

Bird-watching with Tony Erskine No email address. Please email Coordinator at tsccordinator@nbnnet.nb.ca to get a message to the Instructor.

Mondays, 9:00-11:00 in United Church Parlour and outdoors

8 weeks starting on April 12, 2010 (Note: Early start)

There will not be a class on Mon May 24.

Maximum 15

Storm Policy: No classes when schools are closed in Sackville.

The proposed course will discuss, among other topics:

- why people are fascinated by birds;
- what are birds, and how did they get that way?
- recognizing different kinds of birds – of 9,800 species world-wide, about 300 have been identified near Sackville;
- using books and specimens to learn to identify birds, before trying to recognize “ducks at a distance”;
- bird songs and calls, as aids to identification;
- distribution, and migration – most ‘local’ birds are here only for parts of each year;
- different birds like different habitats – more clues that help in identification;
- equipment for ‘birding’ can be as little as binoculars, field-guide, notebook & pen, or as elaborate as your bank account allows; travel to good places costs more than needed equipment;
- excursions in the course will be limited by time and the need to hear what the instructor says; weather is often limiting too!
- feeding birds, mainly in winter, is primarily to let you see birds closer than they’d come without being offered food; let them eat natural foods when those are available;
- watching birds can be addictive! I’ve been hooked on them for 70 years, and still go birding when weather or other duties allow it.

A.J. (Tony) Erskine was born in England and came to Nova Scotia in 1936. Birds became one of his many interests soon after that, but he earned three degrees in chemistry before deciding in 1957 to pursue birds as a vocation. He worked in Canadian Wildlife Service 1960-91, plus emeritus appointments there until 2006. That work took him all across Canada, and also to conferences in the U.S.A., Europe and New Zealand, birding wherever he went. His studies of birds, reported in over 200 publications including several books, dealt mostly with ducks, forest birds, and urban birds, with emphasis on ecology and populations, and on encouraging efforts of volunteers in these fields.

Some people are very sensitive to perfumes and other scents. Please respect a scent free environment by not using scented products. Thank you.

A note to seniors about class attendance and absenteeism....

As you know, our instructors are all volunteers, who work very hard at putting courses together. Your cooperation is appreciated in letting them know if you are unable to attend any of the classes as most instructors plan weekly classes that are appropriate to the number of registered students in the course.

If circumstances change between registration and the first class, or if you decide to withdraw after the first or second class, please email tsccordinator@nbnet.nb.ca or call 364-2780. Many courses have a wait list and this could allow someone else to take your place.

Sometimes, seniors have travel plans or medical appointments made in advance. It would help instructors to know this at registration, if possible, so that class material may be adjusted accordingly. Illness, as well as other unanticipated and unavoidable conflicts can occur. If you are able, please let your instructor know as soon as possible if you will miss a class.

Thank you!