



# Fredericton Nature Club/ Club de la nature de Fredericton

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Newsletter

September–December 2008

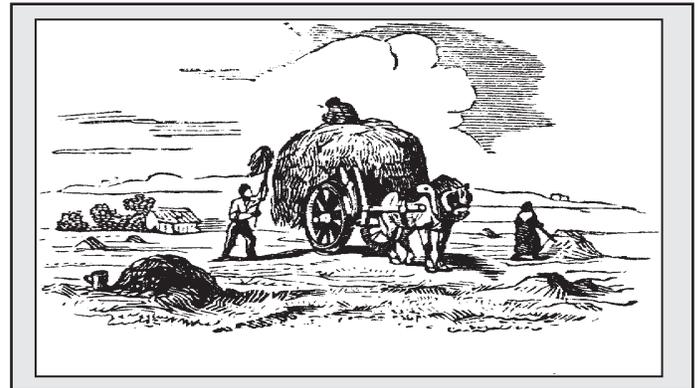
## Welcome Back, Fredericton Nature Club Members!

Hello everyone. Hopefully the summer was as you hoped; maybe frantic drives in search of new sightings and trails, or restful meanderings in old familiar places.

It was a late spring and a wet summer and I wonder if the plants and animals were a bit different this summer - any odd sightings or behaviour would be of interest - so please mention them at the October meeting.

As in the past, the FNC autumn program begins with a presentation in October but please note we have an outing for September 21. I have tried to cover a range of topics but please let me know of ideas or people for upcoming presentations or outings. We have a diverse membership and maybe you know of a good speaker?

Please note that it's time to renew the annual club memberships. Your dues help volunteers to run the club. Expense items include renting the meeting room, mailing newsletters, and providing guest speakers with an honorarium. *GJF*



## Location and Meeting Times

**Date:** First Wednesday of each month (starting in October)

**Location:** The Stepping Stone Centre  
15 Saunders Street  
Fredericton

Across the road from YMCA  
Lots of parking  
Easy access

**Time:** Monthly meetings start at 7 p.m.

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## Fredericton Nature Club Membership for 2008–2009

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

- \$20 Individual Membership
- \$25 Family Membership

Please mail form to:

Fredericton Nature Club  
PO Box 772, Station A  
Fredericton NB E3B 5B4

## Calendar of Events

### Indoor Stuff

All talks take place at  
The Stepping Stone Centre, 7 p.m.

**Wednesday October 1**  
***The Acadian Forest in New Brunswick***  
with Judy Loo

New Brunswick is a boundary between mainly hardwood forests to the south and coniferous forests to the north. The Acadian Forest covers our region, but exactly what is it? How has it changed in the last few hundred years? Some tree species have become rare while others now dominate. Judy Loo of the Canadian Forest Service will provide an overview of the tree species composition, disturbance regimes, human impact, and biodiversity of this special forest.

**Wednesday November 5**  
***Wildlife Photography***  
with Brigitte Noel

Taking pictures of wildlife is like playing golf - we can all take a swing but its hard to get a birdie (sorry). Come out to see Brigitte's photos of wildlife from New Brunswick, hear her stories for getting the picture, and pick up some tricks on how to get quality photos of wildlife.

**Wednesday December 3**  
***A Month in the Amazon***  
with Graham Forbes

Graham was lucky enough to work in a very remote part of the Amazon jungle for part of the summer. While studying bats, he also did some work on birds, caiman, dolphins, fish, and monkeys, including the very rare red uakari. Come hear about boating on the Amazon, birds in mistnets, and what monkeys throw from trees when they want you to leave.



### Outdoor Stuff

Most outings begin at the Odell Park  
parking lot. Times vary - check below.

**Sunday September 21**  
***An Autumnal Ramble*** with Jim Goltz

Jim Goltz will lead a nature walk near Crock's Point Road and some of the islands downriver of the Dam. It will be a great chance to practice identifying those fall warblers, as well as plants in seed. Wear weather-appropriate clothing and bring a lunch. We meet first at Odell Park at **12:20 p.m.** and leave at **12:30 p.m.** sharp. (or, meet at 1 p.m. at the parking lot of Mactaquac Dam, opposite the Holiday Inn).

**Saturday October 18 (to be announced)**

**Saturday November 24**  
***Seeking Rough-Legged Hawks*** with Don Gibson

We had a great outing last year (see page 3 for a summary) and since a wide variety of wildlife is possible we thought a repeat outing to Jemseg, Gagetown, and environs would be fun. We'll be looking for Rough-Legged Hawks, shrikes, and enjoying the very last days of fall. Bring a lunch. We meet first at Odell Park at **7:50 a.m.** and leave at **8:00 a.m.** sharp.

**Sunday December 14**  
***The Christmas Bird Count***

Come take part in a long tradition of making every bird count! Sign up as a group or join an existing one but get out your snowshoes, skis, or toboggan and search your zone for as many hours as your toes permit. Our all-day Christmas Bird Count ends with a **potluck dinner at 5:30 p.m.** at The Stepping Stone Centre. Contact Don Gibson, coordinator, 454-3261 for sites, and items for the pot-luck.

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## Outing Summary:

### **Rough-legged Hawks at Jemseg, November 24, 2007**

(8am -12 pm; overcast, snow flurries then clearing sky; -10°C but a cold wind)

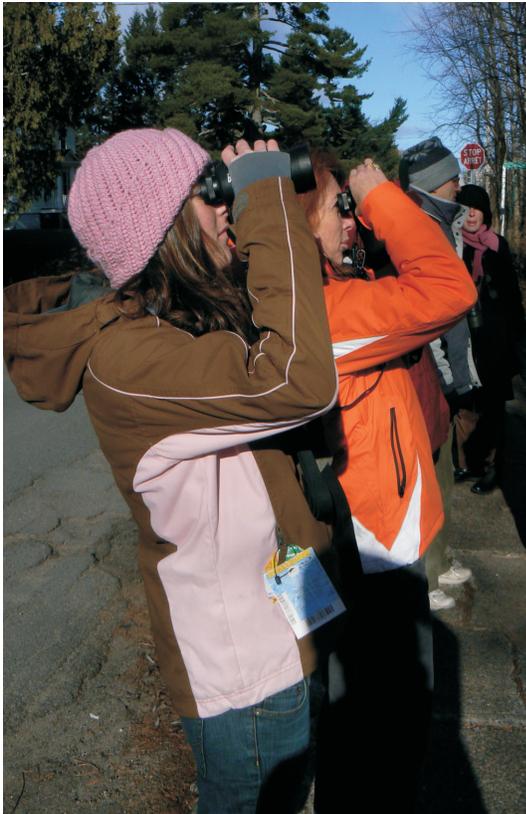
Our November club outing hoped for sightings of this Arctic raptor that winters in the Maugerville-Jemseg area, and so, led by Don Gibson, 13 members of the FNC bundled up for the Arctic-like weather and headed off at 8 am. Don has been recording the species and location of raptors in the area from McGowan's Corner to Lower Jemseg for many years. Hopes were high because several 'Rough-legs' had been recently sighted, we had Don, and birders who need to put on long-johns in November aren't likely to quit without compensation. We saw numerous Common Goldeneye on the Saint John River as our convoy of 5 cars snaked along the old-Trans Canada Highway, a trip now much safer for birders who slam on the brakes for every shadow flying overhead.



Although the objective was Rough-legs, we scanned every dark shape among the branches and quickly found two adult Bald Eagles, sitting a metre apart, perched in the maples beside the River. Two Red-tailed Hawks were found along the hydroline a short distance later, one of which free-falled from 50m in the sky down to the other hawk perched in a tree. As they flew off, a Northern Harrier and Raven popped up and, for a few seconds, large birds were going in every direction. At McGowan's Corner, 2 more Harriers flew low over the uncut fields and a flock of Common Redpolls moved past. The next raptor was another Red-tailed, hidden enough behind a trunk to raise hopes for a Rough-legged. Finally, a kilometer downroad, Don spotted a dark raptor, high up in the leafless tree. A dark-phase, almost solid black, Rough-legged Hawk. Those in the first few cars had a good look but those pulling-up had to settle for watching it flying away and scoping it in the distance. It had landed near the Great Blue Heron heronry near the Oromocto Bridge. Dark-phase Rough-legs are much less frequent than the light-phase ones and if we only had 1 Rough-leg for the day, this one could suffice.

Then, by fortune, we had a fantastic view of a light-phase soaring low overhead; the sighting of both phases back-to-back allowed a great comparison.

The long-johns were paying off. The convoy carried on to Lower Jemseg where a few more Red-tails and Rough-legs were spotted. A quick visit to Andrew McGinnis' feeder showed a White-breasted Nuthatch and Goldfinches. Don then wondered if the group was warm enough to try for a Tufted Titmouse across the river in Gagetown, and of course, off we went. Gagetown has a number of feeders in close proximity and we were treated to a group of 10 Evening Grosbeaks, a Cardinal, Blue Jays, a Hairy Woodpecker, and numerous Black-capped Chickadees and Northern Juncos. We looked for the titmouse for a half-hour, without luck, and were heading back to the cars when flying across the field and straight towards us, came the titmouse. The entire



group had good, long looks as the titmouse perched in the



open, oblivious to the birdwatchers who started the day searching for hawks typical of the Arctic, and finishing with a bird from the south!

Summary by Graham Forbes

It is hoped that we can include a summary of a recent FNC outing in the newsletters so please consider taking some notes and/or pictures and submitting a short account of the trip. When we get the webpage up we can also save the accounts there. Best inform the outing leader if you plan on writing the summary.