

The BIRDER

The official magazine of Birds SA Winter 2023 No 266



In this Issue

Nature Forum Aldinga 2023

- *Burning issues KI*
- *Beach driving in SA*

SA Duck Hunting Enquiry



Linking people with birds
in South Australia

*Hey! ... two's company
and three's a crowd*



Western Grasswrens (Photographed by Richard Croll at Whyalla, 27 February 2023)

Contents

Calendar of Events	4
President's Message	5
Nature Forum at Aldinga	5
Conservation Sub-Committee	6
Select Committee Inquiry on Hunting Native Birds	7
Friends of Adelaide International Bird Sanctuary (FAIBS)	8
Past General Meetings	10
Future General Meetings	16
Stripy Wind Turbines could reduce fatal seabird collisions	16
Congratulations Cynthia!	17
Time to say Goodbye	18
Birds SA at Sophie's Patch, Easter 2023	19
Birds SA New Members Walks	20
Birds of the Wet Tropics	24
Bon Voyage Cynthia	26
Past Excursions	27
Future Excursions	41
From the Library	44
Bird Records	46
Birds SA Contact Details	49
Members' Photo Gallery	50

CENTRE INSERT No 83: Dr Alexander Morgan (1867–1934) Part 3 by Penny Paton.

Cover image: Galah

Photographed by John Gitsham in January 2023 at Gluepot Reserve, SA. The cover of this magazine was designed by John Gitsham.

Graphic design: Ingrid Grigg

We welcome 32 new members who have recently joined the Association. Their names are listed on page 22.

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

Birds SA aims to:

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

Calendar of Events

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

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

June

Saturday 10 June	Birds SA	Excursion, Monarto
Thursday 15 June	Birds SA	Excursion, Shepherds Hill Recreation Park, St Marys
Sunday 18 June	PA	Excursion, Carriewerloo to Yudnapinna Road
Sunday 25 June	Birds SA	Excursion, Little Mt Crawford Native Forest Reserve (Jenkins Scrub), Adelaide Hills
Tuesday 27 June	Birds SA	General Meeting

July

Saturday 1 July	FB	Excursion, Hindmarsh Island
Saturday 8 July	Birds SA	Excursion, Aldinga Scrub Conservation Park
Sunday 16 July	PA	Excursion, Mundallio Station
Thursday 20 July	Birds SA	Excursion, Laratinga Wetlands, Mount Barker
Tuesday 25 July	Birds SA	General Meeting
Sunday 30 July	Birds SA	Excursion, Minko Scrub, Mount Compass

August

Saturday 5 August	FB	Excursion, Hardy's Scrub, Blewitt Springs
Friday 11 – Sunday 13 August	PA	CAMPOUT at Oratunga Station
Saturday 12 August	Birds SA	Excursion, Paiwalla Wetland, lower Murray
Thursday 17 August	Birds SA	Excursion, Kaiserstuhl Conservation Park, Angaston
* Sat 26 – Sun 27 August	Birds SA	General Meeting and excursions, Mount Gambier
Sunday 27 August	Birds SA	Excursion, Talbot Reserve, Rockleigh

* Please note the General Meeting is not in Adelaide this month. See page 16.

September

Saturday 2 September	FB	Excursion, Pangarinda Botanic Garden, Wellington East
Saturday 9 September	Birds SA	Excursion, Scott Creek Conservation Park, Cherry Gardens
Sunday 10 September	PA	Excursion, Wirrabara Forest Reserve
Thursday 21 September	Birds SA	Excursion, Belair National Park
Sunday 24 September	Birds SA	Excursion, Kinchina Conservation Park, Rocky Gully
Tuesday 26 September	Birds SA	General Meeting

President's Message

Hello everyone

The South Australian Parliamentary Inquiry into hunting native birds has just commenced. This is a unique, once in a generation opportunity to get the hunting of native ducks and quail banned.

Waterbird wetland habitats are shrinking, with a major long-term study showing a reduction of 57% over the last 40 years in eastern Australia due to climate change and large drainage schemes. Two major long-term studies, supported by the SA Government, showed duck populations in 2022 were down around 75% compared to the long-term average. Between 2015 and 2021 between 12,000 and 80,00 ducks were killed per year in SA. This doesn't include the many thousands that were downed and not retrieved and those which were wounded by shotgun pellets and still managed to fly.

This has got to stop.

Duck hunting is already banned in Western Australia, Queensland and New South Wales, together representing 63% of the Australian population. In Western Australia it's

been banned for more than 30 years – it's about time South Australia caught up.

It's a political decision, and politicians respond to public opinion so if we want change, we need to let the politicians know.

Birds SA has submitted a very strong case to the Inquiry to ban the hunting of ducks and quail. The Inquiry runs until August, so this is a long campaign, and we need to seize every opportunity to make a difference and persuade politicians to do the right thing.

It should be a no-brainer - surely the recreational killing of birds has no place in the South Australia of 2023.

Most people don't even know that hunting native birds still goes on. So, we need to make our feelings known, and we very much need your active support. Please look out for our emails and newsletters asking for your support in various ways.

Steven

Steven Langley, President Birds SA
M: 0490 802 176

NATURE FORUM at Aldinga on protecting the Fleurieu and Kangaroo Island



On April 16th, 2023, the Wilderness Society, Birds SA, Conservation Council SA and Nature Conservation Society of SA, collectively hosted a Nature Forum on 'Protecting the Fleurieu and Kangaroo Island', at the Aldinga Institute Hall. The event was well attended, with well over 100 people present, including at least three members of Birds SA Management Committee.

The two-hour programme involved presentations followed by a Panel Discussion, The panel of five people included Deputy Premier and Minister for Climate, Environment and Water, Susan Close, and our President, Steven Langley.

The principal topics that emerged were **Strategic Burning**, mainly on Kangaroo Island, and **Beach Driving in South Australia**. Our President Steven Langley (see

picture) gave an excellent presentation, revealing some recent and almost surprising figures on recent sales of Sports Utility Vehicles (SUVs). These now constitute almost 50% of vehicle sales and probably come with the implication of: 'Have vehicle can do' attitude often supported by advertising.

Such vehicles are highly relevant to the problems associated with an explosion in Beach Driving and its impact on roosting and breeding birds. He showed several photos illustrating damage and disturbance connected with the use and overuse of such vehicles and the impact on both local and migratory species such as Hooded Plover, Red-necked Stint and Eastern Curlew, as well as on human use of beaches.

Other States control this with various bans and permit systems, but at present, South Australia has few effective controls, even in National Parks. I was pleased that Steven took the opportunity to mention the massive worldwide decline of invertebrates, including insects, which is perhaps the biggest environmental issue of all.

Steven's presentation was very well received, and several points were picked up by Deputy Premier Susan Close in her later presentation, during which she apologised for the delay in addressing the Beach Driving problem and gave the impression that something would be done before the next driving season in summer.

John Hatch

Conservation Sub-Committee

NEWS

May 2023

The Sub-Committee has been encouraging the management and restoration of freshwater wetlands in the South-east for many years. One of these, Pick Swamp, was drained and developed from the 1970s, and only a decade ago was still a cattle grazing property. After being purchased by the South Australian Government in 2005 for its restoration potential, and then progressively renovated from 2007, the area is now listed as a Ramsar site for its international significance for wetland birds. For over a decade, Birdlife Southeast SA and other volunteers have been conducting surveys, and a report on the past 12 years of bird surveys is currently being prepared. Unfortunately, not all the wetlands in the South-east are in such good condition, and a number are being degraded by the impact of ground-water extraction for irrigation in Western Victoria. One of the wetlands to suffer most is the famous Piccaninnie Ponds, which has been losing water inflow since the late 1990s and has recently also been hit with an algal bloom.

On Eyre Peninsula, there has been no recent activity at the Southern Launch facility, an important site for the threatened Eyre Peninsula Southern Emu Wren and Mallee (White-bellied) Whipbird. Birds SA is still hopeful that the site will not be approved as a permanent launch site, due to the threat it poses to these species. Birds SA

made a submission to the Commonwealth Environment Department on the eligibility of the Mallee Whipbird (*Psophodes leucogaster* subsp. *leucogaster*) for inclusion on the EPBC Act threatened species list in the Endangered category. We found the information provided to be a compelling argument in favour of inclusion of the sub-species in the Endangered category, and the conservation actions identified in the documentation to be suitable for recovery. We noted that the development of rocket launch facilities on the southern tip of Eyre Peninsula will clear approximately 24 ha of known suitable and occupied mallee whipbird habitat, with increased threats to this population, particularly from fire.

On Kangaroo Island, we received reports on the considerable effort going into post-fire recovery, with a new funding proposal being developed to specifically target woodland birds. The good news is that Glossy Black Cockatoos are breeding well, with over 80% of birds using nest-boxes, a rise from around 50%. The population has grown from 158 birds in 1995 to well over 400 at the last count. Some 25,000 drooping sheoaks have been planted on the island since the fires, and they are expected to be producing seeds in the next 8 – 10 years.

Ray Nias

Chair, Birds SA Conservation Sub-Committee



Mobile billboard travelling around Adelaide, displaying beach driving message

Select Committee Inquiry on Hunting Native Birds

A Select Committee of the South Australian Legislative Council has been established to inquire into and report on the hunting of natives birds with particular reference to:

- Community values and perspective;
- Cultural, social and recreational aspects;
- Sustainability, environmental and animal welfare aspects of native bird hunting;
- Economic considerations;
- Perspectives of First Nations;
- How native bird hunting is handled in other jurisdictions; and
- Any other relevant matter.

The members of the Select Committee have been announced. They are:

- Hon Nicola Centofanti – *Liberal Party*
- Hon Tammy Franks – *Greens*
- Hon Sarah Game – *One Nation*
- Hon Ben Hood – *Liberal Party*
- Hon Ian Hunter – *Labor Party*
- Hon Reggie Martin – *Labor Party*
- Hon Frank Pangallo – *SA Best*

As members would be aware, Birds SA is opposed to the hunting of native ducks and Stubble Quail. We have made a detailed submission to the Inquiry, focussing on the animal cruelty inevitable with the hunting of these birds, and the challenges faced by native ducks and quail to just survive. Considering the massive loss of habitat over the last forty years and the impacts of climate change, the hunting of these birds is clearly not acceptable.

The table below shows the average number of ducks and Stubble Quail bagged by hunters in South Australia and Victoria per annum. These figures do not include those birds that are downed and not retrieved, and those that are wounded and escape. With the continuing decline in duck numbers recorded in the major surveys relied upon by the South Australian and Victorian Governments, it is staggering that these jurisdictions have proceeded with duck and quail open seasons in 2023.

The Inquiry is our best chance to at last have this archaic activity consigned to history.

The closing date for submissions has passed and you can see the Birds SA submission in the *Policies and Statements* area of the Birds SA website: birdssa.asn.au

Jeff Groves

Ducks and Quail Taken Annually in South Australia and Victoria

State	Ducks	Stubble Quail
South Australia	12,000 – 80,000	4,000 - 6,000
Victoria	350,000	170,000
	Total: 362,000 – 430,000	Total: 174,000 – 176,000

- Based upon data provided to the SA Minister prior to the announcement of the 2023 open season for ducks & quail.
- Based upon SA duck seasons from 2015 to 2021 and quail seasons 2017 to 2019.
- Numbers of birds taken extrapolated from hunter survey data.



Pink-eared Duck unretrieved by hunters
(Photo supplied by Doug Gimesy)



With the departure of the migratory shorebirds and the arrival of the cooler months, the *Friends of Adelaide International Bird Sanctuary*, (FAIBS) volunteer focus will swing from organised bird viewing events to habitat restoration. Weed removal and seedling plantings in Gulf St Vincent coastal areas will contribute to *BirdLife Australia's* current campaign to regenerate nature and reduce fauna and flora extinctions. *BirdLife Australia* is alerting local communities to the fact that Australia is in the grip of an extinction crisis, and birds constitute the largest proportion of threatened species in most areas across Australia.

Many Birds SA members will be aware that around one sixth of Australia's birds are at risk of disappearing. *BirdLife Australia* is currently campaigning to highlight the desperate need to change the way we manage our natural systems to better protect our birds, animals, and plants. This year, the Federal government is reviewing the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act (EPBC) 1999* to strengthen nature laws, reduce the decline in species and to repair nature. *BirdLife Australia* is urging Federal politicians and local communities to support a commitment to policy and action that fosters long-term recovery of habitat and species populations on the brink of extinction.

FAIBS are aware of critically endangered and threatened birds in and around the *Adelaide International Bird Sanctuary (AIBS)*, including the Far Eastern Curlew, Bar-Tailed Godwit, Curlew Sandpiper, Great Knot, beach-nesting Plovers, and the Samphire Thornbill.



FAIBS volunteer planters in action
(Photographed by Anna Woods)



Bar-tailed Godwits at St Kilda
(Photographed by Mary-Ann Van Trigt)

By contributing to the restoration of local habitat, FAIBS volunteers are helping in the recovery of roosting and feeding areas for migratory and resident shore and bush birds. Anyone wishing to support the efforts of these volunteers is most welcome to join FAIBS' events over the coming months. This might include the long-term Weeds and Seeds project led by the local Department of Environment and Water (DEW) Ranger. Volunteers interested in joining the group's fortnightly habitat restoration activities on Monday mornings in the Light Beach and Thompson Beach areas, can get further details by emailing FAIBS at faibssa@gmail.com.

Also, over winter, FAIBS will be holding weekend planting and clean-up mornings along the Gulf St Vincent coast, where hundreds of endemic species will be placed in the dunes by volunteers. The more hands to help, the merrier, so if you'd like to join in, please email us on the above email address, or look at the *Friends of Adelaide International Birds Sanctuary* Facebook page for more details as the months progress. These weekend activities are usually held on the third Sunday of each month.

Of course, whenever 'out there', the birder in us is also on the lookout for interesting avian sightings so please let us know what you see!

Anna Woods

KITE OPTICS®



KITE APC Stabilised 42

Stabilisation as never seen before



The innovative APC 42 redefines your experience in nature observation. Just as light and just as bright as conventional 42mm roof prism binoculars, but stable. And not the kind of stability you may have experienced before... but an entirely new level of stability. Observe in the strongest winds, observe as long as you like. See details as if you are watching a film.

Start watching while you are still out of breath from that long walk, and enjoy highest magnifications without the slightest image vibration. But most important of all... Let yourself be amazed by the things you see, that are invisible with even the best standard binoculars.

KITE OPTICS®

Proudly distributed in Australia
by Hallprint Pty Ltd.

Go to www.kiteoptics.com for more information and a list of current dealers in Australia.

Mention this ad and publication to one of our Australian Dealers and get a free silicone jacket valued at \$58 in your choice of colour!

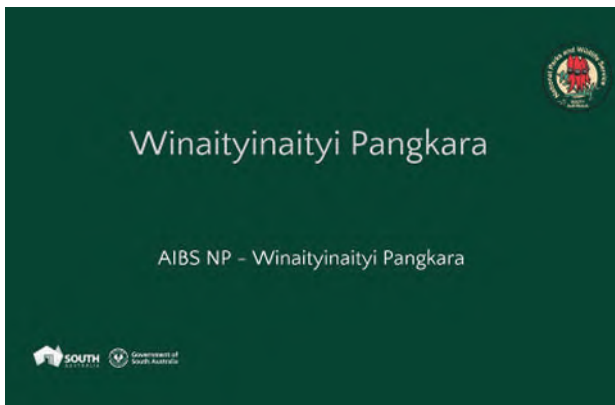
Past General Meetings

Tuesday 22 February

Management of the Adelaide International Bird Sanctuary (AIBS)

Presenter: Warrick Barnes

The Adelaide International Bird Sanctuary is a place where people and nature are thriving – through connecting to nature, Country, and each other.



John Hatch introduced Guest Speaker **Warrick Barnes** who gave a talk on Management of the Adelaide International Bird Sanctuary (AIBS).

Warrick has worked as a Senior Ranger at the Adelaide International Bird Sanctuary (AIBS) for 2.5 years, and in the footprint of what is now the AIBS, since 2012. He has been part of a small Ranger team of three people whose oversight of this vast area presents many challenges. The ongoing support of a broad and diverse community of people has been a vital part of protecting the future of the area, as well as connecting people with nature, and with each other. Warrick mentioned that he was in the process of changing jobs, so his position at AIBS was about to become vacant.

Encompassing terrestrial and marine environments, the Flyway site extends from Port Adelaide to Price on Yorke Peninsula. The National Park sits within the flyway site, encompassing many of the tidal flats of Upper Gulf St Vincent on the Eastern side of the Gulf. The **AIBS National Park** (*Winaityinaityi Pangkara*) was created in 2016 and sits within the AIBS flyway site.



Sharp-tailed Sandpiper (left) and Pectoral Sandpiper (right) at AIBS (Photographed by Mary Ann Van Trigt)

The Flyway incorporates several conservation parks, including AIBS National Park, Adelaide Dolphin Sanctuary, Torrens Island Conservation Park, and the Upper Gulf St Vincent Marine Park, Clinton Conservation Park, and Wills Creek. In all, seven local councils share responsibility for the area, namely, Pt Adelaide Enfield, Salisbury, Playford, Adelaide Plains, Wakefield, Yorke Peninsula, and a small section of Barunga West Council.

Warrick gave us a bird's eye view of the current state of the Sanctuary, and the ongoing measures in place to protect this unique site, as it faces an uncertain future.

He strongly emphasised the importance of engagement with the local community as a key factor in protecting the area, and said without that shared vision "*we would not be where we are now*". He saw cooperation of local

Past General Meetings *(continued)*

An early vision the 'Collective' Beginning


Our collective work has:



- Built a common commitment
- Reached out to a broad and diverse community of people
- Evoked a sense of curiosity and creativity
- Taken the time for broad and continuous engagement

Guiding Principles for Collaboration

The Bird Sanctuary Collective has embraced the following principles to guide the work of the collaboration:

1. Sustain a positive future for birds and people.
2. Respect and incorporate Kaurna people and their culture at all steps.
3. Integrate best science and knowledge into responsive management.
4. Ensure leadership comes from many, and responsibility is taken by all.
5. Build the collaboration adaptively and seek to be responsive to community needs.
6. Encourage a diversity of voices.
7. Support government, at all levels, to be engaged in the partnership.
8. Create a learning environment that is engaging and long-lasting.
9. Focus on capacity building for community leaders.
10. Recognise that community involvement is at the centre of the collaboration.
11. Support community access through nature-based tourism and recreation.
12. Encourage innovation and seek outcomes that bring positive change.



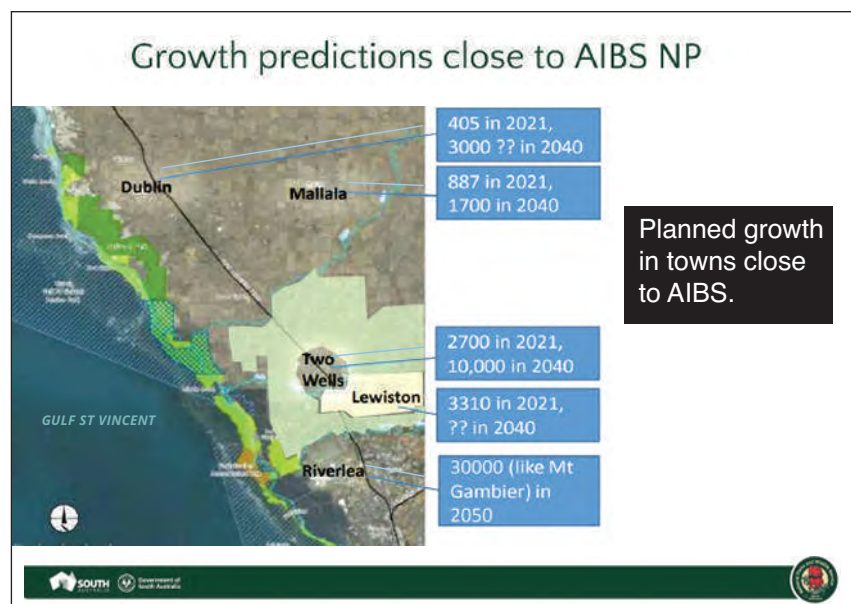



councils, Kaurna co-management and partnership groups that put the community at the centre, as the way forward. Warrick praised the work of the *Friends of the Adelaide International Bird Sanctuary (FAIBS)* and other volunteers, who are not only maintaining and protecting the area, “*but are showing the Department how it should be done*”.

He said that educating the public at large about using the space in a respectful way, sharing it with the birds and other wildlife is of prime importance. Publicising March and April as great months to visit the area to catch a glimpse of the migratory shorebirds, before they begin their 10,000 km return journey to breed in the northern hemisphere, has attracted an increasing number of visitors.

Visitors are informed about how the shorebirds constantly feed during this period, day and night, building up energy reserves for the flight, and the importance of giving them some space and observing from a distance, because both the birds and the sites are highly vulnerable to disturbance.

Educating people about appropriate vehicle use and horse-riding in



the park, has been a gradual process. Adherence was being achieved with the help of strategically placed signage and community engagement.

Some fines have been issued for breaches, but over time, people have been responding well. Control of pests like deer, foxes and rabbits and dealing with weed infestations are ongoing, as is removal of rubbish. Habitat restoration is taking place through the planting of thousands of endemic species.

Most importantly, Warrick emphasised the need to “get the basics right”. Without this well and truly in place, the chance of protecting foreshore and other habitat, birds and wildlife (given the plans to build hundreds of houses close to AIBS in the next few years) could well prove catastrophic not only for our shorebirds, but for the community at large.

John Hatch thanked Warrick for his informative and educational talk, and presented him with a small gift as a token of appreciation.

Summary by Chris Bates-Brownsword

Past General Meetings *(continued)*

Tuesday 28 March

Pelican Movements in the Land of Oz

Presenter: Dr Greg Johnston

*John Hatch introduced Guest Speaker, **Greg Johnston**, a biologist originally from Eyre Peninsula, who has undertaken extensive wildlife research during his career. Between 2000-2010 Greg was Head of Science at Zoos SA's Adelaide and Monarto Zoos, where he established the Research and Conservation program. Now semi-retired, Greg is Adjunct Associate Professor at Flinders University, and Honorary Research Associate at the South Australian Museum. Greg's dry sense of humour made for an informative and entertaining presentation, as members learned a great deal about the fascinating lives of these intriguing birds.*

Of the eight species of pelican, only one species occurs in Australia. Australian pelicans (*Pelecanus conspicillatus*) occur regularly throughout Australia, in Southern New Guinea, and in Timor. Vagrants have been recorded as far away as Christmas Island, over much of eastern Indonesia, the Phillipines, Palau, Tonga, Fiji and New Zealand.

Since 1990, Greg has studied a breeding colony of pelicans located near Outer Harbour, and for much of that time he has focused on the breeding biology and family dynamics of the pelicans while at their breeding grounds. But he also wanted to know about their movements when absent from the colony. "Where were they heading, what were they doing, what were they eating? At the General Meeting in March, Greg spoke of his findings, including the distance the pelicans travelled.

Knowledge about non-breeding pelicans has been gained using a variety of techniques, and the first information on pelican movements came from banding studies. Since 1962 many people working under the auspices of the Australian Bird and



Greg Johnston holding an adult pelican before applying a GPS tracker to its back to record its movements
(Photo: Jay Johnston)

Bat Banding Scheme, have put leg bands (or rings) on 20,000 Australian pelicans. From this enormous effort, 716 leg bands have been recovered. The maximum distance travelled by one bird was 3207 kilometres. This Pelican was banded as a nestling at the Coorong pelican breeding colony, and was found 9 months later in southern New Guinea.



Steve Papp attaching a GPS tracker to the back of a pelican held by Greg Johnston. The tracker records over several weeks and then falls off.
(Photo: Darren Kennedy)

Past General Meetings *(continued)*



This male pelican was wing-tagged as an adult with a nestling in August 2004. This bird bred again in 2005 and 2006 and was sighted 41 times up until August 2008, regularly visiting fisher people to get food.

(Photo: Greg Johnston)

While this shows that pelicans can travel long distances, the average distance travelled by banded pelicans is 285km. Most bands were recovered from the same river drainage-basin where the pelican was originally captured and banded. So whilst individual pelicans can travel across the species' entire geographic range, most don't travel such extraordinary distances. One difficulty with leg-banding studies, is that information is usually only obtained about where the pelican was first captured and banded (Location A), and where the band was found (Location B), which is usually on a pelican that has died. This doesn't reveal where the pelican travelled between A and B.

In a first attempt to learn more about pelican movements, Greg used cattle-ear tags as wing (patagial) tags so that individual pelicans could be recognised from a distance. Between 2002 and 2010, Greg and his team of volunteers wing-tagged nearly 1500 pelicans in this way. Each tag had an individual number and the words "Adelaide Zoo" printed on it. The Zoo received multiple reports of individually tagged pelicans, which showed that young pelicans range widely until they became adults at three years of age. Many then return and raise their own young in the colony where they hatched. After that, the adults generally remain within a few hundred kilometres of the colony. A few pelicans banded as nestlings at the Outer Harbour breeding colony, were later found breeding on the Coorong. One young pelican banded near Outer Harbour, was reported from Arnhem Land, east of Darwin, after it had been eaten by a crocodile(!) Despite a high death rate among the dispersive immature pelicans, many birds that did return, came back as wing-tagged adults and bred each year.

As time has gone by, relatively inexpensive GPS trackers have become available and have been used to find out where adult pelicans go to find food during their breeding period. These trackers transmit the location of pelicans every ten minutes, providing detailed information on movements of breeding adults. Males and females take it in turn to incubate eggs and feed their young. With funding from the Lirabenda Endowment Fund, Greg and his colleagues were able to put trackers on five breeding pelicans. They learned that breeding adults fly between 50 to 90 km away from the nest to obtain food for themselves and their young, and they take shifts with their partners every 1-2 days. The birds tend to return to the same place to forage. Three of the five pelicans flew over the Mount Lofty Ranges to forage along the River Murray. One was called "Mrs Mannum" because she always foraged among the house-boats moored there.



Over several weeks, a GPS tracker on this pelican's back recorded her location every 10 minutes. She was named 'Mrs Mannum' because she flew regularly

from her nest at Outer Harbour to Mannum on the Murray River to get food for her nestlings.

(Photo: Amelia Kennett)

Another pelican repeatedly flew south over the Adelaide suburbs to an open-fill rubbish dump between Seaford and McLaren Vale. She would also forage in the Onkaparinga Estuary, and at the Wingfield refuse collection depot before returning to her young. Three out of the five tracked pelicans foraged in places where they obtained food associated with humans, either rubbish dumps or hand outs from fisher people.

Greg stated that we are very lucky to have pelicans breeding so close to Adelaide. The colony breeds on an artificial island and the number of pelicans there is increasing. He described this as a far cry from Birds SA's involvement with pelicans in the early part of last century. Birds SA played a pivotal role in protecting pelicans breeding on the Coorong, from a very active campaign to destroy them by people concerned that they were a threat to the fishing industry there. Birds SA's involvement eventually gave rise to the establishment of the Coorong National Park, where a substantial colony of breeding pelicans live today.

Summary by Chris Bates-Brownsword

Past General Meetings *(continued)*

Tuesday 2 May

The Eyrean Connection – a Barrier and a Peninsula

Presenter: Andrew Black

*John Hatch introduced the replacement speaker, **Andrew Black**, as “someone who needs no introduction” but added, for new members, that Andrew joined the Association in the 1960s, was a student of Joan Paton, was President three times, has published widely on birds and conservation, including his book ‘Grasswrens’, published in 2017 with Peter Gower (deceased). He received the OAM (Medal of the Order of Australia) for contributions to Medicine, and to Conservation & Ornithology, and was awarded BirdLife Australia’s J N Hobbs Medal, for contributions to Australian ornithology by an amateur.*

Andrew opened his talk by expressing admiration for Edward John Eyre, whom he considers the ablest of Australian explorers. Many of us are familiar with Eyre’s great treks across the Australian continent, but Andrew also spoke of Eyre’s time as Protector of Aborigines and later as Governor of Jamaica, where in 1865, his suppression of a brutal revolt during which both African and European people were killed, earned him the title ‘Butcher of Jamaica’. Eyre was commended for crushing the rebellion, but his reprisals were considered excessive by some. After public agitation for a trial in which he was acquitted, he was pardoned by the British government and granted a pension for life.

Edward John Eyre 1815-1901

- Overlander, Explorer, friend, author and Protector of Aborigines, Colonial Administrator
- The Butcher of Jamaica
- Lake Eyre
- Eyre Peninsula
- Eyrean Fauna of Australia’s arid zone
- Eyrean Barrier separating southern populations

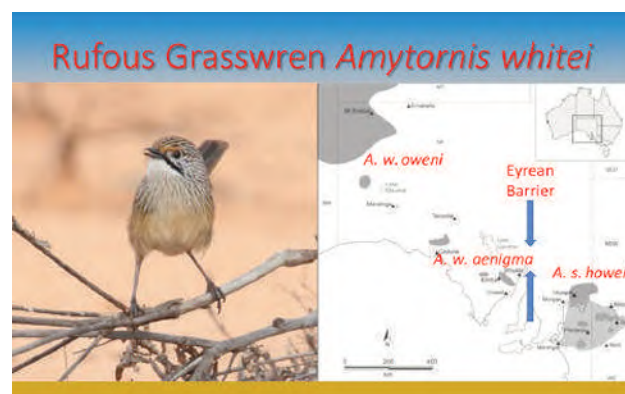
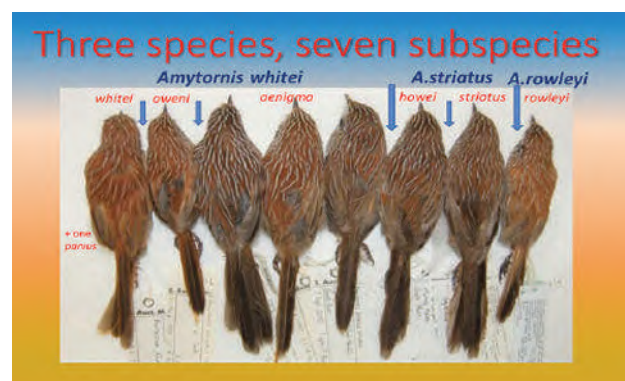
During his talk, Andrew spoke about:

- a) The Eyrean Barrier as a key to revising the taxonomy of grasswrens, among others, and
- b) Eyre Peninsula’s avian specialities.

Andrew developed a serious interest in grasswrens in 2001 after a chance encounter north of Olary, in South Australia. Until then, both Striated and Thick-billed Grasswrens were thought to occur broadly across the Australian continent. Field studies with Lynn Pedler and Graham Carpenter from 2006-2008 allowed separation of Western (*A. textilis*) from Thick-billed Grasswren (*A. modestus*). Later, with support from Leo Joseph and Jeremy Austin, five subspecies were recognised in the Western, and seven in the Thick-billed Grasswren.

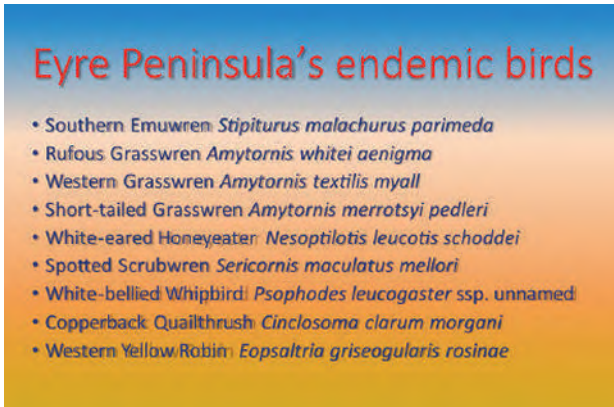


At the time ‘Grasswrens’ was published, taxonomy of the Striated group was unresolved, whether there were three subspecies, or even four species. Museum and limited genetic studies now suggest that there are three species, Rufous Grasswren (*A. whitei*) with four subspecies, Striated (*A. striatus*) with two and monotypic Opalton Grasswren (*A. rowleyi*).



Past General Meetings *(continued)*

Andrew then listed the species that eastern birders must cross The Eyrean Barrier and go west from Port Augusta to see, and subspecies that are endemic to Eyre Peninsula.



Among examples, he compared Southern Emuwrens from southern Eyre Peninsula and southern Fleurieu Peninsula.



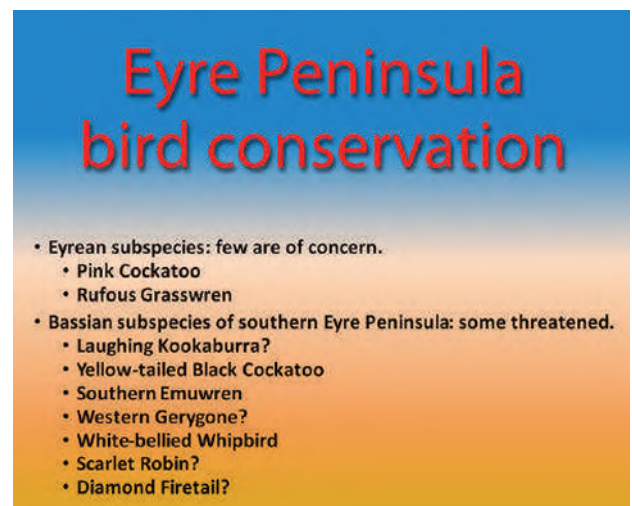
He mentioned that the remarkable field worker FW Andrews had collected a Short-tailed Grasswren from the Gawler Ranges over thirty years before the species was described from the Flinders Ranges, and over a century before it was formally recognised in the Gawlers. The well preserved, mounted specimen was located in Germany!



The Copperback Quailthrush *Cinlosoma clarum*, recently separated from the Chestnut Quailthrush *C. castanotum*, occurs on Eyre Peninsula as *C. clarum morgani*. Unlike the Chestnut, the Copperback's female also has a broad and bright back band.



Andrew concluded his talk with a discussion on conservation concerns on Eyre Peninsula. He found few among northern (Eyrean) species, except for Pink Cockatoo (in retreat) and Rufous Grasswren (functionally extinct in north-eastern Eyre Peninsula). In the south, some smaller populations of Bassian species are certainly threatened, notably the White-bellied Whipbird and Southern emu wren, which are at increased risk from the Whalers Way proposal, and which have been upgraded to Endangered under Commonwealth legislation.



Andrew offered some copies of his book 'Grasswrens', for a \$20.00 donation to the Conservation Fund. He is happy to receive enquiries at abblack@bigpond.com and can provide pdf copies of some papers on request.

Summary by Chris Bates-Brownsword

Future Meetings

Birds SA Future General Meetings

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

Dates are listed below and topics will be published in future e-newsletters.

- Tuesday 27 June
- Tuesday 25 July
- *NOTE: No General Meeting in Adelaide in August*
- Tuesday 26 September

John Hatch

Combined Birds SA and Birdlife SE Regional Meeting

The Combined Birds SA and BirdLife SE Regional Meeting will be held at Mt Gambier on 26 and 27 August 2023.

Members will need to make their own way down, and organise their own accommodation for the weekend at one of the caravan parks or motels in Mt Gambier.

For members who arrive by Friday afternoon, there will be welcome drinks at a local hotel (TBC).

- Saturday's Field trip to *Pick Swamp*, just outside of Mt Gambier, will be led by local birder Bob Green.
- The Saturday night Dinner and General Meeting will be held at a local Hotel, also yet TBC.
- Bob Green will be the Guest Speaker.
- Sunday's Field Trip will most likely be searching for Red-tailed Black Cockatoos at Nangwarry, also just out of Mt Gambier.
- The event will finish by mid-afternoon on Sunday.
- Please supply all your own meals, drinks etc.
- Further information will be supplied via the *E-Newsletter*, closer to the event.

For further information contact John Gitsham on 0438 900 393

Stripy wind turbines could reduce fatal seabird collisions

THE number of seabirds killed by colliding with wind turbines could be cut by painting black-and-white stripes on the blades and poles, say researchers.

Graham Martin at the University of Birmingham, UK, and Alex Banks at Natural England, a public body that has a say in planning applications for offshore wind farms in England, wanted to devise a pattern that could be easily painted onto turbines to reduce their impact on bird life.

Between 140,000 and 328,000 birds are killed each year by onshore wind turbines in the US, according

to one estimate. It is harder to tell how many birds are killed by offshore turbines each year, says Martin, as they fall into the ocean.

A previous study, published in 2020, looked at the effect of painting a single blade black on four onshore turbines in Norway. Bird collisions were reduced by 70 per cent compared with all-white turbines nearby.

Martin believes that further improvements could have an even greater impact. Based on analysis of previous studies into bird vision and bird collisions with wind turbines, the two researchers came up with a series of guiding principles to aid their design of a turbine that would harm fewer birds (Global Ecology and Conservation, doi.org/jx52).



"Most birds do not see too much fine detail in their vision - especially compared to humans," says Martin, so any design shouldn't be too complex. Many collisions occur in low light, so the design should be easy to decipher in the dark, while

Illustration of the proposed turbine design to reduce collisions with birds at sea

high internal contrast would help the turbine stand out against different backgrounds, such as a cloudy or sunny sky.

In low levels of light, black-and-white patterns are best, says Martin "In the dark, a red-and-white pattern would rapidly look like shades of grey," he says.

The design hasn't yet been tested, but Martin hopes that manufacturers will consider it, particularly as it would be easy and cheap to implement. "I think people are starting to take the issue seriously now," he says.

Jason Arunn Murugesu

4 March 2023 | New Scientist |

Above: Adapted from the original New Scientist article supplied by a Birds SA member

Congratulations *Cynthia!*

At the February 2023 General Meeting of Birds SA, Cynthia Pyle, editor of **The BIRDER** (the official magazine of Birds SA) was honoured with a ***Distinguished Service Award*** from the Association, in recognition of Cynthia's 22 years of dedicated service editing the magazine (formerly *Birds SA Newsletter*).

In 2001, when the *Birds SA* Management Committee was looking for a new editor, Cynthia's daughter Josie, who was on the Committee, said "*My Mum will do it!*" As Cynthia had recently retired from teaching, she kindly accepted the role.

Over the past 22 years, many changes have taken place, culminating in the wonderful publication that we see today. What was originally a black and white publication is now a high-quality, full colour magazine with twice the number of pages, and regular contributions from birding groups in Port Augusta and the Fleurieu Peninsula.

Gathering content for each edition of *The BIRDER* is a major feat. Cynthia has patiently dealt with numerous contributors, some of whom have been guilty of submitting their reports rather late! A time-consuming challenge has been ensuring that bird species are correctly spelled, and that photographs are correctly named and attributed. Over the past few years, Cynthia has appreciated the assistance of John Gitsham in designing the front cover, and Ingrid Grigg in managing the graphic design.

During this 22-year period, Cynthia has generously volunteered her time to provide *Birds SA* members with both a wonderful record of birding information, and the various activities of the Association.



Cynthia receives her Distinguished Service Award from Jeff Groves

(Photographed by John Gitsham)

Receiving her award to a rousing round of applause, Cynthia thanked members, and said how much she has enjoyed her role as Editor of *The BIRDER*, encouraging members to consider submitting their photographs for inclusion in future issues.

Jeff Groves

Vice-President
Birds SA Management Committee



A friendly reminder

To our readers/contributors

Just a friendly reminder that putting together an issue of **The Birder** can be a complex exercise, so please respect deadlines and make sure your contributions arrive before the closing date. This will make life easier for the volunteers who carry out this task. The **Copy Deadline** for the next issue appears on the *Birds SA Contact Details* page at the end of each magazine.

We are pleased to receive your contributions and photos, so keep them coming. They are what make the magazine interesting. When sending photographs please include name, location and date, otherwise we can't use them. To our younger members in particular – tell us about your birding experiences - we'd love to hear your stories.

Please note that for ease of handling, in future ALL contributions go to one email address: magazineeditor@birdssa.asn.au

Time to say **GOODBYE**



Far Eastern Curlew (Photograph by Paul Taylor)

As the Migratory Wader season draws to a close, it is time to say "Thank You" to all the dedicated folk who carry out monthly survey work monitoring these amazing birds from October through to April each year.

Some *Birds SA* Members have been undertaking this task for many years - true dedication indeed! It has been heartening this year to welcome new members to the Survey Team - Peter Sadler and Ali Sanger who have made Parham "their site", Ian Forsyth covering the Proof Range site, along with the amazing "Two Jacks", Lange and Mildred. Fred Duncker is our most recent team member, and welcome back to Wyn Syson, who surveys Goolwa and Hindmarsh. We are especially grateful to those who organise their RDOs to fit in with the survey schedule.

Most people would have read the amazing "AKK" story. The monitoring of "AKK" has been undertaken by Paul Taylor for many years.

Friends of the Adelaide International Bird Sanctuary make a huge contribution, not just through their maintenance of the Sanctuary, but also their work to increase awareness of the needs of Migratory Waders along Gulf St Vincent.

Tony Flaherty, *Green Adelaide* (DEW), organises and supports workshops on Migratory Wader identification, undertakes surveys himself, and liaises with local councils on issues relating to the protection of birds. What an incredible effort, year after year.

A special "Thank You" to Craig Johansen of Salisbury Council, who has been working hard to improve security



Bar-tailed Godwit in breeding plumage

(Photograph by Paul Taylor)

at Magazine Road, a place that was once a wonderful "refuge" for a quiet day of birding. "The Girls" who do monthly surveys at Magazine Road are appreciative.

Thanks also to Darren Kennedy, Dept of Defence, for his support of the monthly surveys, and to the select group who liaise directly with private businesses to gain access to their sites. These places are NOT open to the public for general birding, so your polite and accommodating manner enables access to these sites to continue.

All surveyors submit monthly reports and pay for their own fuel to their designated sites - what generosity!

On behalf of the Birds, our grateful thanks to you all.

Kate Buckley

Co-ordinator Migratory & Wader Survey Group
Birds SA

Birds SA at *Sophie's Patch* Easter 2023

Following tradition, **Birds SA** was again delighted to be represented at **Sophie's Patch Open Garden** event in Mt Barker over the Easter weekend (Saturday/Sunday 7- 8 April 2023). As in past years, we spotted familiar stalls along the walking tracks - specialist nurseries, organic farm produce, the Beekeeping Society of SA, and the Butterfly Conservation of SA, to name just a few.

During the two days, our volunteers enjoyed promoting Birds SA, and interacting with visitors. We did notice this year that there were less visitors than usual, possibly because of confusion about whether or not the garden had been sold.

Nevertheless, as always, the garden looked splendid, and those of us who were there, really enjoyed talking to a variety of people about all kinds of bird-related matters. There were quite a number of comments about different bird species moving into areas where they had not previously been seen, as well as about ways we can protect our gardens from birds we may not be so keen on.

Gardening Australia personality, Costa Georgiadis, aka **Costa, the Garden Gnome**, visited the Patch on



both Saturday and Sunday to join in the fun, and we were lucky enough to have him give a talk about the "Birds and the Bees" alongside our tables. We found him an animated and captivating speaker.

In the garden there were also lots of fun activities designed for children, which Costa happily joined, making him especially popular with the kids.

We thank you for coming along and talking to us at Sophie's Patch, and we look forward to seeing you at our next Birds SA event!

Claire Bourne

Helpers on the day
L to R: **Alan Burns, Claire Bourne and Sue Credley**

What was that?



Birds SA New Members Walks

Laratinga

The first two New Members Walks for the year were held at Laratinga on Sunday, 26 February, and Sunday, 26 March 2023.

26 February 2023

For the February walk, a total of 14 members met at 8.00 am in the car park off Bald Hills Road, on a beautiful Sunday morning. From the car park we saw Galah and Little Corella on the power lines opposite the entrance to the wetlands. Entering the wetlands, we could see that the water levels were still high, but hoped this would not affect bird sightings. After the obligatory briefing and toilet stop, the group, led by Claire Bourne, headed west along the southern pathway. Superb Fairywrens seemed to be everywhere, darting across the path ahead of us. Approaching the reed beds, Australian Reed Warbler and Little Grassbird could be heard quite clearly, and we spent some time helping the new members distinguish between the two. We had sightings of both species, so the walk was off to a good start.

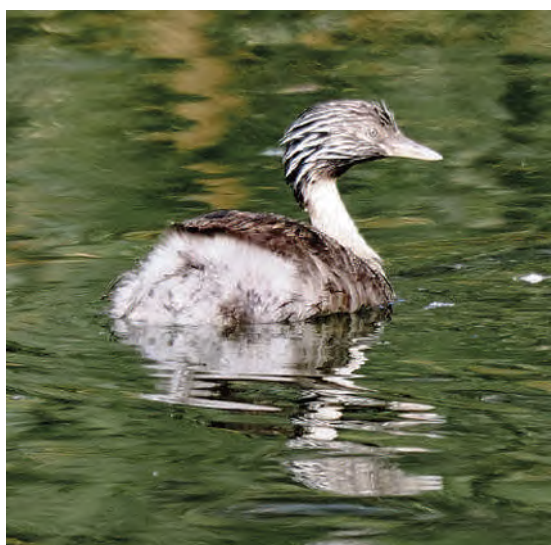
Then, thanks to a sharp-eyed member, we had good sightings of an Australian Spotted Crake as it foraged along the edge of the water. The walk continued at a leisurely pace with plenty of stops for new members to observe the birdlife, mostly concentrating on the ponds. We cut through between the ponds, where the change in vegetation allowed us to see some bushland birds.

At the junction with the outer path, we found several Ring-tailed Possums tucked up in their dreys. The group

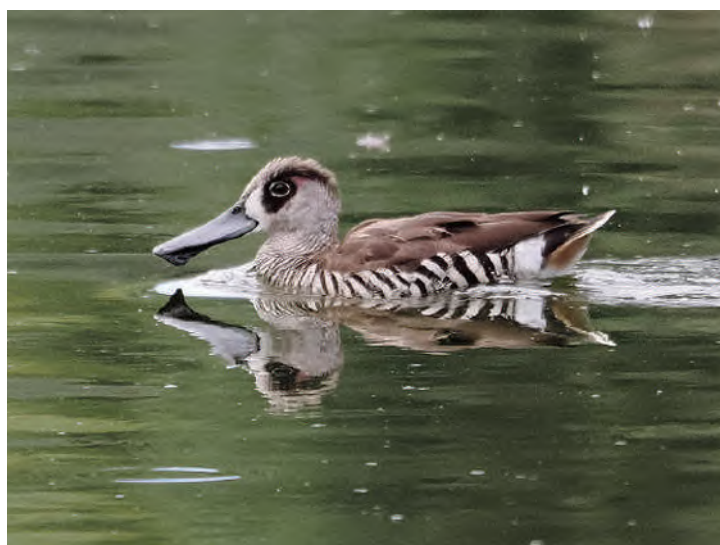
continued in a clockwise direction around the northern outer path, eyes concentrating on the waterbirds on and around the ponds, mostly Maned Duck, Pacific Black Duck, Grey and Chestnut Teal, Dusky Moorhen, Eurasian Coot, Australasian Swamphen and Australasian Grebe. However, it was the sighting of Hardhead, Blue-billed Duck (8), Pink-eared Duck (8) and Hoary-headed Grebe (12) that excited the new members most.

We cut back through the easternmost pond and across the boardwalk, spotting an Australasian Shoveler on the way, and returning to the start just over 2 hours later.

After the walk, the group assembled for some morning tea and held the bird count. A total of 38 species was recorded for the morning's walk, including Australasian Grebe (20), Hoary-headed Grebe, (12), Australian Spotted Crake, Australasian Swamphen (30), Australian Reed Warbler (25), Australian White Ibis (5), Blue-billed Duck (8), Common Bronzewing, Dusky Moorhen(30), Eurasian Coot (10), Grey Teal (30), Chestnut Teal(20), Grey Shrike thrush, Hardhead, Little Grassbird (5), Little Pied Cormorant (3), Magpie-lark (6), Australian Wood (Maned) Duck (10), Australasian Shoveler, Pacific Black Duck (50), Pink-eared Duck (8), New Holland Honeyeater (20), Red Wattlebird (10), Masked Lapwing (4), White-faced Heron (2), Superb Fairywren (30), White-plumed Honeyeater (6), Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoo (4), Crimson (Adelaide) Rosella (2), Little Corella (12), Galah (10), Welcome Swallow (12) and Tree Martin (12).



Hoary-headed Grebe (Photographed by Roger Bourne at Laratinga, 26 March 2023)



Pink-eared Duck (Photographed by Roger Bourne at Laratinga, 26 February 2023)

Birds SA New Members Walks *(continued)*

26 March 2023

In contrast to the previous New Members Walk, the March walk at Laratinga was held in overcast and damp conditions, with light rain falling from the start. Only 3 intrepid members braved the elements to attend the walk. As we entered the wetlands, the water levels, while still high, were noticeably lower than the walk in February. The walk followed the same clockwise trail as the February walk and the Superb Fairywrens were active as usual. The Australian Reed Warbler and Little Grassbird were not calling as much as in February, but we did get reasonable sightings of both as we walked around. We were also fortunate to see the Australian Spotted Crake, firstly in more or less the same area as in February, and again later on near the main boardwalk.

As the walk progressed, the weather deteriorated and it was soon raining steadily, with bushland birds appearing in noticeably smaller numbers. Our mood was soon lifted with sightings of Masked Lapwing and two Black-fronted Dotterel at the new pond on the northern side of the Wetlands. Here, the water levels had dropped, exposing some mud flats. Following this, we made a dash for the cover at the shelters where we had some morning tea and carried out the bird count.

In total, we recorded 31 species for the morning, which was not bad given the weather conditions, including Australasian Grebe, Australasian Shoveler, Australian Spotted Crake, Australasian Swamphen, Australian Magpie, Australian Reed Warbler, Australian White Ibis, Black-fronted Dotterel, Grey Currawong, Chestnut Teal, Common Blackbird, Crested Pigeon, Dusky Moorhen, Eurasian Coot, Grey Shrike-thrush, Grey Teal, Hardhead, Hoary-headed Grebe, Laughing Kookaburra (H), Little Grassbird, Little Pied Cormorant, Little Raven, Magpie-lark, Australian Wood (Maned) Duck, Pacific Black Duck, New Holland Honeyeater, Masked Lapwing, White-faced Heron, Superb Fairywren, White-plumed Honeyeater, Welcome Swallow and Tree Martin.

30 April 2023

The third new members walk for the year was also held at Laratinga.

A total of 12 members met in the car park off Bald Hills Road at 8:00 am on a cloudy but dry morning. After the obligatory briefing and toilet stop, the group led by Claire Bourne headed in the same direction as the two previous walks, clockwise along the southern pathway. Water levels were still on the high side and the reeds had grown noticeably since



Participants in the first new members walk

(Photographed by Roger Bourne at Laratinga, 26 February 2023)

the walks in February and March making clear views over the ponds difficult for all but the tallest members. The walk started quietly compared to previous walks with Australian Reed Warblers and Little Grassbirds nowhere as prolific as in February and March, but we did eventually get sightings of both species, albeit fleetingly in the case of the Little Grassbird. A large mixed group of Welcome Swallow and Tree Martin were overhead, feeding on the wing.

The group continued in a clockwise direction around the northern outer path, observing Hardhead, Pacific Black Duck, Grey and Chestnut Teal, Dusky Moorhen, Eurasian Coot, Australasian Swamphen, Hoary-headed Grebe and Australasian Grebe on the ponds. We also managed to see both Spotless Crake and Australian Spotted Crake.



Australian Spotted Crake *(Photographed by Roger Bourne at Laratinga, 30 April 2023)*

Birds SA New Members Walks *(continued)*



Participants enjoying the third new members walk for the year *(Photographed by Roger Bourne at Laratinga, 30 April 2023)*

The ever present Superb Fairywren were about in reasonable numbers, as well as Little and Red Wattlebird, White-plumed, New Holland and White-naped Honeyeater, Striated Pardalote, White-browed Scrubwren and Grey Shrike-thrush. We also got good views of Dusky Woodswallow.

The walk cut back through the eastern most pond and across the boardwalk, where we observed a small group

of three Pink-eared Duck and another Spotted Crake, we returned after just over two and a half hours, to the starting point.

After the walk the group gathered at the picnic area for morning tea and some excellent iced Jubilee cake made by Peter Vincent. The bird count recorded a total of 40 species including Australasian Grebe (50), Hoary-headed Grebe (8), Australian Spotted Crake (4), Spotless Crake (2), Australasian Swamphen (20), Australian Reed Warbler (4), Dusky Moorhen (30), Eurasian Coot (30), Grey Teal (20), Chestnut Teal (8), Grey Shrike-thrush, Hardhead (10), Laughing Kookaburra, Little Grassbird (2), Little Pied Cormorant (3), Magpie-lark (6), Pacific Black Duck (30), Pink-eared Duck (3), New Holland Honeyeater (4), Little Wattlebird (2), Red Wattlebird (10), White-faced Heron (5), Superb Fairywren (30), White-naped Honeyeater (4), White-plumed Honeyeater (20), Crimson (Adelaide) Rosella (4), Little Corella (30), Galah (4), Sulphur-crested Cockatoo (4), Rainbow Lorikeet (4), Red-rumped Parrot (2), Striated Pardalote (2), White-browed Scrubwren, Welcome Swallow (50) and Tree Martin (30).

Additional birds recorded after the walk by Peter Vincent included Australasian Shoveler (10) on the pond next to the picnic area, Spotted Pardalote, Weebill, Common Bronzewing, Noisy Miner and Black-fronted Dotterel on the shallow Northern Pond.

Roger Bourne

New Members

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

Jane Axon..... Glenelg South SA
 Austin Perrot..... Campbelltown SA
 Kerryn McEwan Coffin Bay SA
 Andrew Laslett..... Norwood SA
 Verlie Rohrlach..... Burton SA
 David Hall..... Tranmere SA
 Maureen Gallagher &
 Lionel Edwards..... West Croydon SA
 Maggie McLean & Jeff Bowey..... Port Augusta SA
 Lauren & Peter Newman..... Glenalta SA
 Margaret Beal Erindale SA
 Graeme McCleay..... Torrens Park SA
 Zabia Chmielewski..... Rostrevor SA
 Michael Emerson Nailsworth SA

Peter VincentBeaumont SA
 Sherry Larson McCracken SA
 Trevor Worsley Mt Barker SA
 Sonya Mahoney North Brighton SA
 Kai & Robert Holt..... Glenalta SA
 Chris & Michelle Warren Hallett Cove SA
 Mary Adam Felixstow SA
 Margaret Low..... Hahndorf SA
 Sue Phillips Glenelg East SA
 Jacqui & Max Hart Hallett Cove SA
 Kate Gilfillan Campbelltown SA
 Brianna Ganly Bridgewater SA
 Maureen Ritchie Kensington Park SA

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



NT Bird Specialists

Birding & Photographic Safaris



World-Class Birding Experiences, Local Expertise

Join renowned expert guide Luke Paterson on award-winning birding & photographic tours in northern Australia, Sri Lanka & Borneo.

- 5 Star Reviews
- 37 years ecotourism expertise
- Unique original itineraries
- Fully accredited & permitted operators
- Target species missions
- Private cruises & access
- Luxury vehicles



Full calendar & tailored itineraries at www.NTBirdSpecialists.com.au

tours@NTBirdSpecialists.com.au | +61 (0)421 651 122

SPACES LIMITED
Please book early & join wait lists

Gouldian Finch photographed by Luke Paterson



Birds of the Wet Tropics

The photographs on these pages were taken by Glenys and Ashley Grivell, during their trip in 2022 to the Wet Tropics National Park in Queensland, enjoying the birds and spectacular rainforests. Glenys and Ashley, who travel most years to do some birdwatching, take amazing photographs (and give Adelaide winters a miss!) leave shortly for their 2023 travels in the Northern Territory and Western Australia.



This shot of a **Magnificent Riflebird** (male) was taken by Glenys at Cook's Hut Camping area, Iron Range NP. The Riflebird flew down from his display perch to grab a Katydid (bush cricket) from the side of a tree.

Black-tailed Tree-creeper
taken near Doomadgee Community Qld.
(Photo taken by Glenys Grivell 4 July 2022)



Ashley and Glenys sat in the darkest spot in the rainforest from first light to 10 am for three mornings to finally see this **Papuan Pitta** (just arrived from PNG to breed during the wet season), Iron Range National Park (Photo taken by Ashley Grivell 20 October 2022)

Birds of the Wet Tropics *(continued)*

Purple-crowned Fairywren (female)

Fairly common along pandanus lined rivers and creeks in northern Gulf in Qld and NT.

(Photo taken by Glenys Grivell 29 June 2022)



White-faced Robin (Cape York endemic) Fairly common in Iron Range National Park

(Photo taken by Glenys Grivell 20 October 2022)

A really difficult bird to photograph, this **Spinifexbird** shot was taken by Glenys near Noccundra in south-west Qld. Ashley and Glenys spent two hours in 44-degree heat to get it!

Spotted Catbird spends most of its time in the canopy, so is difficult to photograph.

(Photo taken by Ashley Grivell near Malanda, Qld.)



Glenys took this beautiful **Frill-necked Monarch** (Male) at Cook's Hut Camping Area, Iron Range National Park



Bon Voyage Cynthia



Following Cynthia Pyle's well-deserved *Distinguished Service Award* from the Association at the February 2023 General Meeting, recognising her many years of service as magazine editor (see *Vice-President, Jeff Groves tribute and presentation to Cynthia in this issue*), I sat down to catch up with her prior to her overseas travels, to learn a bit more about Cynthia's own story.

Above: Cynthia with her Master of Education Degree (MEd) in Adelaide in the 1980s

Cynthia was born at Sandgate in South-east England, near Folkestone, a port town on the English Channel in Kent. Her father, who was a tax inspector, died when she was only two and a half years old. When the Second World War came, her mother wanted to do her bit for the war effort, so she sent 7-year-old Cynthia off to a boarding school north of London. Cynthia said that during the time she was there, she became quite interested in Catholicism and started talking about becoming a nun, which she suspects is the reason her mum whisked her out of the school and sent her to stay with friends in Cornwall.

She loved her life in Cornwall, so much so that she didn't really want the war to end(!) Eventually, she and her mother went to live near St Mary's Bay on the coast of Kent, where she attended Folkestone Grammar School for Girls.

In time, Cynthia went on to study at London University, where she met her future husband, John. They were both studying for the same Degree BSc (Physics). They got married and lived in Chelmsford in Essex for 3-4 years, both working at Marconi's (Marconi was famous for inventing the first functional radio transmitter). Cynthia remembers wiring and soldering at Marconi's, where her husband also worked, but in a different office.

Cynthia and her husband John came to Australia in 1958. John had visited Australia many years earlier with his mother and stepfather. His mother missed her sisters, so they went back to England, but it was always John's intention to return and settle in Australia. I asked Cynthia if they were "*Ten-pound poms*" but she said not so. When they approached Australia House in London seeking passage and employment, not surprisingly, given their qualifications, they were welcomed with open arms. They travelled first class on the *Iberia*, one of the ships used to transport migrants from Europe following World War II. The voyage took four weeks, stopping en route at Aden, Sri Lanka and Perth. They were disappointed at missing out on a Mediterranean stopover, which was used to allow 300 Greek migrants to board the ship.

Both John and Cynthia had positions lined up at the *Weapons Research Establishment (WRE)* in Salisbury. WRE was established after the conclusion of the Second World War as a facility for the research and development of rocket-propelled weapons. Thousands of people worked there, and Cynthia recalls that one of her tasks was writing up instructions for new inventions. She said she still remembers getting off the ship and travelling to their house in Blair Athol and seeing dozens of dried thistles lining the roadside. She couldn't believe the size of the house provided, especially the number of rooms. To Cynthia and John, it was pure luxury. Their accommodation in England had comprised a bedroom, kitchen, and shared bathroom.

After working at WRE for a while, Cynthia decided to change careers. She explained that in those days, a University Degree was adequate for employment in a professional capacity, not necessarily in the specialty, so Cynthia began working as a teacher. She got a job at *Wilderness School* for a few years, until John was offered a promotion, and they moved to Canberra. It was during this time in the ACT that Cynthia decided to get her *Diploma of Teaching*, which, on her return to Adelaide, enabled her to obtain a position at *Walford Anglican School for Girls*. Her specialty was Geology, and she taught there for 19 years until her retirement in 2000.

Cynthia's involvement with *Birds SA* began during her teaching career, primarily through her daughter Josie, who was an avid birdwatcher and kept numerous aviaries at her home in Gawler.

Cynthia joined *Birds SA* in 2000. She was not able to attend meetings when she was working, but she occasionally went on birdwatching excursions through Joan Paton's WEA classes. She remembers weekends at *Graham's Castle* at Goolwa – as indeed do I, having enjoyed those walks with Joan myself. Purchased and restored by the WEA in the 1960's, the Castle ran summer schools for a range of topics, including birdwatching, and Cynthia recalls that Joan particularly liked to take people on walks away from the city when the Grand Prix was on (!).

In 2000, when Cynthia retired from full-time teaching, she was able to look at attending *Birds SA* meetings on a regular basis. Her daughter Josie was on the Management Committee, and in 2001 when they were looking for a new editor, Josie put her mother's name forward, Cynthia accepted the post, and the rest, as they say, is history.

Cynthia is about to set off on a trip she booked 3 years ago, but thanks to Covid, was delayed. She will be away for 3 weeks or so, visiting Normandy, Brittany, and the Channel Islands, and we wish her all the best for a wonderful journey and safe return.

Chris Bates-Brownsword

Historical Series No. 83

Dr Alexander Matheson (Mat) Morgan (1867-1934).

Part 3 by Penny Paton

Morgan described birds seen from several areas in the autumn of 1927 (Morgan 1927), including a few species from Nepean Bay on Kangaroo Island from 15-18 April and an unusual roosting record of Black-faced Cuckooshrikes. Twenty-two birds roosted in Pyramid Trees *Lagunaria patersonii* at the back of the University of Adelaide oval from early April through May, arriving just before sundown, and an even greater number had used the same trees for roosting in the previous year.

Another short article documented two examples of the nesting of Striped Honeyeaters and Grey Butcherbirds in the same tree in mallee near Wood's Point, River Murray, in September 1927 (Morgan 1928a). Morgan and Sutton, in association with pastoralist Hurtle Morphett, who owned Wood's Point, were surprised that the honeyeaters were not perturbed to be nesting so close to a species with "an evil reputation as a nest-robber." This nesting association between species of Australian birds is now well-known and a study in Western Australia where both Pied and Grey Butcherbirds nested in close proximity to Yellow-throated Miners deduced that the butcherbirds may "benefit from larger invertebrates that are unused and controlled by miners through the exclusion of other insectivores" and that both species benefit from mutual nest protection (Fulton 2008). It seems likely that a similar situation operated for the Striped Honeyeater and Grey Butcherbird. The ever-alert John Sutton picked up that John Mellor had published a note in the SAO a few years previously about finding four young Grey Butcherbirds and three young Striped Honeyeaters being fed by their respective parents in the same bush in mallee near the Victorian border (Sutton 1928).

As he had in the previous spring, Morgan spent many days with John Sutton and other colleagues searching for nests in September and October 1927; he visited Sellick's Beach, Hope Valley, One Tree Hill, Blackwood, Williamstown, Meadows Creek and Wood's Point as we saw above. Also, as in the year before, he accompanied Frank Parsons and, this time, J. Neil McGilp on a 10-day trip to the South East in late October (Parsons 1928). Apart from a description of their route, the article is in the form of an annotated list of birds seen. The main object of this trip was to find breeding waterbirds so they spent time at Bool Lagoon and found nesting Straw-necked and Australian White Ibis, Yellow-billed Spoonbills, Little Black and Little Pied Cormorants, Musk Duck and Purple Swamphen.

On a quick trip to Renmark by car in March 1928, Morgan (1928b) remarked on several bird species. He

noted where the cross-over occurred between White-backed and Black-backed Magpies, which was about Blanchetown. He then documented where he had seen the two types in other parts of South Australia, demonstrating his remarkable record-keeping over several decades of bird-watching. He saw some White-browed Treecreepers, firstly between Truro and Blanchetown and then as far as Renmark and, on the return trip by a different route, he observed them near Sedan, which he considered an enlargement of their known range. A fleeting glimpse of a whistler between Kingston and Blanchetown in thick mallee scrub was thought to be a Red-lored Whistler which is possible given its known distribution at that time, but Gilberts Whistler cannot be excluded. In the next SAO Morgan elaborated on the birds seen on his March trip to Renmark and back, listing all the species seen between the major towns he traversed (SAOA 1928a).

A short note on sightings by Morgan in autumn 1928 at Port Gawler described thousands of waders, including Red-capped Plover, Curlew Sandpiper, Greenshank, Red-necked Stint and Sharp-tailed Sandpiper (SAOA 1928b). He also elaborated on birds seen on a week-long visit in April 1928 to Kangaroo Island, mainly in the vicinity of Rocky Point, which is near Browns Beach on the Dudley Peninsula, suggesting that he stayed there for the duration (SAOA 1928a).

John Sutton (1929) wrote up a trip made by himself, Dr Morgan and J. Neil McGilp to the South East in November 1928. A brief description of the route and highlights of the birdlife was followed by an annotated list of all species seen. Due to recent rain the main road from Kingston to Lucindale was unpassable so they detoured via Robe, Lake Eliza, Lake Hawdon and Reedy Creek. One morning they explored St Helena Swamp, southwest of Lucindale, where they found nesting Black Swan, Purple Swamphen, Australasian Bittern, Musk Duck, Swamp Harrier and Little Grassbird. At Konetta Homestead they were hosted by the owners, Mr and Mrs John Watson, and Mr Watson took them to a teatree swamp near "Frog Island", a slight elevation. Here there was a heronry of about 2000 Nankeen Night Herons with 100 occupied nests. The recently inundated country was pockmarked by millions of yabby holes and the remains of yabbies littered the water beneath the teatrees, indicating that the herons were eating the yabbies.

On the October 1928 trip to Wood's Point, Morgan and Sutton were driven across a paddock on Mr Hurtle Morphett's land when they put up a Spotted Nightjar. They searched for a nest with no success and on the

next day returned and drove the same route and marked the place where the nightjar flushed again. On searching this spot, a nightjar chick was found and, on picking it up to observe it more closely, it emitted a squeak which brought the parent bird to within 25 feet, where it performed the wounded bird actions (Morgan 1929a). Morgan had not previously seen or read a description of the young of the Spotted Nightjar. A page of the handwritten account of this note is replicated in Figure 6, to provide an example of Morgan's handwriting.

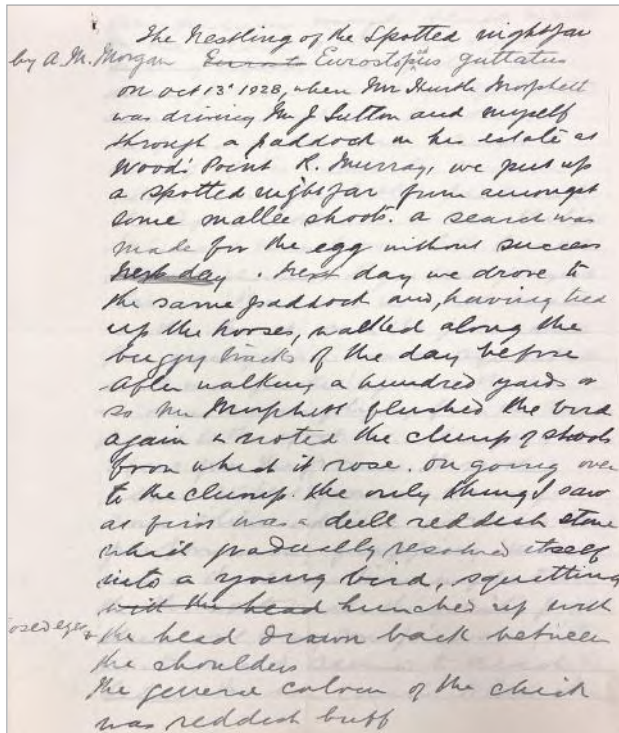


Figure 6. An example of Dr Morgan's handwriting – a page from his SAO note on the nesting of the Spotted Nightjar (from SAOA Archives in SLSA)

Later in the same SAO Morgan (1929b) provided a brief account of an outing to Yorke Peninsula in late December 1928. It documented the bird species seen between Port Wakefield and Ardrossan, Ardrossan and Gleeson's Landing, and birds seen at the last-named place as well as at Pondalow Bay. Morgan again visited Kangaroo Island in May 1929, providing just a list of birds seen at various locations, including a captive Cape Barren Goose at Rocky River (SAOA 1929).

Morgan (SAOA 1930) provided notes on a number of bird species, including nesting birds, from Sellick's Beach, Buckland Park, Mannum, Meadows Creek and the Adelaide city. During November and December 1929 three nests of the White-browed Woodswallow were found in the city, including one near the University Oval, and two of these successfully fledged young.

Sutton (1930a) again wrote up a trip taken by a group of ornithologists, including Dr Morgan, this time to the property of Mr L. Parsons, presumably a relative of Frank Parsons who was one of the party. Edwin Ashby and his son Keith also attended the five-day foray to Sugarloaf Park, in the triangle between Meningie,

McGraths Flat and Coonalpyn, an area of heath on sand with a few mallees on the sandy rises. The party recorded 99 bird species, presumably being the total of all birds seen on the return trip from Adelaide.

The Royal Australasian Ornithologists Union met in Adelaide in 1929 and the campout following the congress was held in the Coorong. Sutton (1930b) wrote up the trip from 11 to 17 October which was attended by seven SAOA members, including Dr Morgan. The 17 attendees visited the Pelican and Wild Dog Islands in the Coorong, freshwater lakes east of Salt Creek, a cutting-grass (*Gahnia* sp.) swamp en route to the lakes as well as areas southeast of Salt Creek on the way to the Washpool. The ornithologists of this era were very good at finding nests and they found 935 nests of 51 species over the six days, as well as recording 117 species for the whole trip. There were about 200 Pelican nests on the Pelican Islands, as well as nesting Black Swan, Silver Gull and Pied Cormorant. Sutton and Morgan waded to the Wild Dog Islands where they found nesting Silver Gull and 15 Fairy Tern nests. Highlights included a single Malleefowl, nesting White-backed Swallow and nesting Slender-billed Thornbill. Several papers read before the Adelaide Congress were published in the *Emu*, but it is silent on the Salt Creek campout, apart from a comment that "the ladies of the party will occupy the accommodation house and the men will sleep under canvas" (Anon. 1929).

During 1929 and 1930 Morgan continued to contribute to the Bird Notes section of the SAO, with records from Williamstown, Sellick's Beach, Meadows Creek, Buckland Park and closer to home in his own garden and the parklands in North Adelaide. He was one of a party on a motor launch trip to the islands near the Murray Mouth in April 1930, which Sutton (1930c) again wrote up.

A longer trip was taken by Dr Morgan over nearly three weeks in July and August of 1930 to Clifton Hills Station with the lessee Mr E.A. Brooks (Morgan 1930). This was quite an epic trip, necessitating taking two trains (the East-West express and the Alice Springs train) as far as Marree, then a long and difficult car journey via Lake Harry, Dulkaninna, Etadinna, Mungeranie, Mirra Mitta and Mount Gason to Clifton Hills. A breakdown saw Morgan and Brooks camping on a sandhill while the driver walked 20 miles for help. The next leg of the journey saw them bogged and lost in the dusk so they camped out again, this time in a dry swamp. On the next day they got as close to the station homestead as they could by car and then rode the last 5 miles on horseback. At this time the Diamantina River near the homestead was 120 yards wide and still flowing swiftly, following a flood. In contrast to the wet conditions around Goyders Lagoon, the country between the Cooper and the Diamantina was in a deplorable state, there having been no rain for six years.

A horseback trip over three days saw them exploring Cooncherie [Koonchera] Waterhole, part of Goyders Lagoon where Pelicans were nesting and Candoonie Waterhole. They visited Lake Uloowaranie on the way

back to where they had left their car and thence on to Ooroowilanie, Marree, Lake Letty homestead and the dry River Frome. Morgan was surprised not to see any whitefaces or the Crested Bellbird on this trip, but he did record 92 species of birds and found many species nesting. Seven duck species were seen, including Plumed Whistling Duck, Pacific Black Duck, Chestnut-breasted Shelduck, Pink-eared Duck and Hardhead and breeding Maned Duck and Grey Teal. Although Dr Morgan did not recognise them, a fellow traveller indicated that two pigeons seen at Goyders Lagoon were Flock Pigeons, which were once in "their thousands...in the district" (Morgan 1930). Other groups of birds that Morgan considered to be scarce were the parrots and the honeyeaters.

Early in the next year, Morgan was again up north in company with J. Neil McGilp, as they travelled to Lake Callabonna to see a nesting colony of Banded Stilts (McGilp and Morgan 1931, Morgan 1931). The stiltery was in the southern portion of the lake, known locally as Lake Mulligan, which was about 250 m long and up to 5-6 m high in the middle, with mud spits at either end. On 11 January 1931 they estimated the number of nests to be 27,000 and the number of eggs at 81,000, with clutch size varying from one to five. When the Moolawatana Station manager, Rex McKay, visited the breeding colony on 19 December 1930 no eggs were present, but on a subsequent visit on 29 December some nests contained five eggs. By 21 January there were many recently hatched chicks, suggesting that the incubation period was about 28 days. The article is well illustrated by photos of eggs, showing the wide variety of coloration, and portions of the colony, showing adults, chicks and eggs. This was only the second observation of Banded Stilt nesting ever recorded, the first being about six months earlier, from Lake Grace near Kukerin in Western Australia, where there were estimated to be about 40,000 pairs (Pedler 2017).

The second article described their trip to Moolawatana Station via Jamestown, Nilpena and Beltana, and the return trip through Mount Serle, Sliding Rock, Beltana, Hookina and Port Augusta (Morgan 1931). One hundred and three bird species were recorded and many species were breeding on Lake Callabonna and Broken Swamp on Moolawatana. These included Hoary-headed Grebe, Whiskered and Gull-billed Tern, Black-winged Stilt, Red-necked Avocet and Pink-eared Duck, as well as the afore-mentioned Banded Stilt.

In the spring of 1931, late in September, Morgan had the opportunity of spending a week at Paratoo Station, between Nackara and Yunta as a guest of Mr and Mrs Byron McLachlan (Morgan 1932a). Byron left a career in medicine for jackarooing at Paratoo and at the age of 19 became manager of the station in about 1919 (www 3). The season of 1931 was a good one and the grass, saltbush and other groundcovers were healthy, but birds were not as plentiful as Morgan had expected. He recorded 64 species, with many species nesting,

including Stubble Quail, Banded Plover, Chestnut-breasted Shelduck, Little Eagle, Cockatiel, Owllet Nightjar, Fairy Martin, Yellow-throated Miner and Grey Butcherbird. A descendant of Dr Morgan's by marriage described him holding his hat up to Mr McLachlan, whose job it was to climb the trees to bring down the eggs for Mat's collection.



Figure 7. Photograph of Paratoo Homestead 1934 (courtesy of SLSA, B18329/1)

As a footnote to this article, correspondence from Byron McLachlan to Dr Morgan dated 2 January 1932 described large numbers of Budgerigars flying roughly north over the Paratoo homestead at dawn for several hours (McLachlan 1932). He estimated that over the next three hours there was hardly a break in their flight and that one to ten million were passing every ten minutes which gives an estimate of between 18 and 180 million birds. This was during a period of extreme and extended high temperatures in the interior of Australia (for example at Oodnadatta the 51 days from December 15 1931 averaged 110° Fahrenheit (43.3° Centigrade) and one or two days were 122° (50°) (Anon 1932a). Bird mortality was very high at many locations so one can only imagine that the fate of the millions of Budgerigars was not a happy one. Indeed a later note in the SAO estimated that millions of Budgerigars had died at Kokatha Station near Kingoonya early in 1932 where, just from one dam, five tons of birds were removed and from one tank, 30,000 Budgerigars (Anon 1932b).

Next Morgan (1932b) wrote a disturbing article on the destruction of Wedge-tailed Eagles, which suggested that such actions were not unusual for the time. He did not question the actions of pastoralists in killing such large numbers of eagles nor did the newspapers of the day resile from publishing such accounts. Morgan mentioned a press article from May 1930 describing the trapping of large numbers of eagles at Koonoona Station near Burra but, when he wrote to the owner asking for weights and measurements, he replied that the birds had left the district and he should write to the manager of Koonamore Station where eagles were being trapped in large numbers. In response to Morgan's request, the manager sent him the details of 43 birds, which Morgan compared with other published information to gauge the average weight and wing spread of Wedge-tailed Eagles.

Another short paper discussed spurs on the wing bones of birds (Morgan 1932c). Fully developed spurs occur in only the Masked Lapwing among Australian birds but also in a few species of several families worldwide. Rudimentary spurs do occur in many species of Australian birds that Morgan examined, with the exception of penguins, the Emu and the Cassowary. The rudimentary spur takes the form of a knob, the summit of which is bare of feathers and covered with skin which is somewhat thicker than on the rest of the wing. Morgan surmised that in flying birds this bony process would serve as a lever for the stronger extension of the wing, but of course in non-flying birds such as penguins and Emus, this would be irrelevant.

Morgan wrote up the discovery of a small population of the introduced Grenadier Weaver *Euplectes* (formerly *Pyromelana*) *orix* near Wood's Point on the River Murray between Murray Bridge and Tailm Bend (Morgan 1933a). On 22 October 1932 he and John Sutton were shown four of a flock of about 15 to 20 birds that were feeding daily on wild oats on the reclaimed flats. Sutton was later told of a pair of weavers building a nest in a reedbed at Paradise; both populations were believed to be derived from aviary escapees and had the potential to establish wild populations. At the January 1933 meeting of the Association, a letter about the weavers was tabled from the Commonwealth Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (the forerunner of the CSIRO) and Dr Morgan and the President were empowered to deal with the matter.

A few weeks later Morgan took a 480 mile journey from Adelaide to Mannahill and back (Morgan 1933b). The country was dry northeast of Paratoo and this, combined with the mid-November time frame, resulted in only 46 species of birds being recorded. Despite his non-appearance at the AGM on 31 March 1933 and expressions of sympathy being offered to Dr Morgan on his illness (Anon 1933b), Morgan visited Hope Valley Reservoir with his old friend Dr Chenery on 25 September of that year. They found a nest with four young of the Chestnut-breasted Mannikin, a species not found in South Australia and therefore assumed to be a cage escapee (Chenery 1933). An Editor's note recorded that the Grenadier Weaver had nested in this same area of the reservoir in 1932.

I assume that due to ill health, the last two notes attributed to Dr Morgan, on cuckoos (Morgan 1933c) and treecreepers (Morgan 1934), are taken from his field notes. The cuckoo notes detailed specimens of four species taken by him in the Gawler Ranges in August 1923 and the treecreeper notes detailed specimens of four species taken by him in various parts of Australia in 1919, 1921 and 1923. One gets the feeling that he was putting his affairs in order at a time when he was perhaps unable to leave home. His death on 18 October 1934 was marked by his obituary by Dr Chenery in the pages of the SAO in the first part of Volume 13 in January 1935 (Chenery 1935). Other obituaries appeared in the *Records of the South Australian*

Museum, Annual Reports of the Board of Governors of the Public Library, Museum and Art Gallery and the Emu (Blaylock 2000).

The *Emu* obituary (White 1935) recorded the debt owed to Dr Morgan by South Australian ornithology and the pleasant companionship enjoyed by the two ornithologists and their peers. White singled out Dr Morgan's championship of the trinomial system of bird taxonomy (which set South Australian ornithology apart from much of the rest of Australia at that time) and also the great service bestowed by Morgan as Honorary Ornithologist at the South Australian Museum. Morgan took up this position in 1922 on the death of the Museum Ornithologist F.R. Zietz (Blaylock 2000) which also coincided with Morgan's disposal of his private medical practice (White 1935). As museum Honorary Ornithologist Morgan was instrumental, with the Zietzes and John Sutton, in building the foundations of its comprehensive bird collection and keeping South Australian ornithology at the forefront of scientific investigation (Schodde 2000). Morgan often led discussions of groups of birds at SAOA meetings and used the skin specimens from the Museum for illustration. This was a time before easy-to-use field guides with excellent illustrations that we have become accustomed to.

Morgan was not a founding member of the Royal Australasian Ornithologists Union (RAOU) according to the list published at the end of the first volume of *Emu*, but was probably a member in 1905, although he did not attend the Adelaide Congress nor the campout on Kangaroo Island in that year (Truran 2000). As Truran (2000) also noted he published little in *Emu*, despite a long membership, preferring the local journal. His earliest note in *Emu* was about Welcome Swallows nesting in natural breeding spots like caves, hollow gum stumps and gorges before they adapted to European buildings (Morgan 1906). This note is instructive as it shows how interested and knowledgeable he was about birds as a young child. He documents seeing a swallow nest in a cave in the hills behind Mitcham in 1874 or 1875 when he was about seven or eight and on every subsequent visit until 1906 there was an occupied nest there.

Morgan's only other contributions to *Emu* were a co-authored paper later in his life and three brief notes, written in response to what he regarded as poor ornithology and supporting Truran's (2000) assertion that Morgan had an ambivalent relationship with the RAOU. His responses were well-reasoned and based on his own careful observations and discussions with other SAOA members. He was particularly scathing about the naming of new species by some RAOU members based on just a few specimens and with little comparative material to support their arguments. His attitude softened a few years later and he did attend the Ninth Congress in Adelaide and was elected to the RAOU Council in 1910, although they appeared to make little use of his skills during his term on Council (Truran 2000).

Spotted Harrier

(Photographed by Roger Bourne at
Tookaninna Waterhole,
Oodnadatta Track, 7 June 2022)



camerahouse

Camera House Adelaide - Central Market is the Oldest Camera Store in South Australia and a proud third generation family business established in 1965.

We are now very proud to be the only SA based dealer for Kite Optics' revolutionary new elite optical quality and high tech APC 42 stabilised image binoculars (12 X 42 and 16 X 42). Those who have trialed and purchased these binoculars have said it is like watching a movie compared to using standard binoculars without the heavy weight, short battery life and "seasickness" effect of other stabilised image models.

Like our own business, Kite Optics is a multi-generation family business and as the name suggests is owned and directed by a lifelong birdwatcher who strongly believes that this new technology is the future for birdwatching - and many other things.

KITE OPTICS



Please visit our shop alongside the lively Central Market Arcade off Gouger Street and experience the Kite difference for yourself!

Go to www.photococamerahouse.com

Mention this ad and publication and get a free silicone jacket valued at \$58 in your choice of colour!

Past Excursions

Fleurieu Birders

Saturday 4 March

Belvidere Private Property

This is the first time that the group has visited this private property near Langhorne Creek, which consists of some original scrub under a Heritage Agreement. The scrub adjoins more open land in various stages of revegetation, mostly planted with tube stock or direct seeding by *Trees for Life*.

At her request, Bob Daly and I met Janice a month earlier regarding a possible bird survey for the owner. Janice regularly works as a volunteer, weeding on the property, and as the vegetation was well established, we decided it would be worth doing a bird survey with the group.

We had a “magic day”, and the weather was perfect. We met at the car park opposite *Belvidere Soldiers Memorial Hall*, and while waiting for members to arrive saw a mob of parrots fly into some large Eucalyptus trees and sit on the twiggy branches above the foliage, providing a great view. They included Purple-Crowned Lorikeets, Red-Rumped Parrots, Elegant Parrots and Crimson Rosellas.

From the car park, fifteen members drove the short distance to the property where we met the very passionate owner, David Cross. He explained his vision for the property to be left solely for conservation and to be managed by *Trees for Life*. David purchased the land in 2016 and gradually increased it until it became the current 44.5 hectares (110 acres). Many people have been involved on a voluntary basis helping with the revegetation, and one group has supported David financially by paying for the revegetation.

Walking through the native pine forest, the birds were all about us. Peaceful Doves, White-Plumed and Spiny-



Hooded Robins (Photographed by Bob Daly at Belvidere private property, 4 March 2023)



Owlet-nightjar (Photographed by Julie Hocking at Belvidere private property, 4 March 2023)

Cheeked Honeyeaters, White-Browed Babblers, Parrots and Lorikeets were all calling. Galahs, Little Corellas and Sulphur-Crested Cockatoos were also heard.

Janice led us to a paddock of mallee gum trees with lots of small hollows that looked suitable for Owlet-nightjars, but none appeared. Tree Martins and Welcome Swallows were about, and a few people found Variegated Fairywrens. Bob wandered off on his own and came across a pair of Hooded Robins resting on a farm gate. In the distance, two Spotted Harriers flew above us and were the only birds of prey seen on the day.

The group spread out and when we returned to the house for morning tea, David provided us with biscuits and chatted to individuals about the property. Janice showed us her photo albums and pictures of plants she had taken on the property. She marked the ground with coloured sticks, so they could be found later when they were in flower.

After morning tea, we walked to another section of the property and it was here that Denzel spotted an Owlet-nightjar resting in the native pines. Our youngest member was “over the moon” to get a new bird for his list and he followed it each time it flew to another tree.

The tally for the morning came to 33 species. The list was provided to the owner for future reference and we hope to repeat the survey in future at another time of year.

Wendy Phillips

Past Excursions *(continued)*

Birds SA

Sunday 26 February

Buckland Lake, Port Gawler

A fine and mild morning saw 19 members assemble for the outing. Due to a difficult track, several vehicles parked some way from the lake, and we consolidated in fewer vehicles.

The northern end of the lake had more water than expected, and probably more than has been there for several years. From a distance we could see the lake was crowded with many waterbirds, especially Black Swans and Grey Teal. As we approached the lake on foot we saw that there were large numbers of several species. We estimated that there were 1,500 Australian Shelduck, 1,000 Black Swan and 800 Grey Teal. After close inspection and persistence by some members, it was discovered that some shorebirds were mingled with the Grey Teal. Twelve Curlew Sandpiper, 50 Sharp-tailed Sandpiper and one Common Greenshank were recorded. A Rainbow Bee-eater was heard, but not seen.

The highlights of the day were two sightings of a sub-adult White-bellied Sea Eagle, followed by the sighting of one adult bird. Four Nankeen Kestrel and four Whistling Kite completed the raptors for the day, with one of the Whistling Kites initially spotted near a nest.

The bird call resulted in a total of 39 identified bird species.

Brian Walker

Birds SA

Saturday 11 March

Deep Creek Conservation Park

Originally envisioned as a mini campout, plans had to be changed as no campsites were available on the long weekend. It was encouraging, however, that three new members attended on the day along with four regulars. The morning was cool and overcast as we made our way through Stringybark Camp to the start of the Spring Wildflower Walk for our intended bird survey.

Our overall tally was a low 22 species (219 birds) for the day, although the bushland scrub was very pleasant and allowed us to enjoy the sometimes challenging terrain. Previous visits in April 2015 and June 2020 recorded similarly low tallies of 21 and 17 species respectively.

The highlight for most was when we stood underneath a large flock of Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo feeding on a small plantation of pine trees. Although they were sometimes hard to see, their feeding, contact calling, and short flights to relocate kept us entertained.

When they departed for a dead gumtree in a grazing paddock we counted 45 birds, including some young in the flock that were constantly calling for food. The predominant sightings were of Adelaide Rosella (10), Musk Lorikeet (15), White-throated Tree Creeper (8), Superb Fairywren (20), Red Wattlebird (6), Brown Thornbill (5), Striated Thornbill (4), Grey Currawong (2), Australian Magpie (20), Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike (3), Grey Shrike-thrush (2) and Grey Fantail (20). We also saw Scarlet Robins (8) and Crescent Honeyeaters (20) during our walk.

We were fortunate to meet Senior Ranger Carol Marsden, and I will follow up our discussion about a future campout to the Park. Stay tuned!

Lynton Huxley

Birds SA

Thursday 16 March

Bushland Park, Lobethal

Fifteen people gathered on a fine and mild day with only the occasional light breeze. It was interesting to revisit this area after the Cudlee Creek bushfire of December 2019 reduced most of the park to ashes. The situation was so serious at the time that remaining koalas were removed for rehabilitation or rehoming, and feeding stations were set up around the perimeter to feed kangaroos, wallabies and other animals, as there was nothing left for them to eat.

Things have progressed since then with vigorous regeneration, and the park is undergoing an early-stage succession event involving mainly Golden Wattle (*Acacia pycnantha*). Areas that were previously relatively open are now covered in very dense cover, making it hard to see much beyond the track in many places.

We started our walk by the lower lake where Eurasian Coots (16 including some youngsters) were the most common residents. We then traversed the eastern boundary where we saw the most birds during our walk. Magpielarks (10) and several Common Bronzewing (3) were seen and/or heard as they were flushed by our approach. Galahs (20) and Tree Martins (10) flew overhead, and in a particularly good 'hot spot' we saw Red-browed Finches (10), Crested Pigeon (1), Grey Fantails (30), Superb Fairywrens (12), Dusky Woodswallows (10), Scarlet Robins (3), Laughing Kookaburras (5), Western Whistler (4), Striated Pardalotes (5), Rufous Whistler (1), New Holland Honeyeaters (10), Grey Shrike-thrush (6), Silvereye (1) and Crescent Honeyeaters (10), Australian Magpies (8), Little Ravens (6), Sulphur-crested Cockatoos (4), Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoos (2), Little Corellas (4), Rainbow Lorikeets (2), Elegant Parrots (4) and Adelaide Rosellas (30).

Past Excursions *(continued)*

Other Honeyeaters recorded were Yellow-faced (1), White-naped (1) and some Red Wattlebirds (2). Several people commented that the recent season had not shown many Honeyeaters in general. The only Thornbill recorded was a single Yellow Thornbill.

We then headed west across the central area and down Fern Gully. Unfortunately, this wasn't very good for birdwatching mainly due to the dense cover of Golden Wattles. However, we did hear or see Grey Currawongs (3) and White-throated Treecreepers (4).

We returned to the lower lake where we had lunch and did the bird call. Several more birds were seen on or by the lake including Little Pied Cormorants (6), Australasian Darters (2), White-faced Herons (2), Dusky Moorhens (2), Australian White Ibis (2), Pacific Black Ducks (4) and Australasian Swampheens (5), with a Masked Lapwing heard in the distance. A quite large number of Maned Ducks (80) suddenly swooped in and two Wedge-tailed Eagles were seen soaring above.

The only feral species seen were House Sparrows (2) and Common Blackbirds (4). The bird count for the day was 46.

Ali Ben Kahn

Port Augusta Bird Group (The Babblers)

Sunday 19 March Telowie Gorge

On a warm, calm, overcast and humid morning, six birders gathered at Telowie Gorge Conservation Park, near Port Pirie. Two people came from Port Pirie, and one each from Whyalla, Port Augusta, Port Neill and Mambray Creek.

Along the road into the gorge we saw a flock of Yellow-rumped Thornbills and a Hobby, while near the car park Little Ravens, Weebills, Spiny-cheeked Honeyeaters, White-browed Babblers and Silvereyes moved about in the trees and scrub.

We walked into the gorge along a red gum-lined creek, with low scrub-covered slopes leading to steep rocky cliffs on either side. Galahs flew through the gorge, slicing the air as they rushed past, while the calls of Grey Butcherbirds echoed off the cliffs. In the dense scrub, Grey Shrike-thrush, Inland Thornbills, Purple-backed Fairy-wrens and Singing Honeyeaters could be heard and seen moving about, while in the trees Striated Pardalotes and Weebills fossicked through the leaves.

A flash of bright yellow caught our eyes as a Western Whistler appeared before us accompanied by his mate and an immature male. As we were busy trying to take photos a Rufous Whistler came by to have a look at us.



Western Whistler (Photographed by Bernie Haase at Telowie Gorge, 19 March 2023)



Grey-fronted Honeyeater (Photographed by Jude Owen at Telowie Gorge, 19 March 2023)

As we moved along the creek, Kookaburras flew past, their calls reverberating through the gorge. Elusive Grey-fronted Honeyeaters could be heard and occasionally seen, but the poor light conditions made it hard to take good photos.

We returned to the car park for smoko before walking along a track that follows the western boundary of the park. The area is covered in low dense shrubs and we

Past Excursions *(continued)*



Grey Butcherbird (Photographed by Bernie Haase at Nelshaby Reservoir, 19 March 2023)



Australasian Grebe with dragonfly (Photographed by Judy Owen at Nelshaby Reservoir, 19 March 2023)



Horsfield's Bronze-cuckoo (Photographed by Richard Croll at Telowie Gorge, 19 March 2023)

were unable to locate the Southern Scrub-robins that we know live there. We added Chestnut-rumped Thornbills, Peaceful Doves and a Brown Falcon to our bird list. An Owlet Nightjar and a Horsfield's Bronze-cuckoo could be heard calling out from the trees in the creek. On our way out, Welcome Swallows, Crested Pigeons, Mallee Ringnecks, Common Bronzewing and a Magpie completed our list of 28 bird species for the area.

Nelshaby Reservoir

We drove south to Nelshaby Reservoir where we had lunch before climbing the embankment overlooking the half-filled reservoir. On our way we saw Red-rumped Parrots in the old red gums and Blackbirds scurried away from us. In the trees around the water were Yellow-throated Miners, Galahs, Black-faced Cuckoo-shrikes, Singing Honeyeaters and a Grey Butcherbird, while in the bushes Purple-backed Fairy-wrens flitted about. Magpie Larks, White-faced Herons and a Black-fronted Dotterel were at the water's edge, while on the water Coots and Australasian Grebes swam about with yabbies or dragonflies in their beaks to feed to their young. We saw Little Pied Cormorants, Grey Teal, Pacific Black Ducks, Wood Ducks, Hardheads and a Musk Duck floating about or feeding in the shallows.

Some of us stayed in the bird hide overlooking the water to take photos of a Little Grassbird, while others walked around the reservoir, through a swampy forest area.



Richard, Judy, Frank, Trevor and Bernie at Telowie Gorge (Photographed by Colin Elliot, 19 March 2023)

Past Excursions *(continued)*



Little Grassbird *(Photographed by Bernie Haase at Nelshaby Gorge, 19 March 2023)*

Here we saw Kookaburras, Little Ravens, Mallee Ringnecks, Willie Wagtails, White-plumed Honeyeaters, Sacred Kingfishers and Grey Shrike-thrushes. A Whistling Kite chased dragonflies over the water, and Black-tailed Native-hens quietly crept through the shoreline growth.

As we returned to our vehicles we saw Silvereyes, White-browed Babblers and Crested Pigeons, which completed the list of 32 bird species for the area. Although it was getting on, we decided to continue and drive the short distance to Nelshaby Gorge.

Nelshaby Gorge

It was warm and humid, and the birds were quiet as we walked along the low scrub and tree-covered slope towards the red gum-lined creek. Kookaburras and Little Ravens called out as they flew past, and Singing Honeyeaters moved about in the trees.

A Black-shouldered Kite hovered above the trees as a Common Bronzewing rocketed past. As we moved along the track, the gorge gradually narrowed and we passed some old quarries. Weebills, Galahs and Spiny-cheeked Honeyeaters were seen in the red gums while Grey Shrike-thrush and Inland Thornbills inhabited the dense scrub.

As it was getting late and some of us had long drives home, we turned around even though it looked like promising birding country ahead. Back at the vehicles we had bird call and counted 11 bird species, making a total of 50 bird species for the day. The birds of the day were the Hobby, Grey-fronted Honeyeaters, and the photogenic Western Whistlers and Little Grassbird.

Bernie Haase

Birds SA

Sunday 26 March

Mount Lofty Botanic Gardens

Light drizzle greeted the 11 members as we contemplated whether to proceed with the excursion. It was never in doubt! With the prospect of seeing a Bassian Thrush we donned our wet weather gear and departed the lower car park. After crossing the lake wall we saw a large flock of 30 European Goldfinch feeding under the cover of branches near the bank. Our chosen path to the upper carpark was via Rhododendron Gully and the steep climb was taken slowly!

Regrettably a Bassian Thrush could not be included in our species list totalling 27 for the day. We ended up returning earlier than scheduled and did a quick count of the birds seen, skipping lunch to head home. Our list included Maned Duck (25), Pacific Black Duck (12), Hardhead (2), Eurasian Coot (6), Dusky Moorhen (4), Australasian Grebe (3), Masked Lapwing (2), Little Pied Cormorant, Australian White Ibis, Sulphur-crested Cockatoo (6), Galah (14), Adelaide Rosella (10), Superb Fairywren (20), Crescent Honeyeater (6), White-browed Scrubwren, Brown Thornbill (6), Little Raven (24), Silvereye (4), Red-browed Finch (4) and Common Blackbird (15).

The Botanical Gardens are a delight to visit any time of the year and there is always the chance you will see a Bassian Thrush – so what are you waiting for?

Lynton Huxley



Members sheltering from the rain *(Photographed at the Mount Lofty Botanical Gardens, 26 March 2023)*

Past Excursions *(continued)*

Fleurieu Birders

Saturday 1 April Inman River Walk

Only seven Birders met in the car park opposite the *Victor Harbor Library* and braved the rain for a walk through the Inman River flood plain. We started out in persistent light rain, which was somewhat unpleasant for us but didn't put the birds off. The small bush birds were by far the most plentiful, with good numbers of White-plumed Honeyeaters, New Holland Honeyeaters and Wattlebirds of both species.



Black-chinned Honeyeater (Photographed by Bob Daly at Inman River, 1 April 2023)

When the rain finally cleared, we found a group of six Black-Chinned Honeyeaters near the bird hide on the edge of the golf course. This bird, occasionally reported from this area, has eluded me previously so it was good to finally get a few photos. The rain held off as we completed the loop walk, and we visited some Clydesdale horses (used for the Horse-drawn Tram in Victor Harbour) that were resting in a nearby paddock.



Our youngest birdwatcher/photographer
(Photo of her son, by Raechel Lewis, Inman River, 1 April 2023)

The bird count came to 39 species, which was good considering that there were no raptors included, and a lone Silver Gull for the seabird count.

Bob Daly

Birds SA

Easter Campout 5 to 10 April Balcanoona Station Homestead

Our Easter Campout was held at Balcanoona Station Homestead in the Vulkathunha-Gammon Ranges National Park. We had an excellent turnout of thirty seven members with several attending their first campout. The warm to hot conditions were appreciated given the cold and wet Easter being endured in Adelaide. Two Victorian visitors Asha and Dave (members of Birdlife Australia) also supported us with sightings they had made at Weetootla Gorge. All accommodation rooms were occupied and everyone appreciated the convenience of the well equipped kitchen, lounge room and bathroom facilities at this campout.

The traditional Sunday barbeque brunch feast of bacon, eggs, tomatoes, sausages and mushrooms was consumed under the shelter of the large veranda or cool kitchen. Copious pancakes (Liz made a big bowl of her secret mix) with syrup, lemon or sugar quickly followed to quell any remaining hunger pains. A special thank you to Roger Bourne and Liz Carpenter for cooking over the unshaded outdoor barbeque to ensure everyone got fed.



Four Painted Finch with Zebra Finches
(Photographed by Chris Lill at Balcanoona Station, April 2023)

As well as the Homestead (50) species count, we scheduled survey trips to Italowie Gorge (27), Weetootla Gorge (36), Balcanoona Creek (29) and Lake Frome Regional Reserve (16) on a daily basis. We also visited Stubbs Waterhole (21) near Arkaroola on several occasions. The total species count for the campout was an impressive 65 for all sites visited with some standout observations that included **Painted Finch** (4) near Stubbs Waterhole, **Bourke's Parrot** (4) along Balcanoona Creek on the way to Lake Frome, **Thick-billed Grasswren** (2) in the sand dune swales at the

Past Excursions *(continued)*



Members birdwatching in Weetootla Gorge

(Photographed on the Easter Campout, April 2023)

Lake Frome shelter, **Orange Chat** (2) around the shearing shed at the Homestead, **Chirruping Wedgebill** flocks at the Homestead, Balcanoona Creek and Italowie Gorge.

Some of the other species recorded included Emu, Australian Owlet-nightjar, Collared Sparrowhawk, Brown Goshawk, Brown

Falcon, Wedge-tailed Eagle, Nankeen Kestrel, Budgerigar, Elegant and Mulga Parrots, Australian Ringneck, Purple-backed and White-winged Fairywren, Southern Whiteface, Red-capped and Hooded Robin, Spotted Pardalote, Weebill, Yellow-rumped Thornbill, Southern Whiteface and Rufous Whistler. Honeyeater species included Grey-fronted, Pied, Spiny-cheeked, Singing, White-fronted, White-plumed and Yellow-throated Miner. But by far the most prolific species seen was the iconic Zebra Finch with their noisy chatter.

On behalf of our members I would like to extend our thanks and appreciation for the support and kindness extended to us by Senior Ranger Sian Johnston and Ranger Jesse Evans. The rangers are currently preparing bird field guides for visitors to the Park and our survey data will be beneficial for that task. Having onsite accommodation available ensured those members without caravans could also participate and enjoy our successful 2023 Easter bird survey campout.

Addendum: A few members were able to undertake a quick bird survey at the Leigh Creek Retention Dam for the local Progress Association. The data (39 species) has been forwarded to assist their records. The list included Emu, Blue-billed Duck, Freckled Duck, Musk Duck, Black Swan, all three species of Grebe, Red-necked Avocet, Pied stilt, Black Fronted Dotterel, Red-capped Plover, Red-necked Stint.

Lynton Huxley



Members enjoying happy hour *(Photographed on the Easter Campout, April 2023)*



Members resting after Sunday brunch feast *(Photographed on the Easter Campout, April 2023)*

Past Excursions *(continued)*

Port Augusta Bird Group (The Babblers)

Friday 14 April

Hiltaba Nature Reserve

It was a cool day with clouds building and a slight breeze, when two of our birding group met at the tanks near the Iron Knob turnoff. We met others along the way and at the Hiltaba Nature Reserve, bordering the Gawler Ranges National Park on the Eyre Peninsula. Our group included two people from Whyalla, two from Adelaide, and one each from Port Augusta, Port Neill and Mambray Creek.

Four of us drove to White Dam on Coronna Station, north west of Whyalla, where we stopped for smoko and a bit of birding. On the water we saw Wood Ducks and Australian Grebes, in the air Welcome Swallows, in the bushes Purple-backed and White-winged Fairy-wrens, White-browed Babblers and a Redthroat, and in the trees Galahs, Spiny-cheeked and White-plumed Honeyeaters, a Red Wattlebird, Magpies, Grey Butcherbird, Willie Wagtails, Magpie Larks and a Collared Sparrowhawk. A total of 16 bird species were seen in about 30 minutes.

Next we travelled along 233 km of dirt road towards Hiltaba, joining a couple of birders from Whyalla as they were chasing some Slender-billed Thornbills. We dropped into Mount Ive for lunch as the sky darkened with clouds. The forecast was for rain later in the evening, but it began to come down about 50 km from Hiltaba and steadily increased until the road became soft and slippery. The manager met us at Hiltaba Homestead, and said we were lucky to get through as the road was about to be closed. We set up camp about 2 km away at the shearers' quarters where we met the last of our group, a birder from Port Neill. It continued to rain all night, making it impossible to drive on the tracks throughout the property.

Saturday 15 April

The rain had eased to the occasional shower as we had breakfast before going birding on foot. We were surrounded by a flat, bluebush plain with areas of black oak woodland. A short distance away were rounded spinifex-covered hills with rocky outcrops and areas of mallee trees. Magpies, Willie Wagtails, Yellow-throated Miners, Australian Ravens, White-browed Babblers, Magpie Larks and many Mulga Parrots were found close to the camp.

Some of us walked through the bluebush and black oaks finding White-winged Fairy-wrens, Spiny-cheeked and Singing Honeyeaters, Port Lincoln Parrots, Grey Butcherbirds, Emus, Chestnut-rumped and Yellow-rumped Thornbills, Crested Pigeons, Welcome Swallows, Southern Whiteface, and some photogenic Red-capped Robins.



Red-capped Robin (Photographed by Judy Owen at Hiltaba Nature Reserve, 15 April 2023)



Spiny-cheeked Honeyeater (Photographed by Richard Croll at Hiltaba Nature Reserve, 15 April 2023)



Port Lincoln parrot (Photographed by Bernie Haase at Hiltaba Nature Reserve, 15 April 2023)

Past Excursions *(continued)*



Mulga Parrot (Photographed by Trevor Cox at Hiltaba Nature Reserve, 15 April 2023)



Grey Butcherbird (Photographed by Judy Owen at Hiltaba Nature Reserve, 15 April 2023)

The more able people climbed a spinifex and shrub-covered hill adding Grey Shrike-thrush and Little Ravens to the bird list, but could not find any Short-tailed Grasswrens. One person climbed the Mount Hiltaba area behind the homestead looking for the Grasswrens, but had no luck. He did, however, add Little Button-quails and Tawny-crowned Honeyeaters to our list, while getting soaked in a shower of rain for his efforts!

As we returned to the shearers' quarters for lunch, some White-backed Swallows, Pipits, Horsfield's Bronze Cuckoos, Black-faced Woodswallows and White-fronted Chats increased our bird list. Rain showers kept falling, but in the breaks the birding continued. A small, mallee-

covered hill provided our first birds of prey; a couple of Brown Goshawks that were being severely harassed by Magpies and Kestrels, while a Wedge-tailed Eagle watched from high above. Some of the mallee trees were in flower, and we saw Inland Thornbills and Dusky Woodswallows, but few Honeyeaters and no Weebills. Again, some of the group were caught in a shower of rain as they headed back to camp. We found 33 different birds for the day.

Sunday 16 April

Sunday was a lovely day with patchy clouds drifting past, and we went to look at the reservoir in the hills behind the homestead. From here two of the group joined a hiking tour group to climb Mount Hiltaba, two climbed the hills to look for Grasswrens, and the others wandered around the local area birding, as the roads were still closed.

In the hills, the endemic *Grevillea parallelinervis* was flowering and had attracted White-fronted and Tawny-crowned Honeyeaters, while Grey Currawongs calling noisily drifted past. In dense undergrowth, Purple-backed Fairywrens and Inland Thornbills scolded us. Spotted Pardalotes moved through the leaves of a small patch of mallee, and Zebra Finches drank from pools of water left by the rain, but still no Grasswrens.

Purple-backed Fairywren

(Photographed by Bernie Haase at Hiltaba Nature Reserve, 16 April 2023)



Past Excursions *(continued)*



Red-capped Robin (Photographed by Richard Croll at Hiltaba Nature Reserve, 15 April 2023)

As we climbed back down the hill, a different chattering call caught my attention. I knew that call from previous trips to Central Australia, a Painted Finch, which soon appeared at my feet, obviously a lost and lonely bird. As I was taking photos, an Echidna stumbled towards me. I took a photo of it and returned to the finch, but could not find the Echidna again once the finch had gone.

Back at the camp for lunch, the others reported finding Brown Falcons, Orange Chat, Tree Martins, Black-faced Cuckoo-shrikes and Blue Bonnets. After lunch some of the group went to look at the base of some hills with vegetation that looked like it would yield more birds. I decided to climb a small spinifex-covered hill nearby.



Rufous Whistler (Photographed by Bernie Haase at Hiltaba Nature Reserve, 16 April 2023)

On the way to the hill Galahs flew past, and Rufous Whistlers, Black-eared Cuckoo and Little Crows were seen in black oaks. The western side of the hill had suffered in the dry summer, and was vegetated with only stunted spinifex and shrubs. As I climbed over the summit, the slope was steeper and more sheltered from the afternoon sun. The spinifex was much larger and denser here, and the crickets called louder, although some of the calls were different. I heard a loud squeak and the head of a Grasswren poked up from behind a spinifex before disappearing in an instant.

Painted Finch (Photographed by Bernie Haase at Hiltaba Nature Reserve, 16 April 2023)



Past Excursions *(continued)*



Brown Falcon (Photographed by Judy Owen at Hiltaba Nature Reserve, 16 April 2023)



Black-eared Cuckoo (Photographed by Bernie Haase at Hiltaba Nature Reserve, 16 April 2023)

Quiet squeaks could be heard around me, although nothing was seen. As I walked down the slope, a little thing shot out from under my feet. I thought it was a mouse or a lizard, but it was a Short tailed Grasswren chick.

Monday 17 April

The sun was shining, and it was a lovely calm morning as we had breakfast. Unfortunately, the roads were still closed and prevented us from heading home. While we waited for the latest road report, some of us walked around the area looking for new birds. A Lapwing and Restless Flycatcher were heard but could not be found.

The road report came through, with the road to Minnipa via Yardea open to 4x4 only. We packed up, cleaned our accommodation, and headed to Pretty Point on the way out. A quick lunch stop at Pretty Point turned into a two hour birding hike around the loop path! It is a pretty place, with a small creek cutting through domed rocky hills and mallee. We finally added Weebills to the bird list and Grey Fantail, Mistletoebirds, Silvereyes, Striated Pardalote and White-eared Honeyeater.

We found 26 bird species here. The road out to Minnipa was dry except for a few patches of water and mud over the road, with the corrugations being the worst obstacle.

A total of 59 bird species were found during our trip. The birds of the trip were the Painted Finch and Short-tailed Grasswren, with a special mention to the Black-eared Cuckoo and Tawny-crowned Honeyeaters, which are on the edge of their recorded range.

Bernie Haase

Birds SA

Saturday 20 April

Byards Road Wetlands Reynella East

It was pleasing that our gathering of 16 members for this excursion included several new members. Given recent rains the first two lakes were full and the remaining two were only partly filled which allows some birds to feed along the muddy banks. The walk started under cloudy conditions but that cleared and we did most of the excursion in clear sunny conditions.

The high point of the day was when someone called 'Brown Quail' and quite a few of us got a view as it moved in and out of long grass and weeds by the walking track. In total we were able to sight 33 species with a total of 348 birds.

We had lunch in the carpark and our bird call list included Maned Duck, Pacific Black Duck (30), Common Bronzewing, Spotted Dove, Crested Pigeon (13), Dusky

Past Excursions *(continued)*

Moorhen (2), Australasian Swamphen (7), Australasian Grebe (20), Masked Lapwing (2), Little Black Cormorant (2), Little Pied Cormorant (3), White Faced Heron (2), Australian White Ibis (2), Little Corella (10), Sulphur-crested Cockatoo (2), Rainbow Lorikeet (50), Red-rumped Parrot (5), Adelaide Rosella (10), Eastern Rosella (1), Superb Fairywren (15), New Holland Honeyeater (50), White-plumed Honeyeater (2), Noisy Miner (40), Little Wattlebird (2), Red Wattlebird (20), Striated Pardalote (3), Australian Magpie (30), Willie Wagtail (2), Magpie Lark (12), Little Raven (6) and Welcome Swallow (12).

Lynton Huxley

Birds SA

Sunday 30 April

Kaiserstuhl Conservation Park, Barossa Valley

Eighteen birdwatchers braved the cooler weather to arrive at the Tanunda Creek Road gate of Kaiserstuhl Conservation Park which is on the western side of the park. Kaiserstuhl Conservation Park is comprised of 435 hectares located 12km south east of Tanunda in the Barossa Valley, SA.

The walk commenced from the access gate and proceeded to follow the Stringybark Loop trail which is an approximately 3 km walk through forest and woodland with a mixture of predominantly Stringybark, gum and Sheoak trees. Although the morning was cool

and overcast there was thankfully no rain, however this did seem to deter the birds in the initial part of the walk, but as the sun started to break through the clouds the birds became more active.

Plenty of honeyeaters were seen feeding on the flowering gums, Silver Banksia and Flame Heaths. The following were seen: 20 New Holland Honeyeaters, 20 Red Wattlebirds, 20 Eastern Spinebills, 15 Crescent Honeyeaters, 6 Yellow-faced Honeyeaters, 3 White-naped Honeyeaters, 2 Little Wattlebirds and 1 Brown-headed Honeyeater.

The group stopped for a while, approximately half way round at a large rock outcrop which held a small pool of water, honeyeaters and Red-browed Finches (8) were seen going down for a drink.

Throughout the walk many different groups of Superb Fairywrens were seen, with the males still showcasing their beautiful breeding plumage. It was estimated approximately 20 were seen by the group. Only a couple of raptors were observed, being a solitary Black-shouldered Kite and two Wedge-tailed Eagles.

Not too many parrots, lorikeets or cockatoos were seen. The most numerous either flying overhead or feeding in the flowering gums were 12 Adelaide Rosellas and 5 Galahs. The forest woodland was filled with the sound of Pardalotes singing from the tree canopy with 10 Striated Pardalotes and 2 Spotted Pardalotes being sighted. Treecreepers were seen exploring the bark of the numerous trees along the walk, 6 White-throated Treecreepers and 2 Brown Treecreepers were seen but many more were heard in the woodland.

At the intersection of the Stringybark Loop and the Wallowa Track a beautifully (almost orange) breasted Scarlet Robin was seen preening itself on a small tree in the warmth of the sun. This was one of 4 Scarlet Robins seen (2 female and 2 male).

There was great excitement in the group when an Australian Owlet-nightjar (a less common species for the park) was seen in a distant hollow of a dead gum tree.

Members observing an Owlet-nightjar in the hollow of a distant gum tree.

*(Photographed at Kaiserstuhl
Conservation Park, 30 April 2023)*



Past Excursions *(continued)*

Overall, 32 bird species (of the 138 total species recorded to date) were observed by the end of the walk. Those not already mentioned were: Australian Western Whistler (2), Australian Magpie (6), Buff-rumped Thornbill (2), Grey Currawong (1), Grey Fantail (5), Grey Shrikethrush (2), Little Raven (6), Rufous Whistler (2), Striated Thornbill (8), Yellow-rumped Thornbill (2), Weebill (5), White-browed Babbler (2). No introduced species were observed.

The walk had finished by 11.30am and then the group drove to the Bethany Reserve to eat lunch and undertake the bird call.

Tina A Woods

Fleurieu Birders

Saturday 6 May

Private Vineyard, Currency Creek

The day before our walk, wet weather had set in and the rain continued during the night and early morning. However, twelve people decided to brave it, and we were lucky to dodge the showers for the rest of the morning until lunch time, when we headed to the shelter shed at Wally's landing for the bird call and lunch.

Travis, the Vineyard manager, met us at the gate where I signed us on as visitors, and after piling into three cars, we travelled to three different areas of native scrub surrounding the Vineyard. There were large old gum trees interspersed with native understorey plants that were planted 10-11 years ago, (post-drought) with government funding. Kangaroos and possibly wild deer have done some damage to the revegetation, but overall, it is providing a great habitat for birds.

The Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoos were most prolific. We estimated 80-100 birds feeding and resting in the area, and calling as they flew overhead. The Red-rumped Parrots, Elegant Parrots and Crimson Rosellas were also in good numbers, despite the fact there was not much flowering at this time of the year. A Rufous Whistler and a Fantailed Cuckoo were seen, and the Honeyeaters included, White-plumed, New Holland and Red Wattlebird. There was a tree full of Crested Pigeon and one Peaceful Dove was photographed.

Looking down over the wide expanse of the Tookayerta Creek, which flows into the Finniss River nearby, we were hoping to see some water birds or at least hear some warblers, but nothing showed. A bird of prey had us guessing and turned out to be a young Collared Sparrowhawk. The small bush birds, Superb Fairywrens, Silvereyes, Grey Fantail, Striated Pardalote and a Red-browed Finch appeared. It was so much quieter than our two previous visits to this property, which looking back on my records, were done in Springtime. The total for

A young Collared Sparrowhawk

(Photographed by Bob Daly at Currency Creek, 6 May 2023)



White-plumed Honeyeaters *(Photographed by Bob Daly at Currency Creek, 6 May 2023)*

the day came to 28 species. Autumn is known to be quiet for birds in the Fleurieu district, as they are not calling, and some fly further north for Winter.

It turned out to be a pleasant day with lots of sunshine, good chatter, and catch-up time with old friends.

Wendy Phillips

Future Excursions

The following excursions have been scheduled, but are subject to cancellation or change due to weather conditions or the closure of a site for conservation requirements. It is important that you check the **Birds SA website** and / or **Facebook page** for any updated information. Updates will be provided 24 hours prior to the commencement of any affected excursions.

Whilst usually not relevant this time of year, please be aware of our **Hot Weather Protocol**:

If a Fire Ban is in effect, or the forecast temperature is 36C or above in the area of a scheduled excursion, that walk is automatically cancelled.

We encourage you to pre-register your intention to participate on a particular excursion using the Member Jungle site. Pre-registration is not compulsory, but is another way we can keep you informed if your chosen event is cancelled.

We ask that members only attend field trips if they are well and have no cold or flu-like symptoms.

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). Distances provided with excursion information below are km from Adelaide.

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

If you require any further information contact:

Lynton Huxley

Field Program Co-ordinator and Campout Organiser

Phone: 0498 466 092

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

Birds SA

Saturday 10 June

Browns Road, Monarto **Easy** (MLR) 60 km.

Meet at 8.30 am at Browns Road, Monarto, just off the old Murray Bridge Road. Leave the SE Freeway at the Callington exit. Drive through Callington and turn right onto the old Murray Bridge road. The junction is on the left at the top of the hill.

TRIP LEADER: *John Gitsham*

Birds SA

Thursday 15 June

Shepherds Hill Recreation Park, St Marys **Difficult** (MM) 10 km.

Meet at 8.30am at the car park 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*

Port Augusta Bird Group (The Babblers)

Sunday 18 June

Carriererloo to Yudnapinna Road **Moderate**

Meet at 8 am at the start of Stuart Highway.

TRIP LEADER: *Bernie Haase*

Birds SA

Sunday 25 June

Little Mount Crawford Native Forest Reserve (Jenkins Scrub) **Moderate** (MLR) 61 km.

Travel about 10 km from Williamstown towards Springton, then turn right onto Mount Road. Meet at 8.30 am at the entrance to the scrub on the left, opposite Murray Vale Road.

TRIP LEADER: *Richard Woodland*

Fleurieu Birders

Saturday 1 July

Hindmarsh Island **Easy** 86 km.

Meet at the Information Bay car park, near Hindmarsh Island Nursery, at 8.30 am.

TRIP LEADER: *Richard Smyth*

Birds SA

Saturday 8 July

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

Meet at 8.30 am at the reserve entrance on Cox Road, opposite Aldinga Holiday Park.

TRIP LEADER: *Alan Burns*

Future Excursions *(continued)*

Port Augusta Bird Group (The Babblers)

Sunday 16 July

Mundallio Station **Moderate**

Meet at 8 am at Carlton Parade Cemetery, Port Augusta.

TRIP LEADER: *Bernie Haase*

Birds SA

Thursday 20 July

Laratinga Wetlands, Mt Barker **Easy** (MLR) 34 km.

Meet at the carpark on Bald Hills Road, Mt. Barker at 8.30 am.

TRIP LEADER: *Bonny Vogelzang*

Birds SA

Sunday 30 July

Minko Scrub, Mount Compass **Moderate**
(MLR) 60 km.

Attendance will be limited to 20 via Eventbrite (This link will be circulated later in an e-Newsletter with additional details on this site visit).

TRIP LEADER: *Steven Langley*

Fleurieu Birders

Saturday 5 August

Hardy's Scrub, Blewitt Springs **Moderate** 43km.

Meet at Gate no. 16 on Chapel Hill Road at 8.30 am.

TRIP LEADER: *Edith St George*

Port Augusta Bird Group (The Babblers)

Friday 11 - Sunday 13 August

Oratunga Station **Easy**

Meet at 10am on Friday at Blinman Hotel, Blinman. (CAMPOUT - facilities available, costs apply)

Birds SA

Saturday 12 August

Paiwalla Wetland **Easy** (MM) 90 km.

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

TRIP LEADER: *Lynton Huxley*

Birds SA

Thursday 17 August

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

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

TRIP LEADER: *Volunteer required*

Birds SA

Saturday 26 - Sunday 27 August

August General Meeting (Combined Birdlife SE and Birds SA Meeting and Campout), Mount Gambier.

Field trip on Saturday to Picks Swamp (target bird species Bitterns, Brolgas and Magpie Geese) and Sunday to Nangwarry Forest (target species red-tailed Black Cockatoos). Meeting on Saturday night with talk by Bob Green. Friday night drinks, and Saturday night meeting venue and dinner location to be confirmed. Members to organise their own transport and accommodation.

Birds SA

Sunday 27 August

Talbot Reserve Rockleigh & Bushland Conservation
Easy - Moderate (MLA) 74 km.

Meet at 8.30 am at Talbot Reserve. Follow the SE Freeway and take the exit north towards Monarto. Cross Old Princes Hwy and follow Schenscher Rd for 5 km. Fork right into Pallamana Rd, then left onto Reedy Creek Rd. Continue to the junction with Blackheath Road. Turn left onto Blackheath Road and travel about 2.5 km to Talbot Reserve. This is only a small area so the plan is to move onto Bushland Conservation to complete the morning's birding. It may be wet underfoot. Choose footwear wisely!

TRIP LEADER: *Barbara Bansemer*

Fleurieu Birders

Saturday 2 September

Pangarinda Botanic Garden **Moderate** 107 km.

Meet at the entrance on Pangarinda Drive, Wellington East.

TRIP LEADER: *Wendy Phillips*

Future Excursions *(continued)*

Birds SA

Saturday 9 September

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

Meet at 8.30 am at Gate 20 located on Frith Road which runs off Dorset Vale Road, Cherry Gardens. This area of the park was spared from the devastating fires earlier this year.

TRIP LEADER: *Jim Spiker*

Port Augusta Bird Group (The Babblers)

Sunday 10 September

Wirrabara Forest Reserve **Moderate**

Meet at 8.30 am at Wirrabara pub.

TRIP LEADER: *Bernie Haase*

Birds SA

Thursday 21 September

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

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

TRIP LEADER: *Lynton Huxley*

Birds SA

Sunday 24 September

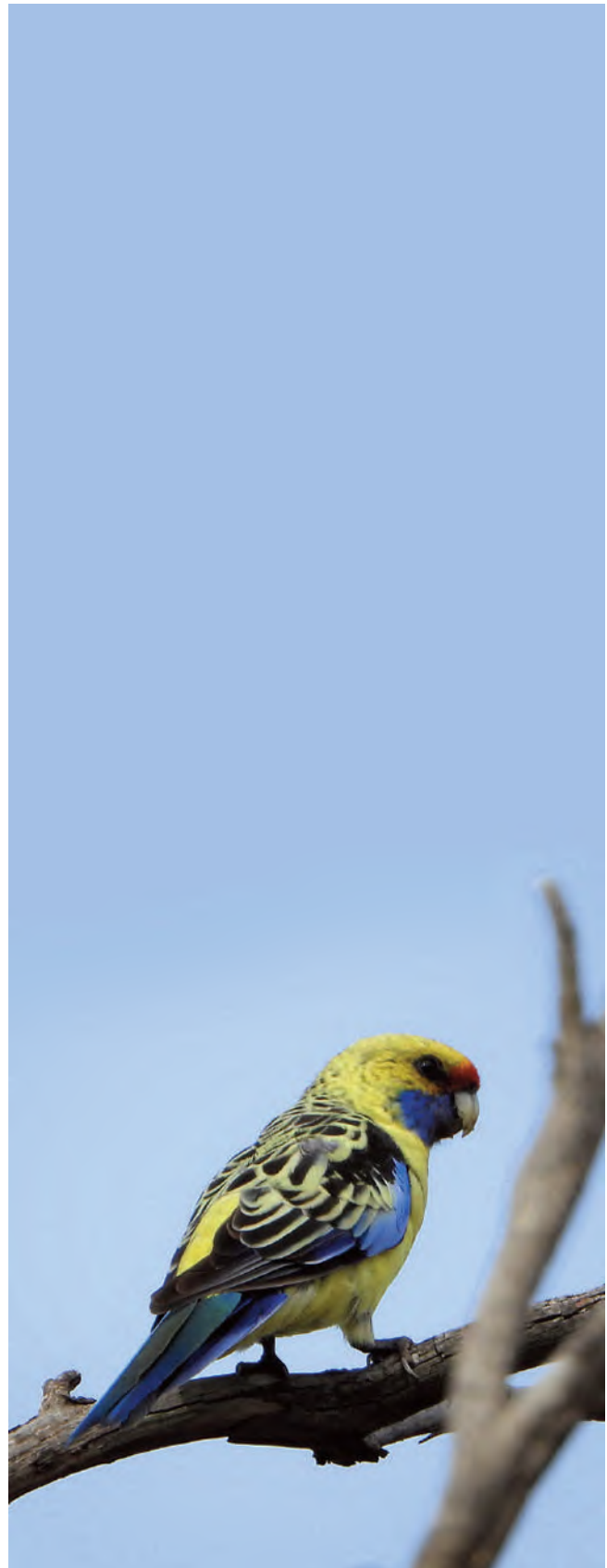
Kinchina Conservation Park **Easy**
(MLA) 69 km.

Meet at 8.30 am at the Cypress Hill Trail car park at the junction of Maurice Road and the main railway line to Melbourne. To get there from Adelaide, follow the SE Freeway and take the exit north towards Monarto. Follow Ferries McDonald Road, turn right onto Old Princes Highway, and then take Maurice Road on your left. The car park about 2.5 km along this road

TRIP LEADER: *Ali Ben Kahn*

Yellow Rosella

(Photographed by Bernie Haase in the Morgan Conservation Park, 29 March 2023)



From the Library

The library is located upstairs in the Boardroom of the *Conservation Council SA* offices at The Joinery, 111 Franklin Street, Adelaide.

The library is open fortnightly from 12.30 – 3.00 pm on the 2nd and 4th Fridays of every month.

Opening times until the end of July

Friday June 9	12.30 – 3:00
Friday June 23	12.30 – 3:00
Friday July 7	12.30 – 3:00
Friday July 21	12.30 – 3:00

New books



598.251 JON

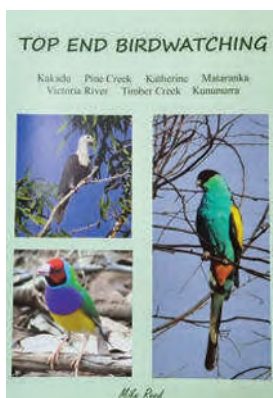
Jones, Darryl

Curlews on Vulture Street : Cities, Birds, People & Me

Sydney, NSW : NewSouth, 2022

ISBN 9781742237367

Acclaimed urban ecologist Darryl Jones reveals the not-so-secret lives of the most common birds that share our towns and cities. Despite the noise, heat, dust and fumes, the ceaseless movement, light and toxins, many birds successfully live their lives among us. And not just furtively in the shadows. Ibis steal our lunch, brush turkeys rearrange gardens and magpies chase us screaming from near their nest. Jones shares a fascinating story of curiosity, discovery, adventure and conflict, played out in city streets and backyards.



598.299429 REE

Reed, Mike

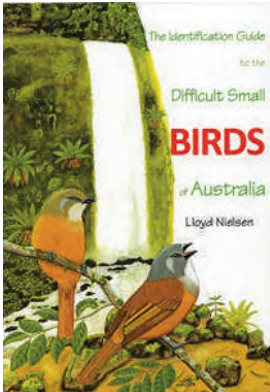
Top end birdwatching : Kakadu, Pine Creek, Katherine, Mataranka, Victoria River, Timber Creek, Kununurra

Katherine, NT : NT Birds, 2014

ISBN 9780992415402

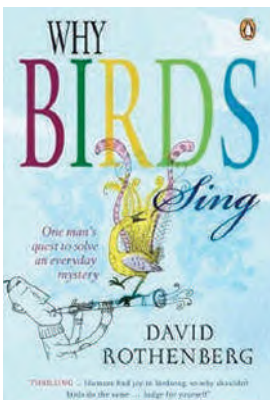
A full colour book with detailed maps, notes and directions for 47 reliable birding sites in Kakadu NP, Pine Creek, Katherine, Mataranka and the Victoria River region of the Northern Territory and Kununurra in northern Western Australia to enable visiting birdwatchers to quickly find the endemic, sought-after and common birds of Australia's Top End. Also includes a bird checklist, photographs of some sites and habitats, travel and personal safety advice. The compact 24 page A5 format fits comfortably with popular field guides.

From the Library *(continued)*



598.2994 NIEd
Nielsen, Lloyd
The identification guide to the difficult small birds of Australia
Mt Molloy, QLD : Lloyd Nielsen, 2021
ISBN 9780957988132

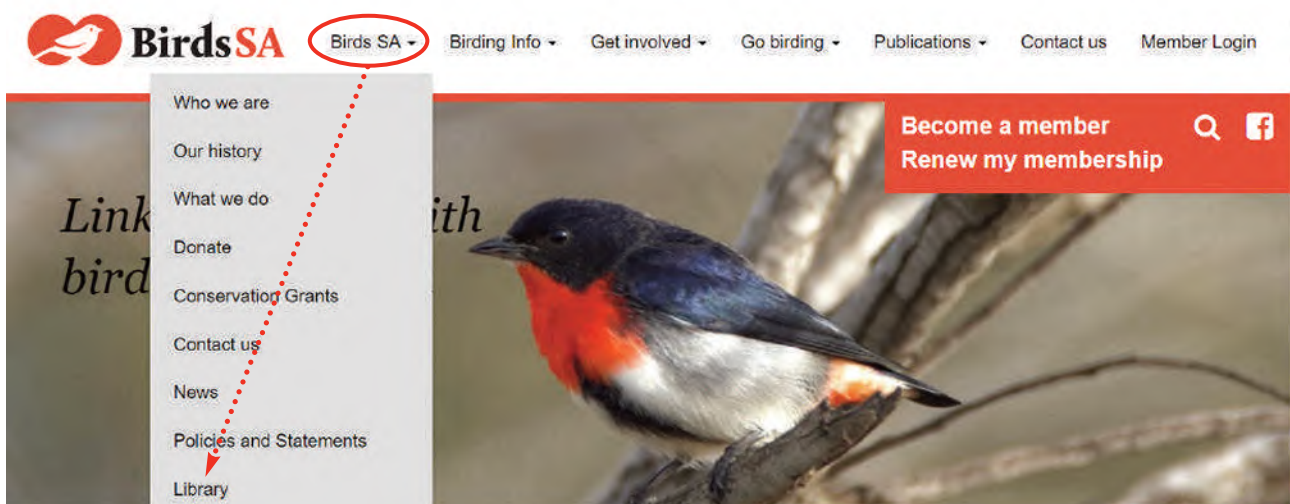
An identification guide which shows how to separate the difficult-to-identify small birds (the LBJs) inhabiting the Australian continent. It covers similar birds in single areas, or regions rather than a genus, individuals which are usually scattered far and wide across the Australian continent. It shows how to separate and properly identify a thornbill for example, from a very similar looking gerygone sharing habitat. It is entirely devoted to identification.



598.259 RO
Rothenberg, D.
Why birds sing : one man's quest to solve an everyday mystery
London : Penguin, 2005
ISBN 9780141020013

The richness and variety of birdsong is both a scientific mystery and a source of wonder. David Rothenberg has a unique approach to this fascinating subject, combining the latest scientific research with a deep understanding of musical beauty and form.

Access to the library catalogue is via the Birds SA website: <https://birdssa.asn.au>
or directly at <https://www.libib.com/au/birdssa>



Bird Records

Collated by Graham Carpenter

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

birdrecords@birdssa.asn.au or phone 8297 5463.

Note that the list includes reports of rare or vagrant species to South Australia that may not have been submitted yet, or formally accepted by the Birds SA Rarities Committee (SARC). Members are encouraged to submit records of rare and vagrant species in SA to the Committee (refer to list of species and information on the Birds SA website).

Brown Quail

Scattered reports from mostly southern SA including:

- 2, 15/2/2023. Port Augusta arid lands
botanic garden, NW. Langdon, P.
- 2, 5/3/2023. Globe Derby Park, White Rd
Wetland, AP. Rodda, B.
- 1, 14/3/2023. Naracoorte Caves CP, SE. Possingham, H.
- 22 in 4 groups, 15/3/2023. Onkaparinga RP,
Perry's Bend, MLR. Tildesley, L.
- Also a group of 6 seen there on 22/4/2023
R. & G. Goland.
- Heard, 17/3/2023. Altona Scrub, MLR. Tildesley, L.
- 6, 10/4/2023. Farina, NE. Rich, G.
- 1, 17/4/2023. Porters Lagoon, MN. Howell, B.
- 1, 20/4/2023. Reynella East, Byards Rd
wetland, MLR. Huxley, L.
- 3, 25/4/2023. Balaklava, Rocks Reserve, MLR. Taylor, P.W.

Australasian Shoveler

- 2, 17/4/2023. Porters Lagoon, MN. Howell, B.

Hardhead

- 8 over, 31/3/2023. Bald Hill Beach, AP.
Also 3 Pink-eared Duck on 24 April. Taylor, P.W.
- Not usually seen near coastal waters.*

Black Swan

Large numbers present in gulf waters off St Kilda in April-May. Also:

- 450, 26/2/2023. Buckland Park Lake, AP. Scholz, C.
- 110, 17/4/2023. Porters Lagoon, MN. Howell, B.
- 3, 4/5/2023. Victoria Park, Pakapakanthi
Wetlands, AP. Reid, I.

Flesh-footed Shearwater

- 450, 12/2/2023. Shelf off Port MacDonnell, MO.
Also present were one Common Diving Petrel and
160 White-faced Storm Petrels. Harper, D. *et al.*

Great Crested Grebe

- 1, 16/4/2023. Stirling, Woorabinda Reserve, MLR. Rich, G.
- 1, 18/4/2023. Port Lincoln, Greyhound Rd
wetlands, EP. Jack, T.
- Few reports from EP but up to 20 have been reported from
sheltered coastal bays on the western coast.*

Cattle Egret

- 1, 4/4/2023. Happy Valley Reservoir, MLR. Peter, J.
- 1, 13/4/2023. Old Whyalla High School oval, EP. Croll, R.
- 1, 27/4/2023. Aldinga Washpool, MLR. Bainbridge, T.
- 2, 29/4/2023. Tolderol GR entrance, MM. Ames, L.

White-faced Heron

- Records of relatively large groups following the floods.
More reports of which waterbirds (and numbers) are using
flooded lagoons along the River Murray are needed.*
- 27, 7/4/2023. Glenthorne NP, MLR.
- Feeding on crickets. Burns, A & Chesson, S.
- 23 over, 27/4/2023. Encounter Bay, MLR. Miatt, H.

Eastern Reef Egret

- 1, 28/3/2023. Onkaparinga mouth, MLR. Bainbridge, T.
- 1, 10/4/2023. Goolwa Barrage, MM. Phillips, W.

Osprey

- 1, 1/3/2023. Barossa Reservoir, MLR. Eff, S.
- 1, 15/3/2023. Encounter Bay, MLR. Chuck, A. & M.

Letter-winged Kite

- 2, 27/4/2023. Taldra, MM. Douglas, J.
- Occasional reports from the agricultural regions follow
floods in the Lake Eyre drainage and mouse plagues in the
south.*

White-bellied Sea Eagle

- 1, 26/2/2023. Buckland Park Lake, AP. Scholz, C.
- 1 immature, 13/4/2023. Myponga Reservoir,
MLR. Bainbridge, T.

Little Eagle

- 2, 8/3/2023. Owen, AP. Steeles, C.
- Few reports near Adelaide in recent years.*

Square-tailed Kite

- Most reports from northern Adelaide suburbs and nearby MLR.*
- 1, 11/2/2023. Modbury, Bergmann Dr, AP.
Harper, D. & S.
- 1 over, 14/2/2023. Para Hills, Bridge Rd, AP. Gordon, S.
- 1 over, 17/2/2023. Yattalunga, MLR. Letheby, R.
- 2, 24/2/2023. Hope Valley Reservoir, MLR. Gordon, S.
- 1, 2/3/2023. Cobbler Creek CP, MLR. Kaashoek, M.
- 2, 11/3/2023. Barossa Reservoir, MLR. Bainbridge, T.
- 1, 17/3/2023. Altona Scrub, MLR. Tildesley, L.
- 1, 13/4/2023. Gawler, MLR. Copland, B.

Bird Records *(continued)*

Buff-banded Rail

Numerous reports from mid February onwards.

1, 17/2/2023. Marino, MLR. Hanley, G.
1, 17/2/2023. Marion, Bandon Park, AP. anon.
1, 19/2/2023. Currency Creek,
Watchalunga Reserve, MLR. Harrison, J.
1, 22/2/2023. Willunga South, MLR. Julie Turner
1, 15/3/2023. Robe, Fox Lake, SE. Templeton, G.
1, 16/3/2023. Globe Derby Park,
White Rd Wetland, AP. Tildesley, L.
2, 22/3/2023. Robe, Lake Butler, SE. Christy, P.
1, 5/4/2023. Valley Lake, SE. Huon, C.
1, 6/4/2023. Reynella East, Byards Rd wetland,
MLR. Harvie, G.

Also seen on 8 April by J. Thompson and
10 April by R. Heness.

1, 9/4/2023. Marion, Oaklands Wetlands, AP. Siebert, P.
1, 15/4/2023. Kensington Park, AP. Tiller, K.
1, 22/4/2023. Onkaparinga RP,
Perry's Bend, MLR. Thompson, J.
1, 23/4/2023. Glenelg North, AP. Heath, A.
1, 4/5/2023. West Beach Rd stormwater
pond, AP. Edey, D.

Lewin's Rail

1, 3/4/2023. Kellidie Bay CP, W side, EP.
In area of flooded samphire. Wood, M.
Very few reports from EP.
1, 24/4/2023. Tolderol GR, MM. Hatch, J.

Australian Spotted Crake

2, 3/3/2023. Saint Kilda, AP. Kaashoek, M.
1, 9/3/2023. West Beach stormwater
pond, AP. Edey, D.
5, 20/4/2023. Victoria Park, Pakapakanthi
Wetlands, AP. O'Connor, D.

Spotless Crake

2, 14/3/2023. Flinders University lake, MLR. Blokland, J.
1, 3/4/2024. Victoria Park, Pakapakanthi
Wetlands, AP. O'Connor, D.
1, 14/4/2023. Salt Creek, Coorong, MM. Dean, E.

Painted Button-quail

2, 17/4/2023. Hallett Cove CP, MLR. Edey, D.
1 dead, 24/4/2023. Reynella, Sherriffs Rd, MLR. Mary, E.

Sharp-tailed Sandpiper

24, 26/4/2023. Tolderol GR, MM. Brooker, W.
*An unusually late report of this species that leaves Australia
in the winter months.*

Pectoral Sandpiper

1, 3/2/2023. Brimpton Lakes, EP. Wallace, S.

Little Curlew

1, 3-12/3/2023. Bald Hill Beach, AP. Taylor, P.W.

Whimbrel

1, 24/4/2023. Port Clinton, YP. Letheby, R.

Grey-tailed Tattler

1, 10/4/2023. Port Lincoln,
Billy Lights Point, EP. Trengove, K. & Solly, F.
Also seen on 14 April by T. Jack.

Gull-billed Tern

15 (migratory subspecies *affinis*), 14/2/2023. Clinton CP,
AP. Also 6 on 3/4/2023 including 3 in breeding plumage.
Taylor, P.W. *et al.*

Little Tern

3, 3/3/2023. Bald Hill Beach, AP. Taylor, P.W.
9, 24/4/2023. Price Saltfields, YP. Jack, T.

Fairy Tern

175, 3/3/2023. Bald Hill Beach, AP. Taylor, P.W.
300, 24/4/2023. Price Saltfields, YP. Jack, T.

Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo

100, 23/4/2023. Anstey Hill, MLR. Attwood, R.
80, 28/4/2023. Athelstone, MLR. Cellier, G.
300, 4/5/2023. Victoria Park, Pakapakanthi
Wetlands, AP. Reid, I.

Bourke's Parrot

2, 25/4/2023. Nantawarrina,
Big Moro Waterhole, FR. Cramond, G.
2, 8/4/2023, Gammon Ranges NP,
Lake Frome paddock, LNE. Birds SA campout

Spotted Nightjar

3, 18/4/2023. Sleaford, EP. Jack, T.
Rarely reported from southern EP.

Fork-tailed Swift

10, 20/2/2023. Waitpinga Cliffs,
3km W Kings Beach, MLR. Vincent, P.
Widespread reports on 24 February including:
100. Grange golf club, AP. Hall, R.
350. Para Hills, AP. Harper, D.
120. Hope Valley Reservoir, MLR. Gordon, S.
600. West Beach, AP. Lange, J.
Up to 50. West Lakes, AP. Carter, D. & P.
100. Hectorville, AP. Gordon, S.
100s. Seaford, MLR. Shaw, S.
100s. Pine Point, YP. McKenzie, S.
200. Bay of Shoals, KI. Jenner, B.
50. Black Forest, AP. Carpenter, G.
100. Tumby Bay, EP. Buring, N.
Also 15, 15/4/2023. Port Augusta
arid lands botanic garden, NW. Wallace, D.

Bird Records *(continued)*

White-throated Needletail

20, 5/3/2023. Mount Burr, SE. Possingham, H.
20, 11/3/2023. Coonawarra bush park, SE. Possingham, H.

Few reports from SA in recent years, all from the SE.

Short-tailed Grasswren

4 including juveniles, 16/4/2023.
Mount Hiltaba, NW. Haase, B. *et al.*
Interesting autumn breeding record.

Thick-billed Grasswren

2, 8/4/2023. Gammon Ranges NP,
Lake Frome paddock, LNE. Birds SA campout

Eastern Spinebill

2, 13/2/2023. Skillologalee, MN. Dugand, R.
1 immature, 15/2/2023. Clare, MN. Wilson, S.

Black-chinned Honeyeater

2, 10/4/2023. Onkaparinga RP,
Perry's Bend, MLR. Thompson, J. & Heness, R.
3, 12/4/2023. Goolwa Sewage Works, MM. Slade, R.
1 calling, 22/4/2023. Semaphore, AP. Letheby, R.

White-eared Honeyeater

1, 17/4/2023. Wilpena Pound, FR. Sarna, J.
*See Black 2018 (SA Ornithologist Vol 43) for information
about its limited distribution in the FR.*

Chestnut-rumped Heathwren

2, 19/2/2023. Alligator Gorge, Tower Track, FR. Croll, R.
2, 10/4/2023. Para Wirra NP, Scenic Drive, MLR. Edey, D.
*First report from this park where it was reported in area
with dense heathy understorey.*

White-breasted Woodswallow

1, 4/5/2023. Mannum, MM. Mildwaters, J.
Usually seen further upstream nearer to Morgan.

Pied Butcherbird

1 adult, 19/2/2023. Angaston, MLR. Reid, I.

Golden Whistler

Pair, 1/3/2023. Robe, SE. Carpenter, G.
*As reported in the last Birder, the status of 'golden whistlers'
in the SE is poorly known.*

White-winged Chough

6, 20/2/2023. Belair NP golf course, MLR. Bombardieri, N.
10, Feb 2023, Waite Conservation Reserve, MLR. Bird, P.
20, 19/3/2023. Scott CP, MLR. Spiker, J.

Red-capped Robin

Female, 24/4/2023. Hope Valley Reservoir, MLR.
Gordon, S.

Flame Robin

Male, 25/4/2023. Cox Scrub CP,
NE boundary, MLR. Mart, B. & Macilwain, E.
*Few reports of the south-eastern Australian migrant from
MLR in recent years.*

Painted Finch

30, 10/4/2023. Arkaroola, Stubbs Waterhole, FR. J. Sara, Birds SA campout.
1, 16/4/2023. Mount Hiltaba, NW. Haase, B. *et al.*

Beautiful Firetail

up to 20, Feb 2023. Lawari CP, Hunters Creek, MM.
Carter, L. per T. Bainbridge

Zebra Finch

1, 7/4/2023. Pinkerton Plains, AP. Milde, S.
*Few reports from AP in recent years, where it formerly
often associated with areas of lignum in lower-lying areas.*

European Goldfinch

1, 4/5/2023. Whyalla, Neagle Tce, EP. Croll, R.
*A population of this species occurred on southern EP until
the late 1960s, with the last report from Pandurra Stn
(near Iron Knob) in 1974 (SAOA Newsletter No. 69)*

Common Mynah

5, 3/4/2023. Ballara Gas Centre, QLD. Carpenter, G.
*Although not in SA, this species has spread into far
western Queensland in recent years. Ballara is near
Cooper Creek only 100 km from Innamincka in SA.*



Barn Owl (Photographed by Richard Croll at Port Augusta
Arid Lands, 11 May, 2023)

BIRDS SA COMMITTEE

President.....	Steven Langley	0490 802 176
Vice President.....	Richard Woodland	0488 229 394
Vice President.....	Jeff Groves.....	0401 125 510
Secretary	Roger Bourne	
Treasurer.....	Anita Smyth	
Assistant Treasurer	Vacant	
Journal Editor	Philippa Horton	8271 4388
Magazine Editor	Cynthia Pyle	0414 432 987
Field Programs	Lynton Huxley.....	0498 466 092
Bird Records,	Graham Carpenter	8297 5463
Membership Officer	Alan Burns	0411 595 910
Member	John Hatch	0401 082 489
Member	Raymond Nias	0414 917 297
Member	Sue Winwood	0407 619 557
Member	Claire Bourne	
Member	John Gitsham.....	0438 900 393

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

COMMITTEE EMAIL CONTACTS

If you wish to contact any committee member by email, use the email address: general@birdssa.asn.au and indicate which committee member you wish to contact. Your message will be forwarded to that person.

MEMBERSHIP CONTACT

If you have any queries about your membership, Email: membership@birdssa.asn.au

e-newsletter EDITOR

Anthony Collebrusco, e-newsletter@birdssa.asn.au
Contact Anthony if you wish to place material in the monthly e-newsletter

FURTHER USEFUL CONTACTS

Librarian, Karen Donkin

0402 123 960

Campout Organiser, Lynton Huxley..... 0498 466 092

Port Augusta Birders (The Babblers)

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

Fleurieu Birders, a sub-group of Birds SA

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

BirdLife South East SA

Convener: Karen Hunt 0437 487 687 Email: gr.kehunt@bigpond.com

Conservation Sub-committee members

Ray Nias (Chair), Jeff Groves, David Andrewartha, Ali Ben Kahn, Bill Breed, Chris Proud, David Hansman, Greg Johnston, Fran Solly, Karleah Berris, Rodney Attwood, Bryan Haywood.

SA Rarities Committee (SARC) Members

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

SA Bird Records Committee Members

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

Conservation Fund Committee

This Committee assesses applications for research grant funding. Members: Jody Gates (Chair), Leo Joseph, Charles Moore, Beatrice Rogers, Anita Smyth, Brian Walker, David Paton (participates when conflicts of interest arise).

POSTAL ADDRESS

c/- South Australian Museum, North Terrace, ADELAIDE 5000

COPY DEADLINE

Copy for the SPRING 'Birder' is due by the end of 31 July 2023. Contributions, 'Word' format preferred, can be recorded on a USB stick, emailed to the email address below, or typed/handwritten neatly.

magazineeditor@birdssa.asn.au

Editorial team: Chris Bates-Brownsword and Julie-Anne Harris

ABN 76 339 976 789

Print post number 100004337

Printed by Abbott Printers and Stationers

WEBSITE: birdssa.asn.au

BIRDS SA CURRENT SUBSCRIPTIONS

The annual subscriptions are:

Individual Member \$50.00

Family Membership \$60.00

Full-time Student \$10.00
(no age restriction)

All members receive a digital copy of both the Magazine and the Journal. We also offer printed copies for an additional yearly fee of \$30.00

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

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

ADVERTISING IN 'The Birder'

Birds SA relies on the integrity of advertisers for the quality and nature of their products and services. We cannot guarantee them.

Advertising is charged as follows:

\$1.00 per line

\$40.00 per half page

\$80.00 per full page

10c per inserted leaflet (*single sheet*).

Advertisers will be invoiced after the edition containing the advertisement has been published.

The Committee reserves the right to lower or waive these fees.

Please send in photos from your own birding activities or field trips for inclusion in The Birder

Small is beautiful



Buff-sided Robin

(Photographed by Glenys Grivell at Butterfly Springs in Limmen National Park, Gulf Country, 14 June 2022)



Jacky Winter

(Photographed by Bernie Haase at the Murray-Sunset National Park, Pheenys Track, Victoria, 31 March 2023)



Superb Fairywren *(Photographed by Christine Sedunary at Mt Lofty, 5 October 2022)*

Flowers and dinner



New Holland Honeyeater (Photographed by Christine Sedunary at Mt Lofty Botanic Gardens, 14 August 2022)



Striated Pardalote (Photographed by Christine Sedunary at Monarto Conservation Park, 10 April 2023)

Coming in for a landing!



Mulga Parrot (Photographed by Richard Croll from the Josie Pyle bird hide at Gluepot Reserve, 30 April 2023)