



DRAFT ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING MINUTES SATURDAY, 26 MARCH 2022

ATTENDANCE

1. PRESENT

Amanda Freeman, Peter Valentine, Graham Harrington, Keith and Lindsay Fisher, Sandra Christensen, Hidetoshi Kudo, Peter and Laurie Trott, Geoff Stapley, Alan Gillanders, Helen and Jeff Larson, Louise Baume, Sanne Boland, Cameron de Jong, Rhiannon Williams, Edward Bell, Renee Cassels, Ceri Pearce, Graham Harrington, and others.

2. APOLOGIES

Laurie Jones, Julia Logan, Kath Shurcliff and Dave Houghton, Ray Pierce, Doug Herrington, Ceinwen Edwards, Golo Maurer, Alister Freeman, Elinor Scrambler, Sam and Martin Willis, and Ron Schweitzer

PROCEEDINGS

1. WELCOME, ATTENDANCE, AND APOLOGIES

- Meeting held at Lake Barrine Teahouse, Lake Barrine was declared open at 12:12 pm by Ceri Pearce, Convenor.
- Welcome To Country and Acknowledgement of the Ngadjjon-Jii Traditional Owners by Ceri Pearce.
- Meeting attendance and apologies taken by Renee Cassels, Secretary.

2. MINUTES OF 2021 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

- Ceri Pearce opened the floor to questions and comments on 2021 Annual General Meeting minutes.
- No questions or comments received.
- VOTE: Renee Cassels moved to accept the minutes of the 2021 Annual General Meeting, seconded by Ceri Pearce, unanimously accepted.

3. CONVENORS REPORT

- 2021 Convenors Report (attached) prepared and presented by Ceri Pearce. Highlights include:
 - o Awards and recognition for outstanding service and contributions to birds in 2021
 - o 2021 Crane Count
 - o Graham Harrington Student Research Scholarship
 - o Artemis Nature Fund
 - o Cairns Area and Mikey Kudo's work
 - o Tablelands Area and Peter Valentine's work
 - o Cassowary Coast and Sanda Christensen's work
 - o Cape York Area and Kath Shurcliff's work
 - o Keith and Lindsay Fisher's work at Abattoir Swamp

- o Helen Larson KBA Guardian and Cassowary Recovery Team representative
- o KBAs and the contributions of all KBA Guardians
- o Branch communications, social media, and website
- o Contact Call, thank you to Jenn Muir Assistant Editor, Peter Valentine, Don Franklin and all contributors
- o BirdLife Northern Queensland acknowledges and sincerely thanks Ray Pierce for his valuable contribution to the branch and his service to ornithology and conservation
- VOTE: Lindsay Fisher moved to accept the 2021 Convenor's Report, seconded by Alan Gillanders, unanimously accepted.

4. TREASURER'S REPORT

- The 2021 Treasurer's Report was prepared and presented by Lindsay Fisher, Treasurer.
- Members were asked to review and accept the report on our financial situation as of 31 December 2021.
- VOTE: Graham Harrington moved to accept 2021 Treasurer's Report, seconded by Peter Valentine, unanimously accepted.

5. OFFICE-BEARER ELECTIONS

- Alan Gillanders dismissed the Committee. All positions were declared vacant, and nominations received.
- The following Office-bearers were elected, with only one nomination received per position:
 - o Convenor – Ceri Pearce
 - o Deputy Convenor – Vacant
 - o Secretary – Renée Cassels
 - o Treasurer – Lindsay Fisher

6. COMMITTEE NOMINATIONS

- The following Committee members were nominated and accepted:
 - o Cairns Area Coordinator – Mikey Kudo
 - o Tablelands Area Coordinator – Sam and Martin Willis
 - o Cape York Area Coordinator – Kath Shurcliff
 - o Cassowary Coast Area Coordinator – Sandra Christensen
 - o Conservation Coordinator – Peter Valentine
 - o Grasswren Project Leader – Kath Shurcliff and Graham Harrington
 - o Newsletter Editor – Ceri Pearce
 - o Newsletter Sub-editor – Jenn Muir
 - o Website Manager – Renee Cassels
 - o Social Media Manager – Doug Herrington
- VOTE: Alan Gillanders moved that all nominations be accepted, Helen Larson seconded, unanimously accepted.

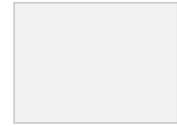
7. OTHER BUSINESS

- Graham Harrington has been granted the great honor of Honorary Life Member of BirdLife Australia.

8. MEETING CLOSE

- Meeting closed by Ceri Pearce at 1:00 pm.
- Meeting followed by lunch at Lake Barrine Teahouse.

Minutes submitted by Secretary, Renée Cassels.



Convenor's Report, Annual General Meeting

26th March 2022

I am honoured to report on BirdLife Northern Queensland (BNQ) activities for 2021-2022.

Governance

Our finances remain healthy and are well managed thanks to our Treasurer, Lindsay Fisher.

Thanks once again to BirdLife Australia's acceptance of the Action Plan we submitted for 2022, we have received funding support from BirdLife Australia National Office.

The committee works hard to ensure that the BNQ action plan and budget allocated is targeted, achievable and delivers real outcomes for conservation/survey work, education and awareness activities, communications, and supports general birding activities in our region.

Membership/supporters

In January 2022, we had 175 members which is a drop of 25 members since the last Annual General Meeting. I say this while noting that the BirdLife Australia membership portal has been down due to installation to a new customer service system and the membership and BirdLife supporter reporting system is still being developed. Rest assured that we will be monitoring this over the next few months to determine if it is a true decline or an artefact of people's inability to access the website to renew membership.

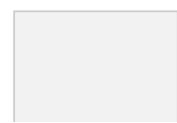
Award recognition of BNQ members for their outstanding contributions to bird conservation.

In February 2021, the BirdLife Australia Board awarded Kath Shurcliff a BirdLife Australia Distinguished Service Award. Kath was one of our first convenors following the merger that created BirdLife and BNQ. As well as Kath's significant contribution during 6 years as convenor, which included development of our first regional strategic project plan, Kath has also participated in Carpentarian Grasswren surveys since 2008, and is now our Grasswren Survey Leader. These are just a few of the contributions that led to her receiving this well-deserved accolade.

Mid year, Dominic Chaplin received a Cassowary Award for Innovation from the Wet Tropics Management Authority following our nomination (prepared by Dr Amanda Freeman, and supported by Dr Stephen Garnett). Dominic continues to lead monitoring of Golden and Tooth-billed Bowerbirds with new survey techniques being trialed in 2021 at a number of sites across the Wooroonooran Key Biodiversity Area and Wet Tropics World Heritage Area. Dom has scoured many mountain tops in search of bowers and bowerbirds, recording and mapping their location when found. Dr Garnett highlighted that Dom's data was an incredibly valuable resource which he used when considering bowerbird conservation status in the latest *Action Plan for Australian Birds 2020*.

Another significant event in our region during 2021 was the awarding of Australia Honours to BirdLife members Cliff and Dawn Frith. On the 14 June, 2021 Dr Cliff Frith and Dr Dawn Frith each received an Order of Australia Medal for services to conservation and environment (including their outstanding contributions to tropical wildlife science, especially in ornithology).

Congratulations to all our award winners.



Conservation and other activities

Despite the various challenges over the last couple of years due to the pandemic, our Branch has continued to successfully deliver a number of monitoring and conservation projects including the following:

- Thanks to the leadership of Kath Shurcliff and the Grasswren support team, and our strong partnership with Southern Gulf Natural Resource Management, BNQ continues to deliver effective monitoring of threatened Carpentarian and Kalkadoon Grasswrens. Southern Gulf NRM is working with pastoralists to promote uptake of grasswren friendly fire management practises. BNQ contributes by monitoring the grasswren populations in the region and in response to the fire regimes. Grasswren surveys were completed effectively by a small, dedicated team in 2021, and this was enhanced by the modeling and mapping undertaken by Graham Harrington Research Scholarship awardee (2021), Henry Stoetzel, as part of his PhD project on Carpentarian Grasswrens.
- The annual Crane Count in the Atherton Tablelands Key Biosecurity Area and surrounding area was completed thanks to our new coordinator Edward Bell and the crane count team of volunteers. BNQ annual crane counts commenced in 1997. The Atherton Tableland Key Biodiversity Area seasonally holds around 19.5% of the global non-breeding population of Sarus Cranes and just under 5% of the global non-breeding Brolga population. THANK YOU to everyone involved.
- BNQ also contributes to the North Queensland Naturalist Group Gouldian Finch Project led by Ray Pierce. Surveys have continued and are continuing in 2022. Gouldian finch populations, feeding observations and breeding activity are being monitored.
- Torresian Imperial Pigeon surveys including an annual synchronized coastal count have been undertaken under the leadership of new coordinator Rebel Warren, mentored by Dr Julia Hazel from James Cook University.
- Cassowary Award winner Dominic Chaplin continues to lead monitoring of Golden and Tooth-billed Bowerbirds across the Wooroonooran Key Biodiversity Area and Wet Tropics World Heritage Area. Bowerbirds are just some of the bird species identified as threatened by climate change. Dominic delivered Bowerbird presentations in Cairns and Malanda. He engaged volunteers in new survey techniques which were trialed in 2021 at a number of sites across the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area. And he has written articles for Contact Call reporting on survey results. Thank you to Dom and the team of volunteers.
- The Threatened Coastal Birds Project (migratory waders and Beach Stone Curlew) has continued under the leadership of Paul Fisk, Sally Sheldon and Amanda Freeman. As well as an article in Contact Call, project leaders have been actively engaging with members at 'Wave the Waders Goodbye' events and 'Welcome the Waders home'. While the grant funding finishes in early 2022, various monitoring aspects are likely to continue, thanks to Paul and the team.
- Artemis Nature Fund and saving the Endangered Golden-shouldered Parrot. In 2021 BNQ directly donated \$2000 to the project following consultation with Dr Steve Murphy. Steve provided valuable insights into the conservation activities being undertaken to assess predator impacts and habitat change on the parrots breeding success, and overwhelmingly convinced the committee of the significant value the Artemis Nature Fund was having supporting the research and habitat restoration works. BNQ is so convinced of the value of

this work that this year we have a \$4\$ challenge. BNQ will match every dollar donated by the end of April that includes 'BNQ' on the online donation form, up to a total of \$2000. We sincerely hope this initiative, led by Lindsay Fisher, will double our impact and support of the project.

- Mikey Kudo (Cairns Area Coordinator) has continued to deliver an exciting program of

activities in 2021, from Wave the Waders Goodbye workshops to having a stall at the Cairns EcoFiesta. I know the Cairns members appreciate the work that Mikey does to provide local opportunities for participation.

- Monthly surveys of the seasonal wetland at Hasties Swamp near Atherton, have continued under the leadership of Ron Schweitzer. This monitoring continues our long relationship with the wetland since the Branches early work to raise funds (including grant funding) to build the bird hide and install interpretative signage (circa 1998 onwards). A big thank you to Ron and his regular volunteers.
- Sandra Christensen (Cassowary Coast Area Coordinator) continues to lead keen local birders on regular monthly social outings/monitoring at Warrina Lakes, Innisfail. These sociable events are very much appreciated, and are gradually expanding to other locations in the Cassowary Coast region as time and weather allows. Thank you Sandra!
- Our Conservation Coordinator, Peter Valentine continues to lead and take proactive action on conservation issues in our region including the Jack Barnes Boardwalk and the windmill saga on the Atherton and Evelyn Tablelands. Peter's involvement in the Wet Tropics Management Authority, Terrain NRM, the Tree Kangaroo and Mammal Group and with the Cairns and Far North Environment Centre illustrate his commitment to conservation in our region. I know that his regular Conservation Matters articles in Contact Call, are highly regarded and very popular. Thank you Peter for all the support and insights you provide.
- As BNQ representatives, Lindsay and Keith Fisher have been closely involved in the Abattoir Swamp since the sites management moved from Mareeba Shire Council to the Abattoir Swamp Management Group under the Mitchell River Watershed Management Group. To stay up to date on the great work being undertaken to repair, maintain and improve the bird hide and the surrounding vegetation to maximize the contribution the site provides to biodiversity in the region, go to the Friends of Abattoir Swamp facebook page that Lindsay also manages.
- Helen Larson, Coastal Wet Tropics Key Biodiversity Area Guardian, also continues to represent BNQ representative in the Cassowary Recovery Team.
- A BIG shout out to all our Key Biosecurity Area Guardians, who monitor our Key Biodiversity Areas and contribute an Easter health check by way of recording the threats to these predominantly important bird areas.

Communications

- Our NEW BNQ website, created by our secretary and communication lead, Renee Cassells is sensational. The following statistics are a snapshot from a recent 365 day (year) period:
 - 2,884 visits and 1,850 unique visitors
 - average session time is over 5 minutes
 - the most popular page of the site is 'Events' followed by 'Birding'



BIRDLIFE NORTHERN QUEENSLAND

TREASURERS REPORT AGM 26th MARCH 2022

BANK BALANCE AS AT 22nd MARCH 2022

Cash Account Cheque	\$22,432.66	General Account
Cash Account Maximiser	\$13,857.03	Grasswren Account
Term Deposit	\$10,377.04	
Total	\$46,666.73	

INCOME & EXPENDITURE APRIL 2021 – MARCH 2022

Income

Advertising	\$132.00	
Grasswren Grant	\$9,900.00	
BLA Network Support	\$3,000.00	
Donation	\$100.00	
Finance	\$383.33	GST Refund NO
	\$13,515.33	

Expenditure

Admin & Finance	\$489.98	
Graham Harrington Award	\$1,500.00	Henry Stoetzel – Grasswren Research
Grasswren Project	\$5,959.95	
New Website	\$7,200.00	
	\$15,149.93	