

# BirdLife Melbourne Newsletter

Volume 2 Number 3 September 2013



## The late Fred T.H. Smith

### Bill Ramsay on the passing of Fred Smith and 63 years of WTP records

As many members would now know, Fred T.H. Smith, a BirdLife Australia Honorary Life Member, died peacefully in his sleep on 19 June 2013 after suffering a stroke the day before.

Fred was a highly respected birder, had published numerous articles and was well known for generously sharing his knowledge. He had a very impressive list of first sightings for Australia and Victoria. In June of this year I had arranged to interview Fred for this newsletter, but unfortunately that interview never took place and I am left with many unanswered questions. Nevertheless I decided that I should continue with the article to raise awareness about Fred's association with the Western Treatment Plant at Werribee (WTP) and what became of all his field notes.

Early visits to the WTP by Fred were achieved by taking his bike on the train to Little River, sometimes with an overnight rough camp at the You Yangs, before a day's birding on his bike at the WTP. Later visits were less demanding as he was often a passenger in John Barkla's car.

For those many birders who visit the WTP, if they turn to inside the back cover of the Melbourne Water Western Treatment Plant Bird Checklist they will see that Fred is thanked for assistance in developing the list and identification codes used in the booklet. A fitting memory of Fred and his knowledge of the WTP birds that is available to all.

Fred had visited the WTP and surrounding area many hundreds of times since the late 1940s. On each occasion he would make notes on the birds he observed and transfer these to his notebooks. The notebooks have been entrusted to BirdLife Australia. (*Continued on page 4.*)



Fred Smith at Bailieston, 2008, a favourite Box-Ironbark birding site. Photo, John Barkla

## Contents

1. The Late Fred T.H. Smith
2. Branch News
5. African Adventure
6. Activities Calendar
8. Birds of French Island & Orchid Kingdom
9. DCS Report
10. Birdline Vic Highlights
11. Outing Reports

Picture of a Great Frigatebird accompanying an article written by Fred Smith for *The Bird Observer* in 1992: Great Frigatebird Orbital-ring Colour in Breeding Females at NW Herald Cay. Bill Ramsay's tribute to Fred is on the front cover of this newsletter.

Photo, Fred Smith.



## President's Report

### Branch Consultation Meeting

A Branch Consultation Meeting was held at National Office on 24 May, the day before the BirdLife Australia AGM. Sonja Ross and I represented BirdLife Melbourne. It was attended by delegates from about 80% of the Branches, Senior Management, and several Directors for varying lengths of time.

It was an opportunity to meet delegates from other Branches and to get an idea of the aspirations and expectations of other Branches. It was conducted as a workshop and all Branches had the opportunity to have their say on a wide number of issues. Because of the wide diversity in Branch size it was not surprising that there was also a wide diversity in aspirations and expectations.

The topics covered included: Strategic Plan, Membership, Branch Funding Models, Communication, Newsletters, Website, Insurance and OH&S.

Apart from the Branch Funding Model issue there was a lot of common ground. It appears pretty obvious that one size won't fit all with the Branch Funding Model.

It was a good forum for each Branch to put their view, ask questions and hear of some of the work done by other Branches. This was especially good for large Branches and small Branches who I don't think fully understood what hap-

pens in other Branches.

There was an attempt to prioritise issues so that the main concerns of Branches could be dealt with first.

I came away thinking it was a productive day but it gave National Office a myriad of views to work through before reporting back to the Branches. I understand that there will be a report on the day issued by National Office to the Branches.

In a telephone discussion with Fiona Blandford, Branch Liaison Officer, the week after the meeting, Fiona indicated that National Office was pretty pleased with the day.

### Post AGM Outing to the Western Treatment Plant

BirdLife Melbourne was asked by National Office to organise an outing for interstate and country Victoria members attending the AGM. Because many had early flights to catch, only four attended the "official" outing to the WTP led by Sonja Ross. I am very pleased to say that BirdLife Melbourne delivered the goods with all four having sightings of the targeted Northern Shoveler plus the bonus of four Orange-bellied Parrots. Well done Sonja.

*Bill Ramsay*  
President

Tel: 9803 1493

Email: [melbourne@birdlife.org.au](mailto:melbourne@birdlife.org.au)

## BIRDLIFE MELBOURNE COMMITTEE

**President:** Bill Ramsay (tel: 9803 1493 email: [melbourne@birdlife.org.au](mailto:melbourne@birdlife.org.au))

**Vice President:** Stuart Dashper

**Secretary:** Alan Crawford

**Treasurer:** Sonja Ross

**Members:** Tim Bawden, Andrew Fuhrmann, Susan Pepper & Scot Sharman

All the above can be contacted by email at [melbourne@birdlife.org.au](mailto:melbourne@birdlife.org.au)

To contact the BirdLife National Office in Carlton (03) 9347 0757, Mon to Fri 9am - 5pm.

## KEEP YOUR BRANCH STRONG

Every organisation needs an active membership to remain strong and vibrant.

We're currently looking for several volunteers to help with the everyday running of the branch. There are a number of opportunities, so if you'd like to support Melbourne's birding community, as well as meet some new birders, please don't hesitate to get in contact.

- An editor for the quarterly newsletter
- One or two members willing to serve on the Committee
- Members interested in leading group outings, or suggestions for branch outings, including camps.

If you can help, or would like any further information about these positions or the work of the committee, please contact branch President Bill Ramsay.

## CORRECTION

On page 5 of the autumn 2012 number of *The Melbirdian* we incorrectly credited the photograph of the bandicoot. It should have been credited to **Bertram Lobert**.

## VALE EVELYNE SCOTT

In April this year we were saddened to hear that Evelyne Scott had passed away. Evelyne worked with Birds Australia for a number of years and was awarded an honorary membership in recognition of her major contribution to the organisation. She passed away on Sunday 14 April.

## Education Report

### BirdLife Melbourne is about to get busy.

On 22 May we hosted 12 ladies from the Maryvale Hostel in Boronia to a talk, craft and walk activity at Blackburn Lake. The morning started with me giving a short PowerPoint presentation on the different types of nests that birds build and the different places that they build them. This was followed by a craft activity where the ladies made a nest using half a tennis ball and gluing coconut fibre to it. Lastly they made a bird using a pom-pom with paper wings and beak and bead eyes to put in the nest. After morning tea they went for a short walk down to the lake in the sunshine. Thanks to Annette Cook (BirdLife Education Manager) and Jenny Frohlich for their assistance.

Duncan Turnbull has continued to work with the Grade 6 students at Kingswood College in Box Hill. On 19 June the students did their second survey of the Box Hill Golf Course. They recorded 17 species and 317 birds. Thanks Duncan, Bill Ramsay, Anthea Fleming and Ruth Akie for assisting on the day.

After three planned presentations in July and August and another three booked for September we roll into our busy

Spring period – and this is where I need the most volunteers.

**Saturday and Sunday 7 and 8 September** is the annual Yarra Yarra APS Plant Expo. Our original involvement was at Templestowe for two years and then the last three years have been in Eltham. This year they have a new venue at St Sava's Church Hall, 212 Diamond Creek Rd, Greensborough (opposite Plenty River Drive). It is open from 10am to 4pm daily. We have a BirdLife information table there and I need 12 people to assist me over that weekend (2 hours each). You will not be left on your own to face the public as I will be around all weekend. This is an excellent opportunity to promote BirdLife to the public.

**Sunday 27 October** is the 15th annual Breakfast with the Birds at Banyule. Again I am calling for experienced bird leaders to assist with the walks around Banyule Flats and the Warrigal Wetlands. We meet at 7.15am at the Old Shire Offices in Beverley St, Viewbank and return there for a lovely breakfast supplied by the Banyule City Council at 9.30am.

I can always use more volunteers in many different ways but Spring is when our resources are always stretched.

*Janet Hand  
Education Officer*

(03) 9842 4177 or [melbourne@birdlife.org.au](mailto:melbourne@birdlife.org.au)



### Eastern Yellow Robin Research Project

Do you live in eastern Melbourne and love seeing woodland birds in your local parks and reserves? If so, you might like to volunteer some of your time to help understand the threats that our increasing urban areas have on woodland birds. Christine Connelly is a PhD student at Deakin University in Burwood, and she is currently looking for keen-eyed volunteers to help her explore the effects of urbanisation on Eastern Yellow Robins. She has colour-banded birds in Wilson Reserve, Ivanhoe; Shepherds Bush, Glen Waverley; and the Dandenong Ranges National Park. She is trying to understand if home-range and territory sizes differ in the 'urban' reserves, compared to the 'forest' locations and is looking for help to collect data about re-sightings of the banded birds. If you are interested in helping out, please contact Christine for further information at [caconnel@deakin.edu.au](mailto:caconnel@deakin.edu.au) or on 0403 195 663. (Photo credit, "Myobatrachidae", via wiki.)

## Buff Bathing at Monash

### Buff-banded Rail spotted on the Monash University Clayton campus

On the last hot and humid weekend in April this year I was able to observe a beautiful Buff-banded Rail bathing in the ponds between the centre and the main campus centre at Monash University, Clayton. This was the fourth time I have come across the bird at this location.

The three ponds are rather small, covering about a half acre with some native grasses and bushes surrounding the ponds and three large eucalypts nearby. The first time I saw the rail, in August 2011, it was feeding on the grassed area outside the ponds.

The second time was about a year later when I came across the rail feeding in the area between the three ponds. I pointed it out to the students around me, most of who merely smiled.

The first two occasions the bird was seen on weekends. This

time it was a weekday when there was a degree awarding ceremony. There were hundreds of students in their black robes along with friends and family. Amongst this crowd was a very skittish Buff-banded Rail. When I pointed this bird out, it instantly became the most photographed Buff-banded Rail in Australia.

Is it the same rail? Is it always there? I do not know but maybe it has found its own special place where it can feed to its heart's content.

On the fourth occasion I was walking to the main library walking between the three ponds. It was the weekend and I was the only person around at the time. I was stopped by what I saw. At the top of a small rock waterfall, in the flow of water, there was the Buff-banded Rail. Its back was facing me. On a hot day it was washing itself in the flow of water obviously splashing in delight. I saw it raise its wings slightly as it washed under its arms. For a minute I observed secretly what could on other occasions be regarded as a rather intimate moment. After a minute it turned around and saw it was being watched and it immediately rushed into the scrubby undergrowth.

*Scot Sharman*

(Continued from page 1.)

Among the collection are 56 notebooks covering the period from 1948 to 2010. Each of these notebooks contains numerous records of visits to the WTP and surrounds, detailing some of the species observed and, in many cases, their abundance. There are also 88 *Little Blue Bird Books* recording location, species and abundance. Each *Little Blue Bird Book* is capable of storing records for 12 visits. Many of these entries are for the WTP.

It is likely that Fred's notebooks represent the most significant continuous record of birds of the WTP and surrounds over the period from 1948 to the present. It was anticipated that the data would provide Melbourne Water with a more accurate representation of historical patterns of bird usage of the WTP which would significantly improve Melbourne Water's capacity to assess the impacts of present day management on waterbirds. Of particular relevance was data relating to the many species utilising the WTP that are listed as threatened or migratory under either Federal (*Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*) or State (*Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988*) legislation.

BOCA and Melbourne Water recognised the value of this information, and Melbourne Water generously supported BOCA, and, post merger, BirdLife Australia, in preserving this important data. Thus the Fred T.H. Smith Project commenced. The current project focuses on all pre 1990 data.

The following extract from Fred's notes of his visit to the WTP on 19 July 1964 recalls a typical highlight and is an example of a massive population decline when compared with recent sightings.

*ORANGE-BREADED PARROT: About fifty together at Werribee Sewerage Farm by west mouth of the Little River. They were seen flying about together and feeding on ground amid short herbage, perched in low shrubs etc and feeding about bare dirt roads. Beautiful in massed flight, orange bellies seen well on many of them.*

I checked the name 'Orange-breasted Parrot' in J D Macdonald's *The Illustrated Dictionary of Australian Birds by Common Name* which states for Orange-breasted Parrot: "See Orange-bellied Parrot. Given by RAOU 1926 - an intentional misnomer when 'belly' was regarded as inelegant".

All notebooks were scanned at high resolution and stored as pdf files to create a permanent and accessible copy of the records. All the notes are handwritten and some of the older entries are beginning to fade. Data extracted includes date, weather variables, observers, species and abundance. In many instances Fred's records of rare species or significant flocks of individual species also contain references to specific locations at the WTP. All data has been entered into a database that is compatible with Melbourne Water's existing waterbird database.

Dr Jenny Lau, BirdLife Australia Conservation Manager has assessed the project value to Melbourne Water and BirdLife Australia, and some of the key points are outlined below.

The Fred T.H. Smith project provided BirdLife Australia with an opportunity to trial methods for capturing important historical bird records from the notebooks of a well recognised and highly respected member of the amateur birding community.

BirdLife Australia believes that many long-time BirdLife Aus-

tralia members hold such records and in many cases these are the only long-term records of birds utilising important habitats, including areas managed by Melbourne Water throughout the Port Phillip and Western Port catchments.

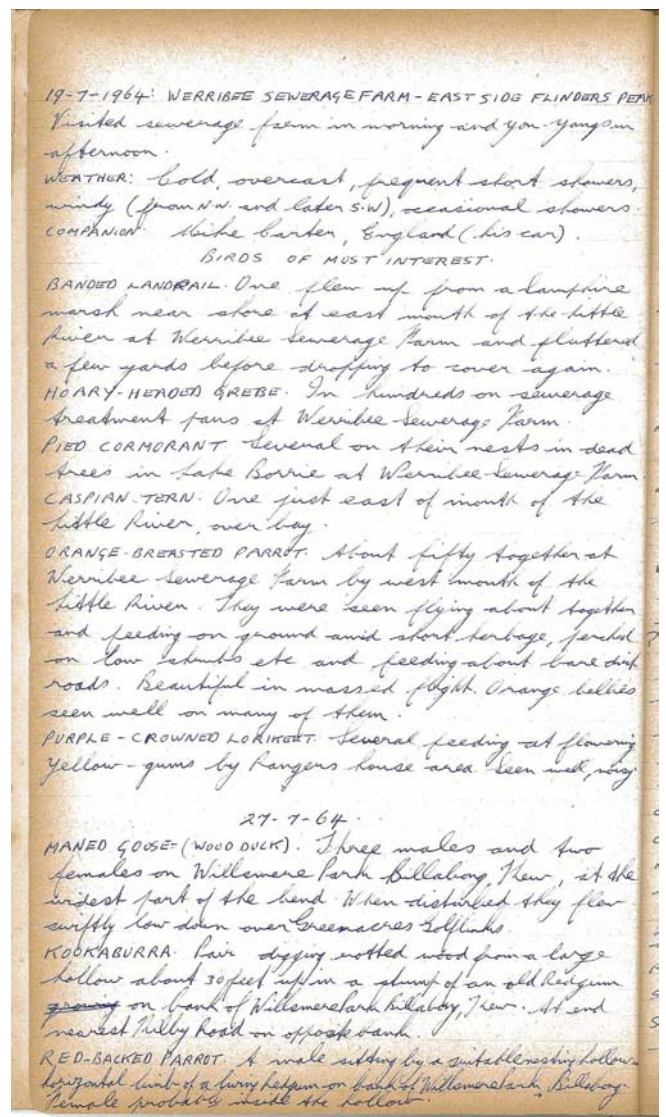
As a not-for-profit environment, non-government organisation, BirdLife Australia generally lacks the resources to explore options for capturing important information contained in historical notebooks.

As anticipated, Fred's notebooks contained many valuable records, particularly of listed threatened or migratory species. Without further analysis, it is difficult to comment on whether the data could be subjected to time-series analysis on species richness and abundance at the WTP.

Overall, BirdLife Australia believes that the project increased the organisation's capacity to undertake similar projects in the future. BirdLife Australia also believes scanned notes will be of value to Melbourne Water in managing the WTP and other sites in the Port Phillip and Western Port Catchment.

My thanks to Dr Jenny Lau, BirdLife Australia Conservation Manager who has permitted me to extract blocks of information about the Fred T H Smith Project from her report.

Bill Ramsay

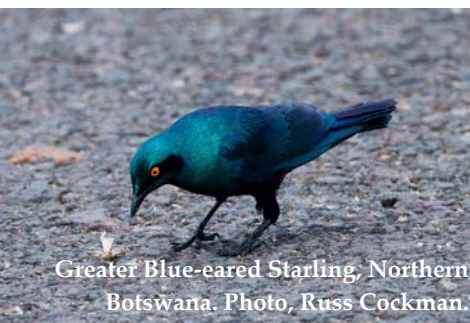


Scanned page from Fred's notes , 19 July 1964

# African Adventure

## Balwyn Meeting Report, May 2013

Russell Cockman's visit to southern Africa lasted only three weeks but he took beautiful photographs of birds and other wildlife. Starting at a friend's home in Botswana, he found the large garden was an oasis in dry country, attracting many birds. Many native succulents and cactus brought nectar-feeders, including three Sunbird species – Mariqua, Plain-backed and White-breasted. Finch-like birds were numerous, including Black-faced and Blue Waxbills and Jameson's Firefinch, and the brilliant Southern Red Bishop. A Masked Weaverbird was building a nest to attract a female – if she accepts the nest she is left to hatch and rear her young alone, while the male departs to build nest after nest for other females.



Greater Blue-eared Starling, Northern Botswana. Photo, Russ Cockman.



Endless land and sky, Chobe NP Botswana. Photo, Russ Cockman



Bearded woodpecker in Moremi Game Reserve Botswana. Photo, Russ Cockman.

The shy male Paradise Flycatcher has a very long tail which the female lacks – the male is chestnut-brown with a grey crested head, and both sexes have a blue eye-ring. Another disproportionate bird was the male Long-tailed Paradise Whydah - total length 36cm, of which 15cm is bird minus tail.

Non-passerines included kingfishers, bee-eaters, woodpeckers and barbets. The Brown-headed Kingfisher with its red bill was quite approachable. The garden also attracted predators such as a Red-backed Shrike and a beautiful Laner Falcon.

The native name of Victoria Falls in Zimbabwe translates as "The Smoke that Thunders". The Falls were completely shrouded in their own mist, accompanied by a deafening roar. A sunny moment permitted a photo of a small part of the huge whole. The hotel grounds were patrolled by Warthogs - a gardener's nightmare with their uprooting habits. The Southern Carmine Bee-eater is a striking pink bird with long tail-shafts like the Australian bird's, and there were yet more species of beautiful Sunbirds.

In the Okavango Delta a permanent river spills out into the Kalahari Desert. The Delta is a haven for water birds such as Openbill Stork, the grotesque Knob-billed Duck, and the Pied Kingfisher. This is the world's largest Kingfisher, which hovers over water before diving on its prey. It contrasted with the Malachite Kingfisher – a tiny brilliant gem-like blue bird with a red bill. An African Sea-eagle devoured its prey while a Hamerkop, like a small brown stork, waited for scraps. The White-headed Lapwing somewhat resembles the northern form of our Masked Lapwing, but has even larger yellow wattles.

A lodge in the Chobe National Park had accommodation which combined native thatched hut design with mod cons such as a mosquito net and shower. No fences, so wildlife such as Impala antelopes may wander through.

While Southern Africa is so well provided with kingfishers, rollers and bee-eaters, it is surprising that there are only

five parrot species – the only one seen was Meyer's Parrot. But among the bush and grassland birds, there are 19 species of cisticola, all very alike and distinguished by their calls. Both Red-billed and Yellow-billed Hornbills were seen, the latter's nickname is 'Flying Banana'.

Russell's trip concluded in Cape Town - nearby he saw perhaps the most imposing bird of the trip - the enormous Cape Eagle-Owl. His last slide was a scene of three Flamingos in a wetland, grotesque but graceful as they reached up to touch beaks.

The impression which remains with me is the brilliant iridescence of so many birds – sunbirds, kingfishers and particularly the starlings - the Violet-backed in gleaming purple, the Red-winged, otherwise black, and the Great Blue-eared Starling with its turquoise wings and brilliant yellow eye.

Besides nature photography, Russell loves astronomy. He concluded with slides of the recent solar eclipse seen from Tennant Creek. A remarkable conclusion to a very interesting talk.

*Anthea Flemming*

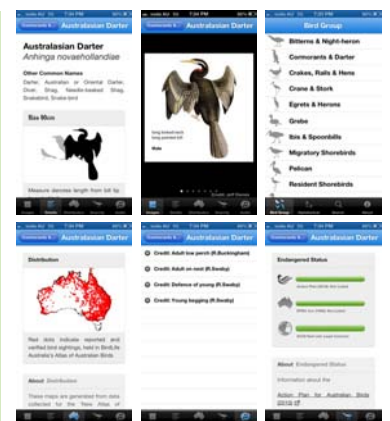
## iWetland: A new Aus birding app.

At the June BirdLife Melbourne meeting in Balwyn, the Member's Topic was presented by Neil and Luke Shelley, with a sneak peak of their new app for Australian wetland birds. The app - currently only for iPhones, iPods and iPads - contains profiles for sixty-three shorebirds and waterbirds, but this might be expanded in future updates.

One can flick through the pages easily and each page gives pictures and typical colouring, areas where the bird can be found, dimensions and flight description. The calls of many but not all birds are included.

Luke and Neil loaded test versions on to about twenty iPhones and other Apple devices. The app should be available from the iTunes app store in the next few months. They also promise an Android version sometime in the future.

*Scot Sharman*



## Activities Calendar September to December 2013

This calendar includes field activities for BirdLife Melbourne. Activities are open to every member of BirdLife Australia. Should you have any ideas for an activity, or if you are available to lead an outing, or would like to volunteer as a leader, please contact the BirdLife Melbourne Activities Co-ordinator, Tim Bawden at [tbawden@live.com.au](mailto:tbawden@live.com.au) or on 0405 184 100

Sunday, 1 September 2013	Yellingbo Birdwalk	Yellingbo Reserve. Melway 305 G11. Take Warburton Hwy to Woori Yallock, turn right to Yellingbo. At Yellingbo, turn right towards Seville, then left into Macclesfield Rd. After 2.5km turn right at large pine trees. Gate opens 10:00am, walk starts 10:30am. Toilets available. Bring lunch and gumboots. Contact Maryanne, 0402 283 080 or <a href="mailto:onlyme53@bigpond.com">onlyme53@bigpond.com</a>
Wednesday, 4 September 2013	Weekdays Outing	Newport Lakes, Newport. 10:00am to 3:00pm. Leader Jane Moseley. Melway 55 G3. From Mason Street enter Lakes Drive. Park near toilets. Contact Diane, 9836 8692 or <a href="mailto:melbourne@birdlife.org.au">melbourne@birdlife.org.au</a>
Saturday, 7 September 2013	Boneseeding & Birding	You Yangs Regional Park. Meet at 10:00am in the car park just past the Park Office, approx 300 m from the Branch Rd entrance to the park. Melway Key Map Page 11 C12. Until late afternoon the day is spent birding and removing the invasive weed Boneseed. Bring all you need for a normal days birding plus gardening gloves and a trowel for Boneseed removal. Contact Merrilyn, 9889 4924 or <a href="mailto:merrilyn@wirejunkie.com">merrilyn@wirejunkie.com</a>
Monday, 16 September 2013	Weekdays Outing	Wonga Park. 10:00am to 3:00pm. Leader Rob Grosvenor. Melway 279 B4. Take Lower Homestead Road to the end. Limited parking. Nearest toilets at Warrandyte. Contact Diane, 9836 8692 or <a href="mailto:melbourne@birdlife.org.au">melbourne@birdlife.org.au</a>
Thursday, 19 September 2013	Carlton Monthly Meeting	8:00pm at BirdLife Australia National Office, 60 Leicester St, Carlton. Plenty of free street parking nearby. Speaker: To be advised. Tea and coffee served after the meeting with time to chat with other attendees. Contact Fiona, <a href="mailto:melbourne@birdlife.org.au">melbourne@birdlife.org.au</a>
Saturday, 21 September 2013	Photography Group Outing	Anglesea area. For details contact Sonja, 9846 5380 or <a href="mailto:sonja.ross@yahoo.com.au">sonja.ross@yahoo.com.au</a>
Sunday, 22 September 2013	ETP Survey	Eastern Treatment Plant, Bangholme. Meet at 9:00 am for a survey that will continue until the evening. The survey is carried out by 4WD. Numbers are restricted and booking is essential. Survey date may change at short notice due to operational constraints. Leader is Mike Carter. Contact Mike, 9787 7136 or <a href="mailto:pterodroma@bigpond.com">pterodroma@bigpond.com</a>
Sunday, 22 September 2013	Weekend Outing	Point Addis, 9:00am to 1.00pm. Leader Tim Bawden. Meet at Ironbark Basin Car Park, Point Addis Road, Bells Beach. Melway Key Map Page 15 A21. Contact Tim Bawden 0407 158 638 or <a href="mailto:tbawden@live.com.au">tbawden@live.com.au</a>
Tuesday, 24 September 2013	Balwyn Monthly Meeting	8:00pm at Balwyn Evergreen Centre, 45 Talbot Ave, Balwyn. Melway 46 E8. Good street parking nearby. Speaker: Annette Rypalski "Mt Rothwell Biodiversity Interpretation Centre". Annette is the Centre's Manager and will tell us what goes on at the Mt Rothwell. Member's Topic: Dave Torr, "Werribee Wagtails' Mt Rothwell Surveys". Stay for supper and a chat after the meeting. Contact Bill, 9803 1493 or <a href="mailto:melbourne@birdlife.org.au">melbourne@birdlife.org.au</a>
Saturday, 28 September 2013	Beginners Outing	Pound Bend, Warrandyte. Meet at 10:00am in the car park near toilets. Melway 23 A11. Contact Hazel, 9876 3712 or <a href="mailto:melbourne@birdlife.org.au">melbourne@birdlife.org.au</a>
Sunday, 6 October 2013	Yellingbo Birdwalk	Yellingbo Reserve. Melway 305 G11. Take Warburton Hwy to Woori Yallock, turn right to Yellingbo. At Yellingbo, turn right towards Seville, then left into Macclesfield Rd. After 2.5km turn right at large pine trees. Gate opens 10:00am, walk starts 10:30am. Toilets available. Bring lunch and gumboots. Contact Maryanne, 0402 283 080 or <a href="mailto:onlyme53@bigpond.com">onlyme53@bigpond.com</a>
Sunday, 13 October 2013	ETP Survey	Eastern Treatment Plant, Bangholme. Meet at 9:00 am for a survey that will continue until the evening. The survey is carried out by 4WD. Numbers are restricted and booking is essential. Survey date may change at short notice due to operational constraints. Leader is Mike Carter. Contact Mike, 9787 7136 or <a href="mailto:pterodroma@bigpond.com">pterodroma@bigpond.com</a>
Monday and Tuesday, 14 & 15 October 2013	Weekdays Outing	Phillip Island over 2 days. Leaders Sally & Derek Whitehead. Meet 1:00pm Monday near the Information Centre on Phillip Island Rd. Melway 732 J8. Bring picnic dinner for Monday and picnic lunch for Tuesday. Arrange own accommodation. Meet 8:00am Tuesday near Information Centre. Finish 3:00pm Tuesday. Scopes useful. Convoy driving to different locations. Contact Diane, 9836 8692 or <a href="mailto:melbourne@birdlife.org.au">melbourne@birdlife.org.au</a>
Thursday, 17 October 2013	Carlton Monthly Meeting	8:00pm at BirdLife Australia National Office, 60 Leicester St, Carlton. Plenty of free street parking nearby. Speaker: To be advised. Tea and coffee served after the meeting with time to chat with other attendees. Contact Fiona, <a href="mailto:melbourne@birdlife.org.au">melbourne@birdlife.org.au</a>
Tuesday, 22 October 2013	Balwyn Monthly Meeting	8:00pm at Balwyn Evergreen Centre, 45 Talbot Ave, Balwyn. Melway 46 E8. Good street parking nearby. Speaker: Amy Amato from Wildlife Victoria. Subject TBA. Stay for supper and a chat after the meeting. Contact Bill, 9803 1493 or <a href="mailto:melbourne@birdlife.org.au">melbourne@birdlife.org.au</a>
Saturday, 26 October 2013	Beginners Outing	Royal Botanic Gardens, Cranbourne. Meet at 10:00am in the Stringybark Carpark. Melway 133 K12. Contact Hazel, 9876 3712 or <a href="mailto:melbourne@birdlife.org.au">melbourne@birdlife.org.au</a>
Sunday, 3 November 2013	Yellingbo Birdwalk	Yellingbo Reserve. Melway 305 G11. Take Warburton Hwy to Woori Yallock, turn right to Yellingbo. At Yellingbo, turn right towards Seville, then left into Macclesfield Rd. After 2.5km turn right at large pine trees. Gate opens 10:00am, walk starts 10:30am. Toilets available. Bring lunch and gumboots. Contact Maryanne, 0402 283 080 or <a href="mailto:onlyme53@bigpond.com">onlyme53@bigpond.com</a>

## Carlton Monthly Meeting

Monthly meetings at the BirdLife Australia National Office are held on the third Thursday of the month. Meetings begin at 8:00pm at the **BirdLife Australia National Office, 60 Leicester St, Carlton**.

Plenty of free street parking nearby. Tea and coffee served after the meeting with time to chat with other attendees.

## Balwyn Monthly Meetings

BirdLife Melbourne's Balwyn meetings are held on the fourth Tuesday of every month (except December) in the **Evergreen Centre, 45 Talbot Ave, 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. Out-of-town members and visitors are always welcome.

**The Member's Topic** segment is a 5-15 minute slot before the guest speaker at the **Balwyn Meeting** for BirdLife Melbourne members to share a topic of their topic with the meeting.

If you think you have an idea that would make for a suitable Member's Topic segment, or require any other information about the Balwyn meetings, please get in touch with the **Bill Ramsay** on [melbourne@birdlife.org.au](mailto:melbourne@birdlife.org.au).

Sunday, 3 November 2013	ETP Survey	Eastern Treatment Plant, Bangholme. Meet at 9:00 am for a survey that will continue until the evening. The survey is carried out by 4WD. Numbers are restricted and booking is essential. Survey date may change at short notice due to operational constraints. Leader is Mike Carter. Contact Mike, 9787 7136 or <a href="mailto:pterodroma@bigpond.com">pterodroma@bigpond.com</a>
Monday, 11 November 2013	Weekdays Outing	Wilson Reserve, Ivanhoe. 10:00am to 3:00pm. Leader Anthea Fleming. Melway 31 G10. From The Boulevard take Irvine Road to the end. Park near toilets. Slippery if wet. Contact Diane, 9836 8692 or <a href="mailto:melbourne@birdlife.org.au">melbourne@birdlife.org.au</a>
Thursday, 21 November 2013	Carlton Monthly Meeting	8:00pm at BirdLife Australia National Office, 60 Leicester St, Carlton. Plenty of free street parking nearby. Speaker: To be advised. Tea and coffee served after the meeting with time to chat with other attendees. Contact <a href="mailto:melbourne@birdlife.org.au">melbourne@birdlife.org.au</a>
Thursday, 21 November 2013	Photography Group Study Night	For details contact Sonja, 9846 5380 or <a href="mailto:sonja.ross@yahoo.com.au">sonja.ross@yahoo.com.au</a>
Saturday, 23 November 2013	Beginners Outing	You Yangs Regional Park. Meet at 10:00am in the first car park. on the left, just past the Information Centre. Melway Key Map Page 11 C12. Contact Hazel, 9876 3712 or <a href="mailto:melbourne@birdlife.org.au">melbourne@birdlife.org.au</a>
Tuesday, 26 November 2013	Balwyn Monthly Meeting	8:00pm at Balwyn Evergreen Centre, 45 Talbot Ave, Balwyn. Melway 46 E8. Good street parking nearby. Speaker and subject TBA. Member's Topic: John Van Doorn, "The Farne Islands, UK". Stay for supper and a chat after the meeting. Contact Bill, 9803 1493 or <a href="mailto:melbourne@birdlife.org.au">melbourne@birdlife.org.au</a>
Wednesday, 27 November 2013	Weekdays Outing	Yellow Gum Park, Plenty. 10:00am to 3:00pm. Leaders Hazel & Alan Veevers. Melway 10 F5. From Yan Yean Road turn into Memorial Drive, turn left into Goldsworthy Lane. Park in end car park. Toilets available. Contact Diane, 9836 8692 or <a href="mailto:melbourne@birdlife.org.au">melbourne@birdlife.org.au</a>
Sunday, 1 December 2013	Yellingbo Birdwalk	Yellingbo Reserve. Melway 305 G11. Take Warburton Hwy to Woori Yallock, turn right to Yellingbo. At Yellingbo, turn right towards Seville, then left into Macclesfield Rd. After 2.5km turn right at large pine trees. Gate opens 10:00am, walk starts 10:30am. Toilets available. Bring lunch and gumboots. Contact Maryanne, 0402 283 080 or <a href="mailto:onlyme53@bigpond.com">onlyme53@bigpond.com</a>
Sunday, 1 December 2013	ETP Survey	Eastern Treatment Plant, Bangholme. Meet at 9:00 am for a survey that will continue until the evening. The survey is carried out by 4WD. Numbers are restricted and booking is essential. Survey date may change at short notice due to operational constraints. Leader is Mike Carter. Contact Mike, 9787 7136 or <a href="mailto:pterodroma@bigpond.com">pterodroma@bigpond.com</a>
Saturday, 7 December 2013	Boneseeding & Birding	You Yangs Regional Park. Meet at 10:00am in the car park just past the Park Office, approx 300 m from the Branch Rd entrance to the park. Melway Key Map Page 11 C12. Until late afternoon the day is spent birding and removing the invasive weed Boneseed. Bring all you need for a normal days birding plus gardening gloves and a trowel for Boneseed removal. Contact Merrilyn, 9889 4924 or <a href="mailto:merrilyn@wirejunkie.com">merrilyn@wirejunkie.com</a>
Tuesday, 10 December 2013	Weekdays Outing	Mullum Mullum Park (Schwerkolt), Mitcham. 10:00am to 3:00pm. Leader Diane Tweeddale. Melway 49 D7. From Deep Creek Road turn into Schwerkolt Cottage and park in car park near toilets. Contact Diane, 9836 8692 or <a href="mailto:melbourne@birdlife.org.au">melbourne@birdlife.org.au</a>
Sunday, 15 December 2013	ETP Survey	Eastern Treatment Plant, Bangholme. Meet at 9:00 am for a survey that will continue until the evening. The survey is carried out by 4WD. Numbers are restricted and booking is essential. Survey date may change at short notice due to operational constraints. Leader is Mike Carter. Contact Mike, 9787 7136 or <a href="mailto:pterodroma@bigpond.com">pterodroma@bigpond.com</a>
Thursday, 19 December 2013	Carlton Monthly Meeting	8:00pm at BirdLife Australia National Office, 60 Leicester St, Carlton. Plenty of free street parking nearby. Speaker: To be advised. Tea and coffee served after the meeting with time to chat with other attendees. Contact <a href="mailto:melbourne@birdlife.org.au">melbourne@birdlife.org.au</a>



**Views of Westgate Park** from Andrew McCutcheon's Member's Topic in May, 2013. On the left, successful Australian Grebe hatchlings (pic taken in 2009). On the right, the Westgate Park Lake. All photos, Andrew McCutcheon.



# Birds of French Island

## Balwyn Meeting Report, June 2013

Martin O'Brien, a member of BirdLife for over twenty years, is also a member of The Friends of French Island.

Even though it is small, there is a large range of habitats on French Island. There is south coast forest which is the home of sea eagles. There is inland forest and eucalypt forest which have low and large trees respectively. Heathland contains a large variety of plants and there is also heath woodland. Also swamp scrubland and saltmarsh are included

French Island: Coastal Saltmarsh north of Tankerton. Inset, feral cat at Barge landing. Photos, Martin O'Brien



among the habitat list. Mangroves can be found on the northern side of the island. Coast tussock grassland is the habitat that is favoured by birds of prey. Banksia woodland is the habitat where honeyeaters can be found. Also making the list of habitats are the wetlands.

The rare birds of French Island include the Rainbow, Musk, Little and Purple-crowned Lorikeets. Martin's question was why do these birds, which are either common or relatively common in areas around Western Port, not go to French Island. There are only three historical records of Superb Fairy-wrens. Why? Martin would like to know.

French Island specialities include Freckled Duck, which can be seen in remoter swamps, and Blue-billed Ducks. Caspian Terns appear to be endemic along with the Fairy Tern. This is the most westerly point in Victoria where the latter now breeds. Port Phillip is no longer used by Fairy Terns for breeding. Orange-bellied Parrots were seen in the eighties but no longer. Eastern Great Egrets love the mud flats. Also it is key area apart from Lakes Entrance for the White-bellied Sea-Eagle. French Island is the stronghold for the King Quail. And if anyone wants a tick for the Australian species list, the Indian Peafowl is a free living bird here.

Extinct birds of French Is include Brolga and Bush Stone-curlews. The last records of the Hooded Robin and the Jacky Winter were both in the sixties. White-winged Choughs were common in the eighties but are no longer found on French Island.

Our thanks to Martin for this informative presentation, and also to those who have helped him in his birding on French Island: parks ranger Mick Douglas, Chris Chandler, Geoff Lacey and the late naturalist Des Quinn.

Scot Sharman

# Orchid Kingdom

## Balwyn Meeting Report, March 2013

Mike Duncan conducts us on a journey through Sri Lanka, Central India and Sikkim. Though the main object of Mike's trip was orchids, he took many wonderful bird photographs along the way.

Beginning in Sri Lanka, Mike went to Sigiriya Rock - like our Uluru, but with a palace fort on top. Here he showed beautiful photos of Asian Openbill, Red-wattled Lapwing, Yellow-fronted Barbet and a Blue Flycatcher. Then it was on to the Kuchler Mountains where we saw the Greater Coucal and the Brown-headed Barbet. This bird is the largest of the Barbet family. Yellow-billed Babblers were seen here working through the undergrowth.

Then it was on to Sinharaja forest reserve. This is a small parcel of lowland forest measuring 7 km by 21 km. Sixty percent of the tree types only occur here. Eighty percent of the birds that occur here are endemic to this forest. The friendliest of the birds was the Sri Lankan Junglefowl. Also seen here was the Malabar Trogon and the Sri Lankan Blue Magpie.

Then it was on to New Delhi for another two weeks. The Delhi skyline was full of Black Kites, House Crows and Black Ibis. In Delhi the Common Hoopoe was seen nesting, along with Alexandrian Parrots. At Agra we saw photos of the Taj Mahal, where we saw a Spotted Owl after it had been awoken by an Egyptian Vulture. At Varanasi where many people bathe in the Ganges and there were religious events occurring, Mike said that Common Mynas were only seen hanging out on rubbish piles. They must be native to Australia! (Continued opposite.)



Spotted Owlet in garden of Taj Mahal. Photo, Emma Duncan



Sri Lankan Blue Magpie endemic at Sinharaja NP. Photo Mike Duncan.



Rufous Sibia, Himalayan endemic in Nepal. Photo Emma Duncan



# Dandenong Catchment Survey Summary

## April to June 2013

Reasonably dry conditions prevailed during April and May, but heavy rain in early June caused extensive flooding at many of the wetlands, especially at Rigby's, which received the full force of the fast flowing Dandenong Creek. Frosts later in the month added to the woes of surveyors.

Raptor species were prevalent in April with Hallam Valley Rd recording nine species including Collared Sparrowhawk and Little Eagle. Troups Creek came in second with eight species sighted, two of which, a Spotted Harrier and Little Eagle were both new to the site. Continuing with the April surveys, Rigby's added five species; Freckled Duck and Red-necked Stint, new to site and Whistling Kite, Flame Robin and Common Blackbird previously Non-survey day (Ns) records. A lone Song Thrush (new) at Kilberry and at South Golf Links Rd, a Grey Shrike-thrush, new to the site. A record 65 bird species was recorded at the Hallam Valley Rd site.

May highlights as follows: Barbary Dove at Kilberry, also recorded in June.

Pink-eared and Blue-billed Duck at River Gum, absent for several months. Crimson Rosella at Frog Hollow, previously an Ns. Hallam Valley Rd, two new species, Pink-eared Duck and Jacky Winter. The European Greenfinch has been absent from the

Waterford Wetlands site, but not any longer and Rigby's kept adding to their total with Australian Shelduck, Cattle Egret, Brown Goshawk, White-browed Scrubwren and White-eared Honeyeater recorded. The Pink-eared Duck was new at Mordialloc Creek and a major highlight was the sighting of a Striated Fieldwren at Troups Creek.

As indicated above, the month of June, with floods early in



Australasian Bittern, on Sunday 7 July at Rigby's Wetland, Scoresby.  
Photo, Richard Alcorn

the month and then frosts later, were detrimental to birding at several sites with low number of species recorded the exception being River Gum with 178 Eurasian Coot and Rigby's, 205 Chestnut Teal and 228 Purple Swampphen. Other site highlights: Hallam Valley Rd - Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike and Mistletoebird, Heatherton Rd Sth - Grey Currawong (new), Waterford Wetland - White-faced Heron and Grey Fantail, both new, and two Magpie Goose had returned to Mordialloc Creek.

From time to time, the eleven wetlands being surveyed may be visited by other observers on a Non-survey (Ns) day who advise of 'interesting sightings' at a particular wetland not previously recorded on a Survey Day. The following have been noted:

Troups Creek - Stubble Quail 27 March, Rigby's, - Lewin's Rail 10 March and Spotted Harrier 23 June, Kilberry - Spotted Harrier 3 June. An Australasian Bittern was photographed at Rigby's on 7 July.

Frog species recorded for the period included Eastern Common Froglet (at all sites except Kilberry and Rigby's), Striped Marsh Frog (only at South Golf Links Rd and Hallam Valley Rd) and Brown Tree Frog (only at Rigby's).

Total number of bird species recorded at each site on Survey and Non-survey days to 30 June 2013:

Frog Hollow - 97, Kilberry Boulevard - 104, River Gum - 119, South Golf Links Rd - 114, Hallam Valley Rd - 120, Waterford Wetland - 70, Troups Creek - 115, Mordialloc Creek - 115, Heatherton Rd Sth - 124, Heatherton Rd Nth - 106 and Rigby's - 115.

A full tally of the three month sightings may be found on the BirdLife website <http://www.birdlife.org.au/locations/birdlife-melbourne/projects-initiatives-mel> and download the pdf below. The results are also displayed at the BirdLife Melbourne Branch monthly Balwyn meetings.

Graeme Hosken  
Birdlife Melbourne DCS Recorder.

(Continued from opposite page.)

While in India, whenever people asked Mike what he was doing, and he replied, 'Looking for orchids,' everyone said that he had to go to Sikkim. Eventually the chorus of voices was so loud that Mike went to Sikkim and he took his camera with him. Sikkim is the smallest state in India and it was the last state to be included in the Indian nation in 1975. Apparently it is the only place in the world where nineteen people can fit into a taxi. It sits between Nepal and Bhutan. It contains Himalayan lowlands and it was where the British went to escape the heat of Kolkata. Darjeeling is located in Sikkim.

Jaldapara is lowland jungle. Here we saw Pied Hornbills and

a Jordan Baza. More than this Mike showed photos of Indian Peafowl actually in its natural environment. And it flies. From there we were taken into the Himalayas to a place called Kalimpong. This is dry forest. Here was seen the Black Bulbul and Himalayan Bulbul and the Great Barbet which Mike described as mostly mouth. He also showed photos of a Blue Whistling Thrush which without fail awoke everybody at 4 o'clock in the morning with its singing.

And we did see some photos of orchids. While we claim Mike as a birder his real passion is orchids, and I for one would love to hear him speak on orchids to an orchid society sometime.

Scot Sharman

# Birdline Vic Highlights

## Reports for 20 April to 31 July 2013 Melbourne and Geelong

A male Northern Shoveler was first spotted at the Western Treatment Plant, Werribee, on the 12 May and has provided the opportunity for many keen birders to add this species to their Australian list. It is interesting to note that a male bird has been reported here in 1999, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2009, 2010 and 2011. This is much more frequent than the single report in HANZAB from 1983.

HANZAB also says that Noisy Friarbirds rarely winter in southern Victoria, so it was great to get a cluster of 3 reports in April from Inverleigh, Little River and Altona.

There have been a flurry of reports of Australasian Bittern, with sightings (and often photographs) at Braeside Park and Woodlands Industrial Estate, Edithvale, Dandenong Creek, Laverton Creek mouth, Jacana Wetlands, Western Treatment Plant Werribee and Lake Connewarre.

Freckled Duck were everywhere, again. Relatively high numbers were seen at Begola Wetlands, Ocean Grove (130), Lake Lorne, Drysdale (250) and McLeod's Waterholes, Drysdale (300), Braeside Park (25), Serendip Sanctuary, Lara (13) and the Western Treatment Plant, Werribee (50).

Sightings of Swift Parrots were predominantly from the western side of the bay with numerous reports from Ocean Grove, Anakie and Lara, a few reports from Royal Park and a couple from the eastern side of the bay at Shoreham.

Point Nepean National Park had 3 Eastern Osprey reported

in July as well as Spotted Harrier, Peregrine Falcon, White-bellied Sea-Eagle and a Masked Owl. And across the Heads from Point Lonsdale were spotted a Sooty Albatross, Giant Petrel, Brown Skua and White-fronted Tern.

White-bellied Sea-Eagles have been on the move with isolated reports from Melton in late May, Lake Lorne, Drysdale in June, Karkarook Park, Moorabbin at the end of July as well as the more regular reports from the Western Treatment Plant at Werribee.

Many observers commented on the number and diversity of raptors at the Western Treatment Plant. Raptors commonly seen (with maximum numbers on a report) were Black-shouldered Kite (15), Little Eagle, Wedge-tailed Eagle, Swamp Harrier (37), Spotted Harrier, Brown Goshawk (6), Black Kite (150), Whistling Kite (51), White-bellied Sea-Eagle, Nankeen Kestrel, Australian Hobby, Brown Falcon (7), Black Falcon, Peregrine Falcon and, less commonly, Collared Sparrowhawk.

The winter wader count at Lake Connewarre Wildlife Reserve (Lake Connewarre) produced an unexpected Broad-billed Sandpiper and a Pacific Golden Plover.

Of the larger water birds a high count of 12 Brolgas was seen at the Western Treatment Plant in April and 2 Cape Barren Geese were reported from Skye in May and North Geelong in July.

There have been several reports of introduced species such as Barbary Dove at Hampton Park, Rose-ringed Parakeet at Kilsyth, Song Thrush at West Brunswick and Geelong and Scaly-breasted Lorikeet at Preston, Mont Park and Viewbank.

*Margaret Alcorn*

# Beginners Outings

## Lillydale Lake

27 April 2013, species count: 55

Thirty-one members met in sunshine at the lake where a Black-shouldered Kite posed in a nearby tree. We crossed the upstream wetlands by boardwalk, enjoying good views of female Australasian Darters, Little Black and Great Cormorants. Continuing to Hull Road Wetlands, we watched a Hoary-headed and an Australasian Grebe diving together, whilst a male Australasian Darter perched, with wings open, at the end of the pond. A male Golden Whistler showed itself to the rear group and Cattle Egrets, first foraging around Alpacas then in graceful flight, were seen by all. An Australian Pelican and more darters circled high above the lake, moving down as a pair of Wedge-tailed Eagles came into view. An unusual sighting of a pair of Pink-eared Ducks created excitement as we approached our lunch spot.

Afterwards, we drove to the Northern end of the lake for a walk in the wooded areas. A Little Wattlebird was unexpectedly found, with several of its Red relatives, before we regained the lake circuit at the dam wall. Yet more darters, this time swimming, illustrated their snake-bird nickname to the delight of the beginners.

## Woodlands Historic Park

22 June 2013, species count: 54

A record 52 participants assembled at Somerton Road car park on a sunny mid-winter day. After identifying the nearby birds, we drove to Providence Road in search of robins. Splitting into four manageable groups, each covered essentially the same ground by taking different routes. Red-capped and Flame Robins were located near the gate, whilst Scarlet Robins were found along the electricity pole track. Some members were fortunate to see Rose Robins (male and female), whereupon our local expert declared the male to be a first for the area. Other highlights were Crested Shrike-tit, Mistletoebird, Wedge-tailed Eagle, Whistling Kite and White-winged Chough.

After lunch at Somerton Road, we walked through the Sugar Gum plantation, where Eastern Yellow Robins were located, and over the hilltop to Woodlands Homestead. Yellow Thornbills and more raptors, including Little Eagle, were added to a healthy list for the day. Returning to the cars, we reflected on an excellent day's birding at a venue where most of us saw four Robin species and some saw five. Thanks to local expert Phil Peel, Geoff Deason and Alan Crawford for helping with the groups. (Afterwards, Phil took seven to the Back Paddock where they saw a pair of Speckled Warblers).

## Grant's Picnic Ground, Sherbrooke Forest

25 May 2013, species count: 20

On a fine but cool morning, 29 members met at Grant's Picnic Ground in Sherbrooke Forest, all hoping to see Superb Lyrebird. A report of a Channel-billed Cuckoo in the area added to the excitement. (*Continued opposite.*)

*(Continued from opposite page.)*

Below the car park tourists were feeding Sulphur-crested Cockatoos, a few Long-billed Corellas, Crimson Rosellas, King-Parrots and a lone Pacific Black Duck. We moved on down Hardy Nature Trail where we were rewarded with good views of a male Superb Lyrebird. Although not displaying, his tail feathers were clearly seen to be in fine condition. An active display mound, presumably his, was discovered further along on Neuman's Track. After a return walk up Lyre-

bird Track, we headed back to Hardy Nature Trail where another sighting of a quietly foraging male Superb Lyrebird delighted us. Towards the end we met a local expert who showed us a Superb Lyrebird nest being constructed by a female, also seen nearby by some of the group.

After lunch, we walked along Coles Ridge Track, where the highlights were several Grey Shrike-thrushes and Eastern Yellow Robins.

*Outings Leaders, Hazel and Alan Veevers*

## Weekday Outings

### Happy Valley, Christmas Hills

14 May 2013, species count: 28

A cold but dry morning greeted 20 observers in the small car park at the entrance to the Happy Valley Walking Track. The area is part of the Warrandyte-Kinglake Nature Conservation Area, a new area to many present. Bird activity was minimal as we walked beside the Happy Valley Creek then diverted up the Ridge Track where more calls were heard and species seen.

With a few eucalypts in flower, Yellow-faced, White-eared, White-naped Honeyeaters and Red Wattlebirds were noted. As the forest became drier with the undergrowth thinning out as we climbed, Buff-rumped Thornbills and a few Scarlet Robins came into view. At the summit, the first highlight for the day was overhead. A Black Kite. At this point we retraced our steps for lunch at the car park, recording White-throated Treecreeper, Golden Whistler and Grey Shrike-thrush on the way.

Back along the creek after lunch bypassing the Ridge Track, damp habitat encountered. White-browed Scrubwren, Brown and Striated Thornbills at a few locations. On returning to the cars, the second highlight, a Powerful Owl well camouflaged, grasping a Brush-tailed Possum. A first for many members. During the 'bird call' at the end of the outing a Wedge-tailed Eagle flying well above the canopy added to the count for another successful day.

*Graeme Hosken for Diane Tweeddale, who is enjoying summer in GB.*

### Badger Weir, Yarra Ranges

19 June 2013, species count: 25

Dense fog greeted 22 people but became intermittent and cleared to a cold, sunny afternoon. Calls were more frequent than sightings. By the time we reached Badger Weir along the Slip Creek Track we'd encountered Pied Currawong,

Crimson Rosella, Brown Thornbill and White-browed Scrubwren. Despite many lyrebird scratchings, only a few had a brief sighting. Walking beside the aqueduct yielded good views of Eastern Yellow Robin and Red-browed Treecreeper in the sunshine. As the cloud thinned we were treated to beautiful light effects through the trees. Along the muddy road we were serenaded by a Superb Lyrebird whose repertoire included Eastern Whipbird and Gang-gang and Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoos.

Lunch was attended by the rosellas, Laughing Kookaburra, currawongs, Common Bronzewing and Australian King-Parrot then a walk along the entry road yielded more thornbills and robins. Leonie "the Lyrebird whisperer" Robbins provided the highlight when she convinced a male Superb Lyrebird to remain in the car park and even to bathe and preen at leisure so that everyone had close and clear views. A cold day but a good one.

*Diane Tweeddale  
Coordinator, BirdLife Melbourne Weekdays Outings*

### Lysterfield Park, Lysterfield

15 July 2013, species count: 50

A flock of a dozen Gang-gang Cockatoo delighted early arrivals as 20 birders assembled. Elsmaree Baxter led and the weather was perfect: a light wind, mild and sunny. The car park yielded a considerable list, including Little Corella, Rainbow Lorikeet, Purple Swamphen and Grey Butcherbird. Eurasian Coot, Silver Gull, Australasian Darter and Hoary-headed Grebe were present as we walked the dam wall. The bush added Golden Whistler and Grey Shrike-thrush with Striated Thornbill active in the canopy.

A highlight for many was a Brown Thornbill attending a nest in a Cherry Ballart. White-eared Honeyeater were vocal and Yellow-faced Honeyeater were initially difficult to see but came out later. Eastern Yellow Robin was the only robin but was well seen while Grey Currawong and White-throated Treecreeper were only heard.

*Diane Tweeddale  
Coordinator, BirdLife Melbourne Weekdays Outings*

## Birding and Boneseeding

### The You Yangs

Saturday 1 June 2013, species count: 38

After a night of heavy rain and thunderstorms, water dripped from the trees, lay on the ground and even ran in the normally dry creek beds. During the day, however, there was only about an hour of light rain while we were bone-

seeding. We were not deterred. Otherwise, the day was calm and mild.

We recorded 38 bird species altogether. This is very similar to the number recorded in June over the past few years. Numerous Musk and Purple-crowned Lorikeets called loudly as they raced through the air or fed on the abundant Eucalypt flowers. They were joined by New Holland, White-plumed, White-naped and Brown-headed Honeyeaters. Late in the day we saw a single Black-chinned Honeyeater on a tree in our boneseeding site. There were *(Continued page 12)*

(Continued from page 11.)

Painted Button-quail scrapings there, too, but we did not see the birds themselves. Other highlights for the day were Scarlet Robins, Crested Shrike-tits, a Mistletoebird, Spotted Pardalotes and large flocks of White-winged Choughs. The Tawny Frogmouths that live near the Park Office perched rather wet in one of their favourite trees. Our boneseeding site looks very good. Attending to it on a quarterly basis

over a number of years has made a real difference. Many native plants are growing there instead of Boneseed. Unfortunately, other areas of the park are infested with the weed. The patch we cleared last time, when we could not easily access our designated site, is still free of the plants. There were many seeds there at the time, however, so we must return and remove any seedlings as they emerge.

Merrilyn Serong

## New Members

A big welcome to the following new members who joined BirdLife Melbourne between 6 March 2013 and 28 June 2013 and we look forward to seeing you at the BirdLife Melbourne activities and meetings.

Shannon	Woodcock	PRESTON
Nicole	Butler	MILL PARK
John	Nicholson	SURREY HILLS
Freda	Erllich	ST KILDA
Ineke van Polanen	Petel	CHELSEA HEIGHTS
Catherine	Petre	WEST FOOTSCRAY
Susan	Hatfield	NORTH BALWYN
Maira	Dengate	ROWVILLE
Georgie	Simon	BRUNSWICK
Jack	Richards	ASHWOOD
Susan	McVeigh	CROYDON
Sue	Boekel	GLEN IRIS
Christine	Treanor	KILMORE
Katherine	Selwood	MOUNT WAVERLEY
Marni	Harris	MOUNT WAVERLEY
Anthony	Fitton	ST ANDREWS
Barry & Annabele Dawson		LOWER PLENTY
Sue	Hat	BALWYN NORTH
Geoffrey	Ovens	VERMONT SOUTH
Hin	Chiunh	SOUTH YARRA
Alan	Bates	GLEN IRIS
Patrick	Carracher	BAYSWATER
Andrew	Churchyard	ELWOOD
Timon	van Asten	PARKVILLE
Kara	Joshi	CARLTON
Ian	Milesw	VERMONT SOUTH
Nataly Hidalgo	Aranzamendi	CLAYTON
Hilary	Hobart	KEW
Noel	Birch	BALWYN

Mark	Camilleri	ESSENDON
Lynn Bronwen	Teale	ELTHAM
Lyn	Griffen	ST KILDA EAST
Jackie	Manders	CARLTON NORTH
James	Ryan	ALTONA
Jennifer	Flores	ARDEER
Zac	Teale	FLEMINGTON
Leigh	Fisher	MARIBYRNONG
Jennifer	Gulle	CRAIGIEBURN
Kristy	Kertesi	CRAIGIEBURN
Melinda	Iliopoulos	RESERVOIR
Anthea	Jackson	RESERVOIR
Jessica	O'Brien	RESERVOIR
Jasmine	Lowe	LALOR
Carmen	Epifanio	EPPING
Jayne	Vella	EPPING
Michelle-Anne	Ongarella	FAIRFIELD
Mark	Do	KINGSBURY
Shelby	Dow	KINGSBURY
Katelyn	Brode	ROSANNA
Timothy	Theseira	EAGLEMONT
Kelli	Schleibs	WATSONIA
Stephanie	Jones	DIAMOND CREEK
Jade	Pelley	DIAMOND CREEK
Trevar	Harrison	SOUTH YARRA
Helen	Gannon	TOORAK
Bianca	Smaranda	CARNEGIE
Jenna	Rowe	BENTLEIGH
Jennifer	Bateman	MELTON
Aaron	Mocciaro	SUNBURY
Nikki	Richardson	WALLAN
Zoe	Harvey	WHITTLESEA
Corrie	Dickins	BEACONSFIELD
Cristian	Alvarez	NORTH MELBOURNE
Ken	Sanders	BERWICK
Matthew	O'Neill	COBURG
Robyn	Smith	MONTMORENCY
Marianne	Phillips	NORTH WARRANDYTE

Barbara	Praetz	SURREY HILLS NORTH
Brian	Mnew	BRIGHTON EAST
Thomas	Sell	MELTON SOUTH
Graham	Patterson	BRIAR HILL
Jill	McMillan	SURREY HILLS
Steve	Cummins	BENTLEIGH
Stewart	Monckton	MONT ALBERT
Denis	Nelthorpe	MOONEE PONDS
Robert	Kedge	MILL PARK
Rachel	Sayers	KNOXFIELD
Jane	Hockin	MIDDLE PARK
Gianna	Kalc	BUNDOORA
Amelie Parkinson's-Bates		VIEW BANK
Beatrice	Bird	GLEN IRIS
Isabella	Holding	COLLINGWOOD
Frank	Lehmann	CROYDON
Trevor	Tuohy	HEIDELBERG WEST
Sylvia	Eady	CAMBERWELL NORTH
Marjorie	McTier	CROYDON HILLS
Brendan	Murphy	GLEN IRIS
Ivan	Dinsdale	BENTLEIGH
Vincent	Knowles	NORTH BALWYN
Marjo	Chambers	MITCHAM
Clair	Gleeson-McGuire	PRAHRAN
Robyn	Colls	BRUNSWICK
Ewa	Kowalczyk	MOUNT WAVERLEY
Chris	Butler	SMITHS GULLY
Sean	O'Malley	BEAUMARIS
Oliver	Lee	FAIRFIELD
Robert John	McPhee	MITCHAM
Rin	Cheok	CARLTON
Neil	Humphreys	WALLAN
David	Tomlinson	GREENSBOROUGH
Margaret	Johnston	RINGWOOD NORTH
Gavin	Masters	BEND OF ISLANDS
Emma	Donald	BRUNSWICK
David	Looker	ALBERT PARK
Kerrie	Firth	BRUNSWICK EAST

### The BirdLife Melbourne Newsletter

The newsletter is published quarterly, in March, June, September and December by BirdLife Melbourne, the Melbourne branch of BirdLife Australia.

Editor: Andrew Fuhrmann. If you wish to contribute to the BirdLife Melbourne Newsletter you can reach us at BirdLife Melbourne, c/- BirdLife Australia National Office, 60 Leicester St, Carlton, Vic 3053, or email us at [melbirdian@gmail.com](mailto:melbirdian@gmail.com). Contributions for the next issue are due 22 Oct 2013.

### Australia's voice for birds since 1901

BirdLife Australia is dedicated to achieving outstanding conservation results for our native birds and their habitats.

With our specialised knowledge and the commitment of an Australia-wide network of volunteers and supporters, we are creating a bright future for Australia's birds.

[birdlife.org.au](http://birdlife.org.au)

### Add your voice



Enjoy the rewards of membership, making a real difference for our native birds



Contributing your time is one of the most effective ways to help



Help us create positive outcomes for birds and their habitats