

**THE OTTAWA FIELD NATURALISTS' CLUB BOARD OF DIRECTORS (BOD)
MINUTES OF MEETING**

June 16, 2014

Fletcher Wildlife Garden Interpretation Centre, CEF, Ottawa, 7:00 p.m.

Chair: Fenja Brodo

Directors Present: Annie Bélair, Barbara Chouinard, Julia Cipriani, Owen Clarkin, Barry Cottam, Don Hackett, Diane Kitching, Alex MacDonald, Ann MacKenzie, Karen McLachlan Hamilton, Lynn Ovenden, Rémy Poulin, Henry Steger, Ken Young

Directors Absent: Dan Brunton, Carolyn Callaghan, Eleanor Zurbrigg

1. Minutes of the May 20, 2014 Meeting

Moved by Annie Bélair/Diane Kitching that the May 20th minutes
be accepted as distributed.

CARRIED

2. Business Arising from the Minutes

Fenja said that she is still trying to get in touch with the right person at Trent University in order to obtain a copy of the formal agreement between the OFNC and the university regarding the employment of a student helping with the CFN.

3. Communications

- a) The Heart and Stroke Foundation has sent to letter to the OFNC asking about creating a partnership; Fenja will follow up.
- b) The FWG was awarded a volunteer recognition certificate during the National Garden Day. The City of Ottawa is held its first Garden Volunteers Recognition event at City Hall, organized by the Canadian Garden Council, and awarded these certificates to various groups to congratulate them on their “generous volunteer contribution to the City of Ottawa’s garden experience”.
- c) Employees from PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) came to the FWG to volunteer during a special company volunteering day on June 6; they have also donated \$300 to the FWG.

ACTION: Fenja to contact Sandy Garland to coordinate a formal thank you to PwC.

4. Waivers for field trips

After the discussion at last month’s meeting, Ken sent an email with information on waivers with an example. He explained that this example would be sufficient for OFNC field trips. (He pointed out that the waivers the FWG and the Macoun Club currently uses are more specific and would not be replaced by the new one.) However, the BOD asked him to add a sentence saying that parents or guardians are responsible for minors accompanying them.

The text of the waiver will be at the top of the sign-up sheet. It will also appear in T&L at

the beginning of the “Coming Events” section and on the events page of the website. Ken added that trip leaders will need to be proactive and insist that all participants read and sign the waiver in order to take part in the activity.

ACTION: Ken to add sentence regarding parents/guardians and minors, as well as the club logo, and send to the BOD for final verification.

5. Committee Reports

a) **Birds** – Rémy Poulin

FalconWatch reported there are three chicks at the Heron Road location.

b) **Conservation** – Owen Clarkin

- i. Owen was proud to announce that the launch of a new “bio inventory” (which is a year-long bioblitz) was approved by the Committee. The first site will be Constance Bay. The Events Committee is also involved.
- ii. He also announced that an area of 100 acres near Cannamore (off Reveler Road) was donated by the landowner to the South Nation River Conservation Authority to be protected as a conservation site.

c) **Education and Publicity** – Lynn Ovenden

- i. Bird Fair on May 31st was a success. It also served as a nice publicity event for the OFNC. Lynn invited all directors to read the post on the OFNC blog. Alex added that an estimated 900 people attended, and thanked the OFNC for their contributions as a partner and participation.
- ii. Mark Brenchley is working on the Ontario Youth Summit Applications.
- iii. The committee is also working on a questionnaire that might be sent to all committee members regarding the OFNC website revamp. Ken pointed out that updating the PayPal function is necessary too.

d) **Events** – Julia Cipriani

The OFNC and AAFC are organizing a Bug Day again this year, since last year’s was such a success; it will be on Saturday September 6.

Sophie Cardinal, the organizer from AAFC, has asked us to contribute \$1000. This would go to the Canadian Museum of Agriculture to let the visitors use their facilities (parking, washrooms and the new, large outdoor pavilion) for the event; they would also make it a free day for the museum. The bug walks would still be at the FWG. The other but more expensive option would be to rent a large tent and portable toilets to be set up at the FWG.

The BOD agreed with the idea of using the museum’s facilities but expressed concerns about having to cross Prince of Wales. In her request to Fenja, Sophie had proposed getting volunteer cross-walkers to take groups across. Alex suggested asking Ottawa police to help with traffic control.

MOTION: That the OFNC contributes \$1000 to support the organization of Bug Day 2014.

Moved by Julia Cipriani/Barry Cottam

CARRIED

ACTION: Fenja to contact Sophie Cardinal to ask for an invoice and to discuss the suggestion of getting help from the Ottawa police for traffic control.

e) Fletcher Wildlife Garden – Barry Cottam

See report in [Annex 1](#).

Regarding the Weeds Across Borders Conference in October 2014: the Ontario Invasive Plant Council has asked us to consider FWG as a tour site during the event. Barry has figured out an itinerary to propose, but the BOD all agreed we should ask AAFC's permission before agreeing to giving a tour on our continuing fight with invasive plants. Ken suggested tabling a motion to show the BOD's support on the matter.

MOTION: The OFNC Board of Directors supports the FWG's involvement in the Weeds Across Borders Conference to be held in Ottawa in October 2014 and, subject to the concurrence of AAFC, its use as a tour locale to demonstrate remedial actions taken against invasive plants.

Moved by Rémy Poulin/Barry Cottam

CARRIED

f) Macoun Club – Diane Kitching

See report in [Annex 2](#).

g) Membership – Henry Steger

Henry announced that the 2014 membership count is at 12 more than in 2013, which is very good news.

h) Nominations – Ann MacKenzie

Ann asked all directors to let her know if they still want to be part of the Board in 2015 and if not, if they have a replacement to recommend. She also invited them to think about potential new committee members for 2015.

All directors agreed that having more people on each committee would help.

The idea of creating a communications committee was mentioned again but no decision was made.

Fenja then pointed out that the recent cross-committee interactions have been greatly useful and encouraged further cooperation among committees.

i) Treasurer – Ken Young

Ken sent documents to help directors prepare the 2014-2015 budget for the September 2014 BOD meeting. As usual, he asked for estimates as to how much money will be needed for planned activities during the next fiscal year; he also asked the directors to consider how the money from the Czasak bequest might be spent. Concrete proposals should go to the Bequest Committee but can also be included in budget proposals.

ACTION: All committee chairs to send proposed 2014-2015 budgets to the Finance Committee by July 31, 2014.

j) Ontario Nature – Don Hackett

Ken asked Don if fundraising plans towards the purchase of land in the

Frontenac Highlands were mentioned at the recent Ontario Nature regional meeting. Don said yes, and added he would find out more about the location of the lot and the potential purchase plans for the September BOD meeting.

6. Dates for BOD Meetings in the Fall

There have been talks about moving the OFNC BOD meetings to Tuesdays, but we should get the opinion of all the directors before making a decision.

ACTION: Annie to set up a Doodle Poll asking to choose between keeping the meetings on Mondays, moving to Tuesdays, or keeping Mondays but holding some meetings on Tuesdays following statutory holidays that fall on Mondays.

7. Motion to adjourn:

Moved by Barry Cottam/Alex MacDonald that the meeting be adjourned at 9:05 p.m.

CARRIED

Recording Secretary: Annie Bélair

Meetings in 2014:

Tentative dates for fall:

Monday, September 15

Monday, October 20

Monday, November 17

Monday, December 15

FWG REPORT – MAY AND JUNE 2014

June 16, 2014

This will be the final report to the BOD until it reconvenes in September.

A test area has been selected for the treatment of DSV with glyphosate as well as by mowing. JP Gratton of AAFC will be doing this work; he and I walked over the area several weeks ago. A Q&A fact sheet has been prepared and bilingual warning sign designed. The fact sheet will be posted online and on the FWG bulletin boards. Mark Brenchley has prepared warning signs that will be put up very soon. These signs will stay in place for the 2-3 year test period. The spraying can now take place as soon as the weather permits. AAFC will post information on the herbicide during the 72-hour period required by regulations. A copy of the [proposal](#) is attached; it has also been attached to the FWG MC minutes for May 2014. As well, the MC has decided to establish a small committee to develop plans for regenerating the spray area.

The Weeds Across Borders Conference, an international, biennial event, this year hosted by the Canadian Council on Invasive Species and the Ontario Invasive Plant Council, will be held in Ottawa on October 15-16. OIPC has asked us to consider FWG as a tour site. A potential tour route has been discussed with and sent to the OIPC representative.

Naomi Cappuccino's presentation on DSV on June 5 was an interesting and informative OFNC event. She presented the results of research into the characteristics of DSV, brought us up to date on the biocontrol program, already underway at the CEF, and led us on a tour of the FWG. She acknowledged that, pending the potential success of biocontrol, the only solution for major infestations is treatment with glyphosate.

A group of ten PwC volunteers worked with Diane Lepage all day Friday, June 6, digging up and sifting the soil at a spot just south of the Pond bridge. Diane will be replanting this area to create a more welcoming entryway to the Butterfly Meadow.

The Plant Sale on June 7 was the most successful yet, bringing in about \$5300. Kudos to all the volunteers who worked so hard to make it happen. A volunteer is taking down ideas from participants with a view to making next year's sale even better.

The City of Ottawa held its inaugural Garden Days event at City Hall on June 13, with the OFNC / FWG being among a number of garden groups to receive Garden Volunteer Recognition Certificates. Isabelle Nicol and Fenja Brodo accepted the certificate on behalf of the FWG and the OFNC.

On June 20 (raindate June 27), FWG volunteers will go to the Canadian Wildlife Federation in Kanata for a garden tour.

Removal of 56 dead ash trees from the Ash Woods by AAFC continues. One result is the

devastation of the William Cody Fern Garden. As yet, no plans are in place for its reconstruction.

José L. Fernández-Triana, PhD, a Research Associate with the Canadian National Collection of Insects and Biodiversity Institute of Ontario, has given presentations to the MC and to Friday volunteers, encouraging participation in his research into the largely unknown species of tiny wasps that are parasites of caterpillars. This very interesting project is a good example of citizen science but it remains to be seen whether any volunteers become involved.

The grand opening of the Artists Garden being constructed in the AAFC field south of the barn is set for June 26 at 5-7 p.m. Interesting in its own right, this project is part of the effort of the Canadensis Botanical Garden Society's efforts to raise funds for a botanical garden on 34 acres of land on the south border of the FWG.

Other news from the work groups and habitats:

- the BYG picnic table was mysteriously appropriated for use in the Arboretum. David Hobden suspected as much and found it there the day the PwC volunteers were available to restore it to the BYG.
- Butterfly Meadow: Diane Lepage has placed a large order with Laporte Nursery for plants which will be delivered later in the week of June 20.
- New Woods: Brian Haddon continues to be interested in planning and hopes to have some suggestions this July. This will include ideas for a restoration plan for the area being mowed / sprayed.
- the Invasive Species Group is struggling again this year, largely as a result of discouragement over DSV. A new coordinator may be able to inject some energy, if one can be found. In the meantime, other invasives continue to be sources of concern, including buckthorn, comfrey and black locust.

Barry Cottam

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Proposal regarding a Test Area for Control of DSV

Barry Cottam

June 3 and 12, 2014

The following is based on comments made during the MC meeting of May 28. They are reproduced here for attachment to the minutes.

An area in the 'valley' of the New Woods has been selected for comparative testing by AAFC of mowing and treatment of DSV with the herbicide glyphosate. The area lies between the barn on the south and the trees of the New Woods / former Hedgerow on the north. A slight slope on the north side of the 'valley' will be the area sprayed with glyphosate, while the central portion, bordering on the slope, will be mowed. J-P Gratton of the AAFC will be doing the work. We proposed testing herbicide on DSV initially and J-P recommended adding the mowing component so that both techniques can be tested in the same general area at the same time. The test period will begin in June 2014 and run for two, possibly three, years. He will be spraying twice, once in June as flower heads form on the DSV then again a few weeks later. The mowing will take place four times a year, as this is believed to be the minimum required to really set back the DSV. AAFC is able to spray up to an acre, but the area selected is about one quarter that size. The mowed area is about half an acre.

Safety considerations have been raised. Although a path runs on the east edge of this area, it is probably the most remote and little used of any area in the FWG, with the exception of the Ravine. The herbicide test plot will be kept about 30 feet from the path. AAFC will be posting signs as per regulations during the 72-hour spraying period, i.e., 24 hours before and for 48 hours after. This means, of course, that we will only receive 24 hours notice. Meanwhile, our own bilingual warning signs will be put up for the entire two year period.

Concerns about the **effects of glyphosate** on other plants, the water in the Amphibian Pond and potential migratory birds nesting in the area have also been raised. As far as I know, glyphosate will kill all plants in which it comes into contact; it does this by inhibiting a protein that plants need for growth. This protein is not found in mammals. While amphibians can be seriously affected, we do not anticipate that glyphosate will enter the pond, for several reasons: spraying will take place on windless days, to minimize drift, and on days with no rain forecast, to minimize wash-off onto the ground; glyphosate bonds well with the soil, so is unlikely to 'travel'; glyphosate does not have undue impact on birds and mammals. It should be noted that exceptions to each of these statements can be found, as the jury is still out on just how 'safe' glyphosate may be. However, as herbicides go, glyphosate is regarded as the safest.

Migratory Birds Act: Provisions of the Act have been raised and were discussed at the meeting. Eleanor made a number of comments about these and kindly provided the following summary by email:

- General prohibitions under the Migratory Birds Convention Act and its regulations protect migratory birds, their nest and eggs and prohibit the deposit of harmful substances to birds in waters or areas frequented by them. “Harmful” substance isn’t defined, but an example is the deposit of oil in waters frequented by migratory birds. The birds would be harmed/killed by the oil.
- The prohibitions of the Migratory Birds Convention Act and regulations protect individuals of bird species covered under the Act. This is to say that the presence of one nesting pair can delay a project.
- The onus is on the proponent to not disturb or harm a migratory bird, its nest or eggs (to avoid contravening the law). Environment Canada advice is that taking reasonable care and avoidance (delaying an activity that could have a detrimental effect until nesting season is finished) may be the best approach.

Christine Hanrahan advised by email that three species are fairly common in the test area: Yellow Warblers, Common Yellowthroats and Song Sparrows. Of these, I’ve only ever seen Song Sparrows there, but not this year. A couple of years ago there seemed to be some nesting activity. According to Peterson’s Birds’ Nests field guide, song sparrows nest on the ground or low in trees and shrubs; the yellowthroats nest in vegetation on or close to the ground and the yellow warblers nest in forks of shrubs or trees about 3 or more feet above ground. So, any of them could conceivably be affected and a check is in order. As of June 10, no nesting birds have been spotted on three checks of the area.

Monitoring and Assessing Results: AAFC is doing the control work, but it is up to the MC to have a plan for monitoring and assessing its results. Photographs of the area in its current state have been taken. More photos should be taken following each treatment and again about a month later to check for regrowth. This is not a precise methodology, but then, this is not a scientific experiment.

Restoration following testing: There is no point in running this test if we do not develop a restoration plan. I have verbally assured AAFC that we will at a minimum rototill the area and broadcast it with an appropriate seed mixture. This is merely a stop-gap measure, however, and we should instead develop a plan for replanting the area as befits its designation as the New Woods. There will be costs associated with this, but the OFNC Board is willing to invest in the FWG, and this would be a good project for them to help us with.

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MFC Report – June 16, 2014

MFC has had field trips and two indoor meetings since my last report. On May 24, we participated in the Brewer Park Pond activity. This event was well attended by community members, and we heard lots of comments about what a great activity it was. A number of people expressed surprise that there actually was a pond there, let alone one with so many interesting things to see in and around it! When the event ended, MFC members went to the Study Area for lunch and a session of pulling out Garlic Mustard plants. At one patch we had some bonus sightings: three Meadow Jumping Mice, the larva of a Viceroy butterfly and a Grey Tree Frog (dressed in green when we found it). On the morning of June 7, we (seven members, three leaders, and four other adults) participated in the bioblitz at the Keddy Nature Reserve. We all thoroughly enjoyed the opportunity to see parts of this beautiful property.

At a meeting on May 31, Rob talked about his study of invasive earthworms, how they spread, and their effects on forest ecology. On June 14, members showed some of their favourite nature photos. On June 21, we will be having our end-of-year party and distributing *The Little Bear*.

Diane Kitching

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