

## **Minutes of 2016 BirdLife Shoalhaven AGM**

**Meeting held at Tomerong School of Arts Hall at 7:30pm on Monday 4th April 2016**

**Opening of Meeting:** President Barry Virtue chose not to chair the meeting which was declared open by Secretary Brett Davis at 7:38pm.

**Present:** Attendance sheets show 51 people were present.

**Apologies:** Mike Jefferis  
Wendy Hartmann  
Maggie Paton  
Chris McGregor  
Max & Gill Markey  
Phil Craven

### **Minutes of Last Meeting:**

Brett read a summarized version of the minutes from the 2015 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 as a true and accurate record. Seconded by Frances Bray. Carried.

**Business Arising:** There was no business arising from the minutes of the 2015 AGM.

**Correspondence In and Out:** Brett summarized the 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, questions on where to bird in the Shoalhaven and what birds to see, when is the best time to visit here etc.

There was also a great deal of correspondence received from the Head Office of BirdLife Australia re information from the 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.

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.

**President's Report:** None

### **Treasurer's Report:**

Karen presented her treasurer's report - see Appendix 1. Karen moved that the Treasurer's Report be accepted. Seconded by Peter Salvair. Carried.

### **Webmaster's Report:**

Brett reported that very little had been added to the BirdLife Shoalhaven website, apart from the four seasonal newsletters and one additional link. The link was to the website of BirdLife Shoalhaven member Matthew Jones. Brett advised members wishing to become bird photographers that they should not visit this site as the photos are so good they would tend to discourage new bird photographers who would think they could not produce the same quality of work. Brett also reported that the BirdLife Shoalhaven Facebook page now had 131 "likes" and that our Twitter feed had 39 "followers".

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

Brett thanked all contributors to the newsletter and reminded members that submissions of articles and photographs are always welcome, with the Autumn newsletter due out later in the month.

**Conservation Officer Report:** Given as part of the presentations after the AGM - see Appendix 2

**Lake Wollumboola Report:** Given as part of the presentations after the AGM - see Appendix 3

**General Business:** None.

**Election of Committee Members:**

Prior to the meeting and in accordance with the branch working arrangements the secretary had sent out an email request to all members for nominations for all committee positions. A later email informed members that only one nomination had been received for each of the committee positions. Each had been seconded and the position accepted by the nominee. Barry Virtue had indicated that he was happy to step down from the Presidency, and Brett thanked him for his contributions to the branch during its formation and first two years. Barry also indicated that he would like to remain on the committee, although his input might be limited by extended travel during the year.

Under the terms of our working arrangements there was no need for nominations from the floor with all positions filled, so Brett announced the new committee as shown below.

**President:** Rob Dunn  
**Secretary:** Brett Davis  
**Treasurer:** Karen Davis  
**Conservation Officer:** Chris Grounds  
**Committee Members:** Matthew Jones  
Mike Jefferis  
Barry Virtue

**Close of Meeting:** Brett closed the meeting at 7:55pm and handed it over to new president Rob Dunn for a number of presentations.

**Presentations**

1. Rob Dunn - on the work done by BirdLife Australia and how BirdLife Shoalhaven fits into the local, national and international conservation efforts.
2. Frances Bray - a summary of the 2015/16 breeding season for Little Terns at Lake Wollumboola, an assessment of what the future holds, and an indication of what BirdLife Shoalhaven and its members can do for the conservation of the Lake.
3. Chris Grounds - on the history of the struggle to have Heritage Estates included in the Jervis Bay National Park and the efforts to prevent the rezoning of the land to residential, plus the conservation values of the land, its various ecosystems, and the damage done to the land through misuse over the years.

## Appendix 1

### Treasurer's Report

1<sup>st</sup> March 2015 - 29 February 2016

#### INCOME AND EXPENSES

|                                 |             |            |
|---------------------------------|-------------|------------|
| <b>Bank Balance at 1/3/2015</b> |             | 674.10     |
| <b>Income</b>                   |             |            |
| Birdlife Funding 2015           | 0.00        |            |
| Hall Hire refund (AGM 2015)     | 90.00       | 90.00      |
| <b>Expenses</b>                 |             |            |
| Hall Hire (AGM 2016)            | 150.00 *    |            |
| Website                         | 9.90        |            |
| Meeting expenses                | 6.20        |            |
| Postage                         | 0.00        |            |
| Bank Fees                       | <u>4.40</u> |            |
|                                 | 170.50      | 170.50     |
| <br>Bank Balance at 29/2/2016   |             | <br>593.60 |

\* Note: \$90 to be refunded after AGM giving a balance of \$683.60

## Appendix 2

### Conservation Officer's Report:

**Chris Grounds April 4 2016**

2015-16 has been my second term in this role and my report will be an overview of where we have been with conservation as a chance to pause and reflect.

BLS continued its support of Frances Bray and the LWPA with letters and submissions regarding the development and planning issues in the Lake Catchment. This matter remains one of the great conservation challenges in the Shoalhaven and involves one of our IBAs and National Parks. Our newsletters have carried detailed reports of the Lake.

Our newsletter has carried a series of articles with a designated local conservation message.

In Autumn it was the Eastern Ground Parrot and South Coast Shorebird Program features with update reports on Heritage Estate, Bherwerre Wetland and Myola Sand Spit.

The winter newsletter carried updates for Heritage Estate and Myola Spit, feature on Curlew Sandpiper and Eastern Curlew, and 'Saving Our Species' state government election pledge and a report on the local Eastern Osprey nesting.

In the spring issue Bherwerre Wetland was on the agenda again as was South Coast Shorebird Recovery, with a feature article on the conservation status of birds in the Shoalhaven based on the major data from BirdLife Australia survey. That article was also used in the New Bush Telegraph newspaper. The first successful nesting of the Eastern Osprey on the south coast of NSW was reported. The cudgel was also taken up regarding the impact of dogs on our beaches and bird habitat and the "Pet Friendly" tourism promotion by Council.

The Summer edition offered a heartening report on planning progress for Lake Wollumboola and associated bird reports and BLS again took up the tourism issue and the "Unspoilt" Shoalhaven mantra pushed by Council to add to an update on the Bherwerre Wetland, which was the subject of a major feature article in the Autumn New Bush Telegraph.

Adopting a bird survival focus there were three terrific stories to come out of 2015-16. The first was successful fledging of two offspring by the Eastern Osprey at Basin View, a NSW south coast first for a threatened species for BLS members and the Basin. It took three years and a winter without severe wind storm but it was reward for a prolonged monitoring. The second was the northern most nesting by Hooded Plovers, commonwealth EPBC Act Vulnerable threatened species, at Hammerhead Point, south of Lake Wollumboola and the third the one successful Hoody fledgling at Caves Beach. The 'Hoody' records peaks to the continuing voluntary work of so many of our members in the NPWS Shorebird program.

In April 2015 BLS had a satisfying victory when ecologist report material for the Currumbene Creek dredging project was literally replaced by our own data on Myola Sand Spit birds by council staff. Basically we pointed to the bad errors in bird species reporting which downplayed the risks involved at the site for domestic and threatened and migratory species shorebirds. BLS had previously been in contact with council re the intrusion of dogs into a dog prohibited area zoned E1 and that issue persists.

It was not possible to provide the same input on Sussex Inlet, Lake Conjola or Shoalhaven Heads, the other dredging sites. It was clear from the Currumbene Creek site that formal ecologist reports may not be adequate. Being able to offer bird data for particular sites in Shoalhaven, especially IBAs, will be a powerful action in conservation at such sites where development, government and council action potentially threaten birdlife and habitat.

BLS has made significant inputs for council and the BCCR Steering Committee on the Bherwerre Wetland Project. The BW Concept Plan has now been released to the Steering Committee. This commenced with the provision of a 68 species catalogue of bird species for the site developed from May 2014 to May 2015. BLA, at the request of the steering committee conducted a site workshop of a core of members earlier this year to provide recommendations for bird hides on the site and subsequently, the building of these hides. These will be the first in the Shoalhaven? An illustrated presentation to a Shoalhaven Wetlands Conference in May will feature on the agenda with a field walk, both with BLS conservation officer input.

BLS provided a supportive submission for Cudmirrah BirdLife members to Shoalhaven Council regarding request for off-leash area on Cudmirrah Beach.

Fortunately, we are part of a national network and tapping in to that is one key to our operation.

The continuation of our conservation focus in our newsletter is another key.

BLS has already taken up the tourism culture as it involved "Pet Friendly" dogma, "Unspoilt" and the dogs on beaches issues in the Shoalhaven and this will most certainly continue and require our input and responses because of the impact on habitat.

Our conservation focus has perhaps been a little central Shoalhaven oriented. The tourism and dogs issues, which are strongly related, will move us out of that. However we will need member interest, interest of other groups and some good networking to broaden our horizon.

In the greatest sense it will be our shared vigilance and networking, which will create a knowledge of the conservation issues affecting birds in the Shoalhaven. The Natural Resource & Floodplain Committee changes within Council, which have seen the three committees reduced to one for the whole of the Shoalhaven, will be a new challenge but a chance as always for the few BLS members on these committees to speak to conservation matters as they involved birds and habitat.

### **Appendix 3**

Frances Bray reported on issues with the protection of Lake Wollumboola, including the following -

- the Little Tern breeding season was extremely disappointing, with no fledglings reported. Nests were unsuccessful due to a number of factors, including fox predation, probably avian predation and wave washovers of the nesting area
- because of the health of the lake after it had opened and reclosed, there had been a significant increase in mud-crab and prawn populations which had attracted an influx of people taking crabs and prawns, seemingly with no regard for bag limits or the disturbance they cause to migratory birds, nesting birds and to the resident birds in the IBA