

BIRDING BULLETIN No 188

MARCH 2023

CLUB ACTIVITIES FOR MARCH AND APRIL 2023

PLEASE REMEMBER THAT YOU STILL NEED TO BOOK FOR OUTINGS AND CAMP OUTS!

Please check on the Outings Page on the website for the latest guidelines regarding COVID restrictions and for any changes/cancellations related to weather or other events.

March 2023

Saturday 4 March Central Coast Outing: Bucketty and Mogo. Meet at 8.30 am at "The Letter A" at the corner of George Downs Drive and Walkers Ridge Road, Bucketty. Lunch at cars. Leader Graham Nelson 0466 599 278. Booking is required by contacting the leader.

Tuesday 7 March Club Meeting: Meet at the Henry Carmichael Theatre, Level 1, The Sydney Mechanics' School of Arts, 280 Pitt Street, Sydney at 7:30 pm. "The Southern Superb Lyrebird: an ecosystem engineer and impacts of the 2019/20 megafires on its habitat". Speaker: Dr Alex Maisey

Wednesday 8 March Central Coast Half Day Outing: The Entrance. Meet at 8.30 am at Picnic Point Reserve, off Tuggerah Parade, The Entrance. Central Coast UBD Map 61, A12. Lunch at cars. Leader: Christina Port 0421 691 317. Booking is required by contacting the leader.

Saturday 11 March Club Outing: Sydney Olympic Park. Meet at 8.30 am at Belvedere Lake, Bicentennial Park, Parking Area P10D. Proceed through the main gates, along the road past the Conference Centre until the lake is on your left-hand side. The parking area is on the right, just after crossing the bridge. Gradient: easy. Leader: Elisabeth Karplus 0421 665 553. Booking in advance is required by emailing activities@birdingsw.org.au

Saturday 18 March Club Outing: Emu Plains area. Meet at 8.30 am at Emu Green Reserve, corner of Palomina Road and Russell Street, Emu Plains. Lunch at cars. Leader: Judy Clark 0413 550 899. Booking in advance is required by emailing activities@birdingsw.org.au

Central Coast Group Camp 24 - 26 March: Coonabarabran. Leader Alan Morris

The camp will be based at Getaway Tourist Camp, 9286 Oxley Highway, Coonabarabran. Please contact the leader, Alan Morris, on 0418 269 482 before booking your accommodation.

Tuesday 28 March Central Coast Meeting: Meet at 7:30 am at Progress Hall in Anzac Street, Tuggerah, opposite Hungry Jacks, Central Coast UBD map 49, C15. "Bushfires around Mangrove Mountain". Speaker: Kaye Pointer

Wednesday 29 March Midweek Outing: Jamieson Park. Meet at 8:30 am in James Wheeler Place, Wheeler Heights. Easy walking walk at Jamieson Park. Carry morning tea and lunch at cars. Leader: Coleen Southall 9982 5453 or 0410 549 321. Booking in advance is required by emailing activities@birdingsw.org.au

April 2023

Saturday 1 April Central Coast Outing: San Remo and surrounds. Meet at 8.30 at the corner of Richardson and Wills Roads, San Remo. Central Coast UBD map 31, N3. Leader: Meryl Newton 0435 780 380. Booking is required by contacting the leader.

Tuesday 4 April Club Meeting: Meet at the Henry Carmichael Theatre, Level 1, The Sydney Mechanics' School of Arts, 280 Pitt Street, Sydney at 7:30 pm. "Bird watching in the Pilbara and Shark Bay in Western Australia". Speaker: Elisabeth Karplus

Easter Club Campout 7 - 10 April: Forbes area and Nangar National Park. Stay in accommodation in Forbes or camp in a caravan park in Forbes or Nangar National Park. Leader: Allan Richards 0432 064 660. For details about activities, please book in advance by emailing activities@birdingsw.org.au

Saturday 8 April Club Outing: Royal National Park. Meet at 9:00 am at Wattle Forest Picnic Area near Audley. Turn into Lady Carrington Drive at Audley, then right over the timber bridge to the western side of the river. Turn left and meet at the last car park. Lunch at cars. Leader: Philip Brook 0427 446 144 Booking in advance is required by emailing activities@birdingsw.org.au

Wednesday 12 April Central Coast Half Day Outing: Munmorah SRA. Meet at 8.30 am at Birdie Beach Drive, near Elizabeth Bay Drive. Central Coast UBD map 33, E1. Lunch at cars. Leader: Christina Port 0421 691 317. Booking is required by contacting the leader.

Saturday 15 April Club Outing: Mill Creek and Old Great North Road in Dharug National Park, Wiseman's Ferry. Meet at 8:30 am in the Mill Creek Picnic Area. Lunch at cars. Leader: Paul Johnstone 0434 350 409 Booking in advance is required by emailing activities@birdingsw.org.au

Tuesday 25 April Central Coast Meeting: Meet at 7:30 pm at Progress Hall in Anzac Street, Tuggerah, opposite Hungry Jacks, Central Coast UBD map 49, C15. "Birding in East Africa: Speaker: Greg Miles

Wednesday 26 April Midweek Outing: Ebenezer area - Chain of Ponds and Swallow Reach. Meet at 8:30 am at Chain of Ponds Reserve, Stannix Park Road, Wilberforce. Lunch near cars at Tizzana Vineyard. Leader: Judy Clark 0413 550 899. Booking in advance is required by emailing activities@birdingsw.org.au

Saturday 29 April Central Coast Outing: Bulls Quarry and Mt Penang. Meet at 8.30 am at Bulls Quarry trail, Woy Woy Road, Kariong. Central Coast UBD map 96, C13. Lunch at cars. Leader: Frik Gautschi 0404 467 097. Booking is required by contacting the leader.

Please check the website at <http://www.birdingnsw.org.au/> or contact the leader before the outing if you are uncertain whether the outing is going ahead. Participants on Central Coast outings need to book in advance by contacting the outing leader.

The current COVID guidelines for club outings

- Now up to 25 participants including the leader may attend day club outings
- Participants still need to book in advance by emailing the Activities email (activities@birdingnsw.org.au) for Sydney outings or by contacting the leader for Central Coast outings. They will still need to sign the attendance sheet on the day.
- It is recommended that everyone attending should be fully vaccinated.
- Please do not attend if you are unwell with flu like symptoms.
- Safe distancing of 1 person per 2 sqm outdoors must be observed.
- Although face-masks are not required for outdoors activities, it is recommended that they are worn.

BIRDING NSW'S KEY BIODIVERSITY AREAS PROJECT: GRENFELL BIRD SURVEY, MARCH 18th, 2023

The twenty second survey will take place on Saturday, March 18th, 2023, weather and Covid-19 permitting. This survey was cancelled in September 2022 because of the wet conditions. Previous and new surveyors are welcome. We hope to have the usual activities around the survey with BYO everything meals on Friday and Saturday evenings. If you would like to take part and are not already on my list, please contact me for further information on emhodson@exemail.com.au.

“ROCKING UP FOR ROCKWARBLERS”

Volunteers are needed to search for Rockwarblers at target sites in eastern NSW during this autumn and to enter their sightings into Birddata. The overall detection rate of Rockwarblers at sites where they were known to occur before the fires has been low — only 10 percent of sites and 7 percent of surveys recorded Rockwarblers. Most of these sites were on the periphery of the wilderness area, and half the sites surveyed were in unburnt habitat. With so few detections, there is no clear pattern. Repeating surveys at these sites is vital to better understand the factors that affect Rockwarblers' detectability and distribution. If you can help, please go to <https://birdlife.org.au/news/rocking-up-for-rockwarblers/> to book a site to visit or explore sites near you.

BIRDLIFE SHOALHAVEN'S STUDENT RESEARCH GRANT PROGRAM

BirdLife Shoalhaven (BLS) will provide a grant of up to \$4,000 to fund a research project in 2023, that will improve bird conservation and/or a better understanding of birds in the Shoalhaven. To be eligible

you must be a student currently enrolled in a higher degree course at an NSW or ACT university. While it is not a requirement, projects focused on threatened species or with field work carried out within the Shoalhaven, will be highly regarded. The grant must be used to directly support the project or its dissemination, for example on-ground bird conservation work, education programs or materials, project equipment and materials, or travel to relevant conferences. The successful applicant will be required to give a presentation on their project at a BLS event or other conference and submit an article in a future BLS Magazine.

The deadline for applications is 31st March 2023. The application guidelines and form can be downloaded by going to www.birdlifeshoalhaven.org/grant.html

If you have any queries, please contact Rob Dunn at president@birdlifeshoalhaven.org

NSW ENVIRONMENT LEADERS FORUM, SYDNEY TOWN HALL, MARCH 1st, 2023

Three weeks before the NSW election, the environment leaders from parties across the political spectrum are going to present their plans to solve the problems facing nature in our state. This forum at Sydney Town Hall is the biggest event for nature in the lead up to the election. Attendees will hear from the Environment Minister James Griffin, Shadow Environment Minister Penny Sharpe, and Greens Environment Spokesperson Sue Higginson. Then, Nick O'Malley will facilitate a Q+A session. The forum is organised by the Nature Conservation Council, the umbrella organisation for conservation groups in NSW, and is an opportunity for BirdLife supporters to speak up for bird conservation.

RSVP: https://www.nature.org.au/nsw_environment_leaders_forum?recruiter_id=52133

BIRDLIFE SOUTHERN NSW AGM AND SEMINAR DAY. SATURDAY APRIL 22, 2023

BirdLife Southern NSW are planning their AGM and Seminar Day via Zoom on Earth Day so please save the date. Earth Day is an annual event to demonstrate support for environmental protection. First held on April 22, 1970, it now includes a wide range of events coordinated globally by EarthDay.org including 1 billion people in more than 193 countries. The official theme for 2023 is "Invest in Our Planet".

There will be a brief AGM to provide reports on the work of this branch of BirdLife Australia, followed by several presentations on BirdLife projects. Matt Herring will speak on the "Bitterns in Rice" project. Mick Roderick will speak on the Regent Honeyeater release programme. More details will be published on the Birding Southern NSW website (<https://birdlife.org.au/groups/birdlife-southern-nsw/>).

NSW BIRD ATLASSERS

The NSW Bird Atlassers monitor the birds of New South Wales, the Australian Capital Territory, Lord Howe Island and the western Tasman Sea. Over 600 species have been recorded in this area. They maintain a comprehensive database of bird records in their area of interest and have published three volumes of their data. Apart from their monitoring role, the aims of the NSW Bird Atlassers include promoting the study and conservation of Australian birds and their habitats and promoting the enhancement of the natural environment. If you would like to know more about the activities of this organisation, please contact Ian Bailey on ibails@bigpond.net.au

TREE PLANTING IN THE CAPERTEE VALLEY, 6 -7 MAY 2023

The next planting weekend will be on 6-7 May 2023. Further details will be provided in due course. However, if you have any queries in the interim, or would like to be included in the volunteer email list, please contact Wendy Fox at southernnsw@birdlife.org.au.

THE BIRDLIFE DISCOVERY CENTRE AND GUIDED WALKS

The Discovery Centre is open on Sundays from 10 AM to 3 PM. There will be Bird Walks on the last Sunday of each month @ 10:00 AM (no need to book!). The Discovery Centre is looking for new volunteers. If you are interested, please don't hesitate to contact Wendy at BirdLife Southern NSW by writing to: southernnsw@birdlife.org.au

CONSERVATION NEWS FROM BIRDLIFE AUSTRALIA AND ELSEWHERE

1. Despite challenging conditions, thousands of waterbirds are breeding throughout NSW wetlands. Recent flooding and water flow management in previous years have led to vast numbers of waterbirds, including large nesting colonies of Straw-necked Ibis and Royal Spoonbill, breeding at wetlands throughout the Northern and Central Murray Darling Basin. Although several waterbird species require flooding to breed, the recent extreme floods, that are impacting humans and animals alike, saw large areas of nesting colonies in the MDB go underwater. Researchers from the UNSW Sydney Centre for Ecosystem Science (UNSW-CES), however, have confirmed that many chicks managed to survive at the Booligal and Gayini wetlands in Southern NSW and the Narran Lake and Gwydir wetlands in Northern NSW, with some already taking flight. The Gayini Wetlands, an area of significant conservation importance, is a roughly 88,000-hectare property in the Lowbidgee Floodplain, the largest remaining area of wetlands in the Murrumbidgee in the southern Murray-Darling Basin. The property is owned and managed by the Traditional Custodians of the land, the Nari Nari Tribal Council. Gayini, the Nari Nari word for water, is one of the largest wetland restoration projects in Australia and features a mix of environmental and Indigenous conservation and sustainable farming. The number of birds observed at Gayini include: 10-15,000 breeding pairs of Straw-necked Ibis; 300 breeding pairs of Royal Spoonbill; and 3500 breeding pairs of Pelicans.

2. 2022 NSW Regent Honeyeater Captive Release Community Update #4– 31st January 2023

In late-December and into January, most birds continued to congregate in two main “hot spots” – each of which still supporting large numbers of Musk Lorikeets also taking advantage of available blossom. Having birds remain loyal to these defined areas has allowed the team to have a greater focus on observing the behaviours and interactions among particular birds. The southern hotspot features several species of eucalypts where the birds typically fed in the morning, and a nearby open area dominated by Black Wattle where they hawked and gorged on invertebrates later in the day. The second hotspot, located 500 metres north along a creek line, had a variety of flowering eucalypts, Black Wattle, and small waterholes. Alas there is still no successful nesting activity.

3. **The Victorian Government has decided to allow duck shooting in Victoria** this season though the season has been shortened to four weeks. Birdlife Australia notes that despite three years with more rain, our declining populations of ducks and other waterbirds have not yet recovered after years of prolonged and widespread drought. Long-term monitoring shows that the bounce-back in waterbird numbers has not been as high as would normally be expected and that several good seasons are needed to replenish the losses that have occurred. Ducks need this season to build up numbers, as will the many non-target waterbirds species that will be disturbed or in the line of fire of the shooters' guns.

4. **The NSW government announced last year it had approved the Cumberland Plain conservation plan (CPCP)**, a [major planning policy](#) that will guide the development of four new urban growth areas and up to 73,000 houses from Penrith to Wilton over 35 years. To compensate for the destruction of koala habitat and some of Sydney's rarest bushland, the state has committed to environmental offsets, including a new Georges River koala reserve in the local government areas of Campbelltown and Wollondilly. The proposed reserve would be up to 1,830 hectares. The NSW government plans to establish conservation agreements on much of this land in order to generate biodiversity offset credits. The government would then buy those credits using levies paid by developers to fund the new reserve's ongoing management. But, as the CPCP itself states, most of this future reserve was already in state government ownership. National Parks Association of NSW president Grahame Douglas considers that this is another example of what is referred to as "double dipping" on offsets, where lands already intended for conservation are traded again for the same purpose and to facilitate more clearing. <https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2023/feb/23/just-a-disgrace-experts-condemn-nsw-use-of-public-land-to-offset-huge-housing-expansion>

5. A good news story! **Lord Howe Island Woodhens numbers double in a year** as wildlife bounces back after rodent eradication. <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2023-02-20/lord-howe-islands-wildlife-comeback-after-rodent-control-success/101995784>

6. **Robotic traps and artificial intelligence deployed in trial to control feral cats** in Queensland's wet tropics. Queensland Parks and Wildlife Rangers are trialling grooming traps which use light and image sensing technology to detect movement and artificial intelligence to determine if what it detects is indeed a cat. The trial in Wooroonooran National Park is the first time the "Felixer" traps have been used in a tropical Australian rainforest. <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2023-02-13/robot-trap-ai-feral-cat-control-wet-tropics/101951204>

7. **Another way to get rid of feral cats.** <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2023-01-30/how-wheelie-bins-help-rid-christmas-island-of-cats/101887882>

8. For other stories go to <https://birdlife.org.au/news/>

COWRA WOODLANDS BIRDS PROGRAM

If you would like to take part in the Cowra surveys in 2023, please contact Dr Julian Reid on 0405 922 505 or via email to julian.reid@anu.edu.au. The survey dates are shown below.

Autumn: 15-16 April 2023

Winter: 15-16 July 2023

Spring: 14-15 October 2023

Summer 24: 17-18 Feb 2024

PARRAMATTA RIVER SHOREBIRD COUNTS

Monthly shorebird monitoring by volunteers continues at sites on the Parramatta River, as part of

BirdLife's national Shorebirds Program. Please contact Gerry Duane at gerard@risingdune.com.au to volunteer.

