

## FIELD MEETING TO PAN-BOOLA, 28<sup>th</sup> September 2014

Seven members made their way to Pambula for the full-day visit to Pan-boola wetlands. This reserve, located on an old race-course within the town area of Pambula, offers a range of different habitats, including the lagoon which usually hosts a range of various water-fowl, the salt-flats where a mob of about 80 Eastern Grey Kangaroos graze, the river bank forest of wattle and paperbark, as well as eucalypt forest, mangrove and grassland. ([www.panboola.com](http://www.panboola.com))

We managed to spend more than three hours covering the approximately 4 kms of the route that we chose. There was one section which was quite boggy and most of us got very wet feet – and unfortunately were not compensated by the sighting of Cisticolas nor Southern Emu-wrens – although we had had good views of the Emu-wren from Smiths look-out at the beginning of the walk.

The numbers of water-birds was down compared with my recent surveys of Pan-boola, possibly because of the very good rainfall that we have had recently, giving the birds more options. But we observed a group of three Hardheads, as well as numerous duck species, a single Australian Grebe, one Egret and numerous Coots and Cormorants. On my last visit, there was a single Freckled Duck; a flock of Plumed Whistling-ducks has also been reported in the past, but we were denied such rarities.



The arrival of spring was evident, and we saw a number of nests, including one which was being vigorously tended by a pair of Spotted Pardalotes. We had very good views of a pair of Rufous Whistlers, along with many vividly coloured Superb Fairy-wrens. Reed Warblers called from the ponds and a variety of raptors soared overhead, including a Brown Goshawk and an immature Square-tailed Kite.

Gillian spent quite a while going through the repertoire of cuckoo calls on her birding app, trying to identify a call which persisted almost non-stop all day. Eventually she discovered that it was a Little Grass-bird, another good “tick”.

Our species total for the day was 55, definitely worth the drive down through the Bega Valley to the pleasant little village of Pambula. It was a spectacular spring day and the recent rains meant that the country-side was looking its best. Mandy Anderson