

Ottawa Field Naturalists' Club – Board of Directors Meeting
Monday, January 20, 2025 – 7:00 p.m. on Zoom
Minutes

Chair: Owen Clarkin

Present:, Ann MacKenzie, Annie Bélair, Elizabeth Moore, Bev McBride, Ted Farnworth, Ken Young, Lisa Chamney, Jessica Sims, Catherine Hessian, Susan Lehmann, Gordon Robertson, Katriina Ilves, Janette Niwa, Emilia Michaud, Jakob Mueller

1. Approval of the Agenda – the Agenda was approved as circulated with the addition of:
6 d) Errors and Omissions Insurance
2. Acceptance of Minutes from December 16, 2024
Moved by Elizabeth Moore, seconded by Ann MacKenzie, that the Minutes of the December 16, 2024 meeting be approved. **CARRIED**
3. Business arising from the minutes
 - a) Research Grants (if there are updates) - deferred to February
4. Communications – Ken advised that there had been nothing in the mail, noting the recent postal workers' strike.
5. Treasurer's Report – Ken had circulated the following report by email:

“Current Financial Processing

No issues

Annual Business Meeting

The financial motions presented to members at the ABM all passed, with the required majorities. They were:

Financial Statements: that the Financial Statements be accepted as a fair representation of the financial position of the Club as of September 30, 2024.

Review or Audit: that a review, rather than an audit, of the OFNC's accounts be conducted for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2025.

Nomination of the Accounting Firm: that the accounting firm of Welch LLP be contracted to conduct a review of the OFNC's accounts for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2025.

While the motion to do a review was passed, it seems to me that sooner or later members will vote to do an audit. The cost of our most recent review was \$6,554.”

The Board discussed the push for an audit by some club members at the ABM. Ken advised that this would cost a minimum of \$12,000 and it was noted that an audit would require a great deal of time from certain key volunteers who are already doing a great deal for the Club. Bev inquired what other similar clubs do. **Action: Jakob** will find out what comparable clubs do.

6. Issues for Discussion

a) ABM Review – Owen thought that the ABM went well and thanked everyone who worked towards it. Jakob agreed. It was noted that Ken, as usual, did the lion's share of the work and merited special thanks. Ken would like to hand over this responsibility next year. Jakob and Gord agreed to consider this. Jess thanked Janette for her presentation.

b) Committee Chair Appointments – Owen noted that a number of new appointments had been made over the last couple of years and was pleased that the Club has a good team coming in.

Moved by Elizabeth Moore, seconded by Ann MacKenzie, that the Committee Chairs be approved as documented in the Nominating Papers presented at the ABM.

Jakob felt that more time was necessary to finalise this matter. Concern was expressed about the committees that have rotating chairs. Some Board Members felt that this gave the appearance of committees lacking organisation and felt that Chairs should be named. Some newer Members of the Board expressed concern that responsibilities of Chairs were unclear. Although Ann maintains a Directors' Handbook, its Dropbox distribution is not very user friendly. Jess offered to put together a welcome package for new Directors. A discussion about the relationship between the Macoun Club and OFNC suggested that this needs clarification. Bev expressed concern about some of the Birds Committee's activities being lost from OFNC e.g. the Breeding Bird Atlas. The Motion will be put to the vote in February.

c) Committee Rosters – these will be finalised and approved next month

d) Errors and Omissions Insurance – Ann had circulated an email regarding Errors and Omissions insurance. Anything of a business nature is not currently covered by our existing insurance. This issue has arisen because Safe Wings needed a Business Procurement Number to accept government contracts to evaluate office buildings for bird strikes. Contracted evaluations would carry more weight than voluntary assessments. It has also been suggested that we might wish to consider another type of Errors and Omissions insurance called Media Liability. This would protect the CFN and our social media posts from any lawsuits related to copyright infringement, plagiarism, defamation, etc. Directors felt that due diligence might suggest that coverage would be desirable but the costs need to be considered. Procedures for CFN and social media would have to be reviewed, documented and likely tightened up to obtain such insurance. Owen suggested that perhaps we should be reviewing some of our procedures in any event. Ann advised that, when they get more precise estimates for the policies, they will bring this issue back to the Board.

7. Committee Updates

- a) Awards – Bev had circulated the following report by email:

“The four 2024 award winners have been notified by Jakob and they have accepted their award. Their names are posted on the ofnc.ca homepage banner and on the awards webpage.

Citations are being prepared. We will distribute these by email to the board, for information and endorsement, by the February meeting. Any follow up needed might be done by email too, depending on the February meeting date.”

- b) Birds – Emilia reported that they will hold their first meeting of the year next week. They have been contacted by a researcher from Windsor about helping banding some snow buntings. They are keen to get more committee members.
- c) Conservation – Jakob is reviewing the committee roster and looking forward to carrying forward the initiatives started under Owen’s direction. Owen reported that he had visited a sugar bush near Chesterville in December. The owner is keen to get the group to explore the site and they are planning a bioblitz in 2025. It is a very rich site with many different habitats. Jakob and Owen had a discussion with Paul Catling who requested that a Field Botanists of Ontario article be put on our website and would like to promote the relationship between the two Clubs.
The Board discussed the increasing difficulty of finding volunteers. People increasingly feel that they can’t afford to take time away from work. It was suggested that greater effort needs to be made to show appreciation of the work that our volunteers do.
- d) Education & Publicity – Gord reported that they have two talks coming up. Deb Doherty has offered Gord some help with running the committee.
- e) Events – Owen is looking forward to being involved with Events but would be interested in seeing whether someone can be found to chair the Committee while he is President. He will try to attend as many meetings as possible. He attended the Book Club and was very impressed. He thanked Jess for her efforts. Jakob reported that upcoming monthly meetings and some walks have been arranged.
- f) Finance – Ann: nil to report
- g) Fletcher Wildlife Garden – Ted reported that the plant sale team has starting germinating seeds. There had been recent sightings of a beaver in the pond but it is thought to have moved on and the pond has now frozen over.
- h) Macoun Club – Suzanne reported that the Club is holding its usual meetings and outings. The desirability of building a closer relationship with OFNC was discussed.

i) Membership – Lisa had circulated the following report by email:

“There were 6 gift memberships between late Nov (the start of the promotional campaign) and early Jan. Five were new memberships and one was a renewal of a gift that has been given in past years. Correspondence with the new gifters implied that they had successfully read the gift membership instructions on the website. These numbers do not include any within-household gifting.

There were 14 new memberships in total in December, versus 12 and 7 in Dec of fiscal year 2024 and 2023, respectively. For comparison, there were 17 new memberships in Oct & Nov combined, compared to 16 and 20 in fiscal 2024 and 2023.”

j) Ontario Nature – Jakob: nil to report.

Moved by Jakob Mueller, seconded by Jessica Sims, that Owen Clarkin be authorised to sign, on behalf of the OFNC, joint communications produced by other organizations, according to the Policy on Supporting External Communications (appended). **CARRIED**

k) Publications – Jessica had circulated the following report by email:

- “Issue 138(1) has been published online: <https://www.canadianfieldnaturalist.ca/index.php/cfn>
- Mail backlog from Canada Post strike seems to be resolving: Last week I received my print copies of both CFN 137(4) and T&L (Jan-Mar)
- Next publications committee meeting will be on **February 3, 2025**
- 2025 committee roster is the same as last year, with the exception of Ken stepping down”

Dwayne had circulated the following report by email:

“138(1)

- fully posted online last Friday (17 January 2025)
- $n = 7$ manuscripts (ms) + tribute for Allan Reddoch
- quote for printing from Gilmore received and approved [today](#)
- 116 pages including OFCN By-laws as part of the 2024 ABM minutes
- stunning cover photograph of a new species of animal found in Mer Bleue

138(2)

- 1st galley of 1st ms has been produced and is undergoing review by Amanda and Dwayne
- 2nd ms has been formally copyedited and is being review by author (AU), due date [tomorrow](#)
- 3rd ms sent for formal copyedit with due date this Wednesday
- 4th ms sent for formal copyedit [today](#)
- four other manuscripts including one accepted by Associate Editor (AE), nearly ready for acceptance and then will be sent for formal copyedit
- $n = 8$ ms
- BR & NT were received from Jess some time ago

Other manuscripts in the process

- 12 revisions of manuscripts have been received
- another revision returned and Dwayne sent it for AE's opinion some time ago, but still no response
- 31 manuscripts are undergoing revision after the initial Editor-in-Chief (EiC) decision was made; 13 of which are from 2020 and 2021
- for 4 of these, Jeff Saarela also did initial EiC decision

- peer-review and AE's recommendation completed on 3 manuscripts and are awaiting EiC initial decision, including 1 from Saturday (18 Jan)

- 7 ms under initial review by the reviewers requested by the assigned AE
- 2 ms received so far in 2025, including one about a dinosaur fossil, AE's have been assigned (including 1 [today](#)) but no reviewers yet
- 1 ms submitted on 19 January 2024 rejected last Wednesday (15 January): no response from AU that the submission was incomplete

- total of 25 submissions or queries about potential submission received in 2024
- see previous notes for previous numbers of submission per year

- Dwayne still prioritizing those ms which take less of his time
- after consulting Dwayne, Bill Halliday updated list of AEs on the web and will contact them for the planned AE teleconference which is anticipated to occur before the next Publications Committee meeting scheduled for 3 February"

OFNC Book Club Update - Jessica circulated the following report by email:

- Last week (Jan. 14) we had our second meeting focusing on the book ***Bitch: On the Female of the Species*** by Lucy Cooke
- 59 people registered to attend (on Zoom) and 36 people showed up
- We also hosted guest speaker Dr. Lauryn Benedict from the University of North Colorado to talk to us about The Female Bird Song Project (<http://femalebirdsong.org/>)
- Dr. Benedict gave a 20-minute presentation that was tied to the theme of the book, in that she addressed the history of gender bias in studying bird song. Once thought to be a solely male trait to lure females in mating, we now know that females from 70 percent of the world's bird species sing too! And yet, there is still a massive gap in the data that is collected, with many researchers showing a preference for studying males and ignoring females altogether.
- The next book we read will be ***The End of Eden: Wild Nature in the Age of Climate Breakdown (2023)*** by Adam Welz
- Our next meeting, which will focus on *The End of Eden*, will take place over Zoom on **Tuesday, March 18 at 7 p.m.**

- As of [today](#) (Jan. 20), there are 90 OFNC members on the book club mailing list

Holiday Promo Campaign Wrap-Up: Jessica had circulated the following report by email:

- “See numbers from Lisa in Membership Committee Report
- For 2025, we want to start the campaign earlier, including promotion in *Trail & Landscape* and use of **Facebook ads on a Facebook Business Page**”

Annie had circulated the following report by email:

“I imagine most of you have received the January-March issue.

There’s one thing I need to fix this year. The [online versions of T&L](#) don’t work very well. I can open each issue on my phone, but not on the computer anymore. I have a feeling I need to upgrade the software/plugin (FlipBuilder). I’ve just started to look into this.”

- l) Safe Wings Ottawa: Janette had circulated the following report by email:

“Communication

- Working on promo material for annual display
- Posting WonderGrove ForKids on the web page soon
- Working on SM material about BF windows at the new Line 2 LRT stations & non BF bike shelters
- Reviewing potential missing records (~40) in collision report & public file
- Shared means to have a special link to a volunteers name and areas for collision entry

Annual Report/Stats

- Data cleaning in progress for 2,199 birds to date
- Reports required for rehab licenses

Volunteer Activities / Advocacy

- Annual Display will be at the Canadian Museum of Nature again - Thursday, March 13.
- Following up on reports and have been asked to evaluate all ECCC buildings for treatment priority
- Carleton U research: looking for another student to patrol and there might be a post-doc student doing some other research in 2025
- Ducklings 2025 – currently same procedure as last year
- Request for Building Assessments – connecting with Finance Committee on CanadaBuys application to obtain a Personal Business Number (PBN) for GC buildings
- British High Commission - presented to a very interested group in December; have a “green” new building which has many windows and is very close to the Ottawa River & have noticed an increase in collisions since they opened last winter. They will explore options for mitigation provided they can find the funds
- National Press Office - pending, once we get our PBN”

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

Recording Secretary: Elizabeth Moore

Upcoming Meeting Dates

February 24, 2025

March 17, 2025

April 14, 2025 (TBC)

May 12, 2025 (TBC)

June 16, 2025

Appendix

1. Policy on Supporting External Communications

Appendix

Policy on Supporting External Communications

March 18, 2024

The President is authorized to sign, on behalf of the OFNC, joint communications produced by other organizations, provided that:

- a. the communications promote or advocate a position consistent with the mandate of the OFNC,
- b. the request is circulated to the Board of Directors as soon as practicable with a response date stipulated,
- c. a majority of the directors responding to the request indicate their support for the communication by email prior to the indicated deadline.
- d. any communication signed and any relevant discussion be noted in the minutes of the subsequent Board of Directors meeting as having occurred,
- e. this authority expires with this term of the board, unless renewed by the subsequent board.

NOTE: The approval of this policy on an annual basis is the only Board resolution related to these communications. The President will then follow the policy and the resulting communication will just be noted in the minutes of the subsequent Board meeting.