

QUINTE FIELD NATURALISTS
Bridge Street United Church, Belleville, ON
February 27, 2017

1. Welcome: George Thomson, President

Reminder: Many bargains available at the Treasure Table this evening. Please have a look.

2. Peter Fuller: All are welcome to participate in BIOBLITZ 2017 at the Miller Nature Reserve June 10/11. This event is co-ordinated by Prince Edward County Field Naturalists, Hastings Prince Edward Land Trust, and Prince Edward Point Bird Observatory. Volunteers will join scientists and experts to record all the living species in a specific area. Open to the public.

(for additional information, check <http://peptbo.ca/bioblitz-2017.php>)

As there is a regular population of Chimney Swifts in the area, members may wish to assist in "SwiftWatch" - monitoring and identifying roosting sites for this species that is in serious decline. There are four dates in May/June for the formal survey. If interested you may contact me. Reference: [http://www.birdscanada.org/volunteer/ai/resources/2016 Ontario SwiftWatch Annual Report EN.pdf](http://www.birdscanada.org/volunteer/ai/resources/2016%20Ontario%20SwiftWatch%20Annual%20Report%20EN.pdf)

3. Financial: Doug Newfield, Treasurer

Bank balance is \$7977.16. Please note that Annual Dinner tickets are available this meeting and next. Only 25 remain. (contact: cedarhaven@sympatico.ca)

A reminder: there is free admission for all Parks Canada locations (not Provincial Parks) this year.

Passes are available online or at the sites.

<http://www.pc.gc.ca/eng/voyage-travel/admission.aspx>

(Addendum note: this includes national parks, national historic sites and national marine conservation areas)

4. Outings: John Blaney

No outings planned this month, but many opportunities to birdwatch: among them are Friends of Presqu'île's Waterfowl Weekend, March 25 and 26 from 10 am to 4 pm - a great chance to view waterfowl with the help of knowledgeable volunteers; and Frink Conservation area where two new birdfeeders have been installed - many thanks to past-president Phil Martin who built them.

Members are encouraged to submit articles or information for publication in the newsletter. If you are not receiving the newsletter, please let me know. sharronjohnblaney@gmail.com

We are seeing an irruption of great gray owls in the area this year. Please keep their welfare in mind when viewing. Roadways are very dangerous for them, also for saw-whet owls. See details in February newsletter.

Tom Wheatley reported seeing 71 tundra swans just north of Belleville.

5. Environmental/Ontario Nature/Marketing: Denice Wilkins

- Great crowd tonight (likely owing to our terrific speakers!): we welcome all visitors and newcomers and hope that you will consider joining QFN. Also note there is a donation box at the back table.
- Anyone from the Marmora area is encouraged to distribute QFN brochures to suitable locations there.
- Next month our speaker will be Stuart Mackenzie of the MOTUS Wildlife Tracking System, the world's most ambitious bird tracking initiative.

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- The Robert Argue Scholarship Award, encouraging environmental activism and innovation, is available to one individual student. Deadline May 5, 2017.
<http://quinterecycling.org/about/scholarships/>
- QFN has donated \$600 to the Ontario Turtle Conservation Centre in Peterborough for the purchase of medical equipment - special magnifying glasses. Thanks to all those who have purchased turtle ICUs.
- Each year QFN sponsors a film showing at DocFest, March 3-5, 2017. This year we chose "Samuel in the Clouds", a look at the effects of climate change on one family living in the mountains of Bolivia. Great message along with spectacular cinematography. Individual film admittance is \$10, weekend pass is \$50.
- Our annual dinner speaker in April is Robert Alvo, a conservation biologist and author of "Being a Bird in North America". With a blend of humour and science, he will share highlights from his book.

6. Sightings

A barred owl has spent 2 months by P.E.C. Road #28 – unusual sighting.

Tony: grackles, robins and others have already returned

George: 93 turkeys around house; males knocking on basement window; friend in Tweed saw a chipping sparrow – first time before April.

Penny heard redwing blackbirds.

Six eastern bluebirds and seventy redwing blackbirds have been seen.

Bald eagles have also returned – you may see them using osprey platforms. An adult and juvenile were spotted in Frankford.

Elizabeth Churcher notes a Stewardship Lecture by Terry Sprague taking place at Gerry Masterson Hall on Harmony Road in Thurlow, March 9th, 7-9 pm – Fall and Rise of the Bald Eagle. (also, Peter Fuller will relate story and activities of Prince Edward Point Bird Observatory, PEPtBO))

Ref. <http://www.harvesthastings.ca/sustainability/blog/2017/02/fall-and-rise-bald-eagles-and-more>

7. Speakers: Tony and Kathy deGroot present "Algonquin's Natural Beauty".
Introduced by Elizabeth Churcher: Tony and Kathy's passions and adventures include hiking, camping, canoeing and photography. (See <http://www.tonydegroot.com/>)
Thanked by Kyle Blaney for an awesome presentation ... and George added "spectacular".
8. Refreshments: provided this evening by Penny Vance and Donna Fano.
For a \$2 donation you may enjoy all the bird-friendly coffee and treats you wish. Proceeds go to PEPtBO.
9. Adjournment – George Thomson

Attendance: 98