



2022 BIRD HAVEN FESTIVAL CONFERENCE PROGRAM

**Saturday 22 October, 11am to 5pm with registration from 10.30,
at the Shoalhaven Heads Bowling Club,
76 Shoalhaven Heads Rd, Shoalhaven Heads**

The Bird Haven Festival was a huge success in 2018 and 2019, bringing hundreds of people together in Shoalhaven Heads to celebrate birds and learn more about their behaviour, habitat and conservation.

BirdLife Shoalhaven is thrilled to bring the Festival back again in 2022.

The Conference is the last of this year's Festival events. The first two were aimed at aspiring birdwatchers with a talk in Ulladulla, launching BirdLife Australia's Aussie Bird Count, and a bird walk in Huskisson.

The Conference speakers are prominent ornithologists, researchers and program managers, leading bird conservation and expanding our knowledge of many of our bird species.



We would like to thank BirdLife Southern NSW, the NSW South-East Biodiversity & Conservation Division & the Shoalhaven Heads Bowling & Recreation Club for their support of the Conference.

10.30-11 – REGISTRATION & MORNING TEA

11-12.30 – MORNING SESSION

- **Welcome to Country by Jerrinja elder, Delia Lowe**
- **Fiona Phillips MP, Member for Gilmore, will open the Conference**
- **Professor David Lindenmayer AO - Professor of Ecology and Conservation Biology at The Australian National University's Fenner School of Environment and Society**

“Sustainable farming, landcare and birds in the temperate woodlands of south-eastern Australia”

Professor David Lindenmayer is a world-leading expert in forest ecology and resource management, conservation science, and biodiversity conservation. He currently runs five large-scale, long-term research programs in south-eastern Australia, primarily associated with developing ways to conserve biodiversity in farmland, wood production forests, plantations, and reserves. He has maintained some of the largest, long-term research programs in Australia, with some exceeding 37 years in duration. He has published 1,360 scientific articles, including 880 peer-reviewed papers in international scientific journals, and 48 books, including award-winning textbooks and other seminal books. He is among the world's most productive and most highly-cited scientists, particularly in forest ecology and conservation biology. In 2020 and 2021, *The Australian* listed the 30 leading Australian scientists, and David was listed as the leading conservation and biodiversity expert in the nation. He held a prestigious Australian Research Council Laureate Fellow from 2013-2018, is a Fellow of the Australian Academy of Science, and the Ecological Society of America, and was appointed an Officer of the Order of Australia (AO) in 2014. His research has been recognised through numerous awards, including the Eureka Science Prize (three times), Whitley Award (seven times), the Serventy Medal for Ornithology, and the Australian Natural History Medallion. In 2018, he was awarded the prestigious Whittaker Medal from the Ecological Society of America and, in 2022, was elected a Fellow of the NSW Royal Zoological Society.

David will talk about how healthy natural assets underpin farm productivity and landscape resilience and the role played by farmers, Landcarers, natural resource agencies and birds. David will talk about Australia's temperate woodland birds, what is happening to their populations over time, how they respond to interventions, like replanting and grazing control, and the impacts of the Noisy Miner, and ways we can make robust predictions about bird conservation on farmland. The kinds of monitoring and research insights discussed in this talk will be critical for future efforts on farm-level biodiversity certification and stewardship. Much of this work informed the new biodiversity prediction tool, Birdcast, which has been developed by the Sustainable Farms project at the ANU and is based on the past 24 years of detailed large-scale work in the temperate woodlands of south-eastern Australia.

12.30-1.30 – LUNCH

1.30-3 – AFTERNOON SESSION

- **Alison Russell-French OAM – Chair Australasian Waders Studies Group and former President of Birds Australia**

“How collaboration in the East Asian – Australasian Flyway Partnership is working to protect migratory waterbirds and their habitat along the Flyway”.

Alison Russell-French has been Chair of the Australasian Wader Studies Group (AWSG) for 9 years and a member for nearly 20 years. Alison has been engaged with the East Asian – Australasian Flyway Partnership (EAAFP) for over 20 years and, as Chair, represents the AWSG at partnership meetings. Alison was President of Birds Australia from 2004 to 2010. She was in the Australian Public Service for 32 years and 16 of those years was in the Environment Department in the Senior Executive Service.

Alison’s presentation will look at how the EAAFP brings together representatives of national governments, Conventions, NGOs and corporates, to support the conservation of migratory waterbirds and their habitats in the Flyway. As a non-legal framework, the EAAFP has flexibility to develop strategic directions, approaches, and priorities for partners to adopt, either individually or in collaboration. It provides a model that gives partners options to take action. In contrast, the Convention model is quite limited in its operation. For example, the Ramsar Convention nominates Ramsar sites, but does not have funding to invest in initiatives. Resolutions passed by Conventions are left to countries to action or not. An important focus for the EAAFP is on conservation and sustainable use of wetlands and other migratory waterbird habitats. Alison will explain how the EAAFP achieves this through the collaboration of the 23 mostly developing countries in the Flyway, which contain almost half the world’s population.

- **Dr Alex Maisey, Research Fellow with the Research Centre for Future Landscapes and Department of Ecology, Environment and Evolution at La Trobe University**

The Southern Superb Lyrebird: an ecosystem engineer and impacts of the 2019/20 megafires on its habitat

Dr Alex Maisey is a postdoctoral researcher in ecology at La Trobe University. He is interested in ecosystem function and the ways biota interact with their environment. Through many years volunteering with environmental groups in the Dandenong Ranges near Melbourne, he has developed a passion for local forest restoration and conservation.

Alex’s PhD research topic was the ecosystem engineering role of the iconic Superb Lyrebird in Victoria’s central highlands. This project required extensive field work over two years, leading him to explore the world of microbial ecology, soil chemistry, entomology, as well as the more familiar fields of botany and zoology. In the aftermath of Australia’s Black Summer, Alex undertook a study, funded by BirdLife Australia and WWF-Australia, to understand the impacts of the fires on the lyrebird and its habitat in south-eastern Australia. He is currently working on a large-scale project to define and measure natural capital on farms (i.e. the natural assets of landscapes providing essential ecosystem services, such as soil, pollination, biodiversity etc.) on farms across Tasmania, Victoria and NSW. Alex will provide a brief overview of the important role lyrebirds play as ecosystem engineers in SE Australia’s forests, before delving into the impacts of the megafires on the habitat of the southern subspecies of lyrebird.

- **Dr Catherine Price - ARC Discovery Early Career Research Fellow with the University of Sydney's School of Life & Environmental Sciences**

“Olfactory misinformation: Using “fake news” to protect shorebirds from invasive predators”

Dr Catherine Price is a behavioural ecologist with a background in threatened species management. Her research aims to understand the sensory and behavioural drivers of foraging behaviour and develop new techniques for protecting vulnerable species.

Mammalian predators can be a persistent threat to ground-nesting birds, consuming eggs and adult birds. Targeting predator behaviour, particularly reliance on prey odour cues, has led to a new approach for reducing nest predation based on ‘olfactory misinformation’. Testing was carried out on an approach in New Zealand where a suite of native shorebirds is predated by a range of invasive mammals. The two-year landscape scale experiment led to an increase in nesting success by around 50% without removing any predators. Catherine will discuss the background to this new approach, why and how it works and the types of scenarios where it might be useful as a conservation tool.

3-3.30 – AFTERNOON TEA

3.30-5 - AFTERNOON SESSION

- **Emily Bradstock, Honours student at the University of Wollongong & Dr David Bain, Senior Threatened Species Officer, NSW Department of Planning and Environment**

“The Eastern Bristlebird – its ecology, song culture and conservation”

Emily Bradstock will talk about patterns of singing behaviour and variation in song within the Eastern Bristlebird population located on the Bherwerre Peninsula, Jervis Bay. This research will improve our understanding of Eastern Bristlebird song culture and allow for comparison to be made with other populations, including the translocated population at Wilson’s Promontory, Victoria.

Dr David Bain has been working in threatened species conservation for over 20 years in universities, NGOs, government and the private sector, and in a wide range of areas from birds to orchids to threatened ecological communities. He has been involved in eastern bristlebird conservation for most of his career and will talk about the many translocations of Eastern Bristlebirds, including the most recent movements from Jervis Bay to Wilson’s Promontory, the impacts of the 2019-20 bushfires on the species and other conservation initiatives securing the Eastern Bristlebird into the future.

- **Michelle Toms, Natalie Nye, Jared Brown and Jason Groves, Members of the Aboriginal Advisory Group for the 'Healthy Country Plan for Glossy Black-Cockatoos' project**

The Aboriginal-led ‘Healthy Country Plan for Glossy Black-Cockatoos’

Glossy Black-Cockatoo populations in south eastern Australia were severely impacted by the 2019-2020 bushfires. By empowering local Aboriginal custodians to reconnect with fire impacted landscapes and build on their existing cultural knowledge and values, this project will help secure the Glossy Black-Cockatoo in the Shoalhaven through the development of Aboriginal-led actions in a Healthy Country Plan. Michelle Toms, Natalie Nye, Jared Brown and Jason Groves, all members of the Aboriginal Advisory Group for the project, will explain how they are undertaking habitat assessments and developing Aboriginal-led actions to address current and future threats for this culturally significant species.