



Gaff Point & Hirtles Beach

Not many Scotian Hikers braved the rain for the Gaff Point hike on September 13, and our feet got thoroughly wet on the trail as we made the loop from Hirtles Beach out to Gaff Point, around to Sand Cove (shown at right) and back to the beach, but it was worth it. For the first time, heavy rain actually fell on a Scotian Hiker event, but four of us turned out in spite of the weather. Coincidentally enough, members of the Halifax Field Naturalists had also scheduled a Gaff Point hike for the same time, same day as ours - the trail was plenty big enough to accommodate everyone. Leaving from the parking lot (just as a lone surfer finished catching a few waves in the agitated surf), we walked southwest down the beach to the trailhead and began our clockwise trek. Not long after entering the coastal forest, the skies really opened up and the rain came down in buckets. Pressing onward, we reached the rocky shoreline section of the trail across from West Ironbound Island; we exercised caution here as the sharp rocks were wet and slippery, with potential for mishap. We soon arrived at the halfway mark of the hike and stopped for the traditional group photo next to a large inukshuk (an interesting side-note: Wikipedia



states that a rock structure resembling the human form is actually called an inunnguaq. Also, a number of parks routinely dismantle inuksuit for fear they might misdirect hikers and park visitors from the legitimate cairns and markers along trails). At right, pictured from left to right: Don, Mary Jane, and Michelle (in retrospect, the inunnguaq represents Tina, who unbeknownst to us at the time, was trying to catch up to us on the trail!). Now on the return part



of the trip, we veered off onto the old path for a short distance, where we were able to see the coastline clearly, and the rope leading down into Sand Cove in the distance; the old path proved to be too soggy and overgrown for us, so we returned to the new trail. Emerging into the clearing at Grabble Cove, we backtracked along the cliff edge to the Sand Cove rope and descended to the sandy beach; after a short break and photo op beneath the rugged cliffs, we climbed back out, returning to the trailhead and making our way back up the beach to the parking lot. Another hike completed, but the day wasn't over. Upon discovering that the ocean water was surprisingly warm, I decided to do some impromptu boogie-boarding. No proper swimwear, but the board was in the trunk of my car. Hirtles Beach is a great spot for surfing and such, as it sees some impressive rolling waves (this was, of course, the scene of the Hurricane Bill surf-watch as discussed in the last issue). After I caught a few waves, Tina took a turn with the board and I had a really good [BAD] idea - to walk out into the surf and get some neat side-view photos of



rolling breakers, and maybe even catch a tunnel shot as the water rolled over. I got several shots, grabbing each photo then holding the camera up high as the water rolled past me. Unfortunately, my timing was off when one particular wave came in - to the right is the last photo my Fuji S700 ever took. It served as another reminder that seawater and digital cameras do NOT mix (unless the cameras are waterproof perhaps). I still look forward to more boogie-boarding.





Taylor Head Provincial Park

We could not have asked for a better day for this hike.

The weather turned out great for this road trip/hike combo, as four of us ventured out the Eastern Shore along Route 7 to Spry Harbour to experience the wonderful natural gem that is Taylor Head Provincial Park. Taking 2.5 hours to drive from Kentville to our destination, our 12 km hiking route gave us lots of time to stretch our legs. We started out following the Beach Trail; the white sand was pristine, marred only by footprints, and perfectly matched with the blue water of Psyche Cove and Mushaboom Harbour. We picked up the Spry Bay Trail which led us along the western edge of the salt pond to where it joined the Headland Trail; from here, we followed the root-strewn path alternately through the coastal forest and along the rocky coastline. We stopped for lunch before the halfway mark of the hike, soaking up the sunshine and marvelling at the

crashing surf. Watching waves is quite addictive; a big one hits and you find yourself waiting eagerly for the next big one to crash ashore. The view from our 'lunch room' was spectacular, as you can see for yourself (below, right). After a long



break, we packed up and carried on our way towards the halfway point - Taylor Head itself. Several other people were hiking the route as well, and were loosely gathered at the point when we arrived. We staged a group photo (top left; clockwise from left are Don, John, Tina, Mellissa) overlooking the roiling ocean. We lingered a while, taking photos and appreciating the sights and sounds of the coast, before moving on. Skirting along the rocky coastline; it



was easy to imagine we were hiking in Ireland or Scotland. The trail became muddy in places on the second half of the loop; the terrain was very uneven and we had to avoid rocks and roots much of the way, but there were sections of boardwalk over problem areas; I wouldn't describe this as an easy hike, due to the length and terrain, but it was far from an ordeal physically. Rotting organic matter washed up on one beach was quite unpleasant smelling, and the cloud of flies buzzing around it was thick, but we hiked through it in short order; that's certainly a downside to hurricane season - the seaweed and other matter that gets thrown up onshore along Nova Scotia's coastline. The only unsettling thing was the multitude of little black spiders scuttling all over the beach rocks; when you're an arachnophobic hiking enthusiast, you wind up with some mixed emotions at times on the trail, that's for sure! We finally emerged from the trail back at the park pavilion, signed the guest book, and with a good portion of daylight remaining, decided to make a side trip to Martinique Beach Provincial Park 12km south of Musquodoboit Harbour. This beach is the longest strip of sand in Nova Scotia, but was almost deserted when we arrived. Some of the boardwalks leading to the beach were still closed to



public access due to storm damage. A couple of surfers braved the waters, trying to catch a wave; they managed to ride in on a few, but it looked like the surf was not being very cooperative overall. Our group strolled along the beach, but the wind proved to be quite cool and the sun was going down, so we called it a day and set out for home. The Eastern Shore is incredibly scenic, and Taylor Head and Martinique Beach are not to be missed! Happy Trails!





Scotian Hiker

SUGGESTIONS? FEEDBACK?
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There's No Place Like Home To Roam

As featured on CBC Radio!

Homegrown Trivia

1. What was the name of the mystery ship that shut out its lights and sailed away from the foundering Titanic?
2. General Robert Ross led the army which burned Washington D.C. in the War of 1812. In what city is he buried?
3. What future king was saved from drowning in Nova Scotia in 1883?
4. What rivers form part of the boundary between Nova Scotia and New Brunswick?
5. In what community can you find Deadman's Pond?

(Answers at bottom of page)

Things To Do

- Explore historic and ghostly Wolfville NS with tours on Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays <http://www.wolfvillewalkingtours.com>
- Read the Grapevine <http://grapevine.wolfville.org/>
- The Blomidon Naturalists Society has its own event schedule posted online at <http://blomidonnaturalists.ca>

HIKE and DINE

A Fundraiser for the Black Rock Trails

Saturday, October 3rd 2009 10.00am

Come and join us for a guided hike on the Black Rock Trail, followed by a harvest lunch overlooking the cliffs of the Bay of Fundy with a menu of local seasonal casseroles and fresh baked French breads.

Menu items include:

Country Soup * Beef Bourguignon * Moroccan Lamb Stew *
Local Seasonal Vegetables * Delectable Desserts

Meet at 10.00 am at the Black Rock Community Hall (also called Culture & Recreation Center), 4404 Black Rock Road

Guided tours will start at 10.30 am

Lunch will be available from 12 – 2.00 pm at 199 Wall St., a fabulous location overlooking the Bay of Fundy (lunch indoors if it rains)

\$20 per person – pre-paid tickets only (children under 12 free)

Call Barbara 538-3389 or Irmgard 538-8714

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His profession is the best symbol of our life.

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it is the history of every one of us."

- Henry David Thoreau

"Thanks to the interstate highway system, it is now possible to travel across the country from coast to coast without seeing anything."

- Charles Kuralt, On The Road

"Forget not that the earth delights to feel your bare feet and the winds long to play with your hair."

- Kahlil Gibran

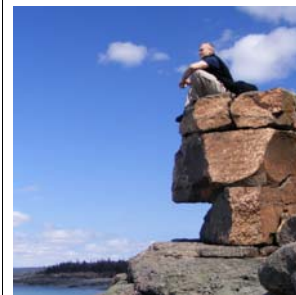
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FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

It seems that with the arrival of Fall my work schedule has become very busy, and it's becoming a regular occurrence for the Scotian Hiker newsletter to be

much delayed. So, I've decided to produce one issue per month for the duration of the Winter. Also, group hikes will still be scheduled, but less frequently until the New Year. To keep up to date, visit the scotianhiker.com Events page at least once a week, and if you use Facebook, add Scotian Hiker as a Friend as new events will be posted in status updates, also. Thanks for following along, and watch for the next newsletter in late October. Happy Trails! :) -dc

ZipLine Excursion UPDATE: I am still looking for expressions of interest from any and all group participants, who would like to go on a group zip-line adventure in Moncton. I am thinking of Saturday, October 24th. Visit this website for more info: <http://www.treegomoncton.com/english.html> - reservations are required, and I plan to book my trip by Oct 5.