

The Murrumbidgee Naturalist



August 2014 - Issue #218

Journal of the Murrumbidgee Field Naturalists Inc.

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Objects of the Club

To facilitate and promote the knowledge of natural history, and to encourage the preservation and protection of the Australian natural environment, especially that of the Murrumbidgee River Valley



Pelicans with Young at Leeton Ponds – 10 August Photo by Penny Williams

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CONTRIBUTIONS

**For the next issue by
Wednesday 3 September**

To Rowena Whiting

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**Outings this month are to
Ardlethan / Moomboodool,
Taleeban Reserve**

Murrumbidgee Field Naturalists Inc. Office Bearers and Annual Subscriptions

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MEETINGS ARE HELD ON THE SECOND THURSDAY EACH MONTH, EXCEPT JANUARY, AT THE Yellow Room, Leeton Library, Sycamore Street at 7.30 PM

FIELD TRIPS NORMALLY TAKE PLACE ON THE FOLLOWING WEEKEND.

INTENDING NEW MEMBERS, GUESTS AND VISITORS WELCOME.

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Opinions expressed by authors are their own and do not necessarily represent the policies or views of the Murrumbidgee Field Naturalists Inc.

Seed Collecting

In the days when Nericon and Campbell's Swamps needed to be re-vegetated a lot of our MFN members were involved in a task which still brings us benefits.

Col Sell, Brian McCann, Denis Moretto and Bill Moller are names I have come across on seed collections some of which I still have. I remember Griffith members dedicating field trips for seed collecting. Some of the re-vegetation was done by direct drilling and some was done by planting trees individually. You can see the results of that planting now despite 10 years of drought in between.

One year I went out and collected some *Indigofera australis* seed at Lake Talbot. I visited that site every morning for a fortnight and this ended up being 0.35kg of seed. Mind you after it left my hands it had to be dried, separated and sieved from its husks. Then it had to be labelled and stored in cool room conditions. And it had to be protected from meal worm and other vermin.

Every parcel of seed had to be treated in a similar fashion. Hakea produces one seed per pod and it's prickly. Hop bush is really difficult to separate and sieve as it is really dusty (just ask Denis). The gums are easy, you get your long pruner and chop off branches laden with seed, then you wait for it to spill from the pod together with the litter. The acacias are easy enough but variable in the amount of seed they produce and seasonally.

By the way, this takes all year as you keep an eye out for any likely seed producing trees when out on field trips

There are many parcels of seed still remaining which would have required many man/woman hours of collecting and processing. I would like to recognize the members who spent many hours on this task, of which we are now reaping the benefits.

P.S. We need to collect some fresh seed.

P.S.S Just how long did it take you to collect that large bag of creeping saltbush Col?

Nella Smith



Photos by Dennis Moretto MFN members involved in the seed collecting and plantings and Campbell's Swamp in the early days of re-vegetation.

“Yarrabimbi” Outing on Sunday 13 July 2014

Due to the continuing damp weather over the previous few weeks, Nella suggested that instead of attempting to go onto Barry Hehir's property we should, at Andrew Thompson's invitation, go to his place instead. This was an excellent idea as apart from the incredible walk over the hills, we came back to a sumptuous lunch provided by Nella and Anna. What a formidable pair they are!

As a result, we struggled home in the early afternoon totally sated and not needing anything that evening because of the goodies served at lunchtime.

The walk over the rocky hills through the Crown Land Reserve at the back of Andrew's place was excellent as the day turned out to be fine and clear so we had wonderful views of the surrounding countryside from



the top, both to the north and to the south-west over Fivebough and Leeton.

Nella located many patches of Greenhoods on

the way but the birds were few and far between. We came back down via the cadet shelter where the club has had campouts in previous years. Here there were more birds to keep us entertained and Phil Tenison managed some good photo opportunities particularly for a very low feeding Striated Pardalote showing its red dot on the wing panel – not always seen when the birds are usually seen high up feeding in the canopy.



Photos by Phil Tenison
View from above house
towards Fivebough
Wetlands - top
Diamond Firetails above
Striated Pardalote – left

Of course, lunch was THE SPOT to see some of the best birds with Diamond Firetails, Double-barred Finches and so on coming close to feed on the seed provided for them by Anna and Andrew.

The list below is a comprehensive list made up of birds seen on the day with a few additions from another visit there a week later.

Bird List

Galah
Eastern Rosella
Common Bronzewing
Welcome Swallow
Variegated Wren
Yellow Thornbill
Yellow-throated Miner
White-browed Babbler
Grey Shrike-Thrush
Australian Raven
White-winged Chough
Double-barred Finch

Mulga Parrot
Mallee Ringneck
Fan-tailed Cuckoo (H)
Tree Martin
Western Gerygone
Weebill
Striated Pardalote
Grey-crowned Babbler
Grey Butcherbird
Pee-wee
Eastern Yellow Robin
Diamond Firetail

Red-rumped Parrot
Peaceful Dove
Laughing Kookaburra
Brown Treecreeper
Yellow-rumped Thornbill
Southern Whiteface
White-plumed Honeyeater
Black-faced Cuckoo-Shrike
Magpie
Willie Wagtail
Red-capped Robin

Max O'Sullivan

The Murrumbidgee Naturalist

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Tree-Planting at Lake Wyangan plus Campbell's Walk 27 July 2014

At the invitation by Joanne Tarbit, the club accepted to assist with Joanne's tree-planting morning at the Lake Wyangan Picnic Area and then to go onto Campbell's Swamp for the intended outing for that day.

The planting morning was well attended by both our members and a large number of locals with plenty of young children to assist. The whole exercise was well organised and everyone spent a couple of hours digging holes, fertilising, planting, watering and putting protectors around each plant. Joanne had also organised to provide lunch for the participants and after the work was done we all helped ourselves to the sandwiches and cakes that had been provided.

After lunch a number of us proceeded to Campbell's and after visiting the hide a few stayed on to do the walk around the swamp. That proved very rewarding for basically the first bird we saw was an Australasian Bittern which flew out of the phragmites when it heard us coming. As well, we had excellent views of a Hobby sitting in a tree in the swamp and on the far side, we saw 13 Glossy Ibis feeding in the shallows. On the way back to the hide, we had good views of a Brown Goshawk at close range.

By about 3.30pm we decide we had had enough for the day and dispersed to our respective homes. I returned to Leeton via 'the winery' site for a quick look and found 8 Mulga Parrots in the dead tree beside the road. However, apart from them, there was little else about so I called it a day as well.

Photos by Phillip Williams

Birds seen on the day were:

Black Swan	Black Duck	Australasian Shoveler
Grey Teal	Pelican	Australasian Bittern
Yellow-billed Spoonbill	Glossy Ibis	Straw-necked Ibis
Black-winged Stilt	Eurasian Coot	Purple Swamphen
Spotted Crake	Black-shouldered Kite	Swamp Harrier
Little Eagle	Whistling Kite	Brown Goshawk
Nankeen Kestrel	Australian Hobby	Crested Pigeon
Mallee Ringneck	Red-rumped Parrot	Blue Bonnet
Kookaburra	Welcome Swallow	Tree Martin
Yellow-rumped Thornbill	Pied Butcherbird	Australian Raven
Pee-wee	Willie Wagtail	Black-tailed Native-hen
Dusky Moorhen	Magpie	Pied Cormorant

Max O'Sullivan





Clean Up Australia campaign
 MFN members relaxing after the clean up day at Nericon
 Also missing from the photo Neil Pafraiman also took part.
 Photographer Phillip Williams

Competition #6

The Mars Bar has a winner! Congratulations Virginia

The question was who can name the most number of parrot species recorded in the local MIA area in the past few years. Virginia had 20 correct species and one incorrect, the Elegant Parrot. There were actually 22 on my list. Max O'Sullivan .

Max's Parrots of the Riverina

Glossy Black Cockatoo
 Galah
 Rainbow Lorikeet
 King Parrot
 Yellow Rosella
 Red-rumped Parrot
 Blue Bonnet
 Swift Parrot

Major Mitchell's Cockatoo
 Little Corella
 Little Lorikeet
 Mallee Ringneck
 Eastern Rosella
 Blue-winged Parrot
 Budgerigar

Sulphur-crested Cockatoo
 Long-billed Corella
 Musk Lorikeet
 Superb Parrot
 Mulga Parrot
 Turquoise Parrot
 Cockatiel

For this month

In Britain there's great unofficial competition for hearing the first Cuckoo in Spring.

So for this season two species to watch out for:-

A Leopard Orchid and a Mistletoebird when is the first time you see each of these?

Send your sighting(s) to ericwhiting4@bigpond.com or phone 6953 2612



Leopard Orchid *Diuris pardinia*
 Photographer Eric Whiting
 Mistletoebird
 Photographer Phillip Williams



Birding with a Visitor - 19 and 20 August 2014

Nella had noticed the Glossy Black Cockatoos had a young bird appearing at the entrance to the nest hollow on the 13 August so got in touch with Neville Bartlett, a keen photographer and birder from Albury-Wodonga, to alert him to the fact. Last year he took some excellent shots of another breeding pair and he was keen to get more from this year's hatching.

Unfortunately as it turned out, he was a few days too late as the bird had already fledged during the week and the whole family returned to the feeding area in the Bogalong Hills.

Whilst waiting for the late afternoon possible return of the Glossies, we decided to do a trip to Binya and Griffith in search of Major Mitchell's Cockatoo that Neville was also interested in photographing. Our first stop was 'the winery' site at Binya State Forest and within a few minutes of arrival, we heard them calling in the distance. We located them on the other side of the channel away in pine trees and wondered how we could get closer. Before we could



Photos by Neville Bartlett
Yellow Robin - above
Major Mitchell's Cockatoo - left
Nankeen Night Heron - bottom

come to a satisfactory solution, we heard a single cockie

coming towards us and, lo and behold, it landed in a dead tree right above us! Needless to say we were highly delighted and Neville proceeded to take multitudinous photos of it in various poses. It seemed to know it was being filmed! After what seemed like 10 minutes, it simply flew off back to the pine trees where the others were feeding. Neville, of course, was ecstatic and had loads of shots and you can see the results in this article.



What else could you hope for after that? We went to Wattle Dam hoping for Turquoise Parrots but none appeared. However, Neville got a few photos of Mulga Parrots and Speckled Warblers.

On the way back we went via Binya township and ended up at Evans Smyles Road where Neville tracked down a pair of Hooded Robins and managed a reasonable photograph of the male.

Nella and Neville went back to Narrandera and on the way, at my suggestion, stopped at the Yanco McCaughy Park Lake to photograph the roosting Night Herons there at the moment. On their return to the Glossie site it was then they realised they had already gone a few days before.

On the Sunday morning, we met again at Andrew Thompson's place and had a wonderful morning around the vicinity of the house seeing lots of birds coming in close for easy photographs. Our search for Mulga Parrot was unsuccessful so Neville contented himself with the house birds instead.

After one of Anna's yummy 'snacks' we eventually headed to Fivebough for a look there. Unfortunately, most of the birds were too far out for good shots and Neville managed only distance photos of Stilts and Avocets.

It was yet another good experience to be able to show a keen visitor about the place. It gives you a renewed perspective on what we take for granted in our local area. Some of Neville's photos are included in this article, particularly the one of the performing Pink Cocky!



Max O'Sullivan

Ouyen – Hattah Kulkine National Park 7-9 June 2014

Another spur of the moment decision on Nella and my part saw us making a quick long weekend trip to Ouyen and Hattah Kulkine National Park in Western Victoria. Both of us have made a number of previous trips there looking for particular birds over the years and one in particular, the **Mallee Emu-Wren** has constantly eluded us. I think I have made a few more trips than Nella as I recall at least twice being there by myself and searching in vain for the little critter.

We booked into the Ouyen Caravan Park into a cabin as we didn't relish the thought of possible chilly nights camping. We are becoming soft in our old age!

We arrived after lunch and decided to look at an area of mallee on the Sunraysia Highway to the east of Ouyen called Bronzewing Reserve. What a shock we got when we arrived to find that the whole reserve had been burnt out late last year it seems in a massive bushfire that razed the whole area. There were pockets of unburnt mallee but not sufficient to support any Malleefowl or Quail-thrush let alone Bronzewing Pigeons!

So from there we decided to drive along Patchewollock Road where in late January last year we saw 22 Malleefowl. There were reports again in January of this year that the birds were again being seen along the roadside feeding on spilt canola seed but we had left our run a bit late as there were none to be seen on the drive down the road. However, we did see a **Chestnut Quail-Thrush** fly across the road. We drove along a few side roads in the hope of seeing a Malleefowl but found nothing so returned to the main road to have one last look. Nella by this stage was just a wee-bit tired and as we drove onto the road I had to yell for her to stop as just a few metres ahead, a **Malleefowl** was strolling across the road quite oblivious of possible danger from being run down by us! It just wandered nonchalantly into the bush on the other side never to be seen again. So there is still at least one malleefowl about.

Next morning we got away early with thick fog to drive to the national park just 35km away on the highway to Mildura. The roads in the park are very good and we headed straight to THE spot where the emu-wren has been regularly reported and where we had been so frustratingly unsuccessful on previous visits. On the way we stopped when we saw some parrots fly up from the roadside. Hoping they might be Regent Parrots, we were slightly deflated to find they were merely Red-rumps. However, all was not lost when we heard **Major Mitchell's Cockatoos** calling and 4 flew into trees nearby. Just a beautiful bird no matter how many times you see them.



Mallee Emu-Wren
Photographer Jim Smart



Chestnut Quail-Thrush.
Photographer David Kleinert

feeding on the ground. So that put a spanner in the works so we decided to move away from them to another area where we couldn't hear them.

At the spot for the emu-wren we settled for a long search so determined were we to find them this time. Nella with perfect hearing and me with little ability to hear such a low frequency call wasn't a perfect team but we spent the time searching and listening for the call. Nella was sure we were onto them when she kept hearing what she thought was their call and we kept following it for some time. Whilst doing so, a very confiding pair of **Chestnut Quail-Thrush** were busily feeding close by and everytime Nella thought she was onto the wrens, the Quail-Thrush would be there. So she played their call and found that the Quail-Thrush have a low frequency contact call that they make when

Not long after, Nella this time was convinced she heard the wrens and on playing their call on her phone App, a male bird popped up on a small eucalypt out of the spinifex. I got a very brief view but we at least knew we were onto them at last.

With patience, the male reappeared and we both had a good look at him whilst he scurried from one clump of spinifex to another with brief times sitting out in the open. Others were also seen but didn't give clear looks so we couldn't claim seeing a female although there were more than a pair of birds present.

We decided to leave them and drove further along the road and stopped where we saw some babblers fly across the track. They turned out to be **White-browed** rather than **Chestnut-crowned** as we had hoped. However, at that spot, we saw a male **Hooded Robin** and **Gilbert's Whistler** plus the mallee form of the **Spotted Pardalote** which was a bonus for us.

We had lunch at the campground beside Lake Mournpall and I was surprised to see how high the water level was. I had been there many years ago during the drought and the lake was all but empty so it was strange to see it so high.



Hooded Robin
Photographer David Kleinert

Nella read later at the Visitors' Centre that they had some environmental water allocation, hence the present level. The week after we came home there was a report on Birding-Aus saying that the flow will continue until November and that the water level will rise another metre flooding not only the campgrounds but is aimed at inundating the Blackbox woodlands nearby that haven't had water for 35 years or more and need to be flooded in order to survive.

Max O'Sullivan

Footnote: On the way home we came via Swan Hill, Deniliquin and Jerilderie. I was surprised to see an **Indian Myna** in the main street of Jerilderie and fear it won't be long before they find their way into the MIA. They seem to be present in all Murray River towns but so far haven't been reported in these parts. How long will that be – I wonder!

A Rare Encounter of the Trials of Life

Butterflies are not the easiest of subjects to photograph. They rarely settle for long enough to get closer to get a decent shot. Whilst walking in the Bunya Mountains in Queensland, I seized on the chance to get one of a Wanderer butterfly slowly moving over a small shrub. At first I did not get too close in case I scared it off.

It was then I noticed a small twig or leaf land close to the butterfly. The latter gave a few flutters but did not fly off. I moved in closer to get a full frame shot. It was only then I realised that the twig or leaf was actually a preying mantis. By now it was enjoying a meal of the butterfly quite unconcerned that I was hovering over it clicking away.



Eric Whiting

An Introduction to Lichens

Lichens are very often not distinguished from mosses. They are both small things growing on bark or on the ground. Yet they are as different as trees are from birds.

Lichens are a perfect combination of a fungus and one (or two) algae. The fungus contributes to the framework, water and mineral requirements, and protection from predators. The algal partner(s) provide the food via photosynthesis.

The symbiotic relationship is so successful that lichens can be found in more habitats than any other type of organism. The big exception is the marine habitat.

Success in nature is always accompanied by great biodiversity. In part this is displayed in the shape of lichens. For convenience lichens are categorised into three main groups –

Fruticose are three dimensional,

Foliose grow in two dimensions and have a cortex (outer layer) on both upper and lower surfaces, and

Crustose that are also two dimensional but the lower surface is in intimate contact with the substrate and does not have a lower cortex.

Fruticose



Foliose



Crustose



There are a few other variations in form but most lichens can be put into one of the main groups, although the boundaries between the groups can be a bit blurred just like flowering plants can be classed as trees, shrubs or herbs – with a bit of leeway!

Foliose – spore bodies on a twig. Above right.
Crustose – the red ‘spots’ are the spore bodies. Below right.

A feature of many lichens is the fruiting structure. They can form colourful cups on the surface of the lichen. Only the fungal partner is involved in sexual reproduction leading to the formation of spores. The algal partner only multiplies by cell division within the body of the lichen. The released fungal spores have to locate a new algal partner to form a new lichen.



Most of the other features of lichens are microscopic, which invariably means putting a name to a lichen in the field is nigh on impossible. To add to the frustrations diversity also involves a battery of chemicals produced within the body of the lichen. These chemicals are often unique to lichens. Nobody is certain on what role they play, but possibilities include UV protection, and/or protection against being eaten.

Lichens have been studied in Europe since the 1700's, and much is known of their classification, distribution and life cycle. Unfortunately that is not true of Australian lichens. But that is part of their fascination.



Eric Whiting

MEMBERS' SIGHTINGS

These sightings are from members' observations. Please check with the relevant person before quoting any record.

Australasian Bittern [1]	Fivebough Wetlands	11/07/14	Max O'Sullivan
Brolga [7]	Fivebough Wetlands	11/07/14	Max O'Sullivan
Ginger cat [very large]	Fivebough Wetlands	11/07/14	Max O'Sullivan
Nankeen Night Heron [8]	McCaughy Lake, Yanco	12/07/14	Max O'Sullivan
Ground Cuckoo-Shrike [1]	McCaughy Lake, Yanco	12/07/14	Max O'Sullivan
Flame Robin [4+]	Leeton Refuse Tip, Corbie Hill Rd.	12/07/14	Phil Tenison
Glossy Black Cockatoo	Narrandera site	12/07/14	Nella Smith

One breeding pair had a young bird at the nest hollow ready to fly off with the parent birds.

Masked Lapwing + 4 chicks	Dunn Ave, Leeton near the station	14/07/14	Max O'Sullivan
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The chicks had only recently hatched and I was surprised to see there were four. I have been watching them now for the past 3 weeks and they all have survived the traffic. At the time of sending this in, there are only now three. A cat was seen lurking about in the area where they usually feed!

Major Mitchell's Cockatoo [1]	'The winery' site Binya State Forest	19/07/14	Nella Smith
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See article and photo of this and other birds taken by Neville Bartlett from Wodonga in this newsletter.

Black-tailed Native-hen [2]	Old sewerage ponds beside Binya SF	19/07/14	Max O'Sullivan
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This is the first sighting in the area for several months – they haven't appeared at Fivebough yet.

Hooded Robin [pr]	Evans Smyles Rd via Leeton	19/07/14	Neville Bartlett
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Glossy Black Cockatoo [pr]	Narrandera site	19/07/14	Neville Bartlett
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White-bellied Sea-Eagle	Five Mile, Narrandera	19/07/14	Nella Smith
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Glossy Ibis [5]	Fivebough Wetlands	20/07/14	Keith Hutton
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Black Falcon [1]	Fivebough Wetlands	20/07/14	Keith Hutton
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White-bellied Sea-Eagle [1]	Fivebough Wetlands	20/07/14	Max O'Sullivan
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Wedge-tailed Eagle [2]	Fivebough Wetlands	20/07/14	Neville Bartlett
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White-fronted Chat [1]	Fivebough Wetlands	20/07/14	Max O'Sullivan
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White-winged Wren [3 groups]	Tuckerbil area	25/07/14	Max O'Sullivan
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Wedge-tailed Eagle {on nest}	Tuckerbil area	25/07/14	Max O'Sullivan
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Olive-backed Oriole [1]	The Basin Dam/Tuckerbil area	25/07/14	Max O'Sullivan
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Australasian Bittern [1]	Campbell's Swamp, Griffith	27/07/14	Group Outing
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Brown Goshawk [female]	Campbell's Swamp, Griffith	27/07/14	Group Outing
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Glossy Ibis [13]	Campbell's Swamp, Griffith	27/07/14	Group Outing
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Mulga Parrot [8]	"The winery" site Binya State Forest	27/07/14	Max O'Sullivan
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Double-banded Plover [2+]	Fivebough Wetlands [Hooey Lookout]	27/07/14	Keith Hutton
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Major Mitchell's Cockatoo [6+]	Leeton CBD flying over noisily	28/07/14	Max O'Sullivan
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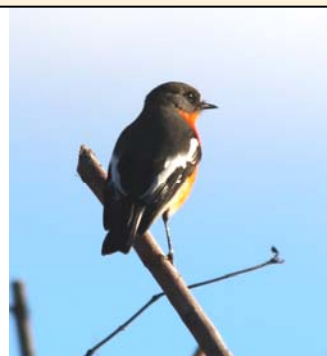
Keith reported they were seen at Fivebough as well that day which makes it a new bird for the Fivebough list.

Sharp-tailed Sandpiper [1]	Fivebough Wetlands	29/07/14	Max O'Sullivan
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Marsh Sandpiper [4]	Fivebough Wetlands [Hooey Lookout]	29/07/14	Max O'Sullivan
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This is the first return of the waders this season so we expect more to return in the coming weeks.

Flame Robin photos by Phil Tenison, taken at the Leeton Refuse Tip Left image is of an immature bird



Magpie Goose [22]	Riverina Beef Feedlot, Yanco	30/07/14	Ben Kschenka
Major Mitchell's Cockatoo [20+]	Tharbogang Swamp via Griffith	31/07/14	Max O'Sullivan
Freckled Duck [30]	Lake Wyangan south lake	31/07/14	Max O'Sullivan
Dusky Woodswallow [50+]	'The winery' site Binya State Forest	31/07/14	Max O'Sullivan

This is the first sighting of woodswallows for several months – Spring is on the way perhaps!

Another interesting sign of a change of season is the sighting of a **Red-capped Plover** at Fivebough with 2 half-grown chicks and 3 **Black Swans** sitting on nests in the middle of the swamp on 02/08/14. On the way to the Clean-up at Nericon on 3/8, I saw two juvenile Black-shouldered Kites in a tree beside Whitton Road.

Golden Whistler [pr]	Carathool Reserve Quarry Rd Griffith	03/08/14	Neil Palframan
Curlew Sandpiper	Fivebough Wetlands	05/08/14	Keith Hutton
Superb Parrot [2 males]	Riverina Beef Feedlot, Yanco	08/08/14	Ben Kschenka

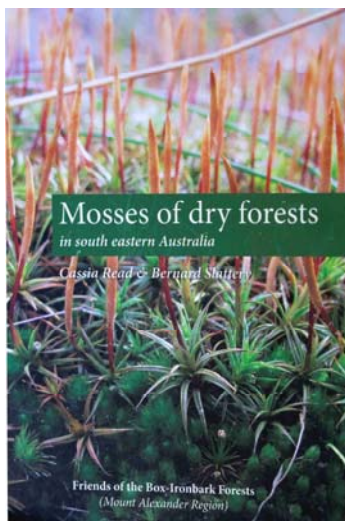
Keith Hutton has recently completed his quarterly survey of Fivebough and Tuckerbil and I have highlighted below a number of species that have been recorded this time around – they include;

364 **Black Swans**, 450 **Pink-eared Ducks**, 125 **Australasian Shoveler**, 1058 **Grey Teals** (no surprise there), 98 **Black Ducks**, 93 **Black-fronted Dotterels** and, surprisingly, only 6 **Pelicans**.

The Pelicans seem to be everywhere at the moment as you often see them daily gliding over the CBD in Leeton as well as along channel banks everywhere, so they must spend most of the time away from their normal roosting site at Fivebough. On a recent trip to Griffith via Whitton Road, I saw 10 Pelicans sitting in a paddock just out of Wattle Hill. What are they feeding on there? I wonder!

And in Narrandera Betty Bradney has reported seeing at least 20 **Pelicans** at Lake Talbot on 27 July, when the water was low, where they were madly feeding and then on the next day she saw around 50 at the Narrandera Wetlands. At the nearby canal, again where the water was low she saw a number of **Black Shags** driving fish in front of them, stirring up the water. Betty would like to know is where do Pelicans sleep?

Book Review – Mosses of Dry Forests by Cassia Reed and Bernard Slattery



Books on Australian mosses are quite rare. Those that have been published were done so many years ago and/or only suitable for the dedicated bryologist who understood the technical language.

It is therefore very welcome to have the book written purely for the layman and in delightfully simple words. Initially conceived to be used only in the Box-Ironbark forests around Castlemaine in Victoria., the authors realised that the mosses they were covering were commonly found in all the dry country forests (and woodlands) in south-east Australia.

Twenty-eight species are fully described and illustrated with photographs of them in situ both when wet and when dry if their appearance is different, a drawing of the leaf and one or two of the spore capsule. Eight others have shorter descriptions and even more are given a brief mention. This is quite sufficient coverage of the species one would expect to find. The main exceptions are those species that are minute

(less than 2 mm high) – let's face it they are really hard to find anyway.

The introduction covers the role of mosses in the ecosystem to set the scene, a description of their structure and life cycle, and notes on how to identify mosses. As with the rest of the book, this section is all in simple English!

There are five appendices covering the relationship of mosses to their habitat, allied plants, the differences between mosses and lichens, a piece in names, and a really useful list of further reading.

All this in a pocket size book for only \$10 to Field Naturalists. A fantastic outcome of a community project by the Friends of the Box-Ironbark Forests. I heartily congratulate them and the authors and recommend that all Field Naturalists get this book.

Eric Whiting

[Penny Williams has the details and a copy of the order form – phone 6953 3524, email murrumbidgeefieldnaturalists@gmail.com]



**** COMING EVENTS ****

- 14 August Thursday** **Monthly Meeting** the Yellow Room at **Leeton Library**,
Sycamore St., Leeton, commencing at 7:30pm
NOTE change of venue **Topic: Highlights of our North Queensland Trip**
Eric and Rowena Whiting
Contact: Penny Williams 6953 3524
Email: murrumbidgeefieldnaturalists@gmail.com
- David Egan will give his talk on the Red-lored Whistler study at Round Hill later in the year.**
- 17 August Sunday** **Outing to Ardlethan - Moombooldool**
For Orchids and Spring Flowers
Meet at the Kamarah Silos (Burley Griffin Way) at 9:00am
Bring morning tea and lunch
Contact: Nella Smith if intending to come on 6959 1210
- 31 August Sunday** **Taleeban Reserve**
Meet at the Erigolia Road (to the West of Binya), Burley Griffin Way
at 9am
Bring morning tea and lunch,
Contact: Max O'Sullivan if intending to come on 6953 4726
- NOTE:** The GPS instruction for this day has been postponed again as Stephen is unavailable.
- 3 September Wednesday** **Copy for the September newsletter is due. Please send to Rowena.**
Email: ericwhiting4@bigpond.com. Phone: 6953 2612.
- 11 September Thursday** **Monthly Meeting** the Yellow Room at **Leeton Library**,
Sycamore St., Leeton, commencing at 7:30pm
Topic: TBA
Contact: Penny Williams 6953 3524
Email: murrumbidgeefieldnaturalists@gmail.com
- 12-14 September** **Spring Campout to Hunthawang National Park (north of Hillston)**
Friday to Sunday Staying in the homestead which is on the Lachlan River
Expressions of interest to Nella Smith 6953 1210
- 18 September Thursday** **Special Meeting** to meet **Martin Odino** and hear his presentation
about his work in Kenya to stop the poisoning of birds in the Bunyala
Rice Fields. Venue: Leeton Library – Yellow Room at 7:30pm.
PLEASE COME TO MEET MARTIN AND HEAR HIM TELL
ABOUT HIS PROJECT IN WESTERN KENYA
- 20-21 September** **Kajuligah Nature Reserve** (near Ivanhoe)
Biodiversity Survey
Expressions of interest to Nella Smith 6953 1210
- 25/26 October** **The annual Twitchathon competition – get your teams organised!**
Saturday 4pm to Sunday 4pm
- Other events**
- 11/12 October** **Birds of the Bush Festival at Rankins Springs**
- 25-26 October** **2014 Australasian Bird Fair**
At Sydney Olympic Park www.birdfair.com.au