



President's Report July 2023 - June 2024

Presented at Friends of Maatsuyker Island – Wildcare Inc. (FOMI) AGM, 5 September 2024

It is my pleasure to present this report on behalf of the Friends of Maatsuyker Island (FOMI) Committee, showcasing our achievements over the past year.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS:

- **On-Island Efforts:** Conducted two successful working bees, including an extended stint
- **Support and Partnerships:** Funding and support from the Pennicott Foundation, Helicopter Resources, and the Wildcare Inc. Tasmania Nature Conservation Fund
- **Capacity Building:** Focused building capacity for FOMI including creating a more sustainable committee structure

ACKNOWLEDGING OUR PARTNERS

Wildcare Tasmania

We extend our gratitude to the Wildcare team - Jill, Kim, Linda, Alex, Donna, and the Board of Management and Grants Assessment Committee. Over the past year, Wildcare has supported us through:

- Monthly Leaders Zoom meetings for sharing updates
- Training opportunities, including Chemcert and Remote Area First Aid
- Field trip support and promotion of FOMI stories via Facebook and their website
- Assistance with our online shop

FOMI have participated on the TNCF Review Reference Group, new Website testing, weed monitoring and data collection 'brains trust', Love your Wildlife Festival Wildcare stall and provided input into the new Wildcare Communication Plan.

A special mention to Kim Willing, who will be leaving Wildcare in October. Kim, we thank you for your fabulous support to FOMI and all Wildcare groups, connecting us, telling our stories; always with a sense of fun. We wish you well in your next endeavours, possibly volunteering on an island.

Tasmania Parks and Wildlife Service (PWS)

FOMI recognise the commitment of the Tasmania Parks and Wildlife Service (PWS) for continued care of the island including ongoing support to the PWS Volunteer Caretaker program and operational expenditure towards the maintenance of island infrastructure including continued care and maintenance of the lightstation.

FOMI value the relationship with PWS staff, Jennifer Mudge (Ranger in charge), Brett Knowles (PWS Ranger) and field staff, Jeremy Hood (PWS Southern Operations Manager), Emmalene Maher (Regional Volunteer Facilitator South), Annita Waghorn (PWS Manager Historic Heritage). This year, we held an Annual Planning meeting and a Lighthouse Working Group (LHWG) meeting to prepare for the season's work. PWS is also developing a Biosecurity Plan for the island, with contributions from FOMI members Sheryl and Marina.

Combined Preservation Efforts

The Lighthouse Working Group, a joint effort between FOMI and PWS, continues to make significant progress in preserving the island's historic heritage. Led by David Milne, the group includes dedicated members from both FOMI and PWS. FOMI have also formed the Whim Committee to plan the restoration of the Whim Shed precinct, with valuable contributions from Don Cameron.

OFF-ISLAND WORK

Our off-island efforts are crucial and include:

- Attending meetings and managing administration
- Writing grant applications and reports
- Communicating with our supporters and attending events
- Selling FOMI merchandise and developing promotional materials
- Planning and running working bees
- Supporting the PWS Volunteer Caretaker program

FOMI Capacity and Succession Planning

This year, a formed a working group led by Penni and with the Committee focused on succession planning and capacity building. We reached out to all FOMI members through an engagement survey and will discuss further at the AGM. This initiative aims to ensure FOMI's growth, vibrancy, and ability to try new things to achieve our goals as well as contribute to the review of our Strategic Plan.

Promotion, Events, Merchandise, Creativity, and Artistry

FOMI merchandise sales have raised \$1,000 this year, supporting our work on Maatsuyker Island. Our merchandise is available on the Wildcare Online Shop and at events with thanks to Ailsa, our creative 'go-to' Committee member.

Our Facebook page and Wildcare stories, led by Fiona and with contributions from the lighthouse community, continue to engage and inform our supporters.

ON-ISLAND WORKING BEES

December 2023 (10-15 December)

- **Shearwater Monitoring Program:** Sheryl Hamilton and Natalie Bool
- **Weed Control Program:** Marina Campbell and Fiona Taylor

March 2024 (2-18 March)

- **Trip Coordination:** Stephen Anstee, Marina Campbell, David Milne, and Sheryl Hamilton
- **Weed Control Program:** Marina Campbell, Stephen Anstee, Mark Raddatz, Nicky Barry, Marguerite Carson, Steve Greig, Ann Wessing, Alan Wiltshire
- **Shearwater Monitoring Program:** Alan Wiltshire and Marina Campbell (with off-island support from Sheryl Hamilton)
- **Building Maintenance Program:** David Milne, Don Cameron, Heidi Krajewsky, Stephen Anstee and help from the weed and shearwater teams

A heartfelt thank you to our on-island volunteers with their combined efforts contributing an impressive 1,636 volunteer hours across two working bees.

Our working bees were made possible by generous financial support from grants and donations. We gratefully acknowledge the Tasmania Nature Conservation Fund and the Pennicott Foundation for their significant funding towards our Weed Control and Shearwater Monitoring Programs. Additionally, we thank Helicopter Resources for their support and funding that assisted our Building Maintenance Program.

Special thanks to PWS Volunteer Caretakers Georgie and Ash Carr for their terrific assistance, from setting up houses and helping in the field to hosting a special film night and early Christmas. We also thank PWS, especially Jen Mudge and Brett Knowles, for their help with planning, logistics, and gear transport.

Shearwater Monitoring

This season marked the 11th year of FOMI's Short-tailed Shearwater monitoring. We record burrow occupancy each December during the nesting and egg incubation period and check the burrows again in March to record chick production, providing an indicator of breeding success.

In December 2023, Maatsuyker's burrow occupancy was well above the long-term average observed over the past decade. In March 2024, breeding success was recorded at 64%, just below the long-term average of 69%. Both breeding adult weights in December and chick weights in early March were above average this season, following five years of data collection.

Weed Control

This year marks a milestone for the Weed Control Program – two decades of dedicated effort. We have made great progress towards eradicating our four target weeds: Blackberry, *Veronica (formerly Hebe) elliptica*, *Californian Thistle*, and *Montbretia*.

With only a small number of these species remaining on the island, our weed control volunteers visited the Tasmanian Herbarium to improve their plant identification skills. Special thanks to Matthew Baker (Senior Curator, Weed Taxonomy) for his guidance and for treating us to an Herbarium tour.

During December and March, the weeders surveyed eight hectares of the island, combing through dense vegetation. Our commitment is yielding great results, and in March, we celebrated a landmark for weed control: our first season since 2008 with no *V. elliptica* detected! Only four Blackberry seedlings were found among previously infested sites. *Californian Thistle* has not been found for three seasons, and *Montbretia* is in rapid decline. We are fortunate to have the expertise of Phil Wyatt from Friends of GIS, providing ongoing data and mapping support. A full report can be found on our Wildcare page.

Building Maintenance

In March 2024, our dedicated volunteers took on the task of refreshing Quarters Two with a fresh coat of paint. A team of four arrived a week early to paint the interior walls, ensuring the space was ready for the arrival of our weeders and shearwater volunteers. This effort greatly enhanced the comfort of Quarters Two. Following this, the team began planning the restoration of the Whim Shed and gave the lighthouse some TLC.

IN-KIND SUPPORT

Our work is powered by the incredible generosity of our volunteers, both on and off Maatsuyker Island. Over the past year, FOMI members and friends contributed an impressive 2,189 volunteer hours. This includes:

- **Working bees:** 1,636 hours (484 off-island, 1,152 on-island)
- **Promotion and merchandise sales:** 20 hours
- **Meeting attendance:** 200 hours
- **Lighthouse Working Group and Whim Committee:** 80 hours
- **Administration:** 100 hours
- **Grant and sponsorship efforts:** 80 hours

Thank you all for your many hours of effort and contribution. **Conservatively, 2116 hours (964 off island and 1152 on island) @ \$45 per hour (recommended in-kind rate increase from \$39 to \$45ph) = \$95,220 in-kind.**

GRANTS AND DONATIONS

This year, Sheryl, Amy, Peter, Stephen, Derek and Marina led our grant applications and donation efforts.

Pennicott Foundation: We are proud to receive a \$5,000 donation for our Weed Control and Shearwater Monitoring programs for the 2023/24 season. This marks the seventh year of support from the Pennicott Foundation, and we extend our heartfelt thanks to Robert Pennicott for his commitment for our conservation work.

Helicopter Resources: Celebrating our 20-year milestone, Helicopter Resources generously donated 1 hour of flight time to support our efforts on Maatsuyker Island. FOMI are also thrilled to announce the ongoing commitment given by Helicopter Resources with a donation of 1 hour flight time to be used as part of FOMI's work in support of Maatsuyker Island.

Donation summary

Pennicott Foundation	Weed Control & Shearwater Monitoring Programs	\$5,000 (GST excl.)
Helicopter Resources	Gift to celebrate FOMI 20 years (volunteer helicopter transport)	\$2,481 (GST excl.)

Total donations received 2023/24 = \$7,481

The following grants were awarded during the 2023/24 financial year:

<i>Funding source</i>	<i>Awarded/ notified</i>	<i>Title and brief description</i>	<i>Amount (GST excl.)</i>	<i>Completion/ Final Report</i>
Wildcare Tasmanian Nature Conservation Fund Round 2	30 Oct. 2023	Critical actions in 2023/24 on WHA Maatsuyker Island towards eradication of invasive weeds and monitoring the annual yula/short-tailed shearwater breeding population.	25,638	22 August 2024
Australian Government Volunteer grant	20 May 2024	First Aid supplies and volunteer fuel reimbursement	909.09	30 June 2025

Total grant monies received 2023-243 = \$26,547.09

With Thanks

The FOMI Committee and friends, working alongside PWS, are dedicated to preserving the unique values of Maatsuyker Island. Special thanks to our committee members: Vice Presidents Peter Blackwell and Penni Rockliff, Secretary Amy Saunders, Treasurer Stephen Anstee and committee members Fiona Taylor, Ailsa Fergusson, Sheryl Hamilton, David Milne, Derek Inglis, Jonah Wiltshire, and Gary Miller. We also appreciate the contributions of non-committee members Joh Bloomberg and Ann Wessing.

As part of FOMI's succession planning, I will be stepping down as President after 13 years in the role. I am incredibly proud of our achievements and grateful for the support from the committee, Wildcare, and PWS teams. The role has been a joy, and I look forward to continuing my involvement with FOMI in the years to come.

On behalf of the FOMI Committee, thank you to all 'friends' for your support toward the care and protection of Maatsuyker Island.

Marina Campbell
President