



In With the Tide

Bay of Fundy Discovery Centre Association Newsletter

Volume 1 issue 2

GOMI Team Wants to Create a “REAL GARDEN”

By Roger Outhouse

What on earth is a “real garden”? The short answer is; it is using a natural setting to feature the native and already established plants of the region. The idea was sparked by the Gulf of Maine Institute Barrington Team. The team has been working on such a project over the past two years. It is situated virtually on the doorstep of the high school. Since its conception lots of partners have contributed to the project and it is now catching on as a true asset for the school and community in educational, social and recreational aspects.

The philosophy is that the beauty of natural plants and habitats are often overlooked and unappreciated. Often the best approach to garden space is to utilize species

that are well adapted to the conditions. They are sustainable, require little to no intervention (pesticides, herbicides, and fertilizers), are virtually free and support local wildlife.

During a brainstorming session our Digby Neck and Islands GOMI squad decided to make this their project a priority for this year. The site selected for consideration is the old Freeport Village Park near the Islands Consolidated School. At the annual village meeting a motion was approved which permits GOMI team members to work with Village Commissioners to explore a better use for the present park property. Thus far the team has surveyed the park, photographed the area, and obtained the assis-

tance of Raymond Fielding, author of *Shrubs of Nova Scotia*, to identify the plant life. Following the initial study, comments from the youth were:

“When we first went to the park I didn't know what to expect, I had never been there before. But I do have to admit I was surprised at how run-down it was. ... on the plus side I saw how there were many kinds of plants that were natural

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Real Garden, Continued

and pretty looking. I'm sure there are also many kinds of animals residing there..." – Shealee Newman

"My impression of the park today was that it has turned very pathetic and I was a little mad because it was left alone for so long and now it is just a wreck. There is still potential in the area, and we can make it better than it ever used to be." –Terese Crocker

"I think that if people actually worked on it, to fix it up, then we could have a park again. But it's gross now. People should have never let it go that far. If we restore it, then a lot of people will appreciate it." – Stephanie Smith

"In my opinion the park needs a lot of work. ... Looks like a tor-

nado went through there. With people to help and money to go towards it, the area could be a park again!"– Abby Crocker

The next steps will be getting input from the school, community, organizations, and village com-

mission as to the possible uses, benefits, and challenges to overcome. The goal is to develop a plan of action for the Village's consideration. Look forward to further updates as GOMI continues its work on this project.



Current Park monument in memory of Horace Churchill

Short Walk–Incredible Variety!

The trail to the Balancing Rock is not a very long one but can you guess how many different kinds of plants you would see along the route?

Have you ever stopped to take in the different things you see when out for a walk? A recent adventure to the Balancing Rock documented over 90 varieties of plants and mosses along the way. Two interesting plants are the Spotted Touch-Me-Not and the Twinflower.

Spotted Touch-Me-Not - a plant that can grow six feet tall, also called Jewelweed because it resembles an earring the way it dangles. It is a favorite of the Red Throated Hummingbird. Bees find it difficult to get at the nectar. There are two variations with one having a much more reddish series of spots along its petals. The seeds literally explode when mature, hence the name "Touch Me Not".



Pussy Toes on trail to Balancing Rock

Balancing Rock Plants, continued

Twinflower - (*Linnaeus borealis*) Named after and in honor of Carl Linnaeus who created the binomial naming system used in labeling all plants and animals. This plant is an evergreen which grows low to the ground and blooms during the May to August in this area. Its fragrant and delicate flowers and delicate opposite leaf structure makes it a favorite of plant lovers. This is a species that is part of the “Plant Watch”, which en-

ables “citizen scientists” to get involved by recording flowering times for selected plant species. Canadians of all ages can contribute scientific data necessary to our important understanding about changes in our environment. If you want to find out about this work and see if you might like to be involved check out the website:

www.eman-rese.ca/eman/



Jeff Whynot and Raymond Fielding

Close Encounters on the Balancing Rock Trail -By Roger Outhouse

August 26 was a misty, overcast but mild day as Patricia Sollows and I waited in the Balancing Rock parking lot. A van rolled in at 8:40 am with two gentlemen inside. The elder man identified himself as Raymond Fielding and he introduced a good friend and neighbor Jeff Whynot. They had left Pleasantville on the La Have River on South Shore at 6:00 am so they could arrive early for the quest ahead. Raymond is a retired biology teacher who wrote the book *Shrubs of Nova Scotia (1998)* and he had made a generous offer to prepare an inventory and description of the plant life one encounters along the Balancing Rock Trail. The Bay of Fundy Discovery Centre Association was thrilled to take Raymond up on his offer. The morning was spent in a leisurely walk, examining and discussing the surrounding plant life.



Bog Goldenrod

Raymond

has a wonderful knowledge and passion for plants which created a wonderful learning experience for those of us who tagged along. After three hours, we had surveyed the trail from start to finish and identified ninety three different species. It was explained that a spring field trip would likely add a number of additional species.



Wood Sorrel

Everyone had a great time and before departing for South Shore Raymond and Jeff (both who enjoy oil painting) accepted an invitation to visit artists Patricia Sollows and Jamie Baxter to view some art and enjoy some island hospitality.

The list is now compiled with both common and Latin names. Raymond will be assisting us over the next while as we attempt to design a number of interpretive signs for the

Round Leaved Sundews (insect-eaters) the sticky droplets have been used as a medicinal application to warts and corns but the plants are rare and it is recommended not to pick them.



Trail. With some dedicated planning and support over the winter the Association hopes to have some signage ready for next summer.

Roger Outhouse, Jeff Whynot, Raymond Fielding



Geocaching is a popular activity that involves people of all ages in a scavenger-like hunt for hidden “treasures” or places. The basic idea is to find hidden containers, called geocaches, and then share the experience online. All that is needed to play the game is an inexpensive hand held Global Positioning System (GPS) and a connection to a website such as geocaching.com to find out where sites are located.

There are over 880,000 geocache sites world wide. There are 52 sites between Roxville and Brier Island and 6 more at Gullivers Cove. Millions of people are involved and many use geocaching as a focused outdoor activity on weekends or engage in it in conjunction with travel. As people find sites they record their visits on a website and get credit for a “find”. Some people have thousands of finds to their credit.

The most frequently found are Traditional caches. The traditional cache is a small to medium sized container with a log book to record a visit and a few items for trade. These caches may be useful for bringing people into an area, but they don't really exploit the cache's potential for community development.

What we would like the cache to do for our community is to more fully engage the visitor in our history, culture and landscape. We can use geocaches to attract visitors, make their stay more enjoyable, and encourage them to spend more time with us. We can help local people to more appreciate their home place. We engage in education through recreation and direct experience - the best kind of lessons.

The concept is to create geocaches with an informative purpose by placing them at locations we want people to visit. The game starts by creating geocache locations on a website such as geo-

cache.com. It is at this point we can begin to tell about our community as each site has description. For example, if we decide to place a traditional cache at an historic building, we can provide information about the building in our description giving the reader an extra interest in visiting that cache. The cache itself could provide more information about the building and contain pins or stickers that the finder could take. It could contain coordinates of other similar sites in the area and so on.

We can move beyond the creation of Traditional caches to some other types. An Earth cache is a site whose description needs to be approved by the Geological Society of America just to be listed. To get credit for visiting the site the geocacher must take photos and answer questions about the geology. There is an earth cache at Red Cliffs. Sandy Cove would make a wonderful earth cache. How did all this sand get into the middle of a basalt dike formation?

To get credit for a Virtual cache the finder has to answer a question based on the cache location. For example, credit would be given for a correct answer to a piece of information found on one of the signs at Northeast Cove or for the date on a special monument at an historic cemetery.

A Multicache links together a number of sites in a chain of events. Clues to; or coordinates for a second site in the series are given at the first cache and so on for three or four sites. There are other types of sites but these are the most frequently listed types.

The keys to making geocaching

useful in community development are: 1) to create enough sites to get saturation with a focus on unique features of the community, 2) to write engaging descriptions on the website so that people will want to find those geocaches, 3) make the final location of objects to be found relatively evident once the finder is at the site, 4) to include special trinkets in the boxes as promotional give aways, and 5) to have a procedure for periodically checking and maintaining the geocache sites so that they are up to date and the record of visits is collected.

It is clearly established that finding and getting credit for finding geocache sites is sufficient motivation for people to get out-of-doors and visit places that would not ordinarily be on their list. We can increase the motivation to visit our cache sites by making them part of a “set” of sites with the common theme of being community informative and fun to visit.

Dan Earle locates the Loyalist Geocache



GOMI Participants Parade Idle Free: Let Your Feet do the Work!

Abby Crocker, June Swift, Roger Outhouse, and Terese Crocker represented the Digby Neck / Islands Gulf of Maine Institute Team in the Freeport Days Parade passing out hundreds of “IDLE FREE BUCKS” which encourage all of us to save money, combat global warming and

create a healthier environment for everyone. The bucks also invite people to visit the five interpretive panels related to the Global Climate Change Project around Northeast Cove. Great job!



Take a Day: Enjoy What's Close to Home! By Anna-Marie MacKenzie Kelly

What do you do when you awake to a perfectly beautiful Sunday morning on Digby Neck? Get outdoors and enjoy every minute of it!

Since joining the Board of Directors of the Bay of Fundy Discovery Centre, I have wanted to bicycle to Brier Island and I finally met that challenge on Sunday, September 6, 2009. The temperature was perfect for a bicycle ride. I packed some locally grown fresh fruit and vegetables, a package of mini-pitas, some homemade hummus and kopanisti (feta cheese and roasted red pepper spread) and lots of water.

Cindy Graham and I headed out from Little River to catch the 8:30 am ferry. The sky was an iridescent blue, the air was crisp and the rays of the sun let us know the air would warm quickly and there was a light breeze to coax us on our way.

The Island's new pavement meant we didn't have to worry about landing in any potholes and the shoulders were easy to access if necessary (it sure would be great if I could say the same for the Neck road). We met few vehicles along the way and those that came from behind were courteous, helping make the ride all that more enjoyable.

Meandering down Long Island at a bicycle's pace was wonderful. The numerous shades of natural green blended well with the blues of the sky and the glimpses of the bays. The songs and calls of the gulls,

ducks and other birds created a harmonious pedaling song with the breeze rustling through the trees.

On Brier Island, we met up with a group of Cindy's friends from the Valley who had bicycled down from Digby the day before. They had the day free to explore the Island. Cindy and I joined up with Peter Eaton from Wolfville and headed out on our bikes to the end of Gull Rock Road. Leaving all thoughts of schedules and time behind, we packed our food and headed out on foot along the bay- The hiking trail was easy to access and the people we met were just as excited as we were to be exploring this natural gem. We searched for beach glass, tried to identify many of the plants, watched the seals playing and basking in the sun and walked until we decided we were hungry.

At this point, the sun was warm and the air was cool so we tucked ourselves into one of the basalt rock formations overlooking the water. We feasted on our light lunch and absorbed the warmth from the sun- we couldn't have asked for a better day to explore Brier Island. There was more to discover so we headed back to our bicycles, refilled our water bottles at the hostel and cycled out to the end of Water Street, by the lighthouse. In no time, we were on foot again, enjoying the coastal trail- breathtaking, peaceful, relaxing, refreshing- there is nothing else I can say to describe the afternoon on Brier Island.

Cindy and I did realize we were so anxious to head out in the morning that neither of us had remembered to pack out headlights so, reality struck and we had to do some quick mental math taking in ferry times and travel times to get home before dark. The 4:25 ferry from Westport got us started on our return trip, this time, heading into the wind. Our calculations said we could get in one more stop: Central Grove Picnic Park was a welcoming stop to eat the last of our fresh fruit. We landed on the ferry at 5:58, Phew! Now, that was cutting it short.

Only a few more kilometres to Little River- the rest on the ferry was just enough to recharge our energy as we chatted about this amazing day.

As we walked into the kitchen in Little River, we were welcomed by the aromas of the delicious supper Tony had prepared for our return!

It really is quite wonderful to think of all the great places we can explore right here in our home community along **Digby Neck and Islands Scenic Drive**- The best holiday is the one that takes the least amount of planning at no expense! Next time, I will remember my headlight and my camera!

Our Fundy, Our Future

Bay of Fundy Discover Centre

Board of Directors:

Roger Outhouse (chair),
Peter Morehouse (vice chair),
Terese Crocker, Doug Wood-
man (Treasurer), Pat Sollows,
Bonnie MacLaughlin, Kathleen
Shea, Anna-Marie MacKenzie
Kelly (Secretary)

AGM and Membership Drive

Our Annual General Meeting and Membership Drive will take place this Fall. Membership Renewals will be sent out via Canada Post to current members. If you would like to become a supporting member of the Bay of Fundy Discovery Centre, please contact Roger Outhouse.

GOMI Youth Delegation in Boston



Waiting for the ferry "Outward Bound" to take us to Thompson Island was nothing new for the Neck and Islands Team. It proved to be a wonderful opportunity to meet some of the U.S. youth and leaders.

Following the theme team presentations youth and their leaders had a few hours to stroll around the fabulous Boston Harbour and enjoy the sights and a bit of shopping. Some even made it through the lines and got to the New England Aquarium shown in the background.

Digby Neck / Islands GOMI youth members at Boston Conference: Left to right are Ashley Smith, Abby Crocker, Terese Crocker, Shealee Newman, Stephanie Smith and Jesse Swift

