

Macnamara Field Naturalists Club 2021 Annual Report – Field Trips

Despite COVID restrictions, we managed six fabulous outings in 2021. A total of approximately 70 participants joined us on outings focussed on a variety of topics: geology, odonates, plants, mosses, fungi and birds. Again, we are extremely grateful to the knowledgeable trip leaders who took time to prepare so that participants would get the most from each outing. We are also grateful to the participants for adding their knowledge, their photos, their post trip comments and for being so respectful of the COVID guidelines. A further thank you for the understanding of club members unable to participate when numbers would not allow. We hope that the blogs will encourage everyone to get out and explore these areas themselves whether they were on the outing or not.

With expected loosening of some restrictions in 2022, we are expecting to have some trips repeated for those of you who were not able to attend last year and will add new types of outings as well. Members are encouraged to connect with each other for self guided outings and as always, to provide the executive with feedback and ideas that would help us enhance the benefits of club membership.

A brief summary of the 2021 outings follows:

Morris Island – Odonata with Gillian Mastromatteo and Chris Lewis

Highlights of the trip were of course the more than 20 species of dragonflies and damselflies, the large number of Brown Water snakes and several different spiders including the large Dock Spider with her nest of babies.

High Lonesome Nature Reserve – Fungi with Jonathan Mack

The outing to this unique reserve began with a super introduction to the reserve by our club's own Art Goldsmith. Because of the wealth of interesting specimens observed, Jonathan could barely keep up with all the pleas to "come look at this one". As a result of our search and Jonathan's excellent knowledge, Art has been able to add a half dozen rare species to the reserve's list. Many other plants, amphibians and insects were also noted on the walk.

Pinhey's Point – Geology with Jean Dougherty

Jean, a retired geologist discussed geological processes and the impact of geology on history and development of human occupation in the Ottawa area. The group looked at geological maps and the local geology from the vantage point of Pinhey's Point. The impact of the pockets of Lida clay found in the Ottawa area was quite an eye-opener.

Macnamara Nature Trail – Mosses with Jennifer Doubt and Cassandra Robillard

Those participants who love mosses were in their glory on this relaxed and extremely informative outing. All that "green stuff" was differentiated into endless variety of mosses and liverworts by Jennifer and Cassandra. Cassandra followed up on the iNaturalist reports and identified some new species which had not yet been recorded on the trail.

Carp River Watershed – Riparian Restoration with Janet Mason

Though chilly with the occasional snow squall, participants were challenged on our knowledge of this watershed which is contained entirely within the bounds of the City of Ottawa. Janet discussed the impact of shoreline management practices, arrangements with local developers and their outcomes while we explored the area. We saw how natural areas can co-exist in, and indeed are necessary for commercial/suburban settings as they provide habitat, recreation and ecosystem services for adjacent and downstream communities.

Arnprior and area – Car Birding Blitz with Michael Runtz

Participants had a lovely day for a winter (late Fall actually) car birding outing that familiarized us with the local birding hotspots and birds expected at that time of year in the Arnprior area. Over twenty-eight species of birds were eBirded during the outing with all three species of Mergansers being found but a dearth of raptors being specifically noted.

A common thread for all these outings is that contributing to citizen science (via iNaturalist, eBird and to reporting sites specific to the location) will enhance their understanding of the flora and fauna which exist in the location. This is often important when funding is being sought to help save or enhance the area.

More fulsome blogs of each of the trips may be found on the Macnamara Field Naturalists' Club webpage:

<https://mfnc.ca> under the section titled "Our Blog"

Respectfully Submitted

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Field Trip Coordinator