

Western Australian Bird Notes



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Obituary.....	p5	Crossword.....	p14	Observatories.....	p24
Letters to the Editors.....	p5	Notices.....	p15	Coming events.....	p27
Observations.....	p6	New members.....	p18	Crossword answers.....	p30
BAWA reports.....	p7	Country groups.....	p20	Opportunities for volunteers.....	p32
Members' contributions.....	p9	Excursion reports.....	p21	Calendar of events.....	p32

ANTHOLOGY OF HOODED PLOVER BEHAVIOUR (Part 3)

Hooded Plover research in Western Australia has to date concentrated on beach locations and coastal salt lakes mainly because these areas are easier to access than remote inland salt lakes. Many of the findings about Hooded Plover behaviour, ecology and distribution in Western Australia therefore have been based on observations made in coastal and near coastal areas. Behavioural observations are summarised in earlier articles in WA Bird Notes (France 2003, 2004), based on observations and findings made at the coastal salt lakes in Yalgorup National Park. It is therefore interesting to gain new and additional data on Hooded Plover from inland areas of Western Australia.

As a wildlife photographer and researcher, I have been studying Hooded Plovers in inland areas of south-western Australia for the past three years, collecting information on various aspects of Hooded Plover behaviour, including feeding, breeding and social habits. The area of study covered the inland salt lakes from Lake Grace, past Pingrup to the Stirling Ranges then across to Cranbrook to Katanning and back to Lake Grace. This article relates mainly to the Hooded Plover populations on a 37.5 ha salt lake system near Cranbrook and those breeding between Lake Grace and Pingrup.



Inland breeding following a cyclone

Severe tropical cyclone Clare crossed the Pilbara coast on Monday 9 January 2006. The remains of cyclone Clare caused flooding, particularly significant in the area around Lake Grace where 224 mm of rain was recorded in a 24 hour period during 12-13 January. This was further exacerbated by rain from tropical cyclone Daryl a week later. After the heavy inland flooding an explosion of breeding activity took place among ducks, grebes and waders, including Hooded Plovers.

The cyclone resulted in many small salt lakes being filled up and areas previously unknown to have lakes now supported lakes. Most Hooded Plovers had chosen their nest sites within the small lakes and were very secretive, especially during the egg laying period. Field observations indicated that predators less frequently patrolled these smaller lakes than the larger lakes, which supported high numbers of nesting waterbirds such as Red-necked Avocets, Red-kneed Dotterels, Eurasian Coots and Hoary-headed Grebes.

Eight Hooded Plover nest sites were monitored in mid-May 2006 from Lake Grace to south of Pingrup (Table 1). Two clutches contained four eggs and there was one sighting of a batch of four chicks only days old (Photos 1 and 2).

Generally Hooded Plover clutches consist of three eggs, occasionally four. However,



Photo 1: Hooded Plover clutch with 4 eggs.
Photo by Steve Elson

Number	Clutch	Location	Nest	Distance from water's edge
Nest 1 26 May 2005	One egg	Salt lake approx. 30 km west of Newdegate, at south-western corner of the lake	Partly flooded due to recent rains; lined with small amount of pink shells	30 cm from water's edge
Nest 2 18 May 2006	No eggs	On peninsula of salt lake	Two scrapings 4.5 m apart	Scrapings on elevated ground 2 m and 3.5 m from water's edge
Nest 3 18 May 2006	One egg	At edge of small lake	Shallow bowl in white sand unlined	30 cm from waterline; nest slightly flooded
Nest 4 18 May 2006	Two hatched chicks	On elevated ground next to fallen branch	Nest lined with small amounts of sandy grains of quartz, soil white	
Nest 5 18 May 2006	Four eggs	Nest next to fallen branch	Small scrape in greyish-white sand with small amount of shells	30 m from water's edge
Nest 6 20 May 2006	Four eggs Stained and coated with mud	On island 20 m from mainland; water depth 48 cm	Small scrape in white sand; contained small amount of shells	Island 16 m long and 5 m wide
Nest 7 21 May 2006	Four chicks only days old	Next to fallen timber	Shallow depression in white sand, lined with small amount of quartz grains	75 m from water's edge
Nest 8 21 May 2006	No eggs	Adults searching for nest site	Two shallow scrapes in greyish-white soil, 7 m apart	1.5 m from water's edge
Nest 9 21 May 2006	Three eggs Mud stained	Next to only branch on the lake	Shallow depression in white soil, lined with shells	1 m from water's edge

Table 1: Hooded Plover breeding data for inland Western Australia, Lake Grace to Pingrup, 2005 and 2006.

there seem to be no records of clutches with four eggs in Western Australia prior to these observations. Johnstone and Storr (1998) mention that clutch size in Western Australia is mostly three eggs, occasionally two. Marchant and Higgins (1993) mention mostly two to three eggs per clutch, occasionally four.

The nests containing four eggs and the four runners were recorded after the summer cyclone of 2006. One cannot help but think that the cyclone may have created optimum breeding conditions that Hooded Plovers took advantage of by increasing their normal clutch size. One other sighting of a clutch with four eggs was made on 28 August 2006 near Cranbrook (Table 2).



Photo 2. Hooded Plover runners.
Photo by Steve Elson

Number	Clutch	Location	Nest	Distance from water's edge
Nest 1 28 Aug 2006	4 eggs; after hatching runners moved to main salt lake	In a field supporting low vegetation, mostly Cape Weed < 15 cm	Base of nest lined with small similar sized grains of quartz	150 m from water's edge
Nest 2 22 Sept 2007	No eggs	On peninsula freshly constructed nest between two fallen branches	Bird sitting in nest attempting to mould depression in to shape	2.8 m from water's edge
Nest 3 22 Sept 2007	No eggs	Both scrapes next to fallen timber	Two bowl structures in sand, one with shells in nest; 7 m apart	Scrapes 4.5 m and 3 m from water's edge
Nest 4 22 Sept 2007	Nest with 1 egg	Next to fallen timber	Lining consisted of small amount of fine pieces of quartz	Located 5.5 m from water's edge
Nest 5 22 Sept 2007	2 runners with 2 adults.	Damp areas near lake	Nest site not located	150 m from main lake

Table 2: Hooded Plover breeding data for Cranbrook salt lake system, 2006 and 2007.

Monitoring the pairs with clutches of four eggs showed that these pairs had a greater success rate in overall egg hatching and in runners reaching the advanced juvenile stage. However this conclusion comes from a very small data base.

Hooded Plover behaviour

Both adults in a pair were observed making nest scrapes and constructing nests on two occasions. Adults were observed for several hours checking out potential nest sites. One bird would stop, then squat and start scratching out a bowl, then walk off again. There was similar behaviour suggesting potential nesting. For example, Hooded Plovers would constantly walk a short distance then suddenly squat; this was repeated several times. The birds were also noted to increase their barking and piping calls to one another. The number of nest scrapes discovered at some locations possibly indicated that this species makes several nest scrapes before making a final choice.

Hooded Plovers, sometimes in company with Curlew Sandpipers and Red-necked Stints, were observed feeding in the shallows of the lake up to eight metres from the shoreline.

Nest locations

Hooded Plovers may have commenced breeding as soon as suitable conditions became available in the Lake Grace area, as some nests that were found had eggs that were already stained or coated with mud and one nest was slightly flooded.

Some nests were unlined while others were lined with small amounts of quartz grains or shells. Nests in the Cranbrook, Katanning and Pingrup area had *Coxiella* shells at the base of the nest scrapes. One Hooded Plover was seen collecting small shells that had been deposited or washed up next to drift wood only centimetres from the nest site. When the nest lining was later checked it contained a small amount of pinkish white shells. Records collected on 38 Hooded Plover nests in the two inland study sites showed that ten Hooded Plover nests contained no lining, seven were lined with small pieces of quartz, four were lined with small pieces of rock and pieces of dry vegetation and the remaining 17 nests were lined with pink to pinkish white shells.

At least five nests sites were close to fallen tree branches that may have been for shelter or protection. Dead tree branches seem to play an important role in nest location as indicated by the sighting of four runners that spent most of their time near fallen timber well away from the water's edge. Also noted was a flock of Hooded Plovers that moved away from the water's edge during certain periods of the day seeking shelter by sitting in slight depressions in the sand among the fallen branches.

Nests were found in white or greyish-white sand or clayey soil. Nests found in porous soils tended to be less water

logged whilst nests in clay soils or compacted soils were found to be more frequently water logged. All nests that were water logged were abandoned soon after and on many occasions pairs were observed to construct another nest near the recently abandoned nest. Most of the nests found flooded only contained one egg.

Flooding either due to rainfall or surging surface water caused by easterly winds during summer, were a cause for breeding failure, especially of nests close to the water's edge.

The Hooded Plover nest and breeding data from the area between Lake Grace and Pingrup are displayed in Table 1 and from the Cranbrook area in Table 2.

Observations made at the Cranbrook salt lake system from 2005 to 2007 showed that nest sites 1 and 2 (Table 2) were only 40 metres apart and sites 2 and 3 were 50 metres apart.

In September 2007 at the Cranbrook site 60 Silver Gulls were observed patrolling the edge of the lake. Fox prints were found along much of the shoreline.

Flocking behaviour

The salt lake near Cranbrook contained water and suitable feeding grounds all year, therefore acting as a refuge when all the other salt lakes in the district dried out, and this was the main research site. This lake supported 167 Hooded Plovers over the period 17 January 2007 to 27 May 2007 after which the numbers dropped to 23 birds with six pairs commencing

breeding. This suggests that Hooded Plover flocking took place at this inland salt lake during summer and these birds did not move to coastal areas. In the days leading up to the commencement of the heavy winter rains, increased Hooded Plover aggression was observed.

On 15, 21 and 22 May 2007 observations were made of a group of Hooded Plovers in the main flock of 167 birds. Up to 12 Hooded Plovers suddenly started bowing to one another with their bodies arched to the

front and their tails fanned out and at the same time facing one another. Their barking call increased and became quite intense whilst their beaks were pointed down. The birds seemed to be sizing one another up for a confrontation. These actions were repeated on several occasions but not always by the same birds, the behaviour lasting for up to two minutes. It was also noted that sub-adult birds were involved in these confrontation displays (Photo 3). This behaviour had not been observed earlier in the season. One week later the birds dispersed. A later survey showed that pairs of Hooded Plover had settled at lakes in the surrounding district.

Habitats

Habitats where Hooded Plovers were found varied widely. They included salt lakes containing small exposed islands close to shore, often lacking in vegetation. Lake systems near



Photo 3. Hooded Plover flock displaying "confrontation" behaviour with heads bowed down.

Photo by Steve Elson



Photo 4. Flock of Hooded Plovers.
Photo by Steve Elson

Cranbrook had extensive flat but jagged shorelines with coves and peninsulas, and fallen timber, mostly from dead or dying *Melaleuca* species.

The most productive feeding sites within one salt lake system were peninsulas, coves, entrances to creek lines and the uneven shoreline supporting spits and small island systems. Hooded Plovers were found feeding at these sites 90% of the time.

A pair of Hooded Plovers with two chicks was found in one area, 150 m from the main lake which supports large open areas of low lying vegetation, mostly Cape Weed and a few large single live *Melaleucas*. The area covered around six hectares and the Hooded Plovers here were observed searching for insects among the Cape Weed. This feeding behaviour has not previously been recorded.

Camel Lake

Successful breeding was not recorded at Camel Lake, north of the Stirling Ranges. It is suggested that the main reason for this was that nest sites were situated in areas prone to flooding. In 2006 two failed breeding attempts were recorded and another two in August and September 2007. On all occasions the nests were flooded after heavy rains. In addition Camel Lake had a fox population problem.

Artificial island

In response to the loss of Hooded Plover nests due to flooding it was decided to conduct a trial by creating an

artificial island in a salt lake. The experiment was conducted in August 2005 on a salt lake near Pingrup where a small island 3 m wide and 4 m long was created using local soil and placing it in the lake 3 m from the shoreline. The island was about 15 cm above the high water mark. Fallen timber was added to the newly created site for shelter and to encourage breeding.

In October 2005, on revisiting the site, a pair of Red-capped Plovers had taken up residence and a small freshly scraped bowl was found next to the timber. This experiment warrants further trials as it may increase the success rate of Hooded Plovers breeding where sites are known to be prone to flooding at coastal and inland salt lakes.

Steve Elson

Acknowledgements

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Landowners are thanked for providing access to their properties and Marcus Singor for his assistance in preparing this material for *WA Bird Notes*.

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Photo 5. Juvenile Hooded Plover.
Photo by Steve Elson

CORRIGENDUM

In the last issue of *WA Bird Notes* (No. 123) photographs on pages 25, 26, 33 and 35 were incorrectly attributed to Molly Angus. These photographs were actually taken by Barry Angus. The Editors apologise for any inconvenience this may have caused.



Obituary



VALE VINCENT NOEL SERVENTY

Three months after suffering a stroke, Dr Vin Serventy, aged 91, passed away on 8 September at Pearl Bay in his adopted state of NSW.

Born to immigrant parents at Kalgoorlie in 1916, he was the most educated of the family and was awarded an honorary doctorate in recognition of the quality and quantity of his writings and his preachings for the conservation of our wildlife. He was championing conservation before I even knew the word and before the much-publicised crocodile-man, Steve Irwin, was even born.

Vin had an awesome knowledge of natural history and a keen empathy for it. At the annual wildlife shows presented by The Western Australian Naturalists' Club, he was a man with many hats: organiser, overseer, exhibitor, lecturer, instructor and projectionist. It was then that many thousands of schoolchildren and adults saw this great man in the flesh for the first time and listened to his sensible and rational teachings about our wildlife and the need to conserve it.

He also had a good sense of humour and one evening while screening slides of Sooty Terns, he commented that their "wide-awake" calls had indeed kept him awake at nights and that their behaviour was a "funny turn". Realising his terrible pun he apologised to his audience, which responded with appropriate laughter.

I first met him at one of the wildlife shows but got to know him better at naturalist club meetings. He was a

founding member of the WA Bird Group (now BAWA) and was a member of the party that caught and filmed a Noisy Scrub-bird at Two Peoples Bay in January 1964. I still remember Vin repeating my cry of "Atrichornis!" when we had netted the bird.

Vin seemed to be good mates with the late Graham Pizzey, another keen naturalist and staunch conservationist, and the famous Harry Butler, who is also a knowledgeable naturalist and conservationist. I remember Vin's account of the conversation between the two when they broke open a termite mound and discovered a new species (a snake, I think): "Congratulations, Mr Butler! Congratulations, Mr Serventy!"

Vin's passing is a great loss to Australia, for he was one of our greatest, staunchest and most vociferous eco-warriors. And no one, not even the media magnate, Rupert Murdoch, was beyond Vin's reach, and his personal approach to Mr Murdoch was instrumental in removing part of the Dryandra woodland from the clutches of the mining fraternity.

Vin's espousal of conservation, though, was a 'gently-gently, softly-softly' approach that had the objective of gaining people's minds through education and enlightenment. Fortunately, he had recently published his memoirs, but perhaps he had had a premonition.

Robert Stranger



Letters to the Editors



Dear Editors

Skuas at Woodman Point

I was both fascinated and humbled by the wonderful and detailed account of Skuas at Woodman Point by John Darnell and Alan Collins. I am sure I am not alone in having sporadic and therefore limited experience with this difficult group.

It would seem that the event they describe is regular, but only predictable in terms of detailed meteorological knowledge and forecasts. It would therefore be difficult to organise an excursion in advance. Perhaps, however, it would be possible to have an e-mail grouping of interested persons who could be contacted at short notice to take advantage of John and/or Alan's experience with these birds.

John Brooke

Dear Editors

I am a BAWA member and a student at Edith Cowan University working toward my Doctor of Philosophy. My research topic, *Patterns and Processes of Dispersal: A Biogeographical Study of Invasive Avian Species in South-western Australia*, focuses on the following species: Laughing Turtle-dove (*Streptopelia senegalensis*); Spotted Turtle-dove (*S. chinensis*); Rainbow Lorikeet (*Trichoglossus haematodus*); Sulphur-crested Cockatoo (*Cacatua galerita*); Laughing Kookaburra (*Dacelo novaeguineae*); Australian White Ibis (*Threskiornis molucca*) and Indian Ringneck Parrot (*Psittacula krameri*).

The observation of the target species within their adopted habitat is an integral and important component of the research. Whilst I am endeavouring to cover as much of the

study area as possible, as often as possible, restricting findings to a single observer is somewhat limiting. As a means of broadening the extent of field observations, I thought it prudent to appeal to fellow 'birders' to share their knowledge and experiences.

I would like to appeal to members and other interested parties to inform me of the following:

- *Are any of the target species visitors to your garden or surrounds? If so, what is your locale and when have they been present? (month/s and year/s – provide what information you can)*
- *Do the target species make use of food/water/vegetation in your garden or surrounds? If so, how?*
- *Have you seen evidence of nesting/breeding by the any of the target species in your locale or within the study area? Have nests been constructed in native or exotic trees/shrubs/vegetation?*
- *Have you seen the target species at any other locations throughout the study area? If so, where and when? (month/s and year/s – provide what information you can)*

- *Have you seen any of the target species interact with any native species? In what manner?*
- *Do you have any other comments to add in regard to the target species or the research topic?*

I understand that you likely have many appeals for items to be included in the publication and that you are unable to honour all requests. However I felt it worthwhile asking, as I believe that the assimilation of small snippets of information builds a mosaic of a much bigger picture. I am willing to present a summary of all responses received for publication at a later date.

Thank you for taking the time to consider my request. Also, thank you for your investment of time in preparing and presenting a publication that is both interesting and informative.

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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@birdswa.com.au) or to the BAWA office (9383 7749). Sightings are included on the BAWA web site (birdswa.com.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. This has been a very quiet period. The highlight was another **Fiordland Penguin** near Albany taken into care, and the second Western Australian record of **Abbott's Booby** seen off the Pilbara. A **Franklin's Gull** was photographed at Penguin Island. There has been a larger influx than usual of **White-winged Trillers** in the south west, including many records in the metropolitan area. There continues to be an increase in the number of sightings of **Masked Lapwing** and **Cattle Egret** in the south west with additional sightings beyond those below recorded on the web site. There were several sightings of **Grey**

Honeyeaters just south of Payne's Find. There have been reports of an excellent spring near Carnarvon, but further inland south of Meekatharra the effects of the drought are very obvious with Nallan Lake near Cue being dry for the first time in many years. The most unusual record has been a **Rufous Owl** in the main street of Bridgetown, that is believed to have escaped from Margaret River two to three years earlier.

METROPOLITAN (UBD Street Directory)

Black-tailed Native-hen – 28, 24/07/07, Bridgewater Lake (Erskine) – VB (high count for south west; photograph)

FRANKLIN'S GULL – 1 adult plumage, 18/09/07, Penguin Island (Shoalwater) – GW (reported about once a year in WA; photograph)

Black-eared Cuckoo – 1, 18/08/07, Pipidinny Road (Eglington) – AC (uncommon in south west)

SOUTH WEST (Shark Bay to Cape Arid)

FIORDLAND PENGUIN – 1, 12/08/07, Waychinicup Inlet (Albany) – per JP (rare in WA; photographed; taken in to care)



Franklin's Gull at Penguin Island.
Photo by Gavin White

Cattle Egret – 26, 19/09/07,
Frenchman Bay Road (Albany) –
FO (increasing in the south west)

Black Bittern – 1, 11/08/07, Carey
Road (Manjimup) – DS (rarely
reported in the south west)

Osprey – nesting, 11/08/07, Lake
Beedelup (Manjimup) – DS
(uncommon inland)

Ruddy Turnstone – 2, 07/10/07, Lake
Coyrecup (Katanning) – DS
(uncommon inland)

Inland Dotterel – 2, 31/08/07, Lake
Clifton (Mandurah) – DR
(uncommon in the south west)

ARID ZONE

Tahiti Petrel – 1, 12/09/07, 150 nm
NE of Barrow Island – FM, MS
(rare off the Pilbara coast)

ABBOTT'S BOOBY – 1, 12/09/07,
150 nm NE of Barrow Island –
FM, MS (rare off the Australian
coast; photographed)

Grey Falcon – 2, in courtship flight,
25/10/07, Throssell Range, N of
Rudall River NP (East Pilbara) –
MB (uncommon)

Scarlet-chested Parrot – 2, 30/09/07,
near Great Northern Highway 105
km N of Meekatharra
(Meekatharra) – JM (edge of
range)

KIMBERLEY

Grey Falcon – 1, 03/09/07,
Mornington Station (Derby – West
Kimberley) – LH (uncommon)

Chestnut-backed Button-quail – 1,
04/09/07, Mornington
Station (Derby – West
Kimberley) – LH (edge
of range)

Gouldian Finch – 20,
12/08/07, Argyle
Diamond Village
(Wyndham – East
Kimberley) – GD *et al.*
(highest count for
Argyle)

OBSERVERS

AC = Alan Collins
BRo = Bruce Robinson (Vic)
DR = Dick Rule
DS = Dick Shore
FM = Fiona MacKnight
FO = Frank O'Connor
GD = Guy Dutton (Victoria)
GW = Gavin White
JM = Judy MacKinnon
JP = Jon Pridham
LH = Luc Hoogenstein (Netherlands)
MB = Mike Bamford
MS = Mark Stanley
VB = Viv Beacham



Abbott's Booby, NE of Barrow Island.
Photo by Fiona MacKnight



Birds Australia WA Inc reports



CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

From December 2 – 5, 2007, Birds Australia WA will extend a warm welcome to delegates of the Australasian Ornithological Congress in Perth. This will be an enjoyable time for Birds Australia members, bird researchers from across our region and visitors from overseas, hearing about the latest research and catching up with old friends. Given this exciting event, this seems an opportune time to look at the research that is undertaken by Birds Australia WA.

Research is integral to informing the conservation management of our native birds and the habitats that they use. Although we might not think of research when we consider what Birds Australia WA does, this actually underlies most of what we do. Far from being the domain of academics, research is something that all of us are undertaking when we go birdwatching. The value of long-term observations in documenting changes in the distribution and abundance of our native birds is well established, with the best-known example being right here on our doorstep. The cornerstone study by Harry Recher and Dom Serventy in Kings Park, compared the abundance of birds from the 1920s, 1950s and 1980s and documented a number of declines and extinctions as well

as a number of increases. All of this came about from bird lists kept by Dom Serventy during his morning walks from his residence in Subiaco to the Zoology Department at the University of WA.. Even now, bird lists submitted to the new Atlas of Australian Birds have enabled comparisons with the old Atlas, looking at changes to bird communities across the continent. So something as simple as keeping a list during your birdwatching trips can provide an incredibly useful and important dataset for future generations and an insight in changes in the environment.

Research is also undertaken formally by a number of BAWA projects. Perhaps most high profile is the Carnaby's Black-Cockatoo Recovery Project, which employs two project officers. Core amongst the project's research objectives is the monitoring of nests in tree hollows to investigate long-term trends in breeding populations and provide the ability to step in to manage populations if they are in decline. Research has also involved identifying important breeding sites so that on-ground actions including covenanting and fencing can be prioritised.

The Hooded Plover Project is conducting research to examine the distribution of this species in inland salt lakes and is undertaking a colour-marking program to try and uncover the mysterious movement patterns of this

species. This will help to highlight important sites for this species and manage its protection.

Eyre Bird Observatory has a long-running program of counting shorebirds and keeping lists of birds seen at the observatory. This data was recently requested by the Bureau of Meteorology to inform research on climate change. Research at Broome Bird Observatory has been ongoing for many years and is most famous for the wader studies, led by Clive Minton, that have revealed much about the global importance of Roebuck Bay for shorebirds.

The Western Ground Parrot project has collected data on the presence of this species at a number of sites across the south coast of WA and has contributed significantly to our knowledge of this species, providing an insight into its management requirements, particularly the role of fire. Station Surveys are undertaken regularly for the Department of Environment and Conservation at a number of stations across the Murchison and Goldfields, and the data collected on these is informing the management of stations in relation to fire, the impacts of grazing and the role of artificial water sources. New projects are also being undertaken such as the Bittern Surveys that aim to clarify the status of bitterns in south-west WA.

Finally, we are also involved in a number of important national projects including the ongoing Atlas and the Important Bird Areas (IBA) initiative. There are many more projects I haven't mentioned, but as you can see there is a lot of research happening in BAWA!

So next time you pick up your binos and spend an hour wandering around your local bushland, be sure to keep a bird list and submit it to the Atlas. You never know when it might be needed to inform bushland management or be used by future researchers.

Until next time, Happy Birding!

Rob Davis

LETTER FROM COUNCIL

My good intention of writing a report from Council for every issue of WABN went the way of many good intentions. Only three reports after eight meetings; where does the time go? I have now been on the Council of BA for two years and was recently returned for a second term, and perhaps it is the meeting that has just finished which provides the best indication of what has happened in BA over that time.

My first Council meeting was held in the office on Riversdale Road. The possible sale of this office, with a move into rooms within a building designed to be as environmentally sustainable as possible, was on the agenda. There was discussion about how the sale of the office and the move into rented accommodation (with an option to buy) would affect our finances. The massive undertaking known affectionately as HANZAB was unfinished, there were discussions about regional groups and their role within BA, where was the Atlas going, what was BA's position on wind farms and what did BA really want to be doing in its next decade? This last question was a conversation-stopper. It is also a question that needs to be asked regularly in an

organisation with as complex a history as BA and so many reasons for being in the minds of members. There seemed to be very little talk about birds, but the members of Council, many new to the table like me, very clearly identified themselves as passionate about birds. I soon learnt that each Council meeting ended with a dinner in a local restaurant where the conversation was about birds, bird-watching and bird biology; and rarely about finances, insurance, legal liability and those other trappings of a modern business.

Move ahead a couple of years, and the meeting is being held in the Green Building, a stone's throw from the Victoria Markets just outside the centre of Melbourne. The building, bland on the exterior, has solar panels on the roof, rainwater tanks, a water recycling system and a series of ponds and small waterfalls down the middle that are a biological filter. It is the sort of building you'd expect of an organisation that is about conservation.

The agenda looks a bit familiar, but under finances we have to discuss how we invest over \$2,000,000. That's a welcome change. There is also mention of large sums of money for several major projects: Important Bird Areas and Shorebirds 2020, the latter representing the reinvigoration of shorebird (wader) monitoring that is only too timely in the light of massive reclamation of tidal mudflats in East Asia where many of our migrants stopover. HANZAB is still there, but now complete, with only the question of how do we keep it up to date.

Also on the agenda is discussion of the name for a new Birds Australia facility in Sydney. It will include an office, but will also be a centre for the public to learn about birds, bird conservation and Birds Australia. After much debate, a lunch in which discussions continue, we settle on the Birds Australia Discovery Centre (with the option of Sydney in brackets for when such centres arise in other cities).

Other topics for discussion also reveal an organisation that is subtly changing. There is a policy on wind farms and a policy on feeding birds in the garden. There is also a document entitled Directions 2008-2018, which tries to capture the essence of what BA is about for members and the general community. Regional Groups are still on the agenda, with clear recognition of their value as the face of BA.

And at the end of an all-day meeting, a quick tour of the new offices. A modern office, computers ubiquitous, largely open-plan but the walls festooned with images of birds. In one room, however, there was something different. A meeting room with a small glass cabinet containing a display of badly stuffed birds, a display that may clash with modern perceptions, but put together with a passion for birds expressed in a late Victorian manner. Also in that room, a photograph of a formal gathering of men (no women) in dark suits and starched collars. A group from the very early days of the RAOU, come together to discuss the conservation of birds with politicians, including none other than Sir John Forrest, Premier of Western Australia. Having sailed all the way from Fremantle to attend a meeting shortly after the federation of the Australian colonies, the conservation of birds was also on his agenda. Now that's something I'd like to see.

Mike Bamford

CRESTED SHRIKE-TITS MATING

At 7:00 am on 6 September 2007 I observed a Crested (Western) Shrike-tit at the office of the Stirling Range Retreat. It was in a bush looking at its reflection in the office window. I then heard another shrike-tit calling nearby. I located the bird in the fork of a wandoo branch about 6 metres above the ground. The bird had its wings fully outstretched at about 45 degrees and was quivering as it called, with a somewhat querulous call. The bird at the office flew over, and after a few seconds the bird from the office briefly mated with the calling bird. This was an unusual and amazing display to watch.

I consulted HANZAB (Higgins and Peter 2002) and found no reference to mating. However, HANZAB does mention a quivering display and wing fluttering by young birds. Whitlock (1912) described courtship feeding in which a male fed an incubating female on the nest; the female quivered its wings and gave a querulous cry to beg for food. Interestingly, this observation was also in the Stirling Range. In another observation, young of the south-eastern subspecies were seen to beg for food by fluttering their wings and calling repeatedly (Sutton 1927).

My observation was clearly an adult female making the display. I did not follow the female to see if it was nesting. The male definitely did not feed the female, as it had no food while outside the office window. I observed a bird several minutes later foraging in another nearby wandoo. I assumed this was the male.

References

- Higgins, P. J., and Peter, J. M. (Eds) (2002). 'Handbook of Australian, New Zealand and Antarctic Birds. Vol. 6 Pardalotes to shrike-thrushes.' (Oxford University Press: Melbourne.)
- Sutton, J. (1927). Bird notes. *South Australian Ornithologist* 9, 72-75.
- Whitlock, F. L. (1912). Further notes from the Stirling Ranges, W.A. *Emu* 11, 239-243.

Frank O'Connor

CULTURED PATRON

On 13 August, a friend and I observed a very handsome visitor to the Art Gallery café. He seemed very familiar with the venue and seemed unafraid of the human traffic. He had frequent small snacks, but no beverage passed his lips. He was very nimble around the tables and chairs despite only having one foot. The other was just a "pegleg". You may also meet him if you patronise the cafe. "He" is a Willie Wagtail.

Claire Gerrish

DUCKS ON THE PONDS

My first stop when visiting Mukinbudin in the north-eastern wheat belt is the Wastewater Treatment Dam Site at the southeast entry to town.

Waterbirds gather here in surprising variety on the two treatment ponds: Australian Shelduck, Pacific Black Duck, Grey Teal, Hardhead, Australasian Grebe, Eurasian Coot, Black-winged Stilt and Black-fronted Dotterel were seen on one morning in late August. The shelduck and the grebes both had downy young with them.

In September 2006 I recorded similar species here and also a pair of Pink-eared Ducks and a White-faced Heron. There is sparse woodland surrounding this site. Red-tailed Black Cockatoos usually pass overhead.

It is worth noting that in Dowerin, the Wastewater Treatment site has been made into a visitor attraction. Some hessian screens are fixed to the high fences making a Bird Hide and visitors can approach the area without disturbing the waterbirds. As there is also a large area of remnant woodland surrounding the dams, the bird life is prolific and the walk trail near Tin Dog Creek is pleasant and informative.

Diane Beckingham

INLAND DOTTERELS AT YALGORUP

About 20-30 metres from the water's edge among sparse stunted samphire, two Inland Dotterels were seen on 31 August 2007 with scattered flocks of Red-necked Stints and Red-capped Plovers. This was at the north east of Lake Clifton between fences 2 and 3 and at 32°43'07''S 115°38'32''E. The beach here was about 100 to 150 metres wide and had rain puddles.

I had over 20 minutes of observing as they moved slowly in front of me keeping about 30 metres away. Eventually they grew tired of the game and, when they were spooked, flew south east with a flock of Red-necked Stints. They were a conspicuous sandy-rufous colour in flight.

See below for description written in the field before I could get back to the car and the bird books.

On 22 August 2001 two Inland Dotterels were sighted at Boundary Lake and this report was published in *Western Australian Bird Notes* 100, Page 24, 2001.

Other birds seen that day were more than 250 Red-necked Stints, more than 50 Red-capped Plover and three adult Hooded Plovers with no bands.

Field Description

- Taller sandy-rufous bird with very upright stance with black 'v' on breast.

- Legs long and light brown.
- Black stripe from forehead through or behind eye and below eye.
- Black band on shoulder. and back which joined with v in front.
- Considerably taller and larger than Red-capped Plover and Red-necked Stint.
- Head bobbing.
- Back feathers streaked or striated rather like a quail back - rufous and darker grey brown.
- Throat light buff.

Dick Rule

SEIZING THE DAY WITH SKY FROGS

Is it my advancing years, or perhaps some septuagenarian familiarity with the activity breeds inertia?

Whatever, I know that on too many twitching occasions these days I just feel 'birded out', certainly much less inclined to be camera-burdened. Even the very thought of dashing back to retrieve my faithful Nikon TFN single-lens reflex camera and long focal lens, then frantically returning to set exposure, depth-of-field and composition, proves too much at the moment, though I know in my heart that I might well have to endure pangs later created by a nagging sense of wasted opportunity.

Despite such retrospective (introspective?) misgivings, the flesh grows less willing, and the spirit, alas, too often proves just as suss. Some other time, perhaps. In any case, why not just relax, observe and enjoy the bird life for itself, denying for once (or, thrice) an almost life-long compulsion to seize and freeze the moment on film. Yet, hardly *carpe diem* stuff. To be an overloaded Luddite, or to embark late in life on a veritable sea of lightweight digital gadgets, that is only partly the question.

But isn't it just the way ... the slippery slope ... when you don't make the effort, fail to seize the often once-in-a-lifetime bargain or other opportunity, or neglect even one that might just occasionally be expected to repeat itself. Some other time, perhaps.

Talking about slopes, our Myalup cottage lies at the bottom of a steep embankment to the sealed road above, where is our letter box, showing 28 as our official postal address, whereas our dirt driveway takes off from our Lot 17, in the opposite direction, eastwards on the flat. Anyway, from our secluded, storm-sheltered hollow, our near neighbours' houses are invisible.

Nevertheless, either my spouse or I quite regularly find somewhere in our garden stray and highly coloured beach-balls, or fuzzy-new, or near-bald, tennis balls, evidence of energetic children's games on the road above, or perhaps of their junior moments flinging playthings for pet dogs. The effect of gravity notwithstanding, I could not account for two rubber frogs that independently once appeared, out of the blue, onto our small lawn patch. It struck me as most unlikely that anyone could have thrown those frogs so far down from the road.

One of the rubber frogs was much larger-than-life, with garish markings and, proving squeezable, some sort of trick water-pistol, with the squirt jet housed in the gaping and lurid red mouth of the thing; the other toy frog was much smaller, with modest, but realistic, colours upon a softly solid body. I had to imagine that some of our visitors' children had brought them along and forgot them afterwards.

My whim thereafter was to place each frog as a decorative piece at the base of the foliage of a planter in front of our entrance porch. Weirdly thereafter, every now and again, I found one or other of the rubber frogs either somewhere back on the lawn, or in one of our garden beds.

As a mere male, I am not a great believer in poltergeists, witches and warlocks (although my spouse is one of those who regularly tells me she hears things that go bump in the night). Anyway, as time went on I tried to theorise about the curious arrival of those toy frogs. I had read about medieval wonderment over it's sometimes 'raining cats and

dogs' (actually a real-life phenomenon, now known to be created occasionally by powerful hurricanes sucking up objects and commonly depositing them many miles away). But raining frogs at our seaside Myalup hamlet seemed unlikely.

But, I suspect, everything comes to he who waits long enough. Sure enough, as I exited our front door one day I saw a plump Laughing Kookaburra perched on the bare branchlet of a tuart that dominates our small lawn. The bird had some outsize prey in its beak, which it was busily thrashing, left then right, to death against its perch. It turned out to be the smaller of the two toy frogs. So it seemed likeliest to me that an outsider, or one of our resident 'kookies', had originally delivered the frogs to us from someone else's property.

I rate Galahs as smarter than 'kookies', though 'kookies' are not complete mugs. So I still wonder why our frog-hunting visitors took so long to catch on to the toy-frog deception. Anyway, the smaller toy frog has long since gone missing, probably sky-dropped into someone else's yard.

As you likely guessed, I did actually think about it at the time, but could not be bothered to nip back into the house for my bulky Nikon camera. Another time, perhaps. But, isn't it just the way: the frog-thrashing incident has not since been repeated. And, of course, I now regret I cannot provide a



Laughing Kookaburra
Photo by Tony France

'kookie' action picture to go with this article. Even so, now we have a hanging basket on the self same 'kookie' killing-perch where I recently saw and almost immediately took a photo (now digital, by the way) of what could well be the same plump (dumb?) bird, and took one exposure a little later of the remaining rubber frog.



Toy Frog
Photo by Tony France

If there is a carping moral for reluctant 'senior moments', should it be, "Never do on the moment what you can put off till much later"?; or should that really be the other way around? Whatever.

Tony France

CHANGING BIRD PATTERNS ON HERDSMAN LAKE SOUTH SHORE

Following the September equinox the southern shoreline of Herdsman Lake was quite shallow because of the flooding of the lawn area during previous continuous rain.

A family of Pink-eared Ducks with ducklings about one week old were dabbling in these shallows with both mother and father birds murmuring encouragement.

The Grey Teal were displaying courtship: the male swimming approximately 60 cm in front of the female, both bobbing their heads in unison. The male in all his glory was swimming with slightly raised wings displaying the broad black band on the wing with dazzling white bands of approximately the same width above and below the black band.

Eurasian Coot numbers were greatly reduced from the 4000 birds constantly seen three months previously. Now there was only one large group of approximately 70 birds grazing on the lawn area. Six of these birds had albino feathers. None of these birds revealed the same albino patterns as seen in the coots from May to July when the bilaterally identical albino patterns distinctly identified each bird. Each bird had bilaterally identical albino feathers, producing a unique pattern on various parts of wing or on the chest. These patterns made for easy identification of individuals as they often turned up in a different group of grazing birds.

M H Bremner

TRILLERS IN MANDURAH

This observation is dated 16 October 2007 and was recorded in Casuarina thicket at the Samphire Cove Reserve, Mandurah. The reserve lies to the north of the western ramp of the bypass road bridge over the Peel/Harvey estuary.

I was unable to identify a small, modestly coloured bird until two unmistakable male White-winged Trillers joined it. I watched this trio of trillers again on the following day, when it had moved into a patch of Tuart woodland on the southern side of the bridge.

This observation is hardly remarkable but I record it to emphasise the value of small but well protected reserves, such as Samphire Cove, in attracting additional species to the centre of a rapidly developing city.

Frank Pridham

BIRDS OF THE MARGARET RIVER TOWNSHIP

I have lived in Margaret River for the past ten years and kept records of the birds in the Augusta-Margaret River Shire over that time. For more than nine years I lived on a small block one street west of the main street and then moved to a new address on a hectare or so 1 km north-west of town where I stayed for around eight months.

At the most recent address I decided to attempt to keep a daily record of the birds present. The property was away from the noise of the town and closer to Karri and Marri forest. The area included the house surrounded by kikuyu grass and a small garden along the front veranda with Kangaroo Paw, Chinese Tallow and smaller plants. Peppermint trees were dotted around the grounds and in front was a horse paddock. Marris and other eucalypts of varying sizes flanked the block. Several pine trees added to the mixture. One large pine tree stood 50 metres from my front windows. To one side was a soak surrounded by ti-tree and bracken. The houses next door had introduced grevilleas and other plants. Fencing was post and wires (great for small birds).

My observations of the birds in the garden were made throughout each day as I went about my usual activities. There were variables such as time spent watching and weather conditions. When at home my early morning cup of tea on the veranda was a good opportunity to watch the birdlife. I counted the numbers of birds where possible. I kept breeding information not shown here. Despite the short number of months recorded, interesting information was obtained.

The most bird species seen on one day was 26 on 7 January 2007.

The total number of species recorded over the period was 51, compared with 47 at my previous address. Thirty-eight species were common to both addresses.

New Holland Honeyeaters were seen on all 155 days surveyed, followed by Australian Ringneck on 147 days, Red Wattlebird on 138 days, Australian Magpie on 130 days, and White-breasted Robin and Silveryeye on 124 days.

South west endemic species found during this survey were Baudin's (Long-billed) Black-Cockatoo, Western Rosella, Red-capped Parrot, Red-winged Fairy-wren, Western Spinebill, White-breasted Robin and Red-eared Firetail.

	Oct 2006	Nov	Dec	Jan 2007	Feb	Mar	Apr	Total	Comments
No. of days	5	29	22	28	22	24	25	155	
Species recorded each month									
Australian Wood Duck				1				1	1 flying over
Pacific Black Duck	2							2	1 pair
White-faced Heron					1	1		2	1 flying over
Straw-necked Ibis					1			1	40 flying over
Square-tailed Kite					1			1	1 over trees
Whistling Kite				1	1			2	Single bird
Brown Goshawk				1	1			2	1 in pine tree
Wedge-tailed Eagle				1				1	1 flying over
Little Eagle		1			2	2		5	Single bird
Common Bronzewing	3	16	7	12	14	12	17	81	2-4 birds
Red-tailed Black-Cockatoo	2	2	6	10	17	8	9	54	3-5 birds
Baudin's (Long-billed) Black-Cockatoo	3	15	12	21	15	11	3	80	Min 2 max 40
Galah	1	13	19	21	17	21	21	113	Min 3 max 40
Purple-crowned Lorikeet		7	3	1	5	3	12	31	Flocks of 5-10
Western Rosella		3	1	4	3	6	9	26	3-4 birds
Australian Ringneck ('28 Parrot')	3	26	21	27	21	24	25	147	2-10 birds
Red-capped Parrot	2	12	10	14	5	1	8	52	2-3 birds
Fan-tailed Cuckoo		1						1	1 bird seen
Shining Bronze-Cuckoo	2	12	10	2	1			27	Single bird
Southern Boobook	1		3			1	3	8	Single bird
Tawny Frogmouth	1	7	8	14		7	11	48	2 adults 3 young
Laughing Kookaburra	3	17	19	22	18	13	14	106	Up to 5 birds
Splendid Fairy-wren	1	11	4	20	18	21	20	95	3-5 birds
Red-winged Fairy-wren		4	5	11	1	3	6	30	1-4 birds
Spotted Pardalote	2	18	5	14	8	12	13	72	1-2 birds
Striated Pardalote		7	9	3	1			20	1-2 birds
White-browed Scrubwren		1	1	7	8	7	8	32	1-2 birds
Western Gerygone	3	19	13	7	8	2	1	53	1-3 birds
Inland Thornbill		12	14	20	8	4	10	68	1-3 birds
Yellow-rumped Thornbill	1	1	2	6	10	15	11	46	1-5 birds
Red Wattlebird	5	29	17	19	19	24	25	138	1-9 birds
White-naped Honeyeater		1	1	4	5	6	4	21	Small numbers
Brown Honeyeater	5	22	12	7		4	5	55	2-3 birds
New Holland Honeyeater	5	29	22	28	22	24	25	155	Abundant
Western Spinebill	2	23	11	19	13	12	22	102	1-2 birds
Scarlet Robin			1	1	4	7	5	18	1-3 birds
Western Yellow Robin		1						1	Single bird
White-breasted Robin	3	21	14	24	19	18	25	124	2-3 birds
Grey Shrike-thrush		1		5	11	14	13	44	Up to 4
Golden Whistler	5	26	17	17	10	10	21	106	Up to 5
Grey Fantail	2	19	17	14	15	17	21	105	2-3 birds
Willie Wagtail				2	1	1	2	6	1-2 birds
Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike		1	2	1			1	5	Single bird
Dusky Woodswallow							2	2	Small numbers
Grey Butcherbird	1						1	2	Single Bird
Australian Magpie	3	20	19	20	20	23	25	130	8-10 birds
Australian Raven	2	13	13	12	16	16	18	90	1-3 birds
Red-eared Firetail						8	9	17	2-3 birds
Welcome Swallow	1					2	3	6	2-3 birds
Tree Martin		2	1		3	1		7	Less than 5
Silvereye	2	14	16	21	22	24	25	124	Numbers vary
No. of species seen each month	27	36	34	38	38	37	37		

Table 1: Bird species, number of days they were recorded in each month and approximate numbers.

I have noted three domestic cats during the survey. I have watched the behaviour of the Laughing Kookaburras. They often sit quietly on fence posts and branches catching grasshoppers and small reptiles. I did witness a kookaburra take a Splendid Fairy-wren on one occasion.

Emu	Carnaby's (Short-billed)
Stubble Quail	Black-Cockatoo
Australian Shelduck	Elegant Parrot
Grey Teal	Barn Owl
Australasian Grebe	Sacred Kingfisher
Little Pied Cormorant	Rufous Treecreeper
Australian White Ibis	White-cheeked Honeyeater
Black-shouldered Kite	White-browed Babbler
Peregrine Falcon	Crested Shrike-tit
Nankeen Kestrel	Rufous Whistler
Purple Swamphen	Magpie-lark
Eurasian Coot	Richard's Pipit

Table 2: Bird species seen in the Margaret River township within a 2 km radius of the post office, not found during the above survey. Some of these species were recorded at my first address.

And introduced birds seen:

Mallard/Muscovy – several birds at Rotary Park
Sulphur-crested Cockatoo – single bird (escapee)
Little Corella – single bird in Marri
Cockatiel – single bird (escapee)
Rainbow Lorikeet – single bird in main street

I encourage everyone to keep a garden bird list. Apart from providing an opportunity to improve bird watching skills, useful information can be gained over time.

Christine Wilder

Bird cards for sale!

Beautiful cards with a Christmas message
Only \$1.00 each including envelope (+ postage)



Willie Wagtail



Western Spinebill



Scarlet Robin



Singing Honeyeater



Silveryeye



Red Wattlebird



Splendid Fairy-wren



Sacred Kingfisher

Examples of some of the cards available at Peregrine House.
See our website: birdswa.com.au for colour images of all cards.

Blank cards also for sale.

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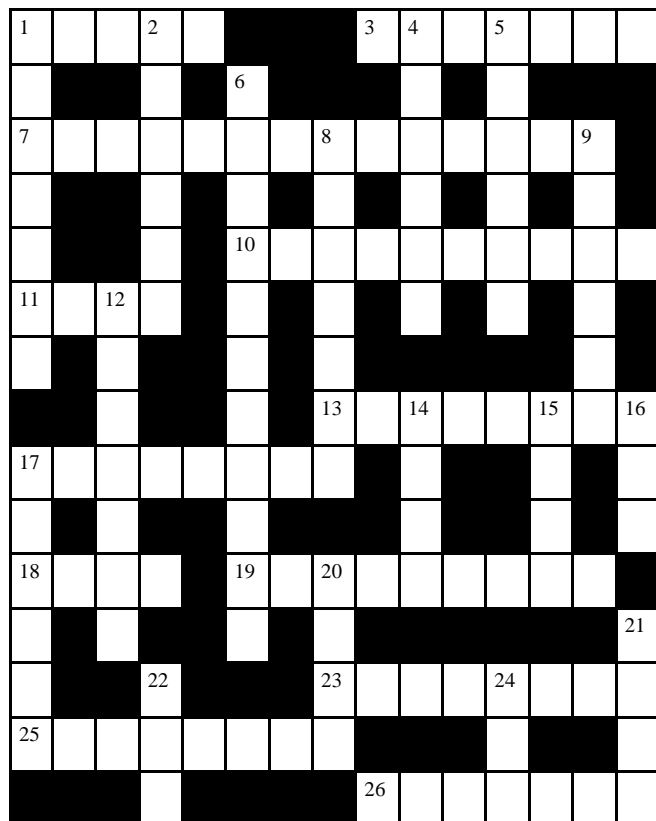
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By Pam Agar



Clues across

1. Feeling of elation and pleasure.
3. Genus name of White-faced heron.
7. Cockatoo introduced to southern WA.
10. Changing colour.
11. May be useful as nest material.
13. One who watches.
17. Often fascinated by baby birds.
18. Small widespread duck species.
19. Having two toes partially fused.
23. Dove of north west of WA.
25. To increase.
26. Eventually.

Clues down

1. Likely territory of Cattle Egret.
2. To leave.
4. Small aquatic birds.
5. Birds use colour or song to do this.
6. Ground bird of stony inland areas.
8. Brilliant red.
9. To provide.
12. Ring surrounding eye.
14. Large predatory sea-bird.
15. Differ.
16. Upper edge of nest.
17. May disturb insects for birds.
20. Area at back of neck.
21. Stratagem.
22. Physical feature not visible on birds.
24. Time span.



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Contact our Peregrine House office for sales
Tel: (08) 9383 7749

Birds Australia Emu badges also
available \$5 each + postage



Brown Booby nesting, Christmas Island
Sketch by Diane Beckingham



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Birds Australia WA AGM is on Monday 25 February 2008, 7:30 pm at the Tamala Hall, Environment Centre, Floreat.

We need to elect a new Committee and Chairperson, as Rob Davis, who has very ably served us for three years, is due to step down from that position next year. Nominations are called from members. Many people will have something to offer to assist in the management of our very active Western Australian branch of Birds Australia.

Please consider helping by nominating for a position on the 11-member Committee that manages the day-to-day affairs of the organisation.

Enquiries about the work of the Committee are welcome, and you can arrange to talk to Robert Davis, Liz Walker, or any member of the current Committee by calling the BAWA office on 9383 7749.

Chair for Birds Australia (WA) — apply by 31st January, 2008

Birds Australia WA (BAWA) is seeking a new volunteer Chair to help guide us on our mission of conserving, promoting and understanding Australian birds. BAWA is the regional group of a national organisation and represents some 1020 members in WA.

We seek an experienced and enthusiastic chair who understands the importance of good governance and sound business management, but has a passion for bird conservation and educating the public about our unique bird fauna.

Contact current Chair Rob Davis on

0429 702 973

or rob@graduate.uwa.edu.au

for more information.

Further details on BAWA are available at our website:

birdswa.com.au.

REMEMBER!

Our Peregrine House office is closed for the Christmas holidays from Saturday 22 December 2007 to Sunday 6 January 2008 inclusive.

New office volunteers are always welcome.



COMBINED CHARITIES' CARD SHOP

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Sunday 16 December: BAWA Christmas barbecue



A barbecue will be held on Sunday, 16 December at Peregrine House, commencing at 6:00 pm.

BYO meat, drinks, and salads
— all members are welcome!

Gold coin donation for hire of the barbecue would be appreciated.

For members and guests only.

Annual Hooded Plover survey 2008

Don't miss out on the birding experience of the year.

The annual Hooded Plover count will take place on:

Saturday 23 February 2008 and Sunday 24 February 2008

Surveyors needed.

For further information please contact.

Marcus Singor Tel: 9362 2742 or e-mail msingor@iprimus.com.au

Please find a survey form in this issue of *Western Australian Bird Notes*

CARDS SUB-COMMITTEE NEEDS HELP

The Cards Sub-committee of BAWA raises money towards the cost of running the office at Peregrine House by the sale of greeting cards to members and to the public. They are sold from the office, at meetings, at venues such as birding workshops run by the Community Education Sub-Committee, shows where BAWA has a stall, the Combined Charities Card Shop in the city and country tourist bureaux and gift shops.

We are looking for members, perhaps with marketing or advertising skills, who can help us expand our sales, offer suggestions for new outlets and help in contacting and supplying country venues.

Please contact me if you can help in any way.

Valerie Hemsley
themsley@inet.net.au
9364 6573

BAWA E-NEWS

Items for the BAWANEWS are to be sent to the e-news email address, news@birdswa.com.au. This will ensure they are sent out as soon as possible for you to get your message out. Items sent to the office email or one of the news teams could be delayed as we may be away on holiday.

The BAWANEWS has proved to be very helpful and we will endeavour at all times to send messages out on the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of the month.

BAWANEWS — GUIDELINES

This Newsletter is primarily for activities not published in Bird Notes. Items for publication should be sent to news@birdswa.com.au by the first or third Tuesday of the month. Items should be **less than 100 words** and relate only to BAWA supported activities. The final decision on publication rests with the news team.

Your news team, Elsa Dabbs, Ruth Greble
and Merrian Kuerschner

Conservation Priorities Forum

Ecology Centre, Bold Park, Floreat
Saturday February 16th 2008, 2.00 pm.

The Conservation and Research Sub-committee of BAWA has called for a special forum of members who are particularly interested in conservation for birds.

The purpose of the forum is for members to provide and discuss their ideas on the type and priority of conservation issues that concern them, and the type of actions they think BAWA should be undertaking to address those issues. The sub-committee intends using this input to develop an action plan for BAWA conservation efforts in Western Australia.

RSVP: BAWA Office 9383 7749

If you cannot attend the forum, we invite you to submit your ideas by:

e-mail to conservation@birdswa.com.au

or in writing to:

Conservation and Research Sub-
committee
Birds Australia WA
Peregrine House
167 Perry Lakes Drive, Floreat WA 6014

or by phone to The Committee on
9246 2026

WA WETLAND MANAGEMENT CONFERENCE 2008



World Wetlands Day, Friday 1 February 2008 Cockburn Wetlands Education Centre

The Cockburn Wetlands Education Centre invites all interested persons to contribute poster presentations and/or workshop presentations to its 4th Annual Wetland Management Conference to be held at the Cockburn Wetlands Education Centre on Friday 1 February 2008 in celebration of World Wetlands Day, which commemorates the signing of the Convention on Wetlands in the Iranian city of Ramsar on 2 February 1971.

The primary objective of the Conference is to provide an annual opportunity for the exchange of information and ideas between wetland practitioners with a focus on the latest developments about how to effectively manage and restore wetlands.

This year's theme follows the Ramsar theme for 2008 of *Healthy Wetlands, Healthy People*. Sub-themes include wetland management and restoration, wetland education and wetland policy.

Proposed Format The conference will include a combination of plenary and concurrent sessions. It will feature keynote presentations and poster presentations, workshop sessions and interpretive tours of local restoration sites. Groups are encouraged to contribute displays and other information. The conference program will be prepared in early December and speakers will be notified of their time slots and any other relevant information.

Contributed posters will consist of poster presentations and displays, which provide an opportunity to discuss your wetland project and allow for greater interaction between the presenter and the audience. Contributed presentations will take the form of a 4-minute oral presentation (optional), combined with a poster display throughout the day. Time will be allocated for authors to attend their poster stand for an informal discussion session with interested conference participants. Groups are encouraged to make shared presentations. Advice and assistance is readily available from the Centre if you are not familiar with this format. All accepted posters will be published in the proceedings. If you choose to present a poster please submit an abstract by Friday 17 November 2007. Abstracts should include a title, author(s) names, affiliations(s), address, telephone and email contacts, and a maximum 1-page summary of the content of the poster. The maximum size for posters is AO in portrait orientation (110mm high x 80mm wide) and A1 in landscape orientation (50mm high x 80mm wide). Alternatively, equivalent-sized posters may be presented as a combined series of A3 (297mm x 420mm) and/or A4 (210mm x 297mm) sheets. Free laminating services for A3/A4 posters are available through the Centre.

Workshops Expressions of interest are sought for presenters and facilitators for up to four concurrent workshop sessions featuring issues that address the wetland theme. Some possible topics include restoration techniques and case studies, water management, education programs and policy issues. If you choose to present a workshop please submit an abstract by Friday 17 November 2007. Abstracts should include a title, author(s) names, affiliations(s), address, telephone and email contacts, and a maximum 1-page summary of the workshop.

Proceedings Papers, posters and workshop sessions will be collated in the conference proceedings on CDROM. One copy will be provided to all delegates. Hardcopies will be available at additional cost.

Audience The Conference is intended to bring together community conservation volunteers, landowners, local and State Government officers and private sector environmental officers involved with wetland management.

Registrations A call for registrations will be issued in December. It will include details of the conference program and registration fees. Every endeavour will be made to keep the fees to a minimum to facilitate community participation.

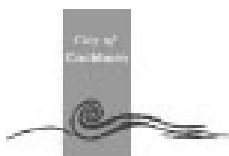
Sponsorship Expressions of interest are sought for sponsorship of the 2008 conference. Please contact the coordinator, Denise Crosbie, for further information.

Further details: Denise Crosbie, Wetlands Officer, Cockburn Wetlands Education Centre
184 Hope Road, Bibra Lake WA 6163 Ph/fax: (08) 9417 8460 Email: denise@cockburnwetlands.org.au

Current sponsors



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Cockburn Wetlands
Education Centre Inc

EYRE BIRD OBSERVATORY

The following courses have been scheduled and more are planned. Please contact the current caretakers, Beverley and John O'Brien, if you would like to attend.



FIELD TECHNIQUES IN BIRD STUDIES

25th November – 1st December 2007 Facilitator Stephen Davies

One of our longest running courses and always well attended. On this course you learn a variety of methods to study birds and be introduced to a range of census techniques. You will also be assisted with bird identification skills, encouraged to participate in bird banding and take part in on-going recording procedures at the observatory.

POST CONGRESS BIRD STUDIES

7th December – 12th December 2007 Facilitator Peter Sandilands

This course will follow the Australasian Ornithological Conference held from 2 - 5 December 2007. See our website: www.eyrebirds.org for details and programme.

CHRISTMAS AT EYRE

23rd December – 29th December 2007 John and Bev O'Brien, Caretakers

Christmas at Eyre offers that delightful combination of isolation and comfort, sorely needed in our busy lives. Grant yourself a peaceful week amongst the mallee and dunes of Eyre. Sleep, read, wander or swim at the nearby beach. You can even watch birds! Enjoy the beautiful natural environment away from the frantic atmosphere of Christmas in the city.

DUNE RESTORATION Special price!

6th January – 12th January 2008 Facilitator George Agar

Special offer to all people who love the outdoors and the environment. This is a marvellous time of the year for collecting seed (for future planting) and seaweed (for spreading on the dunes). Eyre is offering a reduced rate of \$60 per day for accommodation and meals for those participants willing to work four hours each day.

BUSY BEE Special price!

2nd – 8th March 2008 Facilitated by Caretakers

A busy bee is organised to assist the caretakers with maintenance and other small jobs around the observatory. We charge \$60 per day for food and accommodation for 4 hrs work each day. The rest of the time is yours to enjoy. You may not wish to stay for the full duration OR just a few days. This is possible if caretakers are informed.

Work to be carried out will include: a beach clean-up, weeding around the house, collection of seaweed and seeds for dune restoration work, as well as firewood collection and general cleaning of gutters and verandahs. Busy bees are popular so book in early with the caretakers and avoid disappointment.

AN INTRODUCTION TO NATURE PHOTOGRAPHY

11th – 17th May 2008 Facilitated by Simon Nevill

Simon is a well known WA photographer and naturalist, who has a long list of Natural History publications to his name. I'm sure this one will be rapidly booked out.

Alfred Cove Wader Counts

I would be interested to receive any (preferably) complete wader counts from the Alfred Cove area. These can be from 1980 or earlier to the present.

A description of the area counted would be beneficial. Did you count the off shore islands and the samphire flats?

Details can be sent to Marcus Singor

e-mail m.singor@iprimus.com.au

or 149a Bishopsgate Street,
Carlisle WA 6101

Banders wanted

Bird Banders (A Class licence) wanted to colour band Hooded Plover in Yalgorup National Park.

Banding to take place during the summer months (2007/2008)

Will pay competitive rates.

Volunteers also sought to assist in banding.

Contact: Marcus Singor
Hooded Plover Sub-committee
Tel: 9362 2742 e-mail :
singor@iprimus.com.au

NEW MEMBERS

The following people joined Birds Australia between 26 July to 31 October 2007. We look forward to meeting you at our excursions and general meetings.

J Alach, L Chrystal, F Coles, A Galbraith, A Galbraith, D Glennon AO, M K Hornsby, M & H Howell, R Kardos, J Malloch, L & K McDowall, R McGregor, S Murphy, G Osborne, J Prefumo, M & H Prickett, L Purdy, S Pynt, A Reid, J Schlatter, B Smith, I Stewart, R Sulastin, J & J Wood

CRUISING THE MURRAY RIVER

Proud Australia Nature Cruises have offered BAWA members this fantastic opportunity to explore the lower Murray River at an attractive rate and with a significant financial benefit to BAWA.

With a resident Ecologist passengers experience unique Nature Cruising & encounter The River at its best. Take a journey into history at Ngaut Ngaut Aboriginal Conservation Park. On a small boat, glide through the lagoons and inlets to see prolific birdlife. The Nocturnal Discovery is an insight to abundant wildlife, including the Southern Hairy Nosed Wombat and as dusk falls, enjoy a bush BBQ on the golden sands of the River bank.

Catering for a maximum of only 36 passengers, this boutique product provides the ideal environment for passengers to relax, cruise & unwind and spot birds. The well appointed bar, lounge and dining area provides the perfect location for indulging in the culinary delights of our executive chef, while viewing the passing Australian scenery. The vessel boasts 18 spacious Riverview rooms. Each cabin has twin or double beds, individually controlled air-conditioning units, private en suite, tea & coffee making facilities and hair dryers. All rooms offer spectacular Riverviews & open on to balcony areas.

This unique '7 day Bird Watching & Outback Nature Cruise' will include:

- Air travel from Perth to Adelaide return including all Taxes
- 1 night's accommodation in Adelaide staying at the City Stamford Plaza, Hotel Dinner and Breakfast included
- Adelaide City, Seaside Glenelg, and Mount Lofty, in the Adelaide Hills sightseeing tour
- A 5 night River Murray nature cruise aboard MV Expedition – with **all meals**, ensuite/riverview accommodation & daily nature based shore excursions guided by an ecologist such as:
 - *Onshore BBQ campfire night with live Aussie entertainment*
 - *Reedy Creek Environmental Park.*
 - *Lagoon trips aboard a small boat through the backwaters and inlets guided by a qualified ecologist, a perfect, unspoilt place to spot the river's most famous birds*
 - *Ngaut Ngaut Conservation Park*
 - *Murray Aquaculture*
 - *Nocturnal Tours*
- All meals and transfers as stated in the itinerary

This 7-day holiday will sell from **AUD\$2350 per person**, fully inclusive. **Nothing else to pay!** This offer will be exclusive to BAWA members, with a suggested departure date during June - July 2008, to allow for sufficient lead time.

The BAWA office holds a DVD and further information on this expedition for anyone interested.

The financial benefit to BAWA is the offer to:

- Provide a royalty payment of AUD\$100 per booking for all bookings received through BAWA.

Based on 15 bookings received in total		
15 bookings @ an average of AUD\$2350 per person	AUD\$35,250.00	
Financial Return to BAWA		
Royalty payment of AUD\$100 per booking received	AUD\$1500.00	
Estimated value of FREE holiday		
'7 Day Bird Watching & Outback Nature Cruise'	AUD\$2350.00	
TOTAL FINANCIAL RETURN TO BAWA		AUD\$3850.00
Based on 30 bookings received in total		
30 bookings @ an average of AUD\$2350 per person	AUD\$70,500.00	
Financial Return to BAWA		
Royalty payment of AUD\$100 per booking received	AUD\$3000.00	
Estimated value of 2 FREE holidays		
'7 Day Bird watching & Outback Nature Cruise'	AUD\$4700.00	
TOTAL FINANCIAL RETURN TO BAWA		AUD\$7700.00

If you are interested in this offer please contact Brice Wells, telephone: 08 9255 3710 or the BAWA office.



ALBANY BIRD GROUP

August 2007 outing

Having met at Baker's Junction with rain threatening, 12 of us decided to cross the road to the Riverview Golf Course, which is always rewarding. We saw, amongst others, White-breasted, Scarlet and Yellow Robins, as well as Red-tailed Black-Cockatoos. It showered periodically, and we headed for Prideaux Road where we saw a few more bushbirds, and found the wildflowers beginning to come out. We had lunch at the Lower Kalgan bridge picnic area and the day's count was 44 species.

Charlie Davies

September outing

Seventeen people met for a walk round the bush area in Kambellup. The highlight was a group of nesting Little Pied Cormorants on the far bank of the Kalgan River. A Painted Button-quail was seen, as well as Blue-breasted, Splendid and Red-winged Fairy-wrens, and also Southern Emu-wrens. All the usual parrots were there. The bush was very dry indeed, and looked stressed. The final count was 48 species.

Liz Davies

October outing

A very wet day on Monday the 8th, and only a few of us who had accommodation booked at The Retreat in the Stirlings braved the weather. Those who had been going to camp arrived early on Tuesday morning, when 14 of us set off to

the Yongergnow Australian Malleefowl Centre at Ongerup. Still lots of rain, which made the locals ecstatically happy as it had come just in time to save their crops. So although our birdwatching was rather curtailed, we couldn't help but be happy for them.

Yongergnow is an amazing place. It is run by the Malleefowl Preservation Group, which is proudly community owned, and staffed by local volunteers. It has a wonderful display of the story of the Malleefowl and its habitat. It has galvanised local community conservation and encouraged economic development activities.

Two Malleefowl patrol the very large aviary at the Centre. Hopefully they might breed next year, but the female is still

too young to breed this year. Between heavy showers, we managed to walk around the aviary, and also two wildflower tracks set out nearby. We thoroughly congratulate Judy O'Neil and all her helpers on a truly remarkable achievement. It should be visited by everyone.

Judy then took us to her farm, which has several active Malleefowl mounds. We followed a track through a fenced off area of mallee where we saw four active mounds and several Malleefowl. The rain

held off till we were on our way back to our cars, when the heavens opened again. A most enjoyable day.

Charlie Davies



Albany Bird Group in the field.
Photo by Charlie Davies



Malleefowl seen on the Albany Bird Group's October outing.
Photo by Charlie Davies



Yongergnow Australian Malleefowl Centre, Ongerup
Photo by Charlie Davies

HERDSMAN LAKE, Pony Club area, 12 August

Over 15 birds braved the cold, early start to a most enjoyable bird walk in perfect weather. Good looks were had of all the birds seen, thanks to the people who brought their 'scopes. We saw 61 species of bush and waterbirds. The Red-capped Plovers and Richard's Pipits were still seen despite all the building projects and unleashed dogs. The large flock of almost resident Glossy Ibis were busy feeding all around the lake. Four raptors were seen during the walk, including a Wedge-tailed Eagle. A White-winged Triller (non breeding) was found in the same tree where one had been seen a couple of years back. Great Cormorants were still breeding on the dredge. We saw several hungry chicks being fed. Pacific Black Ducks were also breeding. Eight species of duck were seen, mostly Hardheads.

We had morning tea under a tree where Magpie-larks were building their mud nest.

Claire Gerrish

LAKE GWELUP, STIRLING, 1 September

Twenty-two people met at Lake Gwelup on a lovely morning and six were non members including the Friends of Lake Gwelup. The Stirling Times had a photographer there taking photographs of some members of the group.

Lake Gwelup dried up last summer and had only refilled with water in the last month so good numbers of duck, coot, grebes and Black Swans had returned. A Glossy Ibis flew over, as did a Brown Goshawk and we had excellent views of a Swamp Harrier circling the lake. A Shining Bronze-Cuckoo was heard 'calling the dog' but not seen and Splendid Fairy-wrens that had not been seen in the area for some time were also seen. Most people had good views of both Spotted and Striated Pardalote and Clamorous Reed-Warbler sitting out on a reed calling.

Following morning tea most of us went to look at the bush on the northern side of the lake assisted by Wayne Eddy, from the Friends of Lake Gwelup. The wild flowers were magnificent with a large variety present including four orchid species. Spider Orchids, Cow Slip Orchids, Pink Fairy Orchids and carpets of Donkey Orchids were wonderful to see in this piece of small remnant bush. The Western Wattlebird was located in the flowering banksias.

A total of 47 species of birds were seen.

Sue Abbotts

KARNUP RESERVE, 9 September

Eighteen members enjoyed the fine day along with 32 birds seen at Karnup Reserve on Sunday. The flora was also very good this year with many orchids. It was hard to know where

to look, either up for birds or down for flowers. The Western Yellow Robins eventually showed themselves with most members getting a good look at the resident three. Interesting sightings were also the number of ducks (Australian Wood, Australian Shelduck and Pacific Black) and an Australian Pelican flying over.

The continuation to Baldvis Nature Reserve was quite a disappointment. Housing developments have surrounded the area and as a result the bird population has dropped markedly. It is now too small an area with no surrounding bush for support. Let us hope the same thing does not happen to Karnup.

Mary Vaughan

LAKE CLAREMONT, 13 September

Despite the heavy rain nine people joined David on a walk around Lake Claremont. Fortunately, as we set out, the rain stopped and we all enjoyed a very good excursion. The lake was full of water, but the variety of ducks was small. Several Eurasian Coots were nesting and a Purple Swamphen was seen in the reeds with three young chicks, while a pair of Black-shouldered Kites perched in a tree watching the scene.

Altogether thirty eight species were seen and a very pleasant walk was enjoyed by all thanks to David's guidance.

Maureen Cawley

FORRESTDALE LAKE, 23 September

Sixteen people met at the Moore Street car park for a very pleasant morning excursion. From the recently built limestone viewing point, we looked across acres of typha to see many Black Swan, some with cygnets, the dominant waterbird on this day. With no exposed mud and the water depth about 30 cm, we decided to walk to the east side of the lake via the Banksia woodland trail. Here from the high vantage site at the appreciated rest chair, we looked west over the lake to see Swamp Harrier, Black-winged Stilt, Australian Shelduck and other regular species.

Returning back to Moore Street via the same trail, interesting woodland birds were seen, White-winged Triller, Grey Shrike-thrush and Splendid Fairy-wren. With time still to spare after morning tea, we went to nearby Stirling Road swamp. This open wetland is private property, but has good viewing for telescopes from Stirling Road. Here we saw 12 waterbird species, with ten White-necked Heron featuring.

Our morning walk at Forrestdale Lake produced 44 species of which 33 were bushbirds.

David James

THE JAURDI JAUNT, 28 September – 1 October

The long weekend of September saw a group of 23 BAWA members enjoying the delights of Jaurdi Station, not far west of Coolgardie, close enough to the east-west rail line to hear the trains trundling past at night. The weekend was planned and ably led by Clive and Wendy Napier, who had arrived on Thursday and had tried wrecking their caravan on the access track suggested by DEC.

Thankfully, as a result, Clive and Wendy had returned and marked a much better alternative road for everyone else to use.

Over the next few days the group travelled many of the tracks around the station, being careful not to fall down any of the numerous old mine shafts. The station has an interesting variety of landforms and soil types from yellow sand to dark red ironstone. The vegetation is surprisingly dense in parts but is showing signs of the drought in that part of the country, with most of the dams being dry. The few dams still containing water were a focus for many birds.

Overall the group saw a total of 63 species on Jaurdi Station. Highlights were Little Woodswallows and Peregrine Falcons at a large breakaway filled with old mine workings. Others were a Tawny Frogmouth, Red-backed Kingfisher, Crested Bellbirds and White-eared Honeyeaters. Two members on the drive in also saw a pair of Spotted Nightjars, but a search during the weekend failed to find them again. We also became quite familiar with Gilbert's Whistler, especially when one flew in and perched right above Clive's head as he demonstrated their call on his tape recorder at the campsite. An interesting find was a pebble dragon, which looked very much like an animated red ironstone pebble with a twig for a tail. As expected with the lack of water there was an absence of waterbirds in the final count.

The camping area was typical of an outback station with a huge area where we could spread out as much as we liked. The facilities were good, and we all enjoyed the weekend immensely. Unfortunately the weekend was over all too soon.

However a smaller group of five vehicles and 11 members continued on with Clive and Wendy for a further ten days. This took us first to Coolgardie, south to Moir's Rock near Norseman, and then on to Newdegate. Highlights of this part of the trip were a Black-breasted Buzzard south of Coolgardie, a climb to the top of Peak Charles for some, a swim for a couple of brave individuals in a very cool water tank at Moir's Rock, and 12 Hooded Plovers and a Malleefowl at Newdegate. Coolgardie provided the obligatory visit to a sewage farm giving several species of waterbirds and waders. Clive provided an endless supply of names for the verticordias and many other species which were flowering and which turned the latter part of the trip into a wildflower spectacular.



Nesting Tawny Frogmouth, Westonia
Common during WWF Bioblitz, Sep 2007.
Photo by Andrew Hobbs

Clive and Wendy had to leave at that point but seven of us then travelled on to Wagin and an overnight stop on Rae and Bob's farm. This included a quick visit to the Kojonup reserve owned by Bush Heritage where we saw 24 species of birds and 13 species of orchid.

The final count for the entire two-week trip was 116 species. The weather for much of the trip was pleasantly warm and clear but we did find out why the wheat belt exists, with 20 mm of rain over a couple of days in Newdegate.

Finally, a great thanks to Clive and Wendy for organising and leading the trip and making it into the really enjoyable experience that it was.

Andrew Hobbs

CHEYNE BEACH CAMPOUT, 28 September – 1 October

Both metropolitan and regional members gathered at Cheyne Beach in anticipation of an exciting weekend of birding, whales and wildflowers. Participant numbers

varied each day because of distance and football finals.

The "big three", Noisy Scrub-bird, Western Bristlebird and Western Whipbird were on the wish list for many. A Brush Bronzewing provided an unexpected preliminary bonus for some attendees. For early risers on Saturday morning and with the help of David Secomb, some had achieved two of their wishes by 7:00am. It did require one to be looking in the right direction when the Noisy Scrub-bird scuttled across the path and at least one person rued the fact that she was looking at whales in that moment. The Western Whipbird was calling on Saturday and some persistent work by David nailed its hideout ready for a further attempt on Sunday. Male, female and juvenile were seen by quite a few eager bird watchers.

The Western Bristlebird proved to be the easiest to see for a few lucky people who at different times managed to see one perched and calling. This allowed time for a really good look through the binoculars.

After all the early morning excitement you would expect the rest of the time to be a bit tame but that was not so. On Saturday, Ray Garstone took us on interesting drives through the surrounding countryside. His considerable plant expertise added an extra dimension to the experience. On Sunday, Ann Bondin led us through Waychinicup and further afield to Hassell Beach, swelling the species list from 71 on day one to just over 100 by the end of day two.

Whales also cooperated and Southern Rights were present in Cheyne Bay for most of the weekend. They gave some amazing displays as well as disturbing light sleepers with their constant blowing.

Thanks from all present to Ray, Ann and David for making this a really enjoyable and rewarding campout.

Merrian Kuerschner



Cheynes Beach campout
Photo by Merrian Kuerschner

Overall 44 species were seen and a great day was had by all. Let's do it again next year!

Sean Van Alphen

WALLISTON, 11 October

On this Thursday 14 birders including veterans Sue Abbotts, George Agar, Ron Dibbens and Hank van Wees went to check out the 34 ha of bushland at Walliston.

We had great views of Western Yellow Robins in two areas including a sighting of a nest, and some members saw a Red-capped Robin female feeding a chick. Rainbow Bee-eaters had arrived probably in this or last week, calling with their distinctive calls.

In total we recorded 32 species in two hours.

Michael Hancock

DELL FOREST, 30 September

On a mild, partly cloudy day about 20 members went on the Dell Forest walk with me. This is an area I have been surveying since I was 14. The morning started off slowly with Inland Thornbill and Striated Pardalote gleaning and picking in the upper canopy and a pair of Scarlet Robin pouncing at ground level. Walking through the former Dell orchard Australian Wood Duck and Pacific Black Duck were sighted on the two dams. Further along the fence line on the second property, well planted with natives, the resident Western Wattlebirds, White-browed Scrubwrens and Grey Shrike-thrush were foraging and gave us some great observations. A Sacred Kingfisher also made itself conspicuous on the upper dead branches of a Jarrah tree.

At the start of the forest gully the action was certainly catching everyone's eye as we stood in one spot for at least 30 minutes observing species such as Spotted Pardalote, White-naped Honeyeater, Grey Fantail, Golden Whistler, Western Spinebill, Weebill and Western Thornbill. Both Red-tailed and Carnaby's Black-Cockatoos also made their 'fly over' appearance. Making our way to an area of the Dell Gully that I call Elegant Falls, calls were heard of Fan-tailed and Shining Bronze-Cuckoo.

We had lunch at Elegant Falls where a single Tawny-crowned Honeyeater was seen and a small family of Splendid Fairy-wrens was putting on a show. Making our way back to the track from the falls an adult Western Tiger Snake was seen at close range. Everyone gathered around for a better look and although this made me a little nervous, our Tiger Snake friend took it all in its stride even posing, then slowly making its way under a small shrub.

On the way back to the car park the farmland provided us with sightings of Western Rosella, Australian Ringneck, Common Bronzewing, the rarely seen but increasing Singing Honeyeater, Australasian Grebe and a mixed squadron of Tree Martins and Welcome Swallows.

BEERMULLAH LAKE, GINGIN, 14 October

Roughly a dozen birders turned up to explore Beermullah Lake and its surrounds, hopeful that there would be some good birding to be had. We were not disappointed, as the meeting place was alive with birds. Rufous Songlarks were particularly conspicuous in full song and a number of White-winged Trillers were seen feeding on the road. However, there was better to come, as two Crimson Chats were found and proceeded to wander around on the road, affording most people good views.

After a brief scenic drive up (and down) the Brand Highway, we reached Beermullah Lake, where more White-winged Trillers, Blue-billed and Pink-eared Ducks, a single White-necked Heron, a number of Rufous Whistlers and a couple of Pallid Cuckoos were among the highlights. The best sighting was probably a pair of Freckled Ducks, and thanks to those who had brought 'scopes, most people were able to view them despite their being on the opposite side of the lake.

After lunch, the group explored a few more lakes nearby. Several Stubble Quail were heard, but they remained elusive as did a Brown Songlark, which was also heard. The first lake did have good numbers of Australian Shelduck, as well as Banded and Black-winged Stilts and a small group of waders, comprising Curlew and Sharp-tailed Sandpipers and Red-necked Stint. The second lake did not yield anything in the way of waterbirds, but a Whistling Kite was seen diving at a Wedge-tailed Eagle. A couple of people checked a third lake and found a flock Red-necked Avocets along with both species of stilt.

All up, 71 species were recorded. Thanks go to Ian Rudd for leading a successful days birding and to the owner(s) of the property for allowing us the chance to explore this excellent birding site.

John Graff

BROOME BIRD OBSERVATORY

During the last few months, migratory shorebirds have been returning to Roebuck Bay in huge numbers, and the good news is that there appear to be a fair number of juvenile birds in the mix. This will either be confirmed or denied in the coming weeks, when a large contingent of AWSG (Australasian Wader Studies Group) wader buffs from all over the world descend on the BBO for their annual wader and tern expedition in the north west. For the first time there will be a Nigerian ornithologist in addition to the standard Chinese, New Zealand, Taiwanese and British contingent. We hope that the weather behaves itself; an early but prolonged wet season has been forecast.

Rare waders have been rather scarce, if you pardon the expression. A small number of Pectoral Sandpipers and a single Ruff were found on the inland lakes. A juvenile Little Stint was seen among thousands of small waders a kilometre from the observatory. Numbers of Wood Sandpipers became impressive during late September. They recovered from the journey back from their Russian breeding grounds in the company of large flocks of Red-necked Stints, Curlew Sandpiper and Sharp-tailed Sandpiper, which were all seen feeding at the inland lakes. Oriental Plover and Little Curlew have arrived back from the Russian steppes. The fact that they have already begun to desert the plains for the beaches shows that the temperature is steadily climbing.

Presence of the Radjah Shelduck at Lake Campion became increasingly erratic until it left the area altogether, perhaps returning to its normal range in the east Kimberley. We hope that it has not fallen foul of a group of people seen hunting in the area surrounding the lake. Reports of Chestnut Teal have been treated with some suspicion because Malcolm Douglas' new crocodile farm has several free flying birds.

A Great Black Cormorant was seen during the BASQ Armchair Twitch. Our figurative armchair was located at 'One Tree', an excellent vantage point at a junction between several habitats. The BBO team managed to see a respectable 89 species within 24 hours, but we were narrowly beaten by a team from NSW, which saw 90. We blame our loss on the Magpie Lark, which proved surprisingly elusive on the day!

Migrant passerines are also back in the Broome area, and we have already recorded more Yellow Wagtails this year than during the previous wet season. It is always a pleasure to see and hear the Dollarbirds as they start to set up breeding territories near the observatory.

There are several paid and voluntary positions available at BBO in 2008. If you are interested in details please don't hesitate to contact us. Alternatively, if you're just after a holiday, the *Wave the Waders Goodbye* courses in March and April are beginning to fill up already, so we advise booking as early as possible.

Pete Collins and Holly Sitters



EYRE BIRD OBSERVATORY

A New Loo!!!! Hardly headline news anywhere other than at Eyre. Yes, a new Rota-loo has been installed this month, thanks to Lotterywest. It is a dry composting toilet and will take the pressure off the water supply. A crew from DEC Esperance erected it for us while there to install fire hydrants and other fire equipment. With constant improvements taking place, visitor numbers are steadily rising.

Caretakers are also queuing up to take their turn at a 'Holiday' at Eyre, many of them for the second and third time. Their reports usually start with... It's good to be back at this very special place called Eyre.

Caretakers' Report

The opportunity to act in a caretaker role at Eyre is enriched by the voluntary nature of the organisation and the history of enthusiastic teamwork in an atmosphere of mutual trust. The not-for-profit, no-growth ethic is exemplary and infuses the high regard in which the Observatory is held. The Committee should be justly proud of the history of restoration and conservation and will, we feel sure, continue to maintain the special atmosphere here. We commend the hard-working members of the EBO Committee.

In the 30th year it is salutary to all who have lent their weight at Eyre to remember that in 1969 author Geoffrey Dutton noted that:

"the high sand drifts are advancing on [the fine stone building] in a crescent of soft motion that in a few years will ride over it and hide it, as has happened at Eucla..." (*The Hero as Murderer. The Life of Edward John Eyre*, Geoffrey Dutton, William Collins Ltd, Sydney, London, Glasgow, 1967, p.125).

Summary for September

Temperatures ranged between 37 degrees and minus 2.

Following closely on the visit of Michael and Lesley Brooker, who last visited Eyre in 1973 (in the company of the notorious Johnny Carlisle), came the DEC crew of five who were soon ensconced, their swags and eskies crowding the front veranda for the five-day duration. The



The new Rota-loo and fire hydrant
Left: The finished product
Right: Trying out the new equipment
Photos by Bob Graham and Helen Gee

new fire fighting equipment (underground pipes, hydrants, trolley, steel cupboard in Monkhouse) was swiftly installed and the Rota-loo and toilet housing were duly constructed, with, bless them, ramp, rails and pavers! They livened up the old Station with good cheer and worked like Trojans.

We wish to commend the Esperance DEC works team. They worked brilliantly together from day one, putting in longer hours to ensure the completion of the job by Friday. The team worked with professionalism, skill, enthusiasm and good humour and were a pleasure to have here. When two 3 m girders were found to be missing, left behind in Sands yard in Perth, Ian Hughes spared no effort in providing a solution. There was a great sense of camaraderie once this very real hurdle was overcome. (Ian Hughes rendezvoused with Perry de Rebeira in Coolgardie, and for his spontaneous assistance Perry must be sincerely thanked.) The window of opportunity would have been lost had the all-important girders not arrived at Eyre when they did.

We wish the new caretakers, Bev and John, a wonderful time here.

Sightings

Birds: 89 species recorded

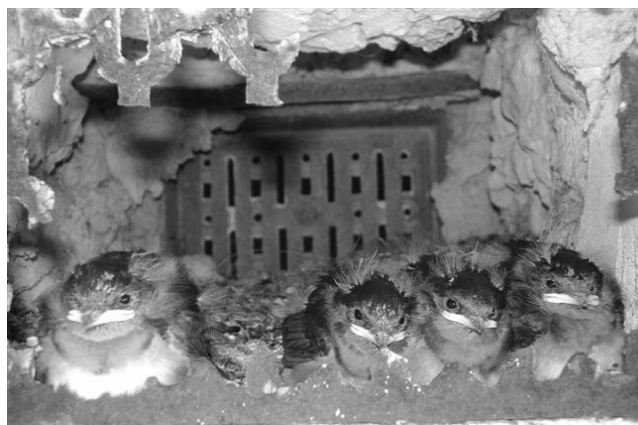
August

We saw four separate Emus with chicks, (the largest brood being nine), feeding on succulent *Nitraria* bushes behind the primary dunes.

The great sand dunes, formed of very fine white sand, are marvellous places for observing scats and tracks and this particular Emu group clearly walked across the open dune abreast, ten distinct sets of footprints being visible.

The days began with Welcome Swallows. Soon after we heard the peals of the Grey Butcherbird and then a Grey Currawong. When a Spotted Pardalote joined in it was time to expect the eight or so Brush Bronzewing to begin their ritualistic visit to the birdbath.

Around the observatory the White-browed Babblers, Welcome Swallows and Spotted Pardalotes were nesting. Red-capped Plover runners were first seen on 30/8/07.



Welcome Swallows
Photo by Bill Wakefield/Els Haywood



Emu with 9 chicks
Photo by Bob Graham

September

Around the house sightings were mostly of the regulars: New Holland Honeyeaters, Australian Ravens, Grey Currawongs, Singing Honeyeaters, White-eared, Brown and Brown-headed Honeyeaters, Grey Shrike-thrush, Brush Bronzewing, Red Wattlebirds, a small flock of about 40 Major Mitchell Cockatoos, Southern Boobooks, Blue-breasted Fairy Wrens by the score, White-browed Scrubwrens, Inland Thornbill, Spotted Pardalotes, five Yellow-throated Miners reported in the flowering mallee just to the west of the observatory, White-browed Babblers and a few Willie Wagtails. Some Rainbow Bee-eaters had arrived. The Welcome Swallows were breeding in the shed, but in very small numbers. The Major Mitchell's Cockatoos were in small but regular numbers, and more often in pairs at this time of the year. A small number of cuckoos had arrived, while White-winged

Trillers were first sighted on 11 September. White-browed Babblers, Spotted Pardalotes and Grey Currawongs were nesting close to the observatory.

On the beach, Red-capped Plovers were in healthy numbers though runners were few. Pied and Sooty Oystercatchers are resident but September saw the appearance of occasional small numbers of migratory waders: Great Knot, Red Knot, Ruddy Turnstone, Sanderling, Red-necked

Stint, Marsh, Wood, Terek and Common Sandpipers and a Pacific Golden Plover. Straw-necked Ibis, an Osprey, Black-fronted Dotterel and flocks of Caspian and Crested Terns were also present.

October

Another sighting of Slender-billed Thornbills was recorded and as we write, a Rainbow Bee-eater and a Crested Bellbird have been observed, and October promised to see the arrival of more of the 246 species recorded at Eyre.

New Species at EBO

Recent observatory visitor John was a new but very keen birdwatcher who jumped at the distinctive sound of a completely new species which was subsequently discovered to be a Black-capped Silver Whistler, which had Caretaker Bob reaching for the field guide at the regular daily bird count that evening.

Bob Graham and Helen Gee



Black-capped Silver Whistler
Photo: Anonymous

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Code-of-conduct for campouts

This code-of-conduct is designed to make BAWA campouts pleasant, safe and enjoyable for everyone.

1. Members shall notify the BAWA office if they plan to attend a campout, leaving name, address, phone number, and an emergency contact.
2. The leader is responsible for gaining consent from the owners or public authorities to visit proposed birding areas prior to the visit.
3. Family pets should not be taken on campouts. If children are taken on the campout, then parents shall take full responsibility for them and will be held accountable for their behaviour.
4. While the Leader generally seeks consensus on the arrangements for the day's events, if a final decision is required then this rests with the leader. Their directions should be followed, especially in public land or parks.
5. A compass and whistle can be invaluable if lost, or, to raise an alarm.
6. Participants should treat each other and the facilities provided with respect.
7. Participants wishing to leave any activities early should ensure the leader is advised.
8. Campfires can only be used if permitted at the time and must be fully extinguished prior to leaving the camp area.
9. Rubbish shall be disposed of properly, and if no suitable bin is provided then the rubbish shall be taken home.
10. Members should ensure that their vehicle is in roadworthy condition and they have adequate food, water and fuel, and suitable clothing including footwear. Daily checks can be undertaken using the 'POWER' check guide, ie, P = petrol/diesel fuel, O = oil, W = water, E = electrical/battery, R = rubber/tyre pressures.
11. When travelling in convoy having your vehicle 'lights turned on' and always keeping the vehicle behind you in sight, especially at turns is good practice. If they stop, check if help is required and advise the Leader.
12. The environment should be left in its pristine condition, and care should be taken not to disturb the wildlife or stock animals. Always leave gates as you have found them, ie, if they are open then leave them open, if closed then close them.

Note: Communication can be enhanced when travelling in convoy and when walking through bushland to call-in interesting sightings by carrying handheld two-way CB/UHF radios.

Disclaimer

Birds Australia provides insurance cover between the ages of 16 and 80 for members undertaking activities officially organised and controlled by the organisation. Members of the public are also covered under the same terms when participating by invitation in an officially organised and controlled Birds Australia activity.

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. When members arrive without notice it makes it difficult for leaders who have made arrangements only for the people on the list, so if you are unsure, put your name down. You can always cancel, and then we can advise the next person on the waiting list. With this information we will be able to ensure the group will be together and will know when to expect people.

An emergency contact number should also be provided in case of accident.

New members

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

Sunday 2 December: Alfred Cove, Melville

Half-day excursion

Meet at 8:00 am in the car park in Troy Park next to the Oval, off Burke Drive, Attadale. There should be plenty of migratory waders and waterbirds round the river, and there are always bushbirds in the park. Buff-banded Rails have been seen here.

For members and the general public.

Leader: Clive Napier

Wednesday 5 December: Bull Creek Wetlands,

Half-day excursion

Meet at 8:00am at Brockman Park

Reserve, Bull Creek. Travel along Leach Highway and turn south into Karel Avenue, then turn right into Brockman Avenue. At the roundabout take the third exit, which is Stringfellow Drive, then first right into Mossman Crescent. The walk follows Bull Creek, which winds in behind the playing fields of All Saints College. It continues through Reg Bourke Reserve and finally around Richard Lewis Park which is a Lions Club rehabilitation project and memorial Arboretum.

The creek has Flooded Gums, Jarrah, Marri, paperbarks and casuarinas along its banks. Splendid Fairy-wrens, Western Wattlebirds, White-faced Herons and Yellow-rumped Thornbills have been recorded here.

Bring water, sunscreen and morning tea.

For members and the general public.

Leader: Sue Keogh

Sunday 9 December: Big Carine Lake, Carine

Half-day excursion

Meet at 8:00 am in the car park off Beach Road, Carine. Over 80 species have been recorded at this lake, including the three ibis, Buff-banded Rail, several species of duck, and various raptors. Bring your telescope if you have one.

For members and the general public.

Leader: Paul Marty

Saturday 15 December: King's Park, Perth

Half-day excursion

Meet at 8:00 am in the car park at the northern end of Forrest Drive, opposite the Botanic Gardens, near the junction of Lovekin Drive. There should be plenty of bushbirds in the area.

For members and guests only.

Leader: Charles Merriam

Sunday 16 December: BAWA Christmas barbecue

The annual Christmas barbecue this year will be, as usual, at Peregrine House, at about 6:00 pm, on the lawn at the rear of the building. Bring your own food and drink, and chairs if possible.

We have hired a barbecue so would appreciate a gold coin donation to cover the cost of this.

All members are welcome.

Sunday 30 December: Bibra Lake, Cockburn

Half-day excursion

Meet at 7:30 am in the first car park at the northern end of the lake off Progress Drive. Bibra Lake is a part of the Beeliar Wetlands chain and a large number of bushbirds and waterbirds can be seen here. Bring water, hats and suitable footwear.

For members and guests only.

Leader: Wynton Maddeford

Sunday 6 January 2008: Lake McLarty, Murray

Full day excursion

Meet at 7:30 am at the gate into Lake McLarty Reserve — look for the BAWA sign. Travel on the South West Highway through Pinjarra, turning right along the Old Bunbury Road, 5 km south of Pinjarra. Turn right into Mills Road (fourth turning) and continue along for about 10 km until you see the BAWA sign on the right. Take your lunch, wellies/old shoes, sun hat, insect repellent, water and telescopes. There should be a variety of waders at the Lake, as well as many waterbirds and bushbirds.

For members and guests only.

Leaders: Mike Craig & John Graff

Saturday 12 January: Woodman Point, Cockburn

Half-day excursion

Meet at 7:30 am in the car park at Woodman Point on Jervoise Bay. Turn right off Cockburn Road, into O'Kane Court, then left into Jervoise Bay Cove, and almost immediately right into Woodman Point Road. Drive to the end of the road into Woodman Point car park.

We will walk along the beach to Woodman Spit, and back along the other side to Cockburn Cement Jetty to look for waders and seabirds. Bring your telescopes.

For members and guests only.

Leader: Paul Marty

Thursday 17 January: Garvey Park

Half-day excursion

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. This area has a good variety of waterbirds and bushbirds. Species recorded here have included Buff-banded Rail, Spotless Crake, and Mistletoebird.

For members and the general public.

Leader: Hank van Wees

Sunday 20 January: Herdsman Lake, Stirling

Half-day excursion

Meet at 7:30 am in the Maurice Hamer car park. Turn off Pearson Street into Falcon Avenue, then right into Lakeside Road. The car park is on the left, opposite Heron Place. This is one of the waterbird refuges which never dries up. Bring your telescope if you have one.

For members and the general public.

Leader: Sue Abbotts

Monday 21 January 2008: Tamala Hall, Environment Centre, Floreat

Meeting, 7:30 pm

Note revised date due to the 28th being Australia Day public holiday.
Dejan Stojanovic, Conservation Officer (Carnaby's Black-Cockatoo) in the WA Group, will describe his work on the Recovery Project for Carnaby's Black-Cockatoo.

Saturday 26 to Monday 28 January: Australia Day Long Weekend Campout, Walpole

Walpole is situated 423 km southeast of Perth in the Walpole-Nornalup National Park. It is a picturesque area with tranquil waterways, and magnificent Karri and Tingle forests, home to many birds.

The venue is the Coalmine Beach Caravan Park at Walpole. Cabins — some with ensuite, plus powered and unpowered caravan sites, as well as camping areas, are available.

The leaders will be in residence from Thursday 24 until Tuesday 29 January. All are welcome at any time.

Book yourselves in and if you are serious book EARLY. Good birding for both water and bushbirds: the Walpole-Nornalup NP has 121 species on the BA database.

If sufficient people are interested there will be a boat trip around the inlet (cost \$35) with a well-known local guide, Gary Muir. The Caravan Park phone number is 9840 1026.

You must notify the BA Office as soon as you have booked.

For members only

Leaders: Wendy & Clive Napier

Saturday 2 to Sunday 3 February: Rottnest Wader Count

This survey is part of the twice-annual continuing survey of wader sites and bushbird presence on Rottnest Island.

Accommodation is approximately \$16.50 per night, at the UWA Research Station. This offers cooking facilities, refrigerators and bathrooms. You need to buy your own food or buy it on arrival. Transport around the Island and to the accommodation will be provided.

Numbers are limited to 20 people and members experienced in wader identification are required. If you are interested in attending please register your name and contact details, including e-mail address, at the BAWA office on 9383 7749.

For members only.

Leader: Sue Mather

Sunday 3 February: Peel Inlet, Mandurah

Full day excursion

Meet at 7:30 am in the car park at the western end of the Mandurah Estuary Bridge, under the bridge. We will first look around the bird hides, and the boardwalk associated with them. Those wishing to extend the excursion after lunch may also visit the shore at Coodanup. Bring insect repellent, your telescope if you have one, and come and learn about waders. This excursion will also contribute to the annual wader count.

For members and guests only.

Leader: Sue Abbotts

Sunday 10 February: Blackwall Reach, Bicton

Half-day excursion

Meet at 7:30 am at the junction of Kent Street and Blackwall Reach Parade. A pleasant walk along a bush track beside the Swan River is noted for its population of White-cheeked Honeyeaters. We will also look for waders along the Point Walter beach.

For members and guests only.

Leader: Eric Pyatt

Thursday 14 February: Waterford Foreshore, Salter Point, Manning

Half-day excursion

Meet at the Curtin University Boat Shed at 8:30 am. To reach the parking area travel along Manning Road and turn into Elderfield Street which is on the western side of the Trinity College playing fields. Proceed to the end of this street and the parking area is on the right side. The walk will proceed along the river front for about 1 km and return via a nearby park. Several species of water and bushbirds have been seen.

Do not forget your morning tea because, if time permits, we will move to Salter Point where other species can be seen.

For members and the general public.

Leaders: Barry & Molly Angus

Saturday 16 February: Tamala Hall, Environment Centre, Floreat Conservation Priorities Forum, 2:00pm

See Notices for details.

Sunday 17 February: Lake Joondalup, Joondalup

Half-day excursion

Meet at 7:30 am at Neil Hawkins Park, in the car park at the end of Boas Avenue. Sixty-nine species of birds have been seen here. There are always lots of waterbirds and bushbirds to be seen around this large lake, and there could be waders as well. Bring your telescope if you have one.

For members and the general public.

Leader: Tom Delaney & Paul Marty

Saturday 23 February: Wellard Wetlands, Baldivis

Half-day excursion

Meet at 8:00 am at the entrance to Wellard Wetlands on the northern side of Zigzag Road, 1 km from St Albans Road. Coming from Perth, turn left off the Freeway into Mundijong Road, then right into St Albans Road. There should be plenty of bushbirds and waterbirds here, as well as several species of raptors.

For members and guests only.

Leader: Charles Merriam

Monday 25 February 2008: Tamala Hall, Environment Centre, Floreat Meeting, 7:30 pm and Annual General Meeting

Kevin Coate (of Coate's Tours) will give an illustrated talk entitled "Birds, Animals and Reptiles of the Galapagos".

This meeting also includes the Annual General Meeting of the WA Group. See Notices in this edition for details.

Saturday 1 to Monday 3 March: Long weekend campout, Pemberton

It is three years since we had a campout at Pemberton in the cooler southwest. The caravan park is situated in lovely Karri forest with Red-eared Firetail and White-breasted Robin along the creek. Besides the Karri forest, we will also visit coastal heath and some more accessible parts of the D'Entrecasteaux National Park. A trip is planned to Windy Harbour covering some of the south coast for the Hooded Plover count.

Booking for camping sites and cabins by ringing the Pemberton Caravan Park

on 9776 1300.

For members only.

Leader: Sue Abbotts

Sunday 2 March: Bibra Lake, Cockburn

Half-day excursion

Meet at 7:30 am in the first car park at the northern end of the lake off Progress Drive. Bibra Lake is a part of the Beeliar Wetlands chain and a large number of bushbirds and waterbirds can be seen here. Bring water, hats, suitable footwear, etc. Snakes have been seen around here.

For members and the general public.

Leader: Mary Vaughan

Sunday 9 March: Yangebup Lake, Cockburn

Half-day excursion

Meet at 8:00 am on the new road near the Lake Yangebup entry point. Turn into Hammond Road from North Lake Road, drive along about 600 m, turn right into Yangebup Road. Travel 400 m to the Lake Yangebup entry point, and park along the new road beside the newly developed industrial area.

There may be muddy areas so wear rubber boots if possible and bring scopes if available. There should be good varieties of waterbirds and waders, and three species of crane have been sighted here. If time permits we will visit Kogolup Lake.

For members and guests only.

Leaders: Clive Napier

Thursday 13 March: Ascot Waters, Ascot

Half-day excursion

Meet at 8:00 am in the car park at the end of Tidewater Way. To reach the area from Great Eastern Highway, turn into Stoneham Street, then into Resolution Drive, and left into Tidewater Way. Continue through two roundabouts, over the bridge, and up to the car park at the top of the rise. This is getting better as the thousands of shrubs and trees that have been planted start to mature and blossom. A wide variety of habitats can provide shelter for many birds and it is well worth a visit to this promising site.

For members and the general public.

Leader: Tom Delaney

Sunday 16 March: Alfred Cove, Melville

Half-day excursion

Meet at 8:00 am in the car park in Troy Park next to the Oval, off Burke Drive, Attadale. There should be plenty of migratory waders and waterbirds round the river, and there are always bushbirds in the park. Buff-banded Rail has been seen here.

For members and guests only.

Leader: Sue Abbotts & Alan Collins

Friday 21 to Monday 24 March: Easter Campout at Quaalup Homestead in Fitzgerald River National Park

The Fitzgerald River National Park is recognised as an area of international significance, and has been classified as a Biosphere Reserve. It contains 20% of the plant species occurring in Western Australia, including the magnificent Royal Hakea. Many plants that are found here occur nowhere else.

One hundred and eighty four bird species have been listed, including rarities such as Western Ground Parrot,

Western Bristlebird and Western Whipbird. There is excellent birding around Quaalup Homestead and at Bremer Bay.

Quaalup Homestead has camping facilities, cabins and on-site vans. Easter is a busy time and they expect to be fully booked for this time of year so it is important to call and make a reservation as soon as possible.

Phone 9837 4124 and check their web site

www.whalesandwildflowers.com.au

or email: richelmann@web.de. Further information will be sent to you when you have registered at the BAWA office on 9383 7749.

For members only.

Leader: Sue Abbotts

Sunday 23 March: Lake Monger, Cambridge
Half-day excursion

Meet at 8:00 am in the most westerly car park off Lake Monger Drive. This is a good opportunity to see many species of ducks, waterbirds and some bushbirds.

For members and the general public.

Leader: Max Bailey

Monday 24 March 2008: Tamala Hall, Environment Centre, Floreat
Meeting, 7:30 pm

Nicole White, a PhD student in Biological Sciences of Murdoch University, will describe her work on White-tailed Cockatoos. This talk will complement but not overlap the talk on 28 January.

Sunday 30 March: Canning River Regional Park, Wilson
Half-day excursion

Meet at 7:30 am at the Kent Street Weir car park. The walk follows a 5 km circuit along the Canning River, viewing a large selection of bush and waterbirds, hopefully with sightings of the elusive Spotless Crake.

For members and guests only.

Leaders: George & Pam Agar



Crossword answers No 51

Across

1 pride, 3 Egretta, 7 sulphur-crested, 10 iridescent, 11 root, 13 observer, 17 children, 18 Teal, 19 syndactyl, 23 peaceful, 25 escalate, 26 finally

Down

1 pasture, 2 depart, 4 grebes, 5 entice, 6 quailthrush, 8 crimson, 9 donate, 12 orbital, 14 skua, 15 vary, 16 rim, 17 cattle, 20 nape, 21 ploy, 22 ear, 24 era

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60 Leicester St, Carlton VIC 3053

02/2007



Opportunities for volunteers



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

- ◆ **Atlas** — surveys for this are continuing — contact Cheryl Gole 9293 4958, e-mail <cgole@westnet.com.au>
- ◆ **Monthly Meeting Speakers** — contact Brian Wilson 9293 1094
- ◆ **Community Education Sub-committee** — members willing to visit schools, set up displays, attend shows and help with administration — contact Elsa Dabbs e-mail <dabchic6@bigpond.net.au>
- ◆ **Excursion leaders** — contact Sue Abbotts 9444 1607, e-mail <suechat@bigpond.net.au>
- ◆ **Card Committee** — BAWA's bird cards provide an important income for the organisation; assistance needed with marketing of cards, eg, possible outlets and distribution — contact Valerie Hemsley ph 9364 6573
- ◆ **Avon Community Engagement Project** — Carnaby's Black-Cockatoo recovery initiative in the Avon River basin — anyone interested can contact Gen Farrelly, on ph: 9881 9213, mob: 0429 202 753 or e-mail: <gfarrelly@wwf.org.au>
- ◆ **Carnaby's Black-Cockatoo Recovery Project** — the South Coast Project Officer is based in Albany and working throughout the South Coast NRM Region; if you have any information particularly re potential nesting sites or would like to volunteer in the project, please contact Raana Scott, South Coast Project Officer, e-mail: <r.scott@birdsaustralia.com.au> or ph: 9842 0011.

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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; **do not** embed pictures or graphics in MS Word.
- 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 the BAWA Office)

March 2008 issue: 1 February
June 2008 issue: 1 May
September 2008 issue: 1 August
December 2008 issue: 1 November

Calendar of events

Sun 2 Dec: Alfred Cove, Melville, Half-day excursion

Wed 5 Dec: Bull Creek Wetlands, Half-day excursion

Sun 9 Dec: Big Carine Lake, Carine, Half-day excursion

Sat 15 Dec: King's Park, Perth, Half-day excursion

Sun 16 Dec: BAWA Christmas barbecue

Sun 30 Dec: Bibra Lake, Cockburn, Half-day excursion

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Thu 17 Jan: Garvey Park, Half-day excursion

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