

that the replacement cost of wooden breakwaters, pilings and wharves in North America amounts to about \$50-million U.S. every year.

While wood borers cause most of the deterioration of wood in the sea, fungi and bacteria are thought to play an important, but as yet unknown, part in the success of the borers.

Surprisingly, little information is available on the reaction of marine fungi to chemically treated wood. Wood used for man-made structures is normally treated with a preservative (usually creosote) but eventually, leaching from the surface of the wood allows fungi to settle and grow.

So, the next time you are strolling along the shore of Malpeque Bay and come upon a piece of driftwood or an old lobster trap, you might just remember that there, just out of sight, is a species of fungi found nowhere else in the world.

## Note from a reader

I received an interesting letter from a reader last week that I will pass along to everyone else.

"As a member of the Island's Natural History Society, I am moved to write following my recent reading of the Nov.-Dec. 86 Island Naturalist.

"The newsletter referred to above struck me as one of the most interesting for some time. There was plenty to sink one's teeth into, yet for reason of the deletion of the customary bird sightings, it left a disappointing void, in my opinion. Especially at this time of year reports of rare bird sightings are of great interest to readers of the report, to say nothing of the intense thrill of the actual sighting. It is to be hoped that this issue is merely a once-only lapse in the reporting of bird sightings.

"The story painted by R.B. MacLaren of the "rape of the smelt school" by our noble cormorant tribe was thought-provoking to say the least!

"The article written by Brian Dalzell was most interesting, not too flowery or lengthy, full of lucid and exciting detail. We could do with many more such informative articles, on any of the many areas of nature, wildlife and especially of the Island where we live.

"To close, Gary, let me congratulate you on the way you put the Island Naturalist together, a task which cannot be easy.

Sincerely yours,  
Marguerite Wheatley

First off, the newsletter is fun and easy for me, especially when I get feedback from the actual people reading it. Hopefully the problem of the missing bird sightings has been solved (see page 15), a compromise, but one that most members should be happy with. Besides focussing on the rarer sightings, it also leaves more room for other stories. I would like to add my thanks to Brian Dalzell, who has consistently come through with interesting and different stories, including one in this issue. And one more positive result of readers' letters (for me) - as a result of Bruce MacLaren's letter last issue, and a subsequent phone call, Bruce has agreed to do a story on P.E.I.'s pretty floral emblem, the pink lady's slipper. The story will be featured in the March-April newsletter, and hopefully there will be more to come. Also, the plant that Bruce found was Cardamine flexuosa. Thanks again for all those who take the time and effort to express their views.