

NATURE
MANITOBA

People passionate about nature

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

(In-Person and Virtual)

7pm MONDAY, MARCH 27th, 2023

AGENDA

1. Welcome
2. Minutes of the preceding AGM March 2022
3. Annual Report of the President
4. Treasurer's Report
5. Appointment of Auditors for 2023
6. Annual Reports of Nature Manitoba Committees
7. Election of Board Members
8. Election of Executive Members
9. Resolutions
10. Adjournment
11. Presentation:
The Trail to Hike Manitoba
Presented by Jaime Manness from Hike Manitoba

INDEX

Page 1 - 3	2022 AGM Minutes
Page 4 - 5	President's Report
Page 6	Treasurer's Report
Page 7 - 8	Gray Hares Report
Page 9	Garden Tour Report
Page 10	Discovery Evenings Report
Page 11	Workshop Series
Page 12 -13	Mantario
Page 14 - 15	Important Bird Area Report
Page 15 - 16	Chimney Swift Report
Page 17	Manitoba Bluebird Report
Page 18 - 19	Bridging the Gap Report
Page 20 - 21	Bee City Brandon
Page 22 - 23	Operations Report
Page 24	Habitat Conservation Report
Page 25	Proposed Slate of Officers
Page 26	Donors

Nature Manitoba (Manitoba Naturists Society Inc.)

100th Annual General Meeting

Monday, March 21, 2022 at 7:00 pm

Centre culturel Franco-Manitoban

340 Provencher Blvd

Winnipeg, Manitoba

Minutes from the meeting:

1. Welcome

Sandy HayGlass brought greetings as the President of the Board. Thirty members participated online and twenty-two in person. This exceeded the quorum required.

2. Minutes of the preceding Annual General Meeting March 2021

The minutes of the 2021 AGM were approved at April 2021 Board meeting.

3. Annual Report of the President and Committee reports

Sandy reviewed the 2021 Nature Manitoba annual report which was made publicly available in advance of the meeting.

- Cancellations in 2021 of many programs (Mantario Summer Program, Garden Tour, and Discovery Evenings) were difficult for volunteers and attendees, but all accepted situations gracefully.
- Partner programs such as IBA and Bridging the Gap adapted their programming and were able to meet many goals in 2021.
- Programs are already starting up for 2022, can read about these in April 2022 newsletter.
- New volunteers have been put in place for some programs, including 3 people coordinating the Discovery Evenings.
- A new IT volunteer helping with goals of modernizing in the office and working with different programs. Office staff (Lynsay and Susan) are thanked for their continuous work.
- Gratitude was expressed for donations from members and other funders to continue our operations into the future, and to volunteers and members of Nature Manitoba.

4. Treasurer's Report

Andre Laberge, Treasurer, reviewed the 2021 Treasurer's report.

- Nature Manitoba saw a surplus budget in 2021, due to Covid-19 support grants from Province and from Winnipeg Foundation.
- Nature Manitoba membership numbers were up, administration fees were down.

- Cancelled fundraisers were a challenge but were able offset with other funds coming in.
- Overall, the organization was able to adapt to the Covid environment.
- The Nature Fund received a large donation and bequest, and Manitoba Bluebird fund received a large bequest as well.
- More information can be found in the Annual Report.

Andre proposed that the Treasurers Report for 2021 be accepted as submitted.

Motion: Don Himbeault

Seconded: Jack Dubois

Passed

5. Appointment of Auditors for 2022

- Andre proposed the appointment of Hartland Chartered Professional Accountants for year ending March 2022.

Motion: Andre Laberge

Seconded: Meredith Stoesz

Passed

6. Resolutions

- Sandy shared that the Habitat Committee has prepared a proposed change to the Terms of Reference for the Paul Guyot Fund as Nature Manitoba no longer owns significant property.
- The proposed change is to expand "To finance projects involving conservation, restoration and/or management of native habitat or education on the value of native habitat."

"Whereas Nature Manitoba no longer owns large parcels of land and subsequently does not need a large stable income to pay for taxes and management fees"

"Whereas there is still income from the Paul Guyot Endowment Fund which could be beneficial in restoring or managing native habitats"

"Whereas the current Terms of Reference only allow for management costs on wildlife habitat lands owned by Nature Manitoba"

"Whereas any changes in the terms of reference for the Paul Guyot Endowment Fund require approval by a majority of the members at an Annual General Meeting of Nature Manitoba.

"Be it resolved that Nature Manitoba adopt the proposed amendments to broaden the Terms of Reference, while remaining consistent with the original intent of conserving native habitat".

Sandy requested a motion to accept the changes to the Habitat Fund Terms of Reference as presented.

Motion: Marlene Waldron

Second: John Morgan

Passed

7. Election of Board Members and Executive Members

- Sandy introduced the current Board Members
- Sandy requested any nominations from the floor for Board members. None were offered.
- Sandy declared the Board Members and Executive Members as printed and elected by acclamation.

8. Announcement of Awards

Susan McLarty, Office Administrator was presented with a Long Service Award recognizing 20 years of service to Nature Manitoba.

9. Adjournment

AGM Meeting adjourned at 7:30 PM



President's Report

Sandy HayGlass

Nature Manitoba is Back!!!

After several years of the covid pandemic, all our programs were operational in 2022. Excitement, action, and joy were the words to welcome the new normal. Members and volunteers returned to activities at their own pace.

I thank all our volunteers, board members and employees who make Nature Manitoba the great organization it is.

A major focus was business modernization. We tested hybrid meetings (online and in person) for the AGM and Discovery Evenings. The Manitoba portion of the website was enhanced with many photographs. Workshop processes were streamlined. Registration was moved to Eventbrite. Operational documents, records, procedures, and email were moved to Microsoft 365. This necessary initiative spearheaded ensures effective business management, sharing of information and record keeping.

You can see Nature Manitoba's healthy finances in the Treasurer's Report. We thank everyone who become a member or renewed their membership. Thank you to donors for fall fundraising donations, regular donations and bequests. All this support is very much appreciated!

The virtual office operations during the fall provided an opportunity to re-assess and re-organize Nature Manitoba operations. Thank you to Andre Laberge and John Schulz who have taken on so many extra activities during our staff shortage. Their efforts are key.

A volunteer newsletter committee was re-established. Karen Mackintosh has learned and excelled at taking on many duties. This committee's dedication ensured the uninterrupted newsletter publication.

A modernized program coordinator position was created. After an extensive search, Tami Bradford was hired. She focuses on enhanced program support, communications, promotion, and volunteer engagement. Nature Manitoba's increased focus on promotion and volunteers will facilitate our effective operations and growth.

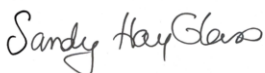
Check out all the committee reports where you can read about what happened this year. The garden tour had record attendance. Hosts and guests loved participating. Mantario summer programs and rental, Grey Hares weekly activities and overnight excursions returned in full force. The beginner birding course had record attendance. Regular birding trips and the Christmas Bird Count were back. We welcomed Marissa Berard as the new Important Bird Area and Chimney Swift coordinator. Read about Bee City Brandon, our newest partner program.

Marika Olynyk took over leadership of Bridging the Gap and established a new Committee. They received an Organizational Grant from the Winnipeg Foundation. They will conduct a strategic review and planning process to ensure effective future programming.

The Habitat Committee initiated a grant application process for projects or activities related to Habitat Conservation in Manitoba. The Bluebird Committee expanded and is planning how to effectively use the funds so generously donated by Elva and Guent Salzmann. A streamlined process was developed for the private landowner tree donation program.

Reviewing all of these activities for the AGM report illustrates how much Nature Manitoba and its enthusiastic volunteers accomplished in the last year. Remarkable! Stay tuned to our newsletter and website to find our 2023 programs and see what's next.

Wishing you all an enjoyable spring and summer.



Sandy HayGlass
President Nature Manitoba

TREASURER'S REPORT

Andre Laberge

Nature Manitoba's general operation finished the year 2022 with an excess of revenue over expenses of \$8,817.

Our membership revenue was down by \$570, the administration fees increased by \$4,632, the fall fundraising letter raised \$7,160 and the garden tour was another success by raising \$6,673. The general operations received a disbursement from the Manitoba Naturalists Endowment Fund held at The Winnipeg Foundation for \$6,945, an increase of \$230 from 2021.

The expenses of the general operation saw changes due to staff fluctuations, the purchase of a new computer and equipment, higher supplies costs, and lower telephone and internet communication costs.

The Paul Guyot Endowment Fund for Habitat received a disbursement of \$7,542 and the Manitoba Bluebird Endowment Fund received a disbursement of \$17,257 from The Winnipeg Foundation.

During the year, the Nature Fund received a donation of \$5,000.

Although our financial planning is to have a balanced budget each year, it is typical for our year-end position to cycle between surpluses and deficits. The board continues to look at ways to increase revenue and reduce costs, while also wanting to make sure the money we are spending is effective and providing value to the members.

I would like to thank our volunteers, those who have donated, and our grantors for their support during this past year. I would also like to thank and recognize the many years that Susan McLarty has assisted me in preparing the accounting for the organization during my tenure as the treasurer.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

GREY HARES

Kevin & Anita Miller

Grey Hares is a group of retired, partly retired, and flexible-work-hours people within Nature Manitoba who enjoy nature, new experiences, making friends, being physically active, doing meaningful things, and sharing time with like-minded people. Grey Hares has an activity every Wednesday during the day, and sometimes there are other activities that are multi-day or on a non-Wednesday. For more info, go to <https://www.naturemanitoba.ca/grey-hares-trips-0>.

It has been slightly over two years since we took over administration of Grey Hares. 2022 was our first full year, and unlike 2020 and 2021, it was a normal year with a full slate of weekly activities. Grey Hares administrative tasks fall into five categories:

- Coordinating the weekly activities.
- Communication.
- Membership.
- Financial.
- Liaison with Nature Manitoba's staff, Board, and other volunteers.

Activity statistics from 2022

Of 52 weeks, we had an activity on 43 of them. 6 of those weeks had 2 activities.

Of the 9 weeks that didn't have an activity, 8 of the weeks had one scheduled, but bad weather on 7 weeks postponed or cancelled the activity. 2 other activities were cancelled because of bad weather, but another activity took place on that day. We had our first multi-day activity since 2019: 24 members camping/paddling/hiking at Rushing River in July.

We had 23 leaders in 2022. One led 9 times, another led 6 times, another led 4 times, 5 leaders led 3 times, 5 leaders led twice, and 10 leaders led once.

We started 2022 with 217 members and ended the year with 246.

Communication

We use MailChimp to send weekly email messages to Grey Hares members. We sent 58 messages in 2022, usually on Wednesday evening. Topics include information about upcoming weeks' activities, requests for leaders/activities for upcoming weeks, photos from past weeks' activities, and misc. news.

All activities were also posted on the Nature Manitoba website, almost always prior to being announced in the weekly email message.

Membership

Grey Hares members must be current members of Nature Manitoba, and they must pay a one-time lifetime \$5 fee to join our membership list and email list. 34 people became new members in 2021. 5 people left the membership.

Financial

Grey Hares started 2022 with a balance of \$616.39 and ended with \$786.39 . All income was via 34 \$5 membership fees.

2023

The year has started well for Grey Hares.

GARDEN TOUR

Tim Evans

The 2022 Nature Manitoba Garden Tour took place on Saturday, July 9th and was a huge success! The gardens were located around North Main and East Kildonan. Due to the cancellation of the 2021 tour, we were able to offer replacement tickets for anyone wanting to attend in 2022. Our ticket sales were close sold out this year with 500 tickets printed bringing the total intake for the garden tour and plant sale over \$7,200.

Some of you may have noticed the change of name for our garden tour from “Our Natural Garden Tour” to “Gardens of Distinction Garden Tour”. Given my experience with the Manitoba Master Gardener Association and ticket sales being much higher over the years simply due to the name “Master Gardener”. This gives the impression that their garden tour was of a higher quality and since I attend all the Winnipeg tours, I knew this wasn’t the case, therefore the name of our tour was changed to “Gardens of Distinction Garden Tour”.

The Garden Tour did incredibly well financially, which I believe was a result of the name change, hard work of our dedicated volunteers and a few other factors:

- The beautiful design that Lynsay Perkins (former Nature Manitoba communications employee) created for all the promotional material using the same design throughout keeping everything consistent.
- Pre-tour evenings for the gardeners and volunteers (Tuesday and Wednesday evenings prior to the garden tour). This ensures everybody the opportunity to see each other’s gardens and socialize.
- A potluck dinner a week after the garden tour at my home so the gardeners and volunteers can converse about their experience with the Garden tour and connect to exchange plants or seeds.

Every year we choose one public location as part of the tour where we sell the donated plants as well as last minute tickets. In 2022 this took place at the Seven Oaks House Museum and in 2023 it will take place at the Living Prairie Museum.

The 2023 Garden Tour will take place on Saturday, July 8th showcasing some incredible gardens in St. James and Charleswood. We will be adding a QR code to the ticket for easy access to a map of the garden locations using a smartphone. There will also be an increase to the ticket price from \$15 to \$20 keeping inline with other garden tours of equal quality along with promoting the fact that most of the gardens are wheelchair accessible.

DISCOVERY EVENING PROGRAM Simone Faucher & Sandy HayGlass

Discovery Evenings resumed in February 2022. In March, we were very pleased to welcome Simone Faucher as the new Discovery Evening Coordinator and Christa Yeates as a Discovery Evening organizer. Thank you to Simone and Christa for taking over this important Nature Manitoba indoor program.

We'd like to thank Katharine and John Schulz for their dedicated volunteering for every Discovery Evening. John manages the evening's audio visuals and IT, and Katharine manages the admittance with help from Christa. A special mention to Sam Line who joined the Discovery Evening team as the Zoom meeting host for each event.

We greatly appreciate the generous contribution of time and effort made by all of our 2022 speakers:

2022 Discovery Evening Presentations

1. **The Peregrine Chronicles**, Tracy Maconachie, Project Coordinator, Manitoba Peregrine Falcon Recovery Project.
2. **Exploring the Brokenhead River**, Dustin Molinski, Public Programs Coordinator, Oak Hammock Marsh Interpretive Centre
3. **Bringing Agriculture and Nature Together**, Paul Kruse, Northern Grove Tree Service/Permaculture Design
4. **Exploring Manitoba's Threatened Bird Species**, Tim Poole, Manitoba Provincial Bird Biologist
5. **The Environmental Musician**, Emily Thoroksi, Canadian Singer-Songwriter & Wildlife Biologist

2022 WORKSHOP SERIES

Cindy Louër

Al and



We were pleased to be offering our Nature Workshops once again in 2022!

The goal of the Workshop Series is to increase our understanding and appreciation of the wonders of the natural world under the guidance of experts. Some of the sessions include field trips, which greatly enrich our experience of the outdoors. The fees charged to workshop participants (\$5.00 for members; \$10.00 for non-members; \$3.00 for student members; and \$5.00 for student non-members) bring in much needed funding for Nature Manitoba programs. Attendance continues to be high and response to the workshops remains enthusiastic.

We had 9 workshops in total that ran from Feb through to April. Many of the workshops reached their capacity and were sold out (an option to be on a wait list if any cancellations came in was offered). There were 241 registrants in total for all the workshops and of those 93% were members.

We would like to thank the Earl Grey Community Club for providing Nature Manitoba with a venue for the workshops.

The following is a list of the 2022 workshops along with the presenters who we would like to thank for sharing their knowledge with us:

1. **Animals Without Backbones** – James Whitelaw
2. **Shorebirds** – Rudolf Koes
3. **Grassland Birds** – Amanda Shave
4. **Mushrooms** – Donna Kurt
5. **Butterflies of Southeast Manitoba** – Peter Taylor
6. **The Immature Mosquito** – Fernand Saurette
7. **Plant Propagation** – Stu Innes
8. **Warblers** – Ward Christianson
9. **Manitoba Day tripping by Canoe** – Charles Burchill

We are currently working on the 2023 workshops and the participation is very good.

Mantario Summer Program

The Mantario Summer Program was able to run for the first time since 2019 with the easing of pandemic restrictions. The Committee prepared for the program with a purchase of food supplies which were shipped for the cabin in late winter 2022. The Committee worked with Nature Manitoba to promote the trip with an updated website, social media posts, and easier registration and payment process.

The Committee organized volunteer-led themed trips for July and August. All trip leader volunteers were provided with a subsidy to cover their Remote Wilderness First Aid training. This provided a value-added perk to volunteering as well as supporting the need for risk management and emergency preparedness for operating programming at a wilderness facility.

Trips were generally planned for Monday - Fridays, with one trip from Friday-Monday.

Weeks advertised included Family Week, Astronomy Week, Photography and Botany Week, Mushroom Week and Mantari-Yoga (4 day weekend). Two trips ran at full capacity for participants, while the other 3 trips were unfortunately canceled due to lack of registration (1 trip), or late withdrawals of participants which could not be refilled (2 trips).

Overall, the Summer Program offered a total of 16 participants and 4 volunteer trip leaders a unique experience in the pristine Wilderness Zone of Whiteshell Provincial Park, and the Summer Program was able to run for the first time since the pandemic.

Mantario Cabin Usage and Communication

The Mantario Cabin is available for booking throughout the year by approved cabin users. Nature Manitoba updated the Mantario section of the website in late spring 2022 to allow ease of access to the information needed by booking groups. The Mantario Committee handled the bookings calendar and communication with those who were renting. The method of payment for groups continued the per night rental fee paid via PayPal or cheque.

Approved cabin users are Nature Manitoba members who have been led to the cabin by experienced users and trained in cabin upkeep and wilderness safety. In 2022, four new cabin users were approved.

Volunteer work maintenance groups visited the cabin in spring and fall to ensure the cabin and its amenities were well kept. Multiple work trips in fall ensured the cabin

was stocked with firewood for the winter season. Firewood gathering had been a challenge to stock during 2021 when pandemic restrictions limited group size at the cabin.

Mantario Cabin Bookings

Overall, 2022 saw a total of 99 people visiting the Mantario Cabin (excluding the Summer Program, which would total 131).

Deep snow, frigid temperatures, and dangerous slush conditions resulted in the cancellation of some winter trips. Overall, 55 people visited the cabin in winter 2022. A group of 13 intrepid Westgate Collegiate students hiked in on snowshoes in March. One winter public ski trip was organized, filled and completed in late March.

The wet spring prevented visitation to the cabin due to flooding and park closures. Two work parties got to the cabin, with 2 and 10 people respectively.

In summer, 22 people visited the cabin on 6 separate private bookings, as well as 32 with the Summer Program. The last week in August was booked by Manitoba Conservation. Fish researchers were studying the lake trout in Mantario Lake as a reference lake for scientific research.

The fall season saw 6 people on 2 private trips, as well as the two fall work trips (total 20 people). December saw 4 people make it in for an early season ski.

Cabin Maintenance

Spring work party was delayed due to flooding in the park. One small and one larger work party ensured the cabin was ready before the end of June for the Summer Program. In fall, two work parties, each with 10 volunteers, ensured the cabin was stocked with firewood and all necessary tasks were completed ahead of winter.

Volunteers do not pay cabin fees and access Summer Program food stores that are nearing expiry.



Marissa Berard

General

Despite the ongoing COVID-19 situation in 2022, The Manitoba IBA program was able to offer a variety of virtual and in-person programming in 2022, despite the ongoing and evolving COVID-19 situation.

The IBA and MCSI programs had a transition in program coordinator over the summer and fall of 2022. Amanda Shave has moved on to another exciting opportunity and will be dearly missed! We thank Amanda for all her work over the past few years. Marissa Berard, the new program coordinator, began full-time in October. The IBA Steering Committee was comprised of Tim Poole (Chair), Christian Artuso, Paula Grief, Bonnie Chartier, Gillian Richards and Marika Olynyk.

A big thank you to our incredible volunteers, who are a key part of everything we do!!!

Events and Activities

We held 5 webinars this spring, in what has become our annual spring webinar series. All webinars were later posted on Manitoba IBA's YouTube Channel for the public to view. In addition to the attendees who watched the webinars live, there are currently a further 531 views of the webinars available on YouTube.

We held several shorebird focused events, including walks and blitzes. We held two shorebird identification walks at Oak Hammock Marsh IBA on May 28th, as well as a walk at Whitewater Lake IBA on July 26th. We held two shorebird blitzes at Whitewater Lake IBA, on June 4th and September 25th. With the help of dedicated volunteers, we conducted International Shorebird Surveys (ISS) in spring and in the fall, at Oak Lake/Plum Lakes IBA, Whitewater Lake IBA, Oak Hammock Marsh IBA, and North, East and West Shoal Lakes IBA.

We organized three stewardship events. Due to high water levels on Lake Winnipeg and the Riverton Sandy Bar, we instead held a purple loosestrife pull at Oak Hammock

IBA on September 5th. We also held two shoreline clean-ups, at Delta Marsh IBA on October 22nd and in Lockport on October 23rd.

We continued to focus on Red-headed Woodpecker and Eastern Whip-poor-will, including survey routes and blitzes. We held three Red-headed Woodpecker blitzes, which took place at North, East and West Shoal Lakes IBA (July 9th), Oak Lake/Plum Lakes IBA (July 23rd), and Kinosota-Leifur IBA (September 10th).

We also held two grassland events at the Southwestern Manitoba Mixed Grass Prairie IBA, including a grassland bird walk on June 18th and a grassland bird blitz on June 19th.

Funding

Our main sources of funding this year came from the Environment and Climate Change Canada's EcoAction and Habitat Stewardship Program grants. These are 3-year grants, with 2022-2023 being the last year of both grants. We also received funding from the TD Friends of the Environment Fund and the Conservation Trust. We also had a sizable donation from the Patvin Foundation, along with several smaller donations from individuals. Nature Manitoba's in-kind support has also been invaluable for us. A big thank you goes out to our funders and donors in 2022.



General

As mentioned in the IBA report, the MCSI programs had a transition in program coordinator over the summer and fall of 2022. We thank Amanda Shave for all her hard work and dedication. Marissa Berard, the new program coordinator, began full-time in October.

The MCSI Steering Committee in 2022 was comprised of Christian Artuso (co-chair), Tim Poole (co-chair), Rob and Barb Stewart, Ron Bazin, Nicole Firlotte, Frank Machovec, Joanne Tuckwell, Laura Burns and Ashleigh Westphal (Assiniboine Park Zoo), Ken de Smet, Jack Dubois, Lewis Cocks and Neil Butchard.

Once again, a big thank you to Frank Machovec for his continued work on managing our website and keeping our blog readers informed online.

Events and Activities

We continued to monitor on MCSI Nights, each Wednesday evening from May 25 to June 22, while select sites that host larger roosts of swifts were monitored on nights designated by the federal National Roost Monitoring Program (NRMP). 110 chimneys in 21 communities were monitored this year, and four new swift chimneys were discovered. Over 75 volunteers were involved in this monitoring.

There are now five artificial Chimney Swift towers in Manitoba, including four at the Selkirk Mental Health Centre and one at the Assiniboine Park Zoo. In 2022, four of these towers had nesting attempts, and three out of these four nesting attempts were successful! These results are exciting and are a sign of hope. We look forward to continuing to monitor these sites, and hope for similarly high success in future years.

Outreach continues to be an important of the MCSI. In 2022, we presented to various audiences including at FortWhyte Alive, Souris School, and the Selkirk Birdwatchers Club.

Funding

Our main source of funding this year came from Environment and Climate Change Canada's Habitat Stewardship Program grant. This multi-year grant will be coming to an end in 2022-2023. We also received grants from Nature Manitoba's Bluebird Fund, as well as from Enbridge. We received several donations from individuals. Nature Manitoba's in-kind support has also been invaluable for us. A big thank you goes out to our funders and donors in 2022.

Steering Committee

The MCSI Steering Committee in 2022 was comprised of Christian Artuso (chair), Tim Poole, Rob and Barb Stewart, Ron Bazin, Nicole Firlotte, Frank Machovec, Joanne Tuckwell, Ashleigh Westphal, Ken de Smet, Jack Dubois, Lewis Cocks and Neil Butchard.

Once again, a big thank you to Frank Machovec for his continued work on managing our website and keeping our blog readers informed online.



MANITOBA BLUEBIRD FUND

Jack Dubois

The Manitoba Bluebird Fund (MBF) was established at the Winnipeg Foundation in 2011 by Nature Manitoba in partnership with the late Elva and Guent Salzman through their generous donation. They derived great delight from the birds encountered on their property in south Winnipeg. Their vision was to stop, and more importantly reverse, the alarming decline in songbird numbers occurring across North America which they also saw happening locally. They wished to do this by funding concrete projects through Nature Manitoba and thus the MBF Committee was created.

Since its inception the MBF Committee has encouraged the planting of trees and shrubs that provide food and habitat for Manitoba songbirds, by both subsidizing the purchase of select varieties of trees by private land owners, and by the purchase of trees and shrubs for other planting campaigns on public land, including Henteleff Park and the Save Our Seine Rain Garden in Winnipeg. Other initiatives the Committee has supported are the Manitoba Chimney Swift program and the Friends of the Bluebirds in Brandon.

In 2022 Mr. Salzman bequeathed a significant contribution to the capital fund of the MBF for which we are very grateful. It will effectively triple the yearly spending budget of the MBF Committee starting in 2024, but has already increased revenue somewhat, as shown in the Treasurer's Report.

In 2022 the private landowner tree campaign continued to be popular and resulted in the planting of approximately 75 new trees through the one-time subsidy of up to \$100 per homeowner at the time of purchase. Details on how to access this ongoing program are available on Nature Manitoba's website www.naturemanitoba.ca.

We also supported the Manitoba Chimney Swift Initiative in 2022. The MBF Committee meets formally as required through the year to review current programs, to plan future initiatives, and to consider applications for grants. We look forward to expanding the program to further benefit Manitoba songbirds as more resources become available. Watch the newsletter and the website for details.

Many thanks to Committee members Christian Artuso and Don Himbeault for their efforts in the past year, and to Susan McLarty our office manager who makes it all happen. We were very pleased to welcome new Committee members Paula Grief, Tim Poole and Meredith Stoesz recently and look forward to putting them to work in 2023.

BRIDGING THE GAP

Engaging Inner-City Youth in Stewardship

Taja Hanine & Marika Olynyk

Field Trips

In spring and fall 2022, field trips were offered through BTG. We continued our partnership with FortWhyte Alive and were able to offer 11 field trips at FortWhyte. The field trip curriculum is offered in the morning through FortWhyte's staff where the students participate in the "Adapt or Die" program. Lunch then follows where the students eat outside the Interpretive center and the afternoon is a guided "Bison Tour" done by BTG's staff. The afternoon consists of a hike to explore around the field in which the bison are found. The participating schools in 2022 were Machray, Arthur E. Wright, Mulvey, Victoria-Albert, Shaughnessy Park, Wellington, William Whyte King Edward and Weston schools.

Seed Starting

Seed starting continued in spring 2022. BTG provided all necessary materials to classrooms and went down to the schools to show the students how to start seeds and take care of them until they are ready to be transplanted into the gardens. Twenty different classes participated in this programming. Many seeds were started in the greenhouse at the Program manager's house and taken care of over winter and spring to ensure there would be enough plants for the gardens.

Gardening

Gardening was again continued in 2022. Several projects were completed and new gardens planted.

The new projects included:

Isaac Brock School: 2 new garden boxes were built and the school participated in spring gardening where donated plants were planted. The students wrote letters to different places and received a lot of plants! The plants that were leftover were donated to BTG to use in gardens at other schools.

Victoria Albert School: The plan for an outdoor learning space was finished in 2022. The students participated in outdoor gardening and the boxes were filled with donated plants, and some plants that the students had started during seed starting.

Norquay School: In 2022, BTG helped Norquay with a project to support residential school survivors. 200 orange marigolds were planted in the front garden and every

class in the school helped to plant them. Soil was purchased and BTG helped fill in the soil and turn up the ground so the garden would be ready to plant.

Weston School: Weston participated in gardening and new indigenous plants were planted to help with pollinators.

William Whyte School:

William Whyte participated in garden again in 2022. More indigenous plants were planted and gardens were weeded and turned up.

Harvesting

Harvesting was offered in the fall of 2022. BTG went down to participating schools and helped with all harvesting activities, such as, picking plants, taking out annuals and composting them, turning up the soil, and prepping the gardens for the following season. There were 4 participating schools and ten different classes.

BTG News

2022 was a challenge Bridging the Gap as we have had to say good-bye to long-time coordinator Taja Henine, following the fall programs. Taja has contributed to countless opportunities for children through her dedication and enthusiasm for Bridging the Gap's programs. She has invigorated the gardening programming, bringing learning and fun into the schools, as well as out and about on field trips. For many years she has almost single-handedly ensured the success of the program and she will be missed by staff, volunteers, teachers, and participants. We are fortunate that she will stay on as a key member of the Steering Committee to provide advice, guidance, and continuity as Bridging the Gap moves into its next phase. We thank Taja for all her amazing work and wish her only the best in future endeavors.

Grantors

At this time, BTG extends a big thank you to our grantors: The Winnipeg Foundation, Province of Manitoba's Heritage grant, Caisse Financial, Telus and The Red River Co-op. The grants and funding provided enabled us to offer programming throughout 2022; as well as our in-kind donations from Prairie Originals and the City of Winnipeg.

A big thank you to FortWhyte Alive for helping to cover certain field trip costs!

For more information about our program and what we offer, please visit our website at: www.btgwinnipeg.ca



BEE CITY BRANDON

Sherry Punak-Murphy

Bee City Brandon was established in May 2018 in the City of Brandon with unanimous backing from the City Council. The last couple of years have been hard with not being able to reach out to the public in person but we persevered by using Zoom and TEAMS to connect with community partners.

2022 saw all of us escape out of our cocoons and spread our wings. Bee City Brandon volunteers spent time planting pollinator gardens, giving presentations to many local groups in Brandon and even was interviewed for a local cable show! We held an art show and had booths at several local functions. It was nice to get out in the public again, teaching people about our native pollinators.

Our mandate, as an official Bee City, has three pillars: one to educate the public on the importance of native pollinators and plants to our ecosystem; two, to promote the creation of native prairie gardens and three, to celebrate our native pollinators in all the beauty during Pollinator Week which runs the third week in June. However, we try to celebrate pollinators all year round, through our educational posts on Facebook and Instagram. Follow us at @beecitybrandon and learn all you can about Manitoba's pollinators and what you individually can do to help these little creatures that rule the world.

Many activities happened during 2022 in Brandon. We celebrated World Bee Day by providing a booth for people to stop by and learn about pollinators while they enjoyed high tea! It was great fun and all the treats were made from honey! At Arbor Day we were able to display how you can create a place for bees and butterflies to stop for a drink of water without drowning. Just take any small container, fill with water and rocks. The rocks provide a safe place for them to stand so that they don't end up getting a bunch of water on their bodies and drowning. Simple things can mean a lot to our little creatures.

Brandon © Bees was a collaboration with Brandon University and BU Library, BCB, the Brandon Shoppers Mall and Brandon Neighborhood Renewal Corporation to put on a Pollinator Art showcase. It highlighted 58 pieces of art from Brandon & Area residents and nine informational posters about pollinators and the prairies. It was set in the Curve Gallery at the BU Library for all to see.

The City of Brandon participated in the Year of Garden. The theme for Brandon was “Create a Buzz for Ukraine” and grow sunflowers. Our committee gave out Seed packets graciously donated by McKenzie seeds. We wanted Brandon to be covered in Sunflowers.

The City Nature Challenge, an international challenge to identify all kinds of wildlife in your city took place 29 April – 2 May. The CNC uses the app iNaturalist to document wildlife you see by uploading photos or recordings. We see a connection between Bee City and the City Nature Challenge in the desire of getting citizens of Westman out and enjoy our native wildlife offerings. We also use iNaturalist to create a list of bees and Lepidoptera that can be found in the city. So far 25 bee species and 64 moths and butterflies have been documented. As more and more people use iNaturalist the more species that can be identified for the area.

An amazing pollinator garden was developed at the Brandon Riverbank Discovery Centre by a friend of Bee City Brandon. She bought the plugs and seeds from Prairie Originals and with a group of friends planted this in the rather hard soils by the Centre. Educational signs have been placed to inform the public that these are pollinator gardens at work, that it will take time to see the benefits.

Our local food bank has a community garden, called Green Futures North where fresh vegetables are grown for the food bank. Native plants were planted in some of the raised beds to attract pollinators for the vegetables. The seeds for these plants were purchased from a local Brandon plant enthusiast who has been collecting native prairie plant seeds.

In the upcoming years, Bee City Brandon will be VERY busy working with the City of Brandon and local partners to bring the old Eleanor Kidd Park back to life. This beautiful formal garden was destroyed in 2011 floods, but the structures are still in place. We, along with the University of Manitoba School of Architecture, are creating a five-year plan to make the area into a pollinator place to be where citizens can be with nature and learn what pollinators need to survive.

We always have lots on the go and everything is put on Facebook or Instagram so give us a follow. We are looking forward to an amazing pollinator filled 2023!

OPERATIONS

Sandy HayGlass

The office, information technology and committee leads are the heart of operations supporting Nature Manitoba programs. Operations focused on business modernization activities to streamline processes, use more Information Technology and prioritize excellent services to members.

We worked with Katrina Froese to expand the Mantario website. Many more photos were included so that potential attendees can clearly see all the facilities. The registration process was reviewed and streamlined. Potential future improvements were identified.

The Workshops processes were reviewed and streamlined with Alain and Cindy Louer. Further modernization recently started with the use of Eventbrite for registration. The changes were successfully implemented.

We are testing Hybrid meetings (online and in person) for the AGM and Discovery Evenings. Some challenges were identified after each hybrid meeting and changes were made at the next meeting. An evaluation will occur over the summer to determine if the pilot project will continue.

Operational documents, records, procedures and email were moved to Microsoft 365. This will ensure effective business management, sharing of information and record keeping.

The selection of the Microsoft 365 cloud-based platform was based on a review of all technology systems used by Nature Manitoba and the recommendation to prioritize the modernization of documents and email systems. Microsoft 365 enables secure and efficient access to information for staff and volunteers.

Our membership system was reviewed and streamlined. Processes were updated to follow a defined workflow which improved the accuracy and consistency of information.

Due to a staffing shortage a virtual office was put in place in October. Andre Laberge volunteered to manage all financial aspects of operations and John Schulz managed communications and membership. Their continued dedication and extra work is much appreciated.

The virtual office provided an opportunity to reassess and reorganize Nature Manitoba operations.

A modernized program coordinator position was created. After an extensive search, Tami Bradford was hired. She focuses on enhanced program support, communications, promotion and volunteer engagement. Nature Manitoba's increased focus on promotion and volunteers will facilitate our effective operations and growth.

A volunteer newsletter committee was re-established with John Schulz and Karen Mackintosh whose quality work ensured the uninterrupted newsletter publication. Karen has taken on the creation of the newsletter along with content review and publication. This was key. Tami Bradford will lead the newsletter committee.

We are continuing the modernization of operations to ensure effective program support. Stay tuned for what's next.

HABITAT CONSERVATION COMMITTEE

Marilyn Latta

This year marked a change in focus for the Habitat Conservation Committee. As Nature Manitoba is no longer a landowner (880 acres of tall grass prairie lands owned by Nature Manitoba were donated to the Nature Conservancy of Canada last year), the Committee looked at ways to best utilize the approximately \$5000 in revenue that is provided each year through the Paul Guyot Fund for Habitat Conservation.

In the end it was decided that these funds would best be used to provide grants for projects or activities related to Habitat Conservation in Manitoba. Terms of reference developed for the grants were approved by the board in June of 2022.

The **Nature Manitoba Native Habitat Grant** was officially announced in the November 2022 newsletter and a link was established on the Nature Manitoba website to provide information for applicants. The priority for the fund will remain on native grasslands in Manitoba and the native species that inhabit them. However, projects or activities involving other types of native habitat, such as forests, riparian areas, wetlands and tundra, will also be considered. Funds can be used to support the conservation, restoration and/or management of native habitat, or education on the value of native habitat and species.

The announcement and terms of reference for the grant were also emailed to 78 organizations and individuals thought to have an interest in habitat conservation. The deadline for applications is set for January 31 each year, with successful applicants to be notified by April. Whether there will be 3, 30 or 300 applicants remains to be seen!

An announcement listing the successful applicants will be made in the May newsletter.

NOMINATIONS

2023/2024 Proposed Slate of Officers

EXECUTIVE (1 year term)	
President	Sandy HayGlass
Executive Vice President	Don Himbeault
Vice President	James Whitelaw
Treasurer	Andre Laberge
Secretary	Katrina Froese
Past President	Jack Dubois

BOARD MEMBERS (3 year term)	
Term ending Mar/2026	
Meredith Stoesz	
Marika Olynyk	
John Schulz	

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