

BIRD IDENTIFICATION COURSE BEING OFFERED:

The Society will host a bird course as its primary event starting in October and running every second month in the autumn schedule. The first segment commenced at our regular meeting on Tuesday, October 7 starting at 7:30 pm at the Farm Centre and will continue every second month.

STRIPED BASS:

by Lena Phillips

The Striped Bass is also commonly known as a striper, rock, and rockfish. It is a dark olive-green color, with bluish-black above, silver on its sides and a white belly. They have a triangular head, a large mouth and many small, sharp teeth. The Striped Bass grows to be about 40-45 cm. What distinguishes this fish from others, like the white perch, are its dark stripes. They have approximately 7-8 or more dark stripes along its sides.

When the Striped Bass are young they are eaten by silver hake and cod. However, when they are older they have very few enemies. Striped Bass are carnivorous fish and feed on small fish such as alewives, herring, smelts, eels, flounders, mummichog, rock eels, sand lance, silver hake and silversides. As well as invertebrates like squids, crabs, sea worms, amphipods and lobsters.

The Striped Bass is found in coastal waters here in the Maritime Provinces. During the months of May and June, these fish travel to fresh water to spawn in Canada. The males spawn starting at age three to four years of age while the females start at age four or five. Spawning lasts approximately two weeks, and, in that time, the fish may lay 11,000 to several millions of eggs before going back to the sea. After about 72 hours, the "eggs hatch into free-swimming yolk -sac larvae." Striped Bass reproduce here in the Maritimes in the Northwest Miramichi River and Shubenacadie-Stewiacke River estuaries. These fish are also found on P.E.I. in the Hillsborough, Dunk and Morell Rivers.

During the summer and fall, the Striped Bass travel hundreds of kilometres away from where they hatched on feeding migrations. This is followed by their winters, spent in fresh-water, to escape the cold and deadly marine temperatures.

Editor's Note: The Atlantic Veterinary College's Cardigan Hatchery is working with the Hillsborough River Area Development Corporation to explore the potential for striped bass population enhancement to allow the development of striped bass sport fishing.

GOLDEN EAGLE REPORTED AT EAST POINT:

by Father Tom Margevicius

Mr. Seeler picked up us three Minnesotans in Charlottetown early in the morning of Tuesday, May 20, 2003 and drove us northeastward, birding as we travelled. We reached East point late in the morning - perhaps 10 or 11 am. It was a gorgeous morning: mostly thin cirrus clouds, almost no wind, temperature by then perhaps 18° Celsius. We first studied the birds on the uncommonly-glassy-surfaced Gulf, then began walking the point toward the left away from the lighthouse. As we walked, we began noticing raptors kettling above the East Point land. With the sea and morning sun at our back, and a mostly clear sky, we had excellent viewing conditions. Throughout the morning, we identified many species. Roughly in order of most to least numerous, they were: Sharp-shinned Hawk (10+ individuals), American Kestrel (8-10), Merlin (4-6), Peregrine Falcon (3), Bald Eagle (3), Northern Harrier (2), Osprey (1) and Northern Goshawk (1).

The Sighting

I'm not sure who in our group first sighted the bird; I think I did. I said something like, "David, what have