



### Eastern Spinebill

Scientific name: *Acanthorhynchus tenuirostris*

Family: Meliphagidae

Order: Passeriformes

### Description

The Eastern Spinebill is most easily recognised by its very long, fine, down-curved beak and energetic flight, during which its white outer tail feathers are prominent. Males have a grey-black crown which extends in a black



photo by Ron Imisides

line on either side of the breast. The breast and throat are white, with a rufous patch in the centre of the throat. The wings and lower back are dark grey and the underparts and upper back are buff. Females are similar to males but have less distinct markings.

### Similar species

Crescent Honeyeater, Tawny-crowned Honeyeater, Western Spinebill (in Western Australia).

### Distribution

The Eastern Spinebill's range is generally east of the Great Dividing Range from Cooktown in Queensland to the Flinders Ranges in South Australia.

### Habitat

The Eastern Spinebill prefers heath, forest and woodland.

### Seasonal movements

Largely sedentary, but undergoes some local movements, especially away from higher elevations in autumn/winter.

### Feeding

The Eastern Spinebill feeds on insects and nectar while perched or while hovering. Nectar is obtained from a wide array of flowers, including grevilleas, but its beak is particularly well-suited to extracting nectar from tubular flowers such as epacrids.

### Breeding

The Eastern Spinebill's nest is a small cup of twigs, grass and bark, combined with hair and spider's web, built in a tree fork, generally between 1 and 5 metres from the ground. Only the female builds the nest and incubates the eggs, but both parents feed the young when they hatch.

*(Eastern Spinebill information; supplied courtesy of Birds in backyards)*

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**'ONE GOOD TERN  
DESERVES ANOTHER'**

ILLAWARRA BIRD  
OBSERVERS' CLUB INC.

POSTAL ADDRESS: P.O. BOX 56  
FAIRY MEADOW, N.S.W. 2519  
[www.iboc.org.au](http://www.iboc.org.au)

Founded in 1977

*Club's Aim: To join together people with a common interest who wish to further their knowledge and enjoyment of the bird life around them.*

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## SEPTEMBER ACTIVITIES

### Club Meeting –

Monday 13<sup>th</sup> September 7.30pm - Fairy Meadow Community Hall.  
Cnr of Cambridge Avenue & Princes H'way Fairy Meadow.

A presentation by Charles Dove ' Birds of Eastern Australia 2010' . 'Some of the wonderful birds of Australia'

Come and see the great photography of Charles, presented in full and glorious colour complimented by some background sounds.

Charles is our newsletter editor so you will know that this presentation will be of an exceptional standard.

Alan Cousins (President).

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### September 2010 Mid Week Walk

Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> September 2010.

#### **The Cascades Track Macquarie Pass N.P.**

Leader Betty Hudson.

Meet at 9.00am at the car park on the right hand (northern) side at the bottom of Macquarie Pass. From Wollongong take the Freeway south to the Yallah roundabout and turn right onto the Illawarra Highway. At the traffic lights in Albion Park turn right and continue until the 100km is replaced by 60km speed limit. The car park is shortly on the right. Bring a carry morning tea and insect repellent.

This is a walk through rainforest and tall forest along side a creek, which should have plenty of water after the prolonged wet.

Contact Betty on 0432 892 945

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### September 2010 Monthly Outing

Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> September 2010

#### **Bellawongarah Cambewarra Lookout & Bomaderry Creek**

Leader Betty Hudson

Meet at 9.00am 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 1km, the entrance to the cemetery is on the left hand side. Enter and park in the small reserve by the Rural Fire Station ensuring that we do not cause an obstruction

We will do a short walk from here possibly finding the logrunner. When we finish we will drive a few km's to Cambewarra Lookout where a café provides a good morning tea if you so desire, good birding along the track up to the lookout as well as spectacular views. Another short walk will start at Bomaderry Creek Nerang Road Bomaderry, followed by lunch in the picnic area and then a longer walk along the creek where Rock Warblers have been seen.

Bring lunch and morning tea. The walk will finish around 2.30pm.

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### September 2010 Committee Meeting – 7.30pm on Monday September 27<sup>th</sup> 2010

The September committee will be at Charles & Janina Dove, 2/39 Purry Burry Avenue Primbee Ph 4275 2383. Interested members welcome.

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### September 2010 Newsletter –

Deadline for Articles and **Photos** in the next IBOC newsletter is Friday 27<sup>th</sup> August 2010  
E-mail contributions to Charles Dove [newsletter@iboc.org.au](mailto:newsletter@iboc.org.au) or post to 2/39 Purry Burry Ave. Primbee 2502. Ph: 4275 2383

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#### 'FOOTNOTE'

There has been some questions as to the reference to the sighting of a 'Pacific Blue Whistler' in the Leeton area. To clarify, this was a light hearted reference to a freight train that passed through.

It was in fact a Union Pacific train which is **blue in colour** and the driver sounded its whistle as it passed. Apologies if this reference caused any confusion or offence.

Alan Cousins (President)

# REPORTS

## Monthly Meeting Report

*Alan Cousins*

### **NATIVE TREES OF THE SOUTH COAST**

Our guest speaker for the August meeting was Kevin Mills who is well known to many members of IBOC and his presentation neatly complimented the excellent introduction presentation by Charles Dove who had put together photographs of things other than birds that we have seen on IBOC outings - I believe that we only saw one bird picture and they were silhouetted. As Charles stated to me this compilation was a complete fluke!

Who would have thought that nearly 200 native tree species grow on the south coast of NSW from Sydney to Batemans Bay. This must nearly equal the number of bird species!

The trees can vary in size from the Mallee at just 2 metres to trees over 40 metres tall, the tallest being 53 metres. This area has more species of trees than the whole of Europe.

We were shown pictures of numerous tree specimens and their forms and told that some had been renamed (sound like birds?).

Trees have a big impact on the environment and can provide for example ornamentation, shelter, shade, breeding (nests), habitat (logs and litter) and perches for raptors. The list of animals that use trees is endless and includes birds, bats, frogs, arboreal animals and invertebrates etc.

This was a very interesting and thought provoking presentation which raised questions from the floor and also the thought that on bird watching expeditions we may also give more than a glance to the trees that we are looking at birds in and also those trees around us.

### **MOEYAN HILL BERRY 11<sup>th</sup> AUGUST 2010**

*Lorraine Pincus*

Twelve members met on Moeyan Hill in Berry, an area of tall eucalyptus forest that has been preserved from suburbia. The agreement was to walk to the top of Moeyan Hill and then retrace our steps back to the cars. It had rained the night before but thankfully it was reasonably dry under foot.

Private gardens surrounds the start of the walk where little birds are seen Red-browed Finch, Grey Fantail, Superb Fairy-wren, and the bigger birds, Magpie-lark, Eastern Yellow Robin, Lewin's Honeyeater and Laughing Kookaburra.

The track wanders up a small rise surrounded by tall eucalyptus, the small birds of the tree tops, Spotted and Striated Pardalotes were spotted, then down into a dry creek bed where an Eastern Whipbird was heard and Variegated Fairy-wren seen.

The tall eucalyptus was in flower many honeyeaters were seen, Rainbow Lorikeet, Yellow-faced Honeyeater, Eastern Spinebill.

White-bellied Cuckoo-shrike was seen and photographed by Charlie Dove, but not confirmed until Thursday when looking through his photos.

Morning tea was had at the cars, then decided to spend the rest of the morning at



Camp Quality Park in Berry. We walked along the river where a Fan-tailed Cuckoo, White-browed Scrub-wren were clearly heard and seen, a Rose Robin and Golden Whistler were happy to stay. Walking back to the cars, Yellow-rumped Thornbills were feeding in the grass.

Thank you Betty for an enjoyable walk.

**Bird List Moeyan Hill**

Indian Peafowl (Peacock)	Laughing Kookaburra	Eastern Whipbird
Black Swan	White-throated Treecreeper	White-bellied Cuckoo-shrike
Australian Wood Duck	Superb Fairy-wren	Golden Whistler – E Race
Spotted Dove	Variiegated Fairy-wren	Grey Shrike-thrush
Crested Pigeon	Brown Gerygone	Australian Magpie
Wonga Pigeon	Brown Thornbill	Grey Fantail
Rainbow Lorikeet	Spotted Pardalote	Magpie-lark
Crimson Rosella	Striated Pardalote	Eastern Yellow Robin
Eastern Rosella	Lewin's Honeyeater	Silvereye
Fan-tailed Cuckoo	Yellow-faced Honeyeater	Red-browed Finch

**Bird List Camp Quality Park**

Galah	Yellow-faced Honeyeater	Australian Magpie
Fan-tailed Cuckoo	Little Wattlebird	Grey Fantail
Laughing Kookaburra	Red Wattlebird	Australian Raven
White-browed Scrubwren	Eastern Whipbird	Magpie-lark
Yellow-rumped Thornbill	Golden Whistler – E Race	Australian Raven
Lewin's Honeyeater	Grey Shrike-thrush	Rose Robin

**Wirrimbirra Sanctuary and Avon Dam 15 August 2010***by Terry Edwell*

The walk at Wirrimbirra Sanctuary, Bargo was attended by 15 members. First sightings were on the roadside near the beginning of the track. White-Winged Choughs and Common Bronzewing were drinking from a rain puddle. The track was quite overgrown in places but it was an easy walk. The birds could be heard, high in the trees and Yellow-Faced Honeyeaters were identified, but it was impossible to see some of the birds as they were darting around too quickly in the canopy. Two Pacific Black Ducks and a Pied Cormorant were sighted on a small dam. Mostly common varieties of birds were present, but there were some good sightings, such as White-Eared, Yellow-

Tufted and White-Naped Honeyeaters. Neil found us a Scarlet Robin, which was my favourite for the day.

We then drove to Avon Dam and had lunch. In between arriving and a rain squall, six birds were sighted, but no Rock Warblers. On an earlier visit by a few of our club members, quite a few Rock Warblers were present, feeding around the picnic area. Our day was ended by a storm of wind and rain. As usual, it was a very enjoyable day. It was good to share the day with a new member, who will join us whenever she can, so welcome to Janelle Barker.

Thanks to all for their company, and thanks to Betty for leading us. 41 birds were sighted for the day.

**Bird List Wirrimbirra**

Pacific Black Duck	Yellow Thornbill	Golden Whistler – E race
Common Bronzewing	Spotted Pardalote	Grey Shrike-Thrush
Crested Pigeon	Striated Pardalote	Grey Butcherbird
Peaceful Dove	Eastern Spinebill	Australian Magpie
Little Pied Cormorant	Yellow-faced Honeyeater	Grey Fantail
Pied Cormorant	White-eared Honeyeater	Willie Wagtail
Sulphur-crested Cockatoo	Yellow-tufted Honeyeater	Australian Raven
Crimson Rosella	Red Wattlebird	Magpie-lark
Eastern Rosella	White-naped Honeyeater	White-winged Chough
Fan-tailed Cuckoo	Eastern Whipbird	Scarlet Robin
Laughing Kookaburra	Varied Sitella	Welcome Swallow
Variiegated Fairy-Wren	Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike	

**Bird List Avon Dam**

Azure Kingfisher	Brown Thornbill	Rose Robin
Superb Fairy-Wren	Pied Currawong	Eastern Yellow Robin



## OCTOBER BIRD CAMP

### Sandy Hollow Camp 23<sup>rd</sup>-30<sup>th</sup> October 2010

The October 2010 Camp is being held at Sandy Hollow Tourist Park, Golden Hwy, Sandy Hollow, 2333. Phone 02 6547 4575. Or book on line at [www.sandyhollow.com.au](http://www.sandyhollow.com.au) There are plenty of caravan & tent sites still available. Unfortunately no cabins or motel rooms are still available.

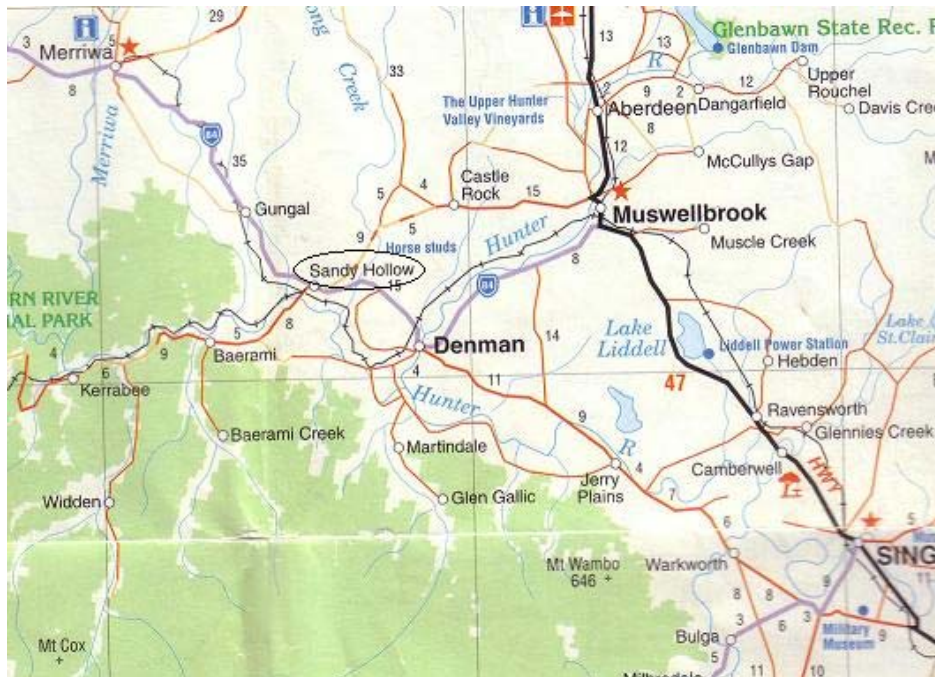
Everyone is welcome to come and join us for a week of interesting and rewarding bird watching in the Upper Hunter Valley.

Phone Betty 02 423603 or 0432 892 945

Sandy Hollow is N.W. of Denman and adjacent to Wollemi NP and Goulburn River NP as well as Munghorn Gap Nature reserve, where over 164 species of birds have been recorded. The area is a meeting point for both coastal and western species. The Golden Hwy connects Singleton with Mudgee passing through Denman and Ulan.

If possible, please let me know if you do decide to join us.

### Location Map for Sandy Hollow



# ITEMS & LETTERS OF INTEREST

*Science Daily (June 24, 2010)* — The evolution of bird bills is related to climate according to latest research by the University of Melbourne, Australia and Brock University, Canada..[Extract from Article](#)

By examining bill sizes of a diverse range of bird species around the world, researchers have found that birds with larger bills tend to be found in hot environments, whilst birds in colder environments have evolved smaller bills. The study led by Dr Matt Symonds of the Department of Zoology at the University of Melbourne and Dr Glenn Tattersall of the Department of Biological Sciences at Brock University provides evidence that maintaining body temperature in a bird's natural environment may have shaped the evolution of bird bills.

The size and shape of these distinctive structures are usually explained by their role in feeding and mate attraction. However, previous research shows

bird bills have a third, less appreciated function, as organs of heat exchange.

Dr Glenn Tattersall says we know, from our thermal imaging studies that birds like toucans and geese can lose a large amount of their body heat through their bills.

"Unlike humans they don't sweat but can use their bills to help reduce their body temperature if they overheat."

"We then wondered whether this function had evolutionary consequences, and sought to compare bill sizes across a whole range of species," says Dr Tattersall.

The 214 species examined comprised diverse groups including toucans, African barbets and tinkerbirds, Australian parrots, grass finches, penguins, Canadian gamebirds, gulls and terns.

"Across all species, there were strong links between bill length and both latitude, altitude and environmental temperature," Dr Matt Symonds says. "Species that have to deal with colder temperatures have smaller bills."

"This suggests that there is an evolutionary connection between the size of the birds' bills and their role in heat management," he says.

Although it's possible that large bills have evolved to help shed heat loads and prevent overheating in hot climates, we think it's more likely that cold temperatures impose a constraint on the size of bird beaks," Dr Tattersall says.

"It simply might be too much of a liability to carry around a big radiator of heat energy in a cold environment."

The research validates a 133-year-old ecological theory called Allen's rule, which predicts that animal appendages like limbs, ears, and tails are smaller in cold climates in order to minimize heat loss.

Dr Symonds says Allen's rule has never been tested with this large a group of animals and was more anecdotal.

"This is the first rigorous study of its kind to test this theory and to show that bird bills have evolved in this manner."

The paper is published online this week in the journal *American Naturalist* and will be in the journal's August 2010 edition.

### Trip report Haywards Bay – more there than just water.

Truscott Last Sunday (June 27) I wandered again to Haywards Bay where houses are inexorably consuming our open space and wetlands. Hopefully now that Kevin "Mr Big Australia" is gone, the pressure to destroy more habitat in a relentless push to a 'sardine can' future for us all, may lessen; but I digress..... Wandering across open grassy meadows numerous pipits were busy insectivoring.

For the second time in a few weeks, a marsh harrier flew overhead and Black-shouldered Kites were busy. Lots of ducks in the ponds too – mostly chestnut teal. There was much high-pitched noise coming from the casuarinas ahead. It sounded like mistletoe birds but I do not usually associate casuarina forests with these red and blue flowerpeckers. Indeed the trees were thick with male and female MBs. It became clear why when I looked closer. Not only were there swathes of mistletoe on the she-oaks, it was in flower!

Roger

Later I got a close view of a Grey Goshawk as it perched a metre above the ground cover in the same forest intent on some ground-dwelling prey. A truly beautiful, sleek bird with bright yellow lores and legs. A magpie impressed its friends by trying to dislodge the goshawk from a branch near the lake but the raptor did not take much notice. Casuarina-friendly Yellow Thornbills flocked past. A highlight came as I took a short detour across a grassy patch. I stopped and could hear what sounded like a Black Bird's clucking alarm call. Eventually I spotted the singer low down in lantana on the grassy verge. Through the bins it was a Tawny Grassbird clucking away. It stayed for several minutes then skulked off. These birds are rarely seen (by me anyway).

The next time I visit there will be more houses, and less land for other birds and animals. Where will it end?

19 August 2010

### Smuggler jailed for £70k peregrine falcon egg theft

Lendrum was arrested at Birmingham International Airport while waiting for a flight

#### Egg smuggler was 'wildlife criminal'

A man has been sentenced to 30 months in prison after admitting attempting to smuggle rare bird eggs out of Britain.

Jeffrey Lendrum, 48, from York Close, Towcester, Northamptonshire, was found in possession of 14 peregrine falcon eggs when he was detained on 3 May. He was arrested at Birmingham Airport as he waited for a flight to Dubai. Lendrum was caught with the eggs, valued at £70,000 on the black market, strapped to his body after he was seen acting suspiciously by a cleaner. The former member of the Rhodesian SAS had wrapped the eggs, which had been stolen from a nest in south Wales, in socks before taping them to his chest to keep them warm.

After they were seized by police, 11 of the eggs were successfully hatched and the highly protected chicks released back in to the wild, Warwick Crown Court heard. Lendrum admitted one count of trying to export the eggs and another of illegally stealing them from a nest on the side of a mountain in Rhondda. At first he claimed they were chicken eggs he had bought at Waitrose before trying to fool police by saying he used them to treat his bad back.







Powerful Owl



by Dave Stephens

Photo taken 4.30p.m. on Monday 2nd Aug. Powerful owl in a Liquid amber tree in front garden of house next to the 'Reject Shop' in Boree St. Ulladulla. Dave Stephens

Russell Hannah's daughter in Law Margaret has been busy with her new camera in Manyana with some great Shots Square-tailed Kite Marg



Red-whiskered Bul Bul

Andrew Wood



Eastern Whipbirds



Satin Bowerbirds



Bassian Thrush

by Ron Imisides



Eastern Yellow Robin



New Holland Honeyeater



Ron Imisides had a great day over Primbee Sand Dunes with 30 species in around 3hrs Mid August.

Rock Warbler

by Charles Dove



Revisited Avon Dam Wed 18<sup>th</sup> August and the Rock Warblers were in the Car Park early Afternoon

Gang-gang Cockatoo



Gang-gang's were up at Budderoo National Park in Numbers on a very windy Friday 20<sup>th</sup> August great to see them Charles Dove

Western Gerygone



Mark from CBOC sent a nice Pic of a Western Gerygone from Shane's Park in Sydney, not often seen in this region. Mark Fuller, Editor CBOC

**Bird List for August 2010**

Compiled by Martin Cocker

SPECIES	NUMBER	DATE	LOCATION	HABITAT	OBSERVER
White-headed Pigeon	6	31-Jul-10	Jerrara Dam	Forest	Ian McKinley
Topknot Pigeon	20+	09-Aug-10	Mt Keira Ring Track	Rainforest	Wal Emery
Bar-shouldered Dove	10	31-Jul-10	Jerrara Creek Dam	Bush	Chris Chafer
Bar-shouldered Dove	2	09-Aug-10	Farmborough Hts	Garden	Chris Blatch
Bar-shouldered Dove	9	08-Aug-10	Primbee	Forest/dunes	Ron Imisides
Rose-crowned Fruit-Dove	2	31-Jul-10	Jerrara Creek Dam	Bush	Chris Chafer
Wandering Albatross	1	22-Jul-10	Kiama Blowhole Headland, Kiama	Inshore	Stan Brown
Black-browed Albatross	3	22-Jul-10	Kiama Blowhole Headland, Kiama	Inshore	Stan Brown
Shy Albatross	4	22-Jul-10	Kiama Blowhole Headland, Kiama	Inshore	Stan Brown
Striated heron	1	07-Aug-10	Griffins Bay, Lake Illawarra,	Riparian	Martin Cocker
Striated heron	1	07-Aug-10	Berkeley Boat Harbour	Riparian	Martin Cocker
Eastern Osprey	2	02-Jul-10	Swan Lake	Lakeside	Brian & Barbara Hales
Eastern Osprey	1	02-Jul-10	Huskisson	River	Sylvia & David Garlic
Collared Sparrowhawk	2	22-Aug-10	Little Bay, Warilla	Overhead	Martin Cocker
Collared Sparrowhawk	1	20-Jul-10	Primbee	Garden	Ron Imisides
Collared Sparrowhawk	1	08-Aug-10	Primbee	Forest/dunes	Ron Imisides
Grey Goshawk	1	09-Aug-10	Excelsior Forest, Thirroul	Overhead	Mike Morphet
Grey Goshawk	2	07-Aug-10	Bulli	Rainforest	Roger Truscott
Grey Goshawk	1	08-Aug-10	Primbee	Forest/dunes	Ron Imisides
Brown Falcon	1	09-Aug-10	Helensburgh	Overhead	Darryl Goldrick
Australian Pied Oystercatcher	6	15-Jul-10	Windang Estuary	Estuarine	Martin Cocker
Australian Pied Oystercatcher	1	08-Jul-10	Windang Estuary	Estuarine	Martin Cocker
Sooty Oystercatcher	1	15-Jul-10	Windang Estuary	Estuarine	Martin Cocker
Sooty Oystercatcher	1	22-Aug-10	Windang Estuary	Estuarine	Martin Cocker
Red-capped Plover	25	15-Jul-10	Windang Estuary	Estuarine	Martin Cocker
Red-capped Plover	15	08-Jul-10	Windang Estuary	Estuarine	Martin Cocker
Red-capped Plover	6	22-Aug-10	Windang Estuary	Estuarine	Martin Cocker
Double-banded Plover	15	15-Jul-10	Windang Estuary	Estuarine	Martin Cocker
Double-banded Plover	40	08-Jul-10	Windang Estuary	Estuarine	Martin Cocker
Double-banded Plover	0	22-Aug-10	Windang Estuary	Estuarine	Martin Cocker
Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoo	3	Mid July	Farmborough Hts	Overhead	Andrew Wood
Long-billed Corella	200+	31-Jul-10	Calderwood	Rural	Chris Chafer
Powerful Owl	1	09-Aug-10	Excelsior Forest, Thirroul	Heard	Mike Morphet
Azure Kingfisher	1	07-Aug-10	Griffins Bay, Lake Illawarra,	Riparian	Martin Cocker
Noisy Pitta	1	27-Jul-10	Mt Pleasant	Rainforest	Wal Emery
Green Catbird	1	07-Aug-10	Wollongong Botanical Garden	Forest remnant	Ian McKinley
Australian Logrunner	1	24-Jul-10	Grevillea Gardens, Bulli	Forest	Nerida Hudspith
Australian Logrunner	2	25-Jul-10	Corrimal	Rainforest	Wal Emery
White-bellied Cuckoo-shrike	1	11-Aug-10	Moeyan Hill Track	Rural Residential	Charles Dove
Australasian Figbird	3	09-Aug-10	Jamberoo	Garden	Kevin Mills
Dusky Woodswallow	20	31-Jul-10	Calderwood	Rural	Chris Chafer
Spangled Drongo	1	08-Aug-10	Primbee	Forest/dunes	Ron Imisides
Rose Robin	1	07-Aug-10	Bulli	Rainforest	Roger Truscott
Rose Robin	1	30-Jul-10	Jamberoo	Garden	Tony Loader
Bassian Thrush	1	04-Aug-10	Excelsior Forest, Thirroul	Forest	Mike Morphet
Common Blackbird	1	08-Aug-10	Primbee	Forest/dunes	Ron Imisides

Spring is fast approaching so send in your first sightings of the summer migrants. Recent visits to Windang over the past three weeks have seen the numbers of Double-banded Plovers dwindle to nil, maybe the helping hand of the recent westerlies and the occasional warm day was too much for them to resist. Recent walks around the Lake have also raised the question about the complete absence of Black-winged stilts that have been resident in recent years, they must be out west taking advantage of the recent floods!

Many thanks for all your records please continue to send them to cocker@speedlink.com.au