



fleurieu birdwatch

Newsletter of Fleurieu Birdwatchers Inc

June 2003

- 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
- Contacts:** Judith Dyer, phone 8555 2736 Ann Turner, phone 8554 2462
30 Woodrow Way, Goolwa 5214 9 Carnegie Street, Pt Elliot 5212
- Website:** members.iinet.net.au/~verlew
- Newsletter:** Verle Wood, 13 Marlin Terrace, Victor Harbor 5211, verlew@iinet.net.au

DIARY DATES



☆ **Saturday 14 June**

Torrens Vale (private property)
Meet at the noticeboard, Parawa, junction of
Range Road and Yankalilla Road.

☆ **Wednesday 25 June**

Currency Creek Gorge
Meet at the Lions Park, Strathalbyn Road,
Currency Creek.

☆ **Friday 11 July**

MEETING
Speaker: Win Syson — *Further Adventures
of the Rambling Babblers*

☆ **Sunday 13 July**

Cox Scrub—Coles Crossing
Meet at the junction of Nangkita Road and Heifer
Lane, Nangkita.

☆ **Wednesday 30 July**

Scott Conservation Park
Meet at the main car park on the northern
boundary off Deep Creek Road.

☆ **Saturday 9 August**

Mt Magnificent
Meet at the junction of Nangkita and Enterprise
Roads, Nangkita.

☆ **Friday 15 August**

ANNUAL DINNER

☆ **Wednesday 27 August**

Yankalilla Creek

Meet at Garnet Kelly park, 4 km south of
Normanville.



Once-a-year night

DINNER

at the

Hotel Victor



7 pm Friday 15 August

3 Courses — \$15

Bookings essential

Ann 8554 2462

Verle 8552 2197 verlew@iinet.net.au

Please note that you will need all your bird books and
encyclopaedias for Elaine's Quizzical Quiz!

MEETING

Friday 9 May

Chairperson Jim Marsh welcomed 19 members and 7 visitors to this lively meeting.

We were all sorry to learn that Di Shearer has resigned her membership. We have valued her contributions both to the group as a birdwatcher and as a *clown* ambassador for orphaned and sick children.

A copy of a letter from Penny Paton, President of BirdsSA, to the Minister for Heritage and the Environment, Mr Hill, expressing concerns about the status of the endangered Hooded Plover, was read. Those present agreed that Fleurieu Birdwatchers Inc should also write to the Minister in support of Penny's letter.

Two signs for the Goolwa Effluent Ponds Project have been completed, one to be held in reserve in case of vandalism. (From the Committee: A launch of the project and unveiling of the information board will take place at the ponds, Kessell Road, Goolwa, on Sunday 14 September. A scheduled bird outing will be held at 8.30 am and guests will be invited for an informal ceremony at 10.30 am. President of BirdsSA, Penny Paton, has agreed to officiate.)

Trish Mooney, of National Parks and Wildlife, Kangaroo Island, showed a video and elaborated at length on the project she oversees to preserve the critically endangered Glossy Black-Cockatoo. The only few pairs left in South Australia are on KI. There have been unconfirmed sightings on the Southern Fleurieu and Trish would like birdwatchers to keep a lookout and report any possible sightings. These reports, in 1999, were the first for 30–40 years. The glossies feed on just one species of she-oak (Drooping Sheoak, *Allocasuarina verticillata*) and each bird needs about 200 cones in 24 hours. Trees are being planted at several sites on the mainland so that any birds which may perchance find their way across Backstairs Passage will have a food source.

Visit this website for lots more information about the glossies.

www.environment.sa.gov.au/biodiversity/glossyblack.html

At bird call one of our visitors, Will Vandenberg, showed us a skull and feathers of an albatross, a neat nest and a deceased Silvereye, possibly a migrant from Tasmania.

Phyll Whellams had an interesting tale of an Eastern Spinebill. She found the dead bird on Range Road, Waitpinga, on 18/11/2002 and noticed it was banded. Enquiries to the Australian Bird and Bat Banding Scheme*, revealed that it was banded by Dr D C Paton (David) on 15/05/1999 at the north-east corner of Newland Head Conservation Park. At that time the bird was "age code: first year or older, male". The time between banding and recovery was 3 years 6 months and 3 days. The bird had moved a distance of 5 km with a bearing of 39 degrees.

Hooded Plover have been sighted at the Hindmarsh estuary and Basham's Beach; Fairy Martin on Hindmarsh Island; Spotted Harrier seen on the northern side of the Goolwa-Victor Harbor Road at Middleton.

*Environment Australia, Wildlife Information — Bird and Bat Banding Scheme, GPO Box 8, Canberra ACT 2601

CAMPOUT



Keep the last weekend of October free for this highlight of our calendar, **Friday 24 October to Monday 27 October**. This year's venue is the Barossa Valley. Accommodation will be at the Tanunda Caravan Park and sites we plan to visit for birdwatching are Altona Scrub,

Sandy Creek Conservation Park, Kaiser Stuhl Conservation Park and the effluent ponds at Tanunda.

Accommodation

- ◆ Park cabins (6 only available) sleep 6 — a double bed and two double bunks \$45
- ◆ Onsite vans sleep 4–6 \$35
- ◆ Powered sites \$19.50
- ◆ Unpowered sites \$15

These are all close to an ablution block and amenities, a covered electric barbecue area, and an open fireplace.

Also available in another area of the park a short walk from the above

- ◆ Ensuite cabins (sleep 4–6) , \$60.
- ◆ Deluxe ensuite cabins from \$75.

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OUTINGS

Mt Billy Conservation Park

Saturday 5 April

On a sunny, still morning, 14 members met at Mt Billy to see what we could see! We parked the cars at the bottom gate of the track, and then all piled into three cars which took us to the top gate, and set off walking.

The track was very easy to commence but by the time we reached the end, we were glad to reach the bottom! The track was very steep in places with a very loose, gravel surface which did nothing for the walkers with damaged knees and bad joints. However, all made it in one piece, and we saw a total of 35 birds including a rare sighting of a Bassian Thrush. Included were 5 different honeyeaters, Galah, Crimson Rosella, Elegant Parrot, White-fronted Tree-creeper, Scarlet Robin, and a Golden Whistler. A good, energetic morning.

Ann Gilbert

Aldinga Scrub

30 April 2003

Overcast and wet— at 8.30 am it was raining in Adelaide, dry in Victor Harbor. Five of us set off into Aldinga Scrub. Birds were everywhere as the rain had stopped. Then all went quiet. The rain was returning.

As soon as it was over the birds came out again. Ominously their song soon stopped and we hurried back to our cars, passing a dense copse of quondong trees.

The scrub is overrun with mistletoe so the Mistletoebird was out and about in numbers. A Grey Shrike-thrush followed us for fifteen minutes before we spotted him. He then disappeared. We saw Golden Whistler, White-plumed Honeyeater, Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike and Dusky Woodswallow. The Varied Sittella was unusual. Two flocks of Galah went by and Little Raven were plentiful. Sixteen species all told.

Geoff Evans



Terns at Waitpinga Creek estuary

Bullock Hill

Sunday 18 May

Four members braved the blustery conditions to meet at Ashbourne. We then moved to the golf course road.

The first bird we saw was a New Holland Honeyeater of course, but walking along we disturbed White-browed Babbler in the bushes. Grey Fantail kept us company until we came to an open area where we saw Brown Treecreeper that could almost be classed as resident, this being the spot where we usually see them.

We had two highlights for this section of the walk. The first was a male Scarlet Robin — always a delight — and on our way back, two Wedge-tailed Eagle gracefully soaring were harassed by a Peregrine Falcon. A total of 23 species seen here.

At Bullock Hill, as it was very windy, we walked along the side road instead of cutting through the park. It was fairly quiet until we reached the bottom gate where we had a group of Red-browed Firetail/Finch, Southern Whiteface, Yellow-rumped Thornbill, Hooded and Scarlet Robin which took the count to 20.

With the rain staying away we again had an enjoyable outing.

Ann Turner

Newland Head Conservation Park

Wednesday 28 May

It was a brisk, cool, windless morning when 10 birdwatchers gathered at Dennis Hut to start our uphill walk.

Silverye greeted us around the hut and a group of White-browed Babbler called out as they sunned themselves. Brush Bronzewing running on the path instigated discussion as to whether they were *common* or not.

We arrived at the water tank and took in the view while the sun warmed our backs. We returned to Dennis Hut and took our cars to the estuary and walked along the shore and creek. There was a large flock of Crested Tern resting. Several waterbirds were on the creek: Yellow-billed Spoonbill, Black Swan, Pelican, ducks and a White-faced Heron.

Returning to the car park we ate our lunch and recorded 42 species for the outing.

Malcolm Haines

CAMPOUT

(continued from page 2)

Prices are per night for 2 people. Charge per additional person: cabin \$10, site \$6.

A block **reservation** will be made for our group so that we can be together and take advantage of an offer of discounts. At present we need from you an indication that you will be taking part in the campout so that we can make this reservation. Please ring Ann 8554 2462 or Verle 8552 2197 before 30 June and let us know the type of accommodation you will require.

After that you must **book** your own site with the caravan park proprietors and pay your deposit directly to them. You will need to identify yourself as belonging to the Fleurieu Birdwatchers to receive the appropriate discount.



Waitpinga: Up the creek ...

Watch out!

Bruce Riglin phoned in excitedly to say that he and partner, Elizabeth Wilson, had come upon two Bassian Thrush on a heritage property on the Mt Alma road, Inman Valley.

Ron Taylor also saw one recently at Newland Head Conservation Park.

Please note the **NEW ADDRESS** for our website and also a change in my email address — see page 1.

If you would like to receive *birdwatch* electronically please send me an email.

If you already receive your *birdwatch* electronically please notify me of any change of email address. Verle



Cockatoos, Parrots and Lorikeets etc

Pondering on the Glossy Black-Cockatoo led me to the question: What's the difference between our cockatoos, parrots and lorikeets, etc?

It seems there are family differences, with sub-families — like second cousins twice removed. Consult your bird books to resolve the genealogy! Guess it's getting complicated now that DNA has kicked in.

All parrot species have a curved, pointed upper bill attached to the skull by a flexible joint, and which fits over the lower bill. Two of the four toes point forward and two backwards and assist the bill and tongue to manipulate food, and dig, crush or tear hard objects. Apparently a parrot has no wishbone! Most parrots require hollows for nesting: trees, cliffs and even termite mounds. Colours are usually brilliant but male and female can be quite different as in the Eclectus Parrot.

Cockatoos are large parrots with mobile crests. There are about 18 species and they are found only in Australasia. Their feathers evidently lack the structure that produces bright colours in typical parrot feathers so they are coloured mainly black or mainly white.

There are five species of Black-Cockatoo: Glossy, Long-billed, Red-tailed, White-tailed and Yellow-tailed. These all require tree hollows for nesting and they hatch just one chick which spends about three months in the nest and another three dependent on its parents. Given these two facts we can understand why the numbers of Black-Cockatoo are declining.

Lorikeets are smaller with pointed tails, short or medium-sized long. They are generally found in forest situations and are noisy and fast-flying. Their brush-tipped tongues are adapted to gleaning their diet of nectar and pollen.

The etc leads to other classifications: Rosellas, Budgerigars, Fig-Parrots ... and that's just the tip of the iceberg!

Verle Wood

Pick up the day ... and give it your best.

— Darcy Niland

