



The Twitcher

April
2024

CENTRAL COAST GROUP, BIRDING NSW

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

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DATE	ACTIVITIES	LEADER/SPEAKER
23/4/24	Next Meeting: Birding in Sri Lanka Meet: 7.30pm Tuggerah Progress Hall, Anzac Rd, Tuggerah, opposite McDonalds	Alan Stuart
27/4/24	Outing: Bull's Quarry and Mt Penang REMEMBER TO REGISTER Meet: 8.30am Entrance to Tunnel Creek Fire Trail, Woy Woy Rd, Woy Woy	Frik Gautschi 0404 467 097
8/5/24	½ day Outing: Outing Dubbo Gully REMEMBER TO REGISTER Meet: 8.30am Mangrove Mountain shops - Corner of Wiseman's Ferry Rd and Waratah Rd, Mangrove Mountain	Margaret & Kaye Pointer 4374 1163
28/5/24	Next Meeting: Birding in Madagascar Meet: 7.30pm Tuggerah Progress Hall, Anzac Rd, Tuggerah, opposite McDonalds	Dick Jenkin

Note: For all Outings bring your morning tea and lunch. A chair is a good idea.



Tea, coffee, and biscuits will be available at the end of the meeting.
To cover hall hire and refreshments a donation of \$4 would be appreciated.

Tonight's Meeting: Our Speaker Tonight is Alan Stuart. Alan will tell us about a trip to Sri Lanka to explore the history, the culture and of course, the bird life.

Last Month's Meeting: 30 attendees heard a very interesting presentation by Associate Professor Andrea Griffin from the University of Newcastle about monitoring shorebirds in the Hunter River. Andrea explained how the Motus system worked using transmitters on the birds which are detected by fixed station receivers. Although results are very preliminary at this stage some very interesting data has been generated showing where the shorebirds feed and roost. Although the system works very well the rate limiting step is catching the birds and the time the transmitters stay attached to the birds.

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 has now reached over 1200 members. A great job Malcolm Hill! The Facebook page is a huge success allowing bird-related issues to reach over 800 people on the Central Coast.

CAMPS 2024

Fri 3 rd May - Sun 5 th May	West Wyalong	Christina Port	0421 691 317	Ace Caravan Park Cnr Newell Highway and Mid-western Highway West Wyalong (02) 6972 3061
Fri 6 th - Sun 8 th September	Karuah	Graham Nelson	0466 599 278	Big 4 Karuah Jetty Caravan Park 88 Holdom Rd, Karuah 1800 005 552 or (02)4997 5520
Fri 18 th - Sun 20 th October	Harrington	Alan Morris	0418 269 482	Harrington Beach Holiday & Caravan Park 50 Crowdy St, Harrington (02) 6556 1228

CAMPOUT PROCEDURES for Central Coast Group, Birding NSW

- Campouts will be limited to 20 birders.
- The leader is to be contacted prior to booking accommodation.
- Car-pooling may be necessary to enable all cars to park at some locations, otherwise the group will be unable to stop at these good birding areas.
- When there are several cars, please wait when turning off the main route for the following car to catch up.
- It is a custom at campouts to have a "Bird Call" in the BBQ area of the Caravan Park after the day's birding, to check all the birds seen during the day by everyone at the camp. People usually bring a drink and nibbles and socialise. Everyone is encouraged to attend the bird call to make sure no birds seen are omitted from the list for the camp.
- Generally, at campouts the group attends a local club or restaurant for dinner one night and usually has a BBQ meal together another night after bird call. Bird camps are a good time to socialise and get to know one another better.
- Please follow the leader's instructions. They are volunteers and have put a lot of time into organising the camp.
- It is best if everyone can keep up with the leader and stay together, where possible, so that all manage to see the birds and the leader is not constantly waiting for people to catch up.

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.

Saving Stamps: Please keep saving used stamps (on paper, trimmed) to pass to Wendy Mitchell for donation to charity.

WHAT WAS NEW in April and WHAT CAN WE EXPECT in May?

The Terrigal Pelagic has delivered once again with the first record for the Central Coast of a South Polar Skua. The Oriental Cuckoo at Narara was a good record. The Australian Shelduck has remained on the Coast with sighting of a female at South Wyong Treatment Works and the Dairy. Also, a first of the year, at South Wyong were four Pink-eared Ducks along with 6 Shoveler and a male Musk Duck. There have been several sightings of Drongos. The record of six Swift Parrots at Wyee (just out of our LGA) is encouraging.



The spring migrants will have departed with the White-breasted Woodswallows the last to go. The Swift Parrot Surveys commenced on the 20th April and will continue for all of May. The Yellow-faced Honeyeaters, White-naped Honeyeaters and Silvereyes will be migrating north during this period. This is a very spectacular event, so keep an eye out. Autumn brings the possibility of Restless Flycatcher and Scarlet Robin in the Bucketty/ Mangrove Mountain area.

OUTING REPORTS

Outing: March 30

SAN REMO

Leader: Meryl Newton

Cancelled

Camp Out: March 21 - 24

ORANGE

Leader: Doug Hocking

It is 17 years since the Central Coast Birding Group had a Camp Out at Orange, led then by Graeme Catt. Orange is a locality on the Tablelands with the township at 840 metres above sea level. It quickly rises in the south-west to Mt Canobolas at 1400 metres. To the north towards the Macquarie River the country changes to Grassy Box Woodland and mixed Eucalypt and Cypress Pine on the Mullion Range and Ophir locality (700 to 1000 metres). There are several Reservoirs close to town. These habitats have a range of alpine, woodland and water birds.

Our first day was visiting Lake Canobolas, Mt Canobolas and Borenore Caves, the latter on the western fall. At Lake Canobolas it was a clear, cold but calm morning and we were greeted by a large flock of 30-40 Grey Fantails, Striated and Spotted Pardalote, White-plumed, White-naped, Yellow-faced and Blue-faced Honeyeaters. Other birds were Superb Fairy-wren, Red Wattlebird, White-browed Scrubwren, Red-browed Finch, Pied Butcherbird, Rufous Whistler, Grey Shrike-thrush, White-throated Treecreeper, Eastern Yellow Robin, Eastern Spinebill, Leaden Flycatcher, Australasian Darter, Little Black and Little Pied Cormorant, Great Cormorant, Pacific Black Duck, Grey Teal, White-faced Heron, Eurasian Coot, Australasian Grebe, Silver Gull, Welcome Swallow, Kookaburra. There were also common birds that were widespread during the whole camp - these included Crimson and Eastern Rosellas, King Parrot, Sulphur-crested Cockatoo, Rainbow Lorikeet, Galah, Pied Currawong, White Ibis, Common Starling, Australian Raven, Common Myna and House Sparrow. Spotted Doves were also seen at various locations.

At the Lake we were joined by Rosemary Stapleton, Secretary of the Orange Field Naturalist Club. We then drove up the Towac Valley (reputedly one of the best apple growing areas in Australia) and saw Black-shouldered Kite, Wood Duck, Crested Pigeon, Noisy Miner, Little Corella, Noisy Friarbird, Common Bronzewing, Musk and Little Lorikeets and Grey Butcherbird. We then drove up Mt Canobolas and had morning tea at Federal Falls Picnic Area that is at about 1200 metres. Rosemary Stapleton gave us an excellent overview of the unique flora and fauna of Mt Canobolas Conservation Area, its conservation value and how it is being managed. In 2017, 70 per cent of the area was burnt by wild fire. A pair of Flame Robins gave us excellent views. We also saw a Wedge-tailed Eagle and heard a Grey Currawong and Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo. Before leaving Canobolas, we drove to the Lookout on top of the Mountain at 1400 metres. It has wonderful views in all directions.



We then went to the Borenore Caves Karst Conservation Reserve, (700 metres) on the Boree Creek for lunch. On the way 3 Little Eagles were seen. It should be noted that the Borenore Caves Area is famous for its marble. Birds seen were White-throated Treecreeper, Common Blackbird, Brown-headed Honeyeater, Female Satin Flycatcher, White-naped Honeyeater, Restless Flycatcher, Willie Wagtail. We had Bird Call at 5:00 pm and noted a Brown Goshawk that flew over the Camp the day before.

On Saturday we headed north and visited the South Mullion Reserve first and saw Yellow and Striated Thornbills, White-throated Gerygone, White-eared Honeyeater, Fantail Cuckoo, Rufous Whistler, 2 Turquoise Parrots flew over, Masked Lapwing, Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike, Nankeen Kestrel, White-winged Chough and Red-rumped Parrot. Our next stop was Mullion Range State Conservation Area – highlights here were a pair of Scarlet Robins, Weebill, Brown, Striated, Yellow and Buff-romped Thornbill and Brown-headed Honeyeater. Next stop was the 4th Crossing at Summer Hill Creek for morning tea. Here there were Brown Honeyeater, White-throated Gerygone, Yellow-faced Honeyeater, White-browed Scrubwren and on a ridge overlooking the creek in mixed Pine and Eucalypt a Red-capped Robin which gave us the 3 Robins for the Camp Out.



Three Robins
Graham Nelson

We then went to Ophir District, the site where gold was first discovered in Australia (1851) on Summer Hill Creek, for lunch. On the way we saw a flock of Little Ravens and Noisy Friarbirds, the latter at the old Ophir Cemetery where the "Material meets the Spiritual" - noted on the sign. There were few birds at lunch, however we saw King Parrot, White-throated Treecreeper, Grey Fantail, Dusky Moorhen, Eurasian Coot, Silvereye, Brown Thornbill, White-throated Gerygone, Pacific Black Duck and Red-browed Finch. On the way back to Orange through Mullion Creek, we stopped at another site in the Mullion State Conservation Area that was very quiet for birds but we saw Australian Raven, White-throated Treecreeper and Grey Shrike-thrush.

Cilla Kinross, Associate Professor at the Charles Sturt University joined us for Bird Call. Cilla, who is very active in Bird Data Surveys, gave us an excellent overview of birding in the Orange Area. Cilla also runs the noted Peregrine Falcon Cam on the University Water Tower. We had a very pleasant meal at the Loc Sing, an iconic Chinese Restaurant in Orange.

On Sunday it was time to visit 2 Reservoirs and particularly Spring Creek Reservoir, a well-known birding spot where a total of 49 species were seen. The highlight for us all were the 3 Blue-billed Ducks and 5 Great-crested Grebes. Other birds seen were Hoary-headed Grebe, Musk Duck, Black-fronted Dotterel, Australian Reed-warbler, Tree Martin, Dusky Woodswallow, Double-barred Finch, Yellow-rumped Thornbill, Australian Hobby, to name a few. We had morning tea at Gosling Creek Reservoir where we met up with Dr Bernie Huxtable who has been involved with the Field Naturalist, Birding and Conservation issues in Orange for many years. This is an area where Superb Parrots regularly visit and a site where nest boxes have been erected in the large Eucalypts. Unfortunately, they were not there except for a single bird brief flyover and another bird softly quarrelling high in the trees. Thirty years ago, Superb Parrots were very rarely seen in the Orange area, however, on the recce, we saw 28 at this spot. They regularly breed here.

Heading towards a Dam on Hiney Road a Swamp Harrier was observed and on the dam there were Australasian Shovelers, Hardheads and a single Great Eastern Egret. Also seen here were Pink-ears the day before the Camp and Di and Robyn also saw them on the way home at the dam on Pretty Plains Road. We then went back to Gosling Creek Reservoir and walked along the water's edge where we saw 170 Eurasian Coots, 40 Little Black Cormorants, Purple Swamphen, and a very prominent and easy to see male Musk Duck. We then went to the Orange Botanic Gardens for lunch and a short walk and saw White-winged Chough, and a pond with common water birds of the area. A highlight for me is the Grassy Box Woodland Regeneration Area. This habitat was once wide spread on the western slopes but is now down to 10 percent of the original area due to agriculture development – no wonder the birds are struggling!

Twenty-seven Birders were on the camp and we welcomed Lyn Callaghan and Margaret Vallance both members of Central Coast Birders for their first Camp Out and Natalie (Norma Ikin's daughter). I would like to thank Graham Nelson, who also did the recce in November. Without Graham the camp wouldn't have run as smoothly and have been as productive and informative. We saw 104 species.

1/2-day Outing: 10 April

MUNMORAH STATE RECREATION AREA

Leader: Christina Port

A much cooler, blustery southerly 50km wind did not deter the 14 keen participants from this outing but the birds were not as happy. We met at Birdie Beach and saw Brush Turkey, Willie Wagtail, Osprey and Magpie before travelling to the Moonee Beach walk. Yellow-faced Honeyeater, New Holland Honeyeater, Little Wattlebird and Eastern Spinebill were observed along the track. In the distance a Pied Cormorant flew over the ocean.

Down at Frazer Beach, we were more sheltered and Silver Gulls and Crested Tern were over the water. Welcome Swallows flew through, and a Martin sp. was seen over the lagoon. As we ate morning tea, Superb Fairywrens and White-browed Scrubwrens were hopping around. A noisy group of New Holland Honeyeaters gave great views, Lewin's Honeyeater, Australian Raven, Eastern Whipbird and Silvereye were recorded in numbers on their winter migration. We also had White-bellied Sea-Eagles soaring around. Saw a total of four for the day, in varied stages of development.

Our next stop was a windblown Wybung Head. There were no birds until Gabrielle spotted a Collared Sparrowhawk flying below and a distant White-faced Heron.



Back to Birdie Beach and a walk to the Camping Area had Brown Thornbill, Eastern Yellow Robin, Grey Fantail, and a Black-shouldered Kite hunkered down spotted by Graham. A Juvenile Sea-Eagle flying low here too.

A low bird count with about thirty birds seen but it did not seem to matter. A very pleasant morning with great company.

BIRTHDAY BREAKFAST ON 8 APRIL

Frik Gautschi

Coleen Southall and Christina Port recently reached milestone birthdays and this was duly celebrated at Water's Edge, The Entrance, where twenty-three birders filled half the café on a beautiful sunny day in this popular location.

Unfortunately, Coleen couldn't attend due to a mishap only a few days prior to the event, the incident apparently leaving her in much pain but fortunately not too serious. We sincerely hope all is well again by now. Nevertheless the party proceeded with her blessing and good food and a great time was had by all. Birthday cards were signed by everyone at the gathering and Coleen's reached her a day or two later. And very special cards: they were prints of our very own Leonie Loewe's water colours of local birds! Although residing in our parent-group's birding area, Coleen has been a regular at our Coastal outings and accordingly considered to be 'one-of-us'!

Christina continues to be one of our foremost leaders, making an enormous contribution with scheduling outings and camp-outs (many of which she leads) and, even more importantly, ever sharing her knowledge and photographs with us personally and on Facebook.

SPECIES LIST

MARCH 2024

Bird names used and the order in which they occur are in accord with the IOC World Birdlist Version 11.1.2021

First Migrant arrival *	Last Migrant departure **	LN = biggest number since January	OW = Over-winter
Musk Duck	1	16-17,27/3	Tuggerah WWTP Allan Benson
Australian Shelduck	1	8-9/3/24	2 on 16-17/3, Tuggerah WWTP Guy Dutson
Australian Shelduck	F	27/3/2024	Tuggerah WWTP Allan Benson
Australian Shoveler	4	1-17/3/24	Chittaway Bay Andrew Robinson
Australian Shoveler	6	24-27/3/24	Tuggerah WWTP Allan Benson
Pink-eared Duck	4	27/3/2024	Tuggerah WWTP Allan Benson
Brown Quail	9	10/3/2024	Mangrove Mountain Store David Schuemaker
Brown Quail	2	23/3/2024	Magenta Shores Jan Mohandas
Australian Grebe	A+J	28/3/2024	Dairy Swamp, CCW Tuggerah John Day
Hoary-headed Grebe	6	16-30/3/24	Dairy Swamp, CCW Tuggerah Mel Stratton
Pheasant Coucal	2	1-26/3/24	x4 Central Coast Wetlands, Tuggerah Andrew Robinson
Eastern Koel	J	29/3/2024	fed by Red Wattle Bird, Lake Munmorah Meryl Newton
Oriental Cuckoo	AM	14/3/2024	Narara Guy Dutson
Fan-tailed Cuckoo	F	11/3/2024	Tathra Taila HSD, Mangrove Mtn Kaye Pointer
Brush Cuckoo	HC	27/3/2024	Mogo Camp, Yengo NP, Bucketty Alan Morris
Emerald Dove	J	11/3/2024	North Avoca, into care Belinda Cohen
Brush Bronzewing	3	20-23/3/24	Magenta Shores Meryl Newton
Peaceful Dove	2	19-27/3/24	x3 Tathra Taila HSD, Mangrove Mtn Kaye Pointer
Bar-shouldered Dove	2	1/3/2024	Bulls Quarry, Brisbane Water NP Jan Mohandas
Topknot Pigeon	200	31/3/2024	Ourimbah Andrew Robinson
White-throated Needletail	40	4/3/2024	Parkes Rd, Kincumber Rhelmade Hebbard
White-throated Needletail	200+	8/3/2024	Long Jetty Andrew Robinson
Buff-banded Rail	1	1/3/2024	McPherson Rd Swamp, Tuggerah Leeanne Lemke
Buff-banded Rail	1	16/3/2024	Chittaway Andrew Robinson
Black-winged Stilt	33	1/3/2024	Tuggerah Bay Saltmarsh Andrew Robinson
Black-winged Stilt	47	16/3/2024	Tuggerah WWTP Andrew Robinson
Bar-tailed Godwit	10	3/3/2024	The Entrance Channel Andrew Robinson
Red-capped Plover	12	15/3/2024	The Entrance Channel Andrew Robinson
Red-capped Plover	10	21/3/2024	Pelican Point, Norah Head Allan Benson
Double-banded Plover	1	21/3/2024	Pelican Point, Norah Head Allan Benson
Black-fronted Dotterel	16	16 & 24/3	Tuggerah WWTP Andrew Robinson

Ruddy Turnstone	12	15/3/2024	Soldiers Point, Norah Head	Andrew Robinson
Red-necked Stint	28	15/3/2024	Soldiers Point, Norah Head	Andrew Robinson
Caspian Tern	19	27/3/2024	The Entrance Channel	Andrew Robinson
Little Penguin (leucistic)	1	9/3/2024	Terrigal Haven	Nick Carson
Shy Albatross	1	23/3/2024	Terrigal Pelagic	Andrew Robinson
Wilson's Storm-Petrel	13	23/3/2024	Terrigal Pelagic	Andrew Robinson
Wedge-tailed Shearwater	50	23/3/2024	Terrigal Pelagic	Andrew Robinson
Short-tailed Shearwater	5	23/3/2024	Terrigal Pelagic	Andrew Robinson
Flesh-footed Shearwater	40	23/3/2024	Terrigal Pelagic	Andrew Robinson
Pomarine Jaeger	3	23/3/2024	Terrigal Pelagic	Andrew Robinson
South Polar Skua	1	23/3/2024	Terrigal Pelagic	Andrew Robinson
Australian Gannet *	6	23/3/2024	Terrigal Pelagic	Andrew Robinson
Black-necked Stork	2+2Y	4-19/3/24	McPherson Rd Swp/Central Coast Wetlds	Rick Worthy
Black-necked Stork	2	1-12/3/24	Tuggerah NR, Tuggerah Bay	Andrew Robinson
White-faced Heron	17	21/3/2024	Central Coast Wetlands, Tuggerah	Carole Carpenter
Yellow-billed Spoonbill	1	30-31/3/24	McPherson Rd Swamp, Tuggerah	Mel Stratton
Eastern Osprey	1	2/3/2024	Central Coast Wetlands, Tuggerah	Andrew Robinson
Eastern Osprey	1	21/3/2024	Pelican Point, Norah Head	Allan Benson
Eastern Osprey	1	21/3/2024	The Entrance Bridge	Allan Benson
Black-shouldered Kite	2	7-24/3/24	Central Coast Wetlands, Tuggerah	Bronwyn McCarthy
Black-shouldered Kite	2	11/3/2024	Mount Penang Gardens, Kariong	Rob Montgomery
Black-shouldered Kite	1	20/3/2024	Bay Village, Bateau Bay	Daniel McKeon
Square-tailed Kite	1	4/3/2024	2 on 16/3, Henry Kendall G'ns, Wyoming	Rob Montgomery
Square-tailed Kite	1	10/3/2024	Everglades Golf Course, Umina	Andrew Robinson
Square-tailed Kite	1	12/3/2024	McPherson Rd Swamp, Tuggerah	Graham Nelson
Square-tailed Kite	1	19/3/2024	Mingara Wetlands	Graham Nelson
Square-tailed Kite	1	19/3/2024	Aldinga Drive,Wamberal	Ashley Mullahey
Wedge-tailed Eagle	1	6-27/3/24	x5 Tathra Taila HSD, Mangrove Mtn	Kaye Pointer
Wedge-tailed Eagle	1	9/3/2024	Central Coast Wetlands, Tuggerah	Leeanne Lemke
Wedge-tailed Eagle	1	19/3/2024	Wyong Milk Factory, Alison Rd, Wyong	Graham Nelson
Little Eagle	1	17/3/2024	Rumbalara Reserve, Gosford	Greg Shaw
Grey Goshawk	1	7/3/2024	Ourimbah	Andrew Robinson
Grey Goshawk	1	18/3/2024	Tumbi Umbi	Shane Seczkowski
Grey Goshawk	1	25/3/2024	Ourimbah RTA Reserve	Tony Palliser
Brown Goshawk	2	14-29/3/24	x4 Tathra Taila HSD, Mangrove Mtn	Kaye Pointer
Collared Sparrowhawk	1	2/3/2024	Murrumbung HSD, Mardi	Carole Carpenter
Azure Kingfisher	1	9/3/2024	Coles Carpark, Toukley Shops	Leeanne Lemke
Sacred Kingfisher **	2	10-11/3/24	Mount Penang Gardens, Kariong	Gary Jackson
Sacred Kingfisher **	A+J	12-13/3/24	Tathra Taila HSD, Mangrove Mtn	Kaye Pointer
Rainbow Bee-eater	60	6/3/2024	Mangrove Dam Carpark	John Carpenter
Yellow-tailed BI Cockatoo	20	18/3/2024	Central Mangrove	Kaye Pointer
Glossy Black Cockatoo	1	2,8 & 10/3	Murrumbung HSD, Mardi	John Carpenter
Glossy Black Cockatoo	2	10/3/2024	John Whiteway Drive, Gosford	Elaine Elliott
Glossy Black Cockatoo	1	25-29/3/24	Henry Kendall Gardens, Wyoming	Ann Juan
Glossy Black Cockatoo	2	22-29/3/24	Murrumbung HSD, Mardi	Carole Carpenter
Gang Gang Cockatoo	6	6/3/2024	Bucketty Wall	Carole Carpenter
Gang Gang Cockatoo	2	29/3/2024	The Watagan NP (within CC LGA)	Andrew Robinson
Sooty Owl	HC	8/3/2024	Henry Kendall Gardens, Wyoming	Rob Montgomery
Southern Boobook	HC	19/3/2024	Murrumbung HSD, Mardi	John Carpenter
Powerful Owl	HC	25/3/2024	0030 hrs Murrumbung HSD, Mardi	John Carpenter
Australian Hobby	1	4/3/2024	Tathra Taila HSD, Mangrove Mtn	Kaye Pointer
Nankeen Kestrel	1	10/3/2024	Central Coast Wetlands, Tuggerah	Biggles Solander
Nankeen Kestrel	1	12/3/2024	Mardi near Westfield	Graham Nelson
Brown Falcon	1	4-11/3/24	Tathra Taila HSD, Mangrove Mtn	Kaye Pointer
Little Lorikeet	5,3	5/3/2024	x2 Tathra Taila HSD, Mangrove Mtn	Kaye Pointer
Little Lorikeet	12	6/3/2924	Mogo Camp, Yengo NP Bucketty	Kaye Pointer
Little Lorikeet	2	29/3/2024	The Watagan NP (within CC LGA)	Andrew Robinson

Musk Lorikeet	4	12/3/2024	Tathra Taila HSD, Mangrove Mtn	Kaye Pointer
Musk Lorikeet	15	28/3/2024	Westfield, Tuggerah	Margaret Pointer
Superb Lyrebird	2	26/3/2024	Mogo Camp, Yengo NP, Bucketty	Alan Morris
Scarlet Honeyeater	M,F,J	1/3/2024	Tathra Taila HSD, Mangrove Mtn	Kaye Pointer
Yellow-tufted Honeyeater	6	7/3/2024	Mangrove Dam Access Road, Kulnura	Gary Jackson
Spiny-cheeked Honeyeater	1	16/3/2024	Central Coast Wetlands, Tuggerah	Andrew Robinson
Brown-headed Honeyeater	4	6/3/2024	Mogo Camp, Yengo NP, Bucketty	Kaye Pointer
Yellow-rumped Thornbill	7	31/3/2024	Mangrove Mountain	Andrew Robinson
Varied Sittella	8+	2-12/3/24	x3 Tathra Taila HSD, Mangrove Mtn	Kaye Pointer
Varied Sittella	4	4/3/2024	Murrumbung HSD ,Mardi	John Carpenter
Varied Sittella	4	15-16/3/24	Ourimbah Creek Rd, Ourimbah	Darren Earnshaw
Crested Shrike-tit	2	26/3/2024	Mogo Camp, Yengo NP, Bucketty	Allan Benson
White-bellied Cuckoo-shrike	3	30/3/2024	Woy Woy Tunnel Tk, Brisbane Water NP	Julie Peksis
Dusky Woodswallow	2	6/3/2024	Mogo Camp, Yengo NP, Bucketty	Margaret Pointer
Rufous Fantail **	1	12/3/2024	Ourimbah Creek Rd, Ourimbah	Darren Earnshaw
Rufous Fantail **	1	21/3/2024	Tathra Taila HSD, Mangrove Mtn	Margaret Pointer
Rufous Fantail **	1	21/3/2024	Murrumbung HSD, Mardi	Carole Carpenter
Leaden Flycatcher	F	19/3/2024	Kincumba Mountain Reserve	Barbara Melville
Spangled Drongo *	Im	22/3/2024	Tathra Taila HSD, Mangrove Mtn	Margaret Pointer
Spangled Drongo *	1	29/3/2024	Lakes Beach, Budgewoi	Allan Benson
Jacky Winter	2	14 & 28/3	Tathra Taila HSD, Mangrove Mtn	Kaye Pointer
Rose Robin	AM	10/3/2024	Ourimbah Creek RTA Reserve	David Shuemaker
Double-barred Finch	2A,2Y	4/3/2024	San Remo	Meryl Newton
Double-barred Finch	2	9/3/2024	Tathra Taila HSD, Mangrove Mtn	Kaye Pointer
Bassian Thrush	1	4/2/2024	Tathra Taila HSD, Mangrove Mtn	Kaye Pointer

Breeding and some other records - March

Black-shouldered Kite: 2 Tathra Taila HSD Man. Mtn 2/3, 8/3, 3 on 29/3 (KP), 1 Mangrove Mountain 31/3 (ARo); **Grey Goshawk:** 1 Dairy Swamp CCW 18/2 (MTy), 1 x3 Tathra Taila HSD Man.Mtn 13-31/3 (KPo); **Glossy Black Cockatoo:** 2 Tathra Taila HSD Man. Mtn 10 & 29/3 (KPo); **Little Wattlebird:** A+N Tathra Taila HSD Man. Mtn (KPo); **Mistletoe Bird:** A+J Tathra Taila HSD Man. Mtn 30/3 (KPo); **Red-browed Finch:** with nesting material Tathra Taila HSD Man, Mtn 25/3 (MPo).
 Good Birding!

TWITCH LIST April 2024

Graham Nelson	210	Julie Peksis	153	Diana Hogan	121
Allan Benson	192	Chris Jamieson	147	Gabrielle Rees	120
Carole Carpenter	179	Margaret Pointer	135	Doug Hocking	117
John Carpenter	176	Leonie Loewe	131	Paul Shelley	114
Christina Port	175	Daniel McKeon	129	Michael Scobie	110
Kaye Pointer	169	Rowena Wallace	125	Frik Gautschi	91
Krystyna Lonergan	164	Robyn Price	121	Judy Clark	80

Graham Nelson still maintains a solid lead for the Twitch Trophy on 210 species with the nearest birder, Allan Benson, on 192.

BIRDATA SURVEYS YTD 2024

Graham Nelson	110	Robyn Price	15	Doug Hocking	3
Alan Stuart	90	Leeanne Lemke	14	David Schuemaker	3
Allan Benson	69	C Clutterbuck	8	Daniel McKeon	2
Nick Carson	18	Guy Dutson	8	M & K Pointer	2
Frik Gautschi	15	Michael Scobie	6		

For March 110 surveys were completed, compared with 89 in 2023. YTD 2024, 442 surveys have been completed. This is a significant improvement on 2023 where 345 survey were entered. Graham Nelson has maintained a good lead for the Alan Morris Trophy but Alan Stuart is on his heels.

We would like to see more birders putting in more surveys. Birddata is one way, as a birder, you can make a contribution to bird conservation.

SOUTH WYONG SEWAGE TREATMENT WORKS

March Survey

The 7 observers hit the jackpot this survey. A female Australian Shelduck was still present along with 3 pairs of Shovelers. As well, a male Musk Duck was observed. However, the exciting find was four Pink-eared Ducks - the first for 2024. Total count was 43 species (which is about average) and 210 waterfowl which is a lower count than normal.

The survey takes place the Wednesday after our meeting. Meet at the Ibis Rd entrance at 9.30am.

Vale of Peter Roberts – a founding member of Birding NSW

(3 June 1928 – 3 March 2024)

Tom Wilson

Peter was one of the drivers behind the establishment of the Club. In the mid-1960s, Peter, by then already a keen bird-watcher, was an active member of the Ornithological Section of the Royal Zoological Society. This body met regularly with the NSW section of the RAOU at a time when lots of new knowledge about the birds of Sydney was being presented and people were keen to find out more and see for themselves. Out of these meetings grew the idea of a separate and independent organisation that could organise more frequent field days and publish a birding periodical.

In April 1966 Peter chaired the RZS Ornithological Section and was also an active member of the NSW Gould League of Bird Lovers (now known as the Gould League). He raised the possibility of the League providing funds to form a Senior Division (referencing the Bird Observers Club of Victoria as a model). The League donated \$200 to form a senior division that could organize field days (up to nine per year being envisaged) and publish a bi-monthly magazine.

Peter was deeply involved with the new group in its early days as President, editor of the Club's publication "*Birds*", and a Field Day Organizer. When the RAOU stopped having state branches, the existing members came across and the new organisation became the NSW Field Ornithologists Club. The Club acted immediately to call a Meeting, at which a new constitution (in which Peter was a driving force in drafting...hence his interest in AGM procedures) and the new name were voted in. At that moment, the club that is now Birding NSW officially came into being.

Peter remained active with the new Club and served in a range of committee positions over the years, including as Vice-President (1983-87) and then President for two years. Between 1993 and 1999, Peter was the editor of the Club's journal "*Australian Birds*". Although not on the committee in later years, his interest in the club continued and he was a regular at Club Meetings. Peter was made a life member in 1993 in recognition of his involvement as a founding member and his contribution to birding in and around Sydney.

As well as being a founder of the Club, Peter will also be remembered for his excellent volume "*Sydney Birds and where to find them*", first published in 1993 and refreshed in 2009. In the days before eBird and digital birding, this book was invaluable when planning a day out in the Sydney region.

Rob Benson ticks his 800th bird

Congratulations to Rob Benson for recording his 800th bird on a recent trip to the Britannia Seamounts located about 200 km southwest of the Gold Coast but in NSW waters. His 800th bird was the New Caledonia Storm-Petrel (aka Stripey). These were constantly around the boat at the seamount with a maximum of three seen at the one time. His 801st bird was the Band-rumped Storm-Petrel.

Superficially, these look like a Wilson's Storm-Petrel without the foot projection but they behave totally differently. Whereas a Wilson's pitter-patters across the waves, the Band-rumped flies over the waves behaving more like a petrel.



New Caledonia Storm-Petrel

There 40-50 birds behind the boat all the time, mostly Grey-faced Petrels, Flesh-footed Shearwaters and Wilson's Storm-Petrels with a fair number of Tahiti Petrels. There were many sightings of Kermadec Petrels.



Band-rumped Storm-Petrel

Other highlights included White-necked Petrel, Gould's Petrel, Lesser Frigatebird, White Tern, Red-footed Booby, Sooty Tern and Common Noddy. A total of 27 Species were observed.

Terrigal Pelagic March 23, 2024

Andrew Robinson

We departed at 6:20am in what would have to be the calmest conditions experienced for a Terrigal pelagic; a small SE swell and somewhat worryingly little or no wind forecast throughout the day.

It was a rather uneventful trip to the shelf that included small numbers of the below *Ardenna* species, a few juvenile Gannets, a distant Pomarine Jaeger or 2, and prior to reaching the shelf, several Wilson's Storm-Petrel.

About halfway out we encountered a pod (40+) of Short-beaked Common Dolphin that provided excellent close views and some nice photo opportunities.

Arriving at the shelf just before 9am we made our way to the 300+m mark and commenced the first of 3 drifts. This was slow going with only Wedge-tailed and Flesh-footed Shearwaters and small numbers of Wilson's Storm-Petrel being attracted to the slick. Nearing 11am and with the lack of wind hampering our cause, the call was made to motor further out in the hope of more activity. This proved even less productive though a moderate sized pod of Off-shore Bottlenose-nosed Dolphin kept everyone entertained.

Soon after, we returned to the start of the shelf slope for a final drift which was again slow going. However, just as we were getting ready to try our luck on the return trip, we were again joined by a large (more than 100 individuals), slow-moving pod of Offshore Bottlenose-nosed Dolphin that showed plenty of interest in the boat, providing fantastic views in the process. At one point it seemed we were surrounded, and it was hard to know where to look. Some distant Humpback Whales were also observed for a short time.

Already content with the cetacean action on offer, a rather stunning Pomarine Jaeger in breeding plumage joined the party as it alternated between loafing on the water and some close passes of the boat. Excitement levels then went up a level when just as we were about to head for shore, a Striped Marlin, made its presence known by performing a series of aerial displays (is there a term for this?) no more than 25m from the boat. Many on board managed good photos, with back of camera shots revealing an attached remora for good measure.

We figured this was about as good as it was going to get and reluctantly began the return trip, though still with hope of something big. The first half of the return was monotonous, though reasonable views of Inshore Bottlenose Dolphin were welcome. Soon after though, just as we were resigned to no new birds being added, it happened.

Two dark plumaged birds, one noticeably larger, were seen star-board side at mid-range. Accordingly, we shifted course and slowed, realising it was a Skua species as we neared. The bird's pale head, neck, chest and flanks were immediately apparent and a cautious call of South Polar Skua was made before it took to the wing allowing views of extensive upper wing flashes and a better comparison to be made between pale flanks and significantly darker underwings.



South Polar Skua
Daniel McKeon

Thankfully 'our' bird, after harassing the hapless Flesh-footed Shearwater for a short period, resettled on the water and we were able to slowly reverse towards it for closer views, at which point the bird's smaller build / bill became even more apparent – at least when recalling a Brown Skua.

Staying with the SPS for half an hour we were even afforded a few more close passes that allowed for plenty of in-flight shots and some very happy birders.

This was the latest finish to a Terrigal pelagic yet – though you get that when such a crippler is seen 10-miles from shore. The South Polar Skua was a lifer for most on board as well as a first record for the Central Coast, NSW and the 46th species recorded on these trips, this being the 20th edition.

As pelagic birders are fond of saying it only takes 'one bird' and just like that an enjoyable, but slow (low diversity / abundance) day had become an outstanding and very memorable one. The incredible run of Terrigal pelagics can't last forever but we'll bloody well take it while it does.

As always, a huge thanks to skipper Paul Minto and Dean Purcell and to everyone that joined us – great company it must be said. In total 11 species were seen beyond The Haven with 5 of those Tubenoses, As follows:

Shy Albatross – 1, Wilson's Storm Petrel – 13 (6), Wedge-tailed Shearwater – 50+ (15)

Short-tailed Shearwater – 5 (4), Flesh-footed Shearwater – 40+ (12), SOUTH POLAR SKUA – 1. Pomarine Jaeger – 3 (1), Crested Tern – 1, Silver Gull – 60 (50), Australasian Gannet – 6 (2), Australian Pelican – 1.

*Parenthesis denotes the maximum number of that species seen at any one time, while uppercase is considered a notable sighting.

Also seen:

-Unidentified 'small-brown' passerine that flushed from the top of the boat while at the shelf – awaiting photos in the hope of confirming ID.

-Excellent cetacean action with moderate / large pods of Common Inshore / Offshore Bottlenose and Short-beaked Common Dolphin.

-Distant tail-slapping Humpback Whales (2).

-Striped Marlin.

TANYA PLIBERSEK REJECTS TOONDAH HARBOUR PROJECT OVER IMPACT ON GLOBALLY SIGNIFICANT WETLANDS

Lisa Cox

The environment and water minister, Tanya Plibersek, has announced she will reject an apartment and retail development on an internationally important wetland at Queensland's Moreton Bay.

Plibersek said on Tuesday she would refuse Walker Corporation's Toondah Harbour project – first proposed eight years ago and opposed by a long-running community campaign backed by scientists and conservationists – because it would have an unacceptable impact on the Ramsar site.

"I have made my proposed decision, which is to protect Moreton Bay from unacceptable impacts from a proposed development," Plibersek said. "These wetlands are rare, unique and important to prevent the extinction of animals like the eastern curlew and loggerhead turtle.

"My proposed decision says that we can't destroy portions of this internationally important wetland."

The proposed decision, if finalised, would bring to an end an almost decade-long battle by environment groups and residents, who have fought to protect the wetland. The site is a habitat for migratory birds, including the critically endangered Eastern Curlew, which uses the wetland to recuperate and feed after its annual migration from the northern hemisphere. Moreton Bay is also habitat for dolphins, dugongs and several species of marine turtles. The site is protected under the Ramsar convention, an international treaty established to halt the global loss of wetlands.

Walker Corporation proposed transforming the area into a residential and commercial complex with more than 3,000 apartments, shops and a 200-berth marina. The development would have carved out more than 50 hectares of the Ramsar site.

The project has been controversial after the former environment minister Josh Frydenberg went against the initial

advice of his department in 2016 that the development was “clearly unacceptable” because of the impact it would have on the wetland’s ecological character. Frydenberg sent the project to the next stage of the assessment process, a decision that was contrary to advice from the attorney general’s department, which warned it could put Australia in breach of its international obligations.

Documents released to Guardian Australia under freedom of information in 2020 showed the former minister had considered removing the protections from an area of the wetland after he was lobbied by Walker Corporation.

The chief executive of Birdlife Australia, Kate Millar, said the organisation and community campaigners who had fought to protect the site for a decade said they were thrilled “Plibersek has proposed to overturn this completely inappropriate development at such a spectacular and internationally significant site”.

“We thank everyone who’s worked so hard to get to this milestone. We also thank Minister Plibersek for listening to us and understanding the importance of these wetlands to the world’s birds and the local community. “While we welcome this proposal to reject, this proposal should never have progressed as far as it has.”

The Australian Conservation Foundation said the announcement was a “landmark decision for nature and people”.



“Walker Group’s marina and high-rise apartment plan would have destroyed irreplaceable feeding grounds for migratory birds, a big chunk of the Ramsar wetland and mature eucalypts that are home to koalas and other wildlife,” ACF’s chief executive, Kelly O’Shanassy, said.

“This draft decision is a testament to people power. More than 24,500 people have directly contacted Minister Plibersek, urging her to reject this proposal.

“Thousands have taken to the streets calling on the Albanese government to save Toondah.”

O’Shanassy said the development was an example of why Australia needed strong new nature laws and an independent environment protection agency that allowed for a “fast no” to projects with unacceptable environmental impacts.

“The truth is, a proposal for a massive real estate project on a Ramsar wetland should have been rejected when the department recommended that to [the] then minister Frydenberg in 2015,” she said.

Plibersek’s proposed decision finds that in addition to having an unacceptable impact on the Ramsar site, the development would have an unacceptable impact on a range of threatened and migratory species, including loggerhead and green turtles, the eastern curlew and the grey-tailed tattler. It would also have a significant impact on dugongs, dolphins and other shorebirds.

She said the proposed decision would be exhibited for public comment before she makes a final decision.

She said she had formally advised Walker Corporation and the company had 10 business days to respond to the proposed decision.

Walker Corporation said in a statement it respected the minister’s proposed decision and would take time to review and understand the reasons behind it.

The company said it would then work to “see what opportunities might exist to mitigate or ameliorate the environmental concerns that the department has raised to ensure we provide the best opportunity for this important project to proceed to deliver housing, jobs and new state government infrastructure whilst ensuring world’s best environmental practice”.

In a statement, the Redlands city council said it was “disappointed” by the decision and will write a submission to Plibersek reiterating its continued support for the project.