

Catch up with the latest news and events in the quarterly ACSA newsletter.

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September 2022

Dear ,



The State of the Environment Report was released in July and it was not a pleasant read. The report found that since 2016 there has been an 8% increase in species listed as threatened. We continue to have the worst rate of mammal extinction in the world. The main causes of species decline are habitat loss, fragmentation and degradation, and climate change is compounding these threats.

The report highlighted that monitoring of threatened species and communities is mostly inadequate and

often non-existent. Where monitoring does occur, quality in terms of national extent and adequacy is generally poor. Monitoring Australian biodiversity efficiently and at the necessary spatial and temporal scales cannot be achieved by professionals and institutions alone.

The state of our environment means that the value of citizen science is greater than ever. The report notes that citizen science has great potential to support conservation efforts for threatened species and communities. It recognises that ACSA has a key role to play, acting as a conduit between the many groups and participants within the citizen science landscape in Australia and globally.

ACSA strongly advocated for the inclusion of citizen science in the State of the Environment Report as well as in the Threatened Species Strategy. We've recently held discussions with the Threatened Species Commissioner and offered our support to help deliver the [Threatened Species Strategy Action Plan 2021-2026](#). We are also working with the Invasive Species Council to test citizen science approaches to biosecurity surveillance.

September is biodiversity month. September 7 was threatened species day, a day when the plight of listed species is cast into the spotlight. In reality of course, biodiversity month is every month and threatened species day is every day. There are so many natural history projects and events happening every day across the country that I can't keep up! Check out our website and social media channels for a taste of what's on offer.

The ACSA AGM will be held towards the end of November. As usual, there will be positions on the management committee up for grabs. If you'd like to contribute to taking ACSA and citizen science to the next level, then this could be a golden opportunity. There's a lot happening in citizen science right now and it's an exciting time to be involved. Feel free to get in touch if you'd like to have a chat.

ACSA Updates

Our patron - Professor Hugh Possingham

As many of you may have heard, Hugh has stepped down from his role as Queensland Chief Scientist, finishing on 31 August this year. At his farewell, Science Minister Meaghan Scanlon paid tribute to his work for the science sector through the COVID pandemic, and the progress achieved in many areas under his guidance.

“In all, he led and participated in close to 30 committees or advisory boards covering a broad range of endeavours from university research, energy, climate, reef, and biodiversity and other environmental issues as well as advice to government.

“Professor Possingham has especially devoted time and energy to ensure young Queenslanders are inspired to continue their studies in STEM.”

We are delighted that Hugh has agreed to continue as ACSA's patron. We certainly value his sage advice around strategically investigating ecology and taking conservation actions.

[Read more about Hugh's farewell here](#)

Amy has moved on

In more news about changing roles, Amy Slocombe, our wonderful National Coordinator for over 6 years has begun an exciting new role with NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service in Jindabyne, as Environmental Liaison Officer for the Resorts and Environmental Services Team. Amy has been an absolute powerhouse during her time with ACSA, and we are incredibly grateful to her for her unwavering, hard work in growing ACSA into what it is today!

With Amy's departure, the Management Committee elected to create two part-time roles to support the growth and operations of ACSA. We welcome Jessie Oliver as the Executive Officer, and Lisa Evans as the Executive Support Officer.

Having been involved with ACSA since its inception in 2014, Jessie is delighted to now focus on growing ACSA networks and partnerships in this new role. Please feel free to reach out to Jessie by email to discuss potential partnerships:

executiveofficer@citizenscience.org.au

Lisa became a general member of the Management Committee in 2020 and convened the Conferencecommittee for CitSciOz21. She will still be receiving messages sent to Amy's former email:

coordinator@citizenscience.org.au.



Amy with one of her farewell gifts, an Indigenous print inspired by the NAIDOC 2018 phrase "Because of her, we can"

2022 ACSA Seed Grant winners

We are very pleased to announce that two great projects have been selected to receive our \$1,000 seed grants.

Dr Larissa Braz Souza, [Ferox Australis](#)

Larissa's grant will be put towards the costs of publishing a paper in the open-access journal [Citizen Science: Theory and Practice](#). It will explore and publish the outcomes of the [Great Southern Bioblitz](#), a co-created citizen science initiative.



From their application:

The Great Southern Bioblitz (GSB) is a co-created citizen science initiative to observe as many species as possible over spring in the Southern Hemisphere.

As GSB is reaching its third year, we have identified the need to analyse its development and implementation, and assess challenges and opportunities to reach new areas. Thus, we propose using quantitative and qualitative methods to explore the GSB framework, outcomes and future directions resulting in an open access journal article to disseminate its results.

[Dr Judy Friedlander, Planting Seeds](#)

This Seed Grant will help support the National Schools B&B BioBlitz, run by Planting Seeds in National Biodiversity Month.

The B&B's (Bed and Breakfasts for Birds, Bees, Butterflies and Biodiversity), are key pollinating spaces and pollinator habitats at strategic urban locations throughout Australia. They provide much needed rest and revival for pollinators who are experiencing alarming population decline.

From their application:

This project, involving primary and high school students, not only aims to contribute valuable data on species in urban and regional school grounds but also build STEM skills and educate teachers on citizen science and the multiple links to curriculum.

The funding will be used to train schools and teachers to learn the basics of citizen science, upload to iNaturalist (and the Atlas of Living Australia) and join a dashboard and will help this project immensely. Funding will also assist with promotions to schools, distribution of resources, the running of zoom workshops and troubleshooting.



ACSA AGM 2022

The 2022 ACSA AGM is being planned for November. If you are interested in getting more involved in what we do, please think about joining our Management Committee. Nominations for vacant places will open next month.

Being on the committee is an amazing way to build your network in citizen science, discover new opportunities, and contribute to building our community of practice. ACSA can benefit from people with all levels of skills and experience, whether you are a whizz at designing graphics in Canva, an experienced researcher who can help us write papers and strategies, or someone who is passionate about non-profit organisation development and governance.

If you are interested in learning more, please get in touch at: coordinator@citizenscience.org.au

Conference 2023

Calling for volunteers

Do you have experience with organising conferences?
Or are you excited about helping with our next conference in any way you can?

Another opportunity to get involved with ACSA is to join our 2023 Conference Organising Committee. The committee works alongside our professional event manager to help choose the themes of the conference, invite speakers, curate which abstracts will be included, and design the program.

If you would like to join the committee please send us an email for details

coordinator@citizenscience.org.au

Community consultation

For this conference, ACSA is aiming to include more of our wonderful community in activities and events of interest to groups such as citizen scientists, students, educators and other stakeholders. Have you chosen not to attend a previous ACSA conference because there wasn't enough in the program to interest you? Please get in touch and let us know your feedback at

coordinator@citizenscience.org.au

Members-only Facebook Group

We recently launched our CitSciOz Members Only group on Facebook to help our members connect with one another. Every month we have a fun catch-up online, and members can post questions, talk about their upcoming events and opportunities, and more.

We understand that not everyone is on Facebook, but if you are this is a great way to connect with other members. If you are a member and haven't received an invitation, or need a new one, please let Michelle, our Social Media Moderator, know by emailing our Secretary, Bill Flynn secretary@citizenscience.org.au

Membership types

Did you know that ACSA has individual and organisational memberships? Joining is a great way to support the growth of ACSA and citizen science across Australia! See all of our membership types on the [ACSA website](#).

ACSA News & Events Round-Up

National Science Week

National Science Week 2022 took place from 12-20 August. As always, it was a very busy time for our members! Some of ACSA's highlights were:

A fascinating and inspiring webinar about **The Value and Power of Place-based Science**. When people are interested in studying their own locality, they are likely to do this more carefully and over long periods, because their place matters to them. This symposium explored great global and local examples of powerful place-based citizen science and considered why this is the sweet spot for great science with communities that can add great value to natural resource managers.

An [Australian BioBlitz Symposium](#). This took a look at the current and future potential of BioBlitzes in Australia - for community and for science.

ACSA-WA held a **Pathways to Citizen Science forum**, where attendees learned more about current citizen science projects in WA, and the various pathways to become involved in local initiatives.

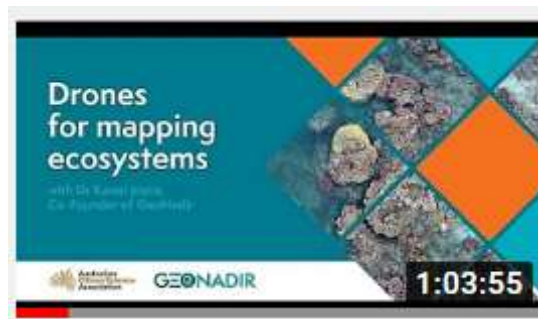




Participants in the Big Bushfire BioBlitz
ACSA-WA's Pathways to Citizen Science forum

Recent presentations available online:

[ACSA's YouTube channel](#) is the place to look for videos of our events and talks. Some recently uploaded videos are:



Our popular webinar [ACSA & GeoNADIR Presents: Drones for Mapping Ecosystems](#)



[ACSA QLD Presents: Nature Exploration using iNaturalist with Thomas Mesaglio \(thebeachcomber\)](#)



[ACSA QLD Presents Whale Research with Dr Wally Franklin](#)

Congratulations to the 2022 Eureka Prize winner and finalists for Innovation in Citizen Science

This year the Department of Industry, Science and Resources Eureka Prize for Innovation in Citizen Science went to the [Environment Recovery Project](#), UNSW and the German Centre for Integrative Biodiversity Research. Congratulations on your win!

ACSA has previously supported the [UNSW Centre for Ecosystem Science](#) with their [Big Bushfire BioBlitz](#), and are thrilled that this important bushfire recovery project has been recognised.

We would also like to congratulate the other finalists:

- [The Dignity Project: Reimagining Disability](#) - Griffith University
- [Fungimap Inc.](#) - Murraylands and Riverland Landscape Board; Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria; and University of Adelaide

Happenings shared from our community

Do you have something you want us to share?

An easy way is to create social media posts and tag us. You can usually do this by typing "@" followed by our handle. Our accounts are:

- [Twitter](#) - @CitSciOZ
- [Instagram](#) - @citsci_oz
- [LinkedIn](#) - @Australian Citizen Science Association
- [Facebook](#) - @Australian Citizen Science Association

Biodiversity Month

September has been [National Biodiversity Month](#). Here are some citizen science projects to get involved in or look out for:

- [Platy Project](#) is being run by the Australian Conservation Foundation throughout September. Head down to your local creek or river, find a quiet place on the bank, try to spot a platypus and record what you see.
- Get involved in the [1 Million Turtles](#) project, helping to protect turtles from extinction. The project is planning a series of activities for National Turtle Month in November.
- Be the eyes and ears of the forest! [Forest-Eye](#), supported by ACSA, has been collecting remote camera trap and acoustic data from forests and regions around NSW. New images will be [going up on DigiVol](#) soon for volunteers to identify.
- Can you get your local area excited for the third annual [Great Southern Bioblitz](#)? Volunteer local area organisers are currently being sought across Australia.

Upcoming conference

[Citizen science and birds: people powering ornithology](#) | [#BOUasm22](#)

This virtual, international conference is running **10 - 11 October 2022**.

This two-day meeting aims to communicate what succeeds and fails in citizen science programmes, what technological advances are available to ornithology, the prominence of rigor and evaluation, and the social science of community participation in ornithology. Citizen science will likely continue to be a key method for ornithology long into the future and this meeting will be of interest to a wide range of ornithologists.

Invitation to participate in research about Inclusion in Citizen Science

Tamara Pinkerton from UWA is conducting Honours research about inclusion in Citizen Science and she would like to interview practitioners. Please contact Tamara at scicom-sbs@uwa.edu.au or Dr Heather Bray at heather.bray@uwa.edu.au to take part.

HAVE YOU MANAGED OR COORDINATED A Citizen Science program?

Then we need your help!

You're invited to participate in a research study
at UWA to help make Citizen Science
programs more inclusive.

Participation in the research involves a single
1 hour interview about your experiences.



For more information contact

Tamara Pinkerton scicom-sbs@uwa.edu.au
Dr Heather Bray heather.bray@uwa.edu.au

Approved by the UWA Ethics Committee 2021/ET000511

Hot Tips!

Insurance for Citizen Science projects provided by QWalC

Queensland Water & Land Carers provides insurance coverage for citizen science projects run by its members. [Information about this coverage can be found at this link](#). If you would like to discuss this further, please get in touch with Darryl Ebenezer at darryl@qwalc.org.au.



QWalC
QUEENSLAND WATER & LAND CARERS



Look the part with our fantastic citizen science hats, caps and t-shirts. Perfect for your next BioBlitz, bird count or even school pick up. All proceeds go towards our mission – to support, develop and advocate for citizen science in Australia.

Buy now

Be like Costa Georgiadis at the BioSym2022 conference and get your ACSA t-shirt now!



**Australian
Citizen Science
Association**

[About ACSA](#)



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