

# *The Murrumbidgee Naturalist*



**February 2021 - Issue #289**  
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Website: [www.mfn.org.au](http://www.mfn.org.au)

Email: [murrumbidgeefieldnaturalists@gmail.com](mailto:murrumbidgeefieldnaturalists@gmail.com)

## 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

**Australasian  
Bittern  
in flight over  
a rice crop  
a rare  
photographic  
opportunity  
by  
Graham Russell**



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## CONTRIBUTIONS

For the March 2021 issue by  
Wednesday 3 March

To Rowena Whiting

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

Phone: 6953 2612

*Unlock the door  
to your mind before  
opening the door  
to the world*

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

<b>President:</b>	Alan Whitehead 6959 3779	<b>Editor:</b>	Rowena Whiting 6953 2612
<b>Vice President:</b>	Nella Smith 0428 809 537	<b>Committee:</b>	Phil Tenison 6953 4869
<b>Vice President:</b>	Max O'Sullivan 0434 923 766		Glenn Currie 0488 563 321
<b>Vice President:</b>	Meredith Billington 0498 711 165		Virginia Tarr 6962 5614
<b>Secretary:</b>	Graham and Dione Russell 0419 350 673 (Graham) 0428 536290 (Dione)		
<b>Treasurer:</b>	Ellené Schnell 0488 080 866	<b>Website Co-ordinator:</b>	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 7 PM

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

INTENDING NEW MEMBERS, GUESTS AND VISITORS WELCOME.

### Membership enquiries:

<b>Leeton</b>	Eric Whiting 6953 2612	<b>Griffith</b>	Virginia Tarr 6962 5614
<b>Narrandera</b>	Nella Smith 0428 890 537	<b>Coleambally</b>	John Wilkinson 6954 4129
<b>Wagga Wagga</b>	Melanie Baulch 0428 914 702	melaniebaulch@bigpond.com	

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

**Bank details for direct deposit:** 082 672 account no. 772043387, 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 February 2021

I hope that you all had a happy festive season (not to inconvenienced by the border closures) and that you are all looking forward to club activities during the coming year.. So far the year is shaping up well: we are able to return to the Leeton Library for our general meetings.

This issue has a number of contributions of sightings and stories from various members. Keep them coming and enjoy your first read for the year, **Rowena**.

## World Wetlands Day Display at Fivebough 02/02/21

Kathy Tenison mounted a brilliant display of wetland birds at the Budyaan Baamirra Picnic shelter at Fivebough to celebrate World Wetlands Day. She filled the front display case with the wonderful poster Jason Richardson (see picture page 7) had made for last year's celebration and in the inside case, Kathy had a display of a number of her own photos of local wetland birds as well as wetland posters explaining the importance of wetlands and in particular Ramsar Sites for the survival of all species dependent on wetlands to survive – especially for the survival of the highly threatened Migratory Waders

whose numbers have plummeted greatly in recent decades

because of the loss of wetlands in South-East Asia and China, on their annual migration routes.

On behalf of the Club, I would like to congratulate Kathy on such a brilliant display and hope that members will go and have a look as it is well worth a visit. Thanks Kathy.

**Max O'Sullivan**



The display cabinet at Fivebough with Tim Coulter (Leeton Shire) – Kathy Tenison



Kathy assembling the posters

## Fivebough Wetlands Christmas Gathering 12 December 2020

A rather low key affair this year with everyone bringing their own food and drink to comply with Covid. Nevertheless it was a lovely evening, not too hot so a walk out to the junction was enjoyed by most with a few venturing a bit further. Some time was spent at the Brolga shelter from where a number of birds could be observed on the water. We then gathered at the information/picnic area for our meal and talk session. As the list below, compiled by Max, shows quite a number of birds were sighted.

### Bird list:

Pelican	Cattle Egret	Little Pied Cormorant	Royal Spoonbill
Yellow-billed Spoonbill	Straw-necked Ibis	White Ibis	
Glossy Ibis	Black Swan	Black Duck	Australian Shoveler
Grey Teal	Black-shouldered Kite	Spotless Crake (H)	
Dusky Moorhen	Purple Swamphen	Black-tailed Native-hen	Masked Lapwing
Black-fronted Dotterel	Wood Sandpiper	Marsh Sandpiper	
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper	Pied Stilt	Whiskered Tern	
Crested Pigeon	Galah	Superb Parrot	Welcome Swallow
Black-faced Cuckoo-Shrike	Willie Wagtail	Cisticola	Reed Warbler
Purple-backed Wren	Little Friarbird	White-plumed Honeyeater	Zebra Finch
Little Raven	Starling	PeeWee	Magpie

Max O'Sullivan

Photos by Kathy Tenison

### Black-tailed Native-Hen



## Bittern Friendly Rice Farm Visit 23 January 2021

Anna Wilson (Local Land Services) and Matt Herring invited members of the MFN to visit a rice farm and to see firsthand the latest methods used by Matt in locating bittern nests in the rice crops.

Fourteen members took advantage of the invitation and on the Saturday morning (23 January) we all met outside the Andrezza Farm at Wilbriggie and moved in convoy after car pooling behind Matt and Anna around the rice fields to see if we could find any bitterns. We were very fortunate as not long after starting, a bittern flew out of the first rice bay and most of us had a good view of the bird flying off. One other bird was seen flying and several were seen with their head sticking out above the crop during the drive around. Everyone managed to get some good views of the birds and several got some good photos.

Back at the farm house, we stopped for morning tea which Anna generously provided and Matt showed a video of the use of the infra-red camera had which is attached to a drone. Despite the warm morning Matt was able to fly the drone over the rice crop and showed us how the



**Top: Australasian Bittern in a rice crop (Graham Russell)**  
**Above right: Matt Herring telling us about the drone (Penny Williams)**  
**Above left: Matt flying the drone with our group watching (Dionea Russell)**  
**below a bank to provide refuge for the young Bitterns (Penny Williams)**

infra-red camera can detect warm-blooded creatures in the area. The best time to use the camera is at dawn and dusk when the

temperature difference is greater and the warm-blooded birds can be easily located. Matt was excited as on the previous day, he located a nest in one of the bays that had a young chick in the nest – the first he'd found this season.

Anna also gave a talk about the Growing Bittern Friendly Rice program that they have set up over the last two years and are very pleased that so many farmers have signed up to the program. This year they have 11 local farmers subscribing to

the program which is enough for Matt to cope with at this early stage of the program. The basic commitment is to ensure the farmers agree to keep the water on their crop for a set number of days (up to 150) before draining the bays and drying out the crop for harvesting thus giving the bitterns plenty of time



to breed and fledge their young before the harvester moves in. Added to that is a requirement that there is no spraying of the banks between the bays to ensure the young birds have a good refuge to go to a week to ten days after hatching. This means that the banks have a tall growth of weeds and rank grasses to help protect the young birds from predators like foxes and cats.

The bitterns usually wait for up to 2 months after the rice is planted and delay their usual nesting time until the rice has sufficient height for them to 'hide' in. Another important aspect of this delay by the birds is to allow sufficient time for their prey of frogs, tadpoles, fish etc to build up in the bays so enough food is available for them to successfully nest without the brooding female having to fly off further afield to find food.

We are very grateful to Anna and Matt for inviting the MFN to see first hand what the Growing Bittern Friendly Rice is all about – it was a wonderful morning both for seeing at least 5 bitterns and to have the drone demonstration and on behalf of the members who attended I sincerely thank them for such a privilege to see the program first hand.

**Max O'Sullivan**

## New Wagga Wagga Chapter

A great first outing as MFN's Wagga Wagga Chapter. 14 keen bird watchers and 30 birds sighted.

A magic misty morning with water birds backlit by shimmering golden light.

Date: 2 February 2021 Time: 6:42 am

Location: Murrumbidya Wetland Coordinates: -35.092040, 147.357797.

Survey type: 500m area search

Notes: World Wetlands Day, MFN Wagga chapter



### Bird List

Little Corella	Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike	Red Wattlebird	Noisy Miner
Galah	Australian Magpie	Yellow Rumped Thornbill	Australian Reed-Warbler
Australasian Darter	Australasian Grebe + juvs	Eurasian Coot	
Pacific Black Duck + ducklings		Superb Fairy-wren	Magpie-lark
Masked Lapwing	Rainbow Bee-eater	Peaceful Dove	Dusky Moorhen + juvs
Grey Teal	Australian White Ibis	Little Grassbird	White-faced Heron
Laughing Kookaburra	Australian Raven	Sulphur-crested Cockatoo (P, None)	
Blue Cheeked Yellow Rosella		Australian Wood Duck	Purple Swamphen
Red-browed Finch	Western Gerygone	Grey Shrike-thrush	Eastern Rosella

**Melanie Baulch**

## CELEBRATE WORLD WETLANDS DAY at Campbell's

Griffith City Council will mark World Wetlands Day by reminding locals about the hidden gem that is Campbell's Wetland.

World Wetlands Day is celebrated internationally each year, marking the anniversary of the signing of the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar Convention) in Ramsar, Iran, on 2 February 1971.

This year, the international theme of World Wetlands Day is 'wetlands and biodiversity', raising awareness of the vital services wetlands provide and their importance as habitat to a diverse range of plants and animals, many of which are rare or threatened. Campbell's Wetland is located approximately 6 km's North of Griffith and is 27.3 hectares in size, sitting on the eastern side of Lake Wyangan. It is one of the best kept secrets in the Griffith City Council area. Campbell's is a natural ephemeral wetland, meaning that it would usually hold water after heavy rain and flooding and periodically dry up. However, in recent years

Campbell's Wetland has been allocated environmental water providing a more permanent habitat for waterbirds to take refuge through our harsh summers.



While not currently recognised under the Ramsar convention as a wetland of international significance, Campbell's has been recognised as an Important Bird Area (IBA) and helps support the mosaic of wetlands of inland NSW, particularly within the broader Riverina Region and locally within the MIA, as being a site offering refuge during drought years for migratory and other bird species."

Several Threatened Species have been recorded at

**Aerial view of Campbell's Wetlands - Charlie Colloridi (GCC)**

Campbell's Wetland including the Australasian Bittern and the Southern Bell

Frog. Five bird species have been recorded at Campbell's that are covered by the Japan-Australia Migratory Bird Agreement (JAMBA) and the China-Australia Migratory Bird Agreement (CAMBA) and over 53 waterbird species have been recorded.

Australia was one of the five founding nations to sign the Convention. The world's first Wetland of International Importance (Ramsar wetland) under the Convention has also been designated. Worldwide, there are 170 Contracting Parties to the Convention and over 2,400 listed Ramsar wetlands.

Wetlands are amongst the most important, productive and valuable ecosystems in Australia. They are socially important for education, research, recreation and tourism. They also have cultural, heritage and aesthetic values.

A few things to remember for locals visiting the Wetland:

- The best time to visit Campbell's Wetland is early morning or late afternoon when the birds are more active
- Wear long pants and enclosed footwear, broad brimmed hat, sunglasses and sunscreen
- Be patient, waterbirds at times are very mobile. However through the middle of the day they will take refuge in the trees and cumbungi and may be difficult to see
- Don't forget to bring your binoculars!
- Be quiet, the slightest noise can scare off the birds
- Don't litter
- Think about joining the Murrumbidgee Field Naturalists or your local Landcare group
- And enjoy!

**Magpie Goose flying at the wetland -David Kellett**



For more information on Campbell's Wetland contact David Kellett (Principal Officer – Environment GCC) on 1300 176 077 or david.kellett@griffith.nsw.gov.au

**David Kellett**

Submitted from a media release by Griffith City Council

## Fivebough and Tuckerbil Wetlands

World Wetlands Day - The year 2021 commemorates the 50th anniversary of the signing of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands on 2 February 1971 in Ramsar, Iran. This date is celebrated annually as World Wetlands Day.

Fivebough Wetlands is Crown Reserve and is designated under the Ramsar Convention. This means it is a Wetland of International Importance for conserving biological diversity. Fivebough and Tuckerbil were accepted and designated under Ramsar on the 21st of October 2002.

Fivebough is significant as a high value natural ecosystem which supports threatened and endangered well as other bird life and native wildlife species.

The migratory waders come here as part of the southern migratory route from their northern summer breeding grounds in Eastern Siberia. They come via East Asia across the Equator and over New Guinea. Half of them head south through the Gulf and half down the inland of Australia arriving at Fivebough and Tuckerbil to fuel-up before heading further south into Victoria and Tasmania.

We have many significant wetlands in the Murrumbidgee Catchment. These wetlands help to clean the river system, buffer floods, provide habitat for a large diversity of wildlife and provide recreational resources.

Traditional owners over time found wetlands to be a valuable source of food, fibre and even transport.

Wetland loss and pollution has intensified a water crisis threatening all life. Climate change is reducing surface and groundwater in already dry regions, resulting in increasing competition for water. Amazingly 25% of all wetland species and 1 in 3 freshwater species face extinction ([ramsar@ramsar.org](mailto:ramsar@ramsar.org)).

Murrumbidgee Landcare and Leeton Shire Council ran a competition for World Wetlands Day where people in the shire could email Leeton Tourism to win a Wetland Bird Master Class for themselves and a friend along with a bird breakfast at the Hungry Fox (Donated by the Leeton Shire Council), plus an information package on birds and wetlands put together by Landcare.

The winner announced on World Wetlands Day was Rachelle Ward and her daughter Ellena. We look forward to taking them on their Wetland tour. Thanks to Brent Lawrence, Tim Coulter (Leeton Shire Council), Max O'Sullivan and the Hungry Fox for their time in helping with the competition and getting the Fivebough display looking sharp for the 50 year celebration.

If you would like to get involved in wetlands here are a couple of options:

- Find and visit your nearest Ramsar-listed site and wetland education centre.
- Become a citizen scientist. Help gather vital information about wetlands, and the habitats and biodiversity they support.
- Get involved in local wetland conservation activities with Landcare ([bidgeeirrigation@mli.org.au](mailto:bidgeeirrigation@mli.org.au)), Narrandera Landcare ([narranderalandcare@gmail.com](mailto:narranderalandcare@gmail.com)) or Murrumbidgee Field Naturalists [info@mfn.org.au](mailto:info@mfn.org.au).

### Kathy Tenison

More information:

visit the World Wetlands Day page at [environment.gov.au/water/wetlands/world-wetlands-day](http://environment.gov.au/water/wetlands/world-wetlands-day)



Jason Richardson's Poster. Jason has printed stickers of this – available from him or the Leeton Visitor Centre  
Photos by Kathy Tenison

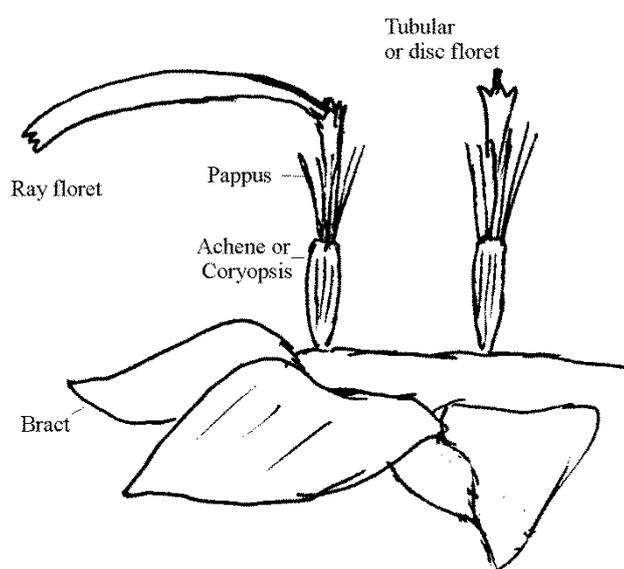


## Know your Daisies - part 1, the basic structures

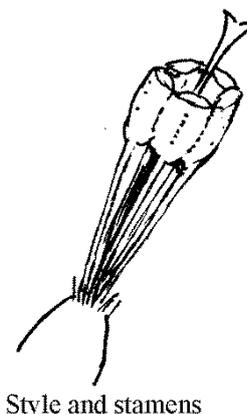
The daisy family must be the most successful of all the plant families. Worldwide there are around 25,000 species in c.1100 genera. In Australia there are c. 970 species in c. 205 genera of which New South Wales has 177 genera. Identifying one plant to a species is therefore quite a task.

Firstly is it actually in the Asteraceae (the proper name for the family). With so many species diversity is great. Not all members look like the easy to tell typical daisy, dandelion or everlasting pattern. The main defining feature is that the flowers are in heads. What we generally call the flower is actually the inflorescence consisting of a few to many individual flowers which for convenience are termed florets.

The Asteraceae are not the only plants with flowers in heads. Thymelaeacea (Riceflowers), some Goodeniaceae (like Blue Pincushions) and some Apiaceae (particularly the Flannel flowers, *Actinotus*) have their flowers in heads. Asteraceae differ from them in that the florets have inferior ovaries (ie. beneath the petals), the calyx or sepals are either absent or are modified into scales, awns or hairs, and the fruit of each floret is a dry achene. (Actually the fruit is a cypsella as it forms from an inferior ovary but that term is rarely used.)



The anthers of Asteraceae are combined into a tube although the five filaments are free. The pollen is released into the tube and pushed out by the developing style to be gathered by the pollinator.



Having established the unknown plant is in the family the next step is to understand the variations of the basic structures and some of the terms used.

The head (or capitulum) can be flat topped as in most species or domed or even globular (Billy Buttons). The florets can be few per head or very many as in the Sunflower. The head can actually have a number of smaller heads (a compound head with partial heads), but that

feature often requires careful examination to determine.

Each head is surrounded by bracts in one or several rows. Bracts can be green and leafy, brown or translucent and scaly, or opaque and coloured (Everlastings and Sunrays).

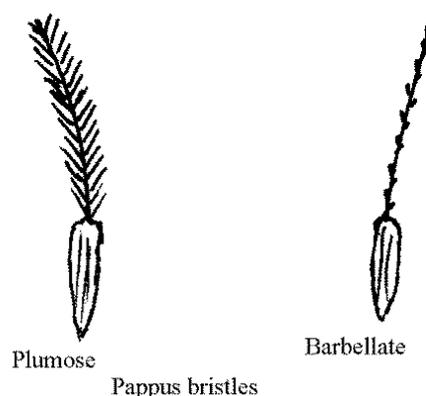
The calyx (sepals) are always small or even absent. They can become scales, awns or hairlike on the maturing achenes. The general term used is pappus. Hairs can be simple, toothed along all or part of their length (barbellate) or bearing smaller hairs (plumose).

The petals are combined into a cup like tube, the five parts showing as lobes. If all the lobes are similar the floret is tubular.

If one lobe is longer the floret is ligulate. The longer lobe is called the ray but in common parlance is often erroneously called a petal. Heads can have all ligulate florets (Dandelions, Yams, Thistles), all tubular florets (everlasting, sunrays), or the outer florets are ligulate and the often majority inner ones tubular (typical daisies).

The achenes are generally separate, but in one tribe they combine into spiny burrs. Examples are Bathurst Burr and Wormwoods.

Another tribe (Cichorieae – Chicory, Sow Thistles, Dandelions, Lettuce, etc) exude a milky sap when broken and this fact is used to separate them from other family members,



Eric Whiting

## Sightings and Stories contributed by various people

### Blackish Blind Snake *Anilius nigrescens*

Michelle sent photos to the club for an identification and we forwarded to a reptile group in Canberra for a confirmation. Michelle has written this piece about her encounter and location.

Our farm is near the Yanco creek in the Riverina, the creek runs south from the Murrumbidgee river near Narrandera to where it meets the Billabong creek above Canargo. We have a 35 acre paddock full of old and new red gums that is a treat to drive through on the way to check our sheep in the next paddock. It was along this track that I found what I thought was a very large worm, approximately 30cm. A bird of some sort had been at it as it was squished at intervals and whether I disturbed it or something else did is still a mystery. It hadn't been dead long and upon closer inspection I was unsure if it was a worm or not. It's belly was paler than it's back and it looked like it had smooth skin with a scaly look. I didn't notice at first it had eyes as it's strange snout threw me. The other end was thick and finished to a sharp downward point. I took some quick photos and half thought about taking it with me but didn't and am still kicking myself over this. I took some quick photos as I was in a hurry that morning. I posted the photos on facebook and then sent photos to this club and after a few days it was identified as a Blackish Blind Snake. After doing some reading about them I realised how amazing they are and feel priviledged to have seen one and chuffed to

think that there could be more in the area.

**Michelle Chibnall**



### David Heath has had great breeding sightings at his place, "Acres" near Pulletop .



Firstly, the **Major Mitchell Cockatoos** have returned to an artificial nesting box that David put up in a tree. They managed to raise 2 chicks. Firstly, it's a privilege to see this happening with a beautiful Vulnerable species. You don't see that much nesting activity in artificial nesting boxes. (Except for Starlings that we found in boxes at Fivebough.

Secondly David has had breeding sightings of **Masked Woodswallow** in a natural hollow. Sometimes these are hard to find in a mixed flock but it seems they are doing OK this year.

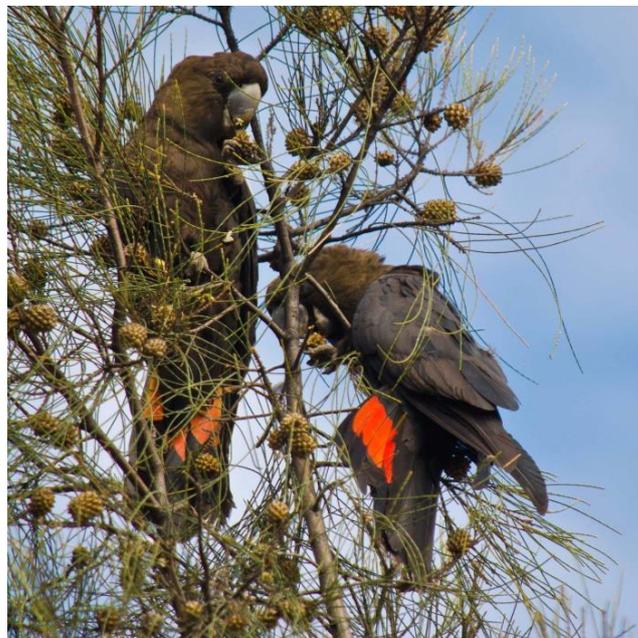


Received via Nella who also added:-

Thirdly Did you see the hundreds of White fronted Chats in the cotton field at Wilbrige on the way to the Australasian Bittern morning?

Jason Richardson's photo shows a pair of Glossy Black Cockatoos feeding on the Casuarinas at the Leeton Golf Course – they were seen by a number of members late last year.

Jason has also sent this link to Bamay, a "slow TV" program currently streaming on SBS On Demand that reveals a new perspective on some of the local landscape.



The visuals are mostly drone footage of the natural environment, accompanied by occasional text detailing features.

Bamay shows stretches of waterways and includes the Murrumbidgee River as well as tributaries such as Yanco Creek and dams Burrinjuck and Blowering.

There is a short introduction by Wiradjuri man Peter Ingram, who shares some of his knowledge of the Murray Darling Basin waterways as links between communities and describes them as veins for the Australian continent.

It will be interesting to hear impressions from other Murrumbidgee Field Naturalists.

<https://www.sbs.com.au/ondemand/video/1843255363956/bamay-ii>

[Very relaxing – just let the river flow... – Ed]

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## Music could be key in finding rare bird species

From Saving our Species e-news December 2020  
Searching for the red-lored whistler

The red-lored whistler (*Pachycephala rufogularis*) is a threatened small, grey brown songbird that occurs in isolated populations of Mallee woodland.

In the middle of NSW there's a cryptic bird so elusive that SoS has turned to music to detect it. Threatened species experts have been recording birdsongs – through bioacoustic technology – to monitor and track the critically endangered red-

lored whistler (*Pachycephala rufogularis*) in the Central West's Round Hill and Nombinnie Nature Reserves



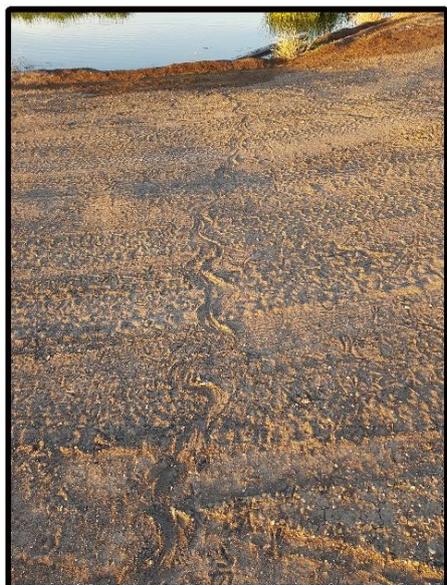
[Watch the video](#)

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## Researchers use thermal imaging to find elusive birds

An article in the Sydney Morning Herald which relates how scientists are using thermal technology to monitor the critically endangered Plains Wanderer in northern Victoria (Terrick Terrick National Park). These thermal searches also uncovered fat-tailed dunnarts, a mouse-like marsupial, and other grassland birds. They are using thermal scanners – which sit outside a vehicle mounted to the window – and the driver and front-seat passengers rotated these manually to scan the landscape as the vehicles crawled through the grasslands. From Joy Young

## Around the Rice in January



Snake Track on the edge of the rice bay

During January we have been walking in the early mornings around the rice and observing the animals around us. The rice bays full of water attract birds. We noticed some, for example the Red-rumped Parrots are there to have a drink. Others forage for food. Some species were only observed once during January whilst other species were there every day. Pacific Black Ducks and Little Pied Cormorants were the most prevalent. Red-kneed Dotterels were there every day as were Magpie-Larks.

We have seen tracks of snakes leading into the water and then away from the water. It seems that the local kangaroo population comes to the rice to drink. We see them moving away from the rice in groups, mostly in the evening.

Peter reported that he saw a Bittern in the rice, but we didn't see it, so I have not recorded it in the bird list. Last year we saw Brolgas in the rice on the farm in April but have not seen them this year.

Bird list – we have seen around the rice bays during January:

Seen more on one day over January		Seen on one day only during January
Pacific Black Duck	Pied Stilt	Royal Spoonbill
Little Pied Cormorant	Masked Lapwing	Nankeen Night Heron
Magpie-Lark	White-faced Heron	Little Black Cormorant
White Ibis	Red-rumped Parrot	Eurasian Coot
Straw-necked Ibis	Pink-eared Duck	?Tern
Red-kneed Dotterel	Great Egret	Grey Teal
Black-fronted Dotterel		Pelican flyover
<b>Other animals</b>		
Kangaroos	Snake tracks	
? indicates unsure of the species		



Straw-necked Ibis (left)  
Pacific Black Duck (below)



Penny and Phillip Williams

## A Wet Spring

With the wetter spring that we have had this year both of the Box trees on the farm and many of the native grasses flowered this year. What this has meant is that there have been more successful bird breedings on the farm this year. The following are two examples.

We have had Superb Parrots present on the farm over winter, from memory this is the first time in the 20 years that we have lived here that they have done this, normally we only see them when they are passing through on the way to and from their more usual haunts at the river.

We had heard young begging calls over the end of spring and into the early summer, but it wasn't until I was sitting on the front veranda playing with my new camera that realised that the begging calls (that sounded very similar to a young Magpie) were coming from young Superb Parrots chasing their parent around in the tops of the trees.



I never saw them nesting, but the fact that the adults had been around all winter makes me think that they probably nested nearby.

At the same time that I photographed the family of Superb Parrots drinking there was also an interesting interaction between an adult and three young Blue-faced Honeyeaters. The poor parent bird flies in to deliver food and is confronted by three open mouths all looking for the same piece of food.

**Graham Russell**

[The Russell's property is to the north of Leeton on the Colinroobie Road – Ed]



## MEMBERS' SIGHTINGS

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

<b>White-bellied Sea-eagle</b> [pr]	Hooey Lookout, Fivebough Wetlands	07/11/20	Keith Hutton
<b>Lathams' Snipe</b> [2]	Hooey Lookout – in contour drain	07/11/20	Keith Hutton
<b>Caspian Tern</b> [9]	Lake Wyangan Picnic Area on shoreline	02/12/20	Max O'Sullivan
<b>Magpie Goose</b> [20]	Lake Wyangan Picnic Area on shoreline	02/12/20	Max O'Sullivan
<b>Spotted Crake</b> [12+ Ad 10+ Imm]	Fivebough Wetlands	03/12/20	Max O'Sullivan
I have never seen so many crakes together and so many immature birds as well.			
<b>Baillon's Crake</b> [1]	Fivebough Wetlands	03/12/20	Max O'Sullivan
<b>White-fronted Chat</b> [14+]	Fivebough Wetlands	03/12/20	Max O'Sullivan
<b>Brolga</b>	Graff's Swamp – Lake Coolah area	03/12/20	Peter Draper
<b>Australasian Bittern</b>	Peter's Farm Koonadan – in rice crop	03/12/20	Peter Draper
Graham Russell also saw this bird in Peter's rice crop on his way past on 9 December.			
<b>Plumed Whistling-duck</b> [100+]	Coleambally settling ponds	05/12/20	Neil Palframan
There were 3 lots of ducklings as well as <b>Pink-eared Ducks</b> .			
<b>Australian (Spotted) Crake</b> [26]	Fivebough Wetlands – many chicks	05/12/20	Keith Hutton

<b>Baillon's Crake</b> [4]	Fivebough Wetlands – with young chicks	05/12/20	Keith Hutton
<b>Spotless Crake</b>	Fivebough Wetlands – with downy young	05/12/20	Keith Hutton
<b>Wood Sandpiper</b> [4]	Fivebough Wetlands	05/12/20	Keith Hutton
<b>Marsh Sandpiper</b> [14]	Fivebough Wetlands	05/12/20	Keith Hutton
<b>Sharp-tailed Sandpiper</b> [11]	Fivebough Wetlands	05/12/20	Keith Hutton
<b>Black-tailed Native-hen</b> [16]	Fivebough Wetlands – includes 3 Imm.	05/12/20	Keith hutton
<b>Red-necked Avocet</b> [2]	Fivebough Wetlands	05/12/20	Keith Hutton
<b>Masked Lapwing</b> [13]	Fivebough Wetlands	05/12/20	Keith Hutton
<b>Red-kneed Dotterel</b> [20]	Fivebough Wetlands	05/12/20	Keith Hutton
<b>Dollarbird</b> [1]	River Rd, Yanco on powerlines	09/01/21	Kath&Phil Tenison
<b>Brown Honeyeater</b> [pr]	Gidgee St, Leeton – nesting possibly!	09/12/20	Keith Hutton
<b>Glossy Black Cockatoo</b> [3]	Maiden Ave Leeton Golf Course	10/12/20	Penny Williams
Several other reports have come with up to 8 birds being seen in the Golf Course this week.			
<b>Great Crested Grebe</b> [1]	Campbell's Wetlands, Griffith	10/12/20	Max O'Sullivan
<b>Grey Butcherbird</b> [3]	McCann Rd, Lake Wyangan	10/12/20	Max O'Sullivan
<b>Red-capped Plover</b> [4]	Lake Wyangan ,Picnic Area on shoreline	10/12/20	Max O'Sullivan
<b>White-browed Woodswallow</b> [6]	Store Creek Cocoparra National Park	10/12/20	Max O'Sullivan
<b>Masked Woodswallow</b> [4]	Store Creek Cocoparra National Park	10/12/20	Max O'Sullivan
<b>Diamond Dove</b> [1]	Wattle Dam, Binya State Forest	10/12/20	Max O'Sullivan
<b>Brolga</b> [1]	Fivebough Wetlands	13/12/20	Terry McGrath
<b>Marsh Sandpiper</b> [2]	Fivebough Wetlands	13/12/20	Keith Hutton
<b>Black-tailed Native-hen</b> [30+]	Fivebough Wetlands	13/12/20	Keith Hutton
<b>Cattle Egret</b> [70+]	Fivebough Wetlands	13/12/20	Keith Hutton
<b>Whiskered Tern</b> [1]	Fivebough Wetlands – only one left!	13/12/20	Keith Hutton
<b>Glossy Black Cockatoo</b> [8+]	Leeton Golf Course – feeding in behalf	13/12/20	Keith Hutton
<b>Budgerigar</b> [Small flock]	Nericon Wetlands flyover	19/12/20	Neil Palframan
<b>Barn Owl</b> [road kill]	Colinroobie Rd, Leeton	19/12/20	Keith Hutton
<b>Budgerigar</b> [20]	Leeton Soldiers' Club – flyover	20/12/20	Keith Hutton
<b>Budgerigar</b> [12]	Golden Apple, Leeton – flyover	21/12/20	Keith Hutton
<b>Wood Sandpiper</b> [7]	Fivebough Wetlands	01/01/21	Keith Hutton
<b>Pied Stilt</b> [80]	Fivebough Wetlands	01/01/21	Keith Hutton
<b>Brolga</b> [3]	Fivebough Wetlands – flyover	03/01/21	Keith Hutton
<b>Black-fronted Dotterel</b> [1]	Fivebough Wetlands	03/01/21	Keith Hutton
<b>Little Bittern</b> [male]	Fivebough Wetlands – T-intersection	02/01/21	Max O'Sullivan
<b>Freckled Duck</b> [2]	Fivebough Wetlands	03/01/21	Max O'Sullivan
<b>Magpie Goose</b> [20+]	Campbell's Wetlands	06/01/21	Neil Palframan
<b>Magpie Goose</b> [3]	Fivebough Wetlands	07/01/21	Max O'Sullivan
<b>Budgerigar</b> [50+]	Store Creek Cocoparra National Park	08/01/21	Max O'Sullivan
<b>Glossy Black Cockatoo</b> [3+]	Spring Hill Picnic area, Cocoparra Nat Park	09/01/21	Neil Palframan
<b>Olive-backed Oriole</b> [1]	Spring Hill Picnic area, Cocoparra Nat Park	09/01/21	Neil Palframan
<b>Turquoise Parrot</b>	Wattle Dam Binya State Forest	09/01/21	Neil Palframan
<b>Turquoise Parrot</b> [male]	Spring Hill Picnic area, Cocoparra Nat Park	10/01/21	Max O'Sullivan
<b>Painted Honeyeater</b> [1]	Apostle Yard Rd via Leeton	12/01/21	Max O'Sullivan
<b>White-fronted Chat</b> [200]	Adam's Rd, Wilbriggie via Griffith	23/01/21	Nella Smith
Nella also reports an irruption of <b>Crucifix Frogs</b> around Narrandera in January.			
<b>Australasian Bittern</b> [5]	Wilbriggie Rice Farm	23/01/21	MFN Group
<b>Tawny Frogmouth</b>	Narrandera Common	Jan 2021	Warrick Bradney
<b>Australasian Bittern</b> [1]	West of Whitton in a rice crop	30/01/21	Kath &Phil Tenison
<b>Little Bittern</b> [2]	Fivebough Wetlands – 1 seen & 1 heard	31/01/21	Max O'S & Keith H

Glenn Currie reports that he is seeing plenty of birds at Oolambeyan National Park since he has taken over there – birds such as **White-winged Wren**, **Banded Lapwing**, **Ground Cuckoo-shrike** (possibly), **Wedge-tailed Eagle**, **Sacred Kingfisher**, **Rainbow Bee-eater** and **Pipit** to name a few.

Griffith City Council's Wyangan Wetlands area now incorporates Nericon, Campbell's, Lake Wyangan , Tharbogang and Jack Carson Wildlife Reserve. Both Nericon and Campbell's Swamps will be referred to in future as **Nericon** and **Campbell's Wetlands** - David Kellett.

**Breeding Bonanza at Fivebough this past Spring.** It has been an interesting Spring for local waders with records of breeding for **Swamphen, Coot, Moorhen, Spotted, Spotless and Baillon's Crakes, and Buff-banded Rail** with downy young seen in December prior to eWater going in. After that all seemed to have disappeared so hopefully the chicks all survived the increase in water level.- **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.

- 11 February Thursday**      **Monthly Meeting** in the **Henry Lawson Room** at the **Leeton Library**, Sycamore St., Leeton commencing at **7pm**.  
**Topic:** "Galapagos of the Southern Ocean: Subantarctic Islands"  
by Meredith, Peter 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: a visit to the Tuckerbil Wetlands** preceded by a viewing of a video about Koonadan in the theatre at the Leeton Museum and Gallery, Chelmsford Place, Leeton.  
**Meet at the Museum at 3pm.**  
**Bring afternoon tea / nibbles, chair and binoculars for Tuckerbil**  
**Contact:** Nella Smith ph 0428 890 537, email [nella.smith0@gmail.com](mailto:nella.smith0@gmail.com)  
**You must register with Nella preferably by email.**
- 27 February Saturday**      **Outing: To be decided at the meeting**  
McCaughy Lagoon/ Narrandera wetlands/channel bank / walk along river for fruit bats spot lighting have been suggested as possible locations.  
**Contact:** Graham or Dione Russell 0428 536290 (Dione)  
or 0419 350 673 (Graham) **Email:** [murrumbidgeefieldnaturalists@gmail.com](mailto:murrumbidgeefieldnaturalists@gmail.com).  
**You must register preferably by email.**
- 3 March Wednesday**      **Copy for the March newsletter is due. Please send to Rowena.**  
**Email:** [ericwhiting4@bigpond.com](mailto:ericwhiting4@bigpond.com). Phone: 6953 2612.
- 7 March Sunday**      **Wagga Wagga outing**  
**Meet at the car park area near the BBQ next to Wagga Wagga Boat Club**  
**Time: 7am**  
**Contacts:** RSVP Mel Baulch [melaniebaulch@bigpond.com](mailto:melaniebaulch@bigpond.com) or Sarah Danckert [spdanckert@gmail.com](mailto:spdanckert@gmail.com) Registration is necessary for Covid-19 purposes.
- 11 March Thursday**      **Monthly Meeting** will be held in the **Henry Lawson Room** at the **Leeton Library**, Sycamore St, Leeton commencing at **7pm**.  
**Topic:**  
**Contact:** Graham or Dione Russell 0428 536290 (Dione)  
or 0419 350 673 (Graham) **Email:** [murrumbidgeefieldnaturalists@gmail.com](mailto:murrumbidgeefieldnaturalists@gmail.com).
- Other Events**  
**19 February Friday**      **Hay Plains Landcare '4 Seasons of Seed' – Workshops**  
Summer – seed collection. Other seasons to follow.  
For more info: Jade Auldish 0428 549 647