

Coal Age Galápagos: Launching the Geoheritage Initiative

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The launch of a new book on the Joggins Fossil Cliffs World Heritage Site marks a milestone for the Geoheritage program, a new, core component of geoscience work at the Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources. The fundamental underpinning of the concept of geoheritage, and a key component of the Natural Resources strategy for Nova Scotia, is the growing desire for knowledge of the earth which sustains us, and to make the work of geoscientists more accessible to our fellow citizens. The role that geoscientists at NSDNR played in the designation of the Joggins Fossil Cliffs as a UNESCO World Heritage Site stands as a model of collaborative leadership. Sharing the research and knowledge that was required to achieve that goal is the aim of a new book, *Coal Age Galápagos: The Story of the Joggins Fossil Cliffs*. The book will meet a need already demonstrated by strong sales of the official UNESCO nomination book at the Joggins Fossil Centre.

The pages of the book take us on a journey that explores just why Joggins has long been revered as one of the Earth's great geologic sites, and in particular, why it was acclaimed as a World Heritage Site. It also tells how geoscientists have helped to shape our understanding of the world. Topics range from the role that geologists like Dawson, Lyell and Logan played at Joggins, to the place of Joggins in the *Origin of Species* and the significance of the earliest reptile *Hylonomus lyelli* (Nova Scotia's provincial fossil) in the 'tree of life'. The book touches on broader topics as well, including the people of Joggins and the role that coal mining played in the history of the community.

Like geology itself, the book is highly visual and reflects the close collaboration between author and graphic designer Kathy Kaulbach of Touchstone Design. The topics and first draft of what would become *Coal Age Galápagos* had their beginning as a source book written for the use of Design + Communications, the innovative Montreal-based company that was tasked with developing the interpretive component of the Joggins Fossil Centre. The design of the centre and the writing of the nomination were done simultaneously, and one informed the other – a symbiosis reflected in the book. *Coal Age Galápagos: The Story of the Joggins Fossil Cliffs*, is scheduled to be published in early 2012.

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