



**MINUTES OF THE BIRDLIFE SHOALHAVEN AGM
HELD ON 19 FEBRUARY 2019 AT THE
MILTON ULLADULLA BOWLING CLUB, 68 ST VINCENT STREET, ULLADULLA**

Rob Dunn opened the meeting at 7.15pm 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 33 people attending.
He added that apologies had been received from a further 14 members.

Acceptance of minutes of the 2018 AGM – refer <http://birdlifeshoalhaven.org/pdfs/2018agminutes.pdf>

Acceptance of the minutes was moved by Brett Davis, seconded by Barbara Liddle 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 Chris Grounds 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 report prepared by Karen Davis, BLS Treasurer, is detailed below:

<u>Income and expenses – 1/1/18 to 31/12/18</u>	
Cashbook Balance at 1/1/2018	\$ 1476.35
<u>Income</u>	
Sales of items at Festival (\$477) and other events	1171.05
Sale of photos at NPWS 2017 Exhibition	430.00
Donations from photographers at NPWS 2018 Exhibition	305.00
Grant received for shorebird display boxes	600.00
Bird Haven Festival raffle	350.00
Donations	150.00
BLS evening talks entry fees	131.35
	3137.40
<u>Expenses</u>	
Hall Hire	58.25
BLS evening talks expenses	60.00
Bird Haven Festival expenses	79.40
Postage	0.00
Funding for two display boxes for NPWS Shorebirds Recovery Program	1500.00
Bank fees	70.00
	1767.65
Cashbook Balance at 31/12/18	\$ <u>2846.10</u>

Rob Dunn highlighted the increase in the year of our cash funds from \$1,476 to \$2,846 in the year. The Committee has approved that \$1,000 of these funds will be retained for

our on-going costs, while \$1,800 will go towards the design and installation of signage at birds walks.

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 Kim Touzel, seconded by Rob Dunn and passed unanimously.

Election of Committee Members:

Rob Dunn noted that prior to the meeting and in accordance with BLS rules, an email had been sent out to members seeking nominations to join the Committee. He added that as only one nomination had been received for each position, there was no need for nominations from the floor or voting. As such the BLS Committee was confirmed as:

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

Other general business – There was no other general business

Close – the meeting closed at 8pm.

APPENDICES

PRESIDENT'S REPORT TO THE 2019 AGM – ROB DUNN

2018 has been another active year for BLS.

Every year sees highs and lows in our bird conservation work, which Chris will go through in detail shortly. We continue to be indebted to Chris for the energy and commitment he puts into this. We're really lucky to have him on board.

As in previous years BLS arranged several guest speakers on various issues, while MUD Birders, Shoalhaven Birdwatchers and BLS members maintained a full calendar of bird walks. In October the inaugural Bird Haven Festival in Shoalhaven Heads was a huge success thanks to the efforts of Cathy Law and Perrie Croshaw. The Festival drew over 120 people, many of whom were birding novices and others who had especially travelled from out of the area. This proved that bird tourism has real potential in the Shoalhaven and that there are lots of local people who want to learn more and be involved. The organisers are already in planning this year's event to make it even bigger and better. So, put the weekend of 19 & 20 October 2019 in your diaries now!

At the beginning of 2018, the BLS Committee set itself the challenge of building Shoalhaven's first bird hide and promoting our bird walks with interpretative signage. As we have just seen,

three new bird hides with signage are planned to be built at Burrill Lakes, fully funded by South East Local Land Services. Charles Dove has done an amazing job in making this happen almost single handed and we are all indebted to him for this. An obvious location for a bird hide was at Lake Wollumboola, which we discussed with Frances Bray. She then said "but we already have a bird platform, would that count?!" She then took me through the totally overgrown path to the existing dilapidated viewing platform. The work to restore and extend the platform will start soon and fully funded by Council with a \$10,000 budget. In addition, with funds from the Festival and the Migratory Shorebirds Save our Species grant, interpretive signs will be installed at Lake Wollumboola and Shoalhaven Heads. At our last Committee meeting we agreed that we will continue to fund signage at other bird walk locations with Bangalee Reserve being our next target. So watch this space on making this all happen this year!

Our Magazine show that BLS and our network continue to make a difference for the conservation of our birds. This is underpinned by our expanding supporter base. BLS now has a database 600 members and supporters and over 600 on Facebook; a number which continues to increase each year. This has been driven by community interest in our conservation work, more talks and walks, community group presentations, the Festival and distributing the Magazine. Yolande has helped make a lot of this happen with her Birds in Backyard community talks. In 2018 she did 9 talks to over 300. We also now have a new website. It has all our Magazines, an increasing number of bird walks, details on our conservation projects and campaigns, a calendar of events, an emerging bird photo library, all our latest news and it looks great! Brett can take all the credit for both the Magazine and the new web-site. I get a lot of comments from people saying how impressive the Magazine is and the web-site is now getting due recognition.

The success of BLS is due to the work of a lot of people. I have just thanked Chris, Yolande and Brett, who play key roles on the Committees. I also need to mention Kim for responding to a lot of the increasing emails we receive of the 'what bird is this' variety to 'what are we doing about this'. Karen keeps the books balanced and is the Jervis Bay KBA Guardian. Mike plays a key role in making sure we are linked in with what is happening down here and has worked on projects, like the bird walk brochure and bird hides/platform. Increasingly there are more people outside the Committee, taking on projects and leading walks. I have already mentioned Cathy, Penny and Charles. Hugh Capes and Norm Webb also deserve a special mention with the Save our Glossies project at JBMM. They arranged a talk and the planting of 100 casuarinas and put up four bird boxes. More people are leading bird walks and giving talks and the contributions of our great photographers should not be forgotten. Then there are our friends and partners in conservation. Lake Wollumboola would not be what it is today without the work of Frances Bray and her friends in the Lake Wollumboola Protection Association. There is the Shorebirds Recovery Program, Shoalhaven Birders and of course MUD Birders. But I would also like to make special mention of the environmental staff at Council and our friends at NPWS. They do amazing work despite being woefully under-resourced and it annoys me that so often they go unacknowledged.

On a sad note, Frances Bray & I both want to express our condolences at the passing of Matt Jones and show our appreciation of his amazing contribution to BLS both as a member and Committee member and his tireless work with the Lake Wollumboola Protection Association Inc. He was a true champion for bird conservation.

So many thanks for everyone's support for BLS and bird conservation in 2018. 2019 will inevitably bring more conservation challenges for BLS, but hopefully more wins to celebrate together, as well as opportunities to learn more about our birds with other interesting, fun

people. I look forward to playing my own part in all of this and catching up with many of you in the year ahead.

CONSERVATION OFFICER REPORT TO 2019 AGM - CHRIS GROUNDS

INTRODUCTION

I would first acknowledge that we are meeting in the Yuin country of the Ulladulla people and pay my respects to their elders past and present.

This report deals with matters I have been directly involved with in 2018-2019.

The conservation effort of BLS occurs in a broad context.

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, which all means conservation organizations seem to all be in overload. [2018 CO Report to AGM]

NSW recorded the **hottest year on record and the hottest January on record this year** in a sustained trend of increasingly hotter than standard years since 2000, as did the global oceans 'marine heat wave' noted in the Tasman Sea-Pacific Ocean. Bourke had a sequence of 21 days over 40 degree maximum. Many other 'hottest ever' records were broken.

Australia set **records for habitat destruction and wildlife extinction**. The scientists are saying that it is not too late but something has to happen now.

The Commonwealth law for environment protection, the **EPBC Act 1999**, is due for Review this year and campaigns will intensify following the federal election. BLA are one of these partners in the campaign.

The recent introduction of the **Threatened Species Index** is significant. The Threatened Species Index for Australia is a research project to develop understanding of population trends across Australia's threatened species. The Threatened Species Index (TSX) began as a research project of the National Environmental Science Program's [Threatened Species Recovery Hub](#). In the first phase, it has focused on building a [Threatened Species Index for Australian Birds](#) (TBX), in collaboration with [Birdlife Australia](#).

There is of course a **CO Report in each of the quarterly Committee Meeting Minutes and BLS quarterly magazine with subsidiary CO feature articles, which include Web Watch and Conservation Curiosities**.

SHOALHAVEN COUNCIL

Worring Heights Precinct Plan: has been through Council's exhibition process. Our BLS input was summarized and reported to Council, as with all such submissions. The report was accepted and it now waits on further advice from SCC. This is a critical area involving both JBPN,

associated Heritage Estate properties and BNP in association with the Woolworths and Bayswood developments.

A **BirdLife perspective was included in a submission to SCC** concerning a proposal to develop an overflow, car park on the site of an old tip on the Naval College Road. This part of the submission noted it as an E1 Conservation area with the presence of both the Eastern Bristlebird and the Eastern Ground Parrot.

A majority Shoalhaven councillors voted to **disband the Natural Resources and the Sustainability committees**, which involved significant progressive community participation. The Natural Resources Committee or at least a group of eight aligned progressive community representatives had been responsible for challenging the Tourism and tourism staff in presentations to the committee. These encounters had highlighted the significant gulf between environmental interests and tourism. The NRFMC was an important forum for advocacy for Shoalhaven birdlife interests. Mike Clear and myself were members of that group.

Then the **Council's Preliminary Growth Management Strategy** was taken to the community prepared in a bit of a rush by outside consultants at the state government behest. The major flaws – a total misrepresentation of our Shoalhaven natural environment (mention a photo of the Berry donut Van) and a complete and abject failure to define and enunciate the Sustainability concept. The GMS natural environment concept lacks a biodiversity perspective and thus a recognition birdlife. These two events not linked?

BLS completed a major submission to Council for the exhibited **Draft Destination Management Plan 2018-2023 (TOURISM)**. We expressed particular serious concerns with the characterisation of natural environment and the highly restricted concept of sustainability. (Reminder Submissions are on our website)

A Council **Shorebird article in their community Newsletter of December 20** contained a number of serious flaws. As usual it seems from council staff contact that environmental services staff had no role in the preparation of the poorly sourced, consulted and dated information. The necessary protocols seemed to be abandoned.

BLS has also provided a **submission to support advocacy with council regarding conservation of urban trees and tree canopy**, recognizing the negative impact on birdlife of the known and continuing demise of urban trees and natural vegetation habitats in the Shoalhaven.

The most intense and dramatic action involving Council was the campaign organised by Mike Clear and supported by BLS concerning **Cudmirrah Beach** and a council decision to move it to "Dog Off-leash" status. The reports are in our E-magazine. All of this was on the tail of Council's majority **Cudmirrah Beach** decision to introduce Off-leash dog to a beach with a history of shorebird breeding. Of course the proposal smacked of dreadful consultation, almost shocking misinformation and poor governance. BLS played a key role in getting this over-turned and hopefully providing a lesson to the councillors who were prepared to implement a very bad decision regarding the environment and birdlife. Subsequently, four pairs of red-capped Plovers nested on the beach, though unsuccessfully I understand. I would like to acknowledge and praise the work of Mike Clear in this campaign, which he generated as the Co-ordinator of a Shorebird Recovery Volunteer Group. It was excellent leadership.

OTHER CONSERVATION MATTERS

The BLS conservation project with **Shoalhaven Heads** continues and has to this point involved three major presentations and guided walks in association with conservation partners CVA, NPWS as well as the Bird Haven Festival. BLS now has a research and discussion paper in place on the broader Shoalhaven Heads area, supported with various PowerPoint Presentations.

Another project Karen and I have been working on is to develop a **BLS Resource on the Jervis Bay KBA**, of which Karen is the BLA Guardian. The broader purpose of this is to develop a birdlife biodiversity concept of the KBA and put BLS in a better position to advocate for the KBA, as we do with Shoalhaven Heads and Lake Wollumboola. The other positive effect of this is to strengthen our coverage of and connection to the Shoalhaven.

BLS actively supported by submission the LWPA position on Planning related to the proposed Halloran developments of the **Lake Wollumboola catchments** and in particular the Long Bow Point Golf Course. In effect, this reiterates our prior positions through a number of letters and submissions but the recent decisions by the Independent Planning Commission and the state Department of Planning and Environment represent critical, watershed determinations in resolving the Halloran proposal in favour of Lake Wollumboola. It has been a very long haul for Frances Bray whose work has been forensic and unrelenting in support of the case for the Lake. The position taken by these agencies is due in no small part to her work.

I have used our E-magazine for conservation reporting with the **continuing inclusion of both a Conservation Officer report and the Web Watch section**. I have consciously varied C.O. reporting, e.g. Conservation Curiosities, with members interests in mind and I have varied the CO Reports away from a diary format to allow for some focus and greater detail on special birdlife conservation matters. Tonight however, it is diary format!

A major feature article was prepared for our Magazine involving the **Bherwerre Wetland-Birds-Art-and See Change Arts Festival**. The committee subsequently attended the opening of the recent art installation at the wetland, which is based on birdlife at the site. I have also just helped lead a 'Reading The Land' walk on the Bherwerre Wetland for local artists with a view to generating another exhibition for the See Change Festival this year. Birdlife continues to play an informal role in the wetlands project.

The most recent development prior to tonight has been consideration of developing relationships with related to the initiative by **BLA to build working relationships with Indigenous peoples**. This will apply just as much in the Shoalhaven as in most other places. It will be quite challenging but has the potential to be extremely productive. BLA has established a staff working group known as the **BirdLife Australia Indigenous Community of Practice (BAICOP)**. I will be doing some initial work in liaison with the Booderee-Wreck Bay community and staff. They reached a most disturbing point in their community life with the finding of CPAS contamination in their community lands.

Other than these various matters it has been quiet !!!!