

# Sandpipers Can't Swim But They "Shore" Can Fly

By Kerry Lee Morris-Cormier

The Bay of Fundy is a resting and feeding stop for shorebirds including 30 % of the world population of the species; Semipalmated Sandpiper. Semipalmated describes the bird's partially webbed feet that are perfect for walking on ooey gooey mudflats at low tide. These birds also have a prehen-

sile beak and bristly tongue that are perfect for pecking and slurping teeny tiny creatures out of the mud to eat.

Semipalmated Sandpipers are born in the summer on the tundra in polar bear country - 2,000 km north of the Parrsboro shore. The adults fly there from Brazil via Delaware Bay, United States every spring. When the birds arrive in the

Bay of Fundy in July and August, they weight only 20g, which is not heavy enough to survive flying another 4,900km, non-stop, over the ocean to Suriname in September. So they put their perfect beaks, tongues and feet to good use and fuel up.

It is amazing these little birds ranging in age from 2 months - 20 years old can fly so far. Equally amazing, is the fact shorebirds cannot swim. They couldn't take a break on their way south if they wanted too. When the tide rises over the mudflats, the birds are forced to stop eating and must rest on the beach until the tide recedes. After three weeks they will hopefully have been able to double their weight to 40g allowing them to finish their migration before hurricane season.

Shorebirds have always been a part of the culture and heritage of the upper Bay of Fundy, seeing a huge flock of birds flying together in formation is one of the most beautiful sites in nature. Sadly, the birds are in trouble.

As reported in the North American state of the birds report in 2016, shorebird populations have declined by almost 70% since 1973. Ask someone in Minudie or Dorchester and they will tell you there used to be a lot more birds. Thirty years ago, Shepody Bay and Minas Basin were designated as Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network (WHSRN) sites. This designation has helped reduce human disturbance to birds and has led to: job creation, research, long term preservation of the area's natural history and is helping develop bird related ecotourism.

Cumberland Basin and the upper Cobequid Bay are also important to tens of thousands of Semipalmated Sandpipers,

the birds who use the mudflats in these areas do not utilize mudflats in other areas of the bay, and therefore, the bird's survival depends on the place where they land.

The Nature Conservancy of Canada is working on a project to include Cobequid Bay and Cumberland Basin in the existing WHSRN designation as a landscape of hemispheric importance. Nova Scotia and New Brunswick provide some of the best intertidal mudflat habitat for Semipalmated Sandpipers in the world. Very little has to change here in order to best serve future generations of birds and people.

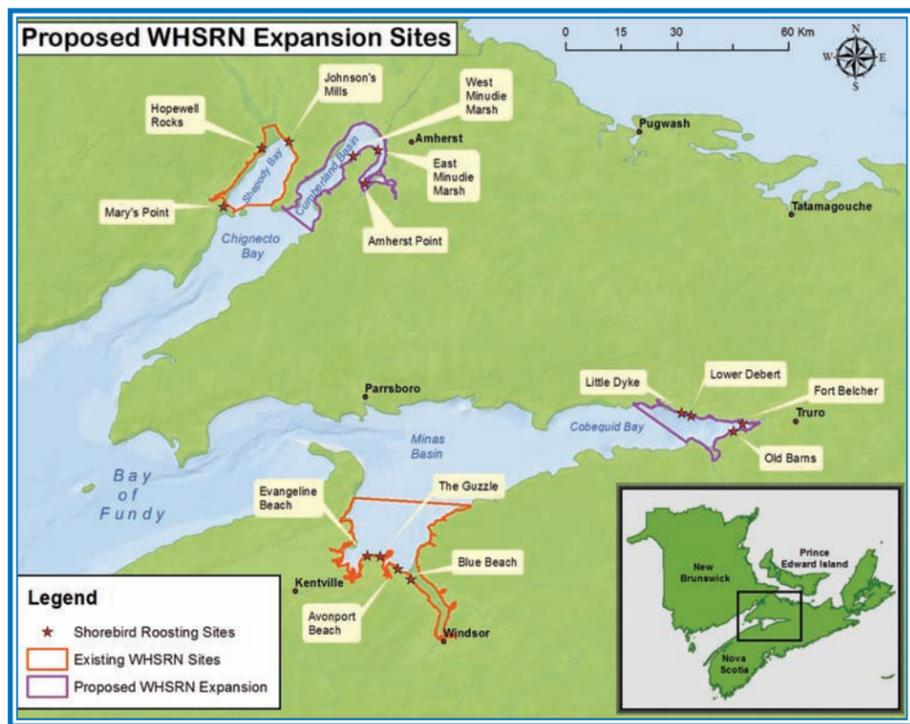
No beaches have to close and no new laws or regulations have to be enforced on landowners. The hope of the project is raise awareness by connecting with the Bay of Fundy community so people agree that shorebird conservation is important. To voice your concerns or ask questions



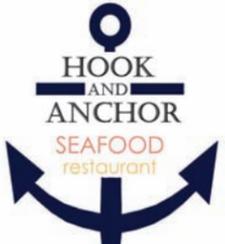
This photo shows Red Knot and semipalmated sandpipers in Shepody Bay in August 2016. The birds are resting on the beach which they at every high tide to conserve energy in Cobequid Bay & Cumberland Basin. (Kerry Lee Morris-Cormier Photo)



Hundreds of thousands of semipalmated sandpipers stop to feed on the mudflats in Cumberland and Cobequid Basins to double their weight from 20 grams to approximately 40 grams before making the 4,000 Km non-stop flight to South America. (Submitted)



The above map shows existing WHSRN protected areas in Shepody Bay and Minas Basin around the Windsor, Evangeline Beach, and Blue Beach areas. New area proposed for Cumberland Basin involving West Minudie Marsh, East Minudie Marsh and Amherst Point. In Cobequid Bay the areas around Little Dyke, Fort Belcher and Old Bams are being proposed as a protection area. Establishment of a protected area does not curtail use of the shoreline bordering Cumberland Basin or Cobequid Bay, but as explained it is more asking residents not to disturb the birds, when they are resting on shore during high tide times. (Submitted)



## ENJOY

### Advocate Harbour

Great food: Sandwiches, seafood, soups.  
**Awesome Seafood Chowder.**

Finish off your meal with one of our homemade desserts.

Children's & Seniors portions.

ADD A Fundy Tide Campground & Hook & Anchor Restaurant

95 Mills Road, Advocate Harbour, NS B0M 1A0  
Ph: 902-392-2517

Mailing: P.O. Box 137, Advocate, N.S., B0M 1A0

## Joggins Fossil Centre Upcoming Events

The following is a listing of upcoming events at Joggins Fossil Centre:

**Until Sunday June 3:** Inspirations by Indu Varma.  
**Thursday June 21:** Fibre Arts Friends - 6:00 -8:00 p.m.  
**Saturday July 7:** Joggins Fossil Festival - 9:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.  
**Thursday July 26 & Friday July 27:** Kids' Summer Day Camps 10:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.  
**Thursday August 9 & Friday August 10:** Kids' Summer Day Camps 10:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

**For further information, contact:**  
**The Joggins Fossil Institute,**  
**902-251-2727 Ext 224;**  
**education@jogginsfossilcliffs.net**  
**or www.jogginsfossilcliffs.net**

See the Summer Festival Schedule on page 12

please contact us. To help the shorebirds, please do not disturb them when they are resting during high tide. **Kerry Lee Morris-Cormier is**

**Coordinator, WHSRN Expansion Project, Nature Conservancy of Canada. She can be reached at Kerry.Cormier@natureconservancy.ca or Ph: 902.694.9159 or 1-866-319-3985**

# LARRY DUCHESNE

Cumberland South

## Standing up for Health Care

The NDP is committed to reducing ER closures, opening more new long-term care beds, hiring more doctors and nurses, and putting an end to secret meetings at the Health Authority.



AUTHORIZED BY THE OFFICIAL AGENT FOR LARRY DUCHESNE.



# NDP

On June 19, vote NDP.

Nova Scotia's passion at work



On April 9th Barbara Aris, Port Greville was honoured as Cumberland's provincial volunteer at a ceremony in Halifax. Pictured above following the 44th Annual Provincial Volunteer of the Year Award ceremony are, (L-R): Lieutenant Governor of Nova Scotia, The Honourable Arthur J. LeBlanc, ONS, QC; Barbara Aris, Premier Stephen McNeil, and Hon Leo A. Glavine, Minister Communities, Culture and Heritage and minister responsible for Seniors. (Submitted)



Congratulations Barbara Aris

We are pleased you were chosen as the Municipality of the County of Cumberland 2018 Provincial Volunteer during the 44th Annual Provincial Volunteer Awards Ceremony in Halifax.