



The Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club

2013 Member of the Year: Mark Brenchley

[OFNC home page](#)
[Coming events](#)
[Birding](#)
[Publications](#)
[Fletcher Wildlife Garden](#)
[Conservation](#)
[Awards](#)
[Macoun Club for young naturalists](#)
[FalconWatch](#)
[Committees and Board](#)
[Join the OFNC/make a donation](#)
[Links](#)
[Search](#)
[Contact us](#)



The OFNC's Member of the Year award recognizes the member judged to have contributed the most to the Club in the previous year.

We are recognizing Mark Brenchley for his positive, creative and enthusiastic commitment. Mark Brenchley joined the OFNC in 2012 upon his return to Ottawa. In late 2012 and throughout 2013 he jumped in to support the Education and Publicity Committee. His energy, skills and ideas were pivotal to the completion of several projects designed to enhance the profile of the Club.

When Ontario Nature invited naturalist clubs to sponsor a youth to attend the Ontario Nature Youth Summit last year, the request landed in the hands of the Education and Publicity Committee. Mark stepped up to design an application process to select a candidate to represent the Club. He communicated with schools boards, scouting groups and the members of the Club to generate interest in the opportunity. Three applications came back to him. Mark, Suzanne DeschÃªnes and Lynn Ovenden interviewed the candidates and selected Sarah Wray, a grade 10 student at Nepean High School. After the Summit, Mark invited Sarah to describe her experience at a monthly meeting in the Fall and asked her to write a report which was published in the 2014 Winter issue of Trail and Landscape.

Had Mark not taken the Ontario Nature initiative, the club would have missed an opportunity to support the Summit and Sarah. Thanks to his initiative, there is a framework in place to support the Club's future participation.

Over the year, Mark worked on a series of promotional items and signs, all bearing the OFNC's owl logo, the club name and often the website on a forest green background. He made an 8' long banner that tops our tent and display table at public events. When Education and Publicity wanted to offer hand lenses on a club lanyard at the monthly meeting sales table, Mark created the logo file and placed the order with the lanyard imprinting company. Then he coordinated the logo design and purchase of the lens wipe pouches which clip onto a lanyard or binocular strap. He led the design of a promotional bookmark which includes photos and the Club website.

The OFNC Council realized a few years ago that the sign at the entrance to Fletcher Wildlife Garden is a highly visible spot, a great place to increase public awareness of OFNC. Although there has been a sign on Prince of Wales Drive to direct people to the Garden, there was nothing to indicate the OFNC's involvement with the Garden. Since Mark is in the sign business, he was asked what could be done. As a result he designed and installed a dark green aluminum panel with the OFNC owl and our website atop the existing Fletcher sign clearly identifying the Fletcher Wildlife Garden with the OFNC, all at minimal cost to the Club. Through these products Mark has developed several graphic files with the OFNC's logo and wordmark. He continues to work at "branding" the OFNC with the goal to create a recognizable visual identity for all Club-related materials, promotional items and signage.

Mark is a cheerful, engaging salesman behind the display table at most monthly meetings and at some of OFNC's public events. It is for his many contributions to promoting the Club in 2013 that we want to recognize Mark as Member of the Year.

(Written by Julia Cipriani based on information and feedback from Lynn Ovenden)

[Top of Page](#)

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