

The Murrumbidgee Naturalist



April 2026 - Issue #345

Journal of the Murrumbidgee Field Naturalists Inc.

PO Box 541, LEETON 2705 ISSN-1327-1172

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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



Little Black Cormorants and a Grey Teal at
Marrambidya Wetland, Wagga Wagga

Photo by Janet Hume

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CONTRIBUTIONS

For the May issue by
Wednesday 6 May

To Rowena Whiting

Email: ericwhiting4@bigpond.com.

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Our minds are shaped by the
modern world, but we originate
in nature.

Theodore Roszak (from Voice of the Earth)

Murrumbidgee Field Naturalists Inc. Office Bearers and Annual Subscriptions

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MEETINGS are held on the second Thursday each month, except January, at the Henry Lawson Room, Leeton Library, Sycamore Street, Leeton at 7pm.

FIELD TRIPS NORMALLY TAKE PLACE ON THE FOLLOWING WEEKEND; (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

Bank details for direct deposit: BSB 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 April

It has seemed a long time coming but at last we can venture out without becoming too hot or sun baked. Hopefully we have a lengthy Autumn with some rain to give the flora & fauna time to regenerate before the cold sets in.

My thanks to all those who have contributed to this issue. The effort they have put in to research their topics and willingness to share is much appreciated. This month has seen me searching past copy for photos of flora and fauna for a couple of articles along with bird photos for Campbell's Wetland. The new signage is progressing well and we will be viewing photos to choose those suitable for the display boards at the Yellow Room meeting.

Do keep a lookout for the invasive Common Myna and report sightings; Margaret has written a comprehensive review of Bill Handke's presentation. Spread the word. As you will read the Ovens Murray Bird Group enjoyed their trip to our area particularly the local knowledge they gained from Nella's guidance. We enjoyed spending time with them. They have generously let me include their report in this issue. Their full birdlist is available if you'd like a copy. Also in this issue is the third and final part of the historical Merool Creek article ably researched by Margaret. Sarah and Janet have recorded the highlights of their summer Bird Walks and Janet has consolidated information about the Rainbow Bee-eater. So plenty to whet the appetite.

Rowena.

Call for Applications for MFN Environment Fund Grants

The Fund was set up to provide financial assistance for projects delivering the enhancement of biodiversity, conservation or enhanced understanding of the natural environment within the region covered by the Murrumbidgee Field Naturalists Club (MFN).

Applications are now open to interested individuals or groups to apply for funding and forms can be obtained by contacting the club secretary via our email address: murrumbidgeefieldnaturalists@gmail.com

Or use the link that Murrumbidgee Landcare have kindly provided <https://mli.org.au/mfn-environmental-grants/>

Applications close on 1st May and the Environmental Grants Committee of the club will consider all applications and notify people of the result of their respective application after the closing date.

Myna problem = Major issue

Bill Handke, Canberra Indian Myna Action Group (CIMAG) President, shared his comprehensive PowerPoint presentation on how communities can tackle the looming problems posed by Indian / Common Mynas which are invading our region. These birds are exotic pests that breed quickly and cause serious unwanted problems.

Mynas were brought to Australia in 1860 to solve a relatively small problem of locusts in Melbourne's market gardens. They spread quickly due to their habits of being omnivorous scavengers, having communal living with cooperative behaviour and high breeding rates. They have increased in number dramatically all along the east coast, the Great Dividing Range and adjacent slopes. In NSW, Mynas have continued to spread west of Byron Bay, further south to Dubbo Shire, Weddin Shire and everywhere in between.

Yellow Room, March 12th



Photo by Toby Roscoe

In our region between Wagga, Hay and Griffith Myna numbers are increasing. Bill Handke said that on a road trip from Canberra in January 2026, he saw Mynas in many locations on his journey along the Sturt Highway to Buronga. The **distinctive white patches on the underwing identify Indian / Common Mynas** as they fly or land, so sightings along roads while driving are quick and easy for anyone to make.

Of major concern to us, as field naturalists and to other residents of our various shires, is the serious threat to native birds and other animals that the habits of Mynas pose. Bill's talk, with statistics and many facts to back his opinions and advice, gave us strategies to raise public awareness of the problem and what can be done to tackle it.

There are many details to be aware of, but the main message is that community action can and will make a difference. Some Local Shire Councils in NSW have assisted Myna Control Campaigns by distributing information with Rates Notices, eg in Weddin Shire, but largely it is community and Landcare groups that are on the front line.

Good news regarding success in reducing Myna numbers comes from several places eg Canberra, Kyogle and Northern Rivers, Dubbo and Weddin Shires. Longterm success needs ongoing community effort which is the biggest challenge to small communities and even for Canberra which is well known for high rates of community volunteering.

Threats to native birds, especially parrots, that use tree hollows are real as Mynas will exclude native birds from using hollows in the vicinity of only one that they use. This is done by aggressive behaviour towards the adult parrots and other hollow users such as Kookaburras by cooperation between Mynas. The invaders will kill chicks and destroy eggs of native birds already occupying hollows, then harass the adult birds until they leave.

Our parrot species such as **Eastern Rosella, Yellow Rosella, Superb Parrot, Red Rumped Parrot, Mallee Ringneck, Blue Bonnet and Cockatiel** that nest in the canopy



level of Eucalyptus Woodland will be impacted by the predicted explosion of Myna numbers, based on documented experience from eastern regions. One benefit of having information presented by someone from Canberra is for us to learn from their experience.



Parrot Photos clockwise from top left:
 Eastern Rosella – Janet Hume
 Yellow Rosella in nest box – Janet Hume
 Blue Bonnet – Graham Russell
 Red-rump Parrot – Neil Palframan
 Superb Parrot - Phillip Williams
 Mallee Ringneck – Jason Richardson



Mynas in large numbers around human dwellings, schools, town parks, farm sheds and grain storage areas become a nuisance due to noise but also pose health risks to humans due to pathogens from their droppings and blood-sucking mites that live on those birds.

At this stage, it's important that we inform ourselves and be prepared for what to expect as Myna numbers increase in our local areas. Most digital and printed information on Myna Control in NSW is very similar and is easily found online by searching for that topic. A publication that many groups use is the NSW Government [Indian Myna Control Handbook](#), as seen from internet search results. A similar resource is [CIMAG](#) (Canberra Indian Myna Action Group) website that has downloadable resources and well organised information.

Margaret Strong

**YOU
Can
Help**

Here are some things you can do to help discourage Indian Mynas



Clear away food scraps after eating outdoors.



Feed pets indoors, or clear away when they've finished.



Plant native shrubs to reduce open areas in gardens.



Avoid planting trees with dense foliage, such as pencil pines, in which mynas will roost at night.



Block holes in roofs or eaves to prevent mynas from nesting – make sure you don't accidentally trap a possum, bat or other native species.



In rural areas, feed stock only as much as they need, cover the feed bins and clean up any spills.

Ovens and Murray bird group report of their weekend visit to Leeton / Griffith

This has been taken from their email news.

Well, what a weekend it was, despite the rather early morning start on Sunday 🙄. We saw 86 bird species including a Black Kite, a Black-shouldered Kite, a Black Falcon, 30 Brolgas, a pair of Glossy Black Cockatoos, Pink-eared Ducks, Blue-billed Ducks, a Purple-backed Fairywren, a Stubble Quail, a Singing Honeyeater and many others.



Black Falcon - Jan Palmer

Saturday

Site One: Fivebough Wetland/Sewage Treatment Ponds

This was our first stop on Saturday morning. Unfortunately, the water level had dropped suddenly in the last couple of days so many of the species had gone missing, including our target, brolgas. However, we still managed a good amount of water birds and especially raptors. A highlight being virtually dive-bombed by a screeching Black Falcon. Moving on to the Treatment Ponds where there was a lot more water, we found large numbers of Magpie Geese and an array of cormorants, spoonbills etc.

Site Two: Private Property Northeast of Leeton.

A highlight on the way were a pair of Pink Cockatoos. Vegetation here consisted of Pine Box Woodland with Drooping Sheoak understorey, and on the rocky ridges Dwyers Mallee Gum. Lots of food for the Glossy Blacks. A lot of scrub bashing was required but most of the group managed to see a pair of Glossy Black Cockatoos, happily posing for the photographers. We saw some Mallee Ringnecks and Red-rumped Parrots, but generally the woodland birds were missing due to the prolonged dry period being experienced.

Site Three: Turkey Flat Wetlands

Another site within the Murrumbidgee Valley National Park. River red gum country, with an environmental water allocation. Again, water levels low, but highlights here White bellied sea eagle and a family of Grey Butcherbirds.

Sunday

Site Four: Private Property

6.45am start, returning to the same area (Site Two). Still not early enough for the parrots, but the Glossy Blacks did appear again, on cue.

Site Five: Campbell's Wetland, Griffith

An absolutely beautiful wetland area, although still on the dry side. The bird hide provided an excellent view of a good variety of waterbirds, including spoonbills, egrets and ducks. Highlights being Plumed Whistling Ducks and a solitary Blue-billed Duck, and a good variety of raptors circling. Further around the Swamp we came across some Purple-backed Fairywrens and Zebra Finches.

Site Six: Lake Wyangan Causeway

New sightings here were Black fronted dotterels and Red capped plover.



Pair of Glossy Black Cockatoos
- Neville Bartlett

Site Seven: Ramsar site on Private Property

This was the highlight of the trip, an absolutely magnificent wetland in a Black Box depression. On arrival we were greeted with an expanse of shimmering silver water and on the opposite shore, 30 Brolgas happily feeding in knee deep water, along with hundreds of the usual waterbirds. On the shore around us were White-winged Fairywrens, Stubble Quail, and a resident Australian Hobby.

Acknowledgements

A huge thankyou to Nella Smith for the time and effort she put in to organise and lead this trip, and for giving us the benefit of her extensive knowledge of local flora, fauna, habitat and water systems. Also it was lovely to meet some of the Field Nats who were involved in the creation of their wonderful newsletter.

A big thankyou to Ana and Andrew for being such hospitable hosts welcoming us to their property.

Thankyou Bill and Linda for compiling the Birdlist.

All in all, a very memorable and enjoyable trip.

Compiled by Jan and Jenny (Ovens and Murray bird group)

Further Information

As Jan and Jenny have already acknowledged in the report, our wonderful guide, Nella Smith, provided plenty of background information about the Murrumbidgee water system that supports so many of the birds we saw. Here is a link to the Murrumbidgee Flow-Mer project website, which some of you may wish to look at...if you scroll down the page, you can read and listen to a story by Nella, *Stories of Connection: Tuckerbil Wetlands*

<https://www.flow-mer.org.au/area-pages/murrumbidgee>

There's also lots of other interesting information on this site including audio recordings (in glorious colour) of how life in a swamp responds to environmental flows. It's worth having a browse. <https://media.flow-mer.org.au/napnap/>



Yellow Thornbill – Neville Bartlett

Summer Wetland Birdwalks Wagga Wagga Tuesdays at 6pm

Tuesday 31 March ended the 2026 summer series, and although the birds were light on that day, our birdos weren't with 18 attending and some microbats came out to send us off as we left. On average we have seen 28 different species each week and an average of 12 people attending with a mix of MFN members, new members, locals who have heard about the event and their friends, and visitors to Wagga.

Visiting four locations three times since early January has revealed some interesting observations, the highlights are:



Flowerdale Lagoon: When the mud flats are exposed over summer, this is the best location to chance a sighting of Latham's Snipe, this year there were three seen, (lifers' for Poppy) along with the agile Black-fronted Dotterels. On 3rd March we were distracted upstream to the creek where we observed a small mixed woodland flock - Grey Fantail, Rufous Whistler and Western Gerygone. Along the Lagoon was a Nankeen Night Heron which flew in but moved on when it saw us, Sacred Kingfishers with recently fledged young and the resident Whistling Kite stirring up the lot.

Participants on 13 January, the first evening.

Marrambidya Wetland: The Dollar Birds - there's value in being with the last to leave, the Dollar Birds were hawking insects together, about 12 of them. On New Zealander Morgan's first visit, we called up the local echidna and swamp wallaby along the track in the River Red Gums. We saw two raptors, the Whistling Kite and Collared Sparrowhawk, but not the Black-shouldered Kite as in previous years. Nor did we see nor hear the Little Grassbird which was unusual, and reviewing the apps, we did not observe the Brown-headed Honeyeater - something to look for in the next series.



Lake Albert Wetland: Such a mixed bag at this location. In January we saw four Hardheads way out in the middle of the lake and we located a White-breasted Woodswallow nest in the fork of the trunk of a young River Red Gum. It was only about 2m off the ground and the nestlings were big, squeezed into the space. Four weeks later, after a week of over 40° maximum temperatures, we were so pleased to see the chicks had fledged. On our last evening, with the sun setting earlier, the Cattle Egrets came in for their regular overnight roost.



Wiradjuri Reserve: Being along the river under the River Red Gums, there are many woodland birds in our list. Seeing the Brown Treecreeper each year at this location is reassuring given its conservation status in NSW and nationally is classified as Vulnerable. And this year we again saw fledglings. The Sacred Kingfishers were seen taking bugs back to the nest or recently fledged young, we saw juvenile Grey Shrike Thrush, but we didn't see the Crested Shrike-tit this year. Every visit, tens - hundreds of mostly Little Corellas and a smaller number of Long-billed Corellas flew upstream.

Thanks to everyone who came and joined us to enjoy Wagga's nature spaces, Landcare and Sustainable Wagga for helping to get the word out.

Sarah Danckert & Janet Hume

Photos clockwise from top:
 Royal Spoonbill at Marrambidya – Janet Hume
 White-breasted Woodswallow Adult & Juvenile at Lake Albert Wetland – Janet Hume
 Participants on 31 March, the final evening.
 Juvenile Oriental Dollarbird at Wiradjuri Reserve – Janet Hume



The Mirrool Creek – Earlier Times Part 3

(See issue #343 February / #344, March 2026 for parts 1 and 2)

Contributed by **Margaret Strong**

The Goulburn Herald and County of Argyle Advertiser Correspondent gave a general location of the country he described at the end of Part 1, as being ‘between the Murrumbidgee River and the Bland country’ meaning between Moombooldool, Ardlethan and Aria Park on either side of the Merool Creek. There were no British urban settlements in that region in 1856, hence no specific place names were mentioned. Fortunately, he was well educated enough to write about these complex topics and thanks to our National Library of Australia, we can read this historic article.

Please note: Digitised text edited by Margaret Strong. Original article from <Trove.nla.gov.au>. Common and Botanical names in parentheses reviewed and added by Margaret Strong, (?) indicates uncertainty.

THE MEROOL CREEK. (From a Correspondent) Part 3 – fauna, insects and reptiles

The lover of animal life would be amply gratified by a visit to this place; the **Kangaroos** of all kinds are very numerous in the scrubs, from the **Forester**(Grey) which stands six feet high, to the **Kangaroo Mouse**, not more than as many inches: the tracks made by these animals are in many places so numerous, that one would almost be led to believe that it was a sheep-walk. This is the only place that I have seen the **Black Kangaroo** (Euro?) alive - he was a fine fellow, about five feet high when standing erect and in colour certainly almost black. **Bandicoots** of different sorts and other root-eating animals are exceedingly plentiful in the pine scrubs, indeed they are so burrowed in places that they resemble a rabbit warren.

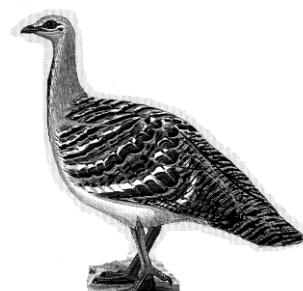
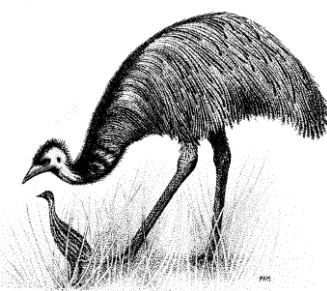


Photos clockwise from top:
Above: Kangaroos – Rowena Whiting
Far left: Pink Cockatoo – Janet Hume
Left: Cockateil on hollow – Janet Hume
Below: Budgerigar – Kathy Tenison

The ornithologist could find an ample supply of the various kinds of **Parrots** and **Cockatoos**, some of which are very handsome, especially the **Wee Jugglar** (Pink Cockatoo) - a white cockatoo, with a tricolour crest and rose-colour on the breast and under the wings. When there is water on the Boree Plains they abound with **ducks** of all kinds, **Budgerigars**, **Cockatoo**



Parrots (Cockatiel), **Spoonbill Cranes**, **Native Companions** (Brolgas), **Turkeys** (Bustards) &c. In the forests the **Emu** is frequently to be seen, many of them of very large size; and in some of the scrubs the Brush Turkey (**Malleefowl**) is to be found with its singular nest; the birds do not lay their eggs in separate nests, but all in one, so that many dozens are accumulated together(!). They cover them up with a huge mound of leaves and the eggs are hatched by the heat caused by the fermentation of the leaves.



Insects are by no means numerous, if we except **flies**, which are far too many so to be agreeable; **mosquitoes** are also troublesome at times. Some few **Sepidoptera** (?), that I have observed are probably new, and also a rather curious **Water Beetle**, called by the natives Karulgin. **Butterflies and moths** are not very common, and all that I have seen are to be found in other places.

Snakes are also rare, but some of the kinds are decidedly new; I have seen one, a short thick snake, about two feet long, of a deep red colour, certainly venomous, which is quite different to anything in any other part of the colony. The **Carpet Snake** appears sometimes to grow to a large size, 10 or 12 feet, but these large ones are by no means common; the usual size being about five feet. Iguanas (**Bearded Dragon?**), **Monitor** and **Sleepy Lizards** are particularly numerous, and some of the kinds appear peculiar to the locality. The **conchologist** finds but little to reward his search: only two kinds, and a singular **bivalve**, with an animal that has a very quick motion: they are all peculiar to the locality and it is very remarkable how soon they appear after rain, in places which have been perfectly dry for months before. I believe I may say that **fishes** are quite wanting.



Bearded Dragon – Rowena Whiting

The climate is very agreeable in the winter months, the frosts being slight and not sufficient to interfere with vegetation, but in the summer the heat is too great to be very agreeable, although the nights do not appear to be hot. When there are dews, they are particularly heavy and have almost the effect of a shower of rain. From the numerous traces it would appear that this has formerly been a favourite resort of the blacks, but they have quite deserted the place, preferring to remain about the stations nearer to the larger rivers. There are places where large rings (Bora ground) have been made in the ground and paths cut through the scrubs. These are said to be the spots where the ceremony of knocking out the front tooth of the young men was formerly performed.

The foregoing is but a hasty and random sketch of a very interesting district. I do not for a moment pretend to assert that it is correct in every respect; much has yet to be discovered respecting both the place and its productions; my only object is to point out some of its novelties to those who, like myself, love nature in its ever-varied forms and aspects, but who have not had an opportunity of seeing for themselves.

A couple of items you may like to pursue from the Murrumbidgee Landcare newsletter

Flake can be found anywhere in Country, so maybe when you're on your next bush walk, keep an eye to the ground and your heart open, and you never know what Country may reveal to you.

To find out what do when you find flake or ancient artefacts or sites, follow these links for [written information](#) or a [video explaining the process](#).



Swift Parrot education packages

We have produced two comprehensive education packages designed for primary schools, offering a unique opportunity to explore the plight of the critically endangered Swift Parrot. Each package includes a range of activities, lessons and hands-on learning opportunities. [Read more](#)

It has a short piece about the Swift Parrot. And interactive links:

<https://www.peakdesigns.com.au/IntEnv/swift-parrot-id/home.html>

<https://www.peakdesigns.com.au/IntEnv/swift-parrot-test/home.html> quiz

<https://www.peakdesigns.com.au/IntEnv/swift-parrot-story/home.html> story of Pippa's journey.



Rainbow Bee-eaters nesting at Wiradjuri Reserve

Rainbow Bee-eaters are a regular summer visitor to our area.

They are brilliantly coloured birds that grow to be 23–28 cm (9.1–11.0 in) in length, including the elongated tail feathers, The upper back and wings are green in colour, and the lower back and under-tail coverts are bright blue. The undersides of the wings and primary flight feathers are rufous to copper with green edges and tipped with black, and the tail is black to deep violet They have long tail streamers (feathers). The adult males have two long feathers in their tail whilst the females have shorter ones.



Rainbow Bee-eaters eat insects, mainly catching bees and wasps, as well as dragonflies, beetles, butterflies and moths. They can spot a potential meal from 50 metres away, catching the insect in mid-flight before returning to their perch to eat. They often beat their prey against their perch before swallowing or taking to the nest hollow to feed young. Even though Rainbow Bee-eaters are actually immune to the stings of bees and wasps, upon capturing a bee they will rub the insect's stinger against their perch to remove it, closing their eyes to avoid being squirted with poison from the ruptured

poison sac.



Rainbow bee-eaters are ground-nesting birds, breeding season is before and after the rainy-season in the north, and from November to January in the south. Rainbow bee-eaters are believed to mate for life. The male will bring the female insects while she digs the burrow that will be their nest. The bee-eater digs its burrow by balancing on its wings and feet, and digs with its bill, then pushing loose soil backwards with its feet while balancing on its bill. The female bee-eater can dig about 7–8 centimetres every day. The nest tunnel is very narrow, and the birds' bodies press so tightly against the tunnel walls that when the birds enter and exit their movement acts like a piston, pumping in fresh air and pushing out stale air. Rainbow bee-eaters have also been known to share their nest tunnels with other bee-eaters and sometimes even other species of birds. The female lays between 3 and 7 rounded, translucent white eggs, measuring 24 by 18 mm (0.94 by 0.71 in), which are incubated for about 21 to 24 days until hatching. The young bee-eaters fledge after 28 to 31 days and are fed by both parents and often have a single, male “helper” to assist with all aspects of rearing young.

Janet Hume

References:

- <https://birdlife.org.au/bird-profiles/rainbow-bee-eater/>
- <https://share.google/bc6AS7lZsLcEeFsqZ>
- https://animaldiversity.org/accounts/Merops_ornatus/
- <https://share.google/qazILTJ9xRZNkjwuv>
- <https://animalia.bio/rainbow-bee-eater>
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rainbow_bee-eater

Morcombe, Michael (2012). *Field Guide to Australian Birds*. Pascal Press, Glebe, NSW. Revised edition. ISBN 9780727013538

MEMBERS' SIGHTINGS

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

Significant sightings

Western Gerygone [1]	Flowerdale Lagoon, Wagga Wagga	03/03/26	MFN birdwalk
Blue-faced Honeyeater [4]	Flowerdale Lagoon, Wagga Wagga	03/03/26	MFN birdwalk
Brown Treecreeper [4]	Flowerdale Lagoon, Wagga Wagga	03/03/26	MFN birdwalk
Little Curlew A rare visitor	Fivebough Wetlands	early/03/26	Paul Maytom
Superb Parrot [80] In a single flock feeding on the ground	"Leighwood", Temora	28/03/26	J Hume, S Danckert
Jacky Winter [3]	"Leighwood", Temora	28/03/26	J Hume, S Danckert

Sightings of interest

Garland Lillies [200+]	Corbie Hill, near Leeton	03/26	Helen MacAuslan
Blue-billed Duck [4]	Campbell's Wetland, Griffith	13/03/26	Virginia Tarr
Pallid Cuckoo [1 Juv]	Nericon, Griffith	13/03/26	V Tarr, Judy Betts
Cockatiel [2] Juvenile and adult seen in the hollow	"Leighwood", Temora	28/03/26	J Hume, S Danckert
Yellow-banded Day-moth See member observations for image and description	Nr Ingalba Nature Reserve	28/03/26	Sarah Danckert

Compiled by Janet Hume, reviewed by Nella Smith

Member Observations

Highlights from a recent trip to Talarmin, nr Mackesville

I recently had a week at my daughters property "Talarinni", nr Macksville on the mid-north coast. Their patch borders a block of bushland, which we walked a few times. A highlight of these walks was the sighting of a pair of Scarlet Honeyeaters and a pair of Australasian Figbird.

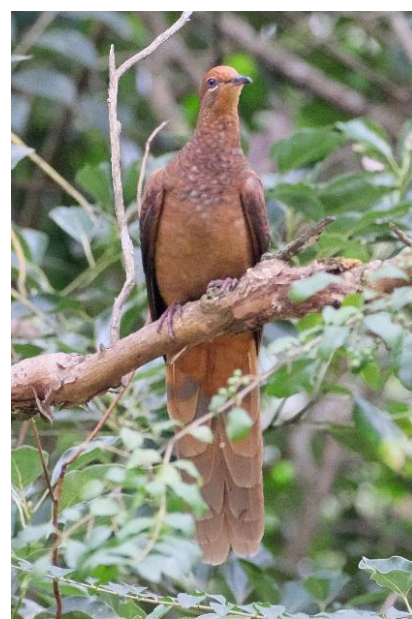
There is a very productive Guava tree in Amy's back yard which attracted many visitors. Including Australian King-parrot, Green Catbird, Regent Bowerbird, Satin Bowerbird and Lewin's Honeyeater.

On a back road to Bowraville we saw a Grey Goshawk, [adult white morph]. A small group of Striated Thornbill bathing in a shallow stoney creek and a Brown Cuckoo-dove perched nearby.



I had a lovely week away and thoroughly enjoyed the variety of birds I saw. Some new and many regular sightings that we commonly see in and around the Riverina.

Janet Hume

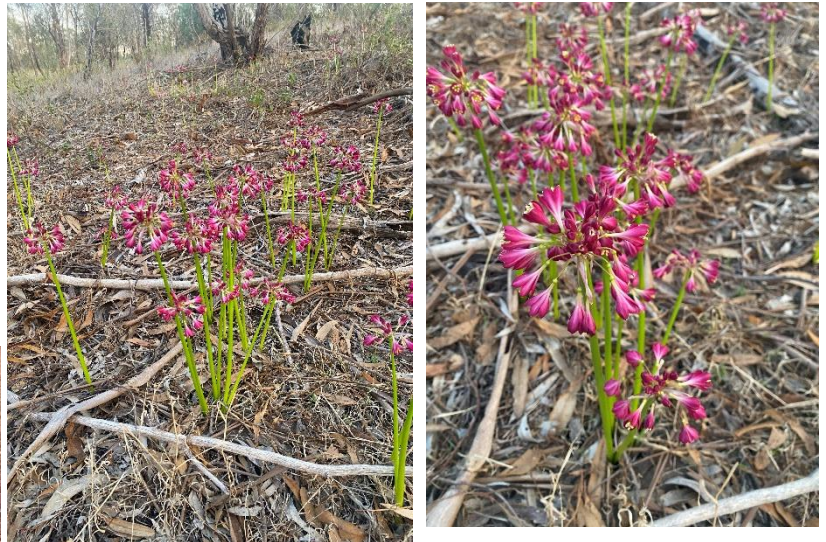


Above: Brown Cuckoo-dove
Left: Striated Thornbill bathing with droplets

Sally Bamblett from her walks on Scenic Hill in Griffith.

There are lovely drifts of **Garland Lilies** in flower at the moment. Very pretty.

I found a line of **processional caterpillars** which I haven't seen for a while. We had cedar trees in our street when I was growing up and these caterpillars would often find their way into our house, much to my mother's horror.



Helen MacAuslan has also photographed Garland Lillies in Leeton on Corbie Hill.



Sarah Danckert

Yellow-banded Day-moth caterpillar *Eutrichopidia latinus*. Its scientific name means well haired leg or foot which relates to its adult moth rather than the caterpillar, as does the common name indicating a yellow band on a black moth which is diurnal.

If you zoom in on the caterpillar you will see sparse white hairs emerging from the orange markings on the black body segments. It also has thin white stripes dorsally and dull yellow misshapen spots laterally. It is described as polyphagous, meaning it feeds on many different plants - this caterpillar would need to move overground to meet its needs as the plant pictured was only 100 x 50cm.

https://gropedia.com/page/eutrichopidia_latinus

Other Events / Items

Matong after dark – Owls, Wildlife & Citizen Science

Friday 1 May, 5pm – 8pm at the Matong Community Hall, 1 Wood Street, Matong.

This family-friendly evening will explore owl ecology, nocturnal wildlife, and conservation in our region. The night includes guest speaker, Mason Crane from NSW Biodiversity Conservation Trust, an introduction to citizen science using iNaturalist, and a guided spotlight walk.

Dinner & refreshments provided.

For more information and to book: <https://mli.org.au/home/mc-events/matong-matong-after-dark/>

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.

Estella Wildlife Spotlight Night

17 April 6pm to 8:30pm. A free event, numbers are limited.

Discover the wildlife that emerges after dark on Charles Sturt University Campus. Look for nocturnal animals and learn about the locally endangered Squirrel Gliders and other night-active species.

For more information and to register go to <https://wagga.nsw.gov.au/the-council/environment/sustainability/environmental-events-and-initiatives/events/estella-wildlife-spotlight-night>. Enquiries: Catherine Conroy on 1300 292 442

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.

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.

Nella Smith is working on a submission. If you have any input you’d like to contribute, share your views, raise any issues please liaise with her nella.smith0@gmail.com or to the club email murrumbidgeefieldnaturalists@gmail.com

**** 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.

- 9 April Thursday** **Monthly Meeting** in the Yellow Room at the **Leeton Library**, Sycamore Street Leeton, please join in person or on Zoom at 6.45pm to start at 7.00pm
Topic/speaker: **New South Wales Malleefowl Recovery Group (NSWMRG) is proud to share a new promotional video - presented by President David Kellett.**
Produced to raise the profile of the NSWMRG, the short film highlights the vital work being undertaken to protect and monitor the remarkable Malleefowl across New South Wales. It aims to inspire community members to get involved - whether by volunteering to monitor mounds, supporting field activities, or through donating. The video was proudly sponsored by MFN Club in 2025. Questions and comments are warmly welcomed and can be directed to David.
This will be followed with Nella Smith presenting **Bird photos for Campbell's Wetland bird hide.** Nella will show numerous photos on the Yellow Rm wall screen, also made available via Zoom. She will ask for feedback from the audience. It is anticipated that there will be no time available for Show and Tell.
Email: murrumbidgeefieldnaturalists@gmail.com if you have any queries.
- 24 April Friday** **Barren Box Swamp Bird Survey**
Meet 9:30am at the gate (map to be sent to attendees)
An opportunity to observe the birdlife in the vast storage and wetland.
A bird list will be provided to Murrumbidgee Irrigation (MI) on completion. Bring morning tea and lunch for a stop on our way back to Griffith, clothing for an exposed landscape - check the forecast
Contact: Sarah Danckert for a map location and car pooling 0427 276 306
Note: Attendees are required to complete online Biosecurity training prior to attending. Those who completed this training in 2024, your certification is still current. Those who haven't, contact Sarah to link you with MI. Also, everyone will need to apply for a permit - <https://www.mirrigation.com.au/home/barren-box-storage-access-permit-application>
- 6 May Wednesday** **Copy for the May newsletter is due. Please send to Rowena.**
Email: ericwhiting4@bigpond.com Phone: 0429 726 120.
- 7 May Thursday** **Committee Meeting held at 7pm by Zoom**
All members are welcome to attend and submit agenda items
Email: murrumbidgeefieldnaturalists@gmail.com
- 14 May Thursday** **Monthly Meeting** in the Yellow Room at the **Leeton Library**, Sycamore Street Leeton, please join in person or on Zoom at 6.45pm to start at 7.00pm
Topic/speaker: **Cryptogams, especially Bryophytes and how they have adapted to the dry 'Mediterranean' conditions in Australia by Christine Cargill (ANU).**
This will be via Zoom from Canberra.
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
- 16 or 17 May** **Narrandera Nature Reserve (Koala Park) Outing**
Saturday or Sunday **Organiser: Glenn Currie**
Email: murrumbidgeefieldnaturalists@gmail.com to register. More Details next month.