

Natural Landscapes

The Newsletter of the Nova Scotia Nature Trust

Spring 2002

THANK YOU, MARTIN "RUDY" HAASE *by Beverly Colpitts*

This April, Rudy Haase will step down from the Nature Trust's Board of Directors. Just as his involvement with the Trust began with the signing of an easement to protect a parcel of land on the shores of Bras d'Or Lake, his term as director will end with the signing of an easement to protect four coastal islands located just off the eastern shore at the mouth of Ship Harbour. These stunning coastal islands, about 40 acres in total, are part of a larger assemblage of undeveloped coastal islands enjoyed by generations of recreational boaters (see Natural Landscapes Spring 2000 cover story for more information about the islands). Rudy's two properties, upon which he successfully placed conservation easements, have now been sold to new landowners. Because an easement is in perpetuity and is a part of the deed, the easement's land-use restrictions ensure that new and future property owners will observe these restrictions. As the holder of these conservation easements, the Nature Trust will carefully monitor the lands and enforce easement restrictions.



Rudy Haase at home in Chester

Rudy's conservation efforts don't stop with the creation of easement agreements. He very generously agreed to donate a percentage of the sale price of the coastal islands to the Nature Trust's Land Stewardship Endowment Fund. His contributions to the endowment fund will help to ensure that the Nature Trust can steward the protected properties in perpetuity, whether that be routine monitoring, educating new owners of the lands about the easement, or taking court action to stop restricted activities on the land.

Mr. Haase, a yacht designer by profession, studied naval architecture at the University of Michigan in 1942. He began his conservation efforts in the United States in 1953 to preserve an island off the coast of Maine. In doing so he and four friends founded the conservation society, "Friends of Nature". He has since founded the Nova Scotia Chapter of the society: the Friends of Nature and continued to work towards preserving the wildness of Nova Scotia in many ways. Rudy also had a hand at preserving the only remaining virgin section of dry tropical forest in Costa Rica. This nature reserve spurred on the Costa Rican government's National Park system.

According to Robert McCleave, past president of the Nature Trust, "Rudy's commitment to nature is legendary." He adds that Rudy has "always been a pioneer", from forging ahead with one of Nova Scotia's first conservation easements to helping to launch the then new Nature Trust, and subsequently providing ongoing resources, support and encouragement that has helped foster a strong and successful organization. No one can deny that Rudy Haase is an incredible person. Bob Waldon, another fellow Nature Trust board member, had this to say about Rudy, "One thing is very clear to me, he is a person of considerable conviction and principle but he also turns those convictions and principles into concrete action". Bonnie Sutherland, Executive Director of the Trust adds "Rudy is truly a remarkable person with an admirable commitment to the environment and a willingness to do whatever he can to make a difference in the protection of natural areas. He is a wonderful role model for us all."

On behalf of all of your friends at the Nature Trust, we extend our deepest gratitude.

Beverly Colpitts is a volunteer with the Newsletter & Special Events Committees of the Nature Trust

Mark Your 2002 Calendar!

- Tuesday, April 23 The Nature Trust **Annual General Meeting** with guest speaker Wildlife Biologist Bob Bancroft — see page 7 for details
- Saturday, October 19 The Nature Trust celebrates its **Fifth Annual Dinner** with special guest speaker, National Geographic Explorer-in-Residence Wade Davis — see page 7 for details

Staff of the Nature Trust *by Emma Boardman*

It is clear from meeting the staff at the Nature Trust that there are several qualities that they all share. They are hardworking, adaptable, and willing to change their schedules at a moment's notice as the job requires. They are friendly, have a genuine appreciation for each other and for the volunteers, landowners and members they interact with on a daily basis. Above all, they are all extremely dedicated to conservation, happy to have the opportunity to work full time for a cause they deeply care about and to see measurable changes as a direct result of the work they do.

Bonnie Sutherland became the Nature Trust's very first staff member in 1997. The board at the time hired Bonnie to work on the Hant's County project, the Nature Trust's first major land conservation project, and one that has since served as a model for all of the Trust's conservation projects. Bonnie has stayed with the Nature Trust ever since, her job as Executive Director evolving naturally as the Nature Trust grew.

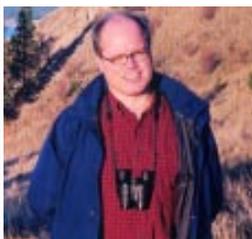


Bonnie with son Cian



Donald Sam came to the Nature Trust in early 1999. In the past, he has worked on a variety of land securement and stewardship projects. Currently, he co-ordinates the Fundy Shorebird Program, which works to protect critical habitat for migratory birds in the Bay of Fundy.

Welcome



The Nature Trust is very pleased to welcome Steve Gormley, our new land securement coordinator. Steve has an extensive environmental planning, habitat protection, and resource management background, as well as a delightful enthusiasm for nature conservation and the work of organizations like ours. Steve is the guy to talk to if you have land you wish to protect. Welcome Steve!



(l-r) Meredith, Karen and Toby with former staffers Steve and Sean

Toby Rowe has been co-ordinating the Forest Legacy Project since June 2001. The project works to identify and protect old growth forest sites in Nova Scotia.

Meredith Flannery joined the ranks in November 2000. She co-ordinates the Coastal Plain Stewards Project, which works to protect and monitor the type of rare and endangered coastal plain flora habitat detailed on pages 4 and 5 of this newsletter.

Karen Potter has worked on almost everything at the Trust since 1999. Some of her responsibilities include working with the project co-ordinators on the conservation projects, fundraising, and various administrative tasks.

A fond farewell to Sean Lemoine and Steve Harder

We will miss Sean Lemoine, a keen and very willing project team member over the last year. Many thanks for your patience, doing what no doubt felt like endless baseline maps and complicated legal agreements! We are all happy that you are reaching your dream of becoming a National Park Warden.

Thanks also to Steve Harder, who completed his On-Site placement with the Nature Trust in December. Steve has gone on to establish his own communications company, Tehlsee Communications. We were so impressed with Steve's work that we have signed on as his first client. We look forward to continuing to work with Steve.

- by Bonnie Sutherland

Peter Romkey and Allen Simpson are contributing to the work of the Nature Trust on a part-time basis. Peter is buried in mapwork for our conservation properties and Allen is crunching numbers as bookkeeper. Sabrina Taylor is finishing up a three month contract, focused on the Trust's conservation projects. Long time volunteer Emma Boardman has also been helping update our fundraising research. Thanks to all for your great work!

Annual Report of the Chester Chapter of the NSNT

Last year marked the second year of operation for the Chester Chapter of the Nature Trust. Over the course of the year, we hosted a major event, developed a local mailing list for the Nature Trust, and elected a new president.

Our major event, held at the Chester Yacht Club, was a combined meeting of the Nature Trust, the Bluenose Atlantic Coastal Action Program (BACAP), and the Nature Conservancy of Canada. The purpose of the event was to give BACAP an opportunity to discuss their Coastal Islands Project (please see article below), and for all three groups to discuss the common goal of preserving the islands and shores of

Mahone Bay. This first joint meeting was such a great success that the Chester Chapter of the Nature Trust has scheduled another informative evening at the Chester Yacht Club on Wednesday evening, August 7, 2002. Our guest speaker will be Jay Espy, President of the Maine Coast Heritage Trust. Mr. Espy will describe the ever-evolving and extremely successful program of the Trust, which protects critical areas of the Maine coast.

Last year our group also developed a mailing list for the Nature Trust in an effort to reach those who may have an interest in the conservation of Mahone Bay. Our subsequent mailing boosted membership and we are thankful for each new and

continuing supporter. During our Committee meeting in September, we elected George Mitchell as Chairman. We are very fortunate to have George accept this leadership position. He has had a long and distinguished career in law and has been an early supporter of conservation in the province. He is also a Trustee of the Nature Conservancy of Canada.

We encourage discussion with you to hear your thoughts and ideas. Gladly we welcome volunteers. This is not an exclusive club. Preserving our wonderful area is everyone's business!

Respectfully submitted by the members of the Chester Chapter of the Nature Trust: George Mitchell, Chairman; Ted and Liz Brainard; Alan Chandler; Syd and Sandy Dumaresq; Rudy Haase; and Sifford Pearre.

BACAP Coastal Islands Project by Heather Olivella, *Coastal Islands Project Co-ordinator*

The Bluenose Atlantic Coastal Action Programme (BACAP) is a non-profit organization dedicated to promoting conservation in the Lunenburg watershed through education, restoration and research. Bluenose ACAP is responsible for several projects in Lunenburg County including the Coastal Island Project, a three year project that encourages conservation on 70 Mahone Bay islands.

The islands provide many different types of wildlife habitat such as sandy beaches, dunes, wetlands, saltwater ponds, scrubland, and mature forest. These features attract and shelter many birds and small mammals, which can be found feeding and nesting on various islands in the bay. Some islands provide critical nesting habitat for the roseate tern (*Sterna dougallii*), an endangered species.



Not only are the islands important to wildlife, they are also becoming more popular with people. Over the past ten years, islands in Mahone Bay have seen a dramatic increase in tourism and property development for vacationers and retirees. To respond to the problems associated with increased use, the Coastal Island Project educates private island owners and the recreational users of the islands, such as boaters, about conservation issues.

During the summer of 2000 and 2001, staff of the Coastal Island Project collected information on land ownership, bird and plant species, habitat type, and human impacts for most of the 70 islands. This year, they will focus on creating an Island Conservation Strategy, working with landowners, promoting stewardship, collecting additional data, and promoting public awareness. In the spring, they will also initiate an Island Watch Program to develop a network of island owners, caretakers, and recreational boaters who will observe and record information related to the islands. If you are interested in becoming a monitor or would like to learn more about the Coastal Island Project, please call Heather Olivella, Coastal Islands Project Coordinator at (902) 624-9888.

C O A S T A L P

Southwestern Nova Scotia is home to many natural treasures, including a unique group of more than 60 species of flowering plants, some of which grow *nowhere else in Canada!* This group of botanical rarities is known collectively as *coastal plain flora*. How did these fascinating plants arrive here? Through a geological legacy originating more than 10,000 years ago. At that time, sea level was 100 metres lower than it is today, which exposed much of the area between Nova Scotia and Massachusetts. Plants invaded this exposed area as they followed the retreating glaciers northward. Later, melt water from the glaciers caused sea level to rise and coastal plain flora in Nova Scotia was cut off from the mainland populations.



Most species of coastal plain flora are rare, and several are threatened or endangered. Three factors greatly limit the ability of these plants to colonize new habitat and even to survive: they produce few seeds, they are very constrained in the kind of habitat that they can occupy, and they are frequently threatened by human disturbance.

Low seed production in Nova Scotia is common for several species of coastal plain flora, including Golden-crest and Pink Coreopsis. Instead of producing seeds, these plants usually reproduce by making clones of themselves, using runners or suckergrowth. The plants reproduce in this way either because they need low water levels to produce seeds, which happens sporadically, or because they are at the northern limit of their range. Low seed production has a couple of serious consequences. First, plants use their seeds to travel to new areas. If they don't produce seeds it means they can't colonize habitat unconnected to their existing site. When plants on one lake are destroyed, they are probably gone forever because plants from other lakes can't re-colonize the area.

Second, limited seed production also means that the plants lack genetic variation and are less able to survive change. Cloned plants are all the same, so if the clones are susceptible to a virus or if their environment changes beyond their tolerance, no individuals will survive. In contrast, plants that grow from seeds are all slightly different, and there is a much greater chance that some individuals will survive if conditions change.

PLANTS WITH LOW SEED PRODUCTION



Sweet Pepperbush



Pink Coreopsis



Plymouth Gentian



Golden Crest

L A I N F L O R A

Coastal plain plants are also very constrained in the kind of habitat that they can occupy. They are small and slow-growing, so they can't compete with larger, faster-growing plants in fertile areas. Instead, they are relegated to wet areas, which are low in nutrients, where the conditions are too tough for other plants to survive. Frequently, they are found along gently sloping sand or gravel shores of infertile lakes, where they rely on seasonal changes in water level and exposure to wind and waves to reduce competition from plants intolerant of periodic flooding. Wetland habitat is the only habitat this group of plants has been able to colonize, so it's vital to protect it. Unfortunately, wetland habitat is often altered by human activity, and these plants are slowly disappearing.



TYPICAL COASTAL PLAIN HABITAT



ATV DAMAGE TO COASTAL PLAIN FLORA

Human activity such as trampling, cottage development, shoreline alteration, ATV use, and improper logging practices are the most serious threats to this fascinating group of plants. Given the natural constraints these plants already face, human disturbance has a huge additive impact. Not surprisingly, many disturbances are inadvertent because people are unaware of the plants' rarity and endangered status. In 1998, the Nature Trust initiated a project to alert landowners to the presence of coastal plain flora on their land, and to assist them in conserving this wonderful flora. Numerous landowners have responded quickly. Many have learned to identify the plants during guided walks and now avoid picking and trampling them, and otherwise altering their habitat. Sixty-one people are actively monitoring these plants to learn how populations of this flora change over time. In addition, 34 landowners have entered into formal stewardship agreements and now protect coastal plain plants by letting them grow undisturbed. The tremendous support of landowners has really brightened the future for coastal plain flora.

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO PROTECT COASTAL PLAIN FLORA? *A LOT.*

- Learn to identify coastal plain species. Join us for a guided walk. Or, if you belong to or know of a group that might be interested in hearing a presentation about these plants, contact the Nature Trust.
- Refrain from picking or trampling the plants.
- Keep ATVs away from lakeshores and wetlands.
- Inquire about the Nature Trust's signage program.
- Become a volunteer plant monitor.
- Avoid contaminating water with deadly fertilizers, oil, salt, antifreeze, and pet droppings
- Help support the work of the Nature Trust. • Be a good steward on your own property.



Ted and Elizabeth Wamboldt enter into a Stewardship Agreement with Meredith Flannery of the Nature Trust (left) on Ponhook Lake.

The Nature Trust is grateful for the financial support from the following sponsors of the Coastal Plain Stewards project:



The Government of Canada Habitat Stewardship Program
for Species at Risk - Le programme d'intendance de l'habitat
des espèces en péril du gouvernement du Canada



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Thank you to our Members:

As of January 2002, the Nature Trust has switched to a calendar based membership renewal system. We will mail out membership reminders in January. Memberships purchased after September 1st will count towards the following year. If you recently sent in your membership renewal and your name is not listed here, it may be this newsletter went to print before it was received - it will be in the next newsletter!

The following are our current members (since Sept 2001):

Annie Abdalla	Robert and Wendy McDonald
Gladys Ascah	Ian and Bernice McLaren
Christopher Baines	Arnold & Peggy Meisner
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Lorna Hart	Harold Stewart
George Hebb	Keith and Cathy Stewart
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Jack MacKillop	Peter Wall
Scott Macmillan	Robert Waldon
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Gillian McCulloch	Warren and Marilyn Zisseron
John and Lily McCurdy	

Thank you to the following donors who have contributed to the Nature Trust's Old Forest Campaign and/or have recently made other financial gifts:

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Gifts have been made in memory of
the following individuals:

Jennie J. (Redden) Holden
Allister MacPherson
Joyce Smith
Wilbur Walworth

WE VALUE YOUR SUPPORT!

Wade Davis Comes to Halifax! *by Greg Potter*

The Nova Scotia Nature Trust invites you to attend an evening event with guest speaker Wade Davis, featuring a dinner and a silent auction of wonderful art pieces, exciting adventures and scenic vacations.

Wade Davis is an anthropologist, botanical explorer, and best-selling author renowned for his fascinating talks. Born in British Columbia in 1953, Davis has worked as a park ranger, a guide and a forestry engineer. He attended Harvard University where he received his Ph. D. in ethnobotany, and through his affiliation with the Harvard Botanical Museum, spent 3 years living amongst 15 indigenous groups in 8 Latin American countries researching and collecting data. Described by many as an adventurer and a living Indiana Jones, Davis has more recently travelled to Peru, Tibet, Borneo, the high Arctic, the Orinoco delta of Venezuela and Northern Kenya.

Davis's travels and research have prompted him to write extensively on a broad range of topics. His books will transport you to faraway lands and initiate you to the realm of Haitian voodoo, Amazonian myth and religion, the use of psychotropic drugs, the biodiversity crisis, and the ethnobotany of South America. A number of his better known books include *The Serpent and the Rainbow* (1986), *Passage of Darkness* (1988), *One River* (1996), and *Shadows in the Sun* (1998). *One River* was nominated for the 1997 Governor General's Literary Award for Non-fiction.

Not only a scientist and researcher, but also an avid activist, Wade Davis is a board member of several non-governmental organizations dedicated to conservation-conscious development and the protection of biological and cultural diversity. Davis's activism coupled with his astonishing research and compelling talks are sure to delight any audience seeking unique perspectives on conservation issues.

The Nature Trust's Annual Dinner is an important gathering bringing together representatives from government, resource industries, environmental and conservation organizations, the research community and the financial industry, as well as many interested citizens. This event also provides critical funds for the Nature Trust's efforts to preserve outstanding and threatened natural areas throughout the province. We hope you can help to make this year's event another success.

Tickets and Sponsorship Opportunities: Dinner tickets are \$75 with tables of 10 at \$750. The Silent Auction is open to the public. To order dinner tickets and for information on event sponsorship opportunities, please contact Karen at the Nova Scotia Nature Trust office at 902-425-5263.

Greg Potter is a grade 12 student at Halifax Grammer School.



Wade Davis, a best selling author and explorer-in-residence at National Geographic, is scheduled to speak at the 5th Annual Nova Scotia Nature Trust Dinner with Silent Auction on October 19, 2002.



Annual General Meeting

Tuesday April 23 at 7:00pm

Maritime Museum of the Atlantic (2nd Floor Meeting Room)

- Special guest speaker Bob Bancroft, the Environment and Wildlife expert on CBC Radio's Maritime Noon & Nature Trust Board Director
- A slide presentation by Nature Trust staff showcasing our conservation work
- Delicious snacks and wine generously provided by Scanway and Jost Vineyards.

Come out and show your support for land conservation
All welcome

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

TREASURER The Nature Trust Board of Directors is looking for a Treasurer with solid accounting experience and preferably experience as a treasurer for non-profits.

FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE Join one of the following sub-committees: corporate campaign, major gifts/giving, or special events.

PROPERTY LAWYER Get involved in major property transactions that protect Nova Scotia wilderness.

INVESTMENT COMMITTEE If you know how to invest money, we would love to put your knowledge to work on the Nature Trust's Investment Committee.

NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE Use your creative talents as a writer, editor, or layout designer (Pagemaker)

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES (watch our website for details)

- Part-time Office Co-ordinator/Administrator
- Campaign-based Fundraiser for corporate or major donor campaigns



NOVA SCOTIA NATURE TRUST

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 B3J 3C4
 phone: (902) 425-5263
 fax: (902) 429-5263
 email: nature@nsnt.ca
 www.nsnt.ca

Our sincere apologies!
 In the fall issue of the newsletter, we mistakenly identified Kristi Soderman as Kimberly Fox. Kristi Soderman, Safety, Health and Environmental Manager with Sable Offshore Energy Inc was the person actually present in the bottom photo on page 4, as the company's representative.

JOIN THE NOVA SCOTIA NATURE TRUST

Membership in the Nova Scotia Nature Trust is open to any person or corporation interested in the protection of Nova Scotia's natural beauty and native biological diversity. Members receive the newsletter, *Natural Landscapes*, are entitled to vote at the Annual General Meeting, and may participate in the various committees of the Trust. Members also have the satisfaction of knowing that they are making an important contribution to the protection of Nova Scotia's outstanding natural areas.

Name _____ Organization (if applicable) _____

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 The Nature Trust also welcomes gifts of securities, trade lands, memorial gifts and bequests

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signature _____ I would like more information on including the Nature Trust in my estate planning

I would like receive more information to pass along to friends

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