

and are happy in the naturally acidic soils of the Island. Furthermore, they thrive only in areas that are not too hot and do especially well in places where night temperatures are cool. Fortunately, they are winter hardy. Ideal locations for them include: their native Pacific West Coast, New England, the Maritime Provinces and regions just north of the Great Lakes. New Zealand also grows lupins well.

In other parts of the country, such as southern Ontario, lupins may grow but they will not thrive as they do here - it is simply too hot in summer for their liking.

Lupin seeds scattered about in late summer will not germinate until the following spring. The seed coat is extremely hard and it takes the harsh winter weather to crack it. It is one nature's ways to prevent the seedling from emerging at the wrong time. The young plants grow vegetatively their first year and generally do not flower until they are 2 years old. Once flowering, they may continue to do so for a few years but, as a rule, lupins are not long-lived perennials. However new plants coming along each year keep the stocks healthy.

Sometimes lupins are considered a noxious weed on the premise that they are harmful to livestock. Indeed, I have read that they may cause sickness in cattle although one would assume that this is not common nor severe as the plants grow so freely now and few reports of lupin poisoning are heard of.

The reputation of P.E.I. as the Garden of the Gulf never seems truer than when the lupins are flowering. This is one introduced alien plant that I for one am glad we have.

The signs are here!



Geoff Hogan, recording secretary and past-president of the Natural History Society, has confirmed that signs of pileated woodpeckers have been found at Greenwich. Geoff saw both old and fresh rectangular excavations in trees on October 6 and 7. There have been no confirmed sightings of the birds on the Island since the turn of the century. Geoff will be doing a feature story in the next issue of the Island Naturalist with more information.

Quite a performance

(The following report came from NHS member Geoff Robinson of Tyne Valley)

Dorothy and I want to report a most unusual sighting last night about 1900 hours ten miles west of Wood Islands terminal on the Trans-Canada Highway. Sitting on a post was a large hawk - with the road side ditch and nothing more separating the road from the post. We watched it for about ten minutes together with several other people who stopped their vehicles. It was quite unafraid - almost tame. On three occasions it flew down into the undergrowth of the ditch but we are not sure what it was after. After one of the sight-seers got a little too close, the bird crossed the road appearing to fly normally and landed in some foliage on the other side.

It was much too large for a Cooper's Hawk. Unfortunately I am not expert enough to make a positive identification but I would feel it was an immature Goshawk (Plate 33 of Petersen's Field Guide to the Birds). Perhaps someone more expert than I may be fortunate enough to see it.