



# fleurieu birdwatch

DECEMBER 1998

<b>Meetings:</b>	Glendale Christian School, start at 7.30 pm	
<b>Outings:</b>	Meet 8.30 am. Bring lunch and a chair.	
<b>Contacts:</b>	Judith Dyer, phone 8555 2736 3 Egret Avenue. Goolwa	Kate Bruce, phone 8555 5020 PO Box 403, Goolwa

## FOR YOUR DIARY



### • Saturday 5 December Christmas Barbecue

at the Barrage, Goolwa.  
Birdwatching from 4 pm,  
barbecue at 6 o'clock. BYO  
everything: food, Christmas  
cheer, tables and chairs. We will provide  
tea, coffee etc. Please bring a cup and  
mizzie repellent. Jim will supply the  
barbie and light up at 6 pm. Friends and  
visitors welcome. Park in the grounds,  
enter by Jim's private entrance at the rear  
of the residence.

**The RAFFLE will be drawn at the barbie so  
ALL TICKETS must be returned then or earlier.**

### • Saturday 12 December

Goolwa Christmas Pageant  
Meet no later than 4.30 pm at the Beach Road  
Assembly Point.

### • Friday 8 January

Members' night

### • Sunday 10 January

Outing, Newland Head  
Meet at Dennis Hut, Campground

### • Saturday 6 February

Outing, Brand's Property at Parawa  
Meet at the junction of Range and Parawa Roads  
near the information signs.

## MEETING REPORT

On 13 November 17 members met to hear a wonderful talk on Wader Migration by David Robertson, Past President of SAOA, who had come from Adelaide to present his fascinating collection of facts about the various navigation methods used by migrating waders. These included: clocks, maps, seasonal biological rhythms and a compass - all built in to a bird brain. Never again will we use that term unthinkingly! David's wife, Minnie, navigated her way through the slides, and the talk was also supplemented with a display of posters and maps.

Group matters discussed, and elaborated elsewhere in this newsletter, included:

- Name change.
- Report of BOC challenge Dec 97 - Judith, Denzel and Ann took part: recorded a creditable score of 123 species (top score 170) and were only group to record Cape Barren Geese.
- Raffle - first prize is another beautiful bird painting donated by the artist, Verna Hayes.
- Goolwa Christmas Pageant - Pam has a penguin costume available.
- Bird Atlas - 6,000 birdwatchers nationally taking part; Judith distributed 20 kits locally.
- Effluent Ponds project.
- Members' night, January - contact Kate or Judith to discuss topics.
- Jim reported five Kestrels being educated in front of the big shed at the Barrage.

## **KYEEMA CONSERVATION PARK and AMAROO WATER GARDENS**

Wednesday 14 October

Eight birdwatchers set off on a hike, firstly sighting two Australasian Grebes near a nest on the dam. On the pathway, we came across a large group of Yellow-rumped Thornbills. They were so close you almost had to be careful not to step on them. Further along a male Scarlet Robin came out to greet us, as well as an Eastern Spinebill, Crescent Honeyeaters and Grey Fantails. A Grey Currawong called from the trees at the top of the hill. At that point two Wedge-tailed Eagles gave us a display with what looked like a Little Raven and a Red Wattlebird (at different times) trying to chase them off.

We took a track that was rarely used. I soon realised what is meant *by off the beaten track*. As we trudged through the bushes Judith hoisted her hat on a stick so the rest of us could see where to follow! We didn't see many birds along this part but did spot a Golden Whistler, White-browed Scrubwrens, Brown and Striated Thornbills, White-naped Honeyeaters, a White-throated Treecreeper and Superb Fairy Wrens.

When we arrived back at the cars, we noticed another vehicle had arrived which belonged to two of our members – latecomers. We left a message saying that we hoped to meet them at the Amaroo Water Gardens.

The second part of the morning, at the Amaroo Water Gardens, brought sightings of Red-browed Firetails, Dusky Moorhens with young – which looked rather funny running along the lily pads – Welcome Swallows, Clamorous Reed-warblers, Striated Thornbills and a mud nest, with two chicks in it, which belonged to a pair of Magpie-larks.

When we sat down for our lunch and bird call, the two latecomers caught up with us. They reported the unusual sighting of a streaker bird – wearing only sneakers – running around Kyeema.

It was an eventful morning with our bush bashing and our streaker. Altogether we sighted 30 species at Kyeema CP (not including the streaker bird): and 20 at Amaroo Water Gardens.

*Belinda Filkin*

## **MT MAGNIFICENT AND BLACKFELLOWS CREEK**

Saturday 24 October

Just a small group of eight met on a very warm morning to enjoy the birdwatching in the scrub on the edge of the Mt Magnificent Conservation Park and along the bush tracks down to Blackfellows Creek.

As we wandered up the edge of the Conservation Park we spotted Fairy Wrens, Scarlet Robins and Grey Fantails. We also had a wonderful view of a Grey Shrike-thrush for several minutes.

The birds were a bit quieter as we sauntered down towards Blackfellows Creek but we did spot a female Golden Whistler (or was it a young male?) and several Adelaide Rosellas.

We were delighted to hear and spot a male Rufous Whistler almost at the bottom of the track. It was quite active and teamed up with a Golden Whistler in the clearing at the bottom of the track. The Rufous Whistlers were heard and spotted several times due to their unusually active behaviour throughout the morning.

Scarlet Robins, a Grey Shrike-thrush, Ravens, Striated Thornbills, Grey Currawongs, Silvereyes, Brown Thornbills, Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoos, Galahs, Red-browed Firetails, a White-throated

Treecreeper and a pair of Varied Sitellas were all recorded.

The honeyeaters spotted were Brown-headed, White-naped, New Holland – only two! – and Yellow-faced.

Spring was evident by the Scarlet Robins, both male and female, and White-browed Scrubwrens feeding young. The highlight of the morning was watching a pair of Crested Shriketits build their flimsy nest right at the top of a gum tree.

An elusive Horsfield's Bronze-cuckoo was heard in close proximity most of the morning, but, unfortunately, not seen!

A total of 31 species was recorded for the morning.

*Marg Kitto*

## **CAMPOUT AT NARACOORTE**

30 October-1 November

Seventeen members and one visitor gathered at Naracoorte for our annual Campout. It was a *fullon* weekend packed with interest.

Friday afternoon we visited the Caves and Stony Point in the Naracoorte Caves Conservation Park. 39 species were recorded in the area with the highlights being the Eastern Yellow Robin, Crested Shriketit and Dusky Woodswallow. Jackie Winters were also very active in this area.

Saturday was a long and full day spent at Bool Lagoon with a full roll call. The weather was overcast with a penetrating chill in the brisk breeze.

The water level is very low in the lagoons this year and significantly reduced the numbers of birds to be seen. Only 4 species of duck were recorded, the greatest number being Shelduck. The Golden-headed Cisticola was by far the highlight, with frequent sightings and, in particular,

well concealed in the long, swaying grass. At Hack's Lagoon a rare prolonged look at a Little Grassbird in reeds kept the group rapt for quite a few minutes. Cattle Egret, Richard's Pippit, Whistling and Black Kite, plus a group of resident Magpie Geese were among the 61 species for the day.

On Saturday evening, Pat and Jack Bourne, of Bourne's Birds, joined us for a cool, but noisy BYO barbecue at the Caravan Park.

Sunday found us together at Mary Seymour Conservation Park. The cool morning resulted in a quiet start to our observations. We drove through the park stopping at various locations. The Rufous Whistlers were very vociferous and a pair of Sacred Kingfishers called frequently. A pair of Restless Flycatchers made good viewing. Nesting activities were recorded for the Yellow-faced Honeyeater and Willy Wagtail. 38 species were listed.

At midday we adjourned for our lunch break to Pat and Jack's farm where Pat supplied us with tea and coffee, and she and Jack entertained us with more information about the area.

Their museum of some 300 mounted bird skins was opened up for us, together with the valued egg collection. What a treat! Not to be missed if you're in the Naracoorte area at any time. At this point some members had to begin their journey home.

Jack then enthralled us – at least most of us! – by skinning and mounting a Little Raven for sale to a Crows' supporter.

In the later afternoon Jack led those who still remained on a scrub crawl in Big Heath Conservation Park where we had a very lucky sighting of a Painted Quail, and an Emu. On the way back to base the stragglers again visited Little Bool Lagoon, this time on an alternative track. To their delight, from this vantage point, they observed a group of more than 30 Cape

Monday found the stragglers, all four, in Big Heath Conservation Park again, looking for the White-winged Triller seen briefly the previous day, but to no avail. However, we were well compensated by exceptional sightings at close range of the Spotted Pardalote and Sacred Kingfishers and Grey Fantails feeding young.

This trip yielded 47 species.

The Naracoorte Caravan Park proved to be a good location for our group with the local Nature Walk adjacent. Although no organised excursion took place there, in excess of 40 species were recorded by members throughout the weekend.

*Judith Dyer*

## **TOLDEROL**

**Sunday 15 November**

The morning was cool but fine with cloud and sunshine. Tolderol is a wetland game reserve on the edge of Lake Alexandrina. National Parks and Wildlife manage the reserve which is an abandoned project of Ducks Unlimited Australia. I think they must have taken the ducks with them!

Twenty- seven species were seen (or heard) and what waders were seen were not in great numbers. In the case of waders it may have been a blessing as those Sandpipers present caused some identity confusion, viz, Pectoral, Sharp-tailed, Wood and Curlew. Red-necked Stint and Red-capped Dotterel completed the list of waders.

It was good to have clear sightings of Golden-headed Cisticola and a very active large flock of White-fronted Chats. Several Black-shouldered kite, the usual Swamp Harriers, a few Tern, Cormorant and Pelican and three Eastern Swamp-hen were seen – but no Gulls and no Ducks.

Question Have the waders arrived from their northern breeding grounds and gone to the

areas of Australia recently flooded or have they yet to arrive?

*Gaynor Jones*

## **EFFLUENT PONDS WORKING BEE**

**Tuesday 17 November**

Chris, Brian, Pam and Judith made a start on our Goolwa Effluent Ponds project on Tuesday, 17 November. They staked out the positions for the hide and paths ready for the Alexandrina Council and Green Corps to begin building the hide and forming the pathways in the near future. This was accomplished under the watchful eye of a big brown snake sunning itself on the mound. "Plant Trees for me" have agreed to raise plants from seeds of indigenous species for revegetation and beautification of the area.



## **BOAT TRIP:**

**Waders of the Coorong**

**21 March 1999**

By popular request we have booked Jack Miller's boat again for a trip in the new year. The date: **Sunday 21 March 1999** Cost will probably be about \$25 per head but is to be confirmed and is payable in advance. Maximum seats available, 26 persons. Visitors are welcome but members will have first priority.

## **WINERY ROAD**

**Wednesday 25 November**

It was perfect birdwatching weather as six of us, accompanied by myriads of freeloading flies, set out along the railway line. new holland Honeyeaters by the dozen were feasting on the flowering callistemons, melaleucas and eucalypts and we had soon totted up quite a few of the other more common species: Galah, Blackbird, Goldfinch, Willy Wagtail, Magpie, Magpie-lark and Rosellas.

We picked up calls of Spotted Turtle Dove, Masked Lapwing, Striated Pardalote, Grey Shrike-thrush and black-faced Cuckoo-shrike and soon sighted all but the first two of these. Overhead soared ibis and a lone Nankeen Kestrel.

Several Mistletoebirds entertained us. Bronzewings flew tantalisingly ahead of us and eventually allowed a positive identification as common. Just a couple of pair of Super Blue Wrens, a fleeting glimpse of the Golden Whistler which kept us company for some time with his song, and a feeble, perhaps traumatised, Jackie winter, were other notable sightings.

Altogether 39 species and ten million flies.

*Verle Wood*

## WHAT'S IN A NAME

At our meeting in November a change of name for our group was ratified. We are now the Fleurieu Birdwatchers.

It has come to our notice over recent months that there is also a Far South Coast Bird-watchers which is located on the coast of New South Wales. Fleurieu reaches further than the south coast where our group originated. We now have members from right across the Fleurieu Peninsula northward to the southern suburbs of Adelaide.

It was felt that we needed to have a name that more closely identified our location not only locally but nationally and worldwide. We felt, too, that this should be considered before our brochure, our Effluent Ponds information board and our Web site are finalised.

During October we had a ring around of many of our members, particularly those of long standing. We also discussed the idea at outings and at the campout before putting the proposal to the meeting on 13 November and, almost without exception, members were agreed on our reasons for the change.

## WEB SITE

Our congratulations and thanks go out to our Clayton connection, Mary Haywood, for the wonderful Web site that she has developed for us. This certainly puts us on the map to all Australia and the world at large. If you have access to the Net or know someone who has please access Mary's Home Page and share our pride in the development of this wonderful medium to publicise our group. Thanks also to Mark Filkin for contributing his photographs. Go in and have a look on

<http://www.terra.net.au/~mhaywood> .

Click on Birdwatching. You may also access other links on her page which will give you information on other aspects of the Fleurieu Peninsula and other Birdwatching organisations.

Good stuff, Mary and Mark.

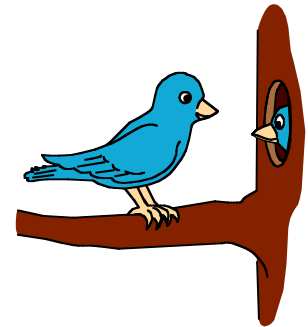
*Oops!! I believe Belinda took the photo of the Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo. Thanks Belinda.*

*Judith Dyer*

## WELCOME:

Renee Clare has joined as our second junior member.

Happy birdwatching,  
Renee!



**Editorial change:** After quite a long stint, Pam Crancher has relinquished her job as Editor of Birdwatch. Thank you, Pam for your sterling efforts, often under some pressure. We have all enjoyed your witty turn of phrase and hope your contributions will keep coming in. Verle will take over Pam's job in future.

## STOP PRESS

check this week's Messenger Southern Times (25 November) for a plug about our group. Judith is available for autographs by appointment.