



Gang-gang

SEPTEMBER 2018

Newsletter of the Canberra Ornithologists Group Inc.

SEPTEMBER MEETING

Wednesday 12 September 2018

7.30 pm

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

This month there will be a joint presentation by **Birgita Hansen**, a Research Fellow at the Federation University Australia, Ballarat, and **Lori Gould**, Program Manager of the Woodlands and Wetlands Trust at the Jerrabomberra Wetlands, entitled **"Building an understanding of habitat use, movement and migration of the Latham's Snipe"**.

The bilateral Japan-Australia Migratory Bird Agreement (JAMBA) for the Protection of Migratory Birds in Danger of Extinction and their Environment was agreed between the two governments in February 1974, and came into force on 30 April 1981. The Latham's Snipe is one of the species protected under JAMBA, yet for over 30 years very little research was done on this species.

The Latham's Snipe project was initiated in the wake of a Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal case in 2014, regarding a housing development proposal on an important Latham's Snipe wetland (Powling Street wetlands) in Port

Continued Page 2

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

Compared with clear, cold conditions for most of July, the weather over the five week period to 29 August covered by this column has been very changeable, with fronts regularly coming through and many fewer, though occasionally still heavy, frosts. While there have been reasonably regular showers, there has only been one moderate fall of rain, and even though the ACT still isn't drought-declared it remains seriously dry out there. As a result bird activity in the COG area of interest (Aol) has remained quiet with, as detailed below, no real indication yet that the major influx of spring/summer migrants is underway.

To me the most interesting observation during this time was the report of a large group of around 24 roosting **Brown Thornbills** in Liam Manderson's Tuggeranong backyard on 7 August. It's a great example of how careful observations in your own garden can lead to some exciting finds, with HANZAB noting that records of flocks are rare, but that small flocks,

Continued Page 2



Brown Thornbill

Geoffrey Dabb

Everyone welcome

SEPTEMBER MEETING

Continued from Page 1

Fairy, south-western Victoria. During the case, proponents claimed that the housing development would not impact on the snipe population because the birds would move to another site. However, there was no evidence to support this claim.

Birgita will be presenting the results so far of the multi-scale investigation, which she co-ordinates, into the patterns of habitat use by the Latham's Snipe and their response to urban development in south-western Victoria. This will include the capture and tagging program aimed at investigating the species' local movements as well as between western Victoria and the island of Hokkaido, Japan, where it mainly breeds. This program commenced in the spring of 2015. Lori will summarise the data obtained from Jerrabomberra Wetlands over the past couple of years, as well as reporting the findings to date from the local snipe radio-tracking project. She will also outline future plans based on the results to date.

Lyndon Howe

Pink Robin



Pink Robin © Lyndon Howe

Summary/analysis of the past month and what to watch out for this month —continued from Page 1

exceptionally up to 12 birds, have been observed, usually in the non-breeding season. HANZAB also notes they roost in shrubs in understorey within territory, usually as a pair. In Liam's photo they were huddled up close together in contrast with the **Sulphur-crested Cockatoos**, **Red-rumped Parrots**, **Satin Bowerbirds** and **Magpie-larks** with which I'm more familiar, which do it singly or in pairs, even though there may be multiple birds in the roost shrub/tree/site.

However, the bird that seems to have gained most of the attention over the period was the female **Pink Robin** (the first ACT record for 15 months) at the ANBG. It was first reported there by Steve Wallace on 30 July, and turned out to be the most co-operative bird of this species locally that I can remember, with many observers admiring and photographing it as it moved around different areas of the ANBG. While reports of it became less in the second half of the month it was reported as still present on 23 August.

The related **Rose Robin**, often considered a passage migrant though some do overwinter, has also been reported a number of times from the ANBG as well as from 4 other locations (and from Gossan Hill NR, Bruce, on 29 August – ed!). Compared with July, the **Flame Robin** has been reported from over 20 locations, 7 of them in the peri-urban areas around Canberra. However, there is some indication that they have started to move towards the mountains with 5 birds seen at the Two Sticks Road in the Brindabellas and 10 birds in the Tidbinbilla NR on 24 August. The **Scarlet Robin** has been reported from around an incredible 40

locations, widely spread over the ACT and to the nearby north and east, during the five week period. So please keep an eye out for any red-breasted robins, among my favourite species, as they move away from Canberra to breed during September.

Keep an eye/ear out also for the **White-eared Honeyeater** and the **Golden Whistler**, still reported close to Canberra from around 25 and 20 locations, respectively, during the period, though I haven't recorded any from my local patch of Chapman/Rivett, NW Cooleman Ridge and S Narrabundah Hill. Often the latter may stay around into October. The **Crescent Honeyeater** has also been present in the ANBG throughout August, with a maximum of 5 recorded there on



Rose Robin

Lindsay Hansch

4 August, as well as from 4 rural locations to the west of here. It has remained present though relatively cryptic in my GBS site throughout the period, calling only occasionally but with two birds on one occasion.

In contrast the **Yellow-tufted Honeyeater** was last reported from Tuggeranong Hill on 25 July, with only a single bird recorded moving through since at Greenway on 23 August. Notably all records for 2018 so far have been from the southern half of the ACT closest to its preferred habitat in the Apple Box along the Murrumbidgee River south of Gigerline. On 23 August, Marnix Zwankhuisen reported a **Restless Flycatcher** giving its typical scissor grinder call while uncharacteristically perched on a car roof in his work car park. He noted that the same bird has been hanging around the Tuggeranong town centre all winter, supporting my view that it is mainly a winter visitor to Canberra. A number of other observers have since reported it from there; otherwise single birds have only been reported from Narrabundah Hill and the nearby Bibaringa.

The **Bassian Thrush** (which I have previously overlooked to mention) is an altitudinal migrant for which there were many records from the ANBG during August, with a maximum of 4 birds recorded there. There are very few other records for this species during 2018 outside its preferred wet forest habitat. It continues to amaze me how this species (and the **Pink Robin** above and **Brown Gerygone** below) manages to find the small area of favourable habitat at the ANBG, and to where they will return once spring/summer comes.

The **Brown Gerygone**, not an altitudinal migrant but a winter visitor from the coast, has also continued to be recorded from the ANBG throughout August with a maximum of 6 reported from there on 29 July. Again the birds moved around a bit and there were few reports in the second half of the month, but at least 3 were still reported there on 27 August. Interestingly there was also a report of 2 birds at Murrumbateman on 5

David Cook



Brown Gerygone



Australian Ornithological Services P/L

PO Box 385
South Yarra 3141
Victoria

Mob: 04173 10200

enquiries@philipmaher.com

Good birding, good food

2019

Tasmanian bird and mammal tour Includes Melaleuca and pelagic

2 to 9 February 2019

Only a few places left.

Due to the 2019 Gulf, FNQ and the new Pilbara tour selling out, second tours have been organised for those three tours.

Gulf of Carpentaria

Georgetown, Karumba, Mt Isa, Winton
New tour starting mid-May 2019

FNQ: Atherton Tablelands & Iron Range

8 to 21 June 2019

The Pilbara, NW WA

Karratha, West Lewis Island, Karijini NP,
Millstream-Chichester NP.

22 to 31 August 2019

Only a few places left.

Alice Springs & West MacDonnell Ranges, Yulara

10 to 18 September 2019

Plains-wanderer Weekends

26/27 October 2019

23/24 November 2019

8/9 December 2019

Please see itineraries, checklists
and latest news on our website

www.philipmaher.com

August. In contrast there have been no more reports of the **Swift Parrot** since early April. So watch out for this species on its return migration back to Tasmania where it breeds, as well as the last of the other species mentioned above.

As these altitudinal and other winter migrants are departing the spring/summer migrants will be arriving. Among the first to arrive to date were a **Shining** and **Horsfield's Bronze-cuckoo** reported separately from Hume and Mulligans Flat on 13 and 14 August, respectively. While the latter has been reported from two other locations since, the former remains the only record so far this spring. At the time of writing there have been no reports yet of the **Pallid Cuckoo** but reports at three locations of the **Fan-tailed**, as noted previously the least migratory of the local cuckoos.

There have also been first reports of two species which I didn't alert readers to look out for in my August column. The first was a **Latham's Snipe** (an oversight on my part) which Michael Maconachie reported on 10 August at the Jerrabomberra Wetlands NR, with 7 subsequently reported from there on 26 August. The second was an early male **White-winged Triller** reported by Sandra Henderson at Kelly Road off the Monaro Highway north of Michelago on 23 August. Earlier on 4 August Sandra found an **Australian Reed-Warbler** at Hume, again the first (and so far only) report of this species.

The **Fairy Martin** was also first reported by a number of observers at the Jerrabomberra Wetlands on 26 August, whereas the **Tree Martin**, which was recorded several times during June and July, was reported from a surprising 19 locations in the COG Aol during August. Likewise the **Western Gerygone**, for which there were several records in June and July, was reported from Mt Ainslie and Campbell Park (2 birds) on 31 July and 13 August, respectively. Similarly there was a further report of **2 Noisy Friarbirds** on Capital Hill on 13 August, adding to the earlier record on 11 July.

Of the summer migrant species which have over-wintered the **Dusky Woodswallow** has been regularly reported during August, but in the ACT only from the Jerrabomberra Wetlands area, with a maximum of 12 birds seen together there on 12 August. However, 13 birds were also reported from the Yass Gorge on 26 August, in both cases underlining its preference for locations close to water during winter. **Olive-backed Orioles** have also been present in small numbers right through winter, at 9 locations over the period.

The **Grey Fantail** and **Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike** continued to be regularly reported during August, each from around 20 locations, with again the latter mainly from around central Canberra. Small numbers of **Superb Parrot** have been reported from 7 locations, 3 from south of the lake and with the maximum of 5 at Bruce on 10 August. However, there have only been 2 reports so far of the **Rufous Whistler**, with

2 birds at Wamboin on 17 August, and one at Swinger Hill on 26 August, and surprisingly none of the **Mistletoebird** during the reporting period.

From the above it seems clear that the major influx of spring/summer migrants has yet to commence, so keep an eye/ear out for larger numbers the above as well as **Yellow-faced** and **White-naped Honeyeaters**. These have also been present during winter, reported from around 14 locations each during August, but it is clear significant numbers are still to return, though in spring this is usually much less noticeable than the quite spectacular autumn migration. Please keep an eye out also for the first returning **White-throated** and **Western Gerygones** and the **Leaden Flycatcher** in September, as well as towards the end of the month for the **White-winged Triller** and **Rufous Songlark**. If it continues to be dry inland but improves here the last two species may be present this spring/summer in large numbers. Depending on the weather the **Sacred Kingfisher** and **Rainbow Bee-eater** may also first return towards the end of September.

During the period there was a second autumn/winter report of the "unusual" species the **Little Friarbird** by Brian Grinter from Yerrabi Pond on 11 August. Apart from the continued **Brown Gerygone** reports at the ANBG (see above), the **Scaly-breasted Lorikeets** around the National Library/High Court were last reported on 6 August, but there was a report of 2 birds at the Australian Institute of Sport in Bruce on 12 August. There was also a further late but confirmed report of the **Yellow-plumed Honeyeater** on 27 August from the Bicentennial National Trail close to where it was originally found at Hall. There have also been further winter reports of a **Black Kite** at Scrivener Dam on 12 August, as well as a **Grey Goshawk** from near Sullivan's Creek, and of a **Barn Owl** at the Jerrabomberra Wetlands on 29 July and 28 August.

Only limited breeding has come to my attention for the reporting period, consisting mainly of common species, with a very early hatching being the nest with very noisy begging young **Noisy Miners** in Sandra Henderson's street in Wanniasa. Mid-month the **Crested Pigeon** and **Black Swan**, both species that breed in winter, were reported building and on a nest, respectively. As partial support that significant breeding is yet to commence, mixed feeding flocks comprising **Yellow-rumped Thornbill**, **Speckled Warbler**, **Southern Whiteface**, **Diamond Firetail** and **Hooded Robin**, as well as **Striated Thornbill** and **Yellow-rumped Thornbill** with **Grey Shrike-thrush** were still reported at Googong and Narrabundah Hill on 28 July and 9 August, respectively.

Limited information has been reported on large single flocks except that on 2 August Geoffrey Dabb reporting at least 600 Little Corellas flying noisily over the Mount Mugga/Red Hill saddle (Hindmarsh Drive), over Callum Brae and the Monaro Highway towards NSW, in a fairly direct line. On the late afternoon of 5 August he photographed 154 birds crossing

Red Hill ridge to the Federal Golf Course, where 362 were then seen on the ground pre-roosting.

So please keep up the reports for any early arriving summer migrants (including those which have overwintered) or the departing altitudinal migrants mentioned above, for signs of increased breeding, for roosts and roost flights, and for the last single species flocks. 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 chat line") 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

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) 6174 2171, or barbdebruine@hotmail.com

COG'S BIRD BLITZ 27-28 OCTOBER 2018

Yes, it is on again – our fourteenth Bird Blitz, when we attempt a full weekend of counting birds across the ACT. All the details are on our website, including the list of frequently surveyed locations and the names of those birders who have already signed up to survey there. Please let me know – to blitz@canberrabirds.org.au – if you are prepared to help us get really good coverage of our Territory by nominating to take on one or more of the listed locations (or other sites) to survey over the course of that weekend. You don't have to enter your data electronically – paper is still fine. I'm always looking for 4WD vehicles with competent drivers to survey beyond locked gates in Namadgi NP. If you haven't done this before, it is really inspiring – there are just a few conditions we have to comply with – so get in touch if you are keen.

Barbara Allan, Blitz organiser



Julatten, 1½hrs. North of Cairns

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Field Trip Reports

Sunday 12 August – West Palerang

After an initial gathering at Spotlight in Queanbeyan, we traveled to Mick Sherd Oval in Bungendore to meet the rest of the group, forming a band of 21 members and guests. It was very pleasing to see a good representation of younger folk.

As David McDonald explained, our itinerary had evolved somewhat as the dam on Lake Road was dry and a TSR had been leased out and was no longer available for birding. We began with a walk to [Bungendore Common](#), with a permanent water feature, but little known to people who don't live in Bungendore. Only three species of duck (**Australian Wood Duck**, **Pacific Black Duck** and **Chestnut Teal**) were sighted but the three common members of the rail family were evident in fair numbers. **Australasian Swampheens** are not common in the area, but are regularly seen here. The least frequently recorded bush bird was a **Grey Currawong**. Two breeding records were logged with **Australian Magpie** and **Crested Pigeon** both building nests. We recorded 29 species here.

After consolidating cars because of limited parking at the next two sites we drove to the [Bungendore Sewage Treatment Works](#). Despite the dearth of open water around the area there were very few waterfowl on the eastern pond. A single **Australian Shelduck** was the most unusual sighting here. We then walked along the ditch to the two western ponds. The highlight here was 34 **Pink-eared Ducks** loafing on the central bank or swimming in the "water". **Hardhead** and **Australasian Shoveler** were also notable. We recorded 15 species here.

The next stop was the main dam on [Trucking Yard Lane](#). We were able to park without disturbing the ducks! As is now expected there were 27 **Plumed Whistling Ducks** on the bank and 56 **Australian Shelduck** (including one with very strange plumage) were grazing on the paddock. At least 8 **Chestnut Teal** were also present and 5 **Straw-necked Ibis** grazed near [Hoskinstown Rd](#). Seventeen species were recorded.

As time was moving on, we decided to proceed directly to [Cuumbeun Nature Reserve](#) on Captains Flat Rd. A **Wedge-tailed Eagle** was seen soaring over the Reserve as we arrived. The hope for this walk was a Chestnut-rumped Heathwren, but unfortunately that species was not evident. Indeed, very few birds were evident until we got close to the Queanbeyan River Fire Trail. A mixed bathing flock there delivered **Scarlet Robin** and **Brown** and **Striated Thornbill** with a female **Golden Whistler** overhead. A total of 14 species was seen here.

We regarded the day's total of 50 species as a pretty good outcome for a chilly day in a dry season.

A blogpost with a few photographs, snips showing the routes walked and a few ancillary comments is [here](#).

Martin Butterfield

Wednesday 15 August – West Hume

Twenty-eight members and guests gathered on a rather little draughty morning, making the prospects for a long list not great. The aim was to circle the area, expecting to cover about 5km (in fact we did 4.74km).

We began by touring some paddocks which produced 5 **Australasian Pipits** (surprisingly the only ones we saw all day), some **Red-rumped Parrots** and 3 **Common Starlings**.

The first pond encountered had 1 **Eurasian Coot**, 2 **Pacific Black Ducks** and 1 **Little Pied Cormorant**.

Skirting an industrial site we entered a large wooded paddock where **Eastern** and **Crimson Rosellas** were added to the list. The former were closely inspecting a nest hollow. Both **Common Mynas** and **Noisy Miners** were in the paddock, enjoying the good live and dead-with-lots-of-hollows eucalypts.

Passing the site of the former homestead 38 **Australian Wood Ducks** were grazing on the roadside before flying to another pond. We then progressed up an "improved" Dogtrap Gully without seeing a bird. The best birding was along the former Cooma railway line where we found a pair of **Scarlet Robins**, at least 3 **Speckled Warblers** and 20+ **Red-browed Finches**.

A total of 31 species was considered to be quite good given the terrible weather.

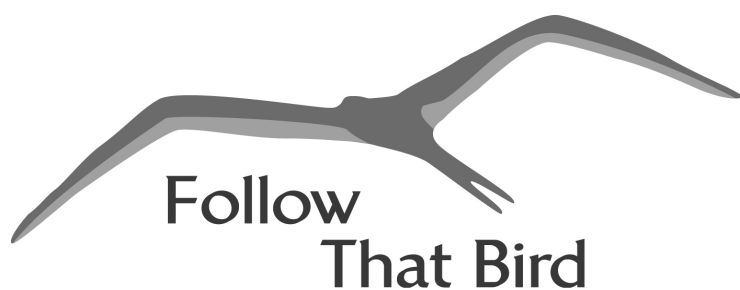
Martin Butterfield

Sunday 26 August – Mt Taylor

Thirteen people gathered at the Waldock Street car park entrance to Mt Taylor Nature Reserve in mild conditions to repeat a walk through the lower north-west slopes, last done in May 2017. We had a list of 16 bird species by the time we departed the car park area, and this was quickly added to with more interesting observations. Like last year, we were fortunate to see the **Gang-gang Cockatoo**, as two birds briefly flew overhead. There were many other parrots around, such as **Sulphur-crested Cockatoo**, **Galah**, **Australian King-Parrot**, **Crimson** and **Eastern Rosella** and **Rainbow Lorikeet**. By mid-morning we had encountered

mixed feeding flocks of small birds, with many thornbills, pardalotes and **Weebills** moving through the trees and along the ground. We were able to see the **Scarlet Robin** and also had a few encounters with the **Common Bronzewing**. Overall the conditions were very pleasant, with no sign of any of the forecast showers. The dryness of the reserve was evident, with not a lot of last winter or early spring flowering. A total of 36 species was seen or heard during the morning, with thanks to Sandra Henderson for again recording all the observations and submitting them to eBird.

Matthew Frawley



September 2018

Barraba – NSW Birding Hot Spot
\$2575

2-6th Sept *Guide: Christina Port*

Broken Hill & Menindee Lakes
\$4610

11-19th Sept *Guide Christina Port*

November 2018

Cape York

TBA

28 Nov–3rd Dec *Guide: Rob Hynson*

January 2019

King & Flinders Islands

\$4105

22-27 Jan *Guide: TBA*

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Rose Robin

David Cook

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 9 September Kelly Road

Meet for carpooling at 8.30am at the Motor Registry on Couranga Cres in Hume. Kelly Road is off the Monaro Highway, not far past the NSW border. It runs for several kilometres parallel to the highway, and in the past has been a popular spot with COG members. No need to register - just be on time at Hume! Once we get to Kelly Rd we'll be driving along the road, with several stops, with walks along the road at points where the vegetation looks promising. Any questions to Sandra Henderson at shirmax2931@gmail.com

Saturday 15 September - Tuggeranong lakes by bike

Note change of date to Saturday

This outing will encompass some or all of the following lakes in the Tuggeranong area, Lake Tuggeranong, Isabella Pond, Upper Stranger Pond, Stranger Pond, Gordon Pond and Point Hut Pond, and will probably conclude early to mid-afternoon incorporating a lunch break at some point. It will predominantly feature wide shared paths, but there will be some sections on gravel or grass so a mountain bike will be necessary. Expect to do about 20-25kms total although there will be plenty of breaks as we stop at the different ponds along the way. Registration is essential, limited places available.

Email roostcensus@canberrabirds.org.au to register and further details will be provided closer to the date.

Ryu Callaway

Wednesday 19 September – Red Hill Nature Reserve

Meet at 9:00am on 19 September on Buxton Street.

Martin Butterfield

Sunday 23 September – Urambi Hills Nature Reserve

Meet at 8am at the Meredith Circuit entrance to Urambi Hills Nature Reserve (off Learmonth Drive - if unsure of location, copy this into Google: -35.396822, 149.047919). This walk will explore the lower western slopes of Urambi Hills, an area on the very western edge of suburban Canberra, with uninterrupted views towards the Murrumbidgee River and the ranges beyond. Being an early spring walk, we will have the opportunity to look for newly returned migrants. Please bring water, sunscreen and morning tea. As parking is limited at the starting point of this walk, please register with Matthew Frawley at frawley.matthew@gmail.com.

25-28 September 2018 – Camping trip to a private property near Kangaroo Valley.

This three-night campout will be on a private block very close to Kangaroo Valley. Arriving in time to set up before dark on Tuesday afternoon, we will explore the property and nearby nature reserves on Wednesday and Thursday. On the way home on Friday we will stop off at places of interest along the way.

Campers will need to bring everything in, including water, and take everything out. Further details will be given to participants. Booking is essential before 10 September. Please contact the organiser, Lia Battisson on 0412 788 791 or liabattisson@grapevine.com.au.

Sunday 30 September – day trip to private property at Kangiara near Boorowa.

We have been invited to a property that has been de-stocked for some years. A reconnaissance visit last year yielded a good number of interesting species along

the creek, in the woodland and in former grazing areas. The owners have added small dams with bird-friendly plantings around the edges.

They have offered to host a lunchtime barbeque at the conclusion of our birding. As it takes almost an hour from our carpooling spot in Hall to Kangiara, we will meet at 7am. Registration is essential: to smlashko@gmail.com. More details will be provided to participants after registration. Numbers will be restricted to 20.

Sue Lashko

Sunday 7 October

I am seeking a venue and a leader for this date. If you have a favourite spot that is likely to be good for spring migrants, please contact me at smlashko@gmail.com

Sunday 14 October – K2C surveys, Bredbo area

COG will continue with the K2C surveys that have been running since April 2010. The surveyed properties have healthy populations of many of the rarer woodland birds such as **Diamond Firetail**, **Hooded Robin** and **Speckled Warbler**. We will be visiting the same sites to continue the monitoring and see if we can add to the property lists with spring-summer migrants. The surveys will be undertaken in 'blitz' fashion; that is, observers in small groups will visit a number of sites on one or more properties before regrouping for lunch and a sharing of the survey's findings. Less experienced observers are welcome to join in the survey as each team will have at least one experienced observer. Anyone interested in participating is asked to contact Nicki Taws **before Wednesday 10 October**. Email: ntaws@bigpond.com or 0408 210736.

Nicki Taws

Saturday 20 October – Percival Hill

Meet at 8.00am on the dam wall of Gungahlin Pond. About a kilometre from the junction of Gundaroo Drive and the Barton Highway, turn into Candlebark Close. Drive to the end of Candlebark and park there, or in one of the little side streets like Platypus or Lyrebird. The dam wall will be obvious from anywhere there and we will meet in the middle.

Percival Hill never disappoints. There are several different habitats which are usually very active in spring. Percival Hill rises from reedy Ginninderra Creek. While much of the eastern slope of Percival Hill is new growth, planted about 20 years ago by Landcare but getting quite mature now, there is a significant old growth stand on its west. Expect well over 30 species on the list.

John Harris

Tuesday 30 October to Sunday 4 November - Balranald Area

There will be two camps. The first is three days at Lake Paika, a farmstay north of Balranald. I believe they have access to wetlands on their property. The second three days will be at Yanga National Park. For those who do not wish to camp there is accommodation available at Lake Paika. There is no accommodation at Yanga, but Balranald is close by. I need to know bookings for accommodation at Lake Paika well in advance and will require payment before I confirm the booking. Those who wish to stay in Balranald can make their own arrangements. In order to make the group manageable I would like to limit the numbers to a maximum of 20 persons.

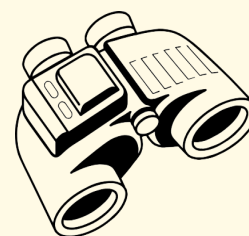
Registration essential. Bookings for the trip and Lake Paika accommodation to be made by contacting Noel Luff at noelluff@homemail.com.au

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**

2018 Gang-gang Cockatoo nesting survey

During 2014 a most successful survey on the distribution of the [Gang-gang Cockatoo](#) in the ACT was held to celebrate 50 years of birding activities by the Canberra Ornithologists Group.

A student at the ANU is keen to develop the survey further by examining in more detail the birds' nesting requirements. COG members are asked to help by reporting breeding observations as a sighting on Canberra Nature Map (<https://canberra.naturemapr.org/>).

You will be asked to provide the information online:

Gender of bird observed— male, female or pair

Gang-gang behaviour

Seen entering hollow

Or looking into hollow

Or chewing bark around hollow

Or perched near hollow

Is this a repeat observation at this location?

List other species seen entering or inspecting hollow



Gang-gang Cockatoo in hollow

Chris Davey

A photograph is required for each sighting entered into Canberra Nature Map. The location and date is stripped from the image preferences. Once logged on click 'Add a sighting' on the top banner, then on the dropdown box click on 'Add a sighting'. Transfer your image, enter the abundance, then select 'Bird' then 'Parrot' then 'Cacatua alba (Gang-gang Cockatoo)', then supply the requested additional information.

If your camera or smart phone is not GPS enabled or you don't own one of these devices, please contact Michael.Mulvaney@act.gov.au and he will set you up so that you are able to add data.

The aim of the survey is to obtain multiple sightings on the use of a hollow that Gang-gangs have been inspecting. In this way information can be obtained on the hollows that have been successfully used by Gang-gangs for breeding and on those that have been unsuccessful and the reasons why. Therefore, please provide information each time you check the hollow whether Gang-gangs are present or not.

Surprisingly the 2014 survey did not definitely confirm the presence of any nest trees, and there are just three trees known in the Canberra area in which chicks have been reared. Locating further nest trees will help to better understand and conserve this species.

Clicking on the box on Canberra Nature Map that this is a nest site means that only the person reporting the site and the project administrators will know the location of a nest site.

Alternatively, information can be provided via email to chris_davey@aapt.net.au or kathy.eyles@anu.edu.au

Chris Davey

New Places – June-July

Sandra Henderson

23-29 July - Point Hut Pond District Park

Where is it: adjacent to Jim Pike Avenue in Gordon

I've driven past this large pond many times on the way to Point Hut Crossing, but have never walked around it. Thursday 26 July was a beautiful, still morning, and I followed the 2.7km track around the pond. The highlight was a group of **Yellow Thornbills** in waterside casuarinas near the playground. It is apparent that locals feed many of the waterbirds – two **Black Swans** paddled close to the edge following me about half way around the pond, and **Eurasian Coots**, **Australasian Swamphens** and **Pacific Black Ducks** were also quite friendly. Several **Red Wattlebirds** were bathing in one corner.

30 July – 5 August - CIT, Bruce

Where is it: off Haydon Drive in Bruce

Whenever I passed by this looked like a leafy campus, so a likely birding spot. I visited on a cold, windy day. The main carpark areas have shrubby edges, there are numbers of large eucalypts on the campus, and there were numbers of small birds twittering in Bruce Ridge reserve just across the road. Rosellas and **Galahs** were exploring hollows in larger trees. Unfortunately I was there on a weekend, and access to the horticulture area, which includes a pond, was not possible – I will visit again on a day when I can check that out! Well worth checking out on a nicer day in breeding season, when I suspect there might be a lot more activity.

6 – 12 August - Flemington Road Ponds

Where is it: corner of Flemington Road and Morisset Rd, near Mitchell (and currently with light rail construction alongside).

I visited on a cold morning, but still managed 26 species. The main pond is quite large, but there are also several small ones, and some areas at the EPIC end which are currently dry but are probably under water at times. There were not a lot of waterbirds, but the rail construction is only metres away and noisy. There is a track of sorts around the main pond, through long grass. I'm not sure I'd want to visit in snake-friendly weather. There are several large clumps of shrubs. A large number of **Silvereyes** were calling from one such clump, and a few ventured to the top to sit in the sunshine. **Red-browed Finches** were heard but not seen. **Golden-headed Cisticolas** sat up nicely on some of the grass stalks, and a **Eurasian Skylark** could be heard overhead.

13 – 19 August - Hawkesbury River at Windsor (boat cruise)

I was the only keen birdwatcher on this outing by the Tuggeranong seniors' group, although one lapsed COG member was also along and showed some interest. There were not a lot of birds to be seen, but an adult **White-bellied Sea-Eagle** circled close to the paddle steamer a few times. Two **Noisy Friarbirds** caught my eye as they landed in a tree on the bank, but I was unable to identify the smaller honeyeaters at a distance. Several **Great Egrets** flew over, along with a group of **Straw-necked Ibis**. Not a spot I'd choose for birdwatching, but interesting nonetheless.

20 – 26 August - Black Mountain – Summit and Forest Loop tracks

Where : the Summit track starts near the substation at the end of Frith Rd behind CSIRO. The Forest Loop runs off the Summit Track and loops around the mountain.

Crimson Rosellas and **Sulphur-crested Cockatoos** were busy inspecting hollows in many spots, and several **Striated Pardalotes** were seen displaying. The major mixed flock we encountered included **Striated Thornbills**, both pardalotes, **Buff-rumped Thornbills** and **White-throated Treecreepers**.

27 August – 2 September - Lyneham Wetland

Where is it: Goodwin St, Lyneham

This is a suburban water quality control pond. There were no surprises among the species seen, and I was pleased to see a sign (not an official one I suspect) asking people to not feed the ducks. **Hardheads**, **Pacific Black Ducks**, **Grey Teal** and **Australian Wood Ducks** were present. Two pairs of **Superb Fairy-Wrens** were busy on the grass, one of the males in full colour, and the other male just starting to colour up.



RANKINS SPRINGS **BIRDING WEEKEND**

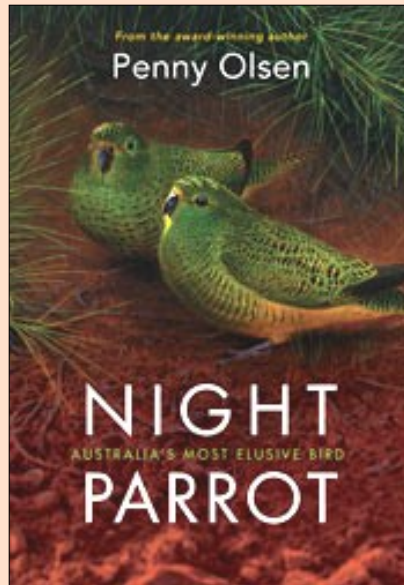
FRI 28 SEPT. TO SUN 30 SEPT.

- **FRIDAY EVENING:** MEET & GREET PUB DINNER
- **SATURDAY:** EARLY MORNING to AFTERNOON BUS TRIP TO LOCAL BIRDING HOT SPOTS. INCLUDES MORNING TEA, LUNCH & AFTERNOON TEA/SNACKS
- **SATURDAY EVENING:** BBQ DINNER AT HALL
- **SUNDAY MORNING:** BIRDING BUS TRIP
- **ACCOMMODATION CHOICES**
 - * CAMPING/YOUR OWN VAN (POWERED & UNPOWERED SITES) AT THE RS CARAVAN PARK
 - * MOTEL
 - * LOCAL B&B & FARMSTAYS



TO BE PLACED ON AN EMAIL LIST FOR FURTHER DETAILS & UPDATES ABOUT THIS FANTASTIC CENTRAL NSW BIRDING WEEKEND, EMAIL HELEN AT THE 'LACHLAN FOLD WILDLIFE ACTION GROUP': [**lfwag@gmail.com**](mailto:lfwag@gmail.com)

ORDER NOW!
Due September



Night Parrot

Australia's Most Elusive Bird

Penny Olsen

The competitiveness and secrecy, the triumphs and adventures of the history of the Night Parrot and its followers.

For well over a century, the Night Parrot lured its seekers into Australia's vast, arid outback. From the beginning it was a mysterious bird. Fewer than 30 specimens were collected before it all but disappeared, offering only fleeting glimpses and the occasional mummified body as proof of its continued existence. Protected by spinifex and darkness, the parrot attained almost mythical status: a challenge to birdwatchers and an inspiration to poets, novelists and artists.

Night Parrot documents the competitiveness and secrecy, the triumphs and adventures of the history of the bird and its followers, culminating in the recent discovery of live birds at a few widely scattered locations. It describes what we are now unravelling about the mysteries of its biology and ecology and what is still left to learn. Complemented by guest essays, illustrations and photographs from a wide variety of sources, this book sheds light on Australia's most elusive bird.

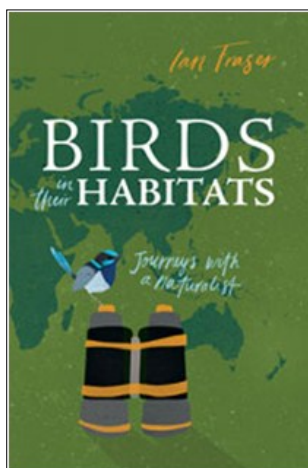
Due in September-Members' Price: \$35

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

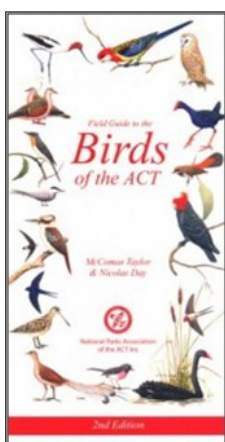


Birds in their Habitats: Journeys with a Naturalist

Ian Fraser

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. 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.



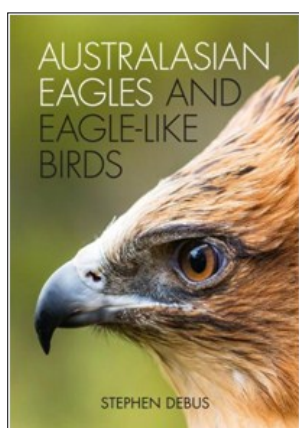
Field Guide to the Birds of the ACT

McComas Taylor & Nicolas Day

This revised second edition illustrates in colour the 217 birds likely to be seen in and around the ACT. It has easy-to-follow descriptions in a compact format. Only local birds are shown making this Field Guide much simpler to use than comprehensive national guides.

McComas Taylor has been watching birds in Canberra for over 30 years and has written, broadcast and lectured on the subject. Nicholas Day is widely recognised as one of Australia's foremost wildlife artists.

Members' price: \$20



Australasian Eagles and Eagle-like Birds

Stephen Debus

Eagles are awe-inspiring birds that have influenced much human endeavour. Australia is home to three eagle species, and in Melanesia there are four additional endemic species. A further three large Australian hawks are eagle-like. All of the six Australian species covered in this book are threatened in at least some states (one also nationally). This book places the Australasian species in their regional and global context, reviews their population status and threats, provides new information on their ecology, and suggests what needs to be done in order to ensure the future of these magnificent birds.

Members' price: \$35.

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

2018-2019 memberships:

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

New members

COG welcomes the following new members:

M Fox
B Palm
L Piccolo
M Quinn
S Rapley
R Schurmann

NEXT NEWSLETTER

Deadline for September 2018 edition:

Wednesday 26 September 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.

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