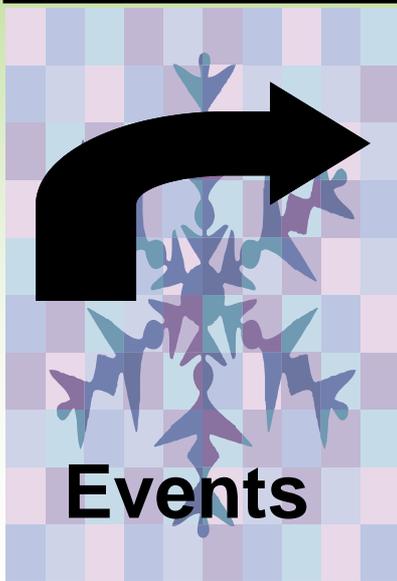




Birdwatch

Newsletter of Fleurieu Birdwatchers Inc



End of Year Celebration

5pm Saturday 5 December Angus River Park
opposite Strathalbyn Library.

Bring a salad or sweet to share, own drinks and chair. We provide cold meats, bread, plates and cutlery.

For catering purposes Please RSVP
Wendy 8555 0634 or send email to FBW

Reminders

2016 Outing Program will be in the February Newsletter

Twilight Outing
Friday 15 January
Meet at 5pm
Goolwa Barrage
BYO BBQ tea afterwards

White-winged Fairy-wren
Photo: *Bob Daly* taken at
Arid Lands Botanical Garden

Requests for
Campout photos.
Please send to Verle for
the Website email:
verlew@bigpond.com
Please include the date
and location taken.



Meetings: Anglican Church Hall, corner Crocker and Cadell Streets, Goolwa.
7.30 pm 2nd Friday of March, May, September and November unless otherwise stated.

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

Contacts: fleurieubirds@gmail.com or phone 8555 0634

Website: www.fleurieubirdwatchers.org

Newsletter: Contact email: fleurieubirds@gmail.com

PT. AUGUSTA Campout– Friday 16 October – Shoreline Caravan Park.

More than 20 Fleurieu Birdwatchers gathered in the breezy afternoon at the Shoreline Caravan Park, Pt. Augusta, prepared for an enjoyable birding weekend at the top of Spencer Gulf. Win Syson our campout organiser and leader, later to be affectionately known as “Sargent Win” and his two accompanying “Wandering Babblers”, Kevin and Derick took us for a walk adjacent to the caravan park. With an ebbing tide, the increasingly exposed shore provided potential sites for feeding waders and a pair of Red-necked Avocets didn’t disappoint. However, the strong southerly winds may have deterred more shorebirds from appearing.

Amongst the mangroves on the other side of the gulf we saw a Great Egret and a White-faced Heron, and over the water a Caspian Tern and a number of Whiskered Terns. Little Black Cormorants and a Little Pied Cormorant were feeding. Immediately to the north of the caravan park in a fenced area of partly vegetated red sand dunes, which has recently been designated as a conservation area, several of us observed Singing Honeyeaters, Variegated Fairywrens, Crested Pigeons, Tree Martins and Welcome Swallows. Including the birds in the caravan park we ended with around 24 species and looked forward to the next few days.

Keith Jones



Arid Lands Garden.
Photo: Wendy Phillips



In the bush, Arid Lands
Photo: Keith Jones

PT. AUGUSTA Campout – Saturday 17 October— Arid Lands Botanic Gardens.

A total of 30 members and visitors met at 8am at the Arid Lands Botanic Gardens, just up the highway from Port Augusta. Fortunately, the continuing southerly winds kept temperatures down and the flies away. We were joined by Peter Langdon, President of the Port Augusta Birdwatching Group. Peter’s long-term birding experience throughout the northern arid lands was a great asset to our visit to the Gardens and throughout the campout. A number of the plants were flowering, including many types of *Eremophilas* and *Grevilleas*, attracting Honeyeaters including the Black and the White-fronted. A family of Mulga Parrots drinking at a pool were eagerly photographed by members and out on the drier saltbush areas, the shy White-winged Fairy-wrens were seen from time to time, as well as Variegated Fairy-wrens in the more diverse vegetation.

For many members a number of the birds gained “ticks”, including for me, the Chirruping Wedgebill and White-winged Trillers. Raptors were conspicuous with Black Kites, Nankeen Kestrels and a Little Eagle being harassed by a Grey Butcherbird. As we meandered along one of the tracks, we came across a well camouflaged Sand Goanna warming itself in the morning sun. After morning tea in the Gardens café, a number of us visited the nearby Flinders Look-out, with stunning views of the red cliffs adjacent to upper Spencer Gulf, where we saw a family of Southern White-face and on the waters of the gulf was a small flock of Grey Teal. We then returned to the caravan park for lunch and prepared for the afternoon’s outing to Yorkey’s Crossing. Our bird count at the Gardens totalled 44 bird species, which despite the dry and windy conditions we agreed to be very good and no doubt aided by Peter’s expert guidance around the gardens.

Keith Jones

PT. AUGUSTA CAMPOUT— Saturday 24 October — Yorkey's Crossing.

Our group of 27 left the Shoreline Caravan Park at 1pm for Yorkey's Crossing. The weather was hot and windy, with a maximum of 29 degrees forecast.

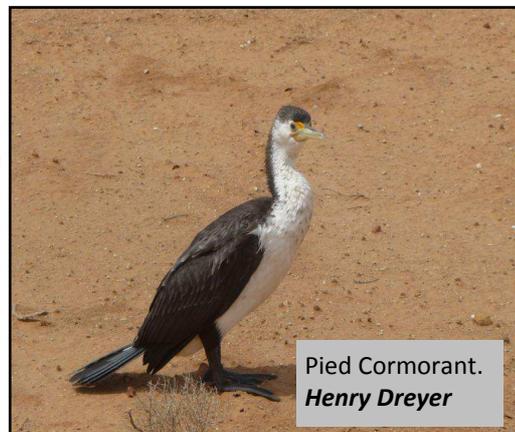
The road to Yorkey's Crossing is unsealed with low shrub land on both sides consisting of mostly bluebush *Maireana* and saltbush *Atriplex*. We proceeded in convoy with stops along the way for birdwatching. Orange Chats were seen above the vegetation but soon disappeared when we stopped the cars. They could have been blown off the bushes by the strong wind! One of the few trees in the area provided some drama as a group of Black-faced Woodswallows fought off two Australian Ravens. Eventually the Orange Chats were seen by all. As we moved along we watched a young Horsfield's Bronze-Cuckoo being fed by two Variegated Fairy-wrens.

At the top of the crossing stood a solitary Pied Cormorant which was not in a hurry to move. Further on we left the cars and moved in among some trees where we not only saw Orange Chats but had a very good view of a Crimson Chat. In one tree we were treated to sightings of a Crested Bellbird and a Chirruping Wedgebill. In the same area a group of five Blue Bonnets were fascinating as they made their way along the ground and we think it was a family group and a Rainbow Bee-eater flew over across the road.

We completed the loop of Yorkey's Crossing with more sightings along the way including a Rufus Fieldwren, a Sacred Kingfisher, White-backed Swallow, Redthroat, Rufous Songlark and Richard's Pipit.

At birdcall the group had seen 35 species.

Thanks to Win and Peter Langdon for leading us. Margaret Dreyer



Pied Cormorant.
Henry Dreyer



Yorkey's Crossing
Salt Bush Country



Blue Bonnet
Photo: Bob Daly

Australian Arid Lands Botanic Garden.

To the uninitiated, Australia's arid land can be seen as barren and lifeless, but in fact the opposite is true. It is home to thousands of highly evolved plant communities that are specially adapted to thrive in an environment where temperatures are extreme and drought can last for decades. Australia's arid zone ecosystems are fragile and complex and found no where else on earth.

The Port Augusta Australian Arid Lands Botanic Garden was established in 1993 to research, conserve and promote a wider appreciation of Australia's arid zone flora.

It is now one of the regions most popular tourist attractions.

With café, gift shop, function room, easy parking and well organised pathways there is something for everyone. The gardens cover an area of 250 hectares and needs time to explore and appreciate.

It is open 7 days a week from 7.30 am till sundown and only 5 mins drive from the centre of town.

The Council does employ some gardeners, but they also have a very active **friends group**.

Peter Langdon is one of the volunteers and we thank him for his knowledge and enthusiasm for the bird life and the plants and for showing us around the Park.

Pt. Augusta Campout—Mambray Creek —Sunday 18 October.

Meeting at 8 am we drove to Bernie Haas's bush block at Mambray Creek where Bernie has lived for the last 15 years. The house has a flourishing native garden with a lot of butterfly-attracting plants. Bernie led both walks, the first to the right of the house, crossing the dry creek bed and circling through the bush back to the house, passing a plot fenced off to protect the critically endangered Spiny Daisy growing there. The creek has a rare Australian Speedwell Orchid.

Bernie supplied us with tea and coffee on his shaded veranda.

At bird count 45 species were recorded for the morning, including a Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike on a nest, Red-capped Robin and Australian Ringneck.

After lunch, a walk to the left of the property, where the creek had some pools of water left. Unfortunately, by this time it was getting very hot and not everyone was able to complete the walk. Despite the trying conditions, 52 species were recorded for the day including White-necked Heron and White-winged Fairy-wren.

Most numerous species of the day were the Flies!

Many thanks to Bernie for hosting us, the local Pt Augusta birdwatchers for helping us on our walks with their local knowledge and our campout organisers.

Jean Boomer

'Birding' on Bernie's Block.



Onkaparinga Gorge -Thursday 29 October.

A small group of mainly "northerners" met at Gate 11 above the Onkaparinga Gorge on a most pleasant morning with enough breeze to keep most of the flies away. There was a very good total of 27 bird species recorded (24 seen, 3 heard). We were met by the "chip, chip" of Striated Pardalotes high up in the trees and soon spotted a group of five that gave us a very good view. Lower in the ground cover Superb Fairy-wrens could be heard and were also soon in the binoculars. The tracks through the park are easy to walk along and had recently been pruned as some parts of the path get quite narrow. As we strolled along we were followed by numerous Grey Fantails.

Whistlers were also heard and eventually spotted. First the Rufous and then Golden came in to good view for most of us. The heavy flight of the Common Bronzewing alerted to its presence and gave us an excellent sighting when one sat up high on an exposed branch. In that position a brilliant yellow iridescence shone in the sunlight of its wing.

Movement high in the sky took our attention to first one and then a pair of Nankeen Kestrels. Other birds that we encountered on that day were: Little Raven, Red Wattlebird, Galah, Magpie, New Holland Honeyeater, Striated Thornbill, Currawong, Grey Shrike-thrush, Spotted Turtle Dove, Eastern Rosella, Adelaide Rosella, Silvereye, Musk Lorikeet, White-throated Treecreeper (H), Sulphur-crested Cockatoo, Kookaburra (H), Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike, Weebill, Tree Martin and Horsfield's Bronze Cuckoo (H).

Dick Doyle



Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike and Common Bronzewing
Photos : Bob Daly



Many thanks for all the articles supplied by members. Keep them coming! Please check the **spelling** of bird names to save time editing. If you want to comment on the Newsletter good or bad send an email to fleuriebirds@gmail.com
It is **YOUR** news that makes it interesting!



*Photos taken in the Arid Lands supplied by:
Peter Gower and Bob Daly*



Glossy Black-Cockatoo Recovery Project on Kangaroo Island.

Birdwatchers on the Fleurieu are asked to be on the lookout for Glossy Black-Cockatoos, which are building up in numbers on K.I. thanks to the management actions of a Recovery Project that has been running since 1995. During the 2015 annual census, the Recovery Program recorded its largest ever flock on the Dudley Peninsula at Penneshaw, consisting of 35 individuals. As the Cockatoos breed over winter, summer is the time we see them making larger movements when they are not tied to a breeding ground. Therefore summer is probably the most likely time of year that the “Glossies” would potentially make the crossing to the mainland in search of feeding grounds. Other bird species are known to make the crossing to and from Kangaroo Island, including Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoos. Prior to the Glossy Black-Cockatoo extinction on the mainland, they were observed crossing Backstairs Passage from the southern Fleurieu coast, and it was previously thought birds from the mainland flew to Kangaroo Island each winter to nest. This is supported by many of the unconfirmed sightings from the late 1990’s and early 2000’s, where all sightings likely to be of Glossies occurred over the non-breeding summer period.



Left photo: Adult female Glossy Black-Cockatoo, with the distinctive red-barred tail and irregular yellow facial plumage. The female yellow facial plumage can be highly variable and we use this to help identify individuals in our population.

Right Photo: A pair of Glossy Black-Cockatoo. Notice the lack of barring on the male tail feathers. Both females and immature birds have a barred red tail.

Photos and article supplied by Karleah Berris



Glossy Black-Cockatoos feed almost exclusively on the seeds of the She-oak trees (*Allocasuarina Verticillata*) The Fleurieu has some good remnant habitat in Deep Creek Conservation Park and several mature revegetation sites between Cape Jervis and Fisheries Beach. The birds leave copious amounts of chewed cone fragments under the trees they have been feeding on, and this is another way to verify they have been in the area.

If you see any Glossy Black-Cockatoos around the Fleurieu or would like more information please contact **Karleah Berris, Project Officer, Natural Resource Management, Kangaroo Island (08) 8553 4444 or email: Karleah.berris@sa.gov.au.**

Mt Magnificent—Sunday 15 November

It was only 11 degrees accompanied by an even chillier wind when seven members met at Enterprise Road. Leader Nick Tebneff assured us that there was plenty of activity at the site when he checked it the previous day. He was not wrong. The Manna and Blue gums were in flower which attracted Red Wattlebirds, New Holland Honeyeaters, Rainbow Lorikeets and Musk Lorikeets by the score. By mid morning the clouds had lifted leaving a beautiful sunny day matched by the magnificent (what pun) scenery. Other birds were hard to find but Nick spotted a pair of Black-faced Cuckoo-shrikes whilst Laughing Kookaburras were heard in the background. A total of 20 birds were recorded.

As the second site on Blackfellows Creek Road was burnt out, Nick led the group down Coles Crossing Road to the northern bank of the Finnis River. Again much activity with a greeting by a Grey Shrike-thrush and several sightings of Yellow-faced and White-naped Honeyeaters. Whilst a count was not taken it was agreed there was enough activity to warrant a future outing. During lunch the group was entertained by a pair of Striated Pardalotes busily building a nest in an adjacent tree. An enjoyable morning with thanks to Nick for filling in as leader.

Peter Owen



Striated Pardalote
Photo: Peter Owen

A WILDLIFE RESCUE CENTRE FOR BIRDS.

The Wildlife Welfare organisation (SA) Inc. (WWO) specialises in the rescue, release and rehabilitation of native birds, aquatic birds and sea birds. WWO is a not for profit organisation and receives no government funding.

WWO provides a free 24/7 community rescue service on the Fleurieu Peninsula. Last year an unprecedented 550 bird rescues were required.

To ensure long term sustainability of this service a new purpose built facility will be built in Goolwa at a cost of approximately \$75,000.

Alexandrina Council has granted WWO a lease on Council land in Goolwa and will also fund some infrastructure costs associated with the land.

This dedicated Bird Rescue Centre will enable:

- Centre of excellence for bird rehabilitation**
- X-ray/operating facilities**
- Bushfire response capabilities**
- Volunteer involvement and community education programmes**

WWO have already raised \$45,000 towards the project through their community shop based in Goolwa. The shop is open seven days a week and is run solely by volunteers.

Other revenue comes from generous donations, fund raising events and the support of local community groups such as the Lions and Rotary Clubs. At a recent quiz night 215 people attended and prizes were donated by local businesses. The night raised an amazing \$7,500.

To build the facility \$30,000 needs to be raised. WWO needs your help to reach this target.

Methods of payment can be made by cheque or direct debit.

Post cheques to: Wildlife Welfare Org. (SA) Inc.

PO Box 940, Goolwa. SA. 5214

Direct Deposit:

BSB: 633 000

A/C No

143993566

Boobook Owl with broken right leg.



Rena Robinson
Rescuing and treating injured Pelican



Fleurieu Birdwatchers support this project as we are passionate about caring for our sick and injured birds. Many of us are not physically able to do the rescues, but can assist financially. If you wish to donate please mention you are a Member of Fleurieu Birdwatchers.

Aussie Back Yard Bird count—19-25 October 20 minute Survey.

What can be done?

I was introduced to this bird recording application last year during October when BirdLife Australia were looking for volunteers to enter bird data via their smart phones for bird week. I was East of Melbourne with family at the time and gave it a try in their back yard, then did more in the local parks for another week. This year I was reminded of the app again with an upgrade. I was staying North of Perth at the time and decided to start using the app on the 5th of October doing surveys about the local parks nearby. Then as I drove back home I kept doing surveys along the route. By the time I arrived home on 21st of October, I had completed 88 twenty minute surveys, recorded 165 different species and counted over 5,500 birds. As the count continued till the end of the month I added a few more sites bringing my tally to 105 surveys and totalled over 200 species and counted over 11,000 birds.

I found the app relative easy to use. It even works when you do not have any phone coverage and loads your data when you get signal again. The only thing you need to watch is your data usage if you use the satellite mapping too often to find your location. Otherwise it is a simple program to use.

I recommend members to give it a try next year during October when BirdLife do it again.

Some birds I recorded on my way home included a site with Black Honeyeater, Pied Honeyeater, Hooded Robin and White-winged Triller together with others. I also saw Square-tailed Kite near Norseman, then Ground Cuckoo-shrike toward the border and North of Nullarbor roadhouse I found Slender-billed Thornbills with Cinnamon Quail-thrush. There were Blue-breasted Fairy-wrens from Western Australia right through to Eyre Peninsula.

Denzel Murfet

General Meeting—Items of Interest:

Win Syson was thanked for organising the successful 2015 Campout.

A letter to the Pt. Augusta Council to be sent highlighting the appreciation of Peter Langdon and Bernie Haas for their contribution to our club for our visit to Pt. Augusta and the Arid Lands Botanical Gardens. The treasurers report was read in Keith Jones absence. An increase in membership this year has provided some extra funds and it was suggested a donation be made to the proposed WWO new building at Goolwa. Keith and his sub-committee have compiled next year's Outing Plan which will be printed in Feb. Newsletter. New name badges distributed and further orders taken.

Michele Foster to arrange food for Xmas Break-up at Strathalbyn.

Twilight outing confirmed with option of BBQ tea to follow.

Karleah Berris from KI wishes to speak at one of our meetings next year on the Glossy-black Cockatoo Recovery Program and asked people to watch out and record any sightings on the mainland as their numbers have built up over the last few years and they may cross the Strait.

Judith Dyer to speak on radio 89.3 with Sally Townsend about birdwatching on 19 November.

Bird education included in training the Green Army team currently working for HI Landcare. Bob and Wendy provided one session recently and are booked for the next team starting in January.

Presentation: by Karen Lawrence and daughter Saskia who run the YACCA Club for kids interested in the environment. This club meets at the Willunga Natural Resource Centre after school on Mondays and has grown so popular that two groups are needed for next year. Saskia has won 2 Youth Environmental Awards for her contribution and with the help of NRM they hope to develop more clubs across the State. Karen said there is very little happening in the State Schools for environmental studies and kids need to have less screen time and more activities outside. Birdwatching is part of it and they would like to see more people like us get involved and interact with the students. Win's presentation was put on hold due to time constraints.

BIRDCALL: Collared Sparrowhawk seen chasing a **hare**. Blue-billed Duck with 4 ducklings Onkaparinga Wetland, 43 Eastern Curlew at Pt. Clinton, and 3 Grey-tailed Tattlers. Rufous Songlark at Macclesfield. 500 Pink-eared Duck past the Barrage at Goolwa along with 1 Freckled Duck, large numbers of Avocets, ST Sandpipers, 4 Marsh Sandpipers. 300 Pelicans feeding near Barrage and 1 Little Tern near the Murray mouth.