



# The Melbirdian

MELBOCA Newsletter Number 70  
December 2009

## Banyule Centenary Plantation Reunion 2009

In Melbourne, to pick a day in August for an outdoor reunion is to chance the weather. But Sunday, 30 August 2009, while not glorious, proved to be the perfect day to gather at the BOCA Centenary Plantation in Banyule. The recent rain had, happily, softened the hard clay soil, but no rain fell on the day.

Twenty-five energetic members (and offspring) gathered to remove tree guards, including three generations of Johnsons and Ashburners – well done! Many thanks to the Warringal Conservation Society members who also came along to help.

With a bit of huff and puff, all the tree guards on four-year-old plants were removed. Then we could relax and enjoy lunch beside the highly successful native habitat corridor. Although there was time to appreciate our own plantings, the wetland failed to delight – “too full for crake”, according to Fred Smith. As recently as March, it was completely dry.

We should acknowledge, once again, the great effort that Celia and Dorey Browne have put into this project. And thanks also to the Banyule City Council for their assistance.



*The Banyule Reunion. Photo, Geoff Browne*

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## MELBOCA Branch Meetings

MELBOCA branch meetings are held on the fourth Tuesday of every month (except December) in the Evergreen Centre, 45 Talbot Avenue, Balwyn, not far from the library (Melway 46 E8).

The meeting begins at 8:00pm and features a guest speaker and a Member's Topic segment – so be sure to attend! Entry is by a donation of \$4. Out-of-town members and visitors are always welcome!

## Upcoming Guest Speakers

**Tuesday 26 January 2010 8:00pm**

**Susan Myers: 'Birds of Borneo'**

Susan is a well known expert on birds of South East Asia. She has just published a field guide to birds of Borneo and regularly leads tours in the region. We are privileged to have her address us.

**Tuesday 23 February 2010 8.00pm**

**Mike Duncan: 'Birds of East Africa – An Orchid Fancier's View'**

Mike is a senior Scientist with the DSE, working in the field of threatened Orchid Conservation. Join him on his trip to Malawi and Tanzania for the safari with a difference.

## Past Meeting Reports

25 August 2009

The meeting was chaired by **Arthur Carew** and began with **Celia Browne** presenting BOCA (via Bill Ramsay) with four copies of a masterful record of the 2005 Centenary Plantation at Banyule Flats in Heidelberg. Everyone joined Bill in applauding the magnificent job done by Celia and Dorey in documenting the dedication of each plant, as well as preparing a digital map of the plantation. No reason now not to track down your planting!

Bill Ramsay then invited **Trish Teesdale** to come forward and, on behalf of MEL-BOCA, thanked Trish for her huge contribution to the branch in her 11 year stay at BOCA Head Office as Administration Manager. We benefited greatly from her knowledge, skill and enthusiasm. Trish accepted a small gift and assured the audience that the people she had met in the course of her work had made her position a great pleasure.

Bill Ramsay presented the Member's Choice segment: the Bald Eagle, a bird he met recently in North America. *Haliaeetus leucocephalus* means 'sea eagle with white head'; thus, *balde*, white in Old English, refers to the striking white-feathered cap of the Bald Eagle. Two subspecies occur: the Northern Bald Eagle, generally north of latitude 38°, and the Southern Bald Eagle, south of this line. The Bald Eagle is the only eagle endemic to North America.

The plumage of all adult birds is evenly brown with a white head and tail. The beak, legs and feet are bright yellow. Female birds are 25% bigger than males. Juveniles are white-speckled brown, normally until their fifth year. Their call is weak, flat, chirping whistles, and, yes, they check out a tad smaller than our Wedge-tailed Eagle.

The Bald Eagle inhabits coastal areas, rivers, large lakes and wherever its main food source, fish, is plentiful. In summer, it ranges all over North America, as far as Alaska, but, as the Big Freeze sets in, most birds move south, with the juveniles in the vanguard. The southern population is biggest in Florida. Fish are caught on the wing. Small mammals, birds, crustaceans and carrion also form part of the diet.

Sexual maturity is reached at approximately five years with Bald Eagles usually pairing for life. Each year a vast stick nest is repaired and extended in old-growth trees and up to three eggs are laid. Both parents tend the nest. Incubation takes about 35 days and fledging occurs at 70

to 90 days. Success of three eggs is rare. The life expectancy of wild birds is up to 30 years.

In 1782, the Bald Eagle was declared the national emblem of the USA, despite lacking the support of Benjamin Franklin who proposed the Rattlesnake and later the Wild Turkey! As a result of widespread use of DDT, loss of habitat and illegal shooting, the species was on the brink of extinction in the USA in the 1950s. Legislation against the use of DDT and for the protection of the Bald Eagle in the USA and British Columbia, has seen populations recover to a point where it was removed from the 'threatened' list in 2007. A happy ending.

Arthur then introduced **Jack Krohn**, a veteran public servant, now working for the Department of Planning and Community Development (DPCD), where he has the title of Manager, Green Wedges. Jack has been a Member of BOCA since 1973. The title of his talk was *Biosphere and Green Wedges – Perspective on Melbourne's Hinterland*, during which he described green wedges in suburban Melbourne

and outlined the setting up of the Mornington Peninsula and Westernport Biosphere Reserve.

Former Victorian Premier Dick Hamer introduced **green wedges** to Melbourne in the 1970s. Initially, they comprised parks and reserves, which then expanded as green nodes around transport corridors. Today, the greening principle has advanced so much that the city is encircled by a green belt, divided into 12 management sections, involving 17 municipalities and comprising 650 000 hectares of public and private land. Greenness of wedges varies, and includes golf courses, national parks, quarries, sewerage treatment plants, nature reserves, etc.

The roles of green wedges are several:

- To provide significant economic, social and liveability benefits;
- To preserve biodiversity, such as supporting the Helmeted Honeyeater recovery program;
- To liaise with agriculturalists (there are 11 agriculture divisions in Victoria, and Melbourne is the third highest producer);
- To safeguard water catchments, i.e. all reservoirs in the Yarra catchment;
- To encourage tourism, e.g. zoos and ecotourism;

*Continued over page*



*Bald Eagle on the Alaskan Inland Passage. Photo, Bill Ramsay*

## Past Meeting Reports (Cont'd)

- To support infrastructure, e.g. airports and sewerage treatment plants.

The DPCD provides strong support to local councils to prepare their green wedge management plans, and approximately \$1m in financial support is available. Cooperation with such groups as Land for Wildlife and Landcare Australia is encouraged, and programs include pest and weed control, sustainable land management, and education and information for landowners.

The DPCD is making progress on the government's commitments, but Jack reports that work has been slow, due to recent council elections, the bushfires and changes to the Urban Growth Boundary. A map of the latter showed growth extending to the north and to the west, impacting the green wedge. It is hoped that the grassy volcanic plains near Werribee can be protected.

There are plenty of challenges to the protection of green wedges. Population growth and urban expansion mean that the Urban Growth Boundary will be regularly reviewed; traditional farming within the green wedges is not secure, and land speculation by private owners is ongoing. Land use often conflicts at green wedge–urban interfaces, and the illegal clearing of vegetation of high significance is an unfortunate reality. There are, however, opportunities ahead to strengthen green wedges: potential money and cooperation emerging from the arrest of global warming.

Focusing next on **biospheres**, Jack told us that they were initiated in the 1970s by UNESCO, through their Man and the Biosphere program, now numbering 553 reserves in 107 countries. Their purpose is to conserve biodiversity and ecosystems, to carry out scientific research, to foster sustainable economic and human development, education and information exchange. The goal is a balance between man and nature.

In Australia, eleven biosphere reserves were dedicated in the late 1970s and 1980s, and all were within national parks or conservation reserves. Their importance is increasing all the time. In 2002, foundation status was granted to the Mornington Peninsula and Westernport Biosphere Reserve after rigorous scrutiny by UNESCO of its proposed structure, accountability, conservation, logistics and sustainability, and after taking into account its urban and coastal components and climate change. It includes the Mornington and Nepean Peninsulas, French Is. and Phillip Is., and the rim around Westernport Bay. The population is 200 000 with seasonal visitors of 100 000. The stakeholders are the Commonwealth and State Governments, local government (5 councils), educational bodies such as RMIT, Monash and Chisholm Universities, conservation organisations such as Parks Victoria, Phillip Island Nature Park and Landcare Australia, community and friends groups and, finally, the local communities.

What projects does our local biosphere have running?

- A research program studying the nationally threatened Southern Brown Bandicoot (a flagship species for conservation within the biosphere), which is surviving well at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Cranbourne, behind a

predator-proof fence, and also at a colony on private land at The Pines, Frankston;

- The reconnection of habitat and predator control;
- The monitoring of Watson Creek (rising at Baxter and flowing into Westernport Bay), which was successfully cleaned up after becoming heavily contaminated;
- In 2007, a very successful *Hypothetical* event staged at Pakenham to engage the public in the effects of climate change in 2025;
- Mass Balance, a program run with CSIRO to promote better use of water, energy and waste;
- Programs promoting nature-based businesses and tourism within the biosphere reserve.

The international nature of the project offers the possibility of twinning with another biosphere, and Jack favours the fostering of ties with a biosphere on the East Asian–Australian flyway. Westernport wader counts have been recorded since 1973, with long data sets being invaluable for studying wader migration and the management of wader habitat.

The Mornington Peninsula and Westernport Biosphere is managed by 2.5 persons out of a shopfront at Hastings, on a budget of \$40 000. It has a nine-member board and an advisory panel. There is an informative website at [www.biosphere.org.au](http://www.biosphere.org.au).

Before closing, Jack named many of the much-loved birding spots around Melbourne that fall within green wedges: the Western Treatment Plant, Yellingbo, Churchill N.P. and Devilbend Reservoir to name several. In responding to a question about fire and management plans, Jack said that any changes were attendant on the completion of the Royal Commission.

Ian Muir gave the vote of thanks and voiced our astonishment at the huge task of managing the green wedges and the biosphere reserve. It was great to have Jack giving information on topics that many of us know little about.

Arthur had several items of business to announce:

- The coach tour program still needs a new coordinator(s) and it will cease in December if no one takes it on. Please consider it.
- A call for volunteers to assist with the bi-monthly magazine mail out. There are 300 copies and your help would be appreciated.
- Max Maddock, of Project Egret Watch in NSW, is requesting help with records of Cattle Egrets, which are in serious decline in their nesting habitat in the Hunter region. Information on the degradation and disappearance of habitat would also be important information. Contact Max at 78, Ballydoyle Dr, Ashtonfield, NSW 2323.

Having announced forthcoming outings, recorded recent sightings, and invited Barbara Longmuir to promote keen shopping, Arthur declared the meeting closed. And refreshments were most welcome.

*Daphne Hards*

## Past Meeting Reports (Cont'd)

22 September 2009

**Janet Hand** welcomed all, and invited **Sonja Ross** to present her Member's Choice segment, *A Photographer's Day at the Western Treatment Plant, Werribee*. Sonja first related how a small group of keen photographers, initially an informal subgroup of MELBOCA, came to form a national branch called PhotoBOCA. She then presented a stunning display of the birds to be seen at WTP, with contributions from Arthur Carew, John Stirling, Keith Hindley, Rob Parker, Ray Chatterton and Sonja Ross, with a song-bird soundtrack compiled by Howard Plowright. Birds included grebe, crakes, egrets, spoonbills, birds of prey, waders, terns, gulls, cuckoos, chats, cisticolas, swallows, skylarks and more. We look forward to further shows!

Janet then invited **Dr Pam Whiteley** of the Faculty of Veterinary Science, University of Melbourne, to the podium. Pam is studying the health and disease of parrots and cockatoos in Victoria, forming part of a wider program looking at the health of all mammals, reptiles, birds and amphibia. She is asking BOCA members to contribute to the study, and she is particularly interested in free-ranging birds outside the CBD. Parrots and cockatoos are susceptible to salmonella and mycoplasma infections, often transmitted at bird feeders. Regular reports on, say, a group of Crimson Rosellas attending your feeding table would be most welcome. Record the number of healthy birds and also note any damaged or sick birds, then ring Pam Whiteley on 0400 119 301

Janet then introduced the main speaker, **Victor Hurley**. Victor did his BSc at Monash University and is now doing a PhD at Deakin University on *Factors Affecting Breeding Success of Peregrine Falcons in Victoria*. He works for the Department of Sustainability and Environment in Mildura. He is Project Leader of the Victorian Peregrine Falcon Project. His talk was titled *Breeding and Biology of Major Mitchell's Cockatoos at Pine Plains*.

Pine Plains, a conservation reserve on the northern edge of Wyperfeld NP, is a grassy plain studded with slender Callitris Pine in which Major Mitchell's Cockatoos feed and breed. The wood of this tree is highly valued, being termite-proof, and a lot of clearing occurred in the 1920s. Subsequent regeneration has been checked, first by stock grazing, and now by rabbits and kangaroos. Fire is also a serious threat to this habitat.

With graphs using data collected since 1995, Victor showed how breeding success is directly related to the number of suitable breeding hollows. Such hollows are only available in trees of substantial diameter. Even established pines are dying before they grow big enough. Rabbit calicivirus helped protect smaller trees when it was first released, but no longer. A study of 63 trees between 1995 and 2008 showed that Major Mitchell's Cockatoos are in competition with Galahs and bees for hollows. Major Mitchell's Cockatoos inhabit semi-arid country; they only breed in Callitris Pine in spring and early summer; and they are endangered. Galahs, on the other hand,

range Australia-wide, breed in various trees all year round and are common. The bird atlases showed that Major Mitchell's Cockatoo numbers declined 45% between the 1977-81 edition and the 1995-99 edition.

To offset the lack of breeding hollows, nest boxes were constructed. Plastic nest boxes were not popular, and led to an experiment to record the internal and external temperatures of hollows in live as well as dead trees. It was shown that the external temperature varies but the internal temperature is more regulated. Moreover, the insulation is better in live trees compared against dead trees due to the water in the xylem acting as thermal insulation. This confirmed the need to keep mature trees alive.

The key threats to Major Mitchell's Cockatoo recovery are:

- Feral bees, which occupy 3% of nesting hollows;
- Galahs, which take up to 50% of hollows previously used by MMCs;
- Brush-tailed Possums, which, in seeking roosting hollows, crush eggs;
- Disease, storms, drought, illegal logging, and wildfire;
- Competition for native grasses by goats, rabbits, hares and kangaroos;
- Hybridisation with Galahs (the hybrids are fertile and have to be destroyed);
- Ravens, which predate nests;
- And kestrels, which harass adults so that they abandon nesting.
- Recovery actions include:
  - Control grazing, particularly by rabbits;
  - Increase the rate of tree regeneration by watering young trees and creating natural tree guards from fallen timber;
  - Selective removal of Galahs, following strict guidelines;
  - Continue research into their diet and feeding habits, their home range and their habitat use;
  - Install nest boxes made from fallen Callitris Pine;
  - Continue monitoring to ensure protection and reproductive behaviour.

As someone with an obvious love of the Major Mitchell's Cockatoo, Victor finished with the quote: "a quiet and unassuming species whose demise would be such a loss". If the 64 breeding pairs at Pine Plains can be increased to 100 pairs, this colony might be safe.

In answering to questions we heard: plastic nesting tubes have been successful on Kangaroo Island with the Glossy Black Cockatoo; woodchips are the preferred bedding material to sawdust; Major Mitchell's Cockatoos probably breed in their third year; and, on a sombre note, that it takes 120 to 140 years for Callitris Pine to reach the ideal diameter to form hollows.

Janet reminded all of the vacancies for beginners outings and coach outing coordinators, and then announced forthcoming outings and camps. After an evening full of jokes, discussion, delays, bird stories and wisdom we were all ready for refreshment.

Daphne Hards

## Education Report

Spring is traditionally the busiest time of the year for education activities.

One of our traditional methods of being seen is with municipal library displays. This October/November, we had static displays in Montrose, Toorak, Box Hill, Wheelers Hill and The Pines (East Doncaster) libraries. My thanks to Jim McMinn, Annette Cook (BOCA), Barbara Longmuir and Graeme Hosken for assembling the displays this year.

The Australian Plant Expo was held in Templestowe on the weekend of 10-11 October, with more than 550 people attending. Our display attracted a lot of attention and it was nice to see so many BOCA members there. Thanks to Graeme Hosken, Bill and Shirley Ramsay, Sylvia McCullum (BOCA office) and Daphne Hards for helping with information, and Jean Cuthbert, who, for the third year assisted my husband and I in setting up and dismantling the display.

Sunday 25 October was the Blackburn Lake Stickybeak activity afternoon. My thanks to Graeme Hosken who supervised the 20 children before taking them to the lake to identify the birds they had been colouring in.

This year our members took part in three different Breakfast with the Birds events.

Friends of Blackburn Lake held a breakfast and walk on 5 September. Thanks to Barbara Longmuir and Ian Moodie for leading the walks where 24 people saw 36 species.

Breakfast with the Birds at Wilson Park, Berwick, on 11 October was organised by the Friends Group and the birdwalk was led by Graeme Hosken. I was told the egg and bacon breakfast was appreciated. This time, 22 people, again with 36 species seen.

At the Banyule Breakfast with the Birds, Sunday 25 October, the rain held off but the wind came up and wasn't helpful in seeing birds. We added Powerful Owl to our list of species, but didn't see Little Black Cormorant or Bell Miner, which had been seen in previous years. The Mistletoebird was also missing for the first time since 2001. There was too much water in the wetlands for waders. Thanks to my leaders Jill and Howard Plowright, Diane Tweeddale, Daphne Hards, Lyn Easton and Anthea Fleming. Thanks to my telescope educators Bill Ramsay, Brian Fleming and Duncan Turnbull.

A report on our November activities will appear in the next edition of *The Melbirdian*. I would love to hear from anyone who can assist with our activities next year.

*Janet Hand, 03 9842 4177*

## Outing Report: Growling Grass Frog Golf Course

**6 October 2009**

A wintry forecast and calendar notice problems, plus clouds and rain on the horizon, were not enough to deter 13 keen birdwatchers from assembling in the car park. John Prytherch led us into an area few had actually registered as a birding site. Australian Wood Duck, with 15 or more half-grown young near the entrance, was a good start to the morning. Had more than one duck been laying eggs in an undefended nest?

The "Bush Mafia", aka Noisy Miners, were vocal in the car park where Australian plantings included WA eucalypts and banksias. Though not indigenous, the flowers were most appreciated by New Holland Honeyeaters. The course uses recycled water and the permanent supply is an attractant for the birds, as is the continuing planting and wetland creation. Rabbits and roos are a problem, but fenced plantings give a chance to the vegetation.

Other non-birds were a Blue-tongued Lizard, a tangle of sawfly larvae and a disputed sighting of a hare. The sight of a mob of Eastern Grey Kangaroos warming their bellies as they relaxed near a fence-line was amusing.

Galahs, Sulphur-crested Cockatoos, Long-billed Corellas and parrots were prominent. Musk Lorikeet replaced Rainbow while Eastern and Crimson Rosella were joined on the bird list by Red-rumped Parrot. Welcome Swallows swooped near the start of the walk and, later, we were joined by Tree Martins, presumably attracted to insects

stirred up by our passage. They flew beautifully close with several Fairy Martins also swooping near which provided good comparative views. A Nankeen Kestrel hovered and allowed us to admire the beautiful colour of its upper wings when it swooped. Near a most unprepossessing pond, where frogs called but there was initially no bird life, we were delighted by the appearance of a Black-tailed Native-hen. Good views for all and a "lifer" for at least five of our number. Later, even those who'd previously seen them on the ground were fascinated when a pair flew across a dam and into shelter, native-hens in flight was another first for many.

That same dam gave Hoary-headed and Australasian Grebe, Grey Teal, Pacific Black Duck, Australian Wood Duck and Hardhead, Welcome Swallow, Tree and Fairy Martin, Masked Lapwing, Dusky Moorhen and Eurasian Coot. Not bad for recycled water. Nearby we flushed Latham's Snipe and watched a Rufous Songlark as it flew and perched. Striated Pardalotes investigated tree hollows assiduously. As we turned back to the clubhouse/restaurant, an Australasian Pipit perched obligingly on a rock wall. Then, when we thought we'd seen all birds for the day, a large mixed flock of Straw-necked and Australian White Ibis appeared above, riding a thermal upward. The final bird list was 49 species and we gave a well-deserved vote of thanks to John for his knowledgeable leadership.

*Diane Tweeddale  
Convenor, MELBOCA Weekdays Outings*

## Interesting Sightings

Entered 30 October 2009

The following Field Reports were received from members attending the MELBOCA monthly meeting held at Balwyn, 25 August, 22 September and 27 October 2009, and from e-mail and web reports to the BOCA National Office.

The report includes White-plumed Honeyeater, Eastern

Spinebill and Noisy Miner sightings within 40kms of Melbourne, plus other Field Reports.

MELBOCA is very interested in the apparent disappearance of the White-plumed Honeyeater from the Melbourne suburbs. Is this the case in your area and if so, are Noisy Miners present?

### White-plumed Honeyeater

**July:** Hampton Park, Royal Botanic Gardens & Werribee Treatment Plant.

**September:** Oakleigh, Hughesdale, Murrumbeena & Carnegie Railway Stations, Royal Park, East Bentleigh & Prahran.

**October:** Blackburn, Fisherman's Bend, Newport, Notting Hill, Williamstown & Prahran.

### Eastern Spinebill

**July:** Ashwood, Glen Iris, Blackburn, Balwyn North, Royal Botanic Gardens, Surrey Hills, Macleod & Cranbourne Botanic Gardens.

**September:** Park Orchards.

**October:** Blackburn.

### Noisy Miner

**July:** Blackburn, Hampton Park, Balwyn North, Royal Botanic Gardens, Bayswater, Croydon South, Doncaster, Surrey Hills & Kew.

**September:** Park Orchards, Murrumbeena, Carnegie, Hughesdale, Oakleigh, Patterson, East Bentleigh, East Kew & Templestowe.

**October:** Blackburn, Greensborough & Chirnside Park.

*Comments:* Helen Aston reports that Noisy Miners came into the 'green belt' round Fordham Gardens, Camberwell, in 1983 after the big fires that year. Also recorded at Fairmont and Frog Hollow Reserves and Wilson Park, Camberwell.

## Other Sightings

Date	Sighting	Street/Location	Suburb
?? Apr. 2009	Mandarin Duck (1)	Dights Falls	Collingwood
06 Jun. 2009	Bell Miner (1)	Near Collingwood Station	Collingwood
12 Jun. 2009	White-naped Honeyeater (1)	Newport Lakes	Newport
18 Jun. 2009	Gang-Gang Cockatoo (3)	Williams Rd	Blackburn
20 Jun. 2009	Spiny-cheeked Honeyeater (2)	Elwood Foreshore near Elwood Canal	Elwood
Mid Jul. 2009	Collared Sparrowhawk (1)	Ascot St	Doncaster
29 Jul. 2009	Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoo (15)	Braeside Park	Braeside
13 Aug. 2009	Crested Pigeon (8)	T H King Oval	Glen Iris
17 Aug. 2009	Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoo (7)	Hedgely Dene	Glen Iris
08 Sep. 2009	Long-billed Corella (1)	East Melb. Tennis Courts, Albert St	East Melbourne
18 Sep. 2009	Rufous Fantail (1 – recorded at this location in previous years)	Back Creek	Burwood
20 Sep. 2009	Song Thrush (1)	Back Creek	Burwood
27 Sep. 2009	Horsfield's Bronze-Cuckoo (1)	Royal Park	Parkville
01 Oct. 2009	Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoo (14)	Albany Dve	Mulgrave
06 Oct. 2009	Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoo (7)	Marchiori Rd	Blackburn Nth
09 Oct. 2009	Pied Currawong breeding	View Mont Rd	Wheelers Hill
15 Oct. 2009	Black-fronted Dotterel (1)	Highbury Rd Quarry	Mt Waverley
27 Oct. 2009	Red-capped Robin (1)	Bulleen Park	Bulleen
29 Oct. 2009	Gang-Gang Cockatoo (1)	Pamay Rd	Mt Waverley

## Interesting Sightings (Cont'd)

### Members Comments

Andrew McCutcheon recorded a 'White Swallow', (albino?), NE of Nagambie, 26 October.

Anthea Fleming has not seen Bell Miners at Banyule Flats since June 2009. Any sightings nearby?

Len Robinson reported Crested Pigeons nesting in a street tree in Dunoon Street, Murrumbena, during

September.

Have you seen a White-necked Black Swan? No, not a new species but several Black Swans have been fitted with white plastic numbered bands fitted round their necks for ease of identification for a research project. Heidi Duncan reported sightings in April at Altona Coastal Park and in July at the Royal Botanic Gardens. Any others?

### Notes Received

**Ian Sinclair** has lived for some 40 years in Horton Close, Brighton, which backs onto the SW section of Elsternwick Park. In earlier years, Silvereye, White-plumed Honey-eater and Willie Wagtail were common, being seen most days. Ian has only seen an Eastern Spinebill once, some 20 years ago. About ten years ago, Noisy Miners arrived at the Bent St section of the park, about half a kilometre from his home, and about five years ago they became daily visitors to Ian's back garden. Very quickly, the Silvereye and Willie Wagtail vanished. White-plumed Honey-eater has now become a rare visitor. In the last year, Red and Little Wattlebird visitors to his grevilleas have also diminished.

Has your garden suffered the same result due to the ingress of Noisy Miners?

**Ken and Vivian Harris** moved to Strickland Drive, Wheelers Hill from High Street Rd, Glen Waverley in 1981.

On moving, they immediately noticed a striking difference in the bird population. Early days, mostly Noisy Miner and, in winter, dozens or more Pied Currawong would arrive. Gradually the Pied Currawong disappeared, and for a few years was rarely seen. Now they see two or three in winter.

The Lorikeet picture is interesting. Rainbow Lorikeet numbers were few at the start but grew rapidly about five to ten years ago, but since, the numbers are less and have

been taken over by Musk, with the Musk outnumbering the Rainbow.

About six or seven years ago, Ken saw the occasional Little Lorikeet in summer, and, over the past three years, they have been sighted in small numbers all year round, with quite a few around at present (August). Three years ago, at home, Ken recorded his first King Parrot with two, possibly four, over wintering. This year, immediately after the February fires, quite a number arrived and stayed. Ken will be watching to see if they head back to their old haunts in spring. Rarely seen at Jells Park, King Parrot is now seen on most visits. Ken is not far from Jells Park.

Have bird numbers changed in your backyard since the February fires?

Beyond the Melbourne area, **Chris Healy (EGBOC)** reports Scarlet Honeyeaters across much of East Gippsland with other migrants making early appearances. It may be worth a trip east?

**Farmers** are not happy with the numbers of Black Swan at Lake Nagambie – up to 400 – as the Swans are grazing on their properties.

*All MELBOCA Outing Reports may be found on the MELBOCA Website, [www.melboca.org.au](http://www.melboca.org.au).*

### Backyard Birds!

I guess many MELBOCA members have a backyard or a park nearby, and, like myself, have made a record of bird species seen at either site since you moved into your home. Now is your chance to share the information you have collected over the years, in my case, forty-six.

It is not a competition, but an 'of interest' exercise. Nominating a 'highlight' would be of interest – in my case, one sighting of a Crested Shrike-tit, 30 years ago.

Information received will be published in *The Melbirdian*.

I have modified a *proforma* used for the recording of species seen on MELBOCA outings to enter your sighting records, now titled, '**Backyard Birds**'.

The following information is requested:

Name, Site Name, From Date, Abundance, Status, Breeding, Habitat

If you don't want to include info on the latter four items, a cross will do beside the species seen.

Forms may be obtained by one of the following methods:

- 1 Forward your request to BOCA and I shall return the required documents by return email
- 2 Contact me on 9802 5250 and I shall post the documents to you.

Good luck!

*Graeme Hosken, Recorder*

## Summary of Wednesday Wanderings 2009

### Warrandyte to Westgate

This year has been another excellent year for Wednesday rambles along the Yarra. The number of participants averaged 22, including many regulars and, on at least two occasions, welcome visitors from out of state.

Some highlights from the year include: the two young Wedge-tailed Eagles that were trying to remain hidden in a tree on the north side of the river at Westerfolds Park; sightings of Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoos on three occasions; a single Powerful Owl in Birrarung Park in May; 49 species observed at Banyule Flats Reserve (always an excellent location) in June; and Tawny Frogmouths found on five walks. Rainbow Lorikeets were twice photographed refurbishing nests and a beautiful Swamp Wallaby was much admired and photographed at Banyule Flats.

The drought deepened as the year progressed. On several occasions it proved difficult to locate small bush birds – Grey Fantail, Yellow Robin and Brown Thornbill were often notable by their absence, probably due to smaller than usual numbers of insects, while the number of rabbits sighted on the denuded river banks was quite alarming.

The penultimate Wednesday Wandering at Bulleen Park and Bolin Bolin Billabong was held on a calm, sunny spring morning at the end of October. It was enjoyed by 32 "wanderers" who sighted 52 species. It was "one out of the box"! On arrival we were greeted by the man-whistling-his-dog call of the Shining Bronze-cuckoo. Black-faced

Cuckoo-shrikes, Grey Fantails and Crested Shrike-tits were observed nest building. A pair of White-faced Herons was observed on a nest and five Nankeen Night-herons flew across the river. An Olive-backed Oriole called strongly. The falling-leaf call of the White-throated Gerygone was heard, and then traced to a small area of youngish eucalypts, affording good views to all present. This was a lifer for several birders and everyone agreed that Bulleen Park was the place to be in October!

I would like to thank Lyn Easton for leading the July walk at Banyule Flats and Anthea Fleming for the September walk at Yarra Flats, during which the spring migrants – White-winged Triller, Rufous Whistler and Pallid Cuckoo – were identified while I was away endeavouring to add to my own life list!

2010 promises to be interesting as we work our way downstream toward the city, visiting such locations as Chelsworth Park, Willsmere Billabong, Fairfield Park and Pipe Bridge and, in November 2010, Herring Island – always a highlight.

2011 will be the final year in the second series of Wednesday Wanderings and will culminate in a sea voyage on the Bay in May.

If you would like to receive a copy of the full four-year list of Wednesday Wanderings dates and places, please give me a ring. In the meantime, I look forward to wandering with you again in 2010, commencing with the walk at Chelsworth Park and Wilson Reserve on 24 February.

*Celia M. Browne*

## Outing Report: The 100 Acres, Park Orchards

### 28 September 2009

After a week of rain, the morning continued with showers, occasionally heavy, as 11 birdos met near the sports pavilion. Cecily Falkingham was our leader and she warned us of "glass-slippery Silurian clay" in the wet conditions, a point well taken. The shelter of the grand stand was a comfortable viewing area and it was with regret and a list of 12 species that we departed it.

Highlights were Eastern Rosella, Brown Goshawk, Crested Pigeon, White-faced Heron and Australian White Ibis. The track yielded White-throated Tree-creeper and Yellow-faced Honeyeater while a Fan-tailed Cuckoo looked most rain-bedraggled on its perch.

Common Bronzewing was almost a "ho-hum" bird, they were so numerous; but Pied Currawong was only heard in the distance, as was the elusive Olive-backed Oriole. Grey Fantails flitted close and frequently, while much discussion resulted in the identification of Shining Bronze-Cuckoo by sight, with a Horsfield's Bronze-Cuckoo calling further away.

An Eastern Spinebill was, presumably, feeding young as it dashed from foraging on one side of the track into the shrubs on the opposite side. We moved on to give it living

room. The first Eastern Yellow Robin was fleetingly glimpsed, but later birds offered better views. White-throated Treecreepers climbed the trunks and Grey Fantails seemed to copy them. A Grey Shrike-thrush bashed its captured grub against the branch. White-naped Honeyeaters foraged athletically in the foliage while Spotted Pardalotes were seen near the ground. A single Varied Sitella was an unusual sighting for this usually flocking species.

Fresh tips of new leaves marked all trees and shrubs and the flowers included carpets of Waxlip Orchids, Bulbine Lilies and Running Postman. Stackhousia, Pimelias and Billy Buttons joined Love Creeper and Clematis in the delightful mix, with wattle flowers in the higher layers. There was a charming contrast between the dark trunks of trees burnt over a couple of years ago and the colours of the flowers and mosses. Fungi also were evident – puffballs, toadstools and mushrooms – while frogs called from the numerous ponds and ephemeral watercourses. By the end of the day we had a bird list of 44 species and a vote of thanks for Cecily whose careful preparation had introduced us to another birding 'gem' among the suburbs.

*Diane Tweeddale*  
*Convenor, MELBOCA Weekdays Outings*

## Outing Report: Truganina Parklands, Altona Meadows

**20 October 2009**

Ultimately, there were 18 of us willing to brave the warm and increasingly windy conditions. The area around the car park, near the 100 Steps to Federation, proved rich in species, with Superb Fairy-wren and Red Wattlebird common.

The wetlands here yielded Chestnut Teal, Australasian Grebe, Dusky Moorhen, Eurasian Coot and Purple Swamphen, one with a youngster. Little Grassbird was calling in several places and a highlight was a White-necked Heron flying over and then returning. Magpie-lark challenged Little Raven with the shrubs being popular with New Holland Honeyeater. However, the most common bird was the introduced Common Starling which was clearly suited to the open grassland.

Leonie Robbins led us on an easy walk across the reclaimed tip and around the mound. Large patches of pink-purple pigface were in flower and it was near here we saw our first Singing Honeyeater. Much excitement, though the species became so common that it was (almost) "another Singing". Most of us got good views of a Sacred Kingfisher, seen by a keen-eyed watcher, while a small group were treated to Blue-winged Parrot. Adult Superb Fairy-wrens with a youngster delighted many of the group before we moved on to avoid stressing the family. Two male

and one female White-fronted Chat were close for a couple of minutes before moving on. We swung around to the mouth of the Laverton Creek on a low and falling tide. Initially only Silver Gull were visible, but when we rounded the final turn there were many waders feeding and sheltering on the mudflat. Mostly they were Red-necked Stint, with a few Sharp-tailed Sandpiper and a lone White-faced Heron. One sandpiper seemed to have a more curving bill but comparing a photo with the field guide ruled out Curlew Sandpiper. The bird is now considered to be a Pectoral Sandpiper. A higher mudflat hosted Common Greenshank, "yapping" Black-winged Stilt and plump Bar-tailed Godwit among its Silver Gull population. Raptors were also present and a pair of Brown Falcon flew over as we approached the cars. At lunch time, a Nankeen Kestrel flew at a Brown Falcon.

A toilet stop at Apex Park added Crested Pigeon, Willie Wagtail and Crested Tern to the list. Then we drove in convoy to the Truganina Swamp where Black Swan, Royal Spoonbill, Little Egret and Straw-necked Ibis plus Hoary-headed Grebe were seen. The final bird list was 60 species, despite the windy conditions, and we thanked Leonie for reminding us of this excellent birding area.

*Diane Tweeddale*

*Convenor, MELBOCA Weekdays Outings*

## Outing Report: Kings Falls, Arthurs Seat

**Monday 9 November 2009**

The predicted hot, sunny weather kept our numbers down. However, enthusiasm triumphed for the eight of us, and, carrying plenty of water, with Joan Peters as our leader, we set out. Red Wattlebird was the most numerous species of the day and Grey Shrike-thrush among the most persistent callers.

The heat clearly created thermals near the rise of Arthurs Seat. Many flocks of Straw-necked Ibis took advantage of this, soaring up and across, with the occasional Australian White Ibis standing out among the dark birds. Then there were two birds soaring independently. Not ibis. Raptors? Two viewers thought Brown Goshawk, but the birds vanished. A few minutes later the cry of "Raptor" went up again and this time the leading bird passed over with prey in its talons. Yes, two Brown Goshawk were hunting in the area. Just afterwards, a Nankeen Kestrel hovered, stooped half-heartedly then swooped unsuccessfully. Later, a soaring Wedge-tailed Eagle added to our raptor count.

A small pond had a pair of Australian Wood Duck. Later in the walk, we encountered pairs with many young, demonstrating how the species has moved from rare visitor to common sighting. The calls of Spotted Pardalote were clear but the birds were difficult to see. Our photographer was delighted when one bird stayed clearly visible for a couple of seconds. White-eared Honeyeater called and were occasionally visible. We swung down the track to the

advice of "move quietly". A pair of Common Bronzewing waddled along the path before us. When bird sightings flagged, there were always the flowers. Below the canopy, with its occasional harvests of nectar, the groundcover included Trigger plants, Milkmaids and orchids – Thelymitra, Onion, Bird and Caladenia – as well as Yam Daisies in flower.

Further down the path, hay-fever and a dodgy shoulder took their toll on our party. The reduced numbers continued and were rewarded with more honeyeaters: Eastern Spinebill and Crescent, New Holland and, surprise, surprise, Scarlet Honeyeater. Photos and observations indicated an immature male. This extends the sightings of Scarlet Honeyeater in the outer suburbs of Melbourne. An Eastern Yellow Robin foraged near the track but we moved on when we sighted its nest in the fork of a sapling. The siren call of "lunch" lured us back to the cars and a quick transfer to Seawinds with its shade and toilet block.

A post-lunch walk yielded views of Superb Fairy-wren (hitherto only heard), White-browed Scrubwren and Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike. The final species count for the day was 44, which was very pleasing, considering the heat and the small number of observers. Our thanks to Joan for introducing us to such a promising area on our back doorstep.

*Diane Tweeddale*

*Convenor, MELBOCA Weekdays Outings*

## Outing Report: Yarra Flats Reserve



*White-winged Triller at Yarra Flats. Photo, Anthea Fleming*

**Wednesday 23 September 2009**

Twelve birders arrived at the Yarra Flats car park to immediately see a pair of Long-billed Corella, with Noisy Miner and Rainbow Lorikeet.

The annulus paddock provided a pair of Eastern Rosella, a Willy Wagtail in some blackened wattles and a Common Bronzewing – a good start. In the greener fringes around the burnt area, a male Golden Whistler sang and posed for cameras; then we moved to the unburned river bank. Here we were very pleased to find White-winged Triller where the black and white males were hunting caterpillars, but not calling, with only one female was seen. A

rather frog-like squawk from the far bank of the Yarra was identified by Geoff Deason as a female Pallid Cuckoo, but it remained invisible. We found Brown Thornbill, Grey Fantail, White-browed Scrubwren and Red-browed Finch on our way to join the Main Yarra Trail, where a pair of Tawny Frogmouth were roosting in a dead tree. Nearby, we found the only pair of Red-rumped Parrot seen. In the horse paddocks were seven or eight Cattle Egret – at least two were acquiring buff breeding plumage. Four Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoo were in a wattle on the river bank and a Grey Currawong patrolled the grass.

The wind was rising and we returned to the car park by the sheltered river-bank track. As well as more sightings of the Triller and a Golden Whistler, as we looked across the river we saw Crested Shrike-tit and glimpsed a Rufous Whistler. We finally found some Superb Fairy-wren (not numerous) and a Grey Shrike-thrush. It is puzzling that Bell Miner were neither seen nor heard.

A few Galah and Little Corella passed overhead, with a pair of Black Duck. The only other waterbird was a Dusky Moorhen heard on the river, and a pair of Australian Wood Duck which appeared at lunchtime. A total of 40 species, including some spring migrants, was a better result than I had hoped for, and we all enjoyed the morning. Many thanks to Geoff Deason for his help.

*Anthea Fleming*

## Outing Report: Yellingbo Birdwalk

**Sunday 6 September 2009**

Despite the day being Father's Day, the gates opened early and cars kept pouring into the car park at the usual Yellingbo Nature Reserve entrance. A total of 23 birders banded together for the day's walk.

The bird list started early: "I heard a cuckoo," said one of our more experienced bird watchers. Others agreed. Two cuckoos were heard along with Crested Shrike-tit, Crimson Rosella, Grey Shrike-thrush and Laughing Kookaburra. The day was looking promising.

During the usual meet and greet before the walk, one birder lamented the unfortunate demise of a mouse that had come to a watery end in the ladies toilet. With disposable gloves donned, the now rather stiff creature was removed to a more fitting spot.

As the walk got underway, Golden Whistler called from many different directions, only becoming visible to the walkers later in the morning. White-eared and White-naped Honeyeater called and were easily viewed. The brilliant white of the White-throated Treecreeper was seen many times throughout the day. While the Eastern Whipbird has been heard a few times this year, it was seen today by many, making its way through the undergrowth across the creek.

In a densely treed area, evidence was seen of a large bird having consumed its prey on one of the branches above. Various small bones and large intestine could be seen on the ground. A Powerful Owl or raptor perhaps?

Superb Fairy-wren looked resplendent in their brilliant breeding plumage. Evidence of spring was all around – in the flowering Acacias and the indigenous native orchids popping their tiny heads from the warming ground. By far the best sight for the day was a Shining Bronze-Cuckoo putting on an impressive courtship display for all to see. Along with the Shining Bronze-Cuckoo, Horsfield's Bronze-Cuckoo and Fan-tailed Cuckoo were also seen.

Yellow-rumped Thornbill, Brown and Striated Thornbill are always a pleasant sight to behold, the Yellow-rumped Thornbill only making an occasional visit. Jacky Winter could be seen, perched on the fence of one of the farmlets. Long-billed Corella was another rare sighting for the year.

After lunch, a Brown Goshawk came into view over distant tree canopies. Australian King-Parrot was difficult to see through the shadows of the early afternoon, despite its magnificent colouring. Red-browed Treecreeper and Brown-headed Honeyeater were a few of the more interesting sights during the afternoon. Just as we arrived back at the car park, Straw-necked Ibis flew over.

In total, 53 birds were recorded for the day. Thanks must be given to those very experienced birders without whom the newer, less-experienced (would-be) birders would have been lost: David Ap-Thomas and Geoff Deason, amongst many others who freely gave of their knowledge on the day.

*Maryanne Anderson*

## MELBOCA Dates to Remember

If you would like to get outside, see some fantastic birds and meet friendly people, then MELBOCA outings are just what you need. Check out some of the outings on offer and we hope to see you in the field!

### Saturday 19 December 2009

**Beginners Outing** – Jumping Creek Reserve, Warrandyte

Meet at 10.00am in the main car park. Melway 24 A11.

**Contact MelBOCA**, 03 9802 5250

*Please note: all MELBOCA Beginners Outings will now be on the fourth Saturday of the month.*

### Wednesday 23 December 2009

**Christmas Camp** – Dartmoor

23 December 2009 to 4 January 2010. The camping area is beside the Glenelg River.

Please bring drinking water and take rubbish away. No pets, no fires. \$6.00 booking fee, \$4.00 per night for members and \$8.00 per night for non-members. Motel close by if preferred. Bookings close Monday 21 December. Day visitors welcome.

Travel to Dartmoor along Princes Hwy (A1) or through Hamilton and Digby (C187). From the junction of A1 and C187 travel west for 1½ km, crossing a bridge over Glenelg River, and turn right into Dartmoor (Ascot St). At Greenham St, turn right, go past the hotel and straight down to the camping area by the river. Do not park under large trees.

**Contact BOCA** 03 9877 5342

### Sunday 7 February 2010

**Birdwalk** at Yellingbo Reserve.

Take Warburton Hwy to Woori Yallock and turn right to Yellingbo. At Yellingbo, turn right towards Seville, then left into Macclesfield Rd. After 2.5 km, turn right at large pine trees. Melway 305 G11. Gate opens at 10:00am. Walk starts at 10:30am. On-site toilets available. Bring lunch and gumboots.

**Contact MelBOCA**, 03 9802 5250

### Monday 15 February 2010

**Outing** to Bellarine Peninsula.

10:00am – 3:00pm. Bush and waterbirds. Leader, Fred Smith.

From La Trobe Tce/Settlement Rd, take Barwon Heads Rd to Barwon Valley Golf Club. Meet in car park. Melway 452 A11. On-site toilets available. Convoy driving to different locations. Scopes useful. All welcome, no need to book.

**Contact MELBOCA** 03 9802 5250

## Summer Shorebird Surveys in Victoria

It's that time of year again when migratory shorebirds return in big numbers to spend the summer.

Birds Australia's Shorebirds 2020 national shorebird monitoring project is putting together a schedule of locations and dates for shorebird counts in Victoria between December and February. There are 35 shorebird areas to survey and additional counters are needed or welcome at many sites.

Even those less experienced in wader identification can help out and get some practice at identifying these tricky birds! This is a great opportunity to see large and diverse flocks of shorebirds at sites around the two bays and further afield. For a full list of sites, dates and contacts go to <http://www.shorebirds.org.au> or contact Jo and Rob on 03 9347 0757.

## Contact

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John Stephen Young

### We're on the Web!

See us at:

[www.melboca.org.au](http://www.melboca.org.au)



*MELBOCA is the  
Melbourne Branch of  
Bird Observation &  
Conservation Australia*

# Dandenong Catchment Survey Summary

Wet conditions greeted many survey teams during September and October, with heavy rain either on the survey days or immediately before. Maximum water levels were reported at most sites in October, making frog species very happy, the Common Froglet voicing its presence at all MELBOCA sites except Waterford Wetlands. With the influx of Black-tailed Native-hen into southern Victoria, the probability of recording one was high, and, in October, at River Gum, one was recorded. Also, on the same survey day, at the same site, a few Tree Martin were sighted hawking with Welcome Swallow and one Fantail Cuckoo, which has taken the total to 98 species recorded on survey days at River Gum.

Other firsts were:

- Frog Hollow – Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoo and Australian Raven. The latter a first for all MELBOCA sites.
- Hallam Valley Rd – Cattle Egret, Australian Hobby and White-winged Triller.

The total for the MELBOCA sites is 129 bird species.

Please note the following changes to the MELBOCA two-month site results:

- The key, 'Ns' denotes a species seen on a non-survey and will remain in the 'cell' until recorded on a survey day.
- An additional row has been added indicating the total number of bird species seen on a survey day.

The second Annual Report, July 2008 to June 2009, on the Constructed Wetlands being surveyed by BOCA, was completed in October 2009 by Dr Jenny Lau, BOCA Conservation Officer, and forwarded to Melbourne Water.

In summary, 21 'priority' bird species of conservation significance have been recorded at the wetlands since the survey commenced, the most widely distributed being the Australian Shoveler, Hardhead, Eastern Great Egret, Royal Spoonbill and Latham's Snipe.

To date, more than 145 species of bird, four species of frog and four species of mammal have been recorded in the wetlands, with a trend toward the highest numbers of wetland birds being recorded

at sites in mid-to-late summer.

A copy of the full report is available from the BOCA Library.

A Community Bulletin was issued in September 2009 to the effect that Melbourne Water will begin the second stage of works to rehabilitate River Gum Creek in Hampton Park. The work will commence in late October 2009 and the completion date is expected in December 2010. The work will be upstream from the existing River Gum Creek wetland and will alter part of the Kilberry Boulevard site.

Following construction, the area will be revegetated with over 200 000 native plants, creating a much improved habitat for wildlife.

Note: Melbourne Water are at present constructing a much larger wetland in the Dandenong Creek Valley, east of Dandenong Creek and between Ferntree Gully & Wellington Roads. It is well worth a visit to inspect the progress. Another survey site for BOCA?

See the BOCA/Melbourne Water Catchment Survey insert for details of observations at MELBOCA sites.

My thanks also to Arthur Carew for completing the DCS report for October's *The Melbirdian* while I was on holidays.

*Graeme Hosken*



*Eastern Great Egret. Photo, Arthur Carew*

*The Melbirdian is published four times a year. Member birding-related stories and articles (up to 800 words) are invited. 1 February 2010 is the deadline for receipt of information for inclusion in the Autumn Edition.*

Survey site number and location	Melway	Survey site number and location	Melway
1 Frog Hollow Wetland, Endeavour Hills	91 G9	4 South of Golf Links Road, Narre Warren	110 F11
2 Kilberry Boulevard, Hampton Park	96 J9	5 Hallam Valley Road, Hampton Park	96 A3
3 River Gum Ck Reserve, Hampton Park	96 H9	6 Waterford Wetland, Rowville	73 E10

Table 1. Bird species observed at MELBOCA survey sites.

Bird species	Site number						Bird species	Site number					
	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6
Black Swan	X		X	X	X		Australian Spotted Crake						
Australian Shelduck							Spotless Crake						
Australian Wood Duck			X		X		Black-tailed Native-hen			N			
Pink-eared Duck			X				Dusky Moorhen	X	X	X	X	X	X
Australasian Shoveler							Eurasian Coot	X		X	X	X	X
Grey Teal			X		X	X	Black-winged Stilt						
Chestnut Teal	X	X	X		X	X	Black-fronted Dotterel			X		X	X
Northern Mallard			Ns				Red-kneed Dotterel						
Pacific Black Duck	X	X	X	X	X	X	Masked Lapwing	X	X			X	X
Hardhead			X	Ns	X	X	Latham's Snipe			X			X
Blue-billed Duck							Sharp-tailed Sandpiper						
Australasian Grebe			X		X	X	Pacific Gull						
Hoary-headed Grebe			X			N	Silver Gull	X		X			
Rock Dove		X	X	X	X		Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoo	N					
Spotted Dove	X	X	X	X	X	X	Galah		X	X	X	X	
Common Bronzewing							Long-billed Corella			Ns			
Crested Pigeon			X		X		Little Corella	X	X	X			
Australasian Darter	X		X	X	X		Sulphur-crested Cockatoo	X	X				
Little Pied Cormorant	X		X		X	X	Rainbow Lorikeet	X	X	X		X	
Great Cormorant	X			X	X		Scaly-breasted Lorikeet			X			
Little Black Cormorant		X		X	X	X	Musk Lorikeet						
Pied Cormorant							Crimson Rosella						
Australian Pelican	X		X	X	X		Eastern Rosella			X		X	
White-necked Heron							Red-rumped Parrot						X
Eastern Great Egret				X	X		Horsfield's Bronze-Cuckoo	X		X	X	X	
Intermediate Egret							Shining Bronze-Cuckoo						X
Cattle Egret					N		Palid Cuckoo						
White-faced Heron	X	X	X	X	X	X	Fantail Cuckoo			N			
Little Egret				Ns			Laughing Kookaburra						
Australian White Ibis	X	X	X		X	X	Superb Fairy-Wren	X	X	X	X	X	
Straw-necked Ibis			X	X	X		White-browed Scrubwren				X	X	
Royal Spoonbill							Yellow Thornbill						
Yellow-billed Spoonbill							Yellow-rumped Thornbill					Ns	
Black-shouldered Kite							Brown Thornbill	X	X		X	X	
White-bellied Sea-Eagle							Spotted Pardalote						
Whistling Kite	Ns				Ns		Striated Pardalote						
Black Kite							Yellow-faced Honeyeater						
Brown Goshawk					X		White-eared Honeyeater						
Collared Sparrowhawk							White-plumed Honeyeater	X	X	X		X	
Swamp Harrier					X		Bell Miner						
Little Eagle							Noisy Miner			X		X	
Nankeen Kestrel					X		Little Wattlebird	X	X	X			
Brown Falcon				Ns	Ns		Red Wattlebird	X	X	X	X	X	X
Australian Hobby					N		White-fronted Chat	Ns					
Peregrine Falcon							Crescent Honeyeater						
Purple Swampphen	X		X	X	X	X	New Holland Honeyeater	X	X	X	X	X	X
Buff-banded Rail			X				White-naped Honeyeater						
Baillon's Crake			X				Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike						

Survey site number and location	Melway	Survey site number and location	Melway
1 Frog Hollow Wetland, Endeavour Hills	91 G9	4 South of Golf Links Road, Narre Warren	110 F11
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3 River Gum Ck Reserve, Hampton Park	96 H9	6 Waterford Wetland, Rowville	73 E10

White-winged Triller					N		Silvereye	N			X		
Golden Whistler			Ns				Welcome Swallow	X	X	X	X	X	X
Grey-shrike Thrush							Fairy Martin					X	
Grey Butcherbird							Tree Martin			N			
Australian Magpie	X	X	X	X	X	X	Common Blackbird	X	X	X	X	X	
Pied Currawong							Song Thrush						
Grey Fantail	Ns			X	X		Common Starling	X	X	X	X	X	
Willie Wagtail	X	X	X		X	X	Common Myna	X	X	X	X	X	
Australian Raven	N				Ns		Red-browed Finch	X				X	
Little Raven	X	X	X	X	X	X	House Sparrow	X		X			
Magpie-lark	X	X	X	X	X		Eurasian Tree Sparrow						
Scarlet Robin							Australasian Pipit						X
Flame Robin					Ns		European Goldfinch	X	X	X	X	X	
Horsfield's Bushlark							Common Greenfinch						X
Eurasian Skylark				X	X	X							
Golden-headed Cisticola	X	X		X	X								
Australian Reed-Warbler	X	X	X	X	X								
Little Grassbird	X	X	X	X	X		Feral Duck	X		X			
Brown Songlark							Feral Goose	N					

<b>Total number of bird species seen at each site during the current survey months:</b>	44	31	54	35	61	24
<b>Total number of bird species seen on survey days:</b>	86	59	98	84	90	45
<b>Total number of bird species seen at each site on Survey and Non-survey days:</b>	90	59	101	89	94	45
<b>Total number of bird species seen at all MELBOCA sites to date:</b>	131					

Table 2. Other species observed at MELBOCA survey sites.

Species	Site number						Species	Site number					
	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6
<b>Frogs</b>							<b>Mammals</b>						
Common Froglet	X	X	X	X	X		Red Fox						
Southern Bullfrog				X			European Rabbit	X		X		X	
Spotted Marsh Frog			X				Brown Hare						X
							Feral Cat						
							<b>Fish</b>						
							European Carp			X		X	

**Key:**

- X** Denotes species seen at this site during the current survey months.  
**N** Denotes new species seen at this site during the current survey months.  
**Ns** Denotes species seen on non-survey day.  
 (Shading) denotes species seen at this site on previous surveys.