

The Prince Edward Island Section of the International Census has been successfully completed. All the beaches appropriate for nesting were surveyed during the period of June 1st to June 9th. In total, the participants walked 52 beaches outside the P.E.I. National Park. These beaches varied in length from 0.5 kilometers to 18 kilometers. The volunteers identified 27 to 30 pairs of Piping Plovers and nine single Piping Plovers. This tremendous success was due entirely to a team of enthusiastic volunteers dedicated to the preservation of this endangered species. Combined with the national park counts, the Piping Plover census total for the province during the June 1st to 9th census period was between 50 and 54 pairs with 9 single birds. The Society is currently reviewing the observers behavioral observations to determine whether any of the single birds really represented a pair of birds.

As most of you have heard from television and radio, a major storm with a tidal surge wiped out many of the north shore nests on June 14, 1991. Spot checks suggest that most pairs appear to be renesting.

The landowner contact portion of the Society's Environment Week project is ongoing. A number of residents who live near plover nesting beaches have already been contacted and the identification of the level of public knowledge about the plover will soon be tested. Work done by the Society in 1988 showed that the public's knowledge of the Piping Plover was poor despite almost 14 years of public discussion of its plight. Jennifer Cameron and Hélène Deacon students at Montague Junior High prepared a Science Fair exhibit on the Piping Plover. They examined the knowledge level of 14 and 15 years olds regarding the Piping Plover and showed that 90% of these individuals didn't know that Piping Plovers existed.

## ALL SHADES OF BLUE BIRDS

by Dan McAskill

This spring has yielded an unprecedented number of sightings of blue coloured birds on Prince Edward Island. The sightings came from across the province and included reports of Indigo Buntings, Bluebirds, and the first record of a Blue Grosbeak. The males of these three species are various shades of blue but each has distinct markings which distinguish it from the others.

The most spectacular sighting was reported by Lydia and Ralph MacDougall of Mount Albion who recorded a male Blue Grosbeak at their feeder in April, 1991. Lydia mentioned the sighting to Sue Stephenson at the Bird's Eye Nature Store and provided a copy of a photograph of the bird to Geoff Hogan. The bright chestnut wing bars which mark this species were evident in this picture and the birds was subsequently seen at their feeder by Dan McAskill.

The most common blue bird sightings of the spring were those of male Indigo Buntings. The male of this species is blue all over and is slightly smaller than a house sparrow. There were sightings in South Lake, Souris, Georgetown Royalty, Mt. Buchanan, Bunbury, Sherwood, Parkdale, and Ellerslie by Francis Stewart, Eileen MacLaren, Martinus Rose, Barbara and Ken Coles, Jean and Reg Thompson, Ray Cooke, Hilda LeClair and Loretta Wagner respectively.

Tom and Jean Klewin reported a male Bluebird singing in a poplar tree in their yard during the last few weeks of May. They described the distinguishing orange breast of the male Eastern Bluebird. As they had Tree Swallows nesting in their yard, the possibility of another Eastern Bluebird nest was raised. Unfortunately, the bird disappeared on June 1st. Should you be in the area, it would be worth a look and listen.

