

**Ottawa Field Naturalists' Club – Board of Directors Meeting
Monday, November 17, 2025 – 7:00 p.m. on Zoom
Minutes**

Chair: Owen Clarkin

Present: Jessica Sims, Annie Belair, Elizabeth Moore, Janette Niwa, Jakob Mueller, Lisa Chamney, Ken Young, Bev McBride, Katriina Ilves, Susan Lehmann, Ann MacKenzie, Gord Robertson (from 7.15 p.m.)

Absent: Emilia Michaud, Ted Farnworth

1. Approval of the Agenda – the agenda was approved as circulated with the addition of:
6a) Nominations
2. Acceptance of Minutes from October 20, 2025 Board of Directors meeting
Moved by Elizabeth Moore, seconded by Jessica Sims, that the Minutes of the October 20, 2025 Board of Directors meeting be approved. **CARRIED**
3. Business arising from the minutes - none
4. Communications – Ken: no significant communications in mail.
5. Treasurer's Report – Ken had circulated the following report by email:

“Current Financial Processing

No issues

Year-End Financial Processing

Ann and I met with our accountants (Welch LLP) and our bookkeepers (Plus Advisors) on November 7. We answered their questions about the activities of the Club.

We asked that the financial statements be improved by including an all-funds statement of operations in the Financial Statements. For a non-profit corporation like the OFNC, the statement of operations is equivalent to a profit & loss statement. Currently, there are separate statements of operation for the General Fund, the internally restricted funds, and the externally restricted fund. Users of the financial statements often think that the General Fund statement covers the operations of the entire Club. So we will now have a true statement of operations for the entire Club.

Everyone agreed that the schedule was still practical. The draft financial statements are due by December 3.

6. Issues for Discussion

- a) Nominations – Ann reported that the nomination process is in hand. She and Jakob have reached out to all current Board Members.
- b) Monthly Meetings room rental renewal – Owen had circulated the price increases from City View United Church for 2026. The Board agreed that the increases are reasonable. **Moved** by Jakob Mueller, seconded by Ann MacKenzie, that the Board approve the increases in the City View United Church monthly meeting room rates. **CARRIED**
- c) Awards nominations minor items for discussion:
 - i. Bev advised that an entire Club Committee had been nominated for Member of the Year and inquired whether the nomination could be accepted. The Board agreed that this nomination would be acceptable.
 - ii. Club membership status of prospective awardees – Owen inquired whether Presidential nominees must be members and was advised that they are required to be members. It was noted that there is a non-member conservation award.
- d) Print copies of publications to sister organizations – Jessica noted that the Club has been mailing CFN to the Trinidad & Tobago Field Naturalists and wondered whether it was necessary to continue this in view of the costs of international mail. This relationship apparently arose when an OFNC member was posted to Canada's diplomatic mission in Trinidad and Tobago. We have not been receiving their publication recently so it was felt that it is probably not necessary to continue to send CFN. Bev may be able to find a contact name and follow-up.
- e) Audit vs Review Finance Document – Ann reported that the Finance Committee had finalized the paper on Audit versus Review of Financial Statements, Guidance for OFNC Members at the Annual Business Meeting. The Finance Committee is recommending to the Board that this paper be made available as part of the package for members prior to the ABM. At the ABM Ann will make the motion to have a review instead of an audit. Then there will be a short presentation along the lines of this paper prior to opening the floor to discussion and then the vote. This vote is an extraordinary resolution that requires 80% support to carry.
- f) Owl Harassment at FWG – there have been several recent communications about harassment of barred owls at FWG. It is likely that these are returning owls and that they are used to the conditions at FWG but the appearance earlier this year of a northern saw-whet owl was of greater concern. People congregating around a saw-whet may draw the attention of the barred owls to the saw-whet which would be considered prey by the barred owls. Some members of the Board felt that there was little that could or needed to be done. Others felt that more active steps should be taken to educate the public and protect the owls. Suggestions included setting up exclusion zones, website blog posts, a presentation/video and the possibility of involving media. **Jess offered to draft something.**

7. Committee Updates

- a) Awards – (see also 6c) above) Bev had circulated the following report by email:

“The nomination period is open till November 30th. We have received at least one nomination in most categories. We will provide the board with a recommended slate before the December Board meeting.”

- b) Birds – Emilia had circulated the following report by email:

“Committee membership and executive

- We voted to accept a new member in the committee, Jolene Meloche. She has observed three committee meetings. @lchamney9@gmail.com - can you confirm that she is a full OFNC member? I asked but I just want to double check.
- She is also interested in taking over the Treasurer position from Bernie Ladouceur.
- Lorraine Elworthy and I remain in the current positions as recording secretary and chair, respectively.

Bird seed donation

- Our one feeder in Gatineau is not available to be filled - a tree fell and makes the area dangerous to access right now.
- As a result, we passed a motion to donate \$300 of the \$574.71 to the Wild Bird Care Centre.

Projects/activities

- **Bird Song ID** course likely to be offered in late February or March. Will work details and confirm the dates (multiple dates)
- We have on the OFNC calendar the **outing at the Museum of Nature** for a tour of the bird skin collection on November 27.
- **Bird walk with the Club des ornithologues des l'Outaouais (COO)** - plan to have a birding walk with members of the COO January 17 around Strathcona Park and the Adawe Crossing. It's on the calendar for the COO. The intent is to get the COO and the members of the Birds Committee and the OFNC to connect more and foster a tighter relationship moving forward.
I will forward the details - I think we should add this event to our OFNC calendar.
- **Potential spring bird walks** - example: looking for Woodcocks, looking for warblers. Dates are TBD but we have people willing to lead walks.
- **Christmas bird count** - Ottawa-Gatineau bird count is confirmed for December 14 and the ONRI count is set for December 20. Dates have been posted on Facebook.
- **Website (Birds section)**
 - i. Lorraine and I are reviewing sections of the website and we will make updates to the content.
 - ii. We all agreed that reviewing the website every year is a good idea.

iii. Bird Friendly Ottawa will point to the page on the Birds Section covering "where to go birding" specifically for indications of where accessible birding is available.

- **Shrike data entry** - we have two students who are transcribing data from paper checklists into excel, for bulk upload to eBird. This is a very long-term project as it takes a while to get this done. Bernie will execute the bulk uploads once the data is in excel.
- **Land Access Permit for Shirley's Bay** - Janet has put together letters to the different contacts within City of Ottawa, DND, Government of Canada and NCC to request help on who owns the causeway as it's not clear. Once we know this information, we can request permission to access the location. The letters are signed by me and Owen."

Concerning redirecting the bird seed donation money, Ken said that if a committee wants to spend money on something other than what was budgeted, it should make a request to the Board, as outlined in policy D-5.1 Policy on Funding Requests outside the Budgeting Process.

- c) Conservation – Jakob has updated the Conservation section of the website. He plans to post details of the dialogue happening between OFNC, Friends of Stittsville Wetlands, Ecology Ottawa and Ontario Nature about the loss of wetlands in the area to try to retain more protection for wetlands which are threatened by recent Provincial legislation.
- d) Education & Publicity – Gord reported that activities put on at the Junior Explorer's Picnic Afternoon at the Billings Estate had gone well. He has updated the website with information about educational materials and flora and fauna at FWG.
- e) Events – Owen reported that three of four leaders for the 2026 Pelee trip have been confirmed (Jamie Spence, Derek Dunnett and Alex Stone). The possibility of finding a female leader to complete the group was discussed. They have been trying to increase the number of events during the "off season". The weather has been poor and the Moose Creek event was quite challenging but the event itself was excellent. The membership does appreciate this initiative so they are trying to keep the events up. They did a bioblitz at Carlington Woods on October 26 and found 212 species with some good finds, including:

Jumping Bristletail (S1 in Ontario) : <https://www.inaturalist.org/observations/323938861>

Woolly Oyster Mushroom (N3 in Canada) : <https://www.inaturalist.org/observations/323601920>

Resupinatus urceoloides (only 11 observations on iNat)

: <https://www.inaturalist.org/observations/323596407>

Overall Event Page: <https://www.inaturalist.org/projects/carlington-woods-2025-ofnc-bioblitz>

They are finding it challenging to find field trip leaders, but are doing very well on Monthly Speakers, mainly due to the efforts of Catherine Crosier. They are trying to include different types of events such as winter themed workshops at FWG, with our new internet.

An easy sell to current club members and probably many prospective members re: the club's mandate in the current zeitgeist is "real biodiversity" IRL; fits the "touching grass" desire by many people interested in nature (particularly younger people).

- f) Finance – Ann reported that the Finance Committee met in person on November 6, 2025. At that meeting they agreed to the Annual Report 2024-25 and the new Terms of Reference of the Committee. Both have been circulated for the consideration of the Board.
- g) Fletcher Wildlife Garden – no report
- h) Macoun Club – Susan reported that meetings and outings continue with great attendance and they are starting to plan for next year.
- i) Membership – Lisa: nil to report
- j) Ontario Nature – Jakob: nil to report
- k) Publications – Jess had circulated the following reports by email:

“Book Club Update: We met on October 28th to discuss Eager. 35 people registered and about 20 stayed for the whole meeting. No speaker this time, just a focus on discussing the book. But this format seemed to go well. Our next book is An Immense World by Ed Yong, and it is all about the range of sensory experiences in the animal kingdom. Our next meeting is January 13. The book club mailing/member list is now up to 113 members.

Publications Committee Report

1. There is promising news re. the committee’s decision for CFN to skip 2025 as a publication year...

As of November 14, Eleanor reported that EBSCO subscription renewals for Volume 139 (2026) — i.e. the volume that had the year change — are “now arriving regularly”. So far, 68 out of 111 EBSCO clients have renewed CFN for Volume 139.

2. Currently 4 articles and 2 notes have been published online for CFN 138(4), in line with our decision to start rolling publication online.

Check out the incredible dinosaur-themed Paleoart cover: <https://www.canadianfieldnaturalist.ca/index.php/cfn/issue/view/111>

3. Publications Committee Annual in-person dinner to be held December 6th when Dwayne is in town for COSEWIC. Location TBD.

T&L - Annie is working on the next issue

I) Safe Wings Ottawa – Janette reported the following

Volunteer Activities

- Patrolling completed for 2025 – now to collect birds and enter data and Global Bird week data
- Need to get new provincial & federal permits for holding bird/remains – with Christina
- First time disposing of some remains – will look into permitted process
- A volunteer has stepped up to take over the role of volunteer coordinator (emailing new volunteers, organizing training, etc.)
- Adding video of patrolling to training
- Need to discuss ways to better engage and keep volunteers
- Rehab had fewer birds than in 2024, for a few reasons
- Planning started for 2026 display – looking for a new volunteer to train to take over the role

Finances

- May explore options for some gas/mileage compensation for longer trips
- Expecting more paid building evaluations in the future – current large project going through FLAP due to SW volunteer conflicts of employment interest; need to work out protocol for who conducts these and training

Communication

- Idea to post volunteer “bios” over the winter for social media & interest
- Need to reduce “cc all” emails – overwhelming and not necessary > idea to create some emailing lists for specific tasks
- Google implementing 2-factor authentication – need to find a workaround for phone volunteers

Advocacy

- Compiling a list of bird friendly buildings – will use FLAP collision mapper
- MBA - early December meeting with higher level at ECCC given some reports of individual cases for one bird; getting updated data for species at risk

Bird-Friendly City

- Still working on gaining support from city council
- Gatineau has submitted their first application

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

Recording Secretary: Elizabeth Moore

Upcoming Meeting Dates

December 15, 2025

January 19, 2026

February 9/23 2026 (TBC)

March 16, 2026