

THE
BRODIE
CLUB



ROYAL ONTARIO
MUSEUM OF ZOOLOGY

THE 1,055th MEETING OF THE BRODIE CLUB

The 1,055th meeting of the Brodie Club was held at 7:30 pm on Tuesday, March 20, 2012 in Room 432 of the Ramsay Wright Zoological Laboratories of the University of Toronto.

Chair: Paul Gray
Secretary: Ed Addison

The meeting was attended by 32; 26 members and 6 guests.

Roll Call:

Present: Abraham, E. Addison, Bertin, Bodsworth, Bousfield, Bryant, Coady, Crins, Currie, Eadie, A. Falls, B. Falls, Gray, J. Hussell, Iron, A. Juhola, H. Juhola, Larsen, Machin, McAndrews, Pittaway, Rapley, Seymour, Slessor, Speakman, Tomlinson.

Regrets: R. Addison, J. Bendell, Y. Bendell, Dunn, D. Hussell, Lumsden, Norm Martin, Norma Martin.

Guests: Kristen Martyn and Jen Sinasac, guests of H. Currie; Chris Zoladeski, guest of R. Curry; Sharon Hick, guest of J. McAndrews; Eric Davies and Reuben de Almeida, guests of B. Falls.

Minutes: The following correction for the minutes of meeting 1054 was received: Seymour was noted as both present and absent. He was present and his name should be removed from the list of those absent. With this correction, the minutes of the February meeting were accepted, moved by A. Falls and seconded by B. Falls.

Announcements and New Business:

- B. Falls has received a letter from Locke Rowe of the Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology (EEB) confirming the desire of EEB to work with the Brodie Club toward common objectives. The letter will be circulated.
- B. Falls noted that A Pocketful of Galls, Louise Hertzberg's biography of William Brodie, is available for reading.

- B. Rapley reminded the club of the Rouge Valley ‘bio-blitz’ to occur from June 15 (1500 hrs) –June 16 (1500 hrs) and invited participation.
- Membership Committee
G. Bryant welcomed David Beadle as a new member of the Brodie Club.
- Program Committee
B. Falls reported that Erling Holm, assistant curator of ichthyology at the ROM, will speak to the Club in April about ‘Fishes of Toronto’.
- June Field Trip
Four potential sites were listed in the February minutes. The Toronto Zoo was withdrawn so as to not compete with the ‘bio-blitz’ in the Rouge, also occurring in June. A field trip to the Rice Lake Plains, led by Don Sutherland/ Bill Crins, was selected as destination based on vote of members present. A date in mid-June convenient to the leaders will be confirmed at the April Club meeting.
- J. Iron has been selected as the “Celebrity Birder” in a 24 hr birding activity on 25 - 26 May that will raise money for the Carden Alvar. She invites sponsorships from members and can be contacted at 9 Lichen Place, Toronto, ON M3A 1X3 and/or jeaniron@sympatico.ca .

SPEAKER:



The speaker, Bill Crins, was introduced by Bruce Falls. Bill has been a member of the BRODIE Club since 1981. He is Senior Conservation Ecologist with the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, Parks and Protected Areas Policy Section. Bill spoke on

Birding in Northern Peru

Bill reported on a birding tour that he and club member D. Strickland traveled on from 6 to 25 November 2011. The trip was from the northern coastal community of Chiclayo inland to the east, rising through many ecosystems to a height of 3700 m, over the continental divide of the Andes Mountains, down to lower elevations in the western Amazon River basin and returning back west over the mountains. Some of the birding spots were private biological reserves.

However, a day or so in Lima prior to the formal expedition allowed for visits to two ecosystems south of Lima to observe some coastal birds. Among other species mentioned from a rugged coastal area at Pucusana were Belcher’s Gull, Blackish Oystercatcher, Peruvian Pelican and a nesting colony of the strikingly beautiful Inca Tern. In a higher, fog-enshrouded yet arid ecosystem (“lomas”), numerous species of birds were sighted including Bare-faced Ground-Dove, Thick-billed Miner, and Andean Tinamou. On the road to Sayan, the Cactus Canastero (a member of the Ovenbird family, Furnariidae) was one of the target birds, on arid, rugged,



Thick-billed Miner

slopes that supported cacti. Freshly hatched nestlings of Lesser Nighthawk were found on the way to the Cactus Canastero canyons, and Grayish Miners were seen here, as well. After arriving at Chiclayo and spending an evening there, the group began to move inland, with the first stop being at the Bosque de Pomac Reserve. Here, among numerous species, a Rufous Flycatcher and the endangered Peruvian Plantcutter were observed. The Plantcutter is threatened by loss of habitat. Also observed in this arid ecosystem was a .5 m long lizard, most likely a Peru Desert Tegu, endemic to Peru.

Chaparrí Ecological Reserve

This private reserve has deciduous scrub vegetation and is higher in elevation with rugged mountains. Reclamation work is ongoing with spectacled bears and White-winged Guans. The Guans are turkey-like birds. Pale-legged Hornero and Pacific Parrotlet were seen here as were a variety of butterflies, a Sechuran fox, and green iguana.

Bosque Frejalillo

This location supports a remnant population of White-winged Guans.

Porculla Pass

This pass through the Western Cordillera is at 2145 m. There is denser deciduous scrub vegetation than in some of the prior stops. Although mountainous, there are extensive patches of both natural vegetation and agricultural lands.

In this area, the Ecuadorian Piculet, a tiny woodpecker about the size of a House Sparrow, was well seen. Also seen in the area from Chaparrí to La Coipa Road were two species of Crescentchest (Elegant and Marañon), Baird's Flycatcher, and the much smaller flycatcher, the Mouse-coloured Tyrannulet.

Sideroad to La Coipa

This area was wetter and the vegetation increasingly lush. Bill had excellent photos of a most colourful millipede, of copulating cicadas, and also of butterflies.

Jaén Area – Gotas de Agua

Here, the group was east of the first range in the Andes. The topography was impressive with escarpments and agricultural fields in valleys. Both Tataupa Tinamou and Little Inca-finch were observed at this private reserve.

San Lorenzo

San Lorenzo, at about 3000 m in elevation, was the only major climb into cloud forests that the group conducted. The effort was well worthwhile, with numerous plant species in bloom and flourishing, bizarre and colourful gastropods, including a large multi-coloured snail and a black slug, 15-20 cm in length, 'squarish' ends, and a corrugated surface. It was an extremely rich area for birds with numerous endemics, including lots of tanagers, warblers, hummingbirds, and wrens. The somewhat secretive, retiring Rufous-breasted Chat-tyrant came out and was seen.

Spatuletail Reserve at Huembo

In between intermittent rains, the Marvelous Spatuletail (a stunning hummingbird with paired, long, racket-tipped tail feathers) was seen well and photographed. The range of this species is restricted to only one or two valleys. Sparkling Violetear and White-bellied Hummingbird were among several other hummingbird species sighted here.

Abra Patricia

Several days were spent in and around this private reserve. It was a cloud-enshrouded high country forest. The group was fortunate to see and hear the relatively recently described [late 1970s] Long-whiskered Owlet. It is the smallest owl known in the world, smaller than a Saw-whet and about the size of a Pygmy Owl.

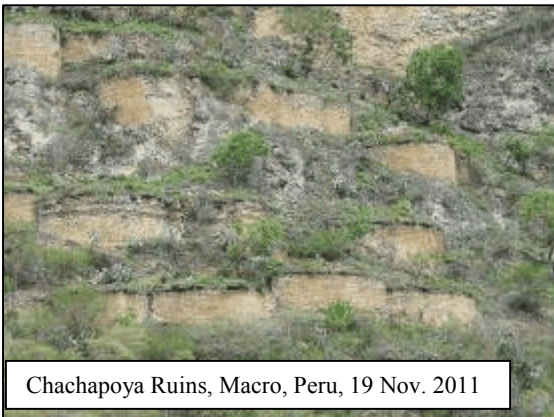
Lots of beautiful moths were seen and photographed on buildings in the reserve, having been attracted by lights in the evenings.

Birds at this site and on day trips in the vicinity included the Chestnut-breasted Coronet (yet another very handsome hummingbird), White-capped Tanager, the bright green Golden-headed Quetzal, Undulated Antpitta, Emerald-bellied Puffleg, and the common Long-tailed Sylph (another stunning hummingbird). Many interesting flies and beetles were observed and photographed.

Afluente

Much lower at about 1000 m on the east slope of the Andes, there was quite a different array of birds, and the butterflies were diverse and spectacular. Birds included numerous species of tanagers and flycatchers, Andean Cock-of-the-rock, Collared Trogon, antwrens, euphonias, and some of our familiar warblers (e.g., Blackburnian, Cerulean, Canada) that were overwintering there.

Chachapoya Ruins at Macro



Chachapoya Ruins, Macro, Peru, 19 Nov. 2011

The ancient round dwellings that had been built into the cliffs could still be seen. A Spot-throated Hummingbird was photographed.

Leymebamba to Abra Barro Negro

East and south of the previous sites, Leymebamba is a mining village. The drive up to Abra Barro Negro at 3700 m elevation was through striking, irregular terrain. A diversity of biota seen included: *Oreocallis grandiflora*, (a proteacid plant), butterflies, an unidentified snake, acacia shrubs in bloom, Hepatic Tanager, Yellow-faced Parrotlet (endangered,

with a very restricted range), Long-tailed Mockingbird, Peruvian Pygmy-Owl, Golden-bellied Grosbeak, Lesser Goldfinch, tarantulas, a 20-25 cm long beautiful wasp that hunts tarantulas, Golden-billed Saltator, and Rufous-eared Brush-finch.

Celendín – Rio Chonta Canyon [Cajamarca] – San Marcos

Traveling back down to the west, the group saw a very large lubber grasshopper, Plain-colored Seedeater and other small finches, Grey-bellied Comet- another highly localized endemic hummingbird, White-winged Cinclodes, the nest of a Giant Hummingbird, cacti in flower, Andean Teal, Rufous-Collared Sparrow, and Slender-billed Miner.



Lubber grasshopper

Ventanilla Wetland

The trip ended with a visit to Ventanilla Wetland just north of Lima, where a number of waterfowl, including White-cheeked Pintail and Cinammon Teal, herons such as Little Blue Heron, and other waterbirds were observed, many at close range.

In all about 530 bird species were seen, and many of them were endemic to northern Peru.

QUESTIONS:

Q. Speakman: Did you see many raptors and vultures?

A. Few raptors but lots of vultures. Only one King Vulture seen but Black-chested Buzzard-eagles were more common.

Q. Abraham: How developed were the areas through which you traveled?

A. In the north, development was from subsistence to small agriculture. There was little, but some, 'slash and burn'. Around each city was a ring of agriculture but there was some agricultural activity even at the highest elevations.

Q. Bryant: How difficult was it to see the Long-whiskered Owlet?

A. We hiked down a known trail for about 45 minutes, played a tape, waited about 30 minutes, saw the bird and retraced our route.

Q. E. Addison: How small is the Long-whiskered Owlet?

A. A little smaller than a Saw-Whet owl, about the size of a Pygmy-Owl.

Q. E. Addison: Does the fox with the grey pelage (Sechuran fox) climb like grey foxes do?

A. I don't know but the legs of the Sechuran fox are not as long as those of a grey fox.

Q. B. Falls: I have been to southern Peru and this area was very different.

A. Yes, Peru, like Colombia and Ecuador, has extremely diverse habitats.

The speaker was thanked by Glenn Coady.

NOTES & OBSERVATIONS

Bertin has been in England. On previous visits there, it was difficult to find eels in the fish markets, consistent with the trends in Atlantic eel populations as previously reported to the Club by Casselman. However, on this trip, *Bertin* found fishmongers speaking of an abundance of eels. Casselman notes a resurgence of eels in the western Atlantic also and speculates that it might be some climate related response of the Gulf Stream that led to increased eel recruitment beginning about 2000.

Bertin displayed photos of carvings in Chester Cathedral from about 1380. The carver had clearly known of, but was unfamiliar with, exotic animals as there were elephants with horses' hooves and lions with heads of dogs.



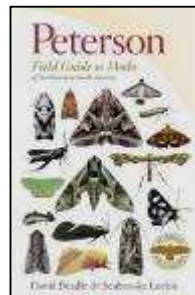
Tomlinson has been surveying the same plot of woodland in Cuba for North American migrants during the winter for the past eight years. Black-throated Blue Warblers are exploding in numbers even to the extent that they are very actively defending territories. Habitat deterioration continues. Another trend is young boys changing their behavior from wanting to chase or kill the birds to watching them with David and even identifying them from his bird book.

McAndrews is still looking for information on Passenger Pigeon roosts. In some writings of a brother of Catherine Parr Traill and Susanna Moodey, Jock found that he described a Passenger Pigeon roost west of his farm in Douro Township (which is just east of Peterborough). This is the type of information that Jock would like help finding.

Abraham mentioned that the name Omemee, a Mississauga word, is said to be derived from a relationship with the Passenger Pigeon. Omemee is on the Pigeon River which flows into Pigeon Lake.

Iron mentioned that *Dave Beadle* has an advance copy of his new Peterson Field Guide book on moths. It is:

Beadle, David and Seabrooke Leslie. 2012. Peterson Field Guide to Moths of Northeastern North America. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Co. ISBN 978-0-547-23848-7.



Dave hopes to have a box of books that he could bring to the next meeting of the Brodie Club.

E. Addison recommended a most interesting book on evolution. It is interesting because it focuses on the evolution of ten items, rather than species. The items include the evolution of photosynthesis, DNA, complex cells, sex, muscle/movement and more. It summarizes knowledge to date by an author who is a biochemist and a highly effective communicator. A refreshingly different approach and not always just leisure reading. It is:

Lane, Nick. 2009. Life Ascending. W.W. Norton and Co., New York. 344 pp. ISBN 978-0-393-06596-1.

A. Falls showed pictures of a lizard she photographed in Corkscrew Swamp in southern Florida and asked members for information on its identity.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:22 P.M.

CORRESPONDENCE

Ken Abraham forwarded a link to an article on the Trumpeter Swan recovery programme run by Harry Lumsden. It can be seen at <http://www.yorkregion.com/news/article/1308158-man-helps-swan-population-recover>

On March 25 Ann Falls emailed re her inquiry of the lizard she photographed in Florida:



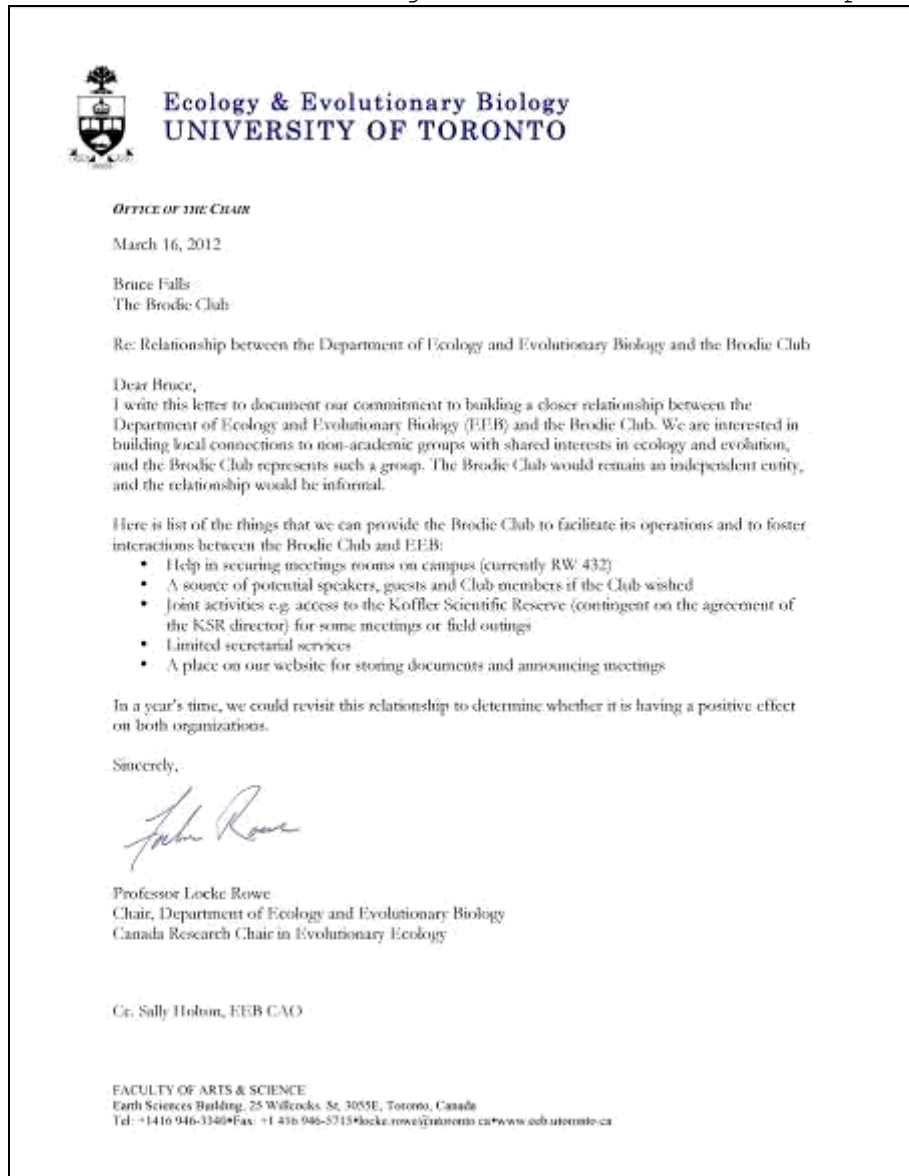
"Kevin Seymour took a photo home to check and suggested it could be a Puerto Rican crested anole, as Florida has many introduced lizards. I looked at some internet sources and I agree with this suggestion - the species (*Anolis*

cristatellus) is the only crested lizard on an up-to-date list of Florida reptiles and it resembles the on-line photos a lot, allowing for some variation in colour and spotting.”

From: Locke Rowe, Tuesday, March 20, 2012 2:49

Re: Brodie Club and EEB

Attached is a letter describing an informal relationship with EEB:



NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held Tues., April 17 at 7:30 pm in Room 432 of the Ramsay Wright Zoological Laboratories. The speaker will be **Erling Holm**, assistant curator of Ichthyology at the Royal Ontario Museum. Erling speak on “**Fishes of Toronto**”.

Note: This is a change. The originally scheduled talk for April by Don Sutherland is being rescheduled to autumn 2012.