



The Twitcher

June
2025

CENTRAL COAST GROUP, BIRDING NSW

Editorial Team: Allan Benson (0457 458 274) Wendy Mitchell (0423 388 529) & Robyn Price Volume 20, No. 6

DATE	ACTIVITIES	LEADER/SPEAKER
24/06/25	Next Meeting: Bush Birds coping with Climate Change Meet: 7.30pm Tuggerah Progress Hall, Anzac Rd, Tuggerah, opposite Hungry Jacks	Janet Gardner
28/06/25	Outing: Gosford Waterways Meet: 8.30am Gosford Regional Art Gallery, Adelaide St, East Gosford	Graham Nelson 0466 599 278
9/07/25	½ day Outing: Central Coast Wetlands / McPherson Rd Swamp Meet: 8.30am Central Coast Wetlands carpark, South Tacoma Rd, Tuggerah	Leeanne Lemke 0412 233 594
22/07/25	Next Meeting: Bhutan Meet: 7.30pm Tuggerah Progress Hall, Anzac Rd, Tuggerah, opposite Hungry Jacks Note: For all Outings bring your morning tea and lunch. A chair is a good idea.	John Rawson



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: Janet Gardner is our speaker tonight; she will be explaining how bush birds are coping with climate change. Janet has spent the last 40 years working as a biologist and ornithologist for a range of state and federal government agencies and in the university sector, most recently based at the ANU as an ARC Future Fellow where she led a research group investigating the effects of climate change on our avifauna, work she will talk about tonight. She is currently an Adjunct Research Scientist at CSIRO Environment.

We are all aware of the increasing frequency of extreme weather events such as heatwaves, which are a signal of contemporary climate change and harm birds and other wildlife. However, we know little about how temperature extremes affect the survival and persistence of natural populations. This makes it difficult to predict how they will respond to ongoing climate change, and what we might do to manage this. In this talk I will describe our detailed study of Jacky Winters living in semi-arid mallee woodland in South Australia, showing how individual birds respond to temperature extremes and the costs of heat exposure on survival and reproduction. Based on what we learned from Jacky Winters, we then analysed bird banding data collected over decades to show how climate affects mortality in populations of bush birds in semi-arid sites in NSW. Last, I will show how we used this information to project survival patterns to the end of the century.

Last Month's Meeting: Alan Stuart provided a very professional and fascinating presentation to the 31 attendees. He presented 20 years of data of boat surveys of Port Stephens. This noted the decline in shorebirds over this period. Interestingly, it noted a variation in common waterbirds such as cormorants between summer and winter surveys. They also found significant numbers of non-breeding Pied and Sooty Oystercatchers. They have observed increases in White-bellied Sea Eagles, Brahminy Kites and Ospreys but have seen a worrying decline in the presence of Whistling Kites.

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 1500 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.

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.

CAMPS 2025

Tue 2nd - Thu 4th September	Parkes	Doug Hocking	0427 800 428	Spicer Caravan Park 37a Albert St, Parkes. (02) 6862 6162
Tue 21st - Thu 23rd October	South West Rocks	Alan Morris	0418 269 482	Ingenia Caravan Park Gordon Young Drive, South West Rocks (02) 6566 6264

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

PAY YOUR MEETING DONATION ELECTRONICALLY
 Don't scratch around for cash!
 Graham Nelson has set up an account so your meeting donation can be paid electronically:
BSB: 063097 A/C: 89676934

The Art House Presents Songbirds - Ensemble Offspring Saturday 2nd August

Songbirds celebrates the breathtaking virtuosity of Australian birdsong with an array of original Australian chamber works commissioned by Ensemble Offspring. Be transported into the Australian bush by the familiar sounds of nature's own musicians, with a little help from Australia's leading composers.

After devoting her life to documenting Pied Butcherbird song in Central Australia, Hollis Taylor composed her trio *Bitter Springs Creek 2014*, pairing live instrumentalists with ancient bird sounds. Fiona Loader's Lorikeet Corroboree follows an upbeat journey which interweaves the chatter of rainbow lorikeets with the sounds of ground-dwelling composers – including fragments from Papageno's *Magic Flute* and Vaughan Williams' *The Lark Ascending*. Gerard Brophy makes flamingos dance and hummingbirds buzz in his three-movement tour-de-force *Beautiful Birds*.

First Nations composers Nardi Simpson and Brenda Gifford share Indigenous perspectives on the sky and its many inhabitants. Brenda Gifford's *Mungala (Clouds)* evokes clouds building across the sea, while Nardi Simpson's *Of Stars and Birds* interprets a significant Yuwaalaraay story about the creation of the southern cross.



Performed by Lamorna Nightingale (flutes), Jason Noble (clarinets) and Claire Edwardes (percussion), Songbirds captures the magical bird calls of the red centre, virtuosic avian displays and Indigenous musical perspectives on these beguiling creatures of the sky.

This performance will take place in our Studio which is general admission unassigned seating.

WHAT WAS NEW in May/June and WHAT CAN WE EXPECT in July?



The most interesting record is a Swift Parrot found by Nick Carson in Brisbane Water National Park. Otherwise, it's been a very quiet period. White-fronted Terns have returned. Up to 18 Gang Gangs have been reported at Palmdale. This site has been well visited with photographers getting great photos.

The flocks of Top-knot Pigeons around Ourimbah, Lisarow etc seem to have diminished.



Rose Robins are being regularly reported, which is expected this time of year. Interestingly, Yellow-rumped Thornbills have been observed at three sites. This species is becoming much scarcer on the coast. There appears to be more Fuscous Honeyeaters this year at a number of sites. Unfortunately it will be more of the same for July.

OUTING REPORTS

Outing: May 14

DUBBO GULLY

Leader: Kaye and Margaret Pointer

For the people who had something better to do on the first sunny day in 2 weeks, we think you got a poor substitute. 13 birders met in Waratah Road, Mangrove Mountain on a foggy, warm autumn morning, for a great day's birding in lovely warm sunshine, in a scenic section of the Mangrove Creek Catchment area. We started our list with 10 species including Yellow Thornbill, Noisy Friarbird, and a White-bellied Sea Eagle.

Our first stop near Dubbo Gully Bridge was damp but the fog began to lift. The stand-out birds for the walk here were a Shining Bronze-Cuckoo and a Fan-tailed Cuckoo calling from dead wattles, providing good views. Small groups of King Parrot, Silvereeye, Lewin's Honeyeater and Crimson Rosella fed on black Privet berries. Yellow-faced Honeyeater were on the move in search of food and better weather, Rose Robin called from a thicket of vegetation but could not be seen.

We finished morning tea in sunshine, then drove to the edge of the wetland below Fairview Homestead. One Purple Swamphen and six Black Ducks were the only inhabitants showing themselves. Our walk south along Ten Mile Hollow Road had background sound dominated by Bell Miner and at least one of the Lyrebirds dashed across our path. Flocks of Noisy Friarbirds passed through with a few Little Wattlebirds. We stopped where there were views across a low grassy vegetation to see a Red-Whiskered Bulbul, and tried unsuccessfully to turn a distant Little Wattlebird into a Spangled Drongo! Returning to the cars for lunch Carole saw a Little Pied Cormorant across the wetland.

We made a short stop near the bridge for the allusive Rose Robin. In searching vegetation along Dubbo Creek a Female Rose Robin landed a few meters away. Near the car were another two, with a Golden Whistler and Brown Thornbill. The Dubbo Gully Road/Waratah Road intersection is always worth checking out for birds and to see no one is left in the gully! Here we added Yellow-rumped Thornbill, Noisy Miner, Bar-shouldered Dove, Eastern Rosella, Australasian Grebe, Willie Wagtail and a Whistling Kite flew over the cars.

The 18-kilometre return drive to Fair View and a few shorter easy walks during the day counted 62 species, (54 were beyond the locked gate). The highlight for a few was a Pheasant Coucal's fly-run across Waratah Road on the way home. Some members of the group saw 4 "lifers" for the day! Another great day birding Waratah Road and Dubbo Gully. Thank you - for the birds, company, weather and Central Coast Council for allowing us access to this fantastic location!

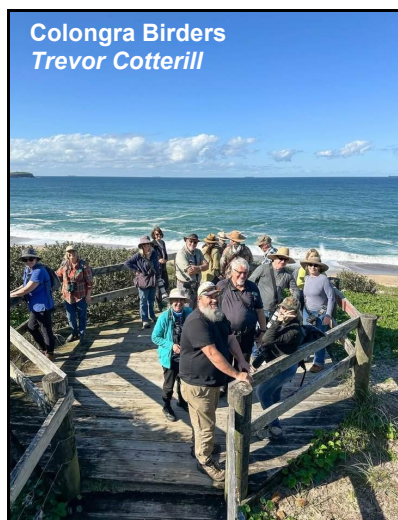


Outing: May 31

COLONGRA SWAMP

Leader: Daniel McKeon

After a few weeks of wet weather our outing route had to be refined to suit the conditions. The day of the outing the sun was shining and hopes were high; twenty-one enthusiastic birders joined me on a walk through Colongra Swamp Nature Reserve. The walk out didn't provide many highlights as conditions were pretty quiet. We walked out to the canal and along the water's edge until we made it to the lake. Small birds made their presence known from time to time but not much slowed us down. The walk back in had us finding some feeding small birds with a few nice species amongst them. Red-browed Finch, Silvereeye and Grey Fantail gave us a chance to stop and take a breather. A Scarlet Honeyeater had us entertained long enough for a Fan-tailed Cuckoo to fly in. Further along the path we came across an active little Mistletoebird high in the trees and a fly-over of a White-bellied Sea-Eagle. The walk back out of the reserve was interrupted by a beautiful Red-bellied Black Snake basking in the sun. Everyone kept their distance and photos were taken before it turned and went back into the undergrowth.



A short drive to Mackenzie Reserve at Budgewoi had the front cars wondering whether everyone had got lost. No, they had taken the opportunity to stop and look for the local Nankeen Night Herons. After morning tea, the reassembled group headed over to Ocean Street Beach Carpark and we made our way along the boardwalk hoping for a

Rose Robin. No luck with that but we did catch sight of Yellow Thornbill, Golden Whistler and Eastern Spinebill a plenty. A walk out to the beach had the group being entertained by a hunting Nankeen Kestrel who put on a show for us. As we made our way back a Spangled Drongo was seen hawking bugs in the swampy area near the road. Photos were taken in tough conditions and we moved on.



Spangled Drongo
Trevor Cotterill

Back to Mackenzie Reserve for lunch and a debrief. We lost some of our number as we set out for our final destination. Our amended group made our way to the Lakes Beach bike track and we avoided the dog poop and went for a casual walk. New Holland Honeyeater and Brown Thornbill seemed to be order of the day on the track. As we turned to make our way back and goodbyes were being said an Eastern Shrike-tit was spotted but unable to be relocated.

Another great day out on a revised schedule due to the weather. Fifty-nine species were seen all up with highlights being the Mistletoebirds, Spangled Drongo and the Eastern Shrike-tit. See you on the next one.

1/2 Day Outing: June 11

BRISBANE WATER FERRY

Leader: Graham Nelson

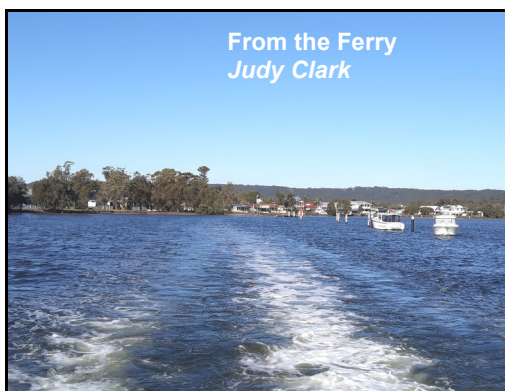
This particular excursion had not occurred in approximately 15 years. It was proposed by two individuals last year, prompting me to transform it into a leisurely and unique experience. Upon arriving at Woy Woy wharf, the weather was sunny, although a chilly breeze swept in from the snow-capped mountains. A group of thirteen departed from Woy Woy, and we collected three additional participants at Pine Street, Davistown. The journey meandered along Brisbane Water to Empire Bay. It was a delightful thirty-minute cruise, enhanced by sunshine, a gentle breeze, and enjoyable company—what more could one desire? The only drawback was the high tide, which meant the absence of mud flats; nevertheless, we observed several common bird species typical of the area.

Upon reaching Empire Bay, we proceeded to Shelly Beach Road, heading towards the corner where the Bush Stone-curlew is occasionally spotted. Unfortunately, it was not present. We had been walking, scanning front yards, when Gabrielle discovered it a few doors down, much to everyone's delight. Continuing towards the end of the road, where I usually observe House Sparrows and waders, a lady informed us of two Pied Oystercatchers located on the wharf to the side. A gentleman also shared his excitement about spotting a Black-necked Stork flying south over Gosford a couple of weeks ago. We did not encounter House Sparrows or many waders at the end of our walk, so we returned to the tennis courts for an extended morning tea.



Bush Stone-curlew
Graham Nelson

We made our way back to the wharf to catch the 11:20am ferry across the river to Pine Street, Davistown. To the east of Illoura Reserve, a brief boardwalk leads to Kincumber Crescent, which is not connected to the remainder of Kincumber Crescent. At the end of Illumba Avenue, we found three Black Swans and Chris saw some Australian King Parrots. Although we were unable to locate any Mangrove Gerygones, we did observe a Brown Honeyeater take flight. I offered \$14 to anyone who could find a Tawny Frogmouth, but to no avail. Once again, we enjoyed an extended lunch at Illoura Reserve while waiting for the ferry at 1:20pm. Illoura Reserve was positioned at an unfavourable angle to Cockle Channel, as the breeze was blowing directly up the channel.



From the Ferry
Judy Clark

The return trip to Woy Woy was pleasant and slightly improved due to the outgoing tide. Near Lintern Street, Davistown, we spotted three Bar-tailed Godwits. I remained vigilant in the mangroves but failed to find a Striated Heron. The ferry returned to Woy Woy at 1:50 PM. We managed to walk approximately 4.5 kilometres, although a significant portion was optional. While the official outing concluded, I offered to walk down to the Pelican Breeding Island. Six participants accepted, so we bid farewell to the others and drove to Lions Park. The walk to the island did not yield many new sightings for the day, but we did observe two Pied Oystercatchers up close. The distance was longer than I remembered, totalling at least 2.6 kilometres for the round trip.

In total, we observed 42 species. I extend my gratitude to everyone for their company. Perhaps we will undertake this excursion again on a summer's day. If you are looking to go yourself it is a \$10 concession round trip. The ticket only allows you to get off once so like us if you want to go from Empire Bay to Pine Street, Davistown, you can pay \$4 for that section. Non concession is \$18 and \$6.

SPECIES LIST**MAY 2025**

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	
Bold – Threatened and or rare species				
Pink-eared Duck	2	12/5/2025	Central Coast Wetlands, Tuggerah	Guy Dutson
Brown Quail	7	2 & 31/5	Tathra Taila HSD, Mangrove Mtn	Margaret Pointer
Hoary-headed Grebe	1	27/5/2025	Central Coast Wetlands, Tuggerah	Rex Schmidt
Tawny Frogmouth	1	29/5/2025	Murrumbung HSD, Mardi	John Carpenter
Owlet-Nightjar	1	23/5/2025	Tathra Taila HSD, Mangrove Mtn	Kaye Pointer
Pheasant Coucal	1	13/5/2025	Eric Close Reserve, Narara	Jon Spicer-Bell
Fan-tailed Cuckoo	1	4/5/2025	Tathra Taila HSD, Mangrove Mtn	Kaye Pointer
Shining Bronze-Cuckoo	1	14/5/2025	Mangrove Mountain Store	David Lamont
Shining Bronze-Cuckoo	1	15/5/2025	Dubbo Gully, Dharug NP	Kaye Pointer
Shining Bronze-Cuckoo	1	15/5/2025	Tathra Taila HSD, Mangrove Mtn	Kaye Pointer
Brown Cuckoo-Dove	50+	1-10/5/25	Murrumbung HSD, Mardi	John Carpenter
Brush Bronzewing	1	13 & 30/5	Magenta	Leanne Lemke
Bar-shouldered Dove	5	8/5/2025	Murrumbung HSD, Mardi	Carole Carpenter
Topknot Pigeon	180+	1/5/2025	Ourimbah	Nerida Carter
Topknot Pigeon	900	1/5/2025	Narara Eco-village	Guy Dutson
Topknot Pigeon	100+	4/5/2025	Narara	Rob Montgomery
Lewin's Rail	1	3/5/2025	Chain Valley Bay	Andrew Robinson
Red-capped Plover	10	27/5/2025	Pelican Point Reefs	Nick Carson
Double-banded Plover	4	27/5/2025	Pelican Point Reefs	Nick Carson
Bar-tailed Godwit	2	14/5/2025	The Entrance Channel	Hitomi Ward
Grey-tailed Tattler	1	1/5/2025	The Entrance Channel	Hitomi Ward
White-fronted Tern *	1	31/5/2025	Soldiers Point Reefs	Kerr Brad
Nankeen Night-Heron	1	31/5/2025	McKenzie Reserve, Budgewoi	Julie Peksis
Australian Ibis	160	29/5/2025	Gavenlock Rd & Dairy Swamp, Tuggerah	John Carpenter
Straw-necked Ibis	170	29/5/2025	Gavenlock Rd & Dairy Swamp, Tuggerah	Carole Carpenter
Cattle Egret	110	29/5/2025	Central Coast Wetlands, Tuggerah	Carole Carpenter
Osprey	1	9/5/2025	Rip Bridge, Daley's Point	Danny O'Brien
Osprey	1	10/5/2025	Shingle Splitters Point	Arnie Boyaci
Osprey	3	22/5/2025	perched on crane, Mason Pde, Gosford	Rob Montgomery
Pacific Baza	5	9/5/2025	Henry Kendall Gardens, Wyoming	Ann Juan
Pacific Baza	1	31/5/2025	Cresthaven Ave, Bateau Bay	Ian Kerr
Black-shouldered Kite	2	3-8/5/2025	Mt Penang Gardens, Kariong	Nick Carson
Black-shouldered Kite	1	3/5/2025	Woongarah	Nick Carson
Black-shouldered Kite	1	17 & 25/5	Tathra Taila HSD, Mangrove Mtn	Margaret Pointer
Square-tailed Kite	1	8/5/2025	Bulls Quarry, Brisbane Water NP	Bruce Ward-Smith
Square-tailed Kite	1	20/5/2025	Wyong Christian School, Tuggerah	Nick Carson
Square-tailed Kite	1	25/5/2025	Cochrone Lagoon, McMasters Beach	Suzy Roessel
Brahminy Kite	1	6/5/2025	Burge Rd, Woy Woy	Greg Shaw
Brahminy Kite	1	18/5/2025	Chain Valley Bay, Lake Macquarie	Meryl Newton
Wedge-tailed Eagle	2	3-27/5/2025	x8 Tathra Taila HSD, Mangrove Mtn	Margaret Pointer
Wedge-tailed Eagle	1	7/5/2025	Wamberal	Carmel Baker
Little Eagle	1	4/5/2025	Central Coast Wetlands, Tuggerah	Mike Barrow
Brown Goshawk	1	1-18/5/25	x5 Tathra Taila HSD, Mangrove Mtn	Kaye Pointer
Brown Goshawk	1	4/5/2025	Mount Penang Gardens, Kariong	Andrew Robinson
Brown Goshawk	1	8/5/2025	Summerland Point	Neryl Richards
Grey Goshawk	1	17/5/2025	Central Coast Wetlands, Tuggerah	Kelly Nash
Grey Goshawk	1	25/5/2025	Cochrone Lagoon, McMasters Beach	Suzy Roessel

Central Coast Group - Birding NSW

Grey Goshawk	1	29/5/2025	Elizabeth Bay Drive, Budgewoi	Steven Merrett
Collared Sparrowhawk	1	4/5/2025	Mount Penang Gardens, Kariong	Andrew Robinson
Collared Sparrowhawk	1	5/5/2025	Cresthaven Wetlands	Nick Carson
Sacred Kingfisher (OW)	1	29/5/2025	Lakes Beach, Budgewoi	Leeanne Lemke
Sacred Kingfisher (OW)	1	30/5/2025	Point Clare Mangroves	Graham Nelson
Sooty Owl	1	5/5/2025	Brush Rd, Glenning Valley	Nick Carson
Sooty Owl	1	9/5/2025	Rumbalara Reserve, Gosford	Ian Mo
Powerful Owl	1	4/5/2025	Fern Road, Ourimbah	Kara Dunn
Powerful Owl	1	6/5/2025	Chain Valley Bay	Trevor Cotterill
Powerful Owl	HC	29/5/2025	Glenning Valley	per Darren Earnshaw
Nankeen Kestrel	1	4/5/2025	West Gosford	Andrew Robinson
Nankeen Kestrel	1	8/10/5/25	Mount Penang Gardens, Kariong	Andrew Robinson
Australian Hobby	1	4/5/2025	Mount Penang Gardens, Kariong	Andrew Robinson
Australian Hobby	1	11/5/2025	Warnervale	Mark Smith
Peregrine Falcon	1	12/5/2025	Sutton Reserve, Bateau Bay	Nick Carson
Yellow-tailed Bla Cockatoo	57	10/5/2025	western side of Woy Woy Tip	Julie Peksis
Yellow-tailed Bla Cockatoo	100+	30/5/2025	Mount White	Sue Watts
Glossy Black Cockatoo	2	25/5/2025	Joshua Porter Reserve, Chain Valley Bay	Guy Dutton
Glossy Black Cockatoo	2	26/5/2025	Mangrove Mountain Hall	Kaye Pointer
Gang Gang Cockatoo	12	9-29/5/25	Upper Palmdale	Bruce Ward-Smith
Gang Gang Cockatoo	2	11/5/2025	Tathra Taila HSD, Mangrove Mtn	Kaye Pointer
Little Lorikeet	30	3/5/2025	Chain Valley Bay	Andrew Robinson
Little Lorikeet	8	12/5/2025	Summerland Point	Meryl Newton
Little Lorikeet	2	23/5/2025	Toukley	Leeanne Lemke
Scaly-breasted Lorikeet	12	1-6/5/2025	Sutton Reserve, Bateau Bay	Nick Carson
Noisy Pitta	2	30/5/2025	Upper Palmdale	Meryl Newton
Superb Lyrebird	1	8/5/2025	at house, Murrumbung HSD, Mardi	Carole Carpenter
Southern Emu-wren	6	9/5/2025	Central Coast Wetlands, Tuggerah	Leeanne Lemke
Brown-headed Honeyeater	2A+4Y	5/5/2025	Joshua Porter Reserve, Chain Valley Bay	Julie Peksis
Brown-headed Honeyeater	6	12/5/2025	Coast Walk, Munmorah SCA	Meryl Newton
Fuscous Honeyeater	4	3/5/2025	Chain Valley Bay	Andrew Robinson
Fuscous Honeyeater	6	10/5/2025	Woy Woy Firetail & Mt Wondabyne	Julie Peksis
Fuscous Honeyeater	10	31/5/2025	Teregalin Drive, Chain Valley Bay	Archie Brennan
Brown Honeyeater	4	10/5/2025	Woy Woy Firetail & Mt Wondabyne	Julie Peksis
Tawny-crowned Honeyeater	2	12-26/5/25	Munmorah State Conservation Area	Gordon Arthur
Brown-headed Honeyeater	2	22/5/2025	San Remo	Julie Peksis
Yellow-faced Honeyeater	400	7/5/2025	seen in 15 min. Mogo Camp, Yengo NP	Graham Nelson
Yellow-faced Honeyeater	40+	30/5/2025	on migration Tathra Taila HSD, Man. Mtn	Kaye Pointer
Blue-faced Honeyeater	1	12/5/2025	Copacabana	Zee Merven
Blue-faced Honeyeater	A+J	18/5/2025	Lake Munmorah village	Meryl Newton
Blue-faced Honeyeater	1	16/5/2025	Umina Beach	Tanum Gomathy
Yellow-rumped Thornbill	1	3/5/2025	Central Coast Wetlands, Tuggerah	Sooraj Sekhar
Yellow-rumped Thornbill	3	3/5/2025	Mount Penang Gardens	Nick Carson
Yellow-rumped Thornbill	4	15/5/2025	Dubbo Gully, Dharug NP	Margaret Pointer
Varied Sittella	2	6 & 28/5	Tathra Taila HSD, Mangrove Mtn	Kaye Pointer
Varied Sittella	5	30/5/2025	Kulnura	Anna Pillich
Rufous Whistler	AM	31/5/2025	San Remo	Julie Peksis
Crested Shrike-tit	1	2/5/2025	Lees Lane, Glenning Valley	Nick Carson
Crested Shrike-tit	2	13-14/5/25	Tathra Taila HSD, Mangrove Mtn	Kaye Pointer
Crested Shrike-tit	2	31/5/2025	Lakes Beach Track, Budgewoi	Julie Peksis
White-bellied Cuckoo-shrike	2	2 & 18/5	Wye	Leonie Loewe
Dusky Woodswallow	2	7/5/2025	Bucketty Waterhole	Graham Nelson
White-breast Woodswallow**	8	3/5/2025	Central Coast Wetlands, Tuggerah	Sooraj Sekhar
Restless Flycatcher	1	7/5/2025	Bucketty Waterhole	Graham Nelson
Spangled Drongo	2	27/5/2025	Central Coast Wetlands, Tuggerah	Rex Schmidt
Spangled Drongo	1	31/5/2025	Weemala Wetlands, Budgewoi	Daniel McKeon
White-winged Chough	6	9/5/2025	George Downs Drive, Kulnura	Nick Carson

Rose Robin	AM	2/5/2025	Tumbi Wetlands	Nick Carson
Rose Robin	AM	9/5/2025	Tathra Taila HSD, Mangrove Mtn	Kaye Pointer
Fairy Martin **	1	3/5/2025	Woongarra	Nick Carson
Double-barred Finch	6	29/5/2025	San Remo	Meryl Newton
Red Whiskered Bulbul	2	15/5/2025	Tathra Taila HSD, Mangrove Mtn	Kaye Pointer
Mistletoebird	1	7/5/2025	Tathra Taila HSD, Mangrove Mtn	Kaye Pointer

Breeding and other records May 2025

Hoary-headed Grebe: 4 Cochrane Lagoon 3/6 (SRo), 7 Tuggerah STW 6/6 (DPu); **Topknot Pigeon:** 20 Sohier Pk Ourimbah 19/5 (LFu); **Osprey:** perched near nest at Mingara 10/5 (GNe), 1 Cochrane Lagoon 31/5 (SRo); 2 San Remo Comms Tower (JPe) & 1 with band on leg Blue Bay Reefs (Lle) 31/5; **Grey Goshawk:** 1 Tathra Taila HSD Man. Mtn 6 & 26/5 (KPo), 1 Kincumber/Davistown Walkway 15/5 (GDu); **Powerful Owl:** 2 at nest hole Rumbalara Reserve 14/5 (NCa); **Little Lorikeet:** 7 Cockle Bay NR Empire Bay 24/5, 6 Lake Rd Wyong 31/5 (GDu), 2 Tathra Taila HSD Man. Mtn 31/5 (KPo); **New Holland Honeyeater:** 5+1J Tathra Taila HSD Man. Mtn 8/5 (KPo); **Little Wattlebird:** A+1DY Tathra Taila HSD Man. Mtn 15/5 (KPo); **Yellow-rumped Thornbill:** 2 Mangrove Mtn Store 14/5 (DLA). *Happy Birding!*

TWITCH LIST May 2025

Nick Carson	214	Margaret Pointer	152	Judy Clark	114
Allan Benson	194	Doug Hocking	151	Frik Gautschi	108
Carole Carpenter	179	Chris Jamieson	150	Robyn Price	104
Julie Peksis	171	Krystyna Lonergan	148	Diana Hogan	103
John Carpenter	168	Daniel McKeon	142	Lynette Callaghan	90
Kaye Pointer	168	David Schuemaker	120		
Christina Port	165	Gabrielle Rees	116		

Nick Carson has a good lead at this stage with Allan Benson second.

BIRDATA SURVEYS YTD 2025

Alan Stuart	137	Meryl Newton	29	Doug Hocking	11
Graham Nelson	127	Guy Dutson	26	Michael Scobie	9
Allan Benson	101	Frik Gautschi	25	Ann Lindsay	9
Robyn Price	36	C Clutterbuck	17	David Schuemaker	5
Daniel McKeon	31	Leeanne Lemke	12		

The YTD 2025 number is now 859 compared with 1087 in 2024. Hopefully, Swift Parrot surveys will narrow this gap.

Alan Stuart has opened up a lead on the field with Graham Nelson a close second and Allan Benson trailing by a fair margin. We would like to see more birders putting in more surveys. Birdata is one way, as a birder, you can make a contribution to bird conservation.

SOUTH WYONG SEWAGE TREATMENT WORKS

May Survey

4 observers completed this survey. The ponds were very full after rain. 380 waterfowl were on the ponds. The majority (over 300) were Eurasian Coots with a fair number of Hardhead, and Australasian Grebe along with Black Duck and Chestnut Teal with small number of Hoary-headed Grebe. Highlights were 2 Male Shoveler, 3 Swamp Harrier a Whistling Kite and a Hobby. The "resident" Musk Duck wasn't seen. Total species count was 50 species which is an above average count.

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

Swift Parrot Surveys**YTD****June 15**

260 surveys were completed YTD 15th June. Key sites such as Joshua Porter Reserve at Chain Valley Bay and Sutton Reserve at Bateau Bay have been surveyed multiple times. These are, historically, the most likely sites for Swift Parrots to visit.

Nick Carson found a Swift Parrot in Brisbane Waters National Park.

A full analysis will be in the next newsletter.

**THE BIRDS ON LORD HOWE ISLAND ARE NOW SO FULL OF PLASTIC, THEY CRUNCH**

Jake Evans

On a pristine Australian island, the seabirds have become so full of plastic they crackle and crunch. The tiny Lord Howe Island is a sanctuary of volcanic rock off Australia's east coast, so carefully preserved that the number of visitors allowed at any time is strictly controlled.

The mutton birds have become so full of plastic their bellies crunch and crackle with the sound of it. It is a graphic sound, but one that the Lord Howe Island scientists want the world to hear. Dr Lavers has been seeking to raise the plight of the mutton bird, saying it is a canary in the coal mine for the world's larger plastic problem.

And so, as Australian politicians campaigned in a federal election, she enlisted the help of long-time friend and Greens senator Peter Whish-Wilson, asking him to join her and see for himself the state of the mutton birds on Lord Howe Island. Arriving to the island for the first time, Whish-Wilson said the mountainous landscape rising out of the fog was like something from Gilligan's Island. "It's not really the kind of place you come to be shocked, and walk away feeling a little bit traumatised." That night, he joined researchers to visit the mutton birds at their rookery, a collection of nests dug into the sand at the beach. He said the innocent birds were so unafraid of humans they would see the light of his head torch and run into his lap. "They're all running around, bumping into you, knocking things over. It's kind of mayhem." There at the beach he helped the team to 'lavage' the birds — that is, he helped to feed a tube down their throats to flush them with water. Until last month, the most they had ever found was 403 pieces in 2024. "I'm sad to say just yesterday we blew [the record] out of the water, and our new record holder is 778 pieces of plastic in an 80-day-old seabird chick, in one of the most pristine corners of our planet." She says what is happening to the mutton birds is happening everywhere.

Plastics and microplastics are being found in everything, including humans, but the migratory shearwater is a 'sentinel species' for a bigger problem. "These birds have a very important story to tell, and what they are telling us is that their populations are in decline, that the amount of plastic they're consuming is going up and up," she said. "The birds are telling us we need to do more."

Whish-Wilson says what he witnessed moved him. "What's been seen can't be unseen. I wish every politician and every decision maker in parliaments around the world, because this is a global problem, I wish they could all experience what I experienced just for 24 hours, to come down here and do it themselves, and then they'll get it," he said. "We are not winning the war on waste."

The most recent waste data for Australia shows that the average Australian generated about 512 kilograms of waste in a year — about 50 kilograms of that being plastic waste. Australia is producing more plastic waste per capita than in 2017, when a baseline measurement was taken.

That year, about 12.5 per cent of plastic was recycled, with the rest sent to landfill. The most recent data, five years on, shows plastic recycling rates have not improved at all. The responsible industry group admitted last year its target for 70 per cent of plastics to be recycled by 2025 "clearly" would not be met. The recycling sector says the problem is simple: there are simply not enough companies buying enough recycled products. "The major missing piece is demand. We're really good at collecting and sorting, we can process in Australia, but what we are not doing in Australia is buying it back," Waste Management and Resource Recovery chief executive Gayle Sloan says. But there is an idea being floated in parliament to make packaging producers more responsible for their products.

The United Kingdom has introduced world-leading laws that require at least 30 per cent of plastic products to be made from recycled materials. For every kilogram of "non-compliant" plastic that does not reach that 30 per cent threshold, producers suffer a financial penalty.

Whish-Wilson has found an uncommon ally across the chamber in Nationals senator Ross Cadell, who last month both handed down a report calling on Australia to legislate a Circular Economy Act, and force producers to use more recycled products and take responsibility for its entire life cycle. "I think the reason we're losing is because the only focus we've had on circularity, or, you know, recycling or waste reduction, whatever you want to call it, has been on the end of the pipe, on the businesses that actually have to clean up the mess."

A Labor-led inquiry into waste, established by the recently replaced environment minister, has also recommended considering a 30 per cent recycled content target with "incentives or mandates" on local plastic manufacturers to reach it.

Newly installed Environment Minister Murray Watt told the ABC the government was committed to "new rules to produce less waste in the first place". "This includes consideration of mandatory requirements for recycled content in packaging," Watt said. "Our reform will also include enforcement measures to make sure companies adhere to our strong regulations."

With a new term of parliament, a new environment minister and the final round of global negotiations on a treaty to end plastic pollution, Whish-Wilson hopes that momentum is building. "It's a really big issue in people's minds. Now, like globally, there's a push to get this high-ambition treaty. You know, [former prime minister] Scott Morrison even flew to New York to raise plastic pollution as an issue at the United Nations," he said. "My experience in politics is things take a long time to change, but when they do, they can happen really quickly. And I feel like we are on the cusp of that."

In March 2022, United Nations members endorsed a resolution to end plastic pollution, and agreed to forge a legally binding agreement by the end of 2024. That deadline passed without a deal. But a final session of negotiations is due to be held in August in Geneva.

Former environment minister Tanya Pliibersek warned that UN assembly last year that plastic production was set to triple by 2060, "and experts predict plastics in oceans could outweigh fish by 2050 — making this treaty critical". A review of Australia's last major reforms to the waste sector, introduced under former prime minister Scott Morrison, is due in weeks.

Whish-Wilson says it is time for Australia to turn its eye on the "front end" of the waste pipe, where the plastic gets made, not where it gets spat out. "The big problem, it's actually quite simple how to solve this. All government policies all around the world, including here in Australia, have been targeted at the end of the waste pipe. When the waste comes out we try and recycle it, we try and recover resources from it, or we send it off to landfill, or it ends up in our environment. "What we need to do is focus on the front of the pipe, the producers of this plastic. Packaging is the biggest cause of plastic pollution on the planet, and in the ocean, and I saw it in the stomach of all these poor seabirds. "Everyone out there hates plastic pollution. They hate seeing it on the beaches. They hate the idea of it being in our bodies. They hate it being in their food and in their seafood. It doesn't matter what political colour you are, most people don't want to see this issue, so they want to see politicians solve it."

AI POISON DEVICES ARE THE LATEST WEAPON IN FIGHT TO SAVE KING ISLAND ENDANGERED BIRDS FROM FERAL CATS

By Georgia Hogge

The critically endangered King Island Scrubtit and King Island Brown Thornbill are among five Australian bird species considered most likely to become extinct within 20 years. Both are subspecies endemic to the island, and their populations are thought to be between 50–100 individuals for the thornbill and less than 50 for the scrubtit. However, conservationists are hopeful the use of poison delivery devices that use artificial intelligence (AI) technology to identify and poison passing cats, will help protect the birds from predation, buying more time to restore crucial habitat areas.

An AI approach to managing feral cats

Cats in Australia are estimated to kill 2 billion animals each year and threaten more than 100 native species. They have been implicated in at least 27 of Australia's 30 extinctions since they were introduced during European settlement. Traditionally, feral cats are caught using baited traps that are manually set and monitored. But because King

Island is remote, vast and difficult to traverse, these traps are less effective and more expensive to maintain than they are in other parts of the country.

Not-for-profit foundation Thylation has developed the Felixer trap, which founder John Read believes will work better on King Island because it is "automated and self-managing. You don't actually have to physically catch or hold a cat or deal with it," he said. The devices use AI-imaging technology to identify passing cats and a projectile system to shoot poison onto them. An internal AI camera system works to differentiate cats from other small, ground-dwelling animals such as pademelons and quolls, preventing misfires. Once a cat is identified, the range finder measures the distance of the cat from the device. Then, the unit shoots out 8 milligrams of sodium fluoroacetate gel, also known as 1080, which sticks to the cat's fur and is ingested when it self-grooms. Once the toxin is ingested, the cat's central nervous system slows, leading to unconsciousness.

Non-lethal trials of the device have been underway on King Island since July 2023, capturing and storing images of animals as they pass by. This has enabled researchers to determine feral cat population density in certain areas and has strengthened the AI camera's machine learning, preventing misfires. Surveying conducted by Deakin University researcher Christian Knapp suggests there are at least 300 feral cats on King Island

The importance of birds

King Island was nominated and listed as an Important Bird and Biodiversity Area (IBA) in 2006. Between 2021 and 2022, systematic searches of King Island were undertaken as a part of the recovery program, with both important remaining habitat and remnant populations identified. The King Island Landcare Group's bird survey project Wings on King, managed through the Birds of King Island website, undertakes surveys twice a year and is involved with monitoring all King Island endemic birds. Based on the data collected, key habitat patches for the King Island Brown Thornbill and Scrubtit have been identified and the Felixers have been optimally positioned in high-priority areas.



The King Island Scrubtit (left) and the King Island brown Thornbill (right)