



## The Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club

### Daniel F. Brunton - 2010 Honorary Member

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Ask anyone in the Ottawa region to name a prominent and respected naturalist, and if they know of anyone that might fit that description, they are most likely to name Dan Brunton. He is the expert who is most frequently consulted by the local media in matters of natural history, and municipal and regional departments in the Ottawa region often call on his help and opinion for environmental issues.

All this is not surprising if one looks at Dan's remarkable achievements over the past 40 years. Although counting himself principally a botanist and birder, he has publications on moles, wolves, turtles and salamanders as well. His major scientific work has dealt with quillworts (*Isoetes*) and ferns in general, usually co-authored with Donald Britton of Guelph University. This has resulted in more than 30 peer-reviewed publications including the description of over 15 new North American taxa. Dan, however, is an expert general botanist with a broad knowledge of plants of every kind. He also has a long list of publications on birds, most of them in *Trail & Landscape*, *The Canadian Field-Naturalist (CFN)* and *Blue Jay*.

Dan was born and raised in Ottawa and spent his formative years first with a passion for astronomy, and then birding, often in the company of folks like Ron Pittaway, Monty Brigham, Joe Dafoe and Ken Ross. He received his university degree in geography and botany from Carleton University in 1973. Dan worked for several years as a park naturalist, especially in Algonquin Park, and he has always been very active in that park and its biota. Dan also worked in Alberta at the Kananaskis Provincial Park, helping to develop their interpretation program.

Since the 1970s, Dan Brunton has operated a private consulting firm (Brunton Consulting Services), doing environmental assessments, botanical or biological surveys, and providing expertise to governmental agencies. He has naturally become very much interested in conservation matters and has served the community well in this regard. Dan received the OFNC's 2003 Conservation Award for his work in establishing a riverkeeper program in Ottawa. The Transportation Association of Canada awarded him their 1999 Environmental Achievement Award, and, in 1992, he received the Canada 125 Medal from the Canadian Government for his contributions to natural features protection and conservation in the National Capital Region. Dan received the Club's Anne Hanes Natural History Award in 1988 for his book, *Nature and Natural Areas in Canada's Capital*.

The OFNC has benefited tremendously from Dan's interest and activity in club affairs ever since he joined in 1967. He has served on numerous committees and chaired many including

the Awards Committee (see his interesting article in *Trail & Landscape* 21(5): 236-243, 1987), and was president of the club in 1982-1983. He received the George McGee Service Award for 1985. Dan contributed dozens of articles to *Trail & Landscape* and, in 2004, prepared a detailed and fascinating history of the club in *CFN* (vol.118: 1-34). In fact, Dan provides a unique contribution to the OFNC as the club historian, and he shares this knowledge freely.

For his achievements as a knowledgeable naturalist, accomplished botanist and birder, important environmentalist and spokesperson for natural history in the National Capital Region, and for his outstanding service to the club, the OFNC is proud to offer Honorary Membership to Daniel F. Brunton.

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