

The Murrumbidgee Naturalist



March 2018 - Issue #257

Journal of the Murrumbidgee Field Naturalists Inc.

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Objectives

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

Glossy Black Cockatoos by **Graham Russell**



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CONTRIBUTIONS

For the April issue by

Wednesday 4 April

To Rowena Whiting

Email: ericwhiting4@bigpond.com.

Phone: 6953 2612

***Spotlighting along the
Murrumbidgee River
Birdwatching at Wattle Dam,
Binya Forest***

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.

Membership enquiries:

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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.

Welcome to the March issue

This last month has been devoted to one of our threatened species, the Glossy Black Cockatoo with members participating in counts at Narrandera, Leeton and Rankins Springs. Unfortunately no one was available to cover the Griffith area. Again 3 people have written about these events and as last month with our summer camp there is a bit of overlap. Over the month I think most of us who went out have seen a glossy. Our special thanks go to Nella, and Graham and Dione who organised for us to go on private properties and also for providing a barbecue at their respective homes afterwards.

I need to point out a couple of boobos in the last issue. I managed to mis-label the male & female Glossy Black Cockatoos, that was after pointing out the yellow face markings on the female! I also managed to place the photos of the duck chicks in the wrong place, they are Wood Ducks. Max also pointed out that the Pipit is no longer called Richard's but Australian. Hope I have done better this month! Your feedback is welcome.

Enjoy your read, Rowena.

From the Inbox

Some items that have been on the environmental agenda recently that you may be interested in:

Yanga National Park - The [Yanga National Park, Yanga State Conservation Area and Yanga Nature Reserve Draft Plan of Management](#) is available for public review and comment. The exhibition of the draft plan provides an important opportunity for members of the community to have a say in future management directions for the park. Submissions close 23 April 2018.

National Heritage Places map available online - the new [National Heritage Places map](#) documents the places of outstanding heritage importance to Australia. Together these places tell Australia's story from its earliest fossil records to the long history of Indigenous settlement of this continent, and events that have made Australia what it is today. The front of the map shows the locations of National Heritage listed places, and the back has a summary of their Indigenous, natural and cultural values.

Land management and biodiversity conservation reforms – transition for Biodiversity Offsets Scheme. The Biodiversity Offsets Scheme commenced for local development in most local government areas in NSW on 25 February 2018. Additional Interim Designated Areas have been declared for some local government areas where transition arrangements will be extended until 24 November 2018. Local development in these areas will continue to be assessed under the former planning provisions until then.

To find out about the reforms visit the [Land Management and Biodiversity Conservation website](#)

Counting Cockatoos

The Annual Count of the Glossy Black Cockatoo

In a sultry late afternoon in February this year, a company of local field naturalists first gathered, then dispersed, as they do at the same time every year, to visit local farm dams for the annual count of the Glossy Black Cockatoo.

There they sit quietly and, as best they can invisibly, on the dam walls to hopefully sight these beautiful and sadly endangered avians as they arrive to drink. This, like almost all seed-eating birds, they must do daily. There can be long periods of just sitting around and waiting at these sojourns!

The problem here is that there are far too many of these precious water storages in the area to cover by the small number of birdwatchers available. However, experience informs the group which dams are more likely to enjoy a visitation.

When the cockatoos are in this position of vulnerability they are extremely cautious in their approach. A designated 'cockatoo', to use the Aussie vernacular, a word derived from two-up games in the early 20th century, provides a lookout for the other birds to drink safely.

As well, the watchers sedulously record all other bird species sighted on the afternoon (from about 5 to 8pm) as part of a general data bank of the area. And some rare and beautiful feathered visitors have been sighted; from your correspondent alone this February, these have included: Diamond Firetail; Barking Owl; Spiny-cheeked Honeyeater; Turquoise Parrot; Bar-shouldered Dove; White-browed Babbler; Darter; Australasian Grebe; and many more.

Actually, the Narrandera 'cocky count' is one of three conducted at this time of the year in the region, the other two being, on consecutive weekends, at Rankins Springs and Leeton. Many ardent birdwatchers attend all three counts.

Apart from being rare, hence difficult to spot under normal circumstances, the majestic "Glossies" are unique and remarkable birds. They nest, each winter, in large, sky-facing hollows in old eucalypts, many long dead; the nest chamber snugly lined with masticated wood pulp. The female remains in the nest throughout incubation, being dutifully fed and watered by the male once every afternoon. Following the hatching of the single chick, both parents raise it to fledging, where it joins the family group for its hopefully long life in the sunny uplands of the Narrandera Ranges – and elsewhere in inland Eastern Australia.

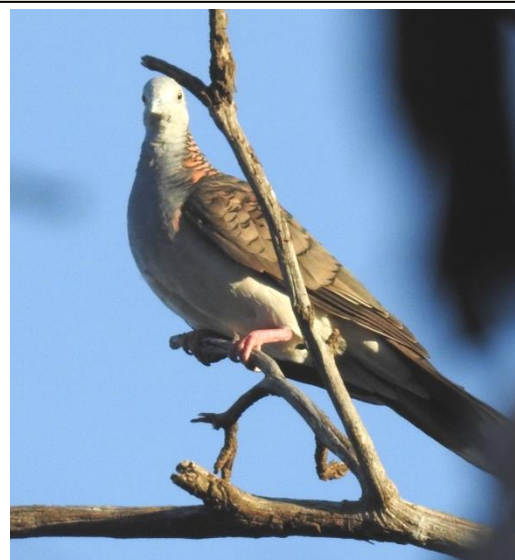
Parental instruction even begins inside the nest. The chick is oddly born lacking the typical cockatoo beak curve, so the parents teach it to abrade the bill down to the right shape to, in time, extract the tiny seeds from the tough cones of its main food source, the She Oak, or Casuarina.

It is this exclusivity of nutrition which has contributed to the bird's declining numbers over the last two centuries - a diminishing also of course due to land clearing and other environmental pressures. Conversely, the success of, say, its omnipresent cousin, the Sulphur-crested Cockatoo, is largely attributed to its omnivorous appetite. This assertive bird has actually flourished with the spread of human settlement, including in cities.

At least with the Casuarina, there is little competition, as almost no other bird can extract the fine seed from the adamantine but beautifully patterned cones. The equation then is simple; preserve and even increase the Casuarina stands and the Glossy Black will be safe. As well, the large, old nesting trees must also be protected from fire, bulldozer and chainsaw.



Glossy Black Cockatoo flying in to drink at dam
Bar-shouldered Dove
Photos Phil Tenison





Glossy Black Cockatoos at the dam showing the male (higher) and female (lower) tails. Female bird in flight (right)
Photos taken at dam on Brobenah Hall Road by Graham Russell



Sadly it takes a gum tree about 150 years to reach a size large enough to accommodate the capacious nesting hollow of the Glossy Black Cockatoo. To help compensate for the loss of nest trees, many artificial nesting hollows have been hoisted up into tall trees in the area in the last few years. Their success is still being determined.

Of course a large community of other birds also depends on tree hollows for nesting, including most parrots, Kookaburras, Dollar Birds and owls.

Similar to all black cockatoos, such as the Red- and Yellow-tailed Blacks, our Glossies - again unlike the raucous Sulphur-crested - have a sweet, melodious call. In fact one is more likely to find them in the bush by listening for the crackling sound as they feed in the Casuarina canopy – or even by one being sprinkled by their falling detritus!

Naturalists the world over count certain species of large animal in the wild by the individual’s distinctive markings. For instance, the spots of a particular Whale Shark (or Tiger, Manta Ray, Giraffe, etc.) are photographed and entered into a computer database. If the giant fish has been recorded elsewhere, the spot pattern can be matched; hence information on its migration, population numbers, *et alia*, can be increased.

The female Glossy Black has such a distinctive ‘fingerprint’, in this case the yellow face markings, which become brighter as the bird matures. The two sexes can also be identified by the female having black bars across the scarlet-red tail. As a result, the ornithological community is calling for photos of female Glossy Blacks (including time and place) to increase the database to add to our knowledge of this iconic bird; one especially important for Narrandera, it being a kind of faunal emblem of the town. The information gained helps in instituting protective measures for its continued survival.

‘Looking down at me’
About 2.5 metres right above me
By Graham Russell



And if the numbers from the Cockatoo Count of 2018 are an indication, survival is looking pretty good, with over 140 birds counted at the three localities this February.

And in the spirit of modesty, your correspondent (with his ever-patient wife Susan) recorded the highest single location count of all. At a vista-blessed farm dam between Narrandera and Leeton, the couple were astonished to be visited, over the space of just a half hour or so, by no less than 21 Glossy Black Cockatoos as they wheeled in to drink.

The wait was worth it.

Alan whitehead

Two Weekends of Counting Glossy Black Cockatoos

On the weekend of 16 and 17 of February a number of Murrumbidgee Field Naturalists ventured to Rankins Springs to help with their Glossy Black Cockatoo count. Some only did one evening and some both the Friday and the Saturday; in total there were 12 of us that did at least one evening.

Between the two evenings they covered around 50 dams and counted 98 cockies over the two nights

As usual at Rankins Springs the hospitality was excellent with those that participated treated to a fine BBQ meal on each of the nights after all had returned from their allocated dams.

As with most Glossy Black Cockatoo counts not everybody got to see one but even if you didn't it was a pleasant way to spend an evening and there is always other things to watch.



Spotted Bowerbird

You only need to sit on a dam in the evenings so you have all day to do whatever you want and there are a number of easy to find birding spots to help fill in your day. The highlight for me was seeing the much talked about but very elusive Spotted Bowerbird that makes its home at the caravan park where a number of us camped.

At 4pm on Saturday 24th February, we met at the church hall in Leeton and dams were allocated. We all headed out to reach our allocated dams by just after 5pm. We met up with a few of the farmers from properties and some joined the count at one of their dams.

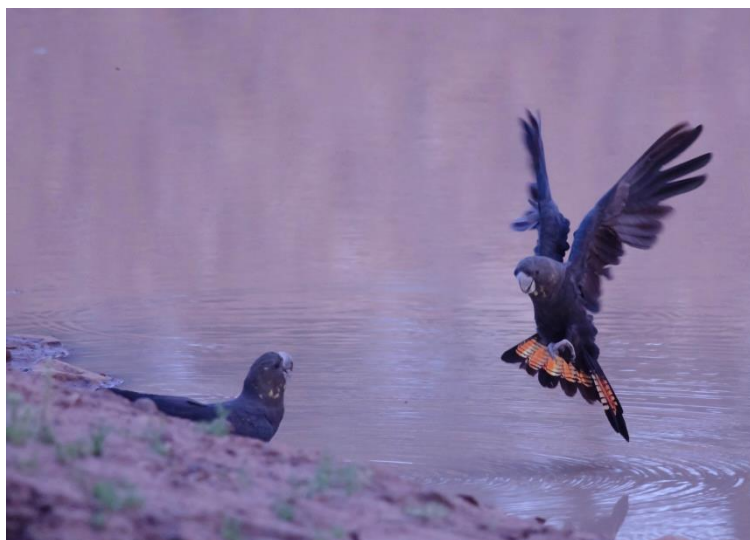
In total we had 13 people and covered 12 dams between Brobenah Hall Rd and the Narrandera Borellan Rd. Cockies came in to drink at 4 of these, with the total number counted being 38. The majority of these were at 2 dams, one with 21 and the other on with 13. Two were seen at each of the other 2 dams. There were another 7 sighted flying over but these haven't been included in the count as they were headed in the direction of the dam that recorded 21.

When all the counting was completed everybody headed to our place and we shared a barbeque and conversation before heading home.

I would like to thank the farmers that allowed us onto their properties and all those that participated in the count.

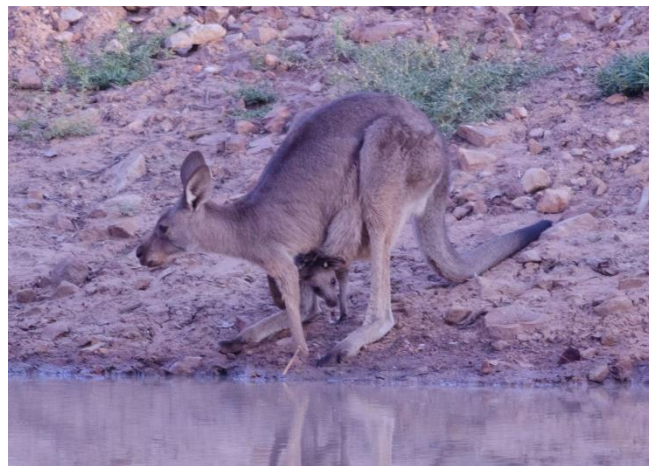
Finally I would like to encourage everybody to participate in next year's count. This year in the Leeton area we had 19 dams that we had permission to sit at and at least that many again that we should sit on. To get a robust and valid estimate of the total numbers in our region we need to have enough people to sit on all of the likely dams, if we don't cover all of the dams we don't know what we don't know.

Graham Russell



Graham has included a detail account of the cockie's behaviour at his dam.

- the first pair flew in at 7:08
- this was followed by a pair, then three, another pair
- and at 7:32 the final four flew in and almost directly down to drink
- There were a few aborted attempts by the others to drink but they were very skittish and every time the kangaroos moved, off they flew
- I am not sure that they all drank but they had all moved away by 8:01
- As I was leaving they appeared to be settling in to roost in nearby trees.



Glossy Black Cockatoo Count at Rankins Springs

MFN had a good turnout for the Glossy Black Cockatoo count at Rankins Springs and as you all know the more people the more dams you can survey.

Up to 100 GBC were counted there, which makes that landscape great for this critically endangered species. Next year instead of a count Lachlan Fold Wildlife Action Group is planning to map the vegetation in order to inform their decisions about management in order to further improve the habitat.

I was privileged to sit at a dam where I saw 12 GBC come to drink. These birds appeared to be paired and some with begging young from last year.

Additionally we did enjoy visits to various sites around Rankins Springs including mallee and dams.

On the way home some of us inspected the Turquoise Parrot nesting boxes at Binya. 50 nest boxes at 10 sites in clusters of 5 were placed in April 2017. As October is the key breeding month these should have been used last Spring. All we saw was a feather and a scat which shows that they may be at least checked by some fauna.

Turquoise Parrot -
Phillip Williams



Nella Smith

Other birds photographed at Rankins Springs (from left)
Striped Honeyeater by Graham Russell
Peaceful Dove by Phil Tenison
Rainbow Bee-eater by Phil Tenison



The Purple Copperwing Butterfly *Paralucia Spinifera*

For my son-in-law and daughter, Frank and Shirley Colzato of Bathurst, a highlight of 2016 was a lovely day spent spotting the rarely sighted, endangered Purple Copperwing Butterfly.

With cold and rainy conditions continuing well into Spring, they said it was delightful to have a clear, warm and sunny day that brought out an abundance of these tiny butterflies.

The Purple Copperwing Butterfly, *Paralucia Spinifera* (also known as the Bathurst Copper Butterfly), is a small butterfly with a thick body and a wingspan of only 20-30 millimetres.

Purple Copperwing Butterfly is only found in the Central Tablelands of New South Wales.

It is one of Australia's rarest butterfly species. Its habitat is restricted to elevations above 300 metres where it feeds exclusively on a form of blackthorn.

Roy Wade

Photos by Frank Colzato



Murrumbidgee Catchment Environmental Water

Watering actions 2017/18 – Update; 1 March 2018 Issue 2

The birds are breeding, the frogs are calling and wetlands in the Murrumbidgee valley are showing the benefits of targeted watering events.

This community update provides a snap shot of the delivery and outcomes of water for environmental purposes in the Murrumbidgee valley. This is the second update and specifically focuses on actions and outcomes since November 2017.

Low water allocations have prevailed this season in the Murrumbidgee with only a small increase in the general security allocation since September 2017. Most wetlands are being allowed to go through a drying phase now.

OEH scientists and water managers are keeping a close eye on wetlands that have been identified as key refuge habitats to ensure that water levels do not get too low, and to ensure populations of Southern Bell frogs and native fish such as Murray-Darling Rainbowfish and Flathead Gudgeon survive.

Current watering projects

Waldaira Lagoon – located to the west of Balranald near Murray River junction

Water is being delivered to this significant wetland that is located on private property. Pumping commenced in late February 2018 and it is expected to continue until May 2018. Monitoring is showing an ongoing improvement of



vegetation (lignum and redgums) which was severely affected during the millennium drought. This lagoon provides habitat for waterbirds, such as Egrets, Ibis, Spoonbills, Herons, and the threatened Regent parrots.

Completed projects

Coonancoocabil Lagoon - located near Gogeldrie Weir

Watering to this lagoon was completed in December 2017. Monitoring by field staff is showing an excellent response with improved aquatic vegetation (Water Primrose and Spike Rush) flourishing. These plants are important habitat for small fish such as Murray-Darling rainbow fish, and Gudgeons.

Outcomes to date



Southern Bell Frog

Last year, approximately 247.3GL of water was delivered in the Murrumbidgee of that 236GL was used for the **Murrumbidgee Reconnection Flow**. This was undertaken during August 2017. This event was successfully completed with hundreds of wetlands in the mid-bidgee being filled. Significant



A baby turtle

areas of floodplain in the lowbidgee were also watered including in the Nap Nap - Juanbung area with "overbank" flows. This reconnected

the floodplain with the river, allowing carbon back into the river and watering the floodplain trees and shrubs (see at www.environment.nsw.gov.au/resources/environmentalwater/building-a-wetland-food%20web-170314.pdf) .

Monitoring in the lower Murrumbidgee has found Southern Bell frogs at Mercedes Swamp (Yanga National Park). Southern Bell Frogs have not been seen here since 2013.

In addition, vegetation has improved considerably in the mid-bidgee (around Darlington Point) as a result of August's reconnection event e.g. Spiny Mudgrass, Spike Rush

Yarradda Lagoon

Extensive aquatic vegetation has grown in Yarradda West Lagoon. This was a key goal of the environmental flow delivered in August 2017.

The pictures below show the lagoon shortly after filling and then the growth a few months later.... and some of the new residents



Learn more about wetlands and how they support us

Factsheet – Building a wetland food web

<http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/resources/environmentalwater/building-a-wetland-food%20web-170314.pdf>

To keep up to date with the watering in the Murrumbidgee

visit <http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/environmentalwater/murrumbidgee.htm>

James Dyer OEH Albury; contributed by Nella Smith, our representative to the Environment Water Advisory Group

Fivebough Wetlands Happenings

Work for the Dole will be wrapping up works shortly, after almost 12 months at Fivebough, contributing a whole stack of amazing achievements as a result. The latest works have been the sheltered seats dotted around the wetlands walking track, with more to be established in coming weeks. The new Budyaan Baamirra Picnic Area sign has been put up to finalise the structure and the natives and lawn area are coming along well, considering the weather conditions over the past few months. The bird nesting boxes are working a treat, scattered throughout the woodland areas – any bird-enthusiast volunteers to run some monitoring on the habitation of those would be much appreciated!



We have some major hydrological project works in the pipeline (pun intended) through Riverina LLS tender within the Regional Partnerships Program. The scope of the works would see the completion of a hydrological study to ascertain water flow rates and paths throughout the reserve, development of previously planned levee bank structures to better assist with water redirection in the wetland and perhaps of most interest socially, hosting of a Frog Watch event to involve the community in awareness of our amphibian friends at Fivebough.

We are focussing on promotion of the wetlands at present, with the distribution of the new information brochures (available at the Visitors Information Centres in Leeton & Griffith) and some new mapping signage at the entrance. The bird and wildlife identification signage is yet to come, so keep an eye out for that.

Upcoming events include a visit from Parkview Public School juniors in late March to learn about *Features of Places* at the wetlands and the Yanco Agricultural High School Gala Day on 17th March.

Bec Byrne

Department of Industry – Lands



Are People a Plague ?

Before I start I need to make some disclosures, I am an average middle class Australian with all the trappings that this brings including a house, car etc. I also need to declare that I have done nothing to reduce the population pressure, I have 4 children. I have no qualifications as a demographer and the following is meant only to provoke thought.

There are some alarming facts in relation to human population that make a good starting point for any discussion on human population

- Current World population is around 7.6 billion
- It is estimated to have taken 123 years for the population to grow from 1 to 2 billion
- But it took only 12 years for the population to grown from 6 to 7 billion
- The estimated population in 2050 is between 8.3 and 10.9 billion
- There are estimates that by 2002 97% of all vertebrate flesh on the land was made up of mankind and their animals (cows, sheep, etc.)

There is mixed opinion about whether the current growth rate will continue or if it will decline but even if we instantly went to zero population growth is that enough to stop the damage that we are doing to the world.

If we are going to look at whether we are in plague proportions then we need to define the phrase

an uncontrolled and usually harmful increase in the numbers of an animal or insect

If we were any other animal on earth undergoing the exponential population growth that we have undergone for the past two hundred years, then we would be considered to be in plague proportions, we fulfil the “harmful increase in numbers” statement above

But is it just population growth that we need to control or is it more complex than this. In the early 19th century a six person family may well have lived in a two or three bedroom house, had nothing more than a Radio for entertainment, probably with an outside toilet and laundry and the laundry was done by hand with no electric washing machine.



That same western family would now live in a five bedroom house with at least two inside bathrooms, three or four TV's , electric lights that never get turned off, and two or three cars. All of these things take resources to create and maintain. The current fictitious family is using far more resources that the one from the early 19th century. So the effect that we are having on the planet isn't just connected to the number of people but it is also connected to the advances in and increased use of technology.

Is there a solution, will that solution be a technological one or is technology part of the problem. As I said at the beginning of this article I am not going to try and give you any of the answers but I hope that I have made you think enough to look for what these answers might be.

Finally while we think about what form the solution may take think about this

If there is a village common and everybody in that village keeps one cow on the common then the common will maintain these cows forever, but what happens if somebody decides that they will be better off if they had two cows. The common may still support all of the cows but when everybody else in the village notices that this one person is making more than them and they also get a second cow; now the cows survive but they aren't as healthy and the common is becoming more degraded. What is the incentive for any single villager to go back to only having one cow and save the common, but if they don't go back to only having one cow per villager then eventually all of the cows will die of starvation and everybody loses. Is this the world we now live in where nobody is prepared to go back to having only one cow rather than letting all the cows die.

Some interesting articles I found

http://www.slate.com/articles/technology/future_tense/2013/01/world_population_may_actually_start_declining_not_exploding.html

<http://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/ockhamsrazor/there-are-not-enough-resources-to-support-the-worlds-population/5511900>

<https://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2014/09/140920-population-11billion-demographics-anthropocene/>

Graham Russell

CRYPTIC BIRD QUIZ Answers contributed by Sue Chittick-Dalton

- | | | | |
|---|-----------|---|------------|
| 1. What a coward does in the face of danger | QUAIL | 8. A monarch and a toiler of the sea | KINGFISHER |
| 2. An action performed in eating | SWALLOW | 9. To sell goods | HAWK |
| 3. Portion of a whole and range of hills | PARTRIDGE | 10. Something bright & moorland plant | STARLING |
| 4. A famous English architect | WREN | 11. A vegetable and a male bird | PEACOCK |
| 5. Equally and a state of decay | PARROT | 12. A schoolboy frolic | LARK |
| 6. To dodge the head | DUCK | 13. The name of a disease | THRUSH |
| 7. Slang term expressing boastfulness | CROW | 14. Abbreviated periodical & popular dish | MAGPIE |

MEMBERS' SIGHTINGS

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

| | | | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|----------|-----------------|
| Mistletoebird [1] | Reservoir Lane, Leeton | 25/12/17 | Joy Young |
| Possum [young] | St Peter's Lane, Leeton on power line | 01/02/18 | Joy Young |
| Bar-tailed Godwit [12] | Merimbula | 01/02/18 | Susan Whitehead |
| Blue-helmeted Soldier Crab | Merimbula Beach | 01/02/18 | Susan Whitehead |

Susan and Alan went down the south coast from Talbingo after our Oz Day camp weekend.

| | | | |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|----------|-----------------|
| Black-eared Honeyeater | 'Yarrabimbi' via Leeton | 01/02/18 | Andrew Thompson |
| Black-eared Cuckoo | Wattle Dam, Binya State Forest | 01/02/18 | Nella Smith |
| Diamond Dove | Wattle Dam, Binya State Forest | 01/02/18 | Nella Smith |
| Square-tailed Kite | Lake Talbot, Narrandera | 04/02/18 | Alan Whitehead |

I saw the same or another Square-tailed Kite over Fivebough on 02/02/18 - Max

| | | | |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|----------|----------------|
| Superb Wren [pr] | Pendula St, Leeton in birdbath | 04/02/18 | Max O'Sullivan |
| Horsfield's Bushlark | Koonadan Rd via Leeton | 04/02/18 | P&P Williams |
| Grey Falcon | Railway Ave, Leeton | 07/02/18 | Graham Russell |

Graham saw the bird very clearly as it flew low along the street – unfortunately he didn't have his camera!

| | | | |
|--|-----------------------------------|----------|-----------------|
| Major Mitchell's Cockatoo [10+] | 'Mountain Dam' via Leeton | Daily | Graham Russell |
| Sacred Kingfisher [fledglings] | Narrandera Common | 07/02/18 | Warrick Bradney |
| Major Mitchell's Cockatoo [8] | Griffith Golf Course on the green | 09/02/18 | Max O'Sullivan |
| Australasian Shoveller [4] | Campbell Swamp, Griffith | 09/02/18 | Max O'Sullivan |
| Pied Honeyeater [male] | Wattle Dam, Binya State Forest | 09/02/18 | Max O'Sullivan |

Keith Hutton said this is the first report of this honeyeater in Binya State Forest – there was one report from the Winery site some years ago.

| | | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|----------|----------------|
| Turquoise Parrot [1] | Wattle Dam Binya SF - 1 st for weeks | 09/02/18 | Max O'Sullivan |
| Pallid Cuckoo | Boree Rd via Leeton | 10/02/18 | Max O'Sullivan |
| Budgerigar [blue and white] | Fivebough Wetlands Car Park – escapee | 11/02/18 | Neil Palframan |
| Little Bittern | Fivebough Wetlands | 13/02/18 | Max O'Sullivan |
| Black Falcon | Fivebough Wetlands | 13/02/18 | Max O'Sullivan |
| Rainbow Lorikeet [3] | Leeton Coach Terminal – flyover | 15/02/18 | Max O'Sullivan |
| Rainbow Bee-eater [30+] | Brobenah Hills moving north | 18/02/18 | Keith Hutton |
| Glossy Black Cockatoo [pr] | Brobenah Hills inspecting nest hollow | 18/02/18 | Keith Hutton |
| Major Mitchell's Cockatoo [10] | Colinroobie Rd, Leeton | 22/02/18 | Phil Tenison |
| Brolga [5] | Fivebough Wetlands | 24/02/18 | Friend of Kath |
| Brolga [2] | Fivebough Wetlands | 25/02/18 | Paul Maytom |
| Common (Indian) Myna | Daalbata Rd Leeton | 25/02/18 | Barry Allen |
| Major Mitchell's Cockatoo [pr] | Dam off Beecher-Leeton Road | 24/02/18 | Rowena Whiting |

Sue's sightings all from 27/02/18 at McNabb Cres. Griffith:

| | |
|---------------------------------|------------------------|
| Major Mitchell's Cockatoo [20+] | Little Raven [20+] |
| Apostlebird [8] | Blue-faced Honeyeaters |
| Grey Butcherbirds | Rainbow Lorikeets |
| Red Wattlebird | Yellow-throated Miners |
| Grey Shrike-thrush [1] | Mallee Ringnecks |
| Grey-crowned Babbler [6] | Silvereyes |
| Laughing Kookaburras | 28 Parrots |
| Variegated Wrens [m and 2 fem] | |

Splendid Fairywren by Graham Russell



**** COMING EVENTS ****

Please note all outings are subject to weather conditions please email or phone if you intend to come.

- 8 March Thursday** **Monthly Meeting** in the Yellow Room at the **Leeton Library**, Sycamore St., Leeton commencing at 7.30pm.
Topic: Norfolk Island by Nella Smith
Contact: Nella Smith 6959 1210.
Email: murrumbidgeefieldnaturalists@gmail.com.
- 10 March Saturday** **Spotlighting evening along the Murrumbidgee River at Euroley**
Meet at the Euroley Bridge (on left before the river from Yanco) at 6:30pm.
Bring binoculars, torches and spotlights (if you have one).
Bring desert / supper.
Contact Nella Smith 6959 1210
Email: murrumbidgeefieldnaturalists@gmail.com.
- 15 – 18 March** **John O'Brien Festival at Narrandera**
24th year of the "Australian Festival of Word and Song"
Poetry, writing, street parade, street markets, busking, bush dance, bush poetry.
Photographic Exhibition at the CRC Hall, Bolton St with the Narrandera Camera Club
- open 10am – 7pm. A number of MFN members are involved with this.
For festival program of events go to www.johnobrien.org.au
- 22 March - World Water Day**
- 24 March Saturday** **Wattle Dam, Binya State Forest**
GPS tuition and later for birds
Meet at the dam at 4pm to participate in GPS tuition.
Bring nibbles/drinks
Contact: Eric Whiting for GPS 6953 2612
Email: murrumbidgeefieldnaturalists@gmail.com
- 5 April Wednesday** **Copy for the April newsletter is due. Please send to Rowena.**
Email: ericwhiting4@bigpond.com. Phone: 6953 2612.
- 13 April Thursday** **Monthly Meeting** in the Yellow Room at the **Leeton Library**, Sycamore St., Leeton commencing at 7.30pm.
Topic: To be announced.
Contact: Nella Smith 6959 1210.
Email: murrumbidgeefieldnaturalists@gmail.com.

Other events

Further information from Nella Smith Email: murrumbidgeefieldnaturalists@gmail.com

The Bird Atlassers 2018 Autumn Camp will be conducted from **Monday 30th April to Friday 5th May** and their base camp will be located at Ben Halls Campground in the Weddin Mountains National Park, approximately 32km west of Grenfell. This is to carry out bird surveys. The Grenfell area has a network of eleven Bird Trails which have yielded 151 bird species, some of which include Spotted Harrier, Little Eagle, Peregrine Falcon, Bar-shouldered Dove, Black-eared Cuckoo, Hooded Robin, Speckled Warbler.

- 27-29 April** **South-east Australian Naturalists' Association (SEANA) Spring Camp**
Healesville area in the Yarra Valley. Hosted by the Field Naturalist Club of Victoria.
- 29 September to 8 October** **Australian Naturalists Network get together will be held in Western Victoria**
Travelling from Halls Gap in the Grampians to Geelong along the Great Ocean Road