

# MISCELLANEOUS SIGHTINGS

- Harbour seals - 2 late in Jan. under Hillsborough Bridge (RR,SH)  
Red squirrel - 1 on feeder in East Royalty, while sharpshinned hawk ate a starling on the ground below, Jan. 6 (MW)  
- 12+ in Montague, Jan. 11 (BD,RB)  
- 2 at Indian River, Jan. 19 (TC)  
- 3 at feeder or nearby in Lewes, Feb. 1 - 20 (RR,GS)  
Snowshoe hare - up to 3 in Lewes during late Jan. (RR,GS)  
- 1 in Culloden, Feb. 17 (RR,GS)  
Red fox - 1 running across Rte 24 near Caledonia, Jan. 24 (GS,RR)

CONTRIBUTORS THIS MONTH: GB - Gwen Beck; JB - Jamie Burton; RB - Rick Burger; JC - Jean Carmichael; BC - Betsy Cayo; TC - Thelma Clark; AC - Alice Clements; FC - Francis Curley; FRC - F. Rosemary Curley; WC - Wanda Curley; KD - Katherine Dagg; BD - Brian Dalzell; AD - Andy Dean; HF - Helen Ferguson; RF - Rory Francis; SH - Susan Hinton; GGH - Geoff Hogan; EBKH - Everett, Betty & King Howatt; TH - Theresa Hughes; NBL - Norah Longworth; GM - Gerald MacDougall; BM - Bruce MacLaren; SM - Sandy MacLean; DM - Dorothy MacLeod; SLM - Sandi Mahon; EM - Evelyn Meader; HM - Harry Mellish; TM - Thelma Murchison; GP - Geraldine Peters; FJP - Frank Joseph Peters; RR - Ruth Richman; GS - Gary Schneider; JCS - Julie Schroeder; SS - Sue Stephenson; JES - John & Ella Stewart; JS - Jane Symmes; JT - Jean Thompson; MWE - Miriam West; and MW - Mary Willms.

Dear Editor:

In response to Margaret Wheatly's inquiry re: the pair of geese on the river in Bonshaw, I had several people ask me about these same birds until finally I managed an observation myself. In mid-May of last year Sue Stephenson, Jamie Burton and I were en route to a Breeding Bird Atlas meeting in Moncton when we passed through Bonshaw. Spotting the geese plainly in view from the highway, we pulled over to get a better look. The white goose was sitting on a nest on the low "island" in the river while her dark mate stood on guard nearby. At first glance something seemed peculiar about this pair. It had been suspected that a Snow Goose had paired with a Canada Goose and they had set up housekeeping in Bonshaw. This would be most unusual not only for the "mixed marriage" but because Snow Geese are tundra nesters and only a very few Canada Geese nest wild on P.E.I. On close examination I think I have the answer. The "Snow Goose" is actually a white domestic goose (granted, rather slim!). Most particularly, there is no "grinning patch" or large blackish patch where the bill comes together. This is a diagnostic feature of Snow Geese. As she was sitting on the nest we couldn't see leg color. It was the gander that seemed the bigger puzzle as he had the appearance of a Canada Goose: dark neck stocking and the trace of a white cheek patch, but his overall color was less so. In fact, I believe the gander is a hybrid offspring between a domestic goose and a Canada Goose. This seems rather complicated but I have seen offspring from such a pairing before, in High Park, Toronto. They resemble Canada Geese very closely except that the extent of white on the cheek and belly areas is more variable and leg color is not true black as in Canada Geese. Besides, they can fly strongly, unlike most domestic geese. I wonder if anyone ever saw the geese in Bonshaw flying? In any event, this is my interpretation of what was going on last summer in Bonshaw. It raised a lot of interest. I wonder if the geese knew?

Sincerely,  
Geoff Hogan.