



ISLAND NATURE TRUST

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Dedicated to the protection of Natural Areas on Prince Edward Island since 1979

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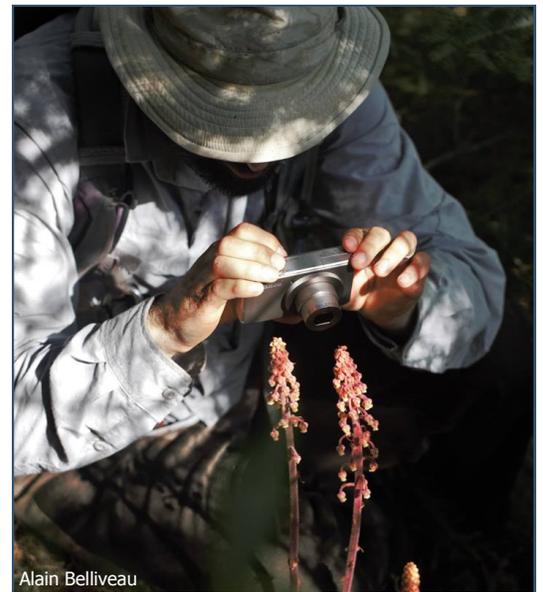


Working in Nature as Participants in the Life of the Island

Ravenwood is abuzz with activity as I try to find a few quiet moments to summon The Bigger Picture. It has been a hectic winter of addressing the immediate tasks at hand while also stepping back to work with our board of directors in the development of INT's first ever strategic plan. Now as we look to finalize that plan and put it into action, we find ourselves poised at the beginning of a field season that promises to be jam-packed with activity.

Yesterday, our Piping Plover team visited the Cascumpec Sandhills for the first time this year, earlier than we've ever managed to make the boat trek, and discovered twelve adult birds! At the same time, I was back at the office interviewing applicants to fill 3 more summer positions, including a naturalist that will coordinate a new series of art and nature workshops with Rock Barra Artist Retreat and a technician to help deliver a new forest bird research project. There are many days when it is difficult to find a quiet moment!

We work to conserve land and that is what we must keep coming back to during these days full of activity. We fundraise, monitor species-at-risk, collaborate with partners to develop tools and gain new knowledge, and acquire land



Alain Belliveau

It's always important in field work to take breaks and appreciate the natural beauty around us, like these pine drops (*Pterospora andromedea*) being photographed

to conserve and protect ecosystems for people and other species. We are not impartial observers but active participants! A small sample of that participation is show-cased here again. I hope you enjoy these small windows into the work we do. We would love to see you sometime this summer. Look for more opportunities to volunteer and events in our next newsletter!

- Megan Harris, Executive Director

Supporter Profile



INT volunteers diversifying Barbara's field with plantings (right)

A view from the Barbara Green Natural Area, overlooking the Tryon River saltmarsh (below)



Barbara Green: Living in Harmony With the Land

An intricate connectedness of people and land is something that Barbara Green feels deeply. When I travelled to Victoria to meet and talk with her about her donation of property in Tryon, it percolated through our conversation, tying together past and present, Island life and life away. All who read her regular column in the County Line Courier likely hear that too. And it is very clearly how she has lived her life.

Barbara Green and her husband Paul arrived in Canada from Portsmouth, England in 1955. Drawn to beautiful, pastoral landscapes, they settled just outside Montréal where they lived and worked for 35 years. In 1968 they discovered another rich, rolling landscape in Prince Edward Island. From then on, they spent summers in Tryon where they could indulge a passion for sailing. They made the permanent move to PEI in 1990. Barbara says that they were attracted to the Island because of its human side: "Islanders have an interest in people". Some things never change!

Growing up during the Great Depression when there was no social safety net, and then raising six children in Montréal during poor economic times in the 1980's, Barbara is acutely aware of the true meaning of self-reliance and community support. Her commitment to giving back to that supporting community extends well beyond the people to include the land. "Always put back more than you take" she tells me. And from there we launch into a conversation about soils, winter gardening, climate change, forest diversification and any number of connected pieces that describe how intimately we are tied to our land.

Barbara put these core beliefs into action in 2003 when she decided to donate her Tryon acreage to Island Nature Trust. For some time, she had worked to return the old, sloping agricultural field adjacent to the Tryon River salt marsh into a protective, forested buffer. From beginning with a simple line of native oaks along the boundary, consistent efforts year after year meant the land was already regenerating a forest by the time Barbara passed the reins to INT. We are so grateful for her foresight, her all-action, get-it-done approach and her incredible generosity! The Tryon salt marsh is more beautiful thanks to Barbara.

"It's a life you want to make, not just a living" - Barbara Green

Our Lands

Calcareous Soils in PEI: Informing Future Land Acquisition

Island Nature Trust acquired their first property for protection in 1985. Thirty-eight hundred acres later, can we look back and say we've protected the most vulnerable, the most uncommon, the most bio-diverse lands? I think we've done well with the information we had available at the time. Now we are trying to inform a more targeted strategy for land protection by adding to our toolbox of knowledge.

One tool that we hope will provide valuable new information is being developed through collaboration with the Atlantic Canada Conservation Data Centre. Sean Blaney, Alain Belliveau and David Mazerolle are botany wizards! They know from their work throughout the Maritime Provinces that regions with basic (calcareous) soils make up a very small portion of the regional landscape yet contribute significantly and disproportionately to its biodiversity. Basic soils are associated with 452 species of rare vascular plants and many more rare mosses, lichens, insects and at-risk birds (Canada Warbler, all swallows, Eastern Wood-Pewee).

Basic soils support agriculture and we have lost much through agricultural conversion, but we hope there are still pockets left on the Island. While we develop methods to more easily identify these places, we need your help to inform our search. Do you know of areas where the plants in these photos flourish? We would love to know about them so that we can visit these areas with the ACCDC botany team this summer. They may be wetlands, forested stream margins or even upland forest. If you have some leads, please get in touch with us at Ravenwood!



Large yellow lady's slipper (*Cypripedium parviflorum* var. *pubescens*) (left)

Alain Belliveau

Showy lady's slipper (*Cypripedium reginae*) (below)



Alain Belliveau



Alain Belliveau

Blue vervain (*Verbena hastata*)

Northern white cedar's (*Thuja occidentalis*) needle-like leaves(right)



David Mazerolle

Black ash (*Fraxinus nigra*) leaf



David Mazerolle



David Mazerolle

Alderleaf buckthorn (*Rhamnus alnifolia*)

Cut-leaf coneflower (*Rudbeckia laciniata*)



Alain Belliveau



David Mazerolle

Shrubby Cinquefoil (*Dasiphora fruticosa*)

Featured Contributor



Brenda Penak is a long-time INT supporter. She served as an INT board member from 2002 to 2005, and has been involved with several Island environmental groups. Brenda collaborated with INT in 2015 on a hummingbird conservation project.

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Last Call for Heron Raffle Tickets!

Our fundraising dinner is fast approaching and so is our annual heron raffle!

Dave Broderick of Alberton carved and painted this beautiful Great Blue Heron for us to raffle off and raise funds for natural area protection and stewardship.

Raffle tickets for the heron are \$5 or 5 for \$20. The draw will take place at the Annual INT Dinner and Auction on April 28, 2017. Tickets for the dinner are now sold out!

Heron raffle tickets are still available at the INT office in the Ravenwood building on the Experimental Farm in Charlottetown, or by calling 892-7513



You could win this hand-carved and painted Great Blue Heron!

Partnerships

Timing is Key with Beach Cleanups



Island Nature Trust staff spend many hours on PEI's shoreline, monitoring our coastal properties and offshore islands, and protecting the Endangered Piping Plover on provincial nesting beaches. Along the way, we see lots of shoreline debris.

We find washed up fishing gear and netting, beer bottles, cans, food wrappers, etc. It's certainly, not all messages in bottles as you can tell, although we occasionally find those too. Shoreline debris sullies our coastline and can impact wildlife through tangling and ingestion.

We have found that people we meet and chat with are passionate about this topic. Every summer, we partner with volunteers, groups and businesses to do beach cleanups. It's a wonderful way to get outdoors and do a good deed. However, one thing to consider when participating in or organizing a beach cleanup is timing.

PEI's beaches and dunes are sensitive spaces that provide breeding and rearing habitat for wildlife species, including piping plovers, common terns, red fox, savannah sparrows, Nelson's sparrows, and spotted sandpipers. Others, including shorebirds and waterfowl, use this ecosystem as a critical stopover during migration.

Disturbing animals during these critical times can be detrimental to their survival and removing what to us is debris could potentially be disturbing an established territory. We recommend that beach cleanups to remove extensive debris from the beach and dune take place during the early spring (before April 1st), fall, and winter.

Of course, we don't want to discourage anyone from picking up trash during the summer, but it is always important to be aware of those with whom we share the shore. If an animal nearby is calling, diving, or otherwise acting out-of-the ordinary, it has likely been disturbed. The best thing to do is to slowly turn around and walk away paying close attention to where you step in case there is a nest or den.

We love to work and play on PEI's beautiful coast, but it's important to also consider who else is using these wild places!

Volunteer Page

Volunteer With INT This Summer!

Summer is a hectic time for us at Island Nature Trust. Once field season starts in April, our staff members are busy running programs, conducting field work, and attending events. It's all hands on deck, and we can always use more helping hands.

Here are a few opportunities to volunteer with INT this summer:

Piping Plover Program

If you enjoy spending time on the beach, are comfortable talking to other beach users, and own a pair of binoculars, you might be interested in becoming a Piping Plover Guardian. Plover Guardians choose a piping plover nesting beach and commit to monitoring "their" beach and plover pair at least once per week.

Farmland Birds Program

If you are a rural landowner or farmer with Bobolink and/or Barn Swallow nesting on your property, and you are willing to monitor these birds and/or are interested in how you can help these species, you may be interested in our Farmland Birds Project.

Conservation Program

If you have a keen interest in the outdoors and want to learn more about INT's natural areas, you may be interested in becoming a Conservation Guardian. Conservation Guardians monitor INT natural areas and report back on wildlife/plants observed, and any signs of disturbance.

If any of these volunteer opportunities appeal to you, get in touch with us via email, Facebook, telephone, or drop by our office in Charlottetown!

Volunteer Profile



John Lane
Conservation Guardian

Thank-you, John, for all you do to help conserve natural areas on PEI!

John Lane became involved with Island Nature Trust's Conservation Guardian Program in 2016. John and his wife, Leona, are Guardians for our Kildare Forest Natural Area in Huntley, PEI. John was also instrumental in helping us deliver our dune and beach ecosystem education program to Grade 7 students at Hernewood and M.E. Callaghan Intermediate Schools this past winter.

John is retired from Holland College where he worked as an instructor teaching business administration. Nowadays, John works as the Coordinator for the Cascumpec Bay Watershed Association. Watershed work is nothing new to John, having been involved with watersheds in some capacity for over 30 years.

John has always been interested in nature, conservation and sustainability. He believes we should be practicing sustainability in all aspects of our lives, from farming to fishing to everyday living. When he isn't working, John likes to kayak, manage and work in his private woodlot, hike, and spend time with his four adult kids and two wonderful grandchildren.

When we asked John why he became involved with INT, he said he believes the work INT does is worthwhile and important, and that he enjoys being a part of something that will leave a lasting legacy for future generations. He also said he has enjoyed meeting new people, getting a chance to be helpful and do what he loves, and sharing the experience with his wife, Leona.

We always jump on the chance to get out in the forest with John. His keen interest and passion for the environment is always refreshing. And it doesn't hurt that we usually make a lunch stop at the Alberton bakery!

Enhancing Gardens for Hummingbird Habitat

Contributed by: Brenda Penak (text & photographs)



Brenda in her garden standing next to *Silphium perfoliatum*, and the cup that forms at the leaf attachment (inset)



After collaborating with Island Nature Trust and the City of Charlottetown in 2015 to develop a hummingbird habitat garden in Victoria Park, I thought it was important to try to improve my own garden for “hummers”.

In 2016 I made a concerted effort to plant for hummingbirds at home, adding more native plant species to existing perennial beds, and new foundation plantings. I define native plants as those indigenous to Eastern Canada. Native plants provide natural nectar sources, attract insects (also a source of food for hummers), and can serve as perching and potential nesting sites for these tiny birds.

The native Eastern Columbine (*Aquilegia canadensis*) is a red and yellow flowered perennial that can grow in sun to part shade, and blooms quite early in the season. It’s a great addition to the front or middle of the flower bed if you want to enhance your garden for hummingbirds, and it can be planted in groupings for full effect.

On the other side of the height continuum is the Cup Plant (*Silphium perfoliatum*). As you can see by the photograph, this perennial is extremely tall, reaching 9 feet! It has relatively small, sun-flower-like yellow flowers that bloom in late summer. I find their leaves interesting as they form a type of “cup” where they wrap around the square stems. This cup feature can collect water after a rain (or

dew in the mornings), acting like a mini reservoir for the Ruby-throated Hummingbird. Last summer I saw a hummingbird drinking water from this unique cup! As last summer was quite dry, I am sure hummingbirds appreciated this source of hydration.

Giant Blue Hyssop (*Agastache foeniculum*) is a purple-blue perennial that is easy to grow and drought tolerant. The colourful flowers take the form of bottle brush-like spikes and are attractive to hummingbirds and other pollinators throughout the summer.

Bee Balm (*Monarda didyma*) is a brilliant red-colored perennial native to Ontario and is considered a hummingbird magnet. These plants can bloom as early as June, produce flowers throughout the summer and reach a height of up to 4 feet. I have watched hummingbirds systematically visit the tube-like structures of the flowers that decorate the tops of these square-stemmed plants!



A “hummer” visiting bee balm in Brenda’s garden

At the back of the flower bed, I have planted Red-osier Dogwoods (*Cornus sericea*). This shrub produces early blooming, flat-topped clusters of white flowers that attract insects for hummingbirds. Insects are an important protein source for hummer adults and chicks. Additionally, it’s many branching reddish stems provide good perching areas and possible low nesting sites for hummingbirds.



A hummingbird perched in Brenda’s garden

Among the dogwoods are planted a couple of highbush cranberries (*Viburnum trilobum*) that similarly enhance habitat. Sadly, one of these bushes was almost totally decimated by the Viburnum Leaf Beetle. However, since it is such a favourite perching spot for hummingbirds in my garden, I decided to leave this almost dead woody shrub as a perch. Like a sculpture in the garden it serves an important function for both hummingbirds and their admirers- providing an unobstructed perching site where observers can easily watch and take photos!

Like all of us northern gardeners and birdwatchers, I look forward to spring and seeing these amazing, tiny, iridescent-feathered, nectar feeders visiting my garden soon!

If you want to include more native species for hummingbirds in your garden this spring and summer, please check out the hummingbird fact sheet on INT’s web site. Remember if you are providing artificial nectar sources for hummingbirds as well, it’s a 1:4 ratio of sugar to water, and feeders should be cleaned regularly.

Happy gardening and birdwatching!

Our 33rd Annual Fundraising Dinner



Calling all golfers! This year, we have green fees at Red Sands, Belvedere, and Green Gables (or Anderson's Creek) up for grabs! Photo source: Green Gables Golf

Our 33rd Annual Fundraising Dinner will be held on Friday April 28th, at the Red Shores Race Track and Casino. The evening will feature a live and silent auction, raffles, and fabulous door prizes!

Every year, many generous Islanders contribute to our dinner by donating their original art and reproductions, crafts, carvings, handmade products and other items to be auctioned at our event. Their contributions help us raise funds to run projects and manage our lands.

Here are just a few of the wonderful donations we have received so far. Thank-you to all of our dedicated supporters!

Tickets for the dinner are now sold out!

See you on April 28th!



One lucky bidder will enjoy a one-night stay in a TreePOD at Treetop Haven! Your TreePOD includes a full kitchen, bedroom, bathroom, and private hot tub. Photo source: Treetop Haven



For history buffs we have a selection of Island history books and magazines donated by the PEI Museum and Heritage Foundation



Bring the beach inside with these two beautiful artworks donated by local artist Sharon Smith



Our friends at Global Pet Foods donated this beautiful basket of goodies for your furry friends. This package will be up for grabs in our silent auction



We have gift cards from Off The Wallz, Owls Hollow, and That Fun Place to keep your kids and grandkids entertained!



This lovely set of four stemless wine goblets were donated by Hawkins Pottery

Thank you to all our generous donors and volunteers!

Our Generous Donors in 2016

Judi Allen & Dave McBurney
 John Andrew
 Deborah Annear
 Mark & Angela Arsenault
 Martin Arsenault
 John & Jean Baird
 Rose Barbour
 Missy & Larry Baschkin
 Dr. Bernice Bell
 Jean Blanchard
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 Brenda Brydon
 Mary Burnett
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 Sid Watts
 Ann Wheatley & Dr. Pierre-Yves Daoust
 Ann Wootton
 Lorne Yeo

Businesses:

Anglican Church Women of Christ
 Church Cherry Valley
 Anne Arvidson Driving School
 City of Summerside
 Communities, Land & Environment

Our Generous Donors in 2016

Businesses Continued:

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DCD Auto Electric
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John Sylvester Photography
Maritime Electric
Mid Isle Farms Inc.
PEI Museum & Heritage Foundation
PEI Preserve Company
Phillips Agri Services
Oak Meadows Inc.
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Eagle Adoptions:

Souris Regional School
West Kent Elementary
Fran Sark (in memory of Kevin Sark)
Fran Sark (in memory of Larry Gallant)

Kestrel Nest Box Adoption:

Linda Lemieux

Endowment Fund:

Dr. Jean-Yves Dubois

Stewardship Fund:

Estate of Therese D'Amour

In Memoriam Donations:

The names underlined are those that are remembered with donations from those listed below each:

Francis Gauthier

Vera Collister
Debbie Collister

Judy Birtwistle

Dan McAskill

Buddy MacIntyre

Dan McAskill

Brian & His Love for His Paradise

Patricia Domine

Ian Bayly & Steve Inwood

William & Lorrie Bylhouwer

Winter On-Line Silent Auction Donors:

Diane Griffin
Confederation Centre of the Arts
PEI Brewing Company
Dundee Arms Inn
Harbourfront Theatre

Brackley Beach North Winds Inn & Suites
Ski Wentworth
Scapes
Five Eleven West
Nova Massage & Laser Clinic
The Great George Inn
Masstown Market
Open Eats
The Loyalist Country Inn
Grand Senses Spa
Island Nature Trust
Quality Inn (Summerside)
Fairholm Inn
Willow Bend Motel & Suites
Jackie Waddell
Kevin Griffin
Lady Baker's Tea Trolley
Murphy's Pharmacy
Donna Gill
E&D Construction
Lovegrass Farm
Megan Harris
Anonymous
Julie-Lynn Zahavich
Chelsey Folsom

Upcoming Nature Events

Apr 29th — Owl Prowl at Macphail Woods — Celebrate the wonderful world of owls at the Macphail Homestead in Orwell. Light refreshments will be served in the Great Room of the Homestead at 6:30pm. At 7:30pm, a slideshow on owls will commence, followed by a guided walk around the woods to call in nearby owls. Admission is free, donations welcome.

May 2nd — Tucking Your Socks In - Ticks in the Maritimes Cause New Style Trends — Kami Harris will be the guest speaker for Nature PEI's monthly meeting. The meeting will start at 7:30 PM at Beaconsfield's Carriage House, corner of West and Kent, Charlottetown. Admission is free.

May 6th — Birding and History Hike— Dan McAskill will be the interpreter for this *All Around the Hillsborough Canadian Heritage River* Canada 150 event cosponsored by Trails-4-All and the Hillsborough River Association. Those interested should meet at Indigo parking lot for car pooling at 8:30 am or at the Hillsborough River Eco-Centre at 9 am. Please bring your binoculars.

May 6th — Smelt Festival — The festival features tours of smelt spawning areas, nature hikes, birding, wagon rides, children's farm tour, geocaching, a traditional smelt fry and barbeque and more. The event will take place from 10:00am - 1:00pm at Shephard's Farm, 66 Whittlesey Road (off Joey's Road) in Pisquid. For more info, visit the Facebook page: HRA Watershed Management

May 13th — Birds and Breakfast— The public is invited to breakfast at the Sir Andrew Macphail Homestead in Orwell and then to take a closer look at island birds along the trails. Breakfast treats will be served at 7:00am, with the walk beginning at 8:00am. Admission is free, donations welcome.

May 20th — Springtime Walk in the Forest— Join the friendly and knowledgeable staff at Macphail Woods Nature Centre for a spring-time walk exploring some of PEI's native ferns, wildflowers, shrubs and trees. The walk is from 10:00am to 12:00pm.

May 27th — Nature PEI's Bain Bird Count— This is Nature PEI's spring bird count. The count provides a snapshot of the birds migrating to PEI over a 24 hour period. For more information and to enter or join a team, contact Dan McAskill (902-569-4351 or jdm-caskill@pei.sympatico.ca)

Board of Directors

Island Nature Trust is governed by a volunteer Board of Directors of 12 to 16 members. Each member serves up to two three-year terms. Board members participate in a number of committees that help guide the work of Island Nature Trust.

Executive:

Kathleen MacNearney	President
Randy Dibblee	Vice-President (Nature PEI)
Rob MacKay	Treasurer
Donna Gill	Secretary

Group Representatives:

Luke Peters	PEI Wildlife Federation
Linda Berko	Museum and Heritage Foundation
Kevin Teather	University of Prince Edward Island

Remaining Board Members:

Sharon Clark
 Joyce Dewar
 Adam Hood
 Carol Horne
 Laura Kell
 Paul Smith
 Michael Walsh

We are...

Island Nature Trust is a non-profit, private registered charity dedicated to permanent protection of natural areas on Prince Edward Island. We acquire lands through purchase and donation for protection and help private landowners protect their own properties through legislation and promotion of good land management practices. We also protect species-at-risk, restore lands and undertake public nature education.

Donations are always welcome.

Contact Us:

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E-mail: admin@islandnaturetrust.ca

Find Us Online:

www.islandnaturetrust.ca



@peinaturetrust



Island Nature Trust



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Donate



This summer and fall we will be reinvigorating and revamping our Conservation Guardian Program. With over 3,800 acres of protected natural areas spread across PEI, it is a challenge for us to visit, assess, and manage all of our properties. Our Conservation Guardian Program will provide training to volunteer guardians who are willing to adopt a natural area and report back to us on wildlife presence, human use, invasive species, etc. Please consider donating to help us cover the costs associated with running this program. Your donation will be helping to protect and enhance valuable wildlife habitat across the Island. When you donate, please specify that your donation is for our stewardship efforts.