

Strictly for the birds

by Bethsheila Kent

Now that the weather has finally decided to cooperate, birders discover the canopy in full leaf and the expected influx of returning migrants come and gone virtually unnoticed. No matter - the woods are alive with birdsong morning and evening, the sounds of hungry fledglings, insistent and plaintive adding to the joyous noise, the gentle fluttering of leaves revealing the presence of the wee ones waiting patiently for food. Slowly, slowly, waterways are seeing the return of the gulls, terns, loons, ducks and alcids that ply our waters and the shorebirds that regularly nest in our area, as well as the migrants from the high north begin to make their annual appearances on local beaches. All in all, a most enjoyable state of being.

Spotlight on the Swainson's Thrush:

Because I am hearing and seeing more of these wood thrushes than in past years, I felt the species worthy of highlighting. A wood thrush of the northern reaches of North America, Swainson's thrush is approximately 7" in length, is, like most of its cousins drab brown above with greyish sides and a rich, buffy breast generously and darkly spotted. It sports a bold, buffy eye ring and its underparts are pale. Like all thrushes



this one is an eloquent songster, its varied whistled notes spiralling upward much like the song of the hermit thrush but the Swainson's song not only lacks the Hermit's introductory note, its song has a slightly buzzy quality vaguely reminiscent of the veery. Its call note is a sharp but musical pipping sound with good carrying quality in morning and evening woods. Its usual habitat is moist woods and the margins of swamps but, given the amount of rain Cape Breton has seen this year, Swainson's thrush may turn up anywhere.

On the water:

The small colony of common tern at the bar at Jersey Cove continues to thrive in spite of the presence of the usual herring, great black-backed and ring-billed gulls. Both common and arctic tern have been observed on the Bras d'Or at Nyanza as well. Canada geese have returned to open water with their young in tow as have American black duck, mallard, common and red-breasted merganser, ring-necked duck and American widgeon, all in appropriate locations. The several wood duck sites of which I am aware have not revealed any young yet but the males

continue to remain in close proximity to nesting sites so I am hopeful that soon the young will be out and about. Common loon adults have been noted in several locations as well and I patiently await the appearance of their little ones. A few great blue heron have been noted in flight with a single bird seen foraging at the pond beneath the Museum on the Bay Road in Baddeck. Greater yellowlegs and spotted sandpiper are the only other waders noted this reporting period. Double-crested cormorant are on all salt water; a few black guillemot were noted at Wreck Cove recently and both surf and white-winged scoter were found off Ingonish. Northern gannet have returned to open water on both sides of Cape Breton Island, the juveniles having quickly taken to performing their remarkable diving feats alongside their parents.

Land Lubbers' Report:

Many sightings are recorded for the past few weeks which include wood warblers - yellow-rumped, magnolia, yellow, American redstart, black and white, common yellowthroat, black-throated green, Wilson's, northern parula, mourning and one or two chestnut-sided all in suitable habitat. Red-eyed and solitary (blue-headed) vireo have been noted regularly as have been common grackle, red-winged blackbird, American robin, hermit and Swainson's thrush, song, white-throat, chipping and Lincoln's sparrow. Ruby-crowned kinglet continues to sing on territory while its boreal cousin, golden-crowned kinglet has returned to its usual places with young in tow. Dark-eyed junco young are simply the most adorable little birds imaginable, the adults fussing over them. Blue and grey jay, American goldfinch, purple finch and both evening and pine grosbeak have all been noted this reporting period. Woodpecker activity (pardon the pun...) includes pileated, hairy, downy, black-backed and northern flicker. Flycatchers noted include olive-sided, yellow-bellied, least and alder, again, all sightings noted in suitable habitat. Ruffed grouse have been heard but not seen, as were ovenbird and eastern palm warbler. Raptors noted include American bald eagle, both adult and juveniles (a female closely watching her twins was found at Englishtown), red-tailed hawk, American kestrel, merlin and osprey.

I can be reached at 295-1749 with your birding news.

Working up an appetite



Pictured are some of the 84 participants in the annual Englishtown Mussel Festival 5K Road Race held June 25th, 2011.

Englishtown

On June 25, the 6th Annual Englishtown Mussel Festival 5K Road Race took place at 10 am commencing at the St. Marks Presbyterian Church and proceeding 2.5 km towards the ferry down the Black Head Road and back.

Each year the race has taken place it has increased in participants. In 2011 an incredible 84 registered runners ranging in age from 9 to 62 years old took part. The weather was kind as the rain never materialized and the winds were light. Many first time runners participated who were enrolled in the "Learn to Run" program.

It is most encouraging to see Cape Bretoners taking control on improving their general fitness levels. Besides it is a blast to get out in a beautiful part of Cape Breton

and after join in on the fun of the festival with seafood and music.

The top runners were:

- Overall Male:** 1st- Allan MacKenzie, 2nd - Chris Milburn, 3rd- Corey Deveaux
- Overall Female:** 1st- Julie Curwin, 2nd- Johnna MacLaughlin, 3rd- Rhoda MacCormick
- Masters Male:** 1st- Vincent Nicholson, 2nd- Ken MacKinnon, 3rd- Glen Basso
- Masters Female:** 1st- Carol Campbell, 2nd-Sherry Finney, 3rd-Melanie Higgins
- Grand Masters Male:** 1st- Martin Guest, 2nd- Arie Schop, 3rd- Bruce MacIntyre
- Grand Masters Female:** 1st- Ann Kerr, 2nd- Arlene Morrison, 3rd-Debbie Howie
- Youngest Runner:** Juliana Vickers -9
- Oldest Runner:** Colin Wayne - 62



GAELIC COLLEGE

The Gaelic College Foundation is a member organization operating the Gaelic College, a non-profit institution, whose mandate is to promote, preserve and perpetuate, through studies in all related areas, the culture, language, music, arts, crafts, customs and traditions of immigrants from the Highlands of Scotland.

The Gaelic College Foundation is seeking to secure an Executive Director with management experience in a non-profit environment reporting directly to the Board of Governors. The successful candidate will need experience and a track record as a leader and manager and the position will require that they be collaborative, familiar with non-profit organizations, government agencies and/or educational institutions.

Duties

The Executive Director will be responsible to provide a leadership role to ensure that the College fulfills its mandate, mission and strategic action plan. The key objective of the Executive Director is to provide direction and oversee all departments within the College and to provide support to the Board of Governors in its strategic governing of the organization.

The successful candidate should show strength and leadership within the framework of culture and education as they will be working in a teaching and instructional environment for the Gaelic culture. As Executive Director, the incumbent would be responsible to direct and oversee management of the College's finances and to develop and maintain partnerships and relationships with other organizations, institutions and government agencies that further the ability to meet the goals and objectives of the College.

The College is located in a small rural community and it would be expected that the Executive Director would endeavor to maintain good close relationships with the community and to seek input and participation from the members of the community.

Qualifications

- Degree in business management or equivalent
- Minimum 5 years experience in a management or leadership role
- Management and supervisory experience an asset
- Basic knowledge of the Gaelic language would be considered an asset
- Knowledge of the tourism industry would be considered an asset
- Experience in a teaching/instructional environment would be considered an asset
- Experience working with a Board of Governors
- Experience in marketing and communications
- Experience in budget preparation and controls

If you are interested in applying for this position, please forward your resume and CV along with a cover letter to Maureen Carroll, Chair on or before July 15, 2011 by fax or email to:

Maureen Carroll, Chair
Gaelic College Foundation
Fax: 902-861-3685
Email: Maureen@mc Carrollconsulting.ca

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