

COUNTING HERONS

THE NATIONAL HERON CENSUS by Rosemary Curley

The 1980 heron census is old news now, but in preparation for this year's effort, we might want to review last year's results. To summarize (see table), 12 of 14 known colonies were censused, one in winter, and one new colony at Blooming Point was located by Paul Strain. Three colonies were found deserted, and an old colony site last recorded as unused at Herring Island remained unoccupied. Some large colonies were very accurately censused, while others in thick vegetation proved very tricky to count. Censusing at the proper time was difficult with weather playing a role in preventing heron counters from reaching their island destinations. (Many who reached the islands owe their thanks to Federal Fisheries officers and their free transportation.) A preliminary total of 859 active nests was found in 1980. In 1981 with a year of census experience, better coordination, and a little luck with weather, we should be able to fill in some gaps.

For more information on the Maritime census results, census techniques and the rationale behind the heron census, participants of the 1980 census and would-be participants of the '81 census are invited to the April meeting when Mr. Al Smith, the Maritime Heron Census coordinator will discuss the aforementioned topics. Those interested in just looking at herons should enjoy the presentation of an excellent new National Film Board production on Great Blue Herons, which Al is bringing along.

1980 HERON CENSUS RESULTS

Colony	Number of Active Nests	Actual or Estimate	Observers
Kings County			
1. Boughton Island	30+	Estimate	John Wright
2. Herring Island	0	Actual	Debbie Peters, Bill Glen and Sid Watts
3. Cherry Island	29	Actual	D.Peters, B.Glenn, S.Watts
4. Thomas Island	100	Estimate	D.Peters, B.Glenn, S.Watts
Queens County			
5. St. Peters Island	30	Winter count	Winifred Cairns
6. Governor's Island	100+	Estimate	Bob Thompson, Richard Holden
7. Judson's Island	0	Actual	Geoff Hogan
8. Glenfinnan Island	182	Actual	Bruce Smith, Alfred Morais
9. Rustico Island	98	Actual	P.E.I. National Park staff
10. North Granville	0	Actual	Margaret Mallett
Prince County			
11. Holman's Island	Not censused		
12. Courtin Island	Not censused but noted to be active		
13. George Island	0	Actual	Winifred Cairns, Anne Landry
14. Oulton's Island	270	Actual	Gerald and Alanagh MacDougall, Penelope Player, Dana Pushie
New Colonies			
15. Blooming Point	20+	Estimate	Paul Strain
Total number of active nests	859	(C.W.S. estimate was 1200 pairs)	