

# THE BIRDER

The official magazine of Birds SA Winter 2022 No 262



Linking people with birds  
in South Australia



## In this Issue

Recovery plan for White-bellied Sea Eagles and Ospreys in SA

A very successful Easter Campout

Many nest boxes sold at Sophie's Patch Easter event

*Two very different birds in flight*



**Great Egret**

*(Photographed by  
Fred Dunker at  
Lawari Conservation Park,  
March 2022)*

**Spotted Harrier**

*(Photographed by  
Peter McKenzie at  
Stansbury, Yorke Peninsula,  
28 January, 2022)*



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## **CENTRE INSERT No 79: Apollos Harrison Gouge (1825–1912) Part 1 by Philippa Horton.**

**Cover image: A female Red-capped Robin.** Photographed by Ashley Grivell.

The cover of this magazine was designed by John Gitsham.

**Graphic design:** Ingrid Grigg

**We welcome 31 new members** who have recently joined the Association. Their names are listed on page 15.

*Birds SA is the operating 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'.

## JUNE

Saturday 4 June	FB	Excursion to Nurragi Reserve
Saturday 11 and Sunday 12 June — <b>LONG WEEKEND two-night camp at Brookfield CP</b> Birds SA		
Saturday 11 to Monday 13 June — <b>CAMPOUT at Oratunga Station</b> Port Augusta Bird Group: The Babblers		
Thursday 16 June	Birds SA	Bushland Park, Lobethal
Sunday 26 June	Birds SA	Kenneth Stirling (Wotton Scrub) CP & Mt George CP
Tuesday 28 June	Birds SA	General Meeting

## JULY

Saturday 2 July	FB	Langhorne Creek Cemetery
Saturday 9 July	Birds SA	Shepherds Hill Recreation Park
Sunday 17 July	PA	Wilmington, Willowie Forest, Melrose
Thursday 21 July	Birds SA	Belair National Park
Tuesday 26 July	Birds SA	General Meeting
Sunday 31 July	Birds SA	Happy Valley Reservoir Reserve

## AUGUST

Saturday 6 August	FB	Scott Conservation Park
Saturday 13 August	Birds SA	Scott Creek Conservation Park
Sunday 14 August	PA	Gum Glen Station
Thursday 18 August	Birds SA	Whites Road Wetlands
Sunday 28 August	Birds SA	Glenthorne National Park
Tuesday 30 August	Birds SA	General Meeting

## SEPTEMBER

Saturday 10 September	Birds SA	Altona CSR Landcare Reserve
Thursday 15 September	Birds SA	Tangari Regional Park Woodcroft

# President's Message

## Hi everyone

I have just returned from Birdlife Australia's biennial National Beach Nesting Birds conference which took place this year at Moonta last weekend, 13-15 May. It was well attended by about 150 delegates from all over Australia.

There were many inspiring stories about people making a real difference — despite all the challenges.

For instance, the Hooded Plovers on Fleurieu Peninsula fledged 16 chicks compared just 6 the previous years – great work from David and Sue Thorn and Emma Stephens and all the other helpers. I will try to arrange a zoom presentation from that team so they can tell us more about it and also see how we can all help build on that for the 2022/23 season.

However, the conference did also highlight the accelerating damage caused by vehicles' uncontrolled beach access. The foreign travel restrictions of the past two years of Covid have seen a boom in domestic tourism which is fantastic for the economy of South Australia's regions. However, it is very important that this tourism is environmentally sustainable, especially in our State's often fragile ecosystems. The accompanying

boom in sales of new offroad vehicles and offroad caravans is contributing to unsustainable pressure on our beaches and dunes.

We have therefore requested an early meeting with the new Minister for the Environment to build on the good work of her predecessor. We will be pressing her to enact the recommendations of the 2019 Parliamentary Inquiry and finally turn all this talking into action! Please note that we may well need your support in a public campaign to raise this to a priority issue — watch this space!

Another Birds SA campaign issue this year will be pushing hard for an end to duck and quail hunting. The new Government has promised an inquiry into the "sport" which will be an opportunity for a high-profile public debate. It is difficult to believe that most people wouldn't support a ban. However, we may well need your support as part of a wider campaign to pressure our politicians of all sides.

*All the best*  
**Steven**

Steven Langley, President Birds SA  
M: 0490 802 176

## Our Facebook page

We now have a volunteer, a new member, Sarah Ansell, to look after our Facebook page, which has been languishing recently. She has provided the following information about herself and her reason for volunteering.

I am a busy working Mum to my 6 year old son and a menagerie of animals. I have studied Environmental Science and keep busy volunteering as a Ranger with Dept. of Parks and Wildlife which has given me the opportunity to work in different parks across Adelaide and the Flinders Ranges. My interest in birds began only a few years ago when we moved from the suburbs to a beautiful little property just out of Mount Compass. The Superb Fairywrens would visit and come right up to the window to peek in, I fell in love with them straight away. For my 40th birthday I was given

my first pair of binoculars, and I was hooked! Being a very novice birder, I am keen to see and learn everything I can, and am starting to collect lots of bird ID books, mostly found in op shops.

When I saw the Birds SA Facebook page was a little quiet, I reached out to offer my support. Social media is one of the key sources of information that people turn to, and an active social media presence will complement the fabulous e-newsletter and Birder magazine. My hope is to create regular, engaging posts to promote the wonderful activities of Birds SA, encourage people to come along to our field trips, and generate new members of the Association to support the variety of activities of Birds SA.

**Sarah Ansell**

# Conservation sub-Committee

## Beach Nesting Birds Conference – Moonta

The President in his report in this issue has highlighted his attendance at BirdLife Australia's National Beach-nesting Birds Conference at Moonta SA on May 13-15. This biennial Conference is aimed at sharing the latest research findings and stakeholder knowledge for beach-nesting bird species, their habitats, threats and conservation management. The conference attracts a diversity of representatives from local and state government, coastal committees of management, volunteers, community groups, researchers and students. The 2022 Conference program included a range of presentations, workshops and field trips aimed at building and extending knowledge and practical skills for threatened species protection and coastal management.

Birds SA and BirdLife Australia sought to use the profile of this national Conference to highlight the damage caused by the uncontrolled use of off-road vehicles in coastal areas in SA. The Conservation sub-Committee is currently finalising a Vehicles On Beaches Policy which will be used as the basis for discussions with Environment Minister Susan Close.

## Conservation Status – Eyre Peninsula Southern Emuwren

A draft conservation advice was received in late April 2022 from the Commonwealth Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment relating to the

Eyre Peninsula Southern Emu-wren (EPSEW). The advice sought comments on a proposal to change the conservation status for this sub-species from **Vulnerable** to the more critical **Endangered** level. The primary reasons for this proposed change were:

- loss of habitat
- the declining population size, currently estimated to be approx. 750 mature individuals
- the fragmented habitat and associated lack of genetic diversity
- the increased likelihood of extreme events such as wildfire and drought.

Birds SA made a submission in support of the proposed status change and the need for a recovery plan, highlighting:

- the risk of fire posed by the Southern Launch rocket launching facility at Whalers Way, a known location for EPSEW
- the fact that the launch sites proposed by Southern Launch were at known EPSEW hotspots
- the fact that climate change means that the likelihood of wildfires has increased and a fire similar to Kangaroo Island 2020 or Yorketown 2019 would be likely to render the EPSEW extinct.
- the fact that the limited range of the sub-species, at the bottom of Eyre Peninsula, was subject to uncontrolled access and impact by off-road vehicles in many areas.

### Eyre Peninsula Southern Emuwren

*(Photograph supplied by Marcus Pickett)*



## Conservation sub-Committee *(continued)*

### Significant Commitments – New State Labor Government

The election of the new SA Labor Government brought with it a number of commitments having relevance to birdlife. Birds SA will endeavour to ensure the Labor election promises are acted upon in a timely fashion. Some of the more notable Labor commitments and recent status are as follows:

#### Response to changes to the Pastoral Act proposed by the previous Marshall Government

- Post the election, new Environment Minister Susan Close told the ABC "The previous government, the Liberals, wanted to remove stocking rates, to have extremely long leases — up to 100-year leases — and also to not do on-ground assessment of the quality and condition of the land. All of that stops now."
- Minister Close also confirmed that "Labor is moving the government's Pastoral Unit out of the Primary Industries portfolio and back to the Environment Department," promising more money to ensure sheep and cattle stations are not damaging the fragile country.
- Minister Close was quoted as saying the government will also confirm that pastoral land can be used for conservation purposes, something that the former Govt appeared to be challenging.

#### St Kilda Mangroves

Since the election, Minister Close has had discussions with representatives of the Save the St Kilda Mangroves coalition. Prior to the election, Labor committed to develop a restoration plan for the damaged areas of mangrove forest and samphire marsh in the St. Kilda area. Labor also committed to "ensure the investigation into the cause of the die-off was completed as soon as possible to ensure any future incidents are avoided and ensure those responsible were held accountable for their actions."

#### Off-road Vehicles

At the time of writing, Birds SA was seeking a meeting with Minister Close on this issue. There have been further examples reported recently in the media

demonstrating just how out of control the management of vehicles on beaches is in SA. Prominent coverage has been given to issues at Perlubie Beach and Greenly Beach on the West Coast, impacted by numerous tourists camping on the beach with their vehicles. Closer to Adelaide, irresponsible off-road vehicle use has been highlighted at Goolwa Beach, the headline in the Adelaide Advertiser reading: "**Dunes hoons face ban**".

Labor has previously said it would review the recommendations contained in the report of the Natural Resources Committee from June 2020 relating to vehicle access to sensitive environments, including beaches, which were not acted upon on by the Marshall government.

#### Duck and Quail Shooting

Prior to the election Labor stated that it recognised the concerns of many people about recreational hunting of native birds which are not over-abundant and will hold an inquiry into this practice.

### New Chairman for Conservation sub-Committee

I am pleased to announce that Dr Ray Nias has taken up the role of chair of the Birds SA Conservation sub-Committee. Ray is on the Birds SA Management Committee and is ideally qualified to take up this position.

He has worked for more than 30 years on conservation issues in Australia and the Pacific. Ray was formerly the Conservation Director for WWF Australia and the South-west Pacific Director for Island Conservation, an organisation whose mission is to prevent extinctions by removing invasive species from islands.

Ray is currently a consultant and Director of a small, newly formed NGO, TierraMar, which is dedicated to promoting Nature-based Solutions.

It is worth noting that early in his career Ray received support from the South Australian Ornithological Association for his research work.

I will remain on the Conservation sub-Committee and look forward to working with Ray.

**Jeff Groves**

Conservation sub-Committee

# At last!

**A Recovery Plan to address the declining Osprey and White-bellied Sea Eagle populations in South Australia.**

*Terry Dennis*

## **The background story ...**

Compared to other states it is highly likely that SA's coastal environments, with few intersecting rivers or fresh-water lakes, only ever supported comparatively small Osprey and White-bellied Sea Eagle populations. Also in contrast to other states, SA does not have extensive coastal forests to provide elevated, less easily disturbed, nest site opportunities for these species. Here, nest placements are mostly limited to cliff-face settings and associated terrain, in landscapes with typically low coastal heath vegetation cover which results in nests being visually exposed over long distances and highly susceptible to disturbance from human activity occurring on the cliffline above.

This was the picture forming back in the late-1970s while living on western Eyre Peninsula, where abandoned nests of both species were common in locations where tourism developments, such as improved access roads and coastal feature lookouts, were constructed without any regard for the impact on sensitive wildlife and their habitats. At the same time, a plethora of informal 4WD access tracks were being forged into remote areas along the coast, most often following the line-of-least-difficulty close to the cliff-edge to gain access to remote beaches and surf breaks throughout the region.

Coincident with the exponential increase in 4WD vehicle ownership, the push for unrestricted access to all features of the coastline is continuing largely unabated across all regions of SA, even into the last very remote locations, degrading both the wilderness quality and habitat integrity of our coastal landscapes.

**An on-the-wing image of the female Osprey close to the new near-shore nest platform at Shoal Bay on Kangaroo Island**

*(Photographed by Jeff Krieg, October 2021)*

# Recovery Plan for declining Osprey and White-bellied Sea Eagle populations in SA *(continued)*

## Adverse consequences

Collectively, these intrusions have impacted Osprey and White-bellied Sea Eagle breeding habitat, in many cases displacing both species away from preferred nesting sites to sub-optimal locations. Inevitably this has resulted in more frequent nest failures and the overall population declines that are now evident across SA.

Following a comprehensive threatened species review in 2008 the conservation status of both the Eastern Osprey and White-bellied Sea Eagle was elevated to Endangered in SA.

## Osprey population profile

### The 'big picture'

In contrast to most Osprey populations in the Northern Hemisphere, the non-migratory Australasian sub-species of Osprey is considered to be adapted to warm temperate and tropical bioregions where the majority of the Australian population occurs. Consequently the sparsely distributed Osprey population found breeding in coastal areas along the southern coastlines of South and Western Australia, may occur somewhat tenuously on the edge of their continental distribution. Significantly, Osprey have never occurred as a resident breeding species in Victoria, Tasmania or in southern New South Wales.

### The numbers

Early modelling of the SA Osprey population (2005–07) estimated the number of occupied breeding territories in SA to be around 52; extensive ground and boat surveys between 2008–10 revised this estimate to around 58 occupied territories, providing a baseline against which future surveys could be compared; then, comprehensive statewide surveys over three breeding seasons in 2015–17, found just 43 occupied territories — revealing a significant overall decline of 26% which alarmingly, had occurred over the 5-6 year period between surveys (see SAO Vol 43 p38–54, for the full Osprey story in SA).

### The road to recovery

Worldwide, Osprey have proven to be resilient and adaptable to environmental change, even venturing into urban landscapes and using 'tree-like' structures such as power poles and communication towers as nesting platforms. This level of adaptability has enabled the use of artificial nest platforms in appropriate areas, to be an important management strategy in planned population recovery programs across Europe and North America. Artificial nest platforms have been an important element in the Osprey recovery and

subsequent breeding range expansion in northern NSW in recent decades and currently here in SA, where platforms are being erected in key locations on Yorke Peninsula and Kangaroo Island.

## White-bellied Sea Eagle population profile

Evidence for substantial historical and more recent declines in the White-bellied Sea Eagle population in mainland coastal regions of SA was first published in the mid-1990s. At that time, White-bellied Sea Eagle population modelling was based on: survey data from a series of targeted remote mainland and Kangaroo Island coastline treks; opportunistic surveys in the Great Australian Bight region, including many offshore islands; and a comprehensive interrogation of the ornithological literature, Birdlife Australia Atlas and Nest Record Scheme database(s), and banding records from the Australian Bird and Bat Banding Scheme ... all well before digitisation made such a task relatively easy!

Further surveys (supported by Birds SA) followed on western Eyre Peninsula in 2004 and Kangaroo Island in 2006, providing updated regional data. These also provided a measure of the extent of abandoned territories, where landscape scale land-use change and various human activities were creating disturbance at critical periods of the breeding cycle. A long-term study of White-bellied Sea Eagle territory productivity on Kangaroo Island found these factors to be directly implicated in nest failures and territory desertions, resulting in significantly lower levels of population recruitment in affected territories.

### The numbers

In the mid-1990s the White-bellied Sea Eagle population was estimated to be around 55 breeding pairs, with 18 of these located in mainland territories, three of which were on inland rivers. Then, working from the extensive territory location knowledge gained in earlier surveys, the more comprehensive statewide surveys in 2009–10 confirmed 72 occupied territories, with 15 of these located in mainland habitats, two of which were in River Murray wetland settings; statewide surveys over three breeding seasons in 2015–17, confirmed a similar number of occupied territories (73), but found further decline on the mainland, ie. down to 14 and to just one territory remaining in the Riverland. During the 2015–17 surveys, standardised habitat quality assessment records revealed further evidence of habitat disturbance/degradation and subsequent territory core relocations and abandonments (see SAO Vol 43 p55–72, for the full White-bellied Sea Eagle story in SA).

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## STOP PRESS

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Because the current statewide surveys (commenced in 2021) are not yet complete for both species, an updated comparative population assessment is not available. However of early concern, White-bellied Sea Eagle territories on the Fleurieu Peninsula (including the 'overly well-known' Waitpinga Cliffs site) and on the River Murray have been negatively re-classified. Also, in the wake of the horrendous wildfires on Kangaroo Island in 2020, there is some uncertainty over a couple of White-bellied Sea Eagle territories on the north coast, where fire burnt ferociously at night along and over sections of the cliffline between Cape Borda and Western River.

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### Eastern Osprey and White-bellied Sea Eagle Recovery Team established in 2020

The establishment of a Recovery Team to address recent declines in both Osprey and White-bellied Sea Eagle populations in SA, followed soon after the publication of the 2015–17 breeding season survey data. Its formation was an initiative of the former Minister for Environment, David Speirs, who was known to have an interest in

Osprey conservation in particular, connected with his fathers' role in the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds in Scotland.

The Recovery Team is comprised of invited representatives from: Birds SA (Stephen Langley, *ex officio*) and Terry Dennis; Birdlife Australia (Dr Rebecca Boulton) and Birdlife Aust. Raptor Group (Ian Falkenberg); Narrunga Aboriginal community (Peter Turner). Also, Dept. for Environment and Water staff: Landscape SA (Max Barr YP); Coast and Marine Branch (Sharie Detmar); Conservation and Threatened Species Unit (Dr Peter Copley); Science Partnerships (Dr Dan Rogers); and National Parks and Wildlife staff from key coastal regions (Peter Wilkins Eyre and Far West, and Heinrich Klein Kangaroo Island). The Recovery Team is chaired by Lisien Loan, Director of Conservation and Wildlife, with Sen. Ecologist Randall Johnson appointed to co-ordinate the development of the Recovery Plan, provide scientific support and to coordinate population surveys and data management.

The principal task of the Recovery Team in 2020-21 was to identify the conservation issues and recovery strategies needed to halt the population declines evident for both species and to develop a Recovery Plan to plot the way these strategies could be implemented. After several iterations, following input from key



A majestic pair of White-bellied Sea Eagles 'caught' on camera during a courtship display near a lake in western Victoria in 2014; note the obviously bulkier female on the right  
*(Photographed by Ian Morgan)*

## Recovery Plan for declining Osprey and White-bellied Sea Eagle populations in SA *(continued)*

### Osprey with a fish in its talons

*(Photographed by Jeff Groves in  
Hervey Bay, Queensland)*



Recovery Team members, a draft was released for public comment in December 2021 through the SA Government's online consultation hub, 'YourSay!'. Although the closure date for community comment has now long passed, the online draft is still available on the following link:

[Draft South Australian Recovery Plan for Eastern Osprey and White-bellied Sea Eagle | YourSAy](#)

The stated Overarching Goal in the final Recovery Plan draft is:

***"By 2030, to secure, stabilise and increase the number of breeding pairs of Osprey and White-bellied Sea Eagle in South Australia from 2021 levels"***

and the 'Objectives' by which to achieve this are set out as:

- 1. To protect all known breeding territories.***
- 2. To increase the number of breeding territories over former and potential habitat.***
- 3. To identify and address critical knowledge gaps.***

A comprehensive range of 'Recovery Actions' are detailed in the final draft to address the known causes of territory desertion and habitat loss, including the following (paraphrased):

- undertake statewide population and threat assessment surveys for both species every five years, together with more frequent monitoring in areas with observed instability, to determine inter-annual variability in breeding activity and productivity outcomes;
- adoption of the defined 'breeding refuge zone' concept (ie. a 2000m radius around nest and nest guard-roost locations for White-bellied Sea Eagle territories and 1000m in Eastern Osprey territories);
- the development and implementation of DEW managed estate policies/protocols, as well as guidelines for external agencies and industries to prevent/minimise disturbance during sensitive phases of the breeding season for both species – ie. to normalise impact awareness of infrastructure maintenance and land management programs (eg. track and walking trail, pest plant and animal control, fuel reduction burn-offs etc.), ill-timed research projects (eg. on offshore islands), recreational activities (eg. seasonal closures of coastal walking trails) and/or commercial activities (eg. tourism operations);
- the development and implementation of a population monitoring and research program (inc. the deployment of satellite trackers);
- increase community awareness and opportunities for involvement in recovery initiatives, coincident with a volunteer training and induction program to enable participation in specific site monitoring and data gathering projects.

Some of these recommended Recovery Actions are already being implemented in part. For example: as mentioned above several strategically placed artificial nest platforms for Osprey have already been erected; a small number of satellite trackers have been deployed on young Osprey, revealing an unexpected level of mobility soon after fledging (both of these projects under the supervision of Ian Falkenberg); and, five years on from the 2015-17 surveys another series of statewide population assessment surveys of both species' habitat commenced in 2021. However, some sub-regions and sites are requiring re-surveying to refine the confidence levels of the survey data for both species and will be completed in the 2022 breeding season.

**Terry Dennis**  
May, 2022

# Past General Meetings

## Tuesday 22 February



Chris Purnell

This was an online presentation by Chris Purnell of BirdLife Australia, who provided an update on floating roost trials conducted in Australia and Korea.

The following link will take you to a YouTube presentation from 2020 in which Chris provides details of the

background to this innovation and the work that had been conducted up to that time:

[Birding at Home Episode 10: Floating Roost Trials with Chris Purnell - YouTube](#)

In this video Chris describes the importance of roosting, during which birds conserve energy at high tide, by relaxing while waiting for the tide to go out so that they can feed. In many parts of the world, constructions have removed the locations on which birds can relax.

Migratory shorebirds need large quantities of energy so that they can fly long distances. Large numbers of migratory birds use the Korean Yellow Sea to rest and feed during their migrations. However, recent constructions have destroyed the mud flats on which they rely. Chris was very pleased to be offered a unique opportunity, provided by funding from Woodside Energy, to go to Korea and collaborate with the Koreans to conserve shorebird habitat.

The Geum Estuary originally contained large mud flats that provided important respite areas for migrating shorebirds. This double estuary was relied on by millions of shorebirds. Construction of a sea wall destroyed the mud flats, so that fewer birds could roost at high tide. In the following summer fewer birds arrived in Australia.



**Changes in the Geum estuary resulting in loss of mud flats.**

Lack of anywhere to roost resulted in flocks of 10,000 birds circling the sky in a holding pattern, burning the fuel required for their onward journey.

A suggested solution was: rather than building on water, to build something that floats above it. In Spencer Gulf, South Australia, birds rested on floating eel-grass. Chris saw a curlew floating on an oyster bag, and that gave him an idea.

Birds can roost on oyster bags at any stage of the tide. These bags are adaptable, cheap to buy and cheap to install. A trial, illustrated in the first photograph below, was carried out on the western shoreline of Port Phillip Bay. The second photograph illustrates its success in providing roosting places for birds.



**Trial using oyster bags in Port Phillip Bay.**



**The birds certainly appreciated it.**

Chris proposed his idea to the Koreans. He met local fishing villagers and a trial site was set up. The roosts were photographed for 10 seconds every hour for a year. The oyster bags demonstrated both resilience and strength, and were considered to be suitable for Korean conditions. Results were analysed and the birds using the roosts were documented.

Chris concluded that artificial floating roosts can certainly be used in places like Yellow Sea, where no other alternatives are available; but retention of natural roosts, such as mudflats, should be a priority. We should do everything possible to retain the roosts that we have.

***A summary by Cynthia Pyle of Chris's YouTube presentation.***

## Past General Meetings *(continued)*

### Tuesday 29 March

This was our first meeting at the newly refurbished Waite Institute and our first in-person meeting of the new year. We were excited to see fellow members in person again. Numbers were restricted to 90 participants so those who wanted to attend enthusiastically registered via Eventbrite.

John Hatch chaired an interactive panel session and encouraged audience participation.

The panellists were John Gitsham, Marilyn Browne and Anita Smyth. The following subjects were explored and the responses were of great interest to all those in attendance:

- how did you start birding?
- which field guide is your preference?
- bird photography v skins.
- taxonomy and changes in bird names.
- what is the best Australian songster?

Members discussed favourite spots for birding in South Australia, Australia and beyond, the best birding experiences, best bird guides, and much more.

### Tuesday 26 April

***John Hatch introduced the speaker, Richard Woodland, whose subject was the Clinton Conservation Park***

Clinton Conservation Park (CP) runs around the northern end of the Gulf of St Vincent (GSV) between Pt. Wakefield and Pt. Clinton. The land is a mixture of areas of shellgrit and claypans with many ephemeral drains and floodouts restricting vehicle and foot access. The extensive mangroves and mudflats provide excellent habitat for migratory shorebirds to replenish their reserves before heading back to their breeding areas in the northern hemisphere. Clinton CP also provides habitat for a wide variety of non-migratory species, both waterbirds and bush birds, for example Slender-billed Thornbills.

Richard responded to a request for a Shorebirds Program Surveyor of this site in December 2017. The initial visit was somewhat arduous involving some bush-bashing to arrive at the southern end of the beach. However, the effort was rewarded with close views of 60 Grey Plovers, Little Egrets feeding in the shallows, some interesting terns, over 30 Sooty Oystercatchers including many juveniles and over 30 Eastern Curlews.

He saw that this was a special place and was determined to conduct regular surveys beyond the schedule, starting with monthly visits throughout 2018. His idea was to see which of the migratory species overwintered and how the resident birds adapted to the changing seasons. As of the March 2022 survey Richard has visited this site 39 times, with an average distance walked of 11km each time. In 2021 Richard recorded his 100th species at the site – a Great Cormorant. The breakdown so far is 27 shorebird, 28 coastal or wetlands and 45 bush species.

Amongst the highlights are the presence of Terek Sandpipers, in fact Terek Sandpipers have been seen on 34 of the 39 visits. Something Richard learned from this site is that Terek Sandpipers like to perch in dead mangrove stumps at high tide, sometimes joined by a Grey-tailed Tattler. Over this period the Terek Sandpipers at the site have increased in numbers from a handful in 2017/2018 to a flock of 13 fat Terek Sandpipers seen twice in March this year. This may not be cause for celebration however as it could just mean that the GSV population is becoming concentrated due to disturbance or habitat loss elsewhere.

### **A variety of shorebirds resting on a mudflat in Clinton CP.**

*(Photographed by Richard Woodland)*



## Past General Meetings *(continued)*

Back to those interesting terns. On his initial visit Richard was able to photograph a mixed species group of terns resting on the sand. A number of the birds were “different”, smaller than the Gull-billed and Caspian Terns but larger than the Whiskered Terns. When he got home, he saw a picture taken by Paul Taylor in GSV which he had identified as the Common Gull-billed Tern sub-species *affinis*, a migratory sub-species from Asia. Thanks to Paul, Richard was able to identify the birds at Clinton as *affinis*, which has now been split as the Common Gull-billed Tern with the non-migratory species now the Australian Tern. The Australian Tern is larger, has lighter-coloured upper parts, a longer and sturdier bill and in non-breeding plumage has a large black eye patch. The Common Gull-billed Tern is in the foreground of the photograph next to a Whiskered Tern. This bird is also in non-breeding plumage, note the differences to the bird at the back standing next to the Caspian Tern.

The shorebird species observed so far at this site are as follows:

Eastern Curlew	Pied Stilt
Whimbrel	Red-necked Avocet
Red Knot	Long-toed Stint
Great Knot	Red-kneed Dotterel
Bar-tailed Godwit	Masked Lapwing
Black-tailed Godwit	Banded Lapwing
Terek Sandpiper	Grey-tailed Tattler
Curlew Sandpiper	Broad-billed Sandpiper
Red-capped Plover	Grey Plover
Red-necked Stint	Sooty Oystercatcher
Pectoral Sandpiper	Australian Pied Oystercatcher
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper	Double-banded Plover
Common Greenshank	Lesser Sand-plover
Marsh Sandpiper	Greater Sand-plover
Banded Stilt	



### Lesser Sand Plovers

*(Photographed in Clinton CP by Richard Woodland)*

Tern species are also well represented with Caspian, Crested, Australian, Common, Gull-billed, Whiskered, Fairy and possibly Little Terns on occasion.

Over the time of these surveys, it is noticeable that there has been a drastic reduction in the number of ducks and swans using the area. There are channels of deeper water running up the GSV here and as the tide fell there would be large congregations of waterfowl and cormorants feeding in these channels. This has not been observed for some time.

The presence of raptors appears to have changed also. Whistling Kites used to be the most numerous raptors at the beach but they appear to have been replaced by Black Kites, possibly due to the scavenging opportunities provided by the increase in poultry, and pig farming and processing in the area.

No vehicle access is legally permitted to the site. However, this ruling is increasingly ignored and obvious signs are visible of vehicles being bogged. When wet the clay pans are treacherously slippery and Richard has taken a few tumbles! Trying to cut across country is no better, with numerous drains and small lagoons making for a wet, slippery and convoluted route. The clay pans behind the beach are also roost areas for the smaller shorebirds as well as breeding areas for the Red-capped Plover.



### Red-capped Plover Nest

*(Photographed in Clinton CP by Richard Woodland)*

This nest was in the middle of the track just behind the beach. The deep tyre tracks left in the clay often contain Stints and Plovers sheltering from the wind, there being no trees or bushes to speak of.

Richard enjoys the challenge of surveying this site. Whether the day is dry and sunny, or wet and windy this is a rewarding site which has taught him a good deal about birds and birding.



**The first General Meeting to be held back at the renovated Waite building.**  
(Tuesday 26 April 2022)

## Future General Meetings

**General Meetings are now held in the newly refurbished Waite Institute. They start at 7.30pm.**

### Tuesday 28 June

Leo Joseph from Canberra, will talk about **Tales of "Golden" whistlers in Australia and a researcher's ups and downs**

### Tuesday 26 July

This will be a Members' Night and of course I am seeking suitable speakers. Fortunately it is usually not difficult to get the required four or five. Please give me your suggestions and offers as soon as possible.

### Tuesday 30 August

Ali Ben Kahn, who had to cancel in April, has kindly offered to come back and will give a talk entitled, '**Conserving the State's wildlife and habitats through effective scientific research advocacy and education**'.

**John Hatch**

# New Members

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

Jane McPherson .....Bolwarra, NSW  
 Courtney Glover .....Aldinga Beach  
 Jasper Willoughby .....Aldinga Beach  
 Andrew & Julie Robertson.....Teringie  
 Patrick Torrens .....Mt Barker  
 Paul Parker .....Tanunda  
 Margaret Grocke .....Tanunda  
 Tim Mcleod .....Aldgate  
 Richard Letheby .....Yattalunga  
 Beverly Moyle .....Hahndorf  
 Julie Claridge.....Hahndorf  
 Bob Kellett .....Forest Range  
 Rob Guyatt .....Angaston  
 Sarah Ansell .....Mount Compass  
 Janice Vaz .....Clovelly Park  
 Ian Radbone .....Glenalta  
 Sue Brown.....Coromandel Valley  
 Richard Irving .....Netherby  
 Ann Nancarrow .....Victor Harbor  
 Nanou Cabourdin .....Point Turton  
 Barbara Parker .....North Haven  
 Julie Palmer .....Meningie  
 Allan & Carol Wadham .....Coromandel Valley  
 Sue Hammond .....Happy Valley  
 Jenny Russell &  
 Marvin Sievers.....Torrensville  
 Ethan Kostecki.....Hackham  
 Kirsty Bevan.....Felixstow  
 Jan & Michael Booth .....Kings Park

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

# Birds, Bees and Bats

Birds SA have partnered with Defence Shed Port Adelaide to produce a range of nesting and hibernation boxes for native fauna. In addition to providing suitable shelters for native species, the project has provided an opportunity for veterans to focus their skills in a new direction, something which is of great benefit when dealing with the mental health challenges which is the price of a lifetime of service.

The boxes have been sold at Sophie's Patch, and are now available to members. We hold some boxes in stock, and others can be constructed to order, either assembled or in kit form. The box comes with instructions for protection and installation. Alternately you may wish to construct your own. We have used open-source plans from Birds in Backyards and [www.nestboxtales.com](http://www.nestboxtales.com). This is a good time to install a box as it will have become part of the local environment by the time that birds are looking for breeding hollows.

**Native bees have specific needs for breeding.** They do not form dense hives like honeybees but prefer some elbow room. Our native bee hotels aim to provide the necessary conditions without encouraging wasps and other species which would prey on the bees. Native bees may not provide honey for us but they will pollinate your garden.



**Microbats will soon be looking for hibernation sites in tree hollows or under bark.** These little bats are voracious predators, especially of mosquitoes so a Microbats box will help keep their numbers down. If you have standing water or nighttime lights nearby these are ideal feeding sites for Microbats.



## We currently have in stock boxes suitable for:

- Pardalotes
- Grey Shrikethrush
- Southern Boobook
- Native bees
- Microbats
- Laughing Kookaburra
- Musk or Purple-crowned Lorikeet
- Australian Wood Duck

We have plans available for Rosellas, Galahs, Rainbow Lorikeet, Treecreepers, Possums and other native mammals. Prices range from \$40 for Pardalote boxes to \$60 for the largest items. Boxes can be bought at General Meetings (please let me know beforehand so I can ensure we have the box ready), or if you can't get to a meeting, we will find a way to get your box to you!

Birds SA provides materials and plans, and Defence Shed constructs the boxes. We are both not for profit groups and money raised by sales supports our work in other areas.

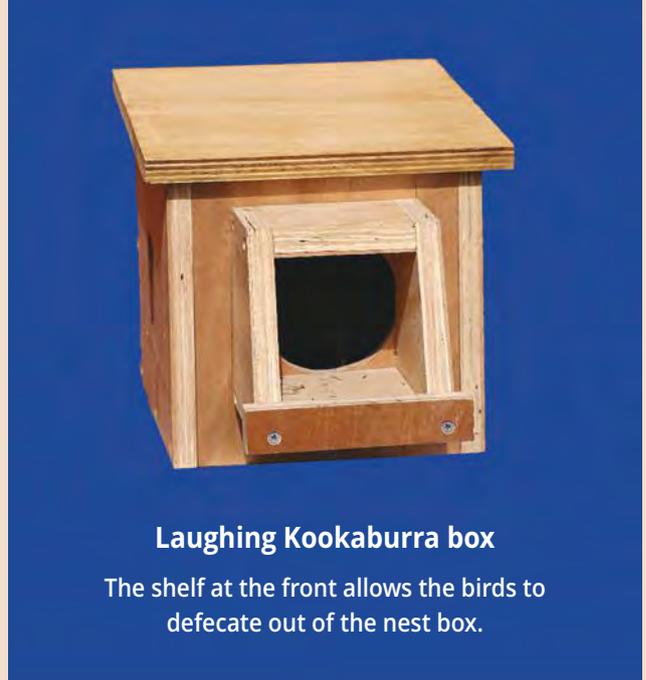
If you would like to know more about our range of nest boxes and bee hotels, please contact me at [richard.woodland@birdssa.asn.au](mailto:richard.woodland@birdssa.asn.au)

**Richard Woodland**

## Birds, Bees and Bats *(continued)*

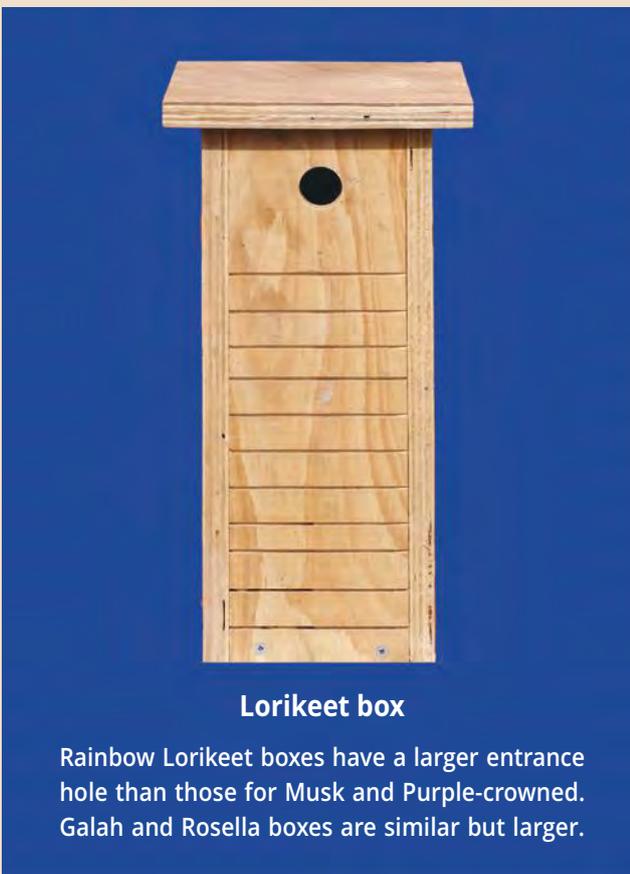


**Pardalote box with tube entrance**



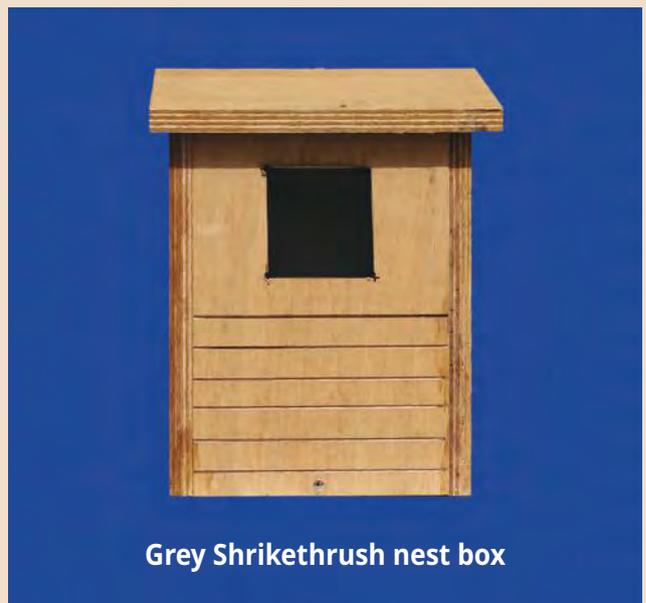
**Laughing Kookaburra box**

The shelf at the front allows the birds to defecate out of the nest box.



**Lorikeet box**

Rainbow Lorikeet boxes have a larger entrance hole than those for Musk and Purple-crowned. Galah and Rosella boxes are similar but larger.



**Grey Shrikethrush nest box**



**Selection of boxes showing relative sizes**

From the left: Rosella, Lorikeet, Grey Shrikethrush, Pardalote, Boobook or Australian Wood Duck and Laughing Kookaburra.

# The News *from* Minko Scrub

When canvassed about changes they would like to see, Birds SA's members particularly wished to participate in more active, on-ground conservation. However, the prospect of Birds SA becoming a landowner of a nature reserve rich in birdlife is remote: the costs of maintaining and purchasing suitable land is beyond the organisation's means.

It was therefore very fortunate when members Mike and Margot Boerema offered access to their 66ha farm near Mt Compass in exchange for Birds SA undertaking works on the land that would contribute to improved habitats for native birds.

Following the signing of a formal agreement between the parties in November 2021, the landowner, with Birds SA's assistance, secured an SA government grant through the *Revitalising Private Conservation SA* programme. The main purposes of the grant were to fund activities that would improve the quality of native vegetation on the farm and to erect bird nesting boxes. Other activities to be undertaken by Birds SA would include bird banding and bird surveys.

## Volunteer members removing broom, an invasive woody weed, near the lower dam



## Volunteers after a fruitful working bee at Minko Scrub

Important aspects of vegetation management are weed control and plant identification, which *Trees for Life* (TFL) will provide. On 7 May 2022, a Bushcare training workshop for volunteers took place in Mt Compass, followed by field work at Minko Scrub in the afternoon.

Three field half-days supervised by TFL will be held over the next months; one each in June, July and August. If you are keen to participate, keep an eye on the regular e- newsletter for dates.

In other news, most of the 40 planned nestboxes have been built by *fauNature* and will be installed in suitable trees in June 2022. The boxes will be erected in diverse habitats on the farm, at differing heights and in various orientations. The boxes have been especially designed to be used by the following species:

- Owlet nightjar
- Pardalote
- Treecreeper
- Small parrot
- Grey Shrikethrush
- Kookaburra
- Boobook owl

Whilst it is proving difficult to gain an authorisation via the Australian Bird and Bat Banding Scheme (ABBBS) to undertake banding at Minko, we remain optimistic that this aspect of the project will progress smoothly.

Now that the methodology and survey locations are mostly finalised, the planned bird surveys for Minko Scrub will commence shortly. What a delight if we confirmed that the southern emu-wren used Minko Scrub.

Lastly, because Minko is a working farm with livestock frequently being transferred between paddocks, bird watching must be as part of a Birds SA approved visit. So far, there have been about four organised visits, which members have very much enjoyed. As before, look for updates on visiting in the newsletter.

**P Lindon**  
16 May 2022

# Noisy Miners and Psyllids



Noisy Miner (Photographed by Teresa Jack)

I suspect that many of us keep a cumulative garden list of species. I certainly do and have done so for 35 years in the inner North Eastern suburb of Joslin where I live. I have recorded 51 species, but nowadays new species to the list are rare — less than one a year. Almost as interesting as presence are absences. One of the rare occurrences in my garden are Noisy Miner, usually odd flyovers, despite the fact that they are abundant nearby along the River Torrens and in parks and school grounds within a kilometre or so. I count their rarity as something of a bonus. Of course, they are an interesting native species, but as most of us know, they tend to drive many other small birds out of their areas.

Miners don't really like thickish understorey and my rather bushy, perhaps overgrown garden, is probably not to their liking. However, they have recently started to visit me. First it was a couple of brief visits by single juveniles and I thought little of it. I did notice however that on both occasions the single bird was actively gleaning on the outer shoots of a very healthy Platypus Gum, *Eucalyptus platypus*. A cursory inspection of their feeding site revealed no bud or new leaf damage.



Then recently, attracted by what in my garden are unusual calls, I watched five or more adult Miners for some ten minutes as they fed again on healthy shoots of the same Platypus Gum. The calls were probably feeding calls, not very familiar to me. Fearing the worst, I cut down a sample of short outer shoots from the feeding area some 3-5 metres off the ground and found a low, but consistent number of Psyllids, on average one perhaps every 30 centimetres of shoots. No other damage was observed. From this and their gleaning mobile pecking behaviour, I

assumed that these bugs and their lerps (cover for the nymphs) were the reason for the interest. New Holland Honeyeaters were also feeding similarly, with them. No serious interspecific antagonistic behaviour was observed, perhaps because the Miners were out of their territory! The Miners flew off towards the Torrens after about ten minutes.

There is nothing special really about the feeding of this omnivorous species, but the willingness of a group to go extra-territory and their 'discovery' of a food source, several hundred metres from their usual habitat is perhaps interesting. What form of bird social media do they use or is it the result of that wandering juvenile?

I feared the worst, but hoped that it was a special event! Moral, perhaps don't plant Platypus Gums, but keep those thickets. A broader interpretation is that urban consolidation, strong in these inner suburbs, is 'improving' habitat for Miners. In addition, it has recently come to my notice that it is a good year for Psyllids and their lerps.

**John Hatch**  
12 May 2022

## Eucalyptus: Lerp psyllids

Psyllidae, the jumping plant lice or psyllids, are a family of small plant-feeding insects that tend to be very host-specific, i.e. each plant-louse species only feeds on one plant species or feeds on a few closely related plants. **Wikipedia**

# Birds SA Conservation Fund

## Review of the Population Status of the Yellabinna Rufous Grasswren (*Amytornis whitei aenigma*)

Karl Jones, Andrew Black and Graham Carpenter



**Figure 1. Rufous Grasswren** (Photographed by K. Jones on Eyre Peninsula, October 2021)

A recent taxonomic revision of the Striated Grasswren complex recognises three species. The Striated Grasswren in the Murray Mallee and central New South Wales, the Opalton Grasswren in central Queensland and the Rufous Grasswren occurring west of Spencer Gulf in South Australia, the Northern Territory and Western Australia. Within the Rufous Grasswren species, there are four isolated subspecies, one of which occurs in mallee-*Triodia* habitats in the Yellabinna north of Ceduna and on north-east Eyre Peninsula, called the Yellabinna Rufous Grasswren (Fig. 1).

This subspecies is poorly documented, and a recent review accounted for fewer than 50 records from the two populations separated by about 260 km (Jones et al, 2021; Fig. 2 and 3). Additionally, the North Eastern Eyre Peninsula population had been recorded less frequently in recent decades and habitat for both populations appeared in poor condition raising concerns for the grasswrens' conservation status. Due to the small geographic range and apparent decline, the Yellabinna Rufous Grasswren was assessed as Endangered.

In 2020, we began a project to review the current distribution and conservation status of the Yellabinna

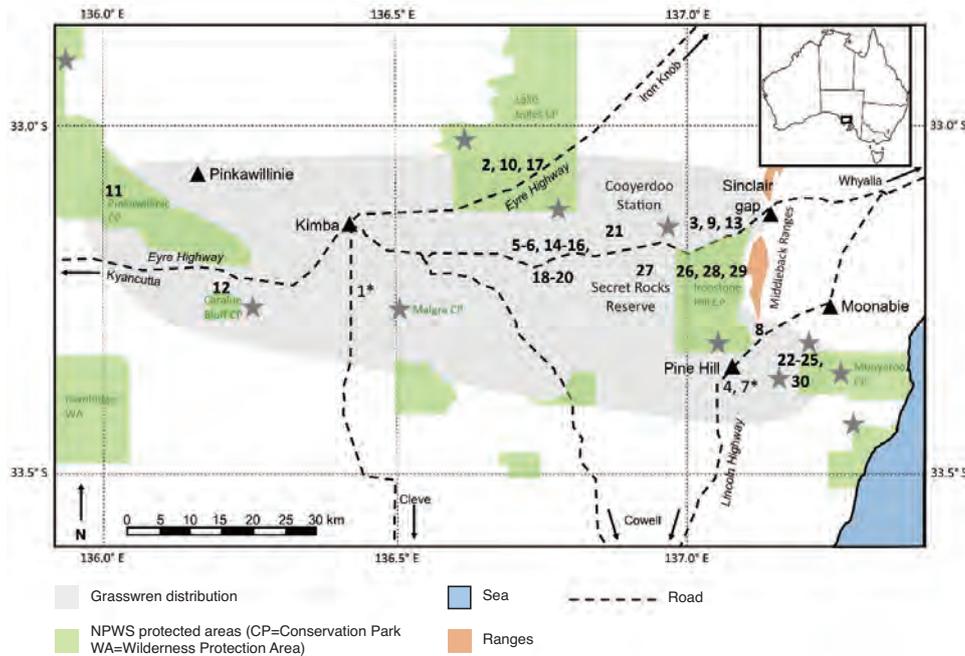
Rufous Grasswren, and to get a greater understanding of their habitat preferences, as little had previously been recorded.

Surveys for grasswrens involved 2-4 workers searching an area of up to a 2km radius from a defined point. Sites were selected either because grasswrens had previously been recorded in those areas, or, if the habitat looked potentially suitable. Search duration was variable to allow more time in areas where habitat looked more promising i.e. greater ground cover of *Triodia* and shrubs, and reasonable extent. Call playback could be used once every 100m travelled or 10 min elapsed. At sites where grasswrens were observed, we undertook vegetation surveys along 100 m transects, starting from where the grasswrens were seen and heading in the direction in which they moved. We recorded ground cover, the height of *Triodia*, shrubs and standing litter (i.e. dead shrubs, trees and branches) in 25 cm intervals to 2m, and canopy height above 2m in 1m intervals. Plant species were recorded, as well as nearby prominent plant species that were not on the transect. Surveys were conducted under a scientific permit and ethics approval.

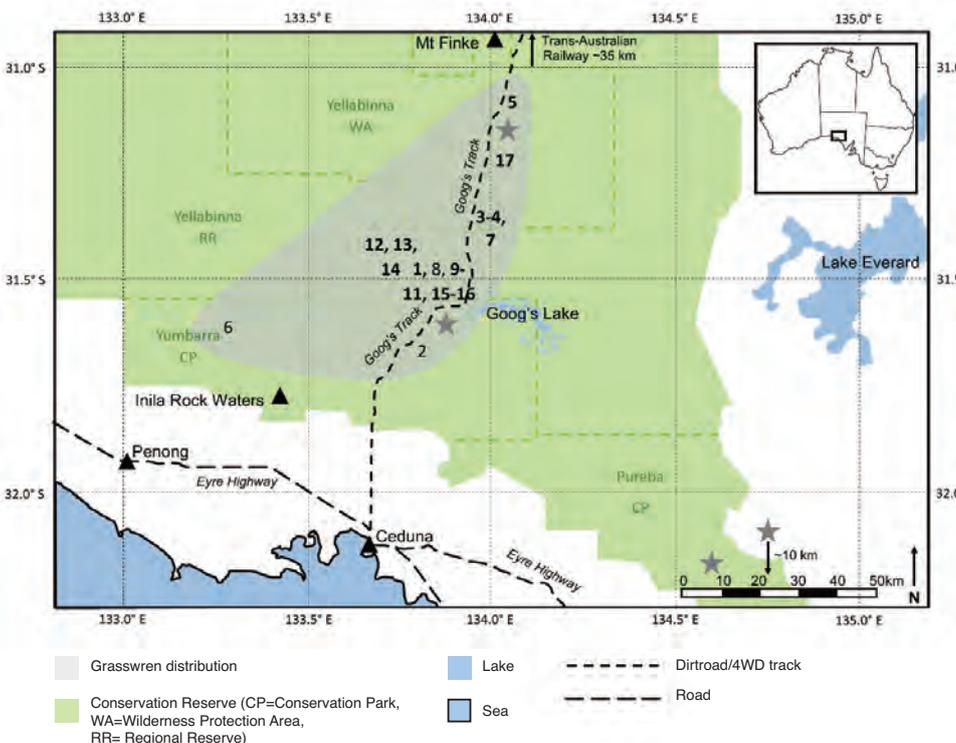
# Review of the Population Status of the Yellabinna Rufous Grasswren *(continued)*

We undertook three surveys in 2020-21 on North Eastern Eyre Peninsula. We visited 41 sites (some revisited) of previous recordings or within or near the known distribution of the grasswrens with potentially suitable habitat (Fig. 2). A single grasswren was found in

October 2021. In the Yellabinna, one survey was undertaken in early 2021. 15 sites were visited mostly in the central and northern parts of the known distribution (Fig. 3), and grasswrens were found at four sites, finding a total of 10 — but possibly more than 12 — individuals.



**Figure 2.**  
**Distribution of Rufous Grasswrens on north-eastern Eyre Peninsula, South Australia,** derived from known records. Numbers indicate approximate locations of previous records. Bold numbers show sites searched during 2020 and 2021, while stars indicate additional areas of potentially suitable habitat searched. \* indicates record known from or likely to be from an area now cleared of native vegetation. Note: multiple sites may be associated with a surveyed area; hence the map does not individually show all sites surveyed.



**Figure 3.**  
**Distribution of Rufous Grasswren in the Yellabinna, South Australia,** derived from known records. Numbers indicate approximate locations of previous records. Bold numbers show sites searched during 2020 and 2021, while stars indicate additional areas of potentially suitable habitat searched. **Note:** There may be multiple sites associated with a surveyed area, hence the map does not individually show all sites surveyed. Surveys of an additional five sites in Pureba CP were undertaken during one of the Eyre Peninsula surveys, but no grasswrens were found.

## Review of the Population Status of the Yellabinna Rufous Grasswren *(continued)*

Vegetation surveys at six sites showed an average *Triodia* ground cover of 19%, varying from 7-45%. Shrubs and ground litter occupied 20% and 23%, respectively, and 34% of the ground was bare. Canopy cover was 11% and standing litter of dead shrubs and branches was 15% (independent of ground litter). Of the *Triodia* ground cover, about two thirds was under 25 cm tall, and the remainder mostly between 25-50 cm. Shrub height was relatively consistent throughout the categories between 25 cm to 2 m (mean 1.5-2.8% per transect), with only 0.3% below 25 cm, while the 75-100 cm category was 5.3%. Canopy heights of 2-3 m were more frequent (7.2%) than the taller categories, which declined to 0.3% at 4-5 m tall. Standing litter up to 25 cm tall was more frequent (6.2%) than the other categories up to 2 m which were between 2 to 3%.

Prominent plant species other than hummock grasses *Triodia spp.*, included the mallees *Eucalyptus socialis*, *E. leptophylla*, *E. brachycalyx*, *E. concinna* and *E. socialis/E. yumbarrana* and *Hakea francisiana*, *Callitris verrucosa*, *Melaleuca lanceolata*, *M. eleuterostachya*, *Leptospermum coriaceum*, *Dodonaea viscosa*, and various *Eremophila* species.

These surveys support anecdotal evidence that the NE Eyre Peninsula population has declined and is now extremely rare, being found only in a small part of its former range. In the Yellabinna, Grasswrens were found throughout the central and northern parts of their range with a relatively small survey effort suggesting this population is less threatened. This information supports our assessment of the conservation status of the Yellabinna Rufous Grasswren as Endangered (Jones et al 2021, Black et al 2021).

This project is ongoing as there are questions that remain and others that have arisen during the project. Primarily, there is uncertainty about the extent of the Yellabinna population as mallee habitat extends west and north west, and east and south east for a considerable

distance. This habitat may contain grasswrens. Additionally, further surveys around where the grasswren was found on Eyre Peninsula are desirable, in order to determine if there are other grasswrens nearby and how far the habitat in that area extends. We also propose further vegetation surveys in areas with grasswrens to better characterise the aspects of habitat that are important for the presence of these birds.

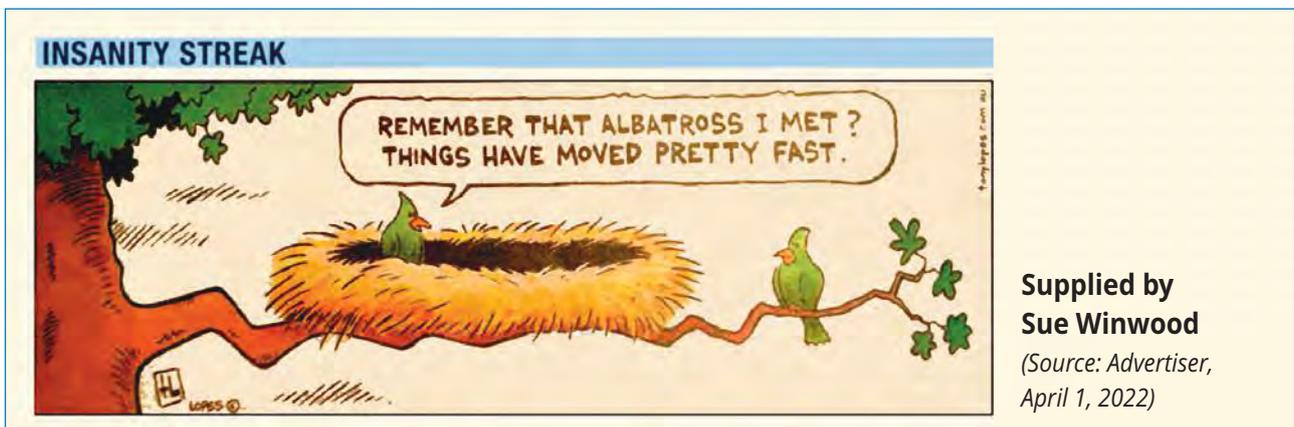
Field work for this project was supported by grants from Birds SA and the Field Naturalists Society of South Australia. We are also very grateful to many people and organisations that helped facilitate this project, some of whom include Brett Backhouse, Dylan Ferguson, Marina Louter, Diego Guevara Torres, John Read and Kathrine Moseby, Belinda Margan, Robert Walsh, Peter Woods, Troy Brougham, Richard Mason, Yumbarra Co-management Board, Far West Coast Aboriginal Corporation, Alinytjara Wilurara Landscape Board, SIMEC Mining and National Parks.

If any reader has records of Rufous Grasswrens on Eyre Peninsula or in the Yellabinna, we would be very grateful to hear about them. Please email Karl at karl.koch.jones@outlook.com.

**Karl Jones, Andrew Black  
and Graham Carpenter**

### References

- Black, A. B., Jones, K. K. and Garnett, S. T. 2021. Yellabinna Rufous Grasswren *Amytornis whitei aenigma*. In *The Action Plan for Australian Birds 2020*. S. T. Garnett and G. B. Baker (eds). CSIRO Publishing, Melbourne, pp. 539-542.
- Jones, K., Carpenter, G. and Black, A. 2021. Distribution and conservation status of the *Rufous Grasswren Amytornis whitei* on north-eastern Eyre Peninsula and in the Yellabinna, South Australia. *South Australian Ornithologist* 46: 1-12.





Jorji Gardener and Viv Szekeres

# *flight*

*An Illustrated Study of Bird Life and Loss*

*Inspired by the Captain SA White collection at the South Australian Museum, this exhibition explores what happened to the Adelaide Reedbeds and the beautiful birds that once lived there.*

**Please join us for the exhibition opening and launch  
of the accompanying publication**

Thursday 4 August 2022 | 6.00 til 8.00 pm

Opening remarks by Mark Parnell

Hamra Auditorium Gallery | 1 Brooker Terrace | West Torrens

*flight* is open throughout August for the SALA Festival

# Sophie's Patch

## MOUNT BARKER

Easter, 16th to 18th April

Many of our members would know Sophie Thomson from Gardening Australia. As a national presenter, she is familiar and much loved. Her biannual open garden events at Mt Barker to assist various charities, known as Sophie's Patch, are also well known and hugely popular with the public. Regularly 5,000 or more people visit these events over 3 days in Autumn and Spring.

At each event Sophie allows various environmental groups and sustainable produce and plant sellers to set up stalls for the weekend. For many years, Birds SA has held a stall so that we can engage with the public and promote the protection of birds as well as our many other environmental causes. The Easter weekend in April 2022 was no exception.

Our efforts continue in the footsteps of Kate Buckley's great work in the early years. Kate is well known for organising events for Birds SA and Sophie's Patch was a highlight for many years. Kate was also a great speaker and delivered many wonderfully detailed talks on various aspects of birds and bird watching.

In recent years, Sue Winwood has taken over the organisational role, organising many volunteers over the 3 days as well as volunteering at the event. Alan Burns and other volunteers have managed the stalls. This year Richard Woodland organised, with the Defence Shed Port Adelaide, a variety of nest boxes which were very popular.

With Kate Buckley's resignation from the Management Committee a few years ago, the number of events



**Two garden gnomes! Dorothy Farmer & Costa**

attended and hosted by Birds SA had to be reduced, both because of the lack of organising volunteers and the effect of the Covid-19 pandemic. The demise of the Laratinga Bird Fair, also held in the past at Mt Barker, added to Sophie's Patch becoming our premier event in regards to contact with the public and the selling of various items including the Defence Shed Port Adelaide nest boxes. This Easter not only were bird boxes sold, but also microbat boxes and the increasingly popular bee hotels.

In recent months Sophie and her husband, Richard, decided that this would be the last Sophie's Patch held at Mt Barker. The increasing urbanisation of the Mt Barker township has resulted in the deterioration of the country lifestyle which Sophie, Richard and her children cherished. In time, the family will sell up and move to a quieter location. Echunga has been mentioned as a possible relocation destination.

The news of the last Sophie's Patch event at Mt Barker travelled fast and it turned out to be the biggest event ever. The crowds were very large, especially on the Saturday and records were broken. We heard that 5,000 people had booked online, 3,000 on the Saturday and 1,000 on both the Sunday and Monday. It turned out that the actual attendance was double these estimates with 10,000 people visiting Sophie's last Sophie's Patch event to be held on Springs Road, Mt Barker. Many had travelled from distant regional towns across the State and it was great to see Costa Georgiadis, winner of the Most Popular Presenter Logie award 2019, attend over the weekend.



**Birds SA display showing nesting box varieties, with Shelagh Gibbs in attendance**

## Sophie's Patch *(continued)*

Birds SA were allowed two marquees. Volunteers set the stalls up late on the Friday afternoon, ready for the 10.00am opening on the Saturday and over Sunday and Monday until 4.00pm each day, then packed up late on the Monday afternoon.

Over the weekend Birds SA sold nest boxes, books, magazines, badges, plants and bird badges; accepted donations, talked about birds, gave advice and raised well over \$1,000 to aid ongoing work to protect birds and their habitats.

Thanks to all the volunteers who donated their time and made this weekend such a great finale and a financial success. Thanks to Sue Winwood (organising the roster, volunteering etc.), Richard Woodland (set up on the Friday evening plus working with the Defence Shed Port Adelaide to have nest boxes ready at short notice and attending on the Monday), Bronwyn Mart, Kathy Moore, Laurie Stevens, Pam Stevens, Merinda Hyland, Wendy Phillips, Claire Bourne, Sue Gredley, Dorothy Farmer, Rose Slade, Liz Carpenter, Christine and Harold Bates-Brownsword, Shelagh Gibbs, Alan Burns and any I have missed and those who have assisted over the years, especially Kate Buckley.



**Costa and Alan Burns at the Birds SA display**

So, what is next for Birds SA? We need a public event in which to promote our association. It may be possible to hold a Nature Festival type event at the new Glenthorne National Park, with a little help from our Friends, in 2023. The construction at Glenthorne is fast being completed, so the facility is there to build on what Sophie has established. This idea will be investigated in coming months.

**Alan Burns**

## 2-FOR-1 TASTINGS

AT THE  
PERTARINGA CELLAR DOOR



At Bec Hardy Wines and Pertaringa, everything we do is inspired by nature, from the vineyard to our branding.

The Bec Hardy Wines logo features the red-browed finch, which is one of a plethora of bird species found at Bec's Topsy Hill garden and at the Pertaringa cellar door.

Exclusively to members of Birds SA, the team at Bec Hardy Wines is excited to offer 2-for-1 tastings at the Pertaringa cellar door in McLaren Vale.

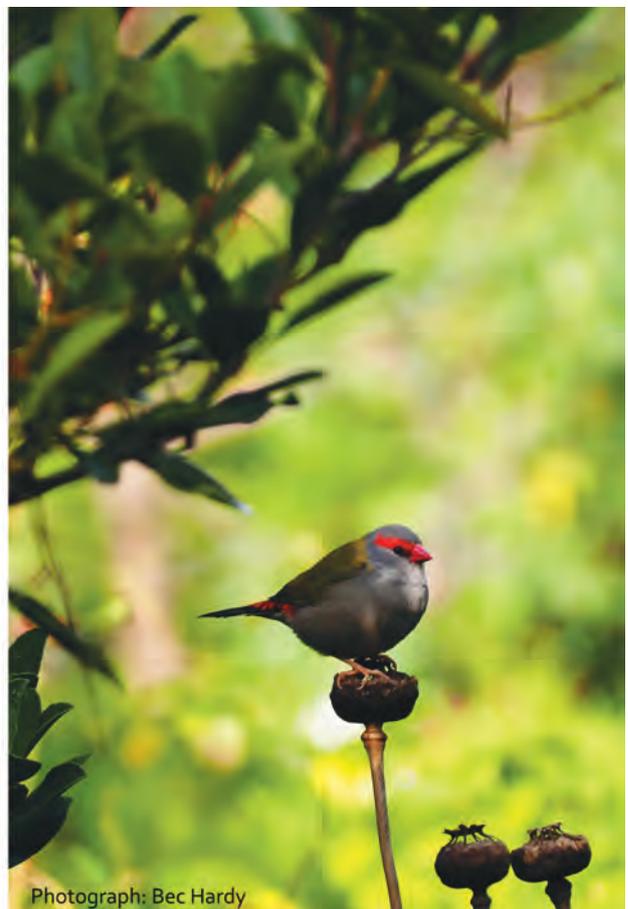
Simply quote the below promo code in cellar door or when booking online:

[bechardy.com.au/pertaringa-cellar-door](https://bechardy.com.au/pertaringa-cellar-door)

**THEBIRDER2FOR1**

Pertaringa cellar door | 327 Hunt Rd, McLaren Vale | Open 7 days

BEC HARDY WINES IS A PROUD  
SUPPORTER AND LIFE MEMBER OF  **Nature**  
Foundation



Photograph: Bec Hardy

# Birdlife Shorebird Counts in the Coorong

Thursday 16 to Sunday 19 June



**Curlew Sandpipers** (These Sandpipers were photographed by Teresa Jack at Pt. Clinton SA, 2 August 2017)

Birds SA Members are invited to participate in the Birdlife Shorebird Counts in the Coorong this year. The count is being coordinated by Steve Winderlich and Anne O'Dea and if you wish to register your interest to participate and seek further information can you please contact them directly (details below).

If you are aware of anyone else you think might be interested, please pass these details on to them. Also if you have assisted with the count previously can you let them know if you are unable to participate this time or no longer want to be on their future contact list.

The proposed dates for the count are from Thursday 16 to Sunday 19 of June but those dates are dependent on responses received and also on the availability of some fishermen, but in the interests of giving as much notice as possible those dates as the most likely.

**Please contact the Shorebird Survey Coordination Team ASAP to register and obtain all relevant information including on the areas to be surveyed and on the survey base camp at Cantara Homestead in the Coorong.**

Further information will be circulated to those who have expressed interest in participating as it becomes available including a draft list of volunteers, dates, and survey areas once they hear back from enough volunteers.

## **CONTACT DETAILS**

*for Coorong Shorebird Survey Team:*

**Steve Winderlich & Anne O'Dea**

Windydea3@bigpond.com

0437681172 / 0427298548

# Historical Series No 79

## Apollos Harrison Gouge (1825-1912)

### Part 1 by Philippa Horton

The South Australian Institute, then including what is now the SA Museum, was established in 1856 (Horton *et al.* 2018) and in January 1861 an 'Inaugural Soirée' was held at which the Institute was declared open to the public. A newspaper article described the events and exhibits of the soirée, and prominent among them was an extensive collection of mounted birds lent for the occasion by a Mr. A. H. Gouge<sup>1</sup>. The specimens included an emu wren, a Ground Parrot, described even then as 'remarkably rare', and a bittern collected during Charles Sturt's 1844-1845 expedition to Central Australia. I investigated Gouge's background but unfortunately found almost no information about his ornithological connections and credentials. However, details of his numerous other activities are worth recording, as at least those prior to 1861 may offer clues as to where he collected his birds. I will now provide a biography of Gouge and in Part 2 will discuss what is known about his bird collection."

Apollos Harrison Gouge was born on 13 October 1825 in Aspatria, Cumberland, England, the fourth of five children to Reverend James Gouge, a Congregational minister, and his wife Fanny née Field, both from Kent. Most of Apollos's siblings were similarly given biblical names: Miriam, Cephas and Hephzibah. Their surname was occasionally spelt Gooze or Gooch so the vowel pronunciation was most likely similar to

'food'. The Gouge family moved in the 1830s to Polesworth, Warwickshire, where Apollos's parents spent the rest of their lives. Apollos found employment in surveying, earthworks and construction under the eminent railway engineer George Stephenson<sup>2</sup>. A day short of his 18th birthday, Apollos became a father when widow and mother-of-two Rebecca Dillon (née Ewer) of Coventry, about 25 km south of Polesworth, gave birth to their son Herbert Dillon on 12 October 1843. Herbert remained with his mother, who married a widower, George Parnell, in 1845.

By 1850 Apollos Gouge was in Port Adelaide, working on construction of a wharf for the Patent Copper Company<sup>3-5</sup>. I have been unable to find his date of arrival but it was probably in the late 1840s, perhaps the 'C. Gouge' who arrived on the *William Hyde* in May 1849<sup>6</sup>. Apollos Gouge soon ran into financial difficulties; now a 'contractor' of Hindley Street, Adelaide, he was listed in December 1851 in the South Australian Register of Insolvencies, and in the same month sold his theodolite, sextant, and

other surveying equipment<sup>7</sup>, presumably to pay his debts. Nevertheless, he made the most of circumstances, having moved to Hindley Street around mid-1851. That October, the proprietor of the Star Inn on the corner of Hindley and Rosina Streets, Mary Ann Walsh, was charged with



Figure 1. Herbert Dillon Gouge in 1902, oldest son of A. H. Gouge. State Library of South Australia PRG 280/1/4/516/1.

'suffering a ferocious dog to be at large, unmuzzled, in Rosina-street'<sup>8</sup>. Gouge gallantly claimed the dog as his and in June 1852 he married Mary Ann, a ship captain's widow<sup>9</sup>; three months later, he took over the licence of the Star Inn from her<sup>10</sup>. Gouge had already been providing evening entertainment there, singing sentimental and comic songs and playing piano, violin and flute, and later claiming that the Star Inn Concert Room was 'the only place in town where a song is sung, or a tune played *correctly*'<sup>11, 12</sup>.

In March 1853 Gouge took over the lease on the 'Unley Farm', earning rent from stockowners running horses and cattle on the property, and selling livestock, wheat, barley and hay<sup>13, 14</sup>. In March 1855 he took up the license for the Cremorne Hotel on Unley Road<sup>15</sup>. Newspaper articles published in the early 1900s claimed that Gouge established the Cremorne Gardens and zoo at Unley, complete with South Australia's first elephant<sup>16</sup> but they were incorrect: a Thomas Bentley was responsible for them<sup>17</sup>. Gouge's residence at Unley was short-lived, as in August 1855 he sold his household furnishings there and, among other things, musical instruments, telescopes, shotguns, saddlery, and three half-acre blocks of land in Unley Park<sup>18</sup>, and the following month he sailed for London on the *Kent*, as a cabin passenger at a cost of 80 guineas<sup>19, 20</sup>. He spent several months in England before arriving back in Adelaide on 19 August 1856 on the *Poictiers*, accompanied by his now 12-year-old son Herbert Dillon<sup>21</sup>. Herbert, thereafter known as Herbert Dillon Gouge, completed his education at St Peter's College then worked in his father's business before becoming a shipping agent and land valuer. He was appointed as the first Public Actuary for SA in 1894 and held that position until his retirement in 1914<sup>22</sup>. As I have been unable to find a photograph of Apollos, I have included one here of Herbert (Figure 1).

A month after his return from England, Apollos Gouge advertised Double Dublin Stout, that he had selected in England, for sale from the Star Inn, or Star Hotel as it became known<sup>23</sup>; presumably Mary Ann had continued running the hotel in his absence. To celebrate the return of the showman, in October 1856 he advertised 'Harmony and hilarity – opening dinner at the Star

Inn – come and see Gouge!', tickets 5 s. each<sup>24</sup>. He also resumed work as a contractor and over the next seven years managed four major public construction projects. The first began in October 1857 when he was awarded the contract to build the Waterworks (Thorndon Park) Reservoir, which began to fill in June 1860 to provide the water supply for Adelaide<sup>25-27</sup>.

The second project, begun in October 1859<sup>28</sup>, was construction of the railway line from Gawler to Kapunda, including a bridge over the Light River (Figure 2); this line was opened in August 1860, the bridge being considered a masterpiece of engineering at the time (Tiller 2021). The following year, Gouge began work on construction of a railway between Kadina and Wallaroo, and a jetty at Wallaroo<sup>29</sup>. Unlike his other major projects, this was his own private enterprise, for which he set up the Kadina and Wallaroo Railway and Pier Company in late 1862<sup>30</sup>. He also purchased a half-acre block of land in Wallaroo in January 1862, perhaps intending to reside there while supervising the works. The railway, completed in July 1863 with an additional branch line to the Wallaroo Smelting Works, was designed to carry locomotives but initially was used for horse-drawn vehicles, including an omnibus that Gouge modified for the purpose<sup>31, 32</sup>.



Figure 2. Gouge's bridge over the Light River, south of Kapunda, constructed 1860, photographed May 1989. Image from Tiller (2012).

Prior to 1862, Port Elliot had been the main sea port in Encounter Bay. That year, the South Australian Government called for tenders to extend the Goolwa-Port Elliot tram/rail line to the safer port of Victor Harbor where a jetty was to be built. In June 1862 Gouge won the contract for the jetty and

for bridges over the Inman and Hindmarsh Rivers on either side of Victor Harbor<sup>33, 34</sup>. Large amounts of timber were required for the three structures and Gouge immediately established the Victor Harbor Steam Saw Mills to supply the works and to sell timber to other builders<sup>35, 36</sup>. The bridges were opened in August 1863, the Alexandra Bridge over the Hindmarsh and the Newland Bridge over the Inman, and Gouge sang at the celebratory dinner held in his works shed<sup>34</sup>. The jetty was nearly complete at this time, to its stipulated length about half-way to Granite Island, but problems with bedrock meant that the planned T-head of the jetty could not easily be constructed. Gouge proposed, for minimal extra cost, to continue the jetty directly across to Granite Island as a causeway, but this was rejected by the Public Works Department and a modified Victoria Jetty was officially opened in August 1864<sup>37, 38</sup>. Gouge's proposal was resurrected in 1872 and the causeway to Granite Island opened in 1875 (Anon 2021).

Aside from these major projects, Gouge was involved in other business ventures and organisations. He joined the Freemasons in March 1858, remaining a member for the rest of his life<sup>39</sup>, he was chairman of the Licensed Victuallers' Association in 1859, and was elected a councillor for the City of Adelaide in December 1858 until he resigned that position in January 1860 because 'his business compelled his constant absence from town'<sup>40-42</sup>. He ran a horse-drawn omnibus day-trip service between the Star Hotel and Glenelg from November 1858 until he sold the hotel, omnibuses and horses in May and August 1859, stating that his other engagements necessitated the disposal of his town business<sup>43-46</sup>. He was a director of the Mochatoona Copper Mining Company in 1859, and on the committee of the Cumberland Mining Company and a shareholder of the Kulpara Mining Company in 1861<sup>47-49</sup>.

In March 1861 Gouge leased 80 acres of farmland on Goodwood Road in what is now Daw Park, where he grew barley and hay<sup>50</sup>. At the same time, he entered into partnership with William Knox Simms (brewer and politician) to purchase the West End Brewery, which they ran as Gouge & Simms, utilising barley from the farm, until dissolving their partnership in December 1862, after which Simms carried on the brewery business<sup>51, 52</sup>. At the farm, Gouge kept draught horses, dairy cows, pigs, turkeys, geese, ducks, poultry, pigeons, guinea fowls, bee hives, and a pair of swans (species unknown but probably Black

Swans). He won prizes for poultry and for English barley at the SA Agricultural and Horticultural Shows in February 1862 and 1863, but suffered severe losses of crops and livestock in a massive hailstorm in October 1862<sup>53-55</sup>. The pigeons were probably for pigeon-shooting matches, in which 'sport' he was regarded as one of 'our best shots'<sup>56-58</sup>. Gouge also kept racehorses<sup>59, 60</sup> and, briefly, a Bengal tiger that he purchased for £75 from a ship's captain who imported it in May 1858<sup>61</sup>. He exhibited the unfortunate tiger at the Star Hotel for a few months, charging 1s. for adults and 6d. for children, until he found a buyer in Melbourne<sup>62, 63</sup>.

Gouge was notably community-minded. He sang at an anniversary dinner for old colonists and at a benefit concert for Mount Alexander (Victoria) gold escort troops in 1852<sup>64, 65</sup>, at banquets honouring the safe return of explorer John McKinlay from the Burke Relief Expedition in 1862<sup>66, 67</sup>, and at a building fundraiser for Christchurch in Kadina in 1863<sup>68</sup>. He donated prizes for South Australian Society of Arts competitions from 1861 to 1863, usually for the best mechanical or architectural drawings, a prize in 1863 being awarded for an architectural drawing of the South Australian Institute building<sup>69, 70</sup>. In 1861 Gouge presented to the City of Adelaide a large drinking fountain of Macclesfield marble, erected for public use in the intersection of King William and Grenfell-Currie Streets (the fountain was moved to Hurtle Square in 1867 and demolished in 1908<sup>71-73</sup>). Gouge's 'can-do' attitude came to the fore when returning from Kadina in March 1863 and finding that the steamer was unable to pick up passengers or mail at Clinton. In company with a fellow passenger, he took charge of the mailbags, secured a small boat with two crew at Clinton, and sailed to Adelaide, getting the mail to the post office on time<sup>74</sup>.

Despite his business success, there are indications that Gouge's income barely kept up with expenditure. In January 1861 he sold all the plant and equipment including draught horses from the reservoir construction, and in July 1863 he sold the Victor Harbor Sawmill<sup>75, 76</sup>. He had lost money on the Victor Harbor contract and on his mining ventures and on 13 October 1863 declared himself insolvent, owing £19,000<sup>77, 78</sup> (equivalent to \$2-4.5 million today). Two days later Gouge sold blocks of land, allotments, a town acre with home on Victoria Square, and the leases on the Cremorne Hotel and Eagle Tavern, realising a total of £2,237<sup>79</sup>. On 28 October he sold his Goodwood Road farm animals, crops and equipment<sup>80</sup>. In late November he sold

all the household furniture and effects from his home on the corner of North Terrace and Bank Street, including birdcages and aviaries, 1 plover, 1 coot, 2 carrier pigeons, 2 quail, 1 landrail, 2 ring doves and a kangaroo<sup>81</sup>. On 30 November he sold his collection of natural history specimens<sup>82</sup>, including '25 cases of stuffed birds (principally South Australian)'. Finally, on 22 December, his trustees sold the entirety of his Victor Harbor works<sup>83</sup>.

Gouge promised his creditors 10s. in the pound, paid in instalments, but it appears they received only the first instalment before Gouge absconded from South Australia in early December 1863; as a consequence, appeals were made to tighten up the insolvency laws of the colony<sup>84, 85</sup>. He was charged on 4 December 1863 with deserting his wife and leaving her without any means of support<sup>86</sup>. It later transpired that he had cohabited with another woman during their marriage and had promised Mary Ann a weekly sum, but she had only ever received two sums of £3 and £2<sup>87</sup>. The other woman may have been Angelina Dalwood (born 1840) as they had a son, Arthur James Gouge, born 27 February 1862; Angelina married William Symons Billin in 1865 and Arthur was known as Arthur Billin thereafter<sup>88</sup>.

On 5 February 1864 the ship *Fanny Merriman* departed Sydney, bound for San Francisco via Newcastle<sup>89, 90</sup>; on board was Gouge<sup>91</sup>. Another passenger was Louisa Herring, born 31 October 1842 in Adelaide and now with child to Gouge. Their son Frederick Pitcairn Gouge was born at sea on 4 April 1864, presumably somewhere near Pitcairn Island. There is no record of a marriage but thereafter Louisa was known as Gouge's wife. Gouge, with his new family, spent the next 14 years in California and Nevada, mining, working on tunnel construction for the Central Pacific Railway, and building reservoirs<sup>39, 92</sup>. Their second son, Bertrand Gouge, was born at Donner Lake Village, California, on 14 September 1867. In 1878 the family moved to Canada, where Gouge prospected for gold and silver in British Columbia while based in Victoria, Vancouver Island<sup>92, 93</sup>. In 1881 Gouge moved to Yale on the mainland, east of Vancouver, to work on the Yale to Savona section of the Canadian Pacific Railway<sup>94, 95</sup>.

In late 1882 Gouge sailed to Australia on the *Moravian* from Vancouver Island, arriving in Melbourne on 25 November, and on 30 March 1883 departed Adelaide on the *Bowen*, arriving in

Port Darwin on 18 April<sup>96-98</sup>. He was there on behalf of an American railway company, intending to submit a tender for the Palmerston to Pine Creek railway once the SA Government passed the bill for its construction<sup>99, 100</sup>. However, after lengthy delays, tenders were not finalised until May 1886 and Gouge's company did not participate. Gouge received medical advice to 'take a trip south' and he departed 6 November 1883 on the steamer *Whampoa*, arriving in Sydney a fortnight later<sup>101, 102</sup>.

There are few surviving records of Gouge's activities over the next 14 years. In August 1884 he applied to the Department of Mines in Sydney for a mineral lease at Broken Hill but the lease was declared void the following year as he had not taken it up<sup>103</sup>. His 'wife' Louisa died of alcoholism in Victoria, Vancouver Island, in 1885, aged 43, but the informant was their son Frederick, not Apollos. There is evidence that Gouge was in Adelaide, as the death certificate of Mary Ann in April 1889 stated that she was his wife and both were living in Grote Street. Mary Ann died of senile decay, aged 64; perhaps Gouge had been caring for her in her final years. In September 1890 Gouge was granted a license for the Huntsman Hotel, O'Connell Street, North Adelaide, but only two months later transferred the license to another publican<sup>104</sup>. Intriguingly, however, Gouge was listed as a miner living at Bagdad (near Hampden, Otago region) in New Zealand electoral rolls of 1887 and 1890. Finally, he moved to Tasmania in about 1897, mining at Whyte River near Waratah in the north-west for the next eight years. In January 1898 he single-handedly saved the Whyte River Police Station from destruction in a bushfire, despite his age of 72 years<sup>105</sup>.

Otherwise hale and hearty at 79, Gouge was suffering from cataracts and in May 1905 travelled to Adelaide for surgery<sup>106</sup>. He decided to return to Canada, having not seen his sons there for 23 years, and sailed in steerage on the mail steamer *Sonoma* for San Francisco, departing Sydney on 10 July 1905<sup>107</sup>. Tragically, when he arrived in Victoria, Vancouver Island on 6 August, he learned that Bertrand had died of tuberculosis that same morning<sup>108</sup>. He went to live with his older son at The Shades, the hotel Frederick ran in Nanaimo, north of Victoria, and died there on 4 January 1912 aged 86<sup>109</sup>.

To be concluded in the spring edition of *The Birder*.

# Time to say *Farewell*

They are all colouring-up and carrying plenty of fat for their very long flight to the northern hemisphere. Paul Taylor captured this Bar-tailed Godwit, nearly ready to go, on the 18th March.

Friends of the International Bird Sanctuary and Members of Birds SA have been working tirelessly to protect an important southern hemisphere habitat of these birds, namely Gulf St Vincent.

You will have heard of the amazing research undertaken by Chris Purnell, BirdLife Australia, at the last Birds SA zoom meeting.

Learning about the Migratory Waders is a fascinating pastime. Undertaking Migratory Wader surveys assists with the data collection about these birds, where they feed, what sections of Gulf St Vincent are critical to their survival and many other details.



**Bar-tailed Godwit ready to leave Gulf St. Vincent** (Photographed by P. Taylor)



If you are interested in learning more about these birds with the intent of being part of the Birds SA survey team, please contact me.

“Thank You” to all of the surveyors who have dedicated many hours to undertaking the summer monthly surveys. These generous folk also pay for their own fuel, and some drive long distances to their particular survey sites.

We are a friendly, welcoming group who will mentor any Birds SA Members who would like to improve their bird recognition skills, with the intention of joining the survey team.

**Kate Buckley**

“Happy Surveyors” gather for lunch at Pt Wakefield to discuss the Migratory Wader season that is now drawing to a close. We were very privileged that Chris Purnell was able to join us.

(Photographed by T Flaherty)

## Past Excursions

### **CORRECTION**

to photo captions on page 33 of the Autumn Birder

All three photos were taken by Laurie Mortimer. Fairy Tern should read Little Tern. It has a black tip on the bill and the black through the eye almost reaches the bill.

### **Birds SA**

Sunday 27 February

#### **Aldinga Scrub**

On a warm, overcast, late February morning, 38 eager birdwatchers gathered at the Cox Road entrance to the Aldinga Scrub. Although some good rain (58mm in Adelaide) had fallen in January 2022, February rainfall had been below 10mm and the scrub appeared in need of a good soaking.

It was heartening after two years of Covid restrictions to see so many birdwatchers attend the Aldinga Scrub Field Trip. Despite the good numbers of attendees, the group decided not to split into two groups. Rather than do the usual route, which treks north along the Boomerang Loop track, then east to the swamp area and home along the boundary fence, we headed west along the wide, well maintained, Boomerang Track. We hadn't gone too far when on the left of the track the group was entertained by a number of species, including Mistletoebird, Eastern Spinebill, Grey Fantail and Rufous



**Members enjoying birdwatching in Aldinga Scrub**

Whistler, all in close proximity. This part of the track is renowned for reasonable birding and you don't have to go far to see attractive species and the wide, flat track gives excellent viewing opportunities for a large group such as ours. We took the first right hand side track to the north (Boomerang Loop track) and headed for the feature 'Lacy Coral Lichen' Circuit. The track was sandy, and the further we ventured the sandier it became. The group was spread out along the track and birds were in small numbers, but sightings were made of Collared Sparrowhawk, Common Bronzewing, White-plumed Honeyeater and Scarlet Robin. Birding was not easy this particular day and as we walked reasonable distances without sighting or hearing many birds, we occasionally came across parts of the park where there were unexplained hotspots with an increased number and variety. A Bee-eater was heard and Grey Shrike-thrush, Striated Pardalote, Dusky Woodswallow and Red-browed Finches were spotted.

As we approached the Coral Lichen, a group of Weebills were spotted in a low gum, feeding a couple of fledglings. On that morning, 20 Weebills were seen, quite a large number relative to other parks and field trips. The group ventured east after viewing the lichen area and again birds were seen in patches with large distances between sightings. Four Peaceful Doves were seen in a clearing, alighting from the ground as we approached and as we headed further east, groups of Elegant Parrots and both Rosella species were seen. The groundcover, *Muntries (Kunzea pomifera)* was prolific throughout the park and is a food source for many species. One Singing Honeyeater, five Crescent Honeyeaters, and many Little and Red Wattlebirds were also seen. The track east of the fenced-off rare Copper Bearded-orchid is a birding hot-spot to be remembered for future trips. Elegant Parrots, Golden Whistlers, New Holland Honeyeaters, Silvereyes, and more were seen there.

The group headed back to the entrance and conducted a bird call over lunch. Despite seemingly low bird numbers in much of the park, a bird list of 40 species was recorded.

After lunch some of the group investigated the Hart Road wetlands but the condition of that area was quite disappointing in that very few birds were seen there. This area had been in a very natural state 15 years ago, before the housing moved in and the wetlands were re-engineered, but it now appeared similar to so many urban wetland landscapes. It will be interesting to survey this area in the cooler, wetter months of the year, when conditions are more favourable to birds, and numbers may be greater.

**Alan Burns**

## Past Excursions *(continued)*

### Fleurieu Birders

Saturday 5 March

#### Lawari Conservation Park

Thirteen people met at the Information Bay on Hindmarsh Island, just over the bridge. I explained to visitors that Lawari C.P. now covers about a third of the island since the government purchased land from the Denver family in 2001 and have since added more to it. Much of the original farmland has been revegetated over the years, but some paddocks are leased back to Mundoo Island Pastoral Co. for cattle grazing. The geese favour open grazing land and it suits the management of the Conservation Park to retain it.

Bob and I planned to visit 3 sites only. We first drove to Denver Rd., then on to Mundoo Road, walked across the fishway into the paddocks beyond, then continued to the end of Mundoo Channel Rd. into the samphire area.

After sharing transport, we drove slowly along Denver Rd. and stopped at Hunters Creek. We saw a family of Black Swans, including five cygnets, a Little Pied Cormorant, a Swamp Harrier cruising above the reeds and several Australasian Swamphens on the road verge. We continued past the Lawari homestead/office and found a group of Cape Barren Geese feeding on the hay spills where the cattle had been fed. A little further back in the same paddock we spotted groups of both Australasian White and Straw-necked Ibis feeding.

Two raptors were resting on an old broken windmill in the distance, but they were too far away to identify. When we arrived home Bob's photos revealed, what I thought were the two young Australian Sea Eagles. We were told by John Gitsham, senior Ranger for the Southern Coorong, just the week before, the adult birds had successfully reared two young this last year. Unfortunately, it was a case of misidentification and although the photos were not clear, it was assumed by others, they were Whistling Kites.

Driving towards Mundoo Drive we came across Galahs having a "picnic" on the hay bales. There were 60-70 in the one group with some on the ground feeding on spilt grain after the hay had been cut. A clear example of why they are now in such large numbers as agriculture has favoured them.

The corner of Mundoo and Mundoo Channel Road was our next stop. The tide was high and the westerly wind was blowing across the water, which meant less water birds at this site than usual. A few more Cape Barren Geese were standing at the water's edge and across the far side the Australian Pelican, Black Swan, Australian Shelduck, were resting. A White-faced Heron had hunkered down on the wreck in the water and more Australian White Ibis were feeding in the wetland. Coming up to the fishway we followed the track to the left and out of the wind were the small bush birds: Silvereyes, Superb Fairywrens, and White-browed Scrubwrens sheltering in the Melaleucas.



**Cape Barren Geese in flight** *(Photographed by Bob Daly in the Lawari Conservation Park, 5 March 2022)*

## Past Excursions *(continued)*



**White-fronted Chat** (Photographed by Fred Dunker in the Lawari Conservation Park, 5 March 2022)

We spent over an hour following the new tracks that wind through this revegetated paddock. A Little Grassbird was heard calling and there were a few raptors were about. One had us guessing. It continued to circle and we decided it was a young Swamp Harrier with its dark colouring. There were many birds in the sky. Stewart spotted a couple of Elegant Parrots flying. At one time there were long strands of Great Cormorants, like flowing ribbons. We estimated about 500 were heading in the one direction. Some Cape Barren Geese were on the move too, honking as they flew. We spotted a Richard's Pipit in the samphire and a Grey Fantail darting about in the bushes. Two Brush Bronzewing took off quickly and a few Chestnut Teal were seen in the creek.

At the end of Mundoo Channel Drive, the walk through the samphire showed up more Superb Fairywrens and several White-fronted Chats. Looking into Scab Creek and across the back of Mundoo Island in the sheltered bay, were large numbers of Cape Barren Geese, Shelduck, small waders, Australian Pelicans, Royal Spoonbills, Ibis, Pacific Black Duck, Caspian and Crested Terns. Unfortunately, I didn't take my telescope and they were a long way off.

We had a great day of birding and finished up back at the Information Bay for birdcall. We tallied 50 species over the 3 sites visited.

Lawari CP is gradually opening-up with more walking trails planned. However, on the Ranger's advice, you do need to check the soles of your shoes carefully for any penetrating Caltrop seeds to prevent it spreading. They are working on eradicating it from the property and this is the reason why you are not allowed to drive on Lawari without permission.

**Wendy Phillips**

## Birds SA

### Saturday 12 March Paiwalla Wetlands

We had a sunny and warm day as we surveyed the wetlands from the Sunnyside Lookout – but the wetlands were dry! Despite this setback the 23 attendees agreed to proceed onto Paiwalla for our excursion. Our walk took the normal clockwise route from the carpark along the base of the cliff-face looking for any roosting birds of prey before completing the circumnavigation of the dry ponds. It was surprising that we still recorded 19 waterbird species (a total of 168 birds) thanks to the high water level of the Murray River. These included Black Swan (10), Pacific Black Duck (20), Straw-necked Ibis (25), Australian Pelican (12), Little Pied Cormorant (20), Australian Pied Cormorant (6), Great Cormorant (19), Australasian Darter (12) and one each of Yellow-billed Spoonbill and Little Egret.



**Whistling Kites, female on left** (Photographed by Rose Slade in the Paiwalla Wetlands, 12 March 2022)



**Peaceful Dove** (Photographed by Fred Dunker in the Paiwalla Wetlands, 12 March 2022)

## Past Excursions *(continued)*



### **Adelaide Rosella, yellow form**

*(Photographed by Rose Slade in the Paiwalla Wetlands, 12 March 2022)*

*It is known that Yellow Rosellas meet Adelaide Rosellas near Wongulla at the Marne-Murray junction and it has been assumed by many that they interbreed there and possibly elsewhere. One hundred years ago Yellow Rosellas reached as far south as Mannum but there have been few reports from below Wongulla during the last half century.*

*This beautiful adult bird, photographed at Paiwalla near Murray Bridge would pass for a Yellow Rosella but another photo showed significant orange around the vent and in the undertail plumage. This area is pure yellow in the Yellow Rosella. It could therefore be an intergrade or hybrid between Yellow and Adelaide Rosellas. Alternatively it could simply be a very yellow Adelaide Rosella, like those that occur in the South Flinders Ranges.*

*Adelaide Rosellas extend beyond the hills eastwards towards the Murray along the Marne River and on Saunders, Shepherd and Reedy Creeks, and are now readily seen on either side of the river at Mannum. The status of the Yellow Rosella below Wongulla needs careful study.*

**Andrew Black**

Our tally of birds of prey included Black-shouldered Kite (2), Wedge-tailed Eagle (3), Swamp Harrier (1), Black Kite (6), Whistling Kite (10) and Peregrine Falcon (2). Other species recorded for the day included Peaceful Dove (12), Sacred Kingfisher (1), Rainbow Bee-eater (14), Galah (50), Red-rumped Parrot (6), Crimson / Yellow Rosella (6), Australian Ringneck (6). Superb Fairywren (20), New Holland Honeyeater (30), Singing Honeyeater (20), White-plumed Honeyeater (30), Striated pardalote (2), White-browed Babbler (5), Rufous Whistler (1), Grey Shrikethrush (2), Fairy Martin (4), Tree Martin (6), Australian Reed Warbler (4), Little Grassbird (6) and Silvereve (10).

Despite our initial collective fear that the visit would be disappointing we were all quite pleased with the total outcome of 58 species.

**Lynton Huxley**

## **Birds SA**

Thursday 17 March

### **Apex Park West Lakes/Breakout Creek**

Thirteen people gathered for the excursion on a fine day with the temperature in the low 20s and a light breeze. The area around the ponds had been cleared yet again for the installation of more amenities. The concrete ponds near the picnic shelters were therefore the focus of quite a lot of activity and we saw Pacific Black Ducks, a Mallard, Eurasian Coots, White-faced Herons and Dusky Moorhens and other birds enjoying the water.

We followed the track beside Breakout Creek (the name by which this last section of the Torrens is known) down to the beach. Along the way we saw Maned Ducks (10), Australian White Ibis (4), White-faced Herons (3), Noisy Miners (150), Galahs (30), Welcome Swallows (15), Australian Magpies (10), Magpielarks (40) and numerous Rainbow Lorikeets (100), Musk Lorikeets (80), Crimson Rosellas (3) and one Eastern Rosella. Down at the end of the creek we saw a Fairy Martin and Cormorants (8 Little Pied, 2 Little Black). There were also Welcome Swallows (15), Tree Martins (40), Silver Gulls (50), Pacific Gulls (2), Greater Crested Terns (6) a couple of Australasian Grebes, and one Royal Spoonbill swishing its bill through the water

We crossed the road and walked up to the road crossing at Tapley's Hill Rd and back down to the carpark. One participant familiar with Council plans for the area said that a couple more crossings are to be installed along with viewing platforms and revegetation of the riverbanks. So, in future, walkers won't have to trek all

## Past Excursions *(continued)*

the way up to the present road crossings to enjoy both sides of the river. Along the way we saw 1 Black Swan, a Grey Teal, Australasian Swamphens (30), Dusky Moorhens (35), Eurasian Coots (10), Masked Lapwings (2), Crested Pigeons (20), New Holland Honeyeaters (20), Singing Honeyeaters (4), White-plumed Honeyeaters (6), Red Wattlebirds (6) and 1 Little Wattlebird. Galahs (30) and Little Corellas (25) flew overhead and grazed on the grassy riverbanks. Fairywrens were scarce with only two Superb Fairywrens being recorded. Australian Magpies (10), Willy Wagtails (6) and Little Ravens (8) were a continual presence. Rock Doves (60), Spotted Doves (10) and Common Starlings (10) made up the feral contingent.

We returned to the picnic shelter near the carpark to have lunch and make the bird call. Our total was 43 species for the day, an encouraging result for a relatively small area.

**Ali Ben Kahn**

### Port Augusta Bird Group (The Babblers)

Sunday 20 March  
**Chinaman's Creek**

On a calm, clear and cool morning three early birders met at the highway turnoff to Chinaman's Creek. While we were waiting for any stragglers a Black Kite was gliding along the highway looking for any overnight road kill on which to feed. Little Ravens moved about on the fallow paddock next to us chasing grasshoppers and Singing Honeyeaters called out from some shrubs. Some soft beeps could be heard coming from a shrub next to us and upon closer inspection a pair of Zebra Finches was found. White-winged Fairywrens moved about in the Black Bluebush and a Rufous Fieldwren was heard and then briefly seen. Whilst trying to entice the Fieldwrens closer, a pair of Redthroats began calling out and then moved quite close to us.

We continued slowly along the dirt road towards the Winninowie conservation park entrance; finding a mob of Emus in the paddock and Nankeen Kestrels hovering overhead. On the road several White-fronted Chats and Australian Pipits were chasing grasshoppers. Near some old ruins we found some House Sparrows, Common Starlings and some more Zebra Finches; while some Elegant Parrots and Australian Ravens flew past overhead. In some scrubby country further along we found Australian Magpies, Galahs, Crested Pigeons, Southern Whiteface and Yellow-rumped Thornbills. The road into the conservation park passes through some Mallee trees where we saw Yellow-throated Miners, Mallee Ringnecks and Grey Butcherbirds. The road then passes through low samphire country where we found



**Little and Great Egret** (Photographed by Bernie Haase at Chinaman's Creek, 20 March 2022)

more Australian Pipits and White-winged Fairywrens. We arrived at the beach just as the tide was peaking. As we were setting up our spotting scopes Australian Magpies, Singing Honeyeaters, Black-faced Woodswallows and White-browed Babblers frolicked in the nearby shrubbery.

We walked along the beach, avoiding the incoming tide as it slowly filled in the low areas that we crossed to get to the shellgrit bank that borders the edge of the lapping waves. Little Black Cormorants, Caspian Terns and Welcome Swallows flew past while on a small island close to shore there were Australian Pelicans, Pacific and Silver Gulls, Great and Little Egrets, Crested Terns and Pied Oystercatchers. Pied and Little Pied Cormorants were resting on some partially submerged mangroves. Along the shore hundreds of Red-necked Stints either sat quietly or flew around in swirling tight flocks while a few Red-capped Plovers fossicked along the beach. We walked to a mangrove area and found Sooty Oystercatchers, White-faced Herons and a Grey Shrikethrush. A reeling call could be heard above us and then we were being buzzed by Fork-tailed Swifts as they chased flying insects.

## Past Excursions *(continued)*

We went back to our vehicles and moved further along the road towards the boat ramp but were stopped by a White-bellied Sea Eagle as it glided past, scaring the birds along the beach, including some Masked Lapwings and a flock of Silvereyes.

We stopped for lunch at the boat ramp/camping ground area with about seventy Fork-tailed Swifts slicing through the air just above us. They proved to very hard to photograph though. While we were enjoying our lunch we added Crested Pigeons, Tree Martins, Willie Wagtails, Yellow-throated Miners, Nankeen Kestrels, Spiny-cheeked Honeyeaters, Purple-backed Fairywrens, Grey Butcherbird, Australian Ravens, Inland Thornbills, White Ibis and a Black-fronted Dotterel, which was an unusual sight in this salty environment.

We then drove back to the Mallee area near the park entrance and headed along the track towards Mt. Grainger, stopping in some good Mallee and finding a Sacred Kingfisher, Weebills, Chestnut-rumped Thornbills, Black-capped Sittellas, Magpie Larks, Rufous Whistler and more of the birds we had seen previously, including more Fork-tailed Swifts.

We had found a total of 59 bird species for the day, with the White-bellied Sea Eagle and the Fork-tailed Swifts being the birds of the day.

**Bernie Haase**

### Red-necked Stints

*(Photographed by Jude Owen at Chinaman's Creek, 20 March 2022)*



## Birds SA

### Sunday 27 March Onkaparinga Wetlands

As is usual for this outing we gathered at the Port Noarlunga Oval, several kilometres from our intended destination. This allows us to make a quick bird count whilst waiting for any latecomers and has always provided a good, and often different, species comparison. The oval overlooks the tidal flats for the Onkaparinga River and on this day we recorded 33 species here including Black Swan (17), Chestnut Teal (2), Australian White Ibis (2), Royal Spoonbill (2), White-faced Heron (10), Little Pied Cormorant (5), White-headed Stilt (6), Masked Lapwing (20), Common Greenshank (1), Silver Gull (250), Crested Pigeon (20), Peaceful Dove (1), Galah (80), Singing Honeyeater (4), Red Wattlebird (4), Little Raven (5) and Tree Martin (2).

With our group now numbering 18 members we drove to Perry's Bend on the Onkaparinga River for the main part of our excursion. Here we recorded 27 Species including Pacific Black Duck (2), Australian White Ibis (12), White-faced Heron (3), Little Pied Cormorant (2), Masked Lapwing (2), Common Greenshank (1), Silver Gull (10), Little Corella (8), Rainbow Lorikeet (4), Superb Fairywren (40), Red Wattlebird (40), White-plumed Honeyeater (10), Striated Pardalote (1), Weebill (3), Grey Shrikethrush (2), Willie Wagtail (6), Little Raven (10), Welcome Swallow (12) Fairy Martin (1) and Golden-headed Cisticola (1).

**Lynton Huxley**

## Past Excursions *(continued)*



**Striated Thornbill** (Photographed by Bob Daly in the Mt Billy Conservation Park, 2 April 2022)

### Fleurieu Birders

#### Saturday 2 April Mt Billy Conservation Park

17 local birders set off on a cool, partly cloudy morning, led by Pat Uppill from the "Friends of Mt Billy Conservation Park". This park consisting of 199 hectares was proclaimed in 1999 when it was transferred from SA Water to the Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources, having served as catchment for the adjacent Hindmarsh Valley Reservoir, which previously supplied water to Victor Harbor. A controlled burn had been carried out in the park only a few weeks earlier and Pat said they saw 3 Bassian Thrush in the burnt area, which they normally would not be able to see in the thick scrub.

We headed west along the main trail from Gate 1 entrance on Hindmarsh Tiers Rd, but soon turned off to follow a smaller track off to the south away from the burnt area. There were a few coast banksias in flower, amongst stringybark and other eucalypts, wattles and xanthorrhoeas. After seeing a number of Crescent and New Holland Honeyeaters, a Magpielark and a Common



**Birders at Mt Billy** (Photographed by Wendy Phillips in the Mt Billy Conservation Park, 2 April 2022)

Bronzewing and hearing (but not seeing) a Kookaburra, things went a bit quiet for a while, but we eventually hit a patch where we had excellent sightings of a White-throated Treecreeper and White-naped Honeyeaters, plus a glimpse of a Golden Whistler. A number of Grey Fantails were seen along the track as well as a Striated Pardalote, both Yellow and Striated Thornbills and a Weebill. As we looped back around towards our entry point, a few of us were lucky to see a Scarlet Robin. Also seen were Superb Fairywrens, White-browed Scrubwren and an Eastern Spinebill, along with some Crimson Rosellas and the usual Magpies, Galahs, Red Wattlebirds, Little Ravens, Silvereyes and a Common Blackbird.

After doing the bird count, 24 species recorded for Mt. Billy, we adjourned to the nearby Hindmarsh Falls Reserve for morning tea and more bird watching. In the picnic area, we saw some Red-browed Finches, a Tree Martin, and Superb Fairywrens, White-browed Scrubwrens, Golden Whistler, Magpie, Blackbird, Crimson Rosellas, Eastern Spinebill and Grey Fantails. As we headed up the track to the Falls lookout we were rewarded with Yellow-faced and another White-naped Honeyeater. Altogether a pleasant morning with some good sightings of a couple of relatively unusual birds. The species count came to 17.

Thank you to Pat Uppill for providing local knowledge and to the Friends of Mt Billy Conservation Park for their excellent work in documenting and helping to preserve this special bit of habitat for birds and other native animals.

**Bernadette Vogelzang**

## Past Excursions *(continued)*

### Birds SA

Saturday 9 April

#### Browns Road, Monarto

The group of 26 birders made their way to the lower car park and included members, non-members and a visitor from Nova Scotia. It was a cooler start to the day than most had expected, but by mid-morning it had warmed up nicely.

We all set off together but within a short while the party had split into a few groups who each went their own way. The research project infrastructure is still intact but had no water or seed so presumably it has now been completed. No nesting activity was noted in any of the nesting boxes spread throughout the park.

In all 38 species were seen, plus Spotted Pardalote heard. A total of 240 birds were recorded.

Most common were White-winged Chough (30), New Holland Honeyeater (30), Red Wattlebird (20), White-browed Babbler (15), Yellow-rumped Thornbill (12), and ten each of Adelaide Rosella, Purple-crowned Lorikeet, Striated Pardalote, Little Raven and Australian Magpie. Robins were scarce and we saw only two Hooded and five Red-capped. We failed to see any Owlet Nightjars. Raptors flying overhead were one Wedge-tailed Eagle, two Brown Goshawks and one Collard Sparrowhawk.

The groups filtered back to the carpark between 11.30 - 12.00 and we made the bird call.

**Rod Tetlow**

#### Port Augusta Bird Group (The Babblers)

Saturday 9 – Monday 11 April

#### Excursion To Secret Rocks

Saturday 9 April

Four birders came together at the Whyalla wetlands on a clear and calm day. One each from Whyalla, Pt. Pirie, Pt. Augusta and Mambray Creek. After a coffee in the shop there we headed off to the Kimba road. We turned into the Ironstone conservation park to join up with another birder from Pt. Neill and then continued on to Secret Rocks.

We parked in the parking area at Secret Rocks and looked at the vermin proof fence around the rocks and a large area of a private conservation land owned by John Read and Katherine Moseby. The fence was built to keep out feral animals and conserve the Mallee Fowl and other animals in the area. Native animals are also being reintroduced to help save them from disappearing in the wild.

A Mistletoebird was zipping through the air calling out as we stepped through the fence to look at the rocks. Some rare plants had been planted there. Spiny-cheeked and Singing Honeyeaters, Purple-backed Fairywrens and Willie Wagtails were found near the rocky area. In the denser mallee and native pine scrub across the road there were Red-capped Robins, White-browed Babblers, Common Bronzewing, Silvereyes, Yellow-rumped and Chestnut-rumped Thornbills.

After we had our lunch we decided to drive further along the road towards Kimba to check out the small lake that was blocking the road from the heavy rains that had fallen earlier. As we arrived it was amazing to see the amount of water over the road and across what were paddocks. We were greeted by the rasping calls of a pair of Restless Flycatchers and Willie Wagtails. There was a large flock of White-fronted Chats feeding on the edges of the flooded paddocks as a Nankeen Kestrel, Tree Martins, Masked and Dusky Woodswallows chased insects through the air. On the water were Pacific Black Ducks with young, Grey Teal, Chestnut Teal with young, Australian Grebes building nests, Hoary-headed Grebes and White-faced Herons. In the Mallee trees around the wet areas there were Yellow-plumed and White-eared Honeyeaters, Red Wattlebirds, Striated and Yellow-rumped (Spotted) Pardalotes, Weebills, Yellow-rumped Thornbills, Black-capped Sittellas, Grey Shrike-thrush, Black-faced Cuckooshrikes and Magpielarks. It was time to go back to the Secret Rocks area and find our camping spot. We were kindly given permission from John and Katherine to access their private property and camp there. We drove in from the main road about 5km. to Titijowie Dam through mainly mallee tree country. There was water in the dam but no water birds on it. We set up our camps and settled down for the night. Boobook Owls and Owlet Nightjars were in the trees as we cooked our meals.



**Yellow-plumed Honeyeater** (Photographed by Trevor Cox at Secret Rocks, 9 April 2022)

## Past Excursions *(continued)*



**Spotted Pardalote** (Photographed by Bernie Haase at Secret Rocks, 9 April 2022)

### Sunday 10 April

The next morning the Australian Ravens roused us up and Restless Flycatchers, Willie Wagtails, White-eared and Yellow-plumed Honeyeaters accompanied them. Common Bronzings cautiously approached the water in the dam as Yellow-rumped Thornbills and an Emu moved around the edges while Tree Martins glided over the water.

We were joined by three more birders from Pt. Augusta and Queensland and we split into small groups and walked around the area to find birds. The dam is in a low area fed by channels winding through sand hill ridges and rocky rises that provide some diverse habitats for birds. In the mallee trees there were Weebills, Striated Pardalotes, Galahs, Pt. Lincoln and Mulga Parrots, White-fronted, Brown-headed, Singing and Spiny-cheeked Honeyeaters, Western Yellow and Red-capped Robins, Rufous and Golden Whistlers, Grey Shrike-thrushes, Silveryeyes, Grey Butcherbird and White-browed Babbler. In the denser undergrowth on the rocky hillside were Inland Thornbills, Turquoise, Blue-breasted and Purple-backed Fairywrens and a Southern Scrub Robin.

After we had spent about four hours looking for birds we decided to go back towards Secret Rocks for lunch. We then entered the property through a locked gate and followed the vermin proof fence track and added a Brown Falcon, Golden Whistlers, Dusky Woodswallows and Mulga Parrots to the Secret Rocks bird list. It was getting hotter as the day went on and the birds were a lot quieter, so after we had followed the fence perimeter around the protected area and re-joined the main road we drove to where the water had blocked the road to show the late comers. Here we said our goodbyes to each other and most headed off to go home, but three



**Restless Flycatcher** (Photographed by Trevor Cox at Secret Rocks, 9 April 2022)

of us found a track around the flood water and headed towards Lake Gilles to camp there and check the lake out. The lake was near full and two of us set up camp as the Pt. Pirie birder had a quick look around and then had to go home.

### Monday 11 April

During the night a Boobook Owl and Owlet Nightjars called out and Magpies, Australian Ravens, Grey Butcherbirds and a Crested Bellbird greeted us in the morning. The Mallee trees were full of Yellow-plumed Honeyeaters and Weebills, with some White-eared and Spiny-cheeked Honeyeaters, Striated and Yellow-rumped (Spotted) Pardalotes, Yellow-throated Miners, Black-faced Cuckoo-shrikes, Pt. Lincoln and Mulga Parrots, Rufous Whistlers, Grey Shrike-thrushes, Crested Pigeons and a pair of Restless Flycatchers. The air above the trees was full of Tree Martins, Welcome Swallows, Dusky Woodswallows, a White-backed Swallow, a Wedge-tailed Eagle and a constant stream of Galahs passing through in small flocks. Willie Wagtails and Purple-backed Fairywrens moved about at ground level. With the lake being almost full we expected lots of water birds but only saw Silver Gulls, Wood Duck, Masked Lapwings and lots of Grey Teal. It is a big lake and would have better places around it for water birds to congregate.

A total of 60 bird species were found over the three days. The birds of the trip would be the Blue-breasted Fairywrens, Restless Flycatchers, Southern Scrub-robin and the Western Yellow Robins. The Black-capped Sittellas, Turquoise Fairy-wrens, Golden Whistlers and White-backed Swallow were also good to see.

**Bernie Haase**

## Past Excursions *(continued)*

### Birds SA

#### Thursday 14 – Tuesday 19 April Easter Campout at Gluepot Reserve

It was pleasing that a mixture of regular and newer members attended this year's Easter Campout held at Gluepot Reserve. A total of 36 members attended, with numbers fluctuating over the course of the weekend, allowing everyone to be accommodated at the Bellbird campsite. Unfortunately, the mallee around this campsite had been acutely affected by a caterpillar infestation and thus there was not much shade!

We had good weather for most of our weekend in the bush and the location allowed more experienced members to pass on valuable information on sightings and locations. Due to the dry conditions the bird hides were a popular destination, but generally driving or walking the variety of tracks also provided good opportunistic sightings. By the end of the campout we had tallied an impressive 67 species and, given the digital era we live in, some great images were captured including the one below by Dawn Borchardt of a Black-eared Miner. A notable highlight included large numbers of Mallee Ringnecks and Mulga Parrots which attended the bird hides along with Striped, White-eared and Brown-headed Honeyeaters.

**Black-eared Miner** *(Photographed by Dawn Borchardt at Gluepot Reserve, April, 2022)*



**Barbeque Chefs Graeme Pascoe and Michael Huxley**



**Easter Bunny visits Andrew Black and Ian Falkenberg**



**Members enjoying the Sunday Barbeque lunch**

Our traditional barbeque Sunday lunch was held at the Education Centre building which featured a large barbeque to assist our expert chefs Graeme and Michael. In a delightful surprise, the Chairman for Birdlife Australia's Gluepot Reserve, Ian Falkenberg; his wife Margaret and the Host Ranger Alistair Bestow joined us for lunch. Ian provided an insightful update on the history of the reserve, future initiatives scheduled for Gluepot and expressed his appreciation for the support of Birds SA members.

Rain came late Sunday afternoon, resulting in the majority of members choosing to depart early on Monday morning to avoid further rain and a potentially slippery trip home.

Thanks to all attendees for making this Birds SA campout a success.

**Lynton Huxley**

## Gluepot Campout – Easter 2022

*from the point of view of two relatively new members*

Gluepot, 50km outside Waikerie, is an amazing place owned by Birdlife Australia and staffed entirely by volunteer rangers and a committee of management. It focusses on the provision of mallee habitats for birds and is available to all members of the general public, who are allowed to camp in several different campgrounds throughout the reserve for a nominal fee of \$15 per person per night.

The 5 hides and watering points are a bonus for birdwatchers and as well there are many signposted walks where anyone with binoculars can see a large variety of birds.

I encourage anyone who can to visit Gluepot. There are plenty of maps and information about Gluepot in the autumn 2022 issue of Birdlife.

Over Easter we spent 5 days at Gluepot with Birds SA with a large number of other members, all of whom were willing to share their expertise. It was a great campout. We were very ably looked after by the Huxley family who made sure we were well informed and organised the evening birdcall. On Easter Sunday we were also treated to a BBQ and pancakes as well as an informative talk on the history of the reserve and the rationale behind some of the management decisions.

As far as birding goes, even though on each day we saw a huge variety of birds, Monday was the best day for us. As the saying goes the late bird catches the worm. With one other couple we spent a wettish day looking around and observed the following species:

Gilberts Whistler, Rufous Whistler, Red-capped Robin male and female, White-browed Tree Creeper, Chestnut Thornbill, Jacky Winter, Australian Raven, White-browed Babblers, Striped Honeyeater, Nankeen Kestrel, Galahs, Emus, Yellow-plumed Honeyeater, Brown Tree Creeper, Wrens (may have been Splendid Fairywrens). Crested Bellbird, White-eared Honeyeater. Mulga and Ringneck parrots Brown-faced Honeyeater.

(All of these had been seen by others on preceding days but we were thrilled to see quite a few we had never seen before.)

Apologies Peter and Barbara if we've forgotten any!

### POSTSCRIPT

As we stayed later than other members, we had permission and guidance from the ranger as to which roads to use and the best way to leave. Weather conditions at Gluepot always have to be taken into consideration and the campers there need to take the advice of the ranger at all times.

Thanks to all the staff at Gluepot and the convener Lynton Huxley for a fantastic weekend.

**Peter and Angela Roodhouse**

*The photographs below show a few of the birds that Peter and Angela Roodhouse saw over the five days.*



**White-eared Honeyeater**



**Striped Honeyeater**



**Brown-headed Honeyeater**



**Grey Fantail**

## Past Excursions *(continued)*

### Fleurieu Birders

Saturday 7 May

#### Newland Head Conservation Park

As I drove south over Willunga Hill I had some qualms about what might be in store. It was windy, and showers of fine rain kept scurrying across the windscreen, it was also looking grey and ominous out to sea. Further south the clouds had begun to lift and the sun appeared as I drove down Dennis Road. Slowly, but surely members began to arrive, and by start time there were 8 of us, quite reasonable in view of the competition from the excursion to Minko Scrub.

As we started up the hill the first birds we saw were Superb Fairywrens, keeping low down in the undergrowth to avoid the cool breeze, plus Singing Honeyeaters higher up in the scrub. We continued up the 4-wheel drive track spotting grey currawongs and many New Holland Honeyeaters. Australian Magpies moved around in groups singing to us from high up in dead trees. On the other side of the exclusion fence, we came across Striated Thornbills, Crimson Rosellas, a Spotted Pardalote and a group of Silvereyes. We had to wait for some of the party at the gate into the exclusion zone, it was worth the wait because they had seen a Fantailed Cuckoo on top of a xanthorrhoea spike.

Near the top of Ridgeway Hill we came across some Brush Bronzewings, spotted some Eastern Spinebills,



**Little Wattlebird** *(Photographed by Bob Daly at Newland Head Conservation Park, 7 May 2022)*



#### Members in the new camping facilities

*(Photographed by Wendy Phillips at Newland Head Conservation Park, 7 May 2022)*

were sung to by a couple of Golden Whistlers and found their female counterparts fossicking low down in the undergrowth. We had heard numerous White-browed Scrubwrens, but it wasn't until we got to the top of the hill that we saw one. A number of birds such as, Mistletoebirds, Crescent Honeyeaters, Little Wattlebirds,

Tree Martins and Welcome Swallows were found as we walked back to the Waitpinga Campground.

We took the opportunity to go and investigate the recently completed camping area for walkers. It's very smart, with a good shelter area, toilets and some raised platforms on which to pitch tents. At the end of the walk, we retired to the BBQ area at Dennis Hut to enjoy our lunches and complete the bird call. Later in the day I received an email with a photograph of a bird on a dead branch, which we first thought was a Crescent Honeyeater. It turned out to be a Tawny-crowned Honeyeater, which was the first time I've seen one in Newland Head CP.

We tallied 28 species for the morning.

**Edith St George**

## Past Excursions *(continued)*

### Birds SA

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Saturday 14 May

#### Buckland Lake, Port Gawler

Trip Cancelled at request of Department

### Port Augusta Bird Group (The Babblers)

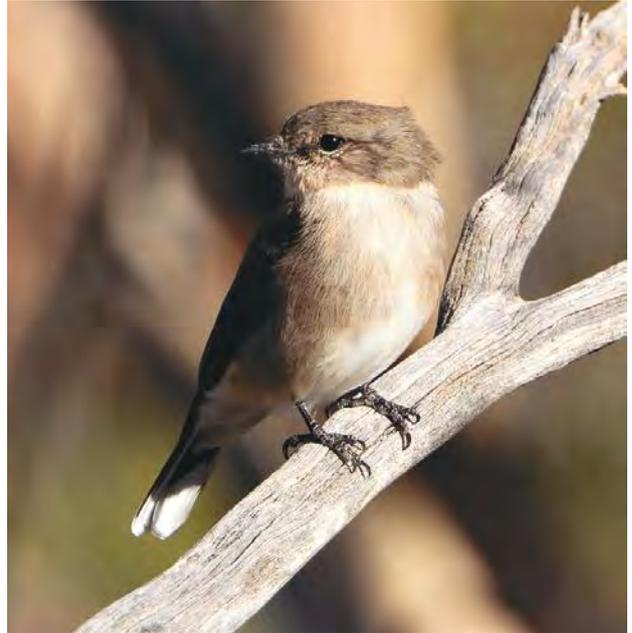
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Sunday 15 May

#### Carrierloo Station

It was a cool and clear morning when six birders met up at the start of the Stuart highway in Pt. Augusta. Two each were from Pt. Pirie and Whyalla and one each from Pt. Augusta and Mambray Creek. We drove along the highway and turned off onto the Carrierloo road. Just after the turnoff we stopped to look at a couple of Black-shouldered Kites and a Collared Sparrowhawk deciding who should be using a tree as a hunting vantage point.

The countryside is looking good, with the perennial plants nice and green. However, the annuals and herbs are waiting for more rain to really start growing. We stopped about 10km along the road to look at a likely place for birds in some Black Oaks and Bluebush scrub. Here we found Singing and Spiny-cheeked Honeyeaters, Black-faced Woodswallows, Eastern Bluebonnets and some passing Elegant Parrots, together with Crested Pigeons, Common Bronzings, Chirruping Wedgebills, a Willie Wagtail, Southern Whiteface, Red-capped



#### Jacky Winter

*(Photographed by Bernie Haase at Carrierloo Station, 15 May, 2022)*

Robins, White-browed Babblers, Zebra Finches, Rufous Fieldwrens, Australian Magpies, Australian Ravens, Australian Pipits and many White-winged Fairywrens.

About another 4km along the road a pair of White-backed Swallows caught our eyes so we stopped and looked for their nesting spot in a creek cliff bank. Unfortunately they did not let us know which hole in the bank was theirs. Here we added to our bird list: Galahs, Little Corellas, Purple-backed Fairywrens, Grey Butcherbirds, Mulga Parrots, Mistletoebirds and Purple-crowned Lorikeets that whizzed past.

Our next stop was at the Carrierloo woolshed for smoko. Shearing was in full swing and we set up near the dam that contained less water in it than we thought it would have. Here we added Welcome Swallows, House Sparrows, Emus and Maned Ducks to our list.



#### Black-faced Woodswallows

*(Photographed by Raye-lene Yates at Carrierloo Station, 15 May, 2022)*

## Past Excursions *(continued)*



### Photographers in action

*(Bernie and Peter photographed by Richard Croll at Carriererloo Station, 15 May 2022)*

We drove on towards the homestead stopping at the Four Mile dams. Here we found many of the birds seen already and added a pair of Cinnamon Quailthrushes, Black-faced Cuckooshrikes, Redthroats, Nankeen Kestrels; and at the dam we saw a solitary Grey Teal, nine Black-fronted Dotterels, Magpielarks many Black-faced Woodswallows chasing insects.

We passed the homestead and turned onto the road to Wartaka station. The landscape changed into hilly country with thicker Mallee and Mulga scrub. We stopped for a late lunch and then walked along a small valley with a rocky outcrop near its the end. Here we found Chestnut-rumped and Yellow-rumped Thornbills, Turquoise Fairywrens, a flock of 14 Brown-headed Honeyeaters and a White-fronted Honeyeater, Yellow-throated Miners, Jacky Winters, Weebills, Grey Shrikethrushes, Port Lincoln Parrots and a Wedge-tailed Eagle; as well as more of the birds seen previously. It was getting late so we drove along the road to Wartaka looking for birds on some of the sideroads and dams but found little bird activity. We drove on until we reached the Eyre Highway near Iron Knob, said our goodbyes and all headed off home.

A total of 48 bird species was officially recorded and the extra Black-shouldered Kites and Sparrowhawk brought the total for the day to 50 species. The birds of the day were the Cinnamon Quailthrush, Turquoise Fairywrens, Redthroats and the White-backed Swallows that were first-timers for some of our group.

**Bernie Haase**

### Black-shouldered Kite

*(Photographed by Richard Croll at Carriererloo Station, 15 May, 2022)*



# Future Excursions | 4 June – 15 Sept 2022

## CONTACT

**Lynton Huxley**

*Field Program Co-ordinator and Campout Organiser*

**Phone: 0498 466 092**

**Email: [fieldtrips@birdssa.asn.au](mailto:fieldtrips@birdssa.asn.au)**

The following field trips have been scheduled, but are subject to complying with COVID protocols for South Australia that exist at the time of the field trip. Please monitor government constraints and when appropriate check for any changes via our e-Newsletter.

**Given Birds SA's duty of care obligation to you, our members, we do ask that:**

- **Members attend field trips only if they are well and have no cold or flu-like symptoms**
- **Members attending field trips observe and comply with the COVID Safe Procedures implemented for our field trips including all relevant social distance restrictions**
- **Members attending field trips consider bringing personal hand sanitiser and a face mask for added personal protection.**

If you have any queries or require further information please contact the Field Trip Coordinator Lynton Huxley on 0498466092 or email to: [fieldtrips@birdssa.asn.au](mailto:fieldtrips@birdssa.asn.au).

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

## Excursion Terrain Difficulty Ratings

**Easy** – generally flat terrain

**Moderate** – may include some short undulating gradients

**Difficult** – may include some continuous or steep gradients

## What to bring:

- **Personal hand sanitiser (facemask optional)**
- 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

## Fleurieu Birders

**Saturday 4 June**

**Nurragi Reserve, Finnis**

Meet on the corner of the Finnis/Milang Rd. and Dry Plains Rd. at 8.30 am.

**TRIP LEADER: Wendy Phillips**

## Birds SA

**Saturday 11 and Sunday 12 June**

**LONG WEEKEND — two night camp at Brookfield Conservation Park (MM) 123km**

### Easy

Meet at 8.30am just inside the gate, approximately 35km east of Truro. The entrance is 2km past "8 mile corner" at a gentle left bend on an otherwise straight road.

There will be a \$9 per person per night camping fee (charged by the Dept) for those choosing to camp there. Ali will collect the money and issue a receipt.

No caravans please just tents and camper tailers for this campout. Gas cooking only – no wood fires other than the one fire pit. Please bring firewood if you can.

Come for a day trip if you are not able to camp but let Ali know so you can be included in that day's activities.

**NOTE: Camping sites are limited. Before you travel please contact Ali on 042 7603 329 to confirm your intention to attend.**

**TRIP LEADER: Ali Ben Kahn**

## Port Augusta Bird Group: The Babblers

**Saturday 11 to Monday 13 June**

**CAMPOUT at Oratunga Station**

Meet at Blinman Pub at 10am. Facilities Available. Fees apply.

## Birds SA

**Thursday 16 June**

**Bushland Park, Lobethal (MLR) 43 km**

### Moderate

Meet at 8.30am in the Bushland Park car park about 2km north of Lobethal on the Lobethal to Gumeracha Road. The park entrance is on your left.

**TRIP LEADER: Ali Ben Kahn**

## Future Excursions *(continued)*

### Birds SA

Sunday 26 June

**Kenneth Stirling (Wotton Scrub) CP & Mt George CP (MLR) 27km**

#### Difficult

Meet at 8.30am. Take the South Eastern Freeway and leave it at the Bridgewater exit. Turn left towards Carey Gully, travel about 3km and turn right into Gum Flat Road. Travel about 1.6km to gate 2 on the right. We will move onto Mt George CP for Lunch.

**TRIP LEADER:** *To be advised*

### Fleurieu Birders

Saturday 2 July

**Langhorne Creek Cemetery**

Meet at Frank Pott's Reserve, Main Rd. Langhorne Creek at 8.30 am.

**TRIP LEADER:** *Bob Daly*

### Birds SA

Saturday 9 July

**Shepherds Hill Recreation Park (MLR) 10km**

#### Difficult

Meet at 8.30am at the car park on Ayliffes Road. The car park is located approximately 500m east of the intersection of Main South Road and Ayliffes Road.

**TRIP LEADER:** *Lynton Huxley*

### Port Augusta Bird Group: The Babblers

Sunday 17 July

**Wilmington, Willowie Forest, Melrose**

Meet at Wilmington Pub at 8am

### Birds SA

Thursday 21 July

**Belair National Park (MLR) 13km**

#### Moderate

Meet at the car park inside the main gate off Upper Sturt Road, Belair at 8.30am. Note car parking spaces are limited so an alternative may be to park at the golf club and walk through to the meeting spot.

**TRIP LEADER:** *Lynton Huxley*

### Birds SA

Sunday 31 July

**Happy Valley Reservoir Reserve (MM) 20km**

#### Moderate

Meet at 8.30am in the car park opposite the roundabout at the junction of Chandlers Hill Road and Kenihans Road Happy Valley. This Reserve was opened in December 2021. This will be our first excursion there.

**TRIP LEADER:** *Ray Nias*

### Fleurieu Birders

Saturday 6 August

**Scott Conservation Park**

Meet at the first Car park on Gould Rd, Currency Creek at 8.30 am.

**TRIP LEADER:** *Richard Smyth*

### Birds SA

Saturday 13 August

**Scott Creek Conservation Park (MLR) 28km**

#### Difficult

Meet at 8.30am at Gate 20 located on Frith Road which runs off Dorset Vale Road, Cherry Gardens. This area of the park was not affected by the fire early last year.

**TRIP LEADER:** *Jim Spiker*

### Port Augusta Bird Group: The Babblers

Sunday 14 August

**Gum Glen Station**

Meet at Quorn Pool at 8am.

### Birds SA

Thursday 18 August

**Whites Road Wetlands (AP) 16km**

#### Easy

Meet at 8.30am. Head north on the Port Wakefield Road. At 1.5km after passing the Salisbury Highway Bridge, turn left into Globe Derby Drive and continue on this road until it meets Whites Road. Turn right and continue to the end. The Park entrance is on the left.

**TRIP LEADER:** *To be advised*

## Future Excursions *(continued)*

### Birds SA

**Sunday 28 August**  
**Glenthorne National Park (AP) 17km**

#### Moderate

Meet at 8.30am at the Ranger Station on Major's Road, O'Halloran Hill, which is on the south side of Majors Road, between Main South Road and the Southern Expressway. The property is 3km from north to south and up to 2.5km wide. If we cover the whole property, we will have a long walk.

**TRIP LEADER:** *Alan Burns*

### Birds SA

**Saturday 10 September**  
**Altona CSR Landcare Reserve (MLR) 55km**

#### Moderate

Meet at 8.30am. The Reserve is off Altona Road and 2km NE of Lyndoch. Parking is available at the entrance gate.

**TRIP LEADER:** *Ali Ben Kahn*

### Birds SA

**Thursday 15 September**  
**Tangari Regional Park Woodcroft (MM) 23km**

#### Moderate

Meet in the car park on Pine Road at 8.30am. This reserve at Woodcroft is bounded by Reynell Road, Pine Road, Pimpala Road and partially by Riddoch Crescent/Chappell Hill Road.

**TRIP LEADER:** *Lynton Huxley*



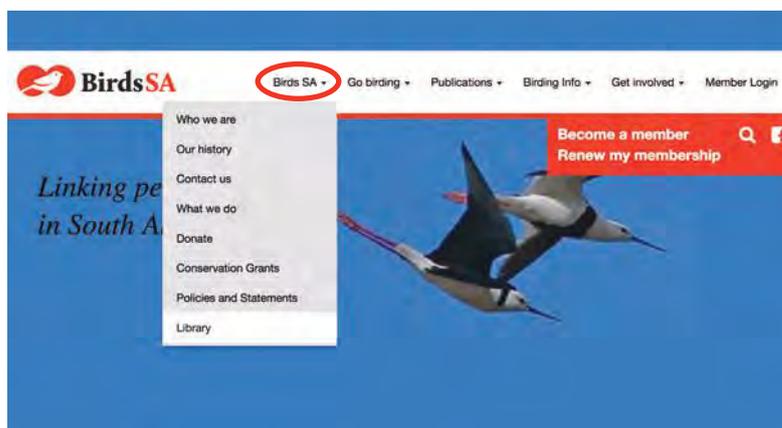
## From the Library

The Committee is currently seeking to make alternative arrangements for our library. We are looking for a venue that will enable members to be to access its contents during working hours.

You can still check our online catalogue for details of resources and can be accessed at this address <https://birdssa.libib.com/>

OR

via the Birds SA Website  
<https://birdssa.asn.au>



# 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](mailto: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).

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### Brown Quail

*Ongoing reports from widespread locations in southern regions, including offshore islands.*

1, 2/2/2022. West Beach stormwater pond, AP.	Edey, D.
2, 8/2/2022. Reevesby Island, MO.	White, G.
1, 16/2/2022. Cobbler Creek CP, MLR.	Kaashoek, M.
1, 21/4/2022. Onkaparinga River, Perry's Bend MLR.	Rodda, B.
1, 26/4/2022. Victor Harbor, Inman River, MLR.	Colgan, S.

*Also several groups still present on Granite Island.*

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### Magpie Goose

1, 24/4/2022. Millicent, Lake McIntyre, SE.	Boyle, S.
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*Presumably from the population re-established at Bool Lagoon in the 1980s.*

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### Plumed Whistling Duck

4, 22/2/2022. Millers Creek Stn, Reedy Dam, NW	Langdon, P.
3, 25/2/2022. Millers Creek Stn, Davey's Dam, NW.	Langdon, P.

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### Blue-billed Duck

12 including 5 juveniles, 27/2/2022. Inman Valley, Ashby's Dam, MLR.	Cutten, D.
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*Few breeding records from SA.*

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### Freckled Duck

2, 18/2/2022. 8km NE Pine Hill, EP.	
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*Also one Australian Shelduck present on 20/2. Croll, R. On ephemeral lakes resulting from heavy recent rains in the region.*

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### New Zealand Scaup

1, 10/3/2022. Bolivar Sewage Works, AP.	
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*On water among other ducks, photos taken.*

Rogers, C. *et al.*

*Colin Rogers points out that 'this species is kept in captivity in SA and Gorge Wildlife Park has several, although have indicated they have not lost any. Apparently they are also held in Victoria and several years ago one escaped from Taronga Zoo, causing excitement among birders in Sydney. The bird is therefore best treated as an escapee.'*

*A surprising array of species is kept in captivity in SA, potentially causing issues to birders if they escape. Marking of captive birds (e.g. leg bands) might be helpful (although not in this case!)*

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### Diamond Dove

1, 5/3/2022. Berri, Oliver Rd, MM.	Rich, G.
1, 17/4/2022. Lake Gilles CP, EP.	Jermakow, A.
50, 18/4/2022. Farina, NE.	Rich, G.

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### Peaceful Dove

Pair + juvenile, 25/2/2022. Woodcroft, 80 acres reserve, MLR.	Brooker, W.
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### Common Bronzewing

2, 9/3/2022. Morphett Vale, Brodies Rd wetlands, MLR.	Edey, D.
1, 16/3/2022. Tennyson Dunes, AP.	Donovan, D.

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### Barbary Dove

1, 29/1/2022. Mount Gambier, McGregor St, SE.	Green, B. & Stratford, N.
26, 14/4/2022. Gawler Belt, Xavier College, AP.	
The largest number reported in SA.	Harper, D.
3, 24/4/2022. Lockleys, Mellor Park, AP.	Edey, D.

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### Fork-tailed (Pacific) Swift

*Lots of reports, mostly in small numbers: 8/2, 16-22/3 and 10-18/4/2022.*

20, 22/1/2022. Pinkerton Plains, AP.	Milde, S.
3, 25/1/2022. Clayton Bay, MM.	Kitto, M.
20, 8/2/2022. Black Forest, AP.	Carpenter, G.
40, 8/2/2022. Thompson Beach, AP.	Taylor, P.W.
80, 8/2/2022. Reevesby Island, MO.	White, G.
150, 8/2/2022. Port Vincent, YP.	Wilson, G.
1000, 8/2/2022. Sheoak Flat, YP.	Newell, D.
20, 16/3/2022. Wool Bay, YP.	Brittain, R.
6, 18/3/2022. Port Clinton, YP.	Letherby, M. & R.
200, 19/3/2022. Wallaroo, YP.	Newell, D.
40, 20/3/2022. Balaklava, AP.	Taylor, P.W.
50, 20/3/2022. Hove, AP.	Crouch, A.
30, 20/3/2022. Semaphore, AP.	Symes, P.
40, 20/3/2022. Two Wells, 3km SE, AP.	McNamara, J.

## Bird Records *(continued)*

70, 20/3/2022. Chinaman's Creek, LN. Haase, B. *et al.*  
750, 21/3/2022. Thompson Beach, AP. Lange, J.  
50, 22/3/2022. Taperoo, AP. Smith, Ed  
50, 22/3/2022. St Kilda saltfields, AP.

Brooker, W. & Rogers, C.  
500, 10/4/2022. 5km SW Victor Harbor, MLR.

Carpenter, G.  
15, 12/4/2022. Point Sturt, MM. Turvey, D.

15, 16/4/2022. Port Broughton, LN. Doubikin, C. & N.  
20, 17/4/2022. Balaklava, AP. Taylor, P.W.

50, 17/4/2022. Semaphore,  
Fort Glanville, AP. Smith, Ed

100s, 18/4/2022. Port Neill, EP. Cox, T.

### White-throated Needletail

2, 11/3/2022. South of Clare, LN. Harper, D. & S.  
*Few reports from SA outside of the SE in recent years. Members are encouraged to study the difference between the two swifts in SA, noting the that forked tail of the former is not always easily seen.*

### White-faced Storm Petrel

Several, 11/2/2022. Boston Bay, EP. White, G.  
*According to Copley in "The status of Australian seabirds" there are several nesting colonies of this seabird on the islands near Port Lincoln.*

### Buller's Albatross

7, 20/3/2022.  
Off Port Macdonnell, MO. Also observed were 200 Flesh-footed Shearwater and 30 White-chinned Petrels.  
Harper, D. *et al.*

### Australasian Darter

*More reports from the Adelaide area:*  
3, 5/2/2022. Barker Inlet wetlands, AP. Edey, D.  
1 female, 19/2/2022. Morphett Vale, Brodie Rd wetlands, MLR. Cook, S.  
1 female, 21/2/2022. Reynella, Byards Rd wetlands, MLR. Goland, R.

### Little Egret

1, 18/4/2022. West Lakes, Tiranna Reserve, AP. Williams, B.

### Royal Spoonbill

*Several reports from wetlands near Adelaide.*  
3, 26/2/2022. West Beach stormwater basin, AP. Edey, D.  
1, 18/4/2022. West Beach, Apex Park, AP. Karatzovalis, P.  
2, 22/4/2022. Wittunga Botanic Gardens, Blackwood, MLR. Edey, D.

### Glossy Ibis

1, 23/2/2022. Bolivar Sewage Works, AP. Breed, W. *et al.*

### Straw-necked Ibis

1, 29/3/2022. Adelaide, Victoria Park, AP. Edey, D.  
2, 5/4/2022. West Beach, University Playing Fields, AP. Edey, D.

### Swamp Harrier

2, 8/2/2022. Reevesby Island, MO. White, G.  
1, 11/2/2022. West Beach stormwater pond, AP. Edey, D.

### White-bellied Sea Eagle

1 immature, 18/2/2022. Light Beach, AP. Noble, C. *et al.*  
1, 18/2/2022. Port Clinton, YP. Letherby, R. & M.  
1, 5/3/2022. Waikerie, Yatco Lagoon, MM. Doubikin, C.  
2 immatures, 8/3/2022. Noonameena, MM. Gitsham, J.  
1, 20/3/2022. Chinaman's Creek, LN. Haase, B. *et al.*  
1, 18/4/2022. Granite Island, MLR. Gould, H.  
2, 19/4/2022. Port Elliott, Pullen Island, MLR. Rodda, B.  
1 immature, 12/5/2022. Bald Hill Beach, AP. Taylor, P.W.

### Square-tailed Kite

1 over, 21/2/2022. Klemzig, Klemzig Recreation Park, AP. Harper, D.  
1 over, 25/3/2022. Gawler, Clonlea Park, AP. Harper, D.

### Brown Falcon

1, 28/2/2022. West Beach, Patawalonga Creek, AP. Edey, D.  
*Few reports from near Adelaide in recent years.*

### Buff-banded Rail

1, 7/2/2022. Laura Bay CP, EP. Daw, M.  
1, 16/3/2022. Tennyson Dunes, AP. Donovan, D.

### Australian Bustard

1, 13/2/2022. Monarto Zoo, MM. Kalvas, J.

### Bush Stonecurlew

1 heard overnight, 10/4/2022. 5 km SW Victor Harbor, MLR. Carpenter, G.  
*Not an escapee from the nearby Urimbirra Wildlife Park, so presumably a wild bird.*

### Sooty Oystercatcher

52, 7/4/2022. Middleton Beach, MM. Syson, W.

### Red-necked Avocet

Pair + 2 juveniles, 29/3/2022. Lake Acraman, NW. Feeding on edge of lake filled by recent heavy rains.  
Brown, N. & L.

## Bird Records *(continued)*

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### Greater Sand Plover

12, 5/3/2022. Clinton CP, AP. Woodland, R.

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### Black-fronted Dotterel

1, 20/3/2022. Chinaman's Creek, LN. Haase, B. *et al.*  
*Unusual to see this species in a marine habitat.*

---

### Red Knot

1100, 18/3/2022. Thompson Beach South, AP.  
Mart, B. & Carpenter, L.  
800, 19/3/2022. Chinaman Wells, YP.  
Jack, T. & vanTrigt, M-A.

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### Pectoral Sandpiper

1, 18/3/2022. Price SF, YP. Jack, T. *et al.*

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### Broad-billed Sandpiper

1, 21/2/2022. Clinton CP, AP. Taylor, P.W. & Moore, G.

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### Black-tailed Godwit

13, 10/3/2022. Bolivar Sewage Works, AP.  
Breed, B. *et al.*

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### Whimbrel

1, 12/2/2022. Murray Mouth, MM. Brooker, W.  
3, 18/3/2022. Bird Island, Outer Harbor, AP.  
Kennett, A. *et al.*  
5, 21/4/2022. Price SF, YP. Jack, T. & Brooker, W.

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### Red-necked Phalarope

1, 17/2 and 18/3/2022. Price SF, YP  
Rogers, C.; Jack, T. *et al.*  
*Presumably the same bird as reported previously at this location.*

---

### Marsh Sandpiper

6, 17/2/2022. Price SF, YP. Rogers, C. *et al.*  
13, 23/2/2022. Bolivar Sewage Works, AP. Breed, W. *et al.*  
*Formerly commonly seen on the adjacent St Kilda Saltfields, where there has been few records in recent years.*

---

### Terek Sandpiper

*Several reports and of relatively high numbers of this rare wader.*

11, 21/2/2022. Clinton CP, AP. Taylor, P.W. & Moore, G.  
Also 15 reported on 27/2/2022 Heikaus, A. & Moritz, M.  
and 13 on 5 & 18/3 Woodland, R.  
and 5 on 11/5/2022 Moore, G. & Taylor, P.W.  
1, 18/3/2022. Port Gawler beach, AP. Bell, W.  
1, 22/3/2022. St Kilda saltfields, AP.  
Brooker, W. & Rogers, C.  
1, 28/4/2022. Bald Hill Beach, AP. Taylor, P.W.

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### Painted Button-quail

1, 7/3/2022. Pinkie Flat, North Adelaide, AP. Flushed from short grass and chased by Noisy Miners.  
Stracey, K. & Dodd, L.

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### Oriental Pratincole

1, 18/2/2022. French Point, SE. Ramm, M.

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### Pomarine Jaeger

3, 20/3/2022. Off Port Macdonnell, MO. Harper, D. *et al.*

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### White-winged Black Tern

1, 23/2/2022. Bolivar Sewage Works, AP. Breed, W. *et al.*

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### Common Gull-billed Tern (affinis)

14, 21/2/2022. Clinton CP, AP. 4 in breeding plumage (not usually seen in Aust) on 23/3.  
Taylor, P.W. & Moore, G.  
7, 28/4/2022. Bald Hill Beach, AP.  
One in breeding plumage. Taylor, P.W.

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### Kelp Gull

1 immature, 9/3/2022. Coorong, Parnka Point, MM.  
Gordon, S.  
1 adult, 13/3/2022. Coorong, North Lagoon, MM.  
Gordon, S.

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### Little Tern

2, 17/2/2022. Price SF, YP. Rogers, C. *et al.*  
1, 21/2/2022. Clinton CP, AP.  
Also 2 on 23/3/2022. Taylor, P.W. & Moore, G.  
1, 1 and 28/4/2022. Bald Hill Beach, AP. Taylor, P.W.

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### Fairy Tern

200, 9/2/2022. Bald Hill Beach, AP. Taylor, P.W.  
72, 5/3/2022. Clinton CP, AP. Woodland, R.  
280, 18/3/2022. Price SF, YP. Jack, T. *et al.*  
38, 19/3/2022. Chinaman Wells, YP.  
Jack, T. & vanTrigt, M-A.

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### Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo

2, 11/2/2022. Lockleys, Kooyonga Golf Course, AP.  
Edey, D.

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### Superb Fairywren

2, 26/2/2022. West Beach stormwater basin, AP.  
Also 4 on 12/4/2022. Edey, D.  
2 uncoloured, 20/4/2022. Breakout Creek,  
Miranda Ave, AP. Edey, D.

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### Yellow Thornbill

3, 6/3/2022. Netley, Brownhill Creek wetlands, AP.  
Fowler, A. & Rich, G.  
2, 12/4/2022. West Beach stormwater pond, AP. Edey, D.

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## Bird Records *(continued)*

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### Chestnut-rumped Heathwren

1, 13/2/2022. Bluff Lookout, Wirrabara, FR.  
Haase, B. *et al.*

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### Eastern Spinebill

1 immature, 20/2/2022. Compton, SE.  
Also 1 adult on 23/2/2022. Mansell, G.  
1, 26/2/2022. Valley Lake, SE. Huon, C.  
*Surprisingly few records in the SE region.*

*Also widespread reports from AP suburbs from March onwards:*

1, 23/3/2022. Fullarton, AP. Bourne, S.  
1 immature, 25/3/2022. Black Forest, AP. Carpenter, G.  
1, 26/3 and 1/4/2022. St Peters, AP. Bansemmer, B.  
1 immature, 29/3/2022. Prospect, AP.  
Also 1 on 26/4/2022. Christy, P.  
1, 2/4/2022. Adelaide Botanic Gardens, visitor centre, AP. Bansemmer, B. & P.  
1 immature, 13/4/2022. Hove, AP. Crouch, A.  
2, 17/4/2022. Adelaide Botanic Gardens, AP. Edey, D.  
2, 18/4/2022. Royston Park, AP. Moore, K.  
2, 19/4/2022. Lockleys, Malurus Ave, AP. Edey, D.  
5, 23/4/2022. Black Forest, Dryden Rd, AP. Carpenter, G.

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### Black-chinned Honeyeater

3 + 2 immatures, 19/2/2022. Morphett Vale, Brodie Rd wetlands, MLR. Thompson, J.

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### White-naped Honeyeater

1, 27/4/2022. 3km W Leasingham, LN. Bellchambers, K.  
*Rarely reported north of the MLR.*

3 over, 9/5/2022. Black Forest, Dryden Rd, AP.  
Carpenter, G.

1, 9/5/2022. Adelaide, Franklin St bus depot, AP.  
Feeding in flowering Spotted Gums with New Holland Honeyeaters. Carpenter, G.

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### White-fronted Honeyeater

20, 18/2/2022. Swan Reach CP, MM. Slade, R.

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### Chirruping Wedgebill

Several, 25/2/2022. Millers Creek Stn, Daveys Dam, NW. Langdon, P.

*This record is located in the gap or overlap zone between the two recognised wedgebill species. It is not known if there is a hybrid zone, the calls being the main difference in the field.*

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### Rufous Whistler

1, 20/4/2022. West Beach stormwater pond, AP.  
Edey, D.

*Few reports from the immediate Adelaide area in recent years.*

---

### Olive-backed Oriole

2, 26/4/2022. Joanna, SE. Smith, A.

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### Little Woodswallow

11, 1/4/2022. Sinclairs Gap, Middleback Range, EP. In a group along the Kimba-Cowell Rd. Croll, R.  
*This species is thought to be a spring-summer breeding visitor to SA, where sites with sheer rock faces are chosen for nesting. The nearest known records are Corunna Gorge and hills around Whyalla. The above record is presumably part of post-breeding dispersal back to northern Aust.*

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### Grey Fantail

1, 3/3/2022. West Beach stormwater pond, AP. Edey, D.  
2, 9/4/2022. Fullarton, Cremorne St, AP. Pring, A. & Christy, P.

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### Red-capped Robin

Male, 15/3/2022. Yankalilla Sports Complex, MLR. Brittain, R.  
Male, 22/4/2022. 3 km SSW Lobethal, MLR. Evans, M.  
*Birds disperse widely in autumn, including occasionally into the wetter parts of the MLR.*

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### Tree Martin

1000s, 18/2/2022 and 21/4/2022. Port Clinton, YP. Letherby, R. & M.  
*Up to 20,000 birds still use trees in Leigh St, Adelaide, for roosting from Jan-May each year.*

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### Mistletoebird

1, 11/3/2022. Lower Mitcham, Wattlebury Rd, AP. James, J.

*This species is attracted into the Adelaide suburbs in autumn when the native Harlequin Mistletoe is fruiting. This mistletoe hosts onto a range of native and introduced trees and tall shrubs, and is often seen on Golden Rain Trees commonly grown as street trees.*

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### Painted Finch

30, 12/5/2022. Witchelina Stn, Termination Dam, NW. Horton, P. & Cole, P. *et al.*  
*First report from this Nature Foundation property.*

## BIRDS SA COMMITTEE

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

## COMMITTEE EMAIL CONTACTS

If you wish to contact any committee member by email, use the email address: [general@birdssa.asn.au](mailto:general@birdssa.asn.au) and indicate which committee member you wish to contact.

Your message will be forwarded to that person.

### e-newsletter EDITOR

Anthony Collebrusco, [e-newsletter@birdssa.asn.au](mailto:e-newsletter@birdssa.asn.au)

Contact Anthony if you wish to place material in the monthly e-newsletter

## FURTHER USEFUL CONTACTS

Librarian, Karen Donkin ..... 0402 123 960  
Campout Organiser, Lynton Huxley..... 7009 5038

### Port Augusta Birders (The Babblers)

Contact people: Peter Langdon 0457 708 859  
Greg Bannon 8648 6630, Bernie Haase 0419 863 834

### Fleurieu Birders, a sub-group of Birds SA

Contact: Wendy Phillips 8555 0634 or 0414 248 648  
Neil Cheshire 8552 7904  
Email: [fleurieubirders@gmail.com](mailto:fleurieubirders@gmail.com)

### BirdLife South East SA

Convener: Bob Green 0407 649 909  
Email: [shriketit@bigpond.com](mailto:shriketit@bigpond.com)

### Conservation Sub-committee members

Ray Nias (Chair), Jeff Groves, David Andrewartha, Ali Ben Kahn, Bill Breed, Chris Proud, David Hansman, Greg Johnston, Rodney Attwood, William Brooker.

### SA Rarities Committee (SARC) Members

Colin Rogers (Chair), David Harper, Ian Reid, Sam Gordon, Bob Green, John Hatch, Marilyn Brown, Graham Carpenter.

### SA Bird Records Committee Members

Andrew Black (chair), Brian Blaylock (secretary and database manager), Graham Carpenter (Bird Records Secretary), Philippa Horton (SA Museum), Bob Green (SE), Julian Reid (NE), Lynn Pedler.

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Please send in your photos, from your bird trips or from your own birding activities, for inclusion in 'The Birder'

## Colourful little birds



**Atherton Scrubwren  
(Mt Lewis form)**

*(Photographed by Ashley Grivell  
in Mt Lewis National Park,  
Queensland)*

**White Winged  
Fairywren (male)**

*(Photographed by Peter McKenzie at the  
Arid Lands Botanical Gardens,  
Pt Augusta, 19 March 2022)*



**Diamond Firetail**

*(Photographed by  
Gordon Pateman at  
Monarto Woodlands,  
30 April 2022)*

**Red-browed Finch**  
*(Photographed by Fred Duncker  
at Yankalilla River,  
February 2022)*



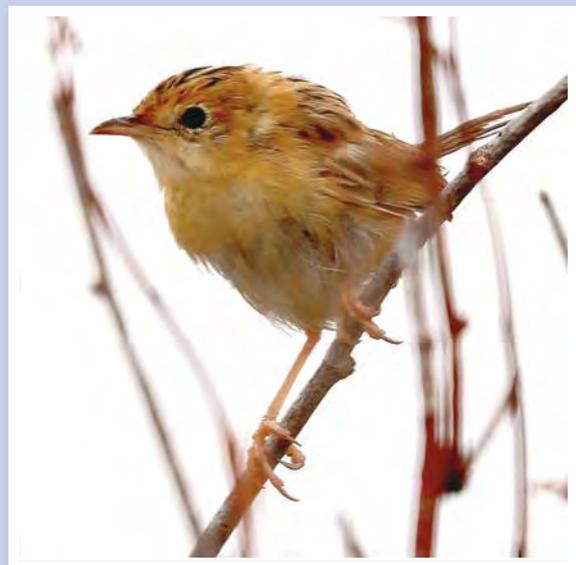
**Pink Robin (male)**

*(Photographed by Ashley Grivell at Errinundra National Park, 2022)*



**Western Yellow Robin**

*(Photographed by Peter McKenzie at Kimba, 22 April 2022)*



**Golden-headed Cisticola**

*(Photographed by Fred Duncker at the Tolderol Game Reserve, February 2022)*



**White-plumed Honeyeater**

*(Photographed by Peter Roodhouse at Port Augusta Arid Lands Gardens, February 2022)*

# *A variety of green Parrots*

**Australian Ringneck  
(Mallee Ringneck)**

*(Photographed by Ashley Grivell  
at Gluepot Reserve,  
March 2022)*



**Rainbow Lorikeet**

*(Photographed by Peter Roodhouse at  
Coromandel Valley, March 2022)*



**Mulga Parrot (male)**

*(Photographed by Ashley Grivell  
at Gluepot Reserve,  
March 2022)*