



EUROBODALLA NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Inc.

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NEWSLETTER NUMBER 166

WINTER 2015

The Little Curlew (*Numenius minutus*) – Gould 1841

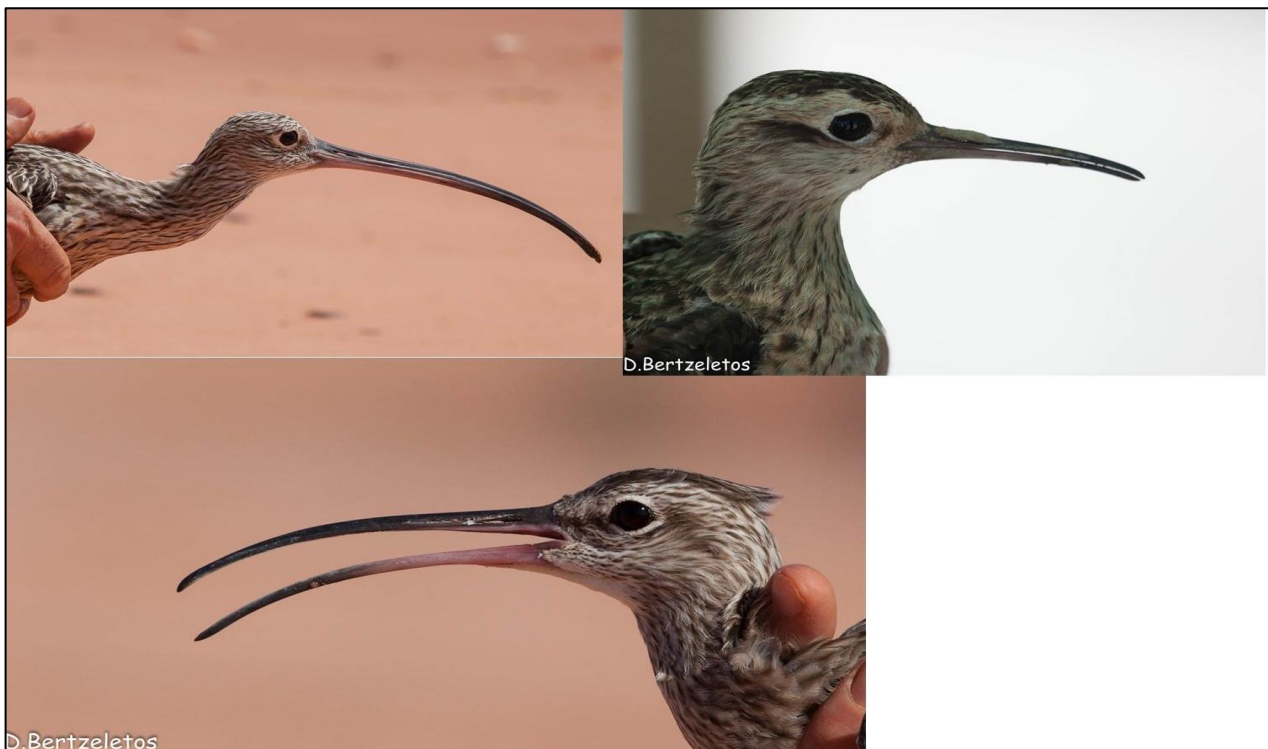
Taxonomy, distribution and habitat

The genus *Numenius* contains the largest of the shorebirds: the eight species of Curlew and Whimbrel. Not all these species are big with three, the Slender-billed, Eskimo and Little Curlew (*N. tenuirostris*, *N. borealis* and *N. minutus* respectively) being medium sized shorebirds. Of these three, only the Little Curlew is still numerous; the other two are very likely to be extinct and the Little Curlew is also declining in numbers.

All three species are short grassland species both in their wintering and breeding grounds. The Eskimo bred in the Canadian Tundra and wintered in Patagonia, the Slender-billed bred on the steppes around the Caspian Sea and wintered in Morocco and the Little Curlews breed on the steppes of northern China and Russia and winters on the savannahs of northern Australia.

Identification and behaviour

Three Curlew species occur in Australia, all of which are similar in coloration though quite different in size. At approximately 30 cm, the Little Curlew is the smallest. Its upperparts are uniformly mottled brown and black, the underparts are paler and the wing feathers brownish black. Apart from size the Little Curlew differs from the Whimbrel and Eastern Curlew in having a shorter, finer beak, a pale face, and no crown stripe. The images demonstrate this, with the head shots showing: top left Eastern Curlew, top right Little Curlew and bottom being a Whimbrel. The flight shots depict a Little Curlew on the left and a Whimbrel on the right. Note that these images are not to scale.





Photos: D. Bertzeletos

The best way to tell the species apart is from their habitat and behaviour. Little Curlews are grasslands specialists, where they delicately pick insects from the tips of vegetation; they rarely feed on mudflats. This is quite unlike the hunting strategies and habitat chosen by the larger two species, which are usually found on saline mudflats. When it becomes too hot on the grasslands Little Curlews do occasionally venture onto the beach and mingle with their larger cousins and other shorebird species and then the size differences are quite apparent.

Little Curlews are social throughout the year, but particularly on their wintering grounds in northern Australia they can form flocks numbering in the hundreds of thousands.

Diet and Breeding

Little Curlews are largely insectivorous throughout the year. In northern Australia they follow plagues of locusts and termite swarms. On their breeding grounds, they form loose colonies mid-June to August where pairs look after their clutch of three to four eggs. As is typical of many migratory species of shorebird, the adults depart ahead of the juveniles which are left to complete the migration on their own.

Conservation Status and Distribution in the Eurobodalla

Due to its large population the Little Curlew is currently listed as least concern under IUCN red list criteria. However, very little is known about the species biology and actual population and counts from northern Australia are declining. As such it will likely join most of the other migratory shorebird species as being threatened by human activities.

Little Curlews are rare vagrants in the Eurobodalla, however there are several records of small numbers from the Tuross Estuary and they have the potential to turn up on any short grassy area. Dimitris Bertzeletos

What's coming up...

Saturday October 10, 2pm Illawong Nature Reserve: Meet at the corner of George Bass Drive and Broulee Road, Broulee. Walk through woodland that surrounds Illawong Swamp. Little Grassbird, Australian Reed Warbler, Olive-backed Oriole, Varied Sittella.

Sunday October 25, 9am Belowra: Meet opposite the Bodalla Police Station. Julie and Peter Collett will lead a walk on their farm. Rufous Songlark, Diamond Firetail, White-winged Triller, Dusky Woodswallow.

Saturday November 14, 2pm Maulbrooks Rd, Moruya: Meet at the Eurobodalla Shire Council car park, in front of the library, Vulcan Street Moruya. Sarah and Michael Guppy will give us a brief talk on the research they have been doing and show us around the site to see what has been nesting and try to spot banded birds.

Sunday November 29, 9am Waders: Check the Field Meetings page of the website or call David, Julie or Mandy for the venue after November 25. The venue for this walk depends on wader activity, weather and water levels in the estuaries. If cancelled, an alternative walk will be proposed.

OUT OF SHIRE TRIP 2015
Lake Cargelligo, Round Hill and Nombinnie, 16th to 21st October

Lake Cargelligo is in central New South Wales. It is a popular birding spot and seasonally can provide some special treats at the Sewage Treatment Works. We plan to leave early on the 16th and will be returning on the 21st October. The trip does not require any strenuous walking though some of the days may be long as we visit Round Hill and Nombinnie. There we will be hopes for sightings of the Red-lored Whistler as well as Gilbert's Whistler. The normal selection of desert birds, including chats, Crested Bellbirds and a variety of honeyeaters will be targeted. A sighting of the Mallefowl would be an extra treat. Accommodation can be in motel, cabin or camping locations within the town itself. We will look to pool cars where needed. Please contact Lyn Burden (0408 183 510) to make any enquiries or to book a spot.

A warm welcome to new members...

Brian and Gretta Beveridge, Moruya Heads
Phil and Sue Green, Evatt ACT

Looking back over winter

I think most people will agree that it's been a cold winter. The reptiles must have felt it too as there were fewer winter records of snakes this year, with just one report of a Red-bellied Black Snake at Coolagolite and a Diamond Python at Pedro Swamp.

Winter storms brought a number of albatross close to the shore, including our more common species, Black-browed and Shy, as well as a juvenile of the larger *Diomedea* species, either a Wandering or Royal Albatross. There were a number of reports of single White-fronted Tern over the winter, and in August, 35 were seen at Tuross. It is unusual to have such high numbers of this species but Tuross seems to be where the larger groups gather. In 2009, 30 were reported and in 2007 over a thousand were present in October.

The Square-tailed Kite returned to the Moruya Heads/Pedro Swamp area as usual in the last week of July. However, the cold weather seemed to delay the return of many of our honeyeater migrants. While Noisy Friarbird and Scarlet Honeyeater began to call in the last week of July, it was late August before large numbers of these species and Yellow-faced Honeyeater arrived back in the Eurobodalla. The Silvery migration started in the last week of July but it was late August before it got into full swing.

It also appeared that August might be a bit early for Swift Parrots to head south in large numbers particularly if the winter's been cold. The Swift Parrot surveys in early August in the



Square-tailed Kite

Photo: S. Benjamin

Eurobodalla resulted in a single Swift Parrot at Wandera State Forest and a report of six birds on Mitchells Ridge Road, in the Bodalla State Forest. Spotted Gum was flowering in the Narooma/Tilba area and in Boyne State Forest. I decided to conduct more surveys in early September once our honeyeater migrants had returned, and found 100 Swift Parrots in Boyne State Forest on ironbark blossom. According to BirdLife Australia, this has been the largest group recorded on the mainland in 2015.



Brown Gerygone in the nest Photo: G. McVeigh

The colder weather didn't delayed breeding with Australian Magpie beginning to build their nests in July, Brown Thornbill nesting at Moruya and Brown Gerygone at Broulee in August. An Emu with six chicks was observed at south spit at Tuross on the last day of August. The wild population of Emu is quite well established in the Tuross/Potato Point area, and a report of an Emu at Brou Lake in July is only the second record of this species at that location.

The number of Pink-eared Duck at Comerang peaked in July with over 200 reported, and Freckled Duck numbers reached a maximum of 25 before declining in late August. Sightings and numbers of Brown Cuckoo-Dove are on the rise, with up to 20 reported at Maulbrooks Road Moruya,

10 at Narooma and 8 at Pedro in August. Peaceful Doves were seen at Bingie and Surfside, both new areas for this species. Julie Morgan

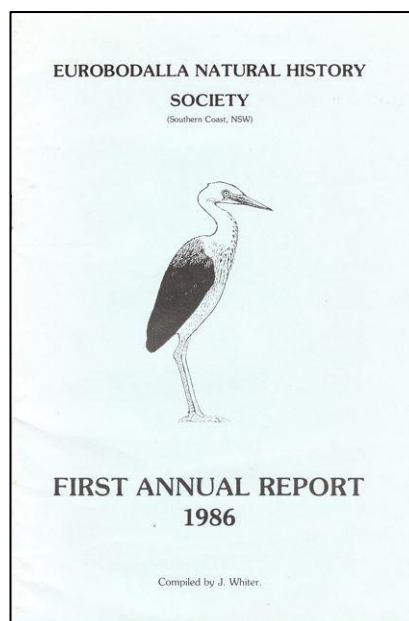
Nature in Eurobodalla (NIE)

Later this year, the 29th edition of NIE will be published, marking twenty nine years of records collected by members of the Society. The First Annual Report was published when the Society was only six months old – a reflection of the dedication of our early members to collecting information about the wildlife in the Shire. The publication was the brainchild of the Society's founding chairman, Stephen Marchant, a renowned ornithologist. As well as receiving an AM for his services to ornithology and nature conservation, he was awarded the John Hobbes medal for his contributions as an amateur to the field.

One of the main reasons for the establishment of the Eurobodalla Natural History Society in 1986 was to record annually the state of the Shire's natural history and to provide an historical record of changes in distribution and abundance. It was envisaged that these records would provide later generations with a fascinating glimpse of the natural history of the area, as well as valuable information to be used as a management tool to guide future land-use decisions.

The first publication had modest beginnings with ten contributors detailing birds, mammals, two reptiles and two butterflies. But it had ambitious goals: to build a long term record for the future and, at the same time inspire our group to continue to enjoy bird-watching and collect data on our sightings. It is now a much more comprehensive document and includes sections on mammals, reptiles, frogs, spiders, moths, butterflies and dragonflies.

Having twenty-nine years of data is extraordinarily useful – it enables us to observe the responses of the Shire's wildlife to changes in climate and habitat. Most notably, these include:



- a number of species that have become established in the Shire, most prominent of these is the Common or Indian Myna, which first arrived in Batemans Bay in 1992 and has spread slowly into most residential areas
- two species of pigeons have become well established: Crested Pigeons were first seen in 1986 and White-headed Pigeons in 1988. Both are now common breeding residents
- Southern Figbirds used to be rare vagrants but are now breeding and present all year round.
- Little (or Short-billed) Corellas first arrived in 1988 and recent counts confirm flocks of up to 500 in many parts of the Shire
- Channel-billed Cuckoos were once uncommon and usually arrived in early October but now flocks of up to eight are regularly seen from mid-September
- Eastern Koels were once considered rare vagrants and Eurobodalla Shire was regarded as their southern limit. They are now common and occur as far south as the Victorian border, arriving about a month earlier than 25 years ago

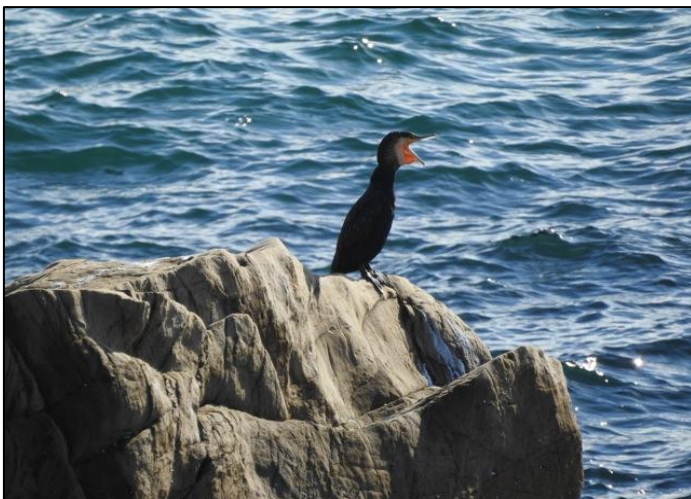
I am writing this in Science Week and have heard the term “citizen scientist” used numerous times on ABC radio. The term “citizen science” only entered the Oxford English Dictionary in June 2014 and is defined as scientific work undertaken by members of the general public. Increasingly citizen science is becoming a very important source of data about biodiversity - it is a growing movement, with 130,000 Australians involved in over 90 projects across the country. Harnessing the enthusiasm, interest and efforts of the thousands of people like us will enhance the range and depth of data available for analysis and research.

The thirtieth NIE will be published next year – another milestone for the Society. We encourage you all to become citizen scientists and complete a record sheet each month – the more we receive the more comprehensive is our data. And the more we learn about this beautiful part of the world. Record sheets can be downloaded from the ENHS website and are available at all field meetings. Copies of past editions of NIE are available – just ask Dave or Helen Kay. Helen Kay

Field Meeting to Moruya Heads, July 2015

It's rare that a field trip delivers everything that is promised, but the outing at Moruya Heads was one of those meetings....

We met on the headland at the top of Coronation Parade, and there was a stiff nor'easter blowing. Not the wind direction we were expecting in the middle of winter but we didn't complain as it brought the seabirds closer to shore. We could see up to 50 albatross off the shore, and from Toragy Point we could clearly identify Black-browed and Shy Albatross. Members also saw an albatross with a pinkish bill, but without any further information it was difficult to determine the species. A photo taken a few weeks later at the same location by Nicola Clark shows a juvenile of one of the larger *Diomedea* species, a Wandering or Royal Albatross. Other birds of interest included White-fronted Tern, juvenile and adult Australasian Gannet, Great and Little Pied Cormorant, Australian Pelican, Pied and Sooty Oystercatcher.



Great Cormorant

Photo: G. McVeigh

But it was the show put on by the local Bottle-nosed Dolphin and Australian Fur Seal that delighted us the most. We watched as a pod of about 15 dolphins swam up from Dolphin Beach towards the headland, then surfed through the waves. We were enthralled with their antics, particularly at the sight of them swimming through forming waves. Up at Toragy Point, at least 6 seals loafed about in the water with their flippers above the surface. The dolphins from the beach made their way up towards the headland and we watched as they swam near the seals. Then Colin sighted the water spout of a whale. We all turned our binoculars out to sea and were soon rewarded with the sight of whales appearing briefly as they moved southwards. It seemed that

the local Great Cormorant must have seen the show before because it seemed unexcited by the events of the morning.

I've often wondered why seals loaf with their flippers out of the water. I researched the behaviour and learned that it's a way of regulating their body temperature. Marine mammals spend a lot of their time in water and there are a number of features that help with thermoregulation; in seals this includes the skin, fur and the blubber. Seals can also regulate their temperature by lying in sun and huddling together in groups. The flipper is not a particularly well-insulated part of a seal and the capillaries are close to the surface so it can be used to warm or cool the body temperature of the seal.



Australian Fur Seal

Photo: G. McVeigh

There are a number of aspects of this type of thermoregulation. It's obvious that by raising its flipper out of the water and exposing it to the sun, the flipper absorbs heat and the seal warms itself. In addition, this action helps warm the animal because removing the flipper from the colder water will help minimise heat loss from the body into the water. The flipper can also be used to cool the seal. By raising the flipper out of the water, exposure to the air leads to evaporation of water from the surface of the flipper and this cools the animal. It has been observed that while basking in the sun on land, seals will flatten out their flippers to maximize the surface area exposed to the sun when warming themselves and raise their flipper into a breeze to help cool down. Julie Morgan

Flying Duck Orchid

When I moved to Moruya almost 15 years ago, I volunteered at the local historical society and met a wonderful lady, Nellie Greig, who came to Australia from Scotland when she was 10 years old. Her father, John Gilmore, was the granite quarry manager and oversaw the quarrying of the stone for the Sydney Harbour Bridge. The Gilmore family lived at Tuffwood on the southern bank of the Moruya River and Nellie grew up exploring South Head. She asked me where I lived and I told her, Pedro Swamp. "Ah", she said, "you have flying duck orchids there". I was intrigued.



Flying Duck Orchid

Photo: J. Morgan

I found the orchid she described growing on sand in the coastal forest east of Pedro Swamp. The Flying, or Large, Duck Orchid, *Caleana major*, has a flower that looks like a duck in flight. The *Caleana* genus was named after George Caley, an English botanist and explorer. The species in this genus were named "duck orchids" because of the shape of the labellum which resembles the bill and head of a duck. The labellum is attached to an irritable claw, or strap, and is located opposite the fertile stamen. In a subsequent review of the genus, all of the duck orchid species, apart from *Caleana major*, were moved to another genus, *Sullivania*. Duck orchids occur only in Australia.

The flower of the Flying Duck Orchid is between 2-2.5cm long and 6-7mm wide. The flower stem is 20-40cm long and quite thin and wiry. Two to four flowers grow on each stem. The leaf is

reddish green on the upper surface and a deep maroon underneath, and is between 8-12cm long and 6-7mm wide. The Flying Duck Orchid grows in small colonies in sandy and gravelly soils in open forest and

heathland up to 600 metres. It is found in Queensland, NSW, Victoria and Tasmania and South Australia and flowers September to January.

The Flying Duck Orchid flower attracts male sawflies to the plant by mimicking a female and then pollination occurs in a process called pseudocopulation. There are two possible explanations for how the flower attracts the male sawfly. Some authors believe that the flower releases a chemical that mimics a female sawfly and support for this includes observations of the sawflies approaching the plant from downwind. Others subscribe to the theory that the colour of the orchid, maroon and green, acts as a visual attractant. The sawfly species thought to visit the orchid include *Lophyrotoma leachii* and *Pterygophorus sp.*

The plant has two pollination strategies. When the male sawfly lands on the labellum it causes the strap to contract and that pulls the labellum shut, trapping the sawfly against the body (column) of the orchid. It is held for about 90 seconds and the struggle releases the pollen which is scattered over the stigma leading to self-pollination. When the sawfly leaves the flower, it has pollen on its body and then visits other plants resulting in cross-pollination. The orchid then resets itself in 10-30 minutes on a warm day. Flowers remain on the plant for up to two months which is not surprising when you consider that the pollination process depends on attracting and trapping a particular insect.



Leaf and flower stem

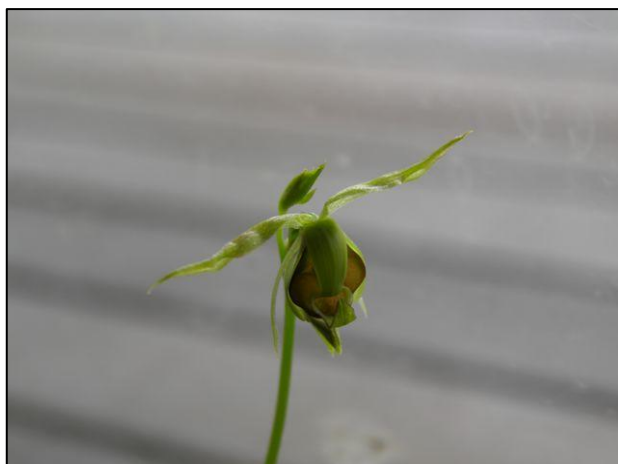
Photo: J. Morgan

You'd think that finding the Large Duck Orchid would be easy as it has a long flower stem and it grows in small colonies but this isn't the case at all. The leaf looks like a blade of grass and the flower stem is so thin that it's easily overlooked. It takes up to a month before the flower fully emerges and in its early stages the flower looks quite different to the duck orchid seen above. Some of the early stages are shown in the following photos. Julie Morgan



Early stages of the Flying Duck Orchid Photos: J. Morgan

References: Native Orchids of Australia, David L. Jones; An Atlas of Orchid Pollination Nelis A. van der Cingel; Genera Orchidacearum: Volume 2. Orchidoideae, Alec M. Pridgeon, Phillip J. Cribb, Mark W. Chase, Finn Rasmussen.



Books about nature – the new best-sellers

Books about the natural world are now huge sellers – not a week goes by without a new major title arriving in our bookshops. In the last two years this category has moved towards the publishing world's centre ground, thanks to several blockbuster books that have enjoyed critical and commercial success.

These are Helen Macdonald's H is for Hawk, which has sold more than 135,000 copies in the UK alone, won the Costa Book of the Year and the Samuel Johnson prize and has turned this Cambridge academic into a literary sensation; and Robert Macfarlane, whose works – including The Wild Places and The Old Ways – have sold more than 300,000 copies in the UK. There has been much speculation about this phenomenon. Does it show a new appreciation for the countryside and scepticism about material wealth? Is society searching for new ways of living or is it a way for our increasingly urban society to connect with nature? Are we looking for more meaningful ways of living? Has the expense and hassle of overseas travel lead us to explore our local environment?

Whatever the reason, this is a boon for those of us with an interest in natural history. Janice Sagar, from Moruya Books told me that books about nature are amongst her biggest sellers, and in particular, Australian books. Two that stand out for her are Where Song Began by Tim Low and The Bush by Don Watson.

Tim Low is a biologist, environmentalist and prize-winning writer, and co-editor of Wildlife Australia magazine. His seventh book, Where Song Began: Australian Birds and How They Changed World became the first nature book ever to win the Australian Books Industry Awards prize for best General non-fiction in 2015. His book reveals some startling facts about the unique nature of Australian birds - they are distinctive and powerful, and exert more influence on forests than any other creature. Recent research has confirmed that the world's songbirds originated in Australia. And of all the animals, it seems that their sense of beauty is the one that most closely aligns with ours.

The Bush – Travels in the Heart of Australia, by Don Watson is a meditation on the sprawling and indefinable land we call “the bush”. Watson is also the author of the acclaimed Recollections of a Bleeding Heart and Death Sentence. According to Janice, the book is intelligent, warm, witty, full of fascinating anecdote, beautifully written and addictively readable. No one who reads The Bush will afterwards look at this country in quite the same way.

Have you read a book lately that broadened your understanding of our natural world? The editorial committee would welcome all suggestions – a short blurb about the book would be grand too. Helen Kay

Birding in Alice Springs

I recently joined a small-coach tour of outback Australia, travelling from Alice Springs to Sydney via the remote settlements of Boulia, Birdsville, Mungerannie, Innamincka, Tibooburra, Broken Hill and Mungo National Park. Such amazing remote communities. Many of these names have long been on my list of “must see” destinations. Included were visits to the Dig Tree and Cameron Corner, where New South Wales, Queensland and South Australia all meet, and where the dog fence is maintained to protect pastoral leases from packs of wild dogs and dingoes.

I decided to spend a couple of extra days in Alice Springs prior to the road trip, and whilst there I engaged the services of a local bird guide, Mark Carter, whose advertisement I had seen in Birdlife Australia magazine. Mark and I met in the hotel foyer before dawn and we headed south through town towards a series of spinifex-covered “jump-ups” where Mark knew we would find Rufous-crowned Emu-wren and Dusky Grasswren. We certainly heard them and had fleeting glimpses of small brown-looking flashes of movement, but could not tick them yet. However, just down in the valley below, we saw a family group of 5 Ground Cuckoo-shrikes – my first lifer for the day. Thanks to Mark's powerful scope we had very good views of these beautifully marked cuckoo-shrike as they grazed amongst the spinifex. As we drove through the early morning and chatted about birding and life in general, Mark told me that he has two children, a daughter named Scarlet, second name Robyn, and a son known as Perry, which is short for Peregrine. I knew I had found a truly committed birdman!!

Heading back in the direction of town, Mark knew of sites for some very unusual birds, and he would pull into a road-side spoon-drain or rough track for views of Mulga Parrots, and Grey, Grey-headed and Grey-fronted Honeyeater. In a salt-bush field, I had sightings of my first Crimson Chat, Banded White-face and – at last - a White-winged Fairy-wren in full breeding plumage. There was a group of about 30 Red-tailed Black Cockatoo picking their way amongst the saltbush and Crested Bellbird sent their unmistakable call chiming through the low desert casuarinas. A Red-backed Kingfisher cooperatively sat on a road-side fence as we heard the calls of the Singing and White-plumed Honeyeaters.

After a quick trip back through Alice Springs for a takeaway lunch, we headed into the ranges to the north of the town where we did finally see the Dusky Grasswren, as well as a Redthroat, Zebra Finch, and Red-browed Pardalote. To finish off the day, we visited the sewage ponds, to which Mark had privileged access (his own key). Here we saw a great many waterfowl, as well as raptors flying overhead. This had been a very successful day for me with a tally of 62 birds including 10 lifers. Back at the resort, the Australian Ringnecks were plentiful in the palm trees, as well as the more common Crested Pigeons, Willy Wagtails, Magpies and Magpie-larks. It is surprising how widespread these birds are, being found in almost every ecological niche.

A visit to Alice Springs would not be complete for a birder without some time spent at the Desert Park and the Botanic Gardens. At the Desert Park, a wonderful raptor show is staged every day and provides the opportunity to see close-up wonderful birds such as Wedge-tailed Eagle, Australian Hobby and Barn Owl. There are also walk-through aviaries where one can learn to identify many desert species such as Cinnamon Quail-thrush, Orange and Yellow Chat and Painted Finch. At the Gardens, numerous Western Bowerbirds can be observed displaying at their bowers, as well as Grey-crowned and White-browed Babblers hopping amongst the undergrowth.



Australian Hobby

Photo: M. Anderson

I always enjoy visiting new places, particularly in Australia, for the opportunity to see new and unusual species – and it’s always a fantastic feeling to tick another lifer. Mandy Anderson



ENHS members have many stories to tell about their observations of nature. 'My Patch' is a forum where these stories can be shared with others and will be published both in the newsletter and on the website. Photos are welcome. Please send your contributions to mypatch@enhs.org.au

Logo design by Trevor King

“Mystery thing” solved

In September 2014, I received this photo from Wendy Selby who found a number of these things floating just below the surface of the water in a freshwater creek that led into Donalds Creek in the Deua National Park. They were soft and fairly uniform in shape. I posted the photo on our website under the heading “mystery thing” and asked for suggestions as to what they could be. Ideas included an embryo of a freshwater species and the faecal sac of an owl or a lyrebird.

Maggie and Greg Summerhayes spoke to Mick Power who confirmed that this object is a faecal sac from a large lyrebird chick. While the sac appears to be too big to come from a lyrebird chick, it is from an older chick and the fact that they are immersed in water could contribute to a swelling in the size of the sac. Mystery solved!! Greg has prepared an article about Mick and Sally and their lyrebirds. Julie Morgan



Mystery thing

Photo: W. Selby

Mick and Sally live on the Araluen Road west of Moruya and have a resident lyrebird which has nested around their home for the last 13 years. In that time the mother has raised 12 chicks that have survived. I spoke with Mick about the faecal sac and the 2015 chick.

The lyrebird has been nesting this year at the end of a ladder over in the Pole Shed. This is the third time she has used that nest over a period of about 6 years. Mick knows that she's built three others in that time. She doesn't use it repeatedly but she goes back every second year to build it up.

When I asked Mick about the faecal sac, he said that when mum comes in to feed she makes a particular sound that alerts the chick to her presence. After the feed she usually leaves with a faecal sac in her beak. Mick believes this is similar to a wallaby where the mother licks the joeys anal area to stimulate the joey to crap and she then eats the crap and keeps the pouch area clean. With the lyrebird, the stimulation of the anal area is with the beak and this gives the chick the signal to excrete. This happens at least 2 or 3 times a day.

When the chick and the sac are small she usually just goes about 30 to 40 metres from the nest and just drops it and then covers it over. Then she starts feeding again for about 15 minutes before she heads back with another feed for the chick. When the sacs get bigger as the chick grows, quite often she will just dump them in the water where the smell is disguised. Mick and Sally have water points for the birds and the wallabies to have a drink, and when they see them in the water Mick uses an old slotted spoon and lifts them out and buries them in the garden area well away from the nest. The sac is quite strong.

I asked Mick why the mother removes the sac from the nest area. He thinks that there are 2 reasons for it. One is to keep the nest clean. She inhabits the nest with the chick for about 4 of the 6 weeks that the chick is in the nest. If she left the faeces there the nest would be foul. She takes it away to remove the smell and keep any predators away from the nest area.



Lyrebird nest

Photo: M. Power

I asked Mick how he finds the nests – “I used to try and follow her to find out where the nest was when I knew she was making a nest. I would see her with a twig or a mouthful of moss. I wouldn't go too close and even though she is extraordinarily cunning and tries to lead me astray, I have an idea of the general direction of the nest. I do it by listening for the tone that she uses when she goes to the nest. I get a good idea where it is and then just observe when she comes back. For two years it was easy to find because she nested in the house under construction, but it is always in the house area where she feels safe.” Greg Summerhayes

Highlights from ENHS records - Winter 2015

Avian species	Number	Place	Observer	Comments
Emu	7, 1	TS/Brou L	PJP/B Pennefather	Adult with 6 chicks at TS.
Brown Quail	2	Deua R	MS	
Plumed Whistling Duck	1	Com	JC	
Musk Duck	1	PS/Long Swamp	JM/FM/MA	
Freckled Duck	8 to 25	Com	JC	In July and August
Pink-eared Duck	200	Com	JC	
Australian Shoveler	Up to 15	Com	JC	
Hardhead	Up to 80	Com	JC	
Hoary-headed Grebe	11, 10	MO/Com	NM/JC	
Brown Cuckoo-Dove	Up to 20	MKS	SMG	10 reported at NA (JMG)
Peaceful Dove	5, 1	Bingie/Surfside	AM/ R Soroka	New locations for this species
Topknot Pigeon	18, 10	CO Creek/ Trunketabella	JM/AM	Flock of 18 flying north over the creek. Clattering about in a forest of Lilly Pilly in the bush behind Trunketabella.
Tawny Frogmouth	1	NA	JMG	
Aust Owllet-nightjar	1	Com	JC	
Albatross sp.	Up to 40	Off MHS	FM	
Albatross <i>Diomedea sp</i>	1	Off MHS	FM/NC	Photo submitted of a juvenile Wandering or Royal Albatross
Black-browed Albatross	7	Off MHS	FM	
Shy Albatross	5	MO	NM	
Giant-Petrel sp	1	MO	NM	In July
Common Diving-Petrel	1	Off Pedro Beach	FM	Near Congo Creek
Australasian Gannet	10	Off MHS	FM	
Pied Cormorant	4, 2	NA/MB	JMG/MA/ AC	
White-necked Heron	Up to 9	Com	JC	
Intermediate Egret	1	Com	JC	
Cattle Egret	Up to 40	MYA	JL	
Eastern Reef Egret	1, 2	Broulee/MO/ MB	GLM/NM/ MA/AC	White morph in MB in July. Unusual in our area.
Straw-necked Ibis	More than 200	Com	JC	
Royal Spoonbill	Up to 24	WL	DO	
Eastern Osprey	1	Broulee I	HR	
Square-tailed Kite	1 or 2	MKS/PS/Pedro	SMG/JM/JS	First return to PS July 29 th
White-bellied Sea-Eagle	5	Bogola Head	FM	Including 2 immatures
Brown Goshawk	2	MKS	SMG	
Grey Goshawk	1	Malua Bay/PS/ MB/Montagu I/ Tilba	MR/JM/MA/ AC/JMG	
Spotted Harrier	1	Com	JC	In June
Swamp Harrier	1	MYA	JM	
Wedge-tailed Eagle	3	Coolagolite	DO	In August
Nankeen Kestrel	2	Com	JC	Nesting in August
Peregrine Falcon	1	Com	JC	
Buff-banded Rail	2 to 4	TS	JH	
Aust Pied Oystercatcher	Up to 9	WL	DO	
Sooty Oystercatcher	More than 4	MB	MA	
Red-capped Plover	8	NA/MB	MA/AC	

Double-banded Plover	4, 2	Bogola Head/ NA	FM/MA	
Black-fronted Dotterel	2, 1	Com/Bingie/ MO	JC/DHK/NM	
Hooded Plover	1	Bengello Beach	L Bain	In June
Masked Lapwing	Up to 60	Com	JC	2 young in July
Eastern Curlew	2	NA	JMG	Wagonga Inlet in June
Brown Skua	1	Montagu I	JMG	In June
Caspian Tern	2, 1	NA/MB	JMG/AC	
White-fronted Tern	35, 4, 1	TS/Clyde R/ MHS/Bingie /Bogola Head	PJP/DB/ DHK/FM	Greater numbers than in recent years.
Crested Tern	More than 300	MB	AC	
Silver Gull	Hundreds	CO Creek	FM	
Glossy Black Cockatoo	7, 6	MO/Deua R	NM/MS	
Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo	30	Deua R/MB	MS/AC	
Gang-Gang Cockatoo	11	Coolagolite	DO	
Little Corella	Up to 200	MYA	JL	
Musk Lorikeet	Hundreds	NA/Tilba	DSD/JM	Feeding on Spotted Gum blossom
Little Lorikeet	Large flocks	MB	MA	20 at Tilba (DSD/JM)
Aust King Parrot	Up to 25	MKS	SMG	
Swift Parrot	Call, 6	Wandera SF/ Bodalla SF	SB/DSD/JM/ MA/AC	
Fan-tailed Cuckoo	1	MKS/PS/Long Swamp	SMG/JM/ MA	
Powerful Owl	1 or 2	PS/Pedro	JM/JS	Calls at Deua R
Southern Boobook	Call	NA/MB/ Coolagolite	JMG/AC/DO	
Masked Owl	1	PS	JM	
Azure Kingfisher	1	MO/Com/NA	NM/JC/MA	
Superb Lyrebird	5	Deua R	MS	Calling throughout the shire
Red-browed Treecreeper	2	MO/Tilba	NM/DSD/JM	
Green Catbird	1 or 2	NA	JMG	
Satin Bowerbird	35, 20, 15	MB/ Com/ Coolagolite	AC/JC/DO	Large groups
Southern Emu-wren	4	Runnyford Rd	NC	At the bridge
Pilotbird	2	Wandera SF	SB/DSD/JM	
Yellow-throated Scrubwren	1	Wandera SF/ Kings Hwy	SB/DSD/JM/ MA	
Large-billed Scrubwren	3, 1	Wandera SF/ Tilba	SB/DSD/JM	
Brown Gerygone	2	Broulee	GLM	Nest building at Broulee in August
Spotted Pardalote	More than 50	MB	AC	At the camping ground, feeding on the ground and in trees.
Striated Pardalote	7, 4, 2	Belowra/PS/ Com	JC/JM	In July/August. Displaying at Belowra in August.
Yellow-faced Honeyeater	Hundreds	NA area	DSD/JM	On Spotted Gum blossom
White-eared Honeyeater	5	MYA/PS	DSD/JM	
Fuscous Honeyeater	Up to 100	Boyne SF	DSD/JM	A large number in this forest
Crescent Honeyeater	20, 18	ERBG/Wandera SF	MA/SB/DSD /JM	
New Holland Honeyeater	50, 30	Bogola Head/ Broulee	FM/GLM	
Scarlet Honeyeater	4	MO	NM	Overwintering at a number of

				locations
Noisy Friarbird	20	Durras North/ Pedro	FM/JS	Back at PS July 29 th but not in large numbers.
Spotted Quail-thrush	5	Boyne SF	DSD/JM	
Varied Sittella	6	Bodalla SF/Com	DSD/JM/JC	
White-bellied Cuckoo-shrike	1	PS	JM	In August
Crested Shrike-tit	2	Broulee	GLM	
Olive Whistler	1	Bodalla	BS	At the Blue Earth café!!
Australasian Figbird	2 to 5	MYA	JM	
Dusky Woodswallow	1	Coolagolite	DO	August 30
Pied Currawong	More than 50	MB	AC	
Grey Currawong	2	Deua R/Com/ Belowra/NA	MS/JC/JMG	
Little Raven	Up to 100	Com	JC	
Restless Flycatcher	3, 1	Belowra/Com	JC	
White-winged Chough	Up to 20	NA	JMG	Nesting at Com in August
Jacky Winter	18	Belowra	JC	
Scarlet Robin	1 or 2	PS/Bergalia/ Com/MB	JM/DHK/JC/ MA	
Flame Robin	4	Belowra	JC	Males, in August
Rose Robin	2	Bodalla SF	DSD/JM	Single at MKS, MO, MB
Golden-headed Cisticola	4	Com	JC	
Silvereye	60	Pedro Pt	FM	Starting to move south in early August
Welcome Swallow	2	PS/Com	JM/JC	Nesting in August
Tree Martin	Up to 40	Com	JC	
Bassian Thrush	4, 3, 2, 2	Deua R/ERBG/ Malua Bay/PS	MS/MA/MW /JM	Not as many records as last year
Common Blackbird	1 to 2	MYA/Com	JL/JC	
Common Myna	1	Kianga	BS	
Mistletoebird	1 or calls	MYA/PS/Com	FM/JM/JC	
Australian Pipit	Up to 10, 4	Com/Bingie	JC/DHK	Displaying at Com in August

Non-avian species	Number	Place	Observer	Comments
Platypus	1	Deua R	R Stacey	In July near Larry's Mtn Rd
Short-beaked Echidna	1	PS/Coolagolite	JM/DO	
Spotted-tailed Quoll	Signs	PS	JM	
Antechinus sp	1	Lilli Pilli/ Bodalla SF	IAG/DSD/ JM	
Long-nosed Bandicoot	1	Lilli Pilli	IAG	June
Common Wombat	1 and signs	Reedy Ck/ Coolagolite	FM/DO	Wandering around in the afternoon at the field trip to Reedy Ck
Sugar Glider	calls	Coolagolite	DO	
Common Ringtail Possum	1	Lilli Pilli/MB	IAG/MA/ AC	
Common Brushtail Possum	Up to 5	Com	JC	
Eastern Grey Kangaroo	More than 38	Coolagolite	DO	
Red-necked Wallaby	Up to 4	Coolagolite	DO	
Swamp Wallaby	Up to 10	PS	JM	
Bush Rat	1	MHS	NC	
Black Rat	1 or 2	Coolagolite	DO	
Eastern Water Rat	1	Cullendulla	NC	dead
Dingo	Calls	Com	JC	
Red Fox	1	PS/Coolagolite	JM/DO	
Pig		Com Mtn	JC	Seen damaging tree roots and in

				paddocks, Comerang Mtn to Bumbo Rd.
Jacky Lizard	1 or 2	PS/Coolagolite	JM/DO	In August
Diamond Python	1	PS	JM	
Red-bellied Black Snake	1	Coolagolite	DO	August
Australian Fur Seal	6	MHS	FM	Loafing off Toragy Pt
Whale sp	4	Off MHS	FM	
Humpback Whales		Broulee	HR	Breaching off the coast 28 June
Bottlenose Dolphin	15	MHS	FM	

Frogs JC/JL/JM/HR	Common Eastern Froglet, Brown Striped Frog, Haswell's Froglet, Brown, and Tyler's Toadlet; tree frogs: Jervis Bay, Keferstein's, Peron's, Verreaux's
Moths JC/JM	Ghost, Red-lined Geometrid, Cream Wave, Mecynata, Sodaliata, Bright Twisted, Crimson Tiger, Green-blotched, Black Noctuid, Variable Cutworm,
Butterflies JC/JL/JM/FM	Black Jezebel, Cabbage White, Meadow Argus, Common Grass Blue
Beetles JC	Ladybirds: Striped, Steelblue
Bugs JC/JM	Water Strider, Harlequin
Spiders JC/JL/JM/FM	Leaf-curling, Red Back, Daddy Long Legs, Black House, Water, Huntsman, Jumping
Flowering plants JM/DO/FM	Spotted Gum, Grey and Mugga Ironbark, River Peppermint, White Sally, Lightwood, Sydney Golden, Sickie, Swamp, Hickory and Hop Wattle, Common Correa, Purple Coral Pea, Gorse Bitter Pea, Common Heath, Australian indigo, Nodding Greenhood, Pixie Caps, early stages of Flying Duck Orchid, Pomaderris sp.

RAINFALL (mm). June: 54.5 at MYA, 105 at Bergalia, 74 at Com, 97 at MB, 111.5 at Coolagolite. **July:** 80 at MKS, 86 at MYA, 64 at Com, 75.5 at Coolagolite. **August:** 202 at MKS, 188 at Com, 144.25 at Coolagolite.

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MA	M Anderson, MB	SMG	S&M Guppy, MKS	HR	H Ransom, Mossy Pt
SB	S Benjamin, Catalina	JH	J&J Houghton, TS	JS	J Sagar, Pedro
AC	A Christiansen, MB	DHK	D&H Kay, Bergalia	BS	B Scales, Kianga
NC	N Clark, SB	JL	J&J Liney, MYA	RS	Roman Soroka, Surfside
JC	J&P Collett, Com	GLM	G&L McVeigh, Broulee	MS	M Summerhayes, MYA
DSD	D & S Deans, ACT	AM	A Marsh, Bingie	MW	M Wilkinson, Malua Bay
JMG	J&M Gordon, NA	JM	J Morgan, PS	FM	Field Meeting
IAG	I&A Grant, Lilli Pilli	DO	D Ondinea, Coolagolite		L Bain, Broulee
		PJP	P Parker, TS		B Pennefather, ACT
					R Stacey, MYA
Places					
BB	Batemans Bay	ERBG	Eurobodalla Botanic Gardens	NP	National Park
BBWG	Batemans Bay Water Gardens	MKS	Maulbrooks Rd S, MYA	PS	Pedro Swamp
BI	Bermagui	MO	Meringo	PP	Potato Point
BP	Burrewarra Point	MYA	Moruya	SB	Surf Beach
Com	Comerang	MH	Moruya Heads, N&S	SF	State Forest
CO	Congo	MB	Mystery Bay	TS	Tuross
DS	Durras	NA	Narooma	WL	Wallaga Lake

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