

MINUTES OF A GENERAL MEETING OF THE SOUTH AUSTRALIAN ORNITHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION INC. HELD ON 25 JULY 2023 IN CHARLES HAWKER 101/102 AT THE WAITE CAMPUS

1. **OPENING:** The meeting was opened by the President, Steven Langley at 19:35 pm, following a sale of surplus books from the Birds SA library. Steven welcomed members to the Birds SA meeting for July 2023, with 65 members being present and advised that the book sale would continue after the meeting.
2. **APOLOGIES:** Barbara & Peter Bansemer, John Gitsham, Lynton & Karen Huxley
3. **PREVIOUS MINUTES:** Minutes of the previous meetings held 30 May 2023 and 27 June 2023, which are on the members area of the Birds SA website, were proposed for acceptance.

An error with one name in the May minutes was pointed out, the name being recorded as XXXX. This will be corrected. The Minutes for May and June were proposed for acceptance as follows:

May 2023 Minutes proposed by Jeff Groves, seconded by Anita Smyth and confirmed by the members present.

June 2023 Minutes proposed by Bob Whatmough, seconded by Steven Langley and confirmed by the members present.

The President advised the members present that, for tonight's meeting, we would again change the order of the Agenda and bring the Conservation Sub Committee report and Bird Call earlier.

4. **CONSERVATION SUB-COMMITTEE REPORT: Ray Nias**

The Conservation Sub-Committee (CS-C) has, as usual, been busy on many fronts, mainly:

The Kangaroo Island (KI) Fire Management Plan, where we have been consulting with BirdLife Australia and we have one Sub-Committee member, Karleah Berris, on KI. Ray will talk about this in more detail later.

The Dog & Cat Management Act – proposed amendments to which include, among other things, registration and chipping of cats and containment of cats to the owner's property. The CS-C is investigating what these amendments entail.

Duck and Quail Hunting – enquiry is ongoing with lots of information coming from the Victorian enquiry.

Beach Driving – DEW are considering potential closure of some beaches which is good progress and the President, Steven Langley, will talk about this later in the meeting.

Proposed changes to South East Coastal Lakes – Birds SA has put in a submission generally supporting, with caveats, the proposed changes. This is heading the right direction however the hunting lobby have tabled outright objection to the proposed changes.

Ray encouraged members to visit the government website and have their say by either sending email or taking the survey. The closing date for submissions is 28 July 2023.

Kangaroo Island Fire Management Plan

This draft Parks of Kangaroo Island Fire Management Plan is part of fire planning reforms following the 2019-20 bushfires and the public consultation on the yourSAy website is open until 7 August 2023. The Plan is very contentious, noting that the Wilderness Society is opposed to the creation of access tracks within the wilderness area.

Ray pointed out the change in Management Zones in the new plan and also the “Unzoned Areas” which do not appear to have been addressed or have any strategy, noting that some of these unzoned areas have Glossy Black populations.

Ray also said that the plan needed monitoring over time to see how successful the plan was and whether it addresses what it set out to achieve.

Ray urged members to visit the yourSAy website and do something either registering to send an email or take the survey on the website.

Whalers Way Rocket Launching Facility

Andrew Black advised the meeting of the proposal to upgrade the White-bellied Whipbird from Vulnerable to Endangered under the EPBC Act, stating that this should have an effect on the proposed rocket-launch facility at Whalers Way, although at this stage it is hard to say what that might be. Andrew advocated that Birds SA lobby both State and Federal Ministers about the potential impact on two endangered birds to try and influence the decision to not proceed with the Whalers Way Rocket-launch Facility.

5. BIRD CALL: Graham Carpenter

The bird call took the format of an around the tables discussion on birds observed in the state followed by a consolidation of these sighting by Graham Carpenter

- Black-tailed Native Hens x 5 seen at Pakapakanthi Wetlands in Victoria Parklands
- Hardhead and Pink-eared Ducks at Bonython Park.
- Pair of Major Mitchell’s Cockatoo nesting at Virginia.
- White-browed Scrubwren 11yrs old netted at Scott Creek CP bird banding.
- 2 flocks of Little Raven at Belair last month calling for 2hrs after sunset.
- Swans with cygnets and 7 active nests at Greenfields Wetland.
- 7,000 ducks at Bolivar Waste Treatment plant with 40+ Shoveler.
- Grey Currawong along the Torrens at St Peters.
- 6 Red-browed Finch at Aldgate.
- 100 Swans at the Washpool.
- Adult Osprey at Aldinga Reef.
- Black-shouldered Kite in large numbers around mid-north.
- Scarlet-chested Parrots still at Gluepot.
- Osprey Tower erected by helicopter at Onkaparinga Estuary, other towers erected at Arno Bay yesterday and three weeks ago at Sleaford Bay.
- The odd Bustard is turning up further south.
- Black-chinned Honeyeater and Spotted Pardalote at Canton Place, Victor Harbor.

6. MEMBER’S NIGHT SPEAKERS:

Jeff Groves introduced tonight’s speakers:

Terri Randell – presented a very informative pre-recorded step by step instruction video on how to access and use the Birds SA online library catalogue, showing members how easy it is to find books in the Birds SA library.

John Hatch – gave a talk about bird surveys conducted by himself, Colin Rogers, Bill Breed and William Brooker at the Bolivar Wastewater Treatment Plant, where over the last 5 years they had conducted some 72 bird surveys. Two papers have been published, one which asked the question, “Is this a really important bird habitat” and the answer was revealed on the very first visit where we found tens of thousands of ducks including 5,000 Pink-eared Ducks and up to 1,000 Blue-billed Ducks. The second paper addressed whether this was a special refuge for birds in periods of general drought and we were lucky that at the start we were in a drought period which was followed by periods of heavy rain, so we had one full cycle so far, although we acknowledge that 5 years is not sufficient to draw any definitive scientific conclusions.

John said his talk is a presentation of a more general nature, recalling interesting things encountered and experienced during these surveys.

Some 100 species have been observed over the five years of which only 25% were passerines, the others being mostly waterbirds. White-bellied Sea Eagles seen on almost 50% of visits and Swamp Harrier seen regularly about 1 in every 3 visits, 1,000's of swallows, 100's of Martins due to propensity of flying insects but Swifts seen only once in 72 visits, in two flocks of about 90. White-winged wrens are quite often seen.

John discussed some notable absences; Dusky Moorhen or Purple Swamphen are two species never seen and Spotted Crakes have only been seen on two occasions. Also, no Thornbills were observed.

John said noted abundances, other than ducks and those already mentioned, are Magpie Larks between March and May several 100's observed congregating after breeding and seasonal flocks of Willie Wagtails.

Some “Odd” Birds have been recorded, such as eclipse phases of common ducks such as Chestnut Teal, Grey Teal and Pacific Black Duck

Ray Swavy's documented observations in March 1983, show only two species of duck in markedly different numbers from our observations. One is Australian Shoveler, where Ray recorded 3,000 but we have only seen about 150 at any one time and the other is Chestnut Teal, which may be a result of regression of mangroves or the inadequacy of scope in the 1980's.

Jeff Groves – gave a photographic presentation titled “Congregating Birds” showing photographs of groups of birds, sometimes in huge numbers, ranging from ducks, Stilts and other waterbirds to Corellas, Cockatoos, Martins, Swallows and Apostlebirds.

7. MEMBERS REPORT: Sue Winwood

Sue reported the 4 new members for June 2023 approved by the Management Committee, since the last meeting, namely:

IND OL	MEREDITH HOSKING	PROSPECT	SA
IND OL	MARGARET EVANS	LOBETHAL	SA
IND OL	JUNE EDWARDS	FORESTVILLE	SA
IND OL	LAUREN CHO	PAYNEHAM	SA

and that there were only 4 new member applications for July so far.

Sue asked how many members had downloaded the Member Jungle App on their phones and advised that information on this was in the latest E-newsletter.

Sue again urged those with family memberships to add family members in Member Jungle and advised that all members from previous years will be in the system by 1 December 2023 and it will all be automatic from then on. Sue asked anyone having problems with Member Jungle to email her and she would help them.

Sue advised that Alan Burns had some Birds SA badges and hat badges which members can purchase.

Steven Langley also urged members to use the Member Jungle App especially for details on field trips.

8. **PRESIDENT'S REPORT: Steven Langley**

South East Lakes: a well-intentioned initiative risks being postponed. At a meeting in the South East some 350+ from the hunting fraternity voiced their opposition to the proposed amendments to increase the size of conservation areas. Steven urged members to submit personal submissions in support. Details in the latest E-newsletter.

Hunting of Native Birds inquiry: a once in a lifetime opportunity to end the hunting of native birds. The Parliamentary enquiry is now out to November 2023. Birds SA will be fund raising to support the campaign to ban duck and quail hunting.

Beach Driving: Birds SA in collaboration with BirdLife Australia, submitted a proposal for 7 target beaches for trial sites in South Australia where beach driving would be banned. DEW have proposed 3 beaches this year but have identified as many as 15 beaches for later restrictions.

Call for Volunteers Steven again called for support from members with some of these tasks stating that it need not be full time support and that every little helps.

9. **FIELD TRIPS: Lynton Huxley**

Lynton Huxley is currently away, details of trips can be found in The Birder, E-newsletters and Member Jungle.

Sunday, 30 July – Minko Scrub, Mount Compass. Leader Steven Langley. Members need to register on Eventbrite, details are on the Member Jungle App and the Birds SA website.

10. **OTHER BUSINESS**

10.1 Anna Woods gave an update on the activities of FAIBS (Friends of Adelaide International Bird Sanctuary):

- In winter in the Adelaide International Bird Sanctuary the focus is on habitat restoration with removing weeds and planting of seeds.
- Another 300 local native species planted by FAIBS Weeds 'n Seeds volunteers and volunteers from the Two Wells Community Nursery propagating group.
- Sunday, 20 August: FAIBS Seedling Planting morning with location still to be determined, check FAIBS Facebook page.

- Sunday, 19 September: FAIBS morning walk with our new National Parks Ecologist, Matt Heard, probably in the Thompson beach area, where the trail at the southern end has been modified for wheelchair and walker access.
- We now have three Rangers working in the AIBS area.
- Double-banded Plovers have been observed near Outer Harbour.
- Saturday, 14 October is World Migratory Bird Day and FAIBS is looking at having an event at Port Clinton together with other organisations including, hopefully, Friends of Gulf St Vincent and others around there. Details will be in the next Birder.

Anna made a call for FAIBS Committee Members and volunteers. The Committee meets on the second Tuesday of each month, either online or face to face and interested parties can get in touch via the FAIBS email address.

- 11. NEXT MEETING:** the August General Meeting will be held at Mt Gambier RSL Club on Saturday, 26 August 2023 at 16:00hrs. Members are required to register for this event.
- 12. CLOSURE:** The meeting was closed at 22:00 pm. The book sale continued after the meeting.