

Grasslands Naturalists General Meeting Minutes
Nature Centre Police Point Park
Tuesday, November 22, 2022 7 pm

1. Call to order – Phil Horch 7 pm

2. Land Acknowledgement - Phil

3. Member's Exciting Sightings - John Slater had one but we're trying to figure out what it is. He saw 2 bald eagles first. Then he saw maybe 1000 feet up some rare big birds of dark colour, long necks, bigger than a Canada goose. Phil debates: maybe tundra swans? Or Cranes (but late for them). Alicia says they did have swan sightings at the park. Linda saw a goose with a bald eagle with a beaver. The next day 2 bald eagles grabbing talons in the air! Beautiful and elegant. Dan had a weasel. Phil notes there's trumpeter swans on the Bow River, anticipated to stay all winter in Calgary. Amazing sights! Cooper's hawk going after a blackbird (but a dog got it instead). Ian notes while in Mexico their guide there was looking for raptors from Canada migrating south. They can come through by the thousands.

4 . Review minutes of General Meetings – October 25 minutes online. Adopted, Carried.

5. President's Report – Phil Horch Busy month! Cross-country skiing and Grasslands workshop, field trip to Murray Lake. Overwhelming visitors for 'Deep Dark' and 'Disappearance' at PPP. Both events were so popular there was not enough parking. Bruce, Bob, Hugh and John came to the rescue and controlled traffic. BIG THANK YOU gentlemen. Lesson learned to try not to have 2 popular events at the same time. Phil wants to highlight Christmas bird count December 18 which is our indoor program, organized by Ian Langil. You need to register with him. Afterwards, potluck resumed and sightings reported. These bird counts in December and May are a way to be an amateur scientist. Phil had a meeting with Kevin Redden who is working on master environmental plan for the City of Medicine Hat. The city has hired a consulting company and we are identified as a consulting stakeholder so will be contacted. Kevin will be our January speaker and give us a report on what is happening with this plan and what it will do going forward. There are hints Meridian dam supporters have gained the ear of our Premier. GN previously opposed this plan. The dam would flood the entire river valley up to the edge of Medicine Hat. Also looking at invasive species including Russian olives so are looking to do a workshop in the new year. Martha MG points out that the original trees were planted by the college and have since been removed but their ancestors have spread. COP 15 December 7 to 19th in Montreal on biodiversity, with over 100 countries taking part.

6. Vice-President's Report – Martha Munz Gue attended North American Grasslands Conference in order to network. Indigenous speakers were very good and would be good as speakers for us. SEAWA has hired Nick Regehr to identify

Russian olives. Martha notes those that were identified at college pond have been removed!

7. Report on Transboundary Grasslands Workshop - Phil Horch & Martha Munz Gue n/a

8. GN Finance Report – Angela Turner Chequing --- \$ 8650.49

GN Savings --- 16724.96

The Casino bank balance is: \$ 10719.99

As for memberships: 45 Individual, 41 Family, and 8 LIFETIME memberships. Dues are usually in January but can come now. Happy to see new members here tonight.

9. Master Environmental Plan Report - Phil n/a

10. Budget and Governance (If needed) - Paul meeting on Thursday submitted budgets will be reviewed and then given to the board for approval.

11. MHIP Report

A. Alicia Lew We currently have 6 staff working at the Nature Centre – 4 full-time and 2 part-time. Public program highlights included: a booth and a nature walk at the “Don’t Fall Behind” event; a burrowing owl paint party with local artist Cindy Shropshire; and 38 participants at a pinecone bird feeder workshop. We will launch our Discovery Tree public program series for 3-5 year olds. out our latest display is owls from Alberta. Special thanks to Dan Schiebelbein for loaning us photographs. The Interpretive Program Total Revenue is currently around 96% of what was projected and our Total Expenses are currently around 78% of what was projected. There will be a Christmas market Dec. 3 10 to 3:30

B. Hugh Armstrong Hugh asks about Christmas hay ride: Lion’s club are not able to secure teamsters this year so had to cancel and because of insurance with probably cancel for the future.

12. Outdoor Program Report – John Slater meet at window bird feeder 10 am every Wednesday until further notice. Last Wednesday we walked and did some orienteering. Bob will bring cross country skis and you can rent them here as well. It came up at the meeting that the park is very busy! And considering other parks for snowshoeing as heavy traffic isn’t always good for tracks. Tina posts on Facebook and will post when we meet so you can come along.

13. Indoor Program Report – Linda Fisher Dec. 18 will be the Christmas bird count and potluck . Jan 24 will be Kevin Redden director of environment and Master environmental plan. Morgan Wall on burrowing owls in February.

14. Scenic Views and Invasive Species Update - Gerry Ehlert reports a 2nd Russian olive task force met today. Good news is city supports and starting to move forward with pest management for the city and adjacent areas! Trial will proceed at Connaught pond this year if all goes well. Rob Gardner found buckthorn 30 to 60 plants they will control this coming fall along with those at PPP. Michelle from the city submitting budget for \$10 000 for signage, will know in December if approved.

15. Communications Committee Report - Corlaine Gardner n/a

16. Other Reports or Announcements - Annette ten Cate tells us about an art show she has in Edmonton on animals at risk and habitat loss albertacraft.ab.ca She will be there Dec. 3 at Police point show.

17. Coffee Break 10 minute break

18. Introduction of Guest Speaker –

Linda Fisher AB Environment and Parks **Sandi Robinson** on endangered Ord's kangaroo rat.

19. Q & A , closing remarks and speaker appreciation – Linda Fisher