

# The BIRDER

The official magazine of Birds SA Summer 2022 No 264



## In this Issue

Activities at Minko Scrub

Laratinga Bird Fair 2022

Fleurieu Birders Coorong excursion



Linking people with birds  
in South Australia

# *A bevy of Waders*



**Black-fronted Dotterel**

*(Photographed by Bob Daly  
from the Fox Lake bird hide at  
Robe, November 2022)*



**Latham's Snipe**

*(Photographed by Bob Daly  
from the Fox Lake bird hide at Robe,  
November 2022)*



**Common Sandpiper**

*(Photographed by Bob Daly  
from the Fox Lake bird hide  
at Robe, November 2022)*

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## **CENTRE INSERT No 81: Dr Alexander Morgan (1867–1934) Part 1 by Penny Paton.**

### **Cover image: Gouldian Finch**

Photographed by Lawrie Mortimer 12 July 2022 at Lee Point Dam on the outskirts of Darwin. The cover of this magazine was designed by John Gitsham.

**Graphic design:** Ingrid Grigg

**We welcome 37 new members** who have recently joined the Association. Their names are listed on page 20.

*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'.

<b>DECEMBER</b>		
Saturday 10 December	Birds SA	Excursion to Aldinga Scrub Conservation Park
Sunday 11 December	PA	Australian Arid Lands Botanic Garden
Thursday 15 December	Birds SA	Monarto and Ferries-McDonald Conservation Parks
<b>JANUARY</b>		
Saturday 14 January	Birds SA	Kaiserstuhl Conservation Park
Sunday 15 January	PA	Baroota Reservoir
Thursday 19 January	Birds SA	Onkaparinga Wetlands
Sunday 29 January	Birds SA	Myponga Reservoir Reserve
Tuesday 31 January	Birds SA	General Meeting
<b>FEBRUARY</b>		
Saturday 11 February	Birds SA	Thompson Beach
Sunday 12 February	PA	Whyalla Conservation Park, Point Lowly
Tuesday 14 February	FB	Coorong Boat Cruise
Thursday 16 February	Birds SA	Shepherds Hill Recreation Park
Sunday 26 February	Birds SA	Buckland Lake, Port Gawler
Tuesday 28 February	Birds SA	General Meeting
<b>MARCH</b>		
Saturday 4 March	FB	Clayton
Saturday 11 March	Birds SA	Deep Creek Conservation Park (Stringybark Camp)
Thursday 16 March	Birds SA	Bushland Park Lobethal
Sunday 19 March	PA	Telowie Gorge/Nelshaby Gorge
Sunday 26 March	Birds SA	Mount Lofty Botanic Gardens
Wednesday 5 April to Tuesday 11 April	Birds SA	<b>EASTER CAMPOUT</b> at Balcanoona Station Homestead
<b>APRIL</b>		
Thursday 20 April	Birds SA	Byards Road Wetland, Reynella East

# President's Message

## ***Hello everyone***

I hope you are enjoying Summer after that wet, wet Spring.

Our membership continues to grow which is fabulous, and much credit is due to Sue Winwood and Alan Burns in our Membership team who do a great job looking after us all.

One consequence is that we have outgrown our old membership system (which was getting very clunky) so as I write we are implementing a new system — with many thanks to Anita Smyth for her sterling work.

Please bear with us as we transition everyone across – for all the details, please see page 20 of this edition.

The new system will be a lot easier for us to manage, but also has a lot of modern features to allow us all to communicate better, including a handy smartphone app.

And we will need to communicate better so that we can collaborate to address a number of conservation challenges, which nearly all involve the State and local Governments. We are still learning how best to manage Government — but having active and vocal supporters is invaluable.

*All the best*  
**Steven**

Steven Langley, President Birds SA  
M: 0490 802 176

## **Laratinga Bird Fair 2022**

**Sunday 13 November saw the 3rd Laratinga Bird Fair run at the popular wetlands in Mt Barker.**

It nearly didn't happen after the horrendous storm event the day before, which was one of the worst weather events to hit Adelaide and the Hills for many years. Fortunately, the Bird Fair went ahead anyway on the Sunday as planned. A few Stallholders pulled out at the last minute, but the sun came out and, despite a few sprinkles of rain, the Bird Fair prospered for the 5 hours without a hitch and was enjoyed by approximately 300 visitors. The Bird Fair contained many great stalls and excellent speakers. This is a great bird and conservation awareness event that is

supported and funded by the Mt Barker Council and any profits or donations on the day goes to the Birds SA Conservation Fund.

The event is organized by Emma Montgomery (Council Environment officer), myself (Birds SA) and Jacqui Wilson (Conservation Volunteers Australia) and supported by many Council staff. A big thank you to everyone involved, and a big thanks again to the Mt Barker Council for supporting this great event for the third time over the past six years.

Also, a big thankyou to the several Birds SA volunteers who looked after the Birds SA stand and led bird tours. The Bird Fair provides a great promotion for Birds SA, as well as a connection for the public's awareness of our association and birds of South Australia.

Hopefully, the 4th Laratinga Bird Fair will be in three years' time, stay tuned.

***John Gitsham***



**The photographs at the Birds SA stand provided plenty of interest for visitors**

# Conservation Sub-Committee

## Adelaide International Bird Sanctuary (AIBS) and Flyway Site Conservation Action Plan (CAP)

Birds SA continues to support the implementation of the Adelaide International Bird Sanctuary (AIBS) and Flyway Site Conservation Action Plan (CAP) that was developed in 2020/2021, initiated and funded by the Department for Environment and Water (DEW) South Australia. The CAP is a working document that provides a guide for partners to develop their work consistent with The Adelaide International Bird Sanctuary National Park – *Winaityinaityi Pangkara* Management Plan (2020). The Management Plan can be found at:

<https://cdn.environment.sa.gov.au/environment/docs/aibs-management-plan-2020.pdf>

One area of particular interest is the issue of disturbance-sensitive birds (i.e., birds that are negatively affected by human-disturbance such as beach driving). This includes:

- 52 shorebird species including 35 migratory species, approximately 25 of which are regular visitors
- Critically Endangered migratory shorebirds (Eastern Curlew, Curlew Sandpiper, Great Knot, Bar-tailed Godwit)
- Internationally important populations of migratory birds (Red-necked Stint, Sharp-tailed Sandpiper)
- Coastal Raptors (White-bellied Sea-Eagle, Osprey)
- Locally breeding shorebirds (Red-capped Plover)
- Terrestrial birds vulnerable to disturbance (Sapphire Thornbill)

By developing and publicly releasing our **Position Statement: Recreational Motor Vehicles and Threatened Coastal Birds** we are promoting public awareness of this issue in the AIBS and elsewhere. In our meetings with government officials, we are urging them to take action along the lines we have set out in our Position Statement. We are expecting the Department for Environment and Water (DEW) to release a Discussion Paper on the topic in the near future.

## Helping to protect the threatened birds at Whalers Way, Eyre Peninsula

There is a precious corner of South Australia, a wildlife sanctuary known as Whalers Way, which is under threat. Found at the very bottom of Eyre Peninsula, Whalers Way is home to many special and threatened birds, including White-bellied Sea Eagles, Eastern Ospreys, Whipbirds and Southern Emuwrens (Eyre Peninsula).

Sadly, this critical bird habitat is currently at risk from a proposal to build an experimental industrial rocket

launching facility. If this construction is approved, habitat will be cleared to make way for launch pads and other infrastructure, new tracks would be bulldozed and then up to 42 rocket launches a year would take place, exposing birds to disturbance from launch noise and unacceptable bushfire risk.

The impact will be direct and devastating. The largest launch pad is planned for the part of Whalers Way which is most important for Southern Emuwrens (Eyre Peninsula). The fragile environment of Whalers Way is simply the wrong location for this industrial development.

It's not rocket science! Threatened birds need their remaining habitat protected as a first step towards preventing their extinction. You can help to prevent this development by using the following link to contact key decision-makers. It takes just a few minutes but it will have a big impact.

<https://natureconservationsa.wixsite.com/website/whalers-way-birds>

## Call for regionally-based members to join the Conservation Sub-Committee

Over the next few months, the Conservation Sub-Committee will be seeking at least two new members who are based outside the Adelaide metropolitan area. We are keen to hear from any member that has a knowledge and interest in bird conservation and is willing to be active in promoting the conservation priorities of Birds SA in their region. Priority issues for the Sub-Committee in the past year include State Government environmental policies (e.g. the Pastoral Lands Bill), impacts on threatened shorebirds, management of coastal lakes of the South-east and Coorong, and woodland protection and restoration. Sub-committee meetings are held in person at the Waite campus of Adelaide University and on-line via Zoom at 6:30pm on the second Monday of each month. If you are interested, please send a short summary of your expertise and interests to the chair; Ray Nias at [ray.nias@birdssa.asn.au](mailto:ray.nias@birdssa.asn.au)

## Keep an eye out for Square-tailed Kites

DEW has commenced a project to attach satellite trackers and leg bands to young Square-tailed Kites to gain a better understanding of where the birds go after leaving the known nesting locations in SA. Cameras have been installed above the known nesting site in Belair National Park and the parent birds are currently using the nest at this site. It is intended that the trackers will be attached just prior to any new birds hatched at this site leaving the nest.

**Ray Nias**

*Chair, Birds SA Conservation Sub-Committee*



2022 has seen a continuation and extension of the various Friends of Adelaide International Bird Sanctuary (FAIBS) shorebird observation, education, counting and habitat restoration events and projects from previous years. Grants, support from, and partnerships with other organisations having compatible goals have added to the scope and quality of what we can do, while we are hugely grateful for the loyal, energetic and essential contributions of our many volunteers.

The lead up to summer heralded the arrival yet again of the incredible migratory shorebirds that roost in the Adelaide International Bird Sanctuary (AIBS) each year, and also the landing of pilot, zoologist, artist and professional birder Amelia Formby, otherwise known as the amazing 'Microlight Milly'.

When Milly did a week's stopover at the Gawler Aerodrome as part of her solo microlight journey around Australia, she was able to visit St Kilda Community Hall where she enthralled over 30 FAIBS supporters as she described the wonders and challenges of her aerial exploits. These endeavours are aimed at highlighting the capacities and flight paths of migratory shorebirds and their fragile habitats through her community education sessions, held en route and adjacent to many of Australia's shorebird roosting sights.

The beautiful and informative children's story book 'A Shorebird Flying Adventure', written by Jackie Kerin, illustrated by Milly, and published by the CSIRO, can be purchased online at [#WingThreads](#) [#AShorebirdFlyingAdventure](#) [#childrensbooks](#).

Since then, FAIBS have continued their habitat restoration 'Weeds and Seeds' project with Department for Environment and water (DEW)/AIBS Ranger Adam Parnell at Light Beach, and conducted a Plant and Beachcombing walk along the southern trails and foreshore at Thompson Beach, led by ecologist Joan Gibbs, supported by Senior DEW/AIBS Ranger Warrick Barnes. This samphire and beach habitat is essential local roosting and feeding territory for the annual inflow of migratory birds and local beach-nesting birds.

On Saturday October 8th FAIBS celebrated World Migratory Bird Day at Thompson Beach.

The migratory shorebirds were welcomed home from their long flights after breeding in the Northern Hemisphere with a scope and binocular viewing session in the tidal flats adjacent to the beach.

A flock of Red-necked Stints provided a spectacular site when they put on a beautiful precision flying display. Their massed formation zigzagged brown one way, then suddenly switched to shimmering white in the opposite direction.



**Viewing newly arrived migratory birds at Thompson Beach north** (Photographed by Anna Woods)



**Recently arrived critically endangered Curlew Sandpiper at Thompson Beach** (Photographed by Mary-Ann Van Trigt)

## Friends of Adelaide International Bird Sanctuary *(continued)*



### Ecology walk with Joan Gibbs

*(Photographed by Anna Woods)*

Other migratory shorebirds sighted were Sharp-tailed Sandpiper, Common Greenshank and the critically endangered Curlew Sandpiper. Resident shorebirds in the area that morning included Red-capped Plovers, Australian Pelicans, a Great Egret and terns of various kinds. The group then moved to the Thompson Beach shed for morning tea and watched three short birding films. Attendees enjoyed eyefuls of filmed feathers, stunning landscapes and key messages about the importance and care of both.

November featured Australian International Bird Sanctuary (AIBS) and the Adelaide Dolphin Sanctuary as DEW Park of the Month. A variety of events took place with Friends of Adelaide International Bird Sanctuary (FAIBS) contribution being a Sunset Bird Viewing at Thompson Beach North followed by a social BYO picnic.

This year of multiple birding and habitat care events in AIBS was rounded off with the FAIBS AGM at St Kilda Community Hall on Saturday, 3 December 9.30am to 12.00, including guest speaker and morning tea. FAIBS is always keen to hear from those interested in birding and contributing volunteer time to the Committee and/or helping at our events, so if you'd like to be involved, don't hesitate to get touch with Mary-Ann or Anna at [faibssa@gmail.com](mailto:faibssa@gmail.com). 'Many hands make light(er) work!'

Our thanks go to BirdsSA for their support in various ways during 2022, along with the Department for Environment and Water (DEW), Green Adelaide, Adelaide Plains Council, BirdLife and the AIBS Partnership Group, and for the counts, Kate Buckley. Season's Greetings to all and a reminder that all interested comers are welcome at FAIBS' events at any time of the year. Add AIBS and FAIBS to your visiting schedule in 2023!

**Anna Woods and Maree Merchant**

## Findings from a Bird Survey:

# Chocolate Little Corella?

I have recently returned from a bird survey at Boolcoomatta Reserve, which is a 630km<sup>2</sup> private protected area in eastern South Australia, 463km north-east of Adelaide and 100km west of Broken Hill. It is owned and managed by Bush Heritage Australia (BHA). On my travels I came across a Little Corella that appeared to have light and chocolate brown markings.

At first glance I assumed it had been in the mud. However, on closer inspection, I also noticed that its belly and legs were white. When it took off brown, I noticed markings throughout its back and on its wings too.

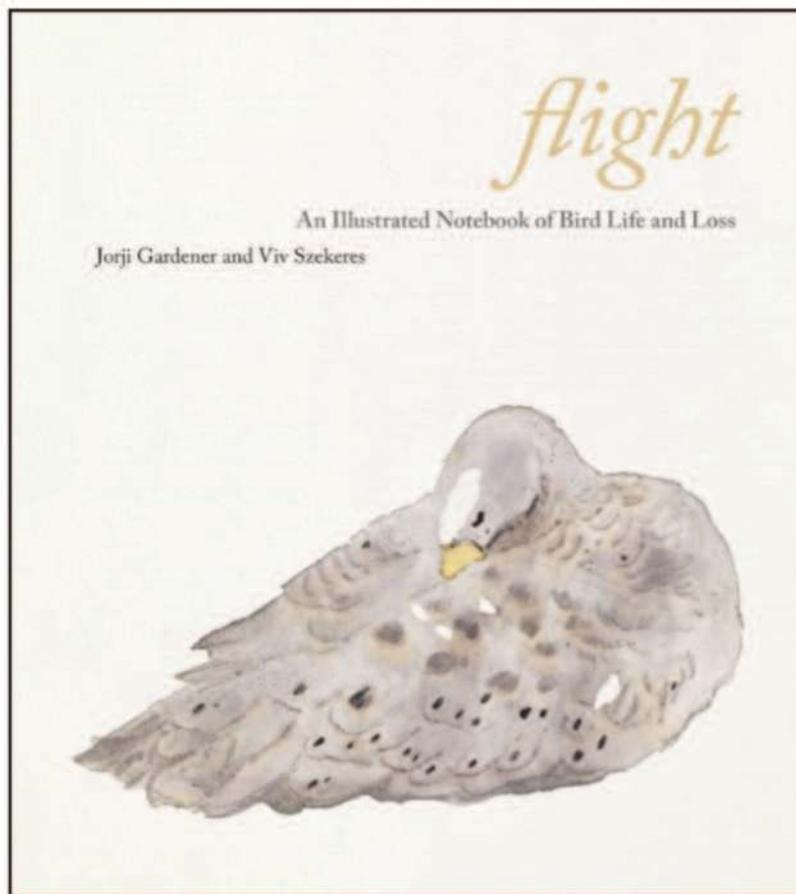
It was feeding with several others that were all white and it was dry where the birds were.

**Richard Croll**



### The Little Corella in question

*(Photographed by Richard Croll at Boolcoomatta Reserve, 2022)*



**Flight speaks of Bird Life, Extinction, and Loss.**

Mother and daughter duo, Jorji Gardener and Viv Szekeres, artist and historian have catalogued the loss of bird species from the Adelaide Reedbeds.

The seeds of the book were sown in 2019 when Jorji worked with the South Australian Museum and Artlab Australia, to conserve the handwritten labels of 3,400 bird egg clutches of Ornithologist, SA White, collected from the Reedbeds at Fulham.

The abundance of bird life which White documented has gone. The book speaks to the importance of museum collections, without which we would have little idea of the diversity of species that previously existed.

The book also celebrates the beauty of our native bird life.

Available directly from Jorji Gardener:  
imprints.studio@gmail.com  
0431372446

**YOU CAN ALSO FIND THE BOOK AT**

The Art Gallery of South Australia, The SA Museum, Dymocks, Imprints Booksellers, Mostly Books, Aptos Cruz Gallery, Hahndorf Academy, South Sea Books, Cleland Wildlife Park, State Flora Belair, Harry Hartog, Dillons, and Matildas Bookshop.

# Past General Meetings

**Tuesday 30 August**

## **Mount Lofty Ranges Woodland Bird Monitoring Program**

*Presenter: Ali Ben Kahn*

Ali Ben Kahn began her presentation by posing a question — what do we do and what happens to our data?

Ali began by saying that her presentation would follow on from Hugh Possingham's presentation on 25 January 2022: **'To count or not to count'**.

Some of Hugh's main points were that data is good but it needs to be accessible. We must be able to analyse, synthesize and communicate it and any findings from it. Science is an incremental process, which must be communicated to meet the needs of different audiences. Citizen scientists (including us) form important resources.

Ali then outlined the purposes of the Mount Lofty Ranges Woodland Bird Monitoring Program which are:

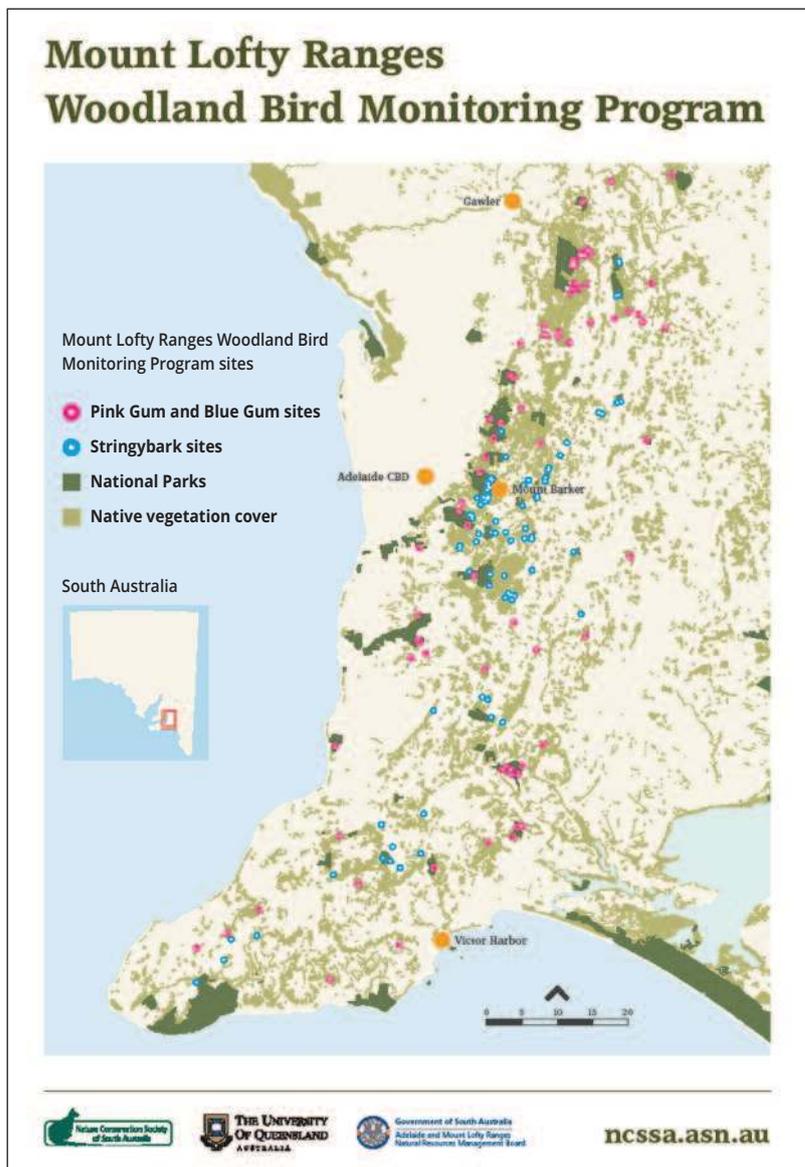
- To detect trends in numbers and activities of woodland birds in response to anticipated climate change, extinction debt and management by landholders and regional bodies' (Article in 'The Birder' November 2020)
- To assess the effects of factors such as fire regimes, especially prescribed burns, on ground management works such as weed and feral animal control, creating corridors and other linkages
- To provide information on further work that could be carried out to increase habitat quality and conservation and thus conserve bird species and numbers.

Each of 165 sites were surveyed three times per season, based on the 2ha 20min methodology. This amounts to a total of 495 visits per season. Approximately 12 surveyors carried out the surveys from September to early January between just after dawn and about 10am. The surveys were not carried out during fire bans or other similar events, such as days of inclement weather or prescribed burns.

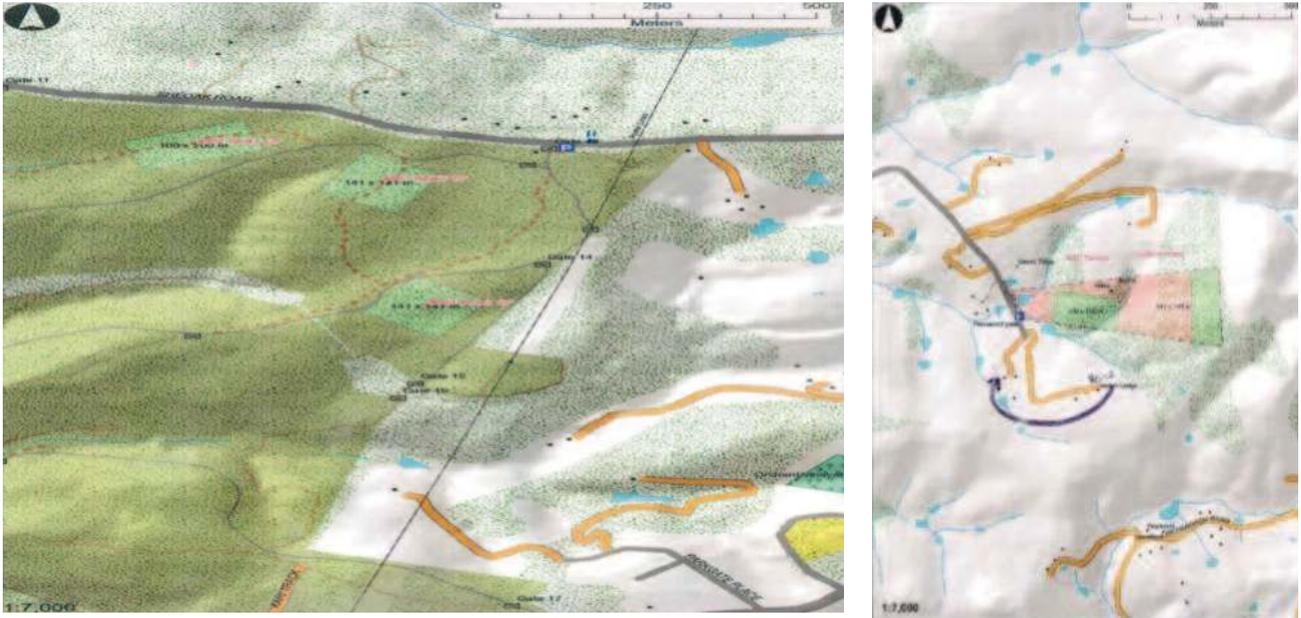
The Natural Resources Management (NRM) Board, now the Landscape Board, provided the majority of the funds.

The pink and blue circles in the map below indicate the locations of the sites. The northernmost site is at Little Kaiserstuhl Sanctuary and the southernmost site is at Deep Creek. The sites are on private land, Conservation and National Parks (DEW); and reserves owned by The Field Naturalists, National Trust, Forestry SA and SA Water.

Surveyors cover 3-4 sites in one morning. Maps show the general area where the site is located, and give ownership, notification required, notes about access and GPS coordinates. Traversing the sites depends on the site itself and sometimes poses challenges. Sites were originally chosen to be representative of remaining native vegetation in relatively good condition.



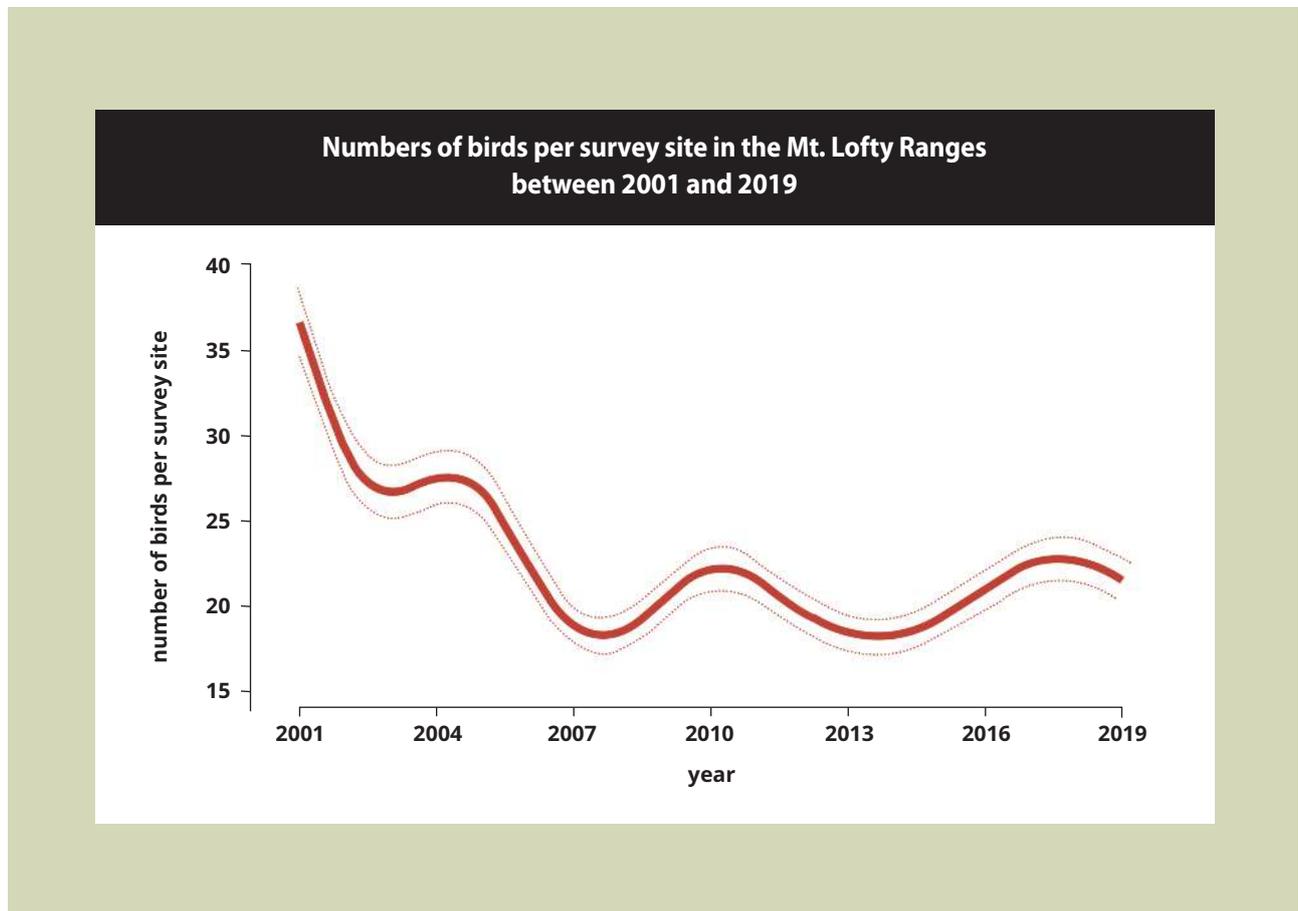
## Past General Meetings *(continued)*



*(Left and right)* **Examples of maps given to surveyors**

The maps above, which are the maps given to surveyors, are examples of our birding sites, known as quadrats.

The most significant finding from our investigations was that, as shown by the graph below, the number of birds in the Mount Lofty Ranges has declined by 45% over 20 years (data to 2019).



## Past General Meetings *(continued)*

The adjacent chart shows that the assemblage of species is also changing. There has been an increase in some large generalist species, such as Australian Magpies, Grey Currawongs, and a decrease in small woodland specialists, such as Mistletoebirds, species of thornbills and many honeyeater species.

The reasons for decline include loss and degradation of habitat, feral plants and animals, fire regimes.

The data has been used in numerous studies and research papers over the years, for example in analysis of fire impacts (including prescribed burns), designing surveys, land management planning and analysing effects of on-ground works

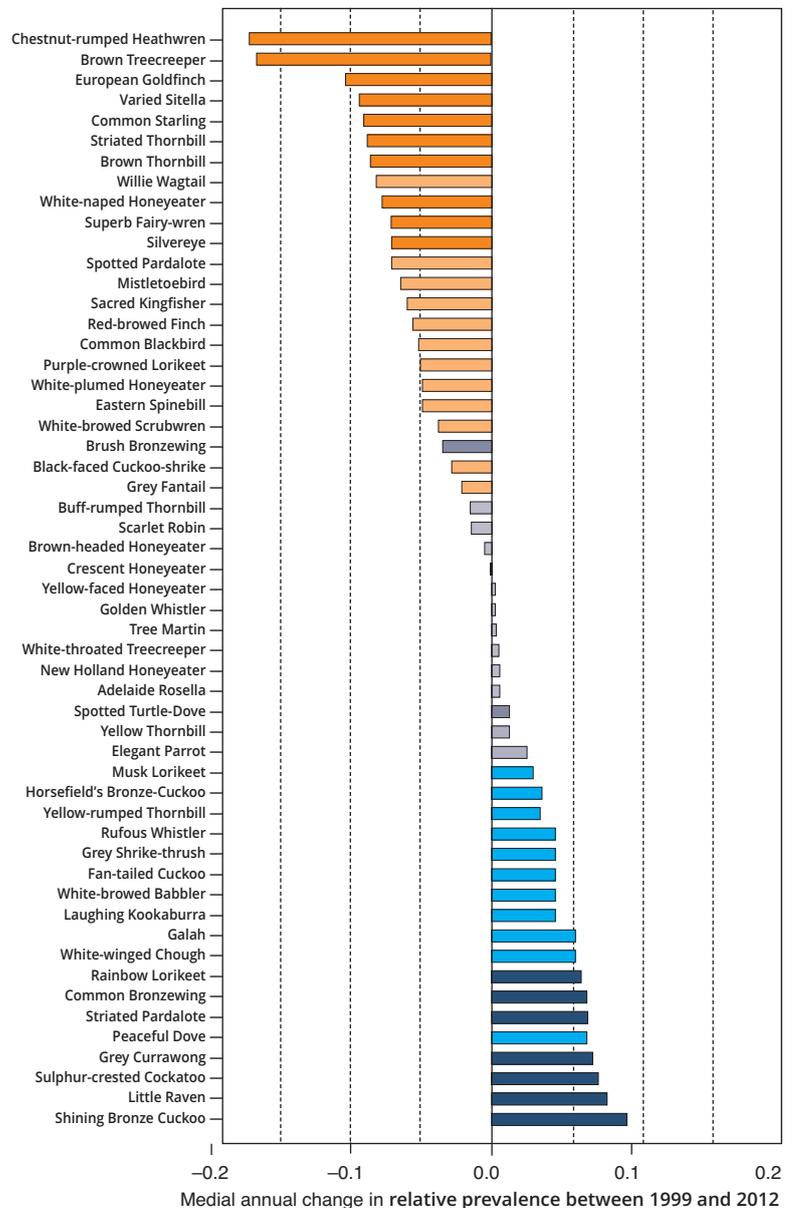
The Nature Conservation Society of South Australia (NCSA) would particularly like to add value to the collected data by creating a programme to assist landholders and managers to take action and address issues identified on their properties. This is already happening on an ad hoc basis, for example, on Stock Road, which is a site where we helped the landholder get in touch with agencies and groups able to help with weed control. It was a good site for birds but was becoming overrun with some very serious weeds such as gorse, pine seedlings from a nearby pine plantation etc. We would like to do more of this but, of course, funding is always the limiting factor!

Our activities are ongoing. The database has recently been rebuilt. Data collection has been on hard copy datasheets in the past but will transition to direct entry into the database via handheld devices, such as phones and tablets. Maps will also be transitioned to live action on Avenza maps, which is an online mapping app that can be used in the field to see where you are in the landscape, to download maps, see where sites are located etc. Data will still be curated as has always been the case, as data hygiene is very important.

However, the survey methods may change in the future.

**Summary prepared by Cynthia Pyle**

**Change in relative prevalence between 1999 and 2012  
Woodland birds in the Mount Lofty Ranges**



**End of season BBQ and wrap-up meeting**

## Past General Meetings *(continued)*

### Tuesday 27 September

#### South Australian Recovery Plan for Eastern Osprey and White-bellied Sea Eagle

*Presenter: Ian Falkenberg*

The South Australian Recovery Team for the Eastern Osprey and White-bellied Sea Eagle Recovery Plan includes Terry Dennis, Sharie Detmar, Peter Wilkins, Stephen Debus, Heiri Klein, Peter Turner, Rebecca Boulton, Lisien Loan, Peter Copley, Randall Johnson, Lee Heard, Max Barr and Ian himself.

The team's overarching goal is, by 2030, to secure, stabilise and ultimately increase the number of breeding pairs of Eastern Osprey and White-bellied Sea Eagle in SA from 2021/22 levels. The goal encompasses the following three aims:

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

The Recovery Actions needed in order to achieve the team's goal are:

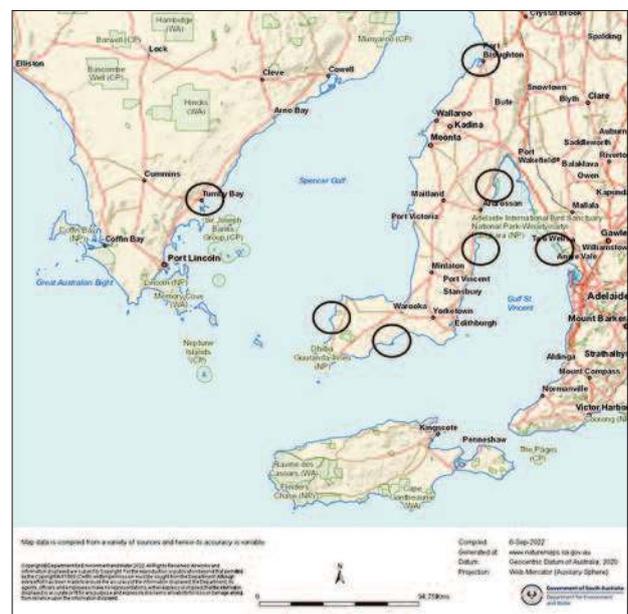
1. Reduce disturbance to breeding territories: for example, by declaring breeding refuge buffer zones, managing access to breeding territories, encouraging nature-based tourism, restoring, abandoned breeding sites [such as in the Riverland] and constructing artificial nest platforms.
2. Investigate and address causes of direct mortality in Eastern Ospreys and White-bellied Sea Eagles; for example by reporting fatalities, including predation of these birds and managing any risks to their safety.
3. Develop and undertake a monitoring and research program, consisting of possibly conceptual models, colour banding, satellite tracking and nest cameras.
4. Develop a programme of data management protocols and processes.
5. Learn about the cultural significance of these birds to First Nation's people.
6. Encourage community awareness of, support for and involvement in recovery actions, such as a communication and community engagement plan, a Web page, codes of conduct, forming a Friends of Osprey group, which would report sightings and provide camera footage.
7. Maintain and facilitate the Recovery Team and support its recovery actions.

An **Osprey Artificial Nest Platform Project** is being developed in order to provide suitable nesting facilities. The significant features of this project are:

- Development Planning Applications, approvals and permits are required from six authorities.
- Composite Fibre Technologies (CFT) material is used for the tower nest platforms, due to its strength, structural integrity, lower costs and ease of fabrication.
- Ardrossan Community Mens' Shed has been engaged to fabricate CFT tower platforms.
- Partners involved in the project include: Southern Yorke Peninsula Landcare Group, Birds SA, BirdLife Australia, Thyne Reid Foundation, four private donors, Adelaide International Bird Sanctuary Partnership Group, the Department for Environment and Water (DEW), Northern and Yorke Landscape Board, Coastal Research and Development and the following community Progress Associations: Formby Bay Environmental Action Group (FBEAG), Port Lincoln Ospreys, Friends of Osprey.
- Community Groups have organised equipment and materials to install platforms.
- Sections of coast are under considerable pressure from campers, four-wheel drivers, fishermen, etc. Not everyone in the community thought new nest platforms for Osprey was a good idea. However, the local FBEAG and the surfing community rallied together to provide support and help for the installation of the platforms.

The map below shows the locations planned for installation of the towers.

#### ○ Locations planned for installation of Osprey nest platforms



## Past General Meetings *(continued)*

Ian presented a series of photographs showing the construction and appearance of nest platforms at several of the locations shown in the previous map. Helicopters were essential to the project, both for transporting materials to remote projects and putting nest platforms in place.

Ian then went on to present a range of other significant features associated with the preservation of raptors.

### Habituation

Habituation occurs when animals are exposed to the same stimuli repeatedly, and eventually stop responding to that stimulus.

When wild animals no longer see humans as a threat, they allow humans to come very close to them — or in some cases the animal will approach a human.



**A helicopter carrying a nest platform to Tumby Island Conservation Park**

### Legal and ethical requirements for satellite tracking of raptors

- Wildlife Ethics Committee approval must be obtained from the Department for Environment and Water (DEW)
- A licence must be obtained under the Animal Welfare Act 1985
- Approval must be obtained from Australian Bird and Bat Banding Schemes, Canberra (Federal Department of Environment)
- The applicant must possess an A Class banding Authority, approval to undertake a colour banding Project, as well as scientific research permits.



**Community members providing the finishing touches to the Gleeson's Landing Osprey nest platform before the rising tide**

## Past General Meetings *(continued)*

### Information obtained from tracking

Ian showed 6 satellite images, representing examples of information about the movements of 6 Eastern Ospreys at different locations, gained from satellite tracking.

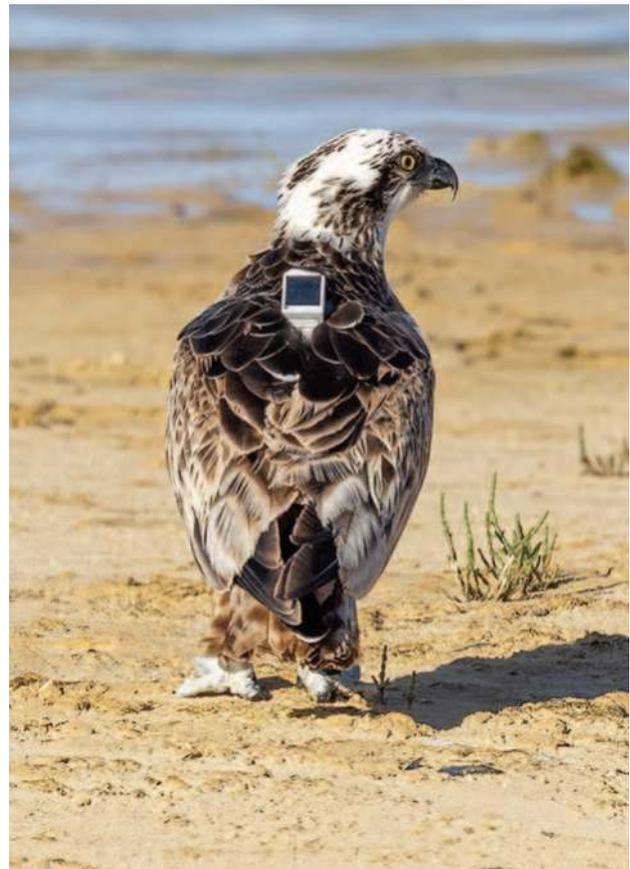
One example of the information gathered by attaching trackers to these birds is illustrated in the satellite image (*below right*), which traces the activities of a male Eastern Osprey (known as the Port Lincoln Osprey) that was fitted with a tracker on 7th November 2021 and fledged on 22nd November 2021. Many observations were made of him catching fish, and he continued to remain in his nesting territory for the duration of these observations. The black circles on the image represent preferred foraging and hunting sites. By the completion of this tracking record, He had been fledged for 45 weeks and continued to remain within his nesting territory.

From satellite tracking we have considerable information about threats to Eastern Ospreys, as well as their preferred habitats. Examples of the information gained are:

- Remote nests are subjected to more harassment and predation from corvids, gulls, possums, etc.
- There is a significant risk of predation of young from foxes on mainland and island nest sites.
- Independent female Eastern Osprey young fly considerable distances from their nest sites to seek out productive sheltered bays and shallow coastlines.
- Some independent male Eastern Osprey young appear to remain in their breeding territories for the first year.
- Mallee vegetation near the coast seems to be very important for shelter, including for perching, resting, feeding and still hunting.
- Eastern Osprey pairs that breed in close proximity to towns have become habituated to human developments. This may hold the key to improved survival rates.
- Eastern Ospreys nesting in built up (semi-urban) areas may be more successful than those in remote areas.

Eastern Osprey occupied territories on Yorke Peninsula have now increased from one in 2017 to five in September 2022. The most significant is the Eastern Osprey pair on the Point Davenport Conservation Park Platform as this location did not have an established resident pair present prior to this platform being installed.

### Port Lincoln Osprey tracking information



Satellite tracker on an Eastern Osprey at Lincoln Cove Marina



## Past General Meetings *(continued)*

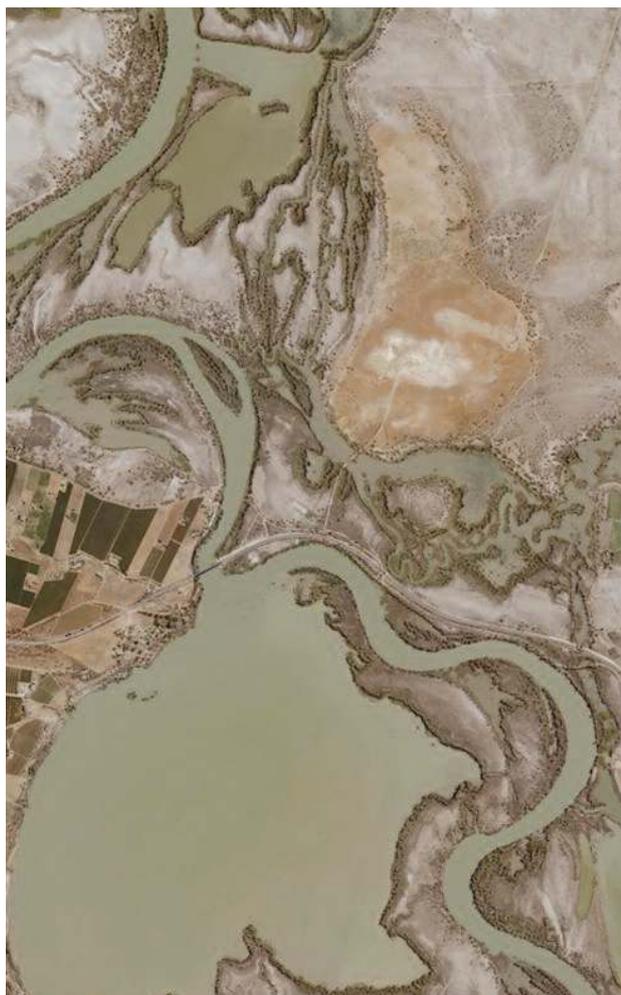
Ian went on to describe threats to White-bellied Sea Eagles (WBSE).

Protection of WBSE breeding territory is critical. Ian described examples of historical WBSE breeding territories, such as the one shown below. Public access to this area was once restricted. However, it is now part of the National Parks and Wildlife Service reserve system with public access and the WBSE have abandoned the territory. In another location, canoe trails have been introduced and WBSEs abandoned their nest site and moved 4.5 km to a more remote site.

Seasonal Habitat Access Restrictions based on spatial buffer zones are required to enhance breeding success.

Prescribing spatial buffer zones of 2,000m radius for WBSE and up to 1,000m for Eastern Osprey around nest sites in open coastal landscapes is vitally important at disturbed sites (Dennis *et al.* 2011 & Dennis 2007).

**Summary prepared by Cynthia Pyle**



**Aerial view of White-bellied Sea Eagle breeding territories**

## Tuesday 25 October

### **Overbrowsing by Western Grey Kangaroos: A key threatening process in the Mt. Lofty region**

**Presenter: David Paton**

David Paton began his presentation by saying that his approach to the topic would centre around three significant factors. These were:

- To show the extent and breadth of the damage:
  - across multiple sites
  - across a diversity of plant species
- To relate the consequences to woodland birds of the damage caused by kangaroos
- To indicate short-term and longer-term solutions.



### **They're very cute — BUT!!**

David illustrated the breadth and extent of the damage in four conservation parks around Adelaide and the Mount Lofty Ranges, and on several types of plants.

The sites were: Sandy Creek Conservation Park, Cromer Conservation Park, Charleston Conservation Park and Newland Head Conservation Park.

The types of plants were: heaths (*Astroloma*, *Acrotriche*), Proteaceae (*Banksia*, *Grevillea*), peas (*Dillwynia*, *Daviesia*), Myrtaceae (*Leptospermum*), *Allocasuarina*; as well as grasses and sedges.

He showed a series of photographs and described plants' response to different levels of grazing for each of the locations.

He started with **Sandy Creek Conservation Park**, showing examples of intact and grazed understory.

## Past General Meetings *(continued)*

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### Sandy Creek Conservation Park

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**Intact Understory**



**Understory grazed out by herbivores**



**Heavily and repeatedly grazed *Astroloma conostephioides* (dense branches and dieback)**



**The plant eventually dies**

David also showed examples of measures taken to protect plants, such as surrounding them with wire netting. The plant has grown densely inside its protection, but anything growing outside the netting has been eaten away.



**A 'protected' specimen of *Astroloma conostephioides***



**A typical ungrazed specimen of the same species: has spreading, elongated branches**

The photograph below shows a larger example in Sandy Creek Conservation Park of methods designed to protect vegetation from herbivores. It compares the effects of grazing outside the enclosure with no grazing inside.



**An 'enclosure' in Sandy Creek CP**

## Past General Meetings *(continued)*

**DIAGRAM A** Impact of herbivore exclusion

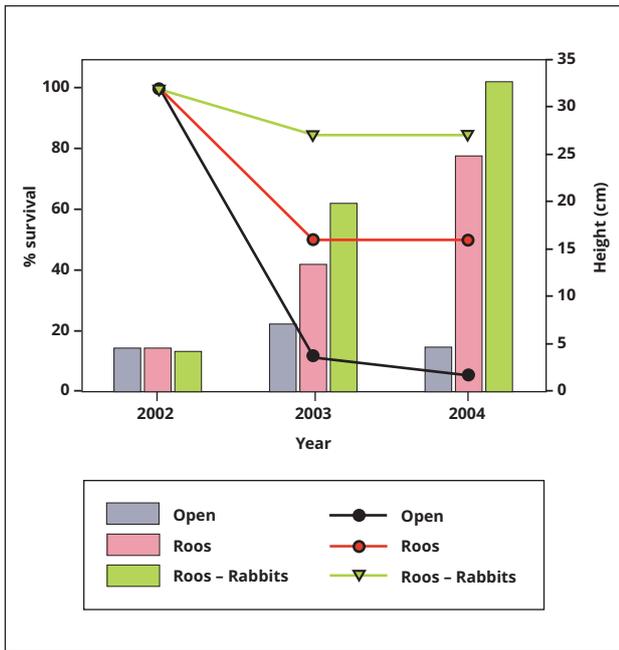


Diagram A (*above*) illustrates recruitment and growth of seedlings of *Astroloma conostephioides* following exclusion of herbivores. The three lines show percentage survival of seedlings appearing in spring 2002. The histograms show their average height.

The plants are most successful when both rabbits and kangaroos are excluded.

Table 1 (*below*) shows the consequences for birds of constructing exclosures, by comparing the number of honeyeaters per hectare in exclosures constructed in 2002 with exclosures constructed in 2015.

**TABLE 1** Exclosure impact on birds

Treatment	Grazing intensity	Flowers/ hectare	Nectar (g/ha)	Honeyeaters per hectare
2002 fenced	Very High	53,000	53	10.6
2015 fenced	Very High	7,000	7	1.4
open	Very High	500	0.5	0.1
2015 fenced	High	26,000	26	5.2
open	High	900	0.9	0.15

The number of honeyeaters per hectare areas fenced has increased from 0.15 to 10.6.

## Cromer Conservation Park

After his description of the effects of constructing exclosures in Sandy Creek Conservation Park, David turned his narrative to **Cromer Conservation Park**, concentrating on *Acrotriche depressa*.



### Heavily grazed *Acrotriche depressa*

He presented a series of tables comparing features of fenced bushes with the same features in those growing in the open. His tables showed that the following features of the bushes were significantly greater in fenced bushes than in those growing in the open.

- Internodal lengths in *Acrotriche depressa*
- Number of flower tassels per branch in *Acrotriche depressa*
- Number of plants per plot, for a variety of species
- Number of seedlings per plot for three different species
- Availability of flowers per plot for four different species
- Numbers of inflorescences produced per plot by different genera of native grasses

## Charleston Conservation Park

At **Charleston Conservation Park**, David compared height categories in *Leptospermum myrsinoides* and *Hibbertia crinitaplants* following exclusion of kangaroos from fenced plots for one year. He found that, for both species, the fenced plants were significantly taller than those in the open.

## Past General Meetings *(continued)*

### Newland Head Conservation Park

At **Newland Head Conservation Park**, David reported some early results of the effects of kangaroos on understorey plants, obtaining the results shown in Table 2 (*below*).

**TABLE 2**  
Effect of kangaroos on understorey plants in Newland Head Conservation Park

Vegetation in conservation	Kangaroos present	Kangaroos excluded
# species flowering/plot	6.3 ± 0.7	12.8 ± 0.7
Dillwynia shoots eaten (%)	39 ± 7	0 ± 0
Baumea height (cm)	15.3 ± 1.0	28.4 ± 1.0
Baumea inflor/m <sup>2</sup>	1.8 ± 0.5	27.7 ± 3.0

**TABLE 3**  
Advantages of kangaroo meat production

	kangaroo	sheep	cattle
Average mass (kg)	19	49	465
Proportion carcass used	0.66	0.68	0.59
Mass used (kg)	12.5	33.3	274
Fat content of meat (%)	< 2	21	15
GHG (kg/head/yr)	3	140	1670
GHG (kg/yr per kg mass)	0.16	2.9	3.6
GHG (kg/yr per kg useable mass)	0.24	4.2	6.0
Water (liters/head/yr)	1.5	11	80
Water (litres/yr per kg mass)	0.08	0.22	0.17
Water (litres/yr per kg useable mass)	0.12	0.33	0.29

After presenting a considerable quantity of information about the destructive effects of kangaroos on the vegetation in conservation parks, David concluded his presentation by describing the factors that have led to this threat.

Western Grey Kangaroo populations have probably increased at least 100-fold since European settlement because:

- (1) Provision of improved pastures has provided abundant suitable food
- (2) Provision of water has provided a ready source of water for kangaroos to drink
- (3) Removal of dingoes has reduced the risks of predation
- (4) Lack of native vegetation because of extensive clearance may also concentrate kangaroos in the few remaining patches

David then put forward a series of management options:

- Exclusion fencing
- Humane culling

Both operate at local scales and not regional scales.

### Recommendations

- We ultimately need to dampen the population size substantially at the regional scale.
- We should increase consumption and use of the kangaroos that are culled.
- We should consider ‘farming’ kangaroos to provide more efficient production of meat. They cause lower greenhouse gas emissions per kilogram of meat produced. They consume less water per kilogram of meat produced, the quality of their meat is better — it contains less fat. The padded feet of kangaroos cause less soil surface erosion than hard-hooved cattle and sheep. David concluded by presenting Table 3 (*left*) that summarises the advantages of kangaroo meat production.

**Summary prepared  
by Cynthia Pyle**

## Future General Meetings

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

### Tuesday 31 January

To be advised

### Tuesday 28 February

Warrick Barnes will speak about 'Management of the International Bird Sanctuary'.

*John Hatch*

## NEW MEMBERSHIP FEES

### FAMILY MEMBERSHIPS

- Family Online (inc access to e-copy of the Birder & SA Ornithologist) .....\$60
- Family Print (inc printed copies of the Birder & SA Ornithologist).....\$90

### SINGLE MEMBERSHIPS

- Individual Online (inc access to e-copy of the Birder & SA Ornithologist)....\$50
- Individual Print (inc printed copies of the Birder & SA Ornithologist).....\$80
- Student Online (inc access to e-copy of the Birder & SA Ornithologist) .....\$10
- Student Print (inc printed copies of the Birder & SA Ornithologist).....\$40
- Honorary Online (inc access to e-copy of Birder & SA Ornithologist).....free
- Honorary Print (inc printed copies of Birder & SA Ornithologist).....free

# New Members

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

Julie Hocking ..... Hallett Cove  
 Liam Bryars ..... Red Creek  
 Kristine Mills..... Daintree, QLD  
 Johan Van Der Walt ..... Kensington Gdns  
 Peter Phillips ..... Flagstaff Hill  
 Joe Hannon ..... Aberfoyle Park  
 Peter Wood ..... Melrose Park  
 Bill O'Brien ..... Murray Bridge  
 Tabitha McGorm ..... Victor Harbor  
 Chris Kirby..... Craighburn Farm  
 Diana Warwick.....Victor Harbor  
 David Eblen ..... Henley Beach  
 Rod Long & Bill Williams..... Hallett Cove  
 Katherine, Kelton, Zara & Isabel Tremellen..... Stirling  
 Michael & Samantha Norris ..... Woodcroft  
 Nicholas Bishop..... Enfield  
 Sara Watson .....Bridgewater  
 Trish Aukett ..... Adelaide  
 Elspeth Young..... Aldgate  
 Linda & Brian De Vries..... Brighton  
 William, Misha, Ella, Matilda & Anna Godward..... Nairne  
 Julie Hill, Timothy O'Connell, Trevor & Val Hill..... Ashton  
 David Cameron & Catherine Bowes ..... Mt Gambier

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

# A Western Sandpiper at Bald Hill Beach

On the afternoon of 19 April 2022, I was birdwatching at Bald Hill Beach on northern Gulf St. Vincent, a location that I visit regularly. Among a small flock of Red-necked Stints, I noticed a bird that was slightly different. It was about the same size as the stints, perhaps marginally larger, and had a longer bill and a plainer appearance. The flock was roosting and allowed quite a close approach of about 10m.

The bird had thin dark shaft streaks on its dorsal feathers, while those of the stints were much broader. My photos also showed a high base to the culmen of the bill, and it appeared to have a shorter rear end and a longer rear toe than Red-necked Stints.

I wasn't sure of its identification. I posted photos on Facebook which resulted in considerable discussion and debate. The general consensus was that it was probably a Western Sandpiper, although I was unable to obtain a photo of its partly-webbed feet.

I sent a submission to the Birds Australia Rarities Committee (BARC). David James, a former committee member, who has had extensive experience with Western Sandpipers, offered to add detailed notes based on my photos. The submission (case no. 1245) was accepted on 18 September 2022 as the first confirmed record of a Western Sandpiper in Australia.

Despite several return visits to Bald Hill Beach following this sighting (including by other birdwatchers), the bird was not located again. I also searched at Port Clinton, Clinton CP, and Thompson Beach.

Western Sandpipers breed in Alaska and far eastern Siberia, and winter in southern US, Central America and northern South America. They are one of the most numerous shorebirds in North America. Vagrant birds have been seen in New Zealand (about 6 records). There have been 4 previous reports of Western Sandpipers in Australia, but none of these were confirmed or accepted.

**Paul Taylor**



**The first confirmed record of a Western Sandpiper in Australia** (Photographed by Paul Taylor)



**Western Sandpiper seen among a small flock of Red-necked Stints** (Photographed by Paul Taylor)

# Volunteering at Minko Scrub

## Sunday 24 July 2022

When my husband Harold and I volunteered on the Birds SA stand at Sophie's Garden earlier in the year, we discovered just how interested people are in placing nest boxes for birds in their suburban gardens or on their country properties. Whilst we sold several boxes on the day, we were less successful at providing information about how and where to install the boxes effectively. This situation was due to our lack of practical experience. So, when we heard about the session being offered by Birds SA at Minko Scrub on Sunday 24 July; demonstrating the finer points of installing nest boxes, we jumped at the chance to join about a dozen other volunteers to learn more.

Minko Scrub is a working farm near Mt Compass, where Birds SA has previously installed nest boxes, and when we arrived, we were able to see some of these boxes in trees adjacent to the camping ground. The afternoon session, organised by Paul Lindon, Project Manager at Minko Scrub was excellent. It included the services of James Smith, who heads an organisation called Faunature. James is a zoologist with wide experience in making and installing nest boxes, and he oversees the care of dozens of nest boxes for several local councils and other organisations in Adelaide. He also undertakes private work.

Before putting the boxes up, James gave a talk about the individual boxes on display, reasons for their different



**James Smith describing and the different types of boxes and explaining their features**



designs, correct positioning on trees, proximity to other boxes and mapping of boxes for the records. James also patiently answered the various questions that people put to him. We learned that the reason boxes designed for Australian Boobooks (see photo above right) have a platform beneath the entrance hole, with a pole each side, is because baby owls often fall when learning to fly and once on the ground are easy pickings for cats, foxes and other predators. The projections give them something to wind their talons around as they strengthen their wings.

James told us that he once saw a box with several fledgelings clinging to these poles and fanning their

**James Smith demonstrating the procedures involved in installing nest boxes**



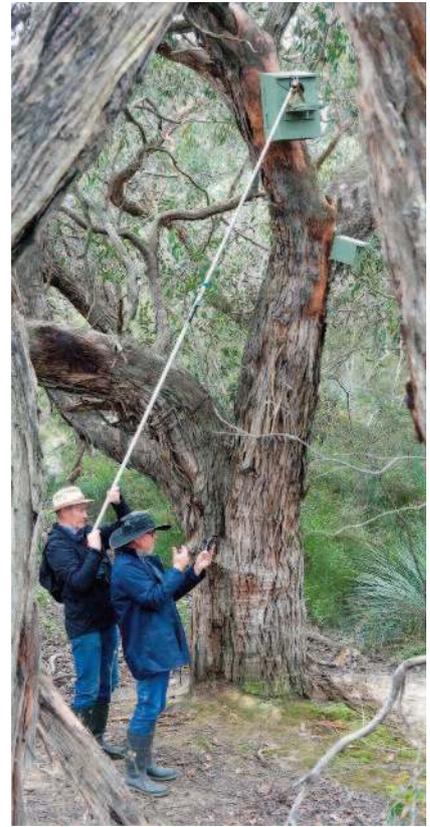
## Volunteering at Minko Scrub *(continued)*



**Volunteer David installing the final nest box**



**Steven Langley, our President, with his mounted camera for checking out occupancy in previously installed nest boxes**



**Using a mounted camera to check occupancy of nest boxes**

wings backwards and forwards. He also explained that these projections are not put on other boxes to discourage pest birds such as Common Starlings from using them as perches. After the talk, the group followed James through the scrub to find likely trees on which to place the boxes. His attention to detail regarding safe ladder placement, tree climbing, and safety harness use was explicit and professional.

He explained the finer points of “roping the ladder” and attaching himself to the tree in a way that kept him safe whilst he drilled holes, placed spacers between the box and the tree trunk, and finally put the box in place, adjusting the angle for

drainage, and where possible ensuring that the box faced south or southeast. During the course of the afternoon, James installed boxes for Australian Boobooks, Laughing Kookaburras, pardalotes, Australian Owllet-nightjars and parrots. I was intrigued to see how close together he put a pardalote box to an Australian Kookaburra box (about 1.5m apart on the same tree) and asked him how safe this would be for the pardalote. – *Wouldn't the kooka be likely to prey on the smaller bird?*

James' response was: “*He'd have to catch him first!*”. The last nest box was successfully installed by a volunteer, David under supervision from James.

Our President, Steven Langley, demonstrated his mounted camera for checking out occupancy in previously installed nest boxes. He did find that one “*guest*” had taken up residence — a little ring-tailed possum, whose image appeared on the monitor.

### **November 2022**

Since writing this article, we are delighted to report that a pair of Adelaide Rosellas and a White-throated treecreeper have taken up residence in two more of the boxes!

***Chris Bates-Brownsword***

# Thoughts of a fledgling birder

Just over six months have passed since I first saw a tiny Eastern Spinebill darting about in the purple Salvia bush outside my bedroom window. Snapping a photo and then locating it in a bird ID book ignited in me a fascination for all things birds and birding. I often try to explain to friends the feeling I get when I spot a new-to-me bird, or when I see a familiar bird singing its heart out on a branch. They nod politely but I know they don't really get it. I struggle to define it, but ultimately, it is simply that I have fallen headlong in love with birds.

I am now a birder, albeit a fledgling one. I do have a list, and have recorded all the birds I have seen. It is populated with such lyrical names as Varied Sitellas, Restless Flycatchers, Golden-headed Cisticolas, Chirruping Wedgebills, White-winged Trillers and Clamorous Reed-warblers. The latter apparently is now known as an *Australian* Reed-warbler, but I will still use the former more descriptive title. (Who decides that these names need changing?)

Up till now, my interaction with birds has relied heavily on my camera. This is mainly because as a fledgling birder, I have not been sure of the bird I am looking at. Taking a picture helps me to correctly identify the bird in my ID book. My camera also has a powerful zoom which helps, even more so than binoculars, to see the bird clearly. I also like to have the photos of the birds to keep,

and I particularly love to catch the bird in an expressive pose, or energetically singing.

On a recent trip to the Northern territory I visited Ormiston Gorge in the West McDonnell Ranges. The day was luminous as we sat by a stunning waterhole. Suddenly a heron came silently gliding down from behind the rocks, its wings catching the light as it circled then landed gracefully on the far side of the still water. It was a breathtaking sight, and it still lives in my mind's eye. However at the time I was devastated that my camera battery had just died, and I could not record the moment. It was the first White-necked Heron I had seen. For hours after I felt frustrated at the bad luck of not being able to photograph it. However if I had tried to capture it through my camera lens, would I have been fully in the moment?

It is exciting to see a new-to-me bird, but just as wonderful to see the old familiars in a new light. One of the birds I see most days at my local reserve is the Grey Shrike-thrush. I would describe this as a solid, dependable bird, as it is not fussy or showy, doesn't flit about like the tiny thornbills or Grey Fantails, and is easy to photograph. It also has one of the more melodious bird songs, but when I hear it I don't get my camera out as it is just the ordinary Shrike-thrush. Recently, however, walking around a plant nursery at Hindmarsh



**Rainbow Bee-eater**  
(Photographed in Kinchina Conservation Park by Sue Hammond)



**Grey Shrike-thrush** (Photographed on Hindmarsh Island by Sue Hammond)



**Brush Bronzewing** (Photographed on Hindmarsh Island by Sue Hammond)

## Thoughts of a fledgling birder *(continued)*



### Great Egret

*(Photographed at St Kilda by Sue Hammond)*

Island, I noticed a bird on a branch, singing very expressively, happily changing position on the branch and showing its playful side. It was a Shrike-thrush and it was a delight to watch. From now on, this bird will never be 'just' a Shrike-thrush to me.

I am enjoying visiting the further afield birding meccas, such as Brown's Road at Monarto, and Cox Scrub Conservation Park where I have located the 'puddles'. Recently I noticed on a birding Facebook site that the Rainbow Bee-eaters were being seen at Kinchina Conservation Park, so the next fine day I located it on the map, and was there. These birds are absolutely stunning, and it was a thrill to start seeing them posing on the bare tree branches. That day I also saw my first Scrub-robin darting between the bushes, and a Black-eared Cuckoo catching flying ants. There was also a Horsfield's Bronze Cuckoo, a bird whose mournful cry is very easy to identify.

Apparently one of the best times to see birds is at sunrise, so car camping has become a thing for those essential over-nighters when you need to sleep in the field. All you require is a comfortable mattress, a small esky, a jetboil for your morning coffee, and a good battery to keep your camera charged. Traipsing over wet grass in the early morning, I saw my first Crested Bellbird, and was also privileged to be shown the secret location of two young Wedge-tailed



### Singing Honeyeater *(Photographed in Alice Springs by Sue Hammond)*

Eagles, one which had recently flown the nest, and one still not quite ready.

My camper is a better option for longer stays. I recently attended my first Birds SA campout at Lawari Conservation Park on Hindmarsh Island. Enough to say that the mosquitoes were the size of small thornbills, and apparently the snakes were about, but that would not deter 20 or so enthusiastic birders. We visited the Murray Mouth and the Goolwa Barrages where I saw my first shorebirds, including Red-necked Stints and Curlew Sandpipers. We also joined the Fleurieu Birders for a morning of birding at the Spring Mount Conservation Park.

I was very happy recently to take one of my daughters birding with me to St Kilda beach. She has a busy, quite stressful life, and she marvelled at the fact that for 4 hours, all she thought about was birds. Maybe that is the lure of this birding lark. She was also quite impressed by my birding knowledge, so perhaps I am beyond the fledgling stage already. What next? Improving my recognition of the bird calls, improving my photography, more camping, more birding expeditions with Birds SA, more hanging out with birding buddies .... can life get any better than that?

**Sue Hammond**

### Horsfield's Bronze Cuckoo

*(Photographed in Kinchina Conservation Park by Sue Hammond)*

# GOULD DESCENDANTS



**John Gould**

Most Members of Birds SA would be very familiar with the name, "John Gould", and the amazing volumes of bird art-work, in particular Australian birds, bearing his name.

John was born in the UK in 1804. He married Elizabeth Coxen in 1829. Elizabeth was a very talented artist.

In just 12 short years she produced hundreds of amazing images of birds from around the world.

These were all distributed and sold under the name "John Gould".



**A sample of Elizabeth's incredible talent**

Between 1829 and 1841 Elizabeth also gave birth to 8 children — she really was a "working mother"!

John's "business" was negatively affected when Elizabeth died aged 37, whilst giving birth to their last child.

12 years, 8 children and hundreds of beautiful bird images — what a woman!!

In the late 1830s the Goulds came to Australia, leaving all but 1 of their children behind in the UK. Elizabeth was essential to her husband's business. She was the principal artist. Without her John's project was destined to fail. But how difficult for Elizabeth to leave behind her tiny children!

Some heart-rending quotes from Elizabeth in letters to her Mother and other Family Members.

*"And the dear little tots, how I long to see them."*

*"I saw yesterday a girl who so strongly reminded me of Lizzy, my darling, that I could scarcely leave her. Of the looks of my poor dear Louisa I cannot form a correct judgment"* This letter was dated 13th September 1839.

In December her letter included, "... I suppose poor little Louisa toddles about by this time ..."

Obviously, Louisa was just a baby when Elizabeth had to leave her behind in England, not to see her again for several years.

Of the eight Gould children, only one was to marry and give John Gould a grand-child, and that was Louisa.

"The three surviving girls lived together as spinsters on Primrose Hill. John Gould organised for one of his friends to marry Louisa. Louisa had 1 child – a daughter, who was very young when Louisa's much older husband died. This girl was my Grandmother."

**Quote from Tony Edelsten**

In Adelaide, on Tuesday 11th October 2022, I was fortunate enough to spend a little time talking with Anthony (Tony) Edelsten, Great-Great Grandson of John Gould. He was accompanied by his son Andy, and Granddaughter.

**Kate Buckley**



**The family inspecting some of the Gould works held in Adelaide. (Left to right) Tony Edelsten, his son Andy and his Grand-daughter.**

# *Historical Series No. 81 Dr Alexander Matheson (Mat) Morgan (1867-1934) Part 1 by Penny Paton*

## Family

Mat Morgan, as he was known to his friends, was the 7th of nine children born to William Morgan and his wife Harriett (née Matthews) on 11 February 1867 at the family home at Netherby. In the mid-1860s William purchased for £3000 the Netherby Estate, an 80 acre property east of Fullarton Road, which hosted many entertainments and dinner parties, attended by the cream of colonial society (www 1). William was a self-made man, arriving from England in 1849 as a nineteen-year old, and becoming a successful merchant and politician, attaining the Premiership of South Australia for three years in 1878. The town of Morgan on the River Murray was named after him. His resignation as Premier was due to failing mining and other business interests in New Caledonia, the extent of which he managed to keep from his family and friends (Morgan 2011). After being appointed KCMG in 1883, he departed for England where his health deteriorated and he died late in that year aged only about 55. He left his family in straitened circumstances and the Netherby Estate was sold in 1884:

“...the whole of the surplus elegant modern household furniture and effects, a full-size billiard table and furnishings; Handsome modern carriage in splendid order; hooded wagonette by Duncan and Fraser; Carriage Horses and harnesses, cows, poultry, implements, choice and rare plants.” (www 2).

An insight into the childhood of Mat Morgan comes from a family history, indicating that Mat and his elder brother, (Edward) Ranembe, were friendly with James Waite, their neighbour to the north. In 1877 when the Waites moved in, 10-year old James was an excellent playmate for exploring and roaming the substantial estates owned by their parents (Waite 2011). For their early schooling, Ran and Mat attended Prince Alfred College, driving themselves in a wagonette with Toby between the shafts, and later moved to Geelong Grammar School, where the Morgan brothers thrived (Waite 2011).

Mat was the only one of his siblings to attend university and he attained an M.B. and a B.Sc. Degree from the University of Adelaide (White 1934). Between 1893 and 1897 he practised medicine at Laura in the



**Figure 1.** Portrait of Mat Morgan, probably taken between 1890 and 1900 when Bond & Co was operating at 91 Rundle Street in Adelaide (<https://connect.adelaide.edu.au/nodes/view/6343>)

southern Flinders Ranges (Figure 1), returning to Adelaide to take up honorary appointments at the Adelaide Children’s Hospital (ACH) (Horton *et al.* 2018). After a trip to England in 1908, where Morgan completed post-graduate training in eye diseases, he specialised in ophthalmology, including holding the position of honorary ophthalmic visiting medical officer at the ACH from 1910 and the Charles Gosse lectureship in ophthalmology at the University of Adelaide from 1910 to 1925 (*ibid.*).

Marriage came late to Mat Morgan when, at the age of 38, he married Myrtle Ellen Green at Parkside on 11 October 1905. The couple had three children, William, Elizabeth and Thomas. William Matheson Morgan (1906-1972), a notable mining engineer, learnt both German and Japanese in part as an aid to

his business interests and restored antique furniture, an occupation he shared with his father.

Early meetings of the South Australian Ornithological Association (SAOA), formed in 1899, were usually held in Morgan's house, which probably doubled as his rooms, at 89 Angas Street in the city, now the site of the Nordic Honda Showrooms (Truran 2000). By 1905 meetings had moved to Morgan's home at 27 Angas Street (Truran 2000), at a later date occupied by the Returned and Services League. After 1908, when Morgan was overseas for an extended time, meetings were held at members' business premises in the city until 1911, when the rooms of the Royal Society of South Australia at the Institute Building hosted the monthly meetings (Truran 2000). Horton *et al.* (2018) surmise that Morgan moved into "St Helen" at 215 Brougham Place in North Adelaide in about 1915, but I believe that it was earlier than this, based on a note in the *South Australian Ornithologist* (SAO) from July 1914. This note (Morgan 1914) described the birds seen over the past two and a half years in his garden in Stanley Street, which is near the corner of Brougham Place. It seems that the boundary between Brougham Place and Stanley Street moved in about 1914. The move to North Adelaide was likely to have been in 1911 or 1912 and it was here that he died on 19 October 1934 (Figure 2).

As with Dr Angove (Historical Series No. 47, Paton 2014), I find it interesting that these busy professionals with young families, seemed to have so much free time for ornithology. Angove, a doctor, wine grape grower and vigneron and father of a large family had sufficient leisure to take walks several times a week

in his local area and also often ventured further afield on longer trips by sailing boat and motor vehicle. Similarly Morgan appeared to have much leisure; for example one of his earliest articles in the SAO was based on the month of August 1912 he spent with his wife observing the birds of Kallioota Station (Morgan 1914a). And in 1918, he and his wife spent a month touring and bird watching in the South East (Morgan 1919).

The pages of the SAO are largely silent about Morgan for the early half of 1921 and this is explained by a reference at a monthly SAOA meeting on 26 August 1921, in which the Chairman announced that Dr Morgan had suffered a long illness, but was hoping to resume his professional duties in a short while (SAOA 1921a). This is further explained at a later meeting on 28 October 1921 (SAOA 1922), where Morgan gave an address on his trip to North-West Australia in June 1921, which had been the cause of his illness. For four weeks Dr Morgan and his wife travelled on the S.S. Minderoo from Fremantle to Derby, and spent two weeks on Meda Station and Kimberley Downs Station, before returning on S.S. Gorgon to Fremantle, where he developed malaria (Morgan 1921, 1922a).

### Ornithology

Morgan was well-regarded by his peers and made a deep impression on those he met. S.A. White first met him in 1898 after Morgan's return to Adelaide from Laura, and Morgan met Dr Chenery in 1902 and they became good friends despite being physically separated for most of their lives. Chenery's obituary in the SAO gives us one of the few portraits of Morgan's character, indicating that he "was intolerant of people



**Figure 2.** April 2022 view of "St Helen", the house on Brougham Place, North Adelaide where Morgan and his family lived from about 1911 or 1912 till at least his death in 1934 (Photo: P. Paton)

who talked or wrote inaccurately on any subject” and had a propensity for “ridiculing such people” (Chenery 1935). This trait is a reflection of his scientific attitude, which was evident in his ornithological work and writings, on such diverse topics as “avian anatomy, physiology, osteology, oology, diet (stomach contents), and taxonomy. His arguments on subjects of taxonomy and conservation were consistently well reasoned, supported by verifiable information and often complemented by his own research.” (Horton *et al.* 2018).

While based at Laura in the Mid North from 1893 to 1897, Morgan studied the birdlife in what was a little-known part of South Australia ornithologically-speaking, made his first collection of bird skins and published the results (Morgan 1897). He did this in concert with Malcolm Murray, the station manager at nearby Wirrabara Station, who will be the focus of a Historical Series at a later date. On his return to Adelaide, Morgan began to inspect the ornithological collections of the South Australian Museum (SAMA), then under the auspices of the Assistant Director Amandus (A.H.C.) Zietz, where he met other like-minded souls and began a public lecture series on birds, using the Museum’s collections as reference material (Horton *et al.* 2018).

It was from such informal meetings as these around a shared passion that the idea for the SAOA grew – the first such ornithological association in the country. Crompton (1914) assigned the germ of the idea of an association to A.H.C. Zietz. Nine men camped at Port Victor (now Victor Harbor) in January 1899 to plan their strategy but, although the camp reports are extant, the identities of the nine are shrouded in mystery by the use of nicknames that have baffled all attempts to identify them over one hundred years later (Truran 2000).

During his time at Laura Morgan made his first collection of bird skins, some that were later presented to the museum, and others that he forwarded to A. J. North in Sydney. While Laura is generally accepted as being in the Mid North of our state, it sits in the Flinders Ranges region for the purposes of denoting areas of South Australia for bird recording (Horton *et al.* 2020). Morgan’s (1897) paper on the birds he recorded near Laura is regrettably only a list with no annotations. However, I have reproduced it below because Morgan’s (1897) paper, in the Transactions of the Royal Society of South Australia, is not easily accessible to most modern birdwatchers. Also, the list is an early one by a competent ornithologist resident

in the area for several years and, for the time, a fairly remote part of the state.

Table 1 presents the list of 113 bird species in modern taxonomic order along with any skin or egg clutches taken during his residence at Laura from 1893 to 1897 in the SAMA collection. As some SAMA specimens taken at Laura have no date, I have added these to the list in square brackets, as many of them may have been collected in this period. SAMA specimen data adds one species to the list in Table 1, the Elegant Parrot, a skin with no date from Laura. Of the 114 species recorded by Morgan from the Laura area, there is specimen evidence for 76 or nearly three-quarters of these.

Many of the clutches with no date collected at Laura or Stone Hut came via the SAOA Egg Collection (registered on 8 November 1932) and these may have had incomplete data slips with them. Morgan’s Egg Collection came to SAMA directly from Morgan in two batches (one registered on 3 February 1931 and the other on 1 May 1934). Other egg clutches of Morgan’s came to SAMA via the F.E. Parsons and J.N. McGilp collections (P. Horton pers. comm.). As Morgan personally donated his skins to SAMA, the lack of dates for some of the specimens is puzzling but probably results from their collection at the beginning of Morgan’s ornithological career; the importance of full collection data would soon have become evident to him.

References (including website references ‘www’) will be provided at the end of the last Part.

**Table 1.** List of birds recorded by A.M. Morgan in the Laura area 1893-1897 from Morgan (1897). EC – egg clutch. [ ] double brackets refer to skins and egg clutches with no dates.

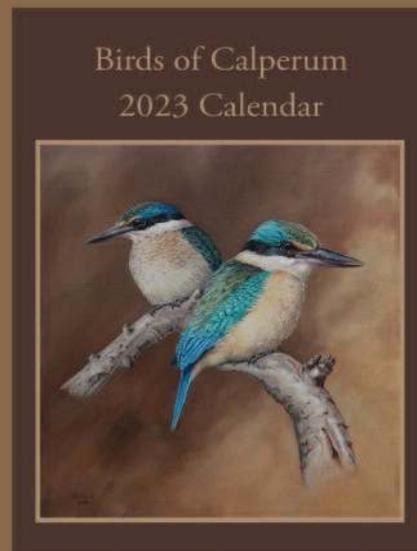
Bird Species	Specimen in SAMA
Stubble Quail	[Skin Laura]
Chestnut Teal	
Pacific Black Duck	
Maned Duck	
Tawny Frogmouth	[Skin Laura]
Australian Owlet-nightjar	[Skin Laura]
Pacific Swift	Skin 21/2/1896 Laura
Australian Bustard	
Fan-tailed Cuckoo	
Pallid Cuckoo	[Skin Laura]
Horsfield’s Bronze Cuckoo	[Skin Laura]
Shining Bronze Cuckoo	
Black-eared Cuckoo	

Bird Species	Specimen in SAMA	Bird Species	Specimen in SAMA
Diamond Dove	[Skin Laura]	Crimson Chat	Skin 7/1894 Laura
Peaceful Dove		Tawny-crowned Honeyeater	Skin 8/9/1895 Laura
Common Bronzewing	[Skin Laura]	Yellow-throated Miner	Skin 1894 Laura
Buff-banded Rail	[Skin Laura]	Brown-headed Honeyeater	[Skin Laura]
Black-tailed Nativehen	[Skin Laura]	Black-chinned Honeyeater	Skin 1894 Laura
Little Buttonquail		New Holland Honeyeater	Skin 1894 Laura
Bush Stonecurlew	[Skin Laura]	White-plumed Honeyeater	Skin 1894 Laura
Pied Stilt		White-fronted Honeyeater	Skin 5/10/1895 Laura
Black-fronted Dotterel	[Skin Laura]	Black Honeyeater	Skin 14/10/1895 Laura
Masked Lapwing		Spotted (Yellow-rumped) Pardalote	Skin 23/11/1895 Laura
Banded Lapwing	EC 7/7/1896 Laura	Striated Pardalote	Skin 1894 Laura
Great Cormorant		Yellow-rumped Thornbill	Skin 1894 Laura
Pied Cormorant		Yellow Thornbill	Skin 30/10/1895 Laura
Straw-necked Ibis		Chestnut-rumped Thornbill	
White-necked Heron	[Skin Laura]	Southern Whiteface	[Skin Laura]
White-faced Heron		Weebill	[EC Stone Hut] [Skin Laura]
Nankeen Night Heron	[Skin Laura]	White-browed Babbler	EC 25/7/1896 Laura; Skin 1894 Laura
Collared Sparrowhawk	Skin 15/10/1895 Wirrabara	Dusky Woodswallow	EC 9/1895 Stone Hut [Skin Laura]
Wedge-tailed Eagle		Masked Woodswallow	Skin 8/9/1895 Stone Hut
Spotted Harrier		White-browed Woodswallow	EC 11/1897 Laura; Skin 2/12/1894 Laura
Whistling Kite		Australian Magpie	
Eastern Barn Owl	[Skin Laura]	Grey Currawong	[EC Stone Hut] [Skin Laura]
Australian Boobook	[Skin Laura]	Black-faced Cuckooshrike	[Skin Laura]
Laughing Kookaburra	[Skin Laura]	White-winged Triller	Skin 30/9/1894 Laura [EC 2/11/1890 Laura]
Red-backed Kingfisher	Skin 16/10/1895 Laura [EC Laura]	Crested Bellbird	[Skin Laura]
Rainbow Bee-eater	Skin 10/1896 Laura [EC Laura]	Crested Shriketit	Skin 1894 Laura
Brown Falcon		Grey Shrikethrush	[Skin Laura]
Nankeen Kestrel	[Skin Laura]	Rufous Whistler	Skin 1894 Laura [EC Stone Hut]
Grey Falcon	Skin 10/1896 Laura	Grey Fantail	[Skin Laura]
Australian Hobby		Willie Wagtail	[Skin Laura]
Peregrine Falcon	Skin 8/6/1896 Laura	Magpielark	EC 1895 Laura
Sulphur-crested Cockatoo		Restless Flycatcher	Skin 1894 Laura
Cockatiel		Australian Raven	
Australian Ringneck	[Skin Laura]	Hooded Robin	[Skin Laura]
Musk Lorikeet	[Skin Laura]	Jacky Winter	[Skin Laura]
Budgerigar	[EC Laura] [Skin Laura]	Scarlet Robin	
Blue-winged Parrot		Red-capped Robin	Skin 1894 Laura
Purple-crowned Lorikeet	[Skin Laura]	Horsfield's Bush Lark	[Skin Laura]
Little Lorikeet		White-backed Swallow	[Skin Laura]
Crimson (Flinders) Rosella		Welcome Swallow	
Red-rumped Parrot		Fairy Martin	
Rainbow Lorikeet	Skin 1896 Laura	Tree Martin	Skin 1894 Laura
Brown Treecreeper		Australian Reed Warbler	
Purple-backed Fairywren	Skin 1894 Laura	Brown Songlark	Skin 5/10/1895 Laura
White-winged Fairywren	Skin 8/10/1895 Port Germein	Rufous Songlark	[Skin Laura]
Splendid Fairywren		Silvereye	Skin 1894 Laura
Spiny-cheeked Honeyeater	[Skin Laura]	Mistletoebird	[Skin Laura]
Red Wattlebird	[Skin Laura]	Diamond Firetail	EC 26/10/1895 Stone hut
White-fronted Chat		Zebra Finch	Skin 1894 Laura
Orange Chat		Australian Pipit	

A 2023 art calendar of the Birds of Calperum is now available for sale.

The calendar features a collection of oil paintings by Belinda Cale, an illustrator and ecologist who lives in the Riverland, South Australia.

Half the proceeds from the sale of this calendar will support ongoing work at Calperum Station which is managed for conservation by the not-for-profit Australian Landscape Trust.



A3 calendar, wire bound with hanger rod, 13 pages, 256 gsm artboard.

To purchase, please visit <https://alt.org.au/product/birds-of-calperum-2023-calendar/>

\$44 (GST incl.)



## Coorong Boat Cruise

Tuesday 14 February 2023



### This will be a special charter at a special price just for birdwatchers

The first 30-40 (not 50) people making bookings — with payment — will be going.

Make your bookings directly to the manager of Spirit Australia Cruises quoting the reference number below

TOUR	Birdwatching Charter - 5 Hours
DATE	Tuesday 14th February 2023
DEPARTS	Goolwa Wharf (Cutting Road) at 10:00am
PRICE	\$105.00 per person
REFERENCE	584-011
NOTES	Minimum 30 people

- Please ensure you arrive 15-minute prior to cruise departure (~9.45am)
- there is plenty of free parking without restriction here at the Goolwa Wharf
- If you have any further queries or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact us.

#### PAYMENT DETAILS:

Passengers can individually call our office on 08 8555 2203 and pay with credit card over the phone or/ make payment via EFT:

- BSB: 085 938
- Account No: 048 121 311
- Reference: BIRD 584-011

**Joel Hirsch (Manager)**  
Spirit Australia Cruises

# Birders without Barriers

As migratory shorebirds headed into the Adelaide International Bird Sanctuary (AIBS) this Spring, so did two avid birders, each on their own lengthy birding journey.

'Milly' met 'Minnie' at a birding event at St Kilda foreshore, one of the southernmost seasonal roosting points for migratory shorebirds along the East Asian-Australasian Flyway. Both are adventurous birders but there is one key difference – age!

Young Milly Formby, zoologist, artist, pilot and bird nerd, otherwise known as the amazing 'Microlight Milly', is currently flying herself solo around Australia, passionately promoting awareness of migratory shorebirds, their incredible long distance flight capacity and the importance of preserving their habitats.

Yet in chronological comparison with Minnie, Milly's birding exploits, astounding as they already are, have just begun.

Adelaide hills resident, FAIBS and BirdsSA member Minnie Robertson is 103, and still actively birding! As a graduate nurse in England, she took up a surgical position in Hong Kong in the 1930's, there met and married keen birder David, and hasn't stopped seeking out the birds since, covering at least 96 countries in her quest to add to her long life list of sighted birds.

Both Milly and Minnie have clocked up serious mileage and reputation in their Australian birding pursuits. Milly's current aerial project will cover some 20,000 kilometres as she circumnavigates the continent piloting her microlight aircraft, landing in places where birding and birders can cross paths and jointly marvel and educate about nature's wonders.

Similarly, but on land, Minnie and David have covered tens of thousands of kilometres around Australia, searching out and recording bird life and volunteering in birding projects, travelling in their trusty camper van, now an historic vehicle rather like its owners!

'Microlight Milly's' recent landing at the Gawler aerodrome enabled her to visit and mingle with birds, birders and local school children for a week as she highlighted the feats of the migratory shorebirds and their precious local summer habitat in the AIBS along the shores of Gulf St Vincent.

Milly's ultimate aim is to fly her microlight to the northern hemisphere Tundra areas, following the migratory shorebirds for another 20,000 plus kilometres along the East Asian-Australasian Flyway, from their



**Minnie, 103, meets Milly** (Photo by Anna Woods)



**Milly at Gawler taxiing out for the next leg of her amazing 'Flight Around Oz'**

(Photo by Ian Forsyth)

Australian southern roosting spots to where they annually breed around Siberia and Alaska.

When Milly spoke to a gathering of Friends of AIBS (FAIBS) about her exploits, who should turn up, but none other than FAIBS member Minnie, who, with David, not only continues to attend sit down events like Milly's talk, but also still participates in bird ID walks in AIBS and other sites in and around Adelaide. Minnie's long-time pursuit of and passion for birds is an amazing feat not only of birding but also of active longevity and well-being in their own right.

Milly and Minnie's inspirational reputations could well be adapted to a familiar refrain: 'Long live the birders!' Herein lies a lesson to the rest of us – birders can be active for life, a reason to get out there and give it a go, whether it be observational - adding to life lists and bird counts - or building bird awareness among others and contributing to bird and habitat stewardship.

Clearly, for birders, age need not be a barrier!

**Anna Woods**  
Member of FAIBS

# Past Excursions

## Birds SA

### Thursday 21 July Belair National Park

Perfect weather greeted the 16 members who attended this walk. After gathering in the crowded car park, we set off on our usual path around Playford Lake and sightings of water bird species including Maned Duck (12), Pacific Black Duck (25), Dusky Moorhen (12) Eurasian Coot (4), Grey Teal (3) and single sightings of Australasian Grebe, White-faced Heron and Australasian Darter. This area also gave us good views of Laughing Kookaburra (3), Crested Pigeon (10) and Masked Lapwing (2) before we headed into the scrub on our way to the Nursery.

The trail taken through the scrub kept us busy, for whilst we could hear our feathered friends calling, getting a sighting was sometimes a challenge! Overall our walk ensured that most of the group saw Galah (20), Long-billed Corella (1), Little Corella (10) and Sulphur Crested Cockatoo (10), Adelaide Rosella (24), Eastern Rosella (20), Superb Fairywren (20), New Holland Honeyeater (20), Crescent Honeyeater (8), Red Wattlebird (4), Yellow-faced Honeyeater (6), Yellow Thornbill (2), Noisy Miner (50), Striated Pardalote (7), Grey Currawong (3), Australian Magpie (50), Magpielark (4), Little Raven (12) and Mistletoebird (1). The nursery eventually provided us with sightings of two White-browed Scrubwrens, although not in the usual location for those birds.

After lunch we ran through the bird call list and confirmed that we had seen 40 species.

**Lynton Huxley**

## Birds SA

### Sunday 31 July Happy Valley Reservoir Reserve

Situated in the southern suburbs of Adelaide, Happy Valley Reservoir is one of the reservoirs that was opened to the public in 2021. The reservoir covers 188 hectares and in addition to the large water body itself, contains a mix of exotic and native vegetation, much of it in the form of plantations. Apart from a few patches, much of the understory is sparse. The banks of the reservoir are also quite sparse in terms of vegetation, apart from a few small patches of reeds. On the 31st of July, around 12 of us walked the Woodland Loop track which is about 4km long. This was the first Birds SA excursion to this site. The day started cold and wet but gradually cleared up after about 20 minutes. In total we recorded 32 species.

Many of the eucalypts were in flower and not surprisingly there were good numbers of nectarivores present such as New Holland Honeyeaters, Rainbow Lorikeets and Red Wattlebirds. Other honeyeaters observed included White-plumed Honeyeaters and Noisy Miners. In a dense grove of ti-trees near the dam we also found a group of around six Little Wattlebirds.

Striated Pardalotes called constantly during the morning and we saw several family groups of Superb Fairywrens where understory vegetation was present.

Overall, we observed most of the common birds you would expect to see in a suburban woodland such as Australian Magpies, Laughing Kookaburras, Galahs, Long-billed Corellas, Adelaide Rosellas, and Sulphur-crested Cockatoos as well as a few of the less common ones such as Red-rumped Parrots, Eastern Rosellas and Musk Lorikeets.

On the shores of the water body itself we saw about 40 Maned Ducks as well as a few Pacific Black Ducks (presumably hybrids) and Grey Teal. Other water birds we saw included Little Pied and Little Black Cormorants, Australasian Swamphens, Eurasian Coots and Dusky Moorhens. Near the end of the walk, we observed a very elegant White-faced Heron in breeding plumage perched in a large eucalypt about 5m above the ground, close to a nest.

Happy Valley Reservoir has very good facilities and is family friendly with easy walking trails. Cycling, fishing and kayaking are also allowed. Kangaroos and koalas are present and the reservoir would be an ideal place to introduce novice birders to many of the common birds of the Adelaide Hills.

**Ray Nias**

## Birds SA

### Saturday 13 August Scott Creek Conservation Park

On a damp and gloomy Saturday morning 5 intrepid ladies braved the Bureau of Meteorology's forecast of yet more rain and met me, (*Mr Huxley had volunteered me as the substitute leader the previous evening*) at Gate 20 of Scott Creek Conservation Park. Fortunately, the rain held off and we were able to enjoy the short but steep walk down to the creek and lake at the bottom of the hill.

The flat area near the gate was boggy with several large ponds of water, but the rest of the walk was relatively firm and dry.

## Past Excursions *(continued)*

On the first part of the walk we saw a mixture of Yellow and Buff-rumped Thornbills, Striated Thornbills, Silvereyes and Red-browed Finches, whilst further down in the heavily wooded area by the creek there were Mistletoebirds, New Holland, Crescent and White-naped Honeyeaters plus Galahs, Rainbow Lorikeets, White-winged Choughs and a pair of Western Whistlers. The lake contained Australasian Grebes, Pacific Black Ducks and Maned Ducks.

In all, we saw 27 species.

**Allan West**

### Birds SA

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#### Thursday 18 August Whites Road Wetlands

Six birders assembled on a cool breezy day when a cuckoo was heard calling directly above our heads. On the wire, there was a Horsfield's Bronze Cuckoo. A great start to the morning!

All the ponds except one of were full of water. The largest pond contained a nesting Black Swan and there we saw Silver Gulls ducks and grebes with young.

The traffic noise from the Northern Expressway was inescapable. Riding for the Disabled horses were calmly led past us with very happy riders on board.

Our bird count for the day was 49 species including Hardhead (35), Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike (3), Western Whistler (1), White-plumed Honeyeater (10), Spiny-cheeked Honeyeater (2), Silvereye (12), Grey Shrike-thrush (2), Royal Spoonbill (4) flying over, Black-shouldered Kite (2) hovering, Black-fronted Dotterel (1) and a white domestic Muscovy Duck.

**Maree Merchant**

### Birds SA

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#### Saturday 28 August Glenthorne National Park (*Ityamaiipinna Yarta*)

Despite the August 2022 rainfall exceeding the average monthly rainfall by around 10mm and the year being very wet and unusually cold, August 28 was mostly sunny when thirteen eager Birds SA members descended on the Glenthorne National Park (*Ityamaiipinna Yarta*), eager to see how the new National Park was progressing. Winds were between 20-30 km per hour, resulting

in low expectations regarding numbers of bird species. In addition, construction work on the Glenthorne Hub — the planned activity centre of the National Park including the Nature Play and adventure playground — was in full swing, further putting doubt on what we would see. It was thought that many birds would avoid these areas of high activity. Nevertheless, another thorough bird survey by Birds SA would provide valuable baseline data for the years ahead.

The group met in the Ranger Station carpark at 8.30am and were immediately welcomed by a group of 6 Little Wattlebirds. This was unusual, given that Little Wattlebirds had been seen infrequently on the property over the past 20 years. The larger Red Wattlebirds are usually seen and in reasonable numbers. The group started by walking down the new bitumen road, heading east from the Ranger Station, towards the retention ponds and filtration plantings which were designed to filter the water coming into the National Park from Majors Road. A small flock of Maned Ducks was seen feeding on the grasses and as the group moved south along the newly constructed water course (the water previously ran underground through a 900mm pipe for about 500m), Striated Pardalotes were seen in the large River Red Gums. The first ever Spotted Pardalote had been seen a few months earlier in this spot, so care was taken to check the trees as we moved along.

The large Eucalypt trees provide valuable hollows and, consistent with recent observations on the property, Galah numbers were high (30), as were Crimson (Adelaide) Rosellas (18) and Rainbow Lorikeets (50).



**Members on the new walking trail in Glenthorne National Park (*Ityamaiipinna Yarta*)**

*(Photographed by Alan Burns, 28 August 2022)*

## Past Excursions *(continued)*



**Looking northwest across the small billabong** *(Photographed by Alan Burns at Glenthorne National Park (Ityamaiipinna Yarta), 28 August 2022)*

The Galahs were again seen feeding on the newly laid turf in the hub area, as were Crested Pigeons (7) and a few Noisy Miners (11). This grassy area will be the centre of public activity when the park's hub will open to the public in December 2022.

Further south, along the watercourse, a family of Superb Fairywrens was seen moving amongst the large rocks, some up to 20 tonnes, placed in readiness for children to climb and enjoy. Heritage Osage Orange trees and Pear trees from the 1860s and the large old fig tree remain in place, as are the heritage buildings, although some have been rebuilt from original materials. This area has been planted with riparian sedges and other plants, including Lignum, to provide secure habitat for the resident Superb Fairywrens.

The group walked along the new trail past the small billabong, observing a Striated Pardalote moving in and out of a hollow in a River Red Gum tree. We heard a Grey Shrike-thrush in the vegetation around this small dam and White-plumed Honeyeaters flew low across the billabong, occasionally picking up insects from the water surface. Red Wattlebirds and a pair of Eastern Rosellas were also seen. The water course now flows along its new course from Majors Road into this small billabong, providing a picturesque spot for some bird photography and the log seats provided were put to good use.

The walking trail passes the eastern side of the small billabong and then heads along the western side of the revegetation, south towards the large central dam.

Part of the trail at the large dam was still under construction, but this new path opens up the vegetation on the western side of the dam, so that a full view of the dam can be seen. The group took the opportunity to view a number of Pacific Black Ducks (7), Australasian Grebes (3) and Hardheads (6) which were on the water. The Hardheads had not been seen for many months at Glenthorne, perhaps having spent some time in the north of the State enjoying the flood waters. Interestingly, the Grey Teals had not yet returned, possibly because the dam's water was at record high levels, given recent rains.

Dusky Moorhens (4) and Eurasian Coots (3) were seen around the edges of the dam and a pair of Black-faced Cuckoo-shrikes flew over, into the large gums to the north of the dam. Grey Currawongs were also seen in these gums, a site where they had previously nested.

The group then walked up the steep hill to the munition huts and rested on a well-carved fallen log seat. Many large logs and rocks had been sourced and put to good use along the trails of the Glenthorne National Park *(Ityamaiipinna Yarta)*.



**A Striated Pardalote at the entrance to its nesting hollow** *(Photographed by Alan Burns in Glenthorne National Park (Ityamaiipinna Yarta), 28 August 2022)*

## Past Excursions *(continued)*

Although the National Park has been under construction for the past 2 years, many of the trails are yet to be completed and weeds such as Variegated Thistles, Stinging Nettles, Common Sowthistle and Bathurst Burr are present in large numbers.

Along the heritage trail from the munition huts back to the Ranger Station, the group spotted a number of Welcome Swallows flying low over the paddocks and an Australian Pipit and European Goldfinches were feeding on the ground. While having lunch in the Ranger Station Garden, the group spotted Australian Pelicans and Australian White Ibis flying overhead. These took the morning's tally to 41 species, very much in line with previous Birds SA field trips but above expectations held earlier in the day. It will be interesting to see how these surveys change over time, as the vegetation increases in coming years, especially in the water course and as the weed load is reduced.

**Alan Burns**

### Fleurieu Birders

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#### Saturday 3rd September Bullock Hill Conservation Park

Six optimistic birders assembled in the car park of the Greenman at Ashbourne on a day that didn't seem able to decide what sort of weather to provide. There were about half a dozen 4wheel drives lined up in the carpark when I arrived, and for a moment I hoped that they might be birders too. However, a sign on one of the vehicles indicated that it was a 4wheel drive training course. Dashed hopes!!

We set off along Signal Point Road in one of the many heavy showers that occurred during the morning. Once parked we set off north along the Eucalypt Hike. This area of the park has been quite badly burned in the last few years, the burned remains of the acacia and regrowth about half a metre high provided a haven for small birds. It was along here that we found New Holland Honeyeaters, Eastern Spinebills, Silvereyes and Yellow-rumped Thornbills.

We followed the path down the hill, into an unburned area containing many big pink gums on the point of flowering, as well as wattles in full flower. Here we found 3 Brown Treecreepers, a Eurasian Skylark, White browed Scrubwrens, Horsfield's Bronze Cuckoo, a number of Elegant Parrots, Musk Lorikeets, Rainbow Lorikeets and some very handsome Adelaide Rosellas. Once we reached the boundary fence between the park and the farmland some more honeyeaters began to appear in the gum trees. Those we spotted were Crescent

Honeyeaters, Yellow-faced Honeyeaters and Red Wattlebirds. We saw a Spotted Pardalote and heard a Striated Pardalote.

As we scrambled up the hill, we could hear the Western Whistlers calling. With some detective work and some bush-bashing we found the courting pair. In the same area we heard a Fan-tailed Cuckoo but did not see it. Alarm calls alerted us to the presence of a raptor which was identified as a Brown Goshawk. Tree Martins were flying overhead and some were landing on the ground in front of us, presumably to pick up suitable nesting materials. It was here that we saw Sulphur-crested Cockatoos, Little Corellas and Galahs.

A significant amount of planting has been done in this open area of native grasslands during the winter, which bodes well for the future. Here we saw a Grey Currawong, Australian Magpies and Little Ravens. We walked back to our cars along the blocked end of Haines Road; here we saw a collection of Red-browed Finches, Yellow-rumped Thornbills and a Brush Bronzewing Pigeon along the fence line. We were treated to a pair of Red-rumped Parrots in a tree examining the nesting facilities and Mistletoebirds, Grey Fantails, a Grey Shrike-thrush, Superb Fairywrens and a Common Blackbird. We also saw an Australian Kestrel and a Laughing Kookaburra.

To find somewhere dry to eat lunch and make the birdcall we adjourned to the bus shelter opposite the Ashbourne Primary School. The final count was 35 species.

**Edith St George**

### Birds SA

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#### Saturday 10 September Altona CSR Landcare Reserve, Barossa Valley

Twenty-one eager birdwatchers gathered at the gates to the Reserve, all pleased that the rain of the past few days had held off for the walk. Because of the large number of people, we split into two groups, one led the way whilst the other one followed a short distance behind.

Two members of the local Landcare group also participated in the excursion and provided information on the history of the Reserve and answered questions from those that were interested.

The walk started from the car park up to the Landcare container, normally quite a productive area for birdwatching but was quiet this morning. However, plenty of Spotted Donkey orchids and Greenhoods were flowering to keep the group entertained.

## Past Excursions *(continued)*

At the container the group turned left following the “Black Chinned Honeyeater” trail. With the *Grevillea lavandulacea* (Lavender Grevillea) still in flower in the reserve, we observed twelve Eastern Spinebills.

We saw pleasing numbers of parrots, lorikeets and cockatoos, either flying overhead or feeding in the flowering gums. We counted the following: 10 Galahs, 3 Sulphur-crested Cockatoos, 12 Red-rumped Parrots, 20 Crimson Rosellas and 10 Musk Lorikeets.

We saw only a couple of raptors: 1 Brown Goshawk high in the sky over the reserve and a single Black-shouldered Kite hunting lower down.

The trail branched off to allow the group to walk down to the Chatterton Gorge lookout to see the large volume of water cascading through gorge, due to the North Para River being swollen by the recent rainfall. The group stayed for a short while, taking the advantage to observe birds and to look down into the canopies of a few large gum trees.

Throughout the walk, we observed approximately fifty Tree Martins. Many were observed harvesting mud from the ground to build their nests in tree hollows adjacent to the gorge.

Further along the “Black Chinned Honeyeater” track, the path runs parallel to the river for a short distance. Looking down on the dark flowing river a solitary Dusky Moorhen was spotted on a nest in the reed beds on the river’s edge and we saw 2 Pacific Black Ducks on the water.

The birds of the day were the two Horsfield’s Bronze Cuckoos, that we sighted. One remained in a large gum tree below the level of the path for quite a while allowing plenty of opportunity for the group to watch it flying from branch to branch.

At the connection of the “Firetail” walk trail the group turned left and proceeded back to the Landcare container via this loop. It was at this intersection that some of the group sighted a Hooded Robin.

We also saw numerous honeyeaters and thornbills in the tree canopies, in shrubs or on the ground: namely 20 New Holland Honeyeaters, 6 White-naped Honeyeaters, 30 Red Wattlebirds, 4 White-plumed Honeyeaters, 2 Brown Thornbills, 12 Yellow-rumped Thornbills and 12 Yellow Thornbills.

We saw eight Superb Fairywrens throughout the Reserve, with the males showcasing their beautiful breeding plumage.

Overall, we observed 42 bird species by the end of the walk – those not already mentioned being: Australian Western Whistler (4), Australian Magpie (12), Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike (2), Brown Treecreeper (8), Common Bronzewing (1), Grey Currawong (10), Grey Fantail (4), Grey Shrike-thrush (12), Laughing Kookaburra (1), Little Raven (6), Maned Duck (3), Mistletoebird (4), Pacific Black Duck (2), Peaceful Dove (2), Red-capped Robin (1), Rufous Whistler (4), Silvereye (6), Striated Pardalote (20), White-winged Chough (10) and Willie Wagtail (4). Introduced species seen were Common Blackbird (2), European Goldfinch (4).

We finished our walk by noon. The group drove down into Lyndoch and enjoyed their lunches under the shade area on Lyndoch Greens followed by the bird call.

**Tina Woods**

## Birds SA

### Thursday 15 September Tangari Regional Reserve, Woodcroft

The weather gods gave us a six-hour window of clear blue sky and no wind for this excursion, which was in stark contrast to conditions either side of that time slot. Three new members joined the nine regulars, who provided great assistance with bird identification.

Our group with binoculars and long lens cameras attracted the attention of other walkers who told us of a nesting Tawny Frogmouth. One kind walker took us to the location but made us earn our stripes by standing back whilst we searched. The bird was quickly located on its feeble nest (*shown in the photo below*) and on closer inspection two white heads were seen protruding under the parent bird’s body. This was a great initiation for our newer members.



**Tawny Frogmouth** (*Photographed by Peter Roodhouse at Tangari Regional Reserve, 15 September 2022*)

## Past Excursions *(continued)*

We saw 34 species altogether, including Maned Duck (2), Pacific Black Duck (8) and a flyover Australian Pelican (2), Nankeen Kestrel (2), a single Little Pied Cormorant, Crimson Rosella (13), Eastern Rosella (9), Rainbow Lorikeet (40), Musk Lorikeet (20), Red Wattlebird (12), Noisy Miner (40), Striated Pardalote (10), Western Whistler (2), Grey Shrike-thrush (14), Australian Magpie (40), Welcome Swallow (5) and White Plumed Honeyeater (2) were the predominant sightings. In addition, members clearly heard three, including Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo and White-throated Treecreeper.

Not wishing to push our luck with the weather we agreed to depart earlier than the usual time, but we were very pleased with our day's outing at this wonderful location.

**Lynton Huxley**

### Port Augusta Bird Group (The Babblers)

Friday 16 – Monday 19 September

#### Bon Bon Station Reserve, Bush Heritage Australia

**Editor's note:** *The participants in this excursion divided themselves into two groups, so that two different areas of the reserve could be surveyed. Hence there are two different reports from this excursion.*

#### Goss's Woolshed Group

##### Thursday 15 September

A group of 9 birdwatchers arrived at Bon Bon Homestead on Thursday 15th September, a day earlier than stated on our programme. This change would enable us to make plans, so we had time to cover all our busy schedule.

People arrived from Adelaide, Mambray Creek, Port Neil, Whyalla, Wallaroo and Wilmington.

After the introductions over coffee and lunch we discussed how we were going to conduct the surveys. The reserve was basically broken up into two halves:

Five birdwatchers would stay at the homestead and concentrate on surveying sites to the north of the homestead, while the remaining 4 birdwatchers would be based at the Gosses Woolshed area staying at the newly updated shearers' quarters.

##### Friday 16 September

Our group of 4 birdwatchers, 2 from Adelaide, 1 from Mambray Creek and 1 from Wilmington set about the task of surveying sites near and south of Gosse's Woolshed.



**Blue Bonnets** (Photographed by Larry Gruitt at Bon Bon Homestead, September 2022)

The weather was not in our favour, with a moderate to strong wind all day.

Some interesting birds we saw in a flooded area along the Scorpion Track were Red-necked Avocet, Black-fronted Dotterel, 1 Pied Stilt and a large number of Grey Teal. Also, a little further along on Five Mile Track we found the sought-after Chestnut-breasted Whiteface, in the southern part of the property.

We moved on, since each survey site, within a 2 Hectare area, was limited to 20 minutes.

Although not finding many birds at each site, we did get some good sightings of Mulga Parrots, Black-faced Woodswallows (which were in abundance) also Blue Bonnets and Cockatiels.

##### Saturday 17 September

The weather was not much better, with more cloud, wind and light rain at times, we saw Chiming Wedgebills along the Puckridge Track as well as Splendid Fairywrens and Singing Honeyeaters.

We also had casual sightings of Black-capped Sittella, Little Buttonquail and White-winged Triller.

##### Sunday 18 September

Finally, the weather was better, with the wind easing, making for better bird watching.

Along the Woollybutt Track there were Budgerigars, Crimson Chats and White-fronted Honeyeaters.

In all our group conducted 21 surveys over the period. Considering the conditions, we had put together a reasonable list of species.

**Larry Gruitt**

## Past Excursions *(continued)*



**Chestnut-breasted Whiteface** *(Photographed by Richard Croll at Bon Bon Homestead, September 2022)*

### The Homestead Group

#### Thursday 15 September

The last of the birders arrived at Bon Bon homestead an hour before dusk and was greeted by one of the Bush Heritage managers. After being directed to the high-pressure wash pad (to rid the vehicle of possible intrusive plant material) it was time to meet the others and conduct the formalities of inductions and necessary protocols to ensure a safe visit. Once concluded, five birders, two from Adelaide, one each from Port Neill, Wallaroo and Whyalla set about planning a strategy to cover predetermined sites for bird observations starting the following day.

One group of three and one group of two would survey designated areas, and meet for breaks to submit their bird counts and relative information.

#### Friday 16 September

The team awoke to moderate winds that would increase throughout the day to 35-40 knots with a maximum temperature of 15C. Not exactly ideal conditions to walk in areas of low vegetation and open plains!

The first two sites revealed ten species, those being: Zebra Finch, Mulga Parrot, Yellow-throated Miner, Crested Pigeon, Australian Pipit, Grey Butcherbird, Singing and Spiny-cheeked Honeyeater, White-winged Fairywren and a pair of Chestnut-breasted Whiteface; all of which we were delighted to find. Other sites and incidental birds between locations included Little Button-quail, Chiming Wedgebill, many Black-faced Woodswallows, Little Crow, Wedge-tailed Eagle more Whitefaces, (Southern and Chestnut-breasted), Budgerigar, Stubble Quail, White-fronted Honeyeater and an Emu family comprising a father and six chicks.

#### Saturday 17 September

There was no respite from the unfavourable weather conditions. Strong winds and cool temperatures were the order of the day. However, many sites needed to be located and surveyed so after an early breakfast it was time to set off again.

Further species encountered throughout more areas in the north of Bon Bon included Brown Falcon, Galah, Purple-backed Fairywren, Bourke's Parrot, Pied Honeyeater, Crested Bellbird, Southern Cinnamon Quailthrush, Hooded Robin, Australian Raven, Magpielark, Blue Bonnet, Black-capped Sittella, Chestnut-rumped Thornbill, White-browed Babbler and Australian Magpie.

#### Sunday 18 September

This was our third day birding and we were pleased to be greeted with improved weather conditions. The wind had dropped and temperatures were rising.

Our fellow birders down south had asked for some assistance to cover sites that hadn't been surveyed yet. This means travelling long distances as the area of Bon Bon Station Reserve is more than 2,000 square kilometres.

We travelled to the south-west of the property and encountered more species to add to our list: Crimson Chat, Australian Ringneck, Striated Pardalote, Splendid Fairywren, Common Bronzewing, Red-backed Kingfisher, Grey Shrike-thrush, Welcome Swallow and Tree Martin. The southern terrain of Bon Bon is considerably more vegetated and has concentrated areas of plant life. One particular area we came across had hectares of Sturt's desert pea rimmed with yellow blossoming Senna. A spectacular sight to witness indeed!



**Crimson Chat** *(Photographed by Richard Croll at Bon Bon Homestead, September 2022)*

## Past Excursions *(continued)*



**Emu and its chicks** *(Photographed by Richard Croll at Bon Bon Homestead, September 2022)*



**Budgerigars in flight** *(Photographed by Larry Gruitt at Bon Bon Homestead, September 2022)*

### **Monday 19 September**

This was the final day of the trip. We decided to revisit sites already covered but in a different time-frame. Also, two birders hadn't seen Chestnut-breasted Whiteface so it was agreed we spend some time looking for them. We were successful and everyone managed to get some photographs. Overall, it had been successful few days at Bon Bon with new species seen by some birders and important information gathered for Bush Heritage.

Saying our goodbyes to management and other birders we all formally signed-off that we had departed the property and travelled our separate ways.

**Richard Croll**

## **Birds SA**

### **Sunday 25 September Cowirra, Mannum**

While our birding group consisted of only 7 people, we certainly made up for lack of quantity with plenty of quality. Forecast rain by-passed Mannum as usual, and the weather was calm, mild and intermittently sunny. Before setting out on the walk, Mannum property owner Ben once again provided an overview of his past and recent planting efforts on his family's former dairy farm. The group then set out to follow Ben's 'Camino', a circuit around the property through various habitat types.

The 'forest' of river red gums, river box, melaleuca and acacia featured Musk and Rainbow Lorikeets, and too many Noisy Miners! Here also we had our first encounter of the day with Pied Butcherbirds and their offspring, sightings of each being repeated later and proving to be one of the highlights of our visit.

This forest area is bordered by a small lake on one side and reed marshes on another. Samphire and pigface became abundant at ground level, the latter showing many a cheerful flower, while saltbush became more prolific the further we walked. These multiple levels were a favourite haunt for Superb Fairywrens, and we were also thrilled to spot three Silvereyes posing atop a bush. Unlike other visits, the Reed Warblers were not to be seen and Little Grass Birds only heard. Clumps of saltbush in this area have been a haven for Brown Quail in the past, but again, none were seen today, although six have been sighted by Ben in recent times.

We were surprised to see two Caspian Terns at the edge of the small lake, and comforted to once again see, as on previous visits, two Masked Lapwings standing tall on a little central island. Welcome Swallows and Tree Martins continually circled this area.

Further up the hill were older and quite grand assorted trees including eucalypts both robust and skeletal, providing excellent habitat for mature and breeding birds. An understory section included more recently planted grevilleas and hakeas of various kinds, golden wattles, correa and quandong trees: a happy bird habitat evolving there. The final leg winding back to the homestead rewarded us with multiple views of White-browed Babblers, circling and roosting Whistling Kites, flitting Superb Fairywrens, and both adult and juvenile Pied Butcherbirds. Finally, at lunch and coffee time seated on the property lawns beside the river, we could enjoy the water birds and a rousing finale of Laughing Kookaburras.

Birds seen but not listed above were: Little Corellas, Galahs, Australian White Ibis, Royal Spoonbills,

## Past Excursions *(continued)*

Australian Pelicans aplenty, Australian Ringnecks, a Red Wattlebird, Adelaide Rosellas, Red-rumped Parrots, White-plumed Honeyeaters, New Holland Honeyeater, Spiny-cheeked Honeyeaters, a Grey Fantail, a Willie Wagtail, many Common Starlings and Crested Pigeons, Spotted Doves, Australian Magpies, Magpielarks, Little Ravens, Great Cormorants, Little Black Cormorants, Little Pied Cormorants, an Australasian Darter, another Caspian Tern in flight, an Australian Shelduck, Pacific Black Ducks, Maned Ducks and a family of Australasian Swamp Hens and chicks.

In all, a most enjoyable time with 42 different species sighted. Our thanks go to Ben and family for hosting us for our fifth visit to this wonderful and varied bird habitat.

**Anna Woods**

### Birds SA

#### October Campout

30 September – 4 October

#### Wyndgate Homestead, Hindmarsh Island

Nineteen members, including some new members, attended this year's October campout at Lawari Conservation Park, which was good. However, tens of thousands of mosquitos also attended, which was not so good! Given we had beautiful sunny days we were fortunate to only have one snake sighting in the camp. Unfortunately, the homestead septic tank backed up and we had to cancel firstly use of the shower and then use of the kitchen sink before the inevitable closure of the two toilets! Despite these challenges we had a very friendly and enjoyable campout.

#### Friday 30 September

This was a find your camp spot and a general mingle and planning day.

#### Saturday morning, 1 October

We left the camp just before 8am to travel to Springmount Conservation Park and join the Fleurieu Birders on their scheduled excursion, which was led by Bob Daly. We had a great time and I will let you read his separate report in this issue regarding sightings etc.

#### Trish and John Oreb explaining their property revegetation

*(Photographed by Lynton Huxley at Wyndgate Homestead, 2 October 2022)*

#### Saturday afternoon

After leaving the Fleurieu Birders we went to the nearby Hindmarsh Falls for lunch. A walk to view the flowing waterfall was very rewarding. Before returning to camp Ali Ben Kahn led us to Nangawooka Flora Reserve. This extensive and beautifully maintained garden is highly recommended for a visit if you are in the area around Victor Harbor. The plantings had attracted 20 bird species, an added bonus for us! Since we still had good daylight, most members agreed to visit the mainland side of the Goolwa Barrage and Beacon 19. Since the River Murray flow, was greater than normal. the fresh water going through the barrage and mixing with the salt water on the outlet side had caused the death of many fish of several species. This had attracted a large colony of about 50 seals and several hundred birds to easy free food. Our Barrage count was 23 species including Black Swan (20), Little Black and Great Cormorant species (100) each, Black-faced Cormorant (1), Australian Pelican (10), Nankeen Kestrel (2) and a single Nankeen Night Heron. Moving on to Beacon 19 we counted 6 species adding Red-necked Stint (7) and Curlew Sandpiper (10) to our count.

#### Sunday 2 October

Wendy Phillips had prearranged an outing for us to the nearby Oreb's private property and she has kindly provided the following report on this visit:

Bob and I met the group of 10-15 campers at the Wyndgate homestead (Lawari C.P.) and they followed us to Trish and John Oreb's property on Randell Rd. Trish talked to us the about the native revegetation they embarked on after taking over the property from her father, who previously grazed cattle on the 80 acres. He had already started to plant native trees near the house.



## Past Excursions *(continued)*

The property has been a labour of love for the two of them over the last 15 years. They travelled down from the Adelaide suburbs every weekend to work on the property clearing Boxthorn and other weedy plants. Trish said they have planted about 18,000 plants, mostly from the Hindmarsh Island Landcare group, after removing the Aleppo pine forest in two stages. These fully grown pine trees had to be cut down and the stacks burnt in situ, before they could start planting, which proved to be a difficult task.

We followed Trish and John through the revegetated bush, down the recently mown tracks they had prepared for us. Instantly, we could hear many bird calls: wrens, thornbills, weebills, honeyeaters, goldfinches, Golden Whistlers, Grey Fantails, scrubwrens and many other birds.

It was hard to believe that the **bush** was a bare paddock 15 years ago, Trish said there were hardly any small birds then. The Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoos were common as they fed on the feral pinecone seeds. Groups of native pines (*Callitris*) and sheoaks (*Allocuarinas verticillata*) have now replaced them.

As we were walking through the rows, circling above us was a group of 6 Whistling Kites, then 12 Pelican glided past, followed by a Black-shouldered Kite and later a Nankeen Kestrel. We spread out, covering a few different areas. Some of us walked up to a wetland of reeds and rushes surrounding a low-lying samphire patch. There were kangaroos resting, but not many birds about at the time.

We spent a couple of hours wandering around and after saying goodbye to our hosts, we were surprised that the bird count came to 32 species. We left a couple of recent issues of our Birder magazine as a thank you to Trish and John in appreciation for supporting our visit

Later Peter Roodhouse unexpectedly found that he had photographed a Beautiful Firetail sitting on an electricity wire while we were there and no one had noticed it! Bob had explained to the group that we had found one 3 weeks previously near the Fishway on Lawari and told them to watch out for it when they visited that area, never expecting it to be on Oreb's property, which "as the crow flies" is quite close to Lawari C.P. It is so important to survey the revegetation sites on the Island that was over-cleared before the re-planting began.

**Wendy Phillips**

### **Sunday Afternoon**

given the sunny conditions and surprising lack of wind we agreed to head to the Murray Mouth (Island side) to put the two spotting scopes to use. It was disappointing

that about 5 groups of people had dogs off the lead in that area, and that the dogs continually disturbed the birds. We also observed a stunt plane flying very low (estimated less than 100m) over the same large flocks of mixed species.

### **Monday 3 October**

Given the sewer issues at camp we left for the toilets at the Mundoo Channel and a bird survey of the adjacent revegetation area. We recorded 31 species here including Brown Quail (3), Black-shouldered Kite (2), Swamp Harrier, Horsfield's Bronze Cuckoo, Elegant Parrot (6) Superb Fairywren (10) White-fronted Chat with young and Eurasian Skylark.

We moved onto the nearby Mundoo Channel Fishway area, where we sighted 27 species and added Red-browed Finch (4), Silvereye and Brown Songlark to our tally for this area.

A weather forecast of rain was clear to see as the sky had now changed to dark clouds, so while most packed up to go home, a few chose to stay and make a quick trip to the plantings in the revegetation plot along the road to the Murray Mouth. We counted 18 species here and added Brown Goshawk and Wedge-tailed Eagle to the list of species seen for the campout.

### **Tuesday 4 October**

Steady rain continued to fall from about 5am making for a wet pack-up for some. We cleaned the floors and tidied the homestead ready for the next group of visitors. I wish to express our sincere thanks to Stuart Hicks, Senior District Ranger for Lawari Conservation Park for making the homestead available for our camp. It is a great asset for us to have available to use. I can now confirm that we recorded a total of 89 species during our campout. Thanks to all who helped make this another successful campout.

**Lynton Huxley**

## **Fleurieu Birders**

### **Saturday 1 October**

### **Springmount Conservation Park, Inman Valley**

It happened to be the Long Weekend for Labour Day and Lynton contacted me to say that Birds SA were having a Campout at Lawari CP on Hindmarsh Island and might join us for the morning.

This increased our numbers to 22 people. After an extremely wet and cold September, it was the best weather for months. Beautiful sunshine and no wind!

## Past Excursions *(continued)*

The stringybark forest of tall trees has a lovely understory of small bush plants and spring is the best time to visit. It is hard work finding birds in the forest and many are heard rather than seen.

In the car park, we observed Superb Fairywrens and Eastern Spinebills. The tall trees are used for nesting hollows for the Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoos though none were there on that day. Sulphur-crested Cockatoos, Galahs, Crimson Rosellas, Rainbow Lorikeets, and one Elegant Parrot were present. The eucalypts were not flowering and the only honeyeaters were a few crescents and a couple of new hollands.

Grey Fantails and White-Throated Treecreepers were plentiful, followed by the Scarlet Robins that seemed to be everywhere. A couple of White-browed Scrubwrens, thornbills, and Red-browed Finches required a good deal of patience to find in the undergrowth.

It was decided, we would do the bird count in the car park over morning tea before heading off to Hindmarsh Falls. The total species came to 24 which I was told, in a stringybark environment is a good count.

Visiting the Falls was an add-on and after such a wet Winter, it did not disappoint. The water was crashing over the rocks. There were other tourists about and we had a great time catching up with plenty of chatter at the picnic ground.

It was a lovely, relaxed day for the start of the campout tribe, thanks to Bob Daly who was the leader for this event and Fleurier Birders got to meet some old and some new members.

**Wendy Phillips**

## Birds SA

Saturday 8 October

### Browns Road, Monarto

After assembling at the carpark for the normal greet and COVID sign on, our group of 17 consisted of several new members and a visiting overseas guest, so I was most grateful for the valuable assistance provided by more experienced members Enid Pascoe, Rod Tetlow and John Gitsham. We took the fence line track to the start of our intended walk and this proved to be very beneficial as there were large flocks of White-winged Choughs and several mud nests occupied by some sitting birds.

A flight of twenty Straw-necked Ibis ensured we kept an eye to the sky, but we only saw a single Collared Sparrowhawk in the clear blue sky.

The group stayed mostly together which was appreciated by those less experienced, as some calls that were not

familiar to us mortals, led to great sightings including, Red-capped Robin (4), Hooded Robin (2) and a surprising number of Diamond Firetail (50) were seen throughout our walk, mainly in pairs but also in small flocks. Despite there being a shortage of flowering trees/ shrubs we still saw Red-rumped Parrot (2), Crimson Rosella (4), Australian Ringneck (6) and Rainbow Lorikeet (2). Honey-eater species included: New Holland (20), Brown-headed (10), Spiny-cheeked (20), Red Wattlebird (15) and White Plumed (3). Both Variegated (12) and Superb (4) Fairywrens were seen. Other memorable sightings included Rufous Whistler (6), Grey Shrike-thrush (10), Varied Sittella (6), Dusky Woodswallow (1), White-browed Babbler (6), Southern Whiteface (8), Weebill (4), Spotted Pardalote (4) and Striated Pardalote (20).

Before heading back to the cars and our birdcall we thought it would be good to try and locate an Australian Owllet-nightjar for our newer members and overseas visitor. Enid was successful and, with her directions, we all obtained good views of the bird sitting on the outside of its nesting hollow. The bird count for our visit was 46 species.

**Lynton Huxley**

## Port Augusta Bird Group (The Babblers)

Sunday 9 October

### Bernie's Block, Mambray Creek

On a crisp, cool, calm, clear and sunny morning ten birders met in the highway roadside carpark at Mambray Creek. Four were from the Adelaide area, two each from Whyalla and Pt. Pirie and one each from Pt. Augusta and Mambray Creek. We then went on the short drive to Bernie's block and parked at the house and started noting the birds in the garden area.



**Peaceful Dove** (Photographed by Richard Croll at Bernie's Block, Mambray Creek, 9 October 2022)

## Past Excursions *(continued)*



**Yellow Thornbill** (Photographed by Richard Croll at Bernie's Block, Mambray Creek, 9 October 2022)

Singing and Spiny-cheeked Honeyeaters, Yellow-throated Miners, White-browed Babblers and Willie Wagtails moved about in the vegetation, while Welcome Swallows darted around catching insects and then feeding them to their young sitting under the veranda. Little Ravens, Galahs and Crested Pigeons flew past and Emus grazed nearby as we prepared to walk across the old paddock into the creek area.

The Red Gum trees in the creek hosted more Yellow-throated Miners plus Mallee Ringnecks, Grey Butcherbirds with young just out of the nest and Red-rumped Parrots. The creek was flowing but only at a low level and the waterholes were full, but the one we stalked up to did not yield any water birds. The bordering revegetated paddock yielded White-winged Fairywrens, an Australian Kestrel, Australian Pipit, Black-shouldered Kite and Australian Magpies. As we moved along the creek towards the National Park boundary, Australian Ravens, Budgerigars and Purple-crowned Lorikeets passed overhead, while we found Weebills, Striated Pardalotes, Peaceful Doves, Common Bronzewing, Kookaburras, Magpielarks, a Rufous Whistler, a Flinders Adelaide Rosella and Red Wattlebirds in the trees. As we were about to leave the creek area an active and noisy group of birds attracted our attention. It was a mixed flock of Yellow-rumped, Chestnut-rumped, Inland and Yellow Thornbills.

Since it was now smoko time, we headed back to the house, crossing the open old paddock area again and following the edge of the native pine woodland. Little Corellas flew past while we also saw Black-faced Cuckoo-shrikes, a Grey Shrike-thrush, Dusky Woodswallows and a Sacred Kingfisher. We enjoyed our morning smoko and headed off into the woodland area. A single White-backed Swallow glided past and White-plumed Honeyeaters darted about in the trees. As we walked through the trees we found a Horsfield's Bronze Cuckoo, Black-faced Woodswallows, Purple-backed Fairywrens and more of the birds we had already recorded.

At the edge of the woodland a Spotted Harrier and a big murder of Little Ravens passed by.

We ate a late lunch back at the house, making a bird call because some of the group had to leave. The rest of us walked further along the native pine woodland adding House Sparrows, Rainbow Bee-eaters and Elegant Parrots to the bird list. We crossed the paddock again and found a Black Kite and more Emus. We crept up to some more water holes in the creek and found some Pacific Black Ducks and Grey Teal. As the birders in our group were distracted by a Lace Monitor climbing a tree, the most inexperienced birder in our group spotted a pair of Tawny Frogmouths about 2m from the ground and provided us with some good photographs.

Back at the house we enjoyed a late afternoon smoko and made the bird call. It had been perfect birding weather all day and yielded 53 bird species. The birds of the day would be the Yellow Thornbills that were firsts for some of the group and the Tawny Frogmouths, Spotted Harrier, White-backed Swallow and the noisy Rufous Songlarks.

**Bernie Haase**

## Birds SA

Thursday 20 October

### Laratinga Wetlands, Mount Barker

Finally, after all the rain during the last month, a lovely spring morning greeted 21 keen Birds SA members to the famous Laratinga wetland in Mt Barker. Unfortunately, due to the massive development happening throughout Mt Barker and the expansion of the Sewage works, the water levels in all the 11 ponds at Laratinga were at maximum, meaning that we would not expect to see a large diversity of waterbirds at this stage. The woodland birds were therefore the targeted bird species for the morning's bird walk.

To start the trip at the wetland entrance from the car park, several members got a good look at a couple of the now elusive Crested Shriketits that reside around Laratinga.

By the end of a pleasant morning's birding, we had seen 50 species of birds — 16 water birds and 34 woodland bird species. Highlights were the Crested Shriketits, a Common Bronzewing Pigeon feeding two hatchlings on the nest in a gum tree, many ducklings, a male Blue-billed Duck sporting a bright blue bill, Black-fronted Dotterel with chicks and Purple Swamphen chicks. Also, there were many showings of the shy Little Grassbirds and Australian Reed Warblers, calling as they moved in and out of the reeds.

**John Gitsham**

## Past Excursions *(continued)*

### Birds SA

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Sunday 30 October

#### Minko Scrub, Mount Compass

The Minko field trip took place in what was forecast to be an extremely wet and windy day, which probably put a number of people off because there were only five participants. However, fortune favours the brave and we were lucky because the rain held off.

With such a small group we decided to adapt our plans to instead inspect a number of the nest boxes which had been installed a couple of months previously. I had taken with me a special nest box inspection camera mounted on an extendable aluminium pole so we could reach up six or seven metres and poke this camera inside the nest holes.

Very encouragingly, most of the 20 or so boxes that we inspected had visible signs of interest and use. For example, there were signs of nibbling around the edges of the entrance hole. Many had various forms of vegetation inside however five were properly occupied: two by ringtail possums, one with young that we couldn't identify, one by Adelaide Rosellas and another by White-throated Treecreepers which is most exciting. It does take a while for nest boxes to be accepted, so we were pleased that so many were clearly being considered and we are hopeful that they will be well utilised in the near future.

As we walked around, we also saw another five or six other White-throated Treecreepers, at least one Horsfield's Bronze Cuckoo, and lots of Grey Fantails

We will arrange another Minko trip in better weather.

**Steven Langley**

### Fleurieu Birders

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Saturday 5 November

#### Hindmarsh River Estuary Walk

On the first relatively warm and calm morning for a couple of weeks, fourteen birders met at the outlet of the Hindmarsh River in Victor Harbor. We were joined by Mark Richards of the Friends of the Hindmarsh Estuary group who gave us a short talk on the achievements of the group and their plan to identify a number of bird surveying spots along the river to gauge the success of their revegetation and weed control efforts. The signage for these should be in place by Christmas.

The river mouth was open and the boardwalks and underpass were dry. We walked along the Lagoon Track and around the lagoon before starting off up the river along Kent Drive. Almost every bird we tried to

photograph turned into a New Holland Honeyeater as we pressed the button.

Highlights of the walk included a Black-shouldered Kite in a dead tree with its breakfast (a large rat) and an obliging Striated Pardalote who stayed relatively still for us to examine and photograph. As we worked our way up the river to the more open forested area, we found Red-browed Finches carrying nesting material, a Rufous Whistler, that sang loudly and many Silvereyes.

The group shrank on the return walk as people had other things to do and six of us returned to the cars for lunch and the bird count. The total was 43 species including five Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoos and around fifty New Holland Honeyeaters, by far the most prolific bird of the day.

To round off the day, further down the beach we found two adult Hooded Plovers with two chicks about to fledge that were well protected by the local Hoodie volunteers.

**Bob Daly**

### Port Augusta Bird Group (The Babblers)

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Sunday 13 November

#### Devils Peak

On a calm, cool and partly cloudy morning two birders met at the Quorn pool. We had expected more people to arrive, but the weather was predicted to be windy, cold and showery and probably kept them away. One person was from Pt. Augusta and the other from Mambray Creek. We drove about 8km out to Devils Peak along a good unsealed track and parked in the carpark at the start of the walking track to the peak summit.

The area is mainly mallee trees with some Sugar Gums higher up the track and steep rocky cliff faces at the top of the Devils Peak. It promised to be a good birding day being calm with the sun occasionally shining through the clouds and warming things up.



**Little Woodswallow** (Photographed by Bernie Haase at Devil's Peak, 13 November 2022)

## Past Excursions *(continued)*



**Striated Pardalote** (Photographed by Bernie Haase at Devil's Peak, 13 November 2022)

As we walked along the new gravel track a flock of Little Ravens drifted past as well as some Black-faced Cuckoo-shrikes. Red Wattlebirds and Striated Pardalotes moved about in the trees and a flock of Budgerigars whizzed past. Two Mistletoebirds were chasing each other about while Inland Thornbills and Redthroats seemed to be trying to outdo each other to see who had the loudest and most varied calls. The 1.5km track rises steadily then dips slightly and rises again and then the gravel track changes into a narrow steep rocky path. We saw a Red-capped Robin and could hear, and later saw, Rufous Whistlers and Grey Shrike-thrushes.

I had to continue on alone as the path was getting too rough and rocky for my offside. Kookaburras were laughing as Silvereyes and White-browed Babblers moved through the low bushes. Some of the mallees and bottlebrushes were flowering; attracting Singing, Spiny-cheeked, Yellow-faced, Grey-fronted and Tawny-crowned Honeyeaters, which I hadn't seen for a long time. A Horsfield's Bronze Cuckoo was calling out from an exposed perch, while Weebills gleaned the leaves below it. Grey Currawong calls could be heard close by and the birds briefly came close to have a look at me.

The top of the track is very steep and rocky to the summit so I stopped and propped for a rest and a look around. A Peregrine Falcon was hanging in the breeze at the top of the summit cliffs while two Australian Kestrels cackled at it from their perches on the cliff. Common Bronzewing shot past and landed on the other side of the small valley between the peak and another rocky outcrop. Some woodswallows drifted about high above me, and then came down to see what I was doing and to chase insects amongst the tree tops. They could then be identified as Little Woodswallows, accompanied by a single Dusky Woodswallow.

As I returned back along the track some Welcome Swallows were also darting about chasing insects, a

Diamond Firetail flew past and another one could be heard calling. Back on the gravel track some Mallee Ringnecks and Galahs sat in the trees, while Chestnut-rumped Thornbills, more Inland Thornbills and Redthroats moved about in the bushes. I tracked down a constant, persistent soft calling that turned out to be a young Horsfield's Bronze Cuckoo being fed by a pair of Inland Thornbills. I also found an Inland Thornbills' nest containing young thornbills. Back at the car park some Australian Magpies, Crested Pigeons and a Willie Wagtail were added to the bird list. 35 bird species were found here and it was time to look elsewhere for some more.

### **Powell Gardens, Quorn**

The wind was picking up as I was enjoying my lunch in the Powell Gardens carpark. I then walked around the native plants garden where some of the Eucalypts were in flower. The Red Wattlebirds dominated the treetops but some Yellow-throated Miners and White-plumed, Singing and Spiny-cheeked Honeyeaters were there as well. Rainbow and Purple-crowned Lorikeets were also feeding on the flowers. As I walked through the garden Mallee Ringnecks, White-browed Babblers, Purple-backed Fairywrens, Crested Pigeons, Magpie Larks, Willie Wagtail, Apostlebirds, House Sparrows and a Common Blackbird were found in the bushes. A Red Gum creek borders the garden and here there were Galahs, Striated Pardalotes, Weebills, Sacred Kingfishers, Red-rumped Parrots and Black-faced Cuckoo-shrikes in the trees, while Australian Ravens and a Nankeen Kestrel flew past. Australian Magpies were on the golf course next door and a Rufous Songlark called out from the top of a shrub. I had found 26 bird species there.

### **Effluent Ponds, Quorn**

The wind was blowing very strongly as I looked over the fence at the effluent ponds. There were not many birds on the water apart from Grey Teal with rafts of young of varying ages, some Pacific Black Ducks and a Hardhead. On the banks around the ponds were Maned Ducks and Masked Lapwings, while flying overhead were Rock Doves, Welcome Swallows, Tree Martins and a Nankeen Kestrel. In the bushes and shrubs around the area some Purple-backed Fairywrens scolded me and Singing Honeyeaters and Galahs were sheltering out of the wind. Brown Songlarks crackled from the fields next door. Only 13 bird species were found here probably because of the wind and it would be better for water birds further north and east where the floods are. 56 bird species were found for the day with the birds of the day being the Little Woodswallows, Tawny-crowned Honeyeaters and Peregrine Falcon, with a mention to the Yellow-faced Honeyeaters and Diamond Firetails.

**Bernie Haase**

# Future Excursions

## 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 eNewsletter.

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

## Birds SA

**Saturday 10 December**

**Aldinga Scrub Conservation Park (MLR) 46km** **Easy**

Meet at 8.30am at the reserve entrance on Cox Road, opposite Aldinga Holiday Park. (*Note: trip was originally listed for Pailwalla Wetlands but due to high River Murray water levels has to be moved to alternative venue.*)

TRIP LEADER: *Bonny Vogelzang*

The Birder | Summer 2022

## Port Augusta Bird Group (The Babblers)

**Sunday 11 December**

**Australian Arid Lands Botanic Garden**

Meet in car park 7.30am

Christmas Lunch in café with showing of year's best birding photos

## Birds SA

**Thursday 15 December**

**Monarto and Ferries-McDonald Conservation Parks (MM) 76km** **Easy**

Meet at 8.30am at the car park of the Monarto CP. Take the South Eastern Freeway from Adelaide. Leave the freeway at the Monarto Zoo ramp exit and turn right across the Bridge to head south on the Ferries McDonald Road for approximately 3.5km. After that walk we drive to the nearby Ferries-McDonald CP.

TRIP LEADER: *John Gitsham*

## Birds SA

**Saturday 14 January 2023**

**Kaiserstuhl Conservation Park (MLR) 60km.**

**Moderate** Meet at 8.30am at the Tanunda Creek Road CP gate. The Park is located 12km southeast of Tanunda in the Barossa Valley. From Tanunda take the main Tanunda to Angaston Road (Mengler Hill Road) for 8km to the southerly turn off onto Tanunda Creek Road. The Park is approximately 4km along this road.

TRIP LEADER: *Tina Woods*

## Port Augusta Bird Group (The Babblers)

**Sunday 15 January**

**Baroota Reservoir**

Meet at 5.30am in Mambray Creek parking bay.

## Birds SA

**Thursday 19 January**

**Onkaparinga Wetlands (MLR) 32km** **Easy**

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

TRIP LEADER: *Lynton Huxley*

## Birds SA

**Sunday 29 January**

**Myponga Reservoir Reserve (MLR) 60km** **Easy**

Meet at 8.30am in the car park off Hansen Street, Myponga (the Myponga Memorial Hall and public toilets are on this corner). The Myponga Reservoir Reserve is near the township of Myponga on the Fleurieu Peninsula about one hours drive south of Adelaide via Main South Road.

TRIP LEADER: *Lynton Huxley*

## Past Excursions *(continued)*

### Birds SA

#### Saturday 11 February Thompson Beach

Meet at 8.30am. It is planned to move to Dublin for the bird call and lunch, as there is more shelter/shade.

TRIP LEADER: *Kate Buckley*

### Port Augusta Bird Group (The Babblers)

#### Sunday 12 February Whyalla Conservation Park, Point Lowly

Meet at 8.30am at Tanks/Iron Knob turnoff

### Fleurieu Birders

#### Tuesday 14 February Coorong Boat Cruise

(See details in this edition on page 27)

### Birds SA

#### Thursday 16 February Shepherds Hill Recreation Park (MM) 10km

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

TRIP LEADER: *Lynton Huxley*

### Birds SA

#### Sunday 26 February Buckland Lake, Port Gawler (AP) 45km **Easy**

Meet at 8.30am at the corner of Port Gawler and Applebee Roads at Port Gawler. From the City head towards Two Wells on the Port Wakefield Road and turn left onto Port Gawler Road (it is about 4km before you reach Two Wells).

TRIP LEADER: *Brian Walker*

### Fleurieu Birders

#### Saturday 4 March Clayton

Meet at 8.30am at Sails Café car park, Clayton

TRIP LEADER: *Wendy Phillips*

### Birds SA

#### Saturday 11 March Deep Creek Conservation Park (Stringybark Camp) (MLR) 100km

**Moderate** The easiest way to get there from Adelaide is to travel along Main South Road to Myponga, then onto Normanville, Second Valley, past the Rapid Bay turn off, until you reach the little settlement of Delamere.

Immediately after the store at Delamere, turn left. This sealed 14 road leads to Victor Harbor, but the unsealed roads to Deep Creek Conservation Park and the camping grounds are clearly marked. Meet at the Stringybark camp area at 8.30am.

TRIP LEADER: *Lynton Huxley*

### Birds SA

#### Thursday 16 March Bushland Park Lobethal (MLR) 43km **Moderate**

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

TRIP LEADER: *Ali Ben Kahn*

### Port Augusta Bird Group (The Babblers)

#### Sunday 19 March Telowie Gorge/Nelshaby Gorge

Meet at 8.00am at Telowie Gorge

### Birds SA

#### Sunday 26 March Mount Lofty Botanic Gardens (MLR) 19km

**Moderate** Meet at 8.30am in the lower car park off Lambert Road. To get there, leave the SE Freeway at the Crafrers Interchange and follow the Piccadilly Road for about 3km. Then turn left into Trigg Road.

TRIP LEADER: *Lynton Huxley*

### Birds SA **EASTER CAMPOUT**

#### Wednesday 5 April - Tuesday 11 April BALCANOONA STATION HOMESTEAD within the Vulkathunha-Gammon Ranges National Park (660km from Adelaide and 100km east of Leigh Creek)

Refer to details on following page. Don't miss this campout for birding in this area is expected to be 'as good as it gets' given the favourable recent rains and expected summer follow-up falls.

TRIP LEADER: *Lynton Huxley*

### Birds SA

#### Thursday 20 April Byards Road Wetland, Reynella East (AP) 22km

**Easy** Meet at 8.30am. Car parking on Byards Road is adjacent to these recently established wetlands which cover an area of 21 hectares and have been extensively revegetated.

TRIP LEADER: *Lynton Huxley*

The Easter Campout this year will be at **Balcanoona Station within the Vulkathunha-Gammon Ranges National Park** (660km from Adelaide and 100km east of Leigh Creek, which is the nearest place for fuel/supplies etc.). The three alternative access routes (*refer to the attached Map A on page 46*) and distances are via:

- Princess Highway through Port Augusta and Leigh Creek - 660km
- RM Williams Highway through Clare and Carrieton - 637km
- Yunta and Waukaringa - 589km (277 km dirt road between Yunta & Balcanoona)

All the main access roads to the park are gravel and are suitable for 2WD vehicles, however most of the tracks within the park are 4WD accessible only (*refer attached Map B on page 47*).

We have secured the Balcanoona Shearers Quarters for the camp. These consist of a communal lounge, and a fully equipped kitchen. There is dormitory accommodation consisting of nine bedrooms located around the veranda. They can sleep up to 19 people. **Please make your dormitory bookings through the camp leader ASAP.** There are showers in the main building, and toilets are a very short walk outside. Camp sites for those wishing to rough it in tents, caravans or motorhomes are available around these quarters.

Camp access for Birds SA will be from noon on Wednesday 5 to noon on Tuesday 11 April 2023 (refer Note 3 right). For those that wish to camp outside the above period, the standard park fees and online booking conditions will apply.

Refer to: [www.environment.sa.gov.au/parks/booking](http://www.environment.sa.gov.au/parks/booking).

Some members may remember that we stayed at this location for the Easter 2018 Campout when the whole area was suffering from a prolonged drought. Conditions this time are expected to be the complete opposite, so please consider joining us to experience conditions in a good year! Over 90 species of birds are recorded in this park and our aim is to undertake a bird survey and provide our data to the park rangers for their records. Species that can be found here include the Wedge-tailed eagle, Little Eagle, Spotted Nightjar, Bourke Parrot, Budgerigar, Southern Scrub-robin, and Brown-headed Honeyeater. A list of all species for this park will be available on our Birds SA website shortly.

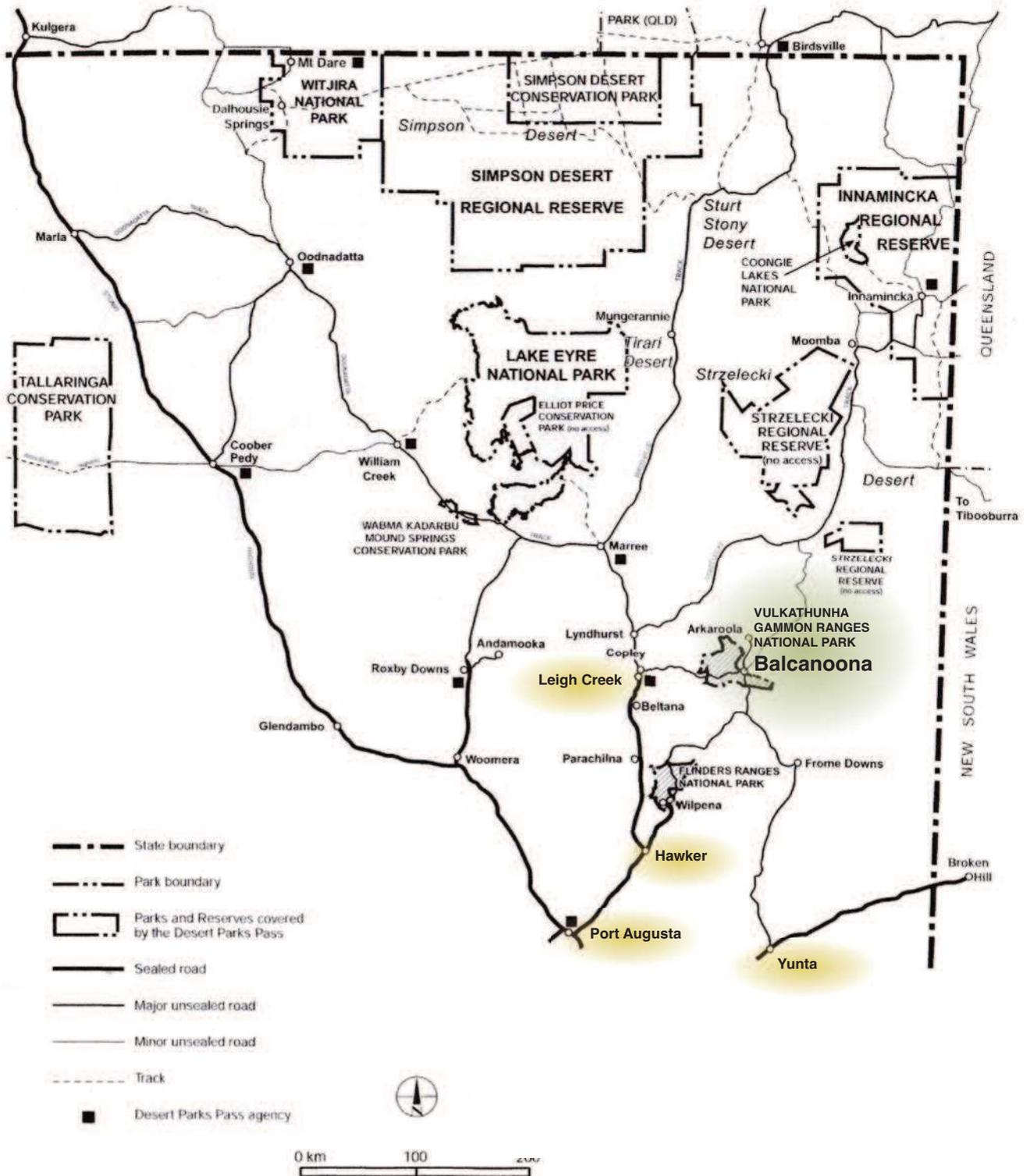
#### PLEASE NOTE:

1. Please top up your fuel tank before you leave either Leigh Creek/ Carrieton/ Yunta.
2. Water is available, but it is best to bring your own drinking water.
3. Fees for a Dormitory bed will probably be \$20\* a night per person (bring your own pillow, sheets and blankets). Otherwise, the fee for camping will be \$10\* per person per day. **The Camp Organiser will collect all campout fees and issue a receipt.**  
**NOTE:** \* denotes that these estimated fees have been set to cover the hire of the facility, and may need to be altered depending on how many members attend.
4. There is no mobile phone coverage in this park.
5. If possible, please bring a handheld UHF radio or vehicle mounted unit. We will use UHF Channel 14 for our Birds SA communication. **The park UHF emergency channels are — channel six for Balcanoona Station or channel eight for Arkaroola Station.**
6. It is advisable to check road conditions before leaving home as closures may apply during and after rain. Up-to-date road conditions can be checked via:
  - the far northern and western road report (1300 361 033) or
  - park headquarters (+61 8 8648 4829)
7. We will have the traditional Sunday gas barbeque lunch (bacon and eggs and/or pancakes). **You will need to provide the ingredients for the Committee Members present to do the cooking!**

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

**Lynton Huxley**  
Campout Organiser  
Ph: 0498 466 092

# MAP A

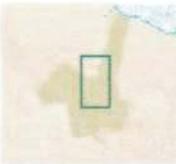
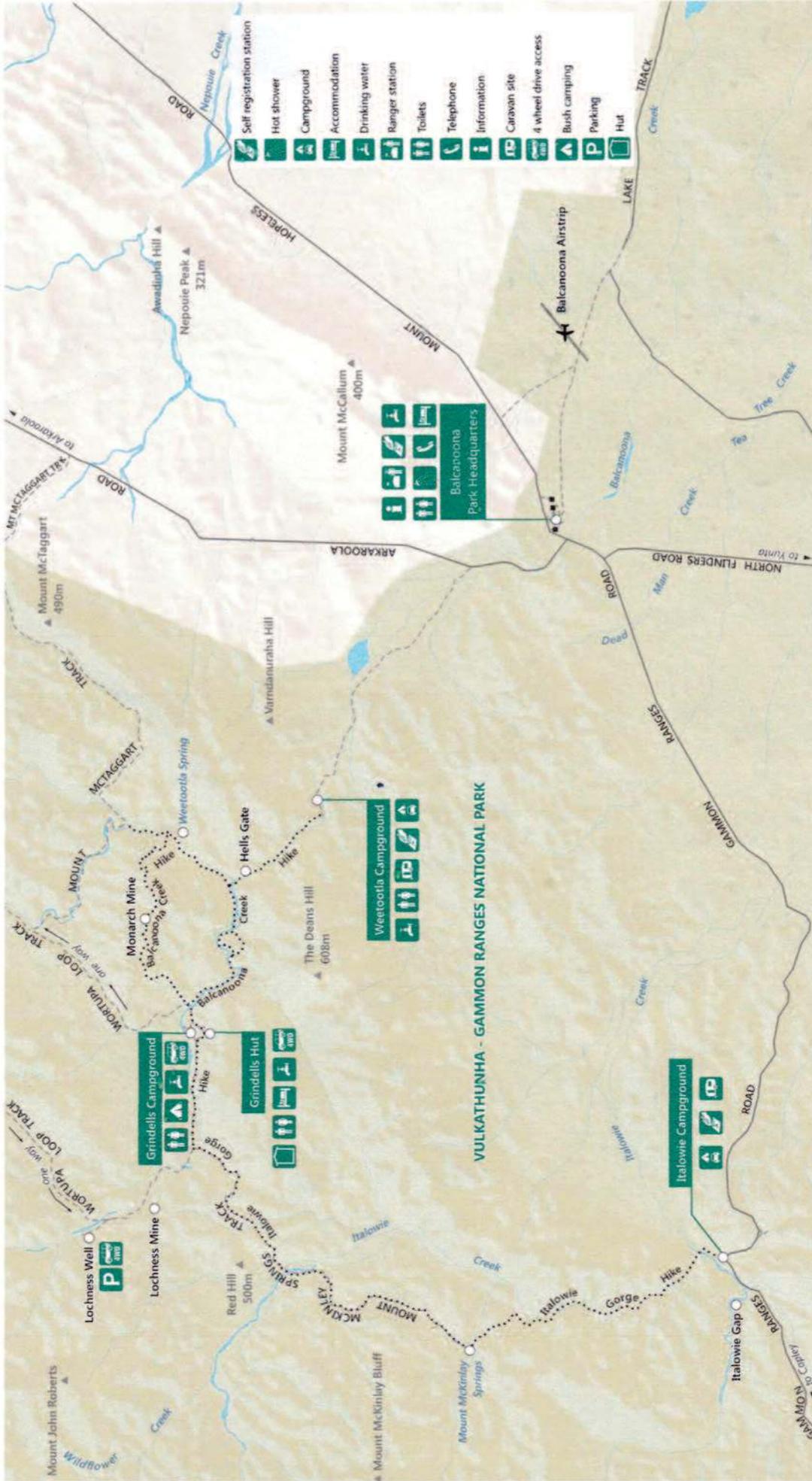


# Vulkathunha - Gammon Ranges National Park

Balcanoona Surrounds



Government of South Australia



[parks.sa.gov.au](http://parks.sa.gov.au)

DENWR does not guarantee that this map is error free. Use of the map is at the user's sole risk and the information contained on the map may be subject to change without notice. Cartography by DENWR, Mapland - 2014

Use this map on your mobile: search Aventura PDF Maps



- Sealed road
- Unsealed road
- Track
- Walking Trail

- Vulkathunha - Gammon Ranges National Park
- Water - perennial, intermittent
- Building, peak

Natural Resources  
 SA Hill Country  
 National Resources Centre Pt Augusta  
 1188 Beach 1700  
[www.naturalresources.gov.sa.gov.au/nrc](http://www.naturalresources.gov.sa.gov.au/nrc)

# 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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### Stubble Quail

1, 25 & 27/9/2022. West Beach stormwater pond, AP.  
Edey, D.

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### Brown Quail

*Fewer reports than in recent years*

1+, 16/9/2022. Onkaparinga River, Perry Bend, MLR. Harvie, G.  
4, 19/9/2022. Goolwa Sewage Works, MM. Colgan, S.  
2, 25/9/2022. Tukurmoar CP, MLR. Colgan, S.  
1, 13/10/2022. Aldinga Washpool, MLR. Colgan, S.

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### Plumed Whistling Duck

9, Aug 2022. Farina, NE. On station dam. Steeles, C. & Girdham, L.  
Still present on 2/10/2022. Hopton, D.

---

### Blue-billed Duck

Female + 1 juvenile, 29/10/2022. Inman Valley, Ashby Dam, MLR. Paton, P.  
*Previously reported breeding at this site by D. Cutten in Feb 2022 (Birder No. 262). Few breeding records near Adelaide.*

---

### Spotted Dove

2, 29/7/2022. Port Lincoln, Kirtin Point, EP. Starkey, J.  
*The status of this introduced species on EP is uncertain, but it appears that a small population has been resident in Port Lincoln for many years.*

---

### Peaceful Dove

1, 5/11/2022. Kingscote, KI. Several other recent anecdotal reports nearby from KI residents. Redman, N.  
*First confirmed report from KI.*

---

### Square-tailed Kite

1, 28/8/2022. Monarto CP, MM. Harper, D. & S.  
1 over, 15/9/2022. Hillcrest, AP. Wilson, V.  
1, 19/9/2022. Mount Bold Reservoir, MLR. Hopton, D.  
1, 22/9/2022. Altona Scrub, MLR. Ramsay, M.

---

### Brown Falcon

1, 12/9/2022. West Beach stormwater pond, AP. Carter, D. & P.

---

### Peregrine Falcon

1, 30/10/2022. Bald Hill Beach, AP. Chasing waders over mudflats. Indistinct photo obtained shows pale cheek patches indicative of various northern hemisphere migratory subspecies that are vagrant to Australia, with most reports from northern Australia and offshore islands. Taylor, P.W.

---

### Baillon's Crake

1, 1 & 7/9/2022. West Beach stormwater pond, AP. Edey, D.

---

### Spotless Crake

2, 29/8/2022. West Beach stormwater pond, AP. Edey, D.

---

### Black-tailed Nativehen

1, 2/9/2022. Lower Mitcham, AP. In suburban garden. Black, S. & B.  
*This species has previously invaded southern regions following wet seasons in eastern central Australia.*

---

### Australian Bustard

15, 18/8/2022. Pootnoura, NW. Griffiths, J.

---

### Bush Stonecurlew

1, 3/11/2022. Point Boston, EP. Solly, F. & Hewstone, P.

---

### Lesser Sand Plover

1, 19/10/2022. Bald Hill Beach, AP. Taylor, P.W.  
*Few reports from SA in recent years.*

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### Pacific Golden Plover

2 or 3, 21/10/2022. Bald Hill Beach, AP. One bird identified as an immature with features consistent with the similar American Golden Plover. Taylor, P.W. *et al.*

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### Ruddy Turnstone

1, 16/9/2022. Breakout Creek mouth, AP. Edey, D.  
About 30, 29/10/2022. Point Lowly, EP.  
Two Red Knots and 1 Sanderling also present. Croll, R.  
27, 30/10/2022. Bald Hill Beach, AP.  
Largest count at this location. Taylor, P.W.

## Bird Records *(continued)*

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### Sharp-tailed Sandpiper

1, 9/9/2022. Nullarbor Roadhouse, NW. Carew, A. & D.

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### Curlew Sandpiper

12, 4/10/2022. Witchelina Reserve, Minagoona Lake, NW.  
Feeding at margin of ephemeral lagoon.

Hopton, D. *et al.*

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### Broad-billed Sandpiper

2, 17/10/2022. Clinton CP, AP. Taylor, P.W. & Moore, G.

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### Black-tailed Godwit

1, 22/8/2022. Bald Hill Beach, AP.

With Bar-tailed Godwits. Taylor, P.W. *et al.*

1, 28/10/2022. Inman River mouth, MLR.

Feeding among beach-washed seagrass. Palmer, D. & A.

---

### Whimbrel

1, 15/10/2022. Port Clinton, YP.

Sarah, J.

Also 2 reported at same location by  
P.W. Taylor on 20/10/2022 and 27/10/2022.

1, 20/10/2022. Bald Hill Beach, AP.

Taylor, P.W.

1, 29/10/2022. Reeves Point, KI. Roosting

with 3 Eastern Curlews.

Buick, I.

---

### Terek Sandpiper

12, 17/10/2022. Clinton CP, AP.

Roosting in dead mangrove at high tide.

Taylor, P.W. & Moore, G.

---

### Painted Button-quail

1, 31/10/2022. Mitcham, Scotch College, AP.

Found dead after striking window.

Pace, D.

---

### Little Tern

1, 17/10/2022. Clinton CP, AP. Taylor, P.W. & Moore, G.

---

### Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo

2, 12/9/2022. West Lakes, AP.

Carter, D. & P.

700, 15/9/2022. Goolwa area, MM.

Haskett, C.

7, 11/10/2022. Waite Arboretum, AP.

James, J.

8 over, 11/10/2022. Black Forest, AP.

Carpenter, G.

13, 27/10/2022. Frewville, AP.

Sparks, K.

1 over, 29/10/2022. Fullarton, AP.

Also 3 over on 4/11/2022.

Horton, P.

---

### Budgerigar

*Widespread reports from northern SA south to EP, MN and northern MM.*

15, 17/10/2022. 5 km N Port Wakefield, MN.

Letheby, R.

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### Pallid Cuckoo

1, 22/9/2022. Hillbank, AP.

Potter, M.

*Few reports near Adelaide in recent years.*

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### Horsfield's Bronze Cuckoo

1, 31/8 and 12/9/2022. West Beach

stormwater pond, AP.

Carter, D. & P.

Also 2 juveniles reported at this location by D. Edey on  
11/10/2022.

1, 2/9/2022. Highgate, Church St, AP.

Pace, D.

---

### Shining Bronze-cuckoo

*Generally reported in wetter forested parts of SA but several recent records from drier areas, including suburban AP.*

1, 15/9/2022. Napperby, FR. Waanders, P.

1, 19/9/2022. Manning Reserve, McLaren Vale, MLR.

Goland, R. & G.

1, 19/9/2022. Kinchina CP, MM.

Woods, L.

1, 21/9/2022. Novar Gardens, AP.

Found injured after colliding with window. per Horne, S.  
Heard, 1/10/2022. Fullarton, Cremorne St, AP.

Horton, P.

2, 17/10/2022. Port Clinton, YP.

Letheby, R.

---

### Pacific (Eastern) Koel

Heard, 12/9/2022. Prospect, Blackfriars School, AP.

A male was seen in this area in previous years.

Paton, F.

Male, 13/9/2022. Prospect, AP.

Christy, P.

Heard, 16/9/2022. Prospect, Ballville St, AP.

Paton, F.

1, 23/10/2022. Prospect, AP.

Christy, P.

Heard, 21/10/2022. Fullarton, Cremorne St, AP.

Horton, P.

---

### Barn Owl

*Additional reports from suburban AP in August 2022.*

1, 6/8/2022. Marleston, Maple Rd, AP.

Fowler, A.

1, 7/8/2022. Semaphore Park, AP.

Rich, G.

1, 7/8/2022. South Parklands, Kurranga, AP.

Rich, G.

1, 14/8/2022. Gillman, Whicker Rd wetlands, AP.

Schlencker, A.

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### Red-backed Kingfisher

1, 2/10/2022. Thompson Beach, AP.

Taylor, P.W.

---

### Brown Treecreeper

1, 16/9/2022. Cobbler Creek CP, MLR.

Kaashoek, M.

---

### Rufous Fieldwren

7, 14/8/2022. 8 km S Kanyacka, FR.

Haase, B. *et al.*

1, 25/10/2022. Bruce, Rodgers Rd, FR.

Gruitt, L. *et al.*

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## Bird Records *(continued)*

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### Eastern Spinebill

Reported from suburban AP later than usual, but no reports of breeding in this region. Also atypical reports from MN and MM regions.

1, 7/8/2022. North Haven, AP. Lodge, J.  
1, 9/8/2022. Croydon, AP. Darlaston, K.  
2, 18/8/2022. Clare Railway Station, MN. Mills, H.  
1, 20/8/2022. Monarto, Browns Rd, MM. Pape, K.  
1, 28/8/2022. Monarto CP, MM. Harper, D. & S.

Also 1 seen at this location on 25/9/2022 by G. Rich.

1, 6/9/2022. Clarence Park, AP. Carpenter, G.

Also reports from the SE region where it is considered a rare (?breeding) resident.

5, 6/8/2022. Dry Creek Forest Reserve, SE. Rich, G.  
1, 19/10/2022. Mount Gambier, SE. Stansfield, S.

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### Yellow-faced Honeyeater

1, 28/8/2022. Monarto CP, MM. Harper, D. & S.  
1, 19/9/2022. Kapunda, MLR. Jones, R.  
8, 25/9/2022. Monarto CP, MM. Rich, G.

---

### White-naped Honeyeater

1, 21/8/2022. Clare, MN. Trengove, J. & I.  
5, 19/9/2022. Kapunda, MLR. Jones, R.

---

### Ground Cuckoo-shrike

6 + nest, 14/8/2022. Gum Glen Stn, Sugarloaf Ck, FR.  
Haase, B. *et al.*

---

### White-winged Triller

Female, 8/9/2022. Kinchina CP, MM.

Male located and photographed on 20/9. O'Brien, B.

Male, 11/10/2022. West Beach stormwater basin, AP.  
Edey, D.

12, 3/11/2022. Para Wirra NP, MLR. Letheby, R.

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### Grey Shrike-thrush

Heard, 25/8/2022. West Beach, Parks Golf Course, AP.  
Edey, D.

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### Golden Whistler

immature male, 31/8/2022. West Beach stormwater pond, AP. Carter, D. & P.

1, 18/9/2022. Adelaide Oval, AP. Colgan, S.

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### Olive-backed Oriole

1 adult, 24/10/2022. Redbanks CP, MN. Lange, J.

1, 31/10/2022. Duck Lagoon, KI. Lehmann, C.

Reported in same area last year.

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### Grey Currawong

2, 18/8/2022. Modbury Heights, MLR.  
First report from area. Harper, D. & S.

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### White-winged Chough

2 juveniles, 13/9/2022. 9km W Eudunda, MLR.

3, 2/10/2022. Panorama, O'Dea Reserve, AP. Gibb, D.  
Allen, J.

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### Red-capped Robin

Male, 31/8/2022. West Beach stormwater pond, AP.  
Carter, D. & P.

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### Rufous Songlark

1, 9 & 19/9/2022. West Beach stormwater pond, AP.  
Edey, D.

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### Fairy Martin

several nests, 16/9/2022. Seaford Railway bridge, MLR.  
Ellinger, P.

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### Beautiful Firetail

1, 10/9/2022. Lawari CP, Hindmarsh Island, MM.  
Daly, B.

1, 2/10/2022. Hindmarsh Island, Randell Rd, MM.  
Roodhouse, P.

*These and previous recent reports suggest a link between populations between the MLR and Coorong district.*

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### Diamond Firetail

2, 21/8/2022. Near Balaklava, AP. Taylor, P.W.

2, 8/10/2022. Cobbler Creek CP, MLR. Kaashoek, M.

2, 16/10/2022. Springton, Strachans Rd, MLR. Building nest in hawthorn bush. van Weenen, J.



**White-throated Treecreeper** (Photographed by Trevor Cox at Loch, VIC, 27 September 2022)

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

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Your message will be forwarded to that person.

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This Committee assesses applications for research grant funding, and reports to the Management Committee. Members: Jody Gates (Chair), David Paton (when conflicts of interest arise), Beatrice Rogers and Anita Smyth.

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### *Time to nest!*



That's not a nest ...  
... this is a nest!

**A well established clifftop Osprey nest** (Photographed by Bob Daly at Cape Range National Park near Exmouth, 28 August 2022)

**Pair of Ospreys nesting on a bridge over a marina, with a young Osprey almost ready to fledge** (Photographed by Bob Daly at Exmouth, 28 August 2022)

