



# Annual Report 2013-14



As the peak environment body in SA, the Conservation Council of South Australia (CCSA) provides leadership, environmental advocacy and runs projects to achieve positive environmental change.

CCSA was formed in 1971 as a non-profit and strictly non-party political organisation and is now governed by some 50 of the state's environment and conservation groups.

This has been done by supporting and working with its member groups to strengthen and broaden the state's environment movement and to engage communities in general. CCSA's peak state role has been recognised by its recognition in all major state acts as the peak environment body.

In summary CCSA has achieved its outcomes by:

- **facilitating and supporting its affiliated groups** and other community groups in their work on conservation
- **advocating for environmental health** by promoting ecological, economic and social/cultural practices founded on ethical principles of protection and conservation
- **implement environmental projects** that deliver both community education and on-ground works to protect and repair the environment
- **contributing to state and federal policy and program development** by coordinating and preparing detailed submissions on Government policies, programs and discussion documents, as well as through participating in working groups and forums.

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# Presidents' & Chief Executives' Message

## Presidents



**Rob Fowler**  
To May 2014



**Nadia McLaren**  
From May 2014

## Chief Executives



**Tim Kelly**  
To Nov 2013



**Craig Wilkins**  
From Nov 2013

The last twelve months has ushered in an era of significant transition in our organisation, with a change in leadership and new directions and challenges.

In November, Tim Kelly passed on the CE baton to Craig Wilkins, and in May, Nadia McLaren took over the President's reins from Rob Fowler. Also in April, Peta Montgomery retired after many years of dedicated service.

With fresh leadership comes new directions and perspectives at a time when many of the places and things we hold dear remain under threat.

However, we end the year on a real high after helping to make history – Conservation SA has helped to create the largest increase in nature protection in our state in a generation. Thirty years ago the idea of creating a series of 'national parks in the sea' in South Australia was first proposed. Fifteen years ago the process formally commenced, and after the largest public consultation in our state's history, a Marine Parks Network was created.

Yet, just as it was about to commence, a Bill in State Parliament threatened to scupper it all. So, we decided to act. Over the course of an intensive two month campaign, working in strong partnership with The Wilderness Society SA, the Save our Marine Life coalition and many passionate individuals, we wrote opinion pieces, organised events on the steps of Parliament House, coordinated lobbying, released reports and opinion polling, created websites and drove social media.

Gradually, bit by bit, we changed the conversation. And finally, we won the day. In the end the Bill was defeated by just 1 vote. It is an achievement of which our sector can be incredibly proud.

However, protection for our precious marine environment is not the only area where we focused our efforts. The start of the year was dominated by the state election campaign. Again, working in close partnership with the Nature Conservation Society and the Wilderness Society, we stood up for biodiversity, renewable energy and protection of our natural spaces. Our 'Endangered Ranger' video in particular captured attention. We hosted a packed out election forum featuring the Premier and won some valuable commitments from the main political parties.

We have also been contributing to the review of the planning system through our membership of the Planning Review Reference Group, working in close collaboration with other organisations such as the Community Alliance, SA Council of Social Services, Environmental Defenders Office and the National Trust. We expect the final report of the Expert Panel conducting this review to be presented to the state government before the end of 2014.

Our small gains in a challenging political climate have been dwarfed, though, by the funding assault on the Environment portfolio which continued apace in the state budget, with a flow on effect to many of our member groups through the loss of funding such as the NRM Community Grants. Matching this was a deliberate move away by the state government from traditional forms of community input into decision making through government boards and committees.

The critical investment and focus on climate change and biodiversity loss (to name just two issues of many) remains grossly inadequate at all levels of government while, at a federal level, the dogged rollback of sound environmental policy continued with depressing pace.

Although as a state based organisation much of our work is focused in that realm, federal policy has a huge impact. In response to the threat to the federal Renewable Energy Target, we have strongly pushed our state's exciting green energy story, hosting prominent interstate experts like Dr Richard Denniss and Giles Parkinson in a series of well attended events.

Meanwhile, a significant part of our work is focused on hands-on community based projects that deliver on-ground outcomes. Our Swamps and Emu Wren project continues to innovate and trial new techniques in a determined effort to hold the line for this critically important species and habitat. Our popular award winning Reef Watch and MOSAIC marine projects inspire local communities to care about the sea. We continue to provide strong support to our member groups through the NRM NGO Alliance, and our Green Hubs energy efficiency project stimulates community centres and sporting clubs to use energy more wisely, and spread this message out to their members and supporters.

All these achievements could not have happened without the ongoing support of our incredibly hard working volunteers, councillors, member groups, Executive Committee and its sub-committees, representatives/nominees on government committees, staff, volunteers and our many donors and supporters.

A huge thank you to you all.

Despite a massive blow with the loss of our core federal funding, we were humbled by the response from our community of supporters. We were again deeply honoured to receive a number of very significant donations. We also trialled new fundraising options to diversify our income streams, and worked hard to raise our profile. This effort has enabled us to end the year with a relatively positive balance sheet.

There is no doubt, though, that significant organisational challenges remain. We remain highly dependent on government funding at a time when this is becoming more tenuous. Like many other environmental NGOs, we are also actively questioning our focus and activities in the face of clear evidence of government and community disengagement.

As a peak body, we have an enormous responsibility to ensure we are useful, relevant and influential in these challenging times. We believe we need to influence differently as recent bitter experience has shown that smart ideas and strong evidence no longer flow so easily through to government policy. Part of this shift is a deliberate re-orientation away from traditional engagement mechanisms such as preparing detailed policy submissions, and increasing our focus on community mobilisation and engagement and helping our member groups to do what they do best.

Central to this new approach is the shift into our new home. We are thrilled to be creating a community hub space in the old Central Bus Station at 111 Franklin Street. Our vision is for this centre to be a go-to place for inspiration, nurturing, education and connection. We hope you will all join with us to maximise the potential for this new home to underpin the next phase of Conservation SA's journey.

# Supporting SA's Conservation Movement

Through its role as SA's peak environment group, CCSA continues to **facilitate informed and articulate community input** into local, state and Commonwealth processes and policy via its representation on a range of government committees such as the:

- Essential Services Commission of SA Community Advisory Committee
- SA Marine Parks Council
- SA Strategic Plan Audit Committee
- Giant Cuttlefish Working Group
- Premier's Climate Change Council
- Planning Reform Reference Group.

Nineteen (19) **government committees include** members that were nominated by CCSA or have CCSA representatives as part of their make-up. These individuals report to each Annual General Meeting and a copy of their reports for 2013-14 can be found on CCSA's website. Our thanks go to these individuals for their considerable efforts on behalf of the environment sector and the Conservation Council.

In 13/14, the organisation has also presented **sector, community and scientific views to government policy processes via 60 submissions**, mostly to state and federal government agencies, on a large variety of topics.

Details of the submissions can be found on the CCSA website. Here are some examples:

- Renewable Energy Target Review
- Blueprint for the Future South East Forest and Wood Products Industry (2014 - 2040)
- Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (Repeal) (No. 1) Bill 2014
- Inquiry into Defence Legislation Amendment (Woomera Prohibited Area) Bill 2014
- Strategic Assessment of DEWNR Fire Management Activities under EPBC Act
- Trade and Foreign Investment (Protecting the Public Interest) Bill 2014
- Bight Petroleum's Environment Plan
- South Australia Draft Bilateral Agreement
- The Future of Port Stanvac
- Emissions Reduction Fund - Green Paper
- Energy White Paper - Issues Paper
- Coongie Lakes National Park Draft Management Plan
- Review of Declaration of Plants under the NRM Act
- Inquiry into the Direct Action Plan
- Integrated Transport and Land Use Plan
- Port Bonython Bulk Commodities Export Facility Environment Impact Statement
- Rex Minerals Hillside Project proposal for copper mine on Yorke Peninsula
- South Australian Planning Review
- Carbon Pricing Policy - Moving to an Emissions Trading Scheme

**Member Engagement** is a vital aspect of the Conservation Council's work. We have continued to engage, support and work with our member groups on a range of issues. We have worked in partnership with other NGOs on such issues as the State Election campaign, Repower Port Augusta, Planning Reform and to save the Environmental Defenders Office.

We have also supported our member groups by such activities as running a Grant Writing Workshop and Campaigning & Media training. We valued the input of our member groups as we

looked at the future direction of CCSA through our Envisioning Workshops and considered the move to the Hub (the old Adelaide bus depot).

CCSA continues to run **the Conservation Centre** at 157 Franklin Street, Adelaide, which includes an information service, public meeting rooms, access to IT and internet free of charge to students, campaigners, member groups and the public. In an average year, over 250 meetings are held in CCSA meeting rooms (daytime, night time and weekends).

## Campaigns, advocacy and projects that deliver CCSA's conservation priorities

### Major Campaigns and Advocacy

In 2013-14 the Conservation Council SA has worked on numerous fronts, and achieved important wins in some areas.

#### Our key campaign: the 2014 state election

For the election, Conservation Council SA focused on developing a discrete, comprehensive and resourced campaign. This campaign focused on letting political parties know that the continued cutbacks and wind backs to environmental protection are unacceptable. We employed a dedicated campaigner to coordinate our efforts for six months in the lead up to the March election and our efforts were clearly visible during the campaign.

Working in close partnership with the Nature Conservation Society of SA and The Wilderness Society, we:



- highlighted our main campaign issue of funding for the Environment portfolio through:
  - a high impact media stunt on the steps of Parliament House
  - a formal application to list DEWNR staff as an 'endangered species'
  - our 'Endangered Ranger' campaign video
- carried out reactive media and proactive and reactive social media on a range of issues including renewable energy, River Murray, Zero Waste and funding for DEWNR

- facilitated a booked out and highly successful election forum featuring the Premier Jay Weatherill, Opposition Environment spokesperson Michelle Lensink and Professor Chris Daniels on the 7th March at the RiAus building.



- coordinated a collation and distribution of the results of our election asks and lobbying
- hosted a campaign stall at the WOMAD music festival with a photo petition re DEWNR funding cuts
- were involved in a pro-marine park advertising blitz in the last week of the campaign.
- hosted a packed out 'Politics in the Pub' forum on unconventional gas with Dr Richard Denniss from the Australia Institute

A number of significant announcements were made by Labor and Liberal at our election forum including:

- \$50K funding for EDO (Liberal)
- An International Bird Sanctuary based on the Dry Creek saltfields (Labor)
- Marine Park Monitoring (Labor)
- Improvement to Parks and Reserves (Labor)

Prior to the election forum, the Liberal party announced a commitment to an additional 12 Park Rangers (\$900K) as a direct response to our campaign, and the

Labor party announced a new body called Adaptive Futures would be based on, and extend the work of Zero Waste (with approx. half the funding – up from \$1 mill to \$4 mill / year).

One of the most effective messages provided was made in the Endangered Ranger video clip that simply pointed out the reduction of our park ranger numbers was happening to such an extent that it was similar to an ecological collapse. Without sufficient rangers, our parks cannot be managed effectively.

## Renewable Energy & Save the RET

SA has a wonderful renewable energy story to tell. We have arguably the highest percentage of (non hydro) renewable energy in the world, and almost one in four domestic households is run on solar. Yet there is so much more we can and should be doing. The exciting thing is that we are within reach of 100% renewable energy within a decade.

We identified that the biggest threat to that exciting future was from the federal government's attack on the Renewable Energy Target. We responded by preparing a detailed submission to the RET review, presented to the RET review panel chaired by Dick Warburton, and lobbied MPs including Nick Xenophon.

During the year, the federal government reversed an election commitment and announced a review into the Renewable Energy Target (RET).

The enormous amount of investment in wind and solar in South Australia over the last decade has largely been driven by the federal Renewable Energy Target, which was started by John Howard in 2001.

## **Save the EDO**

In December 2013, the Federal Government announced that it would cease all funding to the Environmental Defenders Offices (EDO) around the country.

This federal funding had existed since the 1990s and was even increased in 2013, allowing the EDO SA to employ new staff. When this funding arrangement ended on the 30 June, 2014 the SA EDO lost over 90% of its funding.

The EDO is the only community legal service in SA with expertise in environmental law. It doesn't charge for its services - allowing all of us access to vital legal expertise and knowledge we would not otherwise be able to afford.

Many of our member groups have sought the EDO's help for campaigns or to aid their advocacy work. Its law reform work has been crucial in improving environmental legislation and preventing abuses and shoddy practices.

With the 30 June deadline approaching, we brought the sector together to brainstorm options, and provided assistance to the EDO to help market their work to supporters, notably with the production of two videos letting EDO supporters tell their story. We were delighted that a one year funding lifeline was secured, and are poised to help again if required.

## **NRM Community Grants / State Budget**

The SA 2013/14 State Budget was as bleak for environment agencies as we feared. The Environment Department received a devastating cut of almost 40%. There is no doubt this had a significant impact on our natural spaces, and our ability to respond to climate change, biodiversity loss and the next drought.

The budget also confirmed the loss of NRM Community Grants. The Natural Resource Management (NRM) Community Grants program was established by then Environment Minister Jay Weatherill in 2009. The Minister recognised the significant contribution of community volunteers devoting hundreds of hours to protecting and restoring their local patch. The grants provided some much-needed funding support from the government.

The grants have funded 745 projects across the state and achieved a huge range of benefits, such as:

- facilitating positive partnerships between community groups, sustainable agriculture groups, government departments, industry, NGOs and NRM regions
- offering opportunities for older community members to share valuable skills and knowledge with younger generations
- enabling projects to be done in a professional manner, by funding equipment or consultants with specific expertise
- enabling a number of Aboriginal community groups to maintain or remediate culturally significant sites on country.

The grant program was \$2.8 million at its peak but government support steadily eroded to \$1.5 million in 2013-14. The 14/15 budget abolished the program altogether. The grants were a tiny proportion of the government's total expenditure on environmental programs, which delivered many times more than they cost.

Ending this program makes no economic sense, especially at a time when environment budgets and staffing at the state and federal level are also being slashed. It is a cruel blow to the volunteer communities who give up their free time to look after places that are important for all South Australians.

CCSA coordinated a broad lobbying and media campaign into pressuring the government to reinstate this vital program. Unfortunately this campaign was not successful but will be continued.

## **Reform of the SA Planning System**

Over the past 12 months, CCSA has been involved in extensive discussions that have taken place within the Planning Review Reference Group (PRRG) concerning ideas and options for reform of the planning system.

CCSA is represented on the PRRG by Rob Fowler, with Paul Leadbeter (initially) and Craig Wilkins (more recently) serving as his Deputy.

The PRRG has provided a sounding board for a range of reform ideas under consideration by the Expert Panel that is conducting the review, with formal meetings being held on a monthly basis and additional informal consultations with various Working Groups of the PRRG taking place alongside.

CCSA has worked very closely with the Community Alliance, SACOSS, EDO and National Trust representatives within the Community Interests Working Group of the PRRG to respond to the various ideas being generated through the Expert Panel, and also to propose our own ideas such as the Charter on Community Participation. The review is to be concluded by December 2014, when the Expert Panel is required to submit its final report to the state government. Whether the state government has any appetite for genuine reform of the current system, as opposed to simple stream-lining measures to facilitate development proposals, remains to be seen.

## **Mining**

The Conservation Council SA has continued to play an important role calling for the mining sector (covering minerals and petroleum resources) to be accountable for its environmental performance and commitments. Whilst there are processes established by government for the sector to gain approval and licences for operations, these do not necessarily translate into all aspects of good performance or reporting. Finding annual reports and performance data online can be particularly difficult even for those that are experienced in searching for such documents.

The Conservation Council has taken a proactive approach to clearly identify our expectations of the mining sector to demonstrate environmental performance. Rather than attempting to comment on every mining proposal, we concentrated our efforts on the review of the SENEX Statement of Environmental Objectives (SOE) covering operations across the Cooper Basin in North East South Australia. We outlined areas where the revised SOE document was not sufficient, and explained where the document was not adequate in seeking outcomes for improved environmental performance. In doing this, several guidelines for achieving 'best practice' were prepared including:

- Best Practice for providing basic data
- Best Practice – Environmental commitments
- Best practice prevention of fauna entrapments and interactions

In the context of South Australia's mining push, our organisation supports a transition to renewable energy to meet stationary energy needs as quickly as possible. It is our view that fossil gas should serve as transitional fuel only and that the use of both coal and gas for stationary energy should be substantially phased out in the next two decades in order to preserve a safer climate, below tipping points of dangerous climate change.

Conservation SA also provided a detailed submission on the Rex Minerals Hillside Project proposal for copper mine on Yorke Peninsula that has since received approval by the South Australian Government.

Our objective in this submission was to seek to ensure that key aspects of the environment are protected, that unambiguous commitments to the sustainability of South Australia are defined, and that there is an adequate level of disclosure and transparency in reporting against the requirements of a future Program for Environmental Performance and Rehabilitation (PEPR).



The Conservation Council also noted the concerns of the Yorke Peninsula farming community that will be impacted upon by this development as agricultural lands are replaced with a mine.

We were disappointed that the government conditions placed on this mining approval will leave an open cut pit in the landscape for geological time and did not include any requirement for a climate change sector agreement to cover massive potential diesel fuel and electricity demand.

## Places You Love and the 'One Stop Shop'

CCSA is a member of the Places You Love alliance, a network of over 40 conservation organisations from across Australia that was formed in 2012 to oppose the Commonwealth handing over its powers to approve developments affecting matters of national environmental significance to the states and territories (via approval bilateral agreements). Whilst the Gillard government retreated from this idea in late 2012, the Abbott government has vigorously pursued it via its "one-stop-shop" initiative since being elected.

Former CCSA President, Rob Fowler, has been very active in the campaign against this initiative, and was the key speaker in a travelling roadshow across three States and Canberra in May 2014. Conservation SA joined with The Wilderness Society and Places You Love to host a well attended forum at the Adelaide Zoo. At present (Oct 2014) four jurisdictions now have draft approval bilateral agreements open for public comment (Act, NSW, Tas. and Qld). It is quite possible that litigation will be pursued by members of the alliance to challenge the validity of any accredited arrangements as they emerge. There is very little information being made available concerning the timeline for a draft approvals bilateral agreement for SA, but negotiations are proceeding between the SA and Commonwealth governments to develop such an agreement.

## Marine – Giant Cuttlefish

The Northern Spencer Gulf population sub species of Giant Australian Cuttlefish has collapsed steadily over the past 10 years.

Conservation SA has continued to participate with the South Australian Government's Cuttlefish Working Group in an effort to discover reasons for the decline and implement actions to protect and assist the recovery of this unique population.

Whilst there is no full understanding of the decline, our advocacy for a total ban on fishing for giant Australian Cuttlefish in the Northern Spencer Gulf has resulted in a continued moratorium on fishing for these short lived animals, to allow every individual to contribute for breeding to increase numbers.

It was some relief that there were greater numbers returning to the breeding aggregation areas near Whyalla and Point Lowly during the 2014 breeding season. Some estimates have suggested that the population may have been in the order of 100,000 animals, but the final population estimate has not been confirmed.

A detailed list of research being coordinated by the Cuttlefish Working Groups is provided in our Representatives and Nominees report relating to this committee.

In our view, key threats to the population continue to be:

- the risk additional bulk export port facilities proposed to take place directly in and around the breeding aggregation area.
- greater risk of diffuse and point source pollution from the industrialisation of the Point Lowly facility
- greater risks from increased shipping and seafloor disturbance in Upper Spencer Gulf.

The Conservation Council SA provided a detailed submission on the proposed Port Bonython Bulk Commodities Export Facility - Environment Impact Statement. In this submission we highlighted the potentially unmanageable risks to this unique population, and that there are better alternative locations that would eliminate the risk to cuttlefish and help to prevent over 100,000 km of additional annual shipping movements in the Northern Spencer Gulf each year.



Great Australian Cuttlefish

## South Australian Environment Awards

CCSA continues its ongoing recognition of the environmental work of communities and individuals through its annual Awards. In August 2014, the awards for the 2012/13 year were presented at the Santos Conservation Centre at the Adelaide Zoo.

Every year, these awards celebrate the outstanding efforts and dedication of nature lovers and environmentalists in our community caring for the South Australian environment.

**Jochen Kaempf** was announced as winner of the **Jill Hudson Award for Environmental Protection**. This major award recognises South Australians who have made outstanding contributions to environmental protection over the past 12 months. Jochen is a scientific activist for the protection of precious marine environment. An expert in the oceanography of South Australian gulfs, he has contributed research and campaigned against major “questionable” current plans for South Australia’s waters including mining export ports in Gulf St Vincent and Spencer Gulf, and oil drilling in the Great Australian Bight.

“South Australian gulfs deserve to be rigorously protected from aggressive industrial developments. Overall I hope that my scientific contributions have made a true difference for future generations.”

**Tony Flaherty** was honoured with the **Unsung Hero Award**, for his sustained contribution to protecting South Australia’s environment. Tony has shown long-term passion and commitment to marine and coastal conservation over the last 30 years, right up to his current position as Coast and Marine Manager for the Adelaide region. He played a critical role in advocating for the establishment of Marine Protected Areas in South Australia, and was also key in the Leafy Sea Dragon becoming South Australia’s state marine emblem!

**Rose Cullen** received the **Young Achievers Award** for her commitment to inspiring young people to be champions for the environment. The 16 year old from the small country town of Kanmantoo has volunteered to care for the environment since she was nine. She is now the chairperson of the River Murray Youth Council, as well as a member of the Australian Youth Climate Coalition.

“Age should never determine level of passion nor should it determine what you can achieve. Inspiring young people to become actively involved in our communities creates awareness about environment issues and helps to instigate change.”



Front Row  
Tony Flaherty - Unsung Hero Award,  
Jochen Kaempf - winner of the Jill  
Hudson Award for Environmental  
Protection and Rose Cullen - Young  
Achievers Award  
Back Row  
Nadia McLaren President CCSA & Craig  
Wilkins Chief Executive CCSA

# CCSA Projects

CCSA's project efforts are targeted towards filling gaps in the sector and collaborating with member groups and partners to attract more funding opportunities for the environment sector in South Australia.

Our existing projects fall under four categories:

- Natural Resource Management
- Terrestrial Biodiversity
- Marine Biodiversity, and
- Energy and Sustainability

They:

- support and reflect the organisation's environmental policy positions
- play a key role in developing key stakeholder relationships
- foster partnerships
- provide opportunities for volunteerism
- build community capacity and knowledge
- deliver on-ground environmental protection outcomes
- develop resources and
- link to natural resource management plans and outcomes within the state.

## **Natural Resource Management (NRM)**

Through our **NRM Facilitation project**, now in its eight year, we continue to work hard to support the involvement of CCSA member groups and other environmental non-government organisations (eNGOs) in a range of NRM processes in the state and in some cases federally. The aim of this engagement is to ensure the conservation sector has every opportunity to contribute to NRM processes at the policy/planning and delivery levels for better environmental outcomes.

The work focuses on providing support and additional capacity to the sector as required and is positioned to be the nexus between government NRM structures and the eNGOs. Our Facilitation project focuses on building relationships across government and the conservation sector, fostering environmental NGO networks for dissemination of a range of NRM related information, and bringing stakeholders together.

The breadth of work encompassed by the project includes: facilitating sector meetings on NRM; fire management, water allocation plans (WAP) and NRM plans; ensuring early input into the development of park management plans such as the Gawler Ranges, Coongie Lakes, Eastern Eyre and South Para and early engagement with the Native Vegetation Council in areas such as the Significant Environmental Offsets Matrix.

It has included supporting the eNGO NRM Alliance partnership with NatureLinks, a program that connected people and projects to restore SA's natural environment. Unfortunately, as announced in the June budget, this program is no longer funded by DEWNR and the ongoing challenge continues to be to keep advocating for greater investment in landscape-scale restoration programs that protect and restore wildlife and natural habitats.

Another great loss announced in the budget was the axing of the State NRM Community Grants Program which has funded over 740 environmental projects over its five year life. CCSA continues to advocate for this program's reinstatement.

The Facilitation project also continues to call the government to account in consultation practices. At every opportunity we advocate for meaningful public participation, which has included frequent reference to the government's *Better Together: principles of community engagement* guide, launched in 2012.

## Terrestrial Biodiversity Program

### **Mt Lofty Ranges Southern Emu-wren and Fleurieu Peninsula Swamps Recovery Program (MLRSEW & FPS)**

Now in its 20th year, the program seeks to protect and recover important habitat for the endangered MLRSEW and the critically endangered Fleurieu Peninsula Swamps, both listed under the EPBC Act. The program approaches conservation and natural resource protection from a landscape-scale perspective, with protection of the swamps and emu-wrens extending to considerations of land-use, management, existing and potential threats, soils, hydrology, landform elements, topography and the interaction between these variables.

Monitoring of MLR Southern Emu-wren continued during 2013–2014. The estimated population size is 200–400 individuals, across 17 sites. In light of the dire situation and consistent with the strategic development and trials of relatively drastic management techniques, options and feasibility for a captive breeding trial using another subspecies were reviewed.

Similarly, a habitat manipulation burn (10 ha) was undertaken in poor quality swamp habitat with the aim of improving habitat quality and thus emu-wren population size and distribution. This was a successful trial of technical methods for swamp habitat management using deliberate burning and is the subject of ongoing monitoring. The burn was a recovery program initiative, implemented by DEWNR.

The recovery program engaged closely and constructively with DEWNR in 2013–2014 regarding emu-wren habitat management, particularly fire management planning. Research priorities were reviewed in 2013 and substantial effort, albeit unsuccessful, put into progressing the highest priority research.



*Swamp Field Day*

Over the last year, the program has gone through a rigorous process of reviewing datasets and knowledge gaps, and responded by developing a strong Fleurieu Peninsula swamp research and monitoring focus. This has included initiating and co-designing: a) monitoring and evaluation projects; and b) research projects. Research covers topics such as blackberry control in swamps, control of *Phragmites australis*, research methods to monitor swamp edge expansion and investigating swamp seedbanks. As part of this work, project staff have transferred skills and technical knowledge to on-ground practitioners, researchers and tertiary students.

A ground-breaking new pilot project was started this year in an attempt to find a new way to manage Fleurieu Peninsula swamps at a swamp catchment scale. Two very different swamp catchments were chosen to be involved with a collaborative, multi-stakeholder

approach to landscape-scale swamp conservation. This project will extend into next year to enable a thorough and co-operative process to evolve and to allow time for evaluation of the process.

This year we have aimed to increase the profile of swamps and emu-wrens at community events. We have hosted displays and stalls at a variety of events around the Fleurieu Peninsula. One display inspired students at Goolwa Primary School to use the topic of Fleurieu Peninsula swamps in a national Kids Teaching Kids conference.

We assisted in the planning and opening of the repaired and upgraded Mt Compass School swamp boardwalk. This swamp is one of only a few that the general public can visit and experience. The team's expert knowledge was sought in the development of signage for the boardwalk and in the development of a swamp plant identification booklet for landholders.

We also facilitated people getting down and dirty in a swamp through involvement in Swamp Fest, an activity at Stiputurus Conservation Park to increase threatened plant populations and restore the swamp and surrounding vegetation. It had the largest turnout to the event yet.



*Swamp Fest – The community input & the result*

To keep landholders and stakeholders up to date with the program's work we produce an annual newsletter, which has at least 180 subscribers.

## Marine Biodiversity Program

### Reef Watch

Our multi-award winning, flagship marine citizen-science program Reef Watch uses scientifically proven and non-destructive survey methods to collect data on temperate reef health.

The **sub-tidal** monitoring program trains recreational divers to undertake ecological surveys of temperate reefs located in SA's coastal waters. A total of 42 sub-tidal surveys involving 101 volunteers (20 of which were trainees) were undertaken during 2013-14.

The **intertidal** monitoring program, which commenced in 2006 and monitors intertidal rocky reefs, is critical to providing further information on these environments, about which little is known. In



2013-14 the program completed 35 intertidal surveys involving more than 182 volunteers (including more than 61 trainees).

Reef Watch both held and attended a variety of events such as the annual Reef Watch quiz night, Reef Watch Open Day, Reef Watch volunteer tour of the SA Museum marine invertebrate collection, SARDI Aquatic Sciences Open Day, Dolphin Day, Science Alive and the Marion Coastal Funshop.

Reef Watch received a State Community NRM Grant to develop a booklet on 'Seadragons and their friends: A guide to Syngnathidae fishes in South Australia'. The booklet will be ready for distribution in October 2014.

During the year Reef Watch decided to change the format of our newsletters. For many years the Reef Watcher had been produced quarterly both in print and via email. The Committee decided to trial a shorter, email only newsletter, which has received good feedback and goes out to more than 600 people per month.

During 2013, Reef Watch did a large amount of work updating its safety documentation, processes and information provided to volunteers. This is now consistent with new work safety laws that were implemented in SA in 2013 and ensures that both we and our volunteers know how they are covered for activities that are potentially very dangerous.

### **The Feral or In Peril Program**

This program encourages recreational divers, fishers and boat owners to identify and report on introduced marine pests ('ferals') and native marine ('in peril') species.

The program undertook 47 marine pest dive surveys in the AMLR NRM region this year, involving 110 dive volunteers and was involved in 24 events to raise awareness of marine pests.

The program obtained an Australian Government Community Environment Grant to fund further marine pest work and a second series of surveys for western blue groper during the summer of 2013-14. Surveys were done at 15 sites across SA with 95 volunteers, compared with 25 sites the previous year. Locations that could not be surveyed due to budget limitations include Kangaroo Island and the south east, therefore this year's survey is not a full picture. The data analysis will be available in late 2014.

The funding has also enabled a project officer to maintain contact with boating and fishing groups across South Australia, promoting good boat hull husbandry to reduce translocations of marine pests across the state and introducing people to Feral or In Peril, reminding them of the opportunity to look out for and report on potential marine pests.

The same grant also enabled us to take five of our most dedicated Reef Watch volunteers to Victoria to experience their marine parks, meet some volunteer marine groups and to see some marine pests up close that we do not have yet but that are a threat (e.g. northern Pacific sea star). This trip was a great success in that volunteers felt valued and supported, and were able to provide us with good feedback to improve Reef Watch.

In total, Reef Watch and Feral or In Peril engaged more than 1,100 people during 2013-14.

### **Monitoring Seas and Inspiring Communities (MOSAIC) Pilot**

This program is a collaboration between CCSA, the Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources (DEWNR) and local communities to facilitate and explore citizen science activities specifically related to monitoring South Australia's new marine parks.

In 2012-13 CCSA produced a comprehensive report identifying potential opportunities for citizen science contributions to monitoring the performance of the sanctuary zones. The report is available here: <http://www.conservation.sa.gov.au/coast-and-marine-projects/mosaic.html>

Starting in April 2013, the project entered the next phase, which is the establishment of two pilot projects:

- Robe Coastcare: this enthusiastic group of volunteers were very keen to contribute to marine parks. In early 2014, three CCSA staff members and a consultant marine scientist travelled to Robe for several days. During this time they were able to scope out the potential monitoring sites, set up equipment and deliver a range of training such as fish identification, how to measure and sex rock lobsters, how to complete the data sheets and more. After this initial training the group completed one set of surveys on their own. Then later a second training workshop provided the group with the opportunity to get wet in the form of fish surveys by snorkelling.
- Neptune Islands: we worked with the Rodney Fox Shark Expeditions (RFSE) ecotourism business who frequent the two Neptune Islands (now the Ron & Valerie Taylor Marine Park), one of which will be a sanctuary zone and one will not. This is an ideal set up for a control-impact study. Working with a business that has the relevant equipment and can get out to the islands on a relatively regular basis is an ideal foundation for a citizen science project involving both the staff and guests of the business. A training trip was conducted in late April, including one CCSA staff member and a consultant marine scientist. At least two RFSE staff were trained, equipment was set up and tested with fantastic results.

Feedback from both groups was excellent and they are keen to continue their monitoring work into the future. We also did a presentation about the program to the State Coastal Conference.

## Energy and Sustainability Program

The Green Hubs Energy Efficiency Program is funded through the federal government's Energy Efficiency Information Grants Program and assists South Australian community organisations to lower their carbon footprint and energy costs. The project is creating a community of not for profit organisations across the state that are embedding sustainability in their day to day practices. Our Green Hubs are a diverse and dynamic range of community organisations including sports and community clubs, surf lifesaving clubs, conservation organisations, churches and social services organisations. Green Hubs continues to expand and diversify Conservation Council SA community engagement opportunities, creating a solid base for further community sustainability projects.

The 2013/14 financial year has seen a major expansion across the Green Hubs sphere. Our volunteer Community Energy Efficiency Presenters have delivered energy efficiency presentations to 35 organisations across urban and regional areas and our Green Hubs Energy Efficiency Guide has been distributed to 700+ community organisations across the state. Energy audits have been delivered to 24 South Australian community organisations, our Green Hubs, with the assistance of our auditor and sustainability consultant Sustainable Focus.

We have assisted our Green Hubs post-audit by providing information about funding opportunities, assisting with grant applications, and providing information on the latest developments in energy efficient methods and equipment. These organisations have been able to save thousands of dollars, and lower their environmental impact, by adopting our audit suggestions, from simple actions such as decommissioning excess hot water systems and refrigeration, to major building upgrades. We have also been able to identify incorrect

tariffs and charges for unused meters, presenting the possibility for major savings. Through our extensive networks we have provided our Green Hubs with opportunities to engage with, and receive assistance from, other energy efficiency projects in the government and NGO sector. We have also been able to provide home energy efficiency information and presentations to the clients of many of our Green Hubs.

Another exciting aspect of Green Hubs is our relationship with UniSA PhD candidate Gabriele Fitzgerald from the Zero Waste SA Research Centre for Sustainable Design and Behaviour. Gabriele has assisted with the evaluation of Green Hubs over several years as part of her research on the transmission of ideas on sustainability between work, home and community. Her assistance has provided an academic robustness to the project and she has presented her findings at conferences nationally and internationally.

We also have a productive relationship with Uniting Communities and have worked closely with their Towards Carbon Neutral Project and Utilities Literacy Program. We have participated in five Energy and Water Expos organised by Uniting Communities; these have further enabled us to spread the word about Green Hubs throughout the state. We continue to work closely with the energy division of the Department of State Development.

The 2014/15 year will bring further opportunities to extend our community networks and assist South Australian community organisations to reduce their energy costs and add environmental sustainability to their portfolio of community achievements. We look forward to the opportunity to assist them on this journey.

## **Generating funds to create security for conservation advocacy**

CCSA continues to be heavily reliant on government for the income required to support its operations. In 2013-14 our Chief Executive continued negotiations with DEWNR and other state government agencies for on-going funding. In particular to continue to fund our (previously unfunded) advocacy work in relation to fisheries management, transport, planning and energy-related matters. This has had some success. We were particularly pleased that DEWNR has offered a new three year funding agreement starting in 2014-15.

As noted previously the Commonwealth Government has withdrawn the GVESH0 annual funding for all NGOs in Australia. This move made the development of the 2014-15 budget very difficult. On the positive side it has meant we have doubled our efforts to reduce the significance of all government funding. In these times the importance of CCSA maintaining its advocacy is more important than ever and should not depend on government funding.

As noted elsewhere we continue to look at fundraising as an increasing source of support and also reducing our costs. The move to the Hub in 2014-15, while initially leading to higher costs, should in the longer term reduce our office costs significantly as well as lead to better community engagement and group support.

# Financial Report

The overall financial result for the 2013-14 financial year was an operating surplus of \$81,946, which was a considerable improvement on the budgeted deficit of \$53,853. At year-end, organisational reserves were at \$497,682.

This improvement in outcome over budget is attributed to:

- One large unanticipated donation
- Increased state government grants
- Project income and thus project administration fees being above budget
- The organisation continuing to improve its control of operational expenditure.

Since 2010, CCSA has faced a number of financial challenges and there is a clear understanding within the organisation that CCSA needs to put itself on a sustainable financial footing. CCSA up until now has been heavily reliant on three sources for the income required to support its operations:

- first, general operating grants from both the South Australian and Commonwealth governments,
- second, income for administrative services generated from our management of program grants (ie conservation projects - most of which are also funded via contracts with government agencies) and
- third, membership fees, and donations.

We sincerely thank all our financial supporters (non-government and government) for enabling the Conservation Council to fulfil its role.

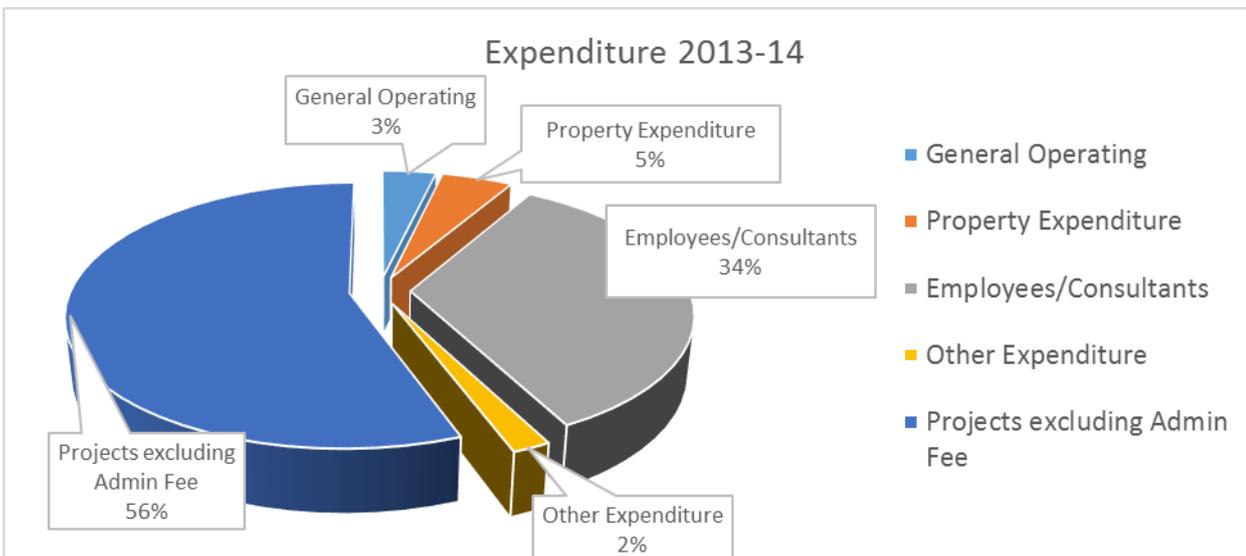
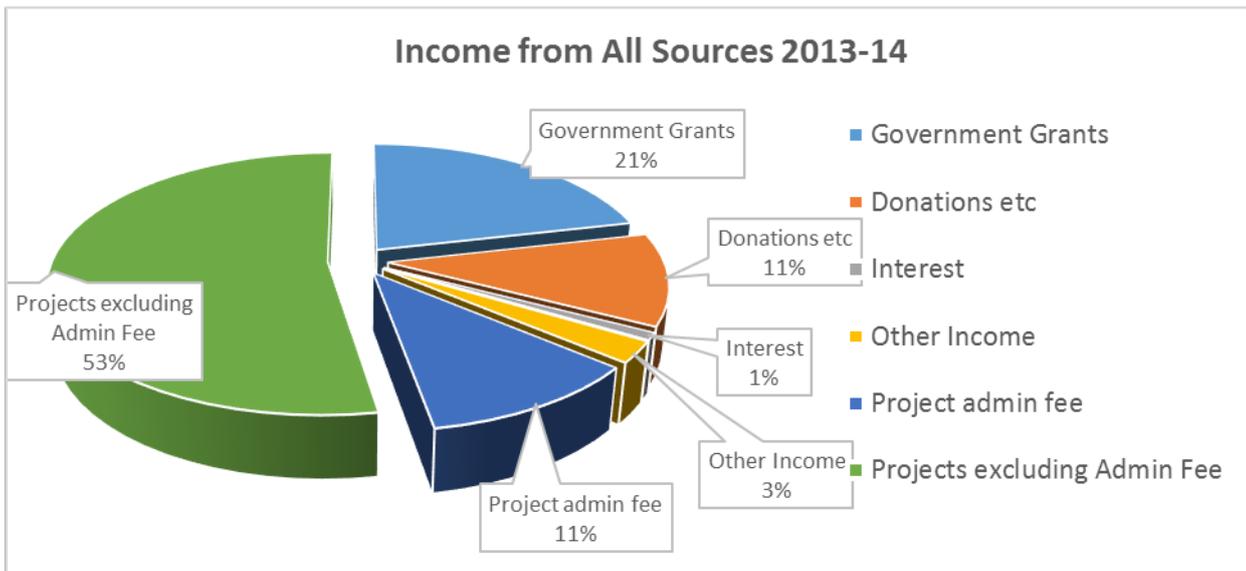
The finances for 2014/15 will be much harder given the Federal Government has decided not to provide any future financial support for organisations such as CCSA. In 2013/14 the Federal Government provided \$77k.

CCSA's role as the peak environment organisation in South Australia should justify the level of support it attracts from government in grants. However, as demonstrated by the loss of the Commonwealth GVESHO grant for 2014/15 there is a risk attached to the current level of dependency on Government as a source of funding. The next few years will be critical in attempting to reorient CCSA's financial situation through the pursuit of a number of extra fundraising initiatives in a climate of government cost-cutting and continuing to look at reducing expenditure.

## CCSA Income & Expenditure Statement

<b>INCOME AND EXPENDITURE STATEMENT</b>		
<b>2013-14</b>		
	<b>2013-14</b>	<b>2012-13</b>
<b>INCOME</b>		
<b>ADMINISTRATION</b>		
-Government	\$327,943	\$245,555
-Donations etc	\$174,231	\$166,052
-Interest	\$13,362	\$15,613
-Project admin fee	\$170,128	\$164,742
-Other	\$39,607	\$44,087
<b>Total Admin Income</b>	<b>\$725,271</b>	<b>\$636,048</b>
<b>PROJECTS</b>		
Income excluding Admin Fee	\$809,825	\$785,384
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>\$1,535,096</b>	<b>\$1,421,433</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>		
<b>ADMINISTRATION</b>		
- General Operating	\$52,720	\$47,095
-Property expend	\$70,103	\$86,467
-Employee/Consultants	\$493,325	\$408,310
-Other	\$27,177	\$33,237
<b>Total Administration</b>	<b>\$643,325</b>	<b>\$575,108</b>
<b>PROJECTS</b>		
Expenditure excluding Admin Fee	\$809,825	\$784,401
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$1,453,150</b>	<b>\$1,359,603</b>
<b>SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)</b>	<b>\$81,946</b>	<b>\$61,615</b>

## Pie Charts for Income and Expenditure



## CCSA Balance Sheet

### CONSERVATION COUNCIL OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA INC. ASSETS AND LIABILITIES STATEMENT AS AT 30 JUNE 2014 & AT 30 JUNE 2013

	At end of June 2014 \$	At end of June 2013 \$
<b>ASSETS</b>		
CURRENT ASSETS		
Cash and cash equivalents	654,935	672,639
Accounts receivable and other debtors	128,295	67,934
Prepayments	8,112	7,336
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	<u>791,342</u>	<u>747,909</u>
NON-CURRENT ASSETS		
Financial assets	33,761	29,906
Property, plant and equipment	7,969	9,638
TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS	<u>41,730</u>	<u>39,544</u>
TOTAL ASSETS	<u>833,072</u>	<u>787,453</u>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>		
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Accounts payable and other payables	58,413	54,437
Grants received in advance	174,432	223,360
Provision for annual leave	45,067	31,281
Provision for long service leave	42,676	43,716
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES	<u>320,588</u>	<u>352,794</u>
NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Provision for long service leave	14,802	18,923
TOTAL NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES	<u>14,802</u>	<u>18,923</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES	<u>335,390</u>	<u>371,717</u>
NET ASSETS	<u>497,682</u>	<u>415,736</u>
<b>ASSOCIATION'S FUNDS</b>		
General reserve	-	-
Retained surplus	497,682	415,736
TOTAL ASSOCIATION'S FUNDS	<u>497,682</u>	<u>415,736</u>

## CCSA Member Groups for 2013-14

Adelaide Hills Climate Action Group  
Aldgate Valley Landcare Group Inc  
Aldinga Bay Coastcare Inc  
Association of South East Field Naturalists Societies  
Australian Institute of Landscape Architects (SA Group)  
Australian Plants Society (SA Region) Inc  
Bicycle Institute of South Australia Inc  
Bird Care & Conservation Society Inc  
Birds SA (SA Ornithological Assn)  
Cheltenham Park Residents Association Inc  
Clean Land, Air & Water SA  
Community Alliance SA Inc  
Echidna Care Inc  
Eco-Action Kangaroo Island Inc  
Economic Reform Australia (SA Division) Inc  
Field Naturalists Society of SA Inc  
Fishers for Conservation Inc  
Friends of Parks Inc  
Friends of the Earth Adelaide Inc  
Friends of Willunga Basin  
Gawler Environment & Heritage Association Inc  
Greening Australia (SA) Limited  
Landscape Partnerships Inc  
Marine Life Society of SA Inc  
National Trust of South Australia  
Natural History Society of South Australia Inc  
Nature Conservation Society of SA Inc  
North East Hills Environmental Conservation Assn  
Orienteering SA Inc  
People for Public Transport SA Inc  
Permaculture Association of SA Inc  
River, Lakes & Coorong Action Group Inc  
SA Genetic Food Information Network Inc  
SA Herpetology Group Inc  
Scientific Expedition Group Inc  
Southern Eco-Alliance Inc  
Spencer Gulf Environmental Alliance  
St Agnes Bushwalking & Natural History Club Inc  
Sustainable Population Australia SA Branch  
The Wilderness Society (South Australia) Inc  
Trees For Life Inc  
Vegetarian Society of SA Inc  
Walking SA  
Western Adelaide Coastal Residents' Assn Inc  
Zoos SA

## CCSA Representation on Government Committees

- Board of Environment Protection Authority
- Duck and Quail Open Hunting Committee
- Essential Services Commission of SA Community Advisory Committee
- Kangaroo Management Reference Group
- Lake Eyre Basin Community Advisory Committee
- Lower Limestone Coast Water Allocation Plan Reference Group
- Native Vegetation Council
- Natural Resources Management Council
- Planning Reform Reference Group
- Power Line Environment Committee
- Premier's Climate Change Council
- Regional Bushfire Management Committees:
  - Adelaide Mt Lofty Ranges
  - Kangaroo Island
  - Fleurieu Peninsula
  - Limestone Coast
  - Lower Eyre Peninsula
  - Murray and Mallee
  - Outback
- SA Marine Parks Council
- SA National Parks and Wildlife Council
- SA Pastoral Board
- SA Strategic Plan Audit Committee
- State Bushfire Coordination Committee
- Technical Working Group of the GHG Protocol Power Accounting Guidelines Project
- The Giant Cuttlefish Working Group

# Committees and Staff: 2013-14

## Executive Committee

Rob Fowler – President June 2013 to May 2014  
Nadia McLaren – President from May 2014 on  
Vice Presidents Paul Leadbeter and Eric Nicholson from Oct 2013 on  
Sean Habgood - Treasurer  
Vacant - Secretary  
Neville Bebee  
Jack Budgen from Oct 2013 on  
Philippa Rowland from Oct 2013 on  
Gabrielle Appleby from Oct 2013 on  
Alison Rimmington (to March 2013)  
Greg Ogle to Oct 2013  
Jasemin Rose to Oct 2013  
Graham Paterson  
Jill Woodlands (staff representative)

## Sub-committees of the Executive Committee

**Finance and Audit:** Rob Fowler, Sean Habgood, Graham Paterson, Neville Bebee, Tim Kelly (to Nov 2013), Craig Wilkins (from Nov 2013), Hadyn Hanna, Nadia McLaren

**Human Resources:** Rob Fowler, Tim Kelly (to Nov 2013), Craig Wilkins (from Nov 2013), Stephen Fox, Hadyn Hanna, Nadia McLaren

**Fundraising:** Rob Fowler, Brain Haddy, Gabrielle Appleby (from Oct 2013), Kylie Kruger, Tim Kelly (to Nov 2013), Craig Wilkins (from Nov 2013)

## Environmental Standing Committee Chairs

**Biodiversity** – Anthelia Bond up to October 2013, vacant thereafter

**Coast and Marine** – Stephen Madigan up to October 2013, vacant thereafter

**Energy** – Matthew Curnow

**Planning and Development** – Iris Iwanicki up to October 2013, Paul Leadbeter from February 2014

**Waste** – Wil van Deur

**Water** – Paul Leadbeter up to October 2013, vacant thereafter

## Staff & Consultants(\*)

**Chief Executive** - Tim Kelly (July to November)

**Chief Executive** - Craig Wilkins (November to June)

**Business Advisor** - Hadyn Hanna\*

**Campaign Coordinator** - Julia Winefield

**Biodiversity Program Manager** - Alexandra Gaut

**Biodiversity and NRM Adviser** - Vicki-Jo Russell\*

**Community Conservation Officer** – Kathryn Warhurst

**Policy and Communications Officer** - Meg Sobey

**Fundraising Officer** - Kylie Krueger (August to June)

**Office Manager** - Virginia Swan

**Executive Support Officer** - Peta Montgomery (June to March)

**Election Campaigner** – Gemma Weedall (August to March)  
**Executive Support Officer** – Gemma Weedall (March to June)  
**Membership and Conservation Centre Support Officer** - Robyn Gardner  
**Website and Database** - Lesley Parton  
**IT** - Hilary Miller, Malcolm Griffith\*  
**NGO- NRM Facilitator** - Jill Woodlands  
**Sustainable Communities Coordinator** - Kathy Whitta

## **Mt Lofty Ranges Southern Emu-Wren and Fleurieu Swamps Recovery Program Team**

Marcus Pickett, Ornithologist  
Tim Vale, Works/Extension Officer  
Rebecca Duffield, Ecological Research Officer (from June)  
Julie Schofield, Policy Officer

## **Reef Watch and Feral or in Peril Team**

Steve Leske\*  
Carl Charter\*  
Neville Hudson

## **Fisheries**

James Brook\* (March to June)



Photo (Brydie Hill): Uncommon Fleurieu Peninsula Swamp plant  
*Patersonia occidentalis* (common name: Long Purple-flag)





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[facebook.com/conservations](https://facebook.com/conservations)