

invasions, readers can visit the trail in Stratgartney Park where periwinkle (*Vinca minor*), invading from the nearby homestead has eliminated the native ground plants in its path. Travellers along the all-weather highway north of Summerside may notice that wild cucumber (*Echinocystis lobata*) has taken over stands of alders and other small trees and shrubs; this vinelike plant is also found in some forests in eastern Prince County. These are only a few of our invasive species, a subject which has not received much attention on P.E.I. Island Nature Trust is trying to assess to what extent some of our more "natural" habitats have been influenced by non-native species, and should have results for older hardwood forests later this year.

ISLAND'S MAJOR WILDLIFE GROUPS OPPOSE COYOTE BOUNTY DECISION:

On April 24th, the Legislative Assembly of Prince Edward Island passed Motion 24, a resolution which in part stated that "this Legislative Assembly support the seasonal bounty on coyotes during the annual trapping season to control the number of coyotes". Shortly thereafter, six of Prince Edward Island's major wildlife and conservation groups issued a press release in which they express their unanimous opposition to this Legislative Assembly decision. The Natural History Society of Prince Edward Island was one of the six. The others were the PEI Wildlife Federation, PEI Trappers Association, Atlantic Salmon Federation, Ducks Unlimited Canada, and Island Nature Trust. Collectively the groups represent thousands of Islanders from across the province.



There have been a number of statements made on the control of coyotes by livestock producers and groups since the coyote became established on Prince Edward Island. The available scientific information, and it is extensive, indicates that bounties do not work. Furthermore, they are costly and divert funds from other needed programs. Coyote food studies have been conducted to enlighten various parties on the feeding habits of the coyote. In the 1980s, Nova Scotia introduced a \$50 bounty on coyotes, but the population continued to grow at the same rate it did in New Brunswick where no bounty was implemented. Nova Scotia eventually cancelled their bounty program. Government wildlife biologists, conservation officers, and farm organizations have been attempting to educate those who might be impacted on control procedures that work. Government established a policy for the control of problem coyotes.

In addition, there has been a long history of the failures of bounties on Prince Edward Island. The skunk was the subject of heated debate in the Legislative Assembly in the 1960s before scientific information finally led to its removal. In light of this history, the Legislative Assembly's decision to support a bounty came as a surprise to the groups. The Minister of Fisheries, Aquaculture, and Environment and former Minister Wes MacAleer voted against the resolution.

As Ben Hoteling, President of the Natural History Society, stated, "It is important that we develop wildlife management regulations based on science rather than emotion." More work by government is now underway on the identification of methods to minimize the impact of the Eastern Coyote on livestock.