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## Delta Naturalists Society

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### DNS Meeting Minutes

January 3, 2023 via Zoom and In-Person

#### DRAFT

**Present:** 30 by Zoom and 17 at the Ladner All Saints Anglican Church (including members who supported the Zoom meeting from the Church venue)

1. DNS members gathered at the church shortly after 7pm with treats supplied.
2. Syd started the formal meeting at ~7:30pm. Syd circulated a sign-up sheet for treats for the next meeting.
3. Agenda – David passed and Jack seconded that the agenda was okay.
4. Minutes of December 6<sup>th</sup> DNS Meeting – Syd asked for comments on the minutes. No comments raised.
5. Financial and Membership – Jim reported on Membership:
  - 62 individual
  - 28 family
  - 3 honorary members. Annie Kaps raised a question about honorary memberships which was not completely answered at the meeting. It was confirmed (by Elizabeth) after the meeting that they were awarded to: Geof and Jean Hacker, Jennifer Melville-Roberts and Terry McComas for a significant contribution to DNS over a long period of time and that recommendations for such memberships are reviewed and approved by DNS Executive..
  - Two new memberships have come in that are not yet reported.

Financially, dues have been contributed so far this year plus a donation of \$800.00. A healthy bank balance is maintained. There is a \$10,000 donation in hand from the Boundary Bay Park Association as well. Jack asked if it is possible to get a new projector for better optics for the club.

**6. Backyard Birding Contest Results** – Debbi congratulated everyone! Highlight species are also listed below (with help from Debbi by e-mail):

Note: Five of our twelve yard listers had the "rare" California Scrub jay!

24- *Jim Kneesch* - block of suet  
*Bald Eagle, Snow Geese, Stellars Jay, Fox Sparrow*

22- *Grant Edwards* -shelled peanuts (for his voracious *California scrub jays*!)  
*Coopers & Sharp-shinned Hawks & Dark-eyed Junco ([cismontanus](#))!*

21- *Vicki Huntington* - block of suet  
*CASJ & Double-crested Cormorant, Great Blue Heron*

18- *Nicki Brockamp*  
*White-throated Sparrow, Chestnut-backed Chickadee (CASJ -Sept/Oct)*  
18- *Kathryn Milligan*  
*Orange-crowned Warbler, Ruby-crowned Kinglet*  
18- *Peter Ward*  
*Snow Geese & American Goldfinch*  
18- *Val Whitlam* -door prize for most seasoned birder!  
*Red-winged Blackbird, Downy Woodpecker*

16- *Anne Murray*  
*Red-breasted Sapsucker, Anna's Hummingbird*  
16- *Val Fuller* -door prize - \$5.50 coffee/Beach Grove cafe  
*CASJ & American Wigeon*

15 -*Brian Avent* - random door prize....  
*CASJ & Bewicks Wren*

14 -*Chris McVittie* - door prize...  
*Varied Thrush, Northern Flicker*  
14 -*Glen Bodie* - door prize...  
*Spotted Towhee & Red-breasted Nuthatch*

**7. Saturday January 7<sup>th</sup> Group Bird Outing** – Thea stated that the outing would start at 9:00am at the main parking lot at Centennial Beach near the concession stand and bathrooms. The regular sign-up sheet can be used to sign in. Members, families and non-members are welcome. Syd thanked Thea for a new terrific initiative.

**8. Birds and Biodiversity Committee** – Anne stated that lots of work has gone on in the background and the committee is reviewing what the City's Biodiversity program has done to promote the strategy and to make Delta a bird friendly city. There has been a change in City staff. The City will fund the brochures. The IBA/KBA need signage and

education materials. The next step will be to show how the City progresses. Anne's full report is appended to the draft minutes herein.

**9. Nature Notes** – Elizabeth reported that the Delta Optimist will do the once a month nature note. The Optimist is willing to increase DNS visibility. The DNS logo may be in the online version of the Optimist.

A question was raised to see if proof of vaccinations were needed for outings and Terry stated that no proof was needed now. Anne stated that the Christmas Bird Count resulted in an unofficial count of 129 species.

**10. Coffee Break** - Syd wished everyone a Happy New Year and to the rest of the world. A short break was made for treats before the speaker was announced.

**11. Speaker** – Elizabeth introduced the speaker, Diane & David Reesor presenting on Botswana - the Okavango Delta. Elizabeth moderated the questions to the speakers.

**12. Next Meeting** – February 7<sup>th</sup>, 2023. Speaker will be Sharon MacGougan, President, Garden city conservation Society.

**13. Adjournment** – Meeting adjourned at about 9:00pm.

Attachment: Anne Murrays Report to Item 8:

Birds and Biodiversity Committee Report to DNS monthly meeting January 3, 2023

Our last meeting of the Birds and Biodiversity Cttee was 19 October 2022. I had intended to do follow up in November and December but an unexpected trip to England and the onset of the Christmas period meant that not much got done.

One idea that came out of the meeting was to do an evaluation of progress on the City's Birds and Biodiversity Strategy. Our committee was set up to get that Strategy enacted AND implemented! The goals and objectives for the Strategy are laid out in detail in the document on the City website. Glen Bodie took on the task of downloading the relevant section and setting up a grading methodology showing how well the various tasks have been done. He and I are working on this now: some actions have been accomplished but many more need to be achieved. We will use our progress report in upcoming discussions with staff.

We discussed at our meeting the high number of dead and living trees that have been removed recently; the replacements are often ornamental trees. Habitat connectivity is also an issue of grave concern - roads and other impediments to wildlife separate parks and protected areas. Our group needs to meet

again soon to discuss what activities DNS could help with, for example: familiarizing the public with the importance of different habitats; helping to recognize native and non-native plants; working to retain and plant more native plants; and controlling non-native and invasive species. We could also advise on signage for Delta and MetroVancouver natural areas.

Our DNS owl brochures were circulated to dyke walks this weekend thanks to Nicki Brockamp and Amy Huestis. We encourage all photographers to use ethical techniques when photographing birds, especially owls which are primarily nocturnal and should not be disturbed. The presence of roosting owls are not to be put on EBird – there is a protocol for reporting them.

Nicki, Pam and I met with Kim Houghton who organized the printing by Delta Municipality of 2,000 of each of the bird brochures for year end (value \$2042).

I met with Autumn Jordan, of Nature Canada, to discuss the Bird Friendly City designation opportunity for Delta. Our Birds and Bio team will need to meet with City staff to discuss progress on that designation further.

Our Birds and Biodiversity group has previously liaised regularly with staff at various organizations and government agencies. Last year there were a lot of changes in our regular contacts. Some Delta municipality staff left, eg. Erin and Leeann from the Delta Environment department and Eric and Jessica from the Wildlife Management Area program. Kim Houghton is our contact at Delta Environment now; Kevin Li is handling invasive species. We have not yet connected with the WMA staff replacements. Delta municipality has recently changed the way “environmental stakeholder” organizations can liaise with the City. The Advisory Committees have been terminated and citizens are invited to give input through Let’s Talk Delta. Councillors can also seek input from community stakeholders. DNS Executive should explore how our society can best represent to Delta Council concerns regarding the natural environment.

I spoke recently to Stewart Guy, BCN’s Executive Director (a new position); and Liam Ragan who is now employed full time as BCN’s IBA Coordinator. I have also been re-appointed as a volunteer on the BC Nature IBA Steering Committee. The IBA program staff and volunteers are also involved in the rollout of the BC KBA program. James Casey, Birds Canada, Liam Ragan of BCN and I met in November to strategize on the involvement of Delta and MetroVancouver in the KBA program. I met with Liam again today in my capacity as volunteer IBA liaison to BCN. I anticipate that our DNS Committee will help with on the ground communications and signage regarding the KBA program in our area.

We participated in the Christmas Bird Count December 18, along with some other DNS members. Results so far show 129 species for the Ladner CBC Count but I have not received official final numbers from Yousif Attia, the Coordinator.

DNS weekly bird walks, held on two mornings each week are well attended. Thea Beckmann has offered to lead birding walks in Boundary Bay park on some Saturday mornings, perhaps resurrecting DNS’s Birds on the Bay quarterly series, as Nature on the Bay.