



# Gang-gang

**DECEMBER 2017**

Newsletter of the Canberra Ornithologists Group Inc.

## JANUARY MEETING

**Wednesday 10 January 2018**

**7.30 pm**

### COG QUIZ NIGHT

Due to the unavailability of our usual meeting venue, the 10 January 2018 COG meeting will be a Quiz Night:

#### QUIZ MASTER – MARK CLAYTON

There will be a Range of Questions to encourage participation from all levels of bird knowledge.

At the door there will a Draw for Seats at the Tables.

Prior registration is not required but it would be helpful if you could let Mark know on [chollop7@bigpond.com](mailto:chollop7@bigpond.com) if you intend to come.

**VENUE – St James Uniting Church Hall, off Gillies St, Curtin**

There is parking for at least 30 cars in the car park off Gillies Street, and further parking in Gillies St itself, or across the road at the Curtin shops.

Please use the entrance on the eastern side next to the Good Shepherd Anglican Church and by going under the Chocolate Bear Playgroup sign.

Please bring your own supper and drinks, including alcohol.

A good-sized kitchen with a fridge is available for our use.

**Everyone welcome**

## Summary/analysis of the past month and what to watch out for over the next two months

The weather over the past 6½ weeks since I wrote my November column has been unexpectedly different from the hot, dry conditions that were forecast for spring. It has been relatively cool with small but regular rainfalls except for one heavier but steady fall on 6 November, the benefits of which seemed to disappear very quickly. Over the last week of the reporting period to 29 November there were some localised very heavy falls as the result of storms, but well before that it was clear that bird activity in the COG area of interest (Aoi) was different from what I had predicted at the end of September based on the flurry of unexpected species which had come in the prior six or so days to then.

Certainly the species which I suggested people look out for as they only come to the COG Aoi in very dry years have not arrived, and are now very unlikely. However, typically one species I did not predict, a male **Crimson Chat**, did come and was seen by many observers as it stayed around a small area on the eastern side of Mt Ainslie for at least 5 days after it was first reported on 19 November. While there is no entry for it in the 2015-2016 Annual Bird Report

*Continued Page 2*

## COG December BBQ

**Black Mountain Peninsula**  
(John Cardiff Close)

**6.00pm Wednesday 13 December 2017**

**Bring a salad or dessert to share, and serving utensils.**

**BYO plates, cutlery, glasses, table and chairs.**

**Sausages, onions, beer, wine and soft drinks provided.**

**Lucky door prize and raffle.**



**Crimson chat** (Campbell Park)

*Robin Eckermann*



**Peregrine Falcon** (Red Rocks Gorge)

*Tony Clark*



**Black Kite** being pursued by **Noisy Friarbird** (Red Rocks Gorge)

*Ann Eldridge*

## Summary/analysis of the past month and what to watch out for over the next two months —continued

*from Page 1*

(ABR), this species is mentioned in the recently updated (22 November 2017) version of “An Annotated List of the Birds of the ACT 2017” on the COG website, where it is noted as a non-breeding vagrant needing submission of an Unusual Bird Report form. The page summary under Bird Info on the website shows records in October/November 2003 and 2009, the latter if I recall correctly being around Yerrabi Pond and that bird was nowhere near as obliging as the current one. While they do come to the western edge of the Divide close to the ACT you wonder where just a single bird would come from, and why it would stay in the same place for at least a few days.

One puzzle to me is relatively low numbers of the **Rufous Songlark**, a species I had expected to be present in significant numbers in the spring/summer season. Indeed the signs of lower numbers were already there in mid-October as hinted at in my November column covering the 2 ½ weeks from 27 September. While the eBird map shows it has been recorded from around 16 different sites over the past month, numbers, particularly those seen together (maximum of 6), seem to have been comparatively small compared with what I had expected. Most telling is that none has been recorded at Narrabundah Hill in October or November. This is a usual stronghold for this species, with even last year after the very wet spring at least 3 being present on the western side, compared with over 15 in the much drier year before. Michael Lenz attributes the lack of grass as the reason he’s been seeing so few, but this doesn’t seem to be the case at Narrabundah Hill, at least not to my eyes. They certainly don’t seem to be present in the same numbers as the **White-winged Triller**, recorded in around twice as many sites and also as breeding.

In contrast, numbers of the related **Brown Songlark** do seem to be higher than usual with reports over the past month from about 12 localities, including from Jerrabomberra Wetlands and around Parkwood, just across the NW border of the ACT (but interestingly no longer at the National Arboretum from where they were first reported). However, the highest number of 19 birds was reported by Michael Lenz on the eastern side of Lake George, where Michael has also counted up to 28 of the **Horsfield’s Bushlark** which he notes were mainly in grain fields which from my experience they favour. Closer to Canberra numbers appear lower as it seems only to have been reported from the NW border around Parkwood over the past month.

The increasingly wetter weather has also meant most of the **White-browed Woodswallow** have moved away from the COG Aol over the past month. In mid-October Michael Lenz reported over 300 in the Gundaroo area, mainly feeding in flowering Red Box, but they departed once the flowering ceased. However, he still found 25 birds east of Tarago in

mid-November, where they were feeding in flowering Snow Gum remnants and included 2 pairs with nests (one of them containing 2 eggs), the only breeding I am aware of this season. Closer to home a single bird has recently been recorded at Giralang Pond, and only one of the related **Masked Woodswallow** was recorded at the Crace Ponds early in November.

My impression, including from COG chatline posts, was that numbers of the **Pallid Cuckoo** had also dropped since mid-October, but this is not supported by the eBird map which shows them having been recorded from 17 spots over the past month. Likewise the eBird map shows the **Brush Cuckoo** recorded from around 11 spots including from the mountains where most of them should now be looking for an opportunity to breed. I'm also aware of 4 reports of the **Channel-billed Cuckoo**. This species is usually only heard calling loudly as it moves through quickly, but one report noted a large bird only seen in silhouette that flew over calling distinctively, with **Australian Ravens** and **Pied Currawongs** giving chase. So please continue to keep an ear out for this species.

By the last few days of spring all of the species usually expected to arrive in the COG Aol were now present, though numbers of the **Satin Flycatcher**, the **Rufous Fantail**, and particularly the **Cicadabird**, for which there have been only 2 reports, are low. So look out for them in the Brindabellas where they spend the summer to breed. Numbers of the **Fuscous Honeyeater** reported have also been low and restricted to their summer stronghold in Namadgi NP.

Finally the **Eastern Koel** is by now well established in the Canberra suburbs and, from chatline reports, activity from mid-November seemed to be increasing with up to 5 seen together and 2 reports of females possibly having laid eggs. Interestingly activity in my local area of Rivett/Chapman has been much reduced this year compared with 2016-2017. Calling has been mainly distant with the three birds I have been able to see so far being females giving their "whip whip" (the rendition of their call which I prefer) calls from as early as 1 November. So keep an eye/ear out for these over the next few months, especially for fledglings from the end of the year which you will be readily alerted to by their loud and insistent single noted begging call (like a very loud **Red Wattlebird** fledgling's, of which there are many around at the moment).

Apart from the **Apostlebird** reported a number of times in Watson, where it has now been surviving for well over a year, and the **Crimson Chat** mentioned above, **Scarlet Honeyeaters** have been the most widely reported "unusual" species. They seem to have moved from the ANBG where they were last reported on 29 October, and over the reporting period were observed at 5 other locations including most remarkably on the eastern side of Mt Ainslie very close to the **Crimson Chat** when it was first found. This is a very interesting juxtaposition of an inland and a coastal species coming together in Canberra.

On 1 November Tony Lawson posted a link on the COG chatline to a Birdlife Australia article on their website on the Invasion of **Scarlet Honeyeaters** with the horrendously dry conditions and associated bushfires in parts of Queensland and New South Wales attributed to having combined to drive the birds further south in search of more favourable conditions. In the last few weeks Scarlet Honeyeaters had been seen in any number of unexpected places such as Phillip Island,



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Good birding, good food ...

**Tasmanian bird & mammal tour**  
**Bruny Island, Melaleuca, pelagic trip**  
3 to 10 February 2018

**Alice Springs & MacDonnell**  
**Ranges birding tour. Includes Sandhill**  
**Grasswren**  
21 to 28 April 2018

**Top End birding tour includes Kakadu NP,**  
**Kunnunurra & Mitchell Plateau**  
23 May to 6 June 2018

**Gulf of Carpentaria, Cairns, Karumba,**  
**Cloncurry, Mt Isa, Winton & Atherton**  
**Tablelands. Includes Rusty Grasswren**  
2 to 20 July 2018

**Atherton Tablelands & Iron Range**  
26 July to 8 August 2018 parts i & ii

**New Caledonia birding tour**  
**includes Lifou an Ouvéa Islands**  
18 to 25 August 2018

**Strzelecki Track Outback tour**  
2 to 21 September  
40 th tour!

**Plains-wanderer weekends**  
20 & 21 October 2018  
3 & 4 November 2018  
17 & 18 November 2018  
1 & 2 December 2018

Please see itineraries, checklists and  
latest news on our website

[www.philipmaher.com](http://www.philipmaher.com)

and there were numerous records from further west in Victoria, especially in Geelong and the surrounding district, as well as in suburban Melbourne.

The third of the “red-coloured” species visiting the COG Aol this spring, the **Red-capped Robin**, has also continued to be widely observed from at least 12 locations over the past month. Of most interest to me has been a couple of breeding records with on 7 November Steve Wallace reporting adults feeding young in the nest at Jerrabomberra Wetlands. The chick had fledged on 22 November when it spent all of its time hiding at the top of the willow in which the nest was built. On 17 November Michael Lenz saw a male **Red-capped Robin** feeding a fledgling at the same site where he had previously seen a pair in a roadside row of pine trees in the wider Tarago area.

The increasingly wetter conditions are likely to lead to an improved breeding season as illustrated by the extensive breeding seen during the annual Nest Workshop (see report elsewhere in this issue). Apart from those reported there (and the **White-browed Woodswallow** and **Red-capped Robin** above) other species reported showing breeding activity include the **Collared Sparrowhawk** and **Brown Goshawk**, **Laughing Kookaburra**, **Rainbow Bee-eater**, **Yellow Thornbill**, **Jacky Winter** (again on a nest) and **Australasian Pipit**, but the following are worth reporting in some more detail:

- On 30 October, Christine D and Kim Larmour reported that at Bluetts Block (Uriarra) two adult **Chestnut-rumped Heathwren** were seen together as well as indications of at least one recently fledged youngster. The chick was only glimpsed as it followed an adult at speed along the leaf litter, and appeared the same size but with a tiny tail.
- The next day Steve Wallace posted on the COG chatline a photo of a juvenile **Chestnut-rumped Heathwren** still being fed by its parents at the same spot on the same day. This species is now listed as a rare breeding resident in the recently updated “An Annotated Checklist of the Birds of the ACT 2017”, with Steve having looked into the COG database and found two records of dependent young in the ACT in the 1990s. So the breeding at Bluetts was not the first for the ACT as might have been suggested by the 2016-2017 ABR.
- On 29 October during the Blitz as Rod MacKay was launching his canoe in Molonglo Reach he was confronted by 1 white and 3 grey geese, being very protective of the 15 goslings with them. These are the four **Greylag Geese** which I have observed there for the past 5 years on the annual COG boat trip. While the numbers have been stable over this time, hopefully they aren’t about to significantly increase!
- On 21 November Sandra Henderson posted that once again the pair of **Peregrine Falcon** parents have raised three new peregrines to fledging stage at Red Rocks Gorge. She has watched them for three of the past four years, and they have successfully raised three each time, which is an excellent success rate.
- A couple of days later Tony Clark saw a **White-bellied Sea-Eagle** extremely low heading upstream with one of the Peregrines doing a bit of a “tussle” with it, as it did when it returned downstream when Tony was able to take a few photos. A day later Sandra reported a **Black Kite** cruised over, being hotly pursued by a **Noisy Friarbird**, again interesting juxtapositions of some of our less common raptors.

When my next column will be published in two months’ time some of the spring/summer migrants, which just come here to breed, may all have already departed, or will be close to having done so. So please keep an eye out for the last **Horsfield’s Bushlark**, and **Brown** and **Rufous**



## Birdwatchers & nature lover's accommodation

Feathers'n'Friends cottage is fully self-contained with extensive facilities to ensure guests can enjoy short or extended stays.

The secluded lodging is surrounded by tropical rainforest and beautiful gardens with varying habitats and a large variety of birds and wildlife.

Activities in the area include birdwatching at nearby Mt Lewis and other birdwatching locations, as well as Daintree River nature tours and other attractions.

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**Songlark**, which have often left by the end of January. **White-browed** and **Masked Woodswallows** are also seldom seen in the New Year. However, two species to look out for from now as they are more commonly seen in the first 3 months of the year (none reported to date on the eBird database), are the **White-throated Needletail** and the related **Fork-tailed Swift**, especially before, during and after stormy weather.

So please watch out for the above species and especially for any further breeding activity. As usual please ensure that all significant observations are properly reported and end up on the COG database.

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

*Jack Holland*

## COG's Bird Blitz - 28-29 October 2017

While the weather was less than perfect, with fog in the mountains on the Saturday and drizzle Saturday evening, most blitzers managed to complete their surveys. To date there have been 297 returns: 196 via eBird; 101 hard copy; and an uncertain number yet to be received from Birdata; and possible "strays".

An initial count showed 178 bird species were recorded over the weekend, including two new for the blitz, **Scarlet Honeyeaters** and **Musk Lorikeets**. Pleasingly too, a few infrequently recorded species put in an appearance, including **Wonga Pigeon**, **Pilotbird**, **Chestnut-rumped Heathwren** and **Spotted Harrier**.

A huge "thank you" to the 81 named individuals and their companions for joining in and helping us get such a complete snapshot of the ACT avifauna at the height of spring.

A further update of results will be presented, along with prizes, at the February COG meeting so come along – there will be something for every participant as well as lucky draws for special categories of "finds".

*Barbara Allan, blitz coordinator*

## Steve Wilson Medal Presentation at 2017 AGM



Neil Hermes (left) and Bruce Lindenmayer (right) with Michael Lenz (centre) who received the Steve Wilson Medal for 2017

*Lia Battisson*



**Wonga Pigeon**

*Geoffrey Dabb*

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## Field Trip Reports

### Sunday 5 November – Braidwood Landcare surveys

Nine COG members carried out the surveys on 5 properties on a cool, still day. The area was noticeably drier than on previous surveys and this no doubt contributed to lower bird numbers than usual. Nevertheless, 55 species were recorded on Jillamatong where there were many waterbirds, in particular.

Several species were recorded for the first time including **Baillon's Crakes**, **Australian Shelducks** (and 13 offspring) and a **Swamp Harrier** on Jillamatong, **Striated Thornbills** on several properties, **Rufous Fantail** on Clarevale, and a pair of **Eastern Whipbirds** on Durham Hall, the latter two species usually being found in wet forests. Many of the species that migrate north for the winter had returned including **White-winged Triller**, **Dusky Woodswallow**, **Dollarbird**, **Australian Reed-Warbler** and **Rufous Songlark**. Perhaps the dry conditions accounted for the absence of any cuckoos or **Sacred Kingfishers** which returned to Canberra several weeks ago.

One particularly interesting bird found in the remnant on Durham Hall was a "blue" rosella which showed no crimson; in place of the crimson was pale yellow. It was with a normal **Crimson Rosella** and from the attention they were showing in a tree hollow, it seemed that they were a pair intent on breeding. At lunch, one property owner produced a photo of a "blue" rosella taken in his garden in August 2017 and I have had a report of one on Mt Sunset this year. Another property owner can recall seeing a "blue" rosella in the area in 1998. It is possible for rosellas to live for more than 19 years but it is more likely that they have bred with normal **Crimson Rosellas** and produced several more blue birds. The fact that the Durham Hall bird was more yellow than the bird in the photo supports this theory.

Fellow members of COG (thanks to Ryu Callaway and Philip Veerman) have suggested the following explanation:

- A bird may carry the mutated (recessive) gene but not show it.
- In this case the "mutant" gene exists at low levels in the population. So most birds do not show or carry the "mutant" gene.
- The 'blue' Rosella must have received the mutant gene from both parents.
- Where 2 normal parents are both carrying the recessive gene: on average, all other things being equal, 25% of their offspring will show the 'blue' character, other 75% normal.
- Where there is 1 blue rosella parent and the other normal parent carrying the recessive gene: on average, all other things being equal, 50% of their offspring will show the 'blue' character, other half normal.
- Where there is 1 blue rosella and the other normal parent is not carrying the recessive gene, they will only produce normal looking offspring, although all of the offspring will carry the mutant and the normal gene.
- Where there are 2 blue rosella parents: all of any offspring will show the 'blue' character.

Sue Lashko



"Blue" **Crimson rosella** (Braidwood area, August 2017)  
*Virginia Hooker*

### Sunday 12 November – Campbell Park nest workshop

Thirty-five members and guests joined Stuart Rae and me for the 15th running of this annual and continuing popular event. Again the e-mailing of the notes beforehand allowed me to largely dispense with the short spiel at the start, and we soon headed fairly directly to beyond the horse gate where an inspection the day before had revealed most of the (somewhat muted) bird activity was taking place. Not unusually for recent workshops I did so with low expectations given I'd not been able to find any breeding activity there in 45 minutes.

However, before leaving the carpark we had already found the cup-shaped nest of a **Noisy Miner**, with an adult sitting in it, highish in a medium sized tree above our heads where we had gathered. This species seems to be ever increasingly each year responsible for the lack of smaller birds now right up to the horse gate. However, about 50 m before this we found dad **Tawny Frogmouth** with two young beside him on a branch, getting the day off to a good

start. More remarkably on the ground under the tree were two dependent young **Common Bronzewings**, perfectly formed but about half adult size, reluctant to fly as they tried to sneak away from us, relying on their camouflage.

Once over the horse gate we first observed the very deep cup-shaped nest of the **Noisy Friarbird**; we assumed it was still being built as no bird could be seen on it and, while a bird was close, it was only later actually seen to approach it. We then spent time admiring at least a dozen **Red-rumped Parrots** interacting in a dead tree, with some of them busy around a possible nest hollow. By this time we had reached the little creek that goes under the track (with the small dam down slope). Moving up the north side of this creek line we first found the large bowl-shaped mud nest of the **White-winged Chough**. This was empty but then we found a bird on a similar nest on the opposite side of the adjacent tree; soon after a number of adults approached with food allowing two young to be seen sticking their heads above the rim begging to be fed. At a similar height on the other side of this tree a **Magpie-lark** was sitting on a much smaller mud nest, with a pair of **Willie Wagtails** building underneath but much lower down.

We then admired a hard-to-see **Rufous Whistler** nest. Some of the participants had seen the pair building, as they had **Weebills** high in a nearby tree, but in the interim Stuart had found a pair of the latter building a nest much lower down at the top of a very straggly, scarcely 1 metre high sapling. This nearly complete dome-shaped nest was much admired, as the side entrance to the nest was clearly visible. We then moved back up the creek line where Stuart had found the dome-shaped nest of the **White-throated Gerygone** on the south side – again this was much admired (including the lovely call) from a distance as the two birds brought in food for the presumed young.

After this we decided to have morning tea ourselves before moving to the gully/creek on the east side of the horse gate. Before getting there we admired a pair of **Leaden Flycatchers** examining possible nest sites. These had been heard around but seemed very mobile, clearly not yet settled down on the best spot. Once near the gully we soon found a **Grey Fantail's** nest in a somewhat atypical spot wedged in a multi-branched vertical fork, hard to find unless you followed the bird to it (we later found another being built in a more typical spot, also with a "pony tail" which this one lacked). While watching this a male **White-winged Triller** (a species again which had been very mobile with males often chasing each other), finally sat for a good view until we realised this was just above a female sitting on a shallow nest typically in a horizontal fork towards the end of a branch. While still very small, this one was easier to view than the one we had seen earlier near the mud nests, which we could be certain of only because the parents were taking food to it.

A little further on we observed **Willie Wagtails** as well as a pair of **Yellow-rumped Thornbills** with dependent young, the



Male **Tawny Frogmouth** with two young  
*Renée Levy*



**Weebill** nest  
*Renée Levy*



Male **White-winged Triller** on nest  
*Renée Levy*

former still with very short tails. Then immediately above us at just over head height there was another dome-shaped **White-throated Gerygone** nest. We moved on partly not to disturb the nest site (the parents had been calling very loudly), but also because we heard the closely related but much plainer **Western Gerygone** calling, with then 2 birds seen seemingly gathering nesting material. Again we were able to watch the nest being built, which was fairly complete but still needed work on the side entrance (though it has been present on several occasions since, this is the first time we have confirmed breeding activity of this species here since 2005).

Over the fence we finally found some **Dusky Woodswallows** but only Stuart during his scouting around actually saw nest building. We were much luckier with several **Varied Sittellas** just at the point of starting to build their exquisite nest in a vertical dead fork on which Stuart put up his scope so that everyone could see the activity. Also seen but for which no breeding activity could be confirmed were several **Black-faced Cuckoo-shrikes** and a pair of **Dollarbirds**, as well as **Mistletoebirds**, with **Olive-backed Oriole** and **Horsfield's Bronze-cuckoo** also heard by some participants.

A total of 44 species were seen on the day, 45 when we add the **Little Eagle** attacking the **Wedge-tailed Eagle** which participants had seen overhead, as clearly identified by Renée's photo. This is a relatively low number for this outing with some species heard on the day before such as the **Sacred Kingfisher** not recorded. However, 20 species were recorded breeding at some level, higher than in the past three years. My thanks again to Stuart Rae for helping me lead (in particular for his scouting while I looked after the large but remarkably cohesive group) this very popular outing which continues to delight participants. As for last year, much breeding activity was taking place in a small space on either side of the creek line between the two small ponds about 100 m past the horse gate, but also along the gully that runs SE down from this to the dam on the eastern side of Campbell Park.

Jack Holland

### Wednesday 15 November - Lake Tuggeranong

Twelve members met at 8:30am at the edge of Lake Tuggeranong in Greenway. It promised to be a nice day, as we set out anti-clockwise around the edge. Honeyeaters were represented by **Red Wattlebird**, **White-plumed Honeyeater** and **Noisy Friarbirds**. **Masked Lapwings** have successfully raised three chicks and other breeding records included **Australian Reed-Warbler**, **Magpie-lark** and **Australasian Swamphen** with fledglings, **Black-faced Cuckoo-Shrike** on a nest, a pair of **Black Swans** with 4 cygnets and the familiar sound of a young **Australian Magpie** begging for food. A very astute member of our group identified the corella that was drinking from the beach as a **Long-billed Corella**. A flock of **Little Corellas** flew over. Perhaps they

were not all Little! There were little flocks of **Australian Wood Ducks** everywhere and about 40 **Australian Ravens**, most of them in the vicinity of Tuggeranong Park.



Black swans with cygnets Lia Battisson

The flock of about 60 **Little Black Cormorants** returned from their fishing trip before the end of our walk and were sunning themselves by the spillway. The species count for the morning was 42.

Lia Battisson

### Sunday 19 November – Mulligans Flat

After several days of rainy, cool weather it was a pleasant surprise to have a beautiful sunny, clear morning for our walk in Mulligans Flat, from the carpark to the Big Dam and back again. The birds seemed to take delight in the change of weather too, with continuous bird activity for the entire four-hour duration of the walk. Seventeen COG members were treated to 59 identified species of bird (plus one unidentified woodswallow, most likely a **Dusky Woodswallow**) for the morning, and there were quite a few breeding records.

While the woodland birds were putting on a good show, in contrast there wasn't much excitement at the Big Dam. We saw a good range of small insectivorous woodland birds including **White-throated Treecreeper**, **Spotted** and **Striated Pardalote**, **Buff-rumped**, **Brown** and **Yellow-rumped Thornbill**, **Weebill**, **White-throated** and **Western Gerygone**, **Rufous Whistler**, **Grey Fantail**, **Varied Sittella**, **Speckled Warbler**, **Leaden Flycatcher**, and **Scarlet** and **Red-capped Robin**. Other highlights included **Superb Parrot**, **Olive-backed Oriole**, **Pink-eared Duck** and **Red-kneed Dotterel**.

We recorded 11 breeding events and 5 probable breeding events: a pair of **Grey Teal** with 10 ducklings on the smaller

dam near the reserve entrance, **Tawny Frogmouths** with two fledglings, **Red Wattlebirds** feeding nestlings, **Noisy Friarbird** sitting on nest, **Buff-rumped Thornbill** adult carrying food, **Yellow-rumped Thornbill** adult carrying food, recently fledged young **Pied Currawong**, nest-building **Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike**, an **Australian Raven** carrying nesting material and another with begging young, and a **Red-capped Robin** pair nest-building. Unconfirmed breeding records included **Eastern Rosella**, **Common Starling** and **Common Myna** all using tree hollows, a possible young **Varied Sittella**, and probable courtship behaviour by **Rufous Whistlers**.

It was also a good morning for incidental records of other groups of animals, including an Echidna, Jacky Dragon, Eastern Long-necked Turtle, Delicate and Boulenger's Skinks, Plains and Common Eastern Froglets, Spotted Grass Frogs, Whistling Tree-frog, Eastern Grey Kangaroos, Swamp and Red-necked Wallabies, Meadow Argus, quite a few Common Browns, Cabbage Whites, Australian Painted Lady, Common Grass-blues, Grapevine Moths, and, rather excitingly, a Golden Sun Moth.

Suzi Bond

### For Sale

**2 acres with creek frontage**, in centre of picturesque village of **Gunning**.

**Position, position, position – and birds, birds** (approx **90 species** including breeding rare species).

Bird list can be provided as well as photos (but last week 2 Nankeen Night Herons for the week). Current residents: pair Pacific Black Ducks with 11 ducklings, 12 Wood Ducks, 2 Grey Teal, 3 Latham's Snipe, Little Pied Cormorants (1-3), 3 White-faced Herons, Grey Fantails with young, Rosellas, Cockatoos, Peewees with 3 young, and many more. Other recent sightings: Royal Spoonbill, Great Egret. Many other breeding species, including Blue Billed Ducks with 3 young.

67km from Canberra, 35km from Yass. 243km from Sydney. Water, sewerage, on site. Phone & power runs alongside. 2 blocks from cafes, swimming pool, pub, chemist, other shops. 3 blocks from Dr, health centre, newsagent, library, Post Office, vet, etc. 4 blocks from school, local tennis courts etc.

**\$140,000 ono** (owner needs to sell due to family illness in Qld)

Contact Robin 0401771642 or [rvilliersbrown@gmail.com](mailto:rvilliersbrown@gmail.com)

PS: Post Xmas also selling 1 acre with creek frontage; house (2br, 1bath, 2 car garage).

Very suitable for retirees or first home owners. (Plenty of room to expand (1 acre)) or use as weekender/holiday home or to retire/downsize to). No work needed.

## Nature Lodge Optics

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.

Major brands such as Steiner, Zeiss, Bushnell, Nikon & Pentax are



represented together with smaller hi-tech brands like Weaver, Vortex, Forest Optics, Visionary and Vanguard.

A selection of Spotting Scopes, Night Vision & Tripods are always available.

As a family business and NOT a franchise the owners Daniel and Joanna Payne will always be happy to source the specialist or unusual products that individual customers require having established a global network of suppliers.

The store also specialises in polarised eyewear with brands such as Maui Jim, RayBan & Oakley to name just a few.

The helpful and informative website [www.binoculars4u.com.au](http://www.binoculars4u.com.au) is regularly updated but is no substitute for personal service and recommendation which is always on hand.

**We welcome customers new and old to call us on 02 4441 7770**

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## For Sale:

### **Kowa Spotting Scope**

TSN- 664M

Direct View

Prominar XD lens

Purchased 06/06/16

\$1500.ono



### **Zeiss Diascope 85 FL with Zeiss lens**

Purchased 20/12/16

Price \$2000.ono



Both scopes in excellent condition and come with padded carrying cases, cleverly allowing mounting and viewing without removing entire case.



### **Additional for sale items:**

- |   |           |
|---|-----------|
| *Carbon Fibre Tripod -Sirui N 3203X in carry bag                        | \$400.ono |
| *Carbon Fibre Tripod -Tournament Feisol CT3342                          | \$300.ono |
| *Fluid Video Head -Manfrotto F1120392 MV H500AH                         | \$150.ono |
| *Parametric Head Mount- Nest NT530H                                     | \$200.ono |
| *Ball Head -Sunway Foto FB-36 w/dual lever quick release clamp<br>DLC42 | \$100.ono |
| *Monopod head with dual lever clamp 66mm – Sunway DT-<br>001 w/DLC-60   | \$80.ono  |
| *Door brace for car mount -Kirk 8085611161                              | \$200.ono |
| *Window rest unused in box -Berlebach 50121                             | \$80.ono  |

**Contact:** Lynda May-Berendsen 046 833 2179 in Merimbula.

## COG Trips

Each participant must sign a COG Field Trip Registration Form at the start of each trip and before proceeding on the trip which acknowledges the participant's responsibilities (wording follows). An Emergency Contact Name and Number are required.

"I declare that I am capable of undertaking the 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 that I am adequately equipped.

I will follow the instructions of the Field Trip Leader, and advise them before moving away from the group."

Changes to trips are notified on the COG chatline

[http://  
bioacoustics.cse.unsw.edu.au/  
archives/html/  
canberrabirds/2012-03/  
index.html](http://bioacoustics.cse.unsw.edu.au/archives/html/canberrabirds/2012-03/index.html)

and trips page of COG website.

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

### Sunday 10 December – Newline

Meet at 8am off Pialligo Avenue at the entry to the track that leads to Newline Quarry. Directions: if coming from the city, pass Canberra Airport, continue on Pialligo Ave at the traffic lights at Scherger Ave (which goes to Fairbairn). Soon after, on your right, you will see the entry to the concrete recycling dump. Do NOT turn in here. Turn in at the next track on the right. There is no sign. Be careful of fast-moving traffic approaching from Queanbeyan, as well as traffic behind you. If the road is not clear, pull over to the left and wait until it is safe to make the turn. Park out of the way of any vehicles that may be going to the quarry.

We will spend a couple of hours birding in the front paddock and along the track to the quarry. Bring hat, water, sunscreen and wear appropriate footwear and trousers as it is snake season.

Sue Lashko

Advance notice of **2018** trips as there is no January Gang-gang

### Sunday 14 January – Uriarra

The meeting point for COG's annual outing will again be next to Uriarra Homestead big dam, close to the T-intersection of Uriarra and Brindabella Roads at 8.30 am. We will spend some time looking at birds on and around the dam, then come back to Uriarra Crossing and then Uriarra East for lunch. We are likely to see quite a few unusual birds and migrants including **Nankeen Night-Heron**, woodswallows, **Dollarbird** and **Rainbow Bee-eater**. There are good picnic and toilet facilities at both Uriarra Crossing venues. Please bring lunch and water.

Getting there is a bit complicated, following rapid urban development in Molonglo. OLD STREET DIRECTORIES ARE LIKELY TO BE UNHELPFUL! Starting at the intersection of Cotter Road and Streeton Drive, travelling out of Canberra, Cotter Road becomes John Gorton Drive. Follow John Gorton Drive. YOU NOW HAVE TWO POSSIBLE ROUTES.

ROUTE 1. Travelling along John Gorton Drive you will (again) come to an intersection with Cotter Road. Turn left and follow this for about 15km past Mt Stromlo and the Cotter Reserve to the T-intersection with Uriarra Road. Turn right and the big dam is on your right.

ROUTE 2. In John Gorton Drive go on until you come to Opperman Avenue. Turn left and follow on straight to the roundabout near Stromlo Forest Park, where you turn right to Uriarra Road. Follow Uriarra Road over the Uriarra Crossing, turn left up the hill until you come to the big dam on your right. It is slightly shorter than ROUTE 1 if coming from Belconnen

Bruce Lindenmayer

### Sunday 4 February – Jerrabomberra Wetlands

To celebrate World Wetlands Day (2 February), during this morning outing we will visit Kelly Swamp and Jerrabomberra Creek. Depending on numbers, the group may be divided into two, so a volunteer to lead a possible second group would be appreciated. Bring hat, sunscreen, water and, if you have one, a telescope. Meet at 7.30am in the carpark at the end of Dairy Road, Fyshwick. No booking required.

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### Sunday 11 February - Molonglo Reach Boat Trip

This outing/cruise will be on the upper parts of Lake Burley Griffin (East Basin) and the adjacent Molonglo River Reach, where late summer/early autumn is historically the peak time for nesting, with darters as well as three species of cormorant known to breed there. The area also has a variety of waterbirds, and a range of land birds can be seen on the banks.

The boat trip will last about 2 hours from 8 am and will cost \$20, payable in cash on boarding. This year we will again be travelling in the electric boat "MV Gull" which can carry around 22 people. The boat allows both a quiet approach as well as access to areas difficult to get to from the land. **The point of departure will again be from Kingston Harbour using the wharf at the end of Giles Street.** There is plenty of all day free weekend parking close by, particularly in Eastlake Parade. Alternatively participants can park their cars in the SE corner of the Glass Works/Bus Depot Markets car park, which will involve about a 200 m walk. Registration for this field trip is essential. Please book your place on the boat with Jack Holland (on 6288 7840 or by email on [jandaholland@bigpond.com](mailto:jandaholland@bigpond.com)).

### Mid-May 2018 - Jenolan Caves birding and dining

This is to canvass interest in joining Michael Robbins on his May 2018 break at Caves House, Jenolan (most likely the 15, 16 and 17th). He is happy to show other COG members the locations he has most often seen **Superb Lyrebird** display, **Red-browed Treecreeper** and **Crested Shrike-tit** among other species. The plan would be to visit Kanangra Walls and a few other birdy spots on the way up and back to Jenolan. This would be an 'indulgent/pricey' trip staying at Caves House and eating in the restaurant for two nights (there is no campground, although there is a backpacker 'lodge' and motel style accommodation) - see <http://www.jenolancaves.org.au/accommodation/refurbishment-news/>. Please let Michael ([mrobbins@home.netspeed.com.au](mailto:mrobbins@home.netspeed.com.au)) know if you're interested in joining him next May.

\*\*\*\*\*

## Updated Annotated Checklist of the Birds of the ACT – November 2017

COG's Annotated Checklist of the Birds of the ACT was updated in November 2017, under the authority of the Committee of COG. It is available online in PDF format at <http://canberrabirds.org.au/publications/maps-forms-and-lists/annotated-checklist-of-the-birds-of-the-australian-capital-territory/>. The new version is dated 22 November 2017, and contains 305 taxa. The taxonomic order and nomenclature—English and scientific names—used in this checklist largely follow [Birdlife Australia's Working List of Australian Birds, version 2.1](#) (BLA's WLAB), in accordance with COG's policy on the matter.

The 'Status' column reflects the likelihood that an experienced birder would record the species during a day of bird observing, at the right time of year, in the appropriate habitat. The Checklist identifies threatened species, i.e. those declared Endangered or Vulnerable in the ACT or NSW. For more detailed information on the status of the birds of the ACT and region, please see COG's *Annual Bird Report*, produced annually and available online at <http://canberrabirds.org.au/publications/canberra-bird-notes/> (by scrolling down to the Archives and looking for the most recent edition).

Under the auspices of COG's Committee, I prepared the 2017 revision, supported by Chris Davey and with inputs from some other COG members.

The main updates reflect:

- Changes to BLA's WLAB taxonomic order and nomenclature, e.g. changing the Australian Pipit to Australasian Pipit and *Ninox novaeseelandiae* to *Ninox boobook*
- Additions to the ACT list that have been endorsed by COG's Rarities Panel, e.g. Tawny Grassbird, and
- Changes to the status of some species, e.g. White-bellied Sea-Eagle changed from non-breeding to breeding.

In addition, the Supplementary List that was appended to the previous (2014) edition is no longer present. This is because it included many species for which there are no accepted records. These have been deleted, and the species in the former Supplementary List with valid ACT records have been moved into the single, consolidated, Annotated Checklist. The status of the re-introduced species, e.g. Magpie Goose and Bush Stone-curlew, has been clarified. All updates to the common or scientific names will be reflected in the Canberra Nature Map.

Please direct any comments, suggestions or queries to me at [ACTbirdchecklist2017@canberrabirds.org.au](mailto:ACTbirdchecklist2017@canberrabirds.org.au), or phone 0416 231 890.

David McDonald

## Draft Field Trips Programme for 2018

The 2018 field trips programme is almost complete. The dates shaded in pink still require a venue and a leader. If you can help, please contact Sue Lashko – [smlashko@gmail.com](mailto:smlashko@gmail.com)

Month	Date	Venue		Leader
January	14	Uriarra	until mid-afternoon	Bruce Lindenmayer
	17	Wednesday Walk		
	21			
February	4	Jerrabomberra Wetlands (World Wetlands Day )	morning	Sue Lashko
	11	Molonglo boat trip	morning	Jack Holland
	17	Forde creek and ponds	Saturday morning	John Harris
	21	Wednesday Walk		
	25	Micalong Swamp	day	David Dedenczuk
March	4			
	11			
	18	Eden pelagic	day	Sandra Henderson
	21	Wednesday Walk		
	30/3-2/4	possibly Deniliquin area	Easter campout	Sandra Henderson
	31	Narrabundah Hill	Saturday morning	Jack Holland
April	1	See Easter campout above		
	8	K2C	until early afternoon	Nicki Taws
	15	Nursery Swamp	all day	David McDonald
	18	Wednesday Walk		
	29	Bluetts Block	morning	Jean Casburn
May	5	ANBG beginners	Saturday morning	Anthony Overs
	15-17	Caves House, Jenolan Caves	mid-week accommodated	Michael Robbins
	16	Wednesday Walk		
	20			
June	3	Hall area and Wallaroo Rd property	day	Bill Graham
	17	Superb Lyrebird survey	morning	Chris Davey
	20	Wednesday Walk		
July	1			
	15			
	18	Wednesday Walk		
	22	Rowes Lagoon, Collector area	day	Bill Graham
August	4	Lake Ginninderra beginners	morning	Anthony Overs
	12	Western Palerang area	All day	David McDonald & Martin Butterfield

Continued Page 14

## Draft Field Trips Programme for 2018 - continued from Page 13

August cont.	15	Wednesday Walk		
	26			
	28-31	Wonga at Bawley Point	mid-week accommo- dated	Terry Bell
September	1 & 2	Eden pelagics	2 x 1 day trips	Sandra Henderson
	9	Mt Taylor	morning	Matthew Frawley
	16	Tuggeranong Lakes by bike	morning	Ryu Callaway
	19	Wednesday Walk		
	23	Urambi Hills	morning	Matthew Frawley
	25-28	Kangaroo Valley	mid-week camp	Lia Battison
	30	McGuirk's at Kangiara	until mid-afternoon	Sue Lashko
October	7	Murrumbateman area	morning	Bill Graham
	14	K2C	until mid-afternoon	Nicki Taws
	17	Wednesday Walk		
	20	Percival Hill	Saturday morning	John Harris
	27-28	BLITZ	2 days	Barbara Allan
	29/10-6/11	Balranald area	extended camping trip	Noel Luff
November	4	Barren Grounds	day	Suzi Bond
	11	Campbell Park nest workshop	morning	Jack Holland
	18	Warks Road		David Dedenczuk
	21	Wednesday Walk		
	25	Wee Jasper	day	Sue Lashko
December	2	Monga National Park	day	David Dedenczuk
	9	Tuggeranong horse paddocks		Ryu Callaway
	20	Wednesday Walk		

### MUDBRICK COTTAGE—MALLACOOTA

Our mudbrick cottage (Blue Wren Cottage) is available for rental. It is set amongst the trees in Mallacoota, Victoria (approximately 4 hours drive from Canberra).

10 minutes walk to the beach, 5 minutes walk to the golf course and about 15 minutes walk to town.

It sleeps 4-6 upstairs and there is a sofa bed downstairs. It is fully self-contained with a kitchen and laundry.

**Contact:** Barbara de Bruine (02) 6258 3531, or  
barbdebruine@hotmail.com



Julatten, 1½hrs. North of Cairns

**FOR THE BEST BIRDWATCHING  
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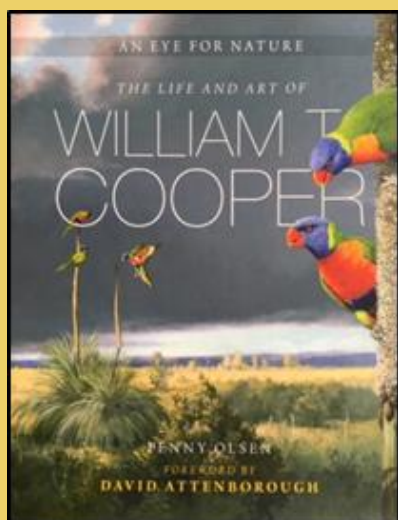
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[sootyowl@bigpond.com](mailto:sootyowl@bigpond.com)

Find us on Facebook

Ph: 07 40941263

## Looking for Christmas presents?



### An Eye for Nature – The Life and Art of William Cooper

*Penny Olsen*

William T. Cooper's paintings of birds which set him apart—his raucous cockatoos, colourful parrots, animated turacos and flamboyantly displaying birds of paradise.

Often placed in meticulously studied landscapes, these intricate bird portraits reveal Cooper's close observation, not only of his subjects' appearance, but their habits, poses and behaviour.

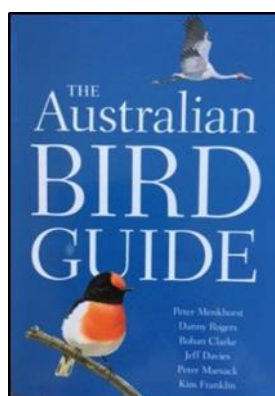
**Members' Price \$37.**

## Publications for sale

COG provides a range of bird watching related publications for sale to members at discounted prices (around 10-30% off RRP).

Below are highlighted a sample of popular publications available from the sales desk at COG meetings. We get new books in all the time and sometimes popular books sell out, but they can easily be re-ordered. If you are looking for a particular book, talk to the sales desk team at the meeting, as they can look at ordering it for you or contact Kathy on [sales@canberrabirds.org.au](mailto:sales@canberrabirds.org.au)

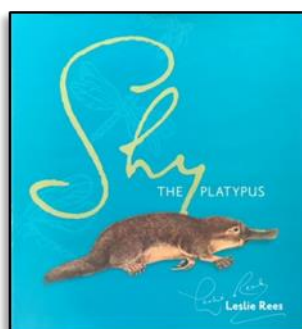
### GREAT CHRISTMAS PRESENTS



#### The Australian Bird Guide

*Peter Menkhorst, Danny Rogers, Rohan Clarke, Jeff Davies, Peter Marsack, Kim Franklin*

The most comprehensive field guide to Australian birds ever seen and winner of the 2017 Whitley Medal. The guide features around 4700 colour illustrations, with particular emphasis on providing the fine detail required to identify difficult groups and distinctive plumages. Comprehensive species accounts have been written by a dedicated team of ornithologists to ensure identification details, distribution and status are current and accurate. **Members' price \$38.**

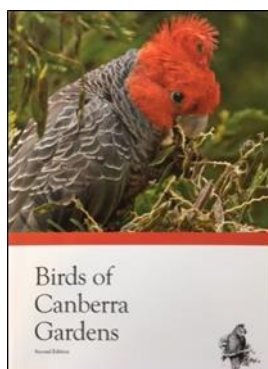


#### Shy The Platypus

*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. **Members' price \$15.**



#### Birds of Canberra Gardens

*Canberra Ornithologists Group*

This book is based on the observation of more than 200 bird species in and around Canberra suburban gardens and in adjacent Canberra parks and open spaces. It describes the abundance and distribution of birds, and discusses how the birds are likely to be found at different times throughout the year, and in different places. The book also provides some ideas on how your garden may be made more attractive to native birds. **Members' price \$20.**

## Canberra Birds Conservation Fund

Donations to this fund are tax deductible. Funds are used to support projects that protect and enhance native birds and the environments that sustain them.

## COG membership

2017-2018 memberships:

- Singles: \$40
- Family: \$45
- Institution: \$40
- School student (under 18) \$20

## New members

COG welcomes the following new members:

A Graham  
T Adams  
P Green  
R Black  
J Monkhouse  
J Bissett (re-joining)  
R Harvey (re-joining)

## NEXT NEWSLETTER

**Deadline for February 2018 edition:**

**Wednesday 31 January 2018**

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

[gang-gang@canberrabirds.org.au](mailto: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.

## COG information

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0413 828 045

[president@canberrabirds.org.au](mailto:president@canberrabirds.org.au)

**Treasurer:**

[cogoffice@canberrabirds.org.au](mailto:cogoffice@canberrabirds.org.au)

**Secretary:**

Bill Graham

[cogoffice@canberrabirds.org.au](mailto:cogoffice@canberrabirds.org.au)

### Address for correspondence

The Secretary  
COG, PO Box 301  
Civic Square, ACT 2608

## COG website

[canberrabirds.org.au](http://canberrabirds.org.au)

### COG Webmaster

Julian Robinson

[cogwebmaster@canberrabirds.org.au](mailto:cogwebmaster@canberrabirds.org.au)

### COG library

### Membership Enquiries & Updates:

[membership@canberrabirds.org.au](mailto:membership@canberrabirds.org.au)

for change of address or other details.

### Gang-gang Newsletter

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**Lay-out Editor** Wendy Whitham

**Newsletter distribution:**

Dianne Davey

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### Canberra Bird Notes

Editor: Michael Lenz

[lenzmj@homemail.com.au](mailto:lenzmj@homemail.com.au)

## COG E-mail Discussion List

### COG E-mail Discussion List

COG has an email discussion list for members and friends: 'CanberraBirds'.

Join (subscribe to) the list by following the links on the COG website or by sending an email message to [canberrabirds-subscribe@canberrabirds.org.au](mailto:canberrabirds-subscribe@canberrabirds.org.au). The subject line and body of the email can be empty.

To unsubscribe, either permanently or temporarily, send an email message to [canberrabirds-unsubscribe@canberrabirds.org.au](mailto:canberrabirds-unsubscribe@canberrabirds.org.au).

If you wish to re-subscribe after being unsubscribed temporarily, simply follow the 'subscribe' instructions above.

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