

**THE OTTAWA FIELD NATURALISTS' CLUB  
MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING**

**September 17, 2012**

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

**Chair:** Ann MacKenzie

**Council Members Present:** Barbara Chouinard, Don Hackett, Diane Kitching, David Hobden, Diane Lepage, Rémy Poulin, Jeff Saarela, Henry Steger, Ken Young,

**Council Members Absent:** Annie Bélair, Carolyn Callaghan, Dan Brunton, Fenja Brodo, Karen McLachlan Hamilton, Jeff Skevington, Eleanor Zurbrigg

**1. Minutes of the June 18, 2012 meeting**

**Business arising:** Council decided that the December Council meeting would be held on the scheduled date of December 17<sup>th</sup> and not moved forward to December 10<sup>th</sup>.

**Moved by** D. Kitching/H. Steger that the  
June 18th minutes be accepted.

**Carried**

**2. Communications**

- A letter was received from the IODE thanking the Club for information provided on Dr. Henri-Marc Ami for their brochure on the history of the John Mather house at 453 Theodore Street.
- Ann circulated a copy of a letter of support she sent to the Madawaska-Mississippi LTC to be used in its application to the Trillium Foundation for a grant to strengthen its capacity.
- Ken circulated a new Nature Canada publication: *The State of Canada's Birds*.

**3. Treasurer's Report** K. Young

**Insurance** Based on information received from ON Nature with respect to the Club's current insurance policy (CGL –Commercial and General Liability) and additional coverage that could be provided if we also had Directors' and Officers' Liability Insurance (D&O), (see Annex A, June 18 minutes) Ken provided an Excel spreadsheet outlining the coverage of each kind of policy. While the CGL coverage would cover the Club in most circumstances, D&O would cover the Club for financial losses incurred as a result of third party actions. Given that court costs and awards could be substantial, and that directors are individually and severally liable for any judgments made against directors, would it be

prudent to spend approximately \$660 per annum for D&O insurance? After some discussion, Ken proposed that the Club purchase D&O insurance in addition to CGL in February when the latter policy comes up for renewal. A formal motion to this effect will be made at the October Council meeting, to allow for more discussion and to enable more Council members to participate.

**ACTION: At the October meeting,** The Finance Committee will move that the Club purchases D&O insurance in addition to CGL in February when the latter policy comes up for renewal.

#### **4. Budget** Barbara Chouinard

Barbara presented a proposed budget for the next FY and asked for feedback from committees. Points raised in discussion:

- Under Revenues, Henry Steger questioned the estimated amount for membership renewals; Barbara and Ken will review the GL and their estimate.
- The “Other” category under Revenues is for all small items.
- Under Operating Expenses, no \$ amount is allocated for administration and communications because we no longer have a Club phone and because other kinds of administration are now done in committees.
- Website and domain expenses do not cover the CFN, which has its own budget.
- The amount allocated for the Birds Committee and Bird Hotline will be revised (increased) to \$1,650 for the three Falcon Watches next spring.
- Regarding showing donations the Club might give to third parties, it was agreed that it is discretionary but is part of the role of the Club.

**ACTION:** All Council members to review the proposed budget and submit comments to the Finance Committee before the October meeting.

#### **5. Birds Committee Report and Funding Request** Rémy Poulin

See [Annex 1](#) for Birds Committee Report

**Funding Request:** The “Birders’ Checklist” of Ottawa birds was last produced in 1993. Rémy explained why a new checklist of Ottawa birds is needed, and what it would look like. Among other features, it would be web-based, making it easy to access and maintain; ideally it would be searchable. We do not know how much it will cost to design/develop a new list, and therefore some scoping/definition money is needed. The Birds Committee drafted a preliminary motion requesting that Council support the effort in principle and authorize the expenditure of up to \$500 to scope out the technical requirements, level of effort and skill sets necessary to address the programming (web site) elements of the initiative, with the results to form the basis of project plan and substantive cost estimate to be presented to Council for approval.

Ken asked if we would need to develop our own software, or whether such a program was already available? Do we know if any other Clubs that have done this or are doing this? After more discussion, Council agreed that this was a worthwhile initiative to explore. Ken will have a new GL code created.

**Moved by** R. Poulin/D. Lepage that the  
Birds Committee may spend an amount not to exceed \$500 for the  
purpose of scoping out the costs of making a new e-checklist for the  
Club's bird records, including as a first step an assessment of what is  
already available and the extent to which it would meet our needs.

**Carried**

**6. FWG** Ann MacKenzie

Fenja Brodo (via email to Council) recommended that the Club look into hiring someone to clean the FWG on a regular basis as the volunteer who had been doing this unofficially and informally is unable to continue. Council agreed that this might be a wise move, given that the building is being used more and more for various Club activities. However, what would the cost be?

**ACTION: Ann** to follow up for further discussion at the next meeting.

**7. Membership Renewal** H. Steger

Henry presented three versions of the cover letters he proposed to send for membership renewals: one (via email) to members who registered and paid electronically last year, one (via email) to members for whom he had an email address but had not registered or paid electronically, and one to members for whom he did not have an email address. These will encourage more use of the electronic options for renewal and allow monitoring of changing patterns of use.

**8. Other Items**

Committee reports (Birds, Nature Canada, Macoun Club, Fletcher Wildlife Garden, Publications, Education and Publicity) are in [Annex 1](#).

Rémy Poulin reported that \$1,000 was pledged during Seed-a-thon.

The fall bird count will be 20-21 October, and the Christmas bird count will be on 16 December.

Don Hackett will help with liaison to Nature Canada re the IBA.

Diane Lepage said the next ON Nature meeting will be held near Belleville on Saturday, September 22<sup>nd</sup>. Diane, Ann MacKenzie and Frank Pope will attend.

**9. Motion to adjourn:**

Moved by David Hobden and seconded by Jeff  
Saarela that the meeting be adjourned at 9:02 p.m.

**CARRIED**

Recording Secretary: D. Kitching (for A. Bélair)

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Meetings in 2012: October 15, November 19, December 17

## Annex 1

### A. Birds Committee Report

- **Falcon Watch** - For the third year in a row, the eggs of the downtown pair have failed to hatch. In addition, sightings of Connor, the male bird, were no longer being reported and he is now presumed dead. Shortly thereafter, a second nesting pair was reported in the south end of the city and a falcon watch was established. Two chicks successfully fledged. Indications are that Diana, the downtown female, may have attracted a new mate and reports have been received of another nesting pair on the east end of the city.
- **Budget** - The latest version of the proposed OFNC budget for 2012/2013 allocates a total of \$1300 for the Birds Committee. This figure includes the cost of the Bird Status Line, which is on the order of \$550. At first glance, the \$1300 figure appears reasonable given the actual numbers from the last two fiscal years of 628 and 739 dollars respectively (noting that the cost of the Bird Status Line was not accounted in the totals back then). In addition, the actuals to date for the current fiscal year would suggest that we will expend on the order of 1200 to 1300 dollars including the phone. The lower actuals of the past few years, however, were indicative of the unsuccessful nesting of the downtown Peregrine Falcon pair. The outlook for next year is much brighter and we will likely be running Falcon Watches at three separate locations in the city simultaneously. Consequently, this development should be reflected in a budget forecast of \$500 for the Falcon Watch, \$600 General (covering primarily the Fall and Christmas Bird Counts) and \$550 Bird Status Line for a total of \$1650.
- **Special Project** - The Birds Committee is requesting additional funding to support the effort to update the "Birder's Checklist of Ottawa" last produced in 1993 and to present the results digitally on the web.
  - Motion: that the Council support the effort in principle and authorize the expenditure of up to \$500 to scope out the technical requirements, level of effort and skill sets necessary to address the programming (web site) elements of the initiative, with the results to form the basis of project plan and substantive cost estimate to be presented to Council for approval.
- **Seedathon** - This year's seedathon was held on Sunday, 2 Sep. The team of Bob Cermak, Kim Zbitnew and Bernie Ladouceur tallied a total of 123 species and almost \$1000 has been pledged so far.
- **Bird Counts** - The Fall count will be held over the weekend of 20-21 October while the Christmas count will be on 16 Dec.

## **B. Nature Canada**

**IBA Lac Deschênes** - The working group met on 19 July. Two promotional events were scheduled in August to coincide with the NCC Bike Days. The first on 12 Aug went well with more than 60 people stopping to receive information and discuss the effort. The second was scheduled for 26 Aug but did not go according to plan due to a last minute change in location required by the NCC. The next promotional event is tentatively scheduled for 3 Nov. Details will be discussed at the next working group meeting scheduled for 20 Sep. The OFNC will be represented by Council members Rémy Poulin and Don Hackett.

## **C. Fletcher Wildlife Garden, report for September 17<sup>th</sup>** (Submitted by David Hobden)

FWG is having a busy and productive season despite the lack of bus service which has affected some volunteers. Our regular Friday morning group has operated as usual. Work in the butterfly meadow (Wednesday evenings) has attracted a good number of volunteers this year and all planned work was accomplished, including the establishment of a model monarch waystation. Over 3000 perennials - grown commercially for us from seed we provided - were planted, as some of us saw at our last meeting. Although the Tuesday Invasive Species Group lost several volunteers over the season, they are doing a remarkable job keeping DSV under control. Their efforts were supplemented by mowing by AAFC in the new woodlot area and four Sunday morning weed bees using our own volunteers and members of the public. These have also attracted high school students looking to fulfill their community service commitment. Corporate groups, which also provide funding, were put to work planting in the butterfly meadow and the ravine. The latter project allowed us to buy about 100 trees and shrubs to replace buckthorn and other invasives that had been cleared. Most of these plants are doing well thanks to watering by volunteers.

Our membership with Volunteer Ottawa has resulted in a number of contacts with individual and corporate volunteers. The club can also use this site.

The Sunday afternoon opening of the Interpretation Centre, which has worked well in previous years, suffered from a lack of volunteers this year and missed several Sundays.

## **D. Education & Publicity Meeting**

This Committee met 13 September. We welcomed newcomer Mark Brenchley as provisional member of this committee.

Ann Prescott ably continues to staff the tables at our monthly meeting and noted

that stocks of many things were low or gone. This committee is looking into the possibility of selling hand lenses with lanyards, the latter to have our Club logo.

We continue to get requests for field trip leaders and this summer we were able to satisfy a few but not all such requests. Gillian Marston and Suzanne Dechênes are back and will represent the OFNC at Larose Forest Day, Saturday September 29<sup>th</sup>.

This Committee hopes to have text and pictures for our webpage up and running soon and we are working on designing an OFNC bookmark, similar to that of the Macoun Club rather than making a flier. We feel the need to have some sort of catchy advertising to give people at the various venues where we represent the Club.

Fenja Brodo  
Chair, Education & Publicity

#### **E. Macoun Field Club Report for September 17, 2012**

(Submitted by Diane Kitching)

The Committee had a planning meeting in late August, at which we set up our schedule for talks and field trips through December. We have some speakers who have agreed to come, and we are actively looking for more.

We held our first indoor meeting at FWG on September 8<sup>th</sup>. Most members from last year have come back, and we have several new and enthusiastic members who also came on the field trip to the study area on September 15<sup>th</sup>. We began the trip at the Sarsaparilla Trail, where the members' enthusiasm for feeding chickadees and nuthatches was well rewarded by some very eager birds. After looking at various features in the Sarsaparilla Trail area, including the presence of dog-strangling vine, we moved to our regular study area for the remainder of the afternoon.

The article in the *Ottawa Citizen* by Phil Jenkins resulted in two new members and strong interest from a third person.

#### **F. Publications Ctee Report to Council: September 2012**

Publications activities continue to progress well. The T&L July-September issue was published on schedule and significant advancement has been made in the continuing catching-up of the CFN publication schedule. All of volume 125 has been published. We continue to benefit from authors with resources to permit colour illustrations - a significant visual asset. The diversity and technical weight of submissions remains good. The first issue of volume 126 will be in circulation within a week - possibly even before the Council meeting. The second issue is

targeted for release in November and the third issue before the end of December. If that is achieved, the journal will be on-time, as the final issue is typically released early in the following calendar year.

The CFN/ OFNC representation at this summer's Evolutionary Biology conference in Ottawa was an effective and successful promotion of the journal and our publication program within that important constituency. A report on the CFN representation by Jay Fitzsimmons (who led the effort) is attached; [see below](#). Jay is also representing and promoting CFN at an Ontario entomological conference in eastern Ontario later this fall. These promotional efforts are valuable for generating readership and contributions and we will be watching for indications of direct results.

The Publications Committee will hold its first meeting of the fall in early October. We are hoping to hold it at CFN Editor Carolyn Callaghan's farm near Luskville as a combination field outing (we're all naturalists, right?) and business meeting. Amongst other issues we will address the issue of a CFN endowment fund and the options for speeding up indexing for the journal.

Dan Brunton  
Chairman, Publications Ctee

### **The Canadian Field-Naturalist at the Evolution 2012 Conference**

CONFERENCE NAME: Evolution Ottawa 2012

DATES: July 6-10 2012, PLACE: Ottawa Convention Centre (the new one downtown)

NUMBER OF ATTENDEES: Approx 2500

PARTICIPATING SOCIETIES:

- American Society of Naturalists (ASN)
- Canadian Society for Ecology and Evolution (CSEE)
- European Society for Evolutionary Biology (ESEB)
- Society for the Study of Evolution (SSE)
- Society of Systematic Biologists (SSB)

SPONSORSHIP LEVEL: Bronze (the cheapest available). This provided CFN with a table in the sponsor area where Carolyn and Jay could meet attendees.

CFN's GOAL: Solicit more manuscripts from this pool of potential authors.

CFN's MESSAGING: CFN has made major improvements recently that make it a more attractive journal in which biologists should publish their research. Our branding linked CFN's proud history with its recent innovations as a "best of old and new" combination.

CFN MATERIALS:

- SLOGAN: The Canadian Field-Naturalist: an up-and-coming old journal
  - Thanks to Lauren Fitzsimmons for coming up with this.
- BANNERS:

- Two banners voluntarily designed by Jay's friend Dan Conroy, a graphic designer. - Bonus owl: Dan edited the OFNC owl logo so it is on a transparent background rather than white (so we can put the owl on any background now), and made the lines more crisp so it still looks ok when resized within reason (.png file format). I've sent this file to Sandy Garland; others can get the file from me upon request.
- One banner hung at the front of our table, and the other overtop our booth.
- The booth next to ours (The International Biogeography Society) did not have a banner at first, but went out and printed one a day into the conference after seeing how much our banner increased our visibility.
- POSTCARDS:
  - Jay designed, and Merriam Print Shop printed, 400 promotional materials on postcard-sized cardstock (8.5 × 5.5", black ink). These emphasized CFN's history and recent improvements on one side, and reasons to publish with CFN on the other side. Thanks to Jay, Lauren, and Gillian Mastromatteo for contributing photos. We made postcards freely available on our booth table and beside the main registration desk.
  - We included QR codes so attendees could scan codes with their phone to go directly to the CFN website. This is useful not only for driving people to our site but also as a signal of CFN's new innovations; the medium of QR codes is part of our message.
- APP BANNER:
  - While printed booklets were available for a fee, the primary tool attendees used for viewing the conference schedule was a free mobile app for smartphones. We were among the few sponsors who submitted a logo in the appropriate format for this app. One of the few logos would appear at the bottom of every page attendees viewed on their app; our logo was viewed many thousands of times.
- TWITTER:
  - We created a Twitter account (@CanFieldNat) in advance of this conference to drive a new group of readers to the CFN website. Tweeting at the conference attracted more "followers" of the CFN twitter account; these biologists will receive all future CFN tweets including announcements of new articles published.
- POSTER NOTES:



- We prepared some notes that Carolyn pinned onto posters reporting CFN-relevant research. Carolyn wrote a note congratulating the authors on their research and inviting them to consider submitting the resulting manuscript to CFN. Our booth location, website, etc. were printed on each note.
- One author came to our booth to talk to Carolyn after she had pinned such a note on his fish poster. He indicated he would discuss with his co-authors whether to submit their work to CFN, and that he would keep CFN in mind for his future research projects.
- OWL:
  - Carolyn brought her stuffed Great Horned Owl for our booth. It stood out and brought curious people in (even catering staff)!
- RE-USE:
  - All materials other than poster notes are available for future CFN sponsorship opportunities.
  - All printed materials were printed on FSC-certified paper with eco-solvent inks when available.

**OVERALL:**

Given the evolution focus of the conference, we were pleasantly surprised how many researchers came to speak with us and indicated they would submit research to CFN in the near future. Even strictly evolutionary biologists are often involved in natural history side-projects, and CFN's Notes appealed to them as the perfect place for side projects and students' research. Carolyn and I also enjoyed seeing interesting talks and posters, and meeting good people (putting faces to names of current CFN authors we met and meeting potential new authors and even associate editors). We succeeded in making many biologists aware of CFN's recent improvements, and we're hopeful that our work will result in more submissions, readership, and citations for CFN.