

Quinte Field Naturalists

General Meeting of the Membership

November 18, 2024 @ 7PM

Maranatha Church Main Auditorium

Attendance 41

1. **Introduction and welcome:** Elizabeth Churcher
2. **Land Acknowledgement:** Elizabeth
3. **Housekeeping Items:** Directions to washrooms. Next meeting is January 20, 2025; Cheryl Anderson will speak about the South Shore Joint Initiative. Treats provided by Bernadette Hymus, Nancy Stevenson, Susan McCourt and Jonathan Balcombe. Sign up in foyer to bring treats for future meetings.
4. **Treasurer's Report:** John Lowry reported on behalf of Dan Guenther that finances were in excellent shape. \$2500 had been received from Rotary for tree planting and funding from Home Hardware and Tree Canada was expected soon.
5. **QFN Vacancies:** Elizabeth reminded all that January is the AGM and the Board needs two additional members. Whatever your skills and interests, the Board needs more voices and ideas.
6. **Christmas Bird Count:** Tom Wheatley announced the Belleville Christmas Bird Count will take place on December 28 and explained how members can participate in the field or as feeder watchers.
7. **Tree Planting Update:** Greg Parsons reported on the highly successful planting event held on October 25th and 26th at Clifford Sonny Belch Park. Over 60 people attended each day to assist in the planting of approximately \$15,000 worth of trees and plants and if you add in the donation of time and equipment from Picture Perfect Landscaping, the triple mix from Connan and mulch donated by the city the value of the project is well over \$25000. Greg thanked all the groups and businesses who made the event possible: Bayview Home Hardware, Belleville Home Building Centre, Tree Canada, Picture Perfect Landscaping, Connan Nurseries Trenton, Natural Themes Native Plant Nursery, Campbell's Orchards, Food Basics, St. Theresa School, Rotary Loves Trees, Girl Guides (Embers), Roland Cave-Browne-Cave and City of Belleville. Greg also thanked the QFN members who helped before the event. Lori Borthwick presented Greg with a QFN Tree Planting Champion shirt to show QFN's appreciation and thanks for the hours of work he spent planning, organizing and managing this major project.
8. **Advocacy:** John Lowry reported that he hopes to donate \$3500 to The Nature Conservancy of Canada on Giving Tuesday December 3, date on which amount will be doubled. Money was raised by collecting alcohol containers and pop cans.

This initiative means 43,000 pop cans will be recycled. He thanked all QFN members for their donations and mentioned Greg Parsons and Melissa Ouillet for “above and beyond” participation.

John L also reported that on Saturday November 16, 200 trees and shrubs were planted by Friends of Sandbanks at West Point in the area where QFN members and others had worked to remove buckthorn.

9. **Sightings:** Cats, skunks, and opossum recorded by camera, 50 wild turkeys displaying at Hepatica Hill in Tweed. Other species mentioned: red-bellied woodpecker, bluejay, junco. mourning dove, robin, cardinal and trumpeter swan.
10. **Guest Speaker:** John Lowry introduced Eli Drummond, Assistant Conservation Biologist with Nature Conservancy of Canada. Eli presented a detailed summary of the many NCC properties in the Quinte area. NCC’s goal is to protect, restore, work with local partnerships and involve communities in preserving areas of natural significance. He explained how they work to improve habitat by removing invasive plants such as dog-strangling vine or phragmites or they work with farmers to have cattle to keep grassland open for loggerhead shrikes or they create new wetlands or seed old farms to create grasslands. From the Rice Lake Plains to the Frontenac Arch to the Napanee Plain and Camden East to McMahon Bluff and the South Shore in Prince Edward County Eli explained how NCC is protecting our unique natural areas and species at risk. Lori Borthwick thanked Eli for his presentation.
11. **Closure:** Elizabeth wished everyone a joyous holiday and hoped to see all at Maranatha in January.
Minutes prepared by Sharron Blaney