



THE FIRST 40 YEARS (1975-2015)

A History of the Halifax Field Naturalists
as recorded in the pages of
THE HALIFAX FIELD NATURALIST

FIRST DECADE (by Doris Butters)

Part 1 History Issue No. 80, pp 4-7

Part 2 Community Projects Issue No. 82, pp 6-9

SECOND DECADE (by Ursula Grigg)

Part 1 People/Activities Issue No. 84, pp 6-7

Part 2 People/Activities Issue No. 87, pp 8-9

THIRD DECADE (by Stephanie Robertson)

Part I 1995-1997 Issue No. 118, pp 18-20

Part II 1998-2001 Issue No. 119, pp 12-15

Part III 2002-2005 Issue No. 120, pp 10-12

30th ANNIVERSARY CONTRIBUTIONS

Members' Reminiscences Issue No. 122, pp 9-16

Issue No. 123, pp 6-7

FOURTH DECADE

Part I 2005-2007 Issue No. 157, pp 8-12 (by U. Grigg and S. Robertson)

2007-2010 Issue No. 158, pp 8-12 (by Stephanie Robertson)

Part II 2010-2012 Issue No. 159, pp 10-14 (by Shirley McIntyre)

2012-2015 Issue No. 160, pp 6-13 (by Shirley McIntyre)

40th ANNIVERSARY CONTRIBUTIONS

Members' Offerings/Poems Issue No. 157, pp 4-6

Issue No. 158, pp 7-9

Issue No. 159, pp 7-10

HALIFAX FIELD NATURALISTS THE FIRST TEN YEARS — 1975-85



Downy Alder



Pussy Willow



Speckled Alder



Balsam Poplar



Scotch Elm

PART 1 - HISTORY

Prior to the 1970s the natural beauty and many unique features of Nova Scotia were not widely appreciated by the general public. Although a vigorous and well-organised Bird Society of Nova Scotia had attracted many people interested in nature, this enthusiasm for bird-life virtually blocked interest in other areas. The only other organised outings in the Halifax area were walks for schoolchildren led by Pierre Taschereau, then a part-time worker at the Nova Scotia Museum; and nature walks for all ages to Cape Split, led by Dalhousie professor of Botany Joe Harvey. There was a clear need for a naturalists' club with broader interests in the general natural history of Nova Scotia.

At about the same time several graduate students in the Biology Department at Dalhousie University began to feel that they were learning too little about living things, and that there were too few opportunities to learn in the field. Anne Linton and Paul Keddy, who were co-operating on a project for Environmental Studies, spent hours in the old Ecology Action Centre in the basement of the Forrest Building discussing the problem, and out of these talks the Dalhousie Field Naturalists was born. Paul, Anne, Winifred Cairns, Cathy Keddy, Scott Cunningham, and Colin Stewart worked together to organise a club which might interest about a dozen people. However, more than 40 attended the first meeting, held in the 8th floor lounge of the Life Sciences Building, to hear Ian McLaren speak on Sable Island.

After that, regular meetings were held on the second Tuesday of each month on the 5th floor of the Biology Building — a map had to be provided for those outside the Biology Department! Then, as Anne recalls... "the real work began; typing articles, making schedules of walks and talks, and printing a newsletter by hand on an old Gestetner in a back room downtown somewhere (I think it was a woman's crisis centre or something), — anyway they let us use their paper and printer for free. I remember spending many a late night there. But in those days it didn't seem like work. We were all enthusiastic about what we were trying to do... learn and educate..."

Enthusiasm developed and membership grew rapidly "but never in those days" says Anne, "to the point where we didn't know everyone. We had helping hands from other Biology students at Dalhousie, while many professors and Nova Scotia Museum staff gladly gave lectures and led walks." Soon, however, it was felt that the name DALHOUSIE Field Naturalists and the meeting place in the Life Sciences Building might be intimidating to the non-university people the club wished to attract, especially at a time when the natural history movement across North America was largely made up of dedicated amateurs.

So in the fall of 1975 the fledgling society changed its name to HALIFAX Field Naturalists. Paul Brodie inaugurated the first meeting with a slide talk on the animal, plant, and human life of the Arctic, providing a glimpse of the aesthetic beauty and power of the landscape, and evincing great respect for the abilities of the Inuit he met there.

The Dalhousie Association of Biology Students donated a grant to help start-up; annual dues were set at \$2.00, and a Constitution was drawn up. Facilities for meetings and a mailing address were sought and generously granted by the Nova Scotia Museum. HFN was off and running.

The first executive — Debbie Burleson, Winifred Cairns, Scott Cunningham, and Anne Linton, under the presidency of Paul Keddy — worked long and hard, often to the detriment of their professional studies. Paul recalls his supervisor's concern that Paul was spending too much time at natural history, to the neglect of his PhD thesis. "There's no doubt" he writes "I could have published at least one more scholarly paper had I not worked with HFN, but in retrospect, which was the more worthwhile experience? I'd do the same thing all over again. I think we all face such difficult decisions every day, when we try to balance the conflicting demands on our time. It's always easy to say, 'Well tonight I'll spend time with the family, or this month I have to write a paper', or whatever our particular pressure happens to be, but when we examine it carefully, the 'other activities' have important rewards too. So I



Daphne



Elm

didn't take my supervisor's advice at that point."

The hard work resulted in monthly meetings both varied and interesting, and popular field trips; some outings became firm favourites, particularly the fall mushroom walk, the late winter visit to the 'sugar bush' for sugaring-off, and of course the annual hike to Cape Split to look for early spring flowers.

By 1975 the newsletter had become a regular feature; at first monthly, then five a year, then six a year, settling finally at four a year. Initial production was a bit rough as by that time Paul, the editor, was printing the newsletter on an old Gestetner in the Biology Department. The content was of a high standard however, as many contributions were by members of science departments. Often, line drawings accompanied the articles, many of them quite amusing. Later, Debbie Burleson became editor and persuaded Lynton Martin, Director of the Nova Scotia Museum, to permit her to print it on museum equipment.

The seventies were years of growing public awareness of dangers to the environment: over-development, acid rain, deforestation, toxic wastes, and chemical pollution. Halifax Field Naturalists played a small part in educating the public through lectures, field trips, and symposia on these problems. As Paul says in an editorial in newsletter No. 1:

Nova Scotia is indeed blessed with a great biotic diversity — from sand dunes to salt marshes, cliffs to hardwood forests, lakes to the ocean, there is an abundance of life forms. They range in size from plankton to whales. Yet few among us are equipped to recognise or adequately appreciate this diversity. The first goal of the Halifax Field Naturalists was therefore to be education — of both our members and eventually the community at large — to increase our appreciation for Nova Scotia's natural history. Our role in conservation activities is under considerable discussion. It is clear that as naturalists we have a vested interest in the protection of wildlife and their habitats. Two avenues of approach need to be considered: one, the creation of wildlife reserves, and two, an attempt to change the destructive aspects of our current technological society which makes such reserves necessary... I hope members will give some thought to our position in this matter. It was most gratifying at the first meeting to see that all members agreed that conservation must be an eventual role of the Halifax Field Naturalists...



Balm-of-Gilead



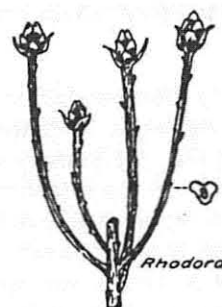
Crack Willow



Purple Osier



Trembling Aspen



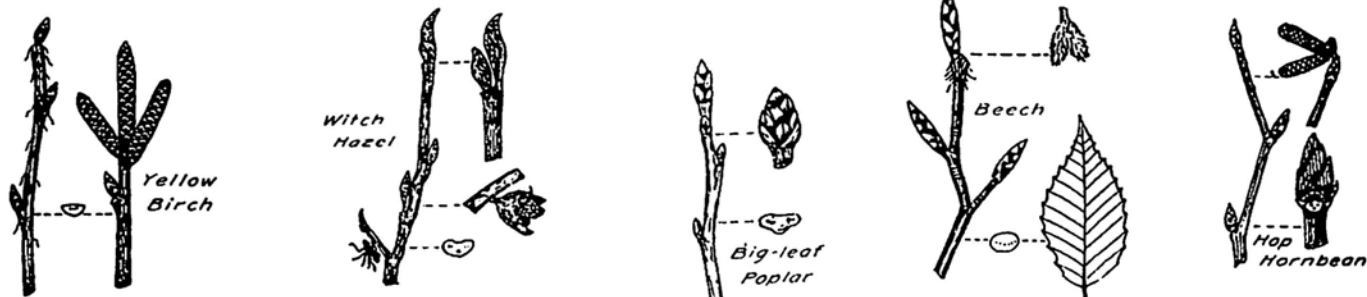
Rhodora

To that end the society began to participate in community environmental programs. Letters of concern or protest were sent to government departments, and periodic symposia or panel discussions on conservation issues were held.

From the club's inception in 1975, to December 1976, membership increased from 75 to 208. The first Annual General Meeting, held on January 22, 1977, in Room 2840 of the Life Sciences Building, was highlighted by a Symposium on Nature Preservation in Nova Scotia. Eighty members attended, and President Paul Keddy attributed the reason for success to the willing way in which many members had helped so that not all the work fell on the shoulders of the Executive.

1976 and 1977 proved to be particularly productive years for community involvement by HFN members often working quietly and consistently behind the scenes. A Seminar on Budworm Spraying and a Planning Workshop on Kejimikujik were held, a submission was presented to the Berger Commission, and a protest was lodged against City trees being sprayed with chemical pesticides. The Metropolitan Area Planning Commission (MAPC) recommendations for setting aside lands for seven parks had been superseded by 'The Porter Plan' which greatly reduced the amount of proposed parkland, and it was felt necessary for the society to express its concern on this issue by letters to the government.

Also in 1977, the Halifax/Dartmouth Annual Regional High School Science Fair was inaugurated and HFN offered a book prize — a scroll beautifully hand-lettered by Pat Evans — and a year's membership for the best project in natural history or conservation. The judges — Estelle Laberge, Howard Ross, and Paul Keddy — were disappointed by the emphasis placed on technology and engineering. There were few entries in HFN's categories. However, a prize was awarded to Stella Couban, Grade 10, Sir John A. MacDonald High School, for her work on Water Quality in various Lakes and Bedford Basin.



For 1977 Heather Harbord succeeded Paul as President, and at the first meeting of the new Executive it was decided "...not to have speakers interviewed on radio as this results in too large an audience for the space available"! Then the question was raised as to whether both auditorium rooms should be opened up. Halcyon days? However, the 1976 Salamander Crawl had been taped for Sunday morning's Maritime Magazine and appeared later on the 'National' programme "Five Nights". Ten years later, media interviews were more than welcomed! Also that year the first HFN brochure was designed and produced by Paul Keddy.

Early in 1977, it became obvious that NSM's commitment to the Department of Education had increased to the point where their print shop could no longer handle outside newsletters. HFN was trying to produce five issues a year with programme flyers in the intervals; members tried to print these themselves on equipment at MOVE — Movement for Citizens Voice and Action — a recently-formed citizens' advocacy group located in downtown Halifax. Fortunately by the end of 1978 the Nova Scotia Museum was once again able to print our newsletter — a courtesy for which the society was eternally grateful.

Before the end of her term of office Heather transferred to the West Coast and Kathy Aldous served the rest of her term as Acting-President. At that time administrative tasks were divided between the Treasurer and the dual position of Secretary and Membership-Secretary, and the club had no official Programme Committee. Executive meetings were not held on a regular basis but called when deemed necessary, and they were often held during a noon hour in the Botany Lab at Dalhousie University. Programmes were usually discussed at such Executive meetings, and proposals for walks and talks were put forward and implemented by the Executive.

By 1978 membership had risen and enthusiasm was high. At the Second Annual General Meeting in February 1978, Joe Harvey was elected President and Anne Linton the first Vice-President. In her presidential report, Kathy Aldous commented on the rapid growth of the club noting that membership had passed the 300 mark, and that HFN was now recognised as a responsible conservation

organisation as well as an active natural history society. In paying tribute to the dedication and hard work of the founding Executive (led by enthusiastic and apparently tireless Paul Keddy), and the volunteers who performed the majority of tasks, Kathy called on members to become more active in supplying ideas, leadership, enthusiasm, and effort. Writing for, and helping publish the newsletter, keeping accounts, writing briefs, leading walks, and presenting programmes were all areas where help was needed, as well as in the sharing the many small but important jobs within the group. Increasing costs necessitated dues being raised again, this time to \$5.00 for an individual and \$7.00 for a family.

1978 was a comparatively quiet, mainly routine year. Interesting and informative slide talks continued, and monthly field trips usually attracted a good turnout. Letters of protest were written, mostly by individuals, and Joe Harvey continued to keep a wary eye on the annual tree spraying program in Halifax.

In 1979 Paul was appointed to the Department of Botany and Genetics at Guelph University, and the Keddys transferred to Ontario; Paul's work on Nova Scotia's Forgotten Corner — the Tusket River Valley — had developed into a continuing research project on rare and endangered plant species of the disjunct coastal plain in the southern corner of the province.

As the original graduate students and university teachers in HFN moved on to positions elsewhere, and as the membership changed, lay people from outside began to replace the university community on the HFN executive. Unfortunately, more and more administrative work and newsletter writing fell on the president's shoulders. In fact it became difficult to find anyone to write on science subjects for the newsletter. To encourage contributions from less science-oriented members, and to create a useful and permanent record of outings, a more formal Field Trip Report Section was started. (In 1982, Filip Volckæert, a marine biology student from Belgium, designed a format for field trip reports which simplified writing them.) Members were also encouraged to send in verse, anecdotes, helpful hints, reports on symposia or meetings, and book reports — so long as it was about natural history, the contribution need not be scientific.

Basswood,
Linden



Silver Maple



Anne Linton, who had spent several summers studying seabirds in the Arctic, had become increasingly perturbed about the potential damage to their habitats from the proposed test drilling for oil in the Beaufort Sea. For the society's AGM in February 1979, a successful Symposium was held on this topic, resulting in many letters of concern being sent to the Prime Minister.

Although 1979 proved to be a year of reduced activity in many natural history societies, and HFN membership declined to 181, individuals continued to work at personal projects.

Anne became president for 1980-81 and in that year Marjorie Willison, then Membership Chairman, modernised HFN's mailing list and introduced the computerised address and label printing system which has become permanent. And in that year also, a programme of area studies was initiated to find out just what did exist in local natural areas.

In 1981 the Museum kindly offered HFN space on the bottom shelf of the bookcase in the foyer; magazines, newsletters from other clubs and government information were readily available there for club members to read.

In the summer of 1981 Erick Greene's research program took him to Princeton University, and the society lost the expertise of both Erick and Anne, now Mrs. Greene. Doris Butters agreed to serve as Acting President for the remainder of Anne's term, with John van der Meer as Co-president; Doris and John continued as Co-presidents during 1982 and 1983. John was elected President for the period of 1984-85.

In 1982 and 1983, budget cuts made it necessary for the Museum to ask us to supply our own paper, though they continued to print the newsletter and provide coloured covers. Mailing costs had also increased significantly, as had all supplies. So HFN increased annual membership dues once again — this time to \$7.00 per individual and \$10.00 per family, plus a new sustaining membership for \$15.00.

HFN still offered a prize in the annual High School Science Fair, although in some years it was not awarded, as emphasis on technical and engineering projects increased. But in 1983 there were two prizewinners, and they were asked to

present their projects at regular monthly meetings: Lara Keith's work on Spider Webs, and Jacqui Shaw's on The Microenvironment of the Pitcher Plant, were both nicely done and well received. In 1984, prizewinners Tanya MacNeill (with a project on Acid Rain) and Raghu Durvasala (Pesticides and Fresh Water Ecosystems) both gave good presentations to club members.

During 1984 HFN continued to operate, though less dynamically, and several projects were shelved. Then early in 1985 Parks were again in the news and the Annual General Meeting celebrated the society's Tenth Anniversary with a mini-symposium on the Projected Parks Along the Eastern Shore. The panel of specialists was headed by Derek Davis, Science Director at the Museum.

About this time, membership which at one point had fallen to 150 had increased to 175 and interest was reviving. Colin Stewart and Michael Downing proposed re-writing and simplifying the Constitution. Administrative responsibilities had again been divided, as during 'the lean years' it had proved difficult to find enough help to share the workload. In addition to President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Membership Secretary, the club now had a good Programme Committee of three efficient and willing members. A larger newsletter staff had been formed under Edna Staples as editor. This staff included Doris Butters, who had been typing the newsletter almost from its beginning. A group of five or six people met at Aileen Meagher's home to collate and mail the newsletter. The nucleus of a Publicity Committee concentrated on attracting new members and finding ways of making the society more widely known. By again encouraging the active participation of as many members as possible, it was hoped that the society would soon be able to revive shelved projects and initiate new ones.

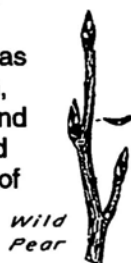
In 1985, as part of the Centenary celebrations of Parks Canada, Kejimikujik National Park honoured HFN with a plaque in recognition of the society's valuable input during the planning process for Keji ten years earlier.

Michael Downing's election as President in 1986 ushered in Halifax Field Naturalists' second decade.

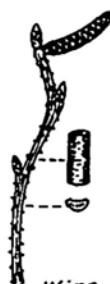
— Doris Butters



Balsam Poplar



Wild Pear



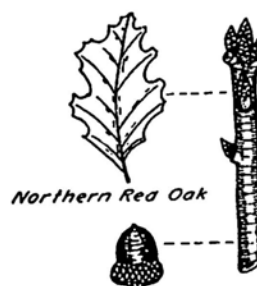
Wire Birch



White Birch



English Oak



Northern Red Oak



Chokeberry



HALIFAX FIELD NATURALISTS THE FIRST TEN YEARS — 1975-85



PART 2 - PROJECTS AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Although the initial objectives of Halifax Field Naturalists were 'to learn and educate,' it soon became apparent that more would be needed. Growing awareness of environmental dangers turned the group towards more active participation in conservation of our precious natural heritage: "...creation of wildlife preserves and attempts to change the destructive aspects of our technological society must be an eventual role of the Halifax Field Naturalists." — Paul Keddy.

As early as November 1975 Alan Ruffman, outlining the plans of the Metropolitan Area Planning Committee (MAPC) to set aside seven areas for park purposes, argued for stronger legislation to protect them. In view of the speed of urban growth, the amount of land in private ownership, and the uncertainty as to what 'park' should mean, Alan doubted that the projected use would be respected. He encouraged HFN members to follow events and report their observations; this produced the club's first letters of concern to government. During the following years the tides of conflicting interest ebbed and flowed, and it was not until 1985 that Hemlock Ravine became a City park. Conrads and Lawrencetown Beaches and McNabs Island were under various degrees of government protection; Cole Harbour was partially protected but endangered by the threat of over-development. Of the other designated regions, Lake Charles was rapidly succumbing to urban development and no progress was made on Admirals Cove, Sandy Lake, Long Lake, and Chain Lake.

The matter did not rest there. HFN remained vigilant, and each time "parkland" was mentioned, letters of concern were sent to government. In 1976 the proposed MacKenzie Valley pipeline project was being discussed all across Canada, and on behalf of HFN Paul Keddy and Don MacDougall prepared and presented a submission before the Berger Commission Hearings, being held at that time in Halifax.

From the beginning, Paul Keddy had expressed concern over budworm spraying, and the danger to natural predators of the budworm — in particular the Bay-breasted and Cape May Warblers. Letters were sent to Premier Regan; Dr. DeLory, minister of Lands and Forests; and Glen Bagnall, Minister of Environment; expressing concern and opposition to the spray programme. A report and a précis of the correspondence was published in HFN newsletter No.2, December 1975. In consequence, a successful day-long Spruce Budworm Symposium was held on January 24, 1976, at Dalhousie University, sponsored by HFN, Ecology Action Centre, and both levels of

government. Scott Cunningham was the co-ordinator.

Two years later HFN gave \$40 to Ecology Action Centre to assist in the production of their brochure on Spruce Budworm. As a result of the combined pressure from anti-spray groups, the Nova Scotia Government bowed to public opinion. Dalhousie University's Institute of Resources and Environmental Studies created a continuing research programme directed by Bill Freedman, to study the environmental impacts of forest practices on the forests of Nova Scotia.

The society also supported Private Member's Bill No. C253 — "To provide the establishment of a Canadian Sea Coast Conservation Authority," although this was a project which stood little chance of passing at that time. However, St. Catherine's River Beach now is a seaside adjunct to Kejimikujik National Park.

During 1976, Parks Canada was considering a master plan for the management of Kejimikujik National Park. To encourage citizen involvement a Master Planning Kit was prepared, containing information on the park and a questionnaire for generate input. To help members and the general public appreciate the problems involved, HFN sponsored an Open Workshop on April 21, in the Dalhousie Biology Building, with Peter Hope, Chief Park Naturalist at Keji as special guest speaker. He gave an illustrated talk on the natural history of the Park and the problems of management. A beautiful, intricate poster was designed by artist Derek Sarty to attract attention in areas where people might not have heard of Halifax Field Naturalists and the Workshop.

In May 1976, Paul Keddy, Scott Cunningham, and Debra Burleson went to Ottawa to represent the society at a symposium on "Canada's Threatened Species and Endangered Habitats". This was sponsored by the Canadian Nature Federation and the World Wildlife Fund.

Also in 1976, a feasibility study to consider the possible impact of the proposed Fundy Tidal Power Project was being undertaken by the Power Review Board. In September, Winnie Cairns and Harriet Rueggeberg represented HFN at the three-day Annual General Meeting of the New Brunswick Federation of Naturalists and the N. B. Conservation Council, at which the Fundy project was the dominant theme.

1977 proved to be a particularly productive year. From the beginning, individual members had worked behind the scenes to pressure government into keeping their habitat preservation promises, but some did more than write. Cathy Keddy submitted to City Hall a study for park planners on the Hemlocks of Hemlock Ravine and later that year City purchased 140 acres for park use. However, it was not until 1985



that the pathways were gravelled and a concrete edge built around the heart-shaped pond.

Paul Keddy attended, and edited the Proceedings of a Symposium on Recreational Land Use; he also produced a Regional Resources Manual printed for us by the Nova Scotia Museum, and designed HFN's first brochure.

Paul was also involved in protesting the Department of the Environment's invasion of the proposed Maitland Ecological Reserve. Areas were cleared wholesale without any attempt made to find out what flora and fauna were there — to the detriment of unique flood-plain species. The hibernaculum of the thousands of bats which winter in the caves was also being affected by increased public useage, and the society wrote letters of concern to the government about this matter.

Chris Corkett put together a special HFN display for INTRODAD '77, an open house weekend sponsored by Dalhousie University and held in every faculty on the campus.

Early in the spring of that year mounting interest in conservation led the society into a rather unusual project. Dune buggies and trucks had severely damaged Martinique Beach, an Eastern Shore beauty spot, even before a violent winter storm washed out a large section of the sand dune protecting the lagoon on the lee side.

With the assistance of the Department of Lands and Forests, and under the leadership of HFN member Murray Cunningham, a Work Weekend was organised in April to try and remedy the situation. Lumber and brushwood, trucked partway by Parks staff, was manhandled to the damaged area by 19 HFN stalwarts who built racks across the gap and secured brush to them to form a fence. Then over the next few months — with crossed fingers — they awaited results. The idea worked! Sand blown inshore drifted against the barrier and began to build. Tim Randall kept a photographic record of the project until — alas — late the following February a particularly severe storm swept the whole barrier away as though it had never been. Shades of King Canute, who 900 years ago demonstrated that we can never command the sea!

However, the club did receive a 'thank you' letter from Parks Planning, with the suggestion that more citizen groups should cooperate with the Parks Division and become involved in practical aspects of conservation. Unfortunately, another Workday in 1985 was a failure; the weather was foul and few people turned up. Later efforts were more successful, on both Martinique and Lawrencetown Beaches. The latter, protected by then, had also been damaged by pedestrians and cars.

The next challenge came in June, 1977: Halifax City Parks and Gardens staff started an overall tree-spraying programme with Malathion and Sevin; they sprayed Paul Keddy as he stood outside his home — along with everything else! Halifax Field Naturalists questioned the safety of the mixture and produced

medical and scientific evidence showing the dangers to human health. In conjunction with the Nova Scotia Resources Council, Ecology Action Centre, and the Nova Scotia Bird Society, HFN raised the matter in the press; a radio interview followed. Council bowed to the pressure and spraying was stopped until 'definite answers were found to questions about human health.' On behalf of HFN Paul presented a brief before City Council and the Committee of the Whole, recommending more practical alternatives to widespread chemical spraying. Move and countermove followed, but eventually Council decided to maintain the ban and adopted a programme which by-and-large was that outlined in HFN's original brief, as published in newsletter No. 12, August '77.

After the spraying was banned, leaf damage by insects increased, and some people pressed for renewed spraying. By November 1978 Council was again debating the question, and resumption of spraying was planned for the following spring. This time Joe Harvey attacked the decision by an effort to educate. A balanced overview of the situation was published in HFN newsletter No. 19, December 1978, and copies distributed to all City aldermen; those views were reiterated later, on a CBC Information Morning programme, on June 5, 1979. Subsequently, Joe Harvey, David Patriquin, and Ken Neill of Dalhousie University, and Susan Mayo of Ecology Action Centre, prepared an effective opposition and City Council did not ratify the proposed spray programme. Council then asked Dalhousie Biology Department to conduct a survey of City trees. Joe asked HFN members to assist by surveying trees on their own street; a simple guide sheet was prepared plus a questionnaire to be filled out and returned to Joe. Eleven members did help, but the majority of areas were surveyed by Joe and David. Lengthy analysis showed that on the whole City trees were healthy and did not need to be 'saved.' The results were handed to Council and later published in newsletter No.22, December 1979.

Early in 1982 the problem surfaced yet again, and once more Joe sprang into action. His correspondence with the Mayor and City Council appeared in newsletter No.,30, February 1982. This time a decision was brought down to spray only when needed, with insecticidal soap — a programme which still continues.

And 1977 was the year the Halifax/Dartmouth Annual Regional High School Science Fair was inaugurated. Halifax Field Naturalists offered a book prize, a scroll beautifully lettered by Pat Evans, and a year's membership in HFN for the best project in natural history and conservation. The judges, Estelle Laberge, Howard Ross, and Paul Keddy, were disappointed by the emphasis placed on technical science and engineering — leaving far too few entries in natural history and conservation. The prize, however, was awarded to Stella Couban, a Grade 10 student at Sir John A. MacDonald High School for her project on Water Quality in Various Lakes and the



Bedford Basin. One result of the field work done on the project was the discovery of a *Streptococcus*, a serious disease organism, in Lake Banook.

Another project for HFN in 1977 was assisting with the Nova Scotia Museum's Fern Project — that of mapping species and locations of all Nova Scotia ferns. Cathy Keddy did most of the work on this. Continued collecting and Museum cataloguing of any new finds is based on this project to this day..

Also during that summer, in cooperation with the Heritage Trust of Nova Scotia, HFN participated in a Regional Resources Awareness Programme, funded by a Young Canadians Works Programme grant. Four of the society's younger members: John Jenkins, Barry King, Marcel Maessen, and Kim van Feggelen, led walks to existing and proposed local regional parklands. They discussed the ecological, environmental, and historical aspects of the areas, with

the object of raising public awareness to the need for creation of parks and their preservation in a relatively natural and unblemished state. Approximately 450 persons attended the more than 25 walks.

The local parks problem has not been entirely settled yet, though progress was made during the first 10 - 12 years during which HFN had taken an interest in it. Shubie Park, Martinique Beach, Clam Harbour, and Taylor Head were well-established under various levels of Government. Conrads Beach and Lawrencetown Beach were still in the planning stage, and Cole Harbour was only partially protected and still in danger of over-development. McNabs Island was under government protection and Hemlock Ravine was now a City Park. At HFN's Tenth Anniversary Annual General Meeting in 1985, Regional Parks were once again the theme.

— Doris Butters

HALIFAX FIELD NATURALISTS

THE SECOND TEN YEARS — 1985-1995

PART I

Doris Butters wrote the history of the first ten years, ending at the point where she stepped down as President, and Halifax Field Naturalists had been awarded a plaque for its part in planning the future of Kejimikujic National Park.

Doris joined HFN almost at its beginning; by 1986 she had done everything from being President to serving tea, and from 1982 to 1989 she edited the Newsletter. In 1987, Doris was made the first Honorary Life Member of Halifax Field Naturalists.

People and activities

By the time HFN was ten years old, the graduate students who had started it had gone on, got jobs, married and started families. Paul and Cathy Keddy moved to Ontario, where Paul continued to work on plants and came to deplore the encouragement of white-tailed deer. Ann Linton married Erick Greene, and went to the United States to study birds and vegetable gardening. Others, like Debra Burleson and Colin Stewart, found work in Nova Scotia.

HFN was carried on by university faculty and local naturalists, who did not have much spare time, or the stamina to work until 2 a.m.! The connection with Dalhousie University was broken, so they had no common meeting place — this sort of convenience has returned in 1996 with an Internet connection for directors.

The need for discussion and comment into environmental issues became greater every year. HFN had to formalise its objectives and be ready to offer advice or objections with one voice. Meanwhile, the talks and field trips continued, arranged by a series of programme committees.

1985: John van der Meer was president, with Bernice Moores as Treasurer and Michael Downing (from Ontario) as Secretary. Filip Volkaert, a graduate student from Belgium, was programme co-ordinator.

Brian Mulroney's government cut funding to environmental programmes, including the Herring Gull egg investigation, the indicator of pollution in the Great Lakes water system.

Judith Kennedy was appointed co-ordinator for the proposed Maritime Breeding Bird Atlas; Clarence Stevens planned to take an atlas square for HFN.

The Woods property near Keji was expropriated by the Nova Scotia government, and Winnie Cairns started to investigate the success of Piping Plovers nesting on the beaches there. This was the start of the Piping Plover protection programme.

Nationally, the campaign to protect Port Moresby and Meares Island forests, in British Columbia, was at its height.

HFN members walked the North West Arm tow path from The Dingle to Halifax in November; this has always been considered a right of way.

1986: Michael Downing became President, with Leigh Mazany as Secretary, and the board appointed standing committees for Programmes, the Newsletter, Publicity, Membership, and Conservation. A revision of bylaws was proposed but actually only achieved in 1995, with a couple of amendments.

HFN considered starting a new organisation to protect access to scenic and wild trails, because Duncan's Cove was fenced off and there was concern about Cape Split. The first meeting of the Trails Federation took place in the Fall, bringing together a co-operative group of hikers, skiers, snowmobilers, cyclists, horseback riders, and the Volksmarch. Michael, who claimed a talent for flipping pancakes, proved it at a lunchtime picnic.

The Newsletter advertised summer courses on terrestrial biology and marine mammals, and the club took its first whale-watching cruise. HFN members worked a square in Lunenburg County for the Maritime Breeding Bird Atlas., and Pierre





Taschereau campaigned to save sea-slugs. We supported the South Moresby Caravan, which passed through Halifax. Members built fences at Lawrencetown, to protect the dunes; the sea washed them away. I joined the Newsletter as Assistant Editor.

1987: President Michael Downing; Secretary, Nancy Witherspoon

Colin Stewart chaired a two-day Symposium on Trails, at which needs of all classes of users, possible environmental consequences, and the rights of land-owners, were discussed. This subsequently produced a printed report. Doug Robertson, Executive Director of the Bruce Trails Association in Ontario, spoke of the need to protect landscape.

HFN criticised the revision of the N.S. poaching laws, which removed protection from scarce game birds.

Paul Keddy promoted protection of the Tusket River Valley, which holds a remnant Coastal Plain flora; this later achieved Special Place status, and the Tusket River Environmental Protection Association was formed.

We observed pack ice in Halifax Harbour, signed a contract to provide 100 signs for identification of trees in the Public Gardens, and made inventories on Conrad's Beach, and at Lake Egmont.

1988: President, Michael Downing; Treasurer, still Bernice; Secretary, Ursula Grigg

The Programme Committee consisted of Norma and Milton Gregg, and Stephanie Robertson; waiver forms were introduced.

HFN put up a sign about protection of Piping Plover nesting sites at the entrance to Conrad's

Beach; Clarence Stevens and Stephanie Robertson carried it out and it was unveiled at the beginning of Environment Week. Breeding Bird Atlassing continued.

1989: The same executive. HFN achieved charitable status.

The Public Garden signs were finally all in place; a corn-boil was held to celebrate. The Trails Federation became a legal entity, with power to speak for all kinds of user.

Several Special Places were being named; Bob Ogilvie, now Special Places Curator, led trips to MacFarlane Woods, Black River Bog, and Piper Glen, in Cape Breton.

The Newsletter was transferred to computer, and was produced by Stephanie Robertson. Ursula Grigg became editor. After some battles with copiers, it was printed by APL, by offset.

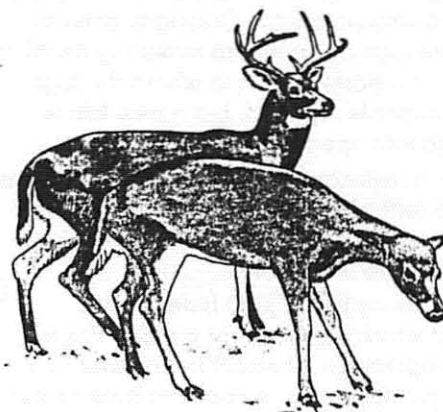
1990: President, Michael; Treasurer, Belinda Wilkinson; Secretary, Jim Ross

HFN criticised the new N.S. Provincial Parks Act, which left parks open to abolition. HFN became involved with several local issues: Protection of Point Pleasant Park, threatened with clearing on account of a presumed bark beetle 'infestation'; and the development of McNabs Island as a park, threatened by a plan to build a sewage plant there. The Blue Mountain area was threatened with excavation. We were also involved in the Federal Government's Green Plan, proposed by Environment Minister Lucien Bouchard!

Stephanie Robertson undertook a survey of Bark Beetles in Point Pleasant Park, with some other members, and demonstrated that there is no infestation; the most destructive conifer bark beetle wasn't even present. She also demonstrated that long-term park management was lacking. Our initiative to influence management of this historic park has been a failure; it is still being logged.

To be continued.

— Ursula Grigg





THE HALIFAX FIELD NATURALISTS

THE SECOND TEN YEARS — 1985-1995



PART 2

(cont'd from Issue No. 84)

People and Activities



The last five years of Halifax Field Naturalists' activities, leading up to the twentieth anniversary, are present history. Most of the members active in those years are still with us. Unfortunately, so are most of the environmental problems. However, the local natural scene is still as great, and more people than ever appreciate it and are willing to protect it.

Colin Stewart was President from 1991 through 1993; Doug Linzey and Steve Saunders acted as Secretary in 1991 and 1992 respectively, and the secretarial post rotated through the executive in 1993. Shirley van Nostrand was Treasurer and Membership Secretary.

The Newsletter was edited by Ursula Grigg and Stephanie Robertson until the end of 1991, when Stephanie accompanied Allan to Barbados for nearly three years, leaving Ursula battling with the latest edition of Aldus Pagemaker. The first Newsletter after Stephanie left was printed on a temperamental copier in K-PC Ltee's storefront window in Agricola St.; this left the floor covered with creased and smeared pictures of the Great Auk, while hapless customers tiptoed their way to the counter. After this, the Newsletter was taken to Art Pro Litho in Dartmouth for offset printing on recycled paper.



(APL printed it until 1996, when the job was transferred to one of the new commercial copy shops; this is much cheaper, but the paper is no longer 100% recycled).

In 1991 the building of a sewage plant on McNabs Island seemed inevitable, even though nearly everyone thought it was the wrong place, and the cost was so high that building it was postponed again.

The Point Pleasant Park Bark Beetle Survey had appeared at the end of 1990 and made the most impact in 1991; it proved that, contrary to forestry reports, there was no infestation of the dreaded 'Spruce Bark Beetle'. This study was conducted by HFN, under the guidance of Barry Wright, Curator of Zoology for the Nova Scotia Museum (now the N.S. Museum of Natural History). The main contributors — Stephanie Robertson, Gareth Harding, and Rick Ballard — did all of the sampling, and Stephanie Robertson wrote and compiled the final paper. This study demonstrated the importance of dead trees being left in place in order to protect the health of any forest. But essentially, other than some initial small cutbacks in cutting, and the use of a chipper to chip the slash back into the park, the report was more or less ignored by the Park Commission, with a gradual present return to their original heavy cutting.

In 1993, the presence of Lyme disease in the

maritimes was confirmed. It is carried by deer ticks and is thought to have been brought here on migrating birds. Founding Member Paul Keddy warned HFN about it, and the medical community became alert to its presence.

In 1993 also, preparations were made for the 1994 Canadian Nature Federation Conference, for which HFN was to be the host.

In 1994, Roy John, a Past President of the Ottawa Field Naturalists, became President of HFN, with Cathy Fulton as Secretary, and a new member, Greg Crosby, as Treasurer. The office of Vice-President was later brought back, and Stephanie Robertson, back from Barbados in the summer, was appointed to it. She also took over the lay-out editorship of the Newsletter again, an immediate improvement!. Roy John brought a decidedly 'birdy' bent to the club; his second enthusiasm was for marine mammals. This was a change from the conservation interests of past Presidents.

Patricia Chalmers joined the Newsletter Committee, and took over preparation of The Almanac, which had only appeared occasionally before.

The Piping Plover Guardian programme was having an effect on the human use of nesting beaches; Etta Parker became the co-ordinator for Nova Scotia.

All hands were needed for the Canadian Nature Federation conference at Mount St. Vincent in August. This was co-ordinated by Bob McDonald, was a great success, left its volunteers gasping, and brought HFN several new members. Nova Scotia got the Osprey as the Provincial Bird, and Environment Minister Don Downe proclaimed it during the CNF conference.

The Canadian Wildlife Fund deeded the Conrad Island approaches to the Nova Scotia Parks Department during the Conference, since the new Parks Act had met their standards.

Turtles made headlines in 1994: a large Leatherback Sea Turtle was caught in a gill net near Lunenburg, and Blanding's Turtle was put on COSEWIC's threatened species list. Blanding's Turtle is found around Kejimikujic National Park.

In January 1995 Roy John left suddenly to take a position in Saskatchewan, so Stephanie stepped from Vice-President to President, a position she occupied in 1996 as well. Peter Payzant became Vice-President. Cathy Fulton was replaced by Linda Payzant during 1995. Greg Crosby continued as Treasurer, and monitored expenditures with a stern eye.

The Payzants are also bird enthusiasts, but their strong second interest is in butterflies; a checklist of local species was proposed in 1995 and was later

prepared by the Payzants and Stephanie with editorial input from the Nova Scotia Museum of Natural History.

During these years, HFN continued to have field trips and talks, and to take part in efforts to protect parks and islands from development. Roy John and Patricia Chalmers appeared before the Proposed System Plan for Parks and Protected Areas, speaking as ordinary citizens, with a series of Mary primrose's slides as backdrop. The Conservation Committee, under Colin Stewart, appeared before the Commission considering the status of McNabs and Lawlor Islands along with the Friends of McNabs Island Society. (The sewage plant scheme has failed because of the cost.)

By the end of the first twenty years, several old notions in science had resurfaced; the study of molecular and cellular biology continued, but there was a return to natural history and to the identification of plants and animals. This has led to the return of the knowledgeable amateur supported by many excellent field guides, and to taxonomy for the sake of specific projects, such as the revival and stocking of rivers. So although there are now many agencies offering outdoor experiences, HFN, which has always had a scientific aspect, still has a place.

There were parallel changes in society: everyone came to value untouched wilderness, and there is much more interest in conservation. This has been countered by a move to realise all natural resources at an increased rate, so our old interest in balanced development is still important.

Best of all, the early camaraderie, partly lost when the students who founded HFN left Dalhousie University and the club was transferred from gown to town, is returning with the use of e-mail and such innovations as NatureNS. HFN executive have a list of their own, and FNSN will soon have one too, to facilitate committee work, and also include volunteers in our projects more easily. The Payzants and Colin Stewart have made most of the arrangements.

NatureNS was installed by Colin; although it was done under the auspices of FNSN (which is beginning to make itself felt on our behalf) still Colin was 'one of ours' first.

Of course this history has not told half the story, but the first twenty years has been great. Just get ready for the second!

— Ursula Grigg



HALIFAX FIELD NATURALISTS **THE THIRD DECADE, 1995 - 2005**

PART I, 1995 - 1997

1995 was HFN's 20th anniversary, and the Executive decided we should publish a summary of our history and activities every ten years. Doris Butters outlined the first decade in the Fall/95 Issue, #80 and the Spring /96, issue #82. Ursula Grigg covered the second decade in the Fall /96 Issue, #84, and the Summer /97 issue, #87.

Following are some highlights from HFN's third decade.

1995

We continued throughout the next ten years to sponsor a child to attend Sunship Earth Camp in Windsor. This special summer programme was developed by the Institute of Earth Education, and is run on three continents.

Spring /95 — Roy John began his second term as President; Stephanie Robertson was Vice-President; Greg Crosby, Treasurer; Cathy Fulton-Strugnell, Secretary; Past President, Colin Stewart; Membership, Shirley van Nostrand; Programme, Cathy Fulton-Strugnell, Charlotte Lundgren, and Jennifer MacKeigan; Newsletter, Ursula Grigg (Editor), Patricia Chalmers, Stephanie Robertson (layout), and Mary Primrose, Shirley van Nostrand (distribution); Regine Maass, Refreshments; and Conservation, Colin Stewart.

The first of our annual March AGM Reports was published in the Spring /95 issue #78; there were no membership statistics.

On February 7th, Roy made a presentation on behalf of HFN to a Public Review Committee about a Proposed System Plan for Parks and Protected Areas. There had been 25 public meetings held in January and February around the province for these presentations. Our submission spoke for every ordinary citizen with an interest in the natural environment.

HFN continued its tradition of awarding a prize/prizes for the best natural history project(s) at the annual Hfx./Dart./Bed./Hfx. Co. Science Fairs. The March /95 junior winners were Seela Amaratunga and Jennifer White (Sacred Heart School, Grade 7) for

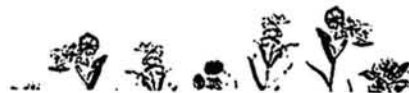
their project on low technology methods for "Gel Extraction from Seaweed". The senior prize was awarded to Michael Shaver (Prince Edward HS) for his important "Oleophilic Properties of Canadian Sphagnum and its application to Oil spill Recovery Systems". They each received an Award Certificate, a Wild Bird Co. gift certificate, and an HFN Brochure.

Summer /95 — Roy moved to Saskatoon, Saskatchewan for an exciting post in his specialty — nuclear chemistry. Vice-President Stephanie Robertson stepped up to the helm for the term's remainder, and Linda Payzant set up and inaugurated HFN's web page!

Patricia Chalmers took part in a Wildlife Corridor Survey with Environmental Management student Marion Radszweit at an 11-acre natural site in Bayers Lake Industrial Park, under the auspices of the NS Wildlife Federation. It was a project which demonstrated that "... a wildlife habitat can be developed and maintained even within an urban or industrial environment." They identified 22 bird species, 28 wildflowers, four mammals, and two amphibians. Two informative signs about the area and its species were erected, with picnic tables nearby.

Fall /95 — The most important conservation event was the Federal/Provincial consultation on the future of McNabs and Lawlor Islands. Colin Stewart, Ursula Grigg, Greg Crosby, and Patricia Chalmers comprised the 1995 HFN Conservation Committee. After a summer of meetings, Ursula and Colin presented HFN's recommendations, and Pat and Ursula wrote them up for HFN's submission.

Winter /95 — Anticipating a July /96 butterfly count, HFN formalised a partnership with the Nova Scotia Museum of Natural History (NSMNH) to produce the Butterflies of Nova Scotia Field Checklist, with HFN doing the artwork and layout, and NSMNH covering the printing costs. HFN also looked forward to possible participation in the 1996 Piping Plover Census, under the leadership of Sherman Boates.



1996

Spring /96 — Stephanie Robertson continued as President; Peter Payzant was Vice-President; Greg Crosby, Treasurer again; Linda Payzant had taken over as Secretary earlier in the year; Past President was still Colin Stewart of course; Membership remained with Shirley van Nostrand; Programme still with Cathy Fulton-Strugnell and Jennifer MacKeigan (Charlotte Lundgren had stepped down); and the other positions remained the same.

Many natural history surveys were announced for the coming summer: Frogwatch; Plantwatch; Ladybugs; Butterfly Count; and CNF's International Important Bird Areas (IBA) Campaign. HFN was involved directly in one or two of them. We included as inserts in our Spring /96 issue an information sheet, a form, and an identification guide for the 12 spring flowers chosen for the Plantwatch Survey; and we disseminated more detailed information about the IBA Campaign and the 1996 Ladybug Survey.

Under Peter Payzant, HFN decided to set up a Breeding Bird Census plot somewhere in Nova Scotia. Also, HFN planned a four-season biota survey of the Mount Uniacke Estate Museum Lands for the Nova Scotia Museum of Natural History, and was exploring the possibilities of the same sort of survey along the Sackville River Greenway.

HFN, along with the NS Bird Society and the NSMNH, was preparing for a much anticipated presentation on cranes by NS native George Archibald to raise awareness and funds for the International Crane Foundation in Wisconsin. We planned a raffle of a tote bag hand-painted with Sandhill Cranes (S. Robertson), and a very pleasant pot-luck supper in Bernice Moores' garden (\$25.00 per ticket plus a potluck donation).

Planning and interest was afoot for local parks; specifically the Mainland Common, Halifax North Common, and Birch Cove Park in Rockingham.

Bob McDonald had been working for a long time on behalf of the Mainland Common. With much chagrin he reported in our Spring /96 issue (#82) that despite user's wishes for low impact outdoor activities such as hiking, walking, running, bicycle trails, opportunities for nature observation, and the placement of playing fields only in already open areas (expressed at many public meetings since 1991) — what was taking place instead was extensive clear-cutting, back-filling, and the building of eight baseball diamonds and two other playing fields. The public's wishes had been ignored, and the proposed citizen's liaison committee had not been established.

Bob and Wendy McDonald, Ursula Grigg, and Shirley van Nostrand attended a public input workshop regarding the new park at Birch Cove. About one hundred citizens attended. Wendy McDonald attended two more public meetings about these two parks in early March/96.

At the March /95 AGM, total membership from March /94 to March /95 was 141.

Summer /96 — Our cover, Issue #83, was a photocopy of the tote bag raffled to support the International Crane Foundation. George Archibald's Crane presentation at Dal was a great success, and HFN activities raised \$1,532.00 for the Foundation.

Peter and Linda Payzant finished the Breeding Bird Census Plot census in Mt. Uniacke Estate Park. The yellow NS Butterfly Checklist was successfully published, and made available for sale at the Museum and at our meetings. Two Butterfly Training Workshops, and one July Butterfly Field Trip took place with Peter and Linda Payzant. Our insect interests also extended to a dragonfly field trip to the Frog Pond in Jollimore with renowned specialist Paul Brunelle.

It was decided at the 1996 FNSN AGM held in Annapolis Royal, that HFN would host the next one in the Summer of 1997.

Etta Parker kept us up to date about the Piping Plover Guardian Programme with an imaginative and innovative video it had commissioned, and a talk.

Fall/96 — The Federal Government announced the beginning of cutbacks; specifically, Phase I of these cutbacks looked forward to a 25% reduction by 1998. By 1997, Parks Canada was to become an agency, able to keep any revenues it generated from park use, and some park work was to be contracted out.

The provincial summary of the McNabs/Lawlor's Public Meetings showed that everyone wanted them to remain close to their natural state, but with the provision of landing facilities and basic amenities.

Environment Canada was formulating a Canadian Landbird Conservation Programme, as populations were declining due to habitat destruction.

We still had for sale our Logo Lapel Pins, HFN Hasti-notes with art by late HFNER Eileen Meagher, Piping Plover Sweatshirts, Endangered Spaces T-shirts, and — we offered books for sale that year — Peterson Field Guides and the Opler butterfly Guide (buying them through HFN ensured no sales tax).

Winter /96 — In November, dues for an individual membership were increased to \$13.00 from \$12.00, and our By-laws were amended. Halifax Harbour Cleanup was in the news; no buildings for it would be put on McNabs Island, but Fort McNab was to be stabilised and renovated in the following Spring/Summer.

To everyone's dismay, the NS Government agreed to allow mineral prospecting on Jim Campbell's Barrens, which contains rare NS flora.

The Sierra Club denounced the decision.

We advertised the first of our Mount Uniacke biota surveys, to take place in March /97, all under the very able direction of botanist Pierre Taschereau.

200 people participated in the 1996 Plantwatch, and the results were databased by the faculty of Environmental Science at St. Mary's University for comparison with Alexander McKay's work in 1896.



1997

Spring /97 — Because of a storm, our usual March AGM was postponed until April. Peter Payzant took over the Presidency; Doug Linzey was Vice-President; Greg Crosby, Treasurer; Linda Payzant, Secretary; and Past President was Stephanie Robertson. The Membership and Newsletter people remained the same, and Regine Maass, Refreshments, now had a helper, Theresa White.

HFN monitored and supported efforts to protect the Dingle Walking Trail, Bissett Road Lands, Jim Campbell's Barrens, and Point Pleasant Park; we also supported Plantwatch again.

We advertised two more Mount Uniacke biota survey field trips in our Spring /97 issue #86; one for April 5th, and another for May 31st.

There was a mix-up in our annual Science Fair Natural History Awards; the schools themselves awarded our prizes without consultation from HFN! The winning project, picked on our behalf, was titled "The Opposable Thumb".

NatureNS List Serve was inaugurated. One of the first and most exciting postings were the sketches that Sherman Williams made of comet Hale-Bopp on March 28.

Total membership for March /96 to March /97 was 139.

Summer /97 — HFN became interested in the most recent scientific information about pesticides on human health, especially children's health, being released by the Ecology Action Centre.

Connie Eaton was a long-time member of HFN. Her irrepressible Airedale, Sam, was a familiar and happy figure on many of our outings. That summer, tragically, Sam died because of pesticide exposure to lawn chemicals in July. We published several informative articles in two or three newsletters about the terrible effects of pesticides on human and animal health, about organic gardening, and about how to 'get your lawn off drugs'.

HFN hosted the 1997 FNSN AGM and Conference, entitled "Green Spaces in Urban Places"; Patricia Chalmers was at the helm. There were many great presentations, and 18 wonderful field trips, the highlight of which was a boat trip to McNabs Island, offering a choice of five forays while there. There were approximately 60 attendees, low for an FNSN Conference, but people did not expect to see much of interest in and around a large urban centre.

Woe to those who did not attend!

All attendees were greatly impressed and surprised with what HRM had to offer. They discovered many unsuspected and unique places of natural history interest, and they enjoyed the weekend immensely.

The April 5 Mount Uniacke biota survey results were published in our Summer /97 issue #87, and another was advertised in its programme for August 23rd.

Fall /97 — HFNER and HRM Land Planner Oliver Maass gave us a wonderful slide presentation about five areas HRM had proposed for protected status:

Tangier/Grand Lake; Musquoidobit Harbour/White Lake; Dollar Lake Provincial Park and surrounding areas; Martinique Beach; and Terence Bay to Pen-nant Point.

In September, Stephanie Robertson (PPP Bark Beetle Survey, Summer /89) and others from HFN attended the first of a two-session HRM Public Workshop about a Point Pleasant Park Master Plan.

There were more than a few HRM formal presentations, and the process was very rigidly structured. Participants finally stated that what they had really come to discuss were issues such as over-cutting, park ecology, and past park management practices. Because of the style of the meeting, there were fewer attendees at the next session. It was once again tightly controlled by the same hired consultant (whose style was that of a kindergarten teacher addressing six-year olds), and those who wanted to have the park's ecology addressed as of prime importance were frustrated and unsatisfied once again. The findings at these meetings were to have lead to the release of a set of draft goals and objectives in November and December /97.

A Mount Uniacke biota survey was advertised for October 11th in the Fall /97 issue #88.

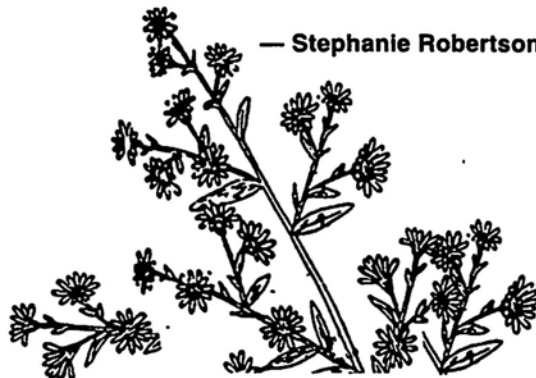
Etta Parker of the Piping Plover Guardian Programme supplied us with the Piping Plover nesting statistics; there were 43 nesting pairs, two single adults; and 73 fledged chicks.

Winter /97 — The October 11th Uniacke biota survey results were published in the Winter /97 issue #89, and another biota trip was advertised for March 6th, /98.

Locally, DNR announced a survey of Moose occurrences in mainland Nova Scotia. We published a Moose Sighting Report form in our Fall issue for people to copy and use.

Globally, the dreaded spectre of the Multinational Agreement on Investment, MAI, loomed over the new year to come. The chief example was the suit by American Ethyl Corporation against Canada who wanted to ban the use of the gasoline additive MMT, a deadly neurotoxin. Ethyl Corporation claimed that Canada was expropriating its potential profits. HFN urged pressuring of local politicians and submissions to local papers. (Ethyl Corporation won, and we now have this additive in our gasoline. For myself, I never go to 'self-serve' pumps at gas stations). (*To be cont'd.*)

— Stephanie Robertson



HALIFAX FIELD NATURALISTS **THE THIRD DECADE, 1995 - 2005**

PART II, 1998 - 2001

Spring/98 — The positions of President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Past President remained this same as Winter/98. Control of the Treasury was passed from Greg Crosby to Tony MacKay. Elizabeth Keizer joined the Programme Committee. Mary Primrose had left the Newsletter Committee, and Doris Young and Carol Klar joined it to help with distribution. Colin Stewart continued as Conservation Chair.

At our March AGM, with sadness and regret, President Peter Payzant acknowledged the death of well-loved HFN founding member Mary Primrose. Dalhousie's Biology Department photographer, Mary served HFN over the years in many capacities and positions. She loved to photograph Nova Scotia's wildflowers and mushrooms, delighting us with her beautiful slides at Members' Slide Nights, and at some other special presentations as well. Her legacy is recorded in her Wildflowers of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and PEI. An Indian Pear tree, (*Amelanchier* sp.), was planted in her memory on the grounds of the NSMNH.

The Plantwatch and Ladybug inventories continued this year for naturalists to contribute to. The Natural History of Nova Scotia, in two volumes, was launched at the NSMNH on February 14th, and the new Roland's Flora of Nova Scotia was launched on May 14th.

Happily, early in the year, Cole Harbour Marsh was donated to the province for a wildlife management area.

The recently formed and very important local group RATE (Real Alternatives to Toxins in the Environment), which HFN heartily supported, came up with local solutions and programmes for HRM gardeners to keep their gardens viable and strong without the use of poisons. Interest in the eradication of toxic chemicals in HRM was increasing and heating up. One meeting was sponsored by RATE, the Sierra Club, and the Dalhousie Environmental Law Society. A second had speakers Dr. Roy Fox of the Environmental health clinic in Fall River, Dalhousie's Dr. David Patriquin, and MLA Howard Epstein, who outlined for the audience the legal actions people could take to stop their neighbours spraying. Howard cited the successful case where an uncut front lawn was protected under the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. The third meeting was with speaker Elizabeth May. She introduced the very important subject of the legally unlisted 'inert' ingredients in these toxic brews, and outlined their deleterious effects.

On a more pleasant note, on May 13th, Alice Reed had a showing of 'Sacred Worth', her breathtaking paintings of the 31 Crown sites proposed for protec-

tion in Nova Scotia.

On March 16th, the Supreme court of Nova Scotia declared that the Provincial Government was within its mandate when it restored Jim Campbell's Barren to its list of protected sites. Kudos and thanks to HFNer Colin Stewart for all his hard work to this end.

The total HFN membership for 97/98 was 107.

Summer/98 — The Herp Atlas project, in which many naturalists and HFNers took part, was launched by the NSMNH; also the Leatherback Turtle survey project, by the Leatherback Turtle Working Group.

During this summer, HFN lost another of its loyal and supportive members, Dr. Murray Cunningham. Dr. Cunningham designed and carved the wooden HFN 'stick' that is put on the display table at our monthly meetings.

Ursula Grigg's first article appeared outlining and explaining the history of biological classification in our Summer /98 issue #91.

Fall/98 — HFN was awarded a plaque for supporting the Parks are for People Programme. Biologist Ursula Grigg reiterated the importance of our Field Trip species lists which are used as valuable contributions to records of biodiversity and population studies in the province. There was a record total of nine very interesting and well-written Field Trip reports in our Fall/98 issue, and the number of species recorded was approximately 250!

Winter/98 — On behalf of HFN, President Peter Payzant wrote to Premier Russell MacLellan discouraging the proposal to use Pearl Island, favoured by breeding seabirds (including the endangered Roseate Tern), as a memorial site for the SwissAir disaster.

On November 13th, three years after all the public hearings, the Federal and Provincial governments finally released their eight-page 'Land Use Strategy' for Macnabs and Lawlor islands. Parks Canada transferred Lawlor and almost all its holdings on MacNabs to the province for a future park. Most importantly, all government-level officials and the public agreed that the unique natural character of the two islands should be preserved in perpetuity.

November 18th — and another inconclusive Point Pleasant Park planning and information session was held at the N.S. Community college on Bell Road.

On November 27th, HFNers joined a 400-strong audience at a Nova Scotia Nature Trust event and silent auction in support of endangered species legislation, to hear David Suzuki give one of his marvelous talks about what unbridled development is doing to our planet.

On December 3rd, the N.S. Legislature passed both the Wilderness Protection Act and the Endangered Species Act. On December 8th, a coalition of 55 Naturalist groups, including we HFN instigators



who had fought long and hard for these bills with much revising and fine-tuning, presented framed certificates of appreciation to all the supportive MLAs. The ceremony was held at the Prince George Hotel, and was appropriately graced with the beautiful Nova Scotian 'Sacred Worth' prints by Alice Reed. The passage of these acts was announced at subsequent Suzuki talks in Calgary and Edmonton to rounds of applause.

In the Fall/98 issue #93, Stephanie Robertson outlined some important work related to the above acts. The article was introduced with references to Point Pleasant Park management practices and the vital necessity of insects in forests. It concerned our local GPI (Genuine Product Index) Atlantic, and the 1997 global report by economist Robert Costanza. His research had concluded (taking the lowest end of their figures) that the world's ecosystems provide the planet with \$33 trillion worth of services every year — \$8 trillion more than the GNPs of all the countries on earth!

Late in 1998, Cole Harbour Provincial Park was created by combining Lawrencetown, Conrad's Island, Rainbow Haven Park, and land around Cole Harbour including some new acquisitions near Lawrencetown.

Spring/99 — Ursula Grigg took over as President; Vice President was now Bernice Moores; the Treasurer and Secretary remained the same; Past President, Peter Payzant; Programme Chair, Marie Moverley; Harry Beach, Bob McDonald, Marie Moverley, and Stephanie Robertson were added to the list of directors, with Debra Burleson and Doug Linzey stepping down this year.

We continued to support Plant Watch and the Herp Atlas, and advertised requests to support the North-east Loon Study, which was to measure mercury in their feathers. The 'MAI-not' (Multinational Agreement on Investment) site was still running, and the Hon. Paul Martin's speech against the agreement could be accessed there.

In the Spring/99 Issue #94, Ursula Grigg concluded her very interesting article outlining and explaining all anyone ever wanted to know about the history of biological classification, accompanied by a diagram of the development of life over earth's four and a half billion year history.

We reported a Larch Caseborer, *Coleophora laricella*, 'infestation' on Grand Manan. A number of European parasites were introduced to combat this population explosion (take note, CFIA).

No membership statistics were recorded for our year 98/99.

Summer/99 — It was an unusually sunny summer, and both bird and insect populations were more abundant than usual. A poll taken for HRM by RATE showed that, happily, nearly 80% of residents would support a bylaw regulating the use of pesticides.

August 11th featured a celestial double-whammy — the century's final total eclipse, and the same evening, the Perseid Meteor showers.

A few environmental concerns were: the renting of Crystal Crescent Beach to the film industry; the unnecessary cutting of the underbrush in Cole Harbour Heritage Park (home to small birds, butterflies, insects, and a lot of flowers); overly aggressive grooming of trails in parks; and the public realisation of the damage off-road vehicles were doing to our natural and wild places.

Ursula contributed an article about the fascinating world of microbes (without which animals would not survive) and their long association with humans, in our Summer Issue #95. This is well worth rereading, for those who have back issues of The Halifax Field Naturalist.

Fall/99 — In spite of the long hot summer, local flora and fauna flourished. However, the Annapolis Valley wetlands and their species languished, as water was pumped to save crops.

Jupiter's brightest, highest, and closest approach to Earth of the decade occurred on October 6th; while Saturn did the same on November 6th; and, for the first time in decades, Mercury crossed the face of the sun.

Nova Scotia Nature Trust's Birdathon was announced. Statistics Canada designated Ron Coleman's N.S. GPI (Genuine Product Index) as a pilot project, and Ron hoped his important work would have an impact beyond Nova Scotia.

IRM — Integrated Resource Management; since the mid 1990s The Department of Natural Resources had been quietly deciding, on the public's behalf, what to 'do' with 1.2 million hectares of public land — 22% of the province's land base. The scale of this exercise? — unprecedented in Nova Scotia. Every one of the parcels of unprotected Crown Land was designated as one of three categories: Category I, 'multi-use' — a wide range of resource uses including clear-cutting, mining, road building, or selling for private real estate; Category II, 'modified multi-use' — the same sort of development as Category I, but with greater modification to enhance 'compatibility' with competing land uses (?); and Category III — lands to be protected and therefore off-limits to ecologically destructive use. Even after the 1998 Wilderness Act, the province conceded that only 23 of the 80 significant sample terrestrial natural regions had a satisfactory level of protection.

DNR has a resource development mandate (it is essentially a forestry and mining department), and had already committed most of the 1.2 million hectares to forestry agreements. They did not want to take any of its Category I and II lands out of their jurisdiction and into protected status.

Through its Wilderness Committee, the Ecology Action Centre, under its 'Visions for Public Lands', set about rectifying this situation as much as possible through volunteer organisations and lobbying the province for 'hot spots' in need of protection. Two such areas were Eigg Mountain, near Antigonish, and Gully Lake, near Truro, both containing large intact blocks of hardwood forest.



'MAI-2' — The World Trade Organisation was planning its international summit in Seattle, Washington (now famous for its successful protests). The Council of Canadians urged key MPs to abandon any type of agreement, and to develop instead a trade policy that benefits citizens, not trans-national corporations.

Winter/99 — Our Winter Programme boasted a total of 23 field trips.

Friends of Hemlock Ravine was formed in response to a summer /99 clear-cut by a developer there, in a site bordering the most sensitive area of the park — the ravine itself — an area which contained the highest density of Eastern Hemlock.

Barry Sawyer submitted a very interesting and thought-provoking article on Nova Scotian birding that is also worth a reread, 'Some Thoughts on Birding in Nova Scotia', in the Winter Issue #97; there is also another memorable one, in the same issue, by Lesley Butters, 'God Talking to St. Francis', about urban lawns.

Spring/00 — The chief executive officers remained the same except for the office of Secretary; Linda Payzant handed over all her papers to Harry Beach for that position. Tony MacKay stepped down and handed over the Treasury to Janet Dalton. Linda MacKay and Bernice Moores left the Board of Directors. Bernice also resigned from the Programme Committee, along with Carol Klar, leaving Marie Moverley at the helm. Carol Klar also left the Newsletter Distribution committee.

We continued supporting the NSMNH's Herp Atlas, and HRM invited input into their plans for the city's future from groups and individuals.

Colin Stewart reported on the reason for the sudden Hemlock clear-cut; the city had forgotten that the area was designated a park, and had re-zoned it to allow for development! Many meetings subsequently took place, to try to prevent the same sort of thing happening elsewhere.

SMU Biology Professor Nick Hill, who spoke at our very first and very successful and enjoyable Spring Social (a Uniacke walk, natural history quizzes and prizes, a delicious dinner, all wonderfully organised by the Payzants), emphasized the important and valuable role naturalists play in ecology.

Ursula Grigg reported on the necessity of 'casual housekeeping' on cottage properties and gardens in our Spring 00 Issue #98 — another submission worth repondering and still timely for cottagers this year.

Total membership for 99/00 was 138.

Summer/00 — This was a season of many serious conservation concerns. But first the good news — HRM passed a by-law banning the use of pesticide sprays on lawns and gardens. They also set up a community training programme to help gardeners learn to garden successfully without them. Conversely, despite the Unsightly Premises Committee planning new by-laws more favourable to more natural gardens, HRM still cast a stern and negative eye on those who deliberately practice truly 'wild'

gardening in order to encourage the healthy presence of a large diversity of insects, grubs, lepidoptera, birds, and small mammals.

Also, the first Leatherback Turtle to be radio-tagged, a female named Helen, launched the beginning of a still extant Leatherback tracking study to increase our understanding of their habits in order to help them survive better.

On June 21st, after the Hemlock Ravine clear-cut debacle, Colin Stewart reported that the Draft Management Plan for Hemlock Ravine had been released for public review and comment.

Jay Meeuwig of CPAWS warned against an up-and-coming management plan for Crystal Crescent Provincial Park that would allow for seaside resort development and entry fees.

Friends of Point Pleasant Park (FPPP) was formed, with HFN member Stephanie Robertson as Vice-President. They sued the Federal Government over the CFIA's \$2,000,000 planned tree-cut.

The CFIA would not share their trapping information, and an Access to Information request had to be filed. Also, their order to cut was declared before the final draft of a pest Risk Assessment was issued, thus violating their own regulations. Like N.S. Forestry ten years before, they were going to cut based only on the presence of sap lines on the bark, lines which have many more causes than that of the *Tetropium fuscum*, the Brown Spruce Long-horn Beetle (BSLB). The tree-cull began in August, but, with seven legal affidavits submitted against it (two from HFN members), FPPP won a full stay on the cut until a full judicial review was carried out.

This victory represented a first in Canadian legal history. FPPP set three important precedents: the legal recognition of the 'standing' of adjoining land-owners; the legal recognition of the irreplaceable value of trees; and a successful public injunction against a federal agency.

Jim Wolford reported on the first International Symposium on Deep-Water Corals, which took place in Halifax. Deep-water corals and the important habitats they provide marine life are being threatened world-wide by modern fish trawling/dragging. Three or four sites were considered for possible Marine Protected areas including the Gully off Sable Island and the Hell Hole Canyon off Brown's Bank.

It was reported that 337 records were submitted to the Herp Atlas for 1999; Blanding's Turtle, the Wood Turtle, the Northern Ribbon Snake, the Four-toed Salamander, and the Blue-spotted Salamander were all either endangered, threatened, or vulnerable.

Colin Stewart reported that The World Wildlife Fund's Endangered Spaces Campaign ended on June 30th, and a network of protected areas were now a part of Canada's vision for the future, despite the threat of DNR's IRM mining and forestry resource plans.

Ursula Grigg submitted another interesting article about the latest developments in the science of taxonomy in our Summer/00 Issue #99.



Fall /00 — In September, the Nova Scotia Museum of Natural History (NSMNH) co-launched the 'Thousand Eyes' project. 100 years before, Dr. A. H. MacKay, N.S. Superintendent of schools from 1897-1923, began this important work. Back then, the project lasted for 26 years, involving 1,500 provincial schoolchildren observing 107 natural phenomena each year and recording their findings in school ledgers. This new venture, the 'Thousand Eyes', required observational recordings of only 50 natural phenomena; but, the new plant and animal records were important indicators of climate changes and weather trends in Nova Scotia, since flora and fauna are sensitive indicators of temperature, precipitation, daylight hours, and humidity.

Despite the CFIA's media hype of "50 BSLB trapped in 1999" (not true), the BSLB population is at the explosive stage" (no basis), and "no predators" (also not true), and other non-scientific claims, FPPP lost the judicial review in October under a new judge, but a meeting with the CFIA and the long fight to protect the park from an overkill response brought the estimated cut from 50,000 to 1,000.

Our Fall Issue #100 culminated 25 years of HFN history.

Winter /00 — In Halifax, in January, the Sierra Club of Canada hosted "Environmental Issues and Skill Building: Making a Difference in Your Community". Also, the Halifax Urban Greenway Association was formed to preserve a 'green rail-trail' from Chebucto Road to Young Avenue.

Spring /01 — Bob McDonald took over the Presidency from Ursula Grigg; Stephanie Robertson became Vice-President; Linda Payzant became Membership Chair; Pat Leader became Programme Chair; and our FNSN representative was Doug Linzey.

HFN was asked to continue supporting the Herp Atlas and the Thousand Eyes project.

Total membership for 00/01 was 145.

Summer /01 — A call for help was put forth for the newsletter; Production Editor Stephanie Robertson was to be away for two years overseas. Wild orchid specialist and HFN member Carl Munden's book, Native Orchids of Nova Scotia: A Field Guide, beautiful illustrated and listing our 39 species of wild orchids, was published by the UCCB Press.

Another important book was published this summer by the Atlantic Geoscience Society — The Last Billion Years: A Geological history of the Maritime Provinces of Canada. This is a book worth buying.

A further important report on FPPP's findings re the CFIA's alleged 'infestation' of the BSLB was published in our Fall/01 Issue #103. It listed the known local PPP predators and biological products that could be used against it, and also detailed behavioural information about its food preferences and habits.

FPPP obtained thousands of pages of data under the Access to Information Act from the Provincial and Federal governments. Nothing read there justified all

the CFIA's claims, and the federal government dropped its claim that the BSLB attacks healthy trees.

Stephen Ward, an outdoorsman and valued amateur in lichen and moss identification, died at the age of 81. He served on the board from 1991 to 1993, and the HFN Board gratefully received several gifts in his name.

Fall /01 — Due to the stressful move to Bangladesh by the Newsletter Production Editor very near the historic '9/11' date, and to other factors, for the first time in the history of The Halifax Field Naturalist, it was shortened to four pages (one 11" x 17" sheet)! The programme still remained full as usual, and was included with it.

Winter /01 — An Atlantic Canada Owl Monitoring Workshop was held at Mt. Allison University in November. The challenges of owl monitoring, and the history and results to date, were outlined, and everyone agreed that although many components contribute to the success of such a venture, the most significant aspect of this programme was a good roster of volunteers.

The implementation of the drastic broader implications and plenipotentiary powers of the CFIA's 'order of cut' for the BSLB were beginning, on all private and public lands, private and public parks, and any other remote locations — with cutting on McNabs and Hemlock Ravine.

In January, a public meeting was called about the filling in of Moir's Pond on the Bedford Highway by Sobey's for more buildings. Even though it had already been degraded and much reduced in the past, surprisingly, many local residents still felt strongly enough about preserving it for their pleasure and use to attend and express their views. Sobey's, in compensation, were planning to install a fishway from Moirs Pond to Mill Run Brook, which would be the first stage in opening up Paper Mill Lake again to migratory fish.

Spring /02 — Bob McDonald continued as President; Stephanie Robertson was overseas and stepped down from the Vice-Presidency (it remained vacant), remained on the Board and continued to produce the newsletter by email from there; Suzanne Borkowski took over from Harry Beach as Secretary; and Elliott Hayes and Pat Leader (she also joined the Board) took on Newsletter distribution from Shirley McIntyre and Doris Young.

On April 3rd, a Moirs Pond Community meeting was held with DFO to discuss the environmental assessment process for Sobey's infilling.

Volunteers were called for the Piping Plover Guardian Programme, Thousand Eyes, Wormwatch, and the Herp Atlas. We were still sponsoring a child for Sunship Earth Camp.

Total membership for 01/02 was 139. (To be cont'd.)

— Stephanie Robertson



HALIFAX FIELD NATURALISTS **THE THIRD DECADE, 1995 - 2005**

PART III, 2002 - 2005

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Fall/02 — President Bob McDonald represented HFN in Halifax at the first regional Maritime Consultation Meeting of Bird Studies Canada (BSC) which was to explore ways to improve and facilitate communication and partnering with naturalist groups in Atlantic

Canada. HFN vowed to support its programmes and to keep members aware of opportunities to participate in them.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

A Toronto, Ontario man won a court case to keep his natural garden (to the dismay of neighbours), thereby contributing cleaner run-off water from it into

the local streams and Lake Ontario. In a victory for all Canadian natural gardeners, the judge urged Toronto officials to "...develop and implement coherent plans with specific guidelines to deal with the critical issue of natural gardens and their enormous environmental significance."

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

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

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

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

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

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

Total membership for 02/03 was 128.

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

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

Following a lecture and field trip by local expert Paul Brunelle, HFN decided to publish a field checklist of the Nova Scotian odonates (dragon and damselflies), similar to our 1989 Butterfly Checklist, to be ready for Spring /04.

Fall /03 — Hurricane Juan flooded the NSMNH's basement, effectively cancelling our October meeting. Juan essentially shut down Halifax for almost a week with thousands of downed trees, damaged homes and cars, no power, and shorelines eroded and weakened by storm surge. Twenty Provincial Parks were devastated. Miraculously, only restorative measures were allowed by DNR, and forestry practices such as clear-cutting were not even considered. Paths were cleared for safety, and fallen trees were to be left to decompose naturally.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

This year the North American Bird Count took place on May 8th. Ten species were added to the four-year list, which brought the total to 173 species.

HFN established the Colin Stewart Memorial Award, and the first recipient was none other than Colin himself. Colin served on the HFN board for over 20 years. He initiated the labelling of the trees in the Public Gardens in 1985; established the Piping Plover Guardian Programme, the Nova Scotia Trails Federation, and the Federation of Nova Scotia Naturalists; and he ensured the establishment of 31 new Nova Scotian protected areas. He developed management plans for McNab's and Lawlor's Islands, Long Lake Provincial Park, Hemlock Ravine, and Point Pleasant Park; he also advised on the remediation of the latter after Hurricane Juan.

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

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

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

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

Total membership for 03/04 was 119.

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

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

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

In September, with \$100,000.00 donated by developer Jim Spatz, HRM announced an 'International Design Competition' to restore Point Pleasant Park. A 16-member Steering Committee was established to develop terms of reference for the competitors. 350 public questionnaires about how people would like to see it restored were submitted to HRM — a record response from any HRM questionnaire. FPPP's President, Iain Taylor, expressed hope that the Committee would seriously attend to a restoration plan

based on sound ecological principles. Chris Majka to date had collected 5,746 specimens of 484 species in 60 families of beetles!

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

— Stephanie Robertson



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. Headly 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



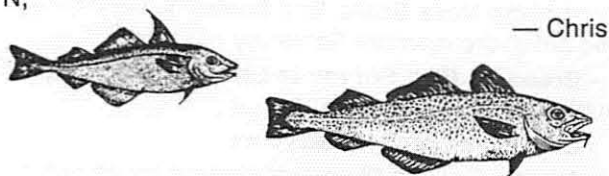
CHRIS CORKETT

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 Fenitrothion 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 Fenitrothion to Reye's Syndrome that we made the local news, and the province immediately backed down.

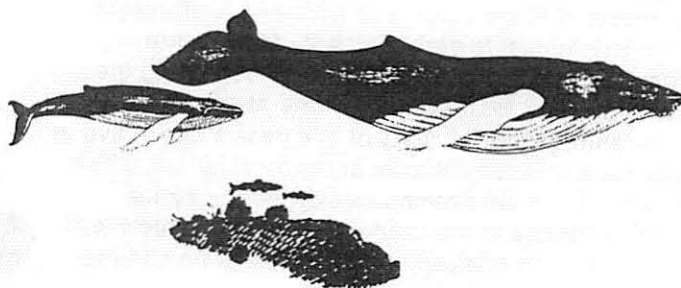
My job with the Canadian Wildlife Service took me north to Lancaster Sound to study seabirds between 1976-78. My issues of the HFN newsletter were air-dropped to me on the island I worked on! I came home with my field assistant Erick Greene who was welcomed into the HFN family and later became my husband. 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

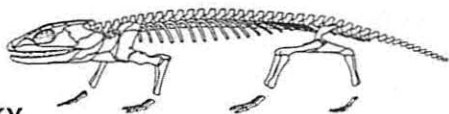


DAVID PATRIQUIN

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

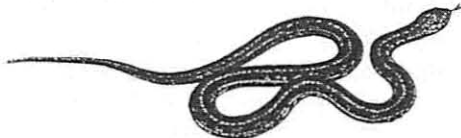


NORMAN PINSKY

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.

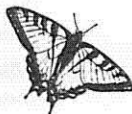
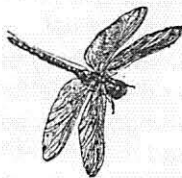
I was born in The Netherlands in 1943, came to Canada in 1949, and became a Canadian citizen in 1955. I was married in 1966 and have two grown children, Lawrence and Deborah. I enjoy natural history, birding, gardening, reading (especially science fiction), corresponding with international pen pals,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

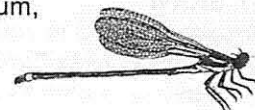
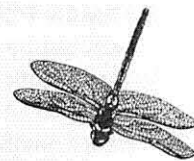
See you then! Meanwhile, I express my sincere congratulations to the HFN and I wish them a fine future!

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's 30TH ANNIVERSARY



Following is another reminiscence from an early HFN member. Joe was indeed generous in his contributions to HFN, among them serving for several years as president, coordinating and completing "The Railway Cutting Area Study", and organising and leading numerous field trips. Many members have memories of happy and educational hours spent in the field with Joe.

JOE HARVEY

I played no direct role in founding the HFN, since during that year, I was away on sabbatical leave at Kew Gardens in London in the U.K. What I *can* do is give an account of the events leading up to its founding, and my own experience of the state of natural history in Halifax in the preceding years.

In the fall of 1963, I had been recruited to the then very small Dalhousie Biology Department. Born in England, I had for many years been a member of the Northumberland and Durham Natural History and Philosophical Society, which was based in the Hancock Museum in Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Yorkshire. I was also an occasional attendee of the Yorkshire Naturalists meetings based in Leeds. Both these were probably founded in the mid-nineteenth century, and both held regular indoor meetings and field trips, also sponsoring publications. When I arrived in Halifax I anticipated there would be some similar group, but nothing existed that quite filled that niche.

There were the bird watchers whose aim seemed to be to get up early in the morning and collect life lists. And then there were the wildlife groups keen on preserving habitats, but I soon found that their interests seemed to be restricted to animals that could be fried or roasted. Neither of these associations was quite what I was interested in.

Most of the field work in the province had been conducted out of Acadia University or Truro, mainly with the aim of finding out what existed — hence, it was basically taxonomic. I wanted to take it to the next level and study habitats and competition mechanisms. Dalhousie, it struck me, was proud to be serious and

laboratory-oriented. This was possibly based on the Scottish Presbyterian ethic that if you enjoyed something, such as going out on field work, it couldn't be serious work.

There existed at the time an attitude to the outdoors that it was a good place to fish, get your deer in the fall and, in December cut a Christmas tree along the then newly-built Bicentennial Drive. I remember my surprise in October 1963 when going into the Dominion Store (then the largest retail grocery chain in eastern Canada) on Spring Garden Road and finding that the enterprising local manager had a couple of dozen second-hand shotguns for sale on a table at the end of an aisle. They were \$9.99 each as I recall. The sale was in preparation for the start of deer hunting season and I was warned not to go into the woods during that time.

Our National Parks each had naturalists whose task was to record and preserve the flora, fauna, and geology — and these people were begging the public to visit their national treasures. But visitor attendance was fairly low, the attitude being that there was no point since we were surrounded by wilderness anyway. I also remember that walks round Point Pleasant Park were the best way of meeting expatriot Germans, Hungarians, Yugoslavs, and English.

At Dal in October 1963 I was replacing Ken Greenwich, a forester, who had left for St. F.X. in Antigonish, Nova Scotia. The Dalhousie Calendar, printed long before my arrival, specified that I would teach a class on 'Plant Geography', about which I knew a little but not sufficient for the whole year. (At the time, A and B half-classes had not been instituted). So, I turned the class into an exploration of plant ecology including field trips. With no apparatus, no tradition, and no mentor, I was thrown on my own resources which resulted in a very intense learning period for me and, looking back, this was a formative period of my life. This was also the first undergraduate ecology class taught at Dalhousie and the next year I co-opted a zoological member of the faculty to add the necessary animal component.

I should add, that to someone from the British Isles, with its millennia of drastic human modification (there is

for instance really no original woodland left) the initial impression of Nova Scotia was that there was a vast expanse of pristine, woodland, bog, marsh, and shoreline. I only gradually learned about the early European settlers cutting much of the original forest and burning the rest.

As an illustration of how little scientific ideas had penetrated the general public's lore as late as 1970, I was being interviewed by a journalist and had mentioned the importance of ecology, and he interrupted me with a request to "Please spell that word."

As mentioned earlier, I was surprised that there was no natural history society in Halifax, so when I became more established and knew my way around, I took to leading informal hikes on weekends, but never on a Sunday morning because people had to have the chance to go to church I was told. We went to see the flowering Daphne shrubs along the old Annapolis Trail, did the shorelines of Pennant Point and Cape Split, as well as camping trips to Cheticamp. Years later I have had people come up to me, including in British Columbia where I now live, to say how much they enjoyed those outings.

Startled at the lack of any tradition of such outings I decided to create instant tradition and as an internal joke to myself I titled all hikes "The First Annual Traditional Hike to...". However, what I failed to do was set up any organisation. I would simply put up notices around Dalhousie announcing when and where the next hike would be, and waited to see who turned up. There was no president, no secretary, nor any fees. This could be called the anarchist model!

When Paul and Cathy Keddy arrived to do post-graduate work at Dalhousie they went the whole corporate model of president, secretary, treasurer, newsletter, monthly meetings (initially at Dal but soon moving to the Nova Scotia Museum) and incorporation under the N.S. Societies Act with a formal constitution. The Field Naturalists grew from this point on.

I congratulate the members in its continued existence. I *almost* helped to found it!



— M.J. Harvey
18/03/06

May published her book At the Cutting Edge: the Crisis in Canada's Forests.

The club included waterfalls in its interests, introduced by Richard and Grace Beazley, who also led a field trip to a series of falls in the Baxter's Harbour District.

Conservation – Two conservation interventions involved Blue Mountain/Birch Cove Lakes, where Crown land had been progressively being removed from the area, and Shubie Park, threatened by highway development in Burnside. The former was met by a petition and a letter to a minister, pointing out that Blue Mountain/Birch Cove Lakes area should remain a publicly owned natural space. Pat Chalmers and Betty Hodgson began a natural inventory of Shubie Park; this had been proposed before but never embarked upon.

Talk Reports included a presentation by Christine-Anne Smith about the necessity of valuing and defending urban forests, and a lively one on sea serpents in the Maritimes by Andrew Hebda. Andrew felt that one of the candidates for these historical sightings was a deepwater Oarfish, *Regalecus glesne*. Peter and Linda Payzant spoke on "The Lives, Habits, and Humour of Butterflies". Their beautiful and informative presentation also included a detailed account of The Life of the Monarch Butterfly. Their checklists of the Butterflies of Nova Scotia and the Dragonflies of Nova Scotia were published and made available for purchase.

Fall 2005 – The five proposals for the restoration of Point Pleasant Park all contained major changes to the Park's environment, and HFN members who preferred it to remain undeveloped were asked to sign a petition to HRM to that effect. Efforts to protect the Nahanni as a wilderness area, and the Colorado River as a water source, were also being made. Elizabeth May of the Sierra Club gave one of the Killam Lectures, "Can Civilisation Survive Climate Change?", and Blake Maybank published his book Birding Sites in Nova Scotia.

The Federation of Nova Scotia Naturalists' 2005 AGM had for its theme the Acadian Forest, which is in bad shape, 98% having been degraded by continuous material extraction. Not only was regrowth being hampered, but areas of old growth forests were being cut apart, leaving islands of forest, thereby cutting off the corridors in use by wildlife. Good planning is needed for sustainable forestry, which should be based on Acadian Forest species. In that vein, there was a talk on "A Biodiversity Conservation Vision for the Acadian Forest; The Cobequids to Chignecto".

Talk Reports – On September 7th, Diane LaRue, with the N.S. Dept. of Transportation and Wildscape Restoration Nursery Services, talked about her trip to the Colorado River Delta to assist in the ecological restoration efforts there due to the deleterious effects of dams and water diversions; the efforts were being hampered by a very complicated political situation.

Field Trip Reports – Ten members of the N.S. Bird Society were stormbound on Bon Portage Island from May 20th to the 27th, Brian Bartlett reported in "Stormbound on Bon Portage...". On the sixth day – "...Clean clothes had become a distant memory, and we'd run out of bread, milk, and eggs. There was more than a half-serious talk about stealing gull eggs and finding supper washed up in lobster traps. Claire's duct-tape-repaired waterproof leggings had come apart a second time...". The Island was full of small

HFN'S FOURTH DECADE

– Ursula Grigg and Stephanie Robertson

PART I; THE FIRST TWO YEARS

The Halifax Field Naturalists continued its fourth decade on its dual paths of enjoyable appreciation of local natural history, and its need to protect it from degradation by those who do not understand its value to society in a pristine state, but subject it to overdevelopment and over management.

The Board of Directors was as follows: President, Allan Robertson; Vice-President, Peter Webster; Treasurer, Janet Dalton; Secretary, Peter Payzant; Past President, Bob McDonald; and Brian Bartlett, Elizabeth Keizer, Burkhard Plache, Ingrid Plache, Stephanie Robertson, Christine-Anne Smith, and Jim Wolford.

SUMMER 2005 began with Environment Week on June 5th to 11th with proclamations of some conservation awards. Stephen Hawboldt received one for restoring the Annapolis River – Atlantic Salmon were spawning once again in its tributaries; while Dr. David Suzuki received a Citation of Lifetime Achievement Award. Also, Elizabeth



migrants, and those ubiquitous residents, Leaches Storm Petrels, were also present. The Halifax Public Gardens was a beautiful and historic site to visit as an example of a classic Victorian Garden. A Butterfly Walk in Uniacke Museum Estate Park and the Pockwock Road area produced fewer insects than Peter and Linda Payzant had hoped, but it was warm and delightful nonetheless.

There was an informative short piece on birch trees by Stephanie Robertson; (the word birch comes from the Sanskrit *bhurga* which means “a tree whose bark is written upon”).

WINTER 2005 - 2006 – On December 7th, HRM Council approved a combined submission on designs for Point Pleasant Park renewal which would leave it relaxed and refreshing. The winners were NIP Paysage of Montreal and Ekistics Planning & Design of Dartmouth. Naturalist and former HFN board member David Lawley died in September, and was missed. He had written A Nature and Hiking Guide to Cape Breton's Cabot Trail, and also A Guide to Whale Watching in the Maritimes, both published by Nimbus. He also had helped to found the magazine Shunpiking. Karen McKendry wanted to start a Halifax Junior Naturalist Club for children with HFN's support.

In spite of rather cold weather, HRM's North American Bird Migration Count on May 14th showed no drop in numbers of birds recorded. In fact the numbers were up; with 12,785 individuals counted in 2005, compared with 11,420 individuals counted in 2003. Species increased from 112 to 131.

Talk Reports – Interesting talks included an informative one on stargazing, practical tips to carry it out successfully, and the various types of celestial objects which can be seen at different times of the year. However, the sky was too cloudy to allow for any viewing in the Museum's parking lot afterward that particular evening. Then, a presentation by Barbara O'Shea and Pat Leader on their trip to Antarctica informed us about the history of that continent, and gave us detailed information about its penguins. Native orchid specialist Bernard Forsythe gave an informative and fulsome talk on our 40 species of beautiful wild orchids (his list was published in the following Spring, #122 Issue of The Halifax Field Naturalist).

Field Trip Reports – The first report was on a trip to Susie's Lake, where we learned about different species of rock lichens estimated to be about 10,000 years old. Then a hike to Pennant Point, which started out at the unfamiliar west end of the beach and ended at Taylor Head with our annual cranberry pick. The dreaded Japanese Knotweed, which can take over completely any native vegetation was noted there at the time (I wonder if it has done so now, ten years later?). Blue Mountain/Birch Cove Lakes was also visited; its importance to mainland moose considered; and protection from a proposed highway cut advised.

SPRING 2006 – Our 30th Anniversary Issue! The Board of Directors remained the same except that Elizabeth Keizer and Christine-Anne Smith had stepped down, and Betty Hodgson was added. An Open House for public input was held for a Draft Regional Trails Plan. Karen McKendry's Halifax Young Naturalist Club was closer to fruition, with talks and field trips to start in September, 2006. The Annapolis Field Naturalists offered to host Na-

ture Nova Scotia's 2006 AGM and Conference in Annapolis; its theme to be “Our Natural History – Changing Lands and Waters”. EAC's Joanne Cook and Minga O'Brien's “Standing Tall Campaign” had some fresh ideas about better forestry practices as the softwood industry teetered on the brink of disaster all across Canada.

Year-end Reports – Financially we were in the black, with assets of \$8,966.00. **Membership** was down from 149 in 1997 to 123 in 2005, but up from 119 in 2003.

Programme – there had been nine talks and 14 field trips in the year. **Conservation** – HFN had contributed to the Nova Scotia Off-highway Act, the Nova Scotia Coastal Guardian Programme, the Halifax Regional Plan, the Point Pleasant Park Design Competition steering Committee, the McNab's and Lawlor's Islands Provincial Park Management Plan, the Long Lake Provincial Park Plan Committee, and the long range planning initiative for Crown Lands on the Chebucto Peninsula.

The **2006 Colin Stewart Conservation Award** was given to long-time avid and knowledgeable naturalist HFN member Jim Wolford of the Blomidon Naturalist Society. Amongst many other conservation efforts and successes, two noted contributions of Jim's were his work with the Annapolis Valley Bald Eagles and the Wolfville Chimney Swifts. **HFN's 30th Anniversary** – Bernice Moores had arranged to have former, and founding members (some living abroad!), to submit their reminiscences and biographies, and there were seven pages of these valuable, sometimes humorous, nostalgic offerings.

Talk Reports – “Scenic Nova Scotia” consisted of breathtaking and beautiful aerial shots by pilot/photographer Len Wagg. Then, the “Trans Canada Trail”, by teacher Kathy Didkowsky, whose four-month trek with three family members (her son was the youngest person to ever have hiked right across Canada on the Trail) showed us all the necessary planning, pitfalls, and rewards of such an arduous trip! “Members' Slide Night” gave us our usual, inspiring panorama of nature images by HFN members.

Field Trip Reports – We had our fun “Annual Sewer Stroll”, and an eye-opening “Behind the Scenes” trip to the Nova Scotia Museum of Natural History.

And – there was a fascinating article with photographs by St. Mary's biology student Joseph Poissant on preparing wax candles from wild Bayberries.

SUMMER 2006 – The budding Young Naturalists Club got off to a great early start with live, natural displays by HFN members at the Museum, followed by a field trip despite rainy weather. Restorative plans for Point Pleasant Park were struggling due to Halifax Council budget cuts. The NNS 2006 AGM had a full accounting of its wonderful conference in Annapolis. On the conservation front, details of attempts to implement improvements in Point Pleasant Park management were reported, and Joe Harvey had submitted his memoirs of HFN's early years.

Talk Reports – DNR Manager of Wildlife Resources-Tony Nette talked to us about the Nova Scotia history of “Wildlife Conflicts” with Moose, White-tailed Deer, Black Bear, Coyotes, Skunks, Beaver, Porcupine, Red Foxes, Brown Bats, Starlings populations, Crows, Pigeons, Canada Geese, Woodpeckers, Sharp-shinned Hawks, Snapping Turtles, and snakes! Post Doctoral Fellow Trecia



Schell of Dalhousie's Department of Earth Sciences talked of "Climate Change" and global climate warming, using her research travels to the Arctic. Cobequid Naturalists Club member Janet Roberts gave a very entertaining slide show of her six-and-a-half month journey hiking the Pacific Crest Trail from southern California to the Cascades in Canada. Our Members' Slide Night presentation was launched by Peter and Linda Payzant with stunning close-up slides of Nova Scotia moths, followed by Chris Miller with spectacular photos taken at Blue Mountain/Birch Cove lakes; Dave Patriquin with post-Juan Point Pleasant Park slides; Bob McDonald with some older HFN field trip slides of Etta Parker's; Ian McLaren showing Arctic birds; Jim Wolford with images from an Arctic trip to see Polar Bears; and finished with Pat Chalmers showing some of Mary Primrose's wonderful flower photos.

Field Trip Reports – Burkhard Plache took us to the beautiful Colpitt Lake area; Jack Pines, scrubby granite barrens flora, the ruins of an air defense structure(!), lichens, and past fire-scars were some of the highlights. Patricia Leader led us to the little known gem of the 90-acre Admiral's Cove Park on the northern edge of the Bedford Basin, with beautiful views, flora and fauna, opportunities for geo-caching, scaling almost vertical rocks, birding, and beach combing and cleaning. Our annual Cape Split Hike was warm and dry that year, but there was a dearth of spring flowers. The first formal trip to the Captain Arnell Lands property for starting a flora and fauna inventory of the area was affected by lots of previous rain. Lots of things were noted, but the formal inventory was postponed to a better day weather-wise. Naturalist and photographer extraordinaire Keith Vaughan took us on a Nature Photography trip to the frog Pond near the Dingle. Lots of practical tips were shared, so we could achieve better nature photos.

FALL 2006 – Plans were still being fine-tuned for Point Pleasant Park's renewal; the city formally declared Blue Mountain/Birch Cove Lakes a regional park; there was a bumper crop of Monarchs all over Nova Scotia; and Nature Nova Scotia's 'Big Tree' contest was underway. Ducks Unlimited launched its newest Greenwing Legacy Project at the provincial Wildlife Park in Shubenacadie, and five new provincial nature reserves were set aside due to the Special Places Protection Act in the Spring. The numbers for the HRM Bird Migration count were down from 12,785 in 2005 to 10,319 in 2006.

Talk Reports – Peter and Gillian Webster presented a detailed talk about their experiences over 15+ years hiking East Coast mountains, from Mount Washington in New Hampshire to up through Quebec and to Gros Morne and the Long Range mountains of Newfoundland.

Field Trip Reports – Bob and Wendy McDonald conducted a biota survey of the Captain Arnell Lands on their own, and were able to add to the list of species already recorded there. On the 8th of July, Laurel McIvor of the K.C. Irving Foundation conducted a tour of its greenhouse and six-acre Harriet Irving Botanical Gardens. The latter display nine Acadia Forest habitat types plus an experimental garden, medicinal and food garden, a large central lawn, and adjacent woodland trails. Our annual Butterfly Trip, as did last year's, again revealed a scarcity of butterflies, especially the larger ones. On August 9th, historian Iris Shea took us to the Dingle Park and then Deadman's

Island, the burying ground for Melville Island prisoners. The Kingsport Mudflats were our September 10th destination, where Jim Wolford shared all his knowledge about the many, many critters and plants there, and what a rich and necessary food source it is for waterbirds, both for residents and those just passing through.

WINTER 2006 - 2007 – The large trees along Beaufort avenue were threatened by HRM's proposed 'greenway' construction (locals called it the 'greyway' because of all the asphalt involved). On October 17th, Nature Canada met with several HFN board members and regular members to hear our group's priorities for nature conservation at the local, provincial, and national/international level, and how the newly conceived Canadian nature Network (CNN) could support our initiatives in wilderness community stewardship, habitat protection, and effective education/communication.

Talk Reports – On October 5th, geologist Howard Donahue gave us a presentation about geology and gold, specifically gold's history in Nova Scotia. (There were three gold rushes here; who knew?!) The next, on November 2nd, was about Marine Mammal Rescue by Tonya Wimmer of the Marine Animal Response Society. We learned that more successful hunting, chemical and noise pollution, habitat degradation, and even whale watching itself have combined in recent times to take a much heavier toll on these wonderful animals. Deleterious forestry practices were the topic on December 7th, given by Joanna Cook of EAC's "Standing Tall: Forests for Life" campaign. The main culprits? Over-cutting, clear-cutting, mono-crops (softwood) and ignoring the potential for better and more sustainable uses of our forests.

Field Trip Reports – Anne Mills led us on a trip to learn about mosses (and liverworts) in Indian Path Common, Lunenburg County. Ancient, beautiful, and important plants, we spent a wonderful four hours absorbing all Anne to share about them. On October 15th, Howard Donahue continued his presentation about gold and geology – in Halifax, Lake Echo, Musquodoboit Harbour, and Tangier. We saw evidence of the geological forces which produce gold, and visited now defunct gold mines with their derelict buildings and rejected rock cores. The next two trips were to some beautiful Colchester Waterfalls led by Richard and Grace Beazley; and then to the Herring Cove Backlands and MacIntosh Run, led by Burkhard and Ingrid Plache.

Pat leader revealed some eye-opening history about all the changes and developments in the Bedford Basin, in her sometimes humorous but very informative article "A Christmas Pantomime".

SPRING 2007 – It was noted that radar had fast become a necessity for birders wanting to know the flight altitudes of different species. The highest flyer? – the Bar-headed Goose at 29,000 feet over the Himalayas; next, swans at 27,000 feet; and then raptors at 22,000 feet. Special red blood cells ensure the take-up of enough oxygen, thus their ability to breathe where mammals never could.

Changes in the Board of Directors roster included a vacant Secretary position, the stepping down of Elizabeth Hodgson and Jim Wolford, and the addition of Lillian Risley. HFN's year ended with a balance of \$8,653.00.



Membership had increased by six; 129 members from 123 in 2006. Under Conservation, we continued to work with the Long Lake Provincial Park Association, DNR, and many others on the preparation of a long range plan; also stewardship issues on Chebucto Peninsula's public lands; the Canadian Nature network; Nature Nova Scotia; and its 2007 AGM and Conference.

An erudite article about the 'exotic' Brown Spruce Longhorn Beetle (BSLB) by entomologist Christopher Majka filled us in on the idiocies of the forestry industry, the CFIA, forest management in general, and erroneous attitudes and claims about beetles. Chris's take? (now publicly acknowledged by Nova Scotia Forestry to be correct) – they are not as harmful as some of our own beetles, have not reached and will not reach infestation levels, and do not attack young trees, but only those older, already-stressed, and dying.

Talk Reports – Aptly, the first reported talk was a continuation of the Forestry Presentation by Joanne Cook on December 7th on EAC's "Standing Tall Campaign". Then, on January 4th, a 'sold-out' talk on a Galapagos trip by Peter and Linda Payzant. Fire regulations meant we had to turn people away, so a special second presentation was arranged later in the week. Chalk full of wildlife sightings, thoughtful observations, and wonderful photography, it necessitated four pages to do it justice. On February 1st, Cindy Staicer, Assistant Professor in Dalhousie's Biology Department, spoke about different Nova Scotian wood warblers and their songs, sharing recordings of the different types. An interesting tidbit – they are two types of warbler, wood warblers, and worm eater warblers.

Field Trips Reports – Our Annual Sewer Stroll on January 7th, led by Peter Payzant, was *bitterly* cold with a high wind chill index and lots of ice. Then, on February 18th we toured the Pockwock Water Plant at Pockwock Lake and learned about everything done to and added to our water before it comes out of our taps. Another Herring Cove Backlands trip on a cloudy, blustery March 10th, presented participants with snowy, slippery walking.

Patricia leader submitted another of her interesting articles, this one on "Spring" (or lack of it) – "...the first day of spring is one thing, and the first spring day is another. The difference between them is sometimes as great as a month".

SUMMER 2007 – We were invited to join a new project of the Nova Scotia Leatherback Turtle Working Group – a study of the relationship between populations of jellyfish, the turtle's main food, and the viability of the Leatherback population. A New Jersey company had been granted rights to extract millions of tons of basalt from Digby Neck by the Nova Scotia government, without any public consultation with the communities to be affected. Digby Neck juts out in to the ecologically sensitive Bay of Fundy. A "Stop the Quarry" fund-raising supper was held on July 14th. The Avon Peninsula, a large watershed for the area, was threatened by Fundy Gypsum, a division of US Gypsum, by proposing a mega-mining complex there. Another report on the BSLB by Stephanie Robertson (she first collected them in Point Pleasant Park in 1989) explained the niche which that undertaker beetle fills, and why it is no more of a threat than our local undertaker beetles.

Talk Reports – Members' Slide Night started with a trip to New Zealand by Ingrid and Burkhard Plache – wonderful pictures of a very different landscape than ours. Then Patricia Chalmers showed us older photos of the people and members on our field trips. We saw our much younger selves on trips of longer ago than we liked to remember! Jim Wolford had slides of many varied field trips, and Charles Cron shared beautiful flower images from Newfoundland. Bob McDonald's pictures were of Odonates; Joan Czapalay had slides of her many past teaching trips to beautiful Jamaica. Karen McKendry had shots from the first Young Naturalist Club field trips, and Peter Payzant's images were of Ecuadorean and Galapagian invertebrates. What a wonderfully wide range and variety of interests!

On April 5th, Dr. Marty Leonard shared with us the trials and tribulations of animals living in an increasingly noisy world. Increased noise hinders animals' communications about identity, mating, needs (young offspring), warning signals, detecting one another, and discrimination between individuals. The 3rd of May gave us Helene Van Donninck and South African Wildlife. Helene is a veterinarian and has been a wildlife rehabilitator for 22 years, some of her rescue and rehabilitation work being done in South Africa. We saw a wide variety of African animals, and heard many, many rescue tales.

Field Trip Reports – On April 14th we hiked the beautiful Bluff Trail with leader Richmond Campbell, a founding member of the Woodens's River Watershed Environmental Organisation (WRWEO). The Bluff Trail is the last large wilderness area on the Chebucto Peninsula. WRWEO was founded in 1995 to protect crown land from commercial exploitation and to preserve original wilderness for future generations. On May 1st, we were off to the Dalhousie Life Sciences Centre and its Greenhouse (all climate controlled for the different types of plants there) where we were met by Stephen Fry, Chief Technologist in the Biology Department. We also toured the Thomas McCullough Museum and its bird collection. Our annual Cape Split trip took place on May 27th, and it was sunny! We were rewarded with Spring Beauty, Dutchman's Breeches, Meadow Rose in bud, and Toothwort. At lunch, the sea stack at the end of the Split boasted many nesting gulls and downy chicks; on the way back, a beach trip offered up many collectable rocks. On 16th June, we visited sustainably run Windhorse Farm, at Wentzell's Lake, Lunenburg County, in the heart of a mature, fully functioning Acadian Forest, one of six endangered forests of North America. This wood products and forestry operation was granted a certificate of excellence by the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) and also by the stricter, regional certifier, Nagaya Forest Restoration.

FALL 2007 – George Archibald, who has devoted his life to preserving the world's living creatures and the environment, has worked tirelessly on behalf of all 15 species of cranes, successfully protecting and increasing their habitat and populations worldwide. This year, he earned the Douglas H. Pimlott Award. Pimlott was the founder of the modern environmental movement in Canada. The award was created over 30 years ago and is Nature Canada's pre-eminent award. It is given to an individual whose outstanding contributions to Canadian conservation serve as an example to us all. He was nominated by HFN



members Bernice Moores and Joan Czapalay.

Special Articles – We had a wonderful study submitted, by Marcel Cornect of the Environmental Engineering Technology and Water Resources at the Nova Scotia Community College, titled “Macroinvertebrates and Water Quality”. Marcel had used several types of water insects collected from seven sites along a section of Paper Mill Run to assess the water quality. Four years of collecting data suggested that there may be small amounts of organic pollution in the area, probably due to runoff from residential and commercial properties.

Talk Reports – June 7th gave us the talk “Lichens” by ecologist Rob Cameron with the Protected Areas Branch, Nova Scotia Environment and Labour. We learned about the relationship between lichens and pollution and how these ancient plants can be excellent indicators of the severity of pollution levels. On September 6th, Laura Hussey from the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society (CPAWS) gave a talk on the “Fundy Mussel Reefs” found in the Bay of Fundy. The reefs are formed by long-dead Horse Mussels, still held together by their byssus threads, with the living mussels on top. These reefs form a very important ecological role, providing habitat for an assemblage of other species, and contributing to seafloor productivity through nutrient recycling (which supports other creatures).



Field Trip Reports – On July 8th, “Butterflies”, with Peter and Linda Payzant, and despite early fog, and clouds the rest of the day, a good round-up of butterflies was seen. A surprising find – a rare Common Roadside Skipper; in all their 30 years of butterflying, neither Linda nor Peter had seen this particular butterfly! The next trip was to beautiful Gaff Point Nature Reserve, Hirtle Beach, on July 29th with Paul MacDonald, where we learned about both its geology and natural history. On September 8th – another oceanside trip, this time to Lawrencetown salt marsh with Nancy Neatt, co-founder of C.B. Wetlands & Environmental Specialists. We learned about, and saw, the type of marsh fish which prey upon insects and in turn are preyed upon by birds, such as Great Blue Heron. Birds, spiders’ webs, flowers, salt marsh grasses, Goosefoot and Glasswort, bulrushes, and Arrowgrass were introduced to us by Nancy, who was very knowledgeable.

Nature Nation e-Newsletter – On June 15th, the US National Audubon Society released an alarming report; many of the most recognised birds were experiencing steep population declines, based on forty years of bird population data collected through their annual Breeding Bird Surveys and Christmas Bird Counts. Twenty species had lost more than half their populations since 1967. *(to be cont’d in the next issue)*





HFN'S FOURTH DECADE

– *Stephanie Robertson*

PART I, THE FIRST FIVE YEARS

In the previous issue of The Halifax Field Naturalist (Winter 2014/2015) we gave an outline of the first two years of our fourth decade; below is a report of happenings and events in the following three.

WINTER 2007/2008 – On October 30th Blue Mountain/Birch Cove was declared a protected wilderness area (bringing the goal of 12% of Nova Scotia to be protected close to 9%); Ship Harbour/Long Lake was being proposed for protection (the then Environment Minister Mark Parment called it “a Nova Scotia treasure”); and the Digby Neck ‘mega-quarry’ project had been quashed(!).

At the 2007 Friends of Point Pleasant Park (FPPP) AGM, then HRM Manager of Real Property Planning Peter Bigelow gave a lengthy and detailed status update on the park following the devastation of Hurricane Juan, specifically – the hiring of a new supervisor of the park, Stephen Rice; and rejuvenation plans by NIP Paysage from Montreal and Ekistics Design of Dartmouth (they won the park design competition) which were to be used as the basis for new park Master/Management Plans.

Talk Reports – At the October 2007 monthly meeting Jennifer Van Dommelen shared her experiences on a scientific **Antarctic Sea Cruise** on the Russian trawler Yuzhmorgeologiya, which embarked from the Chilean tip of South America. Her job was to elucidate and report on the relationships between zooplankton abundance (notably krill) and predator abundance, and the effects of commercial fisheries on the local marine food webs. In November, Laurie Lacey – writer, lecturer, and specialist in traditional native plant/tree medicines – gave a fascinating and informative presentation on **Native Plant Uses**. In December, we learned from Dalhousie PhD student Krista Patriquin all about **Bats** – their population strengths, behaviour, movements, echolocation, some conservation tips, and much more!

Field Trip Reports – We had a wonderful **Shubenacadie Canal trip** led by Bernie Hart of the Shubenacadie Canal Commission. It started with an indoor lecture on its history, followed by a sunny walk along the canal itself (Shubenacadie comes from the Mi'kmaq 'segubunakadi' meaning 'the place where the groundnuts grow!'). **Birds and Beaches**, specifically the Piping Plover, was our next field trip subject, at Martinique Beach, led by Jen Graham of EAC and Sue Abbott of Bird Studies Canada. A few were seen, and we learned about their behaviour, the dangers they face in raising young on public beaches, and what we can all do to help protect these dear little birds. In October,

we learned about **Lichens** in the Terence Bay Wilderness Area from the Dept. of Environment and Labour's ecologist Robert Cameron. This area receives so much rainfall it can technically be classified as a rainforest, which is ideal habitat for a great abundance of lichens, liverworts, and mosses. We identified 26 species of lichens alone! Patricia Chalmers, hoping for some rare bird sightings at **Seaview Park** before the onslaught of Hurricane Noel, but being thwarted in her birding attempts by an enthusiastic HRM employee (she “wasn't allowed on city property”?!), decided to list the many plants she noticed still in bloom. Out of 37 plants listed, 25 were identified as ‘aliens’ in Marion Zinc's edition of Roland's flora of Nova Scotia, and there was an unexpected find of Red Osier Dogwood. Lesley Jane Butters, with her unerring eye for the beauties of nature, and her great gift of being able to take us there with both her photos and her writing ability, submitted a pæan of a piece on **The First Snow in Keji** (after a 20 - 25 cm snowfall). This is definitely worth a ‘re-read’ (*Issue #129, p. 15*).



SPRING 2008 – HFN's Board roster continued as before, but with the addition of Richard Beazley filling the previously vacant Secretarial Chair. February's rusty-red colour of the moon eclipse was explained by the amount of volcanic dust in our atmosphere; HRM's Horticultural Department hosted an open house at both their Dartmouth and Halifax locations; opportunities were announced to help support the quashing of extending the gypsum quarries on the Avon Peninsula which would endanger the ecological profile of the area; and Nature Canada would host their 38th Conference and AGM in June in Montreal.

New strategies for Nova Scotia's natural resources were announced by DNR, and public input was called for by Nova Scotia Environment and Labour for new provincial water resource management strategies. It was reported that Jean Rivers Sawyer, 1948 - 2008, an avid plant naturalist and hiker, had passed away in February. Together with husband and naturalist Barry Sawyer, they had amassed a photo library of trips both local and abroad, plants, and nature, to share through their wonderful slide shows.

Year-end Reports – Finances – In 2007 our unrestricted assets were \$8,423.00 at the end of the fiscal year. **Membership** remained the same at 129. **Programme** – We had nine presentations and 17 field trips. **Conservation** – Conservation Chair Peter Webster attended the Nature Canada Conference hosted in Wolfville by the Nature Nova Scotia. HFN representatives and members were working diligently on the White's Point Quarry Review, the Blue Mountain/Birch Cove Lakes Protected Wilderness Area, the Chebucto Peninsula stewardship Charter, and McNab's Island Provincial Park. Bob and Wendy McDonald attended and reported on the talk “The Importance of Trees to Cities”, by Dr. David Novak of the USDA Forest Service. **The Colin Stewart Conservation Award** went to the Ecology Action Centre, the largest conservation and environmental organisation in our province.

Talk Reports – On January 3rd, Gerry Lunn, Curator of Interpretation for the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic, presented in pictures and words a description of Alberta's wonderful **Waterton Lakes Park** in which he worked in the early 80s. **Jamaican Adventures** was our February



7th presentation by HFNER Joan Czapalay who visited and taught there, no less than seven times, under the auspices of the World Bank Jamaica Project Fund. March 6th was our **AGM and Members' Slide Night** with presentations by Peter Webster (a Bolivian mountain climbing trip); Peter Payzant (a music-study trip to Japan); Lesley Jane Butters (awe-inspiring nature shots from Keji and the Valley); Chris Stoddard (south shore winter scenes); Karen McKendry (YNC field trips); Janet Dalton (the Purdon Conservation Area in Ontario); and Jack Warkentin (his trip to Cuba).

Field Trip Reports – September 22nd saw a trip to the **Captain Arnell Lands** to continue our biota survey. Seventy-nine plants and 23 bird species were observed and recorded up to and including this foray. Our **Annual HFN/NSBS Sewer Stroll** took place on January 26th with leaders Bob McDonald and Suzanne Borkowski; 49 birds were recorded. On February 9th we had a visit and field trip to the **Hope for Wildlife Centre** with leaders Burkhard and Ingrid Plache. Lots of information was shared and many rescued animals were seen at this wonderful facility which Hope Swinimer started in the early 1990s. On March 4th we hiked to **Flat Lake** starting out from the top of Oceanview Drive off Purcell's Cove Road, once again with Burkhard and Ingrid Plache. It was invigorating and fun, and 30 species of plants were seen and recorded.



SUMMER 2008 – On June 25th the final, comprehensive Plan for Point Pleasant Park was publicly presented by Peter Bigelow, Manager of Real Property Planning for HRM. In short, the report's recommendations were true to the sound environmental principles proposed earlier on. A public input session was announced by HRM for those who wished to have input before the official designation of Blue Mountain/Birch Cove as a Protected Wilderness Area.

Special Reports – 195 people attended the Halifax public meeting on the future of natural resources in Nova Scotia, from Grade One and Two students, to Dr. Wilfred Creighton (104 years old and previous Deputy Minister of DNR). He wisely noted "successive provincial governments have shown little appreciation for the value of our forests".

Talk Reports – On the 1st of May, we were given an especially exciting presentation by Bob and Wendy McDonald about their **Birding Trip to Ethiopia**. Multitudes of very different birds were seen and photographed, along with many other species of wildlife.

Field Trip Reports – On May 4th another biota survey field trip was carried out in the **Captain Arnell Lands**; additional to the last survey, 13 species of plants, six of insects, eight birds, one amphibian, one fungus, one moss, and some liverworts were recorded.

FALL 2008 – It had been a wonderful summer for both plants and animals, with lots of rain (but not too much) for roots, waterfowl, fruits, trees, and leaves. Our back garden Spy apple tree was particularly laden. A groundbreaking conference, "For Our Birds", was announced for November, 2008, focusing on the science and conservation of birds, engaging new people in bird conservation, and increasing public awareness about the need for it. HFN backed a proposed province-wide ban on the use of cosmetic and non-agricultural pesticides by Pesticide Free Nova Scotia with a letter of support to the provincial government. The

Cornell 2009 Back Yard Bird Count was announced so that people could begin planning for it.

Special Reports – We printed David Patriquin's July, 2008 impassioned and influential submission to Voluntary Planning, the Citizen's Policy Forum, on Nova Scotia's natural resources, another article worth a re-read (*Issue #132, p. 4*).

Special Articles – Taxonomy and the importance of 'getting it right' was explained by Ursula Grigg with outlines of superkingdoms, kingdoms, families, sub-families, and genus and species. David Patriquin submitted a **Point Pleasant Park Talk & Walk** report following Peter Bigelow's presentation on June 5th, outlining more details of future park management plans and why they were chosen.

Field Trip Reports – On June 14th botanist Ruth Newell, with the E.C. Smith Herbarium at Acadia University, led our visit to the 20-acre gypsum lands near Brooklyn, Hants County to talk about **Limestone Flora and Chimney Swifts**. We marvelled at the rich vegetation (34 plant species were recorded) and interesting gypsum habitat, later going on to meet Jim Wolford at the chimney of the Robie Tufts Nature Centre to see the wondrous flight of the Chimney Swifts as they flew down into it to roost. **Butterflies** were the aim of our next trip on July 5th at the Uniacke Estate Museum Park. We had wonderful weather, but only one Wood Nymph was spotted, there were no Common Branded Skippers, and few fritillaries. Twenty-two species were recorded. On August 7th Bob and Wendy McDonald led us to **Belcher's Marsh Park** in the Glenbourne subdivision in the upper end of Clayton Park. The Halifax Northwest Trails Association, of which Bob and Wendy are stalwart members, are stewards of its marsh and pond, have carried out a flora inventory there (over 100 species have been observed), and helped with its two interpretive panels. Belcher's Marsh is a perfect example of how nature and development can happily co-exist. **Shorebirds** – On August 17th we went to Hartlen Point with longtime birder Fulton Lavender. On a sunny and breezy day we benefited from Fulton's extensive knowledge of birds and bird behaviour, while looking for the shorebirds expected there. Thirty-nine species of birds, along with a 'possible' sighting of a Clapper Rail, were recorded.



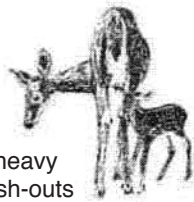
WINTER 2008/2009 – 2009 was the UNESCO International Year of Astronomy (IYA), a global celebration of the 400th anniversary of Galileo's first use of the telescope. In its honour, one of Astronomy Nova Scotia's projects was "Dark Skies Awareness". The loss of dark night skies is a serious issue impacting astronomy research, human health, ecology, safety, security, economics, and energy conservation. We received a letter of appreciation from HFNER Pat Leader for Ursula's Taxonomy article. The Halifax Public Libraries announced it had purchased over 300 children's titles on environmental issues with a generous grant from the TD Friends of the Environment Association.

Special Reports – Bedford Waterfront; Stage II With her usual humorous flair Pat Leader gave us all the history of what has been happening (and not happening), development-wise, with the Bedford Basin waterfront.

Talk Reports – On September 8th Dalhousie PhD student Susanna Fuller of the Ecology Action Centre gave

a presentation on **Marine Diversity**, sharing with us some of her lifelong fascination with sea creatures, describing the current state of marine habitats and populations, and outlining the respective roles of government agencies and conservation groups. On October 2nd we had veterinarian Helene Van Doninck, an international teacher of **Wildlife Rehabilitation**, talk to us about her experiences in this admirable and necessary field, sharing many images of rescued wildlife. Helene founded, and operates, the Cobequid Wildlife Rehabilitation Centre. **Nature Photography** was the subject of our November 6th presentation, and was given by long time nature photographer and HFNER Keith Vaughan, who has had over 3,000 acceptances(!) of his work in international exhibitions. His selection of breathtaking, world-ranging slides had been compiled for a show which he had been invited to present a year after attending a photo conference in San Diego.

Field Trip Reports – Our September, October, and November field trips were **Tidepool Tiptoe**, **Bogs and Barrens**, and **McIntosh Run** respectively. The first took place at Martinique Beach with knowledgeable leader Cathy Fulton; we learned about intertidal zones, water salinity, and saw the many interesting creatures that adapt to and live in these marine areas. Geologist and botanist Janet McGinley led the October trip to the coastal bogs and barrens of Prospect Village, where we learned about its geologic history, and enjoyed discovering the native flora and fauna there. For the last trip, we met at the Roach's Pond Park to explore McIntosh Run near Spryfield. Kaarin Tae and John Brazner led us to this surprising wilderness – so close to the city! McIntosh Run Community Group is working to establish the trail as an 'official' one.



SPRING 2009 – The melting snow and ice of a heavy winter revealed many deleterious crusher-dust wash-outs in Point Pleasant Park (this is still happening in 2015). Crusher-dust (it comes pre-salted) is dumped on the park's roads by the tonne every year. Needless to say, these areas have their flora completely obliterated and permanently damaged. It was announced that the 2009 Nature NS Conference would be held in and around Wolfville on June 13th and 14th. The 2009 BioBlitz was to be organised by St. Mary's biologist Dr. Jeremy Lundholme on June 5th and 6th; he was to be in charge of organising the vascular plant group. EAC, St. Mary's, Dalhousie, and the Coastal Coalition of Nova Scotia partnered in a series of informative lectures about the province's beaches and how to protect them. We learned that field seminars in natural history, at a variety of levels, are offered by the Eagle Hill Foundation, near Acadia National Park, Maine.

David Patriquin took over the Presidency from Allan Robertson, and Allan became Past President. Bob McDonald (previous Past President) remained as a director. Brian Bartlett left the board, and Jim Medill joined, for a total of 12 directors.

Year-end Reports – Conservation – Our activities included working on Blue Mountain/Birch Cove Lakes, the Citizen's Policy Forum on a National Resource Strategy, the Sustainable Coastal Strategy, the McNab's Island Public Advisory Committee, and the Point Pleasant Park Advisory Committee. **Colin Stewart Conservation Award** – It went

to Bob and Wendy McDonald. Bob has served on HFN's Board several times, and both have played leading roles advocating for Blue Mountain/Birch Cove Lakes to become a Protected Wilderness Area. They have been active in land-conservation campaigns, trail groups, breeding-bird atlas squares, presenting submissions to different levels of government about conservation, and are long-time occasional Piping Plover Guardians. **Membership** – Membership was down by two; from 129 to 127. **Programme** – There were nine monthly meetings and 15 field trips in 2008. **Finances** – In 2008, our unrestricted assets clocked in at \$8,324.00.

Talk Reports – Bob Branton, on behalf of senior scientist Ron D'Or, both of Dalhousie's Biology Department and the Census of Marine Life (COML), presented **Our Oceans – Censusing Marine Life; Diversity, Distribution, and Abundance** on December 4th. Begun in 2000, COML was a global ten-year initiative by over 2,000 researchers from 80 countries. Its aim was to assess the diversity, distribution, and abundance of life in our oceans – past, present, and future, encompassing several megascience projects involving many millions of dollars. One of the spin-off projects was the Ocean Tracking Network (OTN), headquartered at Dalhousie. Using tracking devices and sensors, animals were able to be followed globally throughout the world's oceans. On January 8th Grace and Richard Beazley gave a presentation on their exciting rafting trip on the **Nahanni River** near the southwest border of the Northwest Territories. We saw truly magnificent steep rock formations on either side of certain river sections, famous caves, Kraus Hotsprings, Nahanni Butte and many other wonders; this was a great presentation on a very distinctive area. **Wild Nova Scotia** was our February 3rd talk. Len Wagg, a Chronicle Herald photographer, had been taking spectacular photos of our province for more than 20 years, both aerially and at the level of a "Bullfrog's nose". We were shown some of his breathtaking pictures, which were also published in his Nova Scotia Landmarks: Portrait of a Province From the Air, and his Wild Nova Scotia which won the award for Excellence in Illustration at the 2008 Atlantic Book Awards. **Members' Slide Night** rounded out the winter meetings with beautiful presentations by Keith Vaughan (his favourite images of Nova Scotia), Richard Beazley (Autumn Reflections 2008), John Carpenter (central Brazil), Karen McKendry (snaps from YNC trips), Bob McDonald (southern Argentina and the Falklands), and Burkhard Plache (New Zealand).

Field Trip Reports – Our **Annual HFN/NSBS Sewer Stroll** to the usual spots around Halifax Harbour, finishing at Point Pleasant Park, took place on February 8th with leaders Suzanne Borkowski and Bob McDonald; a total of 59 species were recorded.



SUMMER 2009 – A rainy spring had brought forth many beautiful wildflowers in abundance; especially noted were Pink Lady's-slipper groupings along the south-end railway cut. Plans for the 'Urban Greenway' had not yet materialised (locals named it the 'Grey Way' for the large swath of asphalt expected to replace the beautiful grass verge). Nature Canada was to have a new Executive Director in July – Ian Davidson, with an extensive background in



Wildlife Management. Once again the Canadian Sea Turtle Network Volunteer Jellyfish Project, investigating variations in jellyfish populations, was to take place in July, their real focus being the Leatherback Turtle which feeds almost exclusively on jellyfish.

Special Articles – “Species Lists, Love ‘em or Hate ‘em”. Biologist Ursula Grigg expanded upon the reasons that species lists in their ‘proper’ order are important, with an amusing short history behind their use.

Talk Reports – On the 2nd of April Norman Green of the Friends of Keji organisation, gave a detailed and informative talk about all the conservation activities around **Blanding’s Turtles**, one of the rarest turtles in Nova Scotia. We learned about their habitat requirements and what these turtles need to successfully nest, hatch, overwinter, and be protected from roadside accidents to their nesting sites. The volunteers, so necessary for this work, include graduate students, the general public, the Herpetological Society, Friends of Keji, wardens, and scientists. It happens in June and July and participants can take part from three days to three weeks. On May 7th HFN member Shirley McIntyre gave us a wonderful show of Swiss alpine glory, with dizzying and breathtaking shots from various heights and places in **Switzerland**. Shirley is an avid hiker and went there on tour with ten others.

Field Trip Reports – On March 15th we had **Long Lake Lichens** with knowledgeable biologist and mycologist Frances Anderson. After viewing and talking about the different traits of many Nova Scotia lichens, we briefly discussed chemical tests which could be used on those more difficult to identify. The **Sackville River Trail** was our April 4th trip with leaders Walter Regan (President of the Sackville Rivers Association [SRA]), naturalist Sebastian Marquis, and SRA coordinator Steve Caines. SRA’s aim is to keep the river ecologically friendly to salmon and other wild river life. They have conducted many projects, and use the successful reintroduction of spawning salmon as a measure of the river’s viability. On April 19th 35 people went to study **Bay of Fundy Minerals** with Ronnie Van Dommelen, to whitt: manganite, ulexite, gypsum, fluorite, anhydrite, calcite, and howlite, and how and why these particular minerals were found here. The wetlands of the **Greenwing Legacy Centre** at Shubenacadie Provincial Wildlife Park was our objective on May 17th with leader Stephanie Patriquin. The Centre opened in 2006 in partnership with Ducks Unlimited and the Province of Nova Scotia. It is one of 1,600 Ducks Unlimited projects in Atlantic Canada. We enjoyed hands-on activities with dip nets and learned about the necessity of wetlands for many forms of life, including birds. Forty-three species of birds, plants, and insects were reported. **Canoeing Shubenacadie** with Burkhard and Ingrid Plache was our trip on June 6th. The cold, heavy rain thankfully diminished to nothing in our first hour of canoeing. We paddled by beautiful riverbanks marvelling at the magnificent White Pines hanging low over the river, Canada Geese and other birds, and the many plants along the way. The banks and gravelly islets had lots of Royal Fern, and we saw and heard at least two Kildeer. Wonderful!

so much blackened devastation. The Provincial Government requested input into a draft of a new Wetland Conservation Policy. The Blue Mountain/Birch Cove Lakes ‘BioBlitz’ was completed in June. Now all that was needed was for HRM to fulfil its obligations by securing the privately-owned lands which comprise some of its prize assets – an eight-lake canoe route, some shoreline, and park entry points easily reached by transit or foot. We announced our new website address – halifaxfieldnaturalists.ca.

Talk Reports – Labrador Travels and 2008 in Pictures were reported in the Fall 2009 issue. In August 2008 Burkhard and Ingrid Plache travelled by car, coastal ferry, and airplane to reach Nain, Labrador. They experienced gravel road driving, passing through boggy Black Spruce forests on the way to Churchill Falls. They saw a herd of Woodland Caribou, and photographed four young Wolves. They sailed on the supply freighter MV Northern Ranger through Hamilton Inlet out to Groswater Bay. Ingrid showed her interest in wildflowers with many beautiful images, and they drank tea made from the leaves of Labrador Tea, *Rhododendron groenlandica*. They found it to be a vast, wild land still largely unspoiled and yet at the same time the site of some of the largest industrial projects in Canada. **2008 in Pictures –** David Chiasson and his partner Heidi made a point of hiking, kayaking, and canoeing every single weekend of the year; 49 of those weekends were in Nova Scotia and it was well documented with thousands of photos. It required much planning, and he had made spreadsheets outlining all 52 weekends. It all paid off – they had safe sojourning, even around high islands and dangerous oceans, and we sat back, entranced, as we watched his glorious slideshow accompanied by the music of Loreena McKennit.

Field Trip Reports – The post-fire **Arnell Lands Biota Survey** boasted 17 species of plants; some parts of the area had been consumed – some not. **Butterflies** with Peter and Linda Payzant took place on July 11th at our usual spot, Uniacke Estate Museum Park, and – there were very few butterflies to be seen. Rain had flooded some of the area (this trip was the alternate date offered as the first one was rained out), but there were lots of Ebony Jewelwings (damselflies) patrolling sunny spots, the males’ iridescent green bodies sparkling in the sunlight; twelve species were recorded. Ralph Stea, with the N.S. Department of Natural Resources, presented **Rapidly Changing Landscapes** on a hike along sections of Shubenacadie Canal. We learned all about its interesting geological and glacial history, and how it shaped what we find there today. On August 8th we went to **Martinique Beach**. Twenty-three of us joined Sue Abbott of Bird Studies Canada for this enjoyable, sunny trip. The beach is a designated Important Bird Area (IBA) which lies along a major migration corridor named the Atlantic Flyway, and is the longest white sand beach in the province. Besides the usual seabirds, a Nelson’s Sharp-tailed Sparrow was sighted, and a group of ± 40 Semipalmated Plovers were spotted on the wet sand. Two Whimbrels were also seen, with their long, decurved beaks and distinct eyebrows. On September 13th we went to **Gaff Point** with leader Paul MacDonald, meeting at Hirtle’s Beach. The usual beach, dune, and boardwalk configurations had been drastically changed by tropical storms Bill and Dan, and sometime into the walk there was a downpour! Berries picked along the hike were a treat, and we saw many points of interest such as West Ironbound Island, and Mosher’s Island in a distant fog. Twenty-four plant species and 11

Fall 2009 – A biota report of the post-fire Captain Arnell Lands revealed nature’s amazing regenerative ability after

animals (including birds) were recorded.

YNC Field Trip Reports – Young naturalists submitted some write-ups to the Halifax Field Naturalist: Bronwyn on **Winter Survival Tips**, Toren E. Hynes on **Winter and Summer Survival**, Karen McKendry and young participants on a **Purcell's Pond** trip, and Emma on the **Salamander Night Hike**. These were accompanied by charming sketches and a salamander photo.



WINTER 2009/2010 – Some internet sites one could access regarding weather data were listed in the Editorial. Blue Mountain/Birch Cove Lakes area was threatened by a new development proposal making its way through City Hall, endangering the integrity of the entire Regional Plan.

Special Reports – All the latest changes and plans to the Bedford Waterfront were outlined by Patrica Leader, specifically the continuing saga of the development, and/or delayed development, of the public walkway.

Talk Reports – Biology Adventures. On October 1st Karen McKendry shared with us her adventures along the way to her Masters degree in Environmental Studies from Dalhousie. Growing up in Quebec, she spent many happy summers at her family's cottage in 300 acres of forest, ponds, and even a small mountain. This was her background as her interests progressed through marine biology, herpetology, ecology, then to nature conservation. Karen shared with us her 'biology project' adventures on the Rideau River, and an exciting Canadian Field Studies Project in Kenya. She finished her programme in Guelph, then worked on several contracts, one of which was on the endangered Garry Oaks in British Columbia, and another a stint with the Museum of Nature in Ottawa classifying Arctic invertebrate samples which led to Arctic trips. In 2006 Karen came to Nova Scotia and after completing her Master's programme has worked with N.S. Nature Trust, and provides a 'mentor role' for the Young Naturalists Club, which she initiated. On November 5th Sarah Chisholm shared her Arctic and Antarctic adventures with **Life at The Poles** while on contract with the Canadian Wildlife Service. She studied Northern Fulmar on Devon Island, had two adventurous seasons in Antarctica focusing on Chinstrap and Gentoo Penguins, and further adventures as a Park Warden in Auyuittuq National Park in Nunavut.

Field Trip Reports – On Sunday October 8th we offered another trip to **Purcell's Cove Conservation Lands** with leader and interpreter Bob McDonald. Forty-two macrolichens were observed (three of them were new records for HRM), four birds, two new flowering plants, 18 regeneration species after the fire, and one Lepidoptera – a Mourning Cloak, *Nymphalis antiopa*. **Long Lake Provincial Park** was our November 8th field trip with leader Peter Webster. These beautiful and diverse woodlands contain old-growth pines, geocaches, mosses and lichens, and Beaver dams. Long-time avid birder and HFNER Bernice Moores visited the 'cloud kingdom' of **Bhutan** (also known as the last Shangri La) in the eastern Himalayas, a trip organised by the International Crane Foundation. Led by co-founder Dr. George Archibald, a Nova Scotian, she was one of 14 participants. The article was a fascinating description of the world's youngest democracy, a mostly Buddhist culture. Bhutan boasts more than 700 bird species. Three seen by

the group were the Black-necked Crane, the White-bellied Heron, and the Osprey, beautifully illustrated for us by her granddaughter Jennifer.



SPRING 2010 – Sable Island was being considered for National Park or Wildlife Area status. Bridget Stutchberry was to present the research behind her book *Silence of the Songbirds* at Dalhousie. Nature Nova Scotia's Conference and AGM was to be held this year on the Eastern Shore, joining the St. Mary's River Association and the Nova Scotia Nature Trust. Ocean's Day was to be celebrated at the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic on June 4th, and on June 5th – the popular yearly Harriet Irving botanical Garden Plant Sale. The five-year initiative of the Maritime Butterfly Atlas was launched by the Atlantic Canada Conservation Data Centre. Nova Scotia's own Dr. George Archibald was to be the featured speaker at the 2010 Nature Trust dinner. The Nova Scotia government declared coastal management a priority with the release of its "State of Nova Scotia's Coasts" report.

David Patriquin remained President. Peter Webster stepped down, leaving the post of Vice-President vacant. Lesley Jane Butters joined the Board, making a total of 12 Executive Members.

SPECIAL REPORTS – Conservation – HFN continued to work on and support Blue Mountain/Birch Cove Lakes, protection of the central Chebucto Peninsula as a Wilderness Protected Area, McNab's Island, and Phase 2 of the N.S. Natural Resources Strategy Forum, specifically on biodiversity and a Provincial Parks Policy. The Colin Stewart Forest Forum Final Report was released. **Membership** – Memberships were down by six – from 127 in 2008, to 121 in 2009. **Programme** – There were a total of nine talks and 23 field trips in 2008. **Finances** – Our unrestricted assets for 2009 were \$7,763.00.

The media frenzy, misreporting, and general lack of scientific rigour around the presence of the Brown Spruce Longhorn Beetle, rebutted and made clear by entomologist Christopher Majka, was presented in "**Beetle-mania – Again**". The Five Bridges Lakes of HRM was to be declared a Wilderness Area by the province. Calls for public input were tendered and were to be submitted before April 30th. On Friday, March 5th, at the Nova Scotia Public Archives the Nova Scotia Environmental Awards were given out. The awards went to Beth McGee of the Five Bridges Heritage Trust; the Avon Peninsula Watershed Preservation Society; Marilyn Cameron, Chair of the Biosolids & Wastewater Group; Helen Jones and Maureen Reynolds of Real Alternatives to Toxics in the Environment; Ikanawitket of the Initiative of the Maritime Aboriginal Peoples' Council; Janice Asworth with the Energy Issues Committee of the EAC; Mark Parent, former Conservative N.S. Minister of the Environment and Agriculture; and Jamie Simpson, Forestry Programme Coordinator, EAC.

Talk Reports – Urban Ecology was our December 4th presentation by Professor Jeremy Lundholm of St. Mary's University. His talk about different habitat types in and around Halifax was based on his four classifications – remnant habitats (such as Point Pleasant Park), converted habitats (such as vacant lots and crevices in sidewalks), constructed habitats (hard surfaces and roofs), and link/

corridor habitats (which facilitate movement of species between larger habitat areas). On January 7th, we had a wonderful presentation on **Sea Turtles** by Laura Bennett of the Canadian Sea Turtle Network. Specifically, we learned about Green Turtles, Kemp's Ridleys, Loggerheads, and Leatherbacks – their needs, habitats, and what endangers their survival. Leatherbacks have been studied and followed the most extensively. On the 4th of February, we heard about the relationship between coffee plantations and the viability of songbird populations in **Birds – and Coffee**, by Mark Butler, EAC. Essentially, shade-grown coffee protects songbird habitat; plantation coffee compromises it. March 4th was our annual **AGM and Members' Slide Night**. We were shown some breathtaking pictures by Jack Warkentin (plants, birds, and scenery from far and wide), Maryann Burbridge (animals photographed on her world travels), Lesley Jane Butters (a wide range of exquisite photos of nature subjects), Charles Cron (a Churchill, Manitoba Polar Bear trip), Ingrid Plache (islands in the North Sea off the

coast of Holland, and Bob McDonald (images of South Georgia Island and the Falklands from an Antarctic tour, including penguins and seals).

Field Trip Reports – On January 24th, botanists Marion Munro and Frances Anderson conducted us on **An Afternoon at the Museum** where we were able to see lichen specimens from the museum's storage cabinets, with both macro- and micro-lenses (microscopes). Our **Annual Sewer Stroll** on February 13th with leader Suzanne Borkowski boasted 44 species, including three scoter species, two Rough-legged Hawks, a Peregrine Falcon, and at Point Pleasant Park – Purple Sandpipers.

