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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. www.naturenb.ca

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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Celebration of Birds Nature Club (Gagetown), c/o Bonnie Hamilton Bogart, 194 Tilley Road, Gagetown NB E5M 1H7; email bonniehb@nb.sympatico.ca. Information evenings every 3rd Wednesday in February and March, and field trips in April and May.

Chignecto Naturalists' Club, c/o CWS, Box 6227, Sackville, NB E4L 1G6; 364-5047; meets Sackville Public Library, 7:30 pm, 3rd Mon., Sept.-June.

Club de Naturalistes de la Péninsule acadienne, 1521-4 chemin Cowan's Creek Pokemouche, NB E8P 2C6; courriel: emile.info@cnpa.ca site web: <http://www.cnpa.ca> réunions au Club de l'âge d'or Landry, 1^{er} mercredi, sept. à juin; *Le Gobe-mouche* mensuel.

Club de Naturalistes Vallée de Memramcook a/s Yolande LeBlanc, 251 rue Centrale, Memramcook NB E4K 3P8; tél 758-9583; courriel: yolande@nbnet.nb.ca réunions le mardi de mois, sept. à juin, à la Salle Mère Marie-Léonie

Club d'ornithologie du Madawaska Ltée, a/s Musée historique du Madawaska, 195 boul. Hébert, Edmundston NB E3V 2S8; tél 737-5282

(Bert Lavoie); réunions à 19h00, 2^{ème} mercredi, sept. à juin, Musée du Madawaska; *Le Jaseur* trimestriel.

Club les Ami(e)s de la Nature du sud-est Inc., a/s Norm Belliveau, C.P. 4204, Dieppe, NB E1A 6E8, ligne d'information: 532-Buse réunions alternant entre Dieppe et Shédiac, 1^{er} mercredi du mois; excursions 3^{ème} samedi ou dimanche; *La plume verte*.

River Valley Naturalist Club (formerly Ford Alward Naturalist Association), c/o Lorna Maddox, 1-71 Barker Lane, Unit 1, Wicklow, N.B. E7L 3S4; tel. 392-6481 meets Florenceville Town Hall, 7:00 pm, 4th Thur., Sept.-June; meetings advertised in local newspapers.

Fredericton Nature Club, Box 772, Station A, Fredericton, NB E3B 5B4; 455-2038; 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; 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 Mike Lushington, 214 Rosebery Street, Campbellton, NB E3N 2H5; 684-3258; meets Village-Campbellton Nursing Home, 7 pm, 1st Monday; <http://members.tripod.com/~RestNatClub>

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

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On peut lire dans *Le Naturaliste du N.-B.* des rapports touchant l'histoire naturelle du Nouveau-Brunswick. Les articles seront acceptés en français ou en anglais pour être reproduits dans la langue d'origine. Les opinions exprimées sont celles de leurs auteurs. **Veuillez faire parvenir toutes articles pour Le Naturaliste du N.-B. à: Gart Bishop, 16 Pitt St. Sussex NB, E4E 1J1; tel. (506) 433-4994, gartali@nbnet.nb.ca** Demandez les détails de compatibilité d'ordinateur. Tarifs publicitaires disponibles sur demande.

The NBFN is the provincial affiliate of Nature Canada (formerly Canadian Nature Federation) and the Canadian Nature Network (CNN). La FNNB est le partenaire provinciale (N.-B.) du Réseau Canadien de la Nature (RCN) et affilié provincial de Nature Canada (la Fédération Canadienne de la Nature).



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Cover: Rough-legged Hawk eyes a meal by Hal Dalzell

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT / RAPPORT DU PRÉSIDENT

Roland Chiasson

What is in a Name

Names are important, especially for naturalists. Where would we be without names?

Names change. I spend a considerable amount of time, and I am sure you do too, in memorizing new names or trying to learn new ones, including scientific names. We often hold on to old names because they import special meaning. Take for example Solitary Vireo, now Blue headed Vireo. The word solitary described perfectly the sound of the bird's voice. So why was the name changed? The Solitary Vireo like many other species was split into because of our advancements in knowledge of speciation. Of course this has nothing with some insidious plot to make us buy more field guides. Whether we like it or not, this is an important part of naturalizing. Don't get me wrong. I think this is fun even though the old field guides gather dust on my bookshelves.

As I ponder the changing of species' names, we, the Federation, are contemplating changing our name to simply Nature New Brunswick. Our present name says a lot about who we are: a New Brunswick federation of affiliated clubs. This name has a long history, is well respected and many people don't want it changed. Why change a good thing? Why are we even thinking about this? Well, as part of a marketing strategy of Nature Canada (formerly Canadian Nature Federation) determined that their new name has more natural appeal than naturalist especially for marketing. The aspiration of Nature Canada is that this change would reach the provincial and local level: Nature Canada to Nature New Brunswick to Nature Sackville or Nature Miramichi. Many people like this idea. Nature New Brunswick is simple. We already own the trade name Nature New Brunswick. The new name might help prevent confusion between the bareness of the term "naturalist" and the well-dressed term "naturalist". Even so, as much as the name is appealing, all our legal documents use the present name and we already have a web server called Nature New Brunswick. One other organization in New Brunswick has a similar name, and that is the Nature Trust of New Brunswick. Why eliminate the word "naturalist"? These opinions and more were expressed at the last AGM in Sussex (Great weekend, by the way). So in order to lay this issue to rest, your board has decided that by the next AGM we, with our members, would have made our decision. One promising idea would be to keep

Ce qui est dans un nom

Les noms sont importants, surtout pour des naturalistes. Où serions-nous sans noms? Les noms changent. Je passe beaucoup de temps en apprenant par coeur de nouveaux noms, incluant les noms scientifiques. Prenez par exemple la Viréo solitaire, maintenant Viréo à tête bleue. Le mot solitaire décrivait parfaitement le bruit de la voix de l'oiseau. Pourquoi le nom a-t-il été changé La Viréo solitaire comme beaucoup d'autres espèces a été divisée en raison de nos avancements dans notre connaissance d'évolution des espèces. Naturellement ceci n'a rien avec un certain traçage insidieux de nous inciter à acheter plus de guides d'identification. Que nous l'aimions ou pas c'est un important partie de naturaliser. Il ne faut pas pensé que je haïsse les changements de nom, au contraire, c'est amusement quoique les vieux guides d'identification recueillent la poussière sur ma bibliothèque.

Pendant que je songe au sujet des noms des espèces, je ne peux pas ignorer de comparer notre situation avec le nom de la Fédération. Nous songeons sérieusement à changer notre nom à Nature Nouveau-Brunswick.

Notre nom présent indique beaucoup au sujet de qui nous sommes : une Fédération du Nouveau-Brunswick avec des clubs fédérés. Ce nom a une longue histoire, est bien respecté et beaucoup de gens ne veulent pas qu'elle change. Pourquoi nous voulons changer une bonne chose? Ainsi pourquoi sommes-nous pensant même à ceci? Nature Canada (autrefois La Fédération canadienne de la nature) a déterminé (par une étude de commercialisation) que son nouveau nom a un appel plus attirant. L'aspiration de Nature Canada est que cette tendance atteindrait le niveau local : Nature Canada à Nature Nouveau Brunswick à Nature Sackville ou à Nature Péninsule acadienne. Beaucoup de gens aiment cette idée. Nature Nouveau-Brunswick est simple. Nous possédons déjà la marque de fabrique Nature Nouveau-Brunswick. Le nouveau nom pourrait aider à empêcher la confusion entre la nudité du naturaliste et le bien habillé naturaliste.

Néanmoins autant que le nom en appelle à tous nos documents juridiques utilisent le nom actuel et nous avons déjà un serveur appelé Nature Nouveau-Brunswick. Une autre organisation au Nouveau-Brunswick a un nom semblable, la Fondation des sites naturels du Nouveau-Brunswick (en anglais Nature Trust of New Brunswick). Pourquoi éliminez le mot "naturaliste"? Ces avis et plus ont été exprimés

the two names. We could keep the old one as a business name and the new name as an operational one.

Let us know what you think about these ideas. How should we proceed? Tell someone on the board. (See the inside cover of your naturalist magazine for contact information on your club representative on the Federation board of directors). We will keep you informed.



ROUGHING IT AT JEMSEG

Don Gibson

Whereas most *buteos* shun the north, the Rough-legged Hawk has found a niche in the arctic. Even the next most northern *buteo*, the Red-tailed Hawk, stays south of the breeding range of the Rough-legged Hawk. Each winter the Rough-legged must make a complete, and sometimes distant, migration from the tundra. Beginning as early as late August, weather conditions force the birds to head south in search of more favourable hunting grounds. Along the Atlantic Coast some may wander as far as the state of Virginia. Each year New Brunswick plays host to a few of these hawks, on their way south, again on their way north and sometimes for the entire winter.

A relatively light wing-loading makes Rough-legged Hawks less dependent on thermals during migration and they are capable of long flights over water, quite unlike most other *buteos*. Their southward movement has no specific destination, just the next suitable open area with sufficient prey. Birds may be required to relocate a number of times as the effects of winter move south. In spring the hawks head back north following the receding snow with a greater sense of urgency, as nesting season is imminent.

In New Brunswick two places stand out for numbers of "wintering" Rough-legged Hawks. With few exceptions (usually years with low numbers), over 75% of the total Rough-legged Hawks tallied on Christmas Bird Counts (CBCs) for the province are at Jemseg and Sackville.

CBCs tell only part of the story about Rough-legged Hawk numbers for a region. The number on count day reflects only the situation for that moment in time. The

au dernier AGA en Sussex (Belle fin de semaine, d'ailleurs!). Afin d'étendre ainsi cette issue pour reposer, ainsi votre conseil d'administration a décidé que par le prochain AGA nous avec les membres avons pris notre décision. Une idée prometteuse serait de garder les deux noms. Nous pourrions garder le vieux comme nom commercial et nouveau nom comme nom opérationnel.

Faites-nous savoir ce que vous en pensez. Comment devrions-nous procéder? Dites quelqu'un sur le conseil d'administration. (Voyez l'intérieur de votre revue de naturaliste pour l'information de contact pour le représentant de votre club à la fédération) ou membre de votre conseil. Nous vous tiendrons au courant.

thirty recorded at Jemseg in 2001 probably had greatly diminished in numbers a month later. In 1991 not one was found there but almost certainly some had been there earlier, and likely ice or crusty snow had hampered hunting success causing the birds to move further south.

Having occasion to pass through Jemseg on a regular basis, I have kept records of my observations with respect to Rough-legged Hawk numbers plus the location of the sightings.

For the past three years, every time that I have been in the region I plotted the location of any hawk sighted (See map page 54). There are a number of potentially good areas along the river between Fredericton and Jemseg plus the flats at Lower Jemseg but in my experience about 95% of the Rough-legged Hawks are found between McGowans Corner and Jemseg. On a good day 20 to 25 can be tallied.

The usual pattern would see the first Rough-legged Hawks arrive in late October, gradually increase until early January when a declining number of prey and poor conditions at the ground surface could support very few hawks. Through January, February and March few if any are normally present. As spring approaches the number increases but the stays are usually limited in length and by May it would be unusual to encounter even one.



The season 2002-2003 followed that the usual pattern nicely but next two years saw very few Rough-legged Hawks at Jemseg.

The main target of the Rough-legged Hawk at Jemseg is the Meadow Vole. It is one of the most prolific mammals in eastern Canada, being capable of producing several litters in a year. On average four to six voles would be consumed per day per hawk.

The floodplain at Jemseg provides an excellent venue for the sedges and grasses that make up the bulk of the Meadow Vole's diet. The voles use that same vegetation to construct covered surface runways that offer a measure of protection from flying predators.

Living on a floodplain obviously puts one at risk of a flood and each spring, and occasionally during other seasons, the St. John River inundates the region. Somehow enough voles manage to survive to produce future generations. Peak breeding season would follow any spring flooding and any drop in numbers could easily be replenished by this species. It would take the

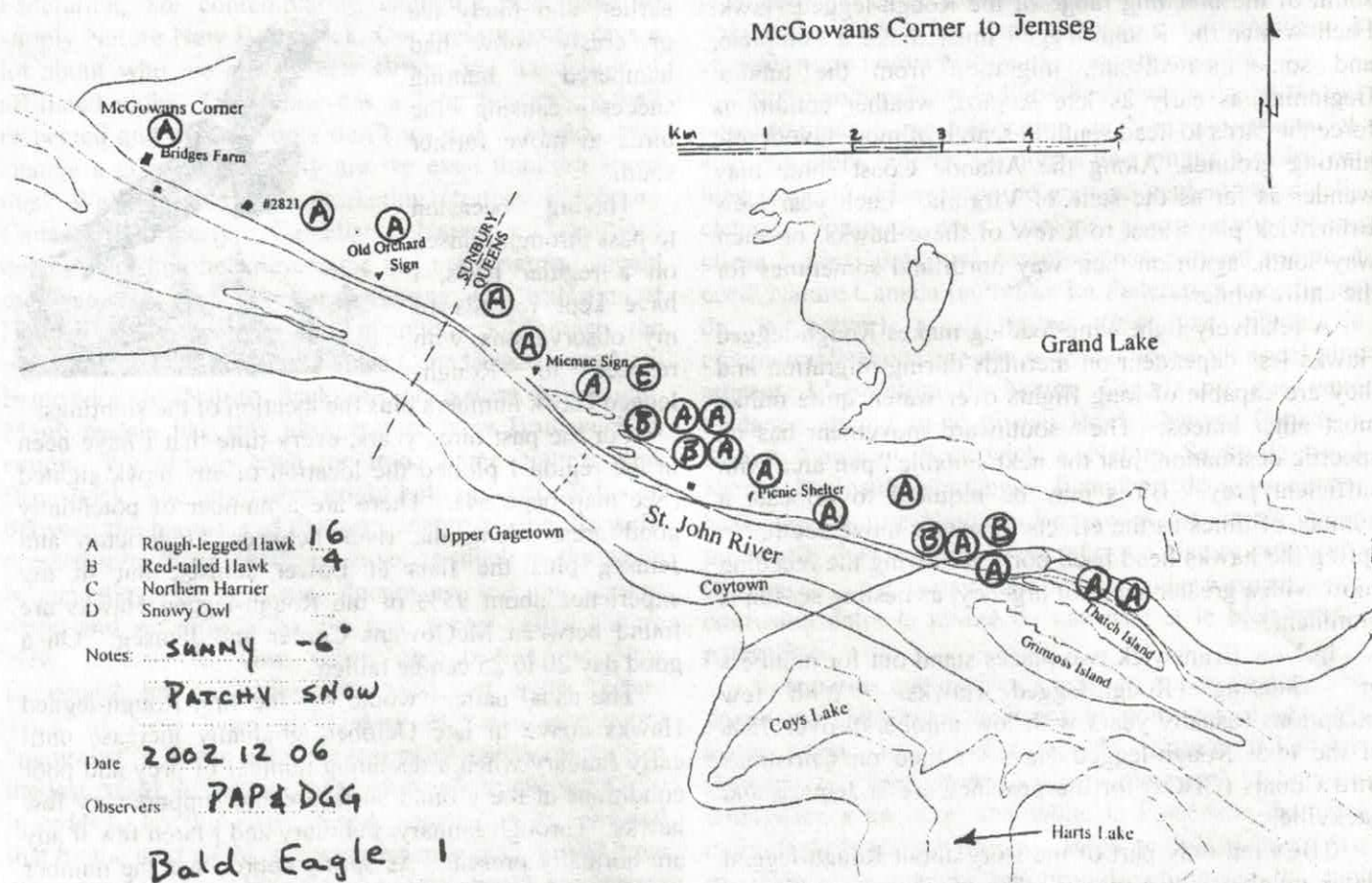
population much longer to recuperate from fall flood that caused a high number of casualties.

The number of Meadow Voles present and the ease with which they can be taken has a significant bearing on the number of Rough-legged Hawks would choose to remain and hunt an area.

Rough-legged Hawks have undoubtedly been passing through New Brunswick during migration for a very long time. It is difficult to estimate how long that the hawks have found the Jemseg area appealing, as there would have been far fewer open spaces prior to the onslaught of agricultural activities.

In his publication, *A Naturalist in New Brunswick*, Austin Squires tells of discovering that the Jemseg-Sheffield area was a favourite spot for Rough-legged Hawks during an outing in November 1962.

The stretch of road through the area served as part of the Trans Canada Highway system until October 23, 2001 but now with a virtual absence of large trucks and a greatly reduced number of total vehicles, hawk-viewing there has become much more pleasurable.



MARRIAGE, DIVORCE AND MIGRATION

Ken MacIntosh

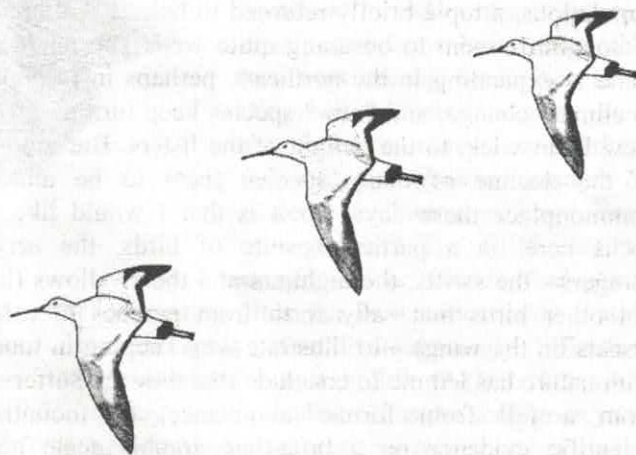
Many long-lived bird species also have long-term relationships with their mates. Pair-bonds formed in the first nesting season may last "for life". For most birds, time spent together peaks just before nesting. In the traditional view, songbirds in particular jealously guard their mates at that time of year in hopes that the young they will be feeding over the following weeks are their own. But after the honeymoon, do bird couples stay together? If an avian couple splits up for part of the year, is the marriage over? If they separate only for the winter, how do they reunite in spring?

In evolutionary terms, these questions are of more than romantic importance. For some species, breeding success increases the longer a pair stays together. Since one evolutionary goal of any animal is to have as many offspring as possible, it makes sense for such birds to stick with the same mate year after year. In spite of that advantage, mature birds arriving on the breeding grounds are very impatient. Procreation is a very urgent business for migrants, and a bride or groom who is late for the wedding may be in for a big surprise. The early bird may have not only taken the worm, but a new partner as well. Students of bird behaviour call this divorce. I would not kid you!

For long-distance migrants, keeping track of mates presents major challenges. In some species, at summer's end, males and females leave the breeding territory separately, often weeks apart. Unless they happen to meet up on what may be expansive wintering grounds, they don't see each other until the next nesting season. The window for arrival back on the breeding territory might be a month or more. But if a migrant is to keep its mate from the previous year (monogamy is good) it needs to arrive at about the same time as its partner, or face starting over with someone new (divorce is bad).

In a letter to the journal *Nature* T.G. Gunnarsson *et al* (2004) describe some observations of such behaviour among Icelandic Black-tailed Godwits (*Limosa limosa islandica*). Members of this sub-species breed exclusively in Iceland, and winter in Great Britain, western France and Iberia. The authors used a network of volunteer observers to record the movements of uniquely colour-banded godwits on wintering grounds. Godwit pairs were known from the authors' observations on the breeding territory. The wintering data established that godwit pairs go their separate ways after nesting. Of the 12 pairs located, the average separation between Mr and Mrs Godwit was nearly 1000 km (ranging from 49 to 1946 km).

Apparently, wintering together does not make an important contribution to godwit pair-bond maintenance. But synchronous arrival on the breeding grounds does matter, and the authors have data to prove it. Surveying the breeding grounds throughout April, the authors were able to establish that although paired birds did not appear to arrive in the same migrant flocks (i.e., they had not met up somewhere before arriving), they did arrive on average within a few days of each other. Moreover, of the three pairs which arrived more than eight days apart, two divorced! Couples with both individuals arriving in Iceland within a week of each other all maintained their "marriages".



After wintering hundreds of kilometres apart, how do individuals manage to synchronise their arrival on the breeding territory and keep their pair bonds alive? That little mystery remains to be solved.

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Ornithology. Frank B. Gill. W.H. Freeman and Company, 2nd ed., 1994.

FALL OF THE AERIAL FORAGERS

Peter Pearce

It seems as though I have been actively watching birds in New Brunswick for a long time. Actually, it's been only 47 years, but enough to provide me a sense of the occurrence of changes in the population status of songbirds, in particular, and the confidence to offer what I trust is relevant and helpful comment.

The "spring chorus" of forest songbirds in the 1960s through the 1980s is to me now only an echo of its former self, a thing of the past. That may be partly accounted for by the dramatic drop in abundance of some birds after the collapse of the spruce budworm outbreak, especially those species, notably some warblers, characterized as budworm followers. Many forces, whether of nature or of man, are of course constantly at play in influencing bird populations, a topic briefly returned to below. A number of songbirds seem to be doing quite well. The range of some is expanding in the northeast, perhaps in response to climate change, and "new" species keep turning up in New Brunswick, to the delight of the listers. But reports of the decline of many species seem to be almost commonplace these days. So it is that I would like to focus here on a particular suite of birds, the aerial foragers - the swifts, the nightjars and the swallows (but not other birds that sally forth from perches to catch insects on the wing) - to illustrate why keeping in touch with nature has led me to conclude that they are suffering from a fall from former abundance, as mounting scientific evidence on a broad geographic scale now demonstrates.

At one time, the summer evening sky over Fredericton seemed to be full of Chimney Swifts, their chattering calls descending from on high. Not any more. The well-known chimney on the University of New Brunswick campus now hosts just a few hundred roosting birds, down from almost two thousand 25 years ago. Few of the remaining large chimneys in the downtown now provide communal roosting or nesting sites, having long since been blocked off. One or two do still attract swifts but only in small numbers. How are swifts faring elsewhere in the province? Not too well, one hears. I am told that the swift has been extirpated from Grand Manan Island as a breeding bird, but it was never common there. Will the Chimney Swift disappear from the urban environment? (Other species of swifts occur in North America, occupying relatively small summer ranges. Since they nest on cliffs, it would be interesting to know if their populations are holding their own.)

Back at the capital city, punctuating the sounds of the swifts would be the frequent "peent" calls of the

nighthawks flying erratically overhead, mouths agape. One heard those curious vocalizations into the night long after the swifts had retired. I rarely seem to catch that sound any more. And it is ages since I heard a "Bronx cheer", the noise made at the bottom of the male's courtship dive by the rush of air vibrating its primary feathers, quite startling if close by. It's just as long since I heard the expression used in that context. Nighthawks used to "nest" sparingly on the flat, graveled roofs of Fredericton buildings, once just outside my office window. I have not heard of any such reports for decades. Years ago I quite often saw cells of 20 or 30 birds winging south in the late summer, but no longer. I know other birdwatchers have no difficulty in running across nighthawks today but I find it hard to connect with them, the occasional year passing without any contact. I'm afraid to say that the "Common" Nighthawk has passed almost beyond my ken.

I don't know about the present status of the related Whip-poor-will, a bird that may never have been all that common in the province. It is difficult to judge but my impression is that it has declined since about the 1980s. Perhaps that feeling is because I used to hear them nearly always when I did woodcock singing ground surveys years ago, and because I don't get into the field in the late evening and at night as I once did. Today, I seem to be reduced to seeking out the occasional calling bird that friends tell me about so that I can then check off that species on my annual list of birds seen, or heard.

Now to the swallows. Who can remember when swallows lined overhead wires by the hundreds as they gathered in August prior to migration? One is no longer privileged to witness such assemblies in New Brunswick. Though obviously fewer in number than formerly, barns are still to be found about the countryside. But when I check them I don't find many nests, either inside or outside. Few Cliff Swallows now nest under Fredericton's Westmorland Street Bridge, not nearly in the numbers that used to. Traditional Bank Swallow nesting colonies have seen far better days. Purple Martins? The central Saint John River valley used to be a martin stronghold but one doesn't see nearly as many birds as one did 25 years ago. Martin houses still dot the rural landscape but so many sit forlorn and empty atop their high perches. But on a more positive note, the Tree Swallow, despite population ups and downs, seems to be doing rather better in the long haul than its relatives.

To put these evident downtrends in a numerical context, I examined some of my Jemseg Breeding Bird

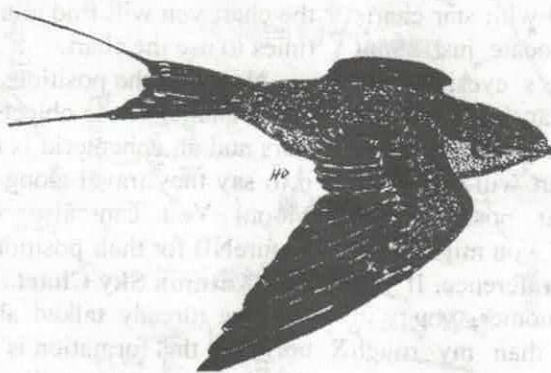
Survey data. (The survey is a continent-wide undertaking by volunteers to monitor landbird populations. The method requires roadside counts of birds heard and seen at 50 three-minute stops spaced at 0.8 km along a route of 40 km.) The total number of birds representing the combined species of swallows in the years 1972, 1982, 1992, 2004 and 2005 was 119, 114, 47, 25 and 23, respectively. One cannot read too much into the results of surveys on only one route but a downward trend is clearly indicated, which is starting to be confirmed by analysis of surveys on many routes regionally, hundreds continentally. A recent communication from Bird Studies Canada, for example, notes that the Barn Swallow population in Atlantic Canada has undergone a decline of an average 7.6 per cent per year in the last decade. The Breeding Bird Survey also shows that the Bank Swallow is heading in the same direction. My Grand Manan correspondent is of the opinion that, despite the availability of suitable nesting sites on the island, the breeding population of Bank Swallows has gone down by about 75 per cent in an accelerating decline over the last 20 years. (Is it just a coincidence that in Britain the Swallow, the same species as our Barn Swallow, has declined significantly. One wonders what is happening there to the Sand Martin - our Bank Swallow.)

One can only speculate about the causes of these downtrends. It is hard to believe that there is a chronic, persisting depression of the birds' food supply that could be responsible. In the long-term it seems that there are always flying insects in abundance and variety, larger ones for the nightjars, smaller ones for the swifts and

swallows. Perhaps systematic monitoring of aerial insects would clarify the connection with bird declines. At times, however, that food resource can be severely knocked back, causing near-catastrophic effects on birds that depend on it. For example, swallows were hard hit in our region by the prolonged spell of cold, wet weather during May 2005 when they were migrating. It happens. It probably takes years for bird populations to recover from such blows.

In addition to severe weather at critical times, several other pressures are probably extremely important. Foremost would be the loss of vital winter-range habitat. Then there are the direct and indirect effects of hard pesticide use, disease, predation, and so on. But what about the loss of nesting habitat here at "home"? Is there a strong relationship between the fall of the Barn Swallow and the gradual disappearance of barns and other buildings suitable for nesting in? Is the swift suffering because there are fewer chimneys, or perhaps fewer hollow trees consequent on more intensive forest management? The Cliff Swallow should still be able to find plenty of nesting sites but is it conceivable that in urban areas it finds it increasingly difficult to find mud for nest building? (You know - "They paved paradise...", as the song goes.)

To conclude, then, the foregoing retrospection gives a personal take on perceived population declines of insectivores representing three disparate bird families. I regret the litany of woes, but I do fear our aerially-foraging birds are in trouble.



Barn Swallow
by Hal Dalzell

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT 2004-05 (ERRATA)

David Christie

Errata: Christmas Bird Count 2004-05 (vol. 32, no. 1, spring 2005):

The previous high year for Red-breasted Nuthatch numbers should be 1995, not 1996 (p. 32, col. 1). On p. 42 (col. 2), Jim Brown should be credited as compiler of the Sussex count, Susan Snyder and associated observers with the new count at Norton, not the other way around. My apology to these folks for the mixup.

The tables of results did not appear in the magazine as originally formatted; the results for Miramichi, Dalhousie, Restigouche and inland counts will be found

on the fifth through seventh pages of tables, not on the first two (p. 32, col. 1), and the results of the coastal counts are on the first four pages of tables instead of the last three (p. 44, col. 1).

If anyone would like a printout of the tables as originally formatted, send me your postal address and I will mail a set. If you spot any other errors please let me know. David Christie, 435 Marys Point Road, Harvey, Albert Co. NB E4H 2M9.

THE NIGHTTIME NATURALIST

Roy LaPointe

Sky Surfing

People often ask me how I find things in the sky and I usually reply with a grin, "I just look up!" After they smack me in the side of the head I tell them it comes with years and years of study and practice. Another grin! I ask them what they would like to see then I open up my night sky guide, find what they are looking for and try to point it out to them. Now where is north???

Seriously, learning to surf around the night sky is not very difficult. All one really needs is a general idea of the shape and location of major constellations and what time of year they are in the night sky. Armed with star charts or a good astronomy guide, one can locate just about anything within the capabilities of one's eyesight and optical equipment. Over the next year, I will provide a series of sky charts with keys to guide you around the heavens starting with autumn. Each chart will cover the next season to come. Since the star positions are relatively constant over a human lifetime, you might want to keep a copy of each chart for future reference. If you become a more serious amateur astronomer, you will surely want to get something better than my rough computer-drawn charts.

How to Use Sky Charts

Using star charts is not quite like using road maps. The first thing you will notice in the following chart is that east and west are reversed. Sky charts are designed to be held up against the sky with the direction you are facing at the bottom of the page. If facing east, rotate the chart so that east is at the bottom. Now, with the chart held up against the sky, the other cardinal points fall into place.

Before looking for something in the night sky, you will need to get oriented. I always start by finding north. If I forget my compass, it's not a problem. I just look for the Big Dipper which is part of the constellation Ursa Major (big bear). This easily-identified group of seven stars is located in the northern quadrant during the autumn. The two stars at the end of the bowl are referred to as the Pointers. Drawing an imaginary line through the Pointers up towards the zenith (the point directly overhead, Z at the centre of the chart) you pass through an area devoid of bright stars until you reach Polaris, the Pole Star. Polaris is not a very bright star at magnitude 2. Compare it to Vega, the sixth brightest star at magnitude 0.

Facing Polaris, you are looking towards True North. East is now off your right shoulder, west to your left and

south directly behind you. Polaris remains in this location at all times while the other stars circle around it..

Two other points to consider are the date and the time of night. The stars drift across the sky as the night progresses at a rate of 15 degrees per hour. This is caused by Earth's rotation.

The stars also shift in position from night to night due to Earth's progression along its orbit around the Sun. This shift is about four minutes towards the west each day. This means that you have to adjust the chart to match the sky depending on date and time of observation. Below the chart you will find a table that indicates the dates and times to use the chart.

Note that the positions of the planets are not included in the charts. These objects wander constantly among the stars and an ephemerid is needed to follow them. Suffice it to say they travel along the ecliptic as do the Sun and Moon. You can also watch Nelson's postings on NatureNB for their positions.

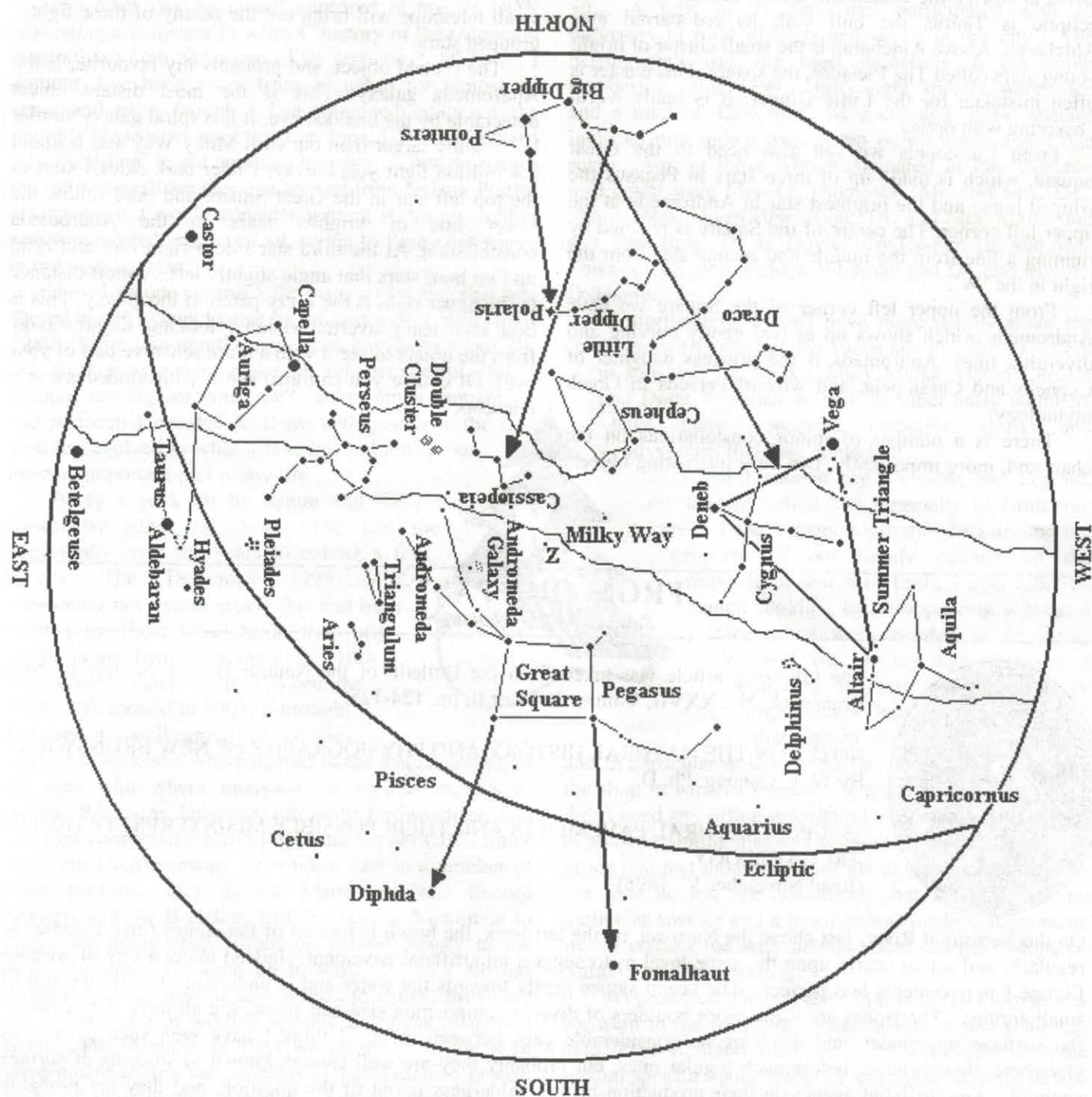
The Autumn Sky Chart

I've already talked about the Big Dipper to locate north but this formation is key to locating many objects in the night sky as you will see in this and the other charts to come.

The Pointers took us to Polaris, which is the end star in the Little Dipper, part of Ursa Minor. A line drawn through the two stars opposite the Pointers passes through the faint and twisting constellation of Draco the dragon onto the Summer Triangle.

The Summer Triangle (not a constellation), now in the west, is made up of three bright stars, each in three different constellations. The brightest is Vega in Lyra the lyre or harp. Towards the zenith is Deneb, the brightest star in Cygnus the swan. The stars that form a cross within Cygnus are sometimes called the Northern Cross. The third star in the triangle is Altair in Aquila the eagle.

Our next key is a line drawn from the third star from the end of the handle of the Big Dipper to Polaris and onward to a group of stars shaped roughly like a 'W'. This is the queen Cassiopeia. To her right is her king Cepheus, a group of stars that looks like a house drawn by a young child. This constellation is difficult to make out under dark skies as its stars are dim against the background Milky Way. The Milky Way is that fuzzy bright band that stretches from east to west in the autumn night sky and is roughly represented by the area between the two squiggly lines on the chart. This is of course only part of our galaxy.



AUTUMN STAR CHART

DATES AND TIMES TO USE CHART

| | | | |
|--------------------|----------------|--------------------------------|---------------|
| 1 to 15 September | 1 am to 3 am | Time change to DST end October | |
| 16 to 30 September | 12 pm to 2 am | 1 to 15 November | 8 pm to 10 pm |
| 1 to 15 October | 11 pm to 1 am | 16 to 30 November | 7 pm to 9 pm |
| 16 to 31 October | 10 pm to 12 pm | 1 to 15 December | 6 pm to 8 pm |
| | | 16 to 31 December | 5 pm to 7 pm |

From Cassiopeia we can travel eastward along the Milky Way to Perseus, the hero who decapitated the Medusa and married Andromeda. Continuing we then arrive at Auriga the coachman. Below Auriga and on the ecliptic is Taurus the bull with its red-starred eye, Aldebaran. Above Aldebaran is the small cluster of bright young stars called The Pleiades, the sisters. This cluster is often mistaken for the Little Dipper. It is really worth observing with optics.

From Cassiopeia we can also head to the Great Square, which is made up of three stars in Pegasus the winged horse and the brightest star in Andromeda at the upper left corner. The centre of the Square is reached by running a line from the middle and second star from the right in the 'W'.

From the upper left corner of the Square we have Andromeda which shows up as two gently curving and diverging lines. Andromeda is the princess daughter of Cepheus and Cassiopeia, and wife of Perseus in Greek mythology.

There is a number of minor constellations on the chart and, more importantly, two very interesting objects

which can be seen by the naked eye though very faint. The first is the Double Cluster between Cassiopeia and Perseus. This is made up of two open star clusters which appear as fuzzy balls under dark skies. Binoculars or a small telescope will bring out the beauty of these tightly grouped stars.

The second object, and probably my favourite, is the Andromeda galaxy. This is the most distant object detectable by the unaided eye. It is a spiral galaxy similar but slightly larger than our own Milky Way and is about 2.4 million light years away. Under dark skies I start at the top left star in the Great Square and follow the lower line of brighter stars in the Andromeda constellation. At the third star I do a right turn and head up two faint stars that angle slightly left. A short distance to the upper right is the fuzzy patch of the galaxy. This is best seen using averted vision (looking slightly away from the object to see it with a more sensitive part of your eye). Of course you can also see it with binoculars or a telescope.

FROM OUR PAST

Selected by Mary Sollows



The following article was taken from the Bulletin of the Natural History Society of New Brunswick: No. XXVII, Volume IV, Part II, pp. 124-125.

NOTES ON THE NATURAL HISTORY AND PHYSIOGRAPHY OF NEW BRUNSWICK
By W. F. Ganong, Ph. D

15.-UPON NATURAL PAVEMENTS AND THEIR POSSIBLE MISINTERPRETATION IN
ARCHAEOLOGY.

(Read November 1st, 1898)

On the Nepisiquit River, just above the Narrows, on the left bank, the beach is formed of flat stones fitted together so regularly and set so nearly upon the same level as to suggest an artificial pavement. Indeed many a city of western Europe has pavements less perfect. The beach slopes gently towards the water and is underlaid by soft clay full of small springs. The stones are water-worn boulders of diverse composition size and shape, but all have flat or nearly flat surfaces uppermost, and there are no considerable gaps between them. I think I have seen such pavements elsewhere, though never before such regular ones, but probably they are well enough known to students of surface geology. Any artificial agency in their production in this wilderness is out of the question, and they are probably formed by the action of the ice in the spring, which, grinding along the shore, would tend to press the boulders into the soft and yielding beach and to work and turn projecting angles about until a flat surface comes uppermost. If the river's course were to become changed, so that the pavement were no longer on a beach, it would be a most puzzling structure and almost certain to be referred to an artificial origin. References to pavements occur not infrequently in local archaeological writings, and are sometimes taken to indicate the existence of early settlements. From the above it would seem possible that such pavements may sometimes be of purely natural origin, especially when on river banks and underlaid by yielding bottoms.

MONCTON NATURALISTS' CLUB

Cheryl Davis

The other day an e-mail appeared in my IN BOX requesting a volunteer to write a "history of the (Moncton Naturalists') club and some of its activities". "Whew", I thought, I've been away from Moncton for almost 10 years and even though I had remained editor of the monthly Newsletter until this past June, I didn't feel that I was "qualified" to put anything together. A few days after the initial e-mail another one arrived from Nelson Poirier asking me if I would consider writing it. So my rubber arm was twisted and here I sit, trying to figure out where in the world to start!

How does one approach the history of a club that was started in 1961 when I came on the scene only in the mid-1980s. More importantly, how does one write about all the great people who make up this wonderful club without leaving someone out? After much thought and research I decided to share with you how the club has evolved to what it is today and how it has been an important part of my life.

Being a pack rat by nature and the past Newsletter editor by choice, I've had the opportunity over the years to collect a few details. The December 1999 MNC Newsletter ran a short article that had been written by Peter Candido in the early 1970s in celebration of the club's 10th anniversary. Peter wrote: "When the MNC was formed in 1961, it brought together a small group of people (eight birdwatchers who gathered in the Majka home), of all ages who were interested in various aspects of nature. We were, however, primarily birdwatchers, and our first coordinated activity was the annual CBC. Since then, our Club members have taken part in a number of other projects, such as the Maritimes Nest Record Scheme and the Breeding Bird Survey, and continue to contribute many observations on natural history to the N.B. Museum." He went on to write, "The Club has already devoted considerable efforts to causes involving the preservation of wildlife species and areas of natural habitat. For instance, in 1964 we presented to the N.B. government urging the adoption of legislation to protect birds of prey in the province... Let us hope that the growing ecological consciousness does not turn out to be a fad and that we will succeed in the preserving for future generations a good measure of our natural heritage."

On January 4, 1962, this article was found in the Moncton Transcript: "For the first time in the Moncton area a Christmas Bird Count took place on December

30.... A total of 27 naturalists participated with 20 observers in rural districts and seven in the city... The herring gull was the most numerous in the count numbering some 1199. Thirty-eight species were seen and a total of 4204 birds were counted. Rarer species included one snowy owl, seven purple finches and one robin.... Among those who participated in the Moncton bird count were Mrs. O. Thompson, Mr. and Mrs. C.E. Sharp, Mrs. Owen Branscome, Dr. and Mrs. Majka and son, Fred Bone, Dr. C. Doyle, Roy Hunter, Dr. and Mrs. Fownes, D.S. and Richard Whitman and Dr. and Mrs. C. D. Hunter..."

Unfortunately, I don't have more details about the club's activities through the 1960s and into the 1970s but I'm sure that Dr. Majka, Mary Majka, David Christie and Doug Whitman as well as other early members have many wonderful memories, stories and adventures that they could tell!

When I entered my pre-teens and beyond, my love of nature and especially birdwatching grew. I spent many hours prowling around the property of our family cottage on the Belleisle in search of birds. I also received much scolding for disappearing without a trace when work needed to be done.

When I was in my early twenties I wondered if there was a group or organization "out there somewhere" that shared my interests in nature and in particular in birds. One day a salesman came into the shop in which I worked. He quickly realized that we didn't need any office supplies so our conversation turned to an owl painting that was hanging on the wall, then to a group that met monthly to talk about nature and birds. By the time he left we determined that the owl was no particular species and a promise was made that someone would contact me with details about the next Moncton Naturalists' Club meeting.

As promised, the call came and with my Mom in tow we went to the May 1985 meeting that at that time was held at the Moncton Museum. I don't remember what the special speaker spoke about or any other meeting details for that matter. What I do remember was looking around at a room that was filled for the most part with grey-and white-haired folks. It didn't matter, I was hooked! These people were kindred spirits and for me there was no turning back.

The following fall, as soon as the meetings started up, I was back. At the December meeting a gentleman by the



name of Fred Lloyd rose to speak about the Christmas Bird Count (CBC) and relay some of his personal experiences of past counts. Up to that point I had never heard of the CBC but by the time he finished, there was no doubt in my mind, I was participating. And that I did. By the end of my first CBC day I don't believe I had ever been so cold in all my life. The next year and those that followed, I was much wiser and dressed much warmer. To date, the MNC still observes this annual tradition and in 1988 another dimension was added with an "after-the-counts gathering" - a great time for the CBC participants to gather, warm up, swap stories (like encounters with the local authorities and what not), tally the lists, enjoy delicious food and socialize with each other.

I don't remember many field trips in my early years with the club. However, unknown to me as a new member, the club was faltering and it was then that Nelson Poirier decided it was time to take on the challenge of President, put a new executive in place, and the rest is history, as they say.

Starting in January 1987, to help keep members more informed of upcoming meetings and activities, Nelson decided to start a monthly newsletter. In time Diane Allain took on the job and then eventually with plans for the club to have its first booth at the Moncton Lifestyles Show (organized by then-president Steve Mallory) to boost the club's profile in the spring of 1989 I took over as editor.

As Nelson and the new executive proceeded with their plans, one telephone conversation stands out particularly in my mind even though it happened almost 20 years ago. After supper one evening Nelson called to discuss some ideas, which included a new club logo. At the same time, while I was tied to the phone on the wall, my mother, much to my annoyance and standing not much more than a few metres away, decided to start rattling around in the refrigerator to do something about those "green non-science experiments" that were growing there. So with an ear to the phone and in deep discussion with Nelson about the future of the club, and an eye on my mother and what she was discarding from my fridge, the idea of a logo took shape. Within a short period of time the club had its new logo, first seen on the February 1988 Newsletter and I, for a short time anyway, had a fridge that was purged of all things green and fuzzy.

As with any naturalists' club, regular field trips are important. Besides bringing people together to learn from its leader and each other, it also builds relationships while exploring all kinds of interesting things at the same time. Once the MNC started with regular field trips, the possibilities seemed endless, covering birds, botany, star gazing, butterfly and moth identification, to name just a few. Some trips became annual treks to places like

Cocagne to look for winter sea ducks, the Jemseg area in search of spring migrants, or to Lutz Mountain to scout for mushrooms. Others will never be forgotten because one was almost blown off the banks and shores of Joggins while looking for fossils, or having a great time exploring the corners of Albert County. And who in their right mind would travel to Fundy National Park late in the evening looking for woodcock and stay up half the night prowling the dark woods looking for owls? I would!

I would! Sometimes trips were local, to places like Halls Creek and Bells Marsh or far away to places like Point Lepreau.

Believed to have started in February 1993, there is one outing that ties in the love of birds, fellowship and good food, and that is the MNC annual Feeder Tour Trip - a day's outing in which various members open up their homes throughout the day allowing the group to visit and see what is that their feeders. At day's end, a predetermined location is descended upon by starving birders where a wonderful meal awaits them.

The one thing that I've always appreciated about the MNC is that even though most of the members are birdwatchers they are still willing to explore other aspects of nature. However, with many members wanting to find that rare bird rather than hear about it at the next monthly meeting, it was inevitable that an active Rare Bird Alert would come to pass. On January 2, 1987 my husband and I discovered a Northern Hawk Owl in Middlesex. Now, to the best of my memory, even though Alma White was in the process of updating and revising the original Bird Alert that had been designed by David Christie, it wasn't up and running when we had discovered the bird. It wasn't until a meeting night some two weeks later when sightings were asked for that action was taken. Within a few days of the meeting Brian Dalzell decided to look for the owl and confirmed its existence. It was at that point that the new Bird Alert was put into action. Over night the Middlesex Northern Hawk Owl went from being a lone bird on a wire minding his own business to star status as I'm sure it became the most photographed bird that winter. "Neither rain 'nor sleet, icy roads or foul weather could deter a keen group in search of a feather!" (Author unknown.)

The new and improved Rare Bird Alert, was a complicated telephone calling network and has had several coordinators over the years with many adjustments to keep it efficient. As a result it has allowed numerous keen MNC birders to see birds like the Gyrfalcon (Riverview, starting in the winter 1988 until the dump closed several years later), Painted Bunting (Moncton Nov. 1990), Harris's Sparrow (Moncton Feb. 2000), Great Gray Owl (Hopewell Cape Jan. 1996).

labeled by some as the "biggest twitch in N.B.", and the Broad-billed Hummingbird (Elgin Nov. 1999) just to name a few. Now, with the use of modern day technology, only one call by the coordinator is necessary to alert those keen birders to quickly hear about the newest vagrant.

As the club grew in numbers during the fall of 1989 it was soon realized that we were quickly outgrowing the small room at the Moncton Museum and a search was underway for a better location. For a few years the club met at the then new library in the Blue Cross Centre, then in 1993 a lecture hall at the Dieppe Community College. Finally, later in the year, the Church of the Nazarene on Fieldcrest Dr., just off of Mountain Road, was discovered, and has met our growing needs to this day.

Throughout the years many fun things have taken place that go beyond the scheduled meetings and field trips.

In 1988 Stuart Tingley saw the need and the desire of new birders to learn more. This resulted in a series of Birding Workshops that he developed which eventually led to the annual Grand Manan trip that takes place over the May long weekend as well as another weekend in late September. Many MNC members and friends look forward to these trips each year. Another tradition that has its roots from these Birding Workshops is the Birding Milestone Certificates which are presented by Shirley Hunt each year at Members Night to those in recognition of their 200, 250, 275, 300, 325, or 350 N.B. bird. With new found knowledge from things like Stu's Birding Workshops, field trips and special speakers, members became more confident and knowledgeable so that many agreed to participate in the five-year survey needed to produce the Atlas of Breeding Birds of the Maritime Provinces which was released in October 1992.

In the spring of 1990 the club participated in its first Baillie Birdathon. Every year since, Shirley Hunt and Brian Coates look for sponsors to keep this tradition going. Not only do they have fun counting birds on any day of their choosing but it provides revenue for the club.

With the club becoming more active in the community, requests for speakers, mostly on the subject of birds, were coming into the executive committee and it was soon realized that an educational committee needed to be organized to meet with the demand. In September 1991 the plea went out and volunteers were found and sent not only to speak to classes in schools but to Scouts and Guides Groups as well as adult groups. (In September 2000 Bob Cotsworth reported that the committee had already made 37 presentations that year.) The next necessary step was to arm these educators with the proper tools, so Diane Allain in May 1992 sent out another request to the members, this time asking them for

their best slides of common birds so that they could be copied and be used in the presentations.

With an interest in the Nature Trust of New Brunswick, MNC members participated in a workshop and field study weekend held in May 1992 at the Irishtown Nature Park to compile scientific data on the incidence and breeding numbers of the wood turtle in the Moncton area.

Chris (Antle) & Company, going beyond arranging field trips, also organized an Art Show and Sale in the fall 1993. This gave members with talents in photography, painting, needlework, sculpture etc. an opportunity to display their work for a short time at a local frame shop, either for fun or with hopes of selling. The first plant sale was also stated in 1993. Chris & Company was at it again with "Project Bluebird" in 1994, when they held an indoor field trip to build boxes and make plans for a new Bluebird Trail.

For several years, starting in 1996, children of all ages had an opportunity to learn about nature at their level with the "Chickadee Club". MNC members also participate annually in Project FeederWatch as well as in a project started in 1998 known as "Migratory Sea Bird Survey" or "SuperWatch".

For those who could attend, how could they forget, in February 1998 when the 36th Anniversary Supper that mysteriously turned into a "Roast" to honour Nelson Poirier, "the voice of our club who has been so instrumental in making our club the success that it is." as then-president Mike Antle wrote. With spring always being a busy season, the club still found time on May 8, 1999 to officially open the Cape Enrage Seabird Observatory as well as every year keep its obligation to clean its section of the Dobson Trail that runs from the Levy Road to Berryton in Albert County.

Other unofficial projects over the years have been the ongoing maintenance of a nature trail at Halls Creek, located in the heart of Moncton, under the watchful eye of Oscar LeBlanc. If this trail had a guest book over the years I'm sure that it would have had hundreds of signatures, not to mention an impressive bird, butterfly and dragonfly list.

In local projects, the club has worked closely with the City of Moncton with regards to the development of the Irishtown Nature Park and provincially, the club has hosted the NBFN in both August 1987 and in June 1993 as well as being a joint host with Les Ami(e) de la Nature in the spring of 1997.

Every club needs a dynamic letter writer. In our case Bob Cotsworth has worked quietly behind the scenes to keep the club moving ahead. Over the years Bob has written letters to people in office, letters to explain a position or an issue, and last but not least letters to apply

for grants that eventually helped to finance not only the Clubs booklet "Birding in the Greater Moncton Area", which was released in May of 1996, but a grant to obtain a much-needed slide projector for the club's meetings.

Before the internet and NatureNB became popular, a supplement to the club's newsletter was needed. Again, with Nelson as its brainchild, it was decided to bring onboard in 1993 a local but daily nature Information Line (506-384-NEWS). Its purpose was to allow members to report anything that was of immediate interest to other members, whether it was the newest migrants during a spring migration, field trip details or updates, as well as reminding members of upcoming meetings. The system hasn't been without its technical challenges over the years. Just ask Nelson or others who have filled in when he's been out of town, but the Line, an alternative to the internet, has its faithful following and serves a purpose for those that like to be kept up to date with any developments either within the club or in the area.

The pure economics of life demands that money for these one-time or on-going projects need to be financed and that is where the club's Ways & Means come in. All along the way the Ways & Means people have been continually at work helping to raise the much needed funds to keep the club going and its many projects. The 50/50 draw, raffles, club pins, mugs, t-shirts, you name it and it seems that they have tried it. The Ways & Means have also built up an impressive audio and visual library that is rented out to club members at a nominal fee. It is yet another way to educate and entertain its members.

Now, this is where I'm going to get myself into trouble if I start naming more names... This club has been only as strong as its executive and its committees and over the years there has been many, many, many dedicated individuals who have served on the executive or committees as Presidents, Vice-Presidents, Secretaries, Treasures, Program Committee, Field Trip Coordinators, Newsletter, Promotions, Ways & Means, Membership, Bird Alert Line, Environmental Watchdogs, Information Line, Educational, NBNF Representatives, Christmas Bird Count, Joys & Sorrows, etc.

As you can see it would be impossible to list everyone who has served over the years in one way or another and not leave someone off the list. I only hope that those who have served on the executive and the committees of this club as with all clubs realize how appreciated and necessary they are in order to have a successful club!

I find it is absolutely amazing how much knowledge and talent we have in our Moncton Club, so much so that I could not write this article and not make mention of some of these people.

It was with great pride when one of its founding members, Mary Majka, received an honorary degree from UNB in Oct. 1998 for her life's work in raising the environmental consciousness of Canadians. Not only that, but in November 2000 both Mary Majka and David Christie were honoured by the Conservation Council of N.B. with its Annual Milton F. Gregg Conservation Awards. Not only being members of the MNC but founding members of the NBNF, they were recognized for being "instrumental in establishing Mary's Point as an international hemispheric shorebird reserve".

As with any club or group that is approaching its 45th anniversary we have lost some wonderful people over the years either to other commitments, transfers, age, illness, or even death. Some of these people quietly supported the club by faithfully attending its monthly meetings. Others let their hair down, so to speak, by showing us their wit and humour during a Members Night presentation (an annual event since May 1988), while others demonstrated their sense of adventure by showing up for field trips, regardless of the time, location or weather. However, I don't think our club was more shaken to its core than with the loss of Rob Walker due to a car accident in April of 2001. Those who knew Rob could not but be amazed at his broad knowledge of nature, his patience in teaching others and his love for the great outdoors. Since I believe in Heaven and a Creator, I'm secretly hoping that some part of eternity will be spent exploring the majesty of the heavens with Rob leading the way.

Now that we have entered the 21st century the MNC has added yet another way in which it can keep its members and interested parties better informed – the creation, through the efforts of Bob Childs, of the club's first web site, found at www.monctonnaturalistsclub.org. As well, more plans are afoot by the executive to offer more workshops with the latest one being offered this past spring.

I know that I have left out far too many names of those who make the club tick both now and in the past. For that I truly apologize, but hopefully I have given a bit of background to where the Moncton Naturalists' Club has come from and what makes it so special.

In February 1992 in celebration of the club's 30th Anniversary, Elaine Bonnell wrote the words for a song and I think that the last bit sums up our club best.

"We have field trips, slide show, lecturers and heaven knows, Bats, bears, foxes, butterflies and moths, Mushrooms, fungus, fishes, whales and fossils. I'll tell you what, you'll learn a lot... at the Moncton, Naturalists Club."

Let's thank the members gone before, who made this club so great..."

AGM 2005 REPORT

Therese Peuramaki

NBFN – 33rd AGM held at Sussex

June 3, 4, 5, 2005

Hosted by the Kennebecasis Naturalists' Society

There were 124 participants, including outing leaders, speakers and guests.

It all began on Friday evening with the Annual General Meeting followed by viewing the Chimney Swifts downtown as well as a Meet and Greet at the Tea Room.

Three to five hundred birds were seen. They went down uncharacteristically late. Normally their circling pattern around the flue begins at twilight followed by the BIG DIVE down the chimney to roost for the night.

On Saturday and Sunday mornings, Wilma and John Arisz and Dianne McFarlane led early bird outings. These were followed by half-day and full-day trips 11 altogether.

The banquet on Saturday evening was lively. Our guest speaker, Dr. Kate Frego, educated and entertained us on the subject of bryophytes. We had a song by Alison McArthur and a very animated poetry recital by Gart Bishop. During the meal, a silent auction raised \$1227 and a 50/50 draw raised \$133. The lucky 50/50 winner spent it all on the silent auction.

A van tour led by Donna Monahan was popular and

some features included the Kennebecasis River, a demonstration by Brent Stanley of the Kennebecasis River Restoration Project, covered bridges and homes and birthplaces of famous residents. A scavenger hunt's 100 points for seeing Frank McKenna went unclaimed. Jim Wilson tried to collect points for a dead skunk, or was it a dead raccoon?

"Old Mines and Caves" outings were led by Roger Albert and Jim Brown. They took in Dalling's, Cave up in the hills behind Waterford. The 45-minute hike from the road to the cave, followed a beautiful stream bed. One of the nicest features of this cave was that it contained a 2m waterfall. The Ice Caves at Waterford (there was ice in them!) were basically a cavern at the base of a sink hole. Participants also went to the old manganese mine at the Glebe, entering a short distance into the tunnel as the leader checked for loose rocks. There was standing room inside. They were cautioned not to go much further, for safety reasons. Its nicest feature was that the day was hot and inside it was nice and cool.

The "Cotter Hollow, Native Trees and Shrubs outing, led by Therese Peuramaki, featured Witch Hazel, Red Spruce, Eastern Hemlock, Purple Trillium, Winter Wren and a local character looking for his lost cow.

Jim Goltz led the "Big Salmon River" outing. It was a plant identification filled hike to the Hearst Lodge with

(continued on next page)

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great weather and lots of ocean views.

The "Kayaking with the Hammond River Angling Association" outings were full both days. Saturday's weather was perfect but Sunday's was far from it. All different skill levels were evident. People who returned from the outings said they really enjoyed them and were wet only on Sunday from the rain.

On the "Cornhill Nursery" tour Bob Osborne led participants through the gardens, the greenhouses, and bedding preparation areas while answering everyone's questions related to turning their thumbs green (or more green).

Judy and Don Dow led the "Spring Wildflowers on Orland's Walk" outing featuring Wild Leeks, Spring Beauties, Wild Oats, Trout Lily, Yellow Violets, Dutchman's-breeches and Bloodroot. Mosquitoes might have been there too.

"The Bluff" outing, led by Stephen Clayden, featured the rare Spike Moss, Bearberry, wildflowers, lichens and panoramic views.

The "Small Green Plants" outing, led by Bruce Bagnell, was a concentrated look at mosses and liverworts behind Sussex Regional High School. Participants were surprised and delighted by the number of different species in such a small area. Magnifying lenses were popular.

Matt Betts led the "Mature Hardwood Forest" outing. The weather didn't co-operate for this one. It poured most of the day. All the same, the outing featured a stand that

contained no softwoods. Bird calling drew a variety of species. A hollow tree was seen, the type that Chimney Swifts would be drawn to roost in the absence of chimneys. There was a proliferation of mosses on the hardwoods and downed logs for discussion. And with a "little" push, the mud gave way and it was back to town.

The "Potash Rock Formations" with Brian Roulston began with instruction on the mine operation and a discussion of the water/flooding issues and how they were being looked after. Participants looked at mineral samples and went for quite a hike up into the hills to see local rock formations and flora. A Fringed Violet (*Viola sagittata*) - there was a whole field of them - and Poison Ivy were collected for later identification.

Our host facility was the campus of Bethany Bible College, of which turned out to be an ideal venue with excellent facility/event management and the cooperation with our key contact, Rosemary Moorhead. Throughout the weekend, displays by local groups and artisans were on hand for participants to enjoy.

The 10-member committee's closing barbeque had us all reminiscing on how well the weekend went, on our pleasure in hosting fellow naturalists, and on friendships that sprouted.

The committee members were Gart Bishop, Rosemary Moorhead, Jim Brown, John Rodger, John Arisz, Therese Peuramaki, Donna Monahan, Carol McFarlane, Jim McQueen and Alison McArthur.

Veillez devenir membre de la Fédération des naturalistes du Nouveau-Brunswick Inc. afin d'aider à éduquer les gens de la province de notre patrimoine naturel et de protéger sa flore, sa faune, et ses écosystèmes.
Oui, je/nous désirons appuyer la Fédération des naturalistes du Nouveau-Brunswick Inc.!

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NATURE NEWS: BIRDS APRIL 11 TO JULY 21, 2005

Ken MacIntosh

Arrival of spring migrants

Spring weather this year featured systems which compressed migration into fewer and more spectacular events than usual. April 12 was one such heavy migration day. A cold front which brought snow to the Fundy coast also carried peak numbers of seaducks past Point Lepreau; many seaducks were also recorded at Waterside (DSC). On the same day, some 200 **Tree Swallows** (*Hirondelle bicolor*) were seen seeking insects at Kennebecasis River (JGW, Harvey McLeod), and feeders in the Fredericton area were invaded by **Dark-eyed Junco** (*Junco ardoisé*) and companions. The following days, especially April 16, featured many reports of early spring migrants such as **Tree Swallow**, **Palm Warbler** (*Paruline à couronne rousse*), **Eastern Phoebe** (*Moucherolle phébi*), **Turkey Vulture** (*Urubu à tête rouge*) and **American Kestrel** (*Crécerelle d'Amérique*).

The first substantial numbers of returning **Yellow-rumped Warblers** (*Paruline à croupion jaune*) were noted at Bayside, April 19 (Tracey Dean), at Grand Manan Island (GMI), April 19 (BED), and at Marys Point, April 20 (DSC).

April 24 week produced many reports of **Pied-billed Grebe** (*Grèbe à bec bigarré*), **Wilson's Snipe** (*Bécassine des marais*), **Snow Geese** (*Oie des neiges*), and **Blue-winged Teal** (*Sarcelle à ailes bleues*). Also noted were the first **Barn Swallows** (*Hirondelle rustique*) and **Greater Yellowlegs** (*Grand Chevalier*).

On May 6, Brain Dalzell reported a fallout at GMI featuring **Eastern Kingbirds** (*Trian triti*), as well as **Black-and-white Warbler** (*Paruline noir et blanc*), among mostly Yellow-rumps and Palms. Jim Wilson reported scattered warblers and **Blue-headed Vireo** (*Viréo à tête bleue*) at Hammond River, May 11. On the following day, Ralph Eldridge reported a major movement of warblers at Machias Seal Island.

May 20 proved an exciting day for Jim Wilson on White Head Island, where he encountered great numbers of warblers and sparrows.

On a May 31 circumnavigation of Grand Manan Island, Laurie Murison counted 50 **Common Loons** (*Plongeon huard*) in migration. She also noted 560 **Red-necked Phalaropes** (*Phalarope à bec étroit*) in flocks of various size. Red-necked Phalaropes were also observed at Sheep Island by BED, who saw groups on May 31.

Species Reports

A small goose, with Canadas, discovered by Don Gibson at Burton, April 23, had all the features of a **Cackling Goose** (*Bernache de Hutchins*) several observers agreed later that day.

Brant (*Bernache cravant*) are expected at seasonal coastal haunts, but one at Carleton Park in Fredericton, May 15, was a rare treat (Gilles Belliveau).

A few **Eurasian Wigeon** (*Canard siffleur*) are found most years in spring, and this year was no exception. They were located at Musquash, April 16 (Tracey Dean), two at Hammond River, May 2 (JGW), at Lower Jemseg DATE? (Don Gibson, *et al*), Central Hampstead, June 9 (SIT, NGGB), at Cap Brûlé, June 9 (SIT, NGGB), and finally June 12, at Tracadie Sheila by Jocelyn Godin (*vide* Roger Dumaresq).

There were several accounts of the Eurasian subspecies of **Green-winged Teal** (*Sarcelle d'hiver*); one was at Lower Jemseg, April 24 (Don Gibson, *et al*), one at Saints Rest Marsh, Saint John, April 20 (JGW), three in the Saint John River near McGowans Corner (Gilles Belliveau), and at Hammond River, April 25 (JGW).

There have been a few reports in recent years of scoters at inland locations. Gord Dunphy reported **Surf Scoters** (*Macreuse à front blanc*) on the Nashwaak River at Taymouth, May 16, while Don Gibson and Peter Pearce recorded one at French Lake, June 24. It should be noted that they report enduring an aerial assault by a Bullhead fish just prior to the scoter observation.

The only report of **Ruddy Duck** (*Érismature rousse*) this spring was of one at the Fort Beauséjour marsh, May 12 (Kathy Popma).

The first **Sooty Shearwater** (*Puffin fuligineux*) and **Parasitic Jaeger** (*Labbe parasite*) of the year were seen with a flock of gulls, May 31, off GMI (Laurie Murison).

The most unexpected sighting of the season was certainly a **Red-billed Tropicbird** (*Grand Paille-en-queue*) which graced the skies over Machias Seal Island on July 11. The bird was seen by two groups of chartered tourists, as well as by lighthouse keeper Ralph Eldridge and researcher Alex Bond. Jim Wilson commented that this sighting "would be a 'first' for New Brunswick (and I believe Canada) and is not the most expected of the tropicbirds. Actually the White-tailed Tropicbird, which breeds as close as Bermuda, would be more likely to appear here, particularly following a hurricane or tropical storm. The Red-billed Tropicbird breeds well into the

tropics and only occasionally wanders up the Atlantic Coast."

We had the usual rash of white egrets along the southern coast, beginning with **Great Egrets** (Grande Aigrette) at Grand Bay and Red Head the week of April 17, and a **Snowy Egret** (Aigrette neigeuse) at Castalia, April 27. A **Little Blue Heron** (Aigrette bleue) followed at GMI, April 29 (BED). A **Cattle Egret** (Héron garde-boeufs) was found May 7 at Bourgeois (Armand Melanson, MNC). On June 7 Don Gibson had a call from a friend at French Lake (near Sunpoke Lake) who reported seeing a Cattle Egret in breeding plumage, and later the same day heard of another at Gagetown. In a submission to the Telegraph Journal "Sightings" section, Pat Norman reports a Cattle Egret at Bonny River, although the accompanying photo appears to be of a Great Egret.

Reports of **Glossy Ibis** (Ibis falcinelle) this year were at Cap Brûlé, April 20 (RAM), and May 7 at Sheffield (Don Gibson). An Environmental Science class from Simonds High School scooped birders by detecting four at Red Head Marsh, Saint John, May 9.

The only spring report of **Cooper's Hawk** (Épervier de Cooper) was of one near Neguac, seen July 7 by Ivy Austin. A very unusual summer sighting of **Rough-legged Hawk** (Buse pattue) was made June 26, by Roy and Charlotte LaPointe, in the Madawaska Black Brook area. Plumage differences noted at separate sightings suggested to Roy the possibility of two birds in the area. A first year **Golden Eagle** (Aigle royal) was a nice find for Frank Branch, June 10 near Pokeshaw.

The Moncton Naturalists hotline reported the following cause célèbre: "July 9, Alain Clavette was very pleased to spot a downy chick crossing his yard pond with its two **Sora** (Marouette de Caroline) parents. This has been a very pleasant event for Alain to see the Sora pair successfully nest in the relatively small, man-made pond just beside his house."

A rare summer resident, **Common Moorhen** (Gallinule poule-d'eau) was found several times this season. Nicole Benoît and Lucille Landry reported one in Petit-Gaspereau, April 29. Others were at McGowans Corner, May 9 (Peter Pearce, Don Gibson), at Long Pond, GMI (discovered by Jean-Sebastien Guénette, May 23), and heard at Central Hampstead, June 9 (SIT, NGGB). **American Coot** (Foulque d'Amérique) was reported at Fort Beauséjour marsh, May 12 (Kathy Popma), then June 11 at the same location (SIT, NGGB).

Jim Brown confirmed the annual return of **Sandhill Cranes** (Grue du Canada) to Havelock on May 3. A crane at Juniper, June 12, was a great find for Yvon and Cathy Beaulieu.

Brian Dalzell came up with 23 Upland Sandpipers (Mauvèche des champs) on the Pennfield blueberry barrens, July 2.

Peter Pearce found a Pectoral Sandpiper (Bécasseau à poitrine cendrée) with seven species of shorebirds at Wilkins Field, Fredericton, May 15.

Found annually in the fall, **Stilt Sandpiper** (Bécasseau à échasses) was a very unusual discovery at the Cap Brûlé sewage lagoon, July 3 (NGGB).

When **Ruff** (Combattant varié) are found in New Brunswick, they are often in the less exotic female or juvenile plumages, so an adult male at the Riverside Trail in Moncton, May 17, was a real treat for Louis-Émile Cormier.

Wilson's Phalarope (Phalarope de Wilson) was found in familiar haunts, three at Upper Gagetown, May 12 (Gilles Belliveau), and four at Lower Jemseg, May 23 (Merv Cormier).

In addition to those seen off Grand Manan (see above), 31 **Red-necked Phalaropes** (Phalarope à bec étroit) were found May 29 at Arthur Street lagoon, by Michel Cormier (*vide* Yolande LeBlanc), and another was at the Saint-Léonard lagoon, May 29, (Roy LaPointe).

Imagine that you are called by telephone to help identify a gull-size bird seen pecking through roadside gravel at Kedgwick River. What would come to mind? Upland Sandpiper? Meadowlark? Pheasant? If you said **Long-tailed Jaeger** (Labbe à longue queue), then your mind works in strange ways. Only Pat Emond knows what he thought when a forest ranger called (May 5) to report the bird, but seemed appropriately incredulous upon seeing it. The jaeger had also reportedly been seen the previous day by the owner of a nearby farm at Montgomery Hill. Among many who saw the bird the next day, Roy LaPointe provided interesting comments about its behaviour, seemingly oblivious to passing vehicles and admiring birders as it patrolled the shoulder in search of food. The jaeger was not seen again after May 6.

Two **Laughing Gulls** (Mouette atricille) were found this year at Long Pond, Grand Manan, May 28 (BED) and five at Castalia, GMI, June 28 (Peter Pearce). Several pairs are nesting at Machias Seal Island.

There were several reports of **Lesser Black-backed Gull** (Goéland brun): Apr 17, at Fredericton (Gilles Belliveau), two near Oromocto April 25 (JGW), four at Hammond River, Apr 27 (JGW), and one at Ste-Marie-St-Raphael (Lamèque) near the fish factory, June 23 (Ivy Austin).

Paula Trecartin of Caraquet submitted a description of a bird she saw on June 26 to the Telegraph Journal "Sightings" column. The description suggests a **White-winged Dove** (Tourterelle à ailes blanches).

Luc DeRoche made the following report to Nature NB on June 17. "While at work this week, I was reading the local newspaper and noticed a photograph of a **Snowy Owl** (Harfang des neiges), taken in Belledune during the past week! I remember being quite surprised at this. Later that same day, I got a call from a friend in Petit-Rocher telling me he had just seen a Snowy Owl very close to route 134 near the Noranda Smelter in Belledune. I immediately drove up and it took around fifteen minutes to find the bird. It was standing near a stream about one hundred feet from the road. I was happy to see that it had not been hit by a car. While approaching him, he attempted several times to take flight but no avail, he was too weak even to lift off the ground." The bird was dusty, plagued with parasites and severely malnourished. Despite expert care, the owl perished.

Many look forward to the arrival of the first **Ruby-throated Hummingbirds** (Colibri à gorge rubis) as a harbinger of spring. What was likely the first seen in the province buzzed past Laurie Murison at North Head, but was too fast to be eyeballed. The first certain reports were May 6, in the Moncton area (MNC) and at Grand Bay (Jim and Betty Evans).

In the aftermath of last year's invasion, Jim Wilson posted an update on one avian immigrant. Jim "got good looks at the **Red-headed Woodpecker** (Pic à tête rouge) that has taken possession of (a Lorneville) property since it appeared as a first-year bird last fall. It now sports adult plumage and spends most of its day perched atop their roof, either on the peak or on the chimney, but comes down periodically to feed at their feeders."

Another interesting report was submitted to the Telegraph Journal Sightings column. Bob and Sharon Dallison reported that an adult **Red-bellied Woodpecker** (Pic à ventre roux) was visiting their feeder with a young bird in tow, providing the first strong evidence that the species has now nested in the province.

Early June provided a flurry of **Scissor-tailed Flycatcher** (Tyran à longue queue) reports. An immature at Saint George did everything but perform cartwheels to be noticed, June 8 (Ken MacIntosh). On June 11, Marc LeBlanc and Jocelyne Godin found another immature at Johnson Mills, south of Dorchester. Stuart Tingley photographed both birds and recognized plumage differences suggesting two individuals. A probable third immature was seen June 12, at Ste-Anne-de-Madawaska (Roy LaPointe, Roy Pike, Eileen Pike, J. Denys Bourque).

Jim Wilson discovered a **Loggerhead Shrike** (Pie-grièche migratrice) at Jemseg, June 7. Birders who were able to be on the spot the same day had success in relocating this rarity, but it became quite elusive by the

next day. Pierre Champigny issued a tantalizing report June 10 that the bird might still be present.

Merv Cormier is surely the undisputed master of **White-eyed Vireo** (Viréo aux yeux blancs) discovery. On GMI, May 27-28, Merv indicated having seen several.

On June 15, while Saint John slept, Roger Burrows "headed out at 7 am to Shamrock Park and found a **Yellow-throated Vireo** (Viréo à gorge jaune)....The song was very distinctive (slow and wheezy) and the bird was briefly seen."

Northern Rough-winged Swallow (Hirondelle à ailes hérissées) identification requires a keen observer. Brian Dalzell found some perched on wires at Grand Manan, May 6. Roger Guitard found one at the lagoon at Point-Verte, June 7.

A **Carolina Wren** (Troglodyte de Caroline) was heard at Fredericton, May 1 (Don Gibson). Another, reported by Bev Schneider, May 3, might have been the same bird.

From the spring arrival desk, we are able to report **Winter Wren** (Troglodyte mignon) arrival at Hammond River, April 15 (Jim Wilson), and **Eastern Bluebird** (Merlebleu de l'Est) arriving April 16 at Dawson Settlement (Dale Gaskin, MNC). Also in that week, **Hermit Thrush** (Grive solitaire) were noted on the Lancaster sewage lagoon trail in Saint John, April 13 (Merv Cormier).

It's not always a good idea for a birder to go out and leave the spouse home to watch the feeder. Roy LaPointe made this mistake April 19, and missed a **Brown Thrasher** (Moqueur roux) at his Saint-Léonard home. Score one for Charlotte. The only other thrasher reported this season was at Marys Point, June 26 (DSC).

More commonly seen in the fall, an **Orange-crowned Warbler** (Paruline verdâtre) appeared for Merv Cormier along the Black Beach Road near Saint John, May 24.

Another of this spring's major finds was a co-operative **Prothonotary Warbler** (Paruline orangée) discovered independently, within about 30 minutes, by Roger LeBlanc and friends, then by Jim Wilson and company, May 17 at Anchorage Provincial Park, GMI. The warbler never had a chance. It lingered for ten days, and was doubtless added to many lists.

Merv Cormier was once again rewarded for diligence when he located a **Hooded Warbler** (Paruline à capuchon) at GMI, May 28. The species has only once been photographed in New Brunswick, so it's too bad the photographer missed this one.

Larry Small reported a **Summer Tanager** (Tangara vermillon) feeding among rockweed on the beach at White Head Island, May 28. **Scarlet Tanager** (Tangara écarlate) were noted much earlier. Kay Alexander had one visit her Saint John feeder for several days in late

April (*fide* JGW). Brad Amirault called Don Gibson to report seeing a male at French Lake, Sunbury County on April 29. Completing the set, a bird matching the description of a **Western Tanager** (*Tangara à tête rouge*) was reported to Durlan Ingersoll by his aunt, at GMI, June 13.

An agitated pair of **Eastern Towhee** (*Tohi à flancs roux*) were likely nesting at the Pennfield barrens, near Utopia, July 2 (BED).

A surprising spring **Clay-colored Sparrow** (*Bruant des plaines*) was found June 26, in Neguac, by Ivy Austin, Roland Chiasson and Jocelyne Godin. **Field Sparrow** (*Bruant des champs*) were reported at Fredericton Junction, May 2, by Frederica Givan, and at the Pennfield barrens, July 2, by Brian Dalzell, who noted many **Vesper Sparrow** (*Bruant vespéral*) the same day. Stuart Tingley reported "at least five (Vespers) singing in early evening in the blueberry fields" between Sackville and Dorchester.

There were relatively few reports of **White-crowned Sparrow** (*Bruant à couronne blanche*) this season. Mention was made of birds April 23 at John Hanson's Saint John feeder, May 6 at GMI (BED), and May 7 at Alma (Doreen Rossiter, MNC).

The **Seaside Sparrow** (*Bruant maritime*) is listed as a "very rare fall visitor" in *Birds of New Brunswick: An Annotated List*. A May 29 observation at New River

Beach by experienced birders from California is an interesting report (*fide* Don Gibson).

Blue Grosbeaks (*Guiraca bleu*) were surprisingly well scattered in the province. Birds were found at Juniper, April 26 (Yvon Beaulieu), April 30 at White Head Island (*fide* Larry Small),

May 3-5 at St-Quentin, (*fide* Roy Lapointe), and May 15 at Miscou (Roger Dumaresq and Frank Branch).

Roy LaPointe was not the only one to leave a feeder unattended. Larry Small left it to his wife to record **Indigo Bunting** (*Passerin indigo*) at their GMI feeder.

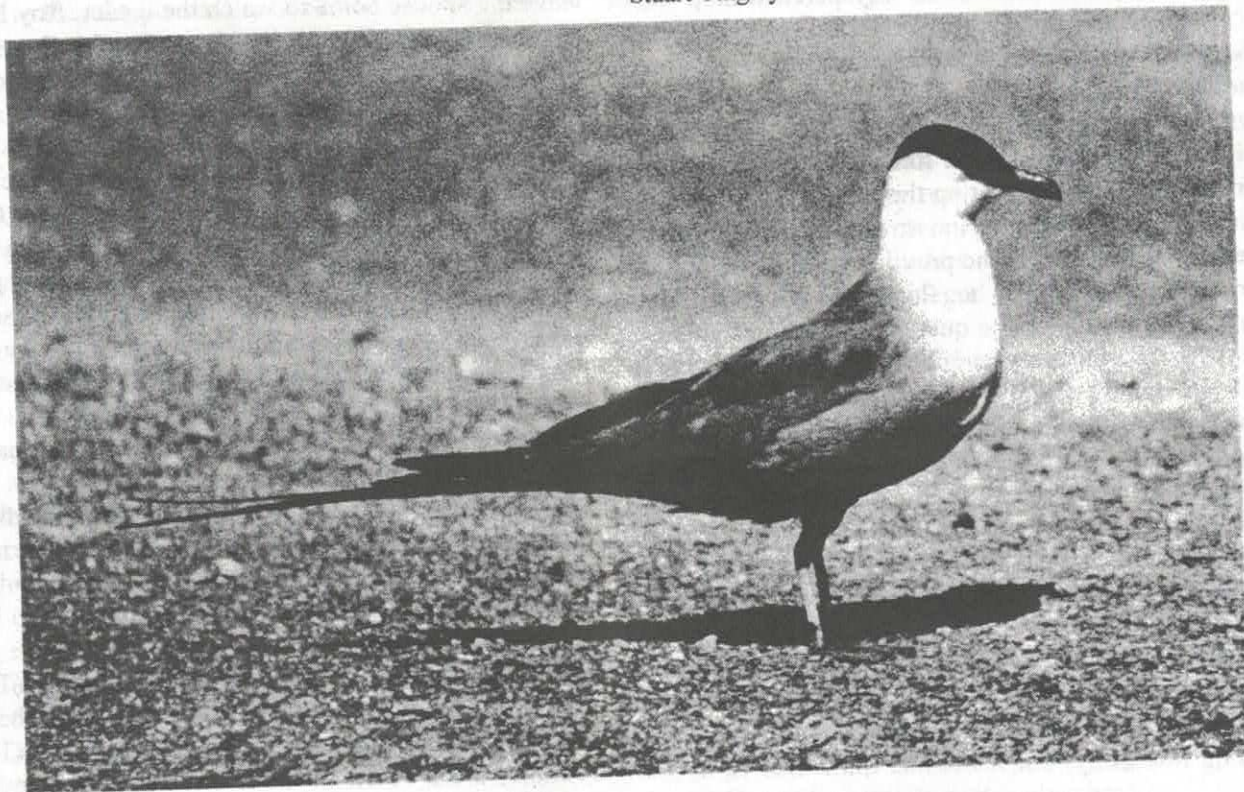
Also at GMI, Brian Dalzell noted a **Dickcissel** (*Dickcissel d'Amérique*) at Southern Head, Grand Manan, May 28.

Dave McLeod reported an update on the **Western Meadowlark** (*Sturnelle de l'Ouest*) which spent much of the winter at Drisdelle. It was last seen April 10, presumably moving on for summer.

A **Yellow-headed Blackbird** (*Carouge à tête jaune*) was a spectacular addition to the yard list for Gloria and Leroy Dobson, who hosted a male at Dieppe, July 8.

We have only a single report of **Orchard Oriole** (*Oriole des vergers*) this spring, of one at North Head, May 23 (Jean-Sébastien Guénette).

Abbreviations: DSC-David Christie; JGW-Jim Wilson; MNC-Moncton Naturalists' Club Hotline transcripts; NGGB-Norm, Gisele and Gilles Belliveau; RAM-Rose-Alma Mallet; SIT-Stuart Tingley.



Long-tailed Jaeger photo by Roy LaPointe

BOTANY RAMBLINGS: 1 May to 31 July, 2005

James P. Goltz

VASCULAR PLANTS

Species New to New Brunswick

At long last, **White Trillium** (*Trillium grandiflorum*) has been confirmed for New Brunswick! For many



White Trillium photo by Carl Munden

years, I had been looking for this species in the province. Whenever I gave a talk on wildflowers or led a foray for spring flowers, I mentioned the possibility that this species could occur here, since it has been rarely found in Maine and Nova Scotia. Despite anecdotal historic reports of this species near Woodstock, all of the tips that I had previously received turned out to be white-flowered Red Trilliums or Nodding Trilliums. However, my "networking" efforts finally paid off. In the spring of 2004, George and Annette Strunz told me that they knew of a spot near Gagetown with "white trilliums". On May 21 of this year, Annette took me and Carl Munden to a patch of woods along the St. John River, where we were thrilled to see over 30 plants of this species in 11 clumps in an area roughly 25 by 25 m. The plants were very robust and in peak bloom, growing in a second-growth medium-aged mixed forest beneath Balsam Fir, White Birch, White Ash and White Spruce, at the foot of a slope, just above the floodplain (where there are Butternuts, Silver Maple and Green Ash). Herbaceous companion plants included Trout Lily, Red Trillium and Woodland Forget-me-not (*Myosotis sylvatica*). It is conceivable that White Trillium could occur naturally along the St. John River but this species has often been transplanted into gardens in the province, and it could also have persisted and spread at this site after being planted there. Unfortunately, the previous owners of the property died a number of years ago, so it won't be possible to find out if these Trilliums are native to New Brunswick. Carl and I checked out nearby patches of woods for more Trilliums but only saw this species in the one locale.

On 21 July, Sean Blaney discovered **Large Yellow Fox Sedge** (*Carex annectens*) in a hayfield that graded into saltmarsh on the tidal portion of the Aboujagane River along the Northumberland Strait, north of Sackville and east of Shediac. In the Maritimes, this sedge species was previously only known to occur at one location in Prince Edward Island but it is common in southern Maine. At the Aboujagane River site, the Large Yellow Fox Sedge was growing almost side by side with **Fox Sedge** (*Carex vulpinoidea*), a similar species that could be confused with it. However, Large Yellow Fox Sedge has culms (stems) that are much longer than the leaves, has shorter broader perigynia that tend to become strongly yellowish at maturity, and has shorter spikes with a greater tendency to have gaps and fewer of the long narrow bracts in the inflorescence (see photos). Also growing with this sedge species were **Dudley's Rush** (*Juncus dudleyi*) and two rare (S2) sedge species, **Limestone-meadow Sedge** (*Carex granularis*) and **Open-field Sedge** (*Carex conoidea*), all three of these latter species apparently also new for Westmorland County. Sean speculates that the area must have more calcareous soil than is typical for southeast NB.

Reports of Rare to Uncommon Species

On 21 June, the clump of **Showy Lady's-slipper** (*Cypripedium reginae*) that grows near Siegas was in bloom (RL, CL). This single clump is the only one known from that area, and it almost met with disaster last fall when the woodlot was cut and logging machinery passed within two meters of the plants.

On 25 June, **Moonwort** (*Botrychium lunaria*) and five other species of Grapeferns were found in good numbers near the headwaters of the Salmon River in J.D. Irving freehold lands east of St.-Leonard during a foray of the New Brunswick Botany Club (JPG). **Small Round-leaved Orchid** (*Amerorchis rotundifolia*) was in peak bloom nearby in a cedar wetland on that date.

On 3 July, Rodrigue Landry found one plant of **Showy Lady's-slipper**, quite likely the first for the Acadian Peninsula, in a swampy cedar wood at Grande-Anse. On 5 July, the Club des Naturalistes de la Péninsule acadienne visited this site and also saw 5 other orchid species, including **Yellow Lady's-slipper** (*Cypripedium parviflorum*), **Bog-candle** (*Platanthera dilatata*), **Tall Northern Green Orchid** (*Platanthera aquilonis*), **Heart-leaved Twayblade** (*Listera cordata*) and **Broad-lipped Twayblade** (*Listera convallarioides*) (RD).

On 18 July, "a lovely clump of" **Hop Sedge** (*Carex lupulina*) was seen at Grand Lake Meadows (GB).

On 25 July, **Pinedrops** (*Pterospora andromedea*) was in bloom at the Eel River, Carleton County; thirteen plants were found there this year (JPG).

Large Purple Fringed Orchid (*Platanthera grandiflora*) was seen in bloom in a small shady "seep", high on a hardwood ridge in Queenstown on July 31 (DS, SM). Four flowering plants and several sterile plants of this species were growing at this site beneath Red Maple, Yellow Birch and Speckled Alder, with Interrupted Fern and Ostrich Fern. At least six plants of this orchid species were also found at Piskahegan Stream on the same date (JPG, DG, SS); most of the plants seen at Piskahegan Stream still had some blooms, but a few were already past flowering.

On 31 July, **Purple Milkwort** (*Polygala sanguinea*) was seen blooming by the "Welcome to Minto" sign (NP).

Blooms and Other Botanical Observations

At least two species of violets, with purple and white flowers respectively, were seen in bloom at Hole-in-the-Wall Park, North Head, Grand Manan Island on 2 May (LM). **Trembling Aspen** (*Populus tremuloides*) was "coming into leaf" at Cumberland Bay, Grand Lake on 2 May (NP).

Trout Lily (*Erythronium americanum*), lots of **Bloodroot** (*Sanguinaria canadensis*) and **Dutchman's-breeches** (*Dicentra cucullaria*), one patch of **Wild Ginger** (*Asarum canadense*) and one plant of **Red Trillium** (*Trillium erectum*) were in bloom along the Tay River off the English Settlement Road on 3 May, while **Wood Anemone** (*Anemone quinquefolia*) was still budded and set to bloom soon (JS).

About 25 Purple Violets (*Viola* sp.) and 100+ **Wild Strawberry** (*Fragaria virginiana*) plants were in bloom at Bancroft Point on 5 May (BD).

By 7 May, **Dandelion** (*Taraxacum officinale*) was in flower at Shediac Bridge, although within 10 m of a building. Bloodroot, **Marsh Marigold** (*Caltha palustris*) and Dutchman's-Breeches were not yet in bloom along the Shediac River by that date, but leaves of **Wild Leek** (*Allium tricoccum*) were "nicely emerged" (NP). At Grand-Digue, many **Red Maple** (*Acer rubrum*) and **Trailing Arbutus** (*Epigaea repens*) were in bloom on that same day, and **Canada Mayflower** (*Maianthemum canadense*) was "popping up all over the place" (RoH). At Scotch Lake, Red Trillium were first noted in bloom on 7 May (MJ).

By 8 May, the male blooms of **Pussy Willow** (*Salix discolor*) at Rabbit Brook were noted to be brilliant yellow (MNCNIL).

On 9 May, the first Trout Lily and a single **Yellow Violet** (*Viola pubescens*) were seen in bloom in the Marys Point area (DSC). On 10 May, many Trout Lilies were seen in bloom in the Crooked Creek valley, and Dandelion had started to bloom along the roadside at Daniel's Marsh (DSC, MM).

On 11 May, the first Wild Strawberry blossom in the Second North River area was seen (MNCNIL).

On 14 May, Wild Strawberry, **Large-leaved White Violet** (*Viola blanda*), Yellow Violet and one plant of **Woolly Blue Violet** (*Viola sororia*) were in bloom at Marys Point. (DSC).

On 17 May, **Serviceberry** (*Amelanchier* sp.) was in bloom between Petitcodiac and Sussex (LM). On that same date, Marsh Marigold was beginning to bloom at Flatlands (AM).

The first blooms of Serviceberry were noted in the Marys Point area on 24 May (DSC).

By 26 May, Dutchman's-breeches were in full bloom along the Shediac River and many **Nodding Trillium** (*Trillium cernuum*) were nearly in bloom (NP).

On 1 June, an **Early Coralroot** (*Corallorhiza trifida*) was seen in bloom near the Forestry Complex at the University of New Brunswick woodlot in Fredericton (JS). By 7 June, a lone plant of this species was nearly finished flowering near Taymouth (JS).

On 2 June, **Rhodora** (*Rhododendron canadense*) was starting to bloom at Cape Jourimain, while Serviceberry was in peak bloom. Other species in flower there on that date were "Common Blue Violet", **Northern White Violet** (*Viola macloskeyi*), **Goldthread** (*Coptis trifolia*) and **Red Elder** (*Sambucus racemosa*). "A cluster of blue violets with the maroon of the emerging Wild Sarsaparilla" (*Aralia nudicaulis*) at the base of a white spruce created "a beautiful composition" (RaH). On the same date, Trailing Arbutus was "in awesome bloom" and Rhodora was "just starting to open" in the Allardville area (NP, JE).

By June 3, both "White" and "Blue" violets were conspicuous at Grand Falls, **Clintonia** (*Clintonia borealis*) and **Starflower** (*Trientalis borealis*) were in full bloom and Red Trillium blooms were on the decline (FJ).

On 5 June, over 100 plants of **Moccasin Flower** (*Cypripedium acaule*) were seen in bloom "at a secret location" near St. Stephen (BD). On 10 June, one plant of Moccasin Flower was seen in bloom at Cape Jourimain, along with Clintonia, Starflower, **Bunchberry** (*Cornus canadensis*), Wild Sarsaparilla and Canada Mayflower (RaH).

A few highlights of a Gagetown Celebration of Birds foray to a poor fen on the Trans-Canada Highway near the Coytown Bridge on 9 June included Moccasin

Flower, **Painted Trillium** (*Trillium undulatum*), **Lance-leaved White Violet** (*Viola lanceolata*), **Tawny Cotton-grass** (*Eriophorum chamissonis*), **Arethusa** (*Arethusa bulbosa*), **Bogbean** (*Menyanthes trifoliata*) and at least 8 four-leaved **Red Clovers** (*Trifolium pratense*) (RM).

On 15 June, **Ragged Robin** (*Lychnis flos-cuculi*) was seen in flower at Shamrock Park and alongside Spar Cove Road in Saint John (RB).

On 20 June, Julie Singleton found **Hooker's Orchid** (*Platanthera hookeri*), **Checkered Rattlesnake-plantain** (*Goodyera tessellata*) and a four-merous plant of **Painted Trillium** (*Trillium undulatum*) in a mature mixed forest at Underwood Brook in the Dungarven drainage system near Blackville. Of all of our trillium species, the Painted Trillium is the one most likely to appear as a "quadrillium" with four leaves, four sepals and four petals.

By 25 June, "spring blooms" had given "way to summer blooms with **Blue Flag Iris**" (*Iris versicolor*), **Blue-eyed Grass** (*Sisyrinchium montanum*), **Ox-eye Daisy** (*Leucanthemum vulgare*) and **Black Chokeberry** (*Photinia melanocarpa*) "showing their colours" at Cape Jourimain (RaH).

On 26 June, **Bird's-foot Anemone** (*Anemone multifida*) at Grand Falls was already in fruit, growing in its typical habitat, a rock face along the river (JS).

A small inconspicuous plant found during a Moncton Naturalists' Club foray to Grand-Digue on 25 June was identified as **Water Pennywort** (*Hydrocotyle americana*) (MNCNIL).

An unusually large plant of **Field Penny-cress** (*Thlaspi arvense*), with pods nearly dime-sized, was found in a field at Upper Coverdale while a farmer was mowing for silage on 27 June (MNCNIL).

On 1 July, a number of **Black Cherry** (*Prunus serotina*) trees were found along Route 112, a part of the province where Nelson Poirier typically only finds occasional scattered trees of this species (NP).

On 5 July, **Musk Mallow** (*Malva moschata*) and **Bush-honeysuckle** (*Diervilla lonicera*) were seen in bloom at Brockway (BS).

On 12 July, Julie Singleton and a group of field botanists from the Dept. of Natural Resources, found and photographed **Spotted Coralroot** (*Corallorhiza maculata*), **Daisyleaf Grape-fern** (*Botrychium matricariifolium*), **Sweet Coltsfoot** (*Petasites palmatus*), **Stinging Nettle** (*Urtica dioica*) and **Water-parsnip** (*Sium suave*) at a site on the Cains River.

On 15 July, single plants of **Ragged Fringed Orchid** (*Platanthera lacera*) were found in bloom at Grande-Digue (RoH) and Cape Jourimain (RaH).

On 16 July, **Common Milkweed** (*Asclepias syriaca*) was "just coming into bloom" near Chipman, and blooms of **Spreading Dogbane** (*Apocynum androsaemifolium*) were very attractive for nectar-seeking butterflies and moths (NP).

On 17 July, **Grass-pink** (*Calopogon tuberosus*), **Rose Pogonia** (*Pogonia ophioglossoides*) and **White Fringed Orchid** (*Platanthera blephariglottis*) were seen in bloom at a bog at Grande-Digue (RoH).

In mid July, **One-flowered Wintergreen** (*Moneses uniflora*) was seen and photographed in bloom at Little Third Lake, Madawaska County (MT).

In mid July, several bizarre plants of **Helleborine** (*Epipactis helleborine*) that completely lacked pigment and had pure white leaves, stem and bracts were found and photographed by Sandy Hopey at Fundy National Park (NP). These plants were not yet in bloom on that date.

On 23 July, 47 species of plants were found in bloom along the NB Trail east of the Prince of Wales exit by members of the Saint John Naturalists' Club. Some highlights included **Horned Bladderwort** (*Utricularia cornuta*), **Grass-pink**, **Joe-pye-weed** (*Eupatorium maculatum*), **Swamp Candle** (*Lysimachia terrestris*) and **Round-leaved Sundew** (*Drosera rotundifolia*), as well as fruits of Wild Strawberry, Raspberry and Blueberry (NN).

Small Purple Fringed Orchid (*Platanthera psycodes*) was in bloom on 25 July at Mactaquac Headpond (BS, MS), and on 31 July at Flaglor Brook (DS, SM) and at Pomeroy Bridge on the Magaguadavic River (JPG, DG, SS).

FUNGI

False Morel (*Gyromitra* sp.) was found at Lower Coverdale in early May, at the site where a forest fire had occurred in the previous year (MP).

Abbreviations:

AM Alan Madden, BD Brian Dalzell, BS Bev Schneider, CL Charlotte LaPointe, DG Don Gibson, DS Dwayne Sabine, DSC David Christie, FJ Frank Johnston, GB Gart Bishop, JE Jim Edsall, JPG James Goltz, JS Julie Singleton, LM Laurie Murison, MJ Marianne Janowicz, MM Mary Majka, MNCNIL Moncton Naturalists' Club Nature Information Line, MP Mike Plourde, MS Marc Schneider, MT Martin Turgeon, NN Ngair Nelson, NP Nelson Poirier, RaH Ramsey Hart, RB Roger Burrows, RD Roger Dumaresq, RL Roy LaPointe, RM Roberta MacKenzie, RoH Rowena Hopkins, SM Scott Makepeace, SS Shirley Sloat.

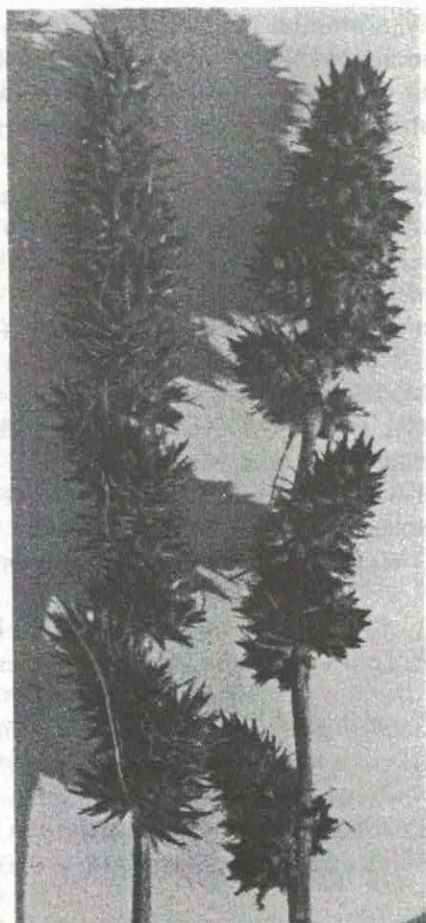


Figure 1

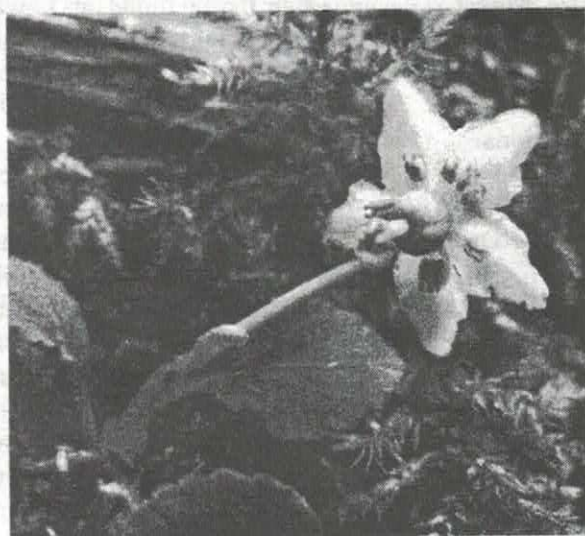
Large yellow Fox Sedge (*Carex annectans*)
Fox Sedge (*Carex vulpinoidea*)
Photos by Sean Blaney



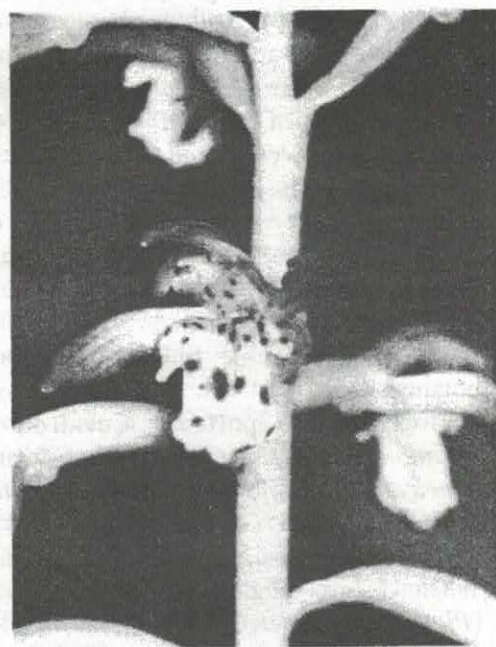
Figure 2

Fig. 1 *C. vulpinoidea* on left and *C. annectans* on right

Fig. 2 *C. vulpinoidea* on top and *C. annectans* on bottom



One-flowered Wintergreen
Photo by Martin Turgeon



Spotted Coral-root
Photo by Julie Singleton

BOTANY CORNER

Gart Bishop

The fresh yellow flowers of Butter-and-eggs (*Linaria vulgaris*) adorn our roadsides, waste areas and neglected gardens from mid-July through October. As a child, I liked the similarity of the flowers to those of the closely related snapdragons I found in my mother's garden. I still enjoy gently pinching the flowers behind the joint of the lower and upper lips, thereby making the flowers "talk", the lower lip separating from the upper one in the fashion of a jabbering creature.

The French name (Gueule de lion) refers to this characteristic, imparting a resemblance to a lion's mouth. The common name, Butter-and-eggs, also seems appropriate for this plant, the lemony yellow and orange of its flowers closely resembling the colour of prized Sussex butter and the yolks of fresh farm eggs. This member of the Snapdragon or Figwort family (*Scrophulariaceae*), is sometimes called Common Toadflax. In fact, because it is found in temperate zones all over the world, it has over 30 different English common names, and who knows how many names in other languages. Its botanical name tells us it is found in the genus *Linaria*, which refers to the similarity the plant bears (particularly the thin alternate leaves) to Common Flax, from which linen is made. The species name *vulgaris* simply means common or ordinary.

Butter-and-eggs originated in Asia, spread to Europe and then was brought to North America by early settlers, not only for its beauty as a garden flower, but also for medicinal use and for making a yellow dye. It was able to escape the confines of the garden, in part due to its two ways of reproducing.

Butter-and-eggs produces seed and spreads by rhizomes (underground stems), which grow as tough and thick as a pencil. The flowers, lasting three or four days, are designed to attract bumblebees. The pollen gets rubbed onto the 'fur' of the bumblebee as it wiggles its way past the flower's mouth to sip the nectar that collects in the spur of the blossom. At the next flower, some of this pollen gets left on the female portion of the flower, thus fertilizing it. Some butterflies cheat by being able to slip their long tongues through the division between

upper and lower lips, and drink up the nectar without coming in contact with the pollen, thus being unable to fertilize the flowers. Humans can view this prized nectar by holding a flower up to the light and looking at the spur; the nectar can fill up to a quarter of it. When depleted by bumblebees or butterflies, the flower takes about eleven hours to replace the nectar.

The winged seeds are adapted to wind dispersal, and will float on the water. While Butter-and-eggs is a prolific seed producer, many of the seeds are sterile. However, the plant spreads quite successfully through its roots and rhizomes. It grows best in the presence of other plants where its roots tap into those of its neighbours and drain off some water and salts, without causing any ill effects.

Butter-and-eggs is a hardy plant, being able to survive fire, herbicides and grazing. Early naturalists, such as Henry David Thoreau, considered it hurtful to pastures and a troublesome weed. Although they tend to graze around it, it can be poisonous to cattle. By the 1950s, it was considered a serious invasive pasture plant. As a result, various insects have been introduced to control its spread.

Butter-and-eggs presents an opportunity to introduce a child in your life to wildflowers. Its colour, names and movable flower parts are easy-to-remember features. Despite some difficult aspects of its personality, its determination to thrive is admirable and its addition to the beauty of our world undeniable.



Butter-and-eggs (*Linaria vulgaris*)

Drawing by: M. Satterlee

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MARITIME BREEDING BIRD ATLAS

Becky Whittam

Second Breeding Bird Atlas project launched!

Twenty years ago, Maritime birders were gearing up for an important project – the Maritimes Breeding Bird Atlas. With the help of over 1,200 volunteers, who donated some 43,000 hours in the field, this project provided the most comprehensive study of bird distribution and abundance in the Maritimes to date. The resulting book became a standard on the shelves of birders across the region.

Breeding bird atlases have been produced in many European countries and in provinces and states across North America. They are normally repeated every 20 years to document changes in bird distribution that may reflect the influence of forestry, agriculture, urban expansion, climate change, natural disasters, bird feeding, and other natural or man-made forces. As one of the few tools that can document these changes scientifically, the atlas model has proved to be extremely valuable in long-term conservation planning and environmental assessment.

Next spring (2006) marks the 20-year anniversary of the start of field work for the first Maritimes Breeding Bird Atlas. With this in mind, a dedicated steering committee consisting of members from various government, university, naturalist, birding and bird conservation organizations has been working hard to raise funds, make decisions and develop the infrastructure required for the second Maritimes Breeding Bird Atlas.

Why conduct a second Atlas now?

Do Whip-poor-wills still breed in the Maritimes? Are Red-bellied Woodpeckers moving in? How severely have Barn Swallows declined over the last 20 years? These questions, and many more, can be answered through a second atlas. Many factors have influenced bird distribution in the 20 years since work began on the first atlas. Governments, corporations, municipal planners and environmental consultants all need current information on bird distribution and conservation in order to satisfy new environmental assessment requirements, species-at-risk legislation, and heightened public and industry awareness.

How will it work?

The second atlas will build on the experience and success of the first, using the same basic method and

structure. In Ontario, researchers are now in the final year of compiling their second atlas (see www.birdsontario.org). Through a cooperative arrangement with Bird Studies Canada, our project will have access to Ontario's sophisticated online data-entry software, which will be modified for the Maritimes.

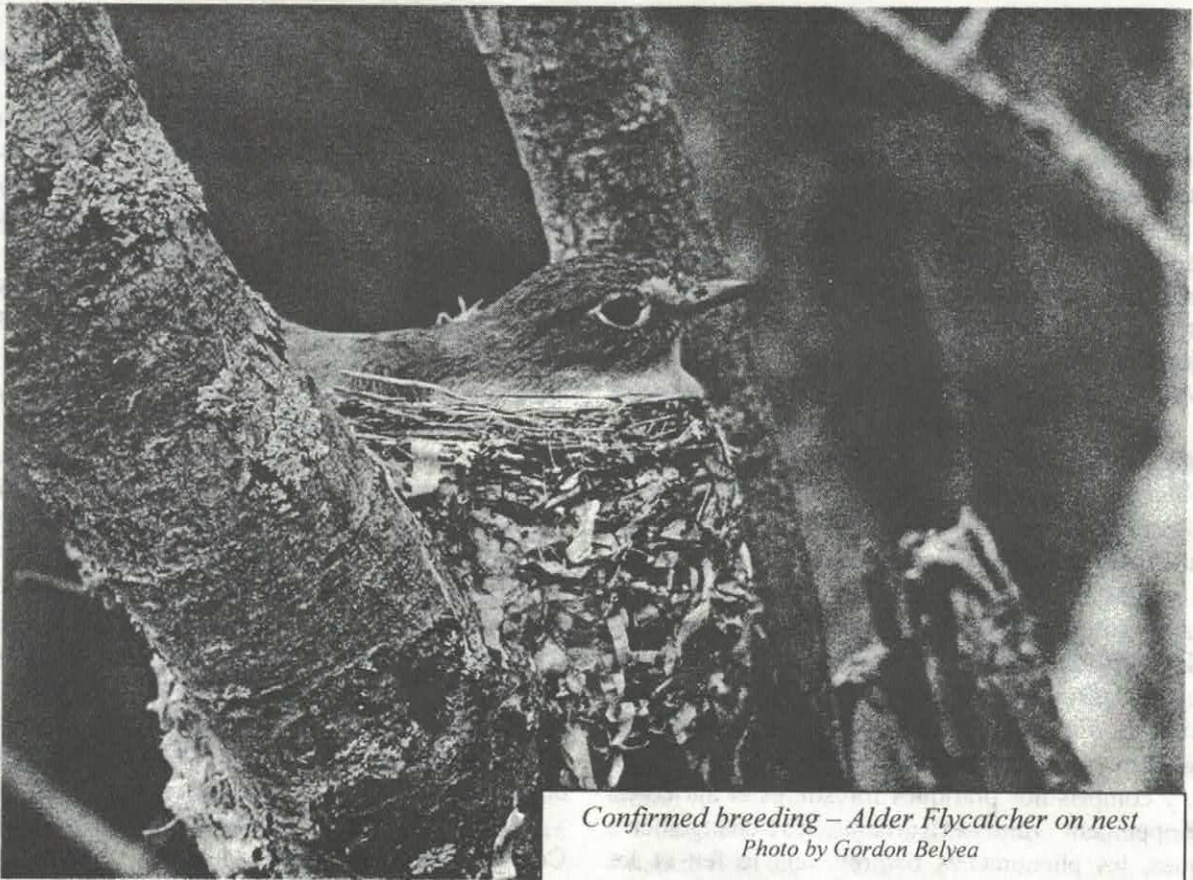
Atlassing fieldwork will be conducted from 2006 to 2010. As in the first atlas, birders will be assigned to 10 x 10 km squares. Within these squares, they will be tasked with finding breeding evidence for an expected number of bird species (based on data collected in the first atlas). Breeding evidence includes everything from singing males to actual nests and fledglings. Some atlassers will conduct point counts (10-minute counts of all birds seen or heard from a particular point) to determine the relative abundance of species in their square. Conducting point counts will be an optional activity for atlassers as it requires considerable skill at identifying birds by song. However, we will be encouraging all birders to consider honing their skill and taking on some point counts in the first or future years of atlas field work.

The second atlas book, anticipated in 2012, will be bilingual, and more comprehensive than the first edition in describing population trends and abundance estimates in the context of regional changes. A web-based, on-line version will be accessible to the public, with details of specific observations such as breeding status, locations, and dates, for use by researchers, government agencies, industry, environmental consultants, and naturalists.

Introducing the Atlas staff

Karel Allard has been hired to coordinate the second atlas. An enthusiastic and skilled birdwatcher, biologist and communicator, Karel will be employed by Bird Studies Canada in the BSC Atlantic office, and housed with the Canadian Wildlife Service in Sackville, New Brunswick. Karel is fluently bilingual. He has experience as a park interpreter, a teacher in schools and universities and as a field biologist for the Canadian Wildlife Service. Karel is just completing his Ph.D. from the University of New Brunswick, and started work with the Atlas at the beginning of August.

An Assistant Coordinator will also be hired through Environment Canada's Science Horizons program, to help Karel with the project. In addition, at least 26 volunteer regional coordinators (RCs) will ensure accurate and consistent coverage by local volunteers.



Confirmed breeding – Alder Flycatcher on nest
Photo by Gordon Belyea

Regional Coordinators are now being identified, and they will come together at a fall training workshop.

Volunteers Needed!

Volunteers are the backbone of any atlassing project. With that in mind, it's never too early to start thinking about atlassing! The 2006 season can start as early as February or March, with Great Horned Owls, Gray Jays and crossbills already engaged in breeding activities. The list of Regional Coordinators will be circulated on the NatureNB, NatureNS and PEI Birding listservs, and will eventually be posted on the Maritimes atlas website. This site has not yet been developed, but the address will be www.mba-aom.ca for "Maritimes Bird Atlas / Atlas des oiseaux des Maritimes". If you're interested in volunteering, contact your local Regional Coordinator for your square assignment(s). You can also contact Atlas Coordinator Karel Allard by email at karel.allard@ec.gc.ca or phone at 506-364-5044.

Sponsors and Partners

The Maritimes Breeding Bird Atlas is a multi-partnered project led by a Steering Committee and

associated subcommittees. Current Steering Committee members include:

Dr. Richard Elliot (**chair**; Canadian Wildlife Service)
 Dr. Phil Taylor (**vice-chair**; Acadia University and Atlantic Bird Observatory)
 Sandy Burnett (Environmental Writer & Communications consultant)
 Dan Busby (Canadian Wildlife Service)
 Rosemary Curley (PE Department of Environment, Energy and Forestry)
 Mark Elderkin (NS Department of Natural Resources)
 Andy Horn (Nova Scotia Bird Society)
 Mike Leblanc (Atlantic Naturalists' Network)
 Scott Makepeace (NB Department of Natural Resources)
 Becky Whittam (Bird Studies Canada)

Funding for the second Maritimes Breeding Bird Atlas has been confirmed from the New Brunswick Wildlife Trust Fund, the New Brunswick Environmental Trust Fund, the Canadian Wildlife Service, the Nova Scotia and New Brunswick Departments of Natural Resources, and Environment Canada's Science Horizons Youth Internship Program. Additional sources of funding from both the private and public sector are being actively pursued.

ATLAS DES OISEAUX NICHEURS DES MARITIMES

Becky Whittam (traduit par Karel Allard)

Deuxième Atlas des oiseaux nicheurs des Maritimes lancé!

Il y a vingt ans, les amateurs d'oiseaux des Maritimes se préparaient à entreprendre un projet d'envergure – un atlas des oiseaux nicheurs pour la région entière. Avec l'aide de plus de 1200 bénévoles dévoués, qui ont contribué plus de 43000 heures sur le terrain, le projet a créé le recueil le plus complet de distribution et d'abondance d'oiseaux de l'histoire des Maritimes. Aujourd'hui ce document constitue un élément essentiel parmi la gamme de ressources disponibles aux passionnés et aux intéressés en matière d'ornithologie chez nous.

Des projets d'atlas similaires ont été entrepris dans plusieurs pays d'Europe, provinces canadiennes, et états américains. Habituellement, le processus se répète à tous les 20 ans afin de documenter les tendances de distribution et d'abondance avec le passage du temps. Ces tendances peuvent être attribuables à de nombreux facteurs, y compris nos pratiques forestières et agricoles, le développement rural et urbain, les changements climatiques, les phénomènes naturels tels le feu et les insectes, et même l'approvisionnement en nourriture de certaines espèces par l'homme. Peu d'outils existent qui nous permettent à la fois de documenter et de voir la nature et l'ampleur de ces tendances. Alors, chaque atlas devient une composante d'une grande stratégie, indispensable à la planification à long terme et à l'évaluation de nos impacts sur l'environnement.

Le printemps 2006 signifiera le vingtième anniversaire du début des activités de terrain de notre premier atlas. Vu ceci, un comité directeur composé de gens provenant de plusieurs paliers gouvernementaux, universités, groupes de naturalistes et de protection de la nature, en plus d'un bon nombre d'amateurs d'oiseaux dévoués, entreprennent présentement l'immense travail de levée de fonds, de prise de décisions, et de création d'infrastructures requis pour la production d'un deuxième atlas des oiseaux nicheurs des provinces maritimes.

Pourquoi un deuxième atlas maintenant?

L'engouement de Caroline niche-t-elle encore dans les Maritimes? Est-ce que les pics à ventre roux se font plus communs chez-nous? De combien les populations d'hirondelle rustique ont-elles affiché une baisse au cours des vingt dernières années? Avec notre deuxième atlas, nous obtiendrons des réponses aux questions précédentes, et à bien d'autres! De plus, nos gouvernements, nos

entreprises, nos gestionnaires municipaux, et nos firmes conseil en environnement ont tous besoin de ce type d'information afin de pouvoir respecter les nouvelles normes environnementales. Ils doivent aussi satisfaire aux règlements se rapportant aux espèces menacées, et à une conscientisation accrue des secteurs public et industriel.

Comment est-ce que cela fonctionnera?

Le deuxième atlas sera conçu en se basant sur l'expérience acquise et les succès du premier atlas, tout en utilisant les mêmes méthodes et structures. Les chercheurs de l'Ontario sont présentement sur le point de produire leur deuxième atlas www.birdsontario.org. À l'aide d'une entente collaborative entre Études d'oiseaux Canada et la province de l'Ontario, notre projet aura accès au logiciel ontarien d'entrée et de gestion des données, qui sera modifié en fonction de nos besoins et objectifs particuliers.

Le travail de terrain sera effectué de 2006 à 2010. Comme pour le premier atlas, chaque participant assumera la responsabilité d'assurer l'inventaire d'un carré de 10 km. À l'intérieur de chaque carré, le participant aura comme tâche de trouver des indices d'activité de reproduction pour un nombre déterminé d'espèces d'oiseaux (liste établie selon les résultats du premier atlas). Ces critères de statut reproducteur bien définis comprennent le chant des mâles, la détection de nids, et la présence de jeunes. Certains participants zélés effectueront aussi des décomptes à point fixe (c'est-à-dire le décompte de tous les oiseaux vus ou entendus à partir d'un point fixe pendant une période de 10 minutes) afin de déterminer l'abondance relative des espèces retrouvées dans un carré. Ces décomptes constitueront une activité supplémentaire pour les amateurs chevronnés car ils requièrent des compétences en identification auditive importantes. D'une façon ou d'une autre, tous seront encouragés à y tenter leur coup au cours des années de collecte de données qui suivront.

Le deuxième atlas, anticipé en 2012, sera bilingue, et plus complet que le premier. De plus, il mettra en valeur les tendances de distribution et d'abondance depuis le dernier atlas. Aussi, une version web offrira des détails sur des observations particulières, par exemple le statut reproducteur, le lieu et la date. Ces informations seront à la portée de tous, y compris chercheurs, agences gouvernementales, industries, consultants en environnement, et naturalistes.

L'équipe de l'Atlas? La voici!

Karel Allard a été embauché afin de coordonner le deuxième atlas. Biologiste, amateur d'oiseaux, et vulgarisateur, Karel travaillera aux bureaux d'Études d'oiseaux Canada et du Service canadien de la Faune situés à Sackville au Nouveau Brunswick. Karel est bilingue et a de l'expérience comme interprète de parc, enseignant au niveau secondaire, professeur universitaire, et biologiste de terrain pour le Service canadien de la faune. Karel est sur le point de compléter son doctorat en biologie à Fredericton (U.N.B.) et commencera son travail avec l'atlas dès le début août.

Un assistant coordonnateur ajoutera ses efforts à ceux de l'équipe grâce au Fonds Horizon d'Environnement Canada. L'assistant coordonnateur, qui sera choisi sous peu, se chargera de tâches spécifiques reliées à la formation des bénévoles, et aussi viendra épauler l'équipe lors des périodes les plus exigeantes du projet. De plus, au moins 26 coordonnateurs régionaux bénévoles, tous amateurs de grande expérience, assureront une collecte de données juste et constante par tous les bénévoles sur le terrain. Tous les coordonnateurs régionaux des trois provinces maritimes se réuniront pour une première session de formation collective dès cet automne.

Vous! Oui, nous avons besoin de votre participation!

Il est clair que le travail des bénévoles constitue l'aspect le plus important d'une telle initiative. C'est pourquoi nous avons besoin de votre participation, et il n'est jamais trop tôt pour commencer à y songer (et même à y rêver)! La saison 2006 peut débuter dès le

mois de février ou mars, avec les hiboux grand duc, les geais gris, et les becs-croisés, qui auront déjà entrepris leurs activités de reproduction. La liste affichant tous les coordonnateurs régionaux sera distribuée sur les sites NatureNB, NatureNS, et PEI Birding sous peu, et seront éventuellement affichés sur le site de l'Atlas des oiseaux nicheurs des Maritimes. Ce site n'a pas encore vu le jour mais son adresse a été choisie www.mba-aom.ca « Maritimes Bird Atlas / Atlas des oiseaux des Maritimes ». Si vous voulez participer en tant que bénévole, contactez votre coordonnateur régional afin de connaître l'identité de VOTRE lopin carré de 10 km! Vous pouvez aussi joindre Karel Allard par courriel karel.allard@ec.gc.ca ou par téléphone au (506) 364-5044 afin d'en savoir plus.

Commanditaires et partenaires

L'Atlas des oiseaux nicheurs des provinces maritimes est un projet à plusieurs partenaires mené par un comité directeur et ses sous-comités. Les membres du comité directeur sont:

Dr. Richard Elliot (**directeur**; Service canadien de la faune)

Dr. Phil Taylor (**vice-directeur**; Acadia University, Atlantic Bird Observatory)

Sandy Burnett (Écrivain en environnement, consultant en communication)

Dan Busby (Service canadien de la faune)

Rosemary Curley (PEI Department of Environment, Energy and Forestry)

Mark Elderkin (Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources)

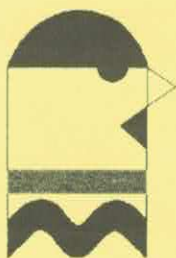
Andy Horn (Nova Scotia Bird Society)

Mike Leblanc (Atlantic Naturalists' Network)

Scott Makepeace (Département des ressources naturelles du NB)

Becky Whittam (Études d'oiseaux Canada)

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Info nature compte sur les membres de la FNNB afin qu'ils nous communiquent leurs observations nature. Les personnes suivantes se partagent la tâche d'assurer un suivi aussi complet que possible à ce niveau. Veuillez faire parvenir vos informations à la personne appropriée.

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