



# fleurieu birdwatch

Newsletter of Fleurieu Birdwatchers Inc

February 2007

- 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.
- Contacts:** Val Laird, phone 8555 5995                      Judith Dyer, phone 8555 2736  
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- Website:** users.bigpond.net.au/FleurieuBirdwatchers
- Newsletter:** Verle Wood, 13 Marlin Terrace, Victor Harbor 5211; verlew@bigpond.net.au

## For your Diary



### \* Saturday 10 February

*Meyer's Scrub*

Will be cancelled if forecast temperature for Adelaide is over 30°C.

Meet at Ashbourne on the side road opposite the school.

### \* Friday 16 March

*Annual General Meeting*

### \* Sunday 18 March

*Hindmarsh Island*

Ferryman's Reserve, about 500 m past the bridge on the right.

### \* Wednesday 29 March

*Barrages to Beacon 19, and alternative sites on Hindmarsh Island*

Meet in the car park at the barrages, Goolwa.

### \* Saturday 14 April

*Cox Scrub (south east)*

Meet in car park on the southern boundary at the junction of Ashbourne and Bond Roads.

### \* Thursday 26 April

*Woodcone (to be confirmed)*

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 7.30 PM, FRIDAY 16 MARCH

note change of date

Take your turn  
on the Committee  
and make a difference!

Your fresh ideas and perspective will help keep our club dynamic and vibrant in the coming year.

Six Committee members are sought and specific responsibilities will be allocated at their first meeting.

Guest presentation on waders.

### WELCOME

Rob and Narelle Wagener,  
Happy Valley

Pat and Brian Simpson,  
Strathalbyn



### STOP PRESS: *Where have all the birdies gone?*

Within 48 hours of the big rains in January all the ducks from Paiwalla—several thousand of them—disappeared.

Where to? We presume to places up north.

*How do they know?*

## Breakup Outing at Goolwa Barrage

Saturday 2 December

The weather at the commencement of the walk was cold with a strong gusty wind blowing, but quite warm if you could find a sheltered spot.

21 members wandered through the garden area to the barrage where we had a close view of a Fairy Tern diving for food. Pelican were also present along with numerous Whiskered Tern.

On leaving there we made our way along the road via the new boardwalk track to look for the Rufous Night Heron on our way to the island point. We did not find any then, but on the way back later we found two.

At the point we set up scopes and found plenty of Golden Plover—one still with some breeding colour—Curlew Sandpiper, and a count of 158 Red-necked Avocet! Little and Great Egret were also in close, both in breeding plumage making it interesting to see the yellow facial markings on the Little and the deep green on the Great.

Back at the lawn area and sheltered from the wind, we enjoyed our tea, with some having a barbecue. We followed this with a light-hearted bird call showing we had seen 41 species which added up to a total of 500 birds counted.

Best wishes were received from Judith for everyone as she was away. Ray, our Chairman, also passed on his best wishes to us all. I too, hope everyone had a safe and enjoyable Christmas and look forward to lots of birding in the New Year.

Ann Turner



Photos: Teresa Jack



Ray and Val Laird waderspotting below the barrages at Goolwa.

## Twilight Walk, Narnu, Currency Creek

12 January

Twenty-two eager watchers hurdled the new stile which enabled us all to climb over the barbed wire fence into Dr Jarrett's property. The stile is solid and easy to mount (quite handsome) and its construction and installation is beyond expectations—an excellent job! Our thanks go to Chris Wastell and Ray Laird who put this excellent piece of equipment in place.

Eighteen species of birds were counted. The highlight was thousands of Tree Martin (adults and juveniles) swirling above us, possibly feeding on flying insects, and taking up lodgements on the trees mainly on the lake (eastern) side of the scrub.

Due to overcast, dull and windy conditions numbers and varieties were scarce. However, we had good sightings of Elegant Parrot and Dusky Woodswallow. Our stroll was thoroughly enjoyable.

Bruce Riglin



Above: Bronwyn Wastell was given the honour of first over the stile at Jarnu.

Below: a Tree Martin tree at Jarnu.



Photos: Verle Wood



## Fleurieu Bird Encounter

Excitement mounts as arrangements for our inaugural FBE in October this year falls nicely into place. A full program has been arranged with daily guided field trips including coaches and lunches, welcome and farewell dinners, evening speakers, quizzes and bird calls, a photography workshop and a bird art workshop.

The sub-committee comprising Val Laird, Brian Ginno, Geoff Evans and Ray Laird, has been very encouraged as they busily sought venues, transport, speakers, and all the other bits and pieces that go together to make a worthwhile event of this nature. Of course, guidance has been sought from Judith Dyer, our founder, in regard to field trips and birding sites. Denzel Murfet has also been a great help in ensuring we do not make any mistakes in advertising what birds we might see at that time of the year.

The week of October 22-25 promises to be full and rich for birdos, both local and interstate.

Copy for advertising the FBE widely in Australia has been sent to *Wingspan* (Birds Australia magazine) for inclusion in their March and June issues. Verle Wood has put together a great design for brochures which we will be sending to all bird clubs in Australia. These will be ready shortly. Details will also appear on our website. We will be advertising by other means as well.

Word of mouth from a friend is a proven method of bringing people together for special events. Perhaps there is someone elsewhere in Australia that you know who would enjoy this experience. Why not send them an e-mail, drop them a line or give them a ring. It would be a great chance to catch up with them and give them an extra treat at the same time.

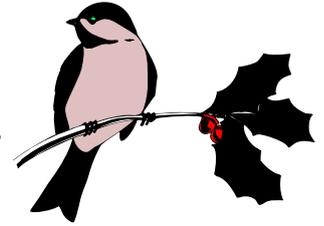
Ray Laird



Cartoon by Peter Rigby reproduced with permission.

## Season's Greetings

Christmas is behind us now but here are some reflections by Sue Hodgkins of the *English Woman's Weekly* December 06, sent to me by Alwyn Dolling.



"The robin is the one garden bird above all others that we associate with Christmas, probably due to the Victorians illustrating their cards with them. I don't know why they chose robins. Maybe it was because the redness of their breast stands out well on dull, wintry days, or because it goes with holly berries; or perhaps it was because robins draw attention to themselves, as distinct from other birds, by singing during the winter months.

While it may be the season of goodwill to all, robins are a bit lacking in social niceties. They sing almost year round—and even at night, especially in towns where the street lights prevent complete darkness. Their song is—to us—a pretty, creamy twitter, but what it tells others is: "This patch is taken. It's mine. I eat here, which means just one thing—you don't!"

The red breast is actually another warning sign to rivals. The males and females hold separate territories throughout winter, and both will fight aggressively to defend their patch. But soon, if not already, the males will be starting to sing for a different reason—in order to attract a mate."

In the same magazine is another story with a familiar flavour—news that some birds in the UK, as the Orange-bellied Parrot and other species here, have influenced environment planning.

In Berkshire, Hampshire and Sussex, house-building plans have been put on hold in order to protect three endangered species—nightjars, woodlarks and Dartford warblers. Local authorities have frozen all new housing planning applications affecting up to 20,000 proposed homes.

The issue is not only the destruction of habitat but also the ground or near-ground nesting habits of these species. Conservationists hope to persuade builders to include a certain amount of open space with all new developments.

**M**en and nature must work hand in hand. The throwing out of balance of the resources of nature throws out of balance also the lives of men.