



October 2009

Birdwatch

Newsletter of Fleurieu Birdwatchers Inc



Campout 2009

Blanchetown

Friday 23–Monday 26 October

Please bring a copy of this program with you.

§ **Saturday 10 October. Normanville and Ingalalla Falls**

Meet at the foreshore car park at Normanville.

§ **Friday to Monday 23–26 October. Campout**

Blanchetown: see below.

§ **Friday 13 November. General Meeting**

Guest speaker: Emma Stephens, *Hooded Plover*

§ **Sunday 15 November. Nurragi**

Meet at the Milang turnoff, Goolwa–Strathalbyn Road, Finniss

§ **Thursday 26 November. Coles Crossing Road**

Meet at the junction of Nangkita Road and Heifer Lane, Nangkita

§ **Saturday 5 December. Breakup Hindmarsh Falls**

Walk at 4 pm followed by a BYO picnic tea.

Meet in the lower car park at the falls, off Hindmarsh Valley Road.

Our base will be the Riverside Caravan Park.

Friday afternoon. *Roonka area*. Meet at the caravan park 3 pm.

Saturday. *Brookfield Conservation Park*. Meet at the main gate on Sturt Highway 8.30 am.

Evening. *Happy hour* at caravan park 5 pm, BYO barbecue 6 pm.

Sunday. *Stockyard Plain Disposal Basin Reserve*.

Leave the caravan park 8 am.

Monday. *Private property at Ponde*. Depart Blanchetown 8.30 am. Birds of Prey and Wombat Awareness (approx 1–1½ hrs).

Proceed to Brown's Road, Monarto, for lunch.

We can use the recreation room in the evenings, and barbecue facilities are available. Contributions by members to evening activities will be welcomed.

If you have not yet made a booking see the June newsletter. Riverside Caravan Park information at www.blanchetownriverside.com.au, phone 8540 5070. Group discount has been offered.

Judith and Ann

Judith's contact after early Friday am will be 0428 992 830.

Meetings: Anglican Church Hall, cnr Crocker & Cadell Streets, Goolwa
7.30 pm 2nd Friday of odd months

Outings: Meet 8.30 am. Bring lunch and a chair. See Events above.

Contacts: Pat Uppill, 8552 4288; Judith Dyer, 8555 2736
fleurieubirds@gmail.com

Website: fleurieubirdwatchers.org

Newsletter: Verle Wood, 13 Marlin Terrace, Victor Harbor 5211



Thank you to Neil Cheshire for responding to the request for a Fleurieu Birdwatchers member to accompany a group of Australian and international scientists on a boat trip down the Coorong during their recent conference in Goolwa. Although there were few waders around, there were good numbers of water birds at Tauwichee. Neil enjoyed the day and we thank him for his willingness to undertake the bird guide role.



Friday 11 September

Nick Tebneff chaired the meeting in Denzel Murfet's absence and welcomed 19 members and two visitors.

The formalities were soon despatched and incoming newsletters tabled. Bird call included

- » Hooded Plover: two at Hindmarsh estuary, three eggs washed away at Watson's Gap
- » 30 Nankeen Night Heron at Old Noarlunga
- » Cattle Egret at Mt Compass
- » Spotted Crake, Pink-eared Duck and Red-kneed Dotterel at the Washpool, Aldinga
- » Sightings on Yorke Peninsula included Osprey nesting, Ruddy Turnstone, Western Whipbird (H), lots of Emu chicks, and Eastern Curlew
- » Eastern Rosella at Newland Head with hybrid young
- » Black-backed Magpie and Pied Oystercatcher at Victor Harbor
- » Inland Dotterel, Banded Lapwing, four Woodswallow species, Pied Honeyeater in a total of 105 species spotted in the Gawler Ranges
- » Channel-billed Cuckoo being fed by Little Crow in a wetland north of Birdsville
- » A photo taken at Victor Harbor of a House Sparrow with a deformed beak was displayed.

As the scheduled guest speaker was unable to attend, members watched a video *Hunters of the Skies*, fascinating footage of raptors breeding, nesting and raising young in the far north, and another showing how the video was shot from a hide atop an ingenious telescopic apparatus. Both videos are available for borrowing from the Alexandrina Library.

Once-a-Year Night

Hosts Elaine and Peter O'Shaughnessy greeted 32 members and friends in a pleasant setting of well presented tables and a menu with cute bird border around the special dishes for this special night. Apologies were received from several members including Ray and Val Laird whose report of their wanderings and sightings in the centre, Northern Territory and Queensland, was read. Bird talk flowed freely along with the refreshments and then, as anticipated, Elaine's Quiz. Joint winners were John Whellams and Neil Cheshire—an extra bottle of wine magically produced. Answers page 4.

For those unable to be there on the night test yourself here.

1. Which of the world's ocean birds has the longest wingspan?
2. Which bird will share the panda enclosure at the Adelaide Zoo with Wang Wang and Funi?
3. What endangered large sea bird was nursed back to health after being found near Ceduna by tourists earlier this year? Reported in the Sunday Mail 5 July.
4. For one point per car, state cars named after birds, eg Ford Falcon.
5. Who am I? My title contains the name of a bird species. I am a Pulitzer Prize-winning novel, published in 1960 and instantly successful. The story is based loosely on the author's observations of her family and neighbours as well as an event that occurred near her home town in Alabama in 1936 when she was ten years old. The novel is renowned for its warmth and humour, despite dealing with serious issues of rape and racial inequality. This novel is performed as a stage play and is a movie made in 1962. It won three Oscars, including best actor for Gregory Peck in the starring role.
6. Unscramble the following bird names: onepig, bendad hatecwife, tippi, breadtwitl, stuntech late
7. Which bird is it feared will cost 1,000 jobs in NSW?
8. A cocky is not only a bird. What else is it?
9. A. What bird, a resident of the Adelaide Zoo, was very much in the news this year? B. How old is this bird thought to be?
10. What is a megapode?



Elaine with quiz winners, Neil (left) and John. Photo: Keith Gilbert

Outings

Kyeema Conservation Park

Saturday 8 August

Travelling to Kyeema I was surprised by the amount of frost in the paddocks and on arrival with the temperature being 1 degree I wondered why I was mad enough to leave my nice warm bed.

We commenced our walk with 18 members and although cold, the sun was already shining and promising us a good day. We were welcomed by a pair of Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo flying over and Crescent Honeyeater, as usual hard to spot but by the end of the walk they were our most numerous species seen.

Birds were not easy to find. The thornbills were very busy moving from branch to branch and in plenty of foliage as well, but were finally identified as Brown. A Golden Whistler came and showed himself for us all to admire, along with a Scarlet Robin at the end of the walk. A Kookaburra flew in silently and then gave a very short cackle to let us know where he was. There was quite a long spell where we did not see or hear any birds but at least there were wild orchids and sundews to study.

25 species were seen for the morning with the most colourful ones being Golden Whistler, Eastern Spinebill, Scarlet Robin and Crescent Honeyeater. As usual, a good morning's outing.

Ann Turner



Well camouflaged nest at Kyeema. Photo: Verle Wood

Hindmarsh Island

Thursday 27 August

A winter's day, sunny for birdwatching around Hindmarsh Island, greeted nine members. Along Denver Road we watched Brown Songlark in the paddock, flitting in the sky and landing out of sight in the grass. Raptors flew overhead: two Swamp Harrier and two Whistling Kite, and a Brown Falcon arrived over our left shoulder. We proceeded to the Mundoo Channel and spent time watching three Horsfield's Bronze-cuckoo on the fenceline and two Great Egret.

We arrived at the mouth lookout and the best action there was seals playing way over from us and six Pied Oystercatcher. We walked a little further but no Rock Parrot.

Time to spare, so off to the barrage. The Whistling Kite nesting in the Norfolk Island pine were seen there, with hundreds of Grey Teal and nearly as many Cormorant on the river. The water level was starting to rise a little and the migratory waders will be here soon.

Lunch and bird count near the paddle steamer was enjoyed to the sound of Clamorous Reed-warbler. Lots of Black-fronted and Red-kneed Dotterel were seen too.

Count was a surprising 44 varieties for Hindmarsh Island and 33 for the area through to the barrage.

Teresa Jack



Counting birds (and seals), Hindmarsh Island. Photo: Teresa Jack



Jarnu presented a variety of habitat with mostly sandy soils, from open areas dotted with yaccas to woodland. Photo: Verle Wood

Jarnu, Currency Creek

Sunday 13 September

A group of 11 including two visitors met at a private scrubland near Currency Creek. Everyone was pleased to be out after the two previous days of severe winds; but our euphoria was short-lived as the wind soon picked up. Surprisingly this did not have too much effect on the presence of birds although it did make it hard to hear their calls.



Raptors at Jarnu, one hassled by a magpie. Photos: Teresa Jack



Above. Eastern Rosella were feasting in Manning Reserve.

Below. Several pairs of Mistletoebird flitted in Manning scrub, too.

Photos: Teresa Jack



For those who have an interest in plants as well as birds there was the constant distraction of orchids in flower, along with other plants indigenous to the area.

A number of raptors patrolled the skies, most proving to be Swamp Harrier. A Kestrel and a Brown Falcon were also seen with another raptor identification remaining frustratingly elusive. Other interesting sightings were the White-browed Babbler, a single White-winged Triller, Mistletoebird, Rufous Whistler and very close viewings of Dusky Woodswallow.

We were fortunate to find a sheltered spot amongst the melaleucas for lunch and the bird count which totalled 37.

Pat Uppill

Manning Flora and Fauna Reserve

Wednesday 23 September

Nine members visited this reserve near McLaren Flat to see 33 species of birds and many beautiful orchids.

Although the clouds threatened there were no showers, but a southwesterly wind kept most of the birds down the slope on the eastern side of the reserve.

Eastern Rosella outnumbered Crimson Rosella with everyone getting some excellent views of these attractive birds, especially one feeding on yacca flowers. Mistletoebird provided good viewing and Tree Martin was seen using a nesting box.

During our lunch at the eastern gate, we were entertained by two young Magpies being fed.

Peter Gower

OBP SURVEY

July: Despite great effort, just two separate sightings of Orange-bellied Parrot were made over the count weekend and both were in South Australia. One unbanded bird was observed at 29-Mile Crossing on the Coorong. It was exciting to have a fleeting glimpse of one bird at Pick Swamp, near Piccaninnie Ponds, SE, over the count weekend, confirming the presence of OBPs in this area.

BREEDING OF THE ELEGANT PARROT

Most members have enjoyed admiring Elegant Parrots and I know I am not alone in never tiring of seeing more of them. While the species is not rare there are many aspects of its life in the wild that are not well known (see HANZAB: Handbook of Australian, New Zealand and Antarctic Birds). Even restricting matters to the eastern Australian population there are deficiencies in knowledge of its known distribution (including controversy surrounding the acceptability of records from NSW), the nature of its seasonal and other movements and its breeding range.

I plan to collate all reliable published and unpublished breeding records and will be grateful for any of the latter that might be in notebooks or other unpublished documents. Occupation of hollows or the feeding of dependent young combined with certainty of identification will be considered evidence of breeding.

If you have any such records please let me know as soon as is convenient to you. I will follow up all records for details, including date and locality. Andrew Black, abblack@activ8.net.au or 8272 7271.

Quiz Answers

1. Wandering Albatross
 2. Mandarin Duck, Chinese symbol of love and fidelity
 3. Southern Giant-Petrel
 4. Nissan Bluebird, Humber Hawk, Humber Snipe, Suzuki Swift, Aston Martin, Holden Sunbird
 5. To Kill a Mockingbird (Harper Lee)
 6. Pigeon, Banded Whiteface, Pipit, Wattlebird, Chestnut Teal
 7. Superb Parrot
 8. Farmer
 9. A. flamingo
 10. B. at least 76 years
- Mound-building bird