



Annual Report July 2025 - June 2026

Presented at Friends of Maatsuyker Island – Wildcare Inc. (FOMI) AGM, 3 September 2026

Presented on behalf of the Friends of Maatsuyker Island (FOMI) Committee, to showcase our achievements over the past year.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS:

- **On-Island Efforts:** A busy year of FOMI working bees including the biannual Weed Control and Shearwater Monitoring working bees in December and March; FOMI worked closely with PWS to deliver two standalone building maintenance working bees as well as assisting PWS contractors on a third working bee.
- **Support and Partnerships:** Funding and support from the Pennicott Foundation, Helicopter Resources
- **Strategic Plan 2025-30:** a renewed plan to take us forward for the next 5 years
- **Off Island Pop-up Museum:** FOMI and Friends of Tasman Island combined to deliver an off-island event with live stream to Maatsuyker Island
- **Membership and engagement:** 1281 Facebook followers, 342 Wildcare Friends.

ACKNOWLEDGING OUR PARTNERS

Wildcare Tasmania

Thanks to the Wildcare team - Phil Laroche (CEO), Linda Lever (Bookkeeper) and Jessie Oliver (Community Engagement Manager). Over the past year, Wildcare has supported us through:

- Advocacy and support toward the weed control program in maintaining the data management App
- Support and assistance toward the TNCF round submission process
- Promotion of FOMI stories via Facebook and Wildcare website
- Managing the FOMI funds and expenditure, alongside our Treasurer Fiona.

Tasmania Parks and Wildlife Service (PWS)

FOMI recognises the commitment of the Tasmania Parks and Wildlife Service (PWS) for their continued care of the island, including ongoing support to the PWS Volunteer Caretaker program and operational expenditure towards the care and maintenance of the lightstation and other island infrastructure. FOMI representative Georgie Carr recently assisted on the selection panel for the next round (3 years) of volunteer caretakers.

FOMI values its relationship with PWS staff, Jennifer Mudge (Ranger in Charge), Brett Knowles (PWS Ranger) and field staff, Jeremy Hood (PWS Southern Operations Manager), Annita Waghorn (PWS Manager Historic Heritage), Emmaline Maher (Regional Volunteer Facilitator, South) and Katy Ross Heritage Officer.

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 and Derek Inglis, the group includes dedicated members from both FOMI and PWS. Plans for the restoration of the Whim Area precinct, are becoming a reality with the recladding and painting of the Whim Shed. Planning is well underway to retrieve the Whim wheel from over

the bank and to install it in a permanent location for the preservation and interpretation of the haulage-way story.

Pennicott Foundation: We are proud to have received a further \$7,000 donation for our Weed Control and Shearwater Monitoring programs for the 2025/26 season. This marks the ninth 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: For the third year, Helicopter Resources generously donated one hour of flight time to support our efforts on Maatsuyker Island with a commitment to ongoing support. FOMI thank Peter Gallaway Acting Base Manager and the team at Helicopter Resources for the ongoing support.

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 holding and attending events
- Selling FOMI merchandise and developing promotional materials
- Planning and assembling working bees
- Supporting the PWS Volunteer Caretaker program
- Developed the 2026-30 FOMI Strategic Plan
- Established Working Groups for Natural Values & Aboriginal Heritage, FOMI Capacity planning, PWS & Community Relationships, and European History & Heritage to support FOMI working in alignment with the Strategic Plan.

FOMI Capacity and Succession Planning

After discussion and review of the more distributed leadership and responsibility model that was implemented in 2024-25, the proposal going forward is to reinstate the established structure of President, Vice-President, Treasurer and Secretary, effective September 2026 onwards. That is, to be implemented alongside the leadership/working group model, where each of the Strategic Plan goals have been progressed by working groups involving knowledgeable committee members and Maatsuyker Island subject matter experts.

Implementation of the FOMI Strategic Plan 2026 - 2030

FOMI's previous Strategic Plan reached end-of-life in 2025, so work was completed to review the existing Plan and implement a new 5-year Plan that would act as a guiding document for FOMI activities in 2026-2030. The Strategic Plan sets our priorities and activities in line with FOMI's mission "*To ensure the conservation, protection and recognition of the historic, natural and Aboriginal values of Maatsuyker Island*" and has a vision for Maatsuyker Island to be recognised locally, nationally and internationally as having unique heritage, natural and Aboriginal values where:

- Historic values and evidence of Aboriginal heritage are well conserved and protected by heritage listing
- Natural values are healthy and free of impacts from invasive species and disease
- These values are clearly reflected in a Maatsuyker Island Values Statement and the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Management Plan
- Volunteer programs and any visitation opportunities are small-scale, well-managed and support conservation of the island's values.

A big thanks to Marina Campbell for being the driving force behind the Plan's development and implementation, to James Stone for sharing his photography with us that feature on the front cover of the Plan, and to Salome Rosa for the graphic design.

Off-Island Pop-Up Museum

Over 70 island enthusiasts came together for the FOMI and FOTI (Friends of Tasman Island) led Off-Island event in August at Geilston Bay Boat Club. It comprised readings from Marlene Levings' book 'Jezabel' and John Cook's unpublished manuscript, a presentation by Tony Fenton about the history of the Port Davey entrance light, a live cross to the Maatsuyker Island Museum in Q1, hosted by caretaker 'Reg' Grundy, brief interpretations of our artifacts held off-island, a talk by former keeper John Thompson and a demonstration by Chris Crease, in keeper uniform, of a kerosene burner in action!

Many thanks to Georgie Carr for her unrelenting energy, enthusiasm, creativity and resourcefulness to make this event happen.

Promotion, Events, Merchandise, Creativity and Artistry

FOMI has raised \$1025 this year from sales of existing merchandise supply ordered in FY25, supporting our work on Maatsuyker Island. Our merchandise is available on the Wildcare Online Shop and at events. Thanks to Ailsa, our 'go-to' creative Committee member and valiant merchandise mover.

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

We have applied to have a stall at the Australian Wooden Boat Festival in February 2027 and submitted grant applications to support this.

Member Day Trips to Maatsuyker Island

Our attempts to organise an arrangement by which members can visit the Island, other than as part of a working bee, advanced this year by the submission of a revised Reserve Activity Assessment (RAA) application to PWS which remains under assessment. However, we have advised PWS that, in view of skyrocketing jet fuel prices and risks associated with avian influenza, we do not expect the application to be progressed by PWS for at least a year.

ON-ISLAND WORKING BEES

This season of working bees was a big year for FOMI and PWS. All objectives were achieved across the Building Maintenance, Lantern Room, Shearwater Monitoring and Weed Control programs.

A special mention and thanks to the PWS Caretakers, Duncan Todd and Michele Weckmann who provided amazing support to the FOMI working bees from December to March. As well, extra thanks to the PWS staff, particularly Brett Knowles, supported by Ranger in Charge Jennifer Mudge, Regional Volunteer Facilitator Emmalene Maher, Heritage Manager Annita Waghorn and Heritage Officer Katy Ross, who FOMI worked with in planning and executing the working bees, especially the Building Maintenance and Lantern Room working bees. Brett Knowles provided invaluable support during all the working bees in addition to other PWS staff supporting on-ground logistics.

A big shout out to our volunteers (listed below) who gave of their time, expertise and energy toward each of the projects undertaken during this season, with their combined efforts contributing an impressive 2864 volunteer hours across the working bees.

10-16 December 2025: Weed Monitoring and Shearwater Monitoring

Weed Control: Marina Campbell and Gwen Egg

Shearwater Monitoring: Sheryl Hamilton and Jess Whinfield

29 January - 4 February 2026: Building Maintenance with Paradigm Builders

Trip co-ordination Off-island Support: David Milne

Team: David Masters and Brett Kellaway

2-3 - 14 February 2026: Building Maintenance

Trip co-ordination: David Milne and Derek Inglis

Building Maintenance program: Project Leaders David Milne and Derek Inglis.

PWS support Phil Duggan.

Team: Peter Blackwell, Bruce Francombe, Georgie Carr, Ash Carr, Allan Graham

4-9 March 2026: Lantern Room Maintenance

Team Leaders: David Milne and Derek Inglis

Peter Rigozzi, Heritage building, author of Maatsuyker Tower Catch up Maintenance Plan

Chris Creese, Mechanical Trades and experienced Lighthouse Lens Restorer

9-20 March 2026: Weed Control program

Trip co-ordination: Marina Campbell and Fiona Taylor

Weed Control program: Project Leaders Marina Campbell and Jonah Wiltshire with support from Fiona Taylor, Jason Whitehead, Alan Wiltshire, Grant Finlay, Tersea Wilson, Miranda Yovich,

Andrew Todd-Weckmann

Shearwater Monitoring program: Project Leader Sheryl Hamilton with support from

Alan Wiltshire, Andrew Todd-Weckmann, Teresa Wilson, Jonah Wiltshire

Funding and support

Our working bees were made possible by generous financial support from grants and donations. We gratefully acknowledge the following:

- Tasmanian Landcare Fund through donations from the JM Roberts Charitable Trust (Weed Control and Shearwater Monitoring)
- Pennicott Foundation (Weed Control and Shearwater Monitoring)
- Wildlife Health Australia funding through National Avian Influenza Wild Bird Surveillance program - NRE Tasmania (Biosecurity Tasmania and Wildlife Health and Marine) short-tailed shearwater project (shearwater blood and swab testing)
- Helicopter Resources (FOMI programs)
- Australian Government Volunteer grant (contributed to AED purchase)
- FOMI programs are supported by FOMI general funds, PWS in-kind and Landcare membership support from Huon Valley Council.

Shearwater Monitoring

This season marked the 13th year of FOMI's Short-tailed Shearwater monitoring. Each December during the egg incubation period, marked study areas are surveyed to determine the proportion of burrows that contain a nest. The burrows are checked again in March to determine the number of burrows with a chick, providing an estimate of breeding success. This year the Shearwater Monitoring program also undertook swab and blood samples of the short-tailed shearwater as a part of Wildlife Health Australia's National Avian Influenza Wild Bird Surveillance program during the December 2025 working bee (all samples were negative), and in March 2026 undertook some additional resurvey of transect lines to obtain burrow density data across a wider area.

In December 2025, Maatsuyker's burrow occupancy was 57.9%, below the long-term average of 62.7% (from 13 seasons), In March 2026, breeding success was 66.7%, close to the long-term average of 69% (from 12 seasons). The breeding population estimate for 2025/26 was below the long-term average with 421,800 estimated breeding pairs (372,600–471,000).

Weed Control

The Weed Control program continued its efforts toward the goal of eradicating the invasive target weeds Blackberry (*Rubus fruticosus* agg), Hebe (*Veronica elliptica*), Californian Thistle (*Cirsium arvense*) and Montbretia (*Crocasmia x crocosmiiflora*). This year the Weed Control team surveyed approximately 14 hectares across the two working bees held in December 2025 and March 2026, including working into areas not previously surveyed using the hip-chain survey method and following up four target weeds and other weeds including *Agapanthus orientalis*, as well as understanding long term photo-point monitoring. This season the weed numbers were:

- 2 Blackberry (importantly not at the mature stage)
- 2 *Veronica elliptica* (importantly not at the mature stage)
- 260 Montbretia plants at 32 sites (importantly 4 new sites were located and treated)
- No Californian Thistle located (importantly the 5th season with no finds).

The team also went over and above with a 3-hour survey of the *Eucalyptus nitida* which is only found on the summit, also a favourite place for leeches.

FOMI thanks Matthew Baker, Senior Curator (Weed Taxonomy), Tasmanian Herbarium, Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery for sharing expertise in plant identification. Additionally, FOMI is being supported by the Herbarium to develop the Maatsuyker Island Herbarium Collection with specimens to be stored at the Herbarium as well as a collection to be stored on Maatsuyker Island. FOMI thank Emmalene Maher, PWS Regional Volunteer Facilitator for arranging the training opportunity for FOMI and the Friends of Tasman Island volunteers, and with gratitude to Matthew Baker and Miguel de Salas, Senior Curator (Botany), for delivering a very informative training day.

Building Maintenance

Two working bees took place in 2025-2026, with FOMI working in conjunction with PWS and their contractors. The first working bee commenced in late January 2026 and was completed mid-February. FOMI had nine volunteers working at Maatsuyker over this 16-day working bee, and works focused on rectifying the internal condition of Quarters 1, residence of the PWS Caretakers / Weather Observers which had been permanently occupied and was in a degraded condition. Works included detailing of the contractor rebuild of the Quarters 1 Laundry, including fit out and painting of walls and ceilings, disassembling and repairing timber sash windows, and painting of essential living areas of Quarters 1.

The second working bee, in March 2026, was focused on the Maatsuyker Island Lighthouse, built in 1891. The original Chance Brothers clockwork mechanism and rotating lens pedestal remains in operation condition, however required servicing and to locate cause of mechanism hesitation issue, rectify, repair and adjust as practical. The working bee efforts resulted in the achievement of one rotation every 357 seconds. Work was also undertaken to repair internal doors, and free up all doors after the recent painting program in Quarters 2 and 3.

GRANTS AND DONATIONS

Donation summary

Pennicott Foundation	Weed Control & Shearwater Monitoring Programs	\$7,000 (GST excl.)
Helicopter Resources	Gift toward FOMI on island works flight for one flight Cambridge to Maatsuyker Island	\$3,100 (GST excl.)

Total donations received 2025/26 = \$10,100

The following grants were awarded during the 2025/26 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 2026-2027	7 May 2026	Protecting the unique biodiversity and seabird habitat values of TWWHA Maatsuyker Island (2026-27 season)	\$26,529	Completion 31 May 2027 Final report 3 months post completion
Tasmanian Landcare Grant Fund 2025 (R-27)	31 July 2025	Weed control and Shearwater monitoring programs	\$11,000	22 July 2027

Total grant monies received 2025/26 = \$37,529

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 3394 volunteer hours. This includes:

- **Working bees:** 760 hours (Building) + 680 (Weed control) + 264 (Shearwater monitoring) + Briefing, planning and ancillary logistics (752 + 408 = 1160) = 2864
- **Promotion and merchandise sales:** 30 hours
- **Meeting attendance:** 200 hours
- **Lighthouse Working Group and Whim Committee:** 50 hours
- **Administration:** 100 hours
- **Grant and sponsorship efforts:** 150 hours

Thank you all for your many hours of effort and contribution. **Conservatively, 3394 hours @ \$45 per hour (recommended in-kind rate) = \$152,730 in-kind.**

With Thanks

The FOMI Committee and friends, working alongside PWS, are dedicated to preserving the unique heritage of Maatsuyker Island. Special thanks to our committee members: Co-chairs Sheryl Hamilton and Joh Bloomberg, Treasurer Fiona Taylor, Secretary Amy Saunders, committee members Peter Blackwell, Ailsa Fergusson, Marina Campbell, David Milne, Rosanna Cameron, Derek Inglis, Amanda Blakney, Penni Rockliff, Georgie Carr, and Peter Saunders.

Thank you to all 'friends' for your support toward the care and protection of Maatsuyker Island.

Your 2025-26 outgoing FOMI Committee