



fleurieu birdwatch

Newsletter of Fleurieu Birdwatchers Inc

June 2002

- Meetings:** Anglican Church Hall, cnr Crocker and Cadell Streets, 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 Ann Turner, phone 8554 2462
30 Woodrow Way, Goolwa 5214 9 Carnegie Street, Pt Elliot 5212
- Web site:** under reconstruction
- Newsletter:** Verle Wood, 13 Marlin Terrace, Victor Harbor 5211, verlew@granite.net.au

DIARY DATES

✘ Wednesday 12 June

Kyeema

Meet at corner of Meadows to Willunga Road and Woodgate Hill Road.



✘ Saturday 22 June

Cox Scrub — north-eastern corner

Meet in car park at northern end of park off Ashbourne Road.

✘ Friday 12 July

Meeting

Program to be arranged

✘ Sunday 14 July

Goolwa Effluent Ponds

Meet at the effluent ponds, Kessell Road, Goolwa.

✘ Wednesday 24 July

Normanville and Bungalla Creek

Meet in the car park on the foreshore.

✘ Saturday 3 August

Cox Scrub — south-eastern corner

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

✘ Wednesday 14 August

Onkaparinga Wetlands

Meet at the park by the Institute, Old Noarlunga

✘ Friday 16 August

Annual Dinner

Once-a-year night

Dinner

at the Hotel Victor

7 pm Friday 16 August

3 Courses — \$15

Bookings essential

Contact Gaynor 8555 5480
or Verle 8552 2197 verlew@granite.net.au

MEETING

Friday 10 May

16 members attended this meeting and were welcomed by Gaynor Jones, Chairperson.

Gaynor reported that Alexandrina Council is working on extensions to the stormwater mitigation wetlands development at Burns Road, Goolwa North.

Members were reminded to write bird sightings in the record book at meetings.

Bird call

- 🐦 Breeding Soft-plumaged Petrel in Tasmania
- 🐦 Bodies for inspection were Boobook Owl, road kill on Hindmarsh Island, Rainbow Lorikeet from Nangawooka, and Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoo, road kill on Range Road, near Parawa
- 🐦 10 different raptors seen at Sunnyside Lookout near Murray Bridge (This is not necessarily a good thing and it may impact on the small bird population.)
- 🐦 Flame Robin at Kingston SE, and locally
- 🐦 Rose Robin at Waitpinga
- 🐦 Black Swan in shallows at Yilki
- 🐦 Hobbies over Goolwa

Goolwa Library holds a series of bird videos entitled Soaring Hunters. This evening we watched two of them: Kites and Goshawks. Others in the set are Harriers and Baza, Falcons, Fishing Hunters and Hunters of the Sky. The six programs are on three videos and each program runs for about 30 minutes. The tapes are available for borrowing from the Goolwa Library.

The usual socialising ensued over a warm cuppa.



WELCOME

Ruth Piesse, Parkholme

We hope you will enjoy your birdwatching activities with us.

OUTINGS

Humble apologies once again to all for my shortcomings. I disappointed Jenny Fonanet by not including her report on the Goolwa Barrage–No 19 Beacon outing in the last newsletter. And, sin of sins, omitted one programmed outing from the diary dates, namely Mt Magnificent. A ring-around ensured that some were able to enjoy this walk but I do apologise if you would have liked to go and were misled by the omission from the Diary Dates.

Goolwa Barrage–No 19 Beacon

Saturday 2 February

On a cool windy morning 26 members and 3 visitors met at the Goolwa Barrage, before moving on to No 19 beacon.

There was an early sighting of Baillon's Crake, then Pelican, Black Swan, various Cormorants and waders, including Common Greenshank, White-faced Heron and Great Crested Grebe. A Little Egret was perched near a nest up in a Norfolk Island pine.

The tide was high so we moved on across the bridge to Hindmarsh Island where Cape Barren Geese were feeding in the paddocks. At Sugars Beach we looked across to the Murray mouth. On the sandbars were Sooty and Pied Oystercatchers, Pelican, Caspian Tern and Silver Gull.

As the rain came down we headed for the Goolwa Effluent Ponds and recorded numerous species of ducks and waders, a pair of Australian Crake, Black-tailed Native-hen, Welcome Swallow and one Little Raven.

Then it was back to the Goolwa wharf area for shelter, bird call and lunch.

Barrage area, 38 species; Hindmarsh Island 28 species; effluent ponds 32 species.

Jenny Fontanet



Parawa

Saturday 6 April

On a warm sunny day we arrived on private property at Parawa and had a close-up look at a road kill Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoo. A lot can be learnt this way as when flying these birds only seem to show yellow on the tail and face but on closer inspection all feathers have yellow edges. The size of the wings when spread out also impressed us. It was a lovely specimen and such a shame it had been killed. On the way home after our outing we saw three large flocks of these elegant birds flying over.

During the morning walk we saw 29 species with the highlights for us all being Crested Shrike-tit, Scarlet Robin and Wedge-tailed Eagle. Some of the other sightings were Common Bronzewing, Golden Whistler, Eastern Spinebill, White-throated Treecreeper and Dusky Woodswallow.

A good morning's birding for us all.

Ann Turner

Currency Creek, Winery Road

Wednesday 17 April

On a warm sunny day 10 members met at the Canoe Tree on the Strathalbyn Road and drove to Winery Road. We then proceeded to walk down the well vegetated railway line towards Currency Creek/Goolwa.

33 species were identified with the highlights being Restless Flycatcher, Mistletoebird, Dusky Woodswallow, Golden Whistler and an excellent sighting of Whistling Kite.

On our walk we disturbed several kangaroos and feral deer. Our lunch and bird count was enjoyed on the edge of the vineyard.

Jennifer Haines

Mt Magnificent

Saturday 27 April

17 enthusiasts met just outside Mt Compass where we decided on our course of action to visit the Mt Magnificent Conservation Park. The day was absolutely perfect with cloudless skies and bright sunshine — the only downside was a sneaky cold breeze.

We took various paths through the scrub on both sides of the main track and were rewarded

by sighting a total of 30 birds including Golden Whistler, many Scarlet Robin and an absolute dearth, for a change, of New Holland Honeyeater. Also seen were 2 Wedge-tailed Eagles and 2 Bronzewings. Heard but not seen were Owlet Nightjar, Mistletoebird and Red Wattlebird.

Down one of the tracks we were joined by Judith to bring the total of our party to 18. Along this track the undergrowth became so thick that all our concentration was fixed on where to put our feet and how to penetrate the growth. A machete would have been useful at times!

It was another great outing — thoroughly enjoyable.

Keith Gilbert

Onkaparinga Gorge

Sunday 12 May

The weather was fine with high cloud and a medium breeze reaching strength on the ridges. Seven stoic souls started searching skies for starlings, sparrows, seagulls, snipes or anything with feathers that could fly. Alas, they were few and far between and our final count reached only 26 species with another couple being heard but not seen.

The find of the day was, would you believe, a koala perched precariously on a branch in fitful slumber. It was cleverly spotted by Phyll Whellams. No sign of the platypus we saw on our last visit to this area!

As far as birds are concerned, it was a bit of a ho-hum day but our outings are always

Yankalilla Creek

Wednesday 22 May

On a mild late autumn day which threatened rain but remained calm and dry, nine people wandered along the quite easy Yankalilla creek walk flanked by river red gums and acacias and surrounded by steep-sided hills almost bare except for trees ringbarked many years ago.

A good range of 36 bird species was observed, some new to some of the walkers which made it especially good. A surprise to me was the full breeding colour of the Superb Fairy-wren and Spotted Pardalote at this time of year. We were accompanied all the way by busy Grey Fantail and saw large numbers of Silvereye and Red-browed Finch.

This is a very pleasant spot with promise of quite seasonal variations of bird species. As usual the bird count was held in a cosy area over lunch before heading home.

On the way home I called into a favourite spot at Nixon Skinner CP to do a Scarlet Robin count (4 male and 2 female) and remain encouraged at how so small pocket of remnant scrub can host such a range of birds — and orchids in season! I got a count of 25 species in 24 minutes, ignoring those around the Myponga reservoir, with 7 different to the official count for the site. Again I was surprised by the full colour of the Superb Fairy-wren and Spotted Pardalote. A very enjoyable day!

Peter Ginnane

Jarnu, Currency Creek

Saturday 1 June

A cool, drizzly morning that later gave way to sun greeted 18 intrepid birdwatchers as we followed Judith's lead along country roads and tracks to Jarnu. This is a private property with a good cover of native scrub and low trees as well as grassy areas.

We saw 36 species of birds throughout the morning. Elegant Parrot outnumbered, for once, New Holland Honeyeater. Both birds were very active and abundant. Also fairly numerous was the Mistletoebird. Highlights included an early Rufous Whistler, a Horsefield's Bronze-Cuckoo and a pair of Grey Butcherbird. Despite our best efforts we again found no quail much to the sorrow of a few members.

While eating an early lunch and doing the count we were entertained by a pair of acrobatic Black-shouldered Kite and Yellow-rumped Thornbill as well as the Mistletoebird all at very close range.

While the number of bird species was down on what was expected from previous visits the numbers of each species more than made up for any disappointments.

Yrena Mountford



You cannot prevent the birds of sorrow
from flying over your head
but you can prevent them
from building nests in your hair.

—Chinese proverb

UNIVERSAL LAWS OF BIRDING

I found gems like these and more some time ago on The Gadwall Birding Page on www.speakingofbirds.com/resources. Suggest you search and follow the links or go direct to www.speakingofbirds.com/resources. On a more serious note there is A Guide to Not Mis-Identifying Birds.

Sacrificial Lamb Law—The bird will be seen by others only after you, as the sacrificial lamb, leave.

Sitting in the Woods Corollary—The bird will be seen by others only after you have snuck into the woods to take care of biological responsibilities.

Theorem of Diminishing Returns—The longer you look for a bird, the less likely you will find it.

Frazier's Law No 1—The bird will only come out after you have begun to leave. Sometimes you can trick the bird into coming out at the end of a day of waiting by loudly announcing that you are leaving and starting to move in that direction. Combining the Sacrificial Lamb Rule with Frazier's Law No 1 can overcome the Theorem of Diminishing Returns.

Gilbert's Wishful Thinking Hypothesis—This takes place by casually mentioning a bird and then the bird shows up. Is that right Keith?

Sosenky's Theory of Optical Availability—Birds are most visible when your binoculars are down.

Elizabeth's Consideration—The bird that you struggle through difficult terrain, endure multiple injuries and screw up your schedule for, will be waiting for you above your car in the car park.

The Scope Location Absolute—If you need the scope, it's in your boot. If you don't need it, it's on your shoulder.

Ian's Irony—The bird will always be between the birder and the sun.

Arie's Nemesis Theory—If you don't see the bird within a certain amount of tries, it becomes insulted and deliberately avoids you from then on.

