



**MINUTES OF THE BIRDLIFE SHOALHAVEN AGM
HELD ON 10 FEBRUARY 2020 AT THE
NOWRA BOWLING CLUB, 40 JUNCTION STREET, NOWRA**

Rob Dunn opened the meeting at 7.00pm by acknowledging the original custodians of the land where the meeting was being held and paying his respects to their elders past and present.

Attendance & apologies

Rob Dunn welcomed the 32 people attending. He especially welcomed the four new members present, as well as Graeme Chapman, a life member of BirdLife Australia. He added that apologies had been received from 14 members.

Acceptance of minutes of the 2019 AGM – refer <http://birdlifeshoalhaven.org/pdfs/2019agmminutes.pdf>

The agenda for the meeting had included a link to the draft minutes for the 2019 AGM. However, there are two corrections required to be made to this draft:

- Firstly, a misspelling of Perrie Croshaw's surname in the President's Report
- Secondly, there is one bad omission, regarding the passing of Matt Jones in 2018. After the approval of the President's Report, I would like to add "Rob & Frances Bray both expressed condolences at the loss of Matt Jones and highlighted their appreciation of his amazing contribution to BLS both as a member and Committee member. He was a true champion for bird conservation."

Acceptance of the minutes as distributed with these two amendments was moved by Rob Dunn, seconded by Frances Bray and passed unanimously.

Business Arising – There was no business arising from the previous meeting.

President's Report: Rob Dunn presented his report – refer appendix.

Acceptance of his report was moved by Rob Dunn, seconded by Yolande Cozijn and passed unanimously.

Conservation Officer Report: Chris Grounds presented his report – refer appendix.

Acceptance of his report was moved by Chris Grounds, seconded by Rob Dunn and passed unanimously.

Treasurer's Report: The following report prepared by Karen Davis, BLS Treasurer, was included in the agenda:

<u>INCOME AND EXPENSES</u>	January 1 to December 31 2019	
Cashbook Balance at 1/1/2019	\$	2846.10
Income		
Sales of misc bird items	1264.30	
Bird Haven Funding	500.00	
Bird Haven Raffle	883.05	
Talk entry fees (fundraising)	317.55	
BA reimbursement of banner expense	165.00	
BA grant funding	1400.00	
BA GST credit re 2018	160.69	
Donations	845.00	
Powerpoint presentation	254.55	5790.14

Expenses

Hall Hire	200.00	
Equipment - Banner & Large Posters	591.82	
Event expenses	220.98	
Contribution to signage at S/Heads and Lake W	1000.00	2012.80
Cashbook Balance at 31/12/2019	\$	<u>6623.44</u>

The income and expenses report for 2019 is included in the agenda. This shows income from sales of items and photos, donations, the Festival raffle and talk entry fees of \$5,790 and expenses of \$2,012. The main cost was \$1,000 for signage at Shoalhaven Heads and Lake Wollumboola. This has resulted in our cash funds increasing from \$2,846 to \$6,623 in the year. During the year the Committee agreed to use these funds for bird signage at some of our key bird walks, starting at Bangalee Reserve. We have quotes for two signs for \$3,500 and are working with Council to arrange for their production and installation. Our policy is to retain \$1,000 for our on-going costs, so we still have funds available to allocate to projects in the year. We have also just received funding of \$1,500 from National Office for future projects.

Rob acknowledged the great work that Karen does in maintaining our financial records.

Acceptance of the Treasurer's report was moved by Karen Davis, seconded by Rob Dunn and passed unanimously.

Correspondence in and out – refer <http://birdlifeshoalhaven.org/submissions.html>

Acceptance of the Correspondence in and out, as recorded on the BLS web-site, was moved by Rob Dunn, seconded by Kim Touzel and passed unanimously.

Election of Committee Members:

Prior to the meeting and in accordance with the BLS rules an email was sent out seeking nominations to the Committee. Only one nomination had been received for each position, so there is no need for nominations from the floor or voting with all positions. The BLS Committee till the next AGM is as follows:

- President - Rob Dunn - continuing
- Secretary – Mike Jefferis – replacing Kim Touzel
- Treasurer - Karen Davis – continuing
- Conservation Officer - Chris Grounds - continuing
- Media Officer - Yolande Cozijn - continuing
- Communications - Brett Davis - continuing
- General Committee - Oisin Sweeney - continuing
- General Committee - Gary Brady - new Committee member
Gary is the former head of science at Vincentia High School and on the Board of the Jervis Bay Maritime Museum

Other general business – There was no other general business

Close – the meeting closed at 8pm.

APPENDICES

PRESIDENT'S REPORT TO THE 2020 AGM – ROB DUNN

It is timely to look back at another active year for BirdLife Shoalhaven, but also consider how it will be relevant for bird conservation looking forward, following the fires.

Chris Grounds' Conservation Officer report will detail our wins and losses through the year. Much of this work has focussed on fighting to keep vital bird habitat in place with the continuing demands of urban and tourism expansion. And this was before the fires! Inevitably we can now expect to see the fire crisis used as added justification for destruction of vegetation for developments, 'improvements' to public spaces and clearing in people's backyards. This can only mean we can expect an increase in our advocacy and campaigning work, in which Chris is always the one taking the lead for BLS. He fully deserves our thanks for all his work.

In June we brought 130 people together in Culburra Beach to celebrate the presentation to Frances Bray of BirdLife Australia's Distinguished Services Award for her work with the Lake Wollumboola Protection Association Inc. over more than 25 years. Frances outlined the Association's success in fighting against the proposed development of a golf course and a major development at West Culburra. Last year the decision against the West Culburra development was challenged by the developers, which meant yet more work for Frances and the Association to support the **Independent Planning Commission's legal case**. At the hearing in Sydney on a day of catastrophic fire conditions, the developers chose to withdraw their application, deciding to submit an amended proposal in the future. So, the campaign will continue into this year and possibly much longer.

The Shorebirds Recovery Program and its beach nesting program continues to be a major focus of a growing and committed group of volunteers under the direction of NPWS. I am not up to date with whether the recent exodus of tourists due to the fires lead to a more positive breeding year than has previously been the case. But I am sure it was welcome that there were less dog owners ignoring the signs.

MUD Birders, Shoalhaven Birders and BLS have continued to organise bird walks with surveys taken of the birds seen. An increasing number of people have entered surveys into BirdLife Australia's Birdata system from these walks, at sites in Jervis Bay KBA, rural properties and some of the Shoalhaven's best birding sites, like the Bangalee Reserve. This is more important than ever with a research project that we are taking on as part of the national project to assess the post-fire recovery of our birds. Gary Brady will be co-ordinating the project. Gary can you expand on this briefly?

We continue to promote the work of Shoalhaven's birding groups and projects, that I have mentioned above. Last year we started promoting Shoalhaven Landcare group planting days and their projects through our magazine. Providing support to these groups as they look to replant, take on weeds and ferals will allow us to play a part to restore habitat and biodiversity on private land.

October saw the second Bird Haven Festival held in Shoalhaven Heads. The organisers, Perrie Croshaw and Cathy Law, did another amazing job arranging a wide range of events, which attracted some 1,500 people. They are currently developing ideas for the next Festival, when it will timely to take stock on how far our birds have recovered and what still needs to be done.

Our members and supporters have risen to over 700 in the year through events like the Festival and Birds in Backyards talks to community groups by Yolande. Continuing this growth in numbers will be vital if we are to get more people playing their part the recovery of birds after the fires.

So much has been done over the past year, but after the recent events, we have just reassessed our priorities to develop BirdLife Shoalhaven's bird fire recovery program. This has and will include:

- Our January magazine's focussed on the bushfires.

- Martine Maron will speak at our event in March at Mollymook, a town surrounded by the bushfires. Within 4 days we have had 100 people confirming and hope to get a lot more. If you have not already, you need to let me know if you are coming.
- We are working with National Office on the bushfire monitoring research project, as Gary just talked about.
- We are partnering with Shoalhaven Landcare on their application for \$40k. of funding for habitat restoration and feral control. We will upskill landowners in Birddata and integrate this as part of the research project.
- We are liaising with Council to install bird interpretative signage at Bangalee Reserve, which missed the fires and will be a key sight in the research project.

So a lot has been achieved and I feel we are set up well to take on more challenges in the year ahead.

I'd like to close with two big thank you's.

Firstly, Charles Dove has recently moved to Queensland. He has contributed to MUD Birders for many years and in more recent times has provided his impressive photo collection to BLS for all our web-site and on Facebook, plus he designed the recent Birds of the Shoalhaven posters. And I know I speak for Perrie and Cathy in saying that his images were a major contribution to the Bird Haven Festival.

Secondly, our Secretary, Kim Touzel is stepping down at this meeting and Mike Jefferis will be stepping into the role. Kim has made a great contribution over three years. What is not so well-known is she originally said she could only commit to a year and I mislead her by saying it did not involve too much work. While you are leaving the committee, I know you will be contributing to Facebook, doing surveys, working with me on the signage for Bangalee and a whole lot more.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge the passing last year of Sue Garside-Brown. She has been active with the Shorebirds Recovery Program for many years and on of the key members of Shoalhaven Birdwatchers. She will be missed by many in the birding community.

CONSERVATION OFFICER REPORT TO 2020 AGM - CHRIS GROUNDS

I would acknowledge the Jerrinja peoples on whose land we meet this evening and pay my respects to their elders.

BLS has now added an Acknowledgement of Country to its documentations – letters, submissions, web site and magazines.

“Birdlife Shoalhaven acknowledges the Aboriginal people of the Shoalhaven, their care of country as it involves birdlife and habitat and pays respects to all Elders.”

We in birding must never avoid the broader context as we recognize 2019 as the hottest and driest year ever in Australia – and one of the windiest I reckon. The infamous drought has not relented though a turn toward relief is now occurring with recent rains across the state, urban water supply is almost catastrophic and actually so in many rural towns, the ecology of the Murray Darling basis is totally compromised, the threatened species profile grows worse and the bushfires have put us all in a totally new place on this earth and in this country.

I have continued my reports to both the committee and in our magazine so eight reports since the last AGM have covered the detail of our conservation business for the last 12 months. The members are well treated with illustrated magazine reports, the committee just text blobs and they cope really well.

Some highlights:

- Presentations on ‘Bird Biodiversity’ in the Shoalhaven were provided for Council’s World Environment Day program, for the Jervis Bay Maritime Museum Science Week program and most recently for Council staff.
- C O Reports in our magazine have dealt with the Save Our Species Shorebird Recovery, the Threatened species Index and Threatened Species Bird Index with an updated Threatened Species List for the Shoalhaven; the shared campaign against the council proposal to use Jervis Bay National Park for Hyams Beach tourism car parking which led to a complete reversal of the original decision; the mirrored result in a

parallel campaign involving an old tip site on Jerrinja land behind Hyams Beach; each with a strong focus on the Jervis Bay Key Biodiversity Area; a profiling of our submissions with the example of the BLS submission on urban tree-tree canopy issues in the Shoalhaven.

- The latest Magazine C O Report has dealt with the threatened species issues and the bushfires impact in the Shoalhaven as part of the Bushfire feature in the Summer Magazine.

As always BLS has been involved with a number of submissions: Council's 'Destination management Plan' for tourism, a shared submission re the National Park proposal for use as Hyams Beach tourism car park with the HEST network, NPA, JBRA and the ACF; Council's Tree Vandalism Policy and the Berry Wire Lane Rezoning Proposal.

As you will appreciate the submissions, magazine contributions and presentations require a good deal of research to develop as well as time in preparing the associated photography.

The Bherwere Wetland See Change Exhibition, the opening of the art installation at the wetland and the announcement of funding for wetland infrastructure were all progressive.

An absolute highlight of the year in conservation more broadly in the Shoalhaven was the announcement that the 2020 Shoalhaven Australia Day Environment Award was given to Pat Thompson, Editor of the New Bush Telegraph. Not only was Pat an outstanding candidate but the disrespectful and misguided treatment of him as editor of the NBT and the paper and its contributors by a band of councillors was answered not only by Pat's deputation to a council meeting, late in 2019, but by the award from the very same council but in a process in which these councillors could not interfere, ensured fairness prevailed.

And bon voyage Charles – my best photographer wishes – you may need a drying cupboard for your camera gear where you are headed.

My sincere thanks to Rob and the committee.

Chris Grounds