

Since 1971, the members of the Natural History Society of Prince Edward Island and their friends have participated in the P.E.I. National Park and the Hillsborough Christmas Bird Counts which are registered with the National Audubon Society's American Birds. In 1983, a third unregistered count area was established around Montague and Murray Harbour. These counts cover a circle 24 kilometers in diameter and thus encompass a large area of land and water.

Birders are arranged in groups to cover specific areas outlined on maps. Normally, there is an attempt made to combine novice birders with experienced birders so that the novices have an opportunity to meet a fellow birder and learn from him or her. Those participating in the count keep track of the number of birds of each species seen, the number of kilometers driven and walked, and the amount of time spent driving, walking, or listening. Feeder watchers record the number of birds of each species seen at their feeder during the count day.

The National Park count stretches from Wheatley River to Blooming Point and from Hillsborough River to the Gulf of St. Lawrence while the Hillsborough count ranges from Cumberland to Point Prim and from Bethel to Governor's and St. Peter's Island. The Montague count runs from, Poole's Corner to Murray River and from Valleyfield and Caledonia to the waters off Graham's Point. To tell if you're in the census circles contact Dan McAskill at 569-4351 or Gary Schneider at 838-2678.

There is no charge for feeder watchers to participate in the counts. However, with the exception of feeder watchers, those participating in a registered count must pay a registration fee of \$5 to assist in covering the costs of publishing the results of the over 1,600 registered counts in North America. This year, for the second time there is a title sponsor -- Leica Camera, Inc. Leica has joined with the National Audubon Society to assist with the substantial publishing costs for the special American Birds Christmas bird count issue.

P.E.I. National Park Count	Saturday, December 18th
Hillsborough Count	Monday, December 27th
Montague Count	Tuesday, December 28

If you wish to participate in either or both the P.E.I. National Park and the Hillsborough counts, contact Dan McAskill in the evening at 569-4351. If you are interested in the Montague Count contact Gary Schneider at 838-2678.

ANIMAL AND PLANT SIGHTINGS

The honeybees were on the crocus at Arlington on Apr. 6 (LP). The fireflies in Donagh were in full flight in late May. A dead red-bellied snake was seen at Elmwood on Sept. 26 (JWa). Red foxes were seen mating during early morning in a Strathgartney field on Feb. 2 (PF). Red fox pup was seen outside a den on May 22, Appin Road (EC). A school of Dolphin was seen on Oct. intensely feeding at the Hillsborough Causeway channel upstream and downstream sides along with a flock of Bonaparte's Gulls (JDM, DMc).

