

# THE HALIFAX FIELD NATURALIST



No. 164  
September to November, 2016



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

**HFN** is incorporated under the Nova Scotia Societies Act and holds Registered Charity status with the Canada Revenue Agency. Tax-creditable receipts will be issued for individual and corporate gifts. **HFN** is an affiliate of Nature Canada and an organisational member of Nature Nova Scotia, the provincial umbrella association for naturalist groups. **Objectives** are to encourage a greater appreciation and understanding of Nova Scotia's natural history, both within the membership of HFN and in the public at large, and to represent the interests of naturalists by encouraging the conservation of Nova Scotia's natural resources. **Meetings** are held, except for July and August, on the first Thursday of every month at 7:30 p.m. in the auditorium of the Nova Scotia Museum of Natural History, 1747 Summer Street, Halifax; they are open to the public. **Field Trips** are held at least once a month; it is appreciated if those travelling in someone else's car share the cost of the gas. **Participants** in HFN activities are responsible for their own safety. Everyone, member or not, is welcome to take part in field trips. **Memberships** are open to anyone interested in the natural history of Nova Scotia. Forms are available at any meeting of the society, or by writing to: Membership Secretary, Halifax Field Naturalists, c/o N.S. Museum of Natural History. Members receive **The Halifax Field Naturalist**, along with its included **Programme**, quarterly. Our membership year is from January 1st to December 31st, and new memberships received from September 1st to December 31st of any year are valid until the end of the following membership year.



#### HFN ADDRESS

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**Website:** [halifaxfieldnaturalists.ca](http://halifaxfieldnaturalists.ca) We are now on **Facebook**. Enter **Halifax Field Naturalists** or **HFN**.

#### NNS ADDRESS

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#### EXECUTIVE

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**Programme**  
Talks/Trips

Design

#### Newsletter

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Taxonomy  
Distribution  
Labels

#### Refreshments

#### Conservation

#### NNS Rep.

#### YNC Rep.

#### PSAs

#### Website

#### CSC Award

#### Book Club

#### FEES

|                            |                  |
|----------------------------|------------------|
| <b>Student</b> .....       | \$15.00 per year |
| <b>Individual</b> .....    | \$20.00 per year |
| <b>Family</b> .....        | \$25.00 per year |
| <b>Supporting</b> .....    | \$30.00 per year |
| <b>Institutional</b> ..... | \$30.00 per year |
| <b>NNS (opt.)</b> .....    | \$5.00 per year  |

#### 2016

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|--|----------|
| Janet Dalton .....   | 443-7617 |
| Clarence Stevens .....   | 864-0802 |
| Ingrid Plache .....  | 475-1129 |
| Michael Bradfield .....  | 423-7706 |
| Allan Robertson .....  | 422-6326 |
| Ron Arsenault, Judy Keating, Burkhard Plache, Shelly Pohl, Lillian Risley, Stephanie Robertson |          |

#### 2016

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|---------------------|----------|
| Ron Arsenault ..... | 410-6868 |
|---------------------|----------|

|                                |                |
|--------------------------------|----------------|
| Denyse Contrasty .....         | 478-1706       |
| Carol Klar .....               | 443-3385       |
| Edward Finigan .....           | 495-7770       |
| Molly LeBlanc (co-chair) ..... | 403-1339       |
| Susan Moxon .....              | 461-1303       |
| Bethany Nordstrom .....        | 1-506-260-1197 |
| Keith Vaughan (co-chair) ..... | 445-9887       |
| Stephanie Robertson .....      | 422-6326       |

|                           |                |
|---------------------------|----------------|
| Stephanie Robertson ..... | 422-6326       |
| Patricia Chalmers .....   | 422-3970       |
| Ursula Grigg .....        | 1-902-681-1264 |
| Bernice Moores .....      | 422-5292       |
| Doug Linzey .....         | 1-902-582-7176 |

|                    |  |
|--------------------|--|
| Regine Maass ..... |  |
| Diane Birch .....  |  |

|                       |          |
|-----------------------|----------|
| Bob McDonald .....    | 443-5051 |
| David Patriquin ..... | 423-5716 |
| Clare Robinson .....  | 446-6603 |

|                       |          |
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| Burkhard Plache ..... | 475-1129 |
| David Patriquin ..... | 423-5716 |

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| Vacant ..... |  |
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| David Patriquin ..... | 423-5716 |
| Burkhard Plache ..... | 475-1129 |

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| Doug Linzey .....     | 1-902-582-7176 |
| David Patriquin ..... | 423-5716       |

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| Gillian Webster ..... | 453-9244 |
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**GRAPHICS** All uncredited illustrations are by H. Derbyshire or from copyright-free sources. **Front Cover** - Public Gardens' maple leaves, Roland Marek; **p. 3** - Duck with young, John Dick; **Back Cover** - Fall at Long Lake, Rebecca Robertson; **Tide Table** - Canadian Hydrographic Service, Fisheries & Oceans Canada.



# HFN NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

## HFN HISTORY MINUTES

– Grace Beazley

The ten HFN 'History Minutes' have been collated into a document as an important record from our 40th Anniversary celebrations. Webmaster David Patriquin has posted and archived them on our website. It's in the History Subpage section, under the larger section titled "About HFN". Be sure to check out the document! Go to [halifaxfieldnaturalists.ca](http://halifaxfieldnaturalists.ca).



## NSNT 2016 DINNER/AUCTION

Tickets are still available for the Nova Scotia Nature Trust's 19th Annual Dinner and Auction at the Cunard Centre on November 3rd. Help celebrate this year's land conservation successes, network with like-minded friends, and raise critical funds for the Nature Trust's continued, vital work. It is building a lasting natural legacy for Nova Scotians and visitors alike by contributing to the protection of our province's most special places and their species. Support the Nature Trust's conservation work by joining them for this special evening.

This year's guest speaker is farmer Peter Forbes, an educator in the fields of conservation, leadership development, and philanthropy; <http://peterforbes.org/home>. There will be tables set aside for HFN attendees, and – free parking! Doors open and the Silent Auction begins at 5:30 p.m. Dinner will be served at 6:45 p.m., and a tax receipt will be issued for a portion of the dinner ticket/table value. Tickets will be held at the door on the night of the event.

For more information, or to purchase tickets, phone **902-425-5263**, or download the ticket order form and fax or mail it to the Nature Trust office.



## AN URBAN WILDERNESS PARK

The following motion was presented to Halifax Regional Council (HRC) on September 20th, regarding the lands around Colpitt and William's Lakes and the Purcell's Cove Backlands being set aside as an "Urban Wilderness Park".

The motion stated, "That [HRC] will direct staff to:

1. Proceed with the negotiations to acquire the lands (PID 00062407) and return to Regional Council for consideration of the key terms and conditions for the 379 acres that address the following: **a.** Suitable acquisition terms respecting the purchase, lease and payment plan for the lands that represents fair market value or better as supported by appraisal commissioned by HRM. **b.** Acceptable governance model that considers a community stewardship model for the management of the parkland. **c.** A suitable concept site and management plan including installation of the proposed infrastructure by The Shaw Group that enables turnkey operation of the property within two years. **d.** Clarification of the obligations of the lessor [Nature Conservancy Canada] and lessee (HRM) respecting the lands including any restrictions/covenants which meet municipal

requirements and mitigate future risk to HRM, **e.** Resolution of the concerns related to the state of the dam on the lands; **f.** Input from public consultation and discussions with the Province and relevant stakeholders regarding the proposal; and

2. Consider updates to the Regional Plan and related planning documents during the next review cycle to reflect the acquisition(s) and the implications on surrounding lands.

The motion was passed.



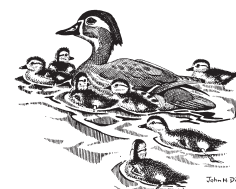
## WILDLIFE WATCH

A new initiative, 'Watch for Wildlife NS', which will be of particular interest to all naturalists, has been inaugurated here in our province. It is a Sierra Club Canada Foundation prevention programme which raises awareness about: ways to prevent wildlife-vehicle collisions; the impacts of vehicle collisions on wildlife and people; and who to contact if and when a collision does occur.

Key elements of Watch for Wildlife include: information brochures for people to carry in their cars; bumper magnets and stickers which will remind other drivers to watch for wildlife while on the road; and public outreach/awareness-raising programmes via the press, social media, and events. They've engaged the Department of Transportation (Road Safety), the Department of Natural Resources (Wildlife Division), Hope for Wildlife, Cobequid Wildlife Rehabilitation Centre, Animal Welfare Canada Foundation, and other stakeholders to develop a collaborative approach to provide education about wildlife on our roads.

If you hit or see wildlife and it is injured but still alive, or if it has eggs or young animals with it, call the nearest wildlife rescue – **Hope For Wildlife** in Seaforth (east of Halifax, 902-407-9453; or **Cobequid Wildlife Rehabilitation Centre** in Shubenacadie (east of Truro), 902-893-0253; or **DNR**, 1-800-565-2224. For removal of a carcass from a road or highway, call the Department of Transportation's road response hotline, 1-844-696-7737.

For more detailed information, or if you are interested in getting involved as a stakeholder or supporter, please let them know, and please help to spread the word about this programme. Their website is [www.watchforwildlife.ca](http://www.watchforwildlife.ca) and their social media addresses are: **Facebook** – <https://www.facebook.com/watchforwildlifens>; **Twitter** – <https://twitter.com/watch4wildlife> OR @watch4wildlife. You may also contact Wanda Baxter at 902-275-8895 or [wandab@sierraclub.ca](mailto:wandab@sierraclub.ca).



## NEW MEMBERS

Condon MacDonald  
Susan Tooke & Richard Rudnicki

Fall 2016, #164

# SPECIAL REPORTS AND ARTICLES

## BLUE MOUNTAIN/BIRCH COVE LAKES REGIONAL PARK – HFN CONSERVATION UPDATE

– Bob and Wendy McDonald

As students return to school, the buzz will be ‘How I spent my summer vacation!’ For many HFN members and contacts, it was a busy summer spent planning and attending meetings (including Regional Council); researching; doing interviews; writing letters to elected officials; and many other, always urgent, activities. But we had fun too, sharing trails with over 150 individuals who may not have explored the region before, either on land or on water. Among these were elected officials and hopefuls, all wanting to understand why it is so important to make informed decisions about the future of the Blue Mountain/Birch Cove Lakes (BMBCL) Regional Park, and also the Backlands adjacent to the Purcell’s Cove Conservation Lands.

A big thank you to volunteers for introducing the Birch Cove Lakes to paddlers, a mini-Keji experience. This pristine eight-lake loop can only be saved if HRM makes some large land purchases, using legacies or other funds for green infrastructure, including lakes, woodlands, and granite barrens. We learned from the experts that unless the provincially-owned Wilderness Area has a substantial buffer (up to one km) around it, healthy habitat will not be sustainable. On September 6th, HRM Regional Council decided (by a 15-1 vote) that no development would be allowed in the privately-owned land within the Regional Park boundary, and that every effort should be made by HRM staff to acquire these lands for the Regional Park. A big thank you to those, among the 1,400 others, who took the time to write in to support the Regional Park. It will be a work in progress for many years while funds are amassed for land purchase.

As HRM makes plans about our Open Spaces and Green Network Plan, including Blue Mountain/Birch Cove Lakes Regional Park boundaries and the Backlands, we will attempt to keep you informed. It affects the whole region and not just the local district’s residents. HFN has sent letters of support to Council on your behalf for both BMBCL Regional Park and the Herring Cove Backlands. These will hopefully create ‘book-ends’ for the Green Network, coming to Council in the fall. Active living on our trails will assist in keeping our healthcare costs down for all ages.

Hike Nova Scotia has posted their fall series of hikes which are taking place around the province. Local hikes are included for all to participate, with registration being generally required. Go to <http://www.hikenovascotia.ca/> or [www.hikenovascotia.ca](http://www.hikenovascotia.ca/).



## A HEALTHY BAT COLONY!

– Department Natural Resources Release  
August 4th, 2016

The discovery of a colony of healthy bats is a hopeful sign for Nova Scotia’s at-risk bat population.

Scientists estimate that nearly 300 healthy female Little Brown Bats and their young are thriving at the site, which is the largest known maternity colony in the province.

Bats are ecologically and economically important mammals. A bat can eat up to half its weight in insects every night – the equivalent of 1,000 to 3,000 mosquitoes. Bats in eastern North America are at risk after years of population decline due to White-nose Syndrome, a deadly disease affecting bats. So far, it has killed about seven million bats in the region.

“This discovery is very significant, as the recovery potential of our bats depends on the number of healthy females,” said Minister of Natural Resources Lloyd Hines. “Every bat sighting provides important information to scientists and we encourage people to report observations of bats each time one is seen.”

As part of its commitment to the monitoring and recovery of any species at risk, the province is asking people to help track Nova Scotia’s bat population by reporting bat sightings on the website [www.batconservation.ca](http://www.batconservation.ca), or by calling 1-866-727-3447 toll free.

“We hope people will continue to report bat sightings so we can learn from these new discoveries and one day return to a healthy bat population in Nova Scotia,” Mr. Hines said.

Due to the seriousness of the concerns for the bat population, the location of the healthy colony is not being revealed.

(Note: Video and photographs of the discovered bat colony are available at <http://novascotia.ca/news/photos/2016/08/04/>. Also, see “Our Unfortunate Bats”, in The Halifax Field Naturalist, Summer 2016, Issue #163, p. 5.)



## MORAR TALES; A SEAL IN A BUCKET

– Gareth Harding and Renée Lyons  
September 12th, 2016.

On a warm sunny Labour Day weekend Renée spotted a large eel in one of the small, shallow pools at the mouth of Horseshoe Bend Brook. A period of strong winds and waves at high tide had formed a high pebble ridge which had blocked the brook from flowing directly into the ocean. This situation occurs frequently here during the late summer droughts. Upon first observation the eel looked to be either dead, or feeling poorly. Its head

was tucked between two rocks with a good two-plus feet of its limp, slimy body extending for all to see. On prodding it proved to be very much alive. I thought it probably was 'playing ostrich' until dark, when it would then snake its way over the then cooler pebbly dune and on down into the ocean. Could the eel make it up the one-metre dune and down the ten to twelve metres of beach to the sea? There were also the frequent beach patrols by our local eagles to consider. We decided to guarantee the trip by using a plastic pail which we keep at the beach to carry traction sand for our often muddy trail up the bluff.

The eel, however, was not as enthusiastic about being caught in a bucket as were its self-perceived rescuers. After several failed attempts to get the eel into the bucket, I realised we would have to flip the tail into the bucket manually before the head end came popping back out from the two rocks. This technique succeeded admirably, followed by a determined sprint to the ocean with three coils of writhing eel in the bottom of the bucket. Once poured out, the eel immediately swam to the east towards Cape George. This just happens to be the correct direction for the eel to exit the Gulf of St. Lawrence.

All North American eels are thought to navigate to the Sargasso Sea where they spawn the next generation. The adults are then thought to die and leave their tiny larvae to navigate their way back thousands of kilometres to, possibly, the mother's stream of origin. We were left with a feeling of amazement that such a large fish could have developed in such a small brook with no permanent lake. Secondly, how could she, as an elver, have made it up the steep, five-metre gradient of rocky shore from the beach so many years ago? Mature eels are thought to be greater than ten and may reach 40 years of age. There are still a lot of unknowns in the natural history of our common freshwater eel.

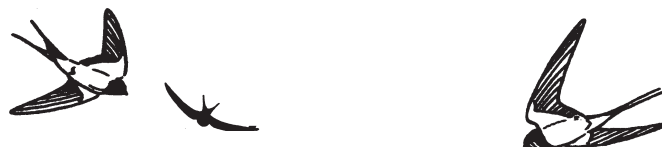
Afterwards, we enthusiastically walked several km down the shore to the outlet of Morar Brook to see whether the appearance of our eel wasn't part of a more-widespread phenomena. There were no eels, although the same surf action had sealed off the brook from the sea with the fresh water seeping through the pebble barrier.

Back in Halifax, we heard that Bob Bancroft was on CBC radio's Maritime Noon and Renée was gung-ho to tell our eel story. Bob suggested to her that we had probably saved a future mother eel, judging from her size, and that he had heard that several eels could form a ball, rather like wintering garter snakes, and roll towards the ocean. Sounds like something out of a witchcraft book! The logic behind this method of propulsion, however, is a little problematic.

The following weekend we returned to Morar to harvest some more of our garden and continue roofing our ancient barn. Jacques Jr., our neighbours' Black Lab, turned up promptly, as usual, sent by his owner to relieve his boredom. When I returned him that evening, Marie MacIsaac told me with a smile that she had told her niece, Bonnie, how we had found a seal in the brook and rescued it by returning it to the sea in a bucket. Bonnie had told her aunt impatiently that that was impossible. Marie said Bonnie had returned the next day triumphant with the information that it was an 'EEL' not a 'SEAL'. Marie Mattie, down the shore beyond Brown's Brook, had heard Renée and Bob Bancroft on the radio.



Our Jack Russell Millie and I returned home across the meadow after dusk, listening to a chorus of crickets on our right, and silence on the left, and I broadly grinned to myself about Marie enjoying the humour resulting from her failing hearing.



## SWIFTS IN SCOTLAND

– Stephanie Robertson

Arthur Morris shared four issues of his favourite magazine with me, "The Scot's Magazine", pointing out specifically a beautifully written and informative article on Swifts in Scotland, *Apus apus*, by wildlife author Jim Crumley (August, 2016). I was specifically interested in reading this, because I have been to see the 'flying in' of the Chimney Swifts, *Chaetura pelagica*, at the chimney in Wolfville.

Jim's article opens, "Finally the morning began to ease out of its torpor. Since before dawn it had buried itself deep in a cocoon of windless drizzle, a dripping festival of grey, a shroud of a thing, a glimpse of nature asleep, or at the very least not paying attention." On this particular May day, 2016, Jim had to wait a long time for clearing weather and a view of what he was waiting for. Finally, in late afternoon, a squad of swifts was spotted fleeing and feeding low over the waters of remote Loch Leven. Here, local birds are joined by city-breeding flocks from Dundee, Edinburgh, Perth, and Sterling, making up a total of over several thousand swifts! What a truly wondrous sight that must have been. His binoculars were "simply crammed with swifts, all of them working the first yard of airspace above the loch's surface, and locked into a flat-out celebration of aerial predation. A swarm of insects must dread the arrival of swifts." "There must be an explanation of how news of vast swarms of insect life transmits itself to swifts over 150 square miles, but I don't have it.", wrote Jim.

"Swifts are born fliers, and it is barely possible to take that idea too literally. Two eggs are laid in late May or early June. They hatch. The young fly by mid-July, but they do not pause to explore their nursery surroundings. Without a single flying lesson, they cast off from the nest and head south. Famously, a chick [banded] at one English nest site turned up in Madrid three days after it left the nest. There is no reason to believe that was exceptional behaviour, or rather exceptional swift behaviour." Their "lifestyle is utterly given over to flight, and swift flight at that, for it is like no other definition of flight. Flight is their natural habitat. They hunt, feed, sleep, and mate in flight. Apart from the brief two to three weeks between laying and hatching, when brooding and roosting at the nest is permitted, all life is flight."





# HFN TALKS

## WETLANDS ECOSYSTEMS 1 SEPT.

– **Stephanie Robertson**

Krista Hilchey presented “Wading Into the Nova Scotia Wetlands Conservation Policy”. Hailing from Pictou, Krista obtained her MSc at St. Mary’s University. She has been with the Nova Scotia Department of Environment for ten years, and the talk opened with pictures of her with an American Toad and a Yellow-spotted Salamander.



As defined by the 1995 Environment Act, Nova Scotia wetlands are lands commonly referred to as marshes, swamps, fens, or bogs. They all either periodically or permanently have a water table at, near, or above the land’s surface, and sustain aquatic processes as indicated by the presence of poorly drained soils, hydrophytic vegetation, and biological activities adapted to wet conditions. As part of their natural cycle, wetlands need to dry up occasionally.

**Bogs** – their source of water is rain. Bog water is fresh, acidic, and stagnant. Soils are comprised of layers of decomposed peat (often deeper than 40 cm); their chief plants are Peat moss, Cotton Grass, and Pitcher Plants.

**Swamps** – their water source is groundwater and/or seepage. Swamp water is generally fresh with neutral acidity. Soils are of mixed mineral and organic composition, with a woody organic layer supporting Black Spruce, Red Maples, and Alders.



**Marshes** – their water comes from rain, seepage, and tidal flooding. Marsh water can be salt or fresh and is generally neutral to alkaline. Their identifying plants are Rushes, Cattails, water lilies, and Arrowheads.

**Fens** – their water comes from seepage from the ground or the surface. Water in fens is fresh and slightly alkaline to slightly acidic. Fens contain the typical bog plants, plus sedges and wildflowers.



Historically, the 1995 Environment Act declared wetlands to be ‘sensitive sites’. Then, the 2007 Environmental Goals and Sustainable Prosperity Act made a commitment to prevent net losses of wetlands. Other relevant and important legislation helping to protect wetlands are the Off-highway Vehicle Act; the Agricultural Marshland Conservation Act; the Wildlife Habitat and Watercourse Protection regulations; and an official ‘Statement of Provincial Interest’ about floodplains.



The 1995 Environmental Act gives Nova Scotia Environment (NSE) ministerial authority over its wetlands, and Nova Scotia’s Wetland Conservation Policy (inaugurated in 2011) prevents the net loss of wetlands. To give a protection example of the 1995 Environmental Act – where an undertaking is proposed which would disrupt a total of two hectares or more of any wetland, an inspector specialist of the NSE Compliance Division, and an NSE Environmental Assessment Officer, Policy Division, would be brought in for intervention.

The Nova Scotia Wetland Conservation Policy’s objectives are to manage human activity to prevent loss of Wetlands of Special Significance (WSS), and to prevent net losses in area and function for other wetlands as well.



The following are considered to be WSS – all salt marshes; wetlands which are within protected areas; those known to support at-risk species; and those in designated

protected water areas. A wetland *may* be considered a WSS if it supports a significant species or species assemblage (i.e. coastal plain flora); if it supports high wildlife biodiversity; or if it has significant hydrologic value or high socialand/or cultural importance. Alterations to WSS will only be permitted if the project which causes the alteration is deemed to provide a ‘necessary public function’.

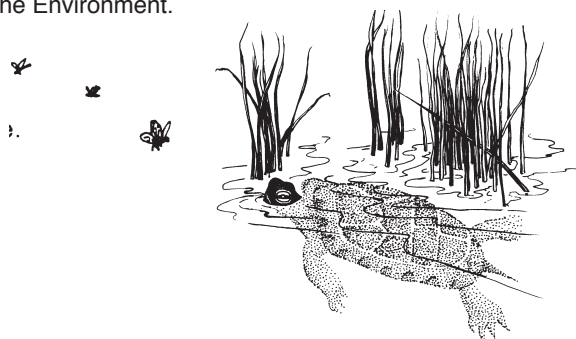
Also, any proposed alteration requires a wetland alteration approval from NSE, especially those alterations which have the potential to affect any wetland’s range and breadth such as filling, draining, flooding, or excavating. Soils which are formed under waterlogged conditions long enough during the growing season have to be wet in the top 30 cm for greater than two to four weeks from April to November. Monitoring is carried out on partially altered wetlands or wetlands where indirect impacts are expected.

More objectives are to promote wetland protection and stewardship, and to increase awareness of the importance of wetlands in the landscape; to promote long-term gains in wetland types which have experienced high historic losses thereby restoring beneficial ecosystem services and functions across the province; and to encourage the use of buffers to better ensure wetland integrity adjacent to development (residential, commercial, industrial), and agricultural, mining, and forestry operations.

There are several types of compensation: restoration (the preferred method which re-establishes wetland where it previously occurred); enhancement (management to increase one or more wetland functions such as sediment retention, flood control, and wildlife support); creation (constructing a wetland where none existed previously); and expansion (of an existing wetland into adjacent areas which has proven to be more successful than creating new wetland).

Unfortunately, there are many exceptions to the policy. Approval is not required to alter wetlands on federal lands; on wetlands less than 100m<sup>2</sup> in total area; on constructions specifically for storm/waste water treatment; on wetlands created by humans on uplands; on ‘marshland’ designations on agricultural lands; within agricultural drainage ditches; on wetlands which are the unintended result of human activity (within 20 years); on those within the medians/drainage ditches of transportation/utility corridors or electrical distribution corridors; on wetlands’ forest access and accompanying secondary roads and driveways; nor for harvesting trees or mowing fields (although best practices are looked for).

Krista encouraged us to report any deleterious practices we see or know about by contacting your local Department of the Environment.



# HFN FIELD TRIPS

## URBAN FOREST WALK-ABOUT

– Molly LeBlanc



**Date:** Sunday, June 12th

**Place:** the Central Public Library

**Weather:** A bit of misty rain, cool, then sunny

**Leader:** Dr. Peter Duinker

**Participants:** 12

Peter Duinker, a professor of Dalhousie's Environment and Resource Management Programme, was our guide on this cloudy Sunday 'walk-about'. Peter's research focus in urban-forest management and policy led him to be a consultant on the Urban Forest Master Plan which was initiated in 2006. By 2013, it was known as "The Best Urban Forest Plan in Canada".

It addressed three elements: physical aspects (planting and care of our urban forest); regulation standards (pruning and street planting); and public education. Peter's walk with us fell under this third category; he volunteers his time to do a number of public walks throughout the year.

We began our route with our group of 12 at the Central Public Library, where Peter drew our attention to the five large Lindens and the Elm which remain in front of the new building. Several trees were lost during the construction of the library, but the ones remaining there now are thankfully looking healthy and happy. The plaza outside the library was made from permeable material to allow water to reach the roots of the trees. It is hard to imagine that within the first 50 cm of soil, the feeding roots are stretching out to the span of the tree's branches, and that the structural roots deeper below are strong enough to hold these massive trees upright, even during the windiest of days.

Our tour took us throughout the historic neighborhood of Schmuttville. Although to most Haligonians this area is just thought of as part of the downtown core, it was actually one of Halifax's first suburbs, being outside of any fortified boundaries at that time.

By the time we arrived at our first stop at the Ralph M. Medjuck Building on Spring Garden Road, we had already learned that Peter likes his trees dense. He spent almost as much time pointing out where potential trees could go as he did discussing the ones that were already present, and it wasn't long before the other members of the group starting pointing out potential tree-planting areas along with him. New research is showing that trees planted close together (as long as they each have sufficient soil nutrients, water, and sunlight) can actually support, rather than crowd, one another. Even trees of different species have no issues intertwining their roots and branches, and have even been shown to share nutrients and to hormonally signal one another with a warning when a pest or stress is present. Peter feels that our issue within Halifax is more an unwill-

ingness to provide a soil quality in which the trees can grow close together. However, new technologies are improving this issue. The new Nova Centre will be using 'Silva Cells' when planting trees around their building, which are milk-crate-like structures which keep the soil from becoming over compacted and help trees to thrive.

Cost of installation is also a major barrier for tree planting. Although it might not look like an expensive project, it costs approximately \$400.00 to install a small tree (3-6 m tall) on the street, and that is without the cost of site preparation! On top of that, new seedlings are still at high risk for not surviving their first few years.

However, at our second stop, the Halifax Provincial Courthouse, we discussed how the benefits we receive from our 'urban forest' far outweigh the costs. Trees provide wind protection, clean air, and temperature control (i.e. cooler air in the summer). Peter asked, "if an urban forester only had one tree, where would they put it?" The answer was, "Close to the street". Trees have been shown to calm traffic, increase safety, slow and reduce storm water, and cast shade on pavement, which allows it last up to 50% longer! It has also been shown that people linger more, and spend more money, on streets with trees.

Despite all this, we continue to develop cities to be receptive of cars, not pedestrians or bikes, and urban trees are often undervalued or overlooked. Tree lawns (the grass verge with city trees between street and sidewalk) are typically small, or non-existent, in urban areas. The Urban Forest Master Plan has the goals of reminding people of the importance of trees, developing specification standards, and showing the requirements trees need.

At our third stop at the 'Old Burying Ground' on Barrington Street, we visited a number of large Lindens, Elms, and Sycamore Maples. With more than 12,000 bodies buried there (although only 1,000 gravestones) Peter referred to these old trees as "the living amongst the dead". These trees highlighted a potential problem in our urban forest; there are many old large trees, but a lack of saplings. You have to choose carefully when planting young trees under older ones, as they need to be more tolerant of the shade being cast there. However, succession planning is very important if we want to maintain our urban forest long-term.

At our fourth stop, on Dalhousie's Sexton Campus, we visited a few young trees that had just been planted. The three spruce, three Hemlock, three Larch, and two Red Maples planted there were just a few of the 200 in total that will be planted in compensation for the trees lost during the construction of the Ocean Science Building. This initiative was supported greatly by retired Urban Forester John Simmons, who also worked on the Urban Forest Plan with Peter, and who is sometimes referred to as the 'informal owner' of the trees of Halifax, based on his love and passion for the trees.



Throughout the tour we visited a number of Pine, Red, and English Oaks along Morris Street; Ginkgos on South Park Street; Elms on Queen Street; and eventually ended up on Church Street. Church Street is packed with trees, likely allowed because of good soil there as it was not compacted when this old street was built. The nine- and six-storied buildings which flank the trees just reach their crowns. People at the buildings' top-most levels are still enveloped in the canopy, which as Peter pointed out feels like "a very human height" for a building to be. Although we could see that some roots had pushed up the sidewalk in places, Peter suggested that maybe we should consider "moving the sidewalk, not the tree".

Peter's walk provided us with a new perspective and greater appreciation for Halifax's urban forest. Trees no longer seemed like accessories of our streets, but rather invaluable parts of our mental, emotional, and physical well-being. Above all, Peter reminded us that we need to act as advocates for the trees in our communities if we want to continue enjoying the benefits they provide us with.

If you have any tree-related issues, or see places where a new sapling could be planted, please call Municipal Services at 311. For anyone who is interested in reading more on the Urban Forest Master Plan, there is a condensed version on the HRM website: <https://www.halifax.ca/property/UFMP/>.



## ADMIRAL LAKE/SKULL ROCK

— Peter Webster

**Date:** Sunday, July 17th

**Place:** Musquodobit area

**Weather:** partly cloudy, warm, humid

**Leader:** Peter Webster

**Participants:** 9

Nine of us met at the Musquodoboit Trailway parking lot on a partly cloudy, warm, and humid day. The marshlands along the Musquodoboit River were lush and green, the waters rippled by only a slight breeze. Our hike began on the level bed of trailway, crossing the river over the iconic iron trestle bridge. Our route passed through the woods at the base of 300-ft granite cliffs soaring above us. We planned to spend the day travelling along the top of these cliffs. We headed uphill onto the narrow bould-strewn foot path which is the beginning of the Admiral Lake trail.

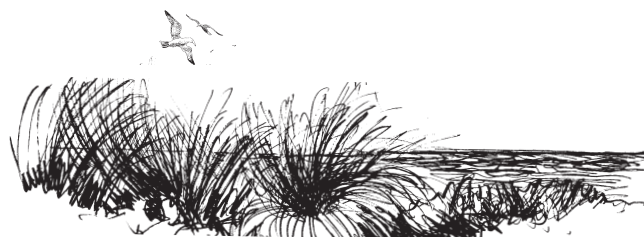
We climbed steeply to reach the Skull Rock look-off. This magnificent head of granite towers above the river valley and is a prominent landmark from below. On top, a modest safety rail protects people from the precipice. The look-off provides a fantastic 360-degree view of the Musquodoboit Valley and the White Lake Wilderness Area north of it. This was the first of five beautiful look-offs.

After stopping to take a few photos and catch our breath, we continued along the footpath upward through thickets of shrubs and small trees, and into shady hollows where the boulders are thickly carpeted in mosses and lichens.

We enjoyed Rolling Rock look-off, and carried on to the Harbour look-off which gives a view to the south, to Musquodoboit harbour and the ocean beyond. After a rest and lunch at the look-off, the roller coaster ride up and down the folded rocky landscape continued.

We passed through the narrow rock crevice called 'the cave', and carried on to the high point of the trail with a view of remote Admiral Lake. Our route took us gradually downward, but there were still short ridges to climb and descend. We stopped briefly at Eunice Lake, a hidden gem tucked into a cleft between two stone ridges. We descended to the final look-off, 'Jessie's Diner', and it gave us fresh views of the Musquodoboit river valley before we returned to the wide and level trailway for our final stroll back to the parking lot.

Overall, for more than 10 km, this was a rewarding walk on one of the province's most beautiful trails.



## MELMERBY WEEKEND

**Dates:** Friday to Sunday, Sept. 9th to the 11th

**Place:** Melmerby Beach, Pictou County

**Weather:** Sunny and dry; small amount of rain Sat. a.m.

**Leaders:** All participants

**Participants:** 12

The weekend was organised and hosted by Stephanie and Allan Robertson, and we stayed in their family's cottages close to Melmerby Beach Provincial Park.

We spent a lot of our free time on a deck overlooking the ocean, or swimming in the marvellously warm water, sometimes with fairly large waves; sometimes in an almost dead calm. Bird feeders attracted many feathered and a few furry visitors – American Red Squirrel, *Tamiasciurus hudsonicus*, Eastern Chipmunk, *Tamias striatus*, and nocturnally, Raccoons, *Procyon lotor*.

Once, all birds nearly instantaneously dove for cover; we human observers were much slower in spotting the Bald Eagle, *Haliaeetus leucocephalus*, soaring overhead. Adjacent to the lawn, typical beach plants made their home such as Marram Grass, *Ammophila breviligulata*, and American Dune Grass, *Leymus mollis*, which stabilises sand to form dunes. The latter was busy invading the lawn, and if left unchecked, would take over the grassy area. Interspersed in the grass Beach Pea, *Lathyrus maritimus* (synonym *L. japonica*); a purple flowering Vetch, *Vicia* sp.; *Aster* sp.; and Goldenrod had established a foothold. Yarrow, *Achillea millefolium*, was frequent, and a few Evening Primroses, *Oenothera biennis*, were also present.

Further up the dune, Bayberry, *Myrica pensylvanica*, raspberry, *Rubus* sp., and roses, *Rosa carolina*, *Rosa virginiana*(?), formed a dense thicket, an ideal hiding spot for many of the small birds. White spruce, *Picea glauca*, grew in a few clumps. Further towards the water, a few brave pioneers were growing: Sea rocket, *Cakile edentula*; Dusty Miller, Beach Sage, or Beach Wormwood, *Artemisia stelleriana*; Common Saltwort, *Salsola kali*; and Seabeach



Sandwort, *Honckenya pepolides*. This selection of plants was fairly representative of the vegetation seen in the dunes along the remainder of Melmerby Beach.

Our first excursion on Saturday led us along the beach to the east; destination – a headland with a lighthouse. The cliffside there was soft sandstone, which, in many places, had been covered by blocks of basalt, to prevent erosion. However, the sandstone is still visible on the beach and at some sections of the cliff. Sandstone forms in bodies of water, when a river carries sand and the sand settles at the bottom, forming distinct layers. We could clearly see such layers in these sandstones. They were occasionally interspersed with other layers containing larger grains or pebbles, called conglomerates. Such deposits originate in more agitated flows of water that can move not only sand grains but also larger particles.

In one instance, a piece of wood had been embedded within the conglomerate, and had been petrified. We also saw a few rocks within which smaller pieces of plants had been fossilised. Beside the sandstone, there were numerous pieces of various types of igneous rock on the beach; these were moved by wave action and ice from the fortification rocks that were brought in to prevent erosion. Some of those rocks showed turtle-shell like patterns, and we were wondering if the pattern was of organic or non-organic origin.

Following this walk, there were a few aborted attempts to launch a canoe in the surf of the Northumberland Strait and a fairly gusty north wind. The following day, paddling in the lagoon behind Melmerby Beach was also rejected out of hand due to persistent strong winds.

One couple braved the trail on Roy's Island, known for its healthy population of mosquitoes. Even the wind did not keep them at bay. This 'island' is mostly forested, with mixed aspen, birch, and White Spruce stands; the latter, probably having been established on abandoned fields or pastures, are now often dying in large numbers, creating new open areas.

Another field trip was to Park's Falls, located some five km south of Sutherland's River. The waterfall is easily accessed from the road, which bridges over the top section of the falls. The view from the top is quite spectacular, with a series of pools through which the water cascades down. This year, however, due to the persistent lack of precipitation, only a comparatively small spate of water was present.

We descended from the road on the right hand side of the fall through a mixed hardwood and softwood forest; the other, western, side of the falls is a nearly pure Hemlock stand, these tall trees making for a beautifully shady and mossy floor sporting a few seasonal mushrooms, on either side of a soft, deep, path of conifer needles.

At the foot of the falls is a typical floodplain. White Ash, *Fraxinus americana* along with another unidentified ash species; Hop Hornbeam or Ironwood, *Ostrya virginiana*; and Yellow Birch, *Betula alleghaniensis*; were in the forest down there. In the gravel along the river were, among many others: Canada Germander, *Teucrium canadense*; Beggar's-tick, *Bidens frondosa* or *B. vulgata*; Alder, *Alnus* sp.; and Virgin's Bower or Clematis, *Clematis virginiana*.

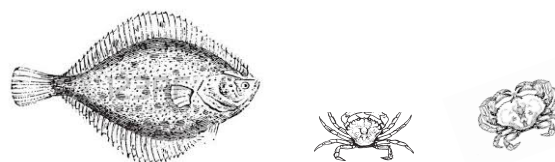
The area at the foot of the falls is used for camping – sadly, with litter scattered in many places.

Upon our return we visited a small wetland behind the cottages. Some 20 years ago, it was dominated by Cattail, *Typha* sp; now, Red Maple and Black Spruce are growing

as well, changing its character. We were wondering if there was a reason for this change. Maybe a recent culvert at the lower end of the wetland is draining it faster now than in the past; alternatively, its inflow might have changed, reducing the amount of water available.

Shortly after this walk, we had our final lunch, and most participants had to say goodbye to our generous hosts and the wonderfully warm waters of Melmerby Beach. All of us were exceedingly grateful that we could spend a weekend close to nature in such a splendid setting.

– **Burkhard Plache**



I love beaches, all beaches, but my favourites are those that are still rich in variety. Sadly so many of our Nova Scotia beaches now support only a whisper of the species one could once find there. Melmerby Beach has less species than it hosted in the past but still sports a richer variety than many.

Right away I noticed the lack of the invasive Green Crab, *Carcinus maenas*. I scoured the beach and nowhere could I find any sign of it, not even washed up shells. In their place was a rich population of our native Atlantic Rock Crab, *Cancer irroratus*, a treat to experience. At low tide they were joined in the sandy tidal pools by hundreds of Long-clawed Hermit Crabs, *Pagurus longicarpus*, waving about their iridescent claws and scurrying around in the shells of the Common Periwinkle *Littorina littorea*, which were also present, cutting their winding pathways across the sand.

The tidal pools were also filled with dozens of six-week-old Winter Flounders, *Pseudopleuronectes americanus*. Their eyes had just finished migrating to the right side of their heads and they were very friendly, frequently landing on a bare foot and even on an outstretched hand. One only needed to lightly drag one's fingers along the sandy bottom to encounter several buried individuals.

Even more numerous were the Sand Shrimps, one of the many species found in the Superfamily Crangonoidea. These particular ones are often nicknamed Ghost Shrimps due to their transparent nature. I was pleased to discover that anytime I created a shallow depression in the sand they converged from all directions to lay in the bottom of it; not sure why they did this but it seemed like a quick way to make friends with them.

By far the most commonly encountered species on the open beach in the form of both live specimens and their old shells were the Atlantic Surf Clams, *Spisula solidissima*. At the rocky edges, Northern Acorn Barnacle, or Northern Rock Barnacle, *Semibalanus balanoides*, were common as expected; but, surprisingly unexpected, were the remains of a quite large Rough Barnacle, *Balanus balanus*, washed ashore glued to the back of an old Northern Horse Mussel, *Modiolus modiolus*. Rough Barnacles live below the low tide line down to 150 metres and can be easily identified by their steeply conical shells and deep, longitudinal ridges.

Other treats included the beautifully coloured and



undulated shells of the Atlantic Bay Scallop, *Argopecten irradians*; the uniquely shaped Atlantic Jackknife Clam, *Ensis directus*, also called the Razor Clam as it is shaped like the an old fashion straight razor; and a few tests (shells) of the Common Sand Dollar, *Echinarachnius parma*.

The cast-off shells of other species encountered included: Blue Mussel, *Mytilus edulis*; Atlantic or Common Slipper Shell, *Crepidula fornicata*; Ocean Quahog, *Arctica islandica*; Eastern Oyster, *Crassostrea virginica*; and Northern Moon Snail, *Euspira heros*.

We were having so much fun on the beach and in the water that my binoculars remained abandoned back at the cottage but we still had close up looks at six species of migrating shorebirds. They were, in order of most common to least common: Semipalmated Plover, Sanderling, Ruddy Turnstone, Greater Yellowlegs, Black-bellied Plover, and Whimbrel.

It was a whimsical weekend of playing; collecting rocks, fossils, shells, and beach glass; and being close to nature and sharing those experiences with like-minded individuals.

Thanks to Stephanie and Allan for sharing their little piece of paradise with the rest of us.

– Clarence Stevens



## THE HALIFAX PUBLIC GARDENS

– Carol Klar

**Date:** Thursday, August 4th

**Place:** The Halifax Public Gardens, Spring Garden Rd.

**Weather:** a sunny but breezy evening; cool later on

**Leader:** Karen Guenther

**Participants:** 12; mostly interested HFN members

The participants gathered on a breezy summer evening at the new fountain behind the Horticultural Hall, with Karen Guenther of Friends of the Public Gardens filling in for Head of Tours Serena Graham-Dwyer.

After handing us free brochures found in the Horticultural Hall, Karen revealed that the Gardens have on staff 40 professional gardeners/horticulturalists, all of whom are unionised and hired within the city budget, so – there's no chance for us to offer ourselves as volunteers to 'seed or weed', or anything else! As a Friend of the Public Gardens, for only \$10.00 per annum, one can be informed about when lectures occur throughout the year and also about the annual Tea Party at the Lord Nelson Hotel, in the Spring. Last year's lectures included our well-known local garden guru Marjorie Willison speaking on the variety of vegetables grown in a Victorian Garden, and Jayme Melrose of Common Roots Urban Garden regaling us with the history of that Garden's evolution. This year, retired Dr. Brian O'Brien gave a fun and most informative talk on the past ten years of restoring the graves and grounds of the historic burial grounds of the Holy Cross Cemetery on the corner of South Park and South Streets.

The Halifax Public Gardens, consisting of 16 acres (6.4 hectares), has been a flowering presence in N.S. and the nation since 1836. After Hurricane Juan in 2003,



\$1,000,000 was raised in just one day when an appeal went out to restore the Gardens, proving Haligonians' love for this timeless landmark. Funds from the Public Gardens' Foundation provided for the new fountain behind the Horticultural Hall, and also for its gates nearby, which open onto Spring Garden Rd. in the middle of the block, making it now accessible to the public from that side.

The Horticultural Hall was built in 1847 to serve as a meeting room for the Horticulture Society, and the building's cellar was used to store winter vegetables; it had not been damaged by Hurricane Juan in 2003. The path of the hurricane swept diagonally from the Main Gates on the corner of Spring Garden Road and South Park Street to the corner of Summer Street and Sackville Street, almost taking with it the older, Victorian Fountain.

Karen pointed out the four majestic and original American Elm trees around The Horticultural Hall. The Friends of the Public Gardens' brochure lists the Gardens' every tree, with a map of where it is found in the Gardens, and sells for \$5.00 in the Hall. There is also an excellent book recently published by the Friends about the Gardens – an 88-page, superbly-illustrated book entitled The Halifax Public Gardens.

The 'Grande Allée', a wide path in the middle of the Gardens running east from Summer St. to South Park St., is lined with many large original trees, and also smaller ones planted as replacement trees following Hurricane Juan.

The Horticultural Society of the 1840's was in debt almost from the beginning. It began selling memberships and also opening once a week to the public, charging a fee. The Victorian Garden was the 'renaissance' for gardening, pointing to a new status for an emerging middle class with leisure hours; it was also an opportunity for the nouveau riche to show off their wealth. It was also the origin of the suburbs moving into the country, allowing for more room for the expression of a Victorian Garden.

From the Hall and its new fountain we strolled along the gravelled paths to the bandstand, where Karen began telling us about the many features of a Victorian Garden describing it in detail and interspersing it with interesting stories. She asked a question of us and I'm not sure if we had the answer or if Karen provided it herself. "What invention allowed for the creation of the flower beds we see throughout the Gardens?" The lawnmower was the answer to these beautiful island beds of both annuals and perennials. The formal garden beds are distinctive of a Victorian Garden allowing for great variety of shapes surrounded by manicured lawns. The lawnmower replaced the labourious scythe, which better-enabled gardeners to give their beds a formal and elegant appearance more easily. Interestingly, a dye known as aniline, originally used for dyeing leather, was used to bring about many gaudy colours in the flowers of that era.

Another feature found in a Victorian Garden is the introduction of tropical plants. In the 1800s ships travelling the



world with built-in greenhouses would return with many exotic plants, to be tried out in more northern climates. Of course, these exotics, for instance the Public Gardens' 100-year old Agaves, are uprooted in the fall and given a place in the greenhouses for the winter. Karen also pointed out certain trees, surrounded by colourful flowers, as yet another special feature. A new term was used to describe this type of garden – 'Gardenesque'. A gentleman by the name of Loudon coined this term which describes a very determined/planned garden whereby man has control over nature.

The bandstand, designed by Henry Busch, was built in 1887 in honor of Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee. It has now been restored to its original look with a copper roof, which had been replaced in the '50s with fibre-glass. Again, the new dyes which came in back then allowed for many more colours to be used in the ornate detail and trim of the original bandstand. Most recently, it has been restored to this more colourful appearance. The city budget covers the cost of performances on the bandstand throughout the summer on Sunday afternoons. Karen told us that with the large number of military men in our city, the women loved to dress up in all their finery to display themselves while strolling on the path of the Grande Allée lined with its majestic Elms.

From the bandstand we strolled to the Soldiers' Memorial Fountain designed by John McCulloch in 1903. We discovered that the statue is that of an actual soldier, a Canadian Mounted Rifleman who fought in the Boer War. A good amount of time was spent here enjoying the beautiful Camperdown Elm Trees that surround the fountain. The Camperdowns are a result of another type of elm grafted onto the base of a Wych Elm. This was a Gardenesque feature popular in the 1840s. The magnificent Weeping Beech Tree, *Fagus sylvatica pendula*, drapes over the fountain itself. Here we heard that Griffin's Pond had been named after an Irish labourer who was wrongfully charged for murder and then hung on the east side of the pond in a public hanging. Karen also spoke of a new recirculating system installed in Griffin's Pond after Hurricane Juan.

The most credit for the development of the Public Gardens belongs to Richard Power, a horticulturalist and landscape gardener born in Ireland and trained as an apprentice in the gardens at Lismore Castle. He arrived in Halifax in 1864, and in 1872 he was hired as Superintendent, introducing the overall symmetrical plan of the Gardenesque style. He oversaw the erecting of the fountains and statues, the cast-iron gates, and established the bedding out of annuals in the carpet beds and the redesigning of Griffin's Pond – he even introduced the waterfowl. The whole gardens were united by the next feature he introduced – a system of gently curving garden paths within a perimeter of mature trees, and wide sidewalks acting as buffers between the park and the surrounding city. Three generations of Powers continued to serve as Superintendents well into the 20th century.

As a child growing up across from the Public Gardens, a best memory for me was the beautiful Peacock at the far end of the childrens' play area (near Summer St.)



with its amazing plumage on display. The pair of beautiful Mute Swans on the stream near South Park Street were always a little more intimidating to me. On my first tour of the Gardens three years ago, Serena suggested there also had been monkeys caged there, along with the free-strutting Peacock, but my memory didn't allow for that.

In November of 1983 the Halifax Public Gardens was formally designated a National Historic Site of Canada – a rare, surviving example of a Victorian public garden. The heritage value of this site resides in its continued use as a public park and in its illustration of Victorian Gardenesque landscape design and planting traditions.



## MCNAB'S ISLAND

– Denyse Contrasty

**Date:** Saturday, August 27th

**Places:** McNab's Island, Halifax Harbour

**Weather:** Sunny and very warm

**Leader:** Brian and Cathy Phelan

**Participants:** 9



On a bright summer morning, we made our way to McNab's Island in Halifax harbour by using water taxis from Dartmouth's King's Wharf, and from Halifax's wharf by the 'Wave' sculpture behind the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic. We landed at Garrison Pier and walked north along a cobble-covered Garrison Road to the nearby kiosk. There, Friends of McNab's guides Brian and Cathy Phelan gave a brief history of McNab's Island. It was originally known as Cornwallis Island and was bought by Peter McNab for one thousand pounds in 1782. Brian, a retired arborist, explained the partnerships that the Friends of McNab's Island Society have with the Department of Natural Resources – who own most of the island and operate it as a year round park and seasonal campground; and with the Waterfront Development Corporation (WDC) – whose aim is to make Halifax a world class waterfront. With money raised or donated, the Friends had erected this kiosk shelter with benches and information panels which included the history of McNab's Island, the ongoing military presence until the early 1990s, and the nature to be found on McNab's. The Friends also installed a composting toilet a short distance from the kiosk, which works using solar panel. A few years later WDC installed two similar toilets and also berthing facilities for private boaters at Garrison Pier. Opportunities to read the info panels were cut short by the arrival at the kiosk of 32 Navy Cadets and their guide, one of the two summer students hired by the Friends of McNab's. But there was opportunity to revisit the kiosk at the end of the tour.







We then proceeded to Teahouse Lane, where Brian explained the signpost at its trail head. He pointed to the military markings at the top of the sign which are identical to those on military markers found throughout the island. Distances to various points of interest were listed in kilometres on one side, and on the other side there was a photo taken by Rochelle Owen who photographs year-round nature seen on McNab's. From there we walked through the pasture where campers usually pitch their tents. However, as the park was closed on August 10th for ten days due to the unusually high fire risk, there were no campers about. We then took a steep climb to the trail that runs behind the old Teahouse which was a commercial canteen venture from 1985 until 1992. Brian pointed out the row of Common Barberry bushes, *Berberis vulgaris*, which lined Teahouse Lane, and also a Scotch Elm, *Ulmus glabra* Huds., a European variety that has some resistance to Dutch Elm disease as opposed to the native White or American Elms which were decimated by it. An English Hawthorn, *Crataegus monogyna* Jacq. was identified to the right of a shed behind the Teahouse. Brian said that there was a study done by DNR in 2011 of the variety of trees, shrubs, and flowers to be found within the Teahouse area; each variety had been staked and marked on a map which we would soon review.

The Teahouse was built with stone taken from the nearby Hugonin-Perrin (H-P) estate ruins (this reuse of historic building material would not be acceptable now in order to mimic the style of stone housing in the late 1800s. It was noted that Virginia Creeper, *Parthenocissus quinquefolia* L. Planch., is spreading up the chimney of the Teahouse. When we went round to the front and onto its upper terrace, we admired what remained of a once enormous European Copper Beech, *Fagus sylvatica* Var. *purpurea*, which was 161 years old; it had had its remaining branches propped up by forks cut from Black Locust trees. Black Locust, *Robinia pseudoacacia* L., is a hardwood, resistant to rot, and its bark has thorns.

Binders of prints, sketches, and maps, related to the English Garden that once grew on the terrace, were passed out so that we could see how this garden was said to have rivalled that of the Public Gardens in the 1890s. Included was a watercolour of the H-P estate showing its terraces and perimeters of trees and hedges. Roderick Hugonin married into the McNab family and in 1854 had purchased a 135-acre estate which stretched across the island from west to east. A large Georgian style house was built in 1855, and after the death of two Hugonin children, it was vacated in 1865. In 1885 Frederick Perrin (of Lee & Perrin's Worcestershire sauce fame), bought the estate. Perrin was a world traveller and botanist, and he planted exotic species of trees and shrubs along with orchards and berries.

It was decided to have lunch in the shade of the Copper Beech. While we were eating, Brian talked of the efforts of the Friends to clean out the old kitchen fixtures in the Teahouse with the hope of eventually creating a resource centre with interpretative panels. From the Teahouse terrace we went to look at the foundation of the Hugonin-

Perrin house that had burnt down in 1948. The trees and other vegetation had been removed from within the foundation in April by a volunteer work party of arborists belonging to the ISA Atlantic Chapter and Friends of McNab's members. Young trees and shrubs on the terrace in front of the foundation also had been removed in hopes of restoring it to a lawn in the near future. Unfortunately, there is much Japanese Knotwood (JK) on the terrace. This perennial plant was introduced to McNab's Island in the 1900s both for its horticultural look and for its use as screening and erosion control. Deer usually eat the young JK shoots and that controls its spread. However, this year the deer did not eat the shoots; consequently, there are large stands growing. Brian noted a Horse Chestnut, *Aesculus hippocastanum* L., along with Sweet Cherry trees, *Prunus avium* L., growing on the edge of this terrace.

We then walked around the corner onto the Timmins' Cove Lane Trail. This trail starts beside the former Findlay Farm and continues past the foundation of the A.J. Davis Soda Pop factory, whose bottles had boasted the wording "Pure McNabs". We looked at a truck chassis abandoned at the site along with broken ceramic bottles ringing the top of the foundation. We could see the Halifax downtown vista above the trees and were informed that the field had French Lilacs, *Syringa vulgaris*, which bloom every spring, and also 150-year-old apple trees, *Pyrus malus* L.

We retraced our steps along Timmins' Cove and Teahouse Lane trails to start up the unmarked path to Jenkins' Hill overlooking the H-P estate. We crossed an old roadway which was still lined with Lindens, *Tilia europea* L., and then entered an area of second-growth Acadian forest. Acadian forest consists of a mixture of northern boreal softwoods such as Red and Black spruce, *Picea rubens* Sarg. and *Picea mariana*, along with southerly temperate hardwoods such as Red and Sugar maples, *Acer rubrum* L. and *Acer saccharum*, and Yellow and White Birches, *Betula alleghaniensis* Britt. and *Betula papyrifera*. This type of forest covers most of the Maritime provinces and is listed as critical/endangered by the World Wildlife Fund.



Brian pointed out a trap for the Brown Spruce Long Horned beetle, *Tetropium fuscum*, in among a stand of spruce. It is considered a secondary pest in its native country (where there are predators present) but is considered a primary pest here in Nova Scotia where there are no natural predators. The beetle is lazy and prefers to re-infest the same tree year after year. However, if the beetle population gets too high, the beetles will fly to new, uninfested trees. We also saw windfall from Hurricane Juan in 2003 where winds hit 175-180 km/h on the island. Forty to fifty percent of trees were lost on the windward side; the knock-downs were mostly spruce, while many White and Yellow Birches survived because they are more firmly rooted. Consequently, this Acadian forest on McNab's is second generation tree-growth reclaiming pastureland, and third generation growth following Hurricane Juan. We climbed

to the highest point on the island where vistas of Halifax, Dartmouth, and the Atlantic Ocean could be seen when the island had been cleared for farming.

On our way down to rejoin Teahouse Lane trail, Brian answered the question on the differences between White and Red Spruce. He said that you looked at the colour of the needles (blue-green vs yellow-green), the shape of the crown of the tree (spire-like vs narrow-conical), and the cones (longer on the White Spruce). He also spoke of Beech Bark disease, *Nectina coccinea* var *faginata*, which was introduced to N.S. in 1890 when Beeches were imported to be planted in the Public Gardens. Scale insects feed on their bark, creating a wound. The fungi spores enter through the wound and cause tissue death. Beech Bark disease has now spread as far west as Ontario. Brian also spoke about the Beech Leaf Mining Weevil, *Orchestes fagi*, another introduced pest recently discovered on native beech trees in and around Halifax. The adult stage feeds on the leaf surface while the larvae hatch and mine the inside of the leaf. The combined damage leaves the tree appearing severely stressed and scorched.

Once we got to the trailhead of Teahouse Lane, we decided to return to Garrison Road via Carriage Road on the far side of the H-P estate. We passed gateposts and noted areas where Juan windfall had been re-laid on the ground in such a way as to maximise contact thereby promoting natural decay. When we reached Garrison Road, some of us decided to head for the Hugonin Battery while others choose to wait at the kiosk. On our way to the Battery, a birder noted a pair of Yellowlegs on the shoreline at Findlay's Cove. We also stopped at a bench with a plaque which commemorated the sacrifice of the Sisters of Charity who nursed victims of the cholera in 1866. From this viewpoint we could see the pasture on Hugonin Point where the unfortunates had been buried in unmarked graves.

Behind the Hugonin Battery – an open, concrete one-storey building – we found two military markers which indeed had the markings used on recently installed signposts around McNabs. Brian also indicated two apple trees loaded with fruit which had 'migrated' from the H-P estate via bird, animal, or man, along with Barberry bushes. It was a brisk walk back to the kiosk where we kept a lookout for the water taxis. Once they were spotted in the distance, we headed along Garrison Road to Garrison Pier where we departed for Halifax and Dartmouth.



## THE NS WILD FLORA SOCIETY

– which meets the fourth Monday of the month, September to May, at the Nova Scotia Museum of Natural History, at 7:30 p.m., has this fall line-up of events:

**26 Sept.** "Summer Finds!", member reports

**24 Oct.** "Southern Caribbean Seagrass Communities", with speaker David Patriquin.

**28 Nov.** "How ...Economy Can Enable Good Forestry..." with speaker Will Martin.

For more information email [nswildflora@yahoo.ca](mailto:nswildflora@yahoo.ca), or go to <http://www.nswildflora.ca/>.



## NATURE NOTES

### E-NOTES (JULY)

Member Michael Goodfellow and Veronica Horsman honeymooned over the summer solstice, camping at Thomas Raddall Park, visiting nearby Port Mouton and Carter's Beach. In the area they saw **Lion's Mane Jellyfish**, **squid**, **Bicknell's Thrush** (during the summer months it is only usually found in the C.B. Highlands), **a Rufous Hummingbird** (we get the very occasional one showing up either in summer or fall; one report per year or every second year), **a baby Snowshoe Hare**, much **Poison Ivy**, **a very large Garter Snake**, and their favourite – **a Pitcher Plant**, *Sarracenia purpurea*, growing in the ditch near Thomas Raddall Park. They saw many other animals and plants as well (about two pages worth!), but didn't want to 'overwhelm' us.

### SEPTEMBER



– Janet Dalton

Stephanie Robertson spoke of a **Harbour Seal carcass** that washed up on the beach at her Melmerby Beach cottage. The Seal was mostly white with only scanty fur patches left on it. It weighed about 400 to 500 lbs. and most likely had been in the water quite a while. Municipal staff tried to bury it right there on the beach but they soon had problems with water which kept welling up to fill their hole, as well as determined owners of nearby cottages who didn't want it buried there. So – they had take it away to some other location. Stephanie also mentioned that **Red-winged Blackbirds** had come to their bird feeders there for the first time ever. They may have come from a nearby marsh.

John Lindsay saw **Northern Pipe Fish** at Duncan's Cove. They were swimming in a horizontal fashion as seahorses do, and were pencil-thin. They were sandy in colour and had bars on their bodies. They are related to seahorses.

Judy Davies was boating and saw **Pilot Whales** right near her boat. She also saw **a large Sunfish**.

Christine Wysmyk saw pink flowers which may have been **European Eyebrights**, and also **Black-backed Gulls** and **Spotted Sandpipers** which were non-breeding. She also saw **a Semipalmated Plover** taking a bath at Crystal Crescent Beach. She enjoyed watching the **Sanderlings** chasing along the water's edge as the waves came in and out.

Clarence Stevens Sr. had a list of 101 species of birds. At Pleasant Hill he saw a **Blue-winged Warbler**. He also spotted a **Moon Jellyfish**. His son Clarence Jr. mentioned it was a good year for seeing **Cape May Warblers**.

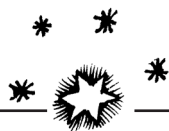
Arthur Morris mentioned 'Googling' the Slimbridge Wildfowl Wetland Trust on the Severn River near Bristol, near Scotland and Wales border. Started in 1946, it has both wild birds, and captive bird research. He highly recommended this site to everyone.

Dennis Hipper saw **Turkey Vultures** at Fall River. It was mentioned that there are Turkey Vultures near a Tim Horton's at Tantallon as well.

Clarence Stevens Sr. saw **three Turkey Vultures** chasing a **Black Vulture**. He also saw a **Yellow-crowned Night Heron** eating crabs. He still has **Flying Squirrels** at his cottage.

Christine Wysmyk saw **a male and a female Pheasant**. They were juvenile and she saw them near her mailbox in the Mic Mac area.

# ALMANAC



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

"October was a beautiful month at Green Gables, when the birches in the hollow turned as golden as sunshine and the maples behind the orchard were royal crimson and the wild cherry trees along the lane put on the loveliest shades of dark red and bronzy green, while the fields sunned themselves in aftermaths. Anne reveled in the world of color about her.

"Oh, Marilla," she exclaimed one Saturday morning, coming dancing in with her arms full of gorgeous boughs, "I'm so glad I live in a world where there are Octobers. It would be terrible if we just skipped from September to November, wouldn't it? Look at these maple branches. Don't they give you a thrill—several thrills? I'm going to decorate my room with them."

– Opening of Chapter 16 of *Anne of Green Gables* (1908), by Lucy Maude Montgomery

## NATURAL EVENTS

- 16 Sept.** Full Moon. Moonrise at 19:29 ADT.
- 22 Sept.** Autumnal Equinox at 14:21 ADT. Fall begins in the Northern Hemisphere.
- 23 Sept.** Thirteenth anniversary of Hurricane Juan.
- 30 Sept.** Average date for first frost in Halifax (Env. Can. says there is a 1:10 chance we will have frost before this date.) Look forward to 210 days of frosty weather.
- 16 Oct.** Full Moon. Moonrise at 19:10 ADT.
- 6 Nov.** Daylight Saving Time ends (clocks are set back one hour) and Atlantic Standard Time begins at 2:00 a.m.
- 14 Nov.** Full Moon. Moonrise at 17:23 AST.
- 22 Nov.** Daily minimum temperature goes below 0 C.
- 5-13 Dec.** Earliest Sunset of the year at 16:34 AST.
- 7 Dec.** Daily average temperature goes below 0 C.
- 13/14 Dec.** Geminid Meteor Shower.
- 14 Dec.** Full Moon. Moonrise at 16:46 AST.
- 14 Dec.** -5 Jan. Audubon Christmas Bird Count Period.
- 21 Dec.** Winter Solstice at 06:44 AST: Winter begins in the Northern Hemisphere: But though the temperature drops, the days begin to lengthen.
- 27 Dec.** -31 Dec. Latest Sunrise of the Year at 07:51 AST.



– Sources: Atmospheric Environment Service, Climate Normals 1951-80 Halifax (Shearwater A) N.S.; Blomidon Naturalists Society 2016 Calendar; United States Naval Observatory Data Services.

## SUNRISE AND SUNSET ON FALL AND EARLY WINTER SATURDAYS FOR HALIFAX: 44 39 N, 063 36 W



|                |       |       |                |       |       |
|----------------|-------|-------|----------------|-------|-------|
| <b>3 Sep.</b>  | 06:40 | 19:47 | <b>4 Oct.</b>  | 07:16 | 18:49 |
| <b>10 Sep.</b> | 06:48 | 19:34 | <b>11 Oct.</b> | 07:25 | 18:36 |
| <b>17 Sep.</b> | 06:56 | 19:20 | <b>18 Oct.</b> | 07:34 | 18:24 |
| <b>24 Sep.</b> | 07:04 | 19:07 | <b>25 Oct.</b> | 07:42 | 18:14 |
| <b>1 Nov.</b>  | 07:53 | 18:03 | <b>6 Dec.</b>  | 07:37 | 16:34 |
| <b>8 Nov.</b>  | 07:02 | 16:54 | <b>13 Dec.</b> | 07:43 | 16:34 |
| <b>15 Nov.</b> | 07:12 | 16:46 | <b>20 Dec.</b> | 07:48 | 16:37 |
| <b>22 Nov.</b> | 07:21 | 16:40 | <b>27 Dec.</b> | 07:51 | 16:41 |
| <b>29 Nov.</b> | 07:29 | 16:36 |                |       |       |

## ORGANISATIONS TO CONTACT FOR OTHER SEASONAL EVENTS

Blomidon Naturalists Society, <http://www.blomidonnaturalists.ca/>; Burke-Gaffney Observatory, 496-8257; Friends of McNab's Island, 443-1749; Nova Scotia Bird Society, 476-2883; Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources, <http://www.novascotiaparks.ca/>; Nova Scotia Museum of Natural History, 424-6099; Nova Scotia Nature Trust, 425-5263; Nova Scotia Wild Flora Society, [nswildflora@yahoo.ca](mailto:nswildflora@yahoo.ca); Nova Scotian Institute of Science, <http://nsis.chebucto.org/>; Royal Astronomical Society of Canada, <http://halifax.rasc.ca/>; and the Young Naturalists' Club, 404-9902.

– compiled by Patricia L. Chalmers



# HALIFAX TIDE TABLE



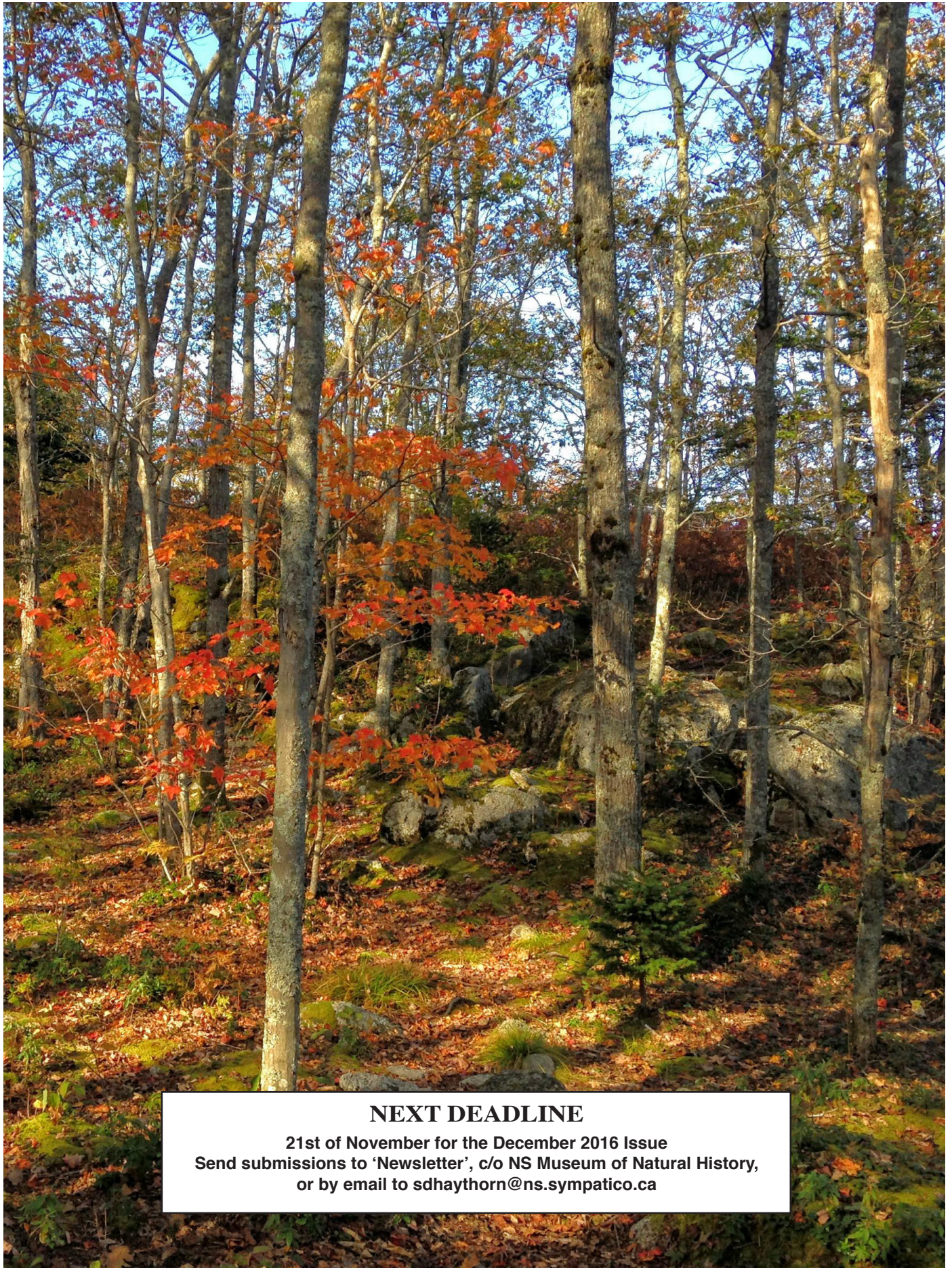
## October-octobre

## November-novembre

## December-décembre

| Day       | Time | Metres     | Feet | jour      | heure | mètres      | pieds | Day       | Time | Metres      | Feet | jour      | heure | mètres      | pieds | Day       | Time | Metres      | Feet | jour      | heure | mètres     | pieds |
|-----------|------|------------|------|-----------|-------|-------------|-------|-----------|------|-------------|------|-----------|-------|-------------|-------|-----------|------|-------------|------|-----------|-------|------------|-------|
| <b>1</b>  | 0216 | <b>0.3</b> | 1.0  | <b>16</b> | 0132  | <b>0.1</b>  | 0.3   | <b>1</b>  | 0247 | <b>0.5</b>  | 1.6  | <b>16</b> | 0301  | <b>0.2</b>  | 0.7   | <b>1</b>  | 0253 | <b>0.6</b>  | 2.0  | <b>16</b> | 0348  | <b>0.3</b> | 1.0   |
|           | 0801 | <b>1.8</b> | 5.9  |           | 0731  | <b>2.0</b>  | 6.6   |           | 0840 | <b>1.8</b>  | 5.9  |           | 0847  | <b>2.1</b>  | 6.9   |           | 0848 | <b>1.8</b>  | 5.9  |           | 0922  | <b>2.0</b> | 6.6   |
| SA        | 1437 | <b>0.3</b> | 1.0  | SU        | 1410  | <b>0.0</b>  | 0.0   | TU        | 1512 | <b>0.3</b>  | 1.0  | WE        | 1541  | <b>-0.1</b> | -0.3  | TH        | 1523 | <b>0.3</b>  | 1.0  | FR        | 1618  | <b>0.0</b> | 0.0   |
| SA        | 2022 | <b>1.8</b> | 5.9  | DI        | 1959  | <b>1.9</b>  | 6.2   | MA        | 2116 | <b>1.7</b>  | 5.6  | ME        | 2128  | <b>1.9</b>  | 6.2   | JE        | 2131 | <b>1.7</b>  | 5.6  | VE        | 2205  | <b>1.9</b> | 6.2   |
| <b>2</b>  | 0249 | <b>0.4</b> | 1.3  | <b>17</b> | 0222  | <b>0.1</b>  | 0.3   | <b>2</b>  | 0315 | <b>0.6</b>  | 2.0  | <b>17</b> | 0401  | <b>0.3</b>  | 1.0   | <b>2</b>  | 0329 | <b>0.6</b>  | 2.0  | <b>17</b> | 0447  | <b>0.4</b> | 1.3   |
|           | 0837 | <b>1.8</b> | 5.9  |           | 0819  | <b>2.1</b>  | 6.9   |           | 0915 | <b>1.8</b>  | 5.9  |           | 0938  | <b>2.0</b>  | 6.6   |           | 0925 | <b>1.8</b>  | 5.9  |           | 1012  | <b>1.9</b> | 6.2   |
| SU        | 1510 | <b>0.3</b> | 1.0  | MO        | 1503  | <b>-0.1</b> | -0.3  | WE        | 1544 | <b>0.3</b>  | 1.0  | TH        | 1638  | <b>0.0</b>  | 0.0   | FR        | 1601 | <b>0.3</b>  | 1.0  | SA        | 1712  | <b>0.1</b> | 0.3   |
| DI        | 2101 | <b>1.7</b> | 5.6  | LU        | 2050  | <b>1.9</b>  | 6.2   | ME        | 2152 | <b>1.7</b>  | 5.6  | JE        | 2220  | <b>1.9</b>  | 6.2   | VE        | 2207 | <b>1.7</b>  | 5.6  | SA        | 2254  | <b>1.9</b> | 6.2   |
| <b>3</b>  | 0317 | <b>0.4</b> | 1.3  | <b>18</b> | 0316  | <b>0.1</b>  | 0.3   | <b>3</b>  | 0347 | <b>0.6</b>  | 2.0  | <b>18</b> | 0504  | <b>0.4</b>  | 1.3   | <b>3</b>  | 0411 | <b>0.7</b>  | 2.3  | <b>18</b> | 0547  | <b>0.5</b> | 1.6   |
|           | 0912 | <b>1.8</b> | 5.9  |           | 0907  | <b>2.1</b>  | 6.9   |           | 0950 | <b>1.7</b>  | 5.6  |           | 1029  | <b>1.9</b>  | 6.2   |           | 1003 | <b>1.8</b>  | 5.9  |           | 1102  | <b>1.8</b> | 5.9   |
| MO        | 1541 | <b>0.4</b> | 1.3  | TU        | 1558  | <b>0.0</b>  | 0.0   | TH        | 1621 | <b>0.4</b>  | 1.3  | FR        | 1735  | <b>0.1</b>  | 0.3   | SA        | 1643 | <b>0.4</b>  | 1.3  | SU        | 1806  | <b>0.2</b> | 0.7   |
| LU        | 2139 | <b>1.7</b> | 5.6  | MA        | 2141  | <b>1.9</b>  | 6.2   | JE        | 2228 | <b>1.7</b>  | 5.6  | VE        | 2312  | <b>1.8</b>  | 5.9   | SA        | 2245 | <b>1.7</b>  | 5.6  | DI        | 2342  | <b>1.8</b> | 5.9   |
| <b>4</b>  | 0343 | <b>0.5</b> | 1.6  | <b>19</b> | 0414  | <b>0.2</b>  | 0.7   | <b>4</b>  | 0427 | <b>0.7</b>  | 2.3  | <b>19</b> | 0609  | <b>0.4</b>  | 1.3   | <b>4</b>  | 0459 | <b>0.7</b>  | 2.3  | <b>19</b> | 0646  | <b>0.5</b> | 1.6   |
|           | 0947 | <b>1.8</b> | 5.9  |           | 0956  | <b>2.0</b>  | 6.6   |           | 1027 | <b>1.7</b>  | 5.6  |           | 1120  | <b>1.8</b>  | 5.9   |           | 1042 | <b>1.7</b>  | 5.6  |           | 1152  | <b>1.7</b> | 5.6   |
| TU        | 1613 | <b>0.4</b> | 1.3  | WE        | 1655  | <b>0.0</b>  | 0.0   | FR        | 1703 | <b>0.4</b>  | 1.3  | SA        | 1834  | <b>0.2</b>  | 0.7   | SU        | 1729 | <b>0.4</b>  | 1.3  | MO        | 1859  | <b>0.3</b> | 1.0   |
| MA        | 2216 | <b>1.7</b> | 5.6  | ME        | 2232  | <b>1.8</b>  | 5.9   | VE        | 2306 | <b>1.6</b>  | 5.2  | SA        |       |             |       | DI        | 2325 | <b>1.7</b>  | 5.6  | LU        |       |            |       |
| <b>5</b>  | 0412 | <b>0.6</b> | 2.0  | <b>20</b> | 0517  | <b>0.3</b>  | 1.0   | <b>5</b>  | 0518 | <b>0.7</b>  | 2.3  | <b>20</b> | 0004  | <b>1.7</b>  | 5.6   | <b>5</b>  | 0555 | <b>0.7</b>  | 2.3  | <b>20</b> | 0031  | <b>1.7</b> | 5.6   |
|           | 1022 | <b>1.7</b> | 5.6  |           | 1046  | <b>1.9</b>  | 6.2   |           | 1105 | <b>1.7</b>  | 5.6  |           | 0712  | <b>0.5</b>  | 1.6   |           | 1124 | <b>1.7</b>  | 5.6  |           | 0743  | <b>0.5</b> | 1.6   |
| WE        | 1650 | <b>0.5</b> | 1.6  | TH        | 1755  | <b>0.1</b>  | 0.3   | SA        | 1752 | <b>0.5</b>  | 1.6  | SU        | 1214  | <b>1.7</b>  | 5.6   | MO        | 1819 | <b>0.4</b>  | 1.3  | TU        | 1244  | <b>1.6</b> | 5.2   |
| ME        | 2252 | <b>1.6</b> | 5.2  | JE        | 2325  | <b>1.7</b>  | 5.6   | SA        | 2346 | <b>1.6</b>  | 5.2  | DI        | 1931  | <b>0.3</b>  | 1.0   | LU        |      |             |      | MA        | 1951  | <b>0.4</b> | 1.3   |
| <b>6</b>  | 0450 | <b>0.6</b> | 2.0  | <b>21</b> | 0624  | <b>0.4</b>  | 1.3   | <b>6</b>  | 0618 | <b>0.8</b>  | 2.6  | <b>21</b> | 0059  | <b>1.7</b>  | 5.6   | <b>6</b>  | 0008 | <b>1.7</b>  | 5.6  | <b>21</b> | 0123  | <b>1.7</b> | 5.6   |
|           | 1058 | <b>1.7</b> | 5.6  |           | 1137  | <b>1.8</b>  | 5.9   |           | 1147 | <b>1.6</b>  | 5.2  |           | 0813  | <b>0.5</b>  | 1.6   |           | 0653 | <b>0.7</b>  | 2.3  |           | 0838  | <b>0.5</b> | 1.6   |
| TH        | 1733 | <b>0.5</b> | 1.6  | FR        | 1856  | <b>0.2</b>  | 0.7   | SU        | 1846 | <b>0.5</b>  | 1.6  | MO        | 1312  | <b>1.6</b>  | 5.2   | TU        | 1211 | <b>1.7</b>  | 5.6  | WE        | 1341  | <b>1.5</b> | 4.9   |
| JE        | 2331 | <b>1.6</b> | 5.2  | VE        |       |             |       | DI        |      |             |      | LU        | 2027  | <b>0.4</b>  | 1.3   | MA        | 1911 | <b>0.4</b>  | 1.3  | ME        | 2042  | <b>0.5</b> | 1.6   |
| <b>7</b>  | 0541 | <b>0.7</b> | 2.3  | <b>22</b> | 0019  | <b>1.7</b>  | 5.6   | <b>7</b>  | 0032 | <b>1.6</b>  | 5.2  | <b>22</b> | 0201  | <b>1.6</b>  | 5.2   | <b>7</b>  | 0056 | <b>1.7</b>  | 5.6  | <b>22</b> | 0220  | <b>1.6</b> | 5.2   |
|           | 1136 | <b>1.7</b> | 5.6  |           | 0730  | <b>0.5</b>  | 1.6   |           | 0719 | <b>0.8</b>  | 2.6  |           | 0911  | <b>0.5</b>  | 1.6   |           | 0751 | <b>0.6</b>  | 2.0  |           | 0932  | <b>0.5</b> | 1.6   |
| FR        | 1824 | <b>0.6</b> | 2.0  | SA        | 1232  | <b>1.7</b>  | 5.6   | MO        | 1235 | <b>1.6</b>  | 5.2  | TU        | 1419  | <b>1.5</b>  | 4.9   | WE        | 1305 | <b>1.6</b>  | 5.2  | TH        | 1446  | <b>1.4</b> | 4.6   |
| VE        |      |            |      | SA        | 1957  | <b>0.3</b>  | 1.0   | LU        | 1941 | <b>0.5</b>  | 1.6  | MA        | 2122  | <b>0.4</b>  | 1.3   | ME        | 2005 | <b>0.4</b>  | 1.3  | JE        | 2134  | <b>0.5</b> | 1.6   |
| <b>8</b>  | 0012 | <b>1.6</b> | 5.2  | <b>23</b> | 0120  | <b>1.6</b>  | 5.2   | <b>8</b>  | 0126 | <b>1.6</b>  | 5.2  | <b>23</b> | 0308  | <b>1.6</b>  | 5.2   | <b>8</b>  | 0151 | <b>1.7</b>  | 5.6  | <b>23</b> | 0320  | <b>1.6</b> | 5.2   |
|           | 0643 | <b>0.8</b> | 2.6  |           | 0833  | <b>0.5</b>  | 1.6   |           | 0817 | <b>0.7</b>  | 2.3  |           | 1006  | <b>0.5</b>  | 1.6   |           | 0849 | <b>0.6</b>  | 2.0  |           | 1023  | <b>0.5</b> | 1.6   |
| SA        | 1219 | <b>1.6</b> | 5.2  | SU        | 1335  | <b>1.6</b>  | 5.2   | TU        | 1332 | <b>1.6</b>  | 5.2  | WE        | 1531  | <b>1.5</b>  | 4.9   | TH        | 1408 | <b>1.6</b>  | 5.2  | FR        | 1553  | <b>1.4</b> | 4.6   |
| SA        | 1920 | <b>0.6</b> | 2.0  | DI        | 2056  | <b>0.3</b>  | 1.0   | MA        | 2036 | <b>0.5</b>  | 1.6  | ME        | 2215  | <b>0.5</b>  | 1.6   | JE        | 2059 | <b>0.4</b>  | 1.3  | VE        | 2225  | <b>0.6</b> | 2.0   |
| <b>9</b>  | 0102 | <b>1.5</b> | 4.9  | <b>24</b> | 0232  | <b>1.6</b>  | 5.2   | <b>9</b>  | 0229 | <b>1.6</b>  | 5.2  | <b>24</b> | 0408  | <b>1.7</b>  | 5.6   | <b>9</b>  | 0252 | <b>1.7</b>  | 5.6  | <b>24</b> | 0416  | <b>1.6</b> | 5.2   |
|           | 0745 | <b>0.8</b> | 2.6  |           | 0934  | <b>0.5</b>  | 1.6   |           | 0914 | <b>0.6</b>  | 2.0  |           | 1058  | <b>0.5</b>  | 1.6   |           | 0947 | <b>0.4</b>  | 1.3  |           | 1111  | <b>0.5</b> | 1.6   |
| SU        | 1309 | <b>1.6</b> | 5.2  | MO        | 1450  | <b>1.5</b>  | 4.9   | WE        | 1441 | <b>1.6</b>  | 5.2  | TH        | 1635  | <b>1.5</b>  | 4.9   | FR        | 1520 | <b>1.6</b>  | 5.2  | SA        | 1653  | <b>1.5</b> | 4.9   |
| DI        | 2016 | <b>0.6</b> | 2.0  | LU        | 2153  | <b>0.4</b>  | 1.3   | ME        | 2130 | <b>0.4</b>  | 1.3  | JE        | 2307  | <b>0.5</b>  | 1.6   | VE        | 2154 | <b>0.4</b>  | 1.3  | SA        | 2316  | <b>0.6</b> | 2.0   |
| <b>10</b> | 0203 | <b>1.5</b> | 4.9  | <b>25</b> | 0348  | <b>1.6</b>  | 5.2   | <b>10</b> | 0334 | <b>1.7</b>  | 5.6  | <b>25</b> | 0458  | <b>1.7</b>  | 5.6   | <b>10</b> | 0353 | <b>1.8</b>  | 5.9  | <b>25</b> | 0505  | <b>1.6</b> | 5.2   |
|           | 0845 | <b>0.8</b> | 2.6  |           | 1031  | <b>0.5</b>  | 1.6   |           | 1010 | <b>0.5</b>  | 1.6  |           | 1146  | <b>0.4</b>  | 1.3   |           | 1045 | <b>0.3</b>  | 1.0  |           | 1155  | <b>0.4</b> | 1.3   |
| MO        | 1411 | <b>1.6</b> | 5.2  | TU        | 1607  | <b>1.5</b>  | 4.9   | TH        | 1553 | <b>1.6</b>  | 5.2  | FR        | 1728  | <b>1.5</b>  | 4.9   | SA        | 1630 | <b>1.6</b>  | 5.2  | SU        | 1745  | <b>1.5</b> | 4.9   |
| LU        | 2113 | <b>0.5</b> | 1.6  | MA        | 2248  | <b>0.4</b>  | 1.3   | JE        | 2224 | <b>0.4</b>  | 1.3  | VE        | 2355  | <b>0.5</b>  | 1.6   | SA        | 2252 | <b>0.3</b>  | 1.0  | DI        |       |            |       |
| <b>11</b> | 0316 | <b>1.5</b> | 4.9  | <b>26</b> | 0448  | <b>1.7</b>  | 5.6   | <b>11</b> | 0432 | <b>1.8</b>  | 5.9  | <b>26</b> | 0542  | <b>1.7</b>  | 5.6   | <b>11</b> | 0452 | <b>1.9</b>  | 6.2  | <b>26</b> | 0003  | <b>0.6</b> | 2.0   |
|           | 0942 | <b>0.7</b> | 2.3  |           | 1125  | <b>0.4</b>  | 1.3   |           | 1107 | <b>0.3</b>  | 1.0  |           | 1230  | <b>0.4</b>  | 1.3   |           | 1144 | <b>0.1</b>  | 0.3  |           | 0549  | <b>1.7</b> | 5.6   |
| TU        | 1523 | <b>1.6</b> | 5.2  | WE        | 1707  | <b>1.6</b>  | 5.2   | FR        | 1658 | <b>1.7</b>  | 5.6  | SA        | 1814  | <b>1.6</b>  | 5.2   | SU        | 1733 | <b>1.7</b>  | 5.6  | MO        | 1235  | <b>0.3</b> | 1.0   |
| MA        | 2207 | <b>0.4</b> | 1.3  | ME        | 2341  | <b>0.4</b>  | 1.3   | VE        | 2318 | <b>0.3</b>  | 1.0  | SA        |       |             |       | DI        | 2352 | <b>0.3</b>  | 1.0  | LU        | 1831  | <b>1.6</b> | 5.2   |
| <b>12</b> | 0421 | <b>1.6</b> | 5.2  | <b>27</b> | 0535  | <b>1.7</b>  | 5.6   | <b>12</b> | 0524 | <b>1.9</b>  | 6.2  | <b>27</b> | 0039  | <b>0.5</b>  | 1.6   | <b>12</b> | 0548 | <b>2.0</b>  | 6.6  | <b>27</b> | 0044  | <b>0.6</b> | 2.0   |
|           | 1037 | <b>0.6</b> | 2.0  |           | 1215  | <b>0.4</b>  | 1.3   |           | 1203 | <b>0.2</b>  | 0.7  |           | 0621  | <b>1.7</b>  | 5.6   |           | 1241 | <b>0.0</b>  | 0.0  |           | 0630  | <b>1.7</b> | 5.6   |
| WE        | 1631 | <b>1.7</b> | 5.6  | TH        | 1755  | <b>1.6</b>  | 5.2   | SA        | 1755 | <b>1.8</b>  | 5.9  | SU        | 1308  | <b>0.3</b>  | 1.0   | MO        | 1831 | <b>1.8</b>  | 5.9  | TU        | 1312  | <b>0.3</b> | 1.0   |
| ME        | 2300 | <b>0.3</b> | 1.0  | JE        |       |             |       | SA        |      |             |      | DI        | 1857  | <b>1.6</b>  | 5.2   | LU        |      |             |      | MA        | 1914  | <b>1.6</b> | 5.2   |
| <b>13</b> | 0513 | <b>1.7</b> | 5.6  | <b>28</b> | 0029  | <b>0.4</b>  | 1.3   | <b>13</b> | 0013 | <b>0.2</b>  | 0.7  | <b>28</b> | 0117  | <b>0.5</b>  | 1.6   | <b>13</b> | 0052 | <b>0.3</b>  | 1.0  | <b>28</b> | 0121  | <b>0.6</b> | 2.0   |
|           | 1131 | <b>0.4</b> | 1.3  |           | 0615  | <b>1.7</b>  | 5.6   |           | 0614 | <b>2.0</b>  | 6.6  |           | 0659  | <b>1.7</b>  | 5.6   |           | 0643 | <b>2.1</b>  | 6.9  |           | 0709  | <b>1.7</b> | 5.6   |
| TH        | 1728 | <b>1.7</b> | 5.6  | FR        | 1258  | <b>0.3</b>  | 1.0   | SU        | 1258 | <b>0.0</b>  | 0.0  | MO        | 1342  | <b>0.3</b>  | 1.0   | TU        | 1337 | <b>0.0</b>  | 0.0  | WE        | 1348  | <b>0.3</b> | 1.0   |
| JE        | 2352 | <b>0.2</b> | 0.7  | VE        | 1839  | <b>1.7</b>  | 5.6   | DI        | 1849 | <b>1.8</b>  | 5.9  | LU        | 1937  | <b>1.6</b>  | 5.2   | MA        | 1927 | <b>1.8</b>  | 5.9  | ME        | 1953  | <b>1.6</b> | 5.2   |
| <b>14</b> | 0559 | <b>1.8</b> | 5.9  | <b>29</b> | 0111  | <b>0.4</b>  | 1.3   | <b>14</b> | 0108 | <b>0.2</b>  | 0.7  | <b>29</b> | 0151  | <b>0.5</b>  | 1.6   | <b>14</b> | 0151 | <b>0.2</b>  | 0.7  | <b>29</b> | 0156  | <b>0.6</b> | 2.0   |
|           | 1225 | <b>0.3</b> | 1.0  |           | 0653  | <b>1.8</b>  | 5.9   |           | 0704 | <b>2.1</b>  | 6.9  |           | 0735  | <b>1.7</b>  | 5.6   |           | 0737 | <b>2.1</b>  | 6.9  |           | 0747  | <b>1.8</b> | 5.9   |
| FR        | 1819 | <b>1.8</b> | 5.9  | SA        | 1336  | <b>0.3</b>  | 1.0   | MO        | 1353 | <b>-0.1</b> | -0.3 | TU        | 1415  | <b>0.3</b>  | 1.0   | WE        | 1431 | <b>-0.1</b> | -0.3 | TH        | 1425  | <b>0.2</b> | 0.7   |
| VE        |      |            |      | SA        | 1920  | <b>1.7</b>  | 5.6   |           |      |             |      |           |       |             |       |           |      |             |      |           |       |            |       |





### **NEXT DEADLINE**

**21st of November for the December 2016 Issue**  
**Send submissions to 'Newsletter', c/o NS Museum of Natural History,**  
**or by email to [sdhaythorn@ns.sympatico.ca](mailto:sdhaythorn@ns.sympatico.ca)**





# **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)**

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

## **SECOND DECADE (by Ursula Grigg)**

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## **30th ANNIVERSARY CONTRIBUTIONS**

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## **FOURTH DECADE**

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## **40th ANNIVERSARY CONTRIBUTIONS**

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507 Tower Road,  
Halifax, N.S., B3H 2X4

Bell Customer Service and/or 'Escalations'  
5201 Duke Street  
Halifax, N.S., B3J 2W3  
September 2nd, 2016

Dear Customer Service/Escalations people,

I hope someone actually reads this letter and gives it the thoughtful attention it deserves, and that it goes to someone who will consider making the necessary changes to your customer service lines. You do indeed have some employees who speak as mature adults, and can pinpoint and provide solutions to problems quickly, but they are becoming increasingly thin on the ground.

1) Please erase the first recorded statement on the repair/technical support line, "Please enter the ten-digit number you are calling about.", (and elsewhere, if it is indeed used anywhere else). It wastes customers' time completely. When a real person finally comes on the line, they always ask, "What is the telephone number you are calling about?". I have started asking your frontline people why that recorded question is there if the number dialled doesn't get to them by that method, and of course they don't know, nor do they, which would be wonderful, say something along the lines of "I will note that and let the person know who can do something about it". The idea that they themselves, by pointing out customer frustrations to an employee with power, can improve Bell Aliant's customer service, never occurs to them. Or, worse, maybe they are not given that option to offer.

2) Increasingly, there are frontline people who answer help calls who actually add to customer frustration and despair by wasting customers' time. They do this by being unbelievably overly polite but not knowing how to solve anything. They repeat themselves over and over again like robots, until they have to be asked, loudly, so one will be heard, to stop, so that one can actually speak, phrasing the problem in another way, thereby attempting to get through to them, or someone else who can actually help solve the issue. Then there are the ones who speak to you like a kindergarten teacher (a subset of the robot behaviour), constantly saying "OK?", repeating themselves, etc. in a puerile tone of voice. It is at this point the frustration begins to set in. It's time you trained your reps to speak like adults, get to the point, and also, give them more information about other people to call, as for instance, the very issue this letter is about.

3) I am increasingly having to ask for a 'supervisor' now, as a lot of your frontline people do not seem to have been given the mandate of thinking for themselves, nor truly caring for the service they are doing rather than merely having a job, nor able to answer questions 'outside the box'. I am wondering if this is partly, or worse, wholly, the fault of poor training, or worse still, deliberate training. Over the police 911 issue, there was one call I made to Accounts which was answered by Hart, Employee #LC29392. Relaxed, succinct and to the point, no memorized patter, he immediately understood what I need to know and got the information I required. Perhaps he should be in 'Training'.

As far as I'm concerned, your customer service is beginning to need tweaking badly. It is starting to become predominantly very frustrating and non-helpful. We used to be with Eastlink, but switched to Bell long ago because their customer service was so terrible. Excellent customer service is important, and especially important to me; please give it high priority. Show us that you truly do think our 'time is valuable' to us. Your service is high-cost, and people who pay a lot each month, and on time, deserve better. Not only that, they deserve to have their concerns effectively dealt with in a timely manner. Don't make us struggle through a thick wall of polite platitudes and ignorance, or make us need to become overly assertive to get results. That lets everyone down.

Sincerely yours,

Stephanie Robertson



### MEMBERSHIP FORM

New \_\_\_\_\_ Renew \_\_\_\_\_ Student \$15 \_\_\_ Ind. \$20 \_\_\_ Fam. \$25 \_\_\_\_\_ Supp. \$30 \_\_\_\_\_ Inst. \$30 \_\_\_\_\_ NNS\* add \$5 \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to order \_\_\_\_\_ HFN lapel pin(s) @\$5; \_\_\_\_\_ Dragonfly Chk'list(s) @\$1; \_\_\_\_\_ Butterfly Ch'klist(s) @\$1 \_\_\_\_\_

Total \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code \_\_\_\_\_

**HFN** is a volunteer organisation. Would you share your interests and skills? \_\_\_\_\_

I could help with: talks/trips \_\_\_\_\_ board meetings \_\_\_\_\_ newsletter \_\_\_\_\_ other \_\_\_\_\_

**MEMBERSHIP:** Renewals are due on January 1st. New memberships received from September 1st to December 31st of any year will be valid until the end of the following membership year. Send this application to: **HFN Membership Secretary, c/o Nova Scotia Museum of Natural History, 1747 Summer Street, Halifax, N.S., B3H 3A6.**

**EMAIL:** hfninfo@yahoo.ca **WEBSITE:** halifaxfieldnaturalists.ca **FACEBOOK:** Halifax Field Naturalists or HFN

\*NNS: Nature Nova Scotia (NNS) is our provincial umbrella group for Nova Scotia naturalist associations.









