

In With the Tide

The Bay of Fundy Discovery Centre Association Newsletter



Our Fundy-Our Future



Digby Neck / Islands GOMI Team Sweep Sandy Cove Beach

By Roger Outhouse

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On October 6th of the Thanksgiving weekend, the Gulf of Maine Institute youth travelled to Sandy Cove's Fundy shore containing one of the area's largest and most beautiful beaches to give it a bit of a facelift. Members of the Digby Pathfinders, Guides and Brownies joined the team in the beach sweep. Sixteen volunteers took part. The project was organized by the Bay of Fundy Discovery Centre Association and sponsored by Waste Check.

After five hours the cleanup was complete. The collected debris consisted of 30 large bags of garbage, 4 large bags of recyclables, a lot of plastic jugs, a large pile of rope, and bits and pieces of fish tote boxes. In total 390 kilograms of materials were collected from the marine environment. Some unusual items found were an old oil container full of dead mice, a hypodermic needle (taken to a safe place to dispose of it), a utility knife with blade extended, and a plastic soldier. About 95% of all materials collected was attributed to the fishing industry and we estimated that 99% of all that was collected was petroleum based. Plastic is truly at plague status to our

marine environment.

The youth did an incredible job and what better way to celebrate Thanksgiving by giving back to the natural world we call the Bay of Fundy. Special thanks to Helen Ivens who transported the team, the Digby Pathfinders, Guides, Brownies and their leaders who contributed greatly to the day's success and to John Ivens who worked with us all day and volunteered his truck to the job of moving truckloads of garbage to the pick up location. Thanks are also due to Digby Salvage and Disposal for assisting in the pick up and disposal of the materials.

The Team really would like everyone to get out and enjoy our fabulous beaches. We also

want to remind everyone on the bay or shoreline to do their best to keep things clean. Remember – Our Bay, Our Future!



GOMI team members are satisfied with the day's work.

GOMI Youth Experience Rare Opportunity

By Roger Outhouse

The morning was cool and overcast as six GOMI Team members and two leaders made their way down a wet boggy trail toward a population of the endangered Eastern Mountain Avens (*Geum peckii*). Upon our arrival, we were greeted by Diane LaRue and Brad Toms, science researchers with the Mersey/Tobeatic Research Institute. Diane and Brad introduced the plight of this plant and why they were working with the Nature Conservancy of Canada to help us



The Eastern Mountain Avens produces its flowers during the summer but this lone flower was making its presence known to the GOMI youth on October 12th! Note the large characteristic roundish leaves at ground level.

understand the habitat and its impact on the future of this little known and less understood species. Their excitement about the mission was evident and contagious. As the day unfolded the youth learned more about this pretty yellow buttercup like flowering plant that exists only in two places on the planet; in sea level bogs on Brier Island and East Ferry and in high altitudes in the White Mountains of New Hampshire.

Over a year ago we were in discussion with the NCC as to how we might be able to help in the preservation of such a rare plant. Team members were amazed at having such a rarity in our area and were very eager to get involved.

Diane and Brad helped us lay out sampling areas and got the group involved in measuring and counting plants as well as recording data on Avens habitat for future analysis. We also



Good science is important to save an endangered species and the research team from the Mersey Tobeatic Research Institute gave a great introduction to the expectations for the day's work.

took photos of the area for future reference. The changes in the area over the next number of years will hopefully yield clues as to what promotes or stabilizes the plant population.

A little cool weather and sprinkles of rain did nothing to dampen our efforts or spirits. With the work completed we broke for lunch. After a final wrap up of the day's efforts we thanked Diane and Brad for showing us some of the ropes involved in protecting this endangered species. As our mentors explained that while it is important to learn all we can about this threatened species, there are often more questions than answers in such research. Humbled by that thought we departed as the rains came down, looking forward to the next opportunity to check on the plants' situation and to also share what we learned from the day's fieldwork. We had a golden opportunity to see an incredibly rare and at risk living

organism that few humans have ever seen and practically no one has the chance to help.



GOMI youth recording vegetation data in a bog inhabited by this endangered species.

Farmers Markets Supporting Local Economy and GOMI

By Roger Outhouse



October 20th saw four GOMI team members and two leaders manning a table at the Farmers Market. A computer slide show was playing a summary of our projects over the past year depicting work on three trails, our conferences at Acadia University and Adelynrood, our work this year with the Endangered Species – Eastern Mountain Avens and Sandy Cove Beach Sweep.

This was truly a great public relations opportunity and a chance to sell some great

items to fundraise for our Team. We had lots of delicious home baked items, freshly prepared spices and herbs, potted plants, newly picked cranberries, and even some second hand books. There were lots of sellers and a nice crowd of buyers. \$145.95 was raised and we had a great time selling and chatting with the folks in attendance.



Great Transportation Improvements

By Roger Outhouse

Sometimes patience is rewarded. Recently Highway 217 from Digby to the Middle Crossroad on Digby Neck (6.9 km) was a bustle of activity with culvert work, paving, and rebuilding the shoulders of the highway. There was considerable attention paid to raising the level of the paved area and shoulders while numerous diversions were created to remove water and limit erosion. The raised highway, new culverts plus water flow controls are important as climate change issues will definitely be in all of our futures as flooding, heavy rainfalls, and intense storms challenge our highway construction. As an added bonus the paving crews repaved a section along Lake Midway that has been a dangerous section for vehicles due to water accumulation and freezing conditions.

Everyone who lives on the Islands and Digby Neck will benefit as they travel the new and safer section of highway on their commute to Digby. We have another reason to be optimistic as the Dept. of Transportation's Five Year Plan calls for an additional 7.4 km section to be repaved from the Middle Crossroad to Sea Wall in 2013-14.



More Signs Promoting the Beauty of our Area



Wally DeVries and Roger Outhouse proudly display the Nature Conservancy of Canada's interpretive sign on Brier Island, mounted at the kiosk outside R.E. Robicheau Ltd.'s General Store. The Nature Conservancy owns over 1,000 acres on Brier Island and in the summer of 2012, the Nature Conservancy of Canada partnered with GOMI, Islands Consolidated School, Digby Regional High School, and St. Mary's Bay Academy and constructed approximately 5 km of trail on its land at Western Light.

Nature Conservancy Photo

Creature of the Cove – Common Flicker (*Colaptes auratus*)

By Roger Outhouse

This is the second largest woodpecker in North America and the only one to spend almost all of its feeding time on the ground. They hop about probing the ground with their beaks and long extending tongue in search of ants and their larvae (their favourite), flies, butterflies, moths, beetles and snails. A smaller portion of their diet includes berries and seeds from poison oak, poison ivy, dogwood, sumac, wild cherry, wild grape, bayberries, hackberries, elderberries, sunflower seeds and thistle seeds. While drilling into the ground may be the common behaviour humans observe the Common Flicker can fly to catch certain insects.

Other common names include yellow-hammer and yellow-shafted flicker. In this area they were also nicknamed "suicide birds" because of the frequency they flew across the road by the hundreds and met their death by vehicles. When flying overhead the under tail and under wings flash a golden yellow. On the ground the bird has a grey cap, beige face, red spot at the back of the



neck, white rump, and blackish bars on the entire body. The belly has black spots and there is also a solid black bib. Only the male has a black moustache. You usually see them in open fields near trees. Parks, yards, and roadsides are examples but this woodpecker exists across the U.S. and Canada as far north as the tree line. If you vacation in Cuba you can expect to see them there.

Breeding ranges as far south as Central America. Both sexes will spend up to two weeks building a nest in a hollow tree, a nesting box, or in burrows abandoned by Belted Kingfishers or Bank Swallows. Sometimes European Starlings will drive flickers from their nest. Both parents incubate the eggs for about 12 days and feed their hatched young regurgitated food. The young birds are ready to

fly in about 4 weeks.

The common Flicker seems to be doing quite well but in some areas its population is under pressure from Starlings forcing them from their nesting habitat.

Annual Genera Meeting Highlights

Through our In With the Tide Newsletter, you have read about many of the successful projects in which we have been involved, in addition to the reports in the newsletter, here are some highlights from our AGM:

- A plan to create a Friends of Islands Trails Society which would partner with the Municipality to improve and operate this and other municipal owned trails. A formal agreement was struck and by early Jan. the Society was registered with Nova Scotia Joint Stocks and our association is on the new society's Board of Directors)
- We are represented on the new Bay of Fundy Exhibition Committee, BoFEX, which is registered as a charitable organization. Its purpose is to create a Fundy interpretation centre in Digby for visitors and locals. Its goal is to inspire visitors and locals to get out into the natural surroundings of the bay to take part in activities that boost the economy and will spark future returns to our region.
- We are currently in serious negotiations with government and EHS to determine suitability of our property on 217 for a new islands medical facility. After many examinations of the property the association hopes to conclude its sale for that exact project. The sale we hope will result in a tremendous boost to the quality and long-term sustainability of medical services to our residents.
- Roger accepted a committee position on the Association's behalf with the Municipality of Digby who has been charged with making a 2013 climate change plan for the municipality and realistically access some gas tax funds to make some positive action(s) to help us meet some of the challenges. EMO, Building Inspection Services, Recreation and others parties concerned about climate change make up the committee.

Ready for Dumping Day

Anna-Marie MacKenzie Kelly

(to the tune of Little Boxes by Malvina Reynolds)

Little boxes on the roadside,
Little boxes made of wire and net,
Little boxes stacked on the wharf,
All ready for dumping day.

There's a green one and a purple one,
And a white one and a yellow one,
Even a black one and a blue one,
All waiting for dumping day.

There's a white one with green net,
And a blue one with orange net,
And a yellow one with blue net,
All tagged for dumping day.

And the workers with the boxes,
Are anxious to get to work,
Catching lobsters in their boxes,
To sell all over the world.

Once again, the wind delayed them,
Keeping the boxes stacked another day,
On the boats tied side by side,
Still waiting for dumping day.

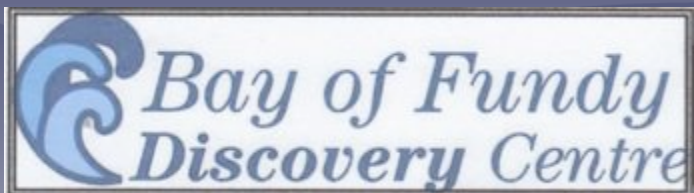


Want a Robert Bateman Print?

Five Robert Bateman prints were donated to assist with fundraising to continue our projects promoting the Bay of Fundy, helping Heather Prime with her birding contest and work with our GOMI youth. GOMI students and Bay of Fundy Discovery Centre members and others will be selling tickets in the New Year. Anyone interested in purchasing tickets can contact us at: righthouse51@gmail.com or anna-marie.mackenzie-kelly@mail.mcgill.ca



Hairy Woodpecker on Birch 12" X 17"
 Snowy Morning Blue Jay 8.5" X 11.25"
 Chickadee and Rose Hips 7.5" X 5"
 Blue Jay Winter Blue 5" X 7"
 Woodworker Pileated Woodpecker 11.5" X 12"



Our Fundy-Our Future

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Please make cheque payable to: The Bay of Fundy Discovery Centre Association and mail to the address above. Charitable receipts are issued.