

Coastal Chronicle

Bluenose Coastal Action Foundation Quarterly Newsletter



Issue 5 / Winter 2017

Happy New Year and Welcome 2017

Greetings readers, and welcome 2017! Coastal Action's office was closed for two weeks over the holidays; we're all rested up, ready to begin another year of research, education, and action.

The winter season at a non-profit environmental organization often includes report writing, completing grant applications, attending meetings, and organizing outreach events. A significant chunk of our time also goes towards planning and preparing for the upcoming summer season, and here at Coastal Action - as I look out the window and see snow beginning to fall - we're already in the process of hiring our 2017 summer staff. Our LaHave River Watershed Project team also continues to monitor that watershed, sampling at various locations every month throughout the year, in almost every kind of

weather! So if you spy folks drilling through ice along the river this winter, it might just be our staff, taking readings and samples.

Speaking of water, in this issue we've brought you stories on both fresh and marine waters, and the species that live there. Danielle brings you up to speed on the 2016 American eel season, as well as a profile on the Scotia-Fundy Elver Advisory Committee. Also in this issue: details on our recent marine protected areas open house in Bridgewater, our free Rural H₂O Project workshops, and a taste of Coastal Action's role in upcoming Canada 150 activities. Clare also brings you a 2016 summary of Trailblazers, our exciting new program under the Morton Centre education umbrella, which aims to get kids playing outside. Happy reading!

Jennifer McKinnon, Editor

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Coastal Action staff at Chester Curling Club for January's Staff Day.

Bluenose Coastal Action Foundation, established in December 1993, is a charitable organization that addresses environmental concerns along the South Shore region of Nova Scotia. Our goal at Coastal Action is to promote the restoration, enhancement, and conservation of our ecosystem through research, education, and action. Our vision is a healthy environment supporting thriving South Shore communities.

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Marine Protected Areas Open House by Ariel Smith



Visitors at Art Happening, browsing information about marine protected areas.

Coastal Action collaborated on a Fisheries and Oceans Canada-hosted Marine Protected Area public session at Art Happening Bridgewater, on December 7, 2016. Information on the general framework of marine protected area planning on Nova Scotia and the Bay of Fundy coasts was provided, questions from attendees were answered, and feedback was gathered about

two relevant ecologically and biologically significant regions: Mahone Bay and the LaHave Islands and Surrounding Area. Coastal Action will continue to gather information via our website feedback form in the coming months. Visit DFO's Oceans and Coastal Management website at <http://tinyurl.com/zg4967r> for more information on marine protected areas. 🐟

NS Heritage and Marine Stewardship C150 Project by Jennifer McKinnon



C150 activities happen this summer, in Lunenburg and across Nova Scotia!

Coastal Action, with financial backing received through the Canada 150 Fund, will be leading the development and delivery of the Nova Scotia Heritage and Marine Stewardship C150 Project in 2017. We're heading the project in Lunenburg (Coastal Action's home base); however, other activities will take place in coastal communities across the province, including Digby, Sydney,

and Annapolis Royal. Coastal Action's project will celebrate Canada's 150th anniversary by engaging Canadians in cultural and environmental activities during summer 2017, including: stewardship and conservation of marine environments, First Nations traditions, marine debris prevention, and building art with recycled materials. Details on dates and times to come! 🐟

Rural H₂O Project by Sam Reeves



Sam performing a home water quality assessment.

Coastal Action has been working with the Clean Annapolis River Project (CARP) to educate rural home owners about drinking water quality, water conservation, and source water protection. So far, Coastal Action has hosted a workshop in Shelburne, and more recently at our office in Lunenburg on January 16, 2017. The free information sessions were open

to anyone interested and provided a good opportunity to learn about water quality and conservation.

Coastal Action is also offering home assessments to a total of 25 homeowners in Shelburne, Queens, and Lunenburg Counties which includes a \$100 rebate to cover the cost of water testing. 🐟

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2016 American Eel Season by Danielle Pernette

Throughout September to November 2016, the third annual American silver eel study was conducted in East River, Chester. Several traps were placed throughout the East River watershed, including three upstream tagging sites, and one recapture site in the main branch below the confluence of the upper river branches. A priority this season was to capture and tag as many eel as possible at the upper sites, and look for any tagged eel

downstream in the recapture site. Lengths were measured of all tagged eels, and colour, or phase, was recorded as either yellow, silvering, or silver. Most of the eel were silver (sexually mature eel migrating to the ocean to spawn).



Blaire measures an American eel for length at the recapture trap.

Drought conditions throughout 2016 meant traps were not as efficient as predicted. Low water levels were the first of several obstacles this season; any significant rain events, causing high water levels, also created a build up of leaf debris. However, a significant number of eel were captured at the upper sites (636 total), more eel than in 2015. Stay tuned for updates on the start of the 2017 American eel season.

Morton Centre: Trailblazers by Clare Kellock

Many of us will recall running around outside after school with our friends, playing in the woods until dusk! Unfortunately, this pastime is no longer a given for children today, even in rural NS.

The Trailblazers program is all about inspiring kids to simply play outside. Outdoor play is extremely important to the physical and mental health of children. We now know that children who get regular exposure to nature are happier, healthier, and have stronger environmental values. Trailblazers aims to make these benefits accessible to all kids. The program started in Bible Hill several years ago as an outdoor

after-school activity. Trailblazers has now spread province-wide, and is embraced by environmental educators. The program varies regionally, with the same overall goals of connecting kids to nature, stimulating outdoor play, and building outdoor leadership skills.

Coastal Action started running Trailblazers in spring 2016 and we now offer spring and fall sessions at two schools in Lunenburg County. The program has been met with great success and enthusiasm by kids, parents, and schools. We hope that Trailblazers will inspire Lunenburg County youth to pursue their own outdoor adventures in NS and beyond!



Trailblazers participants learning how to build a Leave-No-Trace fire.

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Profile: Scotia-Fundy Elver Advisory Committee by Danielle Pernette

Elver (baby eel) fishing has been active in Nova Scotia since the late 1990's, when the first licenses were issued. The fishery has now grown to include nine license holders, and employs approximately 135 people in the rural Maritimes.

Since that time, an elver advisory committee was formed after the first licenses were issued, and the committee has worked closely with the Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) Science and Management Branches on regulations and elver sustainability.

Beginning in 2008, and continuing annually, the elver industry took responsibility for research funding, along with a financial contribution

from NS Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture. A partnership then formed between the elver industry, DFO, and Coastal Action - and the East River, Chester elver study began.

Not only has the elver industry backed the study financially, but has also supported the Coastal Action team tremendously, with incredible knowledge of logistics, trap type and placement, maintenance, and elver movement (among many other things). The successful partnership has led to project expansion since 2008, and now includes the study of both elver and silver eel at East River, as well as silver eel at Oakland Lake. 



Top: Elvers captured in a net for measuring, before being released upstream. Bottom: Licence holders and employees of our local elver fishery.

Want to hear more about topics covered in this issue?

If you'd like to read further, in-depth information regarding the stories highlighted in this issue, please visit our website (www.coastalaction.org) where we post more detailed updates on all of our projects. We have lots on the go here at Coastal Action: research, education and outreach, public engagement activities, and volunteer opportunities. If you'd like to see a report on one of our projects or events in the *Coastal Chronicle*, send us an email at editor@coastalaction.org.



Our home: Captain Angus Walters House in Lunenburg.

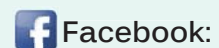
Coastal Action is a not for profit conservation organization. By donating financially to any of our projects we will provide charitable donation tax receipts. We also sell various articles of clothing, accessories, and maps; all proceeds go to Coastal Action!



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