

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; 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 the town of Sackville. This note and attached lists summarise the wildlife personally recorded here by the authors and Sackville naturalists, together with other 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 Yellow 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 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 – like chickadees, nuthatches, woodpeckers, Dark-eyed Juncos, Blue Jays, Mourning Doves, Bohemian Waxwings, Ring-necked Pheasants and many winter finches – roost and shelter within the quarry woods. All told, an estimated 45 or so species are confirmed or assumed to nest here, and over 80 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 park (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 mammals 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. Even Moose or White-tailed Deer visit occasionally, the latter attracted by apples from abandoned orchards in winter, with several sightings of these larger mammals in recent years.

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 urban 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 the greater Sackville area.

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. 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 recently-published *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 (82 species)

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

* Bird species known or likely to have nested in Pickard Quarry Park within the past ten years (46 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 Park within the past ten years (through sightings, tracks, etc.) (16 species)