



Gang-gang

AUGUST 2022

Newsletter of the Canberra Ornithologists Group Inc.

AUGUST MEETING

Wednesday 10 August 2022

7.30 pm

Normal face-to-face meeting

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

The August meeting will again be a normal face-to-face one held at our usual venue, but as school virus rules for after-hours public meetings in school premises remain unchanged (see under **Events** on <https://www.education.act.gov.au/public-school-life/covid-school-arrangements/school-advice>) you will again need to wear a mask and also check in using the Check in CBR QR code, as noted in the COG COVID Safety Plan available on the COG web site ([COG-CGGS-Checklist-COVID-19_09Mar22.pdf](https://canberrabirds.org.au) (canberrabirds.org.au)).

The short presentation will be by **Steve Wallace** on “**HANZAB Online – what’s different to the books.**”

While the soon to be launched online version of HANZAB is mostly the content in the books, there are differences. Some new information is being added, some of the information is being updated and there are improvements to make the information easier to read. So, what does it look like and what are these changes?

The main speaker will be **Philip Veerman** presenting “**On the naming of the Australian Sarus Crane**”

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

While the weather over the 4 weeks from 29 June covered by this column has gradually warmed up after the very cold start to winter, it has often continued to be cloudy and windy. While there have been more frosts, including some heavier ones, there have been very few periods of clear weather, at best for just a few days, with often even clear mornings turning cloudy in the afternoon. Though it has been drier, conditions often are still wet under foot from the significant rain to the end of May. Again, my impression that bird activity in the COG Area of Interest (AoI) has been very quiet seems to be confirmed by my analysis below. While around 10 species generally considered to be spring/summer migrants have been recorded, 6 of these have been in low numbers.

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Victor Bragvine



Hooded Robin

Everyone welcome

The established story is that, even though it is a big and obvious bird, strangely the Sarus Crane was first found wild in Australia as late as 1966 and not identified until later, and that this was first published in 1969. However, even that bit is not quite right. It is likely it had not been picked as separate from the Brolga until then. Initially it was believed to be a recent vagrant. Philip will try to clarify this twisted history, from the known and the obscure records. He will consider evidence bearing on whether indigenous Australians already knew that the species was here. He will also revisit the story of how the Australian population of the Sarus Crane was named as a separate subspecies and how *Canberra Bird Notes* fits into the story. He will tell the strange story of the Australian captive zoo population of the species, and discuss generic nomenclature, including the transfer from genus *Grus* to *Antigone*. This history has three separate yet intertwined stories, one at each of the genus, species and subspecies level, which is surely a very strange situation in one bird. Philip will also summarise current knowledge, fix some errors and add new historical information, particularly about the people involved.

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

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Leucistic **Purple Swamphen**

Jeff Byron

Some of the winter altitudinal migrants also seem to be present in lower numbers than usual, and again there have been very few “unusual” birds reported.

The quiet reporting period allows me to include a few other observations of interest or items of interesting bird behaviour to which readers should also be alert. On 2 July Sandra Henderson forwarded Jeff Byron’s photo of a leucistic **Purple Swamphen** (see photo). It was something Sandra had never been aware of, despite how common they are in Canberra. I also haven’t seen this before; the species is particularly common on the grass around Lake Tuggeranong and Weston Park where I often walk.

On 5 July at the Fairbairn Golf Course Geoffrey Dabb observed something he had seen several times before, a tight group of 12 **White-winged Choughs** were in the middle of the fairway, being sheep-dogged by a variable number of surrounding, generally stationary **Australian Magpies**. He noted that the reason for the compact chough formation seems to be that a magpie (or 2) can drive back in a stray emergent chough but cannot deal with the defensive actions of the whole chough phalanx when it stands its ground. The result is that the choughs can advance foraging, despite the resentful magpies, as long as the flock maintains its cohesion. Many years ago, I saw a similar example on Cooleman Ridge, with 2 lines of around 5 **White-winged Choughs** about a metre apart advancing on some attacking magpies, with the birds in the front line regularly dropping behind to form a new second line.

On 7 July Nick Payne posted that he had several times observed a **Magpie-Lark** playing with cars at the intersection of La Perouse St and Flinders Way in Griffith. The bird perched on the roof of a stationary vehicle that is waiting at the stop sign. When the vehicle moved off, the **Magpie-Lark** launched off the roof, flew alongside the car making a few darts at its reflection in the side windows, and when the car has travelled ten or fifteen metres from the intersection, the bird left it and returned to the intersection where, if there is another car waiting at the stop sign, it alighted on the car roof and then repeated the performance. Nick had first observed this behaviour several weeks before and had seen it three or four times since then, the most recent occurrence being that morning. While this species is well known for incessantly attacking windows or moving between vehicle mirrors in car parks, this behaviour seems to take it to another level.

During a quiet walk on 17 July around the ANBG, Steve Read was standing alongside the eastern boundary fence watching a couple of **Red-browed Finch** foraging at the edge of the grass, along with a group of **Superb Fairy-wrens**. An immature **Grey**

Butcherbird then flew in and landed on the fence, in full view no more than a couple of metres away from him. A minute or so later, the butcherbird flew down, picked up one of the finches by the neck, and flew into the nearest shrub. The other small birds scattered. After another minute or so looking around, the butcherbird flew away with its prey, and the fairy-wrens re-emerged.

Steve's question was why were the small birds not noticeably alarmed when the butcherbird first appeared as it was very visible? If it had been a **Collared Sparrowhawk**, it would likely have caused panic, with birds scattering immediately it appeared, and would possibly also have been mobbed by larger birds. He wondered - are butcherbirds not recognised as threats? The same question could apply to currawongs, magpies and kookaburras, all of which he has seen kill and eat small birds, but which appear to be tolerated more generally than sparrowhawks or **Brown Goshawks**. Unfortunately, his post attracted very little correspondence.

Of the summer migrants still recorded in June, there have been no further reports of the **Shining Bronze-cuckoo**, **Noisy Friarbird** and **Australian Reed-Warbler**. The **Fan-tailed Cuckoo** was still reported from around 12 locations up to the time of writing, the only local cuckoo clearly staying over for winter. The **Western Gerygone** was still reported quite recently from 1 location, a single bird at Campbell Park on 20 July, and the **Tree Martin** was still reported from 6 locations, the most recent being from Nelanglo TSR on 23 July.

The **Rufous Whistler** was reported from 5 locations, the most recent being a single bird at the West Belconnen Pond on 25 July. The **Dusky Woodswallow** was reported from just 3 locations with the most recent one being from the Jerrabomberra Wetlands NR on 11 July. Reports of the **Olive-backed Oriole** were from 7 locations, all of single birds with the most recent being at the Jerrabomberra Wetlands NR and the Callum Brae NR on 25 July.

In contrast numbers of **Black-faced Cuckoo-shrikes** and **Grey Fantails** were still very high, reported from a remarkable over 25 and over 80 locations, respectively. The **Mistletoebird** was reported from 3 locations with single birds last reported from both Cooleman Ridge and Gecko Hill on 16 July. The **Superb Parrot** was reported from around 25 locations (with 10 south of LBG centred around Hughes/Red Hill) throughout the period.

It appears around 10 spring/summer "migrant" species have overwintered this year, 6 of them in small numbers. So please keep an eye out for any more of the above-mentioned species staying over, or the first of them returning. Towards the end of August please also look out for the **Horsfield's Bronze-cuckoo**, **Pallid Cuckoo**, **White-throated Gerygone** and **Fairy Martin**, which are amongst the first species to return.

Of the species that move from the mountains and higher country into Canberra and its surrounds in autumn/winter, the **Scarlet Robin** remains well established being reported from around 20 urban/peri-urban locations of the over 45 total locations during the period. However, the **Flame Robin** has still been reported only from 8 such locations of the around 15 total spots. It doesn't seem to have been a good season for



Australian Ornithological Services P/L

PO Box 385
South Yarra 3141
Victoria

Mob: 04173 10200

enquiries@philipmaher.com

Good birding, good food

2022

Central Australia

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

Nullarbor birding tour

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

2023 tours

Atherton Tablelands

&

Iron Range

In two parts
1-14 May 2023

2023 Plains-wanderer Weekends

07 & 08 October 2023
21 & 22 October 2023
04 & 05 November 2023
18 & 19 November 2023

Contact Patricia Maher for
information and itineraries.

www.philipmaher.com

them, perhaps they haven't moved in as close as usual due to relatively mild winter, at least in respect of overnight minimum temperatures.

In contrast **Rose Robins** have been reported from 12 locations in the period, 6 of which may be described as urban/peri-urban, and with still 4 spots from W of the Murrumbidgee River. This is a quite remarkable number of locations for this species in July, suggesting that the mild winter has allowed more to stay. Again, there were no reports of the **Pink Robin** during the period. The **Crescent Honeyeater** was reported from just one location, the ANBG, from where up 1-2 birds have been regularly reported throughout the period. The **Yellow-tufted Honeyeater** has not been reported during the period. So, there have remarkably been few reports of these two honeyeater species which in some winters visit in reasonable numbers.

There was a single report of the **Swift Parrot** over the period, 4 birds at Mt Mugga Mugga on 16 July. So please keep an eye out for the above-named species to see if more move closer to Canberra this winter before they start to move away again towards the end of August.

As with June there were relatively few reports of "unusual" birds reported, with none deserving a special mention. Two **Plumed Whistling Ducks** were reported only from the Trucking Yard Lane Dam on 2 and 8 July. Again, no **Freckled Ducks** were reported during the period. While **Australian Shelducks** were reported from 9 locations to the E and NE of Canberra during the period, the maximum of 38 seen together on the Wollongorang Rd on 2 July is similar to the maximum numbers in June. There were no **Blue-billed Ducks** reported over the period, and, not including the Sanctuary at Tidbinbilla NR, a single **Musk Duck** was only reported by a single observer at the Wet Lagoon Breadalbane from 2-15 July.

There were no **Stubble Quail** reported over the period, probably as they are not calling. In contrast the **Brown Quail** was reported from 10 locations, showing how much easier it is to observe this species. Up to 9 **Painted Button-quail** were reported from 9 locations in the period, but again there were no reports of **Little Button-quail**.

No **Great Crested Grebe**, **White-headed Pigeon** or **Peaceful Doves** have been reported during the period. On 28 June Christine D photographed the **Diamond Dove** reported previously from the Parkwood horse paddocks. It was initially seen perched in dead tree with **Crested Pigeons**, but flew further away after other birds came in. On 9 July David Dedenczuk recorded a **Brush Bronzewing** at the Rob Roy Nature Reserve. He heard it calling from thick scrub in Guises Creek near the entrance to the reserve, making the fastish 'whoo' calls which he knows well from Tasmania. This species has a very restricted range in the COG Aol, being largely confined to the wetter gullies in the Brindabella Ranges from where the only other report for 2022 has come (on 6 January).

Up to 3 **Spotless Crakes** were reported from the Jerrabomberra Wetlands NR over the period, as well as from the Holder Wetlands on 15 July. No **Australian Spotted Crake**, **Baillon's Crake** or **Lewin's Rail** have been reported during the period, whereas single **Buff-banded Rails** were reported from 3 locations. No **Banded Lapwings**, **Red-capped Plovers**, **Red-necked Avocets**, **Caspian Tern**, **Australian Little Bittern** or **Intermediate Egret** were reported during the period.

Barn Owls were reported from just 2 locations, single birds at the Goorooyaroo NR on 6 July, and at the Gigerline NR on 17 July. In contrast the **Black-shouldered Kite** remained remarkably common, reported from over 50 locations, with some more reports of autumn/winter breeding (see details below). The **Nankeen Kestrel** was also reported from around 55 locations (slightly down from June) during the period.

Single **Grey Goshawks** were reported from the Glenloch Interchange on 1 and 7 July, from the nearby Cork Oak plantation on 11 July, and from the Jerrabomberra Wetlands NR on 22 July. Single **Spotted Harriers** were reported from the Barton Highway N of Murrumbateman on 10 July and from just inside the northern boundary of the Canberra Airport on 23 July. Two **Black Kites** were reported from the Hume Highway at Oolong on 10 July, but no **Black Falcon** was reported during the period.

There were no reports of the **Azure Kingfisher**, **Cockatiel**, **Turquoise Parrots**, or **Little** and **Scaly-breasted Lorikeets** during the period.



Singing Honeyeater

Peter Cowper

Two **Glossy Black-Cockatoos** were reported from Burke burn farm near Mt Fairy on 26 June, and 4 **Musk Lorikeets** were reported only from Kambah on 18 July.

Single **Singing Honeyeaters** were reported from Casey on 11 and 12 July, and a **Blue-faced Honeyeater** from Curtin on 23 July. A **White-bellied Cuckoo-shrike** (the first for 2022, will there again be regular sightings from August to October as there were in 2021?) was reported over McKellar on 22 July, but no **Spiny-cheeked** or **Scarlet Honeyeaters**, **Little Friarbirds**, **Zebra Finches** or **Tawny Grassbirds** were reported during the period.

Of the birds I have continued to ask readers to keep a special lookout for in 2022, in contrast to June **Jacky Winters** were reported from 4 locations, with most being from the known spot at the Top Naas Rd where up to 4 birds were recorded between 1 and 20 July. Two birds were reported from the nearby known location, Naas Rd at Apollo Rd on 11 July, and 4 birds from the also known spot, the Capital Country Holiday Park on the same day. Two birds were also reported from 2 new close together spots near Gundaroo on 18 July.

Hooded Robins were reported from 3 (2 known) locations during the period. There were up to 4 birds regularly reported from the Naas Road at Apollo Road, and up to 3 birds at the Top Naas Rd over the period, as well as 2 males from the new location just W of Bredbo on 6 July. **Restless Flycatchers** were also reported from 3 locations (2 known), a single bird at the Nelanglo TSR on 20 and 23 July, 1-2 birds at the Naas Road at Apollo Road over the period, and also 1 bird from the new spot, the Baroona Wetlands, on 25 July.



Restless Flycatcher

Victor Braguine

In respect of breeding there have been some more reports of **Black-shouldered Kite** (BSK) autumn/winter breeding. Shorty found they were nesting on Callum Brae (the property) next to Narrabundah Lane. They first started to sit on the nest on 1 May and on his visits the female would call from the nest and the male would go off and catch a mouse for her. They were using three trees, including a dead gum from which the male used to keep a lookout and chase off any birds coming near the nest. When the male took the mouse to her, the female came over to receive it in a large gum, staying off the nest for ten minutes eating and preening before returning to it.

On his visit on the very cold and windy 1 June the male **BSK** was constantly taking mice to the nest, so he concluded that the young had hatched. On a visit in the early afternoon on 2 June the male again was constantly catching mice and taking them to the large gum with the female meeting him there where she appeared to remove the head off the mouse before taking the body to the nest. This was well hidden, but she appeared to be feeding young. On 3 July Shorty informed me that the first of the young had fledged a week ago and the fourth one had that day. He found it interesting that the adults still took the mice to the nest and the young had to fly back up to get one. One of the young, he assumed the one that fledged first, was already practicing its hovering and dropping down to the ground. While it didn't get anything Shorty was surprised how quickly they learn.

It is great that Shorty was able to follow nearly the whole breeding cycle and make some very interesting observations over the couple of months it took place. Michael Lenz also reported that the pair of **Black-shouldered Kites** from the Crace Grassland NR had a young visible in the nest on 9 July, which had fledged 22 July. On 28 June Sandra Henderson observed a pair hunting over the Gilmore horse paddocks, then flying off to the other side of Isabella Drive. Both birds came back and forth, sometimes singly, but often both together and she suspected they had a nest with young over there. On 23 July Steve Read reported three perched in one dead tree (including one young bird) at Newline.

I also had an informal report of a family of **BSKs** close to home at the NW end of Cooleman Ridge but have not been able to confirm this. So, there have been a remarkable at least 9 (possibly 11) separate breeding events for this species this late autumn well into winter.

Despite it still being mid-winter, I am aware of reports of **Australian Magpies**, **Australian Ravens** and **Red Wattlebirds** already breeding, as well as **Australian Wood Ducks** checking out nesting hollows. On 17 July Rob Parnell observed **White-browed**

Scrubwrens carrying nesting material at his place in Narrabundah. This is quite early for this species, though the BIRD INFO data on the COG web site indicates 5 previous reports of nest building in July.

On 24 July Kathy Cook found a male **Common Bronzewing** sitting on a stick nest in their garden in Wamboin. It was about 1.5 m from the ground, in a bushy callistemon. She was not sure if this is a bit early for this species in the Canberra region. Checking the BIRD INFO data shows no reports of nest building in either July or August, though the 3 reports of on/leaving the nest in August suggests occasionally building can take place in July.

The most notable mixed feeding flock I am aware of during the period was the excellent one observed at The Pinnacle by Barbara Allan on 7 July. This comprised 11 species, large numbers of **Buff-** and **Yellow-rumped Thornbills**, two **Grey Shrike-thrushes** singing loudly, a female **Golden Whistler**, a male **Scarlet Robin**, **White-throated Treecreepers**, **Grey Fantails**, **Superb Fairy-wrens**, a male **Speckled Warbler** and **Weebills**. While most MFFs should have broken up by now, please keep an eye out for any late ones.

On 1 July Jenny Bounds informed me of large numbers of **Satin Bowerbirds** in Weston in recent weeks. She wondered if this was a winter phenomenon, with birds moving around more widely in big groups? A friend a few streets away had reported 35 around her house area. Jenny had an increase at her place too: from the usual 1-4 birds in the past week there had been up to 8 birds regularly around her garden, feeding in a broadleaf tall shrub with small berries in the rear neighbour's. Her next-door neighbour had a 'large flock' of around 20 on her front lawn 2 weeks before. Around that time, Jenny had flushed a large group from another neighbour's lawn. She counted 16 as they quickly flew away, but there could have been a few more around in the street trees.

My experience certainly is that **Satin Bowerbirds** do flock together more in winter, most notably in the roosting group of up to 80 birds just outside my GBS site before the January 2003 fires. These days when walking my dogs early on the darker mornings I can often hear them waking up in gardens, they have a very characteristic call at that time. I too had been noticing more over the previous month or so, but only a maximum of 5 green birds in my garden, plus an occasional full male. Away from the garden I had seen 12 feeding together in Rivett on 7 June.

On 5 July Geoffrey Dabb observed flocks of 67 **Red-rumped Parrots**, 25 **Eastern Rosellas**, 60 plus **Crested Pigeons** at the Fairbairn Golf Course. Otherwise, I have few examples of single species flocks except for the much more noticeable **Sulphur-crested Cockatoo** activity in my local patch over the past couple of months.

So please watch out for any overwintering spring/summer migrants and towards the end of August for their return, together with the other species mentioned above, for the altitudinal migrants still to arrive, for any MFFs and single species flocks, for roost sites and flights, and for further breeding activity. Please also continue to keep a special look out for the **Restless Flycatcher**, **Jacky Winter** and **Hooded Robin**. As usual please ensure that all significant sightings are properly reported and end up on the COG database.



Scarlet Robin

Victor Braguine

Once again, my sincere thanks to everyone who has contributed to my two main data sources, posting on the COG e-mail Discussion List ("COG chat line") and the eBird Australia database, as well as direct correspondence with me. As always, I am very grateful to all involved for publishing this information without which it would not be possible to put this column together.

Jack Holland

Committee News

The COG committee met by Zoom on 21 July.

Vale Tricia Morton: the committee has been asked to advise COG members that Tricia died on 1 July. The secretary has sent condolences to her family on COG's behalf.

Please see the announcement in this issue of Gang-gang on the results of the survey held in July 2021 about whether COG should consider a new name. The full survey report is available on the COG website at <https://canberrabirds.org.au/about-cog/annual-reports/>.

WANTED: a new treasurer. The committee is looking ahead to the Annual General Meeting on 9 November, when Prue will step down after 4 years as the COG Treasurer. If you are interested in taking on this role please talk to Prue or Neil.

Steve Read *Vice-President* Alison Mackerras *Minutes Secretary*

COG's Canberra Bird Notes and Gang-gang – online and searching

This short note is to remind members that the monthly Gang-gang Newsletter can be accessed online via the "Publications" tab on the COG home page. Issues from June 2003 are available for browsing, and for downloading at your will. I would also remind members that Jack Holland's monthly Gang-gang column, "Summary/analysis of the past month and what to watch out for this month" provides a wealth of information about the local birds and for those interested can provide an informative overview of the seasonal changes that occur across the ACT and surrounding region.

The other substantial COG publication, "Canberra Bird Notes" (CBN), can also be accessed online, again via the "Publications" tab on the home page. Each issue is a separate PDF file which can be downloaded or read online.

Searching Canberra Bird Notes

An important feature that is available at the top of the Canberra Bird Notes page is the ability to search all issues of CBN using a single search for matches to user-supplied text. This search is a Google search that will return a list of the Issues in which the search text has been located. Some context to each search result is provided to assist you in deciding if the Issue might be useful. The next step in the search process is to search within each of the identified Issue PDF files individually.

I draw your attention to the link located just above the box into which your search text is typed. This link will take you to a detailed set of instructions to facilitate your searching of Canberra Bird Notes. If you are new to the Google Search Engine (or even an experienced user) you might find the section "Understanding Google search" of assistance in making your searching more efficient. The subsequent paragraphs of the instructions provide examples.

The COG Committee acknowledges the work our web-master, Julian Robinson, has put into making this facility available.

A O (Nick) Nicholls
COG Committee

Seeking volunteers for Bush Stone-curlew surveys (blitz) at Mulligans Flat Woodland Sanctuary

Background: Bush stone-curlews (BSC) were extinct in the ACT from 1970 until their reintroduction at Mulligans Flat in 2014. Further releases were carried out in 2015-16 and 2018-19. COG has been involved in the BSC project since the outset, providing funding, resources, and volunteers for surveys.

When: Surveys will take place on Sat 3 and Sun 4 September 2022, from 8-11am. Morning tea will be provided afterwards.

Where: Meeting at Amy Ackman carpark.

Contact: If you would like to be involved, please contact Shoshana (PhD researcher) at shoshana.rapley@anu.edu.au.

Provide: Name, best contact number, your availability (one or both mornings), whether you have a camera (not compulsory but ideal) or binoculars (required if no camera), and whether you would like to survey alone or in a team (and if so, whether you would like to be randomly allocated to a team or nominate friend/s to work with).

Other volunteering: Aside from the formal blitz of Mulligans Flat, Shoshana is seeking information on BSCs present in Goorooyarroo Nature Reserve. There are a few pairs present, but their identity and roost locations are unknown. COG members are invited to seek out BSCs in Goorooyarroo and forward the locations (GPS coordinates) and, if applicable, identity (if leg flag is present and can be read) to Shoshana as soon as possible after making the sighting.

The name Canberra Ornithologists Group

In July 2021, we ran a survey about the name of our organisation. The survey asked whether the name Canberra Ornithologists Group (COG) should be retained, or if we should adopt a new name or a trading name. The survey was prompted by member responses to a 2019 survey about planning for COG's future.

There were 107 respondents to the survey. Of these, 47% supported changing the name, 15% were possibly in favour of changing the name, and 38% preferred to retain the current name. Overall, the results highlighted a strong desire within the membership to increase the visibility and approachability of the group, make our name more user-friendly, ensure the name reflected the wider goals of the membership, and increase the membership base. Reluctance to using a name other than COG was associated with the risk of losing professional and scientific recognition and history.

A number of potential new trading names were suggested in the survey, and respondents suggested many more. By far the most popular name was "Canberra Birds", which also aligns with the branding of our website and Facebook page.

The COG Committee has therefore decided not to change the formal name of the group. Legally, we will remain the Canberra Ornithologists Group, and will keep using this name for research contracts and for interactions such as with the ACT Government. However, increasingly we will use the name Canberra Birds for community activities such as events, radio interviews and school visits, as well as social media. This approach is designed to mitigate concerns around loss of recognition from a name change, while becoming more appealing to a wider and younger audience.

A full analysis of the survey results will be posted to our website <http://canberrabirds.org.au/about-cog/annual-reports/>. The Committee thanks Brittany Brockett, David McDonald and Steve Read for their assistance with devising the survey and analysing its results.

COG's cogs No 14 - Dianne Davey

Here at COG there are all sorts of jobs, big and small. You might be surprised to know how many helping hands it takes to keep the cogs ticking over, but Dianne Davey has been busy in the background for nearly ten years (which still makes her a spring chicken compared to some).

Dianne became involved with COG in June 2013 and, as is so often the case, it didn't take long for her to be drawn into the flock. At the time, the Gang-gang newsletter and Canberra Bird Notes made their way to members via a mailout with Brian Fair being responsible for the mailing of the monthly newsletter and CBN, published three times a year. Brian lived in Queanbeyan and so Dianne and Chris drove from Holt to Queanbeyan whenever there was a mailout. Dianne was treated to dinner at a restaurant in Queanbeyan as an incentive. This practice stopped when Brian moved to Queensland in October 2013 and Ann Carrick, who lived in Braddon, assumed responsibility which was soon passed onto Dianne in early 2014.

During this time, it was quite a large task with the monthly folding and sticking of address labels to the newsletters prior to postage, with all items sorted into post codes. In addition, three times a year, CBN was sorted into envelopes and address labels added before being posted.

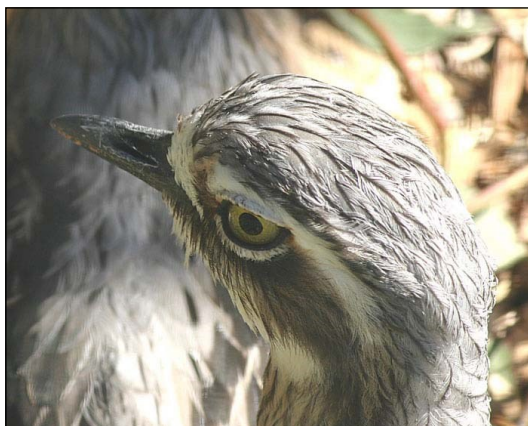
Over time the job has become easier, as the newsletter moved online and posting ceased completely in June 2018. Canberra Bird Notes is also online, with two editions a year instead of three which still get mailed to those requesting a printed copy.

Even so, life is not simple with a supply chain that can have disruptions. There is always a bit of back and forth between the CBN Editor (Michael Lenz) and the Membership Secretary (Sandra Henderson) about how many copies of CBN need to go to press. But once published, the printed editions find their way to Dianne's doorstep where they get labelled, sorted and delivered.

As the digital age marches on, it will probably only be a matter of time until even CBN goes totally digital. But with more members requesting Gang-gang and CBN online, Dianne is more likely to be made redundant than to retire.

Acknowledgements

Nathan Finger and Dianne Davey



Bush Stone-curlew

Peter Fullagar



Neil Hermes Safaris – birding tours this year

July 12-14

BIRDS OF HIGHLANDS AND JERVIS BAY TOUR

Three days exploring the best bird spots on the Southern Highlands and Jervis Bay, includes Barren Grounds Nature Reserve and Booderee National Park. Ex Canberra Includes motel accommodation. 3 day 2 nights Led by Mark Clayton and Neil Hermes \$795pp

August 13

SEABIRD PELAGIC CRUISE ex Jervis Bay

Six hour boat cruise from Jervis Bay to shelf. Big comfortable charter boat. Great outside viewing points. Also large enclosed lounge with toilets etc. Seabird experts on hand. Hope for lots of lifers \$275 pp

Sept 2-9

BIRDS AND HISTORY NORFOLK ISLAND

8 day fully escorted tour of Norfolk Island. General interest tour of Norfolk' plus its wildlife and history. Includes airfare from Sydney, motel accommodation, car hire. Ex Sydney Led by Neil and Michael Hermes \$2539pp

Sept 26-30

BIRDS OF THE NSW MID NORTH COAST

For bird watchers to explore the best rainforest and coastal locations on NSW mid north coast and ranges. Includes motel accommodation Ex Canberra. 5 day 4 nights Led by Mark Clayton and Neil Hermes \$1350pp

Oct 10-14

MELIPHAGA MAGIC TOUR

Our spring hunt for honeyeaters and other inland birds. Includes Round Hill Nature Reserve and the famous Chat alley. Includes motel accommodation Ex Canberra 5 day 4 nights Led by Mark Clayton and Neil Hermes \$1250pp

Nov 10-12

ON TRAIL OF THE PLAINS WANDERER

A days birding in the Deniliquin area followed by a night-time watching the elusive Plains wanderer. Great for lifers list. 3 day 2 nights \$895pp Led by Philip Maher and Neil Hermes Includes motel accommodation Ex Canberra

2023 June TBA

PARADISE BIRDS - TASTE OF NEW GUINEA

7 day 6 nights exploring the birds of Cairns and Port Moresby Highlights Birds of Paradise, bowerbirds and Palm Cockatoos Led by Mark Clayton and Neil Hermes Tour is open for expressions of interest, details to come.

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Future Field Trips

COG Trips

Each participant must sign a COG Field Trip Registration Form at the start of each trip and before proceeding on the trip which acknowledges the participant's responsibilities (wording follows). An Emergency Contact Name and Number are required.

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

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

Changes to trips are notified on the COG chatline <http://canberrabirds.org.au/publications/discussion-email-list/> and trips page of COG website <http://canberrabirds.org.au/category/trips/>.

A reminder that COG has a long-standing policy to give preference to members for field trips that can accommodate only a limited number of people.

Be Covid safe on COG field trips:

Maintain social distancing of 1.5 metres

Maintain hand hygiene

Wear a mask in shared cars if carpooling (Note: carpooling is voluntary)

DO NOT ATTEND if you have tested positive for Covid, have been a close contact within the past 7 days, or have any Covid, cold or flu symptoms.

Sunday 7 August – Mount Taylor

Meet in the Mt Taylor carpark at the end of Waldock Street, Chifley (**not** the Sulwood Drive carpark), at 9am for a general bushland wander during which anything could turn up. **Register** with Doug Laing at lilley@iimetro.com.au, providing your name, mobile number and the name and number of an emergency contact.

Wednesday August 17 - Apollo/Naas Rd intersection and Top Naas Rd

Meet at 9am at the Namadgi Visitor Centre carpark. From there we'll carpool. There is limited space for parking in the Naas Rd/Top Naas Rd area, so the fewer cars the better. Bring a mask with you - wearing a mask in a car with others is a very wise precaution at present.

Bring water, wear sturdy shoes.

Maximum 16 attendees (so register early!).

The area has a number of special species at present, so we'll hope for **Brown Treecreepers, Hooded and Flame Robins, Black-shouldered Kites, Southern Whiteface, Jacky Winter....**

Registration essential, to Sandra at shirmax2931@gmail.com and please register at least 24 hours ahead of the outing, with your name and phone number, and name and number of an emergency contact.

Sun 21 August - Gungaherra Grasslands Nature Reserve, Crace

Gungaherra Grasslands NR occurs between Palmerston, Crace and CSIRO Gungahlin and borders Gungahlin Drive. The extensive grasslands support healthy populations of **Eurasian Skylark, Australasian Pipit** and **Stubble Quail**. There are

scattered trees and woodlands with Brittle Gum and Scribbly Gum. I have seen a pair of **Black-shouldered Kites**, **Nankeen Kestrels** and **Brown Falcons** copulating. 88 species have been recorded. This is a new site for a COG visit.

Meet at 9.00 am at Bollard St Palmerston for a walk through the grasslands.

Distance -about 3km

Difficulty - quite easy.

Register with Bill Graham on graham.br63@grapevine.com.au with your name and phone number and the phone and number of your emergency contact.

Bring sturdy shoes, gaiters, hat, sunscreen and morning tea.

Bill Graham

Tuesday 30 August to Friday 2 September – Tathra

This trip is full.

Sunday 4 September – Namatjira Drive woodland

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

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

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

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

Sunday 11 September – Melba Wetlands

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

We will then walk across to Ginninderra Creek, have a quick look there (including the Melba Half Acre Wood), then walk around to the wetlands using the bridge on Copland Drive to cross the creek. The wetlands have a series of five ponds, constructed in 2019. We should find a variety of waterbirds, as well as a few bush birds. It's an easy wander, mainly on paths with no more than 1km of walking involved. As usual, you should bring water and sunscreen and wear sensible shoes.

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

Monday 12 to Friday 16 September – Yathong Nature Reserve

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

Accommodation is in basic shearers quarters with shared facilities. Because of this numbers are limited to 16. The quarters have showers and a new kitchen.

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

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

You will need to take bedding, food and clothing suitable for all kinds of weather. The weather in spring can be quite unsettled (rain is not uncommon) so be prepared.

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

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

Sunday 18 September – Tidbinbilla NR – Ashbrook Firetrail

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

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

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

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

To register contact Ned Johnston at nedjohnston06@gmail.com with your name and phone number as well as the name and number of an emergency contact. Places will be limited to 15.

Sunday 25 September – Youth Haven, Kambah

Helen Cross and Sandra Henderson

Sunday 2 October – Corin Road

Meet at 8am at the main carpark for Point Hut Pond District Park on McGilvray Close in Gordon for carpooling. Maximum 16 participants (four cars). There is limited parking at the makeshift Smokers Trail carpark.

We will travel out along Tidbinbilla Road to Corin Rd, which we will follow out to the dam, with stops along the way at Woods Reserve, Smokers Trail carpark, Square Rock carpark and Corin Dam itself. At each stop we'll have a short walk.

Bring morning tea with you, as well as the usual water, sunscreen, hat and sturdy shoes. No difficult tracks to be negotiated, but at Corin we will walk down the track on the far side of dam, which is a bit steep and gravelly.

Possible birds for the morning include **Pilotbird**, **Bassian Thrush**, **Olive Whistler**, **Superb Lyrebird**.

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

Tuesday 4 to Friday 7 October – Grenfell area – mid-week accommodated

This is advance notice of a 4 day trip to the Grenfell area. Participants will need to arrange their own accommodation in Grenfell. Visits will be made to **Bimbi State Forest**, **Weddin Mountains NP**, **Warranderry State Forest** and other birding spots around Grenfell. The trip will be limited to 16 people, who will carpool each day from Grenfell in 4 vehicles. **Early registration is encouraged.** Contact Bill Graham on graham.br63@grapevine.com.au, giving your name, mobile number and the name and number of an emergency contact. Once your registration is confirmed, it would be advisable to book your accommodation.

Bill Graham and Kim Farley

Tuesday 18 to Saturday 23 October – Green Cape

This trip was scheduled for 2021 but had to be postponed due to Covid. Most of those who registered last year are able to attend this year and those on the waiting list had first priority to fill any vacancies. It is possible that there may be cancellations in the next 3 months so, if you would like to be added to the waiting list, contact Sue Lashko on smlashko@gmail.com

Saturday 29 and Sunday 30 October – Eden Pelagics

Advance notice of two pelagic trips leaving from Eden. The boat will leave Eden at 7am each day, travel to the edge of the shelf, and return at approximately 3pm. There should still be some albatrosses around and a good range of shearwaters and petrels, as well as storm petrels and jaegers, and whales. Participants will need to arrange their own accommodation nearby. A day at sea is quite tiring so, if you go on the Sunday trip, it is recommended that you do not drive back to Canberra that same day. The cost of each trip will be approximately \$135. You must be a COG member to register (so don't forget to renew your membership for 2022-23).

To **register**, send your name, mobile number and the name and number of an emergency contact to smlashko@gmail.com. Please also advise whether you wish to go on Saturday 29, Sunday 30 or either day.

Further details and arrangements for payments will be sent to participants once numbers are finalised.

Sue Lashko

Field Trip Reports

Sunday 10 June - Aranda Bushland NR

Nineteen hardy souls us gathered on a blustery but sunny morning at Aranda Bushland NR. The walk was ably led by Michael Robbins and Matthew Larkin. Initially the wind made it difficult to hear and see birds, but later the wind dropped and we came across several mixed feeding flocks with a number of species including **Buff-rumped**, **Brown** and **Striated Thornbills**, **Weebills**, **White-throated Treecreepers**, **Grey Fantail**, **Scarlet Robin** and **Golden Whistlers**. **White-naped** and **Brown-headed Honeyeaters** were part of the last MFF but as usual they darted around so fast, it was hard to get a good view of them. We had a close view of an **Australian Raven** and Michael and Sue explained the difference between it and the Little Raven (which we didn't see on this walk).

We also saw a **Wedge-tailed Eagle** flying high on the thermals. We learnt how to identify some of the eucalypts in the reserve from Matthew. We ventured into Snowgums NR but low-lying parts were still wet and muddy so we were unable to access them. As often happens, the best bird, a male **Rose Robin**, appeared just as the walk was ending. Overall it was a pleasant morning, with 31 species recorded.

Nicky West



Rose Robin

Sandra Henderson

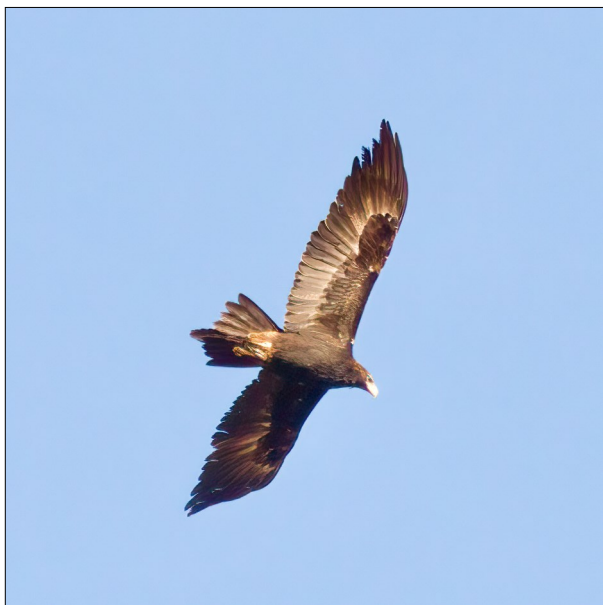
Wednesday 20 July – Callum Brae NR

Fifteen people joined me for this 4.5km wander along some of Callum Brae's management trails. It was a sunny, still day, with patches of frost in shaded areas.

The group managed to hear and/or see 37 species. Disappointingly, not a single robin was found. A small mixed flock included **Speckled Warblers**, **Buff-rumped Thornbills**, **Grey Fantails** and **Weebills**. A highlight was encountering a small group (at least three) of **Brown Quail** near the Icon pump station, which scuttled away down the hill before many had seen them, but they were eventually rounded up and herded back up, and I believe everyone managed to see the two which flew over the track and into the quarry property.

The dams within the reserve yielded a group of **Australian Wood Ducks**, but nothing else, while the Mugga Mugga dam had **Pacific Black Ducks**, **Dusky Moorhens** and an **Australasian Grebe** (heard only, but always present).

Sandra Henderson



Wedge-tailed Eagle Victor Braguine

Woodland Surveys – winter 2022 survey round

compiled by Jenny Bounds

Good rainfall conditions continued from summer and autumn, into the early part of the winter. Alison Rowell again covered the survey for Jenny Bounds at Jerrabomberra West NR, and fortunately was able to drive on the vehicle tracks to save a lot of walking this time. Duncan McCaskill filled in for Michael Lenz at Mt Ainslie/Campbell Park. Thank you to both.

Hall/Gold Creek

Alison Rowell did the survey on the Gold Creek property on 25 June, recording 20 species, including 12 in the survey site counts. Those in the sites were **Australian Magpie**, **Crimson Rosella**, **Sulphur-crested Cockatoo**, **Australian Raven**, **Eastern Rosella**, **Common Starling**, **Galah**, **Red Wattlebird**, **Rainbow Lorikeet** (not common here), **Buff-rumped Thornbill**, **Grey Fantail** and **Yellow-rumped Thornbill**. Birds seen outside the survey sites included **Little Corella**, **Australian Wood Duck** (calling from trees), **Weebill**, **White-eared Honeyeater**, **Pacific Black Duck**, **White-throated Treecreeper**, **Grey Shrike-thrush** and **Australasian Grebe**.

Mulligans Flat NR

Jenny Bounds was pleased to be recovered enough to coordinate the survey team on site at Mulligans on Sunday 26 June, and to survey the northernmost site on the west ridge. It was a really nice winter morning for the survey, sunny and still for the most part (a slight breeze starting to get up after 10am). A total of 49 species was recorded which is quite good for winter; some sites were a little quiet, while some had small flocks moving through or between sites. There were several interesting species recorded: 3 **Brown Quail** in tussock grasses on the eastern side of reserve, a **Painted-button Quail** at site 5, and a **Rose Robin** in woodland on the large dam circuit. A number of medium-sized honeyeaters were around, with **Yellow-faced** and **White-naped Honeyeaters** (overwintering), as well as **White-eared Honeyeater** at two places, and several small groups of **Brown-headed Honeyeaters**. There was only 1 **Scarlet Robin**, at site 3 in the Woolshed environs, unusual as Mulligans in winter is normally a hot spot for robins. One **Rufous Whistler** was recorded on the Western Ridge, as well as 6 **Superb Parrots** and 5 **Rainbow Lorikeets** in that area off Forde. A pair of **Grey Currawongs** was recorded north of the Woolshed where they are often found. Small groups of **Varied Sittellas** were also recorded in two locations.

It was good to see the ground layer/grass levels recovered, from what it was over the drought period a couple of years ago (minimal dry growth), when we recorded only 30 bird species on the winter survey. Thank you to all in the survey team.

Goorooyarroo South NR

Steve Holliday and Prue Buckley did the winter survey in the southern half of Goorooyarroo over a couple of days due to unexpected logistical issues with a locked gate. There was a lot of water around with some creeks flowing. A total of 48 species was recorded over the two days, a very good total for winter, with 31 of these found during 10 minute counts at the 9 survey sites. Sunday 19 June was cool, sunny and still. Snow was clearly visible in the distance on the Brindabellas. Small mixed flocks were encountered at a few sites featuring such species as **Striated**, **Brown** and **Buff-rumped Thornbills**, **Silvereye**, **Superb Fairy-wren**, **Golden Whistler**, **White-eared Honeyeater**, **Grey Fantail**, **Weebill**, and **Spotted** and **Striated Pardalotes**. A **White-plumed Honeyeater** was with a small flock at site 8, and a **Mistletoebird** heard at site 2. Incidental records included **Brown Goshawk**, **Nankeen Kestrel**, **Yellow-faced Honeyeater**, **Common Bronzewing** and **Speckled Warbler**. **Western Gerygone** and **Australian Owlet Nightjar** were both heard. There was one breeding record: a pair of **Yellow-rumped Thornbills** busy building a nest in a large mistletoe in a Yellow Box.

The last 3 sites had to be surveyed on Monday 20 June. It was still and heavily overcast to begin with, then mist and drizzle drifted in and stayed for most of the morning. **Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoos** were heard at site 4 and a **Nankeen Kestrel** seen at site 3. Interesting incidental records included 2 **Brown Goshawks** together near the carpark (and a single seen later), a **Collared Sparrowhawk** flying over, **Gang-gang Cockatoos**, **Superb Parrots**, and a **Golden-headed Cisticola** in the paddock nearest the carpark. A sizeable mixed flock was encountered on the walk out which included a similar range of small species to those recorded on the previous day.

Mt Majura NR

Kathy Walter, John Goldie, and Peter Miller did the surveys over 26 and 29 June. The weather was cool and fine with light winds on both days. No mixed feeding flocks were encountered on either day and small bird numbers were correspondingly

low. Highlights included: a **Brown Goshawk** which was seen twice (once on site 3 and once between sites), a small group of **Superb Parrots** on site 2 and numbers of **Australian Wood Ducks** checking out nesting hollows on sites 1, 2, and 3. Other woodland birds recorded included **Grey Butcherbird**, **Spotted and Striated Pardalotes**, **Brown Thornbill**, **Silvereye** and **White-eared Honeyeater**. A total of 25 species was recorded over the 9 sites.

Mt Ainslie NR /Campbell Park

Duncan McCaskill, with Robin Hide, did the winter surveys in the Campbell Park area on Monday 20 June. The weather was cold, misty and still. Most of the sites were fairly quiet bird-wise, but quite noisy aircraft-wise. The airport seemed particularly busy. The busiest site had a small loose flock including **Brown-headed Honeyeaters**, **Grey Fantails**, **Yellow-rumped** and **Brown Thornbills**, **Superb Fairy-wrens** and a solitary and silent **Fan-tailed Cuckoo**, which was the highlight of the morning. There were a lot of **Crimson** and **Eastern Rosellas** at most sites and **Australian King Parrots** at several sites. Other woodland birds recorded on sites including **Laughing Kookaburra**, **Grey Butcherbird**, **Golden Whistler**, **Weebill**, and both **pardalotes**. **Noisy Miners** were recorded on or near 8 of the 9 sites. A total of 27 species was recorded in total over the 9 sites.

Majura Field Range

On Monday 20 June, Paul Fennell and Barbara Allan surveyed the defence training area. Conditions were a little bleak, with early mist and overcast all morning, but no wind. A total of 24 species was observed at the sites with 7 species observed in transit between them, including: **Willie Wagtail**, **Scarlet Robin**, **Magpie-lark**, **Purple Swamphen**, **White-winged Chough**, and **Masked Lapwing**. What was notable was the high level of activity at the Canberra Airport, quite a difference from the peaceful times of the last two years of covid.

Despite the season and the conditions, it was an interesting morning, with most of the usual suspects, but with a few surprises. The most unusual sighting was of **Brown Quail**, with 5 flushed at site 3 on the southern end of the Range and 2 at site 8, several kilometres away, at the northern end. As far as can be recalled, this is a first for the survey. **Common Bronzewing** were observed at a couple of sites. Also seen was a **White-faced Heron**, a species rarely observed here despite the prevalence of small dams. Other uncommon species spotted were the **Purple Swamphen** and a **Nankeen Kestrel**. Ten **Australian Wood Ducks** were inspecting hollows at the Grenade Range site near the airport. Some **Pacific Black Ducks** and another 4 **Wood Ducks** were seen on Micks Dam, but the **Australasian Grebes** usually there, were absent.

There were cockatoos and parrots around, with 82 **Sulphur-crested Cockatoos** feeding on the ground near Micks Dam at the northern end, 45 at another site, and small numbers at other sites. There were 25 **Red-rumped Parrots** at the Grenade Range together with 10 **Eastern Rosellas** and 4 **Galahs**. Not many honeyeaters were around, except for **Noisy Miners** and the odd **White-eared Honeyeater** and **Eastern Spinebill**. There were few little brown birds apart from site 3 with 15 **Weebills**, **Superb Fairy-wrens**, and 10 **Striated**, 20 **Yellow-rumped** and 2 **Buff-rumped Thornbills**. **Australian Magpies** were observed at a number of sites, while **Laughing Kookaburra** and **Grey Shrike-thrush** were heard at a number of places.

Newline

Sue Lashko surveyed on Monday 21 June, not a pleasant morning for surveying with low cloud and mizzle, but species numbers were about average for a winter survey, although the actual number of birds was low. The paddocks are greatly changed since the cessation of grazing following the 2020 fire, as well as the wet years since. Woody weeds are rapidly taking over in areas where African lovegrass has not taken hold. In addition, several areas have literally become swamps, with reeds, sedges and frogs, so gumboots are essential. All dams, as well as other depressions, contained water.

Australian Wood Ducks were plentiful, mostly calling from trees, but also a dozen on the small dam in the front paddock. Parrot numbers were low, except for **Rainbow Lorikeets** throughout the area. A **Brown Goshawk** and an **Australian Hobby** were the only raptors seen. Two species rarely recorded at Newline were **Fan-tailed Cuckoo** and a pair of **Grey Shrike-thrush**. A total of 34 species was recorded.

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Jerrabomberra West NR

Alison Rowell surveyed the sites behind the grasslands on 26 June, a fine morning. She recorded 27 species, with 16 in the survey sites, including **Australian Magpie**, **Crimson Rosella**, **Common Starling**, **Olive-backed Oriole**, **Black-shouldered Kite**, **Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike**, **Noisy Miner**, **Little Raven**, **Galah**, **Australian Raven**, **Eastern Rosella**, **Striated Pardalote**, **Grey Butcherbird**, **Kookaburra**, **Grey Fantail** and **Brown Goshawk**. The **Black-shouldered Kites** included two immature birds and an adult seen in the same location in autumn.

Additional species outside the survey sites were **Little Corella**, **Australian Wood Duck** (calling from trees), **Sulphur-crested Cockatoo**, **Speckled Warbler**, **Superb Fairy-wren**, **Weebill**, **Brown Thornbill**, **Flame Robin**, **Pied Currawong**, **Yellow-rumped Thornbill** and **European Goldfinch**. The **Flame Robins** were a pair with a mixed feeding flock, seen in the same location as in the autumn survey.

Tuggeranong Hill NR

Lia Battisson conducted the survey on 20 June, a cool, still and overcast morning, with occasional mizzle. It appeared to be a very quiet morning, but species diversity was a little higher overall than the average for winter, with 19 species within survey sites and another 7 elsewhere. That included a small mixed feeding flock on the edge of site 6, comprising **Striated** and **Brown Thornbills**, **Spotted Pardalotes**, **Weebills** and **White Throated Treecreepers**. One each of **White-eared Honeyeater**, **Golden Whistler**, **Grey Shrike-thrush** and **Grey Fantail** were observed, albeit not within sites and **Spotted Doves** (introduced species) were heard in three distinct places in the nearby suburbs.

Naas Sites

Julie McGuinness surveyed this rural lease south of Tharwa on 19 June on a cool to warm, calm, and mostly clear morning. As with recent surveys, the damp grassy understorey was still prolific, with thick green, grassy and weedy plants covering the sites. Species diversity and species numbers remain low, although more small bird species were seen than in the autumn survey. A total of 21 species was recorded in the sites. Three **Jacky Winters** and two **Diamond Firetails** were seen. Two small mixed feeding flocks were seen in two different sites, the first with **Weebill**, **Grey Fantail**, **Silvereye**, **Superb Fairy-wren** and **Buff-rumped Thornbill** and the second with **Yellow-rumped Thornbill**, **Grey Shrike-thrush** and **Flame Robin**. Seeing the **firetails**, **fairy-wrens** and a **robin** was very satisfying as none of these are now regularly recorded. No honeyeaters were observed besides the resident **Noisy Miners**, although a couple of **White-eared Honeyeaters** were heard outside the habitat area. **Two Wedge-tailed Eagles** glided over, and one **Brown Falcon** perched in a site. Once again, the species with highest numbers were the parrots, especially **Eastern Rosellas** and **Red-rumped Parrots**.



Eastern Rosella

Julian Robinson



Red-rumped Parrot

David Cook

New Places: July 2022

Sandra Henderson

Stony Creek Nature Reserve

Where: Captains Flat Rd, Carwoola NSW

I know I've been here once before, probably around ten years ago, and have no memory of the reserve apart from the manicured rural property across the road. The sign is well hidden off the road, but entry is across from Clydesdale Road. I walked a rough vehicle track until it petered out, then wandered.

The first half hour or so was very quiet, but then I came across a mixed feeding flock, with quite a variety of small birds. The song of **Speckled Warblers** initially attracted my attention, but then I identified a pair of **Scarlet Robins**, lots of **Striated Thornbills**, **Buff-rumped Thornbills**, **White-throated Treecreepers** and some **Weebills**. While making my way back towards the gate, I flushed (almost stood on) a groups of four **Painted Buttonquail**, which scattered in all directions. There were quite a few platelets around.

Definitely one to visit again.



Painted Buttonquail

Sandra Henderson

Wanna Wanna Nature Reserve

Where: off Pony Rd, Carwoola

It took me two visits to actually find the entrance, which is well hidden between two properties, and behind trees. Boundary Trail runs up between the properties then opens up into the reserve proper. A mown but quite rough track runs down one side of the reserve, and from there I simply followed the fenceline around the rest of the area.

I walked the perimeter of this quite small reserve. It's mainly undulating open rocky/grassy woodland, and it's possible to see into five separate dams on the neighbouring properties. I came across two mixed flocks, with **Red-browed Finches**, **Silvereyes**, **Spotted Pardalotes**, **Brown-headed Honeyeaters**, **White-eared Honeyeaters**, **Buff-rumped Thornbills**, **Striated Thornbills** and **Superb Fairywrens**. I heard an **Australian Owlet-Nightjar** not far off the track, but could not locate the bird. There were two areas along the back fenceline with a number of platelets, and I came across a third group on higher ground closer back towards where the reserve opens up closer to the entry. As I looked around I noticed three **Painted Buttonquail** moving away fairly slowly.

Another reserve I'll visit again.

Budjan Galindji grasslands reserve

Where: Franklin (not far from the oft-visited Franklin Pond).

This reserve, now formally identified in government documents as Budjan Galindji (=Water Bird) has a sign on the fence saying Franklin Grasslands, and is named on some maps as North Mitchell Grasslands. I was interested in the wetlands areas visible on the satellite views. The area closest to the entry appears to have no open water, but is obviously swampy because there were many frogs calling. I set off for the pond on the far side, which can be accessed via a wide mown path. On the day I visited there was a **Little Pied Cormorant**, a **White-faced Heron**, a **Eurasian Coot**, some **Grey Teal** and a group of **Australasian Swamphens** present. I could hear **Golden-headed Cisticolas** in the grass, and a few sat up on bushes to have a look.

Worth a visit if you are in the area.

Unnamed Coombs ponds

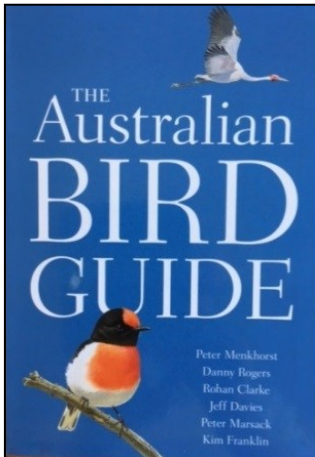
Where: end of Corrigan Rd in Coombs

These two small new ponds were a spur-of-the-moment visit, with curiosity aroused because I spotted them from the Molonglo woodland walk some distance away. They've been constructed on a creekline running under John Gorton Drive from the suburbs down to the river. The day I visited was very cold, and **Australian Wood Ducks** were the only birds on the water.

STOCKTAKE SALE!!

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

Below are some of the most popular books and latest publications. We get new books in all the time and sometimes popular books sell out, but they can easily be re-ordered. If you are looking for a particular book, talk to the sales desk team at the meeting, as they can look at ordering it for you or contact Kathy on sales@canberrabirds.org.au



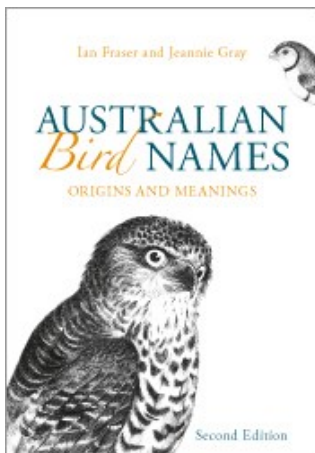
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Revised edition

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

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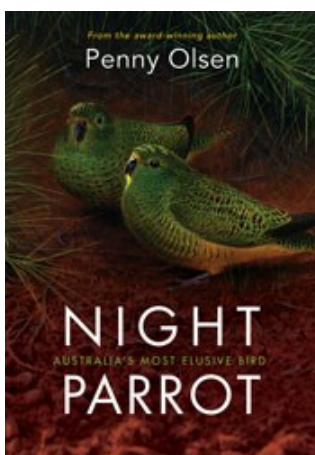


Australian Bird Names

Ian Fraser and Jeannie Gray

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Penny Olsen

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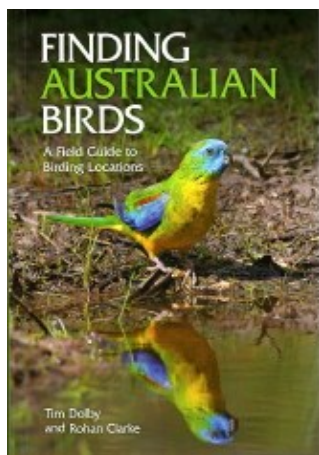
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Canberra Birds Conservation Fund

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 membership

2021-2022 memberships:

- Individual: \$50
- Family: \$55
- Institution: \$50
- School student (under 18) \$20

New members

COG welcomes the following new members:

A Pertsinidis
A Alaimo
K Young
T Verity
E Bitmead

NEXT NEWSLETTER

Deadline for September 2022 edition:

Wednesday 31 August 2022

Please send articles, advertisements, updates etc. to the Editors at:

gang-gang@canberrabirds.org.au

or

c/- The Secretary COG,

PO Box 301 Civic Square, ACT 2608

Articles should be less than 500 words (300 for reports of 1-day field trips) except by prior arrangement with the editor.

Photographs (prints or electronic) with or without articles are encouraged.

COG information

President: Neil Hermes

0413 828 045

president@canberrabirds.org.au

Treasurer: Prue Watters

cogoffice@canberrabirds.org.au

Secretary: Margaret Robertson

cogoffice@canberrabirds.org.au

Address for correspondence

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

Canberra Bird Notes

Editor: Michael Lenz

michael.lenz.birds@gmail.com

COG website

canberrabirds.org.au

COG Webmaster

Julian Robinson

cogwebmaster@canberrabirds.org.au

COG library

Membership Enquiries & Updates:

membership@canberrabirds.org.au

for change of address or other details.

Gang-gang Newsletter

Editor: Sue Lashko

gang-gang@canberrabirds.org.au

Lay-out Editor: Gail Neumann

Publication Sales

Kathy Walter

sales@canberrabirds.org.au

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