



[HOME](#) : [ABOUT ABSAs](#) : [OUR HISTORY](#) : [CONTACT US](#)

NEWSLETTER 153



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Contents

Editorial
ABSAs AGM
ABSAs Conference 2024
Committee Business
Application details for FAR Grants



Image: Darryl MacKay

Editorial

My apologies for the lateness and brevity of this newsletter. I was struck down with a nasty bout of Covid just as I started to compile it, which put me out of action.

There is still time to submit an application for a grant from the ABSAs Fund for Avian Research.

Closing date is 31 December 2023.

Formal notice of the Association's AGM is contained in this newsletter. At that meeting, a special resolution will be proposed to consolidate all recent amendments to our constitution, and to adopt the document as a whole, as recommended by NSW Fair Trading, which oversees the Associations law in NSW. The complete document is available for perusal by members on the Association's website.

ABSAs Annual General Meeting

Formal notice is hereby given that the Association's Annual General Meeting will be held using email, as in the last three years, in the period 3 to 9 February, 2024. Meeting papers will be emailed to each member prior to the meeting.

Notice is given that a Special Resolution will be put to members to adopt the Constitution as revised in 2013 and 2022.

ABSAs Conference

Committee also decided to trial holding the Association's annual conference on line. This event will be held on Saturday 16th February, from 1 to 5pm. The theme of the Conference will be "Technology in Avian Research", and a series of lectures have been organised. Members will be invited to log on to a ZOOM meeting by clicking on a link that will be provided by email prior to the conference.

Members are recommended to download the ZOOM App prior to the date, or to update their copy if they have previously done so.

Committee Business

1. The untimely death of Corella Editor and Vice-President Alan Lill left two positions vacant on the Committee. At the recent meeting, Committee formally appointed Walter Boles to the position of Editor of Corella, and we welcome him to the team.

2. Committee also appointed ordinary member Bill Rutherford to the position of Vice-President. We thank both Walter and Bill for stepping up.
3. We also thank the four members who put themselves forward, following our plea in November, as assistant judges to Stephen Debus at the AOC, for the ABSA prize for Best Student Poster.
4. Committee was approached by a number of Alan Lill's students at La Trobe University, who wished to fundraise for a memorial in honour of Alan's contribution to the ornithology community. They have forwarded the sum raised, and Committee decided to rename the biennial AOC prize for Best Student Poster to honour Alan's contribution, both to the Association, and to Australian Ornithology in general. Members can read about his many and varied interests in the obituary published in the 2023 Corella.
5. Committee also decided to raise the cash part of all the prizes awarded by ABSA from \$150 to \$200. Each prize also includes a year's membership of ABSA.
6. Summary of ABSA Prizes
 - The Bill Lane Award for Best Student in Charles Sturt University Graduate Certificate in Ornithology (annual).
 - The Durno Murray Award for Best Paper in Corella (annual).
 - The Alan Lill Award for Best Student Poster at the Australasian Ornithological Conference (AOC) (biennial).
7. Committee passed a formal vote of thanks to Alan Leishman for stepping in at short notice to complete the editing of the 2023 Corella, and for offering to supervise the process of deciding the Durno Murray Award for Best Paper in Corella.
8. Committee was informed by the President that our bank no longer deals with cheques. As a result, the option of paying by cheque has been removed from the renewal notice. Committee urges all members to pay, if possible, by direct deposit, the option that is least problematic and time-consuming for the Treasurer, and also the most secure.

Fund for Avian Research - Call for Submissions

The deadline for applications for funding support from ABSA's Fund for Avian Research (FAR) Grants is fast approaching.

The FAR Grants are intended to support researchers with project-related expenses such as buying equipment and/or travel within Australia. It is anticipated that approximately \$2,500 will be available in the 2024 round of funding. That amount is usually distributed across several applications.

The amount of money isn't large, but the applications don't need to be lengthy, either! If you are running a research project on some aspect of the Australian bird fauna and could use some extra funding, give it a go.

Please read the Assessment Criteria below carefully. Applicants should email their signed applications (as attachments either in .pdf or .doc formats) to:

info@absa.asn.au

by 31st December 2023

FAR Grants - Assessment criteria

1. General Criteria

How well does the proposal relate to ABSA's objective "to support, encourage and promote the study of Australian birds and to contribute to their conservation" and the purpose of the avian research fund to "assist with the publication of information, the provision of education or the carrying on of research into various aspects of the avifauna of Australia"?

2. Scientific and Technical Criteria

- a) Does the proposal have a clearly stated objective?
- b) Does the proposal include a clearly stated and practical methodology to achieve its objective?
- c) Is the methodology consistent with good scientific design and with good practice (including ethical considerations)?
- d) Is the achievement of the objective able to be measured or quantitatively assessed?
- e) If successful, how significant and/or useful will the outcome be in terms of our knowledge of the Australian avifauna and its conservation?
- f) How likely is the project to result in formal publication of results?

3. Financial Criteria

- a) Does the proposal provide a clear and itemised account of how the funds will be spent?
- b) Are the allocations in the proposed budget appropriate and do they provide reasonable value for money?

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