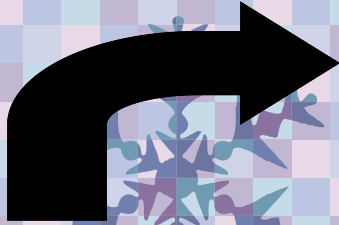




October 2011

Birdwatch

Newsletter of Fleurieu Birdwatchers Inc



Events

- **Wednesday 30th November. Goolwa Barrages to Beacon 19**
Barrage car park. 35°31'41" S 138°48'18" E
- **Saturday 3rd December. Christmas Breakup. 4p.m.**
- **Hindmarsh Falls. 35°26'23" S 138°34'59" E**
- **Friday 13th January 2012 Twilight Walk 6.30pm Inman River Flats**
Near horse yards, Henderson Road, Victor Harbor
35°32'57"S 138°36'25"E
- **AGM Friday 2nd March 2012**

Newsletter Contributions:
Please send all items for inclusion in future newsletters to :
fleurieubirds@gmail.com

Bendleby Ranges Campout

Thank you Peter !

A big thankyou to Peter Gower from all the members who attended this very successful campout for the organisation and leading the walks each day.



INVITATION

Christmas Breakup

4 pm Saturday 3rd December

Hindmarsh Falls Car-park

Short Bird Walk

Committee will supply cold meats

Please bring a salad or sweet to share

BYO Drinks and Chairs

Meetings: Anglican Church Hall, corner Crocker and Cadell Streets, Goolwa
7.30 pm 2nd Friday of odd months.

Outings: Meet 8.30 am. Bring lunch and a chair. See Events above

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Newsletter: Contact fleurieubirds@gmail.com

Kyeema Conservation Park, Oct 15, 2011

Not to be daunted by a weather forecast of strong SW winds, low, fast moving clouds and scattered showers, a total of 13 Fleurieu birdwatchers met at the Brookman/Woodgate Hill Roads intersection on Saturday morning, before proceeding to the Kyeema Conservation Park Car Park. Located between Willunga and Meadows, this relatively large park (350ha) is vegetated by stringybark, pink and cup gums, with, on the day, a splendid display of flowering understory, including Grevilleas, Boronias, prostrate Hibbertia, native violets and several species of native orchids.

For the first part of the walk, which traversed through the relatively exposed top of the ridge, the birds were both visually and audibly elusive, with Crescent Honeyeaters and Golden Whistlers some of the more numerous birds heard in this area. However, as we moved down into the more sheltered parts of the park, and with the clouds beginning to break up, we were pleased to start seeing more species. A pair of Elegant Parrots, several Striated Pardalotes and Grey Currawongs caught our eyes. We also saw two pairs of Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoos feeding on the cones of some low growing Casuarinas. As we moved into the more densely vegetated part of the park, we saw several White-browed Scrubwrens and Brown Thornbills. Quite a few cheeky Grey Fantails followed our group too. In one of the small clearings in the park, one of our group caught sight of a number of Scarlet Robins.

As we began to climb back up to the ridge, and to maximise our bird counts as much as possible, the group broke up into two parties, one passing through the control burnt area and the other moving back through the less disturbed part of the park. Both parties were rewarded. The former group was serenaded by a Grey Shrike-thrush and the second party was amused with a Wedge-tailed Eagle being harassed by a couple of Magpies and Little Ravens. Both Brush and Common Bronzewing were also noted.

At the lunchtime bird call, we were pleasantly surprised with the final count of 31 species. We knew that we had to work hard to get that number, under challenging weather conditions. We thank Denzel for leading the group on this outing.

Keith Jones



Barn Owl Photo: Judith Dyer

Nurragi Sunday 13th November 2011

Twelve members enjoyed a wonderful day out.

The weather was overcast early, with no breeze, so the mosquitoes had a 'field day' for awhile!

The birds were out and about from the start and we were all busy keeping up with the various chips and chirps. Quite a number of overhead birds:- Australian White Ibis, Straw-necked Ibis, White-browed Woodswallow, Rainbow Lorie-keet, etc.

Plenty of interesting little bush birds:- Yellow Thornbill, Superb Fairy Wren, Weebill, White-plumed Honeyeater, White-naped Honeyeater, Mistletoebird, Southern White-face, Striated Pardalote, Brown-headed Honeyeater. Wonderful views of the Rufous Whistlers, eight in all, very pretty and very songful, also five Grey Shrike-thrush who entertained us with song, they are among my favourites.

The special sighting of the day was definitely the Barn Owl. We were all able to have a good look at this, he stayed around, looked this way and that to make sure we could all see his beauty and then he flew off into the distance. My very first sighting of a barn owl in the wild, just magic. After our walk we moved over to Milang to enjoy lunch and do the bird count.

Very pleasant by the lake with a lovely breeze. Total of 44 birds. Great day out.

Elaine O'Shaughnessy

CAMPOUT BENDLEBY RANGES

Friday 7th October

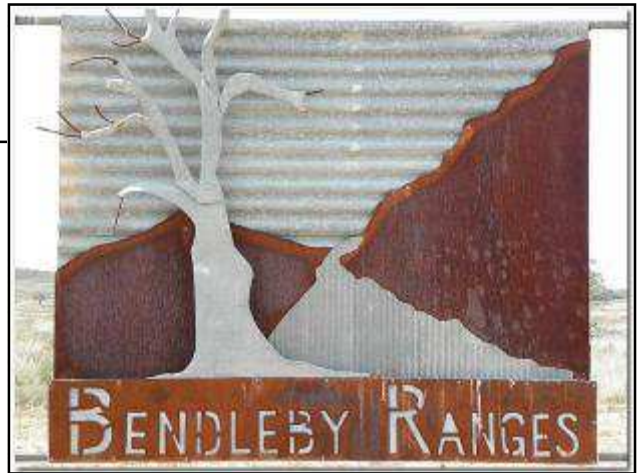
We arrived at 2.30pm after driving for approx. 6hrs and after a quick check of the Shearer's Quarters we set out to find the others in the group who were camping in the bush nearby.

Instantly we knew we were in the vicinity of the Flinders Ranges as the cheeky Apostlebirds were near the camp site and creating quite a racket.

Peter lead us on a short walk up to a little dam and the birds were bit scarce at that time. The dam had a few Australasian Grebes and Teresa was sure one was a Hoary-headed Grebe. A few more birds were obvious on the way back and these included Chestnut-rumped Thornbills and Variegated Fairy-wrens along the track. In the higher canopy of the bush the Spiny-cheeked Honeyeater was prevalent along with the Yellow-throated Miner which we saw many times in the area. The little Grey Fantail flittered around us and the Grey Butcherbird made its presence felt with its lovely song. Just near the homestead we came across a group of Chestnut-crowned Babblers feeding on the ground and in the tree above were Red-rumped Parrots and Mallee Ringnecks with their lighter head colour than their Port Lincoln "cousin". A Red-backed Kingfisher was calling constantly and we found it in a large Gum tree in a creek bed nearby where it stayed for an hour or so and amazingly returned to the same tree each day in the morning and afternoon and on the same dead branch for all to see. We could only imagine it was looking for a mate and had its territory marked out as it was trying so hard to attract attention.

Bird behaviour is always fascinating and going to another area gives us a chance to see and study a bigger variety of our feathered friends as they go about their own business while we get to meet and know our fellow bird-watching friends a little better too.

Wendy Phillips



Red-backed Kingfisher
Photo: *Judith Dyer*



Mallee Ringneck
Photo: *Peter Gower*

Saturday 8th October

In the morning we headed to an area of dry creek beds on the edge of the ranges. The weather was fine, perfect for walking and just cool enough to reduce the risk of brown, slithery reptiles.

On arrival we were welcomed by large numbers of Tree Martins, not surprising as the creeks are the habitat of red gums favoured by the martins. A White-browed Babbler's nest was spotted in an acacia. The area was excellent for sightings of Red-capped Robins, Whitefaces, Eastern Ringnecks, Spiny-cheeked Honeyeaters, Budgerigars, Chestnut-rumped and Yellow-rumped Thornbills and Red-rumped Parrots. Probably the most interesting birds for the morning were a White-fronted Honeyeater, a Blacked-eared Cuckoo and six Red-throats but not all of us were fortunate enough to see them. Numbers for individual species were quite high.

Lunch and bird-count were enjoyed in the creek-bed, with the call of a Horsfield's Bronze-Cuckoo teasing us close by.

Pat Uppill

Sunday 9th October

Beautiful weather for our second morning outing. This time a drive through dry sheep country to the beginning of the Hungry Ranges. We parked and spread out in various directions but noted the birding was slow. I did find a juvenile Mulga Parrot, Nick noticed a Tawny Frogmouth near the nesting Butcherbird.

Pat had found a hot spot that included Whistlers, Sitellas, Sacred Kingfisher, Brown Treecreeper, Variegated Fairywren, Yellow-plumed Honeyeater and White-winged Triller. We moved our cars to that area and found ourself at a camp site beside a deep but dry creek and were able to enjoy birdwatching while having lunch. Black-faced Cuckoo Shrike came by along with Thornbills. Our bird count for the morning was 41.

Teresa Jack.

Campout Photos: Peter Gower, Teresa Jack and Bob Daly



Apostlebird



White-fronted Honeyeater



Monday 10th October

Ten members visited Pekina Reservoir Recreation Park, a couple of kilometres west of Orroroo, on the final morning of the campout. The weather was overcast and chilly.

The initial view was of large numbers of duck (mainly Grey Teal and Hardhead with smaller numbers of Pacific Black Duck), either on the water or resting on the banks. Australasian Grebe and Eurasian Coot were also present in good numbers with the occasional sighting of Hoary-headed Grebe.

Good views of two Pink-eared Duck were a highlight, quickly followed by a small group of Rainbow Bee-eaters seen and heard flying overhead. Later, a single Cockatiel was also sighted in flight.

A Yellow-billed Spoonbill entertained with a couple of fly pasts over the reservoir while, on the muddy banks, the occasional Black-fronted Dotterel and Willy Wagtail could be seen. Australian White Ibis and White-faced Heron were also seen.

On the hillside opposite, a very large group (200) of Black-tailed Native-hen was grazing on the upper slopes near rocky outcrops. A Peregrine Falcon also put on a fine aerial display.

A total of 42 species was recorded at this site. The presence of a good variety of water birds provided an interesting contrast to the previous three days' birding and was generally considered to be a worthwhile visit, topping off a very enjoyable campout.

Kathy Moore



Hardhead
Photo: Peter Gower



Black-tailed Native-hen
Photo: Peter Gower

MEETINGS

General Meeting 11th November—Items of Interest

- Verle Wood will revamp the Fleurieu Birds website.
- Peter Gower is providing photos for the Kessell Rd. Goolwa Ponds information board.
- Neil Cheshire will lead the Beacon 19 bird walk on 30th November.
- Teresa Jack will lead next year's Campout to Marion Bay and Innes NP Yorke Peninsula.
- Ann Turner and Nick Tebneff visited a lavender farm at 55 Tuit Rd. Maslins Beach. If anyone is interested to visit to bird-watch on the property contact Margaret on 0407855788.
- Trevor Cowie from Birds SA has offered to do an induction for people interested in visiting the Dry Creek and Price salt fields. If enough members register he will visit Goolwa for the training. [[click here to email Fleurieubirds](#)]

Peter Merchant from UK gave an excellent presentation on bird groups including the RSPB (Royal Society for the Protection of Birds). The history and conservation methods used to improve the survival of many rare and endangered species by purchasing large properties of wetlands and farming land hold many lessons for us to learn in Australia.

Birdcall:

Ballion's Crake at Goolwa Ponds, Glossy Ibis at 'Beyond', Peregrine Falcons fledged at Paiwalla, Hooded Plovers with 3 eggs at Basham's beach and Watson's Gap and 3 chicks at mouth of Inman River, Juvenile Banded Stilt at Murray Mouth, Gannets also in area, Black-tailed Native-hen and Cape Barren Geese in large numbers on Hindmarsh island, waders arriving near Goolwa Barrage.

Geoff Pollard travelled the Oodnadatta Track, Coober Pedy and Roxby Downs and saw flocks of Zebra Finches, Nankeen Kestrels, birds of prey in large numbers due to grasshopper and mice plagues, Diamond Doves, Plains Wanderer, Red-necked Avocets and Intermediate Egret.

Unusual Sighting:



Olive Whistler—Significantly outside its normal range was spotted on Ann and Les Houghton's property at Willunga in September. Initially a pair of birds were sighted and were constantly calling but did not sound like the normal whistlers. It was checked by a number of people who confirmed the identification.

What do you think?

Fairy Tern Census Update

On Saturday 12th November DENR staff assisted a number of volunteers to survey the Coorong Area from the Murray Mouth to Kingston travelling across the Barrages in 4-wheel drives and then in boats and kayaks to survey the small islands dotted in the Coorong

A total of 48 Fairy Terns were found in two locations, Ocean Beach near Goolwa and in the South Lagoon. Their nesting site (with a fox-proof fence around it) will be monitored during the Summer months and another Survey will be done in February. After such a poor outcome last year the survival of this small Tern is creating quite a stir!

On a good note the bird life in the Coorong with the high water levels in the lakes is just wonderful and I was thrilled to see 25 Night Herons circling us while we stopped for lunch near Pelican Point. It was the first time I have travelled over the Barrages down the Coorong and felt very privileged to bird watch this whole area. Our little team of 4 saw nearly 60 species and at a guess at least a thousand Whiskered Terns along with many other water birds.

Wendy Phillips