



ISLAND NATURALIST

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NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY OF PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND - NATURE PEI
P.O. BOX 2346, CHARLOTTETOWN, P.E.I. C1A 8C1

Meetings are held on the first Tuesday of the month (except July, August, and September) at 7:30 p.m. at the **Beaconsfield's Carriage House on 2 Kent Street, Charlottetown**. Each meeting commences with a brief business meeting followed by a nutrition break and our guest speaker. Members and non-members are welcome.

Membership is open to anyone interested in the natural history of Prince Edward Island. Membership is available at any meeting or by contacting the Treasurer at P.O. Box 2346, Charlottetown PE C1A 8C1. Annual membership is \$20 and renewals are due in January. Multi-year renewals are \$20 per year for which you wish to renew. Membership expiry dates are shown in the top right hand corner of the mailing label or by a notice provided to those receiving electronic newsletters.

The Society is directed by a volunteer Executive elected from its members.

2013 Executive:

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NEWSLETTERS are normally published quarterly and are available in Acrobat Reader colour format via E-mail or in black & white hard copy delivered by mail. Hard copies are printed on recycled paper. Articles, notes, reports, drawings, bird sightings, plant records, pictures, etc. are welcomed from members and non-members. If you have seen anything unusual, please share it with us. It is important to have your observations recorded so that others may learn from them. All contributions should be sent by mail to Dan McAskill, Newsletter Editor, NHSPEI, 368 Brazel Road, Donagh, P.E.I. C1B 0T9 or via E-mail to jdmcaskill@pei.sympatico.ca. The *next deadline* for articles, sightings, or other newsletter information is *September 10, 2013*.

Illustrations/Pictures: The Society extends a special thanks to Carolyn Cockram, Greg and Sandra Feetham, Donna Giberson, and Dwaine Oakley for their photographs in this issue.

Reprinting: Editors of other newsletters and teachers wishing to copy classroom materials are welcome to reprint articles from the Island Naturalist (except when copyrighted). Due acknowledgment must be provided to the Island Naturalist, the author and illustrator.

Web page: www.NaturePEI.ca

The Natural History Society gratefully acknowledges support from the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development which enables distribution of newsletters to schools and libraries desiring it. The Natural History Society is an affiliate of Nature Canada and has representation on the board of the Island Nature Trust. The Society is a registered, non-profit organization (Part 2, Companies Act). Tax receipts are issued for donations to the Society and these funds are used to further the work of the Society.

Cover Illustration:

This male Bobolink was photographed by Donna Giberson. This species has dramatically increased in population during the past four decades. An article in this issue explores the causes as well as measures for their conservation.

SOCIETY (NATURE PEI) NEWS:

Ian Scott represented the Natural History Society of PEI at the Land Use Task Force Public Consultation in Charlottetown on May 2nd and heard the presentation. The Society committed to provide written recommendations at a later date.

In addition to the above initiative, the Society researched, prepared and submitted the Society's views in response to the publication *Planning for a Sustaining for a Future: A Time for Questions*. This document posed six core questions and a variety of questions regarding various aspects pertaining to a new conservation strategy for PEI.

On April 27th, the Society hosted a booth at the 2013 Earth Week Celebration at Murphy Centre in Charlottetown. Lots of newsletters were distributed and a few new memberships were signed up.

Ian Scott and Diane Griffin met with Agriculture and Forestry Minister George Webster on April 24th to discuss Canadian Wildlife Service's proposed expansion of the waterfowl hunting season regulations and participation in the Minister's Breakfast Meeting with groups representing hunters, trappers and other groups pertaining to these sports. They expressed the views of the Society regarding the proposed changes indicating that they would support those changes where they are supported by sound science. They noted the need for a clear protocol for early ice up if the Department supports an extension of the season. They also noted the need for more citizen science and a natural history museum.

Ian Scott representing the Society and the PEI Museum and Heritage Foundation submitted a grant application for the PEI 2014 Fund. This application would provide financial support for an exhibition of PEI bird photographs at Eptek Centre in Summerside. This week, we were advised that this application was unsuccessful.

Ian Scott and Diane Griffin judged the Natural History exhibits for two levels of the 2013 PEI Science Fair on April 3rd and 24th. The Society sponsored three natural history prizes and awarded one for the grade 7 to 12 level and 2 for the grade 4 to 6 category. An article is included in this issue of the *Island Naturalist* on the latter prizes.

The Society submitted a PEI 2014 Fund application for financial aid to publish a book on natural history based on the various natural history articles in the PEI Museum and Heritage Foundation's "Island Magazine". Just before this issue of the *Island Naturalist* was released, the adjudication committees advised the Society's application was unsuccessful.

Randy Dibblee was appointed as the Natural History Society's representative on the Island Nature Trust's General Council.

The Executive decided to offer three of the remaining boxes of the Society's *Island Wings* colouring book to teachers showing an interest in using them for educational purposes. In addition, the Society decided to partner with the Mount Buchanan - Point Prim Women's Institute District in a Feeding Our Birds award pilot project (see article in this issue).

BOBOLINKS AND BARN SWALLOWS:

By Julie-Lynn Zahavich, Island Nature Trust

On Prince Edward Island, Barn Swallows begin arriving in late April and Bobolinks arrive in May. Both species migrate from South America to Eastern Canada to nest and rear their young. Bobolinks are grassland birds and have adjusted to nesting in hayfields on PEI. Before Europeans arrived here, Barn Swallows nested on cliffs and in caves. Now they opt to nest in barns, bridges, garages, and verandahs.

In the summer, male Bobolinks are often observed around hayfields, perching in treetops, shrubs or tall grass, giving their remarkable robot-like call. Barn Swallows are often spotted lining telephone wires in farming communities or in flight as they roll and twist like Snowbird pilots.

Male breeding Bobolinks are medium-sized, with black underparts; white back, shoulders and rump; and yellow nape. Female Bobolinks are plain in comparison, with yellow bodies, streaked brown and black. Male and female Barn Swallows both have bright blue upper parts, dark chestnut-coloured forehead and throat, light rufous underparts and a very long, forked tail. Female Barn Swallows often appear paler and have shorter tail streamers.

Although they are both still regularly spotted on PEI, both birds are now considered species at risk and have been designated as threatened by the Committee on the Status of Endangered Species in Canada (COSEWIC). It is estimated that 88% of the bobolink population and 76% of the barn swallow population has been lost in the last 40 years in Canada.

There are many factors that have contributed to their decline. For Bobolinks, changes in agriculture practices and habitat loss are having the biggest impact. Harvest dates of hay for silage are much earlier than they were 20 years ago, and now coincide with the Bobolink nesting season. Bobolinks nest on the ground in hayfields, so early harvesting often results in destruction of eggs, nests, young and even adults.

Bobolinks also lose nesting habitat as our crops change and hayfields disappear. Less livestock is being raised on the Island so there is less demand for forage crops like hay. Increasingly, fields are being planted in row crops (such as potatoes or soybeans) which are more profitable than forage crops but not useful to Bobolinks. In addition, many hayfields are being abandoned. These abandoned fields may make excellent Bobolink habitat for a number of years but, if left untouched, they will eventually grow into forest, alder or other species. Increasing development in rural and suburban areas reduces available habitat for Bobolinks as well.



Barn Swallow
Photo by Carolyn Cockram

For Barn Swallows, loss of nesting habitat and a changing food supply are major threats. Every year nest sites become harder to find for Barn Swallows because, increasingly, traditional-style wooden barns are being abandoned or destroyed. These barns are not being rebuilt or are being replaced with modern buildings which exclude Barn Swallows. Adding to this, many modern buildings have metal roofs, which heat up in direct sunlight and can increase the risk of mortality in young Barn Swallows.

Furthermore, as aerial insectivores – animals that feed exclusively on insects in flight – Barn Swallows are sensitive to fluctuations in insect populations. Extensive insecticide use, bad weather and environmental contaminants can cause fluctuations in the abundance and timing of insect populations. This can be detrimental for long distance migrants, like the Barn Swallow, for whom it is imperative that adequate energy reserves are built up before undertaking such a lengthy migration.

To protect Bobolinks and Barn Swallows on your

property:

- Avoid harvesting hay until after July 7 to prevent disturbing or killing nesting Bobolinks and their nests, eggs and young.
- Create “late-cut” refuge areas. These are sections of hayfields that are set aside to be harvested later. They provide safe nesting habitat for the duration of the breeding season and are a sanctuary for birds that are re-nesting after being displaced.
- Mow abandoned hayfields once every two years to stop the growth of shrubs and trees and maintain grassland habitat. Avoid mowing until after ground nesting birds have finished nesting.
- Open barn doors and/or windows from May to August to allow Barn Swallows access to nesting sites.
- Provide nesting opportunities for Barn Swallows by installing ledges and artificial nest cups on your property. There are many patterns online that can be downloaded for free.
- Reduce insecticide use wherever possible; and
- Protect wetlands that are used as foraging areas.

If you see a Bobolink or Barn Swallow, report your sighting to the Island Nature Trust at 566-9150. Data collected by citizen scientists is crucial in the understanding of local bird species.

BANK SWALLOWS LISTED BY COSEWIC:

Adapted from Bird Studies Canada Latest News May 6, 2013

Many Islanders have noted the large decline in Barn Swallows but many fewer are aware that Bank Swallows have also been declining. During its spring meeting, the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC) assessed the population status of the Bank Swallow and determined it to be a

Threatened species. Bank Swallows have declined by as much as 98% since 1970. Thus, the Bank Swallow has joined other formerly common and widespread species of aerial insectivores that COSEWIC has recently assessed as being at risk, namely, Barn Swallow, Eastern Whip-poor-will, Common Nighthawk, Chimney Swift, Eastern Wood-Pewee, and Olive-sided Flycatcher.

FEEDING OUR BIRDS AWARD – PRIOR NOTICE:

by Liz Townshend

A new award is available for residents of Mt. Buchanan and Pt. Prim! Nature PEI (formerly the PEI Natural History Society) and the Mt. Buchanan – Pt. Prim District of the PEI Women’s Institute are partners on a new “Feeding our Birds Award”. Each year 2 categories of feeders will be recognized with an award of \$25 plus a Certificate signed by Nature PEI and the WI. The two categories of bird feeders that may be recognized with this Award are:

- The most innovative design to attract a **large range of birds**.
- The most visible from the road to attract **enthusiastic birders**.

The date for judging will be announced here in September and will likely be in early November. Judges will be representatives from both organizations. The judges will visit any property where the owner has given permission for the judges to drive up to the home either by putting a sign at the road or by notifying a member of the WI.

Watch for interesting bird feeders along Route 209. This District includes the Glashvin Road, MacAulay’s Wharf Road (Mt. Buchanan) and the Pt. Prim Road including all its side roads right down to the Lighthouse!

RAPTOR STALKING:

By Dan Kennedy

I had an interesting incident in my yard at Vernon River on May 8. A gang of crows spotted a Red-tailed Hawk in a big spruce behind the house. The crows went after the hawk causing him to flush. As the hawk flew out of the tree, he flushed a Gray Partridge from near the base of the tree. I wondered if the hawk was stalking the partridge until interrupted by the crows?

PEI SCIENCE FAIR NATURAL HISTORY WINNERS:

Congratulations go to Brandon Gaudet, Grade 6 Elm Street Elementary for his presentation “Don't Eat Snow” and SoumyaDeep Chowdhury and Matthew Kozma of Grade 6 West Kent Elementary for their presentation “Shoreline Erosion”. These students won the Natural History prize for the PEI Science Fair this year.

Don't Eat Snow - Brandon noted that “My life is related to this project because I have serious allergies to dust; snow can form itself around dust and other allergy causing pollutants which actually helps me breathe easier in the winter.” Brandon collected snow from the city and then different points into the country. He analyzed the snow by letting it melt through a filter then weighed the filters. His results showed that the snow in the city was more polluted than the country snow. He recommended children must not eat the snow as it is actually quite dirty and polluted.

Shoreline Erosion - SoumyaDeep Chowdhury and Matthew Kozma’s project described a 6-month survey of coastal soil erosion at Wood Islands, Prince Edward Island. Their presentation included information on plant life and erosion rates, specifically beach grass and tree cover and various methods to decrease coastal erosion.

Note: The winner for the senior category were not available at the time of publication.

BIG WEEK OF BIRDING THANKS!

Parks Canada would like to thank members of the Natural History Society for their participation in their Big Week of Birding in PEI National Park event which took place this year from May 25 to June 2. A special thanks to Ron Arvidson who assisted in some of the planning and also in leading an introduction to birdwatching field trip for the public.

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS 2012-13:

Results compiled by Scott Sinclair, Dwaine Oakley & Dan McAskill

The \$5 fee for field counters on Audubon Society - Birds Studies Canada registered Christmas Bird Counts was waived this year. It is hoped that participants will provide sufficient donations to cover the publication and citizen science work required for the counts

This was the 42nd consecutive year the Natural History Society has conducted the Hillsborough Christmas Bird Count through the Audubon Christmas Bird Counts on Prince Edward Island and it was the 113th consecutive CBC in North America. Storms meant the cancellation of the 1975 P.E.I. National Park CBC so it celebrated its 41st anniversary. Despite weather cancellations for storm conditions on Dec. 30th and high winds on Dec. 31st, the Montague CBC held its count on Jan. 1st and the Montague count celebrated its 29th year. The East Point count marked its 11th anniversary with one year missed.

There was a skiff of snow on the ground for the East Point and Hillsborough CBCs but the PEI National Park and Montague counts had fields and woodlands covered in light snow. There was essentially no ice in salt water areas in three or the four counts. Travelling conditions were very good in the East Point, PEI National Park and Hillsborough CBCs. Snow prohibited driving in some unploughed roads on the Montague Count.

Dwaine Oakley coordinated the East Point Christmas Bird Count with the birders assembling in gale force winds at East Point at 7:30 AM. Seven birders and a reporter (Nicole Feriancek) participated. Nicole prepared a story for the Eastern Graphic and posted a You Tube video on line commemorating the event! Geordie Carragher of the Guardian published an article in the Christmas insert to the Guardian. Kerry Campbell of CBC conducted a radio interview with David Christie and Dan McAskill on the birds seen during the CBCs

Barb MacDonald of Parks Canada set up and hosted the potluck venue for P.E.I. National Park in the Dalvay Administration Building Lunch Room. In recognition of the 75th anniversary of the opening of PEI National Park, the Park raffled door prizes, including publications on national parks across Canada to the participants. There was a rather sumptuous potluck and the highlights of the count were noted for the listers amongst the group to chase rarities after lunch. Diane and Kevin Griffin hosted a wonderful Hillsborough pot-luck and the participants shared their sightings after the feast. Dwaine Oakley coordinated the East Point Count while Scott Sinclair organized the Montague count and Dan McAskill coordinated the P.E.I. National Park and Hillsborough CBCs.



Harlequin Ducks at East Point
Photo by Dwaine Oakley

This was a relatively poor cone and, with the exception of winter berry, it was a poor berry crop in most areas. As was the case last year, field counters again reported low numbers of woodland birds and sparrows. On the finch side, there were good numbers of American Goldfinch and some reports of White-winged Crossbills and Evening Grosbeaks this year. The most unusual sightings were: a Yellow-throated Warbler at York and a Wilson’s Snipe at Cass’s Pond on the PEI National Park Count, 3 Harlequin Ducks and a Peregrine Falcon at East Point; and a Turkey Vulture, a Lesser Black-backed Gull and a Ruby-crowned Kinglet on the Montague Count.

As usual, the standardized system of bird numbers, birders, travel, and weather data was collected so that the data was comparable to that from other CBCs in North America and the other count zones. This year’s Island CBC summaries are provided below.

OBSERVATIONS

NUMBERS OBSERVED

Species	East Point	National Park	Hillsborough	Montague	Total
	Dec. 15, 2012	Dec. 16, 2012	Dec. 26, 2012	Jan. 1, 2013	Dec. 15 - Jan. 1
Canada Geese		117	4,432	327	4,876
Gadwall		2	0		2
American Wigeon				8	8
American Black Duck	36	367	1,334	644	2,381

Mallard	2	15	43	15	75
Northern Pintail		7	0		2,007
Green-winged Teal		2	21		23
Greater Scaup		2,401	15		2,416
Common Eider	2000	30	0		2,030
Harlequin Duck	3	0	0		3
White-winged Scoter			6		6
Black Scoter	25				25
Long-tailed Duck	6	1	11	160	178
Common Goldeneye	13	120	115	380	628
Barrow's Goldeneye		1	6	9	16
Hooded Merganser		1		1	2
Common Merganser	111	30	106	158	405
Red-breasted Merganser	8	1	428	88	525
Gray Partridge				21	21
Ring-necked Pheasant			9		9
Ruffed Grouse		1	CW	2	3
Red-throated Loon	2				2
Northern Gannet	1				1
Double-crested Cormorant	1		2	3	6
Great Cormorant				4	4
Great Blue Heron	53		1		54
Turkey Vulture				1	1
Bald Eagle	2	17	17	25	61
Adults	1	14	12	15	42
Immature	1	3	5	6	15
Unknown	0	0	0	4	4
Northern Harrier		1	3		5
Sharp-shinned Hawk			3		4
Northern Goshawk				1	1
Red-tailed Hawk		3	7	2	12
Rough-legged Hawk			2		2
Wilson's Snipe		1			1
Bonaparte's Gull	1		4	1	6
Black-headed Gull		1	CW		1
Ring-billed Gull		9	24	169	202
Herring Gull	20	168	315	514	1,017
Iceland Gull	25	4	64	4	97
Lesser Black-backed Gull				1	1
Glaucous Gull			1	7	8
Great Black-backed Gull	3	45	122	57	227
Dovekie	2				2
Black Guillemot	2			3	5
Rock Pigeon (Dove)	4	103	158	88	353
Mourning Dove	10	135	63	121	329
Barred Owl		1	CW		1
Belted Kingfisher		2	1	3	6
Downy Woodpecker		6	8	5	19
Hairy Woodpecker			9	5	14
Northern Flicker		1	1	1	3
Merlin		1	1		2

Peregrine Falcon	1			1	2
Northern Shrike	1				1
Blue Jay	7	126	197	194	524
American Crow	40	1,240	1,818	339	3,437
Common Raven	13	60	19	54	146
Horned Lark			CW		CW
Black-capped Chickadee	30	180	183	167	560
Boreal Chickadee	13	1			14
Red-breasted Nuthatch		2	2	3	7
Brown Creeper			3		3
Golden-crowned Kinglet	4	12	4	17	37
Ruby-crowned Kinglet				1	1
American Robin	4	1	1	2	8
European Starling	560	518	8,446	1,312	10,836
Bohemian Waxwing	65		534		599
Cedar Waxwing			60		60
Lapland Longspur			CW		CW
Snow Bunting			CW	231	231
Yellow-rumped Warbler	1				1
Yellow-throated Warbler		1			1
American Tree Sparrow		2	19	16	37
Savannah Sparrow			1		1
Song Sparrow			CW	1	1
White-throated Sparrow			1	3	4
Dark-eyed Junco	3	16	40	120	179
UID sparrow	1				1
Red-winged Blackbird		1			1
Common Grackle		1	2		3
Brown-headed Cowbird				20	20
Pine Grosbeak		15	1		16
White-winged Crossbill	2	1		6	9
Common Redpoll	6	130	23	31	190
Pine Siskin			CW	2	2
American Goldfinch	3	63	66	292	424
Evening Grosbeak			1	52	53
UID Passerine	1				
House Sparrow	30	22	9	4	65
Total Birds	3,115	5,986	18,762	5,696	30,559
Total Species	39	48	53	55	85
Add Count Week Species	0	0	8	0	1
Participants: Field	7	12	15	15	42
Feeder	0	0	3	6	9
Mammals:					
Red Squirrel		3	6	15	24
Red Fox		1	2	2	5
Harbour Seal			1	4	5
Roaming House Cats		1	1	1	3
Walked: Km	2	3.75	6.2	18	29.95
Hours	1.25	2	3.5	12.2	18.95
Driven: Km	151	529.3	428.1	433.2	1136.00

Hours	3.5	25.5	31	27.6	493.20
Earliest Start	735 hrs	720 hrs	715 hrs		715 hrs
Latest Ending	1215 hrs	1600 hrs	1630 hrs		1630 hrs
Total Party Hours	4.75	27.5	34.5	39.8	106.55
Owling Hours	0	0	0	0	0.00
Owling Kilometres	0	0	0	0	0.00
Number of Feeder Reports	0	0	3	5	8.00
Feeder Hours	0	0	5	10	15.00
Snow Cover - aver. cm.	0.5	1 to 5	< 0.5	5	
Salt Water Bays - % frozen	0	0	5 to 60	5	
Salt Water - % frozen	0	0	5 to 60	5	
Fresh Water - % frozen	5 to 10	5 to 100	20 to 90	0 to 70	
Weather:					
Bright Sunshine (hrs)	0	0	0.1	0	
Precipitation	blowing flurries - intermittent	flurries	0 to flurries	flurries pm	
Cloud %	75 to 100	100	100	100	
Temperature C.	-5 to -2	-10 to -7	-6 to -1	-7 to -4	
Wind Speed Range km/hr	46 to 56	16 to 24	8 to 25	15 to 30	
Prevail. wind direction	N to NW	W	W to NW	SW	

where CW = species seen during the count week (three days before and after count day)

For registered counts, the entire data base is accessible on line through www.audubon.org and click your way to the results under birds and science.

Thanks to the many participants, namely: Jim Aquilani; Ron Arvidson; Jean Blanchard; Bill Bowerbank; Sharon Clark; Ray Cooke; Rosemary Curley; Wanda Curley; Daphne Davey; Fiep de Bie; Lois Doan; Nicole Feriancek; Chris & Blair Fraser; Diane Griffin; Don Harris; Ben Hoteling; Janet Hughes; Virginia Jackson; Don Jardine; Meike Keunecke; Derek Lowe; Gerald MacDonald; Doug MacEachern; Jean Maki; Evelyn Martin; Dan McAskill; Arlene & Paul McGuigan; Dot Neilson; Audrey Oakley; Dwaine Oakley; Roberta Palmer; Meryl Saquair; Gary Schneider; David Seeler; Scott Sinclair; Angela & Don Stephens; John Stewart; Linda Thomas; Liz Townsend; Rosalind Waters; Jean Watts; and Alex Wazcik. These counts would not be possible without their participation.

NEWS FROM ABOUT:

Compiled by Dan McAskill

Congratulations to Rosemary Curley on her receipt of a Natural Heritage award from the PEI Museum and Heritage Foundation during this year's Heritage Week celebrations in February. This award was presented for her outstanding conservation work both as a volunteer and her work as a biologist with the Government of PEI's Fish and Wildlife Section. She has written numerous articles, served on the various conservation organization boards and committees, coordinated two Maritime Breeding Bird Atlases and much more over the past 40+ years.

Congratulations as well to Diane Griffin on her receipt of an Honorary Doctor of Laws degree which was conferred on her at UPEI's May Convocation ceremony. This is a well deserved kudo for her very extensive conservation work with both local and national conservation groups and initiatives!

In late April, the European Commission announced two-year restrictions on three neonicotinoids (nicotine-like chemicals that are the world's most widely-used class of insecticides). The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds welcomed this decision which should reduce impacts and encourage more wildlife-friendly systems of farming. The American Bird Conservancy commissioned world-renowned environmental toxicologist Dr. Pierre Mineau to review 200 studies on these chemicals. His assessment concluded that neonicotinoids are lethal to birds and the aquatic systems on which they depend. His report, "The Impact of the Nation's Most Widely Used Insecticides on Birds", is on the ABC website. RSPB also has information on its website. (Adapted from Bird

Studies Canada Latest News April 2013)

Long Point Bird Observatory (LPBO) recently banded an adult male Red-winged Blackbird. This was the 900,000th bird banded since LPBO began monitoring bird migration through Long Point, Ontario 52 years ago. During this period, LPBO staff and volunteers have banded 271 bird species. Of the 23,000 Red-winged Blackbirds they banded over the years, hundreds have been recovered providing very valuable information on bird migration. Despite being among the continent's most abundant birds, Red-winged Blackbirds too are experiencing troubling declines as are many other species. To find more information on bird populations trends, visit Bird Studies Canada's NatureCounts data portal. (Adapted from Bird Studies Canada Latest News May 2, 2013)

Every year, as spring approaches, the BIObus team boards their specially equipped RV and heads out where the wild things are. Since 2008, the BIObus has been carrying researchers and students to biodiversity hot spots across North America to collect insects and other invertebrates. This year, the BIObus team will be doing research in PEI National Park for a week in June and August. More information will be available on the PEI National Park website soon! To learn more about Biobus visit www.biobus.ca. (Adapted from May PEI National Park release)

Parks Canada is introducing several new and exciting programs to the long list of things to do in Prince Edward Island National Park this summer. Visitors can join park interpreters for a variety of discovery walks, talks and tours happening each week in July in August. Drop by the new Discovery Dome to explore some fascinating reasons why the north shore is so special through some hands on activities for the entire family to enjoy, or explore the park after dark at Nightwatch and learn all about things that go bump in the night! The all-new Campground Cabaret will showcase the rich culture of the Island's north shore and to experience the park through film, storytelling or songs. For more information, call 902-672-6350 or check the website at www.parkscanada.gc.ca/pei (Adapted from May PEI National Park release)

Congratulations go out to Matt Stimson, a 3rd year student paleontologist from St. Mary's University in Halifax, and to Danielle Horne, an environmental management student at Dalhousie University on their discovery of a rock bearing fossil footprints along the shore at Belfast Highland Golf Course. The tracks depict the footprints of a four legged animal. The rock was collected with the assistance of several others and stored while the legislation on such fossils on PEI was explored. Dr. Helen Kristmanson, the Provincial Archaeologist, talked with Mr. Stimson and explained PEI's Archaeology Act which covers such finds. The specimen has since been added to the collection of the PEI Museum and Heritage Foundation where Mr. Stimson will have access to it. He is interested in researching the specimen further and publishing his findings. (Adapted from a Dave Stewart article in the Charlottetown Guardian on May 3rd and information from the PEI Museum and Heritage Foundation).

WEATHER EVENTS:

Temperatures reached 12 degrees C. in early March then dropped to -12 degrees C. On March 14th, 20 to 30 mm of rain closed the Tobin Road in Tryon, Cavendish Road between Community of Rustico and Cavendish, Portage Road near Brackley Beach, County Line Road between Emerald and Shamrock, Simpson Mill Road was down to one lane and a special advisory warning was released on a number of very, very soft clay roads. In addition, the rain and melting snow caused significant erosion on the Plan B corridor at Strathgartney breaching the silt control protective measures. 15 cm of snow and high winds on March 20th closed schools and government offices but temperatures warmed up to 3 degrees in the afternoon and reduced the drifting. March 22nd brought another snow storm with 15+ cm of snow and high winds. By mid-afternoon, the temperatures came up and the drifting reduced. The Hillsborough River off Mermaid was ice-free although parts of Fullerton's Creek at the junction to the Hillsborough were still ice covered until Mar. 31st, 2013. Malpeque Bay and New London Bay were 90% froze over but there was little ice on either the North Shore between North Rustico and Malpeque or off Argyle Shore and Borden but there was some pack ice to the northwest off Cabot Park on Mar. 31st. Bouyer Pond in Bunbury was open water on Mar. 30th but Lake of Shining Waters in and Rolling's Pond were still 90% frozen over on Mar. 31st. Ice left North Lake on the weekend of Apr. 13 but was still present at Stanhope Bay on Apr. 15th (LY).

A new temperature record was set for April 19th with 19.4 degrees C at Charlottetown (CBC Radio). However, the first three weeks of April were cool and some days the wind chill was below zero. Discing of fields started in Johnston's River area on Apr. 26th with general field discing on May 1st. Late April and early May brought very dry conditions to the province with the western portion being drier than the balance. The very dry

conditions finally broke with rain in eastern PEI on May 10th and in central and western PEI later on May 12th. The subsequent rain finally extinguished a serious forest fire in the Covehead - Friston Road area. Frequent rains and cold weather during the balance of May delayed planting in many areas.

ANIMAL AND PLANT SIGHTINGS:

Compiled by J. Dan McAskill

PLANTS: **Trembling aspen** catkins partially open at North Rustico on Mar. 31 (JDM). The first **pussy willows** reported were at Hazelgrove on Apr. 5th (KEM) and on ~Apr. 7 at Stanhope (BH). First **crocus** bloom appeared at Donagh on Apr. 7 (JDM). **Red maple** in flower at Donagh on Apr. 21 (JDM) and in Clyde Road in Apr. 28 (KEM). **Coltsfoot** in flower near QEH in Charlottetown on Apr. 18 (EM, WFB) and in flower at North Rustico at Rolling's Pond roadside on Apr. 28 (EM, WFB, JDM). **Mayflowers** in bloom at Cavendish on Apr. 22 (KEM, EPG) and large numbers in flower at Auburn Demo Woodlot on May 6 (WCT, DO) and at Friston Road on May 8 (JDM). First **tulips** seen in flower in Charlottetown on Apr. 29 (JDM). **Daffodil** started in flower in Donagh on May 1 (JDM) and their flowers were dying on May 14 (JDM). First **willows** flowering in Johnston's River on May 1 (JDM). **Dandelion** in flower at J. Frank Gaudet Tree Nursery in West Royalty on May 1 (KEM) and the lawn was covered with flowering dandelions at the Provincial Administration Buildings on May 2, flush of flowers over the heating pipes at the QEH on May 5, some in flower at Mermaid and Bunbury on May 6 (JDM), small numbers in flower at Covehead and Friston Road on May 8 (JDM), first in flower at Donagh on May 9 (JDM), significant flush in various areas on May 20 (JDM). First dandelion seen in seed were at QEH on May 25 (JDM, DO) **Forsythia** in flower at Beach Grove on May 2 and at Bunbury on May 5 (JDM). **Bush honeysuckle** buds opening and leaves starting to emerge at Donagh on May 5 and in flower on May 31 (JDM). White spruce bud caps were just starting to push off stems in Donagh on May 6 (JDM). Leaf flush started in earnest on May 9-10 with **pin cherry**, **red-berried elder** and **mountain ash** flushed to ½ leaf length at Donagh and Friston Road (JDM). **Trembling aspen** catkins dropping and first **wild strawberry** in flower at Friston Road on May 9 (JDM). Leaves flushing on **red oak** seedlings and buds swelled on mature red oak at Donagh on May 11 (JDM). First few **white violet** in flower at Donagh on evening of May 5th with lawn covered by May 8th (JDM). First **blue violets** seen at Friston Road woodlands on May 8th (JDM) and at Donagh on May 15 (JDM). First **marsh marigold** in flower at Friston Road and Mermaid on May 10th (JDM). **Buttercup** in flower at Friston Road wetland on May 10th (TK). First **wild pear** (*Amelanchier* spp) at Hazelgrove on May 6 (KEM), small bush in flower at Friston Road on May 10 and at Donagh on May 15 (JDM). **Pin cherry** in flower at Hazelgrove on May 6 (KEM) & at Donagh on May 16th (JDM). **Blueberry** in full flower at Hazelgrove on May 18 (KEM) but still in flower bud stage at MacEwen Road on May 25 (JDM, DO). **Painted Trillium, nodding trillium, dwarf ginseng, and goldthread** in flower at Townshend Woodlot on May 23 (KEM). **Rhodora** in flower at MacEwen's Road and East Point, **Mustard** in flower at River Meadow's and Charlottetown, **lilac** starting to flower at Souris, and **red-berried elder** in flower at MacEwen's Road and Cable Head East and **forget-me-knot** at Hyde Park trail on May 25 (JDM, DO). **Lilac** starting to flower and **grey birch** catkins falling off trees in Donagh on May 30 (JDM) **Hawthorne, red oak, and starflower** flowering at Donagh on May 31 (JDM). **Horse chestnut** in flower in Charlottetown on Jun. 2 (JDM).

INVERTEBRATES: WORMS - first **dew worms** on road at Donagh on Apr. 17 (JDM); **INSECTS:** Large **moth** flying at Donagh on Mar. 14th (JDM). 2 **cabbage white butterflies** fluttering over lawn at Pleasant Grove Road on May 9 (JDM). First bumblebee on the season at Cape Egmont on May 4 (WGH). Small numbers (<10) of large and small **bumblebees** active at Covehead-Friston Road on May 8 to 10 (JDM). **Black flies** bouncing off skin at Donagh on May 6 in Donagh but not biting on May 5th but attempting to bite on May 10th (JDM). Few **mosquitos** active at Donagh on May 6th (JDM). **Wood ants** flying at Friston Road on May 8 (JDM). First **June bug** at Crossroads on May 10 (DMur), 1 at Hazelgrove on May 21 (KEM), and Johnston's River and Donagh on May 30 (JDM). 1 large **dragonfly** at Watervale on May 12 (AC). **Swallowtail** butterflies in Marshfield on ~May 18 (MA).

AMPHIBIANS/REPTILES: First **spring peepers** calling (chorus) at Upton Rd. West Royalty on Apr. 17 (JDM). **Wood frogs** at 48 Road and a few **American toad** trilling at Baldwin's Road on Apr. 30th (JDM). 8 cm long newt at Crossroads on May 10 (DMur). **Northern leopard frog** and **green frog** calling at Watervale on May 25 (DO, JDM).

FISH: **American smelt** below fishway at Warren's Dam in Cherry Hill on Apr. 11 but not present on Apr. 19, present in fishway at Parson's Pond fishway at North Granville and Indian River fishway on Apr. 16 (ADM).

MAMMALS: 1 to 2 **raccoons** at foraging at Donagh feeder in early to mid-Mar. (JDM), 1 digging for food in mud in Wright's Creek estuary on Mar. 29 (W&SF). **Mink** hunting through red squirrel snow burrows near feeders at Donagh on Mar. 11 (JDM). **Striped skunk** at Donagh on Mar. 23 (JDM). **Northern flying squirrel** entered house through ventilator pipe in Stratford in Apr. (DFG), 1 at Seacow Pond feeders in mid-day on Apr. 10 (RG). First **Eastern Chipmunk** active again at Watervale feeder on Apr. 6 (AC), first at Donagh on Apr. 13 (JDM), and at Spring Brook on Apr. 18 (DO, JDM). 8

snowshoe hare in winter coat along Gulf Shore Parkway on Apr. 8 (JtR). 1 **bat** flying at Rocky Point at 4:30 pm daylight on Apr. 5 (LD) & 40 to 50 turned in during the Fish and Wildlife Section's white-nosed syndrome surveys (FRC). At least 5 fox at **Sherwood** on May 15 (JDM) and a mother fox with 4 prancing kits were seen in Sherwood on May 25 (DO, JDM). A short-tailed weasel (ermine) was seen adjacent to Holland College's Charlottetown Campus in May (DO).

BIRDS: **Brant** - 3 at Tracadie Harbour on Apr. 7 (JLZ), 12 at Wright's Creek & Hillsborough River near QEH on Apr. 14 (SGC, DCS) & 15 (SGC) present at Mermaid in late April and 20 still present at Mermaid on May 15 (WJM) and May 18 (JDM), 1 at Covehead Harbour on May 29 (JtR); **Canada Geese** - 2 pair at Monticello on Mar. 13 (JGM), 2 flocks totalling 75 birds, a flock of ~75 at Johnston's River and a flock of 30 at Donagh on Mar. 11 (JDM), 1,000 during road trip through Tryon, Crapaud, Victoria & Desable on Mar. 17 & 2000 on Mar. 27 (R&AA), several pairs and a few small groups at Johnston's River on Mar. 27 to Mar. 31st (JDM), few geese between Donagh (1 nesting pair at Cavendish but good numbers between Shipyard River and Wilmot River (350 in field at Shipyard River, 250 flying near Lower Hamilton, ~700 in several fields and 1 creek off New Annan Road, and ~4,000 at Wilmot River estuary and ~1,000 in potato field and grain field at Wilmot on Mar. 31 (JDM); **Gadwall** - 6 at Chapel Creek & 4 at Oyster Bed Pond on Mar. 2 & 20 on Mar. 29 (JtR); **Eurasian Wigeon** - 3 males & possible hen at Margate (Durante Creek) on Mar. 29 (GW) and 2 males on Mar. 31 (DCS), male at Borden Lagoon on Jun. 2 (G&SF); **American Wigeon** - 1 at Oyster bed Bridge on Apr. 7 (DCS), 1 at Borden on Apr. 28 (G&SF); **American Black Duck** - 300 to 500 on open water at Hillsborough River marsh edge at Scotchfort on Mar. 18 (JDM); **Mallard** - 40 feeding in Bunbury soya bean field on Mar. 24 (JDM); **Blue-winged Teal** - 2 pair at Borden on Apr. 28 (G&SF), 1 at North Lake on Apr. 29 (SCS, GS), 1 at Watervale on May 8 (DCS), 1 at Hyde Park in Cornwall on May 19 (RP); **Northern Shoveler** - 4 males & 1 female at Brackley North Marsh (DCS), 8 at Borden on Apr. 28 (G&SF); **Northern Pintail** - 2 at Oyster Bed pond on Mar. 2 (JtR), 2 during road trip through Tryon, Crapaud, Victoria & Desable on Mar. 17 (R&AA), 2 at Chapel Creek on Mar. 29 (JtR), 12 at Oyster Bed Bridge pond on Apr. 7 (DCS); **Green-winged Teal** - 2 females & 7 males at Wrights Creek on Apr. 1 (W&SF); **Ring-necked Duck** - 2 at Borden on Apr. 14 (RA, JBI, FdB, SGC), 2 at Dalvay Lake on Apr. 19 (DCS), 20 at Borden lagoons & ~60 at Noonan's Marsh on Apr. 28 (G&SF); **Greater Scaup** - 1,000+ at Oyster Bed Bridge on Mar. 2 (JtR), ~3,500 at Oyster Bed Bridge and 1,000 at North Rustico on Mar. 31 (JDM); **Common Eider** - ~35 off Doyle's Cove and ~500 near pull off east of Orby Head on Mar. 31 (JDM); **Harlequin Duck** - 1 at East Point on May 18 (DO); **Surf Scoter** - at Wood Islands on May 5 (GS); **White-winged Scoter** - 28 off PEI National Park on Mar. 31 (DCS), at Wood Islands on May 5 (GS); **Black Scoter** - 23 off east of Orby Head on Mar. 31 (JDM, DCS), 10 off Dalvay on Apr. 12 (DCS); **Long-tailed Duck** - 1,000 off Cavendish east of Orby Head on Mar. 31 (DCS, JDM), 50 at Dalvay on Apr. 12 (DCS), 6 off Monticello on Apr. 30 (JGM); **Bufflehead** - pair at Goff's Bridge at Roxbury on Feb. 15 (SK via FRC), 8 at Dalvay Lake on Apr. 19 (DCS); **Common Goldeneye** - 15 at North Rustico and 20 at Oyster Bed Bridge, 10 off east of Orby Head area on Mar. 31 (JDM), 6 at Borden on Apr. 14 (RA, JBI, FdB, SGC); **Barrow's Goldeneye** - 6 males & females at Oyster Bed Bridge on Mar. 31 (DCS); **Common Merganser** - male & female at Chapel Creek estuary on Mar. 31 (DCS); **Red-breasted Merganser** - ~200 at Oyster Bed Bridge, 20 at North Rustico estuary, and 65 at Stanley Bridge on Mar. 31 (JDM), 40 at Stanhope on Apr. 16 (G&SF); **Ruddy Duck** - 6 males & females at Mt. Stewart on May 20 (DCS); **Gray Partridge** - 2 at Inkerman on Mar. 29 (DCS), 10 to 12 in ditch on St. Paddy's Day at Brooklyn (K&WC), 7 at Mount Stewart on Mar. 21 (BDP), 1 at Vernon River on May 9 (DK); **Ring-necked Pheasant** - male feeding in Donagh soya bean field on Mar. 23 (JDM), 2 males feeding in Bunbury soya bean field on Mar. 21 & 1 on Mar. 24 (JDM), male at Cymbria on Mar. 29 (JtR), female at Rustico on Mar. 31 (JDM); **Ruffed Grouse** - 1 flew through window at Tea Hill on Mar. 7 (FdB), 1 drumming at Tea Hill on Apr. 22 (FdB), drumming at Robinson's Island on May 4 (DCS), drumming at Friston Road on May 8 (TK) and 6 seen on May 10 at Friston Road (TK), adult and later in day 1 half-size young at Covehead on May 8 (JDM); **Turkey** - 1 roadside at Brookvale on Apr. 9 (AA), 2 at Kelly's Cross on May 4 (DD) & 1 struck by car on May 17 (BDP); **Red-throated Loon** - 1 at East Point on May 19 (SCS, GS); **Common Loon** - 1 flying over the Hillsborough River at Stratford on May 25 (DO, JDM); **Pied-billed Grebe** - 3 at Allisary Creek Impoundment on May 25 (DO, JDM); **Leach's Storm-Petrel** - 1 at Campbell's Pond on May 18 (DO, HF); **Northern Gannet** - 1 at Stanhope on Apr. 16 (G&SF); **Double-crested Cormorant** - 2 flying down river at Hillsborough Bridge on Apr. 5 (JDM) & 5 on Hillsborough Bridge piers and a few more in the water on Apr. 6 (JeRo), 75 at Hillsborough Bridge on Apr. 16 (JDM), at Wood Islands on May 5 (GS); **Great Cormorant** - 16 at Orby Head on Mar. 29 (G&SF), 1 fishing at Doyle's Cove near Cape Turner and 15 near Orby Head on Mar. 31 (JDM), at Wood Islands on May 5 (GS); **American Bittern** - 1 at Elliotvale Marsh on May 8 (DCS); **Great Blue Heron** - 3 flying along the coast at Tea Hill on Apr. 4 (FdB), 4 on Hillsborough at Mount Stewart on Mar. 19 (JDM); **Turkey Vulture** - 2 at Cap Egmont on Apr. 19 (WGH), 1 at East Point beach on May 5 (SCS); **Osprey** - 1 at New London nest platform on Mar. 27 (FRC), pair on platform at Tryon and Desable & 1 in nest on Rte 10 old fire training site on Apr. 14 (RA, JBI, FdB, SGC), pair at Rustico Golf Course platform on Apr. 14 (JtR), returned to Wright's Creek nest platform on Apr. 16-7 (W&SF); **Bald Eagle** - immature at Tryon on Mar. 18 (BC), adult at St. Peters on Mar. 18 (JDM), adult at Alexandra on Mar. 19 (FdB), adult at North Rustico on Mar. 31 (JDM), 3 adults calling and in aerial displays plus 1 immature at Friston Road on May 8 (JDM); **Northern Harrier** - 1 at Alexandra on Mar. 19 (FdB), 1 at Robinson's causeway on Mar. 29 and 2 at Stratford on Mar. 31 (FdB), 1 at China Point/Earnscliffe at Point Prim peninsula in Apr. 7 (FdB, LL, KMacA, IM, SGC), pair at Wood Islands on Apr. 8 (GS), 1 at Argyle Shore on Apr. 18 (RA), 15 at East Point on Apr. 29 (SCS, GS) & 1 at East Point on May 5 (SCS), 2 males at Johnston's River on May 10 (JDM); **Sharp-shinned Hawk** - 1 took 2 Common Redpolls in Parkdale on Mar. 2 (JB),

1 adult at Pownal on Mar. 8 (KMacA), 1 perched by Donagh feeders on Mar. 11 (JDM), 1 at China Point/Earnscliffe at Point Prim peninsula in Apr. 7 (FdB, LL, KMacA, IM, SGC), 20 at East Point on Apr. 29 (SCS, GS) & 30 on May 5 (SCS); **Northern Goshawk** - immature hunting stream buffer at Bunbury on Mar. 13 (JDM), 1 at Tea Hill on Mar. 23 (FdB), 1 at East Point on Apr. 29 (SCS, GS) & 1 at East Point on May 5 (SCS); **Red-tailed Hawk** - 1 at Johnston's River on Mar. 11, 13, & 30, Apr. 5 (JDM), 2 at Norboro and 1 at Springvale on Mar. 24 (DFG), 3 at Norboro and 2 at Cavendish on Mar. 29 (G&SF), 3 at China Point/Earnscliffe at Point Prim peninsula in Apr.7 (FdB, LL, KMacA, IM, SGC), 1 at Meadowbank on Apr. 14 (RA). 3 flying together with one swooping at two others over Confederation Trail on Charlottetown on Apr. 18 (IM), 1 at East Point on May 5 (SCS), 1 juvenile in tree at West Royalty but driven of perch by crows on May 10 (JDM); **Rough-legged Hawk** - 1 at Locke Shore Road on Mar. 29 (G&SF), 3 light phase and 3 dark phase at Point Prim peninsula in Apr.7 (FdB, LL, KMacA, IM, SGC); **Virginia Rail** - 1 at Rock Barra on May 25 (A&PM, JGM); **Sora** - 1 at Monticello on May 16 (JGM), at multiple sites on May 25 (JGM, P&AM, DO, JDM); **American Coot** - 1 at Allisary Creek impoundment on May 20 (DCS); **Sandhill Crane** - 1 flying at Glenfinnan River week of May 8 (MNM); **Black-bellied Plover** - 1 at Covehead on Apr. 26 & 28 (DC&ES), 8 at Covehead on May 12 (DCS), 36 at Covehead on May 20 (SCS); **Piping Plover** - 1 at Rustico Island causeway on Apr. 18 (LT, PM); **Killdeer** - 1 at Borden on Apr. 14 (RA, JBl, FdB, SGC), 1 at Stratford Sobey's on Apr. 22 (DO) & May 5 (FdB); **Spotted Sandpiper** - 1 at Desable watershed on May 11 (RA); **Greater Yellowlegs** - 3 at Covehead Bay on Apr. 21 (DC&ES), 2 at Brackley West Marsh on Apr. 22 (DCS), 3 at Brackley North Marsh and 6 at Brackley West Marsh on Apr. 27 (DCS); **Willet** - 1 at Souris on Apr. 29 (SCS, GS), 2 at Covehead on May 4 (DCS), 1 at Wharf Road in Alexandra on May 5 (FdB); **Lesser Yellowlegs** - 1 at Covehead Pond on May 7 (DCS), 1 at Brackley North Marsh on May 9 (DCS), 5 at Brackley North marsh on May 11 & 117 on May 14 (DCS); **Semipalmated Sandpiper** - 12 at Tracadie Harbour on May 12 (FdB); **Dunlin** - 1 at Covehead on May 20 (SCS); **Wilson's Snipe** - 1 winnowing at Francois Buote School on Apr. 28 (RP), 2 at Avondale & 1 at Baldwin's Road on May 8 (DCS); **American Woodcock** - 1 singing at South Melville on Mar. 29 (RA), peenting and displaying at sites on Friston Road on May 8 (TK, JDM); **Bonaparte's Gull** - 1 at Brackley West Marsh on Apr. 30 (DCS); **Ring-billed Gull** - 35 in pond in field at Cymbria on Mar. 31 (JDM); **Herring Gull** - 125 at Stanley Bridge on Mar. 31 (JDM); **Iceland Gull** - 4 at Charlottetown Experimental Farm field on May 16 (JDM); **Lesser Black-backed Gull** - 1 at Grand Tracadie with Ring-billed Gulls on Apr. 11 (DO, BH), 1 at East Point on Apr. 29 (SCS, GS), 3rd year at Campbell's Pond on May 18 (DO); **Great Black-backed Gull** - on two Hillsborough Bridge piers on Mar. 21 (JDM); **Caspian Tern** - 2 at Dunk River on Apr. 21 (G&SF), at Oyster Bed Bridge on Apr. 28 (JDM, WFB), 1 at North Lake on Apr. 29 (SCS, GS), 17 at Covehead on May 12 (DCS); **Common Tern** - 1 at Borden on Apr. 28 (G&SF), couple flying at Hillsborough Bridge on May 10 (AC), 12 at first Hillsborough Bridge pier on May 11-24 (JDM) and absent from the pier on May 27 (JDM); **Black Guillemot** - at East Point on May 18 (DO, HF); **Rock Pigeon** - at Charlottetown, Souris and other sites on May 25 (JDM, DO); **Eurasian Collared Dove** - *first record for PEI photographed on Mar. 22 & Apr. 12 (PP), Apr. 17 (JDM, WFB), Apr. 18 (DO, JDM), Apr. 28 (JDM, WFB, EM)(efforts to obtain better pictures of under-tail feathering were unsuccessful)*; **Mourning Dove** - pair doing head bobbing display at Donagh on Apr. 13 (JDM); **Great Horned Owl** - 1 calling at Wright's Creek in East Royalty on Mar. 29 (W&SF), pair nesting at Donaldston on May 6 (MMacL) & May 25 (JDM); **Snowy Owl** - 1 at Little Tignish shore on May 15 (JHa); **Barred Owl** - 1 at Kingston on Apr. 11 (CQWF), 1 at Valley on Selkirk Road on May 5 (GS), 1 at New Harmony Demo Woodlot on May 19 (SCS, GS); **Long-eared Owl** - 1 on Gowan Brae to Bear River on Apr. 15 owl survey route (FRC, LTo); **Northern Saw-whet Owl** - at Peake's Road on Apr. 30 (JDM), 1 at Junction of Rte 5 & 216, 1 at Elliotvale, & 1 at Union Road south of Rte 3 (DCS); **Ruby-throated Hummingbird** - 1 at Southport on May 9 (A&PM), 1 at Alberton on May 11 (SG), 2 males at Hazelgrove on May 15 (KEM), 1 at Monticello on May 16 (JGM), male at Watervale on May 19 (AC); **Belted Kingfisher** - 1 at Ellen's Creek on Mar. 26 (IM), at Cavendish on Apr. 28 (JDM); **Red-bellied Woodpecker** - 1 most of Feb. & early Mar. at Frenchfort feeders (CA), 1 at Watervale on May 13 (AC); **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** - male at Donagh on Apr. 21 (JDM), 1 at Pleasant Grove on Apr. 21 (SG), drumming on down spout at Desable on Apr. 22 (REM), 1 drumming at Hardy's Pond on Apr. 22 (JtR), 1 at Georgetown Royalty on Apr. 29 (SCS, GS); **Downy Woodpecker** - 2 at Riverview Estates on Mar. 31 (W&SF), 4 chasing and calling one another at Tea Hill on Apr. 22 (FdB); **Hairy Woodpecker** - more present at Argyle Shore feeders this winter than past few winters (BCu); **Northern Flicker** - 2 most days in Feb. and Mar. at Argyle Shore (LY), 1 at Watervale on Mar. 23 (AC), 1 at Point Prim peninsula in Apr.7 (FdB, LL, KMacA, IM, SGC), calling at Donagh on Apr. 21 (JDM), 1 drumming and calling at Tea Hill on Apr. 22 (FdB), many in NW PEI on Apr. 29 (SCS, GS); **Pileated Woodpecker** - 1 at Watervale on Apr. 14 (AC), 1 at Grand Tracadie on Apr. 16 (AMacC via JW), 1 at Tryon on Apr. 28 (R&JA), 1 at Valley on Selkirk Road on May 5 (GS); **American Kestrel** - 1 on wires at Earnscliffe on Mar. 8 (KMacA), 1 at Norboro on Mar. 27 (JDM), 1 at Flat River on Apr. 8 (GS), 1 at Marshfield on Apr. 10 (KMacA), 1 at Brookvale on Apr. 11 (DCS), kestrel maintenance commenced as kestrels at some nest boxes on Apr. 12 (DO), 1 at New London on Apr. 17 (JDM, WFB), 1 at Argyle Shore on Apr. 18 (RA), 8 to 10 at East Point on Apr. 29 (SCS, GS); **Merlin** - 1 at Tea Hill on Mar. 10 (FdB), 2 in Sherwood on Mar. 24 (JC), 1 at Covehead on Apr. 28 (DCS), 2 at East Point on May 5 (SCS), 1 at Brackley on May 9 (DCS); **Peregrine Falcon** - 1 at East Point on Apr. 29 (SCS, GS); **Eastern Wood Pewee** - singing at Tea Hill on Jun. 1 (FdB); **Least Flycatcher** - at MacEwen's Road on May 25 (DO, JDM); **Eastern Kingbird** - 1 at Mount Stewart on May 22 (FRC, DFG), 1 at Hyde Park on May 25 (DO, JDM); **Blue-headed Vireo** - 1 at Georgetown Royalty on May 3 (SCS), 1 at Tea Hill on May 6 (FdB), 1 at Dromore on May 8 (DCS); **Philadelphia Vireo** - at Camp Tamawaby on May 25 (G&SF); **Red-eyed Vireo** - 2 singing at Desable watershed on May 11 (RA), 1 at Georgetown Royalty on May 21 (SCS); **Gray Jay** - 1 at

Monticello on Apr. 30 (JGM); **Blue Jay** - carrying nesting material at Bunbury on Apr. 14 (FRC); **American Crow** - 1 carrying a twig at Johnston's River on Mar. 11 and 1 carrying grass at Stratford on Mar. 28 (JDM), now collecting grass to line nest at Wood Islands on Apr. 8 (GS), carrying sticks and moss at Hardy's Pond on Apr. 9 (JtR), crow trying to lift large stick at Stratford on Apr. 13 (JDM); **Common Raven** - 1 carrying branch at Jenkin's Complex on Mar. 8 (FdB); **Tree Swallow** - 1 at Union Road on Apr. 15 (BH), 2 on power line at Hardy's Pond on Apr. 22 (JtR), present at Maximeville on ~Apr. 28 (R&AG), 1 at Souris on Apr. 29 (SCS, GS), 1 flying at Johnston's River on Apr. 30 (JDM), 3 at Cape Egmont on May 4 (WGH), 3 at Monticello on May 16 (JGM), 80+ at Bubbling Springs on May 17 (DCS); **Cliff Swallow** - 2 at Dalvay with >100 Tree Swallows & 2 at Bubbling Springs on May 17 (DCS); **Barn Swallow** - 1 on wires on May 8 (DCS), 1 at Bubbling Springs on May 17 (DCS), multiple locations in Eastern PEI on May 19 (SCS, GS), 40+ at Hyde Park lagoons amidst a mixed flock of at least 300 Tree, Bank and Barn Swallows on May 25 (DO, JDM); **Black-capped Chickadee** - 1 very fluffy individual at Cornwall feeders on Mar. 7 (SN), aerial displays at Hardy's Pond on Apr. 9 (JtR); **Boreal Chickadee** - 2 at East Point on Apr. 29 (SCS, GS), 1 at Dromore on May 8 (DCS); **Red-breasted Nuthatch** - 1 at Donagh feeders on Mar. 11 (JDM); **White-breasted Nuthatch** - male at Charlottetown feeder on Apr. 7-8 (LF via DO), 1 at Wood Island's feeder on Apr. 8-10 (GS), 1 in woods at East Point beach on May 5 (SCS); **Brown Creeper** - 1 at suet feeder at Tea Hill on Mar. 28 (FdB), singing at Indian Bridge on Apr. 15 (DO); **Winter Wren** - singing at Indian Bridge on Apr. 15 (DO), singing at Monticello on Apr. 30 (JGM), singing at South Melville on May 10 (RA); **Ruby-crowned Kinglet** - at Monticello on Apr. 30 (JGM), good numbers in NW PEI on Apr. 29 (SCS, GS); **Veery** - 1 at Byrne's Road on May 25 (DO, JDM); **Swainson's Thrush** - singing at Friston Road on evening of May 8 (JDM), 1 singing at South Melville on May 10 (RA); **Hermit Thrush** - 1 at Sherwood on Apr. 28 (R&K), several at Covehead-Friston Road woodlands May 8-10 (JDM); **Wood Thrush** - 1 singing in distance at Macphail's Woods upper loop of the trail on Apr. 28 (MG); **American Robin** - 1 at Monticello on Mar. 13 (JGM), 1 at Alliston on Mar. 22-3 (GCu), still very few reports of robins and none seen roadside up to Mar. 31st (JDM), 1 at Donagh (first in months) on Apr. 7 (JDM), 250+ on Point Prim peninsula and 20 at Earncliffe Cherry Valley and China Point on Apr. 7 (FdB, LL, KMacA, IM, SGC), first on lawn at Hardy's Pond on Apr. 9 (JtR), several on lawn at Donagh on Apr. 11 (JDM); **Gray Catbird** - 1 at Hyde Park on May 22 (G&SF); **European Starling** - entering nest holes on Apr. 2 in Charlottetown (JDM), recent fledgling doing begging display in Charlottetown on Apr. 29 (JDM); **American Pipit** - 1 at East Point beach on May 5 (SCS); **Bohemian Waxwing** - 36 at South Winsloe on Mar. 16 (DEJ), flock feeding on berries at Springvale in late Mar. (S&JW); **Cedar Waxwing** - 12 at Sherwood feeders on Apr. 6 (JC); **Ovenbird** - 1 at South Melville on May 17 (R&AA), singing at Ben's Lake on May 22 (DO); **Northern Waterthrush** - 2 at Afton Road on May 20 (DCS), at Byrne Road on May 25 (DO, JDM); **Black-and-White Warbler** - 1 at Alberton on May 6 (SGa), 1 at Dromore on May 8 (DCS), 1 singing at Tea Hill on May 9 (FdB), 1 at Monticello on May 16 (JGM), 1 at South Melville on May 17 (R&AA); **Nashville Warbler** - 1 at West Tarantum on May 19 (SCS, GS), singing at MacEwen Road on May 25 (DO, JDM); **Common Yellowthroat** - 1 at Bubbling Springs on May 17 (DCS), 1 at Mount Stewart on May 22 (FRC, DFG), 1 at Victoria - Augustine Cove area on May 22 (G&SF); **American Redstart** - 1 at Hyde Park on May 22 (G&SF); **Cape May Warbler** - at Camp Tamawaby on May 25 (G&SF); **Northern Parula** - 1 at Tea Hill on May 7 (FdB), 1 at Monticello on May 16 (JGM), at DeSable on May 17 (REM), 3 at South Melville on May 17 (R&AA); **Magnolia Warbler** - 1 at Caledonia & 1 at Valleyfield on May 16 (DCS); **Blackburnian Warbler** - male at Georgetown Royalty on May 21 (SCS), singing at Dromore on May 22 (DO), singing at MacEwen and Cow River Roads on May 25 (DO, JDM); **Yellow Warbler** - 1 at Wilmot River on May 17 (REM), 8 at Allisary Creek on May 20 (DCS); **Chestnut-sided Warbler** - 1 at Georgetown Royalty on May 21 (SCS), at Camp Tamawaby on May 25 (G&SF), at MacEwen Road on May 25 (DO, JDM); **Palm Warbler** - 1 at North Lake on Apr. 29 (SCS, GS), 1 at Mt. Stewart on May 5 (RP), fair number at North Lake on May 5 (SCS), 1 at Dromore & 1 at Caledonia on May 8 (DCS), near New Harmony on May 19 (SCS, GS); **Yellow-rumped Warbler** - 1 singing at Tea Hill on Apr. 23 (FdB), at Black Pond on Apr. 29 (SCS, GS), 2 at Marchbank's Pond in Montrose on Apr. 29 (SG), hundred at North Lake on May 5 (SCS); **Black-throated Green Warbler** - 1 seen at Tea Hill on May 9 (FdB), 5 at South Melville on May 17 (R&AA); **American Redstart** - 1 at Wood Islands on May 19 (SCS, GS); **Palm Warbler** - 1 at Dromore and 1 at Cardross on May 8 (DCS); **Pine Warbler** - 1 at Elliot Park in Cornwall on Mar. 29 (DCS); **Wilson's Warbler** - at Victoria - Augustine Cove area on May 22 (G&SF); **Northern Wheatear** - 1 at Nail Pond on Apr. 11 (G&SF); **American Tree Sparrow** - 1 to 2 at Donagh feeders in mid to late Mar. and early Apr. (JDM), 2 at Milltown Cross on Apr. 8 (DCI); **Chipping Sparrow** - 1 at Crossroads on Apr. 21 (DO), 1 at Stratford on May 1 (A&PM), at Desable watershed on May 11 (RA), 1 at Monticello on May 16 (JGM); **Savannah Sparrow** - 3 at East Point on Apr. 29 (SCS, GS), 3 at Monticello on Apr. 30 (JGM); **Fox Sparrow** - 1 at Pleasant Grove on Apr. 6 (SG), 1 at Milltown Cross on Apr. 8 (DCI), 1 at Seacow Pond on Apr. 10 (RG), 1 at Donagh on Apr. 16 (JDM); **Song Sparrow** - 1 singing at Tracadie Harbour on Mar. 17 (FdB), 2 at Sherwood feeders on Apr. 6 (JC), 20 at Point Prim to China Point/Earncliffe area on Apr. 7 (FdB, LL, KMacA, IM, SGC), now 7 at Wood Islands on Apr. 8 (GS), started singing at Hardy's Pond on Apr. 9 (JtR); **Lincoln's Sparrow** - singing at MacEwen's Road on May 25 (DO, JDM); **Swamp Sparrow** - 6 along Lighthouse Road at East Point & 1 at Bothwell beach on May 5 (SCS), 1 at Stanhope Marsh & 1 at Brackley North Marsh on May 5 (DCS), at Tracadie Harbour on May 12 (FdB), 2 at Monticello on May 16 (JGM); **White-throated Sparrow** - 1 at Wood Islands on Apr. 8 (GS), 1 at Spring Brook feeders on Apr. 18 (JDM, DO), at Vernon River on May 5 (DK), at East Point beach on May 5 (SCS), singing at Donagh, Covehead-Friston Road, and Vernon River on May 9 (JDM, DK); **White-crowned Sparrow** - 1 at Monticello on May 16 (JGM); **Dark-eyed Junco** - started singing at Donagh on Apr. 2 (JDM); **Northern Cardinal** - female at Crapaud feeders on Mar. 20



Northern Cardinal in Sherwood
April 7, 2013
Photo by Donna Giberson

(DD) & female on Apr. 11 (LM), 1 male photographed at Sherwood on Apr. 9 (DG), still present at Palmer's Road on Apr. 10 (RG), 1 female at Tryon on Apr. 11 (JS), 1 at Stratford on May 18 (JBI), male at Wood Islands feeder on May 29 (GS); **Rose-breasted Grosbeak** - female at Argyle Shore on May 8 & male on May 15 (BC), male at Donagh on May 15 & female on May 17 (JDM), male at Watervale on May 15 & female on May 16 (AC); **Bobolink** - 1 at Deroche Pond on May 20 (SCS), 1 at Mt. Stewart on May 20 (DCS), 1 at Mount Stewart on May 22 (FRC, DFG); **Red-winged Blackbird** - one singing at Moore's Pond in Stratford on Mar. 23 (JeRo), 3 males at Cape Egmont marsh on Mar. 30 (WGH), 2 at Crapaud on Mar. 31 with 12 Common Grackles (DD), male at West Royalty feeders on Mar. 31 (DCS), first at marsh by UPEI on Apr. 4 (IM), first at Donagh feeders on Apr. 6 & singing in Johnston's River flowage on Apr. 7 (JDM); **Common Grackle** - 1 at Riverside Estates in Charlottetown on Mar. 15 (WFG), 1 first of spring at Wood Islands on Mar. 17 (GS), first of spring at Crapaud feeders on Mar. 19 (DD), 1 at West Royalty on Mar. 20 (DCS), 8 at Stratford on Mar. 21st (JeRo), only 1 flock of 15 seen and heard singing at North Rustico during bird outing to north-western

Queens and northeastern Prince County on afternoon of Mar. 31 with scattered singles displaying at Cymbria, Hamilton, and Indian River (JDM), 8 at Riverview Estates on Mar. 31 (W&SF), flock of 30 at West Royalty on Apr. 6 (JDM), 100 flying at Oyster Bed Bridge on Apr. 8 (JtR); **Brown-headed Cowbird** - 8 males at Monticello in early Apr. (JGM), arrived at Seacow Pond on Apr. 10 (RG), 3 females and male singing at Spring Brook on Apr. 18 (JDM, WFB), 2 males doing wing displays for female at Tea Hill on Apr. 22 (FdB), female at Crapaud on Apr. 26 (DD); **Baltimore Oriole** - female at Souris in May (JD via DO), 1 at Hyde Park in Cornwall on May 19 (RP) & May 25 (DO, JDM), pair at Dunedin on May 25-6 (JRsr); **Purple Finch** - 1 at Watervale on Apr. 21 (AC), 4 at Cape Egmont on May 4 (WGH); **Common Redpoll** - ~100 at Parkdale feeders on Mar. 2 & ~50 on Apr. 2 (JB), 100 at Tea Hill on Mar. 7 (FdB), 120 at feeders in Sherwood on Mar. 24 (JC), numerous at St. Charles feeders on Mar. 27 (W&SF), 35+ at Sherwood on Apr. 12 & 20+ on Apr. 19 (R&K), 1 at Stratford feeder on Apr. 12 (JeRo), 20 at sunflower hearts feeder at Riverside Estates on Apr. 17 (WFB, EM), 5 to 6 at Tryon on Apr. 19 (BC), 5 at Donagh niger feeder on Apr. 20 (JDM); **Pine Siskin** - 1 at Watervale on May 18 (AC); **American Goldfinch** - 2 at Riverview Estates on Mar. 31 (W&SF), **Evening Grosbeak** - 50 at Milltown Cross feeders most days in early Mar. to early Apr. (DCI), males at Crapaud feeders on Mar. 19 (DD), 20+ at St. Charles feeders on Mar. 27 (W&SF), male & female on Apr. 22 (BC), 2 males at Wood Islands on May 5 (GS), 2 pair at West Royalty on May 12 (DC&ES), 13 at Ben's Lake feeders on May 22 (JM via DO); **House Sparrow** - 10 at West Royalty in Apr. (DCS).

Old Reports & Corrections: 6 **Redhead** at Indian River in early Oct. 2012 (BD). **Red-bellied Woodpecker** pair attributed to LF in issue #206 during summer of 2012 should have been recorded as 1 individual.

Thanks to the following contributors who provided records for this listing, namely: AA - Anne Arvidson; CA - Corrine Adams; MA - Mark Arsenaault; RA - Ron Arvidson; R&JA - Rachel and John Allen; JB - John Burka; JBI - Jean Blanchard; WFB - Bill Bowerbank; AC - Alma Currie; BC - Barbara Clements; BCo - Brenda Cobb; BCu - Barb Currie; DCI - Doug Clarey; EC - Elwood Coakes; FRC - Rosemary Curley; GCu - Georgie Curley; JC - Jim Coady; K&WC - Kevin & Wanda Curley; SGC - Sharon Clark; BD - Billy Dockendorff; DD - Daphne Davies; FdB - Fiep de Bie; JD - Joanne Dunphy; LD - Lois Doan; CQWF - Central Queens Wildlife Federation; G&SF - Greg & Sandra Feethan; HF - Heather Fenton; LF - Leah Fraser; W&SF - Warren & Sherron Foulkes; CEG - Chuck Gallison; DG - Donna Giberson; DFG - Diane Griffin; EPG - Edwin Gillis; MG - Maya Groner; R&AG - Robert & Alice Gallant; RG - Rosemary Gallinger; SG - Shirley Gallant; SGa - Shelley Gallant; BH - Ben Hoteling; WGH - Bill Hartford; JHa - Judy Handrahan; DEJ - Don Jardine; DK - Dan Kennedy; SK - Sandra Keough; TK - Tony Koughan; LL - Lise Lafontaine; ADM - Allie McLennan; AMacC - Allan MacCormac; A&PM - Arlene & Paul McGuigan; DMur - Doug Murray; EM - Evelyn Martin; IM - Ian Manning; JM - June Moyaert; JDM - Dan McAskil; JGM - Gerald MacDonald (formerly listed as GM); KMacA - Kathleen MacAulay; KEM - Kate MacQuarrie; LM - Luann Molyneau; MNM - Mary Myers; MMacL - Mark MacLeod; PM - Phil McCabe; REM - Rosanne MacFarlane; WJM - Wade MacKinnon; SN - Sharon Neil; DO - Dwaine Oakley; BDP - Brad Potter; PP - Peter Paynter; RP - Roberta Palmer; SP - Shirley Prowse; JRsr - John Reid Senior; JeRo - Jennifer Roma; JtR - John te Raa; ASm - Ardeth Smith; DC&ES - David & Elaine Seeler; GS - Gary Schneider; IS - Ian Scott; JS - Jack Sorenson; JDS - John D. Somers; SCS - Scott Sinclair; LT - Linda Thomas; LTo - Liz Townshend; AW - Anne Wootton; GW - Geoff Wood; JW - Jackie Waddell; S&JW - Sue and John Whitaker; WCT - Wildlife Conservation Technology Class; LY - Lorne Yeo., JLZ - Julie-Lynn Zahavich.

ENVIRONMENTAL CALENDAR

Note: All Society presentations and field trips are open to the public.

Society meetings start at 7:30 PM at the Beaconsfield's Carriage House at 2 Kent Street in Charlottetown.

YN = young naturalists encouraged to attend or participate

- Jun. - Oct. - Maritimes Butterfly Atlas** - This is 4th year of the Maritimes Butterfly Atlas, an effort to collect much needed information on the species present, their population levels and distribution in the Maritimes. Your photographs of butterflies or collection of specimens can help reveal much needed critical information for butterflies across the Island and allow you to increase your knowledge on their identification. For more information, please contact Rosemary Curley (368-4707) or John Klymko at (506-364-2660) or the www.accdc.com/butterflyatlas/about.html This website provides collection information and includes colour pictures highlighting the identification of the various species in the region.
- Jun. 4 - Birding through the Seasons** - Ron Arvidson will feature a retrospective look at birding fun with friends and enemies, in the many secret PEI places, through the seasons for the Society's regular monthly meeting. The meeting will start at 7:30 pm at Beaconsfield's Carriage House at 2 Kent Street .
- Jun. 8 - Beach Clean up** - Join with the Parks and People Association to celebrate World Oceans Day by helping to clean up the beaches in Prince Edward Island National Park. Please meet at the Brackley Beach Complex where gloves, garbage bags, and water will be provided to participants. There will be displays on the endangered Piping Plover on display. The event will be held from 9 am to 12 noon. For more information contact the PEI National Park at 672-6350 or their website www.parkscanada.gc.ca/pei
- Jun. 16 to 19** - The 2013 Canadian Rivers Heritage Conference will be held at the Delta Prince Edward. This prestigious international river heritage conference focuses on the theme *Rivers: Building Nations . . . Sustaining Peoples* and will bring together a wide spectrum of individuals interested in various facets of rivers from their aesthetic qualities and sense of place to science, watershed governance, culture and economy. For more information, please contact or contact Don Jardine, the Conference Coordinator, by phone at 902-368-5092 or via e-mail at contact@riversconference.ca See our website at www.riversconference.ca
- Aug. 14 - BIOblitz** - How well do you really know the natural world in PEI? What kinds of animals call the ponds, forests, and shores of Prince Edward Island National Park home? Parks Canada has planned an exciting quest to explore four ecosystems in the park through a variety of fun, family friendly activities in its fourth annual BIOblitz. For more details on this and other 2013 programs, please call (902) 672-6350 or visit www.parkscanada.gc.ca/pei
- Sept. 29th The Neil Bennett Autumn Birding Classic** - This fun birding event collects valuable information on bird migration movements and raises funds for the Island Nature Trust's land protection and acquisition programs. For information on forming a team, check out the information on the Trust's website at www.islandnaturetrust.ca Donations can be sent to the Island Nature Trust at P.O. Box 265, Charlottetown PE C1A 7K4 or via telephone to 902-892-7513.
- Oct. 2nd - New Developments in Piping Plover Management.** The Island Nature Trust will be offering the Society's first guest speaker for the autumn meetings. Meeting starts at 7:30 pm at Beaconsfield's Carriage House at 2 Kent Street. YN



Brown Thrasher at Tignish
Photo by Greg Feetham