

QUINTE FIELD NATURALISTS
Bridge Street United Church, Belleville, ON
November 26, 2016

1. Welcome: George Thomson, President

We are still looking for two volunteers to serve as the Nominating Committee. Duties are merely to identify or phone members to determine interest in serving on the Executive Committee's next term. Also, please note that 5 FM Hearing Devices are available for those who may find it a little challenging to hear speakers during the meeting. Please let Donna Fano know if you would like to try them out.

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

3. Stewart Murray, HPELT: The Land Trust manages the 490-acre Miller Family Nature Reserve in PEC; a diverse 300-acre land-locked property in Hastings County; a 1000-acre property donated to save this example of the northern landscape in North Hastings; and a 125-acre parcel that is waiting on land severance. Please support BioBlitz and consider giving HPELT memberships as a Christmas gift; we rely on donations and membership dues to continue our work in land conservation and sustainable management.

4. George Thomson: Kathy Felkar is selling one-pound bags of Bird Friendly coffee tonight. All proceeds go to Prince Edward Point Bird Observatory. Following the meeting, for a \$2.00 donation, you may eat as many goodies as you like, and sample the coffee, regular or decaffeinated.

5. Financial: Doug Newfield, Treasurer

Bank balance is \$6234.62. The 2017 financial statement and budget will be presented at the January meeting.

6. Outings: John Blaney

First, regarding the Newsletter, contact me if you have any submissions, pictures or news that could be included. Regarding the donation of land to HPELT, please note that significant tax breaks are offered. Regarding the H.R. Frink Centre, QFN has begun supplying feed for the bird feeders. Frink staff are keeping them filled during the week; volunteers are needed to fill them over the Christmas holidays when staff are off. Please let me know if you are able to assist.

Regarding outings: The Christmas Bird Count takes place on Tuesday, December 27th, the goal being to record as many species as possible. Contact John if you would like to join.

sharronjohnblaney@gmail.com

On January 21st there will be an outing to Algonquin Park to see Grey Jays. There is a 99% likelihood of spotting them, and a good chance that they may eat out your hand – they are not shy birds. We'll be meeting at the Lowe's parking lot at 8 a.m. for this trip.

News on sightings: at the Frink Centre, one of our members spotted a young bear who promptly vacated the scene. A Snowy Owl was reported south of Trenton, female king Eiders (brown ducks) have been seen, and also, at Wawa, a Crested Caracara vulture.

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7. Environment/Ontario Nature/Marketing: Denice Wilkins

Bernadette has Sandy Pines 2017 Calendars for sale at \$20, proceeds in support of Sandy Pines Wildlife Centre. Many QFN brochures are available for distribution; if you know of locations to place them, please let us know and take some. The speaker at our next meeting, January 23rd, is Tom Mason, (who now lives in our area) giving a presentation on Spiders of Ontario. Last week at the Trenton Woodlot Conference the highlights were: Environmental Commissioner of Ontario, Dr. Dianne Sax, speaker; adaptation to climate change, no “normal” weather anymore, 2016 blew heat records, need to reduce carbon, “knowledge plus action equals hope”. In October, when Denice asked Maude Barlow (who led a discussion on Canada’s water crisis) “What gives you hope?”, she replied, “The people in this room”. Conclusion is that is up to us to set the bar in these issues.

8. Sightings

Eurasian beavers ... in Scotland (4 families have been settled there); Redwing Blackbirds and Whip-poor-wills have returned to George’s feeders – love peanuts and suet; during hunting season a friend saw a pair of Gray Jays in Wollaston Twsp., Cliff saw a Carolina Wren ... in London; a beaver was seen during the day filling a culvert near Picton; a large skunk looking for grubs has dug up George’s lawn; Norma had a Cooper’s Hawk land on her balcony at The Anchorage; Bob saw an American Egret; and, possibly, extracting from my somewhat illegible scribbles, Marilyn (?) saw 200 robins, and 4 bluebirds ... Lots of sightings !

9. Presentation: “Saving Grassland Birds”, by Kurt Hennige, President of L.A. Stewardship Council

Introduced by John Blaney, remarking that Kurt, Past President of Kingston Field Naturalists, who grew up in Baden, Germany, began weekly bird surveys at the age of 12, and recently has been surveying and monitoring birds at risk. He is very knowledgeable in this field. Kurt spoke of the startling population decline of the grassland birds, focusing especially on the Eastern Meadowlark and the Bobolink on Amherst Island, and the challenges in trying to restore their numbers. Thanked by Nancy Stevenson.

10. John Blaney: Copies of newsletter are available at the back. Please provide email address if you wish to receive this and other notifications by email.

11. Adjournment: George Thomson

Attendance: 60

Addendum: Refreshments this evening were provided by Marlene Alexander and Michelle Hutchison – thank you !