The Murrumbidgee Naturalist

February 2026 - Issue #343
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

Campbell's Wetland – members enjoying the birds
Insert left: Intermediate Egret; right: Hoary-headed Grebe. Photos by Janet Hume

IN THIS ISSUE

Office Bearers and Subscriptions 2
Welcome to 2026 2
Monthly Meetings in Leeton & via Zoom 2
Environment Citizen's Award – Sarah Danckert.....3
Newsletter quiz for 2025 - the answers 3
Breakfast with the birds at Campbell's Wetland.....4
Myna or Miner – Not a minor problem 5
Importance of water for our Australian birds 6
Mirrool Creek in earlier times 7
Plains-wanderer online course.....9
Members' Sightings.....10
Coming Events.....11
Other Events / Items 12

CONTRIBUTIONS

For the March issue by Wednesday 4 March
To Rowena Whiting
Email: ericwhiting4@bigpond.com.
Phone: 6953 2612

Glossy Black Cockatoo Annual Count is on 21 February

Murrumbidgee Field Naturalists Inc. Office Bearers and Annual Subscriptions

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Treasurer:	Glenn Currie	0488 563 321	**Website Co-ordinator**: Virginia Tarr		0434 831 031

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; (Leeton, Griffith, Narrandera areas) AND ON THE FIRST SUNDAY OF THE MONTH (Wagga Wagga area)

INTENDING NEW MEMBERS, GUESTS AND VISITORS WELCOME.

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

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

Welcome to 2026

Welcome to the first newsletter of 2026 and another year of field-natting; of sharing discoveries, experiences and knowledge about the natural world.

Despite the hot and dry weather I hope you have been able to enjoy nature over the break and are looking forward to participating in Club activities in the coming year. Do let the committee know if there is somewhere you would like to visit.

Margaret Strong has been busy organising items for our monthly meetings as well as continuing her research into the history of our local area. Mirrool Creek or Merool as it was previously called is her topic this month

How did you fare with Eric's quiz? The answers are on page 2 along with the relevant newsletter, so take some time to absorb the detail. As he says it is amazing the amount of noteworthy information our newsletters contain.

Our president starts the year on a high attaining the Wagga Wagga Environmental Citizen for 2026. Congratulations, Sarah, a very well-deserved achievement. Keep up the good work!

May 2026 bring many positive outcomes for the environment and all that lives in it.

Rowena

Monthly Meetings - Yellow Room (Leeton Library) or via Zoom

All of our monthly talks can be seen and heard on your digital device, including your phone, after you download the free Zoom App. An email is sent to all members a day or two before the meeting, with the Newsletter and Zoom Link. Click on that link, then on 'join' at or preferably before 7.00pm. Still join after that if you're late.

We would really like more members to join in. We have an interesting and relevant program for you to learn from. It's also an easy way to engage with other members of our club, as often we are not near Leeton.

If you want help with downloading the Zoom App, ask friends and family, phone and/or visit your Public Library. There's no limit to the member numbers who can join in, so we hope to see you soon.

Wagga Wagga 2026 Environmental Citizen of the Year

Our congratulations to our President, Sarah Danckert on achieving this award.

Here is the citation from the council website:

Sarah has made outstanding contributions to the local environment and is a passionate advocate for environmental protection.

Sarah established the local Murrumbidgee Field Naturalists chapter and has led a range of practical environmental initiatives as well as delivering school workshops.

Sarah has inspired many people to care for Wagga Wagga's natural environment, protect biodiversity and create lasting environmental impact across the wider community.

Sarah with Janet and Mayor

MFN newsletter quiz for 2025 - The Answers

1. What is the common name for the reptile *Diporiphora nobbi* ?

   Barking Gecko June 2025 *Member Observations/ Items.*

2. What is a chromosol ?

   A soil profile type. October 2025. *Soils ain't just soils.* Eric Whiting (report of Geoff Minchin's talk).

3. Which butterfly is dependent on the Warrior Bush ?

   Caper White Butterfly. Nov 2025 *Caper White Butterfly activity in the Yenda Flora and Fauna Reserve.* Margaret Strong

4. How many Glossy Black Cockatoos were counted in our February 2025 survey?

   78. March/April 2025. *Glossy Black Cockatoo Count held 15th February 2025.* Nella Smith.

5. What was the name of the giant fungus found at Duncans Creek ?

   Phlebopus marginatus. May 2025. *Member Observations/Items*.

6. What is a Woolly Mantle ?

   A small frail plant of the Daisy family, *Eriochlamys behrii.* July 2025. *Boree Creek Woodland, 14 June 2025* Margaret Strong.

7. How many types of foraging by woodland birds are recognised by researcher Georgea Kamara ?

   Eight. Sept 2025 *Grassy Woodland management and the foraging behaviour of woodland birds* Sarah Danckert report on talk.

8. The current scientific name for Hill Tea-tree is *Gaudium divaricatum*.

   What was it called before the name change ?

   Leptospermum divaricatum Oct 2025 *Hill Teatree – Gaudium divaricatum*

9. What is the main predator for Malleefowl chicks?

   Whistling Kites. (Foxes target the eggs). Nov 2025, *Malleefowl Conservation in the Region* Margaret Strong (report on Rodney Guest's talk.

10. Hay Plains Landcare received an MFN Environmental Grant in 2024. Their project featured protecting one bird – which ?

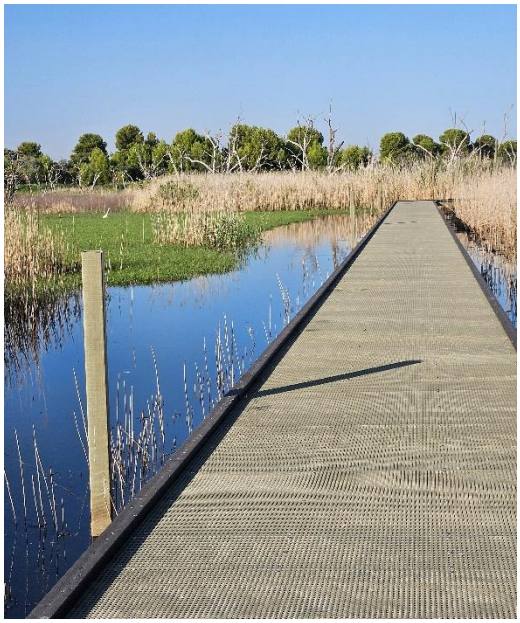
    Black Falcon. Feb 2025. *Hay Plains Landcare Environmental Grant Report*.

How many answers did you know and how many did you have to look up? Hope you re-read the whole article. There was so much varied information in last years Newsletters, and there are 30 years of our Newsletters. Enough articles to compile a comprehensive natural history of our region. But that is what the club is all about – discovering and appreciating our natural environment and sharing the pleasure with others.

Eric Whiting

Breakfast with the Birds at Campbell's Wetland 1 February 2026

For the 'World Wetlands Day' recognition, our Murrumbidgee Field Naturalists group met with the theme of 'Breakfast at Campbell's Wetlands', adjacent to Lake Wyangan on Sunday 1st February. We humans were low in number, but not the birds. We saw 50 species.



At 7am, we met at the carpark, looking at the overcast skies wondering if we need our wet weather gear, we gathered our packs and headed down the track for the recently built covered picnic tables. Dropping our gear off and wet weather staying off, we proceeded to the birdhide along the newly built, quiet, fibre-reinforced plastic (FRP) raised path, which has replaced the boardwalk. On the way, there were species that are always good to see side by side: Little and Great Egret, Chestnut and Grey Teals, Hoary-headed and Australasian Grebes, Superb and Variegated Fairy-wrens. There was approximately 20 Glossy Ibis (a very rare visit) and breeding White Ibis and White-breasted Woodswallows were feeding young - so good to see after the heat wave of > 40^{o}C of the previous 7 days. For the full list, see the link below.

The new 'boardwalk'- Virginia Tarr.
Below left: Young Australian Ibis hassling parent – Janet Hume
Right: White-breasted Woodswallow feeding young – Janet Hume.

We backtracked to the picnic table for breakfast. We were fortunate to have the Singing and Spiny-cheeked Honeyeaters and Yellow and Yellow-rumped Thornbills up close. We noticed that the environmental waters had risen to a moderate level not conducive for Crakes, Rails and other waders. We then proceeded along the gravel track snatching a glimpse of a Mistletoebird and White-winged Triller.

The very light sprinkle of a shower didn't deter us as we continued along to the end of the track.

It's extraordinary how the trees and bushes have survived the dry season. We noticed four species of Chenopods, two in flower

Singing Honeyeater feeding on a Ruby Saltbush berry - Lisa Parker

Short-leaf Bluebush *Maireana brevifolia* with its attractive blush pink edge on the wings of the fruit, and the hard to see Australian Tumbleweed *Salsola australis.* One plant alongside the track was in its moisture filled stems upright form, not the older dryer curving stems that shape the 'ball' for tumbling. The other two species were in fruit, Cottony Saltbush *Chenopodium curvispicatum* and Ruby Saltbush *Enchylaena tomentosa.* The Spiny-cheeked Honeyeater was flitting in and out of Ruby Saltbush picking off the berries.

Australian Tumbleweed – Sarah Danckert

It was good to have keen eyes, and the weather allowed us plenty of time. We're looking forward to Griffith City Council installing the interpretive signs members have been working on.

Virginia Tarr and Sarah Danckert

Here is a link to the birdlist

https://birdata.birdlife.org.au/survey?id=10509777&h=99b19d98

The other Club outing in this period was our end of year break up on 13 December which was enjoyed by a number of members at the Narrandera Food Garden. A lovely evening apart from the wind which was not conducive to setting up the sheets and lights for observing moths and other insects.

Myna or Miner – Not a minor problem

Have you seen one of these birds?

Common or Indian Myna: photo Kathy Tenison

Noisy Miner: photo Kathy Tenison

They are both very aggressive birds, however while the Noisy Miner is native, the Common (or Indian) Myna is introduced, is ranked as one of the worlds 100 most invasive species and is impacting our native small birds.

"Report any sightings of Indian / Common Mynas to eBird, Birdata or to <murrumbidgeefieldnaturalists@gmail.com>, including place, numbers of Mynas and date of sighting. Approximate sightings from 2025 are also welcome.

Any sightings in urban, bushland or roadside locations need to be reported.

Sighting records are needed to understand the scope and size of their invasion so that we can lobby Shire Councils to inform residents about actions to take."

Surplus nest boxes

We have been advised that Kurrajong Timber (A division of Kurrajong Waratah) has a surplus of nest boxes made for a contract. There are 3 Tree Creeper, 54 Glider, 54 Rosella, and 30 Galah for sale at $105.00 plus GST. See attached documents showing the designs used.

“All products supplied by Kurrajong Timber are sourced from environmentally sustainable companies. Your support through shopping with Kurrajong helps us provide employment to people with disability and make a real difference in our community” (Kurrajong website).

If you are interested, please contact Jim Seymour, Manager. jseymour@kurrajong.com.au

The importance of water for our Australian Birds

After completing our Birds on Farms surveys at Highfield Farm, Mt Adrah on the 22nd of January Sarah and I watched with pleasure the amazing variety of birds visiting David and Louise's birdbaths. The temperature was only 18 degrees and the birdbaths had a constant stream of visitors. Mostly they drank happily together, the smaller birds and then the larger birds. Two young Diamond Firetail just watched on, we didn't see them drink. The most aggressive we witnessed was the Eastern Spinebill who hassled both the Fuscous and White-napped Honeyeater.

Janet Hume's photos:
Above: Juvenile and Adult Noisy Friarbird
Left: Double-barred Finch and Fuscous Honeyeater;
Far left: Red-browed Finches

On the 27th January when the temperature was over 40 degrees David sent me a series of photos of the visitors to the birdbath in his garden that day. He had been refilling them every couple of hours throughout the day. At times there were 6 different species on the birdbath at one time. We have not seen the White-napped, Black-chinned or Yellow-tufted Honeyeaters and Eastern Spinebill previously when we walk through the yard to a nearby block that we regularly survey which borders the Ellerslie Nature Reserve. David believes they come quite a distance to drink.

David Bray's photos;
Right: 6 species: White-naped Honeyeater, Diamond Firetail, Yellow-Tufted Honeyeater, Red-browed Finch, Fuscous Honeyeater and a Brown-headed Honeyeater
Below: Blacked-chinned Honeyeater, Brown-headed Honeyeater and Red-browed Finch

Birdlife Australia have a couple of articles on providing water for our birds.

https://birdlife.org.au/news/put-water-out-for-birds/?srsltid=AfmBOooNZNQjbJk4Au-s4jf-TcEIKPLBDAaDax6ZKWA0ZbPJAdMyFGqk

https://birdlife.org.au/providing-water-for-birds/

Janet Hume

The Mirrool Creek - Earlier Times

This historic article highlights the Mirrool Creek's natural significance in our part of NSW.

Contributed by **Margaret Strong**

Goulburn Herald and County of Argyle Advertiser, Saturday 12 April **1856**, p7. <Trove.nla.gov.au>

THE MEROOL CREEK. (From a Correspondent) *Part 1 – geography, geology and habitats.*

Having recently visited the country which lies between the **Lachlan** and **Murrumbidgee** rivers, a tract little known and respecting which many wonderful tales have been told, a short description of it and some of its products may not be uninteresting. In aspect it differs considerably from any other part of Australia with which I am acquainted.

The common name of "The Levels" is a great misnomer (as many of the colonial names are). A great portion of the country certainly is flat, but it is intersected with three or four **distinct chains of ranges** that extend for many miles, the peaks of which vary in elevation from 600 to 1000 ft. The points of the mountains run out and terminate in abrupt **headlands**, so that the traveller may easily imagine himself to be on a sea coast. It is impossible to look on these appearances, and the vast plains between the headlands, and doubt for a moment that the whole country has been at some former period a vast inland sea.

The country is watered by the **Merool Creek** and its tributaries. This is a singular creek, being in many cases quite lost in **swamps** and again appearing, as the channel becomes narrowed by the approach of hills. This loss or reformation occurs several times, until the creek at length joins the **Lachlan** near the junction of that river with the **Murrumbidgee**. At times a large body of water must come down the creek, as is made evident by the flood wreck, in many places, from ten to eleven feet high in the trees growing in the bed of the creek. The name **Merool**, in the native language, means **pipeclay** and the creek takes its name from a place near its source, where there is a large quantity of that substance…

The Mirrool Creek at Ardlethan, 2018

Most of the hills are composed of **sandstone conglomerate**; but in one or two instances **coarse granite** crops out and in some places along the creek **clay slate** is found both in its proper form and altered. There are numerous **watercourses** near all the hills, where large quantities of water might be retained by a little judicious expenditure of labour and which will no doubt be the case ere long. The level portions of the country are now occupied by four very distinct kinds of country, viz. **mallee scrubs, boree plains, pine scrubs and open forest**, each of which I shall endeavour to describe in the order in which they are named:

The **Mallee scrubs** occupy what appears to be the lowest portions of the now dry lake and are composed of a species of eucalyptus growing about thirty feet high, the stems as thick as a man's wrist; and instead of being up-right, crossing in every direction so as to form a perfect living wall, through which it is quite impossible for anything to pass. They vary in extent from **a few acres to many thousands**. The largest that I have seen appears to be some forty or fifty miles by twenty miles.

Viewed from a distance, these tracts are easily mistaken for open plains, for one peculiarity of the mallee is, that it all **grows to one uniform height**, and when looked down upon from an elevation presents an even surface to the eye; and the pine trees which fringe the scrubs and in many places run a short distance into them, serve to increase the illusion but too soon to be dispelled, should the luckless might approach the expected plain and try to make his way into the scrub. I did so once in my ignorance of what I had to contend with, but it was a lesson which I shall not forget in a hurry. The borders of those scrubs present an **interesting field to the botanist**, for there are to be found **many rare and beautiful plants** peculiar to such localities; but these I shall allude to in another place.

The **soil** of the mallee country is not particularly good, although, should the scrubs ever be cleared—by no means such an impossibility as at the first thought it may appear, for they burn very freely. I have seen

patches of many hundreds of acres burnt and only wanting another fire applied quickly to remove them altogether it will no doubt be capable of yielding an abundant supply of grass. As yet it has not been ascertained whether there **is any water in the mallee or not**; I am inclined to think that there is or, at all events, that it may be easily obtained by sinking.

The Mirrool Creek at the Willows Bridge, Narrandera – Ardlethan Rd – almost dry (2010) and in flood (2016) – Eric Whiting

Boree Plains—This is a perfectly distinct kind of country to the one I have just described. The boree is a species of **Acacia**, with a sweet-scented wood like myall, long pendulous branches like the weeping willow, and silvery leaves, which have a most singular effect in the landscape. The trees do not grow very thickly together, and it is perfectly easy to go amongst them in all directions. There is a considerable undergrowth of both **grass and herbs**, which yields the richest description of pasture for stock of all kinds, sheep, horses, and cattle and which is particularly valued for its fattening qualities. Here, also, is found the far-famed **salt-bush**, or rather salt-bushes (for there are many varieties) about which we have heard so many wonderful stories. I can bear witness to the **abundance of the plants** and to the greedy way in which they are devoured by animals when they are first put upon them, also to the decided **salt taste** of many of the varieties; but I cannot say that I have ever been able to discover any of the crystals of salt with which I have heard the plants are covered, and I am inclined to think that they only exist in the fertile brain of some Australian Munchausen.

The surface of the boree plains is very uneven, being full of hollows which contain water during many months of the year. These hollows are called **crab-holes, or billybongs**. The same sort of places in other parts of the colony are called "**melon-holes**"—a far better name, as it is more descriptive of the country. The soil is a very **whitish clay**, with a cold look, but still must be much richer than it looks or it would not produce the magnificent feed which I have alluded to. I am not aware if any person has ever tried to cultivate in such situations, but am inclined to doubt whether it would succeed or, at all events, without considerable outlay in the shape of draining &c.

Pine Scrubs are composed of two species of Callitris (the curra and the umbey of the natives), and in some places occupy large tracts of country. The soil here is of the richest possible description, being a fine red loam of apparently unlimited depth and capable of growing anything. It seems a pity to see so many thousands of acres of land capable of being made available for man's industry going to waste.

The Pine scrubs grow tolerably thick in some parts, but it is pretty easy to get through them on account of their perfectly upright growth, there being but few lateral branches and these only small. The usual height of the pine tree is from sixty to eighty feet. They yield a valuable timber, both for splitting and sawing; indeed, were it not for the pine, in many places available timber would be very scarce, as the different gums are not of much value in this part of the country.

Open Forest Country. This is really of the finest description, being very thickly timbered and producing both grass and herbage in abundance, and of the finest quality. The soil is in most places loamy and good, quite fit for cultivation; the only drawback being want of water, a deficiency which may, however, be in many cases supplied by the labour of man, for there are an abundance of creeks and gullies in which water could easily be retained. There is also an abundant supply of excellent clay, which could be used in making dams. The timber in the forest is pine, three or four kinds of Gum (Eucalyptus), and occasionally Oak (Casuarina).

There are few other descriptions of country besides those I have alluded to and some other kinds of scrubs, com-posed of different species of Acacias &c, but none of them presenting sufficiently marked features to

render them worthy of a more particular description. In looking upon this vast tract of, until lately, unknown and unoccupied country, one can hardly understand how such could have been the case, particularly when its proximity to long occupied districts is taken into consideration. I can only account for it by the dense scrubs which intervene between it and the Bland country having acted as a barrier in that direction and the extent of country which has to be crossed in coming out from the Murrumbidgee, frequently without water should the season be at all a dry one.

Find Part 2 of The MEROOL CREEK in next month's Newsletter, for descriptions of flora and fauna.

The Mirrool Creek is a mostly dry watercourse that, with water in it, runs from Ingalba NR (west of Temora) in a westerly direction towards the Lachlan River nw of Hay. The distance it runs depends on the rainfall where it rises and along its course. The fact that there was the chance of water running through the approximate 264 kms of its course was and is very significant for Aboriginal people for thousands of years up to the present day, for British and other foreigners who occupied land in that region from 1830 onwards and to present day Australians who live near it.

Plains-wanderer online course

David Kellett, Local Land Services, is inviting us to participate in this **FREE online Plains-wanderer course**:

Welcome to the Plains-wanderer - Local Land Services

Meet one of Australia's rarest and most fascinating birds, the Plains-wanderer, and learn how innovative land management is helping protect this critically endangered species while supporting productive farming. The free, self-paced online course from Tocal College, in partnership with Riverina and Murray Local Land Services, explores how conservation and agriculture can thrive together. Learn about: • the unique biology of the Plains-wanderer • threats to native grasslands • practical land management techniques • real-world success stories from farmers and conservationists Perfect for farmers, land managers, students, and anyone passionate about protecting Australia's natural heritage. Enrol today and be part of the movement to restore Australia's iconic grasslands — for the Plains-wanderer and for future generations.

https://bit.ly/4oIflie #NaturalHeritageTrust This project is jointly funded by the Australian Government Natural Heritage Trust and the NSW Government's Saving Our Species program, and delivered by Local Land Services, a member of the Commonwealth Regional Delivery Partners panel.

As a little token of my appreciation, I will give each MFN's member a Plains-wanderer badge/pin when they complete the online course 😊

David Kellett

Murray Darling Basin Plan

This year the Murray–Darling Basin Authority (MDBA) is reviewing the Murray–Darling Basin Plan, as required under the Water Act 2007 (Cth). They have released a Discussion Paper, which signals the beginning of a 12-week consultation period and while anyone can make a submission. At the committee meeting it was proposed that the Club make a submission.

This discussion paper draws on available evidence to highlight issues and propose options for Basin Plan water management. Your knowledge and experience can help shape the Review's recommendations of how our water is managed in the future.

There are a series of webinars exploring different elements of the Review. You can register now for any or all of these.

If you would like to share your views, raise any issues please send them to the club email murrumbidgeefieldnaturalists@gmail.com

MEMBERS' SIGHTINGS

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

Significant sightings

Grey-crowned Babbler [9]	Ganmain Common, Ganmain	01/12/25	Sarah Danckert
Crested Skrike-tit [2]	Marrambidya, Wagga Wagga	02/01/26	Sarah Danckert
Brown Treecreeper [2]	Marrambidya, Wagga Wagga	02/01/26	Sarah Danckert
Blue-faced Honeyeater [3]	Jubilee Park, Griffith	12/01/26	Viriginia Tarr
Grey-crowned Babbler [5]	Jubilee Park, Griffith	12/01/26	Viriginia Tarr
Brown Treecreeper [4]	Marrambidya, Wagga Wagga	13/01/26	MFN Birdwalk
Adults feeding young			
Diamond Firetail [2]	Highfield Farm, Mt Adrah	22/01/26	J Hume, S Danckert
Juvenile			
Yellow-tufted Honeyeater [2]	Highfield Farm, Mt Adrah	22/01/26	J Hume, S Danckert
Dusky Woodswallow [1]	Highfield Farm, Mt Adrah	22/01/26	Birds On Farms
Brown-headed Honeyeater [1]	Highfield Farm, Mt Adrah	22/01/26	Birds On Farms
Fuscous Honeyeater [20]	Highfield Farm, Mt Adrah	22/01/26	Birds On Farms
Brown Treecreeper [3]	Highfield Farm, Mt Adrah	22/01/26	Birds On Farms
Speckled Warbler [1]	Highfield Farm, Mt Adrah	22/01/26	Birds On Farms
Red-capped Robin [1]	Mundarlo Homestead, Mundarlo	23/01/26	Birds On Farms
Banded Lapwing	Oolambeyan Homestead	28/01/26	Glenn Currie
Painted Honeyeater	Oolambeyan Homestead	28/01/26	Glenn Currie
Superb Parrot	Oolambeyan Homestead	28/01/26	Glenn Currie
Superb Parrot [1]	Fitzhardinge St, Wagga Wagga	31/01/26	Janet Hume
Black Honeyeater	Binya State Forest	08/02/26	Nella Smith

Sightings of interest

Rainbow Bee-eater [2]	Wiradjuri Reserve, Wagga Wagga	18/01/26	J Hume, S Danckert
Adults taking food into nest hollow in bank, 30 metres downstream of the boat ramp and 25 metres upstream of rope swing regularly being used. They fly into the hollow and reverse out.			
White-breasted Woodswallow [6]	Lake Albert Wetland, Wagga Wagga	20/01/26	MFN Birdwalk
2 adults with 4 chicks in nest hollow			
Wedge-tailed Eagle [1]	Yabtree West, Mundarlo	22/01/26	Birds on farms
Eastern Spinebill [1]	Highfield Farm, Mt Adrah	22/01/26	J Hume, S Danckert

Compiled by Janet Hume, reviewed by Nella Smith

Rare to see at Fivebough Wetlands – Australasian Bittern (left, below) and Banded Lapwing (right) photos by Paul Maytom 28 December.

**** COMING EVENTS ****

Please note all outings are subject to weather conditions.

Please register with the nominated person so they can be contacted if there is a change in arrangements. Registering also means that the leader is better able to plan activities.

12 February Thursday

Monthly Meeting in the Yellow Room at the **Leeton Library**, Sycamore Street Leeton, commencing at 7.00pm
Topic/speaker: **Dr Andrew Peters Talks about Fruit Bats** (on video, 2020) to Wagga Urban Landcare about the camp of Little Red Flying-Foxes nearby and their relatives elsewhere, explaining how bat health has consequences for other animals and humans.
There is a camp of Little Red Fruit Bats (Grey-headed Flying Foxes) at Wagga and at Yanco along the 'Bidgee, Jubilee Park in Griffith as well as in Narrandera
Accessible to all members via Zoom. Do attend in person, if possible, to enjoy Show and Tell, a light supper and chat following the Zoom session.
Email: murrumbidgeefieldnaturalists@gmail.com if you have any queries

17 February Tuesday

Wagga evening birdwalk – Lake Albert
Meet at 6pm
Contact: *Janet* 0408 238 890 or *Sarah* 0427 276 306.

21 February Saturday

Annual Glossy Black Cockatoo count
We will be monitoring at various locations in the Brobenah and Narrandera hills and Binya Forest and Cocoparras.

Leeton area Contact: Graham Russell grahamrussell29@gmail.com Phone 0419 350 673

Griffith area Contact: Virginia Tarr vobrien3@hotmail.com Phone 0434 831 031

Narrandera area Contact: nellasmith0@gmail.com Phone 0428 890 537

Time will be from 6 pm.

On registration participants will be allotted a dam to go to; place yourself quietly at your allocated dam by 6pm, next to a tree or shrub. If you hear them you should still record them even if they don't drink. If you are able, please record sex of glossies. Also 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.

Information about the Glossies can be found at www.glossyblack.org.au

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

24 February Tuesday

Wagga evening birdwalk – Wiradjuri Reserve
Meet at 6pm
Contact: *Janet* 0408 238 890 or *Sarah* 0427 276 306.

4 March Wednesday

Copy for the March newsletter is due. Please send to Rowena.
Email: ericwhiting4@bigpond.com Phone: 0429 726 120.

5 March Thursday

Committee Meeting held at 7pm by Zoom
All members are welcome to attend and submit agenda items
Email: murrumbidgeefieldnaturalists@gmail.com

10 March Tuesday

Wagga evening birdwalk – Marrambidya Wetlands
Meet at 6pm
Contact: *Janet* 0408 238 890 or *Sarah* 0427 276 306.

****** C O M I N G E V E N T S *continued* ******

12 March Thursday — **Monthly Meeting** in the Yellow Room at the **Leeton Library**, Sycamore Street Leeton, commencing at 7.00pm
Topic/speaker: **"The Myna problem - a Major issue"**
Bill Handke (via Zoom) will discuss how this problem can become a major issue unless community-wide action is taken. Advice is informed from challenges and successes in eastern regions.
Accessible to all members via Zoom. Do attend in person, if possible, to enjoy Show and Tell, a light supper and chat following the Zoom session.
Email: murrumbidgeefieldnaturalists@gmail.com if you have any queries

14-15 March weekend — Ovens & Murray Bird Group are visiting Leeton
Nella Smith is co-ordinating nellasmith0@gmail.com

Other items / events

Malleefowl Monitoring 2026

Save the Date - we will be running our annual training & monitoring weekend on Sat 17 & Sun 18 October 2026 – location to be advised/

From Murrumbidgee Landcare

Webinars for organisations with volunteers (The Centre for Volunteering)

Multiple dates throughout February

Webinars being offered include: Mastering volunteer induction (10 Feb), and An introduction to volunteering (13, 20 or 27 Feb).

Preparing for a more volatile future (Biodiversity Council)

19 February, 1.00 to 2.00 pm

In this webinar, experts will discuss how Australia can build resilience, protect nature, and support community wellbeing in a future with more frequent and severe natural disasters.

Wildlife sensitive lighting (Green Adelaide)

19 February, 4.00 to 5.00 pm

This webinar will explore why darkness matters and how smarter lighting choices can support healthier ecosystems. The session will cover what light pollution is and why it is increasing worldwide; how artificial light at night disrupts feeding, breeding, movement, migration and development of wildlife; and practical ways to reduce harm through wildlife-sensitive and dark sky lighting principles.

Celebrating our nocturnal environment (Riverina Local Land Services)
16 April, 6.30 to 10.00 pm, Mount Adrah

Come along for an evening under the clear, unspoilt night skies, to celebrate the beauty and importance of our nocturnal environment. Share a picnic dinner; hear from Highfield Farm about balancing eco-tourism, biodiversity and sustainable farming; learn about dark sky preservation and how light pollution impacts wildlife; and join a nocturnal creek walk, offering insights into the unique wildlife that calls Highfield home.

The winners of Birdlife Australia's **2025 Wildlife Photography Awards** are well worth a look with some incredible photographs.

https://www.birdlifephotoaward.org.au/gallery-winners-2025