

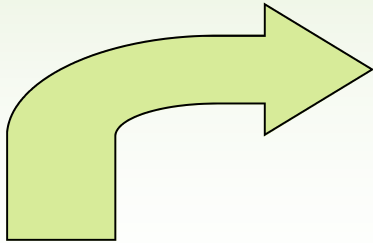


# Birdwatch

Newsletter of Fleurieu Birdwatchers Inc.

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## Events



**Thursday 6 April**, Onkaparinga Estuary, Noarlunga.

Old Noarlunga Institute Carpark.

35°10'51"S, 138°30'09"S

**Saturday 22 April**, Clayton Bay.

Sails Café Car Park.

35°29'44"S, 138°55'30"S

**Sunday 14 May**, Aldinga Scrub.

Car park adjacent to Aldinga Holiday Village, Cox Rd.

35°17'52"S, 138°27'35"S

**Wednesday 24 May**, Monarto, Ferries McDonald CPs.

Intersection of Chauncy's Line Rd and Kangaroo Rd Langhorne Creek.

35°14'35"S, 139°07'54"S

**Friday 9 June, 7.30 pm. General Meeting, Natural Resource Centre Willunga.**

## Reminders

**Subs due for 2017.**  
See previous  
Newsletter for details.

**Beach-nesting Bird Conference** at Willunga 26-28 May. *To Register:* Contact Birdlife Aus. *Details later.* Volunteers from FBW members wanted to assist with their outings on **Sunday, 28 May.** Contact us if you are free to assist.

Superb Fairy-wren changing colour.  
Photo: Nick Tebneff



**Meetings:** Anglican Church Hall, corner Crocker and Cadell Streets, Goolwa.  
7.30 pm 2nd Friday of March (AGM), Other meetings to be advised via Newsletter/Emails.

**Outings:** Meet 8.30 am. Bring lunch and a chair. See **Events** above

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## Outing Newland Head C.P. and Waitpinga Beach-Saturday 11 February.

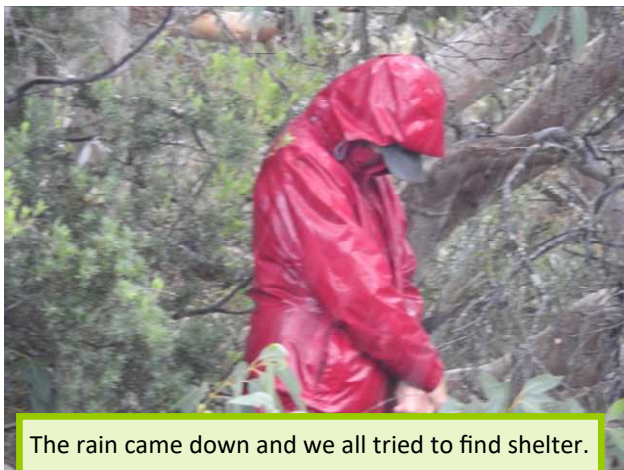
15 keen birdos set off under the leadership of Win Syson to explore a different section of the park. Cheerfully we followed 'the yellow brick road' until it began to rain! Not just a light shower but a steady downpour, which sent birds and people seeking shelter. A few of the usual suspects appeared in patches of sunshine. Highlights were Common Bronzewing an Australian Pipit and Grey Fantails flashing close overhead.

Back at morning tea at Dennis' Hut we saw Spotted and Striated Pardalotes put on a display catching insects in the gum trees.

Then in a stiff wind and sunshine we ventured to the beach to be rewarded with at least 600 immature and adult Crested Terns sheltering on the sand at the mouth of the creek. One Caspian Tern was definitely outnumbered, as was the single adult Pacific Gull. Signs on the board walk announced the nesting of Hooded Plovers and although there appeared to be no fledglings in sight, six adult birds foraged amongst the kelp.

In spite of the rain and wind there was a total of 35 species. Interestingly, no raptors were added to the list.

**Jude Meacham**



The rain came down and we all tried to find shelter.

## An extra special trip "Cruise the Coorong".

29 people booked on 2 trips organised by Wendy. The first one on Wednesday 22nd February was hit by the strongest winds experienced on Hindmarsh Island. The little orange boat headed off to Clayton and had to turn back to Goolwa. By then the wind had died down a little and the decision was made to continue on through the barrage and down the Coorong. Those on board did get to see lots of waders and felt the trip was worthwhile despite the bad weather and being jostled around in the boat.



Through the other side thanks to the labourers.



Tiger Snake Photo: **Nick Tebneff**

The second trip had perfect weather and we were able to go through the Tauwitchere Barrage. Dan Easton, our boat driver is also a keen birdwatcher and made sure we had the best advantage to see the waders and sea birds and helped us identify them. Michelle counted 46 species including a few non-water birds when we called into the 'Snake Pit' and sampled some of the native plant food.

*We did not expect to see this tiger snake swimming across the Goolwa Channel near Clayton!* It showed incredible strength to swim so far across and entertained us for a while. **Wendy Phillips**



Immature Black-winged Stilts. Photo: **Bob Daly**



What fun! Di and John opening the Tauwitchere Gates.



## Outing Sunday March 12, Hindmarsh Island.

A forecast for a morning thunderstorm, a long weekend holiday and "Mad March" festivities didn't deter two members from meeting at Ferryman's Reserve car park. We still decided to proceed to Richard Owen's "Tarniwarra" property on the southern edge of the island. This property has been carefully revegetated with local native plants and with the recent spring/summer rains, many of the ground cover plants and rushes were in full flower. Richard and another birding visitor joined us on a walk along the edge of the island. The water birds were abundant with many Grey Teal, Pacific Black Duck and Black Swan seen. Several Australasian Shovellers, Musk Ducks and Black-winged Stilts were also noted. A large flock of about a hundred Cape Barren Geese flew overhead and eventually landed on nearby mud flats, where we were able to get good views of them. Walking back through the Melaleucas and Samphire grasses, we heard and spotted a number of Superb Fairy-wrens, which, according to Richard have only recently been seen at his property. Other "land" birds seen included Elegant Parrots, Singing and New Holland Honeyeaters. Raptors seen were Whistling Kite and a Swamp Harrier. **Our final bird count for the property was 36 species.** Alas no waders were present, but on the previous day Black-fronted Dotterels had been

observed. By mid-morning we began to hear thunder and light rain started. We decided to move on to Chapel Rd. in the faint hope that the weather would improve, but it worsened and after a few minutes of observation from our cars, we decided to call it a day. We sincerely thank Richard for showing us his property, hearing about his re-vegetation work and observing the birds with us.



Cape Barren Geese.

## Outing Wednesday 22 March, Nixon Skinner CP.

8 members met at Myponga Reservoir for the first part of the outing. A very dull and overcast morning gave us doubt of sighting many birds, but that was soon dispelled. Immediately we spotted a Musk Duck (later two), two Black Swans, two White-faced Herons and eight Coots on the still waters of the Reservoir.

Following an access road into the heavily wooded Nixon Skinner Conservation Park, we saw a large range of smaller birds. Amongst them were Grey Fantails, several Thornbill varieties and Yellow-faced, Crescent and New Holland Honeyeaters. We also spotted a Spinebill and a Grey Shrike-thrush.

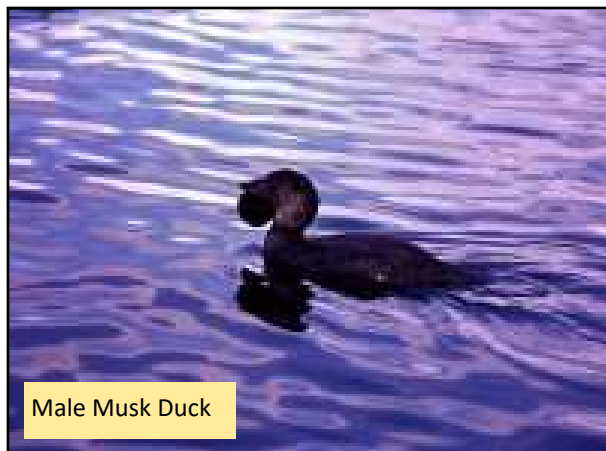
Flying overhead were Rosellas, Galahs and two Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoos and a dozen Sulphur-crested Cockatoos.

With the light misty weather not lifting we decided to avoid Springmount CP which was going higher into the cloudy hills. Instead we visited a wetlands along Blockers Road near Myponga to find Cormorants, Moorhens, Grey Teal, Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike and Rainbow Lorikeets.

We were kindly invited to Nick's home nearby for our lunch and bird count as the mist continued.

Surprisingly we counted 39 species for the morning. **Thank you Nick for leading .**

**Russell Creed.**



Male Musk Duck

Hunting Season in S.A. began 18 February and goes until 25 June for duck shooting.

Quail season began 18 February and goes to 13 August. This is despite numbers recorded being very low in S.A. and Victoria.

Birdlife Aus. want to be contacted to advise them of sightings of Blue-billed and Freckled Ducks, Bitterns and Migratory Waders. Contact Jenny Lau [jenny.lau@birdlife.org.au](mailto:jenny.lau@birdlife.org.au)

**Please be aware hunters may be present at Tolderol Reserve if visiting the area.**

## **General Meeting—Friday 10 March at Goolwa- Items of Interest:**

**Meeting Dates for 2017:** Next one will be at Willunga Friday 9 June, the third and last Meeting for the year will be in Goolwa 10 November. Speakers to be arranged.

**Campout 2017 -October 20 to 23,** Peter Owen suggests people book accommodation early unless you have a caravan or tent. Please advise him if you wish to attend the Campout or contact us via FBW email.

**Bird Rescue Centre Goolwa** Rena Robinson informed us an official opening is planned for September.

**Christmas Breakup 2017.** As the last Strathalbyn outing was cancelled due to extreme weather it was suggested we have a walk along the Angus River followed by a meal at the local hotel.

**Bird Call: Win Syson** reported DEWNR has installed 30 boxes for pygmy possums in Newland Head CP.

Volunteers found a young Fairy-wren trapped in an Orb Spider web and were able to capture and release it. A recent trip to the northern beaches, St Kilda, Thompson's Beach and the Yorke Peninsula yielded high numbers of waders with approx. 1000+ Red Knots, 250 Bar-tailed Godwits and 100 Ruddy Turnstones. The trip yielded 92 species. **Neil Cheshire** found a juvenile Beautiful Firetail at Deep Creek. On review of the photos from the Coorong trip of Little and Fairy Terns he thought there may be some hybrids amongst them.

**David Thorn** gave a Hooded Plover update- 1 chick Gulf side and 10 chicks this side fledged along the Fleurieu coast his year. **BirdLife Australia** are planning a Hooded Plover workshop at Willunga 25-27 May. Details on their website. **Keith Jones** said he has been bird banding with Maureen Christie's group at Thompson's Beach. Some Grey Plovers have been fitted with satellite trackers before they migrate to Siberia.

**Wendy Phillips** said Goolwa ponds are well worth a look now with higher bird numbers, she saw a juvenile Grey Butcherbird there for the first time. Spotted Crakes, Red-kneed and Black-fronted Dotterels found together in the swamp opposite the Ponds on Kessell Rd. Goolwa as the water level is dropping.

**Guest Speaker: Alex Nankivell** Conservation Project Manager for Nature Foundation SA spoke on plans for Watchalunga at Finniss/Currency Creek.

Alex detailed the history and work of Nature Foundation SA over the last 35 years in establishing wildlife corridors around SA. They are promoting Water for Nature by providing some water allocation for 35 small wetlands along the Murray. Further development of their main properties Hiltaba and Witchelina has been undertaken with walking tracks and 4WD tracks opened. A number of properties have been purchased and put under Heritage agreement then resold to remain as conservation areas. **Wendy thanked Alex and presented him with wine and chocolate.**

**Nature Foundation** purchased the 92 hectare property "Watchalunga" at Finniss in 2015 to help protect a small colony of Southern Emu-wrens. Their aim was to improve the vegetation and increase habitat corridors, remove the cattle and fence off fragile areas around the waterways. With only 250 birds left in the Southern Mt. Lofty area it is a "do or die" situation for these tiny birds if they are to survive.

GWLAP have assisted in the re vegetation program and over 4000 plants were planted this last season. Research is desperately needed to understand the genetics and reason why this species is struggling to survive.

**They are appealing to everyone to please help and send a donation to them via their website:**

[www.naturefoundation.org/support-us/donate](http://www.naturefoundation.org/support-us/donate) or phone 1300 366 191 for more information.

## **FBW Club, a Future or no Future?**

Keith Jones advised us he will not be continuing as Treasurer next year. Our calls to find someone to train for the position have not been answered. We beg members to think about offering their services. If NO one comes forward, Bob and I will step down as Secretary and Chairperson.

**If anyone else would like to take on these roles to keep the Club going then contact us**

**ASAP. If not we will be forced to close down the FBW Inc at the end of this year.** The three of us have worked tirelessly over the last few years and have exhausted all avenues to enthruse other members to step up. We know that birdwatching is a solitary pastime and can be just that, but the club has responsibilities to fill. We will be holding a Committee Meeting in May to discuss where we go from here.

**If you have ideas to put forward to the committee we would like to hear about them NOW.**

**Feel free to make suggestions and contact us via FBW email or phone 8555 0634.**

**Wendy Phillips**