

RALLY AT PROVINCE HOUSE

On April 13th, several groups and many individuals rallied on Granville Street in front of Province House. They were protesting and spoke on the absolutely devastating bio-mass clearcutting in our province (allowed by Premier Darrell Dexter and Charlie Parker, Minister of Natural Resources) by Bowater Mersey, NewPage, Northern Pulp, (now all foreign-owned), the Forest Products Association of Nova Scotia (FPANS), Ledwidge Lumber, and others.

Donna Crossland was one of the speakers at that rally. She and NNS President Bob Bancroft had spent many hours producing the excellent 2010 Crossland/Bancroft Report "A Natural Balance: Report to the Steering Panel Phase II", part of the N.S. Natural Resources 2010 Strategy. It was heavily researched, with a long addenda of well-respected scientific references. Following is a slightly edited version of her scathing and forthright presentation.

"I spent 15 years researching the historical forest ecology of the Acadian forest.

In 1849, can you guess what one of the biggest complaints about the Acadian forest was? The darkness! Back then, James Alexander spent weeks surveying a road through the Acadian forest, and, upon finally reaching a major river, he stated that the "sight was a very cheering one, after toiling so long in the shade". There were many other early complaints about our gloomy forests. Huge Hemlocks, Red Spruce, White Pine, Sugar Maple, and Beech created continuous closed forest canopies from which hung pendulous, slow-growing lichens, browsed upon by Caribou during the deep winter snows.

In 2011, our biggest complaint might be the complete opposite of 160 years ago – the lack of shade! – and, as we rapidly deplete our forests, gone are those magnificent and beautiful big trees.

I've been informed that now, we are actually cutting stands of Wire Birch in some places! Our children will only see stands of big trees in our protected areas and the occasional private woodlot. Is this the road we want to go down? Industry has been very successful in converting mixed stands and hardwoods to conifer crops, to the extent that tourists may well think they are in the boreal forest ecosystem.

The Acadian forest is classified as endangered by the WWF. We have reduced species biodiversity, reduced structural diversity (e.g. big trees and coarse woody debris), and have damaged the very soils on which trees grow! The only Canadian forest ecosystems that are in greater trouble than our own may be the Carolinian and Great Lakes/St. Lawrence forests. But, the difference there is that places like Ontario have taken many meaningful steps to better manage and protect them. Nova Scotia lags behind as usual, stuck with old, outdated notions that will not protect our endangered forests.

As co-author of the Bancroft-Crossland report, I firmly believe, based on the available science and research, that should our key recommendations be implemented, we *can* save our forests (as well as increase forest-related jobs). We also listened carefully to you, the people, who clearly voiced your concerns about our forests.

Bob Bancroft and I had a vision when we began this process, that forestry can be a sustainable industry – for big industry, for small woodlot owners, and everyone in between. Forests can generate ongoing sources of revenue without diminishing (as is happening now), the resource base, wild-

life habitat, biodiversity, homes for American Marten, Fisher, Moose, rare lichens and mosses, and healthy streams for our trout. Our vision includes the entire ecosystem, not just a single-minded focus on 'wood supply'.

Removing forests, as we have been doing, is devastating to our long-term economy. We might look to Haiti for an example. Ranked as the poorest nation in the western hemisphere, its poverty has been directly attributed to the degradation of its forests. Will we allow Nova Scotia to suffer a similar fate?

Big industry has accused us of producing a report that was not science-based, and sadly, some people believed it despite more than 110 references listed in the back of the report and two Research Addenda which included 34 references for clearcutting, 77 references for biomass, and 50 references regarding riparian zones.

We've heard whispers that our government also believes that there was no science. Perhaps that would explain why we haven't received any phone calls or questions since we submitted the report, even though there were many, many scientifically reputable references that were employed.

And what of the experts that we suggested they consult? They were never contacted! Scientists and foresters who we recommended to be consulted, who had ideas that were central to our top recommendations, never received a phone call, neither Dr. Bob Seymour nor Peter Salonijs. Moreover, the new research paper which reviews irregular shelterwood systems, by Raymond, Bedard, Roy, Laruche, and Tremblay (2009), was not explored either.

How serious is government to find the solutions?

Are they planning to rely on the 'same old forestry science' that has led to the current state of our forests, the same false set of biased assumptions, the agro-forestry approach?

How dare government foresters and 'Big Industry' foresters criticise us or our ideas when these very same people have clearly failed and failed so miserably! The results of *their* forest management expertise and *their* science lie in the ruins of our former, once rich and bountiful forested areas. After decades, they clearly demonstrate their lack of reputable science over and over again.

Our apologies to all N.S. small woodlot owners who were led to believe that Bob Bancroft and I recommended 'mandatory management plans' on private woodlots. We did not. Instead, what we recommended was management plans for those who want silvicultural funding (and that is fair).

Small woodlot owners have set among the very best forestry standards in this province. The intent of our report was to provide them with more silvicultural support, educational support, and more incentives to continue using the best practices. Bob Bancroft and I are also small woodlot owners and so are many members of my family. Our intent was honourable; not meant to harm woodlot owners.

The fear-mongering led by FPANS, Bowater, and others worked against progress on the forest strategy. To those of you who became so concerned that you ended up liquidating your woodlot, I am deeply sorry. As volunteers, we were powerless to speak on this. We had no voice. A humble offer of advice: It's difficult to know who to trust. When managing your woodlot, listen more closely to those who have no monetary gains. Be careful of the rumour mills and the whisperings of 'Big Industry'. Large, foreign-owned companies are here to make their shareholders



rich. It's up to you to take care of your woodlot. As forests rapidly disappear throughout our province, it is predictable that there will be attempts to gain the resources from the small woodlots.

That's an ecological concern as well as a citizens' rights concern. It would appear that our provincial government is ignoring its own process in which we have participated in good faith.

Premier Dexter, there is an erosion of faith in public processes. That's why we are here today. The Natural Resources strategy relied heavily on volunteers like myself and Bob, as well as many of you, during its first phase (thousands of people participated in this natural resource strategy). We worked hard and we've managed to produce a report with some very reasonable, badly needed, scientifically-based recommendations that will benefit everyone.

A message to Premier Dexter and Mr. Parker – take the science seriously! We expected follow-up! Bob and I have not received one phone call to clarify any of our points. And, here is a homework assignment for the Dexter Government before you pass the final strategy:

1. Read our Report and our Research Addendum.
2. Read the references that were central to the paradigm shift we spoke about.
3. Google 'irregular shelterwood' (a form of uneven-aged management), not 'uniform shelterwood' which is the same as even-aged management. Irregular shelterwood harvests are a very reasonable alternative to clearcutting. There are other types of partial harvest systems, as well, e.g. tree-marking, as is required by law on Crown Land in Southern and Central Ontario.

FINAL WRAP-UP MESSAGE TO THE GOVERNMENT

- Move towards uneven-aged management.
- Reduce clearcutting, but – do it carefully! Be careful of how you define clearcutting. Don't overlook terms like 'seed tree release', 'mosaic cuts', and 'variable retention', these are all clearcuts, too. Don't green-wash these recommendations. Make meaningful, real changes to clearcutting practices and make them soon. Also, be careful how the 50% clearcutting reduction is calculated – is it to be 50% from current clearcutting levels, or from former levels?
- Shift the silvicultural funding; presently, > 90 % of it goes towards even-aged management.
- If you are truly serious about change, then spend taxpayer dollars on doing the right thing.
- Northern Pulp owes you \$90 million dollars(!); get it back and use it to implement good forest practices.
- Regulations against whole-tree harvesting can be put in place in short order, so make it happen!



NNS AGM AND CONFERENCE

– *Stephanie Robertson*

This conference was held at the wonderful Gaelic College in St. Ann's, Cape Breton. A wee bit warmer and less foggy weather would have been appreciated, but nature cooperates only with herself and we must follow. There were 68 registered participants at the conference, and the speakers included Don Anderson (Dragonflies); Fenton Isemer (Rocks); James Bridgland (Forests); Bruce Hatcher (the Bras d'Or Lakes); Bob Bancroft (Coyotes); and Tim

Lambert (Rising Sea Levels). Ten different field trips were offered, covering botany, insects, old growth forests, local birds, owls, and star gazing, although we did not get to see any stars because of the weather which was fairly cool, with clouds and fog in the mornings and evenings.

So, the early morning birding on Saturday, June 4th, was cold and foggy. Various warblers were seen and/or heard (a 'bird-app' was judiciously and carefully used to call some near) and a glorious male Blackburnian Warbler was watched for a little while in the trees (my first sighting!).

ODONATA IN CAPE BRETON

After a delicious breakfast back at the College, our first, and very informative, talk was on Odonates, with Don Anderson, BSc Acadia, now a Forestry Biologist with DNR.

Odonate classification proceeds as follows:

- Arthropoda
- Insecta
- Odonata
- Eiproctra (a suborder)



The Odonates are a very old order, 300 million years or more, and fossils of odonates have been found that sported two and one half- to three-foot wingspans. The largest odonate wingspan now existing is only four to four and one half inches. There are 6,500 odonate species worldwide, and most occur in the tropics. In North America, there are 11 families, with nine in Cape Breton.

How can one tell the difference between damselflies and dragonflies?

Eyes - Damselflies have a large space on the top of their heads between their eyes, and the eyes themselves are more bulbous. Dragonflies' eyes almost touch on the top of their heads and are flatter. Odonate eyes have 30,000 facets each, and 90% of its brain power is devoted to that sense. The eyes are more sensitive at the front and are able to detect movement very, very well. (If you want to catch one, approach it from the back).

Wings - Damselflies when stationary have their wings together over their backs (there are exceptions). Dragons' wings are spread typically to the side.

Size - Damselflies are light and fragile. Dragons are big and strong.

Life Cycle - Both damselflies and dragons have eggs, nymphs, and adults.

Needs - For both, they are simple – food, mates, and a suitable wet habitat such as bogs, marshes, swamps, fens, rivers, streams, seeps, lakes, ponds, mud, and even puddles.

Food - Damselflies and dragons are voracious eaters and both their nymphs eat all aquatic insects, tadpoles, and small fish, their hunting techniques being 'hide and wait', and a stalking method. Nymphs' lower lips are not stationary but extendable, in order to hunt for larger prey. They live for about eleven months.

Adults eat insects and other odonates, and must consume about 10 to 15% of their body weight per day. They live for about one month (exceptions; some can overwinter and live for two seasons). Adults use 'hawking' and 'gleaning' methods for hunting.

The Dragonhunter or Black Clubtail, *Hagenius brevistylus*, with a wingspan four to four and one half inches, eats other dragonflies and has very strong legs; it has a two-year life cycle.

THE HALIFAX FIELD NATURALIST



No. 143
June to August, 2011

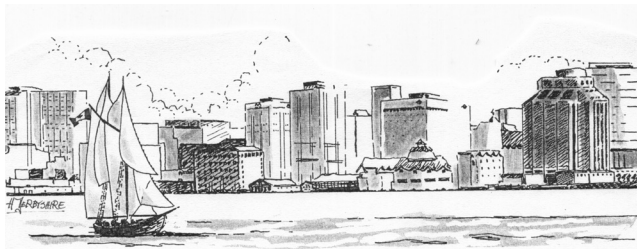


In This Issue.....	2	HFN Field Trips	13
News & Announcements.....	3	Nature Notes	16
Special Reports.....	4	Almanac	17
HFN Talks	10	Hfx Tide Table: July to September	19

Return address: HFN, c/o NS Museum of Natural History, 1747 Summer Street, Halifax, NS, B3H 3A6

HFN is incorporated under the Nova Scotia Societies Act and holds Registered Charity status with Canada Revenue

Agency. Tax-creditable receipts will be issued for individual and corporate gifts. **HFN** is an affiliate of Nature Canada and an organisational member of Nature Nova Scotia, the provincial umbrella association for naturalist groups in Nova Scotia. **Objectives** are to encourage a greater appreciation and understanding of Nova Scotia's natural history, both within the membership of HFN and in the public at large, and to represent the interests of naturalists by encouraging the conservation of Nova Scotia's natural resources. **Meetings** are held, except for July and August, on the first Thursday of every month at 7:30 p.m. in the auditorium of the Nova Scotia Museum of Natural History, 1747 Summer Street, Halifax; they are open to the public. **Field Trips** are held at least once a month; it is appreciated if those travelling in someone else's car share the cost of the gas. **Participants** in HFN activities are responsible for their own safety. Everyone, member or not, is welcome to take part in field trips. **Memberships** are open to anyone interested in the natural history of Nova Scotia. Forms are available at any meeting of the society, or by writing to: Membership Secretary, Halifax Field Naturalists, c/o N.S. Museum of Natural History. Members receive the quarterly **HFN Newsletter** and **HFN Programme**, and new memberships received from September 1st to December 31st of any year are valid until the end of the following membership year. The regular membership year is from January 1st to December 31st.



IN THIS ISSUE

News & Announcements	3
From the Editor	3
HFN Programme – where would you like to go?.....	3
HRM Alliance – hope?.....	3
N.S. Museum – two new events.....	3
NNS 2011 AGM & Conference – a success.....	3
Two New Wilderness Areas – Raven Head/Kelly River	3
New and Returning	3
Special Reports	4
2011 CSCA Acceptance – in its entirety (this time)	4
Rally at Province House – ‘talk and log’, again	5
NNS AGM & Conference – ‘Odonates’, Rising Oceans	6
YNC Year-end Report – lots of good activities.....	9
HFN Talks	10
N.S. Salamanders – new research and discoveries	10
Our Urban Forest – the necessity of our trees.....	11
HFN Field Trips	13
Halifax Waterfalling – many right here in HRM	13
Rogart Mountain Trail – new trails blazed.....	15
Canoeing the Shubenacadie - an old favourite	15

GRAPHICS All uncredited illustrations are by H. Derbyshire or from copyright-free sources. **Front and Back Covers** - Roland Marek; **Tide Table** - Canadian Hydrographic Service, Fisheries & Oceans Canada.

HFN ADDRESS

Halifax Field Naturalists, c/o N.S. Museum of Natural History, 1747 Summer St., Halifax, N.S., B3H 3A6

Email: hfninfo@yahoo.ca

Website: halifaxfieldnaturalists.ca

NNS ADDRESS

Nature Nova Scotia, c/o N.S. Museum of Natural History, 1747 Summer St., Halifax, N.S., B3H 3A6

Email: doug@fundymud.com (Doug Linzey, NNS Secretary and Newsletter Editor)

Website: naturens.ca

EXECUTIVE 2010/2011

President	Shared.....
Vice-President	Vacant
Treasurer	Janet Dalton
Secretary	Richard Beazley.....
Past President	Allan Robertson.....
Directors	Grace Beazley, Elliott Hayes, Bob McDonald, Burkhard Plache, Ingrid Plache, Lillian Risley, Stephanie Robertson.

COMMITTEES 2010/2011

Membership Programme	Lillian Risley
Talks/Trips	James Medill
Design	Elliott Hayes
Newsletter	Janet Dalton
Editor	Stephanie Robertson
Design	Stephanie Robertson
Almanac	Patricia Chalmers
Taxonomy	Ursula Grigg
Distribution	Bernice Moores
Labels	Doug Linzey
Tea Break	Regine Maass
Conservation	Bob McDonald.....
NNS Rep.	Vacant
YNC Rep.	David Patriquin.....
PSAs	Jim Medill
Web Design	David Patriquin.....

FEES 2010/2011

Student	\$15.00 per year
Individual	\$20.00 per year
Family	\$25.00 per year
Supporting	\$30.00 per year
NNS (opt.)	\$5.00 per year

Nature Notes	16
Apr. – Ringneck snake	16
May – Amphibian eggs; Barn Swallows; Peepers.....	16
Jun. – Trilliums; warblers; Yellow Lady's-slippers.....	16
Almanac	17
Natural Events	17
Interesting seasonal phenomena.....	17
Organisational Events	17
Blom. Nat. Soc. – Hikes; birding; diversity; more.....	17
Burke Gaffney Observatory – 1st & 3rd Saturdays.....	18
Mar. Mus. of the Atlantic – Sable Island; Oceans' Day .	18
N.S. Bird Society – Many birding walks	18
N.S. Mus. of Nat. Hist. – “Netukulimk”.....	18
N.S. Wild Flora – Purcell's Cove Lands hike	18
N.S. Inst. Science – “Coal Age Galapagos”.....	18
Royal Astronomical Society – 3rd Friday each month .	18
YNC – McNab's; Nature Games, AGM and wrap-up.....	18
Halifax Tide Table –July to Sept.; all times AST!	19