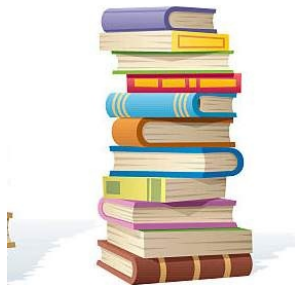


2024 Member of the Year Award - Jessica Sims

In recognition of the member judged to have contributed the most to the Club in the previous year.



Jessica's love of reading and interest in natural history is what enticed her to become the Canadian Field-Naturalist's newest Book Review Editor. When she joined the OFNC Board two years later she wondered how she, as a non-scientist, could serve both the Board and its Club members. As Book Review Editor she receives countless items from publishers, so why not create an OFNC Book Club?

The Book Club started online to eliminate concerns over the number of attendees and finding an appropriate venue. She handled the logistics and created a format that would work for an online, multi-person event. In May 2024, the concept was presented via an online survey, to determine if there was enough interest to proceed. By June the answer was yes. October's event examined the book *Entangled Life: How Fungi Make our Worlds, Change our Minds & Shape our Futures* while, *Bitch: On the Female of the Species*, occurred this January. By January, approximately 90 people registered for Book Club, with 37 and 35 participants at their respective meetings.



With the aim of engaging people with diverse viewpoints while maintaining a friendly environment, Jessica created a formula that proved to be successful.



Each evening begins with a brief introduction to the book, followed by a guest speaker and a question-and-answer session. Then, Jessica randomly divides the audience into smaller groups, allowing each group a chance to discuss the book. She also provides possible topic prompts before the

event. After 25-30 minutes, everyone reconvenes for closing comments and for the next title reveal. Each book is chosen by a Book Club member voting system.



The Club would like to thank Jessica for envisaging the concept of an OFNC Book Club, for developing a formula that works, and for introducing this novel event to its members.

Prepared by Karen McLachlan Hamilton

