by the pond are the oldest plantings, including a bed of R. catawbiense hybrids dating from just before 1952. These are the old 'ironclad' plants, so called because of their toughness, especially to cold. R. catawbiense is native to the Appalachians and has been the most widely used parental species in hybridising.

Towards the pond is a bed of the hybrid R. fortunei x R. smirnowii ('smirforts' in the jargon).

These were received from two growers in the USA as small seedling plants in 1952 and combine the good insect repellent leaves and large flowers of R. fortunei with the hardness of R. smirnowii. Fortune's Rhododendron was the first of the magnificent chinese Rhododendrons to be sent to Europe and stimulated the search for more, resulting in several hundred species being discovered over the next 80 years. Robert Fortune, the plant hunter, discovered it in eastern China in 1843 and the original seedlings are Rhododendron was the first of the magnificent chinese Rhododendrons to be sent to Europe and stimulated the search for more, resulting in several hundred species being discovered over the next 80 years. Robert Fortune, the plant hunter, discovered it in eastern China in 1855 and the original seedlings are

Two of the hybrid seedlings at Kentville had a deeper flower colour and were selected for propagation by cuttings. The two are close except they flower about a week apart. Originally they were named "Evangeline" & "Bellefontaine" (after the heroine of Longfellow's poem) but unfortunately the first name had already been used for a Rhododendron and was disallowed by the international registry of names. It was changed to "Fundy". The original mother plants of the two clones are marked with small labels.

Moving further along and up the bank the parental species and the other Kentville hybrids were examined. For instance the Japanese dwarf species R. yakusimanum and "Minas Maid" and "Minas Snow", which are its derivatives, were seen. "Yak" is used widely because of its effect in transmitting dwarfness and prolific flowering to its hybrids. Past Blair House, the old Director's House, now a museum, is the original clump of seedlings from which "Grand Pré" was selected, and nearby is the lath house where some of the remaining seedlings of diverse origin are still being evaluated.

On our way up to the picnic grounds we stopped to look at the brilliantly glowing Azaleas on the hill by the new Admin. Building.

Sad to say, the hybridising program is now ended. Work will henceforth be concentrated on propagating the seven named Kentville hybrids, trying to get commercial propagators to handle them (a big problem) and studying their propagation in containers. It is a pity that there will be no more hybridising done.

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After lunch we went back down the hill to the Ravine - one honeysuckle bush was in full bloom.

The water meadows were lush with grasses, sedges, common and creeping buttercup, wild mustard, Jack-go-to-bed-at-noon, cuckoo flowers, blue-eyed grass; and bordering the stream masses of forget-me-nots, a pungent water mint, water avens, and one tall, stalky asparagus plant. On the other side of the meadow a butter-nut tree grows beside a duckweed covered pond. Two European willows grace the clear-water stream, Salix alba with long leaves, and S. pentandra the bay willow with rounded, shiny yellow-green leaves.

The sun finally came out while we were in the Ravine, etching the still-tender-green leaves of the hardwoods against a clean blue sky. Perhaps we were a little late for the earlier spring flowers, but among the soft new green of lion's paw, Jack-in-the-pulpit, wild sarsparilla and cinque-foil, we found a scattering of violets, false solomon's seal, lily-of-the-valley, star-flower and a great deal of clintonia. Mary Primrose spotted one lone solomon's seal still in bloom and Roger Pocklington found an off-season mushroom.

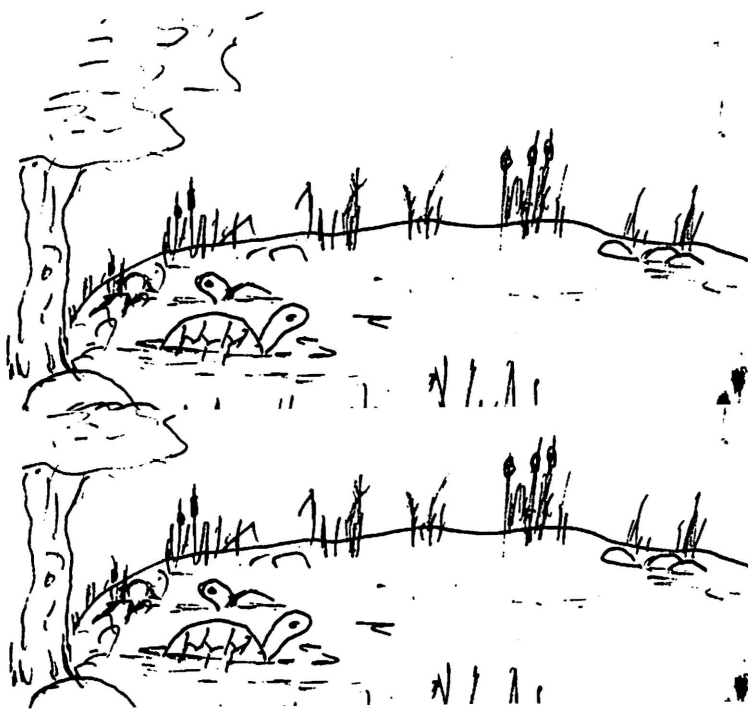
Maples, birch and other broad-leaved trees being in full leaf, ferns were rapidly replacing the early spring ground cover. Among the profusion of young ferns were New York, oak, beech, hayscented, woodland, fiddlehead, Christmas, onoclea, and in a sunwarmed spot under a break in the canopy, a large clump of tall interrupted fern. Bracken was also making a start. The waterfalls at the head of the Ravine were little more than a trickle this year - the profusion of young ferns were New York, oak, beech, hayscented, woodland, fiddlehead, Christmas, onoclea, and in a sunwarmed spot under a break in the canopy, a large clump of tall interrupted fern. Bracken was also making a start. The waterfalls at the head of the Ravine were little more than a trickle this year - the

On the way back Joe led us off the main path along the north side of the stream, where we found spotted coral root, having already seen the smaller yellow coral root, growing in the leafmold beneath the trees - most of these inconspicuous little plants growing dangerously close to the path. Here we also found a solitary pink lady's slipper. At one point along this path above the stream a slippage of the bank reveals a podzol soil profile in the sandy bank under a hemlock.

This part of the outing ended with Joe helping us to identify our 'treasures' - there must have been many more than I have mentioned. Thanks, Joe, for all your help and a well-led tour.

.....

By this time the sun was strong, encouraging several of us to stay to photograph or just walk again around the Rhododendron and Azalea gardens. Later, during an ice-cream stop at Hennigar's Market, we spotted two turtles (probably Eastern Painted Turtles) motionless in the weedy pond next to the store.



A few members of the group included a side trip to the gypsum quarry to look for yellow lady's slipper in their mossy cushions among the hardwoods. Fringing the banks we found small gypsum ragwort and buttercups in bloom, dogwoods and rose bushes, and many murmuring grey aspen. While Mary Primrose photographed some of the more spectacular lady's slipper, three of us took a walk along the gypsum escarpment to a long, reedy pond where a pair of what appeared to be black ducks rose and circled away at our approach. A red-winged black-bird sang cheerfully from the topmost branch of a nearby spruce.



In more remote and less accessible parts of the quarry are tiny, rare ramshead lady's slipper - so I've heard - but we only saw the sturdier, more prolific, yellow variety. Only the hum and swish of cars passing on the highway disturb the quiet of this lovely, peaceful spot. So, from the Valley warmth

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INSECT CONTROL - Insights from a bygone era, taken from a "how to" book written in 1880 by an English gardener, Charles W. Quin, entitled Garden Receipts. (extracted from a recent issue of the Mail-Star).

Ants: scatter half-picked bones about. These will soon be covered with ants, and can then be thrown into a vessel of boiling water, after which they should be again laid down to attract a fresh batch of ants."

Mosquitos: being very much disturbed in his sleep by Mosquitos, took it into his head to place a young plant of Eucalyptus in his bedroom overnight. From that moment the insects disappeared, and he slept in comfort. I have been following his example with the same result. A few Tomato plants trained across the windows will also have the same result."

Rats: fill a barrel half-full of water and sprinkle a layer of powdered cork on its surface, and over this sift a layer of flour or oatmeal. Place a chair and a box or two in the neighbourhood, whereby the rat will be enabled to gain the edge of the barrel. He sees nothing but the meal; he has no innate ideas which teach him to beware of the treacherous foundation on which that tempting surface rests. He sniffs, he leaps, and goes gently down through meal and cork to his waterygrave... his friends...hasten after him to get their share of the probable plunder, and are in their turn taken in by hospitable death. "

my favourite is this one -

cork to his waterygrave... his friends...hasten after him to get their share of the probable plunder, and are in their turn taken in by hospitable death. "

my favourite is this one -

"Weeds on lawns: if the lawn be

HALIFAX PUBLIC GARDENS

*A Brief History, an Account of The Trees and a Map.*  
by

Colin Stewart with assistance from M.J. Harvey.

Introduction: This is Area Study No.3 of a series put out by the Halifax Field Naturalists. The series aims to provide accounts of the history and natural history of popular sites in Nova Scotia. At the moment we need volunteers to work on Hemlock Ravine, The Dingle, Conrad Beach, Smiley's Intervale and McNab's Island, since earlier groups working on these sites collapsed. The accounts so far published have proved to be valuable guides to their areas and, in fact, are the first published record in each case.

The article is in three sections: the first is a summary of the early history of the gardens; the second discusses the history of the trees in the gardens and the third is a numbered list of the tree species, together with a correspondingly-marked map of the gardens. This latter should be very useful when strolling round the footpaths.

Most of the tree species in the Gardens are not native to Nova Scotia and thus there is an opportunity to observe differences and make comparisons with local species. The tree list is reasonably complete although some species and hybrids provided headaches, especially the multiplicity of elm and elm hybrids. There may be a few scientific names requiring correction and we would appreciate any corrections or additional information. Send your letter to the editor of the HFN Newsletter for publishing in a future issue.

HISTORY

In the 1830's Halifax stretched from North Street to South Street and as far inland as Gottingen Street in the north, South Park near the Citadel and Queen in the south. There was a large area of Commons beyond this, and roads criss-crossed the peninsula to provide access to outlying farms, cottages and communities.

In 1835 Sackville Street ended at Bell and South Park; South Park ended at Spring Garden Road, but Spring Garden ran straight at least as far as Robie on its way to summer residences on the N.W. Arm. Tower Road left Spring Garden at the same angle that it does provide access to outlying farms, cottages and communities.

In 1835 Sackville Street ended at Bell and South Park; South Park ended at Spring Garden Road, but Spring Garden ran straight at least as far as Robie on its way to summer residences on the N.W. Arm. Tower Road left Spring Garden

The area from today's Commons to today's Victoria Park was largely marsh and bog. A small river drained through the Egg Pond (the now dry cement 'pool' opposite the CBC TV studios) through the N.S. Museum and Wanderer's Grounds to Griffin's Pond in the Public Gardens, along its present course to pass under Pyke's Bridge (at Spring Garden Rd. between South Park and Tower), through Victoria Park and down between Smith and Victoria where fill was later dumped to build up the piers and railway, but which was at that time saltmarsh across Pleasant Street. Pyke's Bridge explains why Public Gardens, along its present course to pass under Pyke's Bridge (at Spring Garden Rd. between South Park and Tower), through Victoria Park and down between Smith and Victoria where fill was later dumped to build up the piers and railway, but which was at that time saltmarsh across Pleasant

outh Park didn't go further at that time. Summer and Carleton streets were not yet throughways, but were laid out as shown.

In 1836 the lots on both sides of Spring Garden Rd. were offered by the City for long-term lease. At the same time a number of local horticulturists were trying to form a society. The Nova Scotia Horticultural Society came into existence on September 17, 1836 with the publication of its by-laws. The Society immediately secured leases for the lots on the north side of Spring Garden Rd. The lots extended about a third of the way toward where Sackville St. would later be.

The Society set out flower beds and vegetable gardens. In order to finance the organisation everything they grew was for sale, and several interesting catalogues are preserved in the Nova Scotia archives.

In 1848 the Society built a meeting hall, the cellar of which was used to overwinter sensitive bulbs and plants. The present canteen is on the same site.

In 1859 the military built an indoor skating rink on South Park St., just behind the Society's gardens.

The actual Public Gardens got their start in Paris where John McCullough was so impressed by a square opposite his hotel that he sketched it. The next year, 1867, as a Halifax Alderman and head of the Commons Committee, he had an area next to the skating rink bedded out in a similar pattern. (In previous years the site had been used as an unofficial dump).

These were Halifax's first public gardens. It is recorded that they were 'much admired'. Nonetheless, the next year the Commons Committee, under a different head, sowed the flower beds with oats and closed the gardens.

Closed it remained until 1870, when another enthusiastic gardener, William Barrow, became Chairman of the Commons Committee. He, with other enthusiasts, revived the gardens, contributing both labour and plants from his own gardens and greenhouse.

In 1872 Richard Power was hired as "Keeper of the Commons". He had emigrated from Ireland, where he had learned his gardening, via Philadelphia (where he designed their gardens) and Boston. He was gardener on a local estate when hired by the City. He was soon retitled Superintendent of the Commons, a position which he held until his retirement in 1915.

He arranged to have excavation material and street sweepings dumped in the bog west of Griffin's pond. This area was then levelled, laid out and planted the next year.

Meanwhile the Horticultural Society had been slipping out of vogue and into the red. It had been kept alive for several years by appeals to a few dedicated members. By 1874 the Society was considering selling their property for building lots. Unfortunately (or fortunately) they actually owned outright very little of the land. Instead, through the prompting of a few of the members, the Society sold everything to the City for \$15,000. This paid off all their debts, the remaining money being donated to the Gardens and used to build a greenhouse.

The fence separating the two gardens was quickly demolished, the more appropriate of the Society's plant stocks were planted, and the rest (including thousands of roses) were sold. In those days the Public Gardens received some money from the City, but were expected to generate additional funds themselves. By 1874 the Public Gardens had reached their present size, except for the enclave containing the

cont'd

The main entrance remained just to the north of the rink. The main walkway was the long straight path which passes the south shore of the pond. One of the projects of the late 1870's changed the shape of the pond from a perfect (natural) square to its present shape. The pond was also made shallower, the centre island created and the banks sloped gently path which passes the south shore of the pond. One of the projects of the late 1870's changed the shape of the pond from a perfect (natural) square to its present shape. The pond was also made shallower, the centre island created and the banks sloped gently to the water.

Concerts began in the Public Gardens in 1870. Initially, apart from the weekly free concerts, there were special concerts several times a year with guest conductors or bands. These were used as fundraisers to subsidise the Garden's finances.

A bandstand had been built, but by 1887 it needed replacing. A new one was built as part of the celebration of Queen Victoria's Golden Anniversary. The current bandstand, built in 1967, is a replica of the 1887 one.

The rink had ceased to be used for skating in the early 1880's, and other uses for it had failed. In 1889 it was demolished and a new entrance and pavilion built. The present main gates were imported from Glasgow, Scotland, and set up in front of the entranceway.

The Victoria fountain in the centre of the northwest section, dates from the 1897 Jubilee. The Boer War fountain in the northeast section, commemorating those killed in action, dates from 1903.

In 1907 the white wood fence which had surrounded the Gardens was replaced by the present wrought iron fence - also imported from Glasgow. The main entrance was moved to its current position on the corner of Spring Garden and

lapidated in 1907, was removed within a few years. The entranceway seems to have stood longer (ca 1920).

The building now housing the canteen stands on the original site of the Horticultural Society's meeting hall, but is at least the fourth one.

(ca 1920).

The building now housing the canteen stands on the original site of the Horticultural Society's meeting hall, but is at least the fourth one.



#### TREES IN THE PUBLIC GARDEN -

The Gardens occupy what was once wasteland - bog and marsh. If there were any trees originally, they were either cleared because of the Citadel or used by the townspeople for firewood. There is no mention of clearing for either garden (and the area was being filled). The Horticultural Society used the land to grow flowers and vegetables. It is unlikely that they would have planted many trees. However, they did stock trees. Among the Horticultural Society's possessions purchased by the City was half an acre of forest tree nursery.

Richard Power began to plant some trees in 1872. Most were planted in 1875 when the Society's nursery stock was used to plant elms down the main walkway and on the path beside Sackville Street. The path along the northern end of Summer St. was planted with elms on the outside and lindens on the inside.

contd.



George Lawson, the presiding genius in all things botanical and agricultural in the latter part of the 19th century (he was Professor of Chemistry and Natural History at Dalhousie University, but apparently did little chemistry), contributed notes to the several local newspapers over many years. One of his more elaborate descriptions was 'Hortus Halifaxiensis - An Outline Guide To Our Public Gardens, Which Will be Found Instructive'. This appeared in May 1889 and consisted of a list of the trees with notes about each. The introduction reads:

*"The gardens commissioners have signalized the opening of the public gardens this season by an improvement of an unobtrusive kind that is being carried out in a careful and satisfactory manner by Mr. Power, the superintendent. The more important trees and plants are being provided with neatly painted board labels, bearing, in easily read letters, their botanical and common names. Citizens, and especially the teachers and pupils of our public schools, will know how to appreciate this inexpensive addition to the usefulness of the garden. The following notes may serve as a kind of reference index to the trees and plants, so far as they are now labelled."*

Many of the trees he describes are still present although some seem to have succumbed.

There are few references to the planting of specific trees after 1875. All the trees were labelled in 1897, but no list has been found. A Florida palm was donated to the Gardens by the Governor of Georgia in celebration of Queen to have succumbed.

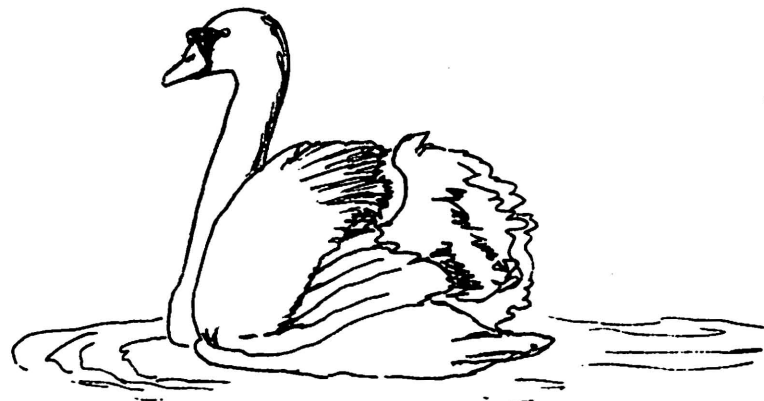
There are few references to the planting of specific trees after 1875. All the trees were labelled in 1897, but no list has been found. A Florida palm was donated to the Gardens by the Governor of Georgia in celebration of Queen

The next useful description of the trees in the Gardens is in a series of articles by D.A. Story, published in the Evening Echo in the summer of 1925. For the benefit of readers who were not familiar with the variety of trees in the Gardens he took the major paths and listed the species to be found on each side, occasionally digressing to include botanical notes on the trees, or comments on the flowers in bloom.

We have not found any references to trees after 1925 (except to say how lovely they are). A more thorough search might reveal that newspaper notes of this type held too little appeal.

In any case after the 1920's the economy suffered a depression, but long before that the power and wealth of Nova Scotia had passed to Upper Canada. Joseph Howe had, after all, been proven correct.

But at the same time the economic decline of Nova Scotia had a beneficial effect. When times were good we could afford the Halifax Public Gardens, when times were poor we couldn't afford to modernise them. The result is that we have a perfectly preserved, well maintained Victorian garden. The best in Canada.

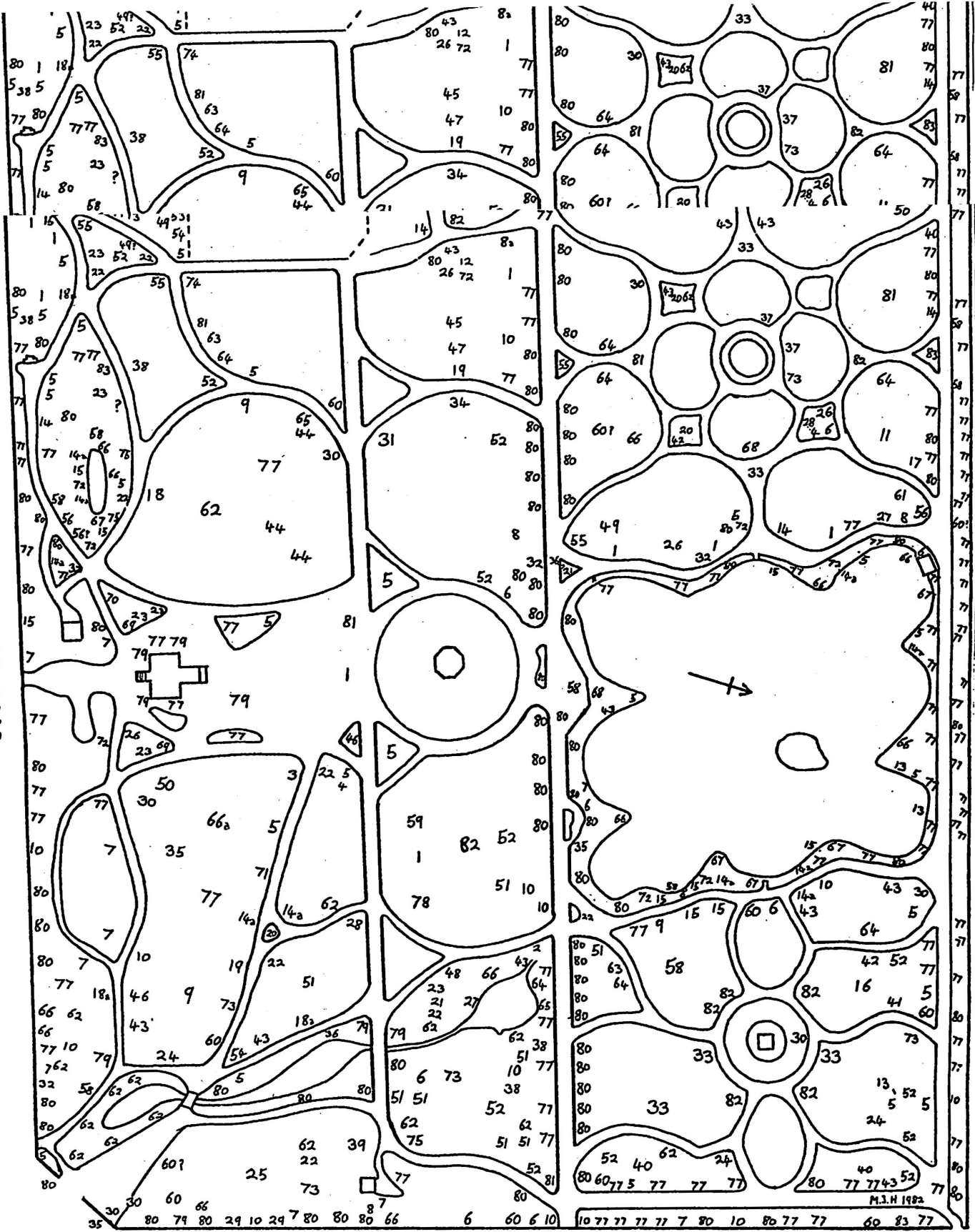


Thanks are due to the Director



Thanks are due to the Director

SPRING GARDEN ROAD.



SOUTH PARK STREET.  
HALIFAX PUBLIC GARDENS  
(Area Study #3)

M.J.H 1982

- |      |  |                        |
|------|--|------------------------|
| 1.   | <i>Acer campestre</i>                                    | hedge maple            |
| 2.   | <i>A. ginnale</i>  | amur maple             |
| 3.   | <i>A. negundo</i>  | manitoba maple         |
| 4.   | <i>A. palmatum</i> var. <i>atropurpureum</i>             | japanese maple         |
| 5.   | <i>A. platanoides</i>                                    | norway maple           |
| 6.   | <i>A. p.</i> var. <i>schwedleri</i>                      | red norway maple       |
| 7.   | <i>A. pseudoplatanus</i>                                 | sycamore maple         |
| 8.   | <i>A. p.</i> var. <i>aureo-variegatum</i>                | variegated sycamore    |
| 8a.  | <i>A. rubrum</i>   | red maple              |
| 9.   | <i>A. saccharinum</i>                                    | silver maple           |
| 10.  | <i>Aesculus hippocastanum</i>                            | horsechestnut          |
| 11.  | <i>A. parviflora</i>                                     | buckeye                |
| 12.  | <i>Amelanchier laevis</i>                                | indian pear            |
| 13.  | <i>Aralia elata</i>                                      | hercules club          |
| 14.  | <i>Betula lutea</i>                                      | yellow birch           |
| 14a. | <i>B. papyrifera</i>                                     | paper birch            |
| 15.  | <i>B. pendula</i>  | european birch         |
| 16.  | <i>B. p.</i> var. <i>youngii</i>                         | weeping birch          |
| 17.  | <i>B. p.</i> var. <i>fastigiata</i>                      | corkscrew birch        |
| 18.  | <i>Carya ovata</i>                                       | shagbark hickory       |
| 18a. | <i>Castanea dentata</i>                                  | american chestnut      |
| 19.  | <i>Catalpa speciosa</i>                                  | indian bean tree       |
| 20.  | <i>Cercidiphyllum japonicum</i>                          | katsura                |
| 21.  | <i>Chamaecyparis pisifera</i> var. <i>aurea</i> .        | golden false cypress   |
| 22.  | <i>C. p.</i> var. <i>plumosa</i>                         | false cypress forms    |
| 23.  | <i>C. p.</i> var. <i>squarrosa</i>                       | (need sorting)         |
| 24.  | <i>Corylus maxima</i> var. <i>atropurpurea</i>           | purple filbert         |
| 25.  | <i>Cotinus coggygria</i>                                 | smoketree              |
| 26.  | <i>Crataegus monogyna</i>                                | hawthorn               |
| 27.  | <i>Davidia involucreta</i>                               | ghost tree             |
| 28.  | <i>Euonymus europaeus</i>                                | spindletree            |
| 29.  | <i>Fagus sylvatica</i>                                   | european beech         |
| 30.  | <i>F. sylvatica</i> var. <i>purpurea</i>                 | purple european beech  |
| 31.  | <i>F. s.</i> var. <i>pendula</i>                         | weeping european beech |
| 32.  | <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>                                | european ash           |
| 33.  | <i>F. e.</i> var. <i>pendula</i>                         | weeping european ash   |
| 34.  | <i>Ginkgo biloba</i>                                     | maidenhair tree        |
| 35.  | <i>Gleditsia triacanthos</i>                             | honey locust           |
| 36.  | <i>Juniperus chinensis</i> var. /<br><i>niltzonianna</i> | ofitzer's juniper      |
| 32.  | <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>                                | european ash           |
| 33.  | <i>F. e.</i> var. <i>pendula</i>                         | weeping european ash   |
| 34.  | <i>Ginkgo biloba</i>                                     | maidenhair tree        |
| 35.  | <i>Gleditsia triacanthos</i>                             | honey locust           |
| 36.  | <i>Juniperus chinensis</i> var. /<br><i>pfitzeriana</i>  | pfitzer's juniper      |
| 37.  | <i>Laburnum x vossii</i>                                 | laburnum               |
| 38.  | <i>Larix leptolepis</i>                                  | japanese larch         |

41.	<i>Magnolia x soulangeana</i>	saucer magnolia
42.	<i>M. stellata</i>	star magnolia
43.	<i>Malus (hybrids)</i>	flowering crab
44.	<i>M. pumila</i>	crab apple
45.	<i>Morus alba</i>	white mulberry
46.	<i>M. a. var. pendula</i>	weeping mulberry
47.	<i>Phellodendron amurense</i>	amur cork tree
48.	<i>Picea glauca</i>	white spruce
49.	<i>P. pungens</i>	colorado blue spruce
50.	<i>P. p. var. kosteri</i>	koster blue spruce
51.	<i>Pinus cembra</i>	stone pine
52.	<i>P. nigra</i>	austrian (or black) pine
53.	<i>P. palustris</i>	long-leaf pine
54.	<i>P. sylvestris</i>	scots pine
55.	<i>Platanus x acerifolia</i>	london plane
56.	<i>Prunus virginiana</i>	choke cherry
57.	<i>Pseudotsuga menziesii</i>	douglas fir
58.	<i>Quercus borealis</i>	northern red oak
59.	<i>Q. petraea</i>	durmast oak
60.	<i>Q. robur</i>	english (or pin) oak
61.	<i>Q. r. var. concordia</i>	yellow english oak
62.	<i>Rhododendron catawbiensis</i>	rhododendron (various hybrids)
63.	<i>R. luteum</i>	yellow azalea
64.	<i>R. mollis</i>	mollis hybrid azaleas
65.	<i>Rhus typhina</i>	staghorn sumach
66.	<i>Salix alba</i>	european willow
66a.	<i>S. babylonica</i>	weeping willow
67.	<i>S. pentandra</i>	bay-leaved willow
68.	<i>Sambucus nigra var. aurea</i>	golden elder
69.	<i>Sciadopitys verticillata</i>	japanese umbrella pine
70.	<i>Sorbaria sorbifolia</i>	false spiraea
71.	<i>S. x arnoldacea</i>	arnold rowan
72.	<i>S. aucuparia</i>	rowan
73.	<i>Syringa japonica</i>	tree lilac
74.	<i>Taxodium distichum</i>	swamp cypress
75.	<i>Taxus x media</i>	hybrid yew
76.	<i>Tilia cordata</i>	small-leaf linden
77.	<i>T. x europaea</i>	linden
78.	<i>T. tomentosa</i>	woolly linden
79.	<i>Ulmus americana</i>	american elm
80.	<i>U. glabra</i>	wych (scotch) elm
81.	<i>U. g. var. lutescens (?)</i>	golden elm
82.	<i>U. g. var. camperdownii</i>	weeping elm
83.	<i>Tilia cordata</i>	small-leaf linden
77.	<i>T. x europaea</i>	linden
78.	<i>T. tomentosa</i>	woolly linden
79.	<i>Ulmus americana</i>	american elm
80.	<i>U. glabra</i>	wych (scotch) elm
81.	<i>U. g. var. lutescens (?)</i>	golden elm
82.	<i>U. g. var. camperdownii</i>	weeping elm
83.	<i>U. procera</i>	english elm (elms are a problem)