

Meeting of the Board of Directors (BoD) of the Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club
Tuesday, November 18, 2019 – 7:00 p.m.

Minutes

Fletcher Wildlife Garden Resource Centre, CEF, Ottawa

Chair: Diane Lepage

Present: Ted Farnworth, Jakob Mueller, Fenja Brodo, Ken Young, Ann MacKenzie, Diane Kitching, Bev McBride, Eleanor Zurbrigg, Bob Cermak, Henry Steger, Catherine Hessian, Owen Clarkin, Elizabeth Moore, Anouk Hoedeman, Jeff Saarela

Absent: Annie Belair, Gord Robertson,

1. Approval of the Agenda – approved as circulated
2. Acceptance of Minutes from October 2019 – **Moved by** Elizabeth Moore, seconded by Bev McBride, acceptance of the October, 2019 minutes. **CARRIED**
3. Burnt Lands Alvar – Tineke Kuiper of the Mississippi Valley Field Naturalists Club, with input from John Blais, delivered a presentation in support of their request for OFNC assistance in raising awareness of the importance of the Burnt Lands Alvar. The Alvar is under threat of development and is also sustaining damage from increasing recreational activity. The MVFNC feels that development of a web site would be useful and are seeking financial and technological support for this. The meeting discussed the type of content that might be appropriate. The value of scientific content compared with that of content designed to appeal to a general audience was discussed. The BoD will discuss this request at an upcoming meeting.
4. Nature Conservancy Canada (NCC) - Diane/Anouk: attended NCC's NatureTalks Ottawa and the reception preceding the presentations. OFNC previously had a connection with NCC and they are interested in re-establishing a relationship. Gary Bell, NCC Program Director for Eastern Ontario, is retiring. **Diane will send a note to him conveying OFNC's good wishes.**
5. Business Arising from Minutes
 - a. Museum of Nature discount (Diane) – item deferred
 - b. Naturalist Newsletter Exchange – follow-up: Jakob has responded to Jason Ramsay-Brown's expression of interest in connecting with other Ontario FNCs through sharing newsletters. Jakob acknowledged that this was a nice idea but suggested the logistics would be difficult given the differences in production of newsletters.
6. Communications – a number of publications were circulated.
7. Treasurer's Report – nil to report

8. Issues for Discussion/Decisions

- a. Brian Coburn Extension vs. Mer Bleue (disagreement between the City and NCC, upcoming public meeting): Jakob drew the attention of the BoD to the City's proposal to overcome traffic congestion caused by development around Orleans. The plan calls for widening of sections of Blair, Renaud, Navan and Brian Coburn from two lanes to four and creation of two new four-lane roads. Bus Rapid Transit would utilise most of the widened stretches of road. Much of the proposed extension is immediately adjacent to Mud Creek and one of the proposed new roads would fragment a section of Mer Bleue habitat. The plan would utilise federal land over which the City has no jurisdiction and has been opposed by the National Capital Commission. An open house has been advertised at short notice for November 19 by the City. Jakob is planning to attend and other members of the BoD were encouraged to attend. Anouk suggested that it would be useful to contact the councillors whose wards cover the relevant area.
- b. Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) – at the November monthly meeting Keith Monro, a biologist with the Ottawa Federation of Anglers and Hunters, delivered a presentation about CWD, a prion disease in deer and potentially any other cervid which is always fatal, and also about the environmental damage associated with the increasing occurrence of wild pigs. Neither of these issues is currently a problem in Ottawa but CWD has occurred on a deer farm in Quebec and wild pigs are being seen increasingly in surrounding areas. OFNC should be prepared to support efforts to prevent these problems occurring in Ottawa and support prompt measures to deal with them if they do arise. Both issues will attract the attention of various interest groups if they do become a problem. It was felt that OFNC should develop a position on these matters and share it with similar organisations. **Action: Jakob will circulate some information about both problems.**
- c. Wild Pigs – see above
- d. FWG Resource Centre backroom – Eleanor, Marilyn and Diane have sorted through items stored in the RC backroom. A number of unnecessary items were identified: old books, boxes of items belonging to Falcon Watch (now disbanded), portable stools and an astronomical telescope. It was suggested that these items should be auctioned at Awards Night. It would be useful to publish a list of these items in advance. Ann confirmed that credit card payments could be accepted.
- e. Annual Report - Bob noted that the committee annual reports were not consistent in that some, but not all, listed committee members and/or commended particular members. Committee chairs agreed that different committees have historically taken different approaches to this task. Inclusion of the committee rosters in the annual report was discussed. Committee annual reports to be approved in December.

9. Committee Updates

- a. Conservation - Owen: package of *Rhododendron canadense* (rhodora) information received from NHIC and will be used in preparing for field work next year to try to establish distribution. Will have one more meeting in early December to summarise the year
- b. Education & Publicity - no report
- c. Events - Jakob: will meet on Wednesday. Julia Cipriani has advised that she will be retiring from the committee.
- d. Finance – Ken: **moved by** Ken Young, seconded by Jakob Mueller that Bob Bergquist be added to the Finance Committee – **carried**
- e. Awards – Eleanor: the nomination period is open with a deadline of November 30. Several nominations have been received. Committee will meet December 5.
- f. Birds – Bob: confirmed that the Christmas bird count will be on December 15.
- g. Macoun Club – Diane K.: have had a couple of indoor meetings and a field trip to Stony Swamp. Their most recent speaker was Roy John.
- h. Membership – Henry; nil to report
- i. Publications – Jeff: CFN recently received a batch of 20 subscriptions through Ebsco and have had a few more since. The committee is interested in strategies to increase subscriptions. The possibility of reaching out to other clubs was discussed. Ontario Nature should be able to provide a list of Ontario FNCs. Quebec has fewer FNCs, their clubs typically being more specialised, but they might be interested. Ken suggested offering a discount to members of other clubs. **Action: Diane will obtain lists of other clubs.** OFNC research grants have been advertised with a January 15 deadline. Committee will be having its annual meeting with Dwayne Lepitzki when he is in town. It was noted that the on-line edition had come out this evening (November 18), continuing to improve the rate of publication.
- j. SafeWings – Anouk: noted that there had been fewer bird strikes than usual during fall migration and commented that birders had noted fewer birds generally this year. 66 Canada geese had been found dead from fungal pneumonia at Dow's Lake, probably having consumed mouldy grain. The Canadian Wildlife Service will follow up. The Ottawa Bird Strategy, a guide to appreciation and conservation of birds developed over several years in partnership with several organisations, is being translated and will be launched in the New Year. The document applies to other aspects of conservation as well as collisions. It was suggested that this initiative might be presented at the ABM.

The BoD was reminded that there will be a potluck after the December meeting.

10. Adjournment – there being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Recording Secretary: Elizabeth Moore

Upcoming Meeting Dates

December 16, 2019

January 20, 2020

February 10, 2020

March 16, 2020

April 20, 2020

May 11, 2020

June 15, 2020

Diane Lepage
President
Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club

Date

Elizabeth Moore
Recording Secretary
Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club

Date