

The Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club 2010-2011 Annual Reports

Awards Committee - Eleanor Zurbrigg, Chair

The Awards Committee met once in 2011 to select recipients for the Club's seven awards. Committee members prepared the citations for each recipient which outline the many ways in which the person had distinguished herself or himself by accomplishments in the field of natural history and conservation, or by extraordinary activity within the Club. The awards were presented at the Club's annual Soiree in April.

Birds Committee - Chris Traynor, Chair

The Birds Committee organized the Fall Bird Count and along with the Club des Ornithologues de l'Outaouais participated in the 2010 Christmas Bird Count. The annual Peregrine Falcon Watch did not go ahead for the second straight year due to egg failure. The seed-a-thon was successful in raising money to operate the club's bird feeders. The committee continues to operate a rare bird alert and the Ottawa bird status line, a recorded telephone message of current bird sightings. Several committee members handle the large number of bird identification requests that come in to the club via its website. The Bird Record Subcommittee met during the year to review rare bird reports and continues to work on an extensive database of Ottawa bird records.

Conservation Committee - Ken Young, Chair

1. NCC Greenbelt Master Plan Review

The Greenbelt Master Plan Review being conducted by the National Capital Commission will shape the future of the Greenbelt in the decades to come. The Conservation Committee participates in the Greenbelt Coalition in order to monitor the progress of the review and attempt to influence it.

In April, 2011, the NCC and the City of Ottawa announced a "Joint Study to Assess Cumulative Effects of Transportation Infrastructure on the National Capital Greenbelt". The purpose of this study is for the City to lobby the NCC to permit additional roads and/or the widening of existing roads through the Greenbelt. Stony Swamp is one of the threatened areas, with either a widening of Richmond Road or a new road across the south end in the cards.

In May, 2011, the NCC released "strategic statements and preliminary land use concepts that will guide the future of the Greenbelt until 2060". Greenbelt Coalition members were disappointed with the limited nature of the proposed concepts. None involve more than marginal changes to the Greenbelt. During the public consultation on these proposals, the Greenbelt Coalition urged that a larger-scale expansion of the Greenbelt be undertaken. We proposed that significant natural spaces be added to the Greenbelt system, such as the Carp Hills/South March Highlands. The current review of the Master Plan is the time to establish that strategy.

2. Development of the South March Highlands

Attempts to stop further development in the South March Highlands were unsuccessful, and KNL Developments began land clearing over the winter. However, there was good news in September, with the announcement by the Ministry of Natural Resources that the Kizell Drain Wetland Complex is a provincially significant wetland (psw). KNL was planning to use the Kizell Drain, which feeds into Beaver Pond, to drain its development. That cannot be done to a psw.

3. Other Activities

Rideau Corridor Landscape Strategy - Parks Canada is conducting a project called the "Rideau Corridor Landscape Strategy". The project stems from the designation of the canal system as a World Heritage Site, and concerns the "visual character" of the canal system. An organization called the Rideau Roundtable is coordinating the response from environmental organizations, in order to make our input

effective. An exploratory meeting was held on April 5, 2011 which Ken Young attended. Kingston Field Naturalists also sent a representative.

Use of Wild Raptors in Falconry - The Conservation Committee drafted letters for the President's signature opposing the use of wild raptors in falconry in Ontario.

Carp Hills-South March Highlands BioBlitz - On May 28, a bioblitz was held in the Carp Hills and South March Highlands. The OFNC provided some support with publicity, and some members participated in the field work. The Education & Publicity Committee presented a display at the Carp Farmers' Market, from which the bioblitz was conducted.

University of Ottawa Student Request - Advice was provided to a University of Ottawa student interested in doing a project involving recreation and the environment.

Education & Publicity Committee - Fenja Brodo, Chair

This committee met six times this year, mostly to prepare for exhibits for various venues. We staff a sales table at all of our monthly meetings.

Wildlife Festival, Billings Bridge, Saturday, March 26th, 2011

Three meetings were devoted to creating our exhibit on the theme "The Boreal Forest." Six volunteers staffed our table. The amount of foot traffic and interest in our display made this event worthwhile.

OFNC Soirée April 16, 2011

Our Boreal Forest Exhibit was on display.

Carp Farmers' Market & Carp Bioblitz Saturday May 28th

Three volunteers staffed our table that featured our "Boreal Forest" display and other OFNC material.

EcoFair, Saturday September 17th at Carleton University Fieldhouse

Six volunteers staffed our booth that featured our Boreal Forest display as well as information on all our club activities. A new venue and new time slot (previously in the spring) resulted in a lower attendance, however, those that came were very interested in our and the other exhibits. We used the Club computer to run a continuous slide show.

"Meet the Experts", Canadian Museum of Nature, Nov. 26th & 27th

We shall be show-casing our Club and its many activities to complement the Museum's show casing the expertise and knowledge of their staff. Twelve volunteers sought to staff our tables.

Ottawa Regional Science Fair, Saturday 2 April

Our judges found worthy recipients for our prizes and wrote this event up for *T&L*.

We field many requests, usually coming from our webpage, for trip leaders or speakers. This year we supplied people for the following events:

- Jane Jacob's Walk, May 7 & 8.
- Kiwanis Club, birding talk, May 25
- Environment week, Federal Government, June 6th.
- Royal Visit: July 2, Macoun Field-Club and Fletcher Wildlife Garden members honoured.
- Organized 2 nature walks for AJA 50+
- Amica at Westboro Park, presentation on local birds.
- Pinhey's Point, afternoon birding walk, April 16th.
- Earth Day, OFNC exhibit, NCC Lobby, 8-2:00 p.m.
- Ottawa Riverkeeper event, Victoria Island, Sept. 25th.

Excursions and Lectures Committee - Jeff Skevington, Chair

We would like to take this opportunity to thank the many volunteers who provided the excellent slate of activities in 2011. Over the course of the year, club members coordinated and/or led 59 events: 44 outings, nine monthly meetings, four workshops, a business meeting, and our annual party (Soirée). We provide a summary of these events and their leaders in Table 1 below. This is an impressive number and diversity of events. If you enjoyed a talk or outing, we encourage you to let your leader know! Our events explored a diverse range of natural history: birds (25), general natural history (13), botany (4), insects (4), mycology (3), natural history by canoe (2), geology (2), amphibians (1), fish (1), lichens (1), mammals (1), photography (1) and club business (1). Planning such a large number of events requires a constant supply of both leaders and ideas. If you would like to lead or co-lead an event in 2012, please contact one of us and let us know what you propose. Even if you don't have any specific ideas, or have not led an event before but would like to get involved, just let us know. Although in Ottawa we are fortunate to have many experts as leaders, you do not have to be an expert to lead an outing! Participants are also often knowledgeable and many great outings are a collective effort. We are similarly interested in hearing about ideas for monthly speakers, or workshops of interest to members. Please speak to us at an upcoming event, or respond to the following email address(es): Jeff Skevington (jhskevington@gmail.com), Holly Bickerton (hbickerton@hotmail.com), Fenja Brodo, Julia Cipriani and Hume Douglas (Excursions and Lectures committee members).

Table 1: Summary of events held in 2011.

Volunteers	Date	Event
Ann MacKenzie & Frank Pope	18 January	Annual Business Meeting
Fred Schuler	23 January	Mudpuppies
Don Smith	29 January	Workshop: Small Mammals
Phil Jenkins	8 February	Monthly meeting: In the field with George Dawson
Jeff & Angela Skevington	19 February	Barron Canyon Snowshoeing; joint outing with Macnamara Field Naturalists'
Gord Belyea	27 February	Algonquin birding
Terry Higgins	6 March	Jack Pine trail birding
Jay Fitzsimmons	8 March	Monthly meeting: Citizen Science online
Hume Douglas & Steven Cooke	17 April	Rideau Canal fish watching
Jeff & Angela Skevington	30 April	Constance Bay natural history
Celia Bodnar & Jeff Skevington	7 May	Innis Point bird banding demonstration
Maxim Larrivée	12 April	Monthly meeting: Monitoring global change with butterflies
Hume Douglas, Fenja Brodo, Holly Bickerton, Julia Cipriani, Annie Bélair, Marilyn Ward, Ann Prescott, Connie Clark, Ann MacKenzie, Gord Belyea, Jeff Skevington	16 April	Soirée
Mark Gawn	8 May	Birding Thurso to Plaisance
Jack Hughes	10 May	Monthly meeting: The Rise of North American Geese
Ken Allison & Dave Moore	14 May	Britannia birding
Patrick Blake	15 May	Birding Chaffey's Locks, cancelled due to weather
Roy John	21 May	Birding west of Ottawa
Gord Belyea	25 May	Birding the south end of Ottawa
Erika Gaertner	28 May	Workshop: Edible wilds
Serge Laplante & Hume Douglas	4 June	Woodboring beetles at Luskville Falls
Gillian Mastromatteo	5 June	Jack Pine trail birding
Irwin (Ernie) Brodo	14 June	Monthly Meeting: Travels with a Lichenologist
Ted Mosquin	19 June	Purdon Fen botany & ecology
Gary Bell	26 June	Elbow Lake natural history
Jeff Skevington & Peter Hall	2 July	Butterfly count
Elyn Humphreys	10 July	Mer Bleue carbon cycles
Gord Belyea	17 July	Rideau River canoeing
Eleanor Thomson	19 July	Ferguson Forest ramble

Rick Cavasin	24 July	Butterflies of Gatineau
Dan Brunton & Hume Douglas	14 August	Constance Lake Canoeing
Bernie Ladouceur & Mark Gawn	14 August	Shorebirds
Ken Allison	20 August	Ottawa area birding
Paul Jones	21 August	Hog's Back/Vincent Massey Park birding
Roy John	27 August	Presqu'île birding
Langis Sirois	10 Sept.	Ottawa area birding
Paul Gammon	11 Sept.	Stromatolites and limestones
Jeff Skevington	12-16 Sept.	Point Pelee birds and monarchs, canceled due to lack of interest
Fenja Brodo	13 Sept.	Monthly meeting: Member's Night, cancelled
Peter Hall	17 Sept.	Ottawa area birding
Michel & Christiane Corbeil	17 Sept.	Mushrooming in Papineauville with Les Mycologues Amateurs d'Outaouais
Les Mycologues Amateurs d'Outaouais	18 Sept.	Mushroom Fair with Les Mycologues Amateurs d'Outaouais
Michael Runtz	16 Oct.	Macnamara trail nature walk; joint outing with Macnamara Field Naturalists'
Dave Moore	24 Sept.	Ottawa area birding
George White	1 Oct.	Slime Moulds, puffballs and cup fungi
John Cartwright	1 Oct.	Ottawa area birding
Carolyn Callaghan & Holly Bickerton	2 Oct.	Autumn tree identification
Ken Storey	11 Oct.	Monthly meeting: Winter survival strategies
Chris Lewis	15 Oct.	Ottawa-Gatineau Fall Bird Count
Geof Burbidge & Bruce Summers	30 Oct.	Urban Geology
Doug Luoma	3 Nov.	Workshop: Camera adaptations for wildlife photography
Macoun Club members	5 Nov.	Stony Swamp study site
Ted Cheskey	8 Nov.	Monthly meeting: Important Bird Areas
Alan Young	17 Nov.	Workshop: The Canadian Boreal Forest agreement
Eleanor Thomson	22 Nov.	Winter botany in Marlborough Forest
Mark Gawn & Bernie Ladouceur	27 Nov.	Gulls
Justin Peter	13 Dec.	Monthly meeting: Bird migration monitoring in Spain
Bernie Ladouceur	18 Dec.	Ottawa-Gatineau Christmas bird count
Bruce Di Labio	29 Dec.	Dunrobin-Breckenridge Christmas bird count

Finance Committee - Barbara Chouinard, Chair

In addition to the other changes within OFNC this year, OFNC's accounting/financial systems also underwent major restructuring. The Finance Committee met several times during the year to consider the logistics and systems in respect of the changes. The year ended with online membership registration, a new bookkeeper and new auditor. In addition, systems were set up for the new online revenue process, the deposit process, the payables processing and financial reporting. These initiatives took the work of many individuals not just from the Finance Committee but across the committees to plan, program and work out the details. A very complicated year for the club's accounting and financial information systems and the process is not yet done.

The last Finance Committee meeting concentrated on fiscal responsibility and the 2011/12 budget. It is anticipated the initiatives/changes started in the 2010/11 year will continue into the 2011/12 fiscal period.

The club is continuing to run a deficit. However the long term goal for the club is a balanced budget. This hopefully will be realized in the 2012/13 fiscal period when the changes within the club will have stabilized.

Fiscal Responsibility for the OFNC is the Finance Committee's objective. Once there is a consistent balanced budget then the club can make better use of the surplus/legacy funds and can start looking at new areas/projects beyond the club's normal operations that it could undertake as per the OFNC objectives to promote, conserve and appreciate Canada's natural heritage

Fletcher Wildlife Garden - David Hobden, Fletcher Wildlife Garden Committee Representative on Council, Sandra Garland, Chair

The committee met monthly during the past year, with the December meeting a gathering for all the volunteers who do most of the work at the FWG. We also thank Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) for their continuing support in some projects.

The proposal for a Monarch Waystation that we submitted to the Evergreen Foundation last year resulted in a grant of \$2500 in fall 2010 and second place in a contest co-sponsored by Fido this summer. We thank all those who voted for our project. The additional \$15,000 prize will allow us to register the entire FWG as a monarch waystation, establish a smaller-scale waystation in the Butterfly Meadow, and provide information to visitors about butterfly conservation. Future plans include a workshop to gather other stakeholders and coordinate local conservation efforts and provide information via our web site.

Some of the prize money was used to rebuild and improve our nursery to grow larger plants for our own purposes and for our annual plant sale.

The volunteers working on Wednesday evenings continued to expand the Butterfly Meadow, gradually replacing the invasive dog-strangling vine (DSV = *Cynanchum rossicum*) with a variety of nectar and pollen sources. Two weeding bees attracted 20 volunteers each to remove DSV, and AAFC rototilled three new areas for planting in 2012.

A new group of volunteers formed this year to work on invasive species, principally DSV. An additional scythe was purchased as cutting DSV before it produces seeds has proven to be the best way to keep it in check, pending the discovery of a biological control system. Weeding bees were also organized to remove DSV from among "good" species.

On Friday mornings, a large group of volunteers, most of whom have been with us for many years, continued to maintain the Backyard Garden. No major changes were made. In addition to many casual visitors, a botanical art class made good use of this area this year. Invasive species work is also being done by some of the Friday morning group, working on buckthorn and Amur maple.

Our usual activities continued. We grew many plants for our annual native plant sale and raised about \$2800. Two bird feeders were maintained throughout the winter. We were involved in the Wildlife Festival and the Great Backyard Bird Count. Volunteers opened the Interpretation Centre on Sunday afternoons through the summer.

Work on the bridge at the east end of our Amphibian Pond, begun in summer 2010, was completed late in the year and is much enjoyed by visitors and volunteers alike.

Macoun Field Club Committee - Robert E. Lee, Chair

The Committee met once and thereafter carried out the month-to-month planning by telephone and e-mail. Committee members supervised or gave presentations at 19 indoor meetings and led 15 field trips during the school year. Indoor sessions were held in the Fletcher Wildlife Garden building; the field trips took place either at the Club's nature-study area in Ottawa's Greenbelt or on private properties in Lanark County. Additionally, several of the indoor meetings incorporated short field trips within the Fletcher Wildlife Garden. Members of the Committee and representatives of the OFNC met with the family of the late Martha Camfield, a long-time leader, leading to the establishment of an endowment fund in her name for specified Macoun Club activities, to be managed by the OFNC. The family also directed memorial donations to the Macoun Club.

Membership Committee - Henry Steger, Chair

The distribution of the membership for 2011 on September 30, 2011 is shown in the table below, with the corresponding numbers for 2010 shown in brackets. "Others" represent, for the greatest part, affiliate organizations that receive complimentary copies of the Club's publications. Local membership (within 50 km of Parliament Hill) was 621 and 650 in 2011 and 2010, respectively. The decrease in total membership of 53 continues an ongoing trend that was interrupted only in 2010. The continued decrease in members located more than 50 km from Ottawa accounted for slightly less than one half of the overall decrease in membership.

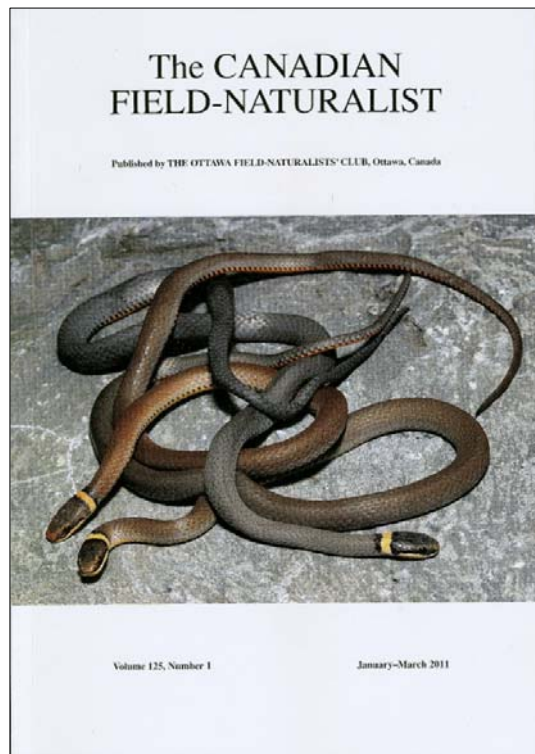
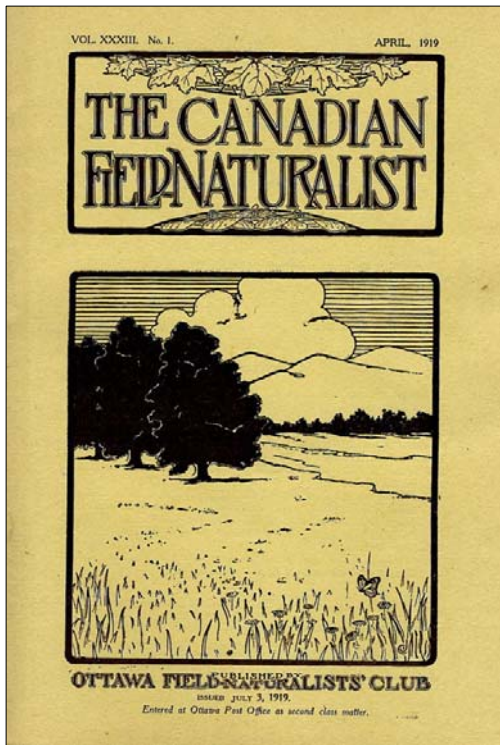
The decrease in membership can be partially attributed to the increase in Club fees and the introduction of a fee for receiving the Canadian Field Naturalist (CFN) in hard copy. Only 56 members, excluding Honorary Members, opted for hard-copy CFN.

	Canadian		U.S.A		Other		Total	
Individual	361	(386)	13	(15)	0	(0)	374	(401)
Family	282	(293)	1	(1)	1	(1)	284	(295)
Sustaining*	-	(14)	-	(0)	-	(0)	-	(14)
T&L	2	(4)	0	(0)	0	(0)	2	(4)
Honorary	24	(21)	0	(0)	0	(0)	24	(21)
Life	48	(52)	4	(3)	1	(1)	53	(56)
Other	23	<u>(22)</u>	0	<u>(0)</u>	1	<u>(1)</u>	24	<u>(23)</u>
TOTAL	740	(792)	18	(19)	3	(3)	761	(814)

*Sustaining membership was discontinued in 2011. Renewing members assumed either Individual or Family membership.

Publications Committee - Daniel F. Brunton, Chair

To suggest that 2011 has been an exceptional year would be a considerable understatement. Not since 1918 when Percy Taverner, James Macoun and their associates reformed the local *Ottawa Naturalist* to become the national *Canadian Field-Naturalist* have we witnessed such a seismic shift in the OFNC publications program. In those post-WWI times such a substantial restructuring was deemed essential to re-engage and enlarge the journal's constituency, to reflect how best to deliver its content in a dramatically changed landscape and to ensure its continued existence into the foreseeable future. The issues are no less urgent for the CFN today and the stakes no less significant. The initial outcomes, we are happy to report, have been no less gratifying.



Retiring CFN editor Francis Cook and his remarkable production team oversaw the publication and distribution of six issues of the journal in 2011, those being two issues of volume 123 and all four issues of volume 124, 631 pages in all. In addition, in-coming Editor-in-Chief Carolyn Callaghan oversaw the publication of issues 125 1 and 2, representing 188 pages (125 2 actually be published in January 2012). This total production of 819 pages in 12½ months represents an all-time productivity record. It easily exceeds that of several ca. 750 page volumes at the turn of this century and volume 112 (1998) which produced 794 pages over a 15 month period.

The breadth and scope of the original research covered in these six issues is classic CFN material, representing a rich combination of taxonomic, ecological, historical and conservation oriented studies that will contribute to the investigation and protection of Canadian biodiversity for decades to come. The unprecedented use of colour images and maps greatly enhances the appearance and effectiveness of these contributions. Such publications are an enduring credit to both the researchers who produce significant, original work and to the CFN production team who review, process and publish them.

Volume 125 saw the production of the first electronic issues of CFN. The installation and application of the

Open Journal Systems (OJS) electronic publication process has fallen largely upon the shoulders of incoming Journal Manager Jay Fitzsimmons. Jay worked diligently with indefatigable retiring CFN Business Manager Frank Pope to ensure that the transition from our traditional hard copy process was as efficient and painless as possible. They have succeeded magnificently, a few inevitable glitches notwithstanding. Much work remains to be done in 2012 to fully integrate all of the OJS elements, but substantial progress has been made.

So many individuals have contributed to the success of CFN in 2011. I've spoken of the production team - and retiring Business Manager Frank Pope deserves special credit here for the million and one issues he has quietly and efficiently resolved - but we must also note the considerable patience and forbearance of the OFNC Council who facilitated both the effort and budget required as we entered this brave new world. Their support was essential and is gratefully acknowledged. First and foremost, however, we acknowledge the continued support of the contributors of important, original material for consideration in CFN.

The OFNC and the Ottawa Valley naturalist community is also blessed by the production of our remarkably successful second periodical, *Trail & Landscape*. Editor Karen McLachlan Hamilton and her team quietly and efficiently went about their business in 2011 as they have for a full decade of T&L's more than 40 years of existence. Another 188 pages of information and data that contributes significantly to both our knowledge of the local landscape and to the enjoyment of it by the naturalist community was published in T&L this year.

The Publication Committee's challenge for 2012 is to sustain the remarkable, historic achievements of 2011 and to continue our support for those dedicated folks on the front lines. We ask all members and subscribers to assist by considering the submission of manuscripts to the CFN and T&L. And we also ask you to encourage your associates to do likewise. That, ultimately, is what this is all about.