

# THE BRODIE CLUB



*Established 1921*

Website: <http://thebrodieclub.eeb.utoronto.ca>

## **THE 1,128th MEETING OF THE BRODIE CLUB**

The 1,128th meeting of the Brodie Club was held on Tuesday, 18 October 2022 in Room 432 of the Ramsay Wright Laboratories of the University of Toronto.

Chair: Katie Thomas

Secretary: Ricky Dunn

The meeting was called to order at 7:45 pm and was attended by 16; 15 members and 1 guest. This was a good turnout for the first face to face meeting in nearly 3 years.

### **Roll Call:**

Present: Abraham, E. Addison, R. Addison, Bacher, Beadle, Bertin, Coady, N. Dengler, Dunn, Hussell, Kotanin, Lindsay, Miller, Peter, Thomas, Rising.

Guests: Mary-Lou Bacher (guest of Bacher).

Regrets: Lindsay, Reading, Xamin

**Minutes:** Minutes of the November 2021 meeting (held online) were accepted as distributed.

### **Announcements:**

- Ed Addison said he had been to visit Ron Tasker, a long time member.
- Oliver announced that Bruce Falls will be 99 in December and we should have a celebration at our December meeting.
- Gavin Miller let us know that Helen Juhola is at Providences of Care residence recuperating from a fall. She is anxious to talk with anyone about natural history. Aarne Juhola is at a different residence close by.
- Rae Hutchinson is now married, and will next appear at Brodie Club as Rae Xamin.
- George Bryant has given up his home in Toronto and now lives in Muskoka, but hopes to come to a few meetings in future.

### **Committee Reports:**

October is the usual time for AGM, but as this was the in-person meeting of the club since February 2020, it was decided to put this off until November. Some business matters were raised, as noted below, but decisions will be left until November.

Collection of membership dues deferred until there can be discussion about whether we should be paying an honorarium to non-member speakers, and if so how we would pay for it.

Trudy Rising offered to collate suggestions for speakers, **but she will rely on members to provide suggestions. Please send possible names to her, preferably within the next month, at [trudyrising@gmail.com](mailto:trudyrising@gmail.com).** Your message should include the full name and title of the potential

speaker, their area of expertise and/or a specific topic, whether the candidate is known to be a good presenter, and the candidate's contact information (email, phone and mailing address if available). If you are offering to give a presentation yourself, send Trudy the same information, adding a presentation title if you have one, and noting any constraints you may have on date of presentation.

A few ideas were raised for field trips, possibly to more than one on the same day (e.g., Alderville Black Oak Savannah, Red Cloud School Road Property, a restored tallgrass prairie ecosystem; Peter's Woods, Hazel Bird Nature Reserve). Topic to be raised again later.

The slate of committee members for 2019-20 (shown below) will be presented in November for renewal. Please let Ricky know ([EricaHDunn@gmail.com](mailto:EricaHDunn@gmail.com)) if you wish to be dropped from or added to the slate. New volunteers are always welcomed!

- Recording Secretaries (Take notes and write draft of presentation): Ken Abraham, Kevin Seymour (Dunn as a sub)
- Editing Secretary (Produce newsletter): Ricky Dunn
- Corresponding Secretary (Deals with email & announcements): Katie Thomas
- Treasurer: Bob Kortright
- Membership: Trudy Rising, Bill Crins, Bob Curry
- Program (arrange speakers): Trudy Rising, Marc Johnson, Don Sutherland
- Ontario Nature Representative: Carolyn King
- Archives: Ricky Dunn, Kevin Seymour
- Refreshments: Jerry DeMarco, Anne Bell, Nancy Dengler, Sharon Hick, Oliver Bertin. (Trudy Rising moved to a new committee)
- Website: Ricky Dunn, Jeremy Hussell
- Field trip: Justin Peter, Katie Thomas
- AV: Jeremy Hussell, Dominic Stones
- By-Laws revision: Ricky Dunn, Katie Thomas, John Riley

The next meeting, on 15 November, will be Ricky Dunn speaking on "Avian Irruptions: Causes and Consequences."

**SPEAKERS** Three members gave short presentations, covering a wide variety of topics..

John Riley welcomed us back with slides that ill ustrated some of his activities and observations during the pandemic. He noted the increased visibility of wildlife when people were confined to homes, including deer and turkey. Conversely, once people were allowed out but could not travel far, there was a notable influx of people to the countryside -- some of them naturalists, but also



many yahoos. Instagram contributed to the influx, as attractive localities that appeared in posted se lfies often attracted a string copycat visitors shortly after. (Comments following John's talk said this phenomeon was noticeable in the entire region within a day's drive from Toronto.)

John also gave an update on his experiments in 'assisted migration,' helping northern plant species to move south in the face of climate change, and vice versa for southern species. He has tried numerous times in to get a flowering dogwood to overwinter and flower on his property, and fine one did so in 2021 for the first time, perhaps indicating that a climate threshold has been passed.. Finally, he mentioned a list of

committees and reports he has been involved in, demonstrating that in his case at least, isolation did not lead to mental stagnation.

Ken Abraham's talk was an account of his discovery on the death of Brodie Member Harry Lumsden that Harry had been a bird artist in his youth. Having an interest in Harry as well as in documenting and archiving the artworks, Ken worked with Harry's daughters to catalogue and preserve the works. Harry evidently learned to paint while at school, and dateable works were completed between 1941 (when he was 18) and 1951. Most were done during the war when he was training as an RAF pilot in Canada, and during active service in India and



Japan. He appears to have stopped painting once he had a family, and indeed, his daughters only found out about his artwork after he died. Of about 150 items preserved, 2/3 were colour portraits, mainly of waterfowl, usually portraits without any background. Most of the remainder were black-and-white scratchboard portraits of grouse, often depicting behaviour and used as illustrations in some of Harry's publications.



More examples of Harry's art appear in the memorial article that Ken published in the [August 2022 issue of 'Ontario Birds'](#).

John Bacher spoke on the life of William Edwin Saunders (1861-1943), elected to the Brodie Club in 1924. He came from an illustrious family of wide interests and accomplishment in natural history and other fields; his father having founded the Experimental Farm in Ottawa. 'Will' (or 'W.E.') ran the pharmaceutical business begun by his father, and served for a while as a professor of Chemistry at what is now Western University.



As one of the seven Active Members elected at the first regular meeting of the American Ornithologists' Union, Will was well-known among ornithologists in the U.S., as well as in Canada. He was a prolific writer of both scientific and popular articles and a beloved field companion and mentor, reputed to be an indefatigable walker who was immune to weather and insects, and would happily sleep afield wherever he happened to be at the end of a day.

Saunders served as the founding President of the Federation of Ontario Naturalists, and was the first chair of the group that became the McIlwraith Ornithological club. He took part in the refutations of Jack Miner's very public pro-secting for the extermination of raptors and crows that Miner considered to be pests. As a wealthy businessman, Saunders did not have to worry about repercussions from bosses who might not agree with him expressing his views..

## **OBSERVATIONS**

No observations were volunteered, perhaps because we all have way too many stored up after 2 years. Instead the meeting was adjourned at 21:21, allowing for refreshments and most welcome time to catch up with one another.