



## MEETING

Friday 14 November

Chairperson, Ray Laird, welcomed 15 members and three visitors, including our guest speaker, to a smaller than usual meeting.

Correspondence included a number of exchange newsletters, and an invitation to the current exhibition at the Porter Street Wildlife Gallery, Goolwa. Brochures received from Birds Australia about beach nesting birds and dogs on beaches were tabled for members to take and distribute.

The Treasurer outlined a healthy financial position after the purchase of our data projector.

Ray reported that the promotion exercise at *Parks Alive*, Pt Elliot, had been of little benefit, mainly due to extreme weather conditions and lack of public support for the event.

Campout at Penola was a notable success with 28 members and two visitors attending three days of intensive birdwatching and friendly get-togethers in the evenings at the local CWA Hall. Our new equipment was put to good use displaying members' photos and for the presentation by a hydrologist for the Southeast Drainage Board, Mark de Jong.

Following our visit to Telford Scrub we received a phone call from Bob Green, Birds SE, to let us know that the Satin Flycatchers had not continued their nesting activity after our visit. Evidently they are known to be easily disturbed at this delicate time, though fortunately they had resumed nest building at a new location. A sober lesson for us all!

Tabled were a Readers Digest *Book of Australian Birds* for purchase by donation; the 2009 Fleurieu Birds Calendar with order forms; and details of a birdwatch cam suitable for backyard use.

Mary-Alice Ballantine, Coast Estuary and Marine Officer for Fleurieu Peninsula then gave us an overview of her role working with the Adelaide–Mt Lofty Ranges Natural Resources Management Board and three local councils, Yankalilla, Alexandrina and Victor Harbor. This has resulted in the compilation of the Southern Fleurieu Action Plan and Conservation Priority Plan. Alarming is the fact that since 1945 there has been a 60% reduction in native vegetation, largely due to coastal development, with a consequent sharp decrease in wildlife.

Mary-Alice also spoke about the Hooded Plover projects, and an event for dogs and their owners at Normanville, *Dogs Breakfast*, to raise awareness of the plight of beach-nesting birds.

Bird call included

- » An increase in numbers of Elegant Parrot at Currency Creek
- » 3–4 pairs of Wedge-tailed Eagles sighted at one time over Mt Compass
- » The White-throated Gerygone was still calling in Telford Scrub but not seen—this is a first record of the gerygone for that site.
- » Hooded Plover nesting at Basham Beach (two chicks) and near Inman estuary.
- » Black-chinned Honeyeater observed in urban Victor Harbor and near the Inman.
- » Black Honeyeater and Red-capped Robin at Monarto.
- » Roadkill Tawny Frogmouth on Inman Valley Road.
- » Beeline for a beaky brekkie—newspaper photo of Rainbow Bee-eater at Adelaide Zoo.

Lots of bird chatter ensued as members lingered over their welcome supper, again prepared by Jenny.



**CONGRATULATIONS** to our Chairperson, Ray Laird, who has been awarded the Doctor of Theology for the thesis he completed earlier this year.



**2009 Fleurieu Birds** calendars \$10 now available from many newsagents, local shops and tourism outlets or order from [seawings@waitpingacliffs.com](mailto:seawings@waitpingacliffs.com).

**Backyard bird camera.** Details [www.brinno.com/image/birdwatchcam.pdf](http://www.brinno.com/image/birdwatchcam.pdf) or track it down through <http://www.brinno.com>. Contact Neville Hudson 8556 6782, 0429804100, [nhudson@senet.com.au](mailto:nhudson@senet.com.au).

### Snap Happy!



The problem of intrusive photography on outings has been raised by some members.

Your photographs are a valuable tool for identification of species and we do like to have them for the newsletter and website.

However, the primary aim of our outings is bird observation, and we need to consider the birds and the observers first and foremost.

## OUTINGS

### Monarto and Ferries-McDonald Conservation Parks Saturday 11 October

With fine weather the day was promising from the start. Nineteen members met at the Monarto Conservation Park and were rewarded within minutes as a Southern Scrub-robin hopped nonchalantly to within a metre of us. This seemed



*Southern Scrub-robin. Photo: Peter Gower*

to start a trend as the next hour provided sightings of other less common birds including Tawny-crowned and Purple-gaped Honeyeaters and the Shy Heathwren.

Many shrubs and eucalypts were in full bloom and this attracted large numbers of Spiny-cheeked Honeyeaters and Red Wattlebirds. Also seen were Yellow and Yellow-rumped Thornbills, a Spotted Pardalote, families of White-browed Babblers and an Elegant Parrot flying over—in all 28 species.

The nearby Ferries-McDonald Park, a scrubland of dense mallee, provided sightings of 12 species. In spite of the increasing heat of the day, the Grey Shrike-thrush and a Grey Currawong were heard, and a Buffed-rumped Thornbill was seen by some.

Species that could be anticipated were seen in a walk around the boundaries of the Langhorne Creek Cemetery, including a Striated Pardalote, a White-plumed Honeyeater feeding a young one, and New Holland Honeyeater.

The final reward after a very successful day was a Tawny Frogmouth on its nest with a young bird and the other adult perched in a nearby fork of the red gum.



*Tawny Frogmouth at nest. Photo: Peter Gower*

This was as we had lunch and bird call in the Frank Potts Reserve.

*Pat Uppill*

*PS Subsequently, two members returned to the park and discovered that there were in fact TWO babies. We also believe that the male bird was with the chicks when we saw them as he takes the day shift and she does the night shift. She evidently (v. Morecombe) has the rufous neck feathers which were visible on the bird away from the nest. These birds survived the Jazz weekend in that park a week previously, and seemed unperturbed by us and other visitors. VW*

### Parawa, private property

Sunday 16 November

Nine members met for the walk and birdwatch. The country traversed included a cleared area with mature trees, the verges of a swamp and a hillside of natural scrubland.

Because of the large number of eucalypts flowering it was a day for honey-eaters: in all eight species including Yellow-faced, Eastern Spinebill, Brown-headed, Crescent and numerous White-naped. Scarlet Robin were active with one pair feeding a juvenile. Crested Shrike-tit and Golden Whistler were also feeding on grubs found in the trees.

There was constant background noise from the Grey Shrike-thrush and elusive Brush Bronzewing. Perhaps one of the great rewards of the day was a close view of the Brush Bronzewing with its intense colouring—or was it the two Elegant Parrots who were in no hurry to fly from their perch?

Forty species were recorded during the morning with some seen in quite large numbers.

*Pat Uppill*



*Brush Bronzewing. Photo: Teresa Jack*

## Hindmarsh River

Thursday 27 November



Photo: Teresa Jack

## Hindmarsh River

Thursday 27 November

The morning was cool and dull as nine of us shuttled cars upstream and then set off on our walk downstream, under the bridge and on to the boardwalk to the lagoon and estuary. A few Chestnut Teal glistened in the morning sun and a small flock of European Greenfinch kept us intrigued on this part of the walk as they flitted in the pine trees and among the dune grasses: nothing surprising on the beach.

We crossed the bridge and road looking for the Night Heron in the pines. No joy there but the Black-chinned Honeyeater in a couple of spots made the detour worthwhile.

We moved on through the plantation behind the primary school, over the bridge and back to the upstream track. Lots of activity—playful, nesting and feeding—for the rest of the walk kept us entertained. We watched the Red-browed Finch collecting 30 cm strands of grass to build a nest in their high-rise development but the only water birds along the river were a couple of Pacific Black Duck and a solitary Dusky Moorhen.

The walk yielded a satisfying 45 species in all before we retired to the beachfront in town for a quick bird call before the rain set in.

Verle Wood

## TALKING POINT

At Padthaway in mid-October, Ann Turner sighted a flock of 1,000 woodswallows, White-browed and Masked, with just one or two Dusky among them. Unfortunately, one Dusky Woodswallow's lack of road sense sent him to an untimely demise. Note the beak markings—not completely blue as some of us had previously perceived.



Above. White-browed Woodswallow. Photo: Peter Gower  
Right. Dusky Woodswallow. Photo: Ann Turner



## ORANGE-BELLIED PARROT UPDATE

Firstly I would like to thank all the volunteers who participated in 2008 Orange-Bellied Parrot (OBP) surveys of the Coorong and Lower Lakes.

Four OBPs were found in the Coorong at the Snake Pit on the 16 June by DEH Ranger Steve Gilbert. This sighting was followed up and the band details of these birds photographed.

The results of the surveys are as follows:

May 3-4: 34 volunteers, 5 Coorong DEH staff, no OBPs recorded.

July 26-27: 31 volunteers, 1 Coorong Ranger, recorded 86 Elegant Parrot and 32 Blue-winged Parrot.

September 13-14: 11 volunteers, 1 Coorong DEH Ranger, recorded 11 Elegant Parrot.

For anyone with more time to give to the Orange-Bellied Parrot between now and June 2009 there will be opportunities to take part in OBP habitat protection and restoration activities. Contact Michelle Le Duff, Management Officer Orange-bellied Parrot Recovery, 08 8735 1143 or 0428 101 184, LeDuff.Michelle@saugov.sa.gov.au  
David Dadd  
OBP Coordinator Coorong/Murray Lakes

## CAMPOUT

### Wombat Flat Native Forest Reserve

Friday 31 August

19 members and Peter Merchant, visiting us once more from England, made our way to Wombat Flat. We had been told by Pat Bourne who took us to the area that the Powerful Owl had been seen there. She advised us to look for droppings under tall trees and to pick up any pellets we found so they could be checked for food sources.

Not far into the scrub we were lucky enough to find one adult bird and a very large white-fronted juvenile bird. It was very interested in us all and stared most intently at us. Many photos were taken, and we could almost have packed up and gone home again as they were the highlight for us all.

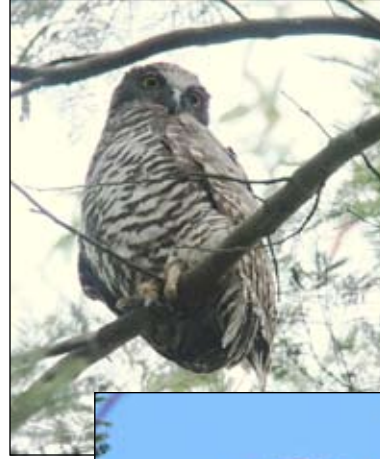
During bird call in the evening it was found 19 people put their hands up to say that the Powerful Owl was a 'tick' for them. Eight more members joined us for bird call taking the total to 28 for our meeting which included a quick look at a couple of photos of the owl and a talk from member Peter Gower regarding his growing up in the South East. He mentioned that his auntie had donated to the state land which is now called Gower CP.

All in all, a brilliant start to our campout.

Ann Turner



Powerful Owl juvenile. Photo: Val Laird



### Powerful Owl

Left. The watcher, alert parent.

Photo: Peter Gower

Middle. The watched over.

Photo: Val Laird

Below. The watchers.

Photo: Verle Wood



### Penola Conservation Park

Saturday 1 November

The group met at the Penola Conservation Park at 8.30 am. There were 30 in all, including visitors. Jack and Pat Bourne, who run the Bourne Bird Museum at Bool Lagoon, were two of the visitors. The group split in two, with Pat leading one group and Jack leading the other.

If the morning could have been classed as a 'Recognise the Bird Call' outing, we would have had a profitable day, but it was a case of 'Now you hear me, but you won't see me!'

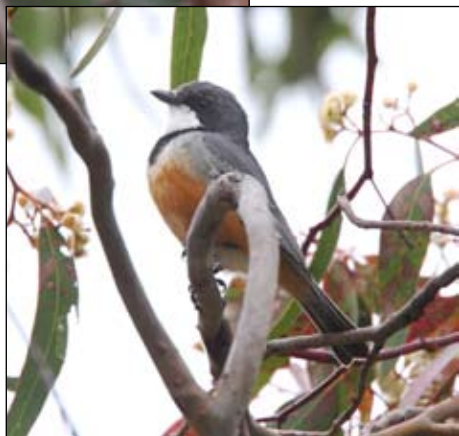
Overall, the species count was 35. This included a Red-tailed Black-Cockatoo, a Sacred Kingfisher, several White-throated Treecreeper, an Eastern Yellow Robin, four species of honeyeaters, lots of Fan-tailed Cuckoo calling with only one sighting, and a thrill for some, Rufous Whistlers courting.

The morning was cool and the walk pleasant with a myriad of wild flowers, including orchids, a few kangaroos and plenty of bird calls to keep us interested.

Colleen Evans



Left. Eastern Yellow Robin. Photo: Ann Houghton  
Below. Rufous Whistler. Photo: Peter Gower



**Telford Scrub Conservation Park**

*Sunday 2 November*

Brian Haywood, President of the South East Birdwatchers, met us there and we divided into two groups. The weather was cool and cloudy, but not having heard or seen the forecast most of us were not prepared for the rain which set in halfway through our walk.

The vegetation was mostly tall forest of stringybark and roughbark manna gum with dense bracken beneath. A well-cleared track ran through the scrub and included an elevated boardwalk about 200 metres long. We had poor sightings to begin with due to the grey skies and showery weather. This worsened as we progressed further into the bush and had some of the group running for cover back to the cars.

For those of us who persevered the highlights were well worth the discomfort of getting saturated. We spotted Eastern Yellow Robin, Crested Shrike-tit, White-bellied Cuckoo-shrike feeding young on a shallow nest and a White-winged triller nearby. Val and Ray heard a White-throated Gerygone which was confirmed by Brian but not sighted. Others spotted a Jacky Winter on the fence up the edge of the park while a few saw a Sacred Kingfisher near the carpark. Rufous Whistler were common and the odd Golden Whistler present. A Collared Sparrowhawk was spotted with something in its talons and three Red-tailed Black-Cockatoo flew overhead. We had several cuckoos calling and

treecreepers crawling, rosellas squawking and blue-winged parrots tweeting.

The biggest excitement of the morning was watching a pair of Satin Flycatcher building a nest which most of us got to observe for some length of time thanks to Judith, Peter (from England) and Brian for their wonderful patience. The telescopes gave us even better access to their private business and what a joy to behold!



*Satin Flycatcher, male. Photo. Val Laird*

An unbelievable morning with 49 species of birds going about their normal life in little Telford Scrub and nearly 30

crazy people getting loads of pleasure in finding and identifying them—not ONE sparrow or starling among them!  
*Wendy Phillips*

**MORE CAMPOUT NEWS**  
coming soon to  
[www.fleurieubirdwatchers.org](http://www.fleurieubirdwatchers.org)



*Our public relations exercise in conjunction with Parks Alive on a hot, windy day at Pt Elliot, at least proved how good our new data projector is in daylight. Photo: Teresa Jack*