

MINUTES OF A GENERAL MEETING OF THE SOUTH AUSTRALIAN ORNITHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION INC. HELD ON 25 JANUARY 2022 VIA ZOOM

1. **OPENING:** The President opened the meeting at 19:33 pm, welcoming members to the January 2022 Meeting of Birds SA being held via Zoom.
2. **MINUTES:** Minutes of the meeting held at The Thebarton Community Centre on 30 November 2021, a copy of which are located in the members area of the Birds SA website, were proposed for acceptance by Jeff Groves and seconded by Roger Bourne. The minutes were accepted as a correct record.

3. PRESIDENT'S REPORT:

Meetings: The President advised that the February 2022 Birds SA meeting would also be a Zoom meeting. The March 2022 meeting will hopefully be in the renovated Waite Institute and members will be advised in due course.

2022 Planning in progress: The President advised that Management Committee had commenced planning for 2022.

Conservation: An update on the Conservation activities will be given later in the meeting by Jeff Groves.

Webinars: The President stated that webinars have been very popular, especially those on Bird Identification and we will be looking to do more throughout the year. The President asked for suggestions for webinars from members either via the Q&A button or by email to general@birdssa.asn.au .

Location for Library: A location is required for the extensive Birds SA library as the Waite Institute is unable to accommodate it going forward. The President requested help from members in finding new home for the library.

Minko: activities planned for Minko have been placed on hold pending Grant approval results, originally expected in November 2021, now anticipated in the next 2 -3 weeks.

Hindmarsh Valley National Park: The President announced that bird surveys would take place in the near future at the new reserve at Hindmarsh Valley.

4. **NEW MEMBERS:** The President announced the following new members for January 2022:

Keryn	Kay	Murray Bridge
Ian	Buick	American River
Carmel	Romeo	Highbury
Julie	Riorden	Norwood

Mila	Smolicz-van Breda	Goodwood
Carolyn	Cotter	Encounter Bay
Col	Elliott	Risdon Park South, Port Pirie
Sacha	Ure	Port Elliott
Ione	Saint	Naracoorte
Peter	Coats	Blackwood
Robert	Gulley	Flagstaff Hill
Dave	Ranger	Sheidow Park

5. **GUEST SPEAKER(S)**: John Hatch introduced this month’s guest speaker, Hugh Possingham, Chief Scientist for Queensland.

Hugh who is known for his work and research in conservation, conservation biology, ecological modelling and spatial planning, is also a mathematician and avid birdwatcher.

Hugh’s talk tonight, titled “To count or not to count”, looked at the quality and volume of bird data which has grown rapidly over the last decade and the statistical methods that can be employed in utilising this data. Hugh discussed a variety of ideas about why we monitor birds, the best ways to count birds, the role of citizen scientists (that is us), old bird data, and some of the most meaningful things we can all do now. Hugh gave a highly entertaining and fascinating talk augmented with examples from his many years of research and experience in the Mount Lofty Ranges and the upper South East of SA.

The talk was followed by a short Q&A session.

7. **CONSERVATION SUB-COMMITTEE REPORT:**

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

Duck and Quail Hunting – The state government has declared open seasons for duck and quail hunting in SA for 2022. The duck season will run from 19 March – 26 June with a bag limit of 8 birds/hunter/day. The quail season will run from 30 April – 31 July with a bag limit of 20 birds/hunter/day.

Jeff stated that he represented Birds SA at the annual Reference Panel meeting conducted by DEW with four other Birds SA members also participating under the banner of the Conservation Council. Data reviewed in the panel meeting confirmed a continuing long-term decline in duck abundance. The 2021 Eastern Australia Aerial Waterbird Survey, conducted by UNSW since 1983, revealed duck abundance to be only 25% of the long-term average. The DEW SA survey, conducted since 2003, showed duck abundance of 36% of the long-term average. Birds SA and Conservation Council argued for highly restricted seasons for both ducks and quail. These recommendations appear to have been largely ignored by the State Gov.

Monarto – Jeff provided an update on the transfer of approx. 180 hectares of land at Monarto, near Browns Road, from the PIRSA portfolio to DEW. Birds SA is part of a

consortium that has undertaken to assist DEW with re-vegetation of the land for conservation purposes. National Parks and Wildlife SA are supportive of this proposal. PIRSA has re-valued the land and DEW has insufficient funds to purchase the land. DEW is now seeking funding from private benefactors. This land, when re-vegetated, would be highly complementary with that being re-vegetated at the adjacent Frahns Farm by Bio-R.

Beach Driving – Jeff advised that this has been getting a lot of publicity lately including Birds SA President being interviewed on ABC radio following reports that more than 20 Red-necked Stints had been run over recently at Goolwa. It was expected that there would be chaos on the Australia Day holiday at Aldinga, Silver Sands and Sellicks Beaches where vehicles are permitted to be driven in very large numbers. Minister Spiers initiated a workshop, conducted in early December, to get the ball rolling on actions to address the problems with off-road driving that were identified in the 2019 Parliamentary Inquiry on Off-road Vehicles. A permit system that identifies where vehicles can go and where they are restricted is the most likely first step that will be implemented.

Jeff noted that the workshop in December included Conservation groups, 4WD Clubs, Councils and DEW. all for some areas, controlled access

Jeff advised that Steven Langley and he met with the SA Tourism Commission to discuss the off-road vehicle activities that they are promoting, which are totally at odds with the position taken by Birds SA. The Tourism Commission were largely ignorant of the problems, but were receptive to the possibility of introducing some educational messages about acceptable behaviour in their future promotions.

Shorebird Surveys – Jeff thanked and acknowledged Birds SA members' support with conducting surveys in support of the National Shorebird Monitoring Program.

8. FIELD TRIPS:

Lynton Huxley thanked Hugh Possingham for his talk and provided details of upcoming field trips.

- Sunday 30 January: Kaiserstuhl Conservation Park TRIP LEADER: Ali Ben Kahn
- Saturday 12 February: Tolderol Game Reserve TRIP LEADER: William Brooker
- Thursday 17 February: Laratinga Wetlands, TRIP LEADER: Cynthia Pyle

Lynton thanked Wendy Phillips and the Fleurieu Birders for organising "Cruising the Coorong" field trips which have proved so popular that 4 x trips have been organised.

Lynton stated that Bellbird campground at Gluepot had been booked for the Easter Camp Out at \$15 per campsite/night and that full details will be in the next issue of The Birder.

Steven Langley thanked Lynton for his effort in organising the field trips

9. **BIRD CALL:**

Steven Langley called for members observations via chat or Q&A on the zoom site

- Restless Flycatcher at Macclesfield
- Eastern Spinebills and Yellow-Tailed Black Cockatoos at Belle Vue Heights
- Striped Honeyeater at Morris Rd, Murray Bridge
- Golden and Rufous Whistlers, both Treecreepers at Scott Conservation Park
- Brush Cuckoo at Kinchina
- Pacific Fork-tailed Swift at Gawler
- Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo in Semaphore
- Black-chinned Honeyeater at Happy Valley
- Straw-necked and White Ibis on Sturt Highway
- Shining Bronze Cuckoo fledgling at Back Valley
- 12x Rainbow Bee-eaters at Rockleigh
- Scarlet Robin at Blackhill CP
- Black-faced Honeyeaters at Lucindale
- Woodswallows at Scott Creek
- 4x White-bellied Sea Eagles on the Coorong
- 700 Sanderlings, 193 Pied Oystercatcher on Coorong
- Chirruping Wedgebills at Port Augusta
- Diamond Firetails at Deep Creek

10. **NEXT MEETING:** To be held Tuesday, 22 February 2022, via Zoom

11. **CLOSURE:** The meeting was closed at 21:15 pm.