

success of Tree Swallows and American Robins may have been somewhat better than in 2002 and 2003. A brood of Sharp-tailed Grouse (introduced to Prince Edward Island ca. 1985) was the first card for that species on file. Nova Scotia records for Boreal Owl and Brown Thrasher were the first there for those species. Total records for New Brunswick and Nova Scotia now exceed 25,000 and 20,000 respectively. (Excerpt from *Maritime Nest Records Scheme 45<sup>th</sup> Annual Report - 2004 Nesting Season Summary*)

### GEAR REQUIRED FOR SOCIETY FIELD TRIPS EVENTS:

By Society Executive

Periodically, the Society holds bird identification field trips. When we hold these field trips, it is difficult to find enough spare pairs of binoculars or field identification guides to allow those participating to have a pair of binoculars or field guide at hand before the birds flush and they have a good opportunity to see the key characteristics. If you have replaced your binoculars or field guide or should you know someone who no longer wishes to use their binoculars or field guide, the Society would like to increase its supply of equipment and bird identification guides to allow it to host field trips for novice birders. Please contact Bonnie McOrmand (628-6994) to make arrangements for pickup or delivery. Such equipment can be considered a gift in kind as a charitable donation.

### NEWS FROM ABOUT:

Compiled by Dan McAskill

A new book for naturalists is now out, *A Place Between the Tides: A Naturalist's Reflections on the Salt Marsh* by Harry Thurston. It is published by Greystone Books, Vancouver.

The installation of "full-cut-off" or "flat-glass" fixtures can improve illumination by preventing scattering of light from fixtures, reduce the potential environmental implications of scattered light, improve visibility, and reduce energy costs. (Adapted from "Light Pollution in Kings County: The Issue and Some Success" by Roy Bishop in *Blomindon Naturalists Society Vol. 31 #3*)

The 2005 Nature Canada AGM and Conference will be held in North Bay, Ontario from June 3 to 5 and will be hosted by the Nipissing Naturalists. This year's event is a joint venture with the Ontario Nature, formerly the Federation of Ontario Naturalists. Information is available on line at [www.nipissing-naturalist.com/ON/conference.htm](http://www.nipissing-naturalist.com/ON/conference.htm) (Adapted from HFN # 118)

Numerous birds species collect the fresh leaves of certain species to line their nests. Research has shown that some birds collect yarrow and line nests with it. This deters mosquitos. Recent research has shown an antibacterial effect when bacteria from wild birds are exposed to volatile chemicals from crushed plants including birch, oak, yarrow, horsetail, dandelion, and wild carrot. Certain birds use these leaves as nest lining material. (Adapted from TFN 530 article originating from *NewScientist* June 5-11, 2004)

Dr. Stephen Campana of the Bedford Institute of Oceanography's Shark Research Division spoke at the Halifax Field Naturalists meeting in January. He indicated that there are 19 different species of sharks off Nova Scotia with the smallest, the spiny dogfish being the most common. The two spines which identify this species also allow researchers to age the individuals caught revealing that many can be up to 60 to 70 years of age. Porbeagle shark, which is also known as a mackerel shark, can be identified by a white trailing edge on the large front dorsal fin and its position behind the pelvic base as well as the position of the much smaller dorsal fin over the anal fin. This species can grow up to 3.9 m. These sharks are being harvested using baited hooks on long lines in waters 100 to 150 metres deep and the fishing quota here is 1000 to 2000 tonnes. Other sharks in our area include the basking shark, the mako, the more common blue shark, and the rare great white shark. The basking shark grows to be the largest and can be identified by its long gill rakers which are used to strain small plankton from the water passing through the gills. (Adapted from Lillian Risley's *Canadian Sharks* in HFX # 118 & Liem and Scott's *Fishes of the Atlantic Coast of Canada*)

Congratulations to the Blomindon Naturalists Society which participated in and donated \$500 to the development of a bird observation platform which opened last June at Evangeline Beach (BNS 32:1)

Recently, the Town of Georgetown decided to rid its community of most of its Rock Pigeons. The Town contracted a pest control company which established bait stations and then substituted bait treated with avitrol ??. Based on the Mayor's media interview, approximately 30 pigeons were killed by the chemical and the population