

Federation of  
Nova Scotia  
Naturalists

# NEWS

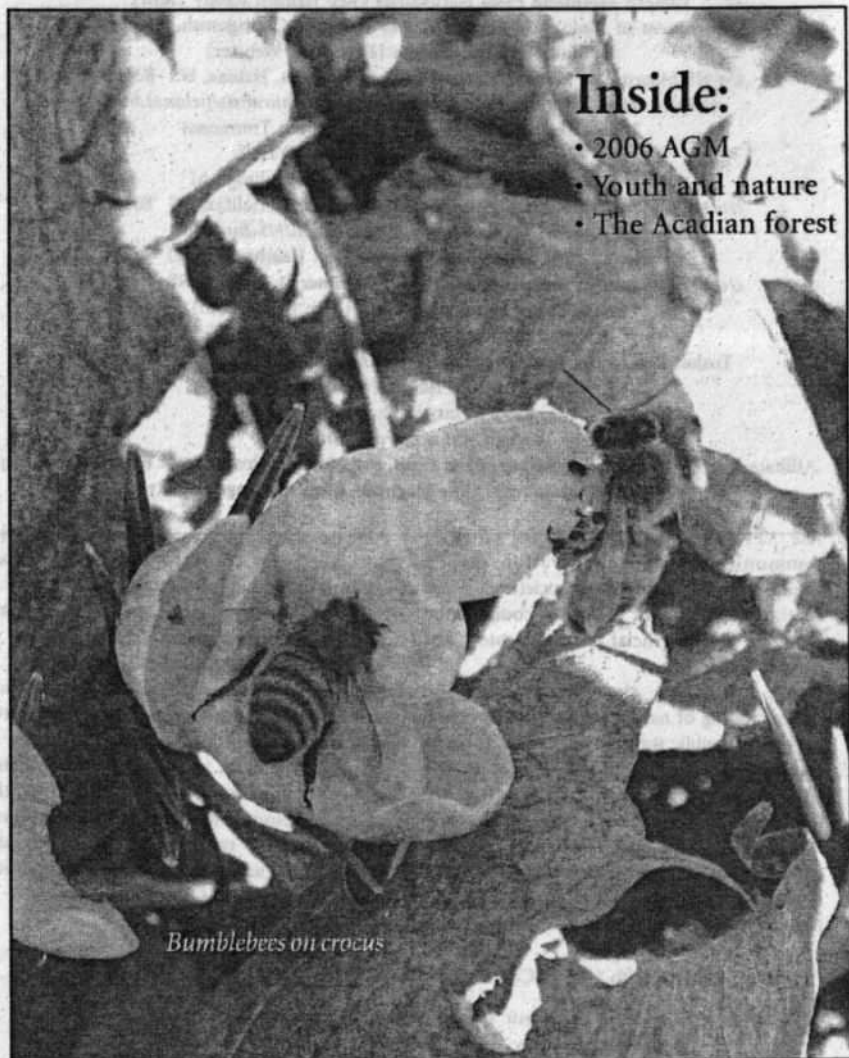
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## Inside:

- 2006 AGM
- Youth and nature
- The Acadian forest



*Bumblebees on crocus*

# Nature Nova Scotia – Federation of NS Naturalists

**Annapolis Field Naturalists' Society** (Rep: Jon Percy)

PO Box 576, Annapolis Royal, NS B0S 1A0

**Blomidon Naturalists Society** (Rep: Larry Bogan)

PO Box 127, Wolfville, NS B0P 1X0

website: <http://www.blomidonnaturalists.ca/>

**Cape Breton Naturalists Society** (Rep: David McCorquodale)

c/o Cape Breton Centre for Heritage and Science, 225 George St, Sydney, NS B1P 1J5

**Chignecto Naturalists Club** (Rep (temp): Tony Erskine)

c/o CWS, Box 6227, Sackville, NB E4L 1G6

**Eastern Mainland Field Naturalists** (Rep (temp): Randy Lauff)

c/o Department of Biology, St Francis Xavier University, Antigonish, NS B2G 2W5

**Halifax Field Naturalists** (Rep: Peter Webster)

c/o NS Museum of Natural History, 1747 Summer St, Halifax, NS B3H 3A6

website: <http://chebucto.ns.ca/Recreation/FieldNaturalists/fieldnat.html>

**Les Amis du Plein Air** (Rep (temp): Jean Timmons)

PO Box 472, Cheticamp, NS B0E 1H0

**Nova Scotia Bird Society** (Rep: Eileen Billington)

c/o NS Museum of Natural History, 1747 Summer St, Halifax, NS B3H 3A6

website: [www.chebucto.ns.ca/Recreation/NS-BirdSoc/](http://www.chebucto.ns.ca/Recreation/NS-BirdSoc/)

**Nova Scotia Wild Flora Society** (Rep: Heather Drope)

c/o NS Museum of Natural History, 1747 Summer St, Halifax, NS B3H 3A6

**South Shore Naturalists Club** (Rep: Jill Comolli)

c/o Jill Comolli, RR 1, Rose Bay, NS B0J 2X0

**Tusket River Environmental Protection Association** (Rep: Sue Hutchins)

PO Box 103, Tusket, NS B0W 3M0

**Members at large** (Rep: Jim Wolford)

e-mail: [jimwolford@eastlink.ca](mailto:jimwolford@eastlink.ca)

**Affiliate Members – Cobequid Naturalists Club, SW Nova Environmental Protection Group**  
**Associate Member – Cole Harbour Rural Heritage Society**

The FNSN purpose is to further communication and cooperation among naturalists and natural history societies in Nova Scotia. We also work toward a coordinated effort on the provincial level to protect our natural environment.

- We promote the enjoyment and understanding of nature by our members and the general public through education; through fostering the creation of nature centres and education programs; and by defending the integrity of existing facilities and programs.
- We encourage the establishment of protected natural areas, as represented in such entities as parks, nature reserves, wilderness areas, and heritage rivers.

- We defend the integrity of existing sanctuaries by exercising constant vigilance against pollution and habitat destruction.

- We promote and engage in funding and research needed for protecting the integrity of all natural ecosystems.

- We encourage and engage in the protection and restoration of threatened and endangered species through working for the inclusion of all major habitats in a system of protected areas; encouraging and facilitating the reintroduction of extirpated flora and fauna to their former ranges in the province; and encouraging and facilitating the restoration and enhancement of essential habitats.

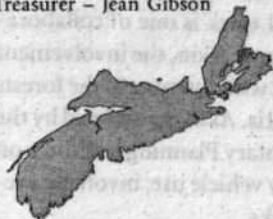
FNSN is affiliated with Nature Canada and is a member of the Atlantic Nature Network.

Visit our website at <http://naturens.ca>

or call Doug Linzey at (902) 582-7176 for more information.

## Nature Nova Scotia

President - Larry Bogan  
Vice-president - Alex MacDonald  
Past president - Joan Czapalay  
Secretary - Doug Linzey  
Treasurer - Jean Gibson



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## From the editor

We are besieged daily with wakeup calls on the environment: the weather is screwy, the North is melting, asthma rates are rising, and everywhere we drive in Nova Scotia we see signs of human activity degrading the natural environment.

On the local front, we may be making some progress, though it often seems to entail the old slog of taking two steps backward for every three forward. The provincial government has finally recognized that the use off-highway vehicles must be regulated, but how long it will take to implement new policies remains to be seen. After far too much hemming and hawing, the Department of Natural Resources finally nixed a proposal to introduce wild turkeys, an alien species, to Nova Scotia.

The recurring question that puzzles me more than anything is Why do we have to work so darn hard to get government to do what's right and what the majority is clearly in favour of? Isn't government in place to do the will of its citizens? Much of the time, it seems not. The Department of Natural Resources has publicly stated goals, the first two of which are "to achieve sound natural resources stewardship" and "to conserve the diversity of Nova Scotia's natural environment." But DNR seems to devote much energy to supporting activities that have the opposite effect. Why? And why does the Department of Environment seem so feeble when it comes to supporting its own constituency, the environment? Mostly politics, I suppose - who has the power and influence at the cabinet level.

A number of our members are working very hard on a number of fronts to slow down, or even reverse, mindless development that has devastating effects on nature. Eileen and Bill Billington report to your board on the efforts of the Nova

>>> continued page 4

Scotia Coastal Coalition to stop development on south shore beaches. Bob and Wendy McDonald and the Halifax Field Naturalists are actively involved in preserving a chunk of wilderness in Halifax's back yard from the ravages of subdivisions and highways. The Annapolis Field Naturalists keep a wary eye on attempts to turn Digby Neck and parts of the North Mountain into sterile quarries. Naturalists in Pictou County were instrumental in getting some major protected areas established. The South Shore Naturalists carry on a never-ending battle to make life bearable for the endangered Atlantic Whitefish. The Tusket River Environmental Protection Association (TREPA) helps maintain some

semblance of natural environment in the Yarmouth area. And the list goes on.

In this issue we look at one organization that finally seems to be on the right track: the Nova Forest Alliance (NFA). That track is one of collaboration and cooperation, the involvement of all parties with interests in the forests of Nova Scotia. As demonstrated by the recent Voluntary Planning task force on off-highway vehicle use, involving everybody works.

It's an old saying, but always worth repeating, as Bob Bancroft, chairman of NFA, did the other day: "We're doing things together we can't do alone."

Doug Linzey



One of the aims of Nature Nova Scotia and a number of its member clubs is to figure out ways to involve youth and get them interested in natural history. The Blomidon Naturalists got off to a good start last summer in a joint effort with the Town of Wolfville summer youth camp.

## **Young Blomidon Naturalists Program**

by Eric Kershaw

This summer the Blomidon Naturalists, Town of Wolfville, and Department of Natural Resources worked together to create the Young Blomidon Naturalists program. One day a week, during the normal summer camp program at Ro-

tary Park in Wolfville, the participants, ages 6 to 11, experienced summer in a different way. Equipped with hand lenses and notebooks, the camp explored the outdoors, discovering, recording, and sharing nature while learning skills

and facts that would help to enhance future experiences.

The affectionately titled "nature guys," Eric Kershaw and Brennan Caverhill, designed a curriculum for the young naturalists and guided each week's experiences with the help of the full-time camp staff. The young naturalists were exposed to different locations and topics each week, taking trips to Blue Beach, Cape Blomidon, The Harriet Irving Botanical Gardens, and Reservoir Park. The activities at these locations covered a wide range of topics, including invertebrate diversity, plant physiology, fossilization, hydrology, evolution, flight, aquatic adaptation, orienteering, genetics, conservation, fossil fuels, tidal processes, and taxonomy.

This is the first year that the Young Blomidon Naturalists program has run, and by all accounts it has been an immense success. There has been a great deal of positive response from the youth and their parents as well as from the camp counsellors and the community of Wolfville. The Young Blomidon naturalists have increased their knowledge of, and excitement for, the natural world. This experience and enthusiasm has enriched the Wolfville community and helped to preserve and enhance the knowledge, responsibility, and delight shared in the spirit of naturalizing.

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*from the BNS newsletter, Fall 2005*

## And speaking of young naturalists . . .

Karen McKendry is a Dalhousie student with a mission: She is organizing a young naturalists club in the Halifax area. The Museum of Natural History is backing the idea, and the initial organizing meeting attracted representatives from the Halifax Field Naturalists, the Nova Scotia Bird Society, and Nature Nova Scotia.

Karen invites anyone interested to join the discussion and planning. Here's what she says:

The young naturalists club (official name yet to be decided on) is off to a great start! The next steps include clarifying some of the legal considerations for the museum and starting to plan the Open House weekend. Since it is likely that it will not be possible to start regular meetings and field trips until September 2006, we are planning a day in June during which families can come out and see what the future young naturalists club will be like. The day will include talks and activities in the morning at the museum, and a guided hike in the afternoon.

To stay informed about the club's progress, I invite you to join an e-mail group I am starting. Simply e-mail <youngnaturalistsns-subscribe@yahoogroups.com>. Then you will be a member of the <youngnaturalistsns@yahoogroups.com> e-mail list. I will use this group to send out updates on the club's progress.

Karen McKendry

# Board Activity

The Nature Nova Scotia board comprises 12 members at this time (5 executive and 7 active club reps). Since last year's AGM, the board has met twice (and will meet one more before this year's AGM), in Wolfville and Bridgewater. We have also done a fair amount of business on line, on our board e-mail forum. The e-mail forum allows representatives from non-active and affiliate members to participate, too.

Following up on our board retreat last March, we are moving ahead on creating an education committee and a Web-based networking facility that will allow all our member clubs to have a Web presence.

We keep tabs on various environment and nature-related happenings in the province, with regular responses to requests for input or support. Typical topics over the last few months include mainland moose habitat, species at risk, the Tobetic management plan, off-highway vehicles, the Cape North stewardship strategy, wood turtle research, Nova Scotia heritage strategy, youth programs, the Nova Scotia Environmental Education Caucus, the Black Bull mine, El Paso Gas.

We have representatives in a number of groups, including the Nova Forest Alliance, Nature Canada, the Nova Sco-

tia Coastal Coalition, and the Forest Technical Advisory Committee. Our newly elected vice-president, Alex MacDonald, is a full-time staff member of CPAWS Nova Scotia.

We are hoping to become more project oriented, in order to involve more Nova Scotians in the appreciation of nature. Our first project is underway – the Big Tree Search. This is a Web-based registry on which Nova Scotians can identify and let everyone know about their favourite big trees. This project is separate from, but complementary to, the annual Big Tree contest sponsored by the NS forest technicians. Go the Nature Nova Scotia Web site <naturens.ca> and select the "Big Tree Project" link.

As many of you will be aware, Nature Nova Scotia will host the 2007 Nature Canada conference in Wolfville. You'll want to set aside August 1-4 next year for a wonderful exploration of "Time and Tides," featuring the Bay of Fundy and its surrounding natural history. This is also a great opportunity to meet naturalists from across Canada. Our past-president, Joan Czupalay, has been your representative to Nature Canada for a number of years, and she is chairing the conference committee, whose organizing work is well underway.

# The Nova Forest Alliance

Report, by Doug Linzey

The Nova Forest Alliance (NFA) administers the Nova Scotia Model Forest, part of a cross-country program that brings diverse partners together to promote and research sustainable forest management. Principal funding comes from the Government of Canada via the Canadian Forest Service (CFS). NFA has an annual cash budget of about \$500,000. The office in Stewiacke is staffed by a manager and two to three support people.

Membership in NFA comprises approximately 40 partners and 25 associate members. Nature Nova Scotia is a partner. The various partners come from some 12 different sectors: federal and provincial government, local community, pulp/paper/board mill, first nations, sawmill and veneer, service and associations, professional and technical associations, research/education, environment, private landowners, and recreation/non-timber.

NFA oversees a working demonstration woodlot in Antrim. It funds programs via three committees: communications and outreach, research coordination, and sustainable forest management. It also strikes ad hoc working groups as necessary to oversee particular projects.

NFA sponsored projects as a rule have two or more project partners, most of which contribute cash or in-kind serv-

ices. That brings the total annual budget into the \$1 million range. Considering that half the partners are directly involved in forestry, NFA projects tend to be remarkably science- and environment-oriented. Here's a summary of projects that are either beginning or continuing this year (with participating partners):

- Buffer management of peatlands in southwestern Nova Scotia—effects of forestry on ecological character (Bowater Mersey, NSERC, Acadia U, DNR, Mersey Tobeatic Research Institute (MTRI), Parks Canada)
- The role of riparian buffers in forest bird conservation—phase 3 (Dalhousie U, Bowater Mersey, JD Irving, Stora Enso, DNR, MTRI, Kejimikujik Park, Canadian Wildlife Service)
- Assessing the effects of forest management practices on wood turtle distribution, movements, and habitat selection at multiple scales in the Acadian forest (Acadia U, Dean McCurdy, St. Mary's River Association)
- The effect of forest management scenarios on landscape connectivity for flying squirrels in southwestern Nova Scotia (MTRI, Greater Fundy Ecosystem Research Group, Fundy Model Forest, Parks Canada, Saint Mary's U, Acadia U, Applied Geomatics Research Group, Bowater Mersey, Ecology Ac-

tion Centre, DNR)

- Testing, refinement, and application of tools for assessing ecological effects on logging roads in Nova Scotia (DNR, Dalhousie SRES, others)
- Genetic diversity of black ash in Nova Scotia (CFS, First Nations Forestry Program of Nova Scotia)
- Enhancing capacity for sustainable watershed management in Atlantic Canada (DFO, UNB, Acadia U, Bowater Mersey, Environment Canada, Canaan-Washademoak Watershed Association, Fredericton areas watershed associations, MTRI)
- Mapping potential wet areas for operational land use management and planning—phase 2 (UNB, DNR, NSDEL, Agriculture Canada, Bowater Mersey, JD Irving, Stora Enso, Neenah Paper, Parks Canada, NFA)
- Expansion of NFA Best Management Practices manual
- Develop forest trail in the town of Stewiacke
- Support Colin Stewart Forest Forum joint technical working groups (Bowater Mersey, CPAWS, Neenah Paper, NSDEL, DNR, Stora Enso, Ecology Action Centre)
- Mi'kmaq Junior Rangers program (CFS, Confederacy of Mainland Mi'kmaq, First Nations Forestry Program of Nova Scotia)
- Costs and benefits associated with wildlife clumps and riparian zones (Acadia U, CARP, Conform Ltd, DNR, Elmsdale Lumber, North Inverness Forest Management Ltd, Federation of NS Woodland Owners)

- Conserving biodiversity on private woodlots at the landscape scale on the Nova Scotia isthmus (Fundy Model Forest, Private Woodlot Strategic Initiative, Athol Forestry Cooperative Limited, UNB)

Another project deals with public and external awareness through regular media relations, posters, reps and displays to forest sector events, the "Atlantic Teachers' Tour," a semiannual newsletter, project notes, and a directory. NFA also sponsors the annual Forest Forum and a merit award program.

One of the most useful functions of NFA is to provide networking opportunities and ways to collect and disseminate useful information. For example, NFA maintains online databases (information on sustainable forest management in Nova Scotia; references to articles and publications pertaining to restoration of the Acadian forest), it holds workshops that deal with issues of interest to partners (such as ecology and dynamics of the Acadian forest, pests, landscape connectivity, and species at risk), it is initiating an exchange with a European model forest, and it is holding a series of woodland owner conferences.

Members of Nature Nova Scotia will be aware that in March 2002 we, in concert with other environmental non-government organizations (ENGOS), quit NFA in protest of its blatant disregard for the principles under which it was required to operate. At that time, the chairman and management committee were virtually ignoring any environmental in-



put. Since then, with wildlife biologist Bob Bancroft in the chair and a new regard on the part of the management committee for adhering to principles, the ENGOS, including Nature Nova Scotia, have returned to the table.

As your representative to the alliance, I see a definite role for NFA in bringing together the disparate interests in the Nova Scotia forest. Its work over the past two years has been exemplary, especially in creating forums for discussion of common and conflicting interests. The Colin Stewart Forest Forum, for which NFA provides logistical and technical support, is a prime example. The Forum brings together ENGOS, large forestry companies, and the provincial government "to develop a province-wide protected areas proposal."

Here is part of the long-term benefit statement in the latest NFA workplan:

**If the Colin Stewart Forest Forum process continues to evolve and progress as it has since its**

inception, the benefits of the project will be far-reaching. It could also serve as a model for reducing conflict and opening dialogue for stakeholders who are traditionally on opposite sides of the spectrum when it comes to creating protected areas. In so doing, it also addressed the broader vision of the Canadian Model Forest Network, which seeks to balance the extensive range of demands placed on our forests today, while meeting the needs of future generations.

The one fly in the ointment now is that federal government funding for the Model Forest Network is ending next year, the end of the current cycle. Indications are that the program will be scaled back considerably; i.e., that a number of existing model forests across Canada will disappear. That would be a real shame for Nova Scotia, now that the process here is working so well.

## Big Tree Search

Old or large trees are to be respected and admired. Unfortunately, they are rare and hard to find. When we find one, many of us consider it an important event and stand in awe while we consider the majesty of its size and age.

Nature Nova Scotia invites you to share your discovery of any long-lived

trees and let us showcase them. If you have a tree you consider as one of the largest or oldest you have encountered in Nova Scotia, tell us about it and send a picture.

Go to  
<[naturens.ca](http://naturens.ca)>  
and follow the Big Tree link.

Notice of General Meeting

**Nature Nova Scotia  
(Federation of Nova  
Scotia Naturalists) will  
hold its 2006 annual  
general meeting at  
8 AM, 28 May 2006, in  
Champlain Hall,  
Annapolis Basin  
Conference Centre,  
Cornwallis Park, NS.**

## AGM 2006

The annual general meeting of Nature Nova Scotia – the Federation of Nova Scotia Naturalists will take place in conjunction with our annual conference (see inserted program and registration details). For additional information and forms, please see the 2006 conference page on the Nature Nova Scotia Web site: <naturens.ca>.

To be able to vote at the meeting, your membership must be up to date. If your mailing label indicates that your latest membership renewal is 2004 or earlier, you must renew before the AGM,

either through your local club or directly with FNSN (see the back cover).

Most of you reading this are federate members (that is, you've chosen to be a member through your local naturalist society). If you don't know who your representative to the Federation board is, check the inside front cover of this newsletter. It's important that each of our organizational members (the local clubs) has a nominated representative at the AGM. We would very much like to see 100 percent turnout for organizational members.

Nature Nova Scotia  
Federation of Nova Scotia Naturalists

2006 Conference  
and  
Annual General Meeting



May 26 - 28, 2006  
- Champlain Hall -  
Annapolis Basin Conference Centre  
Cornwallis Park, NS.

*Hosted by the Annapolis Field Naturalists Society*

~ Program ~

More detailed program information available at ~ [www.naturens.ca](http://www.naturens.ca)

The conference theme "*Our Natural 'History': Changing Lands and Waters*" is in keeping with the recent commemoration of the establishment of the first enduring European settlement in Canada by French explorers in 1605. We seek to highlight the "history" in "natural history" by examining how our habitats and wildlife have changed over the past 400 years. In addition, we will hear about some of the recent initiatives undertaken by local organizations pertaining to education, research, monitoring and restoration of some of our natural treasures that have become somewhat tarnished over time. Field trips will explore some of the natural areas that make Southwest Nova Scotia such an enjoyable place to live and visit. We have an interesting story to share with naturalists from across the province.

- Welcome to the Annapolis Area -

## Conference Program

### Friday, May 26<sup>th</sup>

- 4:30 p.m. Registration and set up displays  
7:00 p.m. Welcoming ceremony and introductions  
7:45 p.m. "*Acadian Forests and Wildlife ~ the past 400 years*".  
by Bob Bancroft (*open to the public*)  
8:30 p.m. Reception (*cash bar*) ~ View displays and posters.

### Saturday, May 27<sup>th</sup>

- 6:15 a.m. Early nature walk ~ *birds*  
6:30 a.m. Early nature walk ~ *spring flowers*  
8:00 a.m. Breakfast  
9:00 a.m. Conference opening  
9:10 a.m. "*Early Perspectives on the Fundy Environment*"  
by Heather McLeod.  
9:50 a.m. "*Getting our feet wet: volunteer water monitoring and salt marsh evaluation in the Annapolis River and Basin*"  
by Andy Sharpe & Denise Sullivan  
10:30 a.m. Nutrition Break  
10:50 a.m. "*Landscape Connectivity*" by Amanda Lavers.  
11:30 a.m. "*Monitoring the changing landscapes of SW Nova*"  
by Dave Colville.  
12:10 p.m. Luncheon

- 1:15 p.m.      **Concurrent Field Trips (3-4 hours duration)**  
 A. Boat Trip\* (3 hours) Annapolis Basin birds<sup>+</sup>  
 B. Bear River Cultural Centre. /Medicine Trail<sup>+</sup>  
 C. Annapolis area wetlands/Historic Gardens<sup>+</sup>  
 D. Melanson Settlement and Queen Anne dykelands.
- 6:30 p.m.      **Reception and cash bar.**
- 7:00 p.m.      **Banquet ~ "Paving Paradise: the changing face  
 of Fundy" by: Graham Daborn.**

## Sunday, May 28<sup>th</sup>

- 6:15 a.m.      **Early nature walk ~ birds.**
- 6:30 a.m.      **Early nature walk ~ spring flowers.**
- 8:00 a.m.      **Breakfast and Nature NS AGM**
- 10:15 a.m.      **"Conserving Belleisle Marsh and grassland birds"  
 by Glen Parsons.**
- 11:00 a.m.      **"Blanding's Turtles in Nova Scotia: Conservation  
 through Science, Public Education, and  
 Stewardship" by Brennan Caverhill.**
- 11:45 a.m.      **Conference wrap up**
- 12:05 p.m.      **Luncheon**
- 1:15 p.m.      **Concurrent Field Trips (3-4 hours duration)**  
 E. Belleisle Marsh and Bobolinks.  
 F. Pleasant River Blandings turtle study site.  
 G. "Ancient Spirits on a Changing Shore ~  
 how Lnu'k Lived in Mi'kmakik".  
 H. "Self-guided" tour of local attractions.

*Notes: <sup>+</sup> There is an added charge for these trips - see details over page.*

*\* Boat space is limited and will be on a first-come first-served basis.*

**Sponsors** ~ We gratefully acknowledge the support of:

- The Clean Annapolis River Project
- The Annapolis County Recreation Department
- The Municipality of the County of Annapolis
- The Town of Annapolis
- Parks Canada

**And a very special thank you to all our speakers and field trip leaders.**

### Speakers ~ (All presentations in Champlain Hall)

**Bob Bancroft** is a well-known naturalist and writer whose long outdoor experience makes him a popular and knowledgeable guest naturalist on CBC radio.

**Heather McLeod** teaches environmental studies at Saint Mary's University. Her research interests include regional environmental history and landscape perception.

**Andy Sharpe & Denise Sullivan** are researchers with the Clean Annapolis River Project (CARP), specializing in waterways and wetlands

**Amanda Lavers** is Director of the Mersey Tobeatic Research Institute (MTRI).

**Dave Colville** is with the Centre of Geographic Sciences (COGS), Lawrencetown

**Graham Daborn** formerly Director of the Acadia Centre for Estuarine Research is now Director of the Arthur Irving Academy for the Environment at Acadia Univ.

**Glen Parsons** studies wetlands and coastal habitats for the Wildlife Division of the Renewable Resources Branch of NS-DNR based in Kentville, NS.

**Brennan Caverhill** is a graduate student in Biology at Acadia University who is engaged in ground-breaking research on the endangered Blanding's Turtle in NS.

### Field Trips ~ (3-4 hours duration, carpool from Champlain Hall)

- A. **Annapolis Basin boat trip** - Enjoy a three-hour guided boat tour of the scenery, history and birds of the Annapolis Basin. Departing from Digby. There is a \$20 per person charge for this trip. The 24 available spaces will be allocated on a first-come first-served basis.
- B. **Bear River Cultural Centre and Medicine Trail** - Explore thousands of years of Mi'kmaq heritage and culture at the Bear River First Nation Heritage and Cultural Centre. A local guide will share beliefs and traditional uses associated with the woodland plants along the peaceful 1.28 km Medicine Trail. There will be a \$5 per person charge for this trip.
- C. **Annapolis Area wetlands and historic gardens** - Denise Sullivan of CARP will guide us around the French Basin Trail as well as through the interpretative displays and Allains River saltmarsh walk at the Annapolis Historic Gardens. There will be a \$6 per person charge for this trip. Easy to moderate 2-3 kms.
- D. **Melanson Settlement and Queen Anne Marsh** - A Parks Canada interpreter will discuss this early Acadian site and we will explore the wildlife of the adjacent dykelands with local naturalists. Easy to moderate 2-3 km walk.
- E. **Belleisle Marsh and Bobolinks\*** - Glen Parsons will explain how the Belleisle Marsh integrates wildlife, recreation and agriculture and talk about recent studies on grassland birds such as bobolinks. An easy to moderate 2-3 km walk.
- F. **Pleasant River Blandings Turtle study site\*** - Brennan Caverhill will lead us through his Blanding's Turtle study sites around this village near Keji.
- G. **"Ancient Spirits on a Changing Shore - how Lnu'k Lived in Mi'kmaqik"** Join archaeologist Roger Lewis in a visit to a 2000 year-old Mi'kmaq summer camp at the mouth of the Bear River. See the evidence of sea-level change on this Annapolis Basin beach. Easy to moderate 1km return.
- H. **Self-guided tour of local attractions** - Information will be available if you would like to explore on your own the Upper Clements Wildlife Park, The Annapolis Tidal Power Station or the Annapolis Historic Gardens.

\* note: these trips may appeal to those returning home eastward towards Halifax.

## Sackville High School First Lake Ecology Project

"If you want something done, go to your local school." Those are the words of Jason Jennings, science teacher at Sackville High School in Sackville, Nova Scotia. Jason is very enthusiastic about a student environmental project that has been gathering kudos from across the country. Funded by the Nova Scotia Teacher's Union Project Development Assistance Fund and Environment Canada's RésEau Partnership Fund, the project involved students from a wide range of classes and disciplines.

The project Web site is well worth visiting: <[kingfishers.ednet.ns.ca/lakeone/INDEX\\_en.htm](http://kingfishers.ednet.ns.ca/lakeone/INDEX_en.htm)>. Here's a summary from the site:

Students have been involved in the First Lake Ecology Project (FLEP) since the start of second semester. This cross curricular project integrates eight different classes, including Science 10, Communication Technology 12, English Language Arts 10, French Language Arts 10 & 12, Global Geography 12 and our school's learning centre.

The final product will be two video presentations, one in French and one in English, which will be presented to the Sackville Community on June 1, 2005, and the implementation of a Web-based water quality database, which will be linked to Environment Canada's RésEau web portal.

Students involved have been taking part in various activities including the development of ecosystems in a jar, research on the history of the lake, graphic

design of brochures and posters, web design, broadcasting, bilingual script writing, film production, translation of documents, letter writing, map creation, and water data collection.

Ten teachers are involved. The true test of this project is to demonstrate effective cross curricular applications of technology in an educationally meaningful manner.

As Jason Jennings reported to the 2005 Forest Forum, this was no lab experiment—it's the real thing in the real world. First Lake, which happens to be on the school's doorstep, is surrounded by housing and was ripe for a water quality study. And what happens in First Lake has far-reaching consequences. The water from this suburban Halifax lake actually winds up in the Bay of Fundy.

Through this project, students learned about water sampling, interpreting results, using a Web-based database, and video editing and production. They used state-of-the-art equipment and techniques. Most important, they learned about their own watershed and got involved in the nitty-gritty of our human impact on nature. Environment Canada was so impressed with the students' work that the department has encouraged the school to continue the sampling program to establish long-term data that will help affect future land-use planning decisions for the area. Jason hopes that this project will lead to investigation of the broader aspects of the ecology of First Lake.

# AGM 2005

Minutes of the 2005 Annual General Meeting of the Federation of Nova Scotia Naturalists

Sunday, 26 June 2005, 10:55 am  
Truro, Nova Scotia

Present: Joan Czapalay, president; Larry Bogan, vice-president (Blomidon Naturalists Society); Jean Gibson, treasurer; Doug Linzey, secretary; organizational representatives Edgar Barrington (Cape Breton Naturalists Society) Suzanne Borkowski (Nova Scotia Bird Society), Jill Comolli (South Shore Naturalists Club), Ross Hall (Cobequid Naturalists), Bob McDonald (Halifax Field Naturalists), Shirley McIntyre (Wild Flora Society), Jim Wolford (members at large); and approximately 25 individual and federate members.

Regrets: Martin Willison, past president

## 1. Call to Order

Doug Linzey, presiding, called the meeting to order

## 2. Approval of Minutes

Moved by Eric Mills, seconded by Allan Robertson, that the minutes of the 2004 annual general meeting be approved as presented. CARRIED.

## 3. Financial Report

Jean Gibson presented the treasurer's report (the audited financial statements for the period 1 April 2004 – 31 March 2005 are appended).

Moved by Jean Gibson, seconded by

Suzanne Borkowski, that the treasurer's report be accepted as presented. CARRIED.

## 4. Appointment of Auditor

Moved by Jim Wolford, seconded by Jill Comolli, that Harold Forsyth be appointed auditor for the 2005/06 fiscal year. CARRIED.

## 5. Directors' Report

President Joan Czapalay reported on the year's activities (see appended report). Larry Bogan reported on the board retreat.

## 6. Special Resolution

Moved by Larry Bogan, seconded by Jean Gibson, that the following resolution be approved by the membership:

Be it resolved that the membership of FNSN approve amendments to the Memorandum of Association of the Society as gazetted in FNSN News, vol. 15, no. 1 (May 2005). [These amendments change the wording of the Society's purpose to conform with requirements of Revenue Canada for charitable status. They do not change the original underlying aims of the Society.] CARRIED.

## 7. Special Resolution

Moved by Joan Czapalay, seconded by Shirley McIntyre, that the following reso-



lution be approved by the membership:

Be it resolved that the membership of FNSN approve changing the trade name of the Society as gazetted in FNSN News, vol. 15, no. 1 (May 2005). [This resolution allows the Society to carry on business under the name "Nature Nova Scotia – the Federation of Nova Scotia Naturalists." A spirited and thorough discussion preceded the vote.]  
**CARRIED, with two members opposed.**

#### 8. Election of Officers

The following officers were elected by acclamation for two-year terms:

**President: Larry Bogan**

**Vice-president: Alex MacDonald**

**Treasurer: Jean Gibson**

**Director-at-large: Jim Wolford** (moved/seconded by Allan Robertson/Suzanne Borkowski)

#### 9. 2006 AGM

Joan Czapalay announced that the 2006 AGM will be hosted by the Annapolis Field Naturalists at the Cornwallis Conference Centre, May 26–28.

#### 10. Adjournment (Stephanie Robertson/Bob McDonald)

There being no other business, the formal meeting adjourned at 12:15 pm.



## Organizational Member Reports (2005)

### Annapolis Field Naturalists' Society

No report.

### Blomidon Naturalists Society

Larry Bogan reported that the club is maintaining regular (and excellent) field trips and monthly meetings, quarterly newsletter, and the annual calendar fund raiser. The meetings are now being held in the Irving Environmental Sciences Centre auditorium. The club this year is sponsoring a youth summer program and is involved in projects with the Nova

Scotia Nature Trust, Town of Wolfville, Blue Beach Fossil Museum, and the Robie Tufts Nature Centre.

### Cape Breton Naturalists Society

Edgar Barrington reported that the club, based in Sydney, is alive and well and continuing to contribute to the knowledge of natural history in Cape Breton.

### Chignecto Naturalists Club

No report.

### **Cobequid Naturalists Club**

Ross Hall reported that the club, although it has no formal structure, attracts good attendance for nine speakers per year and a number of field trips. The club annually presents the Ross Baker (late naturalist) award at the science fair.

### **Eastern Mainland Field Naturalists**

No report.

### **Halifax Field Naturalists**

Bob McDonald reported that the deadline for nominations for the Colin Stewart Award for Conservation in Nova Scotia is November 30. See the HFN website for details.

The club has approximately 135 members. It holds 10 monthly meetings (first Thursday of the month at the Museum of Natural History), at least monthly field trips (Allan Robertson, coordinator), and publishes a quarterly newsletter (Stephanie Robertson, ed.). This year the club is taking an active role in promoting preservation of lands within Halifax Regional Municipality, generally through the HRM regional plan and specifically the Blue Mountain/Birch Cove area (approx. 1,750 acres of relative wilderness between Bedford and Tantallon).

### **Les Amis du Plein Air**

No report.

### **Nova Scotia Bird Society**

Suzanne Borkowski, president of NSBS reported that the society is celebrating its 50th anniversary this year. Events will include a series of talks by experts (such

as Ian MacLaren and Merritt Gibson) on 50 years of watching, studying, recording, and saving birds. The society plans a commemorative (bird-friendly) planting in Point Pleasant Park in the fall.

NSBS has established area representatives to provide a "live link" for local members. Suzanne is keen to get the "big day" competition back on track. She reported that Eric Mills (Brier Island) was currently in the lead but that the "day" was still open for others to challenge.

The quarterly newsletter is now taking advertising, and the website <<http://nsbs.chebucto.org>> now has a link for reporting bird sightings.

### **Nova Scotia Wild Flora Society**

Shirley McIntyre reported that the society continues to meet seven times per year, the fourth Monday of each month at the NS Museum of Natural History, and holds regular field trips.

### **South Shore Naturalists Club**

Jill Comolli reported that Catherine Pross is now president and that the membership has grown to about 85. Programs and outings have been very good, with help from the local press, which announces and summarizes meetings.

The club has been carrying out a fair amount of field work – three volunteer botanists have been doing such things as identifying rare lichens, survey work in Gaff Point, and a seaweed survey. The club supports a local wildlife rehab centre. The issues committee now has 8–10 members. Activities include representa-

# FNSN statement of income and expenses

April 2004 through March 2005

	<u>Apr 04-Mar 05</u>	<u>Apr 03-Mar 04</u>
<b>Income</b>		
AGM (repayment & earnings)	\$ 0.00	\$ 1,879.05
Deposit interest	0.83	0.77
Donation	10.00	0.00
Dues		
Federate	1,140.00	670.00
Individual	27.00	35.00
Organizational	<u>680.00</u>	<u>355.00</u>
Total dues	1,847.00	1,060.00
Grant revenue	<u>2,380.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>
Total income	4,237.83	2,939.82
<b>Expense</b>		
AGM-related expenses	\$ 474.00	\$ 600.00
Bank service charges	6.00	3.00
Incorporation expenses	25.00	25.00
Executive expenses	214.85	0.00
Misc.: board retreat	3,331.56	0.00
Newsletter		
Distribution	0.00	274.61
Printing	<u>0.00</u>	<u>402.04</u>
Total newsletter	0.00	676.65
Projects		
Grants paid out	2,380.80	0.00
Herp atlas	<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>
Total projects	2,380.00	0.00
Travel and other expenses	<u>519.00</u>	<u>301.80</u>
Total expense	6,950.41	1,606.45
<b>Net income</b>	<b>-2,712.58</b>	<b>1,333.37</b>
<b>Retained earnings</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2004</b>
Surplus beginning of year	8,576.79	7,234.28
Adjustment	-0.14	
Excess of income over expenses	<u>-2,712.58</u>	<u>1,333.37</u>
	<b>5,864.07</b>	<b>8,576.79</b>

*Respectfully submitted by E. Jean Gibson, FNSN treasurer*

tion on the Bowater review committee, the Coastal Coalition, and Keji adjunct planning; provincial level responses, brief reviews, etc.; and working to discourage experimental spraying for hemlock looper on a local private woodlot.

The Arrowhead Award this year went to 91-year-old Bobby Chivers –

who focuses on “the small” – for his contribution to preserving the cultural and natural history of South West Nova.

**Tusket River Environmental Protection Association**

No report.

## 2005 FNSN Conference

The 2005 conference and AGM took place on the campus of the Nova Scotia Agricultural College in Truro. Most of us checked in the afternoon of Friday, 24 June, and found our bunks in the dormitory.

That evening got off to a start with a talk from ecoforester Jim Drescher. Jim is well known to Nova Scotia naturalists as a pioneer in sustainable forestry and as the owner of Windhorse Farm on Wentzell Lake, near Bridgewater. On this occasion, Jim was returning from Antigonish and the Conference on Gross National Happiness hosted by Shambala, the Coady International Institute, GPI Atlantic, and others.

Audiences invariably come away from Jim's talks with fresh ideas and new ways of looking at the interaction between humans and nature. Our theme for the conference was the Acadian Forest, and Jim reminded us that we are all creatures of the Acadian Forest. Yes, parts of it have been temporarily disturbed (cities, suburbs, industry) and it is greatly diminished from its natural state, but in the Maritimes, one cannot

really leave the forest, and we owe it to ourselves and the forest to get to know it better.

Jim went on to give a brief history of the forest. In effect it has been “hammered” since colonial times, and even today we are harvesting four times what can be sustainably harvested. Despite all the talk of sustainability, the last five years have been the most devastating in all of the Acadian Forest's 15,000-year history. In pondering where we go from here, Jim asks, “Do we adjust our minds so it suits the way things are? That's certainly the easiest way to handle it.”

Jim then proceeded to engage the audience in pondering the future of the forest and our relationship with it. Some of the sound bites that emerged:

- We have to make some major shifts in the way we behave socially. Do we

really need a lot of stuff to make us happy? Do we have a real concern for the well-being and happiness of others?

- Apply the principle of "nothing missing." If we view ourselves and the world as something wrong, how can we transform it? Rather, let's believe and understand that fundamentally we have everything we need to make the transformation. On that basis, we can ask the tough questions without fear.

- The decline of the Acadian Forest happened one bad decision at a time. A transformation simply requires one good decision at a time. [Tom Miller, named "woodlot owner of the year" by the department of natural resources, is living by this credo. The irony is that he uses methods diametrically opposed to those recommended by DNR.]

- Our vision has to provide for the well-being of everyone; we don't want an us/them situation. Forest management practices have to make sense in all ways, including socially and economically.

- How do we attain "good forest planning"? Everything has to meet the criteria for "what we want."

- First we all have to understand and agree on where we're headed. [The current path is to decreasing forest products and jobs, decreasing biodiversity, and a denuded region.]

- We have the necessary experience and skills and wisdom. We can turn the situation around and even become a

beacon for the rest of the world. Consider Bhutan, which has protected 26% of the country and has the Ministry of Conservation in charge of forestry. "No dream is impossible."

Jim wrapped up his talk by referring to Sun Tzu's advice in *The art of War* on how to win against an enemy with superior forces. "The enemy has to cover all fronts, but because we can't afford to attack all points, we can still win by putting all our resources into attacking one point." Jim went on to suggest one such area in forest management that is already well under way: the Acadian Forest Families.

The objective of the Families is "a complete transformation of the way forestry is done in the Acadian Forest." This so-far relatively small, but growing, group of woodlot owners manage their lands according to best (ecological, community, and economic) practices. Their woodlots and products are certified not only by the global Forest Stewardship Council (FSC), but also by Nagaya, an even stricter regional certifier. The Families encourage Maritimers to join the transformation: If you own forest land, have it certified by FSC and Nagaya; if you are a woodworker, use certified materials; if you buy wood products, ask about certified products and help suppliers learn about FSC and Nagaya certification.

Windhorse farm is well worth a visit. And so is the Website, which has information on public visits and price lists on wood and garden products. This site also has more information on the Acadian Forest Families.

See <[www.windhorsefarm.org](http://www.windhorsefarm.org)>.

## The conference – continued

Saturday morning saw quite a few bodies seeking early morning birds and wild flora. Following breakfast, president Joan Czapalay welcomed some 50 participants from seven member and associated clubs.

Minga O'Brien, forest conservation coordinator with the Ecology Action Centre, and Alex MacDonald, chapter coordinator of CPAWS-Nova Scotia, started off the day.

Minga described the Standing Tall Campaign for Environmentally Responsible Forestry, starting with the campaign's vision for a revitalized and healthy Acadian Forest in Nova Scotia. She discussed the crux of the campaign:

We want to achieve this vision by gradual, feasible means. To start: changes to the Forest Sustainability Regulations, establishment of new protected areas, an independent third-party process to review forestry practices in Nova Scotia, and Forest Stewardship Council certification to cut trees on provincial Crown land. (from an EAC website <[www.novascotiaforests.ca/](http://www.novascotiaforests.ca/)>)

Alex discussed the joint CPAWS Nova Scotia and New Brunswick Chignecto Isthmus project. The isthmus is the 21-km-wide border region between the two Maritime provinces, which connects Nova Scotia and its wildlife populations to mainland North America and the greater Northern Appalachians/Acadian forest ecoregion. The project will study

opportunities for conservation measures to enhance and sustain a "biological bridge." Unless some sort of viable wildlife corridor is established, there is no hope that such species as the endangered mainland moose population can be reinforced by other genetic populations from outside the province. And the need for conservation doesn't end with the Chignecto peninsula. There are currently no protected areas throughout the Cobequid region to guarantee sufficient corridors into the heart of the province for the future.

Judy Loo, a forester and ecological geneticist with the Canadian Forest Service in New Brunswick, gave us an overview of the human impacts on the Acadian Forest since colonization of the Maritimes. Bottom line: not much of the original species mix remains, and it takes a very long time to restore the balance.

On Sunday morning, Tom Miller gave us a very entertaining and inspirational virtual tour of his woodlot north of Truro. Tom, named 2005 Woodlot Owner of the Year, and is a natural raconteur – his story is one of transformation, from traditional cutting and silviculture methods to sustainable forestry. Later in the day Tom led a literal tour of his woodlot.

Field trips dominated Saturday afternoon. They varied from an energetic hike in the Gully Lake area with Ken McKenna to a tour of Bernard Jackson's Truro

garden. Bernard, by the way, is the creator of the wonderful new rock garden on the NSAC campus. Other groups checked out living things along the Salmon River with Ross Hall and hunted down butterflies with the Peter and Linda Payzant. The weather was great, and all trips were reported to be successful. The only disappointment was the scarcity of chimney swifts on the Agricultural College campus. In the course of early morning rambles, some of us came to know of the magnificent Victoria Park, literally in downtown Truro's back yard, while others became reacquainted with this forest gem. Saturday evening we all settled down in the common room to watch Henri Steegh's fine video on wildflowers, Treasures of the Old Forest.

Sunday morning we had a lively AGM, with thorough discussion of changing our name to the more catchy Nature Nova Scotia. Some members were re-

luctant to ditch the original name, so our official moniker now is Nature Nova Scotia – the Federation of Nova Scotia Naturalists. We presented Joan with a certificate of life membership in recognition of her four years of enthusiastic leadership. Larry Bogan was elected president for the next two years, Alex MacDonald as vice-president.

The weekend was well regarded by all participants. The program was particularly welcome; we all learned a great deal about the Acadian Forest and the sorts of actions we have to take to restore it to some semblance of health. Particular thanks to Claire Diggins, the moving force behind this conference, to Pat Hawes, Claire's able assistant, to Joan Czapalay for her enthusiasm, knowledge, and party spirit, to Ross and Linda Hall for local organization, and to the Payzants for their competent and practised job of registration.



## Truro's Victoria Park

Victoria Park is one of Truro's greatest assets – a natural woodland park of roughly 400 acres in the centre of town. Lepper Brook, with its two sets of waterfalls, flows through a steep tree covered rocky gorge. Several walking trails follow along the brook, allowing a close view of this unique setting. The first set of falls are named after the distinguished Joseph Howe, who admired them during a visit in 1830. The next are the Waddell Falls, named after Susan Waddell Stevens, who donated the first land in 1888 containing the falls and gorge, thus beginning this park for the enjoyment of Truro citizens.

For more where this came from, see  
<[www.town.truro.ns.ca/depart/parks/victpark/about.htm](http://www.town.truro.ns.ca/depart/parks/victpark/about.htm)>.

## The Thrifty Tree

The pine's new year begins in May, when the terminal bud becomes "the candle." May after May my pines follow their candles skyward, each headed straight for the zenith, and each meaning to get there if only there be years enough before the last trumpet blows. It is a very old pine who at last forgets which of his many candles is the most important, and thus flattens his crown against the sky. You may forget, but no pine of your own planting will do so in your lifetime.

If you are thriftily inclined, you will find pines congenial company, for, unlike the hand-to-mouth hardwoods, they never pay current bills out of current earnings; they live solely on their savings of the year before. In fact every pine carries an open bankbook, in which his cash balance is recorded by 30 June of each year. If, on that date, his completed candle has developed a terminal cluster of ten or twelve buds, it means that he has salted away enough rain and sun for a two-foot or even a three-foot thrust skyward next spring. If there are only four or six buds, his thrust will be a lesser one, but he will nevertheless wear that peculiar air that goes with solvency.

[from Aldo Leopold, *A Sand County Almanac*]

FNSN MEMBERSHIP is available in conjunction with memberships in the member organizations listed inside the front cover, for \$5 — contact the membership secretary of your organization.

Group, corporate and other category rates are available. Individual membership, available directly from the FNSN, entitles you to a quarterly newsletter and a vote at the AGM. Please fill in the following information, include a cheque or money order made payable to the Federation of Nova Scotia Naturalists, and mail to:

FNSN Membership Secretary, c/o 6360 Young Street, Halifax, NS B3L 2A1

Please check one:

Adult \$20     Student/Senior \$10

Donation \_\_\_\_\_

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