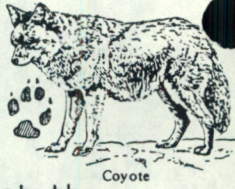


singsong and social hour. Tea and coffee will be provided. All members and friends are welcome.

Our co-hosts, Jean and Wendell MacKay and Joyce and Lorne Gardiner, suggest you take along a warm sweater.

CURIOUS COYOTE

by Dwayne L. Sabine



On July 3rd, I was at Foxley River doing songbird surveys in a black spruce - jack pine stand. After I completed my survey, I spished to attract the attention of any birds I could. I was hoping to see them with food, thereby confirming that they breed, information which is of course useful for the Maritimes Breeding Bird Atlas. Spishing (vocalizing a "spishh-pshh-pshhh-pshhh" sound), as most birders know, is a very effective way to attract the attention of many birds and bring them in close.

On this day, spishing brought an immediate response. A Palm Warbler (with a beakfull of caterpillars) landed on a branch about 10 feet from my head but, more interestingly, I immediately heard something walking towards me through the bushes. Curious, I stood still hoping to see what it was. A few seconds later, a coyote slightly smaller than a fox (this years pup?), walked out of the brush and stopped beside a small sapling about 15 feet away. Although I was in the open, I wear camouflage and drab colours when doing surveys so that I'm not too conspicuous to the birds. This combined with the fact that I was perfectly still allowed it to look at me but not "see" me. As well, it was upwind and thus could not smell me.

For about a minute I spished very softly trying not to move more than my lips. The coyote's eyes looked all around me, trying to locate the source of the noise. Suddenly, its eyes opened wide with a look of sheer terror (at least that's what it looked like to me, but who can say for sure), as it perhaps realized that it was standing "too close for comfort" to a mortal enemy - man. It practically did a somersault trying to turn around and leap away at the same time, and didn't stop running while I could still hear it. I suppose it couldn't know that it had nothing to fear from me.

Anyhow, if you are out birding and you are spishing, I wouldn't expect you to (or for some people, worry that you will) attract every coyote for miles around. The only mammals you are likely to attract are non-birding people who will wonder what you are doing standing in the bushes making funny noises.



NATURALISTS IN ACTION

by Dan McAskill

If you start canvassing conservationists in Canada on who they know who is real active in conservation issues in Prince Edward Island, a resounding number of them will invariably indicate "Diane". The rest of the name is, of course, "Griffin". To do justice to her achievements is difficult but I will attempt to cover some of the highlights both on and off the Island.

On the Island, Diane's name is normally associated with the activities of the Island Nature Trust as she has served as the Executive Director of that organization for five of the past six years. During this time, the Trust has expanded rapidly, purchased five properties, ran a successful landowner contact program, fought a major Land Use Appeal Hearing to protect the Greenwich dunes, and ran a very successful education and outreach program. Largely through her efforts and organizational skills, the Trust become one of the most active and respected land conservation organizations in Canada.