



The Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club

2014 Honorary Member - Ross Layberry

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This award is presented in recognition of outstanding contributions by a member or non-member to Canadian natural history or to the successful operation of the Club. Usually people awarded an honorary membership have made extensive contributions over many years.

Ross Layberry's name is synonymous with the study of butterflies in the Ottawa region. However, his contributions extend far beyond our local boundaries, and he is recognized and respected by lepidopterists across the country for his wide knowledge of and expertise in Canadian butterflies.

In presenting him with the Anne Hanes Natural History award in 2008, it was noted that Ross is "a keen field observer, meticulous collector of data, discriminating collector of specimens, and even a careful rearer of immatures. This has

enabled him to fill in many gaps in our knowledge of the butterflies and, more importantly, to make that information available to all through his lucid writing."

Ross' contributions to expanding our knowledge and understanding of butterflies are manifold. He is certainly well-known as one of the authors of the seminal work on Canadian butterflies, "The Butterflies of Canada" published in 1998 by the University of Toronto Press. In 1982, he, along with Peter Hall and Don Lafontaine, published an important article in *Trail & Landscape*, on the status and distribution of butterflies in the Ottawa District, the first such compilation for our area. Years later, in 2007, Ross prepared a significantly updated summary, delineating changes in status and additions to the butterfly fauna of the Ottawa region.

Ross's enthusiasm and his desire to help others learn more about butterflies is greatly appreciated, as is his ready willingness to answer any and all questions concerning butterflies. He is an indefatigable contributor to the local online butterfly group, where he shares photos and observations, discusses the results of his larvae rearing, and posts butterfly-related articles both scholarly and popular. He poses interesting questions to the group and engages in discussions about the many aspects of butterfly ecology. Under the auspices of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada in Ottawa, he helped to create and maintain

the Canadian Biodiversity Information Facility database which contains thousands of butterfly records. In fact, Ross is considered to be a database pioneer in the field of lepidoptera.

He was the Ontario and Quebec compiler for the Lepidopterists' Society's annual report. In more recent years he compiles and coordinates Ontario and Quebec records submitted to eButterfly, and vets them for accuracy.

Ross also works closely with the Toronto Entomologists' Association on their online Ontario Butterfly Atlas, one of the three editors responsible for this vast collection of records. Furthermore, Ross is lead editor and compiler for the Association's "Ontario Lepidoptera," an annual summary of Ontario records. A prolific writer, many of Ross's articles can be found in this annual publication. He is particularly interested in the rearing of larvae and has written on the rearing of Giant Swallowtails, Mourning Cloaks, and Pearl Crescents, amongst other topics.

In recognition of his long-standing work on Canadian lepidoptera Ross, in 2001, was given the Norman Criddle Award by the Entomological Society of Canada. This award "recognizes the contribution of an outstanding non-professional entomologist to the furtherance of entomology in Canada."

The OFNC is proud and privileged to recognize Ross Layberry for his significant contribution over many decades to furthering our knowledge of Canadian butterflies, by naming him an Honorary Member.

Prepared by Christine Hanrahan

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