



JUNE 2011

Birdwatch

Newsletter of Fleurieu Birdwatchers Inc



- **Saturday 18th June. Cox Scrub, Coles Crossing**
Corner of Nangkita Road and Heifer Lane, east of Nangkita
35°21'4"S 138°42'16"E
- **Thursday 30th June. Aldinga CP**
Entrance, Cox Road, Aldinga
35°17'50"S 138°27'30"E
- **Friday 8th July. General Meeting**
Speaker Neil Cheshire on 'Birds of Chile'
- **Sunday 10th July. Nurragi Reserve**
Junction of Goolwa–Strathalbyn Road and Milang Road, Finniss
35°22'25"S 138°48'01"E
- **Wednesday 27th July. Hindmarsh Island**
Ferryman's Reserve, 500 m past the bridge on right
35°30'29" S 138°47'35" E
- **Saturday 20th August. Scott CP**
Main car park on northern boundary off Deep Creek Road
35°24'01" S 138°43'45" E

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

Bendleby Ranges Campout 7-9th October

- Rooms still available for a further 8 people in Shearers Quarters: Ring Judith by 14th June
- Camping Available: Ph. Jane Luckcraft 8658 9064
- Information and Bookings on website: www.bendlebyranges.com
- Walks organised by Peter Gower

\$\$\$ Subs Now Overdue \$\$\$

Only 60% of members have renewed their subscriptions for the current year. We value your membership and look forward to your continuing support. Subscriptions fell due on the 1st April and this will be your last newsletter unless you are a financial member. Please refer to your April newsletter for payment details.

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

Contacts: Pat Uppill—8552 4288; Judith Dyer—8555 2736
fleurieubirds@gmail.com

Website: www.fleurieubirdwatchers.org

Newsletter: Contact fleurieubirds@gmail.com

OUTINGS

Onkaparinga Gorge 30th March 2011

The morning was cool with clear blue skies as our group of 10 commenced our walk from the Sundews car park in Onkaparinga River National Park. Early sightings included a Common Bronzewing, and then noisy Rainbow and Musk Lorikeets set the scene. A Koala watched us from a comfortable branch and the kangaroos were curious. As we moved along the path we spent some time observing Brown and Buff-rumped Thornbills and Striated Pardalote. Many of the trees were flowering which attracted the Red Wattlebirds. Also seen on the outing were Crescent and New Holland Honeyeaters, Superb Fairy-wrens, Grey Fantails, Crimson and Eastern Rosellas. No raptors were about.

From the Lookout, while enjoying the splendid views of the Gorge and the Onkaparinga River, we counted three Pacific Black Ducks on the river. Flying over was a group of three Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoos, probably a pair and one juvenile. Sulphur-crested Cockatoos and Galahs also flew high above.

As we commenced birdcall the clouds were closing in. After lunch and interesting bird talk we made a dash to our cars to escape the light drizzle. It was a good morning's birding, with lots of birds about, however on a count there were 24 species seen. Thanks to Peter Gower for leading the walk.

Margaret Dreyer

Manning Reserve 28th April 2011

I was looking forward to the bird watch at Manning Reserve and when we arrived there we found that the group consisted of 6 keen birdos for the walk. It was a lovely, calm day, maximum of 28°C forecast later. The scrub looked lush after the good rains of the previous few months and some flowering trees promised good bird watching.

There were a good number of Eastern Rosellas and their lovely colours were a treat.

Interesting species to me were: Fan-tailed Cuckoo, Rufous Whistler, Eastern Spinebill, Elegant Parrot and Striated Pardalote. The clear day made some good opportunities for the keen photographer. At the birdcall we had a total of 20 species.

After the walk, our leader Geoff Evans, suggested we have our lunch at Gemtree Wetlands close by at McLaren Flat. Here they have built an ecotrail and we had our lunch and birdcall at marker 6, the bird and wildlife habitat point. This point also has an information board with lovely bird photos and information, all supplied by Peter Gower.

Henry Dreyer



Photos by Peter Gower

Mount Billy CP Sunday 15TH May 2011

Nine of us met at the Hindmarsh Valley Tennis Courts and then proceeded to Mt. Billy. Mild day, overcast, clear air and no wind, very nearly perfect.

Denzel was our tour leader and with eight enthusiastic birdos in tow, we eagerly set off to seek out the local birds, share our knowledge and enjoy the atmosphere.

We did all of the above and were absolutely delighted at the number and variety of birds that came our way.

Some of the highlights for me were:

Fan-tailed Cuckoo, my very first sighting; exquisitely beautiful.

Spotted Pardalotes, Striated Pardalotes, Crescent Honeyeaters, Yellow-faced Honeyeaters, White-naped Honeyeaters, Golden Whistlers, Eastern Spinebills, White-throated Tree-creeper, Common Bronzewing, Mistletoebird, White-browed Scrubwren, Grey Fantails, Varied Sittellas.

As one of the newer members said to me how fortunate we are to live on the beautiful Fleurieu Peninsula.

Well over 30 varieties sighted.

We then enjoyed our lunch alongside the Hindmarsh Reservoir with binocs at the ready!

Elaine O'Shaughnessy



Fan-tailed Cuckoo Photo Gerald Uppill

Mt Magnificent CP Wednesday 25th May 2011

Five intrepid birdwatchers braved the elements to experience the beauty of Mt Magnificent CP on a cold and damp morning. We started the morning, on the high ground off of Mt Magnificent Road, following the Hey-sen Trail until it dropped steeply away.

From here we wandered along an extending ridge where we enjoyed the view across the valley to the west. On this ridge we stopped frequently exploring the plants, lichen and rocks as we had members well versed in each of these.

The bird life was very quiet: apart from the carolling of a group of magpies, the call of a few Galahs and the clink of two Currawong early we had to wait until almost the end of this part of the walk to see many species but back near the car park we were treated to a hot-spot. Grey Shrike-thrush, Yellow and Striated Thornbill and White-throated Tree-creeper were all observed for some time.

By the time we moved to the lower area of the CP off of Blackfellow Creek Road the weather had closed in and we decided to abandon the walk but before we could get back to the cars a beautifully coloured male Scarlet Robin and a Grey Fantail entertained us while tripping along the fence.

By the time we had done a bird call the weather had brightened again and the New Holland and Crescent Honeyeaters and a group of female Superb Fairy-wren were added to the list.

Nick continued on alone, until the weather closed in again, adding another 3 more species plus increased the count on those already recorded.

Just 20 species recorded but a very enjoyable walk if you don't mind the damp. I love walking in the rain.

Judith Dyer



Mt. Magnificent
Photo Jenny Fontanot



Male Scarlet Robin Photo FBW Archives

MEETINGS

General Meeting 13th May

- Craig Ostigh (Alexandrina Council) is keen for bird records to begin at the Goolwa Effluent Ponds as changes of conditions may be reflected by the numbers and species of birds. A hide has been built close to the ponds but needs a camouflage of plants. The name may be changed to Kessell Rd Wetlands.
- Pat Ashfield spoke on the life and works of John Gould. She was thanked by Denzel for a most interesting presentation.

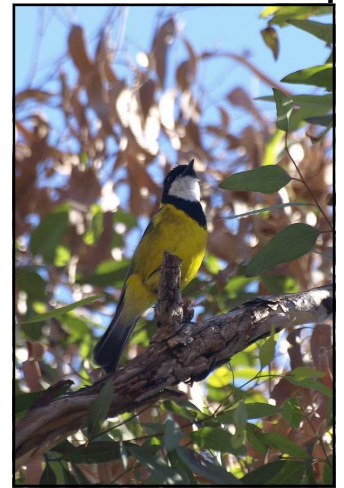
BIRDCALL:

Beautiful Firetails, Chestnut-rumped Heathwrens, Elegant Parrots, Fork-tailed Swifts, Flame Robin, Brush Bronzewing and Peaceful Doves. *From Elizabeth Steele-Collins*

White-bellied Sea Eagles, Spotless Crake and Peaceful Dove at Victor Harbor, many Stubble Quail, 13 Hooded Plover, Spotted Harriers and Brown Quail on Yorke Peninsula, 200 Cape Barren Geese and 20 Banded Lapwing on Hindmarsh Island. Kookaburras at VH and 4 Hooded Plover at Inman Estuary, 6 Black-chinned Honeyeaters at Inman River, Gull-billed Tern of the Asian sub-species at the Murray Mouth. Red-capped Plover on Goolwa Beach.



Mistletoe Bird and Golden Whistler
Photos by Teresa Jack



OBP SURVEY

The first two Orange Bellied Parrots (OBPs) seen on the mainland for the 2011 season were reported recently, seen at Pick Swamp in the Lower South East !

ORANGE BELLIED PARROT WINTER COUNTS

The OBP counts for this year are being held on :

- July 23rd and 24th
- Sep 10th and 11th

If you would like to put your hand up to help in the count let **Bob Green** know and he can allocate you a site, or you might have a site you normally cover that you would like to continue doing.

As always, if you have any reports of Neophemas from anywhere during the winter please contact Bob at the details below;

Bob Green, Regional OBP Coordinator, South East, Coorong and Murray Lakes regions
shriketit@bigpond.com Ph. 08 87250549 Mob. 0407649909

Bush Curiosity!
Photo by Gerald Uppill
Mt. Billy Outing



Tolderol Game Reserve

Until recently the Tolderol Game Reserve which is south east of Langhorne Creek has been very dry, but with the influx of fresh water to Lake Alexandrina its appearance has dramatically changed.

It was once an attractive area for a large number of birds, with large channels crossing its area and swampy areas between. A couple of visits in January and February revealed water again in the main channels and a large growth of reeds with everything green. Not usual at this time of the year even after a good season. In February, 24 species were seen. Another more recent visit on 25th April produced a list of 36 species. Several of the areas between the channels now had water in them making them very attractive for Ibis, Egrets and Herons and even a Common Greenshank. There were also Nankeen Kestrel, Black-shouldered Kite, Swamp Harrier and Brown Falcon patrolling the skies. A sign that there is an increasing amount of food available.

Most observations were made from my car. It's worth the drive, but some time is needed to just sit and watch and listen.

Peter Gower

All photos below by Peter Gower from Tolderol



YELLOW-TAILED BLACK-COCKATOO

The Biodiversity Conservation Unit (BCU) is organising the first census, surveying the Mount Lofty Ranges to determine the number of YTBCs and are relying on volunteers to record sightings on the weekend of May 28th and 29th. These birds are currently listed as vulnerable in SA.

General observation of YTBCs may give a false impression of their numbers as they range large distances in the search of food in scattered flocks and can easily be recorded in the morning and in the afternoon seen again as they are known to travel up to 60 km in a day.

It is presumed there is a low population due to lack of large nesting hollows suitable for breeding and also the lack of food available in the nesting area. Their breeding season is in Spring and Summer and during Autumn and Winter they are out foraging in quite large flocks.

One to two thousand YTBCs are expected to be in the Mount Lofty Ranges region and the survey hopes to clarify to numbers present and give the Rangers a bench-mark to monitor populations in the future.

Unfortunately, the Fleurieu Birdwatchers received this information too late to assist in the count this time, but if you have any information that may be useful please notify :

Charlie Benson

Biodiversity Project Assistant, Adelaide Region M: 0409 288 421

Or email: DEHThreatenedWildlife@sa.gov.au

**Q: What's all black and making a comeback in New Zealand
(Not the All Blacks !!!)**

A: The Black Stilts.

The Black Stilts or Kaki as Maori call them are an endemic wading bird unique to New Zealand. Similar in size to our Black Winged Stilts they were common around the wetlands and river beds until European settlement changed the environment and introduced foreign plants and animals including predators such as feral cats, stoats, ferrets and hedgehogs.

The NZ Dept of Conservation has been running an intensive captive breeding programme on the outskirts of Twizel in the South Island after realising only 23 birds were left in the wild by 1981. They hold a number of captive birds in large aviaries that imitate the natural environment and collect eggs from clutches in the enclosure and from the wild where they incubate them and rear young chicks until they can be released back in the wild. While these efforts have saved the bird from extinction and increased their numbers considerably, managing them in the wild will remain an ongoing challenge to effectively reduce the predation threats.



To see this programme in action and this delightful black stilt you can book a guided tour through the Twizel Information Centre. Email: info@twizel.com
Wendy Phillips

Black Stilt (NZ) Photo Bob Daly

URGENT REQUESTS

Volunteers required: We need five general members, each to give a ten minute presentation on a bird topic of their choice for the General Meeting on the 9th September. (Ideas: Good bird holiday locations, Equipment; binoculars, cameras, scopes etc., bird photography)



Leaders are required for outings run during the week or more will have to be cancelled.
Please contact Pat Uppill 8552 4288 if you can assist.

Photo: Verle Wood