



We acknowledge Australia's First Nations peoples and their connections to Country and community. We pay our respects to their Elders past and present and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Traditional Owners have managed Australia's land and water for tens of thousands of years. We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the lands and waters on which we have worked during 2024, including:

*Ngarrindjeri* people (Mount Sandy, SA)

*Kurna* people (Hart Road Wetlands, Aldinga, SA)

*Jagera, Giabal and Jarowair* people (Toowoomba region, QLD)

*Gundungurra* and *Dharawal* people (Capernwray, NSW)

*Wiradjuri* (Dusky Woodswallow Conservation Reserve, Alleena, NSW)

*Wangeriburra* (Mount Tamborine, QLD)



Cover image: Planting at Mount Tamborine Conference Centre during the national weekend event 13-15 September, 2024

Who we are	4
A Rocha Australia at a glance	5
From the President	6
From the Executive Officer	8
Our impact	10
Board and leadership	11
Our community	15
Our activities	18
Highlights from 2024	20
Photo story – a time for...	27
Our global family	31
Our finances	32
Hopes and aspirations for 2025	34
How you can partner with us	35

Note all photographs are credited to A Rocha Australia unless stated otherwise



A Rocha Australia Inc. (ABN 23 197 579 524) is an environmental organisation engaging in nature conservation and environmental education. Since 2015 we have been providing opportunities for Australians to appreciate nature, engage in practical conservation work, and to better understand the unique calling of followers of Jesus to steward the environment.

We do this together, in community and through partnerships – bringing a voice of hope to the current environmental crises.

We are part of the global A Rocha family. A Rocha means 'The Rock' in Portuguese. This is the name that was given to the family's first ever field study centre, located in the Algarve, Portugal.

### A Rocha family vision

A world where nature flourishes as people live equitably and sustainably.

### A Rocha family mission

To live out God's calling to care for creation and equip others to do likewise.

## Our Commitments



We follow Jesus Christ, who created the world and calls us to care for it.



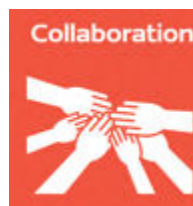
We protect and restore nature and are committed to local places and people over the long term.



We invest in good relationships through our commitment to God, one another and the wider creation.



We celebrate the insights, perspectives and solutions offered by our diverse cultures.



We seek to work with anyone who shares our vision.

who we are

# A Rocha Australia at a glance

## What we do



Provide practical opportunities to participate in nature conservation work and research



Environmental and theological education in Christian churches, schools and other contexts

## How we do it

- Partnerships with land owners and managers
- Purchase biodiversity units to support the protection of land
- Coordinated national activities
- Local activities, e.g. bushland regeneration, planting, species surveys

- Coordinated national activities
- Local activities e.g. nature walks, school trips
- Working with partners
- Speaking at churches, schools, theological colleges
- Hosting and speaking at conference and seminars
- Increased access to creation care resources

## Examples

- Partnerships with: Onkaparinga Council, SA; Capernwray Bible School, NSW; Cassinia Environmental, VIC; Friends of Escarpment Park, QLD
- Participating in the Great Global Nurdle Hunt and International Coastal Cleanup
- Bird surveys contributing to BirdLife Australia's Birddata database

- Speaking at Charlestown Presbyterian Church, Newcastle; Unley Baptist Church; Auburn Uniting Church.
- Relationship with Tatachilla Lutheran School, Eastern College, Morling College and Whitley College
- "Wildlife" partnership with Scripture Union Australia in Victoria
- John Stott Global Bird Race

## Measuring our impact

- Hectares benefitting from conservation activity
- Number of species monitoring programs
- Number of working bees/people engaged in practical work
- Number of plants planted

- Number of schools /colleges engaged with and events
- Number of conferences spoken at
- Numbers attending events
- Number of churches engaged with

Welcome to A Rocha Australia's Annual Report 2025.

On behalf of the board, I thank our members, supporters and partners for walking with us on the journey in Creation care in 2024.

This Annual Report will showcase our activities and partnerships. Through relationships with Cassinia Environmental and Onkaparinga Council, Mount Tamborine Convention and SU Australia, and Wilderlands and Friends of the Escarpment Parks Toowoomba Inc, we grew our engagement with diverse organisations and people.

Through these we contributed to the conservation of sixteen threatened species and worked to restore 120 hectares across four states. Since 2016, we have engaged nearly 4,000 people in churches and conferences, and 1,830 in environmental education.

A highlight of the year was our annual gathering. In 2024, we met at Mt Tamborine Conference Centre in the Gold Coast Hinterland for *Hope and Wonder on the Mountain*. What a wonderful weekend! It was a great collaboration with Mount Tamborine Convention, bringing together solid Bible teaching on God's care for his Creation, fellowship with lots of new friends of A Rocha from South East Queensland and beyond, inspiring speakers, regenerating rainforest, prayer, bird surveys, communal meals and deep sharing. Thank you to all who joined us on the mountain.

We received more requests to partner in caring for Creation than we could meet. These came from churches, government agencies, Christian schools, First Nations, farmers, ecologists, and Bible colleges.

We are heartened by this growing demand, and keen to grow to meet the need.

So, the board took the major step in establishing A Rocha Australia Environmental Projects Ltd. Listed on the Australian Government's Register of Environmental Organisations, it allow us to raise funds to undertake more conservation projects to help meet this deep need. We hope to expand our conservation program to protect and restore the habitat of more wildlife including threatened species, and conduct more monitoring and ecological research. Donations are tax deductible. Can you and your church support this new venture?

A Rocha Australia continues to be well managed financially. Led by Treasurer Dr Philip Hughes, the Board ensured we complied with relevant laws and standards. At 31 December 2024, net assets totalled \$119,114, with income generated for the year of \$46,584 expenses of \$47,927. We incurred a small deficit (-\$1,343, or 2.9% of income) to secure the legal advice required to establish A Rocha Australia Environmental Projects Ltd to enable significant growth in revenue for conservation.

As we look forward to celebrating our tenth anniversary in 2025, I ask you to keep walking with us! We will set our new strategy and seek funds and partners to implement our priorities.

I am very grateful to my fellow directors who volunteer their time, energy and funds to steward A Rocha Australia. Their commitment and passion, in the midst of worsening nature and climate crises, never fails to encourage and inspire me. We were elated to have Frank Sanders and Andrew MacIntyre bring their expertise and knowledge to the board as directors. They have made such an impact during the year. It has been wonderful to have Adeline Chew volunteer as a board intern, and we hope she goes on to have a long involvement with A Rocha Australia.

I warmly thank Sarah French from A Rocha International for supporting us during the year. We are very sorry to see you leave the board. We will miss your encouragement, knowledge and help in connections into the A Rocha Worldwide Family.

The highly productive and enthusiastic Julia Jardine is a wonderful Executive Officer, follower of Jesus and friend. She's a pleasure to work with and a great asset to the organisation.

As we continue to grow, we seek new board directors who can bring skills and expertise in governance, finance, Christian mission and pastoral care, fundraising, nature conservation, theology, business development and the law.

I hope you enjoy reading our Annual Report 2024.



**Stuart Blanch**



As I look back over 2024 two words keep coming to mind - encouragement and growth. And I thank God for his faithfulness in responding to our prayers for more people to join with us as we encourage and resource Australian Christians to look after the world he has entrusted to us. As part of Christ's (and our own) inheritance this is no small task (Hebrews 1:1-3, Psalm 2:8, Romans 8:16-17). At the end of 2024 we can celebrate reaching 130 members, with four core volunteers and a board intern added to our team. With this we have seen an exponential growth in the energy, experience and expertise carrying us forward.

This growth in the team has enabled us to embark upon the preparation of creation care material for children and youth for use in churches, schools, camps, and holiday clubs. This will meet a need for material that reflects our unique and precious Australian environment, heritage and social context. We are also developing a program and range of resources to support and encourage Australian churches as they engage with caring for creation as part of our discipleship and mission – showing a watching world what God's kingdom is like and seeing the outworking of the good news of Jesus through the restoration of our natural environment. Numbers of our members have creation care groups in their churches, and we are looking at how we can network and share experience with other churches.

With upwards of 60 weekend and day visitors, our 2024 national gathering from 13-15 September at Mount Tamborine in Queensland was our longest and largest intergenerational event to date. We welcomed a host of guest speakers inspiring us with their stories of God at work. With opportunities for practical conservation work, quiet reflection, learning and theological insights, outdoor worship, good coffee and chat, the weekend was energising and we've been told offered much needed refreshment. To see and hear the enjoyment and freedom of children playing outdoors in nature was heart-filling. We are hopeful that this has established a work begun by one of our new board directors in southern Queensland, and lays the foundation for Mount Tamborine Conference Centre (MTCC) as a gathering place for conservation-minded followers of Jesus from the Brisbane area and beyond. We extend our heartfelt thanks to MTCC, without whom we could not have entertained such a gathering.

Our engagement with theological colleges and schools continues, and we are blessed that Australia has many Christian schools keen to inspire young people to look after our natural world and to help them see the relevance of the Christian faith to environmental questions.



We were also thrilled to host another *WildLife* day camp with Scripture Union and Tearfund Australia, this time introducing children to the fascinating creatures found in the marine environment at the Point Cook Coastal Park. Beach-combing and rock-pooling along the protected shoreline of Port Philip Bay, Victoria, can't fail to delight!

Turning to the protected sites and habitats we support, local working bees continue to make a difference at Hart Road Wetlands, Aldinga (SA), where we are supported by Onkaparinga Council; and at Mount Sandy (SA) where we partner with Wilderlands to protect and manage endangered habitat and species. 2024 was an exciting year at Mount Sandy, with the discovery of the largest population of the nationally endangered Metallic Sun-orchid (*Thelymitra epipactoides*) on private land anywhere in the world, and in October, confirmation that the tiny nocturnal Western Pygmy Possum (*Cercartetus concinnus*) also find a home at Mount Sandy. In Toowoomba, QLD, the endangered dry eucalypt (sclerophyll) forests of the escarpment parks have again benefitted from the faithful work of A Rocha members and supporters drawn together from local churches.

As we look forward to 2025 we are excited by the many opportunities for A Rocha Australia to further inspire and encourage Christians and Churches to show their family-likeness to God in caring for his world. Reflecting A Rocha's global priorities we have a particular desire to grow a passion for God's world amongst young people, and we see a role for older folk in passing-on sustainable values and practices which for them are second-nature, but which are no longer the norm. If you have time, resources, land, finances, skills and giftings that you can offer to further this work, do get in contact - I'd love to have a conversation with you.

So whoever you are, and wherever you are in your own walk with Jesus there is a place for you in the A Rocha family and at our table. Do get in contact if you'd like to know more about how you can be part of our story.



Julia Jardine





3,950

people engaged in churches and conferences (theological education) since 2016



13 

Working bees in 2024



More than 2455

trees, shrubs, herbs and grasses planted over 2023 and 2024



130 members

Over

1835 

people engaged in environmental education since 2016

120ha 

Benefitting from our practical conservation work in 2023

(excluding research / surveys)



6 

bird monitoring programs

19 

environmental education, events, activities, and speaking engagements in 2024

16 

threatened species monitored or conserved

7 

Collaborations and partnerships

our impact

## Leadership during 2024



Dr Stuart Blanch (NSW)  
*Board - President*



Dr Philip Hughes (VIC)  
*Board - Treasurer*



Prof. Andrew McIntyre (NWS)  
*Board member since  
March 2024*



Frank Sanders (QLD)  
*Board member since  
March 2024*



Jen Schabel (NSW)  
*Board - Vice-President  
& Communications*



Dr Sally Shaw (SA)  
*Board - Vice-President*



Sarah French (Geneva)  
*Board – A Rocha  
International (ARI)  
representative*



Adeline Chew (VIC)  
*Board Intern*



Julia Jardine (VIC)  
*Executive officer (0.25 FTE)*

## Council of reference

Professor Andrew Bennett  
David Williams  
Dr Bruce Hooper  
Jo Knight  
Rev Dr John McLean  
Dr John Neldner  
Rev John Anderson  
Paul Dettmann

Our thanks is extended to all those who served on the board, as staff, volunteers, or on our council of reference during 2024.

## Meet Andrew MacIntyre (NSW) Board member since March 2024

I am a Christian with some 35 years experience in academic and university leadership roles in Australia, the United States and Indonesia. As an academic I researched and taught on government and development in Southeast Asia and Australia's relations with the region.

My executive experience in universities ranges over multiple institutions, most recently as founding president of Monash University Indonesia). I have also served on the boards of various non-profit entities including the Asia Society Australia, the Asia Foundation Australasia, the Australian-American Leadership Foundation, the Australian National University, the Asian Development Bank Institute and the Pacific Economic Cooperation Council (Australia).

I grew up in a family with a keen appreciation for nature, and this has grown into an enthusiasm for Creation Care in later life.

I became involved with A Rocha Australia after seeing an open invitation for expressions of interest for volunteers to take on governance roles. My hope is that my professional background and desire to help nurture God's Creation will enable me to support the growth and development of A Rocha's mission in Australia.

I have three adult children, am married to Dr Ella Whateley, and live on the far south coast of NSW. I worship at All Saints Anglican Church, Bermagui and am a member of the Third Order of the Society of Saint Francis.



## Meet Frank Sanders (QLD)

### Board member since March 2024

My wife Sue and I have three active boys, Jesse, Chris and Toby. Each of us have a sense of enjoy the gift of nature and find spiritual and emotional joy with earth, animals and plants both wild and domesticated.

I have been privileged to live and work in the Pacific and experience the joys and sorrows of community and village life. Serving with global mission partners and the Australian volunteer program in development and agribusiness I have participated in the conservation of habitat, language and culture.

During this most recent season living and working in Queensland our family have helped facilitate regular gatherings at Mt Tamborine Conference (MTCC) Centre to reflect, contemplate and regenerate a piece of beautiful rainforest. MTCC is a sacred space of pilgrimage to us where we receive great theological and bible teaching from the book of scripture and great ecological teaching from the book of nature.

This has also been a season of serving at a Christian school as a property manager where I have been able to help our team develop green learning spaces in the grounds, gardens and surrounding bushland.

My vocational interests and training are in mechanical engineering, renewable and alternative fuels, international and community development, including certified organic and fair trade agriculture principles. I have recently completed a certificate in Therapeutic Horticulture and spiritual direction and am currently engaged in Theological and Regenerative Agriculture studies.

I feel that 2025 is for me a year of restoration as I work toward a taking a time of sabbatical rest. I am blessed to have joined the A Rocha faith community and to serve with the ARA team. I hope that as I rest in God and nature this year I can also serve to share the good news stories of biblical creation care, with churches, schools and conservation partners.



# Meet Adeline Chew (VIC)

## Board intern since November 2024

Listen into a conversation with our new Board Intern, Adeline Chew.

**Adeline:** Hello, A Rocha Australia! I'm excited to be a part of this community; to serve and learn alongside people across the country who love Jesus and His creation!

**Julia:** Adeline - you're well travelled; tell us where have you lived, and which country would you most like to return to for a visit?

**Adeline:** I was born in Malaysia but grew up in Brazil and the UAE. I've also lived briefly in Hawaii (USA) and Vietnam. Every one of these places is so different to the others and I'm immensely grateful for how exposure to the different cultures have shaped me. My favourite part is the joy of knowing wonderful people all over the world — I'm so blessed by rich friendships near and far (I have also developed a hidden talent of keeping track of timezones in my head). If I really had to choose one to visit I would say Brazil as it's been the longest since I was last there compared to the other countries.

I have called Melbourne, Australia home for the past nine years and am so grateful for the experiences, growth, and relationships I have been gifted with here too!

**Julia:** And what have you been doing since leaving school?

**Adeline:** I left school not very sure about what direction my life would take but I knew two things: I have a passion for nature and I want to do what God wants me to do. And that was enough for God to work with! It was always step-by-step and never with any clear idea of an end goal, but I found myself with opportunities to pursue a career in environmental conservation here in Victoria. Simultaneously, I began to realise that the area of work I was in was an opportunity to express God's love for people through caring for creation. So I have been going on this journey, pursuing a career, serving at my local church, and participating in overseas missions to expand my skillset, knowledge, and experiences, as my personal response to the Great Commission.

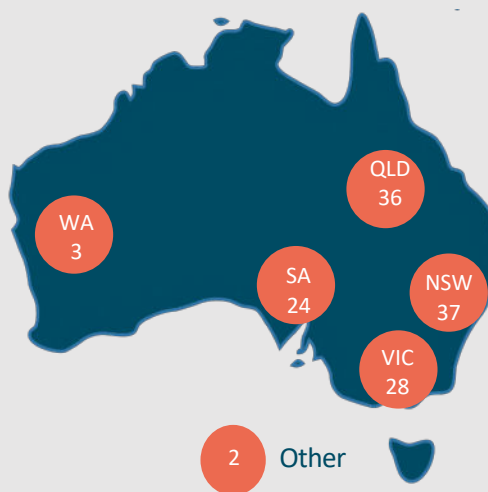
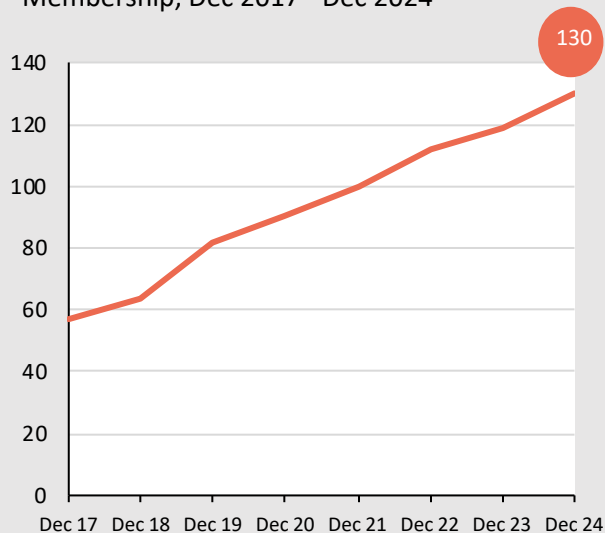


**Julia:** Tell us what drew you to A Rocha, and why you wanted to intern with A Rocha Australia. What do you hope to learn from this?

**Adeline:** Interning with ARA is a great opportunity to continue growing on the journey I mentioned. I am definitely still on this journey and love where it's taking me. I'm excited to learn more about creation care and what that can look like practically. What also makes this opportunity unique for me is that I get to learn about governance and gain experience in strategic planning and stakeholder engagement. It is a very exciting time for ARA and I'm excited to be a part of the team! Thanks for having me! And while I have you, go follow our newly created @ARochaAustralia Instagram page run by yours truly!

As our membership and support continues to grow, we thought this year we would highlight and share some of the personal stories from our new board directors, volunteers and members. We hope you enjoy reading these.

Membership, Dec 2017 - Dec 2024



Above: At Mount Tamborine Conference Centre, September 2024

# Meet Johanne Luetz and Wendy Barron de Luetz new members in 2024

**Julia:** Hello Johannes! Can you describe your life for us in under five words?

**Johannes:** Colourful and confused.

**Julia:** Tell us more!

**Johannes:** We are five, and between us we speak five languages. My wife was raised between Bolivia and Italy and spent extended periods of time in Mexico and Germany. I was raised in Sierra Leone, Switzerland, United Kingdom, Germany, and Australia, plus extended periods of time in Singapore, United States of America (USA), Costa Rica, South Africa, Estonia, Bolivia, among others. Our most dreaded question: “*Where are you from?*”

**Julia:** Where do you currently call home, and what occupies your time there?

**Johannes:** We are currently living in Mount Cotton, QLD, and worship at Gateway Baptist Church. I (Johannes) am a social scientist and researcher examining ecological concerns from spiritual perspectives.

Currently I’m Professor of Sustainability and Religion at Alphacrucis University College; with Adjunct professorships at the University of NSW and the University of the Sunshine Coast. Wendy organises and runs our busy household, with its complex origins and three active children.

**Julia:** Why did you decide to become a member of A Rocha Australia?

**Johannes:** I had been on the contact list for years and learned about the September 2024 event at Mount Tamborine Conference Centre. Since it was near our Brisbane home, we attended as a family—and I’m glad we did. My PhD research explores home, homelessness, migration, and sustainability. You can read my reflections on ‘longing for belonging’ (and more about my family) in my research article:

[https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-99-3862-9\\_16](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-99-3862-9_16).

That weekend, we truly felt at home, enjoying nature, the program, and like-minded followers of Jesus who share our passion for caring for God’s world—so much so that we decided to join the community as members.



From left to right: Wendy, Daniel (10), Noah (12), Johannes, and Aurora (8).



## Meet Daniela Rizzo New member in 2024



*"Hello A Rocha Community!*

*I'm Daniela, and I'm honoured to be part of such an inspiring and like-minded group of individuals who share a deep commitment to caring for God's creation.*

*I currently serve as an Associate Lecturer in Systematic Theology at Alphacrucis University College, and I'm completing my PhD, which focuses on the intersection of Pentecostal theology and animal studies. My research explores the theological value of non-human creatures, and I'm particularly interested in how the Holy Spirit interacts with animals.*

*I've always been passionate about compassionate conservation and how theology informs our responsibility to care for the earth and all of its creatures. I believe that the way we treat animals and the natural world reflects how we understand our relationship with God and each other. This belief led me to join A Rocha—a community that actively integrates faith with ecological stewardship...*

*Currently, I'm particularly excited about my work addressing the overdevelopment of the South-West coast of Victoria, where I've been advocating for the protection of the local koala population. I live in the environmentally conscious coastal town of Warrnambool, along the beautiful Great Ocean Road, and serve on my local council's Environmental Advisory Committee. These experiences have deepened my commitment to creation care and reinforced the importance of faith-based activism in environmental justice.*

*I joined A Rocha because I resonate deeply with the organisation's vision of caring for creation as an expression of our faith. I look forward to connecting with all of you, learning from your experiences, and exploring how we can work together to heal and restore the earth.*

*Thank you for welcoming me into this vibrant and purpose-driven community!*

*Blessings,  
Daniela"*

- Practical conservation
- Theological education, enabling & resourcing
- Research and monitoring
- Environmental education

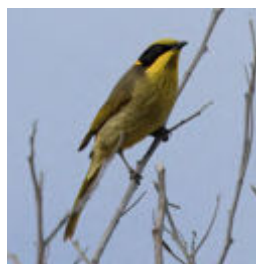
- | Invasive species control at Duggan Park, Toowoomba, QLD
- | Revegetation work and weeding, Mount Sandy, SA, May and October 2024
- | Planting and weeding, Hart Road Wetlands, SA, July 2024
- | Planting new rainforest trees and understorey shrubs at Mount Tamborine, QLD, Sept 2024.



Above left: Removing tree guards and weeding, Mount Sandy, May 2024  
 Above centre: Planting at Mount Tamborine QLD, Sept 2024  
 Above right: Playing at Mount Tamborine QLD, Sept 2024

- Practical conservation
- Theological education, enabling & resourcing
- Research and monitoring
- Environmental education

- | In 2024 A Rocha Australia volunteers undertook 56 standardized bird surveys in NSW, QLD, and VIC for Birdlife Australia's Birdata database, with a total of 87 different species being recorded. 2024 was our sixth year of contributing to this research
- | 11 of these surveys were undertaken at Dusky Woodswallow Conservation Reserve, Alleena, NSW
- | 24 Birdata surveys were undertaken at Duggan Park forest reserve, QLD, with 3.5 years of survey completed, with a total of 72 species identified
- | 21 standardised surveys were submitted as part of BirdLife Australia's Birds on Farms surveys on sites across Victoria
- | Report received on the three years of bird surveys at Hart Road wetlands, SA.



Above left: Grey-crowned Babbler (*Pomatostomus temporalis*), Alleena, NSW  
 Above right: Yellow-tufted Honeyeater (*Lichenostomus melanops*), recorded in surveys in Victoria

- Practical conservation       Theological education, enabling & resourcing
- Research and monitoring       Environmental education

- | 32 people undertook creation care workshops held at Tabor College, Adelaide, in June, August and September
- | 75 people gathered at Mount Tamborine, 13-15 Sep 2024, for the ARA national conference
- | 60 people attended the ARA/ISCAST event at Tabor College, Adelaide, May 2024 with Tony Rinaudo
- | 120 people addressed at the Global Creation Care Forum in Seoul in October 2024
- | A Rocha Australia members active in churches and initiating / participating in creation care groups.



Above: ISCAST/ARA event with Tony Rinaudo at Tabor College, Adelaide, May 2024

- Practical conservation       Theological education, enabling & resourcing
- Research and monitoring       Environmental education

- | Over 30 adults and children enjoyed a WildLife Day Camp with Scripture Union and Tearfund at Point Cook Marine Sanctuary (VIC)
- | 25 year 4 and 5s at Southern Vales Christian School introduced to Hart Road Wetland at Aldinga, March 2024
- | December site visit to Illawarra Christian School, NSW provision of advice with regard to site management and ideas for a year 7 project and sustainability teaching
- | Workshop with Christian Venues Association and eight camp sites; and the provision of advice on how these sites can be managed for biodiversity (July 2024)
- | Field visit and nature walk at Coorong Lakes Reserve (SA), October 2024
- | Participation in the A Rocha global John Stott Birding Day at Western Treatment Plant (VIC)
- | Stuart Blanch (ARA President) article "[\*An ecologist's hope among the nature and climate crises\*](#)" in The Presbyterian Pulse, a bi-monthly publication of the Presbyterian church of Australia in NSW/ACT, May - June 2024.

In partnership with



WildLife Day Camp at Point Cooke Marine Sanctuary, VIC



highlights from 2024

## Point Cooke Marine Sanctuary Day Camp, VIC

In October, over 30 children and adults enjoyed a day exploring and learning about the marine environment at Point Cooke Marine Sanctuary, located on the North-West shore of Porth Phillip Bay, Victoria on the traditional lands of the Burnong people.

Local marine experts Nicole, Dominic, Susie, and Andrew from *Coastcare Point Cook* helped to identify what was collected from our beachcombing and rock-pooling activities.

After the tide receded and exposed the inter-tidal rock zone it was time to get our feet wet and search for the crabs that were living in crevices and under rocks. Susie and Andrew guided us through the task of identifying all the wonderful dead and live creatures and objects we had found. There were multiple kinds of brown and green seaweed algae, the shells of molluscs including Cart Rut and Mud Arc shells, urchin shells, the tubes of tubeworms, seasquirts, at least five different kinds of shore crabs including the Purple-Mottled Crab, and, regrettably, several marine pest species including Northern Pacific Seastar.

There was intense concentration among the children as they found out the particular names of seaweed, shells, and crabs. The children also seemed fascinated that there was so much diversity: why so many kinds of different shells and such a variety of subtly different crabs. After the identification task was completed all the objects and creatures were returned to where we found them.





Mount Sandy and Coorong Lakes, SA



highlights from 2024

## Mount Sandy and Coorong Lakes, SA

In October 2024 a group of A Rocha members enjoyed a discovery walk through the Mt Sandy reserve with Wilderlands' lead ecologist Dea Marshall.

The conservation work at Mount Sandy helps to protect the 14 species of birds, animals and plants recorded on the site that are identified as rare, vulnerable or endangered at either internationally, nationally or at state-level.

During the walk, the group spotted some of the 230 plants species, and saw or heard some of the 60 bird species. Amongst these were a Wedged-tailed eagle, Stumpy-tailed lizards, a Purple-gaped Honeyeater, and kangaroos. Eleven Pygmy Possums were recently found nesting in newly installed boxes. For more information about them see the Wilderlands Facebook page.

**Right (bottom):** A Pygmy Possum found at Mount Sandy

**Right (top):** A rare Plains Beard-orchid, recently found at Mt Sandy



**Above:** At the top of Mt Sandy (L); a nest box for the Pygmy Possum (R)

**Below:** Removing tree guards and weeding around previously planted trees, May 2024





Pygmy Possum (Burramyidae), a tree-dwelling marsupial found at Wilderlands Coorong Lakes Project, SA during 2024. Credit: Wilderlands

## Threatened animals and plants that call Coorong Lakes home:

### Birds

- Purple-gaped Honeyeater (*Lichenostomus cratitius*)
- Blue-winged Parrot (*Neophema chrysostoma*)
- Elegant Parrot (*Neophema elegans*)
- Gilbert's Whistler (*Pachycephala inornate*)
- Yellow-tailed Black-cockatoo (*Zanda funereal*)

### Insects

- Copper Trident-blue (*Cyprotides cyprotus ssp. lucidus*)

### Plants

- Coast Daisy (*Brachyscome parvula*)
- Mallee Beard-orchid (*Calochilus pruinosus*)
- Slender Smoke-bush (*Conospermum patens*)
- Narrow-leaved Red Mallee (*Eucalyptus leptophylla*)
- Limestone Needlebush (*Hakea vittata*)
- Cleland's Beard-heath (*Styphelia clelandii*)
- Metallic Sun-orchid (*Thelymitra epipactoides*)
- Spotted Sun-orchid (*Thelymitra ixioides*)



## Hart Road Wetlands Aldinga, SA

On 28 July 2024, 24 adults and children returned to an area planted by A Rocha in 2023. Dedicated watering over dryer months had ensured the survival of the majority of these. An additional 100 native grasses were planted to encourage butterflies, insects and smaller birds.



## Escarpment Parks, Toowoomba, QLD

A dedicated group continues habitat management work at Duggan Park, one of the protected escarpment parks in Toowoomba. Meeting ten times throughout the year the group undertook weeding to help control invasive Lantana, and conducted 24 Birddata surveys, adding to their knowledge and understanding of species distribution and abundance in the local area. In total there are 3.5 years of survey data available, comprising 64 surveys. 72 bird species have been recorded in this area of eucalypt open-forest, partly with thicket understorey, at the outer edge of suburbia. Whilst there are no listed threatened species detected; one listed Migratory species occurs.

Eucalypt and corymbia species known to occur in Duggan park include:

- White Mahogany (*Eucalyptus acmenoides*)
- Pink Bloodwood (*Corymbia intermedia*)
- Yellow Box (*Eucalyptus melliodora*) Forest Red Gum (*Eucalyptus tereticornis*)
- Small-fruited Grey Gum (*Eucalyptus propinqua*)
- Grey Ironbark (*Eucalyptus siderophloia*) Spotted Gum (*Corymbia citriodora subsp. variegata*)
- Blackbutt (*Eucalyptus pilularis*)

Below: Rufus Fantail  
Credit: Roger Jaensch



What's so special about Duggan Park?

- It's an endangered eucalypt forest ecosystem
- Pre-clearing there was 36,000ha of this ecosystem; in 2021 there was a remnant of only 8,000ha, largely contained in state forest.
- This ecosystem is known to provide suitable habitat for endangered koalas.

Below: Brown Cuckoo-dove  
Credit: Roger Jaensch



ARA national event:  
Mount Tamborine, QLD, 13 – 15 Sept 2024



photo story - a time for...



worshipping



inspiring



relaxing



playing



gathering



collaborating



singing



growing



stewarding

photo story - a time for...



learning



praying and reflecting



designing



befriending



encouraging



planting



creating



dreaming

photo story - a time for...

*"It was a wonderful weekend all around."*

## Hear what people said about the weekend

*"It was an amazing time and so good to meet other like-minded Christians."*

*"It was the first time for me to meet with so many other Christians active in caring for God's creation and to hear others discussing the great biblical passages about why we should - very encouraging for me (more used to being the only one in the church banging on about looking after God's creation)!"*

*"It was nice to see the many kids be so actively welcomed and accommodated – beautiful."*

*"It was an amazing weekend together and so great to meet you all. We are so thankful to God and everyone involved... we were really touched by the deep love for Jesus and His creation."*

*"A big Thank You for the wonderful weekend celebrating our Lord in the bush around Mount Tambourine, being able to hear his special gospel workers in his creation, and assisting by planting to help repair a little of His amazing handiwork."*

*"Beautiful to be outdoors in nature."*

*"There is a deep need for hopefulness to be shared in those involved in Creation Care within the "mainstream" denominational protestant Church."*

*"I found it a great mix of activities, from the worship and speakers through to opportunities for group discussion and plenty of time for meeting and being encouraged by each other. It's a great venue, with the mighty rose gums, birdlife and plenty of space, while still giving opportunities for practical restoration work planting trees. The food was really good too, and it was even good for participants to be able to help with the dishes!"*

*"Was great to see the way the children engaged with each other."*

*"Great to see the enthusiasm of participants, particularly those who travelled interstate to be there."*

*Location was great, input very helpful, conversation with others engaging and great to do some practical work. Resources for local churches helpful."*

*"Tony Rinaudo's FMNR was insightful!"*

*"God has entrusted us to partner with him in caring for the creation so embrace the responsibility."*

*"Being with others who are passionate in this space is crucial."*

*"I would like to use some creation care resources at school and in my therapeutic horticulture practice."*



2024 has been a year of growth for A Rocha internationally (ARI), with A Rocha Sweden being formally recognised as a national organisation. A Rocha works in over 20 countries across six continents through national organisations and associated projects, and has a presence in many more through the Friends of A Rocha network.

A Rocha Australia has a special link with the Asia-Pacific family members in India, Philippines, Singapore and New Zealand-Aotearoa. This region is currently a focus for growth for A Rocha.

2024 has seen A Rocha Australia continue to engage with A Rocha colleagues across the world. The EO meets quarterly with ARI and the leaders of other national A Rocha organisations, and we continue to help shape the development of a Climate Program for the worldwide family and contribute to the ARI Churches and Theology Working Group. In September we gathered online with other A Rocha trustees, staff, volunteers and supporters from around the world for the bi-annual International Festival Forum to encourage, share stories, be inspired, and worship and pray together. In addition to this we value liaising directly with our colleagues overseas to develop friendships and learn from each others' experiences.

A Rocha Australia members and supporters also participated in international events such as the John Stott Memorial Birding Day in May. Along with other A Rocha participants around the world our bird surveys were not only fun, but have contributed to worldwide monitoring and research efforts.



Aotearoa New Zealand  
Australia  
Canada  
Czech Republic  
France

Ghana  
India  
Kenya  
Lebanon  
Netherlands

Peru  
Portugal  
South Africa  
Sweden  
Switzerland

Uganda  
UK  
USA  
Nigeria\*  
Philippines\*

\*A Rocha Associated Projects

## Income 2024

The charts show our income sources, and how we have stewarded our financial resources over the year.

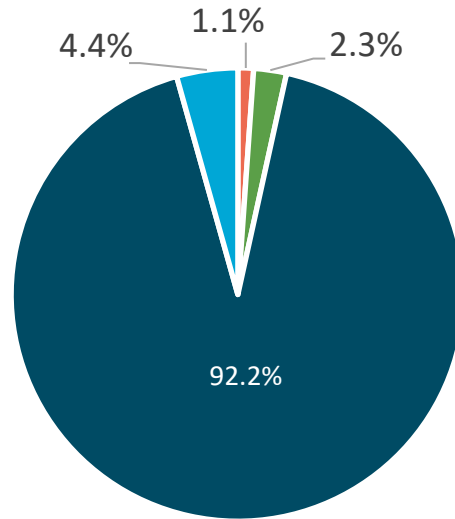
### Income

- During 2024 our income came largely from donations, the majority of which were one-off gifts; during the same period our income from membership fees more than doubled. Going forward we would love to see an increase in regular giving to assist with forward planning.

### Main expenditure items

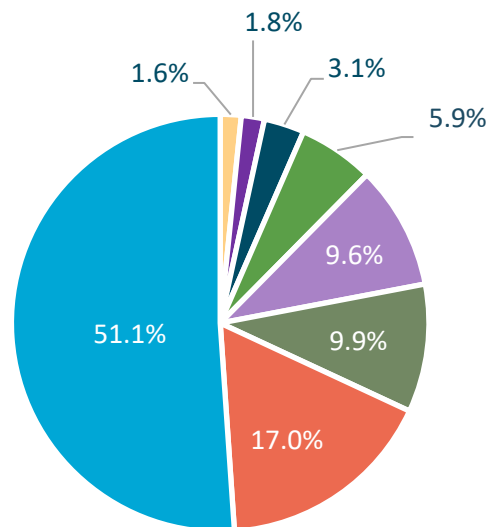
- Our activities, conservation partnerships and volunteer activation rely on our Executive Officer who facilitates and coordinates these across the states. We employed a 0.25FTE Executive Officer for the whole reporting period in 2024.
- During the year we have made significant investment in supporting and growing creation care activity in southern Queensland. This included hosting a weekend event at Mount Tamborine Conference Centre, and supporting on the ground conservation activities at the site.
- The setting up of A Rocha Australia Environmental Projects Ltd required detailed legal advice, which assisted in securing Deductible Gift Recipient status. Changes to our constitution also required legal input and advice.

We would love to be doing more, and if you are able to offer support through membership, volunteering or giving we would love you to partner with us in our work.



■ Membership ■ Interest ■ Donations ■ Sales

## Expenditure 2024



■ International participation  
 ■ Communications  
 ■ Administration  
 ■ MTCC: conference and conservation works  
 ■ Merchandise  
 ■ Conservation activities (inc volunteer insurance)  
 ■ Legal advice (ARAEP Ltd & constitution)  
 ■ People



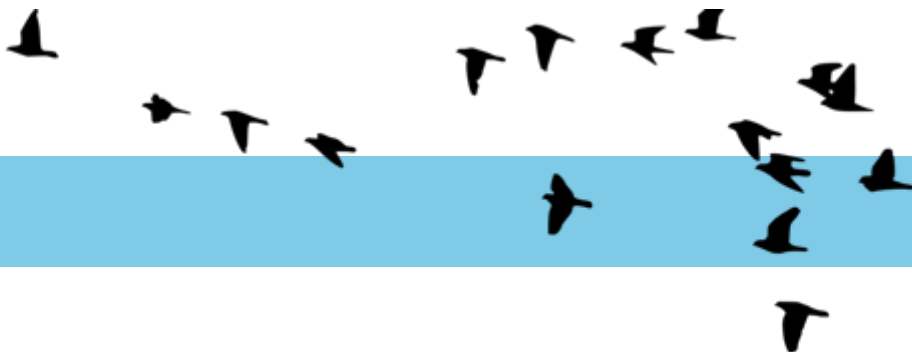
## 2024 Financial overview

INCOME	\$
Membership Fees	520
Interest Income	1090
Donations	42,944
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>44,554</b>
EXPENDITURE	\$
Staff costs	24,486
Projects	3,803
Legal advice	8,140
Administration	1,518
Communications	858
International participation	777
Insurance	3,748
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>43,330</b>
Assets	2,567
<b>Net Assets</b>	<b>119,114</b>

## Hopes and aspirations for 2025

Here are some of the things we're planning to accomplish in 2025:

Activity	Objective
<p><b>Conservation</b> Raise funds for the management and care of our conservation projects</p>	<p>To support Australia's biodiversity and provide opportunities for Christians to learn about, appreciate, and practically care for creation.</p>
<p><b>Environmental and theological education</b> Production of creation care teaching material for children and young people, reflecting our Australian context. For use in churches, schools, and camps.</p>	<p>To equip new generations of Christians for a life of environmental stewardship as part of faithful obedience, worship, and extending God's love to others.</p>
<p><b>Church partnerships / Eco Church</b> Piloting church engagement with a view to developing a program to support churches in their creation care journeys, similar to Eco Church UK and Eco Church Aotearoa New Zealand.</p>	<p>To support and enable churches and Christian communities to be actively caring for creation as part of their ministry and mission, and to understand the Biblical basis for this.</p>



Our heart's cry is to see a step change in Christian engagement in nature conservation across Australia. There are numbers of ways you can continue to help to make this happen:

- *Become a member and part of the A Rocha community: see <https://australia.arocha.org/get-involved/membership/>*
- *Make a regular donation so we can undertake more conservation projects:*

Account name	A ROCHA AUSTRALIA INC.
BSB	313-140
Account number	12356990

- *Volunteer your time and skills:*  
Do you have a passion for God's creation and the expansion of His kingdom, and long to see young people develop a love for God and what he's made; or a desire to see churches develop creation care ministries? If so, do get in contact. In particular we're looking for volunteers with skills in ecology and conservation, administration, communications, fundraising, accounts and marketing or with a legal background. To discuss this with us contact [julia.jardine@arocha.org](mailto:julia.jardine@arocha.org)

And above all, please pray for us.



Practical conservation



Church engagement



Environmental and theological education

With thanks to those we work with:

