

**Shuswap Naturalist Club General Meeting  
Tuesday, November 7, 2023  
SASS Library**

**Marcia Woods**, Chair for this meeting, welcomed 21 members at 8 PM to SASS library.

**PRESENTATION:**

We enjoyed an informative hour via Zoom with Amie Macdonald of the bird migration tracking system (MOTUS), who shared details to increase our understanding of its value for bird conservation. Since the program's inception in 2014, miniature radio telemetry devices placed on birds (bats, insects) have been transmitting to receivers whose antennae can detect those birds within a 15 km radius, and making the data collected available on the MOTUS website at [Motus Wildlife Tracking System](#). The information will be used for bird studies including determining how distance travelled and body condition influence migration timing and stopovers, and the importance of stopover habitat quality. From this knowledge base, we hope to move forward with our idea to install this system in Salmon Arm, adding to the 1780 stations in 34 countries. Next step is to determine a budget and funding sources for the approximate costs (\$3400-\$4500) depending on our choice of building-mounted or free-standing solar-powered station.

**Show n' Tell**

- 1) John Woods sent out a photo challenge in the last newsletter to identify 2 owl silhouettes. Did you guess Northern hawk owls? In the Shuswap, they have been seen in the North Broadview area, and they nest on Mt. Revelstoke.
- 2) In another bird note from John, the frequency of sightings of Steller's jays recently prompted him to describe plumage variations we might see in this hybrid zone where some birds interbreed. Steller's jays that inhabit the BC Interior show a white slash above the eye, while coastal birds have an all-black head. Which have you seen?

**Break** – thanks to Isabelle Elden and Barb Raynor for refreshments tonight.

**Minutes:** Joyce Henderson moved approval of the October 3 minutes. Glenda Hanna 2<sup>nd</sup>. Carried.

**Treasurer's report:** Ted Hillary submitted his financial statement for November 1, 2023:

<b>Bank Balance October 1, 2023</b>	<b>\$4469.86</b>
-------------------------------------	------------------

**Revenue**

Dues	25.00	
Interest	.37	<b>\$ 25.37</b>

**Disbursements**

Nil

**Bank Balance November 1, 2023** **\$4495.23**

**Patronage** **\$ .89**

Larch Hills Sign Project \$2500.00

Songbird Committee \$ 80.00

Ted moved acceptance of the Treasurer's Report. Mike Saul 2<sup>nd</sup> Carried.  
Club dues are payable in December: \$30 (single), \$35 (family).

**Old Business:**

- 1) The letter that Janet Pattinson wrote regarding protection of beavers was signed by Janet Aitken and sent to the two Ministries involved. Thanks to Janet for all her work on this.
- 2) Joyce Henderson reported that 10 new trees were added to the Blackburn Park site at the recent work bee, along with fabric and mulch. Despite the dry summer, the native plants are doing well.

**Reports:**

**1) Christmas Bird Counts**

**Sunday, December 17:** John Woods will contact area leaders to confirm details for the count, based on Ted Hillary's organization over the past many years. Anyone is welcome to join in, bird ID skills not vital, as we hope to promote public awareness of this valued event. More information to come about a followup social/reporting gathering.

**Sunday, December 10:** Christmas Bird Count for kids led by Molly Cooperman, 1-3 PM at the wharf. All welcome to participate.

**2) Environmental Advisory Committee (EAC)**

**Janet Pattinson** attended a meeting earlier in the day:

- a) Gavin King (Kamloops) shared details of an air pollution monitoring device that is being considered for use in Salmon Arm
- b) the City is working on new tree protection bylaws, including the need for more permits and higher fees, and increased public education. Janet asked how our Club can do more to educate the public about the value of trees in the community.
- c) water conservation was addressed in the context of rewilding gardens with native plants.

**3) BC Nature Report: Di Wittner** has attended several recent webinars. Concerning bats, there is new thinking about locations for bat boxes which should be placed facing east due to the trend toward higher late-day temperatures. Boxes should not be placed on trees where bats might roost naturally and should be painted brown or grey rather than black. Free testing is now available for dead bats suspected of succumbing to West Nile Virus. It is illegal to harm bats that may nest in a roof. For more information on bat box design, Di provided 2 websites: [www.batwatch.ca](http://www.batwatch.ca), and [www.helpthebats.ca](http://www.helpthebats.ca)

**Sightings:**

Marcia Woods – huge cedar stumps with hemlock trees growing inside along Eagle River Nature Trail

Colin Spence – showed photos of American dipper seen along the Eagle River Nature Trail

Di Wittner – discovered a little used trail in Larch Hills with scat of elk, moose, lynx, bear and owl pellets which she nicknamed the ‘trail of turds’

Cathy Meakes – a pika near Siphon Falls, above Gleneden

**MOTION to Adjourn** by Mike Saul at 8:55 pm

**Where to send What:**

1) Please send information you wish to be forwarded to all club members to Ken Raynor, at [ken.r.sa.bc@gmail.com](mailto:ken.r.sa.bc@gmail.com). As Communications Director, he will relay upcoming meeting/activity announcements (or cancellations), meeting minutes, information from any of our committees (e.g. BC Nature, Environment).

2) Please send any items for/correspondence about eNewsletters directly to Marlene McDonald, [mcdonald@airspeedwireless.ca](mailto:mcdonald@airspeedwireless.ca). Next eNewsletter, January 1, 2024. Submission deadline: Dec 28.

3) **Next Meeting:** December 5 at SASS Library 7:00 PM Please send agenda items to **Janet Aitken** [janetaitken1@gmail.com](mailto:janetaitken1@gmail.com), **Chair** for the December 5 meeting.