

Wildlife of the Pickard Quarry Area, in Sackville, New Brunswick
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The Pickard Quarry area offers a range of natural habits that provide a sheltered refuge for a diversity of wildlife throughout the year. It provides an unusual combination of still and running fresh-water; regenerating old-field clearings; rock outcroppings, low sandstone cliffs, alder and willow shrubs along the banks of the ponds; and stands of coniferous and hardwood trees on wooded slopes and uplands - all tucked within a settled corner of Sackville. This note and attached lists summarise the wildlife personally recorded here by the authors and other Sackville naturalists, together with additional species that we expect to occur here, based on our combined experience with wildlife across the Maritimes.

Birds are the most visible wildlife in the Pickard Quarry area, with a variety of species nesting in the different habits. The woodlands provide nest sites for songbirds such as Black-capped Chickadees, Golden-crowned Kinglets, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Downy and Hairy Woodpeckers, Swainson's Thrush, and Yellow-rumped and Northern Parula Warblers. Woodland margins attract nesting species like Red-eyed Vireos, American Crows, White-throated Sparrows, American Redstarts, and Chestnut-sided Warblers. American Goldfinch, Song Sparrows and American Robins often nest in scattered trees in the old regenerating fields. Merlins (small hawks) and Great-horned Owls may re-use old crow nests at the edge of the woods, and a pair of Canada Geese, Mallards or Black Ducks often nests along the water's edge. Other nesting birds attracted by the wetlands and shrubby pond edges include Belted Kingfishers, Spotted Sandpipers, Alder Flycatchers, Yellow Warblers and Common Yellowthroats.

Many of the birds that Sackville residents see in winter at nearby bird feeders and berry bushes also roost and shelter within the quarry woods – like chickadees, nuthatches, woodpeckers, Dark-eyed Juncos, Blue Jays, Mourning Doves, Bohemian Waxwings, Ring-necked Pheasants and many winter finches. All told, an estimated 49 or so species are confirmed or assumed to nest here, and about 90 species are likely to occur in the Pickard Quarry area regularly at some time of the year, many of them during the winter or on migration (see attached list).

Over 20 species of mammals may frequent the quarry area (see attached list), although tracks in mud or snow are often the only clue to their presence. Some mammals may just be passing through, such as River Otters or beavers working their way along the water course, but many occur here year-round. Sackville residents who skate here in winter often see tracks of mice, shrews, Red Squirrels, Ermines (weasels) and Red Foxes, and may catch a glimpse of a Snowshoe Hare, porcupine or otter. Spring brings out the Eastern Chipmunks, Woodland Jumping Mice, Woodchucks, Northern Racoons and Striped Skunks, all of which spend much of the winter asleep or hibernating. White-tailed Deer are increasingly common visitors, and even Moose visit occasionally, the former attracted by apples from abandoned orchards in winter.

The diversity of habitats and wetlands also support amphibians like Spring Peepers, Wood Frogs, Northern Leopard Frogs and American Toads, reptiles such as Painted Turtles and Garter Snakes, and several species of small freshwater fish. A variety of dragonflies, damselflies, butterflies, moths and other insects add to the natural biodiversity that can be seen in the quarry area.

Although actively quarried about a century ago, forest succession and protection from recent development have since enabled the Pickard Quarry area to transition into a valuable self-sustaining mix of naturalized wildlife habitats. If protected, this oasis of woodlands and wetlands would complement the Sackville Waterfowl Park as a notable refuge and showcase for wildlife biodiversity in Tantramar .

The authors: Richard Elliot and Kate Bredin are long-time residents of Sackville, New Brunswick, who live a stone's-throw from the Pickard Quarry. As life-long naturalists, they have kept track of the wildlife that they observed throughout the year during many visits with their family to the quarry and surrounding woodlands. Both are members of the Tantramar Outdoor Club and Chignecto Naturalists Club. Richard is a *Scientist Emeritus* with Environment and Climate Change Canada, and former National Director of Wildlife Research for the department. He served as the Chair of the Steering Committee for the recent *Second Atlas of Breeding Birds of the Maritime Provinces*, and is currently a member of the national *Committee for the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada*. Kate worked as a bird biologist with Birds Studies Canada, coordinating field studies and serving as an editor of the *Second Atlas of Breeding Birds of the Maritime Provinces*. A former Heritage Officer for the Town of Sackville, Kate now serves as Chair of Renaissance Sackville, on the executive of the Tantramar Outdoor Club, and on the Sackville committee of the Tantramar Seniors College.

Bird Species Expected in Pickard Quarry Area (90 species)

Canada Goose*	Red-breasted Nuthatch*
Wood Duck	White-breasted Nuthatch*
American Wigeon	Brown Creeper*
American Black Duck*	Golden-crowned Kinglet*
Mallard*	Ruby-throated Kinglet*
Blue-winged Teal	Swainson's Thrush*
Green-winged Teal	Hermit Thrush*
Ring-necked Duck	American Robin*
Ring-Necked Pheasant*	Gray Catbird*
Ruffed Grouse*	European Starling*
Great Blue Heron	Bohemian Waxwing
Bald Eagle	Cedar Waxwing
Turkey Vulture	Nashville Warbler
Sharp-shinned Hawk*	Northern Parula*
Red-tailed Hawk	Yellow Warbler*
Merlin*	Chestnut-sided Warbler*
Spotted Sandpiper*	Magnolia Warbler*
Solitary Sandpiper	Black-throated Blue Warbler*
Greater Yellowlegs	Yellow-rumped Warbler*
Wilson's Snipe*	Black-throated Green Warbler*
American Woodcock*	Black-and-white Warbler*
Rock Pigeon	American Redstart*
Mourning Dove*	Ovenbird*
Great-horned Owl*	Common Yellowthroat*
Barred Owl	American Tree Sparrow
Chimney Swift	Chipping Sparrow
Ruby-throated Hummingbird*	Fox Sparrow
Belted Kingfisher*	Song Sparrow*
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	Swamp Sparrow
Downy Woodpecker*	White-throated Sparrow*
Hairy Woodpecker*	Dark-eyed Junco
Northern Flicker*	Northern Cardinal*
Pileated Woodpecker	Rose-breasted Grosbeak
Merlin*	Red-winged Blackbird
Alder Flycatcher*	Rusty Blackbird
Least Flycatcher	Brown-headed Cowbird*
Eastern Kingbird	Common Grackle*
Blue-headed Vireo	Pine Grosbeak
Red-eyed Vireo*	Purple Finch*
Blue Jay*	Red Crossbill
American Crow*	White-winged Crossbill
Common Raven	Common Redpoll
Tree Swallow	Pine Siskin
Barn Swallow	American Goldfinch*
Black-capped Chickadee*	Evening Grosbeak

* Bird species known or likely to have nested in Pickard Quarry area within the past 15 years (51 species)

Mammal Species Expected in Pickard Quarry Area (23 species)

Northern Flying Squirrel	Short-tailed Shrew*
Woodchuck*	Cinereous Shrew
Eastern Chipmunk*	Star-nosed Mole
Red Squirrel*	Little Brown Bat*
North American Beaver*	Red Fox*
Woodland Jumping Mouse	Northern River Otter*
Meadow Vole*	Ermine (Short-tailed Weasel)*
Southern Red-backed Vole	Striped Skunk*
Deer Mouse*	Northern Raccoon*
Common Muskrat*	Moose*
North American Porcupine*	White-tailed Deer*
Snowshoe Hare*	

* Mammal species confirmed in Pickard Quarry area within the past 15 years (through sightings, tracks, etc.) (18 species)