



The Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club

2014 Member of the Year - Natalie Sopinka

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 a member judged to have contributed the most to the club in the previous year.

We are recognizing Natalie Sopinka because she exemplifies the impulse to share one's appreciation and knowledge of nature with others. When she joined the Club, Natalie was a PhD candidate from the University of British Columbia, completing her research in a University of Ottawa laboratory.

Natalie asked to join the Education and Publicity Committee upon her arrival in Ottawa in Fall 2013, before she had attended an OFNC event. As a member of the committee, she was

reliable, generous, cheerful and optimistic. Her contributions to the Club and the committee have been considerable. They include supporting the Education and Publicity Committee, promoting a wide range of Club activities, capturing highlights of Club events and publishing her descriptions on the website.

When the committee decided to update the Club's display posters, Natalie taught herself the MS Publisher layout software and created files for attractive posters describing how to join OFNC, OFNC publications, the Macoun Club and the Fletcher Wildlife Garden. During her presentation to members of the Macoun Club they learned about threats to Pacific salmon and how the salmon are being studied. She re-activated the OFNC's Twitter account, tweeted frequently about OFNC activities, and attracted 329 followers. She staffed OFNC displays at Nature Canada's Bird Day, Agriculture Canada's Bug Day and the Ontario Field Ornithologists conference, generating interest in the Club by engaging participants with energy and humour. On Bird Day she collected "nesting" materials and joined kids in building human scale birds' nests on the grounds at Andrew Hayden Park. To further support youth she assisted in selecting two young naturalists for OFNC's sponsorship to the fifth Ontario Nature Youth Summit and judged projects at the Ottawa Regional Science Fair for the OFNC's Special Awards.

Natalie is particularly skillful at popularizing scientific work. She created the OFNC blog, [Field Notes](#), in November 2013. Over the time she was in Ottawa, about half of the stories on the blog were written by her and she contributed to all the rest. In total we can thank her for over 50 posts summarizing monthly meetings and events, writing profiles of OFNC members and accounts of others' work on ecological concerns of the region. Twenty other members were also encouraged by her to contribute to the blog. She managed the blog website and coordinated the work of its small editorial team. Before her departure, she supervised an Ottawa University student volunteer who was reporting on OFNC's Fall 2014 events.

It is for her many contributions to engage others and for promoting the Club that we want to recognize Natalie as Member of the Year.

Prepared by Julia Cipriani, based on notes from Lynn Ovenden

[Top of Page](#)

© The Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club

This page was created 25 May 2015

[Contact the OFNC](#)
