

BANDED SHRIKES ALERT:

adapted from TFN #509, September 2002

Bird Studies Canada has successfully placed coloured bands on 464 Loggerhead Shrikes. Loggerhead Shrikes are difficult to distinguish from the Northern Shrike so check all shrikes you see for the presence/absence of coloured bands and the colour combinations on each leg. If you should see one, contact BSC's Species at Risk Hot Line at 1-888-448-2473 (bird).

AUTHOR'S AMONGST US:

Doug Sobey has yet again provided a wonderful service to Islanders and those interested in its natural and cultural history. He has painstakingly researched, collated, and translated the early French descriptions of the forests of Prince Edward Island during the whole French colonial period (1534 to 1758). This publication is available free of charge from the Department of Agriculture and Forestry 902-368-4700.

MOBBING IN ACTION:

by David Seeler

On Thursday, October 10th during a birding outing to Clarke's Pond in search of a reported Black-backed Woodpecker, I had the opportunity to watch "mobbing" in action. As we were getting ready to leave the pond, we heard a large number of crows start up just about 50 feet from where we were. We went over to see crows bouncing around in the tree tops and screaming up a storm. After a few minutes, a HUGE owl broke out of one of the trees. It moved through the trees which obscured identification details but, given the massive size of the body, it most likely was a Barred Owl although a Great Horned Owl cannot be ruled out. It was clearly one of the largest owls I've seen when proximity is taken into account.

Two minutes later they started up again. We followed the sound only to see the same scenario. The third and last time we watched the behaviour about 20 crows, 2 ravens, and 1 Blue Jay were all in on the action. The owl finally took off through the trees over Clarke's Pond and all the noise ceased. They seemed to be quite satisfied with their ability to drive the owl off.

WEATHER EVENTS:

Late June this year seen the advent of a killer frost. Temperatures dropped sufficiently below freezing to cause severe frost damage in many areas of the province and not just in lowlands. The new flush on balsam fir, white spruce and black spruce was killed in many areas.

On September 11 & 12th, Hurricane Gustof hit Prince Edward Island with high winds (up to 110 km/hr) and 45 to 65 mm of rain. Preceded by weather warnings of a tidal surge, the storm was less severe than some anticipated. Falling trees and branches played havoc with power in some areas and caused the first broad spread autumn weather school closure in many years.

The Island was blanketed with snow on November 3 with the Montague area receiving almost 12 inches. This was followed by another dusting on November 7 but warm temperatures on the weekend of November 10 melted the snow clear in many areas.

ANIMAL AND PLANT SIGHTINGS:

Compiled by J. Dan McAskill

PLANTS:

Abundant crop of Mt. Ash berries and apples at Hampton and good crop in Donagh. Scattered balsam fir and white spruce with good crops of cones but certainly not a bumper cone year in Central and Western P.E.I. (JDM). Ironwood (Hop Hornbeam) with 6 inch plus diameter at Brockton (JDM).