



The Twitcher

July
2025

CENTRAL COAST GROUP, BIRDING NSW

Editorial Team: Allan Benson (0457 458 274) Wendy Mitchell (0423 388 529) & Robyn Price Volume 20, No. 7

DATE	ACTIVITIES	LEADER/SPEAKER
22/07/25	Next Meeting: Birding in Bhutan Meet: 7.30pm Tuggerah Progress Hall, Anzac Rd, Tuggerah, opposite Hungry Jacks	John Rawson
26/07/25	Outing: Myuna Bay. Meet: Meet 8.30 at the Scout Hall carpark, Myuna Bay Rest Area, Wangi Rd, Myuna Bay	REMEMBER TO REGISTER Graham Nelson 0466 599 278
13/08/25	½ day Outing: Outing Mooney Creek and Girrakool Meet: 8.30am Karool Rd, Mooney Mooney	REMEMBER TO REGISTER Doug Hocking 0427 800 428
26/08/25	Next Meeting: Rainforest Birding in North Queensland 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.	Doug Hocking



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: John Rawson is our speaker tonight. He will provide some background on Bhutan (the last Shangri-la?) and its history as an independent country. It is an interesting venue from a birding point of view. There are a variety of habitats from sub-tropical forest to the heights of the Himalayas with over 700 species of birds recorded. He will present a PowerPoint slide show covering a recent trip there with Coates Wildlife Tours. Some of the culture and scenery is included together with a presentation on some of the birds and animals seen on his trip.

Last Month's Meeting: An excellent crowd of 39 attendees heard a fascinating presentation by Dr Janet Gardner on the impact of climate change on birds. She was involved in a very extensive study of Jacky Winters in the mallee area of South Australia. The conclusions were that once the temperature reach 40°C the birds began to modify their behaviours including abandoning nests and adopting various strategies to prevent overheating such as changes in posture, perching in shade and perching at the base of trees in the shade. Jacky Winters were habituated to weigh themselves every morning which provided a measure of their condition. The conclusion is that climate change producing extreme heat effects has a very detrimental impact on bush 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 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, 7.30pm
Cost: \$39 or \$32 concession

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*.

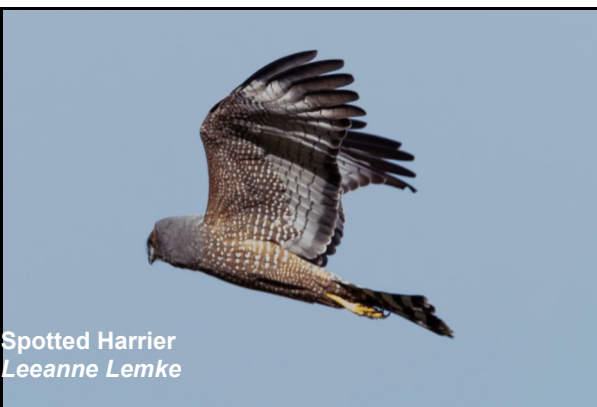
First Nations composers Nardi Simpson and Brenda Gifford share Indigenous perspectives on the sky and its many inhabitants. Brenda Gifford's *Mungala (Clouds)* evokes clouds building across the sea, while Nardi Simpson's *Of Stars and Birds* interprets a significant Yuwaalaraay story about the creation 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 June/July and WHAT CAN WE EXPECT in August?

The most interesting records were two sightings of Kelp Gull at Norah Head and a Spotted Harrier at Mangrove Mountain. This is the 9th and 10th record for Kelp Gull. Spotted Harriers are rare visitors to the Coast. As expected, albatross have returned over winter with reports both from sea watches and pelagic trips. An over-wintering Dusky Woodswallow in Brisbane Water National Park is an unusual record. There are only two reports of White-fronted Terns. Six reports of Glossy Black Cockatoo from 4 different Sites is encouraging as their feeding trees suffered significantly in the 2019 bushfires.



Spotted Harrier
Leeanne Lemke

The shortest day has now passed and the birds will begin breeding. We will see more fully coloured Superb Fairy-wrens. The birds will start calling to defend territories which will make birding much easier.



Kelp Gull
Leeanne Lemke

OUTING REPORTS

Outing: June 28

EAST GOSFORD WATERWAYS

Leader: Graham Nelson

After rainfall at my home from Friday evening, the skies cleared early Saturday morning, leading to a delightful day filled with sunshine and a refreshing coolness. However, as we were leaving the car park at Fagan Park, we experienced a light drizzle.

Nineteen individuals gathered at the East Gosford Regional Art Gallery.

It was wonderful to see some new faces and to welcome back Noel. We set off on a leisurely walk around the Gallery's exterior and along the boardwalk. During our stroll, we paused to identify whether we were observing Variegated or Superb Fairy-wrens, only to find both species present and mingling together. A Satin Bowerbird made an appearance, landing on a Tobacco plant to feed. We also heard the unique "tsit tsit" call of the Yellow Thornbill and identified both Brown Thornbill and Silvereye. At the boardwalk's entrance, we encountered four Australian Brush-turkeys. Just as I was about to mention that I had seen a Buff-banded Rail in that spot before, Elaine spotted one, which was a delightful surprise. In total, I was thrilled to record thirty species.

On our way to Adcock Park we spotted two Ospreys nesting atop the stadium. After having seen an Azure Kingfisher the previous week, which was only the third sighting in a decade, I was unsure if we would see them again, though I remained optimistic. To our joy, we not only spotted one or two but three Azure Kingfishers. With the sightings from the first location, along with the Azure, I could have concluded the day there and everyone would have left content. Continuing, just before 10 am, we entered Carawah Reserve. Another Buff-banded Rail was seen quickly retreating for cover. We also observed Scaly-breasted Lorikeet, Golden Whistler, Scarlet Honeyeater, Australian Pied Oystercatcher, and an Egret that I later identified as a Little Egret. As well, Figbirds were seen and yet another Australian Brush-turkey on a large mound, from which three females departed. Keith and a few others were fairly certain they spotted a Mangrove Gerygone as we were leaving. A total of forty-two species were recorded at that location.



Azure Kingfisher
Nerida Carter



At Carawah Reserve
Nerida Carter

Due to our relaxed pace, we arrived slightly late for morning tea at Fagan Park, Point Clare. No one seemed to mind, as they were eager to enjoy a warm cup of tea. After our morning refreshment, we strolled down the path towards Coorumbine Creek, stopping along the way to observe birds hidden in the water and trees. We sighted numerous waterbirds, with highlights including a male Mistletoebird and brief glimpses of the Brown Honeyeater. On our return to lunch, I found myself leading from the back and paused to investigate a few bird sightings, most of which were about 100 metres ahead, allowing me to be the sole observer of a Striated Heron as it took flight along the waterway.

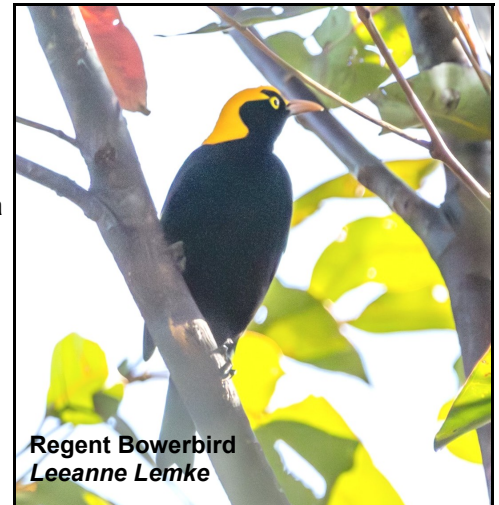
Lunch was greatly appreciated on such a chilly day after several kilometres of walking. Although it didn't feel like we had covered a long distance, we had likely walked around 4 to 4.5 kilometres by that point. A few Scaly-breasted Lorikeets joined us in the branches above as we replenished our energy. After lunch, we headed in the opposite direction along the track leading to Marine Rescue and Brisbane Waters. We added to our list with sightings of an Australian Pelican and a Striated Thornbill, recording twenty-six species during that walk.

In total, we observed sixty-five species, including several remarkable birds. Interestingly, the Osprey was the only raptor we encountered. I extend my heartfelt gratitude for the delightful company on such a splendid day out.

½ Day Outing: June 11 CENTRAL COAST WETLANDS / MCPHERSON RD SWAMP Leader: Leeanne Lemke

The day started with one bird on my/our minds - the Black-necked Storks seen the day before at the swamp. We were meeting in the carpark at the dairy and I think most went via the swamp for a quick look to see if they were there. They weren't and so we headed off towards Pioneer Creek for the first leg. We couldn't have asked for more perfect weather with no wind, crystal clear sky and a crisp sunny day. There were sixteen of us with reasonably high expectations for some good birding and considering the time of year, we weren't disappointed.

We were lucky to see some of the showier species in the new planting area being a male Regent Bowerbird, a male Southern Emu-wren (frustratingly brief appearances) and a pair of Spotted Pardalotes feeding off lerp on the small Swamp Mahoganies there (we think that's what they were) which allowed good views for all. After doing the loop, we headed back for morning tea where John Carpenter made a cameo appearance which was nice, adding to the list and bringing the group number to 17. We then did the western loop around the farmhouse and the front ponds before lunch.



Regent Bowerbird
Leeanne Lemke

A few left at this point before the rest of us headed off to McPherson Road



Cow watching birders
Leeanne Lemke

Swamp for a last check for the Storks from the street above, to no avail. I

spotted a Spangled Drongo on the wires on the way there which a few went back for and were successful seeing on the way home. Graham and I then went for a look at South Tacoma again looking for the storks but they weren't there either. I had 65 species listed but Graham has kindly shared his list which has a total of 80 species with only 4 of those added from Tacoma. Thanks all for your eyes, ears and great company. It was nice to meet some new members and have them along too.

SPECIES LIST

JUNE 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			
Australian Shoveler	M,4F	25/6/2025	Tuggerah STW Graham Nelson
Brown Quail	3	7-16/6/25	Central Coast Wetlands, Tuggerah Ted Elks
Hoary-headed Grebe	150	3/6/2025	flock near Berkley Vale on Tuggerah Lake Christina Port
Hoary-headed Grebe	30	4/6/.2025	Ansells Pt, Chittaway Graham Nelson
Hoary-headed Grebe	50	9/6/2025	Budgewoi Lake, west shore Krystyna Lonergan
Tawny Frogmouth	1	6/6/2025	Yeramba Cres, Terrigal Nick Carson
Tawny Frogmouth	2	27/6/2025	Turana Close, Umina Greg Shaw
Pheasant Coucal	1	28/6/2025	Tollgate Swamp, Munmorah SCA Nick Carson
Shining Bronze-Cuckoo	1	1/6/2025	Hidden Valley Gate. Jiliby SCA Nick Carson
Shining Bronze-Cuckoo	1	22/6/2025	Upper Palmdale Tom Wilson
Emerald Dove	1	1 & 20/6	Upper Palmdale John Carpenter
Brown Cuckoo-Dove	52	9/6/2025	Murrumbung HSD, Mardi Carole Carpenter
Topknot Pigeon	40	5/6/2025	Copacabana Zee Merven
Topknot Pigeon	6	6/6/2025	The Entrance Haley Carter
Topknot Pigeon	12	13/6/2025	Pearl Beach Arboretum Paul Fuller
Buff-banded Rail	1	1-29/6/25	Central Coast Wetlands, Tuggerah Marie Kobler
Buff-banded Rail	1	28/6/2025	East Gosford Art Gallery Graham Nelson
Lewin's Rail	1	7/6/2025	M1 Motorway Ourimbah Rest Area Mark Fuller

Central Coast Group - Birding NSW

Lewin's Rail	1	17/6/2025	Central Coast Wetlands, Tuggerah	Maree Hawken
Bush Stone-curlew	1	13/6/2025	Empire Bay Wharf	David Lamont
Ruddy Turnstone	5	1/6/2025	Blue Bay Reefs	Cyrus Piggott
Red-necked Stint	3	1/6/2025	Blue Bay Reefs	Cyrus Piggott
Kelp Gull	2 Im	15-16/6/25	Soldiers Beach, Norah Head	Mel Stratton
Kelp Gull	Im	29/6/2025	Soldiers Beach, Norah Head	Leeanne Lemke
White-fronted Tern	2	9/6/2025	Winnie Bay, Copacabana	Guy Dutson
White-fronted Tern	3	16/6/2025	Norah Head Reefs	Nick Carson
Wilson's Storm-Petrel	3	20/6/2025	Terrigal Pelagic	Stephanie Owen
Black-browed Albatross	Im	15/6/2025	off Forresters Beach	Paul Minto
Black-browed Albatross	12	20/6/2025	Terrigal Pelagic	Stephanie Owen
Black-browed Albatross	1	29/6/2025	Crackneck Lkt, Wyrabalong NP	Serene White
Campbell's Albatross	2	20/6/2025	Terrigal Pelagic	Stephanie Owen
Shy (White-capped) Alb.	9	20/6/2025	Terrigal Pelagic	Stephanie Owen
Indian Yellow-nosed Alb.	4	20/6/2025	Terrigal Pelagic	Stephanie Owen
Buller's Albatross	1	20/6/2025	Terrigal Pelagic	Stephanie Owen
Providence Petrel	1	20/6/2025	Terrigal Pelagic	Stephanie Owen
Hutton's Shearwater	6	20/6/2025	Terrigal Pelagic	Stephanie Owen
Fairy Prion	50	20/6/2025	Terrigal Pelagic	Stephanie Owen
Fluttering Shearwater	400	20/6/2025	Terrigal Pelagic	Stephanie Owen
Australian Gannet	65	20/6/2025	Terrigal Pelagic	Stephanie Owen
Black-necked Stork	1	12/6/2025	flying over Wyong	Leonie Loewe
Black-necked Stork	Im	14/6/2025	Wyee	Leonie Loewe
Nankeen Night-heron	4	5/6/2025	Avoca Lagoon	Darren Earnshaw
Pacific Heron	2A+Im	30/6/2025	cnr Borrisbrook & Waratah Rds MMtn	Margaret Pointer
Pacific Reef Heron	1	2 & 28/6	Frazer Beach, Munmorah SCA	Hitomi Ward
Intermediate Egret	1	6/6/2025	Central Coast Wetlands, Tuggerah	Rob Montgomery
Osprey	2+N	8/6/2025	Woy Woy Comms. Tower	Therese Elsey
Osprey	1+N	7/6/2025	Harry Moore Oval, Toukley	Mark Fuller
Osprey	1+N	14/6/2025	Erina Creek, East Gosford, on Light tower	Michael Berg
Pacific Baza	1	25/6/2025	Mingara Wetlands	Graham Nelson
Black-shouldered Kite	1	3/6/2025	Kyola Rd, Kulnura	Cyrus Piggott
Black-shouldered Kite	1	7/6/2025	Central Coast Wetlands, Tuggerah	Mika H.
Black-shouldered Kite	1	14/6/2025	Erina Creek, Erina	Michael Berg
Black Kite	1	9/6/2025	Central Coast Wetlands, Tuggerah	Mel Stratton
Square-tailed Kite	1	18/6/2025	Murrumbung HSD, Mardi	Carole Carpenter
Square-tailed Kite	1	28/6/2025	Mount Penang Parklands	Archie Brennan
Brahminy Kite	1	7/6/2025	Brendon Close, Budgewoi	Craig Marshall
Brahminy Kite	1	22/6/2025	Tuggerah Lake, Toukley	Patrick Anderson
Wedge-tailed Eagle	1	5/6/2025	Katandra Reserve, Matcham	Jason Brown
Wedge-tailed Eagle	1	8/6/2025	Upper Palmdale	Haley Carter
Wedge-tailed Eagle	1	9/6/2025	2 on 14/6, Central Coast Wtlds, Tuggerah	Mel Stratton
Brown Goshawk	1	14/6/2025	Cochrone Lagoon	Suzy Roesal
Brown Goshawk	1	18/6/2025	Murrumbung HSD, Mardi	John Carpenter
Brown Goshawk	1	20/6/2025	Ourimbah M1 Motorway Rest Area	Connor Nest
Grey Goshawk	1	4/6/2025	Kincumber Wharf area	Darren Earnshaw
Grey Goshawk	1	22/6/2025	Upper Palmdale	Tom Wilson
Grey Goshawk	1	25/6/2025	Ilya Ave, Erina	Bruce Ward-Smith
Collared Sparrowhawk	1	1/6/2025	Mount Penang Gardens	Guy Dutson
Collared Sparrowhawk	1	12/6/2025	Wyong	Leonie Loewe
Collared Sparrowhawk	1	28/6/2025	Kincumber-Davistown Walkway	Archie Brennan
Yellow-billed Spoonbill	1	8/6/2025	Tuggerawong Pathway	Hitomi Ward
Azure Kingfisher	1	7/6/2025	Central Coast Wetlands, Tuggerah	Mika H.
Azure Kingfisher	1	27/6/2025	Ourimbah University Campus	Kim Farley
Azure Kingfisher	1	28/6/2025	Carawah Reserve, West Gosford	Graham Nelson
Sacred Kingfisher	1	30/6/2025	overwintering, Wondabyne	Graham Nelson
Southern Boobook	1	29/6/2025	Mill Creek Campground, Dharug NP	N. Moltschaniwskyj

Nankeen Kestrel	1	8-17/6/25	The Skillion, Terrigal	Nick Carson
Nankeen Kestrel	1	22/6/2025	Wye	Leonie Loewe
Australian Hobby	1	3/6/2025	Ironbark Rd, Mangrove Mtn	Cyrus Piggott
Australian Hobby	1	7/6/2025	Central Coast Wetlands, Tuggerah	Mark Fuller
Peregrine Falcon	1	3/6/2025	Cochrone Lagoon	Suzu Roessal
Peregrine Falcon	1	4/6/2025	Kincumber Wharf area	Darren Earnshaw
Peregrine Falcon	1	20/6/2025	Terrigal Haven	Stephanie Owen
Yellow-tail Black Cockatoo	70	21/6/2025	Popran NP, Mt White	Nick Carson
Glossy Black Cockatoo	2	9/6/2025	Mount White	Sue Watts
Glossy Black Cockatoo	1	21/6/2025	Wye	Leonie Loewe
Glossy Black Cockatoo	3	27/6/2025	Mill Creek Campground, Dharug NP	N. Moltschaniwskyj
Gang Gang Cockatoo	3	1/6/2025	Dooralong	Nerida Carter
Gang Gang Cockatoo	30	1-22/6/2025	Upper Palmdale	Michael Tyriss
Little Lorikeet	18	21/6/2025	Wye	Leonie Loewe
Red-rumped Parrot	15	15/6/2025	Central Coast Wetlands, Tuggerah	CQ Photography
Swift Parrot	1	6/6/2025	Rocky Ponds Trail, Brisbane WNP	Nick Carson
Swift Parrot	2	21/6/2025	Mt Olive Trail, Popran NP, Mt White	Nick Carson
Superb Lyrebird	1	3/6/2025	Upper Palmdale	Bruce Ward-Smith
Noisy Pitta	1	3/6/2025	Upper Palmdale	Kai H.
Noisy Pitta	2	5/6/2025	Strickland SF	Betty Ray
Satin Bowerbird	30	13/6/2025	Footts Rd, Ourimbah	John Carpenter
Red-browed Treecreeper	1	22/6/2025	Glenworth Valley	James Graham
Red-browed Treecreeper	1	21/6/2025	Jilliby State Conservation Area	Nick Carson
Southern Emu-wren	6	3/6/2025	Central Coast Wetlands, Tuggerah	Leeanne Lemke
Brown Honeyeater	1	5/6/2025	Pateman Rd, Erina	Nick Carson
Brown Honeyeater	1	28/6/2025	Budgewoi Rd, Lakes Beach	Nick Carson
Brown-headed Honeyeater	4	2/6/2025	Munmorah SCA	Hitomi Ward
Brown-headed Honeyeater	1	28/6/2025	San Remo Bushland	Nick Carson
Yellow-faced Honeyeater	393	11/6/2025	on migration Tathra Taila HSD, Man. Mtn	Kaye Pointer
Fuscous Honeyeater	1	9/6/2025	Woy Woy Tip	James Burns
Blue-faced Honeyeater	3	3/6/2025	Westfield, Tuggerah	S. Chou
Blue-faced Honeyeater	2	24/6/2025	Billabong St, Woy Woy	Greg Shaw
Blue-faced Honeyeater	1	13/6/2025	Avoca Beach	Natalie Fallowfield
Tawny-crowned Honeyeater	1	28/6/2025	Munmorah SCA	Nick Carson
Rock Warbler	1	27/6/2025	Dubbo Gully Gate	Margaret Pointer
Buff-rumped Thornbill	4	1/6/2025	Kiah Ridge Road	Nick Carson
Buff-rumped Thornbill	1	27/6/2025	Grasree Circuit, Mill Ck, Dharug NP	N. Moltschaniwskyj
Varied Sittella	4+	10-20/6/25	Tathra Taila HSD, Mangrove Mountain	Kaye Pointer
Varied Sittella	6	20/6/2025	Jilliby State Conservation Area	Dean Purcell
Varied Sittella	5	27/6/2025	Grasree Circuit, Mill Ck, Dharug NP	N. Moltschaniwskyj
Crested Shrike-tit	2	16/6/2025	Tathra Taila HSD, Mangrove Mtn	Margaret Pointer
Crested Shrike-tit	2	19/6/2025	M1 Motorway Ourimbah Rest Area	Sonia Boughton
Rufous Whistler	1	6/6/2025	M1 Motorway Ourimbah Rest Area	Haley Carter
Dusky Woodswallow	3	6/6/2025	Rocky Ponds Trail, Brisbane WNP	Nick Carson
Spangled Drongo	1	2/6/2025	Lakes Beach Surf Club	Carole Carpenter
Spangled Drongo	1	7/6/2025	Reeves Rd, Narara	Guy Dutson
Spangled Drongo	1	7/6/2025	Central Coast Wetlands, Tuggerah	Mika H.
Jacky Winter	1	1/6/2025	Tooheys Rd, Bushells Ridge	Nick Carson
Jacky Winter	2	21/6/2025	Wye	Leonie Loewe
Rose Robin	AM	2/6/2025	M1 Motorway Ourimbah Rest Area	Marie Kobler
Rose Robin	1	6/6/2025	Pearl Beach Fire trail, Patonga	Nick Carson
Rose Robin	AM	13/6/2025	Pearl Beach Arboretum	Paul Fuller
White-winged Chough	7	15/6/2025	Red Hill	Dean Purcell
Bassian Thrush	1	8-22/6/25	Upper Palmdale	Haley Carter
Bassian Thrush	1	27 & 30/6	Tathra Taila HSD, Mangrove Mountain	Margaret Pointer
European Blackbird	1	7/6/2025	M1 Motorway Ourimbah Rest Area	Mark Fuller

Breeding and other records June 2025

Hoary-headed Grebe: 4 Cochrane Lagoon 3/6 (SRo), 7 Tuggerah STW 6/6 (DPu); **Topknot Pigeon:** Small numbers across the LGA - these are the largest groups: 9 Central Coast Wetlands 9/6 (MSt), 12 Ourimbah Rest Stop 22/6 (TWi); **Osprey:** 2+N Gosford Stadium 18/6 (CPo), 1+N Ocean Bch Rd Woy Woy 16/6 (TSw), 1 Terrigal gantry 17/6 (RGa), A+N Mingara Tower 25/6 (GNe), A+N East Gosford 30/6 (BWS); **Black-shouldered Kite:** 2 Tathra Taila HSD Man. Mtn 6-20/6 (KPo), 1 Mingara Wetlands 25/6 (GNe), **Wedge-tailed Eagle:** 2 Tathra Taila HSD Mangrove Mtn 4-28/6 (KPo), 1 Glenworth Valley 22/6 (JGr); **Brown Goshawk:** 1 Tathra Taila HSD Man. Mtn 6 & 14/6 (KPo); **Grey Goshawk:** 1 Tathra Taila HSD Man. Mtn 17/6 (KPo); **Peregrine Falcon:** 1 Mingara Wetlands 25/6 (GNe); **Glossy Black Cockatoo:** 2 x3 Tathra Taila HSD Man. Mtn 14-25/6 (MPo); **New Holland Honeyeater:** N+Y Rocky Ponds Trail, BWNP 6/6 (NCa); **Blue-faced Honeyeater:** 1 Cresthaven Ave Wetlands 19/6 (NCa), 2 Copacobana 19/6 (ZMe); **Rose Robin:** 1 Jilliby SCA 20/6 (DPu).

Good Birding!

TWITCH LIST June 2025

Nick Carson	221	Doug Hocking	161	David Schuemaker	120
Allan Benson	198	Krystyna Lonergan	161	Frik Gautschi	115
Christina Port	185	Margaret Pointer	160	Robyn Price	110
Carole Carpenter	179	Chris Jamieson	159	Diana Hogan	103
Kaye Pointer	174	Daniel McKeon	142	Lynette Callaghan	100
Julie Peksis	171	Judy Clark	128		
John Carpenter	168	Gabrielle Rees	126		

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

BIRDATA SURVEYS YTD 2025

Alan Stuart	170	Daniel McKeon	31	Doug Hocking	19
Graham Nelson	157	Meryl Newton	29	Ann Lindsay	11
Allan Benson	101	Frik Gautschi	27	Michael Scobie	9
Robyn Price	47	C Clutterbuck	22	David Schuemaker	5
Guy Dutson	32	Leeanne Lemke	22		

YTD 2025 number is now 1077 compared with 1305 in 2024.

Alan Stuart has opened up a gap 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.

SWIFT PARROT SURVEYS April 26 to June 8, 2025

259 surveys were completed by 13 observers at 105 of 142 survey sites on the Central Coast. 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. The following number of surveys were completed:

Nick Carson	62	Leeanne Lemke	21	Diane Warman	9	Gary Sanders	6
Allan Benson	33	Guy Dutson	16	Nerida Carter	7	Greg Shaw	2
Daniel McKeon	30	Robyn Price	15	Graham Nelson	7		
Meryl Newton	27	Doug Hocking	12	Frances Westwick	7		

No Swift Parrots were found at Survey sites but there were 4 sightings over this period. One in Brisbane Waters National Park and three on the Somersby Plateau. The next survey commenced on July 19 and will continue until August 30.

SOUTH WYONG SEWAGE TREATMENT WORKS

June Survey

5 observers completed this survey on a horrible windy day. The ponds were very full after rain. 350 waterfowl were on the ponds. The majority (220) were Eurasian Coots with a fair number of Hardhead, and Australasian Grebe along with Black Duck and Chestnut Teal with 22 Hoary-headed Grebe. Highlights were 5 Shoveler and a Peregrine Falcon. The “resident” Musk Duck wasn’t seen, for the second month in a row. Total species count was 40 species which is an about average count.

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

BIRD-A-DAY CHALLENGE

Leeanne Lemke is undertaking the Bird-a-day challenge. This involves photographing a new bird every day. Leeanne is going really well. Up to the 10th July she had photographed a new bird every day. She was up to bird 191. Some of the highlights have been a Spotted Harrier at Mangrove Mountain, a Kelp Gull at Norah Head and an Australasian Bittern at Hexham.

NEW BIRD LIST

A new bird list called *AviList* has been published. It combines IOC, Clements and Birdlife lists world-wide. There have been several species on the IOC list which are now designated as sub species. The most significant one for us is Campbell Albatross, now a sub species of the Black-browed. Other relegated species include Lesser Sooty Owl, Western Ground Parrot, Arafura Shrike-thrush and Western Whistler. Western Whipbird is now one species with four subspecies. The Striated Heron is now the Little Heron. The Olive-backed Sunbird is now the Sahul Sunbird while the Brush Cuckoo is the Sahul Brush Cuckoo.

Trip Report: Terrigal Pelagic – 20 June 2025

Stephanie Owen

A beautifully calm morning greeted us at The Haven as we departed at 6:30am, with a cheerful and enthusiastic crew onboard. Our heading was set to the south of the Kink, allowing the northward current to carry us back over the Kink as we drifted. As we steamed out, we were treated to a few early birds, including a Peregrine Falcon giving us a fitting send-off. The lack of wind and minimal swell, while not always a promising sign in the world of pelagics, made for a pleasant and smooth ride. Bird activity was light on the way out, with mostly individual birds appearing here and there, occasionally joined by small rafts of Australasian Gannets and a few albatrosses drifting in pairs or trios. We paused mid-journey to enjoy a brief encounter with a small family of Risso’s Dolphins and what we believe was a Marlin, seen only fleetingly but enough to generate a buzz of excitement.

Upon reaching the shelf, we were immediately met by Fairy Prions buzzing down the slick - an encouraging sign. Soon after, Albatrosses began arriving at the stern and remained around the boat for much of the day. Our first drift began in 200m of water, with hopeful anticipation for rarities. While none showed, the diversity and close views of several albatross species, at the one time, provided excellent photographic and observational opportunities. Despite best efforts the Prions remained steadfastly Fairy Prions. As activity slowed, we pushed deeper in search of something new. Though nothing out of the ordinary appeared, we were rewarded with the arrival of a Wilson’s Storm-Petrel and very distant glimpses of a Providence Petrel.

We began the return journey at 1:10pm, retracing our drift path in hopes of intercepting anything we might have missed. It was a quiet trip back with the a few Fairy Prions lifting from the deck as we went past. We began encountering Fluttering types the closer we came to shore until about 10 nautical miles from Terrigal, the action suddenly picked up. Paul slowed then stopped the boat as a massive raft of Fluttering Shearwaters took flight—an estimated 400 birds sweeping past us in spectacular fashion.

Almost back at The Haven, the day offered one final highlight: several pods of Humpback Whales made their appearance, along with a few Dolphins leaping completely out of the water - an exhilarating and joyful end to the trip.



Yellow-nosed Albatross
Stephanie Owen

In total 14 bird species were seen beyond The Haven. As follows:

Silver Gull - 1 (1), Crested Tern - 20 (9), Indian Yellow-nosed Albatross - 4 (4), Buller's Albatross - 1 (1), Shy Albatross - 9 (4), Black-browed Albatross (Black-browed) - 12, Black-browed Albatross (Campbell) - 2 (1), Wilson's Storm-Petrel - 3 (3), Providence Petrel - 1 (1), Fairy Prion - 50 (13), Hutton's Shearwater 6 (1), Fluttering Shearwater - 400 approximate count (400), Australasian Gannet - 65, White-bellied Sea-Eagle - 1 (1).

*Parenthesis denotes the maximum number of that species seen at any one time.

THE 'ENDURING' MYSTERY OF HOW BIRDS KNOW WHEN KATI THANDA-LAKE EYRE IS FILLING WITH WATER

Bethanie Alderson

The most arid corner of Australia is about to burst with life, as Kati Thanda-Lake Eyre braces to reach capacity for just the fourth time in the past 160 years.

While the usually-barren salt flats rapidly fill with floodwater from south western Queensland, migratory waterbirds like seagulls, swans, ducks and pelicans will begin descending to the inland oasis in the hundreds of thousands.

So — with the lake expected to become entirely full in the coming months — how do birds know that this once-in-a-generation event is happening?

The question is one University of New South Wales Professor Richard Kingsford has been striving to answer for the majority of his career. He's spent the past four decades monitoring water birds through aerial surveys. "Birds can go incredible distances," Professor Kingsford said. "Unlike water birds in other parts of the world, that sort of regularly migrate between spring and winter — we don't see any of that. These birds just know that it's on in the Lake Eyre Basin and they're ready to go."

Australia's biggest lake is believed to have reached capacity on only three occasions in the past 160 years, but the mass of floodwater now flowing into Kati Thanda-Lake Eyre is raising more than river levels. He said the birds will capitalise on the opportunities to breed at varying times based on the availability of vegetation, invertebrates and fish. "There's that huge smorgasbord of food," Professor Kingsford said. "It sort of triggers that cascade of different types of species coming in at different points. You get these wonderful sort of pulses of productivity depending on which waterbird you're talking about."

Professor Kingsford said — while still complex — tracking waterbirds had become somewhat easier in recent years with the arrival of satellite tracking technology. "These are like little backpacks that you can put on birds and they allow you to track them over a number of years," he said. "And it is one of the great mysteries for Australia is how do these birds know where the water is and head off? We are starting to get some ideas of how they probably do it though."

Ecologist Reece Pedler became fascinated by the movements of waterbirds while living in the remote South Australian town of Roxby Downs for a decade. "I now live up in the Strzelecki Desert ... so I see this stuff first-hand in my life in the outback that birds are flying around and doing these amazing things," Mr Pedler said. "Birds can arrive really rapidly and their ecology is geared to these unpredictable events. But we don't know exactly how they know."

Mr Pedler, who is the coordinator of the Wild Deserts Project in Sturt National Park, previously studied the breeding behaviour of the Banded Stilt using solar-powered trackers as part of his PhD.

The threatened bird species is most commonly found in Australia's saline coastal wetlands, such as the Coroong or at St Kilda Beach, north of Adelaide. "Those banded stilts might be there for months and months on end or live there year-round," Mr Pedler said. "Then suddenly they disappear when places like Lake Eyre or other lakes in the Western Australian desert fill. They fly hundreds or sometimes thousands of kilometres in one fly and they somehow know that there's water there."

Mr Pedler said the abundance of brine shrimp at Kati Thanda-Lake Eyre creates a rare breeding-ground for the threatened species. "They don't breed anywhere else around the coast ... so they have to wait years or decades for those opportunities," he said. "And when they breed, they breed in real style, they have thousands of pairs. But the question of how they know — we didn't quite manage to crack — it still remains one of these enduring mysteries of animal behaviour."

Mr Pedler said while it was once thought the birds only flew after significant wet events, minimal rainfall was enough to trigger the stilts to leave the coast and head inland. "There's some really complex triggers too because this water that's flowing into Kati Thanda-Lake Eyre now fell in western Queensland in the last week of March," he said. "So, the stilts and other water birds that would be turning up at Lake Eyre now are not responding to rainfall or atmospheric queues that have happened in the days prior. There's potentially lots of different mechanisms occurring and it may be that some different groups of birds have different ways of sensing these things."

Several theories of how birds know when Kati Thanda-Lake Eyre is filling exist, including them having the ability to detect infrasound, barometric pressure or smell the flooded salt flats on the breeze. "There's been theories like scouts ... if pelicans send up observers to go and recce inland sites and come back and tell their mates that there's food on offer," Mr Pedler said. "I guess there's some rationale for that because pelicans can fairly easily fly long distances, they get up to high altitude on thermals and then they can cruise and go for a look. It's still an open case and there's a lot more work to understand this really fascinating behaviour."



Professor Kingsford said as more technology emerges and becomes cheaper, the more scientists like himself will be able to shed light on how birds are able to do what they do. "What's most important about that is working out when are the critical times that we need to protect particular habitats in their life cycle," he said. "I'd love to try and work out what's going on and others are too. Although it is rather nice not to know everything or think we know everything because this is a big mystery that's intriguing."

BARN-OWL PROJECT REDUCING FARMERS' RELIANCE ON POISON TO MANAGE RATS AND MICE

By Jennifer Nichols

With a review into the risks of rodent bait in Australia about to be released, an award-winning initiative is using Barn Owls as a natural alternative to control rats and mice on farms.

Wildlife organisations have called for a ban on second-generation anticoagulant rodenticides due to concerns that they kill and harm wildlife that eat baits or poisoned rodents.

Studies here and overseas show some rats and mice are developing genetic resistance to poisonous baits, reducing their effectiveness while potentially increasing their use. But a pilot project in the Northern Rivers, New South Wales, is offering farmers hope of significantly reducing rat numbers in macadamia orchards.

At Banyula, 70 nest boxes — including 12 for owls — span across the property, which has 7,500 macadamia trees and 75 hectares of new plantings of koala habitat and rainforest. Success is monitored by tracking nut damage in the orchards using trail cameras, physically inspecting nest boxes, and examining owl pellets — the regurgitated fur, bones, and feathers the birds cannot digest. "We're finding that 90 per cent [of pellets] is rats and the rest is house mice, which are a really significant pest in the agriculture industry," Mr Duncan said.

Wildlife Health Australia notes increasing reports of toxicities associated with rodenticide exposure in Australian wildlife, including birds, mammals, reptiles and amphibians, and further work is needed to better understand and manage the risks.

Mr Duncan said secondary rodenticides build up in predators' bodies every time they eat a poisoned rodent, affecting their hunting, breeding and survival. As opposed to the days it can take for rodents to bleed to death internally after consuming bait, barn owls are fast and efficient killers. Banyula director Matthew Bleakley said owls had allowed them to reduce rodenticide use, target applications and choose less harmful baits. "To be able to one day get to [be] fully rodenticide free would be amazing," he said.

Late last month, Owls Eat Rats was awarded \$50,000 by Taronga Zoo's Hatch accelerator program, which helps ecopreneurs tackle serious environmental and conservation challenges. Mr Duncan said the grant would help fund academic research and further his goal of mainstreaming nature-based pest control. Mr Duncan planned to replicate the project on the Sunshine Coast, where he lives, and was working with the Australian Macadamia Society. "It's a massive boost for us," he said. "We plan on using it to expand into new territories and generate the evidence that will give the farmers the confidence that we can offer a cheaper and cleaner alternative to poisons."

Wildbnb Wildlife Habitat director David Brook spent a decade perfecting barn owl nesting boxes, prioritising comfort and safety. Each pair of owls needs at least three nesting boxes over a small area to provide variety in their habitat. "We realised that the owls were not only breeding back-to-back — so we had four different clutches of owlets in a 12-month period — but they were bringing in 10 to 15 rats a night to feed the owlets," Mr Brook said. "The next stage of this project is to rigorously investigate the idea. "We're bringing in university and industry partners and looking at just how replicable it is across other landscapes and other industries," Mr Brook said. Mr Brook said wildlife rodenticide poisoning and potentially associated road traffic strikes required more examination. "We're now starting to work with the local wildlife hospitals and with Taronga Zoo and universities to better evaluate the impact of toxic rodenticides on the barn owls," he said

Agricultural chemicals are regulated by the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA). The APVMA is reviewing anticoagulant rodenticides warfarin, coumatetralyl, diphacinone, brodifacoum, bromadiolone, difenacoum, difethialone and flocoumafen, based on public health, worker safety and environmental safety. In a statement, an APVMA spokesperson said it was "preparing the documents for our proposed regulatory decision for the anticoagulant rodenticides review. We expect to publish this in the near future, which will start a three-month public consultation period," the spokesperson said.

