

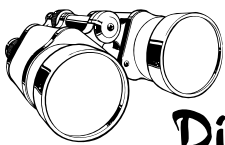


# fleurieu birdwatch

Newsletter of Fleurieu Birdwatchers Inc

June 2008

- 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  
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fleurieubirds@gmail.com
- Website:** fleurieubirdwatchers.org
- Newsletter:** Verle Wood, 13 Marlin Terrace, Victor Harbor 5211



## Diary Dates



- \* **Thursday 26 June**  
*Strathalbyn effluent ponds/Laratinga Wetlands, Mt Barker*  
Meet at Strathalbyn Railway Station car park
- \* **Friday 11 July**  
*General Meeting*  
Guest speaker: Natalie Gilbert—*Penguins*
- \* **Sunday 13 July**  
*Bullock Hill*  
Meet at Ashbourne on the side road opposite the Primary School
- \* **Wednesday 23 July**  
*Mount Magnificent*  
Meet at the junction of Nangkita and Enterprise Roads, Nangkita
- \* **Saturday 9 August**  
*Cox Scrub/Coles Crossing*  
Meet at the corner of Nangkita Road and Heifer Lane, Nangkita

\* **Friday 15 August**

*Once-a-Year Night: Annual Dinner — see below*

\* **Thursday 28 August**

*Aldinga Scrub and Washpool*

Meet at the entrance, Cox Road, Aldinga



*Just a note to say ...*

*don't miss out this year on our*

## Once-a-Year Night

Annual Dinner

Friday 15 August

at

Hotel Victor

Albert Place, Victor Harbor

Soup, choice of three mains and two desserts, tea/coffee \$18

Enhanced by the subtle flavours of

## Elaine's Quizzical Quiz

Meet at 6.30 pm: meal at 7.00 pm

The raffle will be drawn during the evening

Details page 3

**Bookings essential**  
**Contact Val or Verle**

## MEETING

Friday 9 May

Ray Laird, Chairperson, welcomed 26 members, including three members attending our meeting for the first time, and two visitors.

Some points from the business of the meeting:

- ◇ A letter of appreciation of his long involvement with the club had been sent to Brian Ginno, our former Treasurer who is on the sick list.
- ◇ Five members had cleaned up around the bird hide at the Goolwa effluent ponds.
- ◇ Peter Gower would still like to hear about sightings/hearings of night birds on the Fleurieu. Contact him on 8388 9924 for a form on which to record owls, nightjars etc.
- ◇ Four members had surveyed about two hectares of the proposed quarry extension at Hartley and sent the owners of the property a list of 30 species sighted. In their report to the management they suggested that rehabilitation include trees and this had been received favourably.
- ◇ Phyll Whellams, our new Treasurer, explained the raffle which will be run to raise the balance of the funds needed for our data projector.

Our member speaker, Judith Dyer, gave a thoroughly absorbing presentation on *Birds of the Victoria Desert* and took us on a virtual tour of the areas through which she and her partner, Peter Koch, travelled. Of particular interest were views of the insides of nests. Peter has mounted a mirror on an extendable pole. He holds this in position above a nest while Judith photographs the reflection. Surprising were stones in kestrel nests, possibly the birds' version of solar heating for chicks in the very cold desert nights.

### Bird call

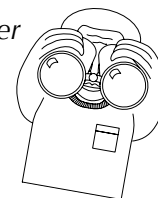
- » Hardly any birds at very dry Tolderol: 12 species included Whistling Kite, Brown Falcon and Little Grassbird.
- » The Orange-bellied Parrot survey yielded no neophemas around the Coorong but 40-50,000 Banded Stilt, Southern Emu-wren (near Salt Creek), Rufous Bristlebird, Double-banded and Hooded Plover, and 500 Red-necked Avocet were seen.
- » Banded Stilt and Hooded Plover had also been recorded at Pondolowie Bay.
- » 10 Nankeen Night Heron and 2 Osprey at Onkaparinga

- » 60 Yellow-tailed Black-cockatoo at Mt Compass
- » Shy Heathwren at Ferris-McDonald CP
- » Black-chinned Honeyeater at Goolwa, possibly!
- » Hooded Plover at Encounter Bay and Watson's Gap
- » Nankeen Night Heron at The Parkway, Victor Harbor
- » Flame Robins, one male and three female, had returned two days early at Page's Flat Road.

## Campout 2008

Friday 31 October–Monday 3 November

This year's campout will be held at Penola. Our base will be the Penola Caravan Park.



You will need to book your own accommodation.

The program will be published in the October edition of *birdwatch* but it is advisable to book accommodation early.

There is the usual range of accommodation at the park and a number of hotel/motels and B&Bs are available in and near the town.

The prices quoted below are those currently displayed on the website [www.penolacaravanpark.com.au](http://www.penolacaravanpark.com.au)

Deluxe Cabin	\$85.00 per night
Standard Cabin	\$72.00 per night
Ensuite Caravan site	\$25.00 per night
Powered site	\$20.00 per night
Un-powered site	\$18.00 per night
Extra adult	\$10.00 per night
Extra child	\$5.00 per night

Linen is available at \$10 per double, \$5 per single.

You can book by phone, 8737 2381, or email [info@penolacaravanpark.com.au](mailto:info@penolacaravanpark.com.au).

To find out more about the range of alternative accommodation visit the Penola Visitors Centre at [www.penola.org](http://www.penola.org) or phone 8737 2855.

## Dues and Overdues

Thanks to all who paid up their subs so promptly.

If you have not yet paid your subscription for the current year we are including a reminder with this newsletter. Payment by post may be by cheque or money order to Fleurieu Birdwatchers Inc. EFT (electronic funds transfer) is available and instructions for this are enclosed.

If you have recently paid your subs please ignore this notice.

## Raffle

It has always been our policy to keep suscriptions to a minimum—just enough to cover expenses such as administration, insurance, newsletter, and hall hire. Unfortunately, with rising costs we have this year had to raise subs a little, but hopefully they will remain the same for many years to come.

We have been borrowing a data projector from Alexandrina Council for presentations at our meetings but feel that the time has come to have our own unit. Apart from our club meetings we are finding that more and more societies and clubs are requesting presentations from us on the wonderful birdlife of the Fleurieu. Having our own equipment would certainly save time, money, and a lot of hassle for our Committee. Using the small surplus left from our annual costs it would take another three to four years before we could buy one!

Last year the Committee decided that the surplus funds from Fleurieu Bird Encounter would be used to purchase a data projector, but we still have a shortfall.

Hence, the RAFFLE. We were given two bird prints as prizes: first prize is a Black-Cockatoo by Jeremy Boot, No 241/250, signed, unframed, and second prize is Tea with the Wrens by Philip Farley, No 367/600, signed and framed.

If every member could make a big effort and sell a booklet of ten tickets we will be able to get our data projector this year! We would appreciate your participation in assisting in this venture. A card with photographs of the prizes is enclosed with your tickets. Please write the name and phone number of the purchaser on the butt of each ticket.

The raffle will be drawn at our annual dinner on 15 August, so if you could get the books and money back to me in the enclosed self-addressed envelope by 7 August, that would be great! Give them to any Committee Member, or send to me at PO Box 80, Victor Harbor, 5211.

Of course, if you can sell more than ten just give me a call on 8552 3644.

Here's to a successful year for Fleurieu Birdwatchers!  
*Phyll Whellams, Treasurer*

*A Red-browed Finch that had had a fatal encounter with a window, was displayed at the meeting.*

*What better excuse to leave your windows GRUBBY!*



## VALE

Sadly, news of the death of **Brian Ginno** is just to hand. Brian and his wife, Maureen, have been members for 10 years, and enjoyed many outings and campouts with us. Brian delighted most of all in the watching the birds around the river at Goolwa and nearby Scott CP.

His interest in birds goes back at least half a century when he subscribed to "*The Emu: Official Organ of the Australasian Ornithologists Union*". This journal first appeared in 1901. Recently, Brian presented the club with four complete volumes of *The Emu*.

Brian was a past President of our club and when work was needed for club projects he was always ready and helpful. Ill health forced him to resign as our Treasurer earlier this year. Last year he was actively and enthusiastically involved on the sub-committee which organised the Fleurieu Bird Encounter. When he found out the cost of lunches for outing participants, Brian and Maureen themselves provided excellent fare and much more economically.

We are pleased to have had Brian as a stalwart member of our club.



## OUTINGS

### Hindmarsh Island

Thursday 3 April

This excursion was attended by six ... err ... hardy, venturesome members!

We met at the Ferryman's Reserve car park in cold and windy conditions. During the morning there were a few spots of rain but not enough to deter us keen birdwatchers.

Even when there are not many birds about there is usually a highlight or two. Along Denver Road we were privileged to see three Banded Lapwing about 150 metres from the road in a paddock. Then at the southern end of Chapel Road out on a sandbar were three Eastern Curlew.

We also visited the Hindmarsh Marina at the northern end of Goolwa Barrage, Mundoo Channel and Murray Mouth. There were no neophema parrots there this time. The final count for Cape Barren Geese along the way amounted to 95.

Then off we went for lunch in the barrage car park on Sir Richard Peninsula and watched waders while we ate. Although many had left there were some Marsh Sandpiper and some Bar-tailed Godwit starting to show breeding colours.

There were 38 species on Hindmarsh Island and 40 along Sir Richard Peninsula—and a total of 54 species for the morning.

Peter Gower



Cape Barren Goose, Hindmarsh Is  
Photo: Peter Gower



Bar-tailed Godwit, and above, Banded Lapwing. Photos: Teresa Jack

### Paiwalla Wetland

Saturday 12 April

Twelve members met at Sunnyside Lookout on a perfect birdwatching morning. A pair of Whistling Kite kept us intrigued for quite a while as we watched them trying to catch Grey Teal ducklings for breakfast. Mum and Dad were very protective and the young ones knew how to dive for safety. In the end the Kites decided it was too much like hard work and gave up.

Moving down to the wetlands we heard several Crake calling but not having any mud to walk out on they stayed well and truly hidden, which was very frustrating for us. We did see Pacific Black, Grey Teal, Shovellers and one male Musk Duck, so quite a good collection of ducks.

A Hobby sat in a tree close to the path which gave us an excellent view of it. Numerous Superb Fairy-wren were seen and we had two sightings of Cuckoo: Horsfield's Bronze-cuckoo along with Fan-tailed Cuckoo.

The resident Barn Owl were not on view but we still had a great morning with a list of 61 species seen.  
Ann Turner



Australian Hobby at Paiwalla.  
Photo: Hugo Klynsmith

Right. Wood Sandpiper, Paiwalla. Photo: Peter Gower  
Below. White-faced Heron, Paiwalla. Photo: Hugo Klynsmith





## Mt Compass boardwalk and Willunga

Wednesday 30 April

An enthusiastic group of about a dozen members gathered at the Mt Compass boardwalk. Weather was fair, that is, not actually raining but that misty threatening, 'I'll think about it'-cloud cover so typical of the Adelaide hilltops. The birds had more insight than the watchers in that they stayed hidden and silent. A few of us thought we might have heard the Southern Emu-Wren but for me, I think it was wishful hearing.

Only about half a dozen species were logged of the more plentiful types and then only from a distance. The pace quickened at the end of the boardwalk to move on to the much anticipated private property.

The weather had other ideas. Nearing the Willunga hilltop, swirling cloud cut visibility to 200 metres or less while seven vehicles arrived at Timbertop. Bird sightings were few and the list eventually made a dozen.

A frustrated group stopped early for lunch. This was where the day blossomed. Collectively and in small groups, for the next hour or so much birding was done: identification, photography, lists, past trips, bird books, all discussed. The fog swirled outside and even the sparrows were on the ground.

Still, as a new member, I'm told, 'this is birding'!  
Nick Tebneff

## Hardy's Scrub

Sunday 11 May

It was a perfect birdwatching morning—calm, sunny and mild. The scrub looked in quite good condition despite the drought, but there was very little flowering and no water in the little dam.

There were 13 of us and we saw 32 species, but most species were represented by only a few birds. We spotted Eastern Spinebill, Crescent Honeyeater and Yellow-faced Honeyeater. Mistletoebird shone in the sun and there was a group of Red-browed Finch. I saw Varied Sitella for the first time in a while and I was surprised that Striated Thornbill was the only thornbill sighted.

Also surprising to see were three koalas—the first time I've seen them in Hardy's Scrub.

Jean Boomer



Unperturbed resident of Hardy's Scrub Photo: Verle Wood

## Basham's Beach and Lakala Reserve

Wednesday 28 May

Eleven members met in the car park at the end of Basham's Parade, Pt Elliot.

The morning was crisp and damp under foot, but with clear sky and beautiful sunshine—very good light for birding. We walked through Basham's Beach Park keeping mainly to the walking/bike track early. But there were quite a few bike riders, so we moved out of their way on to the grass.

We were all very impressed with the number and variety of shrubs and trees in this park. In fact, Basham's Park is an absolutely wonderful place not only for its flora. The walk back along the beach and then around the headland of rocks to Crockery Bay and back around the caravan park was also very good. There are plenty of seats available—logs and other seats strategically placed to enjoy the view.

We then moved to Lakala Reserve for the bird count and lunch, and enjoyed the comfort of the picnic barbecue shelter with seats.

We sighted 39 species in all at Basham's. The highlight of the day no doubt was the Collared Sparrow-hawk, watching us closely.

Others to mention: Australian Hobby, Musk Lorikeet, Silvereye, Richard's Pipit, Skylark, Nankeen Kestrel, Black-shouldered Kite, Caspian Tern, and Sooty Oystercatchers. One surprise was a seal fishing in the bay and not far away, a Black-faced Cormorant.

At Lakala we had 16 species including a solitary Black-tailed Native Hen, Purple Swamphen, Dusky Moorhen, Wood Duck and Mallard. Water birds such as the Little Grassbird, egrets, heron and Pacific Black Duck have generally disappeared since the drastic clean up and removal of habitat from the lake.

Elaine O'Shaughnessy



## Opportunity knocks

The latest range of *Birds of the Fleurieu* greeting cards, the work of member Elizabeth Steele-Collins, is now available. Proceeds from the cards, and from Elizabeth's calendar, are used in a habitat restoration project which seeks to protect remnant scrubland and revegetate using local native plant species. To order cards or to offer help with tree planting, contact Elizabeth on 8552 8822 or seawings@waitpingacliffs.com/.



*"The Emu: Official Organ of the Australasian Ornithologists Union, A Quarterly Magazine to popularize the Study and Protection of Native Birds and to record Results of Scientific Research in Ornithology".*

RAOU is now Birds Australia.

The journal first appeared in 1901. Still published as *Emu*

*Austral Ornithology*, it is the premier journal for ornithological research and reviews in the southern hemisphere.

Recently, the late Brian Ginno presented the club with four complete volumes of *The Emu*: #54–57, 1954–1957, 18 issues in all, and in very good condition. We do not run a library and made a decision some time ago not to go down that path. At the Committee meeting we decided to advertise the journals for sale on our website, inviting offers.

At the time of publication individual issues were priced at 10/- each. A complete digital archive of *The Emu* is available, 100+ years' worth, [www.publish.csiro.au/nid/97.htm](http://www.publish.csiro.au/nid/97.htm) with some individual articles selling at \$25 each.

Please contact the Secretary with expressions of interest.

### Getting their greens

A recent report in the Mt Barker Courier suggests that flocks of Eurasian Coot are winning a battle of wits against the local council which wants to populate the effluent ponds near Laratinga wetlands with duckweed to control odour and algae.

Scarecrows failed to deter the birds from devouring the tasty young plants so the nursery pond was covered in wire netting. The canny coots soon rallied and weighed down the cover so that they could reach their smorgasbord (they also like a little meat to go with their veg), reportedly 'jumping up and down on the netting'. Twice it has been stretched out of shape and had to be replaced.

Shooting blank cartridges and using birds of prey have also failed to discourage this wayward species, and one further plan is to use a remote-controlled model boat to patrol the ponds. The council is patient and will, in its infinite wisdom, continue to monitor the situation.



Eurasian Coot.  
Photo: Peter Gower

### We warned you ...

in the last edition of *birdwatch* that our website was on the move. Now, if you visit the former site you will be automatically re-directed to the new one. *Be patient, this takes fifteen seconds!* Please be sure to Bookmark/create Favorites of the new pages in your browser so that you can return to them quickly.

We are now able to access comprehensive reports of activity on our website and have been agreeably surprised at the number of hits, sessions and downloads. In the week 13–19 May daily average hits were 52, and daily average sessions, which represents individuals accessing the site, were 18. Some of these came via links to our site on pages of larger organisations such as Birds Australia. Most popular pages were the photo pages, Our Birds, and Campout 2007.

Also surprising was the fewer visits to the Outings page. I guess this means that members are using their newsletter Diary Dates efficiently. At least the outings are there when the paper copy is mislaid!

Enjoy your visit to [fleurieubirdwatchers.org](http://fleurieubirdwatchers.org)

### Gardens for Wildlife

Birds attracted to a native garden do not need extra feeding, but birdbaths and watering stations strategically placed (hidden?) near denser shrubbery, will keep them coming for your observation and enjoyment.

If you would like more birds in your garden consider

- ⊙ planting flowering species and grasses, preferably those that are native to your area, including some dense (and prickly?) shrubs for shelter, nectar plants for butterflies and daisies for caterpillars
- ⊙ providing water in a pond or birdbath
- ⊙ a rock or two in a sunny spot for lizards
- ⊙ avoiding the use of pesticides in the garden
- ⊙ keeping dogs and cats inside, especially at night
- ⊙ mulched areas for worms, bugs and beetles.

And remember, as Penny Paton once said, birds like messy gardens!



Photo: Courtesy Mandurah Wildflower Group Inc. [www.mandurahwildflowergroup.org.au](http://www.mandurahwildflowergroup.org.au)