



# Gang-gang

**OCTOBER 2022**

Newsletter of the Canberra Ornithologists Group Inc.

## OCTOBER MEETING

**Wednesday 12 October 2022**

**7.30 pm**

**Normal face-to-face meeting**

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

The October meeting will again be a normal face-to-face one held at our usual venue, but as school virus rules for after-hours public meetings in school premises remain unchanged (see under **Events** on <https://www.education.act.gov.au/public-school-life/covid-school-arrangements/school-advice>) you will again need to wear a mask and also check in using the Check in CBR QR code, as noted in the COG COVID Safety Plan available on the COG web site ([COG-CGGS-Checklist-COVID-19\\_09Mar22.pdf](https://canberrabirds.org.au) ([canberrabirds.org.au](https://canberrabirds.org.au))).

**Anthony Overs – ‘Bird banding in Indonesia’.**

**Chris Lloyd – ‘The Housing Crisis: A Penguin Perspective’.**

The short presentation will be **Anthony Overs** on ‘Bird banding in Indonesia’.

A little over a decade ago, the Australian Bird and Bat Banding Scheme assisted the Indonesian Government with the establishment of the Indonesian Bird Banding Scheme. A significant part of the AusAID-funded project involved the training of senior ornithological researchers, by Australian

*Continued Page 2*

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

The weather over the 4 weeks from 29 August to 25 September inclusive covered by this column mostly remained cloudy, rainy, windy and cool (fresh snow was visible on the higher peaks of the Brindabellas in the final week) with only a few frosts and/or fine, warmer, still days, the latter usually lasting only 1-2 days before the wet cycle set in again. Based on my notes taken from posts on the COG chatline, etc, my impression of very quiet activity (possibly even lower than in August) in the COG Area of Interest (AoI) is again supported by my deeper analysis below. This indicates that over the last part of the period only a few individuals of some of the spring migrants usually first expected in September had returned, that many of the winter altitudinal migrants had also stayed around, and that again there have been very few “unusual” birds reported.

*Continued Page 2*



**Greater Bluebonnet**

*Alison Milton*

**Everyone welcome**

bird banders, in the capture and banding of birds. Join Anthony and his colleagues on their expeditions to Bali and Sulawesi, “training the trainers”, and get an in-the-hand look at some spectacular birds.

The main speaker will be **Chris Lloyd**, a volunteer with the NPWS on seabird work – one of the fields of ornithology he worked in for two decades prior to retirement - on **‘The Housing Crisis: A Penguin Perspective’**.

A series of externalities are placing pressure on the available habitat for **Little Penguin** (*Eudyptula minor*) breeding. In NSW, breeding of this mostly pelagic species is largely restricted to offshore islands after predation by feral animals, industrialisation and urbanisation extirpated the mainland colonies over the last two centuries. Increasing temperatures will see the northernmost breeding colonies decline and there is consequently a need to establish new colonies further south.



Little Penguin

Chris Lloyd

The community of Eden was one of the last places to have mainland breeding and their interest in having them return led to an experiment with artificial habitat and attraction. It is this project and the broader implications for obligate burrow nesters which will be the subject of Chris’s presentation.

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

*continued from Page 1*

The greatest excitement over the period followed from the report of a **Greater Bluebonnet** which was first photographed at John Knight Memorial Park next to Lake Ginninderra by Sophie Orzechowski on 31 August. The single bird was then seen/photographed there, often in the presence of **Red-rumped Parrots**, by many birders up to 6 September, but not since. This species is not listed in the 22 November 2017 update of The Canberra Ornithologists Group Annotated Checklist of the Birds of the Australian Capital Territory available on the COG website, though Steve Wilson’s book, *Birds of the ACT: Two Centuries of Change*, lists a couple of sightings in Campbell in 1966-1967 and a further one in Higgins in 1980. All birds were considered to be escapees. [See note on the Bluebonnet’s name, by Geoffrey Dabb, on page 6.]

Given it was quite tame, this may also have been an escapee, even though no leg bands were said to be apparent. Also, it is an inland species and from the eBird map the closest sightings so far in 2022 have been from the Grenfell area about 150 km to the north northwest. So, like the **Pacific Baza** discussed in my September column, and also not reported since, where has it gone? In this case, unless it has been predated, it is likely to still be in the area. Indeed, the unusual parrot, which was blue under the wings, with a dark blue bill and was vivid orange/red on the belly, seen on 3 August by Melanie Freudenstein near Stella’s Café in the southwest corner of Lake Ginninderra about 1 km away (as reported through the COG office on 31 August), was possibly the same bird.

Causing less excitement but more remarkable has been the return of the **Common Sandpiper** to the Lake Tuggeranong area for the fourth spring/summer in a row. It was first reported at the gross pollutant trap where Village Creek enters the lake at the northeast end on 13 September by Sandra Henderson (she was also the last person to report it from there on 20 April 2022), and seen there since by six other observers. One was then photographed by Kym Bradley at Isabella Pond (the other spot it is known to favour) on 21 September. As it had been recorded at Village Creek that same morning the still unresolved question of whether there are actually 2 birds arose again.

I am quite familiar with the Village Creek location having seen the **Common Sandpiper** there a number of times including recently, and have wondered why it liked the relatively small area of only around 0.2 ha, often favouring the small mud spit, and whether there would be enough food supply there for it. Reports over recent days suggests it roams more widely here, as it was first photographed on one of the “small floating islands” which are the beds put in for experimental nutrient removal, about 300 m away. It has since been seen flying there and landing. So, while the question of 1 or 2 birds still needs to be resolved, it is certainly mobile as you might expect from a bird that breeds across most of temperate and subtropical Europe and Asia, though some websites suggest some birds do not return to Eurasia to breed but remain in the north of Australia over our winter. Either way it is a quite remarkable feat for such a small bird. Interestingly, there is only one very recent record for

this species within NSW so far this spring, though it has been reported from 5 locations in coastal Victoria, the earliest return (after a 4 month break) being on 6 August, before a month's break to 9 September, only a few days before it was first found here.

Of the spring/summer migrants expected in September which had not yet been recorded in August the **Sacred Kingfisher** was first reported from Jerrabomberra Wetlands NR on 15 September. It was subsequently reported from there before further reports from the next location, Umbagog District Park, on 20 September, and at 2 further locations to 24 September. The **Eastern Koel** was first heard in Narrabundah by two different observers on 24 September (quite early based on the detailed records), and then in Turner the next morning. The **Dollarbird** was first photographed at the Woodland Loop of Jerrabomberra Wetlands NR on 21 September (also a bit early), and once more from there since. The **Leaden Flycatcher** was first reported from Macgregor on 23 September, followed by one at Shepherds Lookout walk on 24 September, and the day after that I saw a shimmering male during the Mulligans Flat woodland survey.

Up to the time of writing there had been no reports of **Rainbow Bee-eater**, **White-winged Triller** or **Rufous Songlark**, as well as **White-browed** and **Masked Woodswallows**. The lack of reports for the latter four species is probably not surprising as numbers may be expected to be much lower this year due to the very wet inland.

Of the species for which there had only been a few reports in August, the **Shining** and **Horsfield's Bronze-Cuckoos** have been reported from over 25 and 8 locations respectively. Numbers for the latter probably also reflect that it is also an inland species, as they do for the **Pallid Cuckoo** which has only been reported from around Mulligans Flat (at 4 close-together locations) and Carwoola.

All other species, including those for which there had been only a few records in August (**White-throated** and **Western Gerygone**, **Rufous Whistler**, **Noisy Friarbird** and **Dusky Woodswallow**), are all well established by now. The first two have been reported from over 10, and the other two from well over 30 locations, though the **Noisy Friarbird** has been slow to reach some districts (I have only heard it three times so far in Rivett/Chapman). The **Superb Parrot** has returned to breed as it was reported from well over 30 locations (but with just 4 well south of LBG) compared with 14 in August.

So, during October please keep a lookout for the species mentioned above which have only arrived so far in small numbers, or have yet to be reported, as well as the **Brush** and **Channel-billed Cuckoo**, the passage migrants the **Satin Flycatcher**, **Rufous Fantail** and **Common Cicadabird**, and the **Brown Songlark** and the **Horsfield's Bushlark**.

Of the species that move from the mountains and higher country into Canberra and its surrounds in autumn/winter, there were still plenty of reports of the **White-eared Honeyeater** and particularly the **Golden Whistler** in urban and peri-urban locations during the period. So, watch out for these two species as they move away; the former is often slow to leave. **Scarlet** and **Flame Robins** do seem to be moving away, each reported from just 8 urban/peri-urban locations of the around 25 total locations each during the period.

In contrast **Rose Robins** have been reported from around 20 locations in the period, 15 of which may be described as urban/peri-urban (on



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*Good birding, good food*

**2022 Plains-wanderer Weekend**  
**29 & 30 October 2022**  
A few places available

## 2023 tours

**Kutini - Payamu**  
**(Iron Range) Wet Season**  
**4 to 10 January 2023**  
**11 to 17 January 2023**  
**Cairns to Lockhart River**  
**flight included.**

**Gulf of Carpentaria**  
**16 June to 3 July 2023**  
**Cairns – Georgetown - Karumba -**  
**Burketown – Cloncurry – Mt Isa –**  
**Winton – Hughenden – Cairns**

**2023 Plains-wanderer Weekends**  
07 & 08 October 2023  
21 & 22 October 2023  
04 & 05 November 2023  
18 & 19 November 2023

Contact Patricia Maher for  
information and itineraries.

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



passage migration?), and with only 2 locations from west of the Murrumbidgee River. Unsurprisingly, given the facts I presented in my September column, there were no reports of the **Pink Robin** during the period. The **Red-capped Robin** was only reported from 2 locations: I expect the wet conditions are not favouring this inland species.

The **Crescent Honeyeater** has moved away as it was reported from only 2 locations well away from suburban Canberra over the period, and the **Yellow-tufted Honeyeater** from just one location, the Glendale Depot on 24 September. The latter has been recorded from only 5 locations well to the south of Canberra so far in 2022. The **Swift Parrot** was reported from 2 locations, 5 birds in Curtin on 31 August and a single bird at Callum Brae on 14 September. A **Brown Gerygone** was reported from Tallaganda SF on 4 September, and the **Bassian Thrush** was still present at the ANBG up to 24 September, with it photographed carrying food there on 6 September.

So, during October please keep an eye out for the above species as they move away from Canberra.

As with August, there were relatively few reports of “unusual” birds, with none deserving a special mention, other than the **Greater Bluebonnet**. Two **Plumed Whistling Ducks** were reported only from Trucking Yard Lane Dam up to 9 September. Again, no **Freckled Ducks** were reported during the period. While **Australian Shelducks** were still reported from 6 locations to the east and northeast of Canberra during the period, numbers were again well down with a maximum of 10 seen at Bungendore Meadow Dam on 3 September. No **Blue-billed Ducks** were reported during the period and, apart from Tidbinbilla NR Sanctuary, up to 3 **Musk Ducks** were reported only from 2 locations in the northern part of the COG Aol.

There was only one report of 6 **Stubble Quail** at West Belconnen Pond on 5 September (listen out for them as they start calling during October), and up to 5 **Brown Quail** were reported from just 4 locations. Up to 2 **Painted Button-quail** were reported from 4 locations in the period (the lowest number in quite a while), but again there were no reports of **Little Button-quail**, **Great Crested Grebe**, **White-headed Pigeon**, **Brush Bronzewing**, **Diamond** or **Peaceful Doves** during the period.

Up to 6 **Spotless Crakes** were regularly reported from Jerrabomberra Wetlands NR over the period, and a **Baillon’s Crake** was heard there on 2 occasions. No **Australian Spotted Crake** or **Lewin’s Rail** have been reported, whereas up to 4 **Buff-banded Rails** were reported from 2 locations. No **Banded Lapwings**, **Red-capped Plovers**, **Red-necked Avocets**, **Sharp-tailed Sandpipers** or **Australian Little Bittern** were reported during the period. An **Intermediate Egret** was reported from Isabella Pond on 24 September, a **Caspian Tern** was reported from Jerrabomberra Wetlands NR on 4 September and, apart from its usual spots, a **Pied Cormorant** from the main dam at the National Arboretum on 11 September.



Common Sandpiper

*Geoffrey Dabb*



Shining Bronze-Cuckoo

*Harvey Perkins*

Single **Barn Owls** were reported from 6 scattered locations. The **Black-shouldered Kite** has remained remarkably common, reported from over 50 locations, with further reports of breeding (see below). The **Nankeen Kestrel** was also reported from around 75 locations (well up from August) during the period.

There were no reports of the **Grey Goshawk** during the period, and a single **Spotted Harrier** was reported only from Murrumbateman on 22 September. A **Black Kite** was reported from Ainslie on 2 September, and single **Black Falcons** were reported from Berrebangalo TSR just south of Gunning, and just north of Yass, both on 19 September.

There were no reports of the **Azure Kingfisher**, **Cockatiel**, **Turquoise Parrots**, **Scaly-breasted** or **Little Lorikeet** during the period. A pair of **Glossy Black-Cockatoos** were reported flying and perching out in the open in mixed casuarina/gum forest at Mt Majura on 7 September. A single **Musk Lorikeet** was reported only from Namatjira Drive Tuggeranong on 4 September.

The **Red-browed Treecreeper** at Mt Ainslie was reported again on 29 and 31 August. No **Singing** or **Spiny-cheeked Honeyeaters** were reported during the period, but a **Scarlet Honeyeater** was heard at the Central Basin of LBG on 22 September. A **Blue-faced Honeyeater** was reported from Acton Park on 11 September, and a **White-bellied Cuckoo-shrike** was reported again from Nelanglo TSR on 14 September, but no **Little Friarbirds**, **Zebra Finches** or **Tawny Grassbirds** were reported during the period.

The limited number of “unusuals” reported allows me to mention the **White-fronted Chat** which has a very restricted range within the ACT, largely around Coombs and at the National Arboretum. However, with the wet weather for the past 3 winters most of this species seems to have moved away, with the only ACT report since late July being of 3 birds observed at North Weston Ponds on 15 September.

Of the birds I have continued to ask readers to keep a special lookout for in 2022, there were single reports only of **Jacky Winters** (2 and 3 birds, respectively) from the known spots at Namadgi Visitors Centre and Top Naas Rd during the period. There was also only a single report of a **Hooded Robin**, a female at the known spot of Bracks Hole on Cotter Dam on 4 September. **Restless Flycatchers** were reported from 4 locations (all known or close to known) over the period, 1 or 2 birds at Nelanglo TSR, and single birds at the Mullion, Rowland Crescent woodland in Tuggeranong and Naas Rd at Apollo Rd. I suspect the lack of reports for the first two species reflects that they become very quiet during the breeding season.

In terms of other interesting bird observations, on 12 September Philip Veerman found, close to his Kambah garden, a female **Australian King-Parrot** with about 30 to 40% of the upper wings having yellow feathers. He had not noticed that one around there before. On 14 September at the Kambah adventure playground Philip had a good look at a pair of **Superb Parrots** feeding on the ground and the female had random yellow markings on her back and wings, just like the King-Parrot he saw earlier.

The breeding season certainly has begun, and within my GBS site the 3 common pied species are busy defending their nests against each other, as well as from the nearby **Australian Ravens** feeding their young in the nest. **Black-shouldered Kite** breeding has continued with the most recent being 2 noisy and rather clumsy juveniles reported from Goorooyaroo NR on 21 September.

Everyone’s favourite, the **Tawny Frogmouth**, has had an early start with, by the end of the first week of September, birds on nests at at least 6 different locations, with some lovely photos entered on eBird. Shortly after this, Tawny Frogmouth researcher Stuart Rae indicated that almost half of the birds he follows were now on eggs. This includes only one of the three that I keep a check on in northwest Chapman, with no sign of the other two up to the time of writing.



Red-browed Treecreeper

Julian Robinson



Black-shouldered Kite

David Cook

Despite this, mixed feeding flocks (MFF) continued to be reported (including by me) even in the last week of the period. The most notable was from Lia Battisson's woodland survey at Tuggeranong Hill on 16 September, where she counted 13 species in a frenzied MFF, of which 25 were **Silvereyes**. It also included **White-naped** and **Yellow-faced Honeyeaters**, for which a few small flocks moving through have been reported by other observers. After being present in surprisingly low numbers over winter **Red Wattlebirds** were moving through my Chapman GBS site and Cooleman Ridge from 22 September. My resident pair had already been feeding 2 young from 10 September.

So please watch out for more of the remaining returning spring/summer migrants mentioned above, for the last of the leaving altitudinal migrants, for roost sites and flights, and in particular for spring breeding activity. With the favourable conditions there should be lots of the last-named. Please also continue to keep a special look out for the **Restless Flycatcher**, **Jacky Winter** and **Hooded Robin**. As usual please ensure that all significant sightings 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, posting on the COG email Discussion List ("COG chatline") and the eBird Australia database, as well as direct correspondence with 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

### Note on Bluebonnet name

At the present time, Birdlife Australia (at present followed by COG) recognises only one *Northiella* species. The English name of this is 'Bluebonnet'. However, two global lists, 'IOC' and 'Cornell Lab' (which manages eBird), now recognise *N. haematogaster narethae* as a full species. In consequence, to supply an English name for *N. haematogaster* those organisations have adopted respectively 'Eastern Bluebonnet' and 'Greater Bluebonnet'. For any individual or organisation following Birdlife Australia and WLAB, the relevant species, for the present, remains 'Bluebonnet'. *Geoffrey Dabb*



Neil Hermes Safaris – birding tours this year

Oct 10-14

### MELIPHAGA MAGIC TOUR

Our spring hunt for honeyeaters and other inland birds. Includes Round Hill Nature Reserve and the famous Chat alley. Includes motel accommodation Ex Canberra 5 day 4 nights. Led by Mark Clayton and Neil Hermes \$1250pp

Nov 10-12

### ON TRAIL OF THE PLAINS WANDERER

A days birding in the Deniliquin area followed by a night-time watching the elusive Plains Wanderer. Great for lifers list. 3 day 2 nights \$895pp Led by Philip Maher and Neil Hermes. Includes motel accommodation Ex Canberra

2023 June TBA

### PARADISE BIRDS - TASTE OF NEW GUINEA

7 day 6 nights exploring the birds of Cairns and Port Moresby. Highlights Birds of Paradise, bower birds and Palm Cockatoos. Led by Mark Clayton and Neil Hermes. Tour is open for expressions of interest, details to come.

Book at

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Enquiries at

[neil@neilhermes.com.au](mailto:neil@neilhermes.com.au)

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## Committee News

The Canberra Birds (COG) committee met by Zoom on 22 September.

The Annual General Meeting will be held at Canberra Girls Grammar School at 7:30 pm on Wednesday 9 November, followed by the November members' meeting. The AGM agenda, call for nominations and nomination form are included in this issue of Gang-gang.

If you did not renew your membership by 30 September your membership has lapsed and you will not be eligible to vote at the AGM. Renewal forms can be found at <https://canberrabirds.org.au/about-cog/joining-cog-and-renewing/>.

### Garden Bird Survey

We need to update the list of surveyors. It would help if everyone who has been or is keeping GBS records could email [cogoffice@canberrabirds.org.au](mailto:cogoffice@canberrabirds.org.au) with answers to the following questions:

Did you keep records in 2021-2022?

Have you handed in your chart or spreadsheet or do you need someone to collect it?

Are you keeping records in 2022-2023?

Do you need a chart for this year's records?

What suburb do you live in?

### Gungahlin Festival – Second call for help

We will have a stall at the Celebrate Gungahlin Festival on 15 October (11 am to 3 pm). So far we only have three people running the stand. If you can spare an hour to tell people why you like birdwatching in the Canberra region and the benefits of being a member of Canberra Birds, please contact the office ([cogoffice@canberrabirds.org.au](mailto:cogoffice@canberrabirds.org.au)).

### Recent Submissions

Canberra Birds has made submissions in relation to the proposed developments at Throsby Playing Fields and Lawson North grasslands. The submissions can be found here: <https://canberrabirds.org.au/conservation/cog-conservation-strategy/>.

### HANZAB

Canberra Birds owns a set of the 'Handbook of Australian, New Zealand and Antarctic Birds' (HANZAB). However, we have lost track of volumes 6 and 7. If you know where they are, please email [cogoffice@canberrabirds.org.au](mailto:cogoffice@canberrabirds.org.au).

Steve Read *Vice-President*

Alison Mackerras *Minutes Secretary*

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# Notice of the COG Annual General Meeting for 2022

**Wednesday 9 November 2022, 7.30pm**

The Annual General Meeting of the Canberra Ornithologists Group Inc. (a.k.a. Canberra Birds) will be held at 7.30 pm on Wednesday 9 November 2022 in the usual venue at Canberra Girls' Grammar School.

The agenda and call for nominations are below. Financial statements will be published on the website before the meeting (<https://canberrabirds.org.au/about-cog/annual-reports/>).

## Agenda

- Opening
- Apologies
- Confirmation of minutes of 2021 AGM
- President's Report
- Adoption of President's report
- Presentation of annual statement of accounts
- Adoption of annual statement of accounts
- Appointment of auditor for 2022-23
- Election of office-bearers (President, Vice-president, Secretary, and Treasurer) and ordinary committee members
- Other matters for which notice has been given
- Close of meeting.

The minutes of the 2021 AGM are available on the website and financial reports will be published before the AGM (<http://canberrabirds.org.au/about-cog/annual-reports/>). Please advise any apologies to [cogoffice@canberrabirds.org.au](mailto:cogoffice@canberrabirds.org.au).

## Call for Nominations

The committee consists of the President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer and up to 10 general members. Nominations for positions on the COG Committee are invited from interested members. The form is available in this issue of Gang-gang or from <http://canberrabirds.org.au/about-cog/annual-reports/>. Nominees, proposers and seconders must all be financial members of COG.

Completed forms can be submitted by mail or scanned and emailed to [cogoffice@canberrabirds.org.au](mailto:cogoffice@canberrabirds.org.au). If you need any additional information please contact a committee member or the COG office.

It would be helpful if nominations are received by 2 November. However, nominations can also be taken from the floor during the AGM.



### COG Committee Nomination Form

I hereby nominate ..... for the position \*  
of ..... on the COG Committee.  
(\*Positions: President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, General Members)

(Name): .....

(Signature): ..... Date:.....

I second the nomination.

(Name): .....

(Signature): ..... Date:.....

I accept the nomination.

(Name): .....

(Signature): ..... Date:.....

Nomination forms can be submitted until the date in the call for nominations. Send by mail to COG at PO Box 301, Civic Square, ACT 2608 or by email to [cogoffice@canberrabirds.org.au](mailto:cogoffice@canberrabirds.org.au).

All nominators, seconders and nominees must be financial members of COG.

## Succession planning for the COG Committee – will you help keep COG running?

Calling all COG members! It's the time of the year, on the run up to our AGM, when COG starts looking for volunteers to join the COG Committee. Will you help?

You will have been reading the 'COG's cogs' series in *Gang-gang* over the past year. This presents the various essential volunteers who 'keep the lights on' in COG, running field trips, editing Canberra Bird Notes, managing the chatline and a hundred other tasks. In addition to those cogs, COG also has a governing Committee of a dozen or so members who handle the financial, management and strategic work to keep COG functioning, and decide the conservation issues for COG to focus on. Some of the current committee members have been involved for a long time, and we always need fresh faces, including people who in time could be President, Vice-President, Treasurer or Secretary – will you help one of the premier birding clubs in Australia? This year we are particularly looking for someone to put their hand up to become treasurer as Prue Watters wants to step down.

Joining the committee is easy – just nominate by completing the form above. You can also shadow one of the committee members while learning how things work. It's best to talk to one of us on the committee first, so email [cogoffice@canberrabirds.org.au](mailto:cogoffice@canberrabirds.org.au) and we'll be in touch.

### COG database support

COG maintains a highly valuable set of databases of bird observations in the ACT and our wider area of interest. These databases are populated with data from the different COG surveys as well as eBird, incidental records and other sources. They underpin important COG advice on conservation submissions to the ACT Government, and are used to create our Annual Bird Report and our Bird Info webpages – but they don't look after themselves!

COG is looking for volunteers to assist with upgrading our databases to a modern platform, and with managing the supply of data in response to external queries and for our Annual Bird Report. If you have skills with data or databases, please get in touch with [cogoffice@canberrabirds.org.au](mailto:cogoffice@canberrabirds.org.au) and we can talk with you about how you can help.

Thanks in advance

The COG Committee: Alison, Bill, Brittany, Chris, Clare, Jenny, Kathy, Margaret, Neil, Nick, Prue and Steve.

## COG's cogs No 16 - Lia Battisson

Lia Battisson's love of birds began when her youngest son turned 18. It seemed it was high time to establish some hobbies before the eyes and ears went. Lia had always enjoyed birds but knew little about them, so she joined COG and that was quickly remedied. The first meeting she attended was in August 1997 at the Forestry Building in Yarralumla. She convinced her husband Peter to come along and listen to Penny Olsen who spoke about the Norfolk Island Morepork (Boobook). The talk must have been amazing, because Lia was enthralled. She remembers thinking, "isn't this wonderful, I can absorb all of this information just for the price of a raffle ticket!" Peter was less impressed; when asked what he thought of the night, he said, "They're a bunch of fanatics!" He probably wasn't wrong.

Lia's first outing was to Mulligan's Flat Nature Reserve and everyone was nice and patient while she asked questions like, "what is that bird with the little red thing hanging down from the side of its face?" Every now and again Peter could be coaxed into coming along, and one day a Golden Whistler did elicit a WOW from him, so maybe there's still hope for him.

Whilst she was still working Lia mainly attended the monthly meetings. Her first role was as the Tea Lady, back when the meetings were still held at the Forestry Building. She then moved on to become the Publications Distribution Officer, which she did until joining the Committee and becoming Treasurer. Lia stayed in the role for three years before stepping back. She stayed on the Committee as a General Member and continued to coordinate stalls at events like the Open Days at the Australian National Botanic Gardens, The National Arboretum and Tidbinbilla Nature Reserve and coordinated distribution and sales of the *Birds in Canberra Gardens* publication.

Lia did a second four-year term as treasurer, but after 13 years on the committee she finally hung up her hat. Today she stays involved with COG in numerous ways including assisting at various exhibitions. Lia also undertakes the annual bird surveys and continues to do the Tuggeranong Hill quarterly Woodland Survey. From time to time, she also helps with various other surveys, such as K2C quarterly surveys, Jerrabomberra Wetlands quarterly surveys and annual Lyrebird counts at Tidbinbilla Nature Reserve.

### Acknowledgements

Nathan Finger and Lia Battisson



The eight card designs:

- **Australian magpie** at the National Arboretum Canberra
- **Australian white ibis** at the National Carillon, Canberra
- **Bush-stone curlews** at Mulligans Flat Woolshed
- **Crimson rosellas** at the National Gallery of Australia Skyspace
- **Galahs** at the Balloon Spectacular
- **Gang-gang cockatoos** at City Hill
- **Rainbow-crested cockatoo** at Black Mountain Tower
- **Tawny frogmouths** at Shine Dome

### Canberra Birds 8-pack of greeting cards

Stock up on greeting cards, and be ready for all occasions!

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## Have you seen this bird?

The Gang-gang Cockatoo has recently been listed as threatened in the ACT. Studies to provide information on nesting locations, diet and general behaviour have been conducted locally, for instance see, see Davey et al. Canberra Bird Notes 46, pp145-157 and

» [Red Hill gang gang research summarised Red Hill Regeneration Group \(redhillregenerators.org.au\)](https://redhillregenerators.org.au)

There has been no study on banded individual and questions concerning movements remains to be answered.

A male with a distinctive head pattern nested at the Aranda Bushland over the 2021-22 breeding season. The bird known as 'Baldy' has been reported in various locations up to 4 km from the breeding site. The pattern appears to be a permanent feature for despite moulting the same distinctive feature is still obvious.



Any sightings of Baldy would be most welcome and would go some way to better understand movement patterns.

If you happen to see 'Baldy' could you please try to get a photo and then either post to Canberra Nature Map [Home - Canberra Nature Map \(naturemapr.org\)](https://naturemapr.org) or contact Michael Mulvaney [mulvaney@netspeed.com.au](mailto:mulvaney@netspeed.com.au) or me [chris\\_davey@aapt.net.au](mailto:chris_davey@aapt.net.au)

Many thanks, Chris Davey

## Landbirds survey on Lord Howe Island 7-14 September 2022

The Canberra Ornithologists Group has an arrangement with the NSW Department of Planning and Environment (Science, Economics and Insights Division) known to the general public as NSW Parks and Wildlife Service to monitor landbirds on Lord Howe Island.

The aim of the surveys is to document changes in the abundance of landbirds on the island following eradication of rodents. We have surveyed once a year in September over seven years. Due to delays in the eradication program and delays due to COVID 19 restrictions our annual surveys, originally planned to cover three breeding seasons, have now occurred over a ten-year period. Starting in 2013 COG has now conducted five surveys before the eradication program, one just after, during which time the majority of Woodhen and Pied Currawong were held in captivity and this year, the final survey two years later. Ten members of COG completed the 2022 survey with data input and analysis now in progress.

On return to the island after the two-year break the apparent response in the bird life has been obvious. Initial impressions indicate an increase in abundance of all bird species but we await the results from the detailed analyses before any conclusions can be drawn.

Many thanks to the 31 COG members who, over the ten year period, have contributed to the survey.

Chris Davey and Peter Fullagar

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# Future Field Trips

## 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://canberrabirds.org.au/publications/discussion-email-list/> and trips page of COG website <http://canberrabirds.org.au/category/trips/>.

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.

### Be Covid safe on COG field trips:

Maintain social distancing of 1.5 metres

Maintain hand hygiene

Wear a mask in shared cars if carpooling (Note: carpooling is voluntary)

**DO NOT ATTEND** if you have tested positive for Covid, have been a close contact within the past 7 days, or have any Covid, cold or flu symptoms.

### Sunday 2 October – Corin Road

Meet at 8am at the main carpark for Point Hut Pond District Park on McGilvray Close in Gordon for carpooling. Maximum 16 participants (four cars). There is limited parking at the makeshift Smokers Trail carpark. We will travel out along Tidbinbilla Road to Corin Rd, which we will follow out to the dam, with stops along the way at Woods Reserve, Smokers Trail carpark, Square Rock carpark and Corin Dam itself. At each stop we'll have a short walk.

Bring morning tea with you, as well as the usual water, sunscreen, hat and sturdy shoes. No difficult tracks to be negotiated, but at Corin we will walk down the track on the far side of dam, which is a bit steep and gravelly.

Possible birds for the morning include **Pilotbird, Bassian Thrush, Olive Whistler, Superb Lyrebird.**

Register with Sandra Henderson at [shirmax2931@gmail.com](mailto:shirmax2931@gmail.com), with your name and number, as well as name and number of an emergency contact.

### Tuesday 4 to Friday 7 October – Grenfell area – mid-week accommodated

Participants will need to arrange their own accommodation in Grenfell. Visits will be made to Bimbi State Forest, Weddin Mountains NP, Warraderry State Forest and other birding spots around Grenfell. The trip will be limited to 16 people, who will carpool each day from Grenfell in 4 vehicles. Early registration is encouraged. Contact Bill Graham on [graham.br63@grapevine.com.au](mailto:graham.br63@grapevine.com.au), giving your name, mobile number and the name and number of an emergency contact. Once your registration is confirmed, it would be advisable to book your accommodation.

Bill Graham and Kim Farley



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### Sunday 9 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 5 October. Email: [ntaws@bigpond.com](mailto:ntaws@bigpond.com) or 0408 210 736.

### Sunday 16 October: Bungonia National Park

Bungonia National Park is an interesting sandstone and limestone plateau above the Shoalhaven River about one and a half hours drive north-east of Canberra. There are several cave entrances we will pass and the floral community is quite different from Canberra's. A range of interesting bird species such as **Spotted Quail-thrush** and **Crested Shrike-tit** are found in the park and there is a chance of more coastal birds as well such as **Channel-billed Cuckoo**. The plan is to walk the Green Trail from the David Reid picnic area to Adams Lookout and back again.

**Distance:** Approximately 4km return with moderate difficulty. If people feel up for it and we have time we could walk additional short walks from the picnic area.

**Meeting time** is 7:00 am for carpooling at the Lyneham Netball Centre (on Northbourne Ave just north of the Mouat St/Antill St traffic lights) and we will be returning to the carpooling point no later than 4:30pm. Bring plenty of water, snacks and lunch.

To register please contact Ned Johnston at [nedjohnston06@gmail.com](mailto:nedjohnston06@gmail.com) with your name and phone number as well as the name and number of an emergency contact. Places will be limited to 16 participants in 4 vehicles.

### Tuesday 18 to Saturday 23 October – Green Cape

This trip was scheduled for 2021 but had to be postponed due to Covid. Most of those who registered last year are able to attend this year and those on the waiting list had first priority to fill any vacancies. It is possible that there may be cancellations in the next few weeks; if you would like to be added to the waiting list, contact Sue Lashko on [smlashko@gmail.com](mailto:smlashko@gmail.com)

### Saturday 22 and Sunday 23 October - COG'S BIRD BLITZ 2022

If you have felt thwarted over the past 2 years by Covid restrictions, closed tracks, locked gates, then this year's blitz, our 18th, is the opportunity to put all that behind you. I won't make promises about the weather, but in theory Namadgi NP will be accessible to us this year. We need as many participants as possible to conduct bird surveys across the whole of the ACT, in an effort to obtain as complete a snapshot as possible of the birds using the ACT in mid-spring. [Details are on the COG website www.canberrabirds.org.au](https://www.canberrabirds.org.au), under the header 'Observing and Reporting Birds'. Check out the list of sites [Blitz-sites-adopted-2022-V1.pdf \(canberrabirds.org.au\)](#), or let me know if your preferred location isn't listed. If you regularly survey particular spots, it would be ideal if you could do them again, but feel free to also go somewhere different. It is fine to survey a site if someone else has adopted it but we would like to cover as many of the sites as possible, or you can nominate your own area that isn't on the list. Nicki Taws - [blitz@canberrabirds.org.au](mailto:blitz@canberrabirds.org.au)

### Saturday 29 and Sunday 30 October – Eden Pelagics

**These trips are fully booked but you may wish to be added to the waiting list as there may well be late cancellations.**

The boat will leave Eden at 7am each day, travel to the edge of the shelf, and return at approximately 3pm. There should still be some albatrosses around and a good range of shearwaters and petrels, as well as storm petrels and jaegers, and whales. Participants will need to arrange their own accommodation nearby. A day at sea is quite tiring so, if you go on the Sunday trip, it is recommended that you do not drive back to Canberra that same day. The cost of each trip will be \$137. You must be a COG member to register (so don't forget to renew your membership for 2022-23).

To register, send your name, mobile number and the name and number of an emergency contact to [smlashko@gmail.com](mailto:smlashko@gmail.com). Please also advise whether you wish to go on Saturday 29, Sunday 30 or either day.

Further details and arrangements for payments will be sent to participants once numbers are finalised. Sue Lashko

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### Sunday 6 November – Sherwood Forest

Meet at 9.00 am at the Sherwood Forest car park on Mountain Creek Rd at <https://maps.app.goo.gl/bQMmyUEatcWjUdzZA>. Our slow walk will take us up the forestry road through woodlands to the hill top. There are nice views to be had across to Canberra and a good range of woodland birds to be found, including the chance of **Spotted Quail-thrush**.

To register, send your name, mobile number and the name and number of an emergency contact to Kim Farley [KimlouiseFarley@gmail.com](mailto:KimlouiseFarley@gmail.com)

### Sunday 13 November – Campbell Park nest workshop

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

The workshop is particularly suitable for beginners or those relatively new to bird watching, though more experienced members and repeat customers are also very welcome.

**Meeting time and place:** Meet at 8:00 am at the far end of the car park. Take Northcott Drive up to the start of the Campbell Park Offices, where you take the right fork and keep to the outside of the very large car park, skirting it until you get to the end. Intending participants might also like to look at the Campbell Park map on the COG website under the Maps, Forms and Lists button.

**Walking distance:** While every year has been different, we often don't walk very far as there is usually a "hot spot" where most of the breeding activity occurs around 500 m from where we park. Maximum distance - 2.0 km of easy, flat walking.

**End Time:** Between 11 am and 12 pm. Please remember to take morning tea which we will have out in the field.

**Name of leader and contact details:** Registration is essential no later than Friday 11 November. To participate, please contact Jack Holland (6288 7840) or preferably by email on [jandaholland@bigpond.com](mailto:jandaholland@bigpond.com) – please include your mobile number and emergency contact name and number.

### Sunday 20 November - Woodstock Nature Reserve

Woodstock Nature Reserve is a reserve of 356 ha, spanning both sides of the Murrumbidgee River and stretching from Uriarra Crossing to the NSW border. We will walk along the northern shore of the River, from Fairlight Road to Giorgios Sandwash. The walk is along a fire trail with some uphill sections. Species observed there recently include **Australian Hobby**, **Double-barred Finch**, **Satin Bowerbird** and **Gang-gang Cockatoo**.

**Meeting time and place:** 7.30am. As car parking is very limited, we will meet at Stromlo Forest Park, in the first section of the main carpark and carpool to the entrance to the Reserve.

**Walking distance:** 5 kms return.

**End time:** Approximately 10:30

**What to bring:** Water, sunscreen, a hat and sturdy shoes. Wet weather gear if considered necessary.

**Name of leader and contact details:** Please register with the leader, Lia Battisson by email to [liabattisson@grapevine.com.au](mailto:liabattisson@grapevine.com.au), providing your name and mobile number, and the name and mobile number of an emergency contact. Please do so **before 7pm on Friday 4 November 2022**. Numbers will be limited to 18.

### Sunday 27 November – private property near Hoskinstown

Mixed-eucalypt forest, including post-burn regeneration; garden around house. A range of forest species expected including **Eastern Yellow Robin**, **White-throated Treecreeper**, **Superb Lyrebird**, thornbills, **Australian King-Parrot**, rosellas, **Wonga Pigeon** and **Laughing Kookaburra**, as well as spring/summer migrants.

**Meeting time and place:** 8.00 am, Spotlight car park, Queanbeyan for carpooling.

**Walking distance:** 4 km

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**Degree of difficulty:** medium

**End time (approx.):** 12.00pm

**What to bring:** water, morning tea, hat, sunscreen, sturdy shoes

**Registration:** participants must register with the leader at least 36 hours in advance, providing their name and mobile number, and the name and mobile number of an emergency contact.

**Numbers limited:** maximum of 16

**Name of leaders and contact details:** Peter Smith 0427 879 774 [smith.peter899@gmail.com](mailto:smith.peter899@gmail.com)

### Sunday 4 December – Grassy Creek, Namadgi NP

Meet at 7am at the Kambah Village Shopping Centre carpark (corner Drakeford and Marconi) for carpooling. Maximum 16 participants (four cars). Some driving through the day will be on a dirt road, best suited to AWD/4WD.

We will travel southwards towards and then through Namadgi National Park until we nearly reach the NSW border, parking at the junction with the Grassy Creek Firetrail. We will explore the birds around the firetrail and creek, noting that at the time of writing in September, conditions are still a bit soggy. This soggiess may affect our progress. We should see a good range of woodland birds, including honeyeaters and thornbills.

Bring morning tea with you, as well as the usual water, sunscreen, sunglasses, hat and sturdy shoes.

Register by COB Friday 2 December, with David at [david.dedenczuk@gmail.com](mailto:david.dedenczuk@gmail.com) or 0417 222 154.

### Sunday 11 December - Barren Grounds NR, NSW

We will walk through the heath and forest of the Griffiths Loop track from the carpark, stopping for morning tea at stone bridge that crosses Lamonds Creek and for lunch at Saddlebacks Trig. Previous highlight species include **Gang-gang Cockatoo, Pilotbird, Eastern Ground Parrot, Eastern Bristlebird, Beautiful Firetail, Southern Emu-wren, Black-faced Monarch** and various honeyeaters and cuckoos. We will also stop for any interesting wildflowers, butterflies and other wildlife we might encounter on the walk, with Varied Sword-grass Brown, Macleay's Swallowtail, Eastern Water Dragon and various orchids recorded here on previous visits.

Please note there is limited mobile reception at Barren Grounds and there are toilets at the carpark where we will meet. In the event of rain, this walk will be cancelled.

**eBird hotspots:** Barren Grounds Nature Reserve, Barren Grounds Nature Reserve -- Griffiths Trail

**Meeting time and place:** 9 am at the Barren Grounds carpark, with a carpooling option from Canberra.

**Walking distance:** Approximately 8 km (return)

**Degree of difficulty:** Medium; track is an undulating vehicle track with some small hill sections

**End time (approx.):** 3 pm

**What to bring:** This is an open exposed location with little to no mobile reception. Ensure you bring sufficient water and food (including morning tea and lunch), and rain and sun protection.

Please register your interest by Monday 5 December, to Suzi Bond, email [chowchilla29@yahoo.com](mailto:chowchilla29@yahoo.com) providing your name and mobile number, and the name and mobile number of an emergency contact. Carpooling arrangements will be advised once registrations have been received.

Numbers limited: Limited to 12 people.

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## Field Trip Reports

### Tuesday 30 August – Friday 2 September - Tathra and surrounds

I'm new enough to birding that any trip out of Canberra yields a few lifers, and I was thrilled to see eight new birds on the trip to Tathra, my first overnight trip with COG.

As participants trickled into Tathra on a sunny but slightly windy Tuesday afternoon, they joined trip leader Prue Watters along various headlands and estuaries and saw some **Great Crested Terns**, **Caspian Terns**, **Red-capped Plovers**, **Great Egrets** and **Royal Spoonbills**. The group of 12 plus travel companions met for dinner that night at the Tathra Hotel.

On Wednesday our group of 12 went north, venturing into various spots in Mimosa National Park. Our first stop at Nelson Beach started with a joyous cacophony of **Bell Miners**. On a short walk to the strip where the lagoon meets the beach, we saw our first of what would be many **Scarlet Honeyeaters**. At Gillards Beach two **Shining Bronze-Cuckoos** landed in a leafless tree right beside the track and allowed prolonged views, to the delight of the photographers amongst us. On the Middle Lagoon walking track I saw my first **Variegated Fairy-wrens** happily chirping near their **Superb Fairy-wren** cousins. We heard a **Brown-headed Honeyeater** but didn't manage to see it. At Middle Lagoon we saw our first **Double-banded plover** in fresh breeding plumage ready for the flight back to New Zealand, as well as a pair of **Hooded Plovers**, plus a **Black-fronted Dotterel**. Adding to the sense of occasion, a **White-bellied Sea-eagle** flew across our view to the beach, caught a fish, and flew back past us to perch in a tree and eat it.

On Thursday the weather was gloriously sunny with no wind – perfect conditions. We headed south to Wallagoot Lake, Bournda Lagoon and surrounds. On our way to Wallagoot Beach we met Leo Berzins who volunteers with the South Coast Shorebird recovery program. Leo nodded fondly and named the **Hooded Plovers** we'd seen the day before ("*Ahh yes, that would be R4 and R5*")\* and estimated there were only 60 to 70 left in NSW, and none to be found north of Jervis Bay. He said the **Double-banded Plovers** move on in early September.

Stopping at a few spots around Wallagoot Lake, the water levels were quite high, meaning the usual expanse of mud flats wasn't there, thus neither were the birds. However, we saw some lovely birds on the paths and the beach. Sue Lashko taught me how to tell the difference between a **Pied Cormorant** (bright Omo-white) and a **Little Pied Cormorant** at a distance. Near Bournda Lagoon and beach we saw what we determined was a **Spotted Harrier** flying north, and quite a few **Crescent Honeyeaters** flitting about the banksias along the track. An **Eastern Whipbird** actually let us have a fleeting glance at it.

At lunch overlooking Bournda Beach we saw whales and dolphins, and something that kept its fin out of the water and steady for at least 10 minutes that I saw – a photo revealed that it was a sun fish on the horizontal, basking in the sun.



Little Egret and Great Egret

Graeme Austin (GA)



Striated Heron

GA



Little Black Cormorants

GA



On Thursday afternoon we walked through the Tathra Forest Wildlife Reserve that is right behind the township. We had great views of **Welcome Swallows** collecting mud from a puddle in the middle of the track for nest building. It looked as though, while the gum trees and other foliage had made a good recovery following the bushfires of 2018, the casuarinas had not in this reserve. We recorded 36 species including a **Superb Lyrebird**, **Lewin's Honeyeaters** and **Brown Gerygones**.

To end the day, we sauntered around Mogareeka Inlet looking for a **Spotless Crane** some members had heard but not seen the day before. We saw a **Great Egret** looking quite majestic while feeding in the still waters at dusk. We also saw around 20 **Royal Spoonbills**, a **Striated Heron**, and a couple of **Buff-banded Rails**.

We stayed at Kianinny Bush Cottages, which were very comfortable and seemed to be recently renovated judging by the well-appointed kitchens. On Friday morning Sandra Henderson – the most diligent of the morning walkers - led us around the bushland on the property looking for the Glossy Black-Cockatoo and Rose Robin she had heard on previous mornings. We managed to get a view (although not a great one – it was high up in the canopy) of the **Rose Robin**. While we didn't catch one at the property, some members saw a **Glossy Black-Cockatoo** on Wallagoot Lane on the way home later that morning. I didn't, but following a hot tip from the veterans, I stopped in at Glebe Park in Bega on the way home and saw my first **Yellow-billed Spoonbill** (needs a soak in Napisan) and **Nankeen Night Heron** tucked among the **Royal Spoonbills**, all resting close to the path. A **Pink-eared Duck** rounded off a great week.

It takes a lot of work to arrange, scope and wrangle an outing. I'm very grateful to Prue Watters and her team of advisors for their efforts. Everyone was very generous, gracious and patient sharing their expertise, and I had the most tremendous trip. A total of 86 species was recorded.

\*The names of the **Hooded Plovers** have been changed to protect their identities, and because I can't remember exactly what Leo said their names were.

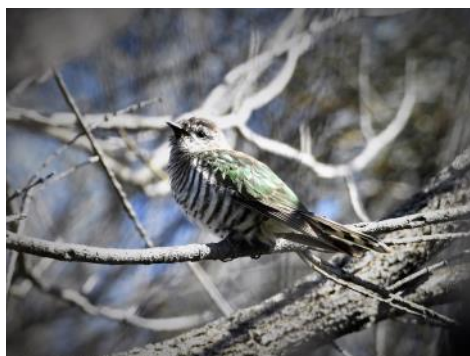
Rebecca Redden

### Tathra and surrounds—more photos



Above: Variegated Fairy-wren GA

Below: Horsfield's Bronze-Cuckoo GA



Scarlet Honeyeater GA



Hooded Plover GA



Red-capped Plover Joanne O'Shea (JO'S)



**Buff-banded Rail**

*GA*



**Royal Spoonbill**

*GA*



**Double-banded Plover in breeding plumage**  
*JO'S*



**White-bellied Sea-Eagle**

*JO'S*



**Laughing Kookaburra**

*JO'S*



**Striated Thornbill's nest**

*JO'S*



**Welcome Swallow** collecting nesting material

*JO'S*

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### Sunday 4 September - Namatjira Drive woodland

A small group of members joined leader Judith for a wander in this small patch of suburban woodland (which has a hotspot name of *Block 1243 (Tuggeranong)*, which is rather unhelpful!). There are some lovely large, old trees, some thick shrubby areas, and a small dam. The weather was unpleasantly windy, and some of the tracks a bit muddy. We saw 15 species, including a **Common Bronzewing**, a female **Golden Whistler**, and **Red Wattlebirds** which were enjoying the flowering Ironbarks. The wind and the proximity of Drakeford Drive made it difficult to hear the birds, but eBird records indicate almost 40 species have been seen in this area in the past.

Sandra Henderson

### Sunday 11 September - Melba Wetlands

We started with a wander along Gininderra Creek at Melba, noting a large number of **Australian Magpies** enjoying the pleasant conditions. The Half-Acre Wood on the edge of the creek was very wet, but is often a great place for small birds.

At the wetlands on the other side of the creek we started with great views of an **Olive-backed Oriole**. The **Australian Reed-Warblers** were calling from the reeds, as were several **Little Grassbirds**. There were **Australasian Grebes** on the largest pond, and a few **Dusky Moorhens** keeping to the reeds in the ponds and in the creek. There was also an immature **Black Swan** on the creek, which we had not seen from the other side.



Olive-backed Oriole

*Richard Arculus*

A single **Little Pied Cormorant** was sighted, as was a **Great Cormorant** flying over. **Grey Fantails**, **Weebills**, **Silvereyes** and **Striated Thornbills** were moving through the trees along the entry path. It's an interesting place to visit, and I'd encourage members in that area to have a look around these wetlands (and the similar ones at Croke Place, Evatt).

Sandra Henderson

### Sunday 18 September – Ashbrook Trail – Tidbinbilla NR

Nine people met for carpooling at the Tidbinbilla Visitor Centre in what seemed like gale-force winds. Once in the forest, however, we were almost completely sheltered from the wind. Several feeding flocks were observed with **Rufous** and **Golden Whistlers** putting in an appearance, as well as an **Eastern Whipbird** near the Mountain Creek Carpark. The highlight of the trip was a **Red-browed Treecreeper** that gave fantastic views next to the track. A total of 20 species was observed which was good for a walk essentially through a single, though very beautiful, habitat.

Ned Johnston

### Wednesday 21 September - Red Hill Nature Reserve

A small group gathered for this walk. The weather was kind to us, and the birds interesting enough that we had plenty of good reasons to stop regularly on the way up the hill. The reserve is popular with **Gang-gang Cockatoos**, and we had good views of two pairs before we left the carpark. Several times during the walk we heard a **Shining Bronze-Cuckoo**, but it stubbornly remained out of sight. The 'chip-chip' of small flocks of **Yellow-faced Honeyeaters** was also heard, and some were obliging enough to stop in nearby trees. A **Brown Goshawk** was heard, then seen briefly. Two pairs of **Black-faced Cuckoo-shrikes** were seen, and an **Olive-backed Oriole** heard as we returned to the carpark. A single **Noisy Friarbird** called from the edge of the suburb as we walked down the hill.

Sandra Henderson



## Sunday 25 September - Youth Haven

Twelve members joined Helen and myself for a walk around Youth Haven on Kambah Pool Road. The property is not open to the public. The route took us along some very muddy tracks and rougher off-track areas, but the birds more than made up for our wet feet.

During the morning we saw/heard 50 species, an excellent result. Quite a few parrots were exploring hollows or had already set up home and peered out at us. **Western Gerygones** and **White-throated Gerygones** were calling in several areas, and parties of **Yellow-faced** and **White-naped Honeyeaters** were heard and seen frequently. We passed a few dams, adding **Pacific Black Ducks**, **Grey Teal** with ducklings and **Australasian Grebes** to the list. In one of the stock yards a couple of **Striated Pardalotes** were hopping on the ground - closer examination of one of my photos showed they were picking up little grass stalks for their nest. The pair of **Wedge-tailed Eagles** from McQuoids Hill were circling above the hill for some time. We saw several species on nests - **White-winged Choughs**, **Magpie-Larks**, and **Welcome Swallows** in a shed and a horse float. A delightful morning.

Sandra Henderson



Striated Pardalote

Sandra Henderson



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Fred & Jeanette Birkbeck

244 Clacherty Road  
Julatten QLD 4871  
Tel: 07 4094 1665  
Email: [freddy@feathersnfriends.com.au](mailto:freddy@feathersnfriends.com.au)



Little Corella

Tee Tong Teo



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# New Places: September 2022

Sandra Henderson

## The Rock Nature Reserve

**Where is it:** in the Riverina, about 50km from Wagga Wagga.

Not being familiar with this reserve, and with not a lot of time to explore on this occasion, I didn't venture more than a few hundred metres from the carpark in various directions. Apart from several species of native orchids, there were quite a few small birds. It's a very rocky area, with "the rock" looming over it. A single **Wedge-tailed Eagle** was floating above the highest point. **Eastern Yellow Robins** kept me company, and a few **Chestnut-rumped Thornbills** were close to the main track. A very vocal **Shining Bronze-Cuckoo** remained out of sight. I must find time to get back and spend a day!

## Leeton – a large water storage dam on McCracken Road

McCracken Road (which has lost its street sign) runs off Fivebough Road, which will be familiar to many birders. Maps indicated an eBird hotspot at a dam a few kilometres down the road. It was not clear to me whether this is public land, but the gate was open so I parked and walked in to the edge of the dam. It was starting to rain, and was very windy, but certainly worth the effort. The dam is large, and the first thing I saw was a flock of **Little Pied Cormorants** (around 40 birds) moving from the near side of the water. They came to rest on the opposite shoreline and some structure in the water. The more interesting birds were the several **Black Kites** in the air, over the dam and over the adjacent paddock, which was being ploughed, so I suspect the birds in the air were chasing mice or rats disturbed by the tractor. Two immature kites were on the ground close to the gate. The dam also yielded **Black Swans**, a **White-faced Heron**, a **Black-fronted Dotterel** and a few **Pacific Black Ducks**.

## Ginninderra Creek wetlands in Evatt (Croke Place)

This newish wetland is only about two kilometres from Melba Wetlands, and also on the edge of Ginninderra Creek. I was unaware of it until asked to help with a primary school conservation group which visits the wetland, similar to a group I'd talked to at Upper Stranger Pond in Tuggeranong recently. I visited on a very cold morning, with ice on the edges of the ponds and on the many puddles. **Australasian Swamphens** and **Dusky Moorhens** were at the ponds and in reeds in the creek. A variety of bush birds were also around, including an **Olive-backed Oriole**, a **Golden Whistler** and several **Grey Shrike-thrush**.

On the way back from a weekend in Leeton, I endeavoured to get to **Doodle Corner Swamp Nature Reserve** near Henty. Unfortunately, the road along the edge of the reserve was a quagmire, so I didn't venture down there, and another road (Diffey Rd) I tried was under water in places, although I did get as far as a small farm dam with five species of ducks (**Pacific Black Duck**, **Wood Duck**, **Grey Teal**, **Australasian Shoveler** and **Australian Shelduck**), so not a totally wasted side trip. When the big wet finally ends, I will get to Doodle Corner Swamp!



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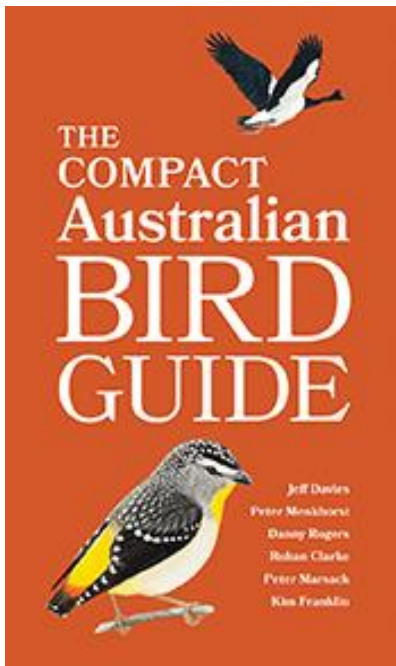
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Below are some of the most popular books and latest publications. We get new books in all the time and sometimes popular books sell out, but they can easily be re-ordered. If you are looking for a particular book, talk to the sales desk team at the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



**RELEASED AUG 22!**

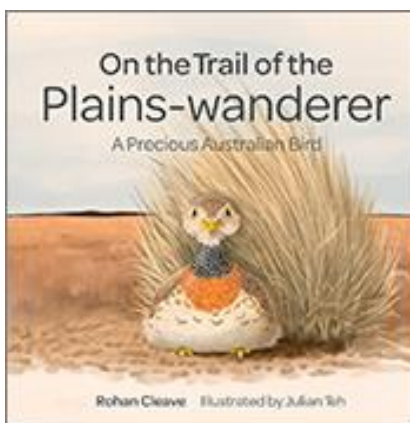
### THE COMPACT AUSTRALIAN BIRD GUIDE

Peter Menkhurst, Danny Rogers, Rohan Clarke, Jeff Davies, Peter Marsack, Kim Franklin

The Compact Australian Bird Guide is an easy-to-use and beautifully illustrated quick identification guide to all bird species regularly occurring in Australia. The content has been carefully designed to provide the reader with key information to enable rapid identification of a bird, in a convenient form. 264 pages | 198 x 120 mm

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Reading level varies from child to child, but we recommend this book for ages 5 to 9.

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## 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

2022-2023 memberships:

- Individual: \$50
- Family: \$55
- Institution: \$50
- School student (under 18) \$20

## New members

COG welcomes the following new members:

H Coppel  
B Bowen  
S & M Guppy  
J Wenke  
S McMillen  
J O'Shea

## NEXT NEWSLETTER

**Deadline for November 2022 edition:**

**Wednesday 26 October 2022**

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

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

or

**c/- The Secretary COG,**

**PO Box 301 Civic Square, ACT 2608**

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

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

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