**BirdLife Melbourne President’s Report for 2024**

During 2024, BirdLife Melbourne provided our established range of activities for members and visitors. I would first like to thank all those who help in running the branch. As a branch of BirdLife Australia, we work with them to support their campaigns and objectives and we receive support in running the branch. In particular, I’d like to thank Fiona Cahill, the volunteer services co-ordinator.

We have around 2700 email addresses on our contact list and Our membership is around 3000, with many other supporters. We are the largest BirdLife branch, with approximately 20% of total BirdLife membership.

Outings:

We ran a full program of outing during the year and I’d like to thank those who assisted. Many people co-ordinate or lead activities. Co-ordinators are Phillip West (Weekdays’ Outings), Hazel and Alan Veevers (Beginners’ Outings), Maryanne Anderson (Yellingbo birdwalks) and Peter Bennet (Photography Group).

Hazel and Alan Veevers retired as Beginners’ Outings co-ordinators at the end of 2024. I would like to thank Hazel and Alan for organising and leading successful and popular outings over many years. Thanks also to Steve and Ange Hoptroff, who have taken on this role, supported by several outing leaders.

Communications:

E-news, our email newsletter, is our main communication to members and was sent out regularly during the year. This contains details of activities and news articles.

With the assistance of others, Adriana Bianchi uploads items such as outing reports to the Blog. Thank you to the contributors and photographers who provide

All new BirdLife Melbourne information is on our page of the BirdLife Australia website. We have decided to retain the old BirdLife Melbourne website for now, which has a lot of reference information, but will not be updated. We have been told that improvements to the website and the way that we can contact supporters will be implemented this year.

There is also a Facebook page with 2700 members which promotes our activities to a wider group, including non-members – thanks to Chris Farrell and others for posting and setting up events in Facebook and to all those that contribute.

Meetings and Education:

Chris Farrell has done an amazing job of arranging monthly speakers for the meetings and also sets up the room, along with Greg Hempenstall and Scot Sharman. We have had a steady audience of mostly regular attendees and are keen to increase attendance with better promotion of the meetings.

Thanks to Heather Mitchener and Janet Hand for providing the refreshments and to Sonja Ross who welcomes visitors.

Kelvin Thomson gave several talks and interviews and others also assisted with talks, outings and other education activities.

Melbourne Water Surveys and other Conservation Activities:

Scot Sharman co-ordinates and produces reports for the Melbourne Water Dandenong Catchment Surveys. Volunteers from BirdLife Melbourne are now surveying 8 sites, providing useful information for this survey, which has now been running for 17 years.

The monthly Yellingbo birdwalks have continued, run by Maryanne Anderson.

We have also assisted with BirdLife Australia’s conservation campaigns, with success in stopping the proposed marina at Toondah Harbour, although disappointment with little action on the ongoing Nature Laws campaign. We also responded to local requests for help with areas threatened with development.

Committee

The committee members give time to enable BirdLife Melbourne to continue to grow and develop. It would be great if other members will volunteer to give some time to help us.

In addition to those committee members previously mentioned, Madeleine Jenkins was assisting in the role of Secretary, although has now resigned due to moving away.

We appreciate the members who take part in our activities and meetings and are happy to receive any suggestions or comments.

Alan Crawford