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N.B. Naturalist

Le Naturaliste du N.-B.



N. B. Federation of Naturalists Fédération des naturalistes du N.-B.

277 avenue Douglas Avenue, Saint John, N. B. E2K 1E5 Canada

The Federation is a non-profit organization formed in 1972 to encourage an understanding of nature and the environment, and to focus concern for the natural heritage of New Brunswick.

La Fédération est une organisation sans buts lucratifs formée en 1972 pour encourager une meilleure compréhension de l'environnement naturel, et pour éveiller le souci pour le patrimoine naturel du Nouveau-Brunswick.

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Club de Naturalistes de la Péninsule acadienne, C.P.2041, St.Simon NB E8P 1L8; courriel: cpna@francophone.net site web: <http://www.francophone.net/cpna>; réunions alternants entre Caraquet, Shippagan et Tracadie, 1er mercredi, sept. à juin; *Le Gobe-mouche* mensuel.

Club d'ornithologie du Madawaska Ltée, a/s Musée historique du Madawaska, 195 boul. Hébert, Edmundston NB E3V 2S8; J. Denys Bourque; réunions à 19h30, 2^{ème} mercredi, sept. à juin, Musée du Madawaska; *Le Jaseur* bimestriel.

Club les Ami(e)s de la Nature du sud-est, a/s Gilles Bourque, 407 rue High, Moncton NB E1C 6E3; 532-2873 (ligne d'information); réunions alternant entre Dieppe et Shédiac, 1^{er} lundi de chaque mois; excursions 3^{ème} samedi ou dimanche; *La plume verte*.

Ford Alward Naturalist Association, c/o Elizabeth McIntosh, 560 Kenneth Road, Glassville, E7L 1B3; 246-5572; meets Florenceville Town Hall, 7:00 pm, 1st Tues., Sept.-June; meetings advertised in local newspapers.

Fredericton Nature Club, Box 772, Station A, Fredericton, NB E3B 5B4; 457-1720; meets Odell Park Lodge, at Odell Park, 7:00 pm, 2nd Wed., Sept.-May; monthly newsletter.

Kennebecasis Naturalists' Society, c/o Ms H. Folkins, 827 Main St., Sussex, NB E4E 2N1; meets St. Paul's United Church Hall, 7:30 pm, 4th Mon., Sept.-June; quarterly newsletter.

Moncton Naturalists' Club, Box 28036, Highfield Square P.O., Moncton, NB E1C 9N4; 857-4271 or 384-5212 or 384-6397 (information line); meets Church of the Nazarene, 21 Fieldcrest Drive, 7 pm, 2nd Mon., Sept.-June; monthly newsletter.

Restigouche Naturalists' Club, c/o Campbellton Library, Box 130, Campbellton, NB E3N 3G1; 684-3258; meets Campbellton Centennial Library, 7 pm, 1st Monday

Saint John Naturalists' Club, P.O. Box 2071, Saint John, NB E2L 3J5; meets N.B. Museum at Market Square, 7:30pm 2nd Mon., Sept.-May, elsewhere in June; monthly *Bulletin*.

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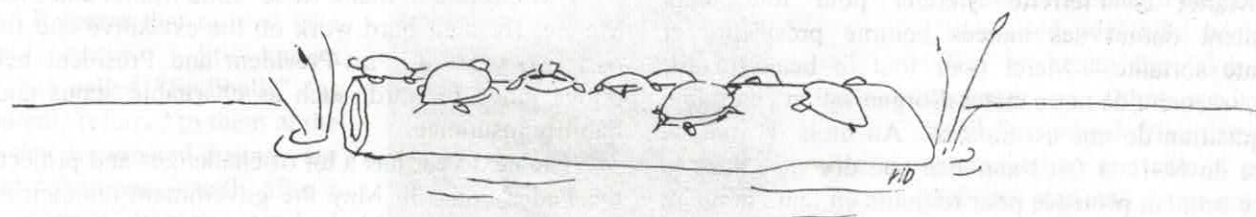
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 Merci beaucoup à tous les bénévoles dévoués qui ont contribué à cette publication.

Please submit articles for future issues of N.B. Naturalist to:

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A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT UN MOT DU PRÉSIDENT

Mike LeBlanc

Qui aurait pensé dix ans passés, qu'à l'AGA 2001 de la Fédération des Naturalistes du Nouveau-Brunswick, à Florenceville, j'aurais été nommé prochain président de la fédération.

Ça tout commencé dix ans passés, alors que ma famille et moi-même avons fait une visite au Parc national Kouchibouguac. Quand nous avons arrêté l'auto dans le stationnement du Marais Salée, il y avait un petit oiseau qui chantait et ça nous a piqué la curiosité. Tout le temps, ce petit oiseau semblait nous suivre et de plus en plus nous nous demandions qu'est-ce que c'était et pourquoi il faisait ça? Quand vient le temps de partir, nous avons arrêté au kiosque de AMICA et on s'est acheté notre premier livre 'Peterson' sur les oiseaux. Maintenant, à chaque fois que je vois une Paruline Flamboyante, je pense à cet oiseau qui a complètement changé ma vie.

Cette année, nous avons malheureusement perdu de nos amis naturalistes de la province; nos pensées sont avec leurs familles et ami(e)s.

J'aimerais prendre un instant pour remercier Rose-Alma Mallet et Pierrette Mercier pour tout leurs dévouement durant ses années comme présidente et présidente sortante. Merci pour tout le beau travail; l'accomplissement de notre statut d'organisation charitable et l'acquisition de nos assurances. Au mois de mai, la province du N.-B. a fait l'annonce que dix sites dans la province seraient protégés pour toujours en leur donnant le titre de 'lieux protégés'. Un gros merci à tout nos membres qui ont écrit des lettres, courriels ou ont fait des présentations.

La prochaine année voit bien de défis à surmontés et bien de projets qui s'en viennent pour la fédération. Quelque-uns de nos membres se sont déjà réunis depuis l'AGA pour discuter du futur de la fédération, de projets et d'un coordinateur. Il y a encore du travail à faire mais, il y a des projets très intéressants sur la planche et on souhaite que de ces projets deviennent réalités dans le futur rapproché. Nous souhaitons aussi que dans la prochaine année la fédération aura enfin un coordinateur pour gérer et aider la FNNB à grandir.

Nous avons une province incroyable à découvrir. Nous devons partager avec les autres tout ce que le Nouveau-Brunswick a à offrir, comme les oiseaux, papillons, libellules, plantes et le reste.....

Je vous invite à communiquer avec moi pour me partager vos idées et suggestions pour notre fédération d'

une des manières retrouvés à l'intérieur de la page couverture.

I would never have thought ten years ago that at the 2001 AGM of the New Brunswick Federation of Naturalists, in Florenceville, the membership would be announcing my name as their next president. Because it all started ten years ago... my family and I went to Kouchibouguac National Park for the day. We stopped at the marsh trail where a small bird was singing. We wondered what it was but then left for our walk. This bird was never far from us, singing. We were quite impressed. Before we left the park, we stopped at the AMICA store and bought our first Peterson field guide to the birds. I always think of that experience every time I see an American Redstart, the little that bird changed my life.

This year, we've seen the passing of some of our friends, mentors, great naturalists of the province. Our thoughts go out to their families and friends.

I would like to thank Rose-Alma Mallet and Pierrette Mercier for their hard work on the executive and for the past two years as Past-President and President helping things move forward, such as charitable status and the liability insurance.

The next year has a lot of challenges and projects for the Federation. In May the government announced the protection of ten wilderness areas in New Brunswick. I would like to thank our members who wrote letters, e-mail or made presentations to help this happen.

A few members have already met since the AGM to start the long-term planning of projects. There is still work to do. Some very interesting projects are under consideration and it is hoped they will soon be realized. We are also hoping that in the coming year the NBFN will have an executive co-ordinator in place to help it grow and to make things a little better for our organization.

As naturalists we love to talk and share what we know and what we have seen. We have a wonderful province to discover. We should share and help others discover the things New Brunswick has to offer in birds, plants, butterflies, dragonflies, etc.....

I can always be contacted by any of the means identified in the inside cover of the NB Naturalist: phone, mail or e-mail.

WHAT THE HECK IS A "KEDRON BALL"?

Don Vail

I check the map again and take a look around once more to see if I can identify any prominent landmarks. No luck. I am on a back road at what I believe to be the southern end of Little Kedron Lake. I am having a hard time telling where I am and decide to retrace my steps, as car trouble, and a long walk out from the middle of nowhere are not exactly my idea of a good time. I pack up, jump in the car, and head back the way I came.

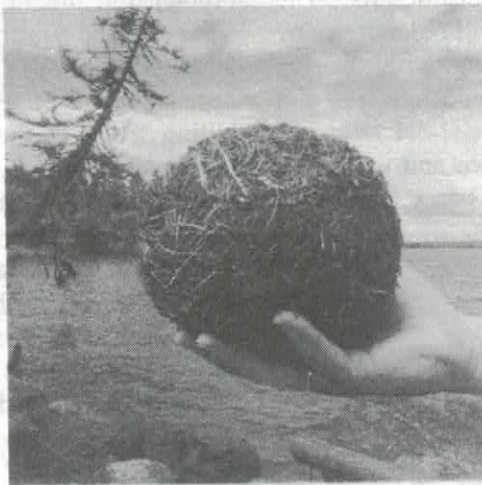
My mind goes back to the day last year, when the memories of this place surfaced again long after I had totally forgotten that I knew it existed. While at the Nature Trust of New Brunswick office on another matter, I happened to notice a piece of paper containing an article on how to use the Ecologically Sensitive Areas Database. One of the examples contained a reference to Little Kedron Lake and an unusual phenomenon that occurs there, called spillballs. Spillballs! A long unused memory neuron sparks, and I am immediately transported back to my childhood. I recall my mother and father telling me about a place in southern New Brunswick where they had spent part of their honeymoon, some half-century ago. It was called Little Kedron Lake. It seems that on that lake there occur little-known structures called "Spillballs" (as my parents referred to them at the time) that are created during very special conditions, usually after a wind storm. If you searched carefully you could find a ball of pine and spruce needles that were supposed to have been constructed by the lake itself. I remember thinking at the time that my unfortunate Mum and Dad may have possibly spent a little too much time in the sun, but here, so many years later, are the Spillballs. "Well" says I "This calls for a road trip". I immediately dig out my trusty, dogeared, Atlas of New Brunswick, and sure enough, here are not one, but two Kedron Lakes: Big and Little. They are located just southeast of Oromocto Lake and the road appears, on the map at least, to be well maintained. Good! There appear to be several camps out there and not a whole lot else. Even better!

At the start of my summer vacation I decide to head out to Little Kedron and solve the mystery of the Spillballs once and for all. Cameras, food, maps and a bug jacket (all the essentials) get loaded up and I am soon

travelling a back road that seems to go on forever. There are very few signs of people (the one vehicle I see is a DNR truck towing a bear trap) and the road passes a number of clearcuts, as well as the route for the new natural gas pipeline. There are also several swampy areas and I stop to investigate. I am rewarded with the calls of Mink and Green frogs as well as a few Bullfrogs. In one of the cutover areas I am thrilled to see a pair of Red-tailed Hawks perched in one of the few trees left standing. A bit further on I encounter a Wood Turtle in the middle of the road. I stop and remove her from danger and take a few photographs.

Soon, according to the map and my odometer, I should be very near the Little Kedron Lake, but due to the surrounding forest I am unable to see it from the road. I pass a couple of likely looking roads but decide to continue as the map appears to show a route that will take me around to the eastern side of the lake, coming out near the shoreline. I continue on for some time but begin to be

unsure of my exact location. The map and the many roads and trails out here are not corresponding very well, and I decide to retrace my route, find one of the roads that I've passed, and hike back in an effort to locate the lake. As I approach one of these roads I see a small four-wheel-drive truck and a car parked to one side. I pull up, grab my map and jump out to ask directions. One of the two men in the truck turns and watches me quizzically, as I walk up to him. (I bet he's thinking "Boy, is this guy



lost!"). I introduce myself and ask him if he knows where the Little Kedron is. "Yep." He gestures toward the road. "Right back there about a twenty minute walk. Got a camp in there". All right! Now for the big one. "Have you ever heard of something called a Spillball?" He cocks his head "You must mean a **Kedron Ball**. Sure. I've got some back at the camp. Follow us back and I'll give you one. Jackpot! I trot back to my car and grab my cameras, unable to believe my good luck.

The man's name is Mr. Fox and he and his daughter and son-in-law are bringing in supplies for the weekend. When we reach his camp he invites me in and reaches for an object in an onion bag, and hands it to me. I stare, open-mouthed! At last! I have in my hands a large ball about 20 centimetres in diameter. It is made up of mostly

pine and spruce needles, and I note bits of cedar as well. Mr. Fox informs me that these balls are made in the lake during stormy weather. It is believed that they are formed in the ripple marks on the bottom and make their way eventually to shore. I also learn later that certain types of bacteria secrete a sticky substance as a means of protection, and it is believed that this aids in the ball's formation. Mr. Fox adds that he thinks that these balls occur in certain other lakes in New Brunswick, as well as the Little Kedron. They are also known as "Burrballs".

I thank Mr. Fox profusely for his generosity and hospitality, and make my way back to the car. As I drive back to Fredericton my Spillball carefully stashed, I am thinking about the many amazing things I am constantly finding out about New Brunswick and its natural history, not to mention the kindness of its residents. These strange natural formations, this special lake, and their connection to my past have combined to give me an experience that would be difficult to top. Only in New Brunswick!

ROWANS PROVIDE A BERRY GOOD WINTER FOR ROBINS

Don Murray

The rowan or European Mountain-ash (*Sorbus aucuparia*) is a tree with medicinal and mythical powers. Rowans were planted in graveyards in the belief that they would keep the dead firmly in their graves until judgement day. It was also believed that with one touch of a rowan branch a true witch would immediately be whisked off by the Devil to "suffer her just deserts". The rowan tree was widely planted at Fredericton by European settlers who wanted to bring with them a memory of home. Seeds were distributed by birds and germinated in the rich soils.

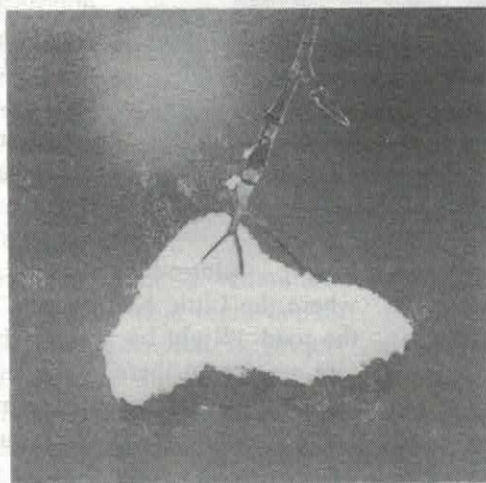
A rowan has a wide spreading crown and will grow in excess of ten metres in height. It bears compound leaves of 13 to 15 leaflets. White flowers appear in the spring after leaf development and orange-red fruit is later borne in clusters of about 40 berries.

The rowan played an important role in bird survival during the winter of 2000-2001. This species of mountain-ash was largely responsible for our enjoyment of a manifestation of spring through the wintry months - hundreds of robins stayed to feed on the heavily laden bundles of fruit that remained on these trees in Fredericton.

Why did these trees produce such an abundance of fruit in the summer of 2000? Many said the heavy fruit production was a sign of an upcoming hard winter. In reality, it was a sign of past events and environmental conditions that were favorable to seed production.

Mountain-ash is a spring flowering species. The buds that produced flowers and fruit in 2000 were actually formed in 1999 and overwintered to flush in the spring of 2000. At Fredericton, the summer and early fall of 1999 were characterized by an extended period of drought that placed many trees under stress. That stress brought out the survival instincts in the rowan and the tree produced a prolific amount of flowers that resulted in large quantities of fruit. Environmental factors that influenced this bumper crop of fruit were: the lack of late killing frosts in the spring, favorable temperatures and adequate amounts of precipitation throughout the growing season, and the absence of the mountain-ash sawfly and other harmful insects, and diseases. It would have taken only one night of heavy frost or a week of drought during the flowering stage to cause the loss of the flowers and the robins would doubtless have left as they normally do.

So what can we expect in the upcoming winter? Trees that suffer stress may recover the next year or may struggle for a few additional years. Massive fruit production stresses the tree and there may be two or three years of heavy fruit production until the tree recovers or, in some cases, dies. Such has been the fate of many European White Birch (*Betula pendula*). This spring in Fredericton, seed production was very heavy on American Elm (*Ulmus americana*), Red Maple (*Acer rubrum*) and Silver Maple (*A. saccharinum*). Mountain-ash, Flowering Crabapple (*Malus* sp.) and hawthorn (*Crataegus* sp.) had magnificent displays of flowers. If environmental conditions are favorable this summer there should be a good production of fruit in the fall that may convince robins to remain and enjoy another New Brunswick winter.



FREDERICTON'S FIELDFARE FROLIC

Peter Pearce and Don Gibson

New Brunswick's third known occurrence of a Fieldfare created a prolonged highlight of bird-watching in Fredericton this past winter, attracting bird students and listers from near and far. The bird was discovered (by DG) on York Street on 18 January and remained in the capital city for at least two months. It was eventually seen on 16 streets in the hillside area bounded by Smythe, Albert, Regent and Priestman streets, as well as in the adjacent vicinity of Parkside Drive. The distance between the farthest-apart sightings was one and a half kilometres.

The Fieldfare was drawn to the area, along with several hundred robins, by an abundant crop of mountain-ash fruit. Also attracted was an unprecedented high number of Cedar Waxwings, as well as Bohemian Waxwings. The situation created great feeding opportunities for several Sharp-shinned Hawks and a Merlin. A Northern Shrike occasionally dropped by to see what all the fuss was about. For Fredericton naturalists and others it was a good chance to witness a spectacular winter gathering of avian frugivores and small bird-eating raptors at work.

Tracking the movements of the Fieldfare became a daily routine for us. Thankfully, the weather was generally cooperative although we did experience some bitterly cold mornings. We eventually drove many hundreds of kilometres in that pursuit, usually travelling separately to improve the chances of finding the bird. It was not an easy task because the shifting availability of mountain-ash berries, as very local depletions occurred, and the alarm and despondency spread by the hawks kept the songbirds, in small and large flocks, in constant movement across the hillside. But we soon developed a search image and were readily able to spot the Fieldfare, even at a fair distance, from the robins with which it usually associated. We found the flashing white underwing of the bird in flight to be a dead giveaway.

Modern communications technology facilitated the rapid dissemination (by DG) of regular situation reports to the outside world. We quickly learned how much "our" Fieldfare was sought after.

Forty-three American birders travelled to Fredericton in the hope of connecting with the bird. They came from ten states as far flung as California, Florida and Illinois. About one-third were from Maine, one-fifth from Pennsylvania. In terms of our ability to find the Fieldfare for those visitors, our overall success rate was a satisfying 86%. To our knowledge, there were no Canadians other than New Brunswickers among the motley throngs of rarity seekers: one can only speculate why.

A charming couple in their early eighties made a second pilgrimage from York, York County, Pennsylvania to Fredericton (York County) before meeting up with the Fieldfare, which had by then moved from York Street! Great was the celebration thereafter, including a lobster luncheon for the two of us, and spouses, courtesy of our gracious American visitors. Another pilgrim experienced the cosmic moment on the road from Emmaus, yet another on the way from Nazareth even. Others journeyed from exotic-sounding places

such as Ho-Ho-Kus and Yorba Linda. Appropriately enough, one hailed from Fairfield. It is worth citing a few of the comments of those who were finally successful in sighting the Fieldfare. With reference to locating the bird, we liked "There's no substitute for local intelligence." When the species was safely checked, there was "Thank you Canada! Thank you Canada!" and, of course, "Oh man!" and "Awesome!" One particular lingering memory is of a large group of Americans and Frederictonians gathered, early one cold morning, with all the paraphernalia of the compleat modern bird-watcher, checklists at the ready. The moment of triumph was manifested by lots of congratulatory handshakes and embraces. It was almost a festival atmosphere.

We learned that a few of our guests from the United States had travelled as far as Attu Island, one of the curiously named Near Islands at the distant end of the Aleutians, in their quest for rare Siberian strays. One had journeyed there many times while building his North American bird list to 810 species. How fortunate that the North American bird-listing bailiwick extends so far westward: after all, Attu is half way to Kamchatka and the Sea of Okhotsk!

On the day that the Fieldfare was discovered, a Varied Thrush was spotted at the same place. It was to be seen fairly frequently over the following several weeks, remaining close by. Unlike the Fieldfare, it



seemed to be a loner, not attracted to the bounteous wild fruit at hand. Judging from the behaviour of other Varied Thrushes that have overwintered in New Brunswick, we suspected, but could not confirm, that it was frequenting a nearby feeder. Some observers were able to study both rare birds in the same binocular field of view at once, a feat surely unique in the annals of bird-watching in the province. We agreed that the Varied Thrush came a close second to the Fieldfare in terms of being Fredericton's *rara avis* of the winter.

The robins gradually became fewer in number as the

supply of mountain-ash berries diminished. With the Fieldfare, they turned to the plenteous fruit of flowering crabapples but we noted that the apples were a little large for them to handle with ease. Later, we saw robins inspecting highbush cranberries, surely a last resort, given their tartness.

By 16 March things had returned to normal. The robins and waxwings, and attendant raptors, had pretty well all departed. The Varied Thrush had gone. The Fieldfare was not reported again. The show was over. What a grand one it had been!



WILSON'S THE NAME, BIRD NAMING THE GAME

Peter Pearce

About two dozen of the species of birds that have been reported from New Brunswick bear the names of figures prominent, roughly in the mid-1700s to the mid-1800s, in one or more of the fields of natural science, ornithology, bird illustration, cataloguing and exploration. For example, birds have been named for or by John Barrow, Charles Bonaparte, John Franklin, William Leach, Edward Sabine, William Swainson and James Ross. Alexander Wilson has been thus commemorated more than most.

Alexander Wilson was a weaver and radical poet, born near Paisley, Scotland, in 1766. As a young man he spent much of his spare time tramping through the surrounding countryside observing and hunting wild life. Through his writing he became embroiled in social unrest and was briefly imprisoned, perhaps unjustly. Weary of harassment and disillusioned with his circumstances, he set sail for Delaware Bay in 1794.

In his new home he diligently put his lack of formal education to rights, becoming a surveyor and then a schoolteacher. Impressed by the abundance and beauty of birds in the New World, he managed to journey extensively through the wilderness of the eastern United States, usually alone on foot, collecting, describing and illustrating the birds he encountered. During that odyssey he added 48 species to the list of those already discovered. Wilson died in Philadelphia in 1813 when just 47 years old. He had completed the text and illustrations of the first eight of an eventual eleven volumes of American Ornithology, the culmination of his deep interest in the avifauna of his adopted land.

Posterity has judged him to be the father of American ornithology.

(In passing, the name of Edward Wilson may be recalled. A physician, he cultivated, a century later, a passionate interest in birds and painting, like Alexander. He is chiefly remembered in the history of Antarctic exploration. He perished in 1912 with Robert Scott and their companions on that dreadful journey back from the South Pole. "Edward Wilson's Birds of the Antarctic" was published in the 1960s. Another Wilson with connections to ornithology - Scott - was born in England in 1864. He was a student of plants as well as birds, co-authored *Aves Hawaiensis* and is further remembered in the scientific name of a honeycreeper, the Akiapolaau (*Hemignathus wilsoni*)).

But to return to Alexander Wilson... Among North American birds, a storm-petrel (*Oceanites oceanicus*), a plover (*Charadrius wilsonia*), a phalarope (*Phalaropus tricolor*) and three wood warblers - Hooded (*Wilsonia citrina*), Wilson's (*W. pusilla*) and Canada (*W. canadensis*) commemorate his name in the vernacular or Latin, or both. Of the birds that formerly bore Wilson's name, in English, French or Latin, the following may be cited:

Least Sandpiper (Maubèche de Wilson), Common Snipe, Common Tern, Long-eared Owl (*Asio wilsonianus*) and Veery (Wilson's Thrush). Despite the abandonment of his name in those species, its retention in the others surely secures his rightful place in avifaunal nomenclature.

POINT LEPREAU – A SPECIAL PLACE IN ALL SEASONS

Jim Wilson

I first visited Point Lepreau on December 31, 1963. I know the date because it occasioned the first account of a birding trip that I ever wrote in my diary. A young birder named David Christie had access to a car and he invited me along to help with the annual Christmas Bird Count. It was only my second Christmas count.

As I left the warmth of my parents' kitchen in the pre-dawn light it was a bitter – 9°F (that's about – 25°C) and it was windy! I could not believe he was actually going to do this. "He must be crazy," I thought. We couldn't stay out of the car for longer than five minutes in the intense cold and our eyes watered so badly we couldn't see anything anyway. The billowing "sea smoke" all but obliterated everything on the water. But by early afternoon the temperature rose enough that the visibility improved and we could see birds up to one kilometre away.

The road to Point Lepreau was winding and narrow, ending at the lightkeeper's home and the lighthouse. I can't recall his name or even his face, but I vividly remember the birds. One of the first that we saw was a slightly oiled Common Murre on the rocks just above the tide line, the only one I've ever seen on the shore. We also saw Razorbills, Black-legged Kittiwakes, Purple Sandpipers, a White-winged Scoter, five other mures of uncertain species and a Black Guillemot. Another highlight was a small duck swimming near the rocks that we first identified as a female Surf Scoter. However, after we retreated to the warmth of the car and checked our Peterson field guide we realized that our bird had THREE white patches on its head, not two, which made it a rare female Harlequin Duck. We hiked back through the cold wind to check, and sure enough it was! All those birds were new for me of course, and I was immediately quite taken with that windswept headland which jutted so far out to sea.

A visit in the spring of 1964 was just as delightful and a good deal warmer. I was part of a combined Saint John Naturalists' Club and Fredericton Field Naturalists' Club field trip co-led by a David Christie. We saw many birds on the coastal circuit from Musquash to Maces Bay,

including a then-uncommon Mourning Dove. But the thing that sticks in my memory most clearly was the hundreds of scoters and Common Eiders that were streaming past the tip of Point Lepreau that April afternoon, all headed up the Bay of Fundy.

During the years that followed I made regular trips there year-round, including several picnics with a young lady named Jean Sullivan, who would later change her name to Wilson.

In the late 1970s and early 1980s the area underwent massive change as NB Power constructed the Point Lepreau nuclear generating station. The old road was eliminated and access was channeled through a heavily secured gate staffed with uncooperative

security people. We made infrequent visits, but always left with the feeling we were less than fully welcome. Then came the day when Cec Johnston and I spent several pleasant hours at the tip of the Point with the understanding that all we needed to do was lift a phone that had been installed there and the security people would rush out to escort us back to civilization. However, when we did there was no dial tone and no rescuers appeared for another two hours. That experience ended further visits for nearly a decade.

In the early 1990s several new faces appeared at meetings of the Saint John Naturalists' Club. One was that of a chipper fellow named David McCurdy; another was Andrew McGregor. Both also happened to be employees at the Point Lepreau nuclear facility. They began to develop an increased interest in natural history. Dave and Andy's connections soon had an effect on some of the Saint John club's field trip destinations. We once again were able to get occasional access to the Point, with one of them acting as guide. We learned that naturalists would be welcomed, provided they adhered to a security protocol and made visiting appointments well in advance.

On one of those visits in the spring of 1995 the sea ducks were once again sweeping through in large numbers. Several rafts of scoters rested offshore. At the same time a supertanker loomed on the horizon, slowly navigating toward the Irving crude oil terminal at Canaport, just east of Saint John. As we looked at this conflicting scene one of us asked the obvious – "What



would an oil spill do to all those birds if it were to happen at the time of peak migration?" Other questions followed – "Just when is the peak time of migration?" "How many birds are here?" and "What species might be affected?"

In the spring of 1996, the then drafty and unheated Point Lepreau Bird Observatory (PLBO), a project of the Saint John Naturalists' Club, opened its door to hardy volunteers who arrived to identify, count and record birds during the annual spectacle of spring migration up the Bay of Fundy. For the birds the Bay acts as a gigantic funnel, greeting seabirds that have wintered from southern New Brunswick to Florida. Most of them are moving north to arctic nesting grounds and theoretically should pass by the tip of Point Lepreau as they go. During the past five and one-half years the PLBO has enjoyed tremendous cooperation from personnel at the Point Lepreau plant, the Coast Guard and from the many volunteers. Those volunteers have logged hundreds of hours and counted hundreds of thousands of birds in both spring and fall. As the database grows the answers to those early questions may be possible.

In recognition of its geographical prominence and its significance to migrating bird-life Point Lepreau was officially identified as an Important Bird Area in 2000. A formal dedication ceremony is planned for the fall of 2001. It is hoped that many naturalists will attend and get to know this unique marine area.

New Brunswick naturalists are privileged to have access to such a marvelous location as Point Lepreau. It juts further into the Bay of Fundy than any other land area in our Province and its tip is still a relatively unspoiled few acres that have changed little since I first visited nearly forty years ago. It provides the closest experience to being on an offshore island that is possible without having to get on a boat. It's the only place I know where birds like Razorbill, Harlequin Duck and Purple Sandpiper can regularly be seen from the mainland. It deserves to be visited, appreciated and most important, *preserved* for the birds and future generations of naturalists and other interested people to experience and enjoy.

STARLINGS IN FREDERICTON

Susan K. Squires

During the first week in January, a lady told me that blackbirds were coming to her yard and eating food that she had put out for pigeons and sparrows. I told her that the birds must be Starlings as our native blackbirds all migrated. I rather forgot them until March 3rd, when I saw three unfamiliar birds myself. They were above my head in some elms, so I could not be sure of their plumage. Not until two of them dropped down a distance and began squabbling with some House Sparrows over a hole in a tree did it strike me that they must be Starlings. I took note of their long bills, short tails, dark colour, song-half whistle and half chatter- their size larger than the sparrows but smaller than a robin and then the time of year and was satisfied in my own mind that they were Starlings.



I sent a notice to the local paper and asked if anyone else had seen and identified the birds, and if so would they let me know. A city clergyman phoned me that he had seen seven Starlings on the 25th of January. An Englishman, who was very familiar with the Starlings in England, also told me that he had seen and heard one. I believe this is their first appearance in Fredericton.

Editor's note: The above article was written by Susan K. Squires of Fredericton, and appeared in the Canadian Field-Naturalist in 1929 (Can. Field-Nat 1929 43: 189-190).

Mrs. Squires was the mother of noted New Brunswick naturalist, historian and author W. Austin Squires. The article is presented in this publication with permission of Margery (Squires) Acheson, daughter of Austin Squires.

BOTANY QUIZ

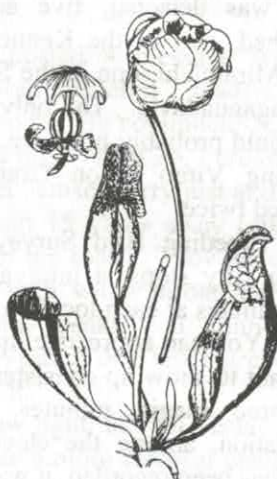
Gart Bishop

Plants that Eat

Television science shows and newspapers often speak of the strange and unusual plants that are found in far-off places, but perhaps too quickly dismiss the uniqueness of some of our native flora. Plants that eat insects, such as the **Venus Fly-trap** (*Dionaea muscipula*) with its often exaggerated hunger and trapping ability, tend to attract public attention.

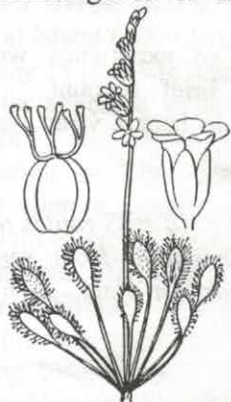
In New Brunswick we have four genera of carnivorous plants, none quite as dramatic as the Venus Fly-trap, but effective just the same. Perhaps the best known is the **Pitcher Plant** (*Sarracenia purpurea*), which is the provincial flower of Newfoundland.

Unwary insects that take a stroll down into the depths of this tubular leaf are unlikely to return, being impeded by downward pointing hairs. The watery liquid found in the leaf's base contains enzymes which, once the hapless victim has drowned, extract various nutrients from the dead insect which are then absorbed by the plant. The overturned, dull red flowers rise well above the leaves on a stout stalk, and are often easily visible above the sedges and sphagnum mosses of bogs, fens and marshy pond edges where this species is commonly found.



Pitcher Plant

Another genus of insect-consuming plants is the



Spatulate-leaved Sundew

Sundews (*Drosera* sp.).

New Brunswick has four different species, including one just discovered this summer. These small, wetland plants have leaves with long hairs with a drop of sticky resin at the tip. Small

insects get stuck to the leaves which then slowly curl up around the unfortunate bugs, and through the use of enzymes, dissolve various nutrients which the plant can use. The flower stalk unfurls much like a fern, slowly unrolling five or six flower buds. Usually only one white bloom is open at a time, with the buds flowering when they are at the top of the spike, and lasting roughly one day.

Bladderworts (*Utricularia* sp.) are principally aquatic plants that capture insects faster than the eye can see. Commonly growing in long ropy strings, these free-floating plants have modified leaves that are like little sacks (less than 2 mm). Each sack has a small opening that is guarded by long trigger hairs. When a small water creature (micro-invertebrate) swims by and bumps into these hairs, the sack is instantly inflated, sucking the small organism into the sack, where it is slowly digested. New Brunswick has nine species of Bladderworts, some of which are very common in slow-moving streams or in shallow ponds. Not only do the leaves attract attention. Some species (such as the **Horned Bladderwort** (*Utricularia cornuta*)) form extensive colonies, which may turn portions of bogs yellow in July with their snapdragon-like flowers.

You may wish to ponder the identity of the fourth type of carnivorous plant that is found in New Brunswick. It is an extremely rare species and is known only from the wet, limy shoreline outcrops of the Restigouche River between Bull's Head Rock and the Rafting Grounds.

"What other spring-time plants first send up a flower or a fruiting form, which is followed by leaves or a vegetative, sterile plant?" That was the question posed in the last issue [Vol 28 (1)].

Even after consulting with Jim Goltz, I found that the list of such plants was small.

1. Sweet Coltsfoot (*Petasites frigidus*) common throughout the province
2. Common Field Horsetail (*Equisetum arvense*) common
3. Sweet Grass (*Hierocloe odorata*) scattered, more common coastally

Many of our shrubs and trees (Beaked Hazelnut, Willow, Poplar, Maples, etc.) do flower before the leaves come out, but are not on separate plants. I would be most interested if anyone can think of any other wildflowers or ferns that fit this pattern.

PERSPECTIVES

Ken MacIntosh

This feature is a collection of extracts from back issues of the *N.B. Naturalist*. Selections for this issue concern discoveries related to the status of three species of birds in the province.

The focus of this edition is the Warbling Vireo in New Brunswick. In *The Birds of Canada* (1966), W. Earl Godfrey notes, "Although reported from New Brunswick and Nova Scotia, no specimen has been taken." The range map in the same publication shows the species distributed extensively through British Columbia, Alberta and Saskatchewan, at the edge of its range in southern portions of the two territories and Manitoba, and in southern Ontario and Quebec. It is essentially absent from Atlantic Canada.

In the *N.B. Naturalist* [Vol. 2 (1), July 1971], David Christie reported as follows. "We have learned something of the true status of Warbling Vireos this summer. It has been known as an uncommon, but regular, summer resident in the Fredericton area, with a few also about Grand Lake. This summer Eric Tull found one in Moncton June 5. The next day two of them were in the same area (Christie & Mary Majka) and on the 7th one was heard in a different part of the city (Dr. Majka). We then learned that they had been heard regularly during 1969 and 1970 in the Sunny Brae area of Moncton (Paul Germain). Alert for its presence in unexpected areas, observers soon found them elsewhere: one at Newcastle June 12 (Christie & Mary Majka), one at St. George June 16 (Christie & David Smith), one at Salisbury June 22 (Mary Majka & Galinat) and one twice during June at Crooked Creek, Albert County (Alward). Warbling Vireos are difficult birds to see due to their tree-top habitat and it appears that many of us may have overlooked their songs, mistaking them for the similar warble of the more common Purple Finch. Thus it appears that Warbling Vireos are fairly widely distributed in small numbers wherever suitable habitat occurs in southern N.B. Readers should be on the watch for them next year. They prefer tall shade trees in towns and along rivers."

The Atlas of Breeding Birds of the Maritime Provinces, published 21 years later, generally confirms this view, with most incidences of Warbling Vireo breeding evidence reported from the valleys of the major river systems of the south (St. John and tributaries, Petitcodiac, St. Croix, and Miramichi). Surprisingly, there were a number of reports as well from coastal

northeastern New Brunswick, including the third located nest, found in Tide Head.

To see how our knowledge has progressed since then, I visited the Breeding Bird Survey web site at www.mbr.nbs.gov/bbs. Of 31 New Brunswick BBS routes listed there, six show no data. Of the remainder, Warbling Vireo is listed as having been located on eleven, and absent on fourteen routes. (Surveys have been run since 1966, but not all routes have been monitored every year.)

Most of the results are anything but surprising, given the findings above. Of the eleven routes where Warbling Vireo was detected, five are in the St. John River watershed, two in the Kennebecasis valley, one in the lower Miramichi, one in the St. Croix valley, and one in the Magaguadavic. The only route of the eleven where one would probably not have thought to go looking for a Warbling Vireo is on Grand Manan, where it was recorded twice.

A Breeding Bird Survey Route "run" consists of making fifty stops at intervals of 800 m, stopping for three minutes at each location to record all birds seen and heard. You can appreciate that a species has to be fairly abundant to show up consistently and sing on cue during the three magic minutes. In keeping with this expectation, among the eleven routes where Warbling Vireo has been recorded, it was found in only one to three years (of a possible 34) on seven routes (but note again, not all routes were run 34 times).

Of the remaining four, Warbling Vireo was found five years on the Jemseg route (1972 - 1992), five times on the Hampton route (1982 - 1989), seven times on the Penobsquis route (1986 - 1997), and a whopping fifteen years along the Red Bank route (1979 - 1996). Notable for not having featured a Warbling Vireo, where one might be expected, are the Saint John and McAdam routes.

We would love to hear of experience with the species, which adds to this brief account. In the meantime, when I really want to hear a vireo warble, I believe I'll head for the Miramichi.

Editor's note: The maps for NB BBS routes (and all others) can be found by navigating from www.mp2-pwrc.usgs.gov/bbs/index.htm (click on data, then route maps).

NATURE NEWS: BIRDS MID-APRIL TO JULY 1, 2001

Ken MacIntosh

This season produced its share of excitement and enthusiasm for the return of our usual breeding species. Some aspects of a typical spring in New Brunswick were not submitted for recording here; weather appears not to have produced any dramatic fallouts of returning warblers or hawks, and no highlights of the annual May visits to Grand Manan were reported. Nonetheless, some very exciting discoveries were made. Highlights include New Brunswick's first documented **Western Grebe** [*Grèbe de l'Ouest*], and two **Northern Wheatear** [*Traquet motteux*].

When Dwayne Sabine posted a message with the opener, "Try to suspend your disbelief", readers might have been prepared for a shock. He continued, "Coming home from Queenstown last night April 26, I crossed (*the St. John River on*) the Lower Jemseg ferry just at dusk... I saw a pair of birds less than 15 yards away (about 10 yards from the other edge of the road). They were huge, dark, long-necked grebes, with white throat and white neck front, and long, thin beaks. I immediately recognized them as either Western or Clark's grebes, but was scarcely able to believe it."

Circumstances (traffic, low light, lack of visual aids or witnesses) conspired to make a more forceful declaration impossible, and the birds were not seen again. We might well have been on high alert for additional sightings of the species, when on May 6, Tracey Dean discovered another adult at Point Lepreau. The bird was well seen by many observers until May 17. A birder's nightmare, and another birder's dream come true.

Migration of **Northern Gannet** [*Fou de Bassan*] was underway May 3, when 200 were observed feeding off the Bouctouche Dune (DD, *fide* MNC).

Green Heron [*Héron vert*] was reported only twice, at Wood Island (*fide* LM) May 18, and at Fundy National Park May 25 (*fide* Ida Adair).

Winter appeared to have been meeting spring, when, on April 16, Brian Dalzell made the following observation on Ross Island: "Every now and then I happen upon a couple of birds that shouldn't be in the same field of view. Birders sometimes refer to this as an "incongruous coupling". "About 4:30 PM I spied a **Northern Shrike** [*Pie-grièche grise*] in the top of a short spruce in the large central field. It seemed to be dropping down to catch cluster flies in the dead grass. As I watched, something white flew through my binoculars. I was mildly surprised to see a **Snowy Egret** [*Aigrette*

neiguse] go sailing by, yellow "slippers" and all." Another Snowy was located by Cecil Johnston in Saints Rest Marsh, Saint John, and sightings there continued into late May.

So far this year, **Great Egret** [*Grande Aigrette*] is much less abundant than last year. One was between Inkerman and Shippagan on May 1 (MD), one at the Bouctouche Dune on May 9 (MLeB), and another at Red Head Marsh, Saint John, on June 16 (KAM). Less commonly seen here, an adult **Little Blue Heron** [*Aigrette bleue*] was at a pond adjacent to the Humphreys Road, near Cambridge Narrows, for several days from April 25 (v.o.), and the season's only **Tricolored Heron** [*Aigrette tricolore*] was at the Saints Rest Marsh until May 22 (MJC - arrival date not reported). **Black-crowned Night-Heron** [*Bihoreau gris*] was first reported at Saint John (MJC) on April 17, and was somewhat out of place at the traffic circle next to Champlain Place in Moncton on April 25 (VB).

It was an exceptional spring for **Glossy Ibis** [*Ibis falcinelle*].

Reports came from Rang-Saint-Georges, Gloucester County, on April 28 (Audard Godin, *fide* MD),

McGowans Corner on April 29

(PAP, DGG, SS), Grand Manan Island on April 30 (Jean Lambert, *fide* BED), three at the Sackville Waterfowl Park on April 30 (Andrew Macfarlane, George Finney), Lower Jemseg on May 7 (Ian Cameron), and at Hammond River on May 8 (JGW) and May 11 (two - IC).

Call me crazy, but in my experience **Turkey Vulture** [*Urubu à tête rouge*] now seems so common in the southwest that I see them as often in summer as Broad-winged or Red-tailed hawks, yet they are still novel elsewhere in the province. Among the many reports are: three near Nackawic on April 16, (Kent Orlando), three at Moncton on April 19 (Richard DeBow), one at Burton on



Glossy Ibis: by Jim Edsall

April 19 (Scott Makepeace), five at Hammond River on April 20 (IC), one near Shediac on June 26 (Julie Pellerin), and four circling a Black Duck at Knightsville on June 28 (Jim Brown, who quips, "the Duck was dead"). Since confirming provincial breeding status two years ago, Ian Cameron and company have monitored activity at the only known nesting location. Ian reported, "This morning (21 May) Scott Makepeace, Jim Wilson and I visited the Turkey Vulture nesting site in the Saint John area.... We were happy to find that the birds were once more in occupation. One of the parents remained absolutely motionless down in the nesting cavity, while the other flew over at intervals to keep an eye on us until we left the area."

Snow Goose [Oie des neiges] was not particularly abundant this spring. A flock was "still" at the Memramcook marsh April 20 (MNC). Small groups were seen at various locations in Saint John from April 23 to 30 (Richard Nelson, JGW), and four were at Musquash on May 10 (KAM). The largest flock was at Atholville on April 25 (MGD).

Puddle ducks were arriving in force in mid-April. Among the rarities were **Eurasian Wigeon [Canard siffleur]** at McGowans Corner on April 29 (GB), one at Hammond River on May 9 (JGW), and one at Waterside on May 16 (Richard Elliott). The **Eurasian race of Green-winged Teal [Sarcelle d'hiver]** was reported at Marsh Creek, Saint John on April 17 (EP).

Redhead [Fuligule à tête rouge] were all seen in pairs this spring: at the Lancaster Sewage Lagoon on April 24 (KAM), at Calhoun Marsh on May 11 (DSC), and near Riverside on May 20 (Suzanne Rousseau, *fide* JGW).

Ruddy Duck [Érismature rousse] was reported at Lancaster Sewage Lagoon on April 28 (EP), at Saint-Joseph on May 4 (AC), and at Moncton on May 18 (SH).

Judging from reports of calling birds heard overland at night, the peak of sea duck migration was in the third week of April, typical of recent years. The last report of **King Eider [Eider à tête grise]** was of a male seen at Point Lepreau on April 19 (Bev Schneider).

Reflecting their scant distribution in the province, Cooper's and Red-shouldered hawks are seldom reported. An "agitated female" **Cooper's [Épervier de Cooper]** responded to playback of recorded calls on April 12 at Keswick Ridge. A **Red-shouldered Hawk [Buse à épaulettes]** was calling near Central Hampstead on April 13 (Scott Makepeace). Two Red-shouldered Hawks were soaring on June 11 at Sunpoke Lake, south of Oromocto (PAP, DGG, SS). A **Golden Eagle [Aigle royal]** created quite a stir when it put in an appearance for a group of birders on May 10 at the Fundy Parkway (Ted Sears). A gray phase **Gyr Falcon [Faucon gerfaut]** must have been quite a surprise at Memramcook (AC).

A flurry of rail activity marked the end of April. Julie Paquet observed a **Virginia Rail [Râle de Virginie]** on a boardwalk at Sackville Waterfowl Park on April 26. Two days later, a **Sora [Marouette de Caroline]** was vocalizing at Daley Creek Marsh (DSC, MM). On the same day, a Virginia Rail was seen at Jemseg (RLeB), and another was heard at Tantramar (BW).

American Coot [Foulque d'Amérique] was seen at the Tantramar Wetlands on April 30 (three - Norm & Giselle Belliveau and Leona Cormier, *fide* MNC), and at Bell Street Marsh on May 17 (Kathy and Dave Smith).

A pair of **Sandhill Cranes [Grue du Canada]** returned to the Havelock area on April 18 (Jim Brown). We look forward to reports of their progress there. George Peabody located another near Woodstock in a field of oat stubble close to the St. John River (*fide* Jim Goltz). The bird was noted on April 23 and 24.

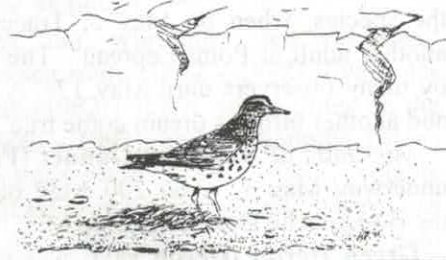
Late April also saw the first returning shorebirds. Early returns included a **Black-bellied Plover [Pluvier argenté]** at Bancroft Point on April 21 (BED), a **Spotted Sandpiper [Chevalier grivelé]** at Sackville Waterfowl Park on April 30 (Ruth Miller), and five **Dunlin [Bécasseau variable]** at Cape Tormentine on May 1 (SIT, RAM). On April 30, Brian Cowan saw a **Wilson's Phalarope [Phalarope de Wilson]** in a flooded field near the Upper Gagetown ferry. David Lounsbury found four nearby on May 5, and reports continued until May 20. The first report of **Willet [Chevalier semipalmé]** was on May 7 (SIT, RAM) at Cap Bimet and Cap Pelé. By May 18, Marcel David was recording up to eight species at Maisonneuve.

Signs of winter clinging tenaciously to shaded valleys made for some unusual sights.

Dwayne Sabine noted Spotted Sandpipers "at various locations along the Nashwaak River between Stanley and

Taymouth. It's probably not all that early for them, but seeing them flying against a backdrop of four foot thick ice pans stranded on the riverbank below Stanley was interesting."

Jaegers are unusual in springtime, even more so inland, so Gilles Belliveau's discovery of a **Parasitic Jaeger [Labbe parasite]** at Lower Jemseg on May 31, was quite a coup. David Christie spotted a flock of twelve jaegers flying up the Bay of Fundy past Cape Enrage on June 16. While too distant to be identified to species with certainty, "my impression based on apparent size and



Spotted Sandpiper: by Hal Dalzell

wing beat was that they were probably **Pomarine Jaegers** [*Labbe pomarin*]...."

One of few reports of **Lesser Black-backed Gull** [*Goéland brun*] was of a bird at Halls Creek, Moncton on April 19 (SIT). Another was near the Burton Bridge on May 2 (JGW). **Bonaparte's Gull** [*Mouette de Bonaparte*] made a rare visit to Madawaska County, where Gisèle Thibodeau found three at Saint-Basile on April 27.

A gull found on May 7 by Don Gibson, Shirley Sloat and Margery Acheson at McGowans Corner was "very interesting", to say the least. Sporting a mantle intermediate in shade between Lesser Black-backed and Ring-billed, red and black on a yellow bill, and a black band on the tail, the bird appeared to be a hopelessly lost Black-tailed Gull. At least it had wits enough to fly as the camera came out!

A **Caspian Tern** [*Sterne caspienne*] was an unusual find at Saints Rest Marsh on April 17 (EP). Others were at Bouctouche Bay on May 17 (DD), at Riverview on May 19 (four - Bob Cotsworth), and at Gagetown on May 20 (Kevin Tutt, Christine Cornell).

June 14 featured the only spring report of **White-winged Dove** [*Tourterelle à ailes blanches*], at Saint-Jacques in Madawaska County (*vide* JDB).

Black-billed Cuckoo [*Coulicou à bec noir*] is seldom abundant and usually inconspicuous in our province. Reports this spring included one found on May 18 on Wood Island, Grand Manan (*vide* LM), and another at Sunpoke Lake on June 11 (DGG, SS, PAP). There were also several observations in southeast New Brunswick.

Another exciting find in Madawaska was the presence of a probable breeding population of **Long-eared Owl** [*Hibou moyen-duc*] as announced on June 15 (J. Denys Bourque).

One of the more thought-provoking observations reported this spring was of a small owl perched near the rising floodwaters at Black Duck Marsh in Lower Jemseg on Apr 28 (anon). The bird appeared to be poised to intercept rodents fleeing the flood. One might imagine that a veteran owl would anticipate this boon, and be on hand by design, rather than by chance.

The earliest report of **Chimney Swift** [*Martinet ramoneur*] was of birds at Fredericton on May 6 (Margaret Gibson).

Ruby-throated Hummingbird [*Colibri à gorge rubis*] appeared to the usual fanfare, right on schedule, with the first report of birds at Grand Manan "as early as May 1 or 2" (*vide* LM), and on the mainland on May 4 (Ajo Wissink).

Black-backed Woodpecker [*Pic à dos noir*] is a nice find in southern New Brunswick at any season. One was

seen on June 13, in the Rotary Park at Dieppe (Valmond Bourque).

Purple Martin [*Hirondelle noire*] arrived at Lower Cambridge on May 1, where Duncan Campbell found six prospecting. A **Barn Swallow** [*Hirondelle rustique*] arrived on April 16, in time to enjoy one of the last snowstorms of the season on Grand Manan (BED). About the same time, **Tree Swallows** [*Hirondelle bicolor*] were fighting over nest boxes in Fredericton on

April
19
(Julie
Single
ton).
The
first
report
of
**Cliff
Swallow**
ow



Barn Swallow: by Hal Dalzell

[Hirondelle à front blanc] was of three at Grand Manan on May 2 (BED). A colony of at least 17 nests at Balmoral made the day for Mike Lushington, nearing the end of his Breeding Bird Survey Route on June 16. Two **Northern Rough-winged Swallows** [*Hirondelle à ailes hérissées*] were seen at Fredericton Junction on May 12 (DGG), and two were also seen at Tracy on June 15 (Luc DeRoche).

House Wren [*Troglodyte familier*], an uncommon breeding species here, seems to have briefly occupied nest boxes near Fredericton in late May (Cliff Thornley) and on White Head Island in June (David Miller).

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher [*Gobemoucheron gris-bleu*] was seen this year at Marys Point on April 25, May 4 and June 10 (DSC), at Caraquet on April 28 (*vide* Marcel David), and at Taylor Village on May 4 (*vide* AC).

One of the most exciting finds of the season was a **Northern Wheatear** [*Traquet motteux*], discovered by Roland Chiasson, Nicole Benoit and Gertrude St-Pierre, near the Val-Comeau Community Centre, where it lingered for at least three days from April 21 to 24. Those who missed it had a rare second chance, when a female was found at the Miscou lighthouse on May 26, during the Miscou Island spring count (*vide* Robert Doiron).

Eastern Bluebird [*Merlebleu de l'Est*] was well distributed this spring. Breeding records include a bird with one egg on May 1 at Prince William (Dawn Parker), a pair showing interest in nesting at Saint-Joseph de Madawaska on May 11 (Pierrette Mercier), a pair feeding young near Fredericton, May 21 (Cliff Thornley), and a

later nesting at Fredericton, with the female still incubating on June 26 (Yvon and Cathy Beaulieu).

Honours for the first report of **Hermit Thrush** [*Grive solitaire*] go to Eileen Pike, who found one on Taylors Island, Saint John on April 17. This harbinger of spring was widely reported in the following week.

Brown Thrasher [*Moqueur roux*] is quite uncommon in the northern reaches of the province, so records at Dalhousie on April 27 (Pat McCormick), and on Route 134 in Restigouche County on June 16 (ML) were exceptional. Other reports were of a bird at Priceville on May 2 (David Lounsbury), and at Marys Point on June 6 (*fide* DSC).

Warbler reports were just trickling in on April 17, when a **Palm Warbler** [*Paruline à couronne rousse*] was at Grand Manan (BED). The following day, a striking male **Yellow-rumped Warbler** [*Paruline à croupion jaune*] was at Memramcook (Giselle Belliveau). On April 24, Bev Schneider reported **Pine Warbler** [*Paruline des pins*] singing near Fredericton. Many of the gaps in the spring warbler arrival list were filled in on May 3 and 4. The most exceptional records were of a **Blue-winged Warbler** [*Paruline à ailes bleues*] "bouncing around at the top of an aspen" in St. Andrews on May 8, and a **Cerulean Warbler** [*Paruline azurée*] at Grand Manan on May 10 (Jim Leslie, *fide* BED).

A bird as brightly coloured as a **Scarlet Tanager** [*Tangara écarlate*] can't help but draw attention. The daily commute for Pauline Beaupre was brightened when she saw one on April 23 on Route 17 in Restigouche County. A first spring male was near Marys Point on May 5 (John Inman, *fide* DSC). Another of the species was at Saint John on May 22 (MJC).

Some interesting sparrows were reported this season. An **Eastern Towhee** [*Tohi à flancs roux*] serenaded Tracey Dean at St. Andrews on May 28, and another singing male was a one-day wonder, June 17, at Deadmans Harbour (KAM).

Roy Lapointe found a **Clay-colored Sparrow** [*Bruant des plaines*] at Saint-Léonard on April 30 (*fide* JDB). Another was discovered near the Forestry Complex at Fredericton on June 6 (JPG) and was observed singing in the area for a period of at least two weeks. It must have had nesting on its mind. The first report of **Field Sparrow** [*Bruant des champs*] was of a bird at a feeder in Saint John on April 29 (Ngaire Nelson). A singing male was discovered at Brockway on June 21 (JPG, DGG, SS). Peter Pearce and Don Gibson confirmed successful nesting of a pair at that location on June 25 when two adults were seen feeding a fledgling. At least two other singing males were also present in the general area.

Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow [*Bruant de Nelson*] is mostly found along the coast in New Brunswick, but several were singing inland near Sunpoke Lake on June 11 (PAP, SS, DGG). **Fox Sparrows** [*Bruant fauve*] were singing at Caribou Brook in Madawaska County on June 14 (JDB) leading one to suspect continued breeding there, as previously documented in the Atlas of Breeding Birds. **White-crowned Sparrow** [*Bruant à couronne blanche*] appeared at a Saint John feeder on May 5 (John Hanson), at Riverview on May 6 (*fide* MNC), and at a Moncton area feeder on May 15 (Bob and Shirley Childs).

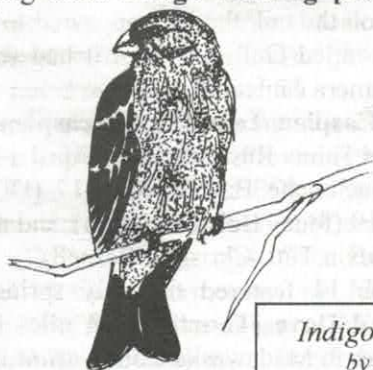
Another interesting find arising from a Breeding Bird Survey was a singing male **Indigo Bunting** [*Passerin indigo*] near the junction of Routes #3 and #630 in Charlotte County on June 16 (TD). Other sightings, mostly at feeders, were on April 29 at Alma (Doreen Rossiter), on May 18 near Harvey (DSC), and on May 25 in Beaumont (AC).

Spring sightings of **Eastern Meadowlark** [*Sturnelle des prés*] included two at Fredericton on April 23 (Bev Schneider), and one at Prince of Wales on April 22 (KAM).

Orioles are a considerable identification challenge, and keep birders on their toes. Two reports of **Orchard Oriole** [*Oriole des vergers*] were from Salisbury on May 9 (Brian Coates), and from Alma on May 6 (Doris Hatt). First reports of **Baltimore Oriole** [*Oriole de Baltimore*] were also in early May, with **Rose-breasted Grosbeak** [*Cardinal à poitrine rose*] hot on their tarsi in the second week of May.

Abbreviations

anon - name withheld by request; AC Alain Clavette; BED Brian Dalzell; BW Becky Whitham; DD Denis Doucet; DGG Don Gibson; DSC David Christie; EP Eileen Pike; GIB Gilles Belliveau; IC Ian Cameron; JDB J. Denys Bourque; JPG Jim Goltz; JGW Jim Wilson; JP Julie Paquet; KAM Ken MacIntosh; LM Laurie Murison; MD Marcel David; MGD Margaret Gallant Doyle; MJC Merv Cormier; ML Mike Lushington; MLeB Mike LeBlanc; MM Mary Majka; MNC Moncton Naturalists' Club; PAP Peter Pearce; RAM Rose-Alma Mallet; RLeB Roger LeBlanc; SH Shirley Hunt; SIT Stuart Tingley; SS Shirley Sloat; VB Val Bourque; v.o. various observers.



Indigo Bunting;
by Hal Dalzell

NATURE NEWS: - INSECTS SPRING 2001

Jim Edsall

The most interesting event in the insect world this spring and early summer was the unprecedented migration of **Red Admirals** into the Maritimes. Normally rather scarce butterflies in this area, Red Admirals poured into the Maritimes and beyond from the south in numbers that must have been in the hundreds of thousands. The earliest report was from Marys Point on May 4 (David Christie). The migration continued throughout the spring and they were reported from all over the province and even in Labrador. Keep in mind that these fragile insects made their way here from as far as two thousand miles to our south. Some were reported landing on fishing boats and buoys off Grand Manan in June (Laurie Murison). By mid-July locally-hatched Red Admirals were being reported in abundance.

Along with the Red Admirals were smaller numbers of **Painted Ladies** and **American Ladies**. Other migrant species such as the **Question Mark** and **Common**

Sulphur were also more common than usual.

The **Canadian Tiger Swallowtail** was very abundant. Rudy Stocck reported groups of 25-50 drinking from damp mud on a woods road in the Fredericton area in early June.

The appearance of the **Little Wood Satyr** in suitable areas around Moncton in June shows that this species has successfully colonized most of the province in less than two decades.

Several pest species of moths hit a high point in their cycle this year, huge numbers of **Armyworms** being reported as well as, to a lesser extent, **Orchard** and **Forest Tent Caterpillars**.

Several **Promethea Moths** were reported flying by day in the Moores Mills area in mid-June (Jim Edsall). This is our least common silkmoth, just barely reaching our area.

Other insect reports included a **Dobsonfly** that shared Nelson Poirier's sleeping bag in early June. This is the largest (and ugliest) of the Neuroptera family which includes stoneflies.

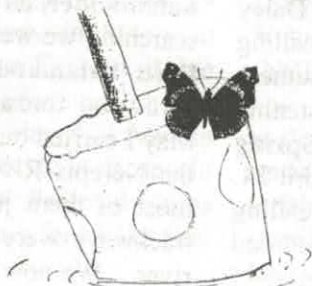


Illustration by: Hal Dalzell

NATURE NEWS: - MAMMALS SPRING 2001

Mike LeBlanc

A **Little Brown Bat** (*Petite Chauve-souris brune*) was flying around the South Kouchibouguac campground on June 26 (Mike LeBlanc).

Red Squirrels (*Écureuil roux*) were very aggressively attacking **Eastern Gray Squirrels** (*Écureuil gris*) on May 1 (Bob Blake). Alma and Don White had some interesting visitors at Moncton when three juvenile Gray Squirrels appeared on May 5.

Karen Hanson, aged 11, saw an **American Beaver** (*Castor d'Amérique*) in her neighbour's yard on May 24 at Rothesay. John Tanner spotted a **Red Fox** (*Renard roux*) in his back yard at about 10 metres from his house at Moncton on May 26. Gilles Bourque spotted one at Salisbury on May 23, at Miscou Island on May 27 and at Saint-Anselme two young were seen on June 1. Five fox pups were seen in a rock quarry at Douglas for a few days

in the latter part of May but no adults were seen (Jeff Higdon). One was on the side of the road at Kouchibouguac National Park on June 25 (Mike LeBlanc). A **Coyote** (*Coyote*) was keeping guard late at night along the road near Kellys Beach at Kouchibouguac on June 25 (Mike LeBlanc). Don Gibson and James Goltz saw a **Black Bear** (*Ours noir*) with three cubs at the edge of the woods along the Trans-Canada Highway near New Maryland May 26.

Gray Seals (*Phoque gris*) made their return to Kouchibouguac National Park in June, the first spotted on June 15. By June 26 there were about 45 basking in the waters of the park (Mike LeBlanc).

A mother **Right Whale** (*Baleine noire*) and her calf were observed in the Bay of Fundy on June 18, the first such sighting since 1997 (Laurie Murison).

NATURE NEWS: AMPHIBIANS AND REPTILES SPRING 2001

Don McAlpine

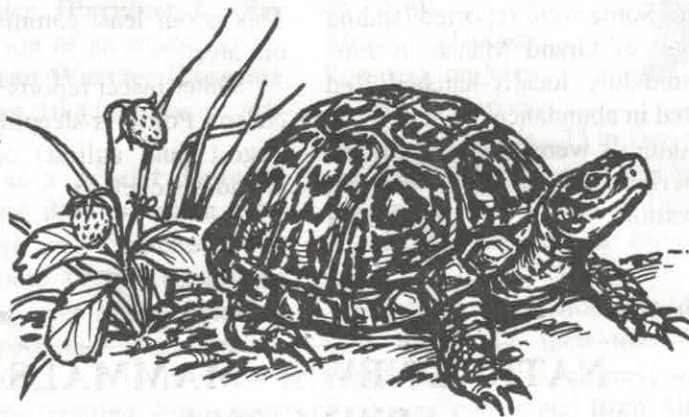
This report covers the period March to mid-July. **Spring Peepers** began calling April 22 at Fredericton (Bev Schneider), and David Christie noted a few **Wood Frogs** and **Spring Peepers** calling April 24 at the Daley Creek Marsh, Albert County. The onset of calling seemed to be pretty much synchronous across southern New Brunswick, as Nev and Lynn Garrity, after listening for days, heard their first **Wood Frogs** and **Spring Peepers** of the season calling near Sackville on April 24. Interestingly, this was later than the usual first calling date of April 17 or 18 for these species normally recorded by Nev for the area around his home near Sackville.

Participants on a Moncton Naturalists' Club field trip to Jemseg on April 29 heard **Wood Frogs** and **Spring Peepers** calling, and two **Painted Turtles** were observed basking in the sun. By early May the **Leopard Frogs** had joined the choruses of peepers. A few were calling at Daley Creek Marsh on May 3 (David Christie) and Roger Leblanc heard a very active chorus of **Leopard Frogs** at the new section of the Bell Street Marsh at Moncton on May 6.

On May 6, accompanied by Don Vail, I led a field trip to Barkers Point for the Nature Trust of New Brunswick Workshop on Amphibians and Reptiles. There were good numbers of **Spring Peepers** calling and a few **Wood Frogs**, but the latter were past their peak. Small numbers of **Leopard Frogs** were calling that night and we heard several **American Toads** as well. The several masses of *Ambystoma* egg masses we found (probably **Yellow-spotted Salamanders**) were well advanced and beginning to hatch. Although it was too early for calling **Bullfrogs**, one good-sized juvenile was encountered shivering among the reeds.

As of May 10 Dwayne Biggar reported **American Toads** had been vocalizing for some days at Edgett Landing, Albert County, with the chorus reaching good numbers by May 8. Also on May 8, Shawna Cox and Lise Weismann discovered a **Wood Turtle** basking on a gravel road adjacent to McLeod Brook, a tributary of the Kennebecasis River. On the same day Denis Doucet heard numbers of **Wood Frogs** calling in the Bouctouche

Dune area. I made a trip to Fundy National Park on May 9 to give a presentation to Park personnel on New Brunswick amphibians and make a search for the **Dusky Salamander**, an elusive species in the Park. With a little searching we were able to find 4 individuals and 2 **Two-lined Salamanders** in a cold stream running through hardwood forest along the Maple Grove Trail. In late May I carried out **Wood Turtle** surveys along portions of the Nerepis River. Over a three-day period 15 turtles, most of them juveniles, and at least 78 **Wood Turtle** trackways were observed along about 10.5 km of the river. We now have fairly good data on the distribution of the **Wood Turtle** in New Brunswick, but information on the location of breeding populations is still required. Jim Brown's observation is therefore especially interesting. On June 27 Jim reported that 2 **Wood Turtles** had laid eggs along the Anagance River. I would be grateful to hear of any observations of **Wood Turtles**, especially egg laying, naturalists might make in the province. On June 7 the second Nature Trust of New Brunswick herp workshop field trip to Barker's Point took place. Unfortunately it was rather cool, but a



small chorus of **Gray Treefrogs** eventually got going. **Bullfrogs** and **Greenfrogs** were also calling and a large mass of fresh **Bullfrog** eggs was seen.

And finally, for all those naturalists who believe bigger is better, a recent note in the journal *Herpetological Review* (Ultsch et al. 2000, 31: 103-104) reports that a New Brunswick **Painted Turtle** from Gagetown, with a carapace length of 18.98 cm, holds the record for maximum size for the eastern subspecies. The report is of more than trivial interest in that, with other data on **Painted Turtle** shell size (all of it taken from the New Brunswick Museum collection), it supports the contention that the size of eastern painted turtles increases with increasing latitude. This is in turn reflected in reproductive biology as larger females produce larger numbers of eggs.

NATURE NEWS: - BOTANY RAMBLINGS

APRIL 29-JUNE 30, 2001

James P. Goltz

Familiar Native Spring Flowers

Trout Lily (*Erythronium americanum*), also widely known as Dog-toothed Violet and Adder's-tongue, was first noticed in bloom on Keswick Ridge on April 29 (JPG, JJW, JR) but many were already in bloom at Fredericton by May 3 (JPG, JJW) and at Keswick Ridge by May 5 (FNC). In other parts of the province, the first blooms of this species were found on May 4 at Middle Island of Marys Point (DSC), on May 8 at Rosevale (AW), on May 10 on the Kingston Peninsula near Kingston (BM), and on May 10 near Crawford Lake (Ida Adair).

Trailing Arbutus (*Epigaea repens*), also called Mayflower, was seen in flower at Cambridge-Narrows on April 29 (MNC), on a steep south-facing slope at Rosevale on May 6 (AW), at the Experimental Farm in Fredericton May 6 (Don and Cathy Gibson), on the Wilson Property near Chance Harbour on May 7 (CLJ, EB), and at Kouchibouguac National Park on May 20 (les Ami(e)s de la Nature du Sud-Est).

Over a thousand blooms of **Spring Beauty** (*Claytonia caroliniana*) were found at Middle Island of Marys Point on May 4 (DSC), and many were also seen in bloom at Keswick Ridge on May 5 (FNC), and on the Kingston Peninsula near Kingston on May 10 (BM).

The pungent blooms of **Red Trillium** (*Trillium erectum*) were observed at Fredericton on May 3 (JPG, JJW), at Keswick Ridge May 5 (FNC), at Nackawic May 9 (DwS), on the Kingston Peninsula near Kingston on May 10 (BM), and at Marys Point on May 18 (DSC). **Painted Trillium** (*Trillium undulatum*) was reported in bloom near Gagetown on May 26 (GCB), at Reid Lake on May 27 (NTNB) and at Kouchibouguac National Park on May 28 (MLeB). **Nodding Trillium** (*Trillium cernuum*) was seen in flower at the Nashwaaksis Stream in Fredericton on May 30 (JPG, DNRE) and at Saint-Gabriel-de-Kent on June 5 (Denis Doucet).

Reports of violets in bloom included **Great-spurred Violet** (*Viola selkirkii*) on May 4 at Middle Island of Marys Point (DSC); **Woolly Blue Violet** (*Viola sororia*) on May 5 at Mactaquac Provincial Park (JPG, DaS) and on May 18 at Marys Point (DSC);



Great-spurred Violet

Northern White Violet (*Viola macloskeyi*) on May 11 at Fredericton; **Large-leaved White Violet** (*Viola blanda*) on May 18 at Marys Point (DSC); **American Dog Violet** (*Viola conspersa*) at Bristol on May 12 (NBFN); **Smooth Yellow Violet** (*Viola pubescens*) on May 12 at Bristol (NBFN) and on May 18 at Marys Point (DSC); and the very rare **Canada Violet** (*Viola canadensis*) on May 13 at the Meduxnekeag River near Woodstock (NBFN) and on May 27 at Moody Hill (MA, JPG, SR, CM).

Blooms of **Wild Strawberry** (*Fragaria virginiana*) were found at Mactaquac Provincial Park on May 5 (JPG, DaS) and at Marys Point on May 18 (DSC).

Goldthread (*Coptis trifolia*) was seen in flower on the Kingston Peninsula near Kingston on May 10 (BM) and at Kouchibouguac National Park on May 28 (MLeB).

Canada Mayflower (*Maianthemum canadense*), also known as Wild Lily-of-the-Valley, was seen in bloom at Kouchibouguac National Park on May 20 (les Ami(e)s de la Nature du Sud-Est).

Bunchberry (*Cornus canadensis*) was in bloom at Kouchibouguac National Park by May 25 (MLeB) and its flowers were seen to carpet the wooded areas near New Horton Lake by June 23 (MNC).

A few **Wild Ginger** (*Asarum canadense*), many **Dutchman's-breeches** (*Dicentra cucullaria*) and many **Bloodroot** (*Sanguinaria canadensis*) were seen in bloom on Keswick Ridge on May 5 (FNC), and a single flowering plant of **Small Pussy-toes** (*Antennaria howellii*) was found that day at Mactaquac Provincial Park (JPG, DaS).

Orchids

Moccasin Flower (*Cypripedium acaule*) was found in bloom at St.-Joseph de Madawaska on May 15 (Pierrette Mercier), near Gagetown on May 26 (GCB), at Kouchibouguac National Park on May 30 (MLeB), at Fredericton on June 6 (JPG), and near New Horton Lake on June 23 (MNC). Both Large (var. *pubescens*) and Small-flowered (var. *makasin*) varieties of **Yellow Lady's-slipper** (*Cypripedium parviflorum*) were seen in peak bloom on the Nashwaak River near Stanley on June 7 (JPG, DwS, MS, MT).

Both the typical pink-flowered form and the rare albino form (forma *candida*) of **Calypso** (*Calypso bulbosa*) were seen at a known location near Williamstown Lake on May 27 (JPG, MA, CM, SR).

Showy Orchis (*Galearis spectabilis*) was in peak bloom on May 27 at Upper Woodstock (JPG, MA, CM,

SR), where the normal colour form and the pure pink colour form (*forma willeyi*) grow together in the same woods, while this species had just started to bloom at Moody Hill and Reid Lake (NTNB). In mid-June, Fred Tribe and Pat O'Brien successfully rediscovered a small colony of Showy Orchis at the Salmon River, Victoria County, about 25 years after Fred had first found it there. All of the other extant locations for this species in the province are in Carleton County.

Two plants of the endangered **Southern Twayblade** (*Listera australis*) were found in early bloom on June 17 at a known location for this orchid near Harvey Station (JPG, GB). Numbers of plants of this species at this site have ranged from 0 (in 2000) to 7 (in 1986).

Shining Ladies'-tresses (*Spiranthes lucida*) was observed in early bloom at Hammond River on June 21 (CLJ).

I was delighted to be able finally to recognize two plants of the cryptic **Nuttall's Bog Orchid** (*Platanthera huronensis*), a species only recently split off from the Tall Northern Green Bog Orchid (*Platanthera aquilonis*, formerly *Platanthera hyperborea*), in a calcareous cedar wetland near Andersonville on June 30 (JPG, MT, SR, DWS).

Woody Plants

On May 5, a few late female flowers of **Beaked Hazel** (*Corylus cornuta*) were still visible at Keswick Ridge (FNC) and the first few blooms of **Fly Honeysuckle** (*Lonicera canadensis*) were seen at Currie Mountain (JPG, DaS).

Neither **Serviceberry** (*Amelanchier* sp.) nor **Pin Cherry** (*Prunus pensylvanica*) had started to bloom at Marys Point by May 18, but many were seen in flower between Codys and Woodstock on that date (DSC), and a few Pin Cherry were also seen in bloom at Shediac Bridge (NP).

Rhodora (*Rhododendron canadense*) was seen in flower on May 23 near Harvey Station (JPG) and at Kouchibouguac National Park on May 28 (MLB).

One of the species of **Mountain Ash** (*Sorbus* sp.) was seen in flower at Kouchibouguac National Park on May 25 (MLB).

Ferns and Fern Allies

Fiddleheads of either Cinnamon Fern or Interrupted Fern (*Osmunda* sp.) were seen at the Crawley Farm Road near Moncton on May 7 (Gilles Bourque), while a small clump of fiddleheads of **Ostrich Fern** (*Matteuccia pensylvanica*) was seen at Rosevale on May 8 (AW).

Dozens of plants of **Daisy-leaf Grapefern** (*Botrychium matricariifolium*) were found on Caraquet Island on June 2 (JPG, NP).

Introduced and Non-Native Species

A few plants of **Butterwort** (*Pinguicula vulgaris*), originally brought from the Bruce Peninsula in Ontario, have persisted and given rise to seedlings on a seepy limestone outcrop on the Hammond River. Blooms of this species were seen here on June 21 (CLJ). In New Brunswick, naturally-occurring stands of Butterwort are known only from the Restigouche River watershed. Nearby on the same rock cliff on the Hammond River, a few transplanted plants of **Ram's-head Lady's-slipper** (*Cypripedium arietinum*) continue to thrive several years after they were brought there from a gypsum outcrop near Windsor, Nova Scotia. This species has not yet been found growing naturally in New Brunswick, but is obviously capable of growing in suitable habitat.

Although many blooms of **Coltsfoot** (*Tussilago farfara*) had already been observed at Saint John by May 1 (JPG) and at Saint-Gabriel-de-Kent by May 5 (MLB), this species did not begin to flower near Turtle Creek at Rosevale until May 6, at a site that had been under snow earlier that week and under water two days previously (AW).

A few flowering plants of **Field Pansy** (*Viola arvensis*) were found at Keswick Ridge on May 5 (FNC) and on the East Irish Settlement Road (west of Woodstock) on May 20 (NTNB). Many **English Cowslip** (*Primula veris*) were found in flower in old fields at Hovey Hill on May 18 (JPG).

Several dozen plants of the pale yellow-flowered species of **Goat's-beard** (*Tragopogon dubius*), a rare weedy plant now known from only three locations in New Brunswick, were found on the south-east side of Fredericton on June 17 (JPG, GB, MT).



Field Pansy

Fungi

The very few reports of fungi included **False Morel** (*Gyromitra esculenta*) at Memramcook on May 1 (Alain Clavette), **Scarlet Cup** (*Sarcoscypha coccinea*) at the Meduxnekeag River near Woodstock on May 9 (NBFN), and **Ganoderma tsugae** at Keswick Ridge on June 28 (JPG, DWS, MS).

People and Plants

Since the death of Hal Hinds on May 9, Bev Benedict has been appointed the Acting Curator of vascular plants of the Connell Memorial Herbarium at the University of

New Brunswick. Dr. Gary Saunders is the faculty person in charge of the herbarium.

The New Brunswick Botany Group continues to be active, organizing four activities for the year including an excursion to the Renforth fen and Hammond River on June 23, a botanical inventory of Odell Park at Fredericton on July 8, a foray to calcareous wetlands on the Acadian Peninsula on July 21, and a field identification workshop on asters and goldenrods at Sackville on August 25. For more information on this group and its activities, contact: Julie Singleton (bowerbk@nbnet.nb.ca) or Maureen Toner

(Maureen.Toner@gnb.ca).

Abbreviations:

AW Ajo Wissink, BM Betty Mitham, CLJ Cecil Johnston, CM Carl Munden, DNRE Department of Natural Resources and Energy, DaS Darla Saunders, DwS Dwayne Sabine, DSC David Christie, EB Ethel Bosence, FNC Fredericton Nature Club, GB Gart Bishop, GCB Gagetown Celebration of Birds, JJW James Walde, JPG James Goltz, JR Jessica Robinson, MA Margery Acheson, MLeB Mike LeBlanc, MNC Moncton Naturalists' Club, MS Mary Sabine, NBFN New Brunswick Federation of Naturalists, NP Nelson Poirier, NTNBN Nature Trust of New Brunswick, SR Sara Richard.



The Colonial Enquirer

Fredericton, New Brunswick

1 August, 2001

Flower Power Takes Root

Recently there have been disturbing reports emanating from the "Picture Province", for what originally had been heralded as an effort to enhance the image of botanists, has developed into a quest for dominance and control. A mutual respect, which has long existed among New Brunswick's naturalists, is now being "plucked clean".

Rumours persist that an ancient form of mind-control is being secretly inflicted upon unsuspecting birders, lepidopterists, etc. Pollen from a rare willow (*Salix hypnotica*) induces a trance-like state, which causes victims to be extremely vulnerable to unwanted instructions. Through investigative journalism, it has been determined that this devious plot was cultivated by **Jimmy "the Weed" Goltz** and **"Burdock" Bishop**.

There are numerous reports of loved-ones acting

mysteriously:- A girl from Saint John claims, "Mother and father made a 500 kilometre round-trip to Carleton County in search of the Dorcas Copper and came back with six rolls of film of Shrubby Cinqufoil". A woman in Bathurst insists, "My husband wanted to trade a \$1000 pair of binoculars for a \$20 hand-lens."

Long-time Christmas Bird Count participants suddenly seem reluctant to take part. When contacted they often act as if they are unfamiliar with the event. Instead they seem to have a strong desire to stay inside and listen to their "winter theme-song". Often the voice of Bette Milder can be heard in the background.

*"Just remember in the winter,
Far beneath the bitter snows,
Lies the seed that with the
sun's love,
In the spring becomes the
rose."*

People with binoculars have been taunted and others with nets have been scorned. It is safe to say that paranoia has gripped many naturalists,

especially the birders who have been running around like "chickens with their heads cut off". Perhaps the ultimate in ridiculousness was revealed when the following bumper sticker was observed in Salisbury:-

**IF BINOCULARS ARE OUTLAWED
THEN ONLY OUTLAWS WILL HAVE
BINOCULARS.**

Excuse me while I close the window, some dust just drifted into the room. Whoa! I feel kind of dizzy. Now let's see, where was I? As I was saying, birding can be a bit of a bore. Imagine chasing all over the country to see these stupid creatures whose main objective is to "crap" on your windshield. Birders wander about aimlessly with eyes skyward ignoring the wonderment in the vegetation that they trample beneath their feet.

Join me, as I am planning to lobby to have two species renamed - **GOLTZ**foot and Small-flowered **GART**iola.

PROPOSED FEDERAL ENDANGERED SPECIES LEGISLATION WILL NOT PROTECT SPECIES

Laura Telford

This spring, the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC) added another 18 species and re-evaluated the status of a further 19 on the national list of species at risk, bringing the total to 380. Three of them are found in New Brunswick. The eastern population of the Harlequin Duck was down-listed from endangered to special concern based on new evidence suggesting the birds are more abundant than previously thought. The Piping Plover, previously listed as a single species, was split into two subspecies (*melodus* is the one found in New Brunswick), both in the endangered category. The inner Bay of Fundy population of Atlantic salmon was the only new listing for New Brunswick. It was ranked as endangered, even though a moratorium on fishing has been in place for the past decade. Populations have not rebounded because of anthropogenic threats from agriculture and aquaculture. In recent years, salmon aquaculture in the outer Bay of Fundy has seen explosive growth. Salmon from the inner bay frequent that area in the fall when herring are abundant. A recent census found no salmon in nearly half of the rivers that feed the inner Bay of Fundy and the highest number found in any river was only 11.



Until there is a national law to protect listed species, COSEWIC's work will be little more than an academic exercise. Despite signing the Convention on Biodiversity nine years ago, an agreement that committed the government of Canada to developing endangered species legislation, Canada still does not have a federal endangered species law on the books. Many of the provinces, including New Brunswick, have had laws in place for years. A Parliamentary Standing Committee is currently considering federal species at risk legislation introduced in February. If passed in its current form, it would do little to protect species at risk. The bill includes measures to protect federal species (migratory birds, aquatic species and species on federal lands) and their residences, but it does not ensure that the habitat of any will be protected. Habitat loss and fragmentation are the primary reasons why most species are on the COSEWIC

list. A law that ignores that will provide no protection. New Brunswick amended its Endangered Species Act in 1996 to enshrine the protection of critical habitat within the Act. Since four of the provinces have provisions to ensure that the habitat of species under their authority is protected, the federal government should, at a minimum, ensure that the habitat of species under federal jurisdiction is protected.

Another glaring inadequacy of the proposed federal legislation is the politicization of the listing process. COSEWIC is given authority in the bill to continue to identify species at risk, but legal designation will rest with politicians. Most of the provinces have opted for that type of listing process and it has been a failure since only about one-third of the COSEWIC-listed species have been listed in each of those provinces. Although New Brunswick does not have a formal independent body to assess the status of species, there is an endangered species advisory committee. That group recommended 61 species for listing in 1996. To date, only sixteen species have received legal protection under the New Brunswick act. Several of the scientists on the committee resigned because they felt the government was ignoring their recommendations in the face of opposition from the natural resource sector, which believes that protecting a large number of species would hinder economic development in the province. The committee has not met since 1996.

Please let our politicians know that the federal government should learn from the experiences of the provinces when crafting legislation. Tell them that a law that does not protect habitat will not protect species at risk and that political listing does not work. Address your letter to The Right Honourable Jean Chrétien, Prime Minister, Room 309-S, Centre Block, House of Commons, Ottawa, ON, K1A 0A6 (no need to add a stamp), or email it to:

pmo@pm.gc.ca. You can also fax it to: (613) 941-6900. While you're at it, send a copy to your MP as well. Canada's most vulnerable species will thank you.

Laura Telford

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THE NATURAL LEGACY OF HAL HINDS

James P. Goltz

I first met Hal shortly after I arrived in Fredericton in the summer of 1985. At the time, I was familiar with his book on The Wildflowers of Cape Cod but, just as I had not yet discovered that New Brunswick has such a rich natural history, I didn't yet know that Hal was one of Canada's finest all-around naturalists or that he would become one of my best friends.

Harold (Hal) Royall Hinds was born on August 9, 1937 in Newton, Massachusetts. From an early age, he was fascinated with nature. Like many naturalists, Hal's initial interest was birds, including a young Great Horned Owl that he rehabilitated, but he soon became aware that plants were in his blood. Hal completed a B.Sc. in Biology at the University of Massachusetts in 1964, and went on to complete his M.A. in botany at Smith College in Massachusetts, producing a thesis entitled The Flora of Outer Cape Cod, Massachusetts.

Hal moved to New Brunswick in 1971 with his family and set up an organic farm and homestead at Cross Creek. He began to teach at the University of New Brunswick's Biology Department in 1973, and soon after became the Curator of its herbarium (now called the Connell Memorial Herbarium). Although Hal's official teaching duties as Senior Teaching Associate pertained mainly to plant taxonomy and ecology, his passion, showmanship and flare for teaching were widely recognized outside the university and he was in great demand to share his extensive knowledge on wildflowers, mushrooms, botany, natural history, environmental protection, gardening, human rights, community development, social justice and cooking.

Hal was full of life and lived his life to its fullest. With boundless energy and enthusiasm, he set out to explore every corner of New Brunswick to learn its botanical secrets and to document his discoveries with collections, slides and publications. Although botanists had been studying the vascular plants of New Brunswick for over a century, Hal was the first person to bring together all of the known information on this topic into a comprehensive and long overdue book, his first edition of the Flora of New Brunswick (1986). Hal personally financed this publication since no other funding was available.

While compiling data for his flora and for his publication on The Rare Vascular Plants of New Brunswick (1983), Hal recognized that many species of plants in the province were at risk because of human threats to their habitat. In order to help protect habitats for rare plants and to preserve New Brunswick's natural

heritage, Hal helped found the Nature Trust of New Brunswick and became the organization's first Executive Director. In addition, he became an advocate for New Brunswick's rare and endangered plants, often stating "I speak for the plants because they have no voice of their own."

Hal was recognized as the leading botanical authority for New Brunswick, was one of the province's foremost conservationists, and was renowned for his high level of commitment to volunteer community-based work, especially that related to environmental and conservation issues. He was a past President of the New Brunswick Federation of Naturalists and an executive member or strong supporter of many other nature and conservation organizations in New Brunswick. In recognition of his many contributions to society, Hal received the Canadian Parks Service Heritage Award, the Outstanding Achievement Award from the Canadian Council on Ecological Areas, the Conservation Council of New Brunswick's Milton F. Gregg Award, and the Canadian Nature Federation's Douglas H. Pimlott Award. In August 2000, the New Brunswick government recognized Hal's contribution to rare plant conservation by setting aside, in his name, a remnant Appalachian hardwood forest tract at Hovey Hill.

Hal was delighted to complete a much-improved second edition of his Flora of New Brunswick in 2000, a publication that will undoubtedly be the definitive work on the subject for many years. When asked to autograph copies of his new flora, Hal encouraged others to carry on his fine work with a motivational inscription "Learn them, love them, protect them." In order to complete this book, Hal had overcome several nearly-fatal bouts of HIV-related illness and cancer. Unfortunately, Hal died of cancer on May 9, 2001. He is survived by his loving partner, George Flanders, who was instrumental in helping Hal to complete his flora and enabled Hal to accomplish many great things during the final years of his life.

Each time I arrive home from a nature foray, filled with excitement about my latest nature observations, my first reflex is to want to share my adventures with Hal. I'm painfully reminded that Hal is no longer with us in person but I still have many treasured memories of time spent with him. Hal's spirit and many legacies live on in the hearts, hopes and dreams of New Brunswick's naturalists and all of us whose lives have been enriched by his work, his inspiration and his comradery.

The New Brunswick Federation of Naturalists honours two of its members

At its 29th Annual General meeting, the New Brunswick Federation of Naturalists honoured Mary Majka and Jim Goltz with an honorary life membership in recognition of their many years of devoted work to increase awareness of our province's natural heritage.

La Fédération des Naturalistes du Nouveau-Brunswick reconnaît deux de ses membres

A sa 29^{ième} assemblée générale annuelle, la Fédération des Naturalistes du Nouveau-Brunswick a décerné à Mary Majka et Jim Goltz, le titre de membre honoraire à vie en reconnaissance de leur années de travail pour augmenter la conscience publique envers le patrimoine naturel de notre province.



Special thanks to Don Vail, who digitized the photographs in this issue. Don works as an imaging specialist with Appleby Color Lab in Fredericton.

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