



Although no definitive proof exists, it appears likely that it came to P.E.I. on oysters, attached as an epiphytic plant to the outside of the shell and placed in P.E.I. waters. The oysters have been checked for diseases and parasites through the Introductions and Transfers Committee of Fisheries and Oceans; but, as the plant was not known to exist there, it was not found.

The life cycle begins as a single cell called a "swarmer." It has two whip-like appendages which propel the organism. It attaches to a hard surface; and, when settled down, sends out filaments that make a fuzzy, cushion-like mass. It then forms a cylindrical thallus which branches and forms the adult plant. It grows very rapidly, from single cell to adult size, in a month to six weeks.

Fisheries and Oceans scientists are interested in conducting studies on this seaweed to determine its effects on the plant and animal life around P.E.I. We know in other areas the effects that Codium has had; and, these include attaching to an oyster, for example, and growing to a large size. The plant grows rapidly and accumulates oxygen inside in the form of small bubbles. This has the effect of increasing the buoyancy of the plant and oyster, resulting in both of them floating away. The fishermen nicknamed the plant "the oyster thief." In another case, Codium attached to scallops and was found to hamper the propulsion of the scallop, making it more vulnerable to predation.

Another problem has been the rapid growth of the plant, resulting in crowding out other plant and animal communities. We do not know, at this time, if this will occur on P.E.I.; but, people are concerned.

To date, the plant has been found on P.E.I. in the Lennox Island Channel, the lower part of Malpeque Bay, and Percival Bay. Fisheries and Oceans is asking anyone to report the sighting of this seaweed in other areas in order to map out the extent of its introduction and spread in Island waters.

PUBLICATIONS FUND DONATION:

During many of her years with the Natural History Society, Margaret Mallett served as our Treasurer and Secretary. She was both a founding member and the principal author of the Society's 20 year history. A talented photographer, her work won a number of the Society's slide shows, graced the Island Nature Trust and P.E.I. Museum and Heritage Foundation's *Wild Side of the Isle* Photographic Exhibition at Eptek, and was featured in Katherine Clough's *Wildflowers of Prince Edward Island*.

The work of Margaret Mallett will continue into the future thanks to a significant donation received in her memory from family members. A special thanks goes out to Mrs. Reg Parkman (Margaret's sister Evelyn).

NEWS FROM ABOUT

compiled by J. Dan McAskill

Jim Jenkins has explored the waters around the Island for many years. At the January meeting of the Society, he reported that blades of eel grass at Lennox Island channel grew up to 2.4 m (8 feet) long. Most of us are more familiar with eel grass that is only 0.4 to 0.8 m (1.3 to 2.6 feet) in length.

The Long Point Bird Observatory announced its Doug Tarry Bird Study Awards for Young Ornithologists for 1997. These awards support a week long workshop/natural history camp at LPBO on Lake Erie, Ontario. Space is limited to six participants aged 13 to 18 years of age and the award covers there direct costs exclusive of travel to the site. For applications, contact Rosie Kirton, LPBO, Box 160 Port Rowan, ON NOE 1M0 (Fax 519-586-3532) (adapted from LPBO release)

Congratulations to *The Island Magazine* as it celebrates its 20th anniversary. To celebrate this event, a *20th Anniversary Party* was held at Beaconsfield on Feb. 20th at 7:30 pm. The new book, *The Island: A Twentieth Anniversary Anthology from the Island Magazine* was launched. Copies may be obtained from the Beaconsfield book