

Coastal Chronicle

Coastal Action Quarterly Newsletter



Issue 15 / Summer 2019

The hazy, crazy days of summer!

Greetings, *Chronicle* readers! It's wonderful to be back and working as designer, illustrator, and editor of the Coastal Action newsletter, following my creative sabbatical over the past winter and spring. And when you come back to work for an environmental organization at the start of the summer season, it's full steam ahead from the get-go!

In June, Coastal Action held its 25th AGM in Mahone Bay, where we recognized this year's winners of our volunteer and bursary awards (more about that on page 4) and celebrated 25 years working for ecosystem conservation in Nova Scotia.

Our summer camps and environmental programs at the Morton Centre are in full swing even as I type! We recently held our 7th Annual Open House at

the Morton Centre as well (more about that on page 3!). In May, we took part in our annual Adopt-A-Highway cleanup on Route 3 between Lunenburg and Mahone Bay.

And now, on to other featured stories in this issue: Taylor gives us the deets on this year's Elver Abundance Index; Sarah fills us in on the water quality monitoring happening at Sherbrooke Lake; and Anna has information about how you can arrange to have a stormwater assessment of your home for FREE!

From all of us at Coastal Action, we hope you're getting out to have some fun on these hot and sunny days of summer. And as always: enjoy!

Jennifer McKinnon, Editor

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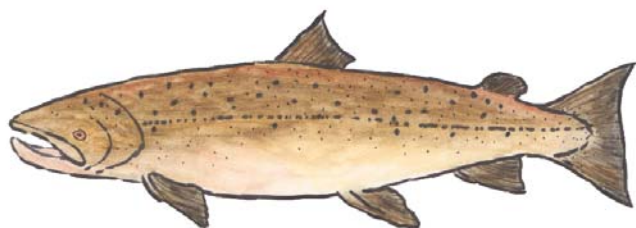
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Coastal Action staff gather together at our 2019 AGM in Mahone Bay in June.



Coastal Action is a charitable organization that addresses environmental concerns along the South Shore region of Nova Scotia. Our goal is to promote the restoration, enhancement, and conservation of our ecosystem through research, education, and action. Our vision is a healthy environment for future generations.

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FREE Stormwater Home Assessment Program by Anna Murphy

Has this past spring shed light on improper drainage or flooding issues on your property? Are you interested in learning more about water conservation and how to manage stormwater runoff on your property? We've got you covered! This summer, Coastal Action is offering 60 free home assessments throughout the south shore of Nova Scotia that include one-on-one consultations with homeowners and property-specific reports loaded with tips and tricks on how to best manage stormwater runoff and water conservation on your property.

The home assessments, about 40 minutes in length, are an opportunity for homeowners to voice any concerns regarding flooding, soil erosion, or impacts of property runoff on the water quality of surrounding waterbodies. A property-specific report addressing the homeowner's needs is provided, with mitigation techniques for site-specific stormwater issues, as well as a resource guide for stormwater management and water conservation practices in the home. Participants also receive an official resource kit and a high efficiency showerhead or device to conserve water in their home and save money on their water bill. Interested in participating in our FREE Home Assessment Program? For more information, contact Anna Murphy at anna@coastalaction.org.



Our water conservation devices include toilet tank bags, low-flow shower heads, and faucet aerators.

2019 Elver Abundance Index by Taylor Creaser

The American Eel (*Anguilla rostrata*) is an enigmatic species with many potential threats, making them important to study.

One component of Coastal Action's eel research is the completion of an annual Elver Abundance Index on East River, Chester. This study, in consultation with Fisheries and Oceans Canada and the Canadian Committee for a Sustainable Eel Fishery Inc. (CCSEF), aims to measure annual elver (baby eel) recruitment to East River. Every spring, a run of elvers arrives in our coastal waters from the Sargasso Sea to begin their upstream migration.

This year, four traps were installed in East River and checked daily from May

8 until the season wrapped up on June 2. Traps were emptied and catches were weighed to estimate the total number of individuals in the traps.

Biological characteristics were also measured including length, weight, and pigment stage throughout the run. These data help us to learn more about the species and determine if they are being harvested in a sustainable manner. This year an estimated 1,479,336 elvers and 1,867 juveniles were caught, making it a very successful season.



Emptying elvers into bins for data collection; upon completion, the elvers are released back into the river.



All hands on deck at Sherbrooke Lake! by Sarah MacLeod

Coastal Action, the Municipality of Chester (MOC) and the Municipality of the District of Lunenburg (MODL) are making water quality a priority with the help of dedicated volunteers.

Due to concerns from the public regarding potential water quality degradation from the development of a public access site at Sherbrooke Lake, the Sherbrooke Lake Stewardship Committee (SLSC) was formed.

The SLSC's mandate is to obtain a water quality baseline for the lake prior to development, monitor any water quality changes, and provide evidence-based advice to councils regarding development along the lake. The SLSC sees the two municipalities working together, along with

Coastal Action, a water quality specialist, and citizen representatives from both municipalities. The water testing program developed by the SLSC was implemented in 2018. Results from the 2018 program indicated a generally healthy lake; however, the lake remains vulnerable to impacts from development activities and increased recreation.

The 2019 program is now underway, running monthly from May to October. Though Coastal Action's Water Quality Specialist manages the program, two groups of trained volunteers from around the lake provide the hands-on work of collecting the water samples and delivering them to the lab.

The collaboration between MODL, MOC, Coastal Action, water quality scientists, and local citizens is a case study in how partnership between stakeholders can be successful. It's all hands on deck for Sherbrooke Lake, and we wouldn't have it any other way. For more on this and other water quality projects, contact sarah@coastalaction.org.



Sherbrooke Lake water quality volunteers collecting samples.

7th Annual Morton Centre Open House & Family Picnic by Clare Kellock



Family and friends of the Morton Centre beat the heat with snacks in the shade.

On Saturday, July 20, we hosted the 7th Annual Morton Centre Open House & Family Picnic on Heckman's Island! This community event has been running since 2013, and we look forward to celebrating each year with our supporters, neighbours, and folks who are curious about what we do at the Morton Centre! Despite the sweltering heat this year, 75 people of all ages dropped in throughout the

day to participate. To beat the heat, there were water relay games, cold drinks, juicy watermelon, Benny's Ice Cream, and lots of shaded activities including a forest walk, face painting, and seed bomb making.

Be sure to join us again next year on the third Saturday in July (July 18, 2020)!

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Profile: Bursary and Volunteer Award Winners by Shanna Fredericks

We hosted our 25th Annual General Meeting at the Mahone Bay Centre on June 20 - over 60 people joined us! Each year we present our Paul MacDonald Volunteer of the Year Award and our Dan MacPhail Memorial Bursary to two deserving individuals.

Our bursary was awarded to Joshua Foster, a graduate of New Germany Rural High School who plans to attend Holland College to study Wildlife Conservation Technology. Our volunteer award was presented to Dr. Alan Warner, a professor at Acadia University who has played a significant role in the development of our environmental education programming since 2012.



Left: Dan MacPhail Memorial Bursary winner Joshua Foster of New Germany (with Brooke Nodding presenting). Right: Paul MacDonald Volunteer of the Year recipient Dr. Alan Warner of Acadia University (with Clare Kellock presenting). To learn more about Paul MacDonald, Dan MacPhail, and the origins of these annual Coastal Action awards, please visit our website: www.coastalaction.org

Want to hear more about topics covered in this issue?

If you'd like to read more 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 info@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 projects and programs!



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