



## President's Report

In the last report, I mentioned that the Australia Day long weekend campout was marred by the "odd shower". The Easter long weekend campout was characterised by rain, with the odd bright patch, although the weather improved as the weekend progressed. Most of us got our tents up and down without rain. We were very fortunate to have the use of a hall by the camp, which had electricity, a working fridge and two flush toilets, and was above all dry! Thanks to Max Harris and Lori Warren for leading this campout, and for giving us access to some private properties with good birds. A report of this activity is in the current issue of the newsletter.

The other Birding NSW activity over Easter was the Outback Track Tour trip led by Judy Harrington to Cabramurra (a breezy location south of Tumut). This went very well, with 91 species being recorded for the weekend.

The next campout will be at Spring Forest near Cowra over the June long weekend. This is always rewarding from the birding point of view, although slightly chilly at night.

The Grenfell IBA survey weekend went very well. We had 29 surveyors and 7 teams. We covered 29 sites, of which 12 were on private properties. Most teams saw groups of Superb Parrots. One hundred and thirty-eight species have been recorded since the surveys started in 2011. A report of the survey is also included in this issue of the newsletter.

Michael Edwards, who co-ordinates our bird database activity, has agreed to record the Grenfell survey records into a database, which will complement our existing database of the Centennial Park surveys.

Laura Rayner was our March speaker. She gave a very interesting talk about her PhD thesis on the value of long-term data collection, using information from the Canberra Ornithologists Group database. A summary of her talk is now on the club website.

In April, Ian McAllan spoke to us about the history of Volume 1, An Atlas of the Birds of NSW and the ACT, a database of bird sightings since 1981. There will be two more volumes published in time.

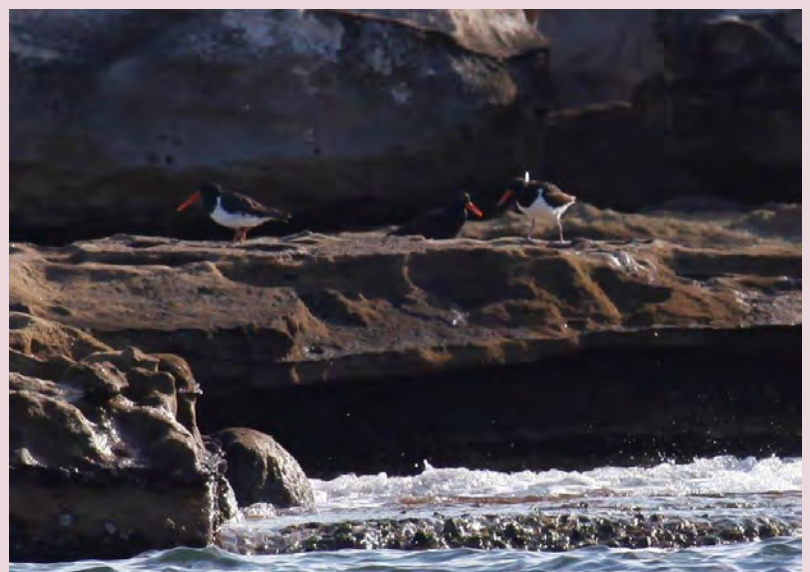
A summary of Ian's talk is also on the club website.

The NSW Bird Atlassers grew out of the first RAOU Atlas program, which ran from 1977 to 1981. At the time, this was conceived as a one-off event. Dick Cooper (as the regional organiser for this Atlas for eastern NSW) was approached to continue the Atlas project in New South Wales, and he accepted the challenge. Since then, six million records of bird observations of over 535 species have been recorded in a systematic way covering New South Wales and the ACT.

Ted Nixon, our new Conservation Chair, attended the April BIGnet meeting which was hosted by the Blue Mountains Bird Observers in the Megalong Valley. He said that there was valuable dialogue between conservation officers at this meeting.

I note that Golo Maurer has been appointed as part-time national co-ordinator of IBA activities, a position funded by BirdLife Australia. The co-ordination of NSW IBA reporting activity continues, led by Elisabeth Karplus and Tony Dymond, Vice-President of the Cumberland Bird Observers Club.

**Tom Karplus**  
President, Birding NSW



**Is this a World First?** Three species of Oystercatcher in the one shot!!! See page 17



## CLUB ACTIVITIES

### FIELD OUTINGS AND MEETINGS

#### FIELD OUTINGS

Bring a snack, lunch and a chair.

#### NATIONAL PARK USE FEES

Club Outings are sometimes held in National Parks. A valid day pass or annual pass is necessary for 46 national parks in NSW and that includes most in the Sydney and Central Coast Regions. The pass must be displayed on your vehicle at all times while you are in the park.

#### TOTAL FIRE BANS

Members are reminded that no Central Coast outings are held on days when Total Fire Bans are in force. For Sydney outings in times of a Total Fire Ban, check with the outing leader.

#### SECURITY

Members are reminded not to leave anything of value visible in unattended vehicles while bird watching.

#### CENTRAL COAST OUTINGS

Sydney Members should advise the leader in advance if they are coming to an outing so that they don't leave without you!

#### FEES AT CAMPOUTS

A camping fee may be applicable at some campsites.

#### PETS

Members are reminded that pets including dogs are not allowed on any Club activity including campouts.

#### HEALTH AND SAFETY

When attending field outings ensure you are wearing appropriate clothing, including wet weather gear in inclement weather, and suitable footwear. It is advisable to bring a hat, sunscreen, insect repellent and to carry water.

Please sign the attendance register at field outings and also at the meetings.

If you leave the outing early please let the leader know before you go.

Participants attend at their own risk and should refrain from any behaviour that might put themselves or others at risk. That includes assessing whether they have a level of fitness required for the advertised outing. If in doubt contact the outing leader beforehand.

## JUNE

**Tuesday 2 June Club Meeting:** The Mitchell Theatre, Level 1, The Sydney Mechanics' School of Arts, 280 Pitt Street, Sydney at 7.30 pm, "Birding Downunder Sub-Antarctic Islands of New Zealand and Macquarie Island - 2014". Speaker: Trevor Waller.

**Saturday 6 June Club Outing:** Warriewood Wetlands. Meet at 9.00 am in the picnic area at the corner of Katoa Close and Garden Street, Warriewood. Easy walking along level trails and boardwalks. Lunch at cars. Leader: Russell Beardmore 9400 9782; mobile 0404 023 223.

**Long Weekend Campout 6-8 June:** Private property, "Spring Forest" near Cowra. Immediately after crossing the bridge over the Lachlan River at Cowra, take the first left-hand turn to Boorowa. After travelling 21.9 kms towards Boorowa, turn right into a sealed road signposted to Koorawatha. After 2.8 kms take the right-turn into Sutherland Road. After about 100 metres, you cross a small bridge. Veer to the right (do not take the road to the left) and the gate to the campsite will be on your left between 1 and 2 kms from the bridge. Go through the gate and the campsite will be next to the trees on the opposite

side of the cleared paddock. Take care if wet, there may be boggy patches. Please note that the gate to the campsite is locked and access will not be available until Friday afternoon 6 June. Bring everything that you need including water and garbage bags. Motels and other accommodation are available in Cowra about 27 kms from the campsite. Leader: Allan Richards 9660 8062; mobile 0432 064 660.

**Wednesday 10 June Central Coast Half-day Outing:** South Tacoma, Central Coast Wetlands and Tuggerah. Meet at 8.30 am at McPherson Road Swamp, Gavenlock Road, Tuggerah. Lunch at cars. Leader: Alan Morris 0418 269 482.

**Saturday 13 June Club Outing:** Forest Trail, Royal National Park. Meet at 9.00 am at the carpark at the southern (Waterfall) end of Lady Carrington Drive. Carry morning tea; late lunch at cars. NB: park entry fee is applicable. Leader: Allan Richards 9660 8062; mobile 0432 064 660.

**Tuesday 23 June Central Coast Meeting:** Meet in the Progress Hall in Anzac Street, Tuggerah opposite McDonalds at 7.30 pm, "Namibia, Okavango and Kruger NP". Speaker: Michael Scobie.

**Wednesday 24 June - Wattle Forest.** Royal National Park, Audley. Meet at 9.00 am at the Wattle Forest Picnic Area near Audley. Turn into Lady Carrington Drive at Audley, then right over the timber bridge on the western side of the river. Turn left and meet at the last Car Park. Second meeting time at 10.00 am at Wattle Forest Picnic Area. Lunch at cars. Gradient: Easy with bush tracks. Leader: Judy Clark 0413 550 899.

**Saturday 27 June Central Coast Outing:** Kincumba Mountain and Katandra. Meet at 8.30 am at Kincumba Mountain Reserve Carpark, Kincumba. Leader: Doug Hocking 4369 2770.

## JULY

**Tuesday 7 July Club Meeting:** The Mitchell Theatre, Level 1, The Sydney Mechanics' School of Arts, 280 Pitt Street, Sydney at 7.30 pm. "Bird Watching in Myanmar". Speaker: Allan Richards.

**Wednesday 8 July Central Coast Half-day Outing:** Coastal Lagoons near Wamberal-Cochrone. Meet at 8.30 am at Remembrance Drive, Wamberal. Lunch at cars. Leader: Michael Scobie 4382 4460.

**Saturday 11 July Club Outing:** Scheyville area. Meet at 9.00 am at the corner of Pitt Town Dural Road and Whitmore Road, Scheyville. Easy walking along trails. Lunch at cars. Leader: Elisabeth Karplus 9816 2285; mobile 0421 665 553.

**Saturday 18 July Club Outing:** Royal National Park. Meet at 9.00 am in the southern-most (top) car park at Wattamolla in the Royal National Park. Please take care not to leave anything of value in view in your vehicle. Lunch at cars. Leader: Allan Richards 9660 8062; mobile 0432 064 660.

**Tuesday 28 July Central Coast Meeting:** Meet in the Progress Hall in Anzac Street, Tuggerah opposite McDonalds at 7.30 pm, "Sub-Antarctic Islands of Australia and New Zealand". Speaker: Trevor Waller.

**Wednesday 29 July Mid-week Outing:** Chiltern Track, Ku-ring-gai Chase National Park, Ingleside. Meet at 9.00 am at the end of Chiltern Road, off Mona Vale Road, Ingleside. Second meeting time at 10.00 a.m. at the end of Chiltern Road, off Mona Vale Road, Ingleside. Lunch at cars. Gradient : Easy walking along bush tracks. Leader: Coleen Southall: 9982 5453; mobile 0410 549 321.

## AUGUST

**Saturday 1 August Central Coast Outing:** Strickland State Forest. Meet at 8.30 am at Upper Picnic Area, Strickland State Forest, Mangrove Road, Narara. Lunch at cars. Leader: Andrew Melville 4328 1005.

**Tuesday 4 August Club Meeting:** The Mitchell Theatre, Level 1, The Sydney Mechanics' School of Arts, 280 Pitt Street, Sydney at 7.30 pm. "Birding safari in East Africa". Speaker: Mike Kuhl.

**Saturday 8 August Club Outing:** Shanes Park area. Meet at 8.30 am in the car park in Peter van Hasselt Park off Resolution Avenue, Willmot. A vast array of birdlife can be found in the remnants of bushland in this area. Lunch at cars. Leaders: Mark Fuller 9832 2183 or mobile 0424 440 140 and Edwin Vella mobile 0402 067 619.

**Wednesday 12 August Central Coast Half-day Outing:** Dubbo Gully. Meet at 8.30 am at the corner of Waratah Road and Wisemans Ferry Road, Mangrove Mountain. Leader: Margaret Pointer 4374 1163.

**Saturday 15 August Club Outing:** Chiltern Track, Ku-ring-gai Chase National Park, Ingleside. Meet at 9.00 am at the end of Chiltern Road, off Mona Vale Road, Ingleside. Lunch at cars. Gradient: Easy walking along bush tracks. Leader: Coleen Southall: 9982 5453; 0410 549 321.

**Tuesday 25 August Central Coast Meeting:** Meet in the Progress Hall in Anzac Street, Tuggerah opposite McDonalds at 7.30 pm, "Costa Rica Birding". Speaker: Alan Rogers.

**Saturday 29 August Central Coast Outing:** Quorrobolong. Meet at 8.30 am at the Shell Service Station, Freemans Drive, Freemans Waterhole, take the Cessnock exit of the M1 when coming from Sydney. Leader: Alan Morris 4334 2776; mobile 0418 269 482.

**Sunday 30 August Nestlings (5 to 12 years) Outing:** Bicentennial Park in Sydney Olympic Park 9-11am. Meet at 9am in the car park at the Waterview Convention Centre in Bicentennial Park. Bring morning snack, drink, hat and sunscreen. Contact Wendy Cope email nestlings@cboc.org.au or 0408 460 200.

## New Members

A warm welcome is extended to the following new members:

Stephen Ambrose	Ryde
Annie Burns	Davidson
Gerald Casimatis	Sylvania
Claudia Chambers	Coogee
Dilini De Soyza and Bahnu Lokubalasuriya	Hornsby
Ian Jones	Croydon
Tatiana Kalishenko and Rodrigo Sobarzo	Ryde
Patrice Newell	Gundy

## IBAs IN DANGER

### The state of Australia's Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas

Summary (with permission) by Elisabeth Karplus of the report by Samantha Vine and Guy Dutton for BirdLife Australia, which was presented at the World Parks Congress in Sydney in 2014.

#### Synopsis

BirdLife Australia has identified 314 Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas (IBAs) in Australia. The designation of an IBA is based on one or more of three criteria:

- Globally threatened species: a threshold number of one or more globally threatened species is/are present.
- Congregatory species: more than 1% of the world's population of a congregational species (usually waterbirds) is present.
- Endemic species: the IBAs include sites for restricted-range species with global ranges of < 50,000 km<sup>2</sup>.

BirdLife International developed a method to score the threats to IBAs as well as the condition of IBAs and the conservation actions in IBAs. Each threat such as fire, agriculture and development are scored on a scale of 0-3 each for timing (whether threat is occurring now or in the future), scope (area of IBA involved) and severity (rapidity of deterioration). The sum of these scores is used to categorise the worst threat for each IBA as Low (0-2), Medium (3-5), High (6-7) or Very High (8-9).

BirdLife Australia has designated 14 IBAs in Australia as under a threat level of "Very High". BirdLife International invited its partners to nominate up to five IBAs considered to be at the highest risk of losing their key biodiversity assets. Information on these IBAs "In Danger" were presented at the World Parks Congress in Sydney in November 2014. I have summarised information about these IBAs below.

#### Introduction

BirdLife International has designated over 12,000 sites worldwide as Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas (IBAs). Fewer than 40% of these sites are formally protected and monitoring has revealed that even in protected areas like national parks, birds are in danger. BirdLife International has now launched the IBAs in danger campaign to identify IBAs at severe risk. BirdLife Australia has identified 14 of the 314 Australian IBAs to be under a threat level rated as "Very High". Of these, five IBAs have been designated as

"In Danger". Another 157 of Australia's IBAs are rated as under "High Threat". Of the 14 IBAs rated as "Very High" or "In Danger" in 2014, only one (Norfolk Island) was at such a high threat level in 2008 with the other 13 considered at "Medium Threat" (12) or "Low Threat" (1). Among the specific threats to these 14 IBAs are inappropriate fire regimens (9 IBAs), agriculture (2 IBAs), inadequate water (1 IBA), invasive alien species (1 IBA) and development (1 IBA). Four of the five IBAs, rated as "In Danger" and discussed below, include national parks.

#### Threat: Invasive alien species

##### IBA: Norfolk Island (Norfolk Island Green Parrot)

The Critically Endangered Norfolk Island Green Parrot is threatened by competition for nest sites from the introduced Crimson Rosella and by predation by cats and rats. By the 1980s only four breeding pairs remained on Norfolk Island. Restoration of nest sites and control of predators allowed the population to increase to about 160 individuals by 2001 so the bird's conservation status was downgraded from Critically Endangered to Endangered. However monitoring of the population ceased and a study in 2013 found only 11 breeding-aged females. Once again with improved monitoring and the installation of predator-resistant nest sites, parrot numbers are increasing but ongoing resources for monitoring and management are required to maintain control of the threats. BirdLife Australia is calling on the Australian Government to implement priority actions to recover the Norfolk Island Green Parrot including establishing a separate population of these birds on a predator-free Phillip Island, which is part of the Norfolk Island National Park.

#### Threat: Inappropriate fire regimens

##### IBAs: Murray-Sunset, Hattah and Annuello IBA (Mallee Emuwren)

##### Boodjamulla IBA (Carpentarian Grasswren)

Two IBAs are "In Danger" because of inappropriate fire regimens. The Mallee areas of south-eastern Australia provide habitat for a number of globally threatened birds including Malleefowl, Black-eared Miner, Mallee Emuwren, Red-lored Whistler and the eastern

## TWO REMINDERS VOLUNTEERS NEEDED PLEASE!

The next Important Bird Area (IBA) Survey weekend around Grenfell will be held on September 25-27 2015. If you would like to take part in the survey or hear more about it, please contact Elisabeth Karplus [emhodson@exemail.com.au](mailto:emhodson@exemail.com.au) or Allan Richards [Activities@birdingnsw.org.au](mailto:Activities@birdingnsw.org.au)

The next Regent Honeyeater Recovery Programme bird survey weekend organised by Birding NSW will be held on October 2-5 2015. If you would like to take part in this survey, please contact Elisabeth Karplus as above.

More information on both these activities will be in the August edition of the Newsletter.

## Dear Birding NSW Members

I am the volunteer Volunteer Co-Ordinator at the Discovery Centre in Newington Armory, Sydney Olympic Park.

I would be grateful if you would mention in your next newsletter that we are always looking for more volunteers at the Centre. We are open on the weekends, 10.00 am till 4.00 pm. The last Sunday of the month we have a free guided bird walk that starts at the Visitors Information building (next to the bicycle hire building) opposite the river in Jamieson Street.

I look forward to hearing from you.

My contact number is 4739 1839 if anyone would like to talk to me regarding volunteering.

Kind regards,  
Debbie Harris

*I have spent days at the BADC on weekends and it can be very rewarding. As well as visitors, there is splendid viewing of the White-bellied Sea-Eagles on EagleCam from May to October, and the library is excellent. Editor.*

subspecies of Western Whipbird and Regent Parrot. These species depend on Mallee that has not been burnt for at least 15 years. Mallee Emuwrens are now confined to the Murray-Sunset, Hattah and Annuello IBA in Victoria following very extensive wildfires in Ngarkat and Billiatt Conservation Parks in South Australia. Following the 2009 Black Saturday bushfires in Victoria, the state government adopted a policy of burning 5% of public land annually. This policy risks the extinction of the Mallee Emuwren if unburnt Mallee is arbitrarily burnt to achieve the 5% target.

The Carpentarian Grasswren is restricted to spinifex grassland, which has not been burnt for at least four years. Only three remaining populations are known in the Wollgorang, Boodjamulla and Buckley River IBAs. Following large fires in 2011 and 2012, the area of suitable habitat has fallen from a nine year average of 79% to 39% and no grasswrens were identified in Boodjamulla IBA. BirdLife Australia is advocating with the Victorian and Queensland Governments to move towards more sustainable burning practices such as smaller early dry season burning when fires are less intense to leave unburned patches where birds can take refuge and repopulate after fire. BirdLife Australia is also calling on the Australian Government to have "*Fires regimens that cause biodiversity decline*" listed as a Key Threatening Process under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act*.

**Threat: Unsustainable agricultural practices**

**IBA: Patho Plains and Riverina Plains IBAs  
(Plains-wanderer)**

The Plains-wanderer in the Patho Plains and Riverina Plains IBAs is threatened by current agricultural practices. Replacement of native grasslands with introduced pasture or crops has destroyed much Plains-wanderer habitat. For example over 20,000 hectares of native grassland was replaced by cereal crops in the Riverina between 1998 and 2001. In addition recently high rainfall has increased the density of grassland habitat and Plains-wanderer numbers have dropped dramatically indicating that to maintain suitable habitat, light grazing is required in low rainfall periods with more grazing required in high rainfall periods. Land managers on private land need incentives while those in national parks

need resources to control grazing to maintain suitable habitat for Plains-wanderers. BirdLife Australia is advocating with state governments to provide staff to assist local land managers to manage habitat for Plains-wanderers.

**Threat: Industrial Development**

**IBA Lower Hunter Valley IBA (Regent Honeyeater)**

The Lower Hunter Valley IBA is "In Danger" because important habitat for the Regent Honeyeater in the Tomalpin Woodlands has been zoned for industrial development as part of the Hunter Economic Zone. While Regent Honeyeaters occur in other IBAs, these woodlands have recently been the most important breeding areas for this bird. In 2007-08, young birds fledged from about 20 nests in this area. The Lower Hunter Valley IBA is also a significant site for the endangered Swift Parrot and it supports breeding populations of several threatened woodland birds. BirdLife Australia is calling on the NSW Government to gazette this area as a protected area.

**Good news stories**

Macquarie Island IBA was declared free of rabbits, rats and mice in April 2014 and there is now recovery of vegetation and increasing numbers of breeding pairs of Grey Petrels, Blue Petrels and Soft-plumaged Petrels. Management strategies (fencing, monitoring of nests, temporary beach signage and pest and animal control) to reduce the impact of recreational activities in IBAs designated for the Hooded Plovers and Fairy Terns have been effective in allowing these species to breed.

**Response to the Report**

I am grateful to Samantha Vine for providing information about the response to this report. The Australian Government has announced \$300,000 worth of funding for rat control on Norfolk Island and has committed \$100,000 to do preparatory work to establish an insurance population of Mallee Emuwrens. In Queensland, the Threatened Species Staff have prepared a nomination for the Carpentarian Grasswren to increase its threat level under state legislation while Samantha Vine is preparing the nomination under the EPBC Act. Meanwhile Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service are burning small parts of Boodjamulla to protect any grasswrens there. BirdLife Australia is working with the Victorian and South Australian governments to address priorities in the existing Mallee Threatened Bird Conservation Action Plan. Mick Roderick is raising awareness of the importance of the Lower Hunter IBA to local communities while BirdLife Australia's CEO, Paul Sullivan, is meeting with Federal and State Ministers and Senior Government officials to push the findings and recommendations of the "IBAs in Danger Report".

**Conclusions**

Monitoring of birds in IBAs is essential if we are to learn whether IBAs are being adequately managed. The IBAs were identified as "In Danger" because of the monitoring of these sites by local groups. Many IBAs in Australia do not yet have systematic monitoring in place so we do not know whether they are in danger. Representatives of Birding NSW, Cumberland Bird Observers Club and BirdLife Southern NSW are gathering information on the current status of the 45 IBAs in NSW from land managers and local bird groups. Meanwhile Birding NSW will continue to monitor the Grenfell area in the South West Slopes IBA as our contribution to the IBA process.

For more information and to see the Report discussed in this article, go to <http://birdlife.org.au/ibas-in-danger>.

## BIRDWATCHING IN MYANMAR

Speaker: Allan Richards

**Club Meeting Tuesday 7th July**

In February 2013, eight members of our club travelled to Myanmar for a 12 day bird watching tour. The tour was organised through Thiri Htin Hla of Wildbird Adventures Travel and Tours and we were guided by Gideon, a senior guide with the company.

We visited areas around Yangon, Bagan, Mt Victoria, Heho, Lake Inle, Kalaw and Yay Aye Kan Reservoir. We heard or saw over 300 species of birds but we also enjoyed the scenery and some great food. The talk will include photos of historic buildings, scenery and people as well as some of the birds that we saw.

## VALE TREVOR QUESTED

*12th November 1948 - 11th February 2015*

Trevor packed a lot of living into his 66 years. A boy from the Western Suburbs of Sydney, he initially had an interest in botany which quickly developed into an intense interest in birds after a trip to the Macquarie Marshes in 1976. He extended this interest by coming to Coonabarabran the next year to attend the Warrumbungle Spring Walkabout, especially the Birding and Wildflower Sessions, and that is where Alan Morris first met him, as he was leading the bird walks. Trevor had a passion about seeing birds, photographing birds and using the latest technology to record his sightings and photographs.

Everybody was captivated by Trevor's infectious enthusiasm. Every bird, no matter how common had a special beauty to him. It was impossible not to be carried along. This enthusiasm made him a natural for leading bird outings so he was always in demand as a leader and he willingly undertook such activities. He described his camper trailer that enabled him to spend time in the bush in relative comfort, as "heaven on a stick".

Trevor was a very active member of both Birding NSW and the Cumberland Bird Observers Club (CBOC), leading numerous field trips and giving fascinating presentations of his trips, accompanied of course, by his stunning photographs. Allan Benson met him at the CBOC and thus began a long friendship between Trevor, Alan and Allan, which continued to the end. In recent times we have both stayed with Trevor and he has taken us birding around Bundaberg.

There was a memorable pelagic off Wollongong in July 1999 where both Soft-plumaged Petrel and Southern Fulmar were seen. The Southern Fulmar was seen just off shore and Trevor danced around in delight trying to ring Tony Palliser on his mobile. Tony was on a Sydney pelagic and had never seen the Southern Fulmar. "This is what birding is about- seeing a new bird and giving it to your mates" said Trevor.

Trevor ran a successful plumbing business in Sydney and it seemed he used the profits to fund his birding trips. Over the years he travelled to 24 countries including India, Sri Lanka, Kenya, Ecuador, USA, Canada and Turkey. He amassed a lifetime list of 4069 species which is roughly half the bird species in world, indeed a remarkable achievement by anybody's standards

After moving to Bundaberg in 2006, he was elected President of the Bundaberg branch of the BOCA in 2007 where he continued to make a significant contribution



*Trevor Quested receiving a BirdLife Australia BOCA Distinguished Service Award. Photo: Bill Moorhead*

to the local birding community being editor of the local newsletter and leading outings and camp-outs. In recognition of leadership, initiative and management in the field of bird watching and conservation of birdlife over a period of 37 years, Trevor was awarded the Bird Observation Conservation Australia Distinguished Service Award by BirdLife Australia in 2012.

Trevor was diagnosed with Motor Neurone Disease in late 2011. Initially, he was not expected to live beyond Christmas 2012 but he battled on courageously and with great humour with considerable assistance from his wife, Annie. Despite his travails, he continued to gain enormous pleasure from sitting on his back verandah, watching and listening to the comings and goings of the various bird species like Bush Stone-curlews and Pied Butcherbirds, in his back yard.

Trevor will be remembered very fondly and greatly missed by all who had the honour and privilege of knowing him.

The birding community sends its sincere condolences to his wife Annie and his daughters Narelle and Jenny and their families. Trevor's photographic skills live on through his daughters' excellent expertise in this area.

**Allan Benson and Alan Morris**

## VOLUNTEERS OF ALL AGES CAME TO CAPERTEE VALLEY TO PLANT OVER 3800 TREES

*“It’s fun, it helps birds, and it’s better than sitting at home watching TV!” said Noah, 9*

**Words and photos by Madeleine Murray**

The first weekend in May! It was that time of year again, when about 100 volunteers come to the Capertee Valley and plant over 3000 trees to help save the Regent Honeyeater. Or so they hope.

A lot of work goes into this project, a labour of love to try to save the endangered Regent Honeyeater, whose habitat has been destroyed by years of clearing in the valley. Once these spectacular black-and-yellow birds used to darken the sky in the thousands as they flew over. Now there are only about 500.

Work begins months before the bi-annual plantings. Forester Dick Turner from Lapstone visits the valley often, meets locals who want trees planted on their land, and chooses a site. He checks out the soil, and designs the mix of trees for the planting. About a month before, a tractor goes through and rips the soil in neat rows.

Turner and some locals gather seeds from around the chosen site. The Lithgow Community Nursery, and valley couple Kerry Cooke and Dominique della Libera grow the seedlings for about six months. When they are ready to be planted, volunteers from the Land Rovers Owners Club collect them in trailers and bring them to the site, along with stakes and guards.

The Capertee Valley Regent Honeyeater Recovery Project is funded by the Federal Government, through the Central Tablelands Local Land Services. Volunteers have planted over 11,500 trees in the valley since the project started in 1993.

On Friday, 1 May, volunteers including two teachers and 15 students from Greystanes High School in Western Sydney laid out the plants about five metres apart and at 8am on Saturday morning, despite intermittent rain and ominous but



*Forester and planting designer Dick Turner and Kate Horsburgh, Bird Keeper at Taronga Zoo*

picturesque dark clouds, dozens of volunteers arrived, ready for a hard day’s work.

This year, there were only 61 volunteers (besides Taronga Zoo), and some of them were either a bit old or a bit young for the task of planting and watering 3810 trees in a day. Luckily at 7am in Sydney, 38 staff and youth volunteers from Taronga Zoo were boarding their bus for the four-hour ride to the valley. Dedicated zoo staff and enthusiastic teenage volunteers called YATZ (Youth at the Zoo) have been coming to these plantings since 2011 – a welcome injection of young, fit workers.

The site was an area along Glen Alice Road, sloping gently down to the river, and the soil was lovely soft loam. A welcome change from some years where the soil has been heavy clay studded with rocks, and the fields full of burrs and Cobblers’ Pegs.

As usual, Turner had chosen the trees based on what once grew on the site, before it was cleared for cattle. There was Yellow Box, Mugga Ironbark – the most nectar-producing tree – Blakely’s Red Gum, Hill-oak – loved by Glossy Black-Cockatoos, plus an assortment of wattles and other shrubs for the understorey.

Two enthusiastic children were busily banging away at clods of earth with little trowels.

“We’re trying to plant some trees,” said Ophelia Bellerose, 6.

“We need a bigger shovel,” Harvey Read, 4, interjected. “I like coming here because I get to plant.



*Tim Sturt from the LROC drives between the rows while two volunteers run behind the truck watering the plants*

I've never planted in a long time. That's it! And I'm four!"

Beside them, Noah Bellerose, 9, was making a bit more progress with a triangular-shaped tool.

"It's my second time," he said. "I'm putting a plant in the ground. It's fun, it helps birds, and it's better than sitting at home watching TV!"

Around 11, the Taronga Zoo group arrived in the bus – a welcome sight – and immediately set to work digging and planting. Taronga Zoo has a deep commitment to the Regent Honeyeater: the Bird Department, headed by Michael Shiels, runs a successful captive breeding program. As the global human population grows and habitats dwindle, many animals are being driven to extinction. In response, zoos around the world are breeding animals in captivity. Taronga Zoo has 18 captive breeding programs, ranging from Corroboree Frogs to Asian Elephants.

Last month, the Bird Department and some lucky Zoo volunteers, brought 77 Regent Honeyeaters to the Mount Pilot National Park near Chiltern in northern Victoria, and released them. This must have been a very moving experience for everyone, including the staff who have bred these birds in special aviaries filled with everything a breeding bird might want, even hand-gathered spider webs.

Kate Horsburgh, Bird Keeper, said,

"It's really amazing to have two years' worth of work in your heart, going out into the forest and watching these birds fly out. And they flew straight up from the tents into the trees. I get to see it from start to finish. They call and they court, the female goes down to nest, I get to see the chicks fledge, then grow up and get released. The aviaries have flowering trees, but the staff supplements their diet with live insects. I bring in mealworms, tubs full of live crickets, maggots, fly pupae," said Horsburgh. "It's just delightful the things I get to handle sometimes! The parents are very good, extremely attentive. One older, breeding male used to be able to carry six mealworms. He would lay them flat across his beak, fly them back to the nest and pop them in the chick's mouth."

Tamara Williams, a YATZ mentor, went to the Regent Honeyeater release in 2013:

"We were one of the first groups of YATZ – going down there to release the birds, teaching the local schools about conservation efforts they can do in their own backyard. It was such a rewarding, life-changing experience. Ever since then, my passion for birds has grown and grown."

Ryan Adamson, 15, has been to every Honeyeater release and every tree planting since the zoo started attending.

"It's actually rather impressive when you think about it because I think I'm the only one that has, which is awesome," he said enthusiastically. "I love being able to do what I want to do when I'm older, like conservation work. I want to be an Australian Mammal Conservator, doing stuff in Australia and maybe overseas as well if I get the opportunity. I'm hoping to do Cert II and III in captive animals at the zoo."

As the day wore on, the rain came and went in soft bursts, but no one really seemed to mind. Herb Myskle from Rylstone filled up the 1000L tanks and 500L water-bladders for the LROC vehicles, which then drove along between the rows with a volunteer running along each side watering the plants. This is a crucial part of the process.

Besides doing the logistics, transporting the seedlings in trailers from nursery to site, the LROC also supplies walkie-talkies, vehicles, drivers, trailers and water containers. Nine LROC members with six vehicles came all the way from Newcastle, Central Coast, and Sydney. The club has been indispensable to the project for the past 20 years. These people care about the environment, contrary to the popular image of 4WDers tearing up sand dunes and crashing through the bush in roaring convoys.

Tim Sturt, from LROC, took a short break from driving one of the watering vehicles to explain his motivation for coming: "I'm very interested in the environment. I do a lot of environmental work through my job as a packaging technologist. I design and develop packaging for food industries.

"I think regenerating the valley is a good cause. It's a naturally beautiful area and it has been cleared of trees over the years. And beyond all that, it's good fun. We always meet very interesting people."

Uldis Clarson, infrastructure consultant, brought his partner Arianna Cowling up for the weekend. Undaunted by the rain, they had camped by the river which sounded both adventurous and romantic.

"It's a beautiful part of the world," said Clarson, "and it's great to be part of making it more attractive and help restore some landscape and habitat. It's Arianna's first time up here, I just wanted to show her how beautiful it is."

Huw Evans of Blackheath brought his son Charlie, 3. Evans works for Local Land Services, which has been helping fund this project for a couple of years.

"I try and get here with the family and show the kids what I do for a job," Evans said.

Jadon Walsh, 16, is famous among YATZ for his deep bird knowledge.

"I started about two years ago," he said. "It's a great hobby. I learned mainly through going out in the field, bird watching, and talking to lots of people. I'm pretty happy and positive that something is getting done for the Regent Honeyeater – that there is still hope for them."

On Sunday, the legendary Dick Turner led an excellent outing to several private properties in the valley.

*The next planting is August 14-15. There has been a rather poor turn-out from Birding NSW for this very important project, which is also a lot of fun. It's a chance to spend time in the spectacular valley, and to meet bird lovers from all walks of life, including the Taronga Zoo Regent Honeyeater Captive Breeding team.*





## BIRDING NSW OBSERVATION RECORDS SURVEY

24/03/2015

This is a short questionnaire to establish how the members of Birding NSW record their observations. Ultimately, recorded observations can be used to assist in conservation of bird habitats.

It would be useful if you could enter your answers on this sheet and return it to the Conservation Officer, Birding NSW, PO Box Q277, Queen Victoria Building, SYDNEY NSW 1230

Alternatively, scan your completed survey and email it to [Editor@birdingsw.org.au](mailto:Editor@birdingsw.org.au). The Conservation Officer is away for a while. You could also just email your responses in the text of the email.

1. Do you make or keep a record of the birds you see on any outing?

(If NO then you have finished. You are welcome to send any comments you wish to make.)

Yes / No

If YES, do you record

- |                                 |       |
|---------------------------------|-------|
| a. species                      | Y / N |
| b. abundance (count)            | Y / N |
| c. the behaviour of the bird(s) | Y / N |
| d. the habitat                  | Y / N |
| e. evidence of breeding         | Y / N |

2. Do you report your sightings? If NO, proceed to question 5; if YES, tick all that apply TO

- a. NSW Bird Atlassers
- b. Eremaea (eBird)
- c. birdata
- d. Cumberland Bird Observers Club
- e. another (please specify) .....

3. Do you use any software to record your sightings and observations? Y / N

If No proceed to Q5

If Yes, do you use a

- |                                                                        |       |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| a. dedicated software package such as found in electronic field guides | Y / N |
| b. spreadsheet, such as Excel                                          | Y / N |
| c. database such as MSAccess, db or Open Access                        | Y / N |
| d. specialised birding database such as Birding Database?              | Y / N |

4. Would you be willing to enter data you have into a database nominated by the club by yourself? Y / N

or, if someone from the club offered to help you or do it for you? Y / N

5. Thank you for your time. You may add any comments here and over the page if you wish.

Return completed questionnaires to Birding NSW, PO Box Q277, QVB. SYDNEY NSW 1230

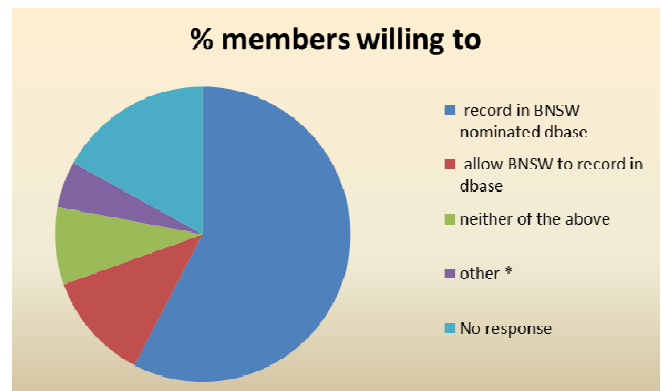
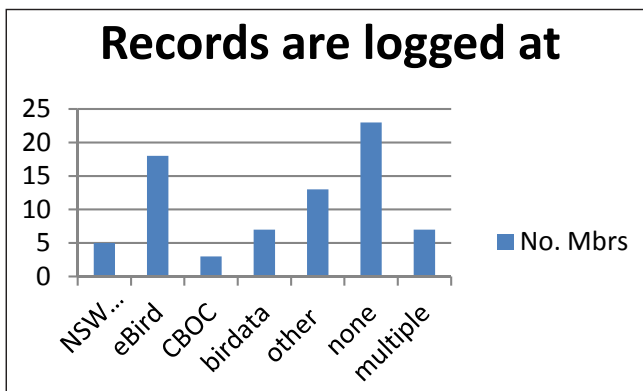
# BIRDING NSW RECORDING AND REPORTING SIGHTINGS

Birding NSW is interested in what records birdwatchers keep of their sightings. The last two guest speakers (Laura Rayner in March and Ian McAllan in April) made it clear how useful keeping simple records of the birds that we see could be. First, in making it possible for research that traces decline or increase in bird populations (see Laura Rayner's talk on woodland birds in the ACT) and second to contribute to the compilation of lasting records. Our observations, when collected and collated can be invaluable for research and conservation efforts.

Birding NSW does not have a clear picture of what records its members keep or what they do with them. To help further this important groundwork for conservation, please complete the short survey overleaf. It will help us improve data collection and retention.

The survey will take no more than a minute or two to complete.

Full results and discussion of the survey will be published in the newsletter and on the website. Preliminary returns are: 55 members and one non-member responded, mostly within a day or two of the emailed notice; of those 45 record species, 28 abundance and 28 evidence of breeding; 11 record habitat and 9 make note of behaviour;



Please join those who have already responded and complete the survey overleaf, clip it out or copy and mail it. The survey is also posted on the website on the Conservation page. You do not need a password and your completed survey can be submitted immediately. Go to [www.birdingsw.org.au](http://www.birdingsw.org.au)

If you are doing it with a pen and posting, feel free to write your comments here:

## BIRDING NSW'S IMPORTANT BIRD AND BIODIVERSITY AREA SURVEY AROUND GRENFELL

28 March 2015

Elisabeth Karplus

Twenty-nine surveyors took part in the eighth bird survey around Grenfell today. We welcomed three surveyors from Grenfell. We were very pleased to have four Cowra Woodland surveyors join us. Several people were not able to take part in the survey this March because of the NSW election. I would like to thank Paul Johnstone, David Winterbottom, Jill Molan, Coleen Southall, Richard Webber and Russell Beardmore for leading survey groups. This weekend we added six new species to those birds listed for the survey sites. David's group saw a flock of 60 White-backed Swallows in Warraderry State Forest. David has surveyed in Warraderry for many years and he had not recorded this species there before. There

were also Tree Martins recorded in Warraderry. Jill's group saw two immature White-bellied Sea-Eagles flying over Weddin State Forest. There were four Pink-eared Ducks as well as 26 Plumed Whistling-Ducks at the Sewage Treatment Works. We have now recorded 138 species on the surveys, and important species in other areas. Of our target birds, Superb Parrots were seen at six survey sites and at five other places during the weekend. We saw 14 Superb Parrots at the survey site on Heather Lamb's property. She had not seen Superb Parrots on her property



*Surveyors at Company Dam, Grenfell. Photograph courtesy of The Grenfell Record*

before. Diamond Firetails were seen on three survey sites during the survey time and on a fourth site but outside the survey time. Rainbow Lorikeets are spreading through the Grenfell area and for the first time were observed on one of the survey sites (Abbot's Lane). On the 29 survey sites (12 on private properties), the number of species observed during surveys ranged from zero to 27. Richard's group found 27 species at Abbot's Lane including nine Superb Parrots and 150 Little Corellas. In Bimbi State Forest, Coleen's group recorded 22 species at the dam site. This



*Speckled Warbler. Photograph by Paul Johnstone*



*Inland Thornbill. Photograph by Paul Johnstone*



*Crested Shrike-tit. Photograph by Jodi Webber*



*Chestnut-rumped Thornbill. Photograph by Jodi Webber*

was an impressive improvement on previous surveys and is probably due to the removal of cattle from around the dam. Birds seen included 11 Southern Whitefaces, 15 Jacky Winters, seven Diamond Firetails and two Hooded Robins. Of the declining woodland species, we saw Hooded Robins at three sites, Speckled Warblers at three sites and Grey-crowned Babblers at five sites, but once again we did not see any Brown Treecreepers. Jill's group saw a single Turquoise Parrot in Weddin State Forest.

Twenty eight people dined on Friday evening at the Railway Hotel – a good opportunity for people to meet others in their survey groups. Once again Mikla and Wayne hosted us at their home for a barbecue on Saturday evening. Everyone got there early in the hope of seeing the two Ground Cuckoo-shrikes which had flown over the

previous evening – no luck! There were however large numbers of Little Friarbirds and several Blue Bonnets and Superb Parrots around. We thank Mikla and Wayne for their hospitality. Finally on Sunday morning we went birding at Company Dam. After a slow start, we found a spot with much bird activity and Richard recorded 32 species.

The next IBA survey (see Reminders on page 4) will take place on 26 September 2015. We hope that our existing volunteers and new volunteers will take part in the next survey. In particular we hope that more people from Grenfell will join us on the surveys. Please contact Allan Richards ([activities@birdingnsw.org.au](mailto:activities@birdingnsw.org.au)) or me ([emhodson@exemail.com.au](mailto:emhodson@exemail.com.au)) if you are not already on our contact list and would like details of the next survey.

## SCHEYVILLE NATIONAL PARK

14 February 2015

Trevor Waller

When we arrived at Scheyville National Park this morning an amazing thing greeted us. The entry gates were closed and locked. There were no signs to say the park was closed so we walked in. Along the way we found Noisy Friarbird, Willie Wagtail and heard Weebill calling. When we reached the offices of the park we saw Rainbow Bee-eater flying around and perched on the wires overhead. A Nankeen Kestrel was using the water tower as a perch, and Red-browed Finches were using the low bushes as cover. Further along the track we had good views of a juvenile Mistletoebird. By now the ranger had arrived and opened the gates, so we drove up to the buildings for morning tea.

Our next location was Pitt Town Lagoon and the fabulous hide. On the way down to the hide we found a

female Eastern Koel in a tree, before it flew off. On the lagoon we saw all the usual water birds to be found there, including Royal and Yellow-billed Spoonbill, Pink-eared Duck and Chestnut-breasted Mannikin. There was an adult White-bellied Sea-Eagle perched in a tree on one of the islands in the lagoon, and a Whistling Kite sailed over the hide.

We had lunch at Mitchell Park before going for a walk. During lunch we were treated to a display from three Wedge-tailed Eagles, and a Satin Bowerbird flew across the bridge over the little creek. Along the track we saw Olive-backed Oriole, Sacred Kingfisher and Crested Shrike-tit. I enjoyed the day birding and I hope everyone who attended did as well.

## CAMP-OUT AT ULLADULLA

13-15 March 2015

Leader: Alan Morris

The March Camp-out at Ulladulla proved to be an outstanding success with 125 species being seen by 31 participants. Although mostly residents from the Central Coast, we also had nine people from Sydney, three from the Blue Mountains, two local residents and two (the Nicholsons) from Devon, UK. The Ulladulla Headland Caravan Park turned out to be an ideal place to hold a bird camp, in that it is close to the business section of the town, yet has its own bushland areas. It is close to the sea-coast, has an ideal camp kitchen for happy hours and meals, comfortable cabins and interested caravan park managers. The weather was kind to us and although a strong southerly change came through on the Saturday evening bringing rain and a change of plans for our outings on the Sunday, it also brought seabirds close to the shore so that we had great views of albatross, shearwaters and jaegers along the sea-cliffs.

During the camp, some of the members of the local Ulladulla-Milton Bird Club who helped in the planning stages, joined us on our outings, in particular Michael Jefferis led a Geological Walk on the Saturday morning, Bob Rusk assisted us to find birds at Burrill Lake on the Friday and Warden Head on the Sunday, while Margaret Harmon was our guide at Yatte Yattah NR and Meroo NP on the Sunday. We really appreciated their skills, interest and support throughout the weekend and we give them a big thanks for their efforts.

The Headland Caravan Park as mentioned before, was a great birding site and we saw 35 species within the caravan park or from the site looking over the rock shelves and sea, and these birds included Peregrine Falcon, Eastern Reef-Egret, Sooty Oystercatcher, White-throated Needletail, Leaden Flycatcher, Grey Goshawk and White-bellied Sea-Eagle.

Friday was a sunny day and we spent the morning at Lake Conjola, first up at the western end near Murrays Road and Fishermans Paradise and then later at the mouth of Lake Conjola. With prior permission from the landowner, we birded along Murrays Road amongst the river flats meadows and riparian vegetation along the creek where we saw Jacky Winters, Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoo, White-necked Heron, Australasian Pipits, Yellow-rumped Thornbills, Yellow-faced and Lewin's Honeyeaters, Grey Teal and Golden Whistlers. We had morning tea at the Fishermans Paradise boat ramp, where we saw two Wedge-tailed Eagles, Brown-headed Honeyeaters, Straw-necked Ibis,



*Hooded Plover at Lake Conjola. Photo by M Scobie*

eight Australian King-Parrots and a White-headed Pigeon. Finally we moved off to the entrance of the lake where on the sandflats we counted 52 Red-capped and six Double-banded Plovers, one Eastern Curlew, two Bar-tailed Godwits, four Australian Pied Oystercatchers and 12+ Red-necked Stints, and on the ocean sandbar, an adult Hooded Plover with a large chick, and a White-bellied Sea-Eagle. That afternoon we visited Narrawallee Inlet, where the waders were two Whimbrels and three Australian Pied Oystercatchers, and a Striated Heron and a Sacred Kingfisher were the other good birds. We then finished the day with a walk through the Garrad Reserve, further up in Narrawallee Inlet. The best birds here were Scarlet and New Holland Honeyeaters, a Shining Bronze-Cuckoo, Striated and Brown Thornbills, and some walkers that we met had seen Glossy Black-Cockatoos but we dipped on them! We finished the day with 98 species and did our birdcall, and evening meals in the camp kitchen.

Saturday morning found some of us heading for Burrill Lake, while eight people, led by local and fossil expert Mike Jefferis, went on the Geological Walk around the foreshore of Ulladulla Harbour, which is famous for its fossils. The Geological walkers then rejoined the main group at Burrill Lake at morning tea. Meanwhile down at Burrill Lake, in the foreshore reserve, east of the main road and south of the bridge, where we were joined by local MUBC member Bob Rusk, there was much to see including three Buff-banded Rails at the edges of the reeds, Royal Spoonbills, Little Egret, Chestnut and Grey Teal, Australian King-Parrots, Australasian Figbirds, Sooty Oystercatchers on the rocks, Eastern Spinebill, Satin

Bowerbirds and Grey Shrike-thrush. After morning tea we headed south to Lake Tabourie estuary where another Hooded Plover plus chick had been reported. We dipped on the Hooded Plovers but did see Eastern Great Egret, more Sooty Oystercatchers, Yellow-faced Honeyeaters, Eastern Yellow Robin and other bush birds. Our last stop for the morning was at Burrill Lake West where we saw Australian Pied Oystercatchers, Black Swans, another Eastern Great Egret and Crimson Rosellas.

Our afternoon outing was to Wilfords Lane Swamp, which is south west of Milton and set in the rolling pasturelands of the Milton area. This freshwater swamp had attracted 22 Black-winged Stilts, two White-necked Herons, Black Swans, 80+ Grey Teal, Cattle, Eastern Great and Intermediate Egrets, Australian Pelicans and a number of raptors including a White-bellied Sea-Eagle, Nankeen Kestrel, Swamp Harrier and we all great views of an Australian Hobby. From here we visited the Milton Rainforest Reserve located behind the High School, and even though it was mid-afternoon when all the birds could be expected to be quiet, we did manage to see Golden Whistlers, Silveryeyes, Eastern Yellow Robins and Lewin's Honeyeaters. Our final stop was at the Warden Head Lighthouse where we saw a flock of 38 Sooty Oystercatchers, two Shy Albatrosses, eight Black-browed Albatrosses and Eastern Reef-Egret and two White-bellied Sea-Eagles. By the end of the day we had seen 108 species for the two days and we all enjoyed a night out at the Ulladulla Bowling Club.

Sunday was overcast and windy, it had rained overnight and there was a strong southerly blowing so it was decided to start the morning with a short visit to Warden Head and here we were well rewarded with Australasian Gannets, Wedge-tailed and Short-tailed Shearwaters, 12+ Arctic

Jaegers, 2+ Pomerine Jaegers, more Black-browed, Shy and Yellow-nosed Albatrosses while a Buller's Albatross was photographed by Carol Abbott. We checked out the Wildflower Reserve in west Ulladulla but only added White-throated Treecreeper to our list in this basically Blackbutt Forest site. We took morning tea in Mick Ryan Reserve in Milton, and managed to see Common Blackbirds, Galahs, Common Myna, Willie Wagtails and some of our group saw House Sparrows (the only ones for the trip) at a nearby bakery. Our final morning stop was the Yatte Yattah Nature Reserve near Conjola, where we were led by local Margaret Harmon. This is a delightful area of Forest Redgum woodland with some rainforest, and here we saw 18 Topknot Pigeons, Brown Gerygones, Jacky Winter, Olive-backed Oriole, Scarlet Honeyeater, Striated Thornbill and Little Eagle, while Superb Lyrebirds were heard calling in the forest.

The afternoon saw us go down to Meroo National Park, south of Ulladulla, where we walked into Meroo Lake. This is an area of Spotted Gum forest and coastal scrubs and dunes and here we saw Crescent, White-naped, White-cheeked and Scarlet Honeyeaters, more White-bellied Sea-Eagles, a Rufous Whistler, White-browed and Large-billed Scrubwrens, Striated and Brown Thornbills, another Black-browed Albatross and a number of cormorants. This finished our trip and we returned as happy campers to the caravan park for happy hour and a communal tea in the camp kitchen. At the birdcall, we found that we had seen 125 species and we all agreed that it was a great autumn camp. Our thanks are extended to the local MUD Birdwatchers Margaret, Bob and Mike who showed us around, Ken Tyquin who allowed us access to his land, and to all our members who helped make this a successful camp.

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## MID-WEEK OUTING TO SCHEYVILLE NATIONAL PARK AND PITT TOWN LAGOON

25 March 2015

Elisabeth Karplus

We met at the headquarters of Scheyville National Park. Our walk before morning tea took us past the silo, where alas there was no Eastern Barn Owl, and then through the woodland and back to the parking area. The Musk Lorikeets, which I had seen during the recce five days earlier, were absent from the trees beside the silo and I could no longer see any blossom. In the open country there were Golden-headed Cisticolas perched on the fence. In the woodland we found a Crested Shrike-tit as well as Yellow-faced and White-plumed Honeyeaters and Noisy Friarbirds. An Eastern Yellow Robin, Yellow Thornbills and Red-browed Finches were easily seen unlike a Rufous Whistler. Carol found some Varied Sittellas but

the Speckled Warblers, I had seen feeding on the track on the recce, were not seen again. We all had close views of a Peaceful Dove as it fed in the grass. We had morning tea near the parking area and watched several Rainbow Bee-eaters hawking for insects. Interestingly these birds were absent when we lunched later in the same place. After morning tea we walked to the small dam and then along the edge of the woodland. There we found a Fan-tailed Cuckoo followed by a heavily striped juvenile cuckoo. We were tempted by the lack of eye-ring to call this a Brush Cuckoo. However Carol analysed her photos carefully when she got home and we reluctantly agreed that the cuckoo was a juvenile Fan-tailed Cuckoo. Then

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Leo and Diann found an Australian Owlet-nightjar, which had just flown in. Alas it was very difficult for shorter people to find and the bird flew before others saw it.

After lunch we visited Pitt Town Lagoon, where Pectoral Sandpipers had been seen. We reached the location to find a suitably sized sandpiper facing away from us. However the bird flew before we could look for the characteristic

markings on its breast. From the bird hide, we saw many Pink-eared Ducks and the single Pied Cormorant, which had been seen there by Keith Brandwood. There were several raptors seen including a White-bellied Sea-Eagle and a Swamp Harrier. Finally we were pleased to see a small group of Chestnut-breasted Mannikins. Diann listed 77 birds for the day.

## EASTER CAMP-OUT TO INGELBA NEAR WALCHA

2-7 April 2015

Elisabeth Karplus

Fifteen people braved the threatening weather conditions to attend this camp-out. It was hosted by Max Harris and Lori Warren and was held at Ingelba, which is 28 kilometres south of Walcha on the road to Niangala. Max and Lori live in Walcha, and through their contacts we had access to the community hall at Ingelba and also to several private properties. This was the third club camp-out to this area, with the previous ones being in 2005 and 2010. We camped in the fenced paddock surrounding the community hall and were woken each morning by the calls of Grey Butcherbirds and Eastern Rosellas. Since we had rain from Friday evening till Saturday lunch time, we were extremely pleased to use the hall's facilities (flush toilets, a fridge, and lights). In fact most people re-located their "kitchens" to the hall for the weekend while Barbara, after a very wet night in her tent, built herself a cubby house in the hall using some gyprock sheets and so was warm and dry for the weekend. We made two visits to Aberbaldie Nature Reserve, where there were Scarlet Robins and several honeyeater species including White-naped, Brown-headed and Yellow-faced Honeyeaters. Gabrielle learnt how to bird from under an umbrella to keep her binoculars dry.

Before the rain on Friday, we all visited a large Koala perched high in a gum tree. The Koala had been found by Nigel and Maria on their way to the camp site. On Saturday afternoon we went to a large dam, where there were Yellow-billed and Royal Spoonbills, Hoary-headed and Australasian Grebes as well as Black-fronted and Red-kneed Dotterels. Later we saw a White-bellied Sea-



*Turquoise Parrot. Photograph by Paul Johnstone*

Eagle flying over the dam. On a private property several of us had brief views of a Platypus. Allan and Roz had better views of a Platypus on the Macdonald River near to our campsite.

On Sunday we made a long trip west to Weabonga, north to Limbri and then home via Woolbrook and Walcha. We travelled through beautiful farming country (mainly cattle and sheep) with many patches of woodland. Near Weabonga we walked along Swamp Oak Creek before morning tea. The first sighting was of an Azure Kingfisher, which was well seen by everyone. Many photographs were taken, but in very poor light. Along the creek there were Scarlet Robins, Jacky Winters, Double-barred Finches, Red-browed Firetails (aka Finches), Yellow-rumped and Brown Thornbills and some were lucky to see a Diamond Firetail and a White-throated Gerygone.



*Azure Kingfisher. Photograph by Paul Johnstone*

At Limbri we visited Cockburn River Campground – a very scruffy place, but it was full of birds. First there was a White-bellied Cuckoo-shrike, followed by an Olive-backed Oriole, a pair of Diamond Firetails, a Spiny-cheeked Honeyeater and a pair of Brown Treecreepers. As we watched the treecreepers, a pair of Turquoise Parrots flew in, fed on some seeds and then flew up into a nearby tree. Again lots of photographs, but in much better light. Finally many had great views of a pair of Little Lorikeets investigating a nest hole. In Walcha there was a single male Musk Duck on the reservoir and many Pink-eared Ducks, Australasian Shovelers and a single Plumed Whistling-Duck at the Water Treatment Plant which some of the group visited on Sunday.

On Monday Max took us to some wet sclerophyll forest – we knew it was a wet forest because Allan got a leech! In this forest of very tall trees, we had views of Red-browed Treecreepers and Scarlet Honeyeaters as well as other honeyeaters, a Scarlet Robin and many Eastern Spinebills. After lunch we re-visited the Water Treatment Plant in Walcha and added Freckled Duck to the list. Finally we visited Apsley Falls in the Oxley Wild Rivers National Park, where the best sighting was of a female Leaden Flycatcher. We saw 119 species between us over the weekend. I would like to thank Max and Lori for organising our visit and taking us around all weekend.

## MT PENANG HALF-DAY OUTING

8 April 2015

Christina Port

A windy start to the day as 11 birders met at the visitors' centre at Kariang. We set off and were soon amongst a group of bush birds with Grey Fantails flitting around, Golden Whistler, Eastern Yellow Robin, Yellow Thornbills and lots of Red-browed Finch. In the distance we could hear a Pied Butcherbird which we soon found. Spotted Pardalotes called and were finally seen. The Rainbow Lorikeets and Sulphur-crested Cockatoos and Red Wattlebirds raced in the strong winds.

As we moved towards the lake we had Australian Wood Ducks, Australasian Grebe and Eurasian Coot. The cockatoos were in force with many Sulphur-crested Cockatoos, Little Corella, Long-billed Corellas and Galah all feeding around the oval.

A White-necked Heron was near the Lotus gardens and flew to the back of the Dam. Also seen Northern Mallard, Pacific Black Ducks and a White-faced Heron. Large groups of Straw-necked Ibis were flying in the distance. The top dam added Dusky Moorhen, Hardhead and White-faced Heron to our list.

We then went for a walk around the outskirts of Mt Penang and groups of Silveryeyes were seen flying, Lewin's Honeyeater, Black-faced Cuckoo-shrikes and a calling White-browed Treecreeper were added to our list. As we headed back groups of Eastern Rosellas were seen feeding, Noisy Friarbirds and Satin Bowerbirds gave fleeting views. A lone Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo was seen in the distance.

Morning tea was very welcome before we headed into the Mt Penang Gardens. The birds seemed a little quiet in the wind but the plants kept many happy. The Satin Bowerbird bower was empty although he had an impressive blue collection. The Superb Fairy-wrens hopped around, and here were more Red-browed Firetails which were joined by Red-whiskered Bulbul. A Common Blackbird was seen flying away and some Little Wattlebirds too. Out the back two Tree Martins flew with the Welcome Swallows. Our last new bird of the day was a Little Pied Cormorant over looking the dam. We then had lunch. 52 bird species were seen today. Thanks everyone for a very enjoyable outing.



## SYDNEY PELAGIC TRIP REPORT

11 April 2015

Roger McGovern

After last month's trip when we had a record breaking 42 passengers on board, this month was very different with only a disappointing number of 13 enthusiastic birders heading out on the MV Avalon. However, all those who were on the boat today agreed that it was one of the best Sydney pelagics in a long time. This was not only because of the number of rarities (although there were a couple of good ones) but also because we had good numbers of birds around the boat for the entire trip and the weather conditions were absolutely perfect. There had been very strong southerlies blowing for the past few days with seas up to five or six metres but it settled down during the course of Friday and we went out in light winds to encounter a lot of very hungry birds. There were many highlights on the day and the main rarities seen were a beautiful Grey Ternlet which flew around the boat at very close quarters for several minutes and a White-chinned Petrel which came in and fed on our berley right next to the boat. The diversity (six species) and number of albatross was notable particularly for an April trip. Good numbers of Wilson's Storm-Petrel was also a feature of the day and the overall species count of 20 was very good. To finish off the trip in grand style, the South Island Pied Oystercatcher which has been in Sydney Harbour for several weeks was rediscovered on the rocks of Shark Island and was photographed together with an Australian Pied Oystercatcher and a Sooty Oystercatcher in the same shot – with only eleven oystercatcher species in the world, it is likely that this was the first ever photograph of three oystercatcher species together.

We departed Sydney Heads in misty rain at 7.25am and headed out towards Brown's Mountain in seas of 0.5m on top of a 1.5 to 2.0m swell – very comfortable conditions for the Avalon which is an excellent seagoing boat. There were light winds of less than 10 knots from the south and, within about 30 minutes or so, the rain stopped and the skies cleared to a lovely sunny autumn day. We arrived at Brown's Mountain at around 9.45am and drifted for some time with a good berley slick and then did a slow motor into deeper water to the east, stopping again for another drift. We departed the shelf at around 12.45pm and arrived back at Rose Bay at 3.30pm after an extended look at the oystercatchers on Shark Island. Water temperature during the trip was around 21.5 degrees C and with the benign sea conditions there were no cases of sea sickness on board.

We departed from Rose Bay at 7.10am and spent a few minutes searching unsuccessfully for the South Island Pied Oystercatcher on the shores of Shark Island. The weather was dull and drizzly as we went out through the Heads and the following Silver Gulls were soon joined behind our berley trail by several Wedge-tailed Shearwaters, and the odd juvenile and mature Australasian Gannet and Greater Crested Tern flew past. The weather quickly improved to a pleasant sunny day and two Pomarine Jaegers were seen before the first of many Black-browed Albatross and Shy Albatross (all of the NZ ssp steady) joined the feeding flock behind the boat. Surprisingly, there were no Hutton's or Fluttering Shearwaters



Left to right: South Island Pied Oystercatcher (note very long bill), Sooty Oystercatcher and Australian Pied Oystercatcher. Photo Steve Hey.

in their usual inshore habitat but Flesh-footed Shearwaters put in an early appearance and albatross numbers continued to increase. There were brief views of Short-tailed Shearwaters passing by, and then the first Indian Yellow-nosed Albatross of the day joined our berley trail followed shortly by a beautiful Buller's Albatross. All the birds appeared extremely hungry and, once they had joined the berley trail, they generally stayed with the boat for a long time. Our only cetaceans of the day were a pod of about 30 Pantropical Spotted Dolphins which were too busy hunting to come and ride on our bow wave. As we began to get closer to Brown's Mountain, the first of many Wilson's Storm-Petrels put in an appearance and a lovely adult Campbell Albatross, which stayed with the boat until we were well on our way back to Sydney, was a lifer for several people on board. We started our berley drift at Brown's Mountain and were soon seeing a few Providence Petrels, two more Buller's Albatross, and an Antipodean Albatross (ssp gibsoni) along with a large throng of Black-browed, Shy, Yellow-nosed Albatross and the lone Campbell Albatross. A distant prion had been seen earlier – too far away to identify, but another (or perhaps the same?) bird appeared at closer range and was identified as a Fairy Prion.

With no new species appearing for a while, we decided to take a slow motor eastwards into deeper water and, as we went up our slick, we came across a flock of around 30 Wilson's Storm-Petrels, one of the larger aggregations that we have seen for a while. After travelling about four nautical miles there was great excitement as a Grey Ternlet was sighted coming close to the boat. All of my Grey Ternlet sightings off Sydney previously (perhaps six in the last 20 years) have involved fairly distant birds and brief sights but this bird delighted everyone by flying around the boat several times at close range giving magnificent views and

photographic opportunities. While we watching the Grey Ternlet, a Procellaria flew in which was soon revealed to be a White-chinned Petrel when the bill structure and colour was clearly seen. This bird was also very obliging in that it settled on the water next to the boat to feed which gave everyone the chance to examine its structural details. Although no Great-winged Petrels had been seen at Brown's, several came in to the boat and fed at this deeper water location, a phenomenon that we have noted on some previous trips.

The trip back to Sydney was marked with flocks of birds following the boat but with no new species appearing until, about five nautical miles off the Heads, a dark morph Arctic Jaeger was seen at some height harassing some Silver Gulls becoming our 20th species for the day. Only one fluttering-type shearwater was seen on the way in but was too distant to call as to species. For some on board, the real highlight of the day occurred as we again motored slowly past Shark Island looking for the elusive SIPO. As we approached the southern tip of the island, three oystercatchers were seen on the rocks and, as we got closer they revealed themselves to be the South Island Pied Oystercatcher, an Australian Pied Oystercatcher and a Sooty Oystercatcher all close enough to each other to be captured in a single photograph! There was great jubilation amongst the group particularly by some who had previously searched unsuccessfully for the SIPO and for whom it was a life bird! It was a great finish to a terrific day on the water and it was a pity that more birders were not there for the experience!

Our thanks to the crew of the Avalon (George and Eddie) for their help and interest during the trip – we will be using this boat for our trips this year until at least October. Thanks also to Steve Hey for the attached photos of the Grey Ternlet, White-chinned Petrel and the oystercatchers.

## BIRD LIST SYDNEY PELAGIC TRIP

(Note that the numbers in parentheses represent the approximate maximum number of that species in view at one time)

Antipodean Albatross	1	subspecies gibsoni			
Black-browed Albatross	38	(28)			
Campbell Albatross	1				
Shy Albatross	11	(4)	all ssp stedi or 'White-capped Albatross'		
Indian Yellow-nosed Albatross	10	(4)			
Buller's Albatross	3	(2)			
Fairy Prion	1				
Great-winged Petrel	6	(2)	all ssp gouldi		
Providence Petrel	8	(2)			
WHITE-CHINNED PETREL	1				
Wedge-tailed Shearwater	50	(35)			
Short-tailed Shearwater	2				
Flesh-footed Shearwater	20	(8)			
Wilson's Storm-Petrel	40	(30)			
Australasian Gannet	9	(3)			
GREY TERNLET (aka Grey Noddy)	1				
Silver Gull	120	(70)			
Greater Crested Tern	20	(7)			
Pomarine Jaeger	4	(2)			
Arctic (Parasitic) Jaeger	1				
<b>OTHER</b>					
Pantropical Spotted Dolphin	30				
Southern Eagle Ray					
Southern Ocean Sunfish					
Flying fish					
Marlin sp					
White-faced Heron about 6NM off the heads flying south					

The next Sydney pelagic trip is scheduled for Saturday 13 June, 2015 departing from Mosman at 6.45am and from Rose Bay at 7.00am. Please book early to assist our planning and to avoid missing a spot – the MV Avalon carries a maximum number of 23 so places are a little limited. All details of our trips and contact details are in the website at <http://www.sydneypelagics.info> and you can also find us on Facebook as well as post photos: <https://www.facebook.com/sydneypelagics>

## CHAIN OF PONDS AND EBENEZER

12 April

Philip Brook

A beautiful cool autumn day greeted the eight stalwarts who gathered at the Stannix Park Reserve on Saturday 12 April. The initial walk was south along the Chain of Ponds Creek with a Common Bronzewing taking off noisily. Strange distant bird calls caused us to move in anticipation further than we intended only to be met by the view of a large aviary on the opposite bank. The birds calling remain a mystery! Restless Flycatchers and a female Rose Robin were sighted on our way back to the cars. A short drive to Ebenezer Church and a stroll along the Hawkesbury at Swallow Reach allowed us to find a Rose Robin, Bar-shouldered Dove, a cruising Brown Goshawk and a group of twittering Varied Sittellas. After lunch by the old church, we moved to the pond at Madeleine Place at Sackville but the Latham's Snipe was missing. In its place were several

Pink-eared Ducks and a Wedge-tailed Eagle soaring in the distance, so we were not disappointed.

On the way back to the ponds on Pitt Town Ferry Road, a short stop to look for Glossy Black-Cockatoos, seen the previous day, proved unsuccessful. Our four keen photographers were pleased to find a trio of an Australian Pelican and both species of spoonbill perched beside a small pond and later at Pitt Town Ferry Road a second bonus produced six species aligned on a submerged fence – three species of cormorant, a Little Egret, an Australian Pelican and a Yellow-billed Spoonbill, all within a metre or so of each other.

Good weather, good company and a total of 67 birds for the day sent us all happily home.

## UNUSUAL REPORTS FOR NEW SOUTH WALES, FEBRUARY-MAY 2015

ALAN MORRIS

Region Abbreviations: **NC**–North Coast; **H**–Hunter, **CC**–Central Coast; **S**–Sydney Region; **I**–Illawarra; **SC**–South Coast; **NT**–Northern Tablelands; **CT**–Central Tablelands; **ST**–Southern Tablelands; **NS**–North-west Slopes; **CS**–Central-west Slopes; **SS**–South-west Slopes; **NP**–North-west Plains; **CP**–Central-west Plains; **R**–Riverina; **UW**–Upper Western; **LW**–Lower Western. Other abbreviations used include **A** – adult, **F** – female, **M** – male, **DY** – dependant young. **Im** – immature, **J** – juvenile, **N** – nest, **RA** – rest area, **rk** – road kill, **hw** – hit window, **ba** – blown ashore, **bc** – beachcast, **hc** – heard calling and **pr** – pair.

Australian Brush-Turkey	1	20/3/15	Grose Valley, Junct Rock BMNP	CT	Libby Raines
Brown Quail	1	12/3/15	Balls Head Reserve, Waverton	S	Judy Clarke
Magpie Goose	400	1/3-23/4/15	Gwydir River Wetlands NR Moree	NP	Curtis Hayne
Magpie Goose	2,N,Y	26/2-30/3	Old STW, Port Macquarie	NC	Tim Morris
Magpie Goose	7	24/4/15	Jabiru-Geenbingeni Wtl Casino	NC	June Harris
Plumed Whistling-Duck	8,16	22/2 & 29/3	Richmond Lowlands, 100 on 28/4	S	Greg McLachlan
Plumed Whistling-Duck	23	6/4/15	Taronga Zoo, Mosman	S	Barton Tait
Freckled Duck	6	27/3/15	Cowra STW	CT	Bob Rusk
Freckled Duck	6	8/4/15	Lithgow STW	CT	Max Breckenridge
Freckled Duck	6	26/4-3/5	McPherson Rd Swp Tuggerah	CC	Andrew Robinson
Blue-billed Duck	4	8/4/15	Lithgow STW	CT	Max Breckenridge
Australian Shelduck	2	10-15/3/15	Hexham Swamp NR	H	Mick Roderick
Australian Shelduck	27	2-13/4/15	Fivebough Swamp, Leeeton	R	Anthony Katon
Radjah Shelduck	1	16/4/15	Myall River Bulahdelah	H	Cameron Ward
Australasian Shoveler	350+	20/3/15	Big Pond, Ash Island Ponds	H	Mick Roderick
Great Crested Grebe	4	25-26/4/15	Fairy Hill Wetland Casino	NC	Paul Johnstone
Emerald Dove	1	22/3/15	Yallah Bay Rd Tallawarra	I	Paul Lynch
Diamond Dove	1	31/12/14	Hazelbrook	CT	Carol Proberts
Diamond Dove	1	3/4/15	Durridergie SCA Ulan	H	Per Mick Roderick
Diamond Dove	1	18/4/15	Private garden Orange	CT	Neville Schrader
Wompoo Fruit-Dove	3	24/2/15	Tallawudjah Ck Glenreagh	NC	Peter Knock
White-throated Needletail **	190	1/4/15	Wentworth Falls	CT	Mark Ley
White-throated Needletail **	40+	2/4/15	Bundanoon & Exeter	I	Lorne Johnson
Fork-tailed Swift	1	28/2/15	Bundanoon	I	Lorne Johnson
Fork-tailed Swift	9	23/3/15	Churinga HSD Wilcannia	UW	Leigh Schmidt

Fork-tailed Swift	4	20/3/15	Lady Carrington Dve Royal NP	S	Lorand Szucs
Fork-tailed Swift	6	12/4/15	Euligal SF Kennebri	NP	Max Breckenridge
White-tailed Tropicbird	2	15/3/15	Malabar Hill Lord Howe Island	LH	Ian Hutton
Red-tailed Tropicbird	2	18/3/15	Britannia Seamount, E Tweed Hd	NC	Nikolas Haass
Red-tailed Tropicbird	1	20/3/15	Warden Head, Ulladulla	I	Bob Rusk
Wilson's Storm-Petrel	3	2/5/15	Ballina Light House	NC	Gus Daly
White-faced Storm-Petrel	1+	21/4/15	Queens Wharf Newcastle Hbr	H	Mick Roderick
White-bellied Storm-Petrel	3	18/3/15	Britannia Seamount, E Tweed Hd	NC	Nikolas Haass
White-bellied Storm-Petrel	30	23/3/15	Lord Howe Is off Admiralty Is.	LH	Allan Benson
White-bellied Storm-Petrel	3	24/3/15	Balls Pyramid	LH	Michael Scobie
Antipodean Albatross	1	26/2/15	Port Stephens pelagic	H	Mick Roderick
Shy Albatross	5	5/3/15	Mistral Pt Maroubra	S	David Mitford
Campbell's Albatross *	1	22/3/15	Eden pelagic	SC	Sandra Henderson
Campbell's Albatross*	1	28/3/15	Wollongong pelagic	I	Robert Hynson
Indian Yellow-nd Albatross	1	28/3/15	Wollongong pelagic	I	Robert Hynson
Buller's Albatross *	1	15/3/15	Mistral Pt Maroubra	S	David Mitford
Buller's Albatross	2	28/3/15	Wollongong pelagic	I	Robert Hynson
Buller's Albatross	2	11/4/15	Sydney pelagic	S	Dion Hobcroft
Fairy Prion *	2	20/4/15	Mistral Pt North, Maroubra	S	David Mitford
Fairy Prion *	3	21/4/15	Newcastle Hbr nr Stockton Bridg	H	Ian Benson
Fairy Prion *	15	22/4/15	Kurnell Peninsular	S	Rob Hynson
Tahiti Petrel	1	18/3/15	Britannia Seamount, E Tweed Hd	NC	Nikolas Haass
Black Petrel	1	26/2/15	Port Stephens pelagic	H	Mick Roderick
White-chinned Petrel	1	20/4/15	Sydney pelagic	S	Dion Hobcroft
Buller's Shearwater	2	26/2/15	Port Stephens pelagic	H	Mick Roderick
Buller's Shearwater	2	31/3/15	Port Stephens pelagic	H	Mick Roderick
Flesh-footed Shearwater	30	15/3/15	Mistral Pt Maroubra	S	David Mitford
Streaked Shearwater	3	24/2/15	Mistral Pt Maroubra, 1 on 21/3	S	David Mitford
Streaked Shearwater	3	3/3/15	Port Stephens pelagic	H	Mick Roderick
Hutton's Shearwater	1bc	7/3/15	Boatharbour, Kurnell	S	Stephen Gilmour
Mottled Petrel	1bc	25/2/15	Bherwerre Bch, Booderee NP	I	Martin Schulz
Collared Petrel	1	18/3/15	Britannia Seamount, E Tweed Hd	NC	Nikolas Haass
Kermadec Petrel	1	18/3/15	Britannia Seamount, E Tweed Hd	NC	Nikolas Haass
Kermadec Petrel	1	22/3/15	Eden pelagic	SC	Sandra Henderson
Kermadec Petrel	5	24/3/15	Balls Pyramid	LH	Allan Benson
Gould's Petrel	3	21/4/15	Newcastle Hbr nr Stockton Bridg	H	Ian Benson
Herald Petrel	1	22/3/15	Eden pelagic	SC	Sandra Henderson
White-necked Petrel	1	18/3/15	Britannia Seamount, E Tweed Hd	NC	Nikolas Haass
Red-footed Booby	1	18/3/15	Britannia Seamount, E Tweed Hd	NC	Nikolas Haass
Brown Booby	1	21/3/15	Mstral Point, Maroubra	S	David Mitford
Brown Booby	1m	22/3/15	Potato Point, Moruya	SC	Roger Williams
Black-necked Stork	A+2J	29/3/15	Hat Head Rd South West Rocks	NC	Clive Meadows
Black-necked Stork	2	1/4/15	Hexham NR	H	Joshua Allen
Black-necked Stork	2+J	14/4/15	Mombah Pt Rd Bulahdelah	H	Dan Barnett
Eastern Reef-Egret	1	19/4/15	Avalon Beach	S	Jayden Walsh
Black Bittern	1	14/3/15	Mullet Ck Warriewood	S	Elisabeth Karplus
Eastern Osprey	2+2J	Jan-Mar	Fledged 2J at Erina Depot	CC	Warren Brown
Eastern Osprey	2+J	Jan-Mar	Fledged 1+J Kincumber STW	CC	Adam Nesbitt
Eastern Osprey	1	5/3/15	Willinga Lake, Bawley Point	I	Margaret Hamon
Eastern Osprey	1	14/4/15	Werai nr Moss Vale	I	Lorne Johnson
Pacific Baza	12	3/3/15	Lawrence	NC	Bill Shillam
Pacific Baza	2	7/4/15	Marana Rd Springfield	CC	Nick Carson
Pacific Baza	11	19/3/15	Rosebank	NC	Phil Murray
Square-tailed Kite	1	1/4/15	Nth Bateau Bay & Killarney Vale	CC	Alan Morris
Square-tailed Kite	1	1/4/15	Scheyville NP, Scheyville	S	Keith Brandwood

Square-tailed Kite	1	6/4/15	Bobbin Head Rd Nth Turrumurra	S	Tom Wilson
Black Kite	1,1	19 & 25/4	North Richmond, South Windsor	S	Lindsey Muller
Black Kite	18+	24-26/4/15	With 5km of Casino	NC	Alan Morris
Spotted Harrier	1	13/3/15	Bunnerong Rd Matrville	S	David Mitford
Spotted Harrier	4	25-26/4/15	Casino, 7 km radius	NC	Alan Morris
Black Falcon	1	15/2/15	Cowra North	CT	Cowra Surveys
Black Falcon	2	24/4/15	Jabiru-Geeneebinga Wtld Casino	NC	Alan Morris
Black Falcon	2	29/4/15	Lismore STW	NC	June Harris
Australian Hobby	1	22/4/15	Fort St HS Petersham	S	Simon Gorta
Brolga	8	2-14/4/15	Fivebough Wetlands, Leeton	R	Anthony Katon
Lewin's Rail	1	12/4/15	Lions Park, Burrill Lake	I	Charles Dove
Spotless Crake	1	20/2/15	Pucca Bucca Wetland Mudgee	CT	Mari Leary
Spotless Crake	2	8/4/15	Fivebough Wetlands, Leeton	R	Max O'Sullivan
Spotted Crake	2	8/4/15	Fivebough Wetlands, Leeton	R	Max O'Sullivan
<b>Sth Is. Pied Oystercatcher</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2/3-21/4</b>	<b>Shark Is, Chowder Bay, Balmoral</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>Joshua Bergmark</b>
Sooty Oystercatcher	31	14/3/15	Warden Hd, Ulladulla, 35 on 20/3	I	Bob Rusk
Sooty Oystercatcher	1	15/4/15	Flying pass Katoomba Falls	CT	Lindsey Grey
Bush Stone-curlew	1	March 15	Woodstock nr Cowra	CT	Per Neil Coutanche
Bush Stone-curlew	hc	8/4/15	Careel Bay, Avalon	S	Gwen McDonald
Beach Stone-curlew	1	27/3/15	Urunga Boardwalk	NC	Michael Dahlem
Hooded Plover	A+J	12/3/15	Lake Conjola estuary	I	Alan Morris
Hooded Plover	A+J	13/3/15	Lake Tabourie entrance	I	Carol Abbott
Latham's Snipe **	6	29/3/15	Eastlakes Golf Course	S	David Mitford
Black-tailed Godwit	40	28/2/15	Ash Island Ponds	H	Alan Morris
Black-tailed Godwit	1	22/3/15	Lord Howe Island Airport	LH	Mike Kuhl
Wood Sandpiper **	1	26/3/15	Pitt Town Lagoon	S	Keith Brandwood
Wood Sandpiper **	3	2/4/15	Emigrant Ck Bruxner Hy Casino	NC	Steve McBride
Wood Sandpiper **	1	8/4/15	Fivebough Swp Leeton	R	Max O'Sullivan
Common Sandpiper **	1	18/4/15	Burns Pt West Ballina	NC	Steve McBride
Wandering Tattler **	5	16 & 30/3	Flat Rock Ballina	NC	Steve McBride
Wandering Tattler **	1	26/3/15	Soldiers Point, Norah head	CC	Christina Port
Pectoral Sandpiper **	3	15-18/3/15	Pitt Town Lagoon, 2 on 22/3	S	Nigel Coghlan
Pectoral Sandpiper **	1	8/4/15	Fivebough Swp Leeton	R	Max O'Sullivan
<b>White-rumped Sandpiper</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>23-26/2/15</b>	<b>Lake Wollumboola</b>	<b>I</b>	<b>Jon Spicer-Bell</b>
<b>White-rumped Sandpiper</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>19-25 /3/15</b>	<b>Shoalhaven Heads</b>	<b>I</b>	<b>Lachlan Hall</b>
Pomarine Jaeger **	25	5/3/15	Mistral Pt Maroubra, 30 on 15/3	S	David Mitford
Pomarine Jaeger **	2+	14/3/15	Warden Head Ulladulla	I	Alan Morris
Arctic Jaeger **	12+	13-29/3/15	Warden Head Ulladulla	I	Bob Rusk
Long-tailed Jaeger	75	2/2/15	Mistral Pt Maroubra	S	David Mitford
Long-tailed Jaeger **	9	15/3/15	Mistral Pt Maroubra	S	David Mitford
Kelp Gull	J	21/3/15	Long Reef Aquatic Reserve	S	Jenny Stiles
Kelp Gull	AA+J	10/4/15	Coogee Beach	S	Chris Gregory
White Tern	1	13/3/15	Died, Wybong Rd Castlerock	H	Tas Willis
White Tern	1	14/3/15	Sydney pelagic	S	Roger McGovern
White Tern	1	22/4/15	Kurnell Peninsular	S	Rob Hynson
Grey Ternlet	1	11/4/15	29 km E of Sydney	S	Dion Hobcroft
Common Noddy	Im	23/2/15	Pelican Pt Norah head	CC	Andrew Robinson
Common Noddy	Im	28/2/15	Nobbys Rocks, Newcastle	H	Mick Roderick
Common Noddy	2	4/3/15	Tacking Pt Light Pt Macquarie	NC	Clive Meadows
Common Noddy	1	22/4/15	Kurnell Peninsular	S	Rob Hynson
Red-tailed Black-Cockatoo	2	4/4/15	Darling R. Gunderbooka NP	UW	Andrew O'Brien
Glossy Black-Cockatoo	5	24/2/15	Tallawudjah Ck Glenreagh	NC	Peter Knock
Glossy Black-Cockatoo	8	3/3/15	Western Plains Zoo, Dubbo	CS	Andrew O'Brien
Glossy Black-Cockatoo	8	19/3/15	Artakoot Res South West Rocks	NC	Greg Roberts
Glossy Black-Cockatoo	6+	29/3 & 20/4	Racecourse Beh Ulladulla	I	Bob Rusk

Gang-gang Cockatoo	10	22-26/2/15	Amber Park HSD Kulnura	CC	Nick Carson
Gang-gang Cockatoo	40	17/3/15	Bloom Hill Rd O'Connell	CT	Tiffany Mason
Long-billed Corella	4,2J	23/3/15	South Cowra Sports Ground	CT	Neville Schraeder
Little Lorikeet	10	18/4/15	Penshurst St Willoughby	S	Simon Gorta
Superb Parrot	101	14-15/2/15	21 sites in Cowra Shire	CT	Cowra Surveys
Turquoise Parrot	8	14/2/15	Spring Forest HSD Koorawatha	CT	Cowra Surveys
Turquoise Parrot	6	30/3/15	WambelongCk WarrumbungleNP	CP	Marc Anderson
Turquoise Parrot	3+J	10/4/15	Warrumbungles NP Visitor Centre	CP	Max Breckenridge
Bourke's Parrot	3	21/3/15	Churinga HSD Wilcannia	UW	Leigh Schmidt
Swift Parrot *	4	22-27/4/15	Ainslie & Mt. Ainslie NR, ACT	ST	Steve Holliday
Swift Parrot *	2	28/4/15	Martindale TSR 7 km N Corowa	SS	Chris Tzaros
Swift Parrot *	6	3/5/15	Livingstone NP, Wagga Wagga	SS	Nella Smith
Swift Parrot *	5	5/5/15	Murray St Bateau Bay	CC	Alan Morris
Budgerigar	16	15/3/15	Borah Creek TSR Barraba	NT	Ted Wnorowski
Ground Parrot	2	19/3/15	Hyams Bch Rd Jervis Bay	I	Max O'Sullivan
Channel-billed Cuckoo **	1	7/4/15	Centennial Park, Sydney	S	Marie Lister
Eastern Koel **	J	21/3/15	Gorokan	CC	Stephen Ward
Eastern Koel **	hc	21/3/15	Bobbin Hd Rd Nth Turrumurra	S	Tom Wilson
Eastern Koel **	AM	4/4/15	Mascot	S	David Mitford
Pallid Cuckoo **	Im	9/4/15	Eulah Ck Narrabri	NP	Michael Dahlem
Oriental Cuckoo	1	20/3/15	Tallawadjah Res Glenreagh	NC	Peter Knock
Black-eared Cuckoo	1	3/4/15	Durridgerie SCA Ulan	H	Per Mick Roderick
Powerful Owl	2	10/3-1/4	Seen & HC Murray St Bateau Bay	CC	Alan Morris
Powerful Owl	2	12/3/15	Sailors Bay Tk Castlecrag	S	David Potter
Powerful Owl	2	24/4/15	Milner Cres Wollstonecraft	S	Lindy Jones
Barking Owl	hc	15/3/15	Borah Creek TSR Barraba	NT	Ted Wnorowski
Masked Owl	1rk	23/4/15	Whiporie	NC	Alan Morris
Sooty Owl	2	22/3/15	Springfield nr Rumbalara Res.	CC	Nick Carson
Red-backed Kingfisher	1	15/2/15	Koorawatha NR Koorawatha	CT	Cowra Surveys
Red-backed Kingfisher	1	4/4/15	Yandra Tk Gunderbooka NP	UW	Andrew O'Brien
Rainbow Bee-eater **	30	15/3/15	Eulah Creek, Narrabri	NP	Michael Dahlem
Noisy Pitta	1	18/4/15	Private property, Martcham	CC	James Panetta
Albert's Lyrebird	2	23/4/15	Murray Scrub NR Afterlee	NC	Rowena Wallace
Red-browed Treecreeper	2	8/4/15	Lady Carrington Dve Royal NP	S	Dion Hobcroft
White-browed Treecreeper	4	28/3/15	Churinga HSD Wilcannia	UW	Leigh Schmidt
Red-backed Fairy-wren	4	25/2/15	Booral	H	Paul Shelley
Southern Emu-wren	3	9/4/15	Fortress Tk Mt Hay Rd BMNP	CT	Mark Hocking
Chestnut-rumped Heathwren	1	15/2/15	Warrapendi HSD Bumbaldry	CT	Cowra Surveys
Chestnut-rumped Heathwren	1	12/4/15	Mitchell Park, Cattai	S	Simon Blanchflower
Fuscous Honeyeater	6+	4/4/15	Gingham Gap, Goobang NP	CP	Birdline
Bell Miner	3	15-22/4/15	Irrawong & Warriewood Wtlands	S	Jayden Walsh
Regent Honeyeater	2	19/4/15	Wollondilly RBurraborang Valley	I	Martin Schulz
Regent Honeyeater	2	1-5/5/15	Princeton Nurseries, Mount White	CC	Greg Miles
Orange Chat	AM	22/3/15	Churinga HSD Wilcannia	UW	Leigh Schmidt
Brown Honeyeater	2	29/3/15	Eastlakes Gold Course	S	David Mitford
Brown Honeyeater	5	31/3/15	Pipi Pt Davistown	CC	Alan Morris
Crescent Honeyeater	2	26/3-8/4	McKell Ave Royal NP	S	Marc Anderson
Black-chinned Honeyeater	2	14/2/15	Iambi HSD Morongola	CT	CWBS
Black-chinned Honeyeater	2	15/2/15	Bumbaldry	CT	CWBS
Black-chinned Honeyeater	2	15/2/15	Warrapendi HSD Bumbaldry	CT	CWBS
Blue-faced Honeyeater	3	15/2/15	Guildford	S	Andrew Patrick
Blue-faced Honeyeater	Im	6/4/15	Budgewoi Caravan Park	CC	Steve Merrett
Little Friarbird	5	20-27/3/15	Churinga HSD Wilcannia	UW	Leigh Schmidt
Spotted Quail-thrush	3	5/2/15	Cataract Dam	S	Ashwin Rudder
Spotted Quail-thrush	1	8/4/15	8 km N Capertee	CT	Max Breckenridge

Chestnut-breast Quail-thrush	AF	5/4/15	Gunderbooka NP Bourke	UW	Andrew O'Brien
White-bellied C'shrike	1	19/3/15	Catholic School Terrigal	CC	Nick Carson
Ground Cuckoo-shrike	8	17/4/15	Eulah Ck Narrabri	NP	Michael Dahlem
White-winged Triller	1	31/3/15	Pipi Pt Davistown	CC	Alan Morris
Masked Woodswallow	5	1/3/15	Pambalong NR	H	Allan Richardson
Little Woodswallow	12	30/3/15	Coxs Rd Pilliga Forest	NP	Marc Anderson
Little Woodswallow	15	12/4/15	Euligal Sf Kennebri	NP	Max Breckenridge
Leaden Flycatcher **	1	2/4/15	Old Tollgates, Cowan	S	Paul Burcher
Spangled Drongo	1	25/4/15	Deep Creek Res Narrabeen	S	Gabrielle Rees
Pied Butcherbird	2	16/4/15	Pistol Range, Scheyville NP	S	Paul Burcher
Paradise Riflebird	AM	25/4/15	Murray Scrub Lkt Afterlee	NC	Diana Hogan
Paradise Riflebird	3	26/4/15	Sheepstation Ck Border Rnge NP	NC	John Rawson
Flame Robin	2	14/2/15	North Cowra Hills	CT	CWBS
Scarlet Robin	2	15/2/15	Koorawatha NR Koorawatha	CT	CWBS
Rose Robin	1	14/2/15	Spring Forest HSD Koorawatha	CT	CWBS
Rose Robin *	3	2/4/15	Royal NP	S	Lorand Szucs
Hooded Robin	AF	22/3/15	Churinga HSD Wilcannia	UW	Leigh Schmidt
Hooded Robin	2M	22/3/15	Yaminbah Ck Pilliga NR	CP	David Johnstone
Plum-headed Finch	6	23/4/15	Eulah Ck Narrabri	NP	Michael Dahlem
Plum-headed Finch	10	24/4/15	Casino STW	NC	Alan Morris
Diamond Firetail	10+	27/3/15	Daisy Hill TSR 50 kmE Armidale	NT	Richard Jordan
Diamond Firetail	2	30/3/15	Canyon Cp, Warrumbungles NP	CP	Marc Anderson
Chestnut-breasted Mannikin	12	3/4/15	Tallawarra Ash Ponds	I	Paul Lynch
Chestnut-breasted Mannikin	60	22/4/15	Jabiru-Geenbingeni Wtl Casino	NC	John Rawson
White-backed Swallow	2	15/2/15	Bumbaldry Cemetery	CT	CWBS

\*=First Return; \*\* Last Date; CWBS= Cowra Woodland Bird Survey.

**Bold** – On the Review list of the NSW Ornithological Records Appraisal Committee – submission required.

(Bird names used and the order in which they occur are in accord with Christidis L and W Boles 'Systematics and Taxonomy of Australian Birds' 2008)

## COMMENT

Autumn has been very wet in all coastal regions and also on the Tablelands and the wet weather appears to have sent the migrants back north earlier than usual. In the past two months (Mar-April) the highlight has been the **White-rumped Sandpiper** at Lake Wollumboola where it has been content to stay from 4 January to 23 February and then relocated back to Shoalhaven Heads 19/3, last seen 25/3/15! The other rarity has been the **South Island Pied Oystercatcher** being seen since 1/3 to 21/4, at Shark Island, Chowder Bay and other localities in Sydney Harbour. **Freckled Ducks** continue to occupy a number of sites in eastern NSW, other reports include: 1 Moorebank 25/2-2/3 (S); **Wandering Whistling-Duck**: 7 Hunter WC, Shortlands 1/4 (H); **White-faced Storm-Petrel**: The current population for the NSW offshore Islands is now estimated to be 1690 prs, compared to a minimum of 10,570 pairs 40 years ago (CBOC Newsl. Apr 2015); The number of seabirds like **Buller's Albatross** continue to increase, other records include 1 Eden pelagic 20/3 (SC) & 1 Wattamolla 9/4 (S) and the numbers of **Streaked Shearwaters** similarly viz 2 North Head 22/2 (S) & 1 Eden Pelagic 22/3 (SC); **Black Bittern**: F Deepwater Pk Milperra 27/2 (S); **Eastern Osprey**: See that two pairs of Ospreys nested successfully for the first time on the Central Coast at Erina & Kincumber, both sites managed by Gosford City Council (CC), 1 Deepwater Pk Milperra 1/3 (S), 1 Tallawarra Forshore 4/3 (I); Other records of **Pacific Baza** include: 1 Greggs Rd Kurrajong 12/3, 1 Sun Valley, 25/3 (S); **Square-tailed Kites** have also been reported from Mt Riverview 2/3 & 30/3 (S), Springwood 20/3 (CT), 1 Riverside Pk Chipping Norton 4/3, Nth Turrumurra 6/4, Koorinal Ave Thornleigh 11/4 (S), there are more and more records each year!; Other single coastal **Black Kites** were at Colo Vale 10/3 (S), Forrester's Bch 6/4, Wyong 28/4 (CC) and there were 8 at Lismore STW 29/4 (NC); A **Brown Goshawk** at Centennial Park on 7/4 (S), was unusual; **Black Falcon**: David Charley reported in litt. 1/5/15 that there are 4 resident pairs in the Richmond Valley (NC); **Black-tailed Native-hen**: The bird at Lake Wallace is still present 19/4 (CT); **Pied Oystercatcher**: On the South Coast (Wollongong to Batemans Bay) 22 prs nested 29 times, laid 58 eggs, hatched 36 chicks, fledged 21 young, this being a marked improvement in numbers of pairs and numbers fledged (Shorebird Recovery Newsl.); The **Sooty Oystercatcher** seen flying past Katoomba Falls was observed at a time of heavy storms around Sydney and it can only be assumed that the bird was forced inland by the storms. On the South Coast (Wollongong to Batemans Bay) 27 prs nested 25 times, laid 42 eggs, hatched 8 chicks, but fledged no young, this being a disappointing year for this Region. (Shorebird Recovery Newsl.); **Hooded Plover**: On the South Coast (Wollongong to Batemans Bay) 14 prs nested 26 times, laid 64 eggs, hatched 12 chicks, fledged 6 young, this being an increase in numbers of pairs and numbers fledged (Shorebird Recovery Newsl.); **Little Tern**: In 2024/15, on the South Coast (Shoalhaven Heads to Batemans Bay) Little Terns only nested at Shoalhaven Heads, Lake Wollumboola & Lake Conjola, there were 183 prs, 251 nests, 548 eggs laid, 122 chicks hatched but only 29 chicks fledged, a bad year for Little Terns in that region (Shorebird Recovery Newsl.); **Glossy Black-Cockatoo**: During March there were 15 reports of 25 birds in total at 13 sites in the Blue Mtns (CT), other records are 2 Wairo Bch 21/2 (I), 2 Eulah Ck Narrabri 5/3 (NP), 2 Berowra Valley Pk Hornsby Heights 30/3 (S), 6 Long Beach, Batemans Bay 5/4 (SC); **Turquoise Parrot**: 2 Warrapendi HSD Bumbaldry 14/2 (CT) & 12 The Aloes, Pilliga SF 12/4 (NP); Other **Powerful Owls** HC include 1 Field of Mars Res Ryde 17/3, 1 Russell St Wollstonecraft 25/3 (S), 1 Steyne Rd Saratoga 13/4 (CC), during March, there were 7 reports of Powerful Owls heard and or seen in the Blue Mountains (CT); **Eastern Grass Owl**: During 2014, 5 birds were found in rice fields at Colleambally by M.Herring 27/1-10/2/14, the data is recorded here so that it is not lost @.

Happily **Regent Honeyeaters** have been recorded at 5 sites in the past two months including 1 Highfiled HSD Mt Adrah 10/3 (H), Crown Station Rd Glen Davis 18/3 & 9/4 (CT) & Mt Rogers Reserve ACT 6/4 (ST). Good Birding!

## BIRDING NSW DIRECTORY

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### Sydney Club Meetings:

The Club meets on the first Tuesday of the month, February to December at 7.30 pm on Level 1, Sydney Mechanics School of Arts, 280 Pitt Street, Sydney. There is an illustrated talk followed by Club business and unusual sighting reports. Visitors are welcome.

### Central Coast Club Meetings

Meetings are held on the fourth Tuesday of the month at Anzac Street, Tuggerah at 7.30 pm. Convenor: Alan Morris 4334 2776

### Annual membership fees:

Single adult \$35.00

Family \$40.00

Junior (under 18 years) \$15.00

Fees are due on 1 October.

Membership includes subscription to the Newsletter.

### Email for Club Activities:

[activities@birdingnsw.org.au](mailto:activities@birdingnsw.org.au)

### Newsletter contributions:

Email articles, trip reports etc to  
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### AUGUST Newsletter Deadline:

Monday 6 July 2015

**Newsletter advertising** rates, and bookings  
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