



THE IBOCC

NEWSLETTER

Issue No. 458

ILLAWARRA BIRD OBSERVERS CLUB INC NEWSLETTER

June 2021

WHITE HEADED PIGEON

Scientific Name: *Columba leucomela*

Atlas Number: 28

DESCRIPTION:

The White-headed Pigeon is a large pigeon with a distinctive white head, neck and breast, which sometimes have an orange or greyish wash. The back, wings and tail are dark grey to black and the underparts are grey. The male has a metallic green or



photo by Charles Dove

purple sheen, and the female often has a darker cap and is usually greyer. Young White-headed Pigeons resemble darker females. The eye ring is pink to dark red and the legs and feet are also pink-red.

DISTRIBUTION:

The White-headed Pigeon is found east of the Great Dividing Range from far north Queensland to southern New South Wales.

HABITAT:

The White-headed Pigeon prefers tall tropical to sub-tropical rainforests, and is often seen in forest remnants. Also regularly found in Camphor Laurel trees in agricultural areas and in privet. Often seen in suburban gardens and will come to feeding trays; also at roadsides.

FEEDING:

The White-headed Pigeon feeds on rainforest fruits and seeds, but strongly prefers laurels, such as the introduced Camphor Laurel. They feed in trees, sometimes in flocks, and will travel several kilometres to feed in open country.

BREEDING:

The White-headed Pigeon builds a platform of sticks in dense tree foliage or in tangled vines. Both members of breeding pairs incubate and care for the single young.

LIVING WITH US

The planting of Camphor Laurels in cleared areas originally favoured the White-headed Pigeon and allowed it to expand its range. However, recent bush regeneration removal of Camphor Laurels and privets has reduced populations in some areas.

Text courtesy of

<https://www.birdsinbackyards.net/>

CONTENTS:

Club Activities	Page	2 - 3
Club Reports	Page	3 - 9
October Camp Details	Page	10
Notices & Articles of interest	Pages	11 - 13
Monthly Bird Sightings	Page	14



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.

ILLAWARRA BIRD OBSERVERS' CLUB INC.

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Andy Knowlson (temp)

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JUNE ACTIVITIES

JUNE MEETING ON ZOOM

Monday 14th June 7pm for 7.30pm start

IBOC will be conducting another virtual meeting using Zoom, officially starting at 7:30 pm. Please note that the meeting will once again start at 7:00 pm to allow folks to catch up a bit and join before the business starts.

Note: to use Zoom, you need a tablet, mobile or laptop/computer and should download the Zoom app and **make sure Ken Brown has your email at membership@iboc.org.au** ; If you require any additional assistance in getting set up, feel free to contact Jann Gowans at info@iboc.org.au or 4285 9070.

Please RSVP Jann if you would like to join the meeting ASAP.

MIDWEEK WALK

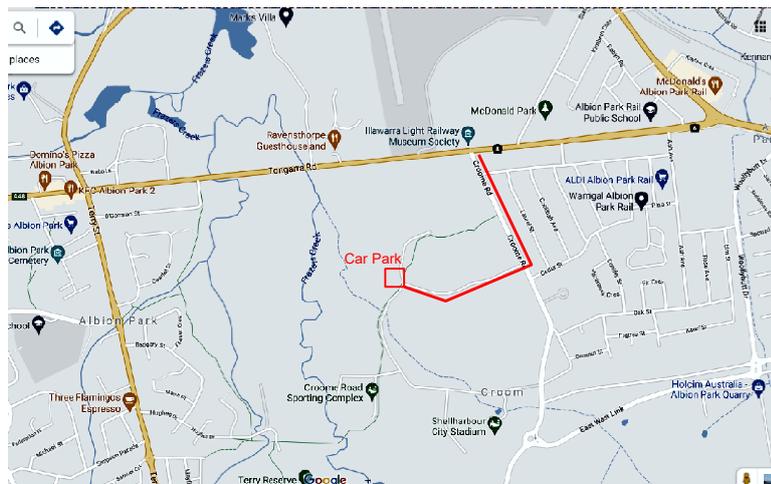
Midweek Walk Wednesday 16th June

Leaders Bill & Joan Zealey

Croome Sporting Complex

Meet at **8.30am** in the carpark. Take the Freeway south to Albion Park. Turn left along Tongarra Road. Take the right turn up Croome Road (opposite the Light Railway Museum). After 500m turn right into the Croome Sporting Complex and park in the carpark at the running track. We will have morning tea on return to the car park. The Croome Recreation Area includes a remnant piece of bush. Much of the area has been taken up by sporting fields and the new Albion Park bypass cuts through the area. This provides a variety of habitats and hopefully we will get a good selection of birds.

Be sure to bring plenty **of insect repellent and sunscreen.**



In the event of inclement weather Phone Bill on 0414747644.

MONTHLY OUTING

Saturday 19th June at 9am

Leaders Alan & Anne Cousins

White Sands Walking Track - Jervis Bay National Park

Travel the Princes Highway south towards Nowra, continue onto the left hand lane turn to Jervis Bay, follow the Jervis Bay Road (ignore turning to Huskisson) and follow the road to the next roundabout. Take the first exit off the roundabout onto The Wool Road and continue to the next roundabout at Vincentia. Take the second exit off the roundabout onto Elizabeth Drive southwards and follow road to the end at Greenfields Beach car park.

We will walk along the track north to Plantation Point where we will stop for morning tea, returning the same way to Greenfields Beach for lunch.

After lunch those that wish can traverse the White Sands Walking Track all or part of the way. It is a circular walk ending back at Greenfields car park.

Bring and carry morning tea, lunch back at cars.

In the event of inclement weather contact Alan or Anne On 0413869534 by 7.30a

NEXT COMMITTEE MEETING

Next Committee Meeting Monday

21st June 2021 at 7.00pm will be via Zoom.

NEWSLETTER

DEADLINE 25th June 2021

For all articles & photos in the next IBOC newsletter PLEASE E-mail contributions: To Charles Dove newsletter@iboc.org.au or post to 1/13 Horrocks Crescent, Kearney's Spring, Toowoomba QLD 4350.

Illawarra Bird Observers Club Reports

MAY ZOOM MEETING REPORT

It would appear the shine has gone from meetings on zoom as the attendance is dwindling. If things go well we may return to the hall in July fingers crossed.

Our presentation this month was from Sophia Lacey giving us a run down on the current activities of the Australian Wildlife Conservancy.

She started out with a video showing Kalamurina sanctuary which sits above Kati Thanda (Lake Eyre) and spans some normally dry waterways. The video showed the area when flood waters arrived from south-east Queensland and watered the country plus carried on to fill the lake.

Sophia went on to inform us of other activities including a number of partnerships with government agencies. Two of interest to people of NSW were Mallee Cliffs and Pilliga feral-free areas, both set up with the NSW National Parks Service.

These areas have had successful reintroductions since being declared feral-free. The animals released are in groups called "critical weight-range" or the little critters who cannot look after themselves; this is any creature smaller than a Rock wallaby.

I personally had not grasped how specialized these reintroductions are, there is a long-term plan that will eventually lead to a strong and diverse population of these animals. There is also work being done to establish populations outside feral free areas. This requires ongoing feral animal control.

So you can probably guess what's next: this group does all their work without government support, so all donations are welcome.

See also the attached email with details on how to view online seminars so you can access a lot more information about AWC.

Ross Gowans

MEMBERS MESSAGE

Hi Ross,

Thank you so much for the time tonight, it was great to answer such interesting questions. We would be very grateful if you would please notify your members of the next series by sending them the information below (please scroll down) so they have the opportunity to tune in and learn more about how AWC is helping to save species and restore biodiversity at the front-line of conservation.

Season 4 launches this Thursday 13 May with *Prescribed burning in north-western Australia*, followed by *Monitoring Australia's last Northern Bettongs* on Thursday 20 May and then *Reintroductions beyond the fence* on Thursday 27 May.

Please let your members know that if the time of the webinar doesn't suit, then they should register anyway and we'll send them the recording which they can listen to at their leisure.



Interested members can also watch previous recordings of Series 1, 2 and 3 of *AWC in Conversation* on our [website](#).

We would like to take the opportunity to thank you and your members for their ongoing interest and support for AWC's work to protect native wildlife and habitats across Australia.

We do hope that you and your members can join us. Please do get in touch with any questions.

Best Wishes, Thanks, Sophia Lacey
Development Executive

MIDWEEK OUTING REPORT

Wednesday 12th May 2021

Wollongong Botanic Gardens

By Jann Gowans

Despite an iffy weather forecast, seven members gathered on a promising morning at the Wollongong Botanic Gardens (the forecast rain didn't eventuate). Numerous Australian Wood Ducks were milling around the side of the duck pond. Two young Eurasian Coots were standing on a nesting mound with a parent to-ing and fro-ing with food. A few Welcome Swallows were swooping about and a line-up of five Chestnut Teal were disturbed from the hand-rail as we walked out to the gazebo in the centre of the pond.

A single Welcome Swallow sat on one of the nests under the middle of the gazebo roof but soon flew off. We advanced across the red Japanese bridge and walked towards the sound of Musk Lorikeets in the distant flowering gums. A couple of Little Wattlebirds were spotted among the Musk and Rainbow Lorikeets.

Various birds were seen and heard as we made our way towards Glennifer Brae--- Laughing Kookaburra, Grey Butcherbird, Australian Raven and Sulphur-crested Cockatoo. We skirted into the forest from

the lawn and felt the temperature drop. Several Brush Turkeys were turning over the leaf litter. Five, no nine, make that eleven... The numbers climbed. We made our way to the stage for an early morning tea. Australasian Figbirds were spotted before our cuppa was even done but sadly no Rose Robins. We ventured up to Glennifer Brae and across towards the soccer fields along the fence-line. This time the rainforest area was alive with small birds, challenging those little brown bird identification skills: Yellow Thornbill, Brown Thornbill, White-browed Scrubwren, Brown gerygone and Yellow Robin.

We meandered through the cactus garden to the Discovery Centre and made our way back towards the car park along the eastern boundary fence. A Green Catbird was seen and a male Satin Bowerbird was trying on a song and dance (complete with flower in his beak) but lost his female audience. Two more Brush Turkeys made a tally of SIXTEEN for the day! A great way to spend the morning and forty bird species were counted.

Bird List for Wollongong Botanic Gardens 12 th May 2021 7 Members 40 Species			
Domestic Goose	Silver Gull	Lewin's Honeyeater	Grey Butcherbird
Australian Wood Duck	Little Pied Cormorant	Noisy Miner	Australian Magpie
Chestnut Teal	Laughing Kookaburra	Little Wattlebird	Pied Currawong
Australian Brush Turkey	Galah	Spotted Pardalote	Willie Wagtail
White-headed Pigeon	Sulphur-crested Cockatoo	White-browed Scrubwren	Grey Fantail
Spotted Dove	Australian King-Parrot	Brown Thornbill	Magpie-lark
Crested Pigeon	Musk Lorikeet	Yellow Thornbill	Australian Raven
Dusky Moorhen	Rainbow Lorikeet	Brown Gerygone	Eastern Yellow Robin
Eurasian Coot	Green Catbird	Golden Whistler	Welcome Swallow
Australasian Swamphen	Satin Bowerbird	Australasian Figbird	Common Myna

WEEKEND OUTING REPORT

SUNDAY 16th May 2021

by Alan Cousins

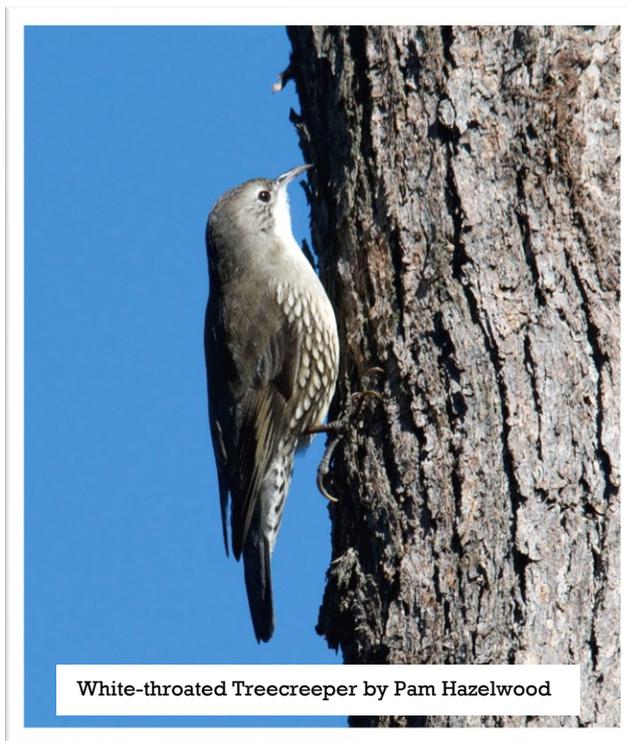
Barren Grounds Nature Reserve

14 members arrived on a nice fresh Autumn morning. The wind was a bit lazy as it passed through us and not around but it did abate during the walk or we were in a protected area. The sun was out all day so the temperature climbed during the walk. We followed the route to the Stone Bridge. The bird life was a bit scarce, probably due to the cold wind so they all had a Sunday lie in but the walk did provide us with a Wedge-tailed Eagle, Peregrine Falcon, Gang-gang Cockatoo, White-throated Treecreeper, lots of Superb Fairywrens, 6 species of honeyeaters including Yellow-faced and White-naped.

We stopped for morning tea at a nice sunny spot with a picnic table just at the head of the short track to the Stone Bridge.

After morning tea, we retraced our steps back to the car park for lunch noting that the car park was by this time full of parked cars. The weather had really brought out the walkers. After lunch 5 members left for home etc. and the remaining 9 of us went to the Illawarra Lookout for the magnificent view along the coast, picking out points of interest.

We were blessed with the weather and had a smallish species count of 21 but it was a very enjoyable day. Thank you all who attended.



White-throated Treecreeper by Pam Hazelwood

Bird List for Barren Grounds 16 th May 2021		14 Members	21 Species
Wedge-tailed Eagle	Superb Fairywren	New Holland Honeyeater	Grey Shrike-thrush
Peregrine Falcon	Eastern Spinebill	White-naped Honeyeater	Olive-backed Oriole
Gang-gang Cockatoo	Yellow-faced Honeyeater	Spotted Pardalote	Pied Currawong
Crimson Rosella	Little Wattlebird	White-browed Scrubwren	Eastern Yellow Robin
Superb Lyrebird	Red Wattlebird	Brown Thornbill	Silvereye
White-throated Treecreeper			

AUTUMN CAMP AT TUMUT APRIL 2021

IBOC Autumn camp was at the Riverglade Caravan Park in Tumut where 27 members and family attended.

We had fabulous Autumn weather for the whole week despite the chilly nights and the location was very scenic next to the Tumut River with coloured autumn trees abounding. While most people arrived on the Saturday some took advantage of the fact that the Festival of the Falling Leaf was on in town and attended the fair on the Saturday afternoon.

The IBOC program began on Sunday morning with a walk around the Wetlands that adjoined the Caravan Park. Birds were a bit scarce but we found some Spoonbills and Ducks in the pond and the nearby Sewerage Treatment Works provided sighting of many White Ibis and a pair of Pink-eared Ducks. Further along the track an Azure Kingfisher was sighted. Walkers were grateful of the picnic tables near Gilmore Creek for a stop for morning tea and more chats and then a leisurely stroll back to the camp for lunch.

In the afternoon we took the walking path next to the Tumut River back towards town. Good sightings were had of White-throated Treecreeper and many Superb Fairy wrens which became the most seen bird of the week. The destination was the Labyrinth of Peace at Pioneer Park. The construction of the Labyrinth had been based on a medieval European design and also included in the layout the position of the planets in the Milky Way galaxy in the southern sky on Armistice Day in 1918 which was appropriate as it was Anzac Day.

On Monday we travelled out along the Goobarragandra River to the first stop which was Goobra Sandy TSR. This was a small remnant woodland next to the river and some good birds were encountered including Eastern Yellow Robin and Golden Whistler and a group of White-winged Chough, White-plumbed Honeyeater and Weebill including unfortunately a dead one on the track which Joan Wylie took back to show others. Some intrepid souls braved a swing bridge crossing over the river and back. Next, we moved onto the private campground at Thomas Boyd Trackhead which formed part of the Hume and Hovell walking track where we set up for the Biggest Morning Tea by the river. Some stayed at this site and relaxed while others wandered over another bridge and walked part of the track before lunch. The usual suspects of birds were sighted but the highlight for all was a flyover of a group of six Gang-gang Cockatoos.

Tuesday saw us all gather at the Adelong Falls Historic sight which produced very few birds but those that felt able made the climb down into the gully to view the ruins of the goldfield operations. After morning tea some took the walk along the creek side back into town while others drove the cars back to the lunch picnic area. Unfortunately, Anne Cousins twisted her ankle on the path only a few meters from the car and emergency first aid treatment was required. On checking at the hospital later luckily, they found that she hadn't broken anything but she was then unable to walk for the rest of the camp. This resulted in some humour seeing her carried around in her camp chair by the guys from the car to picnic sites for the rest of the week.



On Wednesday we all headed out along the Snowy Mountains Highway past Blowering Reservoir to Jounama Creek camp site in the Kosciuszko National Park. Unfortunately, some of the track was closed still because of bushfire damage. But we were able to look around the campsite and see how the bush was recovering from the fire. After morning tea, we crossed over the Highway into Talbingo and proceeded up to view the Hydro Pump Station and Talbingo Dam. A big highlight here was the "promised" sighting of Robins due to the increased elevation. Both the Flame and Scarlet were sighted by most from the car park before the dam which delighted all. Back into Talbingo for a relaxed lunch and then we separately made our

way back to camp visiting Blowering Dam wall on the way. That evening we all were able to meet at the Tumut Club for dinner.

Back to the lower section of the Kosciuszko National Park to do part of the Blowing Cliffs walk on Thursday morning. A good hotspot produced views of a pair of Scarlet Robins, Speckled Warbler, Mistletoebird and three types of Thornbills, Yellow-rumped, Striated and Buff-rumped. Lunch in the picnic area turned up a few different birds for some including Satin Bowerbird, Dusky Woodswallow and Little Lorikeet. In the late afternoons we gathered near the camp kitchen for "happy hour" and roll call on the bird list.

Friday was an easy day and we gathered at Junction Park on Tumut Plains Road. We hadn't realised it was a dog friendly park which created a slight disturbance to bird watching. However most saw some lovely Red-browed Finches and Superb Fairy-wrens still in breeding plumage close up. Of course, another nice picnic spot next to the historic wooden bridge. As most were heading home the next day, we dispersed to start pack up procedures. The final gathering in the afternoon concluded that despite the fact that the total bird count only came to 99 everyone had a good week and the weather was extremely kind to us, Tumut was a terrific destination in Autumn.



FLAME ROBIN



SCARLET ROBIN



SUPERB FAIRY-WREN female



SUPERB FAIRY-WREN male



AZURE KINGFISHER



NEWHOLLAND HONEYEATER

BIRD PHOTOS BY PAM HAZELWOOD

MEMBERS PHOTO BY NIC VAN OUDTSHOORN

Bird List for Tumut Camp		24 th April-1 May 2021	27 Members	96 Species
Emu	Wedge-tailed Eagle	Superb Lyrebird		Olive-backed Oriole
Australian Wood Duck	Little Eagle	White-throated Treecreeper		Dusky Woodswallow
Pink-eared Duck	Nankeen Kestrel	Satin Bowerbird		Australian Magpie
Grey Teal	Brown Falcon	Superb Fairy-wren		Pied Currawong
Northern Mallard	Purple Swamphen	White-browed Scrubwren		Grey Fantail
Pacific Black Duck	Dusky Moorhen	Specked Warbler		Willie Wagtail
Feral Duck	Eurasian Coot	Weebill		Australian Raven
Feral Goose	Masked Lapwing	Striated Thornbill		Little Raven
Rock Dove	Silver Gull	Yellow Thornbill		Restless Flycatcher
Spotted Dove	Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoo	Yellow-rumped Thornbill		Magpie-Lark
Crested Pigeon	Gang-gang Cockatoo	Buff-rumped Thornbill		White-winged Chough
Peaceful Dove	Galah	Brown Thornbill		Jacky Winter
Australasian Darter	Little Corella	Spotted Pardalote		Scarlet Robin
Little Pied Cormorant	Sulphur-crested Cockatoo	Eastern Spinebill		Flame Robin
Little Black Cormorant	Cockatiel	Yellow-faced Honeyeater		Eastern Yellow Robin
White-necked Heron	Little Lorikeet	Fuscous Honeyeater		Silvereye
Eastern Great Egret	Australian King-Parrot	White-plumed Honeyeater		Welcome Swallow
White-faced Heron	Crimson Rosella	Red Wattlebird		Common Blackbird
Australian White Ibis	Eastern Rosella	New Holland Honeyeater		Common Starling
Straw-necked Ibis	Red-rumped Parrot	Eastern Whipbird		Mistletoebird
Royal Spoonbill	Barking Owl	Varied Sitella		Double-barred Finch
Yellow-billed Spoonbill	Southern Boobook	Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike		Red-browed Finch
Black-shouldered Kite	Azure Kingfisher	Golden Whistler		House Sparrow
Whistling Kite	Laughing Kookaburra	Grey Shrike-thrush		European Goldfinch

A few more photos from the Tumut Camp



Great Victoria Gold Mine and alluvial; diggings at Adelong.

PHOTO BY NIC VAN OUDTSHOORN



IBOC HQ at the autumn Tumut camp.

PHOTO BY NIC VAN OUDTSHOORN



The old bridge with McDonald trusses

PHOTOS BY PAM HAZELWOOD

Q = Is a Waxing Gibbous a bird, a phase of the moon or a yoga position?

NOTICES & ARTICLES OF INTEREST

OCTOBER CAMP IN TOOWOOMBA 16TH – 23RD



<https://www.toowoombamotorvillage.com.au/>

Contact Details

For all general enquiries please phone us on **1800 675 105**

Email: info@ToowoombaMotorVillage.com.au

We are located at 821 Ruthven Street Toowoomba Queensland 4350

VISIT THE WEBSITE TO VIEW ALL THE FACILITIES ETC

**Please let them know you are from IBOC or
mention Charles Dove when booking**

NO deposit is required

You only pay for 6 nights then the 7th night is free

Tariffs

Units 1 to 12 = \$130.00 for 2 adults per night, extra \$15.00 per person/s per night, sleep up to 5. (Queen bed, 2 x single beds & a fold up bed) these are air conditioned. \$780.00 p/w

None of our Cabins come supplied with linen, we do hire out double and single packs for \$15.00 per bed if you can't bring your own.

Double Bed Linen Pack = (Double bed sheets, blankets, towels, face washer & soap)

Single Bed Linen Pack = (Single bed sheets, blankets, mattress protector, pillow, towel, face washer & soap)

You can provide your own linen if you wish, the configuration is: -

1 x double bed and or 2 x single beds

Mini Ensuite Cabins A to G = \$82.00 per night, extra \$10.00 per person/s per night. No air conditioning and \$410.00 p/w.

Maxi Ensuite Cabins L to I = \$92.00 per night, extra \$10.00 per person/s per night. No air conditioning and \$460.00 p/w.

Non Ensuite Cabins Q to W = \$72.00 per night, extra \$10.00 per person/s per night. No air conditioning and \$300.00 p/w.

Caravan Sites: \$38 Per night \$228 Per Week Extra Person/s \$5

Wendy has pre booked 7 Mini Cabins and 2 Maxi Cabins

Also 6 sites have been pre booked after I have contacted them for the IBOC camp Charles

These will be held for a month so Please get back to us ASAP so we can lock you in.

We hope you will enjoy your stay with us.

Kind regards

Vaughn and Wendy Smith Managers

A late breeder-feeder

by Mike Morphet

May 10th mid-morning, relaxing with a coffee on my back verandah, I heard a large bird fly into the upper branches of my casuarina and issue loud repetitive single calls. What do I use first: binoculars or camera? I select the latter, taking several shots. Then, in turn, a pair of smaller birds enter the tree and feed it very quickly. At last identification: a young female Eastern Koel and Little Wattlebirds. All three soon take off. I've not known of any young Koel still being in our region so late in the breeding season, but I see in Graham Pizzey's Field Guide it can run from September to March, whereas its fellow migrant, the Channel-billed Cuckoo's is from August to December. Michael Morcombe has a slightly different opinion: the Koel's ends a month earlier, whilst the Channel-bill's begins in June. Either way, this youngster would appear to be a late breeder-feeder.



Young Eastern Koel calling with foster-parent Little Wattlebird taking off after feeding it.

A = Phase of the moon



Ross's Weevil

Curossionidae; Latreille
at Tumut Camp

PHOTO BY NIC VAN OUDTSHOORN

FACTS OF THE DAY believe it or not

Cucumbers... I didn't know this... and to think all these years I've only been making salads with the cucumbers...

1. Cucumbers contain most of the vitamins you need every day, just one cucumber contains Vitamin B1, Vitamin B2, Vitamin B3, Vitamin B5, Vitamin B6, Folic Acid, Vitamin C, Calcium, Iron, Magnesium, Phosphorus, Potassium and Zinc.
2. Feeling tired in the afternoon, put down the caffeinated soda and pick up a cucumber. Cucumbers are a good source of B vitamins and Carbohydrates that can provide that quick pick-me-up that can last for hours.
3. Tired of your bathroom mirror fogging up after a shower? Try rubbing a cucumber slice along the mirror, it will eliminate the fog and provide a soothing, spa-like fragrance.
4. Are grubs and slugs ruining your planting beds? Place a few slices in a small pie tin and your garden will be free of pests all season long. The chemicals in the cucumber react with the aluminium to give off a scent undetectable to humans but drive garden pests crazy and make them flee the area.
5. Looking for a fast and easy way to remove cellulite before going out or to the pool? Try rubbing a slice or two of cucumbers along your problem area for a few minutes, the phytochemicals in the cucumber cause the collagen in your skin to tighten, firming up the outer layer and reducing the visibility of cellulite. Works great on wrinkles too!!!
6. Want to avoid a hangover or terrible headache? Eat a few cucumber slices before going to bed and wake up refreshed and headache free. Cucumbers contain enough sugar, B vitamins and electrolytes to replenish essential nutrients the body lost, keeping everything in equilibrium, avoiding both a hangover and headache!!
7. Looking to fight off that afternoon or evening snacking binge? Cucumbers have been used for centuries and often used by European trappers, traders and explores for quick meals to thwart off starvation.
8. Have an important meeting or job interview and you realize that you don't have enough time to polish your shoes? Rub a freshly cut cucumber over the shoe, its chemicals will provide a quick and durable shine that not only looks great but also repels water.
9. Out of WD 40 and need to fix a squeaky hinge? Take a cucumber slice and rub it along the problematic hinge, and voila, the squeak is gone!
10. Stressed out and don't have time for massage, facial or visit to the spa? Cut up an entire cucumber and place it in a boiling pot of water, the chemicals and nutrients from the cucumber will react with the boiling water and be released in the steam, creating a soothing, relaxing aroma that has been shown to reduce stress in new mothers and college students during final exams.
11. Just finish a business lunch and realise you don't have gum or mints? Take a slice of cucumber and press it to the roof of your mouth with your tongue for 30 seconds to eliminate bad breath, the phytochemicals will kill the bacteria in your mouth responsible for causing bad breath.
12. Looking for a 'green' way to clean your taps, sinks or stainless steel? Take a slice of cucumber and rub it on the surface you want to clean, not only will it remove years of tarnish and bring back the shine, but it won't leave streaks and won't harm your fingers or fingernails while you clean.
13. Using a pen and made a mistake? Take the outside of the cucumber and slowly use it to erase the pen writing, also works great on crayons and markers that the kids have used to decorate the walls!!

Pass this along to everybody you know who is looking for better and safer ways to solve life's everyday problems.

Links etc

<https://www.environment.gov.au/biodiversity/invasive-species/feral-animals-australia/feral-cats>

World is home to 50bn birds, 'breakthrough' citizen science research estimates

https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2021/may/18/world-is-home-to-50bn-birds-breakthrough-citizen-science-research-estimates?CMP=Share_iOSApp_Other

New recordings of critically endangered night parrots music to ears of Kimberley rangers, scientists - ABC News

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2021-05-26/biggest-night-parrot-population-discovered-great-sandy-desert/100159378>

This insect appeared on my little stooble (cross between a stool and table) on my back verandah yesterday morning (19 May). It didn't move about much, but would rub its forelegs together like a house fly does. Ciaran Mathewson at the Australian Museum, Sydney later confirmed my provisional ID that it was a wingless soldier fly (*Boreoides subulatus*) and gave me further information: Common in our SE mainland. It doesn't bite or sting. The larva feeds on decaying vegetation and animal scats (A competitor for the dung beetle in that regard, it seems). A useful presence in compost heaps (mine is a few metres below the verandah), as it helps dry out the vegetation, thus preventing house flies and blowflies from breeding, while reducing the smell of decay. Masses of eggs are laid in late Autumn, which can survive the colder winter temperatures. As the adult female can't fly, I wonder if it might easily fall prey to birds. Perhaps its brown-grey body serves as a camouflage, particularly when it's positioned on a tree or fence post. *By Mike Morphett*



CAUSING A COMMOTION

Mike Morphet

Friday April 16th mid-morning. It was a pair of magpies that raised the first alarm in the canopy of my neighbour's jacaranda trees; some of the branches overhang my back garden. Then a pair of ravens alighted near them, and within minutes Sulphur-crested cockatoos; two, three, and two more, adding to the cacophony with their shrillness and squawking. A green satin bowerbird flew in to investigate, joined by another. It was obvious that something was afoot, other than twelve inches. I had my suspicion, but couldn't determine the cause. Very occasionally, I've observed cockies behave like this when a brushtail possum has ventured out in daylight hours on our property and they've tried to bombard the animal with twigs they've broken off with their bills. So, out with the binoculars, training on to a part of one trunk that appeared to have two large knots I'd not noticed before. And yes, suspicion confirmed: a large snake, a beautifully marked diamond python (*Morelia spilota spilota*, classified in 1804 by Bernard Germain de Lacepede, a French naturalist and an early evolutionary thinker; two years earlier a bay in South Australia had been named in his honour and remains so). Its patterned colours blended with its surrounding vegetation in the dappled sunlight. I could see the end of its tapered tail wriggling further down from behind the tree. Obviously, a whopper of a reptile, nudging six feet, I thought, when I had a clearer view. It was on the move, creating further avian angst, which then attracted three kookaburras. I wondered if they might try to attack it; no laughing matter.



Slowly, in stages, the python made its descent, head stretched out towards the next trunk, working out its route, and with bluish tongue flickering now and then. It eventually reached the ground, by which time all the birds had become silent. It found a gap in the fence palings to enter our garden. Through the dense cover of plants, it moved towards the two bowers our resident satin bowerbird had built and, I anticipated, in the direction of our aviary. Years ago, a very young python managed to get partially inside it, but got caught up in the netting; and in October 2018 I found an older one coiled up on a ledge in the sun that somehow had got in, but fortunately not for a feed, but a sleep. Both were successfully removed. I concluded this large one would have zero chance of following suit, especially as a bulge lower down its body suggested it had not long ago had a substantial meal. At this stage I had to reluctantly call it a day observing this snake, as Carol and I had planned to catch the 11.48 train to Sydney; as it was, we made it with three minutes to spare. Another unexpected python encounter, however, was to follow.

The following Sunday Carol and I visited the NSW Art Gallery with the principal aim of viewing 'The English Channel' sculpture of Captain Cook by New Zealander, Michael Parekowha; we had been inspired by Sam Neill's TV documentary series tracing the captain's explorations of the Pacific. Duly impressed by the larger-than-life, stainless steel effigy, we then wandered through several other rooms, and in one of them I came face to face with another python. It was part of a marble statue, sculpted in the years 1888 to 1891 by Frederic Leighton (Like James Cook, having been North Yorkshire-born) and titled 'An athlete wrestling with a python'. It had been commissioned by Carl Jacobsen, then owner of the Carlsberg Brewery in Copenhagen. My days of athleticism and wrestling matches expired ages ago; but I'll drink to the fact that Friday's python, lengthy as it was, was nowhere near the size of Frederic Leighton's creation. Over the past 24 days there's been no further sighting of the reptile.



MONTHLY SIGHTINGS

April/May '21

compiled by Darryl Goldrick

SPECIES	Nº	DATE	LOCATION	HABITAT	OBSERVER
Grey Shrike-thrush	1	25-Apr-21	Dharawal National Park	ground near entry gate to Trail 10H	Mike Morphet
White-browed Scrubwren	1	25-Apr-21	Dharawal National Park	ground near entry gate to Trail 10H	Mike Morphet
Crimson Rosella	1	25-Apr-21	Dharawal National Park	Trail 10H	Mike Morphet
Eastern Yellow Robin	1	25-Apr-21	Dharawal National Park	bathing in pool just off Trail 10H	Mike Morphet
Silvereye	2	25-Apr-21	Dharawal National Park	bathing in small pool just off Trail	Mike Morphet
New Holland Honeyeater	12+	25-Apr-21	Dharawal National Park	Trail 10H	Mike Morphet
Yellow-faced Honeyeater	40+	25-Apr-21	Dharawal National Park	Trail 10H	Mike Morphet
Southern Boobook	1 heard	27-Apr-21	Thirroul	southern edge of Excelsior	Mike Morphet
Welcome Swallow	13	29-Apr-21	Clifton	powerlines	Mike Morphet
Little Wattlebird	6	29-Apr-21	Clifton	Moronga Park	Mike Morphet
Eastern Whipbird	1	29-Apr-21	Clifton	Moronga Park	Mike Morphet
Lewin's Honeyeater	1	29-Apr-21	Clifton	Moronga Park	Mike Morphet
Noisy Friarbird	6	9-May-21	Woronora Dam	eucalypts	Mike Morphet
Welcome Swallow	6	9-May-21	Woronora Dam	in flight over water	Mike Morphet
Fan-tailed Cuckoo	1	9-May-21	Woronora Dam	vegetation below dam wall	Mike Morphet
Australian Magpie	2	9-May-21	Woronora Dam	picnic areas	Mike Morphet
Grey Butcherbird	1	9-May-21	Woronora Dam	picnic area	Mike Morphet
Eastern Koel	1 young fem	10-May-21	Thirroul	backyard casuarina – fed by Little Wattlebird	Mike Morphet
Great Cormorant	several	1-Apr-21	Bellambi Gully Lagoon	nest building in Casuarinas	Ian McKinlay
Green Catbird	1	29-Apr-21	Thirroul Escarpment track	rainforest	Ian McKinlay
Fan-tailed Cuckoo	1	29-Apr-21	Thirroul Escarpment	rainforest	Ian McKinlay
Cattle Egret	1	3-May-21	behind MaCauleys Beach, Thirroul	grassland	Ian McKinlay
Spangled Drongo	1	4-May-21	Bellambi Dunes	mixed forest	Ian McKinlay
Noisy Friarbird	2	11-May-21	Hewitts Creek estuary, Thirroul	mixed forest	Ian McKinlay
Eastern Koel	1 young fem	12-May-21	Thirroul	backyard casuarina - same as 10/5 only longer feeding	Mike Morphet
Superb Lyrebird	1 heard	12-May-21	Thirroul	Flanagans Creek gully	Mike Morphet
Little Egret	1	14-May-21	Bulli	Memorial Drive mown nature strip	Mike Morphet
Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoo	4	18-May-21	Thirroul	top of backyard robinia	Mike Morphet
Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoo	9	10-May-21	flying over escarpment calling	forest	Terry Edwell
Fan-tailed Cuckoo	1	3-May-21	backyard	bush	Terry Edwell
Wedge-tailed Eagle	2	1-May-21	O'head Backyard +one calling	forest and bush	Terry Edwell
Noisy Miner	2	21-May-21	Thirroul	backyard shooed off by Little Wattlebirds	Mike Morphet
Little Corella	20	30-Mar-21	Greenwell Point		Laurie Williams
Nankeen Kestrel	1	4-Apr-21	Wollongong Lighthouse	Roosting	Laurie Williams
Long-billed Corella	~ 100	20-May-21	Albion Pk Rail oval	grazing	Darryl Goldrick
Bar-shouldered Dove	10	19.05.'21	West Dapto Integral Park	Woodland	Joan W,Tera Wh and Terri Edwell
Scarlet Honeyeater	4 ad +7 juv	19.05.'21	West Dapto Integral Park	Woodland	Joan,Tera and Terri
Australasian Figbird	5	19.05.'21	West Dapto Integral Park	Woodland	Joan,Tera and Terri

Thank you to all those who took the time to submit the sightings

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