

crying, or so I thought. I got up and went into the dining room to see the tiniest chickadee I've ever seen doing a frantic dance on top of the window feeder. When I moved close to him, he didn't fly off but increased his frantic cries for help. Out on the deck I went. Still he didn't fly off but turned to me. Down the steps I went, over to the feeder, and still he stayed. I poked around in the trays on either side to show him how to get to the seed he'd been looking at through the plastic bin. While my finger stirred, he popped down, grabbed a seed, then flew off. A moment later he was back on top of the bin imploring me to help. Well, this time I took out my pen so that I could stir the seed out of the bin into the tray to show how he could do it with his beak. He popped down and perched on my moving finger while I demonstrated. Then he sang to me in gratitude right up into my face while I scrabbled out the seed, "dee-dee-dee!", grabbed another seed and flew up into the maple. He sang to me again and returned to the feeder as I left to go into the house. He'd learned.

The most remarkable event I witnessed April 4th was a solitary Blue Jay chasing off a flock of over twenty grackles, and then mounting guard unselfishly on the tree overhead while thirty-some finches got a bite to eat. Only after they had eaten for about ten minutes did he quietly land among them and feed quietly - without scaring them! This is not at all usual Blue Jay behaviour, and I think, had others been present, he would not have dared to share in such a way. Two or three days later Marjorie watched (the same?) Blue Jay performing the same service!

NEWS FROM ABOUT:

Compiled by J. Dan McAskill

Congratulations to Dr. Ian MacQuarrie on being awarded the Island Nature Trust's Natural Areas Award at the May 6 annual meeting. Ian's long term commitment to conservation of ecological reserves on Prince Edward Island, his 35 years of teaching about the Island's natural history, his motivation of many of today's conservation leaders, and many other achievements earned him this additional distinction.

The eighth Endangered Spaces Report Card was released on April 28th by the World Wildlife Fund. The Island received a "B" Terrestrial rating for its identification of 413 ha. of new natural areas, proposing a system of Provincial Forests and seven new Wildlife Management Areas, and cooperative work to identify new forested natural areas. This brings the Island's protected spaces to 2.52%, just over a 1/3 of the way to the 7% goal of year 2000. In addition, the province shared in the "D+" Marine rating for the Atlantic Region.

A hearty thanks to Premier Glen Clark of British Columbia for the B.C. government's acquisition of 11,000 ha of dry grassland in the Caribou-Chilcotin region of interior British Columbia. This is that province's rarest ecosystem. (adapted from CNF's Nature Alert 8:2)

The Grand Manan Bird Observatory is seeking volunteer field assistants to help operate a migration monitoring station on Grand Manan. Requirements include being able to identify most birds in the northeast by sight and sound, working and living together in close quarters as a member of a team, getting up early, and tolerating biting insects, cool temperatures, and foggy