

**THE OTTAWA FIELD NATURALISTS' CLUB  
MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING**

**March 18, 2013**

Fletcher Wildlife Garden Interpretation Centre, CEF, Ottawa, 7:00 p.m.

**Chair:** Fenja Brodo

**Council Members Present:** Annie Bélair, Barbara Chouinard, Owen Clarkin, Barry Cottam, Ian Davidson, Don Hackett, David Hobden, Diane Lepage, Ann MacKenzie, Lynn Ovenden, Rémy Poulin, Jeff Skevington, Henry Steger, Eleanor Zurbrigg

**Council Members Absent:** Dan Brunton, Caroline Callaghan, Diane Kitching, Karen McLachlan Hamilton, Ken Young

**1. Minutes of the February 18, 2013 meeting**

Rémy pointed out that Annex 1 is not the invitation to find volunteers for the bird tours during the BirdLife World Congress in June 2013, but the initial draft proposal to Nature Canada on how to organize the tours. Annie will correct the minutes.

**Moved by** A. Bélair/H. Steger that the  
February 18 minutes be accepted with this modification.

**Carried**

**2. Citations for the 2012 OFNC Awards**

All but one of the 2012 award citations were distributed by email prior to this Council meeting; the last one will be sent around shortly.

**ACTION:** All to send comments to Eleanor by March 22.

Lynn announced that a member of the Education and Publicity Committee will prepare a press release for these awards; Council agreed that this was an excellent idea.

**3. Message to the Public from the OFNC on the Issue of Owl Baiting**

Owl baiting has become a real concern for some members of the Birds Committee. Chris Traynor sent an email asking us to post on our website that baiting owls is illegal according to the Canadian Criminal Code, 445. Dan Brunton replied by email that the OFNC should rather focus on education and awareness and proposed a few lines of text to be posted instead, avoiding mention of the Criminal Code. Council agreed with Dan's suggestion, but felt that the proposed text was too long.

**ACTIONS:** Henry to shorten Dan's text and share with Council for comments.  
Council to ask Sandy Garland to post the amended text, once it is accepted by Council, on the OFNC's website.

Other points that were mentioned by Council members are that it should be called 'feeding' instead of 'baiting' and that feeding the owls too close to roads is the main cause for concern.

**4. Conservation Committee** O. Clarkin

**a. Cats and Bird Mortality**

Because of the increasing awareness of bird mortality due to cats and its potential conservation concerns, and because the Conservation Committee felt the OFNC should take a position on the matter, Owen presented results from studies published in 2004 and 2013.

These studies show that cats (free-roaming housecats, feral cats and feral cats being taken care of) kill billions of birds, mammals, amphibians and reptiles every year in the U.S. Owen highlighted that past or potential impacts on populations cannot be ignored. Council supported Owen's recommendation to publish suggestions on how to help reduce the impacts of cats on fauna.

**ACTION:** Owen to write an article for T&L on this issue, along with suggestions on how to help, and to include links to the studies.

**b. Monarch Butterflies**

A study released on March 13 shows that Monarch Butterfly numbers were the lowest \*ever\* in Mexico this year, way beyond their normal fluctuation. Severe drought, the continuing loss of milkweed due to herbicides and the spread of Dog-Strangling Vine are all factors that were mentioned as probable causes. Owen said that the role of the OFNC in this case is still education and awareness. Diane L. added that the FWG volunteers are working on planting more milkweed in the FWG Monarch Waystation.

**5. Education and Publicity Committee Report L. Ovenden**

- a. The Education & Publicity Committee met on February 7 and will meet again on April 4.
- b. They have responded to one request for information and two requests for a talk (Lord Lansdowne Retirement Residence, Friendship Force group from New Zealand).
- c. They will bring an OFNC display to the April 13 event at Brewer Park celebrating National Wildlife Week and to Andrew Haydon Park on May 12 during the International Migratory Bird weekend.
- d. As a part of the package to increase club awareness, the committee is proposing to design and print a new OFNC bookmark at estimated cost of \$500-700 for 5000 copies. Council agreed with the idea; Henry pointed out that it would be very useful to measure if the bookmarks are successful in attracting new members.

**MOTION:** That Council approves the expense of up to 800\$ by the Education and Publicity Committee to print 5000 bookmarks.

**Moved by** L. Ovenden/D. Lepage

**SUB-MOTION:** That Council overrides the usual procedure to wait until the next Council meeting to vote on this expense as it was not approved as part of the budgeting process, in order for these bookmarks to be available for activities during International Migratory Bird Day weekend (May 11-12, 2013).

**Moved by** B. Cottam/O. Clarkin

**CARRIED**

**MOTION ABOVE: CARRIED**

**6. Excursions and Lectures Committee**

- a. Jeff noted that the Excursions and Lectures Committee would like to hear suggestions from all OFNC committees for field trips and talks.
- b. The question of charging a fee for workshops was brought up. Council agreed that it would change the flavour of the workshops offered by the OFNC to its

members and dismissed the idea.

### **7. Adding “OFNC” to the FWG signs on Prince of Wales**

Ann distributed a mock-up of the proposed sign designed by Mark Brenchley: it would include “Ottawa Field-Naturalists’ Club” and “Club des naturalistes d’Ottawa”, the OFNC logo, and a reference to the website. Because it will be attached to the FWG at the entrance off Prince of Wales, it has to be bilingual on both sides. Council insisted on including “ofnc.ca” on both sides as well, and proposed a solution to have all elements appear on each side, contrary to what the mock-up showed.

**MOTION:** That Council approves the expense of 240\$ plus tax as quoted and request that Mark proceeds with the design and installation of a bilingual sign with the Club’s website address.

**Moved by** A. MacKenzie/J. Skevington

**CARRIED**

### **8. Method of Allocating Interest to the Externally Restricted Funds**

Prior to the meeting, the Finance Committee distributed a proposal to change the method of allocating interest to externally restricted funds. (See [Annex 1.](#)) They also need to contact the Camfield family and get their concurrence on the record.

**MOTION:** That Council agrees with the Finance Committee’s proposal stating that in future fiscal years, interest that is allocated to funds will be calculated based on the percentage that fund is of the total funds available for investing at the beginning of the fiscal year, if the Camfield family agrees.

**Moved by** B. Chouinard/A. MacKenzie

**CARRIED**

### **9. Bird Column in the Ottawa Citizen**

As Elizabeth Le Geyt will be stepping from her position as the bird columnist for the Ottawa Citizen, Andrew Potter, managing editor of the Ottawa Citizen, contacted the OFNC and asked for suggestions for a replacement. Council agreed that this is an excellent opportunity to promote the OFNC and perhaps move to a naturalist’s column instead of just focussing on birds.

The best candidate so far is Bruce Di Labio, but Council suggested that a small group of guest writers could be established to help when Bruce is too busy or out of town.

**ACTIONS:** Fenja to contact Bruce Di Labio; Council to examine options.

Fenja to contact Andrew Potter at the Citizen when ready.

### **10. BirdLife World Congress, Ottawa, June 2013**

The proposal submitted to Nature Canada on how to organize the Birding Trips in support of the BirdLife World Congress was accepted (see [Annex 2.](#)) Detailed planning is underway. A number of OFNC members have expressed an interest in volunteering to support the World Congress. Their names and contact info will be forwarded to Nature Canada so that they can be contacted directly.

### **11. Motion to adjourn:**

**Moved by** D. Lepage/D. Hobden that the meeting be adjourned at 9:25 p.m.

**CARRIED**

Recording Secretary: A. Bélair

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Meetings in 2013:

April 15

May 13

June 17

September 16

October 21

November 18

December 16

**Allocating Interest to Funds  
February 22, 2013**

Proposal: When interest is allocated to specific funds (either internally or externally restricted) the interest will be allocated based on the opening book value of the fund at the beginning of the fiscal year as a percentage of the total fund balances shown on the balance sheet for the end of the previous fiscal year (opening value).

Background Information:

The OFNC manages its fixed income investments based on a laddered approach. This means, that to the extent possible, the amounts and maturity dates are spread among the years. Each year the maturing investments are reinvested to obtain the greatest yield keeping the ladder in mind. This approach avoids major swings in interest rates and a more stable investment program.

Currently, in the financial statements of the OFNC, two funds are allocated interest. The Manning Fund is internally restricted and the interest on the principal is designated for waiving author charges for CFN.

Instrument method: To date the practice has been to loosely assign an investment instrument to the Manning fund and allocate the interest from this investment to the fund. The matching has never been precise because the fund increases with interest allocations and decreases from waived charges (author support). Investment instruments are bought and sold in larger denominations. However, this same practice was adopted with the start of the Camfield fund.

The problems with assigning a particular investment to a particular fund are:

1. There is not an exact matching of fund principle and investment principle
2. The fund cannot take advantage of our laddering approach to smooth out the ups and down of the market.
3. It is difficult to manage and track.

Percentage Method: Now that the new accounting rules permit us to record investments at their book or nominal value it is easier to calculate the value of a fund as a percentage of the value of our investments. Once we have calculated the total interest earned on all our investments we can allocate a percentage of that interest to a particular fund determined by its percentage of the total book value of all funds. We need to use the value of a fund at the beginning of the fiscal year because money received is not always invested immediately and calculating for money coming in and out over the course of a year would become very complex.

**Examples:**

Total value of funds - Sept 30, 2011    \$ 545,060  
Manning fund beginning of year        \$ 120,322 (22.08%)  
Camfield fund beginning of year        \$ 35,268 ( 6.47%)

Total interest earned in 2012 fiscal year - \$ 19,260

Interest allocations - Instrument method / Percentage method

Manning            \$ 3,970 / \$ 4,252

Camfield           \$ 1,263 / \$ 1,246

Note: the financial statements show more for Manning to correct for a previous error.

## **A Proposal for Birding Trips in support of BirdLife World Congress 2013**

### **Constraints:**

- At least one birding site on each side of the Ottawa River.
- At least one birding site within the Lac Deschênes Important Bird Area.
- Trips must be scheduled for the morning hours prior to the start of the daily scheduled activities for the conference.
- Birding sites must be no further than about a thirty minute drive from the Ottawa Convention Centre.

### **Assumptions:**

- Total number of participants will be limited to approximately 60.
- Participants will pre-register for the trips.
- Total of three birding sites will be selected representing three different habitats.
- Trips will be scheduled to all three locations on three successive mornings (19 to 21 Jun 2013 inclusive).
- Nature Canada will organize transportation consisting of three minibuses (seating for about 25 each) to and from the birding sites.
- OFNC will organize leaders for birding sites on the Ontario side and the COO will do the same for birding sites on the Québec side.
- Each group will have one designated leader supported by at least one assistant.
- The assistant will travel to and from the location with the group.

### **Proposal:**

Given the above assumptions and constraints, the following birding sites are proposed:

- Mud Lake
- Mer Bleue
- Gatineau Park (exact location TBD)

This arrangement will mean that, each day, the OFNC would provide at least two leaders and two assistants while the COO would provide at least one leader and one assistant.

Ideally, the participants would sign up well in advance of the Congress and would do so for all three outings. They would be divided into three groups (A, B and C) and the groups would rotate to the three sites on successive mornings as follows:

<b>Group</b>	<b>19 June 2013</b>	<b>20 June 2013</b>	<b>21 June 2013</b>
<b>A</b>	Mud Lake	Gatineau Park	Mer Bleue
<b>B</b>	Gatineau Park	Mer Bleue	Mud Lake
<b>C</b>	Mer Bleue	Mud Lake	Gatineau Park

All three groups would depart the Convention Centre at 5:30 AM to arrive at their respective sites by 6:00 AM. They would then leave the sites at 8:00 AM to return to the Convention Centre by 8:30 AM. This would allow for about two hours of birding each morning.

Realistically, not all participants will be interested in birding each morning. Additional, but limited space, would be available for sign-up by the Congress attendees by 3:00 PM on each preceding day to fill up the minibuses (max of approx 25 per minibus) for the following morning. If space remains available, consideration will be given for OFNC and COO members to fill the remaining seats.

Regardless, members of both clubs will be invited to make their own way to the birding sites to join the walks and interact with Congress attendees.