

Note from Ian McLaren: North American records of Pink-footed Goose: These Pictou County records are, of course, the first noted in NS, but are not unknown in North America. A 1924 bird in Mass. was considered by AOU 1983 as an escapee, but one in NF in 1980 considered acceptable. I believe there have been at least two sightings in NF since, but haven't checked these. Quebec has eight reports, beginning 1988 and 1990, and in late 1997, and springs of 1998, 1999, and 2004. I believe these have all been sightings of single birds. In 1997, 98, 99, there were spring, fall and winter reports of what may have been (haven't fully checked) the same individual from Massachusetts to Pennsylvania. Dwayne Oakley observed a non-staying bird on PEI Nov. 28, 1993.

The sighting of three birds on PEI and here is particularly interesting. Lone waterfowl are always a little suspect, and some (many?) of the above records may involve the same individual, wandering outside its normal range over the years - maybe even an escapee. This is why it would be good to establish the age of the "loner" of the trio - a family group might be particularly convincing of wild origin.

UPEI SCIENCE FAIR:

By Fiep de Bie & Dan Kennedy

On Tuesday April 7, 2005, Dan Kennedy and I attended the Provincial Science Fair and thoroughly enjoyed the experience. After reviewing the natural history projects, we made the following selections.

For best project in the grade 4 to 6 category, we chose "Trees - A vital part of P.E.I.'s ecosystem" by Emily Wolfe and Hannah Bigelow (both 11 years old) from Miscouche Consolidated School. Emily and Hannah had an elaborate display on the importance of trees. They demonstrated how contamination would leach through a cleared area, whereas the wooded area would filter and reduce runoff. The topic was well researched and presented.

In the 7 to grade 9 category, we selected "Crows and your Garbage" by Carrie Drake (13) and Laura MacNeil (14) from Stone Park School, Charlottetown. In this original project, Carrie and Laura tested the intelligence and preference of crows for certain types of garbage bags. Their test showed that crows are mostly attracted to shopping bags. The crows learned quickly that not much food was there to be found in blue and black garbage bags.

Unfortunately, there were no natural history related projects in the grade 10 to 12 category.

Each winner received \$15 and a Natural History Society membership. Good job Emily, Hannah, Carrie and Laura, congratulations!

SIGNS OF SPRING?

By Dwaine Oakley

Many American Robins over-wintered this winter on PEI this year. I took a picture of one that was observed defending piles of apples in my backyard and even once tearing the back feathers out of another Robin that got too close. I have since put out three separate piles of apples in different locations but to no avail since the dominant one thinks he owns them all. The other two birds do get to eat in his absence though.

PEI WINTER BIRD LIST 2004/2005

Compiled by David Seeler

1 March 2005

123 SPECIES REPORTED

LOONS

Red-throated Loon

Common Loon

GREBES

Horned Grebe

GANNETS AND BOOBIES

Northern Gannet

CORMORANTS

Double-crested Cormorant

Great Cormorant

HERONS, EGRETS AND

BITTERNS

Great Blue Heron

Snowy Egret

DUCKS, GEESE AND SWANS

Pink-footed Goose

Canada Goose

American Wigeon

Gadwall

Green-winged Teal

Mallard

American Black Duck

Northern Pintail

Greater Scaup

Lesser Scaup

Common Eider

Harlequin Duck