

BARRED OWL ON THE CONFEDERATION TRAIL NEAR SOURIS, TAKEN BY WANDA BAILEY

# Souris & Area Watershed News

Souris and Area Branch of the PEI Wildlife Federation

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## PERSONAL REMARKS FROM A DEDICATED SAB SUMMER STUDENT

Contributed by: Christopher Outhouse, Souris and Area Wildlife Branch Field Technician

My name is Chris Outhouse and I am in my second year at the University of Prince Edward Island studying Arts, majoring in English with a goal to someday become an English teacher. Over the past four summers I have had the privilege of working for the Souris and Area Branch of the PEI Wildlife Federation. This local watershed group gives work to many students during the summer months who help to accomplish the various projects they take on annually. Over my tenure with this group I have been a part of projects including green crab fishing, Gowan Brae brush matting and silt pumping, stream enhancement, electrofishing and participating in research into the rare Giant Irish moss located only in the Northeast Arm of Basin Head, a beautiful Marine Protected Area in our own backyard.

As I approached my first summer as a Stream Technician I was most excited for the 6am-2pm work hours as I still had time to go to Basin Head beach after work. Shortly after I began I realized I had so much more to be excited about with this job. In the beginning, I had little knowledge regarding wildlife in our area or what measures could be taken to improve habitat, but it did not take long for mentors like Fred Cheverie, Michael Jacklyn and Tony Meade to take me under their wings and give me a new appreciation for our local watersheds and what could be done for them.

In my first field season I was mostly involved in stream enhancement but later in the summer I was given the opportunity to electrofish. Electrofishing was truly an eye-opening experience as I was able to see the difference we as a group were making; finding fish in an area of the stream we had recently enhanced to be a more suitable area for fish species. In the coming years it was evident the impact that this organization was having on certain habitats as I was able to personally see the difference by walking stream systems like Fortune River and seeing a shift from deep silty bottom to nice gravel and rock bottoms. I was also part of the group that performed stream habitat assessments yearly to see differences analytically from year to year within each system.

Aside from the environment and wildlife knowledge I have gained through my experience at Souris and Area Wildlife Branch the most important things I have learned came from lessons from my co-workers. Over the years my co-workers have become more like family and friends. This group taught me how to work as a team player and helped to develop my problem-solving skills to overcome daily obstacles. In the future I hope to be able to take the skills I have acquired here into a career as a teacher where I can instill in the youth the invaluable knowledge Fred Cheverie, Tony Meade, Michael Jacklyn, Frances Braceland, Keila Miller and others have instilled into me.



## 6<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL FUNDRAISING LOBSTER DINNER



Top picture: Maddox Clinton and Austin Kickham taking take out dinners to dinner guests.  
Bottom picture: Lots of people around enjoying the food, displays, and company!

Our 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Fundraising Lobster Dinner was held on August 5<sup>th</sup>, 2018 at the Eastern Kings Sportsplex in Souris and it was an outstanding success! We sold out again this year, serving close to 500 dinners! So many people to thank and to be grateful for as this event would not happen or be as successful as it is without your kind and continued support. All dinner funds will be directed towards important environmental initiatives in our Eastern Kings communities. These projects consist of ongoing stream and habitat restoration work in over 100 kilometres of local streams, habitat conservation, ongoing community outreach and education, saltmarsh renewal projects, greenhouse gas mitigation as well as many other significant projects happening in our management area right now. This event would not be at all possible if not for the great generosity of fishers and buyers from North Lake, Souris, Naufrage, Fortune and Annandale harbours who donated live lobster this past May and June. Thank you to Shediac Lobster Shop Ltd. for processing our lobster again this year!

We'd like to send out a big thank you to all Souris and Area Wildlife Branch Board members, staff and volunteers who came out to support us and to everyone that inserted vast amounts of time and energy into helping make this event a huge accomplishment.

Our dinner guests were served hors d'oeuvres of smoked salmon and mackerel, a delicious and hearty seafood chowder prepared by Chef Dave Fletcher, and a typical shelled lobster plate or a homemade ham plate with a fresh dinner roll. Thank you to Susan Cheverie for preparing the ham for our non-lobster lover guests! This delectable meal was topped off with a delightful blueberry shortcake dessert, with homemade blueberry sauce prepared by Mae McKinnon. Thanks so much to Sheila Eastman for gracefully taking on this lively event with her flawless kitchen management and for all of her hard work and support year after year for this great dinner event! Everyone was certainly pleased with their meal and it is quite safe to say that all who attended left the dinner very satisfied and with a full stomach!

Our afternoon was also highlighted by a considerable silent auction and local vendors who came out including fly fishing guide Cameron Ross of "On the Fly PEI", Kiki's Creation's local artisan Karen MacKinnon and Patricia McLean-Ettinger, who runs P.E.I. Seaglass. Thank you for taking the time to set up your displays, they were all excellent! A special thank you to Karen MacKinnon for your beautiful dinner decor touches, they added so much to our dinner atmosphere this year.

We'd sincerely like to thank all businesses and individuals who sold dinner tickets for our event as well; The Co-operators: Jansen McKinnon & Associates Inc., Souris Remedy's RX and Vernon d'Eon Lobster Plugs. Thanks so much to all individuals and businesses who kindly donated meal supplies and silent auction items as well. We vastly appreciate your support and are so thankful to residents and tourists for their interest in the work that we do. We can't wait to see you all next year for our 7th Annual Fundraising Lobster Dinner on Sunday, August 4th, 2019!



Left picture: Cameron Ross doing a fly-tying demonstration in front of his On the Fly PEI booth.  
Middle picture: Dave Fletcher serving his tasty, homemade seafood chowder to dinner guests with help from SAB Director Dylan MacIntyre.  
Right picture: Volunteer Marion Flynn preparing the dinner desserts, blueberry shortcake!



## 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Fundraising Lobster Dinner - continued from page 2

### THANKS TO ALL FISHERS AND BUYERS WHO DONATED LIVE LOBSTER THIS YEAR:

#### North Lake Harbour

Aaron Miller, Steven MacLean, David Yeo, Ernie Gallant, Lorne Bonnell, Paul Steele, Darren MacLean, Shay Coffin, Jamie Bruce, Francis Stewart, Francis MacDonald, Tyler MacDonald, Gerard Cheverie, Mark Sutherland, John Whalen, Ernest MacPhee, Kevin Robertson, Glenn Sweeney, Alan Fay, Paul Murray, Mark Rose, Kevin Bailey, Sheldon Hume, Lenny MacNeill, Jeff MacNeill, Mark Robertson, Victor Campbell, Darren MacKinnon, Lonnie Robertson, Glenn Cameron, Brodie MacDonald, Terry Harris, David Outhouse, Jeremy Harris, Bruce Keus, James Coffin, Michael MacDonald, Martin Rose, Lindsay Rose, Tyler Gallant, Craig Bailey, Gerard Holland, Travis Gallant, Garry Gallant, Allan Coffin, Arthur Baker, Michael Murphy, Patrick Eastman, Jimmy MacDonald, Nigel Campbell, J.J. Chaisson, Troy Bruce, Terry Mallard, Curtis MacKenzie, Bernard MacPhee, Darren Chaisson, Trent Mallard, Kurt Harris, Winston Baker, Martin Cheverie, Matthew Clinton, Elmer MacDonald, Colby Bruce, Dustin MacPhee, Duane Ching, Tony MacDonald, David Steele, Dwayne Bailey, William Bailey, Kent Poole, Peter Boertien, Wayne Campbell, Eric Poole, Arnold Bailey, and Walter Bruce.

#### Naufrage Harbour

Wesley MacDonald, John MacDonald, Andrew O'Hanley, Nathan Cheverie, Keith MacDonald, Jackie MacDonald, Tim Cheverie, Bernard MacKinnon, Andrew MacCormack, Archie McInnis, Wilfred Steele, Jeff Palmer, Kevin Miller, Mike Gormley, Kenny Johnston, Steven Higginbotham, John MacKay, Jeff Reynolds, Milligan's Fisheries Ltd. – Scott Milligan, Wendell Clinton, Gregory Norton, Richard Palmer, Lewis Miller, Ian Kennedy, Mike Palmer, Kenneth MacLeod, Ray Shields, Kenneth Sorrey, Bert Peters, Adam Fraser, Tim L'Esperance, Shelley Deagle, Scott Bruce, Robert Acorn, Gerard Whalen, Scott Bell, Josh O'Hanley and DSC Fisheries – Terry Miller, Jansen MacKinnon, Gordie MacLean, Daryl L'Esperance and Lucas L'Esperance .

#### Souris Harbour

Lavon Paquet, Shayne Clinton, Tommy Joe McCormack, Sept MacPhee, Troy MacPhee, Mark McCormack, Trent MacPhee, Ryan Birt, Matthew Birt, John Burke, Colin LaVie, Dan Ehler, Louie Carter, Brian MacPhee, Terry Carter, Mike MacAulay, Nick Campbell, Stephen Carter, Shawn MacPhee, Ian MacDonald, John MacPhee, Josh O'Keefe and Max MacDonald.

#### Fortune Harbour

Edward Jackson, Jimmy Townshend, Alvin Dingwell, Jeremy MacPhee, Mike Fitzpatrick, Henry MacKie, Layton Manning, Jamie 'Skipper' Mallard, Dennis McNally and Wade Hicken.

#### Annandale Harbour

Paul Blackett, Edward Campbell, Marvin Blackett, Jimmy Whitty, Bobby Jenkins, Joseph Banks, Craig Jenkins, Robert Jenkins, Barry Blackett, Freeman Throwbridge, Harley Jenkins, Scott Jenkins, Greg Runighan, Shane Jamieson, Kirk Jamieson, Robert Jamieson, Cody Jenkins, Darren Victor, Gordon Perry, Wayne Mooney, John Campbell, Adam Banks, Tyler Garland and Danny Banks.

### THANK YOU TO THE INDIVIDUALS & BUSINESSES FOR THEIR DONATIONS:

#### Meal Donors

Shediac Lobster Shop Ltd., Sheila Eastman, Dave Fletcher, Susan Cheverie, Louise MacDonald, Mae MacKinnon, Bluefin Restaurant, Lot 45 Pub & Eatery, Rollo Bay Holdings Ltd., Egg Farmers of Prince Edward Island/Maritime Pride, Omegga Holdings, Jasper Wyman & Son Canada Inc., John MacDonald Blueberries, MacPhee's Market Independent Grocer, Seaside Bakery, Souris CO-OP Ltd., D.P. Murphy Inc. – Souris Tim Hortons, Souris Robin's Donuts, ADL Foods, Purity Dairy Ltd. and Perfection Foods Ltd.

#### Silent Auction Donors

Atlantic Salmon Federation, PEI Salmon Council, East Coast Paddle Adventures, Branches and Blooms, Messy Crow Studio, Josie De Meo, Black Rafter Soapworks, Souris CO-OP Ltd., Tony Meade, Main Street Mall, Vernon d'Eon Lobster Plugs Inc., Harry Meade, Janelle MacLeod, Mama B's Spice Blends, MacPhee's Market Independent Grocer, Cameron Ross – On the Fly PEI, The Myriad View Artisan Distillery, PEI Seaglass, Confederation Centre of the Arts, The Johnson Shore Inn, Canada Tuna Cup, Kiki's Creations, Roland MacDonald and CJ Fly's.





Guide Frances Braceland teaching intrigued guests about Irish moss.

## SEASON TWO WRAP UP FOR BASIN HEAD “BEYOND THE BEACH”

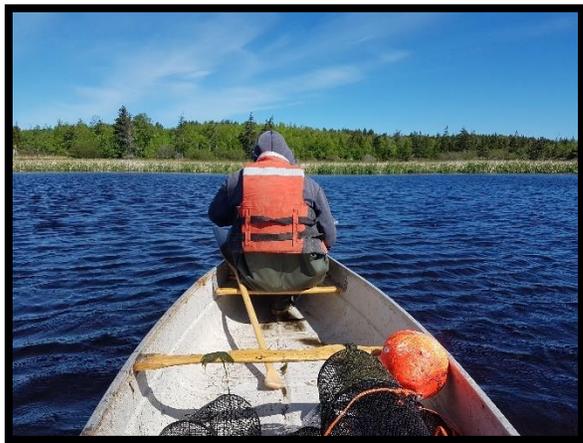
This summer was our second year of running the “Beyond the Beach” experience at Basin Head and we had a fantastic time! This experience runs during the summer and involves a beach walk, viewing the sand dunes, a seaweed-inspired picnic and a seine net pull in the lagoon to look at the animals living there. We had a wonderful new addition to our team, Marion Harris, who many people will know from her work in Pharmasave and her charity fundraising. Marion helped run the tours along with other Souris Wildlife staff and everything was a great success! The number of people attending the experience more than doubled this summer and the feedback proved to be very positive. Guests on the tour left comments such as “Priceless!”, “All parts equally amazing”, and “It is a perfect thing to

do with family/friends and is very entertaining”. We love running these experiences to view the natural beauty of Basin Head and to allow people to explore parts they may never see. Basin Head is the only Marine Protected Area on PEI and one of only two in all of Canada accessible by land, so we love sharing this very special place with everyone!



Identifying the fish caught in the seine net at Basin Head Lagoon.

## DUCKS UNLIMITED PEI — EAST LAKE MONITORING



This summer we began a multi-year contract with Ducks Unlimited that involves monitoring East Lake during the summers of 2018, 2020, and 2022. Our activities began in May, when we installed five data loggers around East Lake that record dissolved oxygen and temperature for the summer. Monthly at each site, we deployed minnow traps for 24 hours to monitor fish populations, which mostly caught Mummichogs (also known as Gudgeons). Our most interesting catch in the traps was an Eastern newt caught at the head of the lake.

While gathering information from our minnow traps, we used water monitoring equipment to measure temperature, dissolved oxygen, salinity, and acidity. This gave us the ability to compare our data to the data loggers to ensure accuracy as well as a surplus of data in the form of salinity and acidity.

When setting our minnow traps, we also

placed a fyke net across the creek downstream of the North Side Road, fishing upstream. This was to monitor incoming fish populations which wouldn't be caught in the minnow traps. In May, our major catch were 13 Brook trout (among other species such as Sticklebacks and Mummichogs), several of which were over 10 inches. In June, we caught 477 Gaspereau (Alewife) which filled the bag of the fyke net entirely. Catches in July and August were predominantly Mummichogs (over 200 in July and over 400 in August). These catches were expected due to local knowledge of fish runs but our sampling provided exact numbers regarding how many fish were entering East Lake.



Eastern newt at East Lake



## STREAM ENHANCEMENT UPDATE

We had another terrific year of accomplishments in stream enhancement. These accomplishments were made possible by a tremendous staff that worked hard during an extremely hot summer. The heavy frost last winter froze the ground early so we had less "blow downs" of large trees which helped our plight. Beavers keep us on our toes as they often appear in areas we worked through and go unnoticed until our next trip when we realize we must double back.

**East Lake Creek** was totally completed within both branches reaching back as far as Elmira. We observed no beaver activity in this branch.

**North Lake Creek** was completed on the main vein to the West Tarantum near Fountain Head. The branches of Alder Brook, Mill Creek and Joe Fay's were also completed, and no beaver activity was detected.

**Campbell's Creek** was done from pond to the Northside Road, beaver free.

**Priest Pond Creek** was completed to Dixon's dam in Glenncoradale and the south branch at Anne MacPhee's was also completed, beaver free.

**Cross River** was completed from the Northside Road to just south of Matt Leslie's and the west branch was completed to New Zealand. No beaver activity was detected here either.

**Hay River** was completed from tidal into the headwaters in New Zealand where we encountered beaver activity.

**Bear River** was completed from pond to the Mickle Macum Road and beaver activity is prevalent throughout the system. Trappers will hopefully alleviate this problem.

**Naufage River** main system was completed from tidal to the spring north of Peter Townshend's on the "S" turn. The west branch below Bert Conahan's was also cleared for a good stretch. Beavers are widespread in the pond and are usually problematic in this watershed.

**Cow River** was completed from tidal to about 1 kilometre from the Goose River Road, beaver free.

**MacAskill's River** was cleared from tidal to the Northside Road. This is a new stretch that had not been completed since 2011.

**Fortune River** watershed is massive with the main branch cleared from tidal including Big Brook to approximately 500 metres past the Little River Road. Shaw Creek was cleared to the blueberry fields. Johnny Belinda Creek cleared to St. Charles Pond (Lester Johnston's Pond). Beavers are always an issue in this watershed.

**Rollo Bay Creek** was cleared from tidal to the Bear River Road, but beavers were present.

**Souris River** has two branches; East and West. East branch was cleared to McVarish's Pond. Souris Line Road West Branch was cleared to 400 metres west of the Manning Road.

**Black Pond Creek** has two main branches; Greenvale and East. The Greenvale branch was cleared from Greenvale Road to the pond. Beaver activity was present at the pond. East Branch was assessed, and beavers were also present.

**Basin Head** was cleared from the Snake Road downstream of Ching's Warehouse and was beaver free. Many brush-mats were installed, abandoned beaver dams taken out, alders trimmed back, and blowdowns removed. With the assistance of a "Long Neck Excavator" (reach of 60 feet) we adjusted rocks within the spillway at MacInnis's dam on Cross River to make fish access easier.



*Above photo: Stream enhancement team in a Cross River stream extension.  
Below photo: Stream enhancement team at a large beaver dam in Bear River.*



## SILT TRAP CLEANING

Our silt traps were excavated this September by G&P Trucking and Construction. Two silt traps were excavated within the Naufrage watershed. The first was at the intersection of the Church Road and Line of the Lot Road on property owned by Dale Cahill, the second trap was on the Selkirk Road belonging to Hazel McInnis. Two more within the Fortune watershed were excavated upstream of the burned bridge on the Grove Pine Road on property owned by the PEI Government.

On the Line of the Lot Road fireweed had firmly taken over the spoils from when the trap was dug out in 2011 which created a natural and thick cover of vegetation. This year's spoils were deposited inland of the bank, away from the stream.

On the Selkirk Road, the spoils from the last several diggings had built the bank so high that even the long-reach excavator had a hard time reaching down to the trap safely, so G&P had their dozer operator push 7-8 feet of spoils off of the top of the bank and further back into the woods away from the stream. After this, the excavator dug out the trap without issue and round bales of straw provided by Wendell MacKinnon were trucked down to the trap and rolled out to provide cover for the bank until vegetation can take over the bank again.

On the Grove Pine Road, the trap was excavated and due to difficulty in accessing the trap, square bales of straw were acquired from George Matheson and carried in from the road to provide cover for the exposed bank.



*SAB Field Supervisor Tony Meade and Field Technician Luke Chaisson installing a silt boom to catch any disturbed sediment travelling downstream during excavation.*



*Excavator digging out silt trap at Fortune River.*



*Straw is laid in the area to provide coverage to the bank.*

These silt traps are important for cleaning sediment out of their respective streams which will improve fish habitat by providing gravel bottom for spawning and will help to decrease water temperature. Our thanks go out to G&P Trucking and Construction for their excavation services in utilizing their long neck excavator, which was required within our permit.

Funding for a major portion of this excavation program was provided by the PEI Wildlife Conservation Fund (conservation section of angling, hunting and trapping licenses plus purchases of the conservation license plates). Funds from our annual lobster fundraising dinner supplemented the costs.



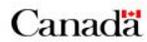
**THANK YOU TO ALL OF THE FUNDERS WHO HAVE MADE IT POSSIBLE FOR US TO CONTINUE DOING IMPORTANT CONSERVATION WORK THIS YEAR IN OUR AREA, WE ARE VERY GRATEFUL FOR YOUR ONGOING SUPPORT!**

### Federal Government Funders

 Environment Canada    Environnement Canada

 Service Canada

  Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada

  Canada  
This project was undertaken with the financial support of the Government of Canada. Ce projet a été réalisé avec l'appui financier du gouvernement du Canada.

 Fisheries and Oceans Canada    Pêches et Océans Canada

### Provincial Funders

 Prince Edward Island  
 CANADA    Agriculture and Fisheries

 Prince Edward Island  
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### Municipal Funders

 Souris Harbour Authority Inc.

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### Foundations

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 Fédération du Saumon Atlantique

 Wildlife Conservation Fund  
 Your Conservation Dollars at Work

 PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND  
 WILDLIFE FEDERATION

 The Atlantic Salmon Conservation Foundation  
 La Fondation pour la conservation du saumon atlantique

### Souris and Area Branch of the PEI Wildlife Federation Membership & Donation Form

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

City/Province: \_\_\_\_\_

Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Payment

Please check one or both:

- Membership (\$10)
- Donations

Amount enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Note: An official tax receipt can only be issued for the value of the donation and will not include the \$10 membership fee.

## PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS: KEVIN ROBERTSON

I assume as you read this article, you have probably noticed soil has been moved around at Basin Head at the location of the old wharf and slipway. Souris and Area Wildlife Branch will be the lead proponent on a project to develop this site. Negotiations are ongoing with several partners to get this project in place. The success of our Basin Head Beyond the Beach experiential tours is the key to the success of this project.

This site will be known as "Basin Head Interpretive Park" and may include the removal of the old wharf, new placement of Island Stone, a new slipway, a research and maintenance building, boardwalks, interpretive signage, a new parking lot, picnic shelters, floating dock, etc.

More details on this project will be contained in our next newsletter.

## WATERSHED COORDINATOR'S COMMENTS: FRED CHEVERIE

Souris and Area Wildlife Legacy Park was developed to honour the accomplishments of past members of Souris and Area Branch of the PEI Wildlife Federation. This park is designed to promote stewardship values for current and future members.

The land for this park was donated to the PEI Wildlife Federation in 2013 by the McVarish family, former owners of the property and former residents of the Souris Line Road. A generous grant from the "Canon Take Roots" program supported by the "Evergreen Green Grants" program provided the funds to start the Souris and Area Wildlife Legacy Park.

Souris and Area Wildlife Legacy Park is located at the junction of where the PEI Confederation Trail intersects with the Souris Line Road. A path from the parking lot leads one through the park.

This year the inauguration ceremony will honour past members Eddie Gauthier and Allan McCormack and will take place on Saturday, October 6<sup>th</sup> 3 pm (rain date is Sunday, October 7<sup>th</sup> at 3 pm). The ceremony reveals the plaques of the deceased member next to a PEI native tree planted in their honour.

We welcome everyone to come and visit our park and to participate in the short ceremony and enjoy light refreshments.

### ABOUT US:

The Souris and Area Branch of the PEI Wildlife Federation is a non-profit, environmental organization dedicated to the conservation, protection and enhancement of watersheds in north eastern Kings County. Our management area accounts for approximately 62,000 hectares representing about 9.6% of PEI, including 27 individual watersheds.

The goals of our organization include:

1. To establish North Eastern Kings County as the "Sports Fishing Capital" of Prince Edward Island.
2. The management of natural resources and enhancement of fish, wildlife and their habitat through watershed planning, protection and restoration initiatives
3. To become the model watershed group on Prince Edward Island
4. To bring unprecedented environmental awareness to our stake holders to create a more informed general public capable of eliciting progressive environmental action
5. To promote our management area as one of the most pristine natural areas in Prince Edward Island through ecotourism ventures to attract visitors to the local area

We meet the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of every month at the Souris Striders Ski Lodge. Meetings start at 7 pm, all are welcome to attend.

### CONTACT INFORMATION:

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