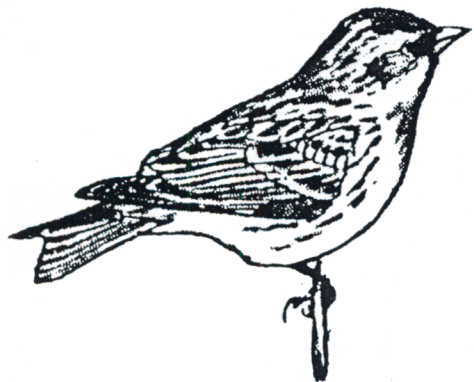


When the niger seed is topped up in the feeder they come in like bees to nectar. I am used to the cheery yellow goldfinch's passion for thistle seed but didn't know our winter visitors were niger tigers. We enjoy groups of three, up to flocks of sixty at one time.



In the depths of winter only about one in ten of these black-chinned little creatures sported a subdued breast. Now (early March) we see about 40% modelling a much brighter, nearly red colour in front. Does it mean the males are assuming the attractive colours of spring? The black facial markings between the eyes and around the base of the beak give them the appearance of worried suitors. If I had a jaunty red cap like theirs I would certainly tip it to these hardy survivors, who have showered us with many warm moments of bird watching pleasure on some frigid winter days.

HILLSBOROUGH RIVER NOMINATED

On January 17th, the Canadian Heritage Rivers Board accepted the nomination of the Hillsborough River as a candidate Heritage River. This is the first river on Prince Edward Island to have been nominated. Before the final designation can occur, the next three years will see a management plan developed for the river.

Maurice Fitzpatrick, Chairman of the Hillsborough River Association, was in attendance at the Heritage Rivers Board meeting along with P.E.I.'s official delegate, Doug Murray of the Department of Economic Development and Tourism. Doug was the proud recipient of the River Rat Award at the meeting.

To become a member of the Hillsborough River Association, send \$5.00 to Box 75, Mt. Stewart, P.E.I., COA 1T0.

ENVIRONMENTAL CALENDAR:

Tuesdays and Thursdays - This summer, on Tuesdays, the Macphail Woods Project will be offering guided tours of the woods trail and nursery on Tuesdays at 9:00 a.m. and, on Thursdays, free environmental education courses for 6 to 10 year olds at 9 a.m. and for 11 to 16 year olds at 1 p.m. Contact Gary Schneider at 838-2678 to book seats.

Jul. 4 to Aug. 26 - Environmental Day Camps for children sponsored by the Institute for Bioregional Studies at Strathgartney Provincial Park. Contact Phil Ferraro at