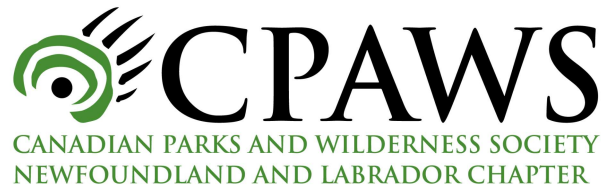




CANADIAN PARKS AND WILDERNESS SOCIETY
NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR CHAPTER

October 2025 Newsletter



It's official: summer is over and autumn is here once again. We hope this newsletter finds you cozying up with a cup of tea, baking some pumpkin-flavoured treats, or getting outside to enjoy the beautiful fall colours! Read on to find out what we've been busy with lately:



It's Storm-Petrel Season!

It's currently "spooky season", which means it's also the time of year when juvenile Leach's storm-petrels become stranded along our shorelines.

From mid-September to mid-November, young petrels fledge during the night to avoid predators, using the moon and stars to navigate. However, they can become disoriented by bright lights along the coast as they begin their long journey to southwestern Africa. They mistakenly fly inland and become stranded, which is where you can help! Simple actions can go a long way to help these birds, like turning off or reducing your outdoor lighting during this time of year. You can also report petrel strandings to us via [Facebook](#) or by texting our petrel hotline at 709-330-8929. We will arrange a safe pick-up and release for the birds.

Did you know? Newfoundland and Labrador is home to the two largest Leach's storm-petrel populations in the world: Baccalieu Island Ecological Reserve and Witless Bay Ecological Reserve!



2025 Puffin Update

Another puffin season is over. This year we were able to rescue and release 6 pufflings! Thanks to everyone in the area who helped out by dimming their lights and a huge thank you to all volunteers who assisted in patrolling! Your contributions are what make this program so impactful. A special thank you goes out to ECCC-CWS for all their help and support.

We had far lower numbers than usual this year, and the fledglings that were found had a lower average body mass than in other years. This is likely due to a lack of available food in the latter half of the fledging season, resulting in less fledging success. We saw a similar pattern in 2011. But puffins have weathered countless storms (literally and figuratively), and while events like this remind us of their vulnerability, they also highlight their resilience. As sad as these events are, they offer scientists important clues about changing ocean ecosystems. Every chick lost is a data point that helps us understand and ultimately protect marine ecosystems for future generations of people and pufflings.

Upcoming Burin Peninsula Community Session

Do you live on the Burin Peninsula? Join CPAWS-NL for a community session to discuss the coastal environment! We are seeking local knowledge about coastal ecosystems around the Fortune and Garnish areas, as part of our research on current environmental conditions here.

When: Tuesday, October 21st at 6:00 PM

Where: Fortune Lions Club, or online via Microsoft Teams

Coffee, tea, and snacks will be provided. We hope to see you there!

For more info, contact Hayley at hmyers@cpaws.org

The Ocean is Haunted... By Ghost Gear!

Ghost gear is about as scary as it sounds: abandoned, lost, or discarded fishing equipment and litter that haunts our oceans, harbours, and coastlines. It's incredibly harmful to marine life and to the environment. According to Fisheries and Oceans Canada, ghost gear may make up as much as 70% of macro-plastics in the ocean. As these plastics age and degrade, they become micro-plastics, which can be mistakenly eaten by



marine life. Some estimates suggest that 5 to 30% of harvestable fish are caught by ghost gear around the world, as they become trapped or entangled in abandoned nets, lines, traps, or other equipment.

Thankfully there are many initiatives focusing on taking this harmful marine debris out of the water. Preventative measures are now being

emphasized, proper gear-loss reporting prioritized, and education on the dangers of ghost gear recognized. We need to continue spreading awareness of ghost gear; at-risk species like the Atlantic Right Whale depend on it. What can you do to help? Shoreline cleanups are a fun and easy way to make a positive difference along your local coast! And say 'hi' if you see us in Petty Harbour this fall – we're working with community partners to remove debris from the shoreline and harbour. Together, we can ensure the marine ecosystem stays healthy for everyone!

Species Spotlight: Ghost Pipe

Try getting into the Halloween spirit this month by searching for a ghost in your local woods! **Ghost pipe** (*Monotropa uniflora*) can be found in shaded forests all across the island of Newfoundland and in southern Labrador. People often mistake it for a fungi, but ghost pipe is actually a flowering plant! It's usually white or sometimes pale pink – this is because it's parasitic, obtaining all its nutrients through a symbiotic relationship with nearby fungi and tree roots. It doesn't photosynthesize, meaning it doesn't need any chlorophyll, which is what gives most other plants their green colouring. Ghost

pipe flowers from early summer to early autumn, so there's still some time to see it before the winter sets in!



As always, feel free to reach out with any questions that you may have. For information on how to [volunteer](#) or make a [donation](#), visit our website at cpawsnl.org! Also, if you're interested in keeping up to date on what's new and exciting at CPAWS-NL follow us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) or [Twitter](#) for regular updates.



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