



INT QUARTERLY

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

A message from our President

I send this message as we enter another stage of an unprecedented era.

It seems that Mother Earth is demanding change. Together, we are navigating a disconcerting period with so many layers to consider. Certainly, an important time to be involved with an organization whose mission clearly supports a return to more sustainable practices.

Island Nature Trust has been in the business of supporting Mother Earth for over 40 years. The properties that you, our members and supporters, have put under protection are living examples of how biodiversity creates a powerful self-sustaining system that has amazing therapeutic benefits.

Our most recent acquisition of 117 acres at Crown Point is a prime example. A walk down to the Point will certainly reveal an incredible number of species in marshes, woodland and finally along the strait. Many thanks to the over 70 donors, MapleCross Foundation, and of course the matching federal monies for bringing this property under protection.

Throughout this recent time, where our experiences have been limited and possibly similar to those of previous

generations, we have seen a return to what is truly important and indeed remarkable:

Local markets and produce are experiencing an increase in sales;

A reduction in Greenhouse gas emissions, that we would have thought impossible only a short time ago, has been realized;

Wildlife is being sighted in urban areas as they respond to reduced human usage;

We have pulled in our circle of connectivity to a more restrictive range; and

Seed companies are struggling to keep pace with orders as humans come to an abrupt understanding that what we may have considered a hobby an “essential service”.

Many of these changes indicate a recognition of the need to support Mother Earth. Could we dare to dream that we have pushed a reset button.

While we continue to be encouraged by volunteers and donors who support acquisitions and stewardship in many ways, we need you more than ever. The possibilities for the Trust are endless!

We look to you and your connections to help us to continue in the strong tradition

established over the last forty years.

Let us take the lessons learned during this moment in time and apply them as we go forward.



I recently received an anonymous quote, referring to our current situation. It focuses on the fact that it is human beings who have limited freedoms, written through the perspective of another species. It goes like this, “You are not necessary.

The air, earth and sky without you are fine. When you come back, remember that you are my guests. Not my masters.”

I hope I can remember!

In the meantime, I call on each of you to strive to improve the situation for Mother Nature by continuing your support for the ideals of Island Nature Trust.

June Jenkins Sanderson—
President

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Our Lands Secured

956 Acres of Hope

It has been a historic year for Island Nature Trust. Our goal at the beginning of 2019 was to secure 1000 acres of privately owned natural area to protect in perpetuity on PEI. This was in addition to the 4375 acres we had previously saved over our 40 year history. We came tantalisingly close to that target, falling short by just 44 acres. We are humbled by the incredible contributions our supporters have made to realise this conservation goal. In depth profiles area available on the [Land Conservation](#) page of our website but let us look at a snapshot of the properties we have secured:



1. Courtin Island



10 ACRES

With the first parcel acquired in 1985, INT now owns two thirds of Courtin Island in Malpeque Bay. It is home to uncantered beech trees, mature red oak & countless migratory birds.

2. Percival River

One of the least developed watersheds in PEI. Percival River in Alaska is an incredible natural area with the largest unbroken ribbon of saltmarsh in coastal PEI.



309 ACRES

3. Tenmile House

An Ecological Gift of land lying on a kame terrace and containing a mix of varying age structure forest, shrub swamp peatland, stream and marsh.



106 ACRES

4. Princetown



12 Acres

Grassland along the Malpeque Bay, this property is home to nesting grassland birds, including the threatened Bobolink.

5. St Charles



60 Acres

This property helps protect headwater tributaries that feed the Fortune River. Beautiful hardwoods in this forested stand provide habitat for diverse bird species.

6. Portage

The undisturbed peatlands on this property allow for carbon sequestration and groundwater filtration, while providing habitat for forested wetland plants and migratory birds.



115 Acres

7. Brudenell

A beautiful parcel along Brudenell River with extensive bird, small mammal and amphibian life, fittingly named the Wellspring of Peace Natural Area.



7 Acres

8. Fort Augustus

With frontage on the Hillsborough River, this mixed-wood forest is dominated by wet-tolerant species, including red maple and black spruce.



101 Acres

9. Freeland

A host to woodland that supports a great diversity of uncommon plants and migratory songbirds. Cedar, red maple and elm to name but a few.



99 Acres

10. Mont Carmel

Forested wetland and bog in the upper watershed of Haldimand River, this property is in an area with high biodiversity.



20 Acres

11. Crown Point

We explore this wonderful headland in more depth on page 4.



117 Acres

COVID -19 Review

The Sound of Nature

In these times of uncertainty, we can look to nature for some comfort as it appears to be flourishing now that many of us are keeping close to home. Wildlife across the globe are reclaiming spaces normally filled with human activity—from lions napping on the road in South Africa to mountain goats taking over a seaside town in Wales.

Our altered pace is giving us an opportunity to appreciate the simpler things in life – and Spring could not be a better time, with flowers and trees blossoming and migratory songbirds announcing their arrival.

In urban environments, the ever-present noises of the city have become muted and suddenly the air is filled with birdsong that

before was barely noticeable. This is even true here on our island. Speaking to a friend living in downtown Charlottetown, they can now step outside during the morning rush hour and hear the distinctive call of the Black-capped Chickadee, once drowned out by the sounds of commuting traffic.

Leanne Tol — *Landbirds Coordinator*



JENKINS COMPLEX



KILDARE FOREST



BARBARA GREEN

Welcoming You To Our Natural Areas

The staff and board of Island Nature Trust draw inspiration and comfort from time spent in the natural environment during these transformative times. We believe that it's important to get outside and engage with the flavours of Spring that our protected natural areas and trails can provide, for the good of your physical and mental health!

We invite you to venture into our trails at the Barbara Green, Jenkins Complex and Kildare Forest Natural Areas over the coming weeks. While we understand people's need to immerse themselves in the natural environment, it's crucial to do so while being aware of our responsibilities to Island wildlife. With the seasonal shift to Spring, it's a critical time of year for nature. We have put together a useful guide for you to enjoy more fully your venture into the outdoors while being mindful of the needs of the natural space. In welcoming you to Island Nature Trust pro-



TECTED areas, we ask you to follow these guidelines:

Please follow provincial guidance on COVID-19 at all times;

Give other visitors all the room they need, and show them you are giving them space;

Keep pets on-leash and clean up after them;

Stay on the trail but beware of overuse.

Taking shortcuts and walking on sensitive areas increases the damage to soils and surrounding vegetation and can cause long-term damage to the terrain;

Use clean gear – muddy or dirty footwear or clothing can carry seeds of invasive plant species, insects or disease spores, contributing to loss of ecological integrity in the long term; and

Take only photos, leave only footprints – natural and synthetic materials affect the ecosystem. All garbage, even compost (e.g.

orange peels), has an impact by changing wildlife behaviour and damaging plants in the understory.

Spring Mating Season – What you need to know

Take your time, observe and engage your senses: Pause – look – smell – but most importantly – LISTEN



The messages that wildlife give us can be subtle and many of us have lost touch with their meaning. Recognize their cues whilst walking one of our trails:

Coyotes and foxes are denning. Owls and raptors have chicks in the nest. Be mindful of their presence. These animals may display signs of aggression while they are protecting their territory and offspring.

You are more likely to hear coyotes before seeing them. 'Yipping' or howling is an indication that you are close to their territory. Turn away and leave the area.

Guides for our trails can be found in the [COVID-19 news article](#) on our website.

Crown Point

PEI is a heavily disturbed province. By 1900 about 70 per cent of its natural land had been cleared and converted from wilderness to agriculture. For the most part, it is a landscape that has been harnessed for food production. Many appreciate the symmetry of rolling fields, flourishing pastures and the abundant crops they provide, while the story behind the complex ecosystems, vitality and climate stability that PEI's remaining natural areas sustain are sadly often ignored or hidden from our collective awareness.

Saving space for a kingdom of wildlife



Crown Point headland is a diverse natural area with unique ecological and cultural qualities. Executive Director Megan Harris observes the coastline on the lookout for shorebirds.



Violets in bloom along the access road

In conserving the remaining legacy of natural Island habitat, INT recognizes the importance of celebrating the immense value of nature. It is vital that we develop better ways to connect with audiences and to help the public recognize the reliance we have on natural spaces to deliver us the clean water and air necessary for life. It is our organizational goal to discuss openly with the public so we can all understand and reflect on our responsibilities in protecting PEI's natural heritage for the sustainability of our Island's future. Therefore, over the coming weeks we will be rolling out content that will enable you to explore how our lands fit into this picture and its position in telling an ongoing story about the long lasting impact that

species and land conservation is having on preserving culture and ecology on PEI. When INT first invited the public to donate towards Crown Point's acquisition in February, it was a land in hibernation - lying dormant under a crisp layer of snow. With Spring now fully sprung, this dynamic natural space is starting to reveal its gifts for Islanders to discover. It's a land waking up!

Amid the turbulent events of COVID-19 and other alarming stories about the general decline of biodiversity across the globe, the acquisition of Crown Point with its multitude of flora and fauna is a healing balm for the human spirit. It is a kingdom teeming with wildlife. The 120-acre land parcel now protected is a rich mix of salt marsh, coastal cliff, forested bluff and peatland habitats that provide homes for countless birds and small mammals. Water-birds forage along the tideline while harbour seals loaf offshore in a vibrant setting that will now be protected for generations of Islanders to appreciate forever.

The proximity of this undeveloped headland to the growing community of Stratford, PEI meant the window to secure its protection was limited. Stratford is experiencing

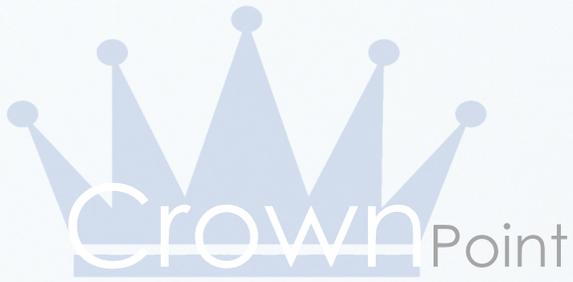
extensive population growth, placing the nearby coastal ecosystem under pressure from both land and sea. With over 90% of PEI's coastline in private ownership, human use can and does impact on the sharing of coastal resources with migrating shorebirds and waterfowl moving north – south on the Atlantic Migratory Flyway.



Bayberry buds about to break dormancy

Holding this land in trust means Island Nature Trust can protect this critical bionetwork and coastal interface in perpetuity.

Ben Russell—*Communications Manager*



CrownPoint

The kingdom wakes up



A green frog basking in the sun. The banjo call of this guy will be heard in June.



A Canada goose cruising in the beaver pond.



A beaver lodge along the Crown Point Rd at the edge of the bog.



Three of five bald eagles hanging out by the bog



One of many busy yellow-rumped warblers foraging in the larch as the needles are ready to burst open.



A black and white warbler with the squeaky wheel - barrow call.



The entry to a belted Kingfisher nest along the coastal bluff.



Harbour seals loafing offshore at low tide.

Educate to Protect

The kids are alright

One of INT’s core missions is to help connect people to natural ecosystems. It is vital for our communities to interact with natural areas that we all frequent in respectful ways. Why? Because beach ecosystems are being affected by global and local societal growth at an alarming rate. The coastal wildlife we enjoy today may not exist for our children to experience tomorrow.



In 2017, INT created an education program focused on western PEI’s beaches and dunes. This year, we’ve been able to continue and expand that program with the financial assistance of Environment and Climate Change Canada, as well as the Prince Edward Island Wildlife Conservation Fund. This means we can now provide immersive education opportunities to schools across PEI.



An eager team from our species at risk program began delivering weekly presentations to schools over the winter. They targeted schools in areas where people’s use of beaches and dunes is very high. Our knowledgeable team engaged



INT’s Lyndsay MacWilliams engages with grade 7 students at Miscouche Primary School

with youth in grade 7 about the fragility of PEI’s beach ecosystems. Students learned that this ecology is dependent on respectful human use. They recognized that correcting negative habits today ensures that beach-dune wildlife flourishes tomorrow.

Knowledge For Future Generations

Here’s what Lyndsay MacWilliams, a member of the presentation team had to say about her experiences engaging directly with the students:

How did you deliver your message to the students?

“We teach the students to understand that our coastal community way-of-life is actually heavily dependent on caring about the conservation of these systems. It’s not enough to just describe the beaches and dunes and express how great and intricate they are. So, we engage and connect with the students on both an emotional and intellectual level – empowering them to realize that they can do something about minimizing the

negative effects people are having on these environments.

The content was delivered in a way that kids can relate to. For example, by giving a snapshot of what it looks like when the things they and their families enjoy and depend on are damaged or even completely disappear.”



Piping Plover Coordinator Vicki Johnson presents a slide depicting the wildlife interconnections within beach dune ecosystems

How have the presentations been received by students and teachers?

“Very positively. The students definitely seemed to enjoy the content. I think the teachers liked it too. For example, we received a request by a high school teacher from Bluefield after they heard about the success of the presentations delivered to Grade 7 students at another school. I also found it rewarding that the teachers assigned the class homework relevant to the presentation.”

What did you enjoy or learn about the experience of presenting to young people?

“Seeing how excited they can be when it comes to nature and wildlife – which are the things that inspire and motivate me. It’s great to see just how much these students know. So far, I have been pleasantly surprised by how well these students have listened, participated and retained information.



after learning that the mother is. I thought that was a great question that displayed strong critical thinking.

It is pretty fun to answer these questions but more importantly, promote discussion with the students.”

How important is it to continually engage with young people on this mission?

“Extremely important. Young people are the future and they will be the ones to take care of this planet and its resources. We have seen what can happen when people and generations have lost their connection with the environment. How it functions and continues to sustain our way of life is often taken for granted. The evidence is right in front of us showing the damage this can cause worldwide. It is important to reflect on the mistakes that people have made before us to ensure that history doesn’t repeat itself. The beautiful thing about the program is that students have been learning that they can make simple changes today for all of us to realize a much better relationship with nature in the future.”

What plans do you have to develop the presentation in the future?

“We would like to incorporate traditional ecological knowledge (TEK) with the help of knowledge gatherer, Eliza Knockwood, into the presentations as well as the field trips. I believe TEK is an important platform to learn about natural systems, how they work and their benefits and uses. Incorporating this



I have also been impressed at just how much the students know about the natural world. It is really exciting and fascinating to see how they think. It’s clear that the new generation displays a curiosity towards the idea of protecting the natural systems they live within.”

What was the most interesting question you received from a student?

“We received some really interesting questions about wildlife and organisms from the students. One asked if the eggs of the red-winged blackbird would be camouflaged



indigenous knowledge will widen the scope and also expose the kids to the concept of two-eyed seeing. It is important that TEK be a part of education and presentations in order to help with steps towards reconciliation.”

Staff Perspectives

Janell MacDonald joined Island Nature Trust as the new Finance Officer in March 2020. While her background is in finance, having completed her chartered accountant designation in 2015, Janell’s passion lies in nature and protecting our Island environment. In 2016 she moved to her family farm and began growing medicinal herbs on a small scale for herbal tea and other related products, transitioning the land to certified organic. After a trip to a goat cheese facility in British Columbia, Janell and her partner Kyle, decided they wanted to add a couple goats to the farm. A couple have multiplied to seven, and while they still don’t have any goat cheese, mischievous escapee goats are often seen frolicking around the barnyard. In addition to the goats, they have a dozen chickens, a barn cat and a border collie named Theo. You can often find Theo and Janell exploring the fields and forests around their farm!

“Growing up, my parents instilled in me a love of and appreciation for nature. I have always been deeply affected by injustices that us humans have placed on our Earth, particularly the issues around species extinction and destruction of natural areas. Many years ago, I was inspired by Albert Einstein’s quote “those who have the privilege to know have the duty to act”. For a long time, I struggled with what my action should be. I never felt like I was doing enough or doing the right thing to help solve the problems I was most concerned with. Finally, I found a way to act upon this concern, beginning an online Master of Environmental Practice program with Royal Roads University in January 2020. Shortly after beginning this program I learned about the opportunity with INT – an excellent way to combine my financial background, new

Janell MacDonald

environmental training and passion for the Island’s natural areas. When I’m not at work, school or exploring nature, I’m often volunteering for other organizations I believe in, including sitting on the boards of the PEI Certified Organic Producers Cooperative and the Environmental Coalition of PEI. I look forward to working with you, as a member of INT, to reach our shared goals of protecting and stewarding natural areas on PEI.” - Janell MacDonald - *Finance Officer*



Janell with volunteers Mike Salter and Louise LaVoie during an unplanned beach clean up while monitoring Piping Plovers at Rustico

Welcoming Our New Staff



Amy Frost-Wicks
Land Stewardship Technician

land@islandnaturetrust.ca



Sandra LeClair
Species-at-Risk Field Technician

sartech@islandnaturetrust.ca



Lyndsay MacWilliams
Species-at-Risk Field Technician

inttech@islandnaturetrust.ca

Janell MacDonald
Finance Officer

finance@islandnaturetrust.ca



Ben Russell
Communications Manager

ben@islandnaturetrust.ca



Piping Plover Update

Our avian friends have returned



Volunteer Mike Salter and Piping Plover Coordinator Vicki Johnson carefully scan Rustico beach for signs of nesting Piping Plovers

Spring has finally arrived! And whilst society is on hold, the natural world is inspiring us with messages of resilience. One example of this is the seasonal return of the valiant piping plover.

It has been an arduous migration for this little bird and the distances it has traveled are vast. From its winter home in the Bahamas, and travelling over 2,500 kilometers, the plovers started arriving back to our shores to breed in early May. So far, 20 piping plovers have been spotted on Island beaches and more birds will continue arriving into June.

Vicki Johnson (Piping Plover Coordinator), other staff and dedicated volunteers are in the midst of visiting beaches to identify and monitor the plovers and their nests. At the beginning of the season, each male plover makes several small depressions in the sand, known as scrapes.

The female then chooses the best scrape as the designated nest to lay her eggs. Vicki and her team carefully monitor these behaviors and set up signage around the chosen area to help protect the highly camouflaged nest and eggs.

One pair in particular, banded as 2K (male) and 2J (female), whom we've been following with a close eye last year and this spring, are the definitions of persistence and perseverance. If you have followed along with our social media posts, you may recall that these two individuals nested in 2018 at Anglo Rustico and fledged all four chicks. In 2019, after their third

nest attempt, 2K and 2J were able to fledge all three chicks at Anglo Rustico yet again. In a turn of events, this year 2K and 2J have decided to try their luck with new partners at Anglo Rustico! 2K's new love interest is 4L and they have established a nest with three, possibly four, eggs. 2J has decided to try her luck with an un-banded male and has several scrapes to choose from to make her nest.



"I'm most excited to follow 2K and 2J's story to see if they are successful with their nests and with their new mates." - Vicki Johnson

Currently, a dozen birds have selected their territories. In addition to three nests at Anglo Rustico, a pair has been spotted with a nest at Twin Shores and scraping behaviours have been sited at Savage Harbour and Spry Cove.

To help these birds have a successful season, please be mindful of your activities in areas displaying piping plover signage.

You can help by walking on the wet sand in these areas, avoiding areas marked with nesting signs, giving the plovers space, keeping your pets on leashes and taking any garbage you may have with you when you leave. Let's work together to protect this endangered species!



Piping Plover alert signs have now been installed on Rustico beach

Our Generous Land Donors in 2019 & 2020

A huge thank you to these individuals & organizations for their outstanding gifts to future generations
- lands now protected as natural areas!

Duncan McNeill & Diana Boulton

The late Carol Connick

R. G. Arsenault

Carol Townsend

K&S Developments Ltd., Charlottetown

Keith Milligan

Buddhist nuns at Great Wisdom Buddhist Institute

Catherine Hennessey & Betty Maurice

Century 21 Colonial Realty Inc.

Island Nature Trust Environmentalist Award

Island Nature Trust is excited to announce the launch of a new youth award sponsored by local Realtor Leigh Jenkins of Century 21 and available to students finishing high school studies at Bluefield, Charlottetown rural, Colonel Grey, Montague and Francois Buote.

If you are a curious and conscientious individual who has a proven interest in environmental issues and nature conservation – we would like to invite you to apply for The Island Nature Trust Environmentalist Award. We are offering \$200 to a winner from each school and a one-year Island Nature Trust Youth Membership.

One of our key missions at INT is to provide education resources and learning opportunities to Island youth. We are dedicated to help individuals learn and develop an understanding of the environmental threats that our Island is facing now and in the future. It is vital to engage our young communities so they can better prepare themselves and plan accordingly for the challenges ahead.

To apply: Students must contact their school counsellor for the application form.

The recipients of this award will have maintained a sound academic standing over the past 2 school years and have been involved in a school or community-based club, committee or organization that is dedicated to environmental issues.

Best of luck to all who apply!



Who are we...?

Island Nature Trust is a non-profit, membership-driven, private registered charity dedicated to permanent protection of natural areas in 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, new members and volunteers are always welcome.

Contact Us:

(Ravenwood, Experimental Farm)
PO Box 265
Charlottetown, PE
C1A 7K4
Phone: 902-892-7513
Fax: 902-628-6331
E-mail: admin@islandnaturetrust.ca

Find Us Online:

www.islandnaturetrust.ca



islandnaturetrust



Island Nature Trust



@peinaturetrust

2020 Blue Heron Raffle Winner

We're excited to announce the winner of the Great Blue Heron raffle drawn on May 8th at the Island Nature Trust office.

Congratulations to Kevin Laughlin of Traveler's Rest who is the lucky but well deserved recipient. Kevin has been buying tickets for our raffles for over a decade and has been an active supporter to INT over the years. He plans to display the heron, with pride in his sitting room. Thank you again to all who purchased tickets.

Dave Broderick of Alberton carved and painted this beautiful Great Blue Heron! Every year, Dave donates one for us to raffle and raise funds for natural area protection and stewardship.



Kevin pictured with the beautiful Great Blue Heron carved and painted by Dave Broderick

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:

June Jenkins Sanderson - *President*
 Jan Matejcek - *Vice President*
 Linda Berko - *Secretary*
 Rob MacKay - *Treasurer*
 Bruce Craig

Group Representatives:

Gerald MacDougall - *Nature PEI*
 Keila Miller - *PEI Wildlife Federation*
 Kevin Teather - *UPEI Biology Dept.*

Remaining Board Members:

Mary Acorn
 Patricia Caporaso
 Joyce Dewar
 Jurgen Krause
 Stéphane Le Blanc
 Michael Walsh



Your 2020 Membership Is Now Due!

Please take a moment to fill out the form below and return it to the address above with your membership fee. You can also pay online via our website www.islandnaturetrust.ca Your membership means Island Nature Trust is stronger.

Thank you for your support!

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____ Postal Code: _____

Telephone: _____ E-mail: _____

Membership Category: Student (\$10) _____ Single (\$20) _____ Family (\$25) _____

Life (\$500) _____ Donation \$ _____ *(Tax receipts will be issued for all donations)*

Payment Method: Cheque _____ Money Order _____ Visa _____ MasterCard _____

Card Number: _____ Exp. Date: _____ Signature: _____



ISLAND NATURE TRUST



Our Staff Members:

Megan Harris—*Executive Director*
exdir@islandnaturetrust.ca

Ben Russell—*Communications Manager*
ben@islandnaturetrust.ca

Janell MacDonald—*Finance Officer*
finance@islandnaturetrust.ca

Vicki Johnson—*Piping Plover Coordinator*
plover@islandnaturetrust.ca

Leanne Tol—*Landbirds Coordinator*
landbirds@islandnaturetrust.ca

Amy Frost - Wicks—*Land Stewardship Technician*
land@islandnaturetrust.ca

Lyndsay MacWilliams—*Species-at-Risk Technician*
inttech@islandnaturetrust.ca

Sandra LeClair—*Species-at-Risk Technician*
sartech@islandnaturetrust.ca

*A black and white warbler ventures out at
Crown Point*