



Gang-gang

October 2016

Newsletter of the Canberra Ornithologists Group Inc.

OCTOBER MEETING

Wednesday 12 October 2016

7.30 pm.

*Canberra Girls Grammar School,
Multi-media centre, corner Gawler Cres
and Melbourne Ave, Deakin*

Following the AGM (see Notice on page 2) there will only be a single presentation entitled:

Australian Brush-turkeys: unique behaviour, life cycle and adaptations.

Join expert **Dr Ann Goeth**, author of "Mound Builders", for a closer look at the unique life of the Australian Brush-turkey. Discover fascinating facts about their habitat, foraging habits, breeding and of course, why they build such large mounds!

Find out what the chances are of these birds becoming a common sight around Canberra, by looking at their historical and current distribution.

Be informed about a human-wildlife conflict arising from Brush-turkeys breeding in suburban areas from where they have not previously been known.

Everyone welcome

Summary/analysis of the past month and what to watch out for this month

As I will be away for a month, this column has been written very early and only covers the first ten days of September. In this time the few warmer days around 7 September have been bookended by two major rain events, so that the ACT soils are very saturated, and there have only been the first signs that an influx of spring/summer migrants in the COG area of interest (AoI) is happening. With the forecast for the next week for continued cool and wet weather, it would seem that it may happen slowly and that it's going to be a late and probably muted spring/summer for them.

Based on my local patch only, the **Grey Fantail**, the **Noisy Friarbird** and to a lesser extent the **Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike** seem to have increased in numbers, with a very few of the first and last having been present over winter. However, migrants often seem to be slow to arrive there, with very early in September Jean Casburn only a couple of kilometres away seeing a larger mixed flock of **Yellow-faced** and **White-naped Honeyeaters** than was reported over winter, compared with only the single bird of the former I've observed so far. Jean has

Continued Page 2

Julie Clark

Scarlet Robins, recently fledged



Notice of COG Annual General Meeting

Wednesday 12 October 2016, 7.30pm

The Annual General Meeting of the Canberra Ornithologists Group Inc. will be held at 7.30 pm on Wednesday 12 October 2016, in the Multi-media Theatre, Canberra Girls Grammar School, corner of Gawler Crescent and Melbourne Avenue, Deakin.

Agenda

1. Opening
2. Apologies
3. Confirmation of minutes of 2015 AGM
4. President's report
5. Adoption of President's report
6. Presentation of annual statement of accounts
7. Adoption of annual statement of accounts
8. Appointment of auditor for 2016-2017
9. Election of office-bearers (President, Vice-president, Secretary and Treasurer) and ordinary committee members
10. Other matters for which notice has been given
11. Close of meeting.

COG's Bird Blitz 29-30 October 2016

Sites for the blitz are gradually being adopted – see the website for the current state of play. But there are many attractive birding sites still not spoken for. If you have time to do an extra survey or haven't as yet taken one on, think about Mt Ainslie NR, the Arboretum, Hall TSR, Newline paddocks, the Museum and west basin, any of the inlets around LBG, Urriara Village, Stoney Ck NR, Murrays Corner, Tuggeranong Hill NR, Mt Rob Roy, Square Rock – etc., etc.

Advise the coordinator on blitz@canberrabirds.org.au if you can help out.

And for those intending to submit their records via eBird, please remember to "share" them with "COG blitz" so that I can see your findings before the official download. Paper records are still acceptable of course, so pick up your datasheets at the next COG meeting and talk to me there if you have any blitz queries.

Barbara Allan

What to watch out for this month—continued from Page 1

also observed **Dusky Woodswallows** over Narrabundah Hill on 7 September, one of the first sightings away from the Jerrabomberra Wetlands where a few overwintered, and it seems they too are starting to arrive.

Otherwise there have been more reports of **Superb Parrot**, **Western** and **White-throated Gerygone**, **Olive-backed Oriole**, **Rufous Whistler**, **Tree** and **Fairy Martins**, **Australian Reed-Warblers** and **Mistletoebird**, but surprisingly none I can find for the **Latham's Snipe** in September, given that 7 were seen at the Jerrabomberra Wetlands on 28 August. However, the cuckoos arrived in the first 10 days of September with a few further reports of the **Fan-tailed** and **Pallid Cuckoos**, and the first of the **Shining** and **Horsfield's Bronze-Cuckoos**.

I expect that by the time you read this column in over 3 weeks' time this situation will have changed and there will have been more reports of the above species, as well as the species that usually return during September, such as the **Leaden Flycatcher**, and towards the end of the month, **White-winged Triller**, **Rufous Songlark** (depending on how wet it is inland), **Sacred Kingfisher** and **Rainbow Bee-eater**.



Brown Treecreeper, with nesting material

Kym Bradley

Species expected to be first recorded during October include **Dollarbird** and **Eastern Koel** (one very early record at Garran on 29 August), as well as the passage migrants on their way to breed in the mountains, **Satin Flycatcher**, **Rufous Fantail**, **Brush Cuckoo** and **Cicadabird**. In particular, the first two are often seen in Canberra on their way through. The **Brown Songlark** and **Horsfield's Bushlark** also usually arrive in October or November, but usually in small numbers. So keep an eye out for these late arriving spring/summer migrants.

One species that has been reported in the past 10 days (as it was at a similar time last year) has been the passage migrant (and over-winterer) the **Rose Robin**, with five being reported from Mulligan's Flat on 4 September. The **Flame Robin** has also still been reported, with Con Boekel reporting a pair and a separate male from Campbell Park. The **Scarlet Robin** is also still present in the peri-urban parts of Canberra, so please watch out for any signs of breeding for this listed species. While there have been further reports of the **Crescent Honeyeater** from the ANBG, there don't seem to have been any new reports of **Pink Robin** or of **Swift Parrot**, **Yellow-tufted Honeyeater** or **Restless Flycatcher**. Also still being reported from urban/peri-urban Canberra is the **Golden Whistler**, which I've noted previously is often still present until early October, as has been the usually slightly earlier leaving **White-eared Honeyeater**.

Despite the weather still being wintry, there has been some further breeding activity reported to add to that I covered in my last month's column, and the highlights are summarised below:

- **Pacific Black Duck** with young at the Jerrabomberra Wetlands, and some further broods of **Australian Wood** ducklings;
- **Grey Teal** looking at the purpose-built nest boxes at Kelly's Swamp, and on one occasion seen copulating there. This is important because they hadn't previously seemed interested and there are few breeding records for this species in the past two COG Annual Bird reports;



Brown-headed Honeyeater, with nesting material

Kym Bradley



Australian Ornithological Services

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enquiries@philipmaher.com

Good birding, good food ...

2017 tours

Tasmania birds & mammals

28 January — 4 February 2017 includes
Melaleuca flight & pelagic

Alice Springs & the West

MacDonnell Ranges tour

22 to 30 April 2017

One day added for Sandhill Grasswren

Top End tour 2017

22 May to 7 June 2017

Part 1: Darwin, Kakadu NP, Pine Creek & Katherine. Part 2: Katherine, Victoria R, Timber Creek & Kununurra. Mitchell Plateau optional

Queensland's Gulf Country

26 June to 13 July 2017

Two days added for Rusty Grasswren.

Iron Range & Atherton Tablelands tour 2017

(Tablelands optional)

17 to 30 July 2017

New Caledonia birding tour

Early August 2017

Strzelecki Track Outback tour

3 to 22 September 2017

38th tour! Covering 4 states &
5 species of grasswren

Plains-wanderer Weekends 2017

28/29 October 2017

18/19 November 2017

Please see itineraries, checklists and
latest news on our website

www.philipmaher.com

- a pair of **Black Swans** at the Yerrabi Pond with 6 beautiful cygnets;
- male **Tawny Frogmouths** commencing to brood on the nest;
- **Speckled Warblers** appear to be nesting at Shepherd's Lookout;
- **Magpie-larks** making the best of the muddy conditions to build their nests; and last but certainly not least,

some lovely photos by Kym Bradley of the **Brown Treecreeper**, **Brown-headed Honeyeater** and **Southern Whiteface** collecting nest material and the latter in a hollow.

So please watch out for further breeding activity; as noted previously, if it warms up but remains wet we could be in for a very good breeding season.

Once again my sincere thanks to everyone who has contributed to my two main data sources, postings on the COG E-mail Discussion List ("COG chatline") and the eBird Australia website, as well as some direct correspondence to me. As usual I am very grateful to all involved for publishing this information without which it would not be possible to put this column together.

Once the weather finally warms up I expect a more noticeable influx of spring/summer migrants. So please look out for them, as well as the last departing altitudinal migrants mentioned above, and particularly for any signs of breeding. As usual please ensure that all significant observations are properly reported and end up on the COG database.

Jack Holland



3 Photos: **Southern Whiteface**, collecting nest material and in a hollow.
Kym Bradley

Field Trip Reports

Sunday 4 September – Eden pelagic

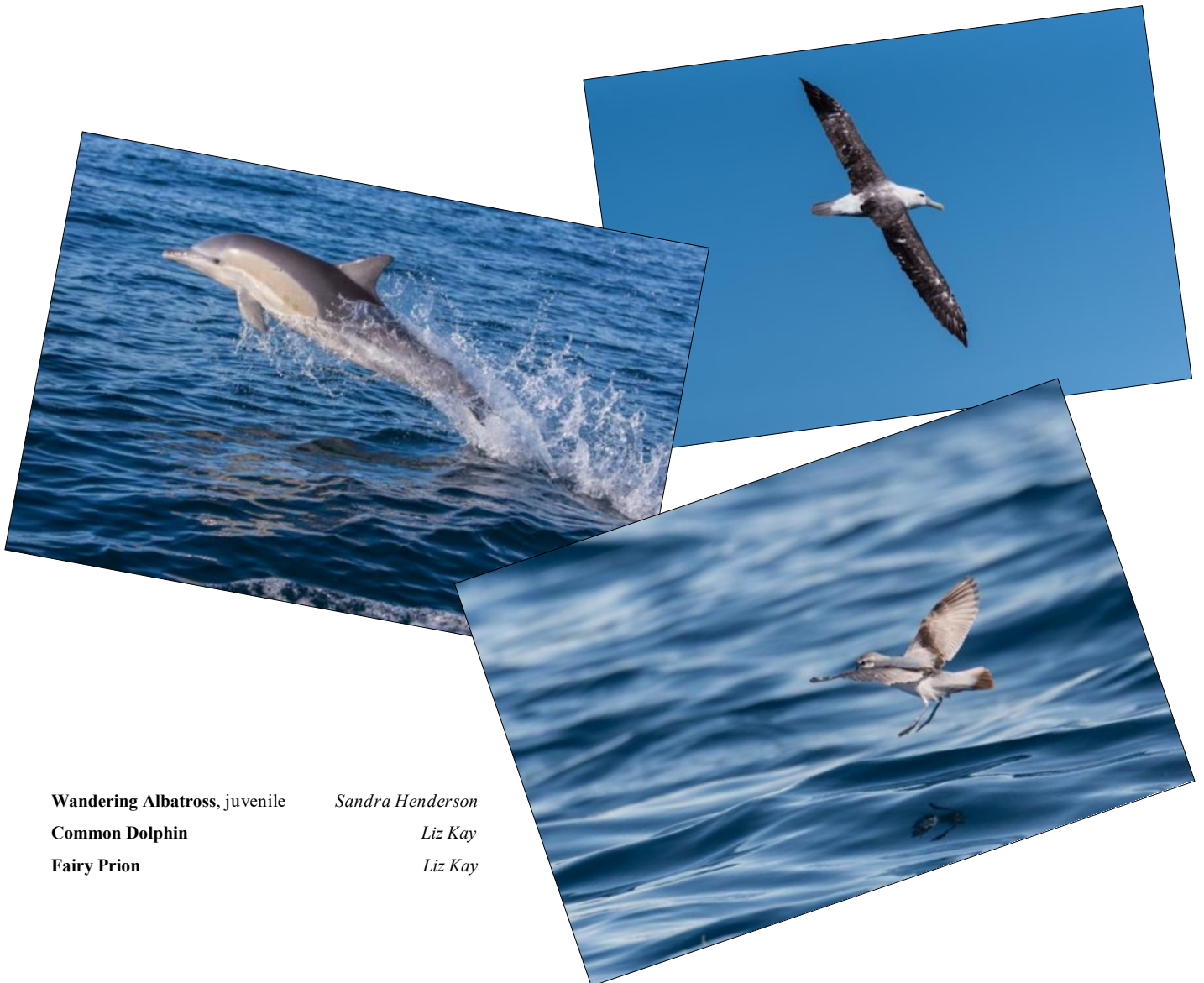
Unfortunately the 3 September outing was cancelled because of the forecast for that day of strong winds, very high seas and offshore thunderstorms - and those of us already in Eden were very glad not to be on a boat in the Saturday weather which ensued.

Sunday was fine and sunny, although the wind did pick up late morning and we made the trip back to Eden from the shelf in fairly trying conditions. Of particular interest were four **Albatross** species (**Shy**, **Black-browed**, **Yellow-nosed** and **Wandering** - the latter did not stay around, but was a thrill nonetheless), three **Storm-Petrel** species (**Wilson's**, **Grey-backed** and **White-faced**) and quite a few **Fairy Prions** dancing along the slick. Several Humpback Whales were sighted well out from the coast, and the Common Dolphins put on a good show, leaping out of the water beside the boat. One large shark, a small group of seals, and a sunfish were seen by several on board, all well out from Eden.

An ebird list is available - 'COG outings' list for 7am on 4 Sept for Offshore -- Eden pelagic.

Many thanks to Anthony for his ID skills and general advice and expertise on the day.

Sandra Henderson



Wandering Albatross, juvenile

Sandra Henderson

Common Dolphin

Liz Kay

Fairy Prion

Liz Kay

Sunday 18 September - Mitchell and Flemington Road Pond

Twelve members and friends attended in overcast conditions and light rain. We saw 26 species at Mitchell Pond with summer migrants **Australian Reed-Warblers** and a **Grey Fantail** present. The Flemington Road Pond was full and turgid with silt runoff. There were 21 species with the highlight being 2 **Hoary-headed Grebes**. The number of waterbirds was down with usual roosting sites under water. The last leg began beside the Bimberi Youth Detention Centre where an **Olive-backed Oriole** was calling and two **Eurasian Skylarks** were in full voice. We walked 500 metres along the Old Well Station Road where the fields had rivulets of water. Birds there included 2 **Australasian Pipits** and 3 **Tree Martins**. These sites were new to many and would be worth return visits.

Bill Graham



Australasian Pipit

Julian Robinson

Wednesday 21 September – West Belconnen Ponds

Seven possibly deranged members met at the appointed time and place in light rain. The first notable sight was a large (conservatively estimated at 100 birds) flock of **Tree Martins** hawking over the pond and surrounding lawns. A few (~15) **Welcome Swallows** were mixed in with them. As we started our circuit 2 **Mallard hybrids** were noted (and three more seen later) and 2 **Black Swans** were on or next to a nest on an island. This was our only breeding record for the day. Other waterfowl were very sparse as seems to be the case for most local water bodies at present.

The highlight of the outing was 5 **Latham's Snipe** flying out of the tussocks at the northern end of the pond, flying to a small island in the middle of the pond.

In total we recorded 33 good species plus the hybrid.

Martin Butterfield



Australian Reed-Warbler

Geoffrey Dabb

Sunday 25 September – Tidbinbilla

Five COG members and one guest gathered at Tidbinbilla on a clear, fine morning. Members were bemused to see that a **Magpie-lark** had made a nest in a metallic power pole at the carpark, in preference to the perfectly good trees nearby. The walk around the Sanctuary was very rewarding, with some 34 species recorded. Much water was flowing through, and platypuses and terrapins were very conspicuous. Honeyeaters of different kinds were in good song. A highlight was a **Little Eagle** soaring over the ponds and a **Brown Goshawk** circling even higher still. The party enjoyed seeing the captive birds, including the **Brolga**, the **Magpie Geese** and Ripper the **Musk Duck**. The latter put on a good display, despite the sad absence of any mate to



Magpie-Lark, on nest

Sandra Henderson

witness it. The second part of the morning consisted of a walk around the Lyrebird Track. Here too, there was much water flowing through, and the clear streams were babbling noisily. It was hard to see many birds in the lush undergrowth, but many were heard. **Golden Whistlers** were numerous. The party heard one plaintive **Eastern Whipbird** in the distance. **Striated** and **Brown Thornbills** and **Grey Shrike-thrushes** all added to the general chorus. Curiously any **Superb Lyrebirds** present were silent.

David Dedenczuk

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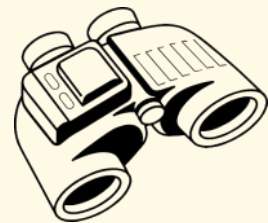
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Nature Lodge Optics, a family owned business based in Huskisson, Jervis Bay, has been supplying quality binoculars to customers in the Canberra region since 2007.

Originally established in the UK in 1946, the owners established a branch in Australia several years ago and have become the region's leading independent binocular store.

Open 7 Days, the store always has over 100 pairs of binoculars in stock with a particular emphasis on Birdwatching products.

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COG Trips

At the start of each trip, and before proceeding on the trip, each participant must sign a COG Field Trip Registration Form, which acknowledges the participant's responsibilities as follows:

- I declare I am capable of undertaking this trip having: discussed with the Trip Leader any limitations I have (e.g. medications, physical), assessed the risks to myself and my property, and ensured I am adequately equipped.
- I will follow the instructions of the Field Trip Leader, and advise them before moving away from the group.

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LATEST UPDATES AND CHANGES TO TRIPS are notified on the trips page of the COG website:

canberrabirds.org.au/
then select 'Our Activities' and 'Field Trips'.

and on the COG chat-line at:

bioacoustics.cse.unsw.edu.au/archives/html/canberrabirds/2015-08/

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A reminder that COG has a long-standing policy to give preference to members for field trips that can accommodate only a limited number of people.

Future Field Trips

Saturday 8 October – Introduction to eBirding in the field

Following Alastair Smith's talk to the COG monthly meeting about the utility of eBird, he will provide an 'in the field' demonstration of eBird to record your bird sightings.

Alastair will demonstrate how to enter sightings using the smart phone apps (iOS/Android) and also the website (for those without smart phones).

The demonstration will only go ahead if there is sufficient interest, so please contact Alastair directly on berigora@gmail.com or 0428466739 to register.

Sunday 9 October – K2C Surveys - Bredbo region

COG will continue with the K2C surveys that have been running since April 2010. The surveyed properties have healthy populations of many of the rarer woodland birds such as **Diamond Firetail**, **Hooded Robin** and **Speckled Warbler**. We will be visiting the same sites to continue the monitoring and see if we can add to the property lists with spring-summer migrants. The surveys will be undertaken in 'blitz' fashion; that is, observers in small groups will visit a number of sites on one or more properties before regrouping for lunch and a sharing of the survey's findings. Less experienced observers are welcome to join in the survey as each team will have at least one experienced observer. Anyone interested in participating is asked to contact Nicki Taws **before Wednesday 5 October**. Email: ntaws@bigpond.com or 0408 210736.

Nicki Taws

Sunday 16 October – Yerrabi Pond

Meet at 8.00am at the Wunderlich St carpark in Gungahlin. The eBird list has 97 species recorded here. Yerrabi Pond is a high use public park and has little in the way of understorey or significant reedbeds. Despite this, it supports a good mix of waterbirds including **Musk Duck** and **Eastern Great Egret**. The most common honeyeaters are **Noisy Miner** and **White-plumed Honeyeater**. **Superb Parrots** move through from Mulligans Flat and other migrants pass through in spring and autumn.

Bill Graham

Wednesday 19 October – Mulligans Flat

Meet at 9am. To save distance, we will be meeting at the end of Eric Wright St and not the formal carpark.

Martin Butterfield

Sunday 23 October Bird photography workshop at Jerrabomberra Wetlands

Meet in the carpark at 7.30 am. This workshop is suitable for people who are in the early stages of using DSLR equipment for bird photography. **Registration is essential.** There will be a limit of 12 with first in best dressed. Registrations are to be sent to my email address con@boekel.com.au. The format will be a brief presentation, followed by field photography, followed by a wrap-up.

Con Boekel

Saturday 29 and Sunday 30 October – Bird Blitz

See separate notice on Page 2.

Sunday 6 November – Goorooyarroo Nature Reserve

Meet at 8am in the carpark on Horse Park Drive. This will be a morning walk through woodlands and grasslands where we may see species such as **Superb Parrot, Speckled Warbler, Rufous Whistler, Southern Whiteface and Diamond Firetail**. We will walk to the area where **Hooded Robins** were last reported from the reserve in 2010. It should be an easy to moderate walk over undulating (and possibly quite boggy) ground, and we may stop along the walk to look at whatever wildflowers and butterflies are out. Please bring appropriate sun protection, some water and possibly gumboots.

There will be a limit on numbers for this walk so please register with Suzi Bond (chowchilla29@yahoo.com) for details.

Sunday 13 November – Campbell Park nest workshop

This will be a repeat of the very successful practical nest workshops held over the past twelve years. As usual it will be a very informal outing which again has been timed to coincide with the peak of the breeding season. The morning will start with the usual short presentation including tips on the types of nests built by different species of birds, and how to find nests or nesting behaviour. This will be followed by several hours putting this into practice, with participants breaking into groups looking for breeding behaviour, signs of nesting etc. This will also allow plenty of opportunities for bird watching.

This workshop is particularly suitable for beginners or those relatively new to bird watching, though more experienced members and repeat customers are also very welcome. While every year has been different, we often don't walk very far as there is usually a "hot spot" where most of the breeding activity occurs. To participate, please contact Jack Holland (6288 7840) or by E-mail on jandaholland@bigpond.com.

Meet at 8:00 am at the picnic tables at the far end of the car park. Take Northcott Drive up to the start of the Campbell Park Offices, where you take the right fork and keep to the outside of the very large car park, skirting it until you get to the end. Intending participants might also like to look at the Campbell Park map on the COG web site under the Maps, Forms and Lists button. Please remember to take morning tea to have out in the field.

Jack Holland



LOIRE VALLEY TIME TRAVEL

The Loire Valley is riddled with caves. They are not natural but the result of over 2000 years of limestone quarrying. In the winter they provide a perfect habitat for hibernating bats, but their constant humidity and temperature also provide perfect habitat for winemakers.

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Sunday 20 November – Mulligans Flat

Meet at 8:00 am, in Amy Ackman St carpark, opposite Cleggett St, returning at about 10:00 am. This should be a great walk with lots of breeding activity to be observed.

Mc Comas Taylor

Tuesday 22 to Thursday 24 November – private property near Young

This trip had to be postponed in September due to heavy rain. There will be a 2 night campout on private property 10 km from Young – no facilities so take everything you need including water. We will survey the property and hope to gain access to another property as well as visit a TSR. Further details in October Gang-gang. Numbers will be limited. Register with Sue Lashko (smlashko@gmail.com).

Sunday 27 November – Kama Nature Reserve

Meet at 8:00am at the car park on William Hovell Drive. The car park is difficult to access and it is best to go past the car park, around the roundabout at the intersection with Drake-Brockman Drive, and then return along William Hovell Drive. The car park will then be on your left.

The walk will cover the northern, wooded section of the Reserve and if time permits we will explore the grasslands and then on to the Molonglo River.

Chris Davey (MOB 0418 679 847)



Caspian Tern, North Weston Pond

Kym Bradley

2017 Field Trips – Draft Programme

Month	Date	Location	Leader
January	15	Uriarra - day	Bruce Lindenmayer
	22	Forde Ponds - morning	John Harris
	29	Pine Island north - morning	Matthew Frawley
February	5	Jerrabomberra Wetlands - morning	Sue Lashko
	7-10	Shoalhaven Heads – mid-week accommodated/ camping	Sue Lashko
	12	Molonglo Reach boat trip - morning	Jack Holland
	19	Woods Reserve – Corin Dam Road - morning	David Dedenczuk
	20-24	Cape Conran – mid-week camping	Martyn Moffat
	26	Yerrabi Track - day	Suzi Bond
March	5	National Arboretum	Chris Davey
	9-15	Albury properties – mid-week campout/ farmstay	Sue Lashko
	19	Eden pelagic - day	Sandra Henderson, Anthony Overs
	26	Dog Trap Rd, near Hall - day	Sue Lashko
April	2	Narrabundah Hill - morning	Jack Holland
	9	K2C surveys - day	Nicki Taws
	14-17	Round Hill - Easter campout	John Goldie & Kathy Walter
	30	Murrumbateman reserves and TSRs - day	Bill Graham
May	6	ANBG beginners – Saturday morning	Anthony Overs
	13-14	Yass Gorge	To be confirmed
	21	Mt Taylor	Matthew Frawley
June	4	Destination required	Leader required
	18	Superb Lyrebird survey – Tidbinbilla - day	Chris Davey
	25	Wanniassa Hills, Fadden Pond - morning	Ryu Callaway
July	9	Destination required	Leader required
	23	Gundaroo area - day	Bill Graham
August	6	Lake Ginninderra beginners - morning	Anthony Overs
	8-11	Wonga, Bawley Point – mid-week accommo- dated/camping	Terry Bell
	20	Monga National Park - day	David McDonald
			<i>Continued next page</i>

Month	Date	Location	Leader
September	2-3	Eden pelagics – 2 x 1-day trips	Sandra Henderson, Anthony Overs
	6	Mid-week bus trip - day	Jack Holland & Jenny Bounds
	9	Mt Rogers, Spence – Saturday morning	Angharad Dean
	17	Gigerline - morning	David Dedenczuk
	25	Numeralla - day	Sandra Henderson
	31-Oct 2	Buddigower Nature Reserve – long weekend camping/accommodated	Mark Clayton
October	8	K2C surveys - day	Nicki Taws
	9-13	Green Cape – mid-week accommodated	Sue Lashko
	15	Collector, Goulburn, Crookwell –full day	Bill Graham
	17-26	Moree area - extended camping trip	Sue Lashko
	22	Gossan Hill - morning	Chris Davey
	28-29	Bird blitz	Barbara Allan
November	5	Braidwood Landcare surveys - day	Sue Lashko
	12	Campbell Park nest workshop - morning	Jack Holland
	19	Mulligans Flat	Suzi Bond
	26	Destination required	Leader required
December	3	Jerrabomberra Grasslands West	Ryu Callaway
	10	Newline	Sue Lashko

Below are some suggested destinations that COG has not visited for several years. Volunteers are sought to lead trips to these destinations or others of their choosing:

Pinnacle NR

Brooks Hill Reserve near Bungendore

Lake Road, Bungendore

Yanununbeyan Nature Reserve on Captain's Flat Rd

Tinderries

If you can help, contact Sue Lashko by email: smlashko@gmail.com with a proposed destination and date.

Woodland Surveys- winter survey round

compiled by Jenny Bounds

(Part 2 in next Gang-gang – some sites still to be surveyed at time of press)

Mulligans Flat NR

Jenny Bounds and the team surveyed on Sunday 18 September, under threatening skies, but were lucky to finish just as light rain came in. Most of the teams complained of very few birds, but the sheets showed reasonable/average numbers for a cool start to spring. The total species count was 62. Both **Western** and **White-throated Gerygones** were calling, there were 3 species of **Cuckoo**, **Pallid** and both **Shining** and **Horsfield's Bronze-Cuckoos**, as well as **Rufous Whistlers**, **Black-faced Cuckoo-shrikes** and **Olive-backed Orioles** around. Highlights included 1 **Fuscous Honeyeater** feeding in the canopy at site 11, 1 **Yellow Thornbill** at site 3, a few **Superb Parrots** flying around, 2 **Varied Sittellas** at site 5, and 4 **Latham's Snipe** on the small dam upstream from the large dam (which was reported for the Snipe Survey). A few **Golden Whistlers** were also around, and **Speckled Warbler** near the Woolshed. A **Spotted Dove** was at site 1 not far from the Woolshed where this has been occasionally recorded in the past.

Goorooyarroo South NR

The spring survey in the southern half of Goorooyarroo was done by Prue Buckley, and David and Kathy Cook on Sunday 18 September. The day started with an overcast sky and it was cool but thankfully windless; the rain held off until mid-morning and luckily it was only light and intermittent rain for the last 3 sites. The reserve was very wet underfoot with running water in creeks. 49 species were recorded for the morning with 37 of these during counts. Interesting records included **Varied Sittella**, **Superb Parrot**, **Speckled Warbler**, a **Grey Currawong**, a **Collared Sparrowhawk** with prey (a **Starling**) and also a **Yellow-rumped Thornbill** nest building. Summer migrants were rather few, but included **Noisy Friarbird**, **Shining Bronze-Cuckoo**, **Western Gerygone**, **Black-faced Cuckoo-Shrike** and **Olive-backed Oriole**.

Mt Majura NR

Kathy Walter and John Goldie surveyed over three days (21-24 September). The ground was extremely wet with water flowing in various small creeks where not seen before on the surveys. Things were pretty quiet with 31 species over the 9 sites. Only one site had a variety of small birds, the most interesting being a pair of **Speckled Warblers** gathering nesting material.

Majura Field Firing Range

Paul Fennell and Barbara Allan were joined by the Defence Environmental Officer for the survey on Thursday 22 September, a shower-free morning under an overcast sky. The ground was very wet, and a lot of sites had sheets of water over significant areas. There were few surprises, and after a pretty good start in a couple of sites, the numbers dropped off a little. As would be expected at this time of year there was a fair bit of competition for nesting hollows, at sites where they were available, between **Crimson** and **Eastern Rosellas**, **Red-rumped Parrots** and **Australian Wood Ducks**. There was evidence of returning migrant species, including **Olive-backed Oriole**, **Rufous Whistler**, **Grey Fantail**, **Yellow-faced Honey-eater**, and **Pallid, Fan-tailed** and **Horsfield's Bronze-Cuckoo**. There were no **White-eared Honeyeaters** and only one **Eastern Spinebill** observed. A **Common Bronzewing** was seen at one site, rather unusual for this area. **Grey Butcherbirds** and **Grey Shrike-thrushes** were observed at a number of sites. A reasonable number of **Laughing Kookaburras** were seen and heard

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at a number of sites, and on the journey between sites, as were a group of **Tree Martins** and a **Nankeen Kestrel** and a single **Yellow-rumped Thornbill**. There were **Magpies** and **Magpie-larks** at many sites, but fewer **Noisy Miners** than usual. Some small birds were observed at some sites, but completely absent at others, including **Buff-rumped** and **Brown Thornbills**, **Striated Pardalote**, **Superb Fairy-wren** and **Weebill**. A group of **Brown-headed Honeyeaters** was at one site, as well as a lone **Speckled Warbler**.

Mt Ainslie NR/Campbell Park

Michael Lenz and Robin Hide surveyed on Monday 26 September, a brisk, but otherwise fine morning with only light wind, recording 34 species at sites and another 9 between sites. Birds were reluctant to call or sing. Any song that was given lasted only for brief spells. Small bush birds were detected only in small numbers. Records of interest were: 1 **Tawny Frogmouth**, 2 **Fan-tailed Cuckoos** together, 3 **Olive-backed Orioles**, 3 **Mistletoebirds**, 1 **Speckled Warbler** and a **Brown-headed Honeyeater**. **Noisy Miners** were present at 8 of the 9 sites. After the recent incidence of cutting dead trees and dead parts of living trees in Campbell Park proper, Robin Hide had counted a minimum of 20 dead trees that had been felled. This represents significant damage to the site, mostly via loss of tree hollows.

Newline

Sue Lashko reported it was a perfect morning for the spring survey on Saturday 24 September, with blue skies and no wind, but very soggy underfoot. The first site, in the front paddock on the east side of the road in, had an amazing 22 species in the 10 minute survey, including **Olive-backed Oriole**, **Western Gerygone**, **Speckled Warbler** and **Varied Sittella**, as well as **Yellow-faced** and **White-naped Honeyeaters** moving through. Elsewhere, a pair of **Rainbow Lorikeets** were bringing food to very noisy begging chicks in a hollow. Raptors for the morning included **Black-shouldered Kite** and **Nankeen Kestrel**. Notable omissions from the list were **Tree Martins**; perhaps the large numbers of **Common Starlings** and increasing numbers of **Common Mynas** (recorded in 6 of the 9 sites) have driven them out. **Dusky Woodswallow** numbers were low with single birds recorded in just 2 sites. A **Jacky Winter** was calling loudly beside the concrete dump and 3 **Double-barred Finches** were the only finches recorded, perhaps due to the lack of seed.

A total of 45 species was recorded.

Symonston: Callum Brae NR/Isaacs Ridge NR

Sandra Henderson surveyed on Tuesday 13 September, an overcast morning but this did not deter the birds, which

were very active and vocal. The reserve was very wet, with water lying in many areas, and water running in all the gullies. 48 species in total were recorded. A disappointing result was the presence of **Starlings** in 3 of the 6 survey sites, which is very unusual. Highlights included a pair of **Gang-gang Cockatoos** in the first site (and another pair later flying in from the quarry), a pair of **Little Corellas** displaying serious aggression towards **Rainbow Lorikeets** interested in the same hollow, one of a pair of **Speckled Warblers** with a beak full of nesting material, and pairs of **Nankeen Kestrels** and **Brown Goshawks**. Large groups of **Pied Currawongs** were in several areas, including near a tree used by nesting kestrels last year - the two kestrels today were very agitated and chasing the currawongs. As usual, there were dozens of both **Eastern** and **Crimson Rosellas** in the reserve, as well as large groups of **Little Corellas** and **Sulphur-crested Cockatoos**.

Tuggeranong Hill NR

Lia Battisson surveyed on Saturday 24 September, a still and mild morning. A few **Yellow-faced Honeyeaters** and one **Grey Fantail** had made their return. **Common Mynas** and **Common Starlings** squabbled with **Galahs** for nesting hollows at site 2 again, as they often do. Numbers of **Rainbow Lorikeets** had increased from 4 to 6 since last survey. **Australian Magpies** had dependent young and a **Pied Currawong** was building a nest. Site 3 was the most active, with 14 species. In all, 24 species were recorded during the survey periods, with a further 8 species seen or heard elsewhere on the Hill.

Naas Valley rural leasehold

Julie McGuiness surveyed on Saturday 24 September, a beautiful clear, calm day, with lots of water underfoot and drainage lines running. There was no flowering except for a few scattered Early Nancy. Very few small birds were about, only pairs of **Striated** and **Spotted Pardalotes**, **Weebills** and **Yellow-rumped Thornbills**. **Striated Pardalotes** were seen nest building in a Blakely's Red Gum hollow. Small parties of **Yellow-faced Honeyeaters**, and one 50 strong, were flying southwest. The only migrants observed were one **Rufous Whistler**, a couple of **Western Gerygones** and a few **Dusky Woodswallows**. The species in any numbers were the parrots, **Crimson** and **Eastern Rosellas** and **Red-rumped Parrots**. **White-winged Choughs** were on a nest. One **Diamond Firetail** was seen outside the woodland site.

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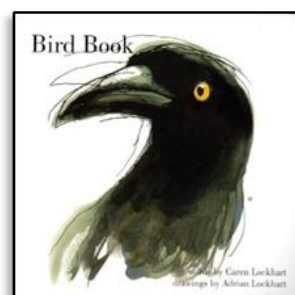
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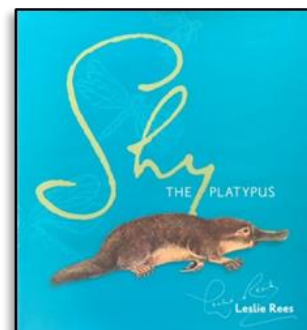
Shy The Platypus

Leslie Rees

National Library Publishing presents a stylish, highly illustrated re-publication of Leslie Rees' classic tale, *Shy the Platypus*. This exciting story of the life of a young platypus describes her growing up and experiencing encounters with humans, other platypuses and different animals.

Leslie Rees published over 40 children's books and won major awards (Order of Australia & NSW Premier's Award) for his 'contribution to Australian literature'. Leslie Rees' animal stories were an important part of the Australian children's books from the 1940s onwards.

Member's price \$15.

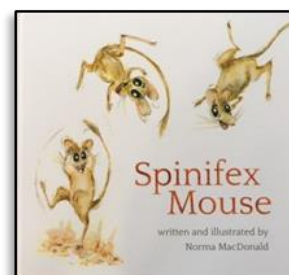


Spinifex Mouse

Norma Macdonald

Spinifex Mouse is the heart warming tale of Cheeky, a spinifex hopping mouse, who lives in the Pilbara region of Western Australia. Cheeky is an adventurous little mouse who loves to leap high into the air and practice acrobatic tricks. Every morning, when his family have returned to their burrow to sleep after a nights foraging, Cheeky sneaks out to look for more food and practice his flips. Each day, he ventures a little further from the burrow. One morning, when Cheeky is far from home, he shows off his clever tricks in front of a hungry snake and becomes swept up in a heart-stopping and very risky adventure.

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- Institution: \$40
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COG welcomes the following new members:

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M Agnew
S Genner

NEXT NEWSLETTER

Deadline for November 2016 edition

Wednesday 26 October 2016

Please send articles, advertisements, updates etc. to the Editors at:

gang-gang@canberrabirds.org.au

Or

c/- The Secretary COG,

PO Box 301 Civic Square, ACT 2608

Articles should be less than 500 words (300 for reports of 1-day field trips) except by prior arrangement with the editor.

Photographs (prints or electronic) with or without articles are encouraged.

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