

JUNE ACTIVITIES

CLUB MEETING:

Monday 12th at 7.30pm

Fairy Meadow Community Hall, Cnr. of Cambridge Avenue & Princes H'way Fairy Meadow.

Galveston Featherfest 2017- Bill and Joan Zealey

In planning our trip to Sth America we discovered it was just as cheap to fly back from the Pantanal via Texas and Los Angeles....so we did! Why Texas...because Galveston Island is one of the top locations in the USA for birding and our return flight coincided with their Feather Fest.

Galveston island has a rich variety of natural habitats within its 32 miles' length. The beaches, wetlands, grasslands, woods, ponds, and bays are home to many common year-round bird species, as well as numerous others that visit briefly or for part of the year. The area is truly one of the best places in the USA to bird because the Texas coast is on the Central Flyway, a broad, hourglass-shaped migratory flight path that extends from Alaska to South America. More than three hundred species of birds stop here on their way south or north, and the best months to see them are March and April.

Feather Fest provided Bill and Joan Zealey with four days of excellent birding. The field trips to Texas Dyke, Bolivar Wetlands and High Island allowed us to meet and mingle with some of the top naturalists in the country, including Greg Miller, upon whose exploits the movie "The Big Year" was based.

Although this years Featherfest was a couple of weeks too early for the main migration of warblers the waterbirds and waders more than made up for this. Black skimmers, terns and piping plovers were in evidence along the beach front, while Red-winged Blackbirds were everywhere in the tall grasses. Pelicans, Loons, Grebes and Red-breasted Mergansers were in the major shipping channels. Egrets, Avocets and Herons were seen in the many lagoons. Tanagers, Orioles, Vireos, Thrushes, and Buntings were seen in the small urban reserves.

One of the highlights were great views of Roseate Spoonbills on the predator-free rookery at High Island.

This was a week we could recommend to any birders passing through the southern US.

Please bring a plate of 'goodies' and a mug for supper after the meeting..

MIDWEEK WALK

Wednesday 14th at 9.00am

Leader Terry Edwell

Mt Kembla Ring Track -34.434596, 150.802766 google GPS

Take the freeway to five islands road and head towards the escarpment. Turn right at last set of lights and left at first roundabout which is Cordeaux road. Follow Cordeaux Rd. go though Village, past school and keep going past Dendrobium mine. Continue till road turns sharply and turn left into Cordeaux Rd where it meets Harry Graham drive. Half way to Mount Kembla lookout is a house on left hand side of road there is a parking area directly across the road. Meet at 9 we will carry morning tea and walk as far as we like and return the same way.

In the event of inclement weather phone Terry Edwell on mobile 0414 848 236 8am or after

MONTHLY OUTING

Sunday 18th June at 9.30am

Leader Betty Hudson

Bellawongarah and Fitzroy Falls

Meet at 9.30am at the Old Cemetery/RFS Station on Kangaroo Valley Rd, Bellawongarah. Look for the bright red mail box on the left.

Travel south along the Princes Hwy to Berry and take the Kangaroo Valley road at the southern end of the town. After climbing to the top of the escarpment pass a left turn and continue for approx. 1.25km. The narrow gravel entrance to the concealed cemetery is on the left-hand side, immediately before the red milk can mail box (It is at the end of a straight section of road and before a sweeping right hand bend.) Enter and park in the small reserve by the Rural Fire Station ensuring that we do not cause an obstruction to RFS vehicles.

We will do an easy walk from here through rainforest, possibly finding the logrunner. When we finish, we will continue the drive along Kangaroo Valley Road to the Nowra road before turning right to Fitzroy Falls. From Fitzroy Falls car park we will walk around the picnic area before a walk along the Eastern Rim Track through heath and rainforest gullies. Both morning tea and lunch will in the vicinity of the cars.

Please note that there is a small charge for entry to the Fitzroy Falls Car Park. No parking is allowed on the surrounding streets

In the event of inclement weather phone Betty on 4236 0307 please ring before 7.45am

NEXT COMMITTEE MEETING:

Next Committee Meeting- 19/June 2017 2.00 pm place TBA

Any members with anything they wish to raise are welcome to attend the meeting

Newsletter:

DEADLINE 24th June 2017

For all articles & photos in the next IBOC newsletter PLEASE E-mail contributions:

To Charles Dove newsletter@iboc.org.au or post to 3/15 Shepherd Street, Mollymook 2539.

Ph: 0417 422 302

Illawarra Bird Observers Club Reports

An Autumn Message from the President

Almost halfway through the year. The Autumn Camp at Bingara and Copeton dam was a great success, thanks once again to Betty. A great choice of birding sites and a very relaxed week. For those who didn't make it this time, Copeton is well worth a visit. Once again Tom did sterling service recording the birds. Thanks also to Anne and Alan for organising the Biggest Morning Tea, which we held on the shores of Copeton Dam. Thanks also to all who participated in providing the goodies.

We have also "grasped the nettle" and begun moving our website to Weebly, partly to allow individuals with responsibility for meetings, walks or camps to have some control of their section of the IBOC website. Charlie and Chris will begin the development of the new website with an aim to complete this toward the end of the year.

Many of us are off and travelling, which makes holding regular committee meetings difficult. So far this year it's been very difficult to get a quorum at our meetings..not helped by being one committee member short and the President having to double as Secretary. Fortunately no major decisions have been needed. I'd like to encourage any of our members who can spare one afternoon a month to volunteer to join our Committee so that we can function properly.

I'd also note that I too will be travelling later this year for an extended period and will not be able to run meetings, chair the Committee and handle secretarial work.....therefore for the proper functioning of the club we urgently need a Secretary. The work is not onerous, but it needs to be done by someone other than the President. At no other period in our history have we lacked volunteers for this vital job.

Bill

Mid-week Walk 10th May

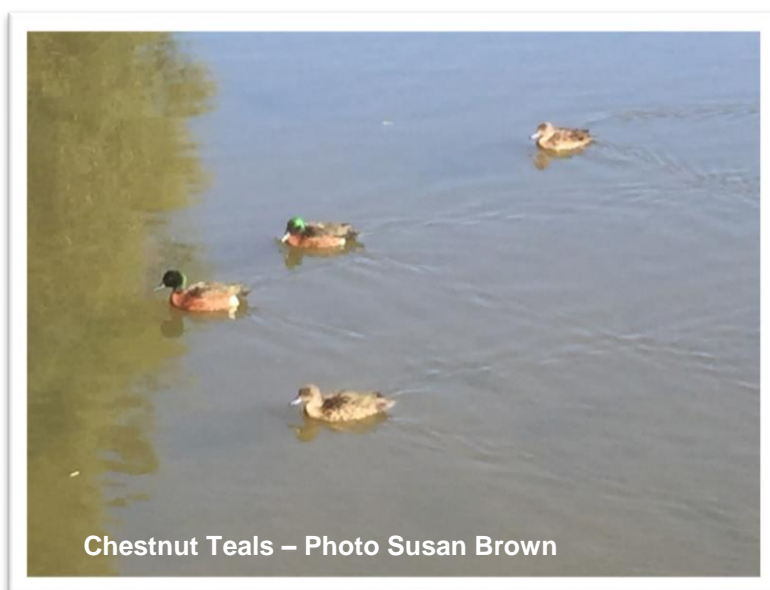
Sandon Point / McCauley's Beach / Hewitt's Creek

A small group (5) gathered at Sandon Point on the 10th for a walk, through to Thirroul and back, along the foreshore rock platform and through the coastal heathland as well as along the walking and cycling track. We were fortunate to have a pleasantly cool day, sunny throughout with a cool breeze.

At Sandon Point the tide was just passed high so the rock platform was not very exposed but the high-water line pushed those seabirds that were in the vicinity closer to the land.

Early in the morning it was pretty quiet with even some anticipated species missing or in low numbers however sightings gradually improved during the morning with the best concentrations in the bushland behind McCauley's Beach and aside Hewitt's Creek. Here there were surprisingly high numbers of Bulbul, together with Finches, a Grey Fantail,

Lewin's Honeyeater and more. Passing through a part of McCauley's Estate, a Kestrel was seen resting on a light pole and Sue Brown's 'Eagle Eyes' spotted a Pelican way up high. As we walked back towards Woodlands Creek and Sandon Point sightings became less frequent other than a few birds that were anticipated all along.



Chestnut Teals – Photo Susan Brown

by Keiran Biddle

Sightings Mid-week Walk 10th May		members 5	species 35
Chestnut Teal	Dusky Moorhen	Superb Fairy-wren	Willie Wagtail
Pacific Black Duck	Sooty Oystercatcher	White-browed Scrubwren	Australian Raven
Spotted Dove	Masked Lapwing	Lewin's Honeyeater	Magpie-lark
Australasian Gannet	Crested Tern	Red Wattlebird	Welcome Swallow
Little Pied Cormorant	Kelp Gull	New Holland Honeyeater	Red-whiskered Bulbul
Pied Cormorant	Silver Gull	Eastern Whipbird	Common Blackbird
Australian Pelican	Sulphur-crested Cockatoo	Grey Shrike-thrush	Red-browed Finch
Cattle Egret	Rainbow Lorikeet	Australian Magpie	European Goldfinch
Nankeen Kestrel	Satin Bowerbird	Grey Fantail	

ARTICLES OF INTEREST

Lyrebird – A Superb Fire Fighter

From: Sustainable Wollongong Issue 38

Did you know that Lyrebirds are SUPERB fire fighters?

Well according to a recent CSIRO publication Daniel et al. Lyrebird foraging could be key in the reduction of fuel loads in forested reserves.

The study considered the relationship between the presence of lyrebirds and the acceleration of leaf litter decomposition and found that on average they were responsible for reducing litter loads by a whopping 25% when compared to sites where the birds were excluded and what's more their foraging or scratching resulted in a considerable patchiness of this leaf litter (fine surface fuels) in such a way that the spread of bushfire was likely to be inhibited.

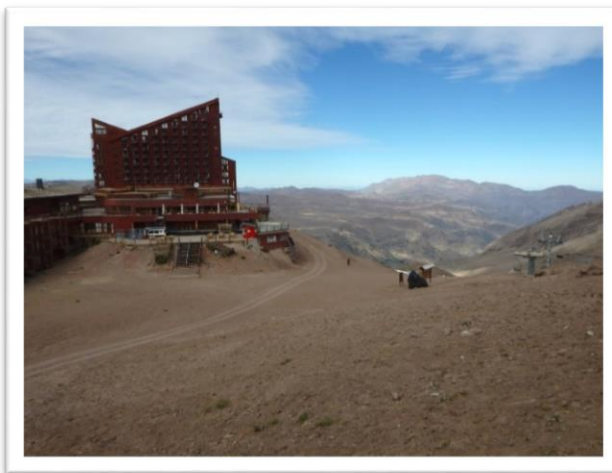
The study also looked at the effect of fire intensity and total area burnt on the lyrebird numbers and found that patchy - low to moderate intensity burns appeared to be more favourable as it provided refuge for the birds to forage safely. In cases where the fire intensity was greater and in particular where the canopy was impacted bird numbers were either significantly reduced or absent, meaning that the birds were not contributing to the breakdown of litter. This is an interesting consideration for fire managers suggesting that by tailoring the burns to achieve these conditions, a longer window between burning and peak fuel loads is achieved. Burning intensity and size is of course a major consideration with any burn as this will affect the ability of the entire ecosystem to recover post fire.

Chilean Condors-

Bill & Joan Zealey

When we were planning our Sth. American trip we stopped over in Santiago for a few days. We signed up for a tourist bus trip up into the foothills of the Andes, in the hope that we might see a few interesting birds... maybe even an Andean Condor. This South American bird is a member of the New World vulture family. As the largest flying bird in the world with a maximum wingspan of 3.3 m., it has always been one of our hopes to see this magnificent bird. However since is considered near threatened by the IUCN due to habitat loss and by secondary poisoning from carcasses killed by hunters we never expected to spot them, even in the distance.

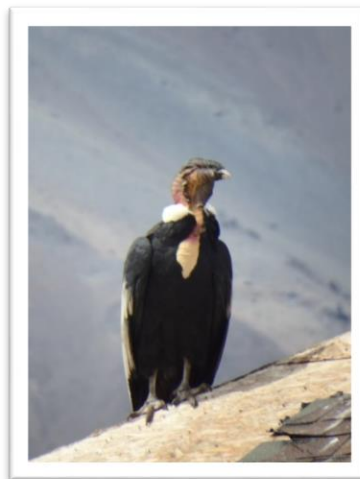
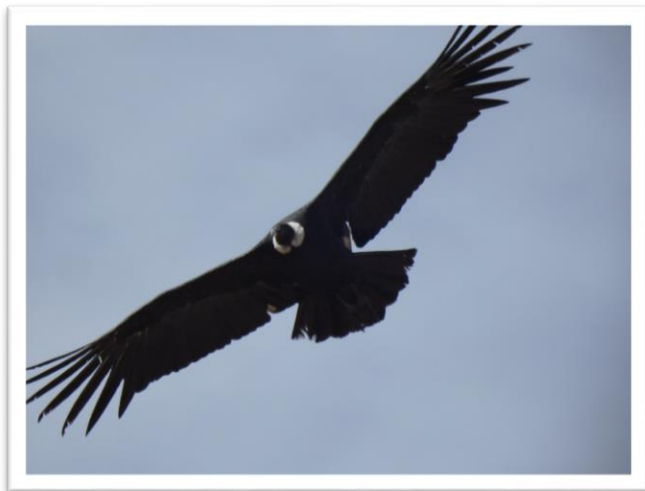
The small bus wended its way up to the ski slopes of Valle Nevado, bare of snow since it was March. Only 70 km from Santiago, at an altitude of 3000m it's a pretty bare place in Autumn.



We walked up the ski slopes for about an hour. We were excited when we identified speck on the horizon as a possible condor, and thought that that's the best view we would get.

As the morning drew on and the sun began to produce thermals we turned back towards the ski lodges. Flying low towards us was an adult Condor, it's ruff of white feathers around the base of the neck and large white patches on the wings, featherless head and neck, making it easily identifiable. Over the next hour or so we were to see about 15 individual birds, both juvenile and adult flying up the valley which was overlooked by the multi-story ski lodges. They perched on the lodge roofs and appeared at one stage to be fighting over carrion and ripping up shingles.

A truly amazing day with a supremely beautiful bird.



BIGnet April 2017 Meeting

The Illawarra Birders hosted the BIGnet meeting in early April 2017. Unfortunately, many IBOC members were travelling and in the event no-one was able represent to IBOC at the meeting. Although the final minutes of the meeting are yet to be made available the following is a short summary of the meetings.

The meeting extended over Saturday and Sunday, 1st & 2nd April.

On the Saturday, the following presentations were made

'The Tiny finch and the Mega Mine' - Dr Stanley Tang, James Cook University

'28 years of conservation of Gould's Petrel; how did we get here, where are we going?' - Dr Nicholas Carlile, Acting Principal Scientist Science Division, Office of Environment and Heritage

'Quoll Spotting in the Illawarra Conservation and research tales' - Dr Katarina Mikac, University of Wollongong

The Conservation Meeting raised issues relating to the following

- Crown Lands/Travelling Stock Reserves
- The Fight for Tallawarra – Michelle Rower, Illawarra Birders
- Key Biodiversity Areas – Peter West, Hastings Birdwatchers
- Biodiversity Conservation Legislation & the Proposed Biodiversity Assessment Method (BAM) – Sue Proust, Hastings Birdwatchers
- Issues Around the Release of Helium Balloons – Gayle Partridge, Far South Coast Birdwatchers

The General Meeting held on the Sunday. Discussions included: -

- Bird Fair, 3-5 November 2017 – Phil Straw, BirdLife Southern NSW & AWSG
Further information could be found at www.birdfair.com.au. Setting up would be on the Thursday, and Phil requested that anyone able to volunteer on the day please contact him.
- Avoiding Clashes with Dates for Branch Events
- It was agreed that David Rower of Illawarra Birders would set an electronic calendar of events and share it with the group.
- Organising Workshops for Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs)
- Allocation of Twitchathon Funds for 2017
- BIGnet Monies
Tom Karplus had circulated a brief on the future of BIGnet finances. There is just over \$8,000 in the account. A survey about what to do with the money had established that there was support to maintain the BIGnet account and that the funds should not be liquidated or donated to another organisation. The consensus was that the funds should be used to fund Pixie and possibly to assist smaller clubs to fund BIGnet meetings.
- Date and Location of Next BIGnet Meeting
The next BIGnet meeting would be held by Birdlife Northern NSW at Urunga. Richard Jordan noted that it is a great shorebird habitat with both Bush and Beach Stone-curlew present.

Spring 2017 Camp Forbes 14th | 21st October 2017

The IBOC Spring 2017 Camp will be held at Forbes Big 4 Caravan Park, 141 Flint Street, Forbes NSW 2871, from **Saturday 14th October to Saturday 21st October 2017**.

The park is situated in a quiet area on the outskirts of Forbes. Travelling from Wollongong, leave the Hume Hwy shortly after Yass, taking the Lachlan Valley Way to Cowra. Turn left at the Mid Western Hwy and then take a right turn to continue on the Lachlan Valley Way to Forbes. The caravan park will be on your left shortly after crossing the Lachlan River.

Forbes has all the usual services and a Visitors Centre at the old railway station.

There are plenty of powered & unpowered sites as well as 10 cabins.

To contact the park ph 1800 641 207 or 02 6852 1055

Web site is www.big4forbesholidaypark.com.au

Accommodation with rates per night linen is supplied on main bed

3 Villa	2 bedrooms QB main 3 bunk beds in 2 nd	sleeps 7	\$138/night for 2
1 <u>Deluxe Bungalow</u>	2 bedrooms, 1 QB & 1 db with bunk over	sleeps 5	\$130/night for 2
4 <u>Bungalows</u>	1 bedroom DB + 4 bunk beds	Sleeps 6	\$120/ night for 2
1 <u>Studio</u>	open plan QB	sleeps 2	\$105/night for 2
2 En-suite cabin old style	DB + 2 bunks	Sleeps 4	\$95/night for 2

All cabins additional persons \$15 per night

An additional Studio cabin is available from Monday 16th to Sat 21st October ONLY

Powered Sites \$35 per night for 2

En-suite Powered Sites \$49 per night for 2

Once you have booked please let Betty know as usual, on 4236 0307, by text on mobile 0432 892 945 or by email elizabethjudson@bigpond.com

The Australian Bird Guide:

obsession and technology breed a tweet treat

Andrew Stafford

It started nearly a decade ago. John Manger, a British expatriate who had spent 20 years at Oxford University Press, had joined the publishing division in the CSIRO, becoming director in late 2005. He was also an avowed bird nerd who'd worked on many large ornithological titles. There were five Australian field guides already on the market but for Manger, that wasn't enough. He decided to do something about it.

Manger contacted Jeff Davies, one of Australia's pre-eminent bird illustrators – and it's probably fair to say that at that point, the birding community held its breath. Davies was a notorious perfectionist, not known for doing anything by halves.

Next Monday, the community will finally exhale, with the publication of *The Australian Bird Guide*. "From the moment I started, people who knew what I'm like started saying, when are you going to finish?" Davies says in his studio in Heidelberg. "It actually annoyed me a little bit, but I'd always reply with a smile, and my answer was always, as long as it takes."

Not that Davies was working alone. Authors Danny Rogers and Peter Menkhurst were brought in, then Rohan Clarke; Davies recommended Peter Marsack and Kim Franklin as co-illustrators. It was a team fit for a gargantuan task: nearly 550 pages and 4700 illustrations of more than 900 species recorded in Australia and its territories. They set themselves five years for the task. It ballooned to eight.

In the old days, birds were illustrated by referring to museum skins. Those days are long gone. Before any contracts were signed, Davies says, "there was a year where I just sat here with no income, collecting photographs, starting to design the book in my head". He says he has collected around half a million images. "That's the reference collection. It's a whole renaissance in birding and our understanding of birds."

Clarke, who was brought on board for his photographic collection as much as his writing skills and status as one of the country's top twitchers, agrees digital photography was the game-changer. "Being able to sit down with 20 images of the key plumage or position or posture [of a single species] just meant we were in an unparalleled position, really."



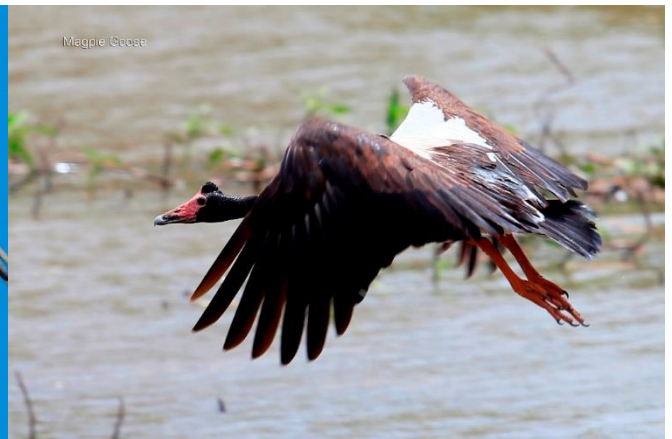
Rose Robin

By Terry Edwell

Another one for my Backyard



Eastern Osprey



Magpie Goose



Grey Goshawk (White Morph)



Eastern Great Egret

- 1) Eastern Osprey
 - 2) Magpie Geese
 - 3) Grey Goshawk
 - 4) Great Egret
- by Charlers dove

MONTHLY SIGHTINGS :- May - June 2017

compiled by Darryl Goldrick

SPECIES	No	DATE	LOCATION	HABITAT	OBSERVER
Whitefronted Tern	5	15/05/20	Wardens Head, Ulladulla	Pelagic	Charles Dove
Cattle Egret	4	5/05/20	Nth Memorial Drive Bul	median strip	Mike Morphett
Eastern Reef Egret	1	1/05/20	Racecourse Beach Ull.	Tidal Rock	Charles Dove
Eastern Osprey	1	27/04/20	Burrill Lake	Power Pole	Charles Dove
Eastern Osprey	1	20/04/20	Primbee	O'head	Walter Boles
Whitebellied Sea Eagle	2 1A 1J	28/04/20	Racecourse Beach Ull.	overhead	Charles Dove
Glossy Black Cockatoo	2	7/01/19	Ulladulla	overhead	Charles Dove
Yellowtailed Black Cockatoo	30	13/04/20	Brownsville	O'head	Bill & Joan Zealey
Yellowtailed Black Cockatoo	3	24/04/20	Thirroul	Garden	Mike Morphett
Common Noddy	1	28/04/20	Wardens Head Hill	Reef	Charles Dove
Sulphurested Cockatoo	6	15/05/20	Lake Illawarra South	Powerlines	Darryl Goldrick
Fan-tailed Cuckoo	1	23/04/20	Wardens Headland Ull.	Open Forest	Charles Dove
Fan-tailed Cuckoo	1	2/05/20	Burrill Lake	Open Forest	Charles Dove
Azure Kingfisher	1	4/05/20	Kings Point Ull.	Foreshore	Charles Dove
Variegated Fairywren	3	3/05/20	Thirroul	Garden	Mike Morphett
Spotted Pardalote	1	2/05/20	Thirroul	Garden	Mike Morphett
Yellowfaced Honeyeater	1	5/05/20	Thirroul	Garden	Mike Morphett
Eastern Whipbird	2	3/05/20	Thirroul	Garden	Mike Morphett
Varied Sittella	15	7/01/19	Ulladulla	Open Forest	Charles Dove
Blackfaced Cuckoo-shrike	15+	March-May	Lake Illawarra South	Powerlines	Darryl Goldrick
Olive Whistler	1m	4/05/20	Porters Crk Road	Dirt Road	Charles Dove
Rose Robin	1	4/05/20	Kings Point Ull.	Foreshore	Charles Dove
Red-whiskered Bulbul	1	23/04/20	West Nowra	Open Forest	C Dove C Brand
Mistletoebird	1f	7/05/20	Ulladulla	Open Forest	Charles Dove

Last minute additions

Cattle Egret	18	16/05/20	Holy Spirit Playing Field	Thirroul	Mike Morphett
Whitethroated Treecreeper	1	15/05/20	back garden Binia	Thirroul	Mike Morphett
Green Catbird	1	15/05/20	back garden Binia	Thirroul	Mike Morphett
Yellowthroated Scrubwren	1	19/05/20	Front Garden	Thirroul	Mike Morphett

Please remember to forward all your sighting that you think would be appropriate and not necessarily a rare sighting To Darryl Goldrick

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL NOW DUE SEPARATE FORM AVAILABLE



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