



# fleurieu birdwatch

Newsletter of Fleurieu Birdwatchers Inc

August 2004

- Meetings:** Anglican Church Hall, cnr Crocker and Cadell Streets, Goolwa  
7.30 pm 2nd Friday of odd months
- Outings:** Meet 8.30 am. Bring lunch and a chair — see Diary Dates
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## DIARY DATES

\* **Saturday 7 August**

Newland Head CP  
Meet at Dennis Hut  
in the campground, Waitpinga.

\* **Friday 13 August**

Once-a-year Night

\* **Wednesday 25 August**

Inman River Estuary  
Meet at Barker Reserve, Bay Road, opposite Victor  
Harbor Council Chambers.

\* **Friday 10 September**

General Meeting  
Guest Speaker: Karen Bradford,  
Milang Wetlands Project

\* **Sunday 12 September**

Onkaparinga Wetlands  
Meet near the Institute, Old Noarlunga.

\* **Thursday 23 September**

Cox Scrub, SE area  
Meet in the car park on the southern boundary at  
junction of Ashbourne and Bond Roads.

\* **Saturday 9 October**

Tolderol Game Reserve  
Meet near the railway carriage, Milang.



## *Once-a-year Night*

*with extra special extras*

*Hotel Victor, 7.00 pm Friday 13 August*

*Three delicious courses \$15*

*Book now!*

*Geoff 8552 1064, evansone@arcom.com.au*



We  
have  
packed up our  
website files and we  
have moved. Please note  
the NEW WEBSITE ADDRESS in the  
information panel above. Visit soon  
and make this site a Favourite!  
The former site is still available  
but will not be updated.  
Please also note my NEW  
EMAIL ADDRESS. Verle

## MEETING

Friday 9 July

In the absence of Chairman Jim Marsh, and Secretary Judith Dyer, Val Laird and Ann Turner conducted the business session. Geoff then introduced member Janet Pedlar.

Those of us who forsook the cosy fireside to attend this meeting were not disappointed.

Janet kept us thoroughly entertained and quietly educated us with her presentation about birds and biodiversity. For her presentation Janet had collected a number of very good quality bird photos and classified them into several categories according to their food sources.

As she elicited information about each bird from her audience Janet skilfully led us to an understanding of why the numbers of some species of birds have declined while others have increased, and the effects of these changes on the whole ecosystem.

The time flew and we had to give up our usual bird call though many reports of sightings were swapped over a welcome cuppa.

PS Denzel says don't forget to write your special sightings in the Report Book when you come to meetings.

## *Don't miss out on ...*

### CAMPOUT

#### Naracoorte

Friday 29 October–Monday 1 November

See June birdwatch for comprehensive location and accommodation details.

#### Proposed Program

Friday pm: Naracoorte Caves CP

Saturday: Bool Lagoon

Saturday evening: BYO barbecue in the caravan park. Informal talk by Pat and/or Jack Bourne about their local activities.

Sunday am: Mary Seymour CP

Sunday early pm: Bourne's Birds — the collection of mounted bird skins rivals Adelaide Museum's and they're not behind glass! Also a wonderful egg collection if we're lucky!

Monday am: Big Heath CP

## OUTINGS

### Hardy Scrub

Saturday 12 June

On this overcast day 12 dedicated birdwatchers withstood the temptations of The Vales winetasting festivities to walk on the wilder side in Hardy Scrub.

The mammal wildlife was interesting with two good koala sightings and an echidna road kill.

The birdlife was patchy and it was a surprise at bird call to find we had seen 29 species. Grey Fantail, Eastern Spinebill and Superb Fairy-wren were prevalent. The highlight for me was watching a group of Varied Sittella stripping bark looking for food. Later, on the roadside a male Mistletoebird and a Scarlet Robin divided my attention.

It was lovely at last to walk in bush after a decent rain, to smell the dampness and see the vegetation refreshed.

Phyll Whellams



Photo: Chris Wastell



Halfway at Hardy Scrub

Photo: Verle Wood

### Coles Crossing

Wednesday 23 June

A cold start to our Coles Crossing walk, but it turned into a beautiful morning — sun shining and the countryside looked a treat. The birds however, thought hide and seek would be fun this particular morning but we did see 22 species, and heard quite a few others.

I think the Scarlet Robin were particularly beautiful,

and I was glad to see some Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoo fly over. Seed must have been plentiful as we saw quite a lot of Red-browed Firetail. A number of Adelaide Rosella gave a splash of colour as they flew into the pine trees of Kuitpo Forest, which by the way protected us from the strong wind. Silvereye were in good numbers. We also saw the Tasmanian form which was interesting. Thornbills caused us a problem as usual. Six members enjoyed the morning.

Pat Ashfield

## Hindmarsh River and Estuary

Sunday 11 July

Seven members met on Wattle Drive in winter sunshine. We first visited the Hindmarsh Estuary area. Several tracks and signs have been added to this area to help guide the public around the lagoon and sand dunes. The lagoon was full of water with Eurasian Coot swimming about. The pair of Hooded Plover was very difficult to find as they nestled among the seaweed high up on the beach. Crested Tern, Silver Gull and Little Pied Cormorant were the only ocean birds seen. We recorded 25 species during our 50-minute walk.

We then left some cars at the lower end of the river and made our way to the start of our Hindmarsh River walk at the upper end of Wattle Drive. As we meandered down the river's edge we stopped to look for the birds making the many calls we could hear. Luckily the Fan-tailed Cuckoo showed delightfully on a power wire for all to see. This cuckoo was our first calling bird for this season.

We arrived back at the lower area for an early lunch and bird call under the shelter of the Swamp Paperbarks. The Yellow Thornbill and the Weebill heard I thought were unusual for this area as they are more at home in the drier mallee region. The tally of birds for our river walk was 43 species. This brought the total for the morning to 50.

Denzel Murfet



Photo: Verle Wood

**This Southern Great-Petrel** spent a couple of days around Granite Island and The Bluff jetty recently.

## Gilbert Siding

Thursday 22 July

This day provided a beautiful windless sunny morning for the outing at Gilbert Siding. That was not the only treat enjoyed by the half-dozen members who turned up, for among the 40 species that were sighted were some real gems.

For one thing the bush blazed with the brilliant yellow of a number of Crested Shrike-tit, enough to make it a good day if nothing else were seen!

Then we were entertained by a tribe of Dusky Woodswallow with their gorgeous blue beaks. Add to these a large family of Peaceful Dove, a couple of Common Bronzewing, a Grey Butcherbird, some Elegant Parrot, Red-Rumped Parrot, Musk Lorikeet and a flock of Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoo, and the day was looking good indeed.



Photo: Val Laird

A trip to Gilbert Siding would not be complete without sighting a Jacky Winter or two, and sure enough a few of these were present. The dark Tasmanian form of the Silvereye had made its annual autumn/winter migration to the mainland and a number were on hand for us.

Space does not allow the full list, but the day was capped off by the sound and sight of cuckoos, a Horsfield's Bronze-Cuckoo and a Fan-tailed Cuckoo at different spots on the walk.

Nice weather, nice sightings, nice company.

Ray Laird

Heather Gibbs, of Deakin University, is seeking help with surveys for some research she is undertaking. She says, "I aim to study the effects of climate and geography on the distribution, abundance and breeding of Australian avifauna, using bird Atlas and Nest Record Scheme data and bioclimatic modelling. This is relevant to biodiversity conservation, particularly in relation to climate change, and could inform management at a regional level and policy at the national level. This will help ensure that the needs of Australia's avifauna are properly accounted for during the critical early stages of adaptation to climate change."

If you would like to do some simple surveys of your backyard birds (100 m radius) please contact me, Verle.



## WA RAMBLINGS

Six weeks into our three-month ramble into Western Australia and we have conquered most of the species we set out to find. For Peter there have been many ticks as he has not travelled this far west before, but to date I haven't recorded anything new. Peter also records the various sub-species he sees and this has made for a great deal of interest for me.

Did you know that the Galah over here is a bit different to the eastern one? They have a lovely deep pink crest with a grey or white eye-ring. At Cape Arid we recorded the Grey Fantail – form *albicauda*. It is much paler than at home and has the most beautiful white tail feathers with only the central ones being grey.

We have recorded two different sub-species of the White-naped Honeyeater. Sub-species *whitlocki* has a white eye ring where we are used to seeing red. We saw this from Cape Arid onwards until we got into the deep south-west. Here it has a pale bluey-green eye ring.

The Australian Ringneck, better known over here as the '28' has a black cap like those at Port Lincoln and a red frontal band. It's supposed to say 'twenty-eight' but I can't pick it. Purple-crowned Lorikeet are the only lorikeets over here although there is a colony of Rainbows around Perth, thought to have established from aviary escapees.

The giant karri trees have been in bloom throughout the south-west and filled with the sound of the Purple-crowns. The Western Rosella is a spectacular bird, quite a bit smaller than our Rosella and with beautiful yellow cheek patches contrasting with his red head and underparts.

The Red-capped Parrot is only found in the south-west and is strikingly beautiful with very bright colouring – crimson cap, yellow throat, blue abdomen and crimson vent. Lovely yellowy-green wings and yellow rump; blue and green tail complete the picture.

And so it goes on ... But my ramblings would not be complete without mentioning the Red-eared Firetail, similar to our Beautiful Firetail but with the scarlet ear patch, and the breast and under-tail black, heavily spotted with white. They are found in similar habitat to our Beautiful and Red-browed Firetails. We have spent many hours chasing the White-tailed Black-Cockatoo of which there are two species, the Long-billed and the Short-billed,

but this is a story for later. It is enough at this stage to say that we found both and learnt how to tell them apart, be it with great difficulty. I'll save that story for the next newsletter.



The Hobby and the Tawny Frogmouths are inmates of a Raptor Rescue Park that we visited at Margaret River. We presume these were all road victims as the Hobby obviously has an injured wing. There were 9 Tawnys in all in the cage. The park also had a Brahminy kite, several Black Kite, a Collared Sparrowhawk, Wedgies, to name a few and quite a few owls. The owners release those they know will be able to survive in the bush, the others they have to keep.



These eggs are of a White-fronted Chat that I came upon in a forest area near Narrogin. I spotted the female first as she rose to a tree and moments later I

flushed the male from quite low down. Peter, with his nesting experience and his hawk eye, spotted the nest deep in the bush barely 18 inches off the ground.

Judith Dyer

All photos this page: Judith Dyer

*Get Well Soon!*

Our very best wishes go out to several members who have been below par.

Both our Treasurer, Brian Ginno, and Ray Laird had major surgery recently but are home and recovering well.

Rosalie Sharpe is also making a little progress and hopes to be home within a couple of weeks.

