

The BIRDER

The official magazine of Birds SA Summer 2020 No 256



Linking people with birds
in South Australia

In this Issue

The Association's contribution to saving our pelicans

Easter Campout details

Our participation in the Nature Festival in Belair NP and Campbelltown

Rosella Antics



A young Eastern Rosella begging for food from Adelaide Rosellas, which eventually fed it, briefly.
(Photographed by Trevor Cox in Wirrabara Forest on 30th October, 2020)

Please accept my apologies!

Thank you to everyone who sent me photos for inclusion in the Summer Birder. However, due to a fault occurring in my computer, I cannot access them at the moment.

Fortunately, Trevor Cox, from Port Neill on Eyre Peninsula, sent me a DVD containing many excellent bird photos. Trevor took the photo on this page, and many of the photos at the end of the magazine. Thank you, Trevor!

Cynthia Pyle

p.s. Hopefully I will be able to include the photos you sent me in the Autumn Magazine.

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CENTRE INSERT: SAOA HISTORICAL SERIES No: 74,
EDWIN ASHBY, PART 3

Cover image: Two Australian Pelicans, photographed by John Gitsham along the Coorong 2019. John Gitsham also designed the cover.

Graphic design: Ingrid Grigg

We welcome 42 new members who have recently joined the Association. Their names are listed on page 19.

Birds SA is the trading name of the South Australian Ornithological Association Inc. which was established in 1899. Birds SA affiliated with BirdLife Australia in March 2018. Birds SA is a non-government, non-profit organisation. It obtains its funding from memberships and donations from the public to run its programs and distribute its publications.

Birds SA aims to:

- Promote the conservation of Australian birds and their habitats.
- Encourage interest in, and develop knowledge of, the birds of South Australia.
- Record the results of research into all aspects of bird life.
- Maintain a public fund called the "Birds SA Conservation Fund" for the specific purpose of supporting the Association's environmental objectives.

Calendar of Events

The following is a list of the activities of **BIRDS SA**, **FLEURIEU BIRDERS (FB)** and **PORT AUGUSTA BIRDERS (The Babblers) (PA)** for the next few months.

Further details of all these activities can be found later in 'The Birder'.

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, no plans have been made for Birds SA General meetings. Check the E-Newsletter for details of future meetings and webinars.

Saturday 5 December	FB	Excursion to Beyond Water Ponds, Hayborough
Saturday 12 December	Birds SA	Excursion to Cleland Conservation Park
Sunday 13 December	PA	Excursion to Arid Lands Botanic Gardens
Thursday 17 December	Birds SA	Excursion to Laratinga Wetlands, Mount Barker
Saturday 9 January	Birds SA	Excursion to Paiwalla Wetlands
Sunday 17 January	PA	Excursion to Baroota Reservoir
Thursday 21 January	Birds SA	Excursion to Kyeema Conservation Park
Sunday 31 January	Birds SA	Excursion to Thompson Beach
Saturday 13 February	Birds SA	Excursion to Kinchina Conservation Park
Thursday 18 February	Birds SA	Excursion to Onkaparinga Wetlands
Sunday 21 February	PA	Excursion to Bowman Park
Sunday 28 February	Birds SA	Excursion to Magazine Road Wetlands Dry Creek
Saturday 6 March	FB	Excursion to Langhorne Creek Cemetery and Dog Lake
Saturday 13 March	Birds SA	Excursion to Newland Head Conservation Park
Sunday 14 March	PA	Excursion to Mt. Gullet Beach
Thursday 18 March	Birds SA	Excursion to Barossa Goldfields
Sunday 28 March	Birds SA	Excursion to Hart Road Wetland, Aldinga Beach

Birds SA
Easter Campout 1 to 7 April
Cantara Homestead, Coorong National Park
| Easy |

President's Message

Hi Everyone,

2020 is coming to an end. It has been a most unusual and challenging year for everyone, but especially for the Association (Birds SA). We were able to hold only a couple of General meetings at the Waite Institute at the beginning of the year due to the COVID-19 restrictions. We also found it difficult to run our Management Committee meetings for a while and had to conduct them via 'Zoom' internet meetings.

Now that SA seems to be coming out of the COVID-19 crisis relatively unscathed, we look forward to a great summer of birding and a busy 2021 for Birds SA.

As an Association we managed to keep our members informed as well as we could, and when we were able to, we recommenced our field trips. We also managed to keep producing our publications 'The Birder' and 'The Ornithologist' and to send out regular 'E-newsletters' to keep in touch and inform our members. I would like to thank our Management Committee and helpers for their ongoing commitment and enthusiasm during this difficult year and our many members for understanding how difficult it has been trying to keep the Association's momentum going throughout the year.

Vice President Steve Langley has done a fantastic job in coordinating the 'Webinars' which have been a huge success, with an average of 100 participants at each. This is something we will continue to do in addition to our General Meetings. Our WEA course went ahead again in October/November, despite the restricted participation.

We continued to follow up important conservation issues within the state and to challenge the State Government when and where necessary. I would especially like to thank our other Vice President, Jeff Groves for his dedication and determination as Chair of the Conservation Sub-committee to follow up and investigate many ongoing conservation issues affecting our birds and their habitats in South Australia.

It appears we will be in for a wet summer, so this should be more attractive for the birds and hopefully there will be less bushfires. I would suggest travelling to the outback as it will be beautiful this year and try searching for those elusive desert birds!

Sadly, this year we lost two of our most esteemed birders, Kent Treloar and Trevor Cowie. They will be sadly missed from the birding community. They contributed enormously to the collective knowledge of SA birds.

Unfortunately South Australia's second COVID wave has resulted in the cancellation of our planned 'face to face' last General Meeting for the year at the Adelaide University's Scott Theatre in the city.

Well, enjoy your summer birding and have a great Christmas everyone. All the best for a terrific and COVID free 2021! I look forward to seeing you all back next year at the General Meetings.

John Gitsham



(Cartoons supplied by Lynton Huxley)



Vale Trevor Cowie

Tributes to Trevor Cowie from some friends who knew him well

Long time member, Trevor Cowie, died in August, after a long battle with Parkinson's disease or a similar syndrome. He was a wonderful organiser of field trips and campouts for many years before his ailing health set in. In preference to a funeral, his wife, Hazel, organised a gathering of his friends at her St. Agnes home. More than 40 of Trevor's friends attended and stayed well into the evening, sharing their memories of Trevor.

Many members of Birds SA will remember Trevor in happier times when he exuded enthusiasm and fun, which he shared with those around him. He contributed greatly to our Association and our love of those wonderful creatures, which we celebrate. Tony Russell, who many of us remember and who is, himself, rendered largely inactive nowadays let me know of Trevor's last days.

I know that the Association, as he would probably have called it, will find a fitting way to remember and honour this joyful and lovely man.

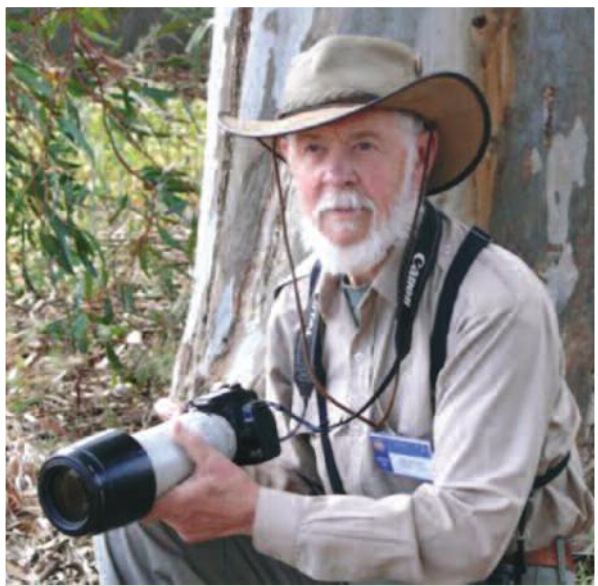
John Hatch



In 2013 Trevor Cowie was awarded an Honorary Life Membership of the Association in recognition of his outstanding contributions to planning, organising and leading many excursions over more than 20 years.

As the Field Trip Coordinator for over 20 years, Trevor encouraged membership of Birds SA through his welcoming approach to new and prospective members. He expanded the programme to encompass a coordinated approach to the outings. Trevor went beyond the call of duty in personally leading the vast majority of trips on Saturdays and Sundays. He collected records of bird species seen on all trips, thus creating a formal record of observations. He took many interstate and overseas visitors to South Australia's wide range of bird habitats.

Trevor acted as the coordinator of Birds SA's participation in BirdLife Australia's Shorebirds 2020 Gulf



Trevor Cowie

St Vincent programme from its inception. This involved recruiting and training a core of volunteers and organising their activities at several locations for a large number of bird counts.

Trevor successfully negotiated access to the Dry Creek Saltfields for members of birding associations in general. He helped to develop the induction process required by the Saltfields' proprietors for anyone entering the facility. He assumed responsibility for conducting inductions and issuing permits so that Saltfields' staff members were not distracted from their normal duties by the need to induct birders and issue permits for access. This process ensured many Birds SA members were able to visit the Saltfields and see a wide variety of shorebirds that they would otherwise have missed.

Many people will remember fondly Trevor's quick wit and jokes that made us all laugh. Many of us can credit Trevor for introducing us to the Birds of South Australia — and Birds SA — through the field trips.

Vale Trevor Cowie (continued)

He was never too busy to point out features of common birds to new birders, imparting his amazing knowledge of many species and the environment.

He will be sadly missed.

Karen Donkin

Many of my first Field Trips were with Trevor.

He made field trips fun for all and made sure those who hadn't seen a particular bird were looked after.

Such a sad, sad day.

Alan Burns

My first Birds SA field trip was to Tolderol with Trevor and Hazel. He made me feel so welcome. A sad day.

Karen Donkin

The notice of Trevor's passing in the Birds SA E-Newsletter naturally concentrated on his long and willing service providing organised outings for members, and he was justly praised for his endless work in this.

Instead of going over the same ground I would like to say a little about the kind of person he was to his friends, how we experienced being out and about with him, because he was indeed a nice man.

So now our dear friend and travelling companion has left us. This makes us all very sad. Trevor was always



Trevor demonstrating a device that would enable birders to carry their telescopes around on their backs.

very friendly and helpful to other birders, comparing experiences with his peers and teaching new birders where to go and what to look for, — often providing transport to anyone who needed a lift. He was always cheerful and full of jokes although some of his puns were not always fully understood by those not used to his often quirky wit.

I spent many hours travelling all over the country with him, as did many of you, sometimes in single vehicles and sometimes in convoy. Often it was a mad twitch from home to lone rarities hundreds of km away on the other side of the country, sometimes driving all the way, sometimes a fly/drive. But with his help we usually found them. Amazing!

It is indeed a sad time. He was a great friend, someone we shall remember for his forever repeated stories and photos of his earlier life in the RAF designing and building stage sets for RAF functions and entertainment, — without apparently realising that we'd heard it all before, but never meaning to stretch our patience.

I remember him forever playing his favourite tubular bells cassette in his car. It would go on and on with him tapping his steering wheel in time to the bells until hooray! We finally reached home.

I remember a couple of times him pulling old vinyl pop records from his cupboards at home and playing them to me and testing my memory as to who the artists were. I enthusiastically remembered the songs but rarely who had sung them. I didn't pass the test.

I remember us waiting for too long for a meal to be served in a Cooktown restaurant, and when it finally came Trevor indignantly sent it back and threatened not to pay because the plate wasn't preheated.

Even though he was generous in giving lifts to people his driving could be quite scary, especially for passengers in the back of a hired minibus yelling at him to slow down as we hurtled dangerously downhill from Atherton to Cairns. We didn't let him drive the next day.

I remember how we had to teach him how to drive up sand dunes without getting stuck half way up, and how one time I had to pull him out of Burra Creek. He'd driven in too fast and his engine had stalled with wet sparkplugs. But that was our Trevor...

Trevor, your passing saddens us very deeply, we all loved you. We shall miss you very much. Goodbye our dear friend.

Tony Russell

Proposed Rocket Launching Facility at Whalers Way, Southern Eyre Peninsula

During September 2020 the Birds SA Conservation Sub-committee became aware of considerable consternation expressed by some members with respect to the satellite launch complex proposed by Southern Launch Space Pty. Ltd., an Adelaide based company. The company plans to locate the launch operations at Whalers Way, a privately owned property at the southern tip of Eyre Peninsula. Key bird species found at this location include Eyre Peninsula Southern Emu-wren and Western Whipbird (listed as Endangered in SA), Osprey (listed as Rare in SA) and White-bellied Sea Eagle (listed as Vulnerable in SA).

The State Planning Commission has issued the company with guidelines for the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for this proposed development.

The Department for Environment and Water recommended that Birds SA speak directly with the company to obtain details of what is proposed.

Following discussions with the proponents and a visit to the Whalers Way site, it has been decided that Birds SA will state its position on this development when the public consultation period for comment on the EIS occurs. It is only then that we will have a complete picture of the environmental issues at the site and the commitments made by Southern Launch Space Pty Ltd to address these issues. We have been advised that the period for comment is likely to be between 15 January and 15 February 2021.

Off-road Vehicles

As previously reported, the outcomes of the Inquiry Into the Use of Off-Road Vehicles were presented to State Parliament in early June this year. On August 1 Birds SA wrote to Minister Speirs requesting advice on which of the recommendations from the Inquiry will be acted upon, by whom and when. At the time of writing (November 3), we have yet to receive a response.

There was some good news to report when, on September 28, the Adelaide Plains Council passed a resolution to implement a trial closure of Thompson Beach to motor vehicles between 5 October 2020 and 30 May 2021. A petition in support of this trial received over 1,100 signatures.

In another development relating to vehicles on beaches, the City of Onkaparinga has sought community feedback on managing vehicle compliance where vehicle access on beaches is available (Moana, Aldinga and Sellicks Beach). Feedback was sought via an online discussion on the various options being considered or by completing a short survey. This consultation closed on 9 November 2020.

Birds SA members were encouraged to voice their concerns about vehicles being allowed on these beaches and the resulting impacts on beach-nesting birds.

On a recent trip to the Eyre Peninsula I noted that motor vehicles are prohibited on the beach at Arno Bay. This appears to be well accepted by the local community.



Sign at Arno Bay

Conservation Sub-committee *(continued)*

I also visited Coffin Bay to catch up with Doug Clarke who for years has advocated that motor vehicles be excluded from Long Beach, Coffin Bay. For many years Doug and his wife Annie undertook surveys and compiled bird records for Long Beach, highlighting the large numbers of Pied Oystercatchers roosting there as well as migratory waders. Sadly, there is still abundant evidence of 4WDs and trail bikes treating the beach like a vehicle test track and ignoring the restriction signs placed on the beach. This highlights the fact that relying on individual councils to manage vehicles on beaches will not be successful until there is an over-arching strategy to identify those coastal areas of high biodiversity value where vehicles should be restricted and where compliance can be reliably enforced. The responsibility for this clearly lies with the State Government.

In the meantime, Birds SA Committee member Davide Gaglio is continuing to conduct interviews and obtain relevant video footage for a documentary on the impacts of off-road vehicles in coastal areas.

Duck and Quail Hunting

On August 20 I participated in a meeting with the Department for Environment and Water (DEW) staff to review the Terms of Reference for the Open Season Stakeholder meeting that takes place at the end of each year. The outcomes of this meeting enable DEW to formulate recommendations, which are provided to the Minister on the bag limits, timing and any restrictions on the Duck & Quail Open Season in the following year.



This discussion covered:

- what has worked well in previous meetings
- suggested improvements
- who should be involved
- sharing of information

Key points raised on behalf of Birds SA were:

- The decision matrix should be the primary tool used to determine recommendations. However, this matrix requires significant revision to the acceptance criteria and the weighting of these criteria in the matrix.
- Stubble Quail population and distribution will never be known as these birds are highly nomadic and extremely difficult to reliably count.
- Panel participants need to see the recommendations that go to the Minister.
- Birds SA questions the validity of the whole process, as a duck hunting season was allowed to proceed in 2020 when Bureau Of Meteorology data revealed catastrophic rainfall measurements in 2019, with large swathes of eastern Australia recording the lowest rainfall on record.
- The ability of DEW to police bag limits and ensure that only target species are shot is dubious at best.

Birds SA will continue to argue for the cessation of this archaic activity in SA on both conservation and animal welfare grounds. We see no place in the 21st century for human activity that inevitably leads to native birds being maimed, as shown in the accompanying photograph.

Jeff Groves

Conservation Sub-committee

This Pink-eared Duck was a duck-hunter's victim

(Image provided by 'Treasures not Targets' Coalition)

'On The Right Track'

A documentary account of the concerns regarding off-road vehicle use in coastal areas.

With its inherent diversity of breathtaking landscapes, and extraordinary and unique wildlife, South Australia provides a rich abundance of opportunities for personal enjoyment in and with nature. Amongst its many attractions, our state is renowned for its pristine beaches and stunning coastal ecosystem. This coastal environment is an important and irreplaceable natural asset. It supports the survival of several species of animals. In particular, it harbours crucial habitats for beach nesting birds and migratory shorebirds. The community and social value of the coastline is also significant as a destination and recreational attraction.

Birds SA does not support the use of vehicles on beaches, primarily because of the detrimental impact on and disturbance caused to birds. It is Birds SA's intention to raise awareness among the community, including off-road vehicle users, about the potential ecological damage and associated costs caused by off-the-track driving. Birds SA has initiated a project, strongly supported by BirdLife Australia, to produce a short documentary highlighting the issues associated with off-road vehicle use in coastal areas. I am leading the production. Over the last few months I have recorded several interviews with community and interest-group representatives, and collected a wealth of footage. The challenge for me now is to carry on with conducting more interviews and collecting further footage of both migratory shorebirds and beach nesting birds, and the impacts of off-road vehicle use.

If you have any good quality footage of resident beach nesting or migratory shorebirds, or of the impacts of off-road vehicle use in coastal areas, and you are happy to provide the footage for the documentary, please contact me at swift.terns@gmail.com.

The documentary will be titled 'On The Right Track'. Its principal concern will be to raise awareness of the detrimental effects of non-regulated off-road driving. The documentary will have multiple exposure channels facilitated through partners' social media platforms, including websites, Facebook pages, YouTube channels and campaigns. The documentary will also be shared on blogs and podcasts, radio and television, and advertised in magazines and newsletters to garner public support for the changes

needed to address irresponsible use of off-road vehicles. Any support you are willing and able to offer will be much appreciated.

Davide Gaglio

Nature Festival 2020

The Nature Festival 2020 was organised by a coalition of individuals and organisations under the name of Amongst It. It ran from the 25th of September to the 4th of October. This 10-day program included activities and experiences dedicated to celebrating South Australian nature in positive, creative and meaningful ways.

Birds SA was involved over the last weekend in September, starting on Saturday the 26th of September, with an event organised by the local Landcare group and

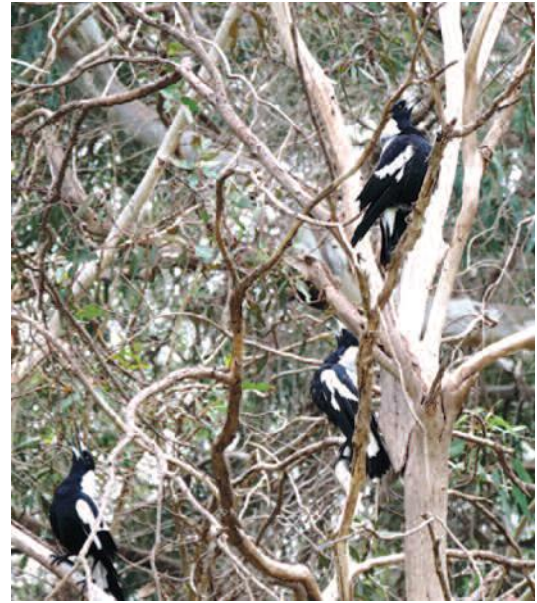


Family birdwatching in Belair National Park, part of Nature Festival 2020.

(Photo: Lou Jayleigh)



Setting off on a bird walk—part of the Nature Festival in Belair National Park on 27th September.



There were plenty of Australian Magpies in the Gums Reserve.

(Photo: Alan Burns, October 2020)

held at Brookside Cellars in The Gums Reserve. A Birds SA display was set up in the hall and I gave a talk on attracting birds to backyards. Sue Winwood, Kathy Moore and Cynthia Pyle chatted to visitors about Birds SA and birding and the event included Sophie Thomson, who gave a talk and workshop on bee hotels. There were other activities organised throughout The Gums Reserve, including the planting of a number of local native seedlings.

On the Sunday, Lou Jayleigh organised a number of public bird walks in the Belair National Park. A display was set up close to the entrance carpark and a good number of Birds SA members took the opportunity to highlight the varied local bird life to members of the public and to promote the work and activities of the Association. The short walks followed the trail around the small wetlands and Birds SA members enjoyed pointing out a number of birds to young families, including many inquisitive children.

Three walks were organised for the morning and all were fully booked, soon after being announced. The weather was perfect for families to participate. Lynton Huxley and Miles Ramm led the hour-long walks. Birds SA members who participated and helped Lou Jayleigh make the event a success included David and Minnie Robertson, Stephen and Miles Ramm, Lynton and Karen Huxley, myself and

Richard Woodland. Birds SA binoculars were put to good use by the visitors and highlights included Grey Teal ducklings, a Koala, Eastern Rosellas, Rainbow Lorikeets and Little Pied Cormorants that were enjoying the sunshine.

A follow-up event was held on the 17th of October for the Campbelltown Landcare group. Kate Buckley and I led a bird walk through The Gums Reserve, recording the birds seen. Although The Gums has many ancient River Red Gums along Third Creek at Tranmere, relatively few birds were seen. Australian Magpies and Noisy Miners were common, but some of the residents such as Laughing Kookaburras were noticeably missing. The cool and overcast weather didn't help the birding and it is hoped that the work being done to revegetate the creekline will be successful in bringing back many of the smaller native birds which were so obviously missing from the landscape during the bird walk. This walk highlighted the importance of having a rich diversity in plant species and layers, from ground cover species through to the larger shrubs and trees. To finish the morning off, Kate Buckley gave a passionate talk about the importance of birds to society and some of the basics of birdwatching to enthralled local Landcare group members.

Alan Burns



Hybrid Fairy-wrens

Peter Haines (*SA Ornithologist* 39, 87-89, 2014) reported the presence of three coloured Fairy-wrens at Hart Lagoon, Waikerie, that were identified as White-winged x Superb Fairy-wren hybrids.



White-winged x Superb Fairy-wren Hybrid
(Photo: Peter Haines, at Hart Lagoon, Waikerie 2014)

There have been few reports of hybridisation among Fairy-wrens but one cited by Peter was of a Redbacked x Superb Fairy-wren hybrid observed by Malcolm Wilson (*Sunbird* 13, 38-39, 1983) south of Dalby Queensland.

It is quite a coincidence therefore that on 3 October 2020, Glenn Roman of Tweed Heads South saw and photographed a White-winged x Superb Fairy-wren hybrid at Oakey, near Towoomba, Queensland, only 51 km southeast of Dalby.



White-winged x Superb Fairy-wren Hybrid
(Photo: Glenn Roman, at Oakley, Queensland, October 2020)

The close resemblance between the Waikerie and Oakey birds is readily seen, although the latter is undergoing moult and its underparts are less extensively coloured. It is perhaps a younger bird.



The Oakey bird 20 days later. Note tail growth and colouring up of underparts. (Photo: Glenn Roman)

The Oakey bird was in the company of a male Redbacked Fairy-wren but Glenn has recorded the White-winged Fairy-wren within one km and the Superb within three.

Interspecific hybridisation is most common near the distributional limit of one or both parental species, where conspecific mate-choice is limited. This criterion applies to the White-winged Fairy-wren at both Waikerie and Oakey, and to the Red-backed Fairy-wren at Dalby.

Andrew Black

Bush Stone-curlew (*Burhinus grallarius*)

This bird is referred to in the 4th Edition of 'A Field List of the Birds of South Australia' as being "widespread" and "rarely observed".

On October 11th 2020 Catherine Attwood, Teacher at Bordertown Area School and resident of Bordertown, startled one of these birds in the school grounds. Bush Stone-curlews are not all that unusual to the area, although they do seem to be on the brink of local extinction. The bird startled by Catherine caught her attention because it was banded on both legs (Red over White). The banding of birds is a key activity in ornithological studies and provides critical information on the distribution and population status of birds.

Some Unusual Sightings! *(continued)*



The bird observed by Catherine was banded by registered bander Maureen Christie *(ABBBS) as a bird in the first year of its life at the Bordertown Cemetery grounds in July 2005. This indicates that this individual had survived in the wild for at least 15 years making it a record for the species.



Graham Pizzey in 'A Field Guide to the Birds of Australia' noted that the Stone-curlews are "large aberrant waders known also as stone-plovers or thickknees. They have long legs and thick "knees" but no hind toes — the feet are partly webbed. With the large yellow eyes typical of many nocturnal birds, the wailing call of the bird is celebrated in Australian literature. It gives rise to the Bush Stone-curlews having the Aboriginal name of "willaroo"."

Bands are issued only for approved studies as banders must have demonstrated high-level skills in catching and handling birds and must have a permit from the State Wildlife authority.

Rodney Attwood

* (ABBBS) is Australia Bird and Bat Banding Scheme

Bush Stone-curlew

(From the BirdLife Australia website)



Nankeen Kestrel

(Photo: Bob Daly, at Farina, Flinders Ranges, 24 September 2020)

Bird Life amongst the Ruins

Bob and I were on our way back from Witchelina, Nature Foundations outback station property, when we called in to Farina for 20 minutes only. We did not expect to find any interesting birds, as we were there just to see the famous underground bakery and the old ruins.

This is the side view of the old ruin. The Kestrel repeatedly landed on the left edge of the building. Bob photographed it as it sat on the third chimney from the right.

The photo shows how well the Nankeen Kestrel camouflages into the old ruins. We think it had a nest nearby in one of the holes in the old stone building. Shows that you just never know what will surprise you.

Once a Birder always a Birder!

Wendy Phillips





Inland Dotterel Sighting

An unusual record of Inland Dotterels on the beach near Ceduna in January 2019.

It was the third and final day of a record-breaking heatwave in South Australia. On January 22nd 2019, the thermometer hit 43C, and the following day the temperature broke existing records at 48.4C! Then if that wasn't already bad enough, the next day January 24th the temperature peaked at an all-time record of 49C; and this was on the coast! The strong north wind was blowing the heat straight in off the desert, 40km north of Ceduna.

Mid-morning on the 24th (it was already a balmy 41C) I decided to have a look on the nearby beach before it got too hot. I grabbed my scope and camera and set out hoping to see Oriental Plovers, as I had previously seen them in the area during earlier heat waves.

I parked the car and began walking along the beach. The tide was still quite low, exposing approximately 200m of tidal sand flats. Immediately I could see quite a few of the regular wader species, Red-necked Stint, Curlew Sandpiper, Common Greenshank etc. feeding on the flats, but no Oriental Plover.

I walked a further 500m along the beach and with the naked eye I noticed a loose cluster of birds in the distance, consisting of about a dozen individuals that I couldn't quite identify. Moving closer to within 150m, I put the scope on them and was surprised to discover it was a flock of Inland Dotterels! The birds were not feeding but appeared to be simply standing on the damp sand in an effort to keep cool. I observed them for a short while through the scope, counting a total of 16 individuals, before deciding to move closer in the hope of getting a photograph.



An Inland Dotterel *(Photo: Andrew Brooks, at Ceduna, January 2019)*

As I slowly moved in, the birds made very little attempt to move away from me which I thought was a bit odd and they allowed me to get within 10m of them. Being that close I could see the birds were exhausted, with a couple of them looking like they were about to buckle at the knees and collapse! The inland plains where they had come from must have been a scorching 50C. I sat and watched them for a few moments, took my photographs and then backed away, not wishing to disturb them any further. By now it was mid-day and the heat was becoming very unpleasant, so I made a hasty retreat to the safety of my house.

That night a cool change moved across the state bringing welcome relief from the heat. The following morning, I went back to the beach to check on the welfare of the Inland Dotterels but they were nowhere to be seen. I assumed they returned back inland with the cooler conditions.

Andrew Brooks
Ceduna



A flock of Inland Dotterels on the beach at Ceduna
(Photo: Andrew Brooks, January 2019)



2020 began with great optimism for the year's FAIBS program. However, as COVID limitations, then openings, evolved with each month, so did the challenge to adapt. On top of this, in April we had to accept the huge gap left by the passing of our Treasurer, Joe Dafoe, whose expertise, generosity and friendship continue to be sorely missed.

Through winter and spring we were able to run socially distanced habitat restoration plantings in areas of the Adelaide International Bird Sanctuary (AIBS) around Middle Beach, Thompson Beach and Light Beach. Three events in October and November were run to view returning migratory birds and resident species, while also removing hundreds of tree guards from previous plantings. After various levels of isolation and restriction, it was wonderful to join others in the outdoors again, doing what is both necessary and congruent with our birding passions.

A recent highlight was the celebration of 2020 World Migratory Bird Day. On October 10th we shared 'scopes and binoculars with all-comers to view the early northern hemisphere arrivals to Thompson Beach. The weather was perfect and we were treated to Red-necked Stints, Common Greenshanks, Ruddy Turnstones, Grey-tailed Tattlers, Curlew Sandpipers and Grey Plovers. These birds shared their shores with the local residents that included Great Egrets, Australian Pelicans, Pied Oystercatchers, Red-capped Plovers, Pacific Gulls, and Whiskered, Crested, Fairy and Caspian Terns. Wheeling above were two Black Kites and a Whistling Kite, no doubt also interested in what we saw sunning itself high in some bare branches adjacent to the claypans – a Bearded Dragon!



Hungry migratory Sharp-tailed Sandpipers near Thompson Beach

(Photo: Mary-Ann Trigt, October 2020)

Several of our members have been involved in Shorebird Counts this year, with considerable excitement being generated by the arrival of 13 Eastern Curlews and a pleasing number of Bartailed Godwits (65) to Port Prime during October. More recent news is the approval by the Adelaide Plains Council of the motion to trial banning all vehicles from the Thompson Beach and Port Prime foreshores, apart from those required for DEW emergency and boat launching needs. This trial, also supported by Birds SA, applies over the summer period while migratory and beach-nesting birds are present. We will be keen to see the results of this long overdue trial to which monitoring criteria will be applied and evaluated.

Friends of Adelaide International Birds Sanctuary *(continued)*

Other very welcome news is the appointment of Warrick Barnes as an AIBS Park Ranger, along with Indigenous Ranger Phillip Dudley. In future, 3 rangers will be assigned to the area, along with the newly appointed Adelaide Plains Coastal Conservation Officer. FAIBS will work closely with them to identify ways to share projects and events beneficial to coastal habitats and birds during 2021. This year a FAIBS representative was also invited to join the AIBS Partnership Group, adding another link to local and environmental groups active in the stewardship of AIBS.

During 2020 FAIBS has continued its contributions to local publications as well as to on-line news posted internationally by the East Asian-Australasian Flyway Partnership based in Korea. By publicising our organisation and events through these channels, we hope to both inform and educate more people more widely about the very special features of AIBS and its birds. Feedback to the FAIBS Facebook page has indicated that these efforts are extending our reach.

The final event for 2020 will be the FAIBS AGM to be held at the St Kilda Community Hall on December 5th, from 10am to 12.30pm. Tony Flaherty will be the guest speaker, highlighting why the Gulf St Vincent area deserves renown and care for its landscape and birds, both now and into the future. All are welcome! Your RSVPs sent to faibssa@gmail.com are necessary because of limits on hall capacity due to COVID.

As always, we are hugely grateful for the input of our volunteers, who this year, unusual as it has been, have contributed many hours to habitat care and bird viewing and education sessions. Thank you to everyone, including Birds SA, who have supported FAIBS endeavours. Your input is absolutely vital to our continuing efforts of to maintain and improve habitat and populations of both local and migratorybirds in the area.

A special thank you too to Ranger Erik Dahl for the wonderful, skilled and dedicated support he has contributed to our group over the past two years. We look forward to seeing more of Erik in AIBS in the future.

Anna Woods

Volunteers with tree guards at Thompson's beach

October 2020

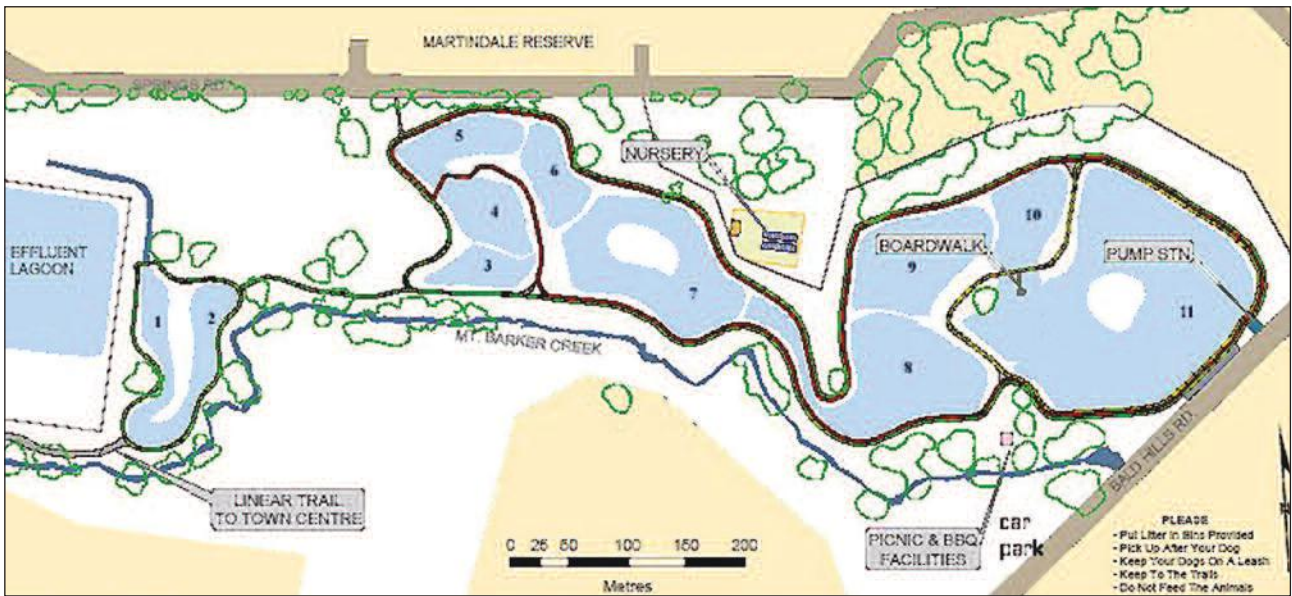


Ruddy Turnstone

(Photo: Mary-Ann Van Trigt, at Thompson's Beach, October 2020)



Laratinga Twenty Years On



Laratinga Plants Map

LOCATION: Bald Hills Road, Mount Barker; also accessible from Springs Road.

AREA: Total area of 16 hectares, with 11 hectares under water.

At Laratinga from December 1999 to March 2000, 21 species of birds were observed by the Greencorps group 3058. (This group was involved with the original plantings in the Wetland.)

A Birds SA bird count on the 23rd of January, 2010, recorded 61 species, and a total count of 1261 birds, with 886 being water birds: so you can see that this Wetland has attracted many birds since its construction twenty years ago, and more than 76 species are known to have bred in the area.

Laratinga now has recorded 160 bird species. Between 30 and 61 may be seen on any one day during a walk around this Mount Barker Wetland.

Highlights of my time spent bird watching at Laratinga have been spotting birds and being able to photograph them, such as the Rose Robin and the rare Australasian Bittern.

Migratory birds such as the Latham's (Japanese) Snipe visit from Japan in the later part of the year, and return home in February/March the following year.

Three species of Crake — the Baillon's, Australian Spotted and the Spotless Crake are regularly seen at Laratinga,

and all three species have bred there. Crakes and the Latham's Snipe are most easily seen when the water levels are low.

There is excellent access to all eleven ponds; and the two fenced effluent lagoons that at times hold large groups of ducks are relatively easy to view. The rare Freckled Duck may sometimes be spotted on these lagoons along with the occasional Black Swan. My personal favourites are the Pink-eared and Blue-billed Ducks.

The Wetland is very popular with walkers and cyclists, and the birdlife has become quite accustomed to the disturbance, making the area ideal for photography or just plain bird watching.

The Mount Barker Council showed wonderful foresight in setting up Laratinga two decades ago to act as a STEDS system to treat effluent water. I believe it now rates as one of the best manmade Wetlands in Australia. Unfortunately, recent rains in other areas have led to many of the water birds moving out, but hopefully they'll return when other areas dry out.

Visitors will find that the amenities are excellent at Laratinga, with two barbecues and undercover seating and tables. Two uniquely designed toilets are also provided.

Visiting Laratinga provides a great experience and a refreshing look at birdlife in the wild, and brings out a bit of the ornithologist in everybody.

Kevin Williams

The Pelican Islands — Saving the Pelicans

An achievement of Birds SA when it was known as (S.A.O.A)

The following story is adapted from an article published in:

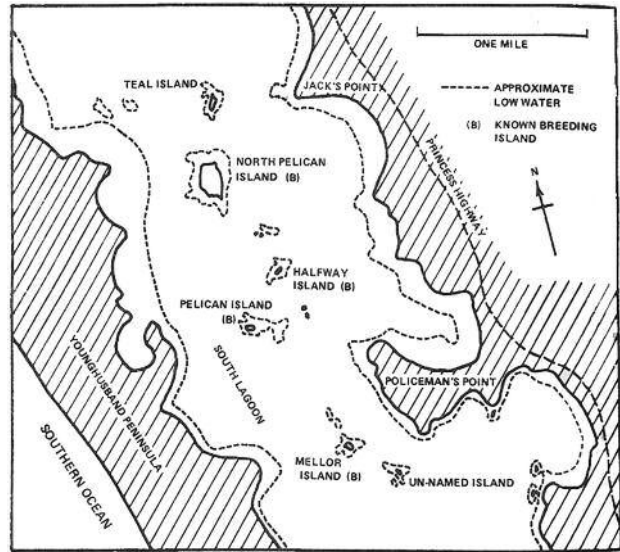
EUROPEAN HERITAGE OF THE COORONG

Alex McDonald, Scientific Officer

A general survey of the sites of Early European Heritage of the area now comprising the Coorong National Park and Coorong Game Reserve.

Penny Rudduck, *National Parks and Wildlife Service*. May, 1982.

Fishermen considered Pelicans to be pests due to the birds' habit of raiding fishing nets. In an effort to protect their interests, local fishermen massacred nesting birds and their young, particularly on the Pelican Islands. By the turn of the twentieth century, the decline in pelican numbers in the Coorong area was of great concern to the South Australian Ornithological Association (S.A.O.A) and in particular to the Society's Secretary, Mr. Mellor, from whom Mellor Island takes its name. "From 1904 to 1919 the S.A.O.A. leased these islands, then from 1919 to 1962 the S.A.O.A. paid a rental of one shilling a year for an annual licence in an attempt to prevent fishermen from illegally destroying eggs (Chapman, Delroy and Noye 1974 p. 108). From about 1910 the S.A.O.A. employed a warden, a local resident named Goldfinch and although some illegal destruction of eggs continued, the problem of declining pelican numbers was largely overcome. In 1963, the six islands: Teal Island, North Pelican Island, Pelican Island, Halfway Island, Mellor Island, and an unnamed island to the south; together with all waters for 7 chains from high water mark around the islands were declared Prohibited Areas and were administered by the Department of Fisheries and Fauna Conservation and from 1972 by the National Parks and Wildlife Service.

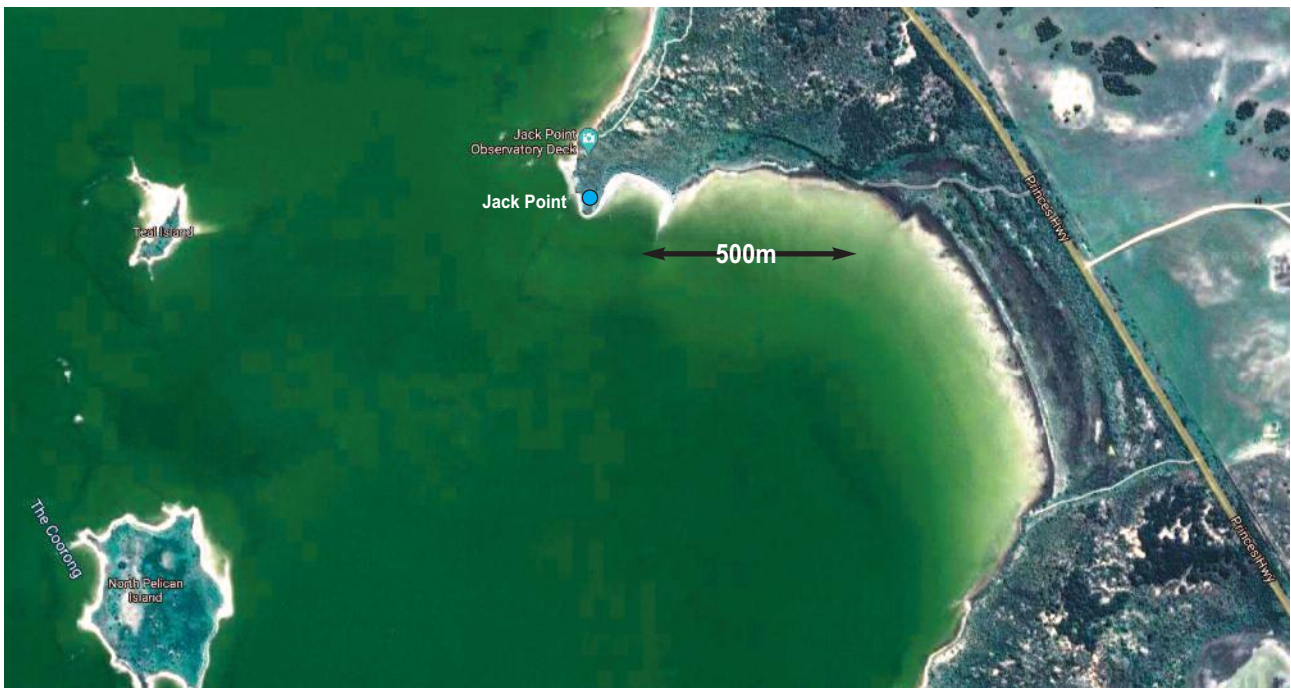


THE PELICAN ISLANDS, COORONG

Island and an unnamed island to the south; together with all waters for 7 chains from high water mark around the islands were declared Prohibited Areas and were administered by the Department of Fisheries and Fauna Conservation and from 1972 by the National Parks and Wildlife Service.

The map was obtained from an article entitled Aquatic birds of the Coorong published in 1974 in an old book "The Coorong" by John Noye.

John Gitsham



Location of Jack Point Observatory (from Google Maps)

The Pelican Islands—Saving the Pelicans *(continued)*



**Teal Island,
seen from
Jack Point
Observatory**

*(Photo: Cynthia Pyle,
2016)*

The Pelican Islands today

The following information was obtained from National Park notices near Jack Point — the viewing point for the islands.

Six limestone islands are located in the South Lagoon of the Coorong between Woods Well and Salt Creek. Collectively they are referred to as the Pelican Islands. The height of these islands above high water varies between 0.3m and 6.0m and the majority of the islands are less than 0.5ha in area. Their vegetation consists of

sparse salt tolerant annuals and other small plants. Non-native species are also present.

Pelican Islands represent a regular historic Australian Pelican breeding location in South Australia. Access to all islands in the Coorong, including the Pelican Islands is prohibited.

Teal Island can be seen from a viewing area, Jack Point, Observatory Deck, from which I took the photograph.

Cynthia Pyle

New Members

We welcome the following 42 new members who have joined the Association in the past few months.

Helen Parsons	Victor Harbor	Max Arney	Penola
Gini Lee	Oratunga Station	Lucas Britza.....	Lock
Martin Butler	Adelaide	Norman George	Uraidla
David Cann	Adelaide	Hannah Fairbairn.....	Mawson Lakes
Michael Greenshields.....	Salter Springs	John Wynne	Glenelg
Dylan Santich.....	Brighton	Ian Bassham	Saint Peters
Bob Hamilton-Bruce.....	Nairne	Rebecca Goodwyn	Gawler
Dawn Borcharadt.....	Murray Bridge	Margaret Apsey	Malvern
Tim Milne.....	Wistow	Noha Gad	Ingle Farm
Yahna Pal.....	Valley View	Mark Allcock	Henley Beach
Vanessa White	Adelaide	Suzanne Lee.....	Kent Town DC
Pamela Gillen.....	Meningie	Gregory Powell	Aldgate
Randall Bates & Diane Fury.....	Hallett Cove	Geoff Bryant	North Adelaide
Mark & Debra Richards.....	Victor Harbor	Trevor Diment.....	Glenside
John Hill & Andrea Dale	Goodwood	Sue Graham	Rostrevor
Greg Johnston.....	Belair	Miriam Amery-Gale	North Adelaide
Alan Sizer	Darlington	Graham Winch.....	Marino
Meagan Daniel	Kadina	Rachel Yendle	Kensington Gardens
Jonathan Sims	Gawler	Matthew Polatayko	Kilkenny
Ian Tyrer	Adelaide	Heather Davis.....	Uraidla
Rachel Short	Mount Barker	Philip Knight.....	West Lakes Shore

If your name has inadvertently been omitted from this list, please contact our Membership Officer, Alan Burns. His mobile number is 0411 595 910.

We thank our members for persevering with us while we sorted out the many enrolment and renewal issues that have arisen.

Birds SA Conservation Fund Project

This report describes one of the projects that Birds SA's Conservation Fund has supported.

The effects of high temperatures on the breeding behaviour of the Jacky Winter during the nestling period.



Fig 1: **Jacky Winter nestlings** (Photo: Belinda Cale)

Birds of the hot arid and semi-arid regions of Australia are particularly vulnerable to climate change because they are exposed to thermal stress (both hot and cold) in conditions in which food and water are unpredictable. At the hot end of the temperature scale, birds must use evaporative cooling via panting to maintain body temperature below lethal limits whenever air temperatures approach or exceed body temperature (about 40C). This generates conflict between the need to conserve water to avoid dehydration and reliance on evaporative water loss to avoid hyperthermia.

Prolonged exposure to high temperatures can also reduce breeding success via increasing the cost of caring for offspring. For example, the need to shade eggs and nestlings to prevent lethal overheating when temperatures reach the mid to high 30s is costly for parents, leading to high rates of evaporative cooling via

panting and loss of body weight (condition). In addition, chicks exposed to high temperatures tend to develop more slowly and may be underweight at fledging which is associated with lower survival. Moreover, in extreme temperatures chicks may even succumb to heat stress leading to breeding failure. Despite growing concerns for the persistence of arid zone birds in the face of rising temperatures few studies have investigated how high temperatures affect reproduction.

Our study assessed how exposure to high temperatures affected breeding success and parental body condition in a wild population of Jacky Winters (*Microeca fascians*), a small insectivorous bird (12-16g) belonging to the robin family (Petroicidae). These birds are permanent residents in the semi-arid mallee woodland on Calperum Station Reserve in South Australia, a site managed by the Australian Landscape Trust for its biodiversity values.

Birds SA Conservation Fund Project *(continued)*

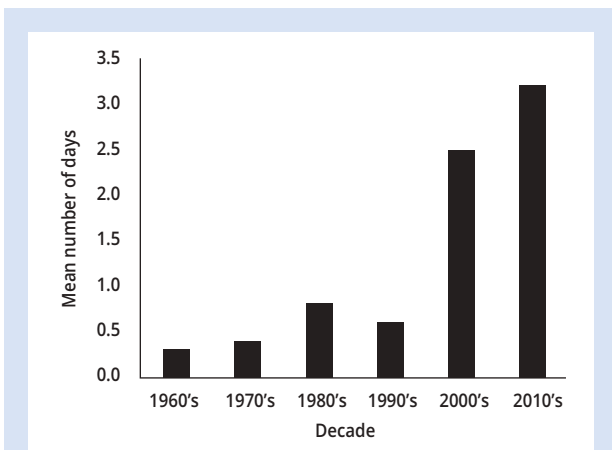


Fig 2: Mean annual number of days with maximum temperature $\geq 42^{\circ}\text{C}$ during the Jacky Winters' breeding season (November-December) by decade (Remark; Bureau of Meteorology)

Calperum Station is part of the OzFlux Land- Atmosphere observatory station network (operated by the Terrestrial Ecosystem Research Network) so very detailed weather data is collected on site. Temperatures in this area have been rising over recent decades with many more days above 42°C during the breeding season, a temperature known to cause heat stress in this species (Fig 2).

We focused on 40 breeding groups, some 90 wild individuals, each of which is colour-banded so we can follow their fates, and those of their offspring, over time (Fig 3). We followed all the breeding attempts of each group and monitored chick growth and survival (Fig 1). An important part of this study is the habituation of a subset of adult birds who we have trained to stand on an electronic scale in exchange for a small food reward, a



Fig 3: A colour-banded Jacky Winter (Photo: Janet Gardner)



Fig 4: A wild Jacky Winter perched on an electronic balance for weighing (Photo: Lynda Sharpe)

mealworm (Fig 4). This allows us to observe their behavior very closely and monitor daily weight change in response to changes in weather and investment in breeding attempts.

We found that Jacky Winters employ a number of strategies to ameliorate the effects of high temperatures, including modifying nest attendance behaviour. At high temperatures females increased their nest attendance, switching from brooding to shading chicks when temperatures rose into the low 30Cs. Increasing nest attendance at high temperatures was costly for parents who panted while shading as temperature increased. Both parents lost weight on days with maximum temperatures above 35°C , but females, who did most of the shading and all the brooding, lost weight over the course of the nestling period, presumably because they expended more effort than did males. Despite attempts to protect their chicks from high temperatures, chicks grew more slowly on days when air temperatures reached the mid 30s and those that were exposed to temperatures above 38°C were smaller at fledging. Under heatwave conditions (above the mid 40Cs), parents abandoned their nests entirely, and all nestlings died.

Our results suggest that the increasing frequency, intensity and earlier arrival of extreme heat events poses a major threat to Jacky Winters; increasing parental costs and lowering reproductive success. This raises concerns about the persistence of arid zone birds in the face of rising temperatures.

We thank Birds SA for their support of this work.

Dr Janet Gardner (supervisor) and Kevin Yang (Honours student),
Australian National University

Past Excursions

Birds SA

Sunday 2nd August Altona Landcare

Twelve people gathered on a clear and sunny day for the excursion. After a pep talk about the new Birds SA COVID-Safe Plan and related contact tracing requirements, we set off to make the usual clockwise traverse of the area.

Rufous Whistlers (10) were very prominent from the start. A Grey Shrikethrush (6) was calling near the entrance and seemed to accompany us as we walked up to the Friends shed. We heard Laughing Kookaburras (5) calling several times but didn't see them as they were always in the distance. Likewise Peaceful Doves (3), although one was finally spotted towards the end of the walk.

Red-rumped Parrots (8) and Musk Lorikeets (6) were hanging about in the large eucalypts on the way down to the river viewing seat and Welcome Swallows (10) and Tree Martins (20) were wheeling about and very probably nesting in hollows in the same trees. When arrived near the seat we hoped to see Diamond Firetails but they were a no show that day. Sulphur-crested Cockatoos (15) were making a racket down along the river and 1 Little Corella and 10 Galahs, a Masked Lapwing, 2 Maned Ducks and 2 Pacific Black Ducks were also seen.

Other birds recorded during the walk included Grey Fantails (8), Common Bronzewing (3), Fan-tailed Cuckoo (1), Adelaide Rosellas (10), Brown Treecreeper (1), Superb Fairywrens (10), Eastern Spinebills (10), Little Wattlebirds (2), Red Wattlebirds (10), Spotted Pardalotes (6), Striated Pardalotes (20), Yellow Thornbills (20), Yellow-rumped Thornbills (8), Weebills (20), White-browed Babblers (8), Grey Currawongs (6), Australian Magpies (6), Australian Golden Whistlers (2), Willie Wagtail (1), Magpie-lark (1), Little Raven (4), Silvereyes (6), and Mistletoebirds (6).

Other honeyeaters included New Holland (30), White-plumed (6) and Yellow-faced (10). Of course, everyone was on the lookout for Red-capped Robins (6) who made regular appearances especially during the second half of the walk. The only feral species seen were 1 Common Blackbird and 1 Common Starling. Altogether 43 species were recorded for the day.

Ali Ben Kahn

Birds SA

Saturday 15th August Scott Creek CP

Thirteen members attended this excursion in really good weather conditions. There are many walking trails giving a variety of vegetation and habitats and we moved our walk to take advantage of some local knowledge and also see some bird banding being undertaken. Birds being banded by experts allowed us some very close-up views and an appreciation of the work required to safely collect data from each bird before its release.

The sightings for the day totalled 36 species, with the most abundant being New Holland Honeyeater (40), Red Wattlebird (20), Superb Fairy-wren (15) and Crescent Honeyeater (12). We also saw Varied Sittellas, Australian Golden Whistlers, Scarlet Robins, Striated Pardalotes, White-browed Scrubwrens and Buff-rumped Thornbills.

Lynton Huxley

Port Augusta Bird Group (the Babblers)

August Excursion Hiltaba Nature Reserve

Saturday 15th

It was a cool, windy day with scattered clouds when 4 birders met at the tanks near the Iron Knob turnoff south of Pt. Augusta. Three were from Pt. Augusta and one was from Mambray Creek. We drove to Iron Knob and turned off onto the dirt road to Hiltaba. Here we met 2 more of our group of birders, from Whyalla and Pt. Neill. The road was good with some wet patches left after recent rains. Even though there had been some rain the countryside was looking dry and bare apart from the tinge of green produced by the meagre annuals' plant growth and the flush of new growth on the perennial plants. We stopped to look for Western Grasswrens at White Dam where we had found them on other trips but none were to be seen. Around the dam there were Magpielarks, Australian Ravens, Willie Wagtails, Banded Lapwings, Wood Ducks, Australian Grebes, Black-fronted Dotterels, Welcome Swallows, White-browed Babblers, Southern Whitefaces, Black-faced Cuckoo-shrikes, Crested Pigeons, Spiny-cheeked and Singing Honeyeaters, Galahs, Mulga Parrots, Port

Past Excursions *(continued)*



Australian Ringneck
(Photo: Bernie Haase, at Hiltaba Nature Reserve, August 2020)



Black-eared Cuckoo *(Photo: Bernie Haase, at Hiltaba Nature Reserve, August 2020)*



Splendid Fairy-wren, singing
(Photo: Jude Owen, at Hiltaba Nature Reserve, August 2020)

Lincoln Parrots, Little Corellas, Blue Bonnets, Purple-backed Fairywrens and Common Starlings. White-plumed Honeyeaters were in the trees and are on the extreme edge of their range. As we walked around looking for the Grasswrens a Brown Falcon, Australian Magpies and Elegant Parrots flew past while White-winged Fairywrens, a Rufous Fieldwren and a pair of Stubble Quail moved about in the bushes. We had smoko and drove on to Nonning to look at another Grasswren site but still with no luck. We had lunch further on near a dry dam and found a Crested Bellbird, Southern Whiteface and the usual honeyeaters. We still had a fair distance to go so we drove at a faster pace to get to Hiltaba before dark. There wasn't much bird life around due to the poor condition of the country, the result of the drought and grazing pressures. As we entered the Hiltaba nature reserve the landscape improved, with more vegetation on the ground and kangaroos and wombats seen regularly. There were also more birds flying around. We arrived at the homestead area in the late afternoon and



Weebill *(Photo: Jude Owen, Hiltaba Nature Reserve, August 2020)*

settled into our accommodation. We met another member of our group who had already been at Hiltaba for a few days and the rostered-on manager, who is also part of our group. The manager had planned a path around the property for us to go on the next day. A total of 28 bird species were seen, with the Stubble Quail and the White-plumed Honeyeaters on the edge of their range being the birds of the day.

Sunday 16th

It was another cool, partly cloudy morning with a slight breeze when we did some morning birding around the homestead area. The Australian Magpies had been calling before sunrise and Grey Butcherbirds and Yellow-throated Miners soon joined them. Welcome Swallows and Willie Wagtails darted around chasing insects while Crested Pigeons, Australian Ravens and Magpie Larks flew around. Walking along a short gully behind the homestead we found White-browed Babblers, Grey Shrike-thrushes, Spiny-cheeked and Grey-fronted Honeyeaters, Galahs and Mulga Parrots. Emus wandered about the area taking little notice of us. After everyone had finished their breakfast we joined the manager and drove along a track to look at some rare acacias on a hill and saw a pair of Major Mitchell's Cockatoos fly past. We drove on to an open bluebush plain sighting Australian Pipits, a Nankeen Kestrel, Southern Whitefaces and Black-faced Woodswallows. A cold wind was blowing across the open plain and it was a dry landscape, so we didn't see many birds there. We continued on until we entered a valley called the Pillars valley. We stopped for smoko and birding and added White-fronted Chats, White-fronted Honeyeaters, Wedge-tailed Eagles, Tree Martins and Peregrine Falcons to the day's list. Our next

Past Excursions *(continued)*



Gilbert's Whistler

(Photo: Bernie Haase, Hiltaba Nature Reserve, August 2020)



Red-capped robin, in flight

(Photo: Jude Owen, at Hiltaba Nature Reserve, August 2020)



Rufous Whistler

(Photo: Jude Owen, at Hiltaba Nature Reserve, August 2020)

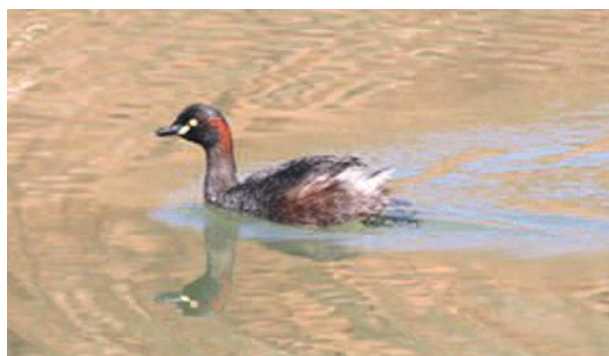
stop was near Pretty Point on the edge of a bluebush plain with a tree lined creek following the base of some hills. The place was alive with birds. Australian Pipits, Southern Whitefaces, White-winged Fairywrens and Australian Ravens were in the open areas while in the scrubby areas there were Turquoise and Purple-backed Fairywrens, Crested Bellbirds, White-browed Babblers, Port Lincoln and Mulga Parrots, Grey Shrikethrushes, Spiny-cheeked and White-fronted Honeyeaters, Inland, Yellow-rumped and Chestnut-rumped Thornbills and Red-capped Robins. The taller trees along the creek yielded Rufous Whistlers, Weebills, Brown Currawongs and Black-faced Cuckooshrikes. We ate our lunches at the Pretty Point picnic area, where our guide had to leave us. We drove on and stopped in some mallee scrub, finding Striated Pardalotes, Yellow-plumed Honeyeaters, Jacky Winters, Tree Martins and a Brown Falcon, plus more Rufous Whistlers and Thornbills. We drove on to the North Wall area and took a wrong turn finding ourselves at the end of a narrow, steep and rough dead end track which took some careful manoeuvrings to get out of. Along the track we stumbled across a family of Rufous Treecreepers which entertained us for a while. Driving on over some rough rocky ridges we stopped to photograph some Red-capped Robins and Inland and Chestnut-rumped Thornbills before descending down a steep and very rocky track, which took some more tricky driving. We left the hills and headed for the homestead stopping to take photos of wombats on the way. A total of 43 bird species was found for the day, with the Major Mitchell's Cockatoos, Peregrine Falcons and Rufous Treecreepers being the birds of the day plus a mention of the spectacular Turquoise Fairywrens.

Monday 17th

After breakfast and a short walk around the stone-walled dam behind the homestead area the group packed up and headed off back to their homes. On their way they saw a Common Bronzewing, White-winged Choughs and a Cockatiel on Hiltaba and further along the road a Redthroat and Slender-billed Thornbills were found on Siam station. I stayed on for an extra day at Hiltaba and was allowed to drive around a track that went to the south western part of the property and followed the boundary around. It was Black Oak and Mallee country and yielded 26 of the bird species seen before and also added Black-eared Cuckoo and Gilbert's Whistler.

A total of 61 bird species were found for whole trip, with the Birds of the trip being the Major Mitchell's, Gilbert's Whistler, Rufous Treecreepers and Slender-billed Thornbills.

Bernie Haase



Australasian Grebe *(Photo: Jude Owen, at Hiltaba Nature Reserve, August 2020)*

Past Excursions *(continued)*

Birds SA

Thursday 20th August

Anacotilla Springs, Second Valley

Despite dire weather predictions for heavy rain and strong winds, on arrival at this private bushland property near Wirrina Cove, the sky was clear and the wind only moderate. The forecast probably deterred some, but the six members who attended (one wearing shorts and a tee shirt) were able to walk through some areas recently prepared by our hosts Pamela and Rob. Their efforts to conserve and restore native vegetation and heritage aspects of their property are inspiring.

The first part of our walk was along an exposed uphill track where we had good views of Eurasian Skylark, Australian Pipit, Wedge-tailed Eagle, Nankeen Kestrel and Brown Falcon. We then moved down to follow the Anacotilla River with its large gums and vegetation providing a calm and protected habitat for us and our feathered friends. At the area around the dam we saw Pacific Black Duck, Grey Teal (with two young), White-faced Heron and Yellow-billed Spoonbill. The walk along the riverbank kept us entertained with Galah, Little Corella, Crimson Rosella, Rainbow Lorikeet, Sulphur-crested Cockatoo, Superb Fairy-wren (20), Grey Shrikethrush, Grey Fantail, Red-browed Finch (40) and Black-faced Cuckooshrike.

At around noon a light drizzle developed and most of us retreated indoors for lunch. A few hardy souls stayed outside for a while and were rewarded with good views of four Varied Sittellas. Our birdcall revealed a total count of 31 species for this outing. We thank Pamela and Rob for allowing us access to their property and for their warm hospitality.

Lynton Huxley

Birds SA

Sunday 30th August

Glenthorne National Park

On a cold and overcast late August morning, 17 eager Birds SA members met at the Glenthorne National Park *Ityamaiitpinna Yarta* Ranger Station, eager to see what the new National Park had to offer. The property had in the past few months been closed to the public and had undergone an intense process of building demolition and had only recently been re-opened. This work



Sulphur-crested Cockatoos eating Soursobs

(Photo: Alan Burns, at Glenthorne, 30th August 2020)

included the removal of a significant building known as the Physiology Laboratory and many other built structures from the CSIRO occupancy period from 1947 to 1996, including over 200 tonnes of asbestos. The aim of the walk, other than just a great morning's birding, was to record the bird species and numbers as a base line record of the National Park before it undergoes decades of revegetation and transformation into an important wildlife sanctuary.

The walk left the Ranger Station's southern gate and followed the loop track down to the revegetated ephemeral watercourse and on to the large central dam and then to the small, most southern dam. Along this section, both Magpie-larks and Grey Currawongs were seen sitting on nests in the top of trees in the revegetated area. Superb Fairywrens were seen in a number of places along the walk and on the main dam were Wood Ducks, Grey Teal, Hardheads, Dusky Moorhens, Australasian Grebes and a handful of Eurasian Coots. Along the edge of the large dam, a solitary Black-fronted Dotterel searched for insects together with a pair of Willie Wagtails. The weather was misty and light rain occasionally fell throughout the morning. The grassy weeds, which had received good rains in recent weeks, were thick and lush. In some paddocks, the weeds had been sprayed and were brown and dead. The small southern dam had a large area of bulrushes and 2 Australian Reed Warblers were seen and heard.

Past Excursions *(continued)*



Musk Lorikeets (Photo: Ann Houghton, Glenthorne, 30th August 2020)

The group headed back in a northeasterly direction, heading for the historic avenue of large Sugar Gums, believed to have been planted in the 1880s. Along the way, in the thick grass on the eastern side of the property, 2 Shelducks were seen in the distance as well as 4 White-faced Herons. The sighting of the Shelducks was significant as this pair had until recently, been seen regularly on the large dam. Little were we to know that these ducks were nesting and in 5 weeks' time would be seen on the large dam again, with 10 ducklings in tow.

Along the avenue of Sugar Gums many Rainbow Lorikeets were seen and estimated at around 100. Galahs were plentiful and 20 Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoos were also seen. The group continued north along the old coach road to the small northern dam. At this site the Friends group had installed a number of nest boxes and the group was thrilled to get an extended view of a pair of Musk Lorikeets checking out one of these new nesting sites. Many great photos were taken as the female attempted to enter the box from a natural hollow entrance purposely installed for Pardalotes and the male sat on top watching. Pacific Black Ducks were seen on the small dam and a Kookaburra, Striated Pardalotes, Black-faced Cuckooshrikes and Grey Shrikethrushes were seen in the surrounding River Red Gums. Other birds of note were White-plumed Honeyeaters, Common Bronzewing, Eastern and Crimson (Adelaide) Rosellas and in the air flew Black-shouldered Kites, a Nankeen Kestrel and a single Straw-necked Ibis.

The morning concluded with lunch in the grounds of the newly planted Ranger Station garden and a solid total of 44 species was recorded across the various habitats to kick off the Glenthorne National Park Ityamaitpinna Yarta.

Alan Burns

Fleurieu Birders

Saturday 5th September Pangarinda Arboretum

10 members enjoyed a very pleasant walk around this beautifully planted arboretum in Wellington East. For most of us, it was our first visit to this location and we all marvelled at the amazing job the volunteers had done to create such a wonderful place for a walk.

Altogether, we recorded 38 species in a few hours. The highlights were a Collared Sparrowhawk that circled overhead as we were about to set off in the morning, allowing clear views for everyone who had gathered by then. The other highlight was a Boobook Owl that was accidentally flushed from some dense vegetation, but then perched low in a tree, affording great views for those in the main group of walkers.



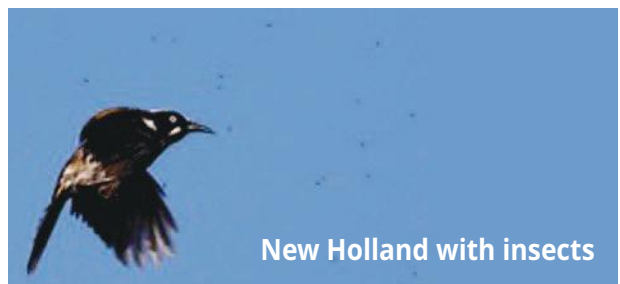
Boobook Owl

Many plants were in bloom, which meant that New Holland Honeyeaters and Red Wattlebirds were abundant, and a few Spiny-cheeked, Brown-headed and Singing Honeyeaters were present as well. Strangely, we did not see any lorikeets and in fact, the only parrot was a single Elegant Parrot and some early arrivals saw some Red-rumped Parrots near the car park.

We had flyovers by a Great Cormorant and a few Australian Pelicans and Straw-necked Ibis. Some of the more interesting bush birds present included Spotted and Striated Pardalotes, Yellow-rumped and Little Thornbills, White-browed Babblers, Weebills, Golden Whistlers, Goldfinches, Superb Fairy-wrens and a single Horsfield's Bronze Cuckoo.

It was a most enjoyable walk and I hope a return visit can be organised in the future.

Stewart Andrews



Edwin Ashby Historical Series No 74.

Edwin Ashby (1861-1941)

Quaker, Naturalist and Plant Enthusiast.

Part 3 by Penny Paton

Parts One and Two investigated Edwin Ashby's family and his contributions to ornithology in several Australian states, notably his home state of South Australia but also Victoria, New South Wales, Western Australia and Tasmania. Here I document Ashby's attitudes to and lobbying for scientific collecting, his contribution to the study of Australian plants, his international reputation as a malacologist, his conservation efforts and his life-long adherence to the Quaker faith.

Scientific collecting

In the late nineteenth century there were no university courses in ornithology so careers in ornithology were restricted to a few museum jobs or to those with private means, like Gregory Mathews. Hence the serious study of ornithology was the realm of the amateur or retiree. This was also a time when there were few field guides and the dominant questions were still: what birds are there and where are they found? So at a time when binoculars and cameras were still rarities, the collection of study skins and eggs was an important tool in answering these questions. Men, and particularly young men, dominated this field of endeavour, as travel to more remote areas, the shooting of birds and the climbing of trees to locate nests were more difficult for women and considered unladylike.

Currently most study specimens are in museums or other institutions but at the turn of the twentieth

century private collections were commonplace. The South Australian Museum, Adelaide (SAMA) holds 62,000 bird specimens, with the largest portion of these being study skins. The Museum dates from 1862 when it was opened as part of the South Australian Institute and began accumulating specimens through exchange with other museums as well as donation, purchase and active collecting (Horton *et al.* 2018). Private collections, including those of S.A. White, Dr MacGillivray, Morton/Oakley, John Eckert and Frank Parsons, form an important part of the museum's collections (Horton *et al.* 2018). Amongst Australian museums, Dick Schodde (2000) regards the SAMA bird collection as second only to the National Wildlife Collection in Canberra, mainly due to the early collectors.

Collecting can be an emotive topic but, as with all history, one needs to avoid the problem of 'presentism'. We need to view the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in context and not from our early twenty-first century perspective. Also people's motivations for, attitudes to and ethics around

collecting varied widely. Egg collecting in particular acquired a bad name due to the activities of some collectors who were more interested in the numbers of eggs and their rarity rather than their value to science. In addition there were the 'market collectors', who amassed eggs for sale for as many buyers as possible (www 8)*. By the early 1900s,



Photo 5. — Edwin Ashby showing his garden at Wittunga to a visitor about 1935 (courtesy State Library of SA B70984/42)

*The bracketed www 8, www 9 etc. refer to web references, which will appear in full at the end in the References

the impact of this type of collecting, combined with the bird plume trade and habitat destruction and alteration, led to serious concerns for some bird populations.

From about 1900 legislation was enacted around the world to stop the bird plume trade (Paton 2020a) and gradually laws were introduced limiting collecting of birds and eggs except for scientific purposes (www 8). I do not know when permits for scientific collecting were introduced in South Australia, but it is likely to have been part of the *Bird Protection Act 1900*. In 1917 John Mellor complained to the SAOA that Minister of Industry had rejected his application for a permit to take birds and eggs for scientific reasons (SAOA Correspondence, SLSA, SRG 652/5), so by this time the permit system was in place. This correspondence also intimated that under the terms of Mellor's permit, if granted, specimens could only be placed in an Australian institution and not in a private collection. Additions to private collections in South Australia continued beyond this date, so it seems that this condition was not enforced.

The members of the SAOA were united in their support for scientific collecting even going so far in 1924 to devote a part of the *South Australian Ornithologist* (Volume 7, Part 8) to 18 papers from Australia, the USA and England on the subject of scientific collecting. Seventeen of the papers supported scientific collecting while the 18th by John Sutton summarised the position regarding permits in the Australian states. All made the point that private collections had been crucial to the acquisition of knowledge on birds and their conservation and most stated that other factors, like land clearance and feral pests, were the major factors in declining bird numbers. Sutton (1924) noted that there nine permits for scientific collecting had been issued in South Australia.

However, within the RAOU there were differing views about the merits of collecting, and these surfaced early in the Union's existence. For example at an RAOU Council meeting in May 1915 Charles Barrett urged that restrictions be placed on collecting at RAOU Campouts (RAOU 1915). This view was rebutted by Mr A.C. Stone, who claimed that but for collectors we would know little about Australian birds and that the Checklist Committee required more skins due to so many type specimens being held overseas. The debate continued to surface at the annual congresses and campouts through the 1920s and 1930s. At the RAOU Congress in Sydney in October 1921, the Congress accepted seven clauses on private collecting devised by a Sub-Committee. The resolutions were designed to

protect birds in sanctuaries, to discourage new collections and to discourage all but collecting for public institutions (RAOU 1923). Despite this official position, collecting for scientific purposes continued at campouts.

At the next Congress held in Adelaide in 1922 Ashby, at the request of the RAOU Council, presented a paper, entitled 'Private Collections and Permits', which was subsequently published in the *Emu* in the following year (Ashby 1923). As one of the recently elected Vice-Presidents, Ashby moved, and A.J. Campbell seconded, a motion to rescind the seven clauses, but after discussion and lunch, the two men withdrew the motion in favour of inserting into clause 2 a suggestion that *bona fide* researchers be encouraged and permits be issued to them with appropriate restrictions. His paper however showed that he was not an advocate of all the clauses, particularly the one that favoured public institutions over private collections. A corollary to this is that Edwin Ashby was voted off his Vice-Presidential position on the RAOU Council in 1924 for his pro-collecting stance (SAOA Correspondence, SLSA, SRG 652/5).

The 1933 Campout at Moree was the last where egg collecting was undertaken, despite the RAOU being reluctant to condemn private collecting unequivocally and the President, F.L. Berney, an enthusiastic egg collector, trying to keep the issue out of the limelight (Robin 2001). However this became impossible in 1935 at the Marlo Campout, when George Mack, a staff member at the National Museum of Victoria, shot a Scarlet Robin near its nest in full view of attendees. It caused an uproar, with some members leaving the camp in protest and much debate in newspapers (Robin 2001). At the Congress a few days later, a resolution was passed forbidding collecting at Campouts except in the case of new birds or eggs and only with the approval of a committee of camp members (Robin 2001).

In Tim Low's book (Low 2014), he briefly examines the topic of scientific collecting from one point of view, that of denigrating the efforts of collectors and their scientific value. He uses emotive language and suggests that collecting of birds and their eggs did not play any place in the study of ornithology in Australia. I believe that there is a middle ground in this debate, recognising that collecting did (and still does) offer insights into the distribution, taxonomy and ecology of birds, but that less scrupulous collectors, with little regard for science, were indiscriminate in their collecting. Our modern-day institutions would have much poorer collections without the early collectors.



Photo 6 — Edwin Ashby boiling the billy on a plant-collecting trip in WA in 1930 with nephew Watson Coleman (courtesy State Library of SA B70984/33)

Ashby the plant-lover

Ashby's interest in natural history included the cultivation and study of Australian native plants and these were increasingly planted at Wittunga. Edwin delighted in showing visitors his garden and Photo 5, on page i, shows one such visitor in about 1935. In 1930 he spent eight weeks in Western Australia with his nephew Watson Coleman, collecting plants and visiting Quaker families. Photo 6 (above) shows a lunchtime scene on this trip. He records in his diary some of the species collected and that these were posted back to Wittunga for planting in the garden there. Photo 7, on page iv shows his large and untidy handwriting. In the 1930s he developed the Ashby system of watering, which involved deep soaking every three to four weeks (Robertson 1979). After the devastating fire of 1934 Ashby developed a native plant nursery and offered 300 species cheaply to encourage others in his interest (Robertson 1979).

After Edwin's death in 1941, his children Alison and Keith took over the garden and expanded it substantially. When Keith's younger daughter settled in the Transvaal, he took advantage of the similar climate of that area to South Australia and developed an extensive collection of South African plants, including Erica, Leucodendron, Leucospermum and Protea (www 9). Agriculture in the increasingly urbanised landscape of Blackwood became uneconomic in the 1960s and in 1965 Keith

Ashby bequeathed the 13 hectare garden to the South Australian Government. By this time the garden contained over 1000 native plant species, as well as many from South Africa and the largest collection of Ericas outside Africa (*op. cit.*). Wittunga was opened to the public in 1975 and is managed by the Botanic Gardens of South Australia. Most of the rest of the Wittunga farming land was developed for housing.

Ashby the Malacologist

Edwin Ashby was almost as passionate about shells, and particularly chitons, as he was about birds. He was a world authority on chitons and discovered over twenty new taxa (www 10). His collection of recent and fossil chitons from the southern hemisphere, which fortunately was presented to the South

Australian Museum in 1932, two years before the fire in 1934, is one of the largest and most comprehensive in the world (www 11). The Ashby collection also includes specimens from Europe, detailed in a paper on European chitons by Edwin and Bernard Cotton in the Records of the South Australian Museum (Ashby and Cotton 1935). Ashby published 60 papers on recent and fossil chitons (Blom 2017).

Three examples of a lined chiton, *Ischnochiton lineolatus*, in the Ashby collection were taken in 1802 by François Péron from rocks on King Island. On the inside of one of the shells is written in faded ink "île King", presumably by Péron himself during Baudin's expedition 1800-1803, on which Péron was a naturalist (Ashby 1926c).

Ashby's general shell collection and his butterfly collection are in the family's possession (www 12).

Ashby the Conservationist

Ashby was also active in the conservation arena. In South Australia from the 1880s on, associations formed, aiming to conserve or preserve one or more of Australia's natural resources (Reid 1974).

Ashby was a foundation member of the SAOA (formed 1899) and continued active membership until his death in 1941. The two aims of the SAOA were the study of and protection of Australian birds

and its members were influential in bird conservation because they provided scientific information, upon which legislation increasingly came to be based.

By the 1920s opposition to scientific collecting was gaining ground and Ashby recognised that the arguments used by the protection lobby to stop the destruction of birds for the millinery trade had misled the public into thinking that the shooting of birds was the most important conservation issue. The SAOA had joined the effort to stop this trade but the debate had muddied the waters, with many people unable to distinguish between scientific collecting and commercial and indiscriminate killing. He and other members of the SAOA were convinced that destruction of habitat was the main threat to the conservation of the natural world.

Ashby was prominent in the Fauna and Flora Protection Committee of the Field Naturalists' Section of the Royal Society. This Committee was influential in the declaration of the Government Farm at Belair as a National Park in 1891, but the members became disillusioned as the park was managed primarily for recreation and not fauna protection, as were other reserves over the next twenty years (Reid 1974). Efforts to conserve a large part of western Kangaroo Island began in 1892 and continued for many years. For example, a deputation from the Protection Committee, including Ashby, met the Premier in 1906, with the result that the Cape Borda Lighthouse Reserve was proclaimed but not the larger area. Many more deputations later and the Fauna and Flora Reserve Act was passed in 1919, which set up the 200 square mile reserve, Flinders Chase, on Kangaroo Island.

Ashby the Quaker

Edwin Ashby was born into a Quaker family in Surrey and married a fellow-Quaker, Esther Coleman, in the Friends Meeting House in Mount Barker in 1890 (Paton 2020b). Religion and living an ethical life were important to Ashby, as evidenced by his attendance at a committee meeting of the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) on his first

night in Adelaide in 1884, having just stepped off the clipper, the *Torrens* (www 13). He was finance secretary for five years, was on the YMCA Board, including some years as its general secretary and in 1929 was a permanent member of the advisory board (www 14).

In 1912 the Friends Meeting House was opened on the corner of Wilpena and Wonoka Streets in Eden Hills near the Ashby residence and at the instigation of the family. The building was used for Methodist

Services until the late 1940s but, after being damaged by an earthquake in 1954, it was demolished in the late 1950s (www 15). For many years Edwin Ashby was one of the Quakers' most widely known members, writing articles on peace and temperance for local papers and speaking at public meetings and on the radio (www 16).

Conclusion

Edwin Ashby lived a full life, ran a successful business and approached his numerous hobbies and pursuits with enthusiasm and scientific rigour. Mention has been made of his contributions

to the fields of ornithology, malacology, conservation, botany and native plant growing, and his membership of and service to numerous learned societies.

Edwin Ashby was interred in the Friends' Burial Ground, West Terrace Cemetery Adelaide, following his death on 8th January 1941 at Wittunga. Other family members buried there are Edwin's wife, Essie (died 1943), and their two children who died early (Gwenyth in 1900 and Ivan in 1920).

Acknowledgments

Philippa Horton provided information on Ashby's contributions to the Bird Collection at SAMA and assisted with thorny taxonomic issues. She also flourished her red pen, improving the flow and sense of the Ashby series, as well as correcting my careless errors. And once again I must thank Cynthia Pyle, Editor of *The Birder*, for her skill and artistic flair in laying out the three parts of the Ashby series.

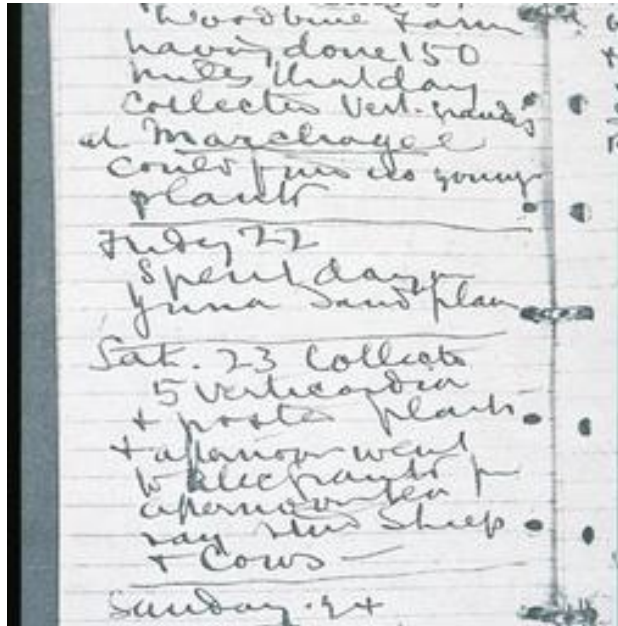


Photo 7 – page of diary Edwin Ashby kept in Western Australia on a plant-collecting trip, 1930 (courtesy State Library of South Australia B70984/34)

Author's Note – Further Historical Series

I have plenty of ideas for more topics for the Historical Series, but am interested to know if other members have ideas about what they would like to see or, indeed, if they would like to write up their favourite historical character or event. Photos from private collections would also be very valuable as they provide insights into the past in a different way from text.

Please contact me at pennypaton@adam.com.au with your ideas. I would very much welcome your input.

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Memories of Edwin's Wittunga Garden

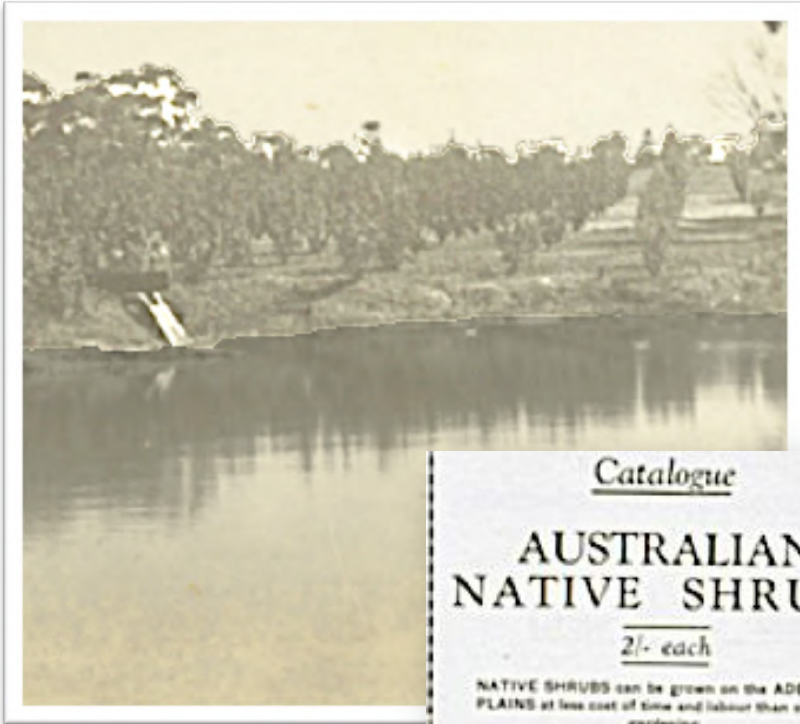


Photo 8 — looking north across the big reservoir on Wittunga farm, 1919; the reservoir was filled from run-off from Cliff St (later Shepherds Hill Road) and used for watering orchard trees and for stock troughs (courtesy State Library of SA B70984/21)

Photo 9 – Front cover of Wittunga Nurseries' catalogue, ca 1935 (courtesy State Library of SA B70984/40)

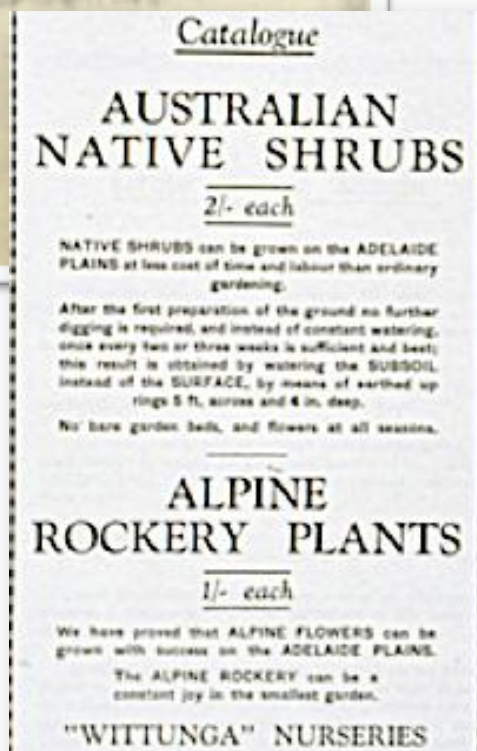
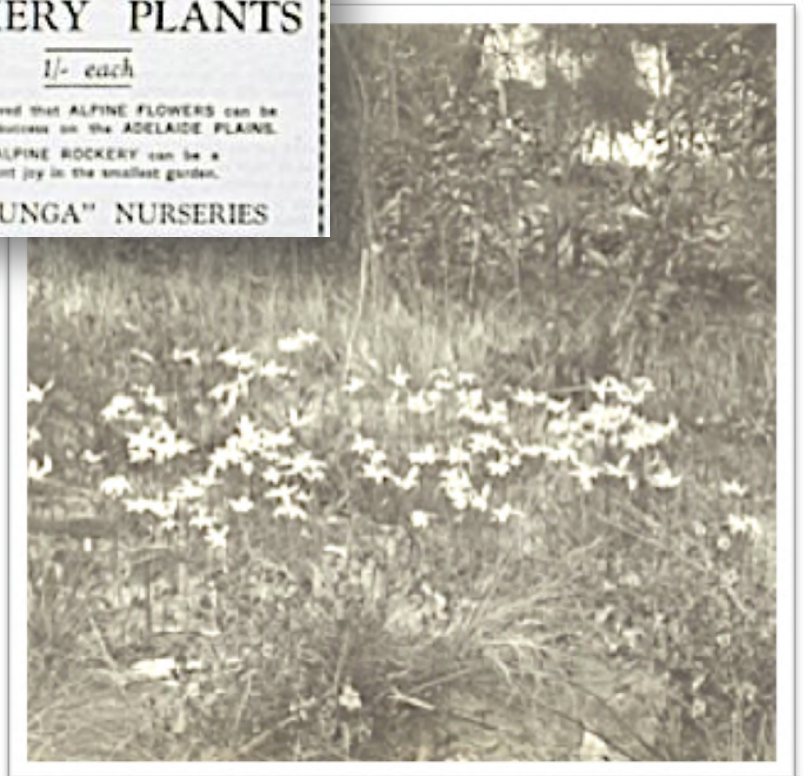


Photo 10 – Native orchids in the Wild Part of Wittunga farm, uncleared native vegetation to the south of the garden, ca 1910 (courtesy State Library of SA B70984/14)



Past Excursions *(continued)*

Birds SA

Saturday 12th September

'Cowirra' Private Property near Mannum

The day belied the weather forecast: as 11 of us strolled through the revegetating lands of this former riverside dairy farm. Bright sunshine and calm conditions, as opposed to the predicted grey skies and rain, were perfect for bird viewing.

Ben Haythorpe, a grandson of the original owners, began our day describing how his 'leisure' time passion to change and improve the property landscape has led him to planting hundreds of Australian natives and several varieties of exotic plants over the past 16 years. This of course has attracted a wide array of birds, the numbers and species of which have been monitored through Birds SA excursions since March 2019.

This was our third visit, and resulted in us recording 53 different species actually seen, equal to the best previously noted. Observers however also heard Spotted Dove and an Australian Owlet-nightjar. Most birds were seen in the dry land area back from the River Murray. Interestingly, 7 species that were counted at this time last year were not present this year, and vice versa.

Later, as we relaxed for the bird count on the home lawn, shaded by a huge river red gum, we were treated to a parade of water birds, including 2 Maned Ducks shepherding their sweet little family of 9 around the river's edge in front of us. The joys of spring! An extra challenge arose in attempts to identify the 'heritage' of some hybrid ducks.

We had hoped to spot Brown Quail which had been seen in March 2019 and also the evening before when Ben and I were checking out his newly constructed dryland walking trail, but alas, the morning was not to present the same gift. The evening had also brought the pleasure of 2 Black Swans and their retinue of 8 cygnets to the home foreshore, but again, they were busy elsewhere when the morning birders were visiting.

Nevertheless, our wanderings brought about the following tally:

Maned Ducks (2 adults, 9 ducklings), 2 hybrid Pacific Black Ducks, 1 Mallard x Pacific Black Duck, 1 Australian Shelduck, 2 Black Swan, 6 Australian White Ibis, 3 Straw-necked Ibis, 1 White-faced Heron, 9 Australian Pelican, 2 Australasian Darter, 2 Wedge-tailed Eagle, 1 Brown Goshawk, 3 Black Kite, 2 Whistling Kite, 2 Eurasian Coot, 3 Australasian Swamphen, Masked Lapwing (3 adults and 2 chicks), 1 Silver Gull, 6 Crested Pigeon, 1 Horsfield's

Bronze Cuckoo, 2 Laughing Kookaburra, 1 Nankeen Kestrel, 6 Little Corella, 6 Galah, 6 Musk Lorikeet, 2 Australian Ringneck, 4 Adelaide Rosella, 3 Crimson Rosella (featuring yellow plumage), 20 Superb Fairy-wren, 6 White-fronted Chat, 3 New Holland Honeyeater, 2 Spiny-cheeked Honeyeater, 2 White-plumed Honeyeater, 20 Noisy Miner, 2 Red Wattlebird, 4 Striated Pardalote, 1 Weebill, 2 White-browed Babbler, 1 Grey Butcherbird, 6 Australian Magpie, 1 Grey Fantail, 1 Willie Wagtail, 2 Magpie-lark, 6 Little Raven, 2 Little Grassbird, 3 Silvereye, 10 Fairy Martin, 3 Tree Martin, 10 Welcome Swallow, 6 Australian Reed Warbler, 1 Common Blackbird, 6 Common Starling, 4 House Sparrow.

Sincere thanks to Ben and family for hosting yet another most enjoyable Birds SA visit to this private property.

Anna Woods

Port Augusta Bird Group (the Babblers)

Sunday 13th September

Bernie's Block, Mambray Creek

On a cool, overcast day with a light wind our group of 11 birders came together in the Mambray Creek highway parking bay. Six were from Pt. Augusta, 2 each from Whyalla and Mambray Creek and 1 from Pt. Neill. We drove about 2km to Bernie's block and parked at the homestead. The birds seen in the house yard were Spiny-cheeked and Singing Honeyeaters, Welcome Swallows, Willie Wagtails, Peaceful Doves and White-browed Babblers and flying overhead across the revegetated old paddock were Galahs, Black Kites, Australian Ravens, Australian Magpies, Common Starlings, Little Corellas and a White-faced Heron. We walked to the Red Gum lined Mambray Creek and entered the creek bed where water was pooling in low areas and slowly flowing underground onto the next low areas. An occasional frog was calling out but no waterbirds were seen. In the trees we found Little Ravens, Yellow-throated Miners, Magpie-larks and Apostlebirds all nesting as well as Striated Pardalotes, Crested Pigeons, Red Wattlebirds and Laughing Kookaburras. As we crossed the creek the area opened up onto another revegetated old paddock and wheat paddocks further on. A pair of Spotted Harriers drifted over the area and a Nankeen Kestrel hovered overhead. We walked on and re-entered the creek line finding Mallee Ringnecks, Common Bronzewing and Whistling Kites all breeding and Grey Butcherbirds and Flinders Adelaide Rosellas. We went back to the house for smoko and a quick bird call. Now we entered the Native Pine

Past Excursions *(continued)*

woodland area and were greeted by the calls of Rufous Songlarks, which have not been here for several years due to the previous dry conditions. White-winged Trillers, Red-capped Robins, Yellow-rumped Thornbills and Rufous Whistlers also added to the bird songs. We walked on along the tracks through the woodland finding Southern Whitefaces and Chestnut-rumped Thornbills nesting and added Grey Shrikethrush, Purple-backed Fairywrens, Black-capped Sittellas and Red-rumped Parrots to the bird list. As we headed back to the house for lunch Black-faced Cuckooshrikes, Horsfield's Bronze-Cuckoos and an Emu were also listed. We had a pleasurable lunch talking about birds and made another quick bird call. After lunch we continued walking through the woodland finding Elegant Parrots nesting in an isolated Red Gum tree and Dusky Woodswallows huddled together preening each other, while a Pallid Cuckoo flew past. As we moved back into the open old paddock area a Black-shouldered Kite hovered above as White-winged Fairywrens and an Emu with 9 chicks moved through the Bluebush. Out of the corner of our eyes a dark, streamlined shape was noticed cruising overhead. A Black Falcon was having a look at us. Back in the creek, Weebills, White-plumed Honeyeaters and a Sacred Kingfisher, the first for some time, lengthened our bird list. Back at the house we checked our bird lists and found we had seen a total of 51 bird species, with the birds of the day being the Black Falcon, Spotted Harriers, Black-capped Sittellas and the various breeding birds.

Bernie Haase

Birds SA

Sunday 27th September

Whites Road

Nineteen members met on a pleasant spring morning, and after completing the COVID formalities we set out on the walk. The area had recorded approximately 25mm of rain in the previous week and this was reflected in the high water levels in all the ponds and waterways.

Some noise from the new motorway was evident but not nearly as much as on a working day, when it is quite significant. All the roadwork temporary fencing barriers have been removed and it is now possible to visit the original White-winged Fairy-wren area. We did not do so, but we did visit the area to which some have relocated.

During the morning we saw nesting activity of one kind or another in nine species — Australasian Grebe, Eurasian Coot, Silver Gull, Musk Lorikeet, Rainbow Lorikeet, Red-rumped Parrot, Magpie-lark Little Raven and House Sparrow. We also saw juvenile Pacific Black Duck.

Prior to lunch and the birdcall we recorded 49 species. After lunch seven members moved on to look for White-winged Fairywrens and were rewarded by seeing one partially coloured male and one female. We also saw another five species we had not previously seen prior. This gave us 55 species altogether for the morning, and we had counted 558 individuals.

Birds SA

Thursday 17th September

Tangari Regional Park, Woodcroft

Ten members met on a wet, cold and windy morning at this new-for-many site, which is largely wooded. It's part of a quite well used public area so we met a few people on walks and runs. One of them was particularly helpful in guiding us to a Tawny Frogmouth nest, which we almost certainly wouldn't have seen without his guidance. We struggled to detect the bird even when he pointed it out above us. Great camouflage! That was the probably the highlight of our trip.

We saw a total of 26 species including Striated Pardalote, White-plumed Honeyeater, Weebill, Yellow-Tailed Black Cockatoos, Silvereye, Musk and Rainbow Lorikeets, Eastern and Crimson Rosellas, Grey Currawong and Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike.

Stephen Langley



Tawny Frogmouth (Photo: Angelo Caon, at Tangari Regional Park, 17th September 2020)

Past Excursions *(continued)*

Whites Road *(continued)*

The highest counts for the day were 40 each of Pacific Black Duck and Rainbow Lorikeet, 30 Australasian Grebe and New Holland Honeyeater, then approximately 20 each of Grey Teal, Chestnut Teal, Pied Stilt, Musk Lorikeet, Superb Fairy-wren, White-plumed Honeyeater, Magpie-lark, Welcome Swallow, Australian Reed Warbler, Common Starling and House Sparrow.

Apart from the ducks already mentioned there were 8 Maned Ducks, 3 Hardheads and 1 Australian Shelduck. Two raptor species were seen — 3 Black-shouldered Kites and one Nankeen Kestrel. Also 1 Laughing Kookaburra, 3 Black-faced Cuckoo-shrikes and 6 Grey Shrike-thrushes were seen or heard. We also counted 12 Australian White Ibis, 11 Royal Spoonbill, 6 Hoary-headed Grebe, 4 Black-fronted Dotterel and one each of Masked Lapwing, Little Grassbird and Whiskered Tern.

The group met at about midday, had lunch, and made the bird call.

There was evidence of what appeared to be suspicious tree removal along, and across from the bitumen track. There was also much cycling activity during the morning and whilst most of it was “recreational” some of it was more of a “training” nature — at speed, with much less than the required regard for pedestrians. There is no signage at all that explains acceptable behaviour by the various users of the pathways, which is surprising in view of the fact that it is also used by horse riders and in particular by RDA (Riding for the Disabled Association).

Rod Tetlow

Birds SA

October Campout, 3–5 October Lawari Conservation Park

We were finally able to have a campout this year! It was quite a challenge to find a suitable venue that would enable us comply with our COVID Safe Plan and I would like to register our gratitude to Stuart Hicks, Senior Ranger, Murraylands District DEWNR for his efforts and support in permitting our use of Wyndgate Homestead, which is located in Lawari Conservation Park. Given the wide variety of weather conditions during our stay, having access to the homestead facilities was a real blessing.

The forecast and actual weather did result in some cancellations, but thirty members still attended and toughed it out. Special congratulations to Minnie and

David Robertson for attending in their trusty campervan, given Minnie is approaching 102 years young! Well done and thank you both for proving there is no age limit for birding.

The first day of the campout, Saturday, probably had the best weather conditions and quite a few took the opportunity to attend the Fleurieu Birders excursion at the One Paddock Winery at Currency Creek. They claimed the birding was great, but I am not so sure that the attraction was for some tasting at the winery! Another highlight occurred on Sunday when after undertaking surveys in areas near the Barrage, we returned to the homestead kitchen to share three bags of hot chips for lunch — yum. Monday had us supporting the economy of the Milang Bakery – but we also did some birding – honestly we did.

The campout was a lot of fun with many newer members attending. We covered quite a variety of locations on and off Hindmarsh Island and separate bird record forms have been lodged for each, but a summary of these reveals a pleasing 73 total species count.

Lynton Huxley

Birds SA

Saturday 10th October Sandy Creek

Eight people gathered for this walk on a partly cloudy but pleasant day. Given reports of their recent arrival in the area, everyone was keen to see Rainbow Bee-eaters (12) and it wasn't long before we started to hear them and then see them flashing between the trees. White-winged Choughs (20), some attending young in a nest, were also seen and heard giving their mournful cries which somehow manage to sound both mournful yet strangely cheerful at the same time.

Other birds recorded included Red Wattlebird (30), Common Bronzewing (1), Crested Pigeon (1), Little Corella (3), Galah (16), Rainbow Lorikeet (6), Adelaide Rosella (20), White-throated Treecreeper (1), Superb Fairy-wren (12), Striated Pardalote (20), Striated Thornbill (2), Yellow-rumped Thornbill (20), White-browed Babbler (12), Grey Currawong (8), Australian Magpie (6), Grey Shrike-thrush (3), Rufous Whistler (10), Grey Fantail (2), Magpie-lark (2), Little Raven (12) and Tree Martin (20 including a nest with young).

Other Honeyeaters included New Holland (12), White-plumed (6) and Yellow-faced (4). We also saw a small

Past Excursions *(continued)*

group of 4 Varied Sittellas, which are always fun to watch as they move from top to bottom of tree trunks and branches often with their heads down.

There was a moment of déjà vu when, at almost the same spot we experienced a similar encounter back in February, a raptor was spotted flying overhead. Another discussion ensued and, as the group was undecided on the identity of the bird, a photo was taken for later identification. It turned out to be a Collared Sparrowhawk (in February it was a young Square-tailed Kite) just to keep us on our toes. In all 29 species were recorded for the day.

Ali Ben Kahn

Port Augusta Bird Group (the Babblers)

Sunday 11th October

Telowie Gorge

A gully wind was blowing out of Telowie Gorge when 10 birders came together in the car park. Five were from Pt. Augusta, two from Whyalla and one each from Weeroona island, Pt. Neill and Mambray Creek. Australian Magpies were seen on the way into the car park, and from the car park area Willie Wagtails, Grey Butcherbirds, a Grey Shrike-thrush and Galahs could be seen. After saying our G'day's and some general chit chat we headed off along the path into the gorge. The creek was flowing and it took a while to find an easy way across it. Weebills and Striated Pardalotes noisily flitted about in the tree tops as we walked along the picturesque gorge. The steep hillsides and rock walls provided a Nankeen Kestrel, a White-winged Triller and a Yellow-footed Rock Wallaby occupying some vantage points from which to sun themselves and watch us. The *Callistemon rugulosus* was flowering and it attracted some Grey-fronted Honeyeaters to their bottlebrush flower spikes. Elegant Parrots were seen feeding their young in a hollow as we came to the area where Chestnut-rumped Heathwrens were found before the Bangor fire. We tried to entice them by playing their song but with no luck and unfortunately no one has seen them for years. It is a similar story with the Southern Scrub-robins that were once found at Telowie. We headed back to the gorge entrance and saw Welcome Swallows, Little Ravens, Purple-backed Fairywrens, Red Wattlebirds, Yellow-rumped Thornbills, Inland Thornbills and Silvereyes on the way. While we were having smoko a Laughing Kookaburra, Spiny-cheeked Honeyeaters, House Sparrows, a Brown Falcon and Little Corellas were added to our bird list as a flock

of about 30 Budgerigars whizzed past. We drove out along the Red Gum lined creek and stopped to look in the trees after seeing a Little Eagle fly out. White-browed Babblers, Singing Honeyeaters, Rufous Whistlers and a Peaceful Dove were also found. We drove on heading for Nelshaby reservoir about 11km away. We had found 29 bird species at Telowie Gorge.

Nelshaby Reservoir

It was lunchtime when we arrived at Nelshaby Reservoir, so we sat under the shade of some Aleppo Pine trees to enjoy our lunches. There is a Red Gum lined creek next to the reservoir and an old paddock across the road from which a pair of loudly singing Rufous Songlarks had a nest hidden in the long grass. As we ate our lunch Galahs, Willie Wagtails, Red-rumped Parrots squabbling over nesting hollows, Singing Honeyeaters, Striated Pardalotes, Magpie-larks, Little Corellas, Weebills, Crested Pigeons, Black-faced Cuckoo-shrikes, Kestrels nesting in a tree hollow, Purple-crowned Lorikeets whizzing past and the usual vermin birds: Common Starlings, Rock Doves, House Sparrows and a Common Blackbird started our bird list. We walked up the steep side of the reservoir and looked over the water, which was about three quarters full from recent good rains. The reservoir had been dry for several years so it was good to see the water and the waterbirds. Black Ducks, Hardheads, Grey Teals, an Australian Swamphen, Coots and Australasian Grebes swam on the water and Red Wattlebirds, Laughing Kookaburras, a Horsfield's Bronze Cuckoo and Little Ravens were in the trees around the reservoir. As we walked around the wall Grey Shrike-thrush, Purple-backed Fairywrens, Welcome Swallows, a Black Kite, a Sulphur-crested Cockatoo, Spiny-cheeked and White-plumed Honeyeaters and Australian Magpie lengthened our list. The reeds had not had time to grow yet but there are dead plants and growing bushes along the water's edge which provided shelter for White-faced Herons, Reed Warblers and a very obliging Baillon's Crake that allowed us to get close and take photos. We walked on around to where the inlet area to the reservoir opened up to Red Gum woodland with feral Olive trees. Here we found Chestnut-rumped Thornbills, Rainbow Bee-eaters, Yellow-throated Miner, Mallee Ringnecks and a Peaceful Dove. Back at the entrance car park a Hobby flew past while Yellow-rumped Thornbills and a Rufous Whistler completed our bird list. We had found 46 bird species here, making it a total of 56 species seen for the day. The birds of the day would have to be the Baillon's Crake, Little Eagle and Hobby.

Bernie Haase

Past Excursions *(continued)*

Birds SA

Thursday 15th October Belair National Park

A mild morning with an overcast sky greeted the 12 attendees for this excursion lead by David Williams who has an extensive knowledge of the bird species of this park, given his almost daily walks over many years. Our walk started at the car park entrance, passed around the lake and then followed a path to the native nursery, before returning to the car park for our bird count.

Our total count for the day was 42 species, with the lake and its surrounds providing over two thirds of these with the usual Pacific Black x Mallard (12), Maned Duck (10), Hardhead (10) Grey Teal (2) and a single Mallard. Eurasian Coot (30) were predominant but we also saw Dusky Moorhen and Australian White Ibis on nests.

White-browed Scrubwren and Superb Fairy-wren provided some excellent views and photo opportunities at their usual Nursery location. Crescent Honeyeater, Eastern Spinebill and Mistletoebird were sighted but the most numerous species included Rainbow Lorikeet, Crimson Rosella, New Holland Honeyeater, Eastern Rosella, Red Wattlebird and Striated Pardalote.

Koala sightings and a brief flyover by four Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo made for a most enjoyable outing.

Lynton Huxley

Port Augusta Bird Group (the Babblers)

Sunday 1st November Chinaman's Creek

On a lovely, calm and sunny morning 6 birders met at the highway turnoff to Chinaman's Creek. Four were from Pt. Augusta and one each came from Whyalla and Mambray Creek. While we waited for any latecomers a small flock of White-fronted Chats moved about in the black bluebush near us, and an Australian Pipit was on the road. A pair of Emus was wandering about in a nearby paddock and Welcome Swallows, Galahs, Little Corellas and an Elegant Parrot flew past us. Some Common Starlings were seen hitching a ride on the sheep's back as Singing Honeyeaters and a Black-faced Woodswallow perched on some shrubs, while a Nankeen Kestrel and a Black-shouldered Kite cruised around above us. We drove slowly along the road to Chinaman's Creek and stopped to look at flock of about 40 Little Ravens feeding on a kangaroo carcass. Then we

walked into a patch of nearby scrub after hearing the scolding calls of Redthroats. We located the Redthroats as well as White-winged Fairywrens, House Sparrows, White-browed Babblers, Australian Ravens, Chirruping Wedgebills and a Southern Whiteface. We continued our journey, driving a bit faster to get to the beach at the top of the tide. On the way a Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike, Australian Magpies, a Grey Butcherbird and Yellow-throated Miners were added to the bird list.

We arrived at the Chinaman's Creek beach area and parked in the car park, flushing some Australian White Ibis into the air. As we set up our gear for beach birding a Grey Shrike-thrush sat on the railings next to us while Singing Honeyeaters moved about in the scrub and Welcome Swallows and Tree Martins chased insects above us. We walked across some mud flats to the beach noting the damage caused by hoons driving on the mud. Red-capped Plovers scurried about around us, and when we set up on a shellgrit bank overlooking the beach. Australian Pelicans sat on a nearby spit along with Crested Terns, Silver and Pacific Gulls, Caspian Terns, Gull-billed Terns and also a pair of Common or Asian Gull-billed Terns who were a long way from their usual home. A single Eastern Curlew was sitting on the ground amongst them. All along the beach there were hundreds of Red-necked Stints resting or feeding. Out in the water resting on some low mangroves were Pied, Little Pied and Little Black Cormorants. In the distance a pair of Little Egrets and a Pied Oystercatcher could be seen as well as an Australian Raven. We walked back to the vehicles finding a Red-capped Plovers nest with 2 eggs in it. As we drove the short distance to Chinaman's Creek some Australian Pipits, a Grey Butcherbird, White-browed Babblers, Australian Magpies, White-winged Fairy-wrens and White-faced Herons were noted. While we were enjoying smoko at the launching ramp area, Masked Lapwings, a Willie Wagtail, Little Ravens with fledglings and a breeding pair of Pied Oystercatchers lengthened the bird list. Our next move was to head back along the road and turn off onto the track that goes to Mt. Grainger.

We stopped in the shade of the Mallee trees for lunch as it was warming up. Looking around in the Mallee we found Black-faced Cuckooshrikes, an Australian Magpie, nesting Galahs, Yellow-throated Miners, Striated Pardalotes, Rainbow Bee-eaters, Weebills, Sacred Kingfishers and Dusky Woodswallows in the trees as Budgerigars, a Hobby and a Black Kite flew past. As we drove on along the track a Chirruping Wedgebill provided us with some good viewing. We parked in the beach car park and proceeded to climb up the slope to the Mt. Grainger summit. Our first Spiny-cheeked

Past Excursions *(continued)*

Honeyeaters were found on the way up along with more Singing Honeyeaters. After we reached the top we could rest and enjoy the view. In the low scrub we could hear Redthroats and after walking down the slope we found them as well as some Purple-backed Fairywrens, White-fronted Honeyeaters and White-browed Babblers. In the Mallee at the bottom of the slope we could hear a Spotted Pardalote and decided to go and look for it, as they uncommon in this area. When we got to the Mallee trees we observed a fledgling Horsfield's Bronze Cuckoo being fed by a pair of Chestnut-rumped Thornbills. The Spotted Pardalotes were located and were also curious about the Cuckoo's constant food begging. We headed back along the beach and saw Red-capped Plovers and a Grey Butcherbird and a Nankeen Kestrel. Back at the vehicles White-winged Fairywrens finalised the bird list for this area. A total of 59 bird species were found for the day, with the Eastern Curlew and Asian Gull-billed Terns being the birds of the day. The Spotted Pardalotes and young Horsfield's Bronze Cuckoo with its Chestnut-rumped Thornbill foster parents are also worth a mention.

Bernie Haase

Fleurieu Birders

Saturday 7th November Myponga Reservoir

Eleven people arrived at the car park for the Myponga walk. The forecast was not good and it came over grey and showery as soon as we arrived. Unfortunately, it stayed that way for most of the morning until lunchtime and we had to constantly wipe our binoculars, cameras, and glasses. However, we did not despair, as the birding was wonderful!

SA Water had recently mowed the long grass, and this enabled us to get close to the water's edge. We had good views of Blue-billed Ducks (approx. 30), Musk Ducks, Australasian Shovelers, many Eurasian Coots, a few Australian Pelicans on the far side, while Little Black and Great Cormorants were resting with them. 5 Hoary-headed Grebes came in close, following each other in a line and then to top it off, a female Australasian Shoveler cruised past with 9 ducklings. Wow! There was lots of activity to see.

The reservoir is a great place to visit as it has such a variety of habitats to walk through. Beside the water birds, the bush birds are easy to pick as the terrain is quite open and runs alongside native scrub and as well as some pine forest areas.

The most common honeyeater was the Yellow-faced and we heard the White-plumed in a few areas. But strangely, no New Holland Honeyeaters were sighted in the park, just one near the car park even though the gums were flowering. A Laughing Kookaburra appeared and Mistletoebirds were found in the old mistletoe hanging on the Eucalyptus trees. We heard Reed Warblers and saw a couple of Australian Swampheens in the reedy areas. The water level was high, but it could be quite different in summer and autumn.

The Galahs, Sulphur-crested Cockatoos and Little Corellas were all feeding together in the grassland that had been recently mowed. The Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoos were on the edge of the pine forest chewing the pinecones. A single Scarlet Robin stayed on the one branch in amongst the pines for all to see.

After doing the full loop walk as we were heading back to our cars, hanging out for morning tea or lunch someone spotted a lone Pink-eared Duck resting on a tree stump and I spotted one Hardhead. We sighted 8 duck species, 3 Black Swans, 2 White-faced Herons and the cormorants.

The entertainment for the morning was watching a Red Wattlebird chase a Grey Currawong and then turn around and see it chase 2 Sulphur-crested Cockatoos as if they were a threat.

While we were wondering where to sit for the bird count we discovered that the Smiling Samoyed Brewery was open. We were able to sit on their veranda and enjoy a drink or a cup of coffee. Their pizza was good too. It looks like a great spot for lunch in the future!

The total count came to 50 species and we all agreed the morning had been very worthwhile.

Wendy Phillips

Birds SA

Saturday 14th November Aldinga Scrub

Perfect weather and 23 people arrived at Cox Rd near Aldinga Holiday Park to find we had no leader. We quickly divided into two groups with Jean Turner and myself volunteering to lead, taking different tracks in the park, 13 in my group and 10 in hers.

Fortunately, Bob and I had stayed at Aldinga Holiday Park only a few months before, when we were under COVID travelling restrictions, and we explored all the various tracks and also discovered the wetlands inside the park for the first time.

Past Excursions *(continued)*

Along the track we found the beautiful Eastern Rosella and someone else saw an Australian Ringneck Parrot. The most common Honeyeater was the White-plumed with only a couple of the New Hollands, and of course, many Red Wattlebirds. A pair of Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoos came into view and Galahs were flying about. It was great to see a Dusky Woodswallow, and a little further on we watched the Welcome Swallows, a few Tree Martins and more woodswallows cruising the sky.

Heading deep into the park we decided to check out the hidden wetland from the western side. Stuart was familiar with the route in. He said it was about 100m from the track. The saplings around the edge of the swamp restricted our view, although we did see a few ducks, cormorants, and Australian Pelicans.

The other road entrance from South Rd. to this section is Hart Rd. We walked up to the gate looking down the

track and picked up Reed Warblers and Little Grassbird calling. A few of the group headed into the eastern side of the wetland. They reported even more ducks and Australian Swampheens while we skirted the eastern boundary and found a Laughing Kookaburra and a group of Australian White Ibis under a tree.

Entering the birds on my phone, using the Birdlife data app as we were walking, helped me keep track of what our group saw. The final tally came to 51 species.

While our group had all the water birds, when Jean's group joined us they saw a few other bush birds bringing the total to around 55 for the park! Wow that was a BIG count!!

Improvising leaders and splitting the group with different routes gave us a far higher count than if we had stayed together. It resulted in an enjoyable day.

Wendy Phillips



Dusky Woodswallow

(Photo: Bob Daly, at Aldinga Scrub, 14th November 2020)



Young White-plumed Honeyeaters *(Photo: Chris Brabham, at Aldinga Scrub, 14th November 2020)*

Future Excursions

Birds SA Contact: Lynton Huxley

Field Program Co-ordinator and Campout Organiser

Phone: 0498 466 092 or 08 7009 5038

Email: fieldtrips@birdssa.asn.au or
lyntonhuxley@gmail.com

In the light of current COVID-19 protocols for South Australia we have prepared the following programme of field trips and the 2021 Easter Campout. We will continue to monitor government constraints and keep you informed of any changes via our eNews.

To comply with Birds SA's duty of care obligation to you, our members, we do ask that:

- You attend field trips only if you are well and have no cold or flu-like symptoms;
- You observe and comply with the COVID Safe Procedures implemented for our field trips including all relevant social distance restrictions;
- You bring personal hand sanitiser and consider bringing a facemask for added personal protection

If you have any queries or require further information please contact me using the information provided above.

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).

Excursion Terrain Difficulty Ratings

Easy – generally flat terrain

Moderate – may include some short undulating gradients

Difficult – may include some continuous or steep gradients

You will need:

- Personal hand sanitiser and optional facemask.
- Sun protection cream and a hat
- Sturdy footwear and long pants
- Drinking water
- Binoculars and or camera
- A chair/ stool and your lunch for our birdcall at the end of the walk

Birds SA

Sunday 29 November

Riverglades Wetlands Murray Bridge (MM) 80km

| Easy |

Meet at 8.30am in the boat ramp car park at Avoca Dell. To get there from Murray Bridge, cross the bridge to the eastern side of the river and take the fifth turning left into

Mitchell Ave. After 3.35km turn left into Murray Drive. At the foot of hill turn right and you will see the car park ahead.

TRIP LEADER: *Lynton Huxley*

Fleurieu Birders

Saturday 5 December

Beyond water ponds, Hayborough

Meet at 4pm at the Aquatic Centre Car Park on Waterport Road. Hayborough (near Victor Harbor). Followed by a BYO BBQ near the Aquatic Centre afterwards for a Christmas celebration — COVID-19 Regulations permitting!

Birds SA

Saturday 12 December

Cleland Conservation Park (MLR) 20km

| Difficult |

Meet at 8.30am in the Cleland Wildlife Park car park located at 365 Mount Lofty Summit Road, Crafers.

TRIP LEADERS: *Miles and Stephen Ramm*

Port Augusta Bird Group: The Babblers

Sunday 13 December:

Australian Arid Lands Botanic Garden

Meet in car park at 7.30am.

Christmas lunch in café and showing of year's best birding photos.

TRIP LEADER: *Bernie Haas*

Birds SA

Thursday 17 December:

Laratinga Wetlands, Mt Barker (MLR) 34km

| Easy |

Meet at 8.30am in the car park on Bald Hills Road, Mt. Barker.

TRIP LEADER: *Kate Buckley*

Birds SA

Saturday 9 January 2021:

Paiwalla Wetlands (MM) 90km

| Easy |

Meet at the Sunnyside Lookout at 8.30am. Take the Murray Bridge to Mannum Road on the eastern side of the river from Murray Bridge. Stay on this road until just past the turnoff to Bowhill on the right. Take the next turning left to Sunnyside Lookout car park.

TRIP LEADER: *Lynton Huxley*

Cruise the Coorong

A special 5 hour
birdwatching charter trip
for members

\$95pp



Join our special birdwatching tour for members on the *Cruise the Coorong Boat*.

When the first trip is full, the next trip will be one week later, on the following Wednesday.

I will take people's names and email addresses and when I have a full boat I will notify them of the payment link direct to the Coorong Boat Company.

We expect to see 60 bird species along the way!

Wendy Phillips
fleurieubirders@gmail.com

- 14 passengers only
- Dates from: 3rd February 2021
- Departs: 10am from the Goolwa wharf
Returns: 3pm
- Morning Tea and Lunch included (with vegetarian option)
- 1 or 2 stops along the way

Contact: Wendy Phillips to book
Phone: 8555 0634 or 0414 248 648
Email: fleurieubirders@gmail.com

Port Augusta Bird Group: The Babblers

Sunday 17 January
Baroota Reservoir

Meet at Mambray Creek parking at 8am.

TRIP LEADER: *Bernie Haase*

Birds SA

Thursday 21 January:
Kyeema Conservation Park (MLR) 60km

| **Moderate** |

Meet at 8.30am. This Conservation Park is on the southern end of Kuitpo Road, about 10km west of Ashbourne and 20km SW of Meadows. Travel from Meadows on Brookman Road. About 5km past Kuitpo, turn left into Woodgate Hill Road. Continue approximately 3km to the Park entrance on the left.

TRIP LEADER: *Ali Ben Kahn*

Birds SA

Sunday 31 January
Thompson Beach (AP) 61km

| Easy |

This excursion will commence at 8.00am to coincide with the high tide. **PLEASE BRING A SCOPE IF YOU CAN.**

Travel north on the Port Wakefield Road to the Thompson Beach turnoff, on your left as you reach Dublin. Follow this road for about 10km end and meet at the Enviro Toilets located at the northern end of The Esplanade, Thompson Beach. Turn right at the Ruskin Road T junction and drive to the end of the road. It is planned to move to Dublin for the birdcall and lunch as there is more shelter/shade.

TRIP LEADER: *Kate Buckley*

Future Excursions *(continued)*

Birds SA

Saturday 13 February

Kinchina Conservation Park (MLA) 69km

| Easy |

Meet at 8.30am. The Park is located about 4km west of Murray Bridge in the Narrinyeri Hills. Parking is available along Maurice Road and the Old Princess Highway.

TRIP LEADERS: *Stephen and Miles Ramm*

Birds SA

Thursday 18 February

Onkaparinga Wetlands (MLR) 32km

| Easy |

Meet at 8.30am at Port Noarlunga Oval Car Park off Britain Drive.

TRIP LEADER: *Lynton Huxley*

Port Augusta Bird Group: The Babblers

Sunday 21 February

Bowman Park

Meet at Crystal Brook at 8.30am. Park in the main street.

TRIP LEADER: *Bernie Haase*

Birds SA

Sunday 28 February

Magazine Road Wetlands Dry Creek (AP) 10km

| Easy |

Meet in the Car park area at 8.30am. If you are travelling northwards on South Road, continue onto Salisbury Highway heading east. The road bends to the north and there is one road off to the left. This is Magazine Rd. From the city, take Port Wakefield Road north, turning left up onto the Salisbury Hwy heading to Port Adelaide. Once you are on the Salisbury Highway, you need to move over to the right hand lane so you are ready to turn right into Magazine Road Wetlands.

TRIP LEADER: *Richard Woodland*

Fleurieu Birders

Saturday 6 March

Langhorne Creek Cemetery and Dog Lake

Meet at Frank Potts Reserve — Main Rd to Wellington at 8.30 am.

TRIP LEADER: *Wendy Phillips*

Birds SA

Saturday 13 March

Newland Head Conservation Park (MLR) 120km

| Easy |

Meet at 8.30am in the car park/camping area by the old house. Travel to Victor Harbor and then head west towards Waitpinga, Two km beyond Waitpinga, turn left to Waitpinga Beach. As you descend to the beach, the park is on the left-hand side.

TRIP LEADER: *Winston Syson*

Port Augusta Bird Group: The Babblers

Sunday 14 March

Mt. Gullet Beach

Meet at 8am in Mambray Creek parking bay
Wear beach-walking footwear

Birds SA

Thursday 18 March

Barossa Goldfields (AP) 42km

| Moderate |

Meet at 8.30 am at Bowden Cottage on the corner of Allandale Road and Para Wirra Road at the top end of Para Wirra Conservation Park. There is a car park near the junction of the two roads, and some parking in front of the cottage. A toilet and some picnic tables are available near the cottage. We will explore the Phoenix trail (about 5km).

TRIP LEADER: *Ali Ben Kahn*

Birds SA

Sunday 28 March

Hart Road Wetland, Aldinga Beach (MLA) 46km

| Easy |

Meet at 8.30am in the car park near the corner of Rowley Road and Hart Road Aldinga Beach. It is adjacent to the NE corner of the Aldinga Scrub Conservation Park.

TRIP LEADER: *Jim Spiker*

Birds SA

EASTER CAMPOUT: 1 to 7 April

Cantara Homestead, Coorong National Park

| Easy |

Full details on facilities and how to get there are provided separately, starting on page 37 of this issue of The Birder.

TRIP LEADER: *Lynton Huxley*

The Easter Campout this year will be held at **Cantara Homestead in the Coorong National Park** (230km or about 3 hours' travelling time from Adelaide). Meningie is the nearest place for fuel/supplies etc., since the Salt Creek Roadhouse is permanently closed. To get there from Adelaide, take the South Eastern Freeway to Murray Bridge and onto Taillem Bend then take the Princes Hwy through Meningie, past Salt Creek. After passing 42 Mile Crossing there will be a road on your left. This is Cantara Road, which is linked to Keith. **Do not take this road**, but continue on the highway for about 1km and look for a dirt road on your right (Old Coorong Road) with a Birds SA sign that, after about 500m, will lead you via a gate on your right, directly to the Homestead (*refer attached Maps 1 and 6*). All the main access roads to the park are suitable for 2WD vehicles; however some of the tracks within the park are 4WD accessible only.

For this camp, we have secured the Cantara Homestead. It consists of a kitchen and dormitory accommodation of 8 bedrooms that can sleep up to 15 people. If you wish to stay in the dormitory, **please make your dormitory bookings through the camp leader ASAP**. Three showers and two toilets are a very short walk outside the homestead building. Campsites for those wishing to rough it in tents, caravans or motorhomes are available around these quarters. There is a combustion heater inside, but you must bring your own wood. If the fire season has finished there is a campfire spot outside.

Camp access for Birds SA will be from 12 noon on Thursday 1 April till 12noon on Wednesday 7 April. This facility is not available for us to camp outside the above period but alternative National Park sites may be available should you wish to extend your stay. For information about the standard park fees and online booking conditions refer to www.environment.sa.gov.au/parks/booking.

Please note:

- All attendees **MUST** comply with our COVID Safe Plan. If you feel unwell please do not attend!
- Top up your fuel tank before you leave either Taillem Bend or Meningie.
- The Homestead operates on rainwater catchment only. Water from the filtered tap in the kitchen is fit for drinking and cooking. It is recommended that you bring your own bottled water for drinking.
- The **kitchen** has a gas stove and two fridges for our use. Some utensils are provided, but to be certain, bring any cooking utensils you may need. A gas barbeque is also available.
- There are 8 share rooms, which can be used as **bedrooms**. One double bunk and 13 single beds are provided. You will need to bring all your own bedding.
- Three showers and two toilets are available in the **bathroom**.
- The fee for a Dormitory bed will be \$10 a night. You must bring your own pillow, sheets and blankets. The fee for those camping in either a tent or a caravan will be \$10 per person for the duration of the campout. The Camp Organiser will collect all campout fees and issue a receipt.
- Mobile phone coverage in this area is patchy so assume that you will off the grid.
- If possible, please bring a handheld UHF radio or vehicle mounted unit. We will use UHF Channel 14 for our Birds SA communication.
- We will be undertaking various birding surveys for anyone interested.
- We will have the traditional Sunday gas barbeque lunch — bacon and eggs and/or pancakes. *You will need to provide the ingredients for the Committee Members present to cook!*

It would be most helpful if you could contact me on email: lyntonhuxley@gmail.com to secure your attendance or to obtain more information on this fun Birds SA Annual event.

Lynton Huxley
Campout Organiser

Ph: 0498 466 092 or (08) 7009 5038 (home)

The following six maps cover the whole Coorong National Park. The first one shows the whole of the National Park, and the remaining maps cover sections of the park in greater detail, from north to south.

Coorong National Park

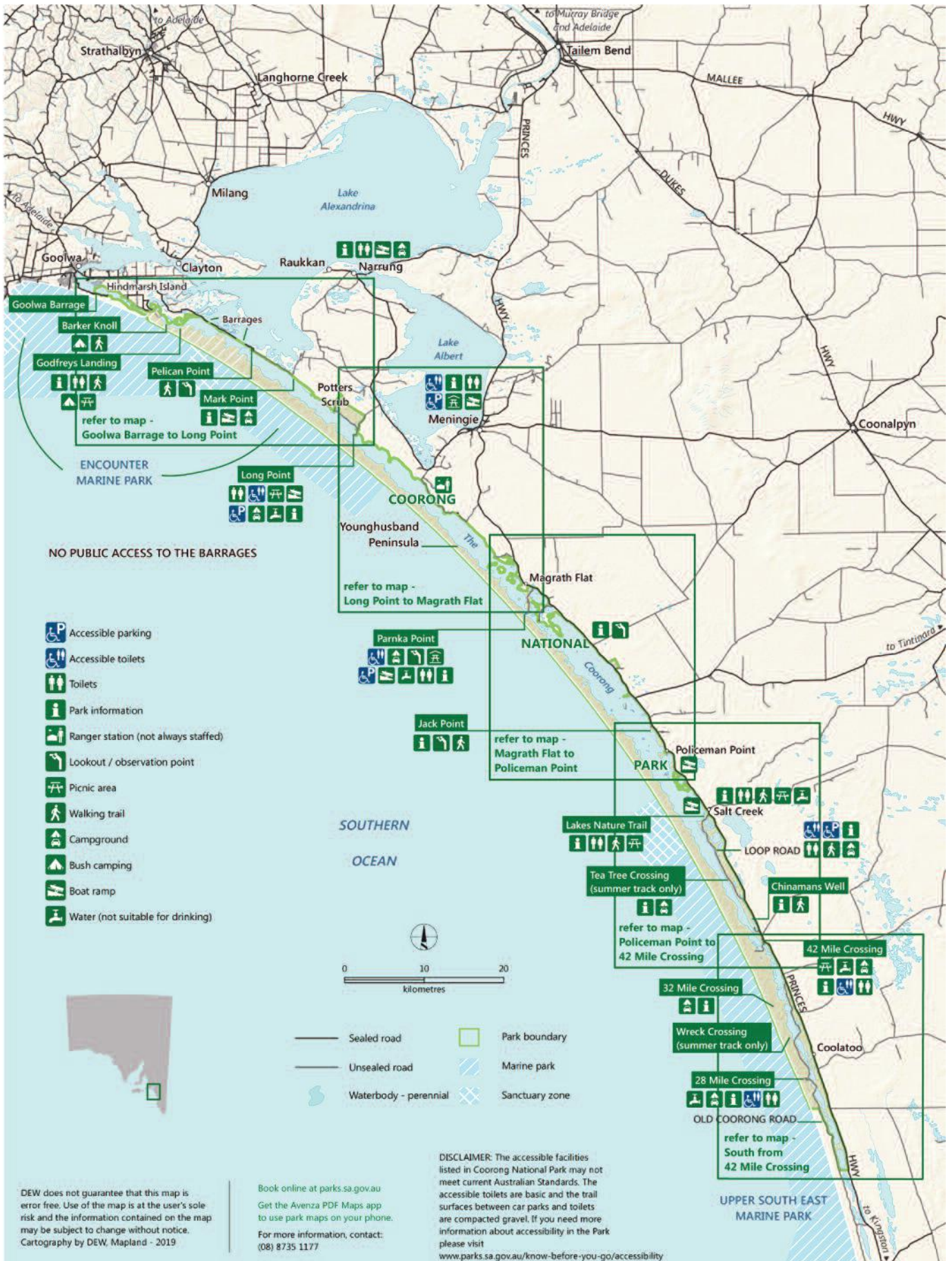
MAP
1



Government of South Australia



National Parks South Australia



Coorong National Park

Long Point to Magrath Flat

MAP
3



Government of South Australia



National Parks South Australia



- Sealed road
- Unsealed road
- Track
- Park boundary
- Built-up area
- Water - perennial, intermittent
- Marine park

DEW does not guarantee that this map is error free. Use of the map is at the user's sole risk and the information contained on the map may be subject to change without notice. Cartography by DEW, Mapland - 2019

Book online at parks.sa.gov.au
Get the Avenza PDF Maps app to use park maps on your phone.
For more information, contact (08) 8735 1177

Coorong National Park

Magrath Flat to Policeman Point

MAP
4



Government of South Australia



National Parks South Australia



- Sealed road
- Unsealed road
- Track
- Walking trail
- Park boundary
- Water - perennial, intermittent
- Built-up area

DEW does not guarantee that this map is error free. Use of the map is at the user's sole risk and the information contained on the map may be subject to change without notice. Cartography by DEW, Mapland - 2019

Book online at parks.sa.gov.au
Get the Avenza PDF Maps app to use park maps on your phone.
For more information, contact: (08) 8735 1177

Coorong National Park

Policeman Point to 42 Mile Crossing

MAP
5



Government of
South Australia

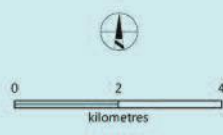


National Parks
South Australia



- Accessible parking
- Accessible toilets
- Toilets
- Boat ramp
- Walking trail
- Picnic area
- Information
- Campground
- Water (not suitable for drinking)
- Lookout
- Parking

DISCLAIMER: The accessible facilities listed in Coorong National Park may not meet current Australian Standards. The accessible toilets are basic and the trail surfaces between car parks and toilets are compacted gravel. If you need more information about accessibility in the Park please visit www.parks.sa.gov.au/know-before-you-go/accessibility



- Sealed road
- Unsealed road
- Track
- Walking trail
- Water - perennial, intermittent
- Park boundary
- Marine park, sanctuary zone

DEW does not guarantee that this map is error free. Use of the map is at the user's sole risk and the information contained on the map may be subject to change without notice. Cartography by DEW, Mapland - 2019

Book online at parks.sa.gov.au
Get the Avenza PDF Maps app to use park maps on your phone.
For more information, contact: (08) 8735 1177

Coorong National Park

South from 42 Mile Crossing

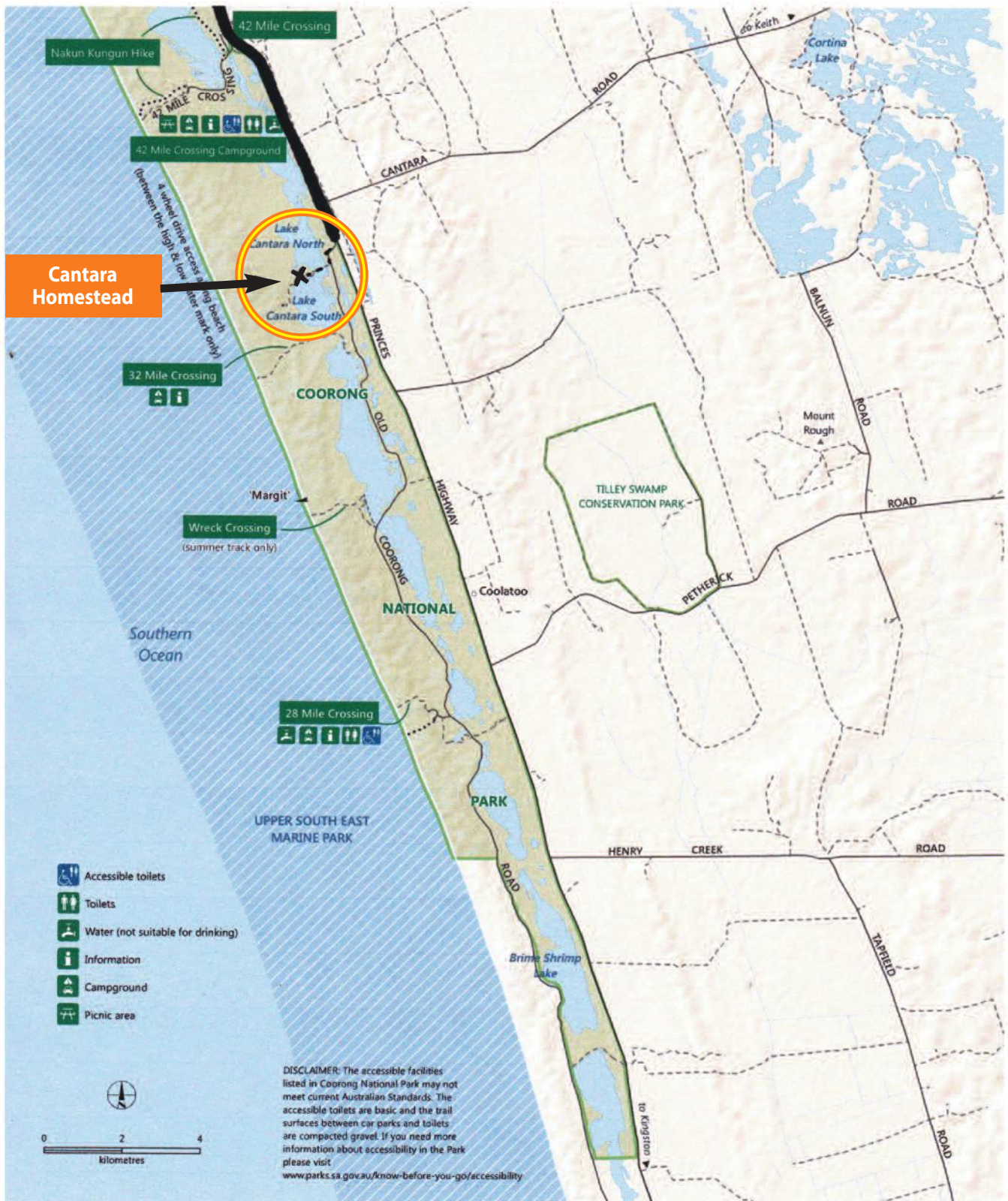
MAP
6



Government of
South Australia



National Parks
South Australia



From the Library



598.07234 RIC

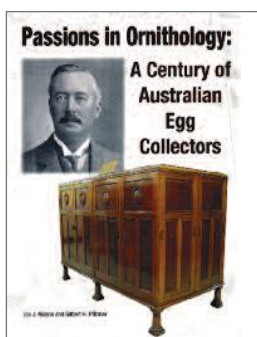
Richardson, R. Bruce

An Australian birding year : a couple travelling and birding the entire continent of Australia in a camper - without killing each other

Oxford : John Beaufoy Pub, 2020

ISBN 9781912081387

A highly personal account of a phenomenal, once-in-a-lifetime adventure that saw Bruce and his wife, Lynn, embark on a year of travel and birding across the entire continent in a camper van. Their aim was to see Australia, but also to keep a list of the birds that they saw together. That list began with two Gang-gang Cockatoos flying over their son's yard in Torquay, Victoria and ended a year later watching a lovely little Speckled Warbler on a chilly morning back in Victoria with 638 other species seen during the year.



598.14680994 MAS

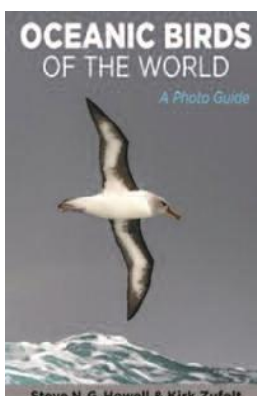
Mason, Ian J. & Pfitzner, Gilbert H.

Passions in ornithology : a century of Australian egg collectors

Canberra : [Ian J. Mason and Gilbert H. Pfitzner], 2020.

ISBN 9780646820798

The most comprehensive collection of bird eggs collected in Australia over the past 100 years, offering insights into not only the egg collections, but lives of the people behind them. Collectors from all over Australia comprise an impressive genealogical detailing of generations, outlining the evolution of the pastime into its current form. The extent of the biographies is a sight to behold.



598.2924 HOW

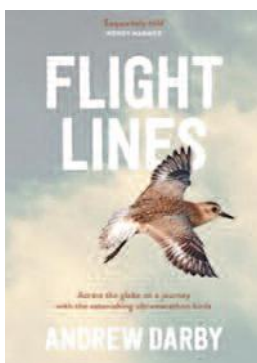
Howell, Steven

Oceanic birds of the world : a photo guide

Princeton, New Jersey : Princeton University Press, [2019]

ISBN 9780691175010

Oceanic birds are among the most remarkable but least known of all birds, living at sea, far from the sight of most people. They offer unusual identification challenges--many species look similar and it can be difficult to get good views of fast-flying birds from a moving boat. The first field guide to the world's oceanic birds in more than two decades, this exciting and authoritative book draws on decades of first hand experience on the open seas. It features clear text filled with original insights, new information and more than 2,200 carefully chosen colour images that bring the ocean and its remarkable winged inhabitants to life.



598.33 DAR

Darby, Andrew

Flight lines : across the globe on a journey with the astonishing ultramarathon birds

Crows Nest, NSW : Allen & Unwin, 2020

ISBN 9781760296551

Andrew Darby follows the extraordinary migratory shorebirds from Australia's Southern Ocean to the Arctic and back. On these travels he explores the power of science to reveal the mysteries of these birds, and to heal both their endangered world - and unexpectedly - himself.

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 not have been submitted yet, 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 Birds SA website).

Brown Quail

Heard, 6/9/2020. Modbury Heights, MLR. Harper, D. & S.
Heard, 22/10/2020. Balaklava, AP. Calling from lentil crop after sunset. Taylor, P.W.

Hardhead

Pair + 7 juveniles, 28/10/2020. Adelaide Botanic Gardens, AP. Bansemer, P. & B.
Despite being relatively common, there are very few breeding records of this duck species from near Adelaide and SA generally.

Cape Barren Goose

1, 5/11/2020. South Brighton, AP. Roosting on beach. Silvester, J.

Peaceful Dove

2, 14/9/2020. Kimba, EP. Taylor, P.W.
Its status on EP is uncertain.
1, 1/11/2020. Desert Camp CP, SE. Leddy, L.

Buller's Albatross

1, 20/9/2020. Off Port Macdonnell, MO. O'Neil, B., Harper, D. et al.

Fiordland Penguin

1, 16/8/2020. Talia Beach, EP. Gorvell, M.
1, 7/10/2020. Beachport, Rivoli Bay, SE. Williams, S.
Both records are of live birds roosting on beach/rocks. Submitted to Birds SA rarities committee.

Australasian Darter

Male, 25/8/2020. Vivonne Bay, KI. Parnell, M.
Few reports from KI.

Eastern Reef Egret

1, 16/8/2020. Hallett Cove, MLR. Dawson, G.
1 at same place on 14/9/2020 Long, R.

Australian Little Bittern

1, 24/8/2020. Banrock Wetlands, MM. Field, T.
An early report from this regular locality.

Straw-necked Ibis

6, 18/10/2020. Forreston, MLR. First report for district. Slade, R.
1, 28/10/2020. Coober Pedy sewage works, NW. Young, C.

Grey Goshawk

1 white phase, 25/8/2020. Millicent, Lake MacIntyre, SE. Boyle, S. & Pounsett, R.

Square-tailed Kite

1, 28/8/2020. Anstey's Hill, MLR. Stratford, J.
1, 10/10/2020. Williamstown, Coppermine Rd, MLR. Pearce, A.
1, 21/10/2020. Scott CP, MLR. Dennis, T. & Brittain, R.
1, 3/11/2020. Bull Creek, MLR. Hopton, D.

Grey Falcon

Pair + nest with 1 juvenile, 15/9/2020. Cowarie Stn, NE. Rogers, C.

Black Falcon

1, 8/9/2020. Goolwa Beach, MM. Brinsley, R.

Buff-banded Rail

2, 22/10/2020. Adelaide Zoo, AP. Possingham, H.

Lewin's Rail

Heard, 27/8/2020. 7 km NW North Shields, EP. Calliss, S.
Reported from near this locality at Charlton Gully in December 2012.
Heard, 11/10/2020. Tolderol GR, MM. Harper, S.
1, 2/11/2020. Cleland CP, Heptinstall's Spring, MLR. MacIwain, E. & Mart, B.

Bird Records *(continued)*

Baillon's Crake

1, 11/10/2020. Nelshaby Reservoir, FR.
Haase, B. et al.

Bush Stone-curlew

1, 12/8/2020. Nangawooka Flora Reserve, MLR. Wild
bird found injured by roadside.
Phillips, W.

Red-necked Avocet

800, 11/9/2020. Pelican Point, Coorong, MM
Green, B.

Common Ringed Plover

1, 1/3; 26/3 & 14/5/2020. Little Eyre Island, EP. Roosting
on sand-spit with other small waders.

Taylor, C.

*Report submitted to Birds Australia Rarities Committee and
accepted in October 2020. Previous reports from SA at Price
Saltfields on 18 Sep 1993 (J. Cox, D. Close et al.) and two at
Buckland Park Lake and adjacent St Kilda saltfields in
October 1976 (C. Rix – Australian Bird Watcher 7:40-44).
Acknowledgements to C. Rogers for advice on previous
reports in SA.*

Little Stint

1, 26/9/2020. Tolderol GR, MM. Full details submitted
to Birds SA Rarities Committee.
Rogers, C. et al.

Latham's Snipe

1, 21/10/2020. Mawson Lakes, Dry Creek linear park,
AP. Fairbairn, H

Red-necked Phalarope

1, 30/9/2020. Point Sinclair, EP. Swimming in salt lake.
Suter, A.

*One previous report from EP (Whyalla Saltfields 17 Feb
1973 by J. Cox). The last report from SA was at St Kilda
saltfields in 2006. Also of interest was one at the sewage
works at Ayers Rock (Uluru) in Oct 2017.*

Terek Sandpiper

5, 25/10/2020. Clinton CP, AP. Taylor, P.W.

Little Buttonquail

1, 24/10/2020. Hallett Co
ve CP, MLR. Fowler, A.
Few reports from southern districts in recent years.

Gull-billed Tern

9, 25/10/2020. Clinton CP, AP. Taylor, P.W.
2, 1/11/2020. Chinaman's Creek, NW. Haase, B. et al.
Both reports were of the migratory species 'affinis'.

Pacific Gull

Adult on nest, 1/11/2020. Granite Island, MLR.
van Weenen, J.

Long-billed Corella

75, 6/9/2020. Nuriootpa, Tanunda Rd, MLR.
Greenshields, M.

*Long-billed Corellas near Adelaide are thought to originate
from releases near Buckland Park in the early 1900s and
McLaren Vale in the 1980s. There have been many reports
of nesting (mostly in Red Gum hollows) near Adelaide in
recent years.*

Gang-gang Cockatoo

1, 26/8/2020. Humbug Scrub, MLR. Massie, A.
*Presumed to be the same escaped bird as the one reported
from One Tree Hill in March.*

13, 15/9/2020. Karatta, KI. Hammond, P.
2, 23/10/2020. West End Highway, KI. Hunt, T.
*Released onto KI in the 1940s and 50s where they have
survived in low numbers.*

Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo

*Arrived on AP earlier than usual this year, in search of
pines on which to feed.*

1+, 27/9/2020. Fullarton, AP. Horton, P.
10, 28/10/2020. Gilberton, Gilbert St, AP. Roosted
overnight in red gums. Previously thought to have
roosted overnight here in Oct and Nov 2018.

Paton, P.
32, 4/11/2020. Black Forest, AP. Flying east in evening.
Carpenter, G.

Also a northern report:

5, 18/10/2020. Mount Crawford Forest, Cricks Mill Rd,
MLR. Hartland, D.
10+, since early November 2020.
*Flying around the pine trees in Highbury Aqueduct Reserve
and feeding on the cones.* Pyle C.

Musk Lorikeet

2, 3/9/2020. Halbury, AP. Neumann, T.

Bird Records *(continued)*

Budgerigar

8, 18/9/2020. Port Arthur, YP. Taylor, P.W.
6, 24/9/2020. Wilmington, Hampel Rd, FR. Wright, G.
30, 11/10/2020. Telowie Gorge, FR. Haase, B. et al.
9, 1/11/2020. Magdala, AP. Girdham, L.
Large numbers in MN and FR regions in late Oct – Nov (below), so more reports from southern districts expected.
100s, 29/10/2020. Parachilna, FR. Edwards, N.
100s, 29/10/2020. Arkaba, FR. Eager, C.
1000s, 1/11/2020. Near Orroroo, MN. Luker, A.
30, 1/11/2020. Porters Lagoon, MN. Fowler, A.
40, 2/11/2020. Mount Bryan, LN. Sinclair, T.

Eastern Koel

Heard, 29/9/2020. Fitzroy, AP. Christie, P.
Male, 9/10/2020. Prospect, AP. Christie, P.
Male, 13/10/2020. Prospect, Ballville St, AP. Paton, F.
1, 14/10/2020. Manningham, Lawrie Knight Reserve, AP. Storr, R.

Azure Kingfisher

1, 3/10/2020. Picaninnie Ponds CP, SE. Heikaus, A.

Rainbow Bee-eater

2, 18/10/2020. Kingscote, KI. Ingram, G.
Chris Baxter's 'Birds of KI' lists few reports (some breeding) from KI.

Thick-billed Grasswren

1, 15/8/2020. Marla, NW. Castle, D.
2, 18/8/2020. 18 km WNW Frome Downs HS, LNE
Brittain, R & Diment, J.
1, 23/10/2020. Lake Marion, 23 km NE Marree, NE.
Nat, F.

Superb Fairy-wren

2, 29/10/2020. Breakout Creek, upstream Tapleys Hill Rd, AP. Edey, D.

Spotted Pardalote

Pair + nest, 10/9/2020. Field River, Trott Park, MLR.
Burns, A. & Bates, R.

Crimson Chat

Several reports in September but have since dispersed following rains in northern regions.

5, 18/9/2020. South Hummocks, YP. Taylor, P.W.
2, 19/9/2020. Balaklava, AP. Taylor, P.W.
3, 19/9/2020. Salters Springs, MLR. Greenshields, M.
2, 20/9/2020. Pinkerton Plains, Farrelly Rd, AP. Milde, S.
2, 20/9/2020. Mount Wedge, EP. Penna, I.

Black-chinned Honeyeater

1, 1/9/2020. Currency Creek arboretum, MM. First report here. Nicolle, D.
2, 29/10/2020. Reynella East, Merlot St, MLR. Smith, Ed

White-bellied Cuckoo-shrike

1, 13/8/2020. W of Balaklava, AP. In roadside vegetation. Taylor, P.W.

Olive-backed Oriole

Adult, 17-19/10/2020. Cygnet River, Duck Lagoon Rd, KI. Calling from top of Sugar Gum. Wickham, C.
One reported from this area several times in the 1990s and 2000s.

White-breasted Woodswallow

1, 22/10/2020. Balaklava, AP. On TV antenna in town. Taylor, P.W.

Pied Currawong

1, 16/8/2020. 4 km SE Glencoe, SE. Boyle, S.

White-winged Chough

4, 24/9/2020. Happy Valley Reservoir, east side, MLR. Smith, Ed

Apostlebird

5, 16/8/2020. Naracoorte, SE. Miller, R.
Previous reports from the SE in native pines near Naracoorte in the 1930s (SA Ornithologist 13:118) and an early specimen from near Tarpeena in July 1868.
2, 16/9/2020. Redhill, MN. Rogers, C.

Fairy Martin

Several, 7/10/2020. Little Cuttlefish Bay, KI. Souter, W.
Baxter's 'Birds of KI' lists it as a rare visitor, with most reports (including nesting) from the north coast of Dudley Peninsula and to the west at Red Banks.

Painted Finch

1, 3/10/2020. Old Peake Telegraph Station, NW. Harper, D. & S.

Zebra Finch

2, 18/9/2020. Mount Monster CP, SE. Fairbairn, H.
Several, 19/9/2020. Wellington, MM. Rodda, B.
Several, 5/11/2020. 7km E Milang, MM. Phillips, W. & Syson, W.

Few recent reports from the lower RM and lakes region, where they were once commonly seen in lignum shrublands and vineyards.

Photo-Finish

Making the moment matter

The weather is finally getting warmer! As Spring eases into Summer, for me this is the best time of the year; a period that I like to call Hoodie Time! Hoodie Time? No – this has nothing to do with leisure wear. It's at this time of the year that Hooded Plovers (*Thinornis rubricollis*) seem to re-emerge onto our coasts and commence their mating and breeding behaviours. Elusive as they may sometimes be, when found they prove to be a boundless source of fascination, as they go about their business, fossicking and foraging, always alert to themselves and to their environment. And as great as it is to see them, better still is to be privileged to watch them over time and to come to know them and their ways and to follow them in their efforts to win through and secure a successful clutch. In some ways, it's like following a favoured football team across the season. Hoodie Time. Hoodie Season. What a fantastic time it is to be a birder!

Hooded Plovers breed from August to March on sandy beaches, in a narrow strip between the highwater mark and the base of the fore-dunes. They generally like beaches with large amounts of beachwashed seaweed, primarily because it's in here where they can find their food. Hooded Plovers lay up to 3 eggs in a scrape in the sand, and incubate them



Red-capped Plover (Photographed by Davide Gaglio at Seacliff)

for about 28 days until the eggs hatch. Although the chicks are capable runners from birth, they can't fly until they are five weeks old and must forage for their own food up and down the beach and along the water's edge.

Life can be a bit of a struggle for Hooded Plovers at the best of times, but unfortunately, the situation is even more dire during breeding season. In particular, they are highly susceptible to the impacts caused by human disturbance and activities. They will abandon eggs and chicks if persistently disturbed by vehicles, dogs, humans and predators. Their nest defence strategy is to leave the nest when a predator approaches and stay distant from the eggs until the predator leaves and it is safe to return. If the adult remains away for too long or if disturbances are too frequent, the eggs can either be exposed to harsh temperatures that lead to the death of the embryo inside or can be exposed to other approaching predators. Population densities are lowest on narrow, steep beaches, where there are few or no dunes. A further significant threat for this species is the loss of habitat and degradation through coastal development and weed infestations.

Many of us enjoy observing and taking photos of these little treasures. This year I have had the privilege of getting a close and sustained look at these fantastic birds as they negotiate their way through breeding season along Adelaide's beaches. In coming to know them and their behaviours, by trying to capture images of them, I have come to learn new things about photographic techniques and also refine long-practised strategies. So, I would like to share with you some tips on how to take stunning photos of these small and fast-moving birds.

To not only get a feeling of their world, but also capture a sense of it, get down to their level! Always try to photograph the birds at their eye level – doing so, you stand a much better chance of getting more intimate photographs of birds since you will get eye contact as well as a pleasing blur both in the foreground and background. Please, while doing that do not forget to do your best to reduce the disturbance caused by your presence. Go low but also go slow! You need to give the breeding pair time to get accustomed to your presence and the slower you move the less the birds will feel threatened.

We all know that photography is all about light, right? Light has a few characteristics that can be harnessed to make a photograph wonderful. Early morning and late afternoon is the best time to photograph these birds, not only because that is the time when they generally are most active, but it's also the time when the light is at its softest. Think about it — the middle of the day, the sun is high and the light is harsh and

Photo-Finish *(continued)*



Hooded Plovers *(Photographed by Davide Gaglio at Seacliff)*

hard. At the start and end of the day, the sun is low and the light is less abrasive. Soft. Soft light allows you to not cast harsh shadows on the bird. It also brings out a glow in the bird's plumage and it creates a catchlight in the bird's eye.

Your photograph needs to be able to tell a story, express a mood, place, or behaviour of the bird in a single image. Viewers should be able to picture themselves in the scene. The composition of a bird photograph — where you position what's in the frame — helps you convey your message in the best possible way. Use the 'rule of thirds' compositional technique to place the bird off-centre, and use colour contrast by aiming for a complementary background whenever possible. Experiment — find what works best for you, and achieves the effect you're after. If the close detail and particular features are what you're after, fill the frame with the bird; if you're trying to capture and convey the bird's lived experience and its context, then try to incorporate its surroundings — this will give a better sense to your story.

And here is my story: I was patiently waiting for the golden light to wash in over Seacliff beach, observing from a distance a pair of Hooded Plovers. I noticed that while one of the adults remained sitting on the nest, the partner quickly ran to the shore and met another Hooded Plover. I was surprised to observe that interaction: a partnered bird with a third individual. I then approached, low and slow, as the two birds ranged together in the tidal wash. My zoom lens allowed me to get a close look at the birds. After a few minutes one of the birds decided to sit on the wet sand, not

far from me, looking like he wanted to enjoy the last bit of sunshine with me! The scene was beautiful, the very low angle and soft light was perfect ... but something was not right just yet. I slowly crawled across and nestled into the wet sand to modify the composition. This let me place the other blurred individual into the background, thereby filling the space on the left side of my picture. Doing so has given more breadth and tridimensionality to the scene. My slow approach and patience was rewarded – I am pleased and proud to have captured and conveyed an intimate moment shared with such a beautiful species.

Davide Gaglio

We would like to include a **'Photo-Finish'** article towards the end of future issues of *The Birder*. This will consist of 1 or 2 pages containing for example a stunning photo of a bird and a text relevant to that image. The content can vary: perhaps the narrative of the moment when the photo was captured, or a specific insight into the species photographed or even some technical photographic suggestion — how you can obtain that kind of photo.

**Please send me your contributions to
'Photo-Finish', using the email address:
magazineeditor@birdssa.asn.au**

We hope we will be able to enjoy our General Meetings again in 2021

Committee meetings are usually held in the Hawker Centre of the Waite Institute on the second Monday of each month, starting at 7.30pm.

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Your message will be forwarded to that person.

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'The Birder' is produced every three months and includes general news, conservation updates, bird sightings, and details of past and future meetings and excursions.

The 'South Australian Ornithologist' is Birds SA's scientific journal.

Members paying by credit card will be charged \$1.50 per transaction.

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A page of Raptors



Australian Hobby

*(Photographed by Trevor Cox
at Port Neill, Eyre Peninsula,
July 2020)*



Little Eagle

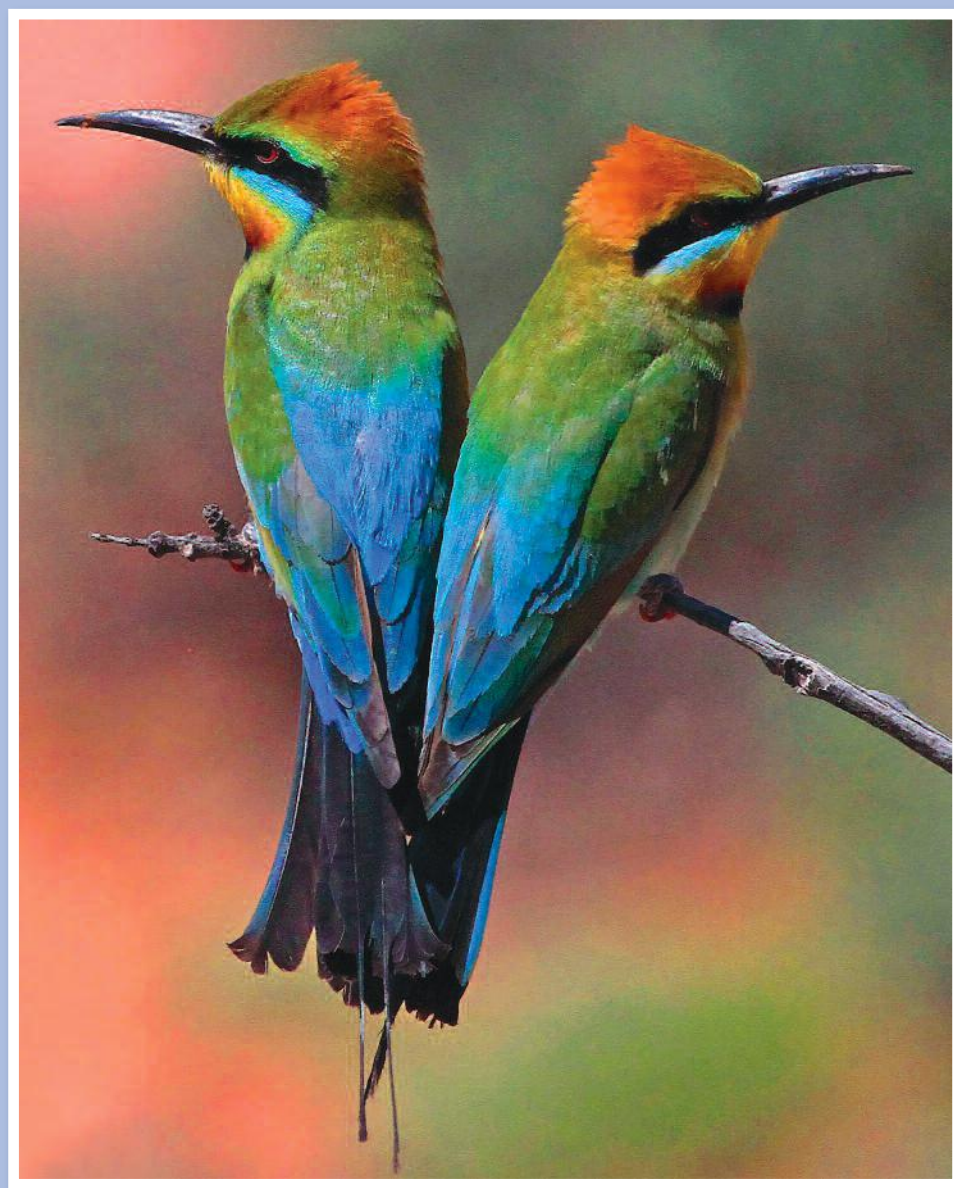
*(Photographed by Trevor Cox
at Arid lands Botanic Gardens,
September 2020)*



Australian Hobby

*(Photographed by Trevor Cox at
Tumby Bay, 30th October 2020)*

Beautiful Rainbow Bee-eaters



Rainbow Bee-eaters (Photographed by Trevor Cox, Port Augusta 2020)



Rainbow Bee-eater (Photographed by Trevor Cox, at Port Neill, 13 February 2019)