



EUROBODALLA NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Inc.

PO Box 888
MORUYA NSW 2537

www.enhs.org.au



NEWSLETTER NUMBER 197

July 2023

Double-banded Plover - *Charadrius bicinctus* – (Jardine & Selby 1827)

Plovers are found throughout the world, with the exception of the Sahara and the polar regions. The International Ornithological Committee recognises 45 species of plovers and dotterels, with 32 species in the Genus *Charadrius*, ten of which are found in Australia, three resident and seven seasonal migrants.

The Double-banded Plover, *Charadrius bicinctus*, (known as the banded dotterel or pohowera in New Zealand), is unique among the migratory waders of Australia in that it migrates west to east from Australia to New Zealand to breed. All other waders migrate south to north from Australia to Arctic regions and Siberia to breed. Small numbers of the species are recorded along the Eurobodalla coastline each year, predominantly in the late autumn and early winter months, but with occasional records as early as February and as late as October.

The Double-banded Plover is a smallish wader (18-19cm) and most birds seen in Australia are in the duller non-breeding plumage. The breeding male is white below and grey brown above with two bands across its chest: a thin black upper band and a wider chestnut lower band. The forehead is white from the bill to the eye, with a black band running from eye to eye like a mask, and there is a white eyebrow. The relatively long legs are greenish yellow, the head is prominent with large, dark-brown eyes, the short bill is black, and the tail is dark. The breeding female is duller, with a narrower frontal bar. In non-breeding birds, the upper band fades from black to a dull grey and the chestnut becomes almost obscure. Immature birds lack chest bands. Visible in flight are white underwings, a narrow white bar on the upper wing and whitish outer tail feathers.



Double-banded Plover in breeding plumage in New Zealand.
Photo P Gatenby

The species breeds throughout New Zealand and its offshore islands, including the Chatham and Auckland Islands, but the largest numbers nest on the braided riverbeds* in the South Island. They are at their breeding grounds from roughly August to November, where they form seasonal monogamous pairs. The nest site is a scrape in the ground lined with stones, particularly on braided riverbeds, and they are highly faithful to a nest site. From August to September, they lay two to four eggs and can re-lay up to three times if there is a failure or predation. Incubation generally takes 28–30 days. Chicks leave the nest within a day of hatching and feed themselves with parents guarding close by for five to six weeks until they fledge. The parents then remain close for several days until the chicks join flocks and become fully independent. Many move to coastal locations in New Zealand in the immediate post-breeding season (roughly December to March). A large proportion of the population, including most that nest in the riverbeds of the South Island high country, then migrate 1,600 kilometres or more to south-eastern Australia, including Tasmania, remaining there until mid-winter. On 24 May, Tuross birders Greg and Maureen Mendel saw a Double-banded Plover at Coila Lake. It appeared to be an immature



Double-banded Plover at Broulee
Photo G McVeigh.

bird and was wearing 2 coloured bands on each leg as well as a tracking device on its back. Greg followed up and found that it was banded just south of Lake Tekapo in New Zealand in August/September 2022.

These plovers are predominantly opportunistic carnivores, feeding on insects and other aquatic invertebrates along coastlines and rivers, although they have been known to consume berries from nearby shrubs. The birds forage in daytime and at night. They hunt by sight, rather than by feel as longer-billed waders do, using a run-and-pause technique, rather than steady probing.

Charadrius bicinctus is the only plover in Australia with two breast bands, or two broken bands or tabs when not breeding, so confusion with other species is unlikely. It also has a more upright stance than most other small plovers. Non-breeding and juvenile birds might be confused with non-breeding and juvenile Lesser Sand (Mongolian) Plovers (*C. mongolus*) or Greater Sand Plovers (*C. leschenaultia*) although they have shorter legs and a shorter bill than either of these species which are summer migrants to the Eurobodalla.

Double-banded Plovers are considered secure in Australia, but their nesting sites on braided rivers are threatened by flood mitigation works and invasive trees such as willow. This has led to the species being classified internationally as “Near Threatened”. David Kay

* A braided river is a fast-flowing river with steep gradients and multiple branches within its channel.

A warm welcome to new members....

Glynis Whitfield, Moruya
Deb and Brett Stevenson, Moruya Heads
Gillian Tedder, Meringo

What's coming up.....

Saturday 8 July, 2pm, Clouts Road, Moruya (2-3km Grade 2) Meet at the car park outside the Eurobodalla Shire Council and the Library, off Vulcan Street, Moruya. Walk along a rural road with bush and farmland areas. Australasian Pipit, Wedge-tailed Eagle, Whistling Kite, Scarlet and Flame Robin, Jacky Winter, Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike, Little Raven.

Sunday 23 July, 9am, Reedy Creek Road, Eurobodalla (3-4km Grade 2) Meet opposite the Bodalla Police Station. A walk down a quiet rural road. Farmland and bush birds with the possibility of Flame and Scarlet Robin, Jacky Winter, Whistling Kite, Wedge-tailed Eagle, White-eared Honeyeater.

Saturday 12 August, 2pm, Mummaga Lake (2-3km Grade 2) Meet at the Bodalla Park Rest Area on the Princes Hwy just south of Brou Lake Rd. Walk through bush along the edge of the lake. Wonga Pigeon, Brown Gerygone, Eastern Whipbird, White-winged Chough, Silvereye, White-naped Honeyeater, Striated Thornbill, cormorants and raptors.

Sunday 27 August, 9am, Benandarah/Boyne State Forest (2-3km Grade 2) Meet at the turnoff to Long Beach, intersection of Cullendulla Dr and the Princes Highway. Where we go will depend on conditions on the day. Migrating honeyeaters, Crescent and Yellow-tufted Honeyeater, Gang-gang Cockatoo, Superb Lyrebird, Eastern Shrike-tit, Rose Robin, possibly Swift Parrot.

Saturday 9 September, 2pm, Pedro Point Road, Moruya Heads (4-5km Grade 1) Meet at Moruya South Head Beach carpark, Cnr Charles Moffitt Dr and Coronation Dr, Moruya Heads. Walk along Pedro Point Road towards Congo Creek through Bangalay sand forest. White-bellied Sea-Eagle, Eastern Shrike-tit, Red-browed Treecreeper, Variegated Fairy-wren, Pied and Sooty Oystercatcher.

Sunday 24 September, 9am, Bingie (2-3km Grade 2) Meet at the Bingie turnoff, intersection of Princes Hwy and Bingie Rd. A visit to a private property bordering Coila Lake with grassy woodland, casuarina stands and remnant wet forest. Various raptors, Azure Kingfisher, Australasian Figbird, Eastern Whipbird, Yellow-rumped Thornbill, Jacky Winter, Australasian Pipit and water birds.

Saturday 14 October, 2pm, Broulee (1-2km Grade 1) Meet at the corner of George Bass Drive and Broulee Rd. Coastal Sand Bangalay Forest with a mix of honeyeaters, Sacred Kingfisher, Bar-shouldered Dove, Spotted Pardalote, Yellow-tailed and Glossy Black Cockatoo, Olive-backed Oriole.

Report of the Annual General Meeting

The AGM was held once again in the Spotted Gum Pavilion at the Eurobodalla Regional Botanic Gardens on Sunday 28 May, with 20 members in attendance.

Chair's report: Following a welcome to all attendees, Julie presented her Chair's report, in which she expressed her thanks to those leaders who have steered the Society over time, with special mention of David Kay who is stepping down from the Committee after serving for 15 years, including as Chair and Secretary. David will continue working on NIE and the newsletter. Julie further thanked Treasurer Malcolm, the other committee members and the newsletter team. She expressed gratitude to all of those members who continue to contribute to the monthly observation records that are the basis of our publications, *Nature in Eurobodalla* and the quarterly newsletter. Gratitude was expressed for those who suggest places to visit for our field meetings program and Julie made particular mention of Julie and Peter Collett, who have welcomed us to their properties for many years and had also organised visits to other properties. Julie acknowledged the contribution of members who volunteer with Birdlife Australia and NPWS in monitoring declining species.

Secretary's report: David's final report as Secretary echoed Julie's words that the Society was flourishing with a steady membership of around 100. Our walks program has been severely impacted by inclement weather, but those which went ahead were very much enjoyed. David put out a call for suggestions of new venues to explore and also asked that other members consider leading future walks. There has been very little correspondence. Changes to the Associations Incorporations Act of NSW were examined by David and Malcolm and were considered not to have any relevance to our Society. The ENHS Facebook page has 350 followers. David expressed his thanks to Roman Soroka for his work in administering and maintaining this and the website. David concluded by thanking the Chair, Treasurer and Committee members for their support.

Treasurer's report: Malcolm tabled his report and indicated that the Society is in a sound financial position, with a surplus of \$645.11 over the past year, and with funds of \$13,108.12.

Election of office-bearers: All positions were declared vacant. The Committee is as follows: Chair and Recorder – Julie Morgan; Secretary – Annie Loveband; Minutes Secretary – Mandy Anderson; Treasurer – Malcolm Griggs; Committee – Julie Collett, Nicola Clark, Paul Gatenby, Deb Stevenson, Gee Hounsell.

General Business: There was some discussion about finding a different venue for future AGMs and it was decided from a show of hands to continue to use the pavilion. The selection of photographs for the website was discussed. The Committee had previously decided that photos would be added under habitat types, and any member is welcome to forward their photographs for inclusion.

The meeting was followed by lunch and a walk through the Gardens. Mandy Anderson

Field Meeting - Mynora - 13 May

Our field meeting on Saturday 13 May was yet another reminder of joys and benefits of ENHS membership. Julie and Peter Collett invited us to "Mynora", an historic private property which is situated on the southern side of the Moruya River, between Moruya and Moruya Heads. The walk started at the site of an old dairy, and we then walked towards a small swamp where a number of ducks were sheltering, mostly Australian Wood Duck but also Pacific Black Duck and Grey Teal amongst them. Also present was a pair of Eurasian Coots and a White-faced Heron. From the swamp, we climbed a small hill and were greeted with magnificent district views. The group lingered on the knoll and marvelled at the number of beautiful Port Jackson Figs that grew in seemingly impossible places, in the cracks of the granite boulders. From the hill, large Forest Red Gum trees stood watch over the property.

From this vantage point, we also had better views of the saltmarsh which extended right around the knoll. The saltmarsh was protected by the Collett family and their neighbours in 2016 and the vegetation in and around the saltmarsh has regenerated well. The colours of the samphire were stunning in the afternoon light. The Grey She-oaks and many species of reeds and sedges were thriving and providing food and shelter for birdlife. We saw Chestnut Teal, White-faced Heron and a single Black-fronted Dotterel in the saltmarsh as well as many Superb and Variegated Fairy-wren, Welcome Swallow and Tree Martin. Past visits to the property, had also led to the discovery of two rarely reported species of butterfly in the saltmarsh, the Samphire Blue and Saltbush Blue.



View of the saltmarsh at Mynora
Photo B Stevenson

As we started heading back towards our cars, a Great Egret and Royal Spoonbill flew above us. Two Wedge-tailed Eagles were also seen flying overhead and a large flock of Little Corella fed in the paddocks west of us. There were also Cattle Egret in the paddocks. High tides during the previous week had left some parts too wet to walk across, so for the most part we kept to the higher ground. Peter, always the thoughtful host, carried our portable bridge, a piece of timber to help people across the boggy sections of the route.

The name “Mynora” is used today for the properties on the river flats owned by the Collett family and their neighbours. In the 1800s, the name “Mynora” was used to refer to an area that began just south-east of the town of Moruya and all the way out to Moruya Heads. It was also the name given to a property that was owned by Henrietta Pomphrey in the late 1800s. As a result, it is hard to know exactly where the events that are attributed to “Mynora” actually occurred. In 1860, the town wharf was moved east to “Mynora” after it became inaccessible to all except small boats. Dredging of the Moruya River was a regular event in the days when there was no rock wall and the area relied on ships for food and transport. “Mynora” is also an area of significance for local indigenous people. In 1868, Cooral, who as a small boy witnessed the arrival of George Bass at Potato Point in 1797, died and was buried at “Mynora”.

We had seen a number of bird species and visited a place of historic significance. Our sincere thanks to the Colletts for once again inviting us to enjoy their wonderful property. Helen Kay and Julie Morgan

A visit to Werribee

Sue Taylor’s book [Best 100 birding sites in Australia](#) is one of my favourite birding reference books. I enjoy ticking off the sites in the contents section as I visit them. The number one site in her opinion is Broome, and it’s hard to disagree. I spent a week at the Broome Bird Observatory some years ago for their “Welcome back the waders” course and have since also visited the Broome sewage works a couple of times. The local council in Broome has shown great consideration to birders and their idiosyncratic interest in sewage farms by building a shaded viewing platform, from which it is possible to observe the many thousands of waders and other waterbirds that visit.



Brolga

The second site listed in Taylor’s book is the Western Treatment Plant near Werribee in southern Victoria, and it’s been a long-standing ambition of mine to visit this birdwatching mecca. Finally in March this year, I had the opportunity. With Lyn Burden and another friend, Meg, we planned a week in the area. The STP was our main goal, but Lyn had also researched some other great sites (some of which were included in Taylor’s book) where there was the chance of seeing a variety of bush birds, which do not generally feature at the sewage works.

Unbeknownst to us during our planning, our chosen dates coincided with the famous Avalon Air Show, so not only was our visit impacted by very loud and prolonged jet aircraft noise, but also by the fact that the access

road to the STP and to the Avalon Airport is a shared route, so our visiting opportunities were limited to non-air show days.

We had to obtain a key from the information office at the Werribee Zoo precinct and were also given a brief orientation as to restrictions and requirements, with recommendations not to drive too close to the pond edges, and to avoid contact with the water – no swimming and no drinking.



Cape Barren Geese

Having got the formalities out of the way, we spent three very productive half-days touring around the various pondages and bird hides. On the first day we were amazed to see a huge gathering of many hundreds of Australian Shelducks, which were joined by Brolgas, which I was surprised to see in Victoria, Cape Barren Geese, and many other wading birds. Over the course of our three visits we compiled an impressive list of species, and were delighted that Werribee had lived up to its reputation. Several sightings of Spotted Crakes were a real highlight, along with a good number of raptors, including Swamp Harriers, a Spotted Harrier and kites.

Excluded from further visits by the air show, we spent the remaining days birding in the You Yangs (Bee-eaters, Brush Bronzewing and robins), Serendip Sanctuary (hundreds of Magpie-geese, Cape Barren Geese, 4 different lorikeet species), and several coastal parks where we added several species of tern and a Common Greenshank, identified after prolonged debate.

As I have often noted, it's always great to get out of our own local area from time to time, for the opportunity to see some new species, or to revisit those that we don't see in our home patch. Our species count for the 6 days totalled around 140, a very satisfactory result. Mandy Anderson

All Kinds of Hairy

What is your definition of a hair? A very fine strand of something of varying length? NSW Flora defines a plant hair as an outgrowth of the epidermis, usually elongate and consisting of one or more cells, known as trichomes. In the botanical world hairs come in all lengths, shapes and arrangements and can appear on any part of the plant.

Hairs are an essential component of plants and serve a variety of functions. They protect the plant from the sun, wind, rain and other harsh elements as well as help to deter insects, bacteria, and fungi. They help in trapping dust and other small particles. They can work as a respiratory system for plants because they can take in carbon dioxide and release oxygen through the pores on their surfaces. They help ensure that water is distributed evenly throughout the plant, by breaking up smaller droplets of water into larger ones, allowing more water to enter the plant's tissues.

Hairs can also be found in all sorts of different shapes and sizes. Botanists have a great many terms that are applied to the different types of hairiness. Some examples are illustrated in the photographs below.



Beyeria lasiocarpa
densely hirsute hairs on fruit

left
Hirsute: coarse, moderately stiff, longish hairs.

right
Fimbriate: having a margin fringed with long hair-like outgrowths.



Thysanotus tuberosus
Fimbriate hairs on petals



Clematis glycinoides
Plumose hairs on fruit

left
Plumose: feather-like, fine hairs arising from a central axis.

right
Pilose: long, soft weak hairs which are clearly separated but not sparse.



Xanthosia pilosa
Pilose hairs on leaves

To see more of the incredible variety of hairy plants, visit: <https://www.shutterstock.com/search/hairy-plants>

Often the species name of plant will indicate what kind of hairiness and can be useful to differentiate between plants in the same genus. In other cases, a genus name will indicate that a hair or its arrangement is an important identifying feature, for example

- *Astrotricha* from the Greek 'asteros' meaning star and 'tricho' meaning hair, referring to the stellate hairs on most parts of the plant.
- *Leucopogon* from the Greek 'pogon' meaning beard, referring to the hairy sepals.
- *Comesperma* from the Greek 'come' meaning hair, referring to the hairy seeds, and
- *Eriostemon* from the Greek 'erion' meaning wool, referring to woolly-ciliate filaments.

Other terms describing hairs or hairiness include:

- velvety: covered in short, dense, soft hairs (*Pomaderris velutina* leaves)
- pubescent: very short, soft hairs (*Lissanthe strigosa* fruit)
- silky: densely covered with fine, soft, straight, appressed hairs with a silky feel and look (*Spinifex sericeus* male flower bracts)
- felted: matted with very short, interlocked hairs, like felt
- floccose: soft woolly hairs which are entangled and tend to rub off (lower surface of *Astrotricha floccosa* leaves)
- tomentose: covered with short dense intertwined matted, woolly hairs (lower surface of *Banksia integrifolia* leaves)
- woolly: densely covered with soft, matted long hairs, like sheep's wool (*Grevillia lanigera* lower leaf surfaces, styles and fruit)
- cobwebbed: covered with long, weak, loosely entangled, thin hairs resembling spiderwebs; usually white (stems, lower leaves and base of flowerhead of *Euchiton sphaericus*)
- cottony: with long, soft, weak, filamentous hairs, somewhat flocculent and entangled (younger leaves of *Commersonia dasyphylla*)
- villous: shaggy hairs, not matted (stems of *Pultenaea villosa*)
- ciliate: having a margin fringed with hairs, resembling an eyelash (petals of *Vincetoxicum barbata*)
- hirtella/hirtellus: pubescent with small coarse, stiff hairs (stems of *Phyllanthus hirtellus*)
- hoary: a dense covering of short, dense greyish-white hairs (leaves of *Leucochrysum albicans*)
- glandular: hairs that produce a secretion at the tip (flower stalk of *Stylidium graminifolium*)
- stellate: hairs with radiating branches, star-shaped (underside of leaves of *Solanum stelligerum*)
- clavate: club-shaped (*Bulbine semibarbata*)

In comparison, a non-hairy feature is often referred to as glabrous, often with a species name of glabra/glabratum meaning no hairs for example *Patersonia glabrata*

Once you have mastered the terms for hair types, the next task is to explore the range of botanical terms for the harder textures of bristles and scales.... that's a large subject all on its own! Sharon Pearson

A trip to see the endemic birds of western South Australia 8-16 May 2023

I recently undertook a guided birding trip to western South Australia to catch up with endemic birds in this part of the country. A number are new full species having been split from their eastern cousins or from birds in the far west. Many people don't realise that western birds begin on the western side of the Flinders Ranges and in some cases as far east as Western Victoria rather than on the other side of the Great Australian Bight, leading to a lot of different birds, species and sub-species to be seen as you head west from Adelaide.

I drove to Adelaide hoping to catch up on an Australasian Bittern in Murray Valley NP and Striated Grasswrens that I'd seen previously in Hattah-Kulkyne NP. Neither proved successful but I was unlucky to be travelling on the record cold weekend in May. Closer to Adelaide, near the Murray mouth, I visited the Tolderol Game Reserve, again hoping for an Australasian Bittern. No such luck but the place was interesting, about half committed to bird protection and half committed, in the season, to shooting waterfowl. I wondered if the ducks in particular understood which side of the dividing line to be on when it mattered.

From Adelaide where I met some fellow travelling birders, we flew to Port Lincoln.

Lincoln NP: The next day seven of us visited the Lincoln NP, situated at the tip of the Eyre Peninsula where the main target was the White-bellied Whipbird (*Psophodes leucogaster ssp leucogaster*). The Western Whipbird has been split into this species and the Black-throated Whipbird (*Psophodes nigragularis*) in SW WA, a target for November. The birds call noisily in the morning but rarely show themselves in the coastal heath we explored. After a few glimpses a male bird posed on a stem, but not long enough for me to get an in-focus photo. There and elsewhere in the park we saw Southern Scrub-robins, Rufous Fieldwrens (*ssp campestris*), Port Lincoln Ringnecks and new birds for me including Blue-breasted Fairywrens (*Malurus pulcherrimus*) Spotted Scrubwrens (*Sericornis maculatus*), now split from White-browed Scrubwren, Western Whistlers (*Pachycephala fuliginosa*) split from Golden Whistlers and the Western Yellow Robin (*Petroica griseogularis*). The scenery in the park was spectacular including an Osprey nest on a stack off the coast.



Spotted Scrubwren (*Sericornis maculatus*)

Coffin Bay NP: The next day included a trip to the equally attractive Coffin Bay NP where we spent a frustrating morning listening to White-bellied Whipbirds in a heath filled valley between two huge sanddunes. We retired for breakfast in the town of Coffin Bay and a coastal walk led to a sighting of several Rock Parrots (*Neophema petrophila*) a new bird for me. Stops in woodlands revealed honeyeaters such as the uncommon Purple-gaped (*Lichenostomus cratitius*) and Grey Currawongs (*Strepera versicolor ssp intermedia*).

There was then a long drive up the West coast of the Eyre peninsula to Ceduna.

Yumbarra CP: The next day we changed from our bus to two 4 wheel drives for a trip north up Goog's Track, a desert track so famous it has its own website. This took us into the Yumbarra CP in search of the Rufous Grasswren (*Amytornis whitei*) a subspecies of the Striated Grasswren complex, now regarded as related to the Pilbara Grasswren, but not yet elevated to species level. After sustained searching through low scrub and spinifex a bush containing several small birds was detected. I was unlucky enough to focus on a bird which turned out to be the familiar Inland Thornbill. Others caught a glimpse of the grasswren. We returned to Ceduna, once again crossing the Dog Fence, a rite of passage for any Australian.

Nullarbor Plain: The next day was a long trip across the Great Australian Bight to the Nullarbor Plain NP and Roadhouse. Just before arriving we spied a pair of Nullarbor Quail-thrush (*Cinlosoma alisteri*) next to the highway and obtained great views with photographs. This Quail-thrush, confined to the Nullarbor, has been split from the Cinnamon Quail-thrush which is found further east and north, in a large area where Qld, NT, SA and NSW meet.



Nullarbor Quail-thrush
(*Cinlosoma alisteri*)

Koonalda Track: After lunch we travelled further west and then north up the Koonalda Track to the abandoned Koonalda station. This was in search for the Naretha Blue Bonnet (*Northiella narethae*), confined to an area that straddles the WA, SA border on the edge of the Nullarbor Plain. After a few false alarms due to the more plentiful Mulga Parrot, a small group of Naretha Blue Bonnets swooped by, briefly perching at a distance beyond my camera. Another great bird seen that afternoon was a group of Ground Cuckoo-shrikes.

A stop on the coast did not reveal any interesting birds, but we were all in awe of the huge cliffs that look over the Bight. The next day we explored the Nullarbor NP adjacent to the Roadhouse. We saw some distant juvenile or female Nullarbor Quail-thrush and realised how lucky we had been with the roadside view the day before. On the return to Ceduna we stopped at the Yalata Woodlands and found the Rufous Treecreeper (*Climacterus rufa*) almost as our bus drew up. This completed the full set of Australian Treecreepers for me. We stopped at several seaside places, Black-faced Cormorants and Pacific Gulls were the most prominent birds that would never or rarely be seen in Eurobodalla.

Yumbarra CP: We returned to the Southern part of Yumbarra CP and found the elusive and shy Copper-backed Quail-thrush (*Cinclosoma clarum*), a split from the Chestnut Quail-thrush. A return to woodlands in Lake Gilles SP brought a variety of honeyeaters with the White-fronted and Grey-fronted the standouts.

Overnight was at Kimba in the NE Eyre Peninsula, a town famous for the “Big Galah” and marking the halfway point between Sydney and Perth. The next day was back to Lake Gilles SP and then Corunna Station near Iron Knob where the Western Grasswren (*Amytornis textilis ssp myall*) was for grasswrens readily seen.

We lunched in Iron Knob a small mining town built largely out of second-hand corrugated iron, not as stylish as Broken Hill. My impression of the western SA towns until then had been one of surprise at how orderly, neat and prosperous they appeared. It was then on to Whyalla where in the wetlands we saw a juvenile Banded Stilt (*Cladorhynchus leucocephalus*) as well as a collection of shorebirds around the harbour.



Elegant Parrots
(*Neophema elegans*)

Overnight was in Port Augusta. The next day, the last, began in the Australian Arid Lands Botanic Gardens where the initial highlight was a small flock of Elegant Parrots (*Neophema elegans*). This was followed by Chirruping Wedgebills (*Psophodes cristatus*). We then moved on to Telowie Gorge for a number of honeyeaters, a highlight nearby was a close encounter with a Black Falcon. Lunch was at Nelshaby SP where we saw Mallee Ringnecks for a change and Adelaide Rosellas (*Platycercus elegans ssp subadelaidae*) which I am certain pose less than their related Crimson Rosellas.

The rest of the trip to Adelaide included a few more waterbirds and then a couple of hours in Adelaide looking, without success for the feral, but breeding Barbary Dove.

Gluepot Reserve: Throughout the tour we had been talking about reports of a large flock of Scarlet-chested Parrots (*Neophema splendida*) that had been reported from Gluepot Reserve. This wonderful area in the SA Mallee, north of Riverland is a Birdlife Australia Reserve and was fortunately on my way home. I picked up my car from Adelaide airport and after a couple of days with friends in Adelaide drove the 4 hours to Gluepot and then another hour traversing the reserve as the birds were reported from the eastern border. There they were, about 30; males, females and juveniles, scurrying about the ground, feeding but trusting, walking in front of me allowing photographs. This was thrilling, these birds are one of the classic hard to see parrots in Australia. They irregularly burst out of their homeland in the Great Victoria Desert to be seen in places like Gluepot. Perhaps this was associated with the La Niña we have had, the country everywhere was well watered and splendid.



Scarlet-chested Parrot
(*Neophema splendida*)

Altogether a great trip with for me 12 new species and 3 new subspecies. Paul Gatenby



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

Golden Whistler Sighting

In 2007, Sarah and I started a long-term study of the breeding ecology of the bird community on a 10 ha site on our property, Ballara. The last season of the study was 2014.

As part of this study we banded 2833 birds, all with metal bands from The Australian Bird and Bat Banding Scheme (ABBBS). But 1364 of these birds were also banded with colour bands so they could be recognised at a distance. Without these colour-banded birds, our investigations of the various aspects of the community would not have been possible.

Over the course of the study we recaptured 1061 birds, on the site, but we were always hoping for a sighting or a recapture of a banded bird, distant from the site. All bird banders in Australia, and most bird watchers in Australia, would know to contact ABBBS if they caught, or could somehow identify, a banded bird. But up until this year, there had only been one record of one of our banded birds distant from our site. This was a metal banded magpie, killed on the road, only about 1 km from our site.

Low recoveries of banded birds is the norm, worldwide. As an example, 12,927 Yellow-faced Honeyeaters were banded along the Murrumbidgee River in the ACT between 1963 and 1977. There were only 4 recoveries (0.03%).

However, in May 2023 ABBBS contacted us with a recovery from Broulee, about 10km away. The person had sent in a photograph. The bird was a Golden Whistler, either a female or an immature, and it had a metal band on the right leg, and a white colour band on the left leg. The way colour-banding is organised in Australia, if more than one person is colour banding a particular species, the colours, combinations and legs used, are such that the birds cannot be confused. So this bird was definitely banded on our site, and would have had two colour bands on the left leg. Unfortunately, the upper colour band was not visible in the photograph. The number on the metal band would uniquely identify the bird, but it was not readable on the photograph.

However, we managed to narrow down the possibilities. There were 6 Golden Whistlers that were banded with a white band as the lower band. However, adult breeding Golden Whistlers are sedentary, so we think this bird was a juvenile when banded, and subsequently dispersed from our site. Because the age of each bird is recorded when it is banded, we looked in our records for juvenile Golden Whistlers with a white lower band. This narrowed it down to two combinations, Light green on White (banded in 2010), or Mauve on White (banded in 2014). Either way, it is at least an 8 year old bird.

Such a lucky sighting, and such an important bit of information. Michael and Sarah Guppy

The Wagonga Inlet Living Shoreline Project

A new project seeks to rehabilitate and restore the beautiful, picturesque inlet at Narooma and increase the marine life there for all to enjoy. The project is a joint effort by Commonwealth, State and Local government, along with various NGOs.

In Australia, it is estimated that 99% of natural oyster reefs are ‘functionally extinct’, meaning they no longer play a significant role in ecosystem function. In NSW, wild oyster populations still exist in most bays and estuaries but at very low densities compared to the pre-European period. We know that many Australian wildlife habitats have been adversely affected by European settlement. But it is not so well known that one of these habitats, shallow water oyster reefs, have been almost destroyed through exploitation for food and minerals.

Awareness of this loss has increased, however, and, as a result, action is under way to restore oyster reefs at some sites around the Australian coastline. This involves placing structures in appropriate waters and either relying on natural recruitment or seeding of oyster spat to get these restored reefs going. Significant landscaping is also needed to restore not only the reef but also the foreshore.

According to Jillian Keating from the Department of Primary Industry, the Wagonga project is the second large-scale project involving an oyster reef restoration in NSW, the first being in Port Stephens. She said the progress at the Port Stephens project had been “quite incredible”. The most recent survey has estimated there are 50 million baby oysters, 34 species of fish and 50 times more fish on the juvenile reefs compared to bare sand. And the reefs are estimated to filter three Olympic-sized pools of water per hour.

At Wagonga, local citizen scientists are monitoring the growth and recruitment of Sydney Rock Oysters to the new intertidal reef and local bird enthusiasts, have been documenting shorebirds using the area. Species recorded include Pied Oystercatchers, Royal Spoonbills, Crested Terns, Bar-tailed Godwits, Eastern Curlews, Australian White Ibis, Little and Intermediate Egrets and Silver Gulls. These shorebirds are not only foraging amongst the reef patches but are using these as high tide roosts.



Royal Spoonbills at Wagonga
Photo R Williams

For those interested in joining oyster recruitment surveys please contact James from Nature Coast Marine Group on jimbo@ozemail.com.au and for those keen on helping with shorebird surveys please contact Jillian.Keating@dpi.nsw.gov.au.

For a more detailed summary of the project and to see what it will look like when completed (very cool video) go to the Eurobodalla Shire Council’s website at: <https://www.esc.nsw.gov.au/council/major-projects/current-projects/planning-recreation-business/wagonga-inlet-living-shoreline>

Thanks to Bill Barker (Nature Coast marine Group) and Jillian Keating for providing the information for this article. Helen Kay

Highlights from ENHS records - Autumn 2023

Avian species	Number	Place	Observer	Comments
Emu	2	PP	FM	
Stubble Quail	10	Com	JC	
Brown Quail	15	Belimbla	JC	Along Belowra Rd
Black Swan	More than 49	MB	MA	
Hardhead	1	BI	MA	
Pacific Black Duck	500	Com	JC	After harvest of corn silage
Grey Teal	20	Com	JC	
Australasian Grebe	Up to 40, 5	Com/MB	JC/MA	
Brown Cuckoo-Dove	6, 3	MKS/Coila Ck Rd	SMG/FM	Fewer elsewhere
Topknot Pigeon	8	Deua NP	JM	
Tawny Frogmouth	1 or call	Com/MB	JM/MA	
White-throated Nightjar	1	PS	JM	Last on March 2
Australian Owlet-nightjar	Calls	Deua NP/MB	FM/MA	

White-throated Needletail	2,000 to 5,000	Surfside	DB	In early March
Eastern Koel	1	Sth DS	JCof	Young
Horsfield's Bronze-Cuckoo	1	Deua NP	DB/JM	In late April
Dusky Moorhen	3	Com	JC	Immatures
Eurasian Coot	More than 500	Jemisons Point	FM	
Royal Spoonbill	40, 16, 2	Com/NA/MYA	JC/MA/FM	
Striated Heron	1	TN/Broulee/NA/Bingie	V Brown/GLM/MA/DHK	First record at Kelly's L Bingie
Cattle Egret	70, 50, 23, 20	MB/MYA/Bergalia/Com	MA/JM/DHK/JC	
White-necked Heron	4, 1	Com/MYA/Cool	JC/JM/DO	
Intermediate Egret	2, 1	MYA/Com	MA/JC	
Little Egret	10, 2	Nangudga/BI	MA	
Eastern Reef Egret	1	Broulee/Mullimburra Pt/Bingie Pt/NA/BI	GLM/DHK/MA/ V Brown/DO	
Australasian Gannet	8, 7, 2	Jemisons Pt/Sth DS/Broulee	FM/JCof/GLM	
Great Pied Cormorant	2	Kianga	MA	
Australasian Darter	1 or 2	Com	JC	
Aust Pied Oystercatcher	9	NA	MA	Fewer elsewhere
Sooty Oystercatcher	3	Candlagan Ck/NA/BI	HR/MA/DO	Fewer elsewhere
Pied Stilt	Up to 18, 2	Com/Bumbo Rd	JC/V Brown	Many immatures at Com
Pacific Golden Plover	1	MB	MA	Over-wintering
Red-capped Plover	14, 5	MB/Coila L	MA/V Brown	
Double-banded Plover	Present	Coila L	V Brown	
Hooded Plover	2	MB/Tilba L	MA	
Black-fronted Dotterel	8, 5, 3	Com/Coila L/Bingie/MO	JC/V Brown/DHK	
Red-kneed Dotterel	4	Com	JC	From mid-March to mid-May
Far Eastern Curlew	3, 1	NA	MA	
Bar-tailed Godwit	30, 8	Coila L/NA	V Brown/MA	
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper	2	PS/Com	JM/JC	Overflying PS
Caspian Tern	6, 4, 1	NA/Coila L/MB	MA/V Brown	
White-fronted Tern	1	Bingie Pt	DHK	
Greater Sooty Owl	Calling	MB	MA	
Powerful Owl	2	PS	JM	
Masked Owl	1-2	Pedro	JS	
Osprey	2, 1	Broulee/MHS/PS	GLM/JM	Nest building on the telecom tower at MHS
Square-tailed Kite	1	MB	MA	March record
Swamp Harrier	2	MB	MA	
Grey Goshawk	2, 1	PS/Sth DS/Bergalia	JM/JCof/DHK	
Brown Goshawk	1	Bodalla	MA	
Collared Sparrowhawk	1	PS/Com	JM/JC	
Oriental Dollarbird	Call	MB	MA	In March
Azure Kingfisher	1	Com	JC	
Sacred Kingfisher	1	Broulee	GLM	In May
Australian Hobby	1	PS/Com	JM/JC	
Peregrine Falcon	1	Com/PS	JC/JM	
Glossy Black Cockatoo	4, 3	Broulee/PS/MB	GH/GLM/JM/MA	Fewer elsewhere

Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo	Up to 50	MB	MA	
Gang-Gang Cockatoo	5, 3	Sth DS/MB/ MKS/Com/Cool	JCof/MA/SMG /JC/DO	
Eastern Rosella	12, 8, 2	Com/Bumbo Rd /Bergalia/ Belowra/MB	JC/V Brown/ DHK/MA	
Musk Lorikeet	6	PS	JM	
Little Lorikeet	2, 1	PS/Mogo SF	JM	
Australian King Parrot	Up to 40	Com	JC	
Superb Lyrebird	2, 1	Deua NP/Mogo SF/MKS/Cool	FM/JM/SMG/ DO	
Southern Emu-wren	Up to 10	Candlagan Ck	GLM	
Crescent Honeyeater	Up to 6	Deua NP	DB/JM	At 3 locations
White-cheeked Honeyeater	6, 3, 1	Jemisons Pt/ Mogo SF/ Bimbimbee Rd/ Broulee	FM/JM/GLM	
White-naped Honeyeater	Up to 100	Deua NP	DB/JM	
Brown-headed Honeyeater	10, 6	Deua NP/PS/ Com	DB/JM/JC	
White-eared Honeyeater	Up to 20	Deua NP	DB/JM/FM	At 3 locations
Noisy Friarbird	1 or 2	MKS/PS/Deua NP/Com	SMG/JM/DB/ JC	Still present in April
Scarlet Honeyeater	8, 1	Deua NP/PS/ Jemisons Pt	DB/JM/FM	
White-fronted Chat	5	Coila L	V Brown	
White-plumed Honeyeater	2	Deua NP	DB/JM	
Fuscous Honeyeater	51, 6	Mogo SF/ Bimbimbee Rd	JM	Migrating with Yellow-faced Honeyeaters
Yellow-faced Honeyeater	Hundreds	Deua NP/PS/ Com	JM/JC	Strong migration
Yellow-tufted Honeyeater	2	Bimbimbee Rd	JM	
Striated Pardalote	10, 4, 1	PS/Deua NP/ Bimbimbee Rd	JM	Migrating with Silvereyes
White-throated Gerygone	Call	Coila Ck Rd	FM	March
Pilotbird	1	Deua NP	DB/JM	Mungerarie Firetrail
Varied Sittella	6, 1	PS/Cool/Deua NP	JM	
Australasian Figbird	7, 3	Bingie/NA	JM/MA	
Spotted Quail-thrush	2	Donalds Ck Rd	JM	
Eastern Shrike-tit	1 or 2	Deua NP	JM	Seen at 3 locations
Rufous Whistler	4, 3	Coila Ck Rd/PS /Com/MB/Cool	FM/JM/JC/MA /DO	Dependent young at Com in March
White-bellied Cuckoo-shrike	2	PS	JM	
Common Cicadabird	2	PS	JM	In March
White-browed Woodswallow	5	Belimbla	JC	In March
Dusky Woodswallow	10, 2	Deua NP/Cool	JM/DO	
Rufous Fantail	1	PS/Bingie/MB	JM/DHK/MA	
Spangled Drongo	1	PS	JM	In April
Restless Flycatcher	1	Com	JC	
Leaden Flycatcher	1	PS	JM	March
Black-faced Monarch	1	MB/Bingie	MA/DHK	

Little Raven	50, 2	Com/MYA/MB	JC/SMG/MA	
White-winged Chough	9, 6	MK/Com/PS	SMG/JC/JM	
Rose Robin	1 or 2	Bimbimbee Rd /Deua NP/PS/ Com/MB	JM/FM/JC/ A Christensen	
Little Grassbird	1	Com	JC	In March
Tree Martin	20, 10, 2	Com/ERBG/ Coila Ck Rd/PS	JC/FM/JM	
Silvereye	Hundreds	Deua NP/PS/ Com	JM/JC	Moving north through shire
Bassian Thrush	1	Pedro Pt	V Brown	
Mistletoebird	4, 2, 1	Deua NP/PS/ Jemisons Pt	FM/JM	

Non-avian species	Number	Place	Observer	Comments
Short-beaked Echidna	1	PS	JM	
Long-nosed Bandicoot	Signs	Mossy Pt	HR	
Common Wombat	Signs	Com/Cool/Tilba	JC/DO/MA	
Sugar Glider	2, calls	PS/MB	JM/MA	
Common Brushtail Possum	2, 1	Com/MB/Cool/ Mossy Pt	JC/MA/DO/HR	
Eastern Grey Kangaroo	52, 25, 20	Cool/PS/MB	DO/JM/MA	
Red-necked Wallaby	7, 4, 1	Sth DS/Cool/PS	JCof/DO/JM	Also at Jemisons Pt
Grey-headed Flying-fox	1 or 2	Mossy Pt	HR	
Snake-necked Turtle	Up to 10	Com	JC	
Yellow-bellied Water-skink	2	Com	JC	March-April
Southern Marbled Gecko	1	MHS	MC	April. Second record at this location.
Eastern Blue-tongue	1 or 2	Broulee/Mossy Pt/ Com	GLM/HR/JC	
Jacky Lizard	1 or 2	Mossy Pt/PS/ Cool	HR/JM/DO	
Gippsland Water Dragon	Up to 5	Com	JC	
Lace Monitor	1	PS/Com/Cool/ BI	JM/JC/DO/MA	In March
Diamond Python	1	MB/Cool	MA/DO	

Frogs JC/JM/ HR/FM	Common Eastern Froglet, Brown-striped Frog, Dendy's and Tyler's Toadlet; tree frogs: Brown, Eastern Sedgefrog, Jervis Bay, Screaming, Peron's, Tyler's, Verreaux's.
Moths JC/JM	Varied Fraus, Australian Bagmoth, White Rush, Beet Webworm, Eggfruit Caterpillar, Twig Looper, Brown Twisted Moth, Triangular and Neat Epidesmia, Plain Heath, Cream and Varied Wave, Plantain, Mecynata, Coprosma, Processionary, Variable Halone, Reticulated Footman, Lichen-eating Caterpillar, Heliotrope, Magpie, Tiger, Plain Pantydia, Triangle Owlet, Green-blotched, Variable Cutworm, Native Budworm.
Butterflies DB/MA/JC/GLM /JM/HR/FM	Splendid Ochre, Narrow-brand Grass-dart, Macleay's and Orchard Swallowtail, Imperial and Black Jezebel, Cabbage White, Dusky Knight, Brown Ringlet, Varied Sword-grass Brown, Common Brown, Meadow Argus, Yellow Admiral, Monarch, Varied Dusky-blue, Common Grass Blue.
Dragon & Damselflies JC/JM	Common Bluetail, Blue Skimmer, Australian Emerald, Wandering Percher.
Beetles JC/JM	Plague Soldier, Green Scarab, Metallic Green Acacia, Banded Pumpkin, Small Blue Leaf, Dotted and Spotted Paropsine, Three-lined Potato, Acacia Leaf, Dung, White Christmas, Honeybrown; Ladybirds: Steel Blue, White Collared, 26 Spotted, Variable, Mealybug, Striped, Fungus-eating.
Bugs JC/JM/FM	Harlequin, Bronze Orange, Green Vegetable, Yellow-dotted Gum Tree Shield, Red-green Spined Stink.

Other insects MA/JC/JM/DO	Bees: Blue Banded. Wasps: Blue Flower, Common Paper, Orange Caterpillar Parasite. House Centipede. Yellow-winged Locust. Olive-green Coastal Katydid.
Spiders MA/JC/JM	Spiny, Black House, Leaf-curling, Jumping, Huntsman, Daddy Long Legs, Golden Orb, Two-tailed, St Andrew's Cross, Giant Water, Orange-legged Swift, Garden Orb Weaving, Green Crab.

RAINFALL (mm). **March:** 85.5 at MKS, 61 at Bergalia, 44 at Com, 32.5 at MB, 51.5 at Cool. **April:** 66 at MKS, 95 at Bergalia, 43.5 at Com, 39.25 at Cool. **May:** 13 at MKS, 40 at Bergalia, 50.5 at Com, 14.5 at MB, 22 at Cool.

Contributors

MA	M Anderson, MB	DHK	D&H Kay, Bergalia	FM	Field Meeting
DB	D Bertzeletos, Surfside	GLM	G&L McVeigh, Broulee		V Brown, ACT
JCof	J Coffey, Sth DS	JM	J Morgan, PS		A Christensen, MB
JC	J&P Collett, Com	DO	D Ondinea, Cool		
MC	M Crowley, MHS	HR	H Ransom, Mossy Pt		
PG	P Gatenby, Broulee	JS	J Sagar, Pedro		
SMG	S&M Guppy, MKS				
GH	G Hounsell, Broulee				
Places					
BB	Batemans Bay	ERBG	Eurobodalla Botanic Gardens	PDD	Percy Davis Drive, MYA
BBWG	Batemans Bay Water Gardens	LP	Lilli Pilli	PS	Pedro Swamp
BI	Bermagui	MKS	Maulbrooks Rd S, MYA	PP	Potato Point
BP	Burrewarra Point	MO	Meringo	SB	Surf Beach
Cool	Coolagolite	MYA	Moruya	SF	State Forest
Com	Comerang	MH	Moruya Heads, N&S	T'bella	Trunketabella
CO	Congo	MB	Mystery Bay	TN	Tomakin
DS	Durras	NA	Narooma	TS	Tuross
DY	Dalmeny	NP	National Park	WL	Wallaga Lake

ENHS Committee and Contact Details

Chair/Recorder	Julie Morgan	0457 637 227	chair@enhs.org.au
Secretary	Annie Loveband		secretary@enhs.org.au
Treasurer	Malcolm Griggs	4472 4150	treasurer@enhs.org.au
Committee	Mandy Anderson, Nicola Clark, Julie Collett, Paul Gatenby, Gee Hounsell, Deb Stevenson		
Public Officer and Membership	Malcolm Griggs	4472 4150	treasurer@enhs.org.au
Minutes Secretary	Mandy Anderson	4473 7651	
Newsletter Team	Mandy Anderson, Susan Heyward, David Kay, Helen Kay, Gillian Macnamara, Julie Morgan		editor@enhs.org.au
Website	Roman Soroka		webmaster@enhs.org.au

All mail correspondence to P.O. Box 888, Moruya, NSW, 2537.

Copyright 2023. All rights reserved. While all due care has been taken to ensure that the content of this newsletter is accurate and current, there may be errors or omissions and no legal responsibility is accepted for the information in this newsletter.

Anyone can write an article for the newsletter, and it would be great to see some new contributors.

Please think about writing an article if you:

- have discovered a new birding spot in our local area
- would like to let others know about the birding happenings in your garden or suburb
- have learnt something interesting about wildlife that you would like to share
- have taken an interesting photo that would add to the quality of the newsletter
- have been on a holiday where you saw some interesting birds

If you feel that you can contribute in any way to the newsletter, we'd love to hear from you. The newsletter team is a collaborative friendly group who would be happy to support you in any way. Email editor@enhs.org.au