



Natural History Society of South Australia Inc  
trading as

**Wombats SA**

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## Minutes of the Wombats SA Annual General Meeting 2025

2:00pm on Saturday, 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2025

Meeting held in Rm 101/2, Charles Hawker building, Waite Campus, Waite Road, Urrbrae and via Teams

### Attendees

Gary Taylor (President), Peter Clements (Vice President), Wendy Clements, Kevin Stead, Steve Protopapas, Merv Renton (Media Officer), Margaret Renton, Susanne Jahnes, Michael Brindley, Kerrie Davies (Secretary), Brian Donaghy, Jill Millhouse, Deb Berridge, Peter Cullen, Penny Harper, and guest presenter Rebecca Greening.

Anne Bynon - via Teams from Arizona in the USA.

### 1. Welcome

Gary Taylor opened the meeting at 2.15 pm with an Acknowledgement of Country.

### 2. Apologies were received from:

Adrian Jones (Head Ranger), Karen Collins, Michael Dowling, Mary Holt, Wayne Donald, Margaret Taylor, Matt Gaughwin, Coral Johnston, Lidia Rozman, Nanette Hill, Barry Powell, Gary and Lisa Deayton.

### 3. Minutes – AGM 4th April 2024

Minutes from the 2024 AGM had been circulated. The approval of them as a true record was moved Peter Clements, seconded Penny Harper. Passed (no dissension).

### 4. President's Report

Members were provided with a copy of the President's Report. Gary Taylor presented the Report, outlining the activities and achievements of the Society over the last year. Condolences were expressed on the death of Enid Jones and Dr John Coulter, both long-time members of Wombats SA. John was an early supporter of the Association. Two strategic workshops were held during the year, attended by current and former Committee members. Matters considered included land management and maintenance, and potential projects and funding. Wombats SA Rangers were recognised by the Premiers Certificate of Appreciation in 2024 for Outstanding Volunteer Service. Ongoing projects included weeding, track and fence maintenance, and completing the installation of wombat warren markers. The Society received a grant from the *Limestone Coast Landscape Board* for the control of lavatory creeper and periwinkle at Cullen Reserve at Robe, with members and local volunteers undertaking spraying and weed removal in early November 2024. Our profile in the community has expanded considerably through the good work of Merv Renton in our social media posts and in MyGivingCircle raising some very useful funding, and through Peter Clements, supported by Susanne Jahnes, giving a number of talks to like-minded community groups. As a consequence, there has been increased attendance at our Volunteer Working weekends and many new enquiries. The Society is currently seeking a new Social Media Coordinator, and is seeking expressions of interest from interested persons. Gary thanked Committee members for the various activities undertaken during the year. No questions arose from the report.

### 5. Financial Reports

In the absence of Karen Collins, Gary Taylor presented the Financial Report for the Society, for the year 1st January to 31st December 2024, the auditor's account and an update on donations and fundraisers over the year. Donations for

the year were \$15,734 (up from \$10,258 in 2023). The balance sheet at the end of the year was \$115,210; up from \$111,310 at the same date in 2024. The Society had 103 financial members at the end of 2024 and 33 life members. This was a large increase from the 76 financial members at the same time last year. Non-financial members will be discontinued.

We received \$2,000 from Friends of Parks and Nature with the Fuel Subsidy Grant to reimburse our volunteers for their cost in accessing the reserves when the distance they must travel was 300 kms or more for each event. Volunteers donated their shares back for the Society to use in our projects.

Karen thanked the auditor and the accountant (Georgie Fiedler) for their continuing work and support; and gave a huge 'thank you' to book-keeper Margaret Renton.

No questions were raised from the Financial Report.

Kerrie Davies moved that the report be accepted, Penny Harper seconded. Passed (no dissension).

## **6. Appoint the Auditor for 2024 accounts**

Margaret Renton moved that Bruce Evans remain the auditor, Peter Clements seconded. Passed.

## **7. Elect up to ten general members to the Management Committee – nominations**

For this part of the meeting, Gary Taylor passed the chair to Jill Millhouse.

As there were only ten nominations for the ten Committee positions, no election was necessary.

The following members were duly named as the Wombats SA Management Committee for 2025:

Peter Clements

Karen Collins

Kerrie Davies

Susanne Jahnes

Adrian Jones

Peter Jones

Penny Harper

Merv Renton

Steve Protopapas

Gary Taylor

Accepted. Committee members will elect the Office Holders from within this list at the first meeting following this AGM. Meeting turned back to Gary Taylor.

## **8. Guest Speaker**

Gary Taylor introduced the guest speaker Rebecca Greening.

Rebecca was the winner of the Alwin Clements Award in 2024, when she did her Honours project. This has now expanded to become her PhD research project. The title of her presentation was *"Could live-stock associated soil microbes be affecting plant recruitment?"*

Rebecca pointed out that, in South Australian arid lands, the biodiversity of native perennial vegetation is threatened by consumption of species that taste good for introduced sheep. While the effects of livestock on native vegetation are well-documented, she explained that little work has been carried out to look at indirect effects on soil microbes.

These have a crucial role in nutrient cycling but their effects on plant regeneration and renewal are largely unexplored. Soil was collected from Koonamore Station and the 99-year livestock exclusion Reserve within it to look at livestock-associated soil microbes and nutrient levels. She has found that some of these changed by livestock, and that they have any effect on native plant recruitment. Rebecca is further exploring such changes in the work for her PhD, and her work has much relevance for our Moorunde reserve. The talk was enthusiastically received, and Rebecca answered many questions from her audience. She will receive a year's membership of Wombats SA.

## **9. Closure**

Meeting closed 3.10 pm.

Attendees then enjoyed chat, coffee/tea and nibbles.