

QUINTE FIELD NATURALISTS
Bridge Street United Church, Belleville, ON
October 24, 2016 Meeting Minutes

1. Welcome - George Thomson:

- a) We are still looking for two volunteers to serve as Nominating Committee: this role consists of calling people on the membership list to determine interest in serving on the Executive.
- b) Bernadette has on hand the 2017 Sandy Pines Wildlife Centre fundraising calendars for sale this evening
- c) George and Elizabeth recently released back to the wild a turkey vulture from Sandy Pines. The skies over the fields were empty at the time, yet 3 other vultures appeared immediately to join it.
- d) Mea Culpa: George apologized for neglecting to mention that Nancy Stevenson had contributed some of the treats for September's meeting.
- e) Dick Bird advises that the Amherst Island approval has been appealed, and many feel that the wind turbine may not receive final approval.

2. Dick Bird, Hastings Prince Edward Land Trust (hpelt.org):

The battle to protect Amherst Island from wind turbines was lost.

The battle to prevent wind turbines at Ostrander Point (Ostrander Crown Block) was won.

There are, however, more battles to be waged against turbines on the south shore of P.E.C. Although the South Shore Appeal Fund (savethesouthshore.org) has reached \$250,000, more donations will be required to cover the extensive costs of preserving the area. Dick emphasizes that important bird areas should have legal status for protection.

The Miller Family Nature Reserve on Lake Ontario in P.E.C., along with other properties managed by the Land Trust, are available for use upon permission from P.E.C. Land Trust

3. Kathy Felkar, Prince Edward Point Bird Observatory:

Banding will continue from August through October. The team has banded 3- 4000 birds, over 600 owls. Best viewing conditions are with a north wind and a light moon.

Will bring to our November monthly meeting (last one before Christmas) lots of excellent bird-friendly coffee, for sale at \$15 per pound (great for gifts), proceeds in support of the Bird Observatory.

4. Financial – Doug Newfield:

Bank balance is \$6604. John has secured a deal on bird feed for Frink Centre, \$500 covers whole season.

5. Outings – John Blaney:

- a) First a correction: the bird feed acquisition and cost is still ongoing owing to the need to create a mixture that excludes peanuts (to avoid possible allergic reaction in visitors viewing the birds). Project FeederWatch begins Saturday, November 12. Near the feeders at Frink you will see boxes holding pamphlets and bird-sighting lists (already out of date as 9 additional species have been observed). When you see birds, please add sightings to the list.
- b) Outing: Trip to PE Point for owl banding, Friday, Oct. 28th, unless it rains. (I will confirm by email) Possibility of seeing good variety of owls, including sawwhet and long-eared. Meet at the Petro-Canada variety store parking lot in Rossmore, near the south end of the Bay Bridge, to car pool at **7:00 p.m.** We should be back in Belleville between 10:30 and 11:00 p.m.
- c) Outing: Waterfowl are returning to the Quinte area, particularly the west end of the bay, as they pass through on their way south. Many species can be observed: buffleheads, hooded mergansers,

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mallards, wood ducks and more. On Saturday, November 19th meet by the Golden Jet in Zwicks Park at 8 A.M. or in Bain Park, Trenton (Foot of RCAF Road) at about 8:30 A.M.

6. Environment/Ontario Nature/Marketing – Denice Wilkins:

QFN hosted the regional Ontario Nature meeting in early October.

Speaker's topic at our next meeting, November 28th, will be "Saving Grassland Birds". Research was carried out on Amherst Island.

7. Sightings:

Denice recently visited Victoriaville, east of Montreal, and reported that she has never seen so many birds at once.

Donna – has green frogs and tree frogs living in her BBQ

George – a red-bellied woodpecker visited – will he stay in winter? Also saw red-breasted nuthatches, 3 at a time, at feeders.

Susan – fox sparrows, large reddish brown birds

8. Speaker – Lanna Desantis, The Puzzling Biology of Flying Squirrels

Introduced by Denice Wilkins, Lanna spent her youth in nature rather than malls, studied environmental biology, conducted research in the Yukon, got her Master's degree and, as a PhD candidate researching flying squirrels, discovered the unusual stress levels in this species. Lanna described the unique physiology of the northern and southern flying squirrels, their extraordinarily high levels of free cortisone, and how the research is conducted.

Penny Vance thanked Lanna for her very interesting presentation.

George commented that it was fascinating information and good to see young people involved in these studies. More conservation is needed.

9. Refreshments – George Thomson

Please contribute \$2 for all the organic coffee and goodies you can consume, proceeds to PEPtBO.

Treats provided by June Humphrey and Lori Brown.

10. Adjournment – George Thomson

Thanks for attending. See you next month.

Addendum re attendance this evening: 59