

BirdLife Australia 2025 Annual General Meeting Minutes

Date: Sunday, 25 May 2025

Time: 9.30 am

Location: Quest Collingwood, 79-85 Wellington Street, Collingwood

Chair: Mandy Bamford (MB)

Present

22 voting members

Apologies

Christine Thomas| Judith Harrington |David McCann | Kaye Trainor| Roo Rawlins| John Rankin| Ann Lindsey| Gavin O'Meara|

Proxies Received

Valid proxies were received from 320 members.

1. Welcome

BirdLife Australia President Mandy Bamford (MB) opened the meeting and welcomed members, supporters, and staff attending in person and those joining via the livestream webinar. There being a quorum, the meeting was declared open at 9.37am.

MB acknowledged the Traditional Owners of the land. She thanked the board directors for their efforts throughout 2024, especially Gerard Early, who stepped down from the board after joining in 2011. MB said that GE has been a voice of extraordinary support, wisdom and reason to the board, and his contributions to BirdLife have been hugely valued.

2. Meeting Apologies

Apologies were received from Judith Harrington, David McCann, Kaye Trainor, Roo Rawlins, John Rankin, Ann Lindsey, Christine Thomas and Gavin O'Meara.

2.1. Proxies

320 proxy votes were received prior to the AGM. These BirdLife members had agreed to participate by proxy and had directed the President how to vote on matters requiring resolution, such as the Annual Report, Financial Accounts, the Auditors' Report and the election of Board Directors and Honorary Life Members.

Meeting Date: 25 May 2025

Date Approved: [TBA]

BirdLife Australia 2025 Annual General Meeting Minutes

A list of questions submitted by members prior to the AGM will also be made available to all members on the website after the AGM.

3. President's Address

MB reflected that the strength of BirdLife Australia lies in its people, and the past year has shown just how powerful that collective force can be in achieving real wins for birds and their habitats. BirdLife has strengthened its partnerships across science, community and policy and our expertise is increasingly being recognised by governments, communities and fellow conservation organisations. BirdLife's work is changing the future of Australia's birds.

MB thanked the Board, CEO, executive team, staff, volunteers, members and donors for their generosity and support for BirdLife Australia.

4. Minutes of the 2024 Annual General Meeting held on 25 May 2024

The minutes of the 2024 Annual General Meeting held on 25 May 2024 were published on the BirdLife Australia website and available to members on request. The count of proxy votes was in favour of accepting the minutes of the 2024 Annual General Meeting. The President called for the minutes of the 2024 AGM to be adopted. The minutes of the BirdLife Australia Annual General Meeting held on 27 May 2024 were adopted as a true and correct record of that meeting.

Moved: Prof Hugh Possingham. **Seconded:** Brian Boyd

Carried

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

5. Annual Report of Directors for the Year Ended 31 December 2024

The 2024 Annual Report was presented to all members. It is available on the AGM section of the BirdLife Australia website.

The President thanked the Board Directors and acknowledged the significant amount of time given by our volunteers to support BirdLife. In addition, MB commended members who made time this year to get to know KM and the other new staff members around the country, which helps our ability to work as one organisation and get better outcomes for birds.

MB introduced and presented each of the Board directors in attendance to the members.

The count of proxy votes was in favour of accepting the Annual Report of Directors.

The President called for the 2024 Annual Report of Directors to be adopted.

Carried Moved: Judith Hoyle **Seconded** John Barkla

Carried

BirdLife Australia 2025 Annual General Meeting Minutes

6. Presentation of the Financial Accounts of the Company and the Auditors' Report for the Year Ended 31 December 2024

Gary Nelson (GN), Chair of the Finance & Audit Committee, presented the Financial Accounts and the Auditors' Report for 2024 on behalf of the Board. He confirmed that an independent auditor RSM was engaged to ensure that BirdLife's financial statements were fairly and appropriately presented, and compliant with the not-for-profit requirements of the Australian Accounting Standards Board (AASB). The organisational structure of BirdLife was established following the recent reforms to align with the strategic plan. The organisation is now structured around four key functional areas: conservation and science, participation and engagement, strategy and governance, finance and business improvement. The structure recognises the branches, the observatories and special interest groups, as they are an integral part of the national network.

In 2024 revenue was just under \$15M. BirdLife had a strong result for bequests, totalling just under \$1.8M, and an uplift in the value of our investments. These uplifts have enabled us to support strategy. Donations and bequests are becoming a more important income source complementing the income received from grants.

Total expenditure has increased slightly, mostly attributable to the strategic investment in our systems, staffing and governance, together with a number of one-off costs associated with the organisational restructure. 2024 had an operating deficit of \$3.1M, which was a planned deficit reflecting the strategic decision to invest in systems. This deficit is anticipated to reduce significantly in the next two years.

BirdLife remains in a strong financial position, with good governance and a pathway to break even in 2026. The full financial report, income expenditure reserves and financial strategy are available in the Annual Report.

There were no questions from the members throughout the presentation.

The President called for the Financial Accounts and the Auditors' Report for the year ending 31 December 2024 to be adopted.

The count of proxy votes were also in favour for accepting the accounts.

Moved: John Barkla **Seconded:** Tuanh Nguyen

Carried

BirdLife Australia 2025 Annual General Meeting Minutes

7. Declaration of the Election of Directors

All eligible voting members were notified and invited to submit nominations to the Board through the member magazine, *Australian Birdlife*, and on the BirdLife Australia website. A summary candidate statement and ballot forms were posted to members in their AGM notification pack. The full candidate statement was also available on the BirdLife AGM website.

According to the Constitution, the voting for Board Directors must commence after 10:00am (AEST) after the in-person ballot count has ended. Following a count of proxy and attendee votes, Gerard Early (GE) announced that Mandy Bamford was elected for a further three years. 299 people were in favour of MB's election.

GE congratulated MB on being elected.

8. Presentation of BirdLife's Achievements in 2024

BirdLife Australia's Chief Executive Officer, Kate Millar (KM), gave a presentation on the organisation's achievements in 2024. Her presentation covered key activities in 2024, including:

- BirdLife has had almost 900,000 visitors to the website, 216,00 surveys logged in Birdata and almost 60,000 people completed the Aussie Bird Count.
- Using 50 years of data collection, BirdLife successfully halted the construction of a windfarm at Westernport Bay, protecting migratory shorebirds.
- The biennial Hooded Plover count was extended to Tasmania. At Lorne, the first pair produced chicks since the 80s, generating local excitement.
- Bio-acoustic monitoring of the Mukarrthippi Grasswren has begun.
- Saved the Cocanarup Reserve, saving black-cockatoos.
- After ten years of effort, Toondah Harbour was saved. KM particularly noted Judith Hoyle's contributions to this achievement.
- Birds on Farms continues its crucial work.
- Beach nesting birds conference was very well attended, with a key attendance by First Nations People. This conference translates science into meaningful outcomes around the country.
- The Red Goshawk National Monitoring Program is engaging Traditional Owners across the Cape York Peninsula, Tiwi Islands and Arnhem Land, supported by a tailored monitoring training program.
- KM spoke at the Senate Inquiry in Canberra into environmental reforms, articulating the importance of a 'Nature Positive' approach and the role Environment Information Australia should play.
- The organisational restructure was a challenging process for KM and for staff, and KM wishes to acknowledge the contribution of the staff who have moved on and hopes they will remain part of the flock. KM also noted the strength of the new staff and the expertise they bring. She hopes to create one flock with one purpose.
- The Aussie Bird Count recorded 4 million birds and drew wide media coverage.

KM encouraged all members to read the Annual Report for further information on BirdLife's impact and achievements.

BirdLife Australia 2025 Annual General Meeting Minutes

9. Election of Honorary Life Members

Under the BirdLife Australia Constitution, persons can be elected by the members on the recommendation of the Board as an Honorary Life Member of BirdLife Australia. Over the past year, the Board has carried out a rigorous process involving nominations from members and the Community Grants & Awards Committee. As a result, the Board recommended that members elect Iain Paterson, John Rankin and Judy Harrington

The proposed citations were posted to members when they received their AGM notification pack. The full citations are also available on the BirdLife Australia website. MB read distilled citations for all three.

Iain Paterson:

Nominated: Gerard Early **Seconded** Penny McMullin **Carried**

John Rankin

Nominated: Hugh Possingham **Seconded:** Jarrod Pittson **Carried**

Judy Harrington

Nominated: Penny McMullin **Seconded:** Tuanh Nguyen **Carried**

Following a count of votes and proxy votes, the President announced that Iain Paterson, John Rankin and Judy Harrington have been elected Honorary Life Members of BirdLife Australia.

BirdLife Australia 2025 Annual General Meeting Minutes

10. Announcement of BirdLife Australia Award

10.2 JN Hobbs Memorial Medal

The JN Hobbs Memorial Medal is awarded to an amateur ornithologist who has made a significant contribution to the knowledge or conservation of birds in Australia.

Nominations are made by members of BirdLife Australia and are considered and recommended by the Scientific Awards Committee and the Research & Conservation Committee before being approved by the Board. This award is made by the Board and does not require confirmation by members. The full citations of all award recipients are available on our website.

The President announced that Ann Lindsey was awarded the JN Hobbs Memorial Medal. A short video prepared by Ann was played to the attendees.

The President congratulated Ann for her very well-deserved recognition.

No Fellow nominations or the DL Serventy Award were received for 2024 and MB suggested that people consider nominations for next year, all details available on the website.

11. Questions and Other Matters from Members Submitted by Proxy

The President noted that there were questions raised by members before the AGM. These questions were addressed and, along with the answers, will be available to all members via the AGM section of the BirdLife Australia website after the AGM.

There were no questions from the floor.

In other business, Judith Hoyle displayed an original Peter Slater painting of black honeyeaters and told its history. The painting has been purchased by an anonymous supporter, with the proceeds donated to BirdLife Australia.

The President thanked everyone who attended the AGM in person, via proxy, and via the livestream webinar. MB also acknowledged everyone working behind the scenes to organise the AGM.

As there was no further business, the President declared the 2024 BirdLife Australia Annual General Meeting closed at 11:04am.

Signed:

(Chair)

Date:

Meeting Date: 25 May 2025

6

Date Approved: [TBA]