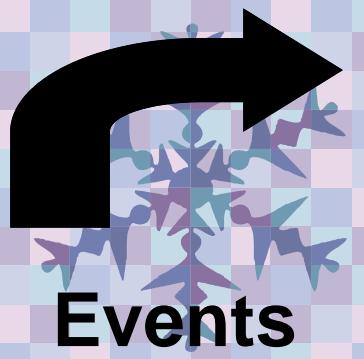




October 2014

Birdwatch

Newsletter of Fleurieu Birdwatchers Inc



Events

2014 Campout
17-20 Oct. Waikerie.

See page 5 for details.

Thursday 30 October Currency Creek Arboretum

Lions Park, Currency Creek
35°27'17" E 138° 45'35"

Friday 14 November General Meeting

Guest speaker, Rena Robinson from Wildlife Rescue.

Sunday 16 November Paiwalla Wetlands, Burdett

35° 02' 04" S 139° 22' 18"

Wednesday 26 November Ingallalla Falls

Ingallalla Falls Carpark, Hay Flat Rd Normanville



Christmas Breakup Saturday 6 December 5pm
Nangawooka Reserve Victor Harbor

Thick-billed Grasswrens
See Page 2 for details



Meetings: Anglican Church Hall, corner Crocker and Cadell Streets, Goolwa
7.30 pm 2nd Friday of March, May, September and November

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

Mt Billy—Hindmarsh Falls. Wednesday 30 July.

Seven members braved the elements and met at Hindmarsh Valley Hall lead by Bob and Wendy.

The day was very cold and cloudy and showers were forecast. We drove to the Inman Valley Reservoir and spent quite a while there looking across the water. Here we were able to record:

Musk Duck, Chestnut Teal, Hardhead, Grey Teal, Black Swan, Dusky Moorhen and others on or near the water's edge and one Wedge-tailed Eagle flying overhead.

We moved on to Mt. Billy Conservation Park and enjoyed the Banksia Loop walk, observing the native orchids, whilst looking for birds. Three species of Greenhood orchids were noticed as well as flowering Grevillea, Banksia and also a beautiful white Hakea. Along the track there were many and varied fungi.

It was very exciting to see two Basket Fungi that Chris Thompson pointed out (See photo). I don't know anything about fungi myself, but I soon realised that these were very rare and special. There were many other pretty little flowers as always in this park. The birds were few and far between and hard to find. I think they knew it was a good day to be under shelter!

We moved on to Hindmarsh Falls and this was absolutely magnificent, watching the huge amount of water crashing over the rocks. The power of water was there for all to see.

We sat comfortably on the benches and ate our lunch whilst doing the bird count and were fortunate that we did not get rained on.



Photos by Verle Wood

Our bird count for the morning was 38 species. The highlight for me was the beautiful little Weebill. Someone did comment that this is the smallest of all the Australian birds.

Other birds seen were:
Superb Fairywren, White-naped Honeyeater, Crescent Honey-eater, Grey Currawong, Grey Fantail, Grey Shrike-thrush, Black-shouldered Kite.

A great way to spend a day!

Elaine O'Shaughnessy



Weebill
Photo: Peter Gower

Front Page Photos:

Thick-billed Grasswren.

It is an extremely shy and elusive bird to find. It hides under shrubs and darts across the ground when disturbed. It is found in Central Australia in areas of low vegetation e.g. salt bush and spinifex. The reduction of bird numbers are due to heavy grazing and removal of habitat. It flutters close to the ground when it fly's and only travels short distances.

Photos by Nature Foundation SA Inc. (Photo taken near Witchilena by research students Amy and Marina)



Nurragi C.P. Saturday 16 August.

A group of ten members met for a wander down the old railway track between Sandergrove and Milang. Although it was an overcast and cool day the track was sheltered by mature trees so it was comfortable for walking.

Eucalyptus *Fasciculosa* (pink gum) was in full bloom and this attracted a range of birds after the nectar and insects which in turn had been attracted to the blossom. Rosellas, Musk Lorikeets and Rainbow Lorikeets were seen, though in small numbers. Among the small birds we sighted were Superb Fairy-wrens, Grey Fantails and Striated Pardalotes. It was a good chance to practise thornbill identification skills as the Yellow, Yellow-rumped and Weebills were probably the most common birds for the day. Other interesting birds for the morning were the Rufous Whistlers, Spiny-cheeked and Brown-headed Honeyeaters, White-browed Babblers and the Grey Shrike Thrushes.

After a very interesting walk the bird count revealed that we had seen a total of 33 species.

Pat Uppill

Rufous Whistler and
Spiny-cheeked
Honeyeater
Photos: Peter Gower



Coles Crossing/Cox's Scrub, Thursday 28 August 2014.

On a superb warm Spring day with clear skies and almost calm conditions six Fleurieu Birders started the walk from the Ridge Road parking area. Of immediate interest was a pair of Scarlet Robin that flew around our cars and gave good views. Scarlet Robins continued to show well with a total of six pairs being seen during the morning. A welcome sight given this species can be hard to find on the Fleurieu.

Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoos flew over four or five at a time and after a few minutes we had the magnificent sight of a straggling flock of about 250 flying low overhead with slow deep wingbeats, giving their plaintive contact call. Three Fan-tailed Cuckoos were seen or heard and three Horsfield's Bronze-Cuckoos were also calling.

At Coles Crossing on the Finniss River we had good views of White-throated Treecreeper foraging on the trunk of a River Red-Gum. Another species unusually abundant was Eastern Spinebill with about 20 being counted. No raptors were seen but in spite of this some 45 species were counted during the walk.

Thank you Keith
for leading a
very enjoyable
outing.

Neil Cheshire



Photos: Peter Gower

Lyrebird.

A lyrebird's song can reach a hill 3 kms away. As well as copying other birdsongs it mimics the wing beats of pigeons, the barking of dogs, the honks of swans, the pleading of young magpies, the grunting of koalas, and numerous other sounds in the bush.

The lyrebirds in captivity such as zoos have been known to copy the noise of other animals in the zoo. They imitate chainsaws, tractors, cars and bus engines and any other sounds around them.

The male lyrebird builds a mound of litter from the forest floor and sings and displays his tail for long periods to attract the female. The female builds a nest close to the ground, sits on one egg for 50 days and raises the chick on her own. The young bird learns its repertoire from other lyrebirds around it.

The young male bird develops his tail plumage in his 2nd year and it moult each year. It is fully developed by his 6th year when he is ready to breed. This bird has fascinated people around the world for its vocal abilities and can live up to 30 years. Recently viewed on TV on David Attenborough's wildlife program. You can google Lyrebird and hear it on YouTube with David Attenborough.



Photo by : Peter Owen
Taken at New England NP
near Dorrigo

Hardy's Scrub, Sunday 14 September.

On a glorious spring day 6 members met at gate 19 on Chappel Hill Rd. The bush was alive with bird calls and wildflowers. However, the birds remained elusive and hard to find, so heard calls outnumbered sightings until at the final count we realized we have actually seen 24 species and heard another 11. Also in the "seen" list was a kangaroo and a koala.

The Cuckoos, both Horsefield's Bronze and Fantail, were calling from everywhere but impossible to find. We spotted a pair of Musk Lorikeets nesting in a tree and two Wood Ducks perched on a tree. The little dam and creek were dry perhaps accounting for a lack of birds congregating around that area and dispersing to the bush. The regular birds other than New Hollands, Wattlebirds and Singing Honeyeaters were surprisingly missing despite lots of flowering eucalypts. We sighted two Mistletoebirds and some nesting Striated Pardalotes,

Yrena Mountford (Photos by Yrena)



Campout 17 – 20 Oct 2014 - Waikerie.

<http://www.waikeriecaravanpark.com.au/>

Please note, for those booking a Cabin, they are only available until the Monday am.

PLAN:

Friday 4pm, meet at the Camp Kitchen for a walk to the Bird Hide, Hart Lagoon.

Saturday 8am, meet at the Camp Kitchen for a Car convoy to Gluepot Reserve. Entry Fee per car. (Car pooling very helpful). It is a 50 km dirt road trip in with a number of gates to be closed behind us. Any car can

negotiate the road in dry weather. In Gluepot we will travel via the Visitors Centre to Grasswren Hide, Froggy Dam Hide, Kangaroo Dam, Old Gluepot Hide and leave from Emu Hide.

<http://www.gluepot.org/>

Saturday 5pm, join together for a BBQ in the Camp Kitchen. (We have the use of the Camp Kitchen each evening.) Photo Slide Shows encouraged.

Sunday TBA, waiting for advice re outing, winter rains and water levels will determine where we can access.

Monday TBA.

I have booked into the Caravan Park and will be arriving Thursday 16th Oct.

Looking forward to a good turnout.

Teresa Jack.

Email: teresajack57@yahoo.com

Mobile 0429695249

Mulga Parrot
Photo by Peter Owen



Gluepot. A brief History:

In 1996 a volunteer recorded the endangered Black-eared Miner sighted near Gluepot Station. When a further survey of the area was done they found four other species that were listed as Nationally Threatened were in reasonably good numbers there.

The owner indicated that he would be happy to sell the marginal farm land if someone could buy the property.

Immediately people pulled together to raise the funds necessary and protect the largest reasonably intact Mallee vegetation.

It took only 10 weeks and 2,400 people who donated money to secure it. Then with the assistance of many dedicated volunteers Gluepot was transformed. The sheep were removed and work commenced on restoring the property to its original state. The Reserve has won a swag of rewards for conservation and restoration for benefit of the fauna and flora in the Mallee Region. It supports an enormous amount of scientific research projects each year by attracting funding from around Australia.

190 bird species have been recorded there and nearly 300 plant species. Many of the trees are hundreds of years old and have numerous hollows suitable for nesting. It is known to be one of the best areas for viewing some very special birds e.g. Major Mitchell Cockatoo, Mallee Fowl, Striated Grasswren, Red-lored Whistler, Regent and Scarlet-chested Parrot, all on the National Threatened Bird List.

The Reserve is 64 kms from Waikerie or one and a half hour drive away and has well marked tracks suitable for most 2-wheel drive vehicles.

Regent Parrots at Gluepot
Photo: Teresa Jack



If you haven't been there this is your chance with Teresa at the Campout !!

OBP News

Unfortunately no OBP's were found in SA. In fact the only ones found were four birds together in western Port Phillip Bay in Victoria.

The total for the other Neophemas was pretty good though, particularly the increase in parrot numbers in the Coorong, a good sign that conditions are improving for our little bright green friends.

Total count figures:

Blue-winged Parrot --263

Elegant Parrot -----171

Rock Parrot -----0

Bob Green

Orange-bellied Parrot Regional Coordinator.

South East, Coorong and Murray Lakes Regions.

shriketit@bigpond.com

Ph. 08 8725 0549

mob. 0407 649 909



Items of Interest from General Meeting 12 September:

15 Members present and 5 apologies.

Committee decided to support Nature Foundation Inc. with a donation and annual membership fee.

The members voted to amalgamate with Birdlife Australia.

Neil arranged a meeting with Victor Harbor Council to discuss a Bird Trail Brochure like Alexandrina Council's two Bird Trails. This would then cover most of the Fleurieu Peninsula area that tourist can visit.

Christmas Break-up format to remain the same with the Club purchasing meats and members supplying salads and sweets.

Idea of a Dinner or a Picnic discussed for a Twilight meet in January yet to be arranged.

Keith and Neil to plan outings for next year in January. Members can suggest new birding sites and offer ideas to make the club interesting for all. The possibility of participating in a Tolderol survey discussed.

Judith Dyer has compiled all bird data from 1995-2013 and burned to a CD for FBW records.

Many thanks to Judith and Ann Turner for all their hard work keeping the records and Denzel for his help.

BIRD CALL: Black Kite near the causeway VH, 40 Black-tailed Cockatoos Waitpinga, 6 pairs of Scarlet Robins at Coles Crossing, breeding of Wrens, New Holland Honey-eaters and Blackbirds at VH, Milang to Clayton 20 Cattle Egrets, Hindmarsh Island 2 Cattle Egrets, 2 White-necked Herons, 7 Bar-tailed Godwits, 3 Ruddy Turnstones, 2 Great Knots, 5 Red Knots.

Interesting talks and photos were presented by Keith Jones on his surveys of Pied and Sooty Oystercatchers and by Peter Owen with his excellent bird photos from trips around Australia.



Birds photos from Southern W.A. trip.
Red-eared Firetail, Carnaby Cockatoo, Ring-necked Parrot, White-breasted Robin, Red-capped Parrot, Red-winged Fairywren all taken by Bob Daly.
Very special endemics easily found when visiting the many Conservation Parks South of Perth.

Get Ready for the Aussie Backyard Bird Count 20-26 October 2014.

Birdlife Australia is conducting a massive survey to see how our birds are faring. They want you to download a free app and go outside into your yard or nearby park and count the birds you see for a twenty minute period. Google 'Birdlife Australia' for further info.

Aldinga Scrub/Washpool Wednesday 24 September.

The wet weather which had been forecast did not eventuate and our group of nine enjoyed a bird walk in warm, sunny and still conditions. Some plants were still flowering which made the Scrub more interesting. Early in our walk we saw a Yellow Thornbill, Striated Thornbill, Grey Shrike-thrush and White-plumed Honeyeaters. We walked past Quandong trees with small ripe fruits on them and saw the fading remnants of the Fire Orchids.



Special mention must be made of the Xanthorrhoea or Yacca many of which were in flower and provided some special moments of bird watching and photography. We were treated to a good view of two Eastern Spinebills feeding on the flowers of the Yacca, and then later New Holland Honeyeaters, in similar behaviour. The Mistletoe was producing berries, which provided us with good views of Mistletoe-birds, both male and female.

We saw quite a few female Rufous Whistlers and eventually a male, then Golden Whistlers too. In one section of the scrub Dusky Woodswallows were very active. Among other birds seen were Superb Fairy-wren, Silvereye, Willy Wagtail, Grey Fantail, Little Raven, Crested Pigeon, Kookaburra and Brush Bronzewing. Overhead were Nankeen Kestrel, Eastern Rosella, Galah and Rainbow Lorikeet.

We enjoyed our morning at Aldinga Scrub and birdcall gave us a total of 28 species seen and 2 heard i.e. Grey Currawong and Horsfield's Bronze Cuckoo.

Later a smaller group moved on to the Washpool where we observed, Black-winged Stilts, Australasian Shovelers, White-faced Heron, Black Swans, Chestnut Teal, a small flock of Whiskered Tern, Pacific Black Ducks, and more. A very rewarding end to a great morning's birding. Thanks to Keith for leading the walk.

Margaret Dreyer

Photo:

Whiskered
Terns
Roosting at the
Washpool.

Eastern Spinebill
in Yacca

Bob Daly

