



fleurieu birdwatch

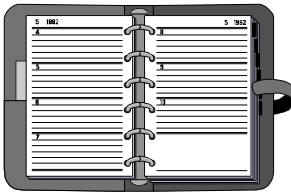
AUGUST 1999

Meetings: Glendale Christian School, cnr Glendale Close/Strathalbyn Rd, Goolwa
7.30 pm 2nd Friday of alternate (odd) months

Outings: Meet 8.30 am. Bring lunch and a chair – see Diary

Contacts: Judith Dyer, phone 8555 2736 Kate Bruce, phone 8555 5020
3 Hewett Road, Goolwa 5214 PO Box 403, Goolwa 5214

FOR YOUR DIARY



✿ **Sat 7 August.**
Mt Billy
(Hindmarsh Valley
Reservoir Reserve)

Turn off Adelaide Road towards Myponga about 8 km north of Victor Harbor. Meet at the Hindmarsh Valley Hall and Tennis Courts about 200 metres further on.

✿ **Wednesday 18 August**

Hindmarsh Island

Meet on the causeway on the Hindmarsh Island side of the Ferry Crossing.

✿ **Saturday 28 August.**

Aldinga Scrub

Meet at Willunga, by the cemetery on Aldinga Road, near the access roads at the bottom of Willunga Hill.

✿ **Friday 10 September**

Meeting

Guest Speaker: Steve Gilbert, 'Ranger of the Year' – *Aspects of the Coorong Conservation Park*

(☞ Look for the **sandwich board** for **directions** to the room to be used for this meeting.)

✿ **Sunday 12 September**

Goolwa Effluent Ponds

Meet at the Effluent Ponds, Kessell Road, Goolwa.

✿ **Wednesday 22 September**

Newland Head CP, Waitpinga

Meet at Dennis Hut in the Camping Ground.

✿ **Saturday 2 October**

Ashbourne and Myer's Scrub

Meet in the side road near the telephone box at Ashbourne.

✿ **Wednesday 13 October**

Gilbert Siding

Meet at the junction of Strathalbyn Road and Gilbert Siding Road at Finniss.

✿ **Saturday 23 October**

No outing – **Campout** the following week.

MEETING REPORT

Friday 9 July

Kate Bruce chaired the meeting and welcomed the Guest Speaker, 4 visitors and 14 members. There were 9 apologies.

Matters discussed included

- Ramsar Management Plan – a copy is available from Judith;

- Mallard Duck Survey – Penny Paton is still appealing for reports, particularly from areas outside of Adelaide.

Other matters are dealt with elsewhere in this Newsletter.

Kate introduced our **Guest Speaker**, Fran Marsh, who gave an overview of wetland management. She explained that the Murray basin is one of the most variable systems in the world. Fran showed slides to illustrate how regulation and pollution have interrupted the natural cycles with a detrimental impact on the river and its adjacent wetlands and the flora and fauna formerly found there.

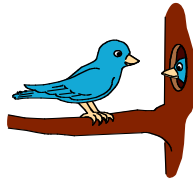
The evening concluded, as usual, with cuppa and a chat.

WELCOME

NEW MEMBERS:

Bev Shean, Victor Harbor

Gayla Pelchen, Port Noarlunga



Peter and Carmel Ginnane, Morphett Vale
Ismey Hoffmann, Victor Harbor, who has rejoined us after a break

Also Peter O'Shaughnessy, Victor Harbor, husband of Elaine, who was welcomed last issue. Apologies, Peter!

And Sarah Filkin, Willunga, charming 3-year-old daughter of Mark and Belinda, who's off to a great start as our latest Junior member – honorary!

TONKIN'S WINERY, UPSTREAM

Saturday 5 June

Thirteen members and one visitor gathered on a better than forecast morning with sunshine interspersed with cloudy periods and an intermittent sharp wind blowing.

We were disappointed that none of the reed birds were to be seen or heard in the reedbeds at the start of the walk but White-faced Heron, Little Pied Cormorant and Masked Lapwing were sighted

around the dam. Superb Fairy-wren flitted through the blackberries, and Silvereye and Yellow-rumped Thornbill played in flowering gums beside the path.

We didn't need binoculars for a delightful view of one Mistletoebird, very busy with green berries in a clump of mistletoe. I found it interesting that all the Mistletoebirds sighted were male.

New Holland Honeyeaters in large numbers were enjoying the banksias, as were very busy Red Wattlebirds and Crimson Rosellas in more open country.

A small patch of scrub on the top side of the circuit provided the highlight of the day, a sighting of a Yellow-plumed Honeyeater. Also in this scrub were Striated Thornbill, Brown-headed Honeyeater and Golden Whistler.

A Marsh Harrier glided majestically overhead looking for lunch while we picnicked. We counted a total of 44 species.

Jean Boomer

DOUGLAS SCRUB

Wednesday 16 June

It was a fine crisp morning, the sun was shining but 12°C would have been top temperature in the fresh breeze. We met in McLaren Vale and travelled to Douglas Scrub, off the Kangarilla Road. We were a group of 12 members who thoroughly enjoyed our mid week outing. One of our first sightings was a koala tucked away high in a gum tree – at first glance it looked a bit like a bird's nest amongst the leaves.

Later in the morning, one member spied a bird of a different nature – a ladybird sitting very happily on a seed cone of hakea. We didn't include it in our bird count!



We were hoping to see some Fairy-wrens but this was not to be, not even along the creek. They could well have been frightened off by the noisy tractors stacking pine logs.

It was a special day for me as I had my very first close-up observation of an Eastern Spinebill and we had several opportunities to see pairs close at hand. I also had my first observation of a female Golden Whistler.

We sighted 28 species in all, the most common being the Red Wattlebird.

Elaine O'Shaughnessy

INMAN ESTUARY, YILKI BEACH, and beyond

Saturday, 26 June

The weather was cold, but sunny, with just a slight breeze, when 15 members met in the car park by the Inman. Around this area birds were scarce with distant sightings of Red-rumped Parrot, Red Wattlebird and Little Wattlebird. Water birds were few with only a gathering of Dusky Moorhen and a Eurasian Coot.

Moving to the estuary we had very good sightings of Hooded Plover, Masked Lapwing and Red-capped Plover family groups. Catching half a nap was a Sooty Oystercatcher with beak buried in its back feathers, one eye closed and the other on us. It made no effort to move away from our presence. To the pleasure of all, two or three seals were feeding off the point at Kent Reserve, with two pods of dolphin out to sea.



After visiting Kent Reserve we moved along Franklin Parade towards the Bluff, but due to the tide being well in, very little of the beach, reefs and rocks were exposed and only a few

varieties of water birds were sighted. However, we had an excellent viewing of a Black-shouldered Kite with nest in a Norfolk Island pine just inland from the esplanade.

As a diversion to our normal activity we ventured to the cliffs area near King Head,

but disappointingly, it gave us no good sightings of oceanic birds.

On returning to Kent Reserve for lunch, we had good observations of a Nankeen Kestrel and a Striated Pardalote.

Our count at the end totalled 38 birds along the sea front.

Bruce Riglin



SCOTT CONSERVATION PARK

Sunday 11 July

10 members, 3 visitors (now all members) and Sarah, our Hon Sub-Junior member, with her cute bright blue binoculars, did a rather ambitious walk on a cool but fine morning. We parked on the southern boundary and walked along the western fenceline to a new creek crossing, along the newly constructed walking trail through the north-west corner of the park. We continued along the road to the old creek crossing and back down the western boundary again – a marathon!

Lorikeets were plentiful and very vocal, particularly the Purple-crowned Loris which appeared to be exploring every hollow. We estimated an F (300 to 1000) in number.

Australian Wood Duck were heard calling in the trees – were they, too, looking for nesting hollows?

Two Common Bronzewings sat obligingly on a branch while most of us had a good look at them. Good spotting by someone!

Six species of Honeyeater were recorded, but *no* Black-chinned!

The Golden Whistlers, as ever, gave wonderful viewing, but to me the highlight of the morning was to see a Crested Shrike-tit and a small group of Varied Sittella.

35 species in all were recorded for the morning, not a large count for that location.

Judith Dyer

NORMANVILLE BEACH and PARAWA

Wednesday 21 July

This outing saw 10 members and a visitor set off for a short walk along the beach where we found Hooded and Red-capped Plover, Crested Tern, Pied Cormorant and a pair of Pacific Black Duck. We then walked through the caravan park, over the creek and back to the beach. A Nankeen Kestrel perched on a fence post in a nearby paddock, and Willie Wagtail, New Holland and White-plumed Honeyeaters, Crimson Rosella and Rainbow Lorikeet were at home in the caravan park.

On the way back over the dunes there were Red Wattlebird, a pair of European Greenfinch and a Black-tailed Native Hen.

Moving down the road for a quick look at Lady Bay we added Little Black and Pied Cormorants to the list before driving to a member's property at Parawa. There, Scarlet Robin came quite close, Crested Shriketit were heard, but moved away before we could spot them, and Golden Whistler were calling and showing off their lovely colour, making viewing easy.

A Fantail Cuckoo's calling had three of us walking up the hill to try and find it but a number of noisy Sulphur-crested Cockatoo flew over so the calling stopped. Of course, once we started walking back to the main group, it recommenced calling but by that time stomachs were complaining so we sat in the sun enjoying lunch during the bird count: Normanville Beach 29, Lady Bay 12, Parawa 32 species.

Thanks to Geoff for allowing us to end a good morning's birding on his property.

Ann Turner

EFFLUENT PONDS PROJECT

The viewing platform is now complete, except for sanding the handrails to prevent injuries from splinters. Many thanks to Ann Turner's husband, John,

who gave valuable help to Chris and Brian on this part of the project.

The stiles have yet to be built and the car park area has to be marked out.

The tree planting was accomplished very efficiently – all before lunchtime – with the help of a number of local groups: Alexandrina Council, Hindmarsh Island Landcare, Goolwa Gardeners and Glendale Primary School children, supervised by agricultural science teacher, Brice Walker. Trees were raised from locally collected seeds grown in the Alexandrina Council nursery by Trees for Me volunteers. Kallan Dennis, Parks and Gardens Supervisor, Alexandrina Council, has also supplied valuable technical information.

Timing of further tree planting below the shelter and in the swamp area will be determined by weather.

Brian Ginno has mown around many of the plantings. There have been some losses to rabbits but the survivors are looking good.



BROCHURE

The brochure is now printed!

A grant from the Fleurieu Region Community Grants Program 1998/99 ensured sufficient funds were available.

Thanks to Elaine and Geoff for doing some final checking on both the brochure and the map.

Copies will soon be distributed to tourist information points throughout the Fleurieu, but first we must have the

LAUNCH!

This will be held at 5.30 pm on 20 August in the South Coast Regional Arts Centre, the Old Police Station, Goolwa Terrace, Goolwa.

You are all **invited**, with your partners, to participate in this landmark occasion for

our group. Other guests will include those who have supported us in the project and local environment and tourism representatives. Mr Chris Burchett, Regional Marketing Manager, Fleurieu Tourism, will officially launch the brochure.

We plan to serve drinks and *hors d'oeuvres*. To help with costs we ask you each to bring along a plate of nibbles – please note that there are no facilities for heating food at this venue. Suggestions: dip with celery/carrot sticks/crackers, savoury topped biscuits, cheese/metwurst platter, nuts/olives/crisps, cocktail sandwiches or your specialty. We would really like you to let us know what you intend to bring so that we can provide a balance of offerings. Please ring Judith 8555 2237, Ann 8854 2462 or Verle 8552 2197.

We request also that you aim to arrive a little before the official opening time of 5.30 pm so that food can be placed on tables. Some members will be needed to take turns at the door to welcome guests.

After the Launch some of us plan to move on to Middleton Tavern for a meal. If you would like to join us please ring one of the above numbers as we must make a booking early.

Be Friendly— Wear Your Name Badge

1999 CAMP OUT

This year's Camp Out will be held on the last weekend of October – Friday to Monday, 29, 30, 31 October, 1 November.

We will base ourselves at Blanchetown. This will put us within easy distance of Brookfield CP, Stockyard Plains and Moorunde Wildlife Park as birdwatching locations.

Accommodation is available at the Riverside Caravan Park. Cabins, most with ensuite, range from \$38-\$58 per night, and sleep 2-6 adults. Concession rates apply. Powered van sites cost \$15 (concession \$13), for 2 persons, with extra adults \$4 each, children 4-14 \$2.50 each.

Please *register your interest* with Judith, but we ask you **to make your own bookings** with

Riverside Caravan Park, Blanchetown
Mrs Daphne Walton (Daph)
Phone 8540 5070

ATLAS PROJECT

A steady stream of Atlas forms keeps arriving in my letterbox. To those members who have taken Atlas kits but not yet registered, it is not too late: there are still three years to go. If you haven't yet asked for a kit I have a supply.

For those having difficulty with identification of species – if in doubt, leave it out!

Some Atlassers are having trouble with Corvid species – you know, those Cravens! If you are observing on the Fleurieu Peninsula, you can safely conclude that you are seeing the Little Raven. Australian Ravens don't come further south than about Gawler to the north, and have been recorded east of Strathalbyn and Milang areas towards the River Murray, but not further west on the peninsula.

If you are travelling and putting in record forms and uncertain which species you are seeing, and hearing, you can enter them, under Birds Not Listed, on the reverse side of the Atlas form as 'Corvid spp' and put the number 837 in the box.

Judith Dyer



BIRDS IN THE HAND

J A recent report in Strathalbyn's *Southern Argus* relates member, Kit Smith's, discovery of the body of a Black-faced Monarch in her garden late last year. This bird has not been recorded in South Australia before and it is a significant addition to the SA Museum Collection.

The species is considered a bird of the high rainfall forest regions of eastern Australia. Some migrate south each spring and summer to breed in the damp gullies of the southeastern area of the continent. Its range was previously considered to spread to the Dandenongs, in Victoria, where it was found breeding in 1929. Nowadays, it is an extremely rare vagrant west of Melbourne; this bird must have been really lost and overshot the mark.

It is thought that this adult of the species may have succumbed to the heat of early December last year – autopsy shows that it certainly did not starve to death.

Well done, Kit!

J Another quite significant find, also reported in the *Southern Argus*, is Brian Ginno's Little Shearwater, picked up early last summer on Goolwa beach. It is thought that this immature specimen was of a race which breeds on islands off the Western Australian coast. Although this bird is a winter breeder, it starts coming ashore and taking possession of nest burrows or rock crevices in January. This explains the timing of Brian's discovery.

J The Harrier, BOCA's (Bird Observers Club of Australia) Conservation Network Newsletter, reports that an Eastern Curlew, banded and fitted with a satellite transmitter, was detected off Papua New Guinea on 8 March 1999. Two days later it was off Oki Daito Jima, near Southern Japan, 3,050 km in 55 hours – an average of 55 km/h for the journey!



*Special thoughts and sincere sympathies to member, **Barbara Mason**, whose husband died recently after a long illness.*

Travellers' Tales

Hi Folks: Here we are back safe and well after a wonderful journey through most of Canada and a small section of the US.

Our first experience in Vancouver, of course being on the water's edge, was of Glaucous Gulls, which would have our seagulls for breakfast! They are very large, probably even bigger than the Kelp Gull, which was also present, and very graceful. It was interesting to see their Ravens, which are much bigger than ours too.

Our next journey was to Vancouver Island where we had a great sighting of a magnificent Blue Heron which stood about 1.2 metres high. This bird is fairly common and we had opportunities to see it at many places as we crossed the country.

One of the most exciting sightings was on a boat trip up the coast to the Whistler Resort. We were standing out front looking at a huge bird we *thought* was a Bald Eagle when the Captain threw the window open and yelled, "I have never seen one this close". Yes, it was a beautiful Bald Eagle and only a matter of 30 or so metres off the ship. This is a very large and majestic bird indeed, and Canada has the largest population of them, especially during the salmon run, with a record of up to 3,000. We were lucky enough also to see a Golden Eagle while travelling across the Rockies.

A pair of Osprey had the National Park rangers very concerned in Lake Louise as they tried to capture them. They had drifted in on a thermal and weren't expected to survive winter and so needed to be relocated. Everyone in the town was on alert and spotting. Chris had a good sighting of a Downy Woodpecker on a walk he took to Lake Agnes in this area one morning.

Large numbers of Turkey Vulture inhabit areas all around Niagara Falls and the days we were there we saw up to a dozen at a time. These are amazingly beautiful and graceful, surfing the updrafts over the

falls and all along the river and could easily be mistaken for Golden Eagle at first glance.

We also had a wonderful sighting of a Peregrine Falcon that had been re-established in Arcadia National Park in Bar Harbour, Maine. This bird was causing much fuss as a large group of people had gathered around three rangers with telescopes to try to identify it. The pair had been breeding successfully since 1991 and had reared a large number of young. Peregrine Falcon in Arcadia National Park represent 32% of the breeding birds in the entire state of Maine.

Among other birds sighted were the Blue Jay and Stella's Jay, which is a much more colourful bird with a large crest, Chickadee, Dark-eyed Junco, Red-winged Blackbird, Brewer's Blackbird, Magpie (very different than ours!) and various Robins and Sparrows with wonderful songs, although the winner of the song contest was the American Robin.

Bronwyn and Chris Wastell