

## SOCIETY'S ANNUAL REPORT - 1996:

In 1996, the Society's efforts were led by Ray Cooke (President), Mary Beth Harris (Vice-president), Jean Watts (Secretary), Jim Jenkins (Treasurer), Meike Keunecke (Program Director), David Cairns (Publicity Director), and Barbara Currie (Past-president). Dan McAskill continued as Newsletter Editor and coordinated the P.E.I. National Park, Bain Bird Count, and International Migratory Bird Count Day. Ben Hoteling and Dan McAskill combined to coordinate the Hillsborough Christmas Bird Count while Ruth Richman and Gary Schneider coordinated the Montague Christmas Bird Count. Maurice Roy again set up the Dalvay Interpretive Centre at the P.E.I. National Park for the potluck. Donald Wilkinson judged the slide show and continued illustrating and writing the bird monograph column in the *Island Naturalist* while Linda and Allen Thomas and their family distributed the newsletter.

The Environmental Education program of the Society was very active. The monthly program started with the member's night show of slides and natural history items at Ravenwood. Our monthly speakers program at the Farm Centre featured: Maurice Roy (Life in a Saltmarsh Pond); Marion Copleston (Visit to China); Chris LeCroix (Baltic Bog and Its Plants); Lawson Drake (Butterflies workshop); Kate MacQuarrie (Life on the Edge of the Water); Friend Herring (Local Activities of the Atlantic White-sided Dolphin); and Randy Dibblee (The Beaver Population on P.E.I.). In addition to these efforts, the Society supported the efforts of the Endangered Species Coalition through participation in meetings on the draft legislation, contributed prizes to the Wildlife Week radio program, gave several copies of *Island Wings* to a school class for a project, and published four issues of the *Island Naturalist*. Jean Watts set up and staffed a booth at the P.E.I. Environmental Network's Earthcare Fair at Scale's Pond while Ray Cooke led a bird walk at this event. The Society utilized its slide education collection to loan slides to Meike Keunecke for school education talks. Dan McAskill spoke on winter bird feeding on behalf of the Society and the Island Nature Trust.

Members were encouraged to participate in the International Migratory Bird Day in May, the Butterfly Count Day in July, and the Canadian Nature Federation's Ladybug surveys. Efforts to encourage additional amphibian surveys were unsuccessful. Society members Ray Cooke, Linda Thomas, Roberta Palmer, and Dan McAskill and Island Nature Trust staff combined their efforts to host the second Autumn Birding Classic. The donors contributing to this project provided over \$1,000 towards the acquisition of a natural area on the Trout River in Coleman.

The Society, aided by members and friends, continued efforts to create Federal Endangered Species legislation by writing letters and providing a communications vehicle to the Endangered Species Coalition. The Society's efforts for the Piping Plover were led by Neil and Sally Bennett this year and members assisted with the 5th year International Piping Plover Re-survey coordinated by the Jackie Waddell of the Island Nature Trust.

Rosemary Curley and Ben Hoteling judged the exhibits at the U.P.E.I. Science Fair on behalf of the Society. Due to lack of natural history entries at the Intermediate and Senior Levels, three awards were presented to the Junior category. The winners were: Steven Clements and Andrew Murchinson of Montague Consolidated School on "Finding Fossils on P.E.I."; Jacob Harding of Vernon River Elementary on dragonflies on P.E.I.; and Russell Campbell of Queen Elizabeth Elementary on "paper wasps and mud daubers".

Society members were deeply saddened to learn of the death of two founding members, Margaret E. Mallett and Ruth I. Ross. The Society contributed \$200 to the Island Nature Trust's Honourary Deeds program in their memory. Special donations in the amount of \$ 925 in memory of Margaret's enthusiasm and care for the environment and the work of the Society were dedicated to the Society's publications fund.

Charitable activities: in addition to those noted above, the Society contributed Audubon Field Notes to the U.P.E.I. Library.

The Society participated in public meetings on the revisions to the Fish and Game Act, provided comments on the Round Table on Resource Land Use, and gave technical input into the revision of the vegetation management plan for the P.E.I. National Park. Letters were written in support of the protection of the Baltic Bog. Bruce Smith led the Society's intervention to limit nesting by Great Black-backed Gulls at the Hillsborough Pier Tern Colony. It was partly successful but predation by a mink wiped out most of the juvenile terns and eggs.