

SOCIETY OF GRASSLANDS NATURALISTS
Minutes of General Meeting, April 23, 2019
Police Point Park..

1. Call to Order 7:00 pm with Hugh Armstrong presiding and Betty Rainville, Secretary.
2. Review and Adoption of General Meeting Minutes from February 26, 2019. **CARRIED.**
3. Exciting Sightings: Members reported the following sightings:
Dave McKenzie saw 4 queen bees recently in the N.E. Crescent Heights area.
The other day Hugh Armstrong saw 13 deer swim across the river, a distance of about 20 yards. Today he saw 11 swimming back the other direction.
Congratulations Phil, to you and Annalora, on your 50th anniversary. Hopefully you will be seeing lots of exciting sightings on your celebratory trip to Costa Rica this winter.
Corlaine Gardner said she has had reports that the female moose is back.
Ian Wallis reported there were a lot of racoon tracks along the river in Ranchlands by Ian and Angela's area.
4. Treasurer's Report and Membership: Eileen Cowtan is away.
5. Correspondence: Eileen absent.
6. Priority Business:
 - a. **Invasive Species Workshop May 4th:** Gerry Ehlert and Marty Drut are absent. (See 8.a. below)
Hugh reported that Gerry emailed to say there would be Learning Tables outside at the workshop if weather permits. There will be evaluation forms available for input from participants.
Rob Gardner noted there would be specialists from across Alberta, in particular, Aquatic Invasive Specialist, Nicole Kimmel.
Hugh requested that volunteers sign up with Marty, as time keepers, to keep each group moving smoothly from table to table.
Rob will send a notice, regarding the workshop, for Ian Turner to post in the Chronicle.
Angela Turner suggested publicizing the fact that there is no charge for any part of this Workshop. ,
If there are any problems registering with Eventbrite.ca, Corlaine recommended people phone her at 403 529-6225.
 - b. **Community Spirit Awards Nomination:** Hugh noted that the deadline for submission is May 31, 2019. He reminded members that nominators must get approval from nominees before submitting their names.
 - c. **Casino Volunteers:** Dave McKenzie has a sign-up sheet for volunteers. Most positions will be the same as previous years.
Dave reported that the Urban Environmental Recreation Advisory Board (UERAB), of which he is a member, has suggested that a City park be named after the late well-known artist Donna MacLean.
Dave suggested that Dawn Dickinson's name also be put forward to UERAB. He asked that 3 GN members, who knew Dawn well, write an article for UERAB. Phil Horch may assist with the article.
 - d. **Litter Blitz:** Ian and Angela reported that 15 people participated in the Ranchlands area clean-up on April 13th. A total of 25 to 30 bags of garbage were collected.
Hugh and Dee Armstrong and Dave McKenzie valiantly cleaned the off leash trail above Police Point Park, as they have done in previous years. Thank you to everyone who volunteered in both areas.
7. Interpretive Program Report:
Corlaine reported the IP had a very big weekend over Easter, and all the volunteer help was appreciated. Over 4000 people attended Easter Celebrations at the Nature Centre.
She said the Geocaching Club of Medicine Hat did a clean-up the previous week.
Corlaine noted the IP now has subsidies to hire new summer staff.
There may be 2 parties in the near future, Corlaine said, with Co-op hosting the Prairie View Point Party possibly May 22 or May 23.
The Medicine Hat Accommodation Association (MHAA) would be hosting the second celebration possibly in late June, around the Summer Solstice, June 21.
8. Committee Reports:
 - a. **Issues Committee:** Martha Munz Gue reminded everyone about the Invasive Species Workshop on May 4th.(See 6.a. above)
The Wildflower Walks in May and June have already begun, Martha said. (See 8.c. below) She suggested members let her know if they wish to lead a walk on Tuesday mornings, or on other days of the week.
The next walk will be led by Gerry Ehlert to Ajax Coulee. Meet behind Lorne Holden Ball Diamond on April 30 at 10:00 am.

Martha spoke briefly about the railroad that used to lead to Ajax Mines in Echo Dale.

On May 7, Gerry will lead a walk from the top of Ajax Coulee down to Seven Persons Creek.

- b. **MHIP/Operations Committee:** To meet May 6 if Bob Townsend is back.
- c. **Field Trips** :(from Chronicle)
 - 1. Sat. April 27. Annual Field Trip to Sauder's and Murray Reservoirs 8:00 am to approximately 1:00 pm.
Led by Phil. Meet at A & W along Gershaw Drive.
 - 2. Tuesday April 30th. Neighbourhood Walk at 10:00 am. (See 8.a above).
 - 3. Tuesday May 7. Neighbourhood Walk at 10:00 am (See 8.a above).
 - 4. Saturday May 11. Field Trip to the Brooks Area led by Milt Spitzer. 7:00 am to 4:00 pm. Meet at N.Lands Co-op Liquor Store.
- e. **Indoor Program Speakers:** Linda Fisher reported that tonight's speakers will be Wendy Blackwell and Ian Wallis on The Wild and Not-So-Wild Life of Rajasthan, India.
May's General Meeting presenter will be Sandi Robertson, Provincial Wildlife Biologist, speaking on the Ord's Kangaroo Rat.
- f. **Fund Raising Committee:** Hugh noted the Committee has still heard nothing from the Alberta Native Plant Council regarding a request for financial assistance with the upcoming Invasive Species Workshop.
- g. **Birding Trails:** Phil reported there is nothing new at this time.
- h. **Bird Tales Update:** Hugh reported for Dee and Paul, that the B.T. program will start on April 24th at Sunnyview-South Country Village. Birdfeeders will be allowed on windows for resident's enjoyment, and 2 terrariums with Fairy Gardens will be started. The group is fortunate to have 2 expert volunteers to assist them.
- i. **Communication Committee:** Angela reported that the GN table at the Farmer's Market will need volunteers. Please contact Angela at (403) 526-1350 if you are able to help on May 25, June 22, or September 21 from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm.
- j. **Nature Alberta:** See highlights of the meeting March 30 and April 3 in the April Chronicle, including 50th Anniversary plans for 2020.
Martha dropped off 2 boxes of Birding Trails of Southeastern Alberta Guide Books at the Edmonton office recently. Angela will contact the office to confirm that the books were received, and to request that they be distributed.

9. New Business:

- a. **Brooks Bird Count:** Milt Spitzer reported that the May Species Count will be held May 18 and 19th. Registration takes place in Brooks for this large area. More details will be shown in the May Chronicle.
Elaine noted there are good rates offered at the Travelodge in Brooks.
- b. **Medicine Hat Spring Bird and Flower Count:** Corlaine advised members to contact Marty who will arrange territories throughout the City. Marty may be reached at 403 529-6225.
The count will be held Sunday, May 26th.
- c. **SEAWA Research Results:** Hugh reported that SEAWA is involved in ongoing research projects if any GN members are interested in volunteering.
One of the projects involves Riparian Area Assessment and Restoration. More information may be seen on their website at executive@seawa.ca or 403 580-8980.
Martha noted that a large group such as a ball team or service club would be very beneficial in helping SEAWA carry out their projects.

10. Other Business:

- a. **Volunteers for General Meetings:** Rob noted that help is needed to unlock the Nature Centre and prepare the coffee for monthly General meetings. Someone is needed on a regular basis.
Corlaine will prepare a note to be put into the May Chronicle.
- b. **Casino Update:** Dave McKenzie thanked everyone for volunteering so promptly for the upcoming Casino in June.
- c. **Next Board Meeting:** 6:30 pm Tuesday May 7 at Betty's house.
- d. **Adjournment:** 7:43 pm. Attendance 28 people.
- e. **Refreshment Break**
- f. **Program Start:** 8:00 pm. Speakers: Wendy Blackwell and Ian Wallis on The Wild and Not-So-Wild Life of Rajasthan, India.

