

The Canadian Field-Naturalist

Foreword to the Special Issue honouring Donald F. McAlpine: contributions to the natural history of the Canadian Maritimes

It is a great pleasure to dedicate this double Special Issue of *The Canadian Field-Naturalist* (CFN) to Dr. Donald F. McAlpine, Research Curator of Zoology and Head of the Department of Natural History at the New Brunswick Museum. Although New Brunswick encompasses <1% of the area of Canada and <2% of its population, Don has made outsize contributions to Maritime and Canadian natural history. He is a distinguished researcher, curator, and science communicator; an influential mentor of students and citizen scientists; and an organizer and leader of collaborative projects that have done much to further knowledge and conservation of biodiversity. He is also a longtime contributor to this journal. More than 40 of his research articles and notes have appeared in CFN since 1976, and he has served as an Associate Editor of the journal since 2003.

Don began hinting a few years ago at retirement. We hasten to add that it isn't our intention to nudge him in that direction (!), but to celebrate and honour his many contributions over a long and continuing career. The range of taxonomic groups and research methodologies represented in this issue attests in part to the unusual breadth of his interests and collaborations. Several of the papers originate partly or largely from opportunities that he created through BiotaNB—a long-term biodiversity survey in New Brunswick's protected natural areas. From our outreach to colleagues and students, we know that many others would like to have contributed. Inevitably, time constraints shaped the content of the issue. We are grateful to the manuscript reviewers for their critical input, and we also thank the New Brunswick Museum for financial and other assistance.

The issue begins with a sketch of Don's career (Clayden). The 12 research articles and notes which follow are by 32 authors, not including Don, who is also a co-author on one of the manuscripts. Several deal with the dynamics of vertebrate species' populations that have been much-affected by human activity: River Otter (*Lontra canadensis*) in Prince Edward Island (Gregory *et al.*); Moose (*Alces alces*) in mainland Nova Scotia (Scott *et al.*); and occurrences in urban settings in New Brunswick of Gray Treefrog

(*Hyla versicolor*; Wallace *et al.*) and two turtle species (Browne and Sullivan), Eastern Painted Turtle (*Chrysemys picta picta*) and non-native, potentially problematic Red-eared Slider (*Trachemys scripta elegans*). Other zoological contributions include a survey of the diversity of terrestrial molluscs in a protected natural area and adjoining provincial park in north-central New Brunswick (Forsyth); the first report for New Brunswick of Seaside Dragonlet (*Erythrodiplax berenice*), a dragonfly species restricted to saline habitats (Sabine *et al.*); and a study of the diversity and frequency of parasitic subcutaneous mites occurring on Northern Gannet (*Morus bassanus*) in Atlantic Canadian waters (Proctor *et al.*). Four other contributions deal with species diversity and/or range extensions among myxomycetes (slime moulds), fungi, lichens, and flowering plants in New Brunswick. Eighty myxomycete species are reported, greatly increasing the known diversity of this group in the province (Zoll *et al.*). The occurrence and identities of 10 species in the mushroom-forming genus *Cortinarius* are confirmed by molecular evidence, with morphological and habitat descriptions provided for each (Malloch *et al.*). A synopsis of the lichen genus *Rinodina* details the distributions and habitats of 15 species (Clayden *et al.*). And a widely disjunct occurrence of the native annual Douglas' Knotweed (*Polygonum douglasii*) is documented (Blaney *et al.*).

We thank CFN for the opportunity to celebrate Don's productive and diverse career in natural history, and we wish him good health and happiness in his continuing adventures.

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