

Shuswap Naturalist Club Minutes - Wednesday, May 4, 2022

Acting Chair, **Mike Saul**, welcomed about 30 members to Room 130 at Okanagan College at 7 PM.

Minutes: April 6 minutes were accepted as circulated

Treasurer's Report: Ted Hillary

Bank Balance April 1 2022		\$2,792.39
Receipts		
Dues	505.00	
Gift	10.00	
Interest	0.13	513.13
Disbursements		
Web site	103.72	103.72
Bank Balance May 1, 2022		\$3,203.80
Patronage		.89

Ted moved acceptance of the Treasurer's Report. 2nd Dawn McDonald

Announcements:

- 1) The next meeting of SNC will be Wednesday, June 1 at Peter Jannink Park at 4 PM. Janet Pattinson agreed to chair that meeting. This fall, we hope to be meeting again in SASS library: watch for confirmation of this before October.
- 2) Janet Aitken reported the grant process is ongoing for Save Shuswap Songbird Committee projects.
- 3) Di Wittner asked that we report any observations at the Jespersion bluebird trail to fern@advantagebc.com, as Fern Fennell will be away for the next 2 weeks.
- 4) Janet Pattinson referred to her item in the May eNewsletter urging everyone to sign group petitions, write letters, phone MLA/MP to let these decision makers know about our concerns regarding climate action activities in our community. See the newsletter for more details. Janet also urged us to learn more about First Nations stewardship of the natural world in support of Truth & Reconciliation and suggested Louis Thomas as a possible speaker at a future meeting.
- 5) Dawn McDonald reported good turnouts for the last few outings. Tomorrow, there is a short walk at Jespersion's Farm to look for bluebirds, and wildlife around their pond. Since the site is adjacent to Little Mountain, members could explore that area to see what is taking place re: fire mitigation.
- 6) Pat Danforth shared details of the plans to refurbish, update and rewrite some of the old signage on the Larch Hills Trails. The committee has a grant to replace 30 of about 60 signs on existing posts. Pat will be emailing a survey to members to solicit help with this project, with a time frame for completing

the first phase by the end of 2022. We were proud to hear that this project is being recognized for its significance by BC Nature.

7) SABNES: Janet Aitken notes that the sign alerting the public to the dog walking ban beginning May 1 has been put up at the Nature Sanctuary. Grant application for a summer student is in process.

8) Di Wittner noted the BC Nature AGM will go ahead in Kelowna on May 26-28.

9) The Environmental Action Committee invites anyone to attend the meeting to discuss fire mitigation activities with forestry and city officials at Little Mountain on **Friday, May 20 at 2:30. Watch for details of exact location in the park.** Colin Spence spoke about his investigation into the fire mitigation plans, after reading documentation provided by the City of Salmon Arm. He feels there is a lack of easily understandable operational detail, and especially little relevant detail about wildlife affected. Many questions arise. The community is supposed to have been engaged and informed: has a report been made public? How appropriate is, for instance, removal of many young western red cedar (the future forest?) at Little Mountain in light of recent extreme climate events? Will the clearing activities be repeated as the understory regrows? Hopefully the May 20th meeting will provide some clarity.

Sightings:

Barb Raynor - a flock of 150-200 yellow-rumped warblers at the foreshore; osprey taking broken branches for nesting

Ted Hillary - great egret at the wharf (verified by photo, John Woods)

Di Wittner - rubber boas at her property

John Vivian - seeing lots of bears in Salmon River valley

Glenda Hanna - grizzlies have been seen (photographed) on Larch Hills: be alert if hiking there.

Mike Saul adjourned the meeting at 8:15 pm.

Presentation:

John Woods gave us helpful tips on recognition of bird songs (for claiming breeding territory and attracting mates) and calls (alerts, communication). Now is the best time to learn the language of many local birds as they arrive in their nesting locations. Four keys to identification: protect your hearing at all times for optimal function; watch for movement of a bird's bill; learn common birds first; use Merlin ID on your phone (it's getting more reliable all the time, and it's free).