

# The FEDERATION of NOVA SCOTIA NATURALISTS

The FNSN is an umbrella group comprising naturalist organizations from across Nova Scotia. We present a unified voice concerning natural history issues.

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Colin Stewart - Endangered Spaces  
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## Member Organization Addresses:

**Annapolis Field Naturalists Society:**  
**Blomidon Naturalists Society:**  
**Cape Breton Naturalists Society:**

PO Box 576, Annapolis Royal, NS B0S 1A0  
 PO Box 127, Wolfville, NS B0P 1X0 *add home page*  
 c/o Cape Breton Centre for Heritage and Science  
 225 George St., Sydney, NS B1P 1J5

**Chignecto Naturalists Club:**

PO Box 1327, Sackville, NB E0A 3C0  
 c/o Jeff Odgen, #13-34 Village Ct, Truro, NS B2N 6K8  
 c/o R. Lauff, Box 4, Site 13, RR #7, Antigonish, NS  
 B2G 2L4

**Cobequid Naturalist Club:**

**Eastern Mainland Field Naturalists:**

c/o N.S. Museum of Natural History, 1747 Summer St.  
 Halifax, NS B3H 3A6  
<http://ccn.cs.dal.ca/Recreation/FieldNaturalists/fieldnat.html>

**Halifax Field Naturalists:**

**Les Amis du Plein Air:**

**Nova Scotia Wild Flora Society:**

PO Box 472, Cheticamp, NS B0E 1H0  
 c/o N.S. Museum of Natural History, 1747 Summer St.  
 Halifax, NS B3H 3A6 <http://csensen@fox.nstn.ns.ca>

**Tusket River Environmental**

**Protection Association:**

**South Shore Naturalists:**

c/o C. Jacquard, Box 8A, RR #1, Tusket, NS B0W 3M0  
 c/o Jill Comolli, RR#1, Rose Bay, NS B0J 2X0

**Associate Member:**

**Cole Harbour Rural Heritage Society:**  
 471 Poplar St., Cole Harbour, NS B2W 4L2

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 The Editor, FNSN News, c/o 6360 Young Street, Halifax, NS B3L 2A1

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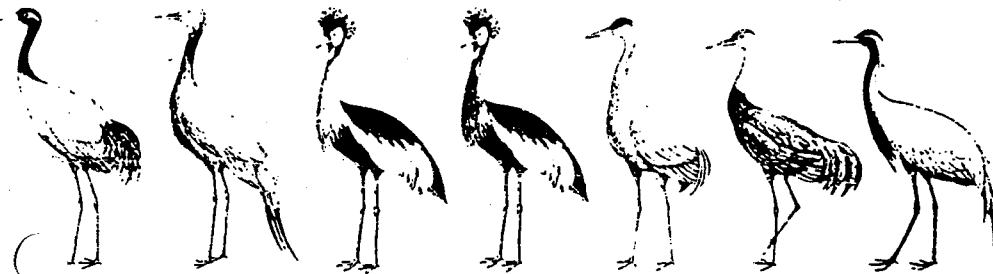
# Federation of Nova Scotia Naturalists

# NEWS

Volume 6 No. 2

Summer 1996

ISSN 1188-326X



Black-necked  
Crane  
*Grus americana*

White Crane  
*Anthropoides  
pachica*

Grey-crowned  
Crane  
*Balaeniceps rex*

Black-crowned  
Crane  
*Balaeniceps rex*

Sandhill Crane  
*Grus canadensis*

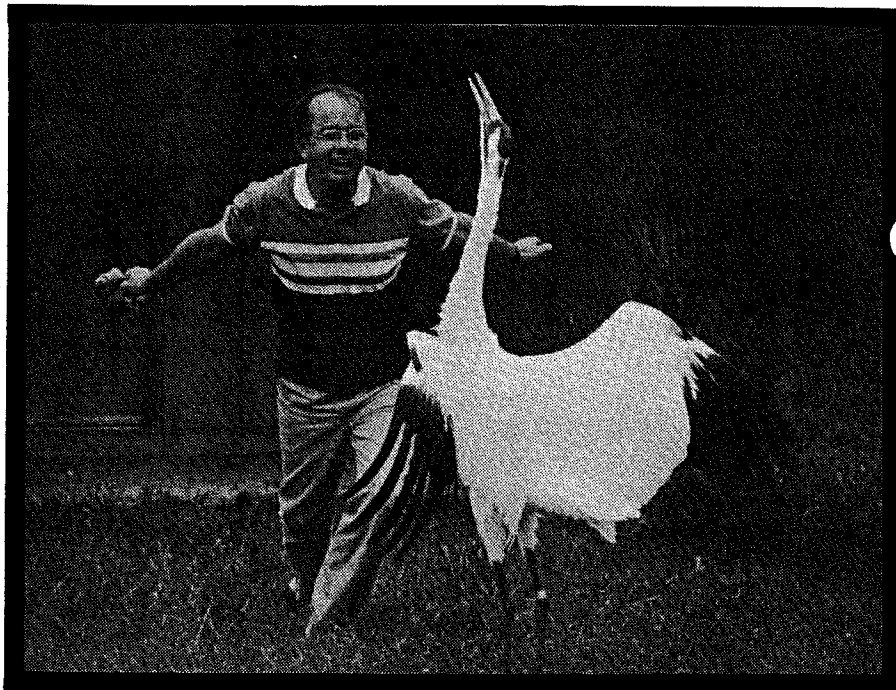
Hooded Crane  
*Grus monacha*

Demoiselle  
Crane  
*Anthropoides*

land and water ecosystems. The decline of crane numbers in many parts of the world is a signal that key habitats, both grasslands and wetlands, are seriously being altered or damaged on a worldwide scale.

In Canada the whooping crane (*Grus americana*) has been rescued from extinction; from a low of 22 in 1941 to more than 300 now. Canada's other species, the Sandhill crane (*Grus canadensis*), is the most abundant crane species in the world, although some of its subspecies are in trouble, and researchers worry about the diminishing habitat on the River Platte, Nebraska.

George Archibald had some wonderful crane stories to share. Through ticket sales and donations, the co-sponsors were able to present to Mr. Archibald and the ICF a cheque for \$1532.



## FNSN News

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### Notes from the Outgoing President's Desk...

Alice White

*Prior to leaving office, Alice White prepared a summary of recent events concerning FNSN which would be of interest to the membership. Even though this newsletter is being published much later than anticipated and several months after Alice submitted her article, I have included most of the text, albeit heavily edited to reflect the current situation. My apologies to Alice for my tardiness. .... Jeff Pike, Editor*

The Federation was asked to participate in the Nova Scotia Plantwatch. Members have begun observing and recording the earliest of twelve flowering plants common to Nova Scotia. The results of the survey will alert us to the health of our wild flowers, allow comparison in different areas and enable us to compare results to those recorded more than 100 years ago by Alexander H. MacKay, superintendent of NS schools. Your organization has the plant lists and forms, so join in.

Sue Brown, Nova Scotia Museum, was in contact with FNSN concerning the ongoing Frog Watch. Information was distributed to the individual organizations through their representatives.

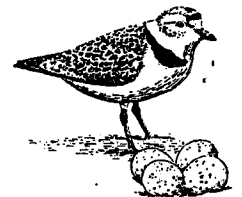


male



Halifax Field Naturalists in association with the Nova Scotia Museum has compiled a checklist of butterflies found in Nova Scotia. A butterfly census (international, similar to the bird count) took place the first week in July. A workshop was held the first week in June followed by a field trip.

Eastern, Halifax, Cape Breton and South Shore Naturalists groups will be participating in monitoring the Piping Plover. Completed census forms will be sent to Jill Comolli (SSNC) to compile and send results to Sherman Boates, Department of Natural Resources.




Piping Plover

*Charadrius melodus*

**N**ova Scotians have often left the province to make their mark on the world. An illustrious example is George Archibald, co-founder of the International Crane Foundation (ICF), who, more than anyone, has helped secure a future for the cranes and their habitats throughout the world. George spent much of his early life in rural Guysborough Co., where his small collection of waterfowl was a first step on his life's path. He began undergraduate study at Acadia and then Dalhousie University, with an eye on medicine. Two summer jobs at Al Oeming's famous Alberta game farm kindled a passion for the world's cranes, which he researched for an undergraduate thesis. Cornell University was then much the best place to pursue his dream, and, despite the fact that his scholarship could not be held outside Canada, he was received at Cornell with enthusiasm. There he carried out research on cranes and met a like-minded student, the late Ron Sauey. Together in 1970 they boldly created a Crane Trust, later the ICF, on property in Wisconsin, made available by Ron's parents. George's first trip abroad was in 1972 to help study an endangered population of the red-crowned cranes and to persuade Japanese authorities to supply some captive cranes to the ICF. This became the pattern of his life, involving trips to Australia, Siberia, China, southeast Asia, and other remote parts of the world, using his remarkable energy and powers of persuasion in behalf of these beautiful, vulnerable species of birds. For this, he has received much support and many honours from governments and organizations.

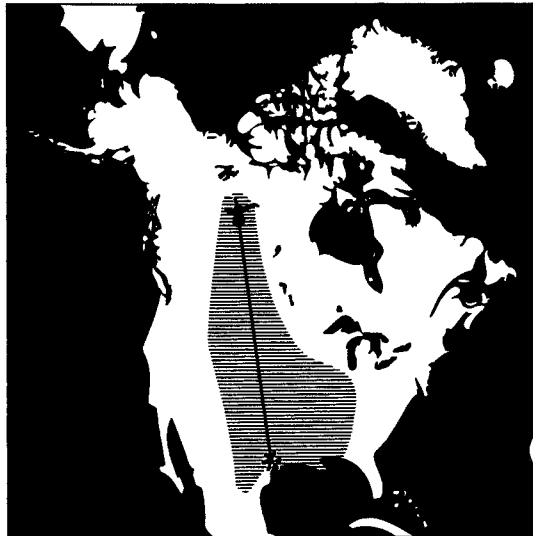
Distribution of the Whooping Crane

*Past distribution*

 Approximate range in 1850

*Present distribution*

- Present migration route
- Breeding range in Wood Buffalo National Park
- \* Wintering area in Aransas National Wildlife Refuge

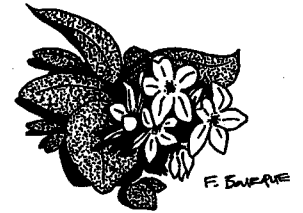


*(The following excerpt is the overview from the document that was submitted by FNSN in December 1995 in response to the government request for input concerning this new policy.)*

**T**he proposed policy makes some underlying assumptions about tenure and rights to mine. These issues are not widely known or understood and should be specifically stated and explained. We do not know the extent to which they are rights, privileges or just standard procedure. We are not yet taking any positions on these matters since our knowledge is inadequate.

In what is apparently an attempt to reconcile the policies presented in this document with the Department of Natural Resources mission statement and goals (some aspects of which are more appropriate for renewable than for non-renewable resources), the concepts of sustainable use and stewardship are misused. The misuse occurs primarily in Policy 5.0 which contains policy statements that we generally support. We believe that the introduction of these concepts (which have become buzzwords) is unnecessary and their misuse is damaging to the presentation.

In this document the Department clearly presents itself as a promoter of the mineral industry. We recognize that this is one of the Department's roles but the degree to which this goal is pursued is extreme and portrays the Department as an unquestioning supporter of the industry. Such an extreme position compromises the Department's mandate as a neutral public educator and indeed undermines its public trust.



The document gives not indication that any priorities have been set in the pursuing the Department's mineral development policy. The impression given is that all mineral development is in the best interests of Nova Scotians and should be pursued. We have great difficulty with this.

The environmental aspects of the document are positive as is the indicated willingness for public consultation and a broader involvement of other stakeholders. We look forward to its implementation.

The document presents the Department as, on the one hand, an unrestrained advocate of industry and, on the other, a source of balanced educational material and supporter of a consultative approach to mineral development. Despite the many positive aspects of this documents we feel it does not deal with the role of mining in society or define a clear and consistent role for the Department of for the Government.

areas in each. Alberta, which received an **F** last year (partly for jiggering the boundaries of Dinosaur Provincial Park (a World Heritage site) to permit oil and gas exploration) spent half the year saying the **F** didn't matter. To the public it *did* matter, and the pressure to live up to its **Spaces** commitments just did not go away. The Alberta government eventually reversed itself, dusted off Special Places 2000 and implemented a number of long-languishing protection proposals. With 600,000 ha protected, and a new commitment to be done by 1998, Alberta earned a score of **B**.



This year there were two **F**s. Ontario has not designated any new sites this year, and has taken a number of actions that either weaken existing areas or compromise some agencies' abilities to ensure protection. All this despite the new government's election commitment to **Spaces**. New Brunswick's **F** is earned through a lack of progress toward a system of protected areas and some backing away from their Protected Areas Policy.

To complete our region, PEI received a **C+**. It had quickly set clear objectives on what should be done, but is slipping in implementing them. (In one case, the province is assisting the industrial exploitation of one of its most significant bogs.) Newfoundland and Labrador received a score of **D**, despite a good plan, because significant candidate areas continue to be lost to resource extraction options. The other grades are indicated in the chart on the following page.

### This Year's Priorities

At this year's press conference, Minister Eleanor Norrie asked Ray White, the MLA for Guysborough, to add a few words. He began by pointing out that it is one thing to get an **A**, but another to keep it.

With its commitment to the systems plan, the government has set itself a number of duties, including an implementation strategy followed by a management planning exercise. The government expects the process to take about three years. It has also promised to revise parks legislation to better fit the conservation emphasis.

There is also plenty of room for the Nova Scotia government to envision a Marine Protected Areas network, then proceed co-operatively with the federal government to establish it.

Although the 31 sites represent most of what can be done using Crown land, half the province remains unrepresented. Clearly the major remaining effort involves private lands. While this necessitates the further and more

## Nova Scotia Makes the Grade

by Colin Stewart, Endangered Spaces Co-ordinator

On Tuesday, April 30, in the Red Room of the legislature, the World Wildlife Fund's (WWF) 1995-96 **Endangered Spaces** Progress Report (and Report Card) was released. The news was good. Nova Scotia received an **A**, tying with British Columbia for top honours.

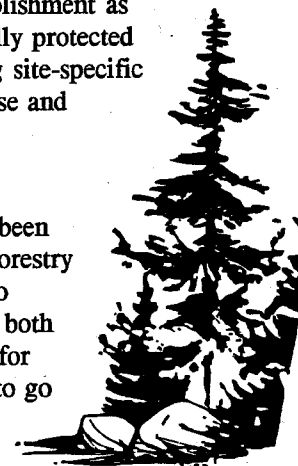
The biggest single factor in the good news was the Nova Scotia government's commitment to proceed with all 31 candidate protected areas. This announcement was made on December 11, following the report of the public review committee. Copies of both the report of the review committee and the government's response are available from the NS Department of Natural Resources (Box 698, Halifax, NS B3J 2T9).

These candidate sites are now being counted because, under the interim protections established in 1993, they meet the required **Spaces** standards, and the point of the commitment is that their establishment as protected areas will proceed. They are not yet fully protected because the remaining process includes developing site-specific management plans which will define the type of use and development that will be permitted.

### Mining Claims

The level of commitment along the way has been very clear. All of these sites are protected from forestry and from new mineral claims. The commitment to proceed with protection continues and perpetuates both limitations. There is an equally clear reservation for pre-existing mineral claims; they will be allowed to go through the normal process.

The presence of a mineral claim does not affect the status of these areas as significant natural areas worthy of protection. As the protection proposal was broadly accepted through public review, any proposed mineral activity should be subject to an environmental assessment, which includes restoration to an end state suitable for, and worthy of, protection. Restoration has been the norm for over a decade, so that satisfying these concerns is accepted as part of the cost of doing business. However, with the quality of the surface ecosystems so clearly identified as a priority, it seems likely that marginal mineral prospects will not be pursued. Alternatively, because this protection effort concentrates on Crown lands, it might be possible for a company to acquire clear title to equally suitable lands in the private sector and propose an exchange.



## Natural regions of Nova Scotia Ecological representation by protected areas



Level of Representation	Number of Regions
■ Represented	: 16
■ Moderate	: 18
□ Partial	: 17
□ Little or None	: 26
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>77</b>

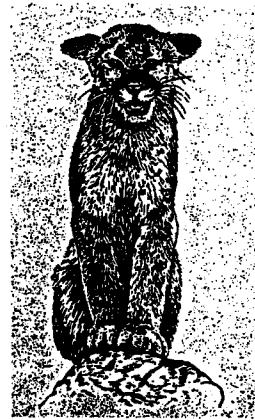
Source: Endangered Spaces Progress Report 95-96, WWF

### The Tobeatic Finger and Other Priorities

The government's Proposed Systems Plan for Parks and Protected Areas mentioned an additional 10,000 ha area (the Finger) adjacent to both the Tobeatic Wilderness Area and Kejimikujik National Park. This area did not affect the report card grade either way. Protection of the Finger depends on finding another source for 10MM board feet of timber committed to a local

sawmill from Crown Lands. This replacement wood would allow all or most of the Finger to be added to the Tobeatic.

Of the numerous sites mentioned to the review committee as deserving protection, Cape Split and Klooscap (Kelly's) Mountain were the most frequent. Cape Split is privately owned. Klooscap is partially Crown-owned; most of the coast is in private hands. Presenters from some other areas noted that there were no local potential Crown land sites for protection. This makes it clear that some regions are not represented, and that finding representation for them will not be easy.



### On the Marine side

The **Spaces** goal has always been conservation of the diversity of the lands and waters of Canada. In broad terms, we've known what needed to be done on land for years and, in many cases, we knew where. For the oceans we have had Parks Canada's general notion of 29 marine zones, including some site options. More recently, there have been delineations of natural regions in BC, Quebec and Nova Scotia. Other countries have Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) - Australia's Great Barrier Reef being one of the most famous examples - but our best known example, Fathom Five in Lake Huron, is primarily a shipwreck preserve.

From the beginning, WWF recognized that marine protection would probably take a little longer. Unfortunately, this has seemed to result in a "we can start later" philosophy. Over the last two years, WWF has increased the emphasis on the marine side. This year the report card grade for marine has been split out, and split up. A separate federal grade recognizes that most of the jurisdictional responsibility lies with the federal government. The federal grade is a **C**. The four regions assessed are Pacific, Arctic, Atlantic and Great Lakes. The Pacific, with a **C**, is clearly ahead, with BC pushing what needs to be represented and working cooperatively with the federal government to get it done. The Atlantic (including the five eastern provinces) with a **D+**, is a mixed bag. Quebec and NS are a bit ahead in having concepts of marine natural regions, but PEI and Newfoundland have committees studying the role of MPAs in protected area strategies. For Nova Scotia and the Atlantic region, the most advanced concept involves the Gully, a Grand Canyon-sized submerged area NW of Sable Island.

### Other Provinces

**Endangered Spaces** is a Canadian campaign. Many of us have interests in other parts of the country, so here is a quick review of how some other provinces are doing.

BC received an **A-** last year but advanced to an **A** this year as it kept up its regular process of addressing natural regions and setting aside protected

## Warbling Vireo

Although they tend to sit up high  
The warbling vireos are not shy;  
They warble lustily by the hour  
While perched up high in leafy bowers.

They sing ebullient, boisterous songs,  
As proof their avian kingdom's strong;  
Extolling confidence and resonance,  
Their urge to sing, sweet recompense.

Close to mankind's very busy places,  
The vireos often fashion an oasis;  
There, in terms of signing celebration,  
Each summer day's a zestful endorsement.

While diesels grunt below on rail track bed,  
Small float-planes often roaring overhead,  
Beneath the helicopters busy, beating blades,  
The vireos vigorous song floods shady glades.

And all of that persistent and discordant sound  
With dull, loud hum of narrows traffic loosely bound  
Does not deter the vireos cheery confidence,  
Nor qualm them into songless abstinence.

How much we own to their brave song;  
Though few in number, their sing-a-long  
Helps us to turn thoughts heavenward;  
Is that the purpose of each singing bird?

We wonder, if the answer is affirmation  
For, we do grant birds our approbation;  
Knowing, whether bee all hum, bird all song,  
God's smallest messengers are strong.

Harold Craven, Burnaby  
Reprinted from **BC Naturalist**, July/August 1996

intense involvement of those of us concerned with completing representation, there is still plenty of room for government facilitation and cooperation.

Keeping our **A** depends on continued progress - new land on the ground (or in the water) - until all the regions have been adequately represented.

### 1995/96 Terrestrial report card grades

	GRADING CRITERIA						GPA	BONUS	PENALTY	FINAL 1995/96	
	1	2	3*	4	5	6				GPA	GRADE
FEDERAL	B	C	C/D	F/D	C	C	1.78	0.25	0.25	1.78	C
YUKON	C	D	D	F	D	N/A**	1.00	0.25	0.50	0.75	D
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES	D	C	D	F	C	N/A**	1.14	--	0.25	0.89	D
BRITISH COLUMBIA	A	A	C	A	A	A	3.25	0.50	--	3.75	A
ALBERTA	B	B	D	B	B	D	2.00	1.00	0.25	2.75	B
SASKATCHEWAN	B	D	D	D	B	C	1.63	0.25	--	1.88	C
MANITOBA	B	D	D	F	D	C	1.25	--	0.75	0.50	D-
ONTARIO	C	D	D	D	D	C	1.25	--	1.00	0.25	F
QUEBEC	C	C	D	F	D	C	1.25	0.25	--	1.50	C
NEW BRUNSWICK	C	D	F	D	D	C	0.88	--	0.75	0.13	F
NOVA SCOTIA	B	A	C	A	A	B	3.00	0.75	--	3.75	A
PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND	B	A	D	C	B	A	2.38	--	0.25	2.13	C+
NEWFOUNDLAND/LABRADOR	B	C	D	F	C	C	1.50	0.25	0.75	1.00	D

\* Criterion #3 receives a triple weighting  
\*\* not applicable

Source: Endangered Species Progress Report 95-96, WWF

If your organization is also participating, send your forms to Jill (RR 1, Rose Bay, N.S. B0J 2X0). When completed, Sherman Boates will send us the results of the census.

## Welcome Cobequid Naturalists!

The Cobequid Naturalist Club, Truro, is now a member organization of the Federation. We look forward to working with you.

## Endangered Species

Endangered species remains prominent on our agenda provincially and nationally. At a spring workshop in Ottawa, Colin Stewart communicated FNSN's position on endangered species. We have been actively pursuing the Endangered Species Act with three major concerns:

- 1) habitat should be given more importance
- 2) act should extend to private land and
- 3) species list should be expanded.



## Conservation Easement

The Federation has been designated as an official organization under the auspices of the Nova Scotia Conservation Easement Act.

## Speaker's Roster

A Speaker's Roster is in the making and will be ongoing for future updates. Pat Chalmers (HFN) has drafted a form for speakers to fill out. It has been distributed throughout the Federation. She is now awaiting the return of the forms in order to compile the roster which will be helpful to all member organizations and our communities. We have many potential speakers within and outside our naturalist societies. All Pat needs to do is compile the information you send to her.

*→ Inquire as to BWS status!*

## Exciting news from Cape Breton Naturalists Society

"Two UCCB students, working with our Biodiversity Group, discovered a land snail new to Nova Scotia. What a thrill for the two of them. Their find was well documented by an expert in the field."

## Have You Sent Your Questionnaire in Yet?

A questionnaire was sent to member organizations asking for feedback on the perceived relationship between FNSN and member organizations. Those returned and discussed at the last board meeting were helpful to the board in improving communication and involvement between the board and organizations and among organizations. We need your input too, so if you haven't sent yours in, please do.

## Nova Scotian Helps Save the World's Cranes

by Joan Waldron, Museum Services, Nova Scotia Museum

The survival of a number of the world's crane species has been ensured in great measure by a Nova Scotian, George Archibald and his worldwide team of volunteers and researchers.

George Archibald came home to Nova Scotia in July for a visit and agreed to give a public presentation about his wonderful work. He also offered to forego his usual fee of a donation of \$1000 for the International Crane Foundation (ICF) since this was a personal visit. The Nova Scotia Bird Society, the Halifax Field Naturalists, Dalhousie University Biology Department and the Nova Scotia Museum of Natural History, who co-sponsored the event, agreed that we should support this important international work and use the occasion to raise funds for ICF.

The Foundation began in the early 1970s, the dream of two enthusiastic young men, Ron Sauey and George Archibald, who met as graduate students at Cornell University. Sadly, Ron Sauey died of a sudden illness in 1987. George grew up in Sherbrooke, Guysborough County, attended Acadia University and graduated from Dalhousie. Together they began a program that now has implications in every part of the world. From the beginning ICF was pledged to five essential activities: research, education, habitat protection, captive breeding and restocking.

Today the crane pens at the ICF in Baraboo, Wisconsin, house all 15 species of crane. Research is done in co-operation with other countries and institutions. Members of Crane Working Groups on five continents share information through publications, visits and international conferences. ICF conducted the first international transfer of crane eggs, bred both Siberian and hooded cranes in captivity, bred the first Brolgas and black-necked cranes in North America, used artificial lights to stretch daylight and simulated monsoons to trigger egg laying, and were the first to use crane puppets to prepare captive chicks for socializing with wild cranes.

Flight silhouettes



Crane



Heron

Why cranes? Because of their worldwide distribution cranes offer a rare opportunity to measure, on several continents, the health of



## 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.

*FNSN News* is published by the Federation of Nova Scotia Naturalists in March, June, September, and December. Deadlines are the 1st of the month preceding publication. Original articles within may be reprinted with the permission of the author or "FNSN News" provided credit is given.

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Back issues of FNSN News are available for \$2.00 each from the editor.

Editor: Jeff Pike, telephone (902) 454-9909.

Advertising rates per issue:  
page size 5½" x 8½": \$50.00 per page,  
\$25.00 per half-page, \$12.50 per quarter-page. Camera ready copies required.

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Thank you to Doug Linzey for his editorial assistance with this issue.

*New Editor.*

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## NATURE SASKATCHEWAN announces new publications of interest to naturalists nationwide.

The Atlas of Saskatchewan Birds, by Alan R. Smith - - maps, text, historical and recent records for all of Saskatchewan's 409 species. Includes appendices, gazetteer, check list, overlays to help you make your "own" checklists, the most complete bibliography available on Saskatchewan birds. Paper, 8½ x 11", 456 pages, illustrated by the author. \$45.

Birds of the Elbow by J. Frank Roy - - a vivid accounting of 301 species in one of Canada's premier birdwatching areas. Detailed site and route maps showing Lake Diefenbaker, Luck Lake, the Coteau Hills, the Matador Grasslands, and many others. Checklist, bar graph, appendices. Paper, perfect or coil, 8½ x 11", 325 pages. Maps, colour, b/w photos, drawings. \$30.

Birds of the Besnard Lake Area, North Central Saskatchewan, 1968 - 1994 by Jon Gerrard, Gary Bortolotti and Karen Wiebe - - an annotated list of over 200 species in this increasingly important area where the mixed wood forest meets the Canadian Shield. Maps and routes for birdwatchers. Checklist. Paper, 5½ x 8½", 97 pages, maps, b/w photos plus drawings by Wiebe. \$12.

The Isabel Priestly Legacy, Saskatchewan Natural History Society, 1949 - 1990 by Margaret Belcher - - the evolution of a major conservation organization from a handful of naturalists to its present significance in environmental work throughout the Prairies. A good model for any group preparing its own story. Paper, 286 pages, b/w photos, drawings. \$25.

Available from: Nature Saskatchewan  
Room 206, 1860 Lorne Street  
Regina, SK S4P 2L7.

Within SK: 1-800-667-4668; outside SK: (306) 780-9273.

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International orders: 1st book \$7.00, ea add'l \$4.00.
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