

**Ottawa Field Naturalists' Club – Board of Directors Meeting**  
**Monday, March 16, 2026 – 7:00 p.m. on Zoom**  
**Minutes**

Chair: Owen Clarkin

Present: Jessica Sims, Annie Belair, Elizabeth Moore, Bev McBride, Ann MacKenzie, Bob Bergquist, Jakob Mueller, Ken Young, Lisa Chamney, Deborah Doherty (representing Education & Publicity Committee), Janette Niwa, Susan Lehmann, Juliette Marczuk (Chair, Ottawa Valley Wild Bird Care Centre – guest until 7.30 p.m.)

Absent: Emilia Michaud, Ted Farnworth, Katriina Ilves, Gord Robertson,

1. Approval of the Agenda – the agenda was approved as circulated with the addition of:
  - 6 g) Committee Rosters
  - 6 h) Ontario Master Naturalist Program
  - 6 i) OFNC email addresses
2. Acceptance of Minutes from February 16, 2026 Board of Directors meeting  
**Moved** by Elizabeth Moore, seconded by Bev McBride, that the Minutes of the February 16, 2026 Board of Directors meeting be approved. **CARRIED**
3. Business arising from the minutes - none
4. Communications - none
5. Treasurer's Report – Ken thanked Ann for filling in for him while he was away. The Pelee trip is fully booked and the first & second payments are being processed. Everyone has paid at least the initial deposit.
6. Issues for Discussion
  - a) Possible Donation to WBCC - Juliette Marczuk gave a short presentation about the WBCC and about the new facility that is under construction. Projected costs have tripled from those predicted in 2019. They have currently completed stages 1 and 2 of six stages of construction and require \$2.8 million in order to complete stage 3 which would allow them to occupy the main building. WBCC is offering name recognition of various spaces in the new facility in return for donations currently starting at \$10,000. Members of the Board expressed concern about the substantial shortfall and the likelihood of the project being completed. It was generally felt that the Club should consider donating to WBCC but possibly to support operations rather than building.

This discussion also gave rise to consideration of increasing internal support of Safe Wings.

- b) Awards Night Planning (including acceptance of citations)

**Moved** by Bev McBride, seconded by Janette Niwa, that the Awards citations be accepted as distributed. **CARRIED**

Bev inquired who has succeeded Diane Lepage as being responsible for oversight of Awards Night, noting that previous organizers were either on or closely associated with the Board. Awards Night has historically been a responsibility of the Events Committee. **Further discussion of this subject was deferred until the April meeting.**

- c) Zoom Meeting size capacity

**Moved** by Janette Niwa, seconded by Jakob Mueller, that the Club upgrade its Zoom account to Zoom Workplace Business Account. **CARRIED**

- d) Director's Handbook Spring 2026 - Ann had sent out the updated Handbook and invited members to let her know if they have any difficulties accessing it.

- e) SwiftWatch Ontario - Janette inquired whether OFNC would be interested in participating in or sponsoring Birds Canada's SwiftWatch chimney swift roost monitoring this year. (Last year monitoring occurred on five dates in late May/early June.) Birds committee and Bird Friendly Ottawa are looking at being involved. **Janette will get additional information for the April meeting.**

- f) Status of Dan Brunton's book "Nature and Natural Areas in Canada's Capital" – Bev inquired whether the status of the publication rights to Dan's book was known. Frank Pope's son has a box of copies and Bev wondered whether they could be updated, e.g. with an addendum. It was determined that the Ottawa Citizen and OFNC hold joint copyright. It was suggested that this was something that the Publications Committee might look into. The possibility of contacting the Ottawa Citizen was suggested.

- g) Committee Rosters

**Moved** by Jakob Mueller, seconded by Jessica Sims, that the Board accept the committee rosters as circulated, pending confirmation of individuals membership being in good standing. **CARRIED**

- h) Ontario Master Naturalist Program - Bev reported that she had attended the winter session of the Ontario Master Naturalist Program and would recommend the programme.

- i) OFNC email addresses - Deborah Doherty expressed concern that emails that are received by ofnc@ofnc.ca and forwarded to various individuals and committees cannot be responded to from an @ofnc address. Some committees have developed workarounds but Ed & Pub and others have been using personal emails. Deborah wondered whether the Club could acquire business email addresses. It was recognised that this issue had been raised on a number of previous occasions. It was felt that using personal emails does not look professional and they may be overlooked by people who are expecting a response from @ofnc. The possibility of using a new host was discussed. Safe Wings has acquired a new system that allows them to respond to emails. Janette will obtain more details.

## 7. Committee Updates

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

- “Awards preparation in advance of awards night is nearly done. All 2025 award winners have agreed to accept their award. All have said they will attend Awards Night. Elizabeth has their names for their fancy name tags.
- The club website has been updated with the 2025 winners and their citations. We were considerably behind schedule on getting that part done due to some complicating factors. It should have been done by early February at the latest.
- The citations will soon go forward for T&L and CFN publication.
- Awards Night event organizers have been in touch with me for some details needing coordination. For those who do not already know, the Awards Committee does not organize Awards Night, we just organize the awards. I await finding out the sequence of the evening’s events.
- Still ahead: Eleanor will be contacting Owen soon to have him sign the certificates. Then I will help Eleanor to frame them.
- Owen, reminder: Please use the citations as previously distributed or available online to craft your MC’s notes for each award category’s recipients.”

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

### **“Activities/Events**

- Gave a talk at the Manotick Public Library about birding in the winter (with Janette Niwa). This came through the Bird Friendly Ottawa organization but we talked about the OFNC as well in that presentation. We only had 5 people attend but they all enjoyed the talk and asked a lot of questions.
- Gave a talk to a group of Embers (girl guides) in Orleans. The request came to the Birds committee. The girls really enjoyed the presentation, which was a lot more fun with the bird skins that Janette lent me. Since the group enjoyed this so much, I offered to take them on a birding walk in the spring. The organizer said she would contact me to schedule that. The girls all had so much fun and they already knew different birds.
- Janet McCullough organized and has been delivering the Bird Song ID course via Zoom for the past few weeks with Ken Allison (one session a week). This has been going very well, from what I hear. We had some technical issues when I originally booked the Zoom links for the sessions but we worked through that. We also have issues with people registering and then not showing up, and thus occupying a spot that someone else could use - we only have 100 Zoom "spots" .
  - The recorded sessions will be posted on the OFNC YouTube channel
- We have a volunteer OFNC member, Amy VanTorre, who has quite a bit of experience with website building and managing projects to update websites in Wordpress. She is now working with us to update and revamp our Birding section of the OFNC website. She has presented Lorraine and me with wireframes of the changes and we will review them with the rest of the Birds Committee at our next meeting on April 2. Once everyone has provided input, Amy will start the implementation changes (she's connected already with our webmaster to get access).

- We have one more OFNC member who is interested in joining the Birds Committee and might want to take over the Recording Secretary role in the future. This is good as Lorraine would like to pass that on to someone else.

### **Future plans**

- Warbler Birding walk around the Rideau River in May - in coordination with Bird Friendly Ottawa. Will decide on the date in the next couple of weeks and will add it to the OFNC Calendar. I will lead that walk, but I've not done that for the OFNC before. Please let me know if I need to have attendees sign waivers, or if there's a particular process I need to follow. I will limit the number of people to 15.
- Spring birding walk in search of American Woodcock - Janet mentioned she wants to do this. We still need to decide the date.
- Swift Watch - Webinar coming up on how to participate in Swift Watch. I want to attend and see if we can get a few more people involved in this program to help monitor this aerial insectivore."

c) Conservation – Jakob: nil to report

d) Education & Publicity – Deb reported the following:

The Education and Publicity committee has been actively preparing for spring events. Here's a brief list

- updating our large tri-fold display (Deborah to contact committee leads for input)
- updating the map for the Fletcher Wildlife Garden and planning the reprinting of brochure
- we are also researching cloth tablecloth banners and feather flags as more lightweight and visible options.

Spring Events open to the public include:

- March 27th Ottawa Regional Science Fair - judging for the OFNC student awards (we will provide 4 awards of \$100 each again this year)
- April 18th - Display and Nature Walks at River Ward's Earth Day celebrations in Hunt Club. We are looking for volunteers to assist with the nature walks in the nearby McCarthy Woods.

Ontario Nature Youth Summit

- September 11–13, 2026 at Tawingo Outdoor Centre in Huntsville. Youth Summit -
- as in previous years, the OFNC will be sponsoring 2 youth to attend (tuition and \$150 towards transportation)
- We are looking to launch a print and social media campaign prior to the end of school to encourage students to attend
- We would like to announce this opportunity at the April 11th, awards night
- Gord will be updating the OFNC website upon his return in early April

e) Events – Owen reported that they have been busy organising the Pelee trip. They are planning several spring ephemerals walks.

f) Finance – Ann: nil to report

- g) Fletcher Wildlife Garden – no report
- h) Macoun Club – Susan reported that the Club has been focusing mainly on meetings rather than outings over the March Break period but they did have a very successful mudpuppy night. They expect to have at least three youth displays for Awards Night.
- i) Membership – Lisa: nil to report
- j) Ontario Nature – Jakob reported the following:
- Ontario Nature has successfully acquired their Sauble Dunes North property, allowing them to expand their Sauble Dunes Nature Reserve on the SW corner of the Saugeen/Bruce Peninsula. While outside our region, this is a conservation success, as it will protect rare and sensitive Great Lakes dunes and shoreline habitats as well as numerous species at risk.
  - A further acquisition is expected in the near future in the Frontenac Arch to enhance nature reserve coverage there. The Frontenac Arch is becoming one of Ontario Nature's "areas of focus", given that it has ecological significance on a continental scale, not just provincially.
  - To that end, Ontario Nature's annual gathering is expected to be held in the Frontenac Arch over the weekend of June 20-21. Details still TBA.
  - A meeting was held with Nature Network groups earlier today (at 15:00 on 16 March) to discuss implications of the proposed Alto high-speed train, which would connect Quebec City, Montreal, Ottawa, Peterborough, and Toronto. Ontario Nature is developing a position statement taking the perspective that the project will move ahead, trying to provide guidance and feedback on how to reduce environmental impacts as much as possible, while ensuring appropriate mitigation measures (i.e. wildlife passages) are in place and are as effective as possible. We can expect an invitation to sign a joint letter in the coming weeks with a signing deadline no later than April 20.

**Moved** by Jakob Mueller, seconded by Ann MacKenzie, that Owen Clarkin as President be authorised to sign, on behalf of the OFNC, joint communications produced by other organizations, according to the Policy on Supporting External Communications. **CARRIED**

- k) Publications – Dwayne had submitted the following report by email:

**“139(1) January–March 2026**

- complete at 84 journal pages
- online posting began on 28 January and should be fully posted today– Bill to post single issue pdf and the full covers
- quote from Gilmore for print run of 180 copies approved 10 March
- files sent to Gilmore for printing this morning

- digital print galleys expected to be couriered for Dwayne's final review and approval
- Dwayne will then write the Editor's Synopsis for posting at OFNC

### **139(2) April–June 2026**

- have 2 galleys already completed and are being reviewed by Amanda and Dwayne and revised by Robert: mussel community in Mississagi River (flows into Lake Huron); Purple-striped Jellyfish off the Pacific coast (new species to Canada)
- 21 journal pages so far
- early invoice has been requested for one, so payment can be made by the end of this federal fiscal
- copyedits on 3<sup>rd</sup> manuscript (terrestrial flatworm in NB) being reviewed the author (AU) with deadline this Wednesday
- four Book Reviews and the New Titles list have been received from Jess and are being reviewed/edited by Amanda and Dwayne
- documents from the 2026 ABM (minutes, Committee Annual Reports, Club Awards for 2025 presented next month) are expected to be published in 139(2) as is the notice for the Fletcher Award—"best" paper published in volume 138

### **Other manuscripts in the process** (from farthest along in the process to just beginning)

- two AU revisions have been reviewed and Dwayne sent them back for further Associate Editor (AE) opinions
- 15 AU revisions have been received, three of which the assigned AE concludes are ready to be accepted for publication and one more has been edited by AE; the latter four are awaiting Dwayne's review and final decision
- 17 being revised by AUs (since EiC decision January 2024) some of which will probably not be revised)
- AE recommendations from initial peer review have been received on one manuscript and is awaiting Dwayne's initial decision on next step (revise, resubmit, accept as submitted, decline)
- nine manuscripts under initial peer review
- AEs have been assigned to two manuscripts but AEs have not yet contacted potential reviewers
- Dwayne will be AE on another and has today asked the AU for confirmation of species identification and if vouchers are being deposited into a publicly accessible collection i.e., ROM or CMN given the response from two potential reviewers he contacted; AU responded positively so peer-review to proceed
- no new submissions or queries about potential submission received since last BoD meeting (n=9) but one of those queries has resulted in a formal submission
- by the same time last year only four had been received so submissions seem to be increasing
- one manuscript which required extensive revision since it was submitted in January 2025 as determined by the AE and Dwayne and before formal peer-review by reviewers other than the AE and Dwayne was withdrawn by the AU 28 February
- thematic collection by Amanda and Dwayne still in progress: Dwayne searching for and adding DOIs or URLs for CFN & T&L articles referenced in COSEWIC status reports posted on SARA registry up to January 2025 in either the CFN online archives, or for CFN publications before 117(2) 2003 and all those in T&L, in BHL (Biodiversity Heritage Library)

- there are >1700 lines in the spreadsheet but not all are specific references to CFN or T&L articles”

Annie reported that the next issue of T&L is at the printers.

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

**“Communications**

- Working on comms for display & media/politician invites

**Website**

- Updating public collision database
- Updating database and web for bird species names

**Volunteer Activities**

- Display
  - Will email volunteers with details and send list to museum
  - Will have new badges and 2026 specimen tags
  - To pick up specimens from Carleton Specimen Bank
  - Doing outreach to other museums & wind turbine group for specimens post-display
- To arrange rehab tour for volunteers during migration
- On-line orientation program is set to launch

**Advocacy**

- Following up with NAC on timelines for re-treating windows
- Pulling data on new, un-submitted buildings
- Photo contest incentive for treated/bird-safe buildings

**Events**

- A few requests in – email for volunteers will follow”

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

Recording Secretary: Elizabeth Moore

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Upcoming Meeting Dates

April 20, 2026

May 18, 2026

June 15, 2026 – in person