Ottawa Field Naturalists' Club – Board of Directors Meeting
Monday, October 19, 2026 – 7:00 p.m. on Zoom
Minutes

Chair: Owen Clarkin

Present: Annie Bélair, Bob Bergquist, Lisa Chamney, Ted Farnworth, Janette Niwa, Susan Lehman, Ann MacKenzie, Bev McBride, Jakob Mueller, Shawna Lucey, Ken Young, Elizabeth Moore, Janet McCullough (representing Birds Committee), Katriina Ilves, Gordon Robertson (representing Education & Publicity Committee)

Absent: Emilia Michaud, Jessica Simms, Deb Doherty

1. Approval of the Agenda – the Agenda was approved as circulated.

2. Acceptance of Minutes from September 21, 2026 Board of Directors meeting.
   Moved by Elizabeth Moore, seconded by Ann MacKenzie, that the minutes of the September 21, 2026, Meeting be accepted. **CARRIED**

3. Business arising from the minutes
   None

4. Communications
   Bev brought the attention of the Board to two of the communications that she had noted while monitoring ofnc@ofnc.ca

a) Michael Léveillé, in his role as a Director of the Ottawa Stewardship Council, is looking for opportunities to partner with OFNC in offering educational opportunities for youth. **Gord agreed that Ed & Pub will follow this up.**
b) Deb Doherty, on behalf of Bird Friendly Ottawa, is seeking a letter of support from OFNC opposing the development of Canal Woods. (See also report under Birds Committee 7b below.)

5. Treasurer's Report – Ken had circulated the following report by email:

Current Financial Processing

No issues

Year-End Financial Processing

A schedule has been agreed among the various parties – the OFNC, Welch LLP (account ants) and Plus Associates (bookkeepers).

The preparations have begun:

- The Membership Committee (Lisa Chamney) has prepared the annual membership report;

- The Investment Advisor (Bob Bergquist) has prepared a summary of our investments for the year.
- The Treasurer (me) and Finance Committee Chair (Ann MacKenzie) have reviewed our bookkeeping records.

If all goes well, a draft set of financial statements for FY2025–26 will be circulated to the Board in early December, and then after the December meeting of the Board, to members for the Annual Business Meeting on January 13, 2027.

6. Issues for Discussion

a. Scammers: email vigilance - Owen reminded the Board to be alert to phishing emails.
b. Monthly Meeting location renewal - Greg Lutick had reminded Owen that renewal is coming up. Board members generally agreed that the venue is good although Shawna pointed out that it is not very close to any transit routes. Jakob inquired whether there will be a price increase and, if so, is it reasonable. He also suggested that renewal would be a good opportunity to ask City View to replace the projection screen which is torn. **Owen will confirm with Greg that we should proceed.**
c. Budget – Ann had circulated the updated budget **(attached)**. The revenue for membership has been decreased to $28k from $38k as we are planning not to increase fees right now. This, together with funds for potential payments to outing leaders, Discovery Day and the Photo Contest will result in a deficit.
Moved by Ann MacKenzie, seconded by Bob Bergquist, that the budget as distributed be approved as the final budget for 2026-27. **CARRIED**
d. Membership fees – A further discussion was had about membership fees. Ann had drafted a possible submission to T&L outlining the club's financial challenges. The Board is mindful of the financial constraints of many members, particularly in the current environment of lay-offs and rising costs, but would like to encourage members who are in a position to do so to consider donations or an increase in their donations. Lisa could put something in membership renewal reminders encouraging donations. It was noted that the donation option in the membership renewal is not very user friendly. Ann suggested that we may be moving away from PayPal so could consider optimising the system then. Owen asked whether she has ideas about a different membership structure. The Board recognises that the Club should be looking to increase membership. We haven't marketed ourselves well e.g. on social media. Bob suggested that we should be looking to our two universities for potential members. **Ann will edit her draft for submission to T&L.**
e. Awards Night planning/update - Shawna confirmed that Awards Night will be held on April 17, 2027 and that planning is in hand.
f. OFNC mailbox - Bev is prepared to continue monitoring this email.
g. Tech contacts (zoom, email, web): current & succession planning (all) – The Board recognises that, with increasing reliance on technology, there is a need to know who to contact for support both on a current basis and for succession planning. Owen asked the Board to give this matter their consideration for review next month. It was suggested that the information should go into the Directors' Handbook. **Lisa offered to collate the information.**

7. Committee Updates

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

"The request for nominations has been published in T&L and sent to members by email. I also announced it at the start of the September monthly meeting. I will continue with publicity via social media and the club's website. So far we have received two nominations, with three more known to be in the works. We also have nominations made in previous years that we can consider. November 30 is the deadline.

Word of mouth is proving to be important in encouraging nominations. I know sometimes people have an idea for a candidate, but never become aware of calls for nominations because they don't get around to reading emails or T&L. I would appreciate it if committee chairs could mention the awards process to their committee members and to consider if any of their committee members could be award candidates. If board members could remember to mention it in their conversations with club members, that might help too."

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

"Janet continues to pursue the access to the Shirleys bay with DND. That is the last, and it seems hardest step. Once we get approval from DND we will put in place a process that will be used for access and we will need to also put up signage on the site to remind people of the rules they need to follow while they are on site.

Members of the BC led birding walks to Andrew Haydon Park which were very successful and we had great feedback (Janet and Bernie). Unfortunately, I've not been able to host a BC monthly meeting yet, so we are not yet fully clear of what other events we want to host.

We have a possible project to setup and take care of Purple Martin houses. Since the Purple Martin house at Nepean Sailing club has not been that successful lately, and since Purple Martins need these to nest, we thought we would investigate setting one up and looking after it. Pilar is following up and we'll know more in the coming weeks.

Together with Bird Friendly Ottawa and Sandy Garland (who is a resident of the area) I visited the Canal Woods to look at the location. I support getting an official letter from the OFNC to request protection of this space from development. If a Bioblitz is scheduled, I plan to join that event and help document at least the bird species who use the space (I'm not good with plants 😁). Deb shared much more information with Ted and Owen with regards to letter of support and requests from neighborhood residents to preserve this space.

The BC team will go birding together on October 25."

Ken noted that Chris Traynor currently has signing authority with respect to the Shirleys Bay agreement and it was suggested that this be updated.
Moved by Jakob Mueller, seconded by Ken Young, that Emilia Michaud and Janet McCullough, separately, be authorised to sign, on behalf of OFNC, to complete an agreement for access to the Shirleys Bay causeway. **CARRIED**

c. Conservation – Jakob spoke to the role of the Conservation Committee within OFNC. He pointed out that OFNC is a field naturalists club not a conservation organisation. The Conservation Committee sees its role as providing field naturalist data that can then be used by conservation authorities and other NGOs to advocate for protection of areas with significant ecological value. Jakob noted that some members of the committee, together with some other members of the Club, are amongst the top ranked observers nationally, and in some cases internationally, on iNaturalist. They are trying to identify the areas that are most worthy of protection. Although there are reasons why one might want to protect any green space, Jakob suggested that there are areas that are much more ecologically valuable than, say, Canal Woods whose biodiversity was greatly reduced by eradication of the neighbouring Dow's Swamp for development purposes. It is these areas of significant ecological value, often unrecognised, that the committee is most concerned to identify.

d. Education & Publicity – Deb had circulated the following report by email:

"Tours and presentations

October 1 -Tour of FWG for Girl Guides - Gord Robertson and Deborah Doherty.

Older guides assisted with removal of Tickweed as a service project.

Products

• Feather Banner: A design featuring iconic wildlife (monarchs, woodpeckers, turtles) and plants has been reviewed been reviewed by the committee. Several adjustments were suggested including the club's full name and the addition of a website/QR code. There was some concern that the green might be difficult to those with colour blindness. A copy of the draft design is attached.

This banner will be stored in the FWG and will be used primarily at outreach events, but can also be made available to the events and birding committees for their events.

• Tri-folds: The English tri-fold has been sent to Michelle for translation.

• Instagram: Over 300 reels have been posted to date.

• Storyboards at FWG: Summer stories have been replaced with fall themes (asters, grasshoppers, monarchs)."

Gord reported that the FWG trail maps have been reprinted in colour and seem to be appreciated by visitors.

e. Events – Shawna Lucey, new Chair of the committee was introduced to the Board by Owen. Jakob noted that Diane Lepage has been trying to find volunteers for the committee and has recruited two new members.
Moved by Jakob Mueller, seconded by Shawna Lucey, that Paul André Riché and Amanda Dey be approved as members of the Events Committee. **CARRIED**

f. Finance – (see Item 6c Budget above) Ann: nil to add

g. Fletcher Wildlife Garden – Ted reported that it is an ongoing struggle to get approval from AAFC for any changes that FWG wishes to make. They are waiting for approval for adding a third tool shed and putting up a large trail map.
The various work groups are largely finished for the season.

h. Macoun Club – Susan reported that Club events have started up again with the usual fall enthusiasm. About 30 kids have signed-up and about 15-20 are turning out for each event. This makes for rather large outings but the number will probably go down over the winter.
They have been approached by a physician from CHEO who is looking to do a study of the prescription of nature to children with mental health issues. An MOU has been sent by Rob to Owen. Owen will circulate it to the Board for review.

i. Membership – Lisa: nil to report

j. Ontario Nature – Jakob: nil to report

k. Publications – Jess had circulated the following report by email:

"CFN issue 139(3) is already partially posted
online: https://www.canadianfieldnaturalist.ca/index.php/cfn

On that note, I will use the words of committee chair Jeff Saarela because he put it so beautifully:

Given that six articles [and notes] in 139(3) 2026 have already been published online, our move to post articles online as they are completed has greatly improved our timeliness of publication, and we are 100% on track to getting 4 issues out per year, within the calendar year of the volume. There is now no appearance of any delay in publication from a readers' perspective.

In other words, the plan we devised last fall and implemented this year to get back on track has worked beautifully - thanks to the hard work of the journal production team."

Jess had circulated the following report from Dwayne by email:

"**139(2) April–June 2026**
- total 88 journal pages published
- first two galleys posted online 8 May, fully posted 25 June, mailing date 8 July
- Editor's synopsis sent 7 July along with request for open access for the Feature Article
- open access granted today upon re-requested; synopsis will be posted this week

139(3) July–Sept 2026

- last minute changes requested by the author (AU) to last manuscript (ms) to be posted (now that AU transfer of copyright and order form has been received) approved today
- the rest of the ms (total *n* = 7 in the issue) have already been posted, with the first one posted on 3 August
- total of 81 journal pages so far with pagination for Book Reviews (*n* =13 pages), New Titles (*n* = 3), and News and Comment (*n* = 1) to be finalized once the last ms is posted
- to increase the page count to a multiple of four, Editors' Report for volume 138 (currently in preparation) will be added
- part of the Editors' Report is a table tallying CFN subscriptions; nearly 60% of the 198 subscriptions for volume 138 were for print or print and online versions suggesting the print version is still important to CFN subscribers
- covers still be finalized once pagination is complete; layout person is currently in Europe but will work on CFN in the evenings
- Governor General patronage on the inside front cover will not be stated until new patronage announcement is made
- cover photograph (British Columbia alpine mushroom) already online

139(4) Oct–Dec 2026

- 7 ms currently scheduled for this issue
- 2 are currently undergoing formal copyediting with another 5 ready or nearly ready
- one copyeditor went on vacation to Europe for about a month in July–August

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

- 6 AU revisions have been received, 1 of which the assigned Associate Editor (AE) has recommended as being ready for publication, with another 4 sent by Dwayne to the AE for their opinions, one of which has been received; all these 6 are awaiting Dwayne's review and final decision
- 18 ms being revised by AUs (since EiC decision January 2024) some of which will probably not be revised
- AE recommendation from initial peer-review has been received for 5 ms
- 17 ms under initial peer review including a resubmission of an early submission that required major revision/resubmission
- 3 ms have been assigned AEs but they haven't yet sent them to potential reviewers
- another ms received today for which AE still needs to be assigned
- 37 submissions received so far in 2026, 3 of which were declined (one after formal peer-review, another previously published online so not eligible for publishing in CFN, and a third was outside the scope of CFN)
- by the same time last year only 29 ms had been received so submissions seem to be increasing

Additional Tidbits

- no progress on thematic collection by Amanda and Dwayne; Dwayne's priority was to get 139(2) and 139(3) published while at the same time juggling production staff vacations, field work, and other commitments
- compliance with US Federal regulations for accessibility still being discussed

- response to email request for permission to use figures previously published in CFN sent; type of permission required dependent on type of copyright on the particular published manuscript"

Annie reminded the Board that it is T&L's 60th anniversary next year and invited submissions celebrating this milestone.

I. Safe Wings Ottawa – Janette reported that Safe Wings has been busy with almost three times as many birds as this time last year. She wondered whether this reflects more baby birds than last year.

8. Adjournment
Moved by Lisa Chamney, seconded by Janette Niwa, that the meeting be adjourned.
CARRIED

It was agreed that the next meeting would be held on December 14, 2026

Appendix

Budget FY2026-27

Recording Secretary: Elizabeth Moore

Upcoming Meeting Dates

November 16, 2026
December 14, 2026
January 18, 2027
February 15, 2027
March 15, 2027

Appendix: Budget FY2026–27

Ottawa Field Naturalists' Club - Budget for FY2026–27 Approved by the Board of Directors October 19, 2026	
REVENUE:	
4005 Membership	$ 28,000
4030 Sales FWG	17,000
4030 Sales Other	500
4105 Donations Gen plus	6,000
4106 Donations FWG	2,500
4109 Donations Safe Wings + sales	9,000
4200 CFN Subscriptions	20,000
4220 CFN Author's Charges	10,000
TOTAL REVENUE	**$ 93,000**
EXPENDITURES:	
5001 CFN Expenses	$ 72,500
5105 T&L Expenses	29,900
5202 FWG Habitat	10,000
5203 FWG Fundraising	1,000
5230 FWG Centre	4,460
5305 Awards Cttee	400
5310 Birds Cttee	2,700
5311 Safe Wings	10,750
5315 Macoun Club General	900
5315 Macoun Fund	1,700
5325 Educ & Pub	5,000
5330 Events (Awards Night but not Pelee)	11,200
5335 Membership	400
5340 Research Grants	-
5350 Conservation Cttee	-
5605 Affiliation Fees	260
5620 Club Admin	4,610
5670 Donations (to others)	7,000
5685 Insurance	2,400
5690 Financial Service Fees	2,250
5710 Professional Fees	21,700
5790 Website	1,155
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	**$190,285**
EXCESS/(DEFICIT) OF REVENUE	**($97,285)**
4410 Pelee Revenue	-
5320 Pelee Expense	-
4440 Interest from Investments	50,000
NET REVENUE WITH INTEREST	**($47,285)**