



Gang-gang

FEBRUARY 2018

Newsletter of the Canberra Ornithologists Group Inc.

FEBRUARY MEETING

Wednesday 14 February 2018

7.30 pm

The main presentation will be by **Ross Crates**, a PhD student at the ANU's Fenner School for Society and the Environment, on the "**Ecology and conservation of the Regent Honeyeater.**"

Regent Honeyeaters have suffered a rapid decline throughout their vast range. Small population size and unpredictable long-distance movements have constrained attempts to monitor, and hence conserve, the population in a robust way.

This talk will summarise the results of three years of intensive Regent Honeyeater field research undertaken by the Difficult Bird Research Group at ANU. We offer new insights into why the Regent Honeyeater has declined so rapidly, and what can be done to prevent the species' extinction.

After the main presentation **Barbara Allan** will give a brief summary of the **2017 COG Bird Blitz** including the lucky draw and other prizes for participants.

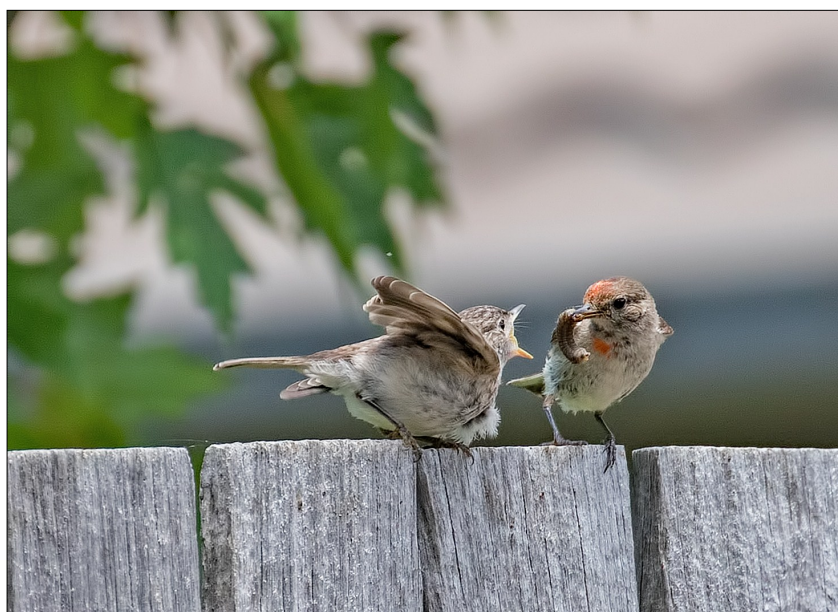
Everyone welcome

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

The weather over the past two months since I wrote my last column at the end of November saw the continuing wet conditions for the first week of December gradually dry out until everything had become quite parched by the end of the third week of January, only to be relieved again, often with localised storms, in the final week. From the discussions below, the effect this has had on bird activity in the COG area of interest (Aol) this summer appears minimal, probably as the pattern had already been well set by the end of spring.

Perhaps not surprising the main spring/summer migrant species of interest to me has been the **Eastern Koel**, with many observers reporting heightened activity with noisy assemblies of both males and females calling and chasing each other during December and into January. The maximum number of Koels reported together was by Daryl King, who could see or hear 9 birds at the same time within the Ginninderra Creek corridor near Melba. This is also another example of the species now moving from the suburbs into the

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Red-capped Robin, male feeding juvenile

Julie Clark

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

—continued from Page 1

reserves as more and more seem to be arriving each season. Another example was the bird I heard ko-eling very loudly from bushland close to the western border of Narrabundah Hill on 18 December. It was the first time in my local area that I've ever recorded this species well away from the houses and gardens of the suburbs, with Duffy at least 1 km away.

The first wave of Koel fledglings was reported from around Christmas time, significantly earlier than in 2016-2017, though by the end of January the total of 33 I'm aware of is very similar to last season, possibly due to the lull in reporting mid-month. Over half of these have been reported from 3 locations, with Diana White finding 6 fledglings from a small area around her home in Narrabundah, including one which stayed around her garden for at least 31 days, and another possibly first recorded while still in a nest obscured by dense vegetation in a backyard, from which it has only recently emerged. Despite the much lower pre-Christmas activity in my local area of Chapman/Rivett than in 2016-2017, I also have recorded 6 fledglings, while Steve Wallace has found 5 in Fraser/Spence. All confirmed hosts have been the **Red Wattlebird**, which again also seem to be feeding many of their own fledglings. A very interesting early record was of a well feathered Koel nestling in Spence that was picked up after its nest fell out of the tree in the bad weather of 3 December. It was returned in a makeshift nest with amazingly the Red Wattlebirds still in attendance, but its final fate is unclear.

So please keep an eye out for, or particularly listen for, this species and report any fledglings (you will be alerted by their loud monotonous begging call) you observe (or other interesting adult behaviour) to me as I'm trying to ensure the **Eastern Koel's** remarkable expansion into the COG Aol is documented as best we can.

Of the other migrant cuckoos there seem to have been plenty of sightings of the **Brush Cuckoo**, with some interesting observations

in January in the local reserves of Mulligans Flat, Mt Ainslie and Narrabundah Hill rather than the mountains where they breed. On the other hand I can only find 4 records of the **Channel-billed Cuckoo** over the past 2 months. Likewise I can only find reports of the **Pallid Cuckoo** in January at 4 locations in the COG Aol. The **Shining Bronze-cuckoo** also seems to have been reported relatively few times (from 10 locations) compared with the related **Horsfield's Bronze-cuckoo**, and the **Fan-tailed Cuckoo**.

Of the species likely to have left the COG Aol by the end of January there have reports of the **Brown Songlark** in January only from Parkwood and Mulligans Flat, with the most recent one being 2 birds at the former on 15 January. Similarly during January there have been reports of the **Horsfield's Bushlark** only from Parkwood and Uriarra Road, with the most recent report (from several observers) of a single bird at the latter on 28 January. Both compare with the many more sightings reported in spring. However, there have been no further reports over the past two months of the **White-browed** and **Masked Woodswallows**, for which there are also usually few records in the New Year.

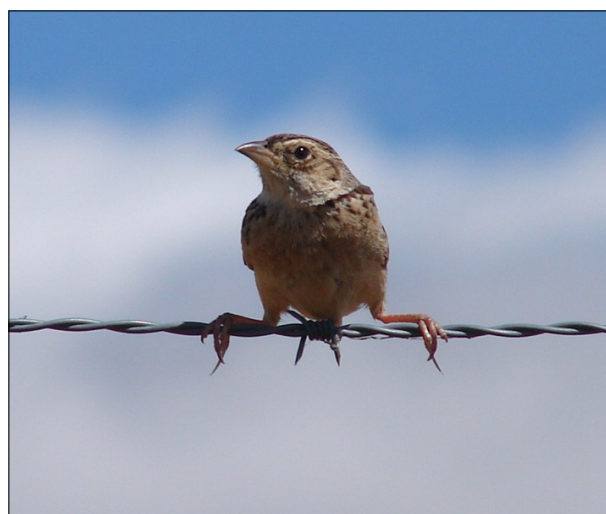
In contrast, and despite its continued absence from Narrabundah Hill, a spot it usually favours, the **Rufous Songlark** has been reported from about 18 locations in the COG Aol over January, including Bibaringa, with the last report being on 29 January. Surprisingly the **White-winged Triller** has only been reported from around 15 locations in January, with the most recent on 30 January, but as far as I can find there have been no reports of breeding since very early in December.

So please keep an eye open for the presence this summer of the last of the species in the paragraph immediately above. The last sightings of the **Brush Cuckoo** are usually in February, so please keep an eye open this this one as well. This also applies to the **Cicadabird**, for which there have been records only from Bendora Road and the Tallaganda Forest during January. This is despite



Eastern Koel, juvenile

Gail Neumann



Horsfield's Bushlark

Frank Antram

quite a number of observers visiting places in the tall wet forests where it might be present, and underlines the small numbers that come to the COG Aol. This is shown by the many more records for the **Satin Flycatcher**, including breeding observations, and for the **Rufous Fantail**, which also prefers this habitat.

Of the two species that are more commonly seen in the first 3 months of the year, there were a couple of reports of 1-2 birds either side of Christmas Day of the **Fork-tailed Swift**, but then none until Alastair Smith saw 28 (the maximum number to date) at Jerrabomberra Wetlands in 22 January. There have been sightings at 5 other locations since this, compared with only 3 records for the usually more commonly seen **White-throated Needletail**, the first (and maximum) being the 30 seen by Alastair and Milburn at the New Chums Road in Namadgi on 18 January. So please keep an eye out for these two species, especially but not exclusively, as they can also be seen in clear fine conditions, before, during and after stormy weather. This is very important for the latter species whose numbers appear to be declining due to the Russian forests where they breed being felled at an alarming rate.

There have been few "unusual" birds reported over summer so far. Of note is that the lone **Apostlebird** continues to be reported from Watson, where it has now been surviving for around 16 months. More **Scarlet Honeyeaters** have also been reported, with the couple of sightings in December being augmented by four in January, 3 in the final 10 days and the other by Duncan McCaskill from his Giralang garden, having dipped on them in the ANBG previously. In contrast, the male **Crimson Chat** has not been reported since 24 November. Reports of the **Red-capped Robin** in January have also dropped considerably compared with spring, coming only from 4 locations. However, importantly, Julie Clark has reported breeding with a juvenile continuing to be seen being fed by its parents at Yerrabi Pond, despite the busy area, and the Mulligans Flat family, where nest building was reported from the COG outing on 19 November, also still doing well by the end of the third week of January. There have also been two reports of the **Great Crested Grebe**, the first of one in Lake Ginninderra early in December, an unusual location for this species compared with Yerrabi Pond where 3 in breeding plumage were seen by many observers on 12 January.



Brown Goshawk, juvenile with prey

Julie Clark



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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



Collared Sparrowhawk, juvenile

Julie Clark

From the reports on the COG chatline, it appears to have been a reasonable breeding season despite the drying conditions to past mid-January. Apart from those reported for the **Eastern Koel**, **White-winged Triller**, **Satin Flycatcher** and **Red-capped Robin** above (and elsewhere in this issue for the **Fuscous Honeyeater**), the following are worth reporting in some more detail:

- On 18 December Martin Butterfield reported that the 4 **Banded Lapwings** seen earlier in the month on the Hoskintown Plain had hatched 2 chicks. He estimated them as about 3 or 4 days old, and was astonished that the birds were able to nest successfully in a paddock occupied by some frisky Hereford calves and their mums;
- There have been a number of reports on the COG chatline of successful fledging of both the **Brown Goshawk** and (slightly later) **Collared Sparrowhawk** chicks at the ANBG, despite the nests being only around 250 m apart, thought to be about the minimum distance they could co-exist;
- An excellent summary of the 2017 breeding season for the vulnerable **Little Eagle** was posted on the COG chatline on 3 January by Geoffrey Dabb;
- Martin Butterfield reporting a juvenile **Pallid Cuckoo** being fed by busy **Yellow-faced Honeyeaters**, one of the more common hosts for this cuckoo species according to HANZAB, despite only being around half its size;
- On 26 January Jean Casburn reported surprising numbers of **Australasian Darter**, **Little Black Cormorant**, **Great Cormorant** and **Little Pied Cormorant** breeding on the Molonglo River between the Tuggeranong Parkway overpass and the spillway towards the new Molonglo suburbs. Immature birds were seen struggling to perch in some locations, while very young birds were visible in and on nests. Hopefully this points to renewed breeding on the Molonglo Reach for the COG boat trip on 11 February.

Finally since mid-January a number of observers have reported families of adult and juvenile **Dollarbirds** appearing on the wires around their gardens. While in my experience their nesting

hollows are very hard to find and observe, families coming into the suburbs before they head north in late February/early March is more common.

So please keep an eye out for the last **Dollarbirds**, as well as the other soon to leave spring/summer migrant species mentioned above, and also 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 E-mail 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



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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www.feathersnfriends.com.au

Fred & Jeanette Birkbeck

244 Clacherty Road
Julatten QLD 4871

Tel: 07 4094 1665

Email: freddy@feathersnfriends.com.au

Field Trip Reports

Sunday 3 December 2017 - Jerrabomberra West

Ten members and guests decided to risk the weather and explore this little-visited grassland and woodland. A very friendly farm dog greeted us briefly before undertaking some determined surveillance of the numerous rabbit warrens on the adjoining private property.

Despite rain threatening at one stage we remained dry and managed to see 49 species. A **Peregrine Falcon** as we walked up from the gate was a good start. The highlights for the morning were a pair of **Varied Sittellas** feeding several young in a nest, a **Western Gerygone** in a nest very low in a bush, a number of **Southern Whiteface**, **Nankeen Kestrels** observed entering a hollow and carrying food (two different locations), a **Rufous Whistler** on a nest, many parrots at nest hollows, two **Wedge-tailed Eagle** nests (not sure if either was in use), and the sighting by one member of the group of a **Red-capped Robin**. Well worth a return visit!

Sandra Henderson



Sunday 10 December - Newline

Twelve hardy souls led by Sue Lashko wandered over hill and dale through, at times, waist high grasses, to see what was there. African Love Grass and beautiful remnant trees were a major feature of today's walk. I have not seen such prolific grass in this paddock previously.

Unfortunately the day became hot as we went. The usual hardy bush birds were in good voice, **Western Gerygone**, **Olive-backed Oriole**, **Striated Pardalote**, distant **Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo**, **Dusky Woodswallow**, **Rufous Whistler** and **Brown-headed Honeyeater**. Not calling were **Dollarbird**, **Brown Goshawk** and **Nankeen Kestrel** except when seen together in the air. The small bush birds which are known to be in this location were probably residing in the shade somewhere, or lost in the grass.

Surprisingly there were quite a few late nesters perhaps taking advantage of the late rain – **Willie Wagtail**, **Tree Martin**, **Sacred Kingfisher**, **Western Gerygone**, **Superb Fairywren**, and **White-winged Chough** building with muddy bill and wing feathers.

All in all, a good exercise and 44 species. Thank you Sue!

Jean Casburn



Little Corella, **Western Gerygone**, nest with eggs
Sandra Henderson

Sunday 14 January – Uriarra area

Now in its 30th year, our annual excursion again commenced at the big dam adjacent to Uriarra Homestead. For the first two decades of this excursion, we continued up Brindabella Road, where from time to time we encountered closed or boggy roads and parking problems. Subsequently we have moved back to survey two sites on the Murrumbidgee, near Uriarra Crossing.

This year, fourteen COG members attended, and despite a slow start to bird counting at the big dam (it was quite cool), we were again fortunate to have permission from the leaseholder to access the property, which improved our bird observations to the extent that we recorded 47 species, 3 better than the previous record of 44 in 2016. Notables were **Latham's Snipe**, **Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoo**, **White-necked Heron**, **Black-fronted Dotterel**, **Tree Martin** and **Rufous Whistler**. **Red Wattlebird** at the site had dependent young.

At Uriarra Crossing West and along Fairlight Road notables were **Wedge-tailed Eagle**, **Collared Sparrowhawk**, **Yellow-rumped**, **Yellow**, **Brown** and **Striated Thornbills**, **Noisy Friarbird**, **Olive-backed Oriole** (one immature bird) and **Pied Currawong** with dependent young.

Our lunch site at Uriarra East provided some of the best trip observations: 3 **Collared Sparrowhawk** including one dependent young, and three **Pied Butcherbird** (one carrying food). Other notables were **Mistletoebird**, **Leadbeater**

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

Flycatcher, Buff-rumped Thornbill with dependent young, **White-throated Gerygone** and **Nankeen Kestrel**.

Total species list for the outing was 64.

Many thanks from this octogenarian outing leader to those with sharper eyes and ears who provided so many records.

Bruce Lindenmayer.

Wednesday 17 January - Glendale

Twenty-two members arrived at Glendale Depot after carpooling at the Namadgi Visitors Centre. Our route was essentially a figure of 8 starting by walking towards the mighty Gudgenby River and then up towards the Depot itself. Early good birds were a pair of **Sacred Kingfishers**. They were soon followed by 3 **Southern Whiteface** which obligingly perched on various fences, wires and *Verbascum* stalks allowing most of us good looks. A family of **Fuscous Honeyeaters** (2 adults and 3 chicks) were observed in some eucalypts, which was quite exciting for some.

Proceeding towards the Depot, a **Latham's Snipe** was flushed from a small watercourse. This landed in, and was flushed again, accompanied by two others, from a damp, reedy area below the dam. The dam contained two **Australasian Grebes** and a **Pacific Black Duck**. The woodland around the dam contained 2 **Diamond Firetails** and at least 15 more **Fuscous Honeyeaters** and 5 **Common Bronzings**. As we left the area 19 **Australian Wood Duck** flew in.

We then travelled across country, logging up to 5 **Rufous Songlarks** and about 50 **Little Ravens**. More **Fuscous Honeyeaters** were seen and the final agreed tally was 40.

Overall we recorded 48 species (and a mixed record of **Fairy/Tree Martins** as the main observer couldn't be sure which they were). A full list is at this [eBird checklist](#).

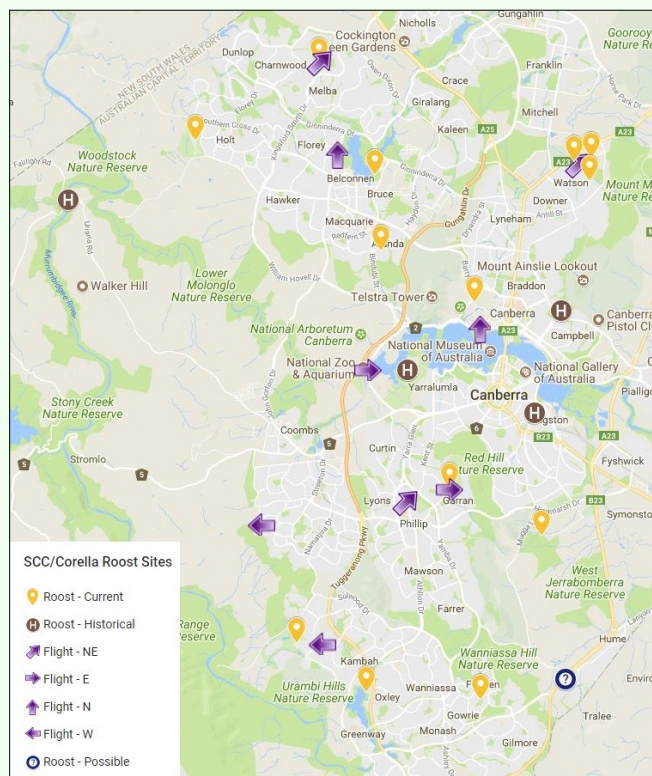
Martin Butterfield



Renewed call for **Sulphur-crested Cockatoo** and **Little Corella** roost site data

As we approach the end of the breeding season and communal roosts resume, I am once again asking for people to keep an eye out for roosting behaviour of **Sulphur-crested Cockatoos** and **Little Corellas**.

The map below shows locations already reported.



Please report the location and direction of any roost flights (regular movement of birds to/from their roost site in the early morning or dusk), and locations of any yet-to-be reported roost sites to roostcensus@canberrabirds.org.au

It would also be good if anyone could confirm whether the following historical roosting records are still current - Uriarra Crossing, Telopea Park, War Memorial, and Royal Canberra Golf Course.

Thanks to all those who have already contributed.

Ryu Callaway

Woodland Surveys

November/December 2017 survey round

compiled by Jenny Bounds

Mulligans Flat NR

Jenny Bounds and the team surveyed on Sunday 3 December, relieved to get the survey done without interference from the weather, after the several inches of rain over the previous two days. The clouds in Gungahlin were low and grey with the occasional very light misty drift, in between blue sky patches, and gumboots were worn by some due to the soggy ground conditions. The total species count was 59, the same as the December survey in 2016, but some sites were quiet in terms of numbers of birds around. Highlights were a number of **Olive-backed Orioles** including one nest building, **Grey Teal** with 2 young on the dam near the Woolshed, 68 **Straw-necked Ibis** in grass north of the large dam, **Superb Parrots** (large dam environs; the reserve entrance off Amy Ackman Drive – females feeding on immature wattle (green) seed pods), **Pink-eared Ducks** still on the large dam (now full of water), and a **Fan-tailed Cuckoo** (possibly immature plumage), the only cuckoo recorded on the survey. Only one pair of **Scarlet Robins** was recorded. A lowlight was a **Common Myna** next to the Woolshed when we were having morning tea inside. Thank you to all who made the effort to get the survey done in less than optimum conditions.

Goorooyarroo NR (south)

The summer survey was done by Steve Holliday, Prue Buckley, and David and Kathy Cook on 10 December, in perfect weather. The reserve had greened up since the rain over the previous 5 or 6 weeks and there were a lot of native and introduced forbs in flower in some areas. Small birds were perhaps less in evidence than usual, and several regulars (such as Brown Thornbill, Speckled Warbler, Dusky Woodswallow and Wedge-tailed Eagle) were missing. 49 species were recorded for the morning with 44 of these during 10 minute counts. Interesting records included at least one **Stubble Quail** calling occasionally near site 1, **Varied Sittella**, numerous **Superb Parrots** including a couple of pairs that appeared to be squabbling over a hollow, and rather more **Leadbeater Flycatchers** than usual. In contrast to the spring survey only one cuckoo was recorded, a **Shining Bronze-Cuckoo**. Breeding records included **Crested Pigeons** with a nest at site 3, and **White-winged Choughs** with dependent young.

Mt Majura NR

John Goldie, Kathy Walter and Duncan McCaskill surveyed the majority of the woodland survey sites during the second week of December, with a couple of sites done the week prior in the rain. A good collection of birds was seen with a couple of first sightings for the surveys, including a **Red-capped Robin** and 3 **Yellow Thornbills** spotted by Duncan. A number of **Olive-backed Orioles** were seen at 3 sites, possibly a couple of family groups with immatures, and an unusually large number of **Australian Ravens** at 4 sites. One **Fan-tailed Cuckoo** was heard and **Speckled Warblers** continue in good numbers at their usual sites. A **Yellow-rumped Thornbill** was seen nest building in the leaves of a low hanging eucalypt and a pair of **Noisy Friarbirds** were tending to a nest. **Rainbow Lorikeets** were recorded at 2 sites, confirming their recent spread to the North Canberra area.

Mt Ainslie NR/Campbell Park

Michael Lenz surveyed on the lower eastern slope of Mt Ainslie on Sunday 1 December, a warm, almost calm morning. Thirty species were recorded at the sites, with another 14 species between sites. Notably, the most widespread species was the **Noisy Friarbird** (at 8 sites), followed by **Crimson Rosella** and **Noisy Miner** (each at 7 sites). Small bush birds were rare overall. Species of interest included **Sacred Kingfisher** (3x, incl. 2x at sites), both **Gerygones** (with **Western Gerygone** only 1x), **Mistletoebird** (at 4 sites), **Dusky Woodswallow** (2x, but off sites), **White-winged Triller** (5, 2 and a nest with 2 young; all off sites), **Yellow-faced** and **Brown-headed Honeyeater** (1x each at a site). The ground vegetation was in many places sparse and low, except for areas with carpets of Saffron Thistle. It appeared that most Grey Kangaroos were in the woodland rather than in the paddocks.

Newline

Sue Lashko surveyed on 8 December, a warm, still morning. Despite the spread of **Common Starlings**, **Common Mynas** and **Noisy Miners** into more sites, bird diversity was among the best recorded for a summer survey. Breeding was observed for **Silvereye**, **White-winged Chough**, **Sacred Kingfisher**, **Tree Martin**, **Buff-rumped Thornbill**, **Grey Butcherbird**, **Australian**

Magpie, **Common Myna** and **Common Starling**. Honeyeater numbers were low despite flowering *Eucalyptus rossii*, but **Rainbow Lorikeets** were closely guarding one flowering tree in their patch, even managing to keep the **Noisy Miners** out. A **Brown Goshawk** and a pair of **Nankeen Kestrels** were the only raptors recorded. The total species count was 54.

Jerrabomberra West NR

Jenny Bounds and Alison Russell-French did the survey in pretty good weather conditions on Tuesday 12 December (a little late due to several factors including the recent rain). Despite the several inches of rain in early December, it looked very dry on the ground, green, but with less grass/weeds cover than usual at this time of year. Forty species for the morning were recorded, quite a few less than last year in December, but within the average range, and a few absentees (eg Red Wattlebird, White-winged Chough, Dollarbird and no small honeyeaters). Good records were **Varied Sittellas**, **White-Winged Trillers** and **Dusky Woodswallows** (in Blakelys Red Gum abutting the grasslands), **Southern Whiteface** and **Speckled Warbler**. The usual small birds (several thornbills, **Weebills**) were around, and there were more **Superb Fairy-wrens** than usual. Only one cuckoo species was recorded this time, **Pallid Cuckoo**. The local pair of **Wedge-tailed Eagles** soared overhead and a **Eurasian Skylark** was recorded over the grasslands.

Tuggeranong Hill NR

Lia Battison reported on the survey on 23 November, a fine, mild and still morning. Very few small birds were observed in sites, but small numbers of several species were recorded in between sites. Five of seven sites had one or two **Noisy Friarbirds**, and at site 4 a pair was feeding young in a nest metres from last year's nest site. The **Rainbow Lorikeets** have now increased to 8, with 2 at site 2 in a hollow and 6 at site 3. **Australian Magpies** had dependent young and **Common Mynas** and **Common Starlings** were carrying food into hollows. It was nice to see a **Speckled Warbler**, albeit between sites. Twenty-one species were observed during the surveys, with a further 15 elsewhere on the Hill.

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

Wednesday 21 February – Yerrabi Pond

Meet at 8:30am at Yerrabi Pond District Park off Wunderlich St. We may extend the walk to a pond further downstream on Ginninderra Creek. Martin Butterfield

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).

Saturday 17 February – Forde Creek and ponds

This has been a good spot for rails and crakes in previous years but if hot weather continues the creek will dry up. Depending on the amount of action in Forde Creek, we will investigate other nearby urban wetlands.

Directions: Turn off Horse Park Road into Mulligan's Flat Road between Forde and Bonner. (Ignore any signs saying Mulligans Flat. Go into the actual, new Mulligans Flat Road). Turn right into Handbury Way. Immediately to your right is the smallish Linear Park. We will meet there. Park in a street there somewhere. John Harris

Sunday 25 February – Micalong Swamp

The Micalong Swamp Flora Reserve is one of the two Wetlands of National Importance in the Canberra region. (The other is Yaouk Swamp). On this visit we will combine birding, botany and bushwalking.

Micalong Swamp is some 80 km west of Canberra. We shall go in and return via the quite rough Brindabella Road, so it will be best if we use 4WD/SUV-type vehicles. We will do a 12 km loop walk around the Swamp, observing the birds that use the Swamp and its margins.

As this will be a full day trip, please bring morning tea, lunch and water. There are no toilets at the venue. Rendezvous for carpooling in the carpark of the Stromlo Forest Park at 7:00 am. Suggested contribution from each passenger to drivers: \$15.

Registration is essential. Numbers are limited to four vehicles, 16 people max. For further information and to register please contact the trip leader, David Dedenczuk, at phone 6295 6065 or 0417 222 154, or email ddedentz@bigpond.net.au by Thursday 22 February 2018.

Sunday 4 March – Lanyon

You will be interested to learn that COG has received special permission from ACT Historic Places for a group of birdwatchers to participate in a guided tour of this historic property and nearby countryside including the Murrumbidgee riverside beginning at 0830 at the main visitors' carpark.

Following birding activities (easy terrain), we have been invited to stay for lunch in the gardens, about noon. A pre-ordered picnic lunch is available or you can order from the menu at the Barracks Espresso Bar and Eating House.

Apart from the Homestead itself there are many other attractions that participants can enjoy at their leisure including several ongoing exhibitions, old farm buildings, antique machinery, etc.

Registration is essential, the sooner the better, by email (preferred)

terrybellbird@gmail.com or mobile 0427292298.

Terry Bell and Terry Munro

Sunday 11 March – McQuoids Hill

Map 27 D14 (UBD). Park at step-through access gate on the right hand side of the Kambah Pool Road. This is about 700 m from the roundabout where the Kambah Pool Rd crosses Allchin Cct/Barrett St, Kambah. The gate is opposite the start of the golf club driving range and about 400 m before the entry to the golf club.

Depending on the size, fitness and ability of the group, we'll either walk the perimeter track with short excursions into the bush, or we'll climb the hill and spend a little more time in the bushy bits. However, even if we do the later, we'll spend time in the grassy areas in hopes of seeing **Double-barred Finch** and/or **Diamond Firetail** and/or **Red-browed Finch**. Whichever route we take, we'll try to find **Speckled Warbler**, and keep an eye out for raptors and any of the migrants which may still be around.

Remember to bring water, and sunscreen and a hat. No booking required. If you have any questions contact Michael Robbins (mrobbins at home.netspeed.com.au)

Sunday 25 March – Eden pelagic

This trip is booked out but there may be late cancellations, so if you would like to go on the waiting list, contact Sandra Henderson at shirmax2931@gmail.com

Friday 30 March to Monday 2 April – Easter campout – Deniliquin area

The camp this year will be on a private property at Wanganella near Deniliquin. The property has some old shearers' quarters which will provide for a few people to have bunks in the quarters, and all of us to have use of very basic kitchen facilities if needed and a lounge room with an open fire if it's chilly. More details will be available once I've had a chance to visit and check it out. There are plenty of places to visit – a couple of places around the Wanganella area, the island sanctuary and forest in Deniliquin, the Mathoura reed beds and the Gulpa Forest/Gulpa Creek. The property owner is a keen birder so may have other suggestions.

Bookings are essential. Detailed information will be provided closer to the date to those coming to the camp. Sandra Henderson – shirmax2931@gmail.com

Easter Saturday 31 March – Narrabundah Hill

Those members who will be staying at home this Easter and/or will have visiting birder friends are welcome to join this outing to the Narrabundah Hill reserve. The walk has been timed for the honeyeater migration season, with the northern and western boundaries of the reserve having some of the few currently known local migration routes. We will walk along these two boundaries and either return by the same or a different path. We will also look for other autumn birds such as the **Scarlet Robin** and mixed feeding flocks, or late departing summer migrants such as the gerygones.

This walk will start at 9:00 am to maximise the opportunity to see the honeyeaters which generally come through late in the morning at the end of March/early April (it is also the last day of daylight savings). Meet Jack Holland (6288 7840 or jandaholland@bigpond.com) at the parking area and stile at the NE end of the reserve, at the corner of Warragamba Avenue and Eucumbene Drive, Duffy. **Please note that the entry to this parking area is a little tricky, and is in fact about 25 metres past (on the Mount Stromlo side) the T-junction with Warragamba Avenue, and for those driving along Eucumbene Drive from Duffy involves a quite tricky 180 degrees turn, so please take care.**

15 to 17 May 2018 - Jenolan Caves Lyrebirds

This is to canvass interest in joining Michael Robbins on his May 2018 break at Caves House, Jenolan. 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. **Sooty Owl** is around although not seen nearly as often as Brush-tailed Rock Wallaby.

The plan would be to visit Kangangra 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). Refurbishment of the Bistro will be finished, that of Chisolm's Restaurant may, or may not, have started. If it has, then dinners will be in the Function Room see <http://www.jenolancaves.org.au/accommodation/refurbishment-news/> Please let Michael (mrobbins at home.netspeed.com.au) know if you're interested in joining him next May.

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.

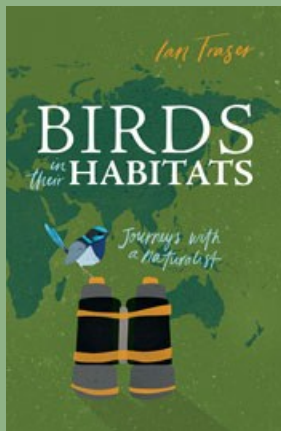
As a family business and NOT a franchise the owners Daniel and Joanna Payne will always be happy to source the specialist or unusual products that individual customers require having established a global network of suppliers.

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 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

NEW PUBLICATION



Birds in their Habitats: Journeys with a Naturalist

Ian Fraser

PRE-order your copy now.
Available MARCH 2018

Everywhere we go there are birds, and they all have mysteries to be unravelled. These mysteries include the way they look, from bizarre to apparently mundane, why they live where they live, and the things they do, many of which are far too incredible ever to be imagined as fiction.

Birds in Their Habitats is a collection of stories and experiences, which introduce fascinating aspects of birdlife, ecology and behaviour.

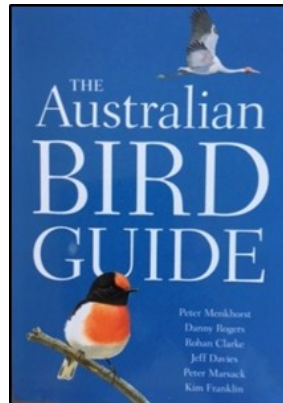
Informed by a wealth of historical and contemporary research, Ian Fraser takes the reader on a journey through four continents: from places as unfamiliar as the Chonos Archipelago of southern Chile and the arid Sahel woodlands of northern Cameroon to those as familiar as a suburban backyard. This is a book of discovery of birds and the places they live. And with humour and personal insight, it is a book about the sometimes strange world of the people who spend a life absorbed in birds.

Members' Price \$33. Available MARCH 2018

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

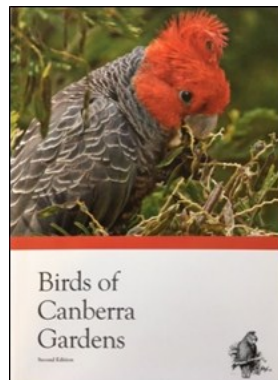


The Australian Bird Guide

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.

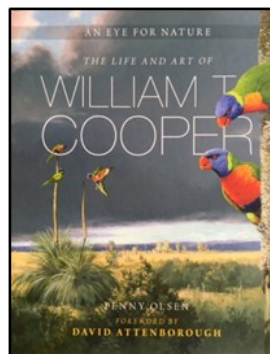


Birds of Canberra Gardens

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.



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.

2018 Field Trip Programme

	Date	Venue	Leader
Jan	14-Jan	Uriarra	Bruce Lindenmayer
	17	Wednesday Walk	Martin Butterfield
Feb	4	Jerrabomberra Wetlands (World Wetlands Day)	Sue Lashko
	11	Molonglo boat trip	Jack Holland
	17	Forde creek and ponds	John Harris
	21	Wednesday Walk	Martin Butterfield
	25	Micalong Swamp	David Dedenczuk
Mar	4	Lanyon	Terry Bell & Munro
	11	McQuoid's Hill	Michael Robbins
	21	Wednesday Walk	Martin Butterfield
	25	Eden pelagic	Sandra Henderson
	30/3-2/4	Deniliquin area Easter campout	Sandra Henderson
	31	Narrabundah Hill	Jack Holland
April	8	K2C surveys	Nicki Taws
	15	Nursery Swamp	David McDonald
	18	Wednesday Walk	Martin Butterfield
	29	Bluetts Block	Jean Casburn
May	5	ANBG beginners	Anthony Overs
	15-17	Caves House, Jenolan Caves	Michael Robbins
	16	Wednesday Walk	Martin Butterfield
	20	Mulligans by bike	Duncan McCaskill
Jun	3	Hall area and Wallaroo Rd property	Bill Graham
	17	Superb Lyrebird survey	Chris Davey
	20	Wednesday Walk	Martin Butterfield
	30	north from Kambah Pool	Michael Robbins
July	14 or 15	venue required	leader required *
	18	Wednesday Walk	Martin Butterfield
Aug	4	Lake Ginninderra beginners	Anthony Overs
	12	Western Palerang	David McDonald
	15	Wednesday Walk	Martin Butterfield
	26	Mt Taylor	Matthew Frawley
	28-31	Wonga at Bawley Point	Terry Bell
Sep	1 & 2	Eden pelagics	Sandra Henderson
	9	Kelly Road	Sandra Henderson
	16	Tuggeranong Lakes by bike	Ryu Callaway
	19	Wednesday Walk	Martin Butterfield
	23	Urambi Hills	Matthew Frawley
	25-28	Kangaroo Valley campout	Lia Battisson
	30	McGuirk's at Kangiara	Sue Lashko
Oct	7	K2C surveys	Nicki Taws
	14	Murrumbateman area	Bill Graham
	17	Wednesday Walk	Martin Butterfield
	20	Percival Hill	John Harris
	27-28	BLITZ	Barbara Allan
	29/10-6/11	Balranald area campout	Noel Luff
Nov	4	Barren Grounds	Suzi Bond
	11	Campbell Park nest workshop	Jack Holland
	18	Warks Road	David Dedenczuk
	21	Wednesday Walk	Martin Butterfield
	25	Wee Jasper	Sue Lashko
Dec	2	Monga National Park	David Dedenczuk
	9	Tuggeranong horse paddocks	Ryu Callaway
	20	Wednesday Walk	Martin Butterfield

* I am seeking a volunteer to lead a field trip on Sat 14 or Sun 15 July to a venue of their choosing. Contact Sue Lashko at smlashko@gmail.com if you can help. If no one volunteers, there will not be an outing that weekend.

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:

P Watters
R Horobin
N Johnston
T Ellem
K Murray
R Gresham
R Erlandson
L Notting
L Tunks
L Smith
G Pfitzner

NEXT NEWSLETTER

Deadline for March 2018 edition:

Wednesday 28 February 2018

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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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.

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.

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