

The Murrumbidgee Naturalist



March 2019 - Issue #268

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



Three wary Glossy Black Cockatoos (female, male and juvenile) checking all is clear before drinking at the dam on Brobenah Hall Road

Image was taken by Barry Allen

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CONTRIBUTIONS

**For the April issue by
Wednesday 3 April**

To Rowena Whiting

Email: ericwhiting4@bigpond.com.

Phone: 6953 2612

***Outings this month are to
Campbell Swamp and
Coleambally***

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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Annual Subscriptions: Family \$45.00 Adult/Single \$35.00 Journal only/Concession \$25.00

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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.

Murrumbidgee Field Naturalist Photographic Exhibition

is proposed
to be held in conjunction with our 25th anniversary celebrations

For this we need your participation.

The plan is in 2 parts

- **Part 1 - Photography exhibit of photographs printed on quality photographic paper.**
 - Prints need to be able to be printed at bigger than 16x9 inches.
 - Photos will need to be supplied as raw images or jpeg files straight from the camera without being resized.
 - Cropped images need to be available by the end of March
 - Images need to be of nature that is viewable in the Murrumbidgee Valley
 - If each of you could send in your best 5 Photos we will cull these down to 20 or 30 to print
 - Please contact Graham Russell on how to get your photos included
- **Part 2 - Photographs to be used for our display boards that we use when we are out and about**
 - If these images could have both common and Scientific name in the file name that would be great
 - These will be printed locally and then laminated
 - If you could email these to mfnphotos2705@gmail.com by the end of May

Contact: Graham Russell 0419 350 673 for any queries

Outing to Rocky Waterholes

Rocky Waterholes at Narrandera forms part of the channel that sends water for irrigation and environment from Berembed Weir to Griffith. The “Rocky” part is actually a rocky section that causes a narrowing of the channel and probably caused the wetland.

On the southern side of the channel is Narrandera Flora and Fauna reserve which shamefully still grazes local horses but happily has a NPWS Nature Reserve where the original koala population was released in the 1970’s from where they have spread as far as Grong Grong or Matong to the east and Darlington Point to the west. The riparian strip must form a good corridor to allow such movement. Unfortunately some koalas do not make it across the highway.

On the northern side of the channel is a Dwyer’s Mallee Gum/Grey Box woodland which is very diverse botanically especially on the gravelly ridge with a few little streams that flow when it is raining and also a few rocky overhangs that create little hotspots of biodiversity.

On 16 February Murrumbidgee Field Naturalists and visitors gathered for their first field trip for the year. Eagle eyed members spotted 7 koalas just on the walk from the TE Smith Rocky Waterholes Bridge to the Carraman boundary and back through the Red Gum forest. A Ring-tailed Possum had conveniently left his tail outside the hollow in which he was resting to allow us to spot him.

Normally at this time of the year (if there’s been rain) the fields would be covered with Wilcannia Lily ranging in colour from maroon to pink and yellow to orange. Today one of our members found a dozen of these in one of the little creeks.

We finished the evening with a picnic on the waterfront.

Bird List Rocky Waterholes Outing 16/02/19 compiled by Max O’Sullivan

White Cockatoo	Galah	Yellow Rosella
White-plumed Honeyeater	Striated Pardalote	Weebill
Grey Fantail	Superb Wren	Buff-rumped Thornbill
Black Duck	Purple Swamphen	Little Pied Cormorant
Great Cormorant	Coot	Wood Duck
Grey Shrike-Thrush (H)	White-winged Chough	Australian Reed Warbler
Pelican	White-faced Heron	

Also seen:

Koala [7]	Ring-tailed Possum	Micro-bat (Sp)
Kangaroo	Black Wallaby	Rabbit/Hare?



A few of the group in the River Red Gum forest – Rowena Whiting



A koala and a Ring-tailed Possum in a hollow – Nella Smith



After a very extended dry period we had up to 50 ml in the Narrandera, Brobenah and Cocoparra Ranges a fortnight before the census. We thought we would struggle to find dams with water in them at all and that was the case in Binya State Forest and the Cocoparra National Park. The Narrandera Hills and Brobenah had some dams with water. This could actually have been a good thing as it concentrated the birds into one area. In the end we looked at dams that we had looked at in previous years which is a good thing for ongoing data. If anyone heard a begging youngster though I would like to know about it and add it to my records.

The total of birds seen in Narrandera Hills was 14, Brobenah 9, Cocoparra 12 and Rankins Springs 17 (In Narrandera, Cocoparra and Rankins Springs birds were seen at one dam). The largest range of other birds seen was at **Brobenah** by our gun birdwatcher see below for report by Max

The **Narrandera Hills** always have a slightly different range of birds. This list was compiled by our other gun bird watcher.

- | | | | |
|-------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|
| Little Pied Cormorant | White-winged Chough | Galah | Black Duck. |
| Peaceful Dove | Pee-wee | Blue-faced Honeyeater | Crested Pigeon, |
| White-plumed Honeyeater | Willy Wagtail | Tawny Frogmouth | Magpie |
| Common Bronzewing | Pied Butcherbird | Noisy Miner | Kookaburra |
| Eastern Grey Kangaroo | Aust Raven | Black Wallaby | Eastern Rosella |
| Grey-crowned Babbler | | | |

Many thanks to all who participated and the landholders for assisting with the count and for allowing us access to their properties.

Nella Smith

Glossy Black Cockatoo Count on Middle Road



Red-capped Robin - Kathy Tenison

I was positioned on Middle Rd just off Colinroobie Rd where there are 3 possible dams in close proximity to the road where the black cockies could come in. I had seen one at one of the dams a few weeks back so was hopeful there was still water in at least one of the dams. Unfortunately after arriving early around 5.30pm I tried to see if I could get close enough to each dam to check if there was water present but each had locked gates and very new fences that defied a climb over for fear of getting caught on the barbed wire. However, I was pretty convinced there was water in one of the dams as there was a **Little Pied Cormorant** perched in a tree over it. So I felt that was the dam to keep watch on the most.

Being so early, I was entertained with plenty of birds along that road, despite it being fairly sparse tree or bush-wise. There were a number of small wattles coming into flower on the bank beside the fence line and I walked slowly between the bushes to discover a wonderful selection of birds feeding or hiding there. Birds such as thornbills and to my surprise a **Rufous Songlark** and a pair of **Red-capped Robins**. I have been searching for both of these birds since the start of the year for my 2019 bird list so if there were no cockies then I, at least, got two new ticks!



Jacky Winter - Phil Tenison

I was being continually distracted by **Little Ravens** flying about which looked like Black Cockies when perched in trees so I was quite surprised around 5 to 7 when what I assumed to be ravens in a gum tree over the lower dam on the right hand side of the road turned out to be a pair of glossies! Wonderful!

They flew out over the top of me and headed towards the cormorant dam but by the time I got level with that dam, I couldn't relocate them. And no more showed the rest of the time I waited – pity!

Bird list in order of sighting them:

Dusky Woodswallow [4]	Rainbow Bee-eater [8]	Rufous Songlark [1]
Jacky Winter [1]	Yellow Thornbill [4]	Yellow-rumped Thornbill [6]
Chestnut-rumped Thornbill [6]	Blue Bonnet [4]	Peewee [4]
Little Raven [many]	Willie Wagtail [2]	White-winged Cough [12]
Magpie [4]	Pied Butcherbird [1]	Eastern Rosella [2]
Peaceful Dove [3]	Common Bronzewing [1]	Crested Pigeon [7]
Red-capped Robin [pr]	Galah [16]	Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike [1]
Little Pied Cormorant [1]	White-plumed Honeyeater [4]	Glossy Black Cockatoo [pr]
White-browed Woodswallow [8]	Major Mitchell's Cockatoo [3]	
Mallee Ringneck [2]		

Max O'Sullivan

Watching for Glossies and More...

While sitting by a dam on Back Hillston Road recently when taking part in the **Glossy Black Cockatoo count**, some old childhood memories started flooding back. I grew up on a farm 40km's north of Ballarat and I remember going and collecting bird eggs with my stepfather each Spring, we had a very good collection of bird eggs that I must see if I can borrow next time I go back to the farm. I remember collecting the odd magpie egg way up in the cypress trees with shouts of warning coming from below when the magpies were on their way to swoop me and every time I smell the cypress it reminds me of those times as a child.



Although I didn't see any Glossy Black Cockatoos that evening I did get to see quite a bit of wildlife and it was a lovely evening for bird watching. Firstly as I tried to sneak up to the dam and look for a good spot to position myself for the next two hours, at least 50 Pacific Black Ducks took off making me realise I need to brush-up on my sneaking skills. Once settled into my position it wasn't very long before the wildlife started returning to the water and two large goannas started patrolling the water's edge and then disappeared over the other side of the bank. Currawongs and

Willy Wagtails kept me company for most of the evening and a Wedge tailed eagle soared off in the distance. A small group of Rainbow Bee-eaters flew in just before dusk and unfortunately I could not get any good photos of them due to poor light. I was also amazed at the number of kangaroos surrounding me most of the evening and I could tell they were looking forward to me leaving so they could get in and have a drink from the dam.



I have also become a regular visitor to **Campbell Swamp** this past month or so and now that the reeds have been cleared along the walking track it has made it much easier to get to the bird hide and view the many waterbirds that gather here. My first visit I was lucky to see some Magpie Geese along with the more common waterbird species - ducks, cormorants, water hens, coots and recently Pelicans and Black Swans as well as many others.

Also while working out near **Pulletop Nature Reserve** I

spotted a very small red-breasted bird that I believe may be a Scarlet Robin though I might need an expert to help me confirm the sighting. I really need to start carrying my Field Guide to Australian Birds with me everywhere I go. The landholder showed me some juvenile Crested Pigeons that were in a nest on some of his machinery and I managed to get some good close-up photos.

David Kellett

Glossy Black Cockatoo evening bird count

White-winged Chough (4)	Pacific Black Duck (50+)	Magpie Lark (3)
Wedge-tailed Eagle (1)	Goanna (2)	Willy Wagtail (3)
Raven(1)	Common Bronzewing (5)	Raptor ? (1)
Rainbow Bee-eater (7)	Parrot ? (2)	Grey Kangaroo (15)

Campbell Swamp

Pelican (10)	Magpie Goose (7)	Wedge-tailed Eagle (1)
Coot (10+)	Purple Swamphen (10+)	Little Pied Cormorants (10+)
Black Swan (6)	Pacific Black Duck (20+)	

Near Pulletop Nature Reserve

Scarlet/Flame Robin (2)	Crested Pigeon (4)	Willy Wagtail (2)
Raven (4)	White-winged Chough (6)	

Reviving Riverina's Malleefowl Project

At last month's meeting, our guest speaker, David Kellett gave us a very comprehensive presentation on this project. He is the Chairperson of the National Malleefowl Recovery Team

He has sent an overview of what he presented:

History of Malleefowl Conservation ranging from early 1900's (Thomas Paine Bellchambers - first known person to captive breed Malleefowl), onto Harold Frith who conducted his studies at Pulletop Nature Reserve in the 1950' and 1960's and then Preddel and Wheeler who conducted their studies at North Yalgogrin.

2011 Aerial Survey by helicopter, 17 mounds located at a cost of 100K

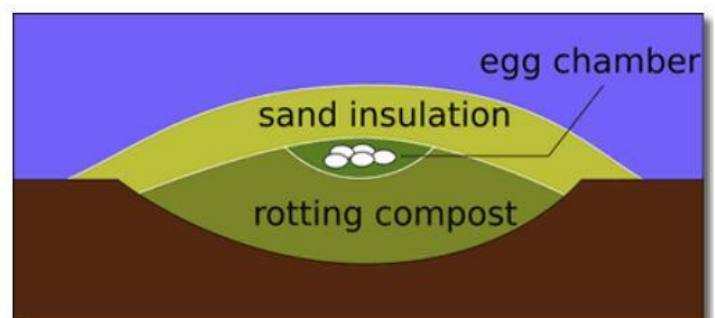
2014 to 2019 The beginning of Riverina LLS Malleefowl Project, monitoring started with cameras deployed at 12 mounds across three sites, Malleefowl Mound Monitoring Training (20 volunteers), 165 ha of Malleefowl habitat fenced and protected, LiDAR Survey conducted with 150 mounds identified and tagged, 68 ha feral animal fencing started in March 2019, MFN's to conduct a biodiversity study of the feral free enclosure in May 2019.

David began by showing a video clip of a fox digging into a mound for an egg, both birds were close by, we were beginning to think and hope it wouldn't succeed, we caught a glimpse of it with an egg, the shell is tough enough for them to carry in their mouth. In real time the fox took 2 hours.

He also gave us an insight into the Malleefowl's behaviour and how they work the mound. Aerial photos of the three sites to be monitored were very clear and put it in perspective for me. They are in Nature Reserves between West Wyalong and Rankins Springs at Yalgogorin, Mt Mulga, Talibalong and Alleena, Buddigower.

There will be another training session if you would like to participate. See Nella's article in the last issue for more information.

Rowena Whiting



Cross section of a Malleefowl (*Leipoa ocellata*) mound, showing layer of sand (up to 1 m thick) used for insulation; egg chamber; and layer of rotting compost. The egg chamber is kept at a constant 33°C by opening and closing air vents in the insulation layer, while heat comes from the compost below.

Source: Encyclopedia of the Animal World, Vol 11. 1972. p1006

© 2010 Image by Peter Halasz (User:Pengo)
<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Malleefowl-camouflage.JPG>

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Owflies



Owfly by Kathy Tenison

In the report of the Yarrada excursion in last month's newsletter a photo of an Owlfly was included with no other reference to it. It was only identified by matching the photo with one in the Field Guide to Insects of Australia by Paul Zborowski. There was very little information given, so I have tried to find more about them.

Frustratingly I could not get much off the net and the CSIRO Insects book I have only gave details in very highly technical language. In the end I was reduced to two accounts – Wikipedia and an Australian Museum page to give the following.

Owflies are in the family Ascalaphidae, a sister to the antlion family in the order Neuroptera. However the adults look more like stout dragonflies (order Odonata). The clear difference is that owlflies have long antennae ending in a prominent club. They have been described as dragonfly bodies with butterfly heads. When at rest on a twig the body is held at an angle to the twig so as to look like a broken branch. Dragonflies settle with their bodies horizontal to the perch. Similar to dragonflies, owlflies are strong fliers and hawk for prey taking it on the wing.

The larva stage is much more like that of the antlion except it does not create pit-traps but patiently waits in amongst litter. They are more flattened than antlions larvae and bear extraordinary large mandibles – they can be up to a third of the body length of only a few millimetres. There are three larval stages (instars) before pupation in a round silken cocoon hidden in soil or litter.

Eric Whiting

Platypus Sighting



If I'm ever out walking with Nella and we happen to be near the river, she always suggests we stop and look over the bank "just to see if there's any platypuses around." I wasn't aware of any platypuses being seen this far down the "Bidgee" so am always very sceptical. But to humour her, we stop for a little while and check out the river. And I'm never surprised we don't see any.

Then a couple of weeks ago, Margrit joined us for a walk in the Narrandera Common. The walk was more for exercise rather than observing nature,

but somewhere between 1st and 2nd Beaches, Nella inevitably suggested we should check the river for platypuses. I explained to Margrit that Nella always does this! We duly walked over to the bank.

Margrit was the first to see the disturbance in the water. She asked, "Is that a fish?", but as we focused on the spot, we all realised we were looking at what was undoubtedly a platypus!

I was torn between watching the animal and getting a picture of this unique sighting. It was on the outside of a bend where the water was moving fastest. It was diving then coming to the surface again.

I watched for a very short while then did get a poor photo with my phone! As we followed it drifting downstream, I got my proper camera out of my backpack, but it was too late. I couldn't get a better photo.

I've done some research and discovered Platypuses are occasionally seen in the area. They seem to be mainly nocturnal feeders, so we were very privileged to see one during the day. They shelter in a burrow when not foraging. Their burrow is nearly always in the riverbank, not far above water level. This must be tough with our regulated river system causing the river to go up and down so rapidly.

Glenn Currie

Searching for 'hairy little rosettes'

Hawkweeds (*Hieracium aurantiacum*, *pilosella* and *praealtum*) are perennial plants belonging to the *Asteracea* or daisy family, closely related to dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale*) and native to the northern hemisphere. Hawkweeds are incredibly successful invaders: producing up to 40,000 seeds per flower, they can spread by wind or attach to equipment or clothing. With the help of rhizomes and stolons the plant forms dense mats to outcompete all other varieties.

In New Zealand hawkweed has completely displaced extensive areas of alpine tussock grassland. In Australia hawkweeds are at an early stage of invasion in alpine regions of VIC, NSW and Tasmania.

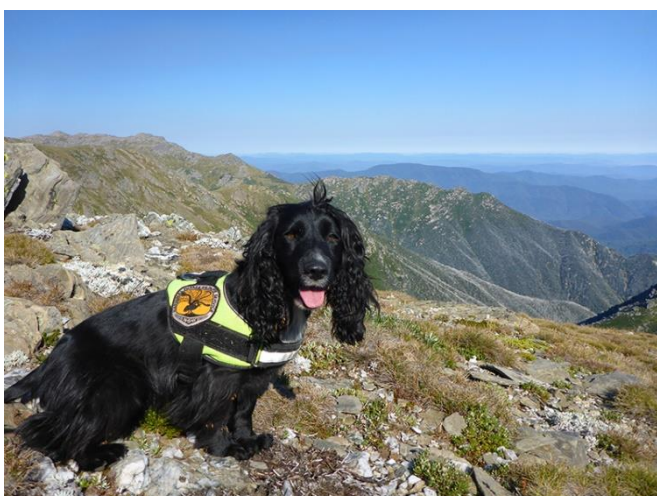
To protect our biodiversity and avoid loss of agricultural productivity NSW and Victorian government have banded together with land managers and the general public to find and destroy every last plant.

If you are fit and well you can join the volunteer program for a week over summer in Khancoban or Perisher and assist in the eradication program. <https://www.nationalparks.nsw.gov.au/things-to-do/volunteer-activities/hunting-hawkweed>

Accommodation is provided either in shared housing or at a ski lodge and includes breakfast and lunches. Dinner is self-catered.

Every morning, after a 4WDrive to known sightings, you walk a grid with like-minded people looking for a 'hairy little rosette'.

This is not a stroll in the park; you need a moderate level of fitness as you will be expected to walk several km a day, negotiating rough and uneven terrain (no paths) and moderate slopes on uneven surfaces. Good walking boots and gaiters are required to crash through bushes and over/under tree trunks. Strong ankles are essential to manage tussock fields. You follow your grid line



regardless of what is in the way. Breath taking views will reward you, as well as the songs, jokes and trivia you share with the happy team guides.

You call out any finding, then mark and record it so that later the spray team can destroy it.

If you are lucky you will see Hawkweed detection dogs at work or as an experienced volunteer you get helicopter 'drop offs' in remote areas of Kosciuszko National Park.

In the evening, over a glass of something, you can share the day's excitements re snakes, jumping jacks, falls or a wet boot. At the end of the week you farewell new friends which you'll probably meet again, some other place trying to save the world.

Margrit Martin

Photos from top right clockwise:

Hairy rosette - nat parks website

Mark and record a hawkweed – Margrit Martin

Sally, the detection dog - nat parks website

Jumping the creek – Margrit Martin

Images of Observations

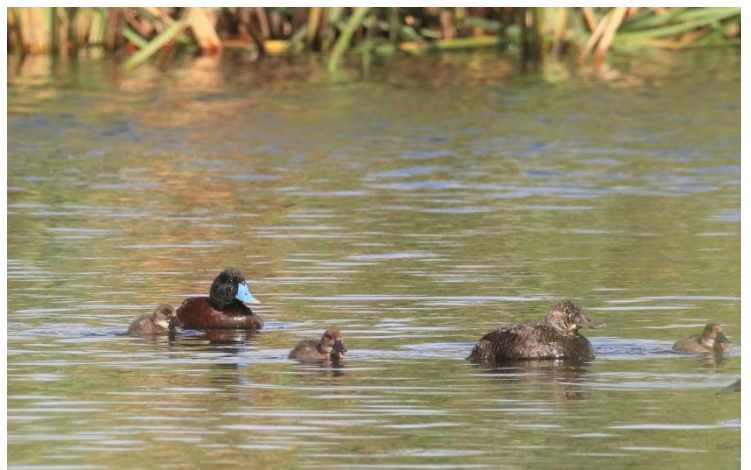


Keith Thompson spotted this **Bare-nosed Wombat** just north of Coleambally on the Kidman way between Eulo Road and Rosewood road, heading west to east across the road (close to the new solar farm and the abandoned ethanol plant). We will be visiting this area on March 30 when Keith will show us the revegetation sections

Keith also took these photos of a **Southern Bell Frog**, also captured a **Tiger Snake with a Southern Bell Frog snack**. Taken at the Wargam lakes, near Booroorban (halfway between Deniliquin and Hay).



**Campbell Swamp: Marsh Sandpipers – Phil Tenison(above), View across the water - David Kellett
A family of Blue-billed Ducks - Phil Tenison (below right). Phil visited on 16 Feb.
The club will be going there on 9 March, this coming weekend. See coming events.**



M E M B E R S ' S I G H T I N G S

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

Guthega Skink	Mt Kosciusko National Park	12/01/19	Keith Thompson
Wombat [bare nosed]	North Coleambally	02/02/19	Keith Thompson
Nankeen Night Heron	Narrandera Wetlands	02/02/19	Alan Whitehead
Yellow-billed Spoonbill [4]	Narrandera Wetlands	02/02/19	Alan Whitehead
Purple-backed Wren [3]	Narrandera Wetlands	02/02/19	Susan Whitehead
Plumed Whistling-duck [10]	Campbell Swamp – birds flew in.	08/02/19	Neil Palframan
Magpie Goose [30]	Campbell Swamp	08/02/19	Neil Palframan
Darter [on nest]	Campbell Swamp	08/02/19	Neil Palframan
Freckled Duck [20]	Campbell Swamp	08/02/19	Neil Palframan
Musk Duck [1]	Campbell Swamp	08/02/19	Neil Palframan
Australasian Shoveller [1]	Campbell Swamp	08/02/19	Neil Palframan
Swamp Harrier [juv]	Campbell Swamp	08/02/19	Neil Palframan

Neil commented that the harrier was almost totally black and he had difficulty ID-ing it as a Swamp Harrier. I saw the same bird a few days before and I was convinced it was a Black Falcon until it flew. It was just so dark even for a juvenile Swamp Harrier.

Rainbow Lorikeet [1]	Koonadan Rd, Leeton on power lines	08/02/19	Vincent Mourik
Major Mitchell's Cockatoo [20]	Colinroobie Rd near the quarry entrance	09/02/19	Vincent Mourik
Royal Spoonbill [30+]	Lake Wyangan north lake	13/02/19	Max O'Sullivan
Mulga Parrot [8]	Spring Hill Picnic Area, Cocoparras	13/02/19	Max O'Sullivan
Major Mitchell's Cockatoo [17]	Koonadan – Phil and Penny's place	13/02/19	Phillip Williams

Phil reported that the cockies in varying numbers have been coming every day with the maximum of 17. They perch in the trees around Peter Draper's old house where Penny and Phil are living and Phil suspects they are feeding in the neighbouring almond orchard.

White-winged Wren [6]	The Basin Dam, Koonadan	14/02/19	Max O'Sullivan
Brolga [18]	Fivebough Wetlands	15/02/19	Max O'Sullivan
Freckled Duck [30+]	Campbell Swamp	16/02/19	Kath & Phil Tenison

Several males were seen with the red bill indicating they are in breeding condition.

Blue-billed Duck [Pr + 5 ducklings]	Campbell Swamp	16/02/19	Kath & Phil Tenison
Little Bittern	Campbell Swamp	16/02/19	Kath Tenison
Rainbow Bee-eater [6+]	Campbell Swamp	16/02/19	Kath & Phil Tenison
Black-tailed Godwit [1]	Fivebough Wetlands	16/02/19	Max O'Sullivan

This is a younger bird than the one that visited the wetlands in January 2016.

Great Cormorant [25]	The Basin Dam Koonadan	28/02/19	Max O'Sullivan
White-fronted Chat [9]	The Basin Dam, Koonadan on the fence	28/02/19	Max O'Sullivan
Brolga [38]	Fivebough Wetlands	02/03/19	Terry McGrath
Common Bronzewing [5]	Back Hilston Rd via Griffith	02/03/19	David Kellett
Rainbow Bee-eater [7]	Back Hilston Rd via Griffith	02/03/19	David Kellett
Rufous Songlark [1]	Middle Rd, via Leeton	02/03/19	Max O'Sullivan
Red-capped Robin [pr]	Middle Rd, via Leeton	02/03/19	Max O'Sullivan
Glossy Black Cockatoo [45+]	Cocky Count – Griffith, Leeton and Narrandera areas – see Nella's report.		
Tawny Frogmouth [1]	Pleasant Valley Rd via Griffith	02/03/19	Virginia's cocky team

The team consisted of Virginia, Trevor O'Brien and Margaret Strong.

Diamond Dove [2]	Pleasant Valley Rd, via Griffith	02/03/19	Virginia's cocky team
Rainbow Bee-eater [15+]	Pleasant Valley Rd, via Griffith	02/03/19	Virginia's cocky team
Yellow-plumed Honeyeater [2]	Pleasant Valley Rd, via Griffith	02/03/19	Virginia's cocky team

Stubble Quail [1]	Pleasant Valley Rd, via Griffith	02/03/19	Virginia's cocky team
Wood Sandpiper [9]	Fivebough Wetlands	04/03/19	Keith Hutton
Masked Woodswallow [10+]	Palla St, Griffith – on power lines	05/03/19	Virginia Tarr
Latham's Snipe [1]	Fivebough Wetlands	06/03/19	Max O'Sullivan
Buff-banded Rail [1]	Fivebough Wetlands	08/03/19	Max O'Sullivan

The 18 Brolgas, Black-tailed Godwit and Wood Sandpipers were still present at Fivebough on 8/03/19.

Virginia reports the following from her observations around Palla St and Cutler Ave in Griffith in February.

Red Wattlebird [2], **Rainbow Lorikeet** [3+], **White Cockatoo** [5+], **Yellow Thornbill** [2], **Kookaburra** [2], **Mallee Ringneck** [3], **Red-rumped Parrot** [2], **Yellow-rumped Thornbill** [4], **Apostlebird** [5 plus young in a nest]. Also **Fruit Bats** have returned to the area.

Sue Chittick-Dalton's monthly report from her home at McNabb Cres Griffith.

Major Mitchell's Cockatoo [daily flyovers have resumed], **Spiny-cheeked Honeyeater**, **Hobby**, **Yellow Thornbill**, **Blue-faced Honeyeater**, **Mallee Ringneck**, **'28' Parrot**, **Red Wattlebird**, **Grey Shrike-Thrush**.

Max O'Sullivan

Max has pointed out a couple of slips in the February newsletter for Kathy's photos. The Stilt in the photo is a Black-winged Stilt not Black-tailed Stilt! And the photo of the spoonbills has just one Royal Spoonbill in the middle with the rest being Yellow-billed Spoonbills!

Coming events continued from page 12

- 5 May Sunday** **Annual Koala Count at Narrandera Flora and Fauna Reserve.**
 There will be a change to the surveying method which means that anyone can lead a group. Please consider volunteering to lead a group and attending on the day
Contact: Nella Smith 6959 1210 or murrumbidgeefieldnaturalists@gmail.com.

SAVE THE DATE for the

Celebration of our 25th anniversary on the weekend of 18/19/20 October 2019 –

We are planning for an Anniversary Dinner, Outings and a Photographic Exhibition over this weekend.

Some other events you may be interested in

- 15 March Friday** **Boree Creek, 'Larell', Shelterbelts and Saltbush: Maximising livestock performance and biodiversity on your farm.**
 Speakers include Graham Strong of "Larell", Dr. John Broster senior technical officer from the Graham Centre and Charles Sturt University and senior ecologist Mason Crane from Sustainable Farms.
 Contact is Dr Mason Crane M: 0427 770594
<http://sustainablefarms.eventbrite.com>
- 17 – 20 March** **John O'Brien Festival at Narrandera**
 25th year of the "Australian Festival of Word and Song" Poetry, writing, street parade, street markets, busking, bush dance, bush poetry.
 6th NHMA National Tractor Week at the showgrounds.
 For program of events go to www.johnobrien.org.au
- 1 – 5 April** **Bird Atlassers Autumn Camp at Condobolin**
 A base camp will be located at Gum Bend Lake, Condobolin where bird surveys will be conducted - 35 ten minute blocks.
 See www.nswbirdatlassers.org.au

**** COMING EVENTS ****

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

14 March Thursday **Monthly Meeting** in the Yellow Room at the **Leeton Library**, Sycamore St., Leeton commencing at 7.30pm.
Topic: "I want a helicopter" - Tassie's Overland Track
by Graham & Dione Russell
Contact: Nella Smith 6959 1210.
Email: murrumbidgeefieldnaturalists@gmail.com.

16 March Saturday **Outing to Campbell Swamp and Lake Wyangan**
Meet at the car park at Campbells on Borga Road at 4pm.
From there we can move on to the causeway at Wyangan and then to the Picnic area for nibbles and chats.
The water levels are low so there should be plenty of birds.
Contact: Max O'Sullivan 0434 923 766
Email: murrumbidgeefieldnaturalists@gmail.com.

30 March Saturday **Outing to Coleambally – revegetation blocks**
Leader: Keith Thompson
Meeting place and time to be advised
Contact: Nella Smith 6959 1210
Email: murrumbidgeefieldnaturalists@gmail.com.

3 April Wednesday **Copy for the April newsletter is due. Please send to Rowena.**
Email: ericwhiting4@bigpond.com. Phone: 6953 2612.

11 April Thursday **Monthly Meeting** in the Yellow Room at the **Leeton Library**, Sycamore St., Leeton commencing at 7.30pm.
Topic: To be decided.
Contact: Nella Smith 6959 1210.
Email: murrumbidgeefieldnaturalists@gmail.com.

13 or 14 April **Outing to be decided**
Contact: Nella Smith 6959 1210.
Email: murrumbidgeefieldnaturalists@gmail.com.

25-28 April **Autumn Camp at Laurel Hill near Tumbarumba (postponed from January)**
Thursday – Sunday Our booking has been transferred to **April, Anzac Day and following weekend.**
It is for 3 nights at \$95 per person night, fully catered.
Own transport but we will car pool where possible.
We will be exploring the mountain forests, sub-alpine grasslands, a secluded dam and waterfalls.
We haven't yet got 20 attendees which is the minimum so if you are considering it please commit yourself. I will also need to know any special dietary needs to send to the caterers. Those who have paid a deposit or the full amount will be refunded soon unless you have indicated otherwise.
Contact: Nella Smith 6959 1210.
Email: murrumbidgeefieldnaturalists@gmail.com.

4 May Saturday **The Central Coast Birders will be staying in the Leeton area.** An opportunity to join them on their birding activities. Details of locations / times next month.
Contact: Max O'Sullivan 0434 923 766

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