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ECOTOUR

of the Trans-Canada Highway
Newfoundland West



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Introduction to Newfoundland West

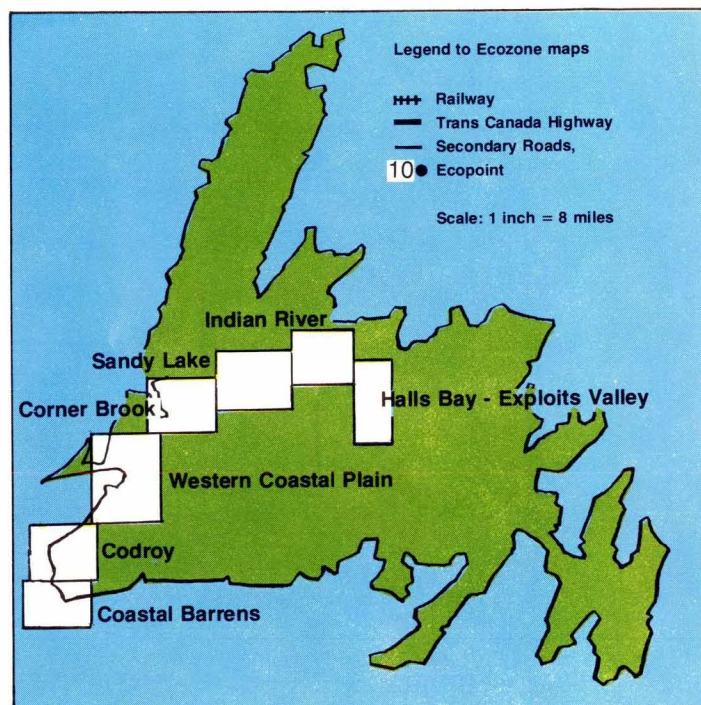
This Ecotour, Newfoundland West, is set within a landscape which according to some, had its beginnings with the collision of the New and the Old World continents 400 million years ago. Some of the limestone rocks of western Newfoundland were then part of an undersea continental shelf and some igneous rocks which now form part of central Newfoundland were part of the deeper ocean floor off North America. When the Old World rafted unto North America it squeezed these undersea rocks upwards and welded them together to form the original land mass of western Newfoundland. Immense natural forces later shaped this land during the 300 million year construction of the Appalachian Mountain System.

During the past two million years, the landscape has been carved by the glaciers of several ice ages. The last ice sheet, which completely covered the region, retreated only 10,000 years ago. Signs of glacier-power are seen throughout the Ecotour route; rounded hills, scoured bedrock, fjord-like bays, raised beaches and numerous ponds and lakes. Since the last ice retreated an invasion of plants from the mainland has led to the development of heaths, bogs and coniferous forests, the common vegetation of the Boreal Forest Region. Chilled Atlantic waters prevented migration of amphibians, reptiles and most mammals from the mainland. Yet of the 14 mammal species that did cross over ice-formed land bridges, all migrated into the western region.

Man migrated to the region along the coastline and later into river valleys. First known inhabitants were the Maritime Archaic People, then came Dorset Eskimos, Beothuk Indians and Europeans - all cultures wed to the sea. The interior of the region remained virtually undisturbed until recent forest and mining operations began. Yet, much of the land is still a wilderness where man can find the stillness and solitude he needs to find himself.

Ecotour, Newfoundland West, traverses through eight Ecozones, namely, Coastal Barrens, Codroy, Western Coastal Plain, Corner Brook, Sandy Lake, Indian River, Halls Bay and Exploits Valley. Travelling on the Trans-Canada Highway provides glimpses of only one facet of western Newfoundland. However, to enjoy this historic and scenic land more fully, a few side trips are recommended to coastal regions, such as Rose Blanche, Codroy, Lark Harbour and Bonne Bay.

Color Code to Ecozone Maps



A word about Ecotours

Ecotours are devised by the Canadian Forestry Service to help you, as a traveller, understand the forces that have shaped the landscape you see — forces ranging from earthquakes to earthworms, from west winds to white pines. This ecological interpretation includes features of natural as well as human history. The route covered by Ecotours is divided into major landscape types (Ecozones) and a map for each Ecozone shows location of interesting ecological features (identified by code numbers) and distance between these points of interest. While most ecological features can be seen without stopping, a stop is suggested for some points of interest. Maximum value from this Ecotour will be derived by keeping a record of the mileage and by reading information on each point of interest before reaching its location.



Coastal Barrens

1. Port-aux-Basques is set on the Newfoundland coastal barrens at the western extremity of the Sou'West Coast. The waters off this coast, now part of the Canadian National ferry route, were fished as early as the 15th century by the Spanish Basques and Portuguese. Since then cultural influences have changed but the fishing continues.

5.7 miles

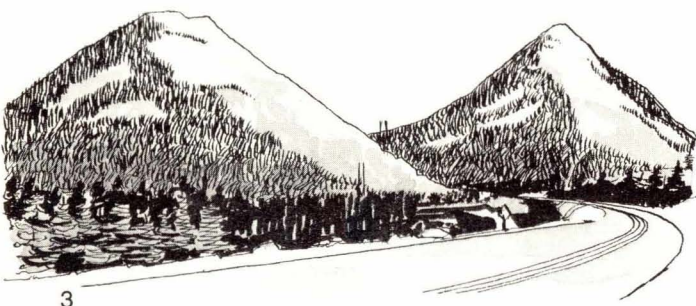
2. Here you are surrounded by coastal barrens, long the sites for harvests of blueberries, marshberries and bakeapples and for supplies of fresh meat, especially partridge (ptarmigan) and caribou. The barrens stretch across southern Newfoundland, interrupted only by narrow strips of forest clinging to the slopes of sheltered valleys.

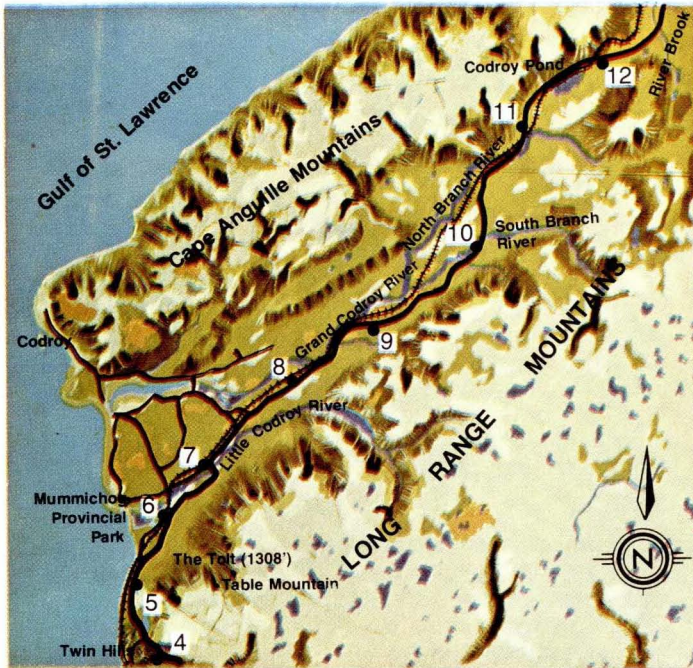
2.4 miles

3. Towering above the barrens are hills of granite - the Southern Long Range mountains. On the slope of the Twin Hills and beyond, trees pruned by the wind form an impenetrable tangled tree layer locally known as **tuckamore**. Tuckamore is a good insulator and provides shelter and warmth for birds and small animals.

0.9 miles

This Ecozone is like a land just released from an ice age. Exposed hills of lichen incrustated rock are patched by a fragile vegetation of bog, heath and scrubby forest. Ground-hugging plants are living expressions of the thin acid soils and harsh, foggy climate. Yet, these barrens are essential winter feeding grounds for some herds of Newfoundland caribou. The caribou graze on sedges, lichens and, at times, on kelp along the coast.





The Codroy Ecozone is a corridor, bordered to the south by the Long Range Mountains, to the north by the Cape Anguille Mountains and the west by the chilling waters of the Gulf of St. Lawrence. This diverse landscape includes weather-beaten forests and windswept treeless barrens near the sea, contrasting with sheltered, farm-dotted valleys and productive fir and birch forests inland.

4. Take a short diversion to Cape Ray. About 2000 years ago this wind-swept cape was the site of a Dorset Eskimo colony, a sea-oriented culture widespread along the coastline until its mysterious disappearance about 700 A.D.

4.1 miles

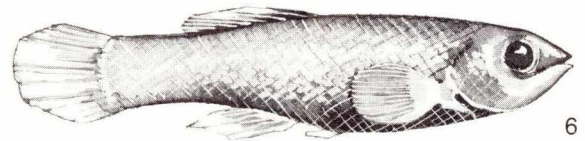
Codroy

5. Winds of over 100 miles per hour funnel down from the 1700 foot Table Mountain. These fierce winds sweep across the narrow gauge railway tracks, sometimes lifting freight cars off the rails. Until 1965 Lauchie McDougall, the famous human wind gauge lived in this house and was contracted by the railway to judge, without instruments, if trains could pass by safely. If he judged conditions unsafe, the cars were chained to the tracks until the winds subsided. After Lauchie's death, his wife continued the practice until 1972.

4.0 miles

6. Mummichog Provincial Park, one of many parks located near the Trans Canada Highway, is named after a tiny fish found in the brackish waters of the park's lagoon. This peculiar lagoon also has purple sulphur bacteria growing along its shoreline and an unpleasant odour caused by gases from decomposition of organic matter in the water. In the park you may spot the baybreasted warbler, Tennessee warbler, blackburnian warbler or great blue heron, all uncommon in Newfoundland.

3.9 miles



6

5

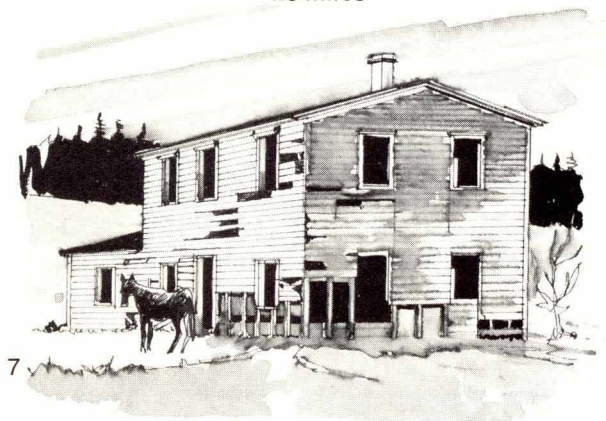


9



7. Abandoned farmhouses, weathered and gray, are mute reminders of the 1940's and 1950's when many young people left the land to work in the construction of the new highways and the American military bases on the Island. Cultivated land in this area is one of the few signs of agriculture visible along the Ecotour route. A side trip into the Codroy Valley will take you into the farming district settled two centuries ago by Channel Islanders via Bay St. George and later by Scots and Acadians via Cape Breton.

4.6 miles



8. To the northwest lie the Cape Anguille Mountains, part of a 200-300 million year old Carboniferous rock formation which covers southwestern Newfoundland. There was active oil exploration and drilling on these mountains up until 1973. Oil exploration is not new in Newfoundland. The first oil well was drilled about 1867 at Parsons Pond on the Northern Peninsula. No commercial finds have been located as yet.

4.4 miles

9. Twisted, wind-shaped **witch-hazels** (yellow birch) are scattered along the roadside. The young twigs of the tree, if chewed, give a wintergreen flavour.

5.4 miles

10. South Branch is the most southerly of the many large salmon rivers crossed by the highway. This is an early river, that is a river to which salmon migrate from the sea in early June. Only an average of 400 salmon are taken here each season by anglers, but a high proportion are large fish. Five miles north is the

sister branch of the Grand Codroy - the North Branch River.

6.1 miles

11. Birch trees dotted over the hillsides are telltale signs of past logging. Most of these have died from their sudden exposure following the removal of balsam fir trees. The wild flowers along the roadside, particularly the pink fireweed in summer and the autumn golden rod are more pleasant sights.

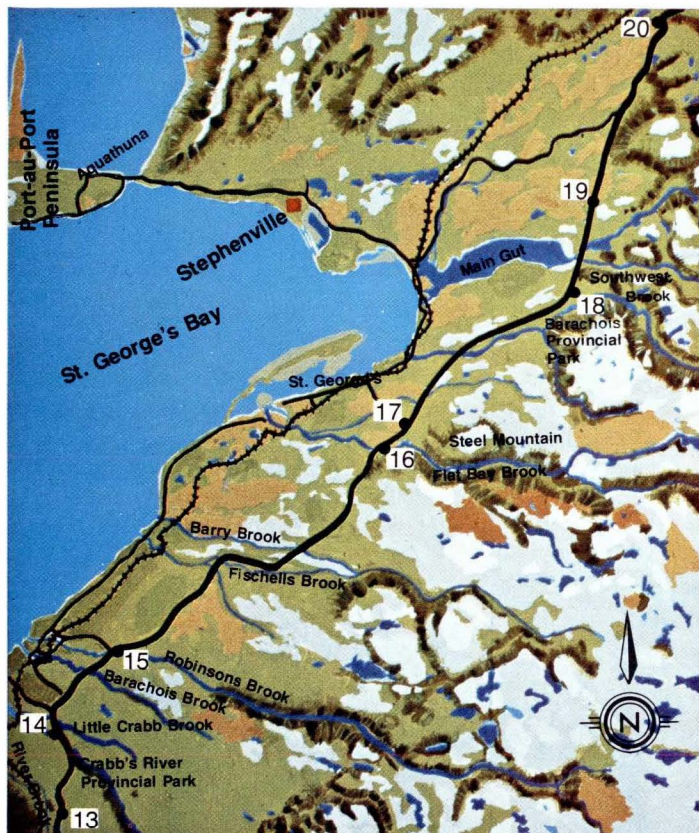
3.8 miles

Fireweed



12. To the east is a valuable balsam fir and white birch forest. Many of Newfoundland's more productive forests are on steep slopes where it is difficult to harvest with heavy logging equipment and difficult to control soil erosion. New methods of harvesting designed to reduce environmental damage on such slopes are now being tested on west coast forest.

4.8 miles



In this gently rolling Ecozone numerous, unspoiled salmon brooks and rivers flow westward from mountain valleys through low hills covered by forests of balsam fir, white birch and yellow birch. Logged-over hillsides are smothered by dense stands of young fir trees beneath gaunt, dead birches. Throughout the zone are patches of virgin forest often with numerous trees damaged by insect attacks and by diseases. North of Flat Bay Brook are blankets of treeless bog which grow over poorly drained soils.

13. A fluffy white flower, the pearly ever-lasting is the motorist's constant companion from mid-summer to late fall. It grows along the roadside and in gravel pits. In fall the flowers were often picked and used as a pillow and mattress stuffing, especially in early logging camps. But more important ecologically, the plant is a pioneer species which colonizes and stabilizes exposed soils.

4.8 miles

14. Crabbes River Provincial Park is a pleasant place to stop. There's a chance of seeing a great horned owl, or some more familiar bird like the whisky-jack or the pine grosbeak. A large part of the river bed is a mixture of giant cobblestones - granites, sandstones, conglomerates, and other kinds of rock. The footing along the stones is awkward, except for children who walk easily in such unspoiled surroundings.

5.8 miles

Western Coastal Plain

15. East of Robinsons Brook the road is bordered by a natural hedge of speckled alder. This hedge, alder mixed with willow, cherry and birch, and edged by the pearly everlasting is common along many roads throughout Newfoundland. This particular hedge runs on for miles, broken only by the openings to small ponds, bogs, brooks and by land cleared for use as community pasture.

17.4 miles

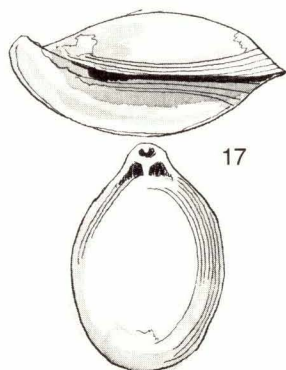
16. Flat Bay Brook is a well-known salmon stream that also supports a commercial eel fishery. It was down Flat Bay Brook Valley that William Epps Cormack walked to reach St. George's Harbour on November 2nd, 1822, completing his trans-Island trek. To the east overlooking the river is Steel Mountain. This mountain is part of the Canadian Shield, a Precambrian rock more than 600 million years old. The road at this point passes over the youngest rock formation on the Island, the Carboniferous, a mere 300 million years old! Large gypsum and salt deposits, the remnants of ancient lagoons, are found in this area.

2.1 miles





14



17

Brachiopod

17. This turnoff leads to St. George's Bay and the Port-au-Port Peninsula, centres of once-flourishing Micmac Indian and French cultures. Fishing was the first industry, mining came later. Gypsum is stockpiled at St. George's. Limestone deposits were quarried at Aguathuna from 1913-1966. There you can dig clam-like fossils (brachiopods) from the limestone and occasionally find a colorful barite crystal. Just 2.0 miles east of the turnoff you can overlook St. George's Bay. You may also smell sulfide in the air or see a white plume of smoke in the valley; signs of the most recent industry of the area - the Labrador Linerboard mill.

11.8 miles

18. Barachois Provincial Park, a naturalist's delight, is nestled at the base of the Long Range Mountains. The park is located within an area of virgin forest, habitat of the rare **Newfoundland pine marten**. You may never see the secretive marten but you should spot a chipmunk, first introduced to the Island in 1962 in this park. Six species of woodpeckers have been recorded here including the uncommon arctic three-toed woodpecker. Hiking trails lead to the top of the mountains to caribou country, with its large herd of 7,000 animals. Barachois has an interesting flora including many orchids and the black ash tree, a rare species in Newfoundland.

5.3 miles

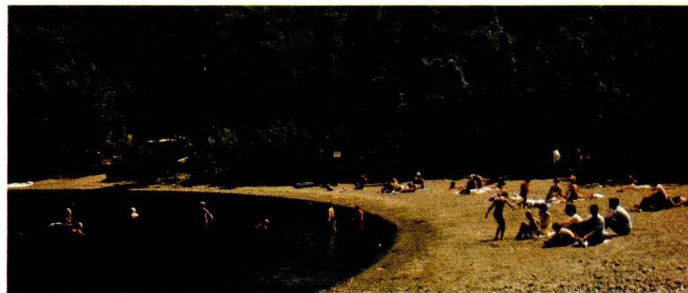
19. These bogs cover the land with a blanket of wet peat varying in thickness from two to 20 feet. Bogs are part of growing up in Newfoundland. You pick berries on them - marshberries and bakeapples. You use them as pathways through dense forest to reach a favorite fishing hole. The bog is also the habitat of the intriguing insect-death-traps; the pitcher-plant (Newfoundland's provincial flower), sundews and bladderworts. Be on the lookout for small birds, three to watch for are the yellow throat warbler, Lincoln's sparrow and the savannah sparrow.

9.6 miles

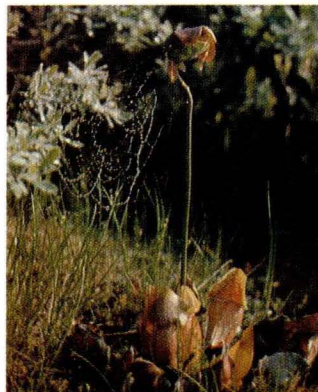
20. From the top of Gallants Hill you have a panoramic view of a logged-over valley with its scattered dead or dying birch trees. The forest was cut 25 years ago, and it will be another 40 more years before it reaches pulpwood size again. A mile east into this valley of a million Christmas trees are dense patches of young balsam fir. By looking directly into these dense stands, some people can see geometric forms like stacked snow-flakes or innumerable crosses.

9.4 miles

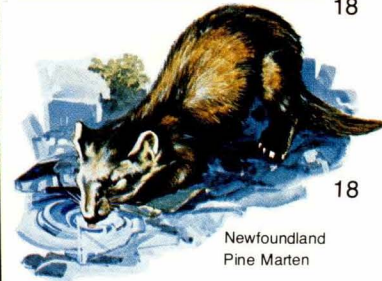
B. Jackson Photo



18



Pitcher Plant



18

Newfoundland
Pine Marten

19



Moisture laden west winds from the Gulf of St. Lawrence reduce the forest fire hazard in the extensive balsam fir and birch forests which cover this rugged, hilly Ecozone. These forests have been logged for pulpwood for the past half-century. On cutover land the vigorously growing succulent young fir and hardwood shrubs are the favourite food of the moose. Roadcuts in this Ecozone expose limestone cliffs. Overlying the limestones are rich soils supporting the greatest diversity of plants on the Island.

Corner Brook

21. The Blue Ponds on the east side of the road reflect a peculiar blue-green color from their clear waters. These two ponds have no stream inflow. Instead they are fed by spring waters rising from underlying limestone.

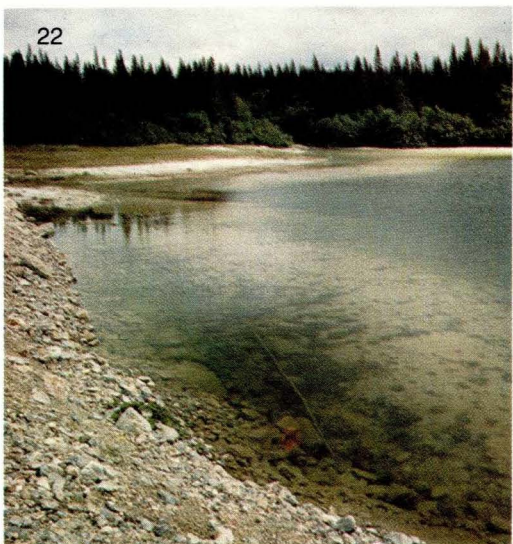
12.6 miles

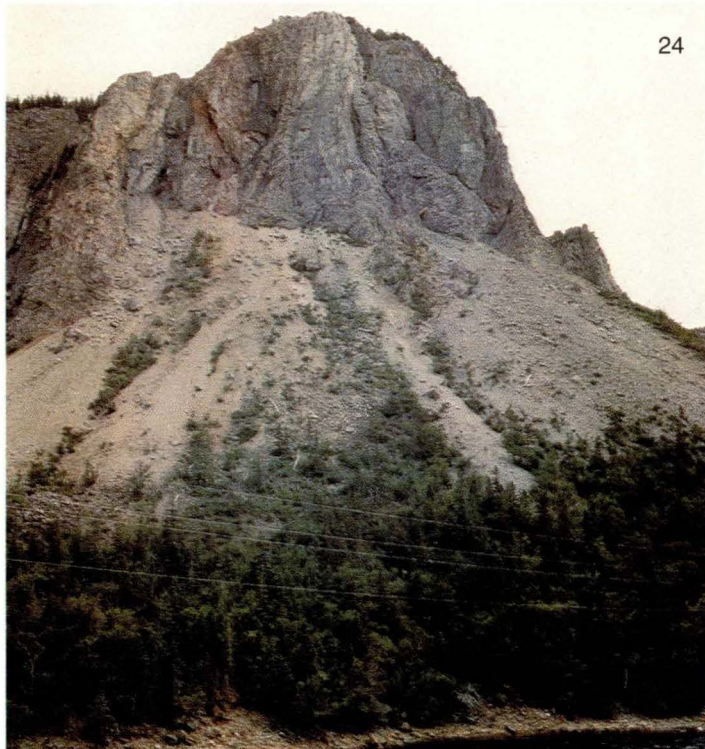
22. Further evidence of the region's limestone bedrock are these marl ponds underlain by a white clay-like deposit, partially formed by the remains of freshwater mollusc shells. Two miles further on, the road cuts through a marble outcrop. The black and grey bands of marble within white and pink calcite make an attractive rock to polish.

3.2 miles

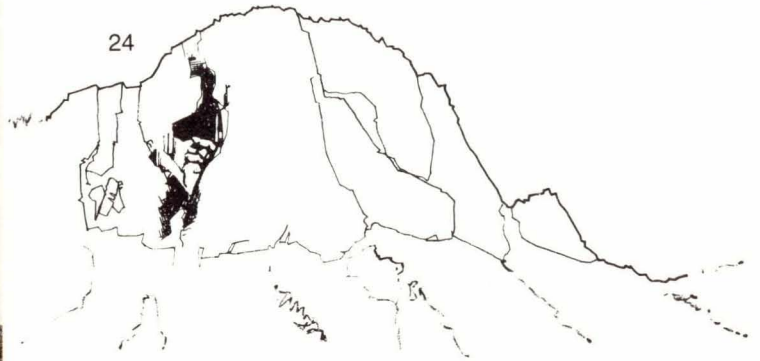
23. The city of Corner Brook, contoured to the Humber Arm and surrounding hills is dependent on nearby mineral, fish, and forest resources for its industry. This is the pulp and paper capital of western Newfoundland. Drive through town to the mill, where the logs lie in the mill pond before being processed into newsprint. The journey of pulpwood logs from forest to the mill is followed along the Ecotour route east of Corner Brook.

3.2 miles





24

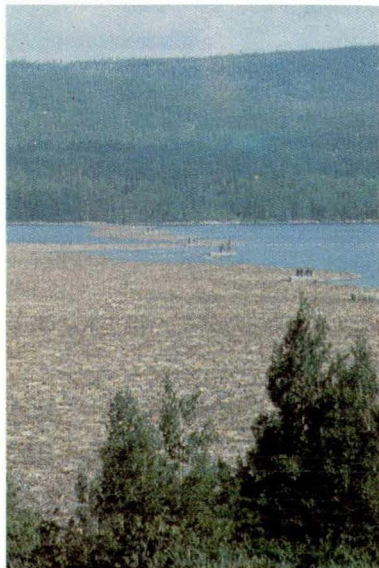


24. Stop here near the mighty Humber River. Maybe the great explorer of the Pacific, Captain James Cook, noticed the example of nature's sculpturing, the old man set in the cliff above. It is a real test to see if you can find the stone face. Cook, who made the first detailed map of the west coast, sailed four miles up the Humber in 1767. The Humber itself is the Island's greatest salmon river. In 1973 this river yielded nearly 4,000 of the 44,000 salmon caught by anglers in Newfoundland.

10.5 miles

25. At the lower end of Deer Lake is a large log boom where wood is stored before its final run down the Humber to the mill at Corner Brook. Use of the lake for wood transport has ecological side effects. Bark, rubbed off the pulpwood logs, falls to the lake bottom, forming a rotting layer. This rotting bark uses oxygen from the water and destroys the habitat of bottom-dwelling fauna. The bottom of the lake is now virtually covered with decomposed bark known locally as **pug**. Pug also fouls the shoreline. Yet Deer Lake still has several beautiful beaches and good populations of fish. The lake, only eight feet above sea level, has landlocked **Tom Cods**, a salt water fish. Bay seals have also been seen here.

4.2 miles



24

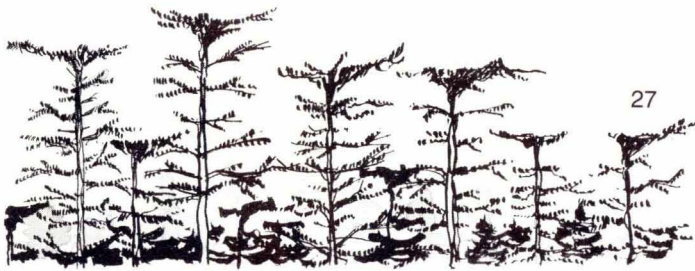
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26. Pasadena, named after Pasadena, California, is a small community with rich agricultural soils and amenable climate. Some farms are evident from the highway. Pasadena is the location of a Canadian Forestry Service field station. The western region headquarters of the Newfoundland Wildlife and Forestry services are also located here.

10.5 miles



The flat to gently undulating Sandy Lake Ecozone is sandwiched between rugged hills. Both the dry, acid sandy soils and the wet Mary Ann Bogs are interlaced by black spruce forests underlain by knee-high sheep-laurel and carpets of white caribou moss. During the 19th century great herds of caribou (10,000 or more animals) migrated across this zone between the highlands of the Northern Peninsula and the Central Newfoundland plateaux. Today only a small herd of 200 animals, the Humber Herd, migrate into the Ecozone.



27. Tops of trees lined against the lake are not as pointed as they should be but rather are flat topped like eagles' nests, the distinct sign of damage caused by an accidentally introduced European insect, the balsam woolly aphid. The aphid, small as a pinpoint, sucks the life-giving sap of the balsam fir trees. Fir, the only tree attacked by this pest, is the most common tree species in western Newfoundland and is the main source of the pulpmwood used at Corner Brook mill.

2.6 miles

Sandy Lake



D. Miles photo

28. The spillway at the town of Deer Lake is a reminder that we are never far from logging activity on the West Coast. Tugboats haul booms of logs from here to the boom piers at the lower end of the lake. The white building near the spillway is the Bowater's hydro power plant which services much of the west coast. Deer Lake was also important in the history of the winter postal service. As late as the 1930's mail-laden dog-sleds left the town enroute to Bonne Bay - the first leg in a relay to St. Anthony at the tip of the Northern Peninsula. Horses wearing snowshoes were also used on this mail route.

1.8 miles

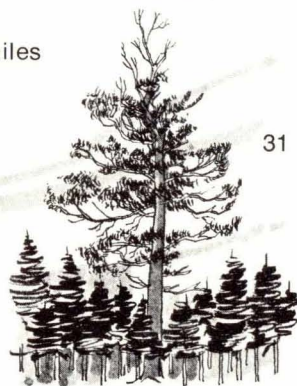
29. This side road courses 275 miles northward through the magnificent ice-carved scenery of Gros Morne National Park and beyond, along the unspoiled coastal plains of the Northern Peninsula. For archeology buffs, visits to the Maritime Archaic sites and museum at Port-au-Choix, and the thousand year-old remains of Viking settlements at L'Anse aux Meadows are a must.

5.0 miles

30. Can you spot patches of cat-tails along the roadside? This plant is rarely seen in central, eastern and southern Newfoundland. It's a challenge to see how many times you can spot the cat-tails and who can find the most easterly or westerly clumps.

10.2 miles

L. Clarke, NFRC



31

31. Look for the white pine, tallest of all Newfoundland's native trees. Some of these trees are over 300 years old. At the turn of the century the great pine was harvested for lumber to supply England's navy. Many Newfoundlanders can tell stories of great pine stumps seen in their woods travels. Unfortunately, white pine is being gradually lost because young trees are killed by a disease known as white pine blister rust.

1.5 miles

32. Near the Howley turnoff you can see Sandy Lake, triangled between Grand and Birchy Lakes. Near this point in 1904, four moose captured in New Brunswick were successfully introduced to the Island. Since this introduction 250,000 moose have been harvested legally or illegally and a population of 50,000 animals now forages throughout the forests and bogs. Today this wildlife resource is under strict management.

7.0 miles

33. Notice stands of balsam fir on the north side of the highway between McIssac Brook and Hampden turnoff. Locally the tree has other names; **var** and **snotty var**. Stop and take a closer look at the grey mottled bark and the resin blisters of the var. The sticky resin is used by loggers to heal sores, cuts and fly bites. Travelling eastward you will soon leave the balsam fir forest and enter black spruce country.

8.7 miles

34. To some of us this area is one of scrubby black spruce, growing poorly on nutrient-deficient acid soils. Yet to others the forms and shapes of the spruce (rounded, clustered, bottle-brush, stovepipe straight) mixed with our own Bonsai tree - the white pine - conjure pictures of a Japanese landscape. Maybe this isn't just a poor spruce habitat, grudgingly supporting misshapen trees, but rather a viable community of interrelated forms.

4.2 miles

35. One tragedy of road construction is the near total destruction of a rare red pine stand between No Name Brook and Birchy Narrows. Natural red pine grows in only six or seven places in Newfoundland. Near here, along the shores of Sandy Lake pulpwood is put in the water on its first leg of a 70 mile journey to the Corner Brook mill.

5.0 miles



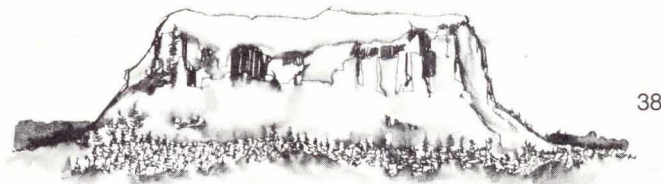
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35



Indian River



In this Ecozone the route cuts through deep gravel deposits covered by a variety of black spruce forests. The most interesting of these forests drape the hillsides south of Birchy Lake where the scrubby spruce are artistically mixed with grand old white pine. Much of the remainder of the zone has been burned either by the great fires of 1904 or since. These fires, often caused by lightening during dry, warm summers, are followed by prolific regeneration of black spruce. These stands, known as fire stands are the dominant vegetation. Near Burnt Berry the new growth on a more recent burn, contains many young hardwoods and is the habitat of many warblers, sparrows and other small birds.

36 Patches of grey dead balsam fir forest lie along Birchy Ridge north of Birchy Lake. These trees were killed by the dreaded hemlock looper, a destructive insect pest. Its populations are naturally controlled by fungal diseases and, when absolutely necessary, by chemical spraying.

1.0 miles

37 Stop at the lookout over Birchy Lake and look for the narrowing of the waterway, known as Slaughter Point. Drift back to the early 1900's and imagine yourself hidden with hunters around the point. You are waiting for the great caribou herds which move from the highlands of the Northern and Baie Verte Peninsulas enroute to winter feeding grounds on the Topsails, Buchans Plateau and in southern Newfoundland. As the waters fill with caribou the killing is easy. Inland, on the Topsails, trainloads of sharpshooters wait for the same herds. Today few caribou cross these waters.

4.5 miles

38 Slow down near Sheffield's Brook. By looking up the brook you can see a steep-sided rubble-based hill, known as Wolf Hill, the site of stories about the now extinct Newfoundland wolf. This animal, sub-species of the Arctic



36

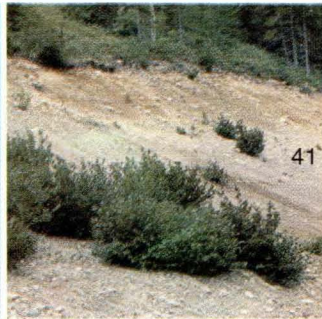


Hemlock Looper

36

Wolf, was last recorded in 1911 with a kill made just inland from here on the Topsails. Appropriately the sub-species was named 'beothucus' after the now extinct Beothuck Indian.

8.5 miles



39. You are driving through a fire stand of black spruce mixed in places by white birch and **juniper** (larch). Some trees on the north side are pulpwood size. Black spruce is the favored pulpwood species because of its fibre qualities and resistance to insect damage. The spruce has had many other economic and cultural uses in Newfoundland from the days of first settlement. One popular use then and now was the making of spruce beer - the diary of Aaron Thomas 1794 provides the following description.

"I now come to a grand and important article, not only in Newfoundland, but in the habitable world! - It is Spruce Beer! In this Country it is the principal beverage of the people. From the Spruce Tree is procur'd the essence of Spruce, with which the Beer is brew'd. The process of making the essence is very simple, nothing more than putting a few Gallons of water in an Iron Pott on the fire, and into this Pott keep throwing the branches of the Spruce Tree. It must be kept constantly boiling and when arriv'd to the consistency of Cream one half pint of it will be a quantity sufficient for thirty Gallons of Beer."

5.5 miles

40. Spindly trees, as numerous as hair on a dog's back, crowd on small knolls. These beanpole stands of spruce result from overcrowded regeneration. There are about four million acres of beanpoles in Newfoundland.

4.7 miles

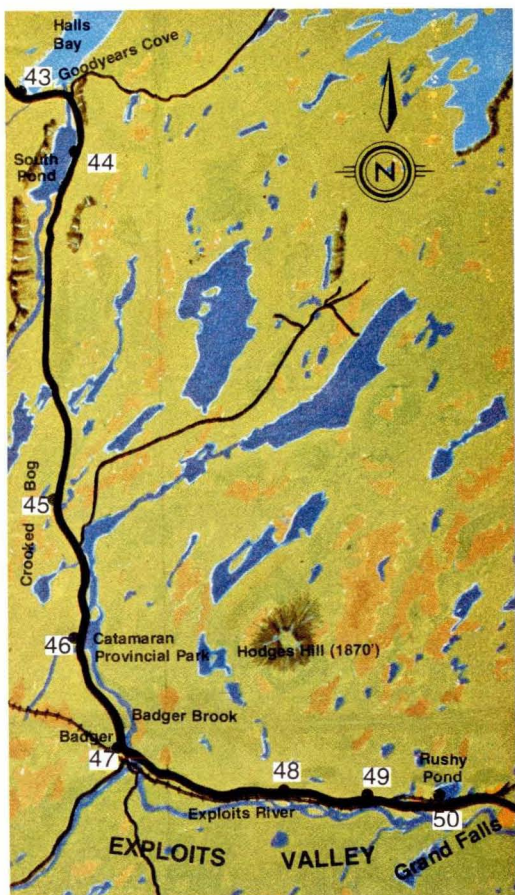
41. The valley of Indian River bursting with autumn colors is a canoeist's dream, and was the scenic route taken by riverboat men on their way to hunt caribou at Slaughter Point on Birchy Lake. Notice the clumps of alder, like tumbleweeds scattered on the exposed banks of soil skirting the highway. The alder, like the pearly everlasting, is a pioneer species. It is capable of converting the nitrogen in the air into plant food. Its fallen leaves form an organic compost in which other plants can gain a foothold. Follow the alder eastward into the valley where it has become firmly established and now forms a natural hedge.

8.7 miles

42. Burnt Berry Motel is located near an old Micmac Indian trail leading from Springdale to the White Hills (Topsails), a distance of 30 miles. In the early 1900's Micmacs would travel inland in mid-summer, hunt caribou, dry it and then cache it on the hunting grounds. In late fall the women would return to the cache and obtain the winter meat supply. Near here is a Micmac graveyard - in disrepair - since no Micmacs are in the area now.

2.7 miles





Halls Bay - Exploits Valley



Around Halls Bay delta deposits and terraces of ancient rivers are now 200-300 feet above sea level, which show how much the land raised since the last ice-age. South of Halls Bay this Ecozone has many small valleys with wet meadow-like fens or drier scrub-covered bog. The forest is mainly black spruce and balsam fir with an abundance of juniper and clumps of **aps** (trembling aspen).

Set within a rolling landscape, the Exploits Valley is dominated by the Exploits River, the largest river in Newfoundland. Hardwoods, such as white birch, aspen, cherry and alder are common in areas where fir and spruce forests have been logged over the past 75 years. On poorly drained sites, particularly near Badger, larch and black spruce are common on peaty soils.

43. At this spot, overlooking Halls Bay, you are only 30 miles southwest of **The Front** perhaps the most publicized sealing grounds in the world. Halls Bay is a fjord stretching inland from Notre Dame Bay. In these waters there's a chance to see **clumpers**, small icebergs which drift into the fjord in spring. Two miles east is Goodyears Cove and located near the road is an ice-cold spring, worth a stop even on a bone-chilling, **mausey** (drizzly) day.

5.8 miles

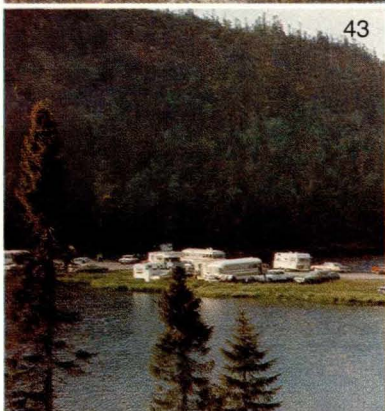
44. Near South Pond the highway turns sharply inland. Characteristic of the central part of the Island is the frequent occurrence of the **aps** tree such as those bordering this pond.

16.2 miles

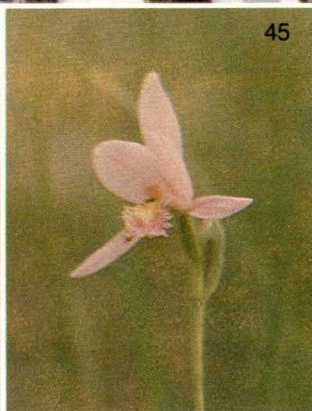
45. Crooked Bog is not really a bog - it's a fen; and fens are much richer than bogs in both their flora and fauna. For nature lovers a stop is recommended. You may see eye-catching orchids such as snakehead, rose pogonia or ragged orchis. Many other flowers, pyrolas, lilies, primulas and asters are found here. Keep an eye open for fen birds which include the common snipe and the screeching, dive-bombing **twillick** (greater yellow-legs).

7.5 miles

46. The history of Catamaran Provincial Park is one of varied land use by man. Hundreds of years ago, this was the winter hunting ground of the Beothuks, the Red Indian, and it was near here that the last Beothuk survivor, Shanawdithit was captured in 1823. The land was left to Micmac trappers. In 1909 the area was logged in bucksaw and horse fashion and afterwards left undisturbed until it became a provincial park in 1958. On the east side of the road, between Catamaran Park and Badger, look for remnants of old bridges and



43



45

Rose Pogonia

a narrow road. These are reminders that the Trans Canada Highway is but the most recent overland route, completed in 1964. The older road was known as the Hall's Bay Line. Before the line the only overland route was a dogsled mail run which followed an even earlier trail - a Micmac trap line.

5.0 miles

47. At the junction of Badger Brook and the Exploits River is the logging town of Badger, made famous by the balladeer John P. Devine in his 1915 folk song 'The Badger Drive'. This ballad is about 'the one class of men in this country that never is mentioned in song' - the log drivers - who with pike-poles and peavies urge the stubborn pulpwood down the Exploits River on its way to the Grand Falls mill.

8.4 miles

48. If you stop at Pearsons Peak, midpoint of the Trans Canada Highway in Newfoundland, you can survey part of the Exploits Valley, with its vegetation in various stages of transition after half a century of logging. The hardwoods, white birch and trembling aspen, are dominant at present, but the more shade tolerant coniferous trees will gradually replace them. This is the normal path of plant succession for much of central Newfoundland.

3.9 miles

49. Here the highway cuts through a black sedimentary outcrop with iron staining. Pyrite (fool's gold) occurs in the rock. Graptolite fossils are also present but more difficult to find.

3.2 miles

Common Snipe Tuck photo-CWS



46

50. The shoreline of Rushy Pond was once the site of the winter hunting camp of the Beothuks. The Beothuks built wooden fences with some strategic openings along the banks of the Exploits River. Migrating caribou herds were driven along the bank and herded through these gateways where hunters waited with flint-tipped spears. The banks of the Exploits and shores of Red Indian Lake formed the main winter hunting grounds for the now extinct tribe.



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Suggested Reading:

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- conducting research and development in the forest management and forest products fields.
- disseminating information and providing technical services to provincial governments, forest industries, and other agencies.
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