

THE BRODIE CLUB



ROYAL ONTARIO
MUSEUM OF ZOOLOGY

THE 959th MEETING OF THE BRODIE CLUB MINUTES

The 959th meeting of the Brodie Club was held on September 18, 2001 in the Ramsay Wright Zoological Laboratories of the University of Toronto.

Chairman: Bill Carrick
Recording Secretary: Bill Crins
Attendance: 18 members and one guest

GUESTS:

Isabel Boardman, guest of Claire Muller

Minutes of the previous meeting were approved without amendment.

COMMITTEES:

- Program - Bruce Falls announced that several speakers have been lined up for the up coming season, including member Norm Martin in October (forest communities of Ontario), Peter Money on Antarctic penguins, and Ed Addison (moose-tick interactions) in subsequent meetings, Sherwyn Desser (parasitology), Mart Gross on aquaculture and member Bill Rapley.

- Nominations - Bill Carrick noted that he is retiring as Treasurer. Claire Muller has agreed to serve as Treasurer.

- Harry Lumsden is retiring as FON representative.-Position vacant.

- Oliver Bertin retains post of Secretary, including distribution of meeting minutes. However, as with the position of meeting chairman, the duties of the recording secretary will rotate among members. Volunteers to be included on the roster for taking minutes are George Bryant, Ed Addison, Sandra Eadie, and Bill Crins.

- Membership Committee members include Ann Falls, George Bryant, and Jennifer Young.

- Program Committee includes Paul Aird, Jock McAndrews, Bruce Falls, Hugh Currie, Fred Bodsworth, John Riley, Jim Rising, and Bill Rapley.

- Environment Committee consists of Keith Reynolds and Don Huff.

- Archivists are Sandra Eadie and Claire Muller.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- Bruce Falls noted the death of Dr. Murray Speirs recently. Dr. Speirs had received the Order of Canada, and was also known as an eminent ornithologist in Ontario. He was known for his meticulous record-keeping, his focus on detailed local distributional data, particularly with regard to relating distribution to forest types, his early focus on quantitative surveys and bird behaviour, and his encouragement and tutelage of many young birders.
- Norm Martin announced the publication of a revised edition of his and Norma's book on the Biotic Forest Communities of Ontario, available for \$10.00.
- Harry Lumsden announced that the Northern Lake Ontario Regional Meeting of the FON will be held at Sir Sandford Fleming College on Nov. 10. All are welcome.
- Bill Carrick mentioned that the FON Christmas Cards are available for purchase.
- Bernard Muller noted that he is part of a group looking for members and/or support for the need to put limits on human population growth and on the use of natural resources.
- Bruce Falls announced that he had seen a photograph of Doug Miller, a member who had not been heard from in quite some time. Doug Miller is still alive, and resides in Petrolia, Ont.
- Hugh Currie announced that hawk watches occur daily through the fall at High Park, Toronto.

SPEAKER:

This meeting was Members Night. Therefore, various members presented brief talks or conveyed significant observations. There was considerable discussion among members on many of the topics that follow.

Bruce Falls presented a brief video on two museums (Bardo Museum and Carthage) visited during his tour of Tunisia in March 2001, with his son and with fellow Brodie Club members Jim and Yvonne Bendell. The trip focused on birds, and 170 species were seen, but many Roman ruins also were visited. Some ruins still had intact mosaics on the floors. The Bardo Museum contains many mosaics (2-4 centuries A.D.), often depicting animals as well as traditional subjects. There were also Tunisian designs, many of which are based on flowers. Some of the Roman mosaics convey action and 3-dimensional effects through the use of shading. Subtle effects are achieved with bits of stone.

Bill Crins briefly discussed his trip to the Hudson Bay Coast to assist fellow member Ken Abraham with Snow Goose banding. In addition to Snow Geese, many other species of birds were seen during the course of two weeks in mid-July. These included a rare dark-phase Ross' Goose, banded and photographed by Ken, numerous shorebirds on breeding territories, a singing Sprague's Pipit well north and east of its normal range, and a Brown Thrasher present for several weeks, also well north of its usual range.

Claire Muller talked about several features of her trip to the Temagami area in July. She noted that they discovered a beaver lodge near Witch Point Bog that was constructed almost entirely of sphagnum moss, with some sticks interspersed. Also, on a hiking trail on the north side of Temagami Island, just west of the little boat landing near Temagami Lodge bay, she discovered 2- to 3-tiered plants of Bunchberry. Crins suggested that these plants looked analogous to some virus-infected trilliums.

Ed Addison observed a Peregrine Falcon flying over a wetland on the Western Uplands Hiking Trail in Algonquin Park on 14 September 2001. Not surprisingly, waterfowl stayed on the water as the falcon flew overhead. Ed also noted that he and Rosemarie noticed lepidopterous larvae feeding on Pearly Everlasting in their garden in Aurora in June. They ate all of a large patch of plants, and were identified as Painted Lady caterpillars.

Harry Lumsden reported that about 30 nests of Trumpeter Swans were found in the wild in Ontario this year, of which 12 were successful, 11 failed, and seven had unknown fates. Many other pairs were on territory but did not nest. Captive swans produced about 60 cygnets for release in 2003; the best year yet. Harry and Ed Addison also provided an update on the fate of the Aurora East Wetland Complex, a Provincially Significant Wetland on the Oak Ridges Moraine. Although much evidence was provided to the hearing officer in support of buffers 150 m or more in width, the final decision was to apply buffers of 35 m.

George Bryant outlined some of the species of plants and animals (or their nests, in the case of birds) that were on his "most-wanted" list for Ontario, and noted that he saw several species from this list ~his year. Some of these included: Eastern Meadowlark nest, Carden, 23 June; Turkey Vulture nest, Ancaster, 11 July; Short-eared Owl and Hickory Hairstreak, Ancaster, 11 July; Mottled Dusky-wing, Waterdown New Jersey Tea Escarpment Fields, 18 July; Big Brown Bat, High Park, Toronto, 24 July; Long-nosed Gar, *Angelica atropurpurea*, three Trumpeter Swans, Bushy Knotweed, Oakes' Evening-primrose, Southern Blue Flag, Ontario Aster, Grass-leaved Water-plantain, Potato Island, Severn River, 29 August; Goldie's Fern, Clinton's Fern, Fisher, four Buckeyes, Beausoleil Island, 31 August. Some other summer highlights included Spotted Salamander, Five-lined Skink, and Milk Snake in Muskoka, and Hoary Bat.

John Speakman provided highlights from three areas. He observed Grey Whales, Humpback Whales, and Killer Whales off of the Queen Charlotte Islands. Also, he visited several Haida villages and Bill Reed's gravesite while in the Queen Charlottes. Secondly, he described the current condition of Thorah Island in Lake Simcoe, near his cottage. This island formerly supported a large colony of Great Blue Herons. However, now it has been colonized by Double-crested Cormorants. Many of the trees on the island now are covered with cormorant whitewash. Thirdly, he described his experience in observing hawk migration at Hawk Cliff on the north shore of Lake Erie on 13 September 2001. Thousands of hawks were observed that day (winds 5-15 kmph from the northwest), mostly comprised of Broad-winged Hawks, Sharp-shinned Hawks, and American Kestrels. Two Peregrine Falcons were observed at a nearby sewage lagoon that day, as well.

Michael Boyer reported that he has been documenting the mosses of the Muldrew Lake area in southern Muskoka District.

Hugh Currie noted several significant observations from this year's field season, including a fresh Zabulon Skipper (2nd record of this butterfly in Canada) and three Wood Storks on Pelee Island on 16 August. The day was cool and rainy, and the Zabulon Skipper was the only skipper of any kind seen by them that day. He also observed a radio-tagged Wood Turtle north of Elliot Lake with University of Guelph researchers ea. 6 July, and he saw a Checkered White (butterfly) at Bronte Creek Provincial Park on 18 September.

Sandra Eadie noted a very large mushroom growing on a dead tree in Rountree Mills Park. Michael Boyer suggested that it might be a Honey Mushroom. She also noted the Asian ladybird beetle invasion this year. She saw the same type of ladybird beetles in Arizona in early August. This ladybird beetle was introduced in the early 1990s in the

midwestern U.S. to combat aphids. She obtained photographs of the nesting sites of Bermuda Petrels (Cahows) while visiting the sites with David Wingate. Also in Bermuda, she noted unusual Easter lilies which had a very dense growth form, with dozens of leaves growing out in dense ranks. On her trip to Arizona in August, she observed cavities containing acorns that had been stored by Acorn Woodpeckers. She also saw an Elegant Trogon there.

Ann Falls observed Belted Kingfishers behind the Science Centre that appeared to have bright red bills. Upon further inspection, she noted that the kingfishers were catching goldfish, which made the bills appear red at a distance. She also noted that in a beaver pond near their cottage at Go Home Lake in Muskoka District, she and Bruce had discovered a population of Frogbit (*Hydrocharis morsus-ranae*) in 1992. This population is still flourishing. It is believed to constitute the first Muskoka record for this invasive alien aquatic plant.

The meeting adjourned at 21:55.

NEXT MEETING:

The next meeting will be held at 8 pm on October 16 in Room 432 of the Ramsay Wright Zoological Laboratories. Norm Martin will speak on his studies of the forest communities of Ontario.

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