

February 2020

The Twitcher



CENTRAL COAST GROUP, BIRDING NSW

Editorial Team: Allan Benson (0457 458 274) Wendy Mitchell (4340 4870) & Robyn Price

Volume 15, No. 2

DATE	ACTIVITIES	LEADER/SPEAKER
	Note: For all Outings bring your morning tea and lunch. A chair is a good idea.	
25/2/20	Meeting: Using Birddata and ebird Meet: 7.30pm Tuggerah Progress Hall, Anzac Rd, Tuggerah, opposite McDonalds	Ian Benson
29/2/20	Outing: Bucketty/Mogo/Yarramalong Meet: 8.30am - The Letter "A," Cnr Georges Downes Drive & Walkers Ridge Rd Bucketty	Graham Nelson 0466 599 278
11/3/20	½ Day Outing: Saratoga and Davistown Meet: 8.30am Saratoga Wetlands, Willaroo Rd, Saratoga	Doug Hocking 0427 800 428
19/3/20	Swansea Pelagic	Allan Benson aejsbenson@bigpond.com
20-22/3/20	Campout Ulladulla. Big 4 Bungalow Park on Burrill Lake. 123 Princess Highway Burrill Lake 02 4455 1621— <i>See page 6 for further information</i>	Michael Scobie 0411 243 433
24/3/20	Next Meeting: Nest Evolution Meet: 7.30pm Tuggerah Progress Hall, Anzac Rd, Tuggerah, opposite McDonalds	Simon Griffiths



Tea, coffee, and biscuits will be available at the end of the meeting.
To cover hall hire and refreshments a donation of \$3 would be appreciated.

Tonight's Speaker: Ian Benson

The recording of bird sightings is an important tool to monitor the changes in bird populations. There are two apps available to birders – birddata and ebird where the sightings eventually are collated into the Birdlife Atlas and into the BioNet system. The more data that is collected the more informed the decision making can be on declaring which species are becoming threatened and which habitats need to be conserved. Ian will explain this in more details and explain the nuts and bolts of using the apps.

Last month's meeting: Members Night

We were taken on a journey from Cape York (Christina Port), South Africa (Rob Benson), New York State (Noel Lonergan) and a potpourri of John Carpenter's birding adventures which covered most of Australia. In addition, Doug Hocking showed us a spectacular video of the very rare Grey Falcon catching a Budgerigar along the Birdsville track. Jeb Field gave us an update on our favourite birding spot: Central Coast Wetland - Pioneer Dairy. Thank you to all speakers for such an interesting night.

Welcome to Visitors and New Members:

42 people attended our January meeting. Apologies were received from Wendy Mitchell. New to our meeting but familiar faces were Liz Noble, Ashley Mullahey and Jeb Field. People are encouraged to bring their own coffee cups to the meetings to reduce the plastic/polystyrene cups that that will be sent to landfill. For those people who remember to do this, congratulations! Thanks to Daniel McKeon for looking after the computer and to Malcolm Hill for setting up the sound system. Thanks also to Carole and John Carpenter and other early arrivals for setting up the hall.

Reminder about Parking: When attending the Meetings at the Tuggerah Hall, **parking** is not available in the car parks of the private businesses next door. The donation for attending the meeting is \$3 and covers room hire and printing of the newsletter.

Saving Stamps: Please give your used stamps (on paper, trimmed) to Colin Mitchell to process for donation to charity.

Webpage: Don't forget to check out the Birding NSW Webpage www.birdingnsw.org.au where there is plenty of info about outings, photograph gallery, and general info about the Club. Well worth a visit!

Check out **Central Coast Birders on Facebook** as well! It now has exceeded 400, with 424 people subscribing to our page. Malcolm Hill does a great job as chief administrator.

TOTAL FIRE BAN DAYS AND OUTINGS

Outings may be cancelled on days of total fire bans. This will be determined on a case by case basis and will depend on the planned birding site being accessible and the potential risk. This decision will be made by the leader. If the outing is cancelled it will be published on Central Coast Birders Facebook. If in doubt contact the outing leader.

WHAT WAS NEW January- February and WHAT CAN WE EXPECT March?

The "Big News" was the "Big Wet" in early February which dumped at least 300mm on the Central Coast and caused minor/moderate flooding of Tuggerah Lake. However for birders it brought some unusual visitors from Lord Howe Island way including a Red-tailed Tropicbird in Rylstone and a White-bellied Storm Petrel and a White-tailed Tropicbird in Canberra. Good birds for your ACT list!!

We have lots of Sooty Terns both Adults and Juvenile, 2 Grey Ternlets (2nd record for CC) and a Streaked Shearwater (5th record). Other good records were a Little Button-quail at Mangrove Mountain in January 2019 (4th record) and a Lesser Sand-plover at Pelican Point (9th record).

Sooty Tern



Little Button-quail



There are still plenty of bushfire/drought refugees around although recent rain may change the picture. Two Yellow-billed Spoonbills have been resident at the Dairy Swamp and two Wompoo Fruit-doves have now been recorded; the last was found at Palmdale. Freckled Ducks are back at the South Wyong Sewage Treatment works with a maximum count of six.

A Spotless Crake at Bull's Quarry was a great find and unusual location for a

crake with a second photographed at a more standard location - STW. It is amazing we keep seeing the rarer Spotless while it's ages since anybody has seen the more common, Australian Crake. The Breakfast for the Birds outing was a great day for White-throated Needletails while the eagle-eyed managed to spot Pacific Swifts.



Streaked Shearwater
Darren Earnshaw

The spring migrants will gradually head north in March with most Sacred Kingfishers going after the big rain. The last to leave will be White-breasted Woodswallows which hang around until May.

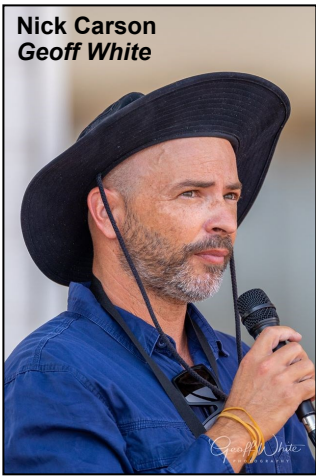
OUTING REPORTS

Breakfast with the Birds Central Coast Wetlands/Pioneer Dairy Tuggerah

2/2/20 World Wetland Day

After a very hot Saturday, 15 birders gathered on a warm humid Sunday morning, to see what birds were at the Wetland and share their interest and knowledge with CEN's Breakfast with the Birds participants (80+). Four groups (led by Allan Benson, Nick Carson, Christina Port, Kaye Pointer) learnt how important the wetland is for the resident/nomads, migratory birds, and as drought, fire refuge for birds, while filtering and slowing the water from some of the hinterland on its path to Tuggerah Lake, The Entrance and the Pacific Ocean. Allan Benson gave a short presentation on the birds seen on the wetland and our Birding Group.

Below is a list of birds recorded from about 7.30 am to 10.00 am and a few extra seen by the few birders who stayed on for the first bird club outing for 2020. Magpie-lark, Willy Wagtail, Australian Magpie, Common Starling, Masked Lapwing, Red-rumped Parrot, Welcome Swallow, Tawny Grassbird, Common Myna, Figbird, Topknot Pigeon, Australian Wood Duck, Pacific Black Duck, Eurasian Coot, Purple Swamp hen, Australian White Ibis, Little Pied Cormorant, Little-



black Cormorant, Royal Spoonbill, Yellow-billed Spoonbill, Torresian Crow, Black-winged Stilt, Darter, Cattle Egret, Eastern Rosella, Black Swan, White-faced Heron, Australasian Grebe, Golden-headed Cisticola, Pied Butcherbird, Crested Pigeon, Chestnut Teal, Whistling Kite, Australian Pelican. Migratory birds likely to fly North in the next month - Tree Martin, Fairy Martin, White-throated Needletail, Clamorous Reed-Warbler, Koel, Latham's Snipe, Sacred Kingfisher, Whiskered Tern.

Note: During January other migratory/nomadic birds seen at the Swamp were, Glossy Ibis, Brown Songlark, Wood Sandpiper, Sharp-tailed Sandpiper, Varied Triller, Horsfield's Bronze-Cuckoo.



Lunch birds: Nankeen Kestrel, Swamp Harrier, Straw-necked Ibis. 47 Bird Species recorded during World Wetlands day at Central Coast Wetlands. Congratulation and thank you to all volunteers and CEN Crew for organising and participating in another successful World Wetlands Day Breakfast with the Birds. (Kaye Pointer)

Outing: Central Coast Wetlands – Sunday February 2

Leader: Christina Port

Our first outing for 2020 was an extension of the Breakfast with the Birds. Great birds were seen here, on an extremely hot day. After all the speeches a group of 14 braved the conditions and we headed off to South Tacoma. Australian Pelican, Spotted Dove, Australasian Darter and White-breasted Woodswallows were seen on the way in. A Nankeen Night Heron was our first great bird. Then we walked down to the point stopping to see Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike, White-faced Heron; a Striated Heron flew in briefly until he saw us. Brown Thornbills chattered away as well as there were, a Golden Whistler, Eastern Yellow Robin, Superb Fairy-wrens, Grey Shrike-Thrush and a group of Noisy Friarbirds high up.

When we reached the point, Little Pied and Pied Cormorants, with Crested Tern and many Black Swans, were flying past. The photographers were busily clicking away. On the return trip Grey Butcherbird, Black-winged Stilt, Great Egret, Masked Lapwing and a calling Striped Honeyeater were recorded. On the drive back a Sacred Kingfisher was seen. We returned



Pacific Swift

to the Central Coast Dairy for lunch, and added Straw-necked Ibis, Swamp Harrier and a Nankeen Kestrel to our total. It was still very hot and down to 5 hardy birders as we headed off to the Sewage Treatment Works at Tuggerah. A breeze was blowing, which helped keep the temperature down and the fruity STW aroma up. We saw a pair of Swamp Harriers to start off with along with 2 Red-necked Avocet, 4 Latham's Snipe, Musk Duck, Dollarbirds, 6 Freckled Ducks, Australian Shoveler, Hoary-headed Grebes, Reed Warblers, Silvereyes. However, the highlight was a large group of around 150 White-throated Needletails, and amongst them 6 Pacific Swifts. To finish off a Black-faced Dotterel was seen on the pond. Thanks to everyone who came on such a hot day. Great birds and company. (Christina Port)

½ day Outing Picnic Point - February 12

Leader: Christina Port

Cancelled because Picnic Point was under more than ½ metre of water.

UNUSUAL GOSFORD-WYONG SIGHTINGS

JANUARY - FEBRUARY 2020

Species List: the names and the order in which they occur are in accordance with the new Birdlife and IOC System, as presented in "The Australian Bird Guide" P. Menkhorst et al 2016.

* = First return of migrants	** = Last birds to depart	LN = biggest number since January	OW = Over-winter
Brown Quail	2	15/1/20	Mingara Recreation Club
Musk Duck	1	1/1/2020	Dairy Swamp, CCW Tuggerah
Musk Duck	1	2/2/20	Tuggerah STW
			Andrew Robinson
			David Catt
			David Catt

Musk Duck	AF	29/1/20	St Huberts Island	Carol Edwards
Freckled Duck	2	11/1-2/2	Tuggerah STW	Nick Carson
Australian Shovelers	2	11/1/20	6 from 22-31/1, Tuggerah STW	Nick Carson
Australian Shovelers	2	28/2/20	Dairy Swamp, CCW Tuggerah	Allan Benson
Hoary-headed Grebe	40	31/1/20	Tuggerah STW	Christina Port
Little Penguin	1	16/1/20	Killcare Beach	David Abrahams
White-faced Storm-Petrel	1 bc	28/1/20	Lakes Beach, Budgewoi	Margot Hislop
Striated Heron	1	21/1/20	Picnic Pt Reserve, The Entrance	Graham Nelson
Striated Heron	1	29/1/20	Dunkey Island, Budgewoi	Meryl Newton
Striated Heron	1	1/2/20	Budgewoi Lake	Frank Ullrich
Nankeen Night-Herons	1	12/1/20	Henry Kendall Gardens, Wyoming	Rob Montgomery
Yellow-billed Spoonbill	1	1/1/2020	Yarramalong	Christina Port
Yellow-billed Spoonbill	2	25/1-2/2	Dairy Swamp, CCW Tuggerah	Daniel McKeon
Glossy Ibis	11	10/1/20	Dairy Swamp, CCW Tuggerah	Margaret Pointer
Osprey	1	13/1/20	Mt Pleasant, Saratoga	Graham Nelson
Osprey	2A+2J	30/1-2/2	Mariners Stadium, Gosford	Mairin Ireland
Pacific Baza	1	13/1/20	Murrumbung HSD, Mardi	John Carpenter
Pacific Baza	2	13-25/1/20	Daleys Point Firetrail, Bouddi NP	Peter Scott
Pacific Baza	1	25/1 & 5/2	Ourimbah Creek RTA Reserve	Gordon Arthur
Black-shouldered Kite	1	14-22/1/20	Dairy Swamp, CCW Tuggerah	Biggles Csolander
Nankeen Kestrel	1	22/1/20	Dooralong	Nick Giles
Wedge-tailed Eagle	1	8-21/12/19	x4 Tathra Taila HSD, Mangrove Mtn	Ross Pointer
Wedge-tailed Eagle	1	5/2/20	Ourimbah	Darren Earnshaw
Little Eagle	1	3/2/2020	Kulnura	Anna Pillich
Brown Goshawk	2+N	14-21/12	Tathra Taila HSD, Mangrove Mtn	Kaye Pointer
Grey Goshawk	1	11-21/1/20	x3 Ourimbah Creek RTA Reserve	Graham Nelson
Grey Goshawk	2	15/1/20	Mingara Recreation Club	Andrew Robinson
Swamp Harrier	2A,2Y	14-22/1/20	Dairy Swamp, CCW Tuggerah	Biggles Csolander
Square-tailed Kite	1	15-16/1/20	Tathra Taila HSD, Mangrove Mtn	Kaye Pointer
Square-tailed Kite	1	23/1/20	Malison St, Wyoming	Andrew Melville
Square-tailed Kite	1	25/1/20	Narara Railway Station	Andrew Robinson
Buff-banded Rail	1	4/2/20	Yarramalong	Graham Nelson
Buff-banded Rail	1	4/2/20	Lauffs Lane, Wyong Creek	Noel Lonergan
Spotless Crake	1	2/2/20	Tuggerah STW	David Catt
Spotless Crake	1	11/1/20	Tunnel Trail, Brisbane Water NP	Greg Shaw
Red-necked Avocet	9	28/1/20	Tuggerah STW, 2 still there 31/1-2/2	Allan Benson
Little Button -quail	1	Jan 2019	Tathra Taila HSD, Mangrove Mtn	Kaye Pointer
Red-capped Plover	10+	21/1/20	The Entrance Channel	Graham Nelson
Red-kneed Dotterel	1	13/1/20	Avoca Lagoon	Nick Carson
Latham's Snipe	2	9/1-3/2	Dairy Swamp CCW, Tuggerah	Frank Ullrich
Latham's Snipe	1	12/1/19	Mingara Wetlands	Allan Benson
Latham's Snipe	2	13/1/20	Avoca Lagoon	Nick Carson
Eastern Curlew	11	28/1/20	Brisbane Water Waterbird Survey	Michael Scobie
Eastern Curlew	1`	3/2/20	The Entrance Channel	Elizabeth Noble
Whimbrel	5	28/1/20	Brisbane Water Waterbird Survey	Christina Port
Bar-tailed Godwit	16	28/1/20	Brisbane Water Waterbird Survey	Michael Scobie
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper	12	16/1/20	San Remo, Lake Munmorah	Bill Lancaster
Sanderling	1	29/1/20	Toowoan Bay Reefs	Luke Ullrich
Grey-tailed Tattler	1	2/1/20	San Remo	Frank Ullrich
Wandering Tattler	1	12-21/1/20	Soldiers Pt, Norah head	Carol Abbott
Wood Sandpiper	1	1-22/1/20	Dairy Swamp, CCW Tuggerah	Jed Field
Common Greenshank	1	28/1/20	4 on 3/2 Picnic Point, The Entrance	Allan Benson
Painted Button-quail	3	4 & 12/1/20	Tathra Taila HSD, Mangrove Mtn	Kaye Pointer
Whiskered Tern	3	21/1/20	Chittaway Point	Christina Port
Whiskered Tern	4	27/1/20	Dairy Swamp, CCW Tuggerah	Daniel McKeon
Sooty Tern	2J	27/1/20	into care Wamberal & Bateau Bay Beaches	Madeline Lalor
Sooty Tern	2J	4/2/20	into care Gosford & Umina	per Nick Carson
Sooty Tern	j	29/1/20	Soldiers Point Reef, Norah Head	Daniel McKeon
Nankeen Kestrel	1	2/1/2020	2 on 14/1, Terrigal Haven	Andrew Wilson
Peregrine Falcon	1	21/12/19	Tathra Taila HSD, Mangrove Mtn	Kaye Pointer

Emerald Dove	1	2/1/2020	Niagara Park	Julie Peksis
Common Bronzewing	1	3/2/2020	Central Coast Wetlands, Tuggerah	Jed Field
Common Bronzewing	1	3/2/2020	Bucketty	Graham Nelson
Superb Fruit-Dove	1	16/1/20	Jilliby	per Ian Benson
Wompoo Fruit-Dove	1	12-21/1/20	Beckingham Rd, Tumbi Umbi	per Malcolm Hill
Wompoo Fruit-Dove	1	20/1/20	Lauffs Lane, Wyong Creek	Ron Newell
Wompoo Fruit-Dove	1	5/2/20	In fig tree at Palmdale	Brian Davies
Topknot Pigeon	6	14/1/19	Wattletree Rd, Holgate	Eileen Davy
Topknot Pigeon	14	15/1/20	Ourimbah Uni Campus	Nikola Markovina
Owlet Nightjar	1	19/12/19	Tathra Taila HSD, Mangrove Mtn	Kaye Pointer
Owlet Nightjar	1	24/1/20	Mill Creek Dharug NP	Greg Miles
White-throated Nightjar	1	24/1/20	Mill Creek Dharug NP	Darren Earnshaw
White-throated Needletail	120	3/1/2020	0930 hrs Forresters Beach	Robin Walker
White-throated Needletail	100+	4/1/2020	0930 hrs Kincumber	Christina Port
White-throated Needletail	150+	12/1/20	Tumbi Road, Tumbi Umbi	Frances Czwarlina
White-throated Needletail	100+	19/1/20	0800 hrs Jilliby	Graham Nelson
White-throated Needletail	100+	20/1/20	0752 hrs Brooks Hill, Matcham	Darren Earnshaw
Azure Kingfisher	1	3/2/20	Henry Kendall Gardens, Wyoming	Rob Montgomery
Rainbow Bee-eater	4	2/1/2020	Brush Rd, Ravensdale	Carole Carpenter
Noisy Pitta	2	13/1/20	Upper Palmdale Road	Carole Carpenter
Noisy Pitta	1	24-29/1/20	Hidden Valley, Jilliby SCA	Carol Abbott
Noisy Pitta	1	26/1/20	Ourimbah Creek RTA Res	Miriam Kinka
Glossy Black Cockatoo	3	4-23/12/19	x4 Tathra Taila HSD, Mangrove Mtn	Kay Pointer
Glossy Black Cockatoo	3	3/1/2020	Kariong	Christina Port
Glossy Black Cockatoo	3	5/2/20	Bulls Quarry, Brisbane Water NP	Ash Mullahey
Gang Gang Cockatoo	5	18-20/12/19	Tathra Taila HSD, Mangrove Mtn	Margaret Pointer
Gang Gang Cockatoo	3	12/1/20	Narara	Julie Peksis
Little Lorikeet	12	10/1/19	Wyoming	Andrew Robinson
Little Lorikeet	30+	22/1/20	Kilcare/Hardys Bay	David Abrahams
Little Lorikeet	20	25/1/20	Kulnura	Anne Pillich
Barn Owl	1	17/1/20	Ourimbah Ck Rd, Ourimbah	Andrew Robinson
Powerful Owl	HC	25/01/20	0600 hrs Wildwood, Kincumber	Diane Warman
Powerful Owl	2J	4/2/20	Fletchers Glen, Hardys Bay	Peter Scott
Southern Boobook	HC	24/1/20	Mill Creek, Dharug NP	David Peet
Pheasant Coucal	1	7-17/12/19	x3 Tathra Taila HSD, Mangrove Mtn	Ross Pointer
Pheasant Coucal	1	14-18/1/20	Dairy Swamp CCW Tuggerah	Daniel McKeon
Pheasant Coucal	1	21/1/20	Dooralong	Nick Giles
Channel-billed Cuckoo	2Y	16/1/20	reared by Currawongs at Gosford	Nick Carson
Horsfield's Bronze-Cuckoo	3	1-21/1/20	Dairy Swamp, CCW Tuggerah	Frank Ullrich
Shining Bronze-Cuckoo	1	17/12/19	Tathra Taila HSD, Mangrove Mtn	Kaye Pointer
White-throated Gerygone	1	22/1/20	Warnervale	Andrew Robinson
Brown-headed Honeyeater	3	26/1/20	Popran NP	Darren Earnshaw
Brown-headed Honeyeater	4	26/1/20	Kulnura	Anne Pillich
Yellow-rumped Thornbill	4	19/1/20	Mt Penang Sculpture Garden	Allan Benson
White-throated Gerygone	2	17-23/12	Tathra Taila HSD, Mangrove Mtn	Kaye Pointer
Rufous Whistler	M,F	17-23/12/19	Tathra Taila HSD, Mangrove Mtn	Kaye Pointer
Varied Sittella	2A+2DY	18/12/19	Tathra Taila HSD, Mangrove Mtn	Kaye Pointer
White-winged Triller	AF	21/1/20	Dairy Swamp, CC W Tuggerah	Christina Port
Masked Woodswallow	10	21/1/20	Lions Park Chittaway	Rex Schmidt
Leaden Flycatcher	1	19-22/12/19	2A+J on 23/12, Tathra Taila HSD, Man. Mtn	Kaye Pointer
Jacky Winter	2	21/1/20	Hidden Valley, Ourimbah	David Russell
Rose Robin	1 pr	27/1/20	Hidden Valley, Jilliby SCA	Elizabeth Noble
Brown Songlark	1	1-11/1/20	Dairy Swamp ,CCW Tuggerah	Daniel McKeon
Brown Songlark	1	28-31/1	Picnic Point Res, The Entrance	Bill Lancaster
Double-barred Finch	10	22/1/20	San Remo	Meryl Newton
Chestnut-breasted Mannikin	5	11/1/20	Dairy Swamp, CCW Tuggerah	Alan Morris
Bassian Thrush	1	17/12/19	Tathra Taila HSD, Mangrove Mtn	Kaye Pointer
Bassian Thrush	1	2/1/2020	Niagara Park	Julie Peksis
Bassian Thrush	1	14-18/1/20	Ourimbah Ck RTA Res	Jan Mohandas
Bassian Thrush	1	5/2/20	Wattletree Rd, Holgate	Eileen Davy

Breeding and some other records:

Grey Teal: 2A+3Y Patonga Lagoon 30/11 (JPe); **Striated Heron:** 1 Brisbane Water 28/1 (MSc); **Eastern Osprey:** 1 Brisbane Water 28/1 (MSc); Pacific Baza: 1 Picketts Valley 4/2 (DMcK); **Latham's Snipe:** 2 Tuggerah STW 28/1 (AB), 2 Lauffs Lane, Wyong Creek 4/2 (NL); **Painted Button-quail:** 2 Tathra Taila HSD M. Mtn 24/12 (KP); **White-throated Needletail:** 27 reports in January, all forwarded to Dr. M. Tarburton; **Tawny Frogmouth:** 2A+J Tathra Taila HSD Man. Mtn 15/12 (MP); **Laughing Kookaburra:** 2A+1DY Tathra Taila HSD Man. Mtn 14/12 (KP); **Sacred Kingfisher:** A+1DY Tathra Taila HSD Man. Mtn 23/12 (KP); **Peaceful Dove:** 2A+J Tathra Taila HSD Man. Mtn 21/12 (KP); **Bar-shouldered Dove:** 2A+2J Tathra Taila HSD Man. Mtn 10/12 (KP); **Topknot Pigeon:** 4 Ourimbah Uni Campus 23/1 (ARo); **Topknot Pigeon:** 1 Mill Ck Dharug 24/1 (AB); **Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo:** 2A+J Mangrove Mtn 10/12 (KP); **Glossy Black Cockatoo:** 2A+1DY Tathra Taila HSD Man. Mtn 11/12 (KP); **Crimson Rosella:** 2A+1DY Tathra Taila HSD Man. Mtn 20 & 24/12 (KP); **Little Lorikeet:** 10 Tathra Taila HSD M. Mtn 7-18/12 (KP), 30 Niagara Park 30/1 (JPe); **Fan-tailed Cuckoo:** J at Dairy Swp 19/1 (DMcK); **Channel-billed Cuckoo:** J fed by Currawongs Wyong 19/1 (GBr); **Superb Fairy-wren:** A+2DY Tathra Taila HSD Man. Mtn 11/12 (KP); **Variegated Fairy-wren:** 3A+2DY Tathra Taila HSD Man. Mtn 25/12 (KP); **Eastern Spinebill:** A+1DY Tathra Taila HSD Man. Mtn 29/12 (KP); **Yellow-faced Honeyeater:** 2A+1DY Tathra Taila HSD Man. Mtn 17/12 (KP); **White-naped Honeyeater:** A+1DY Tathra Taila HSD Man. Mtn 26/12 (KP); **Brown Gerygone:** 2A+N Tathra Taila HSD Man. Mtn 20/12 (KP); **Varied Sittella:** N+2Y Tathra Tail HSD Man. Mtn, subsequently fledged successfully 18-19/12 (KP); **Grey Shrike-thrush:** A+1DY Tathra Taila HSD Man. Mtn 18/12 (KP); **Rufous Whistler:** A+1DY Tathra Taila HSD Man. Mtn 25/12 (KP); **Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike:** 2A+J Tathra Taila HSD Man. Mtn 23/12 (KP), 1J Mt Penang Gardens 31/1 (BLa); **Australian Magpie:** 2A+3DY Tathra Taila HSD Man. Mtn 20/12 (KP); **Rufous Fantail:** 2A+J Tathra Taila HSD Man. Mtn 22/12 (KP); **Leaden Flycatcher:** 2A+1DY Tathra Taila HSD Man. Mtn 23/12 (KP). Good Birding!

CENTRAL COAST TWITCH 2020

The Twitchers have accelerated out of the blocks this year with Christina Port recording 175 species in just six weeks with plenty of people snapping at her heels. Good totals are a reflection of lots of fire and drought refugees around at present. However, it's early days and it's a long year.

Christina Port	175	Margaret Pointer	155	Michael Scobie	114
Carole Carpenter	170	David Catt	153	Rowena Wallace	80
John Carpenter	169	Noel Lonergan	144	Andrew Melville	80
Graham Nelson	169	Krystyna Lonergan	144	Robyn Price	71
Kaye Pointer	168	Nick Carson	132	Diana Hogan	60
Daniel McKeon	168	Graeme Catt	127	Coleen Southall	60
Allan Benson	164	Doug Hocking	120	Judy Clark	59

SWANSEA PELAGIC UPDATE - Dates for 2020Contact Allan Benson - aejsbenson@bigpond.comThursday 19th MarchThursday 23rd JulyTuesday 6th October**ULLADULLA CAMPOUT MARCH 20-22**

In view of the fires, floods and tempest, I have visited Ulladulla to see how these will impact on our visit. The good news is that the town is 'open for business', and there are plenty of spots for us to go birding: plant life is leaping out of the ground, blackened trees are sprouting, and hopefully the birds will follow suit by the time we arrive. There are mainly 'black birds' at the moment! The mountains are burned out, but Lake Conjola may be accessible when the time comes.

Spotting fire and drought refugees will be interesting, and unexpected sightings are likely.

The BIG4 Bungalow Park, Burrill Lake (Ph 4455 1621) has good facilities including an excellent covered BBQ/seating area opposite the row of cabins. Note that there is a 'stay 4 nights, pay for 3' deal on!

You might like to visit Lake Wollumboola on the way down to get a head start!

Let me know if you're coming. See you there.

Michael Scobie 0411 243 433



AUSTRALIA HAS ALL THE TOOLS TO PROTECT ITS BIRDS FROM EXTINCTION – BUT IT IS FAILING

If ever there were a country in a position to invest in protecting its precious wildlife, it was Australia. Yet the survival of dozens of species is at stake Sean Dooley

The last time Australia experienced a quarter of national negative economic growth, the Soviet Union still existed, Nirvana were on the cusp of releasing Never mind, and the first serious attempt to analyse and catalogue our threatened birds – The Action Plan for Australian Birds - was about to be published. In the 28 years since, the lucky country has recorded the longest period of continual economic growth of any modern nation. Whether this was due to 1991 being “the recession we had to have”, the fundamentals of a strong, modern economy having been put in place, or the sheer dumb luck of being a beneficiary of the China boom, if ever there were a country in a prime position to be able to invest in protecting its precious wildlife, it was us.

So how has that worked out? Not so well. Each decade since, lead author Prof Stephen Garnett has produced a further action plan for Australian birds. By the time of the 2010 action plan, the conservation status of 49 species of Australian bird had deteriorated since 1990. That is, they had been recognised as taking the next step towards extinction. Garnett was in Melbourne last month, consulting with threatened-species experts in final preparations for the 2020 action plan. Final population estimates and other data are still being thrashed out; the early indications are not so promising for a turnaround in fortune for the majority of our threatened species. In fact, a 2018 report by the National Threatened Species Hub, with which Garnett collaborates, indicated that some of the birds in this year’s Bird of the Year poll, such as the Regent Honeyeater and the Orange-bellied Parrot, may not exist in the wild if the vote were to be run in 20 years’ time.

On a more positive note, Garnett did point out that some birds have bucked the overall trend and had their status “down listed” to a category that is less imperilled or taken off the threatened species list altogether. In such cases, the down listing was due to targeted conservation action and programs: the Kangaroo Island Glossy Black-cockatoo has had its nesting trees protected from predators and competing hollow-nesting species; the declaration of conservation reserves in its rainforest home has meant the Albert’s Lyrebird is no longer considered vulnerable to extinction; and in the near future, a raft of seabirds that breed on Macquarie Island will come off the threatened species list entirely now that the rabbits that were eating them out of house and home have been successfully eradicated.

Feral animals and invasive weeds have been identified as one of the biggest threats endangering our birds. Historically, the impact of foxes and rabbits has wreaked enormous damage, but recent research estimates that feral, stray and domestic cats now kill more than a million birds a day in Australia, and cats have now been recognised as a major threat for rare species such as the Western Ground Parrot and the Night Parrot that spend most of their life close to the ground. As much as we would like to point the finger at one villain for our loss of birds, cats are not the sole driver on the extinction bus. Loss of habitat – something that Australia still excels at – takes a major turn at the wheel. On one level, conservation is not rocket science – a species loses the place where it lives, it cannot survive. Building a 3,000-unit marina complex in Moreton Bay, the most important site in Australia for eastern curlews, or digging an enormous coalmine directly where the largest population of southern black-throated finch survives, is going to do nothing to reverse the downward trend. Elsewhere in Australia, it is not necessarily the loss of habitat itself but the quality of what remains – increasingly fragmented and degraded – that is leading to losses.

As temperatures and severity and frequency of droughts increase in a hotter climate, our birds are starting to lose out. Endangered Carnaby’s Black Cockatoos have been reportedly falling dead from the sky during recent heat-waves in Western Australia. Species that live in the cool, upland rainforests of north Queensland will lose territory as will the shorebirds that rely on mudflats and beaches to feed.

We are seeing an increase in the area, intensity and frequency of bushfires across the country. Every year fires are nibbling further into rainforests that previously were thought flame-proof. In drier areas, uncontrolled burning is directly wiping out populations such as the Mallee emu-wren, which went extinct in South Australia after a series of massive wildfires in the conservation reserves that were supposed to protect them. And even if birds survive the initial inferno, the country is opened up for predators such as feral cats.

We know that conservation actions work. We know that for the past 28 years we have been in a fiscal position to fund the conservation programs that we know work. Yet we have chosen to invest very little of the boom to turn the fortunes of those 49 birds. Our current nature laws are demonstrably inadequate. There is little political will to strengthen them. While the Bird of the Year vote may seem to be just a bit of fun, it is actually an expression of the love Australians have for our birds, and that perhaps one day we will demand that our leaders do something to save them. Perhaps one day, the bin chickens will finally come home to roost.

BRISBANE WATER KBA SUMMER SURVEY 2020

On January 29 Christina Port, Doug Hocking and Michael Scobie took to the water in Doug's boat at low tide for the bi-annual bird survey following the shore around Saratoga, Davistown, Empire Bay and Woy Woy South as far as the Pelican colony. We didn't get into Kincumber Broadwater or around St Hubert's Island this time, but overall numbers were as expected.

There is still no Osprey nest on the special platform built for them recently on Riley's Island, but in the Norfolk Island Pine next to it is a large nest at the top! It's hard to please some 'people'. The Pelican rookery looked more crowded than ever, but there was just standing room at the edge for the only Swans seen on the day. The hoped-for Bush Stone Curlews seen previously along the Riley's/St Hubert's channel didn't show, and the two raptors (Osprey and Whistling Kite) were late sightings when we were nearly back at the Saratoga mooring.

It was a very pleasant way to spend a few hours on the water, and thanks Doug for ferrying us around.

Australasian Darter	9	Crested Tern	2	New Holland Honeyeater	1
Australian Pelican	400	Eastern Osprey	1	Pied Oystercatcher	7
Australian Raven	3	Eastern Curlew	11	Rainbow Lorikeet	1
Bar-tailed Godwit	16	Fairy Martin	1	Sacred Kingfisher	2
Black Swan	19	Figbird	3	White-breasted Sea-eagle	1
Brown Honeyeater	2	Great Egret	3	Silver Gull	50+
Caspian Tern	2	Little Corella	5	Striated Heron	2
Cattle Egret	5	Little Egret	2	Welcome Swallow	8
Chestnut Teal	1	Long-billed Corella	2	Whimbrel	5
Cormorant Little Black	4	Magpie	2	Whistling Kite	1
Cormorant Pied	11	Magpie-lark	2	White-face Heron	7
Cormorant Little Pied	12	Northern Mallard	30	Australian White Ibis	11
Cormorant Great	1	Masked Lapwing	10	White-breasted Woodswallow	10

WHERE TO WATCH BIRDS ON THE CENTRAL COAST: Yarramalong

The Yarramalong area is visited by birders in spring in pursuit of the migratory Rainbow Bee-eater but a whole swag of other interesting birds awaits the birder willing to make the trip. There is good coffee at Yarramalong Manor.

Rarities seen in the area include Pheasant Coucal, Scarlet Robin (autumn) and Rose Robin (autumn).

Jack Gear Oval, Linga Longa St:

This is an open oval but bordered by the rainforest banks of the Wyong River and a billabong with lots of interesting birds.

What to see: Olive-backed Oriole (summer), Spotted Dove, Australian Magpie, Australian Raven, Rainbow Lorikeet, Little Wattlebird, Crested Pigeon, Willie Wagtail, Magpie-lark, Kookaburra, Noisy Miner, Grey Butcherbird, Little Wattlebird, Superb Fairy-wren, Azure Kingfisher, Regent and Satin Bowerbird, Brown Gerygone, Black-faced Monarch, Lewin's Honeyeater, Rufous Fantail, Common Myna, Red-whiskered Bulbul, Golden Whistler, Red-browed Finch, **Rainbow Bee-eater**, Grey Teal, Pacific Black Duck, Grey Fantail, Dollarbird (summer), Sulphur-crested Cockatoo.

Ravensdale Road

What to see: Sacred Kingfisher (summer), Purple Swamphen, Welcome Swallow, Topknot Pigeon, Straw-necked Ibis, White-necked Heron, Wonga Pigeon, Cattle Egret, Noisy Friarbird, Little Corella, Yellow-faced Honeyeater, Eastern Whipbird, Olive-backed Oriole (summer), Australian Magpie, Australian Raven, Rainbow Lorikeet, Galah, Grey Butcherbird, Eastern Spinebill, Eastern Koel, Masked Lapwing, Little Wattlebird, Bar-shouldered Dove, Australian Wood Duck, Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike, Pied Butcherbird, Willie Wagtail, Kookaburra, Noisy Miner, Superb Fairy-wren, Satin Bowerbird, Brown Gerygone, Black-faced Monarch, Lewin's Honeyeater, Red-browed Finch, **Rainbow Bee-eater**, Grey Fantail, Dollarbird (summer).

Cedar Brush Rd

What to see: Bar-shouldered Dove, Brown Cuckoo-Dove, Jacky Winter, Fantail Cuckoo, Dusky Moorhen, Eurasian Coot, Australian Wood Duck, Superb Lyrebird, Black-faced Monarch, Masked Lapwing, Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo, Australian Brush Turkey, Sacred Kingfisher (summer), Purple Swamphen, Brown Thornbill, Spotted Pardalote, Green Catbird, Common Bronzewing, Wonga Pigeon, Welcome Swallow, Eastern Yellow Robin, Grey Shrike-thrush, Eastern Whipbird, White-browed Scrubwren, White-throated Treecreeper, Red-browed Finch, Noisy Friarbird, Olive-backed Oriole (summer), Australian Magpie, Australian Raven, Rainbow Lorikeet, Little Wattlebird, Willie Wagtail, Magpie-lark, Kookaburra, Noisy Miner, Superb Fairy-wren, Satin Bowerbird, Brown Gerygone, Lewin's Honeyeater, **Rainbow Bee-eater**, Fantail Cuckoo, Dollarbird (summer), Sulphur-crested Cockatoo, Jacky Winter.