

Gang-gang

Canberra Ornithologists Group Inc

Canberra Birds Newsletter

SEPTEMBER 2025

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Photo: Striated Thornbill - 6 August 2025 -
Susan Main

SEPTEMBER MEETING

Wednesday 10 September 2025

7:30 pm

Canberra Girls Grammar School,
Chapel, corner Gawler Cres and Melbourne Ave, Deakin

The September 2025 meeting will be a normal face-to-face one held as usual at the Canberra Girls Grammar School but will again be held in the Chapel where we will be meeting for the rest of 2025 while the Multi-media Theatre (MMT) is being renovated (see details below).

Yiqing Chen - Global distribution and evolution of mixed-species flocking in birds

Bethany Dunne and Stuart Harris - Birds of the Snow Gum woodlands: a post-fire study

The Chapel is much easier to find than the MMT. As for previous 2025 meetings entry and exit for the Chapel are from the main gates on Melbourne Ave, which automatically open and close. The Entry gate will be open, so please drive through and park in the main parking area to your left. Once parked proceed to the Chapel using main path as previously before turning left at the Admin Hub, or use the more direct (but darker) route keeping the Boarding House to your left – see the amended [map](#).

Limited parking will also be available using the Chapel Drive entrance on Gawler Cres and car park, this gate should also be open.

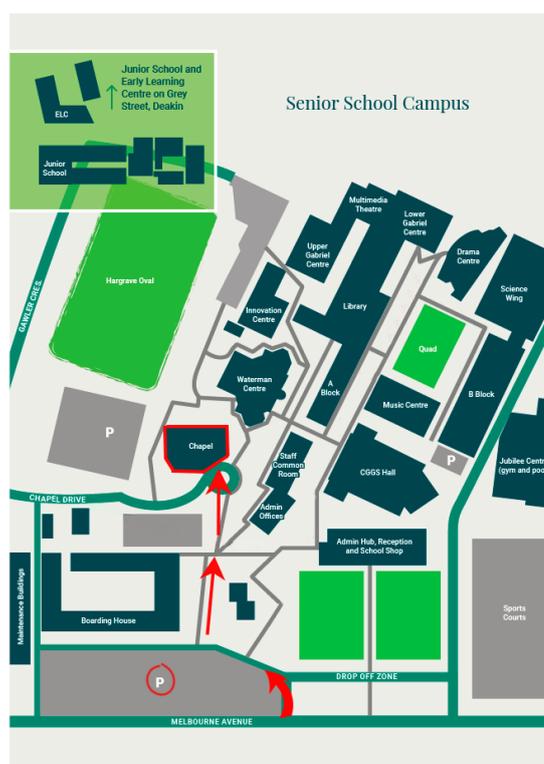
Though it is well lit, as it will be dark before and after the meeting, a torch for finding your way to the Chapel and back to your car is recommended. The Exit gate is on a sensor pad, so please drive up to the gate and it will open for you.

As COVID is still widespread in the community 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.

The short presentation will be by **Yiqing Chen**, a Ph D student at the Research School of Biology at the ANU, and is titled: **“Global distribution and evolution of mixed species flocking in birds.”**

Mixed-species grouping is considered uncommon in animals, while frequently seen in birds. But just how common is this behaviour? Studies on mixed-species flocking have focused on benefits, costs and things happening within the flocks. However, to date we still do not know how many species join mixed-species flocks. We extracted the flocking behaviour data not just from published literature, but also from field guides, which are rich in natural history knowledge. Thus, we were able to quantify how widespread mixed-species flocking is and highlight that mixed-species grouping is a majorly overlooked but important form of social behaviour.

The main presentation will be by **Bethany Dunne** and **Stuart Harris**, Fire Ecologist and Project Officer, respectively, in the ACT Government Office of Nature Conservation, on **“Birds of the Snow Gum woodlands: a post-fire study.”**



During the devastating Black Summer bushfires of 2020, large areas of Snow Gum woodlands across the ACT were burnt, much of it experiencing high severity fire for the second time in just 17 years. As this vegetation type represents a large proportion of the ACT uplands, the ACT Government Office of Nature Conservation fire ecology team started a monitoring project in 2020, investigating the interactions between fire history, vegetation structure and fauna in the Snow Gum woodlands of the ACT. This talk will discuss one of the sub-projects looking at the avian passive acoustic monitoring and analysis completed to date and will include a talk by Stuart Harris and his significant contribution to the bird surveys.

News from the Committee

A committee meeting was not possible in August, due to lack of a quorum but we will meet as usual in September. Many everyday committee activities continued, however. Of note:

- We submitted a response to ACT govt on the 'Draft Plan Amendment 05 - Removing the Future Urban Area (FUA) Overlay and Setting Zoning for a Number of Sites, including Bluetts Block and Coombs Peninsula'. Our response supported the official removal of Bluetts and Coombs from the urban area. Thank you to Jenny Bounds for preparing the response.
- Finalisation of changed arrangements for the 2025 Canberra Birds Blitz. Following the retirement of Nicki Taws as Blitz Coordinator, no-one has been found to take up the role - despite much effort. For information about the changed arrangements and how it will affect you, see the item elsewhere in this issue of Gang-gang.
- Two further Canberra Birds brochures 'Birding in the Jerrabomberra Wetlands' and 'Birding in the ACT' are nearing completion - which is very pleasing for the Brochure team led by Julie Hotchin. These new brochures complement our existing (new) brochures and like them, promote local birds and birding, birding locations in the ACT, and Canberra Birds itself.
- On 11 August Kim Farley and colleagues from the Friends of Bluetts group were invited to visit Block 402, the large block of rural land immediately adjoining Bluetts Block to its west. Jenny Bounds attended the quarterly ACT Biodiversity Conservation Forum meeting on 21 August. On 27 August Kim attended EcoFocus, an annual science and conservation event hosted by the ACT Office of Nature Conservation.

Kim Farley. *President*, Canberra Birds
president@canberrabirds.org.au

Oops! Have you forgotten to renew your membership?

Canberra Birds membership falls due on July 1 each year. If you haven't yet renewed, open our [Membership web page](#), fill in your details, make your payment and it's done.

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

The weather turned dry from the start of the just over 4 weeks from 27 July to 26 August covered by this column. While the mainly easterly wind stream drenched the coast, any rain blown inland mostly petered out before it reached the ACT. By the end of the period the previous wet conditions had become very dry, aided by some strong frosts. Signs of spring remained few, until some warmer days at the end finally got the blossoms going. Both my notes and analysis below confirm that bird activity in the COG Area of Interest (Aoi) again remained low. Of the spring/summer migrants only some of those species which overwintered seemed to be returning in any numbers, with the numbers of some of the autumn/winter altitudinal migrants and of “unusual” species reported remaining low.

Highlights

In the absence of any “special unusuals” during the period, the best sighting over the period may have been the female **Hooded Robin** near Gundaroo (see below), a rare recent record in the northern half of the COG Aoi. Another is the rare sighting of a peri-urban **Brown Treecreeper** at Kama NR/The Pinnacle. However, these are very much offset by the lack of any reports of the **Restless Flycatcher** in the COG Aoi during the period. I can’t recall this ever happening before in winter, when the number of reports of this species are usually higher.

Spring/summer migrants

Of the spring/summer migrants still present in July or returning during the period (as indicated), there was another report (1 location in July) of an overwintering **Shining Bronze-Cuckoo** heard at Campbell Park on 8 and 19 August. There was also a report of a returning **Horsfield’s Bronze-Cuckoo** from The Pinnacle NR on 7 August, and also one for a returning **Pallid Cuckoo** in Holt on 19 August. In contrast there were reports of the **Fan-tailed Cuckoo**, the least migratory species of the local cuckoos, from 12 locations.

There have been no reports to date of returning **Western** and **White-throated Gerygones**, which are often first reported in late August. However, there was a report of 2 very early returning **Noisy Friarbirds** at the Jerrabomberra Wetlands NR (JWNR) on 8 August. There have been reports from 6 locations of the **Rufous Whistler**, the first being from the JWNR on 4 August (exactly a month after the previous report) but with 24 August the first date for 3 other locations.

There were reports of **Australian Reed-Warblers** from 3 locations, the earliest being from the JWNR on 31 July (the previous record was from there on 5 July). **Tree Martins** have definitely returned being reported from 16 locations (compared with 4 in July). Returning **Fairy Martins** have been reported from just 3 locations, but with the first, 7 birds at Rowes Lagoon on 28 July, being quite early.

Returning birds have boosted the numbers of the **Black-faced Cuckoo-Shrike** which was reported from around 25 locations (compared with 12 in July), but again with the vast majority in urban/peri-urban Canberra. In contrast low numbers of the **Grey Fantail** seemed to have returned to date, as it was reported from 36 locations, only slightly up from the 30 in July. Again, I have not been able to find it in my local area of Cooleman Ridge, Narrabundah Hill/Molonglo.

The **Dusky Woodswallow** has been reported from 7 locations (compared with 3 in July) with the last report from the Nadjung Mada NR (between Wells Station Drive and the Federal Hwy), where most seemed to overwinter, being 30 July.



Brown Treecreeper

Julian Robinson



Restless Flycatcher

David Cook

There was also a record from Lake Ginninderra on 26 July, with the others scattered throughout August. The **Olive-backed Oriole** was reported from a remarkable 15 locations (significantly up from the 4 in July), so overwintering numbers have definitely been boosted.

The **Mistletoebird** was reported from just 4 locations (down from the 7 in July) but again the species with the highest number of locations for overwintering birds has been the **Superb Parrot**, reported from over 60 (up from the 50 in June, with again about half south of the lake) locations.

So, during September please keep an eye out for these, and also for (in rough order) the **Leadon Flycatcher** (please be very careful with your identifications, especially of females), **Latham's Snipe**, **Sacred Kingfisher**, **Rainbow Bee-eater** and the **Eastern Koel**.

Watch out too for increasing numbers of returning **Yellow-faced** and **White-naped Honeyeaters**, though this is never as spectacular as their autumn migration. The **White-winged Triller** and **Rufous Songlark** also usually return towards the end of the month, numbers of these reaching the COG Aol, as well as the **White-browed** and **Masked Woodswallow**, will depend on how dry it is in the inland.

Autumn/winter altitudinal migrants

Of the species that come to Canberra and its surrounds from the mountains and higher country to spend autumn/winter here, the **White-eared Honeyeater** and **Golden Whistler** were still reported from around 35 and 60 urban/peri-urban locations, respectively. So, continue to keep an eye out for them, they are often quieter before they leave. The latter is also often slow to leave.

Scarlet Robins have continued to be widespread, with reports from around 45 urban/peri-urban locations, a bit lower than July. The **Flame Robins** was reported from 20 such locations, slightly up from July. Both species have been much harder to find at Cooleman Ridge and Narrabundah Hill in the past month. There have been reports of the **Rose Robin** from 5 such locations (compared with 2 in July), with another 3 on or west of the Murrumbidgee River. Again, there have been no confirmed **Pink Robin** sightings during the period, the closest location being near Melbourne.

The **Crescent Honeyeater** has been reported from 8 locations, 3 of which were urban/peri-urban: 1-2 birds regularly at the ANBG, a single bird on Cooleman Ridge on 1 August, and 2 and 1 birds at the Kambah Pool NR on 28 July and 3 August, respectively. The remainder of the locations were W of the Murrumbidgee River. The **Yellow-tufted Honeyeater** was reported from 1 location only (compared with 6 in July) with a single bird at the Vanitys Crossing Rd on 1 August.

The **Bassian Thrush** was reported from 3 locations (compared with 1 in July) with up to 3 birds regularly at the ANBG. One bird was photographed at Barrer Hill on 15 August, and another at Punchbowl Swamp (just S of the Tidbinbilla NR) on 6 August. Both the latter birds were feeding in surprisingly open positions. No **Brown Gerygones** or **Olive Whistlers** were reported from anywhere within the COG Aol during the period, and **Swift Parrots** were again also not reported, with eBird showing the closest sightings being 4 birds at Mates Gully TSR about 130 km directly west.

During September, please keep an eye out for the species mentioned above in urban/peri-urban locations as they move away.



Australian
Ornithological
Services P/L
PO Box 385
South Yarra
3141
Victoria
0417310200

enquiries@philipmaher.com

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Unusual species

As noted above there were no special “unusuals” species reported from the COG Aol during the period.

Again, there were no **Magpie Geese** or **Plumed Whistling Duck** reported during the period. **Freckled Duck** were reported from 4 locations, with up to 8 ducks continuing to be present at the JWNR throughout the period. There were 19 ducks (down from the 55 in July) counted on the Lake Bathurst waterbird survey on 16 August, with ducks also reported from SW Lake George as well as 6 from NW Lake George on 15 August.

During the period, in the ACT two **Australian Shelduck** reported only from the Pt Hut Rd Dam on 16 August, but otherwise from 9 locations in an arc from the N through to the E of Canberra, with 19 ducks on the Lake Bathurst survey on 16 August (with 4 on the adjacent Morass this about half of the 55 in July). The maximum number was the 38 ducks seen on the Wollgorang Rd on 31 July, with 18 also counted at the Trucking Lane Yard Dam on 2 August.

Blue-billed Ducks were reported from 5 locations during the period, with again up to 8 ducks regularly reported from the Upper Stranger Pond, as well as 2 ducks at the adjacent Isabella Pond on 21 August. A single duck was reported from the JWNR on 7-8 August and from the adjacent Fyshwick Sewage Treatment Ponds (FSTP) on 13 August, and again up to 16 ducks were reported from Rowes Lagoon. Interestingly no ducks seem to have been recorded on the Lake Bathurst survey on 16 August, compared with the 533 there in July.

Musk Ducks were reported from 3 locations only (down from 5 in July), with none in the ACT and 14 ducks recorded at Lake Bathurst on 16 August when there were also 6 reported from the adjacent Morass (around ¼ of the numbers there in July). Up to 2 ducks were also reported from Rowes Lagoon between from 3-20 August.

A single **Great-crested Grebe** was reported from 1 location only, from Bracks Hole Rd (on Cotter Dam) on 9 and 19 August.

Stubble Quail were reported from 2 locations, a single bird at the JWNR on 10 August and one at Lake Bathurst on 16 August. Listen out for them in September as the grass grows and they start calling. **Brown Quail** were reported from 3 locations (well down from 9 in July). Three birds were reported from the JWNR on 4 August, and single birds from the West Belconnen Pond and from near the big dam at Mulligans Flat on 8 and 19 August, respectively. A **Painted Button-quail** was reported only from the Mount Painter NR on 31 July, and again no **Little Button-quail** were reported during the period.

Again, no **White-headed Pigeon**, **Brown Cuckoo-Dove**, **Brush Bronzewing**, **Peaceful** or **Diamond Doves**, or **White-throated Nightjars** were reported during the period.

No **Baillon's Crakes** were again reported during the period. **Spotless Crakes** were reported from 9 locations (well up from 3 in July), with 3 and 1 birds at the JWNR on 6 and 19 August, respectively, and single birds on Gungahlin Drive and from the Isabella Pond on 7 and 16 August, respectively. Up to 3 birds were also reported from 6 locations on either side of the Hume Hwy between Gunning and Yass on a search for them on 10 August. However, no **Australian Spotted Crane** was reported during the period.

Single **Buff-banded Rails** were reported from the JWNR on 29 July and 6 August, and from the big dam at Mulligans Flat NR on 18-19 August. Single **Lewin's Rails** were reported from 5 locations with a single bird at the JWNR from 6-9 August and at the Franklin Ponds system on 19 August, and 2 birds at the nearby Gungahlin Drive roadside verge drainage line on 8 August. Single birds were also reported near Gunning and Yass on 10 August. However, no **Black-tailed Nativehen** were reported during the period.

Eight (compared with 20 in July) **Red-capped Plovers** were reported from the Lake Bathurst survey on 16 August. Two and 4 **Pied Stilts** were reported from the NW end of Lake George on 6 and 25 August, respectively, but no **Red-necked Avocets**, **Australian Painted-snipe**, **Pacific Golden Plover**, **Banded Lapwing**, **Comb-crested Jacana**, **Sharp-tailed, Pectoral** or **Common Sandpipers**, or **Red-necked Stint** were reported during the period.

A **Caspian Tern** was reported from the N end of Lake George on 30 July, but no **Whiskered** or **White-winged Black Terns**, **Australasian** or **Australian Little/Black-backed Bitterns** were reported during the period.

No **Little** or **Plumed Egrets** were again reported during the period. **Great Egrets** were reported from 4 locations (down from 6 in July) during the past month. Single **White-necked Herons** were reported from 5 locations (as for July). **Royal Spoonbills** were reported from 2 locations (compared with 3 in July), 4 at SW Lake George on 15 August and 3 at the Morass on 16 August. **Yellow-billed Spoonbills** were reported from 1 location (down from 3 in July), 3 birds on the Sutton Rd mid-way to Gundaroo on 31 July, but again, no **Glossy Ibis** were reported during the period.

Eastern Barn Owls were reported from 2 locations, one from Lady Denman Drive on 7 August and one from Reconciliation Pl on 9 August. The latter was chased over LBG by a mob of Magpies and other birds. No **Powerful Owls** were reported during the period. **Black-shouldered Kites** were reported from around 25 locations in the period, down from the 35 for July. A single **Spotted Harrier** was reported only from the JWNR on 7 August and a grey morph **Grey Goshawk** was reported from the Ainslie on 23 August. However, no **Pacific Baza**, **Black Kites** or **Black Falcons** were reported from anywhere in the COG Aol during the period.

No **Azure**, **Red-backed** or **Forest Kingfishers** were reported during the period.

Four and two **Glossy Black-Cockatoos** were reported from the Scott NR on 11 and 17 August, respectively. No **Cockatiel**, **Turquoise Parrot**, **Scaly-breasted**, **Little** or **Purple-crowned Lorikeets** were reported over the period. **Musk Lorikeets** were reported 3 locations (compared with one in July), 2 birds from the ANU and the nearby North Oval on 12 and 20 August, respectively, and at the Kambah District Playing Fields on 14 August.

The **Little Wattlebird** continued to be reported from the ANBG to 18 August, but Tracy Rail has confirmed the **Striped Honeyeater** seems to have moved away from Higgins. **Blue-faced Honeyeaters** were reported from 3 locations, single birds from the Kambah and Mawson District Playing Fields on 7 and 14 August, respectively, as well as 2 birds at the Yass Riverbank Park (a known location) on 17 August.

White-fronted Chats were reported from just 1 location in the ACT, 3 birds at the Coaldrake Ave Ponds on 26 July. Otherwise, 8 birds (slightly down from the 10 in July) were recorded at Lake Bathurst waterbird survey on 16 August, but with a maximum of 16 birds on the Wollogorang Rd on 28 July. No **Spiny-cheeked**, **Singing**, **Scarlet**, **Brown** or **Painted Honeyeaters** or **Little Friarbirds** were reported during the period.

Chestnut-rumped Heathwren were reported from 3 locations, 2 birds at Bluetts Block on 4 August, 1-2 birds at the Cuumbeun NR on 24 August and 4 birds at Carwoola on 22 August. A **Red-capped Robin** was heard calling near dusk at the Kama NR on 4 August. However, no **White-bellied Cuckoo-shrikes**, **White-browed Babbler**, **Apostlebird**, **Spangled Drongo**, **Black-faced Monarch**, **Tawny Grassbird** or **Zebra Finches** were reported during the period.

Jacky Winters were reported from just 2 locations (half of that for July), with 1 bird at Mulligans Flat on 3 August, and one bird at the Yankee Hut car park and track (a new location) on 14 August.



Hooded Robin - 19 July 2022 - Top Nass Road
Victor Braguine

Hooded Robins were reported from 5 locations (as for July), with 4 of these from their stronghold to the S of Canberra, a male from the Naas Rd at Apollo Rd on 2 August, a female from the Apollo Rd itself on 27 July, a male at Rendevous Creek (a new location) on 24 August, and 5 birds at the Scottsdale Reserve on 3 August. However, possibly the most important recent sighting is the female photographed at Sue Howieson's property WSW of Gundaroo on 21 July. This is a very important observation as since the start of 2023 there have been reports of **Hooded Robins** on eBird to the N of Canberra in COG's Aol at only one other location, in April and August 2023 at Currawang on the Lake George Rd.

Very concerning is that no **Restless Flycatchers** were reported from anywhere in the COG Aol. Where has this often-conspicuous bird in the S of the ACT in winter gone?

Slightly better news is several reports of a **Brown Treecreeper** at the Kama NR and the adjacent The Pinnacle NR from 2-20 August, the closest to central Canberra for some time, the nearest recent reports being from Carwoola in April 2024 and Tidbinbilla NR in February 2023.

However, this is offset by there being a report from only 1 other location during the period, up to 4 birds from Scottsdale on 3 August.

The number of “unusual” birds reported is again very low, with in particular very few reports of pigeons/doves, raptors, parrots or passerines including honeyeaters. However, some more winter flocks of more common birds were observed (see below).

Breeding

Some late winter observations follow *but first I need to remind readers of the care that needs to be taken around breeding birds as outlined the [Ethical Birding Guidelines - Canberra Birds](#) which can be found through the [Canberra Birds web site](#) (in particular please read and follow the sections on *Nesting Birds and Bird Photography*):*

On 24 August Robin Hide posted that his **Tawny Frogmouths** in Ainslie were back nesting again this year, on the same tree and branch. I checked my pair in Chapman later that day and found them sitting very close together about 5 m away from the most recently used nest site upon which a few twigs could be seen. Stuart Rae clarified that he knew of a few pairs ready to lay or possibly have laid. However, he hadn't seen birds at many sites, so it was generally a late season, possibly there will be fewer pairs nesting but it was soon to call.

On 7 August Matthew Larkin reported a **Grey Butcherbird** busy building a nest in Aranda Bushland.

I had been suspecting the **White-browed Scrubwren** was breeding in my garden as on several occasions at the same spot a “low flying rat” brushed past my ankles and dived into a pittosporum. On a brief check I could not find a nest in there, but they are very good at concealing them. In the past couple of days two birds have been very busy collecting food but I have still to find any fledglings.

On 26 August there was an ABC news article about **Silver Gulls** in “plague proportions” trying to nest again in the forecourt of Parliament House. With strategies being put in place to discourage the nesting birds, the gulls were expected to have cleared the area within a few weeks. The only eBird record I can find is 300 gulls reported there on 7 August. The article quoted Chris Davey saying none are yet nesting on Spinnaker Island the closest alternative site.

Flocks, including of migrating birds

In the first half of the period, Andrea and I still found some mixed feeding flocks (MFF), though they were becoming smaller and less frequent. Twice in the first week of August Matthew Larkin saw two **Golden Whistlers** in a MFF with several other species in suburban Cook. In each case it was an adult male and a grey bird which did not seem to have any of the rufous colour on the wings, so presumably were adult females.

More large single species flocks have again been reported. On 2 August Doug Liang reported 128 **Red-rumped Parrots** (as well as 80 and 115 on 24 and 31 July, respectively) feeding together on the Waramanga Ovals around Stromlo High School nearest Namatjira Drive. Amazingly this is within 2 km of my local patch in Rivett/Chapman where I mentioned last month they are now largely absent. At the same time Doug was also seeing lots of **Eastern Rosellas** in the area, with a maximum of 73 on 2 August in two groups of 24 and 49, respectively, but also 64 in one group on 26 July. That this is a very high count for this species is underlined that since the start of 2023 eBird lists a high of around 50-55 birds for late January/early February (likely post-breeding flocks).

On 24 July Doug noted that at least 40 **Eastern Rosellas** were feeding on the ground with up to 70 **Superb Parrots**, but the former were flighty and more easily disturbed. The high number (up to 76) of **Superb Parrots** there were noted in my August column, but after another 30 there on 26 July they were much harder to find. Interestingly eBird shows that all recent reports of **Superb Parrots** have been on the E half of Weston Creek, except for the single bird I saw flying through Rivett on 4 August.

On 1 August Andrea and I counted at least 115 **Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoos** coming through the NE corner of the Narrabundah Hill reserve over 5 minutes, with one group of at least 50. They moved through pretty quickly and interestingly the only other report of numbers anywhere near there is the 50 seen there the day before. There wasn't a leucistic bird among them with Stuart Rae having reported to me an almost completely yellow **Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoo** he saw at Mt Majura on 24 July. It too was with a flock of 80-100 other normally coloured birds feeding on larvae in acacia branches. Brian Grinter also reported seeing one there with a larger group of normal birds on 18 July.

Checking the photos show this bird was likely different from the one Ben Milbourne and Zac Flegg reported from Denman Prospect on 25 April.

On 14 August Andrea and I also saw at least 70 **Straw-necked Ibis** flying in a very rough V-shape over the Coombs side of the Molonglo River, heading SSE. Where they came from and were heading to is unclear, as only a maximum of 10 have been reported from the Weston Creek/Woden ovals etc over the period, though 50 were reported from West Belconnen Pond on 8 August.

Finally late afternoon on 23 August over several minutes we saw a conservative estimate of at least 50 **Satin Bowerbirds** (all green birds as far as we could tell) flying out of Chapman into bushland on Cooleman Ridge, where some rested before flying on. They were likely going to roost. Two days later I witnessed a similar movement but with a fewer number (at least 14) birds about a km away.

While again there has been an occasional **Yellow-faced** or **White-naped Honeyeater** in our garden, I haven't observed any sign of incoming migrants in my local patch of Cooleman Ridge/Narrabundah Hill/Molonglo. So, please watch out for their return in early September, together with the **Fuscous Honeyeater** (recorded from just 4 locations in the period compared with 7 in July).

September is the first full month of significant bird activity in the COG Aol. So please watch out for more of the returning spring/summer migrants mentioned above, for the last of the leaving altitudinal migrants, for roost sites and flights, for any late MFFs or single flocks, and for early spring breeding activity. 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/ Canberra Birds 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

Coffee and Chat at the Gardens is 2 years old

Our monthly drop-in event at Pollen Cafe at ANBG started in August 2023 and has become an established part of the Canberra Birds calendar. Very informal, Coffee and Chat is mainly social, though with lots of bird talk. Around twenty people come along on the second Tuesday each month and everyone is welcome. Coffee and chatters include long-term and new members, committee members, not-yet-members wondering whether to join, and visitors to Canberra from interstate, or even overseas. Some people come nearly every time and others now and again.

If you haven't tried Coffee and Chat yet, please consider yourself invited and come along.

Bill Graham and Kim Farley



Summary of the 13 August meeting presentations

First **Billy Bray**, a Ph D student at the Research School of Biology, gave a fascinating presentation on “**Conserving song culture in the critically endangered Regent Honeyeater**”.

It was very well prepared, and delivered clearly and confidently, with excellent slides, keeping the audience’s fixed attention. All attendees thoroughly enjoyed it, including those who had previously heard a number of presentations on this species by other researchers, initially from David Geering and more recently Ross Crates.

Billy started off by noting that birds can learn for threat/danger recognition, foraging, migration etc, but that many species also learn their vocalisations which have various roles in territorial defence, individual recognition and social cohesion and is thus linked with individual fitness, ie basically the ability of an individual to reproduce.

In this respect singing appropriate songs can confer fitness benefits with the birds singing the most popular songs more likely to successfully breed. However, song cultures can be lost through habitat fragmentation reducing the incidence of required regularity of song learning.

This is the case for the once abundant **Regent Honeyeater** which due to extensive habitat loss has undergone rapid population decline since the mid 20th century, with now less than 300 surviving. Because it is a nomadic species travelling large distances over its range, learning interactions are reduced with around 15% of birds having learnt the songs of completely different species.

The males learn their song for which two major wild song dialects exist, the “typical” and “clipped” Blue Mountains song. Captive-bred birds sing an abnormal song and have a much lower survival and breeding success post-release, as they are less likely to pair and breed.

As loss of song culture could hasten extinction, song tutoring of zoo birds was recently introduced to allow them to better integrate into the wild, with the first cohort released in 2024. Unfortunately, since 2019 the “clipped” song has become the dominant song of the greater Blue Mountains population, with the zoo population now the remaining birds with the “typical” song.

Therefore, Billy in his Ph D is examining song preferences of tutored zoo-bred females; the changes in pattern of wild song; and the post-release fitness of tutored zoo-bred birds with the overall aim of improving conservation outcomes.

He outlined how he is progressing with each of these studies with the first being carried out at the Western Plains Zoo in Dubbo, with some preliminary promising results.

For the second Billy is opportunistically collecting audio recordings of males in the wild and adding them to the existing database of male song for analysis. So far, he has collected audio recordings from 26 individual males across NSW and Queensland, including identifying a new wild song type, an even shorter version dubbed the “extra clipped” song. No males sang the “typical” song.

Billy also outlined his proposals to test whether tutoring can improve post-release fitness which is supported by potential population trajectories based on earlier population viability analysis predictions. In addition, he will be doing DNA sampling (so far from just 4 birds but adding to an existing data set stretching back to 1879!) and whole genome sequencing to test whether zoo birds are contributing to the wild gene pool.

Once again on behalf of COG/Canberra Birds members, many thanks to Billy for giving this very fascinating presentation updating us on this endangered species, which has such a reduction in numbers that very few have been seen in our local area in recent times. We wish him the very best with his proposed further Ph D studies outlined above and to hearing about their success in the future.

The main presentation was a very interesting and informative one by **Samuele Ramellini**, also a Ph D student at the Research School of Biology entitled “**Sociality across seasons: drivers and consequences in the Superb Fairy-wren**”.

Again, it was very well prepared, and delivered clearly and confidently, with excellent slides. As shown by the large audience, attendees were very interested to learn about the latest studies on this species from the **Superb Fairy-wren** project, on which Andrew Cockburn and Claire Taylor have given us several presentations in the past.

Samuele began by indicating that territoriality is assumed to be costly with injuries, physiology costs and the need for patrolling assumed to lead to reduced survival or body condition. In a soon to be published paper his group questioned and confirmed this belief and then asked how do birds cope with these costs both in the breeding and non-breeding season, and how does this relate to neighbours (“dear enemies”) or strangers “floating” across their territory.

The analysis showed almost all the studies involved the breeding season, so his research, involving a novel hypothesis, has concentrated on social behaviour during the non-breeding part of the yearly cycle. The **Superb Fairy-wren**, a sedentary, co-operative, seasonal breeder which maintains its sociality during the non-breeding season, is a perfect species on which to study this.

It has also allowed use of the **Superb Fairy-wren** project started off in the mid-1960s by Ian Rowley and carried on, *inter alia*, by Stephen Pruett-Jones and Andrew Cockburn, relying and building on the considerable existing database up to 2023 that exists for them from the ANBG. Over 60 years this has covered and monitored >11000 individuals, 2150 territories and >7000 nests, with more than 60 papers published.

This long-term data, plus more fieldwork adding new streams of data done by his group, has allowed the testing of the novel hypothesis, by asking questions such as “are territory boundaries more stable when more neighbours are maintained?” Analysis of the database has confirmed that territory boundaries and the social neighbourhood are quite stable, with these two variables being positively correlated – i.e. an increase in the proportion of neighbours that are maintained from one season to the next corresponds to more stable territory boundaries.

Samuele then showed the transitions between breeding and non-breeding, looking at how environmental factors represent a strong driver of behavioural changes. In fact, individuals tend to move over broader ranges and are far more tolerant of conspecifics when it’s cold. In the **Superb Fairy-wren**, sociality is very complex during winter, as they form a multilevel society. This social structure has been previously known only in mammals and is thought to be a strategy to cope with environmental harshness.

With the advent of spring these larger groups are now breaking up, and through playback he is now testing how this novel hypothesis applies during the territory establishment phase before breeding begins. Preliminary results show that both sociality during winter and being neighbours in previous seasons determine the degree of territoriality shown by territory holders.

Finally, Samuele very gratefully acknowledged the granting of funds from the Canberra Birds Conservation Fund to allow him carry out much of this work including the extensive purchase of equipment.

Coffee and Chat at the Gardens Tuesday, 9 September

You are invited to Canberra Birds monthly Coffee and Chat at the Australian National Botanic Gardens cafe.

Come along any time between 9:30 and 11:00 on the second Tuesday of the month.

All welcome – experienced birders, new and would-be birders, locals and visitors.

Look for the table with the binoculars on it.



Once again on behalf of COG/Canberra Birds members, many thanks to Samuele for giving up his very valuable time to give us this very interesting and informative presentation, giving a fascinating further insight into a species with which we are all very familiar but continues to allow very important studies to better understand birds’ social behaviour. We wish him the very best with his proposed further Ph D studies and look forward to hearing about their success in the future.

Jack Holland

Canberra Birds stall at Wildbark at Mulligans Flat on August 23

Sandra Henderson, Brian Grinter and Bill Graham set up the second Canberra Birds stall at Wildbark on Saturday the 23rd. Our first stall was in May, and it is hoped this will be a successful ongoing quarterly event. The doors opened at 9:00 and from then until about 12.30 we chatted with families, pairs, trios and individual folk of all ages. Two people said they came along to find out about membership and there was also interest in our nest and feather collection. We fielded requests for bird ID from photos, feather ID (small blue Satin Bowerbird feathers!), queries about bird activities for young families, local birds at Mulligans Flat and Gorooyarroo, field trips at North Canberra, how to identify birds and about endangered species. One five year-old showed us his binoculars made from toilet paper rolls, and his parents are encouraging his interest. Sandra had an interesting conversation with a person interested in her bird sightings, Waterwatch Platypus surveys and bird walks in the Oaks Estate/Qbn River area. It was good having three people present as it was pretty busy at times.

If you would like to help out at the next stall on November 22, please email bsgraham1948@gmail.com. You don't need to be an expert, as between us we manage to answer most things.

Bill Graham

Canberra Birds annual Bird Blitz 25 -26 October

Changes and updates

Spring is here, and with spring comes the Canberra Birds Blitz, now in its 20th year. The Blitz provides an annual snapshot of the birds of the ACT, their abundance and breeding activity. It is also a great way to get out birding on your own or with friends just as birds begin actively breeding and our summer bird migrants are arriving.

This year, changes have been made to some parts of the Blitz. The biggest change is that vehicle access beyond locked gates in Namadgi National Park and Tidbinbilla is not possible. Obviously, this will directly impact those who have adopted these sites for Blitz surveys, and it also means a break in the data time series for those sites and grid cells. Another change is that there will be no coordination of site selection. If you can access them, please continue to survey the sites you have surveyed in previous years.

Other parts of the Blitz will remain the same. The majority of Blitz lists are now submitted via eBird and this is strongly encouraged. For eBirders, it is the easiest and quickest way to submit the data and the easiest way for us receive it. For those who prefer them, submission of hard copy COG datasheets remains very acceptable.

The reason for the changes is that we have no Blitz Coordinator. Despite effort during the year by the committee (both publicly and behind the scenes) no-one has come forward to take up the role. This has meant that arrangement of event permits, coordination with Namadgi rangers and coordination of site selection will not take place. We remain hopeful that a Coordinator will be found for 2026.

For more information about the Blitz including detail about submitting data, the list of long term Blitz sites and the ACT grid map please see the updated [Blitz web page](#).

Canberra Birds Committee

Field Trip Reports

Sunday 2 August – Kambah Pool to Red Rocks Gorge

Commencing the walk at the Kambah Pool carpark, a group of 20 keen birders headed along the well-made track towards Red Rocks Gorge. The morning started overcast and windy. The wind possibly accounted for fewer birds in the early part of the walk, but we saw Red-necked Wallabies and a mob of Eastern Grey Kangaroos. We also encountered occasional runners and mountain bike riders. Bridges over the gullies made for easy creek crossings. Smaller birds we saw included **Weebill**, **White-Browed Scrubwren**, **Striated**, **Brown** and **Buff-Rumped Thornbill**, and two pairs of **Scarlet Robin**. A **Grey Butcherbird** near the carpark and later, several **Grey Shrike-thrush** (calling) and more **Crimson Rosella**, added interest to the walk. Along much of the route there were tantalising glimpses of the Murrumbidgee River and at the lookout there was a fine view along the river to the cliffs of Red Rocks Gorge.

On the return journey, most of us left the main path to descend a rather overgrown track with some big steps, to walk back along the riverbank, following faint tracks and dodging wombat burrows and sometimes blackberries. Standout species along the riverside walk included a wombat, **Australasian Grebe**, **White-Faced Heron**, **White-throated Treecreeper** and, at the end of the walk, a **Welcome Swallow** and a **Wedge-tailed Eagle** above the Bullen Range. We climbed the 100 steps to the carpark, reflecting on a pleasant morning's walk and learned our bird count was 119 individual birds observed, covering 23 species.

Jean Golding

Sunday 17 August – Orroral Homestead

The weather forecast had not looked good for most of the week leading up to this walk, but on the day the sun shone and it was only the occasional gust of freezing wind that reminded us that it had been -5 overnight and that the warm clothes we had worn were definitely needed.

Seventeen members met at Namadgi Visitor Centre to carpool before driving to the carpark at the Orroral tracking station site. Our leader, Sandra Henderson, had indicated that we might see **Flame Robins** and the first was spotted from the carpark. From then on, it was Flame Robins all the way. We saw a total of 30 during the morning, the flame-red chests of the males making pops of brilliant colour against the generally brown grassland. We felt fortunate to see such a large number of these robins, especially as they will shortly be returning to the mountains.



Orroral Homestead - 17 August 2025 - Namadgi NP
Sandra Henderson

Around the tracking station ruins we also saw a flock of **Red-browed Finches**, a small number of **Yellow-rumped Thornbills** and two **European Goldfinches**. Calling in the background most of the morning were **Australian** and **Little Ravens**.

After exploring around the ruins, Sandra led us along the track to the Orroral Homestead which was built in the 1860s. The track crosses some marshy ground and there were plenty of Eastern Grey Kangaroos and one Red-necked Wallaby seen. We diverged off the track when several members of the group noticed some **Australian Magpies** making a fuss around a Eucalypt. Sitting in full view, facing us, was the reason: a **Brown Falcon** (light morph). The bird obligingly stayed in the tree for several minutes, occasionally moving from one branch to another. There was a stick nest higher up the tree which may have belonged to the magpies. Closer to the homestead we saw two **Scarlet Robins**, perching on an old fence.

At the homestead itself we were able to inspect the rooms of the house and have morning tea, sitting on the verandah admiring the view across the creek to the granite tors. From this position, a **Wedge-tailed Eagle** was seen, flying high towards the north. After checking out the shearing shed built in the 1930s, we turned around to walk back to the car park.

In total 23 species were seen during the walk, the final one being a solitary **Pacific Black Duck** rising from a concrete-edged pond, the purpose of which we couldn't identify.

Thanks to Sandra for another excellent walk and to Lia for making the bird list.

Wendy Whitham

Wednesday 20 August – Weston Park

Eight COG members led by Lia had a successful bird watching morning at Weston Park in mostly fine conditions. The lakeside and managed parkland, including short grass and many still-bare deciduous trees, yielded a total of 31 species. The rarest sighting for the area was a solitary **Pied Cormorant** which helpfully sat with 2 **Great Cormorants** on a rowing dock allowing size comparison. **Silver Gulls** were flying over the lake.

The most numerous waterfowl counted were 38 **Eurasian Coots**, including some juveniles without white shields. As they foraged close to **Dusky Moorhens**, the less experienced of us could learn about the differences between coots and moorhens in beak colour and presence of white feathers on the “backends” of the moorhens. **Australasian Swamphens** were mixing with the smaller fowl.

Pacific Black Ducks kept to the lake whilst **Australian Wood Ducks** were seen, mostly flying in and out of the trees. **Gang-gang Cockatoos**, **Australian King-Parrots**, **Sulphur-crested Cockatoos**, and **Crimson** and **Eastern Rosellas** were easily spotted. The most numerous parrots were diminutive **Red-rumped Parrots** feeding on the ground.

Three Pied Currawongs were taking advantage of leftovers at a cafe near Heritage Nursery, and **Australian Magpies** and **Magpie-larks** were common. Two small groups of **White-winged Choughs** were seen, as well as **Australian Ravens**.

Small birds were surprisingly rare. We did find one mixed feeding flock at the lake edge consisting of **Grey Fantails**, **Superb Fairywrens**, **Brown Thornbills**, **Spotted Pardalotes** and a **White-browed Scrubwren**.

Bright white skies made spotting tricky at times despite the bare trees, but eventually we did, unfortunately, confirm a duo of **Common Mynas**. **Noisy Miners** were more common and we saw 2 **Red Wattlebirds**. A **Laughing Kookaburra** was heard in the tall eucalypts near the golf course.

A **Grey Butcherbird** and **Crested Pigeons** shared trees with **Satin Bowerbirds** near the public bouldrome. Watching the latter was a highlight. We observed 14 in total with just one blue male. When a bunch of 9 green birds gathered on the grass together we had a learning opportunity to distinguish females from immature males by observing their neck colour.

Nina Johnson

Sunday 24 August – Jerrabomberra Wetlands NR – Waterbirds for beginners

This outing was attended by 10 mostly novice birders, keen to expand their knowledge of Canberra's birds, particularly waterbirds. Unfortunately, the very high water level at Kelly Swamp and the consequent loss of muddy edges has reduced the number of birds present. However, we did manage to see small numbers of most of the regular species and compare size, bill colour, leg colour and other ID features. **Eurasian Coot**, **Dusky Waterhen** and **Australasian Swamphen** showed well, while some ducks were more intent on snoozing than showing their best features. Nevertheless, we managed good views of **Pacific Black Duck**, **Grey Teal**, **Hardhead** and **Australasian Shoveler**. One each of **White-faced Heron**, **Little Pied Cormorant**, **Australian Pelican**, **Australian White Ibis** and **Hoary-headed Grebe**, as well as a pair of **Black Swans** with 3 small cygnets, added to the variety of waterbirds seen. On our circumnavigation at the swamp, we added a number of bush birds as well, giving all participants a taste of the many species that call Jerrabomberra Wetlands home.

Due to so many people wishing to attend this outing, a second beginners' walk will be held on Saturday 6 September. There is currently just one space remaining – contact smlashko@gmail.com to register, with your name and number and the name and number of an emergency contact.

Sue Lashko

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.

Sunday 7 September – Namarag – Molonglo River Reserve

Meet at the carpark for Namarag, which is on a bend on Thancoupie Crescent, Whitlam, at 8.30am. Most of the walk will be on formed paths, with some great views of the Molonglo River. Namarag includes the area long-term COG members remember as Finch Central. The walk will take about three hours. Wear sturdy shoes and a hat, bring water and sunscreen.

Register with Sandra (shirmax2931@gmail.com)
Sandra Henderson

Sunday 14 September – Bowning, Lamb's TSR and Manton

Description. These are sites not visited by Canberra Birds before. The cemetery is a delightful location across the Hume Highway from Bowning. Species seen include **Peaceful Dove**, **Black Kite** and **Rainbow Bee-eater**. Lamb's TSR is on the Wargiela Road, north of Yass. It has open woodland and views to the distance. Birds include **Dollarbird**, **Little Eagle** and **Jacky Winter**. We will return via Manton and the backroads to Murrumbateman.

Meeting time and place: 8.00 am at Hoskins St beside Hall Primary School for carpooling. A \$10 contribution to the driver is suggested. Numbers will be limited to 16 people in 4 cars.

Walking distance: 3 kms

Degree of Difficulty: Easy

End time: 3.00 pm.

What to bring: Sturdy shoes, hats, sunscreen, water, morning tea and lunch.

Please register with the leader by email on bsgraham1948@gmail.com with your name and mobile phone number, and the name and number of an emergency contact.
Bill Graham

Monday 15 to Thursday 18 September – Tathra

Description: This is a mid-week trip to Tathra staying for 3 nights in the Kianinny Bush Cottages located in bushland just outside Tathra. There will be bird walks around our accommodation as well as excursions to sites within Mimosa Rocks National Park and nearby wetlands. We can expect to see around 100 species including **Glossy BlackCockatoos**, **Superb Lyrebirds**, **Crescent Honeyeaters**, **Hooded Plovers**, other shorebirds and seabirds.

Meeting time and place: Drive to Kianinny Cottages on the morning of 22 August. Expect a bird walk that afternoon from about 1.30pm.

Walking distance: 2-5 km each day

What to bring: Self-catering (BYO meals or dinner at Tathra Hotel or other eateries in town). Packed lunches some days. More detailed information will be provided to those who register.

Participants must register with the leader at prue.watters@gmail.com, providing their name and mobile number, and the name and mobile number of an emergency contact.

Six cottages have been booked. Each cottage has 2 bedrooms, one with a queen-sized bed and another with twin beds, plus bathroom, kitchen and living area.

When you **register**, if you wish to share a cabin with particular people, please notify the leader. The cost will depend on the number in each cabin. The cost for one cabin for 3 nights with 3 people sharing is approximately \$600 (ie about \$200 per person for a 3 night stay).

Prue Watters - 0414 357 456

Wednesday 17 September – Gossan Hill

Meet at 9am on Mugglestone Place, Bruce. PLEASE car pool as much as possible as, although there is a fairly obvious length of roadway where parking is possible on the roadside on both sides, next to one of the tracks leading up into the reserve, it is not extensive. The walk will mainly be on wide tracks, a little undulating in parts. It should take 2-3 hours. Register to attend with Michael - mrobbins at home.netspeed.com.au

Sunday 21 September – Greenways of Bywong and Wamboin

Description: We will walk along some of the network of 'greenways' in semi-rural Bywong and Wamboin. These are pedestrian access pathways that run between residential properties, providing important wildlife corridors. They feature typical Canberra region woodland, and likely birds include thornbills, honeyeaters, treecreepers and robins. Note that the greenways are not paved and are gently undulating so hiking boots, trail runners or sneakers are recommended.

Meeting time and place: 10am, Bywong Community Hall, 65 Birriwa Rd, Bywong. Participants may like to carpool from Canberra, if they know others who are attending. Spotlight carpark at Queanbeyan would be a good meeting place.

eBird hotspots: Les Reardon Reserve, Birriwa Rd, Bywong

Walking distance: 5 km

Degree of difficulty: medium

End time (approx.): 1pm

What to bring: water, snack if desired, hat, sunscreen

Registration : Participants must **register with the leader by 5pm Friday 19 September**, providing their name and mobile number, and the name and mobile number of an emergency contact.

Numbers limited: to 12

Lauren Reed

Sunday 28 September – Booroomba Rocks to Apollo Road

This is a reasonably easy 7.5 km all day bushwalk in northern Namadgi National Park, involving a short car shuffle. From Booroomba Rocks carpark we will use the Australian Alps Walking Track to slowly walk down Booroomba Creek to Bushfold Flats. After lunch we will then walk out to the gate on Apollo Road via the southern end of the Mt Tennent Fire Trail.

The Booroomba Creek section involves a descent on a narrow track, followed by a flat section around Bushfold Flats and a steep descent on the fire trail with loose gravel underfoot, and finally a short climb back to Apollo Road. It is suitable for reasonably fit folk who are steady on their feet. Walking poles optional. Please make sure to also bring a hat, water, sunscreen, lunch and binoculars, and wear sturdy shoes.

At the end of September, in these wet creek and dry forest habitats, we might expect to see, or at least hear, **Eastern Yellow Robin, Scarlet Robin, Golden Whistler** and **Rufous Whistler** and we've a good chance of hearing **Eastern Whipbird, Superb Lyrebird** and maybe **Pilotbird**. Raptors are a good possibility in the open country.

Registration essential to mrobbins (at) home.netspeed.com.au, with your name and phone number, and name and number of an emergency contact. **Registrations close at 6pm on Friday 26 September so please register early.** Maximum 16 attendees.

Michael Robbins

Sunday 5 October – private property near Braidwood

The property owners are in the process of establishing a wildlife corridor on their farm, about a third of which is woodland with a large dam. We visited the property in 2023, so it will be interesting to see how tree planting and the creation of wetlands has affected the birdlife.

Meet at 7.30 am in the Spotlight carpark at Queanbeyan for carpooling. We will take a maximum of 16 people in 4 cars. Wear long pants and sturdy shoes, as snakes may be out and about. Bring hat and morning tea.

Registration is essential to smlashko@gmail.com, with your name and phone number, and name and number of an emergency contact.

Sue Lashko

Saturday 11 October - Australian National Botanic Gardens - beginners outing

This morning walk will be aimed specifically to help beginners and new members identify birds and to learn about their behaviour and calls. The Botanic Gardens are especially suitable for such an outing, as they allow the opportunity to observe a range of local bush birds in a variety of habitats. Due to the available food supply, they are also a relative haven for birds during late autumn/winter. Anthony Overs will lead this outing, which will consist of a stroll through this lovely part of Canberra for a couple of hours.

Meet at 9.15am at the ANBG bus shelter.

Registration is essential; please provide your name and mobile phone number, as well as an emergency contact name and number. Book your place with Anthony (0419202155, or anthony.overs@gmail.com), who will be happy to discuss whether this outing is suitable for you. Please make sure to bring your binoculars and field guide. **If you do not have binoculars, please let me know as COG can supply you with a pair to use on the day.**

Note that the aim of the walk is to introduce you to bird-watching, not bird photography, so please leave your camera at home.

Anthony Overs

Sunday 12 October – K2C surveys – Bredbo area

Canberra Birds will continue with the K2C surveys that have been running since April 2010. The surveyed properties have healthy populations of many of the rarer woodland birds such as **Diamond Firetail**, **Hooded Robin** and **Speckled Warbler**. We will be visiting the same sites to continue the monitoring and see if spring migrants have arrived. The surveys will be undertaken in 'blitz' fashion; that is, observers in small groups will visit a number of sites on one or more properties before regrouping for lunch and a sharing of the survey's findings. Less experienced observers are welcome to join in the survey as each team will have at least one experienced observer. Anyone interested in participating is asked to **contact Nicki Taws before Wednesday 8 October**. Email: ntaws@bigpond.com or 0408 210 736.

Saturday 18 and Sunday 19 October – Eden pelagics

Two one-day pelagics have been booked, departing from Eden at 7am to approximately 3pm each day. Cost will be about \$164 per day. The boat holds just 12 passengers, so early booking is recommended. **Currently, there is ONE place available on Saturday and FOUR on Sunday. To register, I require the following information (please reply by numbering 1 to 3 and providing your answers):**

- 1) Name and mobile number
- 2) Name and number of an emergency contact
- 3) Which day do you wish to register for? Sat 18, or Sun 19, or both?

Register at smlashko@gmail.com

Sue Lashko and Julian The

Sunday 19 October – private property, Brindabellas

A preliminary visit will be made to this property in September and further details will appear on the website and in October Gang-gang. It is a 300-acre wildlife/wilderness sanctuary at Brindabella surrounded by national park and with walking trails. Numbers will be limited to 16 with 4 vehicles. Expected departure time is 7.30am and return time by 3pm.

Registration is essential to smlashko@gmail.com, with your name and phone number, and name and number of an emergency contact.

Sue Lashko, Melissa Pearce

Saturday 25 and Sunday 26 October – Bird Blitz

[See notice elsewhere in the newsletter.](#)

Sunday 9 November – Old Boboyan Road & Yankee Hat

Description: We will start with a short walk along the wooded area at the beginning of Old Boboyan Road (where it comes off Boboyan Road), where **Fuscous Honeyeaters** may be sighted. Then we will proceed to Yankee Hat carpark. We will have a quick look along the 100 m before the locked gate where we might see **Brown Treecreeper** and **Dusky Woodswallow**. We will then walk through open grasslands along the Yankee Hat track, stopping for lunch at the rock art site before turning back.

Meeting time and place: 8.00 at the Namadgi Visitor Centre carpark, for carpooling.

Walking distance: The Yankee Hat walk is an easy 6 km return, taking about 2.5 hours.

End time: Mid-afternoon

What to bring: sturdy boots, hat, sunscreen, water, morning tea and lunch

Registration: Please register by 5.00 pm on Friday 7 November by email to Evan Bitmead (efbitmead@gmail.com ; mob. 0409 225 475), providing your name and mobile number, and the name and mobile number of an emergency contact. Numbers limited to 16.

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Image Credit: Alan Landford

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New Zealand

18 October - 10 November 2025

Explore the incredible natural beauty of New Zealand's South Island through this small group nature tour. From the UNESCO World Heritage alps to the ocean, follow the wild east coast of New Zealand's southern-most island. Beyond this we will take you to the remote Rakiura/Stewart Island and Ulva Island, and to New Zealand's impressive fiords of Doubtful Sound and Milford Sound.

Scan for further details:
natureartlab.com.au/



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Image Credit: Alan Landford



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



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

2025-2026 memberships:

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

New members

COG welcomes the following new members:

Ben B
Jemma R
Ian N
Jennifer H

NEXT NEWSLETTER

Deadline for October 2025 edition:

Wednesday 24 September 2025

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: Kim Farley
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
Sub-editor: Kevin Windle
Kevin.Windle@anu.edu.au

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: Zac Flegg
Lay-out Editor: Gail Neumann
gang-gang@canberrabirds.org.au

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

ISSN 2208-018X

