

# The Murrumbidgee Naturalist



February - Issue #300

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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



Receiving our Riverina Landcare Community Award

Photo by Phil Tenison

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## CONTRIBUTIONS

For the March 2022 issue by  
Wednesday 2 March

To Rowena Whiting

Email: [ericwhiting4@bigpond.com](mailto:ericwhiting4@bigpond.com).

Phone: 6953 2612

Albert Einstein:

'Learn from yesterday, live for  
today, hope for tomorrow.

[The important thing is not to stop  
questioning]

## Murrumbidgee Field Naturalists Inc. Office Bearers and Annual Subscriptions

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<b>Secretary:</b>	Dione Russell	0428 536290	<b>Website Co-ordinator:</b>		
<b>Treasurer:</b>	Glenn Currie	0488 563 321		Kathy Tenison	6953 4869

**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.

### 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:** 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.

## Welcome to 2022

And a new year of fieldnatting. I hope you have all enjoyed your summer break.

With the wet summer we are having it is looking very promising. This month we have a couple of evening activities - Frogging at Coleambally and our annual Count of Glossy Black Cockatoos, a very special species that frequent the local hills. Wagga will visit Flowerdale Lagoon and participate in the Clean Up Australia Day.

At our monthly meeting we have a Guest Speaker, Luke Friend on the important topic of water and the Reconnecting River Country Program. It would be good if as many people as possible can come as this is a rare opportunity to find about this program and Luke is coming from a distance.

My thanks to all those who have contributed to this issue, a great choice of photos and topics. Enjoy your read and think of how you can play a part in club activities so it is not left to a few people. The more the merrier.

Our program is beginning to take shape; suggestions for field trips and speakers along with other activities in which the club can play a part are always welcome. Discuss with any of the Office bearers.

### Two of our members achieved Australia Day Awards:

**Glenn Currie Citizen of the Year** (shared) in Narrandera for his volunteer work with Landcare. As we know Glenn has organised many tree planting days, wildflower walks, bird surveys and been intricate in developing the Community Garden.

**Dick Green 'Walk of Honour' Award** for his volunteering commitments with local community organisations in Wagga contributing towards an environmentally sustainable future for residents along the flora and fauna.

Our congratulations to you both.

Rowena.



## Yarrabimbi

12 December 2021

This was definitely the spot to be on a glorious evening when some of us gathered to watch the birds, climb the hill, enjoy good food and drink (even though we had brought our own), great company and watch the sun go down.



It was also the occasion when Kathy Tenison (our local Landcare Co-ordinator) presented the Club with the prize for our Landcare Community Award as Riverina champions. For details of this and our nomination see last September's newsletter.

As dusk fell we broke up and went home with our grateful thanks to Andrew and Ana for hosting the location. Thus concluding another year of enjoyable activities despite the inconveniences that COVID has placed on us.

**Rowena Whiting**

**Clockwise from top right: The dam at sunset – Rowena Whiting; Nella & Kathy – Phil Tenison; Striped Honeyeater on nest, Diamond Firetails (male on left impressing the girls); Australasian Grebe and Sacred Kingfisher all by Graham Russell**





## The state of our local wetlands Dec 2021/Jan2022

With so much rain over the past two months, all local wetlands are full to overflowing – a situation that hasn't occurred since 2012.

I recall in early December that the water level at Fivebough was getting to a point where we might have to request eWater to be put in as Australasian Bitterns had been reported 'booming' there and the water had to be maintained at a good level for the birds to stay and possibly nest.

Well Mother Nature solved that problem for us, as we all know with lots of good rains over the two months that has certainly maintained the high water level in all our wetlands. Campbell's Wetland, in particular, had so much rain in early January that the boardwalk went underwater and the walk was considered dangerous so that David Kellett was forced to install a barricade at its start (photo).

Likewise for Fivebough, the pathways were flooded in parts but the wetland was accessible with a little wading along the way. This ensured the bitterns were able to stay as the water level and massive club grass was perfect for them to set-up breeding areas and attract females with their booming. At least 3, if not 4 birds were calling in the early morning and evening, so we are hopeful that there is breeding activity taking place there for the first time in quite a few years.

As well as the Australasian Bitterns, the Australian Little Bittern (aka Black-backed Bittern) has been heard calling in the clumps of cumbungi at Fivebough so they too are hopefully nesting there.

The same isn't the case with Campbell's Wetlands where no Australasian Bitterns have been recorded there this season. However, the Little Bittern was seen and heard calling at several spots in the wetlands this Summer. Nella Smith also reported hearing Little Bittern calling at Rocky Waterholes in Narrandera in late November but she hasn't been able to check since as massive earthworks are still being undertaken at that spot where she heard one calling.

Apart from few bitterns at Campbell's, there is certainly no shortage of Ibis of both species – White and Straw-necked – there at the moment. I do quarterly surveys there and when I did the October one I saw quite a lot of nesting activity taking place with signs of both species flattening the reeds and starting to build nests. Well come to the January survey and it was bedlam, with hundreds of nesting birds there all along the wetlands. There was continuous activity of birds flying in with food for their young and some still bringing in nesting material. Lots of juvenile birds of both species were roosting in the dead trees waiting for parents to return with food for them and others were still in the nest waiting for the same attention. As a rough guess I would say there were over 500 of each species present – I defy anyone to do an accurate count as most of the nesting activity is hidden from view within the reeds. But just the sheer numbers flying in and out and roosting on the dead trees let alone all those on nests makes it impossible to count them accurately.

David via James Maguire ordered eWater for Nericon Wetlands late last year and MI started putting water in after years of it being totally dry. Both David and I did several checks over the weeks after the water was being put in but neither of us could see any indication of there being any there. However, James provided an aerial photo of the swamp and there was water visible. The grass that had grown over the intervening



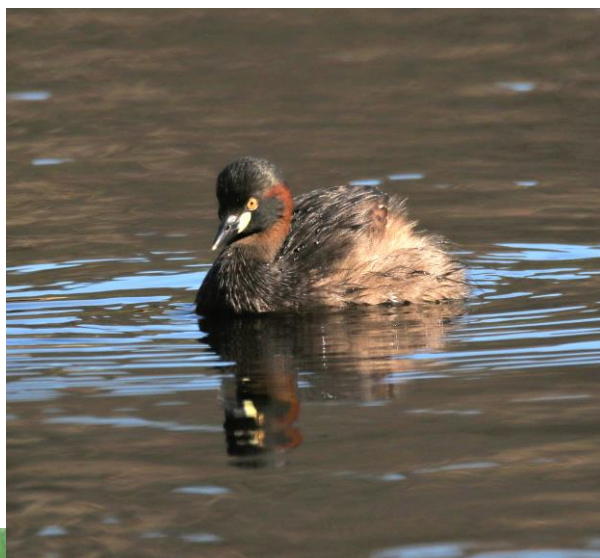
**Entrance to the boardwalk at Campbell's Wetlands on 24 January - David Kellett**



**Nankeen Night Heron and Great Egret taken by Anne Lepper from Fivebough Rd near Quodling Rd intersection. Both birds are still in breeding plumage.**

years made it difficult to see from our viewing point near the carpark. When I did the January survey and after all the rains, I walked down to the fence where the old hide used to be and was surprised to find I couldn't get to within 100m of the fence as the water was well up past the fence-line!

Of course with all things in excess, the rains have had both positive and negative effects. It has helped the larger species such as egrets, herons, ibis and ducks but has not been good for migratory wading birds who prefer shallow water with plenty of exposed mud-flats, as also for the smaller birds like dotterels (Black-fronted and Red-kneed). Crakes (Spotted and Spotless) and rails (Buff-banded), on the other hand have remained and have bred successfully spending most of their time in the shallower water in the reeds close to the pathways where they can be seen venturing onto the path from time to time if you stand still long enough and wait for them to emerge. I had up to 9 Spotless Crakes come out on the southern path leading up to the settling ponds and 5 of those were juvenile birds!



**Australasian Grebe by Phil Tenison (above)  
Glossy Ibis at Fivebough taken by Anne  
Lepper from the Hooey Road Lookout.**



Whilst the wetlands are very overgrown because of all the rain and birds are pretty scarce at times, it is still worthwhile to spend time there if you are prepared to wait for the birds to appear out of the grass and reeds. With such a

wet summer everywhere this year, the birds and ducks in particular are spoilt for choice so you have to be lucky to be at one of the wetlands at the right time – early morning and late evening being the best to see what's there.

**Max O'Sullivan**



## **Pink Cockatoo**

In the December 2021 edition of Australian Birdlife magazine the following official name change has been adopted for what was previously known as **Major Mitchell's Cockatoo**.

“AB would like to acknowledge the issue of culturally offensive and inappropriate bird names such as ‘Major Mitchell's Cockatoo’. The Research and Conservation Committee of Birdlife Australia has formed an advisory group of historians, ornithologists and Indigenous Australians to work through the necessary revisions to many of our eponymous bird names. We hope to report on their recommendations next year (2022). In the meantime, we will adopt the widely popular alternative common name ‘**Pink Cockatoo**’ for this beautiful desert bird.”

**Max O'Sullivan**



## Observations of Magpie Geese around Wagga over the past six months

Magpie Geese are listed as vulnerable in NSW. How delighted we were as a group to find they had decided to grace us with their presence early September on the shores of Lake Albert. Much to the surprise and annoyance of some feathered locals. Several groups were noted at various waterways over the Spring.



Many of us have enjoyed researching, observing & photographing our visitors.

Pelican going out of his way to intimidate, puff up his feathers and suggest they move on.

September 8<sup>th</sup>, 2021

Magpie Geese form strong breeding groups -most commonly one male with two females. The male is the dominant one. The courtship

involves lots of treading water, calling loudly and bowing & scraping to each other. Much like a human proposal would be if conducted at the Wagga Wagga pool!

Nesting precedes egg laying by two months. These are mostly constructed by the male in a secluded space. Generally a floating mound with tall reeds( 60cm -1.2m above water level )surrounding it. Mating takes place at the nest site with both females. Don't look Ethel!



Photo -4<sup>th</sup> December 2021

The three geese stay close to the nest. When sitting low in the nest they are barely visible. Eggs are laid by one or both females 24 -36 hours apart over 5-10 days. Usually 5-11 eggs are laid.

Incubation takes 23-30 days. Male incubates during the day and the females incubate at night. The male stays on guard roosting in a nearby tree.



First little peek of goslings  
Christmas Day still hidden  
amongst reeds close to nest.





27<sup>th</sup> December, 2021  
All 3 parents closely guard goslings. They may take them to water a day after hatching.



Goslings have cinnamon coloured heads which fade to yellowish shade after 3-5 days. They have a gray downy body. These feathers are gone in 6-8 weeks.

Goslings can multiply their body weight by 20 times in the first 7 weeks.

Young are able to fly at 11 weeks. However, they stay with parents until next breeding season.

Family Group leaves nesting site 1-4 days after the first gosling hatches. This family left Lake Albert wetland & moved to Springvale Dam. Parents then build a grassy brood nest at new location.

This photo taken by Janet Hume.



3<sup>rd</sup> January – Geese family at Springvale Dam. Parent feeding goslings bill to bill. This will continue for 5-6 weeks. Young also forage independently.

Susan Campbell



## Know your daisies, Part 11 Sowthistles

Florets all ligulate, yellow; leaves basal and cauline; achenes without a beak; stems exuding a sap when broken.

**Sow** because of its attractiveness to pigs; **thistle** because of its likeness to a young thistle. It can be eaten as a salad or cooked like spinach, younger leaves are less bitter.

### *Sonchus oleraceus*\*, Common Sowthistle

Annual herb 30-110cm high, with taproot and fibrous roots; leaves +/-lyrate-pinnatifid, margins entire to pinnatifid with broad heart-shaped or triangular terminal lobe, usually with acute auricles, lower leaves with a long petiole-like base; heads few to many in cymose or umbellate inflorescence; achenes compressed-ovoid, 3-ribbed on each face; pappus of many rows of barbellate and cottony hairs; weed of cultivation, pastures and disturbed areas.



### *Sonchus asper*\*, Prickly Sowthistle



Annual or biennial herb 20-150cm high, with woody taproot, stems to 20mm diam at base, hollow; leaves pinnatifid, oblanceolate to lanceolate with rounded auricles and pungent spines on margins, reticulate veins prominent; heads numerous in a loosely branched inflorescence; achenes elliptic, 3-ribbed on each face, margins winged; pappus of several rows of barbellate and cottony hairs; weed of most habitats, particularly roadsides and wasteland.

### *Scolymus maculatus*\*, Spotted Thistle

Annual herb, to 1m high, stems winged with margins thickened and white, nearly glabrous; leaves in a basal rosette at first before stem developing; basal leaves oblanceolate, soft, pinnatifid with few spines; cauline leaves rigid, linear-oblong to ovate, sinuate-pinnatifid, spinose; heads solitary or in clusters; achenes obovate, compressed; pappus absent; weed of pastures and wastelands.

### *Scorzonera laciniata*, Scorzonera (syn *Podospermum*)

Biennial herb 1-60cm high, covered in hairs or glabrous, stems hollow, striate; leaves basal and cauline; +/-oblanceolate in outline, pinnatisect with lobes ovate to oblanceolate; basal leaves sometimes entire; heads solitary or few in a loose cluster; achenes narrow-cylindrical on a hollow often swollen base; pappus of several rows of plumose hairs; a weed of pasture.

### *Reichardia tingitana*\*, False Sowthistle

Annual to perennial herb, 10-50cm high; leaves basal and cauline, fleshy, margins minutely prickly; basal oblanceolate toothed to pinnatifid, narrowed at base; cauline leaves smaller, entire or toothed, broad-lanceolate, sessile to stem-clasping; heads solitary, terminal on long peduncles inflated below heads; achenes compressed-cylindrical, inner ones commonly aborted; pappus of many rows of simple hairs fused at base; occurs usually on sands and sandy red earths.

### *Tolpis barbata*\*, (syn *T. umbellata*)

Annual herb, to 40cm high, stems glabrous or cobwebby; leaves chiefly in a basal rosette at first, lanceolate to linear, toothed to +/-pinnatifid; upper leaves entire or toothed grading to filiform; heads in axillary clusters, peduncles over-topping a terminal head; achenes obconic, outer 4-angled, ribbed, each clasped by an inner bract, pubescent; inner achenes compressed, ribbed, glabrous; pappus of 1 row of minute bristles plus 4 longer hairs; recorded chiefly on heavy soils in grassland, woodland and sclerophyll forest.

Eric Whiting



## Local Bushland discovery – Roadsides!

### Look out for these signs

On the 25th of November 2021 Murrumbidgee Landcare organised a workshop on Local Leeton Bushland. The workshop was aimed at learning tips and tricks for preserving and identifying significant bushland. Dick Green facilitated a great morning helping us to identify local bush species giving us the tools to assess the bush health at a local Travelling Stock Route (TSR) in the afternoon. Looking at the past often helps with the direction for the future. We found this out by looking at vegetation surveys done over many years in the Leeton area. More discussions over lunch were very valuable to consolidate our learning.



When looking around your local landscape for bushland people often look for National Parks, State Forests, remnant vegetation on farms or beside rivers. In Agricultural areas where the land is used for cropping and livestock pursuits the land on the roadsides and in TSR's are often overlooked. The roadside vegetation is not being valued as an asset in the local vegetation space. Roadside surveys were produced many years ago but are not easily accessible for councils and landholders to view. Significant Roadside Vegetation signs are minimal in some areas which leads to vegetation being cleared without consultation (e.g. around Leeton and Coleambally).

Getting people together is an important part of protecting roadside vegetation. Over the last few years, I



have noted concerns of the local Murrumbidgee Field Naturalists (MFN) club members about vulnerable native bush on Leeton's roadsides. This bushland is critical as bird nesting sites and a source of food for many of our local birds (e.g. Mistletoe birds, White-winged Trillers) and our visiting bird populations (Painted Honeyeaters). The roadside vegetation is also critical for mammals and reptiles.

Bringing together a knowledgeable team consisting of Eric Whiting who conducted the Leeton surveys, Dick Green who with others compiled a wonderful native revegetation guide; Max O'Sullivan and Melanie Baulch whose expertise provided great knowledge on the correlation between birds and their nesting and feeding sites and there was some great discussion. Add the local Weeds Manager, Jeremy Crocker and there was a wealth of knowledge and information to transfer to those who care for the

**Dick Green helps us identify species from roadsides. Max, Eric and Dick viewing work by Beadle (1945).**

environment (All of our wonderful participants).



Attendees shared their experiences about local bushland on roadsides and TSR's. We all gained a deeper understanding of mapping that has been done historically (Beadle 1940s) covering western NSW and how it was complemented by local surveys by Eric Whiting (1994). Having this baseline survey on vegetation species,

demonstrated to younger members of the workshop how these vulnerable sites were monitored in the past. Site assessment sheets were used at the local



**Participants at the Euroley Bypass Travelling Stock Reserve.**



Euroley Bypass Travelling Stock Reserve (Yanco) to establish a bushland health rating for the vegetation which can now be used to monitor for possible deterioration and plan for action.

This simple bush assessment tool is on page 34 of the South West Slopes Revegetation Guide.

<http://wwwul.org.au/files/SWS%20Reveg%20GuideLR.pdf>

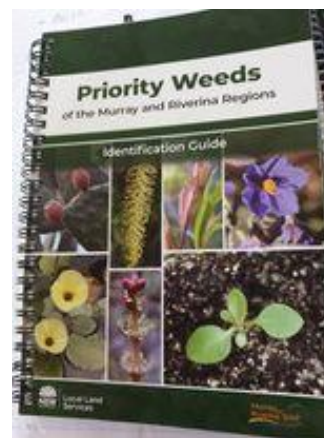
As a result of this workshop, we hope to install signs to notify locals and visitors of the Significant Roadside Vegetation which will help landholders and council employees to recognise the areas which are not to be removed or disturbed. These areas are critical for the survival of woodland birds who are decreasing in numbers and who require the corridors of roadside to safely move from nesting sites to feeding sites. The roadside vegetation also offers some protection from feral cats and foxes.

If you would like to know more about the importance of roadside vegetation visit.

<https://roads-waterways.transport.nsw.gov.au/about/what-we-do/committees/roadside-environment-committee.html>

Looking after our bush real-estate is critical for our native flora and fauna.

**Kathy Tenison (text and photos)**



**Priority Weeds new book available at the Leeton Shire Council**

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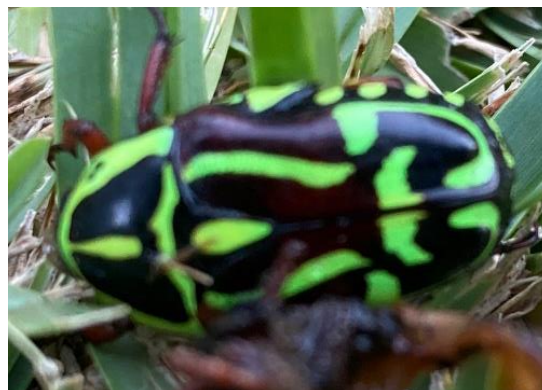
## Member's images and observations

**Narrandera Shire Council are holding a design competition for koala statues** - find information at -

<https://www.narrandera.nsw.gov.au/events/koala-art-trail-design-competition>

Contributed by Jason **Richardson**

The MFN might be interested in our Fiddler Beetle, found in base of an ornamental pot plant cover on our front porch. We guess it either blew in with the wild stormy weather or dropped off one of the Canberra cars over the holidays. We simply put it in the garden, looked it up later, don't know if it can survive our climate etc cheers, **Betty Bradney**



**Glenn Currie** photographed three chicks in a Little Friarbird's nest at Narrandera Wetlands 2/1/22. The nest seemed to be constructed with a lot of artificial material. His other photos is of a Wolf Spider with bumps; these are tiny, tiny spiderlings. He used iNaturalist to id it. It suggested it was a Wolf Spider and it probably was - Wolf Spiders do carry their young on their abdomen. Somehow the Artificial Intelligence iNaturalist uses, disregarded all the funny bumps on the spider and still picked it as a probable Wolf Spider. Technology is amazing!



**Janet Hume** witnessed this Purple Swamphen racing up the bank with a very distressed Eurasian Coot hot on its tail. Alas it was no match for the bigger hen who then proceeded to eat the chick. The Rainbow Bee-eater was seen at Pomingalama and the Pied Stilt Group of about 20 seen at Springvale Dam on the 17th Jan



Approaching storm looking towards Square Knob was taken by **Paul Maytom** on 29 January.

### **Catchment Keepers Workshop Narrandera**

### **Murrumbidgee Landcare**

Murrumbidgee women sharing stories and actions that empower and sustain us as custodians and farmers

Thurs 17th March 2022, 9am - 5pm

Meet at the Ex- Serviceman's Club, 39-45 Bolton St, Narrandera

Morning tea and lunch provided. Covid Safe rules apply.

RSVP essential for this free event.

[Catchment Keepers Workshop – Narrandera Tickets, Thu 17/03/2022 at 9:00 am | Eventbrite](#)

Our wonderful guests are:

Bundle Lawson - A Holistic Management Journey in grazing

Lisa Castleman - Agriculture starting from the soil up

Skye Bellamy - On Farm Biodiversity

Suzannah Macbeth, Sustainable Farms – Advocating change

Farm walk and talk in Grong Grong with Gemma Meier

Local Artist Kerri Weymouth - Art, nature and relaxation

For more information, please contact Kathy Tenison – [bidgeeirrigation@mli.org.au](mailto:bidgeeirrigation@mli.org.au) or 0428 396 826



# MEMBERS' SIGHTINGS

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

<b>Indian Myna</b>	"Mountain Dam" via Leeton	29/11/21	Graham Russell
<b>Blue-tongue Lizard</b> (large)	Narrandera Wetlands	08/12/21	Alan Whitehead
<b>Grey Fantail</b>	Narrandera Wetlands	08/12/21	Susan Whitehead
Feeding with 6 Silvereyes			
<b>Bearded Dragon</b>	Woolscour Rd, Narrandera	08/12/21	Susan Whitehead
<b>Double-barred Finch</b> [pr]	Fivebough Picnic Area carrying grass	05/12/21	Keith Hutton
<b>Black Falcon</b> [1]	Fivebough Wetlands	05/12/21	Keith Hutton
<b>Whiskered Tern</b> [80]	Fivebough Wetlands	05/12/21	Keith Hutton
<b>Magpie Goose</b> [6]	Fivebough Wetlands	05/12/21	Keith Hutton
<b>Brolga</b> [2]	Fivebough Wetlands	11/12/21	Max O'Sullivan
<b>Diamond Firetail</b>	'Yarrabimbi' Colinroobie Rd Leeton	11/12/21	MFN Xmas Party
<b>Australasian Bittern</b> [3+]	Fivebough Wetlands booming at dusk	12/12/21	Keith Hutton
1 seen flying over the club grass near where the males were booming.			
<b>Australasian Bittern</b> [2]	McDonald Rd, Bilbul booming nightly	mid-Dec>	Meredith Billington
<b>Marsh Sandpiper</b> [2]	Fivebough – return after 3 weeks	16/12/21	Max O'Sullivan
<b>Long-billed Corella</b> [12+]	Leeton Showground – Summer return	16/12/21	Max O'Sullivan
<b>Tawny Frogmouth</b> [pr]	Road outside Barry Heihr's property	17/12/21	Kathy & Phil Tenison
<b>Australian Little Bittern</b> [1]	Campbell's Wetlands – boardwalk	21/12/21	Max O'Sullivan
<b>Tawny Frogmouth</b> [1Ad 2juv]	McDonald Rd, Bilbul – Meredith's	Xmas '21	Meredith Billington
<b>Mistletoebird</b>	Mc Donald Rd, Bilbul – resident	Dec/Jan	Meredith Billington
<b>White-necked Heron</b> [12]	Fivebough Wetlands	02/01/22	Max O'Sullivan
<b>Marsh Sandpiper</b> [6]	Fivebough Wetlands	02/01/22	Max O'Sullivan
<b>Australasian Bittern</b> [3]	Fivebough Wetlands – heard booming	03/01/22	Keith Hutton
<b>Mulga Parrot</b> [pr]	Wattle Dam, Binya State Forest	04/01/22	Max O'Sullivan
<b>Turquoise Parrot</b> [2]	Wattle Dam, Binya State Forest	04/01/22	Max O'Sullivan
<b>Brown Honeyeater</b> [pr]	Karri Rd -Keith's front yard	05/01/22	Keith Hutton
8/1/22 sitting on nest, 20/1 adult birds about but nest damaged and no sign of eggs or young. Keith suspects a Singing Honeyeater might have been responsible.			
<b>Australian Pipit</b> [20+]	Road behind Waste Treatment Plant	05/01/22	Max O'Sullivan
<b>Brown Falcon</b> [1]	Fivebough Wetlands	09/01/22	Keith Hutton
<b>White-necked Heron</b> [30]	Fivebough Wetlands	09/01/22	Keith Hutton
<b>Sacred Kingfisher</b> [1]	Fivebough Wetlands	09/01/22	Keith Hutton
<b>Budgerigar</b> [6]	Brobenah Hall Rd via Leeton	09/01/22	Max O'Sullivan
<b>Glossy Black Cockatoo</b> [pr]	Pomingalarna Rd, Wagga	10/01/22	Janet Hume
<b>Rainbow Bee-eater</b> [6]	Rowan Rd via Wagga	11/01/22	Janet Hume
<b>Rufous Whistler</b>	Mc Donald Rd, Bilbul	mid-Jan '22	Meredith Billington
<b>Common (Indian) Myna</b> [2]	Fivebough Wetlands – first sighting	15/01/22	Keith Hutton
I also saw a pair on the pump shed on the Main Channel at McCracken Rd on 31/01/22 possibly the same pair!			
<b>Little Friarbird</b> [4]	Fivebough Wetlands	15/01/22	Keith Hutton
<b>Australian Pipit</b> [1]	Fivebough Wetlands	15/01/22	Keith Hutton
<b>Wood Duck</b> [60]	Fivebough Wetlands	15/01/22	Keith Hutton
<b>Eastern Brown Snake</b>	Fivebough - seen catching 2 frogs	15/01/22	Keith Hutton
<b>Australasian Bittern</b> [2]	Fivebough Wetlands in flight	18/01/22	Nick Stephens + MOS
<b>Plumed Whistling-duck</b> [12+]	Fivebough Wetlands	18/01/22	Nick Stephens + MOS
Also seen were <b>4 Spotless Crake</b> , <b>4 Buff-banded Rail</b> and <b>2 Australian Spotted Crake</b> on the pathways.			
<b>Glossy Black Cockatoo</b> [male]	Spring Hill, Cocoparra Nat. Park – flyover	20/01/22	Max O'Sullivan
<b>Latham's Snipe</b> [1]	Fivebough – channel near the bridge	22/01/22	Keith Hutton
<b>Black Falcon</b> [1]	Fivebough Wetlands	22/01/22	Keith Hutton
<b>Glossy Ibis</b> [25]	Fivebough Wetlands	22/01/22	Keith Hutton
<b>Cattle Egret</b> [25]	Fivebough Wetlands	22/01/22	Keith Hutton
<b>Peregrine Falcon</b> [juv male]	Fivebough Wetlands	22/01/22	Keith Hutton



<b>Latham's Snipe</b>	Flowerdale Lagoon, Wagga Wagga	26/01/22	Janet Hume
<b>Black Kite</b> [7]	Karri Rd circling high overhead	28/01/22	Keith Hutton
<b>Glossy Black Cockatoo</b> [2]	Jacks Creek Cocoparra Nat. Park – flyover	29/01/22	Meredith Billington
<b>Nankeen Night Heron</b> [40]	Fivebough/Quodling Rd	30/01/22	Marie Lister + MO'S
<b>Magpie Goose</b> [7]	Fivebough Wetlands	30/01/22	Keith Hutton
<b>Australasian Shoveler</b> [9]	Fivebough Wetlands	30/01/22	Keith Hutton
<b>Swamp Harrier</b> [2]	Fivebough Wetlands	30/01/22	Keith Hutton
<b>Whiskered Tern</b> [22]	Fivebough Wetlands	30/01/22	Keith Hutton
<b>Cattle Egret</b> [19]	Fivebough Wetlands	30/01/22	Keith Hutton
<b>Buff-banded Rail</b> [ad + 1juv]	Fivebough Wetlands	30/01/22	Keith Hutton
<b>Pied Stilt</b> [12]	Fivebough Wetlands	30/01/22	Keith Hutton
<b>Pink Cockatoo</b> [15+]	Quarry entrance Colinroobie Rd	31/01/22	Marie Lister + MO'S
<b>Glossy Black Cockatoo</b> [pr]	Spring Hill, Cocoparra Nat Park – roosting	31/01/22	Marie Lister + MO'S
<b>Stubble Quail</b> [calling]	Colinroobie Rd near quarry main gate	31/01/22	Marie Lister + MO'S
<b>Spotted Nightjar</b> [2]	Road near Barry Heihr's farm	31/01/22	Marie Lister + MO'S
<b>Rainbow Bee Eaters</b> [2]	Narrandera Wetlands	01/02/22	Alan Whitehead
<b>Dollarbird</b> [2]	Narrandera Wetlands	01/02/22	Alan Whitehead
<b>Orchard Swallowtail Butterfly</b>	Narrandera Wetlands	01/02/22	Alan Whitehead
<b>Dainty Swallowtail Butterfly</b>	Narrandera Wetlands	01/02/22	Alan Whitehead

#### **Margaret Strong's observations at Whitton**

**Two Grey Shrike Thrush seen several times**, but the subtle differences between male and female are very hard to distinguish when they're perched high up in Eucalypts. Lately I've heard a young bird learning his song in response to the mature male's call. If it's father and son, then there must have been a female here at least during December and January - probably the second bird I reported in December.

**Welcome Swallows raised two chicks.** Since fledging 1st January, the offspring still roost with Mum and Dad most nights near the nest.

**Spiny-cheeked Honeyeater** - heard early January - passing through.

**Sacred Kingfisher** - heard but not seen first week of February

Compiled by Max O'Sullivan

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#### **Additional information for the field trips**

##### **11 February Friday Coleambally Southern Bell Frog Field Trip**

We'd be going out to Reserve 5 which is only a 5 minute drive from Coleambally. To make things simpler with COVID everyone should drive out to the site, which should be accessible by two wheel drive cars (though heavy rainfall can make it tricky to get out there).

##### **Minimum gear to take would be:**

Long pants (there are plenty of snakes and we will be walking through some thick vegetation)

Gumboots/waders (preferred) as water depth is anywhere between 30-60cm

Head torch or other powerful LED light

Mozzie repellent (no mozzies out there at the moment but it could change)

##### **24/25 February Fri/Sat Glossy Black Cockatoo Count**

All volunteers must register and when you do, Leeton Narrandera or Griffith organisers will assign you to a dam. You should try and get familiar with the sound they make as you will probably hear them first. As there is a lot of water in the landscape this year, the birds may not drink at a dam as they prefer to drink from puddles. If you hear them you should still record them even if they don't drink. If you are able please record sex of glossies.

Please record all species and numbers of fauna that come near the dam or down to drink. There are forms for this and they should be sent to Nella so she can collate the results. You should position yourself at your allotted dam by 6pm at the latest.

**Remember the more dams we can cover the more accurate the count will be.**



# \*\*\*\* 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, do not come if unwell. By registering you declare that 'I am symptom free and have not been in contact with a confirmed case of Covid 19, or directed to isolate'. Masks and social distancing are required as per current Covid rules.

- 10 February Thursday**      **Monthly Meeting** in the Yellow Room at the **Leeton Library**, Sycamore St., Leeton commencing at 7pm.  
**Guest Speaker: Luke Friend- Community Engagement Officer –**  
**Topic: Water for the Environment & Reconnecting River Country Program**  
What is the Reconnecting River Country Program? The goal of the Reconnecting River Country Program is to achieve a balance of economic, social, cultural and environmental outcomes across southern NSW by improving wetland and floodplain connectivity. See December newsletter.  
**Contact:** Dione Russell 0428 536 290  
**Email:** [murrumbidgeefieldnaturalists@gmail.com](mailto:murrumbidgeefieldnaturalists@gmail.com).
- 11 February Friday**      **Coleambally Southern Bell Frog Field Trip**  
**led by Keith Thompson, Environmental Compliance Officer.**  
**Meet at 7pm at the Lions Park at the entrance to Coleambally** (where the Bucyrus Erie Dragline Excavator is)  
**Register with Nella Smith** Email: [nellasmith0@gmail.com](mailto:nellasmith0@gmail.com) Phone 0428 890 537  
This will give us about an hour of sunlight out at the Reserve, and an hour or so after dark (finish at about 9.30pm).  
A rare opportunity and the water won't be there for much longer.
- 24/25 February Fri/Sat**      **Glossy Black Cockatoo Count – Leeton, Narrandera, Griffith**  
Participants will be allotted a dam to go to at various locations in the Brobenah and Narrandera hills and Binya Forest. Timing will be from 6pm  
If you are interested in participating contact  
**Narrandera** - Nella Smith Email: [nellasmith0@gmail.com](mailto:nellasmith0@gmail.com) Phone 0428 890 537  
**Leeton** – Graham Russell [grahamrussell29@gmail.com](mailto:grahamrussell29@gmail.com) Phone 0419 350 673  
**Griffith** - Virginia Tarr [vobrien3@hotmail.com](mailto:vobrien3@hotmail.com) Phone 0434 831 031
- 2 March Wednesday**      **Copy for the March newsletter is due. Please send to Rowena.**  
**Email:** [ericwhiting4@bigpond.com](mailto:ericwhiting4@bigpond.com). Phone: 6953 2612.
- 6 March Sunday**      **Flowerdale Lagoon – Field trip and Clean Up Australia Day**  
**7:30am Field Trip**  
**9:00am Clean Up Australia Day briefing**  
**Meet at Edward St West car park at each time point**  
**Contact & RSVP Sarah Danckert** [spdanckert@gmail.com](mailto:spdanckert@gmail.com)
- 10 March Thursday**      **Monthly Meeting** in the Yellow Room at the **Leeton Library**, Sycamore St., Leeton commencing at 7pm.  
**Topic:** To be announced  
**Contact:** Dione Russell 0428 536 290  
**Email:** [murrumbidgeefieldnaturalists@gmail.com](mailto:murrumbidgeefieldnaturalists@gmail.com).
- 13 March Sunday**      **Outing to Dry Lake is proposed**  
**Contact Nella Smith** Email: [nellasmith0@gmail.com](mailto:nellasmith0@gmail.com) Phone 0428 890 537