



Island Nature Trust Update

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August, 2010
Issue 110



Summertime, and the projects are hectic



The Nature Trust staff and volunteers have been at a dead run all summer, delivering great projects and meeting the demands of assignments. At this delightful time of year, you can find INT staff and volunteers protecting Piping Plovers, recording plants and animals on our properties, removing Invasive Alien Species, assisting with research at Basin Head and inspecting and recording the condition of natural areas across the province.

To see what staff is working for the Trust this year and the projects they are working on, see page 3.

Acquisitions continue to progress, and new potential properties are coming to our attention nearly weekly.

Over the next very few weeks staff numbers will dwindle as students return to school and as projects end.

We did achieve a great deal—over 30 properties were inspected and had massive amounts of information added to their files. Base Line Documents have been created for most of those 30+ proper-

ties and becoming large and thorough documents.

While the plover population was small, the protection they were offered by staff and volunteers certainly made a difference and is going to result in one of the highest productivity rates of the last decade.

As September approaches, we are getting geared up for our **Annual General Meeting on Sept 30 at the Carriage House—John Sylvester will be the guest speaker.**

We will also be doing more education, creating management plans for some of our lands and revisiting critical habitat for the plovers.

This is the time of year when many of us like to get out into these spectacular areas and just enjoy cooler weather, less bugs and a lovely walk in the woods. Be sure to check out the Environmental Calendar on page 8 for some activities and presentations.

Enjoy your fall season—it is full of the beauty of our natural areas and those that soon will be.

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We Are . . .

Island Nature Trust is a non governmental, registered charity dedicated to permanent protection of natural areas on Prince Edward Island. We acquire lands through purchase and donation and help private owners protect their own properties. We also protect species-at-risk, conduct conservation research, ecological restoration and public education. Donations are always welcome.

Our Board of Directors

Island Nature Trust is governed by a Board of Directors of 12 to 16 members. These dedicated volunteers are:

The Executive:

Jim Jenkins—President

Fiep de Bie—Vice-president

Patrick Crawford—Secretary

Donna Giberson—Treasurer and UPEI Biology Department Representative

Four Island groups have representatives on the INT Board: the University of PEI Biology Department, PEI Wildlife Federation, PEI Museums and Heritage Foundation and the Natural History Society of PEI. These representatives may serve indefinitely.

Our representatives of these organizations:

Donna Giberson—UPEI Biology Department

Tom LeClair—Museum and Heritage Foundation

Lynne Douglas—Natural History Society of PEI

Becky Petersen—PEI Wildlife Federation

Members at large:

Ben Hoteling

Barbara MacDonald

Dody Crane

Paul Michael

Jennifer Roma

The following Director has completed her second term this year and will leave the Board:

Dody Crane

Dody has been an invaluable member of the Board for the last six years and has served on no less than 6 committees! We are going to miss Dody a great deal and hope we can benefit from her many fields of expertise through continued committee work.

We are working now to nominate new Directors to the Board and invite you to attend the **AGM** at the Carriage House on **September 30, 2010** to elect our new slate of Directors.

Project Funding Partners for 2010

Island Nature Trust has benefited from many funding partners for its varied projects. We have partnered with some for many years and are just getting to know others through new projects. We want to thank all of our partners for providing the Trust with funds that sustain and encourage us to keep doing what we do. Individual, and private donors are equally important as it is their contributions that are levered into these project funds from Governments, Corporations and Foundations.

The following is a list of the funding partners and the important project that they support.

Province of Prince Edward Island—Annual operating funds including the plover project, education, secretarial duties for the PEI Natural Areas Protection Act Technical Committee, the PEI Flora manual project, secretary duties for the PEI Species at Risk Advisory Committee and the Conservation Guardian Program.

Habitat Stewardship Program for Species at Risk—The Piping Plover Protection Program and a land acquisition project shared by three land trusts in the Maritimes.

Parks Canada—Piping Plover Education and Outreach work.

Canadian Wildlife Service—Piping Plover Monitoring and protection.

RBC Bluewater Leadership Grant—Acquisition and Protection of Natural Areas.

PEI Greening Spaces Program—Trees and cash for the Nature Trust's Natural Area enhancement work.

PEI Wildlife Conservation Fund—Administration of the Fund annually and this year for an Invasive Alien Species detection and control project.

PEI Internship Program—6 month placement of an Intern with INT.

YMCA Eco-Youth Internship Program—4 month placement of an Intern.

Private Donor—Ongoing ten year project to place a field worker at Basin Head and other eastern Kings Co. beaches—this is year 4 of this Piping Plover related project.

Fisheries and Oceans Canada—Staff at Basin Head for research projects.

Canadian Land Trust Alliance—funds to cover half of the costs of EcoGift land acquisition.

NATURE TRUST STAFF

Staff that can be found in the office for the next few weeks are:

Permanent, Full-time staff:

- **Jackie Waddell**, Executive Director, coordinates and assists all staff where required, deals with land acquisition, land management and strategic planning.
exdir@islandnaturetrust.ca
- **Barb McDonald**, Executive Assistant, operates all things financial and is responsible for office administration.
admin@islandnaturetrust.ca

Seasonal Staff:

- **Tracy MacDonald**, has returned to be our Piping Plover Guardian Program Coordinator. Tracy will supervise plover staff, conduct field work and report to funding partners. Tracy will be working for the Trust from April through November.
plover@islandnaturetrust.ca
- **Emily Swim**—Coordinator of Volunteers—Piping Plover program. Emily is working to recruit, train and support Piping Plover Guardians and will be with us from late April through late August.
plover@islandnaturetrust.ca

- **Alicia Ashley**—Field Assistant with the Piping Plover Program from May 3 through mid August. Alicia has worked with plover staff and volunteers to protect plovers from human disturbance, predators and with volunteers to provide educational events and encounters on the plover beaches.

- **Breanna Gardner**—Field Technician—has inspected, inventoried and determined the location and extent of any Invasive Alien Species on INT properties and some other Natural Areas. Breanna has also worked to develop Baseline Document Reports on many INT properties and finished August 13.
projects@islandnaturetrust.ca

- **Lili Stajic**—Intern through the PEI Internship Program from May 10 to July 2, Lili was successful in finding work in her field with the Provincial Dairy Lab—we wish our very best to Lili and will miss her enthusiasm and dedication to her work.

- **Justin Walsh**—Intern through the PEI Internship Program—has taken over from where Lili Stajic left off- working to inspect and inventory Natural Areas and to develop draft management plans for INT properties.

- **Robyn Wells**—Intern through the YMCA Eco-Youth Internship Program—Robyn started with the plover program and is now working on inspecting Island Nature Trust properties and developing BDRs until August 22.

- **Desiree Simmons**—Field Assistant, Basin Head—has been monitoring and providing educational events and encounters for beach goers on Basin Head Beach in July and August. Desiree also visits other Plover beaches in eastern Kings County to ensure the success of breeding Piping Plovers.

- **Andrew O'Brien**- Field Staff—working with DFO at Basin Head on research associated with the giant floating form of Irish Moss found only in the lagoon at Basin Head.

All staff can be reached by phone at (902) 566-9150 or 892-7513
Fax (902) 628-6331

Invasive Alien Species, Headlines and “Unwanted’s”

There has been lots of media attention on the Giant Hog Weed this summer, especially after it was discovered on PEI. But this plant is not the most troublesome of the Invasive Alien Species (IAS) we have here on PEI. It may be the most noxious, but only a problem if you get its nasty sap on your skin. As an invader, it is mid-pack, losing badly to Japanese Knotweed, Purple Loosestrife, Glossy Buckthorn and a host of others that are widely distributed, were introduced many years ago and have a strong hold wherever they are found.

From an ecological perspective, the Invasive Aliens pose a great risk to the diversity of our natural areas as some of them can move in to pristine areas with alarming speed and ferocity. Others are “sleepers”, waiting until the conditions are right to explode into extraordinary growth and spread.

The list of IAS species is growing, as this summer’s Giant Hogweed discovery can testify. One of the worst invaders is Glossy Buckthorn, an innocuous looking shrub that is spread by birds that eat its berries and then deposit them many kilometers away. This shrub lines Confederation Trail in Charlottetown and the City of Charlottetown has been battling it in Victoria Park and elsewhere for several years. It outgrows forest floor plants such as orchids and lilies and even out-does native shrubs.

In recent surveys of Island Nature Trust properties (with thanks to the PEI Wildlife Conservation Fund, the PEI Internship Program and the YMCA EcoYouth Internship Program), Glossy Buckthorn has been discovered in one of our properties on Salutation Cove. It is undoubtedly in other natural areas, waiting to be discovered. Small populations in few areas have a chance of being controlled, but widespread and large populations are much more difficult and expensive to get under control—virtually impossible to eliminate.

Periwinkle is creeping down a hill from a garden and covering virtually everything in its path at Starthgartney Provincial Park. An estimated acre of this slow moving but very tenacious plant will have to be pulled up by the roots, bagged and incinerated at some

cost before this lovely forest can be declared healthy again. This site will have to be very carefully checked annually to remove any periwinkle that is sure to pop up again. The plant will have to be kept in check for many years if not forever after that.

Japanese Knotweed can be found in all parts of the province and most obviously in Rotary Friendship Park in Summerside, in ditches in St. Eleanors, Souris, South Lake and Bonshaw and many, many other places.

Ducks Unlimited Canada uses a beetle to declare war with Purple Loosestrife and the beetle is holding its own. This little insect is keeping large populations of this wetland invader down enough to prevent flowering and therefore controlling further spread. Rarely do biological controls such as this eliminate the plants or animals they are intended to destroy.

You can help! Avoid buying plants for your garden that you know are “aggressive”, “spreading” or invasive. Learn all you can about invasive plants and work to control them on your own property. Ask your favorite (and maybe your not-so-favorite!) nursery to not stock invasives—Norway Maple, Goutweed, Scotch Pine, or Bugle Weed for example. Suggest native alternatives such as Red Maple, Bunch Berry, Red Pine or Fireweed.

The diversity and health of our natural areas depend on us to remain vigilant for new invaders. There are a host of plants we have not yet seen in PEI and we definitely do not want—Kudzu Vine, Dog-Strangling Vine, Yellow Floating Heart and Knapweed are just a few.

So, while this summer a new invasive species was reported, it is a small population and there is a chance with landowner assistance and cooperation that it could be controlled and perhaps eliminated. Lets hope the next invasion is stopped before it starts—before it gets to PEI.

For more information on PEI IAS, look for the PEI IAS Working Group list of top IAS plants coming soon. This working group is working to educate and inform the public on IAS right here in PEI and to provide alternatives to planting and spreading IAS. Contact Jackie Waddell for more information.

Piping Plover Volunteers Make All the Difference!

Piping Plover numbers—at least the numbers of returning adults this spring—took an alarming fall. Our plover crew were quite disappointed with few adults after a thorough search of many beaches across the Province. Down by 20% over last year, 86 Piping Plovers were counted during the 2009 census, and only 69 were counted during the 2010 census.

But, then the few plovers that are here did a remarkable thing. They produced many more chicks to fledging than last year by at least 45%. In real numbers, that is an increase in the number chicks from 23 fledged chicks last season to 51 fledged for the 2010 season. There is one more late chick to fledge so 52 fledged is possible.

All of our Piping Plovers arrived before the oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico, although we don't believe that the oil spill had an immediate effect on the status of the Piping Plover population, it is a concern that the oil that washes up along the shores of the Plovers wintering grounds could contaminate their food sources and possibly have an impact on the amount of Plovers that return for next year's breeding season.

The summer was such a success thanks to our dedicated staff, protective fencing and the use of exclosures earlier in the season, as well as all the help we received from so many great volunteers who devoted part of their summer to help protect our only nesting endangered shorebird on Prince Edward Island from human related disturbances.

We would like to thank all of our Piping Plover Guardian volunteers: Jim Sutton, Heidi Arsenault, Meika Keunecke, Beth Carter, Earle Lockerby, Emily Adams, Linda Gaudet, and Arianna, Sofia and Lesley Riva; for all their hard work and contributions to the program.

Thanks also go to the Province of PEI—the boat operators and suppliers that got staff across to the Hog Island Sandhills. Wade MacKinnon and Mark Arsenault operated the power boats and spent entire days getting truck, trailer and boat to far flung launching sites and then battled tides and waves to safely land staff on beaches to count or check on plovers on these remote sandhills. Many thanks to George and Sally Williams for allowing us to use their canoe to get to the plovers at South Lake. We just can't do this program without this tremendous help.

Funding is always required to run a big project like this and the Habitat Stewardship Program for Species at Risk has been there for this program for 8 years. This is the primary source of funds for plover habitat stewardship work. Parks Canada has helped with funding for the second of a planned five year program for outreach, volunteer training and support and education. The Canadian Wildlife Service has also supplied funds for the second year, and this is for productivity and population data collection, surveys of plovers and for critical habitat monitoring.

Island Nature Trust provides cash and in-kind services and materials for the program in the office and field, ensuring the entire project is well run, productive and well designed.



Staff work quickly to place an exclosure on a plover nest to protect the eggs from predators.

In 2010, staff were able to spend more time delivering outreach on beaches and at festivals this year and used as many exclosures as they could despite low numbers of nests. Exclosures were successful, with nine of ten used hatching at least one chick. Hundreds of beach users know more about plovers and their needs and threats.

More detailed results are available through Tracy MacDonald, project coordinator. Be sure to contact Tracy if you have an interest in helping to monitor this bird and mitigate its human disturbance threats.

The Jenkins Complex— Featured Natural Area

Once in a lifetime an organization might be lucky enough to receive a gift of this size. When Harold Jenkins decided that the nearly 700 acres of land that he had accumulated over his lifetime and that of his father and grandfather needed to be protected after he was gone, he turned to the Nature Trust. The land, 660 acres on six properties north of the 48 Road in Mt. Albion and Lake Verde (not too many natural areas on PEI are so big that they are in more than one community!), is largely forested, but also has 8 ponds and wetlands created at least in part, if not wholly, by Ducks Unlimited.

Harold wanted DUC to dig ponds and create long narrow channels in low lying areas to encourage his beloved Canada geese to nest and raise broods of goslings. Plenty of other wildlife also benefited from this work—many species of ducks such as Ring-necked, Black duck, Green and Blue-winged Teal and Mallard are found in the ponds of the Jenkin’s Complex.

These created wetlands are home to many other birds, reptiles, amphibians, a host of insects, dozens of plant species and much more.



Pond No. 2 at the eastern edge of the Jenkins Complex

A great deal of the property is former farmland, grown up in white and black spruce during Harold’s life. Harold had a great deal of cutting done and then most of those cuts were planted in a variety of softwoods and almost all PEI genetics (a couple of patches of Norway Spruce have been noted). These plantations were created between 1986 and 1999.

An old farm field is slated for planting with several species of softwoods through a PEI Forestry Improvement Program and after those trees have grown sufficiently to provide some shade, hardwoods and shrubs will be planted—perhaps in 20 years from now.

Ducks Unlimited and the Trust work together on the management of this property. DUC maintains ponds and their barriers and the Trust inspects and manages the entire site from time to time to ensure its overall health.

Volunteer Conservation Guardians watch over the site too, visiting when they can, to provide a presence on this large site.

No hunting or fishing is allowed in the area and this provides the Trust with a safe environment for fall outdoor education. We deliver Project Web Foot in the fall at this beautiful and diverse site, to the delight of hundreds of children in grade 4. They are pretty amazed when a large flock of Canada’s fly just over the trees all around them.



Old Field White Spruce, shade for underplantings!

This year, summer staff searched the entire six properties creating new plant lists where there were none and adding to an existing inventory from 1990. Few invasive alien species were found to our delight. Several rare plants were found, including Royal Fern and an orchid. The survey also found a large white pine, suspected but not yet seen by others on the property. Its offspring are popping up all over the site, some are mere seedlings and others are getting to the 20-foot tall stage.

Several projects have improved the diversity and the species longevity for the forest here. Acadian Forest species have been planted under spruce, birch and cherry and will soon provide seed for the future hardwood forest we hope to have here.

We offered tours of this site to several groups over the last few years and as there are so many easily walked roads and trails, this is a great site to take an easy hike through its gently rolling terrain.

Call the Trust for a map of some of the trails and roads. Visitors are welcome any time.

Trust ED Wins National Award

The Executive Director of the Trust has been awarded the Nature Canada Douglas H. Pimlott Award, the most prestigious award presented by this national naturalist organization. Jackie Waddell was nominated by Andrew Wells—a member of Nature Canada and husband of Lynne Douglas, INT Board Member. Jackie attended the AGM of Nature Canada on June 26 at the Wind Energy Interpretive Centre in North Cape, PEI. The Pimlott Award was presented to Jackie at this meeting for her contributions to Canadian Conservation.

Jackie was most humbled by the list of previous winners, the most recent of whom was Robert Bateman in 2009. Jackie was presented with a beautiful Inuit carving of a muskox and a lovely wood base to rest it on. Jackie wishes to thank Lynne Douglas and Barb McDonald for putting the nomination together and to Andy Wells for submitting it to Nature Canada.

The 2011 Fundraising Dinner is Moving!

Several members of the INT Dinner Committee had a great tour of the many facilities to offer with the **Wanda Wyatt Dining Hall at UPEI**, and liked what they saw. So, we have made the huge decision to move the 27th Annual Fundraising Dinner to this expanded location for April 29th, 2011.

After 26 years at the Delta Prince Edward, we break from a long tradition. The Nature Trust and the dinner patrons will both benefit from this historic move. The largest fundraiser the Trust holds each year will result in more funds going to the hard work of the Trust. The Trust's costs will be lower and therefore a higher portion of proceeds from this event are going where they should—the protection and management of natural areas on PEI.

Patrons of the dinner will benefit from plenty of nearby, free parking! Parking is an easy walk from lots A and B just off Belvedere and there will be no parking charges after a fun evening. The cash bar prices will be very reasonable. Great food, fun raffles and both live and silent auctions will fill this evening.

We will have tickets for sale in February so plan on coming to a whole new experience on **April 29, 2011**.

Electronic Island Nature Trust "Update" Newsletters

While we are working on completely updating our web page and getting the newsletter up there, you can help us save paper and postage and get information faster! You can achieve all of this by getting "Update" via E-mail. If you forward your e-mail address to Island Nature Trust, we will send you the newsletter electronically as a "PDF" file. 75 members have requested this service so far, and we would like to see that number climb to much higher levels. Email us at admin@islandnaturetrust.ca to request your newsletter in electronic form.



Thank you!

Got Paper?

We use everything in our office as many times as we can, reducing use and waste, saving \$ by not buying new materials and generally being green. Do you have a bunch of non-sensitive—we don't want to know your secrets! - used-one-side paper that you would give to us.

We will use the blank side for in-house or file copies and for notes that stay in the office. We will take stapled or Cerlox bound documents, etc. happily. Call Barb at the Trust if you need a pick up.

Thanks!

Environmental Calendar

September 15—The first of 7 Confederation Library talks in the 2010/2011 Nature Series. 7:00 PM at Confederation Centre Public Library. Topic: *The Scenic Heritage Roads of PEI*, by Jackie Waddell. Plants and animals and the history of the roads that are less traveled now but rich with life and tales.

Mid to Late September—The Bennett Birding Classic—Dan McAskill has once again agreed to lead an expert team of birders from pre-dawn to dusk in this annual fundraiser. Look for more in PEI media and the results in our next newsletter - get a pledge sheet and help us raise funds for the acquisition of natural areas. Call the office at 893-7513 to get your pledge sheets or to make a pledge to the team. How many birds will they find?

September 25—Tour of the new Island Nature Trust property off the Souris Line Road. Come for the fall colours, the big trees, the rushing streams and above all, a great walk. Meet at the pull-off at the east end of the Souris Causeway at 10:00 AM. Bring your lunch and water and clothes for rain or shine. Goes almost no matter what the weather—please register for this walk at 892-7513. Call the same number to arrange a car pool from Charlottetown.

September 30—**Island Nature Trust Annual General Meeting**, Beaconsfield Carriage House, 7:00 PM. A review of 2009-2010 and the presentation of the Hon. J. Angus MacLean Natural Areas Award. Well-known photographer John Sylvester will speak. Copies of John's book (*Wild Island Prince Edward Island's Hidden Wilderness*) will be available for purchase throughout the evening.

October 20—*We're Bats for Halloween*—...for all....This Nature Series talk at Confederation Centre Library starts at 7:00 PM. Bats and lots of nocturnal and other creepy crawlies will be shown in a narrated slide show by Jackie Waddell. Eye of newt and toe of toad.....

November 17—*Feeding Wild Birds in Winter*—A Nature Series presentation by Jackie Waddell—the old standby still works and keeps people coming back for more information on feeder birds, their health, feeds and feeders and more. Starts at 7:00 PM at Confederation Centre Public Library. Lots of feed examples, feeders and resources you can find in the library and elsewhere.

April 29—The Island Nature Trust 27th Annual Fundraising Dinner—Now at a new location—the Wanda Wyatt Dining Hall at UPEI

Membership Form

Single Membership (\$20)
 Family Membership (\$25)
 Sustaining Membership (\$50)
 Active Membership (\$100)
 Supporting Membership (\$250)
 Life Membership (\$500)
 My donation of \$_____ towards the Trust's work is enclosed (*tax receipts are issued for all donations*).
 I wish my donation to be invested in your Endowment Fund. Please send me the donor direction notice as required by the Canada Customs and Revenue Agency.
 I prefer to pay via: Visa MasterCard Amex Cheque Money Order
 NAME: _____
 ADDRESS: _____
 POSTAL CODE: _____ TEL.: _____ E-MAIL: _____
 CARD NUMBER: _____ EXPIRY DATE: _____
 SIGNATURE: _____

Please return to: Island Nature Trust, P.O. Box 265, Charlottetown, PEI, C1A 7K4.