

Western Australian Bird Notes



Quarterly Newsletter of
Birds Australia Western Australia Inc
(a division of Royal Australasian Ornithologists Union)



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ANTHOLOGY OF HOODED PLOVER BEHAVIOUR (PART I)

The Myalup Bird Observers Group has kept detailed records on Hooded Plover behaviour since 2000.

Their collection of data is impressive. Over the past 17 months no less than 1000 hours worth of field observations were recorded by the group.

The notes are comprehensive and contain descriptions of some aspects of Hooded Plover behaviour that supplements our existing knowledge and of others that are new. The findings are based on repeated observations and team discussions.

The purpose of this article is to make this information widely available and to encourage an exchange of information between Hooded Plover observers.

The Myalup Bird Observers Group has carried out most of their field work in the south- western part of Lake Preston. They identified 23 Hooded Plover observation sites and allocated each site a popular name and number and monitored these regularly.

The length of the lake foreshore surveyed was 18.6 km.

Lake Preston is the largest lake within the Yalgorup lake system. Its length from north to south is 27.5 km; the widest point of the lake at the southern end is about two km, and the narrowest about 0.5 km.

The Yalgorup lake system extends from about 30 km south of Mandurah to Myalup, which is adjacent to the southern boundary of Lake Preston. Its northern boundary extends to just beyond Preston Beach township. The lake is within the Yalgorup National Park.

Feeding Behaviour

Wading Hooded Plovers forage on the surface and from just below the surface of the water. They presumably feed on some emergent/drowned invertebrates, or on those already floating at the surface.

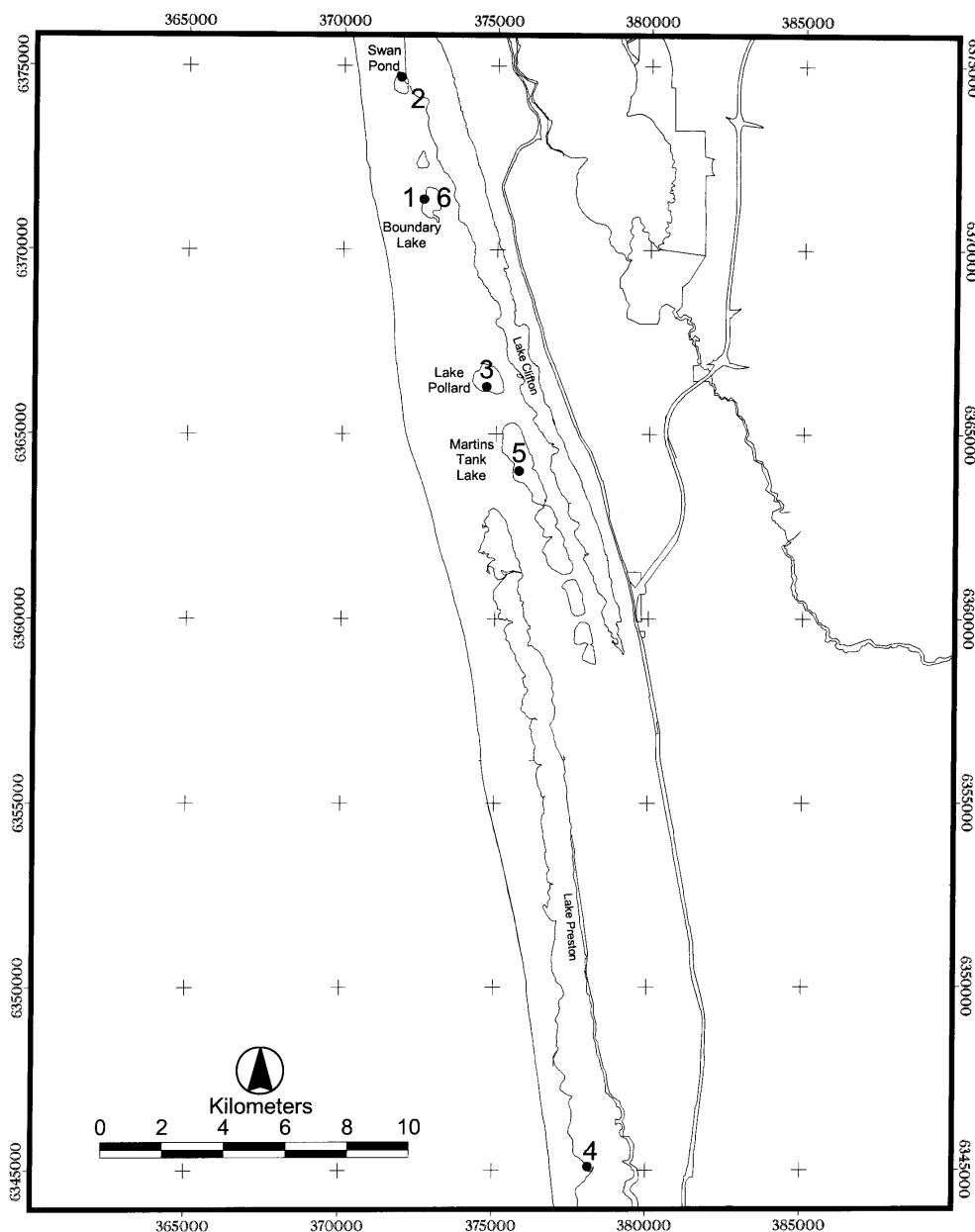
Adults and juveniles sporadically feed upon swarms of dark and seemingly quite hard-cased, waterborne insects close to or on the immediate shoreline, brine flies, and smaller insects found mostly at fresh-water puddles.

At the south-western part of Lake Preston Hooded



Hooded Plover with colour bands at Myalup. This bird was banded by Julie Raines in September 2002 and photographed at the same location, with the same mate, in early May 2003.

Photograph by Allan Burbidge



Hooded Plover 5 - Movements

Map 1: Movements of Hooded Plover number 5 from March 2002 to May 2003. This bird was banded on 2 March 2002 at Boundary Lake in Yalgorup National Park.

Records

1. 2 March 2002, Boundary Lake.
2. 29 May 2002, Swan Pond.
3. 22 September 2002, Lake Pollard.
4. 4 October 2002, Lake Preston (South).
5. 3 November 2002, Martin's Tank.
6. 14 May 2003, Boundary Lake.

Plovers favour year-round the driest, or the least waterlogged areas for foraging. Less commonly, the birds wade in very shallow pools at mudflats, or along very shallow shoreline margins.

In summer, Hooded Plovers forage mostly at the waterline, with less time spent foraging mid-beach, and the least time wading beyond the waterline. Slightly more time seems to be spent on forage wading as winter rains gradually

inundate mudflats and other wide and shallow lake-bed areas, and when rising water levels greatly diminish the width of either hard- or soft-shorelines.

Hooded Plovers most commonly forage in a thorough pattern for a continuous run or in a rough circuit.

Food items are apparently gleaned from the surface as probing into the forage-surface has not been observed.

No attempts have been made until very recently to observe Hooded Plover after dark, but Tony France recorded one instance of a pair of Hooded Plovers still foraging at the waterline when it was almost dark.

Parenting Hooded Plovers with downy chicks or runners forage far less frequently at the waterline, and much more frequently in mid-beach and up-beach zones.

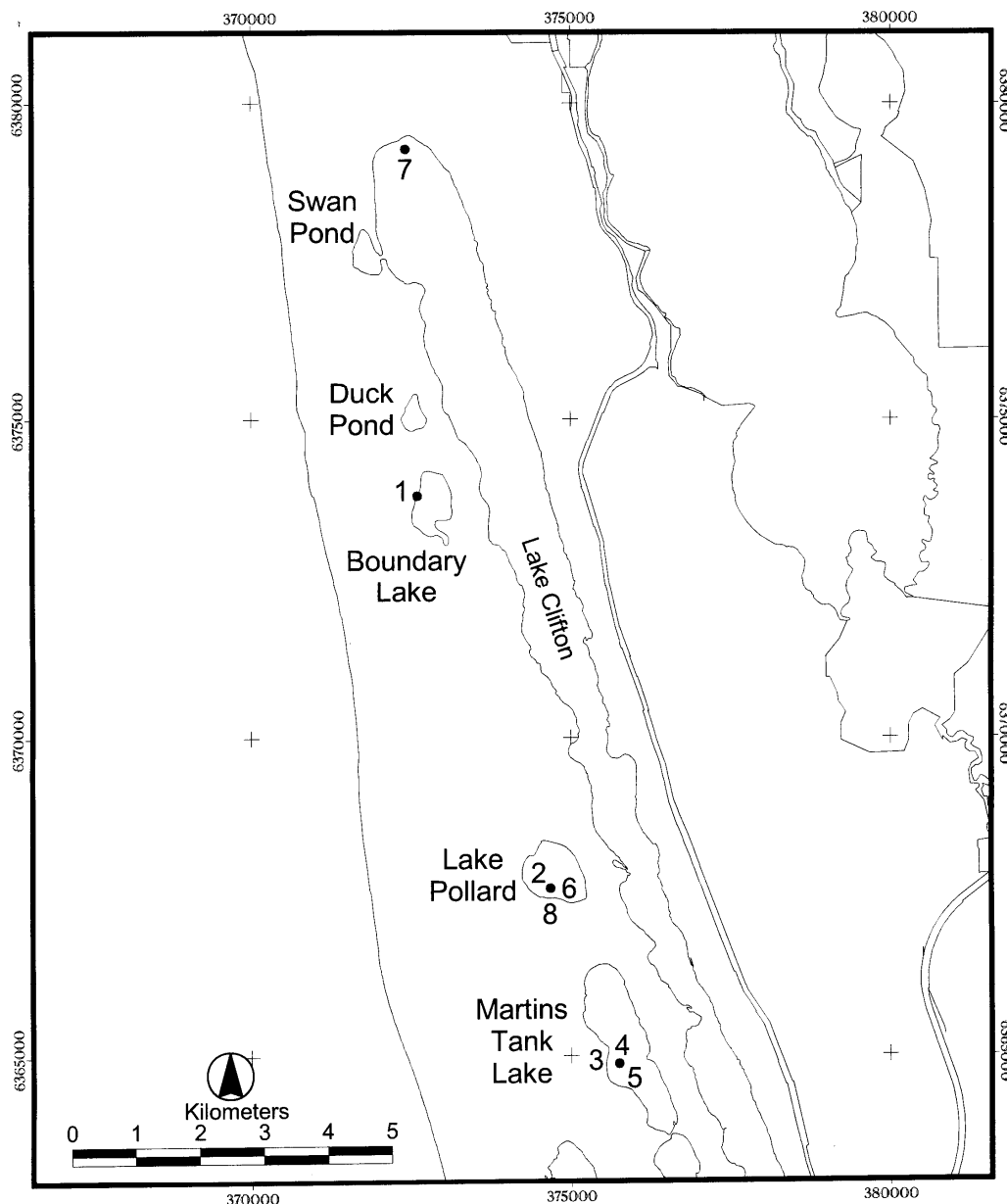
Parent birds with very young chicks favour the very broken surfaces of hard-reef beaches near the waterline, or up-beach zones where stones and shale pieces strew the beach to a point where it meets the nearest low vegetation.

Occasionally, even fully-fledged juveniles rejoin for some time what are assumed to be parent birds.

Fresh Water Use and Preening

Each year there is some indication that Hooded Plovers occupy and later breed close to those beach sites where copious to slow fresh ground-water seepages continue, at varyingly diminishing flows, for much of the year.

For the third successive season a pair of Hooded Plovers nested at a site known as the 'Tarmac'. A three egg nest was found on 8 December 2002. On 13 January 2003, a



Hooded Plover 8 - Movements

Map 2: Movements of Hooded Plover number 8 from March 2002 to March 2003. This bird was banded on 2 March 2002 at Boundary Lake in Yalgorup National Park.

Records

1. 2 March 2002, Boundary Lake.
2. 24 March 2002, Lake Pollard.
3. 6 April 2002, Martin's Tank
4. 14 April 2002, Martin's Tank.
5. 18 August 2002, Martin's Tank
6. 22 September 2002, Lake Pollard
7. 26 September 2002, Lake Clifton (North).
8. 2 March 2003, Lake Pollard.

single chick paraded back and forth between the sitting parent and the waterline.

On two occasions the lively chick took long sips from the fresh-water stream gently flowing down the beach near the nest.

Occasionally, adults birds (sometimes a pair, and sometimes parents and juveniles) bathe in fresh ground-water flows or pools, preening there or at the shoreline thereafter. More often, the birds quickly dip their heads at the waterline and proceed to preen there.

However, in wet or dry conditions, Hooded Plovers at south-western Lake Preston seem most commonly to 'dry preen' where they are, than to first bathe anywhere.

Roosting

Roosting, resting or loafing Hooded Plovers at south-western Lake Preston commonly select slightly elevated and isolated lookouts that provide improved field-of-vision as they rest up.

Adult Hooded Plovers occasionally roost on old fence-post stumps out on extensive mudflats, or roost alongside a weathered branch on a very exposed soft beach.

Both artificial- and naturally-occurring features at exposed inland-lake beaches provide both a degree of shade from the sun, wind, and some cover from any predators.

Birds have been observed resting on wide and open shorelines, heads to the gale, in the worst of cold and wet weather.

In summer, groups of Hooded Plovers have sometimes been noted to rest

up amid belts of the low vegetation that fringes much of the lake.

Vision

Very few records state outright that Hooded Plovers display very keen *eyesight* that commonly belies their seeming ignorance on occasions of nearby humans. However, on repeated occasions, very distant Hooded Plovers have already become restively aware of people, with one or other of the birds commencing the species' characteristic head-'bobbing'.

Increased Hooded Plover agitation commonly occurs commensurate to the degree of human proximity. Very close proximity commonly induces adult Hooded Plovers to engage short, jerky steps, with a sideways, and somewhat crouching, crab-like walk, to adopt a series of zig-zags ahead, seldom taking one eye completely off the observer.

Observed from close by, feeding birds commonly engage in a 'displacement activity'; they appear to forage, but in a very uneven, distracted and agitated manner.

Travel with Hatchlings

Hooded Plovers with young can cover considerable distances over a short period of time.

In the 2000-2001 breeding season, a pair of Hooded Plovers nested and laid three eggs on a slightly elevated summit of a ridge scattered with shale pieces, on an otherwise soft beach away from the hard-reef waterline. They were expected to adopt the same beach while parenting their young, which turned out to be only two. However, almost overnight, the group moved southwards for more than a kilometre.

Even the very youngest Hooded Plover progeny may undertake relatively long treks with their parents, in a

surprisingly short time, sometimes over some very uneven surfaces encountered on the way.

Movements

In order to gain a better understanding of Hooded Plover movements both within and outside the Yalgorup National Park ten Hooded Plovers have been colour banded.

On 2 February 2002 members of the Myalup Bird Observers Group helped Dr Mike Bamford and his team capture and colour-band a small group of Yalgorup Hooded Plovers (three adults and one advanced juvenile) on a small salt-lake, Martin's Tank, north of Lake Preston.

At Boundary Lake, another smallish lake relatively close by, Dr Mike Bamford captured and banded another four Hooded Plovers in early March 2002. A further two birds were colour-banded near Myalup by Julie Raines in September 2002, with help from local observers.

One colour-banded adult bird banded at Boundary Lake, was later found at the southern end of Lake Preston, about 30 km away.

One Hooded Plover pair that inhabits the south-western Lake Preston site was captured and banded during a very inclement spell in September 2002. The pair has been quite regularly found at the same site up until May 2003.

Movements of colour-banded Hooded Plovers throughout Yalgorup National Park have been recorded and details for two birds are shown in Map 1 and Map 2. Although the data set is limited it shows the range of movements of some Hooded Plovers.

Anyone observing Hooded Plovers with colour bands is kindly requested to report them to the Hooded Plover Sub-Committee.

Tony France

Acknowledgements and Sources

1. "Hooded Plover Ecology - S.W. Lake Preston – Yalgorup National Park 2000-2003"

A paper by A.F. (Tony) France of Myalup in conjunction with Neville and Margaret Jones of Cookernup, Margaret Symonds of Harvey, Beryl Flemming and Marcus Clay of Myalup.

2. Many thanks to Greg Harewood for creating the maps.
3. Further thanks to Brenda Newbey for kindly providing suggestions and helpful comments on the article.
4. Thanks also to Dick Rule and Bill Russell for providing their data on flagged Hooded Plovers.



Spiny-cheeked Honeyeater in the hand, Eyre.
Photo courtesy Bea Myers & Ian Tarbin

Observations

This list has been compiled by the Observations Committee. Metropolitan suburbs or shires are in parentheses. Please report interesting observations to Frank O'Connor (9386 5694 or preferably sightings@iinet.net.au) or to the BAWA office (9383 7749). Sightings are included on the BAWA web site (<http://birdswa.iinet.net.au>) as soon as possible, and the most interesting are selected for inclusion in the next WABN.

The names and order follow Christidis, L. and Boles, W. (1994) (*The Taxonomy and Species of Birds of Australia and its Territories. RAOU Monograph No. 2*).

Highlights. The most unusual sightings in this edition were a beach washed **Fairy Prion** at Yanchep, a beach washed **Southern Fulmar** at the Eyre Bird Observatory and a **Little Curlew** near Gingin.

There were a few sightings of the early return of some of the migratory waders, but overall the numbers of waders that have arrived in the south west were alarmingly low by late October. Hopefully this a sign of better conditions further north and inland.

Interesting reports from the metropolitan area included more sightings of **Painted Button-quails** and **Pacific Gulls**.

Another trip was organised to Ashmore Reef in September. This was earlier than the trips from recent years. Higher numbers of seabirds were found migrating through to the Indian Ocean, and a **Little Stint** was found on Middle Island.

METROPOLITAN (UBD Street Directory)

King Quail – 3, 15/10/03, Stirling Road (Forrestdale) – FO (presumed aviary escapees or releases)

Great Crested Grebe – 47, 24/08/03, Alfred Cove (Alfred Cove) – WM (high number at this site)

Kerguelen Petrel – 1 alive, 09/09/03, beach, Safety Bay (Safety Bay) – RGu (rarely seen inshore)

FAIRY PRION – 1 beach washed, 05/08/03, Yanchep Beach (Yanchep) – per WAM (rarely seen in WA; museum specimen)

Painted Button-quail – 1, 18/07/03, near Western Power Playground (Kings Park) – WM * 1, 19/07/03, Star Swamp (North Beach) – MH * 1, 31/07/03, Bold Park (City Beach) – RP, MS * 1, 16/08/03, Bickley Reservoir (Bickley) – RP * 1, 02/09/03, Wireless Hill Park (Ardross) – WM * 1, 19/09/03, Gngangara Road (Gngangara) – RP * 2, 20/10/03, Bungendore State Forest (Bedfordale) – FO * 2, 25/10/03, near Kingston Barracks (Rottnest Island) – MM (possibly increasing in metropolitan area ??)

Sharp-tailed Sandpiper – 73, 05/10/03, Samphire Cove (Halls Head) – BR (early in the south west)

Tern sp. – 1 (Arctic?), 10/07/03, North Mole (North Fremantle) – FO * 1 (Roseate?), 03/08/03, Woodman Point (Coogee) – DMH * 1 (Common?), 27/08/03, Applecross Jetty (Applecross) – WM * 1 (Common?), 29/09/03, South Mole (Fremantle) – TD (uncommon in the metropolitan area)

Whiskered Tern – 29+, 03/09/03, Herdsman Lake (Herdsman) – FO * 54, 10/09/03, Peel Inlet (Nairns) – BR * 30, 19/10/03, Thomsons Lake (Beeliar) – PJ (uncommon in the metropolitan area)

Red-tailed Black-Cockatoo – 3, 26/09/03, John Forrest National Park – HvW (near northern limit of sub species)

Purple-crowned Lorikeet – 2, 09/08/03, University of WA (Crawley) – ST * 1, 24/08/03, Cottesloe Primary School (Peppermint Grove) – MCr (uncommon in the metropolitan area)

Varied Sittella – 5 nesting, 27/09/03, Pinnaroo Valley (Padbury) – RP (rarely reported breeding in the metropolitan area)

White-winged Triller – 2 nesting, 07/10/03, Floreat Waters (Herdsman) – RP (rarely reported breeding in the metropolitan area)

Rufous Songlark – 1 female, 03/10/03, Murdoch University (Murdoch) – JW (uncommon in the metropolitan area)

SOUTH WEST (Shark Bay to Cape Arid)

Hutton's Shearwater – 4 flying east, 06/08/03, near The Gap (Albany) – FO (early migration)

Square-tailed Kite – 1, 07/08/03, Cheyne Beach (Albany) – FO (early return)

LITTLE CURLEW – 1, 04/10/03, near Bootine Road Nature Reserve (Gingin) – BAWA (rare in the south west; photographs on BAWA web site)

Common Greenshank – 60, 16/09/03, Lower King (Albany) – BR (high number and early return)

Sharp-tailed Sandpiper – 76, 15/10/03, Lake Wownaminia (Yalgoo) – WB (high number and early return)

Arctic Tern – 1, 26/09/03, Mangrove Bay (Bunbury) – BR *et al.* (uncommon in WA)

Masked Owl – 1+, 29/09/03, Gura Road at Dryandra State Forest (Cuballing) – FO (uncommon in the south west)

Red-backed Kingfisher – 1, 10/10/03, Kamballup (Plantagenet) – RG (south of normal range)

Rainbow Bee-eater – 6, 07/10/03, Warriup (Albany) – ABG (uncommon in the Albany shire)

Orange Chat – 1 male, 15/10/03, Lake Wownaminia (Yalgoo) – WB (uncommon in the Yalgoo shire)

Ground Cuckoo-shrike – 4, 03/08/03, near Brand Highway / Cooljarloo Road (Dandaragan) – MB (west of normal range)

ARID ZONE

SOUTHERN FULMAR – 1 beach washed, 28/09/03, Kanidal Beach (Dundas) – EBO (very rare in WA; photograph on BAWA web site)

Inland Dotterel – 3, 19/08/03, Gibson Desert (Ngaanyatjarraku) – LE (uncommon in WA in recent years)

Roseate Tern – ~50, 27/09/03, Coral Bay (Carnarvon) – MM, KH (uncommon on coast)

Little Corella – 2, 12/08/03, billabong on Wongawol Station (Wiluna) – LE (east of normal range)

White-browed Treecreeper – 2, 23/08/03, Lorna Glen Station (Wiluna) – LG (1st record for station)

Chestnut-breasted Quail-thrush – pair, 20/08/03, Gibson Desert Nature Reserve (Ngaanyatjarraku) – LE (2nd record for the reserve)

KIMBERLEY

Ruff – 1, 25/08/03, Kidney Bean Lagoon (Broome) – CD, BBO *et al.* (uncommon in WA; early return)

Little Ringed Plover – 1, 14/10/03, Marlgu Billabong (Wyndham – East Kimberley) – PDA (uncommon in WA)

Roseate Tern – 15 000, 26/09/03, West Lacepede Island (Broome) – GS, MC *et al.* (high number)

Fork-tailed Swift – 1, 04/09/03, Broome Bird Observatory (Broome) – AB (early return)

Barn Swallow – 2, 18/09/03, Broome sewage ponds (Broome) – AB (early return)

ASHMORE REEF

Bulwer's Petrel – 55, 20/09/03 to 27/09/03, Broome to Ashmore Reef – GS, MC *et al.* (rarely reported in Australia)

Jouanin's Petrel – 2, 20/09/03 to 27/09/03, Broome to Ashmore Reef – GS, MC *et al.* (rarely reported in Australia; BARC submission in preparation)

Matsudaira's Storm-Petrel – 61, 20/09/03 to 27/09/03, Broome to Ashmore Reef – GS, MC *et al.* (rarely reported in Australia)

Swinhoe's Storm-Petrel – 34, 20/09/03 to 27/09/03, Broome to Ashmore Reef – GS, MC *et al.* (rarely reported in Australia; BARC submission in preparation)

Little Stint – 1 breeding plumage, 23/09/03, Middle Island – GS, MC *et al.* (BARC submission in preparation)

Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike – 1, 25/09/03, Ashmore Reef to Broome – GS, MC *et al.* (southward migration)

Tawny Grassbird – 1, 23/09/03, West Island – GS, MC *et al.* (1st record for the island)

OBSERVERS

AB = Adrian Boyle

ABG = Albany Bird Group

BAWA = BAWA Excursion

BBO = Broome Bird

Observatory

BR = Bill Rutherford

CD = Chris Doughty (Vic)

CG = Cheryl Gole

DMH = Derek Mead-Hunter

EBO = Eyre Bird Observatory

FO = Frank O'Connor

GS = George Swann

HvW = Hank van Wees

JW = Jen Wilcox

KH = Kate Harvey

LE = Landscape Expedition

LG = Les George

MB = Michael Bamford

MC = Mike Carter (Vic)

MCr = Michael Craig

MH = Michael Hancock

MM = Myles Menz

MS = Matthew Sullivan (UK)

PDA = Pam & Des Agnew

PJ = Peter Jacoby

RG = Ray Garstone

RGu = Robyn Guder

RP = Ryan Phillips

SH = Stewart Houghton

ST = Sean Tomlinson

TD = Tom Delaney

WAM = WA Museum

WB = Wes Bancroft

WM = Wynton Maddeford

VALE TONY BENNETT

A long-time member, Tony died on 24 October 2003. An obituary for him will be in the March issue.

Our sympathy is extended to his family.

Letters to the Editors

The Editors

Turtle-Dove Numbers

In the September *Western Australian Bird Notes* (107: 23-24) Wynton Maddeford (Introduced Doves in Perth) commented that Laughing Turtle-Doves were decreasing in number and Spotted Turtle-Doves were taking over. I have been feeding them both on fine bird-seed for the last ten years at this address. And the reverse seems to be the case. There are only 3-4 Spotted Turtle-Doves to the 30-40 Laughing Turtle-Doves that come each day. The same seems to be in the Star Swamp area where I go.

Vera Patterson, Scarborough

Book Review

NORTH LAKE BIRDS (1980-2002)

by Wynton Maddeford

Price \$11.00 from Perry House; \$14.00 posted.

The recent updating of the national Atlas of Australian Birds has focused attention on changes in the distribution of birds over time. Locally, *North Lake Birds* provides an interesting study of changes in the bird population of an important metropolitan wetland over the last 23 years. It is based mainly on 200 early morning visits during two survey periods, 1980-82 and 1989-2003.

North Lake forms part of the Beeliar Wetland System which also includes Bibra, Kogolup, Yangebup and Thomson Lakes. In the 1980s, the lake covered about 20 hectares at its maximum extent, shrinking to about 12 hectares at the end of autumn. Since 1996, however, water levels have declined significantly as a result of several factors. Horse Paddock Swamp, which lies immediately to the south, has ceased to be a significant waterbird habitat and, in the autumn of 2003, North Lake itself virtually

dried up, raising serious questions about future management.

The decline in water levels has already resulted in a significant change in usage patterns according to Maddeford's observations. For example, the numbers of Blue-billed Duck, Musk Duck and Hardhead recorded have declined significantly in recent years, while wading species, such as egrets, Black-winged Stilts and avocets, have become more common.

Most of the book is devoted to comments about the 107 bird species recorded around the lake during the two survey periods. These include not only seasonal variations in numbers but also breeding records, feeding activities and other types of interesting behaviour. Apart from the lack of a map of the study area, it could well serve as a model for other bird enthusiasts interested in publishing the results of monitoring bird populations in an area over time.

Stewart Houghton

Late news!

Stirling Range Bird Walks: BAWA has now successfully completed three years of offering bird walks and talks to visitors at the Stirling Range Retreat, and has earned a half share of the proceeds for our group: this year it was \$1613.

We have been asked to repeat the walks in September and October 2004. Interested members should contact Clive Nealon, Tel: 9448-5921, or e-mail: clivenealon@bigpond.com. It's fun, and accommodation is free.

From the CEO's Desk

EUREKA PRIZE

Birds Australia was the proud recipient last month of the prestigious Eureka Prize for the Atlas of Australian Birds - the most extensive wildlife survey ever conducted in the southern hemisphere. The Atlas won the prestigious Royal Botanic Gardens 2003 Eureka Prize for Biodiversity Research.

Professor Henry Nix, Birds Australia President when accepting the award in Sydney on behalf of Birds Australia said, "This project represents the largest survey of wildlife ever conducted in Australia and the only one in the World where a whole continent has been covered."

"Birds Australia is honoured to accept this award on behalf of its Atlas volunteers and supporters. We thank all who worked to make the Atlas a success, and encourage anybody interested in Australian birds to become involved in the project. We would also like to thank the Royal

Botanic Gardens and the Australian Museum for awarding the Eureka Prize to Birds Australia."

Professor Mike Archer, Director of the Australian Museum said, "Birds Australia have done a remarkable job in creating the Atlas. It gives the first truly national perspective on the status of Australian bird life."

Jim Downey, CEO

Editors' Comment

Many members have probably also been readers of the West Australian Monday feature page *Eureka*. This environment feature has now been discontinued which is perhaps a reflection of the newspaper's editorial policy.

This may be susceptible to reversal if sufficient numbers of readers express their disappointment.

Birds Australia WA Inc Reports

BAWA INC COMMITTEE REPORT

The temptation to start the committee reports with “it has been a very busy three months” is very strong, but would get monotonous after a while. Busy we have been, however, and it is great to come into the office and find on one day that seats have been laid out in preparation for an introduction to birding talk, then to come in another day and find people clustered around talking about the latest excursion or project. The committee has a big task just keeping track of all that is happening, but fortunately we have a growing network of volunteers and sub-committees who make sure things happen as they should.

In September, I represented BAWA at the Regional Groups’ meeting in Coonabarabran and had the opportunity to speak with President Henry Nix and CEO Jim Downey about Eyre Bird Observatory. As a result of this and other meetings, BAWA will soon be more directly involved in the management of Eyre but with the National Office retaining an important administrative role. Eyre is close to the hearts of many of us but its management can be hard work at times. Eyre represents a challenge for BAWA, but also represents an opportunity for us to ensure that one of the first signposts travellers see after entering WA along the Eyre Highway is a big Birds Australia symbol.

Also at the Regional Groups’ meeting, there were discussions concerning membership and the many reasons that people belong to an organisation such as ours. This may sound like rather boring stuff, but it is very stimulating to think about the purpose of BA, what it can do for members and what members can do for the group. Most active members consider themselves to be birdwatchers, but you don’t have to belong to the group to watch birds. Many members belong to express support for BA’s conservation and research programmes, while for others BA is a sort of social club!

The Public Relations Sub-committee has been active, with Brice Wells and Frank O’Connor organising a very successful programme for beginning birdwatching. There is even an advertisement for BA now showing on Channel 31. Pam Agar and I judged an art competition organised by Barry Angus, and we were much-photographed by Elsa Dabbs. The Excursions Sub-committee will never be the same since the retirement of Bryan Barrett and Margery Clegg, but Sue Abbott has expressed interest in taking on this highly successful programme.

Work has begun on the Botanic Gardens and Parks Authority’s Ecology Centre not far from Perry House. When completed, this will provide us with a new meeting venue literally only a stone’s throw from the office, while we have had meetings with the BGPA to discuss our future office space requirements.

Research projects are going well, with funding secured for Leonie McMahon to continue our work on Carnaby’s

Black-Cockatoo for another year, and we have just learnt that a grant application for funds to monitor Hooded Plovers in Yalgorup National Park was successful. Special thanks to Marcus Singor and the Hooded Plover Sub-committee for their efforts there.

Finally, the inaugural Breakfast with the Birds in King’s Park went very well and a brief report appears elsewhere in Bird Notes. It was very pleasant to be among a group of birdwatchers, talking about birds and eating croissants!

Mike Bamford
Chair, BAWA Inc.

FORMULA FOR SUCCESS – Bird Identification Seminars

We started out with some trepidation but great belief that there are people out there who want to know more about **BIRDS**.

A Bird Identification Seminar was created by Brice Wells and Frank O’Connor to be used primarily for new members to help them increase their knowledge, understanding and thereby their enjoyment of birds.

We had applied for and secured a grant from the Department of Education and Training for Adult Learners Week, the first week in September. Why not use the seminar as a pilot project for Adult Learners Week?

Posters were made to display on various bulletin boards, members were encouraged to tell one and all and a story was sent to the local community newspapers around Perry House and Alfred Cove where the classes were being held. We hoped we might get 10 – 15 people who were interested. The first anxious week a few names appeared on the booking sheet and then the Western Suburbs community newspaper called asking for a photo to go with the story. The second week the Fremantle Herald called to ask for a photo to go with the story; this was published on the front page. Office volunteers were inundated with phone calls and the booking list was full. The numbers were extended to accommodate as many people as possible but many more were disappointed. It was estimated we could have filled three courses with the enquiries we had.

The second seminar, run on Sunday mornings Oct 5th 12th 19th and 26th mainly for new members, proved to be the same story; we had to turn people away. The classes were well attended; the first class was a lecture only, on bird identification, behaviour, migration, breeding and binoculars, etc. The three classes following were on

waterbirds, bushbirds and waders, with an hour's lecture and slides followed by a walk. For the walk the classes were divided into small groups of four/five with a leader to help with identification.

Feed Back

The evaluation forms that were filled in by the class participants (approximately half of the course members) rated the organisation of the course as good and very good, benefit and information very good and information gained from course leader as very good. Only one person thought the presentations were poor. Other comments were excellent leaders and guided tours, very good informative course.

How Could the Event be Improved—better quality slides, bird names on slides, videos with birdcalls, more on behaviour, nametags, and a bigger venue because we had to turn people away. One request was to run a course for children.

The Public Relations Sub-committee would like to thank the leaders who helped on the walks as follows: Sue Mather, Wynton Maddeford, Tom Delaney, Michael Hancock, Ian Rudd, Colin Davis, Les Harris, Brice Wells, Frank O'Connor, Barry Angus, Les Hogben and Rick Curtis.

New Members—the classes so far have initiated nine new members for Birds Australia, from Adult Learners Week.

Two more sessions are planned for next year. Watch this space.

Elsa Dabbs, Public Relations Sub-committee



Southern Fulmar, beach-washed at Eyre.
Photo courtesy Bea Myers & Ian Tarbin

PUBLIC RELATIONS POLICY STATEMENT

In the preceding WABN members were introduced to the newly formed Public Relations Sub-committee. Due to a number of misunderstandings over our role/function, we have decided to, hopefully, clarify some of the misconceptions by issuing a simple policy statement.

The PR Sub-committee was formed to:

- Promote an interest in, and an awareness of, birds, Birds Australia (BA) and Birds Australia WA inc (BAWA), including all the roles, services, projects and activities of the latter.
- To house and coordinate PR information and resources.
- To develop ideas for the promotion of BA and BAWA.
- To assist BAWA project/activity coordinators by handling public relations (where volunteer commitment allows).
- To work towards increasing the membership of BA.

Point four seems to be the area where misunderstandings of our role are most prevalent. We are a small group of hard working volunteers, but can not do everything. We are not the publicity organ of the entire organisation. We can help by assimilating and organising information pertaining to public relations. We work in harmony and cooperation with other groups and projects. We can not run the projects. We are an information base not a labour force.

What have we achieved in our eight months of existence?

- Public relations handbook—a summary of BA and BAWA information and services
- Created a new publicity poster
- Are creating an image library
- Advertise weekly excursions
- Have had a publicity advertisement made (Access 31)
- Are having a publicity video made (in cooperation with project leaders, etc)
- Maintain and update the web site
- Organise and distribute leaders packs for excursions
- Oversee and assist the community liaison officer in his work among school, clubs, conservation groups and public displays
- Organise and run (subject to volunteers) various projects, eg, a pilot art competition in three secondary schools; Birding for Beginners, aimed at members of the general public and an introduction to birding to help new members settle into the organisation.

Some of these projects were so successful we plan to both enlarge and run more of them next year.

We also hope to spread our wings and run more specialised workshops in the future, in cooperation with the excursions committee.

We could do with a couple of more members, including a graphic artist, or reporter to assist Elsa Dabbs.

We will always need more voluntary help.

Brice Wells
Chairman, Public Relations Sub-committee

ATLAS NEWS

The September 2003 issue of *Volunteer* included some useful reminders for those marvellous people who are continuing to send in Atlas surveys and for those who are new members of the Atlas team. The Ongoing Atlas Project has recently received the Eureka Prize for Biodiversity Research, so keep up the good work.

The following two items have been extracted from the TBN Volunteer 17 newsletter (downloadable from the BA website www.birdsaustralia.com.au).

Additional Information is Important

We do get a lot of comments written on the record forms. These all get entered into the database and are providing very useful information. The following have proved immensely useful:

Counts of rare and unusual species: You can write species counts on the record form alongside the species name. This is especially important for threatened species such as Swift Parrots, Gouldian Finches, Freckled Ducks, etc, which are invariably seen in small flocks. So please count or estimate the number of any rare and unusual species and write how many you record on the form. This information can then be passed onto researchers studying the threatened species.

Counts of waterbirds are providing us with valuable information on the movements of waterbirds around the country as well as population changes, etc. Data provided to the Atlas has already resulted in at least one site being designated a Ramsar site. If possible, waterbirds should be counted in a standardised and comprehensive manner. Contact us if you need more information.

Breeding Records: If you record a species as breeding on an Atlas survey, then any additional information you can provide about that breeding event is useful. Information such as the stage of breeding, number of eggs, chicks, etc, allows us to study the timing of breeding around the country. If you are able to follow the nesting attempt, you might consider filling in a Nest Record Card, which we can supply, and that information will be entered into the Nest Record Scheme database, commenced in 1964.

Housekeeping

We occasionally get suggestions from Atlassers to make the transcription of data onto forms easier.

Now the Atlas has entered a new phase it may be possible to incorporate some of these changes.

One such request, that we have decided to adopt, is to allow regularly Atlassed sites to be allocated a registration number. In the past, this required submitting a habitat form, now any site can be registered and any type of survey can be conducted there. These sites can be registered by sending us all the site details: Observer, Location, Latitude, Longitude, Was GPS used?, Accuracy, Datum, Distance, Direction, Nearest Town, and State. We would then send you your site numbers for these sites. But please, if you do want to register sites in this manner, include on the Record Form the Site Location name along with the Site Number as we need to ensure that the correct number has been written on the form.

Reminders

* If a survey has been conducted for longer than a single 24 hour period, the time started and time finished do not need to be recorded.

* Please give us your Latitude and Longitude in degrees, minutes, seconds (seconds between 0 and 60) and not degrees, minutes (seconds between 0 and 100).

* Please give distances to the nearest town measured in a straight line. This is a useful check for your co-ordinates.

* 2-ha Searches should not be for longer than 30 minutes.

If your survey is for longer than 30 minutes, mark it down as an area search, even if a 2-ha area was searched.

BETTER LATE THAN NEVER: BROOME WADERS

The table in this article relates to wader counts conducted at Broome and the Eighty-mile Beach. The first three data columns relate to the 2002 mid summer count and the last column the 2003 mid winter count. Chris Hassell sent in data for the table. Chris is fortunate enough to reside in Broome and enjoys a birding scene many would envy. Due to the advent of the Kimberley wet season, Chris and his team conduct their mid summer wader survey in early December, two months before the counts are held in other parts of the state. Owing to the Kimberley moon, the wet season, then the Mt Barker wine show and Rottneest in our corner of the state the following data are slightly dated. However I'm sure those among us with a wader watching bent, will find the information interesting.

Reading down the tables is likely to make birdwatchers residing in the south-west book their tickets ASAP for the sunny Kimberley, for as well as getting up close and personal to the waders, birdwatchers are sure to add other species to their list that are only seen on the far side of the Eighty Mile Beach.

Colin Davis

BIRD NOTES JUNE 2003 ALTERATION

Alterations to mid summer wader count Feb 2003 table in WABN number 106 June 2003 (page 10). The accompanying three columns of figures should be placed over the Albany "Royal & Oyster" columns and the "Totals for each species" column.

Colin Davis

spoke to the parents and students present about what aspects they were looking for in the paintings. They had selected ten paintings on which to make positive and constructive comments. This was greatly appreciated by all present. During this time light refreshments were available for all.

The following entries were then announced as the winners:

Third Prize: *Black Swan* painted by Joel Creasey of Wesley College.

Second Prize: *Barn Owl* painted by Carlen Sylwestruk of Como Secondary College.

First Prize: *White Tailed Black Cockatoo* by Lana Stockton of Penrhos College.

The first prize was a copy of Michael Morcombe's *Field Guide to Australian Birds* and a selection of bird greeting cards. The second prize was a copy of Michael's book and the third prize a selection of the bird greeting cards. Michael donated his two books and signed each one which, when the prize-winners were announced, had the respective winner's name written into the words of presentation. In addition to the prizes each student received a Certificate of Appreciation for participating in the competition.

Although the number of people who came to view the paintings was very disappointing the competition was considered a successful trial and it is probable that further competitions will be arranged. To conclude, the sincere thanks of the Public Relations Sub-committee must be extended to the following: Michael Morcombe, Michael Bamford, Pam Agar, Sarah Crook, Elsa Dabbs, Les Harris and Molly Angus.

Finally, sincere thanks are expressed to those who arranged for and helped their students to enter the competition, John Glass and Monique Lavers of Como Secondary College, Danielle Glucina of Penrhos College and Robin Yakinthou of Wesley College.

Barry Angus
Public Relations Sub-committee

HIGH SCHOOL ART COMPETITION

During the last school term the Public Relations Sub-committee sponsored and organised a trial Bird Painting Competition for students in Years 8 and 9. Three schools participated, Como Secondary College, Penrhos College and Wesley College, with a total of 42 entries being received.

These paintings were put on display on Thursday 25 September, at the Como Uniting Church Hall, remaining on display until early evening when students, parents and visitors could view them.

Michael Bamford and Pam Agar, who took considerable time in coming to their agreed decisions on the winners, did the judging. Before announcing the winners Michael

GOOD LUCK TO SARAH CROOK

The Public Relation Sub-committee and friends of Sarah Crook wish her all the best in her new life in Lagos, Nigeria. Sarah left at the end of October to join her husband who was transferred by his company to Nigeria.

Sarah has been a valued member of the Public Relations Sub-committee and Birds Australia WA, in using her talent for graphics to create the bird leaflets, flyers, headers, business cards and display items too numerous to mention, as well as contributing useful ideas for improving the presentation of WABN. Her imagination and creativity have added greatly to the quality of the Public Relations Sub-committee's work and Sarah will be missed. You will be remembered, Sarah, for your always smiling face, your creativity and willingness to help. We wish you all the best. Keep in touch.

Elsa Dabbs on behalf of the Public Relations
Sub-committee and Birds Australia WA.

BAWA Projects

BIOBLITZ 2003

In September 2003, Birds Australia WA contributed again to the now annual Bioblitz, a 24-hour rapid biological survey organised by the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF).

This year, the Blitz was conducted at Moningarín Reserve, north-west of Koorda in the north-eastern wheatbelt. Birds Australia WA organised the bird surveys component of the Bioblitz and a number of BA members and other community members undertook bird surveys or contributed records.

A total of 56 bird species was recorded, including regionally declining

species such as Blue-breasted Fairy-wren, Redthroat and Western Yellow Robin. If you would like a copy of the full bird list, it is available on the Avon Catchment Council's NRM website. Go to <http://www.avoncm.org.au/index.cfm> and follow the links to projects and local projects.

The last two years have shown that the Bioblitz is a great way to meet people

with diverse interests in biological surveys—or just an opportunity to go camping with like-minded people. The camaraderie makes it a weekend to mark off on the calendar. It is planned that the annual Bioblitz's will take place over a seven year period so that a Blitz is conducted in each of the local councils in the NE wheatbelt region. With five more to go, there is ample opportunity for more BAWA members to actively contribute in the future.

Cheryl Gole

DALWALLINU AGRICULTURAL SHOW

Birds Australia were rather extravagant in August this year. Four people were dispatched to Dalwallinu for the one-day agricultural show, the purpose being to wave the Birds Australia flag and also to sell some cards and field guides and anything else we chose to take with us.

Were we successful? Well, we had the display board showing good photographs of birds likely to be seen in the Dalwallinu shire, the trading table decked out in linen cloths and displaying what we had to show and sell, we

tried smiling at anyone who came within eye shot and even talk to those who came closer. When it came to actually selling things our commercial skills were severely tested, they might need honing by attending yet more agricultural shows, or better still, the trading table needs to be in an improved location at the show.

However, we sold 44 cards, four field guides and a few checklists of WA birds.

Pam Roach, the show coordinator, visited the table, Councillor Robert Nixon enthusiastically expounded on how Dalwallinu was to be made the floral centre for that part of Western Australia and Brent Parkinson, the Shire accounting officer, came to see us, and was also very

helpful in explaining the best places for the local wildflowers.

It was an interesting experience for all of us, and if you want a good meal on a Saturday night then try the vintage Dalwallinu Hotel complete with open fire, much needed in August!

Max Bailey, Kate Creed, Elsa Dabbs and Dale Paks



Kate Creed and Max Bailey at Dalwallinu.

Photo courtesy Elsa Dabbs

GROUND PARROT ALERT!

Following three years of island dwelling I have turned to Australia for a "break in the weather". I have been recently appointed research scientist on the Western Ground Parrot Recovery Project—an exciting and long-awaited endeavour.

My three years in New Zealand on the Kakapo Recovery Team has convinced me that humans were not designed to follow cryptic birds alone. Nocturnal and flightless, these mostly silent birds have evaded the best of our survey and capture efforts in the past. So too the cryptic and unique Ground Parrot has ornithologists scratching their heads.

For the next year I have been employed by CALM to learn as much as can be discovered about this endemic species. *To do this I need your help.* This is a general call for volunteers to assist with this project that is a cooperative effort between CALM, Friends of the Western Ground Parrot and Birds Australia (WA), with NHT funding



Natural Heritage Trust
Helping Communities Helping Australia

obtained through the South Coast Regional Initiative Planning Team (SCRIPT). Success may rely entirely on the involvement of a large number of the concerned community. We need to form a large force of skilled and eager nature enthusiasts who have been itching to get involved. Contact can be made to myself, Brent Barrett, at CALM Albany or through either Brenda Newbey (Perth) or Anne Bondin (Albany) both of 'Friends of the Western Ground Parrot'. We need help throughout the next few months (Nov-Feb).

By simply supporting the 'Friends of the Western Ground Parrot' group you are making the first step in helping to conserve the endangered Western Ground Parrot.

Contacts

Brent Barrett (08) 9842 4519 brentb@calm.wa.gov.au

Brenda Newbey (08) 93375673 sfryc@iinet.net.au

Anne Bondin (08) 9844 1793 albanybirds@hotmail.com

Brent Barrett

Help Ground Parrots by drinking wine!

Yes, it's true, the Western Ground Parrot will soon be gracing many parties and functions across Australia, not in a cage but as a very welcome guest.

The Albany Environment Centre is putting a new face on some top wines from Jingalla. Through their 'Biodiversity Series', they are providing financial support for the Western Ground Parrot, which will feature on some of the labels.

Details of the wines are as follows:

White: Riesling (dry style) or Verdehlo

Red: Cabernet Sauvignon or Shiraz

All are 2001 vintages from Jingalla (and very drinkable!). Jingalla Winery is located in the foothills of the Porongurup Range, and has been producing award winning wines since 1983.

The Albany Environment Centre is co-ordinating the purchase, labelling and distribution of wine in the Biodiversity Series. One-third of the profits will go to the Albany Environment Centre to pay for all of the costs involved, and the rest will be put towards the species that are the focus of this year's 'Biodiversity Series'. The plan is to direct funds raised to the Friends of the Western Ground Parrot and the Gilbert's Potoroo Action Group.

The Cabernet Sauvignon and Riesling will have the Western Ground Parrot label and the Verdehlo and Shiraz will have the Gilbert's Potoroo label.

Cost of case \$160 (and can be any combination of the whites or reds). Delivery - \$12.00 Perth and SW. Can be picked up in Albany for free. For other areas can be advised. The wine will be delivered mid-December - ie in time for Christmas.

To secure your selection, contact Sarah Comer (08 98424513, e-mail sarahc@calm.wa.gov.au) or Sylvia Leighton (08 9842 4522, e-mail sylvial@calm.wa.gov.au) for an order form.

Don't miss this unique opportunity – just by thinking about Ground Parrots and drinking some great wine, you can make a contribution to recovery of this critically threatened species.

Order yours today!

CARNABY'S BLACK-COCKATOO RECOVERY PROJECT

LOOK OUT THIS SUMMER FOR CARNABY'S BLACK-COCKATOOS THAT STAND OUT FROM THE FLOCK

As mentioned in the last edition of Bird Notes, we are now marking the tail feathers of chicks at some breeding sites in the Northern Wheatbelt for the purpose of determining where the birds travel to after they fledge from the nest.

The white tail panels will be marked with special paint on the underside only. The colours used are **red, green, blue, orange and purple**. We are only now starting to paint the chicks so we don't yet have numbers. Most of the chicks identified as being able to be painted will fledge from mid December onwards.

If you see a Carnaby's Black-Cockatoo marked as described please let us know. You can record your observation by:

- Calling the Birds Australia office on 9383 7749; or
- Emailing me on ljmcmahon@bigpond.com

The sort of information we need:

- Date and time of observation
- Colour of paint
- Number of marked birds
- Number of birds accompanying marked birds
- Location (be as specific as you can eg place name, property location number, distance from closest road intersection, GPS reading if you have it, distance and direction from nearest town)
- Your contact details

Some of the marked chicks will also be banded so please look for this too and record details if you are able.

Thanks

Leonie McMahon



Two captive Carnaby's Black-Cockatoos had the white panels on their tails painted green to trial the effectiveness of this method of marking.

Photo courtesy Leonie McMahon

Members' Contributions

BREEDING ATTEMPTS BY BANDED LAPWINGS

Banded lapwings are uncommon in the Perth metropolitan area, and breeding is rarely reported here. The following is an abbreviated report of four breeding attempts by two pairs of Banded Lapwings in the northern Perth metropolitan area.

12/9/02 My wife spotted a Banded Lapwing in the extensive grounds of the Kingsway City Shopping Centre on the corner of Wanneroo Road and Hepburn Avenue, Madeley. As I rarely see Banded Lapwings we went back later in the day to check it out and found that there was a pair of them and they were breeding (pair A).

23/9/02 We returned to find two adult birds with four tiny chicks.

2/10/02 There were three of the four chicks left. We also found in a different area of this shopping centre two more adult Banded Lapwings with two grown-up chicks (pair B). One of the adult birds seemed to be sitting again.

27/10/02 No lapwings at all except the sitting bird of pair B. We assume the two grown-up chicks have fledged.

3/11/02 Only spotted pair B. Pair A, with their chicks, seem to have disappeared.

10/11/02 Three adult Banded Lapwings were seen.

27/11/02 Pair B still sitting. Pair A has returned and is breeding again.

12/12/02 The two lapwings still sitting. In 38°C heat and yesterday in 39°C heat and completely exposed! How can they do it?

20/12/02 Pair B has two chicks again. Pair A still sitting.

27/12/02 Pair B still has the two chicks. Pair A has four tiny chicks again.

5/1/03 Pair B still has the two chicks. Pair A, with the four chicks, seem to have disappeared.

7/1/03 Pair B still OK. Found pair A again but managed to see only one chick.

13/1/03 Pair B still OK. Pair A seems to have disappeared again. We checked out the surrounding area but no luck.

24/1/03 Pair B still OK. The chicks of this pair are now as big as the parents.

28/1/03 Pair B, with their chicks, have gone. We assume the chicks fledged. Pair A has not been seen since 7/1/03 so must be regarded as lost.

21/2/03 One last look for the Banded Lapwings. No lapwings at all but ... one Richard's Pipit. Amazing!

This is surely a sorry story. Of four breeding attempts which could have produced between 12 and 16 chicks only four fledged. But on the other hand with all the ravens

around, cats and may be foxes, humans and heat, there are still four birds added to the population. What an enormous effort for such a small return.

Thanks must go to the shopping centre management for controlling the mowing in such a way as to minimise disturbing the birds.

Hank van Wees

BIRD BANDING EXCITEMENT?

For me, bird banding can hardly be described as a riveting spare time activity — some may think of it as akin to watching lichen growing on rocky outcrops, and mention of the word does not immediately give an adrenalin rush similar to that received when discovering a tiger snake in one's sleeping bag.

Nevertheless, the results obtained from the relatively small percentage of retraps, injured or dead birds found with bands attached, do provide very useful and interesting information. Much of our considerable knowledge concerning migration routes, destinations and longevity of many species, has been built up over a long period of time due entirely to the painstaking efforts of those for which bird banding is a rewarding way of spending not just a Saturday morning, but weeks of one's precious annual holidays.

As a result of browsing through *Corella* Vol 25, No 4, Dec 2001 in a local library I came across some very interesting records worth repeating.

Galah In June 1974 a first-year juvenile was wing tagged and banded at Helena Valley WA. In September 2001 it was found injured and taken to a local vet, where the stainless steel band and anodised aluminium discs showed virtually no sign of wear 27 years after tagging. The bird did not survive.

Straw-necked Ibis In November 1971 a nestling was banded at Narrung, South Australia. It was recovered dead at Boatswain Point SA, 181 km SSE of the banding location 29 years later. This is a longevity record for the species.

White-browed Scrubwren In January 1984 a bird was banded at Iluka nature reserve in NSW. In August 2001 it was recaptured and released at the same place. Seventeen years is also a longevity record for the species.

Results like this might encourage you; there is always room for another banding volunteer.

Max Bailey

BOYAGIN ROCK BIRDS

John and Helen Start have surveyed Boyagin Rock Nature Reserve 42 times between 1991 and 2003. On many occasions André and Judy DuPlessis have accompanied them. They have sent the organisation a list of the species seen during that period.

Boyagin Rock is a large granite outcrop and an important conservation reserve because of its size and the species that have been recorded there. Many of the wheat belt declining species, such as the Blue-breasted Fairy-wren, can be found there.

There is great value in long-term surveys such as these, not only in country areas but also in the metropolitan parks and reserves. Such surveys give indisputable evidence of what is happening with the bird population, where refuges may occur after extensive clearing and which species use those refuges.

Suzanne Mather

List of species recorded at Boyagin Rock Nature Reserve * = Breeding record

Stubble Quail, Australian Shelduck, Australian Wood Duck *, Pacific Black Duck, Grey Teal, Australasian Grebe, White-faced Heron, Black-shouldered Kite, Whistling Kite, Square-tailed Kite, Brown Goshawk, Collared Sparrowhawk, Wedge-tailed Eagle, Brown Falcon, Peregrine Falcon *, Laughing Turtle-Dove, Common Bronzewing *, Brush Bronzewing, Crested Pigeon, Short-billed Black-Cockatoo, Galah, Purple-crowned Lorikeet, Western Rosella, Australian Ringneck, Red-capped Parrot, Elegant Parrot, Pallid Cuckoo, Fan-tailed Cuckoo, Horsfield's Bronze-Cuckoo, Shining Bronze-Cuckoo, Southern Boobook, Barn Owl, Tawny Frogmouth, Laughing Kookaburra, Sacred Kingfisher, Rainbow Bee-eater *, Rufous Treecreeper, Splendid Fairy-wren, Blue-breasted Fairy-wren, Spotted Pardalote, Striated Pardalote, White-browed Scrubwren, Weebill, Western Gerygone, Inland Thornbill, Western Thornbill, Yellow-rumped Thornbill, Red Wattlebird, Little Wattlebird, Singing Honeyeater, White-eared Honeyeater, Yellow-plumed Honeyeater, Brown-headed Honeyeater, White-naped Honeyeater, Brown Honeyeater, New Holland Honeyeater, White-cheeked Honeyeater, Tawny-crowned Honeyeater, Western Spinebill, Jacky Winter, Scarlet Robin, Red-capped Robin, Western Yellow Robin, Varied Sittella, Golden Whistler, Rufous Whistler, Grey Shrike-thrush, Magpie-lark, Grey Fantail, Willie Wagtail *, Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike, Black-faced Woodswallow, Dusky Woodswallow *, Australian Magpie, Grey Currawong, Australian Raven, Richard's Pipit, Mistletoebird, Welcome Swallow, Tree Martin *, Silveryeye.

IN BLACK AND WHITE

During each of our surveys of part of the Narembeen farming district, our adherence to the strict code of surveying principles is tempered by the underlying hope that something colourful will brighten the occasion. In the photographic world colour has become universally available. But black and white prints haven't lost their charm. Nor have birders become interested in only those birds that demand attention with their brilliant colours.

Naturally it was exciting to have a view of a pair of Shy Heathwrens for half a minute or so during the 20 minute search of one site late in September of this year. But the stars of the two day outing were those in the black and white brigade. White-winged Trillers set the tone by appearing at a number of sites. First-time sightings of Black Honeyeaters (a male allowed us a long, careful examination before heading skywards with, apparently, two others) and Pied Honeyeaters continued the theme. The work was concluded with a pair of apparently carefree White-backed Swallows hawking in their usual area.

It is significant that the days commenced with the early, haunting wake-up calls of the Pied Butcherbird. Obviously confident in its farmhouse surrounds, it displayed considerable pride in ensuring that its whole family was available for viewing.

Ever mindful of the temporary presence of their Crimson Chat cousins, the White-fronted Chats were in sufficient number to remind us that this farming area is theirs.

Other black and white (grey is acceptable!) birds noted were a Black-shouldered Kite, Magpie-larks, Willie Wagtails, Grey Butcherbirds and Australian Magpies.

Rod Smith and Joyce Hegney

WESTERN YELLOW ROBIN ON SWAN COASTAL PLAIN

In issue 107 of *Western Australian Bird Notes* (September 2003), Cheryl Gole and Andrew Huggett reported on the distribution of the Western Yellow Robin in the Perth Metropolitan Region and noted that the species had declined almost to extinction on the Swan Coastal Plain part of the Perth metropolitan area. Recent Bird Atlas records show that the species is still patchily distributed through the Darling Range in suitable habitat.

A fortuitous Bird Atlas record of Western Yellow Robin by Kununurra attasser Ian Rudd at the Karnup Nature Reserve intrigued us, and we set out to see if we could record the robin at other locations in the area on the Swan Coastal Plain.

In a search of reserves in the general area in August 2003 we found three pairs of Western Yellow Robins. The birds were located in Karnup Nature Reserve, Baldavis Bushland

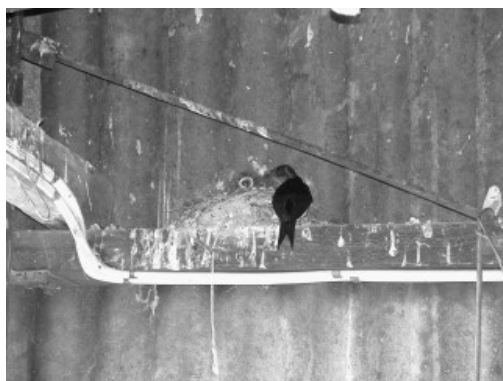
on Baldvis Road in Karnup, and in a council reserve/unmade road reserve off Eighty Road in Baldvis. We found no evidence of breeding, although it is possible that breeding has taken place since the survey period.

Recently, we have become aware that the Western Yellow Robin has been recorded at Lowlands, a large remnant at Mardella, east of Baldvis. The bushland is in private hands and is managed for conservation. The species was known to breed at Goodale Sanctuary but went extinct there about 10 years ago (B. Goodale, pers. comm.). They have also been recorded breeding at the nearby Nine Mile Lake Nature Reserve, east of the Harvey Estuary, but it is not known if they still occur there (Allan Burbidge, pers. comm.).

On the Swan Coastal Plain outside the Perth Metropolitan Region, we have personally recorded Western Yellow Robin at Martins Tank in Yalgorup National Park. Recently, in a series of surveys along a transect over a 10 day period in August 2003, Dick Rule recorded three birds eight times in ten surveys, suggesting the species was resident in the transect area on Herron Road in the northern section of the national park. The only other recent Swan Coastal Plain record for the species is a record for Yanchep National Park north of Perth.

Historically, in the central Perth Metropolitan area, the Western Yellow Robin was last recorded in Kings Park by Dom Serventy in 1935. In the 1930s, Eric Sedgwick undertook to survey the birds of the Rockingham district and in 1938-1939 undertook a regular transect along what he called 'Sixty Six Road'. This road either no longer exists, was misnamed by Sedgwick, or has been renamed. In his papers on the birds of the district, Sedgwick described Western Yellow Robin as a 'rare bird' of the forest of the area. He recorded two pairs in the vicinity of White Lake, now called Lake Coolungup.

It is not clear to us how extensive an area the current Perth Metropolitan population on the Swan Coastal Plain covers and it would be interesting to know if Western Yellow Robin is present in other disjunct areas of bushland in the general Rockingham-Baldvis-Karnup area. It would also be interesting to know the size of bushland remnant that the species requires for long-term survival in this area.



Welcome Swallow nesting in shed at
Eyre Bird Observatory.
Photo courtesy Bea Myers and Ian Tarbin

Although the bushland areas where we recorded the species in August 2003 are vested in various authorities, including local government, the three pairs we recorded are a part of what is functionally the same remnant. The Baldvis/Karnup area has until recently been largely a semi-rural area but this situation is rapidly changing and much of the area is zoned for urban development. It is probable that urban development will result in the progressive removal or fragmentation of most existing large remnants.

Interestingly, while searching for Western Yellow Robins in this area, we found that other bird species now extinct, rare or still declining elsewhere on the Plain are present or relatively common here. These include breeding Wedge-tailed Eagle, Scarlet Robin, Golden Whistler and Grey Shrike-thrush, all species we recorded in remnants we visited in August 2003.

We would like to suggest that some attention could be given by birdwatchers to the interesting reserves and bushland remnants of this area. However, given the fate of Western Yellow Robin in other, more urban parts of the Swan Coastal Plain, it may be that we are drawing attention to this population of the species in time to see it go regionally extinct in the future.

Cheryl and Martin Gole

Acknowledgements

Thanks to Ian Rudd, whose initial sighting of the robins at Karnup Nature Reserve set us on the trail of the birds, and to Bob Goodale and Dick Rule who kindly contributed information on further records of the species on the Swan Coastal Plain.

Further Reading

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- Sedgwick, E. (1940). Birds of the Rockingham district. *Emu* 40: 129-152.
- Sedgwick, E. (1940). Birds of the Rockingham district. Part II. *Emu* 40: 237-245.

NYANG STATION

Nyang Station of 125 000 hectares is some 250 km north-east of Carnarvon. Sandplain with spinifex occupies 77% of the station, 20% comprises stony plain, the rest river/creek. As it happens, the sandplain and stony areas are essentially separated by the Yannarie River, the stony area to the north of the river, the sandplain to the south.

When Anne and I visited (27 to 31 July inclusive), the Yannerie had large pools of water, which accounted for the presence of a number of waterbird species. Higher numbers and more species of waterbirds are said to be present in June each year.

The Yannarie, like many rivers in the Gascoyne, is substantial in the wet—the main river crossing at the station (dry in July) is over 150 metres wide, yet unusually the river does not reach the sea. The river dissipates within the bounds of Yanrey Station. We were informed that there were parts of Exmouth Gulf where fresh water wells up from the ocean floor, making the water drinkable (a sort of Lake MacLeod in reverse). We took this statement with a grain of salt. Consequently we were surprised to hear on the ABC radio a few weeks later that a similar phenomenon occurs in Spencer Gulf, South Australia.

We confined our birding to the sandplain area, parts of which are surprisingly attractive scenically, as well as being easier to walk and drive over.

We saw 59 species, none not previously recorded for the Atlas square. Other observers (unknown) had visited in June 2001 (which had been wetter than 2003) and noted species additional to those seen by us in 2003, making a total station bird list of 88.

Species we observed were:

White-faced Heron, White-necked Heron, Whistling Kite, Brown Goshawk, Wedge-tailed Eagle, Little Eagle, Brown Falcon, Australian Hobby, Nankeen Kestrel, Eurasian Coot, Black-fronted Dotterel, Crested Pigeon, Spinifex Pigeon, Diamond Dove, Galah, Little Corella, Cockatiel, Australian Ringneck, Pallid Cuckoo, Horsfield's Bronze-Cuckoo, Striated Pardalote, Redthroat, Weebill, Spiny-cheeked Honeyeater, Yellow-throated Miner, Singing Honeyeater, Grey-headed Honeyeater, White-plumed Honeyeater, Crimson Chat, Grey-crowned Babbler, Chiming Wedgebill, Crested Bellbird, Magpie-lark, Willie Wagtail, Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike, White-winged Triller, Black-faced Woodswallow, Pied Butcherbird, Australian Magpie, Little Crow, Torresian Crow, Richard's Pipit, Welcome Swallow, Tree Martin, Fairy Martin, Rufous Songlark, Brown Songlark.

One useful occurrence was the sighting of a Little Crow and a Torresian Crow on branches about 20 metres apart, noted because both were calling persistently. This provided a fine opportunity to compare the calls and the birds. The calls were obviously different and the birds could be discerned to differ also—especially with a field guide in hand—but under 'normal' sighting conditions and without calls I remain hesitant about separating these species.

Bruce Buchanan

OBLIGING EAGLES

I took the accompanying photograph of a Wedge-tailed Eagle chick on 7 September at an off-road location about 18 km north of Carnarvon.

I noticed the pair nest building some time ago and assumed that they were first timers due to the amount of debris under the tree and the state of the nest. On a later trip there



Wedge-tailed Eagle chick on nest at an off-road location about 18 km north of Carnarvon, within the Boolathana pastoral lease.

Photo courtesy Les George

I thought that it had been abandoned as it was in a worse state. This was later proven wrong as I noted a bird incubating about a month previously. I went there this time armed with a large ladder and after spending approximately three hours in the general area decided to attempt a photo. As it happened, 'mum and dad' were away so there was no disruption to family life.

Also included on the next page is a picture of one of the pair, and as can be seen it is a young bird.

Les George, Carnarvon

COCKATOOS FORAGING

In the last issue of *WA Bird Notes* (107: 23) Allan Burbidge reported Carnaby's Black-Cockatoos foraging under bark of Tuarts.

I had a similar experience recently at Blue Gum Lake in Mt Pleasant. It was on 18 August, just after noon, when I heard their chuckling calls and found six on *Acacia saligna* (?) trees, busily not only stripping off bark from stems (c.1-2 cm diameter) but also demolishing the wood beneath and dropping the strips on the ground.

Though I watched them through my binoculars I couldn't make out if they were eating anything and I didn't like to go any closer in case I disturbed them. There were more of the flock spread around in the bush and on the island. The weather was fine and sunny.

Valerie Hemsley



Wedge-tailed Eagle, one of the pair seen at an off-road location about 18 km N of Carnarvon, within the Boolathana pastoral lease.

Photo courtesy Les George

VOLUNTEERS FOR SUB-COMMITTEES

Two of our important sub-committees are seeking expressions of interest from members who are keen to be involved in their work. The Excursions Sub-committee and the Public Relations Sub-committee both have vacancies due to the retirement of long serving members who have given us excellent service.

Excursions Sub-committee: please contact
Sue Abbotts on 9444 1607

Public Relations Sub-committee: please contact
Brice Wells on 9255 3710

ESPERANCE BIRDS

With above average rainfall in the Esperance area and large areas of water lying on roadsides east of town, some interesting bird observations have been made recently.

Grey Teal and Pacific Black Ducks in particular are breeding. Black-tailed Native Hens and Purple Swamphens have also been seen on the roadside in the Tagon Road area.

On 1 October I saw a Whiskered Tern at the Thomas River mouth in Cape Arid National Park.

On 14 September, members of the Esperance Bird Observers Group (EBOG) saw a Grey Plover in breeding plumage at Helms Arboretum lake, and a photograph was taken. Also at the same lake a Hooded Plover nest with 3 eggs was located.

Allan Rose

'WROGUE' WRENS

On Wednesday 22nd October whilst on duty as a volunteer at Kanyana Wildlife Rehabilitation Centre I received a telephone call from a very distressed lady who lives on the Golf Estate at Roleystone. She stated that their life was being devastated by two BLUE WRENS!

The birds were depositing their excreta on window sills, cars and washing and damaging the patio furniture! I reassured the lady that we would do something about her problem—without letting her know I was having difficulty with the concept of those particular birds behaving in such a way. You can imagine the amazement and disbelief all round when I relayed the information to June and our team. This, I thought, I have to see. Most of us would give anything to have wrens in our gardens.

Arrangements were made and on the following day I headed off for Roleystone with a birding friend. Mary met us at the door and took us through the house to the back veranda to show us an incredible amount of bird 'poo' in exactly the places she had stated. The patio furniture was indeed badly pecked and washing that she had put on the line that morning was also marked. This just had to be something other than fairy-wrens but Mary said that it wouldn't be long before they attacked my car. We went through the garage where their two cars were parked with their wing mirrors either folded in or encased in specially made gloves! In the driveway was my car and sure enough, even as we watched, a male Splendid Fairy-wren (in full colour) and a female were already leaving their unwanted deposits on my car! In less than five minutes it looked as though it had never seen a car wash.

There were just the two fairy-wrens. They did not appear to be feeding nor did they leave to feed young. There were no other birds in the area, which was unusual but Mary stated that the wrens drove away anything else that attempted to invade their territory. We decided that something had to be done!

I contacted the Birds Australia office. They too found it difficult to believe my story but gave me the name of a Wren Expert who, although he couldn't go himself, asked another friend to investigate on the following Monday, 27 October. He in turn said that he had never seen or heard of this kind of behaviour amongst wrens but he would visit the site. When he did go he had the foresight to take along some mist netting equipment. The problem birds were duly netted and relocated.

It is now a week since the removal of the enemy. Mary and Guy state that their garden is now full of other birds and although they do feel a bit of nostalgia not having those beautiful birds around, they are now leading a life of peace, clean cars and wholesome furniture. I would still like fairy-wrens in our garden—but not those two 'wrogues'.

Barbara Hart

What's In a Name?

WHAT'S IN A NAME (Continued from last issue)

Before the continuation of future articles dear readers I bring to your attention a disturbing behind the scenes trend creeping into WA Bird Notes.

Signs are emerging of a budding Kerry Packer lurking in the editorial office. If we read WABN issue 107 the evidence is ominous. Should not the very title "WHAT'S IN A NAME" be beyond editorial interference? The answer is of course a resounding "yes", however you'll find the letters OK added to Geronticus at the end of September's article.

Now as OK means all correct we could be flattered indeed into believing the contribution was well thought of and indeed had the blessing of those in the back room. Then again OK can also mean just passable and convey a rather patronising message. Who knows, next month's contribution could end with Geronticus O.D., inferring a quite derogatory meaning, or even Geronticus O.S.B. Most of us know *Ordinis Sancti Benedicti* is of the Order of St Benedict, but it could be construed to have a rather sarcastic meaning with certain genetic implications.

Future subscribers to this publication could suffer the indignities of snide additions to their erstwhile contributions. Scoff not, fellow scribes, you may be next.

The answer to the origin of these offensive additives is the creation of an E.C. (editorial code). This is the terminology used between the sub editor and editor to categorise subscribers' articles.

I have researched the subject of suspicious abbreviations and submit the following list of letters that are just a sample of the appendages that could quite feasibly be attached to your future Bird Notes contribution.

A.R.R. *anno regni regis or reginae*
E.C... Long winded

A.W.O.L. Absent without leave
E.C... Clueless

B. Mus. Bachelor of Music
E.C... Off beat

B.Q. *Bene quiescat*, may he (or she) rest well
E.C... Final contribution

E.S.P. Extra sensory perception
E.C... This sighting is dodgy

F.I.D.O. Fog Investigation Dispersal Operation
E.C... Same as above

F.H. Fire Hydrant
E.C... Goes with F.I.D.O.

H.M.P. *hoc monumentum posuit, erected* this monument

E.C... Boring

K.G.C.B Knight of the Grand Cross of the Bath
E.C... Smells

K.F.C. Kentucky Fried Chicken
K.F.C... Similar to E.S.P. (cooked up)

Q.A.B. Queen Anne's Bounty
E.C... Good work

P.O.O. Post office order
E.C... Bad Work

W.H.O. World Health Organization
E.C... Who wrote this?

M.P. Member of Parliament
E.C... Muddled person

Can the editors please offer an explanation?

Editors' response: OK—just!

Geronticus

www.bushwalkingtours.com.au



EXPLORANGES

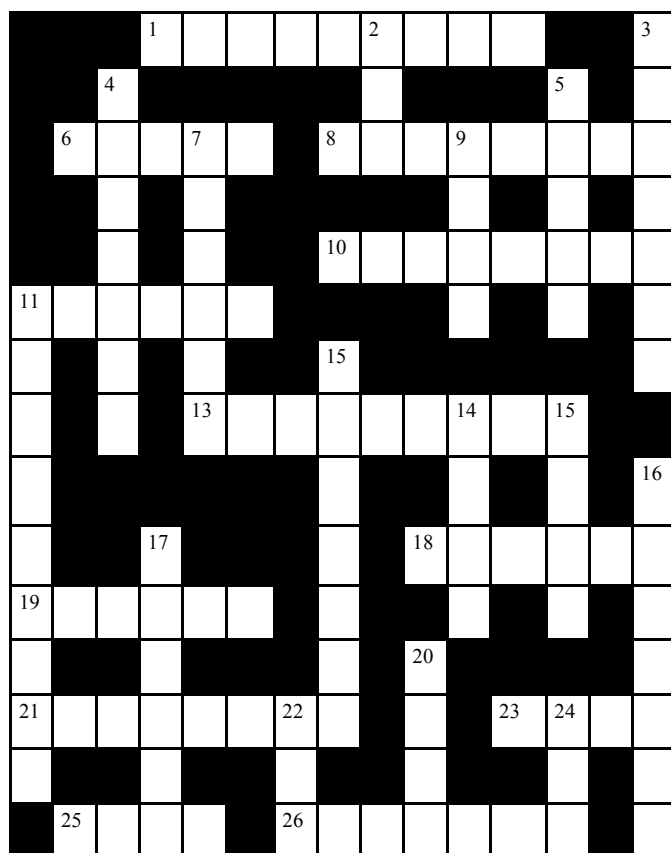
NORTHERN TASMANIA [16 DAYS] <i>includes ferry</i>	
Thursday 12 Friday 27 February	\$2500
KANGAROO ISLAND [8 DAYS] <i>includes ferry</i>	
Monday 22 to Monday 29 March	\$1080
COOPER CREEK [12 DAYS]	
Wednesday 14 to Sunday 25 April	\$1760
FLINDERS RANGES [9 DAYS]	
Monday 10 to Tuesday 18 May	\$1270
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Crossword No 35

By Pam Agar



Clues Across

1. Sequence of bird list.
6. Meeting leader.
8. Genus of grass parrots.
10. The size of it may suggest the occupant.
11. Large hawk common to most of the Australian coastline.
13. Number of waders likely at Broome in March / April.
18. Not what you want when banding.
19. Ground-feeding songbird, absent from W.A.
21. Speed of motion.
23. Common food of Brown Falcon.
25. You're likely to see Cattle Egrets in one.
26. One of five button-quail you might see in W.A.

Down

2. Likely number of young of Brahminy Kite.
3. A good park to start birding.
4. Common name for a Sharp-tailed Sandpiper.
5. Level of organisation.
7. A problem if sea-birds do this with spilt oil.
9. Useful area for bird use.
11. Goal.
12. Brief account.
14. Nature of Grey Fantail's nest.
15. It's to inform the public.
16. In good condition.
17. Useful if stuck in the mud!
20. Locals may do this if the ticks are bad.
22. That of a Great Bowerbird's tail is whitish.
24. On a cliff-nester's egg, one is more pointed.

Notices

Australasian Ornithological Conference 2003



Manning Clarke Centre,
Australian National University, Canberra, ACT

Wednesday 10 to Saturday 13 December 2003

Conference information

Please direct enquiries to:

AOC website: www.birdsaustralia.com.au/aoc/

The Australasian Wader Studies Group will hold their 2-day conference immediately following AOC 2003, at the same venue.

Contact Phil Straw: pstraw@optusnet.com.au for details.

Annual Hooded Plover Count

Saturday 21 and Sunday 22 February 2004

Coordinators and surveyors needed.

For details contact: Marcus Singor

Tel: 9362 2742

e-mail: msingor@iprimus.com.au

In particular for Esperance Regional and Inland Lakes.

Survey sheet enclosed in this issue.

NEW MEMBERS

The following people joined Birds Australia between 1 May and 31 July 2003. We look forward to meeting you at our excursions and general meetings.

J E Broun, I Chalmers, M Chambers, A Clarke,
S Dandridge, H Davie, T A Delaney, D & C Gaunt,
C Gaunt, B Gunther, R Hart, S Hincks, J Hodges,
J Holdaway, J Horner, P J Howe, R Humphries, A Iddon,
J Ingle, S & M Knott, M Knott, R A Maddox, L
R Marshall, P Matthews, S McQueen, A Moncrieff, D
Nesbit, E J Rankine-Wilson, R Savage & S McQueen, B &
R Smith, R Smith, E G Stewart-Wynne, A Thompson,
Department of Conservation and Land Management,
Friends of Attadale Foreshore Inc.

PERRY HOUSE

Members visiting Perry House may have noticed extensive building works going on to the left of the driveway. This will be the new Eco Centre for the Botanic Parks & Gardens Authority, due to be finished next year. BAWA is hoping to be able to hold future meetings there.

Wader Study Group Summer Survey Sunday 8 February 2004

If you wish to participate in this survey, please fill in the enclosed form and send it to our Office as soon as possible.

Call for Nominations for Committee, AGM 2004

Would you like to help BAWA by nominating for a role on the Committee?

If so, please send in your nomination to the Secretary, Liz Walker, prior to 17 February if possible, or else nominate at the AGM on 23 February.

All positions will be declared vacant.

Sunday 14 December Christmas Function, Perry House

A barbecue will be held on Sunday 14 December at Perry House commencing 6.30 pm. BYO meat and drinks—all members welcome!

Courses 2004

About Us



Broome Bird Observatory

on the shores of Roebuck Bay, was established in 1988 by Birds Australia to facilitate research into migratory shorebirds. The bay has international significance, boasting the highest diversity of migratory waders in Australia. It is considered to be one of the best locations globally for the viewing of these amazing international travellers.

For more information and to register for our courses

please contact us at:

PO Box 1313, BROOME WA 6725

Phone (08) 9193 5600 Fax (08) 9192 3364

e-mail: bbo@birdsaustralia.com.au

or access our website through

www.birdsaustralia.com

Wave the Waders Goodbye

March 19th - 23rd or April 3rd - 7th

Experience the departure of the waders as they migrate in their thousands to the Northern Hemisphere. We explore the variety of habitats that support many types of waders and some other top birding spots.

Birds of the Broome Region

September 13th - 17th or October 11th - 15th

Why is the North West so good for birding? Come and find out as we visit a multitude of ecosystems and expose the best birding areas in the region.

Research Techniques - New in 2004

June 7-11

Increase your knowledge of the various methods used to study bird behaviour, distributions and demographics. Gain hands on experience by participating in BBO research.

Discover Birding in Broome - Weekend (TBA)

With over a third of Australia's birds recorded within 70 km of Broome this region is the ideal location for an introduction to bird watching.

Cost (includes accommodation and meals)

Country Groups

ALBANY BIRD GROUP

August Outing

Sixteen of us braved the weather on the 12th and spent the morning on a boat trip on King George Sound.

The weather had been pretty bad the previous few days, but on the Tuesday it was better, though it remained overcast and there was still quite a big swell. It was not quite as good a trip as last winter, but we saw 17 species, including several Australasian Gannets, a skua, and quite a few Crested Terns. Ray Garstone pointed out an albatross on the horizon, probably a Yellow-nosed Albatross. We also saw several hundred pelicans, some breeding on Green Island. We had good views of seals on Breaksea Island. We also had a brief sighting of a Humpbacked Whale and a couple of dolphins.

Liz Davies

occupied. Frank said there were three Wedge-tailed Eagle nests on the property. The land was pretty wet, and we had to leave our cars one side of a creek and had a long walk. All well worth while.

Wayne Zadow again showed his skill in finding nests, and showed us a beautiful Yellow-plumed Honeyeater's nest, with eggs visible through the almost transparent sides. A Restless Flycatcher was building a nest, and a Western Yellow Robin was sitting on a nest watching us having morning tea. Several of us saw a fox stalking some ducklings the other side of a small lake. It pounced, but missed.

On the way home some people were lucky enough to see an Inland Thornbill feeding a Horsfield's Bronze-Cuckoo near the Pingalup Creek.

A very successful day, with 57 species seen.

Liz Davies

October Outing

On 14 October, 20 of us met at Mount Barker and proceeded to Pingalup Creek on the Cranbrook-Franklin Road. Here we divided into two groups and saw a good selection of bush birds, as well as plenty of Enamel and Spider Orchids.

We then went on our annual visit to Frank Smith's farm, Yarralena. As reported previously, Frank, who is 93, set aside a thousand acres as a conservation area over 20 years ago. This is fenced off from stock. Again we were privileged to see hundreds of Spider Orchids, amongst other wildflowers. We returned to a Wedge-tailed Eagle's nest seen last year, but this year it didn't seem to be

September Outing

The morning of the 9th dawned with heavy showers, and we wondered if there would be an outing. However, when 13 of us gathered at Baker's Junction at 8 am the rain had stopped.

We headed towards Fish Track Road, near Manypeaks, and did some Atlassing along that road and Mt Pleasant Road. We then went to Lake Pleasant View Nature Reserve. Before lunch we walked along a track where we didn't see many birds, but we did find a baby Long-necked Turtle, about the size of a 50c piece.

The final bird count was 42, with no unusual sightings. It was a lovely sunny morning until just after lunch, when the rain started again.

Charlie Davies



Installation of solar hot water system at
Eyre Bird Observatory.

Photo courtesy Bea Myers and Ian Tarbin



Need more Christmas cards?

These are examples of some of our beautiful Bird Cards -- call in to Perry House and see the full range.

Only \$1.00 each including envelope!

Excursion Reports

ACOURT ROAD RESERVE, BANJUP, 2 August

Eleven members came along for this half-day excursion to explore Lots 124 and 125, part of the Jandakot Regional Park.

From the gate on Acourt Road, we walked south along the convenient limestone track through *Regelia* thickets and Flooded Gum and into *Banksia* woodland. The *Regelia* thicket immediately produced Splendid Fairy-wrens, White-browed Scrubwren, New Holland Honeyeater and Western Gerygone.

Moving into the higher *Banksia* woodland, a feeding party of Varied Sittellas, Rufous Whistler, Scarlet Robin and Grey Shrike-thrush kept us entertained for a while.

As this piece of bush is directly adjacent to the Jandakot airport, the almost constant noise of passing planes tested our hearing ability. Maybe week days have less air traffic!

We then completed our walk via the southern and western boundary firebreaks, returning to our vehicles midday.

Of the 40 species seen for the morning, other birds of interest seen were Dusky Woodswallow, Western Spinebill and Inland Thornbill.

A very interesting morning walk that all participants enjoyed, and which illustrated the value of regional parks.

Thank you to Bryan Barrett for organising this day's visit.

David James

THOMSONS LAKE, 16 August

Rain had been forecast for this day, but it didn't deter the 21 members who came birdwatching on what turned out to be a beautiful day with 53 species of birds being seen at Thomsons Lake.

Three species of cuckoo were heard calling, and the Pallid Cuckoos were flying around and perching, enabling us to have great close-up views. Red Wattlebirds were busy bathing in the wet leaves of the tall eucalypts looking like puffed up cushions and chattering loudly to all who would listen.

The Scarlet Robins watched as we started off and were there waiting for us when we had our bird call. Splendid Fairy-wrens were plentiful along the path. A Spotted Pardalote with nesting material in its bill was seen by Hank and Bryan spotted a Nankeen Night Heron in a eucalypt growing over the path not far from the parking area.

In one flowering eucalypt we observed Silvereye, Inland and Western Thornbills, Brown and New Holland Honeyeaters, and a Western Spinebill. Large numbers of Black Swans were on the lake and a Swamp Harrier and Wedge-tailed Eagle circled overhead, while a Whistling Kite was sitting peacefully in a small dead tree.

The three hours passed very quickly thanks to the great bird observing weather. Our thanks, too, to Dee for leading us on this enjoyable walk.

Lyn Sellers

YARRA ROAD NORTH, SHIRE OF YORK, 24 August

It was cool and overcast when 32 people met at Yarra Road, off the road to York, to look at a new area for Birds Australia in Wandoo forest. We drove further down the road to a cleared area adjacent to a creek that leads into the Helena River.

In spite of a few early showers, lots of birds were calling as we walked in the area. Fan-tailed Cuckoos, Striated Pardalotes and Weebills were very vocal and several Golden Whistlers were seen and heard.

The group split into two so a fairly large area was covered. Everyone gathered at lunchtime for the bird call and, although the total count for the group was only 37 species, lots of birds were calling and displaying at the start of the breeding season.

Margery Clegg

HILLARYS PELAGIC TRIP, 6 September

The sea and swell were small and the wind light, but the waves were sometimes very close together which made the conditions uncomfortable at times. The day was quiet with the birds spread far apart.

The highlights were the good numbers of White-faced Storm-Petrels and Soft-plumaged Petrels and good views of Humpback Whales. The seabirds seen were Cape Petrel, Great-winged Petrel, Soft-plumaged Petrel, Wedge-tailed Shearwater, Flesh-footed Shearwater, Shy Albatross, Yellow-nosed Albatross and White-faced Storm-Petrel plus Australasian Gannet and Great Skua.

For details of future trips in 2004 contact Frank O'Connor on foconnor@iinet.net.au or (08) 9386 5694.

Frank O'Connor

LOWLANDS ESTATE, SERPENTINE, 13 September

Twenty members were met at the gate by the owner of Lowlands, Ms Midge Richardson, who had kindly permitted us to visit the property again.

Following east along an old track through mixed woodland of Jarrah and Sheoak we saw many birds typical of that habitat, for example, Brown Honeyeater, Grey Fantail, Red-capped Parrot, Grey Shrike-thrush, Scarlet Robin and Golden Whistler.

The fringing forest of Flooded Gum and creepers along the river produced several Splendid Fairy-wrens and White-browed Scrubwren. On the flowing river itself, we saw several waterbirds—Grey Teal, Pacific Black Duck, Wood



Off to search for bristlebirds and whipbirds
on heath at Cheyne Beach.

Drawing by Pam Agar

Duck and Little Pied Cormorant. Although the elusive Western Yellow Robin was not seen, its presence is still most likely, as the woodland habitat hasn't changed since its last reported sighting.

Forty-five bird species were seen for the day with breeding activity noted for Scarlet Robin and Australian Raven.

After thanking Midge for her kind hospitality and guidance, we departed about 4:00 pm.

David James

NORTH LAKE, 18 SEPTEMBER 2003

Thanks to Bryan Barrett who organised this mid week walk that also happens to be at one of my favourite birding spots.

We set off at 0845 and shortly afterwards the group had spotted nests of an Australian Raven, a Magpie-lark and a Willie Wagtail all in the one eucalypt along the western side. The raven's nest was empty, the wagtail's nest appeared to be current and the Magpie-lark was building its nest.

At the southern end of the lake an Australian Ringneck showed particular interest in a eucalypt hollow and we guessed it could be breeding at this site.

Near the SE section we heard and then saw our first Sacred Kingfisher for the spring. At the same time a few lucky members of the group had good views of a male Splendid Fairy-wren in magnificent blue breeding plumage. Nearby most of the group heard a boisterous spring song from a White-browed Scrubwren and a little later we had good views of a Red Wattlebird on its nest.

Along the eastern side the heavens opened up and most of us were a bit wet as we neared the car park again at 1100. We then noticed we were not the only wet things at the lake, as a very dirty and wet looking Galah emerged from its not so dry nesting hollow in a eucalypt.

Over a cup of tea and biscuits in the car park, we counted up and came to a total of 51 birds, especially good considering the late rain. In all we had 22 starters, including some potential members and a Murdoch University student from Switzerland and despite the rain, we had an enjoyable walk.

Wynton Maddeford

CHEYNE BEACH CAMPOUT, 27-29 September

This area was chosen to provide participants with the opportunity to see three of the 'hard-to-see' West Australian endemics: Western Bristlebird, Noisy Scrub-bird and Western Whipbird.

Saturday's perfect weather conditions inspired us to make an early start. Several sorties were made to areas of thick heath close to the caravan park: the slopes behind the park, the start of the sand track to Bald Island and an area beside the road parallel to the beach. The slopes behind the park proved to be the most fruitful for Western Bristlebird and Western Whipbird, while the area of taller heath behind the beach was the haunt of the Noisy Scrub-bird. Because all of these areas are accessible on foot everyone made repeated visits during the campout.

Flowering shrubs among the heath were an added treat wherever we went, and New Holland (in the taller heath) and White-cheeked Honeyeaters (in lower heath) were common. Three cuckoo species were heard and a White-browed Scrub-wren was industriously feeding a young Fan-tailed Cuckoo in the camping area.

In the afternoon the group drove out to Waychinicup, stopping at two points to listen for Noisy Scrub-birds. Although the calls were heard along the creek we were unable to sight the bird.

A dedicated few tried spotlighting that night. Only Tawny Frogmouth and Barn Owl were recorded during the evenings.

On Sunday, cold blustery conditions were much less favourable. A bonus because of the weather was the number of sea-birds: Yellow-nosed Albatross, Flesh-footed Shearwaters and Australian Gannets were all close to shore. A lucky few also saw a Soft-plumaged Petrel. Several Southern Right Whales wallowing and breaching less than a hundred metres off shore were equally special. Some people also made the 3 km drive along the beach to see a beached Sub-Antarctic Fur Seal.

Late in the morning we drove out to the headland opposite Bald Island where we were able to watch more sea-birds.

The afternoon was taken up with a drive west to Lake Pleasant View, along the South Coast Highway. We had hoped to see black cockatoos but instead were able to add several waterbirds, seen on a number of seasonal lakes along the road. The variety of orchids in Cheyne Road Nature Reserve was an added interest for many.

By Monday morning the wind had dropped but steady rain had set in. Most people opted to pack and go, leaving the Noisy Scrub-bird still calling clearly beside the road.

Because of the inclement weather the campout total stood at 85 species, 72 of them in the Cheyne Beach—Waychinicup area. By Sunday night 16 people had recorded Western Bristlebird sightings, seven Western Whipbird but only five had been fortunate enough to actually see a Noisy Scrub-bird, though everyone had heard it on numerous occasions. It would be interesting to know the total number of man-hours spent searching for this one!

Many thanks to Sue Abbotts for her leadership and for suggesting this wonderful venue, and also to Frank O'Connor who willingly took charge of one group.

Pam Agar

RAY MARSHALL PARK, VIVEASH, 12 October

A group of 14 people gathered at the riverside to see what birds were present. The weather was kind, and after the good rains the grass was high in the area near the small lake. No snakes were encountered as we pushed towards the lake's edge. The lake yielded a very good close view of two Black-fronted Dotterels and a few Grey Teal, as well as a Sulphur-crested Cockatoo.

Heading back towards the river we were pleased to see a pair of White-winged Trillers and a Great Egret flying overhead. A Shining Bronze-Cuckoo as well as a Pallid Cuckoo were seen by the river and Sacred Kingfishers were plentiful throughout the walk. The only raptor sighted was a Nankeen Kestrel.

In all, we recorded 44 species and managed to get back to the starting point just as the rain started to come down. A very pleasant walk.

Jan Rogers

ALFRED COVE, 16 October

Nearly 30 people met at Troy Park on a clear and calm morning with bright blue skies and no wind—a perfect morning for birding. Seven of the group were new to birdwatching, having read about the walk in the local paper. Two had earlier attended the Birding for Beginners' Course. Margery was kept busy handing out information about Birds Australia.

As Les welcomed all the walkers an Osprey circled overhead and some early arrivals had already seen a Buff-banded Rail in the nearby undergrowth. An auspicious start to the morning!

As we walked towards the new viewing platform inside the protective fence, we noted Australian Ringnecks, Galahs, and Rainbow Lorikeets squabbling in the tree tops and also two Striated Pardalotes busy preparing a nest in a small hollow on the side of a tree. Two sightings of a Sacred Kingfisher were appreciated by the group.

From the platform we had a good view of Black-winged Stilts and a Common Greenshank as well as a Black-shouldered Kite asleep on a nearby tree. Moving to the west side of Troy Park we had a marvellous sighting of about nine or ten Great Crested Grebes displaying courtship behaviour. A family of Purple Swampheens were seen on the far bank of the river and as we moved around the fence line we saw the usual waterbirds on the extensive sand banks. Of note were the Pied Oystercatchers, Red-necked Stints, Grey Plover, Red-capped Plover and several Great Cormorants.

A total of 50 species were seen. Our thanks to Les Harris for his enthusiastic leadership and for his patience with newcomers who asked many questions and were all keen to use the various telescopes carried by group members.

A very enjoyable morning.

Molly Angus



9GTractor Club on the beach at Eyre.
Photo courtesy Bea Myers and Ian Tarbin

COLLINS ROAD, FLINT STATE FOREST, 18 October

BAWA's first excursion to the Collins Road area of Flint State Forest saw the attendance of 21 members.

The weather was perfect for birdwatching and much of the flora was still flowering, including at least eight species of orchids. Thirty-seven of the 54 bird species previously recorded were seen during our walk. In addition, we were able to add Red-capped Robin, Collared Sparrowhawk, Tawny-crowned Honeyeater and Purple-crowned Lorikeet to the list. As is their way, the Crested Shrike-tits did not oblige by putting in an appearance on the day.

Several species were found nesting, including a pair of Blue-breasted Fairy-wrens with large chicks—Collins Road is the closest known site to Perth for this species. Also breeding were Willie Wagtails, Rufous Treecreepers and Yellow-plumed Honeyeaters. A Collared Sparrowhawk was seen with a recently captured Restless Flycatcher.

Michael Brooker

BROOKTON HIGHWAY, 18 October

Although it was a very chilly 4 degrees when we left home, 21 members met on Collins Road in the Flint State Forest off the Brookton Highway. Michael Brooker has been studying the population of Blue-breasted Fairy-wren in the area and had already found a nesting pair quite close to the road. We spent some time watching the birds visiting the nest to feed the young.

We then walked around the area of Wandoo bushland for about two hours and found a total of 41 species. These included Fan-tailed Cuckoo, Sacred Kingfisher, Western Yellow Robin, Rufous Treecreeper, Red-capped Robin and many others. A Collared Sparrowhawk was seen attacking a Restless Flycatcher and a Wedge-tailed Eagle soared high overhead.

Although it was a cool day, it was a special area with many wildflowers, and lots of ticks!

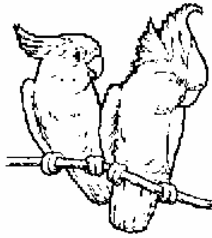
Our thanks to Michael for showing us this great spot.

Margery Clegg

Observatory Reports

EYRE BIRD OBSERVATORY

During August 2003 three women lead by Vi Saffer participated in a Small Mammals Course. They set up pit line and Elliot traps and over four nights caught 100 Western Pygmy Possums. The women worked diligently through changeable weather, measuring, weighing and making sure the little critters were placed safely back in the mallee. All enjoyed their week at Eyre.



On 19 September the 9G Tractor Club visited EBO for a day visit of ten tractors with support vehicles carrying 38 enthusiastic, organised people. The tractors lined up on the track beside the observatory, while everyone ate their lunch then had a look around. They then drove down onto the limestone flat for a photo shoot before returning to the house for muffins and a cuppa. The club raises money for a children's hospital and the Royal Flying Doctor Service during various trips.

On 28 September while driving east along Kanidal Beach we found a beach-washed Southern Fulmar. We brought the bird back to the observatory to be measured and photographed. This information was then emailed to Mike Carter who confirmed the identification. Apparently it is rare for a Southern Fulmar to be in this area.

Thanks to the support of local business, community groups, the Shire of Dundas and guests of EBO, Eyre now has solar hot water for the kitchen. Our thanks also go to Roger and Neil from the Esperance Rotary Club for helping with the installation.

Birds are nesting and mallee, acacia and many other plants are in flower. That is spring at Eyre Bird Observatory. Welcome Swallows are busily carrying nesting material, determined to build nests in impossible places. They try sticking sand on the limestone building and they even tried to nest in a guest's hat left on the veranda. Then when it seems the season may end they find a different location and lay their eggs. Noisy chicks with endless appetites are under the watchful eye of the Grey Butcherbird. Some we have watched develop from eggs, go missing before they fledge. I guess that's nature.

After 14 months it is time for us to say goodbye to

Eyre. Our time at EBO has added a wealth of experience and enrichment to our lives. We have special memories of the people we have met, the sand dunes constantly reshaping before our eyes, and the 1897 limestone Telegraph Station in which we lived. (The building is now heritage listed and a conservation plan for the future maintenance and management should be completed in October 2003.) We have more ticks in our bird book, even managing to see the elusive Southern Scrub-robin before we departed. We have had the pleasure of watching jelly bean size bald Pygmy Possums grow to fend for themselves and enjoyed the peace and tranquillity of Eyre.

We leave Eyre in the hands of Ken and Karina Harris and hope they get as much out of their time as wardens as we did.

**Bea Myers and
Ian Tarbin,
EBO Wardens**

The New Wardens are at Eyre

After a long drive from Kununurra we finally arrived at Eyre Bird Observatory. What a pleasant surprise, nothing, no words, not even the finest poetry could describe the feeling when we first saw the old telegraph station. We knew how the early explorers felt when they first saw Ayres Rock, Stanley Chasm or the Bungle Bungles. Wow, fantastic.

Bea and Ian welcomed us like old friends, after all we had spoken on the phone twice and after a look around, our first impressions were confirmed. We could be very happy here. The old limestone building was warm and friendly and in surprisingly good condition considering its history. If there was a downside it was the hi-tech gadgetry in the office. We thought quill pen and parchment would have been more appropriate.

Imagine my surprise and delight when the very next day I saw the first White-



Beach-washed Southern Fulmar, Eyre
Photos courtesy Bea Myers and Ian Tarbin

winged Triller for the year at the birdbath, what a lovely welcome. After a check of the records Bea found the first sighting last year was on the same day. That's not all, two days later we saw the first Rainbow Bee-eater on the Burnaby road. I told Bea not to worry as it was a different kind of "B" it was interested in. My wife Karina said it was the same one she saw following us down from Kununurra. How good can life get?

There are a lot of new birds here for us to get used to but many familiar faces; Grey Butcherbirds, Grey Currawongs, Welcome Swallows, Black-faced Cuckoo-shrikes, Yellow-rumped Thornbills are just a few.

The Major Mitchell's Cockatoos entertain us with their raucous call and their acrobatics on the telegraph wires.

The Grey Butcherbird is dive bombed by the Welcome Swallows as he sits on the wire eyeing off the Common Starlings in the starling trap. Who needs TV, radio, newspapers?

The range of guests in our first week was interesting, from a group of friends who for the greater part did nothing except sit on the veranda and talk, to a visitor from South Africa who was up at first light to add more birds to his log, had birded all over the world for 40 years and claimed to have seen a Barn Swallow on the limestone flats near the beach.

If that was our first week, we look forward to the next year.

Ken and Karina Harris
Wardens

Coming Events

Important Note re Campouts

Members anticipating attending campouts must notify the BA Office (9383 7749) of the number in their party and when they will arrive. With this information we will be able to make sure the group will be together and will know when to expect people.

New Members

Please let the leaders know that you are a new member and don't hesitate to ask for assistance with bird sightings.

Saturday 6 December—Full day Excursion, Mandurah

Meet with the Mandurah Group at 8:00 am in the car park at the southern end of Wanjeep Street, Coodanup, on the shores of Peel Inlet. From Mandurah Road in Mandurah turn left into Pinjarra Road and travel 1 km until you reach the Wanjeep Road turnoff on your right. Following a survey of Coodanup on Peel Inlet we will then move on to Mariners Cove Board Walk, the Nairns, and the Samphire Cove board walk.

The return trip distance from Perth is about 180 km.

Leaders: Frank Pridham and Dick Rule

Monday 8 December Special Meeting—State Tennis Centre, Burswood, 7:30 pm

Pat Frere, a birdwatcher and resident of Kenya, will speak about and show slides of birds of Kenya. (This is a special meeting to take advantage of Pat's coming visit to Perth.)

Thursday 11 December—Mid-week Morning Excursion, Herdsman Lake

Meet at 8:30 am in Maurice Hamer Park. Turn off Pearson Street into Falcon Avenue, turn right at the T-intersection into Lakeside Road. Continue to the car park at the end of the road (StreetSmart Map 341 D7). This is a good spot for viewing waterbirds. Bring your telescope if you have one.

Leader: Claire Gerrish

Sunday 14 December—Half-day Excursion, Wungong Gorge, Bedfordale

Meet at 8:00 am at the first car park for Wungong Dam, at the end of Admiral Road (off Albany Highway) (StreetSmart Map 527 D5). Over 90 different species of birds have been recorded here, including Red-eared Firetail, White-breasted Robin and Red-winged Fairy-wren. Several raptors have also been seen.

Leader: Bill McRoberts

Sunday 14 December—Christmas Function, Perry House

A barbecue will be held on Sunday 14 December at Perry House commencing 6.30 pm. BYO meat and drinks—all members welcome!

Sunday 28 December—Full day Excursion, Lake McLarty

Meet at 7:30 am at the gate into the Lake McLarty Reserve—look for the BA sign. Travel on the South West

Highway through Pinjarra, turning right along the Old Bunbury Road (5 km south of Pinjarra), then right into Mills Road (fourth road). Continue along Mills Road for approximately 10 km until you see the BA sign on the right.

Take your lunch, Wellington boots/old shoes, sun hats, insect repellent, water and telescopes. There should be a variety of waders at the lake, as well as many waterbirds and bushbirds.

Leader: Colin Davis

Sunday 4 January 2004—Half-day Excursion, Alfred Cove

Meet at 8:00 am at the car park in Troy Park (by the radio mast), off Burke Drive, Attadale (StreetSmart Map 401 E8). There should be plenty of migratory waders and waterbirds round the river, and there are always bushbirds in the Park. Buff-banded Rails were breeding here in September so they should also be seen.

Leader: Les Harris

Saturday 10 January—Half-day Excursion, Big Carine Lake

Meet at 7:30 am in the car park off Beach Road, Carine (StreetSmart Map 281B9).

Over 80 species have been recorded at this lake, including the three ibis, Buff-banded Rail, several species of duck and various raptors. Don't forget your telescope, if you have one!

Leader: Clive Nealon

Thursday 15 January—Mid-week Morning Excursion, Blackwall Reach, Bicton

Meet at 8:00 am at the junction of Kent Street and Blackwall Reach Parade (StreetSmart Map 401 B8). A pleasant walk above the Swan River along a bush track which is noted for its population of White-cheeked Honeyeaters. We will also look for waders along the Point Walter beach.

Leader: Eric Pyatt

Sunday 18 January—Half-day Excursion, Wellard Wetlands, Baldvis

Meet at 7:30 am at the entrance to Wellard Wetlands on the northern side of Zigzag Road (also marked as Bertenshaw Rd)—1 km from St Alban's Road (StreetSmart Map 582 C10). Coming from Perth, turn left off the freeway into Mundijong Road, then right into St Alban's Road.

There should be plenty of bushbirds and waterbirds here, as well as several species of raptors. We could also see some waders if the water level has dropped to expose several areas of mud.

Leader: Les Harris

Monday 19 January Meeting—State Tennis Centre, Burswood, 7:30 pm

Steve Knott, a wildlife photographer and recent resident of Perth from overseas, will give a talk entitled *An Amateur's Guide to Bird Photography*, illustrated with his own photos of overseas birds and animals.

(Note: This meeting is a week earlier than usual because 26 January is Australia Day and a public holiday.)

Saturday 24 January to Monday 26 January—Australia Day Campout, Rotary Park Camp, Eaton

The campout this year will be held at the Rotary Park Camp at Eaton, near Bunbury. Facilities here consist of four separate dormitories catering for 12-20 people each; an area for caravans and campers; a hall; a kitchen; ablutions, etc. The cost will be \$6 per person per day.

To reach the camp, which is near the Collie River, travel on the Old Coast Road from Mandurah and through Australind. When you reach the Collie River, cross over the bridge and turn left into Pratt Road. Follow the road for approximately 2 km—the road terminates at Leake Street. Turn left here, then go for 200 m to the entrance to the camp. Look for the BA signs.

We will have sole use of the camp, but members anticipating attending must ring the Birds Australia office (9383 7749) before 14 January 2004 to let us know how many will be in your party.

Clive knows the area well and we should have good birdwatching as the area has a diversity of habitats.

Leader: Clive Napier

Saturday 31 January—Full day Excursion, Penguin Island

A charter ferry will leave the Mersey Point Jetty, off Arcadia Drive, Shoalwater (StreetSmart Map 609 C1), at 9:15 am sharp for a one and a half hour cruise of prime birding spots in Warnbro Sound, landing on Penguin Island at 10:45 am for an island walk. We will then have lunch—bring your own as no food or drink is available on the island.

After lunch we will have an opportunity to visit the penguin-viewing facility erected on the island by CALM.

Ferries return to the mainland regularly at hourly intervals. The cost of the one and a half hour cruise and return trip is

\$29.50 (\$26 concession), with a 10% discount for a block booking.

Please ring the office (9383 7749) no later than 23 January and put your name on the list if you wish to participate. Booking is essential!

Leader: Clive Napier (Phone: 9332 7265)

Sunday 8 February—Full Day Wader Count around Peel Inlet

Meet at 8:00 am in the car park at the western end of the Mandurah Estuary Bridge--under the bridge (StreetSmart Map 759 E5). We will first look around the recently developed bird-hides and the boardwalk associated with them. The shore at Coodanup may also be visited by those wishing to extend the excursion after lunch. Don't forget hats, insect repellent, old shoes/wellies, and lunch. Bring your telescope and come and learn about waders!

Leader: Sue Abbotts

Thursday 12 February—Mid-week Morning Excursion, Woodman Point, Munster

Meet at 8:00 am in the car park at Woodman Point on Jervoise Bay (StreetSmart Map 490 B3). This is now a bitumen road. Turn off Cockburn Road, south of the caravan park, along O'Kane Court, turning left towards the entrance to the Jervoise Bay Sailing Club, then left to the car park. We will walk along the beach to Wapet Groyne to look for waders and sea birds. Bring your telescopes.

Leader: Les Harris

Sunday 15 February—Half-day Excursion, Herdsman Lake

Meet at 7:30 am at the northern end of Herdsman Lake, off Jon Sanders Drive, in the car park of the Perth Pony Club (StreetSmart Map 341 D3).

This is one of the waterbird refuges that never dries up at the end of summer. If the water level is down, some interesting waders may be seen, such as Wood Sandpiper. In the summer of 2002/2003 a large number of Freckled Ducks were here for many weeks. Bring your telescope, if you have one.

Leader: Claire Gerrish

Sunday 22 February—Full day Excursion, Annual Hooded Plover Survey, Lake Clifton

Meet at 8:30 am at the boardwalk at Lake Clifton, near the stromatolites. From Perth, drive through Mandurah and

over the Dawesville Cut south to Mount John Road on the right, and drive to the end where there is a boardwalk (Travellers Atlas Map 45 D2).

From here we will divide into teams to survey Lake Clifton, assisting the Hooded Plover Management Group gather information about this vulnerable species. Added interest will be in trying to spot birds with leg bands that have been banded over the last 18 months to determine their movement around this lake system.

Leader: Dick Rule

Monday 23 February Meeting—State Tennis Centre, Burswood, 7:30 pm and Annual General Meeting

Cheryl Gole, a member, will speak about her work for the WA Group on the Perth Biodiversity Project on which she has been engaged.

The Annual General Meeting will also take place. For further details, see the separate article in this edition.

Saturday 28 February to Monday 1 March—Labour Day Campout at Cheyne Beach

As this campout was so popular last year it has been decided to repeat the weekend.

Cheyne Beach is a fishing village on the edge of the Waychinicup National Park east of Albany. The campout is primarily to look for the Noisy Scrub-bird, Western Bristlebird and Western Whipbird. Ground Parrots have been heard and seen here at a recent survey, but in much reduced numbers. These birds are notoriously secretive and difficult to see so the campout is strictly limited to 20 people.

For bookings and more information contact the leader on 9444 1607.

Leader: Sue Abbotts

Sunday 29 February—Half-day Excursion, Bibra Lake
For those who will not be going on the campout!

Meet at 7:30 am in the first car park at the northern end of the lake, off Progress Drive (StreetSmart Map 462 A2).

Bibra Lake is a part of the Beeliar Wetlands chain and a large number of water and bushbirds can be seen here. The complete walk around the lake could take over two and a half hours so bring water, hats, etc, as it may be quite hot. Also, have suitable footwear as there are plenty of 'Snakes have been seen in this area' signs around the lake!

Leader: Wynton Maddeford

Sunday 7 March—Half-day Excursion, Woodman Point, Munster

Meet at 8:30 am in the car park at Woodman Point on Jervoise Bay (StreetSmart Map 490 B3). This is now a bitumen road. Turn off Cockburn Road, south of the caravan park, along O'Kane Court, turning left towards the entrance to the Jervoise Bay Sailing Club, then left to the car park. We will walk along the beach to Wapet Groyne to look for waders and sea birds. Bring your telescopes.

Leader: Les Harris

Saturday 13 March—Half-day Excursion, Eric Singleton Bird Sanctuary, Bayswater

Meet at 8:00 am at the small parking area at the entrance to the Sanctuary, at the end of King William Street, Bayswater (StreetSmart Map 344 C6). There are two more parking areas which can be found by turning left at the entrance to the Sanctuary into the road that leads to the river.

This Bird Sanctuary was founded by Eric Singleton in 1977 in conjunction with the Bayswater Council. It consists of waterways, paved paths (suitable for wheelchairs), a bird hide and an artificial island. Many waterbirds breed in the reserve, and we could see crakes and rails, as well as some raptors. The total species list is about 100.

Leader: Hank van Wees

Thursday 18 March—Mid-week Morning Excursion, Garvey Park, Ascot

Meet at 8:00 am in the car park (next to the rowing club) at the western end of Fauntleroy Avenue, off Great Eastern Highway (StreetSmart Map 345 A5). This area has a good variety of waterbirds and bushbirds. Sixty-seven species have been recorded here since 1997, including Buff-banded Rail, Spotless Crake and Mistletoebird.

Leader: Jan Rogers

Sunday 21 March—Half-day Excursion, Yangebup Lake, Yangebup

Meet at 8:00 am at the car park on the south-west end of Parkes Street, between Osprey Drive and Hammond Road (StreetSmart Map 462 C9). Wear rubber boots or old shoes as there could be some muddy areas.

This is a good area for waterbirds and waders. Three species of crakes have been seen here. Bring a 'scope, if possible. If time permits, Kogolup will also be visited.

Leader: Clive Napier

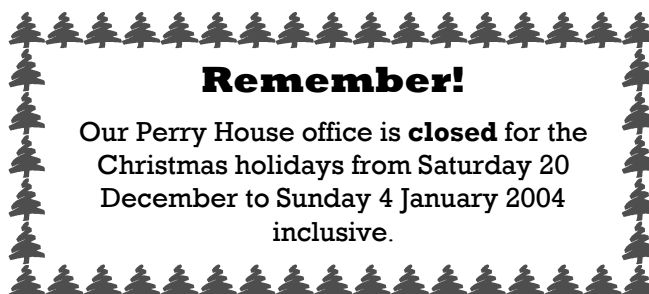
Monday 22 March Meeting—State Tennis Centre, Burswood, 7:30 pm

Arlene Moncrieff of Greening Australia will give a talk entitled *Stepping Stones Creating Healthy Habitats*.

Saturday 27 March—Half-day Excursion, Lake Joondalup

Meet at 8:00 am at Neil Hawkins Park, in the car park at the end of Boas Avenue (StreetSmart Map 221 A6). There are always lots of water and bushbirds to be seen around this large lake, and there could be waders as well. Bring your telescope if you have one.

Leader: Tom Delaney



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Preliminary Notice of Easter Campouts 2004

Friday 9 April to Monday 12 April Easter Campout Hopetoun and Fitzgerald River National Park

The Easter campout in 2004 will be held at the Hopetoun Caravan Park, on the south coast. There is good birding in the surrounding area, which includes the Fitzgerald River National Park, the ocean and the estuary. Also, a chance to see one or two of the south coast rarities.

Make your own bookings at the caravan park—phone 9838 3096. Accommodation available: cabins—sleeping 4-6; smaller cabins for 2; and on-site vans. As it will be school holiday time, bookings for these must be for at least 1 week. There are plenty of powered and unpowered sites, and a camp kitchen is available. Bookings should be made as soon as possible, and preference will be given to Birds Australia members.

More detailed information will be provided by Clive Napier in the March issue of Bird Notes.

Leader: Clive Napier (Phone 9332 7265)

Friday 9 April to Monday 12 April Easter Campout Holleton

Holleton is an old town site in a large remnant of bushland in the eastern wheatbelt, approximately 80 km ENE of Naremburn and 90 km SSW of Southern Cross. It features a number of habitat types, including woodland, mallee shrubland and sandplain heath. A number of interesting birds, including Shy Heathwren and Western Yellow Robin, have been seen here. We will look for Gilbert's Whistler, a species now almost extinct in the wheatbelt.

During the campout, we will explore the bushland and perhaps some of the many reserves nearby. There are no facilities but plenty of space for camping. Be fully self sufficient for everything, including water, food and vehicle fuel. This is advance notice for the campout: mud maps and detailed travel instructions will be available after the March issue of *WA Bird Notes* is printed. Note that participant numbers will be limited to approximately 25 people.

Leaders: Cheryl and Martin Gole (Queries: 9293 4958)

Join Chris Hassell of

TURNSTONE NATURE DISCOVERY



and you will have the opportunity to share his enthusiasm and intimate knowledge of the birds of Broome and **beyond!**

In conjunction with Odyssey Travel, Chris is hosting a tour, in February 2004, to the fantastic Island of **Sri Lanka** and annually offers his 8-day **Birding in Broome** program during peak southward migration.

Visit www.turnstonenaturediscovery.com.au/ for more details, or contact Chris direct:

Tel: (08) 9192 8585

E-mail: turnstone@wn.com.au

PO Box 3089, Broome, WA, 6725

Chris continues to offer exciting birdwatching experiences around Broome including:

- Shorebirds of Roebuck Bay
- Mangroves and Mudflats
- Wetland and Woodlands
- Grasslands and Claypans

Chris is an excellent field ornithologist. He has over seven years experience guiding and researching in the Broome area. This experience and his infectious enthusiasm makes him an outstanding interpreter.

Chris looks forward to hearing from you.

*The Season's Greetings
to all members.*



ANZANG Nature and Landscape Photographer of the Year-2004

ANZANG Nature is organising an annual international nature and landscape photographic competition and subsequent exhibition at state museums and other high profile venues. To enter the competition photographs or digital images must be of subjects taken within the bioregion of **Australia, New Zealand, Antarctica and New Guinea**. Cash prizes totalling **SEVENTEEN THOUSAND AUSTRALIAN DOLLARS** are available for winning entries.

ANZANG Nature wishes to encourage excellence in nature and landscape photography. Profit from the exhibitions will be donated to nature conservation organisations that are actively purchasing and managing natural habitat in the region for the express purpose of providing sanctuary to native flora and fauna.

There are nine sections in the competition

- ◆ Animal Behaviour.
- ◆ Animal Portrait.
- ◆ Botanical Subject.
- ◆ Underwater Subject.
- ◆ Wilderness Landscape.
- ◆ Threatened or Endangered Animals or Plants.
- ◆ Black and White Photography.
- ◆ Digital Camera Photography.
- ◆ Junior Photography.

Entries close 1/5/04

For competition rules, entry forms and further information contact

Website www.anzangnature.com

Email compete@anzangnature.com

Telephone/Fax +61(0) 8 9321 3685

Postal address ANZANG Nature
GPO Box 2828
PERTH Western Australia 6001

Crossword Answers No 35

Across

1 taxonomic, 6 chair, 8 Neophema, 10 aperture, 11 Osprey, 13 thousands, 18 tangle,

19 thrush, 21 velocity, 23 meat, 25 herd, 26 painted.

Down

2 one, 3 nearest, 4 sharpie, 5 genus, 7 ingest, 9 park, 11 objective, 12 summary, 14 neat, 15 sign, 16 healthy, 17 humour, 20 warn, 22 tip, 24 end.

Birds Australia Western Australia (Inc)
(A DIVISION OF ROYAL AUSTRALASIAN ORNITHOLOGISTS UNION)

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415 Riversdale Rd, Hawthorn East, Vic 3123

8/2003

Opportunities for Volunteers

This new section gives members an avenue to advertise for voluntary assistance with projects, surveys, initiatives, office.

- ◆ **Office — manning the desk** — contact Wendy Napier
Phone 9332 7265
- ◆ **Eyre Bird Observatory relief wardens** — contact
* Shapelle McNee Phone 9494 1286, e-mail
<mshapelle@hotmail.com>
* or Rod Smith Phone 9447 3804,
e-mail <rodjoyce@optusnet.com.au>
- ◆ **Noisy Scrub Bird** — contact Sarah Comer Phone 9842 4500,
Email <sarahr@calm.wa.gov.au>
- ◆ **Atlas** — surveys for this are continuing — contact Cheryl Gole
Phone 9293 4958, e-mail <gole@starwon.com.au>
- ◆ **BAWA Committee** — we need a full Committee — contact the
Secretary, Liz Walker Phone 9444 8920
- ◆ **Excursion Leaders** — contact Sue Abbotts 9444 1607, e-mail
<sabbotts1@bigpond.com>

- ◆ **Monthly Meeting Speakers** — contact Brian Wilson 9293 1094
- ◆ **Western Ground Parrot Project**, Nov-Feb — contact Brent Barrett
9842 4519 e-mail <brentb@calm.wa.gov.au>, Brenda Newbey
9337 5673 e-mail <sfryc@iinet.net.au>, Anne Bondin 9844 1793 e-
mail <albanybirds@hotmail.com>
- ◆ **Public Relations Sub-committee** — graphic artist, reporter —
contact Brice Wells 9255 3710
- ◆ **Annual Hooded Plover Count** — contact Marcus Singor 9362
2742, e-mail <msingor@iprimus.com.au>
- ◆ **Carnaby's Black-Cockatoo Project**, marked chicks — contact
Leonie McMahon 9383 7749 or <ljmcmahon@bigpond.com>

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Production: Margaret Philippon

Distribution: Rod Smith

Notes for Contributors

The Editors request contributors to note:

- WABN publishes material of interest to the WA Group
- contributions should be written or typed with **double spacing**—a copy on disk or emailed would assist, especially if in MSWord as a document **without** styles.
- WABN uses Birds Australia recommended English names
- except for Observations, contributions will be published unless the contributor is informed to the contrary.
- Full Editorial Policy is stated in WABN 74:10-12

Printing Deadlines (at Perry House)

March 2004 issue: 1 February
June 2004 issue: 1 May
September 2004 issue: 1 August
December 2004 issue: 1 November

Advertising Rates

1/4 page	\$30.00
1/2 page	\$50.00
Full page	\$90.00

Calendar of Events

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Monday 19 January Meeting—State Tennis Centre, Burswood

Saturday 24 January to Monday 26 January—Australia Day Campout, Rotary Park Camp, Eaton

Saturday 31 January—Full day Excursion, Penguin Island

Sunday 8 February—Full Day Wader Count around Peel Inlet

Thursday 12 February—Mid-week Morning Excursion, Woodman Point, Munster

Sunday 15 February—Half-day Excursion, Herdsman Lake

Sunday 22 February—Full day Excursion, Annual Hooded Plover Survey, Lake Clifton

Monday 23 February Meeting—State Tennis Centre, Burswood, 7:30 pm and Annual General Meeting

Saturday 28 February to Monday 1 March—Labour Day Campout at Cheyne Beach

Sunday 29 February—Half-day Excursion, Bibra Lake

Sunday 7 March—Half-day Excursion, Woodman Point, Munster

Saturday 13 March—Half-day Excursion, Eric Singleton Bird Sanctuary, Bayswater

Thursday 18 March—Mid-week Morning Excursion, Garvey Park, Ascot

Sunday 21 March—Half-day Excursion, Yangebup Lake, Yangebup

Monday 22 March Meeting—State Tennis Centre, Burswood

Saturday 27 March—Half-day Excursion, Lake Joondalup

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