



Gang-gang

October 2015

Newsletter of the Canberra Ornithologists Group Inc.

OCTOBER MEETING

Wednesday 14 October 2015

7.30 pm.

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

The short presentation “**Coevolution in action: defences against brood parasitism in new and old hosts of the Eastern Koel**”, will be given by **Virginia Abernathy**, a Ph D student at the Research School of Biology, ANU.

The Red Wattlebird has been a host of the brood-parasitic Eastern Koel for about 30 years in Sydney and only about 7 years in Canberra. Host switching by a brood parasite is very rare, and knowing the time of the switch allows us to measure how quickly hosts can evolve defences against brood parasitism. Virginia has conducted experiments at nests of new and old hosts and has taken measurements of eggs and nestlings to determine if hosts of the Koel have evolved defences and if the Koel has evolved mimicry of eggs or nestlings.

Leo Joseph from the CSIRO will give the main presentation which is entitled “**News from the Front: An**

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

Except for a couple of 2-3 day periods the weather has remained relatively cool (but drying in September) for the reporting period covered by this column (26 August to 24 September). Though this may have delayed their timing, it was clear that by the end the species which move back to the higher areas and those that spend the spring/summer here had mostly departed and the first had arrived, respectively.

The most notable of these has been the **Rose Robin** of which there have been many more reports than usual, by my count 30 or more individuals spread throughout Canberra. This includes a remarkable observation by Steve Holliday of at least 12 birds along a 200 metre stretch of the western slopes of Mt Ainslie on the afternoon of 4 September (Steve noted that he had never seen so many in one place). The last report of it I can find is 17 September which is consistent with the view that it's mainly a passage migrant through Canberra from and to the mountains in

David Cook

Rose Robin



Everyone welcome

August Meeting —cont. from Page 1

Update on Bird Research at the Australian National Wildlife Collection (ANWC) and Around the World”.

Since Leo last spoke to COG, there have been many interesting developments in our understanding of relationships among the world’s birds generally and bird research at the ANWC has been progressing on a few fronts too. The talk will walk gently through examples of all of this. Globally, the publication on one day last December of 28 papers resulting from a genome-level study of the world’s birds made a very big splash. It was a red-letter day in the history of studying bird biology. The ANWC has continued to chip away at some thorny taxonomic problems in Australian birds and Leo will give some examples of how they are slowly but, he thinks, surely reaching the “higher hanging taxonomic fruit” of Australian birds.

The Chestnut Quail-thrush is an example of where they think they now have a solid case to recognize two species not just one, whereas in the White-eared Honeyeater things are looking interesting but they wouldn’t advocate a change yet. They are also getting into some interesting areas related to natural selection in birds. The humble Eastern Yellow Robin is a star in this area. The ANWC has been working in the savannahs of Papua New Guinea and that promises to open up some interesting work. Finally, they are taking their first steps into the world of trying to use genomes to understand adaptation in birds. For that, the ANWC is using Australian finches and the different climates in which they live.

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

late autumn and early spring, respectively, though small numbers do over-winter here, as they have done this year.

Of the other altitudinal migrants that visit urban/peri-urban Canberra over the winter period a few **Flame Robins** were still reported early in September but most now seem to have moved well away, as have most of the **Scarlet Robins** though these do not move as far away and are still being reported from places such as Narrabundah Hill and Mulligans Flat. Also still being reported from urban/peri urban Canberra is the **Golden Whistler**, which I’ve noted previously is often still present until early October, as has been the usually slightly earlier leaving **White-eared Honeyeater**.

The **Crescent Honeyeater** was last very conspicuous by its loud calling in my garden in Chapman on 9 September, and appears to have moved away to the mountains. There were a few other urban records for this species in late August, but there have been none for the **Yellow-tufted Honeyeater** or **Pink Robin** during the reporting period. However, Steve Holliday posted on the COG chatline an aural record of at least one **Swift Parrot** from Ainslie on 22 September. So keep an ear/eye out for any of the above species in urban areas in early October, by which time most will have moved away.

While the continuing cool weather seemed to delay the arrival of the summer migrants and there hasn’t been the spectacular influx of some years, by the time of drafting this column most species expected to be here by now had arrived. This includes the **Rufous Whistler**, **Western Gerygone**, **Mistletoebird**, the **Australian Reed-Warbler**, **Olive-backed Oriole** (quite a few chatline reports of this species in August), **White-naped** and **Fuscous Honeyeaters**, all of which were reported throughout winter in small numbers but for most it is now clear there have been substantial new arrivals.



Latham's Snipe

Roger Williams



This applies even more to the **Superb Parrot** (including a rare southside report), **Grey Fantail**, **Silvereye**, **Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike** and **Yellow-faced Honeyeater**, which had been more widely reported during winter. In the case of the last-named (and the related **White-naped**) there does not seem to have been a particularly noticeable return migration through Canberra this year, with only a few flocks reported. I've had them in my area including my GBS site for a couple of months, but with never more than five seen together.

It is also clear that **Tree** and **Fairy Martins**, as well as the **Dusky Woodswallow** which was first reported in the last week of August after being absent for winter, are by now well established and widespread. The other winter absentee, the **Noisy Friarbird**, was first reported on 29 August, but which, at least in my local patch, always seems to arrive and then further disperse. A species that I overlooked in my last column, the **Latham's Snipe**, also arrived around the same time, and is by now well established with 10 seen at the Jerrabomberra Wetlands on 30 August (somehow missed by participants of the COG mystery bus trip!).

The first **Pallid Cuckoos** were reported at the Googong foreshores on 30 August during the COG mystery bus trip; there have been a few reports since then but mostly from the eastern side of COG's area of interest (Aoi), and it's hard for me to gauge how widespread it is so far. Numbers of the **Shining** and **Horsfield's Bronze-cuckoos** seem to be higher, with the latter seeming to arrive a bit later than the former, but with both being fairly widely reported after mid September. The same also applies to the **White-throated Gerygone**.

Some of the species that I had predicted would arrive towards the end of September have already been reported, including the **White-winged Triller** (an early sighting at the Jerrabomberra Wetlands on 6 September, and a pair at Holt on 16 September),



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22 May – 6 June

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22 June – 9 July

Two days added for Rusty Grasswren

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New Caledonia birding tour

14-21 August 2016

Strzelecki Outback

2 – 21 September

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

www.philipmaher.com

Sacred Kingfisher (again an early sighting at Carwoola on 10 September, as well as sightings at the Jerrabomberra Wetlands on 18 and 20 September), and the **Rufous Songlark** (again an early record of several calling on 13 September at Mulloon Creek on the eastern side of the **COG Aol**, as well as my record of one calling at Narrabundah Hill on 22 September). It hasn't been clear to me what numbers of the first and last-named species we might get this spring/summer, but with parts of the inland very dry there may be more than might be expected from the (still) relatively wet conditions here. So keep an ear out for them, as their calls are unmistakable.

In contrast there have not yet been any reports that I'm aware of for the **Leaden Flycatcher** and **Rainbow Bee-eater**, but there was a very early observation of the **Dollarbird** during the Mulligans Flat woodland survey on 20 September. Species also expected to be first recorded during October include the **Eastern Koel**, as well as the passage migrants on their way to breed in the mountains, the **Satin Flycatcher**, **Rufous Fantail**, **Brush Cuckoo** and **Cicadabird**. In particular the first two are often seen in Canberra on their way through. The **Brown Songlark** and **Horsfield's Bushlark** also usually arrive in October or November, but usually in small numbers. So keep an eye out for these last arriving spring/summer migrants. Watch out also for the **White-browed Woodswallow**, particularly if conditions further dry out inland.

Despite the continuing cool weather breeding has been reported throughout the period, as might be expected. Interesting observations include a **Speckled Warbler** with nesting material at Campbell Park, **Varied Sittellas**, a **Grey Butcherbird** and a **Grey Currawong** nest building, a **Hooded Robin** nest with two very young chicks, an **Australian Shelduck** with 14 chicks and quite a few reports of **Masked Lapwing** with runners. There are lots of **Tawny Frogmouths** sitting on eggs, including one bird on an old **White-winged Chough's** nest (this has been occasionally reported before). Interestingly the **Australian Magpie** threesome in my GBS site seemed to become a pair as soon as the chicks hatched.

It is unclear to me whether or not the **Flame Robins** at Campbell Park have abandoned their breeding attempt. Early in September there was a suggestion of 2 different nests, but I was unable to find any birds there, though Michael Lenz still observed a brown bird well to the north of last year's nest site on 18 September. It is also unclear whether breeding of the

Banded Lapwings reported near Hoskintown has been confirmed. Up to 5 birds were reported during September, as well as up to 20 **Plumed Whistling Ducks** at nearby Bungendore.

Finally the **Powerful Owl** in Turner is still present there after over 10 months and has been the focus of renewed interest since Holly Parsons told us about the Sydney experience at the September COG meeting.

The information above was again obtained 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 to me. Once again my sincere thanks to everyone who has contributed to these data sources, without which it would not be possible to put this column together.

Once the weather finally warms, bird activity in the COG Aol should increase in our area. So please look out for the returning spring, as well as the last departing altitudinal, migrants mentioned above, and for further breeding. As usual please ensure that all significant observations are properly reported and end up on the COG database.

Jack Holland

Advance notice of COG's AGM at the November COG meeting

COG's AGM will be held on Wednesday 11 November 2015.

For your information the draft minutes of the 2014 AGM are on COG's website .

The link is on the website home page under "Latest News" " You can see the link if you go to the home page.

Alternatively you can use the following link

<http://canberrabirds.org.au/about-cog/annual-reports/>

Notice of COG Annual General Meeting

Wednesday 11 November 2015; 7.30pm

The Annual General Meeting of the Canberra Ornithologists Group Inc. will be held at 7.30 pm on Wednesday 11 November 2015, in the Multi-media Theatre, Canberra Girls Grammar School, corner of Gawler Crescent and Melbourne Avenue, Deakin.

Agenda

1. Opening
2. Apologies
3. Confirmation of minutes of 2014 AGM
4. President's report
5. Adoption of President's report
6. Presentation of annual statement of accounts
7. Adoption of annual statement of accounts
8. Appointment of auditor for 2015-2016
9. Election of office-bearers (President, Vice-president, Secretary and Treasurer) and ordinary committee members
10. Other matters for which notice has been given

Special business: Revision of the Rules of the Association (The "Constitution")

The following motion will be considered by the meeting and voted upon:

'That the Association alter its rules as per the revised rules that have been made available to members'.

(Note: the proposed revised rules, along with a document explaining the main changes and their rationale, can be downloaded from canberrabirds.org.au. Printed copies can be requested from the Secretary, Alan Thomas at cogoffice@canberrabirds.org.au, or by phone on 62785783.)

11. Close of meeting.

COG Committee Nomination Form

I hereby nominatefor the position*

(*Positions: President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, Ordinary Committee Members) on the 2016 COG Committee.

(Name):

(Signature):

I second the nomination.

(Name):

(Signature):

I accept the nomination.

(Name):

(Signature):

Nomination forms may be submitted any time up to immediately before the AGM at the October 2015 meeting.

Nominations can be submitted by mail to COG at PO Box 301, Civic Square, ACT 2608.

All nominees and nominators must be financial members of COG.

Gang-gang project - seeking further data required on hollow inspecting and breeding success

An analysis of the survey has provided 150 records from 50 observers of **Gang-gang Cockatoos** hollow inspecting. From these sites only one appears to have produced young although it is unknown how frequently any of the sites were revisited. To obtain further information on the breeding of Gang-gangs within the COG Area of Interest we would like to obtain further details on hollow inspecting during this coming breeding season.

For any sightings of Gang-gangs showing interest in potential nest hollow sites or any other indications of breeding, could you please fill in an online form to be found at <http://canberrabirds.org.au/observing-birds/incidental-record-form/> and provide information on the location, number of birds and their activity, then if possible regularly return to the site and record any further activity. If there is no activity please still fill in the form and enter a zero for numbers with the words 'This is a zero Gang-gang report' in the notes section.

The project team will also be contacting survey participants who submitted observations about nesting and breeding behaviour to invite them to record observations over this breeding season.

For any enquiries please email ggquery@canberrabirds.org.au. If unable to access the online site then please just send an email to the above address with the details. Note that all locations will remain confidential. Of interest, one site has already been reported for August.

Chris Davey and Kathy Eyles (The GG team)



COG Volunteers for Jerrabomberra Wetlands Bird Walks/Tours

The Woodlands and Wetlands Trust is developing the Jerrabomberra Wetlands as an outstanding conservation reserve, and is now starting a programme of community engagement activities and tours to raise community interest and support.

COG has been asked to provide volunteers to assist new programmes such as Birds and Brunch and Wetlands Discovery Tours; these are paid activities, to help the Trust become financially sustainable. All walks/tours will have a Ranger or Trust staff member as leader, with an expert volunteer, e.g. from COG or the Friends of Jerrabomberra Wetlands.

We are calling for expressions of interest from members who might be interested in volunteering to do an occasional tour, are confident birders at the wetlands and who can engage people in discussion about the birds, their lifestyles, etc. We are looking to have a list of potential volunteers for a 2016 program to be developed after a trial this spring.

We are also seeking someone to assist on a tour on Sunday 18 October in the morning (1.5 hours 8.30-10am including light breakfast). Please reply to Alan Thomas, COG Secretary on cogoffice@canberrabirds.org.au or phone 6278 5783.

Field Trip Reports

Late Winter Mystery bus trip – 30 August

Two full buses of 22 participants joined Jenny Bounds and me on this annual COG event. In keeping with a “mystery” tour our destinations were not announced but it soon became apparent to most participants that we were heading towards the Googong Dam area.

The first stop was the Googong Foreshores area and I knew it would be a good day because as soon as we parked the buses at the start of the Foreshores walk above the carparks I could clearly hear a **Pallid Cuckoo**. We all managed to get reasonable though distant views of what eventually turned out to be two birds, and as far as I was able to tell the first reported arrivals for this spring. After walking around 100 metres all participants had very good views of a male **Hooded Robin** (one of the main reasons for picking this spot), though less so of the accompanying female and a second male. Nearby were 3 immature/female **Flame Robins** which allowed a good comparison of the two species, as well as a male **Rufous Whistler**, possibly another returning migrant, as were the 2 **Dusky Woodswallows** briefly seen, and the **Tree Martins** continuously criss-crossing the valley below us.

Unfortunately the wind picked up (and the cloud refused to clear) which made morning tea at the lovely picnic spot above the water less pleasant than it might have been. However, we could be very pleased with our work so far as we had picked up 42 species by then, an excellent number at any place and under any conditions.

We then set off to visit the Tin Hut Dam area at the other end of the Googong Dam, where one of the first species we saw was more **Flame Robins**, including several that seemed to be taking insects from underneath the lunch shelter’s roof. We did a similar length walk around the carpark and dam edge, where we had very good views of a single male **Scarlet Robin** and **European Goldfinches**, but less so of a couple of very wary **Speckled Warblers**. We also managed to pick up the five local **Thornbill** species plus the **Weebill** (though not everyone had good views of all). However, my favourite moment/time of the day was having lunch in the car park (the sun finally came!) and continuously hearing/seeing **Flame Robins** calling (again no males seen here), intermixed with those of the **Yellow** and **Buff-rumped Thornbills**.

We picked up 32 species here for a total of 48 species at the 2 spots, or at least 52 when we added several species seen at the dam wall as well as the **Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoos** seen on the drive in to the Tin Hut Dam. We did not then visit the nearby Woolshed and London Bridge Homestead as there was not enough time for the walk in to the latter (where the better birds had been recorded) but instead drove back into Canberra to visit the Jerrabomberra Wetlands. Jenny and I had chosen this much more popular spot partly to ensure we did see some birds and also to try and see some of the good sightings which had been reported there in the previous days. We were successful with one of the latter, a male **Rose Robin**, of which all had excellent views, but not the others. Excellent views of a very obliging **Golden-headed Cisticola** which sat up beautifully partly made up for this. Other species seen included an **Australian Hobby** and a **Black Swan** on a very large nest in the open water.

Participants voted it as a very enjoyable day, good company as well as visiting some spots they were not familiar with and seeing a range of birds, including some special ones which were new to some. My thanks again to Jenny Bounds for her considerable help in planning and leading on the day, and for driving the second bus.

Jack Holland

Saturday 5 and Sunday 6 September – Eden pelagics

The trip report will appear in November Gang-gang.

Friday 11 to Sunday 13 September – Bethungra area

Many readers will have driven past the Historic Shirley Hotel (now the Bethungra Hotel B&B) at Bethungra (midway between Cootamundra and Junee) and wondered what it is like inside. In September we found out when I led a COG field trip based at the hotel. It is a beautiful old building, in excellent condition following sensitive renovations. Twelve COG members and friends stayed at the hotel for the weekend, with four others camping at nearby Lake Bethungra. On the Saturday morning we visited Ulandra Nature Reserve (with the permission of NSW NPWS). Some 28 bird species were recorded there, including the iconic **Turquoise Parrot** and **Red-capped Robin**. We added three species to the list for the Nature Reserve: **Peregrine Falcon**, **Superb Parrot** and **Grey Butcherbird**. A productive visit to Lake Bethungra followed and then we headed west to bird TSR 32 (Sawyers). The Junee Shire Council generously arranged for us to have access to the Junee Sewage Treatment Plant where we saw a good range of waterbirds, including **Blue-billed Ducks** and two species of **dotterel**. On Sunday morning we visited the nearby Migurra Reserve, a good spot for both birds and native plants, and then the outstanding Pioneer Park at Cootamundra. Some participants popped into Jindalee National Park on the way home. Excellent birding was had in all these locations.

David McDonald



Red-kneed Dotterel

John Bundock



Apostlebird

John Bundock

John Bundock

Canola in the Bethungra area



Wednesday 16 September – Gigerline

Eighteen members and guests gathered at Williamsdale in far more propitious weather than our previous visit to this site. Thanks to ACT Parks and Conservation and the Land Development Agency for their support in granting us access.

We followed pretty much the same route as in February with a first pause soon after crossing the small creek. The finches seen previously were absent but a group of 3 **Varied Sittellas** feeding down and up in a large eucalypt made up for this. As we moved off a little further an alert member recognised the ping calls of a **Brown Treecreeper** emanating from a grove of eucalypt saplings. The bird wasn't sighted but the call was repeated several times enabling it to be ticked. As we searched for it, 2 **Nankeen Kestrels** were seen perched on trees and man-made structures.

Sticking with the less common species, and jumping forward a mile or so horizontally, and several 10s of metres downwards, descending to the Murrumbidgee the group was able to observe at least 3 **Yellow-tufted Honeyeaters** feeding in eucalypts on the banks of the River. Other honeyeaters recorded on the outing included **Brown-headed, Yellow-faced Honeyeaters, Noisy Miners, Red Wattlebirds** and **Noisy Friarbirds**.



Brown Treecreeper

John Bundock

Many other returning migrants were recorded including **Olive-backed Oriole, Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike, Dusky Woodswallow, White-throated Gerygone and Fan-tailed and Shining Bronze-Cuckoos**. As well as returning migrants we recorded breeding: **Australian Raven (NY) Yellow-rumped Thornbill (NB) and Welcome Swallow (NB)**.

Overall we recorded 57 species, equalling last visit's score which I believe to be the best score on a one-day COG outing.

Martin Butterfield

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.

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Sunday 20 September - Burra

Ros and John Sexton hosted just five COG members to their property at Burra, on a clear, still and warm morning. We enjoyed a stroll along the creek line where **Superb Fairy-wrens**, **Grey Fantails** and **Silvereyes** found cover in the shrubs. **Striated Pardalotes**, carrying nesting material, were seen flying in and out of a culvert under the road so Lach Read, the youngest member of the group, was despatched to investigate further. He found a bolthole in the top of the culvert, just the right size for pardalotes and with no possibility of predators reaching it.

Small groups of **Yellow-faced** and a few **White-naped Honeyeaters** were moving through, perching in the tree tops for a while before darting across open country to the next line of trees. The dam yielded a pair of **Eurasian Coots** with the male quite aggressively trying to warn us off by patrolling backwards and forwards in a flattened pose. It was a good morning for raptors with four **Wedge-tailed Eagles**, two **Nankeen Kestrels** and a **Collared Sparrowhawk**.

Ros produced a sumptuous morning tea and as we sat on the verandah indulging in homemade sausage rolls, mini quiches, biscuits and a slice, we added **Red-browed Finch** and **Cunningham Skinks** to the list.

Our thanks to Ros and John for inviting COG to their property. We were pleased to be able to add two new species to their property list and to see 37 species in total.

Sue Lashko



Painted Button-quail

Rawshorty

BLITZ RESOURCES

COG Bird Blitz—24-25 October 2015

All links are on the COG website, follow the home page quick link

[ACT map showing COG grid cells](#)

[List of blitz sites adopted](#)

[Printable form to record observations](#)

[ACT bird list, unusual bird list, some maps and other info on interesting birding locations](#)

On the website, of interest to new members

(All are under 'Publications' at canberrabirds.org.au)

Canberra Bird Routes

canberrabirds.org.au/publications/canberra-bird-routes/

Checklist of all of Canberra's birds, with status

canberrabirds.org.au/publications/maps-forms-and-lists/...

Some maps of reserves

canberrabirds.org.au/publications/maps-forms-and-lists/



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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.

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LATEST UPDATES AND CHANGES TO TRIPS are notified on the trips page of the COG website:

canberrabirds.org.au/
then select 'Our Activities' and 'Field Trips'.

and on the COG chat-line at:

bioacoustics.cse.unsw.edu.au/archives/html/canberrabirds/2015-08/

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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

Sunday 11 October – Mullangari Grasslands, Gungahlin

This outing was scheduled for 12 July but had to be postponed due to bad weather.

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.

Sunday 11 October – K2C Surveys – Bredbo region

COG will continue with the K2C surveys that have been running since April 2010. The surveyed properties have healthy populations of many of the rarer woodland birds such as **Diamond Firetail**, **Hooded Robin** and **Speckled Warbler**. We will be visiting the same sites to continue the monitoring and see if we can add to the property lists with spring-summer migrants. The surveys will be undertaken in 'blitz' fashion; that is, observers in small groups will visit a number of sites on one or more properties before regrouping for lunch and a sharing of the survey's findings. Less experienced observers are welcome to join in the survey as each team will have at least one experienced observer. Anyone interested in participating is asked to contact Nicki Taws **before Wednesday 7 October**. Email: ntaws@bigpond.com or 0408 210736.

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. **One place remaining.**

Sue Lashko and Peter Fullagar

Sunday 18 October – Wee Jasper

This outing will be to private property near Wee Jasper. The property is called Bimbenang and is on Doctor's Flat Road. The quickest route is over Uriarra

Crossing, turn right and follow the road until the T junction. Turn right onto Mountain Creek Road and continue north to meet the Yass/Wee Jasper Road. Turn left towards Wee Jasper and then left at Doctor's Flat Road. Bimbenang is 14.8 kms from this turnoff. You pass a property called Kenya, then about 1 kms further on cross a small creek (Dinnertime Creek), (which might be dry). The gate to Bimbenang is about 70 metres further on, on the right. It has a "No Trespassers" sign on it. It takes about 1hr 40 mins travelling time from the city centre to get there using this route. We will carpool from Stromlo Forest Park carpark. Please meet there at 7.15 am and we will aim to arrive at the property by 9.00 am. Due to restricted parking on the property we will take only four cars.

Dinnertime Creek runs through the property and usually has water flowing at this time of year. That's probably the best spot to see birds but the property is 86 hectares in size so there are plenty of other places to look also. It's very rugged country covered in virgin tall-timbered forest so people should wear their toughest shoes and worst clothing.

Birds that may be seen include **Superb Lyrebirds**, **Golden Whistlers**, treecreepers, **Eastern Spinebills**, **Fantails** including **Rufous**, numerous small green/brown "scrub birds", **Cockatoos** including **Gang gangs**, and **Wonga Pigeons**.

Bring morning tea. Wear long trousers, sturdy boots and, as it is snake season, wear gaiters if you have them.

As this is an area of dense bush and tracks are narrow, this outing will be restricted to 16 people. Registration is essential to Sue Lashko on 62514485 or smlashko@gmail.com

Noel and Lynne Bentley, Sue Lashko

Sunday 1 November - One Tree Hill (Hall)

We will walk the Centenary Trail from Hall to the summit of One Tree Hill. The trail goes through a mix of open pasture and woodland with a good mix of woodland birds. There are excellent views of Canberra from the summit. The walk will be about 9-10km in total and involves a 200m climb. We will probably take most of the day. Please wear appropriate clothing and footwear, bring plenty of water and whatever food you need for the day. Meet at 8:00am at the One Tree Hill entrance to the Centenary Trail at the corner of Hoskins Street and Hall Street, Hall. Contact Duncan McCaskill by email at duncan.mccaskill@gmail.com. **Bookings essential. Numbers will be limited** because we will often be restricted to single file on a narrow track frequented by walkers, runners and cyclists.

Sunday 8 November – Braidwood Landcare Surveys

The Braidwood Landcare group contacted COG in 2011 to see if we would be interested in surveying the birds on five to six properties where some revegetation has been done. These surveys were repeated in 2013 and will again be carried out in 2015. We will not only survey the revegetation sites, but also remnants and riverine areas. 10 to 12 surveyors are required for Sunday, beginning at 7.30am, and must be sufficiently experienced to undertake the survey. Hopefully the 2013 surveyors will be available again. Please contact Sue Lashko on 62514485 or smlashko@gmail.com if you are interested and to receive further details.

Sunday 15 November — Campbell Park, Morning Nest workshop

This will be a repeat of the very successful practical nest workshops held over the past eleven years. As usual it will be a very informal outing which again has been timed to coincide with the peak of the breeding season. The morning will start with the usual short presentation including tips on the types of nests built by different species of birds, and how to find nests or nesting behaviour. This will be followed by several hours putting this into practice, with participants breaking into groups looking for breeding behaviour, signs of nesting, etc. This will also allow plenty of opportunities for bird watching.

This workshop is particularly suitable for beginners or those relatively new to bird watching, though more experienced members and repeat customers are also very welcome. Though every year has been different, we often don't walk very far as there is usually a "hot spot" where most of the breeding activity occurs.

To participate, please contact Jack Holland (6288 7840) or by email on jandaholland@bigpond.com.

Meet at 8:00 am at the picnic tables at the far end of the car park. Take Northcott Drive up to the start of the Campbell Park Offices, where you take the right fork and keep to the outside of the very large car park, skirting it until you get to the end.

Intending participants might also like to look at the Campbell Park map on the COG web site under the Maps, Forms and Lists button. Please remember to take morning tea to have out in the field.

Sunday 29 November - Gungahlin Cemetery

Gungahlin Cemetery is off Sandford St. Mitchell. Meet at 8.00 am in the carpark of the Norwood Park Crematorium on the opposite side of the roundabout. The cemetery has a large pond at the entrance which supports a variety of waterbirds. It is an excellent site with a lot of trees, shrubs and understorey. It has a good mix of birds including **Superb Fairy-wrens**, **Red-browed Finches**, **White-plumed Honeyeaters** and **White winged Choughs**. The highlight is a population of **Dusky Woodswallows** which breed here each year.

Bill Graham.



Holly Parsons, September's speaker with young members of the audience

Committee Report for September 2015

As previously announced the date for the 2015 Annual General Meeting will be 11 November 2015. The agenda for the AGM, along with a COG Committee nomination form are included in this edition of Gang-gang.

Please note that an item under Special Business for the AGM is proposed changes to COG's Rules of the Association (i.e. COG's "Constitution"). A copy of the proposed changes is on the COG website. Printed copies can be requested from the Secretary, Alan Thomas at cogoffice@canberrabirds.org.au, or by phone on 6278 5783.

The minutes for the 2014 AGM are also on the website.

Alan Thomas

Nature Lodge Optics

Nature Lodge Optics, a family owned business based in Huskisson, Jervis Bay, has been supplying quality binoculars to customers in the Canberra region since 2007.

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.

Open 7 Days, the store always has over 100 pairs of binoculars in stock with a particular emphasis on Birdwatching products.



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.

A selection of Spotting Scopes, Night Vision & Tripods are always available.

As a family business and NOT a franchise the owners Daniel and Joanna Payne will always be happy to source the specialist or unusual products that individual customers require having established a global network of suppliers.

The store also specialises in polarised eyewear with brands such as Maui Jim, RayBan & Oakley to name just a few.

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

Report on the Bird Interest Group Network (BIGnet) meeting

5-6 September 2015

Wyong, Tuggerah Lakes, NSW

BIGnet meetings are held every six months with the venue for the meetings circulated amongst the various bird groups. The aims of the meetings are for representatives from bird groups to get together to discuss items of mutual interest and generally revolve around conservation and record management issues. This meeting was organised by the Central Coast Group, Birding NSW, and COG was represented by Neil Hermes (Vice-president) and Chris Davey (Conservation). At the Tuggerah Lakes meeting there were 42 registrations with clubs from as far south as Ulladulla and up to Coffs Harbour being represented.

The Saturday morning session was on conservation matters of interest to all groups and was led by Samantha Vine, Head of Conservation, BirdLife Australia (BLA). The Saturday afternoon session was devoted to the Important Bird Areas (IBAs), otherwise known as the Important Biodiversity Areas by BirdLife International and IUCN. The session was devoted to management issues and monitoring the 42 areas set aside in NSW. This session was presented by BirdLife's IBA Project Officer Golo Maurer and members of the BIGnet IBA Group. Of immediate interest to COG is the possible down listing of the Superb Parrot (decision still pending) and any possible consequences for the South-west Slopes IBA. Priority funding from BirdLife International has been provided to five IBAs: Mallee (Mallee Emu-wren), Riverina (Plains-wanderer), Hunter (Regent Honeyeater), Norfolk Island (Red-crowned Parakeet (Green Parrot)) and an IBA set aside for the Carpentarian Grasswren. It was noted that four of the IBA's are to be found in national parks. The third session was devoted to some local issues including an overview of local birds, an update to the Greater Sydney Powerful Owl Project, the Gosford Bush-Stone-curlew project and an update on recent Regent Honeyeater and Swift Parrot surveys.

First thing Sunday morning there were three optional bird walks, two around local wetlands and a third in a patch of local rainforest. It was interesting to note the migrant species that had at the time of writing not yet arrived back in our local region. A session on Sunday was set aside for other BIGnet issues including an address by Paul Sullivan, BirdLife Australia's CEO, who gave an update on BirdLife's aims and achievements. A major push is a membership drive from the present 12,500 to 20,000 members. He discussed the Bird Atlas Portal Project and provided us with a rundown of a beta version of the new data input App that looks most interesting and hopefully will be launched early in the New Year. A request went out to all to provide input on how BLA members would like to see any summary reporting form that will be made available on the BLA website. The third session on Sunday was devoted to

BIGnet administrative matters.

The meeting was particularly pleased to see the input provided by BirdLife Australia represented by Paul Sullivan, Samantha Vine, Golo Maurer and Mick Roderick (Regent Honeyeater and Swift Parrot Conservation Officer). COG was congratulated on winning the ACT Sustainable Cities Award and was wished luck in the National finals to be held in October. Many thanks to the Central Coast Group for a well-run and interesting meeting.

Chris Davey and Neil Hermes



Feathers'n'Friends

Birdwatchers & nature lover's accommodation

Feathers'n'Friends cottage is fully self-contained with extensive facilities to ensure guests can enjoy short or extended stays.

The secluded lodging is surrounded by tropical rainforest and beautiful gardens with varying habitats and a large variety of birds and wildlife.

Activities in the area include birdwatching at nearby Mt Lewis and other birdwatching locations, as well as Daintree River nature tours and other attractions.

Discounts available for Birdlife Australia members.

Check our website for comprehensive details, rates, and bookings:

www.feathersnfriends.com.au

Fred & Jeanette Birkbeck

244 Clacherty Road
Julatten QLD 4871
Tel: 07 4094 1665
Email: freddy@feathersnfriends.com.au

Bird Calendars for 2016

Great Christmas presents!



2016 Australia's Colourful Birds:

\$14

size: A4, 210mm x 297mm

From parrots to finches, kingfishers to doves, of the most spectacular sights in Australian parks, gardens and bush are the brightly coloured birds. This calendar features some of the most striking.

2016 Australian Parrots and Cockatoos:

\$14

size: A4, 210mm x 297mm

Frequently referred to as the Land of Parrots, Australia is famous for its abundant, diverse and splendid parrots and cockatoos. This calendar features a selection of some of the most interesting and beautiful, many of which can be seen in our region.

The Photographer

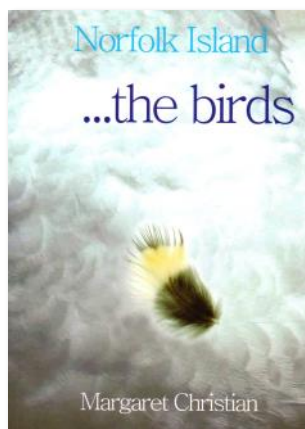
Martin Willis is a well-published wildlife photographer with a passion for the natural environment. With wife Sam, he is located in Malanda, Far North Queensland, an area known for its natural beauty and diverse fauna and flora.

Publications for sale

COG provides a range of birdwatching related publications for sale to members at discounted prices (around 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

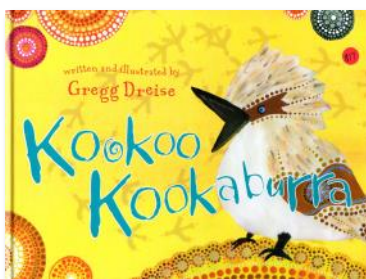
Margaret Christian

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

Member's price \$22

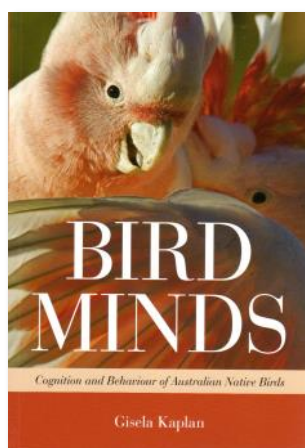
Kookoo Kookaburra

Gregg Dreise



This book is a heartwarming morality tale - set within the cultural context of the Dreamtime — by Queensland teacher Gregg Dreise. Dreise tells the story of Kookoo, a kind and well-loved kookaburra who is famous for entertaining the other bush creatures with his funny stories. For ages 5 to 8.

Member's price \$17



Bird Minds - Cognition and Behaviour of Australian Native Birds

Gisela Kaplan

Bird Minds is the first attempt to shine a critical and scientific light on the cognitive behaviour of Australian land birds. Following on from Kaplan's well-received books on the *Australian Magpie* and the *Tawny Frogmouth*, *Bird Minds* demonstrates how intelligent and emotional Australian birds can be.

Member's price: \$30

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

2015-2016 memberships:

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

New members

COG welcomes the following new members:

J McGilvray
H Thomson
P Maher
M Monaghan
K Schmeling

NEXT NEWSLETTER

Deadline for November 2015 edition

Wednesday 28 October 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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Gang-gang Newsletter

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Dianne Davey

COG E-mail Discussion List

COG E-mail Discussion List
COG has an email discussion list for members and friends: 'CanberraBirds'.

Join (subscribe to) the list by following the links on the COG website or by sending an email message to canberrabirds-subscribe@canberrabirds.org.au. The subject line and body of the email can be empty.

To unsubscribe, either permanently or temporarily, send an email message to canberrabirds-unsubscribe@canberrabirds.org.au.

If you wish to re-subscribe after being unsubscribed temporarily, simply follow the 'subscribe' instructions above.

Canberra Bird Notes

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Gang-gang

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