

The annual General Meeting of the Canadian Nature Federation held at Charlottetown and hosted by our club during August 1978 was a huge success. There were many enthusiastic comments from the 256 persons who were registered. Later came letters congratulating the relatively small group of active workers who organized the program and attended to the multitude of details that made it run smoothly. Final reports show that the P.E.I. N.H.S. gained financially as well.

After various reports and items of business, the meeting arrived at the "pièce de résistance" - a slide talk by Kathy Martin on the "Natural History of the Dunk and Wilmot River Watersheds"--- an area covering about 75,000 acres. Kathy spent much of 1974-1976 working there on a project for the University of Prince Edward Island. The diversity of her slides showed that she did not miss much of what was taking place in nature. She stated that Canada Geese are the most striking and familiar wild-life of the area and use the locality as a staging area where they rest and feed during their spring and fall migration to and from Labrador and Hudson Bay areas. As many as 6000 geese have been seen there in the spring and 2500 in the fall, during the peak of the migratory period. Smaller numbers in fall are accounted for by the fact that some geese return south by other flyway routes.

Black Ducks, shore birds, Hungarian Partridge, Ospreys, American Bitterns were described as well as some of the common species of mammals which inhabit the system.

The rivers are noteworthy, especially the Dunk whose headwaters rise near Fredericton and Springton. As many as eleven ponds occur on the Dunk River system. Many of these are mill ponds and their mills ground grain and sawed lumber for earlier generations of Islanders. In the not so distant past, Scales' Pond at West Newton produced electrical power for the surrounding communities.

Margaret Mallett
Secretary, N.H.S.
Charlottetown, P.E.I.

Water Lilies at the Experimental Farm

Water lilies are among the most attractive and beautiful flowers that we have in Eastern Canada. Our visitors look upon them as rare flowers, as they very seldom see them growing under natural conditions as those seen in the pond near the Experimental Station buildings at Charlottetown. This flower-decked pond when covered with its large, heart-shaped, lily leaves, interspaced with many hundreds of pink and white blooms, that are matchless in their perfection, gives a good illustration of what has been done and can be done with a great number of water holes or ponds throughout this Province.

There are hundreds of named varieties among the eight most important species that can be used in the improvement of home beautification plans and for ponds in landscape development projects.

There were three ponds, or water holes on the height of land from near where the old barn stood at the Experimental Station, when it was first leased by the Canadian Government. Two of these were filled in, they were in line with one another to the north, the largest being near the Pottery Lane. Originally they had been dug to secure brick clay for pottery and brick making.

When Dr. William Saunders, the first Director of the Dominion Experimental Farms saw these ponds, he immediately said he would get up hardy water lilies for the pond near the barn. He made the selection of sorts he believed would do well and ordered them from Kentucky for delivery in the spring of 1910. He asked the firm to include a few plants with blue blooms if they had any they considered would be hardy in Prince Edward Island, Canada. The word "Canada" must have created in the minds of the firm, visions of icebergs, ski slides, ice palaces and lakes frozen to the bottom for we never received plants that produce blue blooms.