

## The FEDERATION of NOVA SCOTIA NATURALISTS

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225 George St., Sydney, NS B1P 1J5  
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B2G 2L4  
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Halifax, NS B3H 3A6 [http://ccn.cs.dal.ca/  
Recreation/FieldNaturalists/fieldnat.html](http://ccn.cs.dal.ca/Recreation/FieldNaturalists/fieldnat.html)  
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Please check one:

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## Federation of Nova Scotia Naturalists

# NEWS

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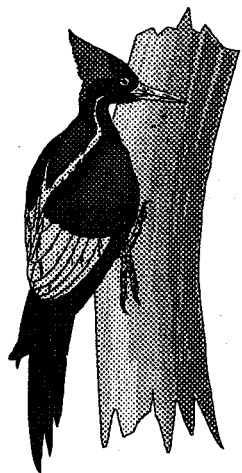


Painted Lady (*Vanessa cardui*)

*Heard of the Christmas Bird Counts?*

In 1975, a new sort of count began....  
see page 4 for details.

The North American Migration Count (NAMC) project was begun in 1992 by Jim Stasz of North Beach, Maryland, USA, in an attempt to expand the geographic range of the kind of information collected by the Maryland May Bird Count. Initially the plan was to broaden the information to include adjoining States, but somehow some of the letters sent out to birders in those States went further afield and interest grew in various directions including articles in ABA magazines and other birding periodicals. This is when I became intrigued in the possibility of a potential Continental count getting underway in the future, under the auspices of Jim and his Maryland committee, and aiding in the information on abundance and distribution, and progress, of each species of bird in Spring migration as they head northwards. I sent in a small report from Kings Co. of birds seen on that NAMC day in 1992. Thus began my involvement with this project, and I believe many others in other parts of North America also followed suit for within a year 43 States and 3 Canadian Provinces were involved as well. I do not think Jim had quite anticipated so much interest in his project in such a short time. However, he continued with the project, feeling it to be too worthwhile to give it up and now the fourth year of "counting" in Spring has been completed, and for the first time a "Fall" count has also been added.



Now you are probably wondering what is the object of the NAMC? Have you ever wondered, "What is the *shape* of bird migration?" What direction or by what paths do neotropical migrants move from their wintering grounds in Central and South America to their breeding grounds up north? Do some species make a series of short hops along a predictable route or move in a solid front, northwards, leaving a few along the way to occupy local territories? Do others travel like shorebirds flying longer distances between essential feeding stopovers? These are some of the questions that have intrigued ornithologists and other scientists for years. Maybe these "counts" will help find answers if "birders" are willing to help with this project.

Some of you may have participated in Christmas Bird Counts (CBCs) in Nova Scotia. The rules are simple: spend a day in the field counting birds in a specific area and keep track of hours and miles on foot, car, boat, feeder watching. The North American Migration Count is similar but with a few twists. The area covered for any one count is not a 15-mile diameter circle as in CBCs, but an entire County. This count is done on just one single day, (not like the several weeks period for CBCs), which is held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday in May for the Spring count, and as of 1995 a Fall count has been added and the date set for this Count

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Spot the Ladybug!

The Canadian Nature Federation (CNF) is looking for Canadian naturalists to help spot ladybugs in their backyards, in their gardens, and while on vacation next summer. There are more than 500 different species of ladybugs in North America. However, some of these species have been introduced into the United States from overseas to control aphids in orange groves. These introduced species are fierce competitors and are expanding their range across Canada. There is not enough research available to determine what effect this influx of alien species is having on our native populations of lady beetles.

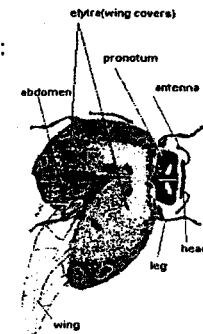
CNF is recruiting volunteers nationwide to identify lady beetle species they find locally. We have chosen 13 of the more common lady beetle species, including two introduced species, and produced an identification kit which includes species illustrations, identification tips and natural history information about lady beetles. Our goal is to have individuals identify the species that they find and send in a reporting form outlining the species and where it was found.

The project is part of the Endangered Plants and Invertebrates Program (EPIC). Existing conservation plans concentrate on more visible animals and higher plants, however these species account for less than 10% of the species in Canada. EPIC attempts to protect the remaining 90% including insects, non-vascular plants, fungi, and algae. This program, partially funded by Science Culture Canada, attempts to inform people of importance that EPIC species play in natural systems.

For those with WWW access, the lady beetle survey can be found at: [http://schoolnet2.carleton.ca/english/math\\_sci/env\\_geol/ladybug/](http://schoolnet2.carleton.ca/english/math_sci/env_geol/ladybug/)

To receive a copy of the species illustrations with identifying tips, please call (613) 562-3447, fax (613) 562-3447, send e-mail to [epiccnf@web.apc.org](mailto:epiccnf@web.apc.org) or write to:

Scott Plunkett  
Canadian Nature Federation  
1 Nicholas St. Suite 520  
Ottawa, Ontario K1N 7B7



Lady Beetle

The Tobeatic Wilderness Committee (TWC) attended the presentation of the Report of the Public Review Committee for the Proposed Systems Plan to the Minister. We felt the report was excellent throughout. The following are the recommendations concerning the Tobeatic Wilderness Area:

- The management plan for the Tobeatic should reflect the significance and status of this area as Nova Scotia's and the Maritimes' largest true wilderness area.
- The boundary of the Tobeatic should be finalized during management planning for this area.
- The Dept. of Natural Resources (DNR) should consider including the area known as the "Tobeatic finger" in the Protected Area.

The DNR accepted all three of these recommendations in its response with the third item footnoted, "The Department is working to resolve this issue." The TWC remains greatly concerned about protection of the so-called *Tobeatic finger*.

More than a year ago, the Department found 95% of the *alternative wood* needed to off-set that committed to Irving (which used to be Lewis Lumber). The 5-7% still remaining is that which endangers the *Finger*. At a recent meeting with the

Minister, the TWC was told this area could be logged by Irving in the near future since the small percentage remaining has not been found. The moratorium still remains on cutting on the Finger, but if the Department determines it cannot find alternative wood, the moratorium will be lifted allowing for logging and management. Due to the high cost of building roads (for such a small amount of wood), our Committee is concerned the industry will persuade DNR to allow for additional logging and management on the Finger. The Finger should not be negotiable. Alternative wood is findable. The entire finger should be included in the protected area.

We know there has been strong pressure from logging companies to open this area to logging. Although we have asked repeatedly about progress in finding alternative wood, information has not been given to us (due to "confidentiality"). At our last meeting with DNR, we felt as though the area of the Finger was in jeopardy. This key area is important not only for its own integrity, but has an impact on Kejimikujik National Park. In Kej's Environmental Impact Assessment and the Park's Public Presentation, the following concerns were identified:

- The water quality is presently poor in the "Finger" area due to extreme acidity. Any further drop in the pH due to logging activities

R.R. #1, Box 5  
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COMMITTEE

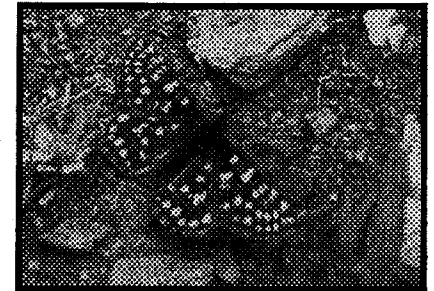


Little Copper (*Lycaena phlaeas*)\*

Although relatively few naturalists are butterfly enthusiasts (perhaps the image of Jane Hathaway is still too strong in people's minds!), butterfly watching - as distinct from collecting - is analogous in many ways to birding. The challenge of identification, the keeping of lists, the thrill of a rarity and the joy of being outdoors are all there. As well, butterflies are benign and esthetically attractive creatures, and they bring pleasant associations of summertime.

There are hundreds of bird species to be seen in Nova Scotia, but the butterfly list is much smaller: only about 70 species are regular breeders or migrants. Twenty of these are unlikely to be encountered casually, leaving about 50 species to get to know. Some of these are familiar to almost everybody: the Cabbage Butterfly (*Pieris rapae*) is the familiar white-winged one with black marks, and most people recognize the Canadian Tiger Swallowtail, the big black-and-yellow butterfly that flies in the spring. Others such as the Red Admiral (*Vanessa atalanta*) and the Sulphurs (*Colias* sp.) are familiar to almost everybody, even if you can't put a name to them.

The diminutive ones, such as the Little Copper (*Lycaena phlaeas*) and the Spring Azure (*Celastrina argiolus*), although delightful in pattern and colour, are not as well known, even though they are abundant in the province. There are some intriguing rarities such as the Baltimore (*Euphydryas phaeton*) and the Mustard White (*Pieris napi*) which are easy to identify, but generally scarce and hard to find. For a challenge, there are several species which are not easy to identify without a really close look. For example, the Aphrodite Fritillary (*Speyeria aphrodite*) and the Atlantis Fritillary (*S. atlantis*) look so similar that identifying even mounted specimens can be a challenge for the amateur.



Baltimore  
(*Euphydryas phaeton*)\*

This summer, a 4th of July Butterfly Count will begin in Nova Scotia. The Halifax Field Naturalists and the Nova Scotia Museum of Natural History (NSMNH) are co-sponsoring the first count, to be held somewhere near Halifax in a yet-to-be defined circle. The choice of locations will depend on access to a good variety of habitat, such as overgrown fields, woodland, spruce bogs and even coastal barrens.

Because there are few people in the province who are confident with their butterfly identification, training sessions for prospective counters will be held. We expect that a combination of classroom and field work will be used. The intention is to develop a group of people who can provide reasonable coverage of the count circle for this year, and perhaps start their own counts in future years.

As part of this effort, the Halifax Field Naturalists (HFN) have developed a Field Checklist of the Butterflies of Nova Scotia. This check-

list is being printed with the assistance of the NSMNH, and will be available by the start of the butterfly season, in early spring. Distribution will be through the HFN and the Museum Shop.

If you would like to participate in the first annual 4th of July Butterfly Count, or just want further information on the Count or the field checklist, contact the Halifax Field Naturalists (address on back cover), or watch the HFN World-wide Web site for more information. Our web address is:

<http://ccn.cs.dal.ca/Recreation/FieldNaturalists/fieldnat.html>

\* Photographs by Peter and Linda Payzant

### Interested in Intensive Natural History Field Seminars and Workshops?

Each summer, the Eagle Hill Field Research Station in Steuben Maine, offers intensive field seminars and workshops in the field of natural history. Located "just down east" of Acadia National Park on the coast of Maine, the list of advanced, professional and specialty natural history seminars and workshops includes among many others: Field Ethnobotany: Medicinal Plants, 35mm Photography, The Science of the Professional Botanical Survey, Geomorphology: Understanding Landforms and Landscapes, Birding in Down east & Coastal Maine, Field Ornithology: Shorebirds & Seabirds, Introduction to Forest Entomology, and Applied Ecological Restoration. Thirty-two different topics are listed in their current flyer. To write or call for more information:

Eagle Hill Field Research Station  
Dyer Bay Road, PO Box 9  
Stibine, ME 04680-0009  
Tel: 207-546-2821  
Fax: 207-546-3042  
e-mail: [eaghill@maine.maine.edu](mailto:eaghill@maine.maine.edu)



### First Loon Watch Held at Kejimikujik National Park Peter Hope

Park Warden Erich Muntz had his hands full and it wasn't his binoculars. Ahead of his boat were adult common loons, lots of them. They alternated swimming and diving, and with the large group bobbing up and down, it was a task to accurately count them all. Eric finally determined that 22 adults were intently fishing the waters of Kejimikujik Lake.

It was the first Loon Watch day at Kejimikujik National Park, August, 20 1995, and the warm, clear, sunny weather couldn't have been better. Volunteers, park staff and Canadian Wildlife Service biologists (21 people in total) had dispersed by canoe and boat to survey lakes throughout the eastern part of the park.

The idea of a Loon Watch was proposed as a supplement to the Canadian Wildlife Service research on common loons to give a "snapshot" of concentration areas and numbers of the loon population.

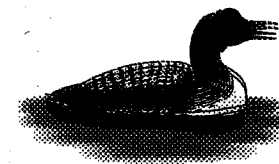
CWS research by Dr. Joseph Kerekes has determined that territorial loon pairs are known to occur in 25 lakes (greater than 20 hectares) within Kejimikujik National Park. The seven-year breeding population data show that the number of residential loons remains stable (around 39 pairs) with the number of fledged chicks varying from five to 18 annually with a mean of 11 chicks. Some of the fluctuations in breeding success may be the result of changes in water levels during the nesting period and predation by great black-backed gulls, but human disturbance may also be a contributing factor.

Participants assembled early on Loon Watch day for an orientation on standard reporting procedures. Participants were given maps of their assigned lakes and asked to indicate the sites and exact times where loons were observed. The data recorded indicated age (eg. young or adult) and number of birds (on the water or flying overhead).

Fourteen different lakes were surveyed by fourteen teams of participants. Two teams covered more than one lake; Kejimikujik Lake, a 26 square kilometre water body dotted by islands, required four teams to cover it completely.

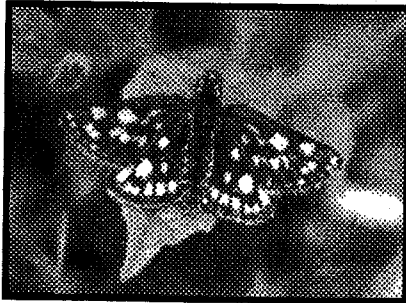
The total count was 53 adult loons and two young of the year. Nine pairs were noted still together on their home lakes; however many birds had congregated in the huge group, seen by Erich Muntz, on Kejimikujik Lake.

The overall opinion from volunteers and researchers was that the Loon Watch was both fun and scientifically valuable. Next year the date will remain late August and the survey time will likely be lengthened to three hours. Hope-fully, even more volunteers will take part so that additional lakes can be covered.



Most readers of this newsletter will have heard of Christmas Bird Counts, and many will have participated in them. From the first count in Central Park in 1900, they have become steadily more numerous until today thousands of counts are held all over North America, the Caribbean, Hawaii and beyond.

In 1975, a new sort of count began: the 4th of July Butterfly Count. That year, 29 different areas were surveyed. In 1994 (the latest year for which I have figures) 249 counts were held in 45 states, six provinces and two Mexican states. The methodology is very similar to the Christmas Bird Counts: volunteers select a circular count area with a 15-mile diameter and conduct a one-day census of all the butterflies sighted within that circle. The counts are usually held in the few weeks before or after the 4th of July, depending on the best timing for butterfly observation in the particular count circle.



Arctic Skipper (*Carterocephalus palaemon*)

The North American Butterfly Association (NABA) organizes the counts and publishes their annual reports. These reports provide important information about the geographical distributions of butterflies and the population sizes of the species counted.

The rules are simple: A 15-mile diameter circle in which to do the count is selected, taking care that it doesn't overlap other count circles. If a count is being held for the second or subsequent year, the same circle is used. Volunteers count butterflies found alive and actually observed within the circle (road kills not countable, and no estimating!), and garden watchers report the highest number of individuals of each species seen at one time in the garden. Butterflies may be captured if required for identification, but they should then be released. Collecting them is not part of the count ethic.

A minimum of four party-hours per count is strongly encouraged for all counts, and required for new counts. At the end of the day, the

counters pool their results, and a report form is returned to NABA for publication.

According to the NABA: "The main goal of the count is not to compete with others for the highest numbers. Rather, sites should be chosen mainly for their potential for repeating counts year after year, not just for richness or rarities. Most of the interest and enjoyment to counters arises from annual comparisons of results in their own count circle. Single counts at distant localities are less valuable."

may render the water essentially sterile. The entire cut drains directly into the Park. (There is added concern for the trout populations in these waters.) Recently Keji was placed on the IUCN endangered wilderness list, because of the effects of acid rain from remote sources.

- Soil quality in the "Finger" is poor, meaning regeneration is likely to be slow and deformed. Erosion may occur with the consequent siltation of Park streams.
- Herbicides used could pollute waters draining into the park.
- Roads built would give access to Keji's most remote wilderness area, classified as Zone 2 in the recent Kejimikujik National Park Management Plan.
- Within the Zone 2 are at least 13 Zone 1 (Special Preservation Areas). One is an old growth hemlock (*Tsuga canadensis*) stand at Dennis Boot Lake which is cut in two by the Park boundary, and a significant portion lies within the "Finger" area.

The Toboatic Wilderness Committee continues to work to preserve this area, and asks that you (as an organization and as individual citizens) also continue to make your opinions known to your MLA and to the Dept. of Natural Resources.

Minister Don Downe  
 Dept. of Natural Resources  
 Box 698, Halifax, NS B3J 2T9  
 Phone: 902-424-4037  
 Fax: 902-424-0594



# The FEDERATION OF NOVA SCOTIA NATURALISTS

*The purpose* of the Federation of Nova Scotia Naturalists is to further communication and co-operation among naturalists and natural history societies in Nova Scotia. We also work towards a co-ordinated effort on the provincial level to protect the natural state of our environment. Our activities include:

- Promoting the enjoyment & understanding of nature by our members and the general public by:
  - educating through publications, lectures, symposia, field trips, and other activities;
  - fostering the creation of nature centers and nature education programs, and defending the integrity of existing facilities and programs.
- Encouraging the establishment of protected natural areas, as represented in parks, nature reserves, wilderness areas, heritage rivers, and other such protected areas.
- Defending the integrity of existing sanctuaries by exercising constant vigilance against pollution and habitat destruction.
- Promoting and engaging in funding and research needed for protecting the integrity of all natural ecosystems.
- Encouraging and engaging in the protection and restoration of threatened and endangered species, with special attention to the preservation of essential habitats, by:
  - 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;
  - encouraging and facilitating the restoration and enhancement of essential habitats.

FNSN is affiliated with the Canadian Nature Federation and is a member of both the Nature Conservancy of Canada and the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society.

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is on the 3rd Saturday in September, to see what is happening on the return flight. The concept of this extra count is to complete the series of population counts determining the timing of population changes, and compliments the Christmas Bird Counts and Breeding Bird Surveys (BBSs). The Spring count will tell us how many birds are returning from the wintering grounds, BBSs will locate main nesting areas, the Fall count will measure reproductive success and CBCs will measure winter population. The current goal is to have two Continental counts every year.

The North American Migration Count is an event not affiliated with any organization. Partners in Flight, the American Birding Association, and numerous state, provincial and local birding clubs provide support by increasing awareness of this activity. The NAMC collects no dues. You cannot join, only participate. *There are no fees.* To quote Chandler S. Robbins, Maryland Count Coordinator 1953:

"The purpose of this count is to give each and every Birdwatcher the opportunity to enjoy a day's birding during Spring (or Fall) Migration with the knowledge that the result of their findings, together with the birds counted by others, would fit together like the pieces of a puzzle and reveal the status of bird migration on a specified date." \*

Under the capable leadership of Bev Sarty of White's Lake, Halifax Co., for 1993-4 as the first provincial coordinator, Nova Scotia's participation blossomed; ten counties were actively participating and interest and awareness in the project was growing. Due to other commitments however Bev was unable to continue heading the project for the province so in 1995 I took over the reins in time for the Spring count. I am happy to report that sixteen counties managed to send in reports for that count but it would be even better if we could see every county in our province represented in the future to obtain a more accurate "snapshot" of bird activities and presence in both those count dates.

Anyone is interested in participating on those count dates, whether "in the field" or watching a feeder, should please contact Judy Tufts at:  
Tel. 902-542-7800  
PO Box 1313, Wolfville, NS B0P 1X0

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*Judy Tufts is the current NS Provincial Coordinator for NAMC.*