

## Minutes of 2015 BirdLife Shoalhaven AGM

Prior to the meeting Brett sent out an email to all branch members explaining that only one nomination had been received for each of the current committee positions. These had been seconded and accepted, and therefore under the terms of our working arrangements there would be no nominations from the floor and the positions would be deemed as filled, with the committee being unchanged.

President: Barry Virtue  
Secretary: Brett Davis  
Treasurer: Karen Davis  
Conservation Officer: Chris Grounds

In the absence of the President who sent his apologies, Karen Davis welcomed all members and thanked them for coming.

**Meeting started at:** 7:40pm

**Present:** 23 people in attendance

**Apologies:** Mike Jefferis  
Barb Liddle  
Rob Dunn  
John Rhodes  
Christine Sylva  
Maggie Mance  
Marg Hamon  
Marlene Grounds  
Yolande Cozijn  
Warren Wilson  
Barry Virtue  
Robyn Hill  
Doug Hargrave  
Mike and Rose Clear  
Bob Ashford

**Minutes of Last Meeting:** Brett read a summarized version of the minutes from the 2014 AGM and explained that the full minutes were available to members (via a password protected page) on the club's website. Brett moved that the minutes be accepted. Seconded by Chris Grounds. Carried.

**Business Arising:**

1. Barry gave a presentation on raptors to the Berry CWA.
2. Our submission to council re the use of Larmer Avenue land not being used as a skate park may have had some impact as on March 21, 2014 Council decided to identify \$650,000 in its long term financial plan for the delivery of a District Skate Park at the Bay and Basin Leisure Centre.
3. As far as the Round the Bay walk goes, Council seemed to ignore public opinion and our submission for the most ecologically friendly option for the path at Plantation Point and decided to go with a very wide and very expensive alternative.
4. Frances Bray reported on the latest developments at Lake Wollumboola, noting that the latest DA in the Lake Wollumboola area included provision for 5400 new houses, and that the only two councillors to vote against it were Amanda Findley and the General Manager, Russ Pigg.
5. The BirdLife Shoalhaven committee decided to follow the Vision, Mission Statement and Working Arrangements provided by BirdLife Australia, allowing for the limitations of our funding, the limited number of people that we had available, and the time, skills and motivation that those people had. Basically, we want to do what we can to further the cause of bird conservation in the Shoalhaven..
6. Regarding Common Mynas, nothing had been actioned since the last AGM. John Fimmano spoke about his experience with myna eradication and said he would pass on his information to Brett. Frances Bray asked us to ask both the SCC and BirdLife Australia about their Indian Myna policies. Brett agreed to follow this up.

**Correspondence In and Out:** Brett summarized a massive amount of correspondence in and out as follows:

Correspondence in was received from members of the public, local and overseas, re membership of BirdLife Shoalhaven and BirdLife Australia, bird identification, suggestions on where to bird in the Shoalhaven and what birds to see, when is the best time to visit here, Cairns etc.

Correspondence was also received from other birdwatching groups including the Milton Ulladulla Birders, Illawarra Birders, Bellingen Birders, BASNA (BirdLife Australia Southern NSW), Canberra Ornithological Group (COG), BirdLife Southern Highlands, and the Yarra Valley branch, plus the LWPA, and National Parks about Shorebirds and the Coomonderry Swamp project.

There was also a great deal of correspondence with the Head Office of BirdLife Australia mainly to do with web page setup, branch formation, as well as a huge amount of information from various Head Office divisions about education, Birds in Backyards, e-news and requests for articles, conservation officer activities, national events, like Farewell Shorebirds, Woodland Birds, the Threatened Bird Network, etc. In addition, we received a weekly membership spreadsheet.

Correspondence out was basically replying to all of the above, plus the completion of a form about the experience of the formation of the branch for head office.

Brett did not move that Correspondence In be received and Correspondence Out be confirmed, because given the volume of correspondence and the brief summary given he did not think it appropriate. He explained that if anyone has any concerns about correspondence, would like to know more about it, or wanted copies of any or all correspondence, they could get in touch with him after the meeting.

## Reports

**President's Report:** In Barry's absence Karen read a summary of the achievements of the branch during the previous year - see Appendix 1.

**Treasurer's Report:** Karen presented her treasurer's report - see Appendix 2.  
Karen moved that the Treasurer's Report be accepted.  
Seconded by Peter Salvair.  
Carried.

**Conservation Officer's Report:** Chris presented his report - see Appendix 3.

**Webmaster's Report:** Brett presented his report - see Appendix 4.

**Newsletter Editor's Report:** Brett presented his report - see Appendix 4.

## General Business:

1. The committee had decided that the LWPA should continue to take the initiative in strategy, timing and suggested content regarding Birdlife Australia submissions and letters re Lake Wollumboola, given their 22 years of experience dealing with the protection of the lake.

2. Frances Bray and Brett Davis spoke about the proposed dredging of various sites within the Shoalhaven, and the need to monitor and reply to the SCC's dredging policy, especially regarding the entrance to Currumbene Creek and Sussex Inlet, but also including Shoalhaven Heads and Lake Conjola.

3. Christine Rigg spoke about her attendance at "Bikes and Birds" - a BirdLife Australia promotion with Sean Dooley and Phil Liggett (the Voice of Cycling). Christine suggested that BirdLife Australia should have a patron with a public profile similar to Phil Liggett. Brett said he would investigate whether or not BirdLife Australia already had a patron, and if not he would write to head office to suggest they get one.

President asks "Any other general business?" until there is no more general business.

**Meeting Closed At:** 8:40pm

## **Appendix 1.**

### **BirdLife Shoalhaven achievements 2014**

#### **Branch Formation**

- First AGM
- First committee formed
- First Slide Show night
- Bank Account set up
- Funds received from BirdLife Australia
- Branch Banner organised
- Branch web page on BirdLife Australia website created
- Our own website created - [www.birdlifeshoalhaven.org](http://www.birdlifeshoalhaven.org)
- Facebook Page created
- Twitter Feed set up and embedded into News page of website

#### **Conservation**

- Submissions to relevant authorities re Lake Wollumboola
- Larmer Avenue Land at Sanctuary Point
- Heritage Estate at Erowal Bay

#### **Support of, and liaising with, existing conservation organisations**

- Lake Wollumboola Protection Association
- South Coast Shorebird Recovery Program

#### **BirdLife Shoalhaven assisting with surveys -**

- Private landowner of Greenhills near Milton
- Bundanon Trust at Bundanon
- NPWS at Coomonderry Swamp

#### **Membership**

24% increase from 154 to 191

#### **Newsletters**

4 editions (one per season) were produced and well received. Brett was thanked for his work.

#### **Talks**

One talk was held during the year at Tomerong Hall - about everything to do with Atlasing our birdwatching records.

#### **Public Liaison**

Successful and friendly interaction with existing birding groups both within the Shoalhaven (Shoalhaven Birders, Milton Ulladulla Birders, Bay and Basin Birders) and outside the Shoalhaven (Illawarra Birders, Illawarra Bird Observers Club, Southern Highlands branch of BirdLife Australia).

Participation in the World Environment Day held in the grounds of the Lady Denman Museum, where BirdLife Shoalhaven had a stand with personnel assisting the public with anything they wanted to know about birds, including becoming members of BirdLife Australia.

## Appendix 2.

### Treasurer's Report

#### BIRDLIFE SHOALHAVEN INCOME AND EXPENSES - 1st March 2014 - 28 February 2015

Bank Balance at 1/3/2014      NIL

#### Income

Birdlife Funding 2014      \$885.00

#### Expenses

Hall Hire \*      \$190.00

Website      \$9.90

Meeting exps      \$5.00

Postage      \$0.60

Bank Fees      \$5.40

**Total**      \$210.90

**Bank Balance at 28/2/2015**      \$674.10

\* Note: \$90 to be refunded after AGM meeting giving a balance of \$764.10.

## Appendix 3

### Conservation Officer's Report:

I took up this role mid-term after expressing an interest to Brett's call for volunteers for our committee. The role has proven to be just as expected: an interesting and productive learning curve.

#### **HALLORAN TRUST PLANNING PROPOSAL & LAKE WOLLUMBOOLA**

The first, quickly encountered task was to prepare a preliminary submission to Shoalhaven Council on the Halloran Trust Planning proposal for Culburra-Callala as it affected Lake Wollumboola. There was a full report of that in the Spring Newsletter. Any of our submissions will be reported in Newsletters and are of course available from Brett. A letter is being finalised for all Parties, Leaders and local candidates in the forthcoming NSW election inviting their response to our position on the proposed development. These responses will be emailed to our membership.

#### **AUSTRALIAN GEOGRAPHIC & 4x4 BEACH DRIVING**

The essence of this action was to challenge, through Letters to the Editor-in-Chief of A.G., their support for 4X4 beach driving without any recognition of the damage it does to beach sand ecology and shorebirds and their habitat. The Editor-In-Chief was initially a very reluctant respondent. That response was challenged with the support of our committee, BirdLife Australia staff and researchers and the National Parks Shorebird Supervisor, Jodi Dunn, had joined the support group. The outcome was that the Editor-in-Chief had promised a specialist article in 2015 dealing with shorebirds and the flyways. The original letter to her was published in Australian Geographic in January.

#### **LARMER AVENUE SANCTUARY POINT PROJECT**

This involves the Council owned block on the Cockrow Creek floodplain, which has been proposed as a bush-wetland bird sanctuary. A preliminary bird catalogue- Edition 1 has been developed and forwarded to the Basin Villages Forum to support their work with Council in seeking a Bush-Wetland-Bird Sanctuary on that area. The Environmental Planning staff of Council who are working on this project have been advised of the catalogue to support their work. Edition 2 of that list is in development and currently has 64 species listed and now includes two NSW OEH Listed Threatened Species.

#### **MYOLA SAND SPIT**

Shoalhaven Council have been formally approached about concerns related to the **birdlife of Myola Sand Spit**. The initial concern relates to the intrinsic importance of the site for birdlife and the disruptive intrusion of dogs in a 'Dog Prohibited Area'. Jodi Dunn of National Parks and Wildlife was consulted on this site in a number of contacts and was, as always, very helpful and supportive. Jodi forwarded our concerns to the Co-ordinator of the North Jervis Bay Shorebird Co-ordinator Wendy Johnson. Our own Stan Brown has also been kept in the loop as the Co-ordinator of the South Jervis Bay Shorebird group. A series of contacts and exchanges of views on the site indicated that Wendy and her group were just as concerned with the disturbance at the site by off-leash/leash dogs in a Prohibited Dog Zone. The Pied and Sooty Oystercatchers which frequent the site are Threatened Species and the migrant Eastern Curlew is seen regularly at the site.

A letter was forwarded to Council's Environmental Services Officer, Kelie Lowe and followed up with a supplementary letter indicating the Shorebird Co-ordinators support. The issue was also discussed with Council's Threatened Species Officer Angela Jenkins. Council has been called on to supervise the site, which we have rated as the leading sand resting area for shorebirds in Jervis Bay.

The Huskisson Woollamia Community Voice and the Callala Beach Progress Association were notified of our concerns.

This site will be affected by the **Currambene Creek Dredging Project** and it is anticipated we would be making a submission when the Review of Environmental Factors is exhibited for public input.

#### **JERVIS CMA NSW THREATENED SPECIES LIST**

A special contribution to our **Summer Newsletter** was prepared on **Threatened Species** of our area. The Office of Environment and Heritage's Threatened Species list of the Jervis CMA area was the reference for this list. It covered the area south of the Shoalhaven River. The illustrated article also provided members with the internet link to research any of the named species. It was a very interesting list of 49 species, 2 of which are included because of the possibility of them being in the area though the rest have been seen at some stage.

(Appendix 3 cont'd)

### **BIRDLIFE AUSTRALIA SHOREBIRD WORKSHOP**

A highpoint of the work has been to attend the day-long **Shorebird Workshop** conducted at Shoalhaven Heads by a very impressive BirdLife Australia Shorebird team.

### **THE FUTURE AND CHALLENGES**

- To recognize and act on bird conservation issues in the Shoalhaven and this will involve developing our own profile as a group.
- To continue to develop our own network of support in these issues.
- To refine our operation in doing this.
- To further develop a Shoalhaven-wide operation with specific support for the southern districts.

## **Appendix 4**

### **Webmaster's Report for 2015 BirdLife Shoalhaven AGM**

BirdLife Australia website: we have set up one page on the site, but it is so user-unfriendly that I set up our own website: [www.birdlifeshoalhaven.org](http://www.birdlifeshoalhaven.org).

We also have a Facebook page. At last count we had 40 likes!

I also set up a Twitter account, primarily for reporting rarities that may visit our area, but also because I can embed the feed into the News page on our website and can therefore update the page any time and any place via my mobile phone or laptop.

We also have a Picasa web albums account for photos from different events, such as birdwatching outings, trips away etc. Contributions are always welcome.

If anyone here is familiar with Facebook, Twitter or Picasa and would like to contribute news, information or photos to our social media pages, please let me know. It would really help to have additional people contributing, because it would make our sites more relevant and more worthwhile to our members and potential members.

### **Newsletter Editor's Report**

There have been four newsletters produced since our last AGM - one per season - and they have been well-received. Because they are strictly electronic - in PDF format - they are relatively easy to produce. I thank all the contributors to the newsletters, particularly Chris Grounds, Frances Bray, Tom Kaar, Marg Hamon, Bob Ashford, Christine Rigg, Sue Tolley, Ian Brown and Barry Virtue.