

1. Mission

- Australian Wildlife Society, founded in 1909, is a national not-for-profit wildlife conservation organisation.
- We are dedicated to conserving Australian flora and fauna through education, advocacy, and community involvement.

2. Background

- Formerly known as Wild Life Preservation Society of Australia Limited ^[1].
- The Swedish Consul-General for Australia, Count Birger Mörner, organised the first preliminary discussion in the consulate on 11 May 1909 ^[1,3].
- The Honourable Frederick Earle Winchcombe, MLC (1855-1917), was the first President of the Society ^[1,3].
- The Society pioneered the recognition of the need for legal protection for Australia's animals and plants ^[1,3].
- Registered with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission.
- Managed by an elected board of up to ten directors (Fig 1).
- Funded through membership fees, sponsorship, partnerships, and donations. One hundred percent of donations are distributed to wildlife conservation projects across Australia.



Figure 1. 2022 Board of Directors of the Australian Wildlife Society.



Figure 2. A fairy tern (*Sternula nereis*) mother feeding its chick. Image: Julie Knight.

7. Acknowledgments

The Society acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of Country throughout Australia and New Zealand and their continued connection to land, water, and culture. We pay our respects to Elders past, present, and emerging.

3. Wildlife Conservation Action

- The Society offers four prestigious **Awards** – Serventy Conservation Award, Community Wildlife Conservation Award, Wildlife Rehabilitation Award, and Youth Conservation Award.
- The Society offers **University Grants and Scholarships** to students from Australian universities for research projects directly relevant to the conservation of Australian wildlife – \$45,000 per year (Fig 3).
- The Board of the Society considers requests for **Conservation Group Grants** from wildlife groups specialising in wildlife rehabilitation and habitat preservation. For example:
 - Funds assisted Reclaim Kosci in taking politicians and media representatives to Kosciusko National Park to help raise awareness about the impacts of feral horses on native wildlife and their fragile habitat.
 - Funds assisted Adelaide and Hills Koala Rescue in purchasing two Niki pumps to rehydrate koalas in rehabilitation care.
- The Society publishes *Australian Wildlife* and *Wildlife Wisdom* to educate the community on the importance of wildlife conservation and the conservation action being implemented nationally.

2022 University Research Grant Winners

The Australian Wildlife Society's University Research Grants are scholarships offered to honours or postgraduate students at Australian universities. Each year, ten grants of \$3,000 are awarded. Grants are available for research projects of direct relevance to the conservation of Australian wildlife (flora or fauna). Grants may be used to purchase equipment and consumables, travel expenses related to field research, or to attend conferences at which you are presenting your research.

The Australian Wildlife Society is delighted to announce the winners of the ten grants of \$3,000 each to honours or postgraduate students conducting research that will contribute to the conservation of Australian wildlife.

The winners for 2022 are:

ADAM YANEY-KELLER

School of Biological Sciences, Monash University

Project Title: Disentangling the long-term effects of marine debris on Australian fur seals

CLAIRE BUTLER

Institute of Marine and Antarctic Studies, University of Tasmania

Project Title: Comparative effects of ocean warming on kelp-herbivore interactions on Australian temperate reefs

ELISE OAKMAN

School of Life and Environmental Sciences, University of Sydney

Project Title: Does restoration return insect pollinators to our endangered ecosystems?

ERICA CSEKO NOLASCO

School of Biological Sciences, Queensland University of Technology

Project Title: Social-ecological drivers and outcomes of conservation in private lands

JACLYN HARRIS

School of Biological Sciences, Monash University

Project Title: Fire and Reptiles: An investigation into threatening processes and potential management solutions

JAVIERA OLIVARES-ROJAS

School of Biological Sciences, Monash University

Project Title: What is required to recover Australian threatened ecosystems?

JESSICA KEEM

School of Ecosystem and Forest Sciences, University of Melbourne

Project Title: Refuges are vital for the survival and persistence of fauna in the wake of disturbance events

NICHOLAS MACDONALD

School of Life and Environmental Sciences, Deakin University

Project Title: Investigation of the immune response of the Tasmanian devil (*Sarcophilus harrisii*) to cancer and altered environmental conditions

NICOLE LYNCH

School of Life and Environmental Sciences, University of Sydney

Project Title: Spot the quoll: Tactical use of olfactory information to improve detection and conservation of a rare, native carnivore

SHAWN SCOTT

UniSA STEM, University of South Australia

Project Title: Post-fire population recovery and chytrid occurrence in frogs of the Mount Lofty Ranges, South Australia



Figure 3. The Society's 2022 University Research Grant Winners.

4. Achievements and Projects

- Successful endeavour to stop the trade in wild bird plumage in 1910, notably of the white heron or egret ^[1].
- Obtained official protection for the koala first in 1911 and 1912 in NSW regarding the koala fur trade ^[2,3].
- In the late 1960s, the Society lobbied to protect the Great Barrier Reef. It only recently succeeded with a new Zoning Plan for the entire Marine Park coming into effect on 1 July 2004 and protecting over 33% of the Great Barrier Reef ^[1,2].
- Formed a 'Friends' group for Towra Point Nature Reserve in 1997 to assist NPWS with bush regeneration, exotic weed removal, tree planting, and protection of the Towra Lagoon and its wildlife, particularly migratory wading birds ^[1,2,3].
- The Society's Threatened Wildlife Photographic Competition, established in 2017, raises the plight of threatened Australian wildlife through photography (Fig 2) ^[1].
- Established Australian Wildlife Week in 2019 to encourage a positive relationship between humanity and nature ^[1].
- Pioneered #SnipRingsforWildlife in 2020 to advocate against ring-shaped items being used in manufacturing ^[1].
- The Platypus Alliance successfully advocated for a complete ban on opera house nets in VIC, NSW, ACT, TAS, and WA ^[1].

5. Significance

- We implement several wildlife conservation projects to help us achieve our mission.
- We liaise and meet with Ministers to influence positive changes in legislation for the conservation of biodiversity.
- To reduce biodiversity loss, we advocate for and educate people on the importance of preserving native and threatened species for future generations.

6. Future Work

- Educate community members.
- Support further research and wildlife rehabilitators and groups.
- Promote sustainable use of natural resources.
- Grow our membership (Fig 4).



Figure 4. Invitation to join the Society.

8. References

- Australian Wildlife Society 2022, viewed 21 October 2022, www.aws.org.au.
- Serventy, V, & Medway, P 2004, Conservation Victories and Battles Yet to Win, Wildlife Preservation Society of Australia Limited, Brighton Le Sands, NSW.
- Webb, J, & Medway, S 2010, *Saving Australia's Wildlife: The History of the Wildlife Preservation Society of Australia 1909-2009*, Wildlife Preservation Society of Australia Limited, Brighton Le Sands, NSW.