

the East Coast. Rockweeds (*Fucus vesiculosus*, *F. spiralis*, and *F. edentatus*) and the knotted wrack (*Ascophyllum nodosum*) grow in heavy layers along the rocks on much of this region. The characteristic air bladders cause the plant's fronds to float when the plant is submerged. These plants harbour a host of organisms which are fundamental to the food chain of the near shore. Proposals to begin commercial harvesting of this algae have raised the concern and/or the ire of many environmentalists along the Bay of Fundy. A number of meetings have been held to explain the harvesting process and potential impacts. (expanded from St. John Naturalist March-April 1995 meeting note and an article by Cheryl Gass)

The Toronto Ornithological Club held their 70th Christmas Bird Count on December 27th. Seventy-three field participants and 5 feeder watchers sighted 40,831 birds of 84 species in 161.5 party hours. Rarities included the second ever Golden Eagle, and first sightings of Double-crested Cormorants and Pine Warbler. (Toronto Field Naturalist # 450)

The Mid-winter Waterfowl Inventory of the entire Canadian shore of Lake Ontario yielded the highest count ever with 135,541 waterfowl. During the past two years, the number of waterfowl has increased 35 to 45%. This dramatic increase is in the numbers of Greater Scaup, White-winged Scoter, and Common Goldeneye. (TFN # 450)

As with the birds its members have worked to conserve, The International Council for Bird Preservation (ICBP) has evolved. It is now called BirdLife International. In Canada, the BirdLife mission is led by the Long Point Bird Observatory and the Canadian Nature Federation. In the United States, the three organizations affiliated with ICBP have reassessed their roles and they merged their tasks to become the American Bird Conservancy (ABC). Its Projects Advisory Council will focus on Latin American and neotropical bird issues while its Policy Advisory Council will take on the responsibilities of the former United States Section. (adapted from *Winging It* 7:3, March 1995)

The Yukon Conservation Society represented by the Sierra Legal Defense Fund is suing the federal government for its refusal to assess the environmental impacts of mineral exploration work in the southwest Yukon. A Department of Indian and Northern Affairs land use permit allowed heavy mining equipment to travel across the calving area of the threatened Aishihik caribou herd which has declined from 1,500 animals to 785 animals between 1982 and 1991. This occurred, despite extensive input from biologists, First Nations, environmentalists, and outfitters, because DIAND did not consider comments about the exploration work to be relevant to its review of the permit application. (adapted from Nature Alert 5:1 Winter 1995 and Working for Wildlife Winter 1995).

A huge development project to straighten, dredge, and channel the Paraguay-Parang River system, the second largest river system in South America, for ocean-going vessels is being challenged by the World Wildlife Fund's Guardians of the Rainforest. Through proposed dynamiting of a unique geological formation called "the cork", this project will threaten the world's largest wetland the Pantanal as well as 1.7 million acres of forest, a multitude of wildlife, and local indigenous people. Concerned individuals are being asked to write Mr. Guy Lavigne, Executive Director for Canada, Inter-American Development Bank, 1300 New York Avenue N.W., Washington, D.C. 20577, USA.



Bluefin Tuna

Atlantic Bluefin Tuna has made the World Wildlife Fund U.S.'s second annual "Top 10 Most Wanted Species". This occurred just prior to the meeting of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) meeting in Florida. (adapted from WWF Working for Wildlife Winter 1995).

In 1993, studies by two German students on Shepody Bay led to concern over the possible decline of mud shrimp, *Corophium volutator* in areas of the bay of Fundy. This species of

shrimp is extremely important for fat buildup in migrating shorebirds and is one of the primary reasons such large numbers congregate in the Shepody Bay. Further studies by two post-graduate students working for the CWS showed declines in some areas and increases in some others. The speculation on cause seems to be again related to human intervention through harvesting of polychaete worms for bait and causeway construction. (adapted from an article by Mary Majka in N.B. Naturalist 21(2-4), December 1994)

On Water, On Wings, In the Woods - A Guide for Maine Wildlife Watchers is available from the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife, 284 State Street, Station #41, Augusta, ME 04333. It describes 62 areas selected by veteran Maine wildlife observers. The cost is \$4.95 US. (Adapted from NB Naturalist 21(2-4) article by C. Packard)