

2003 PRESIDENTS' REPORT:

by David Seeler

During 2003, the Society's efforts were led by David Seeler (President), Dwaine Oakley (Vice-president), Donna Martin (Secretary), Aria Page (Treasurer), Bonnie McOrmand and then Sharon Clark (Communications Director), Eric Marcum (Program Director), and Ben Hoteling (Past-president).

Despite program cancellations to winter storms, the Society's monthly education program at the Farm Centre featured: various members on natural history observations, Donna Martin on Cameron's Island Bird Banding Station, Denise Lejeunesse on P.E.I. National Park Research Projects and Activities, Eric Marcum and Dwaine Oakley on Identifying and Finding Warblers, Jesse Francis on The Path of Our Forefathers, Anne Ferraro on the Oiled Bird Recovery Program, Ray Cooke on Introduction to Birding, Eric Marcum on Environmental Education for Parents, and Dan McAskill on Winter Birds of Prince Edward Island. A group of Society birders conducted numerous birding field trips during the winter and through to the summer months.

The numbers of Society members who contributed rare or unusual bird sightings via the electronic distribution list maintained by David Seeler increased dramatically over the previous year. This prompt method of documentation augmented the sightings for the *Island Naturalist* and provided better documentation by multiple observers as well as photographs of some very rare species.

The Society maintained its participation in various interprovincial and North American bird counts. Vernon Laux coordinated the second Christmas Bird Count at East Point while Gary Schneider, Scott Sinclair, and Ruth Richman coordinated and compiled the Montague Christmas Bird Count. Dan McAskill coordinated the Island's the P.E.I. National Park and Hillsborough Christmas Bird Counts, and the Bain Bird Count. Parks Canada set up the Dalvay Interpretive Centre for the P.E.I. National Park Christmas Bird Count potluck while Dan McAskill and Robin Phillips hosted the potluck for the Hillsborough CBC.

Many members contributed their wildlife observations and stories for the Society's *Island Naturalist* which was again published three times this year. Ben Hoteling, the late Hal Hinds, Dover Colouring Books, A.H. Leim, W.B. Scott, E. Hoyt and the Fisheries Research Board of Canada, P.E.I. Department of Environment and Energy and P.E.I. Department of Agriculture and Forestry provided original drawings. Dan McAskill continued as the editor. Linda and Allen Thomas and their family packaged and mailed the newsletter to members, schools, and libraries.

In addition to these efforts, the Society supported, reviewed, and provided comments on funding applications for the Wildlife Conservation Fund awards and Lois Doan and Dan Kennedy participated in Affiliate Tele-conferences with the Canadian Nature Federation. Ben Hoteling spoke on winter bird feeding in October at the Farm Centre in Charlottetown on behalf of the Society and the Island Nature Trust. During the year, the Society again donated a subscription of *North American Birds* to the Robertson Library at U.P.E.I.

Society members Dan McAskill, David Seeler, Dwaine Oakley, Bill Bowerbank, and Island Nature Trust staff combined their efforts to host the annual Neil Bennett Autumn Birding Classic. The donors contributing to this project provided \$640 towards the acquisition of Bird Island in Malpeque Bay by the Trust. Bruce Smith led the Great Black-backed Gull egg removal project on the Hillsborough Bridge piers to assist the terns nesting. Bruce Smith began the year as the Society's representative to the Island Nature Trust's General Council. Fiep deBie took over in that position when Bruce Smith became the Executive Director of the Trust.

The Society completed the year with assets of \$7,810.03 in its various accounts with almost all of this in the book publishing and projects fund accounts GIC (\$6,021.60).

At this time, I would like to extend my thanks and best wishes to each member of the Society for their participation in the Society for 2003.

THANKS EXPRESSED TO THE BOARD AND VOLUNTEERS!

On January 6th, 2004, the Natural History Society held its annual general meeting. Ben Hoteling, the Past