

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

May 13, 2013

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

Chair: Fenja Brodo

Council Members Present: Annie Bélair, Dan Brunton, Owen Clarkin, Barry Cottam, Ian Davidson, David Hobden, Diane Kitching, Diane Lepage, Ann MacKenzie, Lynn Ovenden, Rémy Poulin, Henry Steger, Ken Young,

Council Members Absent: Carolyn Callaghan, Barbara Chouinard, Don Hackett, Karen McLachlan Hamilton, Jeff Skevington, Eleanor Zurbrigg

Guests: Chris Traynor (Chair of Birds Committee), Mark Armstrong

1. Minutes of the April 15, 2013 meeting

On April 25, Ken sent a correction to the minutes to Annie, the revised version was not sent to Council. Ken therefore read the part he recommended deleting under the Treasurer's report.

ACTION: Annie to send revised minutes to Council.

Moved by A. Bélair/R. Poulin that the
April 15th minutes be accepted with this modification.

Carried

2. Bequest from Laurie Consaul

Mark Armstrong, husband of Laurie Consaul who passed away in December 2012, was invited to the Council meeting by Ken and Fenja to present the generous bequest Laurie wished to give to the OFNC. (See [Annex 1](#) for the letter Mark wrote to the OFNC to accompany the gift.)

Fenja told Mark that the OFNC is extremely grateful. A tree will be planted in Laurie's memory and Mark, along with friends and family, will be invited to the tree-planting ceremony at the FWG.

3. Communications

- a. The OFNC received an invitation from the Governor General to attend the opening of a section of the Trans Canada Trail at Rideau Hall on May 24.
- b. The OFNC also received an invitation from the Greenspace Alliance of Canada's Capital to attend a panel discussion entitled "Natural Linkages: Why they Matter and How to Protect Them" on June 8.

4. Birds Committee R. Poulin and C. Traynor

- a. Rémy announced that three new people wish to join the Birds Committee and asked for Council's approval.

MOTION: That Council approves the nomination of Tony Beck, Nina Stavlund and Gillian Mastromatteo as members of the Birds Committee.

Moved by R. Poulin/D. Brunton
CARRIED

- b. At the Council meeting on April 15, a motion was passed to have the eBird widget reinstated on the OFNC website. After hearing of this decision, the Birds Committee discussed the matter and Chris sent their unanimous response to Council members. The Committee objected to these proceedings because there was no representation from the Birds Committee at the Council meeting when this vote took place.

Chris reiterated that the widget, by displaying owl sightings, contravenes the OFNC Code of Conduct (to put the welfare of birds before our own) and the OFNC's policy that owl sightings should not be reported. He added that if there would have been a member of the Birds Committee at Council on April 15th, he or she would have been able to tell Council that a patch to filter out owl sightings is being developed for the widget.

MOTION: That Council nullifies the decision taken at the meeting on April 15th to have the eBird widget re-established on the OFNC website, since the procedure that Council followed was inappropriate.

Moved by R. Poulin/H. Steger

Vote: In favour: 8; Opposed: 4

CARRIED

- c. Since members of the Birds Committee (Chris and Rémy) were present at this Council meeting (May 13th), Dan wished to move that the widget be put back.

MOTION: That the eBird widget be put back on the OFNC website as is, and when the patch to filter out owl sightings is fully functional, it will be added.

Moved by D. Brunton/K. Young

SECOND MOTION: That Council votes on the motion above at the June meeting.

Moved by O.Clarkin/K. Young

Vote: In favour: 7; Opposed: 4; Abstained: 1

CARRIED

- d. The discussion around points b and c above was very long. Here are other issues that were mentioned, though no decision was taken.

- i. The need for a process to put things on the OFNC website.
- ii. The withholding of information to protect sensitive bird species.
- iii. The loss of data available to our membership if sightings are not reported.

- e. Chris and Rémy also mentioned activities planned by the Bird Study Group (BSG) in the next few months. Fenja asked why these activities were not advertized in T&L

with the club's events. Chris said that the BSG's activities are planned quickly, which doesn't allow for announcements to be sent to T&L before its deadlines for publication. On the birding page of the OFNC website, the BSG is listed under the "Current committee initiatives and resources" and anyone can ask to be added to their distribution list to receive notice of upcoming bird study group sessions. And although not all its members are members of the OFNC, they are encouraged to join.

5. Conservation Committee O. Clarkin

No report.

Owen brought a copy of *Field Guide to the Jewel Beetles of Northeastern North America* for the FWG library.

6. Education and Publicity L. Ovenden

- a. The OFNC bookmarks have been printed. Lynn gave some to all Council members and encouraged everyone to give them out.
- b. Youth Summit in September 2013: Mark Brenchley of the Education and Publicity Committee offered to develop a process for advertising the opportunity and selecting a local youth to attend. The funding required for the conference is \$300. Because the Committee needs to select a student before the end of the school year, Council agreed not to defer the vote until the next meeting, as is the policy for amounts over \$100.

MOTION: That Council gives \$300 to sponsor a high school student of the Ottawa region to attend the Youth Summit in September 2013.

Moved by L. Ovenden/D. Lepage

Discussion: Council asked about the cost of transportation and said that it would be unfortunate if the selected student could not afford to get to and from Toronto.

AMENDED MOTION: That Council gives \$300 to sponsor a high school student of the Ottawa region to attend the Youth Summit in September 2013, plus \$200 maximum for a return bus fare between Ottawa and Toronto if deemed necessary.

CARRIED

- c. A Larose Forest booklet will be published as an OFNC special publication by the Publications Committee.
- d. The new OFNC sign has been added to the FWG sign on Prince of Wales.
- e. The Nature Canada Bird Fair to promote the Lac Deschênes - Ottawa River Important Bird Area (IBA) took place on May 12. Lynn was there with the OFNC display to represent the club; Annie was there to promote the Macoun Club. Despite the cold and windy weather, there was a good turnout.
- f. As the club has sold a good portion of the hand lenses and OFNC lanyards, the Education and Publicity Committee proposed to sell lens wipes with the club logo as well.

MOTION: That Council approves the expense of approximately \$700 to buy 150 lens wipes with the OFNC logo.

Moved by L. Ovenden

Council will vote on this motion at the June meeting as per the policy on votes pertaining to amounts over \$100.

7. Finance Committee

The Finance Committee reported that they sent a letter to the Camfield family, explaining the proposal to change the method of allocating interest to externally restricted funds. The proposal was accepted by Council in March 2013 and will come into effect if the Camfield family agrees.

8. Fletcher Wildlife Garden B. Cottam

Barry informed the council that he had resigned, with regret, as chair of the management committee of the Fletcher Wildlife Garden. He explained that his mandate as chair was unclear and that instances of being undermined in some of his attempts to bring about change had resulted in more frustration than volunteers should be expected to tolerate. He is now a member at large of the OFNC council.

9. Nature Canada and the BirdLife International World Congress in June 2013

Now that the volunteers to lead the bird walks have been found, Nature Canada is asking for volunteers to help with other tasks during the Congress.

ACTIONS: Rémy to craft message with list of tasks and send to Henry. Henry to forward to OFNC members.

Ann to mention at monthly meeting on May 15.

10. Ontario Nature D. Lepage

- a. The Kingston Field Naturalists are inviting OFNC members to join them for a bioblitz at the Depot Creek Nature Reserve on June 14-15.
- b. The Annual General Meeting will take place in Newmarket on June 8.
- c. There will also be a bioblitz at the new Rouge National Park in Toronto on September 14-15.

11. Macoun Club

See [Annex 2](#) for the Macoun Club report sent by Diane K. prior to the meeting.

12. Motion to adjourn:

Moved by D. Brunton/A. MacKenzie that the meeting be adjourned at 9:40 p.m.

CARRIED

Recording Secretary: A. Bélair

Meetings in 2013:

June 17

September 16

October 21

November 18

December 16

Annex 1

April 23, 2013

To the Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club –

My wife, Laurie Consaul, was a long-time and active member of the OFN Club. It was her wish on passing that a legacy be left to the club. Enclosed is this legacy.

Laurie had a passion for our natural world. As a professional botanist she of course loved plants. She had a very long interest in the bird world as well – since a young girl in fact. Laurie participated in bird surveys of all kinds including being a volunteer in two Ontario Bird Breeding Atlases. Laurie was a member of the Bird's Committee in the OFN Club, her last position being the recording secretary.

The direction of the legacy that Laurie left should be used as best felt by the OFN Club Steering Committee. However, it is hoped that some funds could be directed to the annual bird seed program. Laurie maintained the bird feeders on our property and took delight in watching the activity it created.

If possible, it would be nice to have a tree planted at the Fletcher Wildlife Garden in Laurie's name. This would be a lasting memory of Laurie who so much enjoyed nature and everything in it.

Sincerely –

Mark Armstrong

Macoun Field Club Report for May 13, 2013

Since my last report on February 18, we generally have maintained our pattern of alternating field trips (4) with indoor meetings (5) at FWG.

On February 23, we first looked at the big map of the Ottawa area that is in the FWG, and Rob explained how different geographic and human activities were depicted on it. This was followed by a look at a web site featuring all kinds of mites, as part of study we will be doing to track the destruction of forest floor fauna by invasive European earthworms. At our next meeting, Fenja – using insects from her collection – helped us look at insects through microscopes. Matt Ellerbeck was at our March 23rd meeting. He explained the plight of salamanders in Eastern Ontario, including the harmful effects of habitat destruction and fragmentation. His colleague, Clint, brought in a very calm snapping turtle that didn't mind being close to children, and explained that turtles, too, were at risk from habitat loss and fragmentation. On April 27th, Dave Seburn described the frogs of the Ottawa area, accompanied by photos and recorded calls. At the end of the meeting we had a short ID quiz. At our most recent meeting (May 11), we had a drawing workshop which resulted in lots of illustrations for the upcoming Little Bear.

Our field trips all involved water in one way or another. On April 6 we had a short visit to the Study Tree Woods: short because most of our time was spent testing the properties of the ice we encountered on puddles and melt water pools as we walked along. Would it bear weight? Was it slippery? How big a piece of ice could I pick up? Could I crack it without getting a soaker? On April 20, we went to the Sarsaparilla Trail looking for signs of spring; the ice had melted from the pond and we saw geese and ducks.

May 4th (Study Area) and May 5th (Brewer Park with the OFNC trip) were frog days. In Stony Swamp we spent happy hours in seasonal ponds, finding frogs, a newt, salamander eggs, caddis flies by the hundreds, and lots and lots of mosquito wrigglers. Happily for us, there were no adult mosquitoes. We also found two very young water snakes. At Brewer Park there was a good variety of pond life, including many, many frogs. This event was well-attended by the local community, and was an excellent way of introducing people to the OFNC and Macoun Club.

Diane Kitching