

# FORESTED NATURAL AREAS

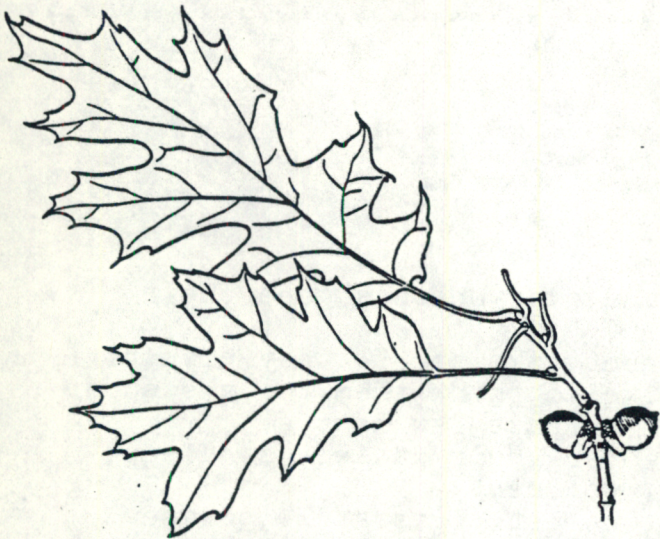
BY JULIE SINGLETON

When you hear the words "Prince Edward Island - The Garden of the Gulf", what comes to mind first? Most people see picturesque rural communities, surrounded by farm fields, intermingled with hedgerows creating patchworks of reds and greens. Although this is true, P.E.I. is blessed with a variety of "typical" settings which help to fill in that picture. These include natural features such as sand dune systems; natural fresh water ponds; salt marshes; bogs; river systems; off-shore islands; and last but not least, remnant original forest stands.

Each community mentioned is important to resident and visitor alike as it is a part of our Island and a part of our past. Due to human influence and the passage of time, few of these natural areas are in the same condition as our ancestors found them, thus it becomes increasingly more important to maintain and conserve a few representative samples. In light of this, the Department of Energy and Forestry has contracted the Island Nature Trust, a charitable non-profit organization interested in conserving natural areas on P.E.I., to write brochures on representative, forested natural areas.

In order to qualify as a forested natural area, a site must meet one of two requirements: 1) it may be a mature stand, typical of our original forest, which has undergone very little cutting. Species composition may include Yellow Birch, Beech, Sugar Maple, Red or White Pine, Red Oak or Hemlock; 2) or a representative sample of a relatively rare species such as Red Spruce, White Cedar or Jack Pine.

Where are these representative woodlots found? They are located across the province, in each county and total 11 sites. They include:



ROYALTY OAKS, in East Royalty, is a 4ha (10 acres) in size. Species include; large Red Oaks, the largest being 153cm (60 in) in diameter, 20m(60ft) high and 150 years old; mature Sugar Maple; Beech; Red Maple and Yellow Birch. Speculation has it that the trees were left as cover for fox pens as this site was a fox farm during the early 1900's. This would explain why these trees were spared while most of the surrounding area was cleared.

ST. CHRYSOSTOME CEDARS, in Prince County, approximately 11ha(25 ac) in size, and serves as a good example of a Cedar stand. Other tree species include White Ash; American Elm; Yellow Birch; White Birch

and Red Maple. Some cutting has occurred over the past 40 to 50 years.

TOWNSEND WOODLOT, near Souris, is some 102ha(250 ac) in size. It is one of the few remaining examples of a relatively undisturbed hardwood stand in P.E.I. Old growth hardwoods remain, with large specimens of Red Maple, Sugar Maple, Yellow Birch, White Birch, Beech and some smaller softwoods Hazelnut, a rare shrub, is also present here.