



The Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club

Gillian Marston and Suzanne Deschenes, Members of the Year 2005

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The OFNC's Member of the Year award recognizes the member(s) judged to have contributed the most to the club during the previous year. Education and Publicity Committee members Gillian Marston and Suzanne Deschenes have made stellar accomplishments over the past year in developing educational and publicity materials for OFNC, and leading a successful membership drive through publicity efforts. They have also brought their considerable computer skills to modernize the Club's photo library and displays.

Gillian and Suzanne are the driving force behind the OFNC's new photography contest which began in 2005 and is set for a second round in 2006. Meant to encourage people's appreciation of nature through photography, and to boost the club's library of digital photographs on natural themes, the first contest reaped 275 images, all of which have the potential to be used in displays or slideshows. The contest resulted in a professional, stunning slide show for the 2006 Annual Business Meeting.

All these new images are now catalogued in a digital library, also developed and managed by Suzanne and Gillian. This library is the successor to the club's long-standing and well used slide collection.

Suzanne and Gillian together bring a special synergy of creativity and management skills. They further applied their talents in 2005, taking the club's new image collection to the public by designing and constructing several portable exhibits to highlight Ottawa nature, the club's activities, and to attract new members. Members and non-members alike will recall seeing volunteers staffing these exhibits at the entrance to popular nature walk areas such as the Britannia Conservation Area. They also appeared on site for various club excursions and conferences where they successfully attracted a good number of new members and caught the eye of educators. Gillian and Suzanne and the rest of the committee continue to develop more portable exhibits and to refine the design. For example, they put together a set of slide shows on different themes that can be shown at exhibits using a table-top projector or laptop computer.

Gillian and Suzanne, the club is grateful for your many special contributions during 2005. Designating you as members of the year is our way of saying "thank you!"

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