



EUROBODALLA NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Inc.

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January 2026

Oriental Dollarbird - *Eurystomus orientalis* – (Linnaeus 1766)

The Oriental Dollarbird is the sole Australian representative of the Roller family (Coraciidae), so named because of their rolling courtship display flight, and is found from Australia to Korea, Japan and India. The Dollarbird is so named because of the distinctive patches on the underside of the wings, described by different sources as pale blue, very light blue, silvery or white, which are highly visible in flight and thought to resemble the American silver dollar coin.

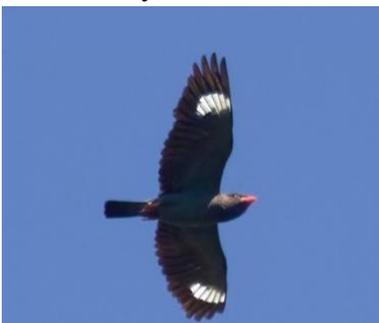
The species was formally described by the Swedish naturalist Carl Linnaeus in 1766, in the twelfth edition of his *Systema Naturae*, under the binomial name *Coracias orientalis*. Linnaeus based his description on "Le Rollier des Indes" that had been described and illustrated by the French zoologist Mathurin Jacques Brisson in 1760. The type locality is the island of Java in Indonesia. The species is now placed in the genus *Eurystomus* that was introduced in 1816 by the French ornithologist Louis Pierre Vieillot. Ten subspecies are recognised of which one, the Eastern Dollarbird (*E. o. pacificus*), originally described as a separate species in the genus *Coracias* by Latham in 1801, is found on northern and eastern Australia.



Oriental Dollarbird
Photo R Soroka

The Oriental Dollarbird is a heavily built, flat headed bird with a length of up to 30cm. It is dark brown, but this is heavily washed with a bluish-green sheen on the back and wing coverts. Its belly and undertail coverts are light coloured, and it has glossy bright blue colouring on its throat and undertail. Its flight feathers are a darker blue. Its bill is short and wide and, in mature animals, is coloured orange-red with a black tip. The females are slightly duller than the males, but overall the two are very similar. Immature birds are much duller than the adults and do not have the blue colouring on their throats. They also have brown bills and feet instead of the red of the adults.

In Australia, the Dollarbird inhabits open wooded areas, normally with mature, hollow-bearing trees suitable for nesting. They are most commonly seen singly with a distinctive upright silhouette perched on powerlines or a bare branch high in a tree. Dollarbirds feed almost exclusively on flying insects. They search for food from a conspicuous perch and then capture it in skilful aerial pursuits, before returning to the same perch. Occasionally, Dollarbirds have been seen feeding on grasshoppers on the ground, although this practice is uncommon. They have a distinctive, harsh 'kak-kak-kak' call that is repeated several times and is often given in flight.



Oriental Dollarbird in flight
Photo R Soroka

The Dollarbird arrives in northern and eastern Australia in September each year to breed, although it is usually early October before they arrive in the Eurobodalla. During the breeding season, pairs are often seen flying in characteristic rolling flights. These flights are more common in the evening and are accompanied by cackling calls. Nests are in cavities; typically tree hollows, and a clutch of 3-4 white eggs are laid in an unlined hollow and incubated by both adults. The young birds are also cared for by both parents.

The same nesting site may be used for several years. In March or April, the birds return to New Guinea and adjacent islands to spend the winter.

The Conservation status of the species is given as of Least Concern, though with an annotation that the population is decreasing. David Kay

2026 subscriptions are now due.

A membership renewal form for 2026 has been sent with this newsletter. Single membership is \$20, family \$30 and for under 18s \$5.

A warm welcome to new members

Cid Mateo and Joanne Pinkas, Bingie
Chris Lucas, Moruya
Nandini Narayan, Batemans Bay

What's coming up.....

Saturday 14 February, 2pm Bingie Dreaming Track, Congo (2km - Grade 2) Meet at the northern end of the track, in the car park off Congo Road at the southern end of Congo village. (Note access to Congo is via Bingie Road.) 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, Rufous Fantail, Scarlet Honeyeater, Common Cicadabird, Brown Gerygone, Eastern Shrike-tit and water birds.

Sunday 1 March, 9am Acheron Trail, Maloneys Beach (2-3km - Grade 2)

Meet at the track in the reserve opposite 62 Maloneys Drive. Parking on Maloneys Drive or Hibiscus Close. Spotted Gum and Blackbutt coastal forest. White-bellied Sea-Eagle, Pied and Sooty Oystercatcher, Brown Cuckoo-Dove, New Holland Honeyeater, White-cheeked Honeyeater and other honeyeaters, Olive-backed Oriole, Rufous Whistler.

Saturday 14 March, 2pm Moruya Riverside (2-3km – Grade 2) Meet at the Moruya Swimming Pool car park, off Shore Street (east) Moruya. A walk through Riverside Park along the Moruya River. Australian Figbird, Yellow Thornbill, Musk Lorikeet, Whistling Kite, White-bellied Sea-eagle, Striated Heron, Pied Oystercatcher and Australian Darter.

Sunday 29 March, 9am Bodalla Forest Park (2-3km – Grade 2) Meet at the Bodalla Forest Park rest area, just south of the turnoff to Brou Tip, Bodalla. A number of old logging tracks provide access to tall coastal forest with bush birds including Glossy Black Cockatoo, Rufous Fantail, Topknot Pigeons, Leaden Flycatcher, Black-faced Monarch, Rose Robin and a variety of honeyeater species.

Saturday 11 April, 2pm Potato Point (2-3km – Grade 2) Meet at the toilet block near the intersection of Riverview Rd and Blackfellows Pt Rd, Potato Point near the bridge. A walk amongst Spotted Gum/Cycad coastal forest and fringing Swamp-oak Forest as well as dune vegetation with views of the ocean. A mix of sea birds, shorebirds, water birds and forest birds.

New guidelines for ENHS Field Meetings on Private Property and the AGM

Engaging with the broader public to educate people about nature is a core value of the Eurobodalla Natural History Society. We have always welcomed visitors on field meetings as it provides an opportunity for potential new members to get to know us before they join. ENHS members also deliver talks about nature to the community and the Facebook page we host is yet another opportunity for members to interact with people interested in learning about nature in the Eurobodalla.

At the ENHS committee meeting in November, we discussed the option of restricting field meetings to private property and attendance at the AGM and the talk that follows to ENHS members and their guests only. Access to private property is a privilege that is extended to our members, and as a society, we have an obligation to respect this as one of the benefits of membership. Attendance at the AGM has rarely attracted visitors but in 2025 we changed the format and added a talk which attracted much interest. It is usual practice for AGMs to be restricted to members only.

We will continue to welcome visitors to most field meetings, however, the committee decided that from 2026, field meetings to private property and the AGM will be for ENHS members and their guests only. We also discussed the issue of privacy for the people who generously invite us to their properties. The submission of bird lists to forums such as Birdata and eBird can result in an invasion of that privacy and it was decided that this practice be discouraged. If a list is posted to these forums, it should be done in a way that will keep locations unidentified, including not naming a property, not providing an address or the geospatial coordinates. Members will be reminded of this at field meetings on private property.

Field Meeting — Barlings Swamp -11 October 2025.

A group of 15 gathered at the junction of Bevia Road and George Bass Drive on a pleasantly warm spring afternoon for a walk around the edge of Barlings Swamp. While waiting for a wedding party involved in a photoshoot to finish their business, we were entertained by a pair of Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoos chewing on a piece of dead wood above us. In the discussion about these birds, I learned that the sexes can be distinguished by the colour of the eye ring – pink in the male and grey in the female.



One of the reasons for the visit to Barlings Swamp was to check on the small population of Blue-billed Duck, as this appears to be the only location in the Shire where the species is seen. When the wedding party left, we started our amble along the track and soon spotted a party of Eurasian Coot estimated to be around 70 strong. The first Blue-billed Duck was sighted shortly after – but at quite a distance from us. This seemed to be the case for the whole afternoon.

Some of the waterbirds were already well into their breeding cycle. Two families of Pacific Black Duck had half a dozen ducklings in tow, and two Black Swans were being followed by their cygnets. Australasian Grebes were scattered across the water in good numbers – not an easy species to count when they keep diving and then resurfacing metres away for a few seconds before diving again – but I thought there were at least 50. A handful of Hoary-headed Grebes were also seen as well as Chestnut and Grey Teal, cormorants and pelicans.

At one point a raptor cruised along the opposite shoreline and provoked a discussion as to whether it was a goshawk or a sparrowhawk. The majority verdict was a Brown Goshawk and that's what went into the record.

At the turnaround point there was a bit of excitement when a Scarlet Honeyeater was seen, and two Rainbow Lorikeets flew in and disappeared into a tree hollow directly above us. At the end of the afternoon we had a list of 38 bird species and a count of 9 Blue-billed Duck, five female and four male. My thanks to Rob Clunes for permission to use his photos. David Kay



Field Meeting - Brou Lake -23 November 2025

With the threat of cancellation lingering due to the overnight forecast of storms, 17 eager birders were relieved not to receive an email of doom from Julie as they crunched on their cereals and sipped their morning coffee. The rain had cleared and Julie declared “ThunderBIRDS are Go” for the final field outing of 2025, for which it has become customary to seek a location focusing on waders. Based on well informed advice from Mandy, Brou Lake was selected as the site to visit, which was a variation from Coila Lake where we have been in recent years. The site selection was spot on and the waders were very obliging with their presence.

We met at Bodalla Forest Park, which in itself is a site well worth visiting. Even in the carpark, sounds of the Black-faced Monarch, Leaden Flycatcher and Rufous Fantail were heard. We then travelled in convoy out to

Brou Lake on a road that was in excellent condition in comparison to the goat track that many people would have been expecting if they hadn't been to the lake for a few years. Our arrival at the Brou Lake Campground coincided with a very light and misty fog hovering near the canopy of the spectacular and somewhat gnarly spotted gums. The campground is very popular for people seeking overnight stays for the likes of fishing, kayaking, and bird watching. It was closed for camping whilst we were there as a nighttime fox-control program was being conducted in an effort to protect the shorebird nesting sites.



Little Tern Photo F Ellison

After a brief induction by Mandy, we wandered down to the edge of the lake and were immediately greeted with a wonderful vista of hundreds of birds going about their business on the lake. The reception was dominated by swans and Bar-tailed Godwits, and it seemed as if they were patiently waiting for the zoom lenses and binoculars to come out; and come out they did, as we virtually stayed in the same position for 15 minutes or so whilst we undertook our initial scan of the lake to see what was about. Before we moved anywhere it was evident we were in for a good day, as we also saw egrets, cormorants, ibis, teals, and ducks. As we wandered along the lake's edge and got our eye in, we came across Red-capped Plovers. It is always a delight to watch these energetic birds in action with their quick darting movements as they run, stop and then peck their prey. We also got a glimpse of the Little Terns, and hopefully this was a prelude to what may be ahead over the next few weeks. An elevated section of sand between the lake and the ocean has been a successful nesting site for them in past years and they would usually be expected to arrive in larger numbers during November or December.



Pied Oystercatcher eggs Photo F Ellison

We progressed between the lake edge and sand dunes and passed a Pied Oystercatcher's nest containing 2 eggs which blended into the sand and sticks which surrounded them. Fortunately, they were far enough back to be away from our direct path, and probably would have gone unnoticed if some members of our group were not previously aware of their presence. It was a good reminder of the need to be cautious of where we tread in shorebird nesting season.



Red-capped Plover Photo G Perera

Walking further north along the lake, mudflats and sedges replaced sand as the interface between the lake and adjacent dunes. As we arrived, a young White-bellied Sea-Eagle flew overhead on its way to somewhere more important. Many of us had earlier observed extremely large footprints as we walked along the back part of the beach. Now in the distance some of us caught a glimpse of the culprit Emu. Wanting a piece of the action, its coat of arms colleague took an elevated position to curiously watch over us on the mudflats, posing as if to say "What are those strange beings doing down there, with elongated black objects protruding from their eye sockets?"



Kangaroo Photo M Anderson

Whilst in and around these mudflats we saw more godwits and Red-capped Plovers, with the introduction of a few new species for the day, including knots, stints, an Eastern Curlew and a Ruddy Turnstone. This particular location delivered sufficient interest to keep us in the vicinity for an hour whilst we tested our own and each other's powers of observation, reasoning and justification of what we were actually seeing. Debates were politely conducted over whether one bird was Pacific Golden Plover or a Grey Plover, or whether another was a Knot, and if it was a Knot, was it a Red Knot or Great Knot. Disagreements developed and were resolved when it was established that some people were actually looking at different birds so they weren't disagreeing with each other at all. Of course, they were looking to the left of the wrong sedge clump, and at the bird to the right of the godwit, rather than to the left of the oystercatcher. Oh, the joys of birdwatching.



Members on mudflat Photo M Anderson

We made the return journey to the campground and conducted the bird count. Including the waders, species observed at our initial meeting point and some additional bush birds seen after most of the group departed, we observed a total of 62 species. It was only 30 minutes after we left that a lightning storm passed through with intense rain falling over the lake edge and beach where we had previously traversed. Thanks must go to Mandy for leading us on the day, and arranging the weather with adept precision. We all thoroughly enjoyed the outing and it was great to see a mix of regulars, semi--regulars and

some of our newest and youngest members make the most of the opportunity to see the wonderful waders. We now take a break from field trips for a few months, and will be together again in February 2026. I hope everyone has an enjoyable break and I look forward to catching up again next year. Bob Germantse

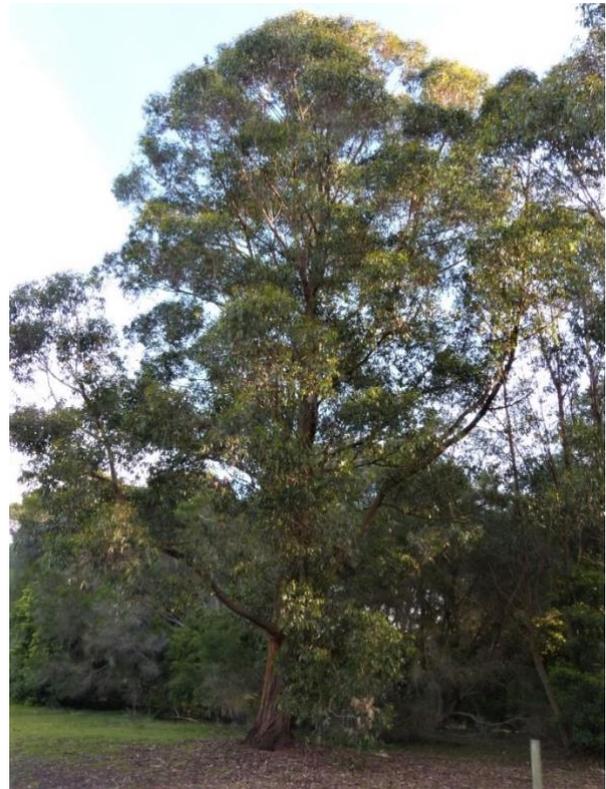
Yellow Stringybark - *Eucalyptus mulleriana*

Some time ago at a field meeting, a few of us had a conversation about stringybarks. Julie Morgan mentioned that, during the process of registering her property as a Wildlife Refuge, she had been told that she had an ‘unusual occurrence’ of Yellow Stringybark. When she later mapped her property, she found more of the species. Since then, she has found the species in other areas of the Eurobodalla, indicating that it has been underreported in our area.

Later, when members of the South Coast Koala Project visited Julie’s property, they referred to the Yellow Stringybark as an important koala feed tree in the Eurobodalla. Other species on her property that are also koala feed trees are: Woollybutt - *Eucalyptus longifolia*; Red Ironbark - *E. tricarpa*; White Stringybark - *E. globoidea*. Koalas were seen on the land up to the 1970s, which is when it was last logged.

Yellow Stringybark is found mainly along the coast of New South Wales south from Wollongong and into Victoria, where it extends as far as Wilsons Promontory and areas north of Melbourne. It grows best on well drained, sandy loam or clay loam soils with at least 800 mm of annual rainfall.

The species was first formally described in 1891 by Alfred William Howitt in *Transactions of the Royal Society of Victoria* and the specific name honours the famous botanist Baron Sir Ferdinand von Mueller (1825–1896). The common name, Yellow Stringybark, is derived from its rough stringy bark and the yellowish hue of its fresh sapwood. The stringy bark consists of loosely intertwined fibres that can be pulled off in long strips. All Eucalypts, whether rough or smooth-barked, shed their bark. The smooth-barked species mostly do so annually, whereas those with rough bark like the stringybarks, shed less frequently. The shedding process is a healthy part of its life cycle, removing any mosses, lichens and fungi that live on the bark.



Mature tree



Bark, leaves and fruit

Mature Yellow Stringybarks are moderately tall (25–45m) with straight trunks and well developed crowns. Leaves are often slightly greener than in other stringybarks, especially new growth. Young plants have lance-

shaped leaves that are glossy dark green on the upper surface, paler below, 55–135mm long and 10–50mm wide. Adult leaves are lance shaped to curved, glossy green but slightly paler on the lower surface, 80–200mm long and 14–45mm wide on a petiole 5–20mm long. It has been suggested to me that the very yellowy green colour of the juvenile foliage and new growth is one of the more helpful features for identification, if you can't lay your hands on any fruits.



Flower buds

The flower buds are arranged in clusters of seven, nine or eleven on an unbranched peduncle (the main stalk of the cluster). They are angular with a conspicuous, often short point. Flowering occurs between January and May and the flowers are creamy white. The fruit, or gumnut, is a woody cup shaped spherical capsule 6–10mm long and 7–12mm wide with a flat or depressed disc.

Yellow Stringybarks are not just an important food source for koalas. Many birds, such as honeyeaters and parrots, feed on their nectar, while insect-eating birds like magpies forage for insects that live on the trees. In some regions it is a key food source for endangered bird species, including the Red-tailed Black Cockatoo.

It is a durable plantation species in Gippsland with timber used for a wide variety of purposes including joinery, panelling, veneers, light and heavy construction, cladding, internal and external flooring, decking, outdoor furniture, sleepers, posts and poles, as well as firewood. It is regarded by some as the best of the stringybark species for farm forestry.

Indigenous people across Australia have historically used stringybark trees for various purposes, including making canoes, shields and ropes from the inner bark fibres. A recent ABC story featured an artist building a traditional stringybark canoe, highlighting the cultural importance of the tree's bark for watercraft and other necessities. To access the article, visit <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2023-10-04/aboriginal-artist-mitch-mahoney-stringybark-canoe-phillip-island/102897558>.

My thanks to Jackie Miles for providing the photos for this article. Helen Kay

Lewin's Honeyeater – a success story

In the previous newsletter, I described how I had observed the construction of a nest by a Lewin's Honeyeater in the Rhapsis palm tree at my front door. She flew away. But a week later, on 6 October, she returned, almost immediately laying two eggs, and incubation began. Presumably during her week's absence, she had found a partner and mated. I placed a sign on the front pillar of my house requesting visitors not to approach, but to phone me and meet me at the side gate. I was forced also to water my palm strategically, because I did not want to lose it! And I did not want to disturb the bird.

Researching the nesting habits of Lewin's Honeyeaters in HANZAB, I learnt that hatching could be expected in 14-15 days. Much of the information provided in HANZAB was contributed by Stephen Marchant, from his observations on his property at Moruya in the 1990s.



On day 14, 19 October, right on target, both eggs hatched within a short period of each other, and the parents presumably removed the shells so as not to alert any potential predators. The hatchlings were covered in dark downy feathers, unlike many smaller bush birds which are naked when they hatch. They were so tiny, huddled in the bottom of the nest, where they had plenty of room to grow. The rate of cell division as the chicks grow must be enormous, as a mere five days after hatching, two large yellow gapes shot up for a feed each time a parent approached. And the workload on the parents was immense as they brought food and carried away poo-sacs. The chicks did not call at all, perhaps another survival strategy.

Fledging was due 14 days after hatching. On day 10, I observed quite a bit of inter-play between the chicks – stretching, pecking and prunning. Their feathers were maturing in preparation for the initial flight. The parents were no longer sitting on the nest, which was starting to look a bit bedraggled as they landed on the edges to feed their young. And it was becoming rather crowded.



On 31 October, 12 days after hatching, I was leaving the house, and I walked past the nest just as one of the chicks fluttered past me and landed about 3 metres away. I was upset, thinking that I may have disturbed it; but less than a minute later, the second chick, now officially a fledgling, followed suit and they were joined on the ground by an adult. The fact that I witnessed this moment I thought was almost miraculous. Five minutes either way, and I would have missed the maiden flight.

I'm wondering who decides that it is time to leave the nest. The two chicks took off about a minute apart. Obviously, they were both equally feathered and strong. Was it their decision, or was a parent calling nearby at a volume that was inaudible to me - certainly not the usual staccato call of the Lewin's. They had not used their legs nor their wings before, so the landings were more of a semi-controlled glide. They did not plummet. There was certainly a little bit of wing flapping, and then once on the ground, they had to realise that they had legs for moving around.

HANZAB suggests that Lewin's fledglings are fed in the nest for around 7 days, but none of my little family has returned. We can never be sure of their fate, bearing in mind that at least 50% of nests fail. But to my joy and relief, my neighbour Bronwen, who has been following this journey with me, observed a young Lewin's being fed, and another drinking from her birdbath. So, my optimistic conclusion is going to be that they are being safely fed in a nearby tree. And I am feeling very privileged to have been able to witness this entire event through my lounge-room window. Mandy Anderson

Reference: Higgins, P.J. et al Handbook of Australian, New Zealand and Antarctic Birds, Vol. 5. Melb., OUP, 2001

How do birds make sound?

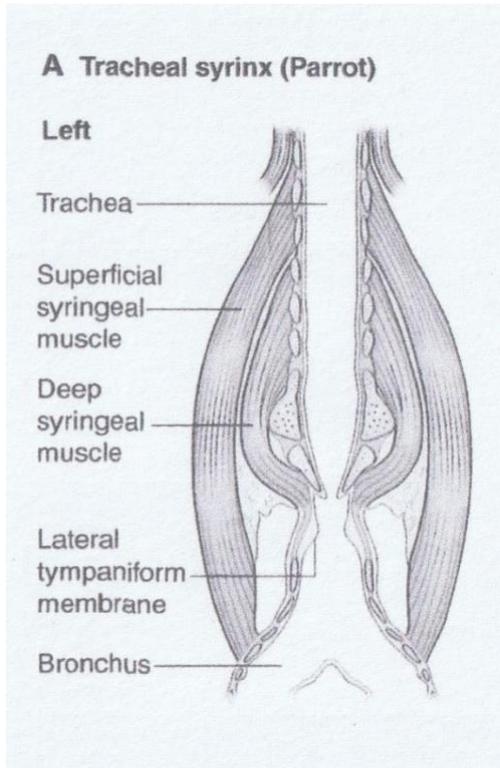
Have you ever wondered about something and decided to read about it, only to discover that you have wandered into a rather large and daunting topic?

This happened to me recently, when I was listening to a Spotted Pardalote. I wondered how such tiny birds produce such loud calls, so I went to my copy of the Cornell Lab of Ornithology's 'Handbook of Bird Biology' and opened it at the chapter on bird vocal behaviour. The first sentence was straightforward enough: 'Birds are noisy animals.' But, as I flicked through the following fifty pages, I saw many unfamiliar terms, helpfully highlighted in bold type, and many diagrams, including graphs representing the frequency and loudness of sounds – **spectrograms** – and their intensity over time – **oscillograms**.

Somewhat daunted, I decided that I would start with the fundamentals. So, what follows is basic information about how sound is produced, and how birds produce vocal sound, as opposed to all the other sounds they make, with feet, wings, feathers, and even tools. This article does not tackle how vocalisations are learned, how they vary from region to region, and what we understand of their various functions. That might be for another newsletter.

First, how is sound made? This really is basic! It ignores synchronised versus opposing waves and a whole lot more. But the essential message is that sound is **energy** moving through matter (including air) by vibrating it. How fast it moves – **frequency** – and how powerful it is – **amplitude** – determines the pitch (how high or low) and the loudness of what we hear.

Mammals produce sound by passing air from the lungs across two small muscles in the **larynx**. These muscles, called **vocal folds**, vibrate to make a sound. (We humans turn this into speech, using our throat, mouth and nose.) Sound is heard when a sound wave reaches an eardrum: the eardrum vibrates and these vibrations become electrical signals that are transmitted to the brain, to be interpreted as sound. Simple, right?



Birds, unlike humans and other mammals, produce vocal sounds in the **syrinx**. The exact position and structure of the syrinx vary between species, but they are near where the **trachea** or windpipe meets the **bronchi**, which are the tubes leading from the lungs. A typical syrinx consists of two chambers held open by rings of cartilage. Sound is produced in the syrinx when membranes stretched between the cartilages vibrate as air is forced past them. The bird controls the pitch and the volume of the sound by manipulating the muscles of the syrinx: the more frequent the vibrations, the higher the pitch, and the more expanded the syrinx, the louder the call.

The trachea's main function is to move air between the larynx and the lungs but, in some species, it is also important in sound production. Like the syrinx, the trachea is held open by rings of cartilage. In most birds, the trachea is a straight tube, but some birds, such as the Trumpet Manucode, have very long trachea coiled within the body; this is thought to account for the **resonance** of the calls of this species. Resonance refers to the prolongation or reinforcement of a sound by reflection from a surface. So, the sound is produced within the Trumpet Manucode's body then bounced about within the coiled trachea to prolong and increase the volume of the call.

Other birds have tracheal variations that affect the sounds they can produce. Some of the rings in the trachea of the Emu are open, allowing air to pass from the trachea into an inflatable sac under the skin of the neck. This allows the bird – more often the female – to produce a loud booming call, audible two kilometers away. And some ducks, including the male Plumed Whistling Duck, have an inflatable bulb or **bullae** on one side of the trachea just below the syrinx; this chamber increases the resonance of the whistle that the drake produces.

Understandably, there is no evidence that birds deliberately take advantage of their external environment to increase the resonance of their calls. How can we know if, or what, they are 'thinking'? But I have noticed that one local male Eastern Whipbird frequently calls from the top of the fence between our house and our neighbour's, where the two metre 'corridor' between two walls provides a great echo chamber.

The more complex the repertoire of the bird species, the more complex the structure of the syrinx. In birds with a limited range of calls, the syrinx is simple. But in songbirds, the syrinx is more complex. It contains small pads of tissue, or 'labia', controlled by muscles which allow the labia to be extended into the bronchial cavity, where exhaled air passes over them and causes them to vibrate. These movements contribute to the complexity of the sounds produced. Some songbirds can also control the two sides of the syrinx separately, which means that they can produce two sounds at the same time. The Australian Magpie is one species that has this **dual syringeal control**, using each side of the syrinx separately as well as both sides together.

Well, that's a start on my journey towards learning more about bird calls and song. I hope it's of some interest to you too. I'm still not sure how a bird weighing about 8g can make a noise that I can hear more than 30 meters away. But I'll continue my research anyway ... Gillian Macnamara

Birds in the News

In November, the ABC reported that the critically endangered Night Parrot had been filmed by Martu rangers at a watering hole in WA's remote east Pilbara. It is the first time the night parrot has been observed drinking water, with researchers previously theorising it did not need to do so. It provides new insight into what resources the elusive bird requires to survive and hopefully helps inform approvals underway at a nearby mine site. To access the full article, visit <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2025-11-23/thirsty-night-parrot-pilbara/106029246>

Also making news is an article in The Conversation in November about a group of researchers who published a paper on the remarkable phenomenon of sex reversal in several Australian birds, including wild magpies and kookaburras. Whilst they've yet to discover the exact mechanism through which this happens, they say that their discovery would have fascinated medieval scientists, who were just as engaged in trying to understand

sex and gender in the avian world. The article then details the fascinating history of this research. The authors, Clare Davidson and Aylin Malcolm, gave permission for us to reproduce the article, but unfortunately the technical task of formatting it to fit into the newsletter proved to be beyond our capabilities. To access the full article visit

<https://theconversation.com/bird-sex-fascinated-medieval-thinkers-as-much-as-people-today-267969>

Pied Oystercatchers – a Photo-essay

This magnificent series of photos was taken by Deb Flynn from Narooma, over a couple of days in November at Saltwater Creek, Beowa National Park south of Eden.



1. A parent Pied Oystercatcher on the nest. Both parents share incubating duties



2. A pair of eggs in the nest scrape



3. One egg has hatched and a second egg is still intact



4. A proud parent with the first chick



5. Pied Oystercatcher chicks are precocial, meaning that they can run around and seek their own food, under parental supervision, soon after hatching



6. Both eggs have successfully hatched

My sincere thanks to Deb Flynn for sharing her wonderful photographs for us to enjoy. Mandy Anderson

Highlights from ENHS records - Spring 2025

Avian species	Number	Place	Observer	Comments
Emu	6, 2, 1	Bodalla/DY/ Brou L	T&A Ross/ H Watson/FM	Five young at Bodalla and one at DY
Stubble Quail	Up to 20, 1	Com/Cool	JC/DO	
Brown Quail	4, call	Tilba/Com	MA/JC	
Plumed Whistling-Duck	2	Com	JC	In August and September
Blue-billed Duck	9	Barlings S	FM	
Musk Duck	9, 8, 5, 1	MB/Tilba L/PS/ Coila L	MA/JM	Male displaying and juvenile at PS
Freckled Duck	Up to 8	MHS	SH/PB/ G Tedder	On Newstead Pond
Australian Shelduck	Up to 8	Com	JC	Up to 6 young
Hardhead	20, 2, 1	MHS/Barlings S /Com	JC	On Newstead Pond at MHS
Australasian Shoveler	2	Com	JC	
Australasian Grebe	50, 15	Barlings S/Com	FM/ JC	Fewer elsewhere
Hoary-headed Grebe	12, 6	Barlings S/MB	FM/MA	Fewer elsewhere
Great Crested Grebe	Up to 6	Deep Ck Dam	NC/GC/SH/PB	Present since August
Bar-shouldered Dove	4, 1	Broulee/Mossy Pt/Coila L/MB	GMcV/SH/PB/ JM/BH	
Topknot Pigeon	12	T&A Ross	Mummaga L	
Tawny Frogmouth	2, 1	MB/Cool	MA/DO	
White-throated Nightjar	Up to 3	PS	JM	First return 30 September
Aust Owlet-Nightjar	Call	PS	JM	
White-throated Needletail	10	MB	MA	First return 1 November
Eastern Koel	Up to 5	Broulee	GMcV/LM	First call 29 September
Channel-billed Cuckoo	Up to 6	Pedro	JS	First return 13 September
Horsfield's Bronze- Cuckoo	1 or call	Brou L/PS/ Pedro	FM/JM/JS	Immature at Brou L in November
Shining Bronze- Cuckoo	4, 2, 1	ERBG/MO/Com /PS/Box Cutting	SH/PB//JM/JC/ MA	First return 5 September Calls elsewhere
Fan-tailed Cuckoo	1 to 4	Widespread	Various	
Brush Cuckoo	1 or call	PS/Com/MKS	JM/JC/SMG	First return 23 October
Pallid Cuckoo	2, 1	Com/PS/ Nerrigundah	JC/FM/JM/IJ	First return 23 September
Buff-banded Rail	1	BBWG	NC	
Aust Spotted Crake	1	BBWG	FM/NC	In November
Spotless Crake	1	BBWG	NC	In November
Dusky Moorhen	7, 3, 1	BBWG/MHS/ ERBG/Com	FM/SH/PB/JC	At Newstead Pond MHS
Eurasian Coot	80, 70	Com/Barlings S	JC/FM	Fewer elsewhere
Shearwater sp.	Hundreds	Off BP/DY	NC/M Craig	Streaming south in September and October
Royal Spoonbill	16, 8, 2	NA/Com/MYA	MA/JC/JM	
Nankeen Night Heron	Up to 8, 7	BBWG/MHS	M Penrith/NC/ FM/SH/PB	
Cattle Egret	30, 20	Com/MYA	JC/JM	Beginning to attain breeding plumage late September
White-necked Heron	2, 1	Com/MYA/Berg alia/Nerrigundah	JC/JM/SH/PB/ DHK/IJ	
Intermediate Egret	1	Com/NA	JC/MA	
Little Egret	6, 2, 1	MB/Brou L/ Mossy Pt	MA/FM/SH/ PB	
Eastern Reef Egret	1	Broulee Is/MB	SH/PB/MA	
Australian Pelican	More than 50, 30	Cool/MYA	DO/GH	Heading west up Narira Ck at Cool; on river at MYA

Australasian Gannet	Up to 4	MB	MA	
Great Cormorant	Up to 300	MYA	GH	On the river
Great Pied Cormorant	5, 4, 3, 2	Coila L/Mossy Pt/Broulee Is/MHS/Brou L	JM/SH/PB/MA	Singles elsewhere
Australasian Darter	1	MHS/PS/Com	SH/PB/JM/JC	
Beach Stone-curlew	1	NA	MA	October
Aust Pied Oystercatcher	6, 5, 4	NA/MHS/MB	MA/SH/PB	On nest at NA
Sooty Oystercatcher	8, 6, 3	MB/Broulee Is/MHS	MA/SH/PB	
Pied Stilt	2	Com	JC	
Pacific Golden Plover	3	Brou L/MB	FM/MA	
Red-capped Plover	25, 5, 2	Brou L/MB/Mossy Pt	FM/MA/SH/PB	
Hooded Plover	Up to 3	MB	BH	
Black-fronted Dotterel	4	Com	JC	
Whimbrel	1	MHS/TS	SH/PB/GC	
Far Eastern Curlew	26, 7, 5, 1	TS/MHS/Brou L/NA/WL	GC/SH/PB/MA	
Bar-tailed Godwit	180, 50, 40	Brou L/TS/DY	FM/GC/C Findlay	Fewer elsewhere
Ruddy Turnstone	Up to 5	Brou L	MA/FM	
Red Knot	5, 2	Brou L/MB	FM/BH	
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper	7, 6	Com/Brou L	JC/MA/FM	
Red-necked Stint	Up to 4	Brou L	MA/FM	
Latham's Snipe	4, 1	Com/BBWG/MHS	JC/NC/SH/PB	At Newstead Pond at MHS
Painted Button-quail	1	MB	MA	Window strike
Little Tern	Up to 5	Brou L	MA/FM	
Caspian Tern	10, 2	Brou L/Broulee/MHS/MB	MA/GMcV/SH/PB	Singles elsewhere
Greater Sooty Owl	Calls	PS	JM	
Masked Owl	1	Pedro	JS	
Osprey	2, 1	NA/TS/Kianga/PS	MA/T&A Ross/JM	At nest in NA
Square-tailed Kite	1	PS/MB	JM/MA	
Little Eagle	2	Carters Bch	T&A Ross	
Swamp Harrier	2	MO	JM	Singles elsewhere
Grey Goshawk	1	MYA	MA	
Brown Goshawk	1	MYA/MB	FM/MA	Mogendoura Farm in MYA
Collared Sparrowhawk	1	Barlings S	FM	Feeding on dragonflies
Oriental Dollarbird	3, 2	Nerrigundah/Bergalia/Bodalla/Com/MB	IJ/DHK/MA/JC	Singles elsewhere. First return 11 October
Azure Kingfisher	1	Com	JC	
Sacred Kingfisher	6, 4	Pedro/PS/Com	JS/JM/JC	Fewer at many locations
Australian Hobby	1	BBWG/Broulee/PS/Pedro	FM/LM/JM/JS	
Brown Falcon	1	Com/MYA	JC/JM/MA	
Peregrine Falcon	1	Com	JC	
Glossy Black Cockatoo	5, 4, 2	Pedro/MKS/PS/Box Cutting	JS/SMG/JM/MA	
Gang-Gang Cockatoo	13, 4, 2, 1	Broulee/MB/MKS/Mossy Pt/Nerrigundah	GH/MA/SMG/SH/PB/IJ	Two immature males at Broulee
Eastern Rosella	8, 4, 3, 2	MYA/MB/Bergalia/Com/Nerrigundah	E Lipscombe/MA/DHK/JC/IJ	Breeding at MYA

Musk Lorikeet	8, 6, 4	MB/MYA/TN/ Mossy Pt/ Broulee	MA/JM/SH/PB /GH	
Little Lorikeet	4, 1	MB/Com	MA/FM	
Southern Emu-wren	6, 3, 1	MHN/Broulee/ PS	F Ellison/MA /BH/GMcV/ JM	Three pair at MHN, a new location for the species for ENHS
White-cheeked Honeyeater	2	MYA	MA	
White-naped Honeyeater	20, 4, 3	PS/ERBG/MB/ Nerrigundah	JM/SH/PB/ MA/IJ	Dependant young at ERBG
Brown-headed Honeyeater	6 or calls	Com/PS	JC/JM	
White-eared Honeyeater	1	Nerrigundah	IJ	
Noisy Friarbird	20, 9, 8	PS/ Nerrigundah /Pedro	JM/IJ/JS	Breeding at PS and Pedro
Scarlet Honeyeater	13, 4, 3	Barlings S/Sth DS/MKS	FM/VH/SMG	
Striated Pardalote	2, 1	Com/PS/Brou L/ Box Cutting	JC/JM/MA	Nesting at Com
White-throated Gerygone	1 or call	MYA/Belowra/ MKS	FM/JC/SMG	
Varied Sittella	4, 3	PS/Com/ Nerrigundah	JM/JC/IJ	
Australasian Figbird	7, 2, 1	MYA/BBWG/ PS/BI	SH/PB/JM/FM /DO	Also at Surfside
White-bellied Cuckoo-shrike	3, 1	PS/MYA/Com	JM/FM/JC	
Common Cicadabird	5, 1 or calls	PS/MO/ERBG/ MKS/Brou L	JM/SH/PB/ SMG/FM	First return 5 September
White-winged Triller	4 or call	Belowra/Com	JC/FM	
Grey Currawong	1	Nerrigundah	IJ	
Dusky Woodswallow	15, 4, 2	Nerrigundah/ Com/Belowra/ Cool	IJ/JC/DO	
White-breasted Woodswallow	26, 4	MO/PS	NM/JM	
Rufous Fantail	2, 1	Long Nose Pt/ PS	SH/PB/JM	First return 25 October
Leaden Flycatcher	4, 2, 1	PS/MO/Bodalla Forest Pk/ERBG Nerrigundah/	JM/FM/SH/PB IJ	First return 5 September
Restless Flycatcher	2	Belowra	JC	
Black-faced Monarch	8, 2	Box Cutting/ Broulee	MA/PG	First return 2 September Singles or calls elsewhere
Little Raven	1	MB	MA	
White-winged Chough	7, 4	PS/Com	JM/JC	
Rose Robin	Call	Com	JC	
Scarlet Robin	2, 1	Nerrigundah/ Com	IJ/JC	
Golden-headed Cisticola	Up to 10	Com	JC	
Australian Reed Warbler	6, 2	BBWG/Com	FM/NC/JC	
Rufous Songlark	2	Com	JC	From 10 Oct to mid Nov
Little Grassbird	2	Com	JC	From 12 th October
Bassian Thrush	1	ERBG/ Nerrigundah	SH/PB/IJ	
Mistletoebird	2, 1	MYA/Com/PS	FM/JC/JM	

Red-whiskered Bulbul	1	Carters Beh	T&A Ross	
Diamond Firetail	3	Belowra	JC	September
Australian Pipit	4, 3, 2, 1	Com/Belowra/ MB/Bingie Pt/ Brou L	JC/MA/DHK/ FM	
European Goldfinch	4	Belowra	JC	

Non-avian species	Number	Place	Observer	Comments
Common Wombat	8, 1 or signs	Cool/Nerrigundah /MO/Com/Brou L	DO/IJ/JC/FM	
Short-beaked Echidna	3, 2	Pedro/PS	JS/JM	Singles widespread
Long-nosed Bandicoot	3 or signs	Pedro/PS/MB	JS/JM/MA	2 young at Pedro
Yellow-bellied Glider	1	Mossy Pt	SH/PB	
Sugar Glider	Calls	PS/Cool	JM/DO	
Common Brushtail Possum	2, 1	Mossy Pt/Pedro/ Com/Nerrigundah	SH/PB/JS/JC/IJ	
Eastern Grey Kangaroo	Up to 40	Cool	DO	
Red-necked Wallaby	5, 4, 2	Pedro/Nerrigundah/ Cool	JS/IJ/DO	
Swamp Wallaby	8, 5	Pedro/PS	JS/JM	
Samba Deer	2	Cool	DO	
Grey-headed Flying Fox	5, 2	Mossy Pt/Com	SH/PB/JC	
Seal sp.	Up to 5	MYA	DHK	Riverside Park
Bottle-nosed Dolphin	1	MHS	SH/PB	
Southern Right Whale	1	MB	BH	November
Humpback Whale	Pods	BP/Mossy Pt/ Kianga/MB	GH/SH/PB/T& A Ross/MA	Moving south; calls audible from mainland
Snake-necked Turtle	10, 9, 1	MHS/Com/Nerrigundah/ PS	SH/PB/JC/IJ/JM	Newstead Pond MHS Eggs at PS
Yellow-bellied Water-skink	4, 1	Com/Broulee	JC/GMcV	
Eastern Water Skink	1	Pedro	JS	
Eastern Blue-tongue	2	Com	JC	
Jacky Lizard	1	Long Nose Pt/ Broulee/Cool	SH/PB/GMcV/ DO	
Gippsland Water Dragon	5, 3	Com/ERBG	JC/SH/PB	
Lace Monitor	5, 3, 2	Pedro/PS/Cool	JS/JM/DO	Singles elsewhere
Death Adder	1	MKS	SMG	
Diamond Python	1	MB	MA	Reports

Frogs IJ/JC/JM/SH/PB/ FM	Common Eastern Froglet, Brown-striped Frog, Bibron's Toadlet; tree frogs: Screaming, Eastern Sedgefrog, Peron's, Leaf-green, Tyler's, Verreaux's.
Moths JC/JM/T&A Ross/FM/ S Christensen	Diamondback, Scat, Concealer, Light Brown Apple, Meal, Small Tabby, Cabbage Centre Grub, Tree Lucerne, Black and Red-lined Geometrid, Frilled and Long-fringed Bark, Loop-line and Mahogany Bark, Pink Arhodia, Spring and Oval-spot Taxeotis, Neat Epidesmia, Pale Grey Heath, Pink Cernia, Twin Emerald, Cream and Variable Wave, Plantain, Flecked Wave, Mecynata, Subidaria, Sodaliata, Black-lined and Elegant Carpet, Apple Looper, Red-spotted Delicate, Native Cranberry, She-oak, Common Anthelid, Emperor and Helena Gum, Convolvulus Hawk, Vine and Coprosma Hawk, Gum Notodontid, Processionary, Pink Browntail, Snowy and Propitious Footman, Favoured and Hookwing Footman, Banded, Spotted, Lichen, Pied and Variable Halone, Reticulated Footman, Lichen-eating Caterpillar, Heliotrope, Magpie, Dark-spotted and Crimson Tiger, Tiger, Long-snouted, Eastern and Spotted Calathusa, Three-lined Snout, Variable Spot-wing, Plain Pantydia, Chestnut Crest, Old Lady, Western Praxis, Triangle Owlet, Tobacco Looper, Eriosoma, Halved and Cycota Tuft, Brown-bar, Yellow-banded Day, Green-blotched, Common Cutworm, White-streaked, Horseshoe Noctuid, Australian and White-spot Armyworm, Black Cutworm, Bogong, Brown and Variable Cutworm, Native Budworm, Corn Earworm.

Butterflies MA/JC/SH/PB/IJ /JM/FM	Banded and Lilac Grass-skipper, White-brand Grass-skipper, Painted Sedge-skipper, Narrow-band and Greenish Grass-dart, Greenish Darter, Blue Triangle, Orchard Swallowtail, Lemon Migrant, Black and Imperial Jezebel, Spotted Jezebel, Caper White, Narrow-winged Pearl-white, Cabbage White, Dusky Knight, Brown Ringlet, Varied Sword-grass Brown, Forest and Common Brown, Meadow Argus, Australian Painted Lady, Yellow Admiral, Bright Copper, Imperial Hairstreak, Dark Pencil-blue, Varied and Blotched Dusky-blue, Two-spotted Line-blue, Dull Heath-blue, Common Grass Blue.
Dragon & Damselflies	Common Bluetail, Metallic Ringtail, Tau and Australian Emerald, Scarlet Percher, Blue Skimmer.
Beetles JC/JM/FM	Green, and Nectar Scarab, Argentinian, Pruinose and Dusky Pasture Scarab, Campfire and Washerwoman Christmas, Acacia Leaf, Small Blue Leaf, Metallic Green Acacia, Dotted Paropsine, Lycid Mimic Jewel, Pittosporum Leaf, Pintail, Banded Pumpkin, Yellow-spotted Darkling, Tiger and Stinking Longicorn, Honeybrown, Net Winged, Fungus, Metallic Flea, Pittosporum, Click. Ladybirds: Common and 26 Spotted, Striped, Steelblue, White-collared (Spotted Amber), Mealybug, Transverse, Variable, Minute Two-spotted, Fungus Eating,
Bugs JC/JM	Harlequin, Bronze Orange, Green Vegetable, Orange Assassin, Horehound, Metallic Shield. Cicadas: Silver Princess, Beach and Black Squeaker, Black Prince, Cherrynose, Double-spotted, Greengrocer.
Other insects JC/SH/PB/JM/JS	Bees: Masked, Reed. Wasp: Orange Caterpillar Parasite, Common Paper. Fly: Flower Feeding March, Wallaby Louse, Common Brown Crane-fly, Native Drone Fly, Australian Leafroller Tachinid, Robberfly. Other: Red Triangle Slug.
Spiders JC/GMcV/JM/JS/ S Pearson/FM	Golden and Garden Orb, Black House, Leaf-curling, Lucrida and Two-tufted Jumping, Bronze Aussie Jumping, Huntsman, Daddy Long Legs, White-tailed, Garden Wheel Weaving Orb, St Andrew's Cross, Spiney, Flat Rock, White Porch, Long-jawed.

RAINFALL (mm). September: 25 at MKS, 26 at Bergalia, 19 at Com, 26 at MB, 25.5 at Cool. **October:** 4 at MKS, 3 at Bergalia, 2.5 at Com, 4.5 at MB, 6 at Cool. **November:** 40.5 at MKS, 53 at Bergalia, 50 at Com, 79.5 at Cool.

Contributors

MA	M Anderson, MB	IJ	I Joyce, Nerrigundah		S Christensen, DY
GC	G Clark, ACT	DHK	D&H Kay, Bergalia		M Craig, TS
NC	N Clark, Surf Beach	LM	L McVeigh, ACT		F Ellison
JC	J&P Collett, Com	GMcV	G McVeigh, ACT		C Findlay, CO
PG	P Gatenby, Broulee	JM	J Morgan, PS		E Lipscombe, MYA
SMG	S&M Guppy, MKS	DO	D Ondinea, Cool		S Pearson, NA
BH	B Harvey, MB	JS	J Sagar, Pedro		M Penrith, Long Beach
SH/PB	S Holliday & P Buckley, ACT	RS	R Soroka, Surfside		T&A Ross, Kianga
GH	G Hounsell, Broulee	FM	Field Meeting		G Tedder, Bergalia
VH	V Howard, Sth DS				H Watson, NA
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

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