



fleurieu birdwatch

Newsletter of Fleurieu Birdwatchers Inc

June 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. See Diary Dates
- Contacts:** Val Laird, phone 8555 5995 Judith Dyer, phone 8555 2736
42 Daniel Avenue, Goolwa 5214 30 Woodrow Way, Goolwa 5214
fleurieubirds@gmail.com
- Website:** users.bigpond.net.au/FleurieuBirdwatchers
- Newsletter:** Verle Wood, 13 Marlin Terrace, Victor Harbor 5211

For your Diary



🦅 Thursday 28 June

Nurragi Conservation Reserve
Meet at the Milang turnoff, Goolwa–Strathalbyn
Road.

🦅 Friday 13 July

General Meeting
Guest speaker: Tim Vale
Southern Emu-wren, its habitats and threats

🦅 Sunday 15 July

Jarnu (private property)
Meet at the Lions Park, Strathalbyn Road,
Currency Creek.

🦅 Wednesday 25 July

Onkaparinga Gorge
Meet in the Woolworth's car park, near corner
of Penney's Hill Road and Main South Road,
Hackham.

🦅 Saturday 11 August

Muntiri
Meet at the junction of Goolwa–Strathalbyn
Road and Milang Road, Finniss.

Don't miss the

ANNUAL DINNER
with Elaine's Quirky Quiz!



at the

Hotel Victor

7.00 pm Friday 17 August

Good food!
Good friends!
Good fun!



Bookings essential

Val 8555 5995

Verle 8552 2197

fleurieubirds@gmail.com

Welcome

Nick Tebneff,
Willunga



MEETING

Friday 11 May

Ray Laird in the chair, welcomed 20 members and visitor John Brame, from Nangkita.

Correspondence included information about an armchair bird twitch (see page 4) and a brochure on the Sapphire Coast Shorebirds Trails at Thompson Beach in northern Gulf St Vincent. An excursion to Thompson Beach for the wader season in 2008 is being considered. New brochures about the Orange-bellied Parrot were also tabled and members invited to take them.

Val reported that Fleurieu Bird Encounter packs have been sent to 40 birdwatching clubs. The organisers of the Fraser Island Bird Week requested copies for their guest information packs. All information about the event, including campout, has been posted to members and many have responded with offers of help and bookings for campout.

Member Denzel Murfet spoke about birds' food sources and the types of plants where various birds are likely to be seen feeding. The topic gave rise to some informative discussion—a useful educational presentation.

Bird call

- Flame Robin, at Myponga, early this year (a week before Anzac Day) and with a partner
- About 12 White-winged Chough at Currency Creek, a sight unusual so far south
- Eastern Spinebill feeding on salvia and fuchsia at Goolwa
- Flock of Greenfinch at Goolwa, and a Silvereye for the first time in two years
- White-browed Scrubwren in Lairds' backyard for about a month
- White-breasted Sea-Eagle near Richard Ballard Park, Liverpool Road, Goolwa.
- Scarlet Robin at Nangkita
- Southern Whiteface at Peak Hill, Eudunda
- 36 Crested Grebe at Port Lincoln.

LATE NEWS! Five Flame Robin now confirmed.

The hide at Nangawooka Flora Reserve has been refurbished to make it easier to spy on the birds that come into the garden.

We all appreciated supper refreshments and sincerely thank Helen and Gaynor for looking after us in the past. And thanks too, to Jenny Fontanot for agreeing to take over supper duties in future.



Photo: Verle Wood



Photo: Peter Gower



Photo: Verle Wood

Top: Cox Scrub renewal southern edge. Below: Scanning the landscape, and Banksia ornata.

Cox Scrub SE

Saturday 14 April

We surveyed the area of Cox Scrub which had been burnt during summer. The gums are showing good signs of regeneration but the banksia do not regenerate and we will have to wait for seed germination after rain. The understorey is completely destroyed and the sandy soil very fragile. However, signs of new growth such as correas, are appearing.

Birdlife was scarce as 13 members and 3 visitors walked the southern boundary of the park, and turned north along the highest ridge before dropping down again to the Ashbourne Road. Twenty-nine species were recorded but only in small numbers. Rainbow Lorikeet, Brown-headed Honeyeater, Weebill, Crimson Rosella and of course, 'guess what!' (New Holland Honeyeaters) were the most prolific.

Lunch at the roadside reserve near the Old Finnis River bridge at Ashbourne completed a pleasant morning.

Judith Dyer

Mt Compass

Thursday 26 April

The day started with grey skies and a constant drizzle, which nobody minded, but we thought optimistically, it might get better ... Well, it didn't!

We gathered at Woodcone Road and drove to the Mt Compass Wetlands Boardwalk. There were nine of us (I think) and a visitor, and as we tiptoed through the cow pads and past the insolent stares of the cows, we kept really quiet trying to locate the very fine call of the elusive Emu-wren (their tail feathers resemble the structure of the feathers of the emu).

Ravens were heard and seen, as were Superb Fairy-wren, Magpie-lark (including one immature), Willie Wagtail and Grey Fantail in the willows—even two kangaroos rounding up the cattle. But the Emu-wren were too good at hiding. This time we didn't see one.

The rain did not ease when we got to a private property on Bahloo Glen Road. Terry and Gael Maloney have made a haven out of 15 acres of paddock, and planted hundreds of trees, shrubs and ground covers to attract a myriad of birds. We saw at least 100 Red-browed Finch! Beautiful! But we were getting wetter, feet slopping in soaked shoes, so we called it a day.

It was an experience and worth doing—however, I do think I am more a dry weather birdwatcher!

Lieke van Bommel

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After half the sodden party absconded the rest of us accepted an invitation to visit another private property on top of the range at Willunga—after all, we couldn't get any wetter!

Here Nick and Di Tebneff have planted a diverse mix of mostly native flora attracting a wide range of birds. The taller scrub is visited by kookaburras, wedgies, owls and a host of other birds, both large and small. We surveyed the scene as well as we could although most of the avian population wisely stayed out of the rain.

Di and Nick kindly invited us in to their dining area for lunch and provided us with towels for the drips. This property presents excellent potential for future birdwatching so if you missed out this time, watch this space.

Verle Wood

Gilbert Siding

Sunday 13 May

Ten of us met on a mild morning with very little wind—ideal birdwatching conditions. We recorded 35 species which we felt was on the low side for the area, though there were good numbers of some birds like Jacky Winter and Grey Shrike-thrush. Very

little was flowering and a lot of blackberry had been removed. Sightings of Golden Whistler and Rufous Whistler led to a discussion of the differences between females and juveniles of both species. Red-browed Finch and Eastern Spinebill are two birds I always enjoy seeing.

Lunch beside the river topped off a very enjoyable morning.

Jean Boomer



Manning Reserve

Wednesday 23 May

Nine members met at the gate on a cool morning. Showers were forecast but we had only a little sprinkle at the end of lunch. Light was good.

Our walk up the first rise was our most productive. We saw 3 Eastern Rosella—very good views of them! They are exquisitely beautiful with their deep red feathers and white cheeks. We also saw at various distances, approximately 10 Elegant Parrot. One of these stayed to give us a good look and they are, of course, very beautiful too.

Another highlight was two Red-browed Finch attending a nest in a Kangaroo Thorn (*Acacia paradoxa*) bush— not nesting as such, just checking the place out. We were also fortunate to see some Eastern Spinebill, always a treat, and two Mistletoebird.

Overall not many birds today—a total of 21 species.

Teresa took the trouble to count the kangaroos in the next paddock, 41 all told, so there was certainly plenty of fauna in the area!

Elaine O'Shaughnessy



Eastern Rosella



Sighting of the month
Juvenile Pink Robin at Willunga

Photo: Teresa Jack

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ORANGE-BELLIED PARROT

The big news of the May survey weekend is that four Orange-bellied Parrot were located (and photographed) in the central Coorong National Park area by the same bloke who found them last year—some people have all the luck!

They were among about 60 Blue-winged Parrot and a small number of Elegant Parrot, all of which were feeding in patches of Potato Weed. However, despite efforts to track them down a few days later to get colour band details, they had disappeared and the blue-wings had also largely dispersed. These were the only OBPs seen in SA. Only six OBPs were located in Victoria, well down on last year's May survey tally.

For the rest of us ... at least the weather was near perfect for parrotting, and everyone got to enjoy that!

Elsewhere in the Coorong only a handful of Elegant Parrot were found. Among these, and a momentary buzz for me, was a group of eight all sitting up preening in the morning sun, and through the scope I could see that two of them had bright orange belly patches ... beware of imposters!

Including travel time, we collectively volunteered about 135 hours and travelled at least 1,750kms! All this and only four OBPs showed up ... ungrateful sods!

The next National OBP survey weekends for 2007 are 14–15 July and 8–9 September. Don't forget to let me know anytime you're going out specifically to search for OBPs so that I can register your activity for the Birds Australia Volunteer insurance cover and remember, we now have a spotting scope available for loan. For Neophema parrot id details and calls check www.birdsaustralia.com.au/birds/obp.html

There is still a challenge for SA-based watchers to locate again OBPs in the St Kilda/Pt Gawler samphire areas.

*Terry Dennis, OBP survey coordinator
Coorong/Murray Lakes
8552 7659 or 0409 527 654
obpsearch@bigpond.com*

GLUEPOT REMEMBERED:

From Sheep Paddock to Conservation Reserve

Written by Don Gobbett, a local historian who lives in the South Australian Riverland.

Alexandrina Library Services Call No A 636.0109 GOB

Gluepot Station was acquired in 1997 by Birds Australia for the conservation of habitat for endangered bird species. This is a fascinating look at the people who lived and worked on Gluepot and the surrounding country to the north of the River Murray in South Australia before the acquisition. Some are still there.

Don Gobbett has delved into the earliest written records of 1888. He tells an interesting and easily-read story of everyday living, the good times and the hardships, and includes documents relating to the changing ownerships and varying fortunes of Gluepot over nearly 120 years.

Judith Dyer

ARMCHAIR TWITCH

Sunday 30 September.

The Armchair Twitch is a competition to observe the most species of birds from a fixed location. It has been designed by Birds Australia Southern Queensland to promote birdwatching as a relaxing pastime for all members of the community including those with limited mobility and to raise money for the conservation of wild birds.

Each team selects a five-metre diameter circle as their designated observing area and this can be left and returned to as frequently as desired. During observations of birds at least two people must be present. There is a nomination fee per person—school children free.

Follow the link on the information pages from www.users.bigpond.com/basqld/active/activities.htm for further information and to read all the rules. Or mail the coordinator, Lesley Beaton, PO Box 38, Harlaxton Qld 4350, lbeaton@westnet.com.au

One Fleurieu Birdwatchers member has already registered to take part in this event at Broome.

But we can't all tootle off up there so we would like someone to rise to the challenge and organise a team to work shifts for a long day out in a spot where we can see both water and bush birds.

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Exhibitions featuring birds – local artists

Photos: Lindy Downing, at Raine and Horne McLaren Vale. 9.00–5.00 Mon–Fri, 9.00–12.00 Sat.

Paintings: Brenda Holden at the Alexandrina Cheese Factory, Sneyd Road, Mt Jagged, 8 kms south of Mt Compass. 12.00–5.00 Fri and 10.00–4.30 Sat/Sun.