



fleurieu birdwatch

October 2000

Meetings: Glendale Christian School, cnr Glendale Close/Strathalbyn Rd, 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: www.adelaide.net.au/~mhaywood/Fleurieu%20Birdwatchers.htm



FOR YOUR DIARY

※ **Saturday 7 October**

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

※ **Friday/Saturday 13–14 October**

Up the Creek

Places still available. Phone Judith Dyer. See overleaf under Meeting.

※ **Wednesday 18 October**

Bullock Hill

Meet at Ashbourne near the telephone box.

※ **Saturday 28 October**

No outing

※ **Friday– Monday 27–30 October**

Burra Campout

Details last newsletter

※ **Friday 10 November**

Meeting – Quiz Night

※ **Sunday 12 November**

Ingallala Falls

Meet at the Yankalilla Hotel.

※ **Wednesday 22 November**

Cox Scrub – East

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

※ **Saturday 2 December**

Christmas Breakup

Barbecue at the Goolwa barrage. Birdwatching at 4 pm and Jim will light up the barbecue for us at 6 o'clock. Keep this date free. Byo food, beverages, chair and insect repellent. Tea and coffee provided in your own mug. Enter via Jim's private driveway from the road behind the house.

※ **Friday 12 January 2001**

Scott Conservation Park

This will be a night walk in lieu of a meeting and Sunday outing. Meet at the main car park on the northern boundary at **7.30 pm**. Bring supper and a chair.

CAMPOUT

Those going to Campout and who will be staying in the township of Burra, **please confirm the program** in the week beforehand. Ring Judith or Ann no later than Wednesday evening.

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Please forward newsletter material to  
Verle Wood  
13 Marlin Terrace, Victor Harbor 5211  
or email: [verlew@dove.net.au](mailto:verlew@dove.net.au)  
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MEETING

Friday 8 September

Brian Ginno chaired the meeting and welcomed 16 members and 6 visitors from Landcare, South Coast Field Naturalists and the Signal Point Riverine Environment Group.

Points of interest

1. Copies of the Draft **Constitution** were tabled and some were available for interested members to peruse: any further input before the next Committee meeting was invited.
2. News of the evening was that Peter and Elaine O'Shaughnessy, of Hotel Victor and the Crown Hotel, have offered to sponsor a reprint 3,000 copies of the bird **brochure**. Members expressed their appreciation of this generous gesture.
3. Some members had taken part in **tree planting** for habitat for the Black-chinned Honeyeater.
4. **Up the Creek: exploring local biodiversity** (details of the program were inserted in *birdwatch* 8/00) will take place at Signal Point, Goolwa, on 13-14 October and will include a bird field trip in Jarnu Woodlands, beginning at 7 am on Saturday 14 October. Meet at **6.30 am** sharp near the corner of Myrtle Grove Road and Main Strathalbyn Road at Currency Creek. This will be followed by breakfast at Currency Creek Winery at 9.15 am. Ring Greg Lundstrom 8555 2879 or Judith Dyer 8555 2736 for enquiries and bookings.
5. Members were reminded of the **Burra Campout**. Expressions of interest to Judith. (See *birdwatch* 8/00)
6. **Bird Call** included sightings of
 - ◆ Three Black-Shouldered Kite teaching young to hunt at Goolwa
 - ◆ Yellow-rumped Thornbill nesting
 - ◆ Mopoke in casuarina scrub near Ferguson Road, Goolwa
 - ◆ Two Marsh Harrier and two (supposed) young at Goolwa Effluent Ponds
 - ◆ Horsfield's Bronze-Cuckoo and Pallid Cuckoo on western Hindmarsh Island
 - ◆ A pair of Bassian Thrush with two young in forest at Back Valley

- ◆ Goolwa's resident Rufous Night Heron has changed his address and now perches on the ferry cables on the Hindmarsh Island side of the river
- ◆ White-necked (Pacific) Heron on the Finniss River.

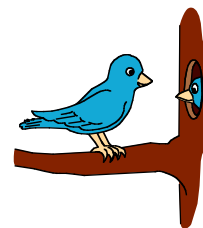
Guest Speaker, Andrew Black, gave an interactive presentation to demonstrate the need to preserve bird habitat and gave some useful pointers to correct identification of species, challenging the experts among us.

Thank you, Hilary, for again making sure we could wet our whistles in the post-meeting chat.

WELCOME

Michael and David Andersen,
Aldinga Beach

A special welcome to these enthusiastic Junior members.



TIME OUT

Twenty of our members gathered at the Mt Compass Tavern for a very convivial dinner on Friday 18 August. The one (only?) topic of conversation over the meal was — you guessed it! — BIRDS. We even had one person drawing a mud map on his serviette to show us the way to a special site ... end of story: please address all enquiries to Ann Turner!

The possibility of a *One and All* trip to offshore islands was also mooted. Alwyn Dolling 8386 2237 has details.

If you missed the dinner this year, make it a date for 2001. An outing worth repeating.

OUTINGS

Hardy's Scrub

Saturday 5 August 2000

The walk started with 17 ready to go, on a beautiful day, at Gate 4. A few new faces included two young brothers, Michael and David, both very keen.

With the wine dam full (of water!) it was decided to split into two groups, one to go east and one to go west, meeting on the other side of the dam before completing the 2.25 km loop.

For those of us used to this area it was a great walk but very quiet in regard to bird numbers and species, yet 42 species were recorded and over 20 walkers at the finish gathered for a pleasant lunch and bird count.

Peter Ginnane

Woodcone and Mt Compass Boardwalk
Wednesday 16 August

It was a cold and overcast morning and soggy underfoot at Woodcone and some of our ten birdwatchers had very wet feet by the end of the walk.

Of the honeyeaters, only the Crescent Honeyeater and Red Wattlebird were seen, most trees not yet being in flower. A Wedge-tailed Eagle soared in the grey sky and a pale sun at the end of the walk shone on a Scarlet Robin, very orange-red.

In all, 33 species were seen at Woodcone.

Because we finished fairly early there, we decided to do the Mt Compass Boardwalk. We were rewarded for our efforts with the sighting of a pair of Southern Emu-wren, to the delight of some of us who had not seen this endangered species before.

For Mt Compass, we had a total of 14 species.

Jean Boomer

Nurragi Conservation Park
Saturday 26 August 2000

Cool and mostly dry weather helped make for an enjoyable morning for 12 members at Nurragi Conservation Park. We were escorted for a time by the appealing White-browed Babblers and had several sightings of the lovely Mistletoebird. One left a strand of yellow bead-like seed swaying in the breeze from a bough and another shared a tree with our lone sighting of a Zebra Finch. The Diamond Firetail Finch was heard but, unfortunately, not seen.

Two Brown Falcon were spotted in an adjoining paddock/field and a sighting of a Rufous Whistler was another highlight.

A total of 33 species was seen during the morning with another three identified by their calls (not by me!). The rain finally arrived at lunchtime during the bird call, sending members scattering for shelter and umbrellas.

PS Angus and Robertson's Store at Colonnades has had David Attenborough's book, *The Life of*

Birds, on sale at 50% discount – \$24.95, a great buy and interesting reading.

Di Shearer

*It's not hard to meet expenses
—they're everywhere!*

Tonkin's Winery — Black Swamp Walk
Sunday 10 September 2000

Some light drizzle and a cool breeze didn't deter the seven members from an excellent count of birds along the flooding Black Swamp.

Clamorous Reed Warbler was easily heard along with a few Little Grassbird. With all the water in this area, it looks as though it may be a good spot for Crake, Rail and Snipe in several weeks' time (if it stops raining).

We recorded five raptors with two Swamp Harrier being very amorous. Is there a possibility of breeding in this area? A Little



Eagle soaring overhead made it possible for us to study the underlying pattern for positive identification. Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoo (thanks to Belinda Filkin for her photo) were certainly noticed, with

over 30 cruising overhead.

When we reached the railway bridge our loop walk was under water. Here one member braved the railway bridge and continued down the other side of the river. The others went back via some remnant woodland on a rise. They were lucky to flush a Boobook up for an easy view.

At the bird call the combined tally of species seen was 57.

Denzel Murfet

Mt Magnificent
Wednesday, 20 September

Five adult members and new junior members, Michael and David, enjoyed perfect weather for this outing which had several highlights.

At the beginning it seemed to be all *heard* until we saw Striated Thornbill. These came so

close we didn't need binoculars and we were able to really study their markings and colour. Further up the road we saw plenty of Grey Fantail, one male Rufous Whistler, Brown Falcon, Brown Goshawk and a Wedge-tailed Eagle.

In the bush we could hear Fantail Cuckoo calling and as we turned to come back along a boggy track there was one sitting right in front of us. We all stood admiring it for quite a while until we heard a strange call very close which turned out to be another Fantail Cuckoo giving a very different call to the two common calls we know.

Eventually, we saw three of these cuckoos and as there were several White-browed Scrubwrens around we wondered if the cuckoo were looking for their nests to lay eggs in.

On the way back we had Scarlet Robin flying around on the road.

We found a shady spot for lunch in the company of Superb Fairy-wren, Yellow-faced Honeyeater and a male Golden Whistler.

A total of 32 species was seen on an excellent morning's outing.

Ann Turner

Unusual?

Two us watched a kestrel continuously dive bomb a very well-conditioned fox as it tracked up the cliff face at Old Noarlunga where three young kestrels were raised last season — the fox retreated! Peter G

CONSTITUTION

The Constitution has now been completed and is ready to submit with our request for incorporation. What a minefield!!!

We have tried to keep it as simple as possible while still complying with the Act. We will now set about compiling some Policies and Procedures to be attached. Items recorded under this heading are purely internal and can be changed in the future without having to alter the Constitution.

On behalf of the Committee I would like to thank those members who took copies of the draft and made very valuable comment on its content. In particular, I would like to thank Verle for the hours she gave to assist me in

typing and wording the document along with very wise counsel on its content.

Judith Dyer

KEY FEATURES FOR IDENTIFYING BIRDS

From the late Joan Paton's notes per Rosalie Sharpe

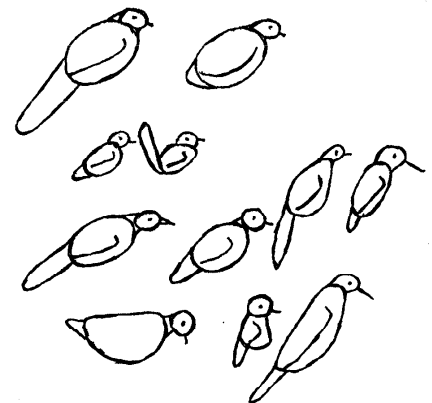
It is often difficult when viewing a bird to pick out and remember the features which will be important in making an identification.

The features listed below are not usually presented by the bird in the neat categories I have used; for example, the shape a bird appears is often influenced by its behaviour. However, if these categories can be kept in mind it may aid in focusing the observer's attention and aid in clarifying the observations.

Size: Compare the bird's size to a bird you know like a sparrow, magpie, willy wagtail etc.

Shape and Stance: Look at the shape and relative proportions of the head, body and tail. For

example,
small head,
round fat
body, long tail
vs small head,
round fat
body, stubby
tail or
medium head,
small body,
short tail vs
medium head,
small body, long tail cocked. After some practice these mental descriptions begin to allow you to place the bird with a group of birds.



Bill and Legs: The shape and relative size of the bill and legs, when combined with the head/body/tail, are usually enough to identify the bird. Look at

- ✓ bill size compared to head
- ✓ bill shape
- ✓ bill use
- ✓ leg size compared to body size
- ✓ leg shape
- ✓ leg use

