

Gang-gang

SEPTEMBER 2022

Newsletter of the Canberra Ornithologists Group Inc.

SEPTEMBER MEETING

Wednesday 14 September 2022 7.30 pm

Normal face-to-face meeting

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

The September meeting will again be a normal face-to-face one held at our usual venue, but as school virus rules for afterhours 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 (canberrabirds.org.au).

Kevin Windle - Ivan Sokolov-Mikitov's ornithological notes: an introduction.

Heather McGuinness - Satellite-tracking the movements of waterbirds.

The short presentation will be by **Kevin** Windle on "Ivan Sokolov-Mikitov's ornithological notes: an introduction".

Ivan Sokolov-Mikitov (1882-1975) was a well-known Russian writer in a minor genre, not much translated into English.

Continued Page 2

Everyone welcome

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

The weather over the nearly 5 weeks from 27 July to 28 August inclusive covered by this column remained cloudy, windy but dry until after the start of the new month when there was a very significant rain event on 4 August. It has often been showery, cloudy and windy since with only a few frosts and/or fine still days, and conditions are still quite wet underfoot. My impression from the notes taken from posts on the COG chatline was that, before the big rain event, activity in the COG Area of Interest (AoI) seemed much higher than before, and then quietened considerably. This is supported by my analysis below, which indicates that only a few spring migrants had returned in any numbers until an influx of some species over the last 3 days of the period, that the winter altitudinal migrants have also stayed around, and that again there have been very few "unusual" birds reported.

By far the greatest excitement over the period was the presence of a **Pacific Baza**, the first confirmed record of this species in both the ACT and the COG AoI. Readers may recall that I included a couple of paragraphs on this species

Continued Page 2



Pacific Baza

Shorty

SEPTEMBER MEETING continued from Page 1

He had a long and varied career, as a soldier in the Imperial Russian army in World War I, Arctic explorer, sailor and journalist. He is remembered mostly as a naturalist, writer and memoirist, whose observations of bird life covered many regions of the then Soviet Union.

Sokolov-Mikitov wrote in the tradition laid down by a novelist, naturalist and memoirist of an earlier generation, Sergei Aksakov (1791-1859). Many years ago, Kevin published a translation of Aksakov's hunting notes – in effect the first Russian bird book - *Notes of a Provincial Wildfowler*, first published in the original in 1848. In 2021, he published a small selection of Sokolov-Mikitov's ornithological pen-portraits in English translation in the US journal, *Cardinal Points*.

The main speaker will be **Dr Heather McGuinness**, a Senior Research Scientist at CSIRO Land and Water with the title: "Satellite-tracking the movements of waterbirds".

Heather and her team at CSIRO have been tracking the movements of waterbirds across eastern Australia since 2016, using GPS backpack satellite transmitters. They have fitted transmitters to over 150 birds of a range of species (mostly Straw-necked Ibis, Royal Spoonbills and Australian White Ibis) at breeding sites across the Murray-Darling Basin and have plans to expand the number of species and sites. This work is being done as part of Commonwealth Environmental Water Office Monitoring, Evaluation and Research programs (https://flow-mer.org.au/; <a href="https://flow-me

Research webpage 'Waterbird Breeding and Movements: Knowledge for Water Managers':

https://research.csiro.au/ewkrwaterbirds/

Articles and videos/presentations:

https://flow-mer.org.au/sharing-science-guide-satellite-tracking-of-australian-waterbirds/

https://flow-mer.org.au/satellite-tracking-waterbird-movements-what-can-it-tell-us-and-how-does-it-work/

https://vimeo.com/698411056

https://youtu.be/uqr1byRGHVw

An early report and some other associated articles are here:

https://ewkr.com.au/waterbirds-2019-research-report/

Waterbirds Australia social media pages:

Facebook: Waterbirds Australia Twitter @AusWaterbirds

COG'S BIRD BLITZ 2022

COG's annual bird blitz is on again. Keep the weekend of Saturday 22 and Sunday 23 October free so you can survey your local patch or somewhere further afield in the ACT. Details are included under 'Future field trips' on page 11 and are also on the COG website www.canberrabirds.org.au, under the header 'Observing and Reporting Birds'.

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

continued from Page 1

in my July column following Mark Clayton's post that on the Australian Bird Identification (ABID) page there was a photo of an obvious **Pacific Baza** taken at Tarago sometime in the recent past. Readers might also recall that from discussion of the history of possible sightings that followed I speculated that perhaps Geoffrey Dabb was correct that the species seemed to be in the OMOT category - Only a Matter of Time - before we had a confirmed record in the Canberra area.

This proved very prescient as on 28 July Roy McDowall posted on Canberra Nature Map that he had found a **Pacific Baza** located halfway between the Red Hill restaurant and Mugga Way. It was eating insects, including stick insects in the tree canopy, loosely monitored by **Noisy Miners**. The next morning 29 July quite a number of birders managed to find and photograph this relatively tame bird, including showing it eating a green caterpillar, but many also missed out as before noon it could no longer be located and hasn't been found since. I suspect it may be still around, though you would wonder what it was doing in Canberra in mid-winter when the supply of large insects including stick insects would be low. Maybe it did move well away? Alastair Smith's photo posted on the COG chatline of the bird bottom-up defecating directly at the camera perhaps sums up what it thought of the place!

Of the spring summer migrants not recorded in July, there have been reports from 3 locations of the **Shining Bronze-Cuckoo**, 3 of them from Campbell Park where it was first heard on 2 August, a bird at the ANBG on 15 August, and on Tuggeranong Hill NR on 28 August. A reasonable description of a **Horsfield's Bronze-cuckoo** being mobbed by **Yellow-rumped Thornbills** was also reported from the former on 24 July, except that the key diagnostic features, the dark stripe through the eye and ear-coverts and particularly rufous sides to the base of the tail (hence it's former alternative name, the Rufous-tailed Bronze-cuckoo), were not mentioned. As the extent of barring is not always diagnostic, please look carefully for these features as more of these often hard-to-identify small cuckoos arrive in September (the next **Horsfield's** was also reported from Campbell Park on 26 August).



Fairy Martin

Roger Curnow



Tree Martin

Julian Robinson

The first **Pallid Cuckoo** was photographed at Mulligans Flat NR Border track on 28 August, and the first **Noisy Friarbird** for the season was reported from Jerrabomberra Wetlands NR on 20 August, with 2 more reported from The Pinnacle on 24 August, and from 4 other locations since. A young **White-throated Gerygone** with its underparts, including throat, mostly yellow was reported from Campbell Park on 27 July, but none since, whereas 2 **Western Gerygones** were reported from Mt Majura NR on 5 August. This species has been reported each month during winter, showing that it overwintered in very small numbers. From 26 August up to 4 birds were reported by four different observers from Campbell Park, including one bird carrying nesting material.

The first **Latham's Snipe** was reported from Jerrabomberra Wetlands NR on 8 August with only a single further report from there on 26 August. The **Australian Reed-Warbler** has been reported from 8 locations, the first quite early from Cotter Campground on 10 August, with the remainder from 19 August. Likewise, the **Fairy Martin** has also clearly returned, reported from 7 locations over the period, the first being 6 birds at Fyshwick Sewage Ponds on 3 August, and with regular sightings since, especially from adjacent Jerrabomberra Wetlands NR where up to 12 have been reported. The related **Tree Martin** was reported from 10 locations, up from July, and with a clear indication on the eBird map of birds returning to join those which had overwintered (up to 40 birds have been reported from Jerrabomberra Wetlands NR).

Of the other species which have overwintered, there have been only two reports of the **Rufous Whistler** during the period, a single bird in at Pine Island Reserve on 8 August and at West Belconnen Pond on 26 August. Likewise, there was only one report of the **Dusky Woodswallow**, 10 birds were observed at Mt Majura NR on 31 July, until 2 were reported from Gungaderra Grasslands NR on 27 August. Single **Mistletoebirds** were reported from just 3 locations. In contrast, reports of the **Olive-backed Oriole** were from 17 locations, nearly half of them in the last 3 days of the period, indicating birds returning.

Of the species which overwintered in the largest numbers, the Fantailed Cuckoo was still reported from around 13 locations up to the time of writing, the only local cuckoo which clearly stayed for the winter. The Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike and Grey Fantail were reported from a remarkable over 35 and over 75 locations, respectively, and should probably be considered as only partial migrants, similar to other species such as the Red Wattlebird, the Silvereye and both species of Pardalote (there have been relatively few of these four species in my local patch this winter). The Superb Parrot was reported from around 14 locations (with 5 south of Lake Burley Griffin) throughout the period. This is about half the number during July, indicating a relative drop in numbers in August before they return to breed.

It has been confirmed that 10 spring/summer "migrant" species have overwintered this year, 6 of them in small numbers. So please keep an eye out for any more of the above-mentioned species returning. During September please also look out for (in rough order) the Leaden Flycatcher, Sacred Kingfisher, Rainbow Bee-eater and Eastern Koel. Watch out too for increasing numbers of returning Yellow-faced and White-naped Honeyeaters, though this is never as spectacular as their autumn migration. The White-winged Triller and Rufous Songlark also usually return towards the end of the month, but I expect again numbers of these reaching the COG AoI, as well as the White-browed and Masked Woodswallow, to be much lower this year due to the wet inland.

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 **Golden Whistler** and **White-eared Honeyeater** in urban and peri-urban locations during the period. So, watch out for these as they move away; the latter is often much quieter at the end of its time in these locations. The **Scarlet Robin** also remains well established



Flame Robin

Tee Tong Teo



Australian Ornithological Services P/L

PO Box 385 South Yarra 3141 Victoria

Mob: 04173 10200

enquiries@philipmaher.com

Good birding, good food

2022

Central Australia

21 — 31 August 2022 Alice Springs, West MacDonnell Ranges, Yulara, Erldunda, Marla Possibly two places available.

Nullarbor birding tour

Two places available 3 — 18 September 2022 Enquiries to Patricia.

2023 tours

Atherton Tablelands & Iron Range In two parts 1-14 May 2023

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

being reported from around 25 urban/peri-urban locations of the over 50 total locations during the period. The **Flame Robin** has been reported from 14 such locations of the around 32 total spots. This is up from July possibly indicating them moving through back to the mountains. They have been very hard to locate at their winter spot south-west of Mt Arawang over the past 6 weeks

In contrast **Rose Robins** have been reported from 11 locations in the period, 10 of which may be described as urban/periurban, but now with none from west of the Murrumbidgee River. Again, there were no reports of the **Pink Robin** during the period. The eBird map indicates it was last reported from the COG AoI (the ANBG) on 26 July 2019, with the nearest records since that in the Kosciuszko area. After being increasingly common during the drought years, with the recent wetter years there have been many fewer records of the **Red-capped Robin** in the COG AoI. Until there were 3 reports of single birds on Mt Ainslie on 27-28 August there was only the report of a non-coloured female from Mulligans Flat on 2 August during the period. There have been reports only from 5 other locations so far in 2022.

The **Crescent Honeyeater** was reported from 6 locations over the period, the ANBG and 5 other spots east of the Murrumbidgee River, including one reported from Rivett for 4-6 weeks, the closest to my GBS site from where it has been absent again this winter. Again, the **Yellow-tufted Honeyeater** has not been reported during the period. There have also been no reports of the **Swift Parrot.**

There have been no records of the **Brown Gerygone** again this winter. The eBird map reveals they were last reported from the ACT on 14 September 2018 at the ANBG (their most favoured spot in winter), though there have been a few records from Tallaganda SF since (the last in February 2021). However, there have been a number of reports of the **Bassian Thrush** at the ANBG again this winter, the last on 28 August, when one was carrying nest material, bringing it to the nesting area high in tree. Otherwise, they have been reported only in the mountains to the west of the Murrumbidgee River.

So please keep an eye out for the last of the above-named species in the urban and peri-urban locations of Canberra as they start to move away again during September.

As with July there were relatively few reports of "unusual" birds reported with, other than the **Pacific Baza** above, none deserving special mention. Up to 3 **Plumed Whistling Ducks** were regularly reported only from the Trucking Yard Lane Dam. Again, no **Freckled Ducks** were reported during the period. While **Australian Shelducks** were still reported from 6 locations to the east and north-east of Canberra during the period, numbers are well down with the maximum of 17 seen together on Wollogorang Lagoon being the only observations of more than 2 ducks. Single **Blue-billed Duck** were reported only from the farm dam on Lake Road on 24 August, and from Isabella Pond and the adjacent Upper Stranger Pond on 27 and 28 August, respectively. Not including the Sanctuary at Tidbinbilla NR, up to 2 **Musk Ducks** were reported only from 2 locations in the northern part of the COG AoI.

There were only reports of 5 **Stubble Quail** at the Holder wetlands on 20 August and 1 at the Majura Pine Plantation on 28 August over the period, and up to 4 **Brown Quail** were reported from just 4 locations, well down from July. Up to 3 **Painted Button-quail** were reported from 6 locations in the period, but again there were no reports of **Little Button-quail**. No **Great Crested Grebe, White-headed Pigeon, Brush Bronzewing, Diamond** or **Peaceful Doves** have been reported during the period.

Up to 2 **Spotless Crakes** were reported from Jerrabomberra Wetlands NR over the period, as well as from Molonglo Reach on 30 July. No **Australian Spotted** or **Baillon's Crake** have been reported, but 4 **Lewin's Rail** were reported from Lade Vale on 31 July during the period, whereas up to 4 **Buff-banded Rails** were reported from 3 locations. No **Red-capped Plovers, Red-necked Avocets, Common Sandpiper, Australian Little Bittern** or **Intermediate Egret** were reported during the period.

Two **Banded Lapwings** were reported from Wollogorang Lagoon on 7 August, and two **Caspian Terns** were reported from Jerrabomberra Wetlands NR on 20 August. On 26 July Sandra Henderson reported 5 **Pied Cormorants** from the western foreshore track at Googong Dam, where she had never seen them before. This species is mostly located around the eastern side of Lake Burley Griffin, but there have been a number of reports of up to 2 birds from Lake Ginninderra over the period.

Single **Barn Owls** were reported from 4 locations, at different spots on the Uriarra Rd on 6 and 20 August, from Holder on 18 August and at Majura Park shopping centre on 20 August. The **Black-shouldered Kite** has remained remarkably common, reported from over 40 locations, with further reports of winter breeding (see details below). The **Nankeen Kestrel** was also reported from around 40 locations (quite a bit down from July) during the period.

A grey morph **Grey Goshawk** was reported only from the Model Airplane Club on Monaro Hwy on 17 August. A single **Spotted Harrier** has been reported by a number of observers from several spots along Majura Road, with some lovely photos of it in the air, including gliding low over the paddocks, posted on eBird. A **Black Kite** was again reported from the Hume Highway at Oolong on 19 August, but no **Black Falcon** was reported during the period.

There were no reports of the Azure Kingfisher, Cockatiel, Turquoise Parrots (the three reported by Sandra Henderson on the COG chatline were well to the west of the COG AoI), or Little Lorikeets during the period. Two Glossy Black-Cockatoos were reported flying over the ANBG towards Mt Majura on 29 July, from where they were observed on 7 August. A Scaly-breasted Lorikeet was reported from Downer and Dickson on 10 and 11 August, respectively, and up to 2 Musk Lorikeets were reported from 6 locations during the period.

An unusual sighting was the **Red-browed Treecreeper** photographed by Shorty at Mt Ainslie on 6 August. It was again photographed there by Ben Ward on 28 August when it was associating with a loose flock of **White-throated Treecreepers**. These are very rare peri-urban observations as nearly all the eBird records back to the start of 2018 are from the mountains to the west of the Murrumbidgee River, with just a few from Tallaganda SF.

No **Singing, Blue-faced, Spiny-cheeked** or **Scarlet Honeyeaters** were reported during the period. A **White-bellied Cuckoo-shrike** was reported only from Nelanglo TSR on 27 July, but no **Little Friarbirds, Zebra Finches** or **Tawny Grassbirds** were reported during the period.



Red-browed Treecreeper

Shorty

Of the birds I have continued to ask readers to keep a special lookout

for in 2022, **Jacky Winters** were reported only from the known spot at Top Naas Rd where up to 5 birds were recorded between 14 and 21 August, as well as 1-2 birds from the new spot Illilanga on Baroona Rd on 20 and 25 August. Unfortunately, it appears that the 4 birds reported from Capital Country Holiday Park on 11 July had been misidentified.

Hooded Robins were reported from 3 (all known) locations during the period. Two birds were reported from Naas Road at Apollo Road between 9-17 August, and from Top Naas Rd on 14 August, as well as 3 birds at Scottsdale reserve on 18 August. **Restless Flycatchers** were reported from 5 locations (4 known) over the period, single birds at Nelanglo TSR, McQuoid's Hill NR, Naas Road at Apollo Road and Illilanga (the new location), and 1-2 birds at Top Naas Rd.

In terms of other interesting bird observations, on 30 July at Umbagong District Park Nigel Secomb photographed a dead **Brown Quail** with the caption "Deceased, being carried by a **Laughing Kookaburra** until dropped. It was a fresh kill based on lack of lividity and fresh blood in quail's bill." There was also a photo of the Kookaburra in a gum with it in its mouth.



Crimson Rosella

Shorty

On 16 August Shorty had a visit from a **Crimson Rosella** with melanism at his place, the first time he had seen such a bird, and on 19 August Martin Butterfield photographed a **White-winged Chough** in Glebe Park with white patches on its back, only the second time he had seen this

In respect of breeding, apart from the **Western Gerygone** and **Bassian Thrush** noted above, surprisingly little of special mention has come to my attention. On 2 August Anthony Overs posted that his **White-browed Scrubwrens** and **Superb Fairy-wrens** were breeding early in his GBS site in Hawker, and on 27 August Kym Bradley posted photos of **Fan-tailed Cuckoos** copulating.

The eBird records show juvenile or immature Black-shouldered Kites

were reported from 10 locations during the period. Taking into account the time and spatial considerations including their increased mobility as they grow older, 5 of these seem likely to be different from those previously reported. These are those seen at Urambi Hills NR/Lions Youth Haven, the Molonglo River corridor off Coombs, Jerrabomberra Wetlands NR, along

Majura Road, and at Yass weir. So, it appears there have been remarkably at least 14 separate breeding events for this species this late autumn/winter.

There have still been a few mixed feeding flocks reported possibly reflecting a slightly delayed breeding season. Few single species flocks have been brought to my attention though, in respect of flocking **Satin Bowerbirds**, Anthony Overs reminded chatline subscribers of the data from the original breeding bird study completed by Stephen Marchant at Moruya. On a tenhectare block of forest there was one territory occupied by a blue male. Stephen made an effort to band all the bowerbirds one winter, ending up with 187 birds banded, the vast majority of which were never encountered again. That's a huge number of birds passing through.

Apart from the very cold first two weeks, the weather this winter has been remarkably similar and hopefully it will warm up soon as September is a month of significant bird activity in the COG AoI. So please watch out for more of the returning spring/summer migrants mentioned above, for the last of the leaving altitudinal migrants, for roost sites and flights, for any late MFFs or single flocks, and for early 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

Committee News

The Canberra Birds (COG) committee met by Zoom on 18 August.

Canberra Birds (COG) will have a stall at the Celebrate Gungahlin Festival on 15 October (11 am to 3 pm). If you can spare an hour to tell people why you like bird-watching in the Canberra region and the benefits of being a member of Canberra Birds, please contact the office (cogoffice@canberrabirds.org.au).

If you want to do the Garden Bird Survey for 2022-23 and haven't started yet, charts and excel spreadsheets can be downloaded from http://canberrabirds.org.au/observing-birds/frequently-asked-questions/surveys/ or you can request a large size chart by emailing gbs@canberrabirds.org.au.

The Annual General Meeting will be held on 9 November. More information and nomination forms will be included in the October *Gang-gang*. The committee can have up to 14 members. It currently has 12 members but, as mentioned last month, Prue wants to step down from her role as Treasurer, so additional members would be very welcome. If you have benefited from belonging to COG please consider whether you can contribute to the success of its ongoing activities by nominating to be part of the committee. Tasks are varied. Some require specific skills but many don't. If you have a question about a particular role send it to Neil (president@canberrabirds.org.au) or the office (cogoffice@canberrabirds.org.au) and the relevant person will answer you.

Neil Hermes *President* Alison Mackerras *Minutes Secretary*

COG's cogs No 15 - Anthony Overs

This week we meet one of COG's great guides and teachers, Anthony Overs. He's been at the helm of the beginners' birding outing for 17 years and has helped countless people discover the joys of Canberra's avian life.

Anthony's interest in wildlife started at a young age. Among his family he was affectionately known as the next Harry Butler (who was a host of the popular 'In the Wild' TV show during the late 1970s). Anthony followed his passion, and eventually completed an environmental management degree with a focus on wildlife. It was during this time that he started getting serious about birds. He began by joining the Melbourne Bird Observers Club of Australia and did some volunteer work there.

Soon though, an opportunity arose to take a six-month job in Canberra. He moved in 1994 and still hasn't left. It didn't take long for Anthony to join COG and, soon after, he became a trainee on bird banding projects run by other COG members.

Over the years, Anthony has held a number of positions within COG, including as a committee member for eight years, editor of nine volumes of Canberra Bird Notes, woodland bird survey coordinator and Mt Majura site surveyor and field trips coordinator.

But Anthony's most enduring contribution to the group has been as an educator and guide. He has led evening outings to Tallaganda to learn about owls and helped Jack Holland in his nest workshop outings. He is one of COG's leading experts on pelagic and is a veteran of more than forty day trips and four 48-hour deep water trips; 18 of those day trips were leading the COG outings from Eden.

Maybe most importantly, Anthony has led the Birdwatching for Beginners' outings, twice yearly, since 2006. They're a popular staple on the COG calendar. In 2021, demand was so high that two extra outings had to be added, for a total of 52 people.

Whether looking at fairy-wrens in the Botanic Gardens and explaining what eclipse plumage is or pointing out the diagnostic features of a Mottled Petrel as it zooms past, Anthony has always derived an enormous amount of satisfaction from introducing newbies to birding.

In his 17th year as leader of the beginners' outings, Anthony is hoping to make it to 20 years. Fortunately, on the seabird front, Tobias Hiyashi and more recently Julian Teh have taken the helm leading the offshore outings. In time, Anthony is hoping to find a suitable replacement to lead the beginners' outings to maintain this essential part of COG's activities before he finally retires.

Acknowledgements

Nathan Finger and Anthony Overs





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 4 September – Namatjira Drive woodland

This walk will commence at 9am from Namatjira Drive, Fisher – **meet** at 8:45am as it is a bit tricky to find. If you are driving from Fisher southwards towards Kambah, you will see Mt Arawang on the right hand side of the road and the bus stop on the left hand side of Namatjira Drive. Drive another 500 to a small dirt carpark on the left here: https://www.google.com.au/maps/dir//-35.3663123,149.0517396/@-35.3703604,149.0518492,16.17z/data=!4m2!4m1!3e0 It is 10m after the last house in Fisher (number 241) exactly where the speed limit changes from 60 to 80. The carpark easily fits 15 cars.

This is a small grassland reserve. As the cow paddocks are usually unlocked, we will likely be able to access the damp areas with frogs during summer, so we may have a variety of birds.

There will be some grassland so long pants are advisable. Most of the walk is on easy fire trails with some mildly steep sections. About 2.5 - 3 km.

To register, email Judi on <u>JudithPaulM@gmail.com</u> – provide your name, mobile number and the name and mobile number of an emergency contact.

Sunday 11 September – Melba Wetlands

Meet: 8.30am, Copland College carpark, on Verbrugghen Street, Melba, just off Copland Drive.

We will then walk across to Ginninderra Creek, have a quick look there (including the Melba Half Acre Wood), then walk around to the wetlands using the bridge on Copland Drive to cross the creek. The wetlands have a series of five ponds,

constructed in 2019. We should find a variety of waterbirds, as well as a few bush birds. It's an easy wander, mainly on paths with no more than 1km of walking involved. As usual, you should bring water and sunscreen and wear sensible shoes.

Register with Sandra Henderson at shirmax2931@gmail.com, with your name and number, and the name and number of an emergency contact.

Monday 12 to Friday 16 September – Yathong Nature Reserve

A midweek excursion to a prime patch of NSW mallee and associated woodlands.

Accommodation is in basic shearers quarters with shared facilities. Because of this numbers are limited to 16. The quarters have showers and a new kitchen. The rooms in the quarters are now allocated but those who have campervans or camper trailers may still register.

Yathong is about 600 kms from Canberra and should take about 6 ½ hours to get there, plus stops, so an early start or a halfway stop is essential.

Birding in the mallee can be frustrating but extremely rewarding, especially if one comes upon such birds as **Malleefowl**, **Striated Grasswren**, **Southern Scrub-robin**, **Red-lored Whistler**, **Gilbert's Whistler** and heaps more. Now I cannot guarantee seeing any of these but they have been seen in the Reserve in the past. The Reserve also has extensive woodlands and dams which brings on different suites of birds.

The weather in spring can be quite unsettled (rain is not uncommon) so be prepared.

Register with Sue Lashko – smlashko@gmail.com; please provide your name(s) and mobile number, and the name and number of an emergency contact.

Note that NSW NPWS has given provisional permission for this trip but it may be cancelled or dates changed if NPWS programmes change or are affected by weather.

Sunday 18 September – Tidbinbilla NR – Ashbrook Firetrail

Ashbrook Fire Trail is a lesser-known walk in Tidbinbilla NR through tall forest along a creek. A good range of wet forest birds have been recorded such as **Rose Robin, Superb Lyrebird** and **Red-browed Treecreeper** and there is a possibility for returning migrants. The plan would be to walk about 1.5km from the Hanging Rock Carpark to where the fire trail crosses a creek and then return to the cars.

We will **meet** at the Tidbinbilla Visitor Centre Carpark at 8:30am and those who wish to can carpool from there to the trail head.

Distance: approximately 3km total. The walk is of moderate difficulty.

We should finish the walk by midday so participants will only need to bring morning tea, plus hat and water.

Sunday 25 September - Lions Youth Haven

Meet at 8.30am at Youth Haven, Kambah Pool Road. The entry is on your right as you drive down Kambah Pool Road, just before the second roundabout. Follow the entry road around to the left, and look for my sign for parking.

On my initial visit I saw 34 species, but it is a good spot for migrants, many of which should be back by late September. There are a number of dams, some open grassland, and wooded areas.

Bring: Morning tea, sturdy shoes, sunscreen, hat. Parts of the track may be very wet and we will also walk off-track in some areas, so the ground will be uneven.

Register with Sandra Henderson at shirmax2931@gmail.com, with your name and phone number, and the name and number of an emergency contact. **Numbers limited to 16 participants**.

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 at 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

This is advance notice of a 4 day trip to the Grenfell area. Participants will need to arrange their own accommodation in Grenfell. Visits will be made to Bimbi State Forest, Weddin Mountains NP, Warranderry 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, 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

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 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 Moaut 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 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 months or so; if you would like to be added to the waiting list, **contact** Sue Lashko on 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, under the header 'Observing and Reporting Birds'. The list of sites adopted for 2022 will be updated shortly. Please let me know, blitz@canberrabirds.org.au, where you would like to survey and I will put your name against that site. 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

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 approximately \$135. 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 <u>smlashko@gmail.com</u>. 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

New Places: August 2022

Sandra Henderson

Wandandian

Where: a locality near Jervis Bay.

When I signed up for a pelagic trip out of Jervis Bay it seemed a great chance to stay with some relatives on their off-grid property at Wandandian.

On the first afternoon I decided a "garden bird survey" was a good idea. The property is a few acres, and my niece was across the road on another few acres. By the time I'd walked across the paddock (followed very closely by a curious cow) and checked out the fencelines and dams, I had a list which included several **Common Bronzewings** (wandering on the lawn next to the house), two pairs of **Jacky Winters, Laughing Kookaburras, New Holland Honeyeaters**, a pair of **Black Swans** with four cygnets, and a **White-faced Heron**. Sitting with drink in hand on the deck, I added a **White-bellied Sea-Eagle** flying over the paddock, then a pair of **Glossy-Black Cockatoos**. The latter re-appeared the following afternoon, and are apparently regular visitors.

Youth Haven

Many of you may have driven past the Lions Youth Haven property on Kambah Pool Road, or gazed at some of the horse paddocks from McQuoids Hill, but it is private property so there is no general access. COG member Helen lives on the property, so a COG outing has been organised, and a visit to have a first look around was organised. The area the COG outing will cover includes some wonderful old trees, and many which are known nesting spots for various species. We walked through some horse paddocks, and along a creek line, some of it a little sodden and off-track. The best find was a group of **Crescent Honeyeaters** along the creek, and I'm assured a number of the soon-to-arrive migrants will be in residence when COG visits.

Corramy Regional Park

Where: The Wool Road, near Basin View, near Jervis Bay and Nowra

I spent only a short time here, where the commonest bird appeared to be **Scarlet Honeyeater**, which were flitting around the canopy. The Park is almost 300 ha in size, and there is a website listing some areas worth further investigation.

Lanyon High School

Where: Heidelberg St, Conder

I visited after noting a water body on the satellite view of the area. The pond, as I discovered, is right next to the school buildings, within the ubiquitous high black fencing, but easily visible. The ironbarks in the carpark were flowering and attracting Rainbow Lorikeets, and the school oval had a group of Little Corellas. A single White-faced Heron and a few Australian Wood Ducks were at the pond, and a group of Satin Bowerbirds were moving between trees at one end of the lagoon.

Field Trip Reports

Sunday 14 August - Mt Taylor NR

Seven hardy souls gathered in wintry cold with intermittent showers, observing 26 species in all, including large argumentative groups of **White-winged Choughs**. Apart from **one Yellow-faced Honeyeater**, there were no signs of early migrants but good views of probable preparatory breeding by a small group of **Sulphur-crested Cockatoos** cleaning out a hollow in an old dead eucalypt. Doug Laing

Wednesday 17 August - Naas Road at Apollo Road

This birding hotspot was not living up to its reputation until I suggested we move on. That seemed to be the signal for all the expected species to come out of hiding. The first was the **Restless Flycatcher**, which eventually showed well. A pair of **Hooded Robins**, a group of **Diamond Firetails**, several **Flame Robins** and some **Southern Whiteface** were seen by most, and about half the group heard the distinctive call of the **Brown Treecreeper**.

Sandra Henderson

Sunday August 21 - Gungaderra Grassland Reserve

Twelve members and guests joined Bill Graham for a wander through this reserve, which most had never visited. I had arrived early and come across a couple of **Flame Robins** near the entry, sitting on a back fence and the roof of one of the houses backing onto the reserve. It took only a couple of minutes for the group to relocate them and get good views. Further into the reserve we came across a group of three, with two adult males. As expected, raptors were making good use of the grasslands, and a pair of **Black-shouldered Kites**, a pair of **Wedge-tailed Eagles** and two **Nankeen Kestrels** were sighted. With a number of dams and water lying in many areas, the waterbirds included **Pacific**





Restless Flycatcher, Flame Robin

Richard Arculus

Black Ducks, Grey Teal, Australian Wood Ducks, several Australasian Grebes and a White-faced Heron. Eurasian Skylarks were heard, but not seen, over the grasslands as we made our way back to the entry. I expect many of us will be back to visit once the migrants start arriving.

Sandra Henderson





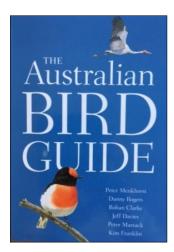


Nankeen Kestrel, Black-shouldered Kite, Tee Tong Teo
Flame Robin Sandra Henderson

STOCKTAKE SALE!!

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

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



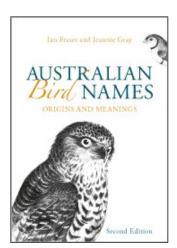
The Australian Bird Guide

Revised edition

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

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

RRP \$49.95 **SALE PRICE \$30**

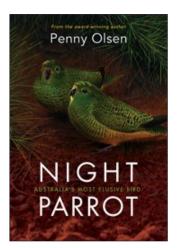


Australian Bird Names

Ian Fraser and Jeannie Gray

An entertaining account of the stories behind the names of Australian birds. This second edition is a completely updated checklist of Australian birds and the meanings behind their common and scientific names, which may be useful, useless or downright misleading!

RRP \$54.99 **SALE PRICE \$30**



Night Parrot: Australia's Most Elusive Bird

Penny Olsen

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

RRP \$49.95 **SALE PRICE \$30**



Plains Wanderer Pin

Julian Teh

This hard enamel pin is a durable piece with a smooth finish, perfect for adorning shirts, coats, bags, hats or even binocular straps.

The Plains-wanderer is Australia's most unique bird.

SALE PRICE \$10



Finding Australian Birds: A Field Guide to Birding Locations

Tim Dolby, Rohan Clarke

This book covers over 400 Australian bird watching sites conveniently grouped into the best birding areas, from one end of the country to the other.

RRP \$49.95 **SALE PRICE \$30**



of greeting cards

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

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

Each fun and vibrant card pairs a different bird species with an iconic Canberra location. The cards are drawn by local cartoonist **Stuart McMillen**,

a resident of Gorman Arts Centre, Braddon.

Greeting cards \$6 each or 8-packs for \$40.

Shop directly via stuart mcmillen.com/shop



The Bird Haven Festival was a huge success in 2018 and 2019, bringing hundreds of people together in Shoalhaven Heads on the NSW South Coast to celebrate birds and learn more about their behaviour, habitat and conservation.

BirdLife Shoalhaven is thrilled to be bringing the Festival back again in October with **three events in three venues** to coincide with the Aussie Backyard Bird Count. The key event is the **Bird Haven Festival Conference, while the others are aimed at novice birdwatchers.**



Bird Haven Festival Conference Saturday 22nd October, 11am-5pm (register from 10.30am) at the Shoalhaven Heads Bowling Club

This will be an ideal opportunity to hear leading ornithologists and researchers speak about their work in bird conservation and the ecology of some of our bird species. The keynote speaker will be Dr David Lindenmayer - Professor of Ecology and Conservation Biology at The Australian National University's Fenner School of Environment and Society.

A list of the other speakers is provided on our web-site. Tickets are \$70 each and can be purchased at https://events.humanitix.com/2022-bird-haven-festival-conference

Birds for Beginners - the Weird and Wonderful Life of Birds -



Saturday 15th October, 2-4pm at the Ulladulla Civic Centre

This presentation by Dr Holly Parsons from BirdLife Australia is aimed at "aspiring" birdwatchers, but even the more experienced will learn something new.

Afterwards you will be invited to do your first Aussie Backyard Bird Count.

Admission is free, but you must register at

https://events.humanitix.com/birds-for-beginners-the-weird-and-wonderful-life-of-birds



Birds for Beginners – improve your bird identification skills - Wednesday 19th October, 3-6pm at the Jervis Bay Maritime Museum in Huskisson

BirdLife Shoalhaven will run guided bird walks to improve the bird identification skills of our "emerging" birdwatchers. It is essential that you bring a pair of binoculars with you! The bird walks are free, but you must register at https://events.humanitix.com/birds-for-beginners-guided-bird-walks-to-improve-your-bird-identification-skills-in-the-field

You will find more information on each of these events at http://www.birdlifeshoalhaven.org/upcoming.html

Hopefully you will be able to join BirdLife Shoalhaven and be part of the 2022 Bird Haven Festival!



Neil Hermes Safaris - birding tours this year

July 12-14 BIRDS OF HIGHLANDS AND JERVIS BAY TOUR

Three days exploring the best bird spots on the Southern Highlands and Jervis Bay, includes Barren Grounds Nature Reserve and Booderee National Park. Ex Canberra Includes motel accommodation. 3 day 2 nights Led by Mark

Clayton and Neil Hermes \$795pp

August 13 SEABIRD PELAGIC CRUISE ex Jervis Bay

Six hour boat cruise from Jervis Bay to shelf. Big comfortable charter boat. Great outside viewing points. Also large enclosed lounge with toilets etc. Seabird experts on hand. Hope for lots of

lifers \$275 |

Sept 2-9 BIRDS AND HISTORY NORFOLK ISLAND

8 day fully escorted tour of Norfolk Island. General interest tour of Norfolk' plus its wildlife and history. Includes airfare from Sydney, motel accommodation, car hire. Ex Sydney

Led by Neil and Michael Hermes \$2539pp

Sept 26-30 BIRDS OF THE NSW MID NORTH COAST

For bird watchers to explore the best rainforest and coastal locations on NSW mid north coast and ranges. Includes motel accommodation Ex Canberra. 5 day 4 nights Led by Mark

Clayton and Neil Hermes \$1350pp

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, bowerbirds and Palm Cockatoos Led by Mark Clayton and Neil Hermes Tour is open for

expressions of interest, details to come.

Book at neilhermes.com.au/safaris/
Enquiries at neil@neilhermes.com.au



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

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

COG membership

2021-2022 memberships:

Individual: \$50

Family: \$55

• Institution: \$50

• School student (under 18) \$20

New members

COG welcomes the following new members:

T Rail

K Reid

P Cottier

NEXT NEWSLETTER

Deadline for October 2022 edition:

Monday, 26 September 2022

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.

COG information

President: Neil Hermes

0413 828 045

president@canberrabirds.org.au

Treasurer: Prue Watters cogoffice@canberrabirds.org.au

Secretary: Margaret Robertson cogoffice@canberrabirds.org.au

Address for correspondence

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

Canberra Bird Notes

Editor: Michael Lenz

michael.lenz.birds@gmail.com

COG website

canberrabirds.org.au

COG Webmaster

Julian Robinson

cogwebmaster@canberrabirds.org.au

COG library

Membership Enquiries & Updates:

membership@canberrabirds.org.au for change of address or other details.

Gang-gang Newsletter

Editor: Sue Lashko

gang-gang@canberrabirds.org.au

Lay-out Editor: Gail Neumann

Publication Sales

Kathy Walter

sales@canberrabirds.org.au

COG E-mail Discussion List

COG E-mail Discussion List COG has an email discussion list for members and friends: 'CanberraBirds'. Join (subscribe to) the list by following the links on the COG website or by sending an email message to canberrabirds-subscribe@lists.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@lists.canberrabirds.org.au.

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

Copyright in *Gang-gang* articles is retained by the articles' authors.

Gang-gang is published on COG's website in PDF format.

ISSN 2208-018X

