
**Bruny Island Environment Network (BIEN)
Annual General Meeting – August 30, 2025
Convenor’s Report for the 2024/25 Period**

Introduction and Acknowledgements

We wish to acknowledge the Nuonnone as Traditional Custodians of Lunawanna-Alonnah. We pay respect to Elders past and present in recognition of Culture and connection to Country.

The 2024/25 period has been one of significant transition for the Bruny Island Environment Network. We begin by formally acknowledging Bob and Marg Graham, who last year retired from their long-standing roles as Convenor and Secretary. Their dedication and immense contributions over the past 15 years have left a lasting legacy and set a high standard for future leadership.

We are pleased to report a successful transition. James and I have been serving as Co-Convenors, Daniel Sprod has been appointed Secretary, and Louise Carnell the role of Treasurer. We thank them for their commitment and extend our gratitude to the entire Bruny community for its support and patience during this period of change.

Key Projects and Initiatives

Threatened Woodland Birds Bruny Island (TWBBI)

Andrew Hingston has continued his exemplary management of the TWBBI project, with over 2,300 habitat trees planted this year to benefit critically endangered species like the forty-spotted pardalote and swift parrot. We gratefully acknowledge the financial support from:

- Department of Natural Resources and Environment Tasmania (NRE Tas) – Threatened Species Fund
- NRM South – DCCEEW Saving Native Species Grant
- Tasmanian Land Conservancy (TLC)
- BirdLife Australia (BLA)
- Responsible Wood (RW) – a grant program ensuring sustainable forestry

We also extend our thanks to the Bruny Island Men’s Shed (BIMS) for their valuable collaboration in constructing nest boxes, assisting with plantings, and providing barbecues that significantly enhanced volunteer engagement. We would also like to acknowledge the lead role taken on by Daniel Sprod in facilitating this project.

Bruny Island Bird Festival 2026

The 8th Bruny Island Bird Festival is scheduled for March 20–22, 2026, with Ella Roles confirmed as Coordinator. Planning is actively underway with partners BirdLife Australia and Inala. Funding

applications are being prepared for the Department of State Growth's Regional Festivals and Events Program and Arts Tasmania, the latter to support *Cygnus atratus*, a public art project led by Maggy Loveridge. As always, the festival's success will rely on the invaluable support of our volunteers and the broader community.

Lunawani - Threatened Species Priority Place

Bruny Island (Lunawani) is designated as one of 20 national priority places for threatened species conservation under the Australian Government's Threatened Species Action Plan.

- **Fauna:** BIEN's TWBBI activities, including habitat restoration, nest box installation, and monitoring for the Swift Parrot and Forty-spotted Pardalote, contribute directly to this plan.
- **Flora:** We are exploring funding opportunities, including with The Australian Orchid Foundation, for a multi-year program to conserve the Chestnut Leek Orchid and Pretty Leek Orchid. This proposed program, developed with Dr. Magali Wright (Landscape Conservation Foundation) and the Royal Tasmanian Botanical Gardens, would utilise innovative mycorrhizal fungi propagation techniques.

The Bruny Biosphere Project

The Bruny Biosphere Project aims to apply UNESCO's framework for biosphere reserves—balancing conservation, sustainable development, and research/education—to benefit Bruny Island. In partnership with KUNO, we are preparing to launch a crowdfunding campaign to raise initial seed funding for a part-time project role. This investment will be leveraged to secure philanthropic funding for a three-year term, continuing the foundational work begun by Bob Graham.

Nothofagus (Myrtle Wilt) Monitoring

Volunteers from Inala and BIEN conducted the annual survey of three long-term monitoring transects, a critical initiative for tracking the health of our rainforests. Key findings for 2024-25 include:

- 374 trees surveyed.
- 8 trees changed health status: 6 moved from 'healthy' to 'dying', and 2 from 'dying' to 'dead'.

This data is shared with relevant authorities to inform conservation strategies for this significant threat.

Marine Conservation

BIEN hosted a planning session with Environment Tasmania, KUNO Earth, and FONB to discuss enhancing marine protections in the Bruny bioregion. Noting that less than 2% of Tasmania's coastal areas are currently protected far below the federal governments 30/30 by 2030 target. We welcome the Tasmanian Government's August 2025 announcement committing to a Marine Environment Act and acknowledge the advocacy of Bec Cartwright and Phill Pullinger in achieving this outcome.

Partnerships and Collaboration

Tasmania Parks and Wildlife Service (TPWS)

We have strengthened our productive relationship with TPWS. Following constructive meetings, we have established Voluntary Works Programs at six key sites. The first working bee at Truganini's Lagoon, focused on removing Spanish Heath, was highly successful thanks to volunteers from BIMS, the Quarantine Station, BIEN, FONB, and SETAC.

We have also begun formally advocating for a review of the outdated *South Bruny National Park Management Plan (2000)*, submitting letters of support from key organisations. We are liaising with Catherine Young (NRM South) on the most effective path forward to trigger this vital review.

Cultural Engagement

We are fostering relationships with SETAC and Weetapooona to improve engagement with the Aboriginal community. Recognising Bruny's profound cultural significance, with over 700 registered sites, we see a critical need and opportunity to develop improved co-management and cultural interpretation.

Ongoing Activities & Organisational Development

- **Annual Gull Count:** Successfully coordinated as part of the long-running SE Tasmania survey. This year we also had a guest lecture for Dr Eric Woehler on 40+ years of gull monitoring
- **Quarterly Meetings:** Planning is underway to establish regular meetings with key conservation organisations on Bruny (TPWS, NRM South, Kingborough Council, SETAC, FONB) to improve collaboration and efficiency.
- **DGR Status:** BIEN has been successful in obtaining Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) status, greatly enhancing our ability to receive tax-deductible donations and access trust funding. We acknowledge Daniel Sprod's hard work in achieving this milestone.
- **Strategic Plan:** Development of a dynamic 5-year strategic plan is underway, with a draft to be circulated to members and stakeholders for feedback before the end of the year.

Conclusion

This year has been defined by renewal, strategic consolidation, and ambitious planning for the future. The strong foundations laid by our predecessors have enabled us to build new partnerships, secure organisational capabilities, and begin developing a proactive, landscape-scale vision for conservation on Bruny Island. We thank our dedicated volunteers, committee members, and partner organisations for their unwavering support and look forward to another productive year ahead.

Respectfully submitted,

James Bunker and Benjamin Convery
Co-Convenor(s)
Bruny Island Environment Network