

Gang-gang

Canberra Ornithologists Group Inc

Canberra Birds Newsletter

APRIL 2026



Spotted Harrier & Australian Raven, .Holborow Avenue
Ponds, ACT, 28 February 2026. Photo: *Shorty*

APRIL MEETING

Wednesday 8 April 2026

7.30 pm

Bugang Room, Denman Village Community Centre, 5 Felstead Vista, Denman Prospect

As detailed below there has been a change in venue for the COG/Canberra Birds monthly meetings for the first half of 2026.

Speakers for the 8 April meeting will be:

Rhiana Woods - The spandrels of nest architecture in a cooperatively breeding mud nester

John Hurrell - My Canberra Birding Big Year

Temporary change of meeting venue for Canberra Birds

The Canberra Birds committee has decided to change the venue for our monthly members' meetings, at least until renovations of the Canberra Girls Grammar School's Multi-media Theatre are complete, expected in August/September 2026.

The new venue is the Bugang Room at the Denman Village Community Centre, located at 5 Felstead Vista, adjacent to the Denman Prospect shops (see Google Maps link <https://maps.app.goo.gl/NqW3XrN5iJf8dzRe9>)

This is a light, spacious, modern event venue with a kitchen. There is plentiful parking, under lights, close to the door and with several disabled parking spots outside the door. The room is on the first floor, accessed by two flights of stairs or by a lift.

To help guide you once there the Canberra Birds Sandwich Boards will be outside the front door and at the top of the stairs/lift.

For people attending the meeting by public transport, the R10 bus provides a very good service around every 15 minutes from the ANU through Civic to the Denman Prospect shops with the bus stop opposite the venue. For example, a bus runs to there from 6:57 to 7:23 pm and return buses at 9:05 or 9:35 pm arriving at the ANU at 9:31 and 10:01 pm, respectively.

The first speaker will be **Rhiana Woods**, an Honours student at the Research School of Biology at the ANU, on "**The spandrels of nest architecture in a cooperatively breeding mud nester**"

Variation in nest architecture is often interpreted as being adaptive, whereby birds shape their nest in response to environmental pressures such as predation, concealment or sexual selection. Many studies have examined nest architecture in this context, however, fewer have considered the role of constraints and limitations in shaping the structures that birds are able, rather than optimised, to build. Rhiana has been studying the mud nests of the **White-winged Choughs**, a cooperative breeder common in Canberra, to understand how limitations or constraints can influence nest architecture.

Because mud nests are costly to build, they can allow us to study what determines the decisions of birds to build a new nest over reusing an old nest, or whether to build a large nest or a small nest. First, she explored

IN THIS ISSUE

(to read, click on topic)

Meeting - 8 April

Everyone Welcome

News from the Committee

**March summary/analysis
and birds to see in April**

Summary of March meeting

Membership Update

**Event at Jerrabomberra Wet-
lands**

Field Trip Reports

Future Field Trips

Contacts/Information

whether the ability to build is dependent on the availability of mud. Second, group size and group composition may create a social constraint whereby smaller groups, or groups with more immature birds participating, may be limited in the capacity to construct an optimal nest. Lastly, these factors may influence whether choughs will decide to build a new nest over reusing an old nest. Rhiana's research proposes that at least part of the variation in nest architecture may not be a reflection of optimisation, but rather what is possible under environmental and social constraints.

The main presentation will be by **John Hurrell** on "**My Canberra Birding Big Year**"

In 2023 local birder John Hurrell set out to see at least 200 different species of birds in the ACT. He wrote about his big year in the July 2024 edition of the Canberra Bird Notes.

In this talk John will explain the basis for settling on the number 200 and some of the strategies he adopted to achieve this target. John will then detail some of the birds he saw and where and when they were seen, on a month-by-month basis.

One of the more notable birds seen that year was a **Spotted Harrier**, which spent several weeks in and around the Molonglo River Reserve just north of Coombs. It became something of a celebrity amongst Canberra birders and photographers. John will spend part of the talk briefly describing the harrier's behaviour during its extended visit, before continuing with his monthly account of birds seen throughout the year.

News from the Committee

The Committee's met on the 19th of March, as always, a week after the members' meeting. We agreed that the launch of the **Commemorative Issue of Canberra Bird Notes** had been a very fitting final step in the year-long reading, discussing and compilation of the special issue by the team of **Julie Hotchin, Michael Lenz** and **Kevin Windle**. Thank you again to them. Feedback on the Commemorative Issue from members has been very good. If you haven't looked at *CBN* yet, here is a quick link [Canberra Bird Notes - Canberra Birds](#).

In other news, **Prue Watters** in her new role as **Membership Officer** reported that Canberra Birds has grown to **380 members**. Not our highest number ever, but a very good membership base at a time when some other community groups are struggling to maintain enough members to keep their group's work going. Building the membership to help ensure the ongoing viability of Canberra Birds has not come about by chance but has been as a result of hard work on multiple fronts by members inside and outside the Committee.

The first phase of the **website rebuild** is now complete, with our strong thanks to web manager **Julian Robinson**. The look and feel of the site has been updated but very importantly, the underlying technical infrastructure has been replaced. Some matters are still the subject of work. If you find "oddities", such as pages that don't open, please report these to webmanager@canberrabirds.org.au. The second phase of the work will review and update the text and other content of the pages. This work will take place during 2026.

Kim Farley, President.
president@canberrabirds.org.au

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

It has been wet, humid and sometimes stormy over the 4 weeks from 25 February to 24 March covered by this column, and conditions are now very green and lush. Despite this my analysis below shows continued low bird activity in the COG Area of Interest (Aoi). The spring/summer migrants mainly seem to be leaving at their usual time, but except for two species, the altitudinal migrants have been slow to move in. There were 3 special species, only one of which was observed by a number of birders over a brief period, otherwise reports of “unusual” species dropped further compared with the already low February levels.

Highlights

There have been 3 “unusual” species reported during the period which are worthy of special mention. The first is two reports of the **Lewin’s Honeyeater**, the first by Tonya Haff of a bird heard giving its distinctive “machine gun” call at the Warks/Blundells Creeks Rds on 21 February, and the second by Yarden Oren of a bird first heard and then briefly seen at the nearby Bendora Rd (upper) on 23 February.

COG’s 2018-2019 Annual Bird Report (ABR) lists this species as a non-breeding vagrant usually found in Tallaganda forests in the east of the region, rarely further west. Checking eBird shows 4 records close to these 2 spots between 10 January and 12 February 2018 but then only 2 more ACT records: 1 bird at the Namadgi NP Visitors Centre on 3 April 2020 and 1 bird at Corin Dam on 16 July 2022. So, these are the first ACT records for nearly 4 years during which time records from the Tallaganda area have continued, with the most recent reports being of 6 birds at Harold’s Cross on 6 February 2026.

The second was the two **Plumed Whistling Ducks** first photographed on the boardwalk at the Jerrabomberra Wetlands NR (JWNR) by Tristan Rheinhardt around 7:05 am on 10 March and then seen/further photographed by around 15 birders, the last being two birds still present after 6:47 pm that day. This seems to have been a typically short stay in the ACT, with the most recent reports by multiple observers from the JWNR being 5 birds in the paddocks on 6 September 2023 as well as 6 birds at the adjacent Fyshwick Sewage Treatment Plant (FSTP) on 15 December 2023. The species is more usually observed only at the Trucking Yard Lane near Bungendore where a single duck was present from 21-26 February, the first one reported from there since 27 September 2024.

The third was an **Australasian Figbird** heard by Shorty, who is very familiar with its call, in Symonston on 17 March. He tried to find the bird, but it kept moving around to different trees calling again when in a new tree. This species is not listed in the COG 2018-2019 ABR despite there being a quite famous record of one in Curtin by Richard Allan over 10 years ago (unfortunately this is not traceable under BIRD INFO on the Canberra Birds web site).

The eBird map shows only one recent record in the COG Aoi, a female bird photographed at Googong Common on 8 December



Lewin’s Honeyeater, COG Photo Gallery, *David Cook*



Plumed Whistling Duck, Jerrabomberra Wetlands NR, ACT, 6 September 2023, *Zac Flegg*



Australasian Figbird, Port Macquarie, NSW, 16 October 2025, *Shorty*

2025, with the photographs showing how easily it could be confused with a juvenile **Olive-backed Oriole**. There are also 3 earlier records from the start of 2018, one bird reported by several observers at the JWNR on 3 January 2019, with again a female photographed, another (again a female) photographed on the Molonglo River on 30 December 2020, and a male observed on power lines in Macarthur on 3 April 2020.

Spring/summer migrants

Of the earliest leaving spring/summer migrant species still reported in the previous period, there have been no further reports of the **Brown Songlark**, which was last reported on 29 January. However, a single **Horsfield's Bushlark** was still reported from the Lake Bathurst survey on 7 March (previously last reported from the Greenwood Rd Murrumbateman on 31 January).

A **Rufous Songlark** was also reported near Lake Bathurst on 7 March (previously last reported from the Ginninderra Creek Macgregor on 1 February), a late report in what otherwise has been a poor summer for them. In contrast the **White-winged Triller** was still reported from 7 locations (17 in February) with the most recent record being from the Kama NR on 7 March.

There have been no further reports of the **White-browed** and **Masked Woodswallow** which were last reported from the Jarramlee Homestead Rd at the Dunlop Grasslands on 1 February. Of the 2 inland cuckoo species usually present, there were still reports of the **Horsfield's Bronze-Cuckoo** from 6 locations (barely down from the 7 in February) up to 14 March. The **Pallid Cuckoo** was reported from 2 locations (1 in February), 1 bird on the JWNR on 6 and 11 March, and at the Cork Oak Plantation on 12 and 14 March.

There have been no reports of the coastal spring/summer migrant the **Sahul Cicadabird** during the period, with the most recent report being a single bird on 11 February.

Likely due to the often-stormy weather **White-throated Needletails** were reported from 20 locations, compared with 6 in the previous month. However, numbers were quite small, with the maximum being 20 birds at Griffith and at Wamboin on 3 and 6 March, respectively. While usually less numerous, **Fork-tailed Swifts** were reported from only 2 locations (3 in February), one bird over Macarthur on 25 February and 2 over Mt Painter NR on 17 March.

Of the migrant species that usually leave from early in March, the **Dollarbird** was still reported from 9 locations, most recently at both the JWNR and the Casuarina Sands NR on 8 March. The **Rainbow Bee-eater** was still reported from 14 locations, most recently at the JWNR and Zosterops Corner on 21 March. The **Sacred Kingfisher**, usually last of these 3 species to leave, was still reported from close to 30 locations, up to the time of writing.

Of the other migrants that have mostly left by the end of March/early April, the **Shining Bronze-Cuckoo** was still reported from 6 locations, most recently from the Uriarra TSR on 21 March. The **Sahul Brush Cuckoo** was reported from just 3 locations, most recently from Oak Hill (Bonner) on 8 March. The **Eastern Koel** was still reported from around 23 locations, with the most recent report of an adult being from Macarthur on 17 March, a relatively early departure in line with the early end to the breeding season (see below).

The **Latham's Snipe** was still recorded from 6 locations, most recently from the West Belconnen Pond on 23 March. The **Leaden Flycatcher** was still reported from around 20 locations, up to the time of writing, as was the **Australian Reed-Warbler**, still reported from over 35 locations. **Fairy Martins** were still reported from 5 locations, most recently at the big dam at Mulligans Flat on 21 March, whereas **Tree Martins**, which usually stay longer, were still reported from 17 locations, up to the time of writing.

Of the passage migrants, the **Satin Flycatcher** was not reported from the mountains to the southwest of Canberra or around Tallaganda SF, with the only confirmed record being of a male with a glossy head and clear downcurved boundary on the breast photographed at the Kambah Pool NR on 11 March. In contrast there were reports from 4 urban/peri-urban locations for the **Australian Rufous Fantail**, as well as still from 8 locations from the mountains to the southwest of Canberra.

So, during April please keep an eye out for the above and other spring/ summer migrants which are still being reported but usually leave during April. These include the **Noisy Friarbird** (still reported from over 40 locations during the period), **Western** and **White-throated Gerygone** (still reported from around 11 and over 30 locations, respectively, during the

period), and most of the **Rufous Whistlers**, **Black-faced Cuckoo-Shrikes** and **Grey Fantails**. A number of these last three species will overwinter, as will the **Mistletoebird** and **Superb Parrot**.

Autumn/winter altitudinal migrants

Of the species that leave Canberra and its surrounds for the mountains and higher country to spend spring/summer there, but return in autumn, the **White-eared Honeyeater** and the **Golden Whistler** were recorded in 11 and 23 urban/peri-urban locations over the past month. This compares with 8 and 4, respectively, in January, an indication that only the latter had started to move in.

There were reports of **Scarlet Robins** from around 24 urban/peri-urban locations (8 in February), an indication they have started to move back in numbers. In contrast there has only been one such report (a female at the Ginninderry Conservation Corridor on 18 March) for the **Flame Robin**, always slower to move in. The **Rose Robin** has also not yet started to move back in/through, with reports only from 6 locations in the mountains to the W of Canberra. Again, there have been no confirmed **Pink Robin** sightings during the period, with the closest locations again being Thredbo in the Kosciuszko NP.

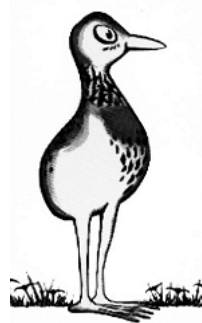
The **Crescent Honeyeater** also stayed away from such locations, again being reported from 3 locations W of the Murrumbidgee River, and the only **Yellow-tufted Honeyeater** reported from anywhere within the COG Aol was one on the Yerrabi Track in the Namadgi NP on 28 February. There was a report of an **Olive Whistler** at the ANBG on 24 February, but the **Bassian Thrush** has not yet been reported from there. Again, the **Brown Gerygone** was not reported from anywhere within the COG Aol during the period.

Unusual species

Apart from the **Lewin's Honeyeater**, **Plumed Whistling Duck** and **Australasian Figbird** described above, there were no "unusual" species reported from the COG Aol during the period that deserve special attention.

Again, there were no **Magpie Geese** reported during the period. **Freckled Duck** were reported from 4 locations during the period (3 in February), with easily the highest number being the 87 recorded on the Lake Bathurst Survey on 7 March (plus 6 at the adjacent The Morass, compared with 68 and none in February). Up to 17 ducks continued to be present at the Jerrabomberra Wetlands NR (JWNR) throughout the period. There was also a single duck reported from the Upper Stranger Pond on 4 March.

Up to 4 **Australian Shelducks** continued to be reported from the big dam at the Mulligans Flat NR to 14 March. Outside of the ACT this species was reported from 5 locations (8 in February) stretching from the NE round to the E of the ACT, with the highest numbers being the 59 ducks (plus 62 on the Morass) counted on the Lake Bathurst survey on 7 March (the former sharply down from the 720 in February, only slightly compensated by the much higher numbers at the latter), and easily the second highest being the 23 ducks at the Trucking Yard Dam on 5 March.



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

0417310200

enquiries@philipmaher.com

Good birding, good food

South West Western Australia
26 September to 5 October 2026

Plains-wanderer Weekends
17/18 October 2026
7/8 November 2026
21/22 November 2026
limited to 6 participants

**Wet Season birding, mammals, reptiles &
butterflies**
Kutini – Payamu
Iron Range NP
13 to 19 January 2027

**Small personal tours in the Deniliquin district,
Victorian mallee, NE Victoria, Gippsland and
the Melbourne area or anywhere you need to
go to bolster your Australia list.**

Please contact Patricia Maher for
information, itineraries and costing.

enquiries@philipmaher.com

Blue-billed Ducks were reported from 7 locations during the past month (4 in February), with a maximum of 16 ducks reported from the Upper Stranger Pond where they were present throughout the period. Up to 2 ducks were reported from the JWNR and at the adjacent FSTP throughout the period. There were 4 ducks recorded on the Lake Bathurst survey on 7 March (1 in February), and again none from the adjacent Morass. A single duck was reported from the West Belconnen Pond on 8 March, on Rowes Lagoon on 12 March and from the Franklin Pond System on 13 March.

Musk Ducks were reported from 5 locations in the past month (3 in February), with the single location in the ACT being the 1 duck at the Bracks Hole Rd on 25 February. The maximum number was 29 ducks on the Lake Bathurst survey (plus one duck on the adjacent Morass) on 7 March (close to the 29 in total on 8 February). There was also 1 duck at the Greenwood Rd Murrumbateman on 1 March and at Rowes Lagoon on 6 March.

The **Stubble Quail** was again reported from just a single location in the past month, 8 birds from Lake Bathurst survey on 7 March. It has been a very poor summer to see this species. **Brown Quail** were reported from 4 locations (5 in February), with the maximum being 6 quail at the Smokers Trail on 22 March. A single **Painted Button-quail** was reported from the Mulligans Flat NR on 15 March (0 locations in February) and again no **Little Button-quail** were reported during the period.

No **White-headed Pigeon, Brown Cuckoo-Dove, Brush Bronzewing, Peaceful** or **Diamond Doves** were reported during the period. Up to 2 **White-throated Nightjars** were reported from 4 close together locations along the Bullock Paddock and Bracks Hole Rds to the W of the Cotter Dam between 20 February and 16 March.

A single **Baillon's Crake** was reported only from the JWNR on 9 March (2 locations February). **Spotless Crakes** were reported from 2 locations (3 in February) in the past month, with up to 2 at the JWNR throughout the period and one crake at the Valley Ave Ponds in Gungahlin on 7 March. **Australian Spotted Crakes** were also reported from just 2 locations in the past month (5 in February), with up to 3 regularly reported from the JWNR, and a single crake from the Bungendore Common on 7 March.

Buff-banded Rails were reported from 3 locations (as for February), with single birds from the Goulburn Wetlands on 2 March, the JWNR on 1 and 6 March and the big dam at the Mulligans Flat NR on 5 March. The only **Lewin's Rail** reported was one from the JWNR on 23 March (cf 4 locations in February). The **Black-tailed Nativehen** at the big dam at the Mulligans Flat NR was last reported on 13 February.

Pied Stilts were reported 2 locations (6 in February) which includes 2 spots from the NW Lake George from where a maximum of 27 birds were reported on 27 February (well down from the 200 birds on 11 February). Two birds were reported from the Greenwood Rd Murrumbateman on 1 March, but there were no birds from both the Lake Bathurst and The Morass surveys on 7 March. Four **Red-capped Plovers** were reported only from the Lake Bathurst survey on 7 March (1 there in February), with none at the adjacent The Morass (4 in February). A single **Sharp-tailed Sandpiper** was reported from the Lake Bathurst survey on 7 March.

However, there were no **Pacific Golden Plovers, Red-necked Avocets, Banded Lapwing, Australian Painted-snipe, Comb-crested Jacana, Red-necked Stint, Pectoral** or **Common Sandpipers** reported during the period. **Caspian Terns** were reported from 2 locations (1 in February), 2 birds at the JWNR on 20 March, and a single bird at the big dam at Mulligans Flat NR on 5 March, but no **Whiskered** or **White-winged Black Terns** were reported during the period.

The **Great-crested Grebe** was reported from 4 locations (down from 7 in February), with up to 13 grebes regularly reported from the Bracks Hole Rd and 1-2 birds from the nearby Vanitys Crossing Rd on 9 March. There were 20 birds reported from the Lake Bathurst survey on 7 March (12 on 8 February) and 3 at The Morass (none in February).

Coffee and Chat at the Gardens Tuesday, 14 April

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.

The **Australian Little Bittern** was last heard calling at the JWNR on 21 February, but no **Australasian Bitterns** were reported during the period.

No **Little Egrets** were again reported during the period, but **Plumed Egrets** were reported from 2 locations (3 in February), with 1 reported from the Horse Park Drive wetlands on 3 March, and another at the Bungendore Common on 26 February and 5 March. Again, in contrast **Great Egrets** were reported from 14 locations during the past month (16 in February), again all but two within the ACT and including up to 3 birds regularly at the JWNR.

The number of locations for the **White-necked Heron** have dropped sharply to 11 compared with the 26 in February. **Royal Spoonbills** were reported from 11 locations during the past month (13 in February), with all but 4 (including 7 birds on the Lake Bathurst survey on 7 March) within the ACT. **Yellow-billed Spoonbills** were reported from 6 locations (5 in February) during the period, with significant numbers on the Lake Bathurst survey on 7 March (12 with another 9 on The Morass). No **Glossy Ibis** were reported during the period.

Single **Eastern Barn Owls** were reported 2 locations during the past month (as for February), both heard at night, 1 on Warks Rd on 28 February and the other at Flynn on 14 March, but no **Powerful Owls** were reported during the period. **Black-shouldered Kites** were reported from around 8 locations in the past month, with numbers dropping again from the 14 locations in February. Numbers of this species often do drop quite dramatically and then rise again and it will be interesting to see if they go back up with the widespread rain over the past month.

Shorty photographed a lovely quite golden immature **Spotted Harrier** at the Holborow Ave ponds on 28 February which may have been the same bird Andrea and I saw the next day (1 March) while standing on the small bridge over Weston Creek near its confluence with the Molonglo River. A large raptor, noticeably golden on the head and shoulders (front part of wings), came towards us very low down the deep channel before it climbed over the side and continued flying low downstream. Apart from flying very low, we thought it was quite unusual behaviour, though looking at HANZAB it notes “Occasionally hunt over open water and vegetated swamps, especially in arid inland: floodwater swamps, bore swamps, waterholes and sewage ponds”.

A **Black Kite** was photographed hunting for insects while the tractor mower was cutting the grass at the Canturf Farm on 5 March, but no **Black Falcons** (1 location in February), **Pacific Baza** or **Grey Goshawks** were reported from anywhere in the COG Aol during the period.

Azure Kingfishers were reported from 5 locations (up from 2 in February) during the period with single birds from the well-known Cotter Reserve on 17 and 22 March. There was also a single bird at the nearby Casuarina Sands Weir on 21 March and at the more distant locations of Bracks Hole Rd on 22 March, the Namarag Molonglo River Reserve on 16 March and the Tharwa Bridge Reserve on 21 March. No **Red-backed** or **Forest Kingfishers** were reported during the period.

A single **Musk Lorikeet** was reported only from Griffith on 3 March over the past month (2 locations in February), but no **Glossy Black-Cockatoos**, **Cockatiel**, **Turquoise Parrot**, **Scaly-breasted**, **Little** or **Purple-crowned Lorikeets** were reported over the period.

Blue-faced Honeyeaters were reported from 4 known locations (none in February), a bird on the Federal Golf Course on 3 March, Garran on 9 and 22-24 March and Coronation Park Yass on 1 March. The two birds photographed in Higgins on 18 March are only slightly E of where one was recorded in January, so far, the most NW Canberra record. There was also a late record relayed by Philip Veerman on 24 March of a **Blue-faced Honeyeater** in Monash. Checking recent eBird maps shows a couple of sightings in Macarthur, which line up on roughly the same latitude. However, Shorty posted there is also a record in Richardson from 30 April 2015, slightly further South. They certainly have been in the ACT much longer than many birders think.

Up to 2 **Spiny-cheeked Honeyeaters** continued to be reported from the known location at the Rock Valley in the Tidbinbilla NR to 11 March. **White-fronted Chats** were again reported from just 2 locations in the past month (as for February), with up to 7 birds at the Holborow Ave Ponds to 14 March, and 13 birds from the Lake Bathurst survey on 7 March (2 there on 8 February). However, no **Singing**, **Scarlet**, **Brown**, **Striped** or **Painted Honeyeaters**, **Little Wattlebirds** or **Little Friarbirds** were reported during the period.

Chestnut-rumped Heathwren were reported from 4 locations (2 in February) with 1 seen at the Tidbinbilla NR on 22 February and the Uriarra TSR on 23 February, 2 birds at Whiskers Creek Rd Carwoola on 25 February and one photographed on the Cuumbeun NR Link Trail on 1 March. A **White-bellied Cuckoo-shrike** was observed on the Federal Hwy at Collector on 2 March.

Red-capped Robins continued to be widely reported from 7 locations (8 in February) with up to 5 birds regularly reported from the Bracks Hole Fire Trail, and a male at the nearby Sinclair Circuit on 17 March and a pair at the bit further away at Concrete Rd Pierces Creek that same day. Up to 2 birds have also been reported from the Nadjung Mada NR from 13-20 March, as well as from the Zosterops Corner throughout the period. Two birds were also reported from Bulls Head on 5 March, and a female from Gibraltar Peak in the Tidbinbilla NR on 11 March. It is notable how many of these locations are in the mountains to the W of Canberra, a habitat which I would not normally associate with this species. It will also be interesting to see whether the species starts to move away again with the recent inland rain.

No **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 1 location over the period (as for February) with 2 birds photographed at the Mulligans Flat NR (a known location) on 8 March. **Hooded Robins** were reported from 3 known locations (2 in February), with two photographed at the known location Rendevous Creek as well as the Lambrigg Lookout (close to known locations), both on 8 March. There was also one at the Uriarra TSR on 19 March. Kym Bradley has reported successful breeding for both these species at her patch to the S of Canberra.

There were no **Restless Flycatcher** reported from anywhere in the COG Aol during the period (1 in February) and it will be very interesting to see if any come close to Canberra over winter, as they usually do except for 2025, this year.

The **Brown Treecreeper** was reported from 2 known locations in the past month (4 in February), with up to 2 birds at the Naas Rd at Apollo Rd from 10 March. There were also up to 5 birds (11 March) regularly at the Nelanglo TSR.

Reports of “unusual” species were very low again over the period with very few reports of pigeons/doves, raptors, parrots and honeyeaters. Only numbers of the **Red-capped Robin** seem to have held up in the past month.

Breeding

Apart from the **Jacky Winter** and the **Hooded Robins** noted above, and the **Gang-gang Cockatoo** below, the following are some other early autumn breeding observations:

The female **Satin Bowerbird** was observed feeding the juvenile around my tomatoes a few more times to 13 March when on 15 March there was a sudden influx of green birds with at least 6 seen there and shortly after a full male who has remained around since. Some activity at the bower in my neighbour’s garden commenced almost immediately showing the very short break between old and new breeding cycle for this species. This is possibly due to the male not participating in the breeding event.

My tally of **Eastern Koel** fledglings of which I am aware now stands at 181 for the season, with just 4 new ones in the past 4 weeks, and just 2 in March but including a quite late, well advanced, probably independent juvenile photographed drinking at the bird bath at Shorty’s place in Symonston on 24 March. So, it was a very early breeding season, with very few fledglings from the **Red Wattlebird’s** third brood. I suspect they were too worn out after all the frenetic feeding in January. Overall, the number of fledglings is only slightly higher than for 3 of the previous 4 seasons, showing that from similar reporting the extent of breeding now seems to have become quite consistent.

Flocks, including of migrating birds

Some mixed feeding flocks (MFFs) have been reported and the best Andrea and I have encountered was a very active one on the S fenceline of Narrabundah Hill on 5 March consisting of around 8 **Superb Fairy-wrens**, 4 **Yellow-rumped Thornbills**, around 10 **Silvereyes**, 15 **Red-browed Finch**, a **Willie Wagtail** and around 8 very active **Grey Fantails** which have been seen moving through in groups. While nowhere as interesting as the nearby one a month earlier, the very much better conditions since then seem to have resulted in the lesser need to feed together, and also the grass/weed cover makes it more difficult.

Through the Canberra Birds Secretary on 26 February Nick Arnott reported a flock of 15-20 **Gang-gang Cockatoos** on Aranda Hill the previous Monday. Similarly on 3 March Michael Reeves reported that for the last few weeks there had been a flock of **Gang-gang Cockatoos** that had been feeding and mating and roosting in the trees of Darke Street Torrens. The flock size was at least 12 with multiple identifiable pairs. They were roosting and mating in the *Eucalyptus melliodora* street trees outside 31 Darke Street and feeding on the emerging seed capsules of the *Liquidamber styraciflua* at 35 Darke Street and elsewhere within the suburb. Michael noted the flock was ranging all around that part of Torrens and their call was outstanding. They seemed to be congregating also in Gouger Street.

It seems to have been a late start to the honeyeater migration season and very little came to my attention until Julie Hotchin posted on 23 March that she had observed **Yellow-faced Honeyeaters** on migration that morning, at the end of Bracks Hole Road overlooking the Cotter Dam (interestingly there was only 1 counted on COG trip there the previous morning). While admiring the lovely view over the water around 9.00 am, a fairly steady stream of honeyeaters started to fly through; initially in small numbers, later increasing to groups of 20 or so. They gathered in larger groups in a stand of eucalypts at the edge of the dam, before flying over the water.

I found it very interesting that they would do so, as it appears the filling of the expanded Cotter Dam, now over 10 years ago, did not stop them from continuing to use a traditional route, even if it posed a greater hazard than before. This contrasts very greatly with them stopping going from Point Hut to Mt Rob Roy when the houses at Gordon etc were built many years ago.

Around 200 **Yellow-faced Honeyeaters** moved through in about half an hour. Julie also heard a few **White-naped Honeyeaters** and a **Noisy Friarbird** among them. Two small groups of **Silvereyes** were also flying with them. The only public response to this post was Richard Allen reporting around 10 **Noisy Friarbirds** moving along ridge at the Mt Franklin Rd the same morning.

April is the second month when there is lots of bird movement and activity in the COG AoI. So please watch out for the last of the departing spring/summer migrants mentioned above, particularly the **White-throated Needletail** and the **Fork-tailed Swift**, and for more of the returning autumn/winter altitudinal migrants, MFFs and single species flocks, as well as roosts and roost flights. 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



Zac and Elliott at the Birdlife Photography Conference, Belconnen, ACT, 8 March 2026, Kim Farley

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 - SCHÖEFHAUSSEN

www.naturelodge.com.au

Summary of the 11 March meeting

Unfortunately, the second meeting at our temporary new venue was marred by the failure of the projection system due to a faulty connection at the Bugang Room in the at the Denman Village Community Centre. Our sincere apologies again to both speakers that, due this unforeseen problem, they were unable to show their slides during their presentations. We have taken up this issue with the management to ensure it does not happen again.

The meeting started with **Julie Hotchin** launching the **Commemorative Issue of Canberra Bird Notes – 50 Volumes of Canberra Bird Notes 1968-2025** which was published in February.

Julie noted that the Issue celebrates *CBN*'s 50 volumes and 57 years of reporting research, bird observations and reflections on the birdlife of the Canberra region. It showcases the diversity and scope of the *CBN* content over the last six decades by republishing some of the remarkable contributions from a range of its contributors, both amateur and professional.

Julie developed the initial concept for this Issue following discussions with Steve Read. It was then refined and extended with the current editors, Michael Lenz and Kevin Windle, who then accepted the challenge of producing this Commemorative Issue, with Julie as guest editor.

The Issue is organised into six themes that reflect the nature and scope of research topics published in in *CBN* over nearly 60 years. Each theme comprises three parts: a short introduction written by an expert on the subject, one or more feature articles selected from earlier issues of *CBN* that demonstrate important research or key aspects of the theme, and a list of further relevant reading published in *CBN*.

Julie thanked the nine expert contributors for accepting the invitation to write an introduction to each theme. She noted that these short pieces distil many years of research, comment on trends in avian research and methods, and draw out the significance of each theme for our understanding of our region's birdlife in the past and some implications for the future.

Julie also thanked everyone involved in the Commemorative Issue, noting that it is somewhat unusual for a publication from a small, regional bird group to have the wide reach and influence as shown in the Issue.

Finally, she encouraged the audience and readers to consider submitting their own short notes, observations or articles for publication, noting that *CBN*'s future depends entirely on contributions from the local birding community.

On behalf of COG/Canberra Birds members many thanks to the editorial team of Julie, Michael and Kevin for their hard work in the planning, organisation and editing to bring this very important Commemorative Issue to fruition. We agree it really does showcase the contribution of *CBN* and COG/Canberra Birds to the knowledge and conservation of the birdlife in our region.

If you haven't already done so, we encourage you to read the Commemorative Issue here: <https://canberrabirds.org.au/publications/canberra-bird-notes/>

The main speaker was **Emeritus Professor Philip Gibbons** from the Fenner School of Environment and Science at the ANU who gave a very interesting and informative presentation "What we have learnt from 15 years of research on old trees in and around Canberra?".

Despite not being able to show his slides, Philip managed extremely well, being able to make his points very clearly. The interest in Canberra's trees was very clear from the many questions from the audience which followed.

He began by noting that bird's richness and abundance in the ACT is most strongly associated with trees with ≥ 80 cm diameter, which comprise just 2% of the total of trees in Canberra urban parks, and contain the most hollows. They are thus disproportionately important for our birds, as well as bats in urban areas.

Most birds associated with large trees are hollow-dependent but around 30% don't use these. Philip also pointed out that birds prefer near-horizontal small diameter branches with large trees having 7-times the length of these branches. He also noted that birds use dead branches disproportionately more than live branches, possibly due to clearer sightlines.

Unfortunately, Philip noted we are losing these trees in an ongoing decline, with 60-80% of remnant native trees being removed in greenfield residential developments, with trees such as the Yellow Box, which can live for up to 500 years, are often being removed before they can form hollows. This is for a variety of reasons, including homeowner or public pressure.

Philip's research has shown that nest boxes are not a good answer with 89% in his ACT study being utilized by 6 species, the **Crimson** and **Eastern Rosellas**, the **Common Myna** and **Common Starling**, the Brush-tailed Possum and Honeybees. However, his research has shown that erected or repurposed trees with perches and nest boxes such as occurs at Barrer Hill increases bird species.

He noted that all trees drop limbs, and therefore a matrix needs to be employed involving a risk assessment of the likelihood of injury/damage. For example, old eucalypts pose a high risk over fixed structures or heavily used paths or car parks, but there is a much lower probability of harm on less used foot paths or in areas of urban parks.

Philip illustrated this with the example of his involvement in the Ginninderry development where there has been a target of 80% retention of existing trees, resulting in more bird species than in adjacent suburbs. There they have often been landscaped around including branches being left, with no impact on the housing supply. He noted that his research showed that birds prefer planting under trees, and that single isolated trees are as valuable or more valuable than trees retained in clumps.

He stressed that trees should be considered right up front in any Greenfields development, and in this respect, Philip is developing a best practice Manual which he proposes will be taken up by the ACT government and hopefully parts of NSW as well.

Once again on behalf of COG/Canberra Birds members, many thanks to Philip for giving up his time to deliver this very interesting and informative presentation on old trees in and around Canberra. It was great to see research and hard data generated on an area for which there are often very subjective views. Our very best wishes for Philip's program's further success and in particular the completion and the widespread adoption of the Manual that they are developing.

Once again, our sincere apologies to both Julie and Philip for the failure of the projection. Philip has since provided a link to a copy of his slides (available until 11 April) at [COG - mature trees 2026.pptx](#).

Jack Holland

MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

Membership payments become due from 1 July 2026 for the 2026/27 financial year. Please do not pay your membership until AFTER 1 July.

From 1 July, new or renewing members should complete the online membership form which can found on our [website](#) and transfer payment to the Canberra Birds bank account.

The information from the membership form will be transferred to a database which will provide an ongoing up-to-date record of our members.

If you have any queries, please contact prue.watters@gmail.com.

Prue Watters
Membership Officer
March 2026

Introductory birdwatching and ecological awareness event at Jerrabomberra Wetlands

On 28 February, the Nepalese Association of Agriculture, Forestry & Environment in Australia (NEPAFE) conducted a guided birdwatching and ecological awareness program for youth at Jerrabomberra Wetlands. Canberra Birds assisted with the organisation of the event, Birdlife Australia granted funding and Miriam Fokker, ranger at the wetlands, provided a comprehensive overview of wetlands ecosystems. This included bird species found in wetlands, their identifying characteristics, habitats, ecological roles, and the importance of conservation and protection. Her insights gave participants a strong ecological foundation and practical understanding of why wetlands matter.

We thank Esha Shekar, a PhD student at ANU, who led her first birdwatching walk. She introduced participants to birdwatching skills, field etiquette, observation techniques, and guided everyone enthusiastically.

The event is part of a series conducted by NEPAFE to introduce young people to experiential environmental learning activities as one aspect of shaping responsible future leaders.

We thank Sujan Neupane of NEPAFE for reaching out to Canberra Birds to be involved and look forward to supporting future initiatives.

Julie Hotchin



NEPAFE participants, Jerrabomberra Wetlands NR, ACT, 28 February 2026: *Sujan Neupane*

Field Trip Reports

Thursday 26 February to Sunday 1 March – Ben Hall Campground, Weddin Mountains NP

Eighteen Canberra Birds members arrived at Ben Halls Campground on 26 and 27 February. Conditions did not look promising –hot, very dry, windy. We could not understand what the birds and animals were finding to eat because every waterway was dry, and any grass was dry and sparse. We saw kangaroos digging, perhaps for roots or fungi. On Thursday and Saturday nights strong winds blew throughout the night, with some respite in the early hours of Saturday. Despite the conditions, we explored Bimbi State Forest, Seaton’s Farm and the Ben Hall’s Cave walk.

A walk in the Bimbi State Forest on Friday morning was productive, with **Red-capped Robin, Yellow, Inland and Chestnut-Rumped Thornbill, Speckled Warbler, Striped Honeyeater** and **Grey-crowned Babbler**. A late afternoon walk to the cave gave us spectacular views of a **Wedge-tailed Eagle** flying not far above our heads. In the very early hours of Saturday morning (the only calm night), most of us heard **White-throated Nightjars** calling from various directions (there were at least three birds), and some also heard **Australian Owlet-nightjars**.

On Saturday morning we walked to Seaton’s Farm, the site of a working farm in the early 20th century. NSW NPWS has restored some of the infrastructure affected by bushfires, and it was apparent life on the farm was very basic and difficult. A **Striped Honeyeater** was feeding on Kurrajong seeds, a legacy of the avenue of this species planted by Jim Seaton almost a hundred years ago.

We celebrated the 80th birthday of one of our long-term members/campers, Pat M, and were delighted that one of our newest members, Sunny, got to experience an Aussie bush camp. Many thanks to John and Kathy for organising the trip, and for doing the bird lists.

I travelled with Sue, and the best of our sightings on the drive to and from the camp were seven **Yellow-billed Spoonbills** on a small farm dam, and a single **Glossy Ibis** at a small Boorowa farm dam.

Sandra Henderson

Sunday 8 March - Goulburn

A small group signed up for a trip to the Goulburn Wetlands and West Goulburn Bushland Reserve. At the wetlands we managed a reasonable 34 species, with the highlights a **Latham’s Snipe** seen by most as it flew across the water and two **White-faced Herons** sitting on the highest rocks. Late in the walk male and female **Australasian Darters** flew over the wetlands, and we managed to see both **Little** and **Long-billed Corellas** on the adjacent golf course.

At the West Goulburn Bushland Reserve, we had a fairly meagre bird list in cold and windy conditions, until we got back to our cars and found a pair of **Red-capped Robins** right at the entry gate. For some this was a new species.



Royal Spoonbill, Lake George, NSW, 8 March 2026,
Sandra Henderson

On the trip back to Canberra, we stopped at Rowes Lagoon, where a couple of us saw a **White-bellied Sea-Eagle**, but little else apart from the numerous **Australasian Swamphens**. The next stop at the Badcoe Rest Area beside Lake George yielded a group of 13 **Royal Spoonbills** moving as a group in the shallows. Dull light meant we had trouble identifying the many ducks down from the rest areas, but we managed to identify **Chestnut Teal** among those visible at the Wheatley Rest Area.

Sandra Henderson

Correction

The March issue of Gang-gang included a slightly incorrect list of Eucalypt species at Stromlo Woodlands. The list of species should read Blakely’s Red,Gum, Red Stringybark, Yellow Box, Mealy Bundy, Scribbly Gum and Candlebark.



Clockwise from top left: **Red-capped Robin**, **Yellow Thornbill**, **Chestnut-rumped Thornbill**, **Striped Honeyeater**, **Apostlebird**, **Australian Ringneck**, **Wedge-tailed Eagle**, Weddin Mountain NP, NSW, 26 February-1 March 2026, *Marcus Hellyer*

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.

Easter Sunday 5 April - Narrabundah Hill - morning outing

This is another field trip to sites on Canberra's Western Edge. For more information see: <https://conservationcouncil.org.au/western-edge/>

Description: Those members who will be staying at home this Easter and/or who will have visiting birder friends are welcome to join this outing to the Narrabundah Hill reserve, a major location on Canberra's Western Edge. This outing has again been timed for the autumn honeyeater migration season, with the northern and western boundaries of the reserve having known local migration routes. We will walk along these two boundaries, depending on conditions and the species seen, possibly along most of the western one, and we will either return by the same or a different path. This will be up to 5 km on relatively flat ground. We will also look for other autumn birds such as **Scarlet Robin** and mixed feeding flocks, or late departing summer migrants such as gerygones.

Meeting time: While daylight savings will have ended that morning the **walk will start at 8:30 am** to maximise the opportunity to see the honeyeaters which in early April generally come through later in the morning.

Meeting place: Meet at the parking area and stile at the north-east end of the reserve, at the corner of Warragamba Avenue and Eucumbene Drive, Duffy. **Please note that the entry to this parking area is a little tricky and is in fact about 25 metres past (on the Mount Stromlo side) the T-junction with Warragamba Avenue, and for those driving along Eucumbene Drive from Duffy involves a quite tricky 180 degrees turn, so please take care.** Please take water and morning tea to have on the track.

Name of leader and contact details: To participate, please contact Jack Holland by email on jandaholland@bigpond.com, with your name, mobile number, and name and number of an emergency contact.

Saturday 11 and Sunday 12 April – 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. It is possible that there will be late vacancies, so if you are interested, contact Julian Teh at julian.teh@yahoo.com, providing:

- Name and mobile number
- Name and number of an emergency contact

Saturday 11 April – K2C surveys, Bredbo area

COG will continue with the K2C surveys that have been running since April 2010 in the Michelago-Bredbo area. 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 we can

witness the autumn migrations. 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 April. Email: ntaws@bigpond.com with your name, mobile number, and the name and contact of an emergency contact.

Nicki Taws

Sunday 12 April – Wandiyali near Googong

On this outing we will visit Wandiyali, a privately-owned wildlife reserve between Jerrabomberra and Googong. Wandiyali includes a 600ha sanctuary protected by a predator-proof fence - see <https://wandyalirestorationtrust.org/>. Wandiyali recently entered into a partnership with the Australian Wildlife Conservancy to reintroduce locally extinct species to the sanctuary: <https://wandyalirestorationtrust.org/news/about-our-partnership-with-awc-australian-wildlife-conservancy> and <https://www.australianwildlife.org/sanctuaries/wandyalienvirona-wildlife-sanctuary?srsltid=AfmBOOrpC2k8eV23Ngmsv4Wz2v05jKUub7zXk77i3hleUhs4ccqQf>

Wandiyali has a range of habitats including grassland, open woodland, gullies and wetlands so we should see a good range of birds. There are also lots of native mammals and reptiles. The sanctuary was recently in the news because it was visited by a koala.

We'll be accompanied by Kaz and Sandy, the landholders, who'll give an introduction to Wandiyali and show us the best spots for birds.

Wandiyali has a Landcare volunteer program (which I'm involved in), so if you are interested in helping to manage and protect this amazing oasis, this will be a great opportunity to talk to Kaz and Sandy about getting involved.

Please be prepared to walk off trails, so long pants and sensible shoes are a must as it will be snake season. Walking poles are optional. We'll avoid the steepest sections but there will likely be some rolling country.

Please bring water and a snack for morning tea - we'll likely be out for a few hours.

Please meet at 8:00am at the main gate marked on this Google maps pin:

<https://maps.app.goo.gl/aBtscEbQA8HhCrTz5>

It's also useful to read these old-fashioned directions:

- Head south on Old Cooma Road from the junction with Edwin Land Parkway.
- Continue along Old Cooma Road for 3.7km.
- Turn right into an unnamed road/driveway (note that Google maps may say you can't turn right here but there is a turning lane and it is legal and safe to turn here). Note that there is no sign for Wandiyali on the corner.
- Continue along the driveway for around 1.2km to the main gate.
- After turning off Old Cooma Road, you will see the sanctuary fence start after a few hundred metres on the left.
- Ignore the houses and driveways on the right.
- You will pass the first gate in the sanctuary fence on the left - ignore this gate and keep driving along the driveway.
- You will reach the main gate where I will be waiting to assign parking and let you into the sanctuary.
- You shouldn't get lost, but if you do, call me on 0418 264 868.

Numbers will be limited to 25 people, so first in best dressed. **Register** at pickelbarrel@gmail.com with your name, mobile number and the name and number of an emergency contact.

Marcus Hellyer

Wednesday 15 April - Less visited spots of Tidbinbilla NR

Meet at the Tidbinbilla carpark at 8.30. We will visit several of the small picnic areas - Greens, Blewitts, Webbs, and then undertake the easy walk in the Eucalypt Forest.

As usual, don't forget your hat, sturdy footwear, sunscreen and water.

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

Sandra Henderson

Sunday 19 April 2026 - Dalton Cemetery and Showground, Jerrawa Travelling Stock Reserve, and Gundaroo Cemetery and Common

Description: The first two sites are in the Upper Lachlan Shire north of Gunning. They have good connectivity with nearby woodlands. **Jacky Winter**, **White-eared Honeyeater** and **Rose Robin** have been recorded at Dalton Cemetery. Jerrawa Creek TSR has had **Pied Butcherbird** and **Common Bronzewing**. Gundaroo Cemetery and Common near Yass River are good for raptors including **Wedge-tailed Eagle**, **Spotted Harrier** and **Brown Falcon**.

Meeting time and place: Victoria St carpark, Sutton Primary School carpark at 8.00 am for carpooling. Suggested contribution for petrol - \$10 per passenger.

Walking distance: Dalton 0.8 km, Jerrawa Ck 1.6 km and Gundaroo Cemetery and Common 1 km

Degree of difficulty: easy

End time: 4.00 pm at Sutton

What to bring: water, morning tea, lunch, sunscreen, water, sturdy shoes, hat.

Numbers: limited to 16

Participants must register with the leader at bsgraham1948@gmail.com, providing their name and mobile number, and the name and mobile number of an emergency contact
Bill Graham

Sunday 26 April - Private properties at Wallaces Gap near Majors Creek

Today's walk will cover three properties across a variety of habitats and all property owners are keen bird watchers, happy to share their experiences and special places with visitors. It will be the first time that Canberra Birds have been to this location.

We will start at the highest point of our trip leader's property (Ben), descending through the Silvertop Ash forest. We should at least hear **Eastern Yellow Robin** and **Superb Lyrebirds**. **Gang-gang Cockatoos** and **Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoos** are often seen in this area along with **Spotted Quail-thrush** and **Grey Currawongs**. As we reach the valley floor, we will enter Lucy's property dominated by Black Wattle and Black Sheoak, a favourite food source of the **Glossy Black-Cockatoo**. We can expect to see where they have been feeding although they normally only appear at dusk.

Next we will make our way to Marshall's property and stop for a quick morning tea (BYO) in their sheltered courtyard. The Peppermint Gums nearby are host to many small birds including **Yellow-rumped**, **Striated** and **Brown Thornbills**, both pardalotes, **Varied Sittellas**, and **Crescent**, **White-naped**, **New Holland**, **Brown-headed** and **White-eared Honeyeaters**. **Satin Bowerbirds** are regularly seen here as well.

We then follow a wet gully (**Black-faced Monarch** and **Yellow-tufted Honeyeater** each seen once) to nearby Brick Kiln Creek. The wide creek bed contains thick strands of tea tree and we will hear many birds within the bushes, but need to wait patiently on the bank for them to appear as they fly up into the Snow and Ribbon Gums nearby. **Sacred** and **Azure Kingfishers** have been observed near the creek.

Our walk continues along the creek with the adjacent Snow Gum-grassy woodland landscape providing habitat for robins, swallows and thornbills. A short uphill section (option for a car shuffle) leads up to Ben's house where we will stop for lunch (BYO) to enjoy the view (and birds) from the deck. With luck the resident **Wedge-tailed Eagle** may now be spotted tracing the invisible thermals high above.

Our drivers will be taken back to the start in order to retrieve their cars and save everybody a long walk back up the hill. Keep an eye out for **herons** on the nearby farm dams as we leave.

The walk is about 3kms, mostly flat or downhill and mostly on driveways or bush tracks. Wear suitable footwear in case



we decide to go off-track. Walking poles optional. Bring water and food for the trip. Toilets are available at each property if needed.

Meet at Spotlight Queanbeyan at 7:15am for a 70 minute drive to the property. Suggested contribution for drivers if carpooling is \$10 – please bring correct money.

End time is approximately 2pm before returning to Queanbeyan soon after 3pm.

Please register with Ben Bradey (bbradeyau@yahoo.com.au) and include your name, phone number, and name and number of an emergency contact.

Sunday 10 May – Nursery Swamp

On this trip we will visit one of the most delightful spots in Namadgi National Park. **Spotted Quail-thrush** have been seen and heard on the uphill section, and in the higher altitude section, there's the possibility of **Olive Whistler**.

Meet at the Kambah Village shopping centre car park (cnr Drakeford Drive and Marconi Crescent) at **8.30 am** for carpooling. Suggested contribution from each passenger to drivers: \$10.

We will then drive to the Orroral Valley. The first part of the walk is 2 km uphill on a fairly steep track, then we continue along a valley through Black Saltees to Nursery Swamp, a fen at 1,100 metres altitude containing peat that has been dated to 10,000 years BP. The walking distance is about 10 km round trip. The area is of great significance to Aboriginal people, containing both rock art and tool-making sites.

We will return in the early afternoon, so bring morning tea, lunch and water, and be prepared for changeable weather as we will be at altitude.

Registration for this trip is essential **by 6pm on Friday 8 May**; maximum: 16 attendees.

To register, or to obtain further information, please contact the trip leader, Michael by email—
mrobbins@home.netspeed.com.au with your name, mobile number, and the name and number of an emergency contact.

Michael Robbins

Saturday 16 May – Australian National Botanic Gardens – beginners' outing

This morning walk will be the first for 2026 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 24 May – Kama Nature Reserve

Description. Although not part of the proposed Western Edge development, the habitat and birds in the Reserve area are a good representative of flora and fauna to be found in the area designated as the Western Edge. Excellent views of parts of the proposed area can also be viewed from the Reserve.

Kama Nature Reserve is a designated COG woodland site with surveys conducted since 2005 by Chris Davey. Surveys were first conducted before the area was declared a Reserve and was grazed by cattle and sheep, so there have been many changes since then.

The habitat in the Reserve consists of Yellow-Box/Red Gum woodland in the northern section leading to grassland and riverine habitat to the south. This outing will be conducted in the woodland section of the Reserve. During the walk we will visit some of the monitoring points and compare images taken in 2005, 2015 and again in 2025 showing the changes in the vegetation as the area slowly recovers from the effects of stock grazing.

Meeting time and place. The outing will start at 8:00am at the Reserve carpark (-35.2597 149.0296). The carpark is situated on the northern side of William Hovell Drive. If heading from the City continue past the entrance and turn back at the roundabout where William Hovell Drive meets Drake Brockman Drive. DO NOT TRY to ENTER the CARPARK when heading north across on-coming traffic. The Reserve is entered via a stock path underneath Hovell Drive.

Walk details. The walk will cover about 5 km on well-formed dirt tracks and take about 2-3 hours. Water, sun hat and good walking shoes will be required.

Please register with Chris (daveychris12@gmail.com) and include your name, phone number, and the name and number of an emergency contact. Chris Davey



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



NatureArt Lab
Learn - Be Inspired - Love Your Art

Borneo

12 - 25 October 2026

Join our exclusive annual small group nature tour to Sabah, Malaysian Borneo, with NatureArt Lab in 2026!

Experience the wildlife immersion, nature photography and nature journaling trip of a lifetime – especially designed for bird and nature lovers!

Scan for further details:
natureartlab.com.au/



natureartlab.com.au
Image credit: Alan Landford



NatureArt Lab
Learn - Be Inspired - Love Your Art

Costa Rica

14 - 30 June 2026

Join our exclusive small group nature tour to Costa Rica, with NatureArt Lab in 2026 – especially designed for bird and nature lovers!

Experience the wildlife immersion, nature photography mentoring and art workshops with Costa Rican artist Tamara Rojas.

Scan for further details:
natureartlab.com.au/



natureartlab.com.au
Image credit: Alan Landford



MYALLA BIRDWATCHERS MID-WEEK SPECIAL

For birding enthusiasts seeking time, stillness and uninterrupted observation, Myalla offers the perfect mid-week base. Book Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday and receive one night free — or enjoy 10% off a weekend stay. T&C's apply. Direct booking only by email to Leasha@myalla.com.au.

A Birdwatcher's Retreat in the Capertee Valley - Escape to one of Australia's most remarkable birding landscapes. Set in the breathtaking Capertee Valley, between the Blue Mountains and inland NSW, Myalla Farm Stay offers quiet, space and exceptional birdlife right outside your door. One avid guest recorded 80 bird species before even leaving the houseyard. From honeyeaters and small woodland birds in the gardens to raptors riding thermals above the sandstone escarpments, the diversity here is extraordinary. The valley is also internationally recognised for sightings of the endangered Regent Honeyeater. Backing directly onto Wollemi National Park, Myalla offers immediate access to exceptional habitat. Guests can explore an easy 6km walk to our private picnic area and lookout with sweeping views across the valley — perfect for spotting raptors. Sleeps up to 10 guests — ideal for couples, small groups or birding clubs. Slow down, take your time, and immerse yourself in the birdlife of the Capertee Valley. Learn more at www.myalla.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:

Rowin Browne
Jean-Maree Hawke
Madeleine & Tony Maple
Stephanie Good
Georgia Avery
Jessica Peacock
Sheila Webster
Daniel Fernandez &
Miranda Forsyth
Alex Whitby

NEXT NEWSLETTER

Deadline for MAY 2026 edition:

Wednesday 29 APRIL 2026

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: Peter Millar
cogoffice@canberrabirds.org.au

Secretary: Sandie Jones
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

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

