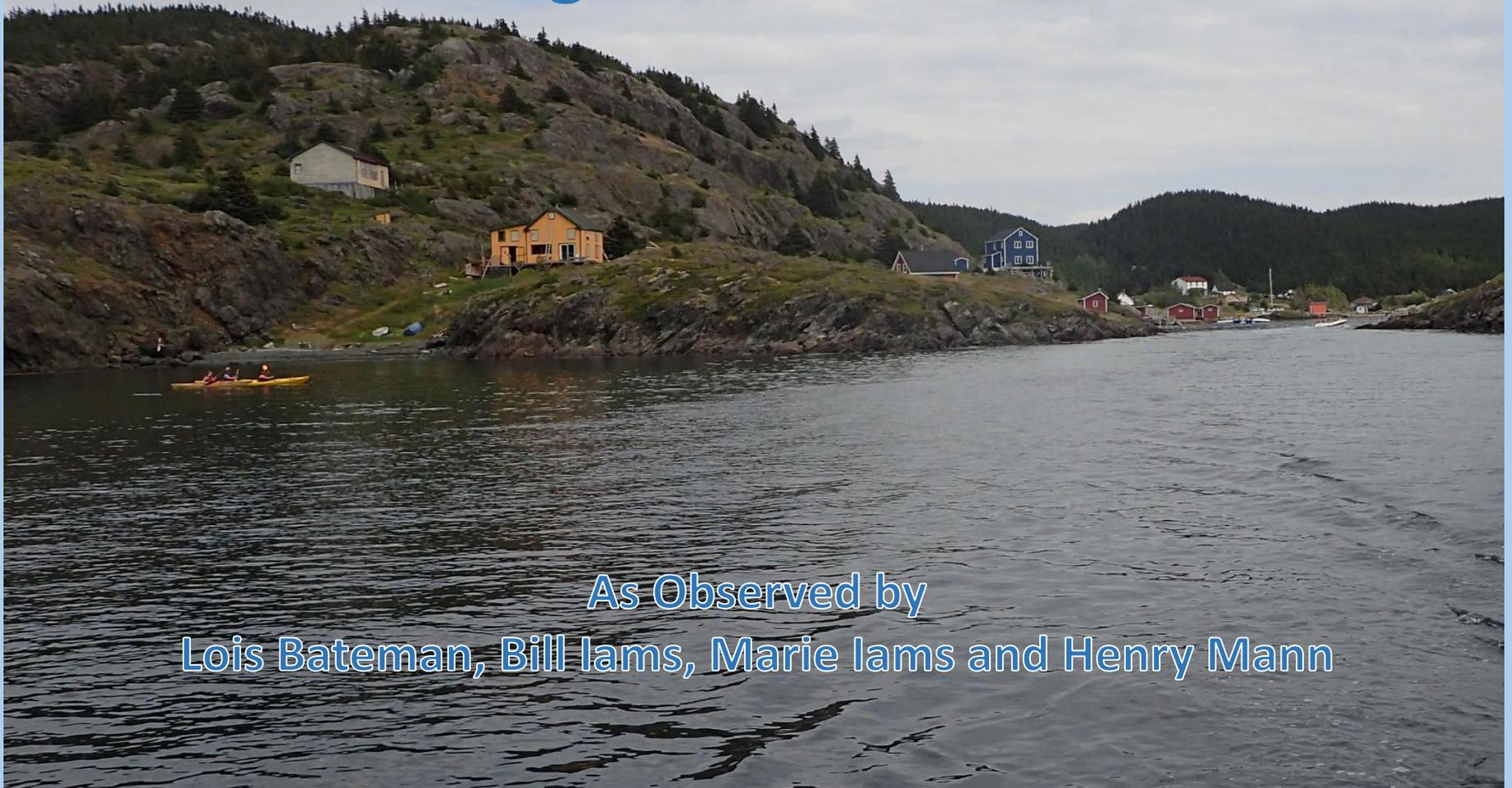


Views of Exploits Island and the Lighthouse Trail



As Observed by
Lois Bateman, Bill Iams, Marie Iams and Henry Mann

Four retired members of the Grenfell Campus of Memorial University spent four days on Exploits Island at the invitation of Paul and Joanne Langdon who now lease the Surgeon Point Lighthouse. From the base at Butt's Cove, the lighthouse trail of approximately 4.5 Km was hiked several times from August 1 to August 4, 2018. Photos were taken and records kept of the plants, animals and geology in the variety of habitats encountered. This presentation is just a brief sampling of some of the observations made on those dates. More detailed lists and written comments have also been made available.



The boat that got us there.

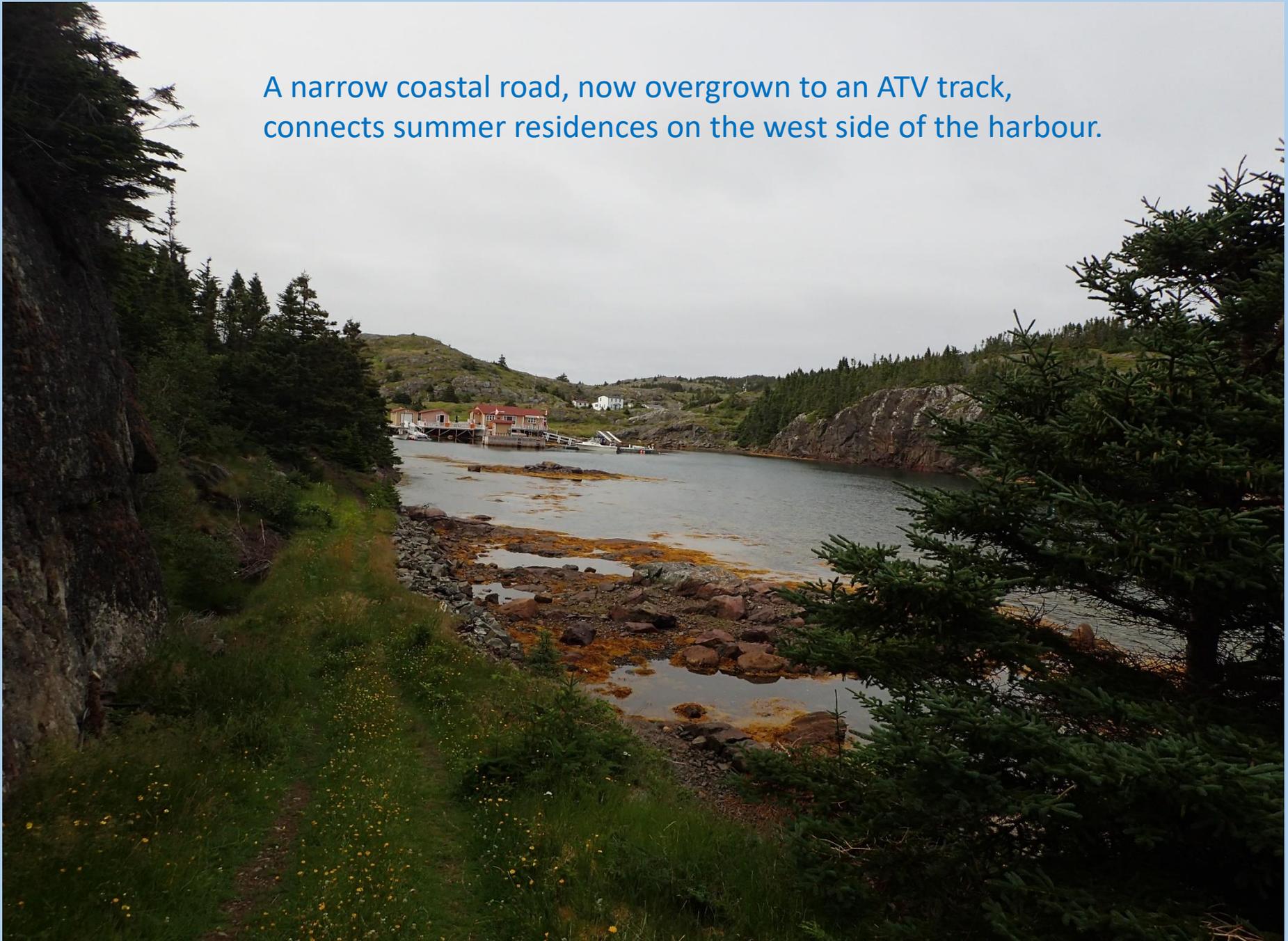
The Community of Exploits surrounds the harbour on a narrow rocky coastal strip. Summer residences are well maintained and utilized.



Some reminders of bygone days add flavor and historical context to the harbour.



A narrow coastal road, now overgrown to an ATV track, connects summer residences on the west side of the harbour.

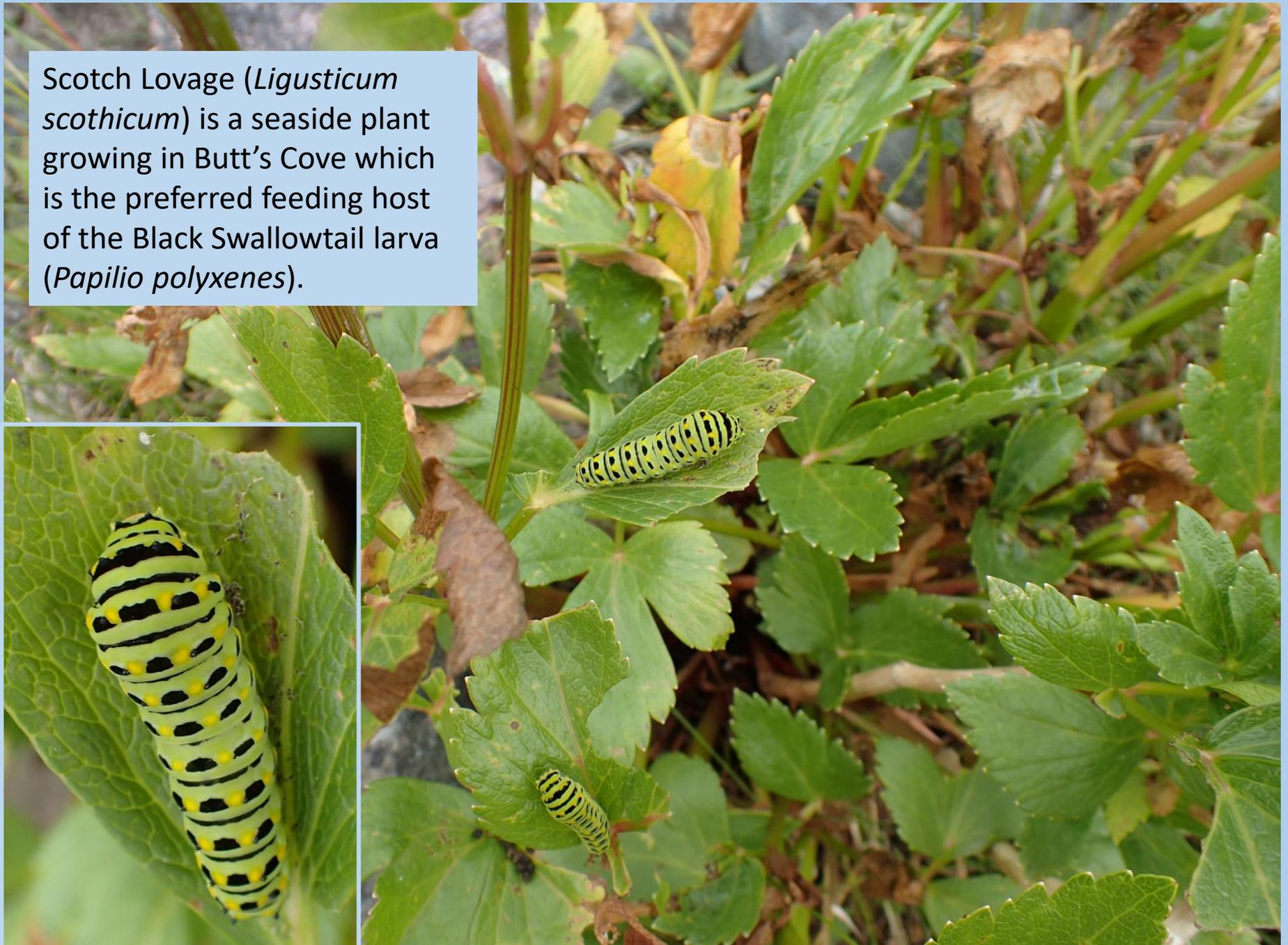




Near the harbour this Larch tree has been defoliated by Larch Sawfly larvae (*Pristiphora erichsonii*). Voles and shrews are important predators of the sawfly pupae in the soil. Shrews have been introduced to Newfoundland to help control this forest pest.

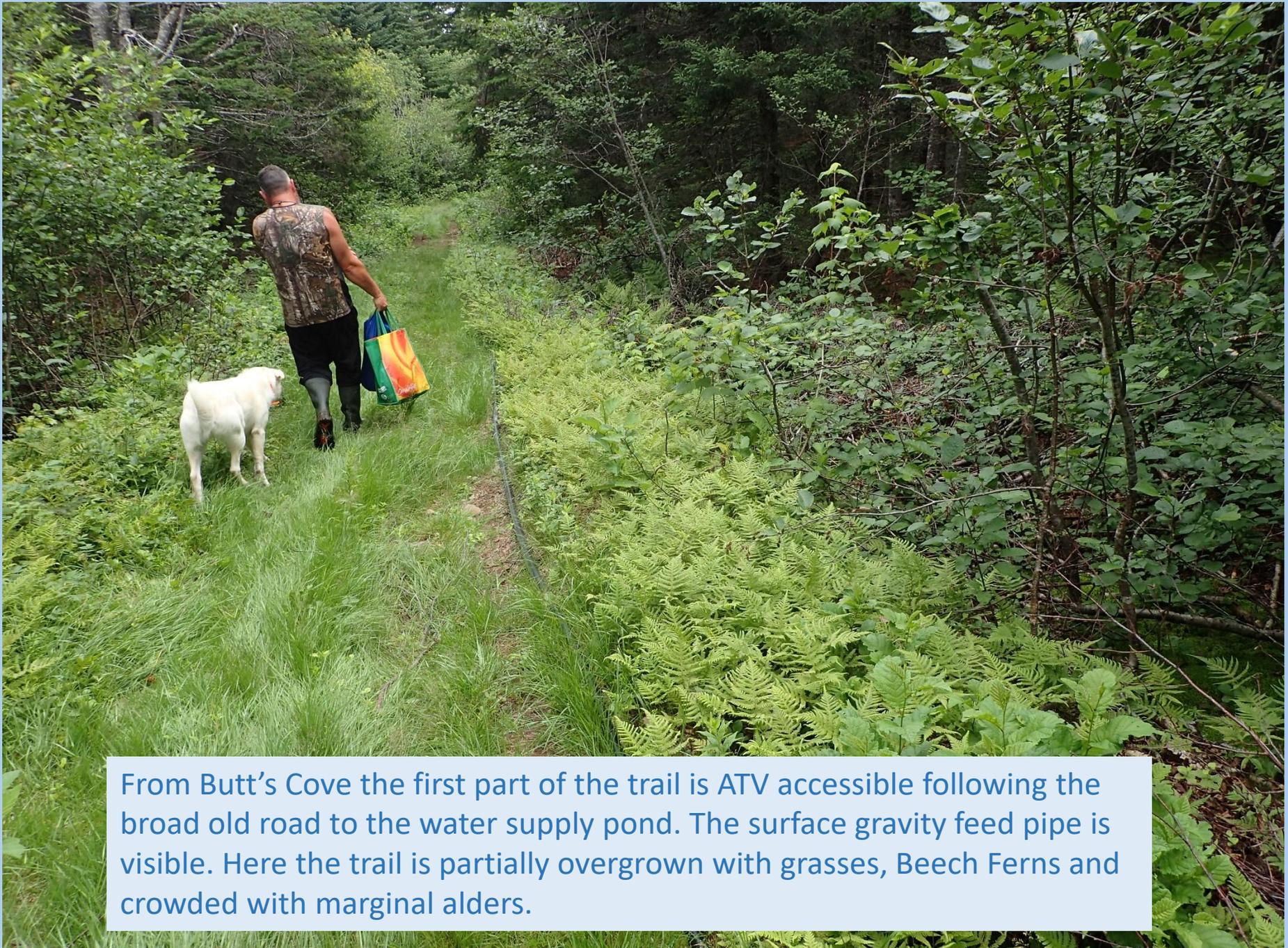


Scotch Lovage (*Ligusticum scoticum*) is a seaside plant growing in Butt's Cove which is the preferred feeding host of the Black Swallowtail larva (*Papilio polyxenes*).





Butt's Cove is the start of the Lighthouse Walking Trail.



From Butt's Cove the first part of the trail is ATV accessible following the broad old road to the water supply pond. The surface gravity feed pipe is visible. Here the trail is partially overgrown with grasses, Beech Ferns and crowded with marginal alders.

The water supply pond is surrounded by a wet fen home to carnivorous pitcher plants, orchids and many other interesting species.



Can you see the Crab Spider on these Horned Bladderwort flowers waiting for an unwary fly lunch? Almost perfect camouflage! Meanwhile the Horned Bladderwort (*Utricularia cornuta*) is trapping microscopic animals with its bladders in the wet peat.



A narrow dirt trail winds through a dense forest. The ground is covered in moss and small green plants. The trees are tall and thin, with some large trunks visible. The overall scene is lush and green, suggesting a wet or moist environment. The trail is the central focus, leading the viewer's eye into the woods.

From the pond
westward the trail
narrows to a footpath
through various wet
and dry habitats.

Mushrooms abound in all habitats from wet to dry. This is the potentially deadly “Fly Agaric” mushroom (*Amanita muscaria*).





In dry upland sites Stair-step Moss (*Hylocomium splendens*) and Schreber's Moss (*Pleurozium schreberi*) carpet the forest floor.



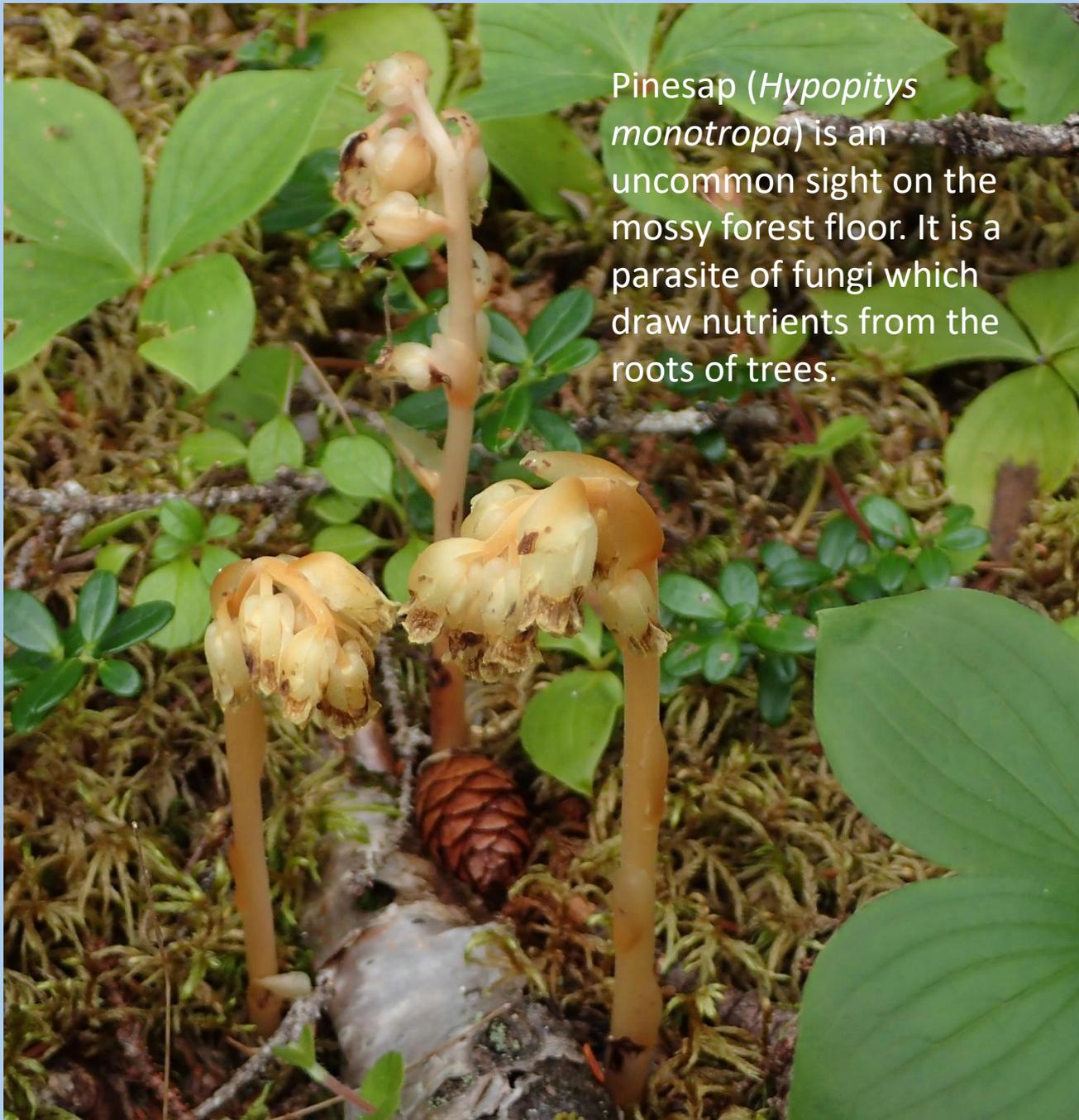
The orchid “Checkered Rattlesnake Plantain” (*Goodyera tessellata*) grows on these dry mossy sites. Leaves have a characteristic checkered variegated pattern.



A close look at the mossy forest floor will often produce some interesting observations.



Pinesap (*Hypopitys monotropa*) is an uncommon sight on the mossy forest floor. It is a parasite of fungi which draw nutrients from the roots of trees.



Another parasitic plant,
Indian Pipe (*Monotropa*
uniflora) is more common
in the deep shady woods





After rains, this yellow Slime Mold can be noted slowly creeping over the wet mosses.

A variety of birds can be seen and heard along the Lighthouse Trail. Spruce Grouse (*Falciennis canadensis*) are often quite approachable.





A variety of ground lichens in the Reindeer Lichen group occur. Star-tipped Reindeer Lichen (*Cladina stellaris*) is recognizable by its rounded growth and spreading starry tipped branch ending clusters.



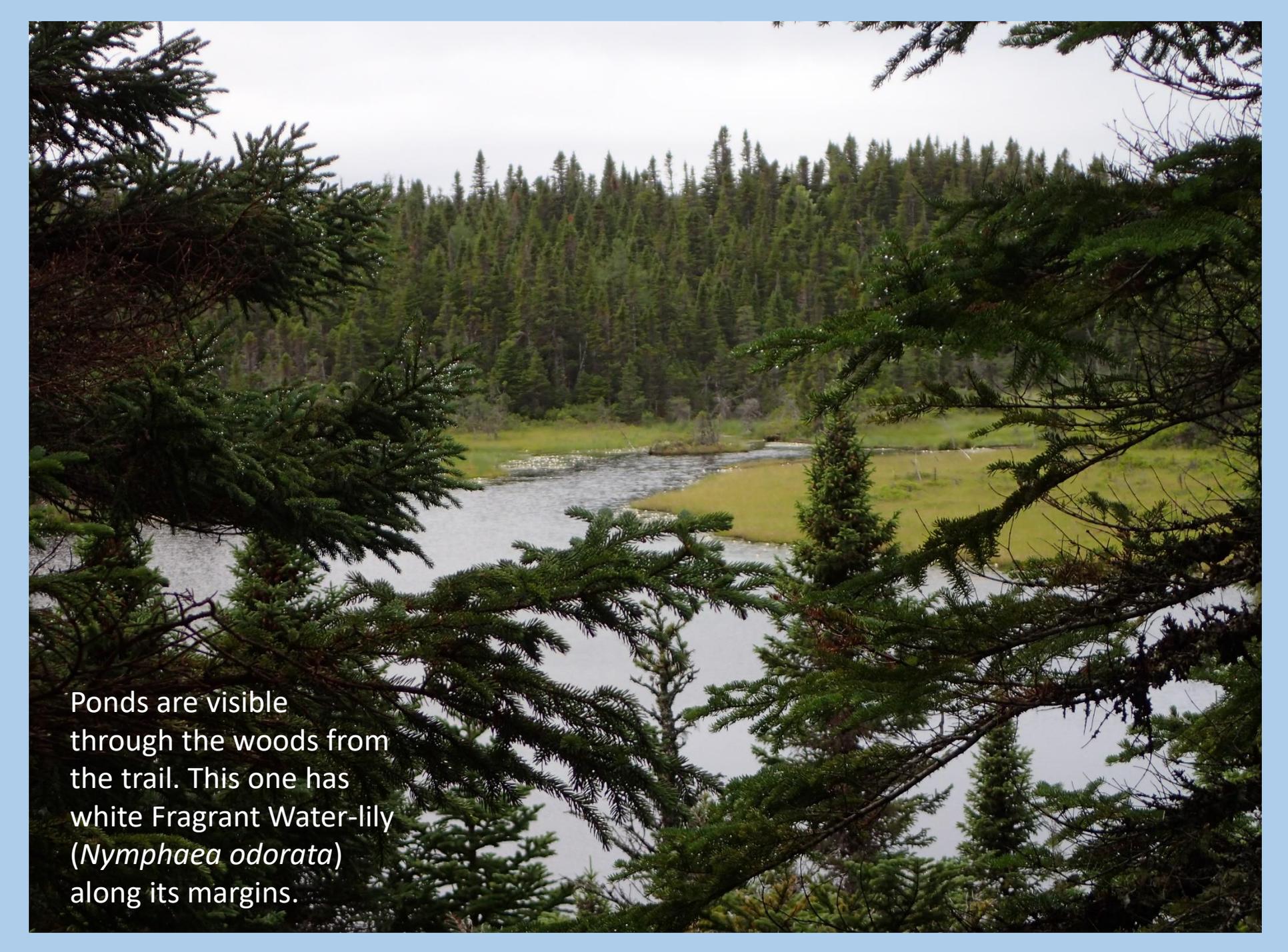


Old Man's Beard Lichens (*Usnea* spp.)
and Horsehair Lichens (*Bryoria* spp.)
festoon conifer branches in sheltered
more humid sites.





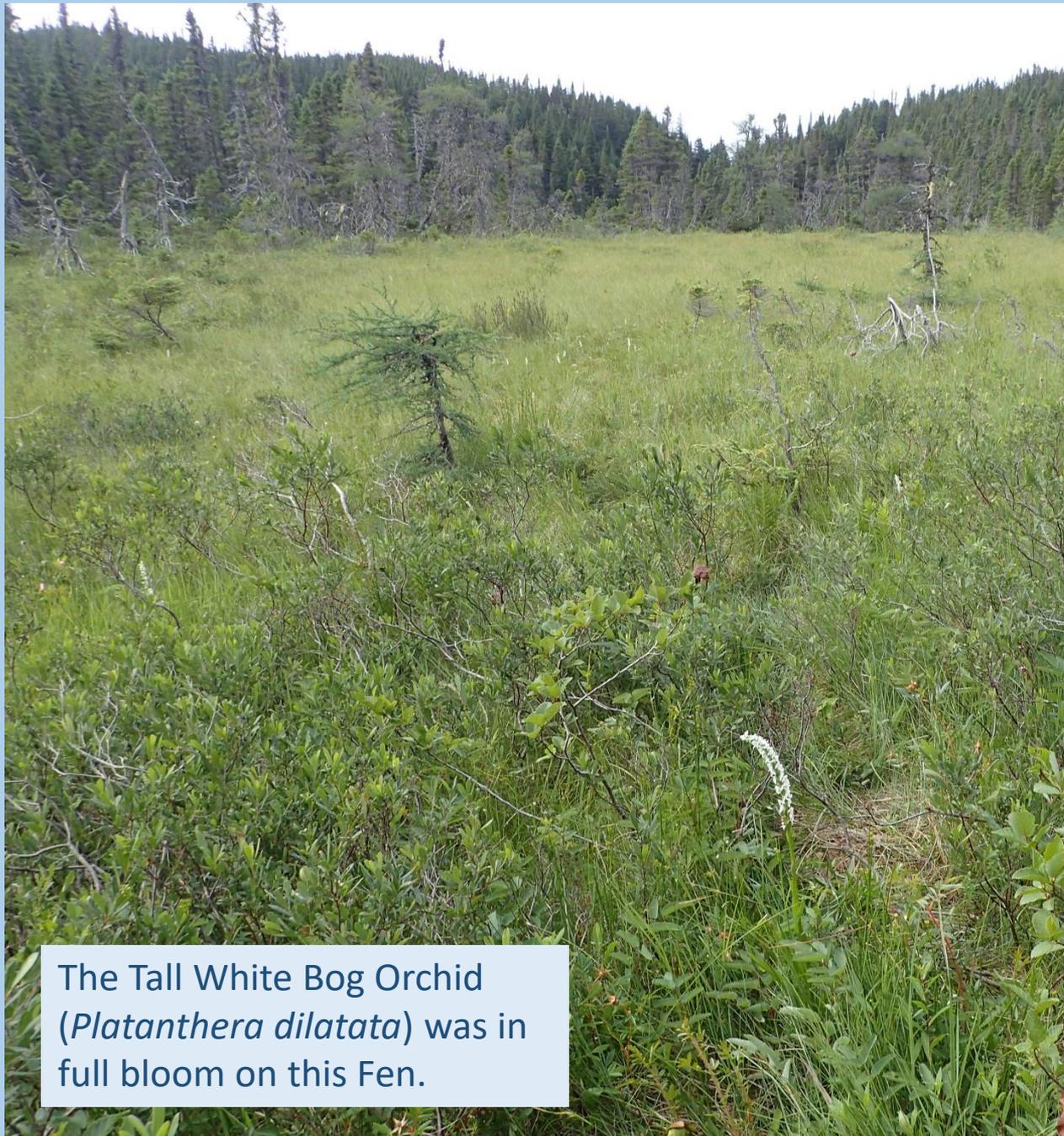
In places the trail is crowded by Sheep Laurel (*Kalmia angustifolia*). When in bloom with its rose-pink flower clusters, this is a colourful sight.



Ponds are visible through the woods from the trail. This one has white Fragrant Water-lily (*Nymphaea odorata*) along its margins.

A trail-side peatland, with the Royal Fern (*Osmunda regalis*) in the foreground.





The Tall White Bog Orchid (*Platanthera dilatata*) was in full bloom on this Fen.





The White Fringed Orchid (*Platanthera blephariglottis*) was also in full bloom on the peatlands.

In moister sites a variety of herbaceous plants blanket the trail sides, including *Cornus canadensis* known as “Crackerberry” in Newfoundland.



A white Pale Beauty
Moth (*Campaea
perlata*) resting on a
Crackerberry plant.





Canada Yew (*Taxus canadensis*) here grows to two meters or more because of the absence of moose on Exploits Island.



Yew is a favorite browse for moose and in much of Newfoundland where moose are plentiful it remains a low shrub.



Shinleaf (*Pyrola elliptica*) is uncommon in moist woodlands, here associated with the Bristly Clubmoss (*Lycopodium annotinum*).





In wetter areas
Sphagnum Moss
patches and sedges
predominate.
Sphagnums are
often a host to a
variety of small
mushrooms



In wet areas the large Cinnamon Fern (*Osmundastrum cinnamomea*) is common. Here the trail is often flanked by alders (*Alnus viridis* and/or *Alnus incana*). Fungal created growths (tongues) can be noted on the female catkins of Speckled Alder (*A. incana*), but Mountain Alder (*A. viridis*) does not get infected. The parasitic fungus is known as *Taphrina robinsoniana*.



From some heights of land
the ocean can be viewed
in the distance.



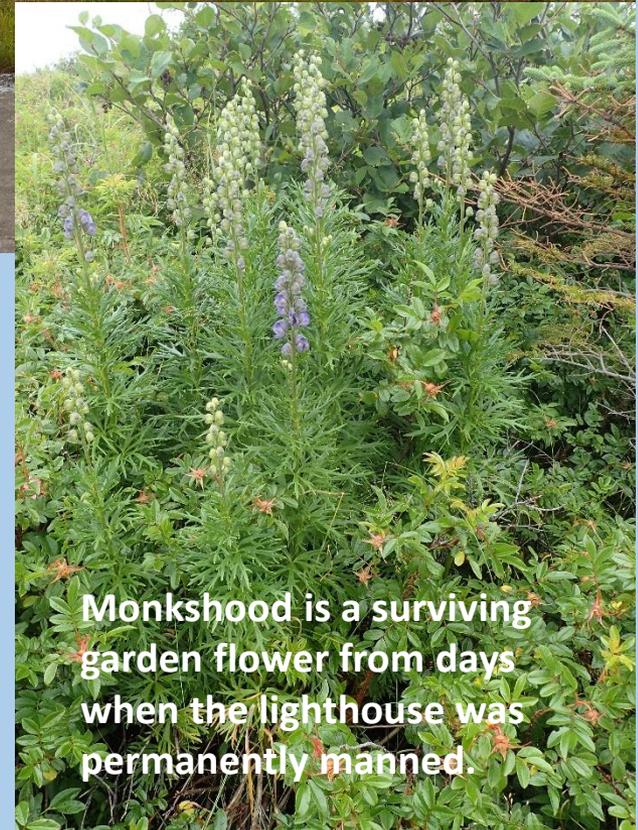


After several kilometers the red lighthouse roof appears through a forest wedge.



The Lighthouse is perched on the edge of a rocky cliff.

The seaside lighthouse deck is an excellent spot to view whales and other ocean activity.



Monkshood is a surviving garden flower from days when the lighthouse was permanently manned.



This Tiger Swallowtail larva (*Papilio glaucus*) sits in a pad of silk atop a Poplar leaf near the lighthouse.

Participants in the brief trail survey of August 1-4, 2018. L-R: Joanne Langdon, Paul Langdon, Bill Iams, Marie Iams, Lois Bateman, Jason Folkes. Missing are mascot dog Bear and photo-taker Henry Mann.





Ocean view of lighthouse on the way home.

