**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF MEMBERS OF THE SOUTH AUSTRALIAN ORNITHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION INC. HELD AT THE THEBARTON COMMUNITY CENTRE, Cnr South Road and Ashwin Parade Torrensville. ON 31st August 2021 AT 7:30PM**

1. **WELCOME**

Steven Langley, the President opened the meeting at 7.30pm.

1. **APOLOGIES**

There were no apologies.

The President reported that there were 107 people registered for attendance at the meeting which is approximately 10% of the total membership.

1. **CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**

The President advised that the minutes of a meeting held on Friday 25th June 2021 had been posted on the Association’s website and that a copy was available for inspection at the venue entrance.

Brian Walker moved that the minutes be accepted as a true and correct record and Jeff Groves seconded the proposal. Members voted to accept the proposal.

1. **NEW MEMBERS:**

The President advised that the following people had become members in June and July 2021:

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| Michael & Michelle Jones | Middleton |
| Elizabeth Kenihan | Hawthorn |
| Simon Walton | Norwood |
| Craig Pisters | Hallet Cove |
| Sarah Wilkie | Tusmore |
| Michelle Arbon | Hahndorf |
| Anthony Calebrusco & Nicole Gschwind | Welland |
| Alan & Rae Rainbird | Lockleys |
| Kevin Smith | Berri |
| Lindsay & Keith Pheasant | Hahndorf |
| Julie Burgher | Aldinga Beach |
| Peter Gardner | Port Adelaide |
| Don Finlayson | Belair |
| Ben Gray | Adelaide |
| Bill Jenner | Kingscote |
| Sue Green | Brompton |
| David Bamford and family | Uraidla |

1. **PRESIDENT’S REPORT**

Steven Langley stated this venue is a great place until the end of the year. The meetings in October and November are to be held here, while the September meeting will be held in Port Augusta.

The next Webinar will be held on Wednesday 1st September.

The library is in storage for 6 months, pending a return to the Waite Institute.

The President reported that a grant application of $10,000 for use in the improvement of habitat in the Minko Scrub has been lodged with the Department of Environment and Water, and there will be a need for volunteer input for the next few months. He is also preparing an Agreement between Birds SA and the landowner.

1. **GUEST SPEAKER:**

The following background to the issue of 4WD vehicles on beaches was presented to the meeting by Jeff Groves as part of his Conservation sub-Committee report. ‘Birds SA has for some years been calling for better control of off-road vehicle use, particularly in key biodiversity areas.

* Minister Speirs addressed a General Meeting of Birds SA in May 2019 and announced that he had requested the Natural Resources Committee of the SA Parliament to conduct an Inquiry into the Use of Off-road Vehicles.
* This Inquiry was conducted and several organisations including some Councils, BirdLife Australia and Birds SA made submissions to the Inquiry.
* The Report from the Inquiry was tabled in Parliament in early June 2020 and included seven key recommendations for the SA Government to pursue. Unfortunately, nothing since that time has happened.
* Birds SA Management Committee member Davide Gaglio suggested that we make a video to highlight the issues and see if we could use this to better inform the public about these matters and get some action from the Govt.
* Davide is a highly accomplished videographer and what we will now see are the results of his efforts and what we believe will be a powerful tool to start addressing this major problem.
* So let us launch the video and we can have some questions after that.’

The following is the media release on the documentary, prepared by Jeff Groves:

**‘Birds SA Says the SA Government Needs to Get On the Right Track**

Australia’s longest operating birding association, Birds SA, says that the SA State Government needs to immediately address the irresponsible use of off-road vehicles that is causing damage to our coastal environment.

Birds SA has launched a stunning documentary video entitled **On the Right Track,** capturing examples of reckless driving on our beaches that endangers people on the beach, disturbs beach nesting birds and destroys the coastal environment. The documentary will be used to educate the public about how to share the beach with the birds so that iconic species such as the Hooded Plover are not disrupted during their nesting, feeding and roosting. The documentary has received strong support from the national birding organisation, BirdLife Australia.

The video will also be used to urge the SA Government to act upon the **Recommendations of the 2019 Inquiry into the Use of Off-road Vehicles** which were tabled in the SA Parliament in June 2020.

Birds SA President, Steven Langley, says “irresponsible use of off-road vehicles is a major issue for beach-nesting birds and for the many migratory birds that visit our shores from the northern hemisphere. The problems were clearly identified in the 2019 Inquiry. The SA Government needs to immediately call together local councils, off-road vehicle clubs, conservation groups and Landscape Boards to commence implementing the recommendations of the Inquiry.”

Birds SA says high priority must be given to:

* Identifying areas which should be prohibited either seasonally or permanently, areas which could be opened for limited use and areas where environmental impacts are low.
* Investigating and implementing a permit system for off-road vehicle use in South Australia, such as exists in other states.
* Developing and disseminating a code of practice for off-road vehicle use, in partnership with local governments, relevant statutory authorities, First Nations stakeholders and Landscape Boards.
* Using the powers currently available to enforcement agencies to caution or penalise perpetrators of the irresponsible behaviours shown in the documentary.’

**References**

1. Birds SA submission to Off-road Vehicle Inquiry

[https://birdssa.asn.au/policies-statements/](about:blank)

1. Final Report & Submissions - Natural Resources Committee Inquiry into the Use of Off-road Vehicles

[https://www.parliament.sa.gov.au/en/Committees/Committees-Detail](about:blank)

Jeff introduced Davide Gaglio, the producer of the video on the problems associated with inappropriate off-road driving in South Australia.

Following the video, Davide Gaglio referred to the massive impact of vehicles on beaches and the general coastal habitat, and the importance of raising community awareness of the vulnerability of birds on beaches.

Steven Langley reported that he had shown the video to the Minister David Speirs.

The following issues were raised by members at the meeting with responses.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Issues | Responses |
| Do Councils benefit from vehicles on beaches? | On the contrary, Councils are responsible for beaches and their maintenance, and a permit system is an option whereby users are charged for entry onto beaches to cover some of the costs of maintenance. An example of this in SA is the City of Onkaparinga which charges $8 per vehicle, with local residents getting access for free. However, it was reported that on most days, the ramps are not staffed. |
| What are the solutions? | A balance between banning vehicles, allowing limited or unrestricted access is required. A mix of solutions relating to the local circumstances and level of vulnerability, should be considered. This is the start of a conversation between local and state governments, the user groups and general community. |
| How to reach the relevant communities | Appeal to young people by distributing the documentary to schools.  Write to government bodies which market our coastline for tourist activities such as the use of 4WD vehicles on beaches, urging them to deter from this. |
| Negative impact on the habitat of birds | It was reported that the use of Goolwa beach by 4WD vehicles is having a negative impact on the habitat of many species. |
| How to reach the users of 4WD vehicles. | John McGuire from Adelaide 4x4 beyondblue Challenge congratulated Birds SA on the production of the documentary and suggested that it be broadcast as widely as possible. He stated that he would share it with the 2,200 members of the 4WD community he is involved in as well as other 4WDrivers. |
| South Australian beaches are also used by Victorian 4WD vehicle owners. | It was suggested that the documentary link be sent to similar Victorian groups to raise awareness of the impact on South Australian beaches. |
| The problem of enforcing existing legislation relating to use of 4WD vehicles on beaches | It was reported that the public can take photos of offending vehicles, if safe, and give them to the police. However, there may be a need for those reporting to be witnesses to the offence in court. If the offence occurs in a National Park, an expiation notice can be given by the National Park officers. |
| Does Birds SA have a policy on the use of 4WD vehicles on beaches? | It was suggested that Birds SA prepare such a policy and make representation to elected members. |

As Councils are the guardians of Crown Land, it was suggested that Birds SA assist Councils in developing a permit system for the use of 4WD vehicles on beaches in South Australia.

1. **CONSERVATION SUB-COMMITTEE**:

Jeff Groves presented a Powerpoint, updating the progress on Conservation issues, in addition to the above documentary:

**Whalers Way – Southern Launch Space**

* EIS and EPBC Referral Responses from Birds SA
* EPBC Referral response has been submitted to Canberra
* Major concerns identified were impact of construction and operation on EPSEW and White-bellied Whipbird –site selection for Launch Pad A entirely inappropriate
* Second major concern raised was fire and the lack of detail on how Southern Launch would prevent fire or the resources that would be brought to bear should a fire start.

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**Monarto Woodlands Land Sale**

The following is a summary of Jeff’s presentation on progress relating to the Monarto Woodlands Land Sale.



* Feb 2021 contacted by Kanmantoo-Callington Landcare Group
* PIRSA land proposed to be sold – 177 ha
* L5, L4 & L3 have been transferred to DEW
* DEW seeking further funding to purchase L1 & L2
* Strongly supported by David Paton (Bio-R) & Minister Speirs
* Consortium Birds SA, GWLAP,
* K-C Landcare, Trees for Life

1. **BIRD CALL**: John Grisham

The following were reported sightings by various members present:

* approximately 200 Yellow-tailed Black- Cockatoos near the Morphetville Racecourse, attracted by the pine trees:
* an Osprey on Eyre Peninsular
* small numbers of shore birds are returning, including Grey-tailed Tattler, Sharp-tailed Sandpipers and Fairy Terns, Grey Plovers, Eastern Curlews and others:
* 4 Antarctic Terns were seen at Port McDonald;
* Pallid and Fan-tailed-cuckoos are commonly seen in the Hills;
* Juvenile Horsfield’s Bronze – Cuckoo at Magazine Road Wetlands
* Approximately 1000 Pelicans are nesting at the Coorong;
* 3 White-bellied Sea-Eagles near the Murray Mouth;
* 2 adults and 2 juvenile Sea- Eagles have been sighted at Bolivar;
* Adelaide Rosellas have been seen down on the plains;
* A Hoary-headed Grebe was seen on a suburban road in Adelaide;
* 400-800 rafting Hoary-headed Grebes have been seen at the Coorong;
* An Olive-backed Oriole was seen at McLaren Flat; and
* White-winged Black Terns at Tolderol.

1. **FIELD TRIPS**:

The following future field trips were noted:

**Saturday 11 September: Jenkins Scrub (Moderate) (MLR) 61km.**  
Travel about 10km from Williamstown towards Springton, then turn right onto Mount Road. Meet at 8.30am at the entrance to the scrub on the left, opposite Murray Vale Road.  
**TRIP LEADER: Richard Woodland**

**Fleurieu Birders - Field Trips**

**Saturday 4 September  
Myponga Reservoir**  
Meet at 8.30am in the car park on Hansen Street at the start of the walking trail.  
**TRIP LEADER: Pat Uphill**

**Thursday 16th September Scott Creek**

**TRIP LEADER Jim Spyker**

1. **OTHER BUSINESS**:

**Speaker for Friends of the Botanic Gardens**

The Vice President of the Friends of the Botanic Gardens, Marg Davy, wonders whether there are any members of Birds SA who would be interested in assisting her to get a small group together to gather information about birds (for brochures, signage, etc), specific for each of the three local botanic gardens.

There is now a new Director of the Botanic Gardens, Michael Harvey, who has also expressed a wish for more signage, and so, with this official support, Marg is optimistic that this project will get off the ground.

Marg is also responsible for organising speakers for the Friends of Botanic Gardens meetings and is keen to have someone present a talk each year on the birds of the three gardens. Earlier this year, one of the Friends of Botanic Gardens, who is also very interested in photography, gave a talk on various birds she had photographed, and where, in the Adelaide Botanic Gardens. This was a great success.

It is hoped to have someone speak on “Birds of Mt Lofty Botanic Gardens” at a Friends meeting next year. The presenter usually speaks for about 45 minutes with time for questions and discussion.

If anyone in Birds SA is interested, could they please get in touch with Marg Davy

Email: [yvad71@gmail.com](about:blank)      Phone: 0402315857

**Sophie’s Patch** on the 6th, 7th and 8th November requires some volunteers for the Birds SA table.

**Bird watching place on the way to Port Augusta.**

The following places were suggested:

* Clement’s Gap, near Redbill
* Bowman’s Park, Crystal Brook
* Napperby Old Reservoir

1. **NEXT MEETING**: To be held in Port Augusta on Saturday 11th September 2021.

**CLOSURE**: The meeting was closed at 9.25 pm.