

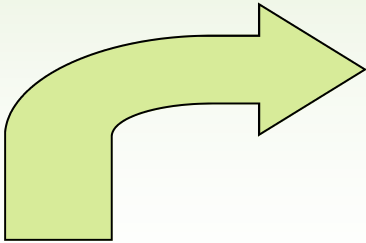


Birdwatch

Newsletter of Fleurieu Birdwatchers Inc.

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Events



Friday 9 June, 7.30 pm General Meeting, Willunga Environment Centre, 18 High Street Willunga.
Guest Speakers: Leanne Lawrence and Julie Turner—Trees for Life program in the local Fleurieu area.

Saturday 10 June, Cox's Scrub, Ashbourne.
Car Park entrance off the Ashbourne Rd.
35°20'23"S, 138°44'34"E

Sunday 16 July, Nurragi Reserve, Milang.
Cnr Finniss and Goolwa/Strathalbyn Rd.
35°22'24"S, 138°49'02"E

Saturday 12 August, Hardy's Scrub, Blewitt Springs.
Gate 16 Chapel Hill Rd Blewitt Springs
35°9'53"S, 138°35'26"E

Reminders

October Campout details
See page 4 for bookings.

Please Note: there is only ONE outing per month over winter. this year.

Tolderol Bird Monitoring Day with NRM Wed. 7 June at 8am.
Meet at the notice board. Reply to Regina on 0427 364 551 or email regina.durbridge@gwlap.org.au

Send your photos and articles for publication to
fleurieubirds@gmail.com



Photo: Bob Daly

Meetings: Anglican Church Hall, corner Crocker and Cadell Streets, Goolwa.
7.30 pm 2nd Friday of March (AGM), Other meetings to be advised via Newsletter/Emails.

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

Outing – Onkaparinga Estuary, Noarlunga – Thursday 6 April.

Seven members met at the Market Square in Old Noarlunga on a beautiful autumn morning. No sooner had we started our walk around the park when we were given a perfectly clear sighting of a Nankeen Night Heron taking advantage of the early morning sun. It got even better when a raptor was sighted atop a nearby Eucalypt. After some discussion it was identified as a juvenile Peregrine Falcon.

A walk along the river resulted in several species highlighted by a pair of Red-rumped Parrots, a Nankeen Kestrel at its nest in the cliff-face and a Eucalypt absolutely full of Rainbow Lorikeets.

What a racket! A pair of Eastern Rosellas were also spotted in the Cliff-face putting on a good impression of having a nest there.

We then moved down to Perry's Bend and did the river loop walk. There was little activity here as there was no water in the wetlands. Our leader, Edith St. George suggested that October would be a better time for this location. However the walk did produce our third raptor of the day when a Black-shouldered Kite did a flyby and four Brown Quail were spotted by Dick Doyle.

We were sitting down doing the bird call when a bird was spotted on the opposite bank. It turned out to be a Common Sandpiper which brought our tally to a very creditable forty seven species for the morning.

Thanks to Edith for leading the outing.

Peter Owen



Nankeen Night Heron.
Photo: Peter Owen

Wader Study Survey –Coorong SA by Dan Weller from Birdlife Australia.

A total of 217,484 birds were counted during this survey. This included 103,903 Grey Teal, the most abundant species by far, followed by Chestnut Teal (20,677) and then in third place, Red-necked Stint (19,056) – a figure which equates **to just over 4% of the flyway population** of this species (based on the recent flyway population estimates revision Hansen et al. 2017). Sharp-tailed Sandpiper was also relatively abundant when compared with previous years (4440), which equates **to just over 5% of the flyway population** for this species. Curlew Sandpipers (2443) were present in numbers exceeding **2.7% of their flyway population**. Sanderling (410) were present in numbers **exceeding 1% of their flyway population**. A total of 12 migratory shorebird species were recorded during this survey. A very impressive roost of the **smaller migratory waders was found here late on the last survey morning, with their numbers exceeding 12,000 birds**. A total of 27,304 migratory waders were recorded during this survey. Also of interest was the number of Fairy Terns, 763 birds were recorded. Also 19 Blue-billed Duck found in the south lagoon.

NEW 'Australian Bird Guide' for sale from CSIRO (see Birdlife Magazine, March 2017) Cost \$50. This new updated Bird Guide has been 10 years in the making and has 3 authors and 3 bird artists. It covers all Australian endemic, non-endemic and vagrant species. You can purchase it on line at www.publish.csiro.au/book/6520 and use the promo code 2017-035.

\$9 will be donated back to fund bird monitoring programs for Birdlife Australia for every book sold.
Also available in book stores and from Andrew Isles.



Red-capped Robin

Outing—Clayton Bay Saturday 22 April.

Travelling to Clayton in pure autumn sunshine, we crossed the flooding Tookayerta Creek. Seven of us met by the Sails Cafe and walked the waterfront shallows facing Hindmarsh Island. Here we saw approx. 150 Tree Martins patrolling the skies and 35 Purple Swamphens around the reeds. 30 Little Corellas flew by, while 35 Crested Terns rested after breakfast. Around the water there were Pelicans, Swans, Grebes, Pied and Little Black Cormorants along with Grey Teal, Pacific Black Duck and White-faced Heron and one Whistling Kite glided by.

Crossing to the other side of the residential bay, we had the sighting of the day: 2 Nankeen Night Herons resting in a copse of pines. Scarce land birds included: Silvereyes, Singing Honeyeaters, New Hollands, Red Wattlebird, Masked Lapwing, Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike and Australian White Ibis, also Magpie-lark, Magpie, Little Raven, Blackbird and a House Sparrow. Thanks to Keith who led the outing well.

Geoffrey Evans



Black-faced Cuckoo Shrike

Outing —Aldinga Scrub Sunday 14 May.



Eastern Spinebill

A glorious Autumn morning and arriving early two of us looked up to our first sighting. A busy Eastern Spinebill was a good start.

12 members arrived, but it was difficult looking into the trees with the bright sun as we headed north. A raptor was noticed but unidentified after some discussion. We saw our usual regular species in small numbers and then noticed a flock of 20 Black-faced Cuckoo-Shrikes fly over. Mistletoe Birds, Crested Pigeons, 2 Fantail Cuckoos, 2 Golden Whistlers, Dusky Wood Swallows were all seen. Walking on further we found Rainbow Lorikeets, Eastern Rosellas and a flock of 8 Elegant Parrots.

A White-throated Treecreeper, along with Singing, New

Holland, 20 White-plumed and one Crescent made up the Honeyeater group. Six Eastern Spinebills over all were seen.

A lone Hooded Robin and with a great amount of discussion and excitement at our bird count, a Red-capped Robin was sighted by several members and fortunately photographed by Peter. We are all waiting for a positive verification. (photo not supplied)

Most of our sightings were in the first half of the walk and only a few Grey Fantails showed themselves on our way back to the cars. At our bird call we listed 33 species and we heard two Kookaburras.

Thank you Peter for leading.

Russell Creed.

Volunteers wanted to assist researchers with the Southern Emu-wren Project.

This is a great opportunity to visit the Fleurieu Swamps and do bird surveys using transect lines and listening for the Wren calls. Plant surveys also required.

Volunteers need to be able to walk in damp and thick vegetation and wear protective clothing.

Survey dates are between April to June. Training will be provided. For further information please contact Jasmin Packer via email j.packer@adelaide.edu.au

OH, WHAT A MOMENT! March-April.

My best bird sighting was a few weekends ago when we had four Black-chinned Honeyeaters at the bird bowl out the front of my house at Victor Harbor, together with a Crested Shrike-tit, three White-plumed Honeyeaters and a few New Hollands. I have seen Black-chinned Honeyeaters a lot lately, in fact nine days in a row. I haven't seen all four together again but they have been in threes, twos and a number of singles. *Verle Wood*

October Campout Accommodation Update: Book in NOW for October 20-23.

The Homestead and 20 beds in the Shearers Quarters and some campsites are still available. Linen can be supplied if required. For accommodation in the Homestead or Shearers Quarters ring the booking agency on 1800 777 880. For camping ring the Station on 08 8648 0016. For information go to:

skytrekwillowsprings.com.au

Don't leave it too late to book. Contact Peter Owen 0417 812 931 or email: poa45@bigpond.com if you are attending to make it easier for him to plan the days outings.

Good News for Hindmarsh Island: Lawari Conservation Park Declared.

March 2017 Mr. Ian Hunter, S.A. Minister for the Environment announced a new Conservation Park called Lawari which is the Ngarrindjeri word for Cape Barren Goose. The property previously known as Wyndgate covers almost one third of Hindmarsh Island. The land contains a diverse array of habitats that support threatened species of water birds and fish. It is also listed as part of the Coorong Ramsar Wetland to protect the migratory waders.

The proclaimed Park demonstrates the Government's commitment to conserve and manage biodiversity in our state. This process has been years in the making and Wendy Phillips represented the FBWs in the preparation of a master plan during 2015 with other members from Hindmarsh Island Landcare, Colin Grundy, farmer from Mundoo Island and government officials.

The property will continue to be re-vegetated with local native species and in time, some sections will be developed for public use. This will be for eco-tourism and will include birdwatching, walking trails and interpretive signage. Some of the property will continue to be grazed by stock to assist in management of the grasslands to benefit the Cape Barren Geese. There will be some areas that will be for conservation only.

Birds SA recently did a survey of the new Conservation Park in April and tallied over 50 species. That day travelling along Denver Rd we sighted a group of nearly 50 Shelduck in a shallow lagoon with about 40 Cape Barren Geese nearby. Another highlight was seeing Cattle Egret amongst the Colin Grundy's Angus bulls.

Wendy Phillips



Shelduck
Photo: Bob Daly

Swift Parrot Survival. Birdlife Aus. Magazine [March 2017]

The Swift Parrot was listed as Critically Endangered in 2015 due to logging in the Tasmanian Forest and predation by sugar gliders on nestlings and is now found to be making some recovery. Thanks to work done by Australian National University Research Study Group. An emergency Crowd Funding Campaign was set up to purchase and install nesting boxes on North Bruny Island and these proved successful with more nestlings produced in one season than the previous six years combined. The birds will be counted again when they migrate to the mainland where they Winter over and feed on the nectar of the Box-Ironbark Forest mainly in Victoria. *Great to see nesting boxes can make a difference and hopefully in time re-veg sites will catch up.*

Photo: Peter Maxwell



Bird Rescue Centre News:

The Wildlife Rescue Centre building in Goolwa is now completed. Furniture and equipment has been moved in and we have already received two magpies into care as our first “patients”. The training of new volunteers has begun. Work still goes on to establish the grounds of the WRC.

WWO would like to thank Hindmarsh Island Landcare for the donation of 200 plants.

A planting day was recently organised

by Wendy and Bob and with the help of Lynn and Peter Maxwell.

The new seabird aviaries are under construction and the waterbird and orphaned duckling aviaries have been completed. Fortunately, wildlife rescues at this time of year are relatively quiet so it will enable us to put all the administrative procedures in place.

If you are interested in volunteering at the centre please call 0434 114 628 Rena Robinson, CEO/WWO.

National Beach Nesting Bird Conference held at Willunga, May 26 – 27, 2017.

More than 100 interstate and local shore-birding volunteers and researchers participated in the 6th National Beach Nesting Bird conference. Interstate participants came from Victoria, Western Australia and New South Wales. The conference was hosted by Birdlife Australia, Adelaide and Mt Lofty NRM and Birds SA. The aim of the conference was to share knowledge and conservation effort for Beach Nesting birds (Hooded Plovers, Oystercatchers and Red-capped Plovers) and coastal habitats of Southern Australia. The conference was an important opportunity to discuss latest research findings for bird conservation.

Workshops on dogs on beaches, predator control, volunteer and land managers networks, volunteer participation, communication with beach users, awareness raising and bird photography were held. Some outstanding talks were given, including the need for long-term detailed monitoring of bird populations. Often, regular bird counts don't give enough information on the status of bird numbers, and additional information on their annual breeding success and movements would assist greatly in an improved assessment of their status. Another talk provided excellent evidence that accurate research information on the timing of movements of migrating wading birds (Ruddy Turnstones) in the south-east of SA has been fundamental in improving the management of commercial beach wrack (washed up seagrasses) harvesting.

Although the two days were spent mainly “conferencing”, we also got out to see the local birding habitats late on Saturday afternoon and on Sunday morning (despite the weather). These field trips were not only a good opportunity to “show off” the birds of our Fleurieu area but also to network with fellow shore-birding enthusiasts from southern Australia. The areas that we visited included the Aldinga Scrub, Manning Reserve, Onkaparinga Estuary, Carrickalinga Beach, Victor Harbor, Hindmarsh Island and the Samphire coast to the north of Adelaide.

It was great to see a number of Fleurieu Birdwatcher members attending and participating in the conference, and special thanks go to David and Sue Thorn and Wendy White for assisting with the efficient running of the conference.

Keith Jones



Hooded Plover

Council Celebrates World Environment Day with a morning tea, to be held on Monday, 5 June 2017 at 10am to 11.30 in the Goolwa Council chambers.

Please RSVP by Wed 31 May 2017 to nadine.ruffing@alexandrina.sa.gov.au.

Council Plans to:

Say thanks and celebrate joint achievements • Open nominations for Council's Environmental Advisory Panel • Launch their Community Biodiversity App • Get feedback on implementation of their Environmental Action Plan.

Outing Wednesday 24 June—Ferries-McDonald and Monarto C.P.

Eleven members met at Monarto Conservation Park on Wednesday 24 May and the group was led by Peter Gower.

The weather conditions were fine, clear and calm and as we started walking the bird activity was fairly quiet until we saw a Tawny-crowned Honeyeater sitting on the top of a native pine. Fortunately it remained there long enough for everyone to have a really good view.

Further on a Spotted Pardalote skipped along some low branches showing us its bright yellow colour and black and white spots.

Another highlight was a pair of Mallee Ringneck parrots that sat for some time in a distant tree and when they flew towards us we could really appreciate their lovely colouring.

Twenty-seven species were recorded here and some of the less common birds seen by some of the group were the Shy Heathwren, Elegant Parrot and the Brown Songlark.

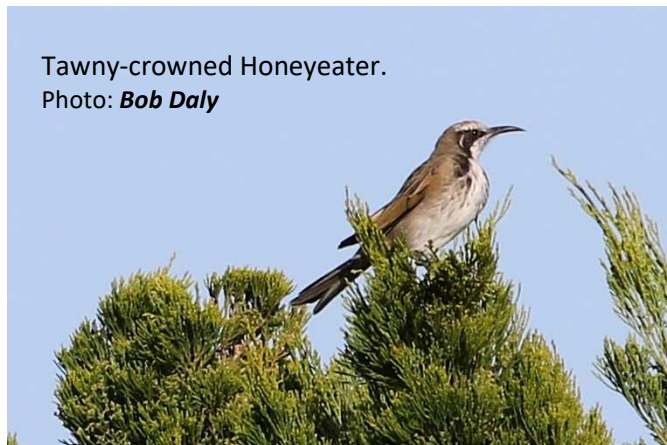
After a morning tea break we went to Ferries-McDonald Conservation Park where Peter expected a lower bird count, particularly as there was very little blossom flowering.

Peter told us about the Painted Button-Quail that had been found along the roadside in the past and he explained that the quail leaves a tell-tale plate-like hollow when scratching in the leaf litter. We did not find any evidence of the bird being there but it was interesting to hear about bird a behaviour that most of us would not have known.

A quick survey of the Park edge suggested there were very few birds to be seen so we stopped for lunch and listened for them.

While we were chatting we heard six species, the last being White-winged Choughs in the distance with their characteristic 'wail'.

Chris Thompson.



Tawny-crowned Honeyeater.
Photo: **Bob Daly**



Mallee Ringneck .
Photo: **Peter Gower**



OBP Surveys for 2017 from Bob Green.

The winter count dates are: **May 20/21, July 22/23, Sep 9/10.**

I'm putting a plan together for all three surveys so if you would like to be involved in any or all of the surveys please let me know the area that you would like and I can help with an exact location. Don't feel put off if you feel you don't have enough experience to identify the parrots, if that's the case I can try teaming you up with someone more experienced to help you out.

Bob Green Orange-bellied Parrot Regional Coordinator. Avian Monitoring Services

shriketit@bigpond.com

Ph. 08 8725 0549 or mob. 0407 649 909

FBW Future?

Committee Meeting held Tuesday 2 May to discuss options.

The President, Secretary and Treasurer wish to hand over their positions to other members of the club and we need to train people this year to enable it to happen. We feel we have contributed to the best of our ability and it is time for a change and fresh ideas. Our attempts to find replacements so far have not been successful. Also we have tried for the last few years to relieve Verle who manages the website and it is disappointing to admit that NO one has volunteered to assist.

*The Committee felt we need to give members **one last chance** to contact us and if we don't get a response in the next few weeks we will start the process of winding down FBW in its present form. If this is the case we will follow the procedure according to our constitution. Funds left over will be donated to Birds SA and Birdlife Australia for Bird Conservation. **The current outing program for 2017 will be completed, finishing with the Christmas Breakup.***

Birds SA President, John Gitsham has offered us a solution:

Members of FBW Inc. could become a Fleurieu Branch of Birds SA.

Only a Contact Coordinator would be required [not a committee].

Membership Fees will be paid directly to Birds SA only.

Public Liability Insurance would be covered by them.

A 'Fleurieu Birdwatchers' outing program could continue and be advertised and reported in 'Birds SA' newsletters.

We could have a website linked to Birds SA Website.

Fleurieu Birdwatchers would therefore function in a similar way to the Port Augusta group.

The Committee considered this and 3 other options:

1. Close down totally.
2. Join Uni 3A and run a small program of Bird Education with a few outings included.
3. Run an informal group with outings only but with NO membership fees and NO Insurance cover.

The Committee members were asked individually their preferred option and all agreed to joining Birds SA.

*However, we would need someone to be the co-ordinator, organise the Outings and send in reports for their Newsletter. Members would need to vote and show their support to join Birds SA for this option to be successful. We propose to do this at our **November** General Meeting.*

If you wish to discuss this issue personally or have any other ideas on the matter then please contact us by sending an email to FBW or phone Wendy or Bob on 8555 0634.

Sadly the only reason we have come to this conclusion is because we have not had enough support from members to keep the club viable.

Wendy Phillips

Tolderol Game Reserve Wetlands Update – May 2017 by Regina Durbridge.

The 2016-17 watering season at Tolderol Game Reserve Wetlands is almost over and despite the delays with preparatory works of the bays due to the very wet spring it was another fantastic season at the reserve. A credit to Peter Koch and Chris Eckert for all the track clearing, bay preparation, operation of the pumps and maintenance around the reserve, also a big thank you is extended to Peter and Colin Rogers for all the fantastic photos they have sent in from this season and the many hours spent observing and documenting our avian visitors.

The Tolderol Open Day hosted by Natural Resources SA Murray-Darling Basin and the Goolwa to Wellington Local Action Planning Association held in February to coincide with World Wetlands Day was well attended with over 50 people coming along to celebrate with representatives from Birds SA, Clayton Bay Nursery & Environment Group, Conservation & Hunting Alliance of South Australia, Fleurieu Birdwatchers and the Lake Alexandrina Wildfowlers Club attending.



We are pleased to report that new Bays 17 & 4 are now holding water, along with Bays 7, 8, 9 and 10. We do advise to use caution around Bay 17 as the low track adjacent to the new plantings becomes inundated when the bay is full – the fence around the plantings will be moved in the near future which will allow for the high ground to be traversed.

A few late stragglers have recently been sighted at the reserve; including Wood Sandpiper, Long-toed Stints in breeding plumage, Banded plovers with a few Sharp-tailed sandpipers and Red-necked stints around also.

This season a few of the more cryptic species have been sighted including the Buff-banded and Lewin's rails, with the Australasian Bittern/s making the occasional appearance, it was pleasing to hear the Australasian Bitterns booming at the reserve in spring 2016. Also observed in early 2017 was the Little Bittern, Colin Rogers and Peter Koch spent many hours observing and documenting the behaviour of a pair of Little Bitterns which were thought to possibly be breeding – as they were making short flights back and forth, a paper is soon to be published regarding their observations.

While the season is almost over and the majority of our migratory waders on their journeys home there are still many bird species to be seen visiting the reserve. *If you would like to come along for monthly bird surveys with Natural Resources SA MDB staff or to register for the Tolderol mailing list, please contact regina.durbridge@gwlap.org.au.* **Our next scheduled monitoring day will be held on Wednesday 7 June 2017, meeting at the Tolderol Noticeboard at 8:00am .**

Photos courtesy of Colin Rogers

