



**MINUTES OF BIRDLIFE SHOALHAVEN COMMITTEE MEETING
3 LOUISA GROVE, VICENTIA
FRIDAY 17 NOVEMBER 2017, 2-4 PM**

1.0 Attendance and apologies

Present: Rob Dunn, Karen Davis, Brett Davis, Chris Grounds, Mike Jefferis, Yolande Cozijn, Kim Touzel
Apologies: None

2.0 Acceptance of the agenda – No additional items

3.0 Approval of minutes of previous meeting

Moved Rob, seconded Kim - carried.

4.0 Business arising from the previous minutes

29 August 2016 meeting

- 1: Brett and Chris to liaise to set up Conservation Officer e-signature. **Done**
- 2: Brett and Rob to review website content and add new Shoalhaven Bird Walks brochure. **Expanded and transferred to new action**

Action 1: Brett and Rob to look at revamping BLS Website to comply with BLA branding guidelines, review content, add new Shoalhaven Bird Walks brochure and add links to BirdLife donations/membership sections.

7 April 2017 meeting

- 1.1: Brett to publish information in August BLS newsletter. **Done**
- 1.2: Kim to create MailChimp email and send out to members and others 5 weeks before event. **Done**
- 3: Recognition of 50th anniversary of NPWS. This has been dropped as contact person Greg Tedder, Nowra area manager is gone due to restructure and downgrading occurring in the NPWS with staff. New area manager is not known. **Closed**
- 4: Rob to send Kim list of conservation groups and contact details to add to new list. **Done**

14 July 2017 meeting

- 1: Chris to write to Sean Dooley, editor to express disappointment and request a correction in the eNews as well as request recognition of partners in future. Copy letter to Rob. **Done**
- 2: Rob, Mike and Brett to meet to organise distribution of Bird Walk brochures and prepare media coverage of the brochure and KBA workshop. **Decision:** More brochures can be distributed at talks, Mike to NPWS and Kim will distribute at Shoalhaven Campus of UOW. Ongoing focus and agreed no one-off action needed. **Closed**
- 3: Rob to send a letter of thanks to the mayor, all councilors and the council tourism marketing team for council's support of Shoalhaven's birdlife in production of the new Bird Walks brochure. A soft copy will be sent to BLS committee and Charles Dove who provided photos. **Done**
- 4: Chris & Rob to send letter to administrator of Booderee Botanic Gardens and elders at the Wreck Bay Aboriginal Community to inform them about the field day and thank them for the use of the gardens. **Done**
- 5: BLS to be represented on Committee looking at opening of Shoalhaven Heads. **Done – see Conservation Officer's report.**

6: Chris to write a formal paper covering why we consider making Shoalhaven Heads a KBA urgent, including the opening of Shoalhaven Heads to the sea. **Done**

7: Matt to draft a letter to send to council and NPWS re monitoring compliance on dog prohibited beaches and dogs on lead. Matt to contact Jodie Dunn first to discuss with her and get her support and input. **Item closed due to Matt's resignation from the Committee.**

5.0 Updates and related issues

5.1 President's report – Rob made the following points:

Since the last Committee meeting on 14 July, I have been out of the country for seven weeks, but either side have taken on various issues.

Easily the most time-consuming was organising and running the KBA Workshop, which I felt was a great success with flow-on impacts for BLS in Jervis Bay KBA and Birddata, as reported by Karen in the last newsletter, and an opportunity to re-engaged with the Mayor. This was certainly a one-off and the only events that I want to be running looking forward are the AGM and three talks each year. Arrangements for the Judy Harrington talk have taken some of my time and we can do a de-brief at the Committee meeting.

At the same time as getting ready for the KBA Workshop, I was finalising the Bird Walk brochure with Mike and Brett. Another one-off task.

As you are aware, I have been in discussion with John Levett, Greens Councillor, about his interest in setting up a Common Mynah Reduction program. He has recently phoned me again on this and left a message. I returned his call, but have not heard back. We have already agreed our position on this, but I will keep you posted if he still wants to move this forward.

Most of my other activities are covered in the agenda.

5.2 Conservation Officer Report

Conservation film-doco screening "Secrets at Sunrise"

As organized by Karen was well supported, very successful and highly interesting doco. It had strong local links within our own KBAs and Eastern Ground Parrot. DVD or download available at homesite ~ \$16.00.

Worrowing Heights Precinct Plan

A BLS submission was lodged with council re the Worrowing Heights Precinct Plan affecting the area involving the Heritage Estate and JBNP as well as the Bayswood-Woolworths development.

Shoalhaven Heads

Chris has continued to liaise with Golo Maurer re progress of the concept. The latest advice from Golo Nov. 8 and 9 is:

I have come to the conclusion that with this information, currently, we would be unable to obtain KBA status for the area you outline. I specifically find it interesting that Shoalhaven heads seems to be bucking the trend for Eastern Curlews. They are a species to watch and if this could be an inspiration to BA and LLS to get behind a bittern project locally to 1st get the numbers currently, 2nd Create habitat to help the bitterns even better.

As a Threatened species protected by 2020 species the A Bittern is hugely significant to LLS because this means funding through the Landcare stream can become available. Maybe worth picking up the phone finding out what they want to do re that and if BA locally and nationally can help...

In summary, I reckon, it is paramount to keep taps i.e. at least annual counts on the Eastern Curlew as it seems an important site is building here for them. It would also be good to get solid data for the bitterns. I.e. number of callers etc. using the standardised survey method.

I don't think the KBA is entirely off the cards. The criterion of irreplaceability by quantitative analysis criterion for instance may well confirm your observation of the outstanding importance of the site. But I am incapable of this analysis and this would certainly be a job for later on if and when we have won a linkage grant to get a postdoc on the job.

*I am sorry it is not greater news but I again commend the work you have done on researching this.
Cheers Golo*

The concept has had other 'lives' with Local Land Services conference presentation by CO on Biodiversity Through Birds at Shoalhaven Heads.

Invitation from SCC Environmental Services-Coast Management to make same presentation to council's Shoalhaven Heads Task Force.

Confidential supply and liaison to Coasts Manager SCC so key staff are aware of the BLS position on SHDS.

Support from Terry Barratt on Shoalhaven Heads conservation action to conserve a small area of crown land is EEC which is part of the area considered.

SCC liaison

Notified and have had included the KBA Concept to Coastlands Management Plan Scoping study esp, in relation to the Jervis Bay KBA as community member of Scoping Study Working Party.

NPWS Threatened Species Exhibition

Provided 2 photos on request the NPWS Threatened Species Day exhibition in Wollongong with BLS as the nominated funding recipient.

SCC tourism

Advocacy per Natural Resources Floodplain Management Committee re Threatened Species shorebirds [Mike Clear and Chris]. Serious concerns exist with community reps. re the new tourism model, especially in relation to Sustainability and environmental sustainability and Advocacy per Tourism 'Destinations 360' stakeholders workshop.

The Tourism arm of council recently announced the development of a new tourism model, "Destination 360" but more of that in a moment. A recent report to Council noted a 27% growth in international visitors for the 'off-season' [June, July, August]. In February, Shoalhaven Tourism was highlighting "6% Sustained Positive Growth to 3.2 million Visitors" for the year to September 2016. This sustained growth data, if indexed with 2014-15 as a base year, translates to 4.04 million visitors for 2019-2020, or a total increase of another 840,000 visitors. Is that really what we want by this time in 2020? These figures were not contradicted when presented to tourism staff at a council committee meeting.

The initial promotion of this from council staff was in terms of SUSTAINABLE TOURISM but this really turned out to be was SUSTAINABLE TOURISM BUSINESS. Some council tourism staff don't think so, having provided the view that Sustainable Tourism has been dropped in the development of the new model as "too confusing". The optimal conditions for environment, as described by council's consultant, exist when "Yield is maximized from key visitor markets".

NPWS

A major contact for CO and BLS Greg Tedder, the Nowra Area Manager, will not be returning after leave. The new area and manager is still not known. This is part of the restructure and downgrading occurring in the NPWS with staff. The same impact is occurring within the Marine Parks group.

5.3 Secretary report

Membership

Kim reported that we now have 220 BLS members with 6 new members added since July 2017; 178 of those members are on our "Members" email mailing list. BLS "Other Supporters" have increased from 94 to 139 mainly due to non-members attending Yolande's BIBY talks having requested to be subscribed to our emailing list.

We have also added a new contact list "Other Conservation Groups" to our MailChimp mailing lists with 24 contacts. We currently have a total of 341 contacts on emailing lists.

Correspondence in / out:

- eagleCAM Email Campaign created and sent via MailChimp on October 13 2017
 - Reminder email sent to all email groups on November 13
 - 49 confirmations of attendance were received (only 22 before reminder email sent)
 - 60 attended the talk
- August 7 Email received from Elisabeth Hodson to thank committee members involved in organising KBA workshop held in the Shoalhaven
- August 10 Fiona Blandford BLA email with link to Guidelines and templates available for setting up eNews
- August 15 correspondence with Gary Daly re nesting boxes as inquiry was received. Gary gets his boxes from Faunature in SA and they can also be purchased from local Mens' Sheds.
- August 23 Fiona Blandford BLA email re weekly Membership Lists received to include Wildbird Protectors (WBP)
- September 9 BIGNET minutes received from Yolande and filed
- October 3 Email from Fiona B. re KBA workshop on blog and expression of support from Simon Robinson BL Southern Highlands for the proposal of Shoalhaven Heads becoming a KBA
- October 5 Milton Ulladulla Birdwatchers Club – reminder email re U3A membership...not necessary for BLS members who sign in under separate sheet and insurance covered by BLA
- October 10 BIGNET contacts list received from Richard Jordan – forwarded to committee members and filed. Any future changes to be emailed to Pixie Maloney bignet1@bigpond.com
- October 11 Email received from Christopher Cerinich, Shoalhaven Heads resident stating he could help BLS out with ID of bird species. He is not on our BLS membership list. Reply sent with link to our birdwalks page in newsletter and invitation to join our walks at any time.
- October 23 Draft Network Working Arrangements received from Fiona Blandford and forwarded to committee members
- Several general inquiries and photos were received by phone / email to identify birds and birds were identified and replies were sent.

BirdFair

Attended Sydney BirdFair on November 4 – It was good to catch up with Fiona Blandford, who I receive frequent email correspondence from, in person at the BLA stall. The lectures throughout the day were excellent and could not be missed. There was an excellent display of bird photography on exhibit where Lachlan Hall a BLS member won first prize in the Photography contest. The Canon Photography workshop was worthwhile to test a few lenses. There were plenty of exhibitors with information on locations nearby and in other regions worldwide for birdwatching. A large range of binoculars and finder scopes were on hand to test.

One day is not enough to spend at the BirdFair, there is too much to do and see.

5.4 Webmaster and social media report

Brett reported that Facebook has gone from 187 to 370 followers in one year.
Website to be redesigned as to grab peoples interest and conform with BLA branding guidelines.

5.5 Newsletter editor report

Brett reported that he will continue to interview bird photographers for future newsletters and has a few in mind.

5.6 Treasurer report

Karen presented the following report:

Income and expenses report		1 January to 15 November 2017	
Cashbook Balance at 1/1/2017		\$	701.20
<u>Income</u>			
Sales of misc bird items		60.00	
Sale of photos at NPWS Exhibition		135.00	
KBA W/Shop Hosting from BSNSW		500.00	
KBA W/Shop exp reimbursement		237.00	
Talk donations		143.60	
			1075.60
<u>Expenses</u>			
Hall Hire		229.00	
Domain Name		0.00	
Meeting exps		66.00	
Badge Logo Setup		35.00	
Gift Judy Harrington		19.95	
Postage		0.00	
Bank Fees		<u>75.50</u>	
			425.45
Cashbook Balance at 15/11/17		\$	<u>1351.35</u>
<u>Add</u>			
Unpresented Cheques	#16	35.00	0.00
	#17	19.95	54.95
Bank Balance at 15/11/2017		\$	<u><u>1406.30</u></u>

Committee discussion:

- Rob – income should be listed as a donation if a tax deductible receipt given.
Action 2: Karen to change "Talk donations" under income to "Talk entry fees"
- Birdlife Australia has funds of \$135 that belong to BLS from sale of photos at NPWS photo exhibition.
Also NPWS have not received all funds. **Action 3:** Karen to follow up with NPWS and BLA.

5.7 Media Officers report - recent Media and presentations and events

Yolande presented the following report:

Date	Group	Attendees	Emails
21/8/17	Jervis bay Probus Club	47	9
6/11/17	Shoalhaven Heads Community Hub	39	7
	Forthcoming Talks		
22/11/17	Rotary Nowra		
	Year to Date Totals		
	9 talks to community groups	257	30

Attended BIGnet meeting Urunga 9/10th Sept

About Magazine – Editor is holding stories on: Magpies and King Parrots

South Coast Register were sent information on KBA workshop and launch of the bird brochure as well as Sea Eagle Talk for community news. Yolande reported that information sent to SCR is not getting published.

Action 4: Karen to email Yolande a new contact for the SCR and cc Kim.

Name badges

Yolande suggested that name badges should be used by committee members when speaking at events or on bird walks. **Decision:** All committee members should have name badges. Rob stated surname should also be on badges. This would be finalised after AGM when new members on Committee worked out. Name badges made at Nowra Trophy shop – **Action: 5** Kim will organise badges when ready to move forward with this.

5.8 Shoalhaven Birders

Stan Brown is working on 2018 Bird Walk program which will be promoted in BLS newsletter.

5.9 MUD Birders

Michael reported that the campout at Cowra was a great success.

6.0 Action Plan for 2018 and impact for Committee membership

Rob advised we need to prepare an action plan of what we are prepared to take on next year for a few reasons:

- BirdLife Australia require it under our Working Arrangements to check that it aligns with the BLA strategic and operating plan
- We need it to make sure we do not take on too much and keep sane and committed!
- I would like to use it to guide our ideas for adding people to the Committee. A draft had been circulated as a basis for discussion. Certain of the actions in the draft were discussed.

Decisions made:

- BLS will hold three talks plus the AGM
- Add the review of the look, functionality and content of web-site
- We would be very selective about giving talks to other community groups
- We would not take on running stalls at community events, unless somebody wanted to put their hand up. However, the World Environment Day Fair at the JB Maritime Museum as agreed as an exception.
- Shared sites would be set up for Birddata for the bird walks in the brochure
- Add support for film nights and other events, subject to resources
- Expand our bird walk programs, but only subject to Shoalhaven Birders calendar and recruitment of walk leaders.
- Make the commitment to the Shorebirds Recovery Program, as being subject to resources and the interest of Jodie Dunn, given the high involvement of members in surveying already.

- Agreed that ABBC should be a key focus for October 2018, especially given its potential for school engagement, which Chris stressed was something we were missing at the moment. Rob agreed to take the lead on this.
- Look at holding talks to community groups on Beach Nesting Birds in 2019, with the focus for giving talks in 2018 will only be Birds in Backyards
- Mike agreed to take the lead on exploring the potential to have a bird hide or walk signage built.

Action 6: Rob to revised the draft Action Plan incorporating the above points and circulate it to the Committee for final approval before submitting to Fiona Blandford.

7.0 Ideal skills and possible candidates to join the Committee

All current committee members confirmed their intention to re-stand.

The pros/cons to expand the Committee were discussed, given the resignations of Barry and Matt.

Decisions:

- Rather than increase the Committee, which was likely to be difficult to find suitable candidates, we should stay with 7.
- A concerted effort to invite members to volunteer on specific tasks, e.g. a bird walk leader, support for the ABBC, presenting thank you gifts to speakers, etc.

Following on from this decision, Yolande suggested organizing afternoon bird walks followed by a BYO picnic which may be attractive for members that are not early morning people. It was agreed that this was a good idea in daylight saving months and January and March suggested at Bomaderry Creek walk. Yolande will ask non-Committee BLS members if they want to help on the day.

Action 7: Yolande to consider organising a late afternoon walk and BBQ during daylight saving months with the support of non-Committee BLS members.

8.0 Adoption of new Branch Working Arrangements and impact for BLS

Rob outlined that this issue had be raised in recent emails with comments from Chris and Kim and gave the following updates:

- Some of our requests for changes have been accepted by BLA.
- There is a branch phone meeting on Wednesday 8 November, which will get further input from branches.
- The document will then go to the Board at the end of November with opportunity for late changes if not material.
- The majority of the document that had been circulated will be approved for the reasons stated in my original email.

Once approved we will have to look at how the new procedures will impact BLS. The key issues are:

- How will we share our contact email lists with BLA? Are there privacy issues? What do we say to people we get emails from?
- How will we get our members, Wildbird Protectors and supporters information back from BLA
- Currently Wildbird Protectors and transitioning members are listed on weekly membership spreadsheets received from BLA.
- BLS compliance with the BLA branding guidelines which involves the update to the BLS website.

Rob will be discussing these specific issues with Fiona Blandford when he visits National Office at the end of the month.

Action 8: Rob to meet with Fiona Blandford, BLA National Office Branch Co-ordinator and cover:

- her initial input on the draft Action Plan

- how they will manage communications for email addresses we provide
- how we get our members, Wildbird Protectors and supporters back from them
- clarify when we can get back the Aussie Backyard Bird Count results for the Shoalhaven
- tell her our plan for reviewing the BLS web-site

9.0 Arrangements for the AGM & talks in 2018

A tentative date for AGM Monday February 12 2018 at the Vincentia Golf Club subject to everyone's availability and confirmation of the venue.

Decision: We will follow the same format as last year with an optional dinner, meeting business and Brett's trivia quiz. Members, Wildbird Protectors, partners and friends.

Action 9:

- Rob will send email to committee when date for AGM and next Committee meeting is confirmed.
- Kim to send email invitation for the AGM to members, Wildbird Protectors, partners and friends 40 days before AGM.
- Rob to liaise with Brett for newsletter re AGM.

Talks in 2018

Rob suggested BLS have three talks in 2018, in addition to the AGM and excluding the annual talk run by NPA Milton.

Of the three talks, two could be in St Georges Basin and another using a different venue to reach out to more BLS members. Kim suggested Shoalhaven Campus of University of Wollongong lecture room, as a Nowra venue. Michael suggested another talk related to birds could be put on by the Milton NPA and a potential speaker could be David Lindemeyer.

Michael suggested MUD Birders could take on one of talks and hold it on their Tuesday meeting night in September or November at the Milton Bowling Club.

Decision: In line with the draft Action Plan, BLS will organise three talks, potentially in May, August and November.

Action 10: Rob to arrange the speaker and venue for the first talk after the AGM in 2018.

Action 11: Mike to contact Barry Tomkinson, president of Milton NPA, to make sure we do not clash with their date and speaker.

We considered including the 24 Shoalhaven CCBs (Community Consultative Bodies), as well as special interest groups, to ask to distribute our email invitations for evening talks. **Decision:** A new CCB contact list be made up and the CCBs be sent invitations to talks.

Action 12: Kim to create new MailChimp contact list to include the CCBs listed on Shoalhaven Councils website.

10.0 Allocation of recent donation receipts

BLS has recently received \$600 for the KBA workshop and approx. \$600 donations from the NPWS Biome photography exhibition, which means that BLS was holding surplus funds of approx. \$1000 above its on-going costs, which are minimal. Rob advised that he & Barb had decided to offer \$600 of their own funds to the Shorebirds Recovery Program.

Rob suggested that BLS use \$900 of its funds to also support the local Shorebirds Recovery Program. Various comments were made:

- Brett agreed that the photo donations came from NPWS, so it made sense to support one of their project.
- Chris suggested use of some of the funds for hardware, i.e. a remote sensor camera that could be used to monitor threatened species, raptors, and shorebirds. Kim indicated the cost is approximately \$500

and a good idea, however who would man the cameras. If they are left out on the beach or other public places they will be stolen or vandalised.

- Michael suggested signage for birdwalks.
- Kim suggested purchase binoculars to lend to people on bird walks because often new birdwatchers show up with binoculars not suitable for birdwatching and guides have lent them theirs.
- Rob suggested display boxes with life-size models of beach nesting birds, their nests and eggs for use at awareness raising talks or community events, which is key focus of Aimee and Jodie Dunn's work in the Shorebirds Recovery Program. Cost approximately \$500 each.
- Rob and Barb are planning to pay for one box from their own charity and Rob suggested BLS funds be used to purchase two more
- Karen questioned whether Jodie would want three.

Action 13: Rob to contact Jodie to advise her of the Committee's approval of \$900, (in addition to the \$600 from Rob & Barb), to support the NPWS Shorebirds Recovery Program and for her to suggest the best use of those funds for her current priorities.

11.0 Next meeting - Friday 9 February 2018 2pm to 4pm ahead of the AGM Monday 12 February 2018

12.0 Other business:

Michael raised the bird hide project again and asked where to find funds. Yolande suggested applying for grant from council and Rob suggested the local Credit Unions. Brett suggested Lake Wollumboola as a location for a hide.

Actions to be carried forward to next meeting:

17 November 2017 meeting

Action 1: Brett and Rob to look at revamping BLS Website to comply with BLA branding guidelines, review content, add new Shoalhaven Bird Walks brochure and add links to BirdLife donations/membership sections.

Action 2: Karen to change "Talk donations" under income to "Talk entry fees" in future financial reports.

Action 3: Karen to follow up with NPWS and BLA on outstanding funds from NPWS photo exhibition.

Action 4: Karen to email Yolande a new contact for the South Coast Register and cc Kim.

Action 5: Kim will organise badges when ready to move forward with this, in discussion with Rob.

Action 6: Rob to revised the draft Action Plan incorporating the above points and circulate it to the Committee for final approval before submitting to Fiona Blandford.

Action 7: Yolande to consider organising a late afternoon walk and BBQ during daylight saving months with the support of non-Committee BLS members.

Action 8: Rob to meet with Fiona Blandford, BLA National Office Branch Co-ordinator and cover:

- her initial input on the draft Action Plan
- how they will manage communications for email addresses we provide
- how we get our members, Wildbird Protectors and supporters back from them
- clarify when we can get back the Aussie Backyard Bird Count results for the Shoalhaven
- tell her our plan for reviewing the BLS web-site

Action 9: AGM arrangements:

- Rob will send email to committee when date for AGM and next Committee meeting is confirmed.
- Kim to send email invitation to members, Wildbird Protectors, partners and friends 40 days before AGM.
- Rob to liaise with Brett for newsletter re AGM.

Action 10: Rob to arrange the speaker and venue for the first talk after the AGM in 2018.

Action 11: Mike to contact Barry Tomkinson, president of Milton NPA, to make sure we do not clash with their annual take date and speaker.

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