

. . . Sanding in Brant continued

Spring, they gorged themselves with sand. The last hunt was timed to coincide with sanding-up time. Can any reader shed light on this subject?

Bruce Pigot
Mount Stewart

GREAT BLUE HERON SUFFERS DEFEAT

In November, 1975, the Natural History Society published an account of mink predation on a female Blue-winged Teal. While Blue-wings are known to be relatively susceptible to mink predation, mink attacks on Great Blue Herons are probably rare. The following is description of such an occurrence.

Observers: David Livingstone, Brendan Curley
Date: August 31, 1977
Time: Approximately 2:30 p.m. ADT
Place: North Lake, P.E.I.

Description: We are standing on the bridge about 100 yards from the Great Blue Heron when it was killed. It had flown in and landed in the water about 5 feet from a shoreline of tall rushes and cattails. The Blue Heron stood in the water for a short time, then started to make heron noises and tried to rise off the water. At first, while frantically beating its wings on the water, it almost succeeded in getting air-borne - except for one leg.

We thought it was caught in a muskrat trap and decided to free it. David took the precaution of putting on canvas gloves to avoid injury from the Heron's beak, but by the time we reached it, perhaps 5 minutes later, the bird was lying on the water, its head under, and the struggle ended. Through the water David could see a mink with the long neck in its beak, but as he drew closer, the mink ran over his feet into the marsh edge. He pulled the Blue Heron from the water and we could see where one leg had been bitten and the neck broken about half way up. We left the heron there and soon after the mink returned to reclaim its kill, dragging it towards the rushes.

Brendan Curley
Wolfville, N.S.

BLUE JAY

The Blue Jay was declared our provincial avian emblem through Bill No. 52, the Provincial Emblems Act on May 13, 1977. In reference to the Blue Jay, the act (which also incorporates the now repealed Floral Emblem Act) states that "The bird known scientifically as Cyanooitta cristata (L.) and popularly known as the Blue Jay is adopted as and shall be the avian emblem of the province." The Natural History Society thanks all those who voted for the provincial bird. A special thanks goes to our legislators who acted speedily to declare the public choice as law.
