

# Birdlife Shoalhaven Newsletter

Summer 2016



## Hudsonian Godwit



**Photo by Dimitris Bertzeletos**

## In this Newsletter

This season's newsletter is dominated by articles about Lake Wollumboola - with an update on the latest battles to prevent development in the lake's catchment, and a couple of articles about its most recent rare visitors - the Hudsonian Godwit from the Americas, and the Paradise Shelduck from across the ditch.

Also included is an article about Twitchathon 2015, and a report about staying at Bowra Sanctuary in Queensland.

We also have some info about the upcoming branch AGM, the chance to pick up some free books, and a trip to Cape York being organised by Illawarra Birders.

There is also an article about Lyrebirds and their calls, as well as updates about other conservation issues that are happening in the Shoalhaven.

Contributions / suggestions / criticisms / feedback is always welcome.

Enjoy!

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## Contributions

If you have any information about conservation issues, or if you would like to share some of your birding experiences, travel stories or anecdotes with fellow members, please send details to the editor at [shoalhaven@birdlife.org.au](mailto:shoalhaven@birdlife.org.au) with any related photos, drawings or maps.

In addition, if you have any bird photographs you would like to share, please send them in as well. This includes photos of unidentified birds that could be used in our "What Bird is This" section.

## Acknowledgements

Thank you to all the BirdLife Shoalhaven members who contributed articles to this newsletter, and also to those people who supplied images. These include - Christine Rigg, Graeme Chapman, Charles Dove, Frances Bray, Tom Kaar, Marg Hamon, Chris Grounds, Barry Virtue, Karen Davis, Sue Tolley and Christine Rigg.

Special thanks to Dimitris Bertzeletos for the use of his images.

Apologies to those contributors whose text or images may not have been acknowledged. If you have not been acknowledged please let the editor know.

## Disclaimer

The information in articles submitted for publication in this newsletter is accepted in good faith and although the editor has endeavoured to verify the accuracy of all information, BirdLife Shoalhaven accepts no responsibility for any errors, inaccuracies or exaggerations that may be contained within articles in this newsletter.

Also, the views expressed in this newsletter are those of the editor, contributors or branch members. They may not be the views of BirdLife Australia.

## Errors

If you find any errors - typographical or factual - in this newsletter, please let the editor know. The beauty of an electronic newsletter is that it can be amended after publication.

## Cover Photo

The cover photo of the rare Hudsonian Godwit seen in December and January at Lake Wollumboola was taken by Dimitris Bertzeletos. The underwing pattern is diagnostic, and really the only way to positively identify the bird in the field. A fantastic photo!

## Editorial

- Brett Davis

I am sure that all of you will remember the heart-warming story of Brooklyn, the bulldog who was trapped down a wombat hole on Ben's Walk in Nowra for a couple of days late last year before being rescued by volunteers after police, ambulance and specialist rescue firefighters abandoned their rescue effort.

The rescue was heavily featured on local television and radio, and made the news in Sydney and Melbourne.

The efforts of the rescuers were universally lauded, and the dog's owner - Charlie Griffith, an unemployed man temporarily living at the Nowra Showground - became a media darling during and immediately after the rescue.

The whole incident was portrayed by all of the media as a feel-good story about a heroic rescue by selfless bystanders of a beloved pet belonging to a man who was down on his luck. Unfortunately, this type of one-sided coverage is typical of the media in the Shoalhaven.

It was never mentioned that Brooklyn had been caught chasing wombats on several occasions by his owner. It was never mentioned that Brooklyn had not been on a leash when it had attacked the wombat and followed it down its hole. It was never mentioned that dogs off-leash are not allowed on Ben's Walk. It was never mentioned that Brooklyn was unregistered.

A couple of days after the rescue it was revealed that due to the publicity generated by the incident, a woman who recognized Charlie Griffith claimed he was a wanted criminal in Victoria who had allegedly almost beaten her sister-in-law to death, breaking all of her ribs and pulling out her hair, causing her to be in hospital a fortnight.

It was later revealed that the abandoned rescue effort had cost approximately \$70,000, and that the locals who had flocked to the scene and dug the bulldog from the ground had risked their own lives due to the danger of the hole that they were digging collapsing around them.

I don't know if the woman's claims are accurate, but it is a timely reminder that what the media tells us, and what passes as "news" is not necessarily the entire story. The media has its own agenda, and "truth" is not always on it.

If the story had been portrayed as "vicious, unregistered, unleashed dog belonging to criminal on the run attacks defenceless wildlife" it would not have enhanced the "pet friendly, unspoilt Shoalhaven, bring your dog and camp on the beach" message of our tourism department.

With this in mind, if an un-leashed dog kills an endangered, beach-nesting bird - how will it be reported?

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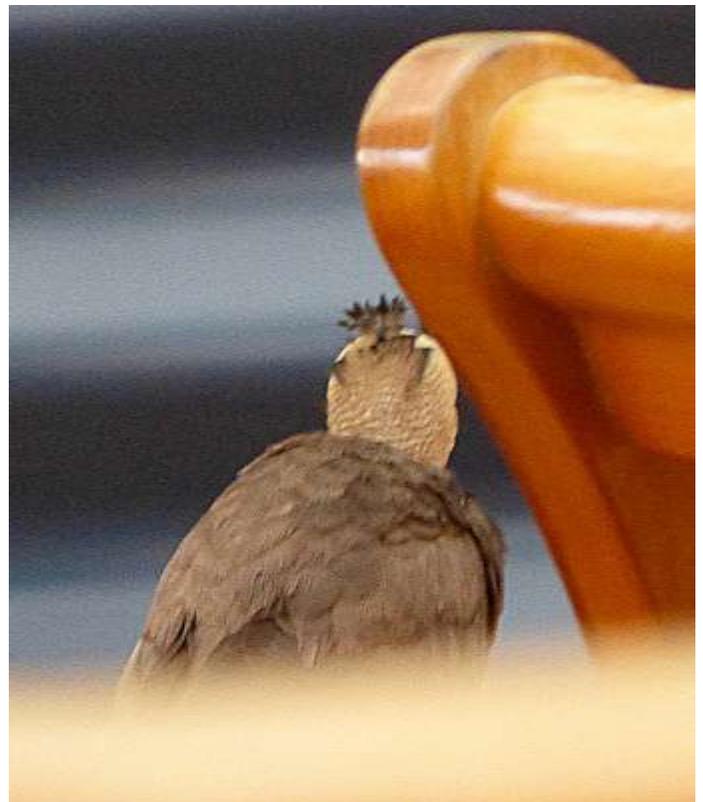


Dog Food?

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## What Bird Was This?

- photo by Christine Rigg



We are pretty sure that the bird shown above was an Indian Myna - having a very bad hair day!

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## Free Books!

Shoalhaven identity Bob Harnwell has a number of books relating to birds that he would like to pass on to someone who will appreciate them - preferably a young person. If you are interested, email [shoalhaven@birdlife.org.au](mailto:shoalhaven@birdlife.org.au) and I will forward you Bob's email address. First in - best dressed!

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## 12 Day Cape York Birdwatching Trip

Penny Potter, the Secretary of Illawarra Birders is organizing a trip to Cape York in September for Illawarra Birders through Simon Mustoe of Wild Diaries, and has opened up the trip to any BirdLife Shoalhaven members who would like to go.

It's a 12 day guided camping trip with tents, four wheel drive, bird guide and most food provided. It's a small group tour, with 6 people already booked in, so there are only another four or possibly five places available.



**Target Birds:** Star Finch, Black-backed Butcherbird, Golden-shouldered Parrot, Eclectus Parrot, Red-cheeked Parrot, Frilled Monarch, Green-backed Honeyeater, Tawny-breasted Honeyeater, Fawn-breasted Bowerbird, Black-winged Monarch, Trumpet Manucode, Yellow-legged Flycatcher, Tropical Scrubwren, Magnificent Riflebird, Yellow-billed Kingfisher, Marbled Frogmouth, White-faced Robin, Palm Cockatoo (in photo above), White-streaked Honeyeater, Spotted Whistling Ducks.

People need to book their own flights / transport to and from Cairns. Interested parties will need to pay a deposit soon. A link to more information including a schedule is shown below but people can also contact Penny by email or on her mobile if they would like to discuss it.

<http://wildiaries.com/tours/173-Illawarra-Birders-Club-Cape-York-Tour>

Penny Potter can be reached via her mobile 0430 343 525 or emailed at [penny@southernphone.com.au](mailto:penny@southernphone.com.au)

## Annual General Meeting

This year's BirdLife Shoalhaven Annual General Meeting will be held in the next month or two. The committee is organizing the hire of Tomerong Hall as we go to press. The meeting will include a slide presentation by Chris Grounds about the latest developments (pardon the pun) at Heritage Estates (near Jervis Bay National Park).

An email with details of the AGM will be sent out soon.

Nominations for any and all Committee positions are now open. There are three vacant general committee positions that would be perfect for those who would like to have a say in how the branch is run, but without any great workload. As usual, a bloodless coup removing the incumbent committee members and replacing them with passionate and committed newcomers would be welcomed!

### President needed!

Current President Barry Virtue has indicated that he will be doing a lot more traveling in the coming years, and is quite happy for someone else to take over the reins of the branch.

If you would like to nominate yourself or another BirdLife Shoalhaven member for President - or for any other position on the Committee - please let the Secretary know as soon as you can.

You might also like to include a very brief description of your birding credentials / qualifications for the position - although all you really need is the desire to help bird conservation in the Shoalhaven.

The current executive committee is made up as follows -

President: Barry Virtue

Secretary: Brett Davis

Treasurer: Karen Davis

Conservation Officer: Chris Grounds

3 x General Committee Members: vacant



Scarlet Honeyeater - a resident at Heritage Estate

## Lake Wollumboola Decision

- by Frances Bray

### Decision sets scene for inclusion of Lake Wollumboola catchment lands in Jervis Bay National Park

The NSW Department of Planning and Environment's November 2015 Determination to approve the Halloran Planning Proposal, offers potential for the remaining undeveloped private lands in the Lake Wollumboola catchment, together with land at Kinghorne Point to be included in Jervis Bay National Park.

Lake Wollumboola Protection Association Inc members are delighted that 1,200 hectares are likely to be given to Jervis Bay National Park, mainly in the Lake catchment and including Long Bow Point, as part of biodiversity offset arrangements for other development at Callala Bay and Culburra Beach.

Whilst the Lake itself and the south west catchment are already part of Jervis Bay National Park, this news gives us hope that our 23 year advocacy for conservation and protection of Lake Wollumboola and all natural, undeveloped parts of its catchment, will finally be successful.

The decision marks the most significant step since 2007 towards securing conservation of the Lake Wollumboola catchment and protection of the Lake from damaging impacts from urban development expansion.

The Determination specifies that, "Council is to zone Long Bow Point" (described as a South coast jewel in the Departmental media release) "for environment protection due to the recognised high environmental sensitivity of Lake Wollumboola dependent on the outcomes of a biodiversity offset strategy."

Also "Land within the surface and ground water catchment of the Lake (north of Culburra Rd) should also be zoned for environment protection, unless the water quality strategy identifies that an alternate zoning can achieve a neutral or beneficial effect on the Lake."



Shoalhaven City Council and the Department of Planning and Environment will now have two years to undertake studies, conduct community consultation and arrive at final proposals for rezoning 1,700 hectares at Culburra Beach, Callala Bay and Kinghorne Point south east of Lake Wollumboola towards Currarong for residential, commercial, industrial and environmental purposes and protection of Aboriginal cultural heritage.

The series of environmental, social and economic studies are to include;

- Studies of surface and ground water quality and clarification of the Lake and Crookhaven River catchment boundary.
- Aboriginal cultural, social and economic studies.
- Assessment of suitable alternative sites for the proposed golf course is to be considered outside the Lake catchment.
- Water quality strategy for any areas proposed for development.
- Social and economic impact assessment for Culburra Beach and other affected towns including Nowra and the new Vincentia Town Centre.

It is now likely that the Planning Proposal process will overtake the application for a golf course development for Long Bow Point.

The proponents for the development have been advised by Council staff for the second time that the draft Species Impact Statement for the proposed golf course does not meet the Director-General's requirements, so it seems unlikely that the application would be approved, particularly in the light of the planning proposal decision.

The Department of Planning and Environment 23rd November 2015 Media Release is easily accessed from the Lake Wollumboola Protection Association Inc website: [www.wollumboola.org.au](http://www.wollumboola.org.au)

The following link will take you to a page showing full details of the [Determination](#).



## Lake Wollumboola Summer Report

- by Frances Bray

### Mixed fortunes for Birdlife at Lake Wollumboola

This summer Lake Wollumboola once again demonstrated its exceptional capacity to provide habitat for diverse and rare bird species. The conditions for shorebirds and water birds attracted two rare vagrants the Hudsonian Godwit and the Paradise Shelduck, as well as more common migratory shore birds and water birds. Lake levels were low with sand and mudflats opening up, following the August 2015 natural opening due to the heavy rainfall associated with the East Coast low and subsequent Lake closure.

However it was a tragic year for the Little Terns, Pied Oystercatchers and Red-capped Plovers with no successful nests, despite extensive nesting habitat and abundant food. Once again avian predators and a fox did the damage. Each night hundreds of prawners contributed to the losses, by disturbing all the nesting and roosting birds and attracting predators with the bi-catch and rubbish left behind.

Of special interest was the discovery of a Hooded Plover nest south of Lake Wollumboola at Hammerhead Point towards Currarong. Lake Wollumboola NPWS Shorebird Volunteers assisted the Jervis Bay Volunteers in protecting the nest. The adult birds also made a surprise visit to Lake Wollumboola on Boxing Day, with Dimitris Bertzeletos capturing the moment in the accompanying photograph (below).



Phil Craven NPWS Nowra, Tom Kaar, visiting birdwatchers and I, identified 30 species during the January 2020 Birdlife Australia count, although the overall species count for the summer would be much higher.

The Hudsonian Godwit flew in from the Canadian tundra around Hudson's Bay, whereas the Paradise Shelduck

made a shorter flight from New Zealand. These two birds attracted bird enthusiasts and photographers from all over Australia. Approximately 20 visitors per day gathered in clusters, waiting for hours for the "Hudwit" to lift its wings (as shown in the Charles Dove photo below) to distinguish itself from the regular Bar-tailed Godwits and 8 Black-tailed Godwits which are also uncommon visitors to Lake Wollumboola.



Charles Dove and Dimitris Bertzeletos first photographed and identified the Hudsonian Godwit early on Christmas Day. Their guidance and wonderful photos helped others to identify the Hudsonian Godwit, a species that has not been identified in NSW since 1982-3 when it visited the Hunter Estuary. It was unfortunate however that some photographers moved too close to the roosting birds in attempts to flush the Hudwit to gain a signature photograph.

The Paradise Shelduck was also observed on 29th December roosting on exposed mudflats in the northern part of the Lake. The species is a common bird in New Zealand, but rare in Australia. In my view its appearance here was no less extraordinary than the tiny Double-banded Plovers that winter from New Zealand each year at Shoalhaven Heads and Lake Wollumboola. Whilst this

large bird was easy to see, over-enthusiastic birdwatchers and photographers pursued it several kilometres south to roosting areas off the south eastern Lake shore. The Paradise Shelduck stayed for approximately 2 weeks, not being observed again after heavy, prolonged rain in the week ending 9th January.

The Pied Oystercatcher pair, which successfully nested at Lake Wollumboola last season, spent most of the past year feeding, roosting and hosting family reunions with their fledgling at Lake Wollumboola - a joy to see. They nested again this year. Tom located the one egg and promptly notified NPWS Nowra Area Office staff who arrived the next morning all set to erect an electric fence. However the egg was gone - fox prints indicated the culprit. Whilst the pair made constant visits to the nesting site, sadly, they did not lay again.

This season's Lake Wollumboola Shorebird volunteers, Tom Kaar, Narelle Wright, Michael Abramowitz, Ellie and Rick Kopytko and I were nervous about the Little Tern season, after last season's disaster. Our concerns increased when Red-capped Plover eggs disappeared, likely to avian predation. The season appeared promising early with over 80 Little Terns present. However our fears were confirmed with only 10 nests laid and 9 taken by avian predators and the other abandoned, despite our best efforts to protect them. Total numbers of breeding pairs have continually fluctuated. There are well over 100 little Terns here now, some pairs still courting, although they are unlikely to nest, with others commencing their northern migration.



Swamp Harriers are the most likely predators of the Little Tern nests. We frequently see both a female and male disturbing all the Lake birds and circling and landing near the nesting site. However, raptor prints near several nests indicate that a small raptor may be responsible as well, possibly a Black-shouldered Kite. We are hoping that the NPWS / OEH "Save our Species" program may initiate research at Lake Wollumboola to establish the

responsible species and identify remedial action. We would hate to lose the Little Terns from Lake Wollumboola as it is the long term priority Little Tern nesting site for the South Coast Region.

On December 17th Fisheries Officers first alerted NPWS and me to the presence of a Hooded Plover pair south of Hammerhead Point. Simon Tedder, the NPWS South Coast Region Shorebird Coordinator, arranged for Jervis Bay volunteers led by Wendi to search for the nest, which they located on the same day. This beautiful 3-egg nest was the first known Hooded Plover nest to be found this far north on the NSW Coast for many years. The Hooded Plover pair was identified as L4 and D3 with one originally banded at Bherwerre Beach and the other at Cudmirrah.



Simon asked us to assist during the holiday season, with sand bagging, erecting protective fences and joining the Jervis Bay crew in monitoring the nest.

When I saw the wave and tide height at Lake Wollumboola on the morning of 26th December, Boxing Day, I became very concerned regarding a possible wave wash over at Hammerhead Point. Tom and I set off to investigate. Unfortunately my worst fears were realised as the waves had already washed over the nest well before high tide.

The adults were present, frantically looking for their eggs. We found the intact eggs on the wave line, close to the original nest site. Our dilemma was to relocate the eggs higher than the incoming tide and waves, but close enough for the pair to find their clutch. We relocated and raised the eggs using the sand bags as a barrier to the waves. We left the site promptly as Ravens and a Sea Eagle were too close for comfort.

The next day we returned to a sad site. One egg was cracked with a dead chick inside. I found a second dead chick buried in the sand. The flesh on one of its legs was stripped to the bone, with Ravens the likely culprit. Although there was no sign of a third egg or chick, the adults were leading us away, suggesting that a chick might be present, so we quickly left the site to avoid

further disturbance. It was a pity that the clutch did not hatch a day earlier, thus avoiding the wave wash over!

Tom was so concerned he returned that afternoon and was fortunate to find the parents and a solitary chick. On the 27th December, Diana Lindsay and I again confirmed the presence of the chick and adults. On a subsequent visit on the 29th December, the adults were as far north as Hammerhead Point itself, but there was no sign of the chick or "leading" behaviour by the parents.

On New Year's Day I missed seeing the same Hooded Plover pair visit the Lake, when I took a wandering dog off the Lake Wollumboola sand bar to stop it following the birdwatchers and disturbing the birds.

NPWS staff advised me of reports from some birdwatchers that a Hooded Plover pair and chick were observed that morning at Lake Wollumboola sand bar a distance of at least 6 kms north from Hammerhead Pt.

I contacted several experienced bird observers / photographers who confirmed that the pair had indeed been observed and photographed at Lake Wollumboola that morning, but no chick was observed. It seemed most unlikely that a tiny 6-day old Hooded Plover chick could have walked that distance to the Lake sand bar. Perhaps the visiting photographers mistook a Red Capped Plover or a Red Necked Stint for a Hooded Plover chick? As Diana observed the adults back at Hammerhead Point the same afternoon, it was obvious that the presence of the adults at the Lake signalled the death of the chick before the adults turned up at Lake Wollumboola.

We hope that this Hooded Plover pair nests successfully at Hammerhead Point next season, despite the ever-present threat of avian predation.

Whilst birdlife generally thrived at Lake Wollumboola this season, prawning, fishing, some over-enthusiastic bird watching and other recreational activities caused significant disturbance. Nevertheless most visitors to the Lake expressed delight at seeing so many birds and were considerate in not disturbing them.

We do have one success story. Early on Sunday 17th January 2016 I noticed a Pelican roosting on a sand bank in the Lake near the shore. The Pelican was in trouble, with blood on its breast, its bill distorted and unable to raise its neck or wings. I could see through binoculars what appeared to be a fish hook in its bill, with the line somehow wound around its body.

With assistance from Valda Corrigan - NPWS Ranger - I was able to contact Lisa, a Seabird Rescuer, who duly arrived and after some effort captured the bird. Lisa said that the fish hook had penetrated the bird's lower bill, with the line looped over its neck and opposite wing. A vet removed the hook and line and treated the Pelican with medical glue and antibiotics.

After a brief rest and food, the Pelican was released back to Lake Wollumboola and has now joined the rest of the Pelican throng.

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The photo of the Hammerhead Point Hoodies below was taken by Dimitris Bertzeletos.



## Lake Wollumboola - January Review

- by Tom Kaar

I have been tardy in identifying non-breeding White-winged Black Terns as others have noted their presence on the shoreline of our Lake Wollumboola for years – smutty black crown extends onto ear coverts. Anyway I have seen a group of about 10 persistently over the last three months.

Late December, as I was observing some Godwits with unusually straight bills, Chris Brandis walked up and showed me a photo on his camera of the rump of a Black-tailed Godwit that he had captured. Shortly afterwards I was lucky enough to see a Blackwit's tail through my binoculars as the bird ruffled its feathers – though not enough of the underwing pattern to determine if it was the Hudsonian Godwit which has also been present – and for which I have seen clear photographic evidence.



Blackwit, Barwit or Hudwit ???  
(photo by Chris Brandis)

This actually is my first definite sighting of a Blackwit – although the bar-tail is not always obvious on all members of a flock of Godwits, I generally search for those for which they are clearly discernible – and assume that the rest of the flock are the same species. However I will need to be more careful in the future.

Some photos by Dimitris Bertzeletos have been very helpful in helping to differentiate the two main species. The Black-tailed Godwits are more uniformly darker brown, are slightly smaller and have straighter bills than the Bar-tailed Godwits – in comparison the latter are much more flecked or streaked and lighter in colour. According to the guides, the Hudsonian is even darker than the Black-tailed, with shorter legs and neck but slightly upturned bill, more like the Bar-tailed.

At Orient Point, I saw a Bar-shouldered Dove in November – and 18 Pacific Golden Plovers foraging at low tide in December – as well as a Striated Heron on the beach opposite Greenwell Point. It seemed a little

unusual seeing it out in the open, as I am usually more likely to see it on the shadowy shoreline of the nearby Goodnight Island.

Last November, I spotted a Wedge-tailed Eagle flying over Terara. This actually is my closest sighting to the coast, though others have reported seeing it over our Lake Wollumboola.

Early in January I saw a White-winged Triller near Jindyandy. I have only seen it twice before at Culburra – both times in 2004 – again in January and also in October.



Hudsonian Godwit - photo by Charles Dove



Avocets at Lake Wollumboola  
(photos by Christine Rigg)

## Bowra Sanctuary

- by Karen Davis

From Xmas Day in 2015 until January 10th 2016 my husband Brett and I were caretakers for the Australian Wildlife Conservancy (AWC) at their Bowra property.



AWC is Australia's largest private owner of land for conservation. Their sanctuaries currently protect 71% of all land mammal species; 86% of all land bird species; and 50% of all reptile and frog species. They are aiming to protect 100%.

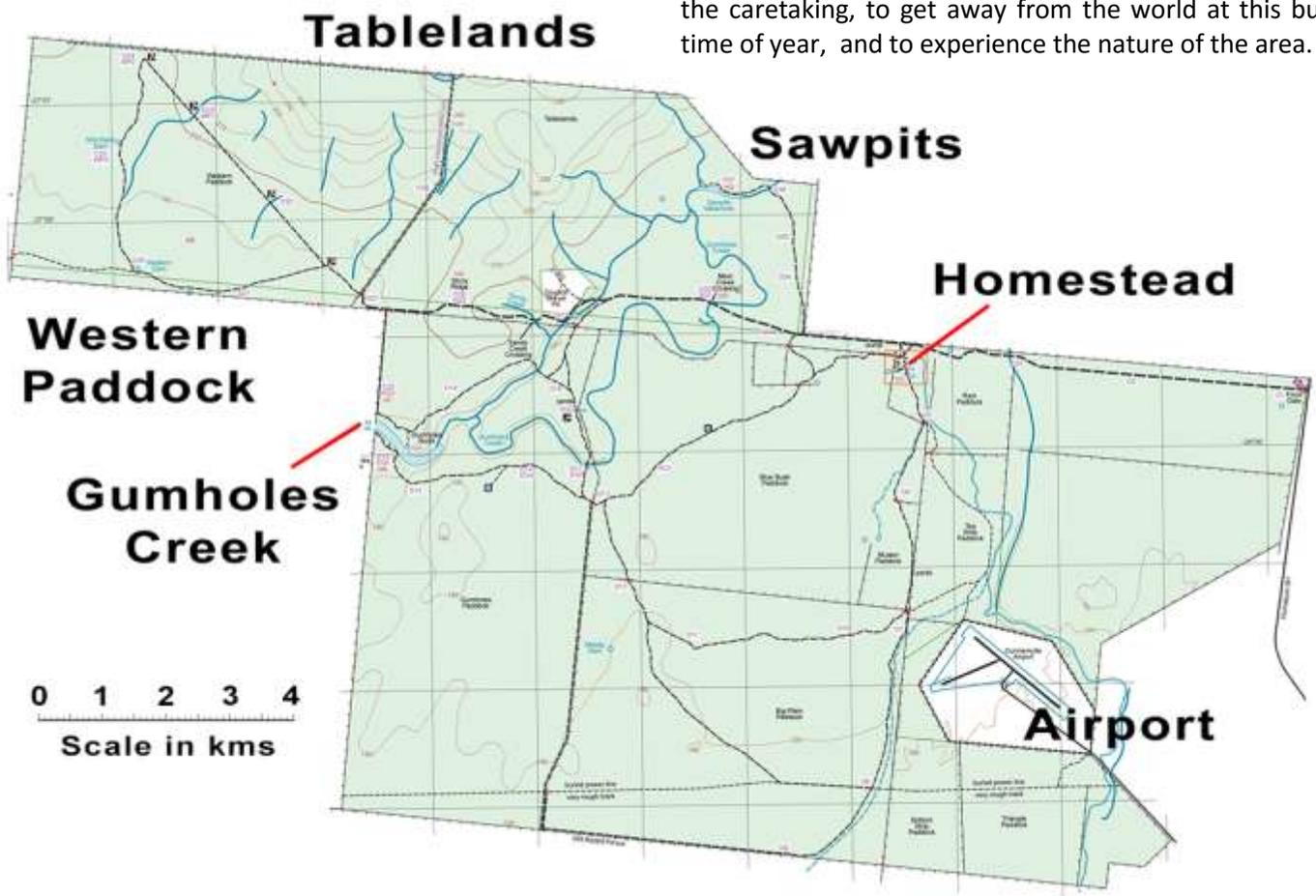
To this end, AWC owns and manages 23 properties around Australia, totaling more than 3.15 million hectares, including sanctuaries in the Kimberley, Cape York, Lake Eyre and the Top End.

One of those properties is Bowra, a former cattle station, situated just northwest of Cunnamulla in central southern Queensland. Bowra covers 14,000 hectares - 140 square kilometres.

At Bowra AWC works with Birds Queensland who provide volunteer caretakers who reside at Bowra on a rotational basis. Their primary responsibility is to manage the visitor program from April to November, but from December to March when the sanctuary is closed, volunteers remain in occupation to maintain the campground and residences on behalf of AWC, and to keep a daily tally of birds seen. This was our job.

Brett and I were able to caretake at Bowra through our registration as volunteers with AWC. We had previously been to Bowra in October 2009 as members of the public. It had been extremely dry, and we experienced a couple of dust storms. The chance to spend a couple of weeks birding in this arid environment in good conditions was a real attraction.

We wanted to see a Halls Babbler which we had not sighted back in 2009, but we were also there to help with the caretaking, to get away from the world at this busy time of year, and to experience the nature of the area.



Things became interesting as soon as we approached Bowra on Xmas day. We had dodged a heavy rainstorm as we approached Cunnamulla, but Bowra hadn't. There was a forecast of more storms so although the road in was wet and a touch soft in places we thought it best to drive in just in case more rain fell. When we arrived, the caretakers we were replacing told us that Bowra had 13mm of rain in less than half an hour. There were puddles everywhere. The next evening Bowra received another 27mm - so from the very start of our stay we couldn't drive the main track west through the property due to a large pool of water covering the road. This didn't change until the day before we left.



Fortunately we found the Halls Babblers early on during our stay, and then saw them regularly when we were out in stony country.



Initially all the other tracks on the property were also covered in water in places or just too soft to drive. There were birds everywhere though, and we walked the Sawpits and Homestead Circuits in the first few days as well as doing regular checks for birds at the lagoon and along the bore drain.

After studying property maps and Google we found an old track along a fence line which would bypass the flooded section of the main track and allow access to most of the property. We were then able to do a number of surveys in the western sections of Bowra, as these had dried or were stony and hard.

A few of the highlight sightings out this way were Bustards, Banded Lapwings, Brown Songlarks (which had us leafing through the field guides as we had never seen them on the ground), and White-browed Treecreepers.

Towards the end of the first week we were able to drive to areas along Gumholes Creek, the main waterway on the property, and we enjoyed breakfast by the dams and waterholes a few times. Interesting sightings here were two female Orange Chats and a Painted Buttonquail.

A week after our arrival, when most of the tracks were almost dry, an evening of rain dumped another 32mm, so we were back to walking again (lucky we are bushwalkers). We walked circuits within the Homestead Loop and east of the bore line down to the Airport. A number of Splendid and White-winged Fairy Wrens, Bourke's Parrots and an Owlet-nightjar were highlights.



The tracks took longer to dry out now so even a week later we couldn't drive all the way to South Gumholes or Sawpits. We never actually drove the Homestead or Airport loops as the tracks were never firm enough.

While at the homestead we had Sacred Kingfishers as a regular wakeup alarm - and they called all day long - and after a while the incessant calling really started to get on our nerves - a good problem to have! It sounded and appeared like they had a nest nearby but we never found where it was unless they had borrowed a Fairy Martin nest - there were dozens under the eaves.



Chestnut-rumped Thornbills were the most common small birds, and we heard Pallid Cuckoos and Crested Bellbirds calling every day.



Other bird highlights for us were a Latham's Snipe residing at the lagoon for the duration, Sharp-tailed Sandpiper at the lagoon for one day, Crimson Chats in numbers, Pied Honeyeaters, Black Honeyeater, Red-

winged and Mulga Parrots, Budgies and Cockatiels, Black-eared Cuckoos, Red-backed Kingfishers, Major Mitchell Cockatoos, Hooded and Red-capped Robins and of course the finches - Double-barred and Zebra.

We looked long and hard for the Chestnut-breasted Quailthrush with no luck, but while we were searching we were rewarded with a Spotted Nightjar that flushed when Brett almost trod on it.



We saw a couple of rabbits, and only two groups of pigs, but there were quite a few herds of goats. Unfortunately the neighbours' sheep and cattle are getting in and were often seen in the Homestead/Lagoon area. There were probably a dozen cattle and close to 100 sheep on Bowra during our stay. The sooner the fences are fixed the better it will be for the birds that require groundcover and seeds. The cattle also did a lot of damage to the ground near the lagoon, and they really cut up the road near the Shearers Quarters after the rain.

Despite the ferals, Bowra is still a fantastic sanctuary that will only improve as funds become available to fix the boundary fences to prevent the neighbour's stock from wandering.

We had a great stay, and with the work we did around the Homestead we would like to think we left the place looking better than when we arrived. We thoroughly recommend Bowra, and volunteering for AWC as well!



## The Highs & Lows of Twitchathon 2015

- by Marg Hamon

(The Twitchathon is an annual event to raise money for a project of Birdlife Australia. This year it was for the Greater Sydney Powerful Owl Project. Teams have to identify as many species as possible over 24 hrs from 4.00 pm Saturday to 4.00 pm Sunday. More than half of the team has to identify the bird. There are three divisions, the Main Race which is full on, the Champagne race which is rather more laid back, and the children's races. This year the MUD Birdwatchers fielded one team, the Wooden Spoonbills.)



A Wooden Spoonbill - but not part of the team!

### Saturday 31 October

When Maggie and I pulled up at the Bawley Point headland just before 4pm the nor-easter was so strong Maggie could hardly get out of the car. Rosemary and Evelyn, the other members of the Wooden Spoonbills, were already there, raring to go. They had already seen the Pipit and a Kestrel. We couldn't tick them until 4pm, so I hoped fervently they would stick around.

4pm arrived and we were able to tick our main target, the Ruddy Turnstone. On the way back to the car we searched carefully for the Pipit. Gone, as had the Kestrel. Damn, they could have waited!

On to Meroo, with the clouds gathering, but at least it was more sheltered. There were some good birds at the car park, but the lake itself and surrounds was disappointing as we searched in the light rain. The Musk Ducks which were our main focus were nowhere to be seen. Not a Swan either, but we'll come to the Swan story later. Still, by this time we had 30 species. The dam at Bada Crescent produced 11 more, including Dusky Moorhens, but nothing really exotic.

On then to Burrill to hunt for the Buff-banded Rail. I was rather pessimistic, as I feared the Rails knew the date and had decided to hide, as they had on previous occasions. However we were in luck with a wonderful view of a Buff-banded Rail having a bath. A Little Egret showed up around the corner too. By this time the light was failing, but Rosemary urged us on to the Ulladulla Lighthouse. We arrived, but the birds had gone to bed. By the time we arrived home it was really dark. The tally for the afternoon was 48. Not bad, but it is a game of diminishing returns.



Buff-banded Rail (photo by Graeme Chapman)

After some negotiation we decided to meet at 6.30am. After all, it was the Champagne Race we were in. We chose Milton Rainforest for our first stop, and it proved a good area even though we decided not to go right into the rainforest to look for a Rufous Fantail as some walkers with a dog were just ahead of us. Also, it was breakfast time! We went to a lovely little cafe in Milton, and spent far too long over a delicious breakfast. Not one of our best decisions perhaps, but it was very enjoyable. As we parked the car outside, Rosemary and Evelyn saw a Sparrow. We felt sure that it would turn up again, but of course it didn't.

A quick stop at the Big Fig scored us a couple of common exotics, and a whole lot of NPA bushwalkers. On then to Lake Conjola before the tide got too high. A quick diversion to the dam on Porters Creek Rd didn't gain us much, as the place was overrun with children on motorbikes, so we moved on.

At Lake Conjola the Tawny Frogmouths we were hoping to see weren't there, but we did score some waders - a Curlew and a Godwit. Only one of each! There should have been more. The tally by now was 68.

Fisherman's Paradise did not produce the hoped-for Azure Kingfisher, but we did score a Darter and Scarlet Honeyeater to bring our total to 73. After morning tea we called in to the little Conjola Cemetery, where we at last picked up the Brown and Striated Thornbills. We also saw a bird we weren't sure about - and therefore couldn't count. My first impression was that it was a Grey Currawong being attacked by a pair of Grey Fantails. Rosemary thought it was a Drongo, but the tail and several other features didn't fit. The discussion raged on all the rest of the day and into Monday, but the upshot was a lost bird, as we couldn't be positive about it.

Heading back to Milton, we called in to the Yatte Yattah Nature Reserve where we found the expected Eastern Rosella and also Brush Cuckoo and White-winged Triller.

Next we called in to Croobyar Rd . As we turned down it we saw a bird on the wires, its back to us. We eventually hauled out the 'scope. The bird flew off as we were setting it up. Thoroughly cheesed off after this example of avian non-cooperation, we drove down the road, pausing to scan a farm dam. Ah, Pacific Black Ducks that we hadn't seen already. But what was that black thing swimming across the dam? A black snake, and going at a fast clip too! The ducks on the dam were not impressed. When we arrived at the little bridge where we hoped to pick up Australian Reed-warblers and Fairy Martins (and did) we were also treated to a Golden-headed Cisticola. We were already over 80 birds.



Golden-headed Cisticola (photo by Graeme Chapman)

As it was lunch time, we stopped at Wilfords Wetlands where we could have lunch without being active, as the rules require. On the way in we saw a Kestrel. Yes! that made up for the missing one at Bawley. While we were there we were entertained watching a Swamp Harrier harassing all the ducks in sight. There was nothing rare or unusual as I had hoped there might be.

As we were leaving this wetland, someone pointed out that we had visited a number of wetlands and not yet seen a Swan.

At Narrawallee entrance we found a Hooded Plover, with two beautiful little chicks. We also scored a Whimbrel - just one again. We decided to check the One track for All for Variegated Wrens, but the wind was up and the birds were lying low. As we drove out though we came across two Long-billed Corellas in someone's yard. Time was running out, and we hadn't got a Sparrow, so it was off to Macca's. Yep, several Sparrows there!

The Lighthouse was worth another visit, and this time we found Short-tailed Shearwaters. We still didn't have a Swan, but a serious Swan hunt found one at the back of Burrill. We celebrated with cheers and applause. We now had 97 birds. Would we make 100? We had 30 minutes to go. Ulladulla Sports Field was nearby; as we walked in we heard and then saw a Grey Shrike-thrush. It was 3.45pm and two to go. Maggie saw a King-parrot, but nobody else did. Then a Peregrine Falcon flew close over us, giving us all a good view. 99! And then, with five minutes to spare, Evelyn spotted a Dusky Woodswallow! We had made 100 - not as good as our 105 last year, but still satisfying!

Exhausted, we made our way to a nearby watering hole, where the discussion over the "Cemetery Bird" continued with intensity.

So, 24 hours of highs and lows, of good luck, bad luck, good choices and poor had brought us to a conclusion. Even though we only came 8th out of 13 in the Champagne race, we had a great time and raised lots of money for the project. Our thanks go to all those who sponsored us or gave donations to the cause.

It would be great if Birdlife Shoalhaven could get a team, or teams, together for next year. The Wooden Spoonbills are issuing a challenge!



Rosemary Maggie and Evelyn celebrating after the event

## Lake Wollumboola turns it on again!

- by Charles Dove

December 2015; Chris Brandis called me about going to Lake Wollumboola in search of a Western Sandpiper that he might have seen and photographed the previous day. He needed to capture a better picture of it to confirm the bird's ID. I was keen to go as I had photographed some Bar-tailed Godwits in November in the same area and had noticed a fuzzy image in the background of one of my photos of what might have been a Black-tailed Godwit - an unusual sighting in this area, but not a rare sighting and a bird I would like to get some good photographs of.

We headed out on the 23rd December, little realizing what would unfold over the next few days. With Christmas approaching and a lot of family commitments coming up, this might be our only opportunity for a week or so to spend time searching for the Western Sandpiper and Black-tailed Godwit. At Lake Wollumboola on a day that was offering excellent light, we searched the foreshore hoping to find the Western Sandpiper in the area where Chris had photographed the suspect previously. There were plenty of Avocets close to shore and a few Red-necked Stints running around, but no Western Sandpiper. We moved on noticing Godwits adjacent to a large number of Crested Terns and White-winged Black Terns, the latter being a very rare bird in this area a few years ago, but now arriving every summer along with the Avocets.

We were able to approach the Godwits within 10 metres and noticed a number of Black-tailed Godwits straight away. These were the ones I was after and it was great to get some close-ups. After 10 minutes we moved on in search of the Western Sandpiper, but to no avail. There were large numbers of Sharp-tailed Sandpipers, Red-necked Stints, Red-capped Plovers, Curlew Sandpipers and Little Terns. The Little Terns are of great interest to me as I do volunteer work to aid their preservation at Lake Conjola where there is a large colony as well. Unfortunately Little Tern conservation is a struggle, as besides people and dogs, the natural elements can devastate these colonies, which is heartbreaking.

We left for home without finding the Western Sandpiper but I did find the Black-tailed Godwits, fantastic for me. When I got home I went straight to the computer to download my photos. I saw almost at once that one of the Black-tailed Godwits had a curve in its bill. "That's unusual" I thought. In another photo a bird with its wings up had black as well as white under its wings.

"Maybe it's a Hybrid" I thought. Better check my field guides, but when I saw the 3 separate Godwit species I soon realised my "hybrid" was a Hudsonian Godwit!



Hudsonian Godwit  
Lake Wollumboola  
charles dove 12/2015

I was on the phone to Chris straight away to confirm the sighting with some of his photographs. He could have kicked himself for not realizing it was a Hudsonian Godwit while we were at the lake - as shown in the following correspondence:

Hi Charlie,

We were too busy looking for the Sandpiper. I had one poor shot of the white underwing that I discarded then did not notice another with the dark under wing. I plead age impairment. Years ago Ronnie, Chis Chafer and I spent hours down at Shoalhaven Heads looking at 100s of Bar-tailed and Black-tailed Godwits trying to find a reported Hudsonian, sitting there waiting for a wing stretch, so I should have remembered!

Cheers Chris"

I sent a photograph to Birdline later in the week to let our fellow birders know of it. I also let a few friends know from the MUDbirders group. Bob Rush and Chris Shinton gave me a call that night and we headed back to Lake Wollumboola a few days later.

Apparently a few other keen birders had also spotted the rarity and the word was out! A massive influx of keen birders from all over Australia had started to arrive at the lake.

A few birders I knew mentioned they had also seen a Shelduck a bit further around as well. I have seen the Australian Shelduck on many an occasion, but the bird was a long way around the Lake and appeared as a black spot. It was a bit far to walk so we headed home. Chris rang to see if I had been to the Lake that day and did I see the Paradise Shelduck?!

Well, my response was not good, knowing I had been there and failed to check its ID. I was a bit too complacent, not expecting another rare sighting, although Lake Wollumboola is getting a reputation of late, with the recent White-rumped Sandpiper sighting.

A great friend of mine - young Ron Imisides (83) - rang me that night and asked if I could meet him at Lake Wollumboola to point out the two rarities. He had been stuck on 666 sightings for a long while and would be happy to get off this number with a couple of "ticks".

Next morning Ron got his 2 ticks. We also saw Great Knot, Red Knot, Grey Plover, Ruddy Turnstone and Curlew Sandpiper - but no Western Sandpiper.

We will keep on looking!



## Conservation Officer Report

- by Chris Grounds

This report for the **2015-16 summer** is necessarily just an overview of some local issues, which is not to say any of the pressures on birdlife in the Shoalhaven have eased, as they have not - and in some cases they have even intensified.

Indeed, the August weather event which opened lakes and estuaries and flooded areas like St Georges Basin and Sussex Inlet, reconfigured many key coastal and shoreline terrains that are bird habitat.

Shoalhaven Heads, Lake Wollumboola, Myola Spit and Lake Conjola were all involved in a major way in the flood event.

As one example, the flood waters leaving Currumbene Creek completely removed the sand spit, which has only partially returned in the months since. This deprived a range of migratory, threatened and local species of an important sand resting area and numbers of species and birds have been reduced drastically in this summer. Next summer should be different.

At least these were natural forces at work and part of longer term cycles.

News of the Little Terns from Lake Wollumboola, where Frances Bray reported a vastly reduced nesting, and Lake Conjola is in separate reports.

Of course, some residents and visitors to Callala Bay and Callala Beach still ignore the "Dog Prohibited" status of the area, which is zone E1-Environment Conservation, a national park equivalent.

This area is right on the margin of the 'Jervis Important Bird Area' though it is overdue for this area to be moved across into Jervis Bay National Park.

The exaggerated and out of balance tourism thrust from Shoalhaven Council persists.

My reintroduction to the Shoalhaven after a recent spell away was the Council billboard at Fitzroy Falls.

The Council billboard at the top of the Barrangary Mountains entrance to the Shoalhaven promotes the "Unspoilt" beauty of the Shoalhaven, which remains at odds with their heavy-handed promotion of the "Pet Friendly" coast and beaches.

Indeed, "Unspoilt", is the banner and theme used by Council for all tourism associated social media sites. There are some quite chronic contradictions in this, which require remediation.

The pressure of tourism on coast birds, especially the threatened species nesting birds remains high.



If their habitat is "unspoilt" it cannot be "pet friendly". If it is "pet friendly" it is spoilt.

A granddad seen enjoying Berrara Inlet with his family is an Aussie delight – until he takes the family border collie into the threatened species nesting zone where a pair of Pied Oystercatchers have just been ushering their pair of chicks around the strandline debris. Thankfully, a quick retreat to the dunes saved the day but it should not have been necessary.

As a fellow grandfather, I find it especially disappointing to see children not getting an appropriate environmental and social education, starting at even the earliest of ages, whereby they are taught to respect nature and the work done by volunteers in their community in the interest of the environment, viz. threatened species fencing on dunes and beaches.

It seems almost impossible at times to venture to key coastal bird areas without witnessing such pet intrusion and disturbance - and this is Shoalhaven wide.

On a positive note BirdLife Shoalhaven will be providing some advice on bird-hide locations for the steering committee of the Bherwerre Wetlands Project at Sanctuary Point, which continues to progress.

Finally, a note of clarification on the precious Hooded Plover. The species has been included on the Commonwealth threatened species list as 'Vulnerable'.

Commonwealth listing under the Environment Protection, Biodiversity and Protection Act 1999 embraces a number of criteria, which involve threat of extinction, population, number of mature birds, trend or decline in numbers, geographic distribution and its status.

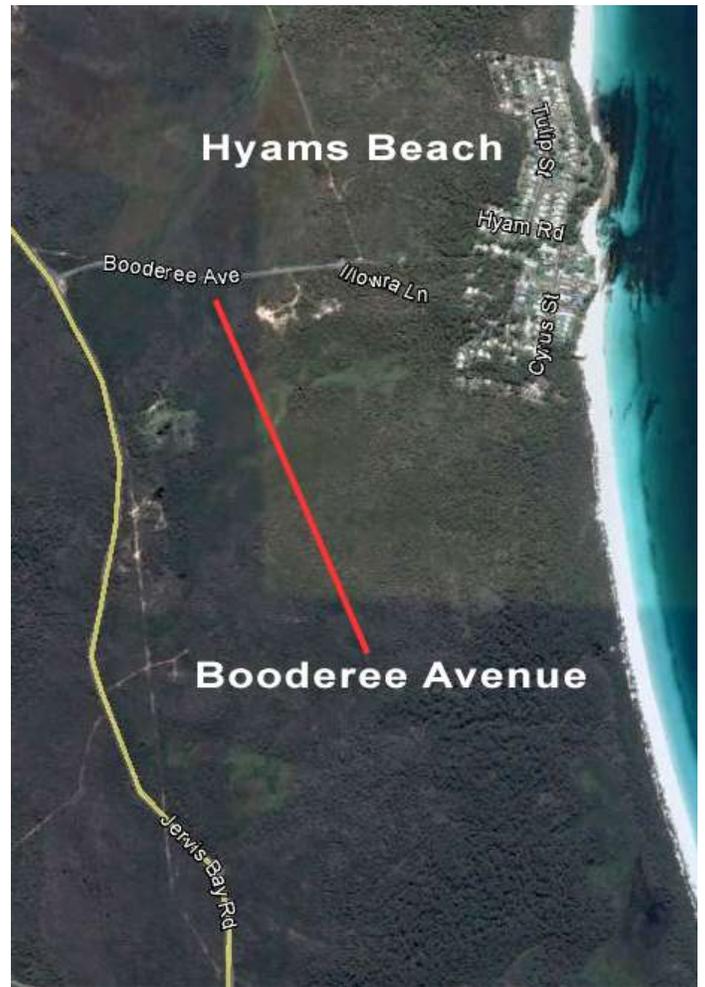
The Hooded Plover reduction in numbers and rate of decline in numbers is 'Substantial' and its distribution 'Precarious'.

## Australian Geographic

Late last year Australian Geographic selected their top 15 reader photos for 2015 - as shown below.



One of the winning photos was submitted by our Conservation Officer Chris Grounds - an image of a Ground Parrot feeding on the side of Booderee Avenue (the road leading to from JB Road to Hyams Beach) taken earlier in the year - see below.



# Bherwerre Wetland Report

- by Brett Davis

The Bherwerre Wetland project is gathering momentum, with a proposed plan being produced for discussion showing the possible infrastructure (boardwalks, seats, fencing, interpretative signs, art installations, tracks etc.) to be added to the Larmer Avenue land.

Local members of the BirdLife Shoalhaven committee have also given recommendations on locations for the bird hides, with some suggestions on the design, height and construction materials for the hides as well.

We anticipate some opposition to at least one of our recommendations concerning the size and placement of the main bird hide. The hide needs to be large enough to accommodate groups of people, raised high enough above the surrounding land to make bird observation far-reaching, and placed in the best location to see birds both on the wetland and in the shallows on the shore of St Georges Basin. Residents might take exception to a large structure spoiling their view. But what is the use of a bird hide if you can't see any birds from it?

The bird hide (top right) is at Reed Beds in southern New South Wales, about 4km east of Mathoura (40km north of Echuca). It is two stories high, has multiple viewing locations and directions, and is reached via a boardwalk from a purpose-built carpark.

The bird hide (at right) is also a two storey bird hide. It is located at Hasties Swamp on the Atherton Tableland in Northern Queensland. Both of the bird hides pictured are well known to bird watchers, and they are major tourist attractions in their respective areas.



We probably will not get a bird hide like these at Bherwerre Wetlands, but it is nice to dream ...

Of course, the project is still in its infancy and we are not counting our feral birds before they hatch, but the signs so far have been encouraging.



Some BirdLife Shoalhaven members inspecting the wetland



Bherwerre Wetland

## Lyrebirds Mimicking?

- by Barry Virtue

Do lyrebirds mimic mechanical sounds as some people claim? Does their mimicry extend to sounds made by us, such as chain saws, mowers, block splitters and axes, machines, radios or music?

I've lived in Broughton Vale for over ten years surrounded by at least four males declaring territories and calling for mates every winter. I hear their own whirring, clicking, clonks, oowee and shrill alarm calls along with their mimicking of many of the local birds, but at no time anything I would call human or the sounds of our technology or equipment.

They expertly and clearly mimic a range of bird calls including Grey Shrike thrushes, Whipbirds, Kookaburras, Whistlers, Currawongs, Monarchs, Catbirds, Bowerbirds, Parrots and Cockatoos. With these birds so clearly copied and repeated; why then can't I hear the sounds I often make around the house? "My" lyrebirds all seem to have a similar repertoire of mimicked calls, shared by all the males in this dispersed lek.

There are many stories of birds imitating human activity but as far as I am aware no controlled experimental research or recordings? But I haven't tried to search this. Why I don't hear human sounds in my lyrebirds is puzzling and something I have listened for. Is it my lack of imagination; or other's very fertile imagination, or interpretation of sounds in the bird's call sequence.

Is it just anecdotal tradition or that we would like to think that wild creatures want to copy clever us?

Gisela Kaplan discusses this in her new book; *"Bird Minds- Cognition and Behaviour in Australian Native Birds"* (a CSIRO publication 2015) in which she presents an easy read but scientific evaluation of the "social brain hypothesis". I recommend this as a great read on many aspects of bird behaviour.

Briefly; she finds that evidence indicates that male lyrebirds learn their territorial mimicking from their fathers and other nearby males and expand their calls each season with maturity (p96-97). She also says that they add "snippets" of other sounds belonging to human machines and cites the case of a lyrebird making the sound of a camera button during a David Attenborough filming in Victoria (see Editor's Note).

Mine make many 'clicking' type noises as part of their sequence of calls. The interesting thing is that the vocal display to attract females is recalled each breeding season after a quiet summer with only occasional song.

I remain skeptical about lyrebirds mimicking human noises consistently in their territorial song but have no

doubt that after reading this you may have a different experience.

So; is it that our imagination interprets the calls to fit our noises, or do different leks develop their own sequences - some including human sounds - or that some birds respond to and copy a sound just periodically as they hear it, but do not include it in their repertoire?

Another interesting thing about "my" lyrebirds is the birds they omit from their song. Cuckoo Dove and Wonga Pigeon both call monotonously yet don't seem to be included. Is it a boring and repetitive sound to the lyrebird also? I hear Bassian Thrush call beautifully at dawn, and several species of cuckoo as well, but these are also not included ...



This photo by George Pergaminelis was taken from the Yarra Valley Branch Newsletter

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**Editor's Note:** The following information about Lyrebirds is taken from [hoaxes.org](http://hoaxes.org)

In his Life of Birds series, David Attenborough showed that Lyrebirds can imitate man-made sounds such as chainsaws, car alarms, and the click of a camera shutter.

Attenborough didn't explain that the lyrebirds he showed were not typical examples of the species. He fails to mention that two of his three lyrebirds were captives, one from Healesville Wildlife Sanctuary and the other from Adelaide Zoo.

This latter individual, Chook, was famed for his hammers, drills, and saws, sounds he reputedly acquired when the Zoo's panda enclosure was built. Hand-raised from a chick, he was also known to do a car alarm, as well as a human voice intoning "hello, Chook!" He died in 2011, aged 32.

Apparently there is no known recording of a lyrebird in the wild mimicking man-made mechanical sounds. Nevertheless, belief in such a phenomenon is now so well established on the internet that it even crops up on official sites ...

## Shoalhaven Birders Outings - 2016

Shoalhaven Birders welcome BirdLife Shoalhaven members on their outings. They meet every third Sunday of the month, meeting at 8.30am. There are no actual leaders to the outings, and it is possible that nobody else will turn up, especially if the weather is iffy, so be prepared to have your own birdwatching outing. Trips away usually go ahead.

- Feb-21** Bamarang / Grassy Gully / Coolendel  
Meet Bamarang Dam
- Mar-20** Currarong  
Meet turnoff Culburra Rd and Callala Rd
- Apr-17** Killalea SRA  
Meet Berry Apex Park, North St
- May 6-9** **Weekend camp to Canberra**
- May-15** Hyams Beach  
Meet turnoff Jervis Bay Rd
- Jun-19** Jerrara Dam / Spring Creek  
Meet north side Berry Apex Park
- Jul-17** Jervis Bay Botanical Gardens  
Meet Information Centre, park entrance
- Aug-21** Bens Walk  
Meet Nowra showground lookout
- Sep-18** Barren Grounds  
Meet Berry Apex Park, North St
- October 3-10** **Albury / Chiltern**
- Oct-16** Florance Head  
Meet Bewong Roadhouse
- Nov-20** Vincentia water tower / Greenfields Beach  
Meet roundabout Vincentia shops
- Dec-18** Shoalhaven Riverside Park, 5pm Xmas Party  
BYO picnic barbecue

**Canberra weekend** - along the lines of the one in 2014

### Albury/Chiltern Week

We had a camp from a van park there some years back with some good birding in the Box Ironbark NP, Mt Pilot and local wetlands. It is a long way, maybe 8 hours to Albury but the accommodation is good and we could get some special birds.

### Contacts:

Stan and Su Brown 4443-4828  
Peter and Julie Hale 0402 076 548  
Barry and Susan Virtue 4464-1389

## MUD District Birdwatchers Outings

Membership of the MUD Birdwatchers club is open to all members of the Milton Ulladulla U3A. For information about joining MUD Birdwatchers, phone Marg Hamon on 4457-1129 or Chris Shinton on 4454-5584, or you can email [mubirdclub@gmail.com](mailto:mubirdclub@gmail.com)

MUD Birdwatchers have outings every fortnight on Fridays from 8am until about 11am. Their programs are produced on a term by term basis.

### Program for Term 1

**5 Feb** Millard's Creek  
Meet: 8am: Cnr St Vincent St & Geoffrey St Ulladulla  
Driving: 0 Time: 0 hr Grade: Easy  
Leaders: Marg Hamon & Maggie Mance 4457 1129

**19 Feb** Comerong Island  
Meet: 8 am: Back of Harry Higgs Room  
Driving: 160km Time: 3 hrs Grade: Easy  
Leader: Mike Jefferis 4455 5162

**4 Mar** Yatte Yattah Nature Reserve  
Meet: 8am: Back of Harry Higgs Room  
Driving: 15km Time: 1 hr Grade: Medium / Easy  
Leader: Bob Rusk 4455 2169

**18 Mar** Meroo Head  
Meet: 8am Lions Park Burrill Lake (by toilets)  
Driving: 50km Time: 1.5 hrs Grade: Easy  
Leader: Chris Shinton 4454 5584

**1 Apr** North Fishermans Paradise  
Meet: 8 am: Back of Harry Higgs Room, or at 8:15am: Murrays Road Turnoff.  
Driving: 30km Time: 1 hr Grade: Easy  
Leader: Geoff Andrews 4454 3580

**March / April** Campout ?  
Possible campout - details will be confirmed.

**15 Apr** Burrill Lake  
Meet: 8 am: Lions Park Burrill Lake (by toilets)  
Driving: 0 Time: 0 hr Grade: Easy  
Leader: Bob Rusk 4455 2169



## Birds in Backyards

You never know what birds you will find in your backyard.

The editor of this newsletter - who lives in suburbia in St Georges Basin - has had an amazing variety of birds in his backyard - including Emerald Dove, Bassian Thrush, Rose Robin, Square-tailed Kite, Buff-banded Rail and Grey Goshawk.

BirdLife Shoalhaven members Maureen and Norm - also from St Georges Basin - reported a strange bird in their backyard recently as well.

They apologize for the quality of the images (shot through the kitchen window) but they are fairly confident the bird shown is a Painted Button-quail!



## Some Images from Charles Dove



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