



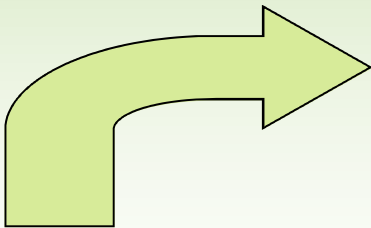
December 2016

Birdwatch

Newsletter of Fleurieu Birdwatchers Inc.

ISSN 2206-4761

Outings



Oscar W trip Cost \$25 ea.

Cash on the day to Bob Daly please.
Saturday, 3 December, 2 hour cruise.
Meet at the Goolwa Wharf 4.15pm.
BYO Drinks and a Salad or Sweet to share.

Reminders

2017 Bird Calendar for sale @ \$17.95 each.

BirdLife Australia's spectacular 'Year of the Parrot' calendar is now available. Spend a month with twelve of Australia's most beautiful parrots and support their conservation work at the same time. Order on BirdLife Aus. website or phone 03 93470757 to place your order.

Please send Campout photos to Verle Wood for website.
verlewood@bigpond.com.au

Tolderol Bird Surveys:
8.00am Tuesday 29 November
8.00am Tuesday 13 December

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

Twilight Outing

4pm Friday 20 January 2017.

Birdwatch at Laratinga, Mt. Barker.

Meet in main picnic area.

Option of a BYO picnic tea if weather suitable.

Male Gang-gang at the Caves. Photo: Teresa Jack



Teresa M Jack

Outing—Hindmarsh River, Victor Harbor, Saturday 8 October.

It was readily apparent that today's walk was going to be different. As we moved initially downriver the erosion marks showed where the torrent had reached. Debris, both natural and manmade littered the area. In parts the area we walked today would have been covered by swift flowing water.

Under the bridge and through the paperbark forest, all was eerie when we arrived at the river mouth. A hunting kestrel flew overhead and two Hooded Plovers walked on the beach ahead. The human weekenders now appeared with young at foot and with loose dogs. So the hoodies flew, not to be seen again. Sad!

Turning to go back upriver we noted a second kestrel. Further observations led us to sight the kestrels high in what must be the tallest pine in the area. Then the sighting of the trip, a nest. Too hard to see activity but hopeful. Moving upriver, the bush birds became plentiful again. It was still wet underfoot. "Let's move higher off the bank" so climb we did - up and up. Bush birds gave way to suburban birds, and still we climbed. The view now was splendid, looking down to the river far below and sighting birds from above.

With no clear knowledge of the path ahead, we retraced our steps to pass the school and cross the river back to the cars. We moved by vehicle to an upstream parking spot where bird call and lunch were taken.

I recall about 45 species in total. Always a rewarding area to walk.

Thanks to Bob for his leadership.

Nick Tebneff



Black-shouldered Kite
Photo: taken on the day by Bob Daly

Campout—Friday 21 Oct. 3pm. Kywong Caravan Park: walk along Glenelg River.



Shining Bronze-Cuckoo. Nelson
Photo: Bob Daly

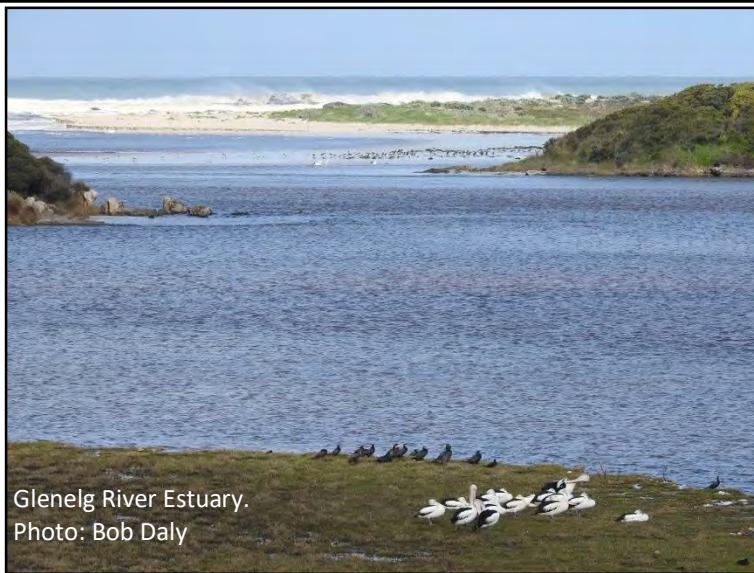
Friday the first day of our Annual Camp and the weather was looking fairly promising. Campers slowly arrived in camp and by 3pm our meet time 38 had arrived. A welcome by Wendy and we set off walking towards the Glenelg River and then upstream on a walking trail. Birds in low numbers and a good variety. I certainly enjoyed watching seven Forest Raven with a lot of interaction as they crossed back and forth in the top of trees. A Horsfield's Bronze-Cuckoo to be heard only as is often the case.

Back to camp for tea and then meeting 7pm at the Community Hall for a welcome and get together. By bed time just a little concerned about some weather on the way. **Teresa Jack.**

A little "Bird" told me some pearls had to be rescued from Penola! Thank goodness she arrived wearing those lost pearls and entertained us all on the boat trip **and** at the evening meetings with her little anecdotes and pressies. What fun! Thanks T.J.

A bit of History from the Australasian Chronicle Friday, 3 April 1840.

We have inspected in the Australian Library the numbers already published of Mr Gould's "Birds of Australia", and we must say that the work is one of uncommon splendour, and cannot fail to find its way into the library of every person of wealth and taste in the colony and in England. As a work of art it is high creditable to its fair artist (Mrs Gould), and we have seen nothing so well calculated to draw the attention of European naturalists to the inexhaustible and hitherto unexplored treasures of this new world. *Hope every FBW person of 'wealth and taste' appreciates the 'uncommon splendour' of Gould's work.* **Verle Wood**



Glenelg River Estuary.
Photo: Bob Daly

Campout – Saturday 22 October. Discovery Bay & Princess Margaret Rose Caves.

Approx. 40 of us at the Campout met at 8.30 am (or 9.00 am Vic time, depending upon the setting of your clock) and proceeded to Discovery Bay by the Estuary Beach at Nelson for the 2.5 km loop walk around Livingston Island. The party split in two groups one observing the waders in the estuary while the other walked around the loop. While the weather was dry, a chilly wind kept us company. The views of the river estuary and salt marsh areas were very scenic. Around this loop one can find a board walk, lookout and bird hide and at one point the township of Nelson can be seen. Some 41 species of birds were identified

including Kangaroos (oops, they are not birds), Pelicans, Shelduck, Grey Teal, Great & Little Egret, Godwit, Sanderling, Red-necked Stint, Oystercatchers, Caspian, Crested and a Fairy Terns on the estuary. Bush birds were harder to find in the strong wind and included the Rufous Bristlebird, Honeyeaters, Wrens and Silvereyes.



Little Egret



Chestnut Teal

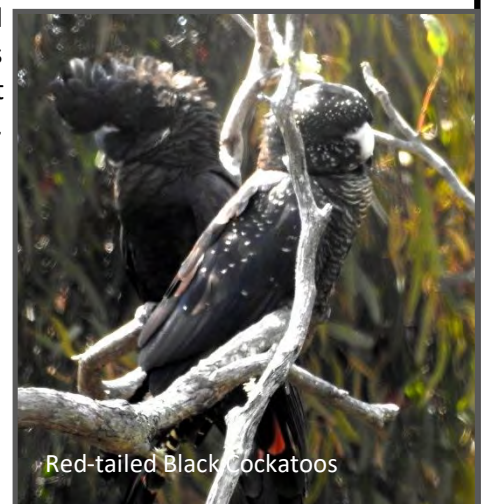
After an early lunch, we met at 1.00 pm and drove to the **Princess Margaret Rose Caves** some 17 km from Nelson, near the SA/Victorian border. There was the option of a 30-minute cave tour, but the timing of this really did not suit us. There were several easy bush walks in the vicinity with views of the Glenelg River. Thirty-five species of birds were recorded with the excitement of a pair of Gang-gang Cockatoos and several Red-tailed Black-Cockatoos seen. Also spotted were the Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoo along with Crimson Rosella, Shining Bronze Cuckoo, Eastern Yellow Robin and a lovely Kookaburra. Keith Jones had his telescope fall off its tripod and roll down a slope with hopefully no damage done! Otherwise the outings were well enjoyed with very pleasant company. Some followed Bob to the Caroline Sinkhole in the hope of seeing a Wombat. It started to rain and no bird count was taken. It poured as we headed for home. Unfortunately the outside BBQ tea was cancelled and after the evening meal we met in the local Hall for an enjoyable evening with the day's bird count, photographs, DVDs and comments from experienced bird watchers.

Peter Barrand and Graham Dixon from the Warrnambool BW group (several of whom had joined us in the Campout) talked about their group and showed pictures of their visit to Lord Howe Island and also bird photos taken from their yearly outings. Teresa Jack showed us photos of Tawny Frogmouths and Peter Owen gave us a pictorial bird quiz (but he did not always know the answers!) *In all a very pleasant evening indeed.*

Colleen Evans.

Keith Jones presented a parcel of 'goodies' to Wendy and Bob as a thank you for all the work put into planning the 2016 Campout.

The contribution of the Nelson Information Centre putting packs of maps together ready to hand out to members was useful. The information from NRM ecologist Steve Clarke at Pick Swamp and the also Mike Risk from Portland at the Gannet Rookery was much appreciated. All have all been thanked.



Red-tailed Black Cockatoos

Campout—Sunday 23 October— Pick Swamp and Port MacDonnell.

A full complement turned out at Pick Swamp at 9 am on a cold overcast day. We were met by Steve Clarke from the Mt Gambier office of the Natural Resources Management Group. Steve gave a detailed briefing on the transformation of land that had been drained and used to graze cattle to a rejuvenated swamp, now home to an abundance of bird-life and other fauna. A few listeners momentarily were side-tracked due to the presence of a nearby Swamp Harrier. Led by Steve, most of the group started walking along the southern flank of the swamp. We soon lost a few due to water over the track. Those with wellies and wet feet soldiered on to a sand dune providing views over the swamp. Given the rest of Australia was awash there was little activity apart from Black Swans, a pair of Australian Shelduck and Musk Ducks. The group then courageously decided to complete the loop of the swamp and had good sightings of Reed Warblers and Golden-headed Cisticolas. Back at the cars the others were keeping a close watch for the Australasian Bittern. This proved fruitless but they were rewarded by more appearances of a Swamp Harrier. The hikers finally arrive back and it was decided to head for Pt MacDonnell for lunch.

Replenished, the group headed to nearby French Point to check out the shorebirds. Their luck was in and soon fingers were pointing in every direction. The close- in Ruddy Turnstones were easy to spot but the low tide meant other birds were further out. A pair of Gulls started a debate as to whether they were Kelp or Pacific. The Bird Count gave it eight and two respectively so everyone had a win. The spotting scope helped ID Grey-tailed Tattlers and several Pacific Golden Plovers, some of which were in breeding colours. There were also many Red-necked Stints and Red-capped Plovers running around.

Whilst this ended the days formal outing several members returned to Piccaninnie Ponds where they were lucky enough to see and photographed an Australasian Bittern. A pair of Brolgas were also seen with two chicks as were several Black Swans with half a dozen Cygnets.

Overall it proved to be a very interesting and varied day of birding with 39 species seen at Pick Swamp and 20 species in Pt MacDonnell.

Peter Owen



Australasian Bittern at Piccaninnie Ponds
Photo: **Teresa Jack**



Rufous Bristlebird
Photo: **Peter Owen**



Brolgas at Piccaninnie Ponds
Photo: **Peter Owen**

Laratinga Bird Fair– Mt. Barker. Sunday 23 October.

Report by John Gitsham—Vice President of Birds SA and Co-organiser of the Event.



John [on the right] and others at the fair.

The Bird Fair ran smoothly and had a really nice vibe about it. Everybody thoroughly enjoyed themselves including the stallholders. Emma from Mt. Barker Council and co-organiser with me estimated about 400-500 people attended the day.



Kids at the Bird Fair with Bob the Tawny Frogmouth.

Highlights were:

Prof. Chris Daniels talk “bird function, structure and biology” followed by Sophie Thompson, ABC Gardening presenter talk about “Creating Wildlife Gardens.” ‘Bob’ the Tawny Frogmouth from *Animals Anonymous* was a great hit with both the adults and kids. **Birds SA ran guided bird walks on the hour around the Laratinga Ponds and they were popular with the crowd. It was a very family friendly event.**



“Flourishing on the Fleurieu”
Signal Point Gallery.
Wednesday 19 October.
FBW stand.
Thanks to Neil Cheshire,
Bob and Wendy
assisting on the day.

(Photos supplied by Mark Dale.)

A great day thanks to the
Victor Harbor and
Alexandrina Councils.

So much to do in retirement
with so many activities
provided.





Point Danger - Gannet Rookery
 Photo: Bob Daly

Campout—Monday 24 October. A trip to Portland.

Nineteen of us who remained on the Monday agreed to meet 10.30am at the gate to the Gannet Rookery at Point Danger 6 km SW of Portland and meet Mike Risk a volunteer guide who has the key to the Rookery on behalf of the Natural Heritage Trust.

Point Danger is unique by being the only mainland breeding site for the Australasian Gannet and just offshore is Lawrence Rocks which hosts the largest Gannet colony in Victoria. Gannets breed once a year and always return to the place they were born raising one chick with the same partner for life. Mike made the comment that the weather was "not normally like this," with clear blue skies, no wind and a mild temperature. Once through the gate we approached the electric fence, put across the point to reduce the risk of predators and it gave us perfect viewing of the hundreds of Gannets nesting there. **What a glorious sight.** Mike commented it had even brought some overseas visitors to tears. We had been told that there were a couple of Cape Gannets amongst them and it did not take long before the cry went out from Teresa "I think I've found one" - and she had, so for some of us it meant 2 ticks. We stood there for some time observing the mating rituals and taking many photographs before reluctantly leaving. As we were heading to our cars we met Henry and Margaret who had unfortunately got lost in Portland and Mike kindly opened the gate again for them. A lovely gesture as it was his day off. The site is about to be developed for tourists with more information and displays set up to watch the Gannets nesting and breeding on the Point.

A big 'Thank You' to Bob and Wendy for organising a wonderful Campout - enjoyed by us all. **Ann Houghton**



Australasian Gannet
 Photo: Bob Daly



Cape Gannet with stripe under chin mixed with Australasian Gannets.
 Photo: Teresa Jack

Teresa M. Jack

General Meeting Friday 11 November —Items of Interest:

22 people present and 7 apologies received. A few visitors came to hear Peter Maxwell's presentation on restoring Mawson's Hut in Antarctica.

Treasurers Report by Keith Jones. A \$500 donation made recently to GWLAP for maintenance of Tolderol. Just over \$2,000 remain in the bank account with some expenses for food etc. still to come for 2016.

Thank you received from Kate Mason, Tolderol project manager and an invitation to place our logo on the information board at Tolderol alongside Birds SA and CHASA (DUCK HUNTERS) in recognition of our support.

Michelle Fuller thanked us for our participation at the 'Flourishing on the Fleurieu' and said it was a great success. Approx. 600 people attended the day and there were 36 groups exhibiting.

Request for assistance to check for Glossy Black-Cockatoos at Fisheries Beach in January to be followed up with Karleah Berris from Kangaroo Island NRM. We need to check the location first before committing.

The Wyndgate Plan still waiting official approval but Stuart Hicks [NRM] said they are already using the recommendations made for the conservation and re-vegetation of the property on Hindmarsh Island.

Oscar W trip fully booked. Twilight Outing for the 20 January planned at Laratinga.

Campout for 2017 planned for Willow Springs in the Flinders' Ranges but date not set until Birds SA decide when to hold their Bird Fair. The leader Peter Owen has looked into the accommodation available.

Committee has decided to **reduce** outings in Winter to one a month due to low attendances.

Both Steve Clarke and Mike Risk have been thanked for their contribution to the Nelson Campout.

'**Cruise the Coorong**' special boat charter planned for February to view waders. This 4-5 hour trip circumnavigates Hindmarsh Island and goes through the Tauwichee Barrage. Maximum 15 people costs \$90 each with lunch and afternoon tea supplied. To register your interest email FBW or ring Wendy.

BIRD CALL: Tawny-crowned Honeyeater at Goolwa seen by Judith Dyer. First time in 25 years! King Parrot near Willunga (escapee) and a Tawny Frogmouth sitting on a mud nest seen by Ann Houghton. A pair Boobook Owls and two families of Tawnys along bike track between McLaren Vale and Willunga. 4 Hooded Plover nesting around Victor Harbor beaches.

PRESENTATION: Peter Maxwell gave an a fascinating insight into life at Mawson's Hut at Commonwealth Bay in Antarctica and the state it was in before preservation. He was one of a team of 6 people who had to chip away at tons of ice to get to the floor of the hut to retrieve items to be restored. He showed a video made by Marty Possingham who wintered over and filmed the Emperor Penguins at their 'nesting' site. Stunning photos of the Aurora lights and icy landscapes, seals, penguins and sea birds were shown and we could see why so many people want to visit Antarctica. Excellent show. *Many thanks Pete.*

Outing Sunday 13 November — Scott C.P.

Despite the inclement weather five intrepid members turned up to try their luck. And luck was what was needed to spot birds in heavy foliage against a dark and gloomy sky. Fortunately the gums were covered in either red or white flowers providing a banquet for the many Rainbow Lorikeets, Musk Lorikeets and Crimson Rosellas. New Holland Honeyeaters were prolific and strangely this was the only Honeyeater species spotted apart from a lone Crescent Honeyeater. Tree Martins kept a constant watch overhead and Red Wattlebirds accompanied us with their constant chatter. Highlights of the morning included fifteen Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoos and two male Golden Whistlers which entertained us for several minutes. A small total of twenty birds seen and two heard pretty well reflected the adverse conditions. **Peter Owen**

*P.S. The weather was **extremely** windy and raining in the morning and the decision to cancel it was too late for some.*

Monthly Tolderol Bird Survey Dates:

Tuesday 29th November – 8.00am, Tuesday 13th December – 8.00am.

Meet at the display board by the first information bay at Tolderol Game Reserve Wetlands.

If attending please RSVP to Regina Durbridge regina.durbridge@gwlap.org.au / 0427 364 551

Be aware of SNAKES when walking around the ponds.

The wet season has delayed the progress of preparing the basins and when the ground is dry enough they will be scraped and re-filled to provide suitable habitat for the waders. Frog survey 8pm Thursday 24 November.

Nelson Campout photos from members



Discovery Bay Estuary



Caroline Sinkhole



Pt. MacDonnell



The Caves



Steve Clarke ecologist (on the left) at Pick Swamp



Boat cruise



Pick Swamp walk