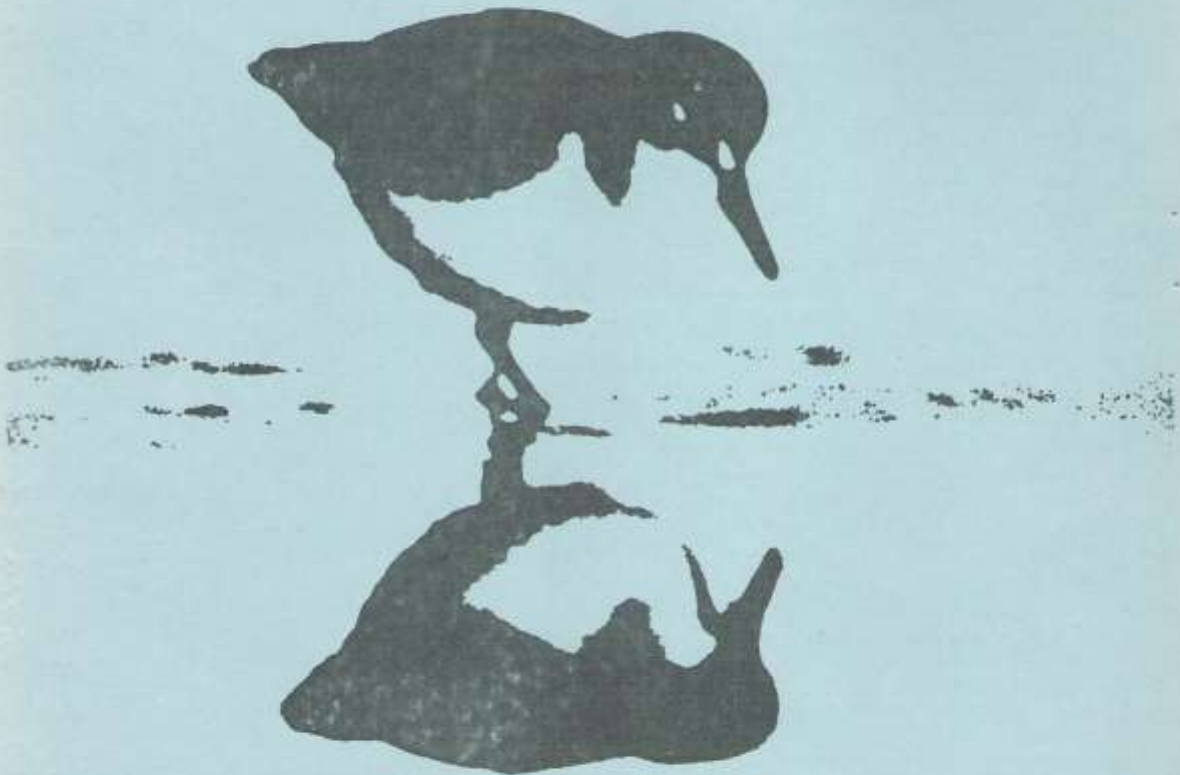




N.B. Naturalist

7(3-4) June - September 1976



N. B. FEDERATION OF NATURALISTS / FEDERATION DES NATURALISTES DU N.-B.
277 Douglas Avenue, Saint John, N. B., Canada E2K 1E5 Tel. 693-1196

The federation was formed in 1972 in order to

- develop an understanding interest in nature among amateur naturalists
- serve as a means of communication and cooperation among nature-oriented groups and individuals
- promote ecologically sound policies and programs of resource management
- foster public awareness of the relationships between man and nature.

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Advice to Contributors

Preferred articles are those from one-half to two pages in length, having relevance to the natural history of New Brunswick. Authors of potentially longer articles are invited to contact the editors. Drawings and cover illustrations should be in black ink and in the same size and proportions they would occupy in the *N.B. Naturalist*. Observations for "Nature News" should be submitted promptly after March 15, May 31, August 15 and November 15, or more frequently.

Aux Naturalistes Francophones

Nous avons besoin d'articles en français, aussi de volontaires qui voudraient écrire des résumés en français des articles en anglais.

Memberships - Subscriptions

Mail to J. G. Wilson, Neck Road, RR 4, Rothsay, N.B. E0G 2W0. Annual fees: \$2 (individual or family), \$1 (students to age 18), \$2 (library subscriptions).

Correspondence

Re the *N.B. Naturalist* to D. S. Christie, 277 Douglas Ave., Saint John, N.B. E2K 1E5. Articles and reports are always welcome.

Re federation policies, programs, and Newsletter information to K.W. Deichmann, P.O. Box 73, Alma, N.B. E0A 1B0.



This issue of the New Brunswick Naturalist, as usual, contains reports and observations from across the province. Alas, there is a sad and sometimes tragic note running through those reports. More and more often we hear of habitats and species threatened, wantonly destroyed, or encroached upon by development and "progress".

Most vulnerable and at the same time most threatened appears to be our coastal zone — beaches, sand dunes, salt marshes, and estuaries. Dave Christie's observations about the dwindling forest wilderness in northern New Brunswick might also pertain to our only coastal "wilderness" which, although being considered for expansion of Fundy National Park, probably will be developed and made accessible to a greater degree than necessary.

Spurred by the threat of another oil refinery along the Bay of Fundy the federation has presented a brief to a U.S. Government hearing on the Eastport proposal. At stake, there, are the tremendously rich marine resources of Passamaquoddy Bay, including the herds of phalaropes and gulls mentioned in this issue. At the head of the Bay of Fundy the possibility of tidal power dam construction poses a threat to the mudflats and marshes which nourish countless sandpipers. In Saint John, Newcastle and elsewhere valuable and fragile saltwater marshes are being destroyed by damming, draining and the dumping of garbage. Again our federation has gone to the defence of those marshes in a brief to the Legislature's Select Committee on Rural Land Use.

At Tracadis, Bathurst, Mary's Point, beaches once used by a few swimmers and hikers are now open to four-wheel drive vehicles, motorcycles, dune buggies and people whose only aim seems to be to race up and down those nesting and resting places of shorebirds. In other summers, Peter Pearce reported a number of Piping Plovers on Buctouche Bar. This year he saw none there.

Those are, alas, only a few examples of problems which could make a long, sad list. It occurs to me that such a list perhaps would convince our government that all is not well in New Brunswick, despite the recent Ecological Reserves Act and a hard-working Environmental Council. I would like to hear from you regarding such problems.

Mary Majka

P.S. We have just learned that, due to the efforts of the Miramichi Naturalists' Club, dumping of garbage will no longer be allowed in the Strawberry Marsh and that the dump will be relocated. Congratulations to the hard-working, dedicated members of the Miramichi club.

HAVE YOU GOT PLENTY OF MONEY TO THROW AWAY?

In the last issue, I mentioned some books of helpful suggestions on saving energy and using alternate sources. Those suggestions can save you money. "Retrofitting", a new word, may sound like astronomical jargon and it may look funny when you start walking around your house with a candle checking on draughts. But in essence it saves you money by improving your insulation, weatherstripping, and keeping the heat in your house. Extra insulation might cost quite a bit but will pay for itself within five years through lower heating costs. After that it's money in the bank.

Another excellent publication from Energy, Mines and Resources Canada is Keeping the Heat In. For a free copy write to the Office of Energy Conservation, P.O. Box 900, Westmount Postal Station, Montreal, P.Q. H3E 2V1.

Hopefully, you have already given retrofitting a thought. If not, why not retrofit your mind. — Mary Majka



Photography & the Birds at Mary's Point

by Brian Townsend

All of my life I have been keenly interested in all facets of Nature and since I became interested in Photography a few years ago I have spent a great deal of time photographing Nature. The word "Photonaturalist" (which I believe I coined) best describes my interests and ambitions.

If any one thing characterizes my photography it would be my desire to observe details close-up. I guess it is because of this that I have never been satisfied watching birds at a distance through binoculars or a telescope. I don't like to say I have seen some bird unless I have been able to observe it at close range. For birds this means a distance of within ten or fifteen feet. This is the probable reason why I had never spent much time photographing birds in the past.

It was not until I had experienced the phenomenon of the thousands of migrating shorebirds at Mary's Point that my interest in photographing birds was restored. On several occasions I sat there and watched the birds. It is obviously a special place for them too. At low tide the birds were widely spread out feeding on the vast mud flats that surround Mary's Point. As the tide came in the birds retreated ahead of it and congregated on whatever beach area remained at high tide.

So there they stood, 75,000 strong (and sometimes more), packed together, resting and waiting for the tide to go out. They seemed rather nervous and, I suppose, vulnerable and they would occasionally all suddenly take flight and fly around above the beach like a great pulsating cloud. Then, just as suddenly, the everchanging kaleidoscope of birds would alight on practically the same spot they had just left. The display was so spectacular that I just had to capture some of it on film.

I'm sure that I could never tire of watching that tremendous aerial ballet of birds. For photographic purposes, however, I wanted to be much closer to the birds. The best solution seemed to be a blind so at low tide one fine day Dave Christie and I set to work and constructed a temporary blind with some sand coloured canvas. The blind was very low since we did not want it to be an obvious landmark on the beach but rather it was to appear as a sandy hump. This made it necessary to lie down on one's stomach.

We retired to the blind about an hour before the birds began retreating into



our area. Naturally, we positioned the blind just above high tide and as the tide came in so did the birds. I finally got a better look at the birds I had been watching. Lots of Semipalmated Sandpipers, Semipalmated Plovers, and Sanderlings, a few Black-Bellied Plovers, Knots, and Short-Billed Dowitchers, a Ruddy Turnstone, and even a Curlew Sandpiper. It was a completely new experience for me to be surrounded by birds, feeling the nervous excitement of the flock and the air filled with their voices. One thing that surprised me was the amount of wind generated by the birds when they would all suddenly take flight. Little feathers and bits of seaweed would come flying across the sand toward us driven by their wind. In all it was a truly rewarding experience. Eventually the tide began to recede and with it went the birds, following it out to the mud flats to feed. So with sore back and neck muscles we left the blind anxious to find out how our many shots would turn out.

If you have always wanted to photograph birds but have put it off because you don't have a camera lens two feet long then a blind is just the thing for you. In fact one 'problem' encountered in the blind was that the birds came too close to focus on with a 400mm lens. My better shots were made with a 75-260mm zoom lens that allows me to focus as close as five feet. Even your normal lens will yield good shots if the birds come close enough. It's necessary to use a fast shutter speed to prevent subject blur.

The accompanying photos were made from my original colour slides. First I printed the slides onto Kodalith 4by5 inch sheet film (graphic arts material). Then, using the sheet film as a negative, I made a black and white print in the normal way. I find the very graphic results to be quite interesting. The Kodalith film eliminates any halftones and produces a very high contrast black and white image. It certainly is not the best thing for a nature study photo in which you would want the finest details possible but it is the only type of photograph that will reproduce well in this magazine (high contrast, that is). On the other hand there is a lot of art to be found in Nature and I imagine that it is in this capacity that this type of technique would find it's place.

If you have an interest in birds and an interest in photography why not tie the two of them together and see what you can come up with.



The Piping Plover

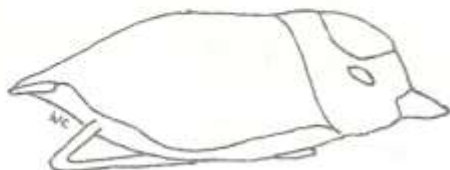
by Winnifred Cairns

(Reprinted from Halifax Field Naturalists' Newsletter No. 3, Jan.-Feb. 1976)

One of the earliest of the summer visitors which flock to Atlantic Province beaches each year is the Piping Plover. So keen is it to get back that it barely waits for the snow and ice to leave the coast before it can be seen along our outer shores. The first birds arrive by mid April and soon begin the serious business of courting and establishing nesting territories. The males choose an appropriate expanse of flat dry sand which they spend much time patrolling. While running about in this area, they sometimes pause to nestle down onto the sand, vigorously wallowing to form a hollowed scrape in the sand.

The males also spend long intervals simply standing on some vantage point within their territory, perhaps choosing a small sand drift or an old log for this purpose. If another male enters the territory, it is immediately chased, the resident bird either chasing it in flight or approaching the intruder at a running charge with head down and feathers ruffled. Sometimes the birds meet along a common boundary. In this case the two frequently commence strutting up and down the line, often stopping to face each other and bob their heads several times. Strutting birds assume very erect postures, maximizing the visual effect of their shiny white breasts and bellies and black neck ring.

It is from these territories that male Piping Plovers take off on their display flights. With deep slow wingbeats that show a flashing white from a distance, they fly over their territories in broad sweeping circles, uttering either a rapid series of high notes or a slower plaintive series of calls. After a female has been successfully courted, and the pair has mated, a clutch of four eggs is laid in a scrape on the sand. The nest scrape is sometimes lined with bits of broken sea shells. Both parents share in the incubation duties, relieving each other so each has time for feeding on the lower beach. Both adults defend the territory. After four to five weeks the eggs hatch and several hours later the young begin to run about, pecking the sand in search of food. During the next five weeks the parents may be seen escorting their broods down to the feeding territories that border the waterfront like cottage lots. While not feeding, the birds are usually moving about or resting in the nesting territory. As the young learn to fly, they break away from the family group, spending increasing amounts of time feeding on their own. By mid August most Piping Plovers have left the beaches and are on their way south to spend the winter along the Florida and Texas coasts.



VANISHING WILDERNESS

David Christie

On the morning of September 4, Harry and Ian Walker, Don McAlpine and I stepped off a lumber road and pushed our way into what looked like an impenetrable growth of spruce and fir. We were off to repeat the hike that Ian and his brother Lyle had made a year earlier from the Miramichi watershed to the Tobique. Ian had promised to lead this particular hike as an event for members of the naturalists' federation.

Once through the initial tangle of blowdowns and bulldozed debris created by the opening of the road, we found easy walking among trees spaced far enough apart to offer few problems to a hiker with a full pack. Viewed from behind, we resembled brightly coloured versions of astronauts with yellow, red and blue life support systems strapped high on our backs. With Ian taking the compass bearings, the rest of us had only to follow along, enjoying nature and the beautiful weather.

In the woods we were impressed by the great crop of mountain ash berries, many of which had been knocked to the ground by wind. Birds were not very common, though the lisping notes of Golden-crowned Kinglets could be heard almost anytime we paused quietly and several Purple Finches drifted through the woods feeding on the berries.

Our first rest stop was at an old beaver pond and bog drained by a tiny alder-lined brook. From there we crossed a ridge to another pond and thence to Logan Lake, a narrow, two-mile long lake nestled in the mountains. A beautiful sandy beach at the east end contrasts sharply with huge granite boulders that line the shore and dot the shallows near the outlet to the west.

As we lunched on the sand, admiring the spectacular view, a Broad-winged Hawk soared out from the slopes of Mount Wheeler and two loons began to call farther down the lake. It was potentially a marvelous wilderness experience, but marred by a well-equipped camp just to our left at the end of the beach. The owners must come and go by amphibious plane. Later, we spotted another camp situated on a point about a mile away.

After lunch we hiked along the south side of Logan Lake to its outlet. The farther west we went, the more granite boulders there were and the rougher the ground was. Lush green mosses covered the boulders, in some places hiding holes down which one's foot would disappear if he was unfortunate enough to step there. We could have spent many hours studying the mushrooms in those woods, if we had had the time and reference books. Few, if any, of the mushrooms were of the favorite edible kinds. Most probably belonged to the difficult genus Cortinarius, many species of which are common in fall.

Having paused only momentarily to watch three Ruffed Grouse and, at another point, two Spruce Grouse, we were glad to rest on a large flat boulder at the lake's outlet. There we watched a Great Blue Heron fly up from the shore to balance precariously on the spindly top of a large spruce. I was surprised to discover a flourishing clump of Coltsfoot at the water's edge. Had seeds of that introduced plant blown many miles in the wind or had they hitch-hiked to that remote lake on someone's clothing or on the float of a plane?

We took time to explore a short distance the brook down which the waters of Logan Lake tumble on their way to the Little Southwest Miramichi. In its upper stretch the brook produces a surprising roar as it drops over one small falls after another. Along it and by the lake, I took note of the few flowers that were still blooming at that elevation. Only Wood Aster and Large-leaved Aster were still vigorously in full bloom. Large-leaved Goldenrod and Lion's-paw were looking frowey, with only a few of their blossoms still fresh. A single Joe-pye-weed plant sported a few bright flowers. Earlier in the day we had also noted blooms of Bog Aster, New York Aster and, rather late I thought, a small orchid, one of the rattlesnake plantains.

From Logan Lake we followed the compass again to Hough Lake and made camp beside a tiny spring-fed brook flowing into the lake. Close by, a female Black-backed Three-toed Woodpecker was searching the trunks of spruce trees, several of which had chips in their bark probably caused by bears during early spring feeding. After supper Harry discovered a pair of Moose on the opposite shore. A kingfisher and an Osprey were fishing over the lake as the sun began to set. There the only sign of civilization was an occasional jet passing high overhead.

The following day our destination was a small pond on the slopes of Mount Vixen. That pond, serene and remote, had been dubbed "Walden" by Lyle and Ian when they reached it the year before. But before leaving, we had to pick up our mouse traps. Donald had packed along 40 of them to do some small mammal trapping in that elevated northern part of the province. He also brought a beam balance to weigh each mammal caught. No wonder his pack weighed 47 pounds! Each evening we set the traps near our campsite and collected them the following morning. At Hough Lake we captured five Red-backed Voles (mice) and a Masked Shrew, a typical catch, since Red-backs are the most common small mammal in most wooded areas. However, we were especially pleased that two of them were almost black, rather than red, on the back. That melanistic (dark-pigmented) colour form is scarce in the southern part of New Brunswick.

To reach "Walden" we decided to travel along the east slope of Wilkinson Mountain where the forest was mature. Although we were constantly on a side-hill and encountered one rough, bouldery area, the walking was easier than it would have been in the heavy brush that Ian and Lyle had travelled through on the mountain top in 1975. We stopped for lunch by a brook flowing down from Mount Vixen. Birds were very few in that area and the weather began to threaten. Ian made an attempt at fishing and we looked under numerous logs and rocks in an unsuccessful search for Red-backed Salamanders, noting also that apparently no earthworms were found there, miles from the nearest settlement. Donald did see another Spruce Grouse and two Winter Wrens scolded from some underbrush.

To get to "Walden" at 2100 feet elevation we followed the brook upstream onto the mountain. Before reaching the pond, we had entered the low cloud cover which we experienced alternately as fog in dense woods, and as Scotch mist, in more open areas where the thick growth of ferns and our legs and feet became soaking wet. En route we discovered some interesting mushrooms - the translucent jelly-like Pseudohydnum gelatinosum which bears many teeth on its undersurface, the shaggy Bear's-head Fungus, a small group of chanterelles which we gathered for a meal, and the distinctive faded violet Cottinarius alboviolaceus.

Although "Walden Pond" is only about 50 yards wide we often could not see the other side through the fog. We scouted all around the lake for the best tenting spot. Shortly after, Ian and Don each discovered an immature salamander - one a Spotted, the other a Blue-spotted. A year before Lyle had seen a young Blue-spotted in almost the very same spot.

Fortunately, we had arrived early and so had the tents up, the mouse traps out, and were just finishing supper when the rain began. We went to sleep very early and were well rested long before dawn. As I lay awake, waiting for daylight, some disturbance alarmed the forest birds and I was pleased to hear the distinctive call of a Gray-checked Thrush, a scarce species which probably nests on those foggy heights.

We awoke to showery weather but, excited at having captured a bog lemming among the usual red-backs and Well-Fortified with eggs scrambled with chanterelles, we were in good spirits for the six miles downhill to Vandine Brook and the Serpentine Road. In the area from "Walden" to Vandine Brook White-winged Crossbills and Red-breasted Nuthatches proved to be numerous. In company with the White-throated Sparrows we were pleased to find a few raspberries still fresh on the canes. Mushroom-wise, the many boletes we saw all were the very bitter Tylopilus felleus. Many blown-down fir trees bore white cup-like mushrooms, possibly Plouratus porrigens.

Vandine Brook is five to ten feet wide and flows swiftly through spruce forest, beneath which the mossy ground was brightly decorated by red clusters of Bunchberries and an impressive number of the blue fruits of Clintonia. We crossed the brook twice, once at an old log-driving dam, in order to be on the side which offered best hiking. Golden-crowned Kinglets, Boreal Chickadees and juncos were the most numerous birds. A Black Duck flew by and a few warblers, impossible to identify, flitted high in the treetops. The farther down the brook we travelled the more wildflowers we saw. Wood Aster was joined by Large-leaved Goldenrod, then Purple-stemmed Aster, Pearly Everlasting, Yarrow, and Lance-leaved Goldenrod. At one place four or five pink blossoms of Twinflower surprised us, that plant blooming normally in June and July.

We hiked along so quickly, without stopping to rest, that we arrived at the Serpentine Road two hours earlier than Erwin Landauer was supposed to meet us there. Harry's pedometer recorded that we had hiked 16½ miles. Having lunched, we were enjoying a sunny interval when along marched a contingent of welcoming naturalists. Half a mile down the road where a bridge had washed out we found even more people — most of the federation's members from Victoria County were there! — a fire, wieners roasting, tea steeping, and a royal welcome. Wilma Miller, an "Mayor of Nictau", presented us with membership in the Order of the Tobique, for having gone to so much trouble to get there!

It was a surprising conclusion to a fascinating trip, one to remember for many years. Looking back, one thought dominates, just how threatened the remaining wilderness areas of New Brunswick. Forestry roads push closer and closer to each other — roads that don't appear on the provincial highway map, but never-the-less are often bigger than many numbered highways. If an adequate wilderness is to remain the time to act to protect it is soon, the sooner the better.

REVIEW: Reptiles of the World

by Carl Gans, 1975; Bantam Knowledge through Colour Series, No. 53; 159 pp., 173 colour photos. Bantam Books, Inc., Dept. KTC-1, 666 Fifth Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10019. Price: \$ 1.95 plus .25 postage and handling (American funds).

For approximately \$ 2.25 it is unlikely that there is, on the market today, another such authoritative work on the reptiles of the world. The author, Professor Carl Gans, chairman of the Department of Zoology, University of Michigan, is exceptionally well qualified to produce such a book. He is managing editor of Biology of Reptiles, now in its fourth volume.

This new Bantam nature guide contains the following: "contents" (3 pp.), a systematic list of orders, families, genera and species dealt with in the text; an introduction (6 pp.) containing several subsections: "what are reptiles?", reptilian adaptations, metabolism, water balance, reproduction, size and growth, who are reptiles?, understanding and study"; and descriptions of representative species (143 pp.). The introduction is authoritative, clear, very much to the point and contains a wealth of information that is very useful to both the layman and the professional. The account of the species dealt with in the main body of the book is likewise very informative. Included are 173 beautiful colour photographs of the species discussed. For anyone interested in reptiles this work is highly recommended.

I would not be without a copy. — Stanley W. Gorham

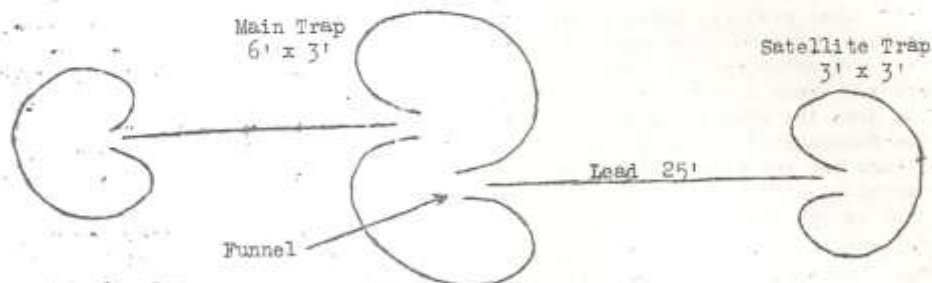
COLOUR-MARKED BLACK DUCKS

In a study in P.E.I., Black Ducks are being marked with coloured nasal saddles or with white, orange, red, or yellow wing tags, bearing a two letter code. Please report sightings through the N.B. Museum, 277 Douglas Avenue, Saint John, indicating type of marker, colour, letter code if known, date, location, habitat, behaviour, and number and species of any other ducks with which the bird was associating.

PASSERINE CAPTURES IN WOODCOCK GROUND TRAPS

Christopher Adam

In the summers of 1972 and 1973, while conducting research on woodcock for my M.Sc. degree at U.N.R., I had occasion to capture many other species of birds. The study, located in numerous old fields in the Maserall Settlement and Hanwell Road areas of York County, involved the placing of modified cloverleaf shorebird traps in the alder covers of these old fields. The trap consisted of one main cell and two satellite cells constructed of sturdy, one foot high weldwire and covered with nylon netting. The traps had funnel entrances connected by chicken wire leads of approximately 25 feet in length. Woodcock enter this trap by walking along the leads and through the funnel where they soon find that exit is impossible.



All Woodcock, Ruffed Grouse, and Robins captured were sexed, aged and banded, then released. Any bird frequenting the floor of the cover will stand a good chance of being caught by these traps. The most common were the thrushes, all species except the Gray-checked being represented. Unfortunately, predation was fairly high, raccoons being the main culprits. Numerous times one would find only a few feathers adhering to the sides of the traps. I think the raccoons would work in pairs, one on each side of the trap so that the bird would be captured as it flew from one side to the other. On occasion, a trap would be overturned completely. Mortality sometimes occurred because of exposure, as the traps could be checked only once a day.

Species Captured	1972	1973	Total
Unidentified merganser	1	1	2
Ruffed Grouse	115	127	242
Woodcock	135	155	290
Common Flicker	15	6	21
Blue Jay	3	-	3
Catbird	96	35	131
Robin	422	335	757
Wood Thrush	33	148	181
Hermit Thrush	87	11	98
Swainson's Thrush	163	75	238
Veery	369	305	674
Unidentified thrush	102	62	164
Ovenbird	17	11	28
Red-winged Blackbird	1	-	1
Common Grackle	7	28	35
Heise-breasted Grosbeak	18	17	35
Evening Grosbeak	1	-	1
Purple Finch	6	13	19
Savannah Sparrow	2	-	2
White-throated Sparrow	8	-	8
Unidentified bird	57	12	69
Snowshoe Hare (immatures)	4	1	5

Anyone wishing to study Robins and other thrushes should consider the woodcock trap as an effective capture method. The only drawback is that they are time-consuming to build and set.

The table lists captures in the 67 traps set in 1972 and the 90 set in 1973. It should be noted that of 115 Ruffed Grouse captures in 1972, 4 were adults, while in 1973, 10 of the 127 were adults. In some cases complete broods were caught, the adult female usually remaining outside the trap. The merganser chick, which was found dead of exposure in a trap set beside a stream, was one of a brood of two glimpsed in the same area a few days previous to capture. The reason for the high number of unidentified birds was because of predation and of difficulty in identifying immature thrushes.

A useful reference manual for live birds is A Bird Banders Guide to Determination of Age and Sex of Selected Species by Merrill Wood (College of Agriculture, Pennsylvania State University, University Park, Pa.) Its price is three dollars.

NATURE NEWS (March 16 - August 31)

David Christie

Warmer than usual temperatures during April, May and particularly June speeded the development of vegetation and brought an early return by many birds. The mild spell of Easter weekend (April 17-20) when temperatures in southern New Brunswick reached 23° C or more was responsible for a major migration wave and a flushing of plant life. The month of May, despite being wetter than usual (Saint John was wettest in eastern Canada), also gave above average sunshine amounts. Hot, dry weather in June led to numerous forest fires in northern parts of the province. Chatham had maximum temperatures of 34.4° on June 22 and 35.1° on July 7, the hottest reading in Canada in June and the hottest in eastern Canada in July. The latter month was slightly cooler than normal, while August was warmer. Both months were on the wet side. Tropical storm Belle passed over northern N.B. August 10-11, leaving rainfall amounts as great as 175 mm. and causing local flooding. On August 18-19 there was local crop damage due to frost, but on the 22nd temperatures soared to the mid-30's, giving Saint John a new August record of 34° C.

Mammals

Enid Inch noted a Chipmunk active at Cambridge March 24 and a Meadow Jumping Mouse, out of hibernation very early, was seen at Browns Flat April 7 (Mrs. H. Wills, fide Stan Gorham).

Two fin whales which became trapped in a weir in Whale Cove, entertained many people on Grand Manan August 5 (Mary Majka, Mary Edwards et al.) With the fishermen assisting by lowering the netting, first the adult and then the young escaped from the trap. Until the young one was safely out, the adult circled round and round nearby.

Birds

During summer many naturalists devote less time to birdwatching than during migration seasons. Ron Weir, however, is as active as ever, accumulating information on the nesting habits of our breeding birds. During July he located 276 nests of 38 species; mostly on the Fingaton Peninsula. The species he found most were Am. Robin, 60; Chipping Sparrow, 26; Song Sparrow, 26; and Cedar Waxwing, 18. Some of these for which he found only one nest were Winter Wren, Solitary Vireo, Mourning Warbler and Wilson's Warbler. Even if you have a chance to observe only one or two nests each summer, you should be sending your information to the Maritime Nest Records Scheme, P.O. Box 1590, Sackville, N.B.

Chris Majka reports that people in boats apparently shoot many birds off Gloucester County. At Four Roads June 19 we found the bodies of 3 Herring Gulls, 2 Oldsquaw and one each of Common Loon, Gannet, Black Scoter, Surf Scoter, Common Eider and Great Black-backed Gull along just 400 yards of beach. Some of them might have been dead for a month or more. Enforcement is very difficult so perhaps an educational program

might lead to a gradual improvement of this sad state of affairs.

Motorboats apparently caused the desertion of a Common Loon nest at French Lake after the two eggs had been laid this summer (Reg Balch). That is a great problem for loons on lakes with heavy recreational use in New Hampshire and Ontario.

One to two Fulmars remained in the waters off Machias Seal Island this summer, being seen at least four times from June 26 to July 11 (Edwards; Maine Audubon Soc.; N.B.P.N.) Their occurrence has been more normal in fall and early winter.

There was not a great influx of southern herons this year but a few were seen. Little Blue Heron: 1 at Chance Harbour Apr. 29 (Dorothy Marshall), 1 at Castalia May 23-24 (Brian Dalsell); Cattle Egret: 2, then only 1, at Lower Sheffield Apr. 21 to May 4 (Chris Adam, Bettie Moore et al.); Great Egret: 1 at Chance Harbour Apr. 25 to May 4 (Victor Smith, Marshall et al.); Snowy Egret: one in mid-April and 2 Apr. 26 at White Head Island (Nancy & Carl Small), 1 near Woodstock Apr. 30 (Bruce Mactavish), 1 at Saint John West May 4-5 (Christie et al.), 2 at Red Head Marsh May 19 (Saint John Naturalists' Club), 1 at Castalia May 23-24 (Dalsell); Louisiana Heron: 1 at Saint John West July 14-19 (Cecil & Doris Johnston et al.); Glossy Ibis: 1 at Millerton Apr. 23 (Ken Maderville, Doug Underhill, Ian Walker), 1 at McGowan Corner Apr. 27 to May 4 (N. Moore & Stu Tingley), 1 at Nowlanville, Northumberland Co., May 2 (Carl Perry), 4 at Hammond River May 7-9 (Russell Jamieson, Jim Wilson et al.), and 1 at Saint John West July 14 (Gayl Hiverson et al.).

The scarcer of our nesting herons were reported as follows: 2 Green Herons at Riverside, Albert Co., May 30 (I. Walker & Don LeHeup) and another at Jemseg June 27 (Mactavish) and the seldom seen Least Bittern at Williamstown Lake, Carleton County, June 20 (Michael Rigby).

The Guillemot noted a heavy spring migration of Snow Geese in Maine but only the usual small numbers were reported here: 1 at Fredericton Mar. 26 (Jean Anderson, fide N. Moore), 1 at Germantown, Albert Co., Apr. 20 (Henrik Deichmann), 1 at Harvey Apr. 25 (Christie et al.) and 6 at Alma May 2 (Norman Wentzell) were all of the white colour form. A blue phase bird was seen on the Shapody Marsh March 23 (Mary Majka). A large concentration of Brant, 10,000, was reported off White Head Island in the last week of March (fide Kathryn Calder).

A pair of Gadwall were seen at McGowan Corner Apr. 16 and 25 (Heather Bunner, Peter Pearce) and a male European Wigeon was in the same area Apr. 25 and 27 (Cliff Jones, Rae Brown & Pearce). Lesser Scaup in northern N.B. were one at Newcastle Apr. 21 (fide I. Walker) and 6 at Tel River Bar May 16 (Mactavish). Three spent the summer on the sewage lagoon at Saint John West (Davis Finch et al.) A female Ruddy Duck was at Gagetown in mid-April (Melvin Moore) and one was there May 27 (Inch). A male at Saint John West Apr. 25 (Johnstone) remained all summer and there was a female or immature at Callander Beach, Kouchibouguac Park, Aug. 2 (David Smith).

Three Turkey Vultures strayed this far north, one near Southwest Head, Grand Manan, on the second weekend in May (Nick & Anne Sheppard), one near Port Elgin in the third week of August (Allan Smith) and one at Kelly Beach, Kouchibouguac Park, August 12 (Richard Blacquiére).

A Cooper's Hawk was identified at Kedgwick River May 27 (Mactavish) and a Red-shouldered Hawk in the Dalhousie area sometime during May 21-26 (Jean-Paul Lebel). The only Peregrine Falcon report was of an adult at Germantown Apr. 20 (Deichmann).

At Browns Flat April 1, Irenie and Jean Gorham were lucky enough to see four Bald Eagles soaring together, a rare sight these days. An eagle seen by Nellie Ross at Tower Hill, Charlotte County, in April wore a yellow wing marker. Apparently it had been found injured in New York State, nursed to recovery by the Fish & Wildlife Service in Maryland, and released at Merrymeeting Bay, Maine (The Guillemot). Murray Watters saw unusually large numbers of Osprey in Victoria County this summer, a fact noted elsewhere as well. The earliest ones appeared Apr. 13 at Jemseg (N. Moore) and in mid-April at Renous (Ken Lewis).

Common Gallinules in possible breeding areas were one at Deer Island July 17 (Michael Tove, Kevin Hintou) and one at Red Head Marsh July 19 (Johnston). An Am. Coot, unusual on the Miramichi, was at Newcastle Apr. 19-21 (Harry Walker, Ian Ward, Doug Underhill).

Stuart Tingley and Erwin Landauer saw a large number of Short-billed Dowitchers in spring migration near Arthurette. There was a flock of 75 on May 23 and three flocks totalling 280 the next day. We have not had reports of migrant shorebirds from the Tobique Valley before. Others they saw were 7 Black-bellied Plovers near Arthurette May 24, a minimum of 15 to 20 Solitary Sandpipers in various places, up to 20 Greater Yellowlegs daily, a Lesser Yellowlegs near Plaster Rock May 16, 2 Least Sandpipers near Three Brooks May 16 and 6 near Arthurette May 24, and a female Northern Phalarope near Arthurette May 23. The nesting species, Am. Woodcock, Common Snipe, and Spotted Sandpiper were common of course.

I mentioned early Killdeer arrivals March 7 and 10 at Mary's Point and Sackville in the April issue. Other arrivals were one at Cambridge in early March (reported at a Fredericton Field Naturalists' Club meeting), 1 at Bronson, Queens Co., Mar. 22 (Clifford Vautour), 1 at Sunny Corner Mar. 22 (David Stewart), 1 at Lamèque Island Mar. 24 (Hilaire & Rose-Aline Chisason) and 7 at Newcastle Mar. 28 (Walkers).

A very early Greater Yellowlegs was noted at Jemseg Apr. 9 (Bunner). Next ones were April 25. Additional spring Lesser Yellowlegs, scarce at that season, were 2 at Jemseg May 9 (Tingley) and one at Sheffield May 23 (N. Moore). Two Willetts, far north, were at Eel River Bar during May 21-26 (Lebel). One paused at Mary's Point May 24 and another on August 15 (Christie). A Curlew Sandpiper at Mary's Point July 31 to August 2 and Aug. 11-19 (many observers) was the highlight of the NBFN shorebird weekend. Three Buff-breasted Sandpipers were at Saint John West July 22 (Johnston). Yet another Ruff appeared at Cape Jourimain, a male in partial breeding plumage May 3 (Con Desplanque et al.). An immature was at Mary's Point Aug. 17-15 (Mary Majka, Pearce, Brown, N. Moore). An Upland Sandpiper was seen near Jemseg May 4 (Blacquiére, Rigby & Donald Kimball) and one at Saint John West August 18 and 12 (Johnston).

Numerous colour-marked Semipalmated Sandpipers were reported along the Bay of Fundy from July 18 into early September, especially at the Mary's Point and Grande Anse concentrations on Shepody Bay, but also at Sackville, Saint John, Maces Bay and St. Andrews, and at Cape Jourimain on Northumberland Strait. These were birds marked by the Canadian Wildlife Service at James Bay. Up to seven at once were seen at Mary's Point and up to ten at Grande Anse (Reid McManus). A marked Semipalmated Plover was also seen at Mary's Point and a Black-bellied Plover in Fundy Park (fide Deichmann). All these birds were dyed yellow on the underparts and wore three bands, a numbered aluminum one on one leg and two coloured bands on the other. 1976 was the second year of the banding project at James Bay. It hopes to learn more about the migration routes and important stopping points on the southbound flight of our northern shorebirds. A similar project was undertaken in Surinam during the spring flight northwards. None of those birds were seen in New Brunswick in spring, but two Semipalmated Sandpipers were seen at Mary's Point in August.

A single Wilson's Phalarope was at Lower Sheffield May 9 (Pearce). Northern Phalaropes were reported in unusually large numbers for spring, 300,000 off Machias Seal Island May 24 (Mary Majka) and several flocks between Deer Island and St. Andrews during the last two weeks of May (Tom Moffatt). In addition to the Arthurette bird, another inland was at Jemseg May 31 (Don MacDougall). During fall migration there were 2000 in Head Harbour Passage July 15 (Moffatt) and perhaps two million (WOW!) August 26 and 29 (Davis Finch et al.).

An unusual Skua, seen from land, was off Campbellville August 14 (Balls, in Guillemot).

A flock of 3000 gulls (mixed Herring and Great Black-backed) which Léo Martin called migrants were at Cap Pelé March 27. Another gull concentration of five to ten thousand Herring Gulls feeding, probably on fish, between Campbellton and Bathurst

May 15 (Mactavish) included 5 Glaucous and 8 Iceland Gulls. Four Glaucous and 30 to 40 Icelands were in the Dalhousie area till May 24 (Lebel) and one of each were at Lincoln the same day (Pearce).

An adult Mew Gull at St. Andrews Aug. 7 (N. Moore & Willa MacCoubrey) is only the second report in New Brunswick. A Black-headed Gull was at Bel River Bar May 14-21 (Mactavish & Lebel) and one at Mary's Point Aug. 11 (Christie). 25,000 or more Bonaparte's Gulls off Deer Island August 26 included 3 Little Gulls, a young Laughing Gull, and an adult Sabine's Gull (Finch et al.) Another Little Gull was at Miscou Island during Aug. 19-21 (Lebel).

Two Caspian Terns stopped at Hammond River Apr. 27 (Wilson) and one was at Mary's Point from July 27 to August 27 (Majkas et al.). The report of an adult White-winged Black Tern at Miscou Island Aug. 13 by Jean-Paul Lebel, who has seen the species previously in Italy, was startling. One was seen in the Grand Lake-Portobello area in July 1968 and May and July 1971 and we certainly didn't expect another such European visitor.

Common Puffins were in the waters around Machias Seal Island for several days before first coming ashore April 16 to investigate their nest sites (Jack Russell). The puffins had unusually good nesting success there this summer (Malcolm Russell, David Godbout). Quite a few Thick-billed Murres were lingering in the Bay during the summer. For instance, one was at Great Duck Island, Grand Manan, Aug. 12 (Jack Russell), 4 at Deer Island Point Aug. 25 (Finch) and 7 off Herring Cove, Campobello Sent. 4 (Famous, in Guillemot). A dead one washed ashore at Mary's Point July 22 (Mary Majka).

A very early inland Belted Kingfisher was at Fredericton March 31 (Lucy McNeill). Whip-poor-wills, very local in distribution, were heard at Minto May 12 (Lionel Girouard) and one was at Kedgwick River June 7 (Mactavish).

Two Red-headed Woodpeckers were seen in spring, one at New Maryland, May 17 (Michael Burzynski) and one at Alma June 4 (Deichmann et al.). Hasen Pugsley, while lumbering, was dismayed to discover that a large poplar he cut near the Narrows May 31 contained two naked young Pileated Woodpeckers. The adult birds were frantic, but there was nothing that could be done to save the injured young. Stu Tingley saw up to 3 Northern and 4 Black-backed Three-toed Woodpeckers daily on plots he was surveying in May near Wapake, Victoria County.

Two northern N.B. nests of Eastern Phoebe were discovered at Kedgwick River (Mactavish) and Pointe-Alexandre (Chassone). A Great Crested Flycatcher, rare in the Moncton area, was at East Lutz Mountain June 8 (Doug Whitman). Undoubtedly, our most unusual current report was sent by Charlie Wilson who saw a bird at Hammond River May 18 that fits the description of a Vermillion Flycatcher, a bird of the southwestern United States. He provided a full description and a painting of the bird.

Tree Swallows were seen at several places in southern N.B. April 16-19 but two were at Grand Bay Apr. 10 (Gorham). Doug Whitman was pleased on May 30 to find that the Cliff Swallow nests at Turtle Creek dam had increased to 45 from a very low count of only four last year. Purple Martins were plentiful around Washademoak Lake and re-occupied some of the houses that had been empty since the May 1974 cold weather die-off (Inch).

A House Wren was at Kedgwick River, possibly our farthest north record, May 27 (Mactavish). A Long-billed Marsh Wren was found at Williamstown Lake June 9 (Rigby).

Mockingbirds were reported in many areas and nesting was found at Oromocto (fide Owen Washburn), Shediac (J.L. Newhouse, fide Pearce), Saint John West (Johnstons et al.), and Kedgwick River (Mactavish), an unprecedented number of breeding records in one year. Brown Thrashers were only slightly less reported but no nests were found. In the north, thrashers were seen at Wapake (Tingley & Landauer), Kedgwick River (Mactavish) and Lamèque Island (Chassone).

The first Am. Robin returned to most places in southern N.B. March 20-25. One even appeared at Lamèque on the 25th (Chiassons). On April 18 about 2000 were at Alma (Deichmann). The increase of Wood Thrushes in the last ten years is well illustrated by the total on the McAdam Breeding Bird Survey, 22 this year (Andy Dean), up from only one in 1966. Bruce Mactavish found them fairly common in all suitable habitat in the Kedgwick River area, where he saw a Gray-cheeked Thrush, probably a migrant, June 11. There have been few reports of E. Bluebirds. The only breeding pair reported was at Fincardine, Victoria County (Mrs Alan Riches), where Murray Waters saw 4 young on August 18.

Three Blue-gray Gnatcatchers were seen in spring, at Grand Bay May 10 (Evan Smith & Phyllis Mullin), Mary's Point May 16 (Christie & Majkas), and Fundy Park May 29 (Roger Burrows). A Loggerhead Shrike appeared at Martinon, Saint John County, April 1 (E. Smith). Jan Dexter and Mike Snow were pleased to observe a Northern Shrike singing at Lakeville Corner March 27. A Warbling Vireo was singing at Fredericton for several days before Nettie Moore first saw it on May 15. In a non-breeding area, two were at Fundy Park May 30 (Burrows & Deichmann).

The Easter warm spell brought the first warblers, a Yellow-rumped (Myrtle) Warbler at Mary's Point (Christie) and a Palm Warbler at Alma (Deichmann) on April 16. The following day a Myrtle was seen at Campobello Island (McArdubon Soc.) and Palms at Welch Cove (Johnston), Martinon (E. Smith), Mary's Point (Majkas et al.) and Campobello (M.A.S.). In the northeast, at Lamèque Island, the first warbler was a Myrtle May 2 (Chiassons). A Magnolia Warbler and a Northern Waterthrush were on Deer Island Apr. 30 (Mary Majkas), a Nashville at Browns Flat May 1 (Gorham), and a Cape May at Fredericton May 3 (J. Noble) but most other warblers were seen first from May 6 to 12. Stuart Tingley saw 15 species during that period at Noonan, Sunbury County.

A number of unusual warblers were noted during the spring and summer, two northern species which migrate further west than New Brunswick and five species of a more southern distribution. The northern birds were Orange-crowned Warbler, one at Bel River Bar May 22 (Lebel) and one at Kedgwick River May 27 (Mactavish), and Connecticut Warbler, one at Martinon late in August (E. Smith & Johnston). The latter species is identified with caution because of the likelihood of confusion with Mourning Warblers in variant plumages. The southern birds reported were a striking male Prothonotary Warbler at Hammond River Aug. 21 (the Charles Wilsons), a bird that probably was a Yellow-throated Warbler at Miscon Island about Aug. 20 (Lebel), a Pine Warbler at Fredericton May 24 (Pearce, Dean & Washburn), a Prairie Warbler at Machias Seal Island Aug. 27 (Finch), and a singing Yellow-breasted Chat at Penobscue June 13 (Christie & Mary Majkas). The chat - usually only a fall vagrant in N.B. - had been in that area for a couple of weeks according to a local resident.

The early blackbirds, which returned to the Bay of Fundy area March 21-25, reached Newcastle Mar. 24 (Walkers & Ward) with a major influx on March 28, "a week or two earlier than the past two years" (Ward). At Lamèque the Grackles appeared Apr. 1, Cowbirds April 6 and Red-wings April 8 (Chiassons). Bobolinks were early this spring, May 7 at Woodstock (Marjorie Gray), May 8 at Mactaquac (Tingley), May 11 at Alma (Joanne Deichmann) and May 13 at Lamèque (Chiassons).

A male Scarlet Tanager in Fundy Park April 20-21 (fide Deichmann) was far ahead of the normal arrivals in mid-May. A Dickcissel, unusual in spring, was at Martinon May 10 (E. Smith). A Cardinal passed a few weeks in April and May in the South End of Saint John (Jack Crammond) and a male was at Cambridge in late July or early August (Gary Hughes). Nesting of Indigo Buntings undoubtedly took place at Woodman's Point, Kings Co., where three were seen during July (E. Smith & Johnston). An early Rufous-sided Towhee was on Machias Seal Island April 16 (J. Russell) and another was at Lower St. Mary's, York Co., in May (Leona Keenan).

April's warm weather stimulated amphibians to emerge and commence their breeding season earlier than usual. On April 6 one Blue-spotted and four Spotted Salamanders were seen in a ditch at Oak Point (Gorham). Spring Peepers began peeping Apr. 16 at Mary's Point (Brian Townsend et al.) and Apr. 17 at Lower St. Mary's (Keenan) and Wood Frogs were calling April 15 at Browns Flat (Gorham), April 17 at Mary's Point (Christie) and Apr. 25 at Douglastown (I. Walker). The Miramichi Naturalists' Club heard early Am. Toads at Douglasfield May 11 when they also found several Spotted Salamanders, Spring Peepers, Wood Frogs and a Red-spotted Newt.

Large numbers of Herring were found in Passamaquoddy Bay and neighbouring parts of Fundy during the summer. 840,000 pounds were taken in one set near Campobello according to The Guillemot. In August great schools of young herring occurred off the mouth of the Alma River (Deichmann).

There was a large invasion of squid in inshore waters of the Bay of Fundy in late July and August. They were common in Passamaquoddy Bay, and Saint John Harbour was "full of them" according to fishermen. Several were found dead in the Reversing Falls (Don McAlpine) and others washed ashore at Point Wolfe and Herring Cove in Fundy Park (fide Deichmann) and at Mary's Point (Majka et al.).

There was a hike to the rock ledges and tidal pools on Mary's Point during the N.F.W.N. shorebird weekend August 1. Besides the ubiquitous amphipods, periwinkles, limpets and barnacles, we found Waved Whelks, a Mottled Chiton, Scale Worms, an Ornate Tube Worm, two species of sea anemones, and several Rock Gunnels. There were many sand collars formed by the Banded Moon Snails to contain their eggs. Tiny, young Dogwinkles were emerging from one cluster of spindle-shaped egg cases. Two of the many small Hermit Crabs that we saw were fighting vigorously for possession of the larger of their periwinkle shell homes. A skate egg case washed up on the shore contained a living embryo, which at that stage looked not much like an adult skate. These last three sightings were of special interest to the hike participants.

The hatch of Banded Purple butterflies was particularly great this summer. On June 28 1000-plus were seen in early morning on the Green River Road in northern Madawaska County (Christie & McAlpine) and many were out along the Shepody Road in Fundy Park the same day (fide Deichmann). On July 4 many were flying at Crooked Creek, Albert County (Chris Majka).

Flora

The blooming of spring flowers was very early during April and the first week of May, but close to normal dates from mid-May onwards. Compared to 1975, 1976 plants were two weeks earlier in April, a week ahead in early May, three to four days ahead in mid-May, a day or two behind at inland locations but about the same as 1975 near the coast during late May, and two to five days ahead again by mid-June.

As usual, Coltsfoot was the earliest flower, noted March 26 at Saint John (Chris, Stubbs) and Mar. 27 at Saint John West (Molly Smith). Other dates were Apr. 10 at Deep Cove, Grand Manan (Wilmer Wilcox), Apr. 16 at Rothesay (Dick Filliter) and Apr. 28 at Sisson Ridge on the Tobique (Erwin Landauer). Next earliest were Skunk Cabbage at Hammond River (Filliter) and Speckled Alder at Turtle Creek and Penobscus (Christie), both on April 5. Even on Caledonia Mountain, at 1200 feet elevation, alder catkins were shedding pollen by Apr. 17 (Christie), one day ahead of the earliest date reported in the province in 1975.

Other species reported blooming in April were:

Trembling Aspen: Apr. 18 Lower Coverdale and Apr. 20 Saint John (Christie)

White Elm: Apr. 18 Moncton (Christie), Apr. 22 Woodstock (Gray)

Dartmouth Violet: Apr. 25 Saint John (Elsa Stanley), Apr. 28 Sisson Ridge (Landauer)

Dandelion: Apr. 17 Rothesay (Filliter), Apr. 30 St. Andrews (Mary Majka)

The Large-leafed Violet, Great-spurred Violet and Spring Beauty also bloomed in April, being well into flower at Mary's Point May 1 (Christie).

Some other species and their blooming dates were:

Floodroot: May 1 Kenos River (I. & L. Walker), May 2 Woodstock (Gray)
Pillberry/Shadbush: May 11 Hampton & Penobscia (Christie), May 16 Woodstock (Gray),
 May 19 Sisson Ridge (Landauer), May 22 Mary's Point (Christie)
Pia Cherry: May 16 Woodstock (Gray), May 18 Rothesay (Filliter)
Apple: May 25 Woodstock (Gray), Norton & Penobscia (Christie), May 28 Rothesay
 (Filliter), May 29 Sisson Ridge (Landauer)
Choke Cherry: May 31 Arohaqui (Christie), June 3 Sisson Ridge (Landauer), June 6
 Rothesay (Filliter)
Rhodora: May 21 Shampers Bluff (Mary Majka), May 25 Tracyville (Adam)
Red Trillium: May 2 Woodstock (Gray), May 4 Fredericton (Adam), May 7 Sisson Ridge (FL)
Painted Trillium: May 19 Sisson Ridge (Landauer) & Mountain Rd., York Co. (Adam)
Starflower: May 28 Indian Lake (Adam), May 29 Sisson Ridge (Landauer)
Canada Mayflower: May 26 Saint John (SJNC)
Punchberry: May 25 Woodstock (Gray), May 26 Saint John (SJNC)
Strawberry: May 5 Caledonia Mountain - one flower away ahead of the rest there (Mary
 Majka), May 6 Rothesay (Filliter), May 12 Sisson Ridge (Landauer)
Cree Daisy: June 13 Penobscia (Christie), June 15 Sisson Ridge (Landauer), June 17
 Kingston Peninsula (Filliter)

Chris Adam discovered one flower of the rare Calypso orchid at Mountain Road, York Co., this spring. It is seldom reported. At Shampers Bluff May 21, Gisele Lamoureux found a colony of Dentaria maxima, the scarcer of our two toothwort species. It occurs mainly in Carleton County, where it is quite common, but has also been found at Hampton and Saint John, so this new record is not a range extension.

Two interesting colour forms of flowers occur near each other by the river at Shampers Bluff on the Kingston Peninsula (Mary Majka et al.). A large proportion of Wood Anemones there are deep pink in bud, fading to paler shades after opening. Nearby are clumps of interesting lilac-coloured Northern Blue Violets.

In the list above we accidentally omitted the date May 16 for Red Trillium blooming at Grand Manan (Wilcox).

THE TREE-SQUEAK SAYS:

