

SOCIETY OF GRASSLANDS NATURALISTS
Minutes of General Meeting – September 23, 2014
Police Point Park

CALL TO ORDER: 7:10 pm. President Anne Bernhardt in the chair; Eileen Cowtan acting as recording secretary.

MINUTES: Motion carried to accept the minutes from the May 27, 2014 meeting as circulated.

EXCITING SIGHTINGS:

Phil Horch: reported a kettle of 31 Swainson's hawks heading south.

Mike O'Shea: 2 sightings of ospreys

Lorine Marshall: basket of red rhubarb to be given away!

Moose in Ross Glen: was tranquilized and relocated to Cypress Hills yesterday.

NEWSPAPER CLIPS: A variety of clips were shared by John Slater.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Eileen

Total cash GN club: \$21,413.48; Interpretive Program: \$59,804.81 as of August 31, 2014.
Membership: 89

BUSINESS – PRIORITY

- a) **Budget Committee** (John Slater for Paul Thibault): Committee to meet soon.
- b) **Fundraising Committee** (John Slater for Hugh Armstrong):
 - Reminder to collect Co-op receipts and submit to Anne.
 - We have been granted a casino licence. Gary Martin is contact person. Our first casino should be in early 2016.
- c) **Board Member** needed: Bill Knibbs has resigned as Director at Large. Anne put out a request to have the position filled until the March AGM.
- d) **Interpretive Program Report:** Corlaine Gardner
 - Corlaine has fostered close relationship with other community groups. Three organizations meet at the Nature Centre: GN, Archeology Society and SEARCH Geocachers. Corlaine sits on the Board of several organizations; one of these is Communities in Bloom. She reported that she attended their conference in Charlottetown recently. Medicine Hat was granted a 5 bloom rating; the best possible. The judges were especially impressed with the city's preservation of natural and heritage assets. They also noted the "Pop Up Park" in the reclamation category.
 - Fall Festival: September 21: 360 attended
 - Coming events: Beaver Walk: October 18; Snow Goose Trip November 2.
 - New exhibit at Nature Centre "Our Dynamic River" until the end of October.

e) **Field Trip Report:**

- Gary Martin: led two trips to Cypress Hills during the summer; 3 had to be cancelled.
- Mike O'Shea: Murray and Sauder's Reservoirs with Phil Horch: Sept 27.

f) **Issues Committee:** John Slater

- Great Canadian Shoreline Cleanup: September 27 – Strathcona Island Park.
- Invasive Plants:
 - i) Baby's Breath in Ranchlands area: with co-operation of City and Calfrac. Second year. 22,000 plants dug up. GN members flagged plants.
 - ii) Baby's Breath in Police Point Park. This is the third year that GN members have tried various methods of elimination. 270 plants removed.
 - iii) Leafy Spurge in Ranchlands: Three members, John, Dave McKenzie and Tina Regehr removed plants in four areas.
- Update on Sage Grouse 2014:
 - i) John shared that the Calgary Zoo breeding program has had limited successful – only 3 out of 11 hatchlings have survived so far.
 - ii) Alberta Wildlife Count on four active leks showed 14 males; the same number as last year. Two of the introduced Montana birds have raised broods this year.
 - iii) Rob Gardner added that the Montana birds are all collared so invaluable information is being collected about summer and winter habitat requirements and the movement of the birds some over 100km. Perhaps cultivated land is preventing historic movement of birds from Montana.
 - iv) Phil suggested that we try to get a speaker about the research work on these birds.

g) **Nature Alberta Report:** none

h) **SEAWA Report:** none.

BUSINESS – OTHER

- a) Park Bench for Life-Time Members – John
The plaque with names of members has been installed. Donations always accepted.
- b) Hope Johnson biography: Darren Tanke of the Royal Tyrell Museum is doing an extensive biography of Hope and is interested in contacting those who knew her.
- c) Indoor Program: A committee of three – Dave McKenzie, Monica Bartha and Gary Martin are serving on this committee. Dave indicated that he will be responsible for the programs during the fall season and Monica, the winter.
- d) Young Naturalists Club: progress is being made in starting this club. Monica Bartha and Tina Regehr have agreed to be leaders. An information table was set up at the Fall Festival.

Attendance tonight: 30 for the business portion and 38 for the indoor program (including a few members from the Archeology Club).

ADJOURNMENT: 7:45pm

PROGRAM: Dr. Chris Jass – Curator of Quaternary Paleontology, Royal Alberta Museum.
Current research on the Ice Age vertebrate record in Alberta, including recent fieldwork in both caves and open-air settings across the province.