

NEW WORLD SECTION

EDITORS

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NOVA SCOTIA JOINS THE WESTERN HEMISPHERIC SHOREBIRD RESERVE NETWORK

Peter W. Hicklin

On 10 August 1988, representatives of the Government of Canada and the government of the province of Nova Scotia plus 225 invited guests gathered at Evangeline Beach, Nova Scotia, to formally welcome Minas Basin and its 16 700 hectares of mudflat and salt marsh (Figures 1 & 2) as a new unit of the Bay of Fundy Western Hemispheric Shorebird Reserve (WHSR). The other section of this vast reserve is Shepody Bay (5 000 hectares) (see Figure 1) which was inaugurated as a WHSR in 1987 (see April 1988 issue of the Bulletin).

Those honoured were Dr. R.I.G. Morrison in recognition of his research on the abundance and distribution of shorebirds in the Americas; Dr. J. Peterson Myers for his research and important role as Chairman of the Western Hemispheric Shorebird Reserve Network Council; and Mr. Paul D. (Pete) McLain who in his former role (now retired) as deputy Director of Fish and Game in the state of New Jersey was responsible for setting up the first Hemispheric Shorebird Reserve in Delaware Bay, New Jersey in 1985.

As part of the proceedings, hand-carved decoys of two Greater Yellowlegs *Tringa melanoleuca* and a Ruddy Turnstone *Arenaria interpres* were presented to three distinguished visitors in recognition of their work which has been largely responsible for making the Western Hemispheric Shorebird Reserve Network an important and viable conservation initiative for shorebirds in the western hemisphere.

The inauguration of Minas Bay as a new section of the Bay of Fundy shorebird reserve means that the three major roost sites (Mary's Point and Dorchester Cape in Shepody Bay and Evangeline Beach in Minas Basin), which on any one day during the peak of southward migration contain some 500 000 Semipalmated Sandpipers *Calidris pusilla*, are now under the protection of the provinces of New Brunswick and Nova

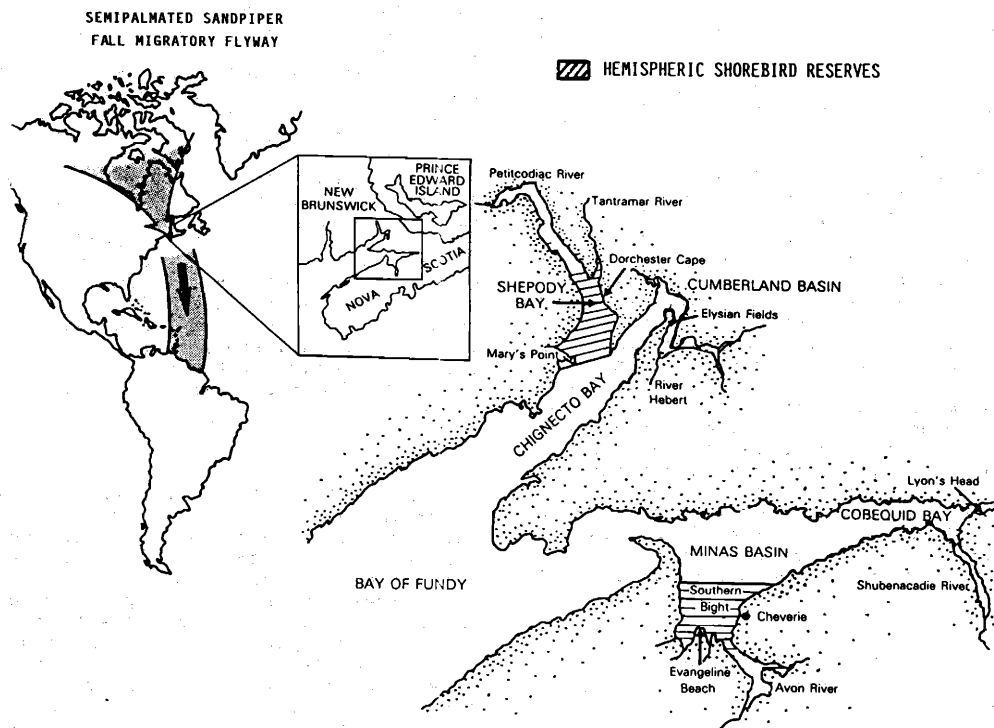


Figure 1. The location of the two units, Shepody Bay and Minas Basin, of the Bay of Fundy Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve.

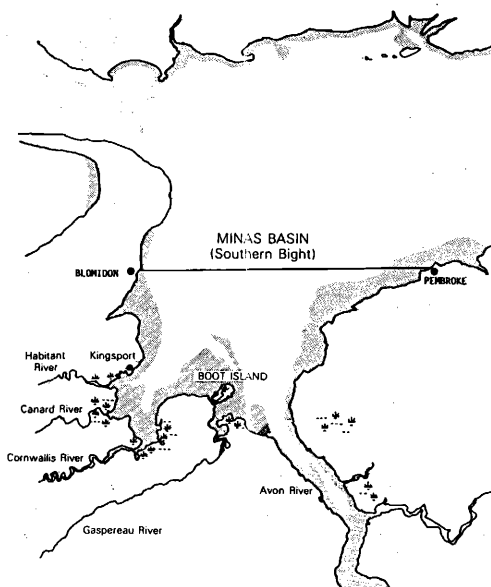


Figure 2. The boundaries of the Minas Bay unit of the Bay of Fundy Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve.

Scotia and the Canadian Wildlife Service representing the federal government.

The closing of the ceremonies at Evangeline Beach marked another major step in protecting the main links in the migration flyway of the Semipalmated Sandpiper in the form of three very important Hemispheric Shorebird Reserves:

- 1) the Bay of Fundy which accommodates around 1.5 million sandpipers and plovers during southward migration;
- 2) the coast of Suriname, South America, where nearly 2 million birds overwinter (the Coppename River Mouth Nature Reserve (12 000 hectares) and the Wia-Wia Nature Reserve (36 000 hectares)); and
- 3) Delaware Bay, New Jersey, a major staging area for spring migrants.

The original goal of the WHSR Network of linking and protecting distant and crucial habitats for shorebird populations shared between the Americas has, in three short years, become reality for one very abundant species.

ABSTRACTS OF SHOREBIRD PAPERS AT THE CENTENNIAL MEETING OF THE WILSON ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY, PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA, USA, 8-12 JUNE 1988.

Aspects of the wintering ecology of Piping Plovers in coastal Alabama

Catherine M. Johnson, Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc., 405 Broadway, Providence, Rhode Island 02909, and Guy A. Baldassarre, Environmental and Forest Biology, SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry, Syracuse, New York 13210.

Piping Plovers *Charadrius melodus* wintering on the Alabama coast were studied from September-October through April 1984-85 and 1985-86. Time spent foraging dominated diurnal activities during all months ($x = 76\%$) and was highest in December (90%). Tidal height was correlated negatively with foraging time and appeared to be the most important factor influencing activities. Time spent resting and preening was related inversely to foraging, and combined time spent in agonistic, territorial, alert and locomoting activities was <5% during all months. Piping Plovers arrived on the study area in mid-July and several individuals remained into early April. Observations of color-marked plovers indicated that individuals were least mobile from late November through late January. Of the plovers marked in 1984-85, 63% returned during 1985-86 despite the occurrence of two major hurricanes during the fall of 1985.

Assimilation efficiency of Sanderlings *Calidris alba* feeding on Horseshoe Crab *Limulus polyphemus* eggs

Gonzalo Castro, Academy of Natural Sciences, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19103 and Department of Biology, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19104.

Millions of shorebirds of several species concentrate every spring on Delaware Bay during

their spring migration and their arrival coincides with the emergence of hundreds of thousands of Horseshoe Crabs that lay their eggs on the beach. Sanderlings feed upon this superabundant resource, shifting from their usual intertidal invertebrate diet. I estimated the assimilation efficiency of Sanderlings feeding on this particular food type and compared it with a standard food type (mealworms). While the assimilation efficiency on mealworms is within normal ranges, the assimilation efficiency on Horseshoe Crab eggs is very low (39%) when compared with efficiencies of other birds feeding on animal foods. Sanderling's choice of this diet is due to the extremely high abundance of this resource, regardless of its low assimilation. This is not surprising because Sanderling's goal in this migratory stop-over is to maximise its net energy intake in the minimum amount of time. They sacrifice in efficiency but profit on abundance.

EDITOR'S NOTE: By coincidence, exactly 100 papers were presented at this meeting. Only the two shown above dealt with shorebirds since the centerpiece of the meeting was a special symposium on parids and many papers dealt specifically with this group. However, it is interesting to note that the Wilson Prize for best student paper at the meeting went to Gonzalo Castro (see abstract above) and the Edwards Prize for the best paper published in the Wilson Bulletin in 1987 went to Peter Hicklin for his paper 'The Migration of Shorebirds in the Bay of Fundy', Wilson Bull. 99(4): 540-570. Although vastly outnumbered, the wader papers hold their own!!