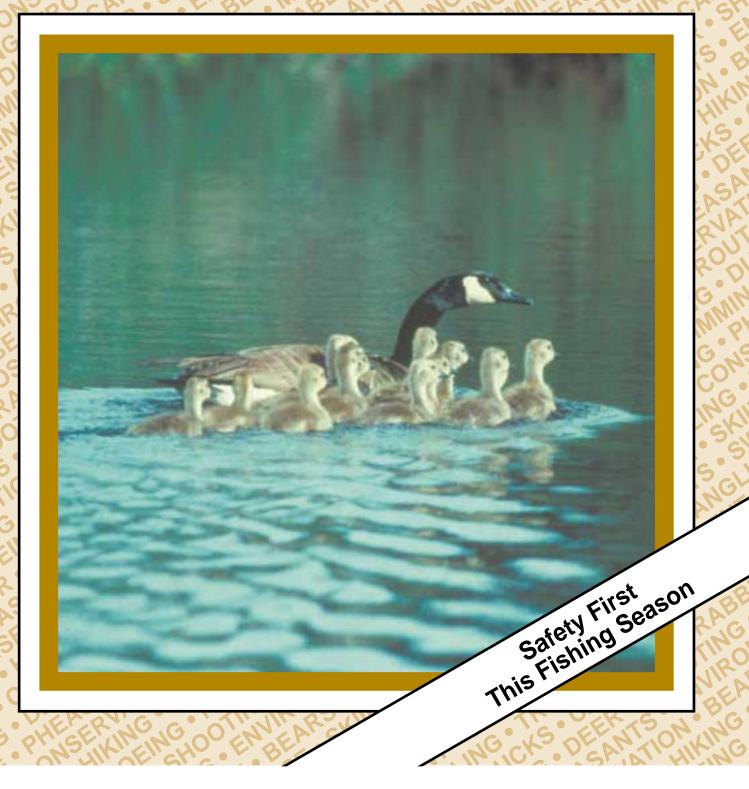


OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE NOVA SCOTIA FEDERATION OF ANGLERS AND HUNTERS





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Summer 2005

# Nova Outdoors Official Publication of the

Nova Scotia Federation of Anglers and Hunters



Vol. 14, No. 3 Summer, 2005 STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The Nova Scotia Federation of Anglers and Hunters is interested in all aspects of the out-of-doors and is dedicated to the fostering of sound management and wise use of the renewable resources of the Province. We want to ensure that their economic, recreational and aesthetic values may continue for the benefit of this and all future generations.

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Nova Scotia Federation Of Anglers And Hunters Fund-raising Banquet And Auction

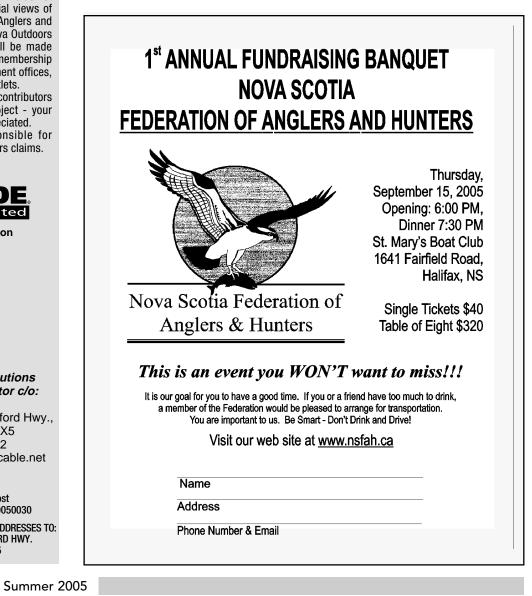
The Nova Scotia Federation of Anglers and Hunters will hold its first ever Fund-raising Banquet and auction. It promises to be a night to remember. Dan Turner, a very busy Dartmouth businessman, alongside the anglers and hunters, is taking the lead on this new project for the Federation and is a welcome addition to our bank of volunteers.

The scenic St. Mary's Boat Club, sitting on the shore of the Northwest Arm is booked as our venue. It will provide a beautiful late summer setting for our guests to enjoy a well prepared meal, meet old friends and gain new ones.

The auction promises to be interesting and entertaining with a variety of items to tempt everyone attending. If you are a company, Federation, club or an individual who would like to support this event with a prize donation or by purchasing tickets, please contact the Federation at (902) 477-8898 or visit our website at: www.nsfah.ca.

Please use the Order Form on page 21 of this magazine to order tickets. We accept Visa, Mastercard, Money Orders and personal cheques. A special members' only draw will be held that night so update your membership at the same time. See you at the boat club.  $\partial$ 

Submitted by Tony Rodgers.



# Executive Director's Voice

### By Tony Rodgers

News reports during the past fall and winter about dogs being caught in traps has set off a chain of events that may ultimately lead to everyone entering into the woods needing the permission of the landowner. The suggestion is that government should open the Protection of Property Act and make those changes. This, in our view, would be a very slippery slope for all outdoor recreations. The following is a letter sent to all MLAs in the province. We hope that they heed our words. Dear Nova Scotia MLAs: A resolution was passed unanimously at the 75th Annual General Meeting of the Nova Scotia Federation of Anglers and Hunters urging government not to overreact to complaints by a few individuals concerning dogs being caught in trappers equipment. The reaction by some members of the legislature has been overthe-top in calling for changes to the "Protection of Property Act" a piece of legislation that has served the people of Nova Scotia well and in also providing recreational opportunity on undeveloped forested land in the province. Calls to have changes made that would force trappers to locate and contact the owners of wild forest property in order to ask permission to enter such land could have the ability of spilling over onto other outdoor activities such as hunting, angling, cross-county skiing, hiking, berry picking and the study of flora and fauna. In a province where most land is in private hands, we should not be moving in this direction. It is our understanding that a working group has been brought together by government with a balanced panel of stakeholders to find an equilibrium in the relationship between some responsible dog owners and the trappers of the province. We feel that it is best to encourage this method to resolve the differences in this situation. It is also important to point out the positive service provided by the skills of trappers in protecting our province from an over abundance of certain wildlife species. The farmers of Nova Scotia need these people for crop protection from fur bearers like raccoons. It's a fact that too many beavers will prove costly to the province and private landowners when the culverts of provincial highways (and private roads and driveways) become habitat for increased numbers of these rodents if trapping is curbed. Such challenging and problematic increases in human/ beaver conflicts have occurred in other areas of Canada, such as in and around the City of Winnipeg, when measures restricting trapping on forested lands near the city were implemented. Cooler heads must guide these discussions to a reasonable conclusion and provide sensible solutions to perceived problems. Trappers who are not obeying game laws should be dealt with by the courts and so should dog owners who allow their animals to run free, breaking either provincial or municipal laws. Please try and find a solution outside of the Act to Protect Property legislation because the potential is there to open a Pandora's box. Once opened, we all may have a problem closing it. We strongly encourage you to develop and adopt a solution which focuses on the major causative factors in this situation, which in our opinion are (a) the need to improve regulatory control of the use of certain traps, (b) the need for increased responsibility by pet owners to prevent their pets from running out of control at large in wildlife habitat (contrary to the Wildlife Act) and (c) the need for better communications about the understanding between and of the activities of our various land users. The Federation of Anglers and Hunters is a union of 32 hunting, angling and outdoor recreation organizations in the province with approximately 6,500 members and supporters. We speak for the hunters and anglers (including trappers) of the province that number over 120,000. This issue, in our view, has the potential to equal the federal firearms registry issue in negative impact on the conservation and sustainable use of our wild resources and we need to know the direction of the province and the opposition parties on this pivotal issue. We look forward to your reply and the reply of all Members of the Legislature. I don't think we can stress strongly enough the importance of making a clear decision based on balance for the sake of all users of our wildlife and wild land resources and its use and a way to help pet owners. It was signed by

me. Another controversial issue that has been getting quite a bit of attention this year is the proposed ban on recreational fishing equipment that contains lead. The proposal is coming from the federal government's Canadian Wildlife Service a branch of Environment Canada. Originally they wanted a ban on smaller bits of lead in your tackle box like split shot and weighted heads. More recently, they have expanded the list to include a wider variety of fishing equipment. The government is proposing a prohibition on the import, manufacture and sale of fishing sinkers and jigs that are less than 50 grams and contain more that 1 percent lead by weight and that are less than 2 cm in length along its longest axis. The proposed lead content of 1 percent would also apply to other tackle, such as spinners, lures and spoons, that attach to fishing line and that because of their small size could be swallowed by water birds. The argument being made by CWS is that anglers are killing loons with their fishing gear. They claim that we lose 500 tons of lead a year into our water courses. The Canadian Sportsfishing Industry Association (CSIA) and various fishing groups have come out in defense of their use of lead gears and argue that the loon population in the country is in great shape and that those that are dying are dying from botulism and other diseases, that very few birds succumb to lead poisoning. The CSIA says that the science being used by the CWS is "junk" and that they pan to fight the proposed changes. To me, it smells like another Federal government style gun control. We can't do anything about the crime in this country, so let's give them gun control. Since we can't do anything about the real cause of birds dying, let's enforce lead control. There is no question that lead is a toxin. It is used in huge quantities in marine environments in both fresh and salt waters for the weights on the bottom of commercial fishing nets to the keels of many sailboats. But let's not just look at the tackle box to solve the problem. See our ad in this issue for the Federation's first dinner and auction to be held in Halifax, September 15.  $\partial$ 

tonyrodgers@eastlink.ca

# **Random Casts**



# **Unusual Fishing Methods**

### By Don MacLean

While anglers may fish with a variety of baits, lures or flies, it still comes down to a fish hook tied to a line which is fastened to a fishing rod. There are areas in the world, however, where fishing methods vary from the norm and venture into the bizarre. One of the most interesting is the cormorant fishery which takes place in parts of Japan. This fishery, which has a history dating back 1,300 years, uses trained cormorants to fish for freshwater fish in large rivers.

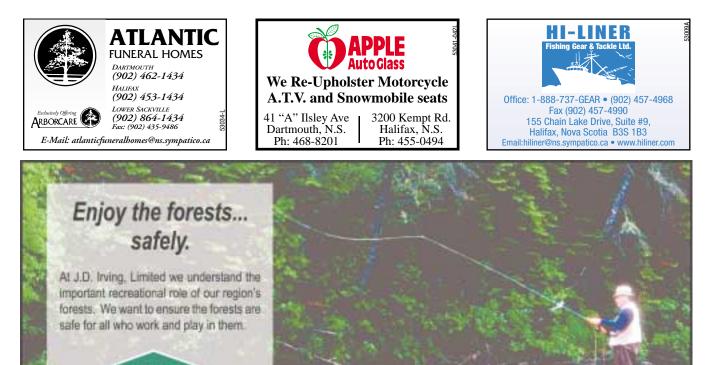
A typical cormorant fishing crew consists of the fishing master who controls the birds, an assistant and a helmsman. They use a special flat bottom boat which is 13 meters long. The flat bottom allows them to fish in shallow water. Each boat is equipped with an iron basket hanging from the bow. All fishing takes place at night so a fire made from pine firewood is lit in the basket. The fire attracts fish to the boat for the cormorants to catch. In addition, the boats fish in a line in order to concentrate fish in a small area. The fish normally captured are known as sweetfish and are a local delicacy.

Watching a fleet of cormorant boats fishing is a popular tourist attraction in Japan. The cormorant master sends the birds into the water on leashes which are attached to the boat. Each leash is connected to the birds by metal rings around their neck. The rings allows the birds to swallow smallfish but not larger ones. When a bird catches a large fish it brings it back to the boat where it disgorges it. Controlling 12 birds on leashes is not an easy task, but since the birds spend a lot of time with their handlers they respond to his signals. The trained birds also benefit from this relationship. They live with the master's family and while a wild cormorant seldom lives longer than four years, fishing cormorants live up to 20 years. While cormorant fishing is a dying art as it is no longer economically viable, it continues as a tourist attraction. How effective was it? It is said that one good fishing cormorant could keep a family fed.

While cormorant fishing sounds like a unique cooperation of man and birds working together, the most bizarre fishing method is closer to home. My award for the most bizarre method of fishing goes to the annual fish shooting season in Vermont. This season, which requires both a fishing and hunting licence, takes place every spring on Lake Champlain and coincides with Northern pike spawning. At this time of year pike move into shallow, weedy bays to spawn. The most effective method is to climb trees which overhang the water and wait until a fish swims within range. Vermont's pike shooting season has been in place for over a hundred years and despite repeated attempts by fish and wildlife regulators to stop the practice, it remains a popular pastime. Although it sounds inherently dangerous, no one has been shot and most accidents involve people falling out of trees and into the lake. I think I'll stick with my hook and line.

Tight Lines. ∂

Don MacLean is a Nova Scotia biologist who writes on sportfishing topics. His book, Discover Nova Scotia Sportfishing, was published in 2003.



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# NS Federation Of Anglers And Hunters Cleans Up "Wildlife Corridor"

### Submitted by Tony Rodgers

The Nova Scotia Federation of Anglers and Hunters has been managing a significant "Wildlife Corridor" in an industrial park in Halifax for the past 10 years and at lease twice a year does a clean up of the area.

This spring, leaders and scouts from the Emanuel Church Branch in Spryfield

of the Baden Powell Scouting Association of Nova Scotia provided the manpower to do the job. They collected 24 bags of garbage, mostly plastic and a popular coffee cup, plus road signs, traffic cones and buckets. The wildlife corridor is located in the middle of the Bayers Lake Industrial Park. It links two wild areas, one in Lakeside and the second in the Spryfield Long Lake provincial park. Tony Rodgers, executive director for the Federation was thankful to Ken Cooper, Scout Leader for the help provided by his troops. They said they would be willing to return in the future to help again. It is unfortunate that people still feel the need to throw their garbage in wildlife areas, said Mr. Rodgers, but fortunately we have youth who still respect nature and are willing to help clean it up. $\partial$ 





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# A Walk In The Woods

## It's tree planting time in the Maritimes

"If you want to be happy for a year, plant a garden; If you want to be happy for a lifetime, plant a tree." —Aldo Leopold



The only thing that helps soothe the pain and loss of having no NHL playoff action to enjoy is the unusually fine, dry weather (except

for that freaky bit of snow), we had during April - our usually rainy month. The snow is gone in most places and the ground is warming and drying, as the high number of recent grass and forest fires prove.

It is now the perfect time to plant trees. Since trees are lost every year due to such things as old age, wind, snowstorms and land clearing, it is important that we as a society continue to plant trees at a high rate for the benefit of all in the future. When it comes to trees, one must think of the long term - decades, when considering their growth and development. Like many good things in life, we sometimes only truly appreciate trees when they are gone.

Most of us have the opportunity to do something positive for our environment, other than the everyday stuff like reusing, recycling, composting, refusing wasteful methods of packaging and not littering. We can plant trees on our own or take advantage of fine tree planting programs that exist in communities like Truro and Halifax, where the municipality subsidizes the cost of the trees. If you choose to plant the trees yourself, you can either transplant them from another location or purchase seedlings or saplings from a store or nursery.

### Why plant trees?

Besides the obvious aesthetic contribution and increased property value and enjoyment, people sometimes don't appreciate the true benefits of trees, especially in the urban environment. There are several very important benefits that result from trees growing around us, which we cannot see or realize on a dayto-day basis - but they are still happening.

#### Impact on temperatures

Urban trees provide important cooling effects (cooling from shade and evapotranspiration - where moisture is a byproduct of plant tissue) that can moderate climate and reduce urban "heat island" temperatures by as much as 5 degrees Celsius. They also reduce UV rays, help keep pavement and parked cars cooler, as well as lower rainfall runoff and flooding. In addition, properly planted tree barriers can reduce wind and traffic noise.

Trees influence temperature and climate, both as individual trees and as urban forests, covering entire metropolitan areas. By altering wind speeds, water transpiration and surface shading, trees affect local climate, thus influencing thermal comfort and air quality.

### **Energy conservation**

When trees provide shading for buildings, they reduce air temperature in the summer and block cold winds in the winter. This reduces heating and cooling needs, thus reducing energy costs and consequent emissions of air pollutants and carbon dioxide by power plants. Energy conservation from trees varies by regional climate, the size and amount of tree foliage and the location of trees around buildings. The ideal tree arrangements for saving energy provide shade/ barrier primarily on east and west walls and roofs, and wind protection from the prevailing winter winds. Research by the U.S.

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Forest Service found that energy use in a house with trees properly located for energy conservation can be 20 to 25 percent lower per year than for the same house in an open area. Therefore, establishing another 10 million mature trees around residences in Canada could save an estimated two hundred million dollars annually in reduced energy costs.

#### Filter for air pollutants

The leaves of trees have the miraculous ability to remove gaseous pollution from the air. The amount of pollution filtered by trees is dependent on many variables, including: seasons (highest amount occurs in late spring and summer), amount of healthy leaf surface area, concentration of pollutants and weather.

Trees also remove carbon dioxide from the air. In photosynthesis - the chemical reaction that is the foundation of virtually all life on earth - green plants use sunlight energy to unlock the carbon bonds of the carbon dioxide molecule and make the structural molecules such as lignin (woody fibre), cellulose (cell walls), and polysaccharides (food/sugar storage). The U.S. studies found that large trees can store about three tons of carbon - which is approximately 1,000 times more than that stored by small trees - and healthy trees continue to sequester additional carbon each year.

This explains why we often hear about forests acting as carbon sinks as they sequester carbon from carbon dioxide. It's because of this ability that the establishment and conservation of forested area is eligible for carbon credits under the guidelines of the Kyoto Agreement.

There are many great reasons why we should plant trees, some innate, some of which we have learned over time and experience. Any way you look at it, it's a good idea that will make you (and the environment) feel good.  $\partial$ 

Don Cameron is a Registered Professional Forester.



# New Conservation Fund Established For 2005 Sportfishing Season

# *By The Nova Scotia Department Of Agriculture and Fisheries*

Nova Scotia anglers will contribute directly to the province's recreational fishery through a new Sportfish Habitat Fund when they purchase their fishing license this year. The fund had been requested by the four provincially based angling organizations - Nova Scotia Salmon Association, the Nova Scotia Federation of Anglers and Hunters, Trout Nova Scotia and the Canadian Association of Smallmouth Anglers who are also partners in the establishment of the new fund. The Department of Agriculture and Fisheries introduced the fund, and a \$5 habitat fee on fishing licenses, for the 2005 angling season. "This new fee allows anglers to share in the restoration and protection of fish habitats and helps to sustain a healthy sport fishery," said Chris d'Entremont, Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries. "Community volunteers carry out most of the project work and this fund will provide them with money to continue their excellent work." The fee will be part of gen-



eral and salmon fishing licenses. However, seniors 65 years and older do not have to pay the \$5 fee when they acquire general fishing licenses.

The primary goal of the fund will be to support the conservation and enhancement of fish habitats and to improve public access to resources. Through the Sportfish Habitat Fund, projects will be funded up to 50 percent of the total project cost. An advisory committee will be established to review all project proposals and they will recommend to the minister which projects to approve. The committee will consist of a representative from the Nova Scotia Salmon Association, the Nova Scotia Federation of Anglers and Hunters, Trout Nova Scotia and the Canadian Association of Smallmouth Anglers. A staff person from the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries will also be on the committee.

Agriculture and Fisheries Minister Chris d'Entremont announced the appointment of six members to the advisory committee of the Nova Scotia Sportfish Habitat Fund on May 20. "I am pleased that we are moving forward with our new Sportfish Habitat Fund, which supports the conservation and enhancement of fish habitats,"

Bluenose Well Drilling Ltd. 28 Partridge Nest Dr., Mineville, NS B2Z IKI Complete Pump Installation, Sales & Service Ralph Jacobs-President "Serving the Eastern Shore & Mainland N.S." Fax: (902) 885-2625 Fax: (902) 885-2625 said Mr. d'Entremont. "Our goal is to ensure that Nova Scotians enjoy a topnotch sportfishery in the province for many years to come. Through this advisory committee, my department will continue to support the efforts of the volunteer groups and organizations that are working to create a better sportfishery for everyone."

The advisory committee will review project proposals and recommend projects to the minister for approval. Larry Shortt of Halifax and Tony Robinson of Dartmouth have been appointed for threeyear terms. Scott Cook of Wolfville and Lewis Hinks of Chester will serve for two years. Appointed for one year are George Taylor of Halifax and Michael Robinson of Wolfville.

Members of the advisory committee were selected from names submitted by the Nova Scotia Salmon Association, the Nova Scotia Federation of Anglers and Hunters, the Canadian Association of Smallmouth Anglers, and Trout Nova Scotia.  $\partial$ 

Project application forms, and guidelines for submitting a proposal, are available on the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries website at http://www.gov.ns.ca/nsaf/sportfishing/ fund.shtml or by contacting: The Nova Scotia Department Of Agriculture and Fisheries, Inland Fisheries Division, PO Box 700, Pictou, NS B0K 1H0.

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Stream Bank Alteration by Off-Highway Vehicles in Watershed

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# **Scoping Out The Crossbow**

#### By Mark Hamilton

Justifications for special bowhunting seasons are under attack, not only from anti-hunters, but from within the hunting community, in particular from crossbow advocates.

The push for crossbows comes from equipment dealers who have a market near its saturation point: bows won't shoot much faster, and there is a glut of rifles out there. Since rifle hunters won't lay down their rifles - and buy crossbows to hunt in the general open season, marketers want to open up archery seasons and new markets.

Yet archers object to the use of crossbows in their dedicated seasons. To understand this controversy, one needs to understand the archery community. The desire to protect hard-won seasons for archery has been called greed and elitism. This shows a lack of understanding of what special seasons are for: hunting with equipment that is hard to master, and having a low hunter success rate.

Things change slowly in the hunting community. Archers were once seen as hunters with high wound-loss or as poachers. Over time, with many successful archery-only seasons, that changed. Now archers are asking crossbowmen the same hard questions they had to answer. Concern over how tackle is marketed makes this necessary.

You see, the shadow of the problem already lies in bowhunting itself, in 3D



target archery. What started as hunting practice - shooting at three-dimensional 'animal' targets - has become a contest to see how far away a shooter can get and still score. This encourages manufacturers to market bows based on how fast they shoot and how flat a shot they can make.

"Velocity" became the industry catch-phrase, and manufacturers now use the measure of a bullet's efficiency (called 'kinetic energy' or KE) as the measure of an arrow's efficiency. The problem is that a bullet kills by shocking and stopping. This is not how an arrow works.

An arrow is a knife: it cuts on contact, so you want that contact to keep going. You require 'momentum' to achieve this, not kinetic energy. It's easy to picture. It doesn't matter how fast you get hit with a ping-pong ball, a golf ball going much slower - is going to hurt more. It wants to keep going.

Also, light arrows and bolts lose their speed much more quickly than heavy arrows. KE numbers don't reflect that: a marketer's dream, the formula squares the speed factor, giving it false importance in measuring effect. Momentum, which is merely mass x velocity, presents a more realistic picture. They're using the wrong formula.

This misinformation gives shooters the impression that because they play tictac-toe at 45 yards, they might be able to hunt at the same distances. Wound-loss goes hand-in-hand with excited, inexperienced hunters seeing impressive deer at marginal distances. Modern archery tackle is accurate far outside its effective killing range. It shows the outstanding ethics and sportsmanship of bowhunters that wound-loss remains low.

Crossbows are an exaggerated version of this problem. They have a tremendous take-off speed and - as advertised - very high "KE". That doesn't tell us much about their effectiveness however, because the power-stroke of crossbows is short, and doesn't impart lasting energy to the bolt. Because the bolt itself is short and has poor aerodynamics, it loses speed much more quickly than an arrow from a



Unfortunately, Mum's help, unknowingly, sometimes made things worse. Latter-day science proved that covering a burn with butter (or any other grease) is detrimental to healing. What she, and we, believed was just not true.

Canada's Firearms Act is just like Mum and her butter. Authority figures tell us that they work for public good. They tell us that Licensing will keep guns out of the hands of those who should not have them. They tell us, without evidence, that "safety courses" will save lives. They tell us that the Firearms Act is beneficial while often not providing any or all evidence.

Many years passed before the majority understood that "butter on a burn" is not the way to help. But even today some Pollyannas refuse to believe the science.

The Firearms Act is as counter-productive as Mum's butter remedy. The hurdles of Licensing discourage participation, will result in the eventual demise of gun ownership by Canada's law-abiding citizens, and embolden the criminals amongst us, leaving us all with a far less safe society. Licensing fails to increases public safety, as does the fiasco of Registration.

Responsible Firearms Owners Coalition of BC Phone: (604) 532-8048 Web Site: www.rfocbc.com

Box 93052, Langley, BC V3A 8H2 Fax: (604) 532-0380 e-mail: admin@rfocbc.com

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hand-held bow (The bolt is aerodynamically inferior to the arrow because it is short relative to its width. Anyone who has paddled a canoe will understand this.).

Besides lacking penetration, long shots bring other problems: in a 100-yard shot, a bolt takes about two seconds to travel. A whitetail can jump ahead one body length in about an eighth of a second. Crossbows make more noise than bows, and hence give deer warning to "jump the string". Shots should be close.

Starting in the 1990s, ads have been run depicting the crossbow as a device with a maximum hunting range of 60 yards. Yet despite advancements over the intervening years, many crossbows are now marketed as having an effective hunting range of only 25 yards.

The World Crossbow Shooting Association's website suggests that crossbow hunters should "accept 50 to 60 yards as a maximum range". "Gunversation" Magazine Online suggests about 45 yards as a maximum range. What gives?

The New York Bowhunters, in observing crossbow marketers, noted that "If they speak to bowhunters or archers, they will say it is ineffective beyond 20 yards due to the noise and poor trajectory. [Yet] some ... have a "Dial a Range" system

that allows the shooter to zero-in on a target at 65 yards. If the crossbow is ineffective past 20 yards, why then, have such a system?" Or why, indeed, a scope?

There is lots of misinformation out there and it makes people nervous. This idea that there is no advantage to crossbows over hand-held bows flies in the face of common sense.

Weapons evolved for a reason: the crossbow came somewhere in between archery and gunpowder. It isn't either one.

A study by American engineers found that the crossbow is superior to the modern hand-held bow in almost every way; that the modern crossbow is more similar to a firearm, and should not be considered archery equipment. The average effective range is around 69 yards.

It's clear that the advertised limitations here are very much tailored to get the 'foot in the door' of archery seasons. How long will these limitations last, and who is going to decide when enough, for a primitive-weapons season, is enough?

Are we ready to send people into a 'primitive weapons' season with a weapon whose range has yet to be determined? It behooves archers to mistrust industry's intentions, and they do.

In the fall 2004 issue of "CROSS-

BOW" Magazine, the author of an article entitled "The Scoop on Crossbows" states "A second crossbow advantage is the time it takes to become proficient enough to successfully hunt with one. Due to the crossbow's rifle-like nature, it takes less time and practice to attain or maintain sufficient shooting skills."

Norb Mullaney, another engineer, pointed out that "shooting the hand held bow and arrow is much more complicated than aiming a [crossbow] and touching off. The total energy to draw, hold and release the bow must come directly ... from the shooter's muscle power."

Any archer will tell you that this is the defining moment of a bowhunt: the draw of the bow. Being close enough to a whitetail to kill it with an arrow is close, and getting that arrow drawn without attracting attention is the difference between success and failure.

Industry has not convinced archers that this latest pushing-back of the technological barrier for primitive seasons is the last push. For bowhunters, it's a matter of drawing a line, and most people believe the justifications for archery seasons have already drawn that line - well short of a crossbow's capabilities.  $\partial$ 





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# Internet Hunters Way Off Target

### By Mark Hamilton

There's a fellow in Texas named John Underwood who operates a new kind of shooting range, where a .22 calibre rifle is operated remotely by Internet users. They log on, pay a fee, and fire away at paper targets. An attendant monitors the sighting to make sure appropriate targets are being selected; he changes targets and reloads the rifle between sessions. It has little to do with the mechanics of actually firing a gun yourself, and isn't much help in assessing your marksmanship, but it's fun, and the range is included within the National Rifle Association (NRA)'s Business Alliance.

Now, if it had stayed that way, it would have been just another interesting thing to come out of Texas. The problem is that the owner has seen an opportunity to marry this remote access to another of his passions: hunting. His 330-acre ranch is home to many species of exotic - read unregulatedgame animals, such as feral hogs, axis deer and blackbuck antelope. Underwood has geared his shooting platform to handle heavy-recoil rifles, and to offer remote hunts to the disabled, the curious, and ... let's face it, the lazy. This has hunters all over North America up in arms, as well as - predictably - animal rights groups. In one of the stranger moments in hunting history, the Humane Society of the United States has asked for the cooperation of the NRA in shutting down this venture before it can get off the ground. There has been no response from the NRA at this stage, but even with their customary bravado in the face of contentious issues, they might have to bite the bullet on this one. Hunters don't like it.

Wayne Pacelle, HSUS president and CEO, stated in a letter to Wayne LaPierre, Executive Vice-President and CEO of the NRA "You and I have many differences, but on one practical point we can agree: where hunting is permitted, there must be standards of ethics and honour to guide the hunter. In the case of Internet hunting, the practice would mark a complete abandonment of any pretense to honour, fairness, or decency." It would appear from the recent uproar that most hunters agree with him. Yet many people - like Underwood equate technology with progress, and progress is good: an easier way to hunt is a better one. Texas Parks and Wildlife Department wildlife director Mike Berger put it this way: "First it was rocks and clubs, then we sharpened it and put it on a stick. Then there was the bow and arrow, black powder, smokeless powder and optics. Maybe this is the next technological step out there." Most feel, however that this step is the one across the line between fair, traditional hunting, and mere high-tech killing. It seems the hunt has been taken out of hunting.

Hunting, as one senior woodsman put it, is a verb. The doing. It's a different word than killing, with broader meanings. The kill is only a small part of the hunt. For

sure, it's an important part to many, but to reduce the hunt to the kill is misleading, and that's a favourite emotional tool of the antis.

Hunting does not equal killing; it's greater than. Much greater. The kill comes at the end of the hunt, maybe, but we've skipped the best parts, the verb parts: crossing a stream in November. The look you exchange with your dog when that grouse doesn't flush, and you both know it's there. Blending into the wilderness so that animals forget you, and the woods close around you and go on -before your eyes- with the business of being the woods. Woodsmoke. Washing in a stream. Bacon in the pan with 'am' radio. Worn gear, able guns, tired dogs. These things are all the hunt. And the big one, the one we use as both justification of our pursuit and a measure of our own pride, is Fair Chase. Being true to your ethics even if it means coming home empty-handed.

And hunters know it. Recently a group of men was asked "what makes a great hunter?" Most said -surprisingly- that a great hunter was one who took home the joy of the hunt, a man who could say "I had a great hunt" even if he didn't bag game.

How far we have come. Can you imagine returning from your hunt 500 years ago to tell your village "I had a great hunt!" with no game in hand? The onus has shifted. It's still about living close to the land, at least for a while; it's about respect for the game, and concern for its Continued on page 18.





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GROHMANN Great Knives and More...

# **Bird Feeding**

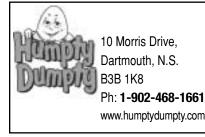
Courtesy of Hinterland Who's Who

- Sunflower seeds are among the most versatile food for birds.
- Where you live, the type of food you offer, and the habits of different bird species will determine the types of birds you will attract to your feeder.
- There are ways to prevent squirrels, cats and dogs from harming birds or their food at feeders.
- It is best not to feed ducks and geese.

### **Types of feeders**

The best way for most Canadians to start a study of birds is to establish a bird feeder, and the best time to feed birds is in the winter, when there are fewer species present and when many birds can be attracted to the bird feeder for observation. Watching the feeding birds can help people recognize the different species and learn about the birds' habits of migration, nesting, and feeding.Feeding birds can be a very simple affair. Just scattering bread crusts on the snow or seed on a bench or table will attract some birds. But if bird feeding is to be a long-term interest, some additional steps should be taken to avoid problems.

- The food must be protected from rain and snow or from unwanted guests such as squirrels.
- It is best to place food in a feeder which protects seed from bird droppings.
- The birds should not be made vulnerable to predation or other hazards by careless placement of the bird feeder.
- It is important to continue feeding through bad weather so that any birds that may have become dependent on the food supply will be able to eat when they need to. This is most important just after winter storms.



(Of course, if your neighbours are also putting out bird food, the birds are less dependent on any one feeder).

A hopper-type feeder that can hold food for several days can help ensure a continuous supply. Many good feeders can be made at home. A plastic bleach bottle can be cut to provide a large opening in one side and then hung from a branch by its handle. Half a coconut, pine cones, or a piece of bark can be used to hold a suet mixture. Suet can be hung from a tree in a plastic mesh onion bag. A Christmas string of popcorn and cranberries draped on a tree is a festive offering for the birds. Just be sure that feeders have no exposed metal parts in areas where the weather gets very cold. Commercially built feeders can also be an excellent value.

### What to feed

Try a few foods and use what works. Sunflower seeds are among the most versatile food for birds. Two kinds of sunflower seeds are used, a larger striped kind and a smaller black kind; the black kind is popular with more species of birds. Sunflower seeds may be used without any other food, if desired.

Commercial bird seed mixtures sometimes contain seeds that are of little interest to most birds. Millet is good, but a study by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service showed that, in one region at least, white proso millet was generally preferred to yellow or red millet. Many species like cracked corn, but the corn is likely to spoil if wet, and it is more attractive to species, like pigeons, that are often considered pests. Oats, buckwheat, wheat, and rapeseed have limited interest for birds. Niger seed (an imported thistle seed) is excellent for small finches but can be expensive.

Many types of kitchen scraps can be given to birds. Of these, some of the most often used are baked goods (give sparingly and watch for mould) and fats.

Captain ED'S Charters Harbour Taxi, Nature Tours Peep Sea Fishing, Halifax 477-9630 Larger pieces of fat, especially beef suet, can be used as is or can be rendered by heating to separate the fat from the connective tissue. Melted fat can be mixed with bread crumbs and seeds and packed into dishes or other feeders. Peanut butter is loved by birds, but some people say it should be mixed with fat to reduce any danger of choking.

Most birds appreciate water to drink if the weather is not too cold. Birds also use grit to help their digestion. Provide dirt, sand, or ground eggshells separately from other foods for this purpose. Sometimes a few wood ashes or a dry supply of salt can provide minerals the birds need.

To limit cost, put a measured amount of food out each day, whatever you decide you can afford. If the feeder is empty an hour later, don't worry. If you are consistent, the birds will adjust their foraging to the supply and find more food elsewhere.

### The birds

What kind of birds can you expect once you've put out some food? The bird species attracted to a feeder will depend on many factors, including the geographic region you live in, the type of food you offer, the habitat of the immediate area, the habits of individual bird species, and the weather. Habitat is a very important factor in attracting birds: an area with trees and shrubs will be the most likely to appeal to them. It is also important to start feeding early in the fall before the birds become set in their winter foraging patterns.

Chickadees are some of the most familiar birds that visit feeders. They travel around a small area of a few hectares, stopping in woodlots where they look for insects and insect eggs and coming to feeders for sunflower seeds and suet. They are adept at opening sunflower seeds by holding them with

Continued on page 20.



# Habitat – Building A Pond

Dreams often reflect happy aspirations. For decades after building my home into a south-facing hill, I dreamed of replacing the tangle of alders and willows below the house with a pond. Scattered old fence-posts and rusty barbed wire on the site were evidence that a wet forest had long ago been cleared for pas-



a cleared for pasturing cattle. After a hard rain, water ran everywhere and mosquitoes a b o u n d e d. Summer heat dried it up. Finally, I

dug an eight foot (2.4 m) deep test hole to assess the soil and water-holding capability of the site. We discovered deep clay under an organic soil layer. Water stayed cool and high in the test hole over the summer of 2002. This meant a liner would not be needed to keep water in the pond. Encouraged, I walked the site in late summer with a government inspector who confirmed that no watercourse or fish habitat existed (permits are required to alter existing watercourses). Over the fall and winter my wife, Alice and I ribboned the proposed perimeter of the pond with flagging tape. We used a chainsaw and snips to clear the site. Fallen alders were dragged into nearby woods to make brush piles for rabbits, birds and other wildlife. Some wood was piled on-site for spring burning (with another permit). Clearing the ground in winter, when migratory birds are south, minimized the habitat upset for wildlife. I booked a gentleman with excavating equipment to arrive in August when the ground was dry.

We began to plan the pond layout and contours during long winter evenings. There would be no dam to block fish access to and from the harbour. The pond would have irregular, meandering borders to create small headlands and coves. Underwater there would be contoured levels at 2 to 3 feet, and 5 to 7 feet for aquatic plants. Such perimeters are safer too - a child who fell in would land in shallow water. One 10 foot-deep zone would be excavated for fish, amphibians and others that might overwinter under the ice. A small island would offer ground-nesting ducks and other birds some refuge from roaming raccoons and skulking skunks. Any old tree trunks

found during digging would be set aside to be incorporated later into the pond. The plan would become a reality using measuring tapes, vertical poles and a transit, an instrument that measures from a level to determine bottom depths. The "diggings" were destined to form a partial berm of clay overlain with organic soil along the east side. Extra clay would also be used to upgrade a forestry road on the property.

An excavator, bulldozer, and two dump trucks rumbled up the lane on August 25, 2003. Alice hastily caught and transplanted 20 frogs from our test hole to a safer place. Later that day, my father died, so Alice, who had shown a genuine interest in designing the pond, now suddenly became the overseer of its construction. By the time I returned, the project was underway. Five and half days after excavation began, the digging, dozing and trucking ceased. After the equipment operators waved good-bye and lumbered down the lane, Alice and I stood side by side and pondered the humungous hole.



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A cloak of silence settled over us and the land. How would this offering be perceived by our wildlife neighbours?

It was a dry autumn, so freshwater trickled slowly in for two months. Frogs, a spotted sandpiper, and inquisitive great blue herons inspected the new hole. The fresh clay soon held nocturnal imprints of curious raccoons, otter, coyote and white-tailed deer. The pond topped up after a rain in late October. Three days later muskrats wandered upstream and discovered it. They promptly built a den in the east-side earth berm. Within the week, schools of stickleback and mummichog minnows were roaming the shallow water zones. Soon young herons were lining up like choreographed dancers to fish along a salvaged log that now jutted into the water. A mink slid in and swam across the pond. As winter's icy mantle descended, a lone black duck flared, skidded to a halt, proceeded to carefully scrutinize the habitat, and suddenly flew away.

As soon as ice left the pond surface in April, the muskrats began busily collecting and consuming the greenery along its border. During the breeding season they ignored us, and we could hear their low chattering to each other. Bald eagles from the harbour, neighbourhood crows and a red-tailed hawk arrived to bathe in the fresh water that flowed from the pond. Male sticklebacks began setting up terri-

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tories in shallows around the shore. On queue, a kingfisher arrived to haunt them. We listened to spring peepers and later the "tunk tunk" chorus of green frogs around the shore. Black ducks, bluewinged teal, mallards and mallard/black hybrid ducks kept circling, flaring, landing and investigating the pond.

Anticipating that a beaver would discover the site, I began to wrap four foot high, one inch square, welded-wire mesh around the trunks of more valuable trees located between the house and the pond. I didn't want to lose the walnut, red oak, white ash, ironwood and other hardwoods I'd planted more than twenty years ago. I also planted (and protected) young yellow birch, white pine, red oak, eastern cedar and staghorn sumac on the new earthen berm around the pond's eastern perimeter. On the evening of June 10, the first of several beavers arrived. This two-year-old, no doubt recently banished from some parental colony, assessed the pond overnight and had moved on by daylight.

On June 17 a female black duck arrived with five newborns from a nest site on the forest floor to the west of the pond. We watched, transfixed, as her ducklings learned to swim! Water striders showed up one day and whirligig beetles soon followed with their zig-zag courses over the water's surface. Dragonflies and damselflies began to patrol sections of shoreline, males chasing after females, but chasing off other males. As if by magic, aquatic plants began to grow in the shallows. I suspect that the seeds for those plants ar-

RCTIC CAT

rived on duck legs. This new underwater cover made life easier for frogs and small fish. Now there were more hiding places from great blue herons and kingfishers. By late spring larger fish swam into the pond, jumping for insects, and causing terrified minnows to leap in unison out of the water. On calm evenings little brown bats scoured the pond surface for insects. The bare-clay portion of the shoreline was gradually topped by a tangle of touch-me-nots and other greenery. I weeded the newly-planted trees so they could receive some sunlight.

By mid-summer spotted sandpipers and killdeer frequented the shore. We transplanted native white water lilies, water smartweed, and pickerelweed from a nearby lake to shallow-water zones in the pond. One day, while poking around in the shallows, I felt an object on my leg and discovered a leech. After that, I swam in the deeper water!

A year has passed. Our pond blossomed from a mud hole to an intricate, evolving freshwater ecosystem. Four young wood ducks visited in the fall. We watch sunsets and baby muskrats cavorting over the water on fine evenings. For the cost of a swimming pool, we've created a freshwater habitat for many wild animals and plants that will persist long after we're gone. Our insurance agent liked it too. If fire ever rides the wind through forests to the west, the pond may save our own home habitat!  $\partial$ 

Reprinted courtesy of Saltscapes magazine.



# Firearms Centre Shortchanges Border Agency

"Customs officers wasting millions and manpower tracking law-abiding gun owners and hasn't even done a risk assessment or cost-benefit analysis."

Saskatchewan M.P. Garry Breitkreuz, the Conservative Firearms Critic, released more documents that once again demonstrate the Liberals misplaced public safety priorities. In a letter to the Canada Firearms Centre (CFC), the Head of Customs Contraband, Intelligence and Investigations wrote: "As a result of the new import requirements, a sizable workload is being generated that the Canada Border Services Agency must manage solely for the purposes of the Firearms Act. Over the past three years, we have documented more than 251,000 non-residents with firearms traveling in transit or coming into Canada for legal sporting purposes, and have collected more than \$11.2 million in fees on behalf of the CFC. During this same period, close to \$7.6 million was spent on the delivery of the firearms program of which only \$5.2 million was recovered from the



CFC."

Breitkreuz asked, "What is Public Safety Minister Anne McLellan thinking when she allows this to go on right under her nose?" The covering letter from the Canada Border Services Agency also confirms that the department didn't have the option of spending these millions where they were needed most, such as: the pursuit of smugglers, terrorists, illegal immigrants, illegal guns, drugs, explosives and other contraband. Their excuse for not doing a risk assessment and cost benefit analysis: "... the Agency is required by law to administer the program."

The documents also show that the Canada Border Services Agency doesn't check to see if these sport shooting tourists and hunters took their guns with them when they left Canada. That's more than 450,000 legally-owned guns the bureaucrats lost track of," reported Breitkreuz. "In 1995, the Liberals promised, in defiance of all logic, that this scheme to track legal guns would somehow stop the smuggling of illegal guns. These new documents show how phony their promises to Parliament were. The Liberals only implemented the sections of the Firearms Act to col-



lect the fees but not the sections to track the guns; measures they said were vital to control gun smuggling. "What a pile of horse manure," exclaimed Breitkreuz. "Before spending more than a billion tax dollars, the first thing any competent government would do is identify and quantify the problem. Something the Liberals still haven't done. These foreign hunters have never been and never will be a threat to public safety so these sections of the Firearms Act were totally unnecessary. For the last ten years, we have been providing data that proves the Firearms Act isn't doing what they promised and that the money should be redirected to real public safety priorities and real border control priorities. For the last ten years, the Liberals have kept their heads buried firmly in the sand. In the most recent poll, 76 percent of Canadians want the gun registry scrapped and the money spent on law enforcement. It's time to elect a government that will do just that," concluded Breitkreuz.  $\partial$ 



# Canada Goose

#### **Hinterland Who's Who**

- This bird flies in large V-shaped flocks when migrating
- can travel more than 1,000 kilometres in one day
- nests in the same area where its parents nested and often uses the same nest every year
- mates for life, but if one member of the pair dies, the other will take another mate

#### Description

Many people can recognize a Canada Goose Branta canadensis by its characteristic black head, white cheek patches, and long black neck. However, there are several different races, so a Canada Goose in one region may be quite different from a Canada Goose in another. Although there has been some disagreement about the exact number of races of Canada Geese, most scientists believe that there are eleven.

Members of the different races range in size from one of the smallest geese, the Cackling Canada Goose, which can weigh as little as 1.1 kg, to the largest of all geese, the Giant Canada Goose, which can weigh up to 8 kg. Wingspans vary between about 90 cm and 2 m. The underparts range in colour from light pearl-grey to chestnut, and even blackish brown. Differences in body proportions, particularly the relative length of the neck, the body shape, and the body stance, further distinguish the different races. In general, the larger the bird, the longer the neck and the more elongated the body.

Newly hatched Canada Geese have a coat of yellow to olive down that darkens to dull grey over the first few weeks of life. As the birds grow, feathers gradually cover the down, and by the time the young geese are ready to fly in late summer, they are nearly indistinguishable from their parents. From that point on, both males and females look the same throughout the year.

#### Signs and sounds

Flocks of migrating Canada Geese are readily recognized by their irregular "V" formation as they pass overhead in spring and fall. They can often be heard as well, since there is usually a steady chorus of honking. Their calls range from the deep ka-lunk of the medium and large races to the high-pitched cackling voices of smaller races. Researchers have determined that Canada Geese have about 13 different calls ranging from loud greeting

and alarm calls to the low clucks and murmurs of feeding geese.

#### Habitat and habits

You can find Canada Geese on almost any type of wetland, from small ponds to large lakes and rivers. However, Canada Geese spend as much or more time on land as they do in water.

Canada Geese breed in a wide range of habitats. They prefer low-lying areas with great expanses of wet grassy meadows and an abundance of ponds and lakes that serve as refuges from foxes and other land predators. The most northerly geese breed on the treeless tundra of the Arctic. Below the treeline, the geese nest in the open boreal forest, with its scattered stands of stunted spruce and tamarack. In southern Canada and throughout the United States, nesting Canada Geese are at home in many places, from sheltered mountain streams and prairie pothole ponds to golf courses and urban parks. During fall and winter, Canada Geese favour agricultural land where vast fields of cereal grains and other crops provide abundant food and relative safety from predators.

Family bonds are strong in Canada Geese — goslings stay with their parents for a full year, returning to the breeding grounds with them after their first winter. Migrating flocks in fall and spring thus consist of a number of families travelling together.

#### Unique characteristics

The spectacle of Canada Geese migrating in long, honking, irregular "V" formations across spring or autumn skies is always thrilling. It is one of the most dramatic portents of the change of seasons in Canada. Flying in diagonal lines or "V" formations serves at least two purposes. The most important is that it helps the geese save energy and permits them to fly longer distances. Scientists believe that Canada Geese fly in a "V" because of the "drafting" effect, where the follower goose, like a cyclist in a race, benefits from the air currents passing the leader, and thus expends less energy flying. A secondary function of the formation is to coordinate the flock's movements, allowing changes in flight speed or direction to be communicated quickly and efficiently to all members of the flock.

#### Range

Canada Geese breed throughout North America, except in the high Arctic and in the extreme southern parts of the United States and Mexico. Part of the North Atlantic population even nests in western Greenland. Some winter in southern Canada from British Columbia to southwestern Ontario to the Maritime provinces, as long as they can find food and open water, but the great majority travel farther south to the United States, or even to northeastern Mexico.

Spring migration for northern-breeding geese begins in late winter and may take several weeks to complete. The geese move slowly northward following the advancing line of melting snow. They make several feeding stops at key areas along the way to build up reserves that will be needed for the final leg of migration and reproduction.

Fall migration begins when the water and soil begin to freeze on the breeding grounds. The trip from breeding to wintering areas is faster than the spring flight north.

In addition to the annual migration from breeding to wintering grounds, Canada Geese sometimes undertake a special voyage called a moult migration. Every year, geese must replace their wornout flight feathers. The feathers are replaced all at once, so the geese cannot fly during the four- to five-week moulting period. The best places for the geese during this time are those with lots of open water where the birds can seek refuge if threatened and where they may find a good supply of the protein-rich food needed for growing new feathers. Most of the geese that don't breed during the season undertake this migration, which usually involves travelling north, often well beyond the normal breeding range, between late May and early June. Successful breeders moult later in the season, remaining with their young goslings, which have not begun to fly.

### Feeding

Unlike many waterfowl species that feed mainly in aquatic environments, Canada Geese feed mostly on land. In spring and summer, they mostly graze on the leaves of grassy plants, but they also eat a wide variety of leaves, flowers, stems, roots, seeds and berries. The geese must consume large quantities of food to obtain the nutrients they need, and they frequently spend 12 hours a day or more feeding. During the winter, Canada Geese often feed in fields where they find an abundance of spilled corn, oats, soybeans, and other crops. When such energy-rich Continued on page 19.

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# Minister Regan Receives Award From The NS Federation Of Anglers And Hunters

The Honourable Geoff Regan, Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, was honoured for his environmental efforts, among them the recent establishment of the Atlantic Salmon Endowment Fund. The Fairn-Hickman Award, presented by Gary R. Penney, outgoing President of the Nova Scotia Federation of Anglers and Hunters at its 75th anniversary breakfast on April 3, 2005 in Truro, recognizes outstanding contributions by a politician to the environment.

Submitted by Cate Barratt, Senior Communications Manager, Communications Branch Fisheries and Oceans, Maritimes Region.



#### Internet Hunters Way Off Target... Continued from page 12.

home, but now the hunt is no longer work hoping for pay. It is the reward itself, the reward for being there. Sure, we still respect a hunter who consistently brings home game, especially if he routinely brings home big, smart, wary game. The thing is, it's all about how. For him to gain our respect, the 'how' needs to reflect our values.

Values: if you want to meet someone who believes - and seeks to ensurethat the wilderness is better for his use of it, ask a hunter. There is very little 'take' in the hunting world without a great deal of 'give'. Everyone knows who pays for conservation; the same people who are there to defend wilderness against unrestricted exploitation, and who keep an eye on the woods and waters to make sure they stay the same, healthy woods and waters. In these values is the unspoken objection to this new ranch hunting: it is too disconnected, too removed from the animal's death and the things involved in its life.

It's not just that it is easy, because our hunting is sometimes pretty easy. It's maybe not even about fair chase: the animal can leave the area as easily as it could leave the area of your ground blind or tree stand. It – the problem- is that by not being there, we are not practicing our connection to the animal and to the landscape. We aren't developing or practicing the things that make us hunters. And when we lose what makes us hunters, we lose a lot.

If you want to meet someone with real respect for life, ask a hunter.

This 'hunt' shows no respect for the life of the animal; in fact it indicates a callous indifference to the life and livelihood – the habitat - of the animal. Not being there means not showing your respect, not paying your respects. Simple as that. And that's just not what we're about. It is saying to all those antis, who don't understand hunting and our traditional life, that "you're right, hunters are just killers ... nothing more."

The most accomplished hunters are those who consistently bring home the most wary of wilderness quarry using the simplest of tackle. They're the most experienced woodsmen, returning to a world of moral clarity and relying on finely-honed skills to pursue their game. Most of us, however use some of the things that make our hunt easier on us, and a bit harder for our quarry: hunters' hearing aids, light-gathering scopes, trail cams and timers, photo-quality cammo prints, scent blocks, attractor scents, bait piles, and so on. We all seek gratification in bagging game, and some of our families depend on it, but our ranking as hunters these days is - by and large- directly tied to how we hunt and what our internal rules are. And like any sport, mastery isn't for everybody, and shouldn't define how much we enjoy our play. Responsibility to the land and to the animals is for everyone though. It means we don't just do whatever is possible to kill something. We have laws to guide us in fair chase; we should keep them. We have ethics that express our sense of responsibility to the animal; we should continue to express that. And, when someone shows the world a hunter who cares nothing for the experience, the values, and the tradition of hunting, he should be routed without dignity.

Whatever your hunting method, what they have in common is 'being there'. Why do we crouch to touch an impressive set of tracks with the hand? Because we are where the animal was, and that's important. We're connecting to the animal and to the land we enjoy and use. And, after a while, to the experience we crave. It's called "love of the land". You can't get it from your laptop.  $\partial$ 

# **Province Introduces New Hunter ID Card**

### The Department of Natural Resources

A new, mandatory hunter-identification card will help Nova Scotia better manage and conserve its wildlife. The new Wildlife Resources Card – which replaces the provincial firearms hunting certificate, the bowhunter hunting certificate and the fur harvester's certificate - will be available on June 1.Hunters, fur harvesters, trappers, guides, fur buyers, taxidermists, deer hide buyers, pheasant preserve operators and nuisance wildlife operators will be required to have cards.Each card will include the height and eye colour of the card holder, will be made of hard plastic and sized to fit in a wallet. It must be carried whenever the owner is engaged in wildlife harvesting activities."Ŏur new Wildlife Resources Card will allow us to interact and correspond with our clients," said Barry Sabean, director of wildlife with the Department of Natural Resources. "It will also assist us in maintaining accurate harvesting records and related use of Nova Scotia's wildlife resources. This will, in turn, support sound wildlife management and decision-making about issues such as

#### Canada Goose...

#### Continued from page 17.

foods are available, they often feed in the fields for a few hours in early morning and late afternoon and spend the rest of the day resting in safety on a lake or large river. Some Canada Geese graze on lawns, in parks, and on golf courses.

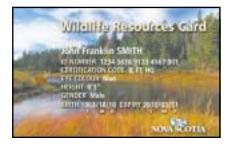
Spring is a very energetically demanding time in a goose's life, especially for breeding females. Canada Geese feed intensively during the few weeks before they leave southern agricultural areas to prepare for a period with little food when they first arrive on the northern breeding grounds. They will need sufficient reserves of fat and protein to complete migration, produce a clutch of eggs, and survive for about one month of incubation.

#### Breeding

The Canada Goose finds a mate during its second year and once paired, the geese remain together for life. Contrary

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limits, species populations and necessary conservation measures." As of June 1, individuals can apply for the new card by calling toll-free 1-888-729-2917. The line is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Wildlife harvesters have until December 31 to apply for their free card. As of January 1, 2006, the cost will be \$6.25. Should you need to replace a lost Wildlife Resources Card, call 1-900-565-2786. The cost to replace one of the new cards will be \$5.75. The cards will be effective for five years from the year of issue.



### Benefits of the new card

- convenient size, fits into wallet.
- durable plastic.
- unique identification number.

to popular belief, however, if one member of the pair is killed, the other will find a new mate.

Canada Geese breed earlier in the season than many birds. Breeding is timed so that the eggs hatch when the plants that the goslings, or young geese, eat have their highest nutritional value. The hatch date also allows enough time for the goslings to grow big enough to fly south before freeze-up. Canada Geese that breed in temperate areas, with mild temperatures, begin nesting as soon as conditions are favourable in spring, in some cases as early as mid-March. Canada Geese that breed in the north reach nesting areas in late April or early May, later for Arctic breeders.

Some Canada Geese breed when they are one year old, but the vast majority do not nest for the first time until they are at least two or three. Usually five to seven eggs are laid, with older birds producing more eggs than birds nesting for the first



- no need to replace card just because of address change.
- Wildlife Resources Card has a sequence number on it so if it is lost or stolen, it can be deactivated so it is no use to anvone else.
- will allow the Department to better communicate with it's clients • will provide capability to report activities online
- assist in maintaining accurate records of harvest and related use of our wildlife resources, which in turn will support sound wildlife management and decision making.

If you have additional questions regarding the new Wildlife Resources Card, please contact your local Department of Natural Resources office.

Interested people can view the card on the Department of Natural Resources website at www.gov.ns.ca/natr/wrcard.∂

For more information, please contact Mary Anna Jollymore at the Department of Natural Resources by phone at 902-424-2354 or by e-mail: jollymmt@gov.ns.ca.

time. The female incubates the eggs for 25 to 28 days while the male stands guard nearby. In some cases, he may be several hundred metres from the nest but is always vigilant and joins the female if the nest is threatened or if she leaves the nest. During the incubation period the female leaves the nest only briefly each day to feed and drink and bathe.  $\partial$ 

For more information, visit: www.hww.ca/index\_e.asp.

Note: a photo of a Canada Goose with goslings is shown on the front cover of this issue.

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#### Bird Feeding... Continued from page 13

their feet and striking them with their bills, like little woodpeckers.

Blue Jays are conspicuous visitors with their bright plumage. In the fall, Blue Jays store food, sometimes carrying away many sunflower seeds packed in their cheeks. At that time of year you might like to feed the Blue Jay some whole corn, which is less expensive than sunflower seeds. Blue Jays are much less trusting of people than chickadees are and usually retreat to a distant viewing point when people come to the feeder.

Several species have changed their winter range, thanks to bird feeding. Among these are Evening Grosbeaks, which come in flocks for sunflower seeds. Cardinals have started nesting far north of their historical range, probably because of the winter food provided at feeders.

Some birds are quite unpredictable in their annual visits to bird feeders. Redpolls, Evening Grosbeaks, and Pine Siskins come in variable numbers depending on their natural food supply and on the weather. Others, such as the Hairy Woodpecker and the Blackcapped Chickadee, are resident yearround in the feeding area and so can be expected at feeders with some certainty.

The House Finch is of special interest at feeders. It was originally a western species, but in 1941 a few individuals were released in New York City. Since then it has spread and has become common in southern parts of Ontario and Quebec. More recently it declined again, as a result of a disease that may have been spread, in part, through concentration of the species at bird feeders.

Some birds that usually eat dormant insects and their eggs in the winter can be attracted to feeders by fatrich foods such as suet, and, for some species, sunflower seeds. Nuthatches, woodpeckers, and chickadees are all fatloving species. Some people do not like pigeons, starlings, or House Sparrows and prefer jays, chickadees, and finches. Offering sunflower seeds alone may help eliminate the first group and attract the second. Fat attracts starlings but is probably worth it if it brings woodpeckers too.

A yard with plantings of bushes such as saskatoon, elderberry, mountain ash, nannyberry, and crabapple or vines such as wild grape or Virginia creepers will attract birds that eat fruit and are rarely found at regular feeders. Even the American Robin will overwinter where such a food supply is abundant.

#### Problems

Sometimes problems develop at bird feeders. Perhaps the most common is the presence of squirrels, which can eat a large amount of food and can also damage wooden feeders. It is possible to buy a squirrel-proof bird feeder. You can also make one at home by placing inverted metal funnels on the feeder post below the feeder or by positioning large disks above hanging feeders. Remember that squirrels can jump, especially from above, that they can walk on a tight rope, and that they can get toeholds on any imperfections in whatever you are using to exclude them.

Cats and sometimes dogs can be a worse problem; they may kill the birds or take suet at feeders. If these animals have free range around the feeder, avoid giving them places to hide from which they can pounce on birds. Be sure the feeders are close to natural hiding places for the birds, such as shrubs, but far enough away from them - 2 to 3 metres — to keep birds safe from cats that may be using the shrubs as cover. Other predators may also visit feeders, but these wild animals have a role in nature, and we should respect their need for food.

Sometimes birds fly into windows and injure themselves. This usually happens when feeders are placed less than 10 metres from windows, because at this distance, birds can see vegetation reflected in the windows or through the windows. If a window near a feeder has a number of such bird strikes, try leaving a curtain closed when the birds are feeding. If this does not help, you may have to move the feeder. A bird feeder can usually be safely fastened to a window or placed very close to it, because in this case, if birds are startled while at the feeder, they will be moving too slowly to injure themselves if they hit the window.

Most other problems can be avoided by regular attention to the feeder. Keep the feeder well stocked in bad weather, and do not let wet food stay in the feeder long enough to spoil. Notice which foods are being ignored by the birds and adapt your feeding plan accordingly.

Many people like to feed waterfowl, including ducks and geese. In fact, it is best not to do so. Water birds that come to rely on handouts may lose their compulsion to migrate and their fear of people, and they may pick up habits that might harm both the birds and people. When birds are not afraid of cars and planes, for example, they may cause safety problems by walking across roads or flying across airport runways. And the birds' tendency to gather in large groups in confined areas when they expect to be fed increases competition for limited food supplies. When winter arrives, the added stresses of eating less nutritious food than they would consume under normal conditions and exposure to harsh weather make the birds more susceptible to life-threatening diseases. If you just can't help yourself, don't feed the birds before the end of the hunting season in your area. It is illegal to put out food for waterfowl during the hunting season except under permit. Your best food choices are grains like wheat and corn because they keep well outside.  $\partial$ 

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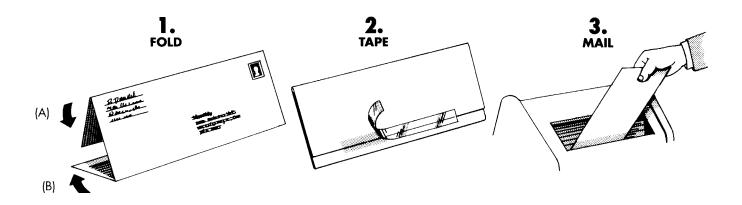


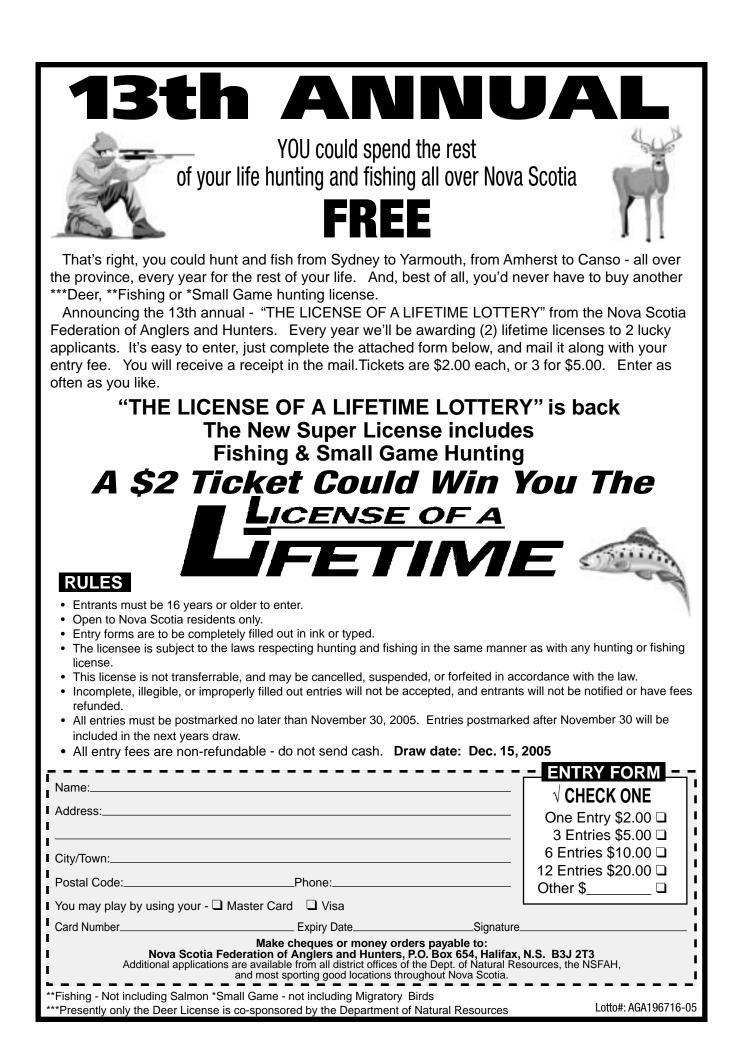
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