



# Australasian Wildlife Management Newsletter

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## Nigel Barlow memorial symposium Queenstown 15 - 17th September 2004

Nigel Barlow made an enormous contribution to pest management, and other fields of ecology, in New Zealand over the last 25 years and was recognised by AWMS with the posthumous award of the Caughley Medal. It was Nigel's model of the dynamics of possums and bovine tuberculosis that underpinned much of the practical management of the possum as a vector of that disease by predicting threshold densities for possums below which the disease should die out. This set targets, expressed as trap-catch indices, for possum managers that underpin the whole possum control contract system used by the Animal Health Board. However, Nigel had very wide interests in pest control and wider ecology and modelled wasp dynamics, rabbits and RHD, aphids, pasture pests, stoats and immunocontraception, and the nature of rarity, as well as having a fascination with crocodiles, large butterflies, komodo dragons and anacondas.

When Nigel died in June 2003, AgResearch (who employed Nigel) and Landcare Research (who contracted as much of his time as they could) decided to hold a symposium on the "Practical applications of ecological theory and modelling" in Nigel's honour. Twenty-eight papers were invited (13 from overseas authors from England, Australia, Canada, and USA and the rest from New Zealand) across themes of interest to Nigel and presented at a 2-day symposium in Queenstown, New Zealand in September 2004. Papers were presented to about 50 attendees on bovine Tb, ecological invasions, biocontrol, ecological theory, and on conservation and many will be published in 2005 in a special issue of the *New Zealand Journal of Ecology* – which Nigel edited between 1985 and 1989.

Nigel would have enjoyed the modelling focus of the papers and the range of topics (many of which in which he was actively engaged) ranged from wildlife diseases, both classical and GM biocontrol, biosecurity, pasture pests, predator-prey models, plant-herbivore models, reintroduction of rare species to control strategies, and from mites to koalas, to kokako and caribou.

*John Parkes, Sep 04*

## Kangaroo Island Conference: 29 November – 2 December 2004

There has been a great interest in the conference, so much so that we have had to organise two full days of concurrent sessions just to fit the papers in. This has been a little bit of a headache in that we have had to find another venue and double the audio/visual facilities. Hopefully, all will go well. Given the interest we expect well over 200 participants so those wishing to attend would need to organise their travel and accommodation ASAP.

In addition to the symposia listed in the conference brochure, there will also be a full session on koalas and their management. This could be an interesting and lively session.

The pre-conference BBQ and the dinner will be catered by a local firm, Two Birds and a Squid. It promises to be an interesting and enjoyable menu, especially the dinner. At one stage we had booked the local cricket team to be waiters at the dinner, but sorry girls, they have had to pull out.

Desley Whisson and Pip Masters have organised stimulating pre and post conference tours. Details can be found on the AWMS website: [www.awms.org.nz](http://www.awms.org.nz) Numbers are limited, especially for the post conference tour so it is first in first served.

Sponsors have been generous this year as well. We have two gold sponsors, the Pest Animal Control CRC and the Department of Sustainability and the Environment Victoria. Other sponsors are SIRTRACK (who has been with us for many years now), Connovation (New Zealand) and the Australian Koala Foundation.

*Mike Braysher, Sep 04*

## The Wildlife Society 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference, Calgary Alberta Canada

Greg Baxter AWMS/TWS liaison

In the AWMS/TWS affiliation agreement that was signed last December there was a provision for the liaison officers from each organisation to meet annually (if possible). To fulfil that condition I attended the Wildlife Society's 11<sup>th</sup> annual conference in Calgary from 18-22 September this year, and this is a report on that trip.

Arrangements and liaison for the trip were handled by Dr. Merlin Shoesmith from the University of Manitoba in Winnipeg, Canada. Merlin currently chairs TWS working group on International Wildlife Management. As well as facilitating my attendance he also arranged for TWS global task force members from the US, Mexico and South America to be in Calgary. We all participated in a symposium "International Opportunities and Challenges for TWS", where views and issues from around the world were aired. The most remarkable aspect of the symposium was the degree of agreement from all parties. Everyone recognised that immediate global expansion by TWS into all parts of the world was neither desirable nor feasible, and that there were already a number of organisations working in the field in various parts of the world. All speakers at the symposium gave good examples of the unique difficulties and issues faced in their own region. In the US, recreational hunting and the Farm Bill are big issues, in Mexico and Columbia lack of funds and population pressures were prominent while in Oceania the control of overabundant species, land clearing and grazing were raised. There was a strong consensus that a system of affiliation with various organisations would be the most likely model to be acceptable to all parties. The recent AWMS/TWS affiliation was held up as an example of the sort of arrangement which could be developed multilaterally, and it was clear that TWS is looking to the relationship with AWMS to develop and mature to a point where it provides a model for other relationships.

From questions and discussions at the symposium it became clear that although specific wildlife management issues may differ across the world, there was a great deal of commonality in the way that TWS was viewed and in the impediments to greater involvement of non-North Americans, specifically the costs of attending meetings and of obtaining the journal, and the American-centred nature of the organisation. There was also common support for the idea of an electronic journal with regional subeditors to facilitate rapid publication.

After the symposium I attended a meeting of TWS International Wildlife Management Working Group. Members there were keen to see the affiliation between AWMS and TWS develop, and there will be a proposal from the Global Involvement Task Force brought to TWS Council for the development of the electronic journal. TWS has a strong chapter structure with many state and provincial chapters sponsoring and nurturing (undergraduate) student chapters. A practical suggestion that was raised was the idea of twinning student chapters with appropriate organisations in Australia and New Zealand.

While there is no comparable student chapter structure in either of these two countries there are student environmental clubs and societies which would amply fit the bill. There would be no financial implications of such a relationship, but it might involve things like sharing newsletters, consulting on common issues, briefing the other party on issues, seeking solutions to common problems that the other party may have solved, discussing educational issues and so on.

The International Wildlife Management Working Group also sponsors the global involvement task force, and that subgroup is working toward reporting to TWS Council by March 2005.

I later met with my counterpart liaison from TWS, Brian Kernohan, and we discussed the next developments in the AWMS/TWS relationship. We spent some time drafting a document that will eventually be presented to TWS Council and AMWS Executive for comment and endorsement. That document is still in early draft form, but it would have been very difficult to make the progress that we did, without a face-to-face meeting.

As for the conference itself, I found it tremendously interesting and stimulating. It is certainly on a different scale from AWMS with a total of 49 sessions, and up to six of those running at any one time. Any one of the sessions was worthwhile, and it seems a miscarriage to pick out a favourite, but I have to mention the session on "Effects of Scale on Biodiversity". Michael Rosenzweig gave an excellent discussion of why scale matters to begin the session. I don't know an ecologist or wildlife manager who hasn't lost sleep worrying about questions of scale. While I'm not sure that I'll now be able to get more sleep, I have a little more insight into why I was right to lose it in the first place.

Just to describe the balance of the trip I returned to the University of Manitoba in Winnipeg and accompanied students on an excursion to the Tall Grass Prairie Reserve where we discovered that the overwhelming management issues were fire and grazing. Later I talked to those students about fire and grazing management in an Australian context, and then I presented a seminar on koala management to the Faculty of Environment.

This account must end with thanks to Merlin Shoesmith and the Faculty of Environment at the University of Manitoba for making me welcome and generously paying a large part of the costs. The school of Natural & Rural Systems Management at the University of Queensland also contributed to the costs, and without this assistance the trip would not have been possible. This is, of course, an issue that AWMS will have to address. A relationship cannot develop and prosper unless it receives dedicated attention. That means that those charged with tending to the liaison must meet regularly, and that will inevitably involve costs.

## Blue Mountains World Heritage Institute

The Blue Mountains World Heritage Institute was founded in April 2004 as a non-profit organization focusing on policy and management issues in the Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area and its surrounds. The Institute's eight founding partners are the NSW Department of Environment & Conservation (Parks & Wildlife Division, and the Botanic Gardens Trust), Sydney Catchment Authority, Australian Museum, Blue Mountains City Council, and the Universities of Sydney, Western Sydney, and NSW. The Institute seeks to enable better knowledge flows to underpin and inform natural resource management in the region, and to develop policies which more effectively integrate the human and natural systems. Central to the Institute's role is integration of a wide range of knowledge, including from scientific research and from local indigenous and non-indigenous communities. Activities include: (1) Research & Problem Solving (2) Information & Advocacy, and (3) Education & Training. Each research project has an interdisciplinary team of researchers drawn primarily from the Institute's partner organisations. Researchers are contracted from elsewhere on a project-by-project basis. The Institute is also coordinating a new postgraduate program in Natural Resource Policy and Management at UNSW.

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## A word about Affiliation with The Wildlife Society (TWS): What does this mean for AWMS members?

An affiliation between The Wildlife Society (USA) and the AWMS was formalised in December last year at the International Wildlife Management Congress in New Zealand. This allows for joint benefits of members and facilitates a working relationship between societies on wildlife management issues, including joint development of position papers and publications and joint sponsorship of conferences. The affiliation does not provide for free joint membership, but does provide AWMS members with the many of the same benefits as members of TWS without cost and vice versa. Hence AWMS members are entitled to reduced membership rates for TWS services and products such as conference registration fees, certification fees and books. AWMS members are welcome to become members of TWS at standard membership rates ([www.wildlife.org](http://www.wildlife.org)). For further information contact Greg Baxter ([gbaxter@uqg.uq.edu.au](mailto:gbaxter@uqg.uq.edu.au)) who is our nominated affiliate liaison officer.

Revised by Sandra Staples-Bortner, Program Director, The Wildlife Society, [ss StaplesBortner@msn.com](mailto:ss StaplesBortner@msn.com), Oct. 19, 2004

## Announcement: 13<sup>th</sup> Australasian Vertebrate Pest Conference

Museum of New Zealand (Te Papa),  
Wellington, New Zealand

**Monday 2 May to Friday 6 May, 2005**

The Vertebrate Pest Committee is again holding a conference on all aspects of vertebrate pest research, management and policy. The conference is held every 4 or 5 years in Australia or New Zealand, and in 2005 it is New Zealand's turn.

A call for abstracts (400 words) for papers or posters and registrations for the 13<sup>th</sup> VPC has been made via the website at:  
[www.landcareresearch.co.nz/news/conferences/vertebratepest/](http://www.landcareresearch.co.nz/news/conferences/vertebratepest/)

**Deadlines:**

- Abstracts for papers – 31 December, 2004
- Early bird registrations – 31 December, 2004

Papers and posters accepted for the conference will be published in a conference proceedings. Authors will be notified of acceptance in January 2005, and the deadline for written papers will be March 31, 2005. Instructions will be sent to authors later.

*Symposia suggested include:*

1. Management of bird pests
2. Management of freshwater fish pests
3. Surveillance, detection and search theory for new invasions and eradication of pests
4. Threat abatement plans and national control plans for key pest species
5. Diseases of vertebrate pests

Other symposia topics are welcome.



Black-footed rock wallaby (*Petrogale lateralis*), Alice Springs 2004.



Thorny Devil (*Moloch horridus*), Alice Springs 2004.



Brushtail possum (*Trichosurus vulpecula*), Ulladulla 2004.



Kookaburra (*Dacelo novaeguineae*), Ulladulla 2004.



Eastern water dragon (*Physignathus lesuerii*), ACT 2004.

All photos were taken by Quentin Hart.



## New Australasian feral animal website now online

A website that has been developed as a central reference portal for information on invasive pest animals in Australia and New Zealand is now online. The Bureau of Rural Sciences supported the Pest Animal Control CRC in cooperation with the Applied Ecology Research Group of the University of Canberra to develop the site. The aim is to make past and current information on invasive pest animals readily accessible to a range of users. A pest animal is defined as an animal that causes significant damage to a valued resource. Hence the site covers native animals such as kangaroos and possums as they can be a pest in some situations.

The portal is interactive, freely available and targets private and government land managers, policy makers, the public, researchers, students and teachers. It is structured around a searchable database of information on vertebrate invasive pest species. The information on the site includes published and unpublished research, technical reports, management guides, threat abatement plans and codes of practice, with a focus on unpublished and hard-to-access 'grey literature.' Whilst some full-text information is provided, the site does not reproduce documents that are available online elsewhere, but rather provides a short summary and a link to the site where the full version can be accessed. The site is work-in-progress with new information continually being sourced and added.

While the site contains some relatively comprehensive databases for some species such as foxes, horses and possums due to the generous donation by individuals, the site does not aim to be a comprehensive repository of all the available information. Such a task is beyond the capacity of the site managers. Nevertheless, the site managers would gladly accept additional databases, either in total or linked to another site. There is a facility on the site for persons that wish to contribute additional information. Material from agencies, researchers and organisations such as reports and especially current research and programs would be gratefully accepted.

The site also has a forum and exchange of information and ideas on current topics, research and management programs is actively encouraged.

The contact for more information is

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## NEW EDITOR OF WILDLIFE RESEARCH

As some of you may know, David Morton is stepping down as Editor of *Wildlife Research*. He is taking on a new role within CSIRO Publishing - as Manager of Journals Production - so he is not leaving the journal behind entirely. David has been instrumental in helping the journal to maintain its excellent quality and relevance to wildlife research in the region, and we are indebted to him for his efforts over the last 14 years at the journal's helm.

Camilla Myers has been appointed as the new Editor of *Wildlife Research*. She is a Senior Managing Editor in the journals group at CSIRO Publishing and has been Editor of *Reproduction, Fertility and Development* and *Invertebrate Systematics* for 6 years. Further details of Camilla can be found on the journal's website, but with a background in zoology and a strong interest in the environment and conservation together with her long career in scientific publishing, she is well placed to take on the role of Editor from David. She will work closely with the Editorial Advisory Committee of the journal to build on the work of David and to continue to grow and strengthen the journal.

In January 2005, a new online submission and peer review system will be in place for *Wildlife Research* and the journal will also move to 8 issues per year, both measures that will improve the service to authors and improve turnaround times. In addition to these improvements, from Issue 5 this year, *Wildlife Research* will be published online in full-text HTML/XML-coded format (in addition to traditional PDF format) and will thus be linked with CrossRef and PubMed to enable direct web-linking between journals from and to WR papers. This is an exciting innovation that will mean much greater www visibility for the journal and hence increased citations. We look forward to continuing to work together with AWMS authors in the future.

Chris Dickman, Chair, Editorial Advisory Committee, *Wildlife Research* and Camilla Myers, Managing Editor, *Wildlife Research* : [www.publish.csiro.au/journals/wr](http://www.publish.csiro.au/journals/wr)

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## wildwatch2

quest for pests

### ABC's online, radio & TV - after the villains of the wildlife world!



The results from around 4000 completed surveys from the ABC's WildWatch2 are about to be collated, so look out for them from November 29th on the website [www.abc.net.au/wildwatch]. The survey posed different scenarios (such as magpies attacking school children, flying foxes feeding on orchard fruit, cane toads spreading into Kakadu) and asked people how they would manage them. The results will also show what people consider is the worst pest or problem in their area in Australia.

The project has generated many ABC local radio stories and discussion on a whole range of topics - from weeds to gambusia, and the two television programs delved into some of the emerging pests and problems (and feedback suggests there is certainly a lucrative market out there for Indian Myna traps!). The project's overall success has largely been due to the involvement and support from AWMS members. Thank you to all those who have contributed.

Any extra information/links/referral services to put on the results website are welcome, and please feel free to contact me for full dataset of the survey results.

Clare Thomson  
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### Items for AWMS Newsletter

Members wishing to provide copy for the AWMS Newsletter should direct their items to Dave Forsyth

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## Kookaburra: King of the Bush

by Sarah Legge, CSIRO Publishing,  
Collingwood, 2004, 144 pp. Price \$34.95

Reviewed by Mark Antos,  
School of Ecology and Environment, Deakin University.

It is always astounding that one can pick any species of Australian bird, no matter how common and how familiar, and discover gaping holes in our knowledge of that species. The kookaburras are no exception. Sarah's book plays a vital role in assembling a wealth of existing knowledge of these familiar inhabitants of the bush, as well as making significant new contributions to our understanding of their ecology based upon her PhD research.

It is refreshing to see a book that not only deals with the natural history of these birds, but also delves into the prominent role that they have played in our cultural history. The chapter examining 'the culture of the kookaburra' emphasises the prominent role that these birds have played in Australian mythology, literature and popular culture.

The natural history chapters cover issues such as taxonomy (examining all four of the world's kookaburra species) behaviour and habits, breeding and mating systems, and conservation and management. These chapters are thorough, concise and self-contained, allowing the reader to peruse individual chapters without needing to read the entire book. Of particular interest are the chapters examining the role and potential benefits of co-operative breeding in this group, and the chapter on nestlings.

This book has managed to translate hard science into a very readable text. A range of outstanding colour and black and white photographs, tables, graphs, and figures complement the text. It is hard to fault this book. However, it may have benefited from an index, and I was surprised that a greater pool of references was not drawn upon, given the large number of sources of information that are available on these birds.

This book is likely to contain something of interest for anyone, ranging from the professional ornithologist to the picnicker who has noticed the kookaburra's sly look as it eyes the snags on the hot-plate.

## AUSTRALASIAN WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT SOCIETY DRAFT

### Minutes 2003 Annual General Meeting

Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> December 5:30-7:06 pm, University of  
Canterbury, Christchurch NZ

#### 1. Opening

Glen Saunders, as president, opened the AGM and thanked those members present for attending. There were 59 members in attendance.

#### 2. Apologies

Quentin Hart (who is also standing down from Treasurer) and Sylvana Maas.

#### 3. Minutes of previous AGM, 3 December 2001

The previous minutes were available from the AWMS desk during the conference and published in the back of the last newsletter. No corrections or clarifications were notified. Wendy Ruscoe moved that minutes be taken as true and accurate account of the previous AGM. David Choquenot seconded this and the minutes were formally accepted.

#### 4. Business arising from the 2002 AGM minutes

##### 4.1 International Wildlife Management Conference

The conference has been a huge success and GS was very pleased with the profile AWMS has had throughout (GS).

##### 4.2 Student subsidies

21 students applied for subsidies for the conference, approximately 50% received the full subsidy (\$450 NZ or \$400 AUS) with the remainder receiving half subsidies (MB). Cheques are still to be issued (MB). The intention at the last AGM was to increase the AWMS profile by subsidising students and this was achieved successfully (GS). Several students which received subsidies were in attendance. It is hoped students remain in the society and stand for members of our committee in the future (GS).

##### 4.3 Workshop (GS)

As AWMS did not have a stand alone conference this year it was suggested at the last AGM that we hold a targeted workshop to promote AWMS (GS). Bushfires was initially discussed but there were many other related workshops in progress.

We opened discussions with Environment Australia about holding joint workshops at a federal level, but had little success. Environment Australia appeared to be more interested in specific issues e.g. sub-species of bats (MB). An 'Off-reserve/ biodiversity' workshop was also discussed. David Choquenot initially pursued this with Tim Clancy director of the Arthur Rylah Institute in Victoria who was positive (DC). Holding the workshop in Adelaide before the conference at Kangaroo Island was also raised (MB). Mike Braysher has discussed this workshop with Graeme Moss (South Australia National Parks) to start things going. This workshop will cost AWMS around \$10 000. ACTION: Continue liaison and establish further contacts in South Australia about the workshop (MB).

The Mammal Society will be holding their conference in the Barossa in July (Kath Handasyde, Mammal Society Treasurer). Landcare Research (NZ) will be holding a symposium in memory of Nigel Barlow in Queenstown in August AWMS may wish to be involved in this (John Parkes).

##### 4.4 Other business

##### 4.4.1 Increasing membership and profile

##### 4.4.2 2004 Conference

##### 4.4.3 FASTS

These issues were discussed in presidents report and/ or in general business.

#### 5. President's Report (Glen Saunders)

Increasing membership is linked to increasing the profile of AWMS. Our aim is to increase involvement and generate projects on wildlife management, rather than simply increase membership. Student subsidies were our first priority in achieving this. GS expressed thanks on behalf of AWMS to Ross McLIney and the NSW Game Council for their contribution of a \$1000 donation for student subsidies. AWMS has also tried to increase our involvement with the Wildlife Society, which Greg Baxter will discuss. The 3<sup>rd</sup> International Wildlife Management Congress (3IWMC) has been extremely beneficial to AWMS in terms of promotion and GS expressed sincere thanks to Andrea Byrom, Elaine Murphy, Robert Palmer, David Choquenot, Cheryl O'Connor and the other contributors for their involvement in the 3IWMC throughout the year.

Other actions that were achieved to promote AWMS were raised; an AWMS flyer, fridge magnets, removing the need for password access to the newsletter from the website. Flyers and magnets can be used at conferences and at universities. There is a notable lack of awareness of AWMS at universities, with the majority of wildlife management students unaware of the society. This issue was also raised by Neal Finch (University of Queensland) during the meeting of our involvement with the Wildlife Society. AWMS will continue to address this in the coming year, but as we run on a voluntary basis GS encouraged all members to promote the society and its benefits to non-members. The introduction of electronic payment for membership fees has simplified payments for members and reduced the work of the membership secretary. Various improvements have been made to the AWMS website and GS thanked Aaron McGlincy for his efforts.

David Choquenot proposed a Graeme Caughley medal for excellence in the field of wildlife management early this year. The committee agreed and will present this medal at the conference dinner. The details were in the newsletter. This also helps promote the society in a positive way. We also participated in debates including the Tasmanian fox issue. We received a reply from a letter to the Environment Minister in Tasmania on this issue. The introduction of bounties in Victoria was also an area which we lobbied and a position statement has been drafted. We supported linked activities this year including contribution to a RSPCA workshop on 'Increasing the humaneness of pest animal control techniques' and attendance by AWMS members. Again this will improve our profile in terms of being important players in wildlife management.

AWMS joined the Federation of Australian Science and Technological Societies (FASTS) as an affiliate member this year. Continuation of this membership was raised for discussion (GS). FASTS is a really useful scientific lobby group with many members around Australia (GS). AWMS would be one of the smallest societies involved (GS). As an affiliate organisation this year the cost was \$2.50 per member, which goes up to \$5 per member next year (\$1000). However, FASTS does not represent New Zealand (GS and raised from the floor), is Canberra centric, and it's difficult to update members on their activities (GS). The issue of whether FASTS will appropriately represent AWMS was also raised, e.g. this situation has occurred with the NSW farmers (Peter Fleming).

Worth while activities organised by FASTS includes 'Science meets parliament' which several AWMS members attended (MB). Mike Braysher sees FASTS as the peak lobby group for Australia that take large issues to government and strongly encourages our contribution. Several members from the floor suggested we negotiate with FASTS for paying only for Australian members (40 out of 200 are NZ) and not for those joint members of other societies which are also involved with FASTS (Kath Handasyde, Chris Dickman). The Mammal Society doesn't pay for these members (Kath Handasyde). There has been similar debate in the Mammal Society and it was decided that FASTS maybe the only group which have enough clout on some issues. Chris Dickman and Jim Hone support our contribution.

**ACTION:** AWMS will continue as a member of FASTS but will negotiate a reduction in fees on the basis of NZ and joint members of other societies. This will also be reviewed by the committee next year.

The discussions about the possibility of a media officer was raised (GS). The AWMS committee has tried to create media links. Mike Braysher has been in liaison with Clare Thompson, who is a member of AWMS and currently involved in wildlife program on the ABC. We have achieved a lot this year, but are also spending our reserves. Positive initiatives such as student subsidies are worthwhile but expensive, we are trying to keep membership fees down hence we'll need to be cautious with spending next year.

## 6. Correspondence

Correspondence included liaison with Environment Australia and issues on Tasmanian foxes (Letters on file with John Tracey). A meeting with Anne-Marie Delahunt, Rhonda Dickson, Brigitta Wimmer, (Environment Australia), Sylvana Maas (EA and AWMS), Mike Braysher and Glen Saunders was held to discuss joint activities such as the workshop, joint position statements and increasing participation of EA in wildlife management issues (MB). Sylvana Maas has been liaising with EA about presentations by AWMS on position statements e.g. adaptive management, 1080, indigenous use of wildlife but to date their hasn't been much response (MB).

Correspondence with the minister for the Environment in Tasmania regarding foxes was raised (mentioned also in the presidents report). Des Cooper suggested foxes in Tasmania was one of the worst conservation disasters in recent years and has contacted the Tasmanian Department and the Commonwealth with little response. Further pressure by AWMS was suggested from the floor, e.g. speak to the government or opposition; letters to the newspaper (this received the best response from the Mammal Society, Kath Handasyde, Chris Dickman); facilitate meetings; use a representative to lobby in Canberra (e.g. Humane Society, Des Cooper); use FASTS. However, GS has contacted FASTS about media releases who suggested any release really needs to come from us. We are also a voluntary society with limited resources. The issue of what they can actually do differently was raised (John Parkes). Encouraging increased funding, which is currently a fraction of what it should be, was mentioned (Des Cooper and others from the floor).

## 7. Treasurer's Report (MB for Quentin Hart)

### 7.1 Summary

The Treasurer's Report was made available to everyone as a handout and displayed on an overhead projector. Copies of the full auditor's report are also available from Quentin Hart on request. AWMS remains in a sound financial position despite reduced conference revenue and increased expenditure. The increased expenditure was largely due to directing some of the large accumulated surplus (\$45,754) from 2002 back into wildlife management activities and student development.

### 7.2 Membership

As of 31 October 2003, the AWMS membership was 190, up from 181 in 2002. Membership subscription income in 2003 was \$5,952, down from \$6,554 in 2002, despite increased membership (this is due to the introduction of the multiple-year membership payment facility in 2002). It is hoped that membership will continue to increase in 2004 following promotion of the Society at the IWMC and improved links with similar societies internationally.

### 7.3 Income

Income for 2003 was \$10,175 which was a significant decrease on the income of \$23,956 received in 2002. The unusually high income for the 2002 financial year was largely due to the well-patronised and low-cost (due to a considerable amount of NSW NPWS volunteer effort) December 2001 Dubbo Conference. For the December 2002 Camden Conference, a professional conference coordinator was engaged (i.e. increased cost/reduced profit) but was considered necessary given the logistical circumstances and will be recommended for the 2004 Conference in South Australia.

The 2002 conference was considered a success in terms of content and still yielded a profit of \$3,042.

### 7.4 Expenditure

The most significant expenditure item registered in the 2003 financial year was the cost of this audit! However, this is due to the accrual accounting system whereby the costs of two audits (minus a deduction for a previous audit) have been accounted for within this financial statement. The most significant actual expenditure was a \$5,696 (\$6000NZD) contribution to the IWMC which will appear in the 2004 financial statement, as under accrual accounting, this is the year in which the actual "services" were provided. Other significant expenses in the 2003 financial year were the AWMS contribution to an RSPCA workshop on animal welfare in pest animal management (\$2,200) and costs associated with student travel and awards at the 2002 Camden Conference. There will also be considerable costs associated with subsidising student (presenting first authors) registration at the IWMC which will appear in the 2004 financial report.

The increased expenditure in 2003 is in line with the AWMS Committee objective (as discussed at the 2002 AGM) to spend some of the Society's relatively large surplus on activities of benefit to wildlife management; particularly student development – whilst maintaining a healthy buffer to ensure the financial viability of the Society into the future. The exceptions to this are the increasing costs associated with insurance and audits which all societies, no matter how small, are obliged to subscribe to. I have written to our Auditor to raise the issue of excessive audit fees for small societies, particularly those which are not-for-profit and have a significant "public good" component.

### 7.5 AWMS Financial Status

The Society made an operating deficit of \$1,752 in 2003 (compared to the operating surplus of \$16,794 in 2002) to give an accumulated surplus of \$44,002 (down from \$45,754 at the start of the financial year). This still represents a historically healthy financial position for the Society and will allow us to continue to support worthy wildlife management activities and student development in 2004.

### 7.6 Auditor's Report

In the Auditor's opinion:

(a) the financial statement of the Australasian Wildlife Management Society Incorporated are properly drawn up:

(i) so as to give a true and fair view of its state of affairs at 31 October 2003 and the results of its operations for the financial year then ended and the other matters required by Section 72(2) of the Associations Incorporation Act (1991) to be disclosed in the financial report;

(ii) in accordance with the provisions of the Associations Incorporation Act (1991); and

(iii) in accordance with Accounting Standards and other mandatory professional requirements;

(b) we have obtained all the information and explanations required; and

(c) proper accounting records and other records have been kept by the Australasian Wildlife Management Society Incorporated as required by the Associations Incorporation Act (1991).

## 8. Membership Secretary's Report (Mike Braysher)

We currently have 217 members, including 41 from New Zealand and 20 institutional members. Paying membership for multiple years is encouraged and has reduced processing time and costs for the treasurer and membership secretary. We are seeking active members rather than simply increasing numbers. MB has been and will be at the AWMS desk during the conference to sign up members, and will accept credit card payments in preference to cash. Members could encourage others to join (MB).

The cost of the auditor was increased this year and is a substantial cost to the society. The possibility of investigating an alternative auditor was raised (MB).

An audit for the Mammal Society currently costs \$250 (Kath Handasyde) and many members suggested we should be investigating (or negotiating for) a reduced fee (e.g. Mike Braysher, George Wilson, Patrick Medway, Greg Baxter, Jocelyn Davies) .

However, members also highlighted that there are rules when changing auditors (Terry Korn, Greg Baxter). Following some queries about process the following was agreed. ACTION: The committee to explore more cost effective arrangements for auditing, including the option to appoint an alternative auditor. A motion to accept was put forward by Terry Korn and seconded by Chris Dickman. No clarifications or amendments were noted. It was also noted that a similar process should be used for members to agree to FASTS membership, which is also a cost to the society (Laurie Twigg).

#### 9. Position Statement Coordinator's Report (Steven McLeod)

SM provided a quick update on position statements. Jocelyn Davies has completed a statement on indigenous wildlife management. John Parkes and Sylvana Maas are in the last stages of revising the feral goat position statement. 'Bounties' is currently in its final draft and Laurie Twigg and Glen Saunders are currently working on a 1080 statement. No others are in progress.

#### 10. Other Business

##### 10.1 2004 Conference

The 2004 AWMS conference is most likely to be held on Kangaroo Island. Doreen Culliver (conference organiser) and MB have investigated, MB will travel over to confirm venue arrangements. At this stage the Yacht Club at Kingscote (main town of Kangaroo Island) looks most appropriate and will cost \$150 per day to hire. McLaren Vale is an alternative 'fall back' venue. South Australian National Parks are willing to support the conference. Most of the arrangements can be organised from Canberra. Travel arrangements to the island were discussed: \$120 return to fly from Adelaide, \$68 return by ferry; a car is not necessary and can be left on the mainland, but check insurance if you wish to take one; students and others may wish to car pool. The possibility of a joint meeting with the Mammal Society was raised and previously discussed (MB, Chris Dickman, Barbara Wilson).

Joint hosting in Adelaide of a pre-conference workshop on encouraging off-reserve conservation of biodiversity with the Mammal Society was encouraged (MB).

##### 10.2 Affiliation with The Wildlife Society (TWS) (Greg Baxter)

TWS appointed representatives to a global involvement taskforce to encourage cooperation between other 'like-minded' organisations. We are currently negotiating the nature of the link with the TWS. An agreement is to be signed this week at the conference dinner. Greg asked for feedback to make sure AWMS is benefiting from this relationship. This process will continue and agreement can be modified to suit the needs of both societies. A meeting will be held in Calgary, Canada next year. An international electronic journal with a more global outlook has been discussed. The limited response to the survey from AWMS members was surprising. There are few joint members of TWS and AWMS and a few who have never heard of the Journal of Wildlife Management or TWS. The nature of the agreement between the two societies was in the last newsletter, Greg emphasised that we are only at the first stage in this process.

#### 11. Election of Office bearers

Following discussion about process all positions were declared vacant and the following nominations were received:

President:	Glen Saunders
Vice President:	Cheryl O'Connor
Secretary:	John Tracey
Membership Secretary:	David Forsyth
Treasurer:	Mike Braysher
Newsletter Editor:	John White
Committee Positions:	Dave Choquenot and Sylvana Maas

There were no other nominations.

All nominations were accepted and the full committee elected as stated. The committee also includes Elaine Murphy, the Immediate Past President

The need for the committee and members to assist John White in providing and pursuing articles for the newsletter was raised (GS). Also, the obituary of John Seebeck in the AWMS newsletter did not mention his contributions to AWMS (Jim Hone). This will be addressed by including an additional section in the next newsletter.

Alan Newsome addressed and sincerely thanked the society for nomination for the Graeme Caughley Medal for lifetime achievement in Australasian Wildlife Management. This will be presented at the conference dinner.

#### 12. Closing

Closed at 7:06 pm by President, Glen Saunders.



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