



# Gang-gang

APRIL 2013

Newsletter of the Canberra Ornithologists Group Inc.

## APRIL MEETING

Wednesday 10.04.2013

7.30 pm.

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

The first presentation will be by Canberra historian and writer (and COG member) **Matthew Higgins** on "**Burramys: possums with altitude.**"

Australia's mountain pygmy possum (*Burramys parvus*) is an iconic yet rarely seen animal of our high country. The world's only marsupial to hibernate for long periods under snow, *Burramys* is Australia's only mammal to live solely above the snowline. It is also endangered. This presentation will describe these beautiful animals and the annual fieldwork that is undertaken to increase our knowledge of them so that their future might be secured. Matthew is a keen bushwalker and cross-country skier who has been involved in the *Burramys* fieldwork over the last two years.

The second presentation "**Canberra's Mystery Bird: How many Little Eagles?**" is by well-known COG member and speaker **Geoffrey Dabb**.

According to nesting information the once-common **Little Eagle** has collapsed in its local numbers over the last 20 years. The ACT government is about to issue an action plan for the species. Curiously, it is still reported quite regularly around the suburbs, which has led to suggestions of widespread misidentification. This talk uses photos, maps, graphs, video and nest records to explore what is going on. (It also recalls the unusual circumstances in which Betty Temple Watts made her Little Eagle drawing). The presentation is based on one given to the Birdlife Southern NSW raptor seminar in March.

## What to watch out for this month.

In last month's column I predicted that March would be more exciting than February due to the considerable movement of birds away, through and into Canberra during the month but, judging by the reporting of observations, it seems to have been a relatively quiet one too, compared to the highs of December and January. Again, following the good rains right at the end of February, the first three weeks of March were dry, a very similar pattern to the preceding 3 months, but for unclear reasons with clearly different results/impacts.

While certainly the waterbird numbers and variety of January are no longer here, as summarised by Steve Wallace on the chatline, the good year for **Freckled Duck** continues, with 5 regularly observed at West Belconnen Ponds and up to 13 on the western side of Lake Road, Bungendore. Several more common waterbird species also seem to have been present in high numbers, with up to 25 **Black-fronted Dotterels** and 23 **White-faced Herons** seen at Kelly Swamp and 10 **Great Egrets** at West Belconnen Ponds as well as over 150 **Little Black Cormorants** (the ones we missed on East Basin/Molonglo Reach in February?).

Of the species that have usually mainly departed before March there was an observation of a probable juvenile **Brush Cuckoo** at the Orroral Campgrounds in the first week of March and a report of the **White-winged Triller** at Kama Nature Reserve early in the month, plus a late observation of a bird at Campbell Park the weekend before Easter. Of those that leave early to mid-March a **Dollarbird** seems to have been present at the Jer-rabomberra Wetlands until the middle of the month

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Everyone welcome

(slightly later than usual), but there have been surprisingly few records of the **Rainbow Bee-eater**, confined to these wetlands and Shepherd's Lookout, and again none since the middle of March. However, the biggest surprise is that there seems to have been only a single record of the **Sacred Kingfisher** at the end of the first week in March, at least from my usual sources. My experience is that this species is usually the last of the above three to leave. In response to my question



**White-throated Needletail**  
(*Hirundapus caudacutus*)  
Photo: Roger Williams

on the C O G chatline, it seems that most of the **Eastern/Pacific Koel** had departed by 10 March, a little earlier than in the past few years, but with some still calling/observed after that, including a male still visiting the fig tree in a Flynn garden almost every day, at least up to the end of the third week in March. During the month another four fledglings/juveniles have been reported, including a third one in Page not that far from Barbara Allan's garden. There has also been a steady stream of **White-throated Needletail** observations posted throughout March, including from clear skies, though numbers have not been as large as they sometimes can be, with a maximum of about 50 on two occasions. Some **Superb Parrots** also have stayed on into March, with the reported maximum of 16 at the Belconnen Golf Course, which seems to be a favourite spot for them, including for overwintering.

Of the other species that mostly have left by the end of March there have been single records of the **Pallid Cuckoo** (a juvenile) and the **Horsfield's Bronze-Cuckoo**, but surprisingly none in March of the **Shining Bronze-Cuckoo**, which was the more numerous of these three cuckoo species this spring/summer among the few cuckoo records

overall. Also surprisingly there seems to have been no observations of the **Latham's Snipe** in March, whereas the **Australian Reed-Warbler** was still regularly recorded as was the **Leaden Flycatcher**, which was still present in Mulligan's Flat during the woodland survey on 24 March. However, there have been no records of the **Satin Flycatcher** in Canberra on its passage north from their breeding sites in the mountains, though they were still present there as late as 10 March, as was the **Cicadabird** and the **Rufous Fantail**. Shortly after there were a number of records of the last-named moving through Canberra, including unusually one observation of two small groups.

Continue to look and listen for any of the birds mentioned above, as by the time this issue of Gand-gang reaches your letter box in early April

any records will be highly significant. While the above leaving times are largely based on my own experience and interest after more than 35 years bird watching in the ACT, they are remarkably consistent with the data that Steve Wallace has been able to extract for me from the COG databases. The main surprise is that most of the 3 cuckoo species, **Latham's Snipe** and the **Australian Reed-Warbler** have left by the end of February, and that significant numbers of the **Rufous Fantail** are still recorded in April. Once again my sincere thanks to Steve for providing me with this information and I strongly recommend anyone with an interest in this kind of information to approach Steve who will be only too happy to provide it. Species which in my experience largely leave



**Rufous Fantail**  
(*Rhipidura rufifrons*)  
Photo: Anthony Overs

Canberra in April are the **Noisy Friarbird**, the **White-throated** and **Western Gerygone** and the **Rufous Whistler**

After several reports up to the middle of March of honeyeaters restlessly milling around in the mountains, the first report of migrating **Yellow-faced Honeyeaters** was around 19 March when overnight temperatures dropped for the first time. However, as these rose movement dropped off but picked up again a week later when the minimum dropped to 5°C. Cold, clear, still nights and mornings are the ideal migration conditions, so if you haven't seen them yet keep an eye and ear out on these type of mornings, as movement through the suburbs in recent times seems only to have been a fraction of that formerly encountered. Also look out for the species that get caught up in this movement such as the **White-naped Honeyeater** (which should form the majority of the flocks late in April), the **Red Wattlebird** and to a lesser extent the **Fuscous Honeyeater**.

Of the species that move down from the mountains but stay here for the winter there have already been many reports of the **Scarlet Robin** (mostly in their preferred habitat, the peri-urban area such as the nature reserves and parks ) and the **Golden Whistler** (with an unusually large group of 12 seen at Black Mountain), but only a few so far of the **White-eared Honeyeater** (generally still in the higher areas round Canberra). By mid-April the **Flame Robin** should have arrived as well; look out for this species, which is the only local robin that forms flocks, in the more open areas around Canberra. Another winter visitor but from further afield is the **Swift Parrot**, which has already been reported in Sandra Henderson's garden, but the presence of which in Canberra and the Tablelands will depend on the extent of eucalyptus flowering here this winter, and it remains to see if the bulk of these migrants from Tasmania will stay on the South Coast where they have been for the past couple of years.

Surprisingly few mixed feeding flocks (MFFs) were reported in March. They have also been quite sporadic in my GBS with great activity for 30 minutes or so, and then very little small bird activity for long periods, sometimes for days on end. A feature has been the absence of pardalotes in the MFF, often a major component, if not the main species. There have also been few breeding reports except juvenile Koels noted above. I had thought that the considerable rainfall at the end of February may have triggered some autumn breeding, including the availability of nest material for the mud nest builders such as the **Magpie-lark** and **White-winged-chough**. None seems to have been reported, but it is well worth keeping an eye on these and other species for signs of breeding activity.

So April will still be a month of considerable bird movements in Canberra, and as always please ensure that all significant observations end up on the COG database, including any late breeding records.

— Jack Holland



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### 2013

**20 – 27 April**  
**Alice Springs area &**  
**MacDonnell Ranges**

**2 – 16 July**  
**Top End**  
Darwin, Kakadu NP, Katherine,  
Kununurra.

**20 July – 3 August**  
**Gulf of Carpentaria**  
Cairns to Mt Isa, returning via Ather-  
ton Tablelands

**1 – 20 September**  
**Strzelecki Outback**  
Vic, NSW, SW Q'ld, SA. 34<sup>th</sup> tour

**22 – 29 September:**  
**NSW Central Coast, Barrington**  
**Tops NP, Barren Grounds NR**

**10 – 18 December:**  
SW Western Australia

**2013 Plains-wanderer weekends**  
30 Nov & 1 December

7 & 8 December  
28 & 29 December

### 2014 tours

2 – 8 Feb: Tasmania  
19 – 26 April: Alice Springs  
25 May – 8 June: Top End  
June: Gulf Country  
August: New Caledonia  
September: Strzelecki Track

Please see itineraries, checklists and  
latest news on our website

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



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# Field Trip Reports

## Sunday 3 March — Micalong Swamp Flora Reserve

A group of 14 enthusiastic birdwatchers joined leader David McDonald for a most rewarding hike around Micalong Swamp. Living up to its name, it didn't take long before we were swamped with **Robins – Red-capped, Eastern Yellow, Flame and Scarlet**. We also had excellent views of **Rufous Fantails**, flitting in the swampy undergrowth. Other species savoured included **Leaden Flycatcher, Olive-backed Oriole, Brown-headed Honeyeater, Fan-tailed Cuckoo, White-throated Tree-creeper** and **Wedge-tailed Eagle**. Hundreds of **Grey Fantails** added to the ambience.

Despite the breezy conditions a total of 35 species were recorded. Three surprising omissions were **Golden Whistler, Red Wattlebird and White-eared Honeyeater**.

Non-birding highlights included a Blotched Blue-tongue, a baby White-lipped Snake trying to bite one of the participants' boots and, for some, an Echidna waddling along on the road out.

At the end of the walk we all filled our lunch boxes and ourselves with fat, luscious blackberries, with plans for pies, muffins, jam and cocktails variously discussed. Many thanks to David for introducing us to Micalong Swamp Flora Reserve. It is a delightful place well worth a visit any time of the year.



Photos: Duncan McCaskill

## Sat. 9 March to Mon. 11 March — Narooma/Mt. Dromedary (Gulaga N P)

In perfect weather seven members spent the Canberra Day long weekend exploring the forests, estuaries, swamps and beaches around Wallaga Lake, south of Narooma. On setting up camp on the Friday night we were greeted by an adult and young **Eastern Osprey**, a first for one of the party. Most of Saturday was spent observing the birdlife on Mt Dromedary (Gulaga NP). Starting at the base of the Tilba Track, a slow amble to the 800 m high peak and return took the party seven hours with 39 species recorded including **Superb Lyrebird, Crescent Honeyeater, Pilotbird, Red-browed Tree-creeper, Bassian Thrush, Top-knot Pigeon** and other expected rainforest species. During the late afternoon we headed south and investigated the Bermagui State Forest and the Lillipilli Rainforest Walk to plan an evening's spotlighting as **Sooty Owls** had been reported from the area.

Sunday morning we headed north to explore Lake Nargal situated in the Eurobodalla NP, a very interesting body of fresh water very close to the sea and obviously used by many bird species to drink and remove salt from their feathers. Here we recorded 31 species including **Australian Hobby**, many **Black Swans, Yellow Thornbill** and at least eight young/female **Musk Ducks**.

Heading south, Long Swamp just north of Bermagui was well worth a visit. It was the only site where **Black-fronted Dotterels** were seen during the trip. Looking out to sea many shearwaters could be seen and surprisingly the only record of one **Australasian Gannet**. At Long Swamp 45 species were recorded including most of the expected wetland species. A quick visit to the Bermagui Wetlands

was again well worth the stop with **Baillon's Crake**, **Spotless Crake**, **Buff-banded Rail**, **Latham's Snipe** and a very quiet **Australian Reed-Warbler** being the notable records. The evening was spent spotlighting in the Bermagui State Forest where we managed good sightings of **Yellow-bellied Glider**, **Sugar Glider**, **Ring-tailed Possum**, **Grey-headed Flying-fox** and heard the call of the **Australian Owlet-nightjar**.

On Monday morning, after packing up, we headed north. Birding at Mystery Bay brought nothing new although we all obtained good views of the native **Swamp Rat**, with its lack of pink feet being the diagnostic feature. The high tide at Narooma allowed a good count of **Bar-tailed Godwit**. Although around 300 had been counted on the way down to Wallaga Lake a couple of days before, this time 190 were counted of which at least 20 showed their distinctive orange-red breeding colours with many looking grossly over-weight ready for their journey north. Also observed were a single immature **Kelp Gull** and a **Grey Goshawk**. A stop at the short Rainforest Walk just north of Narooma was well worth the 5 km of dirt road with excellent views of **Rose Robin**, **Brown Cuckoo-Dove** and **Large-billed Scrubwren**. Finally, a quick visit to Potato Point provided good views of a beach-combing **Emu**.

The varied habitats around the Wallaga Lake area yielded 114 bird and 11 mammal species with the butterfly expert in the party being able to identify at least six species. A most enjoyable weekend spent in good company with excellent birding.

- **Chris Davey**



Tilba Tilba

Photo: Kathy Walter

## Sunday 17 March — Burra (Apologies—Report on page 10)

## Saturday 16 and Sunday 17 March - Illawarra

Our thanks to the Illawarra Birders who hosted four COG members. On the trip down on Friday, two COG members had **Superb** views of a **Lyrebird** display at Long Point Lookout, and the other two had excellent views of a **Striated Heron** feeding on the banks of Lake Illawarra. On Saturday morning we all marvelled at the many hundreds of **Black Swan** on the Lake, then walked around Tallawarra Ash Ponds. Surprisingly, we saw the same number of species at the Ponds as last September (63). The highlight for me was a **Black-shouldered Kite** harassing a young **Whistling Kite**. We also saw **Swamp Harrier**, **White-bellied Sea-Eagle** and **Wedge-tailed Eagle** as well as 6 species of duck, both small grebes, 3 cormorants (not Pied), **Australasian Darter**, **Little** and **Great Egret**, **Red-kneed** and **Black-fronted Dotterel**, **Black Stilt**, **Variegated Fairywren** and other usual suspects. Our luck with raptors continued at lunch. We had excellent views of two **Australian Hobby** hunting, and an Eastern **Osprey** sitting on the electricity pylon.

On Saturday afternoon we visited several of the coastal hotspots, and had good views of **Bar-tailed Godwit** in breeding plumage, **Caspian Tern**, **Crested Tern**, **Latham's Snipe**, **Australian Figbird**, **Little Grassbird** (heard), **Double-banded Plover**, **Kelp Gull**, and **Pied** and **Sooty Oystercatcher**. In the evening we shared an enjoyable meal with our hosts.

On Sunday two of us visited Killalea State Recreation Area and had good views of **Brown Gerygone**, but not **Red-whiskered Bulbul**. Barren Grounds proved well worth our efforts with good views of **Eastern Bristlebird**, **Beautiful Firetail** and **Bassian Thrush**, and tantalising, brief views of something that might have been a **Ground Parrot**.

- **Michael Robbins**

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## Wednesday 20 March—West Belconnen Ponds

Twenty-seven members and guests gathered at West Belconnen Ponds at 8:30 am. Many birds also gathered, and we had a list of 20 species before starting our walk around the pond. Despite the very dry weather recently water levels were still high, with very little exposed mud.

The least common birds seen were 5 **Freckled Duck** observed swimming, preening and skulking under fringing vegetation. A couple of common species were notable for large numbers; a flock of 100+ cormorants of several species (but probably 90+% **Little Black Cormorants**) were flying up and down the pond as well as fishing successfully; and 10 **Great Egrets** were an interesting sight, setting "biggest flock seen in the ACT" records for a number of the group.

Two male **Mallards** appeared to be in almost 'true' species plumage which is uncommon in the area. Unusual behaviour was shown by an **Eurasian Coot** which had captured a fish and appeared a little uncertain what to do with it (beyond keeping it away from a flock of pursuing **Pacific Black Ducks**).

Despite being so close to the NSW border the only bird of geographic contention was a **Black-shouldered Kite** which eventually resolved its status by flying into the ACT and across the pond.

All told we recorded 42 species.

- Martin Butterfield

### News from the committee

- Three committee members met with Commonwealth officials on 28 February to discuss concerns about the Superb Parrot breeding site on Throsby Ridge vis a vis the proposed urban boundary. Common Myna is seen as a possible major threat.
- The Draft SEA is expected to be released for public comment on 23 March with a 4 weeks period for submissions. The Conservation Council is hosting a workshop for interested parties on 28 March which will inform the Council's response to the SEA and assist member groups with their submissions.
- Some members of the committee also met with ACT Government officials regarding bird monitoring in offset areas (river park, retained woodland patches) in the Molonglo development.
- Jenny Bounds is working on several submissions:
  - . a response to the Coombs design for Molonglo River Park - due 22 March
  - . Draft Action Plan Glossy Black-Cockatoo - due 12 April
  - . Oolambeyan NP Management Plan - due 29 April
  - . North Gungahlin SEA - possible end April
- A letter from Alison Russell-French has been sent to the NSW Premier and the NSW Minister for the Environment on the shooting in national parks issue. We are aware many COG members have also sent their own letters to the NSW government on this issue.
- Chris Davey and Sandra Henderson attended the launch of the Glossy Black-Cockatoo project in Queanbeyan, and met a hand-reared cockatoo. The project has a significant amount of funding to plant 10,000 trees in the region between Cooma and Queanbeyan. A number of environmental agencies are involved in the project.
- The committee approved the team selected for the initial Lord Howe Island surveys.
- COG has invoiced CSIRO for the travel expenses money promised to the Functional Connectivity volunteers. When the money is received the funds will be distributed.

- Sandra Henderson



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## Future Field Trips

Before the start of each trip, each participant must sign a COG Field Trip Registration Form which acknowledges the participant's responsibilities. The form reads as follows:

*I declare I am capable of undertaking this trip having: discussed with the Trip Leader any limitations I have (e.g. medications, physical), assessed the risks to myself and my property, and ensured I am adequately equipped.*

*I will follow the instructions of the Field Trip Leader, and advise them before moving away from the group.*

Changes to trips are notified on the trips page of the COG website <http://canberrabirds.org.au/> and on the COG chat-line at <http://bioacoustics.cse.unsw.edu.au/archives/html/canberrabirds/2012-03/index.html>.

### Sunday 7 April – Farrer Ridge

Meet at 8.30am at the Erindale Drive entrance to Farrer Ridge reserve. This is not visible from the road-way, but is adjacent to the underpass through to Wanniasa Hills reserve. You can access it from Sulwood Drive - there is a dirt track leading from Sulwood up the side of Farrer Ridge reserve to the parking area. The track leaves Sulwood just before the major roundabout at Erindale Drive intersection (see the map for Wanniasa Hills walk in June 2011 Gang-Gang

[http://canberrabirds.org.au/gg11jun\\_files/Gang%20gang%20June%202011.pdf](http://canberrabirds.org.au/gg11jun_files/Gang%20gang%20June%202011.pdf)

We'll walk to the summit of Farrer Ridge and through some of the bushland. Farrer Ridge is usually good for little bush birds and parrots. No booking required. **Sandra Henderson** 62310303 or [shirmax2931@gmail.com](mailto:shirmax2931@gmail.com)

### Sunday 14 April - K2C bird surveys in Bredbo Region

COG will continue with the K2C surveys that have been running since April 2010. The surveyed properties have healthy populations of many of the rarer woodland birds such as **Diamond Firetail**, **Hooded Robin** and **Speckled Warbler**, and the autumn honeyeater migration will be in full flight. We will be visiting the same sites to continue the monitoring and add to the property lists. 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**. Email: [ntaws@bigpond.com](mailto:ntaws@bigpond.com) or ph. 6251 0303, mob.0408 210736.

### Wednesday 17 April – Pine Island

We will start at Pine Island at 8:30 am. The walk will be a loop out and back from that area. Confirmation will be by email close to the date.

### Sunday 21 April – Square Rock.

A leader is required for this outing. Contact Sue Lashko on [smlashko@gmail.com](mailto:smlashko@gmail.com) if you can help.

**TAMS have advised that they will be carrying out a controlled burn in the area in April but dates are currently unavailable**, so it is possible that this outing will have to be cancelled. Details will be on the chatline.

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## Sunday 5 May – The Pinnacle NR, Hawker – morning

Enjoy an easy morning stroll through the Pinnacle Nature Reserve in Hawker. It commands glorious views to the Brindabellas and we can expect to see several mixed feeding flocks of all the local thornbills, Speckled Warblers, scrubwren and robins. We'll try and find the resident Tawny Frogmouths and hopefully some raptors. We suggest you bring water and something for morning tea.

Meet at 8am at the end of Dungowan Street, Hawker, by the big tree. Registration is not necessary. For further information contact [john.brannan@netspeed.com.au](mailto:john.brannan@netspeed.com.au)

## Saturday 11 May – Australian National Botanic Gardens

This morning walk will be the first for 2013 aimed specifically to help beginners and new members identify birds and to learn about their behaviour and calls. The Botanic Gardens are especially suitable for such an outing, as they allow the opportunity to observe a range of local bush birds in a variety of habitats. Due to the available food supply they are also a relative haven for birds during late autumn/winter. Anthony Overs will lead this outing, which will consist of a stroll through this lovely part of Canberra for a couple of hours.

Meet at 9.15am at the ANBG bus shelter. Registration is essential. Please book your place with Anthony (6254 0168, or [anthony.overs@gmail.com](mailto:anthony.overs@gmail.com) who will be happy to discuss whether this outing is suitable for you. Please make sure to bring your binoculars and field guide.

## Saturday 18 May to Sunday 19 May – Royal National Park, Bundeena, Camping

This trip focuses on birdwatching in the Royal National Park, south of Sydney. We will camp at the Bonnie Vale camp ground at Bundeena (\$28 per night, all sites unpowered). National Park entry fees also apply (\$11 per vehicle per day). The plan will be to drive down on Friday evening, 17 May (about 4 hours from Canberra). We will explore a couple of parts of the park including the very scenic coastal walk from Bundeena out along the sandstone cliffs and possibly Kangaroo Creek from Audley where we can hire a dinghy and row ourselves up the creek looking for **Rock Warblers**. Possible birding highlights include **Musk Lorikeets**, **Beautiful Firetail**, **Tawny-crowned Honeyeater** and **White-cheeked Honeyeater**. At night we will spotlight for mammals and owls with a chance of Rusa deer and **Powerful Owl**.

Registration is essential. The trip will be restricted to 20 participants and filled on a first reply basis. Please contact Kathy Walter or John Goldie on 6241 7639 or email [walter.goldie@optusnet.com.au](mailto:walter.goldie@optusnet.com.au) to book. More detailed information will be provided closer to the day.

## Jamberoo Valley/Barren Grounds NR; Friday night - Monday, 7-10 June: long week-end accommodated.

The accommodation for this trip to a past favourite COG spot will be at Ben Ricketts Environmental Reserve with self-catering cabins about 1 km from Barren Grounds. They are nicely furnished, with the majority of beds being bunks, but very open plan. There are 17 beds available. Be aware that cabins may need to be mixed genders. For those with web access the address is [www.benricketts.org.au](http://www.benricketts.org.au) if you want to look at photos of the cabins.

We will explore several marked walking tracks on the property, which pass through rainforest, very tall eucalypts, creeks and a waterfall, offering opportunities to see the rich variety of native plants and animals. We will hopefully do some spotlighting as **Sooty Owls** are sometimes heard at night.

We will also visit Barren Grounds and neighbouring areas where there are a range of walks from easy to medium difficulty. Barren Grounds Reserve is in the Southern Highlands about 2 – 2.5 hours' drive north of



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Canberra. It is famous for its specialty birds as well as its flora - flowering heath in spring and summer, and banksias in winter. The reserve is rich in bird life. On the heath, we are most likely to come across various honeyeaters and possibly **Southern Emu-wrens**. If we're lucky, we might even see a **Ground Parrot** or **Eastern Bristlebird**.

Registration is essential. Once your booking is confirmed, payment of approximately \$65 will be required. This trip is open to COG members only. Please contact Sue Lashko at [smlashko@gmail.com](mailto:smlashko@gmail.com) or phone 62524485.

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## CanberraBirds

### COG's email-based announcement and discussion list

The Canberra Ornithologists Groups email-based announcement and discussion list, CanberraBirds, has been operating successfully since 1999. It has around 260 subscribers and distributes about 10 emails per day, on average.

Both COG members and non-members are welcome to subscribe and participate in the lists discussions. If you find the list of interest and value, please consider joining COG. Details of how to do so are online at <http://canberrabirds.org.au/AboutCOG.htm>.

#### List rules

The list has a few simple rules that guide its operation. These stress the overarching importance of subscribers treating other list participants with respect and avoiding inappropriate language and behaviour so that participation remains enjoyable for everyone. It is important that new subscribers, and people new to birding, are made to feel welcome.

Messages sent to the CanberraBirds email list SHOULD NOT

- Be of a purely commercial nature.
- Contain defamatory, offensive, hurtful or inappropriate language.
- Contain personal attacks—discuss the message, do not attack the messenger.
- Contain any photographs of identifiable individuals unless they have given their explicit permission for their images to be sent to the list.
- Include one-to-one private email conversations, unless all authors of those conversations have given their explicit permission for their emails to be distributed via the list.
- Exceed 100 kB in size (this is a courtesy to people accessing the list via mobile devices using plans that have limited and often expensive downloads).
- Stray too far from our main topics: the wild birds of the Canberra/ACT region, their habitat & conservation.

Subscribers who fail to comply with these rules will be suspended from the list for a period or permanently, as determined by COG's Executive.

COG's Committee reminds subscribers that COG (as the list owner), as well as the authors of any defamatory messages distributed by the list, could both be found liable in any legal action for defamation.

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## Capturing bird observation records

Please note that reports of bird sightings sent to the CanberraBirds list are not captured in any birding records databases. If you have a record that should be included in COG's database, and thereby included in COG's Annual Bird Report, the national birding database Birddata and the Atlas of Living Australia, please fill in one of the record forms found at COG's website [http://canberrabirds.org.au/MapsFormsLists/MapsFormsLists\\_Forms.htm](http://canberrabirds.org.au/MapsFormsLists/MapsFormsLists_Forms.htm).

## Subscribing and unsubscribing are easy:

To subscribe, send an empty email to [canberrabirds-subscribe@canberrabirds.org.au](mailto:canberrabirds-subscribe@canberrabirds.org.au) with the word 'Subscribe' in the subject line.

To unsubscribe, send an empty email to [canberrabirds-unsubscribe@canberrabirds.org.au](mailto:canberrabirds-unsubscribe@canberrabirds.org.au) with the word 'Unsubscribe' in the subject line.

Once subscribed, to send an email to the list, address it to [canberrabirds@canberrabirds.org.au](mailto:canberrabirds@canberrabirds.org.au).

Other information can be found by emailing [canberrabirds-help@canberrabirds.org.au](mailto:canberrabirds-help@canberrabirds.org.au) with the word 'Help' in the subject line.

A comprehensive, searchable archive of all the messages sent to the list is available at <http://bioacoustics.cse.unsw.edu.au/archives/html/canberrabirds>.

For any assistance, please contact David McDonald, who manages the CanberraBirds list on behalf of COG's Committee of Management, email [canberrabirds-owner@canberrabirds.org.au](mailto:canberrabirds-owner@canberrabirds.org.au), or phone David at (02) 6238 3706.

## Field Trip Report

### Sunday 17 March — Burra

Four COG members joined Ian Anderson for an outing to his property at Burra. The day was fine and sunny, with strong and persistent wind. A total of 29 species was recorded on the day, with **Eastern Rosellas** the most numerous (20) and a **Nankeen Kestrel** the only raptor. **Grey Fantails** and **Silver-eyes** were recorded in good numbers.

- Ian Anderson

## For Sale - Nature lovers' paradise

Just 10 minutes from Queanbeyan there's a 6.5 hectare (16 acre) refuge of native vegetation and engaging wildlife for sale. Sealed roads lead to its sclerophyll forest, "scrub", low shrubs, an open grassland area and reliable dam. In spring and early summer wildflowers bloom with distinctive colours and a diversity that equates with the species list of Cuumbeun Nature Reserve. Native birds respond to the plants and their pollinating insects. Kangaroos and wallabies keep the grasses in check. Views take in glimpses of the ranges to the west and distant Black Mountain.

There's a modern, well insulated, 2-3 bedroom house which would convert to ample garaging when *the* house is built. A large, concrete-floored storage shed also has ample space for the family's hobbyist or working-from-home person.

Three 45,000 litre water tanks complement the large dam to ensure supply. An Onzite Wormfarm takes care of grey and brown water and compostibles.

The property is being sold through Spackman Real Estate - phone 62973555.

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## 2013 — 2015 COG Forward Plan

The Forward Plan for 2013 – 15 takes into account the core COG objectives of:

- a) encouraging an interest in the birds of Canberra and region;
- b) increasing our knowledge of the local birds; and
- c) helping to conserve our native birds.

Realistically, the Forward Plan also takes into account the capacity of COG to undertake projects, and recognises the many activities already being undertaken by COG members, including surveys, data recording, the Website and Discussion List (Chatline), publications and conservation, as well as the monthly meetings and outings.

The Forward Plan includes both projects to be undertaken by COG members, and also financial support to other projects which are in accord with COG's objectives.

The Plan recognises three categories of projects. Major projects are likely to need the most manpower and/or money to come to fruition. Smaller tasks should be completed relatively quickly and are likely to need only modest resources. There are also projects which will need significant additional resources and are therefore unlikely to be addressed in the near future.

### Major projects

1. Update the COG Website. This project is in progress.
2. Celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of COG in 2014.
3. Further development of the COG database.
4. Continue to improve sets of display material that can be used primarily for COG exhibitions — would also be useful for educational purposes and for interesting young people and the general public in birds.
5. Continue to nominate those species in decline in the ACT listed as Threatened in New South Wales but not listed in the ACT.
6. Continue to fund the operation of COG's woodland project.

### Smaller more immediate, less expensive projects

1. Develop pamphlets/brochures for the reserves making up Canberra Nature Park, and other popular bird watching venues – using a three-tiered approach:
  - Pamphlets (similar to that for Mulligans Flat) for a small number of key sites;
  - Fact sheets including bird lists & maps, for other sites, to be made available on the website; and
  - Further bird route pamphlets.
2. Support for CIMAG initiatives.
3. Encourage the recording of more local bird calls to be made available on the COG Website.

### Projects which will require very significant additional resources

1. Revise the ACT Bird Atlas — undertake a scoping study which would identify the financial and man power requirements to produce a new Atlas or equivalent that will provide reference material on the distribution and abundance by habitat type of birds in the ACT.
2. Fund and/or support projects by bodies such as Birdlife Australia which are relevant to COG's area of interest.





## WONGA

### Bawley Point

South Coast of  
N.S.W.

Two well equipped timber cottages in 50 acres. Damp and dry warm temperate forest, kunzea and rock provide for a diversity of birds and other animals.

A short walk down the driveway leads to sand dunes and beaches, sea birds and Hooded Plovers. Close to National Parks, lakes and historic sites.

patricia.walker@bigpond.com  
phone 02 6251 3136

[www.visitnsw.com.au](http://www.visitnsw.com.au) (follow the links to accommodation and Wonga)

## New members

COG welcomes the following new members:

S Read, Lyons  
D & D Maxwell, Campbell  
K Bryan, Fisher  
R & S Cant, Exeter (NSW)  
D O'Mara, Hughes

## NEXT NEWSLETTER

**Deadline for the May 2013  
edition**

**Wednesday 24 April 2013**

**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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**Newsletter distribution**

Brian Fair and helpers

**COG library**

For all enquiries or access to COG's library phone Barbara Allan on 6254 6520

### COG membership

2012-2013 memberships:

- Individuals, families and institutions: \$35
- school students (under 18): \$17.50.

**Membership inquiries**—

Sandra Henderson

6231 0303

[membership@canberrabirds.org.au](mailto:membership@canberrabirds.org.au)

for changed address or other details

### 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 website

[www.canberrabirds.org.au](http://www.canberrabirds.org.au)

### COG E-mail Discussion List

COG has an email discussion list for members and friends: 'Canberra Birds'.

Join the list by following the links on the COG website or by sending an empty email message to:

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

The subject is 'subscribe' (without the quotation marks).

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