

# The Murrumbidgee Naturalist



December 2020 - Issue #288

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



**Brolgas in rice crop near Koonadan Road via Leeton in April 2020  
by Phillip Williams**

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## CONTRIBUTIONS

For the February 2021 issue by  
Wednesday 3 February

To Rowena Whiting

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Phone: 6953 2612

**End of year get together  
will be in the evening at  
Fivebough Wetlands  
on 12 December**

## 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 Presbyterian Church, 23 Sycamore Street at 7 PM

**FIELD TRIPS** NORMALLY TAKE PLACE ON THE FOLLOWING WEEKEND.

INTENDING NEW MEMBERS, GUESTS AND VISITORS WELCOME.

### Membership enquiries:

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

**Bank details for direct deposit:** 062 564 account no. 10039396, a/c name: Murrumbidgee Field Naturalists Inc. Include your own name and description of payment in the reference box.

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

## Welcome to December

Last month was our AGM and we welcome Nella Smith and Meredith Billington to the role of vice presidents. Alan's president's report appears on page 9 for those of you who were not at the meeting.

Sandra McDougall has put together a lovely calendar of local photos from club members so please contact her if you'd like one (or more), a great gift for family and friends. A copy should be emailed soon. Contact her directly at [sjmcdougs@gmail.com](mailto:sjmcdougs@gmail.com).

This has certainly been a somewhat different year and we will all be pleased to say farewell. However not being able to do our usual travelling we have been able to spend more time locally and be aware of what is in our own 'backyard'. It has been a tremendous year for wildflowers with a number of species that we have not seen for some years in flower again. Hopefully this will not be a one off.

Once again the contributions have been great, so a big thank you to all contributors for your part in making our newsletter so popular.

*Enjoy your festive season with family, friends, on the beach, by the river, with the birds, the choice is yours.*

**Rowena.**



Murrumbidgee Field Naturalists 2021 Calendar

### Index for MFN newsletters

Eric has been busy compiling an index of all the articles in our newsletters over our 26 years.

Let him know if you'd like an electronic version. [ericwhiting4@bigpond.com](mailto:ericwhiting4@bigpond.com) phone 02 6953 2612

## Twitchathon *Upupa epops* Style

With a classy name like *Upupa epops* you'd expect classy results and that's exactly what we got. (Actually no highly distinctive orangey medium-sized birds with a long thin tapering bill and fancy headdress aka Eurasian hoopoe was recorded, but if we had encountered one of those, the Twitchathon would have been in Europe or sub-Saharan Africa and we'd still be on the very long swim/flight/crawl back to Narrandera! The other results were undoubtedly all of a classy standard in our opinion.



We had a great Twitchathon experience, visiting Campbell's Swamp, Lake Wyangan, McCann's Road, Spring Hill, Brobenah Hall Road, Fivebough Wetlands and Euroley Bridge. The company was excellent (if we do say ourselves), and while we missed out on a few species like Painted Honeyeaters and corellas the 109 species we recorded didn't seem too shabby. Several "species-new-to-me" jigs were jigged throughout the day (e.g. Marsh Sandpiper and Spotted Crake for Jess, Little Bittern and Great Cormorant for Meredith), and Nella's highlight was the majestic Spotted Harrier. Other interesting sightings included The Other Group, and Keith Hutton.

Mid-morning we had set up our deck chairs, thermoses and other necessary bird-watching paraphernalia at Wattle Dam but the appearance of dirt bikes quickly transformed Binya Forest into non-birdwatching territory. The friendly "hi there ladies" from the friendly driver of another trailer-load of dirt bikes was probably met with a notable lack of enthusiasm on our part and we resignedly choofed off without getting the suite of woodland birds we had counted on. However we had a pleasant walk at Spring Hill instead (*sans* Turquoise Parrot or Brown Falcon ☺) so all was not lost.

Looking forward to next year ☺☺☺ *Upupa epops*\*

**Jess, Nella and Meredith**

\* Nella assures us if you say the "u" in *Upupa epops* as in "good", that's how the Hoopoe sounds ☺

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## Bidgee BooBooks' Twitchathon Day

This adventure began at Narrandera in Alan's garden at 7.00am. Most of the regular birds there could be heard, including Grey Shrike-thrush, Rufous Whistler, Yellow Rosella, Eastern Rosella, Noisy Friarbird and Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike.

From there we went to the Narrandera Wetlands and heard more bush birds than we could clearly identify, other than Little Friarbird, White-throated Gerygone and Grey Fantail. Only a few waterbirds were on the pond, but the process of identifying the Great Egret on the far shore was to be repeated with numerous Egret sightings throughout the day. Was it 'Great' or 'Intermediate'? Was it in non-breeding plumage or was it a juvenile? At times, the birds and the field guides didn't seem to match exactly and, by the end of the day, each encounter still took much discussion and checking, enthusiastically led by Alan.

The Old Wagga Road led us to Bundidgery Creek where we heard a Dollarbird and saw several Pelicans, but not the variety of waterbirds we had expected. Between there and the Collinroobie Road we stopped to

observe a small flock of Corellas to discover that they were Long-billed – apparently an unusual sighting in that area! A very usual sighting, though, was a Nankeen Kestrel hovering over the paddocks nearby.

Continuing on that road, we stopped where Glenn expected to find Fairy Martins to the north of Leeton and he was right. We then headed up the Brobenah Hall Road to the corner of Evan Smiles Road and were greeted with peels of melodious calls from high up in the small patch of native woodland. This excitement was the expression of a few Rufous Songlarks that were claiming territories and attracting a mate following their recent annual migration. We had several stops along the roads that led to Murrami, just missing a clear sighting of some expected species. Unexpectedly, though, we saw a single cockatiel which are usually in small flocks.



South of Murrami, we stopped at some old willows and were surprised to see a Major Mitchell's Cockatoo in a nesting hollow with a young one also looking out at us, as if waiting to be photographed. Glenn obliged them of their apparent wish before we drove to the northeastern lookout of the Fivebough Wetlands, on Fivebough Road, where we ate our lunch. From the Platform we identified Black-tailed Native Hens and a Swamp Harrier in the foreground and could see many birds in the distance including Black Swans and a Yellow Spoonbill.

At the sewerage ponds just outside the wetlands, a Blue-billed Duck grabbed our attention and that brilliant colour in its name is still clear in my mind. Grey Teal, Eurasian Coots and Hardheads were its main companions there. Along the main pathway inside the wetlands we heard Australian Reed Warblers, as expected at any wetland location with tall reeds during Spring, but also heard the faint and distinctive call of a Little Grass-bird next to its noisy neighbour. From the viewing platform we could see the usual range of

elegant waterbirds, including Avocets, Black-winged Stilts, Black-fronted Dotterels, Common Sandpipers, and Pelicans, perched atop posts. Australasian Swamphens and a Dusky Moorhen were also wading about.

**Major Mitchell Cockatoo – Phil Tenison**  
**Purple Swamphen – Barry Allen**



The Nankeen Night-Herons were exactly where they're reputed to be at the Yanco Park, so that was a quick addition to our list as we proceeded to the Yanco TSR. A Mistletoe bird was too busy to be seen, but was easily identified by its call. This small patch of woodland was otherwise very quiet.

Our Eight hours ended there with 87 species in total. It had been a real team effort with our combined skills and experience and each of us claimed to have extended those that we had at the start. Eight hours of concentrated bird watching was a pleasure, with the discussions amongst the group adding to our knowledge. We raised money for and attention to endangered native birds and the very successful projects that are funded by the Twitchathon. Regardless of your skill level, joining a team in future will help you move along the pathway of an engrossing pastime that holds surprises on any day, at any time.

**Margaret Strong, Alan Whitehead and Glenn Currie.**

## **Twitchathon Fundraising for 2020 continues until 18<sup>th</sup> December.**

This year's conservation project is "The Origma enigma – Where are the cryptic birds after the bushfire and how can we save them?" The project which focus on the Rockwarbler (Origma solitaria), Rufous Scrub-bird, Eastern Bristlebird and Ground Parrot between Jervis Bay and the Scenic Rim needs more funding to reach the \$20,000 goal (under \$14,000 raised so far).

To donate, go to the NSW and ACT Twitchathon website at [www.twitch24nsw.org](http://www.twitch24nsw.org) and follow the Birdlife Australia link on the screen. You can just name 'Twitchathon' or add a team name (eg Bidgee Boobooks, Silly Galahs, Silly Magpies or Upupa epops) in the same line.

**Margaret Strong**

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### **Hits and Misses for the 2020 Twitchathon**

Following is the list of birds seen by only one of the 3 teams who participated in the 2020 Champagne Race. This was an 8 hour event and involved 3 MFN teams:

**Bidgee Boobooks:** Glenn Currie, Margaret Strong and Alan Whitehead – **BB** team – 87 species

**Upupa-epops:** Nella Smith, Meredith Billington and Jess Murphy - **U** team – 109 species

**Silly Galahs:** Kath and Phil Tenison, Max O'Sullivan – **SG** team- 115 species

Following is the list of the birds seen or heard by just one of the groups and missed by the other two teams.

Emu – SG	Mallard - BB	Pied Cormorant – SG
Nankeen Night Heron – BB	Cattle Egret – SG	Little Bittern – U
Little Eagle – SG	Spotless Crake – SG	Wood Sandpiper – SG
Bar-shouldered Dove – SG	Little Corella – SG	Long-billed Corella – BB
Major Mitchell's Cockatoo – BB	Mulga Parrot - U	
Fan-tailed Cuckoo – U	Dollarbird – BB	Western Gerygone – U
Buff-rumped Thornbill – U	Yellow Thornbill – SG	Southern Whiteface – SG
Striped Honeyeater – U	Noisy Miner – U	Eastern Yellow Robin – SG
Grey-crowned Babbler – BB	White-winged Triller – U	Olive-backed Oriole – U
Dusky Woodswallow – SG	Grey Butcherbird – SG	Diamond Firetail – SG
Brown Songlark – SG	Silvereye – BB	Common Myna – SG

Penny and Phillip Williams and I did the 3 Hour race. Kathy and Phil Tenison and I met them at Euroly Bridge at 1.45pm and they tagged along with us – the Silly Galahs for the rest of the afternoon. I had permission from the organisers to be in both teams. They called their team the Silly Magpies and counted 65 species which put them into third place on the preliminary list of winners with 65 species for the 3 hours. In the 8 Hour Champagne Race the top place recorded 136 species whilst in the 3 Hour competition the top team got 86 species – so we were a long way off both groups.

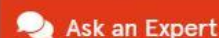
**Max O'Sullivan**

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### **From the Inbox**

Following Joy drawing out attention to the ABC Gardening for identification last month **Meredith Billington** has made the suggestion of the **Australian**

**Museum** for possible identification of species. From the web site "The Australian Museum's areas of study include Australasian animal life and geology as well as Indigenous cultural object collections from Australia and the Pacific. Ask our experts a question online!" There are also lots of links to various factsheets and other information.



**Jo Roberts and Jason Richarson.** Further to the talk that Jo and Jason did at our October meeting they have forwarded a link to the video they showed about the hydrology and geology which explores the deep time history of Matong Forest. The link to **Red Earth Ecology** is <https://youtu.be/2iRSfVgQkCs>. This second link is to the video Jason filmed of Jo talking to the group: <https://youtu.be/E0kmLafZn7g> for those who missed the talk or want to refresh their memory of all those millions of years.

## Superb Parrot Bird Surveys on the Yanco and Colombo Creeks

2 carloads of Field Naturalists set off on a long drive south.

First stop was on Widgiewa Road on the Colombo Creek which was a great site for waterbirds. A lot of cumbungi and reed beds should have been habitat for Australasian and Little Bittern. However it was a breeding area for other water and woodland birds.

Second stop was private property which had lots of Night Herons roosting and many Rainbow Bee-eaters building little tunnels in the dirt for nesting. Never seen anything like it in my life!!

Third stop also on the Colombo Creek had many reed beds and large gums suitable for Superb Parrots we thought. Here there was a lot of disturbance from campers and water skiers. Good woodland birds were busy nesting and raising young.

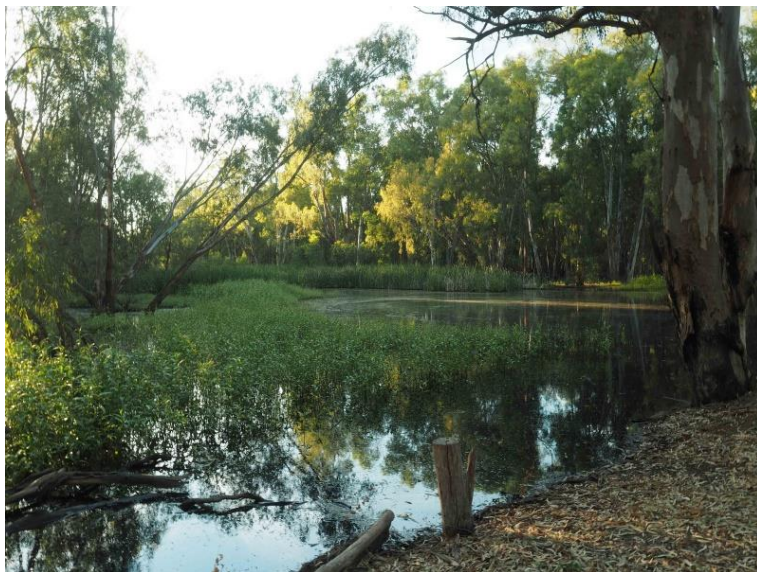
It was a long way to Thurra Road where we met the Yanco Creek. Here there were lots of huge red gum *Eucalyptus camaldulensis*, lots of nesting sites and no reeds and rushes or cumbungi and why are there no Superb Parrots?

Returning back along Colombo Road we ended up circumventing Lake Urana, (a future field trip) and onto the Innes Bridge Road on the Colombo Creek which again had a good mix of reeds and rushes, huge pre-white settlement Red Gum and still no Superb Parrots.

Around Morundah are some good Yanco Creek frontages on Travelling Stock reserves. We visited one on Yamma Road which again had some great Red Gum flowering nicely, some reeds and rushes and cumbungi.

Well the last stop was the Morundah pub. Here Max said he saw a Superb Parrot.

The habitat looks like it should have Superb Parrot, plenty of nesting sites, but maybe not enough food, this could be the Acacias that are missing. Superb Parrots have soft beaks and I've seen them feeding on green *Acacia deanii*. There is a lot of *Acacia stenophylla* out there but maybe a wider riparian tree and shrub area is needed all the way up and down those creeks.



There have been Superb Parrots reported recently, however these were all north of Morundah where we have grain growing which the birds may feed on. I also see *Acacia decora* and *deanii* on the roadsides.

**Nella Smith**

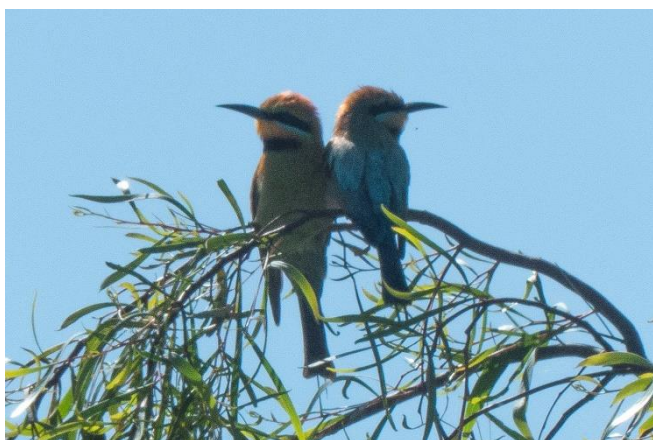


## Yanco and Colombo Creeks Bird List

This is the overall list but Nella has recorded them for each location – please contact her if you would like a copy.

White-winged Chough	Mudlark	Black Duck	Sacred Kingfisher
Reed Warbler	Purple Swamphen	Grey Teal	Magpie
Galah	Cockatiel	Superb Fairywren	Grey Shrike-thrush
Sulphur-crested Cockatoo	White-faced Heron	Willy Wagtail	Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike
Little Friarbird	White Ibis	Whistling Kite	Little Pied Cormorant
Darter	Western Gerygone	Weebill	Red-rumped Parrot
Rainbow Bee-eater	White Ibis	Yellow Rosella	Little Raven
Eastern Rosella	Night Heron	Welcome Swallow	Straw-necked Ibis
Crested Pigeon	Kookaburra	Kestrel	White-plumed Honeyeater
Striated Pardalote	Noisy Miner	Blue-faced Honeyeater	Eastern Rosella
Wedge-tailed Eagle	Tree Martin	Grey Fantail	Little Corella
Brown Treecreeper	Little Grassbird	Peaceful Dove	Starling
Wood duck	Rufous Whistler	White-necked Heron	Moorhen
Noisy Friarbird	Long-necked Turtle		

**Rainbow Bee-eaters and their nest hole –  
Rowena Whiting**

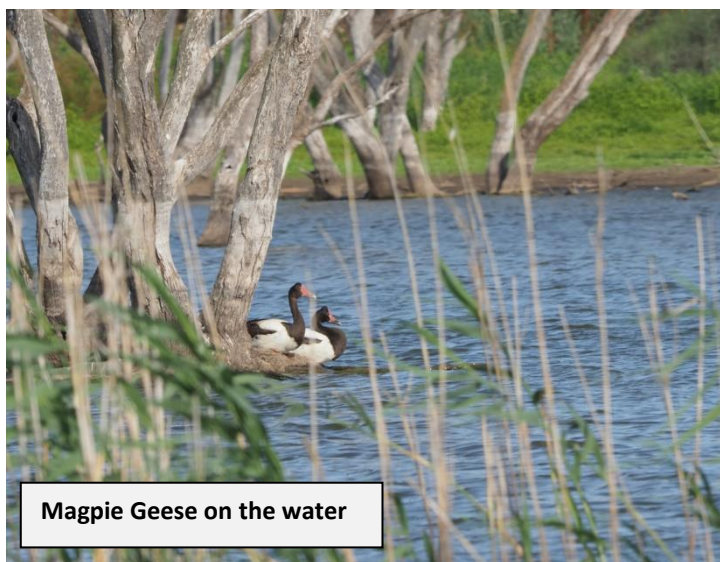


## Lake Wyangan Wetlands Outing - 28 November 2020

Ten of us met at 7.30am at the Campbell's car park. Defying all predictions about 42 degrees that day, we nonetheless looked forward to getting in at least 4 hours before the heat got too much.

First sighting on arrival was a flock of well over 100 **Glossy Ibis** flying out of the swamp and heading out to feed in the rice fields. Then a pair of **Swamp Harriers** circled over the wetlands – the male bird being very active diving into the reeds where I suspect there is a nest.

We decided to head first to the northern end of the swamp in the hope of seeing or hearing bitterns. Some,



**Magpie Geese on the water**

Virginia and Nella actually, glimpsed a **Little Bittern** flying out of the cumbungi but it was all too brief for any of the rest of us to get onto it before it disappeared back into the reeds. There was no sign of any **Australasian Bitterns** that had been in the same part of the swamp for the past 2 months – they may have already headed for the rice fields to set up their breeding sites.

Birds were few and far between on the water but there were a pair of **White-fronted Chats** feeding on the shore line along with a **Black-fronted Dotterel**. Out in the water there were several **Magpie Geese** and on the far bank, a family of them were escorting a bunch of goslings. That would be the third clutch I have seen there this Spring.



We then headed to the hide but the reeds had grown so tall that visibility was difficult with just a few ducks and coots in front. Meredith and Pete climbed up on a makeshift ladder made from a couple of pallets onto the roof where you get a clear view of the whole swamp.

We then headed to McCann Road with a brief stop at the causeway to see what was about – plenty of Pelicans, Black Swans and Coots but nothing else of note. McCann Rd too was very quiet as by the time we got there, it was well past 10 o'clock and very hot and windy.

We finally headed to Lake Wyangan Picnic Area for a late morning tea. On arrival, I noticed a **Caspian Tern** on the edge of the lake so we all stopped to check it out. It turned out that there were 4 of them which was quite unusual. Also there was one sole **Red-necked Avocet** and a few **Black-winged Stilts**. After a relaxing chat and cuppa, we all decided the dust storm was getting worse so we decided to call it a day. Thanks to everyone who attended and in

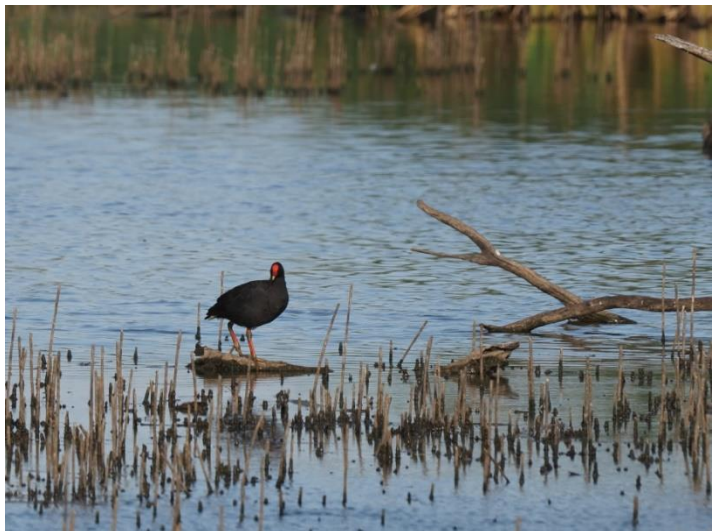
spite of the hot morning, it was reasonably pleasant by the water.

**White-breasted Woodswallow (above)**  
**Magpie Goose on branch (below left)**  
**Purple Swamphen (below)**

**Bird List:**

- |                         |                         |                            |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| Little Black Cormorant  | Darter                  | Pied Cormorant             |
| Pelican                 | Intermediate Egret      | Great Egret                |
| White-faced Heron       | Little Bittern          | Royal Spoonbill            |
| Yellow-billed Spoonbill | Straw-necked Ibis       | Australian White Ibis      |
| Glossy Ibis             | Black Swan              | Hardhead                   |
| Black Duck              | Australian Shoveler     | Chestnut Teal              |
| Grey Teal               | Magpie Goose            | Swamp Harrier              |
| Whistling Kite          | Eurasian Coot           | Purple Swamphen            |
| Masked Lapwing          | Black-fronted Dotterel  | Black-winged Stilt         |
| Red-necked Avocet       | Silver Gull             | Whiskered Tern             |
| Caspian Tern            | Crested Pigeon          | Peaceful Dove              |
| Rock Dove               | Galah                   | Red-rumped Parrot          |
| Welcome Swallow         | Tree Martin             | Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike  |
| Willie Wagtail          | Australian Reed Warbler | Purple-backed Wren         |
| Yellow-throated Miner   | Singing Honeyeater      | Spiny-cheeked Honeyeater   |
| Mistletoebird (H)       | White-fronted Chat      | White-plumed Honeyeater    |
| Zebra Finch             | House Sparrow           | Common Starling            |
| Pee-wee                 | Magpie                  | White-breasted Woodswallow |

**Max O'Sullivan, images by Nella Smith**





## Spinifex or not Spinifex

One soon learns to avoid rounded clumps of grass with needle-shaped leaves we see in mallee areas. Commonly called spinifex by many but that is a general name for several species in two genera, *Triodia* and *Plectrachne*. Most of the species are characteristic of the arid inland areas of the country. Only one, *Triodia scariosa*, extends into the more southern semi-arid mallee areas that we get around here. Its proper common name is Porcupine Grass.

The difference in species is in the flower heads – a matter of the lemmas (the inner of the two bracts surrounding the floret or florets) having apices lobed or in their hairiness. There is one feature of Porcupine Grass that is not shared by most of their arid cousins. The leaves do not contain resin, which means that they do not burn so fiercely. Not that wildfires in mallee are comparatively tame. Some mallee eucalypts have the highest oil content with Blue Mallee found around West Wyalong among other areas with over 1%.

Those who went to Taleeban recently had the rare sight of the grass prolifically flowering. As typical of arid/semi-arid plants, flowering is in response to rain and not a seasonal feature.

Incidentally there is a genus *Spinifex*. Of the three species, all Australian, New South Wales has only one and that is coastal. It has long stolons and rhizomes bearing shorter but still pungent leaves and the flowers are borne in globular clusters. It is often planted to stabilise coastal dunes.

### Eric Whiting



## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

## MURRUMBIDGEE FIELD NATURALISTS 2020

At the 2019 AGM I was handed a poisoned chalice – or an infected one, at least. In the annals of the Club I will forever be known as the “Corona virus President”.

Within a couple of months of my tenure, the lockdowns began, which meant that the community focus (if not individual activities) of our Club ceased for much of 2020. This included both meetings and outings.

However, things thankfully began opening back up towards the end of the year, and we could again gather to share our love of nature, albeit in fewer numbers, as dictated by those on high and far away.

So too did the monthly meetings resume, though in a more covid-suitable venue than the Leeton Library, the Presbyterian Church in Leeton. Thanks go to Dione and Graham for that.

There have also been some excellent outings in the latter part of the year. In line with our charter as a scientific organization, most importantly perhaps is our continued data collection activities, two recent examples being the Twitchathon (four teams!), and, though not our initiative but one in which we were well represented, the Superb Parrot Count at Darlington Point.

The monthly meetings also abide with this knowledge criterion, with presentations being both rich in content and academically rigorous.

Even if my presidency has been covid-condemned, the weather winds have been at my back, with Dread Drought gloriously breaking within a few months. Though what a few months! As such, I could also be cruelly labeled as the Bushfire President, as our country and state (thankfully not our region) was consumed by an unprecedented fire and smoke catastrophe. What collective grief we shared, especially for the legion mammals, birds, reptiles *et alia*, along with their respective habitats, that were incinerated.

As they say, nature is resilient, but it can take only so much, with global warming (the term 'climate change' can be so misleading) easily being our most serious and seemingly intractable challenge.

As if in defiance of the aforementioned, the Riverina has burst into new life, on both a floral and faunal level; the latter being confirmed by the extensive bird lists submitted to our monthly newsletter *The Murrumbidgee Naturalist*.

Which presents a perfect segue to yet again acknowledge Rowena Whiting for her tireless efforts in publishing a high-quality journal each and every month. But before she says it (as she assuredly will), credit must also go to the many erudite and artistic contributors of both words and images. Well done all – including all office holders!

So we remain, on the threshold of a better and brighter 2021, a community whose optimism has been maintained throughout these turbulent times; one whose spirit of hope is perennially buoyed by the blessings of the natural world.

**Alan Whitehead** 12-11-2020

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## **Crested Pigeons *Ocyphaps lophote***



**Crested Pigeon by Phillip Williams**

A small group of these delightful little birds, usually about five or six, can often be seen feeding near my home in Larmer Street, Narrandera.

A little over 300mm long with an erect crest, it is popularly known as Topknot Pigeon.

When farming at Euroley I often saw the same number near the house, or more often in the chook yard, where I was happy to see them enjoying a small portion of the chooks grain.

They are one of Australia's twenty four native pigeons and doves and are found over most of the country except for the South-west and far North. It is common around country homesteads, inland towns and northern coastal towns.

One of the habits of pigeons which distinguish them from other birds is their ability of dipping their bills in water and sucking it up. Most other species of birds must scoop water in their bills and move their heads back to allow the water to be swallowed. This gives the pigeon a greater chance to watch for other birds while it drinks, as predators often strike at this time.

Pigeons build a frail nest of fine sticks, usually about three metres above ground in which they lay two eggs and incubate them for nineteen days.

Australia's native pigeons come in two groups, namely the fruit pigeons with a diet of mainly fruit and the second group ground feeding pigeons which eat fallen seed and grass seed and occasionally caterpillars as well.

They are charming little birds with a black crest, and brown grey markings.

During courting the male often spreads his wings and tail to display the metallic bronze markings. These colours can sometimes be observed when the sun catches the feathers at the right angle.

**Roy Wade**

# MEMBERS' SIGHTINGS

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

<b>Latham's Snipe</b> [1]	Fivebough Wetlands	01/11/20	Keith Hutton
<b>Double-barred Finch</b> [2]	Fivebough Wetlands	01/11/20	Keith Hutton
<b>Pink-eared Duck</b> [9]	Fivebough Wetlands	01/11/20	Keith Hutton
<b>Marsh Sandpiper</b> [10]	Fivebough Wetlands	01/11/20	Keith Hutton
<b>Sharp-tailed Sandpiper</b> [>360]	Fivebough Wetlands	01/11/20	Keith Hutton
<b>Red-necked Avocet</b> [130]	Fivebough Wetlands	01/11/20	Keith Hutton
<b>Whiskered Tern</b> [300]	Fivebough Wetlands	01/11/20	Keith Hutton
<b>Little Bittern</b> [H]	Fivebough Wetlands	01/11/20	Keith Hutton
<b>Red-kneed Dotterel</b> [16]	Fivebough – plus 2 downy young	01/11/20	Keith Hutton
<b>Swamp Harrier</b> [2]	Fivebough Wetlands	01/11/20	Keith Hutton
<b>Boobook Owl</b>	Narrandera Wetlands	01/11/20	Alan Whitehead
<b>Australasian Bittern</b> [4]	Campbell's Swamp, Griffith	05/11/20	Max O'Sullivan
<b>Red-capped Plover</b> [4+]	Fivebough Wetlands	06/11/20	Max O'Sullivan
<b>Latham's Snipe</b> [1]	Hooey Lookout – in contour drain	07/11/20	Keith Hutton
<b>Little Eagle</b> [1]	Cuba State Forest	07/11/20	Max O'Sullivan
<b>Square-tailed Kite</b> [1]	Cuba State Forest	07/11/20	Max O'Sullivan
<b>Red-backed Kingfisher</b> [1]	Koonadan Historic Reserve via Leeton	08/11/20	Sydney Birder
<b>Diamond Dove</b> [2]	Wattle Dam Binya State Forest	09/11/20	Sydney Birder
<b>Black-eared Cuckoo</b> [1]	Wattle Dam Binya State Forest	09/11/20	Sydney Birder
<b>Zebra Finch</b> [17]	Fivebough Wetlands	09/11/20	Keith Hutton
<b>Little Bittern</b> [2 H]	Fivebough Wetlands	09/11/20	Keith Hutton
<b>Black-shouldered Kite</b> [2]	Fivebough Wetlands	09/11/20	Keith Hutton
<b>Chestnut Quail-thrush</b>	Mount Hope	10/11/20	Ellené Schnell
<b>Magpie Goose</b> [2]	Koonadan Rd, Leeton – Peter's rice crop	10/11/20	Peter Draper
Peter also reports the Glossy Black Cockatoos are still about and visiting the trees in his driveway.			
<b>White-browed Babbler</b>	'Mountain Dam' Colinroobie Rd, Leeton	10/11/20	Graham Russell
Graham also reports daily sightings of <b>Bluebonnet</b> , <b>Cockatiel</b> and <b>Major Mitchell Cockatoo</b> .			
<b>Splendid Wren</b>	Mount Hope	11/11/20	Ellené Schnell
<b>Black Honeyeater</b>	Mount Hope	11/11/20	Ellené Schnell
<b>White-browed Woodswallow</b>	Mount Hope	11/11/20	Ellené Schnell
<b>Tawny Frogmouth</b> [adult & 2 young]	Euroly Bridge, Yanco	11/11/20	Max O'Sullivan
<b>Budgerigar</b> [10]	Boorga Rd, Nericon	12/11/20	Neil Palframan
<b>Little Red Flying Fox</b>	Narrandera Wetlands	12/11/20	Alan Whitehead
<b>Blue-tongue Lizard</b> [young]	Narrandera Wetlands	12/11/20	Alan Whitehead
<b>Cattle Egret</b> [in breeding plumage]	Millane Rd, Murrami area	14/11/20	Penny Williams
<b>Red-bellied Black Snake</b>	Fivebough Wetlands	15/11/20	Max O'Sullivan
The snake was swimming through the roosting <b>Sharp-tailed</b> and <b>Marsh Sandpipers</b> and instead of flying off, they were mobbing it along with the <b>Black-winged Stilts</b> . The snake swam through the inquisitive mob and as it moved they followed until it reached the edge and disappeared into the grassy reeds. It was very interesting to watch from the Brolga Platform. They didn't try to peck at it but just gathered around it as it swam to the other bank.			
<b>Black-tailed Native-hen</b> [7]	Fivebough Wetlands	18/11/20	Keith Hutton
<b>Zebra Finch</b> [35]	Fivebough Wetlands	18/11/20	Keith Hutton
<b>Superb Parrot</b> [7]	Woolworth's Leeton - flyover	26/11/20	Kathy Tenison
<b>Little Bittern</b> [1]	Campbell's Swamp – flew from the reeds	28/11/20	MFN outing
<b>Caspian Tern</b> [4]	Lake Wyangan Picnic Area	28/11/20	MFN outing
<b>Superb Parrot</b> [300+]	Whitton – feeding in oat crop	28/11/20	Keith Hutton
<b>Masked Lapwing</b> [24]	Fivebough Wetlands	28/11/20	Keith Hutton

Australian Crane [4]	Fivebough Wetlands	28/11/20	Keith Hutton
Little Egret [1]	Fivebough Wetlands	28/11/20	Keith Hutton
Black-fronted Dotterel [1]	Fivebough Wetlands	28/11/20	Keith Hutton
Marsh Sandpiper [12]	Fivebough Wetlands	28/11/20	Keith Hutton
Banded Lapwing [1]	Fivebough Wetlands	29/11/20	Keith Hutton
Max O'Sullivan			

**\*\*\*\* COMING EVENTS \*\*\*\***

Please note all outings are subject to weather conditions.

Due to the Covid-19 restrictions, outings are currently limited, you must register with the nominated person by email (preferred) or phone to participate.

**10 December Thursday**      **NO meeting.**  
**At the November Meeting it was decided not to hold a meeting this month.**

**12 December Saturday**      **Christmas / End of Year gathering – Frogs, moths and birds, food & drink at Fivebough Wetlands**  
**Meet at the information area.**  
This will be a BYO everything due to COVID. Please register with Graham or Dione Russell 0428 536290 (Dione) or 0419 350 673 (Graham) Email: [murrumbidgeefieldnaturalists@gmail.com](mailto:murrumbidgeefieldnaturalists@gmail.com)

**Other Event**

**5 December – 6 January**      **Moments in Time, a photography exhibition**  
By Narrandera Leeton Camera Club  
At the Leeton Museum and Gallery, Chelmsford Place, Leeton.  
A number of MFN members have photos on display.

**2021**

**2 February Tuesday**      **World Wetlands Day “Wetlands and Water”**  
This year’s theme “Wetlands and Water” shines a spotlight on wetlands as a source of freshwater and encourages actions to restore them and stop their loss.

**3 February Wednesday**      **Copy for the February newsletter is due. Please send to Rowena.**  
Email: [ericwhiting4@bigpond.com](mailto:ericwhiting4@bigpond.com). Phone: 6953 2612.

**11 February Thursday**      **Monthly Meeting will be held in the Presbyterian Church, 29 Sycamore St, Leeton commencing at 7pm.**  
**Topic: “Galapagos of the Southern Ocean: Subantarctic Islands”**  
by Meredith and Nella.  
**Contact:** Graham or Dione Russell 0428 536290 (Dione) or 0419 350 673 (Graham) Email: [murrumbidgeefieldnaturalists@gmail.com](mailto:murrumbidgeefieldnaturalists@gmail.com).

**13 February Saturday**      **Outing to a water location**  
**This will be a late afternoon walk followed by nibbles.**  
**Contact:** Graham or Dione Russell 0428 536290 (Dione) or 0419 350 673 (Graham) Email: [murrumbidgeefieldnaturalists@gmail.com](mailto:murrumbidgeefieldnaturalists@gmail.com).

