

# Maritime Acadian Highlands

Represented by: Fundy and Cape Breton Highlands National Parks



Pilot Whales off, Cape Breton Highlands National Park

## THE LAND:

A rolling plateau, a remnant of the ancient Caledonia Highlands, distinguishes this region. Averaging more than 300 metres above sea level, the plateau is cut by deep valleys and cascading rivers.

Scoured by the giant tides of the Bay of Fundy and pounded by Atlantic swells, this region meets the sea with drama and conflict. The Fundy shore alternates between tide-scoured cliffs of sedimentary rock and extensive mud flats and salt marshes. Around Cape Breton Island, the land abruptly ends in a series of bold headlands and steep-sided river valleys pouring into coves and inlets.

## VEGETATION:

A narrow coastal strip 3-30 kilometres wide, backed by steeply rising uplands, supports a forest dominated by red spruce on the New Brunswick side of the Bay and by white spruce on the Nova Scotia shore. Inland,

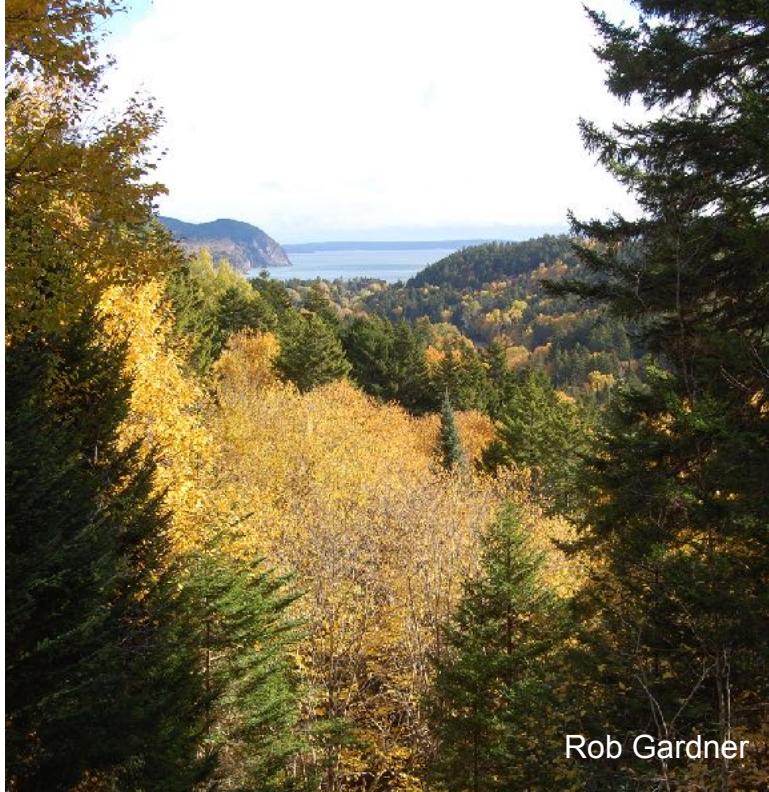
## TIDES AND TRAILS

On the coast, a water world where fog often shrouds the shore and the mist hangs cold and damp from the sharp-pointed spruce; inland, a tranquil world of sun-dappled forests, hidden waterfalls, secluded glens and eternal barrens.

shady forests of white and yellow birch, American beech and sugar maple, carpeted with a lush understory of ferns, provide a restful contrast to the dense, damp evergreen forests. Hemlock, red maple, white birch, red spruce and white pine are found at lower elevations. In the Cape Breton Island portion of the region, extensive "barrens," waist-high with Labrador tea and broken by pink granite outcroppings and patches of light green lichens, cover the upland plateau. Almost the entire region has been logged, some of it several times.



Alma Marsh, Fundy National Park



### **Major Land Uses**

Logging (pulp, paper and lumber)

Fishing

Shorebird and waterfowl resting areas

### **Main Communities**

Moncton, Fredericton, Saint John, Antigonish

### **Aboriginal Peoples**

### **Parks and Natural Areas**

Fundy National Park

Hopewell Rocks Provincial Park

### **Further Information**





Rob Gardner

Who pulled the plug? The giant tides that the Bay of Fundy is famous for can extend far inland, making many rivers tidal.



Rob Gardner



Rob Gardner

Rolling hills showcase bright yellows of tamarack and birch against the deep green of conifers, but the bold red of a blueberry field can't be beat!



Rob Gardner



Rob Gardner

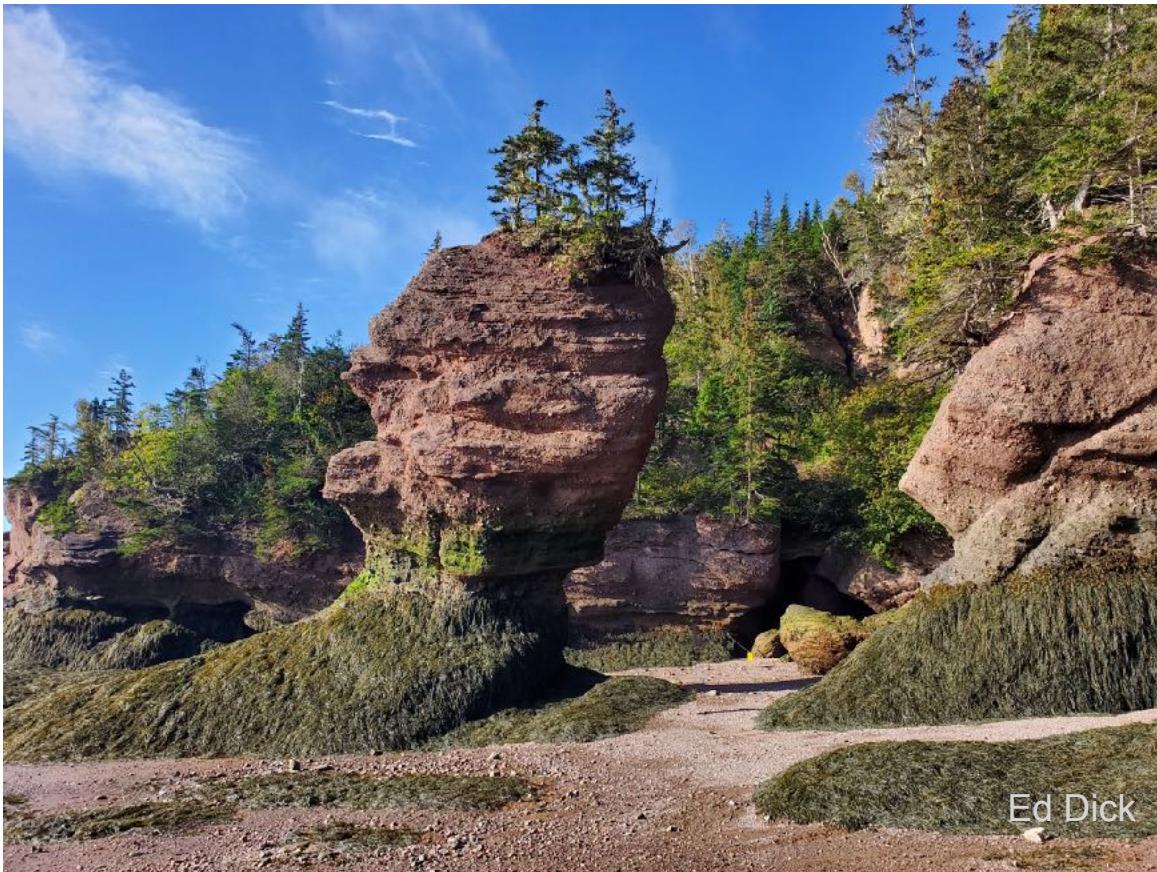
This saw mill processes quite a lot of lumber, as you can see from the large piles of logs and sawdust.



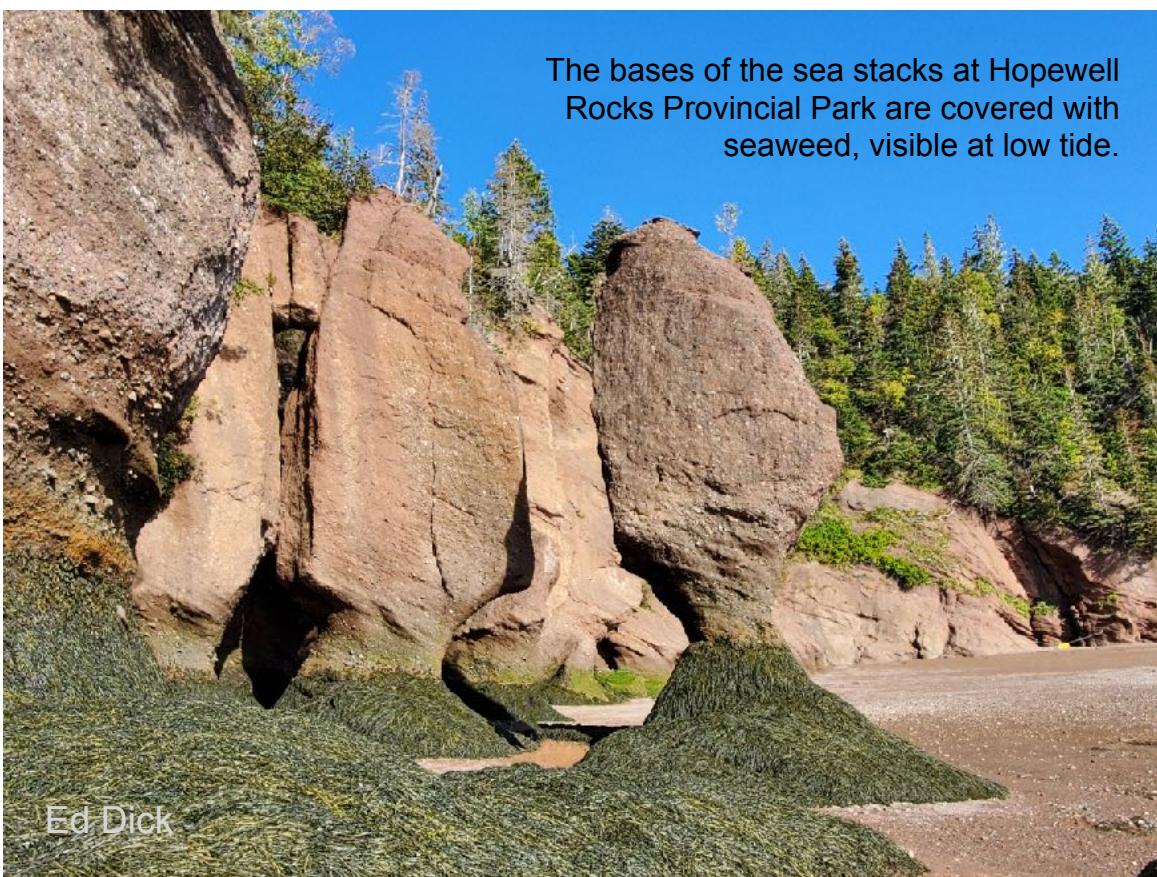
Rob Gardner



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The bases of the sea stacks at Hopewell Rocks Provincial Park are covered with seaweed, visible at low tide.



## Natural Region 31

### WILDLIFE:

Large mammals found in this region include white-tailed deer, moose, red fox, black bear, raccoon, bobcat, coyote, mink, otter, muskrat and beaver. Wolf and caribou



Atlantic Puffins

once roamed this region, but disappeared early in the twentieth century.

The salt marshes and tidal mud flats provide critical feeding and staging areas for myriads of shorebirds and waterfowl. Millions of semi-palmated sandpipers blacken beaches and mud flats in late summer to "re-fuel" for the long non-stop flight to South America. The Tantramarre marshes at the head of the Bay of Fundy are renowned for the vast numbers of waterfowl, particularly Canada geese, that gather here to feed in the rich salt marshes. The term "tantramarre" may be derived from an Acadian word referring to the racket made by the birds. Much of the extensive salt marshes have long been diked, drained and transformed into hay fields.

### STATUS OF NATIONAL PARKS:

Two national parks represent this region, Cape Breton Highlands (951 km<sup>2</sup>) and Fundy (206 km<sup>2</sup>), established by federal-provincial agreements in 1936 and 1948 respectively. Fundy has two faces: the coast where tides alternately expose and submerge a damp ribbon of mudflats, salt marshes and

tidal pools - an area not part of the land yet not entirely belonging to the sea; and the inland face, the Fundy of shady forests and tumbling streams. This park is characteristic of the rugged Bay of Fundy coast and the Caledonia Highlands of southern New Brunswick. The park has a long history of human use; most of it has been logged in the past, and many old fields remain from small farms. The pine martin, considered rare in Canada, and a breeding population of peregrine falcons, an endangered species, have been reintroduced into the park.



The scenic Cabot Trail, the best-known feature of Cape Breton Highlands National Park, hugs the coast, providing breathtaking views of the restless Gulf of St. Lawrence. Trails lead through a variety of habitats typical of this natural region - from lush hardwood forests carpeted with ferns, through boreal forests of spruce and fir and bogs dotted with orchids, to sub-arctic barrens and muskeg. The rock vole, Gaspé shrew, pygmy shrew and pine martin, all considered rare in Canada, occur in the park.



Herring weir



The mountains of western Cape Breton Island share a common history with those in New Brunswick. The scenic Cabot Trail circles the island, leading motorists past scenic fishing villages and breathtaking views of forested plateaux.

