



June 2013

Birdwatch

Newsletter of Fleurieu Birdwatchers Inc



Newsletter Contributions:
Please send all items for inclusion
in future newsletters to :
fleurieubirds@gmail.com

- **Saturday 15 June Manning Reserve McLaren Flat**
Kay's Rd NW Corner of Manning Reserve
35°11'26" S 138°34'49" E
- **Thursday 27 June Scott Conservation**
Gould Rd. 1st Car Park closest to Deep Creek Rd
35°24'01" S 138°43'45" E
- **Friday 12 July General Meeting—Members Night**
- **Sunday 14 July Currency Creek Winery walk.**
Currency Creek Winery Car Park
35°25'02" S 138°47'58" E
- **Wednesday 31 July Monarto & Ferries-McDonald CP**
35°13'14" S 139°7'58" E
- **Saturday 17 August Currency Creek Arboretum**
Currency Creek Lions Park
35°27'17" E 138° 45'35"

**CAMPOUT OCTOBER
2013 - ROBE
DETAILS PAGE 4**

To Register Your Interest in
Attending the Campout
Please Phone Wendy on
8555 0634

**For unpaid subs
Contact Treasurer
Keith Jones
8326 8768**

Bustard seen at Goolwa!! A very rare visitor!!
Photo: *Tony Skewes.*



Meetings: Anglican Church Hall, corner Crocker and Cadell Streets, Goolwa
7.30 pm 2nd Friday of odd months.

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

Contacts: Neil Cheshire on 8552 7904 or fleurieubirds@gmail.com

Website: www.fleurieubirdwatchers.org

Newsletter: Contact fleurieubirds@gmail.com

OUTINGS

Cox Scrub/Coles Crossing Wednesday 20 March, 2013

The forecast was for a clear hot day with temperatures of about 33 expected. Thirteen of us assembled on the corner of Heifer Lane, Nangkita Road and drove to the park. Aply lead by Bob we set off down towards the river following the track inside the park boundary. Along here we came across numerous New Holland Honeyeaters and by the end of the walk they were easily the most numerous bird seen. Along the path running parallel to the river we saw a Golden Whistler, Eastern Spinebill and a few Crescent Honeyeaters. There were also quite a few Grey Fantails calling and displaying for us. Four Wedge-tailed Eagles were spotted by those who keep at least one eye on the sky and we all shared in their majesty. A few Common Bronzewing took off from the path and quickly disappeared into the scrub. Sightings of a Brown Falcon and a Peregrine Falcon on the wing was cause for a consultation of the bird book to confirm the accuracy of the sighters call.

Superb Fairy-wrens played in and out of the low growing bushes alongside the path. Due to the forecast we did not extend the walk and started back once we reached the junction of the fire trail. The native scrub running alongside the now cut down pine forest usually provides some good sightings and it did. Here we saw some Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoos, more Spinebills, a couple of Pardalotes, a rather shy Shrike-thrush, a Currawong and a Dusky Woodswallow. In one of the flowering gums close to the gate we came across both Musk and Purple-crowned Lorikeets. There were the usual arguments about which Thornbills had been seen and we settled on Yellow-rumped and Striated.

Some birders who chose another path back to the start managed to see a Scarlet Robin. As we were having lunch a group of Brown-headed Honeyeaters flew overhead and were included in the count. The mystery birds of the day, which were not included in the count, were a pair of Quail.

Though we finished early we found 36 species for the morning and were well satisfied with our efforts.

Edith St. George

Mount Magnificent CP Thursday 11 April 2013

On what was a magnificent Autumn day, 11 members and four guests/potential members spent the morning at the well named Mount Magnificent Conservation Park for a birdwalk ably led by Nick Tebneff. We started at the eastern boundary of the park enjoying views to the Finniss River and Hindmarsh Island. We followed part of the Heysen Trail through open woodlands to a promontory giving views to the west and the steep spur of Mount Magnificent. Birding highlight of this area was a pair of Scarlet Robins showing well for most of the group. Returning to the cars we headed for the western boundary of the park. Soon after leaving we stopped to view a pair of Australian Hobbys seen closely in flight. At the western boundary we walked up the hill along the margin of thick scrub and saw feeding Crescent and Yellow-faced Honeyeaters and Eastern Spinebill. A detachment of DEWNR employees were preparing fire trails ahead of a planned burn-off in the area. The sounds of distant chainsaws were far enough away not to disturb our lunch. As Nick remarked, "they weren't here two days ago"! A very enjoyable morning that produced 40 species of birds plus two species heard.

Neil Cheshire



Australian Hobby
Photo: Judith Dyer



Crescent Honeyeater
Photo: Peter Gower

Nixon-Skinner - Spring Mount CP Saturday 20 April.

A total of 18 members and three guests met at the Causeway Park overlooking the Myponga Reservoir on a crisp and clear Saturday autumnal morning, with Judith leading the group. Even before we had entered the Nixon-Skinner Park, a friendly Grey Shrike Thrush, and some water birds, including Eurasian Coots, Darters and Hoary-headed Grebes and a pair of Whistling Kites patrolling overhead caught our attention.

One member who forgot about the ending of daylight saving and arrived early was rewarded with the sight of a small flock of 8 yellow-tailed black cockatoos languidly flying above the causeway. Once our group had entered the park, Crimson (Adelaide) Rosellas were often seen. One of the highlights of the morning was the appearance of several Scarlet Robins as they flitted between ground cover and the fence. They kept following us as we strolled along the old road back to the causeway. Several kangaroos and a koala bear were also sighted. Due to perhaps the very dry conditions and the absence of any native bush in flower, many of potential bush birds were not sighted, however, Striated Thornbills, several Yellow-faced Honeyeaters and a Grey Fantail did appear for us. On returning to the car-park, one of our members who had remained there was rewarded with the sighting of 3 Cape Barren Geese as well as a pair of Wedge-tailed eagles. We recorded 33 bird species on this part of the outing.

We then drove over the range to the Spring Mount Conservation Park, a park dominated by brown stringy bark gums, with evidence of strong re-growth after bushfires a number of years ago. Many of the older trees had hollows, which were potential nesting holes for a number of bird species. But alas, again possibly due the dry conditions and the singular nature of the habitat, birds were highly conspicuous by their absence. As we walked along the main track, we did notice several White-Throated Tree-creepers. Finally, one of us had to resort to "electronically" calling up some Brown Thornbills which resulted in one member adding another "tick" to his bird list. We lunched near the entrance to the park, and a total of only 14 bird species were recorded for this area. Despite the low numbers of birds, we all enjoyed the outing with marvellous scenery at both parks, great company, and we thank Judith for leading the morning's outing.

Keith Jones

Scarlet Robins (female and male)

Photos: Peter Owen



MEMBERS NIGHT next General Meeting Friday 11th July.

Wanted 3-4 people to each give a short presentation on any topic of interest to the Club. Projector and computer will be available for your use on the night. Ideas: Recent birding holidays or special observation of birds, interesting DVD clips. The choice is yours!

Please phone Neil Cheshire on 85527904 if you have something you would like to share.

LARATINGA, MOUNT BARKER SUNDAY, 12 MAY.

It was the day out for DUCKS!

Early morning rain meant that we only had 11 keen birdos arrive including 2 visitors.

It rained heavily for about 15 minutes and then no more!! We sheltered during the rain and watched 2 pair of Galahs allowing the rain to wash them and then they hung themselves out to dry – very entertaining.

We were ably led by Neil, winding our way around the wetlands and then to the fenced area of the sewerage ponds. The water was calm and the rain stayed away.

Although we saw 47 species of birds, it was the close proximity to and the large numbers of ducks and grebes that were the highlights for me. Freckled Duck, Pink-eared, Wood Duck, Shoveler, Grey Teal and Chestnut Teal, Pacific Black and Hardhead were all there either swimming, feeding or resting – so it was very easy to get excellent views and good comparisons of the various types. The bush birds were harder to find apart from lots of wrens and White-plumed Honeyeaters.

We all agreed that it was an amazing duck-spotting day!!

Thank you Neil!

Liz Barry

Two Australasian Shovelers and a Freckled Duck (rear)
Photo: Bob Daly



Pink-eared Duck Photo: Peter Gower



CAMPOUT AT ROBE 18-21 OCTOBER

Long Beach Caravan Park has the best facilities for a large group. However, people can choose other accommodation options in the area if they wish.

Proposed Plan:

FRIDAY Meet 3 pm and walk to Fox Lake Bird hide to see the water birds then across the little bridge at the Fox outlet and along the coast into town.

SATURDAY Meet at 7.30 am Drive to Southend and on to Canunda NP. Walk around Cape Buffon and stop at Willichum Lookout and the local beach. After morning tea we will drive to Beachport and stop at Woolley Lake for lunch and walk on a well maintained path around the Lake. We will continue onto Lake George for a short stop and then drive the loop road into Beachport and a coffee stop at the Jetty Café.

This will be a full day and if time allows we will stop at Drain M and the Woakwine Cutting on our way back from Beachport to Robe.

SUNDAY Meet at 8 .30am Drive to Little Dip CP via Nora Creina Road. We will visit Long Gully Beach and Fresh Water Lake and Drive on to Old Man Lake where there is a camping area, toilets and picnic tables. We can continue on to Big Dip Lake further down the road if time allows. The afternoon will be FREE time with options to visit the Obelisk, the sewerage ponds and other town Lakes or rest!!

Dinner at night in a Robe Restaurant to finish off the weekend.

MONDAY Meet at 9 .30am Drive home via Butcher's Gap CP at Kingston which will take up the full morning.

Long Beach is a Discovery (Big 4) Caravan Park. Phone: 8768 2237 or 1800 106 106 or email: robe@discoveryparks.com.au

Further information contact *Wendy Phillips* 85550634 Plans may be changed due to weather or other circumstances.

General Meeting 10 May

Items of Interest:

The Committee members are now meeting at the Anglican Church Hall 1 hour prior to the General Meeting on the 2nd Friday of odd months.

If you have any ideas or things that you would like to include on the agenda please contact the President, It is a great disappointment that no one has volunteered to be secretary and the job is currently being shared amongst the few committee members.

Neil Cheshire reported that with the closure of the Salt Fields north of Adelaide there will be a loss of habitat for the wader birds as the place is likely to fall into a state of neglect. Birds SA have been monitoring the waders there for many years and this habitat is extremely important for their survival.

Teresa Jack reported on Birdpedia the loss of an important habitat for the rare Chestnut-rumped Heathwren in Cox Scrub following the fire.

A letter will be sent to the Alexandrina Council re the Birdhide at the sewage ponds and signage for the area.

A big thank you to Pat Upill for her wonderful presentation on the birds of Christmas and Cocos-Keeling Islands.

Bird sightings:

Spotted Harrier at Urimbirra, Victor Harbor.

Grey Butcherbird at Goolwa North, Crested Shrike-tit at Strathalbyn, Freckled and Pink-eared Ducks at Goolwa Ponds. A strange encounter occurred for the people inside the building of Ecumenical Mission Seaford of a juvenile Boobook Owl that had to be coaxed outside. 50+Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoos at Yankalilla and 50 Pied Oyster Catchers at Sugars Beach HI. A Little Eagle above the Goolwa Ponds recently.



Grey Butcherbird
Photo: Val Laird

Comment from Chairman/President

Eighteen years after Judith Dyer and others founded the Fleurieu Birdwatchers, the club is alive and mostly well. The campout last year at Marion Bay, ably organised and led by Teresa Jack, was well attended and very successful. Our Christmas 'bash' organised by Wendy Phillips and Bob Daly aboard the paddle steamer Oscar W was enjoyed by forty-nine people. Birdwalks are for the most part well supported. Less successful are our bi-monthly meetings, and I can understand the reluctance of some to venture out on a cold and dark winter evening particularly if they live closer to Adelaide than the south coast. Attendance levels are almost at the point where it is hard to justify getting someone from outside the club to give a talk.

Our next meeting on 12th July will be a members night where short presentations will be given by members. I hope you will be able to attend this meeting. Another matter for your consideration - this club is in urgent need of a secretary in order to continue in the structured manner that is required as an incorporated association. The duties are not onerous, correspondence is minimal and the main duties are to produce minutes for committee and general meetings held six times per year. Our former secretary of four years Pat Uppill and the other committee members are available for help and guidance.

Proceedings have now been consolidated as the committee now meets one hour before the general meeting at the same venue. To maintain the enthusiasm of the current management committee, someone from the remaining eighty odd members who enjoy the activities of the club, is required to take on the position as secretary.

On behalf of the club I have written to DEWNR (Dept of Environment, Water and Natural Resources) to register our dismay regarding the Cox Scrub CP fire 1-3 May where a prescribed burn of 40 Ha. re-ignited and burnt out 360 Ha. of the 544 Ha. park. In view of this disaster and recent similar prescribed burns resulting in uncontrolled fires at Deep Creek CP and Bullock Hill CP we have asked DEWNR to review their procedures for these operations.

Neil Cheshire