

Gang-gang

April 2010

Newsletter of the Canberra Ornithologists Group Inc.

APRIL MEETING

7:30pm Wednesday 14.04.10

Canberra Girls Grammar School corner Gawler Cres and Melbourne Ave, Deakin. The meetings are held in the Multi-media Theatre at the School. Enter off Gawler Crescent using the school road signposted as Gabriel Drive. If that car-park is full, enter using Chapel Drive.

Beth Mantle will give the short presentation on "**Cape York Christmas - Birding at Iron Range in December**".

Despite the oppressive humidity and the threat of man-eating crocodiles, birding the Iron Range in December is a once-in-a-lifetime experience. This presentation will highlight some of the memorable moments from one Christmas spent birding there with friends.

The main presentation will be by Ian Fraser, entitled "**Wings over Southern Peru; from the Andes to Amazonia**".

Ian is a *Gondwanan* who is fascinated by, and passionate about, the nature of the Southern Lands.

(Continued on page 2)

Everyone welcome

What to watch out for this month

Since writing my column last month there has been another significant rain event, this time over the first weekend in March. Taken together the three events do seem to have resulted in some late nesting/breeding activity, though it is not always easy to tell which one was the actual trigger.

Late in February and through March there were reports of some very young **Australian Wood Duck** and **Pacific Black Duck** ducklings, clearly the result of the Christmas rain. Late in March, an **Australasian Grebe** was seen with four chicks. These are all rather late though probably none of are a surprise as waterbird breeding is often triggered by good rainfall. The significant **Australasian Darter** and **Little Black Cormorant** breeding described elsewhere in the issue is probably not linked to the good rains, considering it was at a similar level during the much drier time last year. There was also a report of an **Australian Reed-Warbler** feeding young at Lake Ginninderra in the second week of March, which seemed late, though checking the Annual Bird Report (ABR) and the ACT Bird Atlas reveals that this is right at the end of their breeding season, even though it's only a few weeks before they all migrate.

More significantly there were also reports of land bird breeding activity with **Spotted** and **Striated Pardalotes** inspecting nest hollows or carrying nesting material, and there were three separate reports of **White-winged Choughs** nest building immediately following the significant rain in early March. Later reports were of **Noisy Miners** nest building, which appears to be very late for our area. Whether any of this activity will result in successful breeding remains to be seen, with it being often difficult to confirm success for the pardalote species. Another report of late successful breeding was a pair of **Speckled Warblers** feeding a young bird in mid March, a very late record according to the ACT Bird Atlas, but with the same type of observation recorded a month later in the 2008-2009 ABR. What it does show is that just because it's past Christmas, please don't fall into the trap of thinking the breeding season is over, and we should remain vigilant for any

Photo by
Geoffrey Dabb



White-winged Chough
(*Corcorax melanorhamphos*)

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(Continued from page 1)

signs at all times. So please report and ensure all breeding records outside of the “main” season are entered into the COG database.



Photo by David Cook

Sacred Kingfisher
(*Todiramphus sanctus*)

As judged by the chat line postings and other sources it appears that, except for a very late **White-winged Triller** seen during the woodland survey at Mulligans Flat in the third weekend in March, there have been no further records of the January/early February departers mentioned in my March column. Of the slightly later leavers, there has also been one late **Superb Parrot** aural record. Both of these were made by very experienced but different observers. The last report of the **Sacred Kingfisher** was in the middle of the month. Any further sightings of these species will be very significant, and should be entered onto the COG database.

Of the birds which leave during March, the **Western** and **White-throated Gerygones**, plus the **Rufous Whistler**, seem to have stayed on late in surprisingly high numbers judging from the reports. The latter does stay into April, as does the **Grey Fantail**, for which there have been quite a few reports. As well there were a number of reports of

Rufous Fantail mid-month. A surprise was several reports of **Mistletoebird** in late March, and though this species does stay on longer, at least in my area, it seems relatively uncommon compared with earlier years. Again observations of the above from now on are significant and should be recorded.

There were a few more **White-throated Needletail** and **Fork-tailed Swift** reports during the latest rain event, but very few since. There might still be an opportunity, in the first few days of April, to see them on passing fronts or local thunderstorms. However, in good years (it's been quite a while since we've had one of them) they often pass through in small numbers in clear weather, particularly early in the morning if there has been a good dew.

Similarly there might still be an opportunity early in April to see a **Satin** or **Leaden Flycatcher** (few reported to date) or **Rufous Fantail** passing through. **Grey Fantail**, **Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike** and **Noisy Friarbird** usually stay a bit longer into April, with small numbers staying over winter, depending on the season. **Red Wattlebirds**, **Silvereyes** and both **Striated** and **Spotted Pardalotes** also migrate, and can sometimes be seen doing so in large numbers, but quite a few remain over winter. Keep a special ear out for **Dusky Woodswallow**, particularly on clear still days, as groups drift slowly overhead in a northerly direction, calling and feeding on the wing.

Towards the end of March there were a number of reports of the **Yellow-Faced Honeyeater** migration. However, many of these were still in the mountains or outside of the ACT, and it seems that the annual migration through the territory is yet to begin, possibly because the weather has been too warm. It remains to be seen whether this species will migrate at the usual time from late March to mid-late April or whether numbers will be low again this year. Notably this will be the first year in my memory that COG hasn't had an annual outing to view the migration in the south of the ACT. Due to the decreases it will be very important that this migration is carefully monitored in 2010. Please do so and report any major numbers, or the failure of any to appear when expected (remember the best migration conditions are on a clear still day after a cold crisp night). Towards the end of April, the **White-naped Honeyeater** traditionally joins these flocks and then becomes the major species. Some **Fuscous Honeyeaters** may be caught among the movement, and some may linger in gardens for a while, though few seem to have over-wintered in recent years.

Finally there are some species that move down from the mountains and higher country in late March/April to overwinter in Canberra. **Golden Whistler** (there have already been a number of reports of this species from mid March) and **White-eared Honeyeater** are prominent birds among these and will often be seen in gardens, as opposed to the **Scarlet Robin** (again already widely reported from mid March) that prefers to stay in the woodlands close to suburbs. It will be interesting to see at what level the **Flame Robin**, the only robin that occurs in

(April Meeting — Continued from page 1)

In an area smaller than that of the Northern Territory, Peru supports over three times the number of bird species as the whole of Australia. Other biota is equally diverse.

There are two major reasons for this profusion. One is the juxtaposition of the Andes, rising to over 4000 metres above sea level, with the vast rich tropical rainforests of Amazonia, which change constantly as they climb the slopes, becoming the rich dripping cloud forests of higher altitudes. The other is the complex history of South America, before, during and since its association with *Gondwana*. In this, its story mirrors that of Australia to a remarkable degree. This talk explores Southern Peru's avian richness, and seeks to understand it better.

flocks and prefers the more open spaces to the west of the city, will be present this year. Numbers seem to have been reduced for the past couple of winters compared with during the eruptions in the years immediately post the 2003 fires.

Again make sure that all valuable records are not lost but are entered into the COG database. — **Jack Holland**

Field Trip reports

Sunday 14 March — East Basin/Molonglo River — Boat cruise

Under calm, but surprisingly (given the forecast earlier in the week) cloudy conditions with occasional drizzle, a full complement of 25 members and guests joined me on the MV Darter and EL Cygnet for this annual trip to view the darter and cormorant nesting.

We travelled along the south bank to first visit the SE corner of East Basin, including the works around the former Kingston Boat Harbour and up Jerabomberra Creek for a few hundred metres. Compared with last year there were only small numbers of **Australasian Darters** along the wall or silt curtain on the entrance to the creek, along with about 15 **Masked Lapwing** on the shore. On entering the creek proper we were again struck by the large numbers of **Black Swan** on the water, estimated at about 120, which was close to double that last year (but with only a couple of very well advanced cygnets), and about 32 **Pacific Black Duck** (well down on last year). The reason for these numbers soon became clear, as an elderly but well concealed lady could be seen dealing out loaves of bread to them.

On our way up the eastern bank we saw about 40 **Ibis** feeding in the Jerabomberra Wetlands. These had been previously seen overhead and somewhat surprisingly turned out to be **Australian White Ibis**; their numbers had swelled to round 100 on our return. Also seen in this area was a somewhat uncooperative large raptor; best views were when it swooped to pick up a large stick, but this was enough to identify it as a **Whistling Kite**.

The question of whether the clearing and opening up of the northern bank of the Molonglo River in May 2008 had made a difference to the extent of nesting for this season was soon answered when we moved up the Molonglo Reach. We again saw many **Australasian Darter** nests, some in very low and open positions, as usual spread up the south bank singly or in small groups. Surprisingly there were also two nests on the north bank with females sitting tight, one in a very low exposed site on a dead fallen over tree. In total, at least seven birds were sitting on nests, often males. Also seen were a similar number of nests with chicks of different ages, ranging from quite small and very downy white, to nearly or recently fledged chicks, identified by their yellowish colour and well developed wing feathers, with in one case five of them within three metres of an already decaying nest. While at 15, the number of nests was similar, this contrasts with last year when birds were either sitting tight on nests, or the chicks were very advanced. Altogether about 70 **Darters** were seen on this stretch, over 15 of them males, but nearly half were nestlings. Overall the numbers were slightly down on last year's record, but still the evidence is strong that the clearing of the north bank has had limited impact to date.



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enquiries@philipmaher.com

2010: Celebrating 30 years of plains-wanderers

11 April 2010

Pelagic trip off Eaglehawk Neck,
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a 'not-for-profit' pelagic trip

23 June to 7 July

Top End
Darwin, Kakadu NP, Katherine,
Kununurra & optional Mitchell Plateau
flight

11 to 15 July

Alice Springs &
MacDonnell Ranges

22 to 28 August

New Caledonian birds, butterflies and
flora tour

4 to 22 September

Strzelecki Track Outback Tour
31st Strzelecki tour!

Plains-wanderer Weekends:

6/7 & 20/21 November
4/5 & 18/19 December 2010

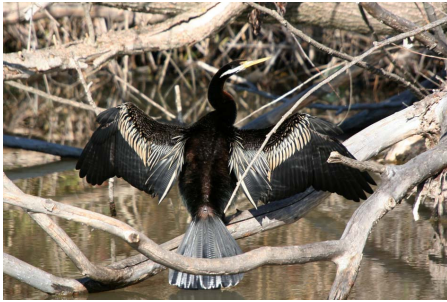
**Proposed tours 2011: Laos, Malaysia,
New Guinea**

**Tour itineraries, bird lists, checklists
and latest news are on the website**

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Where the reach widens, about 0.5 km west of the first bridge, there were two **Great Cormorant** nests with birds in breeding plumage on them, as well as two close together **Little Pied Cormorant** nests in close proximity to several **Darter** nests. Only two **Little Black Cormorants** were seen on the river. These three species were complemented by low numbers of birds seen on Jerrabomberra Creek.

The cormorant numbers are typical for the past few years as the main nesting activity for them, in particular the **Little Black Cormorant**, has been a site just west of the mouth of Sullivan's Creek. As posted on the chat line, on 17 March, Rod MacKay and Roy Harvey paddled Black Mountain Peninsula and counted 27 occupied **Little Black Cormorant**



Australasian Darter
(*Anhinga novaehollandiae*)

Photo by Lindsay Hansch

nests and probably about 150 birds, with the ratio of adults to young unknown. In addition, there were at least 10 smaller birds still in nests. While the bird numbers were similar to the past two years, the number of nests was about half, though the vegetation made it hard to do a count, as did the nests being practically on top of each other. Other species were: 10 **Australasian Darters**, but with no nests that they could see; and six **Little Pied Cormorants** tending two nests which contained up to six small young.

So the answer to the question of whether the clearing of the trees on the north bank has affected the breeding behaviour is still clearly "no", at least for the first two extended breeding seasons following this event. As for the past two years, the river was very quiet in respect of other water birds, with low numbers of common species seen. The highlight was two **Cattle Egrets** which obligingly flew over low and landed several times on the trees close to

the boat. Again, a number of land birds were seen, a **Sacred Kingfisher** being the highlight.

At 40, the total number of species was also very similar to 2009. Nevertheless, all participants, quite a few of them first timers, thoroughly enjoyed the trip, as I did in now my eleventh trip since we started in 2003. My special thanks to Jenny Bounds who was happy to help lead the second boat when it became clear with a few weeks to go that there was sufficient interest. We were lucky it was still available, and even then there was a wait list. Remember to book early next time, the popularity of this trip remains very high. My thanks also go to Rod MacKay, Roy Harvey, Geoffrey Dabb and Martin Butterfield for checking and supplying information on nesting activity on the eastern side of Black Mountain.

Gossan Hill—28 March

At eight am Sunday, 28 March, six COG stalwarts braved crossing Haydon Drive and set out in search of **Speckled Warblers** in Gossan Hill Nature Reserve. At 11am, six different COG members returned (a relay team, in part), satisfied with their efforts, although no **Speckled Warblers** were seen, or heard (unless the strange call we couldn't id at the end of the walk was a SW, unlikely).

Satisfied because it was a beautiful autumn morning, we were "followed" by **Gang-gang Cockatoos**, deafened by **Red Wattle-birds** and **Noisy Friarbirds**, and had much fun working out which **Whistlers** we were viewing (worked out it was both **Golden** and **Rufous**, no adult males, but probably at least one young **Golden** sex unknown), and finally seeing the **Double-barred Finches** we'd heard. We had good views of most of the 30 species of birds we recorded on Gossan Hill, which allowed useful discussion of some of the finer points of ageing (**White-winged Choughs**) and sexing (**White-throated Treecreepers** & **Galahs**). But no SWs, sorry Con, we did try our best to see or hear them!!!



Gang-gang Cockatoos
(*Callocephalon fimbriatum*)

Photo by Geoffrey Dabb

— Michael Robbins

Future Field Trips

The Guidelines for the conduct and advertising of COG field trips are published on the COG web site. Both trip leaders and members/participants should familiarise themselves with these guidelines. In particular, the Registration Form should be completed for each field trip.

Saturday 10 April 2010 — Evening spotlighting – Brindabellas

Kathy Walter and John Goldie are leading an evening of spotlighting for owls and other nocturnal animals such as Greater Gliders in the Brindabellas. We hope to see Tawny Frogmouths and Boobooks and we will try for a Powerful Owl.

The outing will start at Bulls Head at 5.30pm. Bring something for a quick

and easy dinner at the picnic shelter while we wait for dark. Please book with Kathy and John on 6241 7639 or by email to walter.goldie@optusnet.com.au.

Numbers will be limited to 5 cars and the outing will be weather dependant.

Sunday 18 April — K2C bird surveys, Scottsdale and surrounds.

Many COG members would have heard of, and may have visited, the Bush Heritage Australia property 'Scottsdale' near Bredbo. 'Scottsdale' protects a range of vegetation communities including native grasslands and box woodlands which are home to several threatened species such as **Diamond Firetail**, **Hooded Robin** and **Speckled Warbler**. Bush Heritage through 'Scottsdale' is also part of a wider regional conservation partnership called Kosciuszko to Coast (K2C). COG has been asked by Bush Heritage to help monitor the results of conservation actions on a number of properties involved in K2C in the area surrounding Scottsdale.

We will undertake a morning of bird surveys 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 ntaws@bigpond.com, ph. 6251 0303.

Saturday 1 May 2010 — National Botanic Gardens

This morning walk will be the first for 2010 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 from 9.15am, meeting at the bus shelter. Please book your

(Continued on page 6)

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place with Anthony (6254 0168, or anthony.overs@gmail.com), who will be happy to discuss whether this outing is suitable for you. Please also don't forget to bring your binoculars and field guide.

Sunday 15 May — Wanniasa Hills Reserve

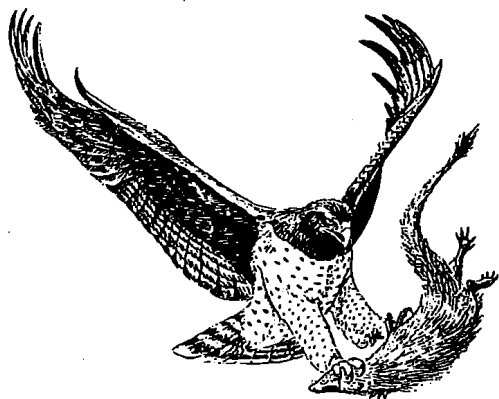
Wanniasa Hills Reserve adjoins both Farrer Ridge and Isaacs Ridge. This outing will commence at 9am. Park at the Farrer Ridge gate off Erindale Drive (accessible via dirt track from Sulwood Drive (see map)). This "parking area" is next to the underpass into Wanniasa Hills Reserve. The reserve is looking great at present after the rain over recent months. A visit in March turned up a **Peregrine Falcon**, although that's not guaranteed on the day! There are tracts of woodland as well as large grassy slopes, but be aware there is very little flat ground, so you will be going up and down gentle slopes much of the time (2-3 hours). Leader: Sandra Henderson shir-max2931@gmail.com or phone ph 6231 0303. Bookings not necessary.



The map indicates where to park and the access track. The Wanniasa Hills Reserve starts at bottom right of the image.

Saturday 29 May — Blue Range Hut

Meet at Blue Range Hut camping area at 8am for the first of several stops. The picnic/camping area is located approximately four km along the Blue Range Hut Road from the Brindabella Road. On the way back towards Canberra we will quickly check the Uriarra Homestead Dam before finishing off with some birding along the Murrumbidgee River. We should see a selection of **robins, honeyeaters, thornbills, bowerbirds** and a few **waterbirds** at Uriarra Homestead Dam. Each stop will be no more than an easy walk. Leader: Dan Mantle, ph 6287 7860. Registration is not required.



SOUTHERN AFRICA BIRDING SAFARI

A 22 day cost share birding expedition in December (log over 400 birds). Great opportunity for only two birders to accompany expert African bird guides (18 years experience) visiting top wildlife areas in Namibia, Botswana and Victoria Falls.

Cost about \$300 each per day.

Contact Mark

pelicansaf@xtra.co.nz

Sunday 25 July —Eden Pelagic — 7 am – 3 pm

A pelagic birdwatching trip for COG members will be run from Eden Harbour on Sunday 25 July. We will travel to the edge of the continental shelf in search of seabirds, cetaceans and seals. At this time of year we may encounter several species of **albatross, petrels, giant-petrels, prions, skuas, storm-petrels** and **terns**.

We will meet at Eden Harbour at 6.45 am for a 7 am departure. We aim to return to dock by 3pm, thus leaving enough time to drive back to Canberra on Sunday afternoon. Travel and accommodation will be each individual's responsibility but no doubt there will be opportunities for car-pooling and an informal get-together for dinner/drinks in Eden on the Saturday evening.

As with all boating activities the trip will be weather dependent and rough seas could lead to the cancellation or postponement of the trip. Seasickness pills or other remedies are recommended for those prone to seasickness.

Please book a place on this outing with Daniel Mantle (danmantle@hotmail.com or 0413 554 500), who will be happy to discuss whether this outing is suitable for

you. The trip will be restricted to 12 participants and filled on a first reply basis.

All participants should bring water, lunch, and sunscreen. More detailed instructions will be available closer to the day.

The cost will be \$100 AUD per person.

Advance Notice — Iron Range Banding Trip — November 2011

At least some of the Canberra bird banding crew will be undertaking a banding trip to Iron Range National Park in **November 2011**. Details are still being finalised. I will *handle arrangements for the banding crew only*.

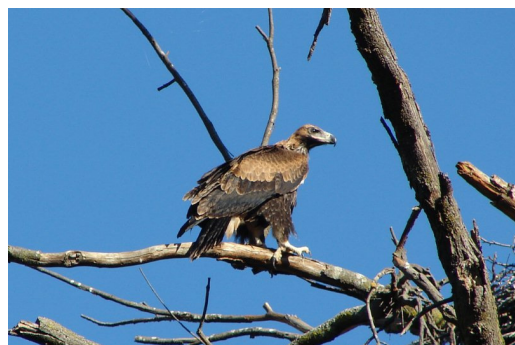
However COG members are welcome to make their own way to Iron Range and we will be able to show you a lot of species in the hand that are hard to see in the rainforests on the northern Cape.

I will provide precise dates etc when I have finished organising permits etc for the banders. If people are interested, contact me on chollop7@bigpond.com or see me at a COG meeting. — **Mark Clayton**

Learning to Fly

Wedge-tailed eagles (*Aquila audax*) soar with grace and apparent ease over many parts of the ACT. For young eagles to achieve such flight requires much effort and practice.

This past spring and summer I was privileged to watch a pair of young eagles grow from downy nestlings to handsome fledglings. For several weeks before flying, wing exercise seemed to occupy much of the day until finally momentary lift off was achieved. For both young birds, flight from the nest occurred within the next week. The smaller youngster took two weeks longer to reach this milestone. Early flights were neither easy nor graceful. On one flight less



Younger bird a few days before first flight from nest – 30 December 2009

than a week after fledging, the younger bird flew from the nest to a precarious perch in the swaying top of a dead Casuarina. Finding itself entangled in a thicket of small dead branches, the fledgling spent 5-10 minutes clinging to a sagging, swaying branch. Finally, with much wing flapping, it manoeuvred into position to escape. The next perch was a better, more sturdy choice. After a bit of rest, the youngster headed higher and landed on a log not far from the cliff top. Then surprisingly, the bird hopped down and walked the last 20-30 metres to the top. Watching activities and interactions of these youngsters and their parents over a 3 month period has been a real treat.

More information about these eagles and the area in which they live can be found in National Parks Association of the ACT Bulletins, March 2009, December 2009, March 2010. — **Esther Gallant**

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Garden Bird Survey Notes

There have been a few recent chatline postings that are directly GBS-relevant:

- **White-bellied Cuckoo-shrike** in Cook.
- **Yellow Thornbill** in Florey (a first for the site);
- **Golden Whistler** returning to Cook after the tsmmer holiday in the mountains;
- a **Barn Owl** hunting (and **Tawny Frogmouth** ‘ooming’) at Carwoola; and
- while not strictly in any one’s garden, a pair of **Peregrine Falcons** has been sighted around Rydge’s Hotel in London Circuit.

When do Yellow-faced Honeyeaters migrate?

The GBS data on **Yellow-faced Honeyeaters** (YFHE) is notoriously difficult to analyse since in some years some observers have not followed The Rule which is to report the largest number seen at any point in time during the Survey week. However, I thought it possible to use the data to see when the migration starts.

Over the summer months only a handful of YFHE are reported in the GBS. The number generally ‘jumps’ once the migration starts. On eyeballing the data my first thought was to define the start of migration as the first week in which more than 1000 birds are reported. A problem is that for 12 of the 28 GBS years the numbers reported never reached that level. The years with a count > 1000 are more evident in the earliest period of the Survey. However, in most years the number of birds reported jumps from 10-20 birds per week to 100 – 200 birds when the birds start moving. So a second definition of the start of migration is the week in which the jump to >100 YFHE occurs.

Definition	GBS Week					
	11	12	13	14	15	16
>1,000 YFHE			4	5	4	3
>100 YFHE	2	5	14	7		

Table: Number of years satisfying definition of the start of migration by GBS Week

The most likely date for the start of the migration is thus Week 13 commencing on 26 March. It appears that once the count gets above 100 the numbers stay at that level for 5 – 8 weeks in most years and have dropped below 100 by week 20 (starting 14 May).

Uses of GBS data

Information on the Survey and some data on Common Mynas has been provided to two researchers for reports on Myna trapping.

Charts

At present I am aware of 95 people having Charts for Year 29. Four additional sites have been started in the last month!!

— Martin Butterfield.

CALLING BIRD WATCHERS

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News from the committee

- Chris Davey will write a letter to Henry Nix, expressing appreciation for his contributions to COG's work over many years. Henry is leaving Canberra.
- Jenny Bounds will represent COG at the April meeting of BIGNet in Sydney.
- A submission has been sent to the Office of the Commissioner for Sustainability & Environment (OCSE) investigation into management of the ACT's nature reserves.
- Chris Davey, Jenny Bounds and Con Boekel attended the Birds Forum with the OCSE on 19 February (related to the investigations into reserves' issues and urban forest renewal program). Chris made a presentation about nest boxes.
- Jenny Bounds attended the Bush on the Boundary meeting on 2 March.
- The draft report (written by Jenny Bounds and Nicki Taws) for the ten-year analysis of the Woodland surveys is now being finalised. It is proposed to put the full report including the trend graphs on the COG website.

— Sandra Henderson (Secretary)

Crested Pigeons (A possible explanation)

That pigeon with crest
Seems to like perching best
When it's with a whole lot of its kind.
When you see one of these,
Whether low or in trees,
Another will be close behind.

I hope you won't ask
For that difficult task,
To put this behaviour in words;
For this pigeon so spiky,
Is, frankly, by crikey,
One of the flockingest birds.

— Geoffrey Dabb



Photo by Noel Luff

Crested Pigeon
(*Ocyphaps lophotes*)

COG SALES



Birds of
Canberra
Gardens



NEW! Birds of Canberra Gardens (\$20.00 for book only or \$25.00 with **Bird Calls of the ACT** CD included - members prices only)

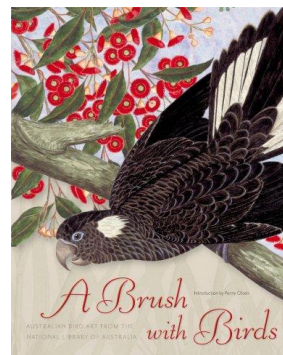
Nearly 230 bird species have been recorded in and around Canberra suburban gardens over the past 27 years in the COG Garden Bird Survey. The life and times of most of these birds are described in this book, illustrated with brilliant photographs and abundance graphs. *Birds of Canberra Gardens* describes the abundance and distribution of birds and discusses how and where to find them throughout the year. It also provides some ideas on how your garden may be made more attractive to native birds. *Birds of Canberra Gardens* is an excellent introduction to the birds of Canberra.

It demonstrates graphically the delights of nature that are available to us here in Canberra, as long as we open our eyes and ears.

Boom & Bust: Bird Stories for a Dry Country Edited by Libby Robin, Robert Heinsohn and Leo Joseph - \$27.00 for members.

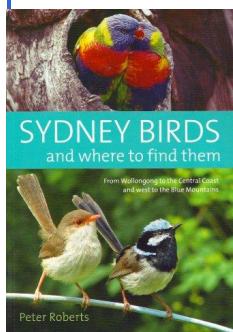
NEW! A Brush With Birds with Introduction by Penny Olsen (\$23.00 for members).

The paintings of Australian birds in *A Brush with Birds* are by artists whose work is represented in the National Library of Australia. They span the years from first settlement to the 1970s, telling us about the times as well as the birds, and showing how the style of bird art has evolved. This book is lavishly illustrated with vibrant and luscious art and it includes the stories of the artists behind the paintings. Enter the colourful world of birds such as the King Parrot, the Yellow-tufted Honeyeater, the Satin Bower Bird and the Red Goshawk, and be inspired by their beauty.



Owls: Frogmouths and Nightjars of Australia by David Hollands (\$55.00 for members)

NEW! The Owls of Australia: A Field Guide to Australian Night Birds by Stephen Debus, illustrated by Jeff Davies, photographs by David Hollands (\$20.00 for members)



NEW! Sydney Birds and Where to Find Them by Peter Roberts (25.00 for members)

Covering the Sydney Region from Wollongong to the Central Coast and West to the Blue Mountains, *Sydney Birds and Where to Find Them* features the 30 top bird-watching localities in and around Sydney. These birding hot spots stretch from Tuggerah Lakes on the Central Coast to Lake Illawarra near Wollongong and from the Blue Mountains in the west to some surprisingly accessible sites tucked away in the heart of the city. Each locality entry lists the key species to look out for, including rare and seasonal visitors. It describes how to access the location, both by public transport and road, and what amenities to expect; maps are featured wherever necessary. The main section gives precise details about where to look for certain birds. There is also a handy list of Sydney birds, each entry providing information on the best spots to find it, its rarity, and helpful tips about its habits and haunts, such as where it roosts or nests. This invaluable guide will take you to some beautiful places, many of which you may never otherwise discover.

Also titles from CSIRO Publishing's Australian Natural History series (\$27.00 each for members):

Kookaburra
Herons, Egrets and Bitterns
Mound-builders

Australian Magpie
Cockatoos
Tawny Frogmouth

Wedge-tailed Eagle
Albatross
Australian Bustard
(coming soon)

All these items (and more) plus COG T-shirts and Polo shirts are available at the monthly meeting sales desk

THE NATURE OF SOUTHERN PERU

This is one of the richest parts of the world for a naturalist and birder.

In a country smaller than the Northern Territory there are three times as many bird species as in Australia!

This September, come with COG member and *AvIan Whimsy* author Ian Fraser to discover it for yourself, in company with two superb local guides. From the high treeless puna to the beautiful cloud forests of the Andes, and deep into the rainforests of the Amazon basin, accessible only by boat, this is an adventure not to be missed. **Hoatzins, macaws, toucans, 30 different hummingbirds, quetzals, tanagers, Cock-of-the-Rock, and monkeys, Giant Otters, caimans, maybe even Jaguar!**

(Nor do we ignore the cultural aspects, including the truly fabulous Machu Picchu.)

For a full itinerary, costings and booking details, contact Ian Fraser on 6249 1560, or ianf@pcug.org.au.

And for a preview, come to the April COG meeting!



AvIan Whimsy will return next month

Endangered species

The NSW Scientific Committee has made preliminary determinations to support proposals to:

- list the **Australasian Bittern** as an **ENDANGERED SPECIES**; and
- upgrade the listing of the **Regent Honeyeater** from **ENDANGERED SPECIES** to **CRITICALLY ENDANGERED SPECIES**.

Full details can be found at <http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/determinations/austbitternPD.htm> and <http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/determinations/regenthoneyeaterPD.htm>.



Photo by Geoffrey Dabb

Regent Honeyeater
(*Anthochaera phrygia*)

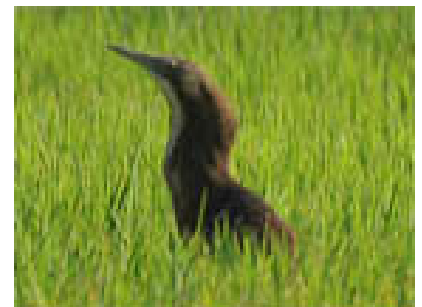


Photo by David Cook

Australasian Bittern
(*Botaurus poiciloptilus*)



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 (follow the links to accommodation and Wonga)

COG welcomes the following new members:

M Bartle, Kambah

L & G Beveridge, Campbell

R Geraghty, Kambah

N Montgomery, O'Connor

NEXT NEWSLETTER

May deadline

Wednesday 28 April 2010

Please send, articles, advertisements, updates etcetera 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 and welcomed.

COG info

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Email: chris_davey@aapt.net.au

Vice President—TBA

Treasurer—Lyn Rees
lynlev@iimetro.com.au

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cogoffice@canberrabirds.org.au

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Newsletter distribution
Judy Collett and helpers

COG membership

2009-2010 memberships:

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

Membership inquiries—

Sandra Henderson ph 6231 0303
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

Office

COG no longer maintains an office. For all enquiries or access to COG's library phone Barbara Allen on 6254 6520

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 with the subject 'subscribe' without the quotation marks

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Gang-gang

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