

**MINUTES OF THE GENERAL MEETING OF BIRDS SA**  
**held on 24 February 2017 at the**  
**CHARLES HAWKER CONFERENCE CENTRE, WAITE ROAD, URRBRAE**

**OPENING**

John Gitsham (Vice President), opened the General Meeting of Birds SA at 7:50 pm.

**APOLOGIES**

David Paton, Marilyn Browne, Dan Rogers, Jody Gates, Cynthia Pyle, Brian Blaylock, Clare Noble, Liz Carpenter, Peter & Pearl Scapens.

**MINUTES**

David Robertson moved that the “Minutes of the General Meeting held on 20 January 2017 as posted on the website be accepted” with the following amendment:-

“Freckled Duck, Bonython Park”, instead of Rymill Park. Seconded by Lynton Huxley.

CARRIED

**NEW MEMBERS**

Peter & Elaine Elton	Colonel Light Gardens
Christine Cowan	Wayville
Ellen Carter	Ascot Park
Craig Greer	Malvern
Jan Clarke	Dulwich
David Mann	Toorak Gardens
Jo, Grant, Caitlin & Phoebe Wood	Aldgate
Wendy Cook	Oakden

John Gitsham gave a warm welcome to all the new members and hoped they spend a long and happy time bird watching.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- Arkellah Irving was to be our Guest Speaker tonight, but she is unavailable. Colin Rogers will be our presenter instead.
- We will be voting on the change to Birds SA Duck Hunting Policy.
- Maryann Van Trigt, Anna Woods and Bev Harman, as FAIBS Committee Members, presented an up-date on the “Friends of The Adelaide International Bird Sanctuary” (FAIBS). FAIBS has received a \$4,000 grant as start-up funding. They have a programme of “tasks” outline for the coming year. \$500 has already been raised with the selling of the “bags” as displayed in the foyer this evening. All are welcome to put their name on the “Contact List” on display or to become Members of FAIBS for the cost of \$10. Training activities, such as First Aid are also being offered to Members. Follow FAIBS on Facebook.
- Attention was drawn to the AIBS public information sessions, times and dates were displayed. A question was raised from this:- “All of the AIBS public information sessions are in a narrow section of Adelaide, are any meetings planned for the southern suburbs”?
- David Hansman – Members were looking forward to an update on the AIBS, it is to be hoped that Arkellah Irving will be available as a Guest Speaker in the near future.
- John Gitsham – Birds SA have concerns regarding the number of people crabbing and cockling in large numbers on the beaches where the wading birds feed, bird numbers are down including at Price Saltfields.

**DUCK HUNTING POLICY CHANGE**

**Previous Policy:- “Birds SA opposes the recreational hunting of all native birds and would prefer it to be disallowed. However, the organisation recognises that sometimes there may be some conservation benefits associated with well-managed recreational hunting and, while hunting remains legal, will co-operate with others to maximize such benefits.”**

**New Policy - “Birds SA opposes the recreational hunting of native bird species.”**

John Gitsham – Many Birds SA Members have voiced opposition to the wording of the existing policy and this change brings Birds SA in line with BirdLife Australia and other States.

John Kentish - When the change was announced in the “Birder” in November, the old Policy did not oppose the

hunting of native birds, this new one does. The Members need to be informed. I ask that the change of Policy be put to the Members for further discussion.

This statement by John Kentish was corrected by members on floor as incorrect, and restated the opening sentence from the old policy.

David Hansman – The Birds SA Conservation Sub-Committee has discussed this change to our Policy over a period of time, in fact, it was seen as overdue.

John Gitsham – The Birds SA Management Committee and Conservation Sub-Committee unanimously supported the change to the Policy.

Graham Carpenter – The Duck Hunting People have helped preserve various wetlands in the past, without their support some wetlands would have been drained.

John Gitsham – Birds SA acknowledge the valuable input to wetlands from CHASA (The Conservation and Hunting Alliance of South Australia), but the bulk of our Members do not approve of the old policy and find the wording confusing and ambiguous at best.

Anna Peek – The declining number of birds is not due to hunting but rather the loss of habitat – there is data to support this and that data should be presented to the membership.

Peter Hirst – Birds SA Policy states that it “opposes” not “imposes” it is a concept of the organization, only the Government can impose.

John Peek - We should focus on the people who have drained the swamps. We have achieved good results by putting water into Tolderol. How can we work together if you oppose the Hunting Community?

John Kentish proposed:- “that the change to the Birds SA Hunting Policy be delayed until further discussion has taken place with the Membership”. Seconded by John Peek. NOT CARRIED

David Robertson proposed:- that the change to Birds SA hunting Policy to, **“Birds SA opposes the recreational hunting of native bird species.”** be put to the vote. Seconded by Allan Burns CARRIED

#### **GUEST SPEAKER**

John Gitsham introduced Colin Rogers to talk on "The Hunt for the Spoonbill Sandpiper"

The Spoonbill Sandpiper breeds in Siberian region whilst half the population winter in Myanmar where they are being trapped and eaten, as well as other shorebirds.

I visited Pak Thale Shorebird Site in Thailand, several hundred kilometers out of Bangkok. There is some interest on the preservation of this bird by a Nature Conservation group in Thailand – but there are so few it takes several hours to find them amongst the other waders.

Photographs of Nordmann’s Greenshank were shown and explanation given that this bird is only seen in groups whereas the Common Greenshank, seen in South Australia, is often alone. Other photographs were of the Asian Dowitchers, Common Red Shank, Spotted Red Shank, not in breeding plumage, Temminck’s Stint, Little Ringed Plover, Malaysian Plover and the White-faced Plover.

A map of the Saltfield near Pak Thale Village gave perspective to the distance walked, in fact, crept along, to find the Spoonbill Sandpiper, through mud and torrential rain. Comparison photographs were shown of the Broad-billed Sandpiper and the Spoonbill Sandpiper. The Spoonbill Sandpiper is a “specialist feeder” and if it can’t put weight on it does not breed, so the numbers are decreasing. There have been fewer recorded sightings along the “Flyway” and it is assumed that there is only about 100 breeding pairs left, but it is hard to know how restricted this data is.

BirdLife Australia and RSPB tried to put in place some captive breeding programmes as a recovery plan, but if it is not known what these birds actually feed on, it is difficult to succeed in recovery.

Unfortunately this site, Pak Thale Saltworks is now for sale, the Thailand Conservation People say that they have a plan in place, however, it is rumored that it will be turned into a Shrimp Farm and if that happens that will be yet another Saltfield lost, mirroring what is happening here. When private individuals purchase such a place, the control is lost.

#### **BIRD CALL**

Graham Carpenter reported :- 9<sup>th</sup> February a small number of Swifts were seen, a Sea-Eagle at Greenfields, Stage 1, Glossy Ibis seen in quite a few places, 2 at Cowell in really salty habitat, they are usually associated with fresh water habitat. John Hatch reported 54 species seen at Magazine Road including Freckled Duck, Shovelers and Baillon’s Crake. Allan Burns reported 100 Tree Martins over Glenthorne Farm along with a Whistling Kite. John Gitsham reported Latham’s Snipe, Baillon’s Crake, Spotless Crake, Buff-banded Rail and Black-fronted Dotterel chicks as well as 9 species of duck at Laratinga, with 58 species sighted during the field trip. Rock Parrot sighted at the Murray Mouth. Barbara Wheaton, Bassian Thrush seen at Stirling. Merinda Hyland, Horsfield’s Bronze Cuckoo at Felixstowe. Many Magpie Geese and Brolgas at Bool-Lagoon.

**FIELD TRIPS**

Lynton Huxley summarized the upcoming excursions for the next few months –

Sunday, 26 February – Sandy Creek and the Ranger and some of the Friends group will join us.

Saturday, 11 March – Porter Scrub

Thursday, 23 March – White’s Road wetland.

Our “Hot Weather Protocol” has been clarified. If the temperature forecast is 36 °C at the site of the fieldtrip, then the trip will be cancelled. If there is a “Fireban” in place at the site of the fieldtrip, then the trip will be cancelled.

Easter campout will be held from 14-17 April at Kingston in the South East, Mt Scott Conservation Park. A portable toilet will be hired for the weekend. Two local Birders will assist and possibly take us to other locations. Kingston Caravan Park is available for those who do not wish to ‘bush camp’. Subject to fire-bans and availability of equipment, a BBQ lunch will be held on Sunday. A \$20 camping fee will be charged.

**ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

- Fledglings Field Trip advertised. Open to the public.
- Sophie’s Garden Easter Weekend advertised and request for helpers on the Birds SA Stall
- Laratinga Bird Fair, October, advertised.
- The Newsletter has been delayed because Cynthia Pyle is away. It will be published in March.
- NRM “Bird Identification Workshops” at Mt Barker are full, but still room on the field trip and at the workshops in the Riverland.
- One free space on the Pelagic Trip on the 19<sup>th</sup> leaving from Pt MacDonald, contact Colin Rogers.

**CLOSE AND NEXT MEETING**

John Gitsham closed the meeting at 9:12 pm. The next meeting will be on 31st March 2017.

Signed..... Date.....