

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

October 21, 2013

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

Chair: Henry Steger (for Fenja Brodo)

Council Members Present: Annie Bélair, Don Hackett, Diane Kitching, Diane Lepage, Lynn Ovenden, Ken Young, Eleanor Zurbrigg

Council Members Absent: Fenja Brodo, Dan Brunton, Carolyn Callaghan, Barbara Chouinard, Owen Clarkin, Barry Cottam, Ian Davidson, David Hobden, Karen McLachlan Hamilton, Ann MacKenzie, Rémy Poulin, Jeff Skevington

1. Minutes of the September 16, 2013 meeting

Moved by A. Bélair/D. Kitching that the
September 16th minutes be accepted as distributed.

Carried

2. Business Arising from Minutes

The Birds Committee said that donations made in memory of Bob Bracken can be used by the Macoun Club.

3. Nature Canada Recognition Award to OFNC

Ian Davidson of Nature Canada informed Council just prior to the meeting that he was unable to attend to present the Award.

4. 2013-2014 OFNC Budget K. Young

- a. The FWG Committee has not sent their budget forecast for 2014 to the Finance Committee yet; they have a committee meeting on Oct. 23 and will approve it then.
ACTION: FWG to send the details of their budget forecast to Barbara Chouinard by Nov. 12, one week before the next Council meeting.

- b. Approval of the 2014 budget:

MOTION: That Council approves the OFNC budget for fiscal year 2014
as circulated prior to this meeting.

Moved by K. Young/D. Lepage

CARRIED

- c. Ken briefly mentioned that he would like to eventually turn the budget exercise into a planning activity. For example, he said that each committee could present scenarios A, B, C, etc. in order to share their ideas with Council.

5. Joint Memberships between the OFNC and the Canadian Museum of Nature (CMN)

Council discussed the item, introduced by Ann MacKenzie at the September meeting, regarding the continuing of the OFNC membership discount to CMN members. Only eight members took advantage of it in 2013 and CMN does not provide a reciprocal benefit to

OFNC members.

MOTION: That Council agrees to stop offering a discount on OFNC memberships to CMN members.

Moved by H. Steger/K. Young
CARRIED

6. Termination of Bird Status Line

In the Birds Committee report that Rémy sent to Council prior to the meeting (see [item #2](#) in [Annex 1](#)), the committee recommends cancelling the Bird Status line as it did not warrant the annual cost of approximately \$600.

MOTION: That Council approves the termination of the Bird Status Line effective immediately and amend the Birds Committee's Terms of Reference and 2014 budget accordingly.

Moved by H. Steger/L. Ovenden
CARRIED

ACTION: Ken to amend the Birds Committee's budget for 2014 accordingly.

7. 2013 Annual Reports

All committee chairs are requested to present their annual report to Council for approval; some have been received already.

ACTION: All committee chairs to send their annual report to Council before the Nov. 18 meeting, if not already done.

Council members present also noted that publishing the annual reports in T&L (not just in the CFN) would be an additional way to let members know how much activity takes place over the year and perhaps even entice them to join a committee.

MOTION: That the OFNC publishes the annual reports in Trail & Landscape on top of its traditional publication in the Canadian Field-Naturalist.

Moved by H. Steger/L. Ovenden
Council will discuss at the November meeting.

8. Requests to Forward Third-Party Information to OFNC Members H. Steger

The Club currently receives requests from individuals or organizations to put a publicity/information notice on the OFNC website or email it to OFNC members. Many such requests are more than purely informational and can be of true interest and concern to the Club and should be acted on. Although we should respect the wish of those members who have requested not to receive email notices, we at the same time have an obligation to forward information of natural history impact to all.

Henry had mentioned to Council, via email, that he would like to have a discussion on whether Council is satisfied with the current practice of polling for each request or if is time to begin to think about setting a policy and subsequently putting into a place a procedure to handle these requests. Some points to consider are:

- a. Is it sufficient to post on the web or important or urgent enough to ensure individual members receive it by email?
- b. Do we send the email to all members or only those who want to receive email notices?
- c. Who will decide whether to acquiesce or not to the request?

This discussion will be on the agenda of the November meeting.

9. New Business L. Ovenden

Lynn tabled the idea that a communications working group could be formed to oversee the website and social media pages and perhaps coordinate the club's communications. Council members pointed out that on top of the OFNC website, there are separate websites that are maintained by some committees; consolidating all OFNC websites and giving them a common and more modern look could be a good idea.

ACTION: Lynn to speak to Sandy Garland, the current webmaster, to get her opinion on the situation and to see if she would have suggestions.

10. Education and Publicity L. Ovenden

See [Annex 2](#) for Lynn's report.

She brought 2 points to Council's attention:

- a. Mark Brenchley is assembling the various forms of the OFNC logo and drafting guidelines for how we apply the logo to various OFNC products.
- b. The committee is looking for a volunteer with publicity skills to help the OFNC advertize itself and its activities. She will write an ad for the "Lend a Hand" section of our website, she will ask Fenja to mention this at the next few monthly meetings and she will write an article for T&L.

11. Awards E. Zurbrigg

Eleanor announced that it was time to send nominations for the 2013 OFNC awards. The deadline is Dec. 31st.

The call for nominations will also be posted on the website and Henry will send it by email to members.

12. Ontario Nature D. Lepage

Diane, Don and Fenja attended the Eastern Ontario Regional Meeting on Sept. 21, in Bloomfield, Prince Edward County. Diane went through some highlights from the other five clubs present.

The next regional meeting will be in Ottawa, at the Fletcher Wildlife Garden, on April 12, 2014. It will be announced in T&L.

As for the 2014 Annual General Meeting, it will be at the YMCA Geneva Park on Lake Couchiching, June 20-22, 2014.

13. Other Committee Reports

The other committee reports sent prior to the meeting are attached as annexes:

- [Annex 1](#): Birds Committee report
- [Annex 3](#): FWG report
- [Annex 4](#): Macoun Club report
- [Annex 5](#): Treasurer's report

14. Motion to adjourn:

Moved by D. Lepage /D. Hackett that the meeting be adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

CARRIED

Recording Secretary: A. Bélair

Meetings in 2013:

November 18

December 16

Birds Committee (BC) Report to OFNC Council – Oct 2013

1. Budget. The BC met on Sep 30th and discussed the draft 2014 budget tabled at the last Council meeting. The BC concurred with the proposed amount of \$1650, pending a Council decision on the Bird Status Line (*see below*), and the additional \$500 to go towards the production of an electronic Ottawa bird checklist.
2. Bird Status Line (BSL). The Club operates the BSL, which allows users to phone in and either record a sighting observation or listen to a weekly bird status report compiled by Bob Cermak of the BC. That weekly report is also provided on the OFNC website and Facebook page as well as on the ONTBIRDS ListServ. Back in August of 2012, the Finance Committee asked if the BSL was used enough to warrant the annual cost to the Club of approx \$600. At the time, the BC recommended that we continue to operate the BSL for another year to allow for the collection of usage statistics. A review of the data collected for the 20-month period from January 2012 to August 2013 shows a monthly average of seven to eight sighting reports made to the BSL by about five individuals. In comparison, Bob typically receives on the order of 80 to 100 bird sighting reports monthly via e-mail. Furthermore, there were very few reports made to the BSL that were not “echoed” by e-mail reports, especially to ONTBIRDS. The system is such that it is not possible to determine how many calls were made to the BSL solely for the purpose of listening to the weekly report. Regardless, in light of the reporting statistics coupled with the availability of the bird sighting information via various electronic sources, the BC recommends that the BSL be discontinued following a suitable notification period.

Recommendation – That Council approves the termination of the Bird Status Line effective 1 Feb 2014 and amend the Birds Committee’s Terms of Reference and 2014 budget accordingly. It is further recommended that a notice be placed on the Club website to advise the OFNC membership of this upcoming change.

3. Fatal Light Awareness Program (FLAP). FLAP is a Toronto based not-for-profit organization whose aim is to safeguard migratory birds in the urban environment through education, research, rescue and rehabilitation. Anouk Hoedeman of the BC is exploring the potential for establishing an Ottawa chapter of FLAP and has initiated discussions with Nature Canada to gauge their interest in participating.
4. OspreyCam. As reported at the last Council meeting, the Innis Point Bird Observatory (IPBO) has an Osprey platform that was successfully used by a breeding pair this past season. They are now working to install a webcam on that platform. The BC has initiated discussions with the IPBO to explore how the OFNC could perhaps assist them in this project. A meeting has been tentatively scheduled for early November, the results of which will be discussed at BC and reported to Council.
5. Ontario Field Ornithologist (OFO) Fall Convention, 2014. As reported at the last Council meeting, the OFO’s 2014 convention will be held in Ottawa in the September/October time

frame. The BC has established an ad hoc committee to liaise with the OFO and assist them in organizing this event.

6. Donations in memory of Bob Bracken. At the last Council meeting, the Club Treasurer advised that a number of donations had been received in memory of Bob Bracken and asked for ideas on how best to use the money. The BC has since forwarded the suggestion that the funds go to the Macoun Club in recognition that that is how Bob got his start with the OFNC and that this involvement marked the beginning of his “road into nature.”

Rémy Poulin

Education & Publicity Committee Report to OFNC Council – Oct 2013

The committee met on Sept.24 to discuss the following ongoing projects and new initiatives:

1. Lens wipes have been ordered (150 units with OFNC logo) and will be available at the November monthly meeting for \$8 each, 2 for \$15. At \$8 each, we break even at 82 units. Total cost is \$651.52.

2. Sponsorship to Ontario Nature Youth Summit for Biodiversity

Sarah Wray was selected to receive OFNC's \$300 sponsorship. She attended the Sept.20-22 gathering in Orillia and will be introduced to club members at the November monthly meeting. Sarah volunteers at FWG. We are writing a short story about this for the Nov/Dec FWG newsletter.

3. Larose Forest booklet

The bilingual text is almost complete.

4. Sales table and OFNC budget

E&P expenses and revenues last year were each about \$1800. Expenses include the OFNC sign at FWG, bookmarks, science fair prizes and the Youth Summit sponsorship. For the Christmas season, we have lens wipes, Ontario Nature greeting cards and loupes with the OFNC lanyard.

5. OFNC Logo (owl and club name)

We considered several versions of the logo. They vary in language, colour of font and background, full name vs abbreviation, shape. Mark is drafting something to help Council decide some guidelines for use of the logo on various products: letterhead, publications, newsletters, website, clothing, bottle, etc.

6. Publicity

We want to advertise for someone to lead us in publicizing club events and accomplishments, e.g. a page on ofnc.ca for "What's Happening" or "News & Notes" type of content, articles in newsletters, press releases and 'Our Town' notices in the Citizen, posters, content for Facebook and Twitter.

7. Other areas where the E&P program could grow if someone volunteered: providing trip leaders and speakers as requested by outside groups through education@ofnc.ca ; creating a display about OFNC suitable for many types of event, audience and weather.

Lynn Ovenden

Fletcher Wildlife Garden Committee Report to Council – Sept-Oct 2013

1. News from the Management Committee:

- under David Hobden's guidance, our first budget has been prepared
- there is general agreement that the Collaborative Agreement between AAFC and the OFNC be renewed without any changes for another five-year period; a meeting will be set up between the parties for this purpose in January after the OFNC ABM
- a job description for the role of habitat manager is nearly ready
- our new IC managers are meeting with the MC on Oct. 23rd to discuss their new role
- habitat reports and work plans are or will soon be available for the Butterfly Meadow, Old Field and Ash Woods; a proposal for work on the New Woods is in early stages of preparation
- the MC is continuing with a rotating chair for the foreseeable future

2. A corner of the birch grove is in final stages of preparation for the planting of a hickory in honour of Laurie Consaul. A large stump has been removed, the gravel pile has been relocated and the area rototilled.

3. Our PBase account has been renewed for another year; over a million people have visited the FWG galleries, now containing over 5000 photos. An article on this will appear in our next newsletter.

4. The TISG is exploring the use of potentially labour saving devices such as brush cutters, both weed wacker-style and walk-behind. Provision has been made in the budget for purchase but the group is still evaluating them. Barry is attending his third OIPC annual meeting and will report to the MC next week.

5. DSV research continues; no results yet on the mystery circles, now the subject of at least two experiments. The CEF is overwintering moth larvae that have been approved for release at the FWG next Spring. Apparently there is some hope that these insects will eventually have an impact on DSV.

6. Bug Day, held at the FWG on Sept. 7, was a roaring success and lots of fun. May it be the first of many.

7. On Sept. 14, the FWG was the 8th of 10 sites on the first Ottawa Sustainability Tour, a new concept in promoting sustainability in many different areas; the FWG represented the theme of habitat.

8. On Sept. 23, about 80 Carleton University students from Renate Sander-Regier's Environmental Studies course spent their class time at the FWG. Divided into 5 groups with 10 volunteers coordinating their efforts, four groups removed invasives along the service road in the NE corner of the Old Field and in parts of the Butterfly Meadow; they followed up by mulching around trees with newspapers and wood chips. The fifth group contributed to the Monarch Way Station project by removing DSV and planting donated milkweed in the field

north of the Ash Woods.

9. On October 18, the Friday volunteers visited the new research garden being developed by a professor in Carleton University's Biology Department. Discussion included potential collaboration with FWG.

10. Shell has declined our FuellingChange grant application. We may have an alternative route for excavating the pond, but other aspects of the project are now on hold.

Barry Cottam

MFC Report, 21 October 2013

We have had three indoor meetings and one field trip since our last report to Council. On September 21, Rob talked about the passage of seasons, and how changes can be “read” in both geologic time and historical time. He brought in several specimens for us to look at. On October 5th, elections were held, and we now have a new president, vice-president, and secretary. After elections, we had a photo “show and tell”, with members showing photos they had taken of over the summer of interesting things like rocks, insects, life on and around the seashore, and plants. On October 19th, Annie and Diane gave an illustrated talk on macrofungi. Our field trip (September 28th) was to White Lake. This is a year of abundant seed crops, and members sought out beech nuts and bur oak acorns, to be kept, dried and sampled at a later date.

Diane Kitching

Treasurer's Report to Council – October 2013

1. Committee Budgets

At the September Council meeting, Council decided to transfer the FWG budget amount for FY2013 from the OFNC general account to the bank account maintained for the Fletcher Wildlife Garden.

At the October Council meeting, we will finalize the budget for FY2014. The question remains of how to define the budget amounts for the FWG, and other committees.

A committee budget should be interpreted as an amount that can be spent on authorized purposes during the fiscal year. If a committee doesn't spend its budget, then the unspent amount should lapse. If the committee wants to spend the money during the next fiscal year, it should include it in its budget for that year.

For example, the Birds Committee didn't spend \$500 that was included in its FY2013 budget for preparatory work on a bird checklist. However, the committee wants the work to be done in FY2014. The committee should include \$500 (or whatever) in the budget for FY2014.

Similarly, a committee budget should be comprehensive. It should include all the expenditures that the committee envisages during the fiscal year.

Using the Birds Committee as an example again, it is responsible for operating the Club bird feeders. To this end, it raises money via the Seedathon, and buys seed. The committee should consider whether the funds raised in the Seedathon will be sufficient to pay for the required bird seed and any other costs. If not, it should include the difference as an amount to be paid out of OFNC general funds.

In both cases, Council will have a better idea what to expect in terms of projects undertaken and their revenues and expenses. The budget process is an opportunity for planning the activities of the Club.

Council can decide to modify these principals. One way is to establish a separate bank account for the committee/activity in question. This is the way that the FWG carry-over has been done.

Another is to establish a fund. This has been done for the Seedathon, for example.

However, the principle that the budget should consider all revenue and expense sources should still be followed.

2. Violetta Czasak Bequest

The court proceedings to have me made executor are completed.

The next steps are to search for possible unknown creditors, sell the condominium and consolidate the cash into a single estate account. There are a lot of nitpicky details to take care of before the estate is completely settled.

Ken Young, Treasurer