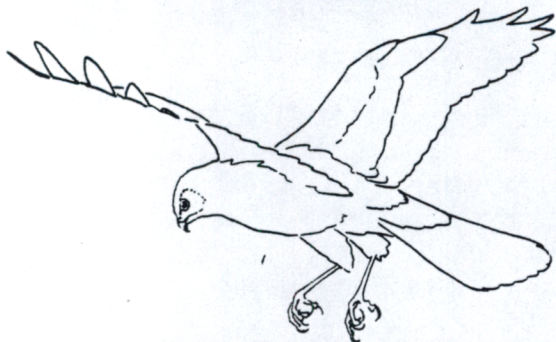


THE BEAUTY OF GREENWICH:

by Tom Reddin

During the summer of 1998, I had the great good fortune to work at Greenwich in the new Adjunct of the P.E.I. National Park. Because this area has such diverse passerine (perching birds), dune land, and wetland habitat, it's home to a multitude of songbirds, small mammals, and, therefore, raptors. Besides Bald Eagles, Ospreys, owls, Merlins, and American Kestrels, there were at least three nesting pairs of Northern Harriers (*Circus cyaneus*) in the neighbourhood.

Of these, the largest nested about 600 m from our new Visitor Centre cottage. The "grandmother" became somewhat of a companion to me on my morning and evening rounds of the site. More than the younger female, she seemed to become comfortable with my presence as the season went on, sometimes approaching my van as it passed along the lane, stirring up sparrows and warblers from shrubs and hedgerows nearby.



Late in the summer, I noticed her ranging more and more around the area near our cottage, where the old farm yard has grown up in bushes and weedy hay and where a spruce grove and raspberry patch are located behind the building. On a late August evening, I looked out my office window toward this corner of the yard and saw the grandmother performing what might be called a "circus trick". After circling over some bushes about 50 feet away from me, she landed, picked up a stick about 2 feet long, flew up about 30 feet, then circled back over the bushes and dropped her "baton" into them.

At first I thought this was a strange fluke but, as I watched, she circled the same spot, landed again and repeated the performance with another stick. This time, it seemed she got results, as she dove swiftly towards the spruce grove, apparently in pursuit of a victim. Because of the flight path, I couldn't be sure of the result but, it seems likely that this was a case of a bird using a tool to flush another bird as prey.

On two other evenings, she showed the same behaviour, though at a distance of about 50 yards. So again, I couldn't see the results in detail. Perhaps this is one part of her repertoire of hunting skills that contributed to her apparent longevity. Though changes are being made at Greenwich and more visitation seems inevitable, along with more disruption of her hunting grounds, this amazing display of survival skills makes me hopeful that she will still be "at home" there as time goes by.

FIRST ISLAND RECORD FOR SWAINSON'S WARBLER:

by Ray Cooke

At 11:10 AM on Tuesday May 25, 1999, while birding in Monticello and looking for Tennessee Warblers about 75 yards west of the south end of the Hermitage Road, I stopped to investigate some suitable habitat. While looking for the warblers, I heard a song I was unfamiliar with although, I thought the song may have been that of a waterthrush. I walked over to the area in question and was surprised when a bird came up from the ground to a height of about 18 inches. The bird then sat in full view for about 15 seconds.

The most notable feature was how slim and long the bird looked. This was accented by a very long, thin and pointed bill. The bill proportion seemed even greater as the bird looked as if it's head was flattened and not rounded like many warblers. The crown had a brownish-red cap that was solid in color and extended to it's nape. A pronounced supercilium [eye brow stripe] was wide and whitish in color and was present both in front of and behind the eye. A dark line was also present both in front of and behind the eye. No eye ring was noted. The throat and face were white in color with no strong markings although