

Nature Miramichi's Visit to Hay Island

This past Tuesday (August 27th) Small group of Nature Miramichi members spent more than 3 hours exploring the “wet areas” of Hay Island on a perfect summer's day. After checking out the first wet area before reaching the one lane bridge to the actual island they were treated to a few minutes of hunting by a low flying Northern Harrier at the Lighthouse pond. Shorebirds in this area included Lesser and Greater Yellowlegs as well as Short-billed Dowitchers and Semipalmated Sandpipers. The water in this pond was quite low creating some mudflat feeding areas for the shorebirds. They were initially startled by the harrier but quickly resumed fattening up for their long flight ahead.

The explorers then took a leisurely stroll around the new well built somewhat elevated board walk that surrounds the main saltmarsh. This allowed for good viewing of some of the coastal plants in the marshy area (Seaside Lavender, Scots Lovage and Common Glasswort) and some up-close and personal time with feeding Least Sandpipers that seemed oblivious to those looking down on them as they foraged on the marshy ground.

Some members walked around the grassy (Marram?) point of the island (perhaps a kilometer and a bit) in search of more shorebirds. A plunging Osprey made a successful dive and one Ruddy Turnstone was busy, turning over stones, naturally, to find its food. Two humans were wading in the water at the tip so this popular feeding ground was birdless.

None-the-less it was a beautiful day and nary a biting insect although the wooded portion of the island remained unexplored on this occasion. There were many grasshoppers that are common but in this case remain unidentified.

For photos of the birds and plants listed here visit <https://flic.kr/s/aHBqjBFsBM>

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