

In the last issue of the Island Naturalist, Beth Hoar's report of a Varied Thrush was noted. Just before the report, Eric Marcum suggested a number of bird species including the Varied Thrush that might be discovered based on large numbers of thrushes this winter. Sure enough, Beth Hoar discovered a Varied Thrush in an apple tree and was able to capture wonderful images of the bird thus confirming the first record of this species on Prince Edward Island.

WEATHER EVENTS:

After relatively dry period in the third week of April and a flurry of wildfires, we had about three centimetres of snow in Central PEI on May. A late frost destroyed newly flushed plants in some areas including blueberry blossoms in areas without frost drainage.

ANIMAL AND PLANT SIGHTINGS:

Compiled by J. Dan McAskill

PLANTS: Mayflower in flower at Lakeside on May 5 (AMcL). Willow in flower (green colour) and mountain ash flushed in Donagh and Mermaid on May 6 (JDM). Dandelion in flower at QEH in Charlottetown on May 6 (JDM). Red maple in flower at Donagh and yellow birch flushing in Donagh on May 10 (JDM). Wild strawberry and ground ivy in flower at Clyde Road (IGM) on May 8. Wild strawberry in flower at Diligent Pond, white and purple violets in flower in the northeast, trillium almost in flower at New Harmony, cotton grass white tufts showing on May 28 (JDM). Marsh marigold in flower at Mermaid on May 15 (JDM) and still in flower in the northeast on June 4 (JDM, RC, DCS, EBM, DO). Wild lily of the valley and sheep laurel (lamb kill) was flowering in the bogs in northeastern P.E.I., pin cherry, common elder, blueberry, starflower, and wild lily of the valley in flower on June 4 while red oak commenced flowering on June 5 in Donagh. Oak leaves completed initial flushing on Jun. 5 in Donagh (JDM). Mountain ash, bush honeysuckle, lilac and bachelor's buttons were just starting to flower in Donagh on June 7. Twinflower and blue bead lily were in flower in the Kensington area on June 9 (JDM). Clematis and poppy started flowering on Jun. 24 and foxglove on Jul. 8 in Donagh (RHP, JDM). First roadside stand strawberries being advertised in Tracadie on Jun. 30 (JDM).

INSECTS:

Black flies bouncing off face but not yet biting in Donagh on May 14 (JDM). Outbreak of forest tent caterpillars at Georgetown especially in poplars (DCa). Four spotted skimmer at Norway on Jun. 24 (DO).

AMPHIBIANS/REPTILES:

Spring peepers in full chorus most evenings in early May to early June in Donagh (JDM). Wood frogs still being heard at Mt. Albion and American toad and northern leopard frog being heard at Mt. Albion, Lake Verde (Jenkins Ponds) on May 28. Wood frogs at Norway on Jun. 22 (DO).

MAMMALS: Bat flying around Chepstow on May 2 (DO). Young red squirrels at Crossroads feeder on May 31 (DO).

BIRDS: This list represents reports received up to July 10, 2005. **Red-throated Loon** - 1 at East Point on Jun. 1 (DCS); **Common Loon** - 5 at Norway on May 31 (DO), at Mt. Stewart on May 28 (BPi), 1 at East Point on Jun. 1 (DCS), at Rice Point on Jun. 21 (EBM), 15 at Norway on Jun. 22 (DO); **Pied-billed Grebe** - 3 to 14 at Allisary Creek impoundment and 6 or more at Pisquid Pond on various days in Jun. (DC&ES), 1 at Anglo-Tignish on Jun. 25 (DC&ES); **Northern Gannet** - few at North Cape on May 6 (EBM), 250 in feeding frenzy off East Point on May 28 (JDM, EBM, RC, DCS, DO), 2 to 100 at East Point on various days in Jun. (DC&ES); **Great Blue Heron** - 35 to 40 on Hillsborough River at Mt. Stewart on Jun. 23-25 (DC&ES); **Great Egret** - 1 at Alexandra on May 1