

Our Wildlife

News from the Wildlife Division

Department of Environment & Conservation

Natural Heritage Branch

Snowshoe Hare Monitoring Program

Hare health plays big role in wildlife management

The Wildlife Division's snowshoe hare monitoring program provides information necessary not only for the management of hare populations as a game species, but for the management of other furbearers, particularly the lynx, that rely heavily on hares as prey.

Winter/Spring 2012

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Snowshoe Hare in Newfoundland and Labrador

By Mike McGrath and John Reynolds

The snowshoe or varying hare (*Lepus americanus*) is native to Labrador, but was introduced to Newfoundland from Nova Scotia on a number of occasions between 1864 and 1876. The Hon. Stephen Rendell, then-president of the Newfoundland Agricultural Society, shipped hares from Halifax to St. John's and distributed them to magistrates in various parts of the Island to be released into the wild. Densities were found to be high enough to have the first open hunting season in 1879.



Information collected from the Snowshoe Hare Monitoring Program, as well as licence sales and returns, provides important information about snowshoe hare cycles. Hares on the Island of Newfoundland are currently experiencing a period of decline.

Photo: John Reynolds

Since those early days, the snowshoe hare harvest has been an important part of the culture and livelihood of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians. Today, approximately 30,000 residents participate in the annual hare harvest, a number that has not changed significantly through the years. However, depending on hare abundance, as many as 300,000 to 1.3 million hares are harvested annually. Although most hares in the province are taken by snarers, in certain areas, shooting hares with and without dogs is also a common practice.

Ecology of Snowshoe Hares

Although snowshoe hares are known locally as "rabbits," they are actually quite different from true rabbits. Hares are generally heavier, with larger ears and hind legs, and do not live in nests or dens. Unlike the helpless and naked young of rabbits, young hares or leverets are born fully furred, on the ground, with their eyes open, and are able to move around shortly after birth. Snowshoe hares are known for their seasonal changes in coat colour, from brown in summer to white in winter, and for their large, snowshoe-like feet. The average weight of adult hares can range from 1.4 to 1.8 kg (approx. 3-4 lb), with females tending to be slightly heavier than males. Snowshoe hares breed primarily between March and early August and may have two or more (up to four) litters. Litter sizes can range from two to four young. Young hares reach adult size in about six or seven months and are able to breed in the spring following their birth.

Snowshoe hare can be found nearly everywhere in the province. The home range of a snowshoe hare is usually no more than eight hectares

- about the size of a mall parking lot. Typical hare habitats are areas with relatively thick, low cover for escape, resting and feeding. The snowshoe hare's diet varies by season. In summer, its diet consists mainly of succulent herbaceous vegetation such as clover, grasses, sedges, ferns and dandelions. In winter, when leafy vegetation is not available, woody twigs are the main food item, although frozen meat has been known to be scavenged opportunistically.

Population Dynamics

Snowshoe hare populations are known for their fluctuations, where numbers gradually increase, peak, and then rapidly decrease. Population peaks tend to occur across the province every seven to 10 years, nearly simultaneously, although with some slight regional variations. Many factors are thought to regulate snowshoe hare fluctuations, such as winter food shortages, predators, disease, weather, stress and changes in the age and genetic structure of the population. It has been shown that when snowshoe hare populations are declining, juvenile mortality can be as high as 80-95% or conversely, as low as 45-70% when populations are increasing.

Common predators of the snowshoe hare include the lynx, red fox, coyote, birds of prey such as goshawks and owls, and red squirrels (predators of young hares). Lynx are so heavily dependent on hares as their main source of food that their numbers also fluctuate dramatically along with their primary prey; although generally with a one- to two-year time lag behind the peaks and lows of the hare. The Wildlife Division uses hare monitoring research to predict population trends in lynx, and to sustainably manage lynx populations by closing the season for lynx trapping on the island in areas and years when lynx populations are low.

Adult snowshoe hares are thought not to live past five years in the wild. During the peak of the population, an 82% overall mortality rate was measured within a localized population from one breeding season to the next. This further demonstrates the high reproductive output and breeding capacity of snowshoe hares, along with their ability to survive in various types of habitats.

One of the primary objectives of the Wildlife Division is to manage wildlife populations at sizes and distributions that are sustainable over the long term. To this end, we gather data on the health of a suite of species. With respect to snowshoe hare, information has historically been collected by two major means: monitoring harvest trends through license returns/sales, and conducting annual field surveys.



Hares feed on woody twigs in winter when leafy vegetation is unavailable.

Photo: Mike McGrath



A trapped hare at one of the seven live-trapping grids located throughout the island.

Photo: John Reynolds



Hares are named for their large, snowshoe-like feet.

Photo: Mike McGrath

Field Research

Snowshoe hare population density and trends are currently monitored on the island through the establishment of permanent, live-trapping grids to estimate abundance. In addition to tracking abundance, the Wildlife Division is interested in the influence hunting may have on hare numbers. Therefore, trapping grids are located in hunted and non-hunted areas. Hunted grids were located near communities, and hunting activity confirmed by conservation officers or located in areas of easy accessibility. Non-hunted grids are located in protected areas such as parks, or areas that are difficult to access.

There are currently seven grids in operation:

Avalon Region:

Paddy's Pond - MUN woodlot (Hunted)
Butter Pot Provincial Park (Non-hunted)

Eastern Region:

Port Blandford woodlot (Hunted)
Dunphy's Pond, Terra Nova National Park (Non-hunted)

Western Region:

Crooked Pond (Non-hunted)
Parson's Pond (Hunted)

Central Region:

Neyles Brook (Hunted)

Distributing sampling grids throughout the island permits the identification of regional differences in numbers.

Each grid contains 50 live traps baited with alfalfa cubes and a slice of apple before dark (between 4:30 and 6:30 p.m.) and checked just after dawn (7:30 a.m.). Trapping occurs for at least three nights on each grid with no more than two nights trapped consecutively. These protocols ensure that any capture stress of hares is kept to a minimum. The three trapping nights usually occur within a seven-day period and depending on the grid, this occurs anywhere between late August and early October.

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KEEPING WITH TRADITION: Approximately 30,000 residents participate in the annual hare harvest. Depending on hare abundance, as many as 300,000 to 1.3 million hares are harvested annually. Most hares in the province are taken by snarers, but shooting/dog hunting is also a common practice in some areas.

Photo: Chris Baldwin.

On initial capture, hares are marked with individually numbered ear tags. For every capture, the ear tag number, trap location, weight, right hind foot length, sex, presence of ticks, and percentage of white pelage (fur) are recorded.

The number of hares on each grid is calculated using a statistical population estimator. Estimators are used because they provide a better assessment of the population size than just using the number of hares captured. The estimator accounts for hares that may be on the grid but never captured, and for hares that are more likely than others to get caught. Population estimates are then expressed as densities (number of hares per hectare) to account for some differences in grid size.

Looking at the data from the individual trapping grids reveals information on regional differences in hare densities. (See graph, top right: **Snowshoe Hare Density Trend, 1999-2011**). Some grids have a relatively high density, while others are quite low. The pattern of change with respect to the previous year is not always the same. For example in 2011, hare density decreased on all grids compared to 2010, except for the Paddy's Pond grid. This type of data helps support information

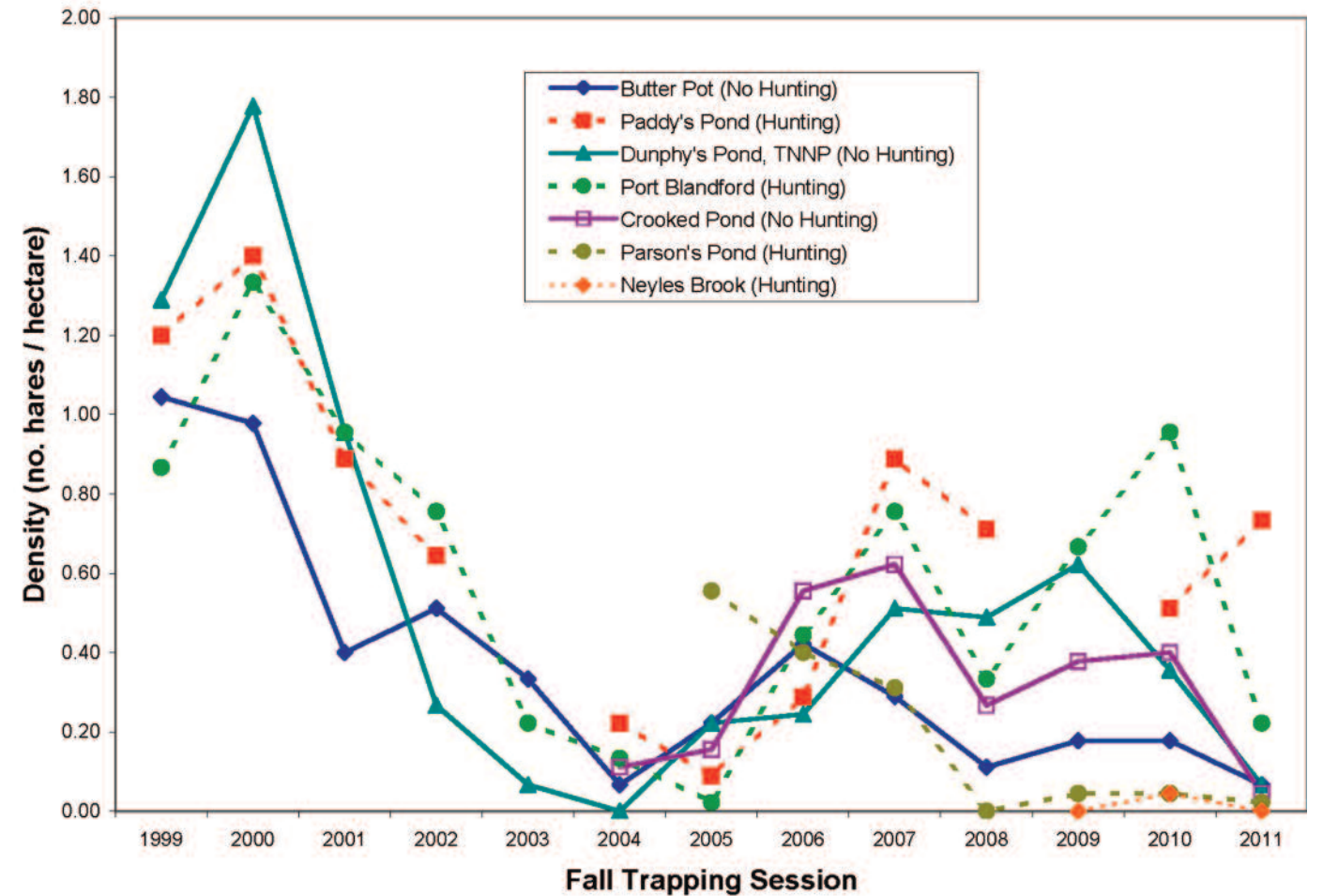
provided by hunters from different areas of the island.

In addition, monitoring multiple grids has shown that there is no clear pattern between the hunted and non-hunted grids. To this point in time, hare densities do not appear to be negatively affected by hunting.

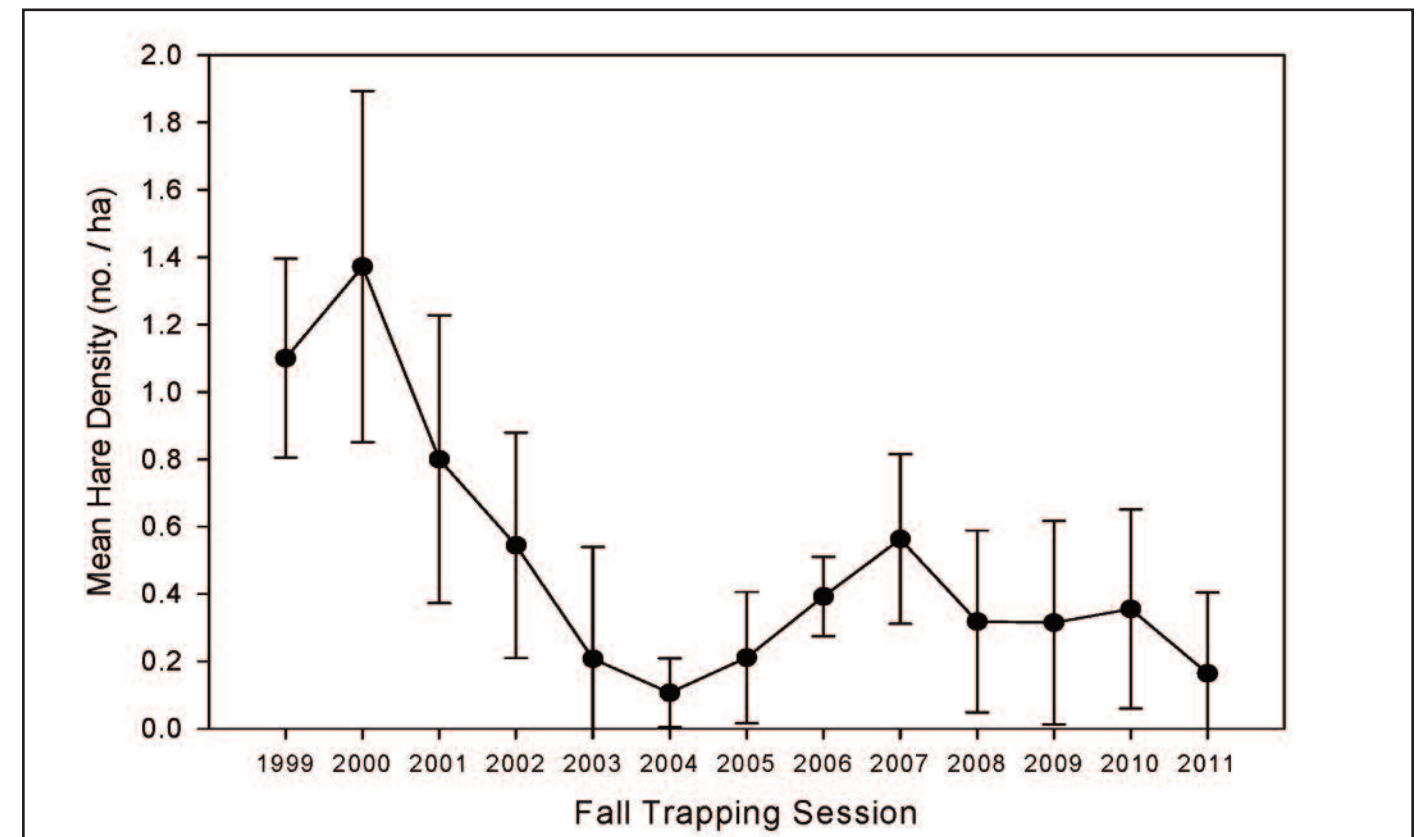
All the data can be combined to provide a general pattern of the hare cycle across the island. (See graph, bottom right: **Mean Hare Densities 1999-2011**). This shows that overall hare numbers peaked in 2000 and then declined steadily. Lowest densities were reached in 2004 before populations increased again until 2007. There was a decline in 2008, and then hare numbers remained somewhat stable until another downturn in 2011. Populations can be expected to be low for the next year or two.

The Wildlife Division will continue to monitor hare populations. This information is necessary not only for the management of snowshoe hare as a game species, but for the management of other furbearers, particularly the lynx, that rely heavily on hares as prey.

Our Wildlife



Snowshoe Hare Density Trend, 1999-2011



Mean Hare Densities 1999-2011

Trapper education goes outdoors

As a kid, you may have heard mom, dad or another important mentor say *just watch and learn, or; listen and repeat after me, or, my favourite; now that you've seen me do it, why don't you give it a try?*

By Nathan Spence & Chris Baldwin

Each of these phrases might have included a few extra creative adjectives for some of us. The real point is, as individuals, our reaction to our teachers says a lot about our own learning style. Educators take advantage of this knowledge by incorporating different styles of learning to ensure students have a full understanding of the steps required to complete a specific task. Trapper education courses use a similar approach, including one participants consider the most enjoyable: using the outdoors as their classroom.

The Newfoundland and Labrador Trappers Association (NLTA) and the Department of Environment and Conservation's Wildlife Division recently delivered several trapper education courses, followed by practical training sessions for fish and wildlife technician program students from the College of the North Atlantic.

Seasoned trapper education instructor and NLTA president Ken White, NLTA member Eugene Tiller, and training specialist Nathan Spence of the Wildlife Division provided hands-on outdoor demonstrations of a variety of common land-based and water sets for furbearers. Participants also learned how to properly use foothold snares for black bears, considered big game in Newfoundland and Labrador but still of great interest to trappers. The NLTA members also demonstrated skinning techniques using several species trapped earlier in the fall.

Instructors took students outdoors to typical furbearer habitats to teach the basics during the practical sessions. Techniques included setting foot snares in a covered cubby set for bears; dirt hole and snow sets with leg-hold traps for coyotes and fox; and water sets for otter and mink, including box sets used to avoid non-target species such as the threatened Newfoundland marten. Participants observed or experienced each step in the process of preparing and making the sets with the help and expertise of their mentors. Many participants

commented that preparing these sets outdoors gave them a much more realistic perspective of setting traps compared to what you would expect from a video or indoor classroom scenario.

Fish and wildlife technician students training to work in natural resource fields as technicians and wildlife officers considered the added component of practical field sessions an excellent introduction to all aspects of trapping. Good trapping skills are important, particularly if future job prospects involve capturing wildlife for research or handling nuisance wildlife.

Like many other trapper education courses, compulsory in-class training provides important background including the historical significance of trapping, its economic and recreational benefits, safety around traps, equipment identification, furbearer ecology, and the importance of trapping as a management tool for furbearers.

The additional opportunity to participate in practical sessions allowed the students to get hands-on experience in trap techniques for various species, and how to properly skin and handle furs such as fox, coyote, lynx, mink and beaver.

The concept of practical trapper education is not new; it's delivered in a variety of ways across Canada. Offering such programs is challenging because of the extra time it adds to an already demanding indoor classroom-style course. The benefits and advantages of engaging this style of learning, however, are valuable and worthwhile in the long run.

Following the success of this year's sessions, the Wildlife Division and the NLTA are planning future workshops for new trappers and those looking to expand their skills. For more information, feel free to contact the Wildlife Division at (709) 637-2006 or by email: nathanspence@gov.nl.ca

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HANDS-ON: Above, left: Eugene Tiller demonstrates the use of snow sets with leg-hold traps for coyotes and foxes. Centre: Ken White explains the use of a water set for mink. Right: Nathan Spence demonstrates proper technique for setting snares. Top right: A CNA student gains first-hand experience in skinning a coyote. Photos: Nathan Spence and Chris Baldwin

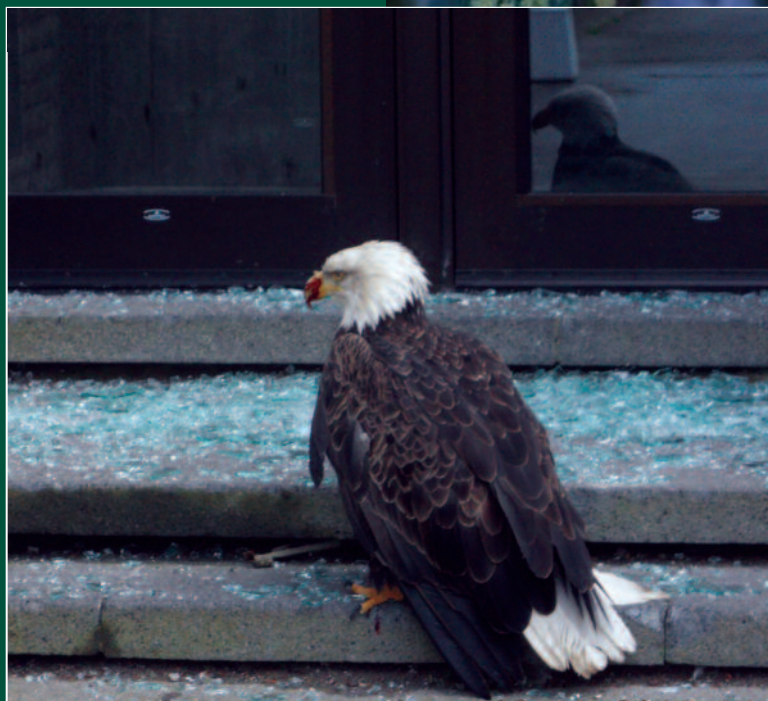
Injured Bald Eagle gets her wings back

By Rodney Collins

Staff at Salmonier Nature Park (SNP)

cared for 65 injured or orphaned animals under its Animal Care Rehabilitation Program in 2011, including an adult Bald Eagle that crashed into and shattered a six-foot, double-paned window at the St. John's Arts and Culture Centre in the fall of 2011.

A witness reported the eagle was being pursued and mobbed by several crows at the time of the crash. Conservation officers responding to the call contained and captured the eagle and transported it to SNP on Nov. 8, 2011.



Above, after the crash: Emily on the steps of the St. John's Arts and Culture Centre.

Photo: Jim Williams

When staff examined the bird, blood originating from the nostrils was visible on the beak, and bruising was observed in the mouth, especially under the tongue. No fractures were found, but the right wing was noticeably very weak, bruised and swollen. Despite its injuries, the bird was bright and alert.

Dr. Danielle Broders prescribed anti-inflammatory medication for five days to treat the injuries. As a precaution, the eagle was maintained inside in a warm and dark room for the first night to treat for stress and shock. The next morning, her good condition allowed staff to move the bird outside to an enclosure that allowed restricted mobility but not flight, to prevent her injuries from worsening and to give them time to heal. For the first five days, the bird refused to eat on its own so was force fed her lunch, which consisted of whole mice. When she started eating on her own, her diet progressed to whole rat or flounder.

After 10 days she was placed in a flight cage where she could fly and get her strength back. After two weeks, she was strong enough to be released back to the wild. The eagle was affixed with a transmitter and a Canadian Wildlife Service band, and released near Paddy's Pond, near St. John's, on Dec. 2, 2011. Tagging and tracking the eagle will provide information on the recovery success of rehabilitated wildlife and possibly insight into her breeding success.

Right: The injured eagle is now healthy and was released back into the wild. Her movements are tracked on the map above.

Photo: Rodney Collins



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The Wildlife Division uses satellite and GPS telemetry to track the movements of large raptors such as Bald Eagles. Current technology permits a Bald Eagle's location to be recorded multiple times during a 24-hour period, identifying its home range, and tracking eagles over large areas, identifying seasonal distribution. To view the monthly movements of two collared eagles, visit [Eagle Tracking Locations](#) on the Wildlife Division website.

SPEAKING OF STEWARDSHIP...

THE WILDLIFE DIVISION'S STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM DEFINES STEWARDSHIP AS "THE CAREFUL AND RESPONSIBLE MANAGEMENT OF SOMETHING ENTRUSTED INTO ONE'S CARE." ALONG WITH THE TRADITIONAL FREEDOM OF ACCESS AND USE OF WILDLIFE AND HABITAT WE CURRENTLY ENJOY IN NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR, COMES PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY TO PARTICIPATE IN MANAGING THOSE RESOURCES SUSTAINABLY.

BY CHARMINE BARNEY

The Stewardship Section was engaged in several education and public engagement events throughout the province this past fall. Many of these events are carried out as part of implementing the Habitat Conservation Plans of municipalities that have signed habitat stewardship agreements with the province. The main goals of these events are to educate residents of an area to become more aware of the natural environment around them, and to encourage and engage them in becoming active stewards in their community.

Youth in our communities are quite open to considering new ideas and changing personal habits that impact our environment. They are also the future leaders of our communities: future councilors, developers, fisherpersons, business people and hunters.



Heather Chaffey of the Wildlife Division talks about wetlands and wildlife with students in Carmanville.

Photo: Danielle Fequet

Involving young people in education or engagement events provides them an opportunity to learn about what makes their own community special. It also gives them a chance to learn about the importance of environmental stewardship, and how the decisions of town leaders and individuals can greatly impact the habitat wildlife need to survive. The support of like-minded individuals can make major changes in the hearts and minds of decision-makers, developers, and residents of communities where resource use decision-making and planning has a significant impact on the landscape and the wildlife it supports.

Best management in Burgeo

The Town of Burgeo signed a Coastal Habitat Stewardship Agreement relating to habitat for Common Eider and the endangered Piping Plover in July 2010. To complement the agreement, this year the town drafted and approved a Habitat Conservation Plan in partnership with the Wildlife Division. A portion of the plan identifies conservation and education strategies that may be implemented within the town. As requested by Burgeo Mayor MacDonald, stewardship biologists Cathy Regular and Charmaine Barney, along with Danielle Fequet, conservation programs specialist with Ducks Unlimited Canada (DUC), traveled to Burgeo in November 2011 and held an education and youth engagement event at Burgeo Academy.

During the event, they talked to 75 students and teachers about the importance of wildlife and habitat stewardship in the Town of Burgeo, and asked students to make a list of activities in which they could participate to be good environmental stewards in their community. Participants also pledged their commitment to implement those activities by "boarding" (signing their name on) the "Stewardship Bus."



Cathy Regular talking to Burgeo Academy students about best management practices for Common Eider and Piping Plover.

Photo: Charmaine Barney



Boarding the Stewardship Bus in Burgeo.

Photo: Charmaine Barney



Geocaching in the Thomas Howe Demonstration Forest with the Gander Boys and Girls Club.

Photo: Cathy Regular



That's the ticket!

Photo: Cathy Regular

One commitment youth made was to follow best management practices for Common Eider nesting islands and endangered Piping Plover beaches found in Burgeo. These best management practices, outlined in the town's Habitat Conservation Plan and discussed as part of the presentation, include avoiding walking near nesting areas or boating around islands where hens are raising their young, and keeping their dog on the leash while walking on known plover breeding beaches. The students also had an opportunity to participate in a drawing and/or writing contest to illustrate how they will be good stewards of the environment, and prizes were also given to some creative students.

Geocaching in Gander

As part of the implementation of the Town of Gander's Habitat Conservation Plan and Stewardship Agreement, the town welcomed stewardship biologist Cathy Regular at a youth geocaching event in August 2011. This event was held in partnership with the Gander Boys and Girls Club and the Sir Thomas Howe Demonstration Forest. Some 50 participants learned about the town's commitment to wildlife habitat stewardship, learned basic GPS skills, and went on an electronic scavenger hunt for geocaches hidden along the Thomas Howe outdoor trail system. Students enjoyed a celebratory BBQ, lucky ones received door prizes, and each was given a take home information sheet on the municipal stewardship program.

Conservation in Carmanville

In November 2011, 135 students and teachers from Grades K-6 at Phoenix Academy in Carmanville were involved in an educational event also carried out in partnership by stewardship biologist Heather Chaffey and Danielle Fequet (DUC). Students had an opportunity to learn about the Municipal Stewardship Program the Town of Carmanville has been involved in for over 15 years.

As part of the implementation of its Stewardship Agreement, the Town has built a wetland interpretation center and extensive trail system, staffed by interpreters during the summer. Students learned about the importance of wetlands and its functions, identified many different types of wetlands including those in their very own community, and talked about the wildlife that live and depend on them. An interactive game in the gymnasium got their hearts pumping as they learned to identify four essential components of a habitat that an animal needs in order to survive – food, water, shelter and space.

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Being a good environmental steward in Burgeo.

Photo: Cathy Regular

Many winter activities are fun and exhilarating - skiing, snowmobiling, snowshoeing, and snarling for example. But with the fun comes an additional risk factor because of harsher and less forgiving weather conditions. Getting lost or injured, or having your equipment fail during a summer outing can be inconvenient and sometimes dangerous. The same occurrence in winter could be fatal.

By Shawn Street

WINTER SAFETY

Expect the unexpected

Knowing how to prepare for potential problem that may occur could make the difference between an unexpected adventure and a life-threatening mishap. The following are some suggestions on how to stay safe and enjoy the outdoors.

During my many years of involvement with a volunteer search and rescue group, many of the people we were called to help or rescue could have spent far less time in uncomfortable situations if they had done a few simple things before leaving home.

The major problem we usually encounter is knowing where to start looking for someone who is overdue. The further you are from a main highway in Newfoundland, the less likely it is that your cell phone will work. Creating a **trip plan**, either in writing or simply by telling someone what you are doing, where you are going, and when to expect you back can be invaluable in case a mishap occurs. When dealing with cold winter climates, minutes rather than hours can make the difference between life and death. A simple trip plan includes the five Ws and an H: **Who, Where, Why, When, What and How.**

- **Who is going?** Are you alone, with someone else, or in a group? This makes a difference in the level of urgency. People who are travelling alone are much more likely to get into situations that require Search and Rescue than those who travel in groups.

- **Where are you going?** This information is crucial for searchers to know where to begin to look. It is very hard to locate someone who is six hours overdue on snowmobile if you have no idea where they were going.

- **Why are you going?** What type of activity are you doing, and is it for work or pleasure? Knowing why you are going can help Search and Rescue determine how far you might have gone, and can narrow down the area we need to search and the time required to find you.

- **When are you leaving and coming back?** This information is necessary for someone to determine when you might be in trouble. It's hard to know you're overdue if family and friends don't know when to expect you back. Knowing what time you left and how long you have been gone can also help Search and Rescue narrow the search area.

- **What are you doing?** Skiing, snowmobiling, hunting, snowshoeing ... the type of activity lets Search and Rescue know what conditions you are likely prepared for and what type of equipment you have with you.

- **How did you get to your starting point?** Car, truck, snowmobile, skis? A search usually starts at the last place the person was seen, but if your vehicle is located, the search can start from that point. This makes the search area smaller and reduces the time you have to spend in a bad situation.

After your trip plan, the next thing you should take into account is the **weather**. Since the jet stream frequently passes right over Newfoundland, the weather can change rapidly and the forecast is not always as accurate as we might like. A sunny Saturday afternoon can easily turn into a Saturday night blizzard, with harsh wind chills and major snowfall. Check the forecast before you go, but be prepared for anything.

Dressing in **layers** provides the best option for changing weather conditions. Add layers for colder weather and remove layers if you are warm. Start off with a wicking layer to take the moisture away from the skin, and end with a water proof layer to keep water or wet weather away from your layers. If your layers become wet, their ability to keep you warm decreases drastically, to the point where they may become useless and even speed up heat loss.

BE PREPARED

Far left: Before heading into the outdoors in winter, prepare a trip plan and make sure someone knows where you're planning to go, when you will return, and who you're with. **Centre:** Basic equipment such as water, snacks, fire-lighting material and a first-aid kit in your pack is essential to staying safe in case of emergency.

Left: There's strength in numbers: travelling with a group is safer than going it alone. *Photos: Shawn Street*

Always **expect the unexpected**. If you are going for a day, plan to spend the night. If you are going for the night, plan for two nights. If you use this rule and a mishap does occur, it could downgrade the danger of trying to survive a night in the woods to perhaps spending an uncomfortable night in the woods.

If you are on a snowmobile, it is a lot easier to take additional supplies because weight does not play such a role; if you are snowshoeing or skiing, your weight capacity is limited. But survival essentials don't need to weigh a lot or take up much space. Having something to **light and maintain a fire** should always be on top of your list. You have heard the saying fire is life: in the winter, that changes from a saying to a law. Having waterproof matches, fire steel or a lighter in a waterproof bag is not enough - you also need tools to gather fire wood: a good knife, small axe or a folding saw will make this task much easier. You must also know how to use your fire-making gear. Starting a fire when you are lost, cold or injured will be much harder if you have never lit one before. Practice with all your gear in a variety of situations.

Water should be the next thing on your list of essentials. The body can go for several days without food, but you can only survive without water for a short period of time. Colder winter air is often drier, causing dehydration to occur faster than you might expect. It's important to drink often. Bringing water or some way to boil water or melt snow will help keep you warm and stop dehydration. A **small, lightweight kettle or juice can** to put over a fire is perfect for water, won't take up a lot of space in your pack, and can be used to store some of the other essentials you should have, such as:

- An easily prepared meal or snacks
- A whistle to signal for help
- A headlight or small flashlight and batteries (LED)
- GPS with spare batteries or a map and compass
- At least two emergency blankets or a small shelter
- A first aid kit
- Sunglasses and sunscreen

If you are out on a snowmobile or quad, you should also have some **basic equipment to fix your machine** if it breaks down. Extra spark plugs, plug wrench, basic tools, oil, extra gas and a spare belt can all be kept on your machine and will be there if you need them.

When thinking about safety in winter, some things should not be compromised. Many people rescued by Search and Rescue teams make the same mistakes: the more comfortable you become in the woods, the more likely you are to neglect safety essentials, particularly when going out by yourself for just a short time. Always tell someone where you are going and when you plan to be back. Always carry a small pack with material to start and maintain a fire, extra clothes, food and water, and other essential items.

Often the biggest mistake people make is thinking that this could never happen to them. *I'm just going out for a short hike or ride - I don't need to let anyone know or take anything with me. What could happen?* Usually, nothing does happen - but being prepared if something does can mean the difference between life and death.

Our Wildlife

News from the Wildlife Division



SPOTTED in your backyard



John Penney snapped a curious Newfoundland marten near Georges Lake



Mink taken south of Corner Brook by Millard Bennett

The Wildlife Division depends on public input to help monitor some of our province's wildlife species. Sometimes people are in the right place at the right time when a chance for a great photos arises. If you're a nature watcher, the Wildlife Division offers a variety of volunteer-based programs that allow you to make your observations count. When you report a sighting, you contribute meaningful information that helps us monitor and protect our province's biodiversity and wildlife resources.



Beaver dam by Millard Bennett



Marten in the woodpile by Millard Bennett



Karen Brake spotted this female red crossbill on a feeder in May 2011



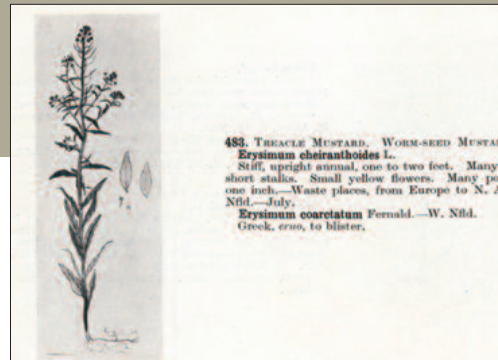
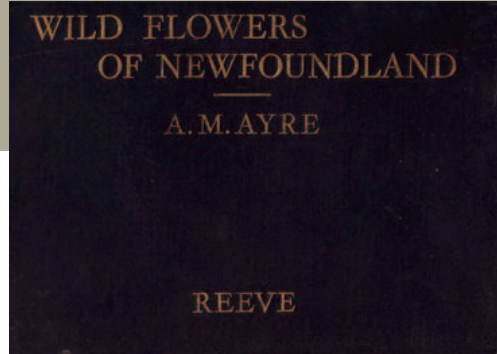
Caribou by Millard Bennett



Female red crossbill on a feeder, by Loretta Crisby-Whittle

Visit [Wildlife Biodiversity Monitoring](http://www.env.gov.nl.ca/env/wildlife/biodiversity) at www.env.gov.nl.ca/env/wildlife/biodiversity to find out how you can report incidental sightings of wildlife, or call (709) 637-2026

HINDSIGHT



Agnes Marion Ayre (1890-1940) of St. John's produced meticulous botanical drawings admired by her contemporaries, although she considered herself to be an amateur botanist. In the preface to her 1935 "Wildflowers of Newfoundland Part III," she wrote: "Without making any pretence at being a scientific botanist, (the author) has tried to describe briefly, and in simple terms, the plants collected by herself and friends since 1927, and those of botanists and recent collectors."

The book was intended to be a five-volume series, but only one was published. Her original descriptions describing where each plant specimen was discovered, by whom, and the date, were omitted due to lack of space. The 1,000 life-sized water

colour paintings she had produced were also washed off and outlined in ink to reduce the cost of publication.



Agnes collected five-sixths of the then-known flora of Newfoundland and Labrador. After she died, her herbarium included nearly 2,500 of her own pressed specimens, as well as samples collected by others. The final collection of 100,000 specimens and 1,800 drawings went to Memorial University's biology department and is now available for viewing at the [Agnes Marion Ayre Herbarium](#).

Source: [Memorial University Digital Archives Initiative](#)

2011 Atlantic Provinces Youth Hunting/Fishing Exchange

The Youth Hunting and Fishing Exchange Program embraces the heritage and culture of hunting and fishing in Atlantic Canada, and encourages our youth to become involved in conservation in their own communities.

Through their participation in programs like the Firearms Safety/Hunter Education Course, young people, age 12 to 17, can also win an opportunity to experience other cultures and lifestyles involving hunting and fishing in our neighbouring provinces. The program is endorsed by the governments of New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island and Newfoundland and Labrador, and is supported by various participating sponsors with an interest in wildlife.

Government and non-government agencies responsible for managing wildlife and habitat depend a great deal on the support of hunters and anglers. We all have a common interest in ensuring that our precious resources continue to be used responsibly and enjoyed by future generations.

Environment and Conservation Minister Terry French recently highlighted the program during the annual meeting of Newfoundland and Labrador Outfitters Association, and offered congratulations to Angelina House of Hawkes Bay, NL. Ms. House, at 17, was the 2011 provincial winner of the Atlantic Province's Youth Hunting and Fishing Exchange Program, and enjoyed a hunting trip for deer and black bear hosted in Nova Scotia by the Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources and Jobs Guide and Outfitting Services.

During the meeting, Minister French also presented local outfitter Barb Genge, owner of Tuckamore Lodge, with a framed "Continuing the Heritage" print for her support of the program, and for hosting exchange winners from several other provinces in years past, including Nova Scotia's 2011 winner, 17-year-old Aaron Creamer.

- Chris Baldwin



Above: Angelina House after a successful deer hunt in Nova Scotia. Submitted photo. Below: Environment and Conservation Minister Terry French, outfitter Barb Genge, Wildlife Division director John Blake, and Newfoundland and Labrador winner Angelina House. Photo: Linda Skinner



Our Wildlife News from the Wildlife Division

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Environment & Conservation

Wildlife Division



The mandate of the Wildlife Division is to protect and conserve Newfoundland and Labrador's biodiversity and manage its wildlife and inland fish resources for the benefit of present and future generations. To deliver on this mandate requires an incredible amount of work, both in the field and at the office. It is our hope that these newsletters will provide a snapshot into the work of the professionals who are striving to fulfill this mandate, and to highlight the complex nature of wildlife research and management.