



# Gang-gang

July 2003

News letter of the Canberra Ornithologists Group Inc.

## JULY MEETING

Wednesday 9 July  
Details pg 6

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## Do birds have mouths?

**No, seriously,  
this is a real question.**

They certainly don't have lips or teeth. The answer probably depends on how you define 'mouth'. (If 'nose' is defined as the part of the face containing the nostrils, then birds have noses.)

Attributing human body parts to animals can be tricky. A famous nineteenth century biologist described a rock-barnacle as

'lying on its back, holding on by its head and kicking its food into its mouth with its heels'.

Is a bird's bill part of a mouth? It might look like it when you see birds like parrots or cockatoos controlling food in their bills with their tongues. On the other hand, for most long-billed birds the bill is really a food-gathering tool.

These remarks are simply to invite attention to the food-gathering practices of those bill-wielding spoonbills when they are on close-range display at places like Kellys Swamp. Last spring/summer was an exceptionally good opportunity for this at Kellys (where the accompanying images were obtained).

The Yellow-billed Spoonbill, in particular, swings its bill with a metronomic rhythm, not pausing when the spoon at the end of its bill meets a food item.



**Figure 1: Yellow-billed Spoonbill** (*Platalea flavipes*)  
Photos courtesy of **Geoffrey Dabb**

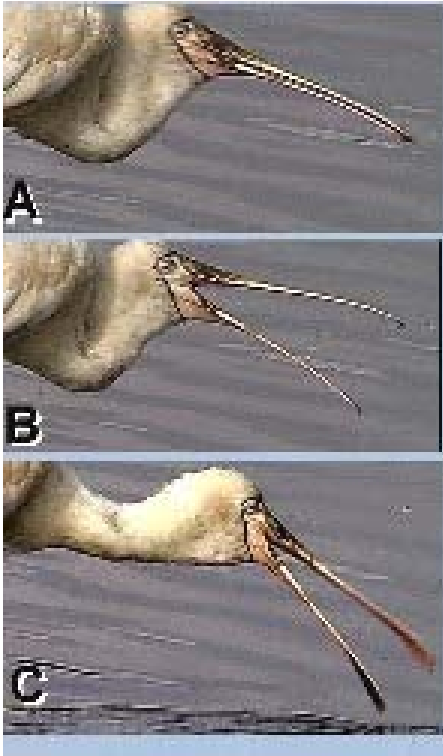


Figure 2

Maintaining its rhythm, the bird sways back its head as far as it will go, opening its bill at the end of the backswing (figs 2A and 2B). This suspends the morsel between mandibles, then at their widest separation, and may cause it to move slightly in the air towards the head (fig 1).

However, the distance between morsel and 'mouth' is mainly closed by a quick forward movement of the head, the bird sometimes resuming its probing



Figure 3  
**Royal Spoonbill** (*Platalea regia*)

action in the same stroke (fig 2C). As the bird noticeably distends its gaping throat to receive it, the morsel does not appear to pause in the 'mouth' (if there is one).

This feeding action, lasting a fraction of a second, involves food-capture by the end of the bill followed by a forward movement of the head to gulp and swallow. The Royal Spoonbill's action (fig 3) is similar although rather neater, less rhythmic and less camel-like, and that of the ibises (Glossy Ibis at fig 4) is along the same lines but still more economical.

*Geoffrey Dabb*



Figure 4  
**Glossy Ibis** (*Plegadis falcinellus*)

Keep a green tree in your heart  
and perhaps a singing bird  
will come.

~Chinese Proverb~

## Membership fees

**MEMBERSHIP FEES are due from 1 July.**

Some members have already paid for next year. Please do not pay again. You can tell from the label on your Gang-gang/CBN or by checking with me whether you need to pay or not. If your label says "subscription year 2002-2003" your membership ran out on 30 June 2003.

Please use the renewal form on Page 14 of this Gang-gang when paying. Then we can be sure we have your up to date details and a record of your payment. **Why not consider changing to an emailed version of Gang-gang (it's in colour)?**

If you intend not to renew, please let me know so that we do not waste members' funds on continuing to send out things to after your membership has expired. We give members not renewing quickly after 1 July the benefit of the doubt (ie that they are simply late in renewing and leave them on our mailing list for some time). This is an expensive exercise if they do not then renew their memberships.

Why not take this opportunity to make a tax-deductible donation to the Canberra Birds Conservation Fund? You can use the membership form to do this.

*Joan Lipscombe*, Treasurer, ph 6262 7975,  
joanlipscombe@bigpond.com



## Donations to Birds Australia for HANZAB

Many of you will know of the fabulous HANZAB volumes being produced by Birds Australia.

Six volumes of the seven volume series are now completed. The seventh is well underway.

Alas, Birds Australia is desperately short of funds to complete this important work. It has launched an appeal to raise \$800 000.

### **This is a good time to give.**

Donations are tax deductible, so that you can get a tax refund soon.

Send your donation - cheque (payable to Birds Australia Research Fund), or credit card (Bankcard, Visa or Mastercard) - to HANZAB at Birds Australia, 415 Riversdale Road, Hawthorn East VIC 3123.

You should include a note indicating that the donation is towards the completion of the final volume of HANZAB.

### **Please give generously to this valuable project.**

It helps "to ensure that we have the information we need to find solutions to the problems that face our bird populations today, and in years to come".

## Field Trip Reports

### **E.L. Cygnet Trip up Molonglo River, 31 May 2003**



The E.L. Cygnet (photo above), a 10-seater electric punt, is a wonderful way of birding Molonglo Reach adjacent to Jerrabomberra Wetlands – slow, quiet and reasonably unobtrusive.

Jack Holland had organised two groups of eight COG members each on two successive two hour trips that left the Kingston wharf at 8am and then 10am.

The main target was late nesting **Australian Darters**, and we were not disappointed.

As the last vestiges of the morning fog lifted, we motored slowly and silently across East Basin and entered Molonglo Reach, running up the southern side of the river. Most of the waterbirds and waterfowl we saw were not too unsettled by our close presence, and the bare limbs of the riverine willows allowed unhindered sightings.

As to the Darters – 35 in all were seen – both adults and juveniles of various ages. One female was still sitting on a nest; and seven



### **Australian Darter on nest** (*Anhinga melanogaster*)

Photos courtesy of **Julie McGuiness**

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large fluffy juveniles were seen either around various nests or roosting in the willows. One nest still contained two fluffy juveniles.

Sub-adults were also seen, and many of the adult males were still in breeding plumage. Wonderful, close up views were had of the stunning plumage of the sunning adults.



Jim Paterson, skipper of E.L. Cygnet has been observing nesting activity in the Molonglo Reach “Dartery” since January. He has also observed Pied, Little Pied, Little Black and Great Cormorants at nest over summer.

As an added bonus, five **Freckled Ducks** were seen roosting on riverside vegetation. These were the closest views I have ever had of these wary birds. Magic.

We also saw 29 **Wood Duck**, 28 **Black Swan**, 40 **Masked Lapwing**, 80 **Pacific Black Duck** and 175 **Eurasian Coot**! As well, smaller numbers of other waterbirds were also seen – **Australian Pelican**, **Dusky Moorhen**, **Purple Swamphen**, **Little Pied** and **Great Cormorant**, **Australasian Grebe**, **Hardhead**, **White-faced Heron** and **Silver Gull**.

Jim took the boat up to the Dairy Flat Bridge, then returned hugging the northern side of the river. A wonderful way to spend a cold Autumn morning. Many thanks to Jim and Jack. I can't wait to repeat the trip in Spring.

*Julie McGuiness*

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## **Kioloa Coastal Campus, 5-7 June 2003**

Only a small number of members joined me at Kioloa Coastal Campus over this long weekend (plus two for Sunday only) to escape the first blasts of the Canberra winter. We spent two lovely fine days there, without seeing a cloud in the sky, exploring for its bird life the cleared area of the campus, and the surrounding eucalypt and rain forest, the areas of casuarina and coastal heath, the tidal creek and the relatively unspoilt sandy beaches and their associated rocky platforms.

The undoubted highlight was coming across 4 **Ruddy Turnstones** at Bull Pup Beach, about 2 km north of the campus. As they were a new bird for most participants and were at slightly different stages of coming into breeding plumage, they caused quite some identification problems, despite the bright orange legs. It was a case where the field guides simply did not provide enough information. Good views were obtained by all, initially from close (including some very good video footage) and then as they flew to some rocks in the water, where they rested for a time before flying off high out to sea, seemingly on their way to New Zealand.

Unfortunately the Hooded Plover we were seeking (and tried very hard to turn them into) were not to be found. They had been present up to about a fortnight before, but had moved on (you can imagine the comments about those “ruddy” birds we found instead). In fact there were few species on the beaches and



associated rocks except for surprisingly numbers of **Sooty Oystercatchers**, and for those up early, several **Caspian Terns** patrolling close to the shore.

Highlights around the campus buildings were a number of confiding **Jacky Winter** as well as a **White-necked Heron**. Nearby in the mixed woodland/heath close to the road we managed to call up a male **Crescent Honeyeater**. It was a surprise to me that this often rather cryptic species responded so readily to a taped call, and also to find it so close the ocean, as I have always associated it with the higher, colder country.

We spent one morning exploring the forest to the west of the campus and spent a very enjoyable hour round a forested dam where many birds were gathering to feed, drink or bathe, including a single **Yellow-tufted Honeyeater**, a number of **Lewin's Honeyeaters**, and several **Eastern Yellow Robin** as well as **Brown** and **Striated Thornbill**. The latter allowed for a good comparison of their identification features. Further along in a patch of rain forest we saw several **Brown Gerygone**, and then about 16 **Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoos** with several squawking dependent young moving through the forest.

Over the 48 hours we managed to see 67 different species, midway between the numbers encountered in previous COG trips there on the same weekend in 1996 and 1999, remarkably with 11 species not recorded on the previous visits.

A *special thank you* to all participants for being so patient with my leading in an area of which I was unfamiliar. We were very comfortably housed in the newer campus accommodation, and were especially privileged to be able to use the large kitchen and dining facilities, which made for a particularly relaxed and enjoyable stay. A *special thank you* to the managers Steve and Robin van Berkhout for allowing us to use this facility.

*Jack Holland*

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### **East O'Malley, 15 June 2003**

The Sunday morning outing to East O'Malley, so ably led by Dick Schodde, was a fascinating introduction for many of us to a little-known corner of Canberra. It was nippy, but brilliantly clear. The wind and the season kept numbers of bird species down to 22, however the human observers count was 35, a tribute I feel sure to Dick and his effortless erudition.

The avian highlights were the **Little Eagle**, seen perched then in flight on several occasions, providing unrivalled id opportunities. From the size of the ravens harassing it, Dick felt the perched bird was a male. We never saw more than one at any one time. The nest, however, was still in situ - awaiting the bulldozers? Good views were also had of a **Speckled Warbler**, **Double-barred Finches** and a pair of **Brown-headed**

**Honeyeaters**, as well as **Australian Magpies**, **Magpie-larks**, **Crimson and Eastern Rosellas**, **Crested Pigeon**, large numbers of **Noisy Miners**, pardalotes and **Weebills**, **White-winged Choughs**, **Galaha**s, wattlebirds, and only two thornbills - a **Yellow-numped** and a **Brown Thornbill**. There were **Wood Duck** on the dam and grazing in the surrounding area; flocks of up to 16 **Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoos** and also **Sulphur-crested Cockatoos**.

Some non-avian species were also observed: a hare, a fox, and good numbers of Eastern Grey Kangaroos. Sadly, the mixed feeding flock of four species of thornbill and Scarlet Robins which the Langdale-Smiths had enjoyed two days before did not put in an appearance.

Dick pointed out many fine mature specimens of Yellow Box and Blakely's Red Gum, and commented on the extent of the regeneration, as well as the numerous examples of the cockies' ringbarking in search of grubs.

Inevitably, the question of the fate of this area was a hot topic. And it must be said that East O'Malley is far from pristine, being heavily weed-infested. From my perspective, now that we have an already completely spoilt area in the form of Stromlo available for housing, I'd prefer to see it used in preference to East O'Malley.

A very big *thank you to Dick*, for leading this walk. Let's do it again, bulldozers permitting, when Dick gets back in the spring.

*Barbara Allan*

## Wednesday Walk, Botanic Gardens, 18 June 2003

About a dozen people turned up for COG's Wednesday morning walk in the Botanic Gardens. We expected the mist to lift but it remained cold and the sun didn't emerge until about lunchtime. Nevertheless we had a great morning with long close-up views of the **Bassian Thrush**, which was higher up the hill from the rainforest gully in Section 46, on leaf litter out in the open. Also seen were **Rose Robin, White-naped, Fuscous and Crescent Honeyeaters** and all the usual suspects.

We fraternized at length with the Australian Native Plant Society group on their Wednesday outing and later on benefited from Alison McKenzie's knowledge of the Gardens and its out-of-the-way places, and learnt something of bird/plant interaction. A very enjoyable outing.

*Phyl Goddard*

That the birds of worry and  
care  
fly over your head,  
this you cannot change,  
but that they build nests in  
your hair,  
this you can prevent.

~Chinese proverb~



## JUNE MEETING

8 pm

Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup>

*Canberra Girls Grammar  
School cnr Gawler Cres and  
Melbourne Ave, Deakin*

**Short talk** is a surprise this month. TBA.

**Main speaker** is Jerry Olsen, a member of the Applied Ecology Research Group at the University of Canberra, and well-known to COG for his work on raptors. Jerry will talk and show video footage of the island of Sumba and its avifauna, including his discovery of a new owl species.

So come along for

**The Owls of Sumba!**

*Should be a great night..look forward to seeing you there.*

## Future Field Trips

**Boorowa area; Saturday-Sunday 5-6 July – weekend Swift Parrot search**

Each winter swift parrots migrate from their breeding grounds in Tasmania to the mainland in search of their favourite food, nectar from eucalypt blossoms.

Anthony Overs, assisted by Stuart Harris, will lead this weekend trip based around

Boorowa, about 90 minutes NNW of Canberra. Both know the area well, and a number of known swift parrot habitats on public land or travelling stock reserves will be visited. It is also likely that a few landholders will be willing to allow COG onto their properties. This should allow access to the most likely flowering ironbarks and other eucalypt species to maximise the chances of seeing this endangered species.

There should also be opportunities to see some other good woodland birds (**Turquoise Parrot, White-browed and Grey-crowned Babbler, Hooded Robin, Diamond Firetail, Little Lorikeet, Black-chinned and Blue-faced Honeyeater**) that can be found near Boorowa.

This will be a weekend outing staying overnight at the Boorowa Blue Metal Motel (02 6385 3186) or the adjacent historic Boorowa Hotel (02 6385 3000). Alternatively there is accommodation at the Boorowa Caravan Park (02 6385 3658), about 1 km north of the town. Participants will need to make their own bookings but it is proposed a meal will be taken together on the Saturday night at a local venue. Alternatively participants may wish to drive up for the day (an early start would be needed on Sunday 6 July).

To register your interest, and to find out details of where and when to meet, please call Anthony Overs on 6254 0168

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(H) or by E-mail on Anthony.Overs.reps@aph.gov.au, who will be leading and organising this outing.

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**Grassy Creek/Yaouk Valley area; Sunday 20 July – all day walk**

On this trip we will visit the southern extremity of the ACT, repeating an enjoyable winter 1994 outing. Our goal will be to see what birds stay through the winter in that high (1,300 metres altitude), cold, harsh environment, and to obtain winter records there for COG's data base and Birds Australia's Ongoing Atlas Project.

We will drive to the Grassy Creek and Yaouk Valleys (70 km one way), visiting snow gum forests, open grassland and fascinating reminders of the lifestyles of the early pastoralists in that locality. Unlike the Wombat/Parrot Roads, where we were scheduled to visit, this area was not affected by the 18 January fires.

Meet the trip leader David McDonald at the Kambah Village shopping centre car park (cnr Drakeford Drive & Marconi Crescent, Kambah) at 8.00 am for car pooling. We will return in the late afternoon, so bring plenty of water, lunch and be prepared for cold, wet weather. As David will be overseas until shortly before this outing, please register with Jack Holland (6288 7840 AH or by E-mail on

jack.holland@ea.gov.au) for this walk.

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**East Basin/Molonglo River; Sunday 3 August – waterbirds for beginners morning**

This is our second outing for new members and/or beginners for 2003. It will be centred around a cruise of the upper parts of Lake Burley Griffin and the adjacent Molonglo River on the all electric "E.L. Cygnet". As noted in the articles in the May 2003 and this edition of Gang-gang (page 3), this area is rich in waterbirds and the boat allows both a quiet approach as well as access to areas normally difficult to get to.

The identification features of the common species such as the various ducks, "waterhens" and cormorants will be pointed out, and we will also be on the look out for any nesting activity in the willows along the riverbank. The boat trip will last about 2 hours and will cost \$20, payable in cash on boarding.

Please book your place on the boat with Jack Holland (6288 7840 AH or by E-mail on jack.holland@ea.gov.au). Depending on the level of interest (the boat takes a maximum of 10 passengers) there may need to be an early and late shift, with possibly also some birding done from the shore on East Basin. If so, participants will need to be at the Kingston Boat Harbour off Mundaring Drive by 8 am for the first shift, with the second

leaving at 10 am. If there is only enough interest for a single trip this will probably leave around 9 am. As of 20 June there were still plenty of places left.

Note that this is an outing specifically designed for beginners and moderate observers, and it is proposed there will be a similar trip for more advanced bird watchers later in the year to look for nesting darters etc.

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**Burra; Sunday 31 August; Morning walk/lunch on private property**

Ian Anderson has invited members for an early spring visit to his property in Burra. One of the main interests will be an area of regenerating casuarina that often attracts **Glossy Black-Cockatoos**. Up to 8 at a time have been seen there this year, which makes it probably the most reliable spot in the ACT region where to find this threatened species. Ian is also very familiar with the other birds that occur on his property, having put in regular atlas sheets from there, usually consisting of 30+ species.

There should be a nice range of woodland birds and some altitudinal migrants, maybe **Flame & Scarlet Robins**. Perhaps there will still be a few winter feeding flocks. The early spring migrants, including the **honeyeaters**, should also have returned.

In addition Ian knows his plants very well, having been very active with the Australian Native Plants Society, formerly SGAP, for many years.

Meet Ian (6281 0609 after 25 July) at the Williamsdale Service Station at 8.30 am prior to a further 30 minutes drive to his property and a couple of hours viewing of a mix of birds and plants. Members are also invited to stop over to have their lunch at the rammed earth home Ian has built there.

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### **Oolong/Dalton; Sunday 7 September – day outing**

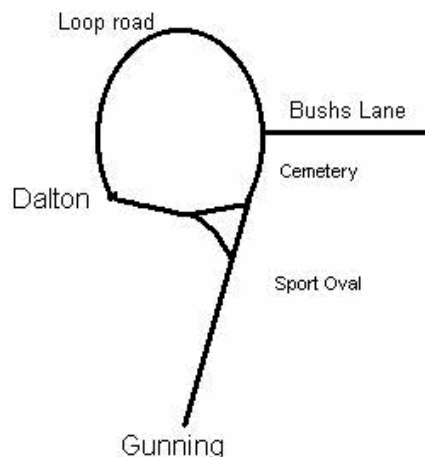
COG had a great day out at Oolong near Dalton last year. Gianni the owner has kindly agreed to another visit from COG at 9.00 am on Sunday 7 September this year. The property has a dam, some pleasant woodland, some wet soaks, open cleared land and for the energetic there is the option of a walk up the hill at the eastern part of the property the provide excellent views of the district. There are lots of opportunities for a wide range of bush birds.

Gianni is keen to develop the property for wildlife and birds, as can be seen from the website [www.pcug.org.au/~gianni](http://www.pcug.org.au/~gianni). Since COG was there last some walking trails have been marked.

We'll meet at the Griffin Centre in Civic for some car pooling at 7.30 am, for a 7.45 am

departure. Some who live on the northside could meet us at the property if they prefer. Please bring a hat binoculars, good walking shoes and your lunch. The property is on a slight slope, but most walking is on level-ish ground. There are, however, options to walk on steeper slopes.

To get there, we'll drive along the Federal Highway as far as Sutton, and continue through Gundaroo to Gunning. From the town of Gunning, on the old Hume Highway, proceed towards the village of Dalton for about 10 km, leave the bitumen road at the Loop road. The sport oval and the cemetery are on the right. Proceed on the gravel road for about 200 m to the Bush's Lane street sign. The Bush's Lane is to the right opposite a hay shed. Proceed on this lane. The entrances to "Dalton Park" and the Oolong Sanctuary are about 1 km from the Bush's Lane sign. Please park your car on the parking area near the entrance.



It is preferred that participants contact the leader Alistair

Bestow (6281 1481 A/H) before hand.

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### **Wednesday walk – Jerrabomberra Wetlands– 16 July**

A mid winter visit to discover what's around at this time of year in this very good birding area (while the drought lingers on). Easy walking.

Meet at the carpark off Dairy Road at 9 am. After Kell's swamp there will be an option to drive around to the main gate of the Sewage Ponds afterwards (note that this part of the road is now two way again). **Freckled Duck** have been reported recently been reported here, as well as on the adjacent Molonglo River. Bring morning tea.

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## **Longer trips**

### **GLUEPOT, NEWHAVEN AND THE TOP END WITH EMU TOURS**

This tour is **now fully subscribed**. It is no longer a COG only trip, though three COG members are booked for all or part of the tour. If there is any further interest, please contact Jack Holland (6288 7840 H) or by E-mail on [jack.holland@ea.gov.au](mailto:jack.holland@ea.gov.au), who can provide you with a more detailed itinerary as well as contact details for Emu Tours in the event of any cancellation etc.



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**BUSH RETREAT;  
EXTENDED WINTER  
WEEKEND AT THE SOUTH  
COAST**

**THURSDAY 14 TO  
SUNDAY 17 AUGUST**

This trip, which has been advertised in the 3 previous issues of Gang-gang, is provisionally **fully subscribed**.

If you haven't done so yet, those who had booked rooms with Jenny Bounds before the end of May need to send their deposit to COG Treasurer asap please (\$25 per person, \$50 couple). Those who have more recently indicated their interest to Jack Holland while Jenny was away, will have been contacted by her early in July.

Final payment details will be provided to everyone in the first week of July when the final number is confirmed – payment is due by 11 July, and can be paid at the COG meeting on 9 July or mailed to COG, PO Box 301, Civic Square, 2608. There is the possibility of a wait list in case of cancellation. All enquiries about this event to Jenny Bounds please, 6288 7802 (AH).

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**COMBINED  
SHOREBIRD/PELAGIC  
OUTING CENTRED ON  
WOLLONGONG**

**18-19 OCTOBER 2003**

A combined shorebird/pelagic outing centred on Wollongong

will be held on the weekend of 18-19 October 2003. It is proposed participants will drive down from Canberra on the Saturday morning, with shore bird watching around Lake Illawarra and environs that afternoon, and with a full day's seabird outing on Sunday (approximately 7.00 am to 4.30 pm). Julie McGuinness and Sue Lashko will be the joint leaders for this trip.

The pelagic trip will be through the Southern Oceans Seabird Study Association Inc. (SOSSA), which provides private charter and guides to accommodate parties of up to 22 persons in their vessel the Sandra K. The estimated cost per person will be between \$65 (including the \$4 COG admin fee) if we manage to fill the boat, and \$95 if there are only 15 participants. This will include two guides and all burlies, and will be finalised when the likely number of participants becomes clearer.

While Julie McGuinness/Sue Lashko will be the leaders on the day, Jack Holland (6288 7840 (A/H) or by E-mail on [jack.holland@ea.gov.au](mailto:jack.holland@ea.gov.au)) is coordinating the arrangements. Please call him to register your interest or to obtain further information. Please note that this trip is filling quickly, with over half the places already taken, and it is recommended that you book asap. A \$25 deposit made out to the Treasurer COG will ensure your place on the boat.

Participants will be provided with several options for accommodation and it is expected they will make their own

bookings. Further information on SOSSA may be obtained from the following web sites:  
<http://members.ozemail.com.au/~sossa/> or <http://sossa-international.org>.

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**Other surveys/  
Activities of Interest  
to COG Members**

**SWIFT/REGENT PARROT  
SURVEY WORKSHOP**

**Sunday 6 July**

Debbie Saunders is running a workshop on 6th July in Chiltern for volunteers involved in the Swift/ Regent Parrot surveys. If COG members are interested they are more than welcome to attend the workshop (similar to the workshop held in Canberra in 2001) and camp out at Chiltern NP. The workshop will include a field visit to known swift/regent parrot sites within the park in the afternoon. If anyone is interested, they can register their interest with Debbie ([swiftparrots@yahoo.com.au](mailto:swiftparrots@yahoo.com.au) or 1800 66 57 66) or Chris Tzaros (Threatened Bird Network, [c.tzaros@birdsaustralia.com.au](mailto:c.tzaros@birdsaustralia.com.au) or 03 9882 2622).

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**NEWLINE SURVEY** – regular surveyors note this will be **Sunday 6 July**, meeting at 8am at the site. Jenny Bounds will confirm arrangements with individuals the week before.

**Volunteers are needed for the  
Barren Grounds annual  
Gond Parrot survey/census  
from 9 am to noon on 10  
August 2003.**

This is one of the longest running monitoring programs in Australia. Members wanting to help with the census on Sunday can join in for no cost.

Alternatively there is a weekend course for the **special price of \$150 (\$140 for BA members)**, which Jack Baker will lead. For more information please contact Jack

by E-mail on [bakerclarkes@bigpond.com](mailto:bakerclarkes@bigpond.com).

Alternatively contact Birds Australia Barren Grounds on 02 4236 0195, or by E-mail on [barren\\_grounds@bigpond.com](mailto:barren_grounds@bigpond.com).

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**THIRD NATIONAL  
NATIVE GRASSES  
CONFERENCE**

**26, 27 & 28 NOVEMBER  
2003**

**COOMA, NSW**

**"Sustainability and Beyond"**

The Stipa conference, supported by Friends of Grasslands, is coming together and so as the advertisement says, keep 26 to 28 November free.

**The first day** will be a bus tour visiting a number of grazing properties and crown land reserves. Given a normal spring we should see some

# COG SALES



- **NEW** – **Wet and Wild - A Field Guide to the Freshwater Animals of the Southern Tablelands and High Country"** by M Lintermans and W Osborne, \$28.00 (RRP \$34.95).
- **Wildlife on Farms** - by David Lindenmayer - RRP \$29.95, **SPECIAL PRICE** for COG members - \$25.00.
- **Where to Find Birds in NE Queensland** - Joe Wieneke - \$16.00.
- **Reptiles and Frogs of the ACT** - Ross Bennett - \$13.00.
- **Native Trees of the ACT** - \$6.50.
- **Birds of Rottnest Island** – by Denis Saunders & Parry de Rebeira - \$15.00
- **Birds of Rottnest Island** – a check list - \$1.00
- **Grassland Flora** – a Field Guide for the Southern Tablelands (NSW and ACT) – by David Eddy et al. - \$13.00
- **Our Patch** – Field Guide to the Flora of the ACT Region - \$13.00
- **The Nestbox Book** – Gould League - \$9.00
- **Birds of Queensland's Wet Tropics and Great Barrier Reef** – by Lloyd Nielsen - \$25.00
- **Guide to the Bird Habitats of NSW (and ACT)** – NSW Atlassers - \$27.00
- **Field Guide to the Birds of the ACT** – by Taylor and Day - \$14.00
- **Simpson and Days' Birds of Australia CDROM Version 5.0** **SPECIAL PRICE** - \$45.00
- **Field Guide to the Birds of Australia** – by Pizzey and Knight - \$35.00
- **COG Birds of Canberra Gardens** - \$25.00
- **COG Atlas** - \$12.00
- **COG Car Stickers** - \$2.00
- **COG Birds of Canberra Gardens Poster** - \$4.00
- **COG Garden Bird Survey Chart (New Version)** - \$1.00
- **COG Badges** – two colour versions - \$5.00
- **COG Birds of the ACT – Two Centuries of Change** – by Steve Wilson - \$25.00
- **COG Annotated Checklist of the Birds of the ACT** - \$1.00
- **COG Bird Songs of Canberra** – Cassette - \$10.00.

**COG T-shirts, Polo shirts, all above and other books on local flora and fauna available at the monthly meeting sales desk or by contacting Carol Macleay (for post and packing costs) on 02 6286 2624.**

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stunning wildflower displays and also see sites where land management and grassland management decisions come together. Thanks to the South East Catchment Board the **bus trip only costs \$10** and includes lunch.

**Days two and three** include a wide range of speakers on building networks and functioning landscapes - integrating production, conservation and function. Sub-themes will cover regional landscape management, on-farm conservation in productive systems, knowing your plants, enhancing functionality, sustaining biodiversity in regional landscapes, and socio-economic aspects of bringing it together.

**The cost of the conference is \$160** including catering. This does not cover the cocktail party, or the formal dinner. We will be privileged to have ACT Chief Minister and Minister for Conservation, Jon Stanhope as the after dinner speaker.

Copies of brochures are available from Margaret Ning - phone 6241 4065 or e-mail [margaretning@primus.com.au](mailto:margaretning@primus.com.au).

**Put this in your calendar NOW**

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### **MINIMIZING MYNAS: EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST INVITED**

In the December 2002 issue of *Gang-gang* members were briefed on progress in developing the second stage of this study which

is led by Dr Chris Tidemann of the ANU, with COG and Environment ACT also participating. Chris has obtained funding support; traps are being manufactured; and it is hoped that the project will commence in July. The central goal of this stage of the project is to ascertain the impacts on Common Myna density in defined locations of trapping and removing the birds. The trapping will probably be confined to suburbs with reasonably high myna densities.

As part of the task of designing the project we need to establish the extent and nature of COG's involvement. Accordingly, expressions of interest are invited from COG members and other birders to assist with the project. We will need someone to coordinate COG's involvement (under the overall project leadership provided by Chris Tidemann) and a number of volunteers to undertake monitoring of mynas (and perhaps some other species) in a systematic manner in the vicinity of the trapping and/or myna roosting sites. In a month or so COG members, as well as the general public, will be invited to register to have traps sited at their homes. The project will run over about one year, with monitoring being undertaken during short periods of perhaps two weeks a number of times throughout the year. It is expected that on-line data entry will be used by the birders undertaking the monitoring, but volunteers without internet access are still welcome to register their expressions of interest.

To let us know that you wish to be involved in the Minimizing Mynas Stage 2 project, or to obtain further information, please contact David Rosalky at email [davros@webone.com.au](mailto:davros@webone.com.au), phone 0418 731 927, as soon as possible. Without volunteer birders it is unlikely that this important project will be able to proceed.

COG Minimizing Myna Project Team (Julie McGuinness, Ian Fraser, David Rosalky & David McDonald)

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### **CALL FOR INFORMATION: A REVIEW OF THE STATUS OF OSPREY NESTING IN NSW**

An Ekerlogic Consulting Services (ECS) and NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) Project funded by the Foundation for National Parks and Wildlife.

The Osprey (*Pandion haliaetus cristatus*) is listed as a Vulnerable species under the NSW Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995. The distribution of the Osprey in NSW is coastal from the NSW/Queensland border to the south coast of NSW, with occasional sightings inland. The Osprey is extremely rare on the south coast and Sydney region, with very few historical and current records. There are occasional sightings around the Central Coast and the Newcastle – Port Stephens region. The Osprey is however, most abundant and widespread from the mid-north to far north coast regions. The distribution of breeding Ospreys from 1977-1988 occurred from Eraring on the Central Coast to the

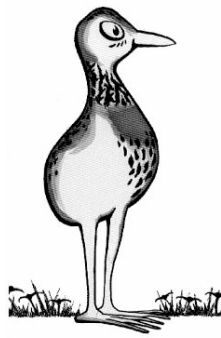


NSW/Queensland border, with a breeding population within this range of approximately 45-50 pairs.

The NSW NPWS (Northern Directorate) has commissioned ECS to undertake a review of the status of nesting Ospreys in NSW. The aim of the project is to prepare an up-to-date inventory of active Osprey nests in NSW, collating existing information from various sources and updating and adding to this information through field surveys. The information will be used by the NPWS to prepare a recovery plan for the species in NSW.

This project relies on the information from a wide range of key National and State organisations, local Councils, birdwatching groups, individual bird watchers and interested members of the public. We are hoping that these groups can provide information on the location of current and previously active Osprey nests. This information will be an important first step in assessing the status of Osprey nesting in NSW. Field surveys, which will occur from June-November 2003 (during the breeding season) will both ground truth this information as well as add the data already available.

If anyone has any information on nesting Ospreys anywhere in NSW, could they please contact Peter Ekert directly on (02) 49500573 or 0140566104 or email [peter@ekerlogic.com.au](mailto:peter@ekerlogic.com.au)



## Australian Ornithological Services Pty Ltd

PO Box 385 South Yarra Victoria 3141  
Tel: 03 9820 4223 mobile: 0417310200  
E: [enquiries@philipmaher.com](mailto:enquiries@philipmaher.com)

# 2004

- ◆ 17—22 March **Tasmania**  
(optional Melaleuca flight on 23 March)  
Accommodated tour seeking all Tassie endemic birds plus mammals such as Tasmanian Devil, Southern Bettong, Eastern Quoll, Eastern Barred Bandicoot. Includes pelagic trip.
- ◆ 9—13 April **Easter camp Oolambeyan National Park (NSW)**  
Good food and birding at one of the Riverina's newest national parks. Starts/finishes in Deniliquin
- ◆ 20—30 April **Mallee Parks and Reserves of Vic and SA**  
Camping tour through Victorian and South Australian mallee parks en route to Gluepot Reserve. Starts/finishes in Melb
- ◆ 22 May — 6 June **Top end endemics tour Darwin Kakadu NP Kununurra**  
Accommodated tour seeking all the top-end endemics such as Black and White-throated Grasswrens, Gouldian Finch, Hooded Parrot and Banded Fruit-Dove. Starts/finishes in Darwin.
- ◆ 11—22 June **Gulf of Carpentaria Tour**  
Accommodated tour from Cairns west to Queensland's Gulf country through Georgetown, Karumba, Burketown, Mt Isa and Cloncurry. Key birds include Carpentarian and Kalkadoon Grasswrens, Purple-crowned Fairy-wren, Black-throated Finch and Flock Pigeon. Starts/finishes in Cairns.
- ◆ 20 Aug —7 September **Strzelecki Track Tour**  
Accommodated outback tour seeking all the inland specialities such as Plains-wanderer, Inland Dotterel, five spp. of Grasswren, Bourke's Parrot and Hall's Babbler. Starts/finishes in Melbourne.
- ◆ 18—28 September **Forests and Woodlands of Central NSW including Bird Routes of Barraba & Baradine districts**  
**New** accommodated tour taking in the best of the forests and woodland of central NSW such as Gillenbah State Forest near Narrandera, Goonoo State Forest near Dubbo and Pilliga Scrub and the Warrumbungle Ranges near Coonabarabran. Starts/finishes in Melb.
- ◆ 30 Oct—17 Nov **South East Australia, optional Tasmanian endemics extension**  
Comprehensive birding tour of SE Australia and Tasmania seeking 300+ spp. Key birds on the mainland include Powerful Owl, Pilotbird, Spotted Quail-thrush, Plains-wanderer, Superb Parrot, Malleefowl, Striated Grasswren and Rufous Bristlebird. Takes in the full spectrum of habitats in SE Aust.

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EMU returns to this safe and friendly part of Africa.  
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of Liwonde and South Luangwa National Parks.  
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### **COG GOES TO GLUEPOT, NEWHAVEN AND THE TOP END**

**24 July to 13 August 2003**

**\$1980** ex Canberra

This COG tour will now start from either Canberra or Alice Springs (at reduced cost)  
with Gluepot Reserve included for those doing the full 21-day tour.  
Other options are do only Newhaven or only the Top End. Ask for details.  
Concludes in Darwin. This tour offers outstanding value.

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A three-part tour where you can sign up for one, two or three parts,  
with substantial discounts for taking more than one part.

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**16 August to 2 September 2003 - \$2950**

Kakadu NP, Kimberley and Broome Bird Observatory. Camping.

#### **The West – Broome to Perth**

**30 August to 12 September 2003 - \$2250**

Broome Bird Observatory, Karijini NP, 'inland' route to Perth. Camping / Accom'd.

#### **The South – Perth to Adelaide**

**14 September to 1 October 2003 - \$3250**

Rottnest, Dryandra, 2 Peoples Bay, Eyre, Kangaroo Is. Accom'd.  
Service run available to Canberra / Sydney at conclusion of tour.

**Special offer – all three parts for \$6990.**

Richard Jordan & Roslyn Hemsley **EMU TOURS** PO Box 4 Jamberoo NSW 2533

Phone (02) 4236 0542 Fax (02) 4236 0176

[emutours@ozemail.com.au](mailto:emutours@ozemail.com.au) [www.ozemail.com.au/~emutours](http://www.ozemail.com.au/~emutours)

# Canberra Ornithologists Group Inc Membership Renewal/Application 2003-2004



Please complete this form and post it with your payment to:

The Secretary,  
Canberra Ornithologists Group Inc.  
PO Box 301  
CIVIC SQUARE ACT 2608

**Title and Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ **Postcode:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Telephone (home):** \_\_\_\_\_ **(work):** \_\_\_\_\_ **(mobile):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

I/We enclose \$\_\_\_\_\_ as Renewal/New Membership being:

<b>Individual - \$35</b>	<b>Optional donation to Canberra Birds Conservation Fund \$</b> _____	
<b>Institution - \$35</b>		<i>(office use only) Subtotal \$</i> _____
<b>* Family - \$35</b>		<i>GST \$</i> _____
<b>Student (18yrs or under) - new \$17.50</b>		<i>Total \$</i> _____

**\*Family memberships:** please list the names of all members covered by family membership:

\_\_\_\_\_

If you would prefer **Gang-gang in Electronic form** (PDF Format - requires Adobe Acrobat Reader) to be sent to the above email address in lieu of printed copy please tick here.....

**Are you interested in any of the following COG activities? (please tick)**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| Atlassing/Bird Surveys<br>Administration/Office<br>Publicity/Exhibition stalls<br>Publications | Data entry<br>Leading outings<br>Youth education<br>Conservation issues |
|--|---|



## Hideaway for two!

### Guerilla Bay / Burrewarra Point

Lovely, clean and quiet self contained 1 bedroom flat amid trees, own courtyard and garden, adjacent Burrewarra Point clifftop reserve. Close unspoiled walks, beaches. Over 120 bird species seen in the local area, half from the property and lots of other interesting fauna and flora. Reasonable rates.

Contact Joan and Trevor Lipscombe  
6262 7975.

## PASSIVE SOLAR HOUSE

### South Rosedale

Arupingi is a passive solar house situated in a peaceful bushland setting in South Rosedale. Birdwatching is possible from the comfort of a chair on the front or back deck. For the more energetic, Guerrilla Bay and Burrewarra Point are within walking distance. The wetlands at Barling's Beach are only few kilometers away. Rich birding is available in almost any direction, the Eurobodalla Botanical Gardens are a favourite spot. The front beach at Rosedale is patrolled by the resident white sea-eagle.

Tariff - \$50 per night; \$250 per week (\$300 per week in school holidays); 3 night weekend \$125; 15 December to 31 January - \$400 per week.

Further details contact – Greg or Sallie Ramsay, 31 MacRobertson St, MAWSON, ACT 2607, phone 6286 1564 or e-mail at [greg.ramsay@argay.com.au](mailto:greg.ramsay@argay.com.au)

## MUDBRICK COTTAGE

### Mallacoota

Our mudbrick 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.

Please contact Barbara de Bruine (02 – 62583531) for further information.

*A bird does not sing  
because it has an answer;  
it sings because it has a song.*

*~Chinese proverb~*

## SPECIAL OFFER

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[on.htm](http://on.htm) or phone the number below)  
and send to – Janis Hosking, 7 Pine  
Hill Drive MS 1, Dubbo, NSW 2830.  
Phone 02 6887 2692, email  
[glossyblack@crt.net.au](mailto:glossyblack@crt.net.au)



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## Expressions of interest: editor of *Gang-gang*

The current editors of *Gang-gang* are calling for expressions of interest to assist in the monthly production of our newsletter. If you would like more information about what is involved, or you are keen to be involved, please contact Tanya Rough by email at [rough.boden@apex.net.au](mailto:rough.boden@apex.net.au) or phone 02 6274 2302 (w), 02 6161 0151 (h)

## COG info

### *President*

**Barry Baker, ph 6274 2402 (w),  
mobile 0412 484 728**

### *Vice President*

**Nicki Taws, ph 6251 1879**

### *Treasurer*

**Joan Lipscombe ph 6262 7975**

### *Secretary*

**Doug Laing ph 6287 7700 (h)**

### *Membership inquiries*

**Contact Alastair Smith 6281 3221 (h)  
or 0401 993 381 for changes of  
address or other details**

### *Address for correspondence*

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

## WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Alex McLachlan, Higgins

Keith Williams, Bonython

Justin Curry, Dunlop

Geoff Murphy, Mawson

Debbie Saunders, Aranda

### *Gang-gang editor*

**Tanya Rough 6161 0151 (h)**

### *Newsletter distribution*

**Lia Battison and helpers**

### *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*

**<http://www.canberrabirds.dynamite.com.au>**

### *COG membership*

**2003-2004 membership:  
Individuals, families and institutions:  
\$35. school students (under 18):  
\$17.50.**

## Next newsletter

**AUGUST newsletter deadline  
Friday 25 July 2003**

**Send updates to**

**Tanya Rough,  
Editor *Gang-gang***

**Email preferred:**

**[rough.boden@apex.net.au](mailto:rough.boden@apex.net.au) or  
[Tanya.Rough@ea.gov.au](mailto:Tanya.Rough@ea.gov.au)  
Ph: 6161 0151 (ah)**

**Articles should be less than 500  
words (300 for reports of 1-day field  
trips; 150 for Atlassing Snapshots),  
except by prior arrangement with  
the editor. Print photographs with  
articles encouraged.**

### *Office (6247 4996)*

**COG maintains an office in room  
G5, Griffin Centre, Bunda Street,  
civic.**

**Office volunteers are not in  
attendance for regular opening  
hours.**

**Members access by prior  
arrangement.**

### *COG E-mail Discussion List*

**COG has an email announcement  
and discussion list for members  
and friends of COG: 'Canberra  
Birding', also known by the  
nickname 'cog-1'.**

**Join the list at**

**<http://www.topica.com/lists/canberrabirds>  
or by sending a blank email  
message to [canberrabirds-  
subscribe@topica.com](mailto:canberrabirds-subscribe@topica.com).**



**Gang-gang**

If undeliverable, please return to  
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