

Harbour. Dark Harbour, is the only harbour on the west side of the island, the coastline being very rugged with steep mountains of rock dropping straight to the sea. If the name seems mystical and dramatic, then so does the actual place. It was no surprise we found lots of eagles and hawks here, it was a surprise when we found the sun. Walking on one of the trails, we started looking down instead of up and first of all, found lots of snack food in the great abundance of blueberries and blackberries, and secondly wildflowers. I suspect our leader, chef, and driver knew all along what many of these flowers were, however he made the van library available to us, and by the end of the day we were pretty proud of our new found expertise. Ray became very good at picking out St. John's Wort. My favorite was a brilliant blue flower called Vipers Bugloss. The bird list was growing too, the waxwings and hummingbirds seemed to be making every stop with us, we were pleased to find as many warblers as we did, and a little surprised at how few crows and starlings we saw. Before the long but eventful day ended Dan created another gourmet meal, and Bill and Bruce set the campfire, while Ray gave a lesson in astronomy. The rest of us worked together as a first rate team to give assistance, the veggies were peeled to perfection and everyone wanted to do the dishes, although the cool temperature may have been a factor in making that hot water seem attractive.

Whale watching at last! It is very hard to put into words the excitement created when 70 to 80 foot whales are surfacing on all sides of the fishing boat, close enough to hear them breathing. We were lucky to see both hump back whales and, the second largest whale in the world, the fin back. The dolphins seemed determined to get their share of the attention. It was if they were on stage at Sea World, synchronized swimming at its best, coming close enough to touch. Moving down in size, there were the pelagics, shearwater, phalarope, kittiwake and fulmar. Try to imagine all this happening at once. Trying to imprint it on your mind knowing you may never see anything like this again. Trying to get the perfect photograph. Little wonder no one had time to

even think about getting seasick, even though the swells were so high I was looking up, trying to take a picture of the dolphins. The tour operator admitted that our particular trip was one of the best he had all summer. We were out on the water from seven in the morning till noon on a beautiful sunny day, we also witnessed first hand the famous fundy tides. When we arrived, early morning, we had to go down a two story ramp and be ferried out to the boat, but when we got back at noon we tied up at the wharf and we simply stepped off.

It was a very tired and satisfied bunch that arrived back in Charlottetown late Sunday night. The trip more than met all of our expectations. Grand Manan is a nature lovers paradise, the birds find it an "in" place to be as well. The whales, well, they are just more than my words can tell. Friends were made, we learned to work together, enjoy together, suffer together (it was a little cramped on the way home,) learn together (Jean and I were a little amazed when Ray and Dan started listing the birds they heard flying over in the night.) I'm sure I speak for the group of us who participated in this field trip, Bruce, Dan, Bill, Evelyn, Jean, and Ray in expressing our gratitude to the Natural History Society for providing this opportunity. When a similar expedition is mounted next year, you will find our names on the sign up sheet next to yours.