

**Society of Grassland Naturalists**  
**Minutes of General Meeting – September 25, 2012**  
**Police Point Park Nature Centre**

1. **Call to Order** at 7:03 pm. John Slater – Chair; Barry Anderson – Secretary
2. **Minutes:** The minutes from May 22, 2012 were reviewed. John moved the minutes to be accepted; seconded by Phil Horch. CARRIED.
3. **Exciting Sightings:**
  - Phil had a report from a local resident riding his bike who encountered a cougar on the Ajax Coulee trail here in Medicine Hat. (The Ajax trail runs from the Holden ball field in east Kin Coulee to the Kensington residential area near the top of the hill.)
4. **Treasurer's Report: Eileen Cowtan**
  - Our current balance as of September 25 is \$7818.25.
  - Recent income includes \$570 from Donna Maclean (MH Community Foundation) and \$841.75 from the Alberta Community Spirit (65% of the \$1295 donation).
  - Recent expenditures include \$477.75 for the GN website development.
  - Our current paid membership sits at 92.
  - John added to the report by reviewing membership dues and stated the need to complete annually the membership/waiver forms.
5. **Announcements:**
  - John reported that the new GN Bylaws have been approved by both provincial and federal governments. A copy of the new bylaws is available on the GN website or by contacting John.
6. **Interpretive Program: Corlaine Gardner**
  - Corlaine reported another successful summer's programming.
  - The annual **Fall Festival** held Sept. 23 was attended by well over 1000 people of all ages. Thanks to the many volunteers who played an integral part in the success of this event.
  - Many activities are already being planned for the upcoming fall and winter months. School and community programs are booking quickly into October and November.
  - Corlaine pointed out that **The Bullet**, Medicine Hat's magazine, includes a monthly article about the Police Point Interpretive Centre – a good way to keep in touch with local programming, events and field trips for classes and families.

## **7. Field Trips:**

- Recent summer field trips included one to Elkwater led by Gary Martin on July 28, one to Aden/Kennedy Coulee arranged by Val Felesky and led by William King on August 18 and finally a migratory songbird walk at Police Point Park lead by Phil Horch on September 8 - thanks to all who participated.
- Phil Horch will lead a bird outing on Saturday, October 6 to Sauder's Reservoir and Murray Lake. Meet at the A & W Hwy. 3 at 8:00 am. The trip is expected to last until noon and car pooling is recommended.
- Ben Verner will lead another bird outing to Many Island Lake on Saturday, October 13. This will be an all day trip so pack lunch. Meet at the bingo hall on Hwy 41A promptly at 8:00 am. Again, car pooling is recommended.

## **8. Issues Committee:**

- Work continues against Baby's Breath, an invasive plant species, in the test area near the east side of the golf course adjacent to Police Point Park.
- Discussion also continues in support of the habitat for species at risk which includes the tiny cryptanthe and sage grouse.
- A copy of an amendment prepared by Dr. Brown regarding Bill 202 and Public Land Sale was received during a meeting with MLA Drew Barnes on September 25.
- PFRA land that once belonged under federal jurisdiction has now been passed down to provincial officials for protection and possible public sale. However, because much of this impoverished land has become excellent habitat for species at risk, it is important to keep these lands in public trust rather than allow them to be used for public sale.

## **9. Nature Alberta – no report**

## **10. SEAWA:**

- All interested parties are invited to join SEAWA for an Integrated Watershed Management Plan Meeting on Thursday, September 27 at the Medicine Hat Lodge at 2:00 pm, 4:00 pm or 7:00 pm. Call Maggie at 403.793.3014 for more information.

## **10. Indoor Programs: Rob Gardner**

- Rob reiterated that topics for programming are always welcome.
- Rob spoke briefly about the Prairie Conservation Forum and its last field trip to see the 55 wind turbines, 9 on prairie grassland, near Drumheller.

## **11. Other Business**

- Phil spoke about the Birding Trails Project that has begun in conjunction with Canadian Badlands Limited. This project would see the implementation of such things as brochures, signage, small parking lots, picnic areas, boardwalks, washrooms and viewing towers as part of its

development. Ultimately, such birding trails will be a boon to the tourism industry in SE Alberta once the three year project is completed.

- A notice of motion was received regarding the archiving of GN minutes and chronicles at the Medicine Hat Esplanade.
- E-versions of the Sagebrush Chronicle prior to 2009 are needed for inclusion on the GN website.

12. **Door Prize** winner was Trish Fai

13. **Attendance tonight** – 21 members

14. **Meeting Adjourned** at 7:45 pm

15. **Indoor Program:**

This evening's indoor program arranged by Rob Gardner was entitled **Migration Monitoring at Cypress Hills Interprovincial Park Pilot Project 2010-2011**. Yousif Attica from the Calgary Bird Banding Society presented an informative and interesting talk about the Cypress Hills bird observatory which is currently in its third year of operation. Yousif covered topics that included mist nesting, banding details, education, trends and volunteering. He included many photographs during his one-hour presentation and left us in awe of this program and its benefits.