



Island Nature Trust Update

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What a Summer!

We knew it would be a busy season, and we were right! Plovers, land inspections, land acquisition chores, bank swallow surveys, educational activities, bio-physical surveys, shore-bird surveys and more kept us going full steam for the last three months. Read all about it in the pages of this newsletter. When you have read all about it, come to our Annual General Meeting on September 26 to let us know what you think about how we did, what we do and our future. We would love to hear from you, our members and friends.

There were a few things we would have liked to do that didn't get done. Some can still get done, but not all. We didn't get to DeRoche Pond to pull purple loosestrife this year. We will have to double our efforts next year! All the more seed that have entered that wonderful fresh water system.

We are not as far along in land acquisition as I want to be. Appraisals, permit-getting, applications to IRAC, visits to lands, surveys, negotiations for right-of-ways and more are all underway, but all take an extraordinary amount of time! We need to raise a lot of funds to buy some important sites and to pay for all those surveys, appraisals and more. In the end we will be the proud protectors of some wonderful land—Canavoy Oaks, Courtin Island, the

banks of the West River, hemlock and pine forest in Caledonia and more.

So, watch our newsletter for announcements of new acquisitions by year-end! There should be quite a few of them.

Read about plover successes this year in this issue and the results of celebrations at lands acquired last year in Sherbrooke and in Bangor. You will find articles on the bank swallow surveys and shore bird work in Important Bird Areas such as Malpeque Bay.

We have the Bennett Fall Birding Classic coming up on September 28. There is still time to form a team and join in the fun! We have three teams heading out that day—why not make it four, or five? If you can't get out on a team, you can help us collect pledges or make a pledge yourself! There is a pledge form enclosed just for you!

Our wonderful Program Coordinator, Shannon Mader, is expecting her first baby in early October, and so we are losing her for a year. We are going to miss Shannon and can't wait to meet this wonderful new baby. All our best wishes go to Shannon and husband Neil at this very exciting time!

See you all at the AGM!

Jackie Waddell, Executive Director

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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, 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. Each member serves up to two three-year terms.

The Board of Directors of the Trust includes the following:

The Executive:

- Fiep de Bie** President
- Judi Allen** Vice-president
- Jennifer Roma** Secretary

Group Representatives
Four Island groups have representatives on the INT Board:

Remaining members of the Board:

- Marina Silva-Opps** UPEI Biology Department
- Tom LeClair** Museum and Heritage Foundation
- Randy Dibblee** Natural History Society of PEI
- Vacant PEI Wildlife Federation

- Barb MacDonald**
- Sandra McConkey**
- Dwaine Oakley**
- Kathleen MacNearney**
- Donna Gill**

Bank Swallow Surveys

Swallows spend their winters in Mexico, the Caribbean and central South America but return to PEI every spring to breed. They make their nests in burrows that they dig into the sides of cliffs or high dunes. As colonial nesters, you often see several at a time swooping in and out of burrows, hunting for insects as they fly.

This aerial insectivore has faced steep declines in recent years, and was recently listed as threatened in Canada. Major threats to the species include: increased erosion, reclamation of sand pits and quarries, installation of erosion control measures along shorelines, pesticide use and climate change. Staff of the INT Piping Plover Program have noted the decline of Bank Swallows for many years, as they often walk by active colonies on the shore. However, 2013 marks our first time working with the Canadian Wildlife Service (CWS) to conduct formal surveys.

Surveys were carried out on PEI from July 02 to July 15, 2013. Known historic colonies were surveyed, as well as some previously unknown colonies that were reported to Island Nature Trust by the public. Reports and sightings from the public resulted in us finding a number of colonies that were not previously recorded, thus public input was incredibly important to our efforts.

CWS staff conducted Bank Swallow surveys in the West Prince region of PEI in 2012, while INT staff did surveys in central PEI in 2013. In 2014 we hope to locate and survey more Bank Swallow colonies in Eastern PEI with the help of volunteers. Although our Bank Swallow surveys are complete for 2013, we welcome reports of colonies from across PEI. To report a colony please call 892-7513 or email admin@islandnaturetrust.ca.



NATURE TRUST STAFF

Staff that can be found in the office and in the field for the next few months are:

Jackie Waddell, Executive Director, coordinates and assists all staff where required. Jackie works in land acquisition, fund-raising, land management and strategic planning. Jackie also prepares and delivers some educational events to schools, groups and the public.

exdir@islandnaturetrust.ca

Barb McDonald, Executive Assistant, operates all things financial and is responsible for office administration.

admin@islandnaturetrust.ca

Shannon Mader, Program Coordinator. Shannon is off for a year for maternity leave! Shannon is due to have her baby in early October. We wish Shannon the very best and we will miss her terribly while she is gone! Shannon will be back to take over her many duties in October 2014. Shannon is responsible for most of our projects such as the Piping Plover protection program, Adopt an Eagle, Project Web Foot, the Atlantic Canada Shorebird Survey Workshop project and more. Shannon also maintains the webpage and Facebook page.

projects@islandnaturetrust.ca

Julie-Lynn Zahavich, Project Coordinator, Piping Plovers and Important Bird Areas. Julie-Lynn is excited to be taking on a few of Shannon's duties while she is away and we hope to find enough funding and work (never a lack of work) to keep Julie-Lynn busy for the fall and winter until plover works starts again next spring.

plover@islandnaturetrust.ca



Summer birds like this Rose-breasted Grosbeak will soon be replaced by a bevy of winter feeder birds. Next thing you know, it will be bird seed sale time!

Conservation Guardians—if you are interested in getting out to one of our properties and willing to do a quick inspection while there, please contact us, we would love to help you find a great site, teach you what to look for and have you learn a bit more about some fantastic natural areas. Now that's healthy living!

Barbara P. Parsons Natural Area Celebration a Success!

On August 15, 2013, INT staff joined over 40 people, friends and neighbors of James Munves and Barbara Parsons, to celebrate the designation of the Barbara P. Parsons Natural Area. The area is 132 acres of undeveloped land, on the Bangor Road in Morell, bordering the Morell River.

The gathering took place in a small orchard on the Munves' property. INT Executive Director, Jackie Waddell, began the evening with a brief history of the property and surrounding areas. Barbara then delivered a heartfelt and inspiring address to the crowd, which set the tone as the group toured the property immediately after, returning to the orchard afterward for refreshments.

It was a lovely evening, celebrating the Munves' incredible generosity and commitment to conservation and enjoying the sights and sounds of this beautiful property along the Morell River. The Munves' donation brings the total area of protected land in the immediate area to 400 acres.

2013 Piping Plover Program

Piping plover monitoring begins early in April when there is still snow on the ground. At that time of year, there are few birds to count and humans on the beach are a rare sight. However, there are always a few brave plovers that arrive in this cold month. In 2013, the first plovers to arrive were spotted by a volunteer in Wood Islands on April 15. By June, most piping plovers have arrived and are establishing their breeding territories.

June is a busy month for plover monitors – it's census time! The census takes place over nine days. Piping plover monitors from Island Nature Trust and PEI National Park, and volunteer Piping Plover Guardians, walk along the shore in search of the tiny shorebirds, covering all historic piping plover nesting beaches.

In 2013, the census took place from June 1-9. Sixty-eight beaches across PEI were surveyed and 60 adult piping plovers were counted. Forty-five were counted on provincial beaches and 15 were counted within the National Park boundary. Overall, that is an 8% increase over the 2012 census count, but a 10% decrease from the last International Piping Plover Census conducted in 2011.

Twenty-one piping plover pairs were monitored by Island Nature Trust in 2013. These pairs laid 26 nests and hatched 31 chicks, 22 of which survived to reach 20 days of age (this is what we call "fledged"). The "fledge rate", an important measure of productivity, is calculated from the number of fledged chicks per pair that have been monitored. The fledge rate for provincial beaches this year was 1.05, and for the entire island it was 0.9.



Photo by: Martin Paquet

Of the 26 nests found on provincial beaches, 9 of them survived to hatch. But what happened to those that did not? As is the case every year, nests were lost to flooding, predation, abandonment and unknown causes.

2013 marked the second year that exclosures were not used on PEI beaches. Although we had great success with exclosures in the past, research has shown that exclosures put adult birds at a greater risk of being predated. As a result, exclosure use was discontinued so as not to lose adult piping plovers, even if it means losing precious eggs. Exclosure use will continue to be studied and we may decide to return to using them in the future.

Five piping plovers were banded on PEI beaches this year. Birds were marked with a metal band on their left upper leg and a coded black or white flag on the upper right leg. Canadian Wildlife Service is testing the effectiveness of the bands for a potential future study. This proposed banding study and subsequent resightings of banded birds will provide insights into where our birds are wintering, important migration stopovers, and breeding site fidelity.

Already, a bird that was banded in June on PEI was resighted in New Jersey! We will be on the lookout for our banded birds next spring and so should you! If you see a flagged or banded bird, give us a call right away. We will bring out our spotting scope and have a look at it with you.

2013 Piping Plover Program staff included: Shannon Mader, Julie-Lynn Zahavich, Kristina Ivkov, Josh Lindsay, and occasionally staff from other programs when extra hands were needed. Chelsie Acheson, a Wildlife Conservation student from Holland College, also volunteered with the program for a month through an on-the-job training placement.

Twenty-five Piping Plover Guardians roamed the shore this season, contributing over 700 hours to the program. Our volunteers monitored nesting pairs, spoke with beach users about the piping plover, and helped out with special events. We would like to send out a big THANK YOU to all of our volunteers this season, and encourage anyone who might be interested in becoming a Piping Plover Guardian to get in touch over the winter or early in the spring.

Ways to get caught up on our activities

This newsletter works well for many of our members, but we have a number of other ways to let you know about our work, events, news and more.

Our website is:
www.islandnaturetrust.ca

This site is updated regularly. Be sure to check it out for more in depth information than that available on social media.

Follow us on twitter
[@peinaturetrust](https://twitter.com/peinaturetrust) to get instant updates on what we're up to and what we're interested in.



Don't forget us on facebook! This is a great way to learn about upcoming events and get updates on all of our programs.

We now have over 400 "likes"
You can help this number grow!



Important Bird Areas

This fall, we will be continuing our work with the Important Bird Areas (IBA) Program. IBAs are parcels of land, big and small, that are designated because they support a specific group of birds, including threatened species, endangered species or large flocks of birds. Many of the IBAs in PEI are designated because they provide nesting habitat for the endangered piping plover, others are considered important because they provide feeding stopovers for migratory shorebirds, or nesting sites for large colonies of birds.

Julie-Lynn Zahavich is working on the IBA Program this fall. Since late August, she and a handful of volunteers have been conducting shorebird surveys within two IBAs as part of the Atlantic Canada Shorebird Survey.

Shorebirds, as a group, are facing sharp declines. Most shorebird species undertake long migrations between their breeding and wintering grounds. Their flight paths are predictable and they have long-established stopover locations, where they feverishly feed to restore energy reserves for the long journey ahead. Unfortunately, loss and alteration of these areas is occurring all along their migration paths. Monitoring these species and the stopover sites they use is critical for their conservation

Julie-Lynn will also be posting signs in and around Island IBAs. Signs will be posted near IBA access points or close to sensitive areas, to create awareness of the program and to discourage potentially destructive behaviors. Keep an eye out for these signs this fall and next summer – you may be visiting an IBA and not even know it!

If you are interested in becoming involved with the IBA Program, we are always looking for IBA Caretakers. Volunteer IBA Caretakers participate in many activities, including: monitoring the IBA to record and report changes or disturbances, collecting data on bird species, helping with habitat restoration activities and raising awareness of IBAs. If you are interested in becoming an IBA Caretaker, please contact us at admin@islandnaturetrust.ca or call (902) 892-7513.

INT Annual General Meeting Sept. 26

As we mentioned in our last newsletter, there is no more important meeting for this, or any organization, than the Annual General Meeting. This is the one public meeting per year at which our members get a chance to vote and express their opinions on the issues facing the Trust, the future directions and the past year. Please mark this date in your calendar and plan to attend.

Do you have an interest in serving on our Board of Directors? If so, be sure to contact the office (892-7513) and we will let the nominating committee know! We could need up to fourth new Board members this year. Perhaps you know of someone that would be a good fit for the Board—we especially need someone with business experience or an accounting background.

Be sure to head to the Carriage House at the corner of Kent and West Streets for 7:00PM on Thursday, September 26. We will review the 2012-2013 year, go over the auditors report on finances, and present the Trust's Hon. J. Angus MacLean Natural Areas Award to a very deserving person or group. We had two good nominations for this award this year so come on out and see who was selected.

We all look forward to seeing you there—refreshments will be served.

Hand-carved Heron Raffle!



Tickets for this beautiful hand-carved Great Blue Heron are \$5 (or 5 for \$20). Dave Broderick of Alberton carved this masterpiece just for the Trust. Wouldn't it look great in your home?

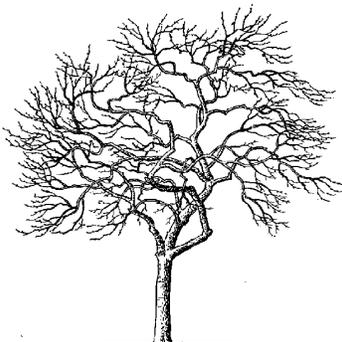
Be sure to get your tickets!

Draw will take place at the INT Annual Dinner and Auction, April, 2014.

Tickets are available at Ravenwood or by calling 892-7513

Electronic Island Nature Trust "Update" Newsletters Save a Tree!

You can help us save paper and get information faster! You can achieve all of this by getting your INT 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. 110 members currently receive their newsletter this way, and we would like to see that number climb to much higher levels. Email at admin@islandnaturetrust.ca to request your newsletter in electronic form.



Thank you!



2013 Funding Partners and Donors

We never say thank you enough to the agencies, individuals, corporations and governments that provide funds for the many things we do.

We have a contract to fulfill with the **Government of PEI** to run the plover program, a conservation guardian program, provide secretarial services to a few committees and to secure natural areas. That base funding is levered many times over to secure funds from many sources for projects.

We also deliver projects for Project Web Foot, a **Ducks Unlimited** contracted project—an educational program that merges well with our objectives.

The **Habitat Stewardship Program for Species at Risk** provides the bulk of the cash required to run the Piping Plover project. **Parks Canada** has supplied cash to add a third field person to the plover project. The **Canadian Wildlife Service** has provided some funds to census the plovers and **Maritime Electric** donated funds to help with the plover project outreach. Private donations complete this multi-source project, making it the largest for the Trust.

Environment Canada also contributed funds for our Atlantic Shorebird Survey Workshop project, which will be delivered this fall.

Nature Canada will be supplying funds for Important Bird Areas volunteer recruitment, placing signs at IBAs and more. The Trust will match that with volunteer time and cash from a variety of sources.

Phillips Feed will donate part of the proceeds of their wild bird seed sales to the Trust again this year.

The **PEI Greening Spaces Program** has supplied trees for natural areas this year.

We raise funds ourselves—well over \$40,000 from donations, the annual dinner, the Bennett Birding Classic, the Aveda Walk for Water and raffles this year.



INT Lands Getting Designated Under NAPA

Last year the Trust accepted 7 parcels of land as donations. Usually the land is designated under the Natural Areas Protection Act (NAPA) AFTER it is acquired by the Trust but in the case of two parcels on the Morell River donated by Barbara and James Munves, the land was protected by the owners first, then donated. Paul and Katherine Schaefer donated land at Alaska which is now designat-

ed under NAPA. Designation is not quite complete for the Long River property also donated by the Schaefers, but we are very close—likely next month.

A property at Foley's Pond in Central Kildare donated by Edward Laughlin is also now designated under NAPA.

A parcel at Sherbrooke bequeathed by

Errol Laughlin is also close to designation, as is a parcel donated by the Estate of Elaine Harrison at Fernwood. Once these lands are protected under this Act they are removed from the aggregate total of lands for the Trust for IRACs purposes. Our undesignated lands currently stand at 157 acres. This is a very flexible figure that changes as lands are acquired and designated.

Environmental Calendar

September 21 Great Canadian Shoreline Cleanup—Join Island Nature Trust and the Hunter-Clyde and Wheatley River Watershed groups for a shoreline cleanup. 9:00AM at Barachois Beach, North Rustico. We will meet at the Irving gas station at the end of Church Road for a brief introduction, and then head to Barachois Beach for the cleanup. <http://www.shorelinecleanup.ca/en/cleanup/event/fall2013/barachois-beach> for more information and to sign up.

September 26—Island Nature Trust Annual General Meeting—We invite all members of Island Nature Trust to attend this important meeting. You can help guide the future of the Trust, review the past year, and listen to a great guest speaker—our own President Fiep de Bie will make an illustrated presentation of her trip in the southern hemisphere - **Antarctic Adventures: Exploring the Southern Ocean by Tall Ship**. 7:00 PM at the Carriage House, corner of West and Kent Streets, Charlottetown, PEI. Refreshments will be served.

September 28 The Bennett Birding Classic—This fun birding event collects valuable information on bird migration movements and raises funds for the Island Nature Trust’s land protection and acquisition programs. For information on forming a team, check out the information on the Trust’s website at www.islandnaturetrust.ca Donations can be sent to the Island Nature Trust at P.O. Box 265, Charlottetown PE C1A 7K4 or via telephone to 902-892-7513.

October 1 - New Developments in Piping Plover Management. Nature PEI first guest speaker from the Island Nature Trust for the autumn meetings. Meeting starts at 7:30 pm at Beaconsfield’s Carriage House at 2 Kent Street.

October 16—Foxes and Coyotes—Wild Dogs of the Island. Confederation Centre Public Library, 7:00 PM, no charge and everyone is welcome. Jackie Waddell will make this illustrated presentation as a part of the Island Nature Trust Nature Series at the library.

November 7—Feeding Wild Birds in Winter. O’Leary Public Library. 2:00 PM. Join Jackie Waddell for an illustrated presentation that has become a perennial favorite—learn about feeds, birds, feeders, diseases, care and safety for birds. No Charge!

November 20—Feeding Wild Birds Safely. A little twist on the above talk, and this one is at Confederation Public Library in Charlottetown. 7:00 PM, all are welcome.

Membership Form

Single Membership (\$20) Family (\$25) Student - **NEW!** (\$10) 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*).

Students: Please let us know what School /University/College you are attending: _____

I prefer to pay via: Visa MasterCard 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.