

Birds SA



Newsletter

No 218

May 2011



Birds SA is the operating name of The South Australian Ornithological Association Inc.

c/- South Australian Museum, North Terrace, Adelaide, SA 5000

The Aims of the Association are:

To promote the conservation of Australian birds and their habitats.

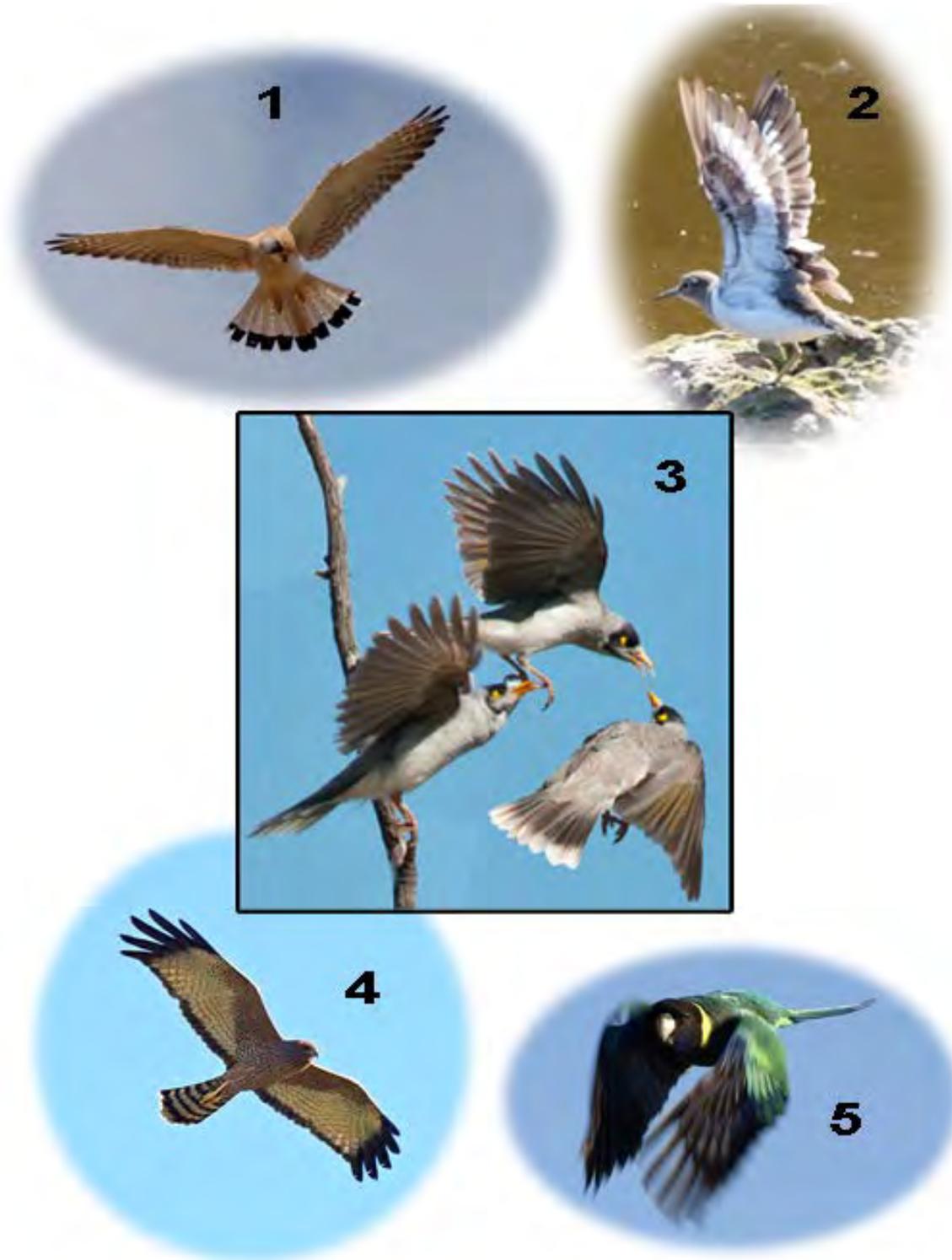
To encourage interest in, and develop knowledge of the birds of South Australia.

To record the results of research in regard to all aspects of bird life.

To maintain a public fund called the "Birds SA Conservation Fund" for the specific purpose of supporting the Association's environmental objects.

Birds in Action

See p19 for details of all photos



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CENTRE INSERT

SAOA HISTORICAL SERIES NUMBER 36,
ERHARD FRANZ BOEHM PART 9

SAOA COMMITTEE 2011 – 2012

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Member	John Spiers	8333 0272
Member	Merinda Hyland	8337 3616
Member	Lynton Huxley	8278 4313
Member	Greg Kerr	8276 5599

DIARY

Following is a list of Birds SA activities for the next few months. Further details of all these activities are given later in the newsletter.

May 29	Sunday	Excursion to Karte CP

June 11	Saturday	Excursion to Bullock Hill CP
June 16	Thursday	Excursion to Rocky Gully
June 24	Friday	General Meeting
June 26	Sunday	Excursion to Lowan CP

July 9	Saturday	Excursion to Goolwa Barrage
July 21	Thursday	Excursion to Nangkita Scrub
July 29	Friday	General Meeting
July 31	Sunday	Excursion to Newland Head CP

Aug 13	Saturday	Excursion to Wotton Scrub CP
Aug 18	Thursday	Excursion to Manning Reserve
Aug 26	Friday	General Meeting
Aug 28	Sunday	Excursion to Whites Dam CP

Cover photo: Superb Fairy-wren, photographed by Margaret Tiller at East Shelbourne, near Bendigo, on 3/11/2010.

General meetings are held in the Hawker Centre at the Waite Institute, Waite Road, Urrbrae at 7.45pm. Doors open at 7.00pm.

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

Donations to the Birds SA Conservation Fund are tax-deductible

New Members

We welcome 11 new members who have recently joined the Association. Their names are listed on p14.

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FURTHER USEFUL CONTACTS

Librarian	Karen Donkin	0402123960
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Publicity Officer	Bob Green	8725 0549
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Fleurieu Birdwatchers

Contact Person	Judith Dyer	8555 2736
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WEBSITE www.birdssa.asn.au

2011 SAOA SUBSCRIPTIONS

Single membership	\$50
Family/household membership	\$60
Single concession*	\$45
Family/household concession*	\$55

Student members (full-time students under 25 years) \$10

*Pensioners and people experiencing financial hardship can obtain concessions. Apply in writing to the Treasurer, Birds SA.

ABN 76 339 976 789

ADVERTISING IN THE Birds SA NEWSLETTER

SAOA relies on the integrity of advertisers for the quality and nature of their products and services. We cannot guarantee them. Advertising is charged as follows: \$1.00 per line, up to \$20.00 per quarter page and 10c per inserted leaflet (single sheet). The committee reserves the right to lower or waive these fees.

COPY DEADLINE

Copy for the August Newsletter is due by the July General Meeting (July 29). Contributions, 'Word' format preferred, can be made on CD, or emailed to either of my email addresses, or typed/handwritten neatly.

- newslettereditor@birdssa.asn.au
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President's Letter

After my last long *President's Letter* I am this time determined to write a much shorter *letter*, which is probably just as well as my last one led to much comment and some controversy. These *letters* naturally present my own opinions, and I am sorry to have caused so much controversy. However, I believe it is important to distinguish between welfare issues and conservation issues, and to constantly bear in mind that Birds SA is primarily concerned with the conservation and the study of birds. My previous *letter* has been posted, without my permission, on hunters' websites, but at least they did it verbatim, though some are using it selectively as unalloyed support for hunting. As a scientist with a long involvement in species conservation, I firmly believe we must base our actions on evidence rather than emotional appeals. Like most people, and certainly all birders, I do not like the idea of wounded birds, but I think we must insist on hard evidence and beware of arguments that rely on cute photographs of fluffy ducklings. Emotion is of course important. Indeed I watch and study birds because of an emotional reaction to their beauty, but organisations that are entirely driven by emotion run the danger of losing track of controversies that are rarely as black and white as they seem. Some have suggested we should have articles in this *Newsletter* on the ethics of hunting, but then to be fair we should allow hunters to have their say, which could all end up in a series of acrimonious exchanges that do not advance any cause. There is a danger of heated viewpoints undermining the credibility of Birds SA as has occurred in several conservation organisations in Australia. I would reiterate that while I do not hunt or have any wish to hunt, I respect the knowledge of most hunters and their attempts to conserve wetlands, and furthermore I am doubtful about movements solely based on changing legislation. I was also concerned about the way in which we joined the Coalition Against Duck and Quail Hunting without full consultation or

proper voting by the Management Committee. I am pleased that the members of Birds SA overwhelmingly voted to stay with our main brief of bird conservation and hence to withdraw from the Coalition Against Duck and Quail Hunting. I would now like Birds SA to move forward and revise our policy to members' satisfaction.

At the recent Annual General Meeting we elected a new Management Committee and somewhat unusually had a vote for some positions as there were three candidates for the two Vice President positions and six candidates for the five ordinary members. I think it is a pity that we do not regularly vote for candidates for most positions, because it means the membership can consider what the candidates represent and vote accordingly. There was some controversy about the voting procedure at the AGM. In particular there was concern about members being asked to put their names on their voting slips which clearly defeats the concept of an anonymous vote. This was done because it was considered the only way to ensure that non-members did not vote and to prevent one person from submitting several voting slips. I doubt that this would have been a serious problem in an association such as ours. Members should rest assured that all the voting slips were destroyed and there was no attempt to uncover who voted for which candidate. There was also concern about some informal lobbying, but I think that is part of the process and I doubt if it had a significant influence on the outcome.

To avoid these issues in future the new Committee has discussed the current procedure in detail and proposes making some key changes to the procedure for future elections. Currently nominations for the Committee may be made at any time up to the commencement of the AGM, which can lead to many last minute nominations. The Committee proposes that nominations must be received at least 28 days prior to the AGM. If required, voting papers photographs and brief profiles of the

candidates will be dispatched to members at least 21 days prior to the AGM. Provision will be made for proxy votes to ensure that members who cannot attend are not deprived of their vote. Members will only be allowed to nominate for one position on the Committee to avoid the confusion of having someone running for several positions. This new procedure will allow all members to have an informed vote in how the Association will be run. Furthermore, some concerns were expressed about the current procedure for putting forward motions at the meetings. Currently a proposal can be submitted at any time up to the commencement of a meeting. The Committee suggests that notice of a proposal should be made to the Secretary at least 28 days prior to the meeting and that notice of the proposal be sent to members at least 21 days prior to the meeting. I am hesitant about having too many procedures that are locked in stone, because they deprive the Association of flexibility and the ability to respond quickly, but on the other hand recent events have led to members being asked to vote on issues with little forewarning or information about the issues.

Despite these issues, the voting for the new Committee was very clear cut and we have a broad and effective mix of the old and the new! It is a pleasure to welcome three new members, Lynton Huxley, Greg Kerr and John Spiers, who have never served on the Committee before. We also welcome back Graham Carpenter, who takes over Bird Records, replacing Colin Rogers who is now the Editor of the *South Australian Ornithologist*. We have two new Vice Presidents in Marilyn Browne and John Hatch (the former Editor), while the rest of the Committee, including myself, retain their previous positions. Overall I think it is going to be an effective Committee and the new blood will do us all good. It is a pleasure to thank Rodney Attwood and Stuart Hull, who both resigned after serving as Vice Presidents for the last few years. Rodney had to resign for

President's Letter (cont) / Duck Shooting

health reasons and he will be very much missed for his experienced and wise voice on the Committee, and for his excellent work with the Conservation Sub-committee. However, he will remain a member of that sub-committee. Stuart did an excellent job on the Committee and was instrumental in organising some excellent speakers and the popular members' nights. Sincere thanks to them both.

Finally, I would like to comment on the return to more 'normal' weather with rain and green in the bush. Last weekend I was on a student field excursion at Yookamurra Sanctuary near Sedan and was very struck by all the birds that have obviously had successful breeding seasons and are looking in good condition. Highlights included having a large group of Splendid Fairy-wrens on one side of a path interacting with an equally large group of Variegated Fairy-wrens, both groups having resplendent nuptial males and pleasing mix of eclipse males, females and plenty of young. There were also many cuckoos including several pairs of Pallid Cuckoos, plus the usual whistlers and babblers. I hope that the rain continues and wish you all good birding this winter.

JEREMY ROBERTSON

SHOOTING DUCKS WITH SHOTGUNS

Categories matter

All Birds SA members will know that while all hawks are birds, not all birds are hawks. In non-ornithological areas, many will be less than certain. Are all computers microprocessors or are all microprocessors computers or both? Are all fats triglycerides or all triglycerides fats? Are all proteins hormones or all hormones proteins? The scientific study of duck shooting goes back about 60 years but isn't an active area of research today. Hence its terminology confuses many people whose interest in the issue is new or transitory.

Practical observations

Watch a person shooting ducks with a shotgun and you will see ducks fly and hear shotguns blast. Some ducks will fall from the sky and be picked up. These ducks are called bagged. They aren't normally dead when retrieved but are killed by the shooter. Other ducks will fall from the sky and not be found. Shooters will vary in how much diligence they exercise looking for such ducks, but the fact remains that some get away. These ducks are called cripples. The formal definition of a cripple is a duck which is "downed but unretrieved by the original shooter"[6]. Unfortunately, the word cripple has impolite uses and this has caused considerable confusion with its use as a technical term in duck shooting. People tend to talk about wounded ducks without realising that wounding is a quite different concept. Wounding is to crippling what birds are to hawks. The concept will become clear shortly. Studies have shown that most cripples (about 95%) die in the hours or days following a shoot[6].

Not all wounding is crippling

It's very easy to count the number of shots a shooter takes per bagged duck and a variety of studies show that this ranges from just over 4 for the best of shooters through to over 9 for others[5]. This means that when you watch an average shooter shoot at a duck, then, more often than not, the duck just keeps going. This brings us to the natural definition of wounding. A duck that is hit by pellets but not bagged is called wounded. Some wounded fly on and some are cripples. This concept was defined in the first formal study of what happens to ducks during duck shooting back in 1953[1]. All cripples are wounded but not all wounded ducks are crippled. Much of the confusion about wounding rates is due to a misunderstanding about the terms wounding and crippling.

Evidence of the flying wounded

How do scientists know there are any wounded ducks at all in addition to the cripples? If you catch and x-ray a sample of ducks anywhere where shooting occurs you can find many with pellets embedded in their

bodies. A large Victorian study between 1959 and 1973 found 9.2% of ducks with pellets in them. These were population samples, frequently taken before the season and including many ducks which had never even been shot at. Some will have been too young to have experienced a season, others were just lucky. All the ducks found with embedded pellets had been wounded, but very few were ever cripples ... they were never downed. They got hit but kept flying. I'll use the term flying wounded to mean the ducks hit but not downed.

When researchers watch duck shooters and estimate how many ducks are downed but not bagged, they are measuring the cripple rate. Field observations cannot distinguish the flying wounded from ducks that have been completely missed. From a resource management perspective, the total number of ducks killed in a season is taken to be the number bagged plus the number crippled ... usually referred to as cripple losses. To my knowledge, nobody has ever investigated how many of the flying wounded die.

Pain and suffering

From an animal pain and suffering perspective there are at least three aspects to duck shooting that are objectionable:

1. Ducks are rarely killed outright but have to wait for the shooter to pick them up and kill them. This can take seconds, or many minutes.
2. Cripples can take a significant time to die.
3. Woundings can be a significant source of extended suffering.

A wounding can be as major as a smashed ankle, or as minor as a hole in the webbing on a foot. Both of these cases, like quite a few types of woundings, will not show on any x-ray study. X-rays studies only reveal a subset of woundings.

A 1998 article [Proposed ban on recreational hunting of game birds in South Australia: A critique](#) by Dr Grahame Webb appeared on the Birds SA website recently. It illustrates the common confusion over basic duck shooting terminology. Webb didn't understand

Duck Shooting (cont)

that wounding and crippling rates are quite different. This leads him to mention, for example, a 1982 study of cripple rates by Humburg[2] and thinks it contradicts an estimate of wounding rates by me. Webb doesn't give much detail about the study so here's what happened.

The best-case scenario

Researchers watched 1,270 shooters fire 10,587 shots in 4,219 attempts to bag a duck. The shooters knew they were being watched. Notice first that they averaged more than two shots per attempt. So many of these shooters had automatic (multi-shot) shotguns which could rapidly fire more than 2 shots at a duck. These are illegal in Australia. The study notes that ducks were crippled in 11.9% of attempts and bagged in 46.6% of attempts. This means that 20.3% of downed ducks escaped. This is a cripple rate and is equivalent to 25.6 cripples for every 100 ducks bagged. The researchers saw 502 cripples and 1966 ducks bagged at an average of 5.4 shots per bagged duck, and 4.2 per downed duck, implying a high level of skill.

What the researchers couldn't count is the number of flying wounded. Of the 4,219 ducks targeted, 1966 were bagged and 502 were crippled. This leaves 1751 ducks that were either missed or flying wounded. While I have frequently claimed a wounding rate of one duck wounded for every duck killed in Animal Liberation press releases and other public material, this is an average. It is a memorable number without being misleading. My more careful scientific paper back in 1994[4] actually gave a range, depending on the skill of the shooter. The range was 50 to 150 ducks wounded for every 100 bagged. For the Humburg study to be consistent with the lower end of that range would require about 500 flying wounded from the 1751. Is this possible?

Solid science is ageless

This newsletter is not the place to provide a detailed mathematical demonstration that 'at least 500 flying wounded' in the above scenario is not only possible but quite certain. Instead, let me quote Frank Bellrose, a hunter and US

Fisheries and Wildlife scientist who was the first person to systematically study shotgun hunting of ducks. Here is his conclusion in 1953:

... it may be predicted that about 60 out of every 100 mallards flying south along the Mississippi Flyway will be hit by shot. Of this number, 32 will be bagged ... 10 will escape in a crippled condition and, of these, only one or two will recover; 18 will be hit by shot pellets but will suffer no apparent ill effects [1].

In summary, Bellrose estimates that for every 32 bagged ducks there will be 10 cripples and 18 flying wounded. i.e. about 1.8 flying wounded for each cripple. As a percentage, his average cripple rate is 24%, slightly higher than the 20% of the Humburg study. Paul Wainwright of the SA Department of Environment and Natural Resources tells me that his Victorian counterparts judge the overall cripple rate, based on a survey of the literature, to be between 25% and 35%.

Bellrose's ratio implies about 900 flying wounded for 502 cripples observed in the Humburg study. This makes my estimate of 'at least 500' seem very conservative ... because it is. The Humburg study provides the lowest measure of cripple rates I know of. But its wounding rate is still appalling and quite consistent with my prediction of an average rate over all shooters of about 1 duck wounded for each duck bagged.

A larger Canadian study[3] had an observed cripple rate of 39%. Add 1.8 flying wounded for each cripple and the number gives a rate of wounding at about 180 ducks for every 100 bagged, even higher than my upper limit in 1994.

Bellrose's comment about recovered birds suffering no ill effects is both a sign of the times he was writing in and of the post-hoc events he was describing. Certainly all ducks sampled in x-ray studies and found to have been wounded can only be those who have recovered. Even trivial wounds can become infected, resulting in a slow and painful death. Such birds will not show up in any sample and be x-rayed. Among the flying wounded will be smashed legs,

pellets in internal organs, and all manner of painful injuries.

Geoff Russell

References

- [1] Frank C. Bellrose. A preliminary evaluation of cripple losses in waterfowl Transactions of the 18th North American Wild life Conference, 18:337-360, 1953.
- [2] Dale D. Humburg, Steven L. Sheriff, Paul H. Geissler and Tom Roster. Shotshell and shooter effectiveness: Lead vs Steel Shot For Duck Hunting Wildlife Society Bulletin, 10(2):121-126, 1982.
- [3] Daniel J. Nieman, George S. Hochbaum, F. Dale Caswell and Bruce C. Turner. Monitoring Hunter Performance in Prairie Canada Transactions of the 52nd North American Wild life and Natural Resources Conference, 52:233-245, 1987.
- [4] Geoff Russell. Shotgun Wounding Characteristics Maple Tech: Maple in Mathematics and the Sciences (Special Issue), pages 17-23, 1994. Birkhauser, Boston.
- [5] Glen C. Sanderson and Frank C. Bellrose A Review of the Problem of Lead Poisoning in Waterfowl I Illinois Natural History Survey, August 1986.
- [6] F. Van Dyke. Mortality in Crippled Mallards Journal of Wild life Management, 45(2):444-453, 1981.

REPLY TO JEREMY ON DUCK SHOOTING

The President's Letter by Jeremy Robertson on duck shooting in the last Birds SA Newsletter (no 217 February 2011, pp. 4-6) is inaccurate on crucial issues and misleading on others. The most important inaccuracies are the statements on wounding rates. These are conventionally defined in the literature as the number of ducks hit by shotgun pellets that are not retrieved by shooters as a proportion of the total birds hit. Shotgun manufacturers and wildlife managers, in carefully researched papers, have proved that wounding rates average about 50%. I have sent

Duck Shooting (cont)

the references to Jeremy. This definition of wounding actually underestimates the cruelty involved, because many ducks are still alive when retrieved by shooters, and so not counted as "wounded." Jeremy has re-defined the wounding rate as the number of ducks with embedded pellets as a proportion of the total wild population. Such a proportion will obviously be extremely low. If for example the whole population sample was hatched in Lake Eyre, the 'wounding rate' by Jeremy's definition would be zero. Jeremy has, in the examples he cites, lowered the wounding rate still further by assuming wrongly that the presence of embedded pellets is the sole evidence of wounding, and by leaving out of account the wounded birds that have not survived.

In his first column, Jeremy repeats the frequent claim by shooters that their activity is a substitute for the destruction of agricultural pests by farmers. The example cited by Jeremy is wrong. The shooting of birds as agricultural pests has declined, not increased, in NSW since the ban on recreational shooting. In fact there is no evidence anywhere for the recreational shooters' claim that they are protecting farmer's crops. The reasons why not are obvious. The only way in which shooters might arguably reduce depredations by ducks on crops is by shooting at ducks while they are trying to destroy the crops, not by shooting at different birds in different locations. Secondly, it is well known that recreational shooting does very little to reduce the population levels of common species of duck. Duck population levels are determined by the availability of water, not by recreational shooting.

Jeremy refers to 'thousands of hectares of important habitats', which we allegedly owe to duck shooters. This statement is not inaccurate, but could by itself be taken as support for the claim by shooters that their activities are vital to wetland conservation in South Australia. This is far from being the case. According to the latest edition (2001) of The Directory of Important

Wetlands in Australia, compiled by the Commonwealth Dept of Environment and accessible on the web, there are in fact 9,860ha of wetlands in S.A. that have any association with shooters. Whether they depend for their continuance on duck shooting is another matter. In the case of Bool and Hacks Lagoons (3,221 ha), they clearly don't. The 9,860ha of wetlands form 0.2% of the total area of wetlands in S.A. for which estimates of area are available in the Directory. There are in addition vast areas for which no estimates are supplied, as well as vast wetlands which are not yet included in the Directory. So the contribution of shooters to wetland conservation in SA can be quantified as somewhere far below 0.2%.

My own faith in claims by shooters to be keen conservationists was shaken in the 1990s, when I spent many hours observing shooting at close quarters in Bool Lagoon. I was appalled by the large quantities of non-biodegradable litter left in the lagoon after each shoot, apart from birds either wounded or paralysed by shock.

I do hope therefore that Birds SA members are not misled by the President's Letter into abandoning their official opposition to recreational duck shooting.

David Close

STRANGE DUCK

Whilst hunting at Tolderol I shot the duck in the photograph below. It has the distinct speculum of a Black Duck and the wing pattern of a Grey Teal. The bird appears to be juvenile and it would seem is a hybrid of some sort. It is the size of a small Black Duck or Bluewing Shoveller.

I have been told that there are records of teal and Black Duck crossing but find this hard to believe. Could this be a specimen, is it a mallard cross or is it something else?

I would appreciate any opinions and have frozen the bird intact in case anybody is researching hybridisation amongst native ducks.

John Peek john.peek@tafesa.edu.au
0427800308



Birds Australia Atlas Project

PROGRESS REPORT:

For the past five years around 5,000 surveys have been submitted to the Atlas annually in South Australia, see Figure 1. A look at the survey coverage map over that period shows that although the majority of surveys have been done in coastal and well inhabited areas, there has still been a good coverage across the state. The Atlas data is used for many purposes, such as identifying and monitoring Important Bird Areas or looking at changes in bird populations at a more local level. Please continue to submit your surveys, or if you are new to Atlassing, get in touch with us and we will get you started (contact details below).

There are several ways for your surveys to enter the Atlas. We still accept data on our Atlas Record Forms, as well as via our website Birdata, while records can also come to us via Birdpedia and Eremaea Birds. Remember when submitting a survey to these online databases to tick the box which allows the survey to be passed onto the Atlas. Alternatively, Birds Australia and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources SA exchange data every few years, so surveys submitted to either organisation do get passed on for the benefit of conservation in South Australia.



Anyone wanting to get involved with the Atlas should contact Andrew Silcocks, Suite 205 60 Leicester Street, Carlton, Vic 3052. Tel: 03 9347 0757. Email: atlas@birdsaustralia.com.au
Pat Bowie

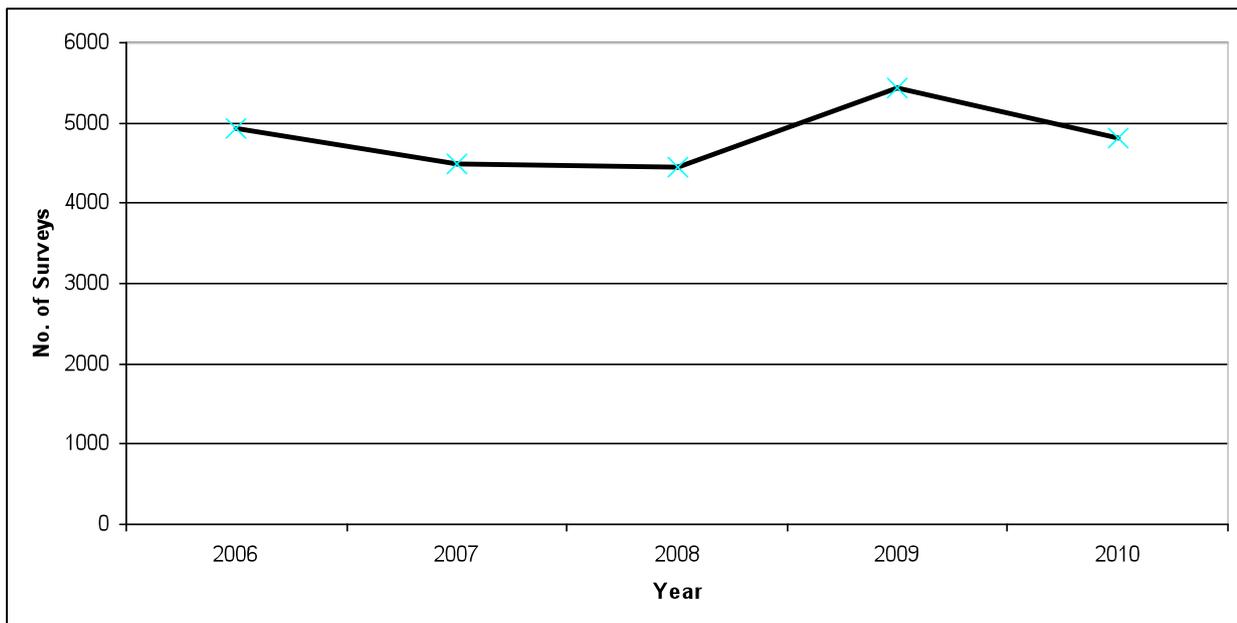


Figure 1 The Number of Atlas Surveys Received Annually Since 2006

Miscellaneous Items

BIRDWATCHING ANYONE? — IN IRAQ!

Amidst the chaos of war Omar Fadhil, an unassuming 32 year old ornithologist, is adding to the store of knowledge of Iraq's bird life As a boy he would travel to the countryside with the men in his family to practise falconry. His passion was birds of prey and the birds they attacked. He later earned a Master's degree in biology where he did research on the ecology of endangered falcons. His job takes him to every part of the war torn country but to go birdwatching in Iraq he needs official endorsements from the police and various ministries.

Recently after getting the all clear he set off with an escort of 15 soldiers to search for the endangered Sociable Lapwing (*Vanellus gregarius*) near Tikrit, ancestral home of Saddam Hussein, (Scientific American, February 2011) This is a handsome species, beautifully marked (Google it).

The party scoured the countryside for almost two weeks without success as the highly mobile birds had moved on. Wherever he goes in the country the villagers are very suspicious. His strategy is to get his binoculars out, set up his camera tripod and show them the birds he is looking for in his field guide. Where possible he lets them look at the birds through his binoculars. After a while the villagers get interested "We have seen this one but not that one". Despite the war he has found six new species never before recorded in Iraq.

Bill Matheson

GORDON RAGLESS AND HIS GRASSWRENS; A BRIEF REVIEW

Gordon Ragless (1909-2002) was a country boy (from Marion!) who, like many country boys of that era, collected birds' eggs. His serious ornithological intent developed only in mid life through an acquaintance in 1951 with Tom Brandon of Wilmington and his diverse and well documented egg collection. In the following year he joined this Association, met Neil McGilp and Frank Parsons and obtained his own permit to collect eggs. He was President from 1957-1960 and was made an Honorary Member in 1985. Gordon and his son John donated

their enormously valuable collection of over 4,000 clutches to the Australian National Wildlife Collection in 1999 (Eckert 2002, SA Orn 34, 31-32, and Ragless family papers).

Gordon is remembered for several achievements, including publication of the first report of nests and eggs of the Chestnut-breasted Whiteface in 1969 (SA Orn 25, 98-99) and a detailed report on nesting of the Chestnut Rail near Darwin in 1977 (SA Orn 27, 254-255). Perhaps his greatest contribution was to share his extensive knowledge of the distribution and breeding of South Australia's birds with Shane Parker after the latter arrived in the State in 1970. This was evident in his co-authorship with Parker of the sadly incomplete Annotated Checklist of the birds of South Australia but equally in one of Parker's most noteworthy papers, Remarks on Distribution and Taxonomy of the Grasswrens *Amytornis textilis*, *modestus* and *puhnelli* (1972 Emu 72, 157-166).

The Ragless family became pastoralists soon after the settlement of South Australia, with early properties on the Willochra Plain, east of Orroroo (Yalpara) and north of Lyndhurst (Witchelina) (*The story of the Flinders Ranges* by Hans Mincham) and remain in the industry today, e.g. at Beltana. Gordon's abiding love of the arid zone and its birds began with his first trip up the Birdsville Track in 1955 but it was not until March 1966 that he first identified a single Thick-billed Grasswren. This was a little south of Farina and in the company of another egg-collector, Harry Morton, whose valuable collection is now in the South Australian Museum. Gordon thought he had found a nest of the species near Marree the following month but it was not until May 1968, after two years of escalating grasswren observations in the country between Copley and Lyndhurst, that John Ragless found their first documented nest with eggs, the latter unfortunately hardened and damaged. Most of the subsequent Thick-billed Grasswren records of Gordon and John Ragless were made in that general area, including Myrtle Springs Station to the west. Later they and Morton found grasswrens south of Lake Harry on the Birdsville

Track and on Witchelina, Mundowdna, Avondale, Mount Lyndhurst, Murnpeowie and Moolawatana Stations (near Lake Callabonna where second generation Ragless brothers had run sheep from 1882-1896 and one of them, Frederick had found *Diprotodon* bones), accounting thereby for almost the entire presently known distribution of that population of Thick-billed Grasswren.

Gordon's expertise in grasswrens extended to other populations. He made important contributions to Parker's (1972) understanding of the Eyre Peninsula subspecies of Western Grasswren *A. textilis myall* and of the Short-tailed Grasswren *A. merrotsyi* (Parker 1982), although they both failed to appreciate the distinctive eggs of the latter species then held in the S. A. White collection and so missed the inference that it was not merely a subspecies of Striated Grasswren *A. striatus*. (AB pers. obs.). His experience of other populations of Thick-billed Grasswren was more limited, including the subspecies widely distributed west of Lake Eyre *A. modestus indulkanna* which had been collected by Arthur Cheney on Todmorden in 1907, by Bob Love and Les Merrotsy between William Creek and Oodnadatta in 1913 and by S. A. White near Indulkana Springs in 1914. In contrast the more accessible North Flinders Population had been documented only once before Ragless' investigations, by Frank Parsons's specimen and brief encounter near the Frome River north-east of Marree in 1920. In recognising the contributions Gordon Ragless made towards knowledge of the genus *Amytornis* and especially through his work on Thick-billed Grasswrens at the periphery of the North Flinders Ranges he is honoured in the recognition and naming of that population as a new subspecies (Transactions of the Royal Society of South Australia (2011), 135 (1), 26-38).

Andrew Black

Giving them wings

conserving threatened species

UPDATE ON THE ORANGE-BELLIED PARROT RECOVERY PROGRAM

The Orange-bellied Parrot Recovery Team held their annual meeting in Hobart in early April 2011. The meeting was an opportunity to discuss how the wild population fared through the breeding season, review progress of work on the Action Plan priorities, and to decide what the priority activities will be for winter 2011. The Recovery Team is heartened by the observed stability in the population between December 2009 and December 2010, a productive breeding season in summer 2010/11, and a successful program to collect much-needed founders for the captive breeding program.

Breeding in the wild population

The 2010/11 breeding season was productive for the only known wild breeding population at Melaleuca. At least 21 adults arrived in spring, which compares favourably with a minimum of 23 adults arriving the previous spring. Encouragingly, it appears that 100% of females at Melaleuca participated in breeding, an important improvement from recent years of low breeding participation.

Four nests were found in nest boxes, and intensive nest searches in November identified four other potential nesting areas in natural nesting habitat. Eleven nestlings were banded from the four broods in nest boxes. One brood had partially fledged before the visit to band nestlings so only the one remaining chick could be banded in the nest. At least 16 unbanded juveniles appeared at the feed table. The minimum number of juveniles produced at Melaleuca in 2011 is therefore 27. This is an improvement over the

previous breeding season when only 13 juveniles are known to have fledged.

Founder collection for the captive breeding program

Collection of new birds, or 'founders' for the captive population was a priority this summer. The new birds will add much-needed genetic variation to the existing captive breeding program.

The Recovery Team determined that this summer was the best opportunity to collect the new founders. Twenty-one juveniles were collected at the feed table between late January and late March. The new founders include seven banded juveniles from nest boxes and 14 unbanded juveniles. One unbanded juvenile died in captivity in the first weeks after capture. The post mortem indicated that the bird had a lung infection and had suffered head trauma. The remaining founders are doing well. Genetic analyses in the coming months will establish the relatedness of the birds, and inform future founder collection decisions. As we were unable to band all birds at Melaleuca, we will be unable to determine whether unbanded birds observed on the mainland are related to those already captured. The unknown genetic value of these unbanded birds, combined with the low likelihood of successful capture, has led to a decision to abandon attempts to capture founders on the mainland this winter.

Habitat management in Tasmania

Recovery Team members who visited Melaleuca after the meeting were excited to see an important planned burn in potential Orange-bellied Parrot feeding habitat in southwest Tasmania. The Tasmanian Parks and Wildlife Service have since completed planned burns at

Towterer Creek, Elliot Hill, Rowita Plains, Birchs Inlet, and Melaleuca Lagoon. The burns will reduce the risk of large wildfires adversely affecting natural values in the southwest, and improve Orange-bellied Parrot feeding habitat. Planned burns to maintain suitable feeding habitat have been a high priority for the recovery program for many years, and is a very high priority under the Action Plan. The Recovery Team is interested to see how the birds respond to this habitat management in the breeding seasons to come.

Priorities for winter 2011

The winter monitoring program remains an important measure of how the wild population of OBPs is faring. Regional Coordinators and volunteers will be continuing to search habitat in South Australia and Victoria to locate over-wintering birds.

When OBPs are located, Regional Coordinators will make arrangements to supply supplementary food to the birds, with the aim of improving their food uptake over the winter period. Supplementary feeding of birds with specially selected seed aims to improve the condition of birds to enhance over-winter survival and encourage high rates of breeding participation next summer. Continuing high breeding participation is required for the wild OBP population to increase.

**Prepared by Rachel Pritchard
Coordinator for the
Implementation of the Orange-
bellied Parrot Action Plan (2010)
19 April 2011**

Giving them Wings (cont)/Past & Future Meetings

OBPs ON THE MAINLAND

Yes it's OBP time of year again and to start the year off with a bang, two OBPs were seen at Pick Swamp in the Lower South East of SA on Sunday 10th April and Tuesday 12th April. This was the first report for the mainland for season 2011. One of the birds was an adult male, while the second was not seen sufficiently to age or sex it.

Winter counts

Future OBP counts for this year are being held on
July 23/24 and
Sep 10/11

If you would like to put your hand up to help, let me know and I can allocate a site or you might have a site you normally cover that you would like to continue with.

As always, any reports of Neophemas from anywhere during the winter will be welcomed.

Please contact me by either telephone or email.

Bob Green, Regional OBP

Coordinator: South East, Coorong and Murray Lakes regions
shriketit@bigpond.com Ph. 08 87250549, Mob. 0407649909

PAST GENERAL MEETINGS

Friday January 28

Stuart Hull welcomed the speaker for the evening, Greg Dare, who showed a DVD of a birding trip to the Cocos Islands and Christmas Island in 2009. Greg and his wife Alana have been interested in bird watching since 2004. He is particularly interested in photographing birds and has compiled several short DVDs, including Bowra Station, SE Queensland and Observations of the Oriental Plover and Lewin's Rail in South Australia. These DVDs are available from the library.

The trip, from 9-16 March 2009 was organised by Richard Baxter. Christmas Island has five endemic species and six endemic sub-species whilst the Cocos Islands have only one endemic sub-species. There is always a chance of seeing a vagrant. Christmas Island is 2,300 km from Perth, closer to Indonesia and the Cocos Islands are a further 900 km to

the south west. Birds seen on the Cocos Islands included the Java Pond Heron, Pintail Snipe, Reef Egret (white and grey morphs), Nankeen Night-Heron, Western Reef Egret, Saunder's Tern, Green Junglefowl, White-breasted Waterhen, Oriental Pratincole, Lesser Frigatebird and Greater Frigatebird. On Christmas Island the following species were observed – Red-tailed Tropicbird, Common Noddy, "Golden Bosunbird", Christmas Island Imperial Pigeon, Tree Sparrow, Java Sparrow, Christmas Island Hawk Owl, Christmas Island Frigatebird, Abbott's Booby, Christmas Island Goshawk, Christmas Island Glossy Swiftlet, White-tailed Tropicbird, Red-footed Booby, Brown Booby (photo p19), Emerald Dove and Greater Frigatebird.

Friday February 25

Stuart Hull introduced the speaker for the evening, Merilyn Browne, whose topic was Bird Families in the Americas.

There are just over 230 bird families in the world (depending on which taxonomic list you refer to), of which 46 families are found only in the Americas. Merilyn had only travelled to a few places in the Americas – Western USA, Dominican Republic, Brazil and Patagonia. She showed photographs of birds from 35 of the 46 families — Rheas; Tinamous; Guans/Curassows/Chachalacas; New World Quail; New World Vultures; Seriemas; Limpkin; Sun Bittern; Hoatzin; Guira Cuckoo/Anis; Ground Cuckoos; Potoos; Hummingbirds; Todies; Motmots; Jacamars; Puffbirds; Toucans; Ovenbirds; Woodcreepers; Antbirds; Ground Antbirds; Gnateaters; Cotingas; Manakins; Tyrant Flycatchers; Palmchat; Mockingbirds; Vireos; Donocobius; New World Warblers; Bananaquit; Tanagers; Cardinal Grosbeaks; Troupials and other Icterids. In total photographs of 149 species of birds were shown.

Friday March 25

Stuart Hull introduced the speaker for the evening David Robertson. His topic was The Whistlers.

David said that the family name *Pachycephalidae* was derived from the Greek *pakhus*, thick, large; *kephale*, the head; thus thickhead. It is a large family, consisting of 57 species spread from India to Burma, the Andaman Islands, Thailand, Malaya, Philippines, Borneo, PNG, New Zealand, New Caledonia, Western Samoa, Tonga, Fiji and Australia. 38 of the species are called whistlers of which there are 9 in Australia including 5 endemic. There are five species of whistler in South Australia — Gilbert's, Golden, Olive, Red-lore and Rufous. David played calls of these species and asked members to identify them.

Whistlers tend to be territorial with little known movement. They are quite vocal, usually defending territory or nesting sites and they usually respond to playback. HANZAB is not very clear whether both sexes are vocal but it is thought that they are. They are recorded as having been heard up to 900 metres away so you should not have any difficulty finding them.

David then played the call of each species and gave a brief description of its habits, accompanied by photographs that were provided by Rohan Clarke's Wildlife Images.

Golden Whistler *P. pectoralis* of the breast.

The male is readily recognisable by its yellow breast (hence the name). It is very variable as there are no fewer than 61 sub-species (more sub-species than any other species in the world, according to Clements' Checklist) that are scattered the length and breadth of south east Asia and the South Pacific. Despite this their distribution in Australia is relatively limited, compared to that of the Rufous Whistler. There is a patch in the southeast of Western Australia, and then it runs from South Australia more or less around the coast including Tasmania to Queensland. The female is drab by comparison. The juvenile has a very curious plumage just after hatching when it is russet for a few weeks. It calls all the year round — usually the male but it can be the female and most often in spring i.e. territorial. Its call has variously been described as

Past & Future Meetings (cont)/Past Excursions

rich, clear, sweet, cheerful, pleasing and varied. Take your pick! It can be heard 300 metres away. It responds to playback.

Olive Whistler *P. olivacea* taken from the Greek for olive, although it is not noticeably olive.

It is more or less confined to southeastern Australia and especially Tasmania. It can be heard up to 135 metres away but it is a ventriloquist so it may not be where you think it is. Both sexes call. It is quieter in winter than in summer. It responds well to playback. Its call is variously described as sweet, beautiful, alluring, exquisite, plaintive, melodious, dismal and melancholy. It all depends on one's viewpoint

Rufous Whistler. *P. rufiventer* red-bellied

The male has a similar pattern to a male Golden whistler: white throat and black breast band but with rufous underparts. The female is similar to the female Golden but her underparts are streaked. It is the most widely distributed whistler in Australia. It occurs everywhere except Tasmania. It is reported as being able to sing with a mouth full of insects. The male calls all year round, while the female calls when she wants the male to come and sit on the eggs. It responds to playback. Sometimes called 'thunderbird' because it will burst into song after a sudden loud noise. Its voice is variously described as brilliant, spectacular, joyous, rich, pretty, lively, animated and musical!

Gilbert's Whistler *P. inornata* Greek for unadorned or plain

This species is fairly widely distributed from WA to NSW but inland, preferring mallee country. Both sexes call. It is territorial, especially when at the nest. It calls mostly in the early morning and evening. It responds to playback, but its call can be confused with the Red-ored Whistler. Its voice is described as loud, clear, melodious and varied.

Red-ored Whistler *P. rufogularis*. red-throated — not lored.

The type specimen was collected by Gould only 3km from Adelaide in 1841 but now the nearest bird is at least 100Km away at Brookfield C.P. extending east to western NSW. It

has a very small distribution. The two species overlap. Its call has been described as charming, sweet, wistful, and haunting. They are also ventriloquial. Probably both sexes call, mostly in late spring. The call is similar to that of Gilbert's Whistler. The bird responds to playback.

FUTURE GENERAL MEETINGS

General meetings are held on the last Friday of every month except December in the Charles Hawker Building of the Waite Institute on Waite Road Fullarton.

Friday June 24

Julie Reorden — Breeding and Biology of Cormorants

Friday July 29

TBA

Friday August 26

TBA

PAST EXCURSIONS

Saturday February 12: Dry Creek Salt Fields

Cancelled due to rain.

Thursday February 17: Goolwa Barrage.

Although overcast the day remained fine for the 25 members who attended the excursion. Since the water level on the Goolwa side of the barrage was so high, the first stop was the swamp area around the bird hide. There was quite a lot of bird activity in this area, including Black Ducks and Swans with young. One observer saw three Latham's Snipe. Then one of them flew while several people were watching. The only other waders seen were 15 Common Greenshanks between the barrage and Beacon 19. Many Royal Spoonbills were spread along the water's edge. Other species seen included Elegant and Rock Parrots, Sacred Kingfisher and Golden-headed Cisticola. Fifty two species were seen altogether, which shows how many birds inhabit this area even when the conditions are not suitable for waders.

Peter Gower

Sunday February 27: Paiwalla Wetlands

On a very pleasant day 29 members enjoyed the walk around Paiwalla wetlands. The ponds were very full of water and therefore not good for crakes, although a single Spotless Crake did cross the track for someone to see. The species count was 74. A single Little Eagle was seen and photographed as most were leaving to go home or go elsewhere. This bird gave us 10 raptors for the site. Black Swans were carrying dependent young on their backs and of the 8 duck species we recorded Blue-billed, Musk, Grey Teal and Hardhead all had dependent young. We also recorded six species of honeyeater which included a single Yellow-plumed, a single Zebra Finch, Sacred Kingfishers, a Barn Owl a pair of Golden-headed Cisticolas and a number of Rainbow Bee-eaters to add colour to the day's sightings.

Trevor Cowie

Saturday March 12: Laratinga (Mt. Barker) Wetlands

It was another cool pleasant day around the water, with 52 species being identified, including one which we believe to be a new species for the wetlands list. An Owlet Nightjar has taken up residence half way up the main trunk of the left hand tree framing the toilet block as you walk in from the car park. It is inside a large opening (with a view). This made a great start for the 22 members who came for the walk. The water levels were high so no crakes made an appearance. However, 3 juvenile Blue-billed Ducks were obliging as were some of the large turtles sitting out on the dead tree stumps. Grey Teal, White-plumed Honeyeaters and Red-browed Finch were all feeding dependent young. A flock of about 400 Little Corellas greeted us on arrival and at least 4 Long-billed Corellas were amongst them.

Trevor Cowie

Past Excursions (cont)

Thursday March 17: Browns Road Monarto

As usual this reserve proved to be a very popular venue, attracting 29 people. It was chosen as an alternative to the Riverglades Reserve at Murray Bridge, some of which was under water due to high river levels. While the 45 species seen for the morning represented a lower tally compared with some previous excursions, the total population of birds did reflect the excellent season. White-browed Babblers, White-winged Choughs and Diamond Firetails were all observed nesting, and the persistent calling from the Horsfield's Bronze Cuckoo may have indicated additional nesting species. Two main groups of people headed north and south with several others doing their own thing; resulting in a very good coverage of the area. Southern Whitefaces were mainly seen to the north, while the Owlet Nightjars were disturbed in the old growth Mallee near the track into the reserve. Honeyeaters and pardalotes were seen everywhere. Very careful observation of thornbills was made, and Brown Thornbills were observed but no Inland Thornbills.

Peter Gower

Sunday March 27: Dry Creek Salt Fields

Cancelled due to rain.

Saturday April 2: Dry Creek Salt Fields

At last we made it into the salt fields albeit late in the summer and close to when the waders leave for the north. We recorded 48 species, this being the lowest excursion species count since January 1993. Not only less species but also lower numbers were recorded, indicating that the inland was the place to be. An advantage of the lower numbers was that species of Wood, Pectoral and Curlew Sandpipers, as well as Fairy Terns were easier to see without the crowded flocks. Some observers were able to have their first good look at these birds. We saw 55 Black-tailed Godwits, a few Hardheads and a Northern Masked

Lapwing which was in the company of our normal southern form. We saw only two raptors: one Sparrowhawk and one Kestrel. It was a pleasant day for 25 birders to be there, although the tracks did contain ruts created by workers carrying out company business. It was appreciated that members understood the lack of access during this summer.

Trevor Cowie

Saturday April 9: Kaiser Stuhl CP & Tanunda Ponds

It was a cool but pleasant day for 23 members. Although the bird population was low and quiet, we did manage to find 32 normal Adelaide hills species. A few of us saw a Hobby, which was not on my previous listings for this area. White-throated Treecreepers were heard and seen. Brown, Buff-rumped, Yellow-rumped and Striated Thornbills showed up well and a few people saw two Diamond Firetails. Honeyeaters included Yellow-faced, Brown-headed, White-naped, Crescent, Eastern Spinebill and Red Wattlebird. Lunch was enjoyed down the hill in the recreational area.

Trevor Cowie

Thursday April 21: Jenkins Scrub

A small group of 14 members enjoyed a sunny but cool leaderless walk around Jenkins Scrub. The birds were elusive to start with apart from the Grey Fantails but half way around the track we had good views of Fan-tailed Cuckoos. We then struck into the scrub after Scarlet Robins, of which we saw three pairs in all; and were rewarded with thornbills, Grey Shrike-thrushes, Crescent Honeyeaters and Superb Fairy Wrens among many other birds. A total of 29 species was recorded.

Di Wiskich (Whom we thank for taking on the bird count and making a report. TC.)

Sunday May 1: Ridley CP

17 birders turned out with the sky overcast the whole day. There were a few spots of rain but none of any concern. We managed to find 46 species. I think everyone managed to see one of the six Gilbert Whistlers

observed. Some of the other species were, Pallid & Black-eared Cuckoos, Owlet-nightjar, Brown Treecreeper, Brown Quail, Red-capped and Hooded Robins. We saw few Parrot species: Aust Ringneck, Blue Bonnet, Mulga parrot, Red-rumped parrot and Purple-crowned Lorikeet. Both babblers were recorded with the majority being Chestnut-crowned. All in all it was a good trip.

Trevor Cowie

Easter Campout, 22-25 April

Brookfield Conservation Park (CP) is now run by Conservation Volunteers Australia on behalf of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR). We were last there in October 2005.

This park is a very interesting place for a number of reasons. There are considerable variations in vegetation from area to area including a very small patch (about 1 hectare) of sand and spinifex in the northwest and a similarly small patch of casuarina west of the headquarters, together with an extensive area on the northeastern side of bluebush amongst mallee.

Consequently we noticed a considerable variation in the distribution of birds and bird species. Some of these variations could be attributed to changes in vegetation but not all. There were 'hot' areas with plenty of birds of many species and cold areas (e.g. the southwest) where there were very few, despite similarity in appearance.

Apart from the number of wood-swallows overhead there were very few species in abundance and nothing terribly exceptional apart from two mallee fowls working a mound.

We divided the CP into quadrants to be surveyed initially by teams of four per vehicle. Thereafter teams were free to visit anywhere they wished.

We recorded 73 species. It could have been more if our survey had been conducted earlier in the year because several of the summer visitors had departed, such as Red-backed and/or Sacred Kingfishers, up to 4 species of cuckoo, some species

Past Excursions (cont)/Future Excursions

of honeyeaters and chats and White-winged Triller,

As is often the case with bird surveys what is not seen is just as interesting as what is seen and perhaps just as informative. For example we would have expected to see Black Kite, Whistling Kite, Little Corella, Sulphur-crested Cockatoo, Eastern Rosella, perhaps the Yellow Rosella, Laughing Kookaburra, Magpie-Lark, Welcome Swallow, Zebra Finch, and Golden Whistler. Most of these are on the 1993 list so their absence is intriguing.

As this year's Easter coincided with the Anzac Public Holiday we had intended to visit Stockyard Plain on Easter Monday but found that the lock had been changed. Instead we spent some time in the neighbouring D B Mack Reserve.

A money-box was passed around for donations to the CVA and they were gratefully received.

The attendance at this camp was less than 20 people; down from the heady days of 70 or so at Mary Seymour some years ago. This number represents about 4% of the Association's membership. There is now a strong logical argument that the 20 or so that are interested should take over organising campouts if they wish them to continue. I believe Trevor has Ngarkat lined up for October so it is time to think about Christmas.

David G Robertson

is at the start of the park on the left-hand side.

Saturday June 11: Bullock Hill CP (MLR) (60km)

Meet at 8.15am at Ashbourne oval.

Thursday June 16: Rocky Gully (Forestry SA) (MM) (72km)

Leave the SE Freeway at the Monarto exit heading north for 2km then turn right at the cross road onto the old Princes Highway, drive approx 5km turning left into Maurice Rd, travel 2km to a rail crossing on the left. Meet here at 8.30am.

Sunday June 26: Lowan CP (MM) (130km)

Travel to Mannum, cross on the ferry and follow the road to Purnong. Approximately 29km along this road is a crossroad, the left turn being to Bowhill. Meet here at 8.15am. Then head south for about 13km turning left at a multiple road junction. After lunch we may return via Glenburr road.

Saturday July 9: Goolwa Barrage/Hindmarsh Island (MLR) (90km)

Meet to the west of Goolwa Yacht Club at 8.30am.

Thursday July 21: Nangkita Scrub (MLR) (55km)

Meet at 8.30am in the dirt car parking area SW of the Junction into Enterprise Rd. approximately 4.5Km

from Mt Compass.

Sunday July 31: Newland Heads CP (MLR) (120km)

Meet at 8.30am in the car park/camping area by the old house. Go to Victor Harbor and then head west towards Waitpinga. 2km beyond same turn left to Waitpinga Beach. As you make the descent to the beach the park appears on the left-hand side.

Saturday August 13: Kenneth Stirling (Wotton Scrub) CP & Mt George CP (MLR) (27km)

Meet at 8.15am. Take the SE Freeway leaving it at the Bridgewater exit. Turn left towards Carey Gully, travel about 3km and turn right into Gum Flat Road. Travel about 1.6km to gate 2 on the right. We will move on to Mt George for lunch.

Thursday August 18: Manning Flora & Fauna Res (MLR) (32km)

Meet at the square/reserve in Old Noarlunga. We will move on to Manning Res in convoy. The contact number for Joan Beer, President, FNS is 83446287.

Sunday August 28: Whites Dam CP (LN) (172km)

The park starts about 10km north of Morgan on the road to Burra. Meet in Morgan at 8.15am by the toilet block on the left as you approach the ferry.

FUTURE EXCURSIONS

Convener: Trevor Cowie

Email: fieldtrips@birdssa.asn.au

Tel: 08 8263 2531

Note: Lists of species recorded at the locations visited can be reviewed at www.birdpedia.com

Sunday May 29: Karte CP (MM) (246km)

Meet at 8.15am at the BBQ & Camping area (or Saturday anytime if camping — no facilities). Drive to Pinnaroo, from where a road heading northwest takes you to Karte (approx 30km). The entrance to the BBQ area

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

Geoffrey Dauntless Nihill	MYRTLE BANK
Suzanne Claire Edge	CLARENCE PARK
Stuart James Collard	STIRLING
Burnard Wayne Rodda	BEFORD PARK
Marie Anderson	GLENGOWRIE
Geoff Russell	ST MORRIS
Elizabeth Bartram	TRANMERE
Jane Renwick	AMERICAN RIVER
John & Anna Peek	MELROSE PARK

If your name has inadvertently been omitted from this list, please contact our treasurer. His 'phone number is on p2.

Bird Records

Records included here are of species listed as 'uncommon, rarely observed' or having not previously been recorded in the regions of South Australia as shown in the 4th edition of *A Field List of the Birds of South Australia*. Also included are interesting breeding or ecological notes, new records for a well known locality, and first of the season records of migratory species. Send all reports to G Carpenter at birdrecords@birdssa.asn.au or 82975463

Malleefowl

04/03/2011. A female was on the side of Kulde Road, Tailem Bend, MM.

Jordan Forster.

11/03/2011. Three were in Innes National Park, YP.

Teresa Jack.

One crossed the Stenhouse Bay Road near Warrenden CP, YP, and another crossed the South Coast Road east of Marion Bay, YP.

per Teresa Jack.

22-26/04/2011. Two were working a mound at Brookfield CP, MM.

Burt May & Lyn Gould.

Brown Quail

02/02/2011. Two were in the garden of a private residence, Port Augusta, EP.

Peter Langdon.

20/02/2011. Four were in Butcher's Gap CP, SE.

William Brooker.

31/03/2011. Three were near the eastern mangrove track in Dry Creek Saltfields, AP.

Colin Rogers.

02/04/2011. Five were flushed from the track at Thompson Beach, AP.

David Kowalick.

18/04/2011. Six or seven were flushed near a creek line near Rockleigh, MM.

Barbara & Peter Bansemer.

18/04/2011. One was calling from Veldt grass on the banks of the Bungala River, Normanville, FP.

Nathaniel Doecke.

23/04/2011. At least five were at Greenfields Wetlands, AP.

Grant Penrhyn.

02/05/2011. Nine were in the Onkaparinga River Recreation Park, FP.

Kevin Stracey.

Plumed Whistling Duck

20/02/2011. One was at Bool Lagoon, SE.

Kay Parkin *et al.*

Fork-tailed Swift

07/03/2011. A flock of at least 100 was over Price Saltfields. YP.

Margaret Tiller.

07/03/2011. A flock of at least 50 was over Port Sturt Peninsula, LA.

Nathaniel Doecke.

18/03/2011. Large number flew over Whyalla, EP.

Ella Smith.

Black-bellied Storm- Petrel

03/04/2011. One approached the boat on the pelagic from Port MacDonnell, SE.

Colin Rogers *et al.*

Submitted to SARC.

Sooty Albatross

03/04/2011. One, in body moult, approached the boat on the pelagic trip from Port MacDonnell, SE.

Colin Rogers *et al.*

Great Shearwater

03/04/2011. Numbers estimated to be at least 50 birds were sighted throughout the pelagic trip off Port MacDonnell, SE.

Colin Rogers *et al.*

This is an unprecedented influx of a species that is normally found in the South Atlantic or western Indian Ocean off Cape Town, South Africa.

On the same date 8 were seen on the pelagic trip from Portland in Victoria. Prior to this date there were only 7-8 Australian records of single birds.

White-headed Petrel

05/04/2011.

A beach-derelict was in Flour Cask Bay, KI.

Chris Baxter.

Gould's Petrel

03/04/2011. Two approached the slick on the pelagic trip off Port MacDonnell, SE.

Colin Rogers *et al.*

Common Diving Petrel

06/03/2011. One was over the shelf on the pelagic trip from Port MacDonnell, SE.

Colin Rogers *et al.*

Grey-tailed Tattler

19/02/2011. Three were in Racecourse Bay, near Port MacDonnell, SE.

Teresa Jack & Marilyn Browne.

14/03/2011. Eight were feeding at the waters edge, Cumberland Road, Port Clinton, YP.

Teresa Jack & Peter Gower.

19/03/2011. Four were on the reef at the end of Bird Island Road, Wallaroo, YP.

Colin Rogers.

Hooded Plover

06/02/2011. Ten were on McEacherns Beach, Port Moorowie, Lower YP.

Chris Thomas & Margaret Tiller.

Thirteen were reported from this location on 06/03/2011 by Teresa Jack and Peter Gower.

06/02/2011. Five were at Stokes Bay, KI.

Chris Baxter.

24/02/2011. Eight were at Cape Rouge, KI.

Chris Baxter.

25/02/2011. A pair was on Sturt Bay Beach, YP.

Graham Crooks.

05/03/2011. Three were south of Port Gibbon, EP.

Peter Langdon.

11/03/2011. Five were on the beach near Hillocks Drive, Marion Bay, YP.

Teresa Jack.

12/03/2011. One was at Corney Point, YP.

Teresa Jack.

13/03/2011. Two were at Levens Beach, YP.

Teresa Jack.

05/04/2011. Two pairs were at Flour Cask Bay, KI.

Chris Baxter.

Lesser Sand Plover

06/03/2011. One was at Chinaman's Creek, MN.

Peter Langdon.

Bird Records (cont)

07/03/2011. Two, of race *mongolus* in breeding plumage, were near the northern car park at Thompson Beach, AP.

John Hatch *et al.*

02/04/2011. At least ten, several in full breeding plumage, were at Thompson Beach, AP.

David Kowlick.

Greater Sand Plover

07/03/2011. Two were near the northern car park at Thompson Beach, AP.

John Hatch *et al.*

17/03/2011. Four were near the central car park at Thompson Beach, AP.

Jeff Philcox.

02/04/2011. Seven or eight were at Thompson Beach, AP.

David Kowalick.

Whimbrel

26/02/2011. One was in Dry Creek Saltfields, AP.

William Brooker.

04/03/2011. Nine were at Price Saltfields, YP.

Teresa Jack & Peter Gower.

24/02/2011. Five were at Cape Rouge, KI.

Chris Baxter.

10/04/2011. Eleven were at Price Saltfields, YP.

Margaret Tiller & Chris Thomas.

Eastern Curlew

26/02/2011. Three were in Dry Creek Saltfields, AP.

William Brooker.

05/03/2011. Nine were in Price Saltfields, YP.

Teresa Jack & Peter Gower.

Grey-tailed Tattler

05/03/2011. Eight were at Port Clinton, mangroves, YP.

Teresa Jack.

Still present on 7 April and 9 reported on 11/04/2011 David Hartland.

Pectoral Sandpiper

16/02/2011. Two were still present at Greenfields Wetlands, AP.

John Cox.

Ruff

31/03/2011. One was roosting with 62 Black-tailed Godwit in Dry Creek Saltfields, AP.

Colin Rogers.

Still present at the same location on 6 April.

Eastern Reef Egret

One was at Gleasons landing, YP,
Teresa Jack & Peter Gower.

Eastern Osprey

28/02/2011. One was flying east above Waitpinga Beach, FP.

Doug Johnston.

20/03/2011. One was fishing off north beach, Wallaroo, YP.

Colin Rogers.

11/04/2011. One was off Port Clinton, YP.

David Hartland.

White-bellied Sea-Eagle

16/03/2011. An adult was soaring over the beacon at Point Sturt, LA.

Nathaniel Doecke.

Letter-winged Kite

22-26/04/2011. Twelve, including two young on the nest, were at two sites along the Strezlecki Track, NE.

Michael, Lynton and Karen Huxley.

Square-tailed Kite

07/03/2011. One was near Watts Gully Road near Rock Creek Road, MLR.

Rose Slade.

Grey Falcon

12/03/2011. Two were on a tower near Cadney Roadhouse, NW.

Chris Shaw.

Brolga

20/02/2011. Two were east of Magpie Swamp Road, SE.

Kay Parkin *et al.*

02/04/2011. Forty-three were near Magpie Swamp Road, SE.

William Brooker.

Lewin's Rail

19/04/2011. One was at Swanport Wetlands, Murray Bridge.

Peter Koch.

Spotless Crane

22/04/2011. Four were at Laratinga Wetlands, Mt Barker, MLR.

Peter Waanders.

Long-tailed Jaeger

06/03/2011. One made several approaches to the boat on the pelagic trip from Port MacDonnell, SE.

Colin Rogers *et al.*

03/04/2011. Five, two in almost full breeding plumage, approached the slick on the pelagic trip from Port MacDonnell, SE.

Colin Rogers *et al.*

Gull-billed Tern

17/03/2011. One was near beacon 19 Goolwa Channel, Murray Mouth.

Kevin Stracey.

26/04/2011. One, race *affinis*, was at the Murray Mouth.

Roly Lloyd, Edward Smith & Neil Cheshire.

Chestnut-rumped Heathwren

03/03/2011. One was just south of the summit of Black Hill. CP. MLR.

Michael Wood.

14/04/2011. Two were 500 m beyond the lookout in Morialta CP, MLR.

David Hartland.

Red-lored Whistler

23/04/2011. Four were at two locations in Gluepot Reserve, MM.

Peter Waanders.

Rufous Fantail

28/02/2011. One was in the Hart School grounds, Hart, MN.

Kim Franklin.

Report submitted to SARC.

Bassian Thrush

20/02/2011. One was at Middle River Reservoir, KI.

Chris Baxter.

04/03/2011. One was at the northern end of Warren CP, MLR.

Amanda Pearce.

31/03/2011. Two were in Rowlands Gully, Deep Creek CP, FP.

Nathaniel Doecke.

Eastern Yellow Wagtail

29/03/2011. One was seen and photographed from a distance in Dry Creek Saltfields, AP.

Bill Alcock.

Identification, if it proves possible, is pending.

News From the Library



598.29944 SCH

Schultz, M.C.

Bird trails of the Riverina and South West Slopes of NSW

Leeton, N.S.W. : Riverina & South West Slopes Nature-Based Tourism Group, 2010.

ISBN 9780646538167

This colourful guide contains a list of birding sites within the region. Details such as maps, access instructions, GPS coordinates and a list of key bird species for the site are listed in this booklet. A checklist of all the birds found in the region is located at the back of the booklet. This is an extremely useful book for visitors looking for birds in this area of southern NSW.



598.299482 CHI

Christian, Margaret.

Norfolk Island ... the birds

[Point Howe, Norfolk Island]: Green Eyes Publications, c2005.

ISBN 0975821202

An identification guide to the 149 bird species on Norfolk Island. It includes information including colour drawings, on extinct species, endemic species, breeding species and visitors and vagrants. It also contains notes on identification, distribution, habitat, ecology and more for each species.



598.29411 HOL

Holden, Peter.

RSPB handbook of Scottish birds

London: Christopher Helm, 2009.

ISBN 9781408112328

This book is an ideal reference for keen birdwatchers and visitors to Scotland. 252 most common Scottish birds are covered in detail plus accounts of the 28 rarer species. There are over 1000 full colour illustrations covering all major plumage variations.



DVD 33

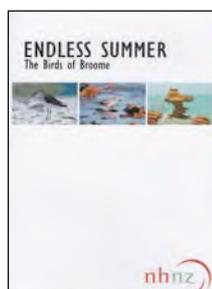
Dare, Greg

Cocos Keeling Islands and Christmas Island bird trip

[Adelaide, Sth Aust.]: Double Dare Production, 2011

Duration : 32 min

This production documents the variety of birds sighted on the birding trip to Cocos Keeling Island and Christmas Island in March 2009 by Greg and Alana Dare.



DVD 34

Endless Summer: the Birds of Broome

[Auckland, N.Z.] NHNZ, c2007

Duration : approx 1 hour

Late each year, just under a million migrants arrive in North Western Australia. These annual visitors are wading birds, on an extraordinary trans-global migration, flying up to 15,000kms from their Russian breeding grounds seeking a food source during the harsh northern winter. The huge tidefall of the area exposes vast mudflats — inexhaustible larders of food for exhausted and hungry birds.

News from the Library (cont)



DVD 35

Wild south: Kakapo — Night Parrot: The Black Stilt — a Bird Surrounded by Change: The Black Robin — a Chatham Island Story

[Auckland, N.Z.]: TVNZ: Distributed by Roadshow Entertainment, c2009.

Duration 120 min

KAKAPO — NIGHT PARROT

The Kakapo — New Zealand's idiosyncratic parrot, with a face like an owl, and a call that booms across the forest floor, is battling extinction. This retiring, nocturnal bird tests the film makers' ingenuity as they attempt to capture on film its unique and endangered existence.

THE BLACK STILT — A BIRD SURROUNDED BY CHANGE

Every year the rare Black Stilts of the McKenzie Country have a fight on their hands when the Pied Stilts arrive to nest, compete for food and interbreed. This is their story.

THE BLACK ROBIN — A CHATHAM ISLAND STORY

In the mid 1970s a small black New Zealand bird made headlines around the world. It had the dubious distinction of being the rarest of all rare birds – there were only five of them left. This is the story of a very narrow escape from extinction.

4th NATIONAL MALLEEFOWL FORUM

Renmark, South Australia
29 July - 1 Aug 2011

You are invited to register your interest for the 4th National Malleefowl Forum, to be held at the Renmark Hotel. Registration and pre-forum refreshments on Friday 29th July.

Themes of the Forum include:

- → The role of community groups in Malleefowl conservation
- → Adaptive Management
- → The role of genetics in Malleefowl conservation
- → The role of fire in Malleefowl conservation
- → Malleefowl and remnants
- → Landscape-scale restoration projects

For Registration, visit:
www.malleefowlvictoria.org.au/

For further information contact:
Sharon Gillam, DENR, South Australia

On behalf of the National Malleefowl Forum Organising Committee¹
P: (08) 8222 9459 -- E: sharon.gillam@sa.gov.au



Details of Members' Photographs

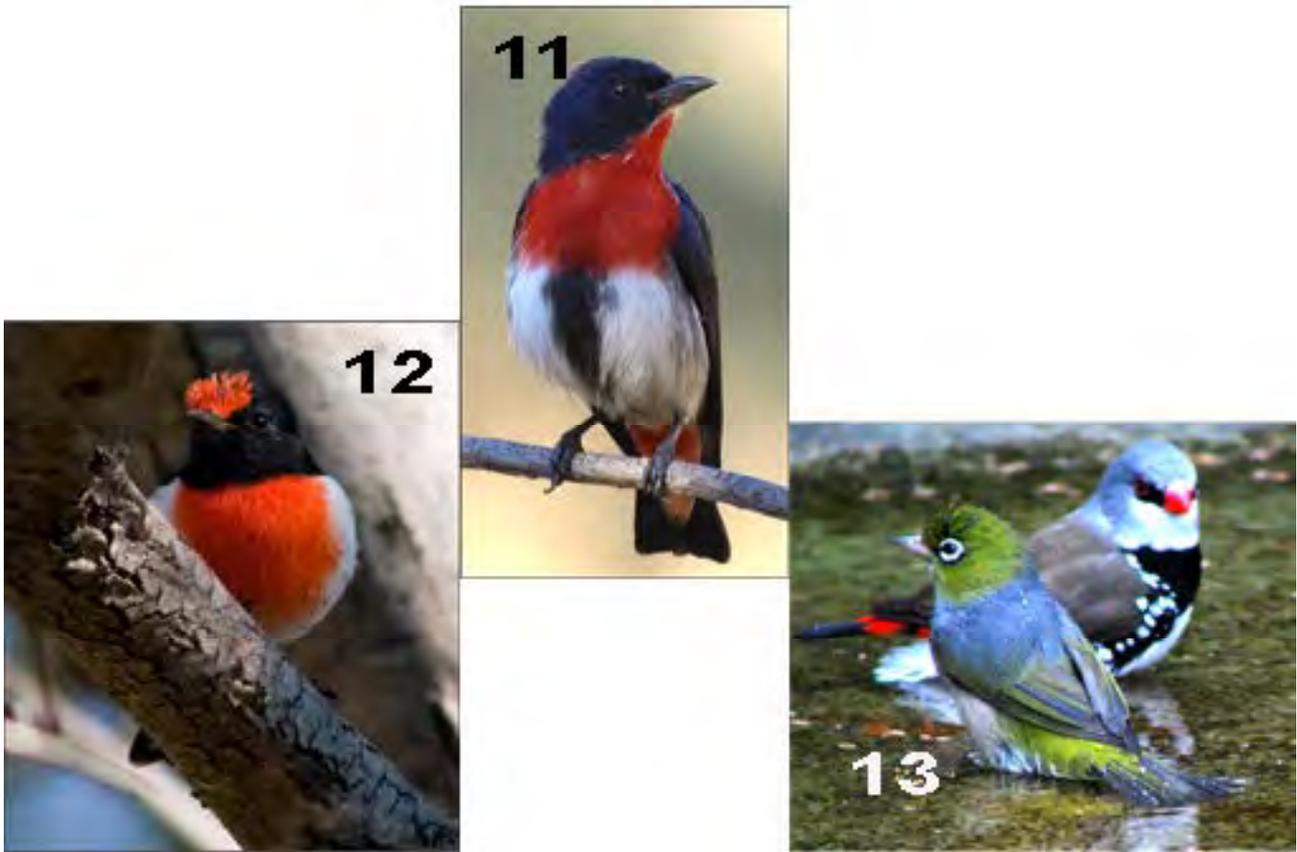
No:	Species	Photographer	Location	Date
1	Nankeen Kestrel	Helga Kieskamp	Loxton	22/8/2010
2	Common Sandpiper	Helga Kieskamp	Cheetham Saltfields	12/11/2009
3	Miners	John Donkin	Renmark	21/04/2011
4	Spotted Harrier	Teresa Jack	Yorke town	March 20011
5	Mallee Ringneck	Teresa Jack	Mikkira Station, Port Lincoln	24/04/2011
6	Beach Stone-curlew	Helga Kieskamp		10/5/2010
7	Masked Lapwing, Northern Race	Peter Gower	Cheetham Saltfields	2/04/2011
8	Purple Swamphen	Neville Harris	Cheetham Saltfields	Early 2011
9	Brown Booby	Greg Dare	Christmas Island	14/03/2009
10	Curlew Sandpiper, Sharp-tailed Sandpiper, Red-necked Stint	Teresa Jack	Price Salt Fields	March 2011
11	Mistletoe Bird	Teresa Jack	Aldinga Scrub	7/05/2011
12	Red-capped Robin	Les Peters	Brown's Rd., Monarto	17/03/2011
13	Diamond Firetail & Silvereye	Colin Parker	Coffin Bay	14/04/2011

Members' Photographs

Seen Around Water



A Splash of Colour



A Birdo's Paradise — Observe Glossy Black-Cockatoos feeding!



Enjoy a special place at American River, within walking distance of all attractions.

Stay in a well-equipped three-bedroom cottage amongst surroundings that are perfect for birdwatching.

We offer Birds SA members staying two or more nights a discount price of \$60 per double plus \$12 for each additional person. We give even more discount to those who stay more than four days.

For more information, contact Chris and Pam Cooper on 85578616, at cpcoopers@adam.com.au or visit one of the following websites: www.roamfree.com or www.holidayz.com.au and search for 'Possums Watch'.