

‘South Shore Wildlife Association’

2013 Annual Report

SSWA took an active role this year in raising the concerns of the rapid spread of black legged ticks throughout the South Shore area. We felt this relatively new problem has escalated much more than the authorities are aware of and more needs to be done to educate the public in awareness. Numerous communications via emails and phone calls were made with research scientist Robin Lindsay in Manitoba and with Nova Scotia Dept. of Health and Wellness. In addition, a meeting was held with the local Public Health Services contact in Bridgewater, and another with the Progress Bulletin editor, all to encourage a more active public campaign to stress the dangers of lyme disease and the very likely exposure to the small carriers now found almost everywhere, and practically any time of year, in our own back yard.

In addition to our work regarding lyme disease, please be informed of some of the other annual, and new, activities of SSWA in 2013:

Fraternity Involvement:

- SSWA prepared a presentation on large mammals for the Young Naturalists Club in January after their request that we take them on a nature hike and give a talk on that topic. A binder of pictures and informative literature on the main animals to discuss was created, and props to use as visual aids were assembled. Four volunteers were prepared to take part in this educational outing. Unfortunately, after several postponements of this by the YNC, they did a last minute cancellation on the final planned day of the event. SSWA did not pursue it further after that.
- SSWA were invited to, and did, a rabbit snaring presentation to the attendees of the Winter Youth Hunting Camp put on by Natural Resources at McGowan Lake depot in March. This included a talk and presentation, in addition to a demonstration of cleaning a rabbit, and ended with taking the young people out to set their own snares in the local area.
- SSWA was again represented at the March NSFAH Convention by two delegates and we co-sponsored the local snack foods for an evening.
- In August we hosted our annual BB/pellet gun shooting booth for young people at the Trappers Rendezvous in Hibernia, Queens Co.
- SSWA organized another Fall Outing Event for Big Brothers in Sept. Unfortunately they had to cancel at the last minute but guarantee they will plan it into their 2014 schedule of events.
- **Community Involvement:** - **Earth Day** clean-up saw a similar campaign to last year for our club. Once again we opted out of picking up the continuing array of roadside debris and continued to approach the problem from an educational perspective. Communication with Saltscapes Magazine and with the local newspaper editor resulted in an anti-littering article printed in the local paper. Additionally we had a club letter published as well, and we also worked with RRFB to supply 36 anti-littering signs which will be posted by our members in various well used locations where garbage is an issue.
- SSWA has been present at the **Michelin Health and Safety Fair** for many years, giving us good exposure while at the same time trying to bring awareness to the public on various outdoor hazards such as wood and deer ticks and lyme disease, poisonous plants, coyotes, sun exposure, getting lost and other topics.
- In April and May we entertained a variety of people over the course of **four fishing events** at the MARC ponds again. In addition to other things, SSWA continues to organize these events and supply all the fishing gear and bait, instruction and supervision. The first was for **Big**

Brothers/Big Sisters. This continues to be their favorite event out of all their activities. Almost 50 fish were landed, cleaned, bagged and stored for the participants. We provided the typical refreshments, including hot drinks which were a big hit because of the cool temperature. MLA Pam Birdsall and her husband, taking time out from a busy schedule to acknowledge our efforts, dropped by for a brief visit and a quick try for a trout. SSWA presented each participant with a certificate and a hat. Four days later we entertained **CSSG (Community Services Support Group)** from 9:00am until 1:00, followed by a new undertaking for us – **Supported Community Living Options** – from 2:00 until 5:00pm. Both of these were a lot of fun and very popular with SSWA and the approximately 50 participants in total from the two groups. The fishing was a bit slow, but by the end of the day between 70 – 80 trout were taken.

The fourth event, for a third year in a row, was with **Bridgewater School Grades 2 & 3 on May 15th**. We assisted the more than 60 kids in attendance. Numerous trout were caught and everyone had a great time. At the end of the event the school presented SSWA with a card of thanks which included a check for \$50.00 (that will be used toward new fishing supplies). The local Progress Bulletin published pictures of our events in three of their editions over the following month.

-In July we once again hosted our annual Giant Flea Market at the Michelin Social Club. For a first time we had a waiting list of vendors and had to turn several away. Close to 600 people attended, one our best turnouts, and helped to make this event one of our best fund raisers of the year.

Fundraising and Donations: - SSWA contributed \$100 to a Big Brothers fund raiser, and purchased \$100 worth of calendars from Cobequid Wildlife Rehabilitation Centre in support of their work. It was decided that our annual food bank donation would be better served if given after the busy year-end Holiday season so will be issued in early 2014.

- We held a penny auction raffle in January, and sold tickets on a seafood raffle prior to Christmas as fund raisers in addition to the summer flea market.

Other Notes: One of the biggest challenges with a large membership is staying on top of renewals. Lapses of a year or more were quite common and presented problems with our accounting among other things. Therefore in 2013 SSWA tightened the renewal process for our members to try to get a better handle on paid memberships. Renewals are given a 3 month grace period notice to respond before being removed from our active list. We now maintain a steady core of members in the 150 -160 range. Our club continues to meet monthly eleven times a year and minutes from these meetings are issued to all members so that everyone knows what their club is involved with. This also allows us to convey any special information, news, or requests on a broad scale very quickly. We take particular pride in working with young people to encourage involvement in the outdoor activities that we used to take for granted, which is beginning to show by the inquiries made for us to host a fishing event for various groups.

Respectfully submitted
Stephen Joudrey
President, SSWA