



# Gang-gang

**DECEMBER 2012**

Newsletter of the Canberra Ornithologists Group Inc.

## What to watch out for this month

With less than a week to go before it starts, the forecast of a wet cool summer looks rather unlikely based on the last 6 weeks or so, where there has only been one significant rainfall event. In fact all the signs are pointing to that we can look forward to a dry, hot summer. In keeping with this weather pattern all of our expected spring/summer migrants from both the north and the drying inland have arrived by now, though there has been only one reported sighting of the **Channel-billed Cuckoo** and a couple of the **Horsfield's Bushlark**. Reported sightings of the **Rufous Fantail** have also been few so far, with a late one in the second half of November which spent a couple of days in Philip Veerman's Kambah garden presumably still on its way to the mountains 10-15 km away. Similarly the reported sightings so far of the **Brush Cuckoo**, **Satin Flycatcher**, and **Cicadabird** seem to suggest lower numbers present this year, particularly as several chat line subscribers have made special visits to known habitats in the mountains to find them.

Numbers of **Superb Parrots** reported also seem to be relatively low so far this year, though these often increase in December/January after the breeding period has finished and the young are taken to some favourite feeding spots. So keep an eye out for this species over the coming period, including S of the Lake/Molonglo River from where so far no reports have been made. While the majority of this species stay north of these, Steve Wallace has kindly interrogated the COG database for me which shows a low percentage does penetrate this "barrier", mainly in the Callum Brae area, but as far SE as Hoskintown. Compared with the many sightings in the first half of October there has only been one report of **White-browed Woodswallows** overhead. I suspect

## COG CHRISTMAS PARTY

*Black Mountain Peninsula*

**6:00pm Wednesday  
12.12.2012**

Bring a salad or dessert  
to share

BYO plates, cutlery,  
glasses, table & chairs

Sausages, beer, wine &  
soft drink provided

**THEME - wear  
your best bird  
accessory**

**Everyone welcome**

## Members Night—January 2013 Meeting

7:30pm Wednesday 09.01.2013

**Canberra Girls Grammar School**

corner Gawler Cres and Melbourne Ave,

*Deakin. The meetings are held in the Multi-media Theatre at the School.*

As is the tradition, for our January meeting we will be having a “**Members’ Night**”, with the opportunity for COG members to contribute short presentations (about 10-15 minutes long) on a range of bird related topics. So if you have a favourite birding moment for 2012, some special bird images to share with members, a birding story to tell, or anything that you think might be of interest to other members, please contact Jack Holland (6288 7840 A/H), or by email on [jack.holland@environment.gov.au](mailto:jack.holland@environment.gov.au) ). Members who have not presented to COG before are especially encouraged.

### Everyone welcome

it has become too dry for them now to be attracted to the COG area of interest (AOI) , though a recent chat line post of Geoffrey Dabb’s indicates that they (and the Black Honeyeater) are still present in the Weddin Mountains, about 3 hour’s drive to the NW.

After the first reports of the **Eastern/Pacific Koel** in mid-October, there seemed to be relatively little calling until well into the first week of November. Since then in my local area of Chapman/Rivett they have proven to be quite mobile and very hard to pin down to a single spot, rather unusually including calling on Cooleman Ridge and in the Chapman horse paddocks, a few hundred metres of outside of the built up areas (as a fruit eater this species is very much an urban one in the ACT). However, I have finally managed to locate them calling at the spots they have frequented in the past few years in both Chapman and Rivett, and I can now be certain that there are two, or even three, present. Other chat line subscribers have reported them regularly in the same spot, including in their GBS sites, since they first arrived, but others were reporting hearing them for the first time well into the last week of the November.

Compared with October the rate of new “unusuals” that has been reported has dropped significantly, comprising only of the **Red-kneed Dotterel** and the **Barn Owl**. However, what has been remarkable has been the numbers of birds reported of some species, or the numbers of reports, compared with the past. Most remarkable has been the number of **Freckled Duck**, with up to 40 reported together at the Fyshwick Sewage Treatment Plant ponds. Again Steve Wallace’s analysis of COG database records indicates that this is nearly double the highest ever seen there, or within the ACT itself, compared with all the other much higher numbers from their COG AOI strongholds of Lakes George and Bathurst. All three species of crane also have been regularly sighted and observations of the **Buff-banded Rail** and **Australian Little Bittern** have continued. While the latter has mainly been of the female temporarily resident at Kelly’s Swamp, another was seen in Lindsay and Rhonda Hansch’s place in Jerrabomberra, a first record for a GBS site. Unfortunately this bird had a sad demise after possibly being attacked by an animal.

There have also been many reports of the **White-necked Heron**, including well away from water. While this is known to be an “irruptive species”, I usually associate this with wetter times compared with the rapidly drying conditions experienced in November. I suspect it’s because they are being displaced from the even drier conditions inland, and will soon also move on from here if we do not have substantial rain. The **Australian Painted Snipe** seen at the beginning of November at the West Belconnen Ponds may be another example of this phenomenon.

Even though we're only just coming into summer, the 2012-2013 breeding season is well under way. As noted elsewhere in this issue, Stuart Rae and I found Campbell Park surprisingly quiet while we undertook preparations for the annual nest workshop, though on the day the record pairs of eyes resulted in an above average number of breeding records. This was confirmed by the Wednesday walkers 10 days later. Most notable have been the number of observations, by 7 different subscribers, of **Tawny Frogmouth** chicks fledging. This species is listed as an uncommon, breeding resident in the Annual Bird Report, perhaps because its presence is easily overlooked. Apart from the above reports of breeding have been relatively sparse, the highlight being a **Mistletoebird** nest found on the COG outing to Tuggeranong Hill, a delightful purse-shaped nest that has eluded us thus far on 10 annual nest workshops.

So please keep an eye out for any signs of breeding, and please report these, especially any unusual findings. It will be interesting to see how the drying conditions affect the second half of the breeding season. Certainly breeding success in my local patch this year has been very low so far, with the **Masked Lapwings** appearing not to raise any chicks for the second year in succession, and the **Magpie-lark** already rebuilding and sitting after abandoning their previous nest halfway through feeding the young. The **White-winged Choughs** breeding event that I was reporting on earlier this season also seems to have been unsuccessful, with their nest blowing out of the tree while we were away. Even the **Australian Magpie** has not raised any young in my GBS site this year, for the first time that I can remember.

As I'm writing this on a hot day before summer has even started, it seems bizarre that by the time I'll be writing my next column in two months, some species will already be departing. These are the **White-winged Triller**, **Brown Songlark**, **Horsfield's Bushlark** and **Rufous Songlark**, most of which in my experience from my local area will have left the ACT by the end of January. However, again Steve Wallace informs me that from his interrogation of the COG database that in most years there are some records of these species in February, except for the Brown Songlark. It also seems quite ironic that in my local patch the Rufous Songlark only seemed to have arrived in numbers by the last weekend of November, when at least six were busy establishing territories on the lower slopes of Cooleman Ridge and the Narrabundah Hill reserve. Perhaps they will breed and stay later this year, like the triller did at Callum Brae last season.

So despite the rapidly drying conditions there will still be plenty to watch out for over the next two months. As always please ensure that all significant observations end up on the COG database.

*Jack Holland*



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South Yarra 3141  
Victoria  
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## 2013

**February: Tasmania**  
including pelagic & Melaleuca

**Easter Saturday & Sunday**  
**Plains-wanderer Weekend**  
30 & 31 March

**April: Alice Springs area &**  
**MacDonnell Ranges**

**July: Top End**  
Darwin, Kakadu NP, Katherine,  
Kunururra,  
Mitchell Plateau flight

**July: Gulf Country**  
Cairns to Mt Isa, returning via  
Atherton Tablelands

**September: Strzelecki Outback**  
Vic, NSW, SW Q'ld, SA, 34<sup>th</sup> tour

**October: Yorke Peninsula to**  
**Ceduna**  
(over 60 scarlet-chested parrots  
seen on the 2011 tour)

**2013 Plains-wanderer week-**  
**ends**  
30 Nov & 1 Dec  
7 & 8 December  
28 & 29 December

Please see itineraries, checklists  
and latest news on our website

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

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# Field Trip and Survey Reports

## Fenner School Surveys & Calendars

For the 17th year now, COG members participated in bird surveys for the ANU Fenner School in September and October at Booderee National Park (Jervis Bay), Beecroft Peninsula Firing Range, The Grassy Woodlands Stewardship Study, Mulligans Flat and Gorooyarroo.

In summary, the coastal studies turned up big numbers of honeyeaters particularly **White-cheeked** and **Scarlet**, in addition to the more common **New Holland Honeyeater**, **Little** and **Red Wattlebirds** and **Noisy Friarbirds**. The local segment of the wide-ranging Stewardship Study took us on to some quite outstanding private properties, in some cases with so many birds and species to challenge even the most experienced observers. Mulligans Flat and Gorooyarroo were down a little on summer migrants compared to previous years, but there were **Superb Parrots** on several sites and big numbers of other parrots and cockatoos almost everywhere.

Many thanks again to all those willing volunteers whose efforts over the years have made great contributions to science and the environment.

**Fenner School 2013 Calendars** will again be available at the COG Xmas party and at the COG January meeting.

*Bruce Lindenmayer*

## COG'S bird blitz 2012

We were blessed this year with perfect weather for our eighth bird blitz on 27-28 October. A warm "thank you" to all participants.

Interim results are as follows:

- 263 datasheets have been received thus far
- from 75 named participants
- covering 92 grid cells
- 166 bird species have been recorded
- but only 57 breeding.

Highlights include another recording of **Australian Painted Snipe**, this time at West Belconnen Pond; a **Wonga Pigeon**; **Bassian Thrush**; and several records of **Spotted Quail-thrush**.

Not all datasheets have been returned. If you haven't submitted your blitz records please mail them asap to COG, PO Box 301, Civic Square ACT 2608 or contact me to make other arrangements.

The blitz wrap-up, prize-giving and lucky draw will take place at the 9 January COG meeting so make sure you come along and see if you're a winner. A full report on blitz 8 will be published in a future *Canberra Bird Notes*.

*Barbara Allan, blitz organiser*



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For more environmental news for your local region "like" the Conservation Council on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Conservation-Council-ACT-Region/237303230572>

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## Sunday 11 November — Campbell Park, Morning Nest workshop

Possibly because of the forecast of ideal weather conditions a record 37 members and guests joined me in this 10th holding of this annual event. I was concerned that we would disappoint them, as when Stuart Rae and I checked it out the day before it seemed to be much quieter than it ever had been in any of these 10 years. The e-mailing of the notes beforehand allowed me to largely dispense with the usual short presentation and we soon broke up into two groups with the plan to view the nests we had been able to find the day before, and then to try pot luck for whatever else we could find.

The first stop was a male **Common Bronzewing** sitting on a nest in a small depression a few metres high near the top of a broken off tree. Above it was a **Black-faced Cuckoo-Shrike** on a typically shallow nest in a horizontal fork, and nearby was a dome-shaped **White-throated Gerygone** nest. This was looking rather tired and worn, with an unusually large entrance but still containing eggs. We then repaired to the SE corner of the park, near the large dam on the edge of the paddock, where most of the activity seemed to be this year.

Here we saw the mud nest of the **Magpie-lark** with a male sitting, and a pair of **Willie Wagtails** actively feeding quite advanced chicks in a rather white nest in a very unusual setting, on a bit of peeled off bark on the side of the trunk of a large yellow box. In the meantime Lia had found a dome-shaped **Weebill** nest in the outer foliage of a small tree, and we were able to watch the parents repeatedly coming to it carrying food. A very quiet **Dollarbird** was then found feeding, followed by an even quieter **Sacred Kingfisher** which dropped to the ground several times to pick up food and re-align on an open perch. A **White-necked Heron** flapped quietly by and Stuart's group found and photographed a **Shining Bronze-cuckoo**, which too only called occasionally (I certainly didn't hear it). **Olive-backed Orioles** were calling a bit more, but only a lucky few were able to catch brief views.

Also occasionally calling around the dam had been a rather elusive **White-winged Triller**, when a male suddenly flew up quietly and displayed itself on the top of a dead tree. When it flew off Sandra followed this to its small nest on a small upright fork in amongst the foliage. Participants were able see it incubating, and later switch duties with its much duller partner. On one side of the horse gate we were able to watch a pair of **Grey Fantails** building a rather white nest like the Willie Wagtails but suspended and already with a noticeable pony tail, and on the other side one of the 3 pairs of **Leaden Flycatchers** present was seen building their nest in a typical spot, on a dead branch with a live one just above, not more than about 10 cm in this case.

At our morning tea spot we could see some **Brown-headed Honeyeaters** taking food to a nest very high in a tall eucalypt, a first for this workshop, and for which there are relatively few records in the COG area of interest based on the last couple of Annual Bird Reports. However, it was so high only a few participants could definitely identify the species. Finally as we were making our way back to the cars Matt found a **Rufous Whistler** nest in a clump of mistletoe and we could just make out the female sitting in it. One species we didn't see breeding this time was the **Noisy Friarbird**, there were a few around but mainly seemed to be flying about.

So despite the quietness a surprisingly good morning in almost perfect conditions saw a total of 44 species recorded, with half of these showing some kind of breeding behaviour including parrots and their allies

*(Continued on page 9)*

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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>.

### Wednesday Walk, 19 December 2012, AIS campus

Please meet at 9am in the visitor carpark (off Leverrier St, across from the Visitor Centre) at the AIS in Bruce. The walk will take in a patch of Bruce Ridge around Bruce Stadium, and a wetland adjacent to Ginninderra Drive, as well as parts of the campus itself. My exploratory wandering around the campus has produced flocks of Superb Parrots on occasion, as well as a range of other birds - over 50 species so far in 3 visits. For those who feel in need of refreshment, we can finish with a coffee in the Visitor Centre cafe. As with all Wednesday walks, there is no need to book.

### Saturday 12 January 2013 - Pine Island Wall to Pine Island North

Meet at 7:30am, at Pine Island North car park), then car shuffle to Town Centre Sports Club car park. Then we will walk from there through the reserve down to the river, then walk along the track by the river to Pine Island North.

It is a 2.5km to 3km easy walk. It was very easy to see **Dollarbird**, **Rainbow Bee-eater**, **Dusky Woodswallow** on this walk last year, and sometimes **White-winged Triller**.

### Sunday 27 January 2013 - Uriarra

Bruce Lindenmayer will lead this outing to the Uriarra area. Meet at the big dam near the intersection of Cotter and Uriarra Roads at 8.30 am. If you have not previously been to the area, PLEASE NOTE there are TWO such intersections – the other one being near the suburb of Duffy. Continue for a further 15km or so on either road until you reach the second intersection.

We will look at birds on and near the dam, and then come back to 3 sites near Uriarra Crossing. Please bring a picnic lunch, water and sun protection, and a chair for a relaxed lunch at Uriarra East picnic area with public toilets. We have had interesting species in previous years: Dollarbird, Latham's Snipe, Tawny Frogmouth, woodswallows, several raptors and many more. No need to book, but you can contact Bruce on 6288 5957 or 0417 418 759 if you have any queries.

### Saturday 2 February – Jerrabomberra Wetlands

To celebrate World Wetlands Day, during this morning outing we will visit Kelly's Swamp and Jerrabomberra Creek. Depending on numbers, the group may be divided into two, so a volunteer to lead a possible second group would be appreciated. Bring hat, sunscreen, water and, if you have one, a telescope. Meet at 7.30am in the carpark at the end of Dairy Road, Fyshwick. No booking required.

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## East Basin/Molonglo Reach; Sunday 17 February 2013 – Electric/ boat cruise

This will be the outing/cruise for 2013 on the upper parts of Lake Burley Griffin (East Basin) and the adjacent Molonglo River Reach, where late summer or early autumn is the peak time for nesting, with three species of cormorant and darters known to breed there. The area is also rich in other water birds, and a variety of land birds can be seen on the banks.

The boat trip will last about 2 hours from 8 am and will cost \$20, payable in cash on boarding. This year we will be travelling in the newly converted electric boat “Gull” which can carry up to 30 people. The boat will allow both a quiet approach as well as access to areas difficult to get to from the land. The point of departure will be the little landing adjacent to the car park in Bowen Park opposite the Landmark Apartments. This car park may be accessed off Bowen Drive (going either way).

Registration for this field trip is essential. Please book your place on the boat with Jack Holland (on 6288 7840 AH or by E-mail on [jack.holland@environment.gov.au](mailto:jack.holland@environment.gov.au)).



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## Avian Whimsy #97

### Beakly Speaking

As we enter the 2012 exhibition of the annual Waterhouse Natural History Art Prize, one of the first things we encounter is Tim Moore's striking *Circle of Birds*, a large colourful glass installation featuring five bird faces emerging from a glass surface and peering up their beaks to the ceiling. Some are recognisable, some are somewhat generic, but the beaks are prominent.

As they should be. Beaks are wonderful structures, though beneath the surface they are more familiar than we might expect. They are after all simply jaws, derived directly from the reptile jaws of their ancestors. If I were to ask many people (I'm not thinking of you of course!) what a beak is made of, I'm sure they'd think of some sort of 'beaky material'. In fact of course it's simply bone, as are the jaws of other reptiles and reptile descendants – crocodiles, lizards and mammals for instance. The bottom mandible comprises two plates of bone, fused at the front and attaching to each side of the skull at the back in the form of a hinge. Most birds have limited capacity to open the lower jaw. The upper mandible attaches to the forehead and sides of the skull by three little prongs. Crucially it hinges at the base, allowing it to be pulled upwards by attaching muscles. This is rather different from our own set-up, where the top jaw is largely fixed and the bottom jaw moves and does the hard work.

As I write I've got a Galah skull alongside me (found in what Monty Python would call an 'ex-parrot state', I hasten to add), in which I can see these things quite clearly. I can also see a pair of surprisingly large nostrils at the base of the bill; I say 'surprisingly' because they are normally largely covered by feathers, and not particularly obvious.

What I cannot see is the original covering layer, for the same reason that I can't see the skin and feathers of the skull. This is because all are comprised of keratin, a group of remarkable complex fibrous proteins which decompose soon after death. Again it should be no surprise that reptile scales are also comprised of keratin, since they are the origin of feathers. Keratin also forms surface skin and claws. The bird's bill covering (or rhamphotheca, for the record) is basically a tough sheath which grows constantly; it provides the colouring in species with gaudy bills.

(I've just noticed I'm alternating between 'bill' and 'beak', as I do when speaking; it's quite valid, as there's no real distinction.)

This is the basic structure, but of course there are innumerable variations. Many birds have a hardened cutting edge called a tomium along the mandibles. Some hunters (falcons and shrikes for instance) have a 'tooth' in the upper tomium, which fits a notch on the lower one. Some Northern Hemisphere fishing ducks have little 'teeth' all along the tomia.

While some beaks are just fairly generalised 'tongs', I can think of many very specialised tools which are represented by highly evolved beaks. For instance, various birds use their beaks as meat shears, delicate forceps to snap up tiny insects, fishing nets, fishing hooks and spears, probes with built-in paint brushes to lap up liquids by capillary action, crowbars, wood adzes, nutcrackers and sifters. (If you want examples of all these, get in touch with me, and make a small donation to the COG conservation fund some time!)

Then there are remarkable super-specialists. Several groups of birds have members with an upper mandible much longer than the lower, to form a hook or probe. **Red-capped Parrots** use it to extract seed from the big Marri (*Eucalyptus calophylla*) 'nuts'; **Long-billed Corellas** to dig up Murnong Daisy tubers; the **Snail Kite**, primarily from South and Central America, to extract the meaty bits from big apple snails.

In at least one group, it is the lower mandible which is the longer. The skimmers comprise three species,



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from Africa, the Americas and south and south-east Asia, of tern-like birds with a hugely protruding lower bill. Flying steadily just above the water, they lower this mandible so it just cuts the water surface, responding by touch to any prey encountered and snapping the bill shut immediately.

We also take it for granted that the tomia of upper and lower mandibles will meet smoothly, but that's not always optimal. Hence the two species of openbill stork (from Africa and southern Asia) have a distinct gap in mid-bill; it was assumed that this was to hold the slippery big bivalves that they eat, but this seems not to be the case. Rather it seems that it allows greater force to be applied at the tips, which are inserted into the opening and force the shells open.

And consider the **Sword-billed Hummingbird**, the only bird with a bill longer than its entire body and head, to enable it to fully plumb the deep flower tubes (especially of passionfruit flowers) that it favours.

There is certainly much more to be said here before the bill can be considered paid.

Ian Fraser calochilus51@internode.on.net

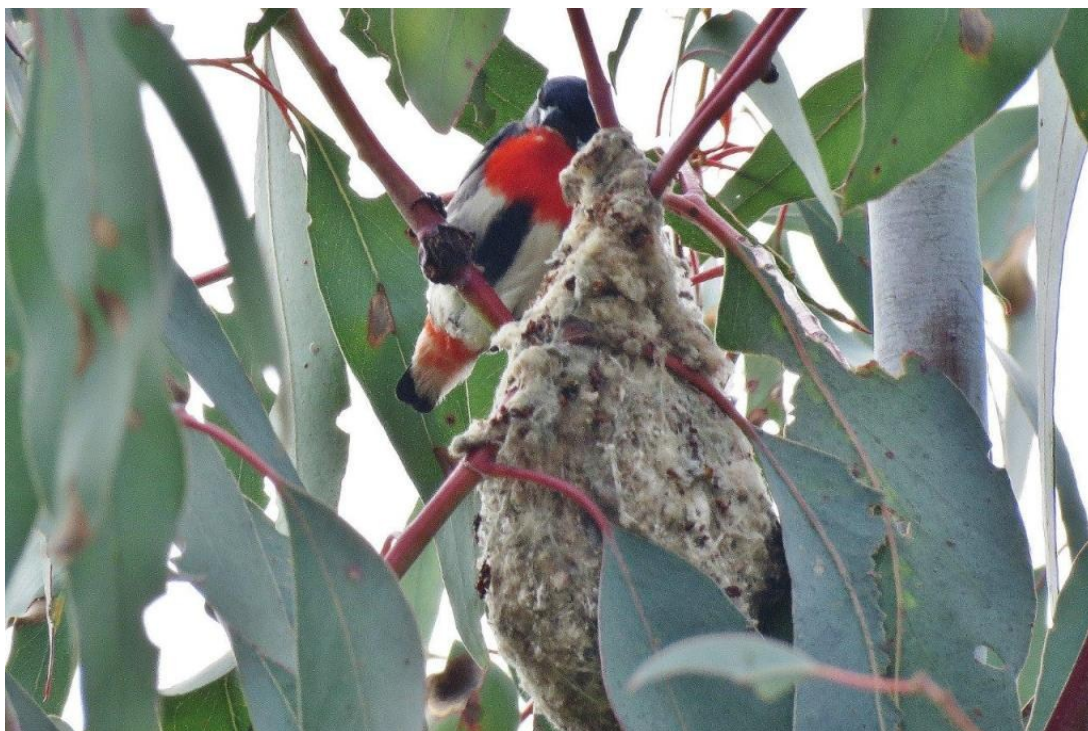
*In the best traditions of backyard cricket I have decided, after 10 years of Whimsies, to retire on 100 not out (that's of course assuming that I'm not dismissed first!). That means three more offerings; if you have any requests, now's the time.*

*(Continued from page 5)*

inspecting or entering or leaving nest holes and in one case seeming to be delivering food and another taking in a green leaf presumably for nest lining. We were able to find 5 of the 10 basic nest types described in my notes. My thanks again to Stuart Rae for his help in leading the workshop, and particularly for the hours he put in beforehand trying to locate nests etc.

## **Saturday 17 November – Tuggeranong Hill**

The highlight of the outing came right near the end - a **Mistletoebird** nest, with bird in attendance; it then perched on top of a nearby tree for us all to get good views. It was a very neat little pear-shaped nest, just off the track in a small eucalypt, only about 20m from houses. The Annual Bird Report indicates breeding records for this species are not common, so this was a special sighting!



Photograph courtesy of John Bundock

*(Continued on page 11)*

## COMMITTEE NEWS

The COG Committee has agreed to make a donation to the Conservation Council. The work of the Council on issues such as protection of **Superb Parrot** habitat is much appreciated, as is the generous provision of meeting space for the COG Committee and various working groups.

Neil Hermes has offered to start looking at ways COG might celebrate its 50th anniversary in 2014.

Please join your committee at the COG Christmas Party (replaces the monthly meeting for December). See the advertisement for this event in this issue.



### PASSIVE SOLAR HOUSE

#### South Rosedale

*Arupingi* is a passive solar house situated in a peaceful bushland setting in South Rosedale.

Bird watching is possible from the comfort of a chair on the front or back deck, while for the more energetic, Guerrilla Bay and Burrewarra Point are within walking distance. The wetlands at Barling's Beach are only a few kilometres away. Rich birding is available in almost any direction.

**Contact:** Greg or Sallie Ramsay

6286 1564 or

[gramsay@grapevine.com.au](mailto:gramsay@grapevine.com.au)

### MUDBRICK COTTAGE

#### Mallacoota

Our mudbrick cottage (Blue Wren Cottage) is available for rental for all those nature lovers out there!!

It is set amongst the trees in Mallacoota, Victoria (approximately 4 hours drive from Canberra). It is only 10 minutes walk to the beach, 5 minutes walk to the golf course and about 15 minutes walk to town. It sleeps 4-6 upstairs and there is a sofa bed downstairs.

It is fully self-contained with a kitchen and laundry.

**Contact:** Barbara de Bruine

(02) 6258 3531, or

[barbdebruine@hotmail.com](mailto:barbdebruine@hotmail.com)

or see

<http://www.stayz.com.au/25595>

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# COG BOOK SALES

## Please note

COG Book sales have been suspended until a we have a volunteer to take over the operation of the book sales desk. The task is not particularly onerous and is greatly valued by COG members. Assistance is available from previous desk managers to get on top of the task and to fill in for occasional absences of the desk operator from monthly meetings. Please give Chris Davey a call on 6254 6324 or email [chris\\_davey@aapt.net.au](mailto:chris_davey@aapt.net.au)

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*(Continued from page 9)*

The route was a loop out past the electricity substation through woodland, then back along the creek. 26 species were recorded, including **Double-barred Finch**, **Red-browed Finch**, **Leaden Flycatcher**, **Grey Currawong**, **Olive-backed Oriole** and **White-throated Gerygone**. A Brown Goshawk with a small animal in its clutches flew over at one point. Well done to all the participants who seemed to do a much better job of finding birds than I did for the morning! Apologies are due to the non-flower watchers, because we also stopped to admire three species of orchid, including purple donkey orchids (a new one for most of us) and numerous common onion orchids. Other wildflowers were also putting on a good show. A possum in the large dead tree near the entry gate also woke up enough for us to get a good look at his face, before he went back to sleep. We finished with a quick visit, for those who were interested, to the Aboriginal grinding stone site further along in the reserve.

*Sandra Henderson*

## Wednesday November 21 – Campbell Park

Twenty-four members and guests rolled into the Campbell Park area for a morning's exploration. Knowing the history of the area as an excellent birding spot, during the drought years I had grown frustrated with the lack of birds. This morning has revitalised my view of the area as we recorded 34 species with 13 of them presenting some form of breeding activity.

Of the species not recorded breeding it is likely that the **Nankeen Kestrel** seen a couple of times was the male of the pair nesting in the Defence Dept Offices. The other raptor passing by - a **Peregrine Falcon** - is not known (to me) to be nesting in the area. Other interesting occurrence records were a fly past by a **White-necked Heron** and a very prolonged pose by a **Dollarbird**.

In the order I recorded them the breeding records were: **Australian Magpie** (DY); **White-throated Gerygone** (NB); **Crimson Rosella** (IH); **Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike** (NB); **Rufous Whistler** (NY); **Weebill** (NB); **White-winged Triller** (NY); **Eastern Rosella** (IH); **Magpie-lark** (ON); **Red-rumped Parrot** (IH); **Long-billed Corella** (IH); **Brown-headed Honeyeater** (DY); and **Varied Sitella** (DY).

Thanks to all those attending as many eyes made nest spotting easier! Thanks to Jack Holland and Stuart Rae also since their workshop 10 days earlier had already done the hard yards for some of the nests. I will put a selection of my photographs of the birds (and a few of the flowers) on my blog. A species list will be included on the Trips page of the COG website in due course.





## WONGA

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## New members

COG welcomes the these new members:

J Henshaw, Lyneham

M Mulvaney + V  
McDonough, Curtin

J and J Harris, Nicholls

I Tranter, Karabar

M Gibbs, Curtin

## NEXT NEWSLETTER

**Deadline for the February 2013 edition**

**Wednesday 30 Jan. 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 and welcomed.

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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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