



The Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club

Marilyn Ward, Member of the Year 2004

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The OFNC's Member of the Year award recognizes the member judged to have contributed the most to the club in the previous year. Marilyn Ward is the kind of member whose efforts keep things humming quietly but surely along. In 2004 Marilyn was particularly busy making significant contributions on at least three fronts.

Anyone who has called the club's phone number recently has spoken with Marilyn. The OFNC has a phone number, but it doesn't have an office. Incoming calls have to go somewhere! For the last four years, they've gone to Marilyn or to an answering machine in

her front hallway. Whether she gets the message by machine or in person, she is a welcoming greeter who efficiently answers questions or connects callers - be they out-of-town visitors, members or prospective members - with the person who can answer their question. We know her hospitality extends beyond the phone too. She even arranges to meet new members at a monthly meeting in order to personally welcome them and to hand them their membership packages which she also compiles. The club's email address also leads to Marilyn.

Marilyn is a valuable member of the Excursions and Lectures committee. She is conscientious, reliable, and cares about details. As any field trip leader will tell you, she is good at recruiting field trip leaders. She also phones leaders and speakers in advance of their commitments to make sure they haven't forgotten - a service much appreciated by club members. Not only that, she personally shows up at almost every field trip and monthly meeting where she helps out with logistical details. The Fletcher Wildlife Garden gets a lot of traffic, with committee and council meetings, volunteers and visitors. Somehow, amazingly, it almost always looks neat and tidy. Of course all users are expected to clean up after themselves, but we all know this sort of thing works better in theory than in practice. Marilyn has been described as a fiend when it comes to keeping the Fletcher centre orderly! She's often there at least twice a week. She also provides suet cakes for the Fletcher bird feeding stations and makes regular walks around the whole site to see what birds are around.

Handling the club phone, helping to make sure events are successful, keeping the place spic and span: we can't underestimate the importance of these contributions as part of the public face of the club. Marilyn, the club is grateful for your many special contributions during 2004. Designating you as Member of the Year is our way of saying, "Thank you!"

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