



Gang-gang

JUNE 2015

Newsletter of the Canberra Ornithologists Group Inc.

JUNE MEETING

Wednesday 10 June 2015

7.30 pm.

*Canberra Girls Grammar School,
Multi-media centre, corner Gawler Cres
and Melbourne Ave, Deakin*

The bird of the month presentation will be by **Bruce Lindenmayer** on "**Local Thornbills and Allies**".

The main presentation will be by the GBS co-ordinator **Duncan McCaskill**, entitled "**The Canberra Garden Bird Survey**".

The Canberra Garden Bird Survey (GBS) is about to enter its 35th year of continuous operation. This talk will present an overview of the survey - how it runs and what it tells us about birds in Canberra over the years, as well as a comparison of Canberra garden birds with the birds of the Botanic Gardens. There will also be the regular reminder about the GBS rules.

Everyone welcome

Summary/analysis of the past month and what to watch out for this month

After the very high bird activity of the past 6 months or so, May has been much quieter as judged by the lower number of posts on the COG chatline. The main focus of these has been on the **Swifts Parrots** first reported in Ainslie towards the end of April. After an absence of reports for the first 10 days of May upwards of a dozen birds have been seen by many observers on the lower slopes of Mount Ainslie, the first time in several years that this species has stayed on for a while. They have been seen preening and taking both nectar and lerps, as well as water from a nearby drain. They were still there on 25 May, and have relegated the **Powerful Owl** to a distant second on the top of the pops. After several chatline posts asking whether it had moved on, the "Powl" was located in a callitris pine on 22 May (still clutching a ringtail possum!) and on 25 May. The difficulty in locating it could be because it is roaming a bit wider for roost spots now that many of its favourite trees are bare.



Swift Parrots

Leo Berzins

What to watch out for this month—*continued from Page 1*

One species which seems to have moved on is the **Plumed Whistling-Ducks** at Bungendore, with Martin Butterfield last reporting 21 birds on 10 May. He noted this was the first time they have been recorded there in May, but it's still not clear to me why this species should be a "summer" visitor. Whether this also applies to the **Australian Shelducks** is also unclear to me; there were still 87 present on 10 May but I can't find any reports subsequent to this. Other "unusuals" reported on Eremaea were a **Blue-faced Honeyeater** at Richardson on 30 April and a **Blue-winged Parrot** at Arawang Homestead on 7 May, plus a further report of a **Regent Honeyeater** towards the end of May.

In this reporting period there have also been observations of migrant species leaving rather late, including a **Rufous Fantail** last reported on 26 April, a **Shining Bronze-Cuckoo** on 27 April, a **Noisy Friarbird** on 30 April (and a late one on 26 May) and a **Sacred Kingfisher** on 2 May. Another species staying even later was the **Western Gerygone**, with two separate reports including one at Mulligans Flat on 13 May, a first sighting by Julie Clark who correctly identified this rather plain species even though it wasn't calling. There was also a single report of 8 **Fairy Martins** around the end of the first week of May, and reports of up to 6 **Tree Martins** in this period, with Michael Lenz still reporting 2 in the Gundaroo area on 24 May.

Surprisingly one or two **Australian Reed-Warblers** have also still been recorded throughout May, as have (less surprisingly) similar numbers of **Mistletoebirds** and several single **Rufous Whistlers**. Of the species that depart last and at least some of which stay over in winter, there have been regular reports of small



Western Gerygone

Julie Clark



Swift Parrot eating lerps

Geoffrey Dabb

numbers of the **Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike** and **Olive-backed Oriole** during May, with higher numbers of **Grey Fantails** and many **Silvereyes**. Significant numbers of **Dusky Woodswallows** were also still reported in the first half of May and further reports since suggest that they may over-winter in greater numbers this year than in the past few. So watch out for this species; my experience is that it often likes to stay near water during the winter.

Early in May, Lindsay Hansch reported there were still plenty of honeyeaters passing over his house in Jerrabomberra, which is under one of their main migration routes. He noted that on 2 May flocks were around 60:40 in favour of **Yellow-faced**, but one flock on the morning of 3 May of about 70 birds was nearly all **White-naped**. Numbers on the Eremaea eBird database reflect these high numbers in early May, but also indicate that both species have been reported up to the date of writing this column, so again some may stay for winter. So watch out for these species as well as the **Fuscous Honeyeater**, which has only been reported in low numbers, in particular where there are significant flowering nectar sources.

As mentioned in last month's column the **Superb Parrot** seems to be overwintering in increasing numbers, and they were still reported regularly throughout May. This includes the lower slopes of Mount Ainslie where they have been since Christmas with up to 20 reported in May, and being the commonest parrot species there, even outnumbering the **Swift Parrot**.

Of the altitudinal migrants that move from the mountains but stay here over winter, on 7 May Phil Malin reported 7 pairs of **Flame Robins** sitting together on the fence outside his office window in Symonston. They appeared to be travelling with upwards of a dozen **Diamond Firetails**, also a significant number for recent times. He thought they were moving towards Callum Brae, but as far as I can tell no one else was able to find them. It is also not clear whether the former have yet moved into other open areas of peri-urban Canberra; I've been looking for them in my local patch of Cooleman Ridge/Narrabundah Hill without success. There have been continued reports of the **Rose Robin** but none so far of the **Pink Robin**.

There has been a **Crescent Honeyeater** calling in and around my GBS site in Chapman since 5 May, initially only occasionally and briefly round 7 am, but much more conspicuous towards the end of May. It proved very elusive to actually observe, until finally two birds were seen together in a bare tree. Surprisingly the only other report I can find is that of a similarly confiding male in Roger Williams's Macgregor garden on 23 May. So watch out for this species, as well as the **Yellow-tufted Honeyeater**, another sometimes winter visitor to Canberra gardens for which I can find no records during May. There have however, been a number of reports of the **Restless Flycatcher**, which in my experience is another species most likely to be found in peri-urban Canberra in late autumn/winter. There were also a couple of reports of the **White-bellied Cuckoo-shrike**, listed in the Annual Bird Report as a non-breeding autumn migrant, but for 2013-2014 there were records in all other seasons as well.

In respect of the autumn and winter phenomenon of finding roosts and observing roost flights Nathaneal Coyne reported on the former seen when walking his dog late at night. His observations largely accord with mine except that his **Red Wattlebirds** exclusively sleep in elm trees in a stormwater/alley/cycleway between 1-3 metres above the ground. While this species is very common in my GBS site I can't ever recall finding it roosting, unlike **Australian Magpies**, **Galahs**, **Common Mynas** or



Crescent Honeyeater

Roger Williams



Australian Ornithological Services

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South Yarra 3141
Victoria

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Mob: 04173 10200

enquiries@philipmaher.com

2015 tours

Good birding, good food ...

Iron Range parts 1 & 2
Pt 1 Atherton Tablelands 10 - 15
Pt 2 Iron Range 15 - 23 July

New Caledonia birding tour
16 — 23 August

Strzelecki Track outback tour
4 — 23 September 36th tour!

Barren Grounds, Gloucester Tops, Wingham & coastal NSW
26 September — 4 October

2015 plains-wanderer weekends

21 & 22 November 2015

6 & 7 December 2015

2016 tours

Tasmania birds & mammals
30 January — 6 February

Alice Springs
25 April — 2 May

Top End & Mitchell Plateau
22 May — 6 June

Queensland's Gulf Country
24 June — 9 July

Iron Range & Atherton Tablelands
12 — 25 July (2 parts)

Strzelecki Outback
2 — 21 September

*Please see itineraries, checklists and latest news
on our website*

www.philipmaher.com

Crested Pigeons which are easy to find. Michael Lenz also reported on a roost flight count of **Australian King-Parrots** from Scrivener Dam he carried out on 23 May. Over 500 birds were heading WSW, and he wondered whether it was towards the Cotter pine forest? Other large single flocks that have also been reported include 127 **Australian Magpies** and 70 **Red-rumped Parrots** near Bungendore, as well as 67 **White-winged Choughs** at Mulligans Flat. Mixed feeding flocks are also still around – I have just recorded one in my GBS site which included **Brown-headed Honeyeaters** and a **Willie Wagtail** in addition to the species usually present.

With winter about to start it appears this year's long breeding season is finally over, but with an interesting report by John Leonard of an adult male and female **Gang-gang Cockatoo** carefully checking out a hollow. With them were an immature male and a presumably immature female who were "larking about and playing around". The autumn/winter breeder the **Black-shouldered Kite** was also reported copulating and using the same nest as last year at the Jerrabomberra Wetlands.

The above was again mainly taken from my two main sources, postings on the COG Email Discussion List ("COG chatline") and the Eremaea eBird web site, as well as some direct correspondence with me. Together this shows that while winter is here Canberra and the ACT will continue to provide rewarding birdwatching. So please continue to watch out for any late departing/overwintering summer migrants or the altitudinal migrants mentioned above, as well as for any roosts and roost flights and mixed or single species feeding flocks. As usual please ensure that all significant observations end up on the COG database.

The importance of this is strongly underlined by the 2013-2014 Annual Bird Report (ABR) which everyone will have received with their May Gang-gang. I continue to be impressed by the ever growing breadth and analysis of the coverage and my congratulations go to both the contributors and the writers and editors. With each ABR we are building an increasingly clear picture of birds' occurrence and distribution in the ACT and COG's wider Area of Interest is different from the impression that I get from my local patch, which shows the importance of reporting all observations. So please keep up the extremely valuable work, and keep those records coming in.

Jack Holland

Renew your COG membership

Now is the time to renew your COG membership.

The simplest way to do this is to complete and submit the online membership renewal form (<http://canberrabirds.org.au/about-cog/joining-cog-and-renewing/>) and pay using electronic funds transfer. You can still also renew in person at a meeting (there will be someone taking memberships at the June and July meetings), or you can send your renewal by mail with a cheque.

If you still receive Gang-gang and/or Canberra Bird Notes by mail please consider whether this is necessary. As has been pointed out in recent annual financial reports, the costs of providing direct member services exceed the amount collected in subscription fees, so every member who elects to read the electronic versions instead of receiving a print copy reduces costs to COG. The online versions include colour photos, and notification of their availability is usually sent out several days before the print version is posted.



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Nominations close 8 July 2015 for Steve Wilson Award 2015

Nominations are called for past or current members of COG to be considered for the award of the Steve Wilson Medal 2015. This Award is the highest honour awarded by COG and is given to a person who has given meritorious service to the Group.

The Award was inaugurated in COG's 50th year and the 2014 awardees were Jenny Bounds and Graham Clark.

Nominees can be made by any member.

To be considered the nominee must have

- served COG in a voluntary capacity
- contributed to COG in a professional way
- contributed for many years
- been on any of
 - committee
 - executive member
 - in another regular role of COG
- supported the aims of COG



NOMINATIONS

- Nominations are due on or before the night of the COG meeting on 8 July 2015
- Nominations for consideration for the award can be in writing or by email to the COG President.
- Nominations must have the signature of two or more current financial members of COG.
- Written nominations must be less than 2 pages in length.
- An Awardee does not have to be a current member of COG
- An Award can be given posthumously.
- The Award can be announced at the COG AGM.

The Award Committee comprises the COG President Alison Russell-French, and Bruce Lindenmayer and Neil Hermes.

Field Trip Reports

Sunday 3 May – Campbell Park

Eighteen COG members came to this outing on a clear, sunny and still morning, including, notably, several new members. Despite the great weather, there were not a lot of birds around. The forested area just north of the office block was again (as last year), dominated by **Noisy Miners** excluding many of the small birds, but **Crimson** and **Eastern Rosella** were in good numbers, plus a flock of **Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoos**, **Red-rumped Parrots**, **Australian King-Parrots** and the occasional **Galah** and **Sulphur-Crested Cockatoo**. Over towards the eastern boundary, Lindell picked up a pair of beautiful **Scarlet Robins**. Back over the horse-ramp, Alison found a male **Common Bronzewing**. Other notables were a **Grey Currawong** pair, **Weebill**, **Black-faced Cuckoo-Shrike**, **Golden** and **Rufous Whistlers**, **White-eared Honeyeater** and a flock of about 15 **Yellow-faced Honeyeaters** moving through. Top spotter for the trip was Duncan, with an overhead **Australian Hobby**, **Yellow Thornbill**, **Speckled Warbler** and **Mistletoebird**. Total bird count was 39 species.

Bruce Lindenmayer

Wednesday 21 May - Stranger Pond and Pine Island

Twenty-one members and guests gathered on Don Dunstan Drive for a lap of Stranger Pond and a trip to the Murrumbidgee at Pine Island. Despite a very ordinary forecast (and some very ominous clouds) the weather was kind.

As we began our lap of the Pond a range of common waterbirds were noted with a mixed flock of **Eurasian Coots** and **Pacific Black Ducks** coming across the Pond. An egret on the far bank was inspected closely and confirmed as an **Eastern Great Egret**. **New Holland Honeyeaters** flew off into the nearby houses and a **Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike** was a bit of a surprise at this time of year. As we neared the dam wall there was some discussion of the specification of a small **Grebe** which was resolved to being a **Hoary-headed**. Almost instantly 2 definite **Australasian**

Grebes were seen, with one showing breeding plumage. We totalled 32 species on this site.

We passed through a belt of woodland to the carpark at Pine Island South. Thornbills were evident in the shrubs along the river bank, and members eventually identified **Buff-rumped**, **Brown** and a single **Yellow Thornbill**. (Interestingly no one identified a scrubwren on the outing.) A pair of **Scarlet Robins** were celebrating their status as 'vulnerable' by munching on grubs. At least 3 **Golden Whistlers** were seen with 2 identified as non-adults with rufous colouration on their wings. Rosellas were present in larger than usual numbers with 8 **Crimson** and 12 **Eastern Rosellas** seen in this area. 25 species were seen here.

For the total trip we recorded 47 species.

Martin Butterfield

Sunday 24 May - Pinnacle Nature Reserve

Some 15 or so COG members, including at least one on her first COG outing, gathered in Hawker for a stroll around the Pinnacle Nature Reserve in near perfect conditions.

While the cold start to the morning meant that the reserve's patch of remnant Red Stringybark (*E. macrorhyncha*) woodland was largely quiet, we were sufficiently entertained by the Rainbow Lorikeets rocketing over on their way from their roost trees to their regular feeding spots in Hawker.

When we paused in a sunlit patch, the mixed eucalypt woodland downhill yielded an interesting mix of species, including **Yellow-rumped** and **Buff-rumped Thornbills**, **Scarlet** and **Eastern Yellow Robins** (the latter not seen at the reserve since COG's last visit!), a resplendent male **Golden Whistler**, a **Speckled Warbler** and at least two **Southern Whiteface**.

Thus encouraged, we pressed on and shortly after encountered another species familiar to many of us, none other than Barbara Allan walking her corgi Stella. Barbara was just returning from conducting one of the regular monthly surveys she and I undertake at the

reserve, and warned of a noisy flock of **Brown-headed Honeyeaters** heading our way. Alas, they must've heard us coming, as that was one species we dipped on during the walk.

Shortly after, however, the COG magic struck once again when we encountered a **Grey Currawong**, once a regular at the reserve but not seen for a few years now. The same spot also yielded another mixed flock that this time included one of the recently returned **White-faced Honeyeaters** and a couple of **Yellow-faced Honeyeaters**, the latter possibly having decided to stick around and over-winter at the reserve as they often do.

Swinging around the eastern slope of the Pinnacle itself, we wandered past a smallish group of 6 **White-winged Choughs**, accompanied by the inevitable posse of **Magpies** keeping watch. Always productive, the woodlands on the flanks of the Pinnacle yielded a wide assortment of thornbills, including **Striated** and **Brown Thornbills**, giving us 4 of the 5 local species, along with several **Grey Shrike-thrush**, more **Scarlet Robins**, including one that sparked an enlightening discussion on the distinction between adult females and immature males, and our first **Grey Fantail** of the morning.

On our return leg, we dropped in on a pair of snoozing **Tawny Frogmouths** I'd spotted earlier in the week, and caught up with the **Red-browed** and **Double-barred Finches** that are often seen along the track between the reserve and the adjacent houses. At this point, the group split up, some opting to take the direct route back to the cars and the other choosing to try another stroll through the Red Stringybark woodland. The former group picked up a **Kookaburra** and 3 **Satin Bowerbirds** along their route, while the latter encountered another interesting mixed flock in the woodland that included still more **Scarlet Robins** (we estimated at least 12 for the whole walk) and a pair of **Speckled Warblers**, one missing its tail. Just as we were lamenting the absence of raptors ("No wind!" as Jean Casburn observed) our final observation for the morning was a **Nankeen Kestrel** disappearing beyond the trees.

Our count for the morning came to a total of 41 species in pretty much ideal conditions, and I for one would be delighted to see another COG group at the reserve in the future, especially if they're going to continue to work their magic of coaxing seldom-seem species out of the woodwork.

John Brannan

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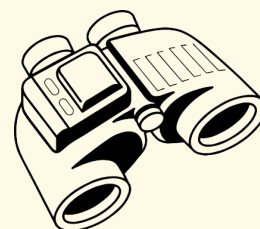
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Originally established in the UK in 1946, the owners established a branch in Australia several years ago and have become the region's leading independent binocular store.

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Major brands such as Steiner, Zeiss, Bushnell, Nikon & Pentax are represented together with smaller hi-tech brands like Weaver, Vortex, Forest Optics, Visionary and Vanguard.

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The helpful and informative website www.binoculars4u.com.au is regularly updated but is no substitute for personal service and recommendation which is always on hand.

We welcome customers new and old to call us on 02 4441 7770

GREY PLOVER

To COG members

AWSG and BirdLife Australia are sponsoring an exciting project – the **Grey Plover** satellite tracking project - through the POZIBLE crowd source funding. **Grey Plovers** are yet another migratory shorebird that is declining in numbers and we know very little about where **Grey Plovers** stopover on their flights through the East Asian -Australasian Flyway in their northward and southward migrations. The funds from the project will enable us to gather information on this through attaching satellite trackers to 3-4 birds. They will also hopefully shed some light on why the **Grey Plover** numbers are declining. **The Grey Plovers** that come to Australia are all females which raises another host of questions about where the males go and how vulnerable are both sexes with separate migration patterns. Transmitters are expensive and we have set a target of \$17, 680. We have reached \$13,781 so far and we really want to reach the target so that we can get this important project underway in the 2016 migratory season. If you pledge support for the project it will be greatly appreciated and the link to go to is <http://www.pozible.com/project/194554>. All donations – except rewards- are tax deductible.

Alison Russell-French
Chair AWSG

May COG Meeting



Left to right: Alistair Drake (President of COG 20 years ago), Neil Hermes, David Hollands (May 2015 speaker), and Bruce Lindenmayer

COG Trips

At the start of each trip, and before proceeding on the trip, each participant must sign a COG Field Trip Registration Form, which acknowledges the participant's responsibilities as follows:

- I declare I am capable of undertaking this trip having: discussed with the Trip Leader any limitations I have (e.g. medications, physical), assessed the risks to myself and my property, and ensured I am adequately equipped.
- I will follow the instructions of the Field Trip Leader, and advise them before moving away from the group.

Changes to trips are notified on the trips page of the COG web-site

<http://canberrabirds.org.au/>

and on the COG chat-line at:

[http://
bioacoustics.cse.unsw.edu.au/
archives/html/
canberrabirds/2012-03/
index.html](http://bioacoustics.cse.unsw.edu.au/archives/html/canberrabirds/2012-03/index.html)

A reminder that COG has a long-standing policy to give preference to members for field trips that can accommodate only a limited number of people.

Future Field Trips

Saturday 13 June - Tidbinbilla Nature Reserve- Superb Lyrebird Survey

Since the January 2003 bushfires Peter Fullagar and Chris Davey have been monitoring the return of the Superb Lyrebird to an area of the Tidbinbilla Nature Reserve. They wish to get an idea of the present distribution within the Reserve and are asking COG members to join them for a morning's survey. They are calling for expressions of interest to join them at 8.00am to walk the trails and to record the location of calling birds. Depending on the trails walked the survey should take about three hours.

This outing will be a repeat of the very successful surveys conducted at this time of the year since 2004.

Note that both outing leaders will be overseas between 9 May and 8 June. If interested and for further details please contact Sue Lashko on 62514485 (h), email smlashko@gmail.com

Chris Davey

Wednesday 17 June – Australian National Botanic Gardens

Meet at 9am at the end of the carpark nearest the café.

Sunday 21 June – McQuoids Hill Nature Reserve, Kambah

Map 27 D14 (UBD). Meet at 9.30am. Park at step-through access gate on the right hand side of Kambah Pool Road which is about 700 metres from the roundabout where the Kambah Pool Rd crosses Allchin Cct/Barritt St, Kambah. The gate is opposite the start of the golf club driving range and 400 metres before the entry to the golf club.

We'll head first to the small farm dam to check if there is anything on it besides **Wood Ducks**, then across to the reserve proper, where we'll walk the perimeter track anticlockwise, hopefully seeing some of the interesting finches, thornbills, robins and raptors recorded on previous visits. No bookings required. If you have any questions, contact Michael Robbins (mrobbins@home.netspeed.com.au)

Tues 23-Thurs 25 June - Little Forest Plateau near Ulladulla

This trip was scheduled for the June long weekend but due to other commitments the leaders are now offering it as a mid-week trip. Over the 3 days we will focus on birdwatching in the heathland of Little Forest Plateau and reserves near Ulladulla. We will stay at Ulladulla Headland Tourist Park (ph 4429 8982) which has cabins and campsites. Please book your own accommodation. Be aware that the road to Little Forest is gravel and car pooling is encouraged for the drive to the Plateau.

We hope to find a variety of heathland birds including **Beautiful Firetails** and **Southern Emu Wrens** as well as spending time at the lighthouse looking for seabirds. The walk at Little Forest Plateau will be an easy/moderate grade.

Please book a place on this outing with Kathy Walter or John Goldie by email walter.goldie@optusnet.com.au. The trip will be restricted to 20 participants and filled on a first reply basis. More detailed instructions will be provided closer to the day.

Sunday 5 July – Jerrabomberra Hill

This will be at Jerrabomberra Hill (Mount Jerrabomberra) in the Jerrabomberra area of Queanbeyan. Meet at 9am at the carpark.

Access via Tomsitt Drive off Lanyon Drive. Take first left off the big roundabout, into Limestone Drive, then a left at Halloran Drive. Jerrabomberra Hill Road is off to the right along that road - look for the signpost. There is a small parking area next to the locked gate into the reserve. There is limited on-street parking.

The road to the top of the hill is a very pleasant, easy walk on a well-maintained dirt road through woodland with lots of stringybark, other eucalypts and acacias. Keep your fingers crossed for a non-foggy morning, so that the view from the newish lookout at the top can be admired! No bookings required.

Sandra Henderson

Sunday 12 July - Mullangarri Grasslands.

Meet at 9.00 am at the Cringan Cres. carpark at the corner of the Valley Ave and Warwick St. opposite Gungahlin College and Swimming Pool. The grasslands cover most of the area with some isolated mature eucalypts. A wetland near Burgmann College has **Golden-headed Cisticolas**. About 20 species is the usual count. In summer, Eurasian **Skylark** and **Superb Parrots** feed or fly over and **Tree Martins** breed. Other species include **Australasian Pipit**, **Nankeen Kestrel** and **Noisy Miners**. We could do half the time in the grasslands and half at the Valley Ponds. Bring morning tea. No booking required.

Bill Graham

Friday 31 July to Monday 2 August - Wonga Bawley Point

The booking for a combined camping/accommodated visit to Wonga appearing in the 2015 Draft Field Trips Programme is now confirmed under the leadership of Terry Bell. We have obtained special permission to bring a group of about 15 persons to this delightful bush/coastal location of 50 acres with abundant bird life. The two comfortable, well-equipped cottages contain three bedrooms with double beds, plus additional singles and trundles with a possible maximum capacity of 10 persons. For COG, approval has been granted for limited camping and for the sake of convenience and avoidance of congestion we shall provide our own long-drop toilet facility. Some of the Illawarra region birds we expect to see are **Scarlet** and **Lewin's Honeyeaters**, **Black-faced Monarchs**, **Bassian Thrushes** and of course **Hooded Plovers**. As the accommodation arrangements are flexible, subject to personal preferences of participants, it is recommended that you secure places early to avoid disappointment. Further enquiries to the leader at terrybellbird@gmail.co or 61619093 or mobile 0427292298

NORFOLK ISLAND

Places are filling quickly on the end of year COG trip to Norfolk Island

Date: 30 November - 7 December 2015
from Sydney
Packages from \$1269pp twin share

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Future Field Trips *continued ...*

Three field trips which will be held later in the year but for which bookings are required now are:

Saturday September 5 and Sunday September 6 – Eden pelagics

COG has booked the weekend of September 5 and 6 for two one-day pelagic trips. The outings leave from Eden Harbour at 7am, and return mid-afternoon. Each trip can accommodate 12 people, and the cost per person per trip will be \$100.

Organising travel and accommodation will be each individual's responsibility but there may be opportunities for car-pooling and an informal get-together for dinner/drinks in Eden on the Friday and Saturday evenings.

Bookings will be confirmed only when full payment is received. Payment must be made by July 17. These trips need to be fully subscribed to ensure COG does not make a loss, and as is the case with all paid trips, preference is given to COG members. Once you've booked and paid, no refunds can be given unless a replacement can be found. No places will be made available to non-members unless the trips are not fully subscribed by COG members by mid-July.

As with all boating activities the trip will be weather dependent and rough seas could lead to the cancellation or postponement of the trip.

Please book with Sandra Henderson (shirmax2931@gmail.com) and indicate which day you prefer (Saturday or Sunday). Payment by direct deposit to COG's bank account is preferred – details will be sent to those who express interest. These trips often fill up fast, so if interested please book early.

Saturday 26 September to Monday 5 October – Capertee and Munghorn Gap

To take advantage of two consecutive long weekends, an extended camping trip has been planned, beginning in the Capertee Valley at Glen Davis campground for the Canberra Family and Community Day long weekend. We will probably then move to other national parks in the area, before arriving at Munghorn Gap where we will be camping at the field station there for the Labour Day long weekend.

A more detailed description of the trip will be emailed to participants later but at this stage, if you are interested, please email me at smlashko@gmail.com. Participants may join the trip for all or part of the time, with a maximum of 16 people at any one time.

Sue Lashko

Monday 12 to Friday 16 October – Green Cape (accommodated)

For some time now, COG has visited Green Cape every second year to stay in the former lighthouse keepers' cottages and enjoy the wonderful wildlife watching (birds and whales, in particular) in Ben Boyd National Park and in the surrounding seas. The internal layout of the cottages has recently been altered to provide space for a live-in caretaker. As a result, there are only 10 places available for this trip. The commitment is for a 4-night stay – no concession for shorter stays. The total accommodation costs will be \$140 per person (payment details will be provided once numbers are finalised). There is also a \$7 fee per car per day to enter Ben Boyd National Park. This can be paid at a self-registration booth on arrival.

To register, email smlashko@gmail.com. As with all COG trips, preference will be given to COG members. More detailed information will be sent to participants closer to the date.

Sue Lashko and Peter Fullagar



Bassian Thrush

Julie Clark

The Gang-gang survey - Where are we up to?

From the launch by Ian Fraser of the survey in mid-February 2004 and the closing at the end of February 2015, the survey allowed for the collection of information on the activities of the **Gang-gang Cockatoo** within COG's area of interest over a 12 month period.

Although the books are now closed on the survey, information is still being submitted with observations being captured to the general COG database, rather than the database specifically set up for the survey. Up until the end of February 2015, there have been around 5000 observations from 425 observers using the online portal, with 90 observers submitting paper forms. Two hundred and eleven observers submitted observations to the five Muster surveys. For those interested, past progress reports can be found at <http://canberrabirds.org.au/archives/gang-gang-survey/latest-news-gg-survey/>

There is now a big job ahead to check the geo-coordinates against site descriptions, allocate observations to suburbs and to follow up on any queries before handing records over to Steve Wallace who has written a programme that will help with data analysis.

Some observations, such as those from the 2014-15 Garden Bird Survey and those logged to BirdLife Australia and eBird, will not be available until around September/October. Bearing this in mind it is intended that a summary of the project will be submitted to the ACT Government at the end of the financial year to acquit a grant that was provided for the survey. An Abstract has been submitted to a Citizen Science Forum to be held over two days, 23-24 July, at the Shine Dome in Canberra. If the Abstract is accepted Kathy Eyles and I will provide either a poster display or a brief verbal presentation. On 6 August, there will be a presentation at the lunchtime talks of the Friends of the Australian National Botanic Gardens on the survey findings and at about the same time we intend to give a presentation at the November COG monthly meeting. It is then proposed that a final report and write-up for Canberra Bird Notes will be provided by the end of 2015, by which time all observations will have been made available for analysis.

In addition to finding out more about the lives of Gang-gangs in the local region over a 12 month period the survey will also allow us to examine more about the



Gang-gang feasting on wattle seeds at the ANBG

Morgyn Phillips

survey process; that is, what did and did not work? For instance, it is interesting that 80% of the observations were submitted by 20% of the observers. To try and find out more, a survey participation form was sent out to all who submitted observations online or by paper form with a return date by the end of April. An analysis of these results is now in progress.

I would like to thank all of the contributors to the survey, arranged to celebrate the 50th year of COG's involvement in birding in the local region. In particular I would like to thank Kathy Eyles who was responsible for communications. A major aim of the project was to reach out to those members of the public who were not COG members but who have a love of birds. Approximately 50 % of participants were not COG members and without Kathy's enthusiasm the participation rate would have been much lower.

Chris Davey (Gang-gang Project coordinator)

MUDBRICK COTTAGE—MALLACOOTA

Our mudbrick cottage (Blue Wren Cottage) is available for rental. It is set amongst the trees in Mallacoota, Victoria (approximately 4 hours drive from Canberra). 10 minutes walk to the beach, 5 minutes walk to the golf course and about 15 minutes walk to town.

It sleeps 4-6 upstairs and there is a sofa bed downstairs. It is fully self-contained with a kitchen and laundry.

Contact: Barbara de Bruine (02) 6258 3531, or barbdebruine@hotmail.com

Canberra Ornithologists Group

Norfolk Island trip

With local Norfolk Island bird expert Margaret Christian

30 November - 7 December 2015 from Sydney

travel packages from \$1269pp twin share

Holiday Package price includes:

- Return economy class 'seat & bag' airfare ex Sydney to Norfolk Island
- All pre-paid airline taxes
- Meet & greet at the Norfolk Island Airport
- Return airport transfers on Norfolk Island
- 7 night's accommodation
- 7 days car hire per apartment including surcharge & basic insurance (petrol additional)
- Half Day Island orientation tour
- Discover the world of Norfolk Island's unique & endemic bird fauna with Margaret Christian (Green Eyes Tour)
- Experience Norfolk Island Birds by night with Margaret Christian
- Guided birding tours of Norfolk Island's rainforest & seabird breeding colonies with Margaret Christian
- 2 x Two-course dinners at nearby hotel (drinks own expense)
- Complimentary Miniature Golf – golf your way through Norfolk's history
- Complimentary "A Walk in the Wild" – a unique rainforest walk
- Bonus Norfolk Island discount shopping card

Optional extra activities include a Philip Island visit, Pelagic birding tour & Glass Bottom Boat tour.

Conditions apply. Prices are current today, subject to availability & change without notice. Travel Insurance strongly recommended.



**Norfolk Island
Travel Centre**
meet the locals...

There's more to
NORFOLK ISLAND

Take advantage of our local knowledge and having your travel agent at your destination

We live on Norfolk and know Norfolk Best!

Please send me further information regarding the 'Canberra Ornithologists Group, Norfolk Island trip', December 2015

Travelling from: _____

Surname: _____ First Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____ Email: _____

www.norfolkislandtravelcentre.com

Contact: travel@travelcentre.nf Norfolk Island Travel Centre, PO Box 172, Norfolk Island 2899
Ph: 0011 6723 22502 or fax: 0011 6723 23205 Toll free from Australia 1800 1400 66

photo copyright & courtesy Ian Koffe, Southern Lightscapes

Canberra Ornithologists Group

Norfolk Island trip

Norfolk Island (3655ha) lies in the south-west Pacific 1400km east of mainland Australia and 1500km south-west of Fiji. An external, self-governing territory of Australia, Norfolk has strong ecological affinities with New Zealand, but is also unique as it is one of the few islands founded on a seamount in the warm temperate zone. Norfolk has a bewildering range of endemic plants, animals and ecosystems, and indeed, is a global priority island for which biodiversity conservation efforts are recommended.

The Norfolk Island Group is a globally important biodiversity hotspot and has been designated as an 'Important Bird Area' by Birdlife International. The group is a breeding site for several 100,000 seabirds including the masked booby, grey ternlet, white tern, sooty tern, & wedge-tailed shearwater. Phillip Island supports one of the largest breeding populations of red-tailed tropic birds in Australia. Norfolk is also home to the endemic & endangered Norfolk Island Green Parakeet, & other endemic birds such as the Norfolk Island golden whistler & Norfolk Island scarlet robin.

Optional tours

Pelagic Boat Tour

Cost - \$120 pp

(Minimum numbers required)

Join Advance Fishing & Cruising for a tour on Norfolk Island's pristine waters. Cruise around the three islands, Norfolk, Nepean and Phillip and view spectacular scenery and birds at sea.

Glass Bottom Boat Tour

Cost - \$45pp

Norfolk Islanders Donald and John, will share their knowledge of Norfolk's unique marine life. Once you've 'walked the plank' with these 'mutineer descendants' it takes 60 seconds (yes one minute!) to be at the reef. View beautiful coral gardens and tropical fish inside the calm crystal waters of Norfolk's lagoon. Donald and John provide full interesting commentary on this environmental tour. With these two you should be prepared for a touch of Norfolk humor.

Phillip Island Trek

Cost - \$160pp

(Minimum numbers required)

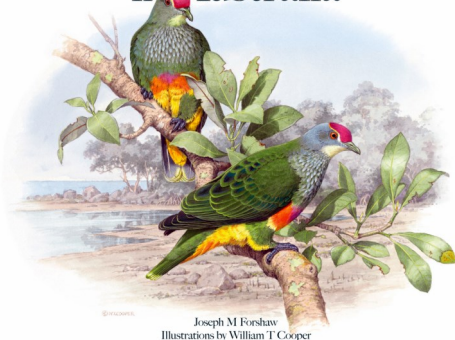
A 5hr boating/trekking adventure starting with a boat trip to Nepean and Phillip islands followed by an informative Trek on spectacular Phillip Island. A must for those with a keen interest in bird watching or the environment in general. The trek is 1/2 day duration, includes a look at the coast from the boat and the services of an experienced guide whilst on the island. It requires a reasonable level of health and fitness, and involves traversing terrain which is at times steep and/or loose under foot.

Contact: travel@travelcentre.nf Norfolk Island Travel Centre, PO Box 172, Norfolk Island 2899
Ph: 0011 6723 22502 or fax: 0011 6723 23205 Toll free from Australia 1800 1400 66
www.norfolkislandtravelcentre.com

FEATURE PUBLICATION OF THE MONTH

ORDER NOW AT A GREAT PRICE!

Pigeons and Doves in Australia



Pigeons and Doves in Australia

Joseph Forshaw and William Cooper

From dense rainforests of north Queensland, where brilliantly plumaged Superb Fruit-Doves *Ptilinopus superbus* are heard more easily than seen, to cold, windswept heathlands of Tasmania, where Brush Bronzings *Phaps elegans* are locally common, most regions of Australia are frequented by one or more species.

In *Pigeons and Doves in Australia*, Joseph Forshaw and William Cooper have summarised our current knowledge of all species, including those occurring on Christmas, Norfolk and Lord Howe Islands. All species are illustrated with a full page plate and the book is scattered throughout with study sketches and smaller coloured drawings.

Retail price \$185.00.

Price for members \$122.

**Order at/or before the
June meeting.**

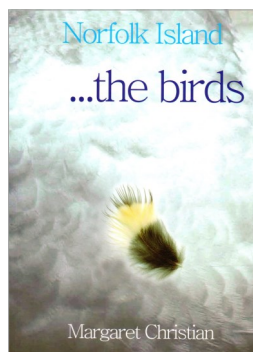
Contact

sales@canberrabirds.org.au

Publications for sale

COG provides a range of birdwatching related publications for sale to members at discounted prices (at least 10-30% off RRP).

Below are highlighted a sample of popular publications available from the sales desk at COG meetings. We get new books in all the time and sometimes popular books sell out, but they can easily be re-ordered. If you are looking for a particular book, talk to the sales desk team at the meeting, as they can look at ordering it for you or contact Kathy on sales@canberrabirds.org.au

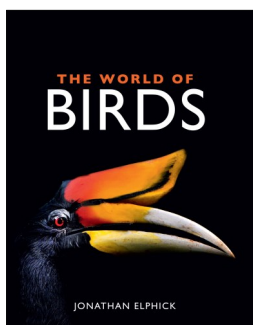


Norfolk Island – the birds

Margaret Christian

A photographic guide to the birds of Norfolk Island, including those birds found only on Norfolk Island.

Members' price \$22

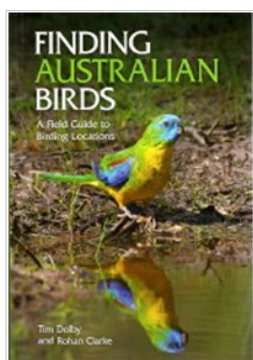


The World of Birds

Jonathon Elphick

Explore the wonders of the avian world with this ultimate reference book. The World of Birds is a comprehensive guide to every aspect of bird life and a concise survey of the world's orders and families. Highly respected ornithologist and wildlife expert, Jonathan Elphick, begins by defining the distinguishing features of birds before going on to describe their evolution since the age of the dinosaurs.

Members' price \$60

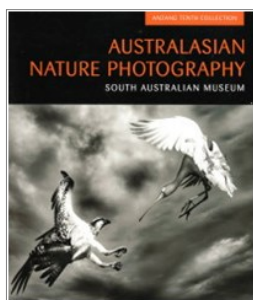


Finding Australian Birds: A Field Guide to Birding Locations

Tim Dolby, Rohan Clarke

This book covers over 400 Australian bird watching sites conveniently grouped into the best birding areas, from one end of the country to the other.

Members' price \$35



Australian Nature Photography

South Australian Museum

ANZANG Tenth Collection presents the finest photographs submitted to the 2013 Australian Geographic ANZANG Nature Photographer of the Year competition. Each photograph is accompanied by technical information as well as anecdotes about how the picture was taken, which will stimulate yet further interest in the flora and fauna and their conservation in the region.

Members' price \$28

Canberra Birds Conservation Fund

Donations to this fund are tax deductible. Funds are used to support projects that protect and enhance native birds and the environments that sustain them.

COG membership

2014-2015 memberships:

- Singles: \$40
- Family: \$45
- Institution: \$40
- School student (under 18) \$20

New members

COG welcomes the following new members:

I Green, Lyneham
L Nothrop, Lyneham (rejoining)
R Beggs, Stirling
C Walker, Uriarra
G Carmody, Yarralumla

NEXT NEWSLETTER

Deadline for July 2015 edition

Wednesday 24 June 2015

Please send articles, advertisements, updates etc. to the Editors at:

gang-gang@canberrabirds.org.au

Or

c/- The Secretary COG,

PO Box 301 Civic Square, ACT 2608

Articles should be less than 500 words (300 for reports of 1-day field trips) except by prior arrangement with the editor.

Photographs (prints or electronic) with or without articles are encouraged.

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COG library

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for change of address or other details.

Gang-gang Newsletter

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Newsletter distribution:

Dianne Davey

COG E-mail Discussion List

COG has an email discussion list for members and friends: 'Canberra Birds'.

Join the list by following the links on the COG website or by sending an empty email message to;

canberrabirds-subscribe@canberrabirds.org.au

The subject is 'subscribe' (without the quotation marks).

Canberra Bird Notes

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