

Birds SA

Newsletter



No 234

May 2015



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 objectives.

A Bevy of Honeyeaters



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CENTRE INSERT

SAOA HISTORICAL SERIES NUMBER 52,
JOHN SUTTON'S OUTER HARBOR NOTES,
PART 1

DIARY

The following is a list of Birds SA activities for the next few months. Further details of all these activities are given later in this Newsletter.

June 13	Saturday	Excursion to Browns Rd. Monarto
June 18	Thursday	Excursion to Laratinga Wetlands
June 26	Friday	General Meeting
June 28	Sunday	Excursion to Black Hill CP

July 11	Saturday	Excursion to Wyndgate, Hindmarsh I
July 16	Thursday	Excursion to Kaiserstuhl CP
July 31	Friday	General Meeting

August 2	Sunday	Excursion to Cox Scrub CP
Aug 15	Saturday	Excursion to Jenkins Scrub
Aug 20	Thursday	Excursion to Sturt Gorge RP
Aug 28	Friday	General Meeting
Aug 30	Sunday	Excursion to Currency Creek Gorge

Cover photo: Dusky Grasswrens, photographed by William Brooker in Ormiston Gorge on 14 August 2014.

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 19 new members who have recently joined the Association. Their names are listed on p11.

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SAOA COMMITTEE 2015 – 2016

President	David Paton	8344 8891
Vice President	John Gitsham	0438900393
Vice President	Daniel Rogers	8222 9517
Secretary	Brian Blaylock	0448822374
Treasurer	Brian Walker	8263 3433
Assistant Secretary	Kate Buckley	8261 7197
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Bird Record Secretary	Graham Carpenter	8297 5463
Membership Officer	Simon Brearly	8390 3666
Member	William Brooker	8381 8730
Member	John Spiers	8333 0272
Member	Jody Gates	8391 6342
Member	John Hatch	8362 2820

FURTHER USEFUL CONTACTS

Librarian	Karen Donkin	0402123960
Image Librarian	John Spiers	8333 0272
	email imagelibrarian@birdssa.asn.au	
Campout Organiser	Lynton Huxley	7009 5038
Rare Birds Secretary	Colin Rogers	8336 3325

RELATED ASSOCIATIONS

BirdLife Southeast SA

Convenor, — Bob Green shriketit@bigpond.com 8725 0549

IBA Coordinator/Newsletter Editor — Bryan Haywood

brytonwood@bigpond.com 8726 8112

Fleurieu Birdwatchers

Contact person: Neil Cheshire 8552 7904

Website: www.Fleurieubirdwatchers.org

Port Augusta group

Contact people: Peter Langdon 8642 5723, Greg Bannon 8648 6630, Bernie Haase 0419 865 834

WEBSITE: birdssa.asn.au

2015 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 \$40.00 per half 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 31). Contributions, 'Word' format preferred, can be recorded on a CD, emailed to either of my email addresses, or typed/handwritten neatly.

- newslettereditor@birdssa.asn.au
- cpy62284@bigpond.net.au

President's Letter/Birds SA Notes & News

For the first time that I can recall, we succeeded in filling all Committee positions at the AGM. I warmly welcome Daniel Rogers and Simon Brealey who have recently joined the Committee. I offer special thanks to Rebecca Zanker who has resigned from the Committee but will still help with some social media tasks. John Hatch has also stepped down as a long-serving Vice President but he continues on the Committee.

There are times when additional assistance is required, and in August and September the Huxleys will be away. The Committee is seeking 2-3 volunteers to help with supper after the general meetings this August and September. If you can help, please contact either myself, Brian Blaylock or Lynton Huxley.

There is plenty happening in 2015. First Birds SA is offering to run a bird identification course through the WEA starting this spring. There is also the Australasian Ornithological Conference in Adelaide, based at Flinders University). This will run from the 26th to 28th of November. Registration and call for symposia are currently open. The BirdLife Australia link is <https://australasian-ornithological-conference-2015.eventbrite.com.au>. Birds SA is involved and will be helping to run the field trips associated with this conference on the 29th and 30th of November.

Another change that will be implemented as memberships are renewed next year will be shifting to electronic distribution for the Bird SA newsletter. Those who still wish to receive a hard copy will be able to, but the committee is looking at reducing printing and postage costs where we can.

Finally a note on the membership, last month the number of members of Birds SA reached 700, the first time that Bird SA has reached this milestone.

David Paton, May 2015

BIRDS SA NOTES & NEWS

CONSERVATION SUB-COMMITTEE

International Bird Sanctuary

The lack of progress by the government in realising the International Bird Sanctuary is causing concern within both the Birds SA Committee and the Conservation Sub-committee. We have been developing a document pointing out the ecotourism potential of the proposed sanctuary. Adelaide receives a large number of short-term visitors whether they are here on business, attending a meeting in the Convention Centre or attending cultural or sporting events. In addition the city receives a steady supply of tourists arriving on cruise ships. Our document points out the value of having facilities close to the city at the International Bird Sanctuary, where visitors interested in nature tourism can see a variety of our birds. Nature tourism, including birding, is a large and growing component of the tourist industry. We had hoped that the promise of income would spur the government into action. This was very timely as the government has since begun a major new initiative to promote tourism in South Australia. We responded to a survey they put out and as a result have been invited to attend a series of workshops on Nature Based Tourism in South Australia that was held this month (May, 2015).

Monarto Crown lands.

John Gitsham is in regular contact with the Natural Resources Management (NRM) staff. The process of gazetting protected areas is very slow. By the time it is proclaimed, we hope to have a pamphlet for use by visitors on the birds to be seen in the area

Tolderol

The Tolderol watering trial has completed successfully. John Gitsham has met with Kate Mason and reiterated BirdsSA's offer to put some money towards work for next year. BirdsSA is unlikely to contribute to ongoing expenditure.

Kate is to work out with a local farmer, Chris Eckert (son of former BirdsSA member, John Eckert) what needs to be done to improve and extend watering in the coming year.

John Spiers

BOOK SALE

Books from the late Bob Brown's library are for sale. All money from the sale will go to the Birds SA Conservation Fund.

A list of books available can be found on the following website: (<http://www.birdssa.asn.au/images/misc/BOOKSALE.xlsx>) and these books will be available for inspection at the General Meeting on 29 May 2015.

If you do not have access to the WEB you can obtain the list of books for sale by contacting the Secretary, Brian Blaylock on 0448822374 or 83703349.

A reserve price has been placed on all books and you can bid the Reserve price or more if you wish. Please make your offer by 22 June 2015. Enter your bids on the Excel Spreadsheet and email to booksales@birdssa.asn.au.

In the event that similar bids are received, the earliest bid will take priority.

If your bid is successful you will need to make arrangements for collection and payment at a General Meeting or by contacting the Secretary, Brian Blaylock

Brian Blaylock

Birds SA Notes & News (cont) / Past General Meetings

ELECTRONIC DISTRIBUTION OF PUBLICATIONS

In his President's letter, David stated that in 2016, Birds SA will shift to electronic distribution of our publications,

I suggested this move to the Committee, and I presented the following rationale in its favour:

- Birds SA is about conservation so we should aim at conserving paper and ink use.
- I believe that emailing our publications is a worthwhile cost cutting, labour saving, strategy.
- I am aware that many members may prefer to receive a hard copy, but I do not see this as a reason for not starting the electronic move.
- There could be two electronic options for recipients, a low resolution and a high resolution. Members opt for the style they want. Those who are only interested in text will probably go for the low resolution, therefore a smaller file.
- All new Members would be asked for their email address and be informed that this is the preferred method of receiving Birds SA communications. The aim is that eventually there will be no postage.
- I know that these publications are available on the web site, but members would not appreciate having to go to the web site to read their Newsletter and Journal like any member of the public.
- They would be much happier to receive their documents via their private emails.
- It is not difficult to send out multiple emails.
- Then there is the final, unpopular suggestion, that members who require a hard copy of the Newsletter and Journal may in the future, have to pay a higher Membership Rate to defray some of this expense.

Kate Buckley

Note: The Committee has decided to use electronic distribution only for the Newsletter at present. They will consider electronic transmission of the Journal at a later date.

Cynthia Pyle

HELP NEEDED

I am a member of the West Lakes Current Affairs group, which meets each Wednesday from 10am to 11.30am. The group consists of about 28 ladies, keenly interested in the many and varied speakers we enjoy. We would be extremely pleased to have a speaker from Birds SA.

The dates available are 19th and 26th August or 2nd and 9th September.

The venue is the Rams Football Clubrooms, Bartley Terrace, West Lakes.

Please 'phone me on 8449 4573 if you are able to help.

My address is 208 Fletcher Road, Largs Bay

Judith Hunter

PAST GENERAL MEETINGS

FRIDAY JANUARY 30

John Hatch introduced the speaker Jeff Groves to talk on 'Avian Action'. Jeff said that he had been a photographer for a long time and said that with the availability of digital cameras it had become much easier to take photographs of birds in action. He showed a series of photographs under the following topics – Conflict and Communication, Feeding, Flight, Human Interaction and Other Behaviour.

Under the heading **Conflict and Communication** Jeff showed photographs of Sulphur-crested Cockatoo, Eastern Rosella, Tawny Frogmouth, Great Egret, Australian Pelican, Emu, Australian Magpie, Wedge-tailed Eagle and Willie Wagtail.

Birds Feeding included Australian Hobby, Collared Sparrowhawk, Brown Goshawk, Australian Reed Warbler, Laughing Kookaburra, Caspian Tern, Little Black Cormorant, Australian Pelican, Greater Crested Tern, New Holland Honeyeater, Varied Sittella, Striated Pardalote, Long-billed Corella, Galah, Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo, Great Egret, Silver Gull, Whistling Kite, Yellow-billed

Spoonbill, Whimbrel and Far Eastern Curlew.

Greater Crested Tern, Australian Pelican, Black Swan, Silver Gull, Brolga, Caspian Tern, Royal Spoonbill, Sulphur-crested Cockatoo, White-bellied Sea Eagle, Sooty Oystercatcher, Bar-tailed Godwit and Blue-and-Yellow Macaw were shown in **Flight**.

Under the topic **Human Interaction** Cape Barren Goose, Port Lincoln Parrot, Western Rosella, Nankeen Kestrel, Peaceful Dove, Rainbow Lorikeet, Tawny Frogmouth, Australian Owlet-nightjar were photographed.

For **Other Behaviour** pictures of Pied Oystercatcher, Black Kite, Mistletoebird, Galah, Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo, Striated Heron, Cattle Egret, Australian Golden Whistler, Fan-tailed Cuckoo, Green Catbird, Striated Pardalote, Turquoise Parrot, and Red-browed Finch were seen.

FRIDAY FEBRUARY 27

David Paton welcomed the speaker Dr. Vicki Thompson who is an ARC Post-doctoral Research Associate at the Australian Centre for Ancient DNA, Department of Genetics & Evolution in the School of Biological Sciences, The University of Adelaide.

Vicki's topic was "The birds of Australasia – A view from ancient and modern DNA".

Firstly she gave an outline of where and what DNA is and how it is extracted. Vicki then spoke about three areas of her work on birds using DNA: Chickens and the Polynesian migration routes; Emu – Island dwarfism and avian extinctions; avian expansions and refugia in Australia. Refugia are areas in which a population of organisms can survive through a period of unfavourable conditions.

Ancient DNA is acquired from samples other than modern tissue including museum specimens including samples up to 700,000 years old. Ancient DNA has low concentration, fragmented size, likely

Past General Meetings (cont) | Future General Meetings

to be contaminated and it can be degraded or damaged.

Chickens and the Polynesian migration routes: Vicki and her colleagues sequenced mitochondrial control region DNA from 122 modern and 22 ancient chicken specimens from Polynesia and Island Southeast Asia and used these together with Bayesian modelling methods to examine the human dispersal of chickens across this area. They found that all ancient specimens and a high proportion of the modern chickens possess a group of unique, closely related haplotypes found only in the Pacific. Two modern specimens from the Philippines carry haplotypes similar to the ancient Pacific samples, providing clues about a potential homeland for the Polynesian chicken.

Emus – Island dwarfism and avian extinctions: The Tasmanian Emu has been extinct since 1850. It was smaller than the mainland Emu but larger than Kangaroo Island Emu. The Kangaroo Island Emu has been extinct since 1827 and the King Island Emu extinct since 1805. The aims of their study were to characterise mainland and island emus by using ancient DNA to determine if they are the same species; from their morphology find out what is driving their dwarfism and using modelling of extinctions to determine how intensively they were hunted. Work carried out has shown that all recently extinct emus were the same species. The Tasmanian Emu was slightly dwarfed. Island dwarfism is related to island size. High hunting rates caused extinctions and sustainable harvest would have been possible only on Kangaroo Island.

Avian expansions and refugia in Australia: Thirty-two Australian bird taxa were sampled to look for co-expansion in the past. In Pleistocene Australia co-expansion 33,000 years ago included the following species — Musk Duck, Crimson Rosella, Australian Ringneck, Horsfield's Bronze-Cuckoo, Satin Bowerbird, Black Butcherbird, Pied Butcherbird,

Splendid Fairy-wren, Red-backed Fairy-wren, and Eastern Yellow Robin but there was no co-expansion in Grey Teal, Southern Emu-wren, Variegated Fairy-wren, Blue-faced Honeyeater and New Holland Honeyeater. Co-expanders are specialists and low dispersers. Examples of refugees include Musk Duck, Ground Parrot, New Holland Honeyeater, Australian Ringneck (south-west and south-east) and Satin Bowerbird, Platypus, Yellow-bellied Glider (south-east and north-east).

FRIDAY MARCH 27

John Hatch introduced the speaker Kieren Mitchell from the Australian Centre for Ancient DNA, Department of Genetics & Evolution in the School of Biological Sciences, The University of Adelaide.

Kieren's talk was about the origin of the kiwi and the evolution of palaeognathous birds. (a group comprising birds with a primitive reptilian type of palate)

On an evolutionary bird tree the palaeognathous group, which includes the large flightless birds, or ratites, descends directly from the earliest branching point. This group is only found in the southern hemisphere and includes elephant bird, tinamou, rhea, ostrich, emu, cassowary, kiwi and moa. Following the dismantling of Gondwana the distribution of the palaeognaths was thought to follow the continental rifting hypothesis. Results using ancient DNA have shown that this is not the case. Moas are more closely related to tinamous and kiwis to the Elephant bird. Early ratite bird distribution is probably due to flighted dispersal, which occurred before these birds had lost the power of flight.

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 and meetings start at 7.45pm.

FRIDAY JUNE 26

Members' Night

Please submit offers to present short talks and other items to John Hatch or the new organiser before mid-June so that the whole programme can be arranged well in advance. We are a bit short of offers at present. This is your chance!

FRIDAY JULY 31

Christine Evans: How faithful are Superb Fairy-wrens in South Australia?

FRIDAY AUGUST 28

Doug Armstrong: Advances in reintroduction programmes for NZ birds.

Past Excursions

Sturt Gorge Recreation Park – 19 February

Thirteen members met in the car park at the end of Mountbatten Road, walked to the Sturt River Flood Control Dam, and returned via the Magpie Creeks ruins. Surprisingly a total of 37 species were recorded (33 seen, 4 heard). A group of eight White-browed Babblers at a nest on the top of an introduced olive and in the surrounding shrubs and trees provided entertainment for some time. Excellent views were obtained of a pair of Peregrine Falcons at a nest box that had been placed several metres below the top of the dam wall on the outside face.

Brian Blaylock

Montacute Conservation Park – 1 March

Twelve people braved the steep slopes at Montacute on a pleasant sunny day including two new members who had enjoyed the earlier outing to Sturt Gorge so much they look like becoming regulars. This is very encouraging and shows the value of our excursions in improving bird identification skills and meeting new people and seeing old friends.

We made a bit of a joke at the start that we might see more birds around the carpark than anywhere else and it soon became clear that this would turn out to be the case. After huffing and puffing our way uphill for a while we decided to return to the creek line where most of the birds were. We also walked back along the road to see if anything else was about and an eagle-eyed member of the group spotted a Horsfield's Bronze Cuckoo sitting silently in a tree above the road.

A total of 24 species was seen on the day including Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo (4), Sulphur-crested Cockatoo (6), Australian Golden Whistler (4), Red-browed Finch (9) New Holland Honeyeater (50) and Red Wattlebird (12). We were surrounded by the calls of Adelaide Rosellas, Grey Currawongs and the occasional Laughing Kookaburra and

so, despite the initial rather challenging steep conditions, we had an enjoyable outing.

Ali Ben Kahn

Wyndgate, Hindmarsh Island – 14 & 15 March

A two-day bird survey was undertaken of the 1,081 hectare property of 'Wyndgate' by a total of twenty three Members. 'Wyndgate' is not open to the public and this was an opportunity to survey the birds of the area. Further surveys during winter and spring have been scheduled for 2015 to provide a baseline of the birds in the area for Stuart Hicks, Senior Ranger/District Officer, Ranges to River District, Natural Resources SA Murray-Darling Basin.

Due to a fire ban on the first day, we were restricted to walking the property, which with the 30C temperature, probably deterred some from camping overnight. Day two was milder and we were able to drive to sections further from the homestead. In total 42 species were recorded including Cape Barren Goose, Grey Teal, Hardhead, Musk Duck, Straw-necked Ibis, Royal and Yellow-billed Spoonbill, Spotless Crane, Swamp Harrier and Elegant Parrot.

Lynton Huxley

Magazine Road Wetlands, Dry Creek – 19 March

The dry and sunny day slightly bettered its forecast as twenty keen participants ventured from their parked vehicles on Magazine Road. The pools to the north and east of the parking area were a mixture of 'partially filled' to 'bone-dry'. With binoculars locating and, where necessary, 'scopes confirming, the group made its way around the pools in an anti-clockwise direction. The usual suspects were obvious and easy, Little Pied and Little Black Cormorants, Australian Pelicans and Eurasian Coot. Trevor discovered the first Wood Sandpiper and Bill added two more as we progressed along the

ridge. However, these delightful birds were to be the only Sandpipers seen on the day. Black-winged Stilts seemed partially indifferent to our group but retained their awareness. A small flock of Grey Teal floated gently away whilst a lone Pink-eared Duck sought companionship. A fly-past by two Royal Spoonbills was later supplemented by five more and a pair of Masked Lapwings cackled their displeasure at our intrusion. The walk covered an area of less than two square kilometres but still afforded us 48 species and one fox in fine fettle.

Peter A Hirst.

Private Property near Murray Bridge – 29 March

It's not often that Members get to visit new places, but thanks to the invitation of Chris Bryant and John Boland who own and lovingly care for their piece of Mallee scrub near Monarto, 22 Members enjoyed a very pleasant morning birding and taking in the serenity. Chris and John acquired the 53 hectares in 1984, noting that nearly one third had never been cleared and a nationally endangered plant species *Prostanthera eurbyioides* (Monarto Mintbush) was present.

The weather was perfect for birding and 38 species were recorded including Golden and Rufous Whistlers, Varied Sittella, Red-capped and Hooded Robins, Spotted and Striated Pardalotes, Diamond Firetail, five species of honeyeater and three species of thornbill. Unfortunately, after close analysis of Peter Martin's photo, the excitement of a Black-chinned Honeyeater record abated after the sighting was determined to be a young Brown-headed.

Chris and John were wonderful hosts and are willing for members to revisit in the spring when there is likely to be more bird activity. We will look forward to that visit being scheduled.

Lynton Huxley

Past Excursions (cont)

Calperum Station, Easter Campout – 3 to 6 April

The weather was very kind to the 16 Members who ventured to the Oak Bore Quarters on Calperum Station for the 2015 Easter Campout. Equipped with kitchen and bathroom facilities, this site made camping under the nearby shade trees very comfortable. This property just north of Renmark is part of the Riverland UNESCO Biosphere Reserve managed by the Australian Landscape Trust and was last visited by Members at Easter 2012.

We were honoured with a visit on Saturday from two young local girls (Lizzy Lewis and Ros Pearce) and their participation and knowledge when we drove a few of the station tracks that afternoon was most welcome. Another highlight for this campout was a very late Saturday night spent watching the full eclipse of the moon. Thank goodness for digital cameras — the expense of processing the same number of 35mm film shots would have made us all very poor! Mention must also be made of the traditional Sunday brunch barbeque feast of liquid refreshments to wash down lashings of bacon, eggs, tomatoes, mushrooms, toast, hot-cross buns and pancakes. It was truly amazing that just sixteen people could consume so much food, but we did it and still went birding afterwards!

Plenty of birds visited the camp area to keep us occupied, but most members also walked or drove along the nearby tracks to improve their species count. The nightly birdcall resulted in a total of 66 species being recorded for this campout including Emu, Australian Wood Duck, Pacific Black Duck, Grey Teal and Australasian Grebe near Long Dam, Black Kite, Collared Sparrowhawk, Wedge-tailed Eagle, Black-shouldered Kite and Nankeen Kestrel, Southern Scrub Robin, Red-capped and Hooded Robin, Spotted and Striated Pardalote, Weebill, Yellow Thornbill, Southern Whiteface, Crested Bellbird, Gilbert's and Golden Whistler. The honeyeater species included Spiny-

cheeked, Striped, Singing, White-eared, Yellow-plumed, White-plumed, Brown-headed and White-fronted.

The possibility of rain resulted in an early departure on Monday morning with most making it to the main road before heavy and persistent drizzle bought an end to a wonderful campout.

Lynton Huxley

Ridley Conservation Park – 11 April

Seven people undertook the long trip to Ridley Conservation Park to arrive at the meeting place in an almost impenetrable mist that appeared as the road started to descend into Swan Reach. At first it was difficult to see either the road or, indeed, each other but we assumed it would burn off before long and this turned out to be the case.

The walk started at the road junction and we soon started to encounter Singing Honeyeater (15), Spiny-cheeked Honeyeater (25) as well as White-browed and Chestnut-crowned Babblers (6 and 25). The Chestnut-crowned Babblers were busily nest building and generally zooming about being garrulous, and the calls of Mistletoebirds (12) seemed to follow us wherever we went. Yellow Rosella (6), Mulga Parrot (6), Australian Ringneck (8) and Common Bronzewing (6) were also encountered and Great Cormorant (7), Australian Pelican (8) and a Whistling Kite were seen passing overhead. White-fronted Chat (12), Southern Whiteface (10), Crested Bellbird (4) and Golden and Gilbert's Whistlers (3 and 7) also tantalised us with their calls and were seen after some stalking effort.

We then went to another nearby site where we saw Varied Sittella (12) and one White-eared Honeyeater as well as a satisfying number of other birds. In the course of our wanderings we also made some other rather bemusing discoveries, such as a pair of motorcycle boots abandoned under a tree and part of an old washing machine!

A total of 43 species was recorded, making it a satisfying morning and

well worth the added distance to see some species either never or rarely encountered closer to Adelaide.

Ali Ben Kahn

Kenneth Stirling/Wotton Scrub CP & Mt George CP - 16 April

Heavy rain throughout the night and early morning did not deter the 13 members that came along on this trip. In fact, by the time people arrived for the start of the walk it was a calm and fine morning. Although the threat of further rain was present, we only experienced a brief shower about mid-morning. However, poor weather was no doubt the cause of the low number of birds and species recorded. The car park, usually a good spot for recording a fair number of species was especially quiet. We did come across a few 'hot spots' so the walk was not a total disappointment. At one spot, we observed three Scarlet Robins, groups of White-naped, Yellow-faced, New Holland and Crescent Honeyeaters, Striated Thornbills, a pair of Australian Golden Whistlers and a lone Fan-tailed Cuckoo. Other highlights were Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoos, very noisy Sulphur-crested Cockatoos, Laughing Kookaburras and White-throated Treecreepers. A single Mistletoebird was heard. No raptors were observed. A considerable proportion of the park was still recovering from a recent burn-off and was especially quiet for birds. In all 29 species were recorded.

After the walk we headed to Mt George Conservation Park for lunch during which we had long, but light shower but we all managed to keep dry under the rotunda. After lunch seven of us headed up the trail into the park where we recorded 27 species in half an hour. The species were similar to earlier in the morning as the habitat was similar. Highlights included Superb Fairy-wren, White-browed Scrubwren and Red-browed Finch. As we returned to the car park the rain began to set in and for some, followed us home. In all it was a pleasant morning.

Martyn Price

Past Excursions (cont) / Future Excursions

Deep Creek Conservation Park (Stringybark Camp) – 26 April

Light rain abated in time for seven members to commence the 2.6km Forest Circuit Walk from Stringybark Campground. Unfortunately, rain returned midway through this walk and we agreed to have an early bird call under shelter at the Ranger Station and abandon the planned second walk. One positive outcome was that we had a pleasant chat with Senior Ranger Carol Marsden, which included a discussion about possible future outings to the Park.

The Campground and walk provided 21 species altogether, with close views of Fan-tailed Cuckoo, Superb Fairy wren and Scarlet Robin. Other species seen included Laughing Kookaburra, White-throated Treecreeper, Eastern Spinebill, Crescent Honeyeater, White-browed Scrubwren, Golden Whistler, Grey Fantail, Grey Shrikethrush, Adelaide Rosella, Galah, Sulphur-crested Cockatoo, Welcome Swallow and Silvereeye.

Lynton Huxley

FUTURE EXCURSIONS

Contact: Lynton Huxley

Field Trip and campout Co-ordinator
Phone: 0498 466 092 or 08 7009 5038

Email: fieldtrips@birdssa.asn.au or huxley@adam.com.au

Information including Google Map, GPS location details and a bird species list for each excursion site is available from the Birds SA website (see User Menu – Go Birding).

If you are prepared to lead one or more of the trips listed below, please notify the Field Trip Coordinator (FTC) before the date/s of those trip/s. Your leadership will enhance the experience of members participating in the trip/s and assist the FTC with updating our extensive records of past excursions. On some occasions, it

may be necessary for members attending a field trip to appoint a leader to guide the group and a scribe to write a report of the excursion. The report, submitted to the FTC, must include the number of attendees, birds seen or heard, the weather and any other interesting events on the day. Both leadership and scribe duties can be shared.

Saturday, 13 June: Browns Road, Monarto (MLR) (60km) Meet at 8.30am at Browns Road, Monarto, just off the old Murray Bridge Road. Leave the SE Freeway at the Callington exit. Drive through Callington and turn right onto the old Murray Bridge road. The junction is on the left at the top of the hill.

TRIP LEADER: Lynton Huxley

Thursday, 18 June: Laratinga Wetlands, Mount Barker (MLR) (34km) Meet at the carpark on Bald Hills Road, Mt. Barker at 8.30am.

TRIP LEADER: Lynton Huxley

Sunday, 28 June: Black Hill Conservation Park (MLR) (12km) Meet at 8.30am at the Addison Ave, Athelstone Entrance. Please note that parking space near the start is limited and this walk begins with quite a climb but it is worthwhile. We will take it at a gentle pace.

TRIP LEADER: Martyn Price

Saturday, 11 July: ‘Wyndgate’ Hindmarsh Island (MLR) (100km) Meet at 8.30am on the corner of Randell and Semaschko Roads Hindmarsh Island. If you are planning to arrive later that day, please proceed to the homestead off Denver Road. This survey follows the March 2015 visit that provided a baseline of the birds in the area. Our thanks once again to Stuart Hicks, Senior Ranger/District Officer, Ranges to River District, Natural Resources SA Murray-Darling Basin for allowing access for Birds SA to ‘Wyndgate’ and the use of the

kitchen and toilets in the ‘Wyndgate’ homestead.

TRIP LEADER: Lynton Huxley

Thursday, 16 July: Kaiserstuhl Conservation Park (MLR) (60km) Meet at 8.30am at the Tanunda Creek Road CP gate. The Park is located 12km southeast of Tanunda in the Barossa Valley. From Tanunda take the main Tanunda to Angaston Road (Mengler Hill Road) for 8km to the southerly turn off onto Tanunda Creek Road. The Park is approximately 4km along this road.

TRIP LEADER: Rod Tetlow

Sunday, 2 August: Cox Scrub Conservation Park (MLR) (66km) This Park is on the Ashbourne to Goolwa Road, about 6km south of Ashbourne. Meet at 8.30am in the northern car park.

TRIP LEADER: Ali Ben Kahn

Saturday, 15 August: Jenkins Scrub (MLR) (61km) Travel about 10km from Williamstown towards Springton, then turn right onto Mount Road. Meet at 8.30am at the entrance to the scrub on the left, opposite Murray Vale Road.

TRIP LEADER: Ali Ben Kahn

Thursday, 20 August: Sturt Gorge Recreation Park (MM) (11km) Meet in the carpark at the end of Mountbatten Road, Bellevue Heights at 8.30am.

TRIP LEADER: Brian Blaylock

Sunday, 30 August: Currency Creek Gorge (85km) The Gorge is 6km north of Goolwa on the Goolwa to Strathalbyn Road. Meet at 8.30am in the Lions Park on the northern side of the road just past the 80km limit in Currency Creek, when travelling from Goolwa.

TRIP LEADER: Winston Syson

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).

Brown Quail

More reports from YP:

5, 18/2/2015. Mac's Beach, YP.

Smith, P.

15, 16/2/2015. Clinton CP, YP.

Rogers, C.

Fork-tailed Swift

20, 14/4/2015. Pt Sturt Peninsula, MM.

Doecke, M.

Few reports over the summer period.

White-throated Needletail

3, 1/4/2015. Coorong, Pelican Point, MM.

Moffatt, B.

This species was regularly seen in summer-autumn in flocks totalling up to 200 in the MLR and KI regions up until the 1980s, but has not been recorded in these regions since. It is still regularly seen in the SE, but the above record is further north than usual.

Eastern Reef Egret

1, 19/2/2015. Pine Point, YP.

Smith, P.

Nankeen Night Heron

34, 20/1/2015. Port Wakefield Caravan Park, AP.

Syson, W.

Suspected to breed in mangroves in this area.

Australian White Ibis

Increasing nos. in the city including: 100, 3/2015. West Parklands, AP.

Paton, D.

115, 6/4/2015. Prince Alfred College, AP.

Sparks, K.

Members are encouraged to forward nesting reports (including numbers) of this species for wetlands around the suburbs.

Straw-necked Ibis

1, 6/4/2015. Prince Alfred College, AP.

Sparks, K.

1, 4/3/2015. St Peters Billabong, AP.

Paton, P.

1, 4/3/2015. North Parklands, MacKinnon Parade, AP.

Paton, P.

First reports (probably the same individual) from around the city, in company with the white Ibis.

White-bellied Sea-Eagle

2, 24/3/2015. Ngaut Ngaut CP, River Murray, MM.

Nye, G.

Black-breasted Buzzard

2, 5/5/2015. Nilpena HS, FR.

Pulsford, L. *et al.*

Close to its southern limit in SA.

Osprey

1, 3/4/2015. Mutton Cove, Port River, AP.

Baxter, C.

Brolga

140, 2/2/2015. Magpie Swamp Rd, SE.

Sothman, B. & Lloyd, R.

Beach Stone-curlew

1, 1/3/2015. Point Douglas, SE.

Ward, P.

1, 13/4/2015

Brooker, W.

First report of this species in SA, details to follow. Usually found on tropical coasts with a few records in Victoria.

Double-banded Plover

1, 8/4/2015. Aldinga Beach, Snapper Point, MLR.

Hudson, N.

A regular wintering site for this species, although in dwindling numbers.

Oriental Plover

1, 14/2/2015. Thompson Beach, AP.

Rogers, C.

2, 10/2/2015. Wauraltee Beach, YP.

Treloar, K.

Reports along the coast are usually on very hot days, with birds usually inland on claypans and bare fields.

Red Knot

400, 15/3/2015. Bald Hill Beach, AP.

Taylor, P.W.

Pectoral Sandpiper

2, 12/2/2015. Tolderol GR, MM.

Rogers, C.

1, 9/3/2015. Greenfields Wetlands, Magazine Rd, AP.

Potter, S.

Bar-tailed Godwit

70, 15/3/2015. Bald Hill Beach, AP

Taylor, P.W.

Terek Sandpiper

2, 7/3/2015. Murray Mouth, Hindmarsh Channel, MM.

Syson, W.

Arctic Jaeger

1, 27/4/2015. Bald Hill Beach, AP. Resting on banks of seagrass.

Taylor, P.W.

Rarely reported in the gulf north of Outer Harbour.

Bird Records (cont)

White-winged Black Tern

2, 12/2/2015. Tolderol GR, MM.
Cutten, D.
7, 20/2/2015. Rogers, C.
10, 25/3/2015. McKenzie, P.

Elegant Parrot

20, 20/3/2015. Arno Bay, EP.
Shore, R.
Increasing reports on EP, with the only known nesting site in the region near Paney in the Gawler Ranges.

Slender-billed Thornbill

3, 15/4/2015. Morgan Mail Rd, MM.
Sparks, K.
A small population exists in Pearl Bluebush Maireana sedifolia shrublands north of Morgan.

Black-chinned Honeyeater

1 immature, 28/1/2015. Happy Valley, MLR.
Brooker, W.
Heard, 7/3/2015. Murray Bridge, Long Is Rd, MM.
Gates, J.

1, 7/3/2015 Hackham West, Village Rd, MLR.

St George, E.
7, 10/4/2015. Clayton Bay, MM.
Doecke, P.
3, 11/5/2015. Hackham West, Beach Rd, MLR.

Kubicki, A.
Most reports of this species in the region are now from ornamental trees.

Crested Shriketit

2, 28/2/2015. Hackham West, Village Rd, MLR.
St George, E.

Olive-backed Oriole

1, 29/4/2015. Banrock Wetlands, MM.
Field, T.
Several reports from this locality, but still only two nesting sites reported in SA (Belair 1968-69: Hal Crouch SA Ornithologist 25:195 and Currency Creek 2005: Bird Report 2008).

Grey Currawong

1, 21/4/2015. East Parklands, AP.
Robertson, D.
1, 23/3/2015. Malvern, AP.
Black, A.

Grey Fantail

1, 25/4/2015. Black Forest, Dryden Rd, AP. First record for area.
Carpenter, G.

Horsfield's (Singing) Bushlark

2, 14/4/2015. Cowarie Stn, NE. In cotton-bush shrubland, photos taken.
Black, A. & Gower, P.
The status of this species in the NE is unknown. A. Black and others previously reported one north of Farina in September 2007. Lawson & Parker (1976) SA Ornithologist 27: 143 reported the rufous variety 'rufescens' from the Mitchell Grass hills near Innamincka in the far NE.

NEW MEMBERS

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

John Pearce	BRAHMA LODGE
Samuel Matthews	HIGHBURY
David Butterfield & Carla Wadewitz	FLAGSTAFF HILL
Josephine & Lewis Brickhill	LOBETHAL
Joanne Lee & Craig Steven Baulderstone	BELAIR
Sharie Detmar	FLAGSTAFF HILL
Gary Goland	OAKLANDS PARK
David Morgan Andrewartha	HEATHPOOL
Josephine Heidi Cookes	DULWICH
Paul Sgaretta	GREENWITH
Roger Mathers	COROMANDEL VALLEY
Travis Rosenberry	BOISE, IDAHO, USA
Edward Lowrey & Katherine Buchanan	DERNANCOURT
Wendy & Martin Percy	CLARENCE GARDENS

If your name has inadvertently been omitted from this list, please contact our treasurer. His 'phone number is on p3.

Two Cases of Mistaken Identity



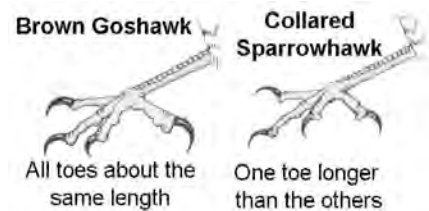
Three of the photographs on this page have appeared in fairly recent Birds SA Newsletters. The first one (A) appeared in Birds SA Newsletters of May 2014. It was identified in the Newsletter as a juvenile Collared Sparrowhawk. The other two (B and C) were in the February 2015 Newsletter and the birds were identified as Brown Goshawks.

I have since heard from Steve Debus of the University of New England, who is a well-known expert on raptors as well as being a member of Birds SA, that both identifications were incorrect. Photograph A shows a juvenile Brown Goshawk, while B and C show adult and juvenile Collared Sparrowhawks respectively.

These two species are so similar that Morcombe's Field Guide to Australian Birds states: "Rather than a single plumage feature that will separate Goshawk from Sparrowhawk, often the difference is a combination of size, shape, colour, build and movement".

Below are the salient features from each photograph by which Steve identified the three birds. I hope his explanations will help us all with future identifications.

Photograph A is identified as a Brown Goshawk mainly because its middle toe is only a little longer than the other forward toes. The adjacent sketch shows that in Collared Sparrowhawks the middle toe is considerably longer than the other toes. The bird also has a rather large bill and a brow-ridge. However, the key feature, tail-tip shape, is obscured.



Photographs B and C show a parent bird and one of her offspring. Both birds show notched tail tips on which the outer rectrices (or tail feathers) are the longest feathers. For contrast, photograph D, from the internet, shows the rounded tail tip of a Brown Goshawk.

Two other features of Collared Sparrowhawks that are apparent in photographs B and C are a small bill and staring eye,



especially on the juvenile bird. Steve commented that this is an interesting record of a yearling Sparrowhawk (apparently female) breeding in juvenile plumage. This happens occasionally and may change perceptions about the Sparrowhawk's breeding status in suburban Adelaide.

Several shots taken of the adult bird, but not published in the Newsletter, showed a very distinct 'beetle brow'. Simpson and Day's Field Guide describes the Collared Sparrowhawk as having "a less beetle-browed eye than the Brown Goshawk". However Steve Debus considers that the 'brow' in the two species is a bit subjective, as Sparrowhawks can show a slight brow and Goshawks don't always appear to have a very pronounced one; it might depend a bit on how

Two Cases of Mistaken Identity (cont)

relaxed or sleeked the head feathers are. Female Sparrowhawks are the same size as male Goshawks and, at the distance the more confiding Sparrowhawk will allow human approach, a female might look rather large.

Unfortunately, one of the juvenile birds in the photographed family met with an untimely end shortly after the photographs were taken. Several shots were taken of the deceased bird, of which photographs E and F are shown below. They confirm the diagnosis of Collared Sparrowhawk. The notched tail tip is clearly seen in photograph E. The toes were too clenched to see the relative lengths, but the middle toe does appear to be very long in photograph F. In fact, the middle toe of a collared Sparrowhawk is a whole segment longer than the other toes.



Thanks to Steve, I shall look very carefully at any photographs of Brown Goshawks/Collared Sparrowhawks that are sent to me in the future.

Cynthia Pyle

Photograph A was taken by Dr. Kath Cooper at Sherlock (MM) in January 2014.

Photographs B, C, E and F were taken by Jeff Groves at Anstey Hill (MLR) in February and March 2015.

Photograph D is from Upload Wikimedia.org.

REFERENCES

Morcombe, Michael Field Guide to Australian Birds, Steve Parish Publishing Pty Ltd, 2000.

Simpson, Ken and Day, Nicholas Field Guide to the Birds of Australia Viking, an imprint of Penguin Books, 7th Ed. 2004.

Emails from Steve Debus, Jeff Groves and Rodney Attwood.

Details of Photographs on pp2, 14 and 16

No:	Species	Photographer	Location	Date
1	Yellow-plumed Honeyeater	Peter McKenzie	Kimba	31/03/2015
2	Varied Honeyeater	Peter McKenzie	Brisbane	03/02/2015
3	White-fronted Honeyeater	Peter McKenzie	Port Augusta	02/04/15
4	White-eared Honeyeater	Barbara Bansemer	Calperum	06/04/2015
5	Grey-fronted Honeyeater	Peter McKenzie	Quorn	22/04/2015
6	Nankeen Night-Heron	William Brooker	Old Noarlunga	17/12/2014
7	Western Bowerbird	William Brooker	Alice Springs	15/08/2014
8	Eastern Osprey	Peter McKenzie	Pine Point	04/04/2015
9	Black-shouldered Kite	Peter McKenzie	Tolderol	26/03/2015
10	Spotted Pardalote , male	Peter McKenzie	Pine Point	05/04/2015
11	Spotted Pardalote , female	Peter McKenzie	Pine Point	05/04/2015
12	Golden-headed Cisticola	Peter McKenzie	Tolderol	18/03/2015
13	Inland Thornbill	Peter McKenzie	Kimba	01/04/2015
14	Diamond Firetail Finch	Peter Mckenzie	Quorn	22/04/2015
15	Zebra Finch	Peter Mckenzie	Port Augusta	02/04/2015

A Variety of Different Birds



A Young Wedgie

These three photographs of a Juvenile Wedge-tailed Eagle were taken by Gordon Pateman about 25km north of Hawker on the Leigh Creek Rd in October 2014.



Colourful and Cute

