Buffalo Lake Nature Club  
 Nov. 21 2019  
Mark opened the meeting with 19 people present  
Regrets were sent from Keyra Hayley she was unable to attend and give her presentation on how ATCO is working to restore the environment and wild life  
  
The minutes were emailed and accepted as such.  
Simone gave the treasurers report As of October 31 the club has a balance of $1701.99. The rent for the church hall has been paid until June, the web page and insurance has been paid for 2019.   
Lunch and door prize conveners are needed to organize us. Usually 2 people to bring snacks and help set up the beverages and another to bring a small door prize. Melanie agreed to do this Marie will send her email list of regular members.  
  
IBA update

Claudia attended the conference on Oct 25 in Red Deer and presented Dr. Charles Bird slide show. Of the Erskine Ewing Lake IBA There will be a summary of the conference and Claudia will also give us a brief. New IBA booklets were distributed and we have 4 metal signs to place around the area. Bob S. will put on near the north side of Erskine Lake by the access road.  
Mark H will put a sign up on Ewing Lake

Linear trails.

Claudia inspected and cleaned out the nesting boxes on the Big Valley trail in late October. Claudia and Marie completes the Rumsey and Rowley trails Nov 21  
A report will be sent to the East Central railway society when the data is complied.

Nature Alberta Marie read the Nature Alberta report sent in by Claudia, she is encouraging anyone to attend the Nature Alberta AGM on Nov 30 in Edmonton See attached report  
  
Roll Call  
Charley mentioned that all the ducks and geese in our area are gone . he was recently was at a wet land east of Calgary and observed over 2000 geese congregation around the open water of the Bow River  
Anne has a Flicker at the feeder  
Thomasina deer in the yard and run of the mill birds at the feeder  
Wayne chickadees at the feeder eating black sun flower seeds Blue jays devouring peanuts  
Kami glad to see several pheasants escaped the hunt and spotted a Golden and Bald Eagle She asked if anyone seen wolves north of town  
Discussion: That wolves have been around the area south west of town closer to river valley for years and others have heard of wolf sightings north of town  
Jessica Hayes Attended the Alberta plant council a few years ago when it was in Stettler and learned of our club. She has returned to the Stettler area and thought to come to a meeting  
She saw a bull moose south of Botha  
Bob S Had a Hutterite come to his place asking to trap coyotes He thought they would be snare traps Bob sent the Hutterite away  
Jim G Alix lake had 400- 500 geese on the lake walking on ice and using a small area of open water so they were crowded. When watching them he saw a black goose and wondered what it could be? Also he has been trying to identify a larger sparrow or finch with a red breast: could be Pine Siskin, House finch, Pine gross beaks Suggested that he try to get pictures but they were too far away to get good shots  
Bob R Oct 27 saw a Blue Herron in Rochon Sands and he has seen a Steller’s Jay Rochon Sands The last day or two Buffalo Lake Nature Club   
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Teresa Leible enjoyed seeing the moose with 2 calves on the loose in Stettler in Early Oct.  
Melanie has a good variety of birds at her feeder including shrike, chickadee and jays. She asked if anyone has heard of a wolf hunt because of the threat to some caribou? Check with Dr.Gilbert Proulx   
John on the way to Stettler seeing a lot of wildlife including a Bald eagle and a 8 point buck He hoped it can make it another 3 weeks until the hunting season closes  
Birthe went to France and Italy this summer and at the Pairs airport she saw Mark and Jennifer Higgins It is a small world.  
At Pelican Point she is seeing a Bald Eagle  
and for the last few days a Steller’s Jay has been in her yard and also  
DeCnodders yard.

Marc while in Calgary also was seeing all the geese along the river. He was looking on the Alberta Wildlife Facebook page and also noticed a post from Calgary showing a Black Goose.  
Simone seeing the usual birds at the feeder at Pelican Point including chickadees, nuthatches flicker and the girls often startle a roughed grouse on the way to the bus  
Marie reported Wolf Willow or Silver berry bushes on the Linear trails and how the abundance the seeds were.  
Mark saw his first snowy owl of the year by Daysland.  
  
Nature Lynx - Mark gave us a short presentation on the App -Nature Lynx -which is used by the ABIM (Alberta Biodiversity Monitoring institute)  
And is available for anyone to learn about and document biodiversity. One can learn to identify local species with the help of the App. Experienced checkers will verify the sightings. One can learn about hotspots and add your comments to others posts. Mark walked us through a posting of a picture his daughter took at Kananaskis of a Steller’s Jay. Mark encouraged us all to use this App as it also helps the ABMI track species in the Alberta.  
Charley gave a short presentation on Birds and their prehistoric ancestors

How to identify a bird?  
A bird has: a back bone  
Is warm blooded  
Has feathers  
Maybe seasonal migratory ie. go to where there is food  
So that is important when we look for birds during the Christmas Bird Countas many birds have left because their food source is no longer here. But we still need to keep a watch and report our sightings.....  
  
Christmas Bird Count  
Marie gave a short slide show on the Stettler Bird count for Dec 15, 2019  
We will meet at the Anglican Church 1:00 and go out on our routes. Meeting back at the church by 4:30 to have our Annual Christmas Potluck. Please invite friends and family to join and a reminder that you do not need to participate in the bird count to join the Dinner.  
A quick review of the protocols: see the attached ppx

drivers will be given a route  
hopefully 4 people in each vehicle  
Safety make sure the vehicle is in good working order you have plenty of fuel, emergency equipment, blankets a working cell phone snacks and drink.  
The routes are marked on a map please do a Talley of the birds you see.  
For large flocks like Snow buntings and red polls do your best at estimating the number If you can see a group of 10 estimate the size and multiply each grouping.   
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If you retrace your route do not count a magpie twice but if you see a different species count that also if you see a larger flock adjust your tally. some routes also overlap on the same roads so just communicate with the other group which will be our area and which is theirs.  
If stopping by a driveway where the yard has a feeder try to do an accurate count Please be aware the public may not want you stopping by their yard with binoculars. please introduce yourselves and be polite. BE SAFE  
We will provide window signage for each vehicle  
A checklist  
Pencil  
Clip board  
Maps  
If you know someone that lives in the area please invite them to help us. They can do a feeder watch or walk their property. Just ask them to let us know where they are so we don't overlap our count. Also invite them to the potluck.  
  
A feeder watch is counted a little differently  
Please observe your feeder for at least 30 minutes. Record when you start and stop We DO NOT do a tally count, or we would have 567 chickadees at a feeder; so instead you take the maximum count of what is there at one moment.  
If you see 5 chickadees, 1 nuthatch and 2 blue Jays and a male Hairy Woodpecker that is what you record. Other birds will fly in and out. Later you may see 8 chickadees at once and a female Hairy so the count would change to **8** chickadees, 1 nuthatch, 2 Blue Jays and **2** Hairy Woodpeckers  
DO NOT ADD THE NUMBERS TOGETHER  
Later you may see 2 nuthatches and 3 blue jays so their totals would also change. Try your best to count large flocks of chickadees and red polls. If you need, take a picture and count them that way.  
A few people will do counts from their area without coming to the church Alex and Gabriel have volunteered to do the village of Botha and the highway coming into Stettler .  
Have fun and try your best

There is no formal meeting in December

Dec. 15 2019 The Stettler Christmas Bird Count and Potluck dinner Lake

Dec. 22 2019 Buffalo Lake Christmas Bird Count

Dec. 29 2019 the Red Deer River Christmas Bird Count

More times and meeting place will be announced later

Our next formal Meeting will be the Buffalo Lake Annual Meeting January 16, 2020

Minutes and notes by Marie Payne