

FOX SPARROWS IN APRIL

The fox sparrow is one of the few species of songbirds that pass through P. E. I. during spring migration without staying here during the summer months. It usually arrives between the first and middle of April and then continues on its way further north at the end of April. Although it passes through here on its way south in late autumn, it is not nearly as noticeable as it is in spring migration. Thus, April is the best month to look for fox sparrows on P. E. I. I saw a flock of ten on April 21, this year.

Although it is quite similar to the song sparrow, the fox sparrow is noticeably larger, has a distinct rust-coloured tail and more heavily streaked underparts. Its favorite habitat is a thicket of small white spruce, bordering deciduous woods at the edge of a field. Its presence is often detected by its habit of loudly scratching through dead leaves on the ground.

A few other songbirds have arrived this year in April, including the cowbird on April 5, the robin on April 8, the yellow-shafted (common) flicker on April 18 and the rusty blackbirds on April 21. Other songbirds to look for near the end of April are the tree swallow, ruby-crowned kinglet, savannah sparrow, white-throated sparrow and the purple finch.

Bruce MacLean,
Milton, P. E. I.

P. S. Bruce knows what he is talking about! On April 30, I saw my first tree swallow, ruby-crowned kinglet and white-throated sparrow for 1974 .

Kathy Martin,
Biology Dept.,
U. P. E. I.

Interpretive Programs in Provincial Parks for Summer -- 1974

The provincial parks system is planning an expanded interpretive program over its initial efforts on 1973. In May, two assistant naturalists will be taken on staff for the summer season. They will be stationed at Green Park and Basin Head Fisheries Museum; both of which have facilities for audiovisual presentations and nature trails. Since Green Park is a shipbuilding site, some emphasis will be placed on historic interpretation in addition to natural history. The naturalist at Basin Head will also be conducting guided walks in the Townsend Woodlot, one of the few climax woodlands left on P. E. I.

In addition to the slide talk that was used last year at the Basin Head Museum, up to six new slide presentations will be given this summer. These will be shown, as well, at various schools throughout the academic year.

Two publications will be ready shortly for distribution. A provincial bird check list has been prepared and should be back from the printers shortly. A three-part nature booklet on common birds, woodland plants and seashore life will be completed in time for the summer season.

Diane Griffin,
Prov. Park Naturalist.

GREEN PARK

One of the most prominent shipbuilders of his time, James F. Yeo Jr. is also now remembered for his Victorian residence, Green Park. Constructed in 1865, this house is one of the few remaining testimonials to the once great era of Island shipbuilding. In order that the cultural history of the area be preserved, a Provincial park has been established which incorporates both its natural and cultural assets.

Today in 1974, Green Park house still remains as a reminder of an era too great to be forgotten. Altered very little since its construction over 100 years ago, the house has been restored and furnished in cooperation with the Prince Edward Island Heritage Foundation.

The history of our province reflects our natural assets, thus much of the Interpretive Program incorporates both the human and