

BirdLife Shoalhaven Magazine Spring 2022



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Cover Image:

This season's amazing cover image was created by Leanne Brook, Murramarang Yuin. The image was commissioned for the "Healthy Country for the Glossy Black Cockatoo" project which is helping to secure the future for Glossy Black Cockatoos in the Shoalhaven area. Members of the Aboriginal Advisory Group for the project spoke at the 2022 Bird Haven Festival organised by BirdLife Shoalhaven recently. A report on the festival is included in this magazine.

You can visit the project website at [Healthy Country for Glossy Black Cockatoos](https://www.healthycountry.org.au/)

Acknowledgment: BirdLife Shoalhaven acknowledges the Aboriginal people of the Shoalhaven, their care of country, birds and habitat, and pays respects to all Elders.

The Return of the Bird Haven Festival

- by Rob Dunn, President of BirdLife Shoalhaven

In 2018, we got a call from Perrie Croshaw and Cathy Law in Shoalhaven Heads. They wanted to get people in their community thinking more about nature and birds, but they admitted that they didn't know much about them. This became clear when we discovered that they did not know the difference between a Little Wattlebird and a Red Wattlebird, or how important the Heads are for migratory shorebirds. However, unlike BLS, they liked running big events and knew how to get sponsorship to make it happen.

A few months later, to coincide with BirdLife's national Bird Week and the arrival of the shorebirds, they ran the first Bird Haven Festival in Shoalhaven Heads. It was a huge success, so much so that they organised an even bigger and better Festival in 2019. This brought hundreds of people together with different events, including art fairs, talks, walks and concerts. It was a celebration of birds and the perfect opportunity for people to learn more about bird behaviour, habitat and conservation.

"Post-pandemic", they asked if we could get the Festival back on the birding calendar, and so last month BLS did just that, organising three events in three different venues across the Shoalhaven.

Birds for Beginners - The Weird & Wonderful Life of Birds

The Festival was kicked off in Ulladulla on 15th October with an event aimed at "aspiring" birdwatchers of all ages, coinciding with the start of the Aussie Bird Count.

About 80 came along, including birders of all levels and several children. The day was opened by Mayor Amanda Findley, who had already completed a couple of Aussie Bird Counts.



The guest speaker was Dr Holly Parsons, Urban Birds Program Manager, BirdLife Australia. Holly has worked with BirdLife Australia since 1999 on a range of ecological research projects, including the "Birds in Backyards" program and the annual "Aussie Bird Count".

Her talk both informed and entertained. As well as covering the basics of bird ID, she gave several insights into the bird world with a special focus on Superb Fairywrens, Powerful Owls, Gang-gang Cockatoos and Superb Lyrebirds. She certainly gave everyone great insights into both the weird and the wonderful life of birds.



Birds for Beginners - improve your bird ID skills

A few days later, 4 BLS members led bird walks around the grounds and bushland at the Jervis Bay Maritime Museum to improve the bird identification skills of local beginners.

28 bird species were seen on the day, which shows how good the Museum is for birdwatching with its range of different habitats in just a small area.

40 people came along, learned tips about how to spot birds, and were inspired to learn more. We had limited numbers for the bird walks and had to disappoint a number of people. This shows that people want to identify more birds and we hope to run similar events next year.





The post-walk bird call

The 2022 Bird Haven Festival Conference

The last event of the week was the 2022 Bird Haven Festival Conference in Shoalhaven Heads on 22nd October with about 130 people coming to hear leading ornithologists and researchers speak about their work and the ecology of some of our bird species.

When we were setting the program for the Conference, we wanted to get the right mix of different insights, landscapes, species, areas of research and conservation projects. From the amount of positive feedback we received, it is evident that we succeeded.

We learned about farms in SE Australia, 23 countries from Australia to Siberia including Wilson's Promontory and the Dandenongs in Victoria and beaches in New Zealand, finishing up back here in the Shoalhaven. We covered woodland birds, migratory waders, Lyrebirds, beach nesting birds, Bristlebirds and Glossies.

We focussed on the importance of long-term bird monitoring, cross-border collaboration, maintenance of functioning ecosystems, innovative new experiments in conservation, trans-location of species and Aboriginal-led conservation actions. We heard what has been done well and not so well in the past and looked forward to what could work best for the future of birds.



Delia Lowe, Jerrinja elder

Firstly we heard from Delia Lowe, Jerrinja elder, about how traditional owners have watched, learnt from and looked after birds for 1000s of years. After Delia, Fiona Phillips MP, Member for Gilmore, talked about the Australian Government's priorities to conserve nature and their recent which can be downloaded via the following link - [The Threatened Species Action Plan 2022-2032 - DCCEEW](https://www.dcceew.gov.au/conservation/australian-threatened-species-action-plan-2022-2032)



Fiona Phillips, Emily Bradstock and Rob Dunn

Professor David Lindenmayer

The Conference keynote speaker was Professor David Lindenmayer AO - Professor of Ecology and Conservation Biology at the ANU's Fenner School of Environment and Society.



David Lindenmayer

David is a world-leading expert in forest ecology and resource management, conservation science, and biodiversity conservation. He has published literally hundreds of scientific articles and 48 books and is among the world's most cited scientists. His work has been recognised through a number of prestigious fellowships and awards, both in Australia and overseas.

David's talk covered how healthy natural assets underpin farm productivity and landscape resilience, and the role played by farmers, Landcarers, natural resource agencies and birds. He spoke about what is happening to the populations of S.E. Australia's temperate woodland birds over time and how they respond to interventions, like replanting and grazing control, and the impacts of the Noisy Miner. He showed how monitoring and research insights will be critical for future efforts on farm-level biodiversity certification and stewardship. Much of his work has informed the new biodiversity prediction tool, Birdcast, which has been developed by the Sustainable Farms project at the ANU.

Go to [Professor David Lindenmayer](#) for more on David's background and publications.

Go to www.sustainablefarms.org.au for more on this project and the Birdcast tool covered in his presentation.

Go to amazon.com.au : [David Lindenmayer](#) to find David's books, including Natural Asset Farming which was mentioned in his presentation.

A PDF version of David's presentation is available on the BLS website here - [Conserving Woodland Birds](#)



Alison Russell-French

Alison Russell-French OAM, Chair Australasian Waders Studies Group and former President of Birds Australia, explained how the East Asian–Australasian Flyway Partnership brings together representatives of national governments, Conventions, NGOs and corporates, to support the conservation of migratory waterbirds and their habitats.

She covered how the Flyway Partnership works in practice through the collaboration of the 23 mostly developing countries with almost half the world's population.

A PDF version of Alison's presentation is available on the BLS website here - [Collaboration in the East Asian – Australasian Flyway](#)

Dr Alex Maisey

Dr Alex Maisey, Research Fellow with the Research Centre for Future Landscapes and Department of Ecology, Environment and Evolution at La Trobe University, gave an overview of the important role that lyrebirds play as ecosystem engineers in SE Australia's forests and covered his research into the impacts of Australia's Black Summer fires on their conservation.



A PDF version of Alex's presentation is available on the BLS website here - [The Southern Superb Lyrebird](#)

Dr Catherine Price

Dr Catherine Price - ARC Discovery Early Career Research Fellow with the University of Sydney's School of Life and Environmental Sciences - talked about her work in New Zealand looking to reduce nest predation based on "olfactory misinformation" (olfactory relates to the sense of smell).



A PDF version of Catherine's presentation is available on the BLS website here - [Olfactory Misinformation](#)

Emily Bradstock and Dr David Bain

Emily Bradstock, Honours student at the University of Wollongong and Dr David Bain, Senior Threatened Species Officer, NSW Department of Planning and Environment, covered their work on the Eastern Bristlebird. Emily talked about patterns of singing behaviour and variation in song within the species.



David covered how translocations has helped the Eastern Bristlebird's conservation, including the most recent movements from Jervis Bay to Wilson's Promontory after the impacts of the 2019-20 bushfires.

A PDF version of David's presentation is available on the BLS website here - [Eastern Bristlebird Presentation](#)

Healthy Country Plan for Glossy Black-Cockatoos

The final talk of the day was by Members of the Aboriginal Advisory Group for the "Healthy Country Plan for Glossy Black-Cockatoos" project.



The group explained how this project is empowering local Aboriginal custodians to reconnect with fire-impacted landscapes and build on their existing cultural knowledge and values to help secure the species in the Shoalhaven.



Simon Tedder, Michelle Toms, Natalie Nye, Jared Brown and Jason Groves

You can assist the project by logging sightings of glossies in iNaturalist via the project web page at [NSW DPE Healthy Country for Glossy Black-cockatoos](#)

A PDF version of the presentation by the Aboriginal Advisory Group is available on the BLS website here - [Healthy Country for Glossy Black-Cockatoos](#)

The full Conference program with more details on the speakers' backgrounds and talks is available here - [2022 Bird Haven Festival Program](#)

Another successful Festival

We have received a lot of positive feedback on all three Festival events, recognising the quality of all the speakers' presentations and the efforts of BLS Festival volunteers.



We also need to acknowledge BirdLife Southern NSW, the NSW South-East Biodiversity and Conservation Division, the Shoalhaven Heads Bowling and Recreation Club, the Ulladulla Civic Centre and the Jervis Bay Maritime Museum for their support of the Festival.

The three events attracted about 250 people, who came from Sydney, Canberra, Victoria and just down the road. One couple, who were originally coming to the Conference from Port Stephens, saw the bird walks and decided to come four days early!

At the Conference there were people from 11 different bird clubs and interest groups, university students, members of nature conservation groups and staff from Government agencies, and at the event in Ulladulla we even had whole families come along!

The original aim of Perrie Crowth and Cathy Law - when they set up the Bird Haven Festival in 2018 - was to get people thinking more about nature and birds.

BirdLife Shoalhaven is delighted that we were able to continue to build on their vision by playing our part in organising another successful Bird Haven Festival.

Declining Bird Species

- by Chris Grounds

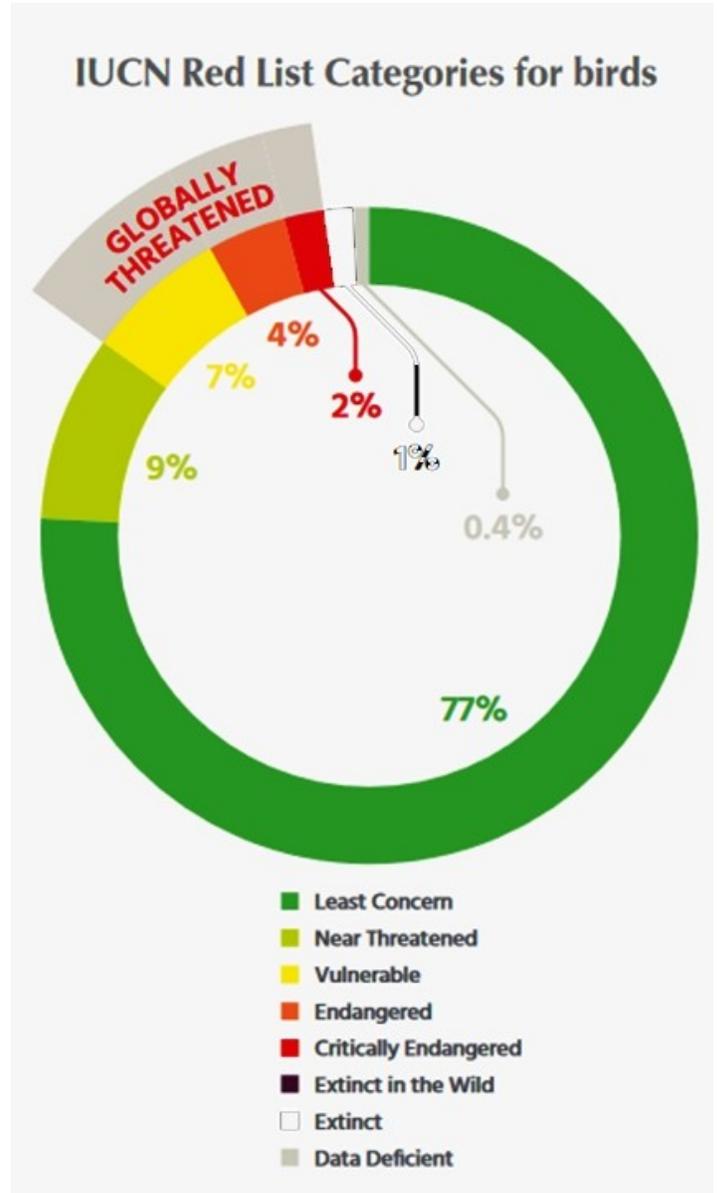
- The Global Picture
- A Shoalhaven Profile
- Development Disasters

On September 28th The Guardian reported that **half of the world's bird species were in decline** with the intensification of destruction of avian life.



BirdLife International (BLI), the parent organization of our own BirdLife Australia (BLA) and thus BirdLife Shoalhaven (BLS), has released their 4 year Report showing that the expansion and intensification of agriculture is putting pressure on 73% of species. Logging, invasive species, exploitation of natural resources and climate breakdown are the other main threats.

Globally, 49% of bird species are declining, one in eight is threatened with extinction and at least 187 species are confirmed or suspected to have gone extinct since 1500. Most of these have been endemic species living on islands, although there is an increase in birds now going extinct on larger land masses, particularly in tropical regions.



Since 1970, 2.9 billion individual birds (29% of the total) have been destroyed in North America. The picture is just as bleak in other parts of the world. Since 1980, 600 million birds (19%) have been destroyed in Europe,

Europe's farmland birds have shown the most significant declines: 57% have disappeared as a result of increased mechanization, use of chemicals and converting land into crops.

In Australia, 43% of abundant seabird species have declined between 2000 and 2016.

Shoalhaven Profile

The ratio of Threatened Species to total species in the Shoalhaven is close to 1 in 6 with 400 species on the historical and contemporary record.

There are 63 species on the Shoalhaven threatened species list and seven of these are listed as Critically Endangered.

This is not really a "pretty picture" at all and remains as a paradox of the promotion of the Shoalhaven for its natural attractions, principally the coastline through tourism "promos" such as "Unspoilt" and "100 Beaches" - especially given the fact that of the 7 critically endangered species, 5 are coastal birds.

Our Shoalhaven avian profile is a good reference point given the variety of habitat, range of birds covered and the migratory connections for so many of these.

There have been two mid-year developments, which have shone a light on the situation - the Gang-gang Cockatoo was elevated in risk from Vulnerable to Endangered on the Federal list, and the Eastern Glossy Black Cockatoo - our very own "Glossy" - was placed on the same list for the first time as a Vulnerable species, both under the EPBC Act.



Development Disasters

A factor of related concern in the Shoalhaven is the impact of urban and peri-urban growth and development, which has already been quite substantial.

A feature in Shoalhaven conservation over some years has been the community push-back on developments that destroy the natural environment and thus avian habitat.

Increasingly it can be seen that the Shoalhaven Local Environment Plan 2014 is inadequate in its provisions for protection or ability to ensure protection in many cases.

Recent research arising from a CSIRO Report prepared by Josie Cawardine and Anthea Coggin noted that:

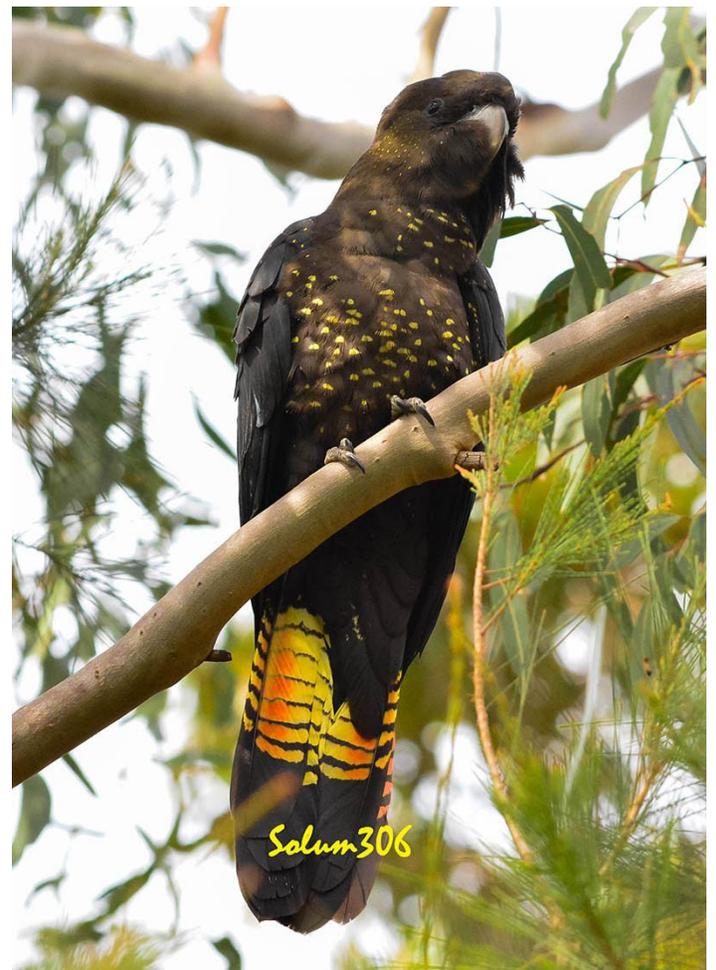
We found almost half (48%) of all of our threatened species' distributions occur on private freehold land, even though only 29% of Australia is owned in this way. Our recent research shows this clearly. But relying on reserves is simply not enough.

Australia is a patchwork quilt of farms, suburbs and fragmented forests. For many species, it has become difficult to find food sources and mates.

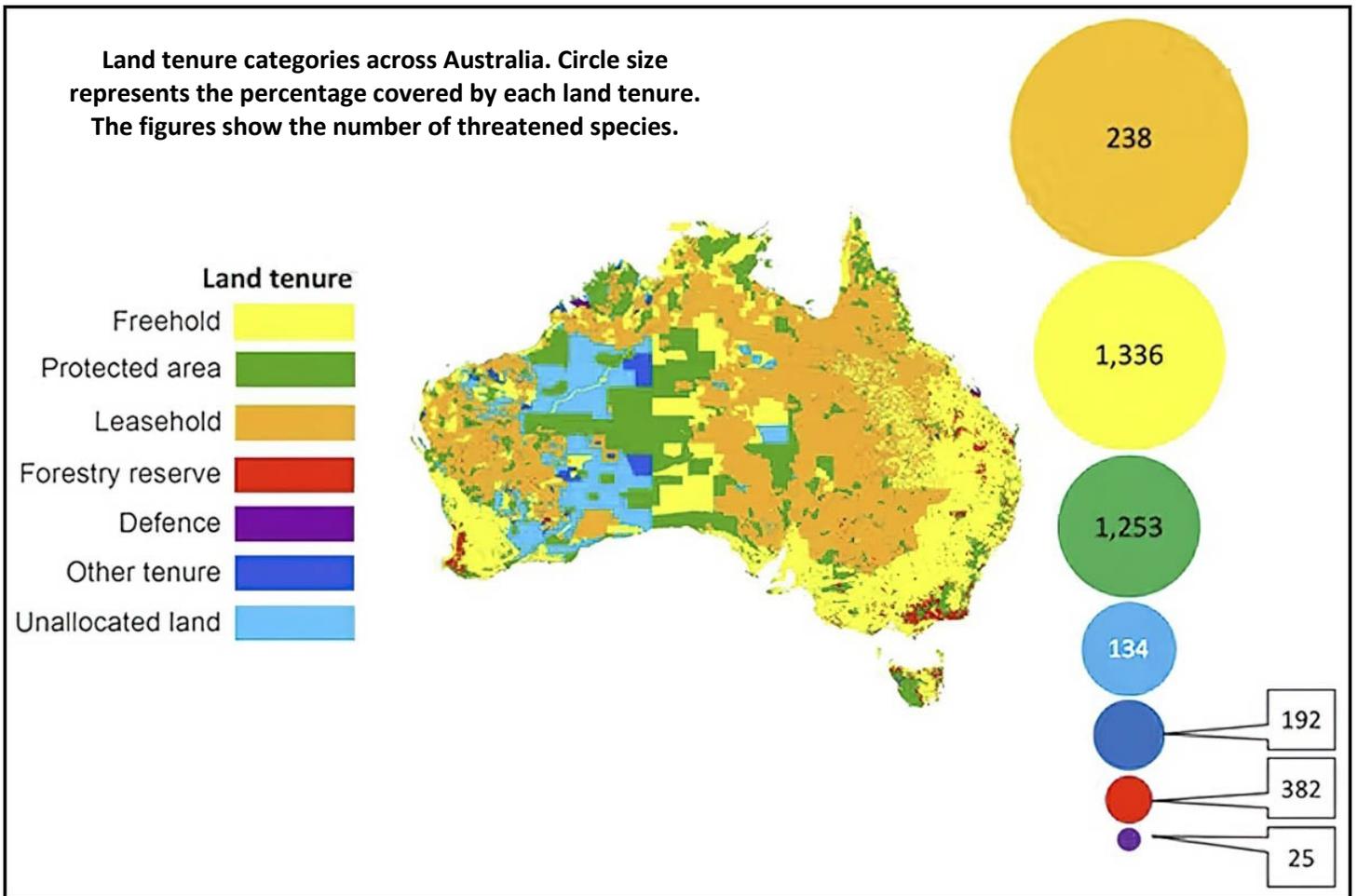
This points clearly to the role that Shoalhaven Council must play and contribute with conservation based actions in the planning process. Put simply, National Parks, Nature Reserves and State Forests will not be enough to ensure habitat integrity and corridors. Indeed, many of these properties remain isolated and unconnected - see the map on the next page.

A crematorium proposal was lodged in January 2022 in St Georges Basin by Murphy's Funerals for a high value biodiversity corridor, significant vegetation and prime catchment environment, which involved a proposed purchase of vexed Offset Credits worth close to \$670,000. Key threatened species has not been included due to a poor survey. A proponent consultant report listed 22 bird species. BLS member surveys have added substantially to the bird species list of 54, including a number of threatened species.

The 'Offsets' and 'Offsets Credits' system has been discredited in a recent NSW Inquiry but it persists without a commitment to change.



New Commonwealth listing as Vulnerable for Eastern Glossy Black Cockatoo.



The crematorium proposal was also on lands that were not to be cleared under the provision of the Local Land Services Act as Category 2- Sensitive Regulated Land. This land has a Rural Landscape 2 zoning in the Local Environment Plan and is a real haunt for "Glossies".



Chessell Road Crematorium development lifts the threat to the Square-tailed Kite

The land involved is a major sclerophyll forest habitat, which fits perfectly to the description above of the CSIRO Report. It also represents a vital corridor linking coast and escarpment national parks, each of which are KBAs, i.e. Jervis Bay and Jerrawangala. Destruction of such habitat is absolutely not in the interest of appropriate conservation and management. These are the sort of challenges Shoalhaven Council must take on. It is on land for which Council has planning and compliance responsibility.

Recently, clearing of sclerophyll coastal sand forest continued in Woollamia at Edendale Street under the permit of a zombie DA. A mature Blackbutt [*Euc. pilularis*] - the dominant tree species of the site - containing a Sulphur-crested Cockatoo nest with chicks was one of a number felled with the fate of the chicks being unclear although Wildlife Rescue were active at the site.

Whilst this bird is not a currently threatened species, the loss of active hollow-nesting habitat is serious and will not be replaced in our lifetimes, nest boxes or not.

This clearing occurred at a time when this tree species is flowering and thus provides foraging to a range of fauna, including the nationally Endangered Gang Gang Cockatoo. So the damage extends to seriously threatened species in an ecological chain. It is most unpleasant to know we are contributing to that risk.



One mature tree with active nesting hollows becomes one mulch pile.

Solun 306

This is a parallel situation to the Huskisson development site issue at Murdoch Street, where clearing could only be delayed to the post-nesting season.

And all this on the shores of Currambene Creek and Moona Moona and thus the jewel of Jervis Bay in a zoning of high biodiversity corridor value in a time when the future of the coast is being planned by Council.

Another recent example dealt with by the Basin community was a recommendation to Council for a rezoning of a key habitat corridor containing special sclerophyll forest based on Swamp Mahogany (*Euc. robusta*), a winter flowering tree and thus key foraging source. A stream, which is a backbone of the corridor drains to Worrowing Creek (Heritage Estate) and the Erowal Bay waterway, both of which are Waterway 1 zonings where the planning responsibility is to "protect ecological values" and "prevent development that would have an adverse effect".

The prevailing Zoning is Rural Landscape 2 – to encourage primary industry - yet it exists within the village boundary on residential size lots! We need to change the zoning to Conservation 2 to ensure protection that is not happening now under current zoning.

Urban tree cover is already declining in Erowal Bay on blocks with garden holiday sheds and old caravans with no effluent or sewerage provisions.

The repeated reaction from Shoalhaven Council has been disrespectful disinterest.

A Future

The BLI Report points to wildfires featuring more prominently in this report than previous editions, with a new extended impact on previously unaffected habitats. The report notes the familiar Australian reprise that a 'succession of heatwaves, droughts and floods in recent years will lead to widespread species extinctions if they continue, researchers warn'.

There is a hope that the forthcoming Montreal conferences that the findings will feed into the final statement. "The key action needed now by governments is to make sure a really ambitious and bold global biodiversity framework is adopted. We've got to bend this curve, so by 2030 we're on a mission of being nature positive," he said.

The BLI Report recommends an increase in the number and quality of protected areas, conserving remaining habitats and restoring those that have been degraded. Preventing the illegal killing of birds, managing invasive species, reducing fisheries' by-catch and preventing overexploitation of natural resources will all help.

What will a strategic action plan for Shoalhaven birds look like if we think globally and act locally?

Presidential Musings

- by Rob Dunn, President of BirdLife Shoalhaven

Launching the BLS Student Research Grant



BLS is delighted to announce its new Student Research Grant program with funding raised from the 2022 Bird Haven Festival and the support of BirdLife Southern NSW.

We will provide a grant of up to \$4,000 to fund research by a student currently enrolled in a higher degree course at a NSW or ACT university. The grant must be used to support a research project in 2023, that will improve bird conservation and/or a better understanding of birds in the Shoalhaven. While it is not a requirement, projects focused on threatened species or with field work carried out within the Shoalhaven will be highly regarded.

The grant must be used to directly support the project and/or its dissemination - for example; on-ground bird conservation work, education programs or materials, project equipment and materials, or travel to relevant conferences.

The successful applicant will be required to give a presentation on their project at a BLS event or other conference, and submit an article to a future BLS Magazine.

The deadline for applications is 31 March 2023 and the form and guidelines can be downloaded from the BLS website at [our BLS Student Grant page](#).

Are you interested in joining the BLS committee?

Do you want to contribute even more to bird conservation and contribute your ideas to shape BirdLife Shoalhaven's future direction? If you do, please consider joining the BirdLife Shoalhaven Committee ahead of our AGM in February 2023.

To discuss what this would involve, and how you think you might be able to help, please give me (Rob Dunn) a call on 0438 250 600.

Punching above our weight with the Aussie Bird Count

Once again the Shoalhaven submitted a higher number of Aussie Bird Counts per capita of our population. Many thanks to everyone who got involved, which included Mayor Amanda Findley, and Sigrid Nelson - aged three - from Bomaderry, and about 500 others! BirdLife Australia will be crunching the numbers to find out which is the most common bird in Australia.



Happy Holidays to Everyone!

Hopefully you will be thinking of buying some BLS merchandise for presents ahead of the holiday season - go to our Redbubble Merchandise page by clicking the following link - [Black Cockatoo Birdlife Shoalhaven by Yolande1](#)

Although, perhaps for that special friend, you may be looking to get them a "pigeon clutch bag" ...



PIGEON CLUTCH BAG

\$890

Colour: 

One Size

PRE-ORDER



[Check Availability in Store](#)

Estimated shipping date
February 28, 2023

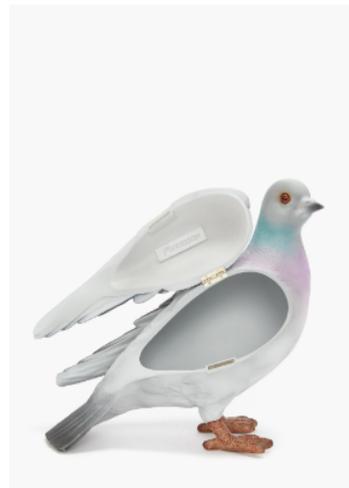
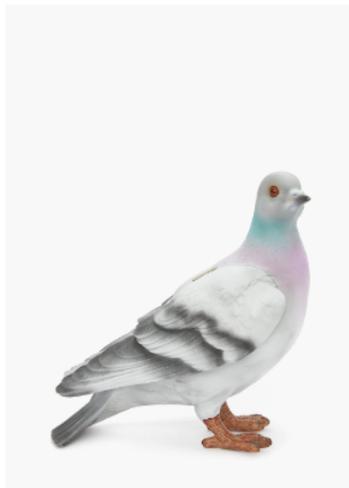
Description -

- Clutch bag
- 3D printed piegon
- Side opening
- Internal printed branding
- Wear in hand as a clutch bag

Details +

Shipping & Returns +

Share   



Pigeons have been waiting a while for their fashion moment. But this year, the undisputed bag of the season is a resin replica of a pigeon made by the Irish designer JW Anderson; yours for only \$890.

That's if you can find one, especially after Sarah Jessica Parker was spotted carrying her own pigeon.

The pigeon may be a bag, but it isn't a bag with much practical purpose. Hollow inside, it has space to carry perhaps a credit card and some lip balm.

Instead, this is a prop, a stunt, a meme come to life. As its marketing says - this is less a bag and more "a main character accessory" ... whatever that is!

Hoody, Hoodee or Hoodie

- by Chris Grounds,

As you may well know by now, the Hooded Plover has been the subject of a common name revamp - changed (in at least one taxonomy) to the Eastern Hooded Dotterel (*Thinornis cucullatus cucullatus*).

At least that allows for the "Hoody" tag to stick in our vernacular. BirdLife still has it as Hooded Plover (*Thinornis rubricollis*) the prior common and scientific name and NSW DPE is having it both ways it seems. The responsible Commonwealth department lists it as *Thinornis rubricollis rubricollis* — [Hooded Plover \(eastern\)](#) but recent inclusion in the Commonwealth Action Plan species list goes with the first mentioned change.

Despite all this linguistic and scientific gymnastics, the Hoody is very special because it is the only resident Shoalhaven bird that is Critically Endangered [NSW], and the Commonwealth species status is Vulnerable. That indicates that it is at the highest risk of extinction in the immediate future in NSW and the current indicators are not reassuring, particularly on the NSW south coast.

A major development with this species has been that it has now acquired enhanced threatened status after its inclusion in the Commonwealth government's newly released "Threatened Species Action Plan 2022-2032.



Fighting extinction

The species does of course remain a focus species in the NPWS Save Our Species Shorebird Recovery Project.

There are many volunteers working hard on the NSW southern coast, including the Shoalhaven, to mitigate the threats to this species but between nature and people it is a critical threshold situation in which there is no population success or breeding success that would lower the threat status.

NPWS records for the 2021-22 breeding season indicate the precarious position of the Hoody.



Very vulnerable

On the South Coast (Gerroa to Batemans Bay) there were 11 breeding pairs which produced 5 fledglings on 2 sites, one at Bendalong and one at Narrawallee. The northernmost nest of the season and still the limit of Hoody distribution in NSW was again Cave Beach where the one nest was lost.

On the Far South Coast there were 13 breeding pairs that produced 3 fledglings.

From the Booderee shore to the NSW / Vic border in 2021-2022 there were only 8 fledglings produced from 24 breeding pairs - so only 1 in 3 breeding pairs were able to produce fledglings, which is testimony in itself to the serious threat status of the Hoody. Of course, it may take more than one nest per pair to succeed with fledglings.



A walk in safety with dad

Whilst not always to blame though often involved, the succession of storms and erosive seas was more of a particular risk factor. It started in August 2021 with a storm that caused quite significant erosion of many beach and dune systems from which they would not recover for the breeding season.

The storm impact cycle was actually triggered with a very damaging East Coast Low in 2016.

The extended and compounding weather storm and rain impact of 2022 has meant that many sites were challenging, difficult breeding locations.



Cave Beach highly eroded - a critical Hoody breeding site

In the non-breeding season 5 Hoodies were recorded on Bherwerre Beach in May and another 7 in June but none were recorded in later monitoring. In September 2022 a breeding pair new to Cave Beach were recorded and by early October had a 3 egg nest but it was on a badly eroded beach profile and the nest succumbed to high tides and waves - the breeding pair deserted the beach.

There are breeding pairs at work on a number of south coast sites such as Berrara Creek but the first nest there has also been lost.



Warning the neighbours



Shane 'Chicko' Sturgeon - a Booderee Ranger - working on recent Hoody nest sandbagging at Cave Beach

Low overall numbers, low numbers of breeding pairs, very low nesting success and very limited success with fledglings are all criteria for the Hoody critical threat.

One of the scientific interests in these situations, as with the Endangered Eastern Bristlebird, is sustainable genetics of the species, so it good to see the NPWS banding / flagging Hoody program resume with 3 birds banded in 2022, including one of the breeding pair on Cave beach, and L3, banded on Bherwerre Beach in June.

Beyond simple identification and higher quality recording, banding is a doorway to assessing and understanding the threat to genetics of the species.

The previous 4 years (2018-2012) had produced no bandings at all and the three years before (2015-2017) only 10 bandings, which was a significant decline on the 2013 banding of 33 birds and 2014 banding of 11 birds.

In the past, our BLS magazine shorebird and Hooded Plover features have waxed lyrical about the need for a substantial improvement in this process which enables identification of individual birds.



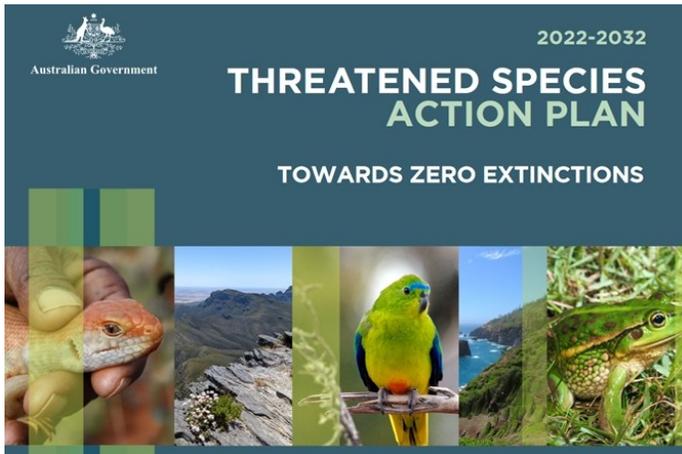
The future is in their hands

[Editors note: Chris is a member of the Bay & Basin Shorebird Recovery Team]

Threatened Species Action Plan 2022-23

- by Chris Grounds

- **Federal Threatened Species Action Plan**
- **Action Plan Bird List**
- **Shoalhaven Perspectives**



There have been a couple of landmark environmental actions since the change of federal government. The release of the Commonwealth State of the Environment Report was one of these. The Report, which had been previously sidelined found the light of day and it wasn't happy reading and provided the pointed assessment that the "Overall, the state and trend of the environment of Australia is poor and deteriorating because of increasing pressures from climate change, habitat loss, invasive species, pollution and resource extraction."

Another of the major actions has been the development and release of the **Threatened Species Action Plan 2022-32 (TSAP) announced on October 4th this year. The Commonwealth Department of Climate Change, Energy, Environment and Water is responsible for this under the jurisdiction of the Minister, Tanya Plibersek.**

The ABC reported that the Federal Department of Environment indicated that "priority places were chosen where support could recover multiple species" and that "independent scientists applied six prioritization principles to identify the action plan's priority species and places: Risk of extinction; multiple benefits; feasibility and effectiveness; importance to people; uniqueness and representativeness."

The ABC reported that the "\$224.5-million, four-year [Threatened Species Action Plan was released last month](#), highlighting 20 important natural places and 110 national species of concern to be prioritised for protection."

The Action Plan has attracted some criticism including from BirdLife Australia. There is concern with attention to the Lake Eyre Basin, inland locations and Aboriginal consultation.

In fact, there have been a range of concerns raised but it seems that this is as much related to the parlous and deteriorated state of environment we have inherited as part of a near decade long mismanagement at the federal level.

BirdLife Australia covered the topic in their latest E-News commenting that the Action Plan is a "positive step" that "includes some welcome revisions" to the previous government's effort.

One can only wonder if there could be a contemporary plan or strategy to address all environmental concerns and of course the answer is no! We watch with hope.

Both the State of Environment Report and the TSAP 2022-32 can be accessed on the web but the bird referencing as it applies to the Shoalhaven is of particular interest.

There are 22 bird species in all, included in the national Action Plan [Shoalhaven species in bold].

- **Australasian Bittern *Botaurus poiciloptilus***
- Black-eared Miner *Manorina melanotis*
- Carnaby's Cockatoo *Zanda latirostris*
- Christmas Island Goshawk *Accipiter hioogaster natalis*
- **Eastern Curlew *Numenius madagascariensis***
- Golden-shouldered Parrot, Alwal *Psephotus chrysopterygius*
- **Hooded Plover (eastern) *Thinornis cucullatus cucullatus***
- King Island Brown Thornbill *Acanthiza pusilla magnirostris*
- King Island Scrubtit *Acanthornis magna greeniana*
- Malleefowl *Leipoa ocellata*
- Night Parrot *Pezoporus occidentalis*
- Noisy Scrub-bird *Atrichornis clamosus*
- Norfolk Island Green Parrot *Cyanoramphus cookii*
- Orange-bellied Parrot *Neophema chrysogaster*
- Plains-wanderer *Pedionomus torquatus*
- Princess Parrot *Polytelis alexandrae*
- Red Goshawk *Erythrotriorchis radiatus*
- Red-tailed Black Cockatoo (SE) *Calyptorhynchus banksii graptogyne*
- **Regent Honeyeater *Anthochaera phrygia***
- **Swift Parrot *Lathamus discolor***
- Western Ground Parrot, Kyloring *Pezoporus flaviventris*
- White-throated Grasswren, Yirlinkirrkir *Amytornis woodwardi*

This newsletter notes separately that in terms of the broadest count of avian species for the Shoalhaven, threatened species represent 1 in 6 species. That in itself is a serious environmental concern.



Eastern Curlew Summer visit at Shoalhaven Heads

The list of the 22 threatened species developed specifically for the national Action Plan includes 5 species known to the Shoalhaven.

Of these, 4 are known migratory species: the Australasian Bittern, Eastern Curlew, Regent Honeyeater and the Swift Parrot, which is a KBA "trigger species". Of these, it would be fair to say, the Eastern Curlew is the most readily observed. In terms of Commonwealth listed threat, the Australasian Bittern is Endangered and each of the other three species are Critically Endangered on that listing.



All this points to nearly 1 in 4 of these Action Plan bird species being on the Shoalhaven list. That ratio appears not to be repeated for the Shoalhaven in any of the Action Plan Lists for mammals, fish, frogs, reptiles, invertebrates or plants. On the face of it, the Shoalhaven is in its most precarious environmental-biodiversity position for birds!

Shoalhaven Challenges

The one species that stands out for a range of reasons is the Hooded Plover (eastern), also now known as the Eastern Hooded Dotterel.

It must be expected that the Action Plan will impact on both the state and federal government approaches to Hooded Plover management on the south coast and in the Shoalhaven and Booderee National Park. It will be more than interesting, to say the least, to see what form this takes.

There is a separate article and report on the status and threat to the "Hoody" elsewhere in the magazine, suffice to say it is a resident breeding species on much of the Shoalhaven coast that is Critically Endangered in NSW and Vulnerable on the Commonwealth list.

Cave Beach in Booderee National Park is the northernmost breeding site of the species in the southeastern distribution, though in the last six breeding seasons the site has produced only two successful nests. The first nest this breeding season of three eggs has already been lost.

It is also one focus species of the NSW Shorebird Recovery Project that has continued for the last decade though the degree of threat appears to be as acute as ever - if not worse!



A Hoody chick pair at Cave Beach 2019 – a rare survival

The 'Provisional List of Animals Requiring Urgent Attention' produced after the 2019-20 Bushfires included 13 bird species of which 9 were birds on the Shoalhaven list and of these 3 were threatened species - the Eastern Ground Parrot, the Eastern Bristlebird and the Regent Honeyeater. Of course that does not surprise given the coverage of the devastating fires in the Shoalhaven but it reinforces the nuances of species threat and concern.

The natural combined forces of coastal climate change, meteorology, storms, East Coast Lows, flooding and changing coastal geomorphology have produced a distinctive and escalating threat to shorebirds such as the Eastern Hooded Dotterel, Pied Oystercatcher and Little Tern. This is a trend that has developed since 2015-16 and has continued with more regular instances since August 2021.

Bherwerre Wetland Update

- by Chris Grounds



Swamp sclerophyll wetland forest July

It would surprise no one to hear that progress with passive recreation infrastructure on the Bherwerre Wetland on the shore of St Georges Basin at Sanctuary Point has slowed to a crawl.

The very wet year combined with a major change to the Concept Plan for the wetland has meant that 2023 is the forward thought.

The passive recreation infrastructure such as signage, boardwalk and tracks has been designed, approved and tenders let by Shoalhaven Council, but continual rain and associated flooding, all quite natural to the site, has meant the work has simply had to wait.

This is no catastrophe for the wetland itself as it continues to regenerate from prior intrusion and damage.

Additionally, the council owned land was transferred from 'Operational Land' to 'Community Land' after continued lobbying of council to enact a prior commitment to the community.

The wetland exists in two sections separated by a built canal and with the reviewed Concept Plan, future works will now be concentrated in the northern section of Swamp Sclerophyll Forest, which adjoins Cockrow Creek as the Stage 1 Project.



The White-faced Heron is a regular on the wetland and has been perfectly at home on the 2022 deluge.



The more ecologically complex southern side involving the shore of St Georges Basin will be considered at a later time as Stage 2 of the Concept Plan - though it will be still possible to walk the area.

The bird catalogue, which has made such a difference to recognition of the wetland, has grown steadily since 2015, usually with one or more new species discovered or verified with successive visits.

Such was the case in an inspection of the flood circumstance in July when the Bar-shouldered Dove (*Geopelia humeralis*) made it to the bird list as No.81.

[Editor's Note: Chris Grounds is a member of the Bherwerre Wetland Steering Committee]



Bar-shouldered Dove

Swooping, Cycling, Cricket & the Queen

- by Rob Dunn

Magpies getting in the way of world cycling



Magpies are a real concern at #Wollongong2022. Grace Brown told me she'd been swooped twice during training rides. @UCI_cycling obviously didn't get this memo - posted just near the finish-line.



1:20 PM · Sep 18, 2022 from Wollongong, New South Wales



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Nobody took any notice of the sign to dismount and walk their bikes near the finishing line of the 2022 UCI Road World Championships despite magpies swooping riders.

Australian rider Grace Brown, who won silver in the world's women's time trial event, said, "I've been swooped twice already since being here. It's not just the international athletes that are worried about it. I get pretty scared by Magpies." At least she did not blame them for missing out on gold.

Belgium's Remco Evenepoel, winner of this year's Tour de France, though clearly not a birdwatcher, said, "A fairly large bird came very close during a training ride and it just kept following me. It was terrifying. But that's Australia, apparently."

The nature of the sport, means riders have to cope with all sorts of road hazards at high speed. This included cows, who brought down riders at the 2015 Tour. It now seems that Australian Magpies have to be added to the list.

Masked Lapwings getting in the way of the Women's Big Bash League

Not to be outdone by swooping magpies, Masked Lapwings decided to hold up the Women's Big Bash League clash between Sydney Thunder and Hobart Hurricanes last month. Thunder players dived on the ground or huddled together in an apparent strength-in-numbers approach, while some just sprinted away.

Proving they were not just targeting the Thunder, the birds set their sights on the Hurricanes opener, who came under fire as she was walking off after getting out in the sixth over. The grounds staff and umpires tried to figure out some sort of solution, but ultimately the game had to go on despite the birds still swooping.



Birdwatchers getting in the way of the Queen's Funeral

Unlike the organisers of world cycling and women's cricket, the Brits were taking no chances with the smooth running of the Queen's funeral, though it is unclear how they would have reacted to swooping birds. Still in Norwich they took no risks with birdwatchers getting in the way - by giving them a clear warning to put down their binoculars during the royal period of mourning.



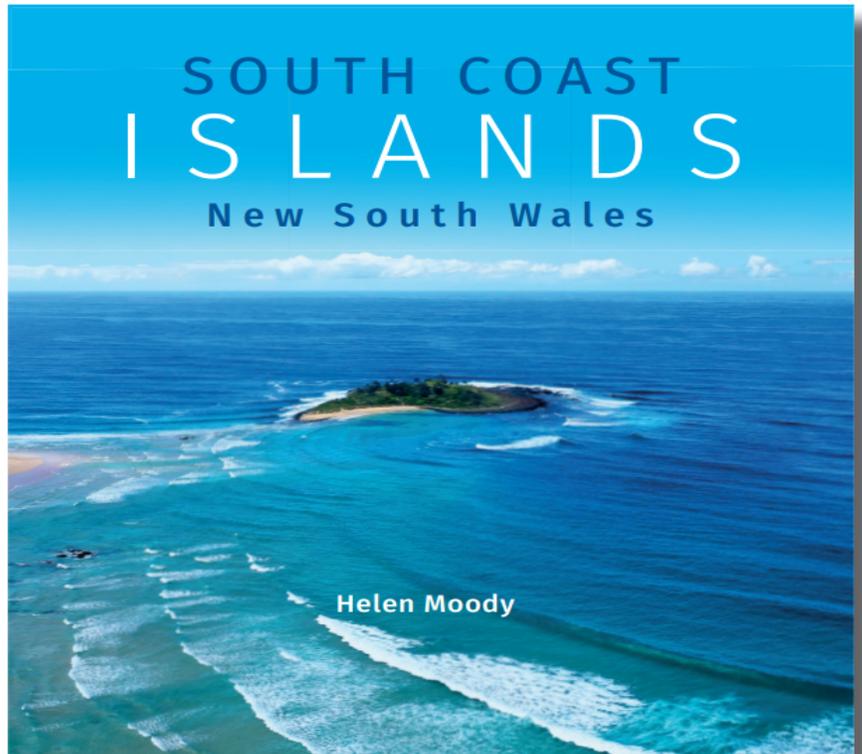
South Coasts Islands

For three years Helen Moody and Mike Jefferis led walks and kayak trips to, past or around the 61 islands of the NSW south coast. There are 20 coastal islands and 41 in the estuaries, rivers and lakes open to the ocean. Now they have written the first ever book on the islands, to be published by mid-2023. This isn't a book just for walkers and kayakers. It's a book for south coast residents, visitors to this area, and anyone who loves nature and discovering wild places.

Nearly all the islands are small and uninhabited; some are mere specks on a map. Yet each has something special about it. Several are wildlife havens with significant biodiversity values. Some have ancient and ongoing spiritual significance to First Nations people. Some have fascinating connections to early explorers and settlers. A handful are privately owned. One has a superb native garden. You have likely never heard many of their names before; or even been aware of their existence.

The book is more than a travel guide. It tells of Aboriginal connections to the islands, the history of south coast exploration, and the arrival of settlers and convicts. It covers the geology, flora, lighthouses, shipwrecks, bird life and environmental values of the islands. With over 200 photographs, and maps and description of how to visit every island, whether on foot or by boat, it will be a substantial, colourful book. The sale price will be \$50.

Many photographers have contributed to the book; historical societies and individual knowledge holders have provided information. Donations and grants from individuals and organisations have covered most of the production costs, so that **all profit from book sales will go to environmental projects.**



It has been a community effort. **NOW WE NEED YOUR HELP.**

Self-published and self-marketed books with a tight budget require a challenging decision about the print-run. We don't want to be storing books under the bed for years, nor sell out in the first week! So we are seeking 'expressions of interest' in purchasing a copy.

Email southcoastislandsbook@gmail.com
with your name and contact details to reserve a copy.
You will be helping us gauge interest, be assured of a copy,
and receive an invitation to a launch event.

**Also, if you are a BirdLife
Australia member, let us
know, and tell us your
location too!**

Shoalhaven
City Council

NPA
NATIONAL PARKS ASSOCIATION OF NSW
protecting nature through community action

The Vision ...

THE UNBURNT FOREST is the heart of our village - a symbol of hope and survival for a community traumatised by the unprecedented and devastating Black Summer bushfires. Here, amongst a vibrant bird chorus, quintessential Aussie bush fragrance and lush greenery, there is LIFE.

We have a vision for how this story ends...

The NSW Government buys the land, declaring the site a Conservation Reserve, dedicated to all who were lost in the Currowan mega-fire: human and animal. At the official opening, the Jerrinja people perform a traditional smoking ceremony, and the community cheers as a brass plaque is unveiled revealing a touching illustration of a Rural Fire Service volunteer rescuing a Greater Glider from the fire grounds.

The battle is over. Tears of relief flow. Smiles abound. Hugs all round. Now we can breathe. The occasion garners worldwide attention. Nature lovers from around the globe rejoice knowing that endangered animals and precious native habitats are saved forever.

In time, a perimeter track is created with interpretive signs along the way, informing visitors of the endangered ecological communities and special animals the forest supports, such as the Grey-headed Flying Fox - a keystone species, and the Dusky Antechinus, a tiny but feisty marsupial that only comes out at night. The story of the land's ownership is also told, from Aboriginal custodians, through various landholders to finally being returned to the community and wildlife, as the Manyana Special Conservation Reserve.

In the following months, the forest is incorporated into The Great Southern Walk. With the forest supporting over 100 avian species, birders arrive at dawn, visiting the hide, patiently hoping to spot a majestic Powerful Owl, elusive Little Lorikeet, migratory Spectacled Monarch, endangered Gang-gang or Glossy-black Cockatoo, or even a rare Swift Parrot.

Ecologists realise its importance as a study ground and make vital discoveries about threatened plant species, like Scrub Turpentine, which now thrive in the protected habitat.

And the locals? They visit regularly, soaking up the sounds and smells of the Australian bush. They sit on bench seats with their children and guests and recount the story of 2020 and the battle of their lives. From the ashes of the bushfires, this wonderful nature reserve becomes a beacon of pride for our community: a special place where we connect with nature, commemorate, celebrate, heal and draw strength.

It's a good news story at a time when our community, the whole of Australia, and indeed the world, needs one.
Thank you for the role you play in making it happen.

28/10/2022. Printed locally on recycled paper

Let's save the forests for our wildlife

Manyana Matters Environmental Assoc
2022 update



Manyana Special Conservation Reserve (once called "Manyana Beach Estate")

- Thanks to people power, the trees in this 20ha plot are still standing!
- Native animals continue to take refuge in the beautiful forest
- Ozy Homes has not yet responded to hundreds of your submissions lodged over a year ago, opposing the project
- When that eventually happens, the Minister for the Environment, Tanya Plibersek, will hand down her decision about its fate
- This year Minister Plibersek elevated the conservation status of both the Greater Glider and Gang-gang cockatoo to endangered, joining the Swift Parrot and the Grey-headed Flying Fox. All of these species are known to frequent the Manyana forest
- Shoalhaven City Council voted unanimously for a Mayoral Minute supporting our vision of establishing the Manyana Special Conservation Reserve
- Our campaign to protect the forest in perpetuity continues.

North Manyana, Inyadda Drive (the old 76ha 'Kylor') Estate

- This developer is taking Shoalhaven City Council to the Land & Environment Court after what they consider to be a deemed refusal from Council. Several members of our community spoke at a recent court hearing on site.



#ManyanaMatters

Facebook.com/manyanamatters
Instagram.com/manyanamatters
Twitter : @Manyana_Matters

Please support us in our efforts

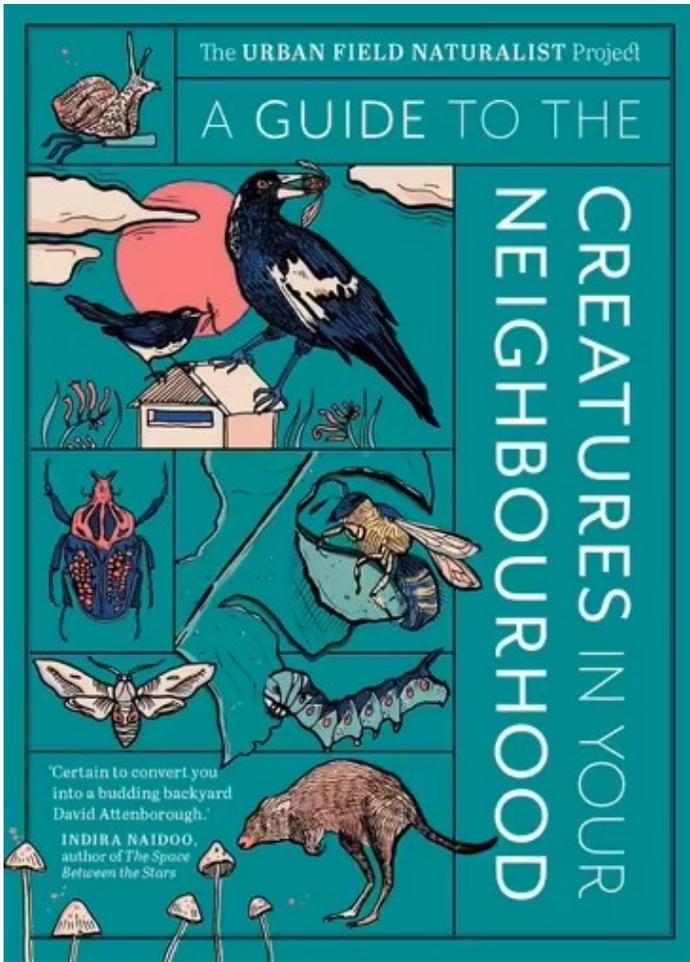
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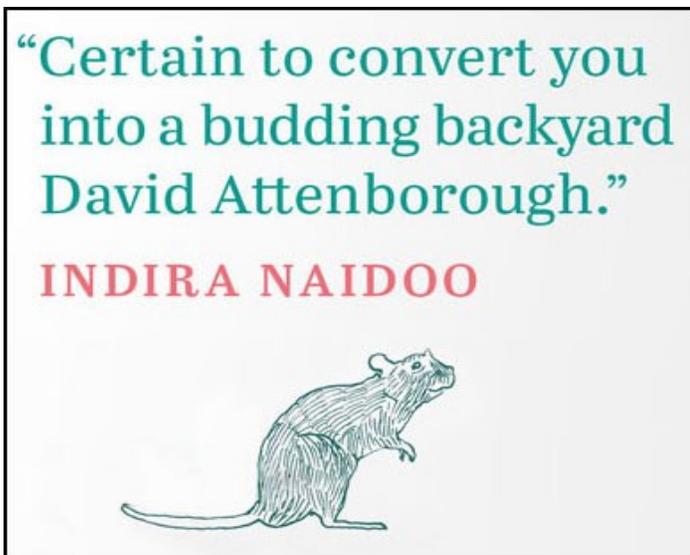
\$5 joining fee, \$5 per year

Manyana Matters Environmental Association acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of country throughout Australia and their connections to land, sea & community.

A Guide to the Creatures in Your Neighbourhood



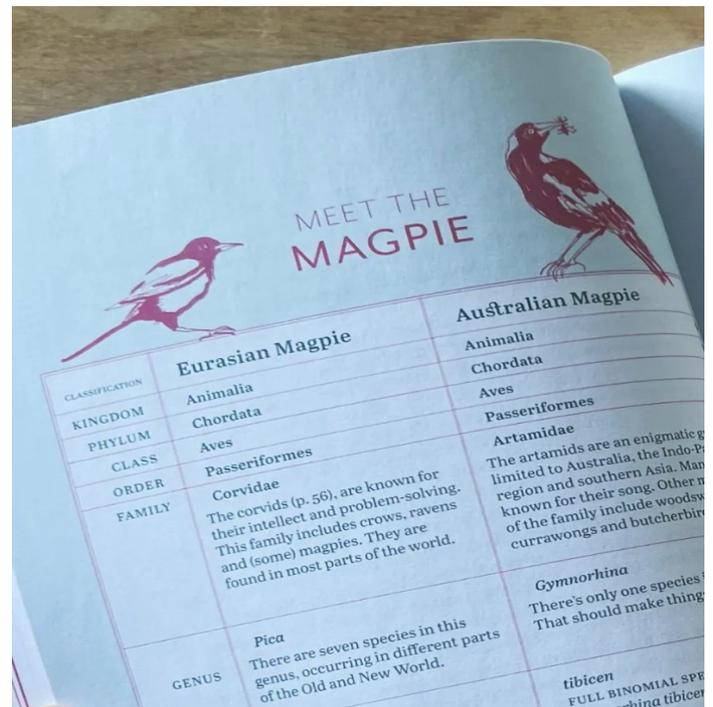
Dr John Martin is a Research Scientist based at the Taronga Institute of Science and Learning. John's research program is directed towards understanding the ecology of wildlife in human-dominated landscapes. This program aims to produce recommendations for land management that will lead to enhanced prospects for co-existence between wildlife and humans.



He joined Taronga in October 2019 after his most recent role as Wildlife Ecologist with the Royal Botanic Garden Sydney, where he worked for 8 years and led research including the Clever Cockie project (formerly the Wingtags Project) and Hollows as Homes citizen science programs.

John graduated in environmental science in 2004 and completed his PhD in ecology at the University of Wollongong in 2012. He has co-supervised students from five universities and currently is an Adjunct Lecturer at the Centre for Ecosystem Science, UNSW, and is an Honorary Associate at the School of Life and Environmental Sciences, The University of Sydney.

His research involves the analysis of patterns of distribution and abundance, both of species that have benefited from human activities as well as species that are threatened.



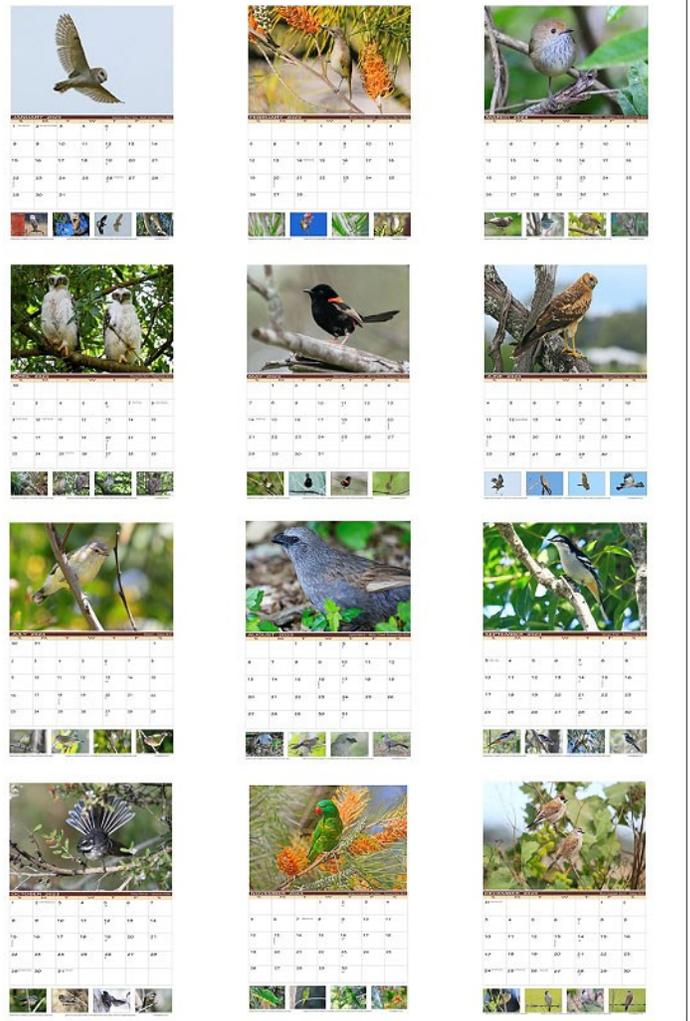
Humans play a key role in landscape conservation; understanding community attitudes, knowledge and values is essential to inform community engagement supporting landscape conservation.

Current research investigates a diverse range of species, from Brush-turkeys to flying-foxes to school kids' connection to nature; the children really are our future.

Lastly, John supports science communication aiming to engage the community and increase their knowledge of and connection to nature. He regularly talks with community groups, gives media interviews and shares information on social media.

"A Guide to the Creatures in your Neighbourhood" is available online at Amazon, eBay, Booktopia etc.

Charles Dove 2023 Calendar



Many of you will remember Charles Dove who has contributed so many bird images to this magazine and to many BirdLife Shoalhaven events over the years.

He produces a bird calendar every year, with next year's calendar now available. If you want to order a calendar they are now available in Ulladulla - for the same cost as the last 10 years! It is printed on high quality 150GSM gloss paper.

Cost for A3 is \$20, and for A4 it is only \$15. Delivery is extra, but you can save delivery costs by picking up your calendar directly from the printers.

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 PO BOX 61 ULLADULLA NSW 2539
e.print@ulladullaprinting.com.au

You can also check out Charles' images on his Facebook page - at [Charles Dove Facebook page](#)

Here are some recent examples of his work ...



How You Can Help BLS

If you would like to get involved in bird conservation in the Shoalhaven, either as part of a specific BirdLife Shoalhaven project or by taking on a committee position, please let us know!

There are, however, a lot of other things that you can do. You could write an article (or articles) for this magazine. You could lead a bird walk in your local area, something that you might do on a regular basis anyhow, but something that no other BLS members usually do.

You could also become one of our Facebook editors, send us some photos, or tell us about conservation issues in your neighbourhood!

Just email communications@birdlifeshoalhaven.org

The Fine Print

Contributions - any bird photographs, articles, conservation issues, birding experiences, anecdotes or sightings that you would like to share with fellow members, please send to the editor (Brett Davis) at communications@birdlifeshoalhaven.org

Requests for **re-publication of articles** must be referred to the Editor for approval.

General Disclaimer - the information in articles in this magazine is accepted in good faith and although the editor has tried to verify the accuracy of all information, BirdLife Shoalhaven and BirdLife Australia accept no responsibility for any errors, inaccuracies or exaggerations in this magazine.

Errors - if you find any errors in this magazine, please inform the editor at communications@birdlifeshoalhaven.org

Acknowledgements - thank you all of this season's contributors.

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Apologies - to contributors and sources who have inadvertently not been acknowledged. Let us know of our oversight and we will acknowledge your contribution in the next magazine.

Opinions - the opinions expressed in articles in this magazine are those of the individual authors and do not necessarily represent the views of BirdLife Shoalhaven or BirdLife Australia.

BLS Facebook images from Kim Touzel



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