



**Minutes of BirdLife Shoalhaven AGM
12 February 2018 at the Vincentia Golf Club,
49 Murray Street, Vincentia**

The meeting opened at 7pm.

Attendance: 33

Apologies: Christopher Doubleday, Pauline Taylor, Ian Brown, Nicola Clark, Ann Millard, Frances Bray, Michael Smith, Sue and Stan Brown

Acceptance of Minutes of Last Meeting: Moved Brett Davis, Seconded Robin Hill - Carried.

Business Arising: No business arising

Correspondence In and Out

Major correspondence is handled by individual committee members, primarily the President and Conservation Officer, most of it being in the form of submissions which are detailed on our website, along with any relevant responses. It is freely available to our members at all times. As a result, it was agreed that there was no need for correspondence in and out to be reported on separately by the Secretary.

President's Report: Rob Dunn

2017 was another active and productive year for BirdLife Shoalhaven.

The challenges presented by the conservation and advocacy focus of our work has continued and will be a constant looking forward, with the Shoalhaven's increasing population, development and tourism driving pressure on the local environment. Chris Ground's conservation reports in the year have documented these. None of these have been simple or easy to address and have all taken a lot of time, energy and commitment. A special thanks to Chris, who we are fortunate to have him on our committee as conservation officer.

Our key communication platforms continued and expanded in 2017. The newsletter is going out to more people and has more content. Facebook and Twitter are reaping similar rewards with the web-site being a further reference source. Many thanks to Brett Davis for the time he puts into this and to Kim Touzel in her tireless work as Secretary, which inevitably increases in line with an expanding database and activities.

Our on-going commitment to the promotion of the MUD Birders' and Shoalhaven Birdwatchers' bird outings through our newsletter has continued with additional walks being put on by BLS members in the Jervis Bay and Basin area. We have also promoted the work of NPWS Shorebird Recovery program and the work of the Lake Wollumboola Protection Association Inc.

We organized two evening talks in the year with Gary Howling on the conservation of connectivity in the landscape in April, and Judy Harrington on the White-bellied Sea-eagle and EagleCAM story in November. Both had good turn-outs and added new names to our supporter list.

Yolande Cozijn has continued to attract interest in the Birds in Backyard program as guest speaker at a number of community events. In 2017 she gave 12 talks to over 400 people, a number of whom became members. Yolande was also featured in an article in the South Coast Register and the Ulladulla News.

Two one-off highlights of the year were the Key Biodiversity Area workshop, which we hosted in August, and the production of the new Bird Walks brochure.

The workshop, opened by Mayor Amanda Findley, drew 50 attendees from 14 BirdLife branches and bird clubs across NSW with training in the Birddata survey tool. This had a number of direct benefits for BLS with newly trained members in survey techniques and setting up survey areas in the Jervis Bay KBA and for key bird walks.

The Bird Walk brochure idea was kicked off in January when we approached the Council's Tourism team. I fully expected a "sounds-good-but-we-do-not-have-funding" response. The opposite was the case and six months later the brochure was complete with 4000 copies printed for us with more copies in the Council's main information offices. I have received many compliments on this initiative and certainly the creative design by Council's in-house graphic designer has added to its appeal. A special thanks to Charles Dove, present at the meeting, who provided 2-3 images of all birds in the Shoalhaven to be used by the council team in producing the Bird Walk brochure.

Karen Davis as well as filling our Treasurer role and guardian of the Jervis Bay KBA has been working with BLA to set up the Bird Walk brochure walks on Birddata and leading BLS walks. Special thanks given to Karen for her work, which will continue into the coming year.

At our last Committee meeting we signed off on an action plan for the year ahead. This obviously includes all our on-going activities, such as the newsletter, social media, three evening talks, more Birds in Backyard presentations, bird outings and the inevitable conservation and advocacy work.

A flow-on from the KBA workshop and the Bird Walk brochure will involve us in new activities next year with Karen Davis vetting new Birddata records for the Shoalhaven and a core group completing Birddata surveys.

There were some new initiatives that BLS Committee members put their hand up to take the lead on.

Brett Davis is keen to overhaul the web-site and make it more relevant to our audiences. This has already started, so watch-this-space for more.

Mike Jefferis is not satisfied with just getting Council's support for the Bird Walk brochure and now wants to get support to build the Shoalhaven's first bird hide - an exciting goal to set for 2018.

The Aussie Backyard Bird Count was a great success for BirdLife Australia in October. We were a bit slow on picking up on the potential of this Australia-wide project. To do it properly will take effort, but it is a great opportunity, especially to promote birds in our schools, which is an area where we need to make some traction. I have put my hand up to be project leader for this and will be asking for support and ideas of how we can really get behind the Count in October 2018.

Unfortunately, in 2017 the Committee lost two key members with the departure of Barry Virtue, who has moved to Bermagui, and Matt Jones for health reasons. I would like to put on record my thanks for their efforts and the work of the remaining Committee over the past year. It is always a challenge for any group to find new Committee members. So, the Committee has decided to take a new tack and, rather than simply replacing Barry and Matt, make a greater effort to have members take the lead on one-off or on-going activities.

Conservation Officer's Report: Christopher Grounds

My report will reflect that there have been four quarterly reports in our Magazine/Newsletter and you have access to all of these. With that in mind I would like to consider for you just some significant progress.

Can I say at the outset that I have tremendous ongoing support from our committee and I would like to formally thank them. We are all volunteer, mostly retired, community members with a few dual citizens and we get through much more work and progress than we might imagine we could.

The context for our work in bird conservation, the fundamental purpose of BirdLife Australia, is increasingly of some serious concern. Climate change, sea level rise, coastal hazards, native vegetation clearing, new biodiversity laws, the orchestrated demise of the NSW NPWS, the gross mismanagement of the Murray-Darling system, unwise urban planning and development, destruction of habitat and habitat corridors, habitat pollution with cruise ships and coal companies all mean conservation organizations seem to all be in overload. The Shoalhaven experiences most of these environmental threats.

One of the substantial concerns of BirdLife Australia and thus BirdLife Shoalhaven is with conservations of places critical to bird survival. In one respect the 2017 move to Key Biodiversity Areas (KBA) was a major element of change.

In our geographical area of responsibility BLS considered the challenge of an area not a declared KBA but which is of outstanding biodiversity value and exceptional birdlife value – Shoalhaven Heads. We needed a sound position for advocacy, which we didn't have. We now have a considered and informed position with supporting resources on this area as it includes Seven Mile Beach NP, Coomonderry Swamp, Shoalhaven estuary and Comerong Island NR. This places us in a position to respond to conservation challenges and they do exist for this area. It has also placed us in a position to build conservation partners and networks. In addition to BirdLife Australia handling our claim to have the area declared a KBA, we have now been involved in significant activities on this area with NPWS, Local Land Services, Conservation Volunteers and Shoalhaven City Council. In each case we have been able to make important and valued contributions.

Karen Davis co-ordinates a monitoring program of bird species monitoring in the Jervis Bay KBA as Guardian using the Birddata App. Such partnerships played a valuable part in the campaign, as brief as it was, in the conserving of the Vincentia TAFE Block into the JBNP. The Heritage Estate

Network was joined by Birdlife Shoalhaven and the Jervis Bay Regional Alliance and an amazing array of people in key positions to convince the State government of the wise course of action. We are now considering the possible development of the key environment near this block and opposite the Woolworths-Bayswood development.

There have been actions focused on particular species in any part of the Shoalhaven. Many of our members devote a huge number of hours to the NPWS Shorebird Recovery Program along the Shoalhaven Coast and some have joined NPWS in the on-going monitoring of the Eastern Ground Parrot in the Jervis Bay National Park.

We forged a new alliance in 2017 with the Eurobodalla Natural History group in an extended monitoring of a new Eastern Osprey nest at Batemans Bay, a first for that area and one of only three known nests on the south coast of which only one, the Batemans Bay nest, had verified success.

On reflection, we have valuable links now with quite a range of conservation organizations and the growth in extent and strength of our network and our credibility in this network certainly pleases me. I note in the latest BirdLife Australia email just such a partnership and network of 41 organizations including BirdLife was seeking innovation and change in environmental laws.

What are challenges for 2018? Well, they are many but the one I would mention tonight is to ask you to check how you are contributing to the birdlife conservation challenge in the Shoalhaven. Never be afraid to say or write to me. If you need support in doing that please let me know.

Treasurer's Report: Karen Davis

BIRDLIFE SHOALHAVEN

INCOME AND EXPENSES REPORT

1 January to 31 December 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	255.00	
KBA W/Shop Hosting from BSNSW	500.00	
KBA W/Shop exp reimbursement	237.00	
Talk entry fees	143.60	
		1195.60
<u>Expenses</u>		
Hall Hire	229.00	
Domain Name	0.00	
Meeting exps	96.00	
Gift Judy Harrington	19.95	
Postage	0.00	
Bank Fees	<u>75.50</u>	
		420.45
Cashbook Balance at 31/12/17	\$	<u>1476.35</u>
<u>Add</u>		
Unpresented Cheques		0.00
Bank Balance at 31/12/17	\$	<u><u>1476.35</u></u>

The expenses include \$70 for an audit certificate required by Birdlife Australia. \$900 of the closing bank balance has been allocated to provide financial support for the NPWS Shorebird Recovery Program. We are waiting on a final proposal on how Jodie Dunn the Program Co-Ordinator proposes to use the funds for the benefit of the program.

Webmaster's Report and Newsletter Editor's Report - Covered in the President's Report.

General Business: None

Election of Committee Members:

Rob Dunn explained that because only one nomination had been received for each Committee position, there was no need for an election to decide committee positions, and he announced the new committee as follows:

- President - Rob Dunn
- Secretary - Kim Touzel
- Treasurer - Karen Davis
- Conservation Officer - Chris Grounds
- Media Officer - Yolande Cozijn
- Webmaster & Social Media - Brett Davis
- General Committee - Mike Jefferis

Close - Rob concluded the AGM by thanking members that have supported our work over the past year and encouraging them to continue leading bird walks, doing bird surveys, adding old copies of the BirdLife magazine to the piles of journals in various reception rooms and forwarding newsletters on to friends.

The meeting closed at 7:50pm.