

Birds SA



Newsletter

No 221

May 2012



Birds SA is the operating name of The South Australian Ornithological Association Inc.
c/- South Australian Museum, North Terrace, Adelaide, SA 5000

The Aims of the Association are:

- To promote the conservation of Australian birds and their habitats.
- To encourage interest in, and develop knowledge of the birds of South Australia.
- To record the results of research in regard to all aspects of bird life.
- To maintain a public fund called the "Birds SA Conservation Fund" for the specific purpose of supporting the Association's environmental objects.

A Birdo's Paradise — Plus Observe Glossy Black-Cockatoos feeding!



Enjoy a special holiday at American River, within walking distance of all attractions.

Stay in a well-equipped three-bedroom cottage amid surroundings that are perfect for bird watching. Just bring your own sheets and towels, and clean the cottage before departing.

Birds SA members and friends staying 3 or more nights pay only \$48 per double per night plus \$9 for each additional person.

Please contact Chris or Pam Cooper on 08 70703392, or email cpcoopers@adam.com.au for further information and website links to *Possums Watch*.

A Very Strange Bird!



Wally Klau photographed this very odd New Holland Honeyeater in his yard at Wilmington, early in May. It had been visiting his yard for about a week when he took the photograph.

CONTENTS

President's Report	4
Birds SA Notes & News	5
Past and Future Meetings	8
Past Excursions	9
Future Excursions	10
Bird Records	11
Members' Photographs.....	14

CENTRE INSERT

SAOA HISTORICAL SERIES NUMBER 40,
F. W. ANDREWS

DIARY

Following is a list of Birds SA activities for the next few months. Further details of all these activities are given later in the newsletter.

May 27	Sunday	Excursion to Milang and Nurragi CP

June 9	Saturday	Excursion to Talbot/Rockleigh Reserves
June 21	Thursday	Excursion to Charleston CP
June 29	Friday	General Meeting

July 1	Sunday	Excursion to Muntiri Scrub & Milang
July 14	Saturday	Excursion to Sandy Creek CP
July 19	Thursday	Excursion to Jenkins Scrub
July 27	Friday	General Meeting
July 29	Sunday	Excursion to White's Rd. Wetlands

Aug 11	Saturday	Excursion to Monarto CP
Aug 16	Thursday	Excursion to Hardy's Scrub CP
Aug 31	Friday	General Meeting

Sep 2	Sunday	Excursion to Morgan CP
15 Sept	Saturday	Excursion to Scott CP
20 Sept	Thursday	Excursion to Altona Reserve

Cover photo: Common Bronzewing. Photographed by Helga Kieskamp at Calperum on 8th April 2012.

General meetings are held in the Hawker Centre at the Waite Institute, Waite Road, Urrbrae at 7.45pm. Doors open at 7.00pm.

Committee meetings are held at the above venue on the second Monday of each month, starting at 7.30pm.

Donations to the Birds SA Conservation Fund are tax-deductible

New Members

We welcome 10 new members who have recently joined the Association. Their names are listed on p13.

SAOA COMMITTEE 2012 – 2013

President	Jeremy Robertson	7183 2674
Vice President	John Hatch	8362 2820
Vice President	Greg Kerr	7007 3922
Secretary	Brian Blaylock	8370 3349
Treasurer	Brian Walker	8263 3433
Assistant Secretary		
Journal Editor	Merilyn Browne	8339 6839
Newsletter Editor	Cynthia Pyle	8264 5778
Field Program Coordinator	Trevor Cowie	8263 2531
Bird Record Secretary	Graham Carpenter	8297 5463
Member	Lou Bartley-Clements	0418858037
Member	John Spiers	8333 0272
Member	Merinda Hyland	8337 3616
Member	Lynton Huxley	8278 4313
Member	Robert Rowland	83881790

FURTHER USEFUL CONTACTS

Librarian	Karen Donkin	0402123960
Image Librarian	John Spiers	8333 0272
	email imagerlibrarian@birdssa.asn.au	
Ongoing Atlas	Pat Bowie	8278 6048

RELATED ASSOCIATIONS

Birdlife Australia — SE of SA branch

Convener, Bryan Haywood brytonwood@bigpond.com 8726 8112
Deputy Convener, Bob Green shriketit@bigpond.com 8725 0549

Fleurieu Birdwatchers

Contact Person Judith Dyer 8555 2736
Email dyer.jm@gmail.com

WEBSITE birdssa.asn.au

2012 SAOA SUBSCRIPTIONS

Single membership	\$50
Family/household membership	\$60
Single concession*	\$45
Family/household concession*	\$55

Student members (full-time students under 25 years) \$10

*Pensioners and people experiencing financial hardship can obtain concessions. Apply in writing to the Treasurer, Birds SA.

ABN 76 339 976 789

ADVERTISING IN THE Birds SA NEWSLETTER

SAOA relies on the integrity of advertisers for the quality and nature of their products and services. We cannot guarantee them. Advertising is charged as follows: \$1.00 per line, up to \$20.00 per quarter page and 10c per inserted leaflet (single sheet). The committee reserves the right to lower or waive these fees.

COPY DEADLINE

Copy for the August Newsletter is due by the July General Meeting (July 27). Contributions, 'Word' format preferred, can be made on CD, emailed to either of my email addresses, or typed/handwritten neatly.

- newslettereditor@birdssa.asn.au
- copy62284@bigpond.net.au

Printed by Abbott Printers and Stationer

President's Report, 2011

Achievements for 2011

- We have researched and produced a quail and duck hunting policy.
- We supported the research of Lawrence Berry at ANU on the effect of fire mosaics on bird communities. He gave us a talk on his interesting findings.
- We have joined the University of Queensland led project *Understanding and reversing the rapid declines in Australia's shorebirds*.
- We have made a submission to the Murray-Darling Basin Draft Basin Plan.
- We have lobbied politicians and ambassadors about the problems on the migratory shorebird flyway through S.E. Asia.
- We have reviewed the Constitution of the Association and will be presenting it to the membership very soon.
- We are working towards an effective relationship with Birdlife Australia now that they have completed their amalgamation of Birds Australia and BOCA.

Thanks for 2011

Bird Records Vetting sub-Committee

A Black, G Carpenter, L Pedler

Rare Bird sub-Committee

A Black, G Carpenter, L Pedler, J Fennell,
J Hatch, C Rogers

Conservation Fund Management Committee

A Black, D Bright, J Russell

Field Trips

T Cowie, M Price, P Gower, T Jack,
B Alcock

e-Newsletter

R Collier, B Walker

Newsletter

C Pyle, S Winwood, P Paton

Library

K Donkin, J Donkin, T Randle

Auditor

Rod Tetlow

Bird Record Database

S Winwood

Supper

K, L & M Huxley, H Cowie

Newsletter and Journal Distribution

H Monterola, M Priede, B Wheaton,
B & M Snell

Conservation sub-Committee

G Kerr, R Attwood, D Hansman,
K Rowland, J Spiers, N Gammon,
W Brooker

Image Library & Scanning of Journals

J Spiers

Web Site Design & Maintenance

B Blaylock

Subscribers

P Horton

Campouts

D Robertson, T Cowie

JEREMY ROBERTSON

Birds SA Notes & News

PROPOSED CHANGE TO ASSOCIATION'S RULES

As noted at the Annual General Meeting, the Committee is proposing to replace the current rules with a new set (now titled "constitution"). The proposed changes take into account several anomalies and shortfalls of the current rules.

In order to allow members to have sufficient time to review and comment on the proposed Constitution the draft and a set of explanatory notes will be made available and comment received until the end of July. Any changes arising from the consultative process will be advised in the August Newsletter and a motion to adopt the new Constitution will be put to the September General Meeting.

Copies of the proposed Constitution and explanatory notes can be obtained from the members' area of the Birds SA web site, or by phoning Brian Walker on (08) 8263 3433 to have a copy posted.

Brian Walker

AUDITOR WANTED

Some of you may be aware that the regulation of charities and not-for-profit associations is due to change later in the year, with the establishment of the Australian Charities and Not-for-profit Commission. As a result of the new legislative framework, Birds SA's previous auditor (Rod Tetlow) will no longer be eligible to undertake the audit.

The new regime will require an audit review of the Association's financial report by a person who is a member of an accounting body and who also holds a practising certificate.

Would any member who holds the requisite qualifications and would be prepared to act as auditor please contact Brian Walker by email (treasurer@birdssa.asn.au) or phone (08) 8263 3433.

Brian Walker

VALIDATION OF ASSOCIATION RECORDS

It is the responsibility of the Vetting Subcommittee to ensure, where possible, that all reports of unexpected bird sightings be checked for validity or potential error before the Association publishes them in any form. This is not always possible and occasional doubtful or incorrect claims do bypass the system. In addition genuine observations of uncommon birds or birds seen in unexpected places may be regarded as unvalidated (and therefore overlooked) unless supportive evidence is provided at the time.

One such example was drawn to my attention recently concerning birds listed from the October 2011 Campout in Ngarkat Conservation Park (Newsletter 220, November 2011, page 10).

Three species, Yellow-tufted Honeyeater, Diamond Firetail and Chestnut-rumped Heathwren, have not otherwise been reported in or near Ngarkat CP and, in the absence of supportive evidence, they cannot be accepted as valid records. In addition, researchers with extensive knowledge of Ngarkat have questioned the record of the Mallee Emu-wren (now vanishingly rare in SA) since the claimed sighting was made at a locality where the species had not been recorded previously and in atypical habitat.

We strongly recommend that all bird sightings of an unusual or unanticipated nature be corroborated by relevant field notes and/or photos made at the time; and that reports be accompanied by a completed Birdlife Aus URRF or Birds SA Rare Bird Record Report Form (on web-site). Only with such documentation can we make progress with our knowledge of the extent of bird distribution in SA.

Andrew Black, Chair Vetting and Rare Birds Subcommittees

RESEARCH GRANT APPLICATIONS FROM THE CONSERVATION FUND

The aim of Birds SA Conservation Fund is to provide research grants to encourage and promote research into birds and their habitats in South Australia.

You do not need to be a University student or be associated with any research institution to apply for a grant. Birds SA welcomes applications from any interested person for a grant of up to \$3000 towards original research into matters affecting conservation or ecology of birds in South Australia. The research can be either fieldwork or laboratory work, and all research activities should be completed within a 12-month period. At the conclusion of the work a written report of 2,000 words is required, as well as a short presentation to a monthly meeting of Birds SA on the findings of the research.

The funds are primarily to cover field expenses for researchers to pursue their studies. Items of equipment may be funded at the discretion of the Committee.

The following are general guidelines to provide applicants with information on projects that the Birds SA Conservation Fund is likely to support:

1. that increase knowledge and understanding of birds and their habitats.
2. relating to management and conservation of South Australian bird species and their habitats.
3. that investigate factors relating to declining or threatened species of birds.

Further information about these grants is available on the Birds SA website or by contacting Greg Kerr at gregkerr@adam.com.au

Cynthia Pyle

Birds SA Notes & News (cont)

A THIRD BIRD ATLAS OF THE ADELAIDE REGION

In 1974-75 and 1984-5, Birds SA documented the distributions of birds in the Adelaide region. Since 1985, a period of nearly 30 years, there has been no concerted attempt to re-assess the distributions of birds within this region. In that time the distributions of some species are likely to have changed. The Adelaide region covers an area of about 27,000km² and runs from a little north of Pt Wakefield to near Morgan to Cape Jervis to south-east of Meningie. The third bird atlas will commence on 1 July 2012 and run for two years until 30 June 2014. This time, Kangaroo Island will be added to the area surveyed.

Knowledge of the distributions of species and shifts in their distributions over time are important for managing species in the future. Of particular concern are a number of woodland bird species that are regarded as declining, and further reductions in the distribution of those species will highlight the need for greater action if those declines are to be halted. Equally though, some species are likely to be increasing in range and expanding into new areas. Repeating the atlas of birds of the Adelaide region will help to identify the species that are contracting, those that are expanding and those that are maintaining their distributions.

In the previous two sampling periods, members of Birds SA collected the majority of the data. Collecting the data involves ticking off the species that are seen at a location. A data sheet (or card) is provided to make this an easy task to do while in the field. The cards are then submitted and the data processed. Experienced and in-experienced observers can be involved, but for the next two years keen bird watchers are encouraged to go to a wide range of areas and record the birds they see. In the second year (2013-14) we will target areas that are rarely visited, to improve the coverage, and hopefully some Birds SA field trips and campouts will be used to target

poorly surveyed regions. Updates on progress will be provided via Birds SA Newsletter.

To be involved you will need a survey kit.

Survey kits will be available at the June 29 general meeting of Birds SA, but you can also request kits by contacting David Paton via email on david.paton@adelaide.edu.au, giving a suitable postal address.

David Paton

CONSERVATION SUB-COMMITTEE

Members:

Rodney Attwood, William Brooker, Nigel Gammon, David Hansman, Greg Kerr, Krystyna Rowland, John Spiers.

Meetings are held on the first Tuesday of each month

Murray-Darling Basin Plan

Letter to the Hon. Tony Burke MP, Minister for Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities from the President, expressing our concern that the proposed Basin Plan published by the Murray-Darling Authority fails to provide adequate protection to sites important to water birds and in particular to the lower lakes and the Coorong.

Our specific concerns are:

1. The proposed reduction to 2,750 GL/year in the long-term is inadequate to restore the river to a healthy position
2. An unjustified and significant increase in groundwater extraction was inserted into the new proposal
3. Failure to address climate change scenarios
4. Failure to assess the feasibility and cost of overcoming physical constraints to the flow of water.
5. Lack of adequate peer review of the Basin Plan
6. Failure of the proposed plan to meet our obligations under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act (1999)

The core issue is that if insufficient water is available to flow and flush

out excess salts the river will become unusable for irrigation and other human purposes, as well as becoming degraded from an environmental point of view.

16th April was the deadline for making submissions to the Murray-Darling Basin Authority.

Subsequent to closure of submissions the MDBA will produce a final Proposed Basin Plan for consideration by Minister Burke.

Proformas are available on the website for letters to be written to

- Tony Burke. Minister for SEWPac
- Greg Hunt Shadow Minister for Climate Action, Environment and Heritage
- Local federal and state members of parliament
- Leaders of the Labor, Liberal and Green Parties

Birds SA Recreational Hunting Policy

Birds SA opposes the recreational hunting of all birds and would prefer it to be disallowed. However, the organisation recognises that sometimes there may be some conservation benefits associated with well-managed recreational hunting and, while hunting remains legal, will co-operate with others to maximise such benefits.

Reasons why we are opposed to the recreational hunting of all birds:

- The non-fatal wounding of a significant proportion of birds results in pain and suffering to these animals.
- Many members of Birds SA are opposed to recreational hunting.
- Surveys indicate a change in the attitude of the general populace, with support for recreational hunting now confined to a minority. In this context a conservation message becomes difficult to justify.
- There are many unwanted by-products of hunting such as killing of non-target species, damage to wetland habitat, and disturbance to birds.
- Basin-wide decline in wetland extent, diversity and productivity

Birds SA Notes & News (cont)

means the environment is less capable of supporting historical waterfowl population levels. This, together with poorly understood waterfowl population dynamics in Australia, gives concern about the impact of hunting.

Circumstances allowing recreational hunting to have net conservation benefit:

- Implementation of an open process for recreational hunting quotas.
- Effective protection of non-target species, non-game and threatened species.
- Adequate monitoring and modelling of population dynamics to underpin decisions on annual catches.
- Implementation of policies and procedures to minimise suffering of target animals.
- Improved habitat protection.
- Implementation of effective monitoring and reporting programs.
- Effective law enforcement.
- Implementation of a vigorous conservation program to increase the area of biologically productive wetlands in Australia.
- Significantly increase the funding for, and diversity of, research.

The types of activities Birds SA may become involved in:

- Annual counts of waterbirds and any other properly conducted, scientific studies which will further our understanding of the dynamics of waterbird populations, or our understanding of wetland conservation.
- Any activities that increase the area of wetlands under protection, or improve the ability of wetlands to sustain waterbird populations, whether hunting is allowed on such wetlands or not.

Phytophthora Management Guidelines

Dieback of native Australian flora species caused by a variety of species of root-rot fungus, particularly *Phytophthora cinnamomi*, is a major threat to some of Australia's native

plants, animals and ecological communities. It is important for our natural heritage to contain and minimise the spread of Phytophthora. Any movement of soil and/or plant material has the potential to spread Phytophthora to new areas.

Prior to visiting a site each group leader should confirm the risk of movement through Phytophthora infected soils. For field trips on which the risk is considered low, minimal Phytophthora management procedures are required. Equipment for cleaning footwear should be taken on the field trip and footwear cleaned prior to departure.

Prior to leaving a known or likely Phytophthora infected area, visual inspections should confirm that footwear, equipment and vehicles are free of clods of soil, slurry (water and soil mixture) and plant material. Dust and grime need not be removed. The clean down procedure consists of dry brushing and disinfection. If available, use facilities specifically designed for cleaning vehicles or footwear.

When cleaning footwear, small equipment and hand tools: remove all mud and soil with a hard brush or other tool, then disinfect the entire sole of your footwear using a spray bottle with disinfectant (70-100% methylated spirits) or household bleach (one part bleach to four parts water). Allow the sole to dry for approximately one minute.

Footwear can also be disinfected using a footbath containing disinfectant.

Disinfect heavy equipment and vehicles, paying particular attention to wheels, mudflaps, undercarriage and areas that are difficult to access, using a pressurised spray unit containing a disinfectant/fungicide such as: Phytoclean® (add one part of Phytoclean® to 50 parts of water) or alternatively use sodium hypochlorite (pool chlorine). Add one part of pool chlorine to 1500 parts of water.

Disinfectant should be allowed to penetrate for at least one minute, and preferably 10 minutes before the car departs.

Greg Kerr

RARE BIRD COMMITTEE REPORT

A sighting of a suspected light morph Masked Owl near the Head of the Bight Visitor Centre, Nullabor Plains on 10 April was reviewed by the Rare Bird Committee. Two photographs were provided. The photos were carefully considered, and based upon the shape of the facial disk (which was heart shaped) and the plumage patterning on the back the Committee considered that the bird was most likely a Barn Owl. All *Tyto* owl records from this area are worth scrutiny.

John Fennell



Malleefowl on Mound, photographed by Burt May at Brookfield CP in April 2011

Past & Future Meetings

PAST GENERAL MEETINGS

Friday January 27

Merilyn Brown asked John Hatch to introduce the speaker for the evening Michael Huxley. John said that Michael needed no introduction but spoke about all the great videos that Michael had shown previously. Tonight's video was on "Desert birds in a good year".

Michael began by telling members of the three trips with his family covered in the video:

- Marree to Birdsville (January 2011)
- Lyndhurst to Innamincka (April 2011)
- Part of Tanami Track (July 2011).

Michael narrated as the video was shown. Near Marree, where Inland Dotterel and Little Button-quail were photographed, the temperature was over 40°C. About 130km N of Marree where the last good season was in 1990 a comparison shot taken in April 2008 was shown. The following birds were photographed: Black-winged Stilt, Banded Whiteface, Diamond Dove, Nankeen Kestrel, Spotted Harrier, Musk Duck, Freckled Duck, Hardhead, Pink-eared Duck and Flock Pigeon. On the gibber plains were Australian Pratincole, Gibberbird and Banded Lapwing. Along Cooper Creek there was White-winged Triller. On the way back to Marree Michael showed shots taken of Zebra Finch, Brown Songlark, Orange Chat, Australian Pipit and Cinnamon Quailthrush.

In April 2011 on the trip to Innamincka Michael also showed comparison photographs. Birds seen were Yellow-billed Spoonbill, Little Black Cormorant, Royal Spoonbill, Grey Teal, White-necked Heron, Australasian Darter, Budgerigar (which were using Fairy Martin's nests), Cockatiel, Galah, and Letter-winged Kite. There were also lots of House Mice and hopping mice. On the floodplains: Southern Boobook, Australian Owllet-nightjar, Little Crow, Collared Sparrowhawk, Inland Dotterel, Little Buttonquail, Gull-billed Tern, Pink-eared Duck, Fairy Martin, Red-backed Kingfisher, Chirruping Wedgebill, Tawny

Frogmouth, Black Kite, Brown Falcon, Australian Hobby, Black-shouldered Kite and Wedge-tailed Eagle.

Along the Tanami track in July 2011 the following birds were photographed: Black Swan, Black-chinned (Golden-backed) Honeyeater, Grey-headed Honeyeater, Chiming Wedgebill, Rufous-crowned Emuwren, Painted Finch, Zebra Finch, Diamond Dove, Little Corella, Common Bronzewing, Spinifex Pigeon, Budgerigar, Crimson Chat and Banded Whiteface.

Michael also showed a few photographs taken in October 2011 at Gluepot – Weebill, Inland Thornbill, White-browed Woodswallow and Scarlet-chested Parrot.

Friday February 24

John Hatch introduced the speaker for the evening Phillip Northeast a PhD student under the supervision of David Paton and Daniel Rogers. Phillip's topic was "Defining habitat needs of declining woodland birds to inform restoration programs." The project involved nine declining species: White-browed Babbler, White-winged Chough, Hooded Robin, Buff-rumped Thornbill, Yellow Thornbill, Yellow-rumped Thornbill, Brown Treecreeper, Willie Wagtail and Rufous Whistler. Each species was tracked separately recording behavior, time and GPS location. A habitat survey compared hot-spots and cold-spots on a 30m x 30m scale. The surveys were carried out in various sites at Altona, Sandy Creek and Para Wirra. He found that each species used a different habitat within each area at different times of the day and in different weather conditions. Overall he found that each species uses the same coarse-scale habitat but they need different fine-scale habitats. Habitat restoration needs to integrate different habitat features on a large scale. Phillip showed photographs of the birds discussed as well as several graphs and ground plans to illustrate his results.

Friday March 30

Jeremy Robertson asked John Hatch to introduce the speaker for the evening. John Hatch said that Merilyn Browne who is well known to members came to bird watching through bushwalking and has visited many countries.

Merilyn's talk was about "Owls, nightjars and other night birds". She said that nocturnal birds make up about 4% (400) of all birds. There are about 230 owls, 93 nightjars and 50 frogmouths, potoos and also the nocturnal Swallow-tailed Gull depending on the classification followed. The "owl" family contains *Tyto* (barn owls), *Otus* (scops owls), *Megascops* (screech owls), *Bubo* (eagle-owls and fish owls), *Strix* (wood owls), *Glaucidium* (pygmy owls, owlets), *Ninox* (hawk-owls), and *Asio* (eared-owls).

Merilyn showed photographs of the following owls: Australian Barn Owl, Lesser Sooty Owl, White-faced Scops Owl, Indian Scops Owl, Serendib Scops Owl, African Scops Owl, Torotoroka Scops Owl, Tropical Screech Owl, Northern White-faced Owl, Greyish Eagle-Owl, Dusky Eagle-Owl, Brown Fish Owl, Tawny Fish Owl, Buffy Fish Owl, Brown Wood Owl, Mottled Wood Owl, Black-banded Owl, Pearl-spotted Owllet, Collared Owllet, Austral Pygmy Owl, Ferruginous Pygmy Owl, Jungle Owllet, Chestnut-backed Owllet, Asian Barred Owllet, Burrowing Owl, Spotted Owllet, Rufous Owl, Powerful Owl, Barking Owl, Southern Boobook, Brown Hawk-Owl, White-browed Hawk-Owl and Short-eared Owl.

The nightjars and nighthawks are insectivorous and feed around dawn and dusk. Photographs were shown of: Sand-colored Nighthawk, Common Nighthawk, Common Poorwill, Ocellated Poorwill, Little Nightjar, Blackish Nightjar, Pygmy Nightjar, Savanna Nightjar, Large-tailed Nightjar, Grey Nightjar, Collared Nightjar, Pennant-winged Nightjar, Ladder-tailed Nightjar, Scissor-tailed Nightjar and Australian Owllet-nightjar. There are about 16 species of frogmouths and Tawny Frogmouth, Papuan

Past & Future Meetings (cont) / Past Excursions

Frogmouth and Sri Lankan Frogmouth were shown. Photographs of other nocturnal birds including Common Potoo, Great Potoo, Rufous Potoo, Nankeen Night Heron, Black-crowned Night Heron, Yellow-crowned Night Heron, Rufescent Tiger Heron, Bat Hawk, Letter-winged Kite, Swallow-tailed Gull and Oilbird were also shown.

FUTURE GENERAL MEETINGS

General meetings are held in the Charles Hawker building of the Waite Institute on Waite Road Urrbrae on the last Friday of every month except December, public holidays or prior to a long weekend. The doors are opened at 7pm

Friday June 29

Les Peters 'Photographing Birds' (A provisional title)

Friday July 27

James Smith will talk about 'Hollow Habitats'.

Friday August 31

TBA

PAST EXCURSIONS

Laratinga Wetlands: February 11

It was a pleasant day out on which our sightings represented practically all the species that are common at this wonderful site. However, most people saw some gems, such as Latham's Snipe, Intermediate Egret (a few are around Adelaide this year) a Greenfinch and at least 20 European Goldfinch. Personally I thought the pair of Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo took the prize for checking out hollows in the trees. Four raptor species were also seen. These were Black-shouldered Kite, Collared Sparrowhawk, Brown Falcon and Peregrine Falcon. It was a pleasant days birding attended by 26 members and on which 69 Species were recorded.

Trevor Cowie

Dry Creek Salt Fields: February 23.

Only 16 members arrived for this trip, on which 66 species were recorded. Six raptors, representing 4

species were seen. The people did outnumber the Galahs who only mustered up two for the day, while 3 Crimson Rosellas made an appearance to show us their colours. Two Sacred Kingfishers graced the electricity lines, 6 White-winged Fairy-wrens showed themselves to some watchers, and the single Common Sandpiper was patrolling the bank. Waders were in extremely low numbers but we did find 6 Eastern Curlews along a beach area. To finalise this report I need to say that there were 10 Fairy Terns, which is always a good record and the Banded Stilts had dropped from 15,000 recorded at the recent 20.20 count to 3,000.

Trevor Cowie

Barker Inlet & Magazine Road Wetlands: February 26

The two locations combined to provide a good walk for the 16 members who attended. The two sites are quite different from each other, even though they are very close. We recorded 50 species at Barker Inlet and 54 at Magazine Road. The total of 71 species for the morning proved the locations to be worthwhile, partly because they include areas of mangroves. Some birders ticked off Barbary Doves, which were foraging around the car park. They were not seen again that day. At Barker Inlet, we saw Superb and White-winged Fairy-wrens, Australian Shovelers and Red-necked Avocets. A few birders, not including me saw about 50 White-throated Needletail Swifts, which came in from the northwest. Banded Stilts and Royal Spoonbills were seen at both locations. Yellow-billed Spoonbills, Spotless and Spotted Crakes were seen at Magazine Road.

Trevor Cowie

Dry Creek Salt Fields: March 17

This excursion was cancelled, due to rain and mud.

Hindmarsh River Victor Harbor: March 22.

Nineteen members met at Wattle Drive in Victor Harbor on a fine morning. A walk south to the beach and river mouth produced only a small number of species. Silvereyes

were common in the coastal tea tree and Silver Gulls on the beach lagoon. Walking back upriver produced the more common species and a Nankeen Night Heron flying along the river. Passengers continued walking and drivers took their cars to the end of Wattle Drive. A short distance along the path provided a sighting of three Crested Shrike-tits, while another three were sighted a short distance away. Cameras were kept busy for some time. These are most difficult birds to photograph, because they keep moving amongst the foliage so that a clear view is not often seen. During the half hour of Crested Shrike-tit viewing, some observers managed to look for other birds, with the final tally for the morning being 52 species.

Peter Gower

Reedy Creek: April 1

Sixteen birders arrived to climb up the valley to the waterfall. The bird song was sparse, and only 37 species were found to be using the area. Red-rumped Parrots kept moving around and Australian Ringnecks, Crimson Rosellas and Galahs passed through. Hardly any water was moving along the creek, although 2 Black-fronted Dotterels represented the waders. Five raptor species, 12 Peaceful Doves and 8 Varied Sittellas were also seen.

Trevor Cowie

Dry Creek Salt Fields: April 5

From our sightings, it could be said that most of the waders had left early. Although no Sharp-tailed Sandpipers were seen, birders managed to find a number of Curlew Sandpipers to identify. Amongst only 52 species recorded we did manage to see one each of: Chestnut Teal, Great-crested Grebe, Great Cormorant, Black-shouldered Kite, Kestrel, Terek Sandpiper, Red-kneed Dotterel, Caspian Tern and Rock Dove, all of which help make a wonderful day for 15 birders. Other sightings included two Fairy Terns, 40 Royal Spoonbills, 300 Red-necked Avocets, 8 Sacred Kingfishers, 6 White-winged Fairy-wrens, and 1000 Welcome Swallows. The Banded Stilts have remained at about 3000, as seen on February 23.

Trevor Cowie

Past Excursions (cont)/Future Excursions

Montacute CP: April 14

The aim of this trip was to have another look at this location after a long absence. It is up-hill all the way, and some of it is quite steep. Hence the reason for not going there too often. Only 2 or 3 of the 14 starters went to the very top. They were rewarded by a tally of 34 species, which exceeded expectations. The birds recorded included 2 Emus, an Australian Hobby, 16 Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoos, a Fan-tailed Cuckoo, 5 species of honeyeater, a Scarlet Robin, Varied Sittellas, Golden Whistlers and Red-browed Finches. Lunch was enjoyed under trees (at the bottom of course) where we rested and then slowly began our journeys home.

Trevor Cowie

Rocky Gully (Forestry SA): 29 April:

No surprises were expected here at this time of the year. However 14 of us tried and failed to add to the existing list of species. Varied Sittellas were seen here and have been reported in most wooded areas this year. Perhaps a breeding recovery has occurred. Golden and Rufous Whistlers made an appearance as did Variegated Fairy-wrens, Red-capped Robins, Hooded Robins, Southern Scrub-robins, Mistletoebirds and Diamond Firetails.. The only raptor observed was a Brown Falcon. We counted 24 Australian Ringnecks and a fly-over of 15 Purple-crowned Lorikeets.

Forty-three species were recorded for the day whilst birders enjoyed the gentle walk around the site. Lunch was taken and the birders vanished.

Trevor Cowie

FUTURE EXCURSIONS

Convener: Trevor Cowie

Email: feldtrips@birdssa.asn.au

Tel: 08 8263 2531

Note: Lists of species recorded at the locations visited can be reviewed at www.birdpedia.com

Sunday 27 May: Milang & Nurragi CP (MM) (80km). Meet 8.30am at the western end of the water front park in Milang. We will bird at Milang until 9am move onto Nurragi, returning to look for additional birds around Milang and have lunch.

Saturday 9 Jun: Talbot/Rockleigh Reserves (MM) (84km)

Meet at Talbot Reserve between 8am and 9am. We will spend the first hour at Talbot then move west to Rockleigh Bushland Conservation Area. Use the Murray Bridge to Palmer Road turning west into Tepko Road. The reserve is approx 2km on the right.

Thursday 21 Jun: Charleston CP (MLR) (38km)

Meet at 8.15am by the tennis courts in Newman Road, Charleston. Lunch area depends upon weather.

Sunday 1 Jul: Muntiri Scrub. PP & Milang (MM) (76km)

Meet at Milang Caravan Park, from which we will leave at 8.30am. We will proceed in convoy to the Blacks' property a few km west. After lunch those who wish to can return to Milang to record any additional species.

Saturday 14 Jul: Sandy Creek CP (MLR) (52km)

Meet at 8.15am at the northern car park. This is at the end of Conservation Road, which is on the right off the Gawler to Lyndoch road about 10km east of Gawler.

Thursday 19 Jul: Jenkins Scrub – Mt Crawford Forest (MLR) (61km)

Meet at 8.30am. Travel about 10km from Williamstown towards Springton, turn right onto Mount Road, which is opposite Wirra Wirra Rd. Meet at the entrance to the scrub opposite Murray Vale Road.

Sunday 29 Jul: Whites Road Wetlands (AP) (16km)

Take the Port Wakefield Road. At 1.5Km after passing under the Salisbury Highway Bridge you need to turn left into Globe Derby Drive. Follow this road to the end, turn right into Whites Road and continue to the end. The park entrance is on the left. Meet at 8.15am.

Saturday 11 Aug: Monarto CP. (MLR) (65km)

Meet at 8.15am in the car park. Take the SE Freeway from Adelaide. Leave the Freeway at Monarto South/Zoo ramp. Turn right across the bridge and proceed a few kilometres south. The car park is on the right at the beginning of the park.

Thursday 16 Aug: Hardy's Scrub CP. Onkaparinga River NP (MLR) (42km)

Meet at 8.30 am by the CFS Station in Blewitt Springs.

Sunday 2 Sep: Morgan CP (MM) (162km)

Meet at 8.45am on the northwest (town) side of the Morgan ferry crossing.

Saturday 15 Sep: Scott CP (MLR) (79km)

Meet at 8.15am at the right-hand turn-off into Gould Road (**not** Deep Creek Road). This is off the Strathalbyn/Ashbourne Road to Goolwa. If you reach the Canoe Tree railway crossing, you would have missed the turn-off by about 1.5km.

Thursday 20 Sep: Altona CSR Landcare Reserve (MLR) (55km)

Travel through Lyndoch towards Tanunda. As you leave Lyndoch town centre take the first left into Altona Road, just past the 100km speed limit sign. Meet at 8.30am at the Reserve entrance at the top of this road.

Bird Records

Collated by Graham Carpenter

Records included here are of species listed as rarely observed or unrecorded in the regions listed in the *Field List of the Birds of South Australia*. Also included are interesting breeding or ecological notes, new records for a well-known locality or first of the season reports of migratory species.

Please send all reports to the Bird Records Secretary at birdrecords@birdssa.asn.au or phone 8297 5463.

Note that the list includes reports of rare or vagrant species to South Australia that may yet to have been submitted or formally accepted by the Birds SA Rarities Committee (SARC). Members are encouraged to submit records of rare and vagrant species in SA to the Committee (refer to list of species and information on the website).

Ostrich

2, 29/3/2012. 10 km W Wilkatanna HS, FR.

Langdon, P.

These are evidently remnants of a population that was established in the 1880s for the feather industry, which collapsed in the early 1900s.

Brown Quail

Still more reports from widespread localities:

1, 17/2/2012. Goolwa Sewage Works, MM.

Wood, M.

3, 13/6/2011. Gluepot Stn, Quinn's Dam, MM.

Klau, W.

2, 8/2/2012. Goolwa Barrage, MM.

Thompson, H.

4, 8/2/2012. Sir Richard Peninsula, MM.

Thompson, H.

2, 26/4/2012. 1km NE Clayton Bay, MM.

Doecke, N.

5, Feb/2012. Mount Barker, Laratinga Wetlands, MLR.

Williams, K. & L.

4, 18/3/2012. Kapunda, Light River, MLR.

Steeles, C.

c12, 22/2/2012. Victor Harbor, West Island, MLR.

Iwao, S.

2, 9/2/2012. McLaren Flat, Hardy's Scrub, MLR.

Schmidt, L.

Several, 21/1/2012. Port MacDonnell, Picks Swamp, SE.

Jones, K. & Haywood, B.

5, 11/4/2012. Wilkatanna Woolshed, FR.

Langdon, P.

Several, 3/2012. Eyre Highway, Lake Gilles HS, EP.

Carpenter, G.

Musk Duck

11, 4/3/2012. Port Arthur, YP.

Zanker, R.

Occasionally observed in sheltered coastal waters during autumn.

1, 19/10/2011. Belair NP, Playford Lake, MLR.

Williams, D.

2, 24/11/2011. Whyalla Wetlands, EP.

Smith, E.

Cape Barren Goose

1, 28/3/2012. Adelaide Airport, AP.

Blaylock, K.

Black Swan

1000, 9/2/2012. Bay of Shoals, KI.

Baxter, C.

1, 18/4/2012. Belair NP, Playford Lake, MLR.

Williams, D.

Blue-billed Duck

179, 21/2/2012. Sheringa Lagoon, EP.

Cooper, J.

Great Crested Grebe

1, 4/2/2012. Port MacDonnell breakwater, SE.

Campbell, J.

Rarely reported from coastal waters.

1, 5 and 31/1/2012. Nelshaby Reservoir, FR.

Klau, W.

1, 21/2/2012. Sheringa Lagoon, EP.

Cooper, J.

Hoary-headed Grebe

1, 1/10/2011. Belair NP, Playford Lake, MLR.

Williams, D.

Flock Bronzewing

100s, 18/10/2011. Mungerannie Wetland, NE.

Berggy, J.

30, 16/4/2012. Lake Harry, NE.

Recorded widely along Birdsville Track.

Black, A. *et al.*

Tawny Frogmouth

2, 22/2/2012. Happy Valley Reservoir, MLR.

Paton, P.

Fork-tailed Swift

After several years of few records, several reports in Feb-March, although in low numbers compared to the 'millions' reported during the 1970s.

100s, 25/2/2012. Waitpinga Cliffs, MLR.

Steele-Collins, E.

200, 26/2/2012. Victor Harbor, MLR.

Carpenter, G.

50, 26/2/2012. Ballast Head, KI

Renwick, J.

90, 26/2/2012. Point Sturt, MM.

Doecke, N.

200, 14/3/2012. Kingscote, KI.

Baxter, C.

200, 14/3/2012. Whyalla, EP.

Smith, E.

20, 20/3/2012. Port Lincoln, EP.

Carpenter, G.

100, 20/3/2012. 17km W Cummins, EP.

Carpenter, G.

150, 20/3/2012. 1km N Nildottie, MM.

Winwood, S.

Australasian Darter

3, 3/3 and 1, 25/3/2012. Middle River estuary, KI.

Baxter, C.

1, 12/2/2012. Mount Barker, Laratinga Wetlands, MLR.

Tiller, M.

1, 10/11/2011. Streaky Bay, near jetty, EP.

Maurer, G.

Pair, 4/2/2012. Venus Bay, Island B, EP.

Cooper, J. & Amey, L.

1, 13/12/2011. Yalata Beach, EP.

Gregory, P. & Brooks, A.

Few previous reports from Eyre Peninsula.

Bird Records (cont)

Intermediate Egret

1, 13/3/2012. Mount Barker, Laratinga Wetlands, MLR.

Waanders, P.

3, Feb/2012. Clayton Bay, MM.

Doecke, N.

1, 6/2/2012. Murray Bridge, Riverglades, MM.

Schmidt, L.

White-necked Heron

1, 7/2/2012. Tea Tree Gully, Yatala Vale Rd, MLR.

Pearce, A.

1, 3/11/2011. Belair NP, Playford Lake, MLR.

Williams, D.

3, 10/1/2012. Big Swamp, EP.

Southern Eyre Birds

Royal Spoonbill

1, 2/3/2012. Belair NP, Playford Lake, MLR.

Williams, D.

One of a number of unusual waterbird records from the lake in 2011/12.

Glossy Ibis

More reports from southern and western regions.

30, 19/2/2012. Mannum, Bolto Reserve, MM.

Jones, K.

1, 16/1/2012. Nelshaby Reservoir, FR.

Klau, W.

1, 16/11/2011. Whyalla, Lincoln Highway, EP.

Smith, E.

20, 10/1/2012. Big Swamp, EP.

Southern Eyre Birds

Straw-necked Ibis

3, 10/1/2012. Big Swamp, EP.

Southern Eyre Birds

20, 11/9 and 100, 12/9/2011. Mullaquana, EP.

Smith, E.

White-bellied Sea-eagle

1+2 immatures, 31/3/2012. Coorong, Pelican Point, MM.

Gower, P.

1 immature, 6/4/2012. Big Swamp, EP.

Jack, T.

1 + subadult, 21/3/2012. Victor Harbor, West Island, MLR.

Steele-Collins, E.

The female of this well documented pair was lost late last year so it is

hoped that the new bird will form a new breeding pair.

Square-tailed Kite

1, 1/3 and 2, 16/3/2012. Altona Scrub, MLR.

Zanker, R.

1, 31/1/2012. Hale CP, west side, MLR.

Pearce, A.

Black Kite

1, 20/3/2012. Caroline Forest, HQ road, SE.

Haywood, B.

Grey Falcon

1, 18/9 and 14/10/2011. Mullaquana, EP.

Smith, E.

Buff-banded Rail

1, 11/2011. Streaky Bay High School, EP.

Cooper, J. & Needle, P.

Australian Spotted Crake

30, 18/2/2012. Busby Islet, KI.

Baxter, C.

Baillon's Crake

Several, 6/11/2011. Port Pirie, Senate Rd, LN.

Klau, W.

2, 11/2011. Streaky Bay High School, EP.

Cooper, J. & Needle, P.

Australian Painted Snipe

6, 2/12/2011. Eight Mile Creek, Boronga Estate, SE.

Young, J.

5, 20/12/2011. Wandillo, Earl's Lane, SE.

Jones, K.

Eastern Curlew

13, 12/2/2012. Acraman Creek CP, EP.

Cooper, J.

Kelp Gull

1, 7/4/2012. Murray Mouth, Hindmarsh Island, MM.

Stracey, K.

Fairy Tern

165+ juveniles, 3/3/2012. Price Saltfields, YP.

Wood, M. Hartland, D. & Mantle, D. 82, 19/3/2012. Thompson Beach, AP.

Philcox, J.

These are large concentrations of this declining species, highlighting the importance of the gulf waters and salt-fields for nesting.

Red-tailed Black Cockatoo

25, 17/4/2012. Pandie Pandie Stn, Diamantina River, NE.

Feeding on ground, apparently on seed of wild portulaca.

Black, A. *et al.*

Regularly reported from this region in the 1930s but not recently.

Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo

28, 17/2/2012. Scott CP, MLR.

Wood, M.

200, 29/4/2012. Vista, MLR.

Russel, T.

Pair at nest, 2/2012. Mount Barker, Laratinga Wetlands, MLR.

Williams, K. & L.

The breeding distribution of this species in the MLR is poorly known, with many former nesting trees destroyed in the 1983 Ash Wednesday fires. It nests relatively late, with eggs usually in December.

Cockatiel

84, 13/12/2011. Port Lincoln Airport, EP.

Cooper, J.

Elegant Parrot

16, 9/2/2012. Pooginook CP, MM.

Jacob, P.

34, 31/3/2012. Lake Newland, Sheridan Lane, EP.

Cooper, J. & Needle, P.

The distribution and nesting of this species outside the Flinders Ranges is poorly known. Nesting on Eyre Peninsula was only reported relatively recently (see Chapple 1991 SA Ornithologist 31:73).

Bird Records (cont)

Rock Parrot

Several, 22/2/2012. Victor Harbor,
West Island, MLR.

Iwao, S.

Rainbow Lorikeet

7, 29/4/2012. Quorn, FR.

Langdon, P.

Pied Honeyeater

Pair, 7/2/2012. Mannum Waterfall
Reserve, MM.

Peters, L.

New Holland Honeyeater

2, 22/3/2012. Kimba township, EP.

Carpenter, G.

Widespread further south on Eyre Peninsula, but apparently only recently established in Kimba gardens.

Crested Shrike-tit

1, 26/2/2012. Clayton Bay, MM.

Doecke, N.

1, 19/2/2012. Mannum, Bolto
Reserve, MM.

Jones, K.

1, 25/3 and 2, 9/5/2012. Mount
Barker, Laratinga Wetlands, MLR.

Williams, L.

Grey Fantail

1, 25/4/2012. Felixstow, River
Torrens, AP.

Hyland, M.

Apostlebird

2, 25/3/2012. Eudunda, MLR.

Hartland, D.

Australian Reed-warbler

Several, 6/11/2011. Port Pirie,
Senate Rd, LN.

Klau, W.

White-backed Swallow

1, 25/2/2012. Robe, The Obelisk, SE.

Haywood, B.

Double-barred Finch

1, 24/2/2012. Waitpinga Cliffs,
MLR.

With a flock of Red-browed Finches.

Steele-Collins, E.

Although most probably an aviary escapee, given the recent finding of the Plum-headed Finch in the North East this species could also colonise from the eastern States.

NEW MEMBERS

We welcome the following new members, who have joined the Association in the past few months:

Philip Evans	CRAFERS WEST
Judith Meacham	HACKHAM WEST
Ashley Colin & Glenys Muriel Grivell	OAKBANK
Evelyn Phlox	BALHANNAH
Andrew David Buckle & Belinda Creighton	NORTH ADELAIDE
Bob Littlejohns	SEACLIFF
Graeme & Beth Shields	ROSTREVOR

If your name has inadvertently been omitted from this list, please contact our treasurer. His 'phone number is on p2.

Details of Photos on pp14 to 16

No:	Species	Photographer	Location	Date
1	Australian Bustard	Kay Parkin	Birdsville Track	April 2012
2	Black Kite	Kay Parkin	Birdsville Track	April 2012
3	Southern Boobook	Kay Parkin	Nr. Freeling	April 2012
4	Western Yellow Robin	Kay Parkin	Lake Gilles CP	28/04/12
5	Silvereye	Burt May	Highbury	May 2012
6	Striated Pardalote	Kay Parkin	Lake Gilles CP	28/04/12
7	Eastern Spinebill	Burt May	Highbury	May 2012
8	Crested Bellbird	Kay Parkin	Lake Gilles CP	28/04/12
9	Chestnut Quail-thrush	Helga Kieshamp	Calperum	8/04/2012
10	Striated Grasswren	Burt May	Calperum	April 2012
11	White-browed Treecreeper	Helga Kieshamp	Calperum	8/4/2012
12	Southern Scrub-robin	Helga Kieshamp	Calperum	7/4/2012
13	Shy Heathwren	Helga Kieshamp	Billiat	1/04/2012
14	Purple-gaped Honeyeater	Burt May	Calperum	April 2012

Members' Photographs

See p13 for details

Birds in Flight



Birds of Bush and Gardens



A Few Mallee Birds

