



# EUROBODALLA NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Inc.

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## The Regent Honeyeater (*Anthochaera phrygia*) – Shaw 1794

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### *Taxonomy, Distribution and Habitat*

Until recently, the Regent Honeyeater was placed in its own monotypic genus *Xanthomyza* because its plumage was unique in comparison to other larger honeyeaters. Genetic studies have since determined that it is actually closely related to wattlebirds and it is now placed under the genus *Anthochaera*.

Prior to its dramatic decline the species moved freely across the Yellow Box, Ironbark and other eucalypt woodlands that spanned from Victoria to southern Queensland. Today it is largely limited to a handful of strongholds primarily in Victoria and southern NSW.

### *Identification and Behaviour*

At 20 to 24cm in length, the plumage of the Regent Honeyeater is unique amongst the largest honeyeaters; no other species boasts a combination of scaly yellow, cream and black plumage with prominent yellow-orange wattles on a black head. If size is not apparent, the smaller black and white *Philidonyris* honeyeaters can be ruled out by the presence of white feathered cheek patches and streaked black rather than scaled underparts.

The call of the species is perhaps most similar to that of the Little Wattlebird in structure; it is however, much more flute like, less harsh, softer and slower. The species is also known to extensively mimic the calls of larger honeyeater species particularly those of the Noisy Friarbird (*Philemon corniculatus*) and Red Wattlebird (*Anthochaera carunculata*). It is thought that it does so to defend food sources against these and other species of honeyeater by making it appear that they are claimed by the larger more aggressive species. The species is social throughout the year and forms loose breeding colonies if conditions permit with larger flocks forming during migration.

### *Diet and Breeding*

The diet of the species is typical of that of the larger honeyeaters with the species feeding primarily on flowering eucalypts and lerps. Insects and fruit are also taken when available. Breeding is strongly associated with the flowering of Yellow Box and Ironbark and the birds generally pick the highest trees to build their nests in. The female then lays two to three pinkish red-spotted eggs which are incubated by the female for 12-15 days. The chicks are then looked after by both parents for two to three more weeks. If conditions remain suitable pairs may attempt to nest up to four times in a season.



Regent Honeyeater

Photo: D. Bertzeletos

### *Conservation Status and Distribution in the Eurobodalla*

75% of the Regent Honeyeaters' preferred habitat of Yellow Box and Ironbark woodland has been destroyed or degraded since the arrival of Europeans. This habitat loss has also exacerbated competition with other species such as the Noisy Miner (*Manorina melanocephala*). Nest parasitism by the Eastern Koel (*Eudynamis orientalis*) also presents a threat as it is currently expanding its range into former Regent Honeyeater strongholds. Today fewer than 500 birds remain in the wild, and the species is listed as critically endangered. A captive breeding program is underway to prevent the species from becoming extinct, but unless habitat destruction is reversed, the future of the species is bleak.

In the Eurobodalla, the species appears to be an occasional migrant though it should definitely be looked out for particularly in years when heavy flowering occurs. Breeding has also been recorded on a handful of occasions. Dimitris Bertzeletos

### **Editor's Note**

The most recent records for the Regent Honeyeater in the Eurobodalla include:

A call in the Wandera State Forest in August 2013.

A pair at a bird bath in Potato Point in April 2012.

Four birds, two adults feeding a juvenile, and an immature bird, at Congo in December 2010 and January 2011.

One bird at Broulee in May 2011.

### **What's Coming Up.....**

**Saturday February 13, 2pm: Tebbs Road, between Narooma and Central Tilba.** Meet at the corner of the Old Highway and the Princes Hwy, southern end of Narooma. Drive and stop to walk along a number of tracks through the forest. Superb Lyrebird, Green Catbird, Scarlet Robin, Spotted Quail-thrush, Crescent Honeyeater.

**Sunday February 28, 9am: Monga National Park.** Meet at the corner of River Forest Rd and the Kings Hwy, the turn-off to Monga National Park. This is the time that the Pinkwood is in flower. Superb Lyrebird, Pilotbird, Rose Robin, Olive Whistler, Red-browed Treecreeper, Large-billed Scrubwren.

**Saturday March 9, 2pm: Bingie Dreaming Track.** Meet at the northern point of the track, in a car park just off Congo Road, at the southern end of Congo village. A walk through Bangalay forest to the coast with views of the ocean and Meringo Lagoon. Red and Little Wattlebird, New Holland Honeyeater, Leaden Flycatcher, Olive-backed Oriole, Cicadabird.

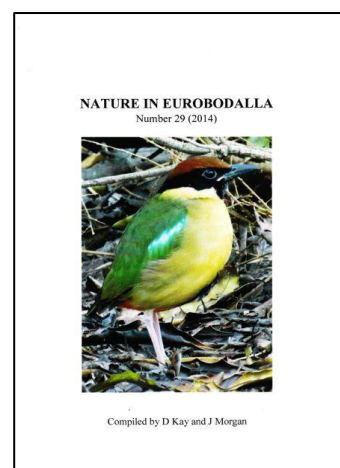
**Sunday March 24: Easter Sunday.** There will be no Sunday meeting this month.

### **2016 Memberships Are Now Due**

A membership renewal form has been included with this newsletter. Single membership is now \$20, family \$30 and for under 18s \$5.

### **Nature in Eurobodalla** Number 29 (2014)

The 29<sup>th</sup> edition of *Nature in Eurobodalla*, which is a summary of members' observations by species for 2014, is also available for purchase. It is priced at \$13 if picked up or \$15 if posted.



### ***The Editorial team would like to say thank you....***

to all the contributors to our newsletter, those who write articles and those who submit their observations. Without you, we couldn't publish a newsletter. Thank you for your interest and dedication.

We would invite all members to contribute to the newsletter, about any aspect of the natural world in the local area, something interesting that you have seen, or your favourite birding spot in the Eurobodalla.

## Looking back over Spring

I'm sure that everyone will agree that it seemed to be a very wet spring this year. The rainfall figures weren't particularly high overall but it did rain quite a bit in November. There were fewer flowering Spotted Gums in September but the Forest Red Gum, Grey and Red Ironbark burst into flower.

For the second year running, large numbers of Swift Parrots moved through the shire in September rather than August. We conducted Swift Parrot surveys in August, around the BirdLife Australia survey weekend, and there were only 6 birds recorded in the Bodalla State Forest. Follow up surveys in September were more fruitful with over 100 birds on Big Bit Road in the Boyne State Forest, which was the largest group recorded on the mainland this year. The presence of large numbers of Swift Parrot in the Eurobodalla in September rather than August was the same last year when we had 700 Swift Parrot on Ironbark blossom in Turlinjah. It will be interesting to see what happens next year. It could be that Swift Parrots are delaying the homeward journey in spring depending on the food available en route.

BirdLife Australia has just released the results of survey and incidental monitoring of Swift Parrots on the mainland in 2015 and the numbers show that the trend in the Eurobodalla is reflected in a low number of August records.

### Number of Swift Parrots

|     | May* | August* | Incidental sightings | Total |
|-----|------|---------|----------------------|-------|
| NSW | 129  | 39      | 240                  | 408   |
| ACT | 12   | 0       | 12                   | 12    |
| VIC | 56   | 68      | 293                  | 417   |
| QLD | 0    | 0       | 0                    | 0     |

\* Includes the survey weekend and one week either side of it.

Source: Swift Parrot and Regent Honeyeater Survey Update 2015. D. Ingwersen, M Roderick, C. Wilson.



Large-billed Scrubwren Photo: D. Bertzeletos

One of my favourite places in the Eurobodalla is Gulaga and in September I walked up Gulaga with Amanda Marsh. For those of you who read the 'highlights' section at the end of the newsletter, you may think there are some typos when you see the numbers of species like 32 Pilotbird, 35 Large-billed Scrubwren and 26 Rose Robin but I can assure you that when you walk the whole track, the numbers do add up. There were also 40 White-browed Scrubwren, 38 Eastern Whipbird, 50 Grey Fantail, 17 White-throated Treecreeper, 5 Red-browed Treecreeper, 5 Yellow-throated Scrubwren and 3 Olive Whistler.

We've included a walk to the lower areas of Gulaga on the field meeting program for 2016 as the sightings of unusual birds started within a few kilometres of Pam's Store at Tilba

Tilba. As soon as we left the farmland and entered the thicker vegetation, we saw a pair of Yellow-throated Scrubwren and a Green Catbird that fed on the berries of a rainforest tree; we heard our first Pilotbird and an Australian Owlet-Nightjar. Four unusual species and we hadn't really even begun the climb. This is also the area where three Noisy Pitta were reported in December 2014.

Another interesting record was the report of Pacific Baza at Malua Bay in October, which is the same location where a pair was reported in January this year. This may be the start of more regular appearances of the species in our area. There were far fewer reports of dead shearwater washing up on the shoreline this spring, and not many reports of whales moving south. And for the second year running, the large Little Tern colony did not stop at the sand spit at Tuross. Please see Amy's update following. Julie Morgan

## An Update on Shorebird Nesting from NPWS

Tuross Lake has been hosting a number of Pied Oystercatcher nests within the entrance islands, at the sand spit and also along the beach towards Blackfellow's Point. ENHS member, Pattie Parker, has been keenly checking on them every few days and we have a number of pairs all within the entrance estuary including Rocky, West, East and East (small) Islands, Blackfellow's Swale and South Spit. Some have chicks that are already foraging nearby to where they have nested or along the adjacent shoreline to the island on which they laid the eggs and there is signposting to let people know there are nests nearby.

We also have reportedly some Grey-tailed Tattler (also one in Wagonga Inlet this week), Red Knot and the usual Eastern Curlew and Bar-tailed Godwit at Tuross. It is exciting to see these northern hemisphere migrants. Unfortunately the status of the Eastern Curlew has been upgraded as their numbers plummet (it is now critically endangered in Australia).

We have Little Terns nesting on the Tuross entrance sand spit with 3 nests on December 18 but there may be a few more in coming days. The numbers of terns in the estuary is still low but we have lost many nests at Mogareeka to the south and over 50 birds have moved on in the last 10 days, so we might see them arrive at other locations such as Tuross Lake and Brou Lake. Now that Brou Lake is closed, there is enough habitat at the entrance for shorebird nesting, so volunteers will be checking in there occasionally over the next fortnight. Amy Harris

## Predators

Spring is a time when birds are busy breeding. What determines the success of breeding, if we define success as the numbers of offspring who reach maturity and then breed? Most people would say the availability of food and habitat. However, as long term readers of the newsletter would be aware, research that Sarah and Michael Guppy have conducted at their property in Moruya since 2006, has shown that the number one determinant is predation.

Below is an update on the Guppy's research, together with some background for newer members. We also have received another interesting report of a Red Wattlebird preying the nest of a Willie Wagtail from Greg Summerhayes from Moruya. This is unusual as they are not known as big predators. Editor

### A Brief History of the Predator Study on Maulbrooks Road

We (Michael and Sarah) started our study of the breeding ecology on our 10 ha site in 2006. By the end of the 2011/12 season, we understood the system pretty well, but still had no idea what predators were taking about half of the 200 nests we monitored each season. In those six breeding seasons, we had seen only one act of predation! So we turned to remote infra-red camera technology and over the next three years essentially worked out who the predators were, and the significance of each predators' role in nest predation. We continue to monitor nests with the cameras and continue to discover new predators and new behaviour; hence the two articles following. Michael and Sarah Guppy

#### The Whipbird Meets its Match

We recently discovered that the Eastern Whipbird is a major nest predator on our bird study site on Maulbrooks Road (Guppy *et al.* 2014). It takes eggs from a variety of nesting species and accounts for about 20% of the nest predation on the site. The photographs from our motion cameras show that there is no attempt by the host birds to defend their eggs. There has been one exception in which a New Holland Honeyeater appeared to fly at the whipbird, but the whipbird already had an egg in its beak. So the whipbird, which is larger than all



the species it depredate, seems to have a clean sweep of the site. However, recently we managed to get a camera onto the nest of a Grey Shrike-thrush, which showed a completely different story. As you can see from the pictures, the male thrush, sitting on three eggs, successfully fought off the whipbird. It looked like a bit of a pitched battle! So the whipbird can meet his/her match on the site, and in the case of the thrush, both male and female brood, so there is no time when the eggs are left unattended.

An interesting post-script to this story, is that a whipbird (almost certainly the same one) was photographed attacking (unmolested) the nest of a Brown Thornbill about 30m away.

Guppy M, Guppy S, Priddel D, Fullagar P (2014) Nest predators of a woodland bird community in South-east Australia. *Australian Zoologist*. 37: 105-116.

## Yet Another Nest Predator!

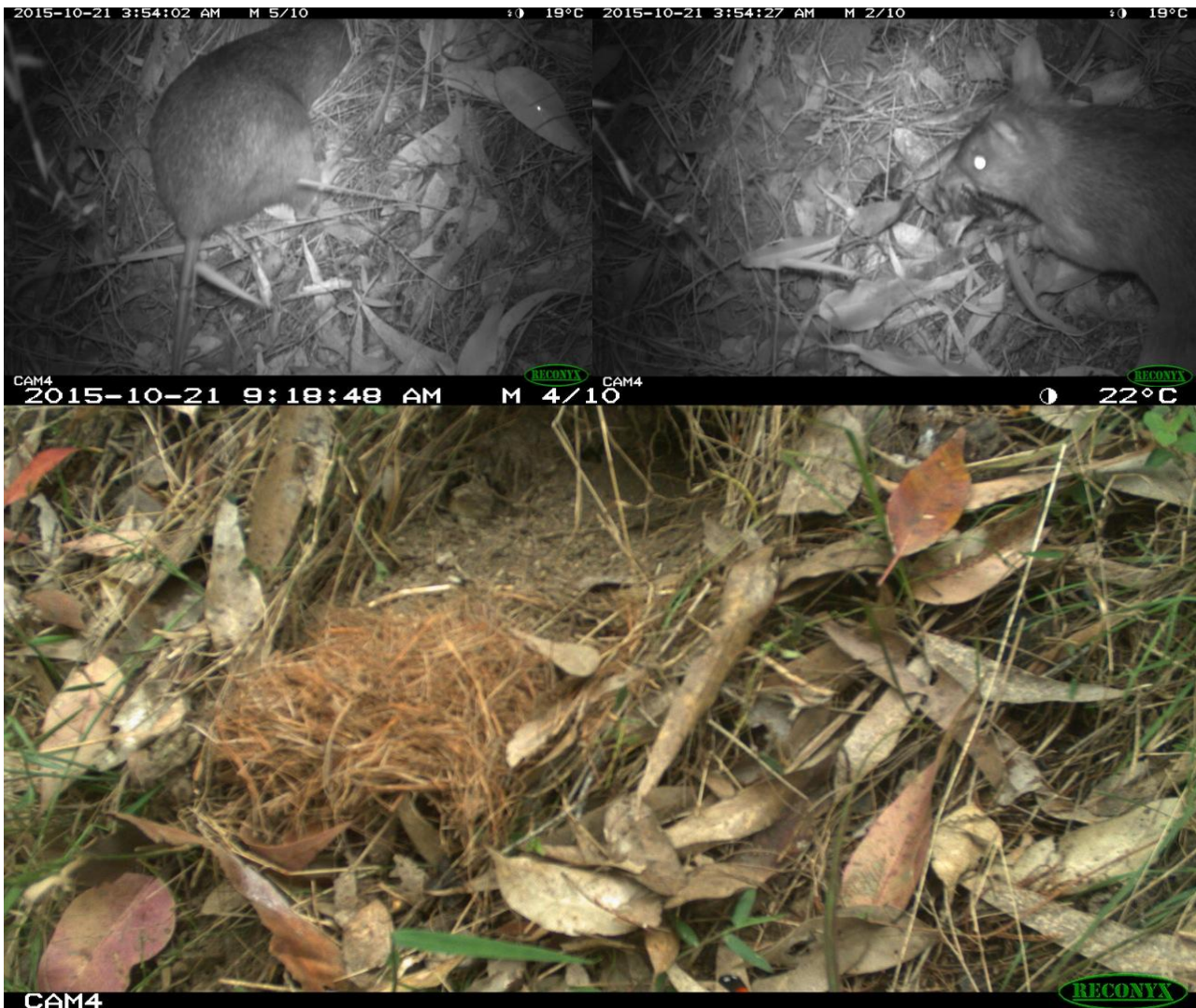
For most passerines, nest predation significantly limits breeding success. But information on the identity of nest predators, especially in whole communities, is difficult to gather and therefore scant and patchy. On our study site on Maulbrooks Road we have been investigating the identity of nest predators that each year depredate about 50% of the nests on the site. In each of three breeding seasons, beginning in 2012/13, cameras were placed at 54-61 nests of 9-14 species. We identified 16 predators: two reptiles, nine birds and five mammals. The two major predators were the Eastern Whipbird (*Psophodes olivaceus*), a hitherto unknown nest predator, and the Fan-tailed Cuckoo (*Cacomantis flabelliformis*); the latter through the process of farming the nests of three species. The suite of nest predators changed markedly each breeding season, for instance the Lace Monitor was only recorded in one of the three years.

We feel that we have identified the major predators on the site, and probably most of the minor and occasional predators. So we no longer put cameras on every suitable nest, but we still deploy them on some nests (in order to investigate cuckoo parasitism), and on others that we feel were inadequately represented in the three-year study. This is how we found the latest predator to add to the list.

We had a camera on the nest of a Spotted Pardalote, as we are interested in the impact of snakes on these nests on the ground. What we recorded, however, was a Long-nosed Bandicoot digging out the nest and eating the three young birds inside. From what we can see in the literature, this animal has not been previously recorded as a nest predator. Below are four pictures which show the details of the predation. The sequence is:

1. Nest with adult pardalote entering.
2. Bandicoot digging the nest out.
3. Bandicoot eating one young bird with two others out of the nest on the ground, one near the top of the picture. The Bandicoot eats them all.
4. Daylight showing the dug-out nest, with the tail of the adult bird just visible at the bottom. Birds often seem to return to raided nests for some time after the nest is lost. Michael and Sarah Guppy





### Red Wattlebird as a Predator

We had adopted our Willy Wagtails and assumed them as ours, so were quite cranky with the nest raider, a Red Wattlebird. The Willy Wagtails (WWs) returned around the 17th September and within a week or so were paired up and starting to nest. The nest was about 4 metres up on a 25mm branch of a Chinese Elm and quite conspicuous. We could not see into it. Over the next week or so, we watched the pair building the nest; they spent a lot of time building it up into its cup shape and smoothing the walls with their heads and beaks. During this time the Red Wattlebirds would carry out nuisance harassment and were often in dispute with the WWs.

After about another week (around October 5), the nest appeared finished in shape and was the size of a small teacup. The pair was sitting on the nest and taking turns to fly and feed for a few days. We noticed a commotion at the nest on about the 9th and saw the Red Wattlebird sitting right next to the nest. The resident WWs had got off and both were vigorously attacking the wattlebird, which largely ignored them, leant over the nest and pecked at what I imagine were eggs. The wattlebird was definitely eating what was in the nest. It then flew off. Both wagtails were present and were vigorously defending their nest and attacking the wattlebird, right up to the time the wattlebird ate the eggs and flew off. Subsequently, the nest has been demolished, we don't know what by, and is now lying on the ground. There were no eggs in the nest remains on the ground.

The outside of the nest is Stringybark, Casuarina needles and grass, plus assorted bits of cotton etc. and the inside was lined with kangaroo fur and soft dry grasses. We have also found a smashed egg on the concrete floor of the nearby shed, with no nest nearby. The egg is white and around 20mm long and could have been carried there by a predator, but I'm not sure of its origin. We did not see the wattlebird with eggs in its beak. It appeared to eat the eggs or the contents in the nest. I don't know how many eggs were in the nest as it was too high to view. Greg Summerhayes

## Field Meeting Report – Belowra October 2015

A warm sunny spring morning greeted the fifteen nature-lovers who gathered opposite Bodalla Police Station at 9.00am for our trip to Belowra. Peter and Julie Collett, our hosts for the day, outlined what we could expect to see and reminded us that the drive would take at least an hour.

For the next hour, we travelled in convoy along the well-graded road through Nerrigundah where we slowed down to look at a large patch of purple flowering Sticky Boronia (*Boronia anemonifolia*). We then drove along the ridges overlooking vast healthy bushland stretching south towards Gulaga and north to Moruya. The time passed quickly as there was much to see along the road – Hickory Wattle (*Acacia penniversis*) in full bloom, the stunning twisting branches of the Smooth-barked Apple (*Angophora costata*) and a profusion of yellow paper daisies.



A restful stop along the way

Photo: J. Morgan

The Belowra Valley was originally stocked with cattle and played an important part in supplying meat at the time of the Nerrigundah gold rush. Later, sheep were run extensively, but since 1968, because of dingo attacks, only the Thompson family has continued with them. The early residents left plenty of trees and vegetation for wildlife, most notably the large stands of aged gnarly *Angophora*, which dominate the landscape. Many of these are looking senescent (much like me) with little significant regeneration, perhaps a result of livestock grazing.

Our walk - 3.3 kilometres according to Heather Haughton's pedometer - had much to keep us interested: Spotted Pardalote and White-throated Gerygone calling (but not sighted), a young Wedge-tailed Eagle with lots of rufous on its upper wings, a pair of Grey Fantail visiting their nest, White-winged Triller and Rufous Songlark perched in full view and singing loudly from the treetops and Dusky Woodswallow building a nest above our heads. We also came across a largish Lace Monitor half way up a tree and the charming sight of a Common Brushtail Possum nestling in a hollow. The tally for the day was 42 bird species, plus several reptiles and mammals.

Once again, our thanks go to Peter and Julie who so generously invited us to visit their property. Helen Kay

Add if at all interesting, the name meaning: *Angophora costata*

*Angophora* - from two Greek words, meaning 'vessel' or 'goblet', and 'to bear or carry', referring to the shape of the fruits;

*costata* - ribbed; the capsules bear prominent ribs.



Common Brushtail Possum in a hollow

Photo: N. Clark

## *Hibbertia dentata*: Riches on the Forest Floor



Flower and bud

Photo: J. Liney

Like golden sovereigns hidden in the leaf litter on the forest floor and up the base of eucalyptus trunks, are the springtime flowers of *Hibbertia dentata*, a non-aggressive climber of the *Dilleniaceae* family, and cousin to the more flamboyant climber *Hibbertia scandens*. J. H. Maiden, one time Director of the Royal Botanic Gardens Sydney, in 1889 wrote that “so often does it display its beauty in our hedges that the appellation of ‘hedge pride’ might suit it.” However, nowadays we opt for a more descriptive common name, that being Twining Guinea Flower, or Trailing Guinea Flower, or Tooth-Leaved Guinea Flower

*Hibbertia dentata* was first described by a Swiss botanist, Augustin Pyramus de Candolle, born in 1788, who established scientific criteria for determining natural relationships among plant genera. He contended that plant anatomy (i.e. the number of reproductive organs and their positions relative to each other) must be the sole basis for classification, for which he coined the term ‘taxonomy’, a term still widely used. De Candolle was also the first to put forward the idea of ‘nature’s war’, meaning different species ‘fighting’ each other for space and nutrients. Today, we call this process species competition. This idea was taken up by Charles Darwin, who considered that the pressures produced by this ‘war’ contributed to ‘natural selection’.

During his professional life, de Candolle published many papers, as well as contributing to botanical books. He prepared the first seven volumes (of a total of 17) containing a descriptive classification of all known seed plants that was finally completed in 1873, long after he died in 1841.

His description of *Hibbertia dentata* was published in 1817, noting that the type specimen (i.e. the first one collected) is ‘habituated in New Holland, on the coast of the east, near blue mountains and the sea’. (I could only find this phrase in Latin, so had to ask Mr Google for help in translation and this is what we came up with).

Which takes us back to *Hibbertia dentata* and its golden flowers. A common species of open forest, even persisting in degraded situations, it has been called a light climber, twining around the stems of nearby herbs, and, if they are within reach, a little way up the trunks of saplings and small trees. The twining stems are reddish and the alternate oval or oblong leaves with toothed margins are purplish when young, often retaining reddish or bronze tinges throughout their life. The bright yellow flowers are about 30mm across with a central cluster of stamens. Each flower only lasts about a day but the flowers appear continually over a long period.



Twining stems

Photo: J. Liney

The genus is named after George Hibbert, an eighteenth and nineteenth century English merchant and nurseryman and collector of rare and exotic plants, with an enthusiasm for the family *Proteaceae*, called at the time *Proteae*; *dentata*, of course refers to the toothed leaves. As far as I could ascertain, this species has not had any major name changes during its botanical life. Jenny Liney



## Lake Cargelligo Field Trip Report - 15<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> October, 2015

A couple of enthusiastic birders travelled west from Moruya to explore the mallee and mulga of Round Hill and Nombinnie, searching the lake, waterways and local sewage ponds for both the common and uncommon birds of the region. We were joined by four Canberra birders, also members of ENHS. Over the course of this very hot week many in the group were rewarded with the sighting of up to 142 species, of which 2 remained unidentified.

In the early 1900's levee banks, weirs and channels were added to an already existing lake. In the past this lake would occasionally dry out in times of drought. The permanent lake that was formed as a result of this construction became an integral part of the agriculture and recreation of the surrounding area. The subsequent formation of the sewage ponds has provided another permanent habitat area for resident and non-resident birds.

We had plentiful sightings of nesting birds and birds with young during our visit. The weather was extremely hot and we needed to return each day to the cool of our accommodation during the hottest hours. Each evening we would return to the sewage ponds to new surprises. One day we had a Musk Duck, never to be seen by us again, a lone Hoary-headed Grebe on another day, and a single Caspian Tern on another visit. It was a great opportunity to distinguish between some of the smaller shorebirds such as the Red-necked Stint, Red-capped Plover, Black-fronted Dotterel and Red-kneed Dotterel. Marsh and Sharp-tailed Sandpipers were present every visit. We were thrilled with the Glossy Ibis and the nervous behaviour of the Black-tailed Native-hens, and on the last day a group of Plumed Whistling-Ducks had joined the swans and coot on the third pond.

One of the highlights included an early visit to a waterhole in Round Hill. Whilst groups of various woodswallows circled overhead, a wide variety of bush birds came in for their early morning drink. The Peaceful and Bar-shouldered Doves both made cautious approaches before drinking quickly and just as quickly disappearing. The busy Brown-headed Honeyeaters took their turns amongst the White-eared Honeyeaters and Striated Pardalotes.

The highlights include a few lifers for each of the birders. We were all thrilled with the sightings of the Southern Scrub-Robin, especially as we were able to see it on consecutive days, and identify a juvenile with an adult. The Gilbert's Whistler was heard, so we trekked off into the mallee for a hard-earned sighting, always keeping our return to the Wheat Paddock in mind. Here on the first day we had a sighting of a Black Falcon and on a subsequent day as we were searching for chats, a Spotted Harrier was seen just before it rose from the paddock.

After taking a wrong turn early one morning, we were delighted to see three Brolga in the farmland, and we spent some time watching the dancing movements of one of them. There were a few flocks of Budgerigar, and on a couple of days we had the enjoyment of watching a Black-eared Cuckoo near Whoey Tank, whilst the surrounding area buzzed with quite a few of the mallee birds. Splendid and White-winged Fairy-wrens are always a highlight and we had our fair share of sightings. A couple of Orange Chat were sighted on a visit the day before the Canberra people arrived, but repeated visits to the area resulted only in the Crimson and White-fronted Chats.



Brolga

Photo: L Burden

We all had a great time and look forward to next year's adventure. I wonder where that will be? The bird list is available for anyone who may be interested. Lyn Burden



*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](mailto:mypatch@enhs.org.au)*

*Logo design by Trevor King*

### **My (Our) Patch - Lurker? at Lilli Pilli**

During the morning supplementation of our boundless zoo, at what we might call Dunfellin (perhaps more on both anon), on 1<sup>st</sup> December 2015, considerable disturbance was noted in the recently rain-moistened ground where supporting logs define our pathways, and in other areas including our verge rising from the road. Similar disturbances had been noticed in times past, usually attributed to Long-nosed Bandicoot which had been noted digging the wet ground, as well as echidna which are frequently welcome visitors to our habitat. Even the less frequent goannas were considered possible culprits. But this time it seemed different and more widespread.

The mystery was to be solved after recalling part of the previous day's recorded activities. In the morning there was an extended period of puzzlingly familiar bird calls, and our searches in the vicinity failed to locate the culprit, but led to the tentative conclusion that a lyrebird might have been responsible. Voila! The following day this theory fitted well with the type of moist ground disturbance that we had noted. There was also a one-day visit report some years back of a solo lyrebird to a nearby friend's habitat on our road. Perhaps there was enough evidence to conclude that we had just had a lyrebird visit and may have had infrequent unrecognised visits previously.

But wait! There's more. The previous evening, although not having been heard all afternoon, just on dusk a lyrebird was seen exiting from under the house and heading through the understorey for parts unknown; probably not an adult male. So, a first for our patch, and encouragement to keep alert for unusual lurkers.  
Ian & Adrienne Grant

### **Highlights from ENHS records - Spring 2015**

| <b>Avian species</b>         | <b>Number</b> | <b>Place</b>          | <b>Observer</b> | <b>Comments</b>                  |
|------------------------------|---------------|-----------------------|-----------------|----------------------------------|
| Brown Quail                  | 1             | Com/Montagu I         | JC/MA           |                                  |
| Plumed Whistling-Duck        | 1             | Com                   | JC              | Still there!                     |
| Musk Duck                    | 4, 1          | Lake Tarouga/<br>PS   | DB/JM           | Displaying at PS in Oct.         |
| Pink-eared Duck              | Up to 150     | Com                   | JC              | Fewer in Nov.                    |
| Australian Shoveler          | Up to 12, 4   | Com/<br>Trunketabella | JC/DB           |                                  |
| Hardhead                     | More than 70  | Trunketabella         | MA              |                                  |
| Hoary-headed Grebe           | 10            | Com                   | JC              |                                  |
| White-headed Pigeon          | Up to 20      | MKS                   | SMG             |                                  |
| Brown Cuckoo-Dove            | Up to 14      | MKS                   | SMG             |                                  |
| Topknot Pigeon               | 3, 1          | NA/Cullendulla<br>Ck  | FM/DB           | Ringlands at NA.                 |
| Tawny Frogmouth              | 1             | TS                    | JH              |                                  |
| White-throated Nightjar      | 1 or 2        | PS                    | JM              | First return 20 Sept.            |
| Aust Owllet-nightjar         | 1             | Com/Gulaga            | JC/AM/JM        |                                  |
| White-throated<br>Needletail | 20, 13        | Malua Bay/PP          | MW/FM           | First return 17 Oct at Com. (JC) |

|                              |              |                        |                       |   |
|------------------------------|--------------|------------------------|-----------------------|---|
| Albatross sp.                |              | Off MB                 | FM                    | In Sept.  |
| Short-tailed Shearwater      | More than 20 | Montagu I              | MA                    | In Oct.   |
| Little Penguin               | Young        | Montagu I              | MA                    | In Oct.   |
| Australasian Gannet          | 6            | Montagu I              | MA                    |   |
| Pied Cormorant               | 8            | TS                     | FM                    |   |
| White-necked Heron           | Up to 4      | MYA/Com/<br>Bodalla    | JL/JC/MA              |   |
| Intermediate Egret           | 1            | Com                    | JC                    |   |
| Cattle Egret                 | Up to 50     | MYA                    | JL                    | First signs of breeding plumage 21 Sept.                                      |
| Little Egret                 | 1            | WL                     | MA                    |   |
| Eastern Reef Egret           | 1 or 2       | MO/MB                  | DHK/MA                |   |
| Straw-necked Ibis            | Up to 120    | Com                    | JC                    |   |
| Eastern Osprey               | 1            | Bingie/BB              | AM/DB                 |   |
| Square-tailed Kite           | 1 or 2       | PS/NA/<br>Coolagolite  | JM/DO                 | Pair display at PS in Sept.   |
| Pacific Baza                 | 1            | Malua Bay              | MW                    | In October. Also at this location in January.                                 |
| Brown Goshawk                | 2            | MKS/Com/<br>Gulaga     | SMG/JC/AM<br>/JM      | Nesting at Com in Oct.  |
| Collared Sparrowhawk         | 2            | PS                     | JM                    | Hunting together  |
| Grey Goshawk                 | 1 or 2       | PS                     | JM                    | Regularly raiding the nests of Noisy Friarbirds, often successfully.          |
| Spotted Harrier              | 1            | Turlinjah              | AM/JM                 | In Nov.   |
| Swamp Harrier                | 1            | MYA/Com/<br>Tilba      | JM/JC/MA              |   |
| Wedge-tailed Eagle           | 2, 3         | Deua R/Belowra         | R Stacey/A<br>Rees/FM |   |
| Little Eagle                 | 2            | Com                    | JC                    |   |
| Peregrine Falcon             | 1            | Pedro/Pedro Pt/<br>Com | JS/JM/JC              |   |
| Buff-banded Rail             | 2 to 5, 1    | TS/Com                 | JH/JC                 | 2 chicks at TS in Sept.   |
| Aust Pied Oystercatcher      | At least 14  | TS                     | A Harris/WN           | 8 nest sites with 16 eggs in Oct.   |
| Sooty Oystercatcher          | 10           | Bingie                 | AM                    | Displaying at MB.   |
| Black-winged Stilt           | Up to 9      | Com                    | JC                    | From 28 Sept.   |
| Pacific Golden Plover        | 2            | MB                     | MA                    |   |
| Red-capped Plover            | 15           | TS                     | FM                    | Nesting in Nov.   |
| Black-fronted Dotterel       | 4            | Com                    | JC                    |   |
| Red-kneed Dotterel           | 2 to 5       | Com                    | JC                    | From 26 Oct.  |
| Hooded Plover                | 2            | WL                     | MA                    | In Sept.  |
| Latham's Snipe               | 1            | Com                    | JC                    | In Nov.   |
| Bar-tailed Godwit            | 32, 31       | NA/TS                  | BSFM                  | At NA in Sept.  |
| Whimbrel                     | 1            | NA                     | NC                    | In Sept.  |
| Eastern Curlew               | Up to 32     | MHS                    | MC/JM                 |   |
| Red-necked Stint             | 30           | TS                     | FM                    |   |
| Little Tern                  | Up to 6      | TS                     | FM/WN/PJP/<br>JH      | First return 24 Oct.  |
| Caspian Tern                 | 1            | TS                     | JH                    |   |
| White-fronted Tern           | 1            | TS                     | PJP                   | In Nov.   |
| Crested Tern                 | 200 to 300   | TS                     | JH                    |   |
| Glossy Black Cockatoo        | Up to 6      | Bodalla                | MA                    | Dependent young at PS in November. (JM)                                       |
| Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo | More than 10 | MB/Coolagolite         | MA/DO                 |   |
| Gang-Gang Cockatoo           | 12           | Pedro                  | JS                    | Inspecting nest hollow and displays at Broulee in Sept, nesting in Oct. (GLM) |
| Little Corella               | Up to 100    | MYA                    | JL                    |   |

|                             |               |                              |                  |   |
|-----------------------------|---------------|------------------------------|------------------|---|
| Sulphur-crested Cockatoo    | 43            | Kianga                       | BS               |   |
| Rainbow Lorikeet            | Up to 120     | Broulee                      | GLM              |   |
| Musk Lorikeet               | 100           | Benandarah SF                | JM               | On flowering Ironbark   |
| Little Lorikeet             | 60            | Boyne SF                     | JM               | On flowering Ironbark   |
| Swift Parrot                | More than 100 | Boyne SF                     | JM/NC            | In Sept.  |
| Eastern Koel                | 3             | TS                           | JH               | October   |
| Channel-billed Cuckoo       | 1             | NA                           | FM               | First return 12 Sept.   |
| Horsfield's Bronze-Cuckoo   | 1             | Belowra                      | FM               | Oct.  |
| Shining Bronze-Cuckoo       | 3             | Gulaga                       | AM/JM            |   |
| Pallid Cuckoo               | 2             | Belowra                      | FM               | In Oct.   |
| Brush Cuckoo                | 1 or 2        | Malua Bay/<br>PS/Com         | MW/JM/JC         | First return 20 Oct.  |
| Powerful Owl                | 2             | Pedro                        | JS               |   |
| Eastern Barn Owl            | 1             | Bergalia                     | NC               | Dead  |
| Azure Kingfisher            | 8             | Bumbo Ck                     | MA               |   |
| Dollarbird                  | 10, 6         | MB/Coolagolite               | AC/MA            | First return to Bergalia on 1 Oct. (DHK)                      |
| Superb Lyrebird             | 1             | Lilli Pilli/Malua Bay        | IAG/MW           | Records east of the highway.                                  |
| Red-browed Treecreeper      | 5             | Gulaga                       | AM/JM            |   |
| Green Catbird               | 1             | Gulaga                       | AM/JM            |   |
| Pilotbird                   | 32            | Gulaga                       | AM/JM            |   |
| Yellow-throated Scrubwren   | 5             | Gulaga                       | AM/JM            |   |
| Large-billed Scrubwren      | 35            | Gulaga                       | AM/JM            |   |
| White-throated Gerygone     | 10, 4         | Belowra/Com                  | FM/JC            | First return at NA on 21 Sept. (JM)<br>Displaying at Belowra. |
| Buff-rumped Thornbill       | 6             | Misons Road                  | JM               | In Sept.  |
| Striated Pardalote          | 2             | Com                          | JC               |   |
| White-eared Honeyeater      | Call          | MKS                          | SMG              | Last record 16 Sept.  |
| Fuscous Honeyeater          | 50            | Benandarah SF                | JM               | On flowering Ironbark.  |
| Crescent Honeyeater         | 11            | Gulaga                       | AM/JM            |   |
| New Holland Honeyeater      | 40            | Broulee/MB                   | GLM/FM           |   |
| White-cheeked Honeyeater    | 2 to 4        | MKS                          | SMG              | Breeding in Sept.   |
| Scarlet Honeyeater          | Up to 15      | PS                           | JM               |   |
| Varied Sittella             | 8             | Gulaga                       | AM/JM            |   |
| Black-faced Cuckoo-Shrike   | 6             | Pedro                        | JS               |   |
| White-bellied Cuckoo-shrike | Up to 6       | MYA                          | JL               |   |
| Cicadabird                  | 1 to 2        | Malua Bay/PS                 | MW/JM            | First return 11 Oct at PS.                                    |
| White-winged Triller        | 2, calls      | Belowra/Com                  | JC/FM            | At Belowra in Oct, Com in Nov.                                |
| Crested Shrike-tit          | 1, call       | NA/MKS                       | JM/SMG           |   |
| Olive Whistler              | 3             | Gulaga                       | AM/JM            |   |
| Rufous Whistler             | Calls         | Com                          | JC               | First return 16 Sept.   |
| Australasian Figbird        | Up to 10      | MYA                          | JM               | Also calling at TS. (JH)                                      |
| Dusky Woodswallow           | 12, 20        | Bergalia/Bodalla/<br>Belowra | DHK/MA/<br>JC/FM | Nest building at Belowra in Oct.                              |
| Grey Currawong              | 2             | Com                          | JC               |   |
| Rufous Fantail              | 1             | MYA/PS/<br>Nerringundah      | MA/AM/JM         | In Woolworths at MYA!!<br>First return 12 Oct at PS.          |
| Leaden Flycatcher           | Up to 15      | PS                           | JM               | First return 11 Oct.  |

|                         |          |                |                    |                                |
|-------------------------|----------|----------------|--------------------|--------------------------------|
| Black-faced Monarch     | 2        | Deua R/NA      | R Stacey/A Rees/JM | First record at NA on 21 Sept. |
| White-winged Chough     | 10, 12   | PS/Coolagolite | JM/DO              |                                |
| Rose Robin              | 26       | Gulaga         | AM/JM              |                                |
| Golden-headed Cisticola | Call     | Com            | JC                 |                                |
| Australian Reed-Warbler | Calls    | PS             | JM                 | In Oct.                        |
| Little Grassbird        | 1 or 2   | PS/Com         | JM/JC              |                                |
| Rufous Songlark         | 2, 4     | Com/Belowra    | JC/FM              | From 21 Oct.                   |
| Tree Martin             | Up to 20 | Com            | JC                 |                                |
| Common Blackbird        | 1 or 2   | MYA            | JL                 |                                |
| Common Myna             | Up to 10 | MYA            | JL                 |                                |
| Australian Pipit        | Up to 10 | Com            | JC                 |                                |
| European Goldfinch      | 6        | Com            | JC                 | Oct.                           |

| <b>Non-avian species</b>     | <b>Number</b> | <b>Place</b>           | <b>Observer</b>       | <b>Comments</b>   |
|------------------------------|---------------|------------------------|-----------------------|---|
| Short-beaked Echidna         | 4             | Pedro                  | JS                    | Singles widespread.   |
| Long-nosed Bandicoot         | 1, signs      | Deua R/MB              | R Stacey/A Rees/MA    |   |
| Common Wombat                | 1 and signs   | Deua R/Com/Coolagolite | R Stacey/A Rees/JC/DO |   |
| Sugar Glider                 | 2, calls      | Pedro/PS Coolagolite   | JS/JM/DO              |   |
| Greater Glider               | 1             | Surfside               | RS                    | Dark morph in Sept. Photo on the Members' sightings page of the ENHS website. |
| Yellow-bellied Glider        | Calls         | MKS                    | SMG                   | To mid Sept.  |
| Common Ringtail Possum       | 4             | Pedro                  | JS                    |   |
| Common Brushtail Possum      | Up to 6       | Com                    | JC                    |   |
| Eastern Grey Kangaroo        | Up to 61      | Coolagolite            | DO                    |   |
| Red-necked Wallaby           | Up to 4       | Coolagolite            | DO                    |   |
| Swamp Wallaby                | Up to 10      | PS                     | JM                    |   |
| Grey-headed Flying-fox       | Hundreds      | Pedro                  | JS                    | In Oct.   |
| Bush Rat                     | 1             | TS                     | JH                    |   |
| Red Fox                      | 1             | Deua R/Coolagolite     | R Stacey/A Rees/DO    |   |
| Snake-necked Turtle          | 10            | Com                    | JC                    | Eggs dug up at PS in Nov.   |
| Yellow-bellied Water-skink   | 2             | Com                    | JC                    |   |
| Eastern Water Skink          | Up to 10      | MYA                    | JL                    |   |
| Dark-flecked Garden Sunskink | Up to 6       | MYA/TS                 | JL/JH                 |   |
| Jacky Lizard                 | 1 or 2        | PS/Coolagolite         | JM/DO                 |   |
| Eastern Water Dragon         | 1             | Deua R                 | R Stacey/A Rees       |   |
| Gippsland Water Dragon       | 10            | Com                    | JC                    |   |
| Lace Monitor                 | 2             | PS/Pedro/Belowra       | JM/JS/FM              | In Oct.   |
| Diamond Python               |               | MB                     | MA                    | Regular sightings.  |
| Red-bellied Black Snake      | 3             | Pedro                  | JS                    |   |
| Eastern Brown Snake          | 1             | Belowra                | FM                    |   |
| Australian Fur Seal          | 6             | Bingie Pt              | DHK                   | Loafing off the point.  |

|                             |  |
|-----------------------------|--|
| <b>Frogs</b><br>JC/JL/JM/HR | Common Eastern Froglet, Eastern Banjo Frog, Brown Striped Frog, Haswell's Froglet, Brown, and Tyler's Toadlet; tree frogs: Keferstein's, Peron's, Tyler's, Verreaux's. |
|-----------------------------|--|

|                                      |  |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| <b>Moths</b><br>JC/JM                | Plume, Black Geometrid, Cream Wave, Plantain, Mecynata, Sodaliata, Spring and Oval-spot<br>Taxeotis, Golden-fringed Emerald, Plain Heath, Banded Porela, White Cedar, Banded<br>Lichen, Variable Halone, Magpie, Heliotrope, Crimson and Dark Spotted Tiger, Tiger,<br>Granny, Mistletoe, Variable and Brown Cutworm, Native Budworm   |
| <b>Butterflies</b><br>JC/JL/JM/FM    | Orchard Swallowtail, Black and Spotted Jezebel, Capar and Cabbage White, Meadow Argus,<br>Australian Painted Lady, Yellow Admiral, Brown Ringlet, Common and Forest Brown,<br>Yellow Sword-grass Brown, Common Grass Blue  |
| <b>Beetles</b> JC                    | Net-winged, Plague Soldier, Click, Dung, Banded Pumpkin, Small Blue Leaf, Repsimus,<br>Cooper Kettle, Argentinian Scarab. Ladybirds: Spotted Amber, Striped, 26 Spotted,<br>Common Spotted, Mealybug, Transverse, Fungus-eating.   |
| <b>Dragon/Damsel<br/>flies</b> JM/JC | Common Bluetail, Wandering Percher, Tau Emerald, Blue-spotted Hawker, Common Glider,<br>Blue Skimmer.  |
| <b>Spiders</b><br>JC/JL/JM/FM        | Leaf-curling, Red Back, Daddy Long Legs, St Andrew's Cross, Black House, Water,<br>Huntsman, Jumping, Flower, Two Spined, Spiny, White-tailed, Comb Footed, Two-tailed.  |
| <b>Flowering plants</b><br>JM/DO/FM  | Grey and Red Ironbark, Forest Red Gum, River Peppermint, Hickory, Hop and Late Black<br>Wattle, Flying Duck Orchid, White Dogwood, Scrubby Platysace, Twining Glycine,<br>Fireweed Groundsel, Gorse Bitter Pea, Australian Indigo, Dusky Coral Pea, Trailing and<br>Rough Guinea Flower, Golden Tip, Purple Coral Pea, Brush Kurrajong, Sandfly Zieria,<br>Wonga Wonga Vine, Headache Vine, Hop Goodenia, Victorian Christmas Bush, Prickly<br>Shaggy Pea, Small St John's Wort, Toothed Daisy Bush. |

**RAINFALL (mm). September:** 22 at MKS, 17.8 at TS, 10.5 at Com, 21.5 at MB, 16.75 at Coolagolite.  
**October:** 38 at MYA, 51.4 at TS, 82.5 at Com, 60 at MB, 44.75 at Coolagolite. **November:** 153 at MYA,  
122 at TS, 188 at Com, 106 at MB, 200.75 at Coolagolite.

#### Contributors

|               |                            |      |                             |    |                          |
|---------------|----------------------------|------|-----------------------------|----|--------------------------|
| MA            | M Anderson, MB             | JH   | J&J Houghton, TS            | HR | H Ransom, Mossy Pt       |
| SB            | S Benjamin, Catalina       | DHK  | D&H Kay, Bergalia           | JS | J Sagar, Pedro           |
| AC            | A Christiansen, MB         | JL   | J&J Liney, MYA              | BS | B Scales, Kianga         |
| NC            | N Clark, SB                | GLM  | G&L McVeigh, Broulee        | RS | Roman Soroka, Surfside   |
| JC            | J&P Collett, Com           | AM   | A Marsh, Bingie             | MS | M Summerhayes, MYA       |
| MC            | M Crowley, MHS             | JM   | J Morgan, PS                | MW | M Wilkinson, Malua Bay   |
| DSD           | D & S Deans, ACT           | DO   | D Ondinea, Coolagolite      | FM | Field Meeting            |
| IAG           | I&A Grant, Lilli Pilli     | PJP  | P Parker, TS                |    | A Harris, NPWS           |
| SMG           | S&M Guppy, MKS             |      |                             |    | R Stacey and A Rees, MYA |
|               |                            |      |                             |    |                          |
|               |                            |      |                             |    |                          |
| <b>Places</b> |                            |      |                             |    |                          |
| 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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