

Yesterday we had a very smart Downy Woodpecker at the feeder. We have a 2.5 m high square post with a wrought iron "contraption" (an old rack with many hooks like people used to hang above their stove) nailed to the top. We use it to hang different birdfeeders on the hooks. The woodpecker went for a ball of peanut butter, laced with niger seeds and sunflower seeds and also for the sunflower seeds on the ground. When one seed was too hard to open, he walked up the post and used the wrought iron ring that held the "contraption" nailed to the post, put the seed securely in the ring and pecked till it opened! Then, back down he went or, sometimes he flew down for the next seed that he chose very carefully before taking it up to repeat the process. Other times he made a bee-line for the peanut butter ball where he gorged himself till he came to another seed that he couldn't open. He kept at it for a good half hour, disregarding, and being disregarded by all the other birds!

We have a lot of activity lately, since we added a suet/birdseed cake and the peanut butter ball. Black-capped chickadees, European Starlings, (about 5-6), American Gold finches, the odd Blue Jay and one squirrel who comes every day at 1 O'clock. The crows and starlings share the compost too.

AZURE BLUET IN PEI

by Robert W. Harding

On September 2, 2000 my son Jake and I took the time for a quick dragonfly survey of one of PEI's Natural Areas: it was our first trip to a small kettlehole-type pond in southern Kings County locally referred to as "Isaac's Lake". It was a pretty spot that day - the clear blue sky was reflected in an apparently deep pond surrounded by a floating mat of sphagnum, upon which grew sundews and pitcher plants. And dragonflies - the place was alive with them - feeding, sparring, mating, egg-laying. We carefully collected along the floating shoreline, and soon realized that we had something different: the Azure Bluet (*Enallagma aspersum*), a first record for the species for Prince Edward Island!

While the Azure Bluet is a small damselfly, it is striking with its alternating bright blue and jet black pattern. There were a great many of them on Isaac's Lake that day, but they flew very close to the water's surface, making them surprisingly difficult to net without joining them in the water ourselves.

The Azure Bluet has been recorded elsewhere in the Maritimes, but so far only in the southern parts of New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. It could very well be found elsewhere in PEI as well. This new record represents a northeastern expansion of the known range of the Azure Bluet, and brings the total number of dragonfly and damselfly species recorded in PEI to 65.

We recorded a total of sixteen different species of dragonflies and damselflies in our one-hour survey of Isaac's Lake last year. And while the deer flies were particularly nasty, we still look forward to spending more time surveying there again this summer.

LIFT WITH CARE PLEASE!

by Hilda Gossi

We're having a real circus here watching the feeders. Every evening a skunk comes to the feeder - can't get in but cleans up the seeds on the ground and waits for help. Then come 2 racoons. One climbs up the post and lays on top of the feeder's roof, holding onto the iron bar behind him with his hind-paws. With one front paw, he scoops the few remaining seeds out of the feeder onto the ground where the skunk and the other racoon share them peacefully, side by side. Last night I even saw the racoon shove one paw under the skunk's belly, lifting the skunk up so he could get at the seeds underneath him!

The other racoon in the meantime contorted himself and got his head stuck into the feeder slot and