

The Murrumbidgee Naturalist



June 2021 - Issue #293

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



Red-capped Robin and Weebill

Taken by Graham Russell on his property north of Leeton

IN THIS ISSUE

Office Bearers and Subscriptions	2
Welcome to June.....	2
Narrandara Wetlands Tree Planting Day	3
MFN at the Riverina Farm Days	4
A New Frog Book.....	5
Visiting Livingstone National Park.....	6
Glossy Black Cockatoo is a winner	7
Sea Life High and Dry – A diatribe.....	8
Members 'show and tell'	9
Know Your Daisies – Part 5, Minnie Daisies	10
Photographing Nature	11
Members' Sightings.....	12
Other Events.....	13
Coming Events.....	14

CONTRIBUTIONS

For the July 2021 issue by

Wednesday 30 June

To Rowena Whiting

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'Reimagine Recreate Restore'

is this year's theme for
World Environment Day

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 Henry Lawson Room, Leeton Library, Sycamore Street, Leeton at 7pm.

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

Bank details for direct deposit: 082 672 account no. 722043387, 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.

Membership subscriptions are due on the 30th June

Please send your money to the Treasurer, Ellené Schnell, promptly to PO Box 541, Leeton, NSW 2705 or make a bank transfer to the MFN's bank account (NB this has changed since last year). Any queries, Ellené can be contacted on 0488 080 866.

See above for annual subscription rates and bank details.

Welcome to June

And Winter! It is well and truly here with a good frost this morning. Don't let this deter you, rug up and come out on the club and other activities that are on offer this month. As usual these are set out on the last page with some other events on page 13, overflowed from the last. Despite not having any outing reports from last month we have still attained 14 pages with a good variety. A couple of worthwhile events did take place in which a number of members took part and the organisers have written about.

At the May meeting our speaker was Ellené Schnell. She gave an inspiring presentation on her role as a snake rescuer with WIRES. She can travel a considerable distance and often brings the victim home to care for them before releasing at the same location if appropriate. She showed some of her equipment - hook, bags with strengthened corners, snake proof container for transporting, as well as what her training involved, how she cares for them. Many thanks for your informative and entertaining talk; we admire what you are doing/achieving. What other hidden talents do you have Elle?

So I will leave you to enjoy your read and your month.

Rowena.



NARRANDERA LANDCARE'S 2021 NATIONAL TREE DAY PLANTING

In the last week of May, the Narrandera Landcare Group had a big week of tree planting at the Narrandera Wetlands. Tree planting is a bit of a misnomer as it was all about the understorey this year.



We planted around 200 shrubs and 1200 forbs/grasses during the week. There was the odd Yarran in the mix, left over from last year, so a few “trees” did actually get planted, but probably won't fare so well at the Wetlands.

Our planting endeavours this year were made possible from a grant MFN awarded us through their Environmental Grant Program. In the grant application we ticked the boxes for *Improve native wildlife habitat, Increase students' knowledge of the environment, Environmental education of the wider community and Involve wider*

community in environmental activities and strove to meet these goals.

Getting the local schools involved with the planting was a priority. The schools have planted with us before and were keen to help again. Narrandera Public, Narrandera East Infants then St Joseph's Primary came along on the Monday, Wednesday and Friday. With the assistance of Kath Tenison and Nella Smith, each class learnt about how wetlands function then went on a biodiversity walk around our Wetlands before planting. The kids loved discovering things and asking questions about what they found.

We got the students to plant a variety of things and explained with photos why we selected these plants – i.e. *Callistemon sieberi* for the Honeyeaters, Wallaby and Kangaroo Grass for finches and some parrots, a *Dianella* for the fruit eating birds and Narrow-leaf Hopbush for Superb Parrots. Kids always plant with enormous enthusiasm and they really enjoy the whole process – digging, planting, hammering in stakes for tree guards and watering. The schools planted about 250 seedlings between them.



Susan, Rowena, Margrit and Alan looking at the bird photos Kathy had put on display.

Then on the Sunday we invited the general community to come and help plant. We had a lot of help from Leeton Toyota and are very grateful



to Narrandera Pizzeria who kindly brought pizza for lunch for all the volunteers afterwards.

The area we planted in already has lots of trees and shrubs and these are dropping seed and regenerating themselves, so we planted 1200 mainly ground layer seedlings. These were planted by 35 volunteers and were a wide mix of species including Narrow-leaf Hobbush, Tufted Burr-daisy, *Mairiana pyramidata*, Wallaby Grass, Dianella sp., Ruby Saltbush, Saloop and Leek Lily's. These were all propagated at our community nursery with the help of many volunteers, all to add to the biodiversity at The Wetlands.

This National Tree Day event was very much a community effort with volunteers, schools, businesses coming together and working together, all facilitated by MFN's grant.

We still have seedlings which MFN have helped us grow remaining at the nursery – these are earmarked for a few small local schools to plant out, a creek planting at Morundah by YACTAC, Campbell's Wetland at Griffith and a lot of Drooping She-oak to be distributed to local landholders with space for a grove of these.

Glenn Currie Photos by Kathy Tenison

Riverina Field Days in Griffith

Murrumbidgee Landcare and Murrumbidgee Field Naturalist had a great spot at the Woodside Hall for the Riverina field days on the 13th and 14th of May. There was a very steady flow of traffic over the two days with loads of questions about environmental issues and stories about their own experiences.

Setting up on the Thursday made a big difference. We were right ready to go on Friday morning. Thanks Nicole, Virginia, Allan, Susan, Phil, and Eric for your help.

There seems to be a lot of interest at the moment in Bush Tucker plantings in schools and with community

projects. The Wiradjuri Plant Use in the Murrumbidgee Catchment is a great guide for this. However a visit to the local nursery is best to see what is available at any given time as it varies so much.

https://archive.ils.nsw.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0009/495261/archive-wiradjuri-plant-use.pdf

There was also a lot of interest in native plantings with people who are developing lifestyle blocks. Many of them had already made a good start and were keen to add to their existing plantings. Discussion about planting locally native species and improving the mid-story and under-story plantings to accommodate the woodland birds were frequent.

The message for biodiversity is certainly getting out there. People were asking about the best local species in the Griffith area and where they could purchase local native plants that would attract birds.

Speaking of birds there was a large group of people keen to know their local birds. Many birds were described and luckily we had a few bird photos to point them out and confirm the sightings. The bird brochure and birds of the MIA and the Murrumbidgee Field Naturalist News letters were popular.

People were very happy to exchange emails and be put on mailing lists for both Murrumbidgee Landcare Inc <https://mli.org.au/> and Murrumbidgee Field Naturalists <https://mfng.org.au/>



Virginia and Kathy with the Field Nats display.



Enjoying the Riverina Field Days

Others were keen to find out how to direct seed and even how to harvest native seed. All questions that are very important as we head to a warmer climate. 4 Season of Seeds Workshops with Martin Driver are being held by Hay Plains Landcare if you are interested Contact Jade Auld bidgeewest@mli.org.au.

One couple planted a couple of hundred trees and had locust destroy them a few years ago. There is often heartbreak in this business. However undeterred they are going to replant this year.

Others were keen to find out how to identify plants on their property. A bit like a plant audit to see what they have and work out a plan of where to next. Exchanging details with these people is a great idea as we can put them in touch with those that can help. Using tags to identify plants out in the paddock was an option discussed as it takes a while to lock in the characteristics of the trees and to learn their name as the seasons pass. If they are not in flower some are harder to tell than others. So robust tags will help the novice botanist once they have been identified by a knowing party.

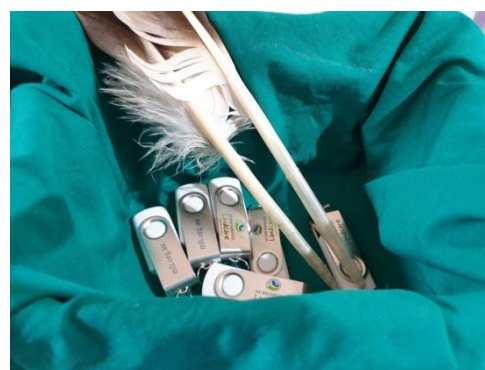
There seems to be a large contingent of women interested in biodiversity on the farm which is great. We look forward to the Catchment Keeper meetings coming up later this year. If you would like to find out more about these events contact Kathy Tenison bidgeeirrigation@mli.org.au.

The USB sticks with all the fact sheets on them for Murrumbidgee Landcare were a winner. The kids and Grandparents loved the colouring in books, Chatterbox of endangered species and the origami Pelicans were also a winner.

Thank you to Virginia, Sue, Margrit, Nella and Phil for helping to man the stall throughout the weekend. It was lovely to catch up and have a chat.

A big thankyou to Nicole from Murrumbidgee Landcare for organising the site. We were very thankful to be in the warmth of the Woodside Hall. We look forward to next year.

Covid has made us realise how lucky we are here in Australia and how we like to be outside enjoying our local environment. So we need to look after it.



Feathers and Thumbdrives

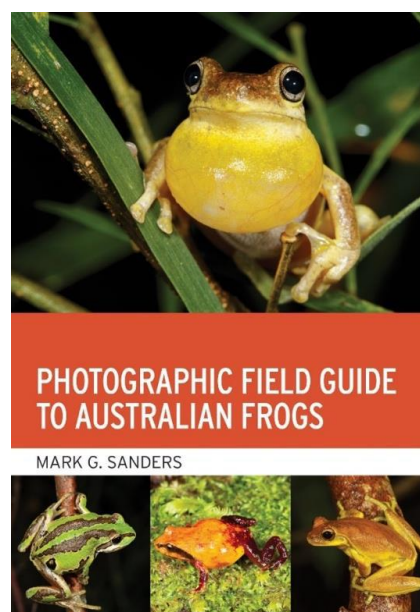
Kathy Tenison (text and photos)

A new frog book

The *Photographic Field Guide to Australian Frogs* by Mark Sanders provides readers with the tools to confidently identify 242 species and five recognised subspecies. It includes detailed information on the distribution, habitat preferences and call of each frog species, as well as fully illustrated keys to genera to assist with identification. Multiple photographs of each species show variation in colour and pattern as well as features used for identification such as thigh colouration, skin texture, belly colour and patterning, eye colour and extent of webbing between the toes.

With a strong focus on illustrating variation and key diagnostic features, this guide will enable frog enthusiasts, environmental professionals and research scientists to identify Australian frog species with a high level of confidence.

- Features detailed species descriptions with comparative analysis to improve identification
- Generously illustrated with feature-specific images including webbing, finger discs, posterior thigh colour, and bellies
- Provides keys for identification and individual distribution maps
- Includes call descriptions with comparisons to similar species



<https://www.publish.csiro.au/book/7951/>

Visiting Livingstone National Park on 5 May 2021

After **3 Regent Honeyeaters** were reported in the park on 2 May by members of the Wagga MFN Group, I went to have a look to see if they were still about. Sadly, I didn't find any but managed a good list of birds – 35 in all – so the trip was well worthwhile. Some of the birds I saw were the smaller honeyeaters that are not found in our area. Wagga and further east has a suite of birds that are not generally found in our area so it was a satisfying trip and should encourage as many MFN members to make the trip there when we have a joint outing on 26 June.



I did the circuit track leading from the car park which took a couple of hours with several stops when I found flowering Ironbark trees in blossom. There was also several spots where the local grevillea was found and flowering which attracted the Eastern Spinebill and Scarlet Honeyeater which was an unexpected finding in the National Park. I hadn't found either there before when I visited.

On my return to the car park, the adjacent rifle range had become active which was my cue to get out of the place. The birds didn't seem to mind but I found the sound of rifle fire very distressing.



Photos by Paul Johnstone
Clockwise from top left: Eastern Spinebill, Fuscous Honeyeater,
Diamond Firetail, Yellow-tufted Honeyeater

Bird list:

Galah 6	Crimson Rosella 4	Red-rumped Parrot 2
Welcome Swallow 4	Australian Pipit 2	Flame Robin 12
Scarlet Robin 1 male	Eastern Yellow Robin 1	Grey Shrike-thrush 1
Willie Wagtail 4	Grey Fantail 3	White-browed Babbler 4
Superb Wren 3	Yellow Thornbill 2	Southern Whiteface 2
Brown Treecreeper 1	White-throated Treecreeper 2	Varied Sitella 4
Red Wattlebird 2	White-naped Honeyeater 1	Brown-headed Honeyeater 3
Yellow-faced Honeyeater 10	Fuscous Honeyeater 18	Scarlet Honeyeater 1
Eastern Spinebill 2	Yellow-tufted Honeyeater 2	Silvereye 4
Pied Currawong 4	White-winged Chough 8	Peewee 2
Dusky Woodswallow 2	Pied Butcherbird 1	Australian Magpie 6
Australian Raven 2	Little Raven 8	

The Pipits and the Flame Robins were seen on the road into the National Park just off the Wagga/Holbrook Road and before the National Park turn off.

On a subsequent trip on 18/5/21, I added a few more birds to the above list as well as seeing some of the birds from my first trip on 5/5.

Hooded Robin (male)	Fantail Cuckoo 1	Eastern Rosella 2
Diamond Firetail 2	Kookaburra 3	White-plumed Honeyeater 4

Max O'Sullivan**Footnote about Fuscous Honeyeaters:**

A friend of mine in Sydney was participating in bird banding at Windsor Downs west of Sydney in mid-May and re-trapped a Fuscous Honeyeater. On checking their records for the bird, they were surprised to learn that this particular bird was first banded in 2012 as a recognised adult then so it would have been at least 2 year old at the time. The bird has since been trapped 12 times since over the years in the banding season, sometimes twice a year. The latest trapping would indicate that this small passerine living for at least 12 years in the same spot and surviving the recent bushfires.



Fuscous Honeyeater by Paul Johnstone

This is quite remarkable both for the indication of its age and secondly because there are very few second recoveries of birds apart from this one banding site in western Sydney. There are just a handful of second recoveries in all the banding sites over the years. Max

Glossy Black Cockatoo is a winner

Today is Environment Day (5 June) and I have just learned that the Glossy Black Cockatoo has been chosen as the winner of the inaugural Saving our Species Threaten NSW Species of the Year. It is so nice to have a species that is relevant to our area. It was a tight race to the finish line; voting was from a selection of 10 species through their website and newsletter. More details about the voting and the other contenders along with information about the species including a quiz to test your knowledge of the glossy.

<https://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/news/your-favourite-nsw-threatened-species-of-2021>



Photo by Phillip Williams

Rowena

Sea Life Left High and Dry - A Diatribe

Sadly, increased compassion for animals this century still does not embrace fish, and other non-mammalian denizens of the deep. I watched appalled as the 12-year-old boy casually pulled the legs and nippers off a beautiful sand crab he had just caught.

"Why are you doing that?" I asked through gritted teeth.

"Bait," he replied without feeling. And that's the heart, so to speak, of the recent Greenpeace/blue fin tuna fiasco. It is not economics, not sustainable resources - not "jobs" even - but a lack of compassion for the suffering, and in the worst case extinction, of our besieged sea creatures that generates the heat in the debate.

"They're just thugs!" one tuna boat captain recently fumed about the dispersal, with inflatables, of his intended tuna catch. Well, history might judge differently. The real thugs will be found to be those who heartlessly and stupidly bankrupt our oceans.

Stupid?

Along the famous Newfoundland Banks, vast populations of cod have almost vanished. One trawler skipper was asked why he was setting off to catch one of the last-known schools of the species. "Because if I don't catch 'em, someone else will," he proudly replied - stupid to the point of economic suicide.

The history of Western humanity's agonisingly slow awakening to the suffering of our fellow travellers-in-evolution places us on a rung of the compassion ladder far above, say, that of the ancient world. Vestiges still remain with Spanish bullfighting (still legal, and dog and cock fighting illegal). Our ancestors gradually moved from the moral miasma of cruelty for cruelty's sake, to cruelty for sport - the hunting ethos. Not such a big difference perhaps, but at least justified by the expediency of feeding oneself - fox hunting excepted.

Until recently there has been a clear line drawn in the sand defining where compassion begins and ends: a literal line, drawn by the ocean itself - the high-water mark.

Since the turn of the 20th century, there has been increasing compassion for animals, manifest in the creation of national parks, species protection and cruelty-to-animal legislation. We in the West have realised that the vocation of, say my great-grandfather, that of koala shooting, is not the honourable way of earning a living that it was once thought to be.

Most Australian terrestrial vertebrates have blanket protection by the law, but in the water? Well, it's still mostly a case of anything goes. Warm-blooded sea creatures, such as seals, dolphins and whales, have since the 1960s, been afforded some protection. Also, today's whale watch industry far surpasses in prosperity that of its resource destroying predecessor. However, with fishing it's still business as usual.

Trawlers return to port with their ever-declining fruits of the sea confronting precious little public outcry. It seems that the new-found compassion is fine for cuddly, land-based animals but not for fish. This attitude is that which makes it doubly hard for the Greenpeace Rainbow Warriors to garner public support. They are at the front line of probably the most vital war in our history.

The myth pervades that "fish don't feel pain like we do". This is built on the fatuous teachings of Descartes. He stated that a mouse doesn't suffer pain when one cuts off its tail; its terrified squeak is merely an automatic response, somewhat the same as the snap of a mouse trap when set off. All scientific, and more importantly experimental, evidence refutes this. Fish not only suffer from the wounding of being caught and cut, but also from slow suffocation and dehydration.

"A thousand people in Port Lincoln will lose their jobs." the captain further fulminated. Well, if the current tuna decline continues this prediction will be realised anyway. How much more intelligent if, through incrementally reduced harvest, the present industry was to metamorphose into, say, "Port Lincoln blue fin tuna catch-and-release sport fishing capital of the world." This would support far more people in the tourist industry than those in industrial-scale fish harvesting.

While still in gloomy reflection on the "bait boy", and the dire implications for the future, I recalled my own 10-year-old daughter's anguished outburst when she saw a man who had just caught an octopus on his line, smash it against a rock. "What's wrong with her?" he asked uncomprehendingly.

On the compassion ladder, it's more a case of what's wrong with him!

Alan Whitehead

Reprinted from an article (with some slight up-to-date editing) in the Sydney Morning Herald January 29, 1998.

Members show and tell

From Fiona Stevens

Here is an article which may be of interest to you.

The 50 beautiful Australian plants at greatest risk of extinction — and how to save them

<https://theconversation.com/the-50-beautiful-australian-plants-at-greatest-risk-of-extinction-and-how-to-save-them-160362>

From Jason Richardson

It might be a lyrebird courtship that I observed at Dunns Swamp earlier this month.

I'd been invited by RealArtWorks to a residency in Kandos to contribute to an installation for the Cementa arts festival later this year.

We were walking around the Castle Rocks, when I heard a variety of bird calls and then something resembling a small brown peacock.

As it flipped those tail feathers over it's head, I realised it was a male lyrebird trying to interest a female.

She seemed to listen to his impressive repertoire of songs, but was also scratching the ground and possibly looking for breakfast.

At first I thought they were tame, as we got within a few metres to make the recording and there are many campsites nearby.

However, after the performance, they seemed startled and set a pace -- as you can see in the following photos.



Here is the link to Jason's video, where he has captured the movements and the song

<https://youtu.be/YP6x3UOXAqE>

From Melanie Baulch

One of her watercolours painted for her TAFE course.



Know your daisies – Part 5, Minnie Daisies

Minuria

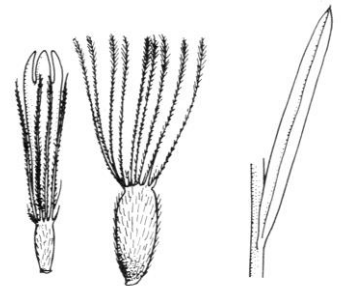
Annuals or perennial herbs or subshrubs; flower heads solitary or occasionally clustered, with tubular disc florets and 2 or more series of ray florets; pappus of ray florets with several free barbellate bristles or +/-clumped capillary bristles; disc florets dimorphic with short and long +/-free barbellate bristles or scales, or else a cup of fused scales surmounted by 1-8 bristles.



A mass of Minnie Daisies and a Smooth Minuria (left)

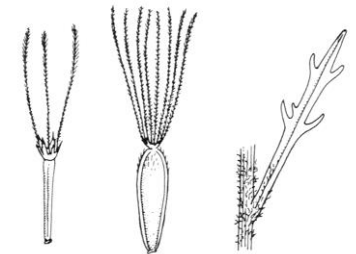
Minuria integerrima, Smooth Minuria

Perennial herbs to 60cm, stems glabrous; leaves oblanceolate to ovate, to 50x 1-9mm, margins often slightly toothed, ray florets purple or lilac; achenes on ray florets pubescent, disc florets glabrous; pappus on ray florets many free bristles with barbs denser apically, c0.3mm long; disc florets with c8-10 uniform bristles 1.5-2mm long, with barbs longer and denser apically; recorded in a variety of habitats and soils near places of permanent or ephemeral water.



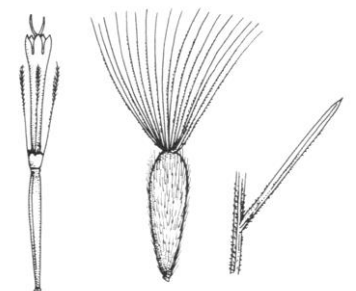
Minuria denticulata Woolly Minuria

Perennial herbs to 30cm, stems +/-woolly with stellate hairs; leaves obovate to spatulate, to 45 x 1-5mm, apex often conspicuously toothed, margins finely toothed; ray florets white or pale lavender, 2-3mm long; achenes of ray florets glabrous, disc florets glabrous or sparsely pubescent; pappus of ray florets 7-10 free bristles, c1.5mm long with barbs denser apically; disc florets with free bristles c0.3mm long and 6-8 bristles 2-2.5mm long, with barbs longer and denser apically; recorded in low shrubland in places of ephemeral water, generally west from Hillston.



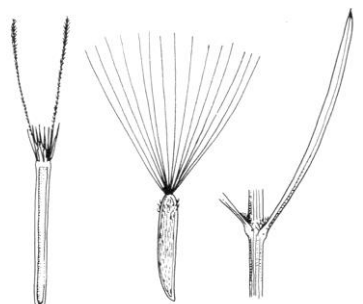
Minuria leptophylla, Minnie Daisy

Perennial herbs to 50cm, stems sparsely hairy with simple hairs, leaves linear, to 40x c1mm, margins entire; ray florets white or purple, 5-9mm long, achenes of ray florets pubescent, disc florets glabrous; pappus of ray florets with many free bristles, 2.5-4mm long; disc florets with many free bristles 0.6-1.2mm long and 2-6 longer bristles 2.2-3.15mm long, with barbs denser apically; frequently recorded from low shrubland, sclerophyll forest and woodland on a wide variety of soils.



Minuria cunninghamii, Bush Minuria

Perennial herbs to 100cm, stems sparsely hairy with simple hairs; leaves lanceolate, to 40x 1-3mm, margins entire, glabrous; ray florets white, pink or mauve, 5-7mm long; achenes of ray florets pubescent, disc florets glabrous; pappus on ray florets many finely and uniformly barbellate bristles, 7.6-9mm long; disc florets with many short bristles 1.2-1.6mm long and 2-6 longer bristles 4-4.5mm long, with barbs longer and denser apically; recorded in low shrubland, on a variety of soils.



Eric Whiting

Photographing Nature

Not sure if this is a field naturalist article or not but here goes. I know many of us involved in Murrumbidgee Field Naturalist are also amateur nature photographers, this type of photography brings with it a range of unique challenges associated with needing to use long focal length lenses (telephoto lenses) and the associated loss of light that goes with them.

Whether you are a bird photographer or just a general field naturalist we all know that the best time to see nature, especially birds, especially in summer means being out early in the morning or in the evenings just before Sunset. Early mornings and evenings means limited light making photography even harder.

As a photographer I have struggled with this, and the other problems associated with nature photography. I am not going to try and solve any of these problems for you, I am only learning this stuff myself but I am going to recommend two internet resources that I have found useful.

One of these I have been using for a while particularly in relation to equipment reviews. This is Photography life at [Photography Life](#) .



Weebill (left), Red-capped Robin (above)



The other one that I have only just found is Steve Perry's YouTube channel that has a number of both instructional and gear review videos most are based around either Nikon or Sony equipment but the techniques that he discusses should be transferable to other brands. The YouTube channel is at [Steve Perry - YouTube](#) and he also has a web page at [Backcountry Gallery | Wildlife And Nature Photography By Steve Perry](#). I hadn't had a look the web page until I sat down to write this article but if it contains as much, easy to interpret information as the YouTube video's then it is worth a look.

I know that both sites are USA based but nature is nature everywhere.

I have been using some of the tips that I have picked up from the Steve Perry YouTube and I think that I have seen an

improvement in the photos that I have taken so have a look even if you don't learn anything you will see some beautiful wildlife photographs.

For those who may be interested for these shots manually my camera is a Nikon D850, telephoto lens; I used manual settings - a shutter speed of 1/3200 sec, aperture f5.6, auto ISO between 900 & 1250 and a focal length of 420mm. Metering mode was centre weighted average and have done some cropping.

Graham Russell

Another member 'show & tell'

From Nella Smith

Glenn And I came across this article about how Bendigo is helping their bats with the summer heat. It relates to the talk given by Andrew Peters

[Bendigo's bats stay cool with a tree canopy sprinkler system - National Tree Day Blog \(planetark.org\)](#)

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.

Three-toed Skink	Cypress St, Leeton	18/04/21	Eric Whiting
Echidna [2]	Narrandera Common	26/04/21	Warrick Bradney
The echnidas were found about 2km apart – one was dark and the other light in colour.			
Large Raptor	Narrandera Common – not a Wedgie	26/04/21	Warrick Bradney
The raptor was very high and a Crop Duster flew under it – could have been a Square-tailed Kite? Max			
Goanna	Gilbert Rd, Coleambally	01/05/21	Warrick Bradney
Swamp Harrier [3 together]	Fivebough Wetlands	02/05/21	Keith Hutton
Magpie Goose [9]	Fivebough Wetlands	02/05/21	Keith Hutton
Peaceful Dove [4]	Narrandera Wetlands	03/05/21	Susan Whitehead
Superb Parrot [4]	Oolambeyan/Conargo Rd corner	04/05/21	Glenn Currie
Superb Parrot [small flock]	'Mountain Dam', Colinroobie Rd	6-13/5/21	Graham Russell
Magpie Goose [17]	Fivebough Wetlands	08/05/21	Keith Hutton
Australasian Bittern [1]	Fivebough Wetlands	08/05/21	Keith Hutton
Brolga [35]	Fivebough Wetlands	08/05/21	Max O'Sullivan
Australian Shelduck [23]	Fivebough Wetlands	09/05/21	Keith Hutton
Pied Stilt [35]	Fivebough Wetlands	09/05/21	Keith Hutton
Yellow-billed Spoonbill	Opposite the TAFE Leeton	10/05/21	Kathy Tenison
Hobby [2]	Bilbul via Griffith	11/05/21	Meredith Billington
Koala [2]	Rocky Waterholes Narrandera	12/05/21	Joy Ellen Young
Blue-faced Honeyeater [25+]	Yanco Reserve – a large flock	12/05/21	Max O'Sullivan
Pied Currawong [50+]	Yanco Reserve – also a huge flock	12/05/21	Max O'Sullivan
Mallee Ringneck [3]	Griffith Golf Course	13/05/21	Alan Whitehead
Masked Woodswallow [3]	Griffith Golf Course	13/05/21	Alan Whitehead
Bluebonnet [5]	Griffith Golf Course	13/05/21	Alan Whitehead
White-fronted Chat [25+]	Koonadan Historic Site	16/05/21	Max O'Sullivan
Magpie Goose [4]	The Basin Dam, Koonadan	16/05/21	Max O'Sullivan
Plumed Whistling-duck [1]	The Basin Dam, Koonadan	16/05/21	Max O'Sullivan
Major Mitchell's Cockatoo [25]	Griffith Golf Course	19/05/21	Tony Pridham
Common Bronzewing [dead]	Bilbul via Griffith	20/05/21	Meredith Billington
Meredith found the dead pigeon in her yard which is the first record of this bird at her place.			
White-bellied Sea-eagle	Fivebough Wetlands	21/05/21	Max O'Sullivan
The Sea-eagle flew in and caught a Purple Swamphen and took it off in its talons right in front of the T-intersection. It flew into the swamp and landed on a fence post to eat it.			
Buff-banded Rail [1]	Fivebough Wetlands	22/05/21	Keith Hutton
Hobby [1]	Fivebough Wetlands	22/05/21	Keith Hutton
Black-fronted Dotterel [14]	Fivebough Wetlands	22/05/21	Keith Hutton
Black Falcon [1]	Fivebough Wetlands	22/05/21	Keith Hutton
Spotless Crake [2]	Fivebough Wetlands	29/05/21	Max O'Sullivan
This is the first time I've seen them at Fivebough this year. I have been hearing them often but not seem them.			
Purple Swamphen [>100]	Fivebough Wetlands	29/05/21	Keith Hutton
Spotted Crake [3]	Fivebough Wetlands	29/05/21	Keith Hutton
Red-necked Avocet [19]	Fivebough Wetlands	30/05/21	Keith Hutton
Flame Robin [female]	Fivebough Wetlands	30/05/21	Keith Hutton
White-fronted Chat [>30]	Fivebough Wetlands	30/05/21	Keith Hutton
Peregrine Falcon [1]	Fivebough Wetlands	30/05/21	Keith Hutton
Black Swam + 4 cygnets	Fivebough Wetlands – unusual	30/05/21	Keith Hutton
Black-fronted Dotterel [15]	Fivebough Wetlands	31/05/21	Keith Hutton
Straw-necked Ibis [>350]	Fivebough Wetlands	31/05/21	Keith Hutton
Superb Parrot [10+]	Leeton Golf Course	31/05/21	Max O'Sullivan
Restless Flycatcher	Oolambeyan National Park	May 2021	Glenn Currie
Grey Shrike-thrush	Naradhan St Whitton - daily	May 2021	Margaret Strong

Margaret also reported two pairs of Crested Pigeons nesting during May – very late in the year for breeding.

Pied Currawong [6+] Nericon Village – first time seen there 01/06/21 Neil Palframan

Virginia's list from her walks in the local area and a visit to Campbell's Wetlands on 30 May 2021.

Red Wattlebird [6], Blue-faced Honeyeater [3], White-plumed H/e [3] Kookaburra [1], Musk Duck [1], Swan [3], Great Egret [1], Spiny-cheeked H/e [4], White-plumed H/e [3], Singing H/e [1], Pied Butcherbird [2], Straw-necked Ibis [3], Red-rumped Parrot [3], Purple-backed Wren [3]

Alan Whitehead also reported 15 Black Swans and 100+ Grey Teal at the Quilters Rd wetlands at Narrandera on 26 May.

Max O'Sullivan

**Buff-banded Rail
Captured by a sensor
camera at Fivebough**



OTHER EVENTS

16 and 17 June – Platypus and Caring for local creeks.

Yanco Creek and Tributaries Advisory Council (YACTAC)

Its area is located between Narrandera and Moulamein, with over 800kms of creek frontage covering a distance of 250km from east to west. The Yanco, Billabong, Colombo and Forest Creek, (known as YCS), network is an anabranch complex that broadly connects the Murrumbidgee River with the Edward River. Water is diverted from the Murrumbidgee River into the Yanco Creek at the Yanco Weir. Unregulated flows from the Billabong Creek enter the regulated system east of Jerilderie, in addition to regulated inlets via Coleambally Irrigation Co Ltd and Murray Irrigation Ltd drainage systems.

They are holding some very interesting workshops in conjunction with Murrumbidgee Landcare on platypus's, and caring for local creeks and farm dams at Morundah.

[Platypus and caring for our creeks](#) (YACTAC & MLI) – 16 and 17 June, Morundah. Join us for one or all three of these exciting events, where you can find out about the Platypus Report, and learn practical tips on how to improve local creeks! Registration essential for all events. Evening talk with the experts with supper on Wed 16 June, Sunrise walk on the morning of Thurs 17, followed by a Plant ID and tree planting event at 11 am on Thurs 17 June.

If you are interested **contact Kathy Tenison (Murrumbidgee Landcare) 0428 396 826**

There is another event in Wagga. [Help monitor the Murrumbidgee's platypus](#) (Wagga Wagga Urban Landcare & MLI) – 17 June, Wagga. Join us for pizza and a fascinating talk by Geoff Williams, Director of the Australian Platypus Conservancy. Geoff will highlight the features that make the platypus so special, and explain how to help these animals. We will also learn how to spot platypus in the wild, and possibilities for becoming involved in monitoring platypus in our local waterways. Registration essential.

This link provides useful information about the platypus: [Guide: What platypus need to survive](#) (Rivers of Carbon) – Platypus need a healthy, well vegetated riparian zone, with pools, riffles and banks within which they can burrow. When riparian zones are in good condition, they provide platypus with good food, protection from predators, and refuge in times of drought. This guide will help you to understand all about these amazing animals and how you can help promote their conservation.

30 July Wednesday

Tree planting at Campbell's Wetlands from 9am to 12 noon

Contact: David Kellett, Griffith City Council

David.Kellett@griffith.nsw.gov.au mob. 0437 948 826

Swift Parrot Surveys - contact birdlife website for methodology and sites.

Round 2- **Saturday 17 July to Sunday 29 August 2021** (a 6-week period approximately centred around the traditional 1st weekend in August)

**** COMING EVENTS ****

Please note all outings are subject to weather conditions.

Covid-19 restrictions need to be adhered to, for outings you must register with the nominated person by email (preferred) or phone to participate.

- 10 June Thursday** **Monthly Meeting** will be held in the **Henry Lawson Room** at the **Leeton Library**, Sycamore St, Leeton commencing at **7pm**.
Topic: The Importance of Fungi
Contact: Graham or Dione Russell 0428 536 290 (Dione) or 0419 350 673 (Graham) **Email:** murrumbidgeefieldnaturalists@gmail.com.
- 12 June Saturday** **Field trip to Lake Urana** The Mayor, Cr Pat Bourke and possibly the General Manager, Adrian Butler will meet us at the Aquatic Centre, near the public toilets on Federation Way at 10 am. With such a welcoming committee we need to have a good roll up. You could arrange car pooling.
Meet at the Aquatic Centre, Urana at 10am.
Contact Nella Smith by text 0428 890 537
- 26 June Saturday** **Field Trip to Livingstone National Park**
Meet at the park entrance at 9.30am. Car pooling is encouraged.
Directions from Uranquinty Bakery travel towards the Service Station (about 50m), turn left here, Follow Oxley Bridge Road until you arrive at the Holbrook Rd(22km) Turn right and travel less than 1 km then turn left into O'Brien's Creek Rd. There's a small sign to Livingstone NP on that road. Travel 7km, turn right at the sign. The signs are not easy to see. It's 1hr 40mins from Narrandera but it's worth it.
Walk is easy approx 3 to 4 kms taking around 2 hours
Bring lunch, can be purchased at the bakery.
Contact Nella Smith by text 0428 890 537
- 30 June Wednesday** **Copy for the July newsletter is due. Please send to Rowena.**
Email: ericwhiting4@bigpond.com. Phone: 6953 2612.
- 4 July Sunday** **Springdale Dam off Plumpton Road, Tatton (Wagga Wagga)**
From 11am to 2pm.
Leader is Marilyn Esler 0413 313 781 Co - leader Mel Baulch 0428914702
- 8 July Thursday** **Monthly Meeting** will be held in the **Henry Lawson Room** at the **Leeton Library**, Sycamore St, Leeton commencing at **7pm**.
Guest Speaker: Elizabeth Madden
Topic: Recycling at Kurrajong
Contact: Graham or Dione Russell 0428 536 290 (Dione) or 0419 350 673 (Graham) **Email:** murrumbidgeefieldnaturalists@gmail.com.
- 10 July Saturday** **Field trip to Yarrabimbi, Colinroobie Road** (18km from Leeton on right side of road). Gate will be marked.
Meet at the house. Bring lunch.
Contact to register: Eric Whiting 6953 2612
Leader: Andrew Thompson
- 17 July Saturday** **Christmas in July.** Come and join us for an open fire roast in the bush.
Time and place will be announced in the next newsletter

Other Events see previous page