



## MEETING

Friday 14 September

Ray Laird welcomed 27 members and 5 visitors—a pleasing audience for our member speaker, Terry Dennis.

The annual dinner at Hotel Victor in August was well supported, with Elaine's quiz providing great entertainment (see page 4). Good bookings have been received for campout. A list of bird photos by club members is being compiled to provide a resource for presenters.

The Fleurieu Bird Encounter Committee reported that there has been lots of encouragement and enthusiasm from the many contacts made through intense publicity, but few paid-up registrations have been forthcoming. However, the event will go ahead with a modified program. (See report) The Photography Workshop has a viable number of participants but the Painting Workshop has been cancelled.

Terry began his presentation with the news that the status of the White-bellied Sea-Eagle has now been moved from Vulnerable to Endangered, the highest order of protection. There is but one pair on the Fleurieu—on Waitpinga Cliffs. Terry then summarised the findings of his 2005 survey of 29 Wedge-tailed Eagle pairs on the Fleurieu, interspersing his fascinating factual information with interesting anecdotes. A lively question time followed.

### Bird call

- ❖ Hooded Plover at Watson's Gap have already raised one chick, but unfortunately it has not been seen since the rough weather of last weekend.
- ❖ No sign of Hooded Plover at Hindmarsh Estuary this year.
- ❖ Hooded Plover being monitored on Flinders Parade, Victor Harbor.
- ❖ Lots of neophema at Scott Conservation Park.
- ❖ Horsfield's Bronze-Cuckoo at Tolderol.
- ❖ White-browed Scrub-wren nesting in hanging basket of fern, near Scott CP
- ❖ Peregrine Falcon at Willunga Hill
- ❖ Wedge-tailed Eagle at Meadows.

The evening concluded as usual with a refreshing cuppa prepared by Jenny Fontanot—thank you, Jenny—and much more bird talk.

*The 2008 Birds of the Fleurieu calendar produced by member, Elizabeth Steele-Collins, will be available early October. Phone orders 8552 8822. All proceeds are applied to restoring biodiversity at SeaWings, a Heritage Agreement area at Waitpinga Cliffs, which is part of the territory for the only breeding pair of White-bellied Sea-Eagle on the Fleurieu.*

## FLEURIEU BIRD ENCOUNTER

Our Fleurieu Bird Encounter will soon be upon us. We hope you have put **22–25 October** in your diaries!

We do not have many interstate guests registered, but having three days set aside in our busy calendars to visit some of our favourite sites around the Fleurieu and to share with our guests, will be a great experience. We will all benefit greatly from the expertise of David Robertson and Andrew Black who hope to be with us each day for our outings. We would be delighted if you will join us on any or all of these field trips—no cost involved. (See the diary dates on the front page for details. Note that the outings will commence at **9.00 am** during the Bird Encounter).

Our evening programs on Tuesday and Wednesday will be held at the Alexandrina Council Chambers, Cadell Street, Goolwa at 7.30 pm. Andrew Black will speak on the Tuesday evening about Identifying Blue Wrens in SA. Jeremy Robertson's presentation on Wednesday will be on the flight of birds. The programs will include a light-hearted quiz on bird identification conducted by Denzel Murfet. Come early and enjoy the slide shows of Fleurieu Birds.

There will be no cost to members for the evening programs but we will be opening them up to the general public and asking for a gold coin donation from them to help with speaker expenses. We encourage you to come and take up the great opportunity to learn from these experienced ornithologists. Maybe you could even bring a friend or two.

PS It's not too late to book in for the Welcome and Farewell Dinners or the Photography workshop, but don't delay and let us know as soon as possible. Contact Val Laird, 8555 5995 or fleurieubirds@gmail.com.

*Be friendly, wear your name badge*

If yours is tatty, please let us know and we will replace it for you, either with just the name card, or a badge holder as well—they do tend to discolour with wear and tear. Phone or email your request.



## OUTINGS

### Muntiri

Saturday 11 August

We had a good turnout of members and visitors for our outing to Dr Andrew Black's property, with its extensive area of heritage scrub. After meeting up with him we split into two groups. Most of the first part of our walk we had Dusky Woodswallow on nearly every fencepost and vocal Spiny-cheeked Honeyeater calling in several places.

Highlights were Varied Sittella, Hooded Robin and Variegated Fairy-wren, and the Brown Falcon which we had heard calling earlier.

Overall combined sightings for the two groups, gave us 49 species—a good morning's birding in spite of the windy conditions.

Ann Turner



Photo: Teresa Jack



Photo: Verle Wood



Photo: Graeme Mountford

### Milang

Thursday 23 August 2007

Only six members were able to attend this outing but it was a perfect day in every way—good company, plenty of birds, lovely sunshine and no wind.

We began at the samphire flats at Milang with the highlights of the day, which were spectacular views of a bittern and three Japanese Snipe. These, of course, were a first for me but I know by Judith's excitement that they were very special sightings, especially as the official notice claims that snipe are usually in the area September–March.

We spent quite some time in the samphire and were rewarded with two beautiful White-fronted Chat. We then went into the centre of the town where Margaret spotted the first Rufous Night Heron under the big old pines—we found four in all. Our next segment was at Kindaruar Corner—not too much there as it is terribly dry. None of us had ever seen this particular area so dry. One Caspian Tern and four Australian Shelduck stood out.

On to Clayton where we spent quite some time with the scope. Plenty of regular water birds here, including Australian Pelican, Black Swan, Royal Spoonbill, Purple Swamphen and one Black-winged Stilt, Great Cormorant, Pied Cormorant, Dusky Moorhen, Caspian Tern and the highlight, two male Darter with seven females.

The six of us had a very pleasant lunch under the pines in the park while writing up the bird count: 32 species at Milang, 13 species at Kindaruar Corner, 26 species at Clayton.

We all could have stayed there blissfully for hours.  
Elaine O'Shaughnessy

#### Photos (left)

*Tramping through the heterogeneous vegetation at Muntiri we were closely observed by a pair of Galah. Note the difference in the eyes of the male (brown iris) and female (red iris). Some members were fascinated by ancient archeological treasures on the property, formerly Yelland's Scrub.*

**Members Faye Lush and Joyce West would like donations of your surplus books to be sold for Willunga National Trust, 13 October. Contact Faye 8383 0361, fayelush@ozemail.com.au to arrange pickup or drop them in to Willunga Courthouse at 61 High Street during opening hours (11.00 am–4.00 pm on Tuesdays, or 1.00–5.00 pm on weekends and public holidays).**



## Scott Conservation Park

Sunday 16 September

Nine members and two visitors met in the northern car park for what turned out to be a very windy walk. The first few steps brought on the most excitement with two Sacred Kingfishers showing for all to see. Further along the same track we managed to find some Buff-rumped (or should I say buffeted) Thornbills.

As we turned down the western boundary fence we were nearly blown off our feet. After we crossed the first creek to enter the park proper we were sheltered from the wind which still roared through the trees making calls very difficult to hear. The Owllet-nightjar wasn't home for us this trip. Near the dam we managed to find the rare Brown Treecreeper.

From here on, finding any birds seemed much harder or maybe they had taken shelter from the wind. During our final leg back to the cars the showers started, which made us hurry the last few steps. We decided to do a speedy bird call and then scatter to home or beyond as the showers became heavier. Despite the strong wind and hurried finish we still managed to total 38 species with Tree Martins being the most numerous.

Denzel Murfet

## Parawa

Wednesday 26 September

"What, no New Holland Honeyeaters!" ... I heard someone say. One member commented that, "Sometimes what you don't see can be just as significant as what you do see".

Only five brave souls took a chance on the crazy spring weather and ventured out on the Brand's property despite the wild, wet, windy day. We found delightful patches of blue orchids, and a few spider and donkey orchids to cheer us up. This gave Teresa plenty of scope to photograph.

While only 23 species of birds were seen or heard on the day, we were all enthralled by the antics of the male Golden Whistler and his partner. The sound of the Clamorous Reed Warbler around the dam had us scanning the reeds with our binoculars, only to see two skimming across the water.

The lack of eucalypts flowering may have contributed to the low numbers of honeyeaters seen, but we all enjoyed the outing and the delightful property—thanks to the Brands.

Wendy Phillips

## ONCE-A-YEAR NIGHT

There were four tables of lively, chattering birdwatchers at the annual dinner at the Hotel Victor. But they were all hushed as they received their quiz question sheet and addressed the serious competitive business. Here are Elaine's brain teasers. Test your bird knowledge!

1. What is the only bird that is endemic to South Australia?
2. What bird species was Ann Turner surrogate mother to, back in the summer at Watson's Gap?
3. This person was a pioneer in women being able to study mathematics. She was born in Florence in 1820 and died in England in 1910. However, she is very famous for her nursing which she undertook against her parents' wishes, as they considered it an unsuitable career for someone of her high education. She is best remembered for her work as a nurse during the Crimean War. The answer is, of course, a species of bird.
4. What kind of a bird is a Gentoo?
5. Unscramble the following: sparepind, ginkarb low, veerileys, lostberdiap, sourfu threwlis.
6. In what area in Australia is it claimed a) there is a new species of bird and b) what species is it?
7. How many birds is it claimed will be attracted to the new *Beyond* development on Pt Elliot Road?
8. What bird is that? (see attached ... sorry, no room for pic! Free point!)
9. Keratin fibres and calcite crystals make up what familiar exterior?
10. What bird brings water to its chicks by soaking its own breast feathers when it drinks?

Answers below, so stand on your head and give yourself a point for each correct answer (possible 15 points including your bonus for #8).



Irrepressible Elaine (left) presented Judith Dyer with a winning drop!

**PS Elaine is looking for the owner of a button found on the floor of the diningroom after the dinner. Phone 8552 1288.**

**Quiz Answers:** 1. Chestnut-breasted Whiteface; 2. Hooded Plover; 3. Nighthingale; 4. Penguin; 5. Sandpiper, Barking Owl, Silvereye, Aposittelbird, Rufous Whistler; 6. North Queensland Blue-fronted Fig-Parrot; 7. 120; 8. European White Stork; 9. Eggshell; 10. Male Sandgrouse