



Canada's Ocean Playground

Established 1867
1st Province

Did You Know?



- *Nova Scotia* is Latin for “New Scotland.” It was named by King James I of England in 1621.
- Since the 1700s, Nova Scotians have been known as Bluenosers. Some say the nickname came from the sailors’ blue mittens, which turned their noses blue when they rubbed them, while others say blue noses are a result of the cold, wet winters. No one knows for sure.
- The unique star-shaped military fort known as the Citadel overlooks Halifax. Today’s Citadel is the last of four forts built in the same place to protect British military interests in North America. This last fort took 28 years to build and was built to guard against an attack by the United States.
- Throughout much of Cape Breton Island, street signs are posted in *Gaelic* (the traditional language of Scotland and Ireland) as well as English. The Gaelic greeting *Ciad Mile Failte*, meaning “One hundred thousand welcomes,” is still used to welcome guests.
- In 1782, the women of Chester saved the town from an American attack by turning their scarlet lined grey capes inside out and carrying brooms. From a distance they appeared to be marching British soldiers. The attackers returned to their ships and left town.
- North America’s first Boy Scout troop was formed in Port Morien in 1908.
- Sable Island, off the southeast coast of Nova Scotia, is known as the Graveyard of the Atlantic. Violent hurricanes and *nor’easters* (storms with northeast winds) have caused more than three hundred recorded shipwrecks on the island. The island is perhaps even more famous because of the 250 to 350 wild horses that live there. No people take care of them or feed them, but the horses have lived there successfully for more than 200 years.
- Canada’s first federal post office opened in Halifax in 1755.
- Halifax’s Chapel of Our Lady of Sorrows is known as the “church built in a day.” On 31 August 1843, two thousand *Haligonians* (residents of Halifax) showed up to help build this church, and they completed construction in 24 hours.
- Cape Breton Island is known for its *ceilidhs*, which are Gaelic concerts and parties, featuring storytellers, fiddlers, pipers, step dancers, and singers. Spontaneous *ceilidhs* are held every week in homes around the island to celebrate Gaelic culture.

Quick Facts



Capital city: Halifax

Population: 949,501

Total Area: 55,284 square kilometres (21,345 sq miles)

Population Density: 17.40 persons per square kilometre (44.80 per sq mile)

The Place



Climate

Even though most of Nova Scotia is surrounded by water, it is attached to the mainland by a narrow *isthmus* (strip of land). Nova Scotia has a *continental* climate, meaning that temperatures are generally warm in the summer and cold in the winter. Average temperatures in the summer hover between 20°C (70°F) and 25°C (80°F). July is the hottest month. The average temperature in January, the coldest month, is -4°C (25°F). The moist air off the Atlantic creates heavy fog in the early summer, particularly around



the Bay of Fundy. It also brings rain and ice storms. The province usually receives about 1,900 millimetres (70 inches) of snow each year.

Average Seasonal High and Low Temperatures

- Spring: 8/-1 °C
- Summer: 28/18 °C
- Fall: 15/5 °C
- Winter: 0/-8 °C

Geography

Nova Scotia is the second-smallest province in Canada, after Prince Edward Island. It's about twice the size of the state of Massachusetts and is shaped like a lobster. The province is connected to New Brunswick and the mainland of Canada by a narrow strip of land called the *Isthmus* of Chignecto. Cape Breton Island is connected to mainland Nova Scotia by the Canso Causeway. You can stand anywhere in the province and never be more than 60 kilometres (37 miles) from the ocean.



A large *plateau* (high, flat area) known as the Atlantic Upland covers more than half of Nova Scotia, stretching from the southern tip north to Cape Breton Island. The northeast is rocky, while the south and southeast are greener. The Northern Highlands include the highest points in the province, while the Annapolis Valley, in the west, is the most important lowland. The high tides of the Bay of Fundy wash the western coast. There are also more than five thousand lakes in the province. The largest of these is Bras d'Or Lake, in Cape Breton Island, which is a saltwater lake that takes up a quarter of the island. *Bras d'Or* is French for "arms of gold."

Wildlife

The majority of the wildlife in Nova Scotia is made up of small animals like foxes, otters, and porcupines. Common larger animals include white-tailed deer, moose, coyote, wildcat, and black bear. The waters around the province are home to seals, lobster, and salmon as well as many waterfowl, such as heron, loon, and duck.



Flora and Fauna

Common Animals

- American mink
- Atlantic whitefish
- Beaver
- Bobcat
- Common loon
- Common snapping turtle
- Double-crested cormorant
- Garter snake
- Harbour seal
- Red fox
- Short-tailed weasel
- Star-nosed mole

Common Plants

- Bluets
- Clintonia
- Coltsfoot
- Dandelion
- Mayflower
- Purple lilac
- Red maple
- Rhodora
- Star-flower
- Tamarack
- Trembling aspen
- Weeping forsythia

Striped skunk
White-tailed deer

Wild strawberry

Endangered Animals

American marten
Atlantic whitefish
Blanding’s turtle
Canada lynx
Harlequin duck
Moose
Piping plover
Roseate Tern

Endangered Plants

Eastern mountain avens
Eastern white cedar
Lileopsis quillwort
Pink coreopsis
Plymouth gentian
Prototype quillwort
Thread-leaved sundew
Water pennywort

Environmental Issues

Acid Rain

Acid rain pollutes Nova Scotia’s land and waterways. Acid rain forms when air pollution is carried by winds to Nova Scotia. These pollutants become part of the rain and fall on the land and water, killing fish and plants and damaging *ecosystems* (communities of living organisms and non-living elements of an environment that work together as a system). Nova Scotia has several areas with this problem, particularly the southwestern region. It is difficult to find solutions to the problem because many of the sources of the air pollution are coming from the United States and other parts of Canada. Coal-burning plants cause a large portion of the air pollution that is carried into Nova Scotia. Over the last few decades, acid rain in Canada has been reduced, but rivers, lakes, and forests have not recovered as quickly as planned.



Recycling

Nova Scotia is one of the leading provinces for recycling in Canada. There are many programs to help people get rid of recyclable waste properly. Several products are outlawed from Nova Scotian landfills, including newspapers, food and drink containers, and *organic waste* (waste that comes from plant or animal sources). These products are either picked up at the curbside by trucks or must be delivered to certain locations for recycling. To return some products, including tires, people pay a fee, which helps pay for the recycling system. The government set up a non-profit organization to fund many of the costs of recycling, which makes the system more affordable for Nova Scotians. Many landfills were closed because of the waste reduction. Nova Scotia is still working to maintain these efforts and educate the public, and the province remains one of the most efficient and effective recyclers in the nation.



Resources and Industries

Agriculture

The Annapolis Valley is the main growing region in the province. Livestock and livestock feed are important products. Chickens, cows, and pigs are all raised in the area, along with enough hay to feed them all. Dairy farming takes up a quarter of the total farm production. Nova Scotia is also known for its apples and its blueberries. The province is responsible for nearly half of Canada's blueberries, with Oxford, Nova Scotia, known as the wild blueberry capital of Canada. Nova Scotia is also an important producer of maple syrup, which is sold across Canada and to the United States.



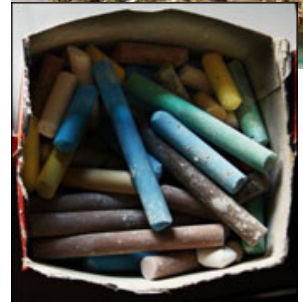
Manufacturing

Nova Scotia's main manufacturing industries are food processing, pulp, paper production, and shipbuilding. All kinds of seafood as well as the livestock raised in the province are all processed in plants. Trees harvested in Nova Scotia's forests are processed and made into paper, pulp, and furniture.



Mining

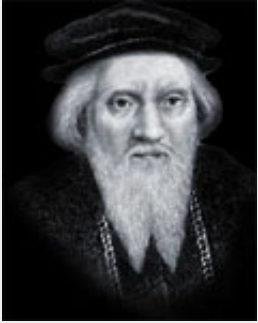
Nova Scotia is Canada's leading producer of *gypsum*—a very soft mineral that is used to make blackboard chalk, plaster casts, and drywall. Most of Nova Scotia's *gypsum* is sold to the United States. Coal used to be the main mineral mined in the province, but because it is so expensive to dig out, all the coal mines have now closed. Nova Scotia also produces sand, cement, and clay, as well as small amounts of gold.



History



Time Line

Native peoples live in what is now Nova Scotia for thousands of years	
AD 1400	
AD 1497	Italian explorer and navigator John Cabot lands on Cape Breton Island
	
1500	

1534 Explorer Jacques Cartier claims Acadia for France



1600

1605 The first European settlement is established at Port Royal

1700

1713 The Treaty of Utrecht gives Acadia to Britain

1749 Halifax is founded



1751 Canada's first printing press opens and begins printing the *Halifax Gazette*



1755 The British force the Acadians to leave Nova Scotia



1783 *Loyalists* (Americans loyal to the British) arrive in Shelbourne

1784 Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Cape Breton Island all become separate colonies

1800

1820 Cape Breton Island becomes part of Nova Scotia



1834 The Eskasoni reserve is established on Cape Breton Island

1848 Nova Scotia becomes the first of Britain's worldwide colonies to gain the right to self-government

1867 Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Ontario, and Quebec join in the Confederation to become the Dominion of Canada



1900

1901 The first official transatlantic message is sent from Glace Bay to Cornwall, England

1917 Much of Halifax is destroyed in the Halifax Explosion when two ships collide in the harbour


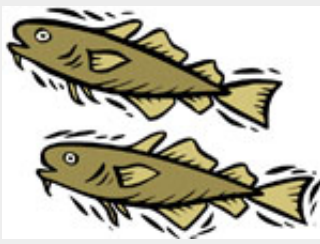


1918 Women gain the right to vote in Nova Scotia

1925 Workers from the Cape Breton mines begin a five-month strike

1936 The Moose River gold mine collapses, trapping three men underground for eleven days

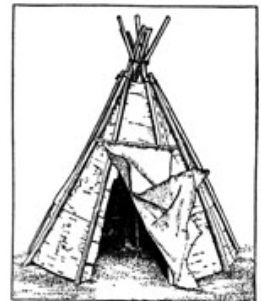
1958 Seventy-four men die in the Springhill mining disaster

1981	French is officially recognized as a language of instruction	
1994	Cod fishing is outlawed in the province due to overfishing having killed off most of the province's cod	
1999	The Mi'kmaq Education Act is made federal law, giving Mi'kmaq communities the responsibility for their children's education	
2000		
2008	Nova Scotia becomes the first province to outlaw smoking in cars with anyone under 19 in the vehicle; the province launches a \$400 million project to clean up Halifax Harbour	
2011	Scientists find signs of growth in the cod population after 20 years of decline	

PRESENT

The Mi'kmaq

Native peoples lived in what is now Nova Scotia for thousands of years before European settlers came. The Mi'kmaq are the descendants of these original inhabitants. The name Mi'kmaq comes from their word *nikmaq*, which means "my kin-friends." They were a peaceful people who moved with the changing of the seasons. In springtime, they settled along the coast and fished for food. In fall and winter, they moved farther inland to hunt caribou and moose. They also gathered many different kinds of berries and roots, with which they made medicines. The Mi'kmaq built canoes and *wigwams* (cone-shaped homes covered in animal skins) out of birch trees and bark. They also decorated their clothes and belongings with porcupine quills, which they dyed bright colors. This was the lifestyle of the Mi'kmaq people when the first European explorers arrived.



Cabot and Cartier

John Cabot was an Italian explorer working for the king of England. On a voyage that he thought would take him to China, Cabot landed in North America and sailed to Cape Breton Island in 1497. Cabot claimed the entire land for England. He returned home with stories of waters full of so many fish that you could reach out your hand and catch one. Fishermen quickly started sailing for Nova Scotia to try their nets in this new territory. Upon arriving, they met the Mi'kmaq people and began trading metal tools and cloth for fur.



In 1534, Jacques Cartier explored the area and claimed all of it for France. French fishermen poured in as well, and they also set up a busy fishing and shipping business. The French got along well with the Mi'kmaq, and the two groups worked together often.

The Mi'kmaq taught the newcomers how to build canoes and snowshoes and survive in the cold weather. However, England and France were both more interested in the fish and fur the land could provide than in the land itself. So neither country set up a permanent settlement, and for a while they worked side by side without many problems. The French fishermen named the region *L'Acadie*, or Acadia.

L'Acadie

The name *Acadia* probably came originally from the Mi'kmaq word *quoddy*, or *cady*, which means "pleasant piece of land." The French king decided he wanted to settle this pleasant piece of land and sent French nobleman Pierre du Gua to establish a settlement. After a first attempt failed, du Gua established Port Royal in 1605. However, in 1613, English settlers from Virginia attacked and destroyed the small settlement. In 1621, the king of England sent Sir William Alexander to settle Acadia. The English renamed the land Nova Scotia. Both England and France fought for control over the region, and the land went back and forth several times. The *Acadians* (descendants of the original French settlers) who lived there did not care who owned the land as long as they were left in peace.

Finally, in 1713, England gained control of Acadia and threatened to force the *Acadians* to leave if they did not join forces with the British against France, but the *Acadians* refused to take sides. So in 1755, the British governor ordered his soldiers to force the *Acadians* to leave. The soldiers burned their homes and fields, loading the *Acadians* from Nova Scotia and New Brunswick on ships bound for the North American colonies. Many of them died on the way. Governor Lawrence gave their land away to settlers from New England. *Acadians* refer to this time as the *Grand Dérangement*, or the Great Upheaval. It wasn't until 1775 that some *Acadians* were able to return to Nova Scotia.



Responsible Government

After the War of 1812, thousands of immigrants poured into the colony. The majority of these were Irish and Scottish. The Irish tended to stay in Halifax, while many of the Scottish settled in the northeast and on Cape Breton Island. Industry was on the rise, and as the colony continued to grow, many Nova Scotians wanted more control over their government.

In the mid-1800s, a group of reformers led by Joseph Howe began the peaceful fight for responsible government. A responsible government would answer directly to the people rather than to the faraway British parliament. The people would elect representatives to make the decisions and pass laws that affect their lives. In the 1847 elections, reformers won the majority of seats in the colonial government, and in 1848, Howe achieved his goal. Nova Scotia became the first colony in the British Empire to gain responsible government and the right to control its own affairs.



The Halifax Explosion

Nova Scotia was one of four provinces that joined together to form the Dominion of Canada in 1867, and Nova Scotians set about helping build the new nation. Railroads and mines sprang up throughout the province. With the outbreak of World War I, there was more demand than ever for Nova Scotia's coal and steel resources. Halifax Harbour was a centre of ship activity during the war.

On the morning of 6 December 1917, two ships crashed into each other in the busy harbour. The French ship, the *Mont Blanc*, was carrying explosives meant for the war

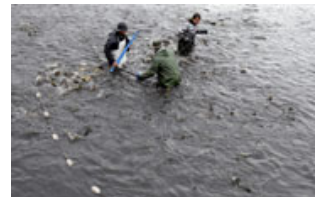


effort and immediately burst into flames after hitting the Belgian relief steamer, the *Imo*. Billows of black smoke filled the sky, and the French crew jumped overboard. But the abandoned ship continued to sail up to the shore. The French sailors tried to warn the people on the shore, but they only spoke French and no one understood them. The flames lit the pier on fire, and 20 minutes after the two ships collided, the *Mont Blanc* exploded, engulfing everything in its surroundings. Pieces of the ship landed as far as 5 kilometres (3 miles) away, while windows shattered in homes up to 100 kilometres (62 miles) away. The explosion also caused a huge *tsunami* (series of waves), which lifted the *Imo* up on the shore. The north section of Halifax was completely destroyed. Two thousand people were killed, and another nine thousand were injured. The Halifax Explosion was the largest man-made explosion the world had ever seen at that point in time.

The Future of Fish

The fishing industry ruled the economy of Nova Scotia for hundreds of years. But in the late 1980s, the numbers of fish in provincial waters, particularly cod, dropped greatly. Some people blamed it on overfishing; others claimed seals were eating much of the supply. Whatever the cause, soon many Nova Scotians whose families had been fishing for a living for generations were out of jobs.

In 1994, the government outlawed all cod fishing in the hopes that it would give the cod time to reproduce and multiply. Some fishermen turned to catching other seafood such as lobsters, mussels, and scallops. But many people left the province looking for work elsewhere in Canada. Nova Scotians are trying to deal with their economic problems by developing their tourism industry, emphasizing the province's many festivals and folk events, and developing the technology and service industries. The government is also developing *aquaculture*, or fish farming, where the fish are grown in underwater tanks or cages and raised for food.



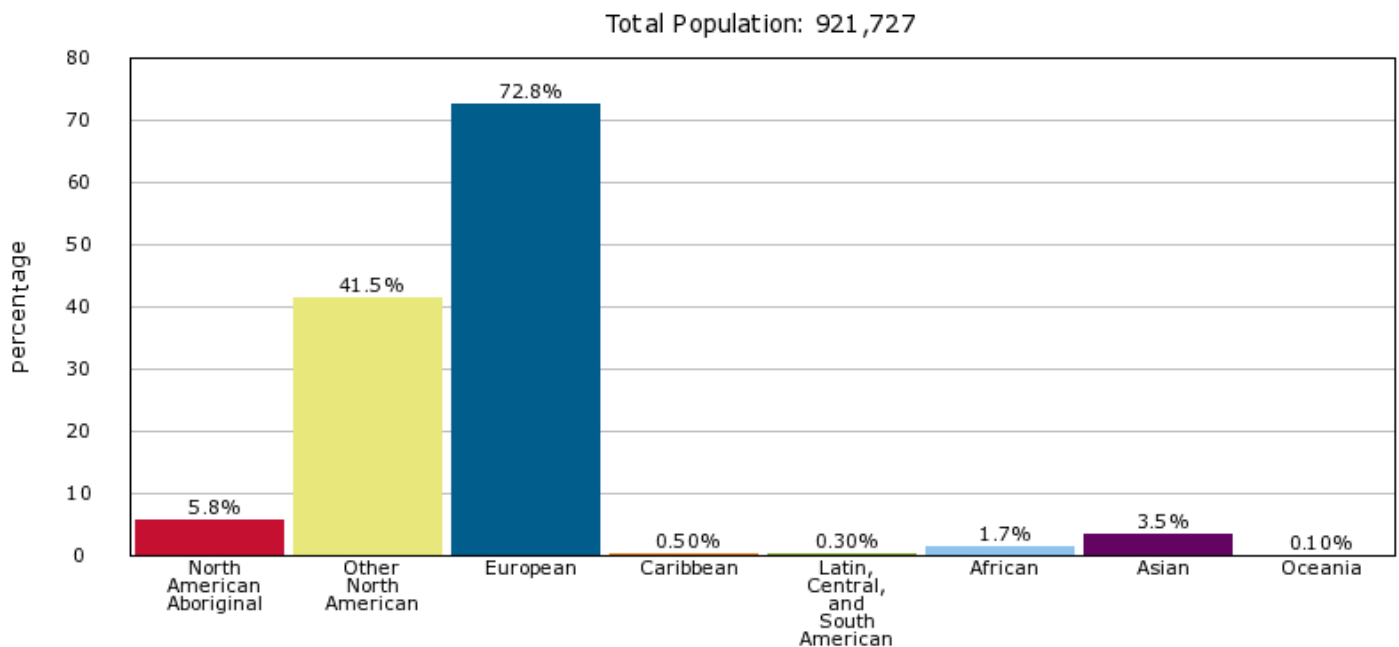
The People



Population

The majority of Nova Scotians live along the coast or in the valleys. Much of the population is of British ancestry, and one-third of those are Scottish. As a result, *Gaelic* (the traditional language of Scotland and Ireland) is still spoken in some places in the province, particularly by Capers—the residents of Cape Breton Island. Nova Scotia is also home to the oldest and largest African Canadian population in the country. Many of their ancestors came from the American colonies during and after the Revolutionary War and the War of 1812 to escape slavery.

There are several thousand First Nations peoples in Nova Scotia. The Mi'kmaq people are the main group, while smaller groups include the Inuit and *Métis* (descendants of early European settlers and native Canadians).



Canadians may belong to more than one group. Totals may not equal 100%.

Government

Federal

Senators: 10

- Liberals: 2
- Conservatives: 4
- Unaffiliated: 2
- Vacancies: 2

Members of Parliament: 11

- Liberals: 11



In Canada, members of Parliament are elected from across the country. The leader of the party that wins the most seats in the House of Commons becomes the prime minister. The prime minister is the head of government in Canada. The monarch (today, Queen Elizabeth II of the United Kingdom) is leader in name only. She appoints a governor-general to be her representative in Canada. The role of this governor-general is largely ceremonial. In Canada, there are two separate lawmaking bodies, the House of Commons, which is made up of elected members, and the Senate, whose members are appointed by the governor-general under the advice of the prime minister. The House of Commons debates and votes on *bills* (proposed laws). The Senate carefully examines the *bills* and decides whether to approve, change, or reject them. For a *bill* to become law, it must be passed by both the House of Commons and the Senate and be given royal *assent* (approval) by the governor-general.

Provincial

Capital: Halifax, population 390,096

Province Abbreviation: NS

Premier: Stephen McNeil (Liberal)

Lieutenant-Governor: John James Grant

Members of the Legislative Assembly: 51

Female MLAs: 15

The lieutenant-governor of Nova Scotia represents the monarch (queen of the United Kingdom) and calls on the leader of the party with the most votes to be the premier. The premier chooses the members of the cabinet from the elected members of the Legislative Assembly, who represent voters. These members are then appointed by the lieutenant-governor. Each is placed in charge of a department such as education, health, or aboriginal affairs. The cabinet members advise the premier, while the Legislative Assembly makes the laws.

Key Issues

Education

The Nova Scotia Department of Education has a program to help students find work after graduation. As a part of the program, businesses are encouraged to hire young graduates. The government helps to match students with employers. The Department of Education maintains a database that holds information about different employers. School officials can use that information to match students with employers. With 11 universities, Nova Scotia has more universities *per capita* (per person) than just about any other province in Canada. It is also home to the Nova Scotia Community College, which has 13 campuses located around the province.



Sunday Shopping

All Nova Scotia stores are allowed to open on Sundays, but for many years a law was in place that kept large stores from opening on Sundays. In fact, Nova Scotia was the only province to outlaw Sunday shopping completely. There are still opinions both for and against Sunday business hours in Nova Scotia. Small businesses fear that if large businesses are open seven days a week, the competition will be too great and small business owners will have to close their doors. Some business owners also believe that it is harder to find people who are willing to work Sundays. But the extended store hours help solve other problems, like cross-border shopping. Some Nova Scotians used to cross over into other provinces to buy products on Sunday because the stores in Nova Scotia were closed.

BUSINESS HOURS:		
Mon.	to	
Tues.	to	
Wed.	to	
Thur.	to	
Fri.	to	
Sat.	to	
Sun.	to	

First Nations, Métis, and Aboriginal Peoples

There are 13 different Mi'kmaq *reserves* (land set aside by the government for aboriginals to live on) in Nova Scotia, covering a total of 11,000 hectares (27,000 acres) of land. About one quarter of the First Nations population lives on *reserves*. Some of these communities run their own schools on the *reserves* and teach their children the Mi'kmaq language as well as their long history, heritage, and culture.



In 1999, the federal government approved the Mi'kmaq Education Act, which gave Mi'kmaq communities control over and responsibility for the education of their children.

Since the passing of this act, *reserve* schools have taken many steps toward improving education for their children. Many native children feel more confident and comfortable when they have teachers who understand their experiences and who want to help them preserve their heritage.

Famous People



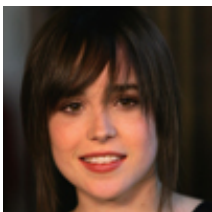
Sarah McLachlan

- *Joseph Howe* – Fourth premier of Nova Scotia (pre-Confederation)
- *Sarah McLachlan* – Singer
- *Abraham Gesner* – Discoverer of kerosene
- *Edna Lockhart* – Professional baseball player
- *Membertou* – Mi'kmaq chief
- *Andrew Cochran* – Creator of *Theodore Tugboat*



Robert MacNeil

- *John Thompson* – Fourth prime minister of Canada
- *Anne Murray* – Singer
- *Sidney Crosby* – National Hockey League player
- *Rita Joe* – Mi'kmaq poet
- *Charles Tupper* – Sixth prime minister of Canada
- *Ellen Page* – Actress



Ellen Page

- *Robert MacNeil* – Television anchorman
- *Holly Cole* – Musician
- *Robert Borden* – Eighth prime minister of Canada
- *Al MacInnis* – National Hockey League player
- *Ashley MacLissac* – World famous fiddler

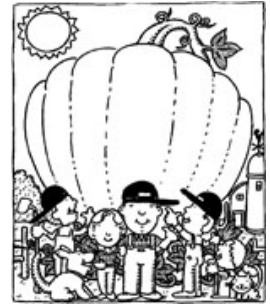


Al MacInnis

- *Frank Sobey* – Founder of national grocery store chain Sobeys

Dill's Giant Pumpkins

Windsor, Nova Scotia, is known as the Pumpkin Capital of the World. Around 20 years ago, Howard Dill began growing a new variety of pumpkin—the Atlantic Giant. Dill's giant pumpkins are the largest in the world, some weighing in at more than 680 kilograms (1,500 pounds)! The town began holding an annual pumpkin festival and weigh-off in the month of October. In 1999, festival organizers started the Annual Pumpkin Regatta. Contestants work in teams to hollow out the insides of their giant pumpkins, decorate them, climb inside, and then race them across Lake Pesaquid. The first pumpkin-paddler to cross the 500 metre (550 yard) distance wins.



The Mystery Money Pit of Oak Island

In 1795, 16-year-old Daniel McGinnis went fishing on Oak Island. He came across an area of ground that looked like it had been dug up and patted down again. Next to it was a tree with strange scratches on it, like someone had attached a pulley to it in order to lower something deep into the ground. Convinced he had found a pirate's buried treasure, Daniel brought two friends back to the spot to help him dig. The boys hit a layer of flat stones followed by a layer of packed logs every 3 metres (10 feet) down, but they didn't have the tools to dig past 10 metres (30 feet).



They returned nine years later, supported by a local businessman. At 27 metres (90 feet) they discovered a stone with strange symbols carved on it. They were unable to interpret the symbols, and flooding forced them to abandon the shaft. Over the next two hundred years, a series of treasure hunters continued to dig for treasure. Though several people have been killed in the process and no treasure has ever been found, the Oak Island Money Pit remains the longest-running treasure hunt in the world.

Fun Facts & Contacts

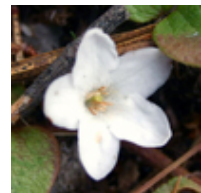


Official Emblems

Provincial Flower

Mayflower

This flower blooms in the early spring after making it through the long, cold winter months. It is a symbol of survival and overcoming adversity.



Provincial Bird

Osprey

This bird of prey builds large nests at the top of dead trees. It lives near the sea and eats fish. It dives feet first toward the fish and grasps it in its talons before carrying it off.



Provincial Tree

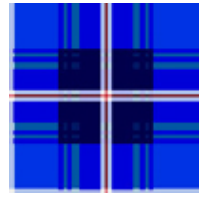
Red Spruce

This tree grows to be about 25 metres (80 feet) tall and can live in both rocky and marshy soil. It represents the strength of Nova Scotians.



Provincial Tartan

Nova Scotia's tartan is the oldest in Canada. It was adopted in 1956. The blue and white represent the ocean and its white-capped waves. The greens stand for the forests of the province. The red comes from the royal lion, which is a symbol of royalty in Scotland, and the gold symbolizes the province's historic Royal Charter. Cape Breton Island, while part of Nova Scotia, has its own tartan that reflects its Scottish culture.



Provincial Coat of Arms

Nova Scotia's coat of arms is the oldest in Canada, having been granted to the colony by King Charles I in 1625. The royal lion of Scotland is superimposed over a blue cross on a white field, a reversal of the Scottish flag. The laurel branch represents peace, and the thistle stands for Scotland. The royal unicorn and the *aboriginal* (native) symbolize the province's dual cultures. The mayflowers are the official flower of the province.



Major League Sports Teams

There are currently no Major League sports teams in Nova Scotia.

For More Information

To learn more about Nova Scotia, see www.novascotia.ca. Or contact the Nova Scotia Tourism Agency, PO Box 667, 8 Water Street, Windsor, NS, B0N 2T0; phone (800) 565-0000; web site www.novascotia.com.

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Nova Scotia

EXTREMES

Highest: White Hill, in the Cape Breton Highlands, stands at 532 metres (1,745 ft).

Hottest: At Collegeville, the temperature reached 38.3°C (101°F) on 19 August 1935.

Coldest: On 31 Jan 1920, temperatures dropped to -41.1°C (-42°F) at Upper Stewiacke.

Lowest: Sea level, at the Atlantic Ocean, is the province's lowest elevation.

