

THE HALIFAX FIELD NATURALIST



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Return address: HFN, c/o NS Museum of Natural History, 1747 Summer Street, Halifax, NS, B3H 3A6

HFN is incorporated under the Nova Scotia Societies Act and holds Registered Charity status with Canada Revenue Agency. Tax-creditable receipts will be issued for individual and corporate gifts. **HFN** is an affiliate of Nature Canada and an organisational member of Nature NS (Federation of Nova Scotia Naturalists), the provincial umbrella association for naturalist groups in Nova Scotia. **Objectives** are to encourage a greater appreciation and understanding of Nova Scotia's natural history, both within the membership of HFN and in the public at large, and to represent the interests of naturalists by encouraging the conservation of Nova Scotia's natural resources. **Meetings** are held, except for July and August, on the first Thursday of every month at 7:30 p.m. in the auditorium of the Nova Scotia Museum of Natural History, 1747 Summer Street, Halifax; they are open to the public. **Field Trips** are held at least once a month; it is appreciated if those travelling in someone else's car share the cost of the gas. **Participants** in HFN activities are responsible for their own safety. Everyone, member or not, is welcome to take part in field trips. **Memberships** are open to anyone interested in the natural history of Nova Scotia. Forms are available at any meeting of the society, or by writing to: Membership Secretary, Halifax Field Naturalists, c/o N.S. Museum of Natural History. Members receive the quarterly **HFN Newsletter** and **HFN Programme**, and new memberships received from September 1st to December 31st of any year are valid until the end of the following membership year. The regular membership year is from January 1st to December 31st.



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FEES 2008/2009	
Individual	\$15.00 per year
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GRAPHICS All uncredited illustrations are by H. Derbyshire or from copyright-free sources. **Front & Back Covers** - Purple stemmed Asters and Seaside Goldenrod - Bob McDonald; **Tide Table** - Canadian Hydrographic Service, Fisheries & Oceans Canada.

HFN NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

EDITORIAL

— S. ROBERTSON

What a wonderful summer for plants and animals! Lots of rain for roots, waterfowl, fruits, trees, and leaves. Our back-garden Spy apple tree was so laden with fruit that one of the largest and most productive branches broke with the weight; the apples have ripened nicely on the back deck in a bucket; they are delicious and full of juice.

Point Pleasant Park was especially verdant with all the precipitation. The Comprehensive Plan for the Park, carried out jointly by Ekistics Planning of Dartmouth and NIP Paysages of Montreal, was shared with HFN on June 5th (followed by an HFN field trip there June 16th), and with the general public on June 25th. It is a plan that is truly ecological in scope, aiming towards a balance of recreational activities and historical features in a restored, nurtured, and protected Acadian forest setting. This will be implemented over time by an 'adaptive management' approach (see the report, p. 7, by David Patriquin).

With this issue we are launching explanatory articles about taxonomy – the naming of species and the ordering of them in relation to evolution and to each other; this bears upon our field trip species lists, and why they are arranged as they are.



FOR OUR BIRDS; 15/16 NOVEMBER

A groundbreaking conference entitled "For Our Birds" will focus on: increasing communication about the science and conservation of birds; engaging new people in bird conservation; and increasing public awareness and action for birds.

The keynote speaker will be Dr. Janis Dickinson, Director of Citizen Science at the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology, Cornell University. It will be presented at the Rowe Management Building, Dalhousie University, University Avenue, Halifax, Nova Scotia, from 9:00 a.m., Saturday, November 15th to 1:00 p.m., Sunday, November 16th.

Be sure to register early: The first fifty registrants will be entered into a draw for two gift certificates from the For Our Birds store in Mahone Bay! To register and for more information, contact Mark Butler, Ecology Action Centre, 429-5287; birds@ecologyaction.ca; or www.ecologyaction.ca/coastal/birds.

This event is sponsored by the Nova Scotia Bird Society, the Ecology Action Centre, Dalhousie University, and Bird Studies Canada.

THANK YOU

Late last year HFN member Akhtar Abbasi alerted our Board to Pesticide Free Nova Scotia's campaign against cosmetic and non-agricultural pesticide use throughout Nova Scotia. Subsequently, Bob McDonald wrote a letter to support their proposed province-wide ban. Following is Helen Jones' reply:

"August 6, 2008

Dear Bob,

I am sorry it has taken me so long to write to tell you and everyone in the Halifax Field Naturalists how much your support is appreciated for a province-wide ban on the use of cosmetic pesticides in Nova Scotia. Thanks to all of you! It means a great deal to our growing coalition to have an endorsement from an organization such as yours.

HFN has a long and impressive history of documenting and cherishing Nova Scotia habitats and all the diverse flora and fauna they support. Reducing and eliminating pesticide damage to sensitive community environments, urban and rural, is a goal we all are committed to. When Akhtar shared the news with all of us in Pesticide Free Nova Scotia, we were delighted and elated to hear it.

Welcome aboard!

Sincerely,

Helen Jones, MSc., Hon. Zool (UBC), Ed.D. (Col. Univ.), for Pesticide Free Nova Scotia; past member Pesticide Bylaw Advisory Committee for HRM; board member, Real Alternatives to Toxins in the Environ-



GREAT BACKYARD BIRD COUNT

Planning is now underway for the Cornell 2009 Great Backyard Bird Count, sponsored by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and the National Audubon Society. Because a goodly amount of lead-time is needed for various nature publications, they're sending out this news release now, so that people can start thinking about and planning their participation.

They are also sharing more than 4,000 digital photos submitted for their annual photo contest! You can view some of these at their online photo gallery: <http://www.birdcount.org/gallery>. Additional background information is available on the GBBC web site: <http://www.birdcount.org> (check out the FAQ section).

For more information, contact Patricia Leonard, pel27@cornell.edu.



NEW AND RETURNING

Judy Keating
Helen Smith

