

**Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Australasian Mycological Society
Wednesday 21 September 2022, 12:00 PM AEDT (Zoom teleconference)**

Present: Tracey Steinrucken (president), Bevan Weir (vice president), Johanna Wong (secretary), Jonathan Plett (councillor), Anna Hopkins (councillor), David Catcheside, Tom May, Aindreeya Alcova, Anders Classens, Cecile Gueidan, Sally Fryar, Weixia Wang

Apologies: Alexander Idnurm, Elaine Davison, Pam Catcheside

12:00 PM

Presentation: Professor Roger Shivas from University of Southern Queensland - “Saving Planet Earth – re-evaluating taxonomic best practices”

12:50 PM – 1:00 PM Break

1. 1:00 PM – Welcome and introduction by AMS President Tracey Steinrucken

Tracey Steinrucken welcomed the audience to the meeting, thanked them for their attendance and outlined the Agenda of the Meeting.

2. 1:10 PM Acceptance of the minutes of the 2021 AGM

Minutes of the previous AGM (2021) were accepted with no changes.

David Catcheside moved the acceptance of the Minutes of the 2021 AGM and Tracey Steinrucken seconded it.

3. 1:20 PM President’s report and summary

Tracey Steinrucken presented [the president’s report](#) to the meeting.

As we come out of COVID, we have an eventful 2022. This year we saw a large number of new members including students and labs joining our society.

AMS research grants and Dr Jack Marcup Memroail Prize

We have awarded two AMS research grants, with each valued at \$3000, the awards haven been awarded to two EMCRs, Alison Merton from the University of Melbourne and Aaron Brace from Edith Cowan University. The AMS hope to have them feature at one of the virtual seminars in the coming year to share with us their research work. This year, the Dr Jack Warcup Memorial Prize have been dedicated to support students travelling to the 2022 AMS symposium in Wellington. The winners of the student travel awards were announced in the AGM and they are Aindreeya Alcova and Weixia Wang from the University of Melbourne,

as well as Eloise Martin from the University of Queensland. Congrats to all awardees for their success!

AMS symposium 2022 in Wellington

The AMS symposium this year will be held jointly with the New Zealand Microbiological Society (NZMS) in Wellington. NZMS's conference will be held on the first four days (20th to 24th November), followed by our AMS symposium on the fifth day (25th November). Despite of the additional travel expenses, the registration fee to our members is kept at minimal as the cost has been shared with NZMS. A special event of the conference—field trip to Zealandia has already been sold out. Another special event over the course of the symposium was a Silent Fungal Auction. We encourage all attendees to bring along funky mushroom inspired items, such as earrings, crocheted arts, magnets for the auction. All fund raised from the Auction will go to support future AMS activities.

Virtual seminar series

The AMS virtual seminar series is a huge success this year. The number of people registering and attending have increased since last year. On average there are 37 people joining on live in our monthly seminar from around the globe, including Australia, New Zealand, United States, United Kingdom, South Africa, New Caledonia, Brazil etc. Virtual seminar recordings are now uploaded to our [AMS YouTube channel](#) with the permission of our speakers. AMS members would have early access to these recordings as soon as they became available, whereas public access is enabled for recordings from 2021. In the future, we look forward to feature diverse seminars related to various fungi and fungal-like organisms, from various fields including medical biotechnology, field mycology, ecology and beyond. The AMS is also actively seeking interests from people with indigenous backgrounds to share about traditional uses of mushrooms and funga.

Public outreach and communications

The AMS remain active in various outreach channels to maintain communications with our members and the general public. There is a collaborative effort among all council members participating in preparation of our bimonthly newsletter. The newsletter featured society news, upcoming events, recent research highlights and seminar updates, and we welcome input from our members. Dee Carter, the AMS webmaster, has continued maintaining and updating our [AMS website](#) and we thank her for her generous contribution. This year we also saw the opening of our brand-new [merchandise store on RedBubble](#), which we hope to host fungi-inspired designs. All proceedings will go towards supporting future activities of the society. On social media, our Twitter handler [@ausmysoc](#) have surpassed the milestone of 1000 followers. Additionally, the AMS also has a [facebook group](#), a [YouTube channel](#) and a small presence on [LinkedIn](#).

Subcommittees

The AMS has two subcommittees, Fungal Education and Fungal Conservation. While the Fungal education subcommittee has provided excellent resources for education in the past, the subcommittee is unfortunately in hiatus at the moment and the resources were becoming outdated. The AMS encourage new participation to the subcommittee. Tom May would provide update on the Fungal Conservation subcommittee later.

2028 Interactional Congress of Plant Pathology

The AMS has won the bid to co-host the 2028 International Congress of Plant Pathology (ICPP) on the Gold Coast and the AMS would hold a satellite meeting alongside the ICPP. Over 2000 delegates are expected to attend this exciting event. We are seeking members to join the executive planning committee for the event.

In the coming year, the AMS plan to continue the virtual seminar series, host small meeting or conferences. The AMS also look for contribution to the newsletter, website, and merchandise store. The AMS would start looking for nominee for the International Mycological Society Young Mycologist award which will open in October 2023.

Wrapping up her report, Tracey thanked the work of all Council Members for their contributions.

David commented on the great work that Tracey has done for the society and congratulated on the increase in membership in a very difficult period of time.

David Catcheside moved the president's report and Tom May seconded it.

4. 1:30 PM Treasurer's report

Jordan Bailey was unavailable on the day of AGM, so Tracey has presented the treasurer's report on her behalf.

The membership updates as follow:

Current members: 94 (88 for 2021/2022)

41 are 3-year memberships

2 lab memberships

35 concessional

Memberships brought in \$3,963 for 2021 and \$7,322 for 2022

Thanks to Philip Jacobson for his sustaining membership and David and Pamela Catcheside for their ongoing support of research awards

The majority of memberships are paid through PayPal. We pay fees for this service which accounted for \$322 this financial year. Other society admin costs included bank fees and zoom account fees. The Zoom account allows us to hold meetings but mainly for hosting webinars and record them. This cost is currently \$906 per annum. Majority of funds are used to support student research projects with \$3,000 delivered in 2021 and \$6,000 in 2022. Two new activities for the FY was the provision of membership pins. This was a fun way to engage and reward members for their support. Costs were about \$5.60 per pin including postage. We hope members enjoyed this and will aim to deliver a new design each year inviting members to submit design suggestions. The other new endeavour is the opening of a Redbubble store. Only a couple of designs have been added, including the AMS logo. Again, inviting suggestions from members - these can be ideas, artwork, or photography. We've sold 2 logo stickers. We have also added a donation button for seminar viewers that aren't

members. This is being used and we've had three \$5 donations through this option. We are looking at new from ways to raise funds, including a silent auction at the symposium this year.

The AMS financials review was performed by Accountant Gabi Buckley. The AMS is financially healthy as we recorded a surplus of \$461.35 this financial year compared to a deficit of \$886 last year.

Johanna Wong moved the treasurer's report and Bevan Weir seconded it.

5. 1:35 PM Subcommittee reports

Fungal Conservation Subcommittee

Tom May presented the Fungal Conservation Subcommittee Report prepared by himself and Peter Buchanan from Manaaki Whenua—Landcare Research.

A Google Group was set up for anyone who is interested in Fungal Conversation. Several new members were added during the year and membership is open to any interested persons. The conservation pages on the AMS website have been updated with information on the 36 threatened species from the region included on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species. This list can be sorted by threat category and distribution.

Globally, the IUCN Fungal Conservation Committee recently published an overview of species of fungi included on the IUCN Red List. There are now 597 assessed species, of which nearly 50% are threatened (Critically Endangered, Endangered or Vulnerable).

Some Australian species included in the IUCN Red List are not yet listed under Australian state and federal threatened species legislation. Fungimap has been discussing how best to make the nominations for these species under the relevant legislation.

No threatened species from Australasia have been formally assessed since the 2019 Red List Workshop in Melbourne, and there is scope to prepare further candidates for assessment. Tom suggested organizing a workshop and that could actually be something as a satellite meeting to an IMS meeting in future to generate activities and communications around this.

Johanna Wong moved Fungal Conservation Subcommittee Report and Bevan Weir seconded it.

Taxonomy Australia

Tom also presented a brief report about Taxonomy Australia, which is a peak body for taxonomy in Australia, which was created out of the implementation of the decadal plan for taxonomy by systematics in Australia and New Zealand.

Taxonomy Australia meets regularly supported by the Australian Academy of Science. Tom represents AMS on the Taxonomy Australia steering committee. The main activity in the last 12 months was firstly establishing a peer-reviewed, online, open access journal called

[Australian Journal of Taxonomy](#). This journal is designed around rapid publication of your Australian taxa. While the journal website is still under construction, the journal itself is established. Tom serves as one of the editorial committee for the journal so in due course, the AMS should expect more news from Tom about the journal.

The other thing that Taxonomy Australia has been doing is preparing an advocacy package for use in presenting the government in the industry, which builds on the report from Deloitte, the accounting firm, which has done a cost benefit analysis for the mission to describe all of Australia's biodiversity. The Deloitte Report described all the biota would generate 8-35 times economic multiplier on investment of about \$800 million, over 25 years. The advocacy package aim to deliver this message to relevant policy makers. But at the moment, this is on hold because of the review of Australian Biological Resources Study (ABRS), which is the major funder of taxonomy and systematics in Australia for Australian organisms. Tom expects that once ABRS review is completed, it will be a good time to then be approaching about increasing the resources for taxonomy. The advocacy packages are going to be a set of information tailored for presenting to politicians and policy makers. Tom will keep everyone in touch with that through the through the newsletter.

6. 1:50 PM Election of office bearers for 2023

- President: Tracey Steinrucken (nomination to continue)
- Vice President: Bevan Weir (nomination to continue)
- Treasurer: Jordan Bailey (nomination to continue)
- Secretary: Johanna Wong (nomination to continue)
- Councillor 1: Anna Hopkins (nomination to continue)
- Councillor 2: Jonathan Plett (nomination to continue)
- AMS student representative(s):
 1. Australia: Christina Stephenson
 2. New Zealand: Vacant

David Catcheside moved the election of office bearers and Tom May seconded it.

7. 1:50 PM Other Businesses

Fungal Education Subcommittee

The fungal education subcommittee is inactive at the moment. The AMS hope to encourage participation to revive this subcommittee. There was a discussion during the meeting which highlighted the importance of educational resources put together by this subcommittee. Tom suggested new, relevant resources, for example bioinformatics about fungi, could attract new interest in mycology and in the AMS from prospective students.

Action: Tracey suggested action to be taken to contact members of the subcommittee to see if there is interest in leading the group. Also, AMS members who are in the university

systems are encouraged to volunteer, or nominate interested person to revive the subcommittee

Low registration rate at the AMS symposium

Bevan reported that the number of registrations is low at the moment, but this number is expected to change as it gets closer to the actual conference and registrations from the Fungal Network of New Zealand (FUNNZ) are finalised. Bevan commented that this has been a good year despite all the challenges. Tracey encouraged members to join AMS symposium.

David once again congratulated everyone on the council for their work.

The AGM 2021 meeting concluded at approximately 02:00PM AEDT.