



Gang-gang

August 2023

Newsletter of the Canberra Ornithologists Group Inc.

AUGUST MEETING

Wednesday 9 August 2023

7.30 pm

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

The August meeting will be a normal face-to-face one held at our usual venue. Attendees should heed social distancing and good hygiene practice etc, and use their common sense and stay home if they have COVID symptoms. Mask wearing is recommended.

Emmeline Norris - Potential impacts of Second Generation Anticoagulant Rodenticides (SGARs) on native fauna in the ACT.

Andy Taylor - Connecting with Canberra - the Scarlet Robin Project.

The short presentation will be by **Emmeline Norris** from the Conservation Research Unit, ACT Government on **"Potential impacts of Second Generation Anticoagulant Rodenticides (SGARs) on native fauna in the ACT."**

Second Generation Anticoagulant Rodenticides (SGARs), commonly used for rodent control in Australia, pose a significant threat to native wildlife. The prolonged toxicity of these chemicals can

[Continued Page 2](#)

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

There was very little rain over the 4 weeks from 28 June to 25 July inclusive covered by this column, though only for about the final 10 days was there a run of clear, stable weather with some very heavy frosts often typical of July. Despite maximum temperatures often being above average, my analysis below supports my impression that bird activity (at least in terms of species) in the COG Area of Interest (AoI) during July was very low. Only around 3 of the spring/summer migrant species, of which some overwinter, seem to have been present in any numbers, and with many fewer "unusual" species reported than for quite some time. In contrast **Scarlet** and **Rose Robins** seem to have been present in higher than usual numbers, and there also seems to have been a recent influx of **White-fronted Chats**.

[Continued Page 2](#)



Rose Robin

Victor Braguine

Everyone welcome

AUGUST MEETING *continued from Page 1*

lead to the bioaccumulation of lethal doses in non-target species such as birds of prey, carnivorous mammals, and reptiles. Despite bans on the use of SGARs overseas, these chemicals are unregulated in Australia. This presentation outlines a recent analysis into the potential impacts of SGARs on non-target native fauna in the ACT and discusses important next steps for mitigating species declines due to secondary poisoning.

The main presentation will be by **Andy Taylor**, a Senior Natural Resource Management Advisor for South East Local Land Services (LLS) on “**Connecting with Canberra - the Scarlet Robin Project.**”

Andy Taylor’s area of work is predominantly within the Queanbeyan Palerang Regional Council area. He advises private landholders on all things soil, water and biodiversity and has a particular interest in building awareness around the plight of our woodland birds and the threats that face them. He also helps to design, manage and deliver grant programs to private landholders, many of which include opportunities to support bird habitat.

In particular, Andy will speak to us about a grant program he has been involved in, the Scarlet Robin Project. This landscape scale project has just completed its 7th year, with a focus on raising awareness about threatened woodland bird species across the communities of Braidwood, Burra, Michelago and Delegate. The project has delivered a lot of wonderful on-ground outcomes and community engagement and he will show a short film to celebrate the achievements so far.

But there is still so much to do, and Andy will be probing the audience about their experiences and observations that can help build on the great work that organisations like COG, LLS and others do to support our beautiful native birds!

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

continued from Page 1

The surprise observation during the period was the **White-browed Babbler** observed by Brian Grinter at Mt Majura NR on 1 July. He was observing a mixed feeding flock (MFF) of thornbills, **Speckled Warblers**, **Superb Fairy-wrens** and a **Golden Whistler** when he was surprised to hear a distinct babbling noise. He eventually located and photographed the bird. Though Brian provided directions, unfortunately no-one else was able to find this bird, despite some considerable searching on the same day. This is yet another example of an “unusual” species being observed, sometimes only by a single birder, or over a few or more days and then not being able to be found. One wonders how these birds manage to avoid detection with so many people looking for them.

Interestingly the nearest report otherwise during the period is from Weddin Mountains over 150 km to the NNW. This species is not listed in COG’s 2018-2019 Annual Bird Report (ABR) as opposed to the related **Grey-crowned Babbler** where it notes records in 2012 (Gundaroo) and most famously at nearby Duntroon from 2004-2007. However, the BIRD INFO on the COG website provides a map of the COG Aol indicating that it was reported from 4 grid cells in 2006 and 2007. Two of these appear from Aranda (from where I can recall the **White-browed Babbler** being reported previously) and Black Mountain, with the other 2 being to the east of Lake Burley Griffin (possibly Pialligo) and northwest of Gundaroo.

Up to 3 (and on one occasion 4) **Freckled Duck** were reported from Jerrabomberra Wetlands NR regularly throughout the period, and up to 5 ducks were also reported from the northern end of Lake George between 8-16 July, with a single duck reported from the Morass east of Lake Bathurst on 2 July.

The only spring/summer migrants reported during July that were not present in June were the **Australian Reed-Warbler** and **Tree Martin**. Single birds of the former were first reported from Lake Ginninderra and Jerrabomberra Wetlands NR on 6 and 11 July, respectively, with then some further reports at the latter, including 2 on 23 July. Five **Tree Martins** were reported from Rows Lagoon on 30 June and from Shepherds Lookout Walking Track on 2 July, with a single bird observed at the latter on 16 July.

There were no reports of the **Noisy Friarbird** in July (the most recent one was from Blundells Cottage on 21 June), or the **Rufous Whistler** (most recently from Tidbinbilla NR on 11 June). There was just one report of the **Dusky Woodswallow**, a

single bird from Campbell on 12 July. There were only 3 reports of the **Olive-backed Oriole** at close together locations, two birds at Mt Mugga Mugga on 1 July, a single bird at Narrabundah on 6 July, and 3 birds at Symonston on 16 July. However, there were still regular reports in July of the **Fan-tailed Cuckoo**, the least migratory local cuckoo, from 6 locations.

Single **Mistletoebirds** were reported from only 3 locations, at Mt Majura NR on 2 July, Wamboin on 4 July and Molonglo Gorge on 15 July. In contrast the **Superb Parrot** was still recorded from around 14 locations (4 south of the lake, including 35 birds near Isabella Pond on 6 July), just over half of the 25 locations in June. The **Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike** was still reported from around 20 locations, similar to the previous period. However, the **Grey Fantail** seems to have overwintered in the largest numbers being still reported from close to 70 locations, again similar to the previous period.

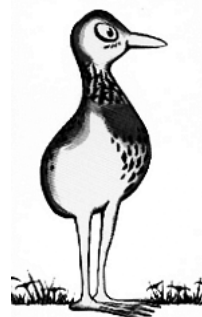
So, during August please keep an eye out for the above-mentioned spring/summer migrants. Towards the end of the month please also look out for the **Horsfield's** and **Shining Bronze -Cuckoos**, **Pallid Cuckoo**, **White-throated Gerygone** and **Fairy Martin**, which are amongst the first such species to return.

Of the species that move to Canberra and its surrounds from the mountains and higher country to spend autumn/winter here, the **Scarlet Robin** has continued to be present in large numbers, being reported from over 70 locations in total of which close to 40 were urban or peri-urban. In contrast, the **Flame Robin** was reported from around 27 locations, of which about 12 were urban/peri-urban. They have again been difficult to find in my local patch of Cooleman Ridge in July, but on 20 July we stumbled upon a flock of at least 12 (an equal number of males and females/immatures) on the southwest track.

The **Rose Robin**, often considered a passage migrant, seems to have enjoyed overwintering as it has been reported from 14 urban/peri urban locations, with the furthest west being 4 birds (2 males and 2 females) at Cotter Reserve on 19 July. However, there were no **Pink Robins** (nearest report was to the east of Melbourne) or **Red-capped Robins** (nearest report from Henty over 150 km to the west) reported during the period.

There has been only one peri-urban report of the **Crescent Honeyeater** (from Tuggeranong Hill on 16 July), plus from 5 other locations, all to the W of the Murrumbidgee River. The **Yellow-tufted Honeyeater** was reported from 3 locations, with a remarkable 12 birds feeding in a flowering eucalypt on Harolds Cross Rd near Captains Flat on 29 June, then 7 birds from 2 sites at the Scottsdale Reserve on 13 July, and a single bird at the ANBG on 17, 22 and 25 July. There were no **Swift Parrots** reported in July, with again the nearest reports being from SW Sydney.

There were also no reports of the **Brown Gerygone** during the period, with again the nearest being from Batemans Bay. Up to four **Bassian Thrush** were reported from the ANBG during July; they were also reported from 1 location in the mountains.



Australian Ornithological Services P/L

PO Box 385
South Yarra 3141
Victoria
04173 10200

enquiries@philipmaher.com

Good birding, good food

Kutini – Payamu Tour
(Iron Range NP) Wet Season
4 to 10 January 2024
Cairns to Lockhart River
incl. flights.

Far North Queensland
NEW DATES
21 May to 3 June 2024
Part 1: Atherton Tablelands,
Part 2: Musgrave, Archer River,
Kutini – Payamu (Iron Range NP)

Top End Birding Tour
20 June to 3 July 2024
Part 1: Darwin, Kakadu NP, Pine Creek,
Katherine,
Part 2: Victoria River, Timber Creek,
Kununurra. Optional Black Grasswren air
charter to Mitchell Plateau

Strzelecki Track Outback Tour
September 2024

Please contact Patricia Maher
for information & itineraries.

www.philipmaher.com

So please look out for the above species (especially the **Brown Gerygone**) as they continue to stay in Canberra and its surrounds during August, with some birds starting to move away towards the end of the month.

Apart from the **White-browed Babbler** and **Freckled Duck** summarised above, there were relatively few “unusual” birds reported during the period. Up to 2 **Plumed Whistling Ducks** were reported only from Trucking Yard Lane dam during the period. **Australian Shelducks** were again reported from 8 locations to the east and northeast of Canberra during the period, as well as a single duck just to the north of Murrumbateman on 18 July. However, the highest number seen together was 60 (less than half of June) on Wollogorang Rd on 16 July. No **Blue-billed Ducks** or **Great-crested Grebes** were reported during the period. Apart from Tidbinbilla NR Sanctuary, up to 4 **Musk Ducks** (mostly single otherwise) were reported from 6 locations.

Again, no **Stubble Quail** were reported during the period, but up to 12 **Brown Quail** were reported from 8 locations, slightly down from June. Five **Painted Button-quail** were reported from Gambles TSR in Sutton on 22 July, with only 1 other record of a single bird at Mt Majura NR on 1 July. Again, no **Little Button-quail** were reported. There were also no **White-headed Pigeon**, **Brush Bronzewing**, or **Diamond**, **Peaceful** or **Bar-shouldered Doves** reported during the period.

Up to 2 **Spotless Crakes** were regularly reported from Jerrabomberra Wetlands NR, as well as a single one at Edgeworth Pond on 5 July. A single **Australian Spotted Crake** was reported only from Jerrabomberra Wetlands NR on 6 July, but again no **Baillon’s Crake** was reported during the period. On 21 July Sandra Henderson flushed a **Lewin’s Rail** from roadside vegetation as it flew into the large reedy area on the other side of track at Rock Valley in Tidbinbilla NR. She noted she hadn’t encountered one there in the past. Another bird was reported from Westernmans Homestead in Namadgi NP on 24 July. Single **Buff-banded Rails** were reported only from Coombs Pond and Jerrabomberra Wetlands NR.

A **Banded Lapwing** was reported from the southwest corner of Lake George on 15 July and 4 birds from the northern end on 21 July. No **Red-necked Avocets**, **Comb-crested Jacana**, **Red-necked Stints**, **Common** or **Sharp-tailed Sandpipers**, **Caspian Tern** or **Australian Little Bittern** were reported during the period, but a single **Whiskered Tern** was reported by 4 different observers at the northern end of Lake George between 9-19 July.

No **Little Egret** or **Intermediate Egret** were reported during the period, and single **Great Egrets** only from 2 locations, the northern end of Lake George on 9 and 21 July and from Wollogorang Rd on 22 July. So, the influx of egrets is clearly over. Up to 2 **Royal Spoonbills** were reported from 4 locations, and the **White-necked Heron** from 6 locations. No **Glossy Ibis** were reported during the period.

Single **Barn Owls** were reported from 4 urban locations during the period and **Black-shouldered Kites** were reported from around 55 locations during the period (up from June – see breeding details below). The **Nankeen Kestrel** was reported from over 80 locations during the period, slightly up from June.

“Unusual” raptors were scarce otherwise and there were no reports of the **Spotted Harrier**, **Pacific Baza** or **Black Falcon** during the period. However, a white morph **Grey Goshawk** was reported from the farm dam on Lake Rd, Lake George, on 1 July, and a **Black Kite** from the side of Uriarra Rd just west of Denman Prospect on 20 July.

No **Azure Kingfishers**, **Glossy Black-Cockatoos**, **Greater Bluebonnets**, **Turquoise Parrots** and **Purple-crowned, Scaly-breasted** or **Little Lorikeets** were reported over the period, but a grey **Cockatiel**, possibly an escapee, was photographed on a powerline in Limestone Ave on 29 June. Up to two **Musk Lorikeets** were reported from 3 locations.

No **Spiny-cheeked** or **Scarlet Honeyeaters**, or **Little Friarbirds** were reported during the period, but a **Singing Honeyeater** was again reported from Casey on 9 July, and a **Blue-faced Honeyeater** from the ANU on 25 July. There has been a recent influx of **White-fronted Chats** into Molonglo from where they were reported from 4 locations from 16-24 July, with by far the greatest



Banded Lapwing

David Cook

number being the 25 reported by James Churches on 23 July. The vast majority of these were male birds feeding in the clover with **Yellow-rumped Thornbills**. Up to 11 birds were also reported from 3 locations to the east and northeast of the ACT.

A **Chestnut-rumped Heathwren** was reported from Cuumbeun NR on 11 July, but no **White-bellied Cuckoo-shrikes**, **Spangled Drongo**, **Tawny Grassbirds** or **Zebra Finches** were reported during the period.

Of the birds I have continued to ask readers to keep a special lookout for in 2023, **Jacky Winters** have been reported 4 locations. One bird was reported from Naas Rd at Apollo Rd on 1 July and 5 birds from Top Naas Rd on 6 July, and up to 2 birds at Gambles TSR in Sutton between 15-22 July. While these are all known locations, 2 birds were reported from Namina TSR, a new location, on 22 July.

Hooded Robins were also reported from 6 locations, all to the south of Canberra. Three birds were reported at Naas Rd at Apollo Rd and one up Apollo Rd, both on 1 July, and 4 birds were photographed on Top Naas Rd on 9 July. From 2 to 6 birds were also reported at Scottsdale Reserve between 10-14 July (these 4 are all known sites). Two pairs, one with a juvenile male, near Orroral Valley Homestead and up the valley from the tracking station, respectively, were observed on 16 July. A pair was also reported from Birrigai Trail of Tidbinbilla NR between 20-22 July, and then Gibraltar Peak Track on 23 July (both are new locations, at least for 2023).

Restless Flycatchers were reported from 5 locations; the one on Cooleman Ridge (which continued to evade me) was reported on 12 and 22 July. One was also reported at nearby McQuoids Hill NR on 2 and 7 July. A bird was reported by two observers in Orroral Valley on 16 July (the only new site), another at Illilanga farm on 29 June, as well as single birds at Scottsdale Reserve on 10 and 14 July.

The reporting of these species at quite a few sites, some of them new, is pleasing, though it confirms my belief that they are more often likely to be observed during winter.

Some further winter breeding by the **Black-shouldered Kite** has come to my attention:

- On 9 July James Churches saw five **Black-shouldered Kites** consisting of three juveniles and two adults on Majura Rd. The adults were actively hunting and when they caught something they would exchange it in mid-air to one of the juvenile birds. This would cause a lot of ruckus each time as the young birds chased their parents. This is very similar to Shorty's experience in Denman Prospect on 24 June reported in my July column. On 27 June Marieline Perrins reported 5 birds, with 2 adults feeding 3 juveniles, at Molonglo River Reserve. These may have been the same birds as Shorty saw as it was less than 2 km away (Shorty couldn't find his on 25 June). They are the only records for the period I can find, and breeding clearly seems to have been much reduced compared with 2022 despite the high numbers of **Black-shouldered Kites** reported (see above).

The warmer weather towards the end of the period seemed to trigger some breeding activity around my GBS site with **Crested Pigeons** observed mating and the **Australian Magpie** collecting nesting material. However, the **Australian Ravens** (well-known early breeders) do not yet seem to be at their usual nest.

Also, I have still been seeing mixed feeding flocks (MFF) of which, in particular, the **Superb Fairy-wren** (with only a few coloured males) but also the **Yellow-rumped Thornbill** (another well-known early breeder), form a major component (or the only species), so it doesn't appear these MFFs have yet broken up to breed. An interesting MFF reported by Jenny Bounds from her Jerrabomberra West COG woodland survey site on 30 June comprised 17 **Crested Pigeons**, 15 **Eastern Rosellas**, a few **Crimson Rosellas**, 20 **European Goldfinches** and 7 **Southern Whiteface**, all feeding on seeds of tall weeds (thistle and others).

In respect of single flocks of large birds, on 9 July Sandra Henderson counted 210 **Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoos** while on Molonglo River woodland track. There was a rough count by two observers of the first group of about 110 birds, then many smaller groups of 5-10 birds counted carefully. All were flying from the Mt Stromlo area to the Arboretum. I have also been seeing quite a few of this species in this area during the period.



Restless Flycatcher

Julian Robinson



Eastern Spinebill

David Cook

Alison Rowell posted that a friend reported a dispersed flock of about 100 **Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoos** flying south over Wamboin towards Kowen pine forest on 18 July. A group of about 50 birds was seen later the same day, also flying towards the forest; they were expected to be feeding and roosting in the pines. Smaller flocks flew over most days, sometimes stopping to feed in pines on their property, but these numbers were higher than usual.

Finally on 10 July John Leonard posted that when he runs on Red Hill he likes to run in the ditch below the Deakin Firetrail, which is too stony and hazardous for enjoyable running. In the stretch of the ditch between Kent Street and the road up to Red Hill Lookout (~2 km) the north slope is planted thickly with grevilleas in places. Along the whole stretch he estimated there were about 80 **Eastern Spinebills** in total feeding that morning, a remarkable number of this species indeed.

While August is the last month of winter, it is also the first month when movement usually picks up. So, please watch out for any further overwintering spring/summer migrants as well as the first species returning, for the altitudinal migrants before they start to leave, for MFFs and single species flocks, for roost sites and flights, and for any early 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.

Once again, my sincere thanks to everyone who has contributed to my two main data sources, posting on the COG email Discussion List ("COG chatline") 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

Lake Bathurst Surveys. Would you like to be involved?

COG is working with Birdlife Australia to find two volunteers for the ongoing water bird surveys at Lake Bathurst (between Tarago and Goulburn). This survey is part of Birdlife Australia's Key Biodiversity Area (KBA) program. Michael Lenz has been doing the survey for many years and is ready to hang up his walking boots.

The surveys are twice yearly in spring and autumn, though Michael says he likes to go more often than this. The ideal people will have good bird identification skills, with particular ability to identify waders, be happy to walk 6-8 km across sometimes wet and uneven ground, and be able to climb through a fence or two.

If you are interested, either chat to a Committee member or send a short email to COGOffice@canberrabirds.org.au. Mark your email 'Lake Bathurst EOI' and include your name and a contact phone number. If you have questions or would like more detailed information, include them in your email and you will be contacted.

COG Committee

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

The continued viability and vibrancy of Canberra Birds and all that it provides to its members is reliant on our volunteers.

Some of our long serving volunteers have indicated their wish to retire. It's time for others to step up and take the club forward with fresh energy and enthusiasm. To fulfill our governance requirements the following positions must be filled:

Committee positions

Vice-president
Minutes Secretary
Treasurer
General committee members

To continue the same of level of services we currently provide, the following positions need to be filled if they are to be continued:

Non-committee positions

Members' meeting convenor
Bookstall Officer
Gang-gang newsletter editors
Website manager and assistants

Our work includes the study of birds, collecting robust data to improve knowledge and understanding about birds; developing community interest in birds through field trips and monthly meetings and promoting conservation of birds and habitats through research and advocacy.

See the [Canberra Birds website](#) for more information about us and what we do.
Becoming involved is rewarding so please get in touch if you would like to know more.

Email cogoffice@canberrabirds.org.au
COG Committee

COG funding for a person to attend the Australasian Ornithological Congress

BirdLife Australia and Birds New Zealand are co-hosting the 12th [Australasian Ornithological Conference](#) (AOC) in Brisbane in November. The AOC is the primary conference for BirdLife Australia and is the largest biennial gathering of enthusiastic amateur and professional ornithologists from our region.

COG Committee has decided to support a suitably qualified person to attend this important conference.

Applications for funding are open to anyone whose participation in the AOC aligns with COG's objectives. This will include tertiary students as well as other people undertaking demonstrated research or projects that support our objectives. While giving a presentation at the conference is not a requirement of COG funding, it would be looked upon favourably as we assess applications.

For more information including COG's objectives, see the [AOC funding application page](#) on the COG website.

COG Committee

Future Field Trips

COG Trips

Each participant must register prior to their chosen trip with their name and contact number and, before proceeding on the trip, must comply with the participant's responsibilities (wording follows). An emergency contact name and phone 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."

New birders and visitors are welcome. If you do not have your own binoculars, COG can lend you a pair, so please advise the trip leader when you register.

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.

Do NOT attend if you have tested positive for Covid, have been a close contact within the past 5 days, or have any Covid, cold or flu symptoms.

If you look on the website, you will note that there are still 11 field trip dates with neither a leader or a venue, including every weekend of September. If you can assist, please contact Sue Lashko at smlashko@gmail.com

Sunday 6 August - Bungendore

Meet at 8.30am at Spotlight carpark in Queanbeyan for carpooling.

We'll travel to Bungendore to check out three birding sites. The farm dam out on Lake Rd (birding from the road beside the dam) often has a wide variety of species, the town common has a couple of large ponds (about 500m walking), and Trucking Yard Lane dam and paddocks (viewing from the roadside) are always worth a look. If anyone has a scope that may be useful for the Lake Rd stop.

Leader: Sandra Henderson (shirmax2931@gmail.com)

Please register with your name and phone number, and the name and number of an emergency contact.

Sunday 13 August – Cooleman Ridge

Meet at 9:00am at the nature reserve end of Kathner Street, Chapman. That's the end farthest from Hindmarsh Drive. We will walk 3 to 4 km depending on which route we decide on. There are some steepish sections but great views from the trig station. The eBird hotspot is <https://ebird.org/hotspot/L2541730/>.

Leader: Alison Mackerras (alison@mackerras.id.au)

Wednesday 16 August, Molonglo Reserve Woodland Walk

Meet at 9am at the unnamed pond at the end of Roy Corrigan Close, Coombs (Roy Corrigan Close does not appear in Google Maps but it comes off the northern end of Southcott View).

The woodland walk provides some great views over the Molonglo Reserve, and finches and chats have been seen there in recent weeks. There is also a good chance of some raptors, as well as a historic site and a wonderful old Apple Box tree.

Please register with Sandra (shirmax2931@gmail.com) with your name and phone number, and the name and number of an emergency contact.

Sunday 27 August - Percival Hill Nature Reserve, Nicholls

Start time: 8.45 am. Finish: approx 12.30 pm.

Description: Percival Hill Reserve to the south is bordered by Ginninderra Creek. It has lots of reeds and ground cover for many species including **European Goldfinch**, and **Red-browed Finch** and **Double-barred Finch**. We will pass Gungahlin Pond that has island rookeries for **Royal Spoonbill** and **Australian White Ibis**. The hill summit has a vantage point that suits raptors like **Little Eagle** and **Wedge-tailed Eagle**. The woodland hosts many species including **White-eared** and **White-plumed Honeyeaters**.

Meet at Harden St, Crace, by Crace Recreation Park for carpooling. This is a moderate ability walk of 4-5 km with a steep hill to climb. Bring sturdy boots, hat, warm clothing and morning tea.

Please register with Bill Graham on email bsgraham1948@gmail.com (please note new email address).

Sunday 3 September - Stromlo Forest West

Description: An easy walk of approximately 2 km through woodland at the far western edge of Stromlo Forest Park. We will NOT be climbing Mt Stromlo and will be several kilometres from the main biking trails of the Forest Park. Birding is usually good and we can expect a good range of species and springtime bird activity.

Meeting time and place: Meet at 8.30am, finish approx 10:30am. Park at the carpark called 'Stromlo Forest Park Western Carpark' on Google Maps. If this car park is full there is another tiny car park about 200 metres further down Uriarra Road.

Please wear closed shoes and long pants as the grass is long and can be scratchy. Bring a hat.

Register with Kim Farley by email to kimlouiseFarley@gmail.com with your name and number, and the name and number of an emergency contact.

Currently, this is the only field trip scheduled for September due to the fact that no one else has volunteered to lead an outing. Please contact Sue Lashko at smlashko@gmail.com if you are prepared to lead an outing.

Advance notice of a mid-week trip to the coast in October:

Tuesday 24 to Friday 27 October - Shellharbour area

We will stay at the NRMA Shellharbour Beachside Holiday Park, Shellharbour Village, (<https://www.nrmaparksandresorts.com.au/shellharbour-beachside/>) which offers villas, cabins and powered sites. Note that NRMA Blue members receive a discount. Numbers will be limited to 16, so please register early as bookings should be made soon. Advise me if you would like to share. **DO NOT book accommodation until I have confirmed your registration.**

We will explore nearby Killalea State Park, Lake Illawarra, Minnamurra and other sites recommended by members of the Illawarra Bird Observers Club who have offered to join us on walks and a joint dinner one evening. Visit their website - <https://www.iboc.com.au/> - for a list of their walks and bird species observed. We will encounter a range of waterbirds and shorebirds as well as bush birds and if we are lucky, an **Australian Logrunner**.

To register contact Prue Watters prue.watters@gmail.com



kingfisher park
birdwatchers lodge

Julatten, 1½hrs. North of Cairns

**FOR THE BEST BIRDWATCHING
IN FAR NORTH QUEENSLAND**

Self-contained Units,
Bunk Rooms & Campground

www.birdwatchers.com.au
sootyowl@bigpond.com
Find us on Facebook

NATURE LODGE OPTICS

62 OWEN ST HUSKISSON 0415516616
108 QUEEN ST BERRY 0488004700

The region's most trusted source for
Binoculars and Spotting Scopes

Free advice and unique guest
accommodation in Jervis Bay..

Proud Official Stockists of
**SWAROVSKI - LEICA - ZEISS - STEINER
BUSHNELL - VORTEX - SCHÖEFHAUSEN**

www.naturelodge.com.au



Feathers'n'Friends

Birdwatchers & nature lover's accommodation

Feathers'n'Friends cottage is fully self-contained with extensive facilities to ensure guests can enjoy short or extended stays.

The secluded lodging is surrounded by tropical rainforest and beautiful gardens with varying habitats and a large variety of birds and wildlife.

Activities in the area include birdwatching at nearby Mt Lewis and other birdwatching locations, as well as Daintree River nature tours and other attractions.

Discounts available for Birdlife Australia members.

Check our website for comprehensive details, rates, and bookings:

www.feathersnfriends.com.au

Fred & Jeanette Birkbeck

244 Clacherty Road
Julatten QLD 4871
Tel: 07 4094 1665

Email: freddy@feathersnfriends.com.au

Field Trip Reports

Sunday 9 July – Kambah Pool north

Nine members and friends gathered at the car park at 9.00 a.m. to walk part of the less-used northern track in the direction of the Cotter. The morning was cold and overcast, but the rain held off and we were spared the strong winds of the previous day. One early bird who arrived well before the start time was treated to the song of a **Superb Lyrebird** on the far side of the Murrumbidgee, but the rest of us missed out. A **White-Throated Treecreeper** was busy in trees at the car park as we assembled, and showed itself for all to see. We walked roughly 2.5 km northward, returning by the same route. Birds were not plentiful, but a sprinkling of honeyeaters made an appearance: **Eastern Spinebills** were the most numerous, but **Yellow-faced, White-eared, White-naped, New Holland** and **Brown-headed Honeyeaters** were also seen or heard in small numbers. Other species included **Scarlet Robin** and **Eastern Yellow Robin**. Twenty-five species were recorded in just over two hours. A swamp wallaby sitting very close to the path was quite undisturbed by our presence.

Kevin Windle

Sunday 16 July 2023 – Googong Western Foreshores

Twenty hardy souls gathered at the Foreshore Carpark to take a chilly stroll along the dam. Many reported frost and fog from their various areas but the morning had cleared to mainly sunshine by 9am, leaving only a brisk, cold wind to deal with as we walked along the edge of the water. Someone did remark it was rather like opening your fridge door and it is true the air was really cold. Everyone, including the fisher people along the shore, was well rugged up and at least we were walking.

Large groups of **Eurasian Coots** were spotted (83 in the count eventually) enlivened with a **Black Swan, Pacific Black Ducks, Australasian Darters** and **Australasian Grebes**, and a few **Dusky Moorhens**.

It was a bit warmer round the corner into Shannon's Inlet but even better as we climbed up the hill for our return path. The walk up the slope and some sun made for a much better temperature up the hill.

The views were really excellent but did not include a huge number of birds. A total for the day was credible a 27 species over two hours with three **White-eared Honeyeaters** and a **Scarlet Robin** the highlights.

It was a most enjoyable walk with a few able to share coffee afterwards at the picnic tables. Thank you, Sandra, for another enjoyable event and for me an introduction to a new area. One of the delights of the COG outings is finding out more about our region and the many wonderful spots we can access.

Denise Rawling

Wednesday 19 July – Nadjung Mada Nature Reserve

For all but two of the 15 participants on this walk, Nadjung Mada Nature Reserve was a new birding location.

Given there had been an overnight minimum of -6 degrees, we were very fortunate that the sun was shining and there was no wind, from the time we parked our cars until the finish of the walk. Ranger Michelle had kindly agreed to unlock the gate for us and our walk got off to an excellent start with a male **Flame Robin** seen perching on the high fence that separates the Reserve from the Bimberi Centre. It was in the company of a small flock of **Superb Fairy-wrens**. Almost straight after that **Brown-headed Honeyeaters** were heard calling, and we left the mown track to look for them. Three large Yellow Box trees were alive with birds, including the **Brown-headed Honeyeaters, Silvereyes** and a **Grey Fantail**. Also seen in this area was a pair of **Scarlet Robins**.

We were just leaving the robins when an excited cry of "Look up! Raptor!" had us viewing a **Brown Falcon** which was calling as it flew towards another tall Yellow Box where there was a nest and another falcon. Both birds were seen on the nest. Other occupants of the tree were a noisy group of **Sulphur-crested Cockatoos**. A **Black-shouldered Kite** and a **Wedge-tailed Eagle** were seen later in the walk.

Also seen (or heard) in good numbers were **Eastern Rosellas, Common Starlings, Weebills, Little Corellas, Galahs, Striated Pardalotes** and **Noisy Miners**. A highlight towards the end of the walk was the sighting of five **Golden-headed Cisticolas**, one of which perched obligingly on a leafless hawthorn shrub, enabling all to get clear views. A total of 37 species was observed.

Thanks to Sandra and Margaret for taking us to another excellent birding location.

Wendy Whitham

Woodland Surveys – Winter 2023 survey round

compiled by Jenny Bounds

Note: not all sites are reported.

Mulligans Flat NR

Jenny Bounds and the team conducted the survey on Sunday 25 June. It was a mild morning with no overnight frost, slightly overcast to start, with a cool breeze rising as the morning progressed. A total of 39 species was recorded, slightly less than the winter average. Most of the teams reported low numbers of birds and mixed feeding flocks were scarce, the exception being a large group moving through site 17 on the eastern side, including 6 **Varied Sittellas**, **Golden Whistler** and several smaller species including **Weebills**, and **Buff-Rumped Thornbills**. **Golden Whistlers** were reported by most teams, there were a few **Yellow-faced Honeyeaters** on the west ridge, 2 **Black Swans** on the first dam, 2 **Red-browed Finches** (uncommon), and a **Mistletoebird** at site 12 on the quartz ridge. Three **Scarlet Robins** in the same area was another good sighting. However, the highlight was a pair of **Bush Stone-Curlews** north of the Woolshed, in a wattle patch with fallen/senescent timber; a pair of the curlews was recorded at the same site in March 2019. Thanks to all the team.

Goorooyaroo NR (northern area)

Nicki Taws did the winter woodland bird survey at Goorooyaroo north on 18th June. Despite the relatively mild, sunny and windless morning, the birds were quiet and fairly scarce. Parrots and cockatoos were in the usual numbers but only two small mixed flocks were encountered and had few species compared to the usual winter flocks. Highlights in one of these flocks included **Scarlet Robin** and **Speckled Warbler**. A **Superb Parrot** was also seen at one site. Interestingly, **White-eared Honeyeaters** were recorded at 5 of the sites - one of the most commonly recorded species. **Noisy Miners** were recorded at their usual sites but in relatively low abundance.

Mt Majura NR

Peter Miller did the survey on 24 June in mild but windy weather. Birds both large and small were few and far between; a total of only 16 species was recorded over the 9 sites with an additional 6 species recorded between sites. It was interesting to note that in last year's June survey, several pairs of **Australian Wood Ducks** were very vocal and inspecting nest hollows, whereas this year none were recorded on any of the sites, although 2 pairs were observed on a small dam between survey sites. The only nesting behaviour observed was a single pair of Galahs inspecting a hollow between sites. Highlights included: an Accipiter sp. (**Brown Goshawk** or **Collared Sparrowhawk**) seen very briefly above site 3. Woodland birds recorded included **Grey Butcherbird**, **Striated Pardalote**, **Weebill** and **Brown Thornbill**.

Mt Ainslie NR /Campbell Park

The winter survey of the 9 sites on the lower eastern slopes of Mt Ainslie was carried out by Michael Lenz on 21 June, a sunny and calm morning (after severe frost overnight). Most sites were very weedy. Overall, bird activity was low. There was one larger mixed feeding flock at one site with 10 species, including 2 **Speckled Warblers**. Apart from **Noisy Miners**, only one other honeyeater species, a **White-naped Honeyeater**, was promptly escorted out by **Noisy Miners**. The most widespread species at sites were: **Spotted Pardalote** (7 sites), **Crimson Rosella** (6) and **Noisy Miner** (6), although the **Weebill** was the most frequently noted along the complete walk. At sites 20 species were recorded, with an additional 8 recorded between sites.

Majura Field Range

Kim Farley and Barbara Allan surveyed the Defence training range sites on 30 June. It was a sunny and calm morning after the very cold weather of the previous days.

Overall, only 25 species at the eight sites were recorded. Barbara noted that this is the lowest number of species in the years she has been participating in the surveys there. On the other hand, more waterbird species were seen than is usual, including **Australasian Grebe** on a dam that has never produced a single sighting of any species. They also counted 65 **Pacific Black Ducks**, with most of these at just the one site. As with the March survey, there were far fewer **Noisy Miners** than has been usual. Five **Scarlet Robins** were recorded, along with **Striated**, **Buff-rumped** and **Yellow-rumped Thornbills** at several sites and along the tracks between sites.

Newline

Sue Lashko surveyed on 10 June, a cool and clear morning. The ground vegetation (grasses/weeds) was still thick and most dams were quite full. Of the 31 species recorded, a single **Golden Whistler** was the only one that wasn't a 'regular'. The only

raptor for the morning was a **Brown Goshawk**. Only 4 **Rainbow Lorikeets** were seen; perhaps they have dispersed to flowering trees elsewhere. **Australian Wood Ducks** were seen in trees on several sites, always in pairs, possibly not nesting yet.

Jerrabomberra West NR

Jenny Bounds and Alison-Russell French did the survey in the woodland patch on 30 June, in reasonable weather. It was quiet on the sites, with mostly the common regulars, and more rosellas than usual, especially **Eastern Rosellas**. Only one mixed flock of **Buff-rumped** and **Striated Thornbills** with **Weebills** was encountered at site 5 in the better-quality woodland. A **Golden Whistler** was heard off site, a small group of 4 over-wintering **White-naped Honeyeaters** was seen late in the survey on the way out, as well as a small group of **Little Ravens** at site 7 and a **Black-faced Cuckoo-Shrike** flying through. There was a large flock of several species on the grasslands edge, feeding on seeds of tall weeds (thistle and others): 17 **Crested Pigeons**, 15 **Eastern Rosellas**, a few **Crimson Rosellas**, 20 **European Goldfinches** and 7 **Southern Whiteface**. A total of 25 species was recorded, on the low side for a winter survey. Prolific weeds (eg thistles, St John's Wort, fleabane, Verbascum) have changed the area and sites since the surveys were started there in 2005.

Tuggeranong Hill NR

Lia Battisson surveyed on 10 June. It was a mild, still and overcast morning. Highlights included a small mixed feeding flock between sites, comprising **Spotted Pardalotes**, **Scarlet Robin**, **Golden Whistler**, **Weebill**, **White-throated Treecreeper** and four species of **thornbill**. In addition, two **Painted Buttonquail** ran off into the undergrowth. Totals for the morning were 18 species within survey sites and another 14 elsewhere.

Naas Sites

Julie McGuiness conducted the winter survey on a rural lease south of Tharwa on 20 June. The survey commenced a bit later than usual due to the very cold and frosty, minus 5.6 degree morning. Otherwise, the weather was clear and calm.

Species diversity and species numbers were low. Only 16 species were observed in the survey sites. Both **rosella** species were seen in numbers; as well as at least four **Common Bronzewing** feeding together on the ground in one of the grazed paddock sites. Only one resident **Noisy Miner** was observed, the only honeyeater seen. One **Scarlet Robin** was also seen within a site. The most interesting in-site sighting was a male **Satin Bowerbird** seen perching in the open in a dead Blakely's Red Gum (the first time this species has been recorded at this woodland survey location).

Two mixed species feeding flocks were also seen in the general area, outside of the sites. One included many **Yellow-rumped Thornbills**, a few **Buff-rumped** and **Brown Thornbills**, **Scarlet Robin**, **White-eared Honeyeater** and **Varied Sittella**. A second mixed flock was observed about a kilometre away from the sites, based in an area of recent pasture grass burning, which included up to 10 **Flame Robins**, 2 **Scarlet Robins**, 2 **Diamond Firetails**, 3 **European Goldfinch**, 2 **Jacky Winters** and a number of **Yellow-rumped Thornbills**.



The eight card designs:

- **Australian magpie** at the National Arboretum Canberra
- **Australian white ibis** at the National Carillon, Canberra
- **Bush-stone curlews** at Mulligans Flat Woolshed
- **Crimson rosellas** at the National Gallery of Australia Skyspace
- **Galahs** at the Balloon Spectacular
- **Gang-gang cockatoos** at City Hill
- **Rainbow-crested cockatoo** at Black Mountain Tower
- **Tawny frogmouths** at Shine Dome

Canberra Birds 8-pack of greeting cards

Stock up on greeting cards, and be ready for all occasions!

Each fun and vibrant card pairs a different bird species with an iconic Canberra location. The cards are drawn by local cartoonist **Stuart McMillen**, a resident of Gorman Arts Centre, Braddon.

Greeting cards **\$6 each** or **8-packs for \$40**.

Shop directly via
stuartmcmillen.com/shop

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

2022-2023 memberships:

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

New members

COG welcomes the following new members:

H Cousins
M Hyde
G Tedder
P Muralidharan

NEXT NEWSLETTER

Deadline for September 2023 edition:

Wednesday 30 August 2023

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

gang-gang@canberrabirds.org.au

or

c/- The Secretary, COG,

PO Box 331, Jamison Centre, ACT 2614.

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: Vacant

cogoffice@canberrabirds.org.au

Secretary: Margaret Robertson

cogoffice@canberrabirds.org.au

Address for correspondence

The Secretary
COG, PO Box 331
Jamison Centre, ACT 2614

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

COG E-mail Discussion List

COG E-mail Discussion List COG has an email discussion list for members and friends: 'CanberraBirds'. Join (subscribe to) the list by following the links on the COG website or by sending an email message to canberrabirds-subscribe@lists.canberrabirds.org.au. The subject line and body of the email can be empty.

To unsubscribe, either permanently or temporarily, send an email message to canberrabirds-unsubscribe@lists.canberrabirds.org.au.

If you wish to re-subscribe after being unsubscribed temporarily, simply follow the 'subscribe' instructions above.

Copyright in *Gang-gang* articles is retained by the articles' authors.

Gang-gang is published on COG's website in PDF format.

ISSN 2208-018X

