



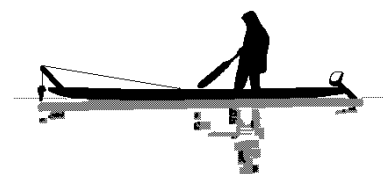
Inside:

President's Report
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Weird Stories
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NSSA Report
ASF Report
Barbless Hooks
And much, much more!

The St. Mary's River has many moods. This photo shows Silver's Pool in March 2005 as the ice is taken down the river by floodwater.

Fields flooded, drowning field mice and attracting six hungry immature eagles in Stillwater.

Their soaked neck feathers made them look like wild turkeys, creating a spectacle that grabbed the attention of passing motorists on Highway 7.



The St. Mary's River Association

The St. Mary's River Association is a charitable, nonprofit organization providing leadership and engaging partners to enhance, protect and promote the St. Mary's River as a healthy ecosystem for Atlantic salmon and other native animal and plant species as well as a rich community resource.

Our vision is "Health for the river, the Atlantic salmon, and our community."

"SMRA NEWS" is a publication of the St. Mary's River Association as a service to our members.

Editor: Bill Carpan

The opinions expressed are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the policy of the St. Mary's River Association, the editor, or the publisher.

Memberships, suggestions, and comments are welcome. Address all correspondence to:

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www.geocities.com/stmarysriverassociation

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Your river association has existed as a recognized organization for now over twenty-five years. The St. Mary's and other rivers of eastern Canada have undergone significant changes since 1979. Annual runs of Atlantic salmon have generally diminished and in some cases disappeared. Impacts from acid rain, farming and forestry practices, land development, high seas fishery and global climate change have all contributed to great changes to our watersheds.

The St. Mary's River Association has recognized this for a long time and has worked to try to mitigate these impacts. The strategic plan adopted by the Association in 2002 restated:

Our Vision

Health for the River, the Atlantic Salmon and our Community.

Our Mission

The St. Mary's River Association is a charitable, nonprofit organization providing leadership and engaging partners to enhance, protect and promote the St. Mary's River as a healthy ecosystem for Atlantic Salmon and other native animals and plant species, as well as a rich community resource.

That is the statement of a large job - a job the SMRA feels is extremely important for our community and river. The communities of the watershed for the most part developed because of the river and have continued to exist because of what the watershed provides. The river gives identity to the community. It is too important to not make it and keep it as healthy and sustainable as it can be. To that end, your board has decided to pursue a course which will move the Association to a new level of involvement in the health of the river.

The St. Mary's Watershed Project concept is being developed by a committee from the membership and board, comprised of Dale Archibald, Bill Carpan, Brenda Carpan, Florence Duffy, Bob Bancroft and John Cameron, with the assistance of Sean Mitchell, aquatic ecologist of Antigonish. An overview of the plan is as follows.

General Objective:

To assess the current state of environmental conditions within the St. Mary's River watershed, and from this develop

and initiate a comprehensive management plan reflecting the wishes and needs of the local communities, within the context of a rapidly changing environment due to anticipated climate change.

The underlying philosophy to this objective is comprised of four pillars:

1. Climate change is the most significant factor affecting future environmental conditions in Nova Scotia. It is occurring and there are foreseeable general conditions to be brought about by it. To maintain the expectations/requirements of society, and to also maintain many temperature-sensitive fish and wildlife species, requires explicitly incorporating climate change into management plans.
2. The local communities and residents must be included to the maximum extent possible in developing a management plan, and specifically in defining goals, objectives, strategies and indicators of the plan. Within this philosophy is also the explicit requirement to incorporate expertise from academia (e.g., St. Francis Xavier University) and government agencies within the plan.
3. A comprehensive plan should be developed at multiple spatial scales (i.e., incorporating the whole watershed; individual branches; individual tributaries; specific sites of issue/concern) and must be long-term (50+ years) in extent.
4. The Integrated Resource Management (IRM) model - requiring a great deal of public participation and communication between agencies and parties - is the best presently available process for managing systems as complex and variable as landscapes and ecosystems.

To meet the stated General Objective, a program of four parts is envisioned.

PART 1: ("Where we are")

Compilation and critical review/analysis

of all existing information and mapping of current conditions

PART 2: ("Where we should be going")

Comprehensive public survey and development of an interim watershed management plan

PART 3: ("How we are going to get there")

Collaboration with external researchers and applied stream/river ecological research.

PART 4: ("The Plan")

Development of comprehensive watershed management plan.

Building on the outline above, a stream-lined proposal package is currently being finalized. It will be used to elicit interest and request support from the community, interest groups, government agencies, academic agencies and funding sources. This package should be finalized by the end of May. An important first step in support for the project was a \$25,000 US a year commitment for three years of funding from Strachan Donnelley of the Center for Humans and Nature in New York. Strachan became interested in the St. Mary's River through his love of fishing and appreciation of nature. He has agreed to serve on the board as an Honorary Director. Strachan's advice for us in dealing with the challenges posed by land development and climate change will be invaluable. This is a very important initiative for our watershed and will help us understand how to best manage it to ensure its long term sustainability.

Although the Watershed Project has been a focus for the board, we still managed numerous accomplishments for the St. Mary's over the past year. Some of these were:

- 25th anniversary celebration, including: bird walk with Hardy Eshbaugh and George Archibald, river tours, river punt display, turtle talks with Mark Pulsifer and Jody MacEachern, kids' fishing derby and banquet with guest speaker George Archibald and silent auction attended by more than 100 supporters, with MC Terry MacIntyre. A great way to start our next 25 years.

- Co-hosted with St. Francis Xavier University a roundtable with approximately 35 participants to kick off the Watershed Project.

- Completed the final section of the Bank Stabilization project at Silver's Pool.

- Conducted a study of smolt densities with two smolt wheels located at Silver's and Glenelg bridges. Allan MacDonald led this hard-working team and will be undertaking the same this year. They can use more help and will welcome all volunteers. Call the Centre for information.

- Supported the turtle project again with administrative support, display space and field support.

- Operated the Interpretive and Educational Centre for another summer season to increased traffic.

- Conducted a scientific kelt fishery from April 1 to May 15 to sample kelts in the river. Angled kelts were measured, had scale samples taken and were examined for previous markings (punched caudal fins). A similar project is underway this year.

- A hook and release fishery was permitted from June 1 to July 15. Association members who participated in this fishery also measured and caudal fin-punched angled fish with kits provided by SMRA and DFO. A similar season is being negotiated for 2005.

All in all, it was a very full year for your SMRA and I would like to thank all who supported us. We do need lots of help and would welcome some new workers.

In closing, I would like to ask you to take a moment to remember two gentlemen who have meant a lot to the St. Mary's community and the SMRA. Sandy Cameron, as a past board member, was always a loyal supporter and a untiring promoter of the St. Mary's area. Norman Sinclair, a longtime member and presence on the St. Mary's, helped us in starting our museum. Beyond financial support, he provided us with the "Babe

Ruth" collection. In fact, as a youth, Norman snapped the photo of Babe in front of the Sinclair Camp at the Ford Pool. Sandy and Norman, we keep you in our thoughts any day we are lucky enough to be on the St. Mary's.



Dale Archibald
President, SMRA

NOTICE TO MEMBERS Annual Meeting

The annual general meeting of the St. Mary's River Association will be held on **Sunday, May 29th, 2005, 2 pm**, at the Association's Education & Interpretive Center, 8404 Hwy 7, Sherbrooke, NS.

Items on the agenda are:

Guest Speaker—Jim Gourlay
Annual Reports
Financial Report
Review of Past Year
Election of Officers & Directors
Plans for the coming year

All paid up members are eligible to vote at the meeting. Memberships will be available for those wishing to join the association.

- Dale Archibald, President

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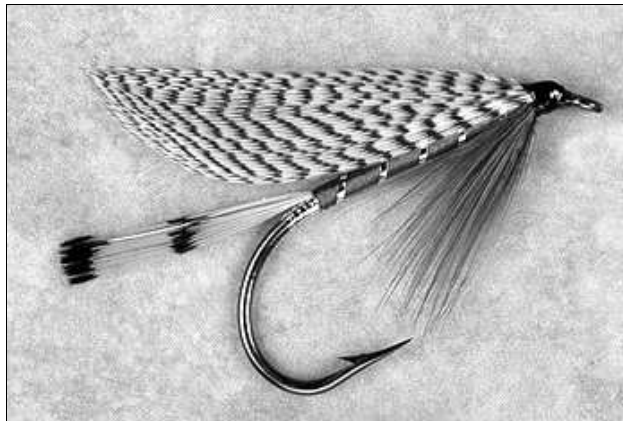
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The Pink Mystery

By Bill Carpan



Tying Specifications:

Thread: Black 8/0 Unithread
Hook: Trout wet fly, size 8—12
Tag: Extra fine oval silver tinsel
Tail: Golden Pheasant Tippet Fibers
Ribbing: Five turns of fine oval silver tinsel
Body: Pink floss
Wing: Teal flank
Hackle: Pink
Head: Black

The Pink Mystery has been a popular sea-trout wet fly in Nova Scotia's Antigonish County for many years. The teal wing and tippet tail give the fly the character of several British sea-trout flies. I suspect that it may have originated in the British Isles, although I have never seen the pattern referenced in any book, British or otherwise, and my Internet searches were also unsuccessful.

I'm told that it is popular for Canada's P.E.I. province sea-run brook trout, and in my experience it seems to work as well as most wet flies for summer brook trout fishing in Nova Scotia lakes.

The fly has a loyal following among trout fishermen in some areas, and those who like it like it a lot. If any of you would like to share information about this fly, please send it to the Association and help us demystify the Pink Mystery.

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Notice to Anglers & Guides

Join ASF's NEW LIVE RELEASE CLUB

but there is a catch...The bar has been raised!

To become a member of ASF's new Live Release Club and to be entered into ASF's draw for prizes, anglers and guides must go the extra mile and voluntarily release wild Atlantic salmon or grilse that could legally be retained.

**Release those salmon
and grilse and enter now!**

Name: _____

Address: _____

Prov./State: _____ Postal/Zip Code: _____

Tel: _____ E-mail: _____

I released a grilse or salmon on the _____ River.

Estimated Weight: _____ Please circle one kg. lb.

Please return your completed form by Dec. 15.

For more information on Live Release or to enter on-line, visit the Live Release section of the ASF website



www.asf.ca

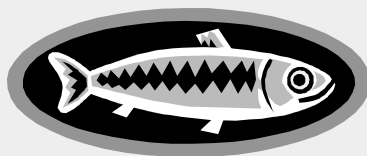
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 (506) 529-4581 asf@nbnet.nb.ca

***Release all salmon and grilse
Save the species; save the sport!***

From the Shallow End of the Pool

by Ol' Hook Bill



We are told by many leading environmental and conservation organizations that fresh clean water is rapidly becoming not only scarce but one of the most valuable resources in the world. Guysborough County has been truly blessed with an abundance of lakes, streams and rivers. Per square mile we have some of the best fresh water resources in Canada. Potentially this resource will have a greater long-term economic impact on Eastern Nova Scotia than either pulpwood or Sable gas.

Guysborough County has lagged behind other areas of the Province in economic and industrial development. This has been a mixed blessing, as we have not had to contend with pollution problems, which, as a rule, accompanies many types of development. The fact of the matter is that a great deal of North America is buried under a blanket of pollution, which is having a devastating effect on fresh water supplies.

We need to do everything in our power to ensure our rivers, lakes and streams are protected and secure. Of course we continue to be the victims of industrial pollution, which originates as far away as the Eastern Seaboard of the United States. However, governments on both

sides of the border are finally taking steps to reduce green house emissions and we, over time, will be the benefactors.

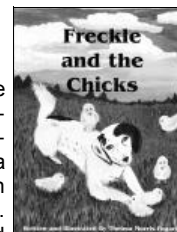
We need to pressure our government to put in place environmental laws, which will protect our land and water. We need to insist upon a zero tolerance of any agricultural, forestry or mining practice, which has the potential to harm the environment, and especially our most valuable natural resource - fresh, clean water.

Sable gas has the potential to change the face of the economy of Eastern Nova Scotia. But, remember, it is not ours, nor will the billions in profit be ours. However, our fresh water is ours and if we do the right things now, our children, grandchildren and countless species of wild life will be eternally grateful. At least that's how it looks from the shallow end of the pool.

_____ Ol' Hook Bill

Books by Nova Scotia Authors

Freckle and the Chicks
by Thelma Morris-Fogarty



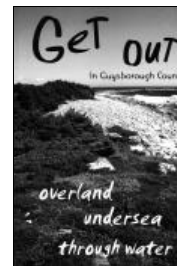
Thelma's second book once again weaves the adventures of farm life into a beautiful tale for all ages. Thelma lives on a century farm in Lower Caledonia, Guys. Co. NS, is a farmer and an avid spinner, weaver, stuffed toy-maker, as well as a gifted writer and illustrator of children's books.

The Legend of Nova Scotia's Deadly Macintosh Dry Fly



Published by SMRA, this little book documents some colorful and historically important St. Mary's River heritage. Enjoyable and informative works by three authors of angling mystery and magic. Only \$4.00!

Get Out in Guysborough County



Published in 2004 by the Guysborough County Regional Development Authority. A guide for outdoor enthusiasts of all fitness levels and a necessary addition to backpacks of those wishing to experience one of Nova Scotia's most rugged, picturesque and geographically exciting regions.

These excellent local books can be purchased from the gift shop of the **St. Mary's River Association Education and Interpretive Center**.

Buying these books helps both our local authors and the Association.

These wonderful books make great gifts!

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Education and Interpretive Centre News

This past year was a very busy one here at the Centre. We started 2004 organizing plans to hold our 25th anniversary celebrations. This event was highly successful as reported in our fall newsletter. We started the 2004 season on a high note followed by a busy tourist season. While other tourism operators reported a slow season, we saw similar numbers to last season. This year we were only approved for one summer student and we were lucky to have Duncan Galant. He is a local grade 11 student whose engaging personality was a hit with visitors.

Again this year we hosted a day camp for local kids. We had a daylong schedule of events scheduled including a nature scavenger hunt, salmon fish game made by Duncan and a wood turtle presentation given by Sarah Fraser and Melanie Duggan. All the kids had a great day.

We continued working on collecting family fishing history. Duncan worked with member Don Barnes to record his family fishing history. In October, the Nova Scotia Salmon Association and St. Mary's River As-

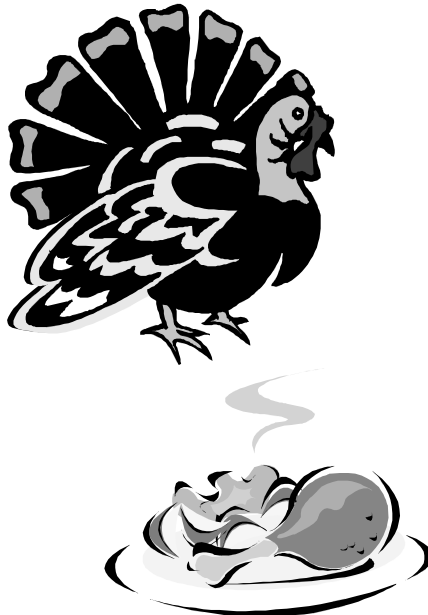
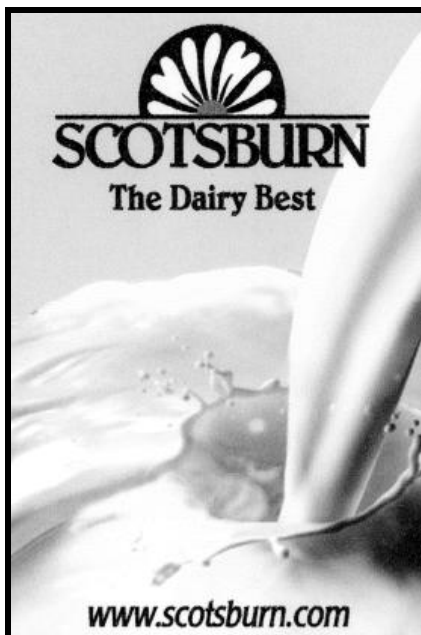
sociation organized a banquet, live and silent auction at the Claymore Inn in Antigonish. Funds raised were divided between the NSSA Acid Rain Project on the West River in Sheet Harbour and our own St. Mary's River Institute Project. The event was a huge success and we hope to have another this fall.

One interesting visitor this summer was a local turkey. I came to work one Sunday and noticed a white object beside the outhouses next door. Upon closer examination, I discovered it was, yes, a real live turkey! Concerned that it might venture unto the highway, I called around looking for the owner. It had occurred to me that he might have escaped its pen in Sherbrooke Village. After many calls, having located the owner, who did not want him back, so I called Natural Resources who agreed to come and get him. In the meantime I had followed his progress to our parking lot. Talking to him seemed to comfort him and before I knew it, he came up the back steps and into the Centre. He seemed quite comfortable inside and with human companionship. I knew he couldn't stay in the museum and directed him into the kitchen and closed the door. (Traffic was heavy due to 4x4 Rally) He didn't like being alone in the kitchen and jumped

up on top of the water cooler. I found that if I left the door open and talked to him, he would keep quiet. Finally he fell asleep on top of the cooler. He was happy to see visitors as they were astonished to see him so close and perched on the cooler. In the afternoon, a Dept. of Natural Resources officer came and took him away. I had a lovely day with an extraordinary guest. I thought that was the end of him as I told DNR that the owner did not want him and that they should find him a good home. Later that week I received a call from director Bob Kelly, who was looking after the turkey. He suggested that we sell tickets at our upcoming yard sale, to see if we could find him a good home.

Sorry to report, but he went to a good home for thanksgiving dinner! It broke my heart as I had become quite fond of him. He was by far our most unusual visitor.

- Joanne Mailman



Joanne Mailman and Florence Duffy receive a donation of \$1500 for office equipment from Nova Scotia Power, an Emera Company. Special thanks to Gary Kaiser.

Parting Words

By Duncan Gallant

Duncan is a St. Mary's Academy student whom SMRA employed for the 2004 summer season. He wrote this for us then.

We are sure his winning attitude, solid values and many skills will bring much success and happiness to him.

He is completing grade 12 this year and we wish him all the best.

While air conditioner salesmen change their tactics to snow blowers and rakes, and the ever increasing threat of frost looms over our disbelieving heads, it is time for me to say Good-Bye to what I've considered to be my second home, here at the St. Mary's River Association Education and Interpretive Centre.

For the last two months, I've hopefully done my part of assuring the operation of this exceptional part of our community.

Over the course of the summer, although the volume of tourists seemed to be down, their enthusiasm and interest in the center was better than ever. We've had people from as close as Old Road hill in Sherbrooke, to as far away as Rome, Italy, Australia and Japan. We have done our best to entertain their curiosity and educate them on the history and heritage we have and the projects to protect them.

With a partnership with the Sherbrooke Recreation Dept., Our Nature Day Camp for kids took place on Aug 16. There the kids were taken around the museum and told about the different exhibits, then the children were taken to the wonderful world of wood turtles with a captivating story and crossword puzzle guided by Sarah Fraser and Jody

MacEachern, students with the wood turtle project.

After leaving the ways of the turtle, the kids then got to become salmon, and travel through the different stages of its lifecycle, with a jumbo sized board game constructed on the floor of the Centre. They started as eggs and ended as smolt leaving for the open sea.

The game was then followed by a craft, where they made bat clips that they got to take home with them, and what better way to proceed after a craft than making your own ice cream, which I think you could ask any of the children that attended and you would be told that it was good.

After realizing their potential as workers in an ice-cream processing plant, the children then competed in a Scavenger Hunt, provided by the Recreation Dept., teams worked together to explore, find, and create different objects on their lists.


Even when the end part of the hunt was encroached by thickening rain,

hot dogs seemed to be fitting no matter what the meteorologist had said.

The children got to discuss the events of the day over barbecued hot dogs and pop, under the shelter of the covered steps of the Centre, and they were taken on a walk to the St. Mary's Rec-Plex by the Rec. Dept. to be picked up by their parents.

Here at the Centre we've also been doing research projects on the importance of the St. Mary's River played to certain families, as well as what kind of lifestyle these families had. This year we've done the project on the Barnes Family, including Henry Barnes who was the last jail keeper in Sherbrooke Village as well as an angler and fishing guide on the river.

As for myself, this has been one of the most educational and memorable summers to my knowledge. I will return to school with a greater appreciation for the river and the Interpretive Centre that I have helped operate. I would like to thank the SMRA for giving me this opportunity. My time here ends the 26th of August but Joanne will be here to guide you through our little piece of heritage for a time yet. So be sure to stop in and see things for yourself, and to be awed at what we have here in our own back yard.



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Inland Fisheries Division Update

Nova Scotia Department of Agriculture and Fisheries

The Inland Fisheries Division is committed to conserving and enhancing the quality and diversity of the fishery resources of Nova Scotia and to providing continued and varied angling opportunity through scientific inventory, classification and management of those resources. **Some of the major responsibilities of Inland Fisheries are:**

- Managing the freshwater sport fishery. This includes producing and distributing trout to urban and rural lakes in the province, establishing Special Management Areas based on biological surveys and angler recommendations to improve fisheries, carrying out angler surveys, conducting biological studies on lakes and streams, and other field and extension work that supports the enhancement and conservation of the inland recreational fishery.
- Providing departmental advice and technical expertise to provincial and federal agencies, intergovernmental committees and the public involved in the management of the freshwater sport fishery.

- Providing extension services to the public in the inland fisheries resource sectors through resource material, demonstration sites, on-site project evaluations, and public seminars and workshops.

- Directing and conducting development projects which promote and enhance sport fishing in Nova Scotia.

Some of the major field projects in 2004 included:

Sea-Run Speckled Trout Assessment

Our division examined the sea trout populations in River Denys, Middle River, and Lake O'Law Brook in Cape Breton. This project assessed sea run populations on these systems through a mark and recapture project whereby trout were live trapped with fyke nets and data collected on age and length. At total of 2,650 fish were marked (adipose fin clipped), 2,100 were captured and 77 were recaptured. On average 7% of the population was greater than 25 cm and 3% was greater than 30 cm. The information gained will also be applicable to mainland rivers.

Electrofishing Project

The purpose of the electrofishing project was to test the assumption that that brook trout population density

was strongly related to water temperature. Electrofishing was conducted on 77 of the 322 stream sites that were previously assessed through the temperature monitoring project. There were 104 cool water sites (<16.5°C), 97 intermediate water sites (16.5-19°C) and 121 warm water sites (>19°C) in the original study. The Nova Scotia stream classification system was based on the assumption that cool water sites are more important to Atlantic salmon and brook trout populations during warm low flow conditions in the summer. Results of the project indicated that brook trout population density was strongly related to water temperature. Approximately, 48 times more trout were found in the cool water sites compared to the warm water sites. The distribution of Atlantic salmon did not seem to be strongly related to the thermal nature of streams in our study.

Paleolimnology Project

Our division worked with Queen's University on the Nova Scotia Paleolimnology project. This project studies a lake's history using information archived in lake sediments. This research is designed to investigate water quality in Nova Scotia using paleo-ecological indicators. Such indicators of water quality are diatoms and chironomids. This research method allows us to see what long-term (150 years) changes have occurred in trout habitat. A total of 35 lakes have been sampled from 2003-

Sherbrooke & Area Crime Prevention Association

Ongoing commitment of two \$500 Scholarships to St. Mary's Academy each year



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St. Mary's District Lions Club

Dinner meetings 2nd — 4th Thursdays, 7:00 pm
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*We serve our community, our province,
our country, the world.*

2004, and 14 more will be sampled in the 2005 field season.

Smallmouth Bass Projects

A smallmouth bass project was conducted that confirmed the presence of this non-indigenous species in low numbers in Lake Ainslie, Inverness County. They have not established a spawning population. Habitat analysis has indicated that spawning structure and substrate constitutes less than 4% of available shoreline but may not be a limiting factor to successful colonization based on observations in established bass populations elsewhere. An important consideration to whether smallmouth bass become established in a particular water body may be the thermal requirements of young of the year (0+ juveniles). They need to accumulate enough fat reserves in their first growing season to survive the winter. This "geo-thermal exclusion" of smallmouth bass from certain geographic areas of the province may explain the inability of some introductions to become established. Other smallmouth bass projects in Nova Scotia include: (1) monitoring the distribution of this species provincially and within watersheds, (2) tournament monitoring, (3) development of a juvenile density index as a predictive tool for assessing year class strength and recruitment to the fishery, (4) assessing the consequences of illegal introductions to native fauna, and (5) assessment of Special Management regulations.

Other major projects included: evaluation of a bottom draw facility which involves using a siphon to increase flow and release cool water to the St. Francis Harbour River, bio-monitoring of West River Sheet Harbour as part of an acid rain mitigation program, a creel survey on the Petite Riviere to assess angler participation and catch rates, five lakes surveys, various smaller projects in support of volunteer sportfishing organizations and several demonstrations at youth camps and schools.

We would like to thank the St. Mary's River Association and all the volunteers who were involved in the research projects conducted by our staff and hope that their valuable support continues in the future. For further information on our research projects, please call our office in Pictou at (902) 485-5056.



NOVA SCOTIA Agriculture and Fisheries

This year my Department is very pleased to introduce a new Sportfish Habitat Fund.

Through a \$5.00 habitat fee on fishing licences, Nova Scotia anglers will share in the restoration and protection of fish habitat and help to sustain a healthy sportfishery. Community groups and volunteers, such as the St. Mary's River Association, contribute a great deal to our recreational fisheries and this fund will provide them with resources to continue their excellent work.

The primary goal of the fund is to support the conservation and enhancement of fish habitat and to improve public access to the sportfish resource.

I encourage all Nova Scotians to take advantage of the Nova Scotia Sportfishing Weekend which will be held on June 4 and 5, 2005. This is a great opportunity to enjoy our great outdoors.

It is my hope that everyone has a safe and successful fishing season.

Chris d'Entremont

Minister, Nova Scotia
Dept. Of Agriculture and Fisheries



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St. Mary's River Association Member of the Year

Jack Duffy



Our 2005 St. Mary's River Association Member of the Year is Jack Duffy. For many years Jack has been an active member of the Association.

Jack loves the outdoors, as his fondness for fishing and hunting shows. He loves his family, sharing his enthusiasm and knowledge of nature with his children and grandchildren, who, naturally, adore their grampa.

Jack helps the Association in many ways, such as acting as project supervisor on river stabilization projects and assisting with the labor intensive smolt wheel juvenile salmon assessment project. He also took part in the Sherbrooke Brook clean up with summer students. Where there's work to be done, there's Jack.

Jack can always be called upon to assist at the Centre whether it's taking garbage to the dump, fixing broken doorknobs or storing signs and other items in a barn over winter. For the past four years Jack has moved tables from Greenfield Sports Centre to the Interpretive for our annual yard sales or whenever, with a smile.

When asked to help out in any circumstance, he is always willing to give his time and experience. Jack's sense of humor is always evident and his helpful generosity is always appreciated.

The photo below shows Jack at work on the 2001 Barren Brook bank stabilization project.



Jack's generosity is extended to his family, his church, volunteer groups like Greenfield Seniors and SMRA, and his many appreciative friends and neighbors.

Thank you Jack!



DRAW & CONTEST WINNERS

During the past year, we held various draws to raise much-needed funds for the Interpretive Center and to promote the St. Mary's River Association. At the Community-a-Fair event held at the Sherbrooke Lion's Hall in May 2003, we had a booth promoting our continuing conservation efforts on the river. We also had a draw for a SMRA T-shirt, which was won by Lesley Brothers of Sherbrooke.

At the Pictou Expo we sold tickets on a rod and reel which were won by Calvin Williams of New Glasgow.

During the summer we sold tickets at the Center on a watercolor of the river by Peter Bresnen. The ticket winner was Joan McGrath of Aspen.

The second annual "Name our Fish" contest was once again very popular with visitors both young and young at heart.

The following people chose the winning names:

Regan Keay - New Glasgow
(6 & under)

Amelia MacKenzie - Sherbrooke
(7-12);

Benjamin McMillan - Bridgetown
(Teen)

Marlen Heggie - Greenhill, N.B.
(Adult)

Congratulations to all winners!

Thank you to everyone for helping us raise funds and awareness for our very important work.

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St. Mary's River Association Lottery Winners 2004

* Indicates proceeds given
back to SMRA

January 2004

150.00 Gerry MacIntosh
100.00 Jack Duffy
50.00 Dave Clark
50.00 Sheldon Rudolph
25.00 Doug Wolfe
25.00 Parker Wong
25.00 Jeff Eshbaugh
25.00 Gordon Steedman
25.00 John Robertson
25.00 Winston Delorey

February 2004

150.00 William Bishop
100.00 Jocelyn Ellis
50.00 Winston /Tim Sawlor
50.00 Don MacLean
25.00 Jenny MacIntosh
25.00 Owen/Nancy Beaver
25.00 Stan Harpell
25.00 Allie Jordan
25.00 Hardy Eshbaugh
25.00 Murray/Mary Baker

March 2004

150.00 Wayne MacIntosh
100.00 Barb Eshbaugh *
50.00 Don Barnes
50.00 Dale Archibald
25.00 Jeff Eshbaugh *
25.00 Charles Widgery
25.00 Allie Jordan
25.00 Parker Wong
25.00 Robert Sidler
25.00 Allan MacDonald

April 2004

150.00 Frank Jordan
100.00 Norm Kelly
50.00 Jocelyn Ellis
50.00 Scott Fraser
25.00 MacGillivray Fuels
25.00 Colin Coady
25.00 Charles Widgery
25.00 William Bishop
25.00 John Robertson
25.00 Linda MacIntosh

May 2004

150.00 Chris Fraser
100.00 Cynthia Sponagle
50.00 Stan Harpell
50.00 Jeff Eshbaugh *
25.00 Bill Fraser
25.00 Carl Purcell
25.00 Gordon Steedman
25.00 Aleah Lomas
25.00 William Bishop
25.00 MacGillivray Fuels

June 2004

150.00 Carolyn Cameron
100.00 Bill Fraser
50.00 Robert Thompson
50.00 Sandy Barnhill
25.00 Robert Sidler
25.00 Clifford Sherman
25.00 Karen Green
25.00 Norm Kelly
25.00 George Sutherland
25.00 Wayne MacIntosh

July 2004

150.00 Jim Gourlay
100.00 Gordon Steedman
50.00 Karen Green
50.00 John/Brad Fraser
25.00 Tim Nobes
25.00 Robert Thompson
25.00 Mike Ackermann
25.00 Gwen/Eric Robar
25.00 Steve Eshbaugh
25.00 Flo Duffy

August 2004

150.00 Eric Pineault
100.00 Doug Wolfe
50.00 Allie Jordan
50.00 Margie MacKay
25.00 Frank Walford
25.00 Jim Gourlay
25.00 Jack Duffy
25.00 Ken Trefrey
25.00 George Sutherland
25.00 Hardy Eshbaugh *

September 2004

150.00 Don Barnes

100.00 Karen Green
50.00 Hardy Eshbaugh *
50.00 Bob/Beryl MacDonald
25.00 Don MacLean
25.00 Gary Baudoux
25.00 Mike Ackermann
25.00 Jocelyn Ellis
25.00 Dan Smith
25.00 John/Brad Fraser

October 2004

150.00 Tom Purves
100.00 Peter Archibald
50.00 Ron Clark
50.00 Linda/Owen Duffy
25.00 Scotty Fraser
25.00 Robert Sidler
25.00 Sandy Barnhill
25.00 Norm Kelly
25.00 Karen Green
25.00 Gary Breen

November 2004

150.00 Sandy Barnhill
100.00 Parker Wong
50.00 Linda/Owen Duffy
50.00 Karen Green
25.00 Peter Archibald
25.00 Barb Crosby
25.00 Gary Baudoux
25.00 Bill Yarn
25.00 George Newell
25.00 Ken Trefrey

December 2004

150.00 Hardy Eshbaugh *
100.00 John MacPherson
50.00 David Eshbaugh *
50.00 Gerald MacIntosh
25.00 Norm Kelly
25.00 Aleah Lomas
25.00 David Sobey
25.00 Joanne/Brian Mailman
25.00 Paul D'Entremont
25.00 Colin Coady



SMRA Lottery 2006

Lottery tickets will once again be on sale at our Annual General Meeting on May 29, 2005. There are still tickets available for our 2005 Lottery. The cost will be pro-rated according to the month of purchase.

There are 120 chances to win with 10 draws every month. 1st prize \$150.00, 2nd prize \$100.00, 3rd & 4th prize \$50.00, 5th-10th prize \$25.00.

This is a great fundraiser for the Association and helps support our Education & Interpretive Center. The next lottery starts January, 2006.

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Weird Stories

With Bruce Weir



This is the first in a series of interviews with the legendary St. Mary's fisherman Bruce Weir, one of the last of our old-time guides. Bruce resides in Stillwater with his wife Ruby. SMRA maintains an endowment fund for river stewardship in the name of Bruce's late brother, Lockie, and Bruce's son Eddie is a director of SMRA. Bruce turns 80 this year on June 12th. Congratulations Bruce!

SMRA News: Bruce, does 80 years seem long?

BW: No, not at all. You're hardly here and then you're gone, something like the lake.

SMRA News: Lake?

BW: Yes, the lake that used to be right there in that field. Beautiful little lake.

SMRA News: Really!

BW: One afternoon in late fall several large flocks of ducks stopped for a rest in the lake. Thousands, there were. The lake was black with ducks.

SMRA News: I see.

BW: Soon it got dark so they stayed overnight. During the night the temperature dipped and the lake froze over.

SMRA News: Oh my!

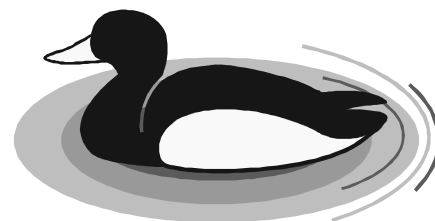
BW: Well, when daybreak came they flew away and took the lake with them!

SMRA News: Hmmm

BW: I wouldn't tell you anything that isn't true. Look, there's no lake there, that's proof!

SMRA News: Good enough for me!

To be continued



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Salmon Assessments in the St. Mary's River, Nova Scotia in 2004



The 2004 adult salmon seining crew. L to R standing, Kim Robichaud-Leblanc, Jamie Gibson, Allan MacDonald, Shane O'Neil, Doug Aitken, Gary Bedeux, kneeling, Paul d'E'treamont, Peter Amiro, Parker Wong.

The Diadromous Fish Division of the Department of Fisheries and Oceans participated in four projects on the St. Mary's River in 2004. The field season began with two SMRA self-directed science projects, one to ascertain the proportion of marked (by the fall seining program) kelts using angling in April as the sampling method and another program to operate two DFO smolt wheels. In both cases the number of marks detected was insufficient to derive population estimates. However, the lessons learned in operating these

types of programs and the cooperation enjoyed made the projects valuable and provides motivation for further work.

The third project involved juvenile assessments through electrofishing. This was the 13th consecutive year that DFO conducted the survey. The St. Mary's River Project surveyed 1990 to 1992 and prior to that the St. Mary's River was part of periodic salmon studies conducted by DFO. Two of these years, 1985 and 1986 which used a similar sampling strategy and method,

are shown below for comparison. In 2004 the assistance of the SMRA was amicably provided by Allan MacDonald.

The fourth project was the fall adult seining operation. While a successful marking trip was enjoyed the rising water prevented the recapture operation to take place. This was the third year in a row that this situation occurred.



catches (1996 and earlier) and from mark and recapture experiments (1997 to 2001). In 2002 and in 2003 mark recapture experiments were attempted but water levels increased before fish could be recaptured. The 2004 estimate was derived from the mean catch rate of 0.13 (0.06–0.20) for seining operations previously conducted at the same locations. A total of 3 larger multi sea winter fish and 61 small salmon were captured in these same three pools on October 5 and 6, 2004.

Using the mean efficiency of the seining operation the estimated escapement to the West River St. Mary's, in 2003, was 486 fish (315 – 1,069) of which 95% were small salmon. Based on the proportion of juvenile salmon habitat represented by the West River (55%), total escapement to St. Mary's River in 2004 was estimated to be about 884 fish that yielded 28% of the egg requirement for the entire river.

These data were summarized in a stock status document to be distributed at the Zone Meeting in April. Here is the essence of the St. Mary's River section.

Status of St. Mary's River in 2004

In the **St. Mary's River** escapement estimates were obtained from recreational

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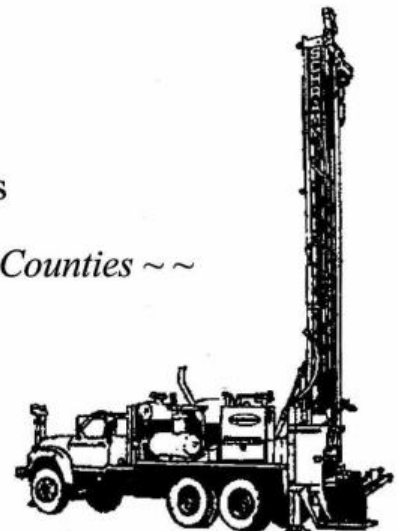
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Escapement Estimates St. Mary's River

Year	Small	Large	% Egg Conservation
1995	2038	437	92
1996	1535	590	93
1997	709	110	28
1998	1926	74	55
1999	559	150	30
2000	572	46	16
2001	580	195	30
2002	400	30	14
2003	1092	221	42
2004	840	44	28

In 2004, total parr (age-1+ and age-2+) densities were again the lowest in the 1985 to 2004 series. Fry (age-0+) densities in 2004 ($3.08 / 100\text{m}^2$) were the second lowest in the time series. This data corroborates recent assessments that indicated escapements are well below conservation requirements and historic average escapements.

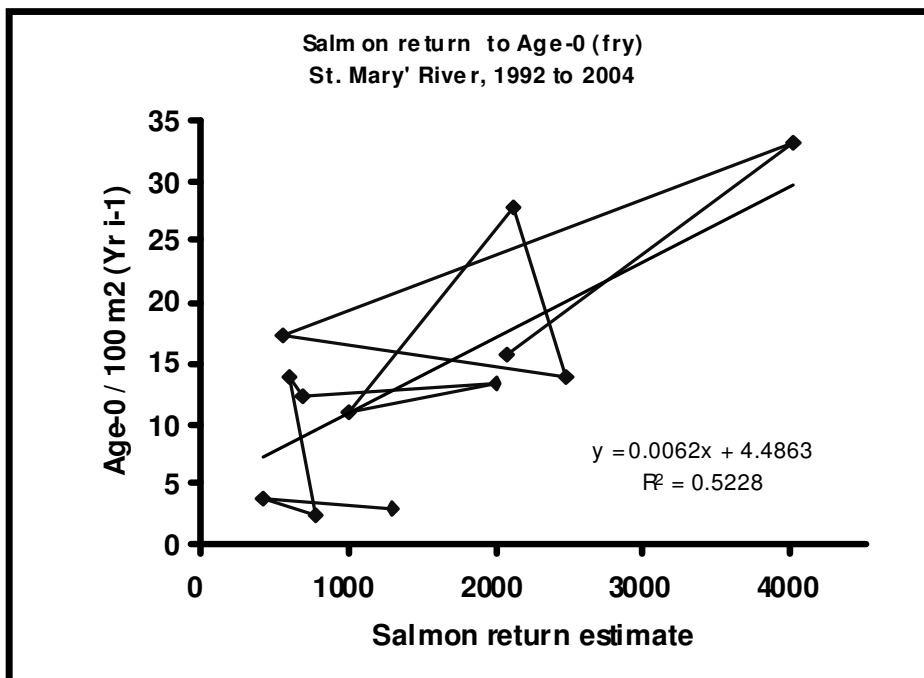
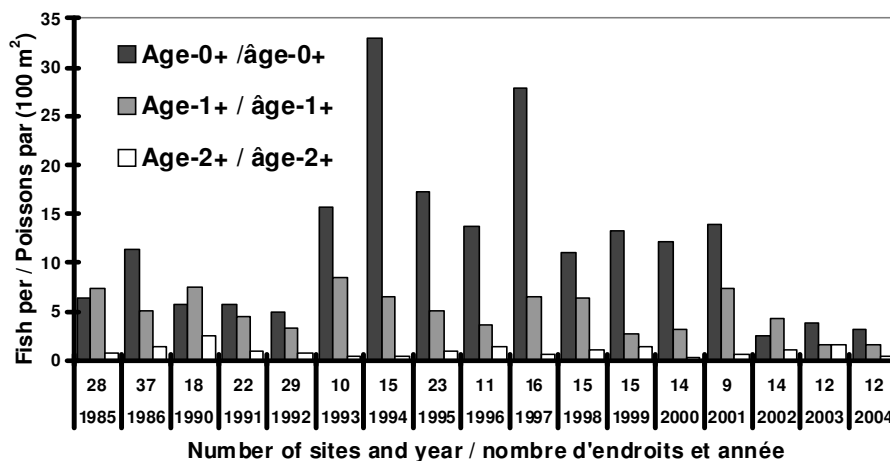
Based on the low age-0 densities observed in 2004 and the relationship between estimated salmon returns and subsequent age-0 densities, it is unlikely that the estimate of escapement in 2003, obtained by using the historic capture efficiency of previous seining operations, was realized. The data suggests that the 2003 population based on the mean catch rate was overestimated. It follows that the 2004 estimate based on the same mean catch rate could be also overestimated.

The low escapements, decreased age at maturity and low numbers of repeat spawning escaped salmon in the past eight years together with the low juvenile densities of the previous three years indicates a possible approaching crisis in the population stability of the St. Mary's River. The result of a diminishing age-at-maturity in the population and the predominance of age-2 smolts is a lower mean time to recruitment, closer to four years than to five years, and the loss of overlap in age-classes of fish. This means that the salmon returns in 2005 will be the last of the higher fry densities observed in 2001. If marine survival of smolts and therefore salmon returns do not substantially increase in 2005 then actions to protect the declining population and genetic diversity of the St. Mary's River need to be considered.

Epilogue

As you can see the story is not all that encouraging for salmon in the St. Mary's River. In fact, as the stock status review states 2005 could be a pivotal year. Considerations for captive rearing to maturity or a full fledged living gene bank are the next steps to consider. If ever there was a time to rally for the St. Mary's River salmon it could be in 2005.

The efforts of the SMRA in these assessment activities cannot be underestimated. Your close involvement brings a necessary critical mass for executing some of the more intense field programs, fosters



understanding of the objective and direction of science and builds a direct appreciation of the state of the salmon stock in the St. Mary's River. Based on a new direction for DFO Science, local groups like the SMRA will be challenged to conduct more of the assessment activities. These assessments are required to address fisheries management in communities.

To that end, in 2005 the Diadromous Fish Division is being incorporated into a new Division of Science at the Bedford Institute of Oceanography called the Population Ecology Division. Within that new Division three geographic areas will be the center of organization. The St. Mary's River will be included in the Eastern Scotian Shelf Section and salmon issues will come under the referral of Dr. Jamie Gibson. Hopefully, you all know Jamie by now and if not will get to meet him again at this year's Salmon Fishing Area 20 meeting. In parting I must say that we have come a long way together over the last thirty years but the distance remaining is great. I hope that we have put the pieces in place to provide the background and analysis necessary to maintain the salmon of the St. Mary's River. I will be working closely with Jamie through the necessary steps to achieve that goal. It has been a pleasure to work with you.

- Peter Amiro



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ASF Report

By Lewis Hinks and Sue Scott



A great deal of work led to some rewarding progress in wild Atlantic salmon conservation in Nova Scotia and throughout the salmon's range in 2004.

We were all pleasantly surprised when runs of salmon defied scientific predictions and, in some rivers, returned in greater numbers. We are convinced that the Greenland Conservation Agreement, live release campaigns, hard work against the impacts of agriculture practices and acid rain, and our ongoing fight to maintain funding for hatcheries and anti-poaching campaigns have all had a positive effect.

The Atlantic Salmon Federation (ASF)

and the World Wildlife Fund have been working internationally to bring about a positive change in NASCO's (North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organization) role in conservation and management of wild Atlantic salmon. An independent report that ASF and WWF sponsored recommended 11 items that would help counter threats such as at sea mortality, loss of freshwater habitat and interactions between wild and farmed salmon. This report also recommended that NASCO work more closely with NGO groups that have expertise in salmon conservation and could help raise public awareness on these issues. Our efforts led to NASCO implementing a consultation process on the organization's "Next Steps", to which ASF and WWF are providing ongoing input.

ASF continues to conduct pioneering research that involves the tracking of smolt, using sonic technology on the Miramichi River and on the Restigouche River. Results of last year's study showed that smolt in the Miramichi had few difficulties moving downstream, but did have significant challenges in surviving life in the estuary before reaching the sea. This tracking research is important in determining why Atlantic salmon from many North American rivers are failing to return to their natal rivers to spawn in the abundance we have seen in the past, and in guiding actions to overcome the problems. ASF is also using this sonic tag technology to help determine the impact of escaped aquaculture salmon on wild populations. ASF is experimentally releasing farmed salmon in Cobscook Bay, Maine and tracking their movements. Preliminary results indicate that the farmed salmon leave the cage area quickly once they escape, making recapture a problem. Previous to this study, it was believed that the escaped fish stayed close to the cages making recapture a possibility. This work is important in stressing the need for the best cage containment technology possible.

ASF has also been advocating for funding to support DFO's science and enforcement divisions. For years these areas have been under-funded to the point that in 2004 the province of Newfoundland and Labrador had to step in to protect valuable salmon stocks in that province. We are optimistic our efforts are paying off and hope to see increased funding for salmon announced in the 2005 federal budget.



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On a more local focus, ASF and NSSA continue to work very hard on the acid rain mitigation project for the West River, Sheet Harbour. The pre-treatment water chemistry has been done, as well as fish and invertebrate surveys. The lime doser has been ordered and liming is scheduled to begin in the spring. This is the culmination of several years of hard work by many people and groups and we are optimistic that there is a future for the salmon of acid rain-stressed rivers.

After several years of hard work and lobbying, we have succeeded in getting a Sportfish Habitat Fund for 2005 to support fisheries conservation projects. The fund will help provide stable funding for programs such as Adopt-a-Stream.

ASF is proud to support the efforts of organizations such as the St. Mary's River Association and we encourage you to continue your great efforts on behalf of wild Atlantic salmon.

**NSSA News
January, 2005**



The last year has been a busy one for NSSA with the West River Acid Rain Mitigation Project as our main focus. We have been in extensive discussions with Acadia University to determine the role they can play in the Project. Partnering with Acadia brings many benefits to the

Project, including increasing the profile and integrity of the venture, advancing much needed research in the area of acid rain mitigation and assisting with fundraising. A Norwegian-designed doser has been ordered, a joint decision between Acadia and NSSA, based on its ability to monitor the application and results of the liming process remotely.

A challenge we faced was to arrange electricity for the doser site. The closest power lines are approximately 1 mile from the site and estimates were for \$50,000 to power the doser. We are happy to report that Nova Scotia Power Inc., one of our partners on the Acid Rain Mitigation Committee, has generously agreed to absorb its installation costs and is prepared to install the necessary lines and poles to the site for the all-inclusive price of \$12,000.



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Currently we are finalizing the permits required to install and operate the doser and expect a start date in early summer 2005.

Many thanks to our past president, Terry MacIntyre and ASF's Rob Beatty, for continuing to lead the Project's fundraising charge, as well as, to another past-president, George Ferguson, and ASF's Regional Director, Lewis Hinks, for their committed efforts to nail down the venture's logistical elements. Many thanks also to the St Mary's River Association for all the hard work in the recent fundraising dinner that was held in Antigonish in October. The dinner was an excellent example of what two dedicated, skilled organizations can achieve when we work together.

On other topics, we are very excited to have the habitat stamp in place for 2005. The five-dollar charge

on every fishing license sold will bring much needed funds for habitat restoration work and we are happy to report that we have been successful in negotiating with the Province and there will be an Adopt A Stream program in 2005.

NSSA continues to be involved on a number of other fronts, including monitoring the Inner Bay of Fundy situation; assisting new affiliate groups with developing viable organizations and reopening closed rivers to angling; lobbying the provincial government with respect to forestry activities in important sport-fish areas such as the Nictaux River; and working with the Ecology Action Center with respect to its Protected Areas Initiative.

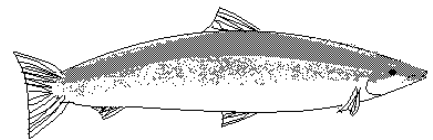
I'd like to take a moment to recognize the hard work and dedication of all our affiliate groups in the Province. You are undoubtedly the

heart and soul of this organization. I look forward to working and getting to know you better in my second year as President of the NSSA.

Tight Lines

David Reid,

President,
Nova Scotia Salmon
Association



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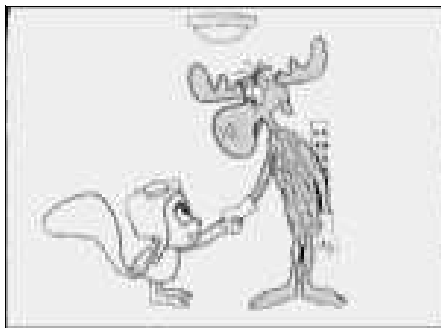
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The Northern Flying Squirrel

Glaucomys Sabrinus

By Brenda Carpan



SMRA honorary director Bob Bancroft once saw a dead tree containing 35 flying squirrels, a pine squirrel, and a little brown bat. Flying squirrels breed yearly and this occurs in the months of March to May. The average brood is 2 - 4 offspring.

Remember Rocky & Bullwinkle on TV? The future doesn't look bright for Bullwinkle, since the mainland moose has unfortunately reached endangered status in mainland Nova Scotia. There are still rare sightings in the St. Mary's River watershed, however. But Rocky could do anything—he was a hero, a brave little flying squirrel. Here in Stillwater, Guysborough Co, Nova Scotia, on the St. Mary's River, we are honored to be hosting several fascinating northern flying squirrels at our home.

The northern flying squirrel weighs an average 132 g/ 4.5 oz and length is approximately 250-320 mm (10-12 inches), making them look about the size of a pine squirrel, but they weigh only about half as much. They have fleshy membranes from foreleg to hind leg. The tail is flat, long and they do not carry their tail up over the back and head as do the red squirrels. Fur is thicker, fluffy and very soft. They have huge black eyes for night vision, and rarely do any vocalization.

The favorite food for the flying squirrel is mycorrhizal fungi (truffles) but we also know they enjoy black-oil sunflower seeds, our treat.

The northern flying squirrel nests in holes in dead trees and are known to share nests. Nova Scotia biologist and

Although nocturnal, these squirrels are not disturbed by the presence of an overhead porch light. However, sudden movement outside or inside the house while viewing them sends the squirrels flying for cover. After the fright a scout will appear from his hiding spot to make a complete scan of the area and then gives the "all clear" with a soft chipping sound. Then you will notice the rest of the "lads" slowly return to their feeding stations. When feeding these squirrels it is important to place the feeding areas near cover as owls are said to find them quite delicious.

Every winter Friday night in Stillwater is Flying Squirrel Night, with the exception of two nights, both of which were extremely windy and wet. In the winter months they appear shortly after 6 PM, zooming into the large trees in front of our veranda. They play and chase each other for a time and then settle to eat, leaving the veranda around 8:30 pm. During a severe blizzard this past winter twelve northern flying squirrels appeared. They gathered around a post on the veranda and ate without conflict. Pine squirrels always seem to be chattering, chasing, and fighting with each other, however, I have noted that the northern flying squirrels enjoy company and generously share

their food supply. Now that hours of the night spring has arrived, their visiting

time has changed and they You are welcome to share this appear much later in the eve- show with us next winter, but ning, not at all, or in the wee for now its by chance.



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NEWS RELEASE/COMMUNIQUE February 28, 2005

Fredericton....At a media conference held today by Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) Minister Geoff Regan on the recently-budgeted \$30 million Atlantic Salmon Endowment Fund, Atlantic Salmon Federation (ASF) President Bill Taylor supported DFO's plans to develop policy and set up the fund.

Mr. Taylor said, "ASF and our regional councils will actively participate in the planned development of a clear Wild Atlantic Salmon Policy and a vision for the future, including the design and establishment of the Atlantic Salmon Endowment Fund. We are pleased that the new fund will operate at arms-length from DFO, and will be separate from the department's operational budget that is so important to monitoring, researching, conserving and protecting wild Atlantic salmon. We also

offer DFO our cooperation in providing leverage for funding to augment the endowment."

Wild Atlantic salmon support a well-managed, largely live release, recreational fishery that depends on a healthy environment to survive. Even today, the Atlantic salmon recreational fishery is worth \$200 million annually to the Canadian economy, despite a decline over the past three decades in salmon numbers. The industry's worth has the potential to grow substantially, hand in hand with increased numbers of restored salmon. "The Atlantic Salmon Endowment Fund will bring us closer to this goal," continued Mr. Taylor.

More than 100 New Brunswick rivers once supported healthy salmon populations. Now the economic benefits flow from a few stalwart rivers, such as the Miramichi, the Restigouche, and the Nepisiguit. "This media conference is being held on the banks of the Saint John River where the recreational salmon fishery, once so vibrant, is closed because of poor returns," said Mr. Taylor. "These salmon can be brought back. The Nepisiguit River is a shining example of successful restoration. Several years ago, our affiliate the Nepisiguit Salmon Association took quick action when mining effluent killed many of the river's salmon following an accidental spill. The association rallied recreational fishermen, the mining company and the Pabineau First Nation, raised two million dollars and over time restored the river's salmon run. This is just one success story of many that have played out on numerous rivers throughout eastern Canada."

past two years, thanks to more anglers practicing live release, the Atlantic Salmon Federation's international agreement that suspended commercial harvest of our salmon off Greenland, and ongoing restoration and enhancement.

"This timely and effective action by the Canadian government will boost morale and provide meaningful support to community watershed organizations and volunteers who actually carry out the bulk of habitat stewardship and restoration," continued Mr. Taylor. "ASF and our network contribute more than \$10 million to these programs annually. And this is cold, hard cash. The in-kind labour of thousands of volunteers more than doubles the annual expenditure."

Mr. Taylor concluded, "Today is a time for celebration of new funding and for thanking all those who have worked so hard and so long toward this very positive announcement."

The Atlantic Salmon Federation is an international, non-profit organization that promotes the conservation and wise management of wild Atlantic salmon and their environment. ASF has a network of seven Regional Councils (New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Newfoundland, Prince Edward Island, Quebec, Maine and Western New England) that have a membership of more than 150 river associations and 40,000 volunteers.



Many salmon populations are showing signs of increasing health, especially in the

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*Tidings & Tales
from the Wetlands*
By: Vince Parsons
A Meaningful Existence

Editor's note:

Peter Archibald is the youngest son of Lettie and the late Donald Archibald, brother of SMRA honorary director George Archibald and brother-in-law of honorary director Doug Hennigar. Peter and brother Sandy and their families settled in Newfoundland. Lettie lives in the family home in Stillwater.

A new year is upon us and January blanketed our world with its customary snowfall and chilling temperatures. We settled in for what could be a long winter season and many prepared to enjoy their favorite outdoor activities. All was well in our wetland kingdom. With February's arrival, we experienced surprisingly warmer temperatures and an abundance of sunshine. Even the ground hog stated there will be only six more weeks of winter. Could this be possible? Will we actually experience an early spring and the new growth that accompanies it?

However, early Monday morning, February 7, all dreams and plans appeared to be shattered with a single telephone call. I heard that one of our volunteers on the Stephenville Crossing Conservation Committee had passed away at the young age of 45. Life, as I envisioned it, will never be quite the same.

Peter Archibald was born in Sherbrooke, Nova Scotia. At an early age he learned to appreciate the wonders of nature and the importance of conservation. Such interests eventually led him to our province where he married and settled in our fair town. It wasn't long before he quietly started supporting recreation, school and church activities, and conservation initiatives.

While many are content with non-involvement and apathy, Pete was determined to make a difference. While some spend a life-time rapping our rivers of salmon and trout, Pete strongly supported initiatives that would protect and preserve these resources.

While some choose not to support our Wetland Park, Pete stood tall and played a major role in developing the memorial gardens, and was instrumental in making the 2004 Wetland Project a success. Through a few simple seeds he brought beauty to an area most people would condemn.

While some choose to ignore an elderly neighbour, Pete mowed her lawn and treated her as if she were his own mother.

Beyond conservation, Peter was a coach of St. Michael's sports teams, an avid curler, and angler. He loved his cabin and delighted in telling how he outfished his buddies on George's Lake. But, above all, Peter Archibald was a loving husband, father and friend to many.

Therefore, it is with heavy hearts the Stephenville Crossing Conservation Committee extends its deepest sympathy to Cindy, Jennifer, Andrew, Victoria, his brother Sandy, and many other family

members.

He dared to make a difference and our community has benefited so much from Peter's vision and innate kindness. He was, is, and will continue to be an inspiration to all who knew him.

Until we meet again. Farewell, my friend.

- Vince Parsons



A.M. (Sandy) Cameron
By: John Cameron
Peace in the Valley



On December 25, 2004 Sandy Cameron left the St. Mary's River Valley for the last time, after a courageous battle with cancer. The Valley lost a champion and a true friend.

Sandy left the Valley he loved for the 'Eternal Valley'. The words of Jimmy Davis' inspirational classic seem appropriate:

*There will be peace in the valley for me someday,
There will be peace in the valley for me oh Lord, I pray
There'll be no sadness, no sorrow, no trouble I see
There will be peace in the valley for me.*

Sandy grew up on the banks of the St. Mary's River. As the Mississippi was the playground for Tom Sawyer and his friends, so was the St. Mary's for Sandy and his friends. As boys we swam, fished, trapped, skated and rafted. The river was our friend! It was mystical and magical.

Sandy loved the River Valley, its people and wildlife. His commitment to conservation is probably best illustrated on the banks of the Arm Brook, a tributary of the St. Mary's. We were in our early teens and our Scout Troup had gone on a winter hiking trip. As we walked along the banks of the brook we startled several deer. As they attempted to get away from the intruders, one young deer went crashing through the ice on the brook. The deer was trapped and losing its battle against the cold, fast flowing water very rapidly. We were all concerned, but none more than Sandy. He was determined to rescue the deer from the icy waters. So, on his belly and linked to the other Scouts by a human chain Sandy inched his way out on the ice, got a rope around the animal and successfully pulled the frightened deer from the clutches of certain death.

I'm reminded of the sage advice passed along by a Jewish father to his son: "Abe, if perchance you should ever need a helping hand, remember, you will find it at the end of your arm." Sandy's 'helping hand' was always there, always involved, always caring. Whether plucking a deer from the Arm Brook, or a fellow human being from the icy waters of a turbulent life, Sandy could be counted on - he was a champion and a friend.

- John Cameron

Thank You!

River Stabilization Report—Silver's Pool Project

In 2004 SMRA stabilized the west bank of the West River St. Mary's at Silver's Pool in Melrose, where a section of the riverbank from a past stabilization project was repaired. Two hundred feet of riprapping was completed. Our contractor was George F. MacDonald & Sons who placed 160 loads of large stone along the riverbank. Project leader was Jack Duffy.

This project could not have been accomplished without financial assistance from the Shell Environmental Fund.

Smolt Wheel Project

In May and June of 2004 SMRA collected smolt migration data using smolt wheels at Silver's Bridge and Glenelg Bridge. This data is used by DFO to help determine stock status and migration properties. This project could not have taken place without the support of the Eric Jefferson and Peter Amiro from the Department of Fisheries and Oceans supported by volunteer members of SMRA. Thanks to all who helped out.

Other Funding Partners

In 2004 we were very grateful to receive funding from the following:

Human Resources Development Canada
 – Summer Career Placement
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 The Elizabeth Wakeman Henderson Charitable Foundation
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Without funding, the work of the St. Mary's River Association could not be undertaken. To all those who supported us ... a great big thank you!



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Barbless Hooks

Some anglers I know still don't trust barbless flies, despite much publicity about their virtues over more than a decade. SMRA promotes use of barbless hooks, not only for catch-and-release fishing, but for all fishing. After all, you never know when you may need to shake a salmon parr or a small trout off the hook.

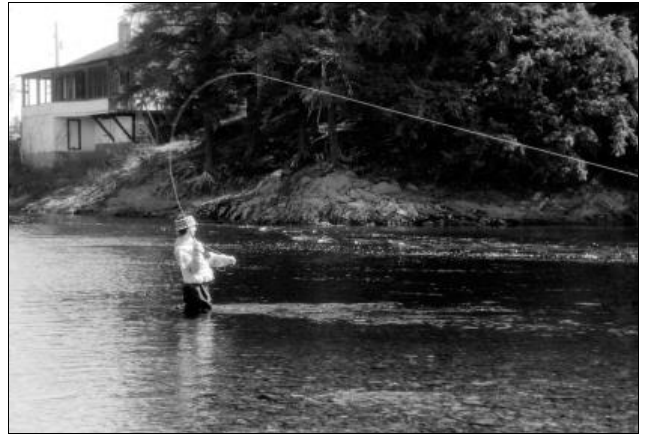
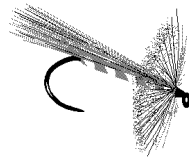
I've used barbless hooks for a dozen or so years. First I tried barbless wet flies and became comfortable with that. I was reluctant at first to pinch the barbs off my dry flies due to the possibility of slack line after setting the hook, but my fears proved to be groundless. There is no longer any question in my mind that barbless hooks give me more hook-ups. This is because they penetrate much easier. If you doubt me, try comparing the pull

needed to sink a barbed vs. a barbless hook into a piece of cardboard.

The barbless hook also slips out easily and quickly, releasing most fish unharmed. Those who believe they will lose more fish on barbless hooks are probably right, but if we have more action and fun due to more hook-ups that's a small price to pay, particularly when one considers the conservation benefits.

I realize that all this has been preached many times before, but we still need converts. If you are still reading this, thanks, there's hope for you!

- Bill Carpan



David Archibald, son of SMRA President Dale Archibald, playing a kelt salmon on a barbless fly at Silver's Pool.

David is a volunteer in a special kelt assessment program SMRA conducts to provide adult salmon data to augment the data collected each fall by seining.

The fall seining is conducted by DFO with assistance from SMRA volunteers.

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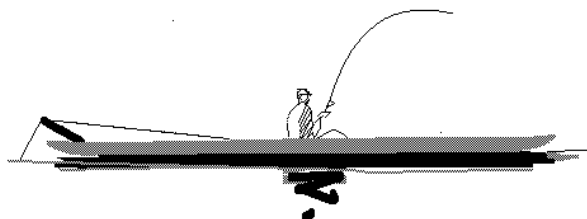
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Wood Turtle Project Returns in 2005

By Mark Pulsifer



A St. Mary's River Wood Turtle

Building on the results of the past two years the Wood Turtle Project Team will be returning with some new faces for 2005. So far it appears that only one of last year's team will be returning. The rest have gone on to pursue graduate studies, or international travel. This year's project will continue with many of the same activities as last year. Emphasis on community education will continue with school visits and mentoring programs, and community volunteer days to name a few. As usual, the team will be looking for wood turtles as well. One significant change to this year's program will be the expansion of the stewardship program to include habitat protection. The project team would like to talk to as many land owners as possible with property on the St. Mary's River that is known as good wood turtle habitat; and then involve these landowners in protecting this species at risk by discussing and hopefully implementing "turtle friendly" activities that might be done on their properties to protect, or improve habitat. We are looking forward to this season and having a chance to talk with you all.

Happy turtling,

Mark Pulsifer
Wood Turtle Project Leader



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