

# 2024 BirdLife Australia

## Distinguished Service Awards Citations

### BIRDLIFE AUSTRALIA DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARDS

The BirdLife Australia Distinguished Service Awards are a formal acknowledgment of the enormous contribution to BirdLife Australia made by BirdLife Australia members and volunteers. The awards are given for significant contributions to BirdLife Australia for a significant period of time.

#### **Brendan Kinsella**

Brendan Kinsella has been a member of BirdLife Australia for 30 years. His contributions to the running of BirdLife WA span the past 6 years. He has worked on a number of committees, participated in surveys both for BirdLife WA and other citizen science programs and lead in areas such as education and BLWA monthly meetings. This makes him difficult to categorise!

Brendan has been an active member of the Community Engagement Committee since 2018. This involves visiting schools and community groups, giving presentations and running workshops, along with leading walks. This work aligns with Brendan's passion for birds and their future as he works to inspire members of the general community and educate them about the importance of conservation. They are an important part of BLWA's efforts to improve understanding of birds and habitat conservation. It aligns with the 'society' aspect of BirdLife Australia's recent Bird Conservation Strategy 2023-2032. His acceptance of the position of Schools' liaison officer at the start of 2023 is a demonstration of his excellent organisational skills, his willingness to take on responsibility in areas of need and his commitment to the organisation as a whole.

Brendan's commitment to the organisational aspect of BLWA include being:

- Member of the Executive Committee (2021)
- Member of the BirdLife Australia Raptor group (2018)
- Member of the Australasian Waders Study Group (2018)
- Organiser of BLWA monthly meetings for members and the public, including the organisation of monthly speakers (2021-2022)
- Contributor to the Greater Western Woodlands Surveys (2020-2023); Birds on Farms Surveys (2023, 2024) monitoring two farms; Member of the Wheatbelt Surveys committee
- Speaker and leader of the monthly community presentations at Herdsman Lake, a collaborative initiative BLWA and the Gould League Society
- Organising the questions and being the MC for BLWA's quiz night in 2021 and 2023

Brendan's generous nature and depth of knowledge about birds, calls, behaviours and habitat have resulted in him being asked to conduct workshops on identification with agencies other than BirdLife Australia, including Bush Heritage. He participates in surveys for these groups, in his capacity as a BirdLife Australia member. Although these are not BirdLife Australia programs his collaboration with these groups (all on a voluntary basis) reflects BirdLife Australia's recent Bird Conservation Strategy, with its focus on ending extinctions. Brendan's whole outlook reflects the vision of the BirdLife Conservation strategy to ensure that by 2050 birds and nature are valued, conserved and restored, sustaining a healthy planet for the benefit of all people. His voluntary work supports two of the 4 areas of focus for this strategy, namely: "sites" working with partners in conservation and "society" by inspiring and educating members of the wider community.

May 2024

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### **Ceridwen Pearce**

Ceri's outstanding service to BirdLife Northern Queensland began back in 2013 when she joined the branch committee and took on the role of the Contact Call Newsletter Editor. Over the next ten years she met the challenge of modernising our newsletter by:

- Transitioning to the standard BirdLife Australia newsletter format, fonts, and protocols
- Managing the change from printed to fully digital version of quarterly newsletter
- Building content and expanding to "bumper" issues by actively seeking a wide range of content, including
- Literature reviews, more observational reports of birds and behaviours, extending the contributions from
- Widespread corners of our region
- Coordinating social events in our region to fill in the calendar of events that expanded to numerous pages in the newsletter
- Recruiting and mentoring a new editor to take over the digital version that keeps our members and supporters informed and engaged

### **Achievements as Convenor**

During her 10+ years on the committee, she has starred through her active participation and support of our projects. So, when we needed a new Convenor in March 2020, she was requested to take on this new challenge. Fortunately, she took this on and maintained a steady leadership role over the three years she was Convenor, as evidenced by:

- Oversight of revision of our branch's Conservation Priorities Plan in 2022 which has set our priority projects since
- Kept the entire committee informed of national office developments and is tenacious in getting our branch views and programs aware at national level
- Coordinating our branch inputs to the Action Plan for Australian Birds 2022 and recognising the need for ongoing monitoring of our threatened species
- Championed widespread use of BirdLife Australia's standard survey methods through workshops for beginners in identifying birds, especially the elusive Wet Tropics endemics, how to undertake the standard surveys, and how to use Birdata
- Ongoing support and encouragement to our project champions, area co-ordinators and other committee Members

### **Achievements as Birds with Altitude Champion**

What's most impressive is that after participating in our Conservation Priorities workshop in 2022, she immediately took the consensus generated in her planning group and initiated the Birds with Altitude Project - from planning to action within a year! This project is designed to deliver the critical monitoring of "at danger" endemic birds in the Wet Tropics rainforest. She has:

- Established partnerships with Queensland National Parks and Terrain NRM, and local scientists to gain their support and involvement
- Obtained initial funding for the project
- Championed scientific approaches but always ensuring that "citizen scientists" are involved by enlisting volunteers and conducted training
- Along with Amanda Freeman developed a monitoring manual
- And has cleverly set individual challenges to encourage greater participation using our standardised surveys

With such a solid foundation already laid for this project, we look forward to even more results under her excellent guidance and co-ordination.

**May 2024**