

Response to the 2018 Member Survey – Gary King, Membership Coordinator

The committee was pleased with the member response to the member survey carried out earlier this year, with the results reported in the August newsletter. To reassure you that your views are not just gathering dust, the committee would like to advise you of the points we are addressing to help you better enjoy your Birdlife Photography (BLP) membership.

- Over the years there have been many helpful articles published in our newsletter. If you joined BLP after they were published you may not know of their existence. Sitting in past newsletters, particular articles may be difficult to find and utilise. We are currently extracting copies of all useful articles from the newsletters, reviewing them and grouping them into subject areas. We will be establishing a user friendly spot on our website to create ease of access for you. We expect this work to be completed before mid-2019. We are also identifying gaps in our resources, and will address these as soon as possible. Arising from this, an article on “Basic Camera Settings for Bird Photography” and an updated document on “How to Submit Your Photos” have been written; both appear in this edition of our newsletter.
- Improved ongoing mentoring and encouragement was raised. First, we would like to encourage more of you to submit images to the “Critique Gallery” where experienced members will do their best to advise you on how your photos can be improved. If this does not address your concern, email us at photography@birdlife.org.au and we will do our best to help you. You should be aware that your committee members are volunteers so our reply to you may not be instantaneous.
- The introduction of a Youth Gallery for competitions was raised. At the moment we do not have a sufficient number of young members to justify a separate competition for them. If any of our young members have friends interested in bird photography, encourage them to join BLP. A larger under-18 cohort will enable the committee to review the current decision.
- The use of social media was raised by a number of people, with views both for and against. The reality is that it is already a major method of communication within Australian society. We have already established an Instagram site ([birdlifephotographyaustralia](https://www.instagram.com/birdlifephotographyaustralia)), with one of our members appointed as co-ordinator to post a selection of our best photos each week. Instagram followers can comment on these photos. This site has already gained a large following and should become a source of new members. If you are not following BirdLife Photography on Instagram, I suggest you have a look and actively support our Instagram page. We are also about to establish a BLP Facebook page which will be even more interactive – more on this once our Facebook page launches.
- A number of members said they would like to see BLP become more socially interactive through coffee mornings, bird walks and workshops. This is not quite so easily organised with a committee spread thinly across the nation. We already play a major role in organising the BLP Conference every two years, with the next one to be held in WA in September 2019. We would like to suggest that when we establish our Facebook page members may be able to use this to organise activities such as coffee mornings and bird walks themselves by placing posts on Facebook.