

**MINUTES OF A GENERAL MEETING OF THE SOUTH AUSTRALIAN ORNITHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION
INC. HELD ON 26 OCTOBER 2021 AT THE THEBARTON COMMUNITY CENTRE**

OPENING: The President opened the meeting at 7:45 pm

APOLOGIES: Wendy Bell

MINUTES: Minutes of a meeting held at Port Augusta on 9 September were presented for approval. Proposed Steven Langley, seconded by Alan Burns, approved by a show of hands.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT:

MEMBERSHIP: The President advised that 34 new members had joined the Association in the past month and that membership now stands at over 1,000 members.

HINDMARSH VALLEY: The President noted that a new National Park was being created from 1,000 hectares of SA Water land. The Association has offered to conduct a base-line survey of bird life followed by annual surveys. The President called upon any interested members to contact him regarding the surveys.

PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION: The President noted that it was proposed to move this Government sponsored competition towards getting school children involved. The President asked any members who were interested in providing support to this initiative to contact him.

BIRD PRINTS: Andrew Black advised that he had received 10 framed 19th century hand-coloured woodcut prints which had been produced from illustrations by F O Morris.

Andrew advised that unframed prints are selling on the market at between \$US40 and \$US45. Andrew stated that a silent auction would be held at the November General Meeting, with proceeds going to the Birds SA Conservation Fund.

SOPHIES PATCH: Alan Burns asked for any member who was prepared to volunteer at the Birds SA stall on Sunday at the upcoming open garden to contact him.

GUEST SPEAKER: Karleah Berris of the Kangaroo Island Glossy Black-Cockatoo Recovery Programme gave a report on the status of Glossy Black-Cockatoos following the 2019-20 bushfires.

Karleah noted that the status of She-oaks (only one species used by the cockatoos) for food and nesting hollows in old eucalypts were critical to survival of the species.

Karleah noted that the species had been formerly present on the Fleurieu Peninsular and possibly on Eyre Peninsular. The last record of the species on the mainland was in 1977. Recent planting on the Fleurieu may attract the species, but more trees were needed there to attract a flock.

Karleah noted that habitat clearance, both on the mainland and Kangaroo Island, had contributed to the decline of the species. Brush-tailed Possums were also a problem on Kangaroo Island, especially as the possum population had been enhanced by land clearance.

Under the Recovery Programme, mitigating action had been taken in respect of possums, including tree collars, pruning of the canopy, installation of nest boxes and a revegetation programme for She-oaks.

Up to 2019 there were 283 known nests (160 natural hollows and 123 nest boxes). Approximately 250 hectares had been revegetated on Kangaroo Island and 100 hectares on the Fleurieu Peninsula. The population of cockatoos had doubled up to 2016.

Karleah outlined the locations of the 7 main flocks of Glossy Blacks on Kangaroo Island and noted that there was only a single egg produced at a single nesting event for each pair per annum.

Karleah noted that the fires in 2019-20 had damaged 54% of the stock of Drooping She-oak and 38.5% of nesting trees. 75% of the population of Glossy Black had used the burnt areas.

Karleah noted the differing impacts of habitat damage on different flocks and that Western River flock had lost 95% of its habitat. Stoke's Bay had lost most of its nesting trees.

Karleah noted that since the fires 36,000 trees had been planted on over 50 properties and that these were expected to become seed producing in about 5 years. A further 7,000 trees will be planted next year, increasing the resilience to future bushfires.

Karleah noted that more than 60 nest boxes had been installed since the fires and that the proximity of nest boxes to other nesting pairs provides the best predator protection. Karleah noted that unused nest boxes become breeding grounds for competitor species (Galahs, Little Corellas and feral bees). Karleah noted that action had commenced to cap boxes being used by Galahs.

Karleah noted that action to protect nesting sites had been taken with 47 tree collars replaced and canopy pruning of 41 trees.

Karleah noted that the results of breeding monitoring, with no difference in breeding success, but fewer breeding attempts. Fewer juveniles had been recorded in 2021 census.

Karleah noted that in the 2020 census 454 birds had been recorded and that there was no evidence of fire fatalities. The 2021 census had recorded 377 birds, with a reduction in flock size where 93% of the feeding habitat had been burnt. There was evidence of flocks moving to revegetated sites for feeding.

Monitoring of woodlands had shown some germination of trees and some basal sprouting, but that the response was not consistent. Karleah noted that the highest germination rates had occurred in areas with 37-45 year fire intervals. The ideal interval appears to be greater than 60 years, with fewer seedlings but faster growth. Areas with 13-15 year interval were still not producing seed. Increased fire frequency could be a serious threat to the persistence of She-oak woodlands.

Karleah acknowledged the support of Australian Wildlife Fund, Nature Recovery Fund, Nature Foundation and the Australian Government. Karleah stated that donations and volunteers were welcome.

In response to questions from the audience, Karleah replied:

- Glossy Blacks first breed at four years of age and pair for life.
- Life span is not known, but the oldest banded bird was 25 years old and the oldest breeding female recorded was 21.
- The main reason for the higher number of males in the population probably relates to the yellow head of females making them more vulnerable to attacks by birds of prey.
- Birds SA members can assist the programme by volunteering for tree planting; population census; and nest monitoring and donations through the Nature Foundation fund.

CONSERVATION SUB-COMMITTEE REPORT

Jeff Groves presented an update on the activities of the sub-committee.

- **Off-Road Vehicles:** The video has been viewed by 1,400 people on Facebook. A presentation has been made to the SA Greens. The Minister for the Environment and Water has viewed the video and has instructed Mike Williams (DEW) to convene a workshop to explore the implementation of some of the recommendations, including a permit system.
- **Southern Launch:** A formal response has been lodged.
- **Monarto Woodlands:** A meeting had been held with Mike Williams regarding the land transfer. Mike had advised that PIRSA had revalued the properties and that further funding was now required for the two southern blocks. GWLAP has commenced an initial revegetation plan.
- **Duck and Quail Hunting:** The RSPCA had planned to promote the "Treasures not Targets" campaign with bus-back advertising, but the content had been deemed inappropriate by the Government. The RSPCA now plans to run advertisements on Channel 7.

Jeff also outlined ongoing activities of members of the sub-committee:

- Bill Breed: Bird surveys at Bolivar sewage works
- Ray Nais: Adelaide International Bird Sanctuary and interaction with local government
- Ali Ben Khan: Co-ordination of Mt Lofty ranges bird surveys
- William Brooker: Bird surveys
- David Hansman: Bird guide for the Adelaide Botanic Gardens and seaweed harvesting in the South East of South Australia
- David Andrewartha: Bird surveys at Monarto Safari Park and background information for Birds SA cat management policy
- Chris Pound: Drafting initial cat management policy and liaison with residents regarding removal of trees for an expansion of Port Adelaide Football club's facilities at Alberton
- Davide Gaglio: Off-road vehicle documentary and community sustainability and environmental projects at Adelaide City Council
- Richard Woodland: Bird surveys at Boolcoomatta and working with the Defence Shed at Port Adelaide to establish a relationship for the construction of nest boxes
- Rodney Attwood: A voice of experience on many matters.

BIRD CALL

Graham Carpenter noted that Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoos were wondering far and wide at the present. Graham noted that Square-tailed Kites had been reported from Anstey Hill and Monarto. There had also been reports of White-winged Trillers, Masked and White-browed Woodswallows and Stubble-quail.

Members reported their observations:

- Crimson and Eastern Rosellas forming a partnership at Para Hills West (Graham noted that hybrids have been observed at times)
- Nankeen Night Heron at West Terrace Cemetery
- Australian White Ibis no longer breeding in St Peters
- Grey Fantail at Semaphore
- White-faced Storm Petrel at West Beach

- Striated Pardalote at St Peters
- Pied Stilt and Australasian Shoveler breeding at The Washpool
- Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoo in Victoria Square
- Striated Pardalote in Hurtle Square
- Flame Robin at Boolcoomatta
- Alexandrine Parrot at Torrens mouth (Graham noted that this should be reported to DEW.
- Eastern Koel at Athelston
- Orange Chat, Brown Songlark and Singing Bushlark at Clinton Conservation Park.

FIELD TRIPS:

Lynton Huxley reported that 17 members had attended the Campout at Caroon Creek and that 62 species had been recorded. Of particular note were the sightings of Ground Cuckoo-shrike and White-throated Gerygone.

Lynton noted upcoming field trips to a private property near Mannum and Jenkins Scrub.

OTHER BUSINESS:

Andrew Black speculated that delays in the progress of proposed amendments to the Pastoral Act may have been the reason that Gina Rhinehart has now listed some of her South Australian properties for sale.

NEXT MEETING: To be held at the Thebarton Community Centre on 30 November 2021.

CLOSURE: The meeting was closed at 9:47 pm