

# PGNC EXECUTIVE REPORT TO 2022 AGM

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## Overview of 2020-2021

The past two years have been a challenge for all organizations including the Prince George Naturalists Club. Our last presentation night at The Exploration Place was in January 2020 and the AGM scheduled for March had to be cancelled. Because of the pandemic we have not held indoor meetings, social activities, or presentation nights since then.

## PGNC Communications

Over the past two years the Executive's chief means of communicating with Club members and supporters is through the newsletter. It's emailed out about twice a month and goes to almost 300 addresses. It's also posted on the Club blog at <https://pgnc.wordpress.com> where about 900 subscribers receive it as an email. The newsletter contents are posted on the Prince George Naturalists Club Facebook page and the PGNC Members Facebook group. Individual news items are shared with other FB groups with common interests, and other social media.

## Activities in 2020

Outdoor events included the Swan Eagle Count in January, weed pulls at the Hudson's Bay Wetland and invasive plant cleanup at Carrie Jane Gray Park in July and August, and the Christmas Bird Count in December.

The PGNC also participated in removing landscaping mesh at Wilson Park with permission from the City's Parks Dept. Eight volunteers led by Dora Hunter helped with the work.

## Activities in 2021

Outdoor events again were the main focus, including the January Swan Eagle Count, two weed pulls at the Hudson's Bay Wetland in July and August, invasive plant cleanup at Carrie Jane Gray Park in August, and the 54<sup>th</sup> annual Christmas Bird Count in December.

## Birdwatching Backpacks

In April 2021 the PGNC Executive helped the Prince George Public Library (PGPL) assemble birdwatching backpacks by providing a paper copy of the *Checklist of North-Central BC Birds* as well as the *Bird Viewing around Prince George* brochure for scanning and reproduction. The PGPL is now lending out five birdwatching backpacks containing a field guide to birds, binoculars, the checklist, and the brochure. In October 2021, all the backpacks were either checked out or awaiting pickup at the downtown Bob Harkins Branch of the Library. This is an excellent service for beginning birdwatchers.

## Long-billed Curlew Monitoring Project

Dr. David Bradley, the BC Director for Birds Canada, and his team returned to Prince George in May 2021 to conduct more fieldwork on the multi-year long-billed curlew monitoring project with assistance from PGNC members and cooperation with local landowners.

## Ferguson Lake Nature Reserve

In March 2020 the PGNC learned that the Regional District of Fraser-Fort George was holding a public hearing to get public comments on a proposed rezoning of a property adjacent to the Reserve to allow for a residential subdivision. The Club circulated information on how to participate in the public hearing and the Executive submitted a letter of concern to the public

hearing. The majority of submissions were opposed to the rezoning, which was seen as a threat to the Nature Reserve.

On December 8, 2021 the Regional District re-opened the public hearing. The Executive again circulated information on how to access the public hearing. The majority of submissions from individuals were opposed to the proposed rezoning. The Executive submitted another letter outlining its concerns about the impact on the Nature Reserve. The Regional Board approved the rezoning bylaw on January 20, 2022. The PGNC continues to monitor this project and will report to members and supporters as events unfold.

### **Members, Volunteers and Supporters**

In spite of all the setbacks in 2020-2021, people continued to renew their memberships or join the PGNC. As of December 31, 2021, the Club reported 75 paid-up memberships to BC Nature, which provides liability insurance and general support to BC's naturalist organizations. Club members include individuals, families and students.

Our volunteer directors held three in-person meetings in early 2020 and three Zoom meetings in late 2021. After four years as director, David Breault left the Executive in 2020 after completing his MSc at UNBC and moving away from Prince George. Heather Meier, former Vice-President, left in April 2021 after eight years as director.

Anne Hogan and Blaire Smith had planned to retire in 2020 but both stayed on to help keep the Club functioning until an AGM could be held. Anne is retiring at the 2022 AGM after 11 years on the Executive as Secretary. She also prepared and sent out the regular newsletter for the past five years. Blaire Smith has served as director since 2018. She will retire at the 2022 AGM because she has completed her degree at UNBC and no longer lives in Prince George. During her term as director, Blaire assisted with membership and treasurer duties and was instrumental in recruiting UNBC student members.

In 2020-2021, other volunteers led members on field trips and projects. Sandra Kinsey organized the swan eagle count field trips and the weed pulls. Cathy Antoniazzi organized the Christmas Bird Counts. Ric Mlynarczyk visited the four observation decks at the Hudson's Bay Wetland on a regular basis. He removed graffiti and garbage and carried out regular maintenance. Nowell Senior provided backup as needed. Ric has been doing this since the summer of 2017 for which the Club is very grateful.

During these difficult two years, we knew we could count on the support of BC Nature, City of Prince George Parks Dept., Northwest Invasive Plant Council, Spruce City Wildlife and REAPS if needed. The Club is grateful for all assistance as it continues its work to promote enjoyment of the natural world.

Respectfully submitted,

Anne Hogan, Secretary  
Sandra Kinsey, Treasurer  
Dave Leman, BC Nature director  
Sandra Hepburn  
Blaire Smith