



Gang-gang

September 2015

Newsletter of the Canberra Ornithologists Group Inc.

SEPTEMBER MEETING

Wednesday 9 September 2015

7.30 pm.

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

Amanda Edworthy will give the short presentation **"Forty-spotted Pardalote: Conservation on the Fly"**. Amanda is a PhD student at the Research School of Biology, ANU.

The Forty-spotted Pardalote is an endangered and declining songbird, endemic to Tasmania, relying on tree hollows for nesting and *Eucalyptus viminalis* trees for manna. Forty-spots have experienced unexplained decline within existing habitat. To investigate current threats to their populations, Amanda studied rates of reproduction and survival in relation to predation, competition, parasitism, and habitat quality in south eastern Tasmania. The principal cause of nestling mortality was a native screw-worm fly parasite, *Passeromyia longicornis*, other threats found will also be discussed.

The main presentation **"Powerful by Name, Powerful by Nature – findings from the Powerful Owl Project in Sydney"**, will be given by **Holly Parsons**.

Since 2011, the Birdlife Australia Powerful Owl project has been assessing the distribution and demographics of urban Powerful Owls throughout the Greater Sydney region, harnessing the charisma of these birds to engage and educate the local

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

For most of the reporting period covered by this column (26 July to 26 August), bird activity in the COG Area of Interest (AOI) has been pretty static due to the continuing cold and wet winter. My previous column was sent in a few days early as I was going to be out of Canberra for a while and so I was not able to include the report of the female **Pink Robin** posted by Steve Holliday on 29 July, which completed the list of altitudinal migrant bird species you might expect to see in Canberra during winter.

Another female was recorded on 12 August by Julianne Kamprad at the Cuumbeun Nature Reserve while searching for the **Chestnut-rumped Heathwren**. The latter, which was the focus of much attention, particularly in the first half of August, is a sedentary species which prefers heathland and can be found in a number of spots within the COG AOI where this habitat occurs. The **Olive Whistler** photographed in the Botanic Gardens by Ken Bissett on 11 August also has a restricted habitat

David Cook

Chestnut-rumped Heathwren



Everyone welcome

August Meeting —cont from Page 1

community in urban conservation. There are three areas of interest within the project: research, engagement, and education. Over the course of the previous 4 years and with the generous support of the Southern NSW Twitchathon in 2011 and 2013, and the NSW Environment Trust the Powerful Owl project has made great progress in each of these three streams. Come along to learn about this amazing threatened species and how it is coping in the urban environment.

in the ranges, but according to the 2013-2014 Annual Bird Report some altitudinal migration does occur.

As far as I can tell no-one else managed to find this bird, in contrast to the heathwrens and particularly the **Banded Lapwings** first reported near Hoskintown in July. Up to 11 birds have been seen there and were the subject of many COG chatline posts to 17 August, including the possibility that they may breed (squatting on the same spot and copulation have been observed but no further evidence has yet been found). This species seems to be mainly a winter/spring visitor, possibly mainly to breed.

It is now even clearer that **Plumed Whistling-Ducks** are not summer visitors as they were reported a number of times at the Bungendore dams during August, though in much lower numbers (maximum of 16)

than in summer/autumn. So the only month they haven't been recorded there now is July; one wonders where most of them spend winter, possibly not far away? Small numbers of **Australian Shelducks** were also present in the Bungendore area during August.

The altitudinal migrants that visit urban/peri-urban Canberra over the winter period will move away during September, though all might still be recorded in this month. The **Yellow-tufted Honeyeater** at the Red Hill Lookout was last recorded on 12 August, and **Swift Parrots** from Torrens on 15 August. The **Crescent Honeyeater** was still calling in my neighbour's garden in Chapman on 26 August, but there seem to be no other urban records for this species this month.

Surprisingly I haven't observed the **Golden Whistler** in my local patch of Cooleman Ridge and South Narrabundah Hill since June. This species is often still present in urban/peri urban Canberra until early October, so keep an eye out for it as well as the slightly earlier leaving **White-eared Honeyeater**. Again I've hardly sighted this bird in my local patch in August but it is often quiet at this time and therefore harder to observe. In contrast **Flame Robins** are still around, and as I predicted have now been reported from Callum Brae by Sandra Henderson on 21 August, but were not present at Stromlo Forest Park earlier in the month. They have also been reported nest building in Campbell Park (see below).



Swift Parrot

Leo Berzins

Scarlet Robins, which don't move as far as their close relatives, are also still present: the male in my GBS site in Chapman was last seen on 21 August. **Rose Robins** were also reported throughout August, with the last record I can find being on 22 August. So watch out for the last of the above species in your local patch in September, particularly if the cool weather continues which may delay their departure.

The cold and wet winter also seems to have delayed the influx of summer migrants with only some increased activity reported during the couple of warmer days around the weekend of 22-23 August. After an apparent absence of over 3 months since mid-May, two **Dusky Woodswallows** were reported from the Jerrabomberra Wetlands on 23 August. I also saw 2 at the Illoura horse paddocks that same morning and 1 at the Googong Dam foreshores the previous day. There were a number of **Tree Martins** at the latter site, and from reports this seems

to be one species that noticeably increased in numbers over August. The closely-related **Fairy Martins** also appear to have returned in this slightly warmer period, after an absence of over 3 months.

Apart from Barbara Allan reporting a **Shining Bronze-Cuckoo** at the Pinnacle NR on the morning of 9 August, and a couple of **Fan-tailed Cuckoos** (the least migratory of the local cuckoo species) reported during August, I can find no other reports yet of cuckoo species. During August there have been a few further reports of small numbers of the summer migrant species the **Rufous Whistler**, **Western Gerygone**, **Mistletoebird**, the **Australian Reed-Warbler**, **Olive-backed Oriole**, and **White-naped** and **Fuscous Honeyeaters**, but as these have been reported throughout winter in similar numbers it is very hard to tell whether or not they have been new arrivals.

This also applies to the **Superb Parrot**, **Yellow-faced Honeyeater**, **Grey Fantail**, **Silvereye** and **Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike** which have been more widely reported, but it doesn't appear any major spring influx has yet started except perhaps for the **Silvereye** whose numbers rose sharply in my GBS site over the past weekend. So please keep a lookout for the first clear signs of the return of the above species, as well as species that usually return during September, such as the **Noisy Friarbird** (no records for winter!), **White-throated Gerygone**, **Leaden Flycatcher**, and perhaps towards the end of the month, the **White-winged Triller**, **Rufous Songlark** (if the predicted El Nino actually does arrive and dries out the inland for these two species!), **Sacred Kingfisher** and **Rainbow Bee-eater**.

In keeping with the continued cold and wet winter, reports of breeding seemed to stall somewhat during August, with most reports late in the month. An example is my **Australian Magpie** threesome reported last month for which nest building seemed complete early in August (the old nest suspended below had fallen



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2015 tours

Good birding, good food ...

Strzelecki Track outback tour

4 — 23 September 36th tour!

Barren Grounds, Gloucester Tops, Wingham & coastal NSW

26 September — 4 October

2015 plains-wanderer weekends

21 & 22 November 2015

6 & 7 December 2015

2016 tours

Tasmania birds & mammals

30 January — 6 February

Alice Springs

25 April — 2 May

Top End & Mitchell Plateau

22 May — 6 June

Queensland's Gulf Country

22 June — 9 July

Two days added for Rusty Grasswren

Iron Range & Atherton Tablelands

12 — 25 July (2 parts)

New Caledonia birding tour

14-21 August 2016

Strzelecki Outback

2 — 21 September

Please see itineraries, checklists and latest news on our website

www.philipmaher.com

Sacred Kingfisher

Julian Robinson



down), but there was no further action until recently when the female still seemed to be putting the final touches to the nest.

For me, by far the most interesting has been the report on 16 August by Alison Mackerras of a female **Flame Robin** nest building in Campbell Park not far from where the nest of the brown-plumaged pair was last year. There was a fully coloured male nearby but consistent with the literature he didn't help with the nest while Alison was watching. Interestingly my CBN paper of last year's nest indicates this is about 9 days earlier than when Con Boekel observed a normal pair nest building there last year (that nest failed).

sign that it's still winter are the flocks of **Sulphur-crested Cockatoos** around Rivett/Chapman. Flocks of over 100 **Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoos** have also been reported. Also consistent is that 40-60 **Magpie-larks** have still been observed each evening flying in from the nearby horse paddocks and roosting together close to my GBS site. These are double the numbers in July; I had been expecting it to break up but am now wondering if the roost ever will!

Another interesting post was by Ryu Callaway of well in excess of 300 **Australian White Ibis** and 35+ **Straw-necked Ibis** roosting on 2 islands of Lake Tuggeranong. Every afternoon he was seeing many large flocks of ibis

fly over Fadden and MacArthur due west, and in the opposite direction in the mornings. Also roosting there were 4 **Great Cormorants** and 3 female **Australasian Darters**.

Finally the **Powerful Owl** in Turner is still present there after nearly 9 months. Not surprisingly there have been fewer reports of it, with the main topic being what kind of prey it has been taking and when will the supply run out. It will be very interesting to hear

what the Sydney experience can inform us at this month's COG meeting.

The information above was again obtained from my two main sources, postings on the COG chat line and the Eremaea eBird web site, as well as some direct correspondence to me. Once again my sincere thanks to everyone who has contributed to these data sources, without which it would not be possible to put this column together.

Once the weather finally warms up I'm predicting a major influx of summer migrants. So please look out for the returning spring birds, as well as departing altitudinal migrants mentioned above, and for further signs of breeding. As usual please ensure that all significant observations are properly reported.

Jack Holland

Tawny Frogmouth

Leo Berzins



The COG Wednesday walk there on 19 August confirmed continued nest building by this species, as well as other signs of breeding including a male **Common Bronzewing** sitting firmly on a nest. On 21 August Martin Butterfield reported the **Tawny Frogmouths** in his GBS site had deposited the first twigs in the nest site overnight. On the same day Sandra Henderson reported **White-winged Choughs** well into breeding mode at Callum Brae, with at least two groups having active nests. Both were being given plenty of attention by numerous **Pied Currawongs**, with in each case a bird on the nest and a single "guard" were being kept busy by the currawongs swooping within inches of the nests.

Consistent with the delay in breeding, Sandra reported a mixed feeding flock still present; these usually break up once the breeding season commences. Another

Gang-gang project - seeking further data required on hollow inspecting and breeding success

An analysis of the survey has provided 150 records from 50 observers of **Gang-gang Cockatoos** hollow inspecting. From these sites only one appears to have produced young although it is unknown how frequently any of the sites were revisited. To obtain further information on the breeding of Gang-gangs within the COG Area of Interest we would like to obtain further details on hollow inspecting during this coming breeding season.

For any sightings of Gang-gangs showing interest in potential nest hollow sites or any other indications of breeding, could you please fill in an online form to be found at <http://canberrabirds.org.au/observing-birds/incidental-record-form/> and provide information on the location, number of birds and their activity, then if possible regularly return to the site and record any further activity. If there is no activity please still fill in the form and enter a zero for numbers with the words 'This is a zero Gang-gang report' in the notes section.

The project team will also be contacting survey participants who submitted observations about nesting and breeding behaviour to invite them to record observations over this breeding season.

For any enquiries please email ggquery@canberrabirds.org.au. If unable to access the online site then please just send an email to the above address with the details. Note that all locations will remain confidential. Of interest, one site has already been reported for August.

Chris Davey and Kathy Eyles (The GG team)



South Pacific Heathland Reserve, Ulladulla

The South Pacific Heathland Reserve is an area of rapidly diminishing heathland right beside the sea in South Ulladulla, to the east of the Ex-Serviceman's Club. It contains many significant rare plants, including waratahs and orchids. It can be accessed via Pitman Ave or Dowling St.

The reserve was set up in the 1980s by keen local birdwatcher, Chris Humphries, and is managed by a group of Trustees. Over the years little has been done in terms of management, but the present Trustees are concerned that, if considered by the State Government to be neglected and underused, there may be an inclination to sell it off. The now very active Trustees have already had a wheelchair accessible track put in to a lookout, and have done some clearing of vegetation along the tracks. A new brochure giving information about the Reserve is being produced.

The trustees are keen to get more information on the birds that use the Reserve. To achieve this the site has been set up as an Eremaea eBird Hotspot, as "South Pacific Heathland Reserve", and the Trustees would appreciate surveys by any birders visiting the area. The Reserve is just over 500m long, and can be walked in an elongated circular way to return to the start. It takes roughly an hour.

Please note that only birds in the Reserve are to be included, not albatrosses out to sea or oystercatchers on the rock platform below, as the interest is in the birds that are using the vegetation. Another couple of things to note are to record your start time and duration, the number in your party and to please try to make a count of the numbers of each species. This will be an estimation, but is really useful. Honeyeaters rule here!

Margaret Hamon

Field Trip Reports

Friday 31 July to Sunday 2 August - Wonga Bawley Point

A full complement of 15 persons participated in this interesting and thoroughly enjoyable visit to the South Coast, so much so that several members already have their hands up for places in a likely return visit planned for March 2016.

Several acknowledgements are in order, starting with the owners of Wonga represented by Cecelia Bradley who, in recognition of the historical connection, gave special permission for this successful combined camping and accommodated group arrangement which worked out very well.

Then we must record our appreciation of our indefatigable guide Margaret Hamon who actually arose from her sickbed on the first day to provide very valuable local knowledge and leadership. Thanks to the advance preparations by our guide, we did cover a fair amount of varied territory including nearby beaches, headlands, rocky coastlines, an old growth forest and the pristine waterways of the well-hidden Meroo National Park.

But it must be stressed that Wonga by itself is an absolute haven for birds of all description and is certainly well worth an independent visit by COG members at any time of the year. It is a very reliable site for honeyeaters including **Scarlet Honeyeater** and **Black-faced Monarch**, at the right time of the year.

On the final day we visited the nearby ANU Kioloa Campus and you will be pleased, if not delighted, to learn that COG has been invited back to survey this extensive former grazing property. Reaching from the coastline through regenerating paddocks, wandering creeks, wetlands to heavily forested foothills it should prove a veritable bonanza for both naturalists and birders.



Wonga Bawley Point trip

Terry Bell



Brown Cuckoo-dove

Julian Robinson



Hooded Plover

Terry Bell

The combined bird list for three days, according to my colleague affectionately known as T1, was 77, including such rarities as **Hooded Plover**, **Variegated Fairy-wren**, **Brown Cuckoo-Dove** and a **Brush Bronzewing**, in addition to flocks of **Topknot Pigeons**, all observed by nearly everyone

On this particular expedition we welcomed a new face, Rae Lister, to the family of COG travelling birders and on this subject, we certainly invite further enquiries for future trips from newer COG members and readers of Gang-gang.

T2 (aka Terry Bell)

Wednesday 19 August – Campbell Park

Thirty-two members and guests gathered at the appointed time and place and headed off for a loop including elements of both the Defence land and the Nature Park. Some birds from the adjoining rural property were also noted. The weather was brilliant, being mild and sunny.

As we set off along the eastern fence line our first **Flame Robins** (1 of each sex) were sighted. Before we got to their nesting area a **Long-billed Corella** was seen peering out of a hollow. It was agreed that this was an IH record, but since it was peering out of the hollow it was agreed that this was Inspecting Humans rather than Inspecting Hollow. Other birds seen checking out hollows included **Galah**, **Sulphur-crested Cockatoo**, **Eastern Rosella** and **Australian Wood Duck**.



A female **Flame Robin** was seen flying into a nest site. A male **Common Bronzewing** was sitting firmly on a nest and as we concluded the outing an **Australian Magpie** was seen building a nest near the car park. Recording 7 species in various stages of the breeding process was very pleasing for this early in the season.

Returning migrants were rather thinner on the ground. The only migrants definitely seen were **Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike** and **Rufous Whistler**. One distant bird might have been a cuckoo and a possible cuckoo call was heard, but in neither case was identification possible.

A pile of feathers indicated that there had previously been one more **Laughing Kookaburra** in the area than was currently the case. There was then some discussion as to the cause of death. This may have been resolved by the sighting of a **Peregrine Falcon** later in the outing.

Other less common birds sighted included a **Jacky Winter**, **Brown-headed Honeyeater** (8) and **Speckled Warbler** (1). **Weebills** were everywhere in uncountable numbers and an estimate was made of 40 **Buff-rumped Thornbills**.

In total we recorded 46 species.

Martin Butterfield



Sunday 23 August – Callum Brae NR

Twenty members and friends gathered on a cool and overcast morning for the Callum Brae outing. The conditions gradually improved through the morning and a total of 46 species was seen, although spring migrants were notably absent. All dams in the reserve are full, with most overflowing.

Grey Currawong
Julian Robinson



The parrots were staking out prime real estate, with rosellas, cockatoos, corellas and **Australian King Parrots** seen investigating hollows. A **Nankeen Kestrel** was disturbed in the vicinity of last year's nest tree, and at least three **White-winged Chough** nests are active. Both **Flame** and **Scarlet Robins** were seen near the quarry fence. Birds heard but not seen included **Speckled Warbler**, **Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike** and **Grey Currawong**. At our final stop at nursery corner a **Wedge-tailed Eagle** and **Brown Goshawk** were sighted overhead.

Sandra Henderson

COG Trips

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

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

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

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

and on the COG chat-line at:

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

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

Future Field Trips

Saturday September 5 and Sunday September 6 – Eden pelagics

COG has booked the weekend of September 5 and 6 for two one-day pelagic trips. The outings leave from Eden Harbour at 7am, and return mid-afternoon. Each trip can accommodate 12 people, and the cost per person per trip will be \$100.

Both trips are fully booked but if you wish to go on the waiting list, contact Sandra Henderson (shirmax2931@gmail.com), as there are often late cancellations.

Friday 11 to Sunday 13 September – Bethungra/Ulandra Nature Reserve

It is a decade since COG visited the Ulandra Nature Reserve which is close to the village of Bethungra, 24 km SW of Cootamundra. We will be staying at the Bethungra Hotel B&B (formerly the historic Shirley Hotel) and birding in the Ulandra Nature Reserve and other spots in the region. An alternative accommodation option is camping at the Bethungra Dam & Reserve which is listed in the Directory of Important Wetlands in Australia. Participants staying at the Hotel will be on a half-board basis, i.e. dinner will be provided on Friday and Saturday, and breakfast on Saturday and Sunday, we will bring our own Saturday and Sunday lunches. Participants will make their own bookings at the Hotel which has 13 rooms of various types and sizes.

Registration for this field trip is essential. To register, and/or for further information, please contact the trip leader, David McDonald, phone 6238 3706/0416 231 890, or email ulandra@canberrabirds.org.au.

Saturday 26 September to Monday 5 October – Capertee and Munghorn Gap

To take advantage of two consecutive long weekends, an extended camping trip has been planned, beginning in the Capertee Valley at Glen Davis campground for the Canberra Family and Community Day long weekend. We will probably then move to other national parks in the area, before arriving at Munghorn Gap where we will be camping at the field station there for the Labour Day long weekend.

A more detailed description of the trip will be emailed to participants later but at this stage, if you are interested, please email me at smlashko@gmail.com. Participants may join the trip for all or part of the time, with a maximum of 16 people at any one time.

Sue Lashko

Sunday 11 October – Mullangari Grasslands, Gungahlin

This outing was scheduled for 12 July but had to be postponed due to bad weather.

Meet at 9.00 am at the Cringan Cres. carpark at the corner of the Valley Ave and Warwick St. opposite Gungahlin College and Swimming Pool. The grasslands cover most of the area with some isolated mature eucalypts. A wetland near Burgmann College has **Golden-headed Cisticolas**. About 20 species is the usual count. In summer, **Eurasian Skylark** and **Superb Parrots** feed or fly over and **Tree Martins** breed. Other species include **Australasian Pipit**, **Nankeen Kestrel** and **Noisy Miners**. We could do half the time in the grasslands and half at the Valley Ponds. Bring morning tea. No booking required.

Sunday 11 October – K2C Surveys – Bredbo region

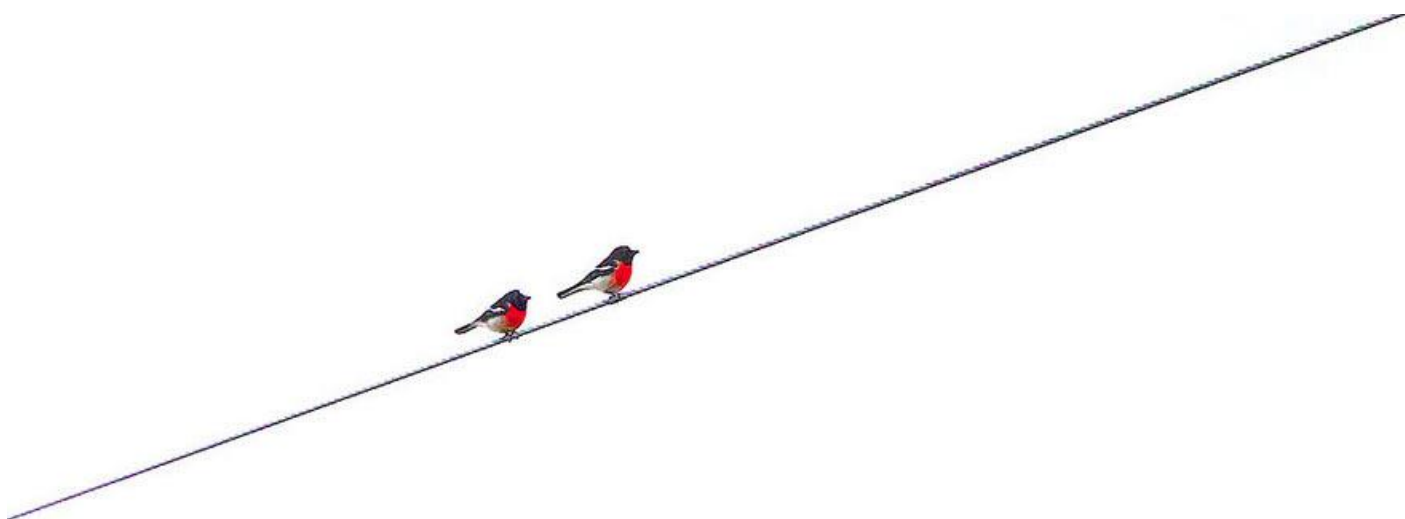
COG will continue with the K2C surveys that have been running since April 2010. The surveyed properties have healthy populations of many of the rarer woodland birds such as **Diamond Firetail**, **Hooded Robin** and **Speckled Warbler**. We will be visiting the same sites to continue the monitoring and see if we can add to the property lists with spring-summer migrants. The surveys will be undertaken in 'blitz' fashion; that is, observers in small groups will visit a number of sites on one or more properties before regrouping for lunch and a sharing of the survey's findings. Less experienced observers are welcome to join in the survey as each team will have at least one experienced observer. Anyone interested in participating is asked to contact Nicki Taws **before Wednesday 7 October**. Email: ntaws@bigpond.com or 0408 210736.

Monday 12 to Friday 16 October – Green Cape (accommodated)

For some time now, COG has visited Green Cape every second year to stay in the former lighthouse keepers' cottages and enjoy the wonderful wildlife watching (birds and whales, in particular) in Ben Boyd National Park and in the surrounding seas. The internal layout of the cottages has recently been altered to provide space for a live-in caretaker. As a result, there are only 10 places available for this trip. The commitment is for a 4-night stay – no concession for shorter stays. The total accommodation costs will be \$140 per person (payment details will be provided once numbers are finalised). There is also a \$7 fee per car per day to enter Ben Boyd National Park. This can be paid at a self-registration booth on arrival.

To register, email smlashko@gmail.com. As with all COG trips, preference will be given to COG members. More detailed information will be sent to participants closer to the date. **One place remaining.**

Sue Lashko and Peter Fullagar



COG'S Bird Blitz 2015

Yes, it is on again, on the weekend of 24-25 October – COG's annual effort to record over the last weekend in October all species of birds present in the ACT across as wide a variety of habitats as possible, as well as to record any breeding activity.



How to enjoy a bird blitz!

COG members taking a break in a corner of the Namadgi National Park

Who can participate?

All COG members and friends are warmly encouraged to participate, so that we can cover as much of the ACT as possible. Join us for a fun weekend of birding for a cause.

Where to survey?

COG members are encouraged to “adopt” one or more locations or entire [grid cells](#), and those already adopted will be [shown on our website](#) and updated from time to time. But don't be perturbed if your favourite location has been taken – multiple surveyors per location are quite acceptable, though it would be good if you took on at least one unclaimed site as well. Think about giving an unknown area a try – it might prove exciting. In order to claim a grid cell or site, please put in your bid to Barbara Allan, the blitz organiser, on blitz@canberrabirds.org.au or phone her on 6254 6520.

If you are very familiar with a site and regularly survey there, or do BirdLife Australia-registered two hectare surveys there, you would probably be the best person to survey that site for the blitz if you can. But if last year's sites were boring or unpleasant or bird-free zones, pick somewhere new this time. Or better still, do a 2-ha 20-min survey to “cover” the site, then move on to somewhere more interesting. If you are a beginner, probably the easiest way to participate is to do a survey in your local park or nature reserve – but remember only to record the birds whose identity you are absolutely sure of. And if work or family commitments preclude you from doing much at all, be sure to try and do at least a 20-minute, 2-ha survey of your own backyard and environs, to support COG's blitz.

As usual, depending on the weather and Namadgi National Park management, we hope to be able to conduct surveys beyond the locked gates in the Park. The organiser is looking for more 4WDs and competent drivers to tackle the fire trails. Please contact Barbara if you'd like to be involved and/or if you have room in your vehicle and are willing to take passengers.

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

What kinds of survey are acceptable?

All standard BirdLife Australia survey methods are acceptable – just indicate on the electronic or hard-copy datasheet which one you used:

- 20 minute survey – record all species observed in a 20-minute period over 2 hectares (roughly a rectangle of 100 m x 200 m; or circle of radius 80 m)
- 500 m survey – record all species observed within 500 m of a central spot, time unlimited but at least 20 mins
- 5 km survey – record all species observed within 5 km of a central spot, time unlimited (though please stay within the one grid cell).

Remember to record the abundance of each bird species seen – e.g. 2 Laughing Kookaburra; plus any indication of breeding using the following codes: ih (inspecting hollow); co (copulating); nb (nest building); ny (nest with young); cf (carrying food); dy (dependent young). Only record species you are sure about. If you see a bird species on COG's "unusuals" list, take a photo of it, if at all possible; take copious field notes of all the details you observe and report any features you didn't see; then submit a completed unusual bird report form with your hard-copy datasheet or email it to rarities@canberrabirds.org.au.

How to record survey results – data sheets and forms

Record your observations either electronically or on paper (one dataset or sheet per location). There are two ways of doing this:

- On paper – blank datasheets are available: a) at COG meetings; b) from the organiser; or c) print some out yourself from the COG website [here](#).
- Electronically using eBird or your own system.

Submitting your results

If you record your bird observations electronically via eBird or a private system, simply send the file to Barbara. If you use hard-copy datasheets, please either: a) mail them to COG blitz records, PO Box 301, Civic Square ACT 2608; b) deliver them to Barbara; or c) hand them in at the November COG meeting.

Prizes!

While most of us find the act of going out and recording birds rewarding enough in itself, it is good if we can offer modest incentives such as participation "lucky draw" prizes. If you are prepared to donate books, wine, DVDs, native plants or anything suitable as a blitz prize, the organizer would love to hear from you!

Information updates

There will be regular blitz updates on the website, including lists of unloved sites awaiting adoption, so do check it out. Accounts of the outcome will be published in Gang-gang and Canberra Bird Notes in due course.

BLITZ RESOURCES

All links are on the COG website, follow the home page quick link

[ACT map showing COG grid cells](#)

[List of blitz sites adopted](#)

[Printable form to record observations](#)

[ACT bird list, unusual bird list, some maps and other info on interesting birding locations](#)

Organiser contact: Barbara Allan, email blitz@canberrabirds.org.au or phone 6254 6520.



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.

Discounts available for Birdlife Australia members.

Check our website for comprehensive details, rates, and bookings:

www.feathersnfriends.com.au

Fred & Jeanette Birkbeck

244 Clacherty Road
Julatten QLD 4871

Tel: 07 4094 1665

Email: freddy@feathersnfriends.com.au

ACT Wildlife and Caring for Birds

ACT Wildlife is a volunteer-run group who rescue, rehabilitate and release Canberra's native birds and animals. Roughly 70% of the wildlife brought in to care are birds, primarily because of trauma such as collisions with cars and windows, attack by cats and dogs, disease, and being orphaned.

If you find an injured or sick bird (or animal), please pick it up and put it in a container that is placed away from human noises, smells and pets, and is warm, dark and quiet. This helps to reduce stress and shock. Don't feed it, and take it as soon as possible to your nearest vet, RSPCA ACT (Kirkpatrick Street, Weston), or call ACT Wildlife on 0432 300 033 for advice.

There are some common diseases among Canberra's birds. Some are treatable, but some require humane euthanasia in order not to spread the disease to the wider bird population. Here is what to look out for if you see a bird you think is sick:

- ◇ In winter we get a lot of **King-Parrots** that come into care with Spironucleosis. This is an intestinal parasite that results in the inability to digest food resulting in loss of body weight and diarrhoea. Birds that come into care are usually so weak they cannot fly, and can be caught easily. They are often found on the ground, all fluffed up and looking lethargic.
- ◇ Lately we have had several reports of **Pied Currawongs** with leg mites. The mite burrows into the skin scales on the legs and feet resulting in crusty, lumpy growths. In severe cases it can affect the bird's ability to perch and catch prey. This can be treated by rubbing oil onto the bird's legs to suffocate the mites and help the scales slough off. We cannot pull the growths off; we wait until the skin underneath is growing healthily again due to the death of the mites and the growths fall off. This can take several months. Unfortunately the difficulty with these currawongs is they can still fly, so they are very hard to catch!



Juvenile Crimson Rosellas



Currawong with leg mites

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

DEUA TIN HUTS (Via Braidwood)

Comfortable accommodation on the door-step of the Deua National Park at Krawarree via Braidwood NSW. Three cosy huts accommodating up to 14 people.

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- ◇ The most common diseases we see in parrots are Psittacosis and Psittacine Beak and Feather Disease. PBFD presents in a variety of ways, often depending on the bird. In rosellas, often the colourful feathers will grow back grey. In **Sulphur-Crested Cockatoos** and **Galahs**, crest feathers and flight feathers may not grow back at all after moulting and they will not be able to fly. Their beaks will often become deformed and they can't eat properly. PBFD cannot be cured and birds must be euthanased as the bird is likely very sick and in pain. Psittacosis is highly contagious and the bird will likely have diarrhoea, lethargy, weight loss and be fluffed up. It is also a zoonotic disease, which means it can be passed from animal to human.

In spring we get a lot of orphaned birds. As many of you would know, most baby birds leave the nest without being able to fly properly. For around a few days to a week, a bird will just be able to run around and flutter along the ground, relying entirely on their parents for protection and food.

When you find a young bird:

- ◇ Check first. Does the bird look healthy, bright and alert? Is it fully feathered? If the answer is yes, it is a fledging and will be fine as long as its parents are still around. Keep dogs, cats and children away. If concerned, observe from a distance to see if parents are coming to feed it. If necessary, you can place it in a shrub or somewhere safe above the ground. If after an hour no parents are coming, put it in a small box and call ACT Wildlife on 0432 300 033 so we can put you in contact with our nearest wildlife carer.
- ◇ Does the bird look too young to be alone, is it naked or with very fluffy feathers, or unable to stand or perch? Then it is a nestling. It possibly fell out of the nest due to human or pet disturbance or high winds. You can try to locate the nest to put it back in. If out of reach you can try to put the baby in an ice-cream type container with tiny holes in the bottom so that any rain water will drain out, lined with dry grass and install it as close to the nest as possible by nailing it to a branch using two nails. This ensures the nest will not spin upside down when the parent bird perches on the edge of it! Do not put yourself in danger. If it does not work, put it in a small box, keep it warm and call ACT Wildlife.
- ◇ If the bird looks sick or injured put it in a small box with a few holes for ventilation, keep it warm and bring it to the RSPCA, your local vet or call ACT Wildlife.
- ◇ Don't try to raise it yourself. Each species have specific diet requirements, difficult to match correctly. A bird raised alone will become imprinted and will never be able to return to the wild. Keeping a native bird more than 48 hours is illegal unless you are a licensed/trained wildlife carer.



Magpie Nestlings

If you love birds as much as we do (and we think you do!), have you considered becoming a carer?

ACT Wildlife runs training courses regularly. To become a carer, you must be a member of ACT Wildlife. Our Orientation course tells you about who we are and how we are run. We run species-specific courses for birds, possums, bats and turtles and lizards.

If you aren't able to care for wildlife at this stage, we also run training for our 24/7 Wildlife Helpline. Volunteers take the phone (a mobile) for a day or two at a time and offer guidance to calls from the public about sick and injured wildlife. Without our phone service, we don't have the animals to care for, and it is an essential part of our service to educate the public about Canberra's beautiful native wildlife. Phone and transport volunteers are highly valued in our organisation!

If you'd like to become a member or carer, have a look at our website – www.actwildlife.net – which will tell you when the next training course is on and how to sign up. We look forward to seeing you!

Emily Birks, ACT Wildlife

On the website, of interest to new members

(All are under 'Publications' at canberrabirds.org.au)

Canberra Bird Routes

canberrabirds.org.au/publications/canberra-bird-routes/

Checklist of all of Canberra's birds, with status

canberrabirds.org.au/publications/maps-forms-and-lists/...

Some maps of reserves

canberrabirds.org.au/publications/maps-forms-and-lists/

Vintage but good pocket guide to the birds of Canberra

canberrabirds.org.au/publications/pocket-guide-to-the-bi...



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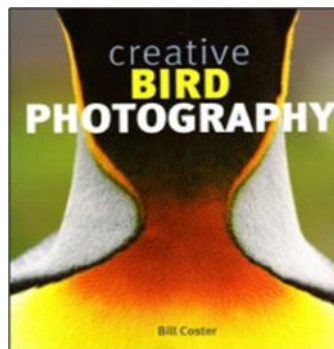
sootyowl@bigpond.com

<http://kingfisherparkbirdwatchers.blogspot.com/>

Ph: 07 40941263

FEATURE PUBLICATION OF THE MONTH

GET YOUR COPY NOW AT A GREAT PRICE!



Creative Bird Photography

Bill Coster

Bill Coster carved out a niche taking photographs of birds in flight and has become one of the U.K.'s top wildlife photographers. In this inspirational guide, Coster shares the secrets of creating memorable images of the birds one meets, going about their often complex and fascinating lives. This book shows how to photograph specific aspects of birds' lives, such as eating and drinking, courtship and flight. The author gives examples, demonstrating approaches for taking great shots of these daily bird activities as well as taking "mood" photographs at dawn and dusk. Each shot comes with detailed technical data, information about locations, and advice about overcoming challenges to achieve the perfect shot.

Members price: \$27

Book table or Kathy Walters

Publications for sale

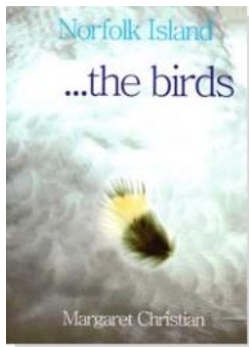
COG provides a range of birdwatching related publications for sale to members at discounted prices (around 10-30% off RRP).

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

Note: there will not be a publications sales desk at the September meeting. Please contact me if you need anything before the October meeting although I will be away for some of September.

Kathy

sales@canberrabirds.org.au

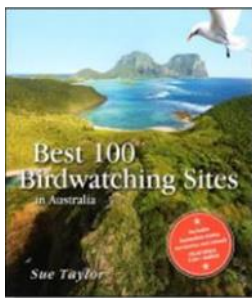


Norfolk Island – the birds

Margaret Christian

A photographic guide to the birds of Norfolk Island, including those birds found only on Norfolk Island.

Member's price \$22

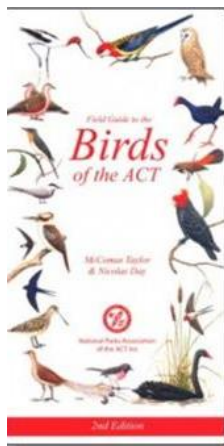


Best 100 Birdwatching Sites in Australia

Sue Taylor

Inside this illustrated guide you'll discover some of Australia's better birdwatching sites.

Member's price \$28



Field Guide to the Birds of the ACT

McComas Taylor & Nicolas Day

Sized to fit in your pocket, this compact field guide describes 207 birds seen in the ACT. An ideal bird guide for the local area.

Member's 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

2014-2015 memberships:

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

New members

COG welcomes the following new members:

A Brophy
P Fogarty
S Farrelly
M James
D Buck

NEXT NEWSLETTER

Deadline for October 2015 edition

Wednesday 30 September 2015

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 library

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Gang-gang Newsletter

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(this issue Julian Robinson)

Newsletter distribution:

Dianne Davey

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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Canberra Bird Notes

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