

Southern Emu-wren

Scientific Name: Stipiturus malachurus
 Atlas Number: 526

Description:

The Southern Emu-wren is a tiny bird with a long (10 cm) filamentous tail, made up of six feathers, which is usually held upright. Male birds are grey-brown streaked black above, warm tawny brown below, with a distinctive blue chin and throat and some blue around the eyes. Females are similar but lack the blue colouration. This species is



photo by Charles Dove

shy and has a weak flight, preferring to spend most of its time low in dense cover and will run like a mouse, with its tail down.

Similar species:

The Mallee Emu-wren, *S. mallee*, is similar but has an un-streaked head, is less tawny brown below and the males have the blue extending more up around the eyes and face. It is a rare species that has a much more restricted range.

Distribution:

The Southern Emu-wren is found along the east coast of Australia from south-eastern Queensland through to Tasmania and west to south-eastern South Australia. It is also found along the coast of Western Australia from Shark Bay to Israelite Bay and inland to Norseman.

Habitat:

The Southern Emu-wren is found in a variety of moist dense scrublands, heaths with grass trees, coastal heathlands, tea-tree vegetation and, in Western Australia, in low scrub and dune vegetation on sandhills.

Seasonal movements:

Sedentary.

Feeding:

The Southern Emu-wren eats insects and spiders gleaned from within thick foliage, rarely appearing on the ground or above the shrub canopy. Foraging parties of up to 40 birds may form outside the breeding season.

Breeding:

The Southern Emu-wren breeds in pairs, with the male defending a small territory with regular bursts of song. The female builds a oval-shaped dome nest with a round entrance at the side. It is made from and lined with grasses and placed near the ground in a grass tussock or dense shrubbery. The female incubates the eggs and both parents feed the young, which remain with them for up to two months after fledging

Living with us

The Southern Emu-wren has suffered where suitable habitats have become fragmented and its conservation status ranges from locally common to vulnerable or endangered, depending on location.

Information courtesy of <http://www.birdsinbackyards.net/>

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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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MONTHLY ACTIVITIES

EARLY Midweek Walk:**Wednesday 5th February**

**5pm at
Pelican View Reserve**
Reddall Parade Lake
Illawarra South.
Bring afternoon tea.

Contact Charles
0417 422 302

**Club Meeting****Monday 10th February**

Peter Fackender presents "Photography in the Torry Plains, Murrumbidgee Wetlands"
7.30pm at Fairy Meadow Community Hall, Cnr. of Cambridge Avenue & Princes H'way Fairy Meadow.

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

Weekend Walk**Saturday 15th February****leader Betty Hudson****Bellambi Lagoon, Dunes and Boat Harbour**

The February monthly walk on Saturday 15th February 2014 will be along the track on the western side of Bellambi Lagoon to its entrance to the sea, returning though the dune forest in the morning, with a shorter afternoon walk to the Boat Harbour and adjacent shoreline.

Meet at 8.15am at the eastern end of Bott Drive Bellambi. From the Northern Distributer turn east at the Rothery Road lights, cross the railway line, go straight on at the next lights and at the roundabout. Bott Drive is a turning to the right on the bend at the end of Rothery Rd. The car park is opposite the end of Bott Drive.

Bring a carry morning tea and lunch to have in a shady area near the car park. A chair or stool would be an asset at lunch time.

Please ensure that you bring a hat, plenty of water, sunscreen and insect repellent. It could be very hot!

Contact Betty on: - 4236 0307 or mobile 0432 892 945 on the morning.

Committee Meeting Monday 17th February

The next IBOC Committee Meeting will be held on Monday 17th February 2014 at 7.30pm at Andrew & Anna Knowlson's home, "Hillview" 280 North Marshall Mount Road, Marshall Mount.

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

Newsletter –

Deadline for Articles and Photos in the next IBOC newsletter is **24th February**

Email contributions to Charles Dove newsletter@iboc.org.au or post to 2/39 Purry Burry Avenue, Primbee 2502. Ph: 0417 422 302.

IBOC has pleasure in welcoming all our New Members



CLUB REPORTS

Club Report - Monday 9th December Christmas Meeting

Alan Cousins

A lovely evening was had by 37 members for our Christmas meeting. The evening kicked off with a quick bingo game ably called by Bill Zealey. On each table was a quiz on identifying parts of the body from cryptic type words, this proved to be a good brain teaser and a crossword about birds provided by Charles Dove. Richard Miller gave us a very interesting reading about a train driver and his fireman and involved chickens and inspectors, very funny. Nick Van Oudtshorn showed us two short films that he had made, the first film was amazing footage of life in a pond through the eyes of a midget submarine and the second was classical music accompanied by amazing scenes of wild animals of South Africa that appeared to be dancing and maybe singing to the music?

The decorated hat competition was won by Neil Wheway for the men and Tera Wheway for the women, the judge was a visitor and complete stranger to the club members! Joan Zealey read us a poem with all the words displayed on the screen for us all to follow. We had a further bingo game which all seemed to enjoy and the lucky door prize was drawn by Peg McKinlay, low and behold the winning ticket was for Neil, her son [no fiddle-honestly].

Our musical entertainment was provided by Siobhan with her wonderful crystal bowls, the sounds of which are very soothing and relaxing and were a revelation to most of us, she was accompanied by Josh Coyte on his guitar and Bruce Coyte on the drums. The last quiz of the evening was about the Flora and Fauna used by the States and Territories as their emblems.

The evening was divided by the provision of magnificent supper supplied by members bringing plates and the Christmas cake being cut by Peg McKinlay.

Thank you to all that attended and Anne and I wish you all a Happy New Year.

Report on Howlong Camp 19th-26th October 2013 -

Betty Hudson

Howlong is a small rural town on the north bank of the Murray River just west of Albury. The caravan park was just what IBOC ordered, small, quiet, with plenty of shady trees and a variety of birds.

The weather was very changeable ranging from very hot & windy to cold & wet. We were spoilt for choices in where to look for birds with all wetlands full and the Murray and its anabranch running fast & full. The environment included natural & artificial wetlands, paddocks, riverine forest, dry Cyprus Pine forest on the ridges, and Eucalyptus forest in the wetter areas. South of the river in Victoria much of the region was subject to mining for gold in the late 1800's and onwards which left the land available to be made into Chiltern National Park.

With everybody arrived in camp we spent a hot Sunday checking out 2 places close to camp both on the anabranch of the river, walking to Lions Park & Howlong Common in the morning and driving to Memorial Park after lunch. The highlights were a close look at Striated Pardalotes, Sacred Kingfishers excavating a nest hole in a dead tree just above the water in the river, and Rainbow Bee-eaters investigating holes in the sand cliff below memorial Park. Walking back we saw a Bar-shouldered Dove (not on any lists for the area) and a Masked Lapwing with 2 chicks in a garden. In the afternoon a Tawny Frogmouth was seen snoozing the day away.

Monday morning everyone was eager to be away as we were visiting Chiltern National Park with the potential for a rare sighting of a Regent Honeyeater. Although the forest is a granite outcrop there was plenty of moisture following good spring rains, and birds were plentiful. The tracks in the park were well maintained and signposted. So following the park map we headed to corner of Riley's Rd & Greenfields Rd

where a small damp creek bed surrounded by Cyprus Pine, provided good birding including a White-winged Triller. After morning tea we continued along Greenfields Rd to the Dam where the Chiltern information centre had advised that Regent Honeyeaters had been seen the previous week. Scattering every which way we all hunted for the elusive birds. Charles eventually came back when lunch beckoned and said that not only had seen one but had a sort of photo as well. While sitting quietly after lunch Charles saw a Regent Honeyeater come in for a drink in the entry channel to the dam. The rest of us saw was a pale blur as it sped away. Charles photos showed that it was a different bird to the one he had seen in the morning. Lyndall then piped up that she had seen another bird earlier in the forest. That made 3 Regent Honeyeaters in a space of 2 hrs!

After lunch we made our way to the historic town of Chiltern with its great old buildings. Calling at the visitors Centre to report our honeyeater sightings we were informed that others had been seen at the same place the previous day but about 5.30pm. So we decided to call in on the way back to camp. A walk around Lake Talbot behind the Visitors Centre produced a number of ducks, both Black-fronted & Red-kneed Dotterels as well as a number of introduced birds which we came to realise were wide spread throughout the old towns of the area.

Our next stop was at Chiltern No 1 Dam west of the town but part of the National Park, where a large number of water birds were recorded including Hoary-headed Grebe; Latham's Snipe and Black-winged Stilt. In a clump of young flowering eucalypts was a flock of Little Lorikeets & in the surrounding vegetation many bush birds including White-breasted Woodswallow, Rufous Songlark, the yellow form of Crimson Rosella, Noisy & Little Friarbirds, Fuscous Honeyeater, Leaden Flycatcher, Tree & Fairy Martins amongst others. With the time getting on we paid a quick visit to Chiltern No 2 dam and added a Swamp Harrier, Red-rumped Parrot, White-browed Babbler, & Little Grassbird to our list. By now it was very late and we hastily retreated to see if the Regent honeyeaters would return to Greenfields Dam. After a long wait during which we had Fuscous & Tufted Honeyeaters coming down to bath & drink we rewarded by not one but 2 Regent Honeyeaters coming in to drink if only briefly before flying off again. Once they land on the trunk of an ironbark tree they are almost impossible to spot until they move. It was a tired hot but happy group of bird watchers who returned to camp that night. Looking at his photos Charles thought he had a Helmeted Honeyeater but was disillusioned later in the week when I met the person in charge of the Helmeted Honeyeater program who said an emphatic "NO". Wrong habitat entirely

Tuesday saw us head in the opposite direction, away from the river to Balldale and near by Kentucky State Forest and then Oil Tree Lagoon. The State forest was Cypress Pine where Red-capped & Hooded Robins were seen as well as Brown Treecreepers and a Grey-crowned Babbler. Apostlebirds were a feature of the roadsides. Next stop was Oil Tree lagoon a large shallow expanse of water, but due to a low water level over a prolonged period regrowth had occurred obscuring a view of birds on the water. Yellow-billed Spoonbill, Brown Goshawk, Cockatiel, White-browed Woodswallow, & Brown Songlark were additions to the list. Lunch calling we headed into Corowa to the Visitor Centre, and had lunch in the adjacent Park braving what was now a cold gusty wind. A Little Eagle was spotted overhead towards the river. We then made our way west to the sewage ponds, unfortunately having to look from outside the fences as we checked both boundaries for birds. The best views were from the main road where we used the spotting scopes. Pink-eared Duck, Chestnut Teal & Hardheads, Black-tailed Native-hens, Black-winged Stilt, both Black-fronted & Red-kneed Dotterel, Latham's Snipe and a Little Raven added to the ever growing list.

Arriving back in camp the weather was very threatening with black clouds coming up fast from the SW. Sure enough the 1st of 3 thunder storms hit us dumping a lot of rain in a short time on ground too hard to absorb the deluge, and then following it up with a hail storm. An interesting experience in a tent! Only a hasty dash outside to lift the side of the annex roof prevented a potential collapse of my tent. Once the rain stopped we started to get the water out of annexes but it took time for it to go down. Unfortunately Charles & Janina were not so lucky their tent was very wet inside together with the contents. The caravan park were very good and found them an empty cabin to use for the rest of camp.

Wednesday was cold, wet and windy for our visit to Wonga Wetlands in Albury. This is an area reclaimed by the city council from farmland and returned to its original wetland state. Winter storm water is drained into the ponds together with overflows from the Murray River at snow melt, and replenishes the ponds. In summer the water is used on the trees in the city, gradually draining the ponds replicating the natural cycle, what started as a way of cleaning up & getting rid of storm water is now major tourist research and education facility as well as a refuge for waterbirds. An impressive list of birds was recorded here with Australian Spotted Crake, Plumed-whistling Duck, Musk Duck, Australasian Shoveler, Black-shouldered Kite, White-bellied Sea-Eagle, Whistling Kite, Nankeen Kestrel, Silver Gull, Australian King-Parrot, Azure

Kingfisher, White-browed Scrubwren, Golden-Headed Cisticola, being additions. This is a place well worth return visits at different seasons.

Thursday another fine warm day saw us make a return visit to Chiltern NP but to a different area, Honeyeater Picnic Area, south of the Hume Hwy., This was a much drier area with the rock close to the surface &, as would be expected, the birds were somewhat different. A stop at the start of Tower Hill Rd gave an Olive-backed Oriole and a Dusky Woodswallow on a nest, White-winged Choughs, a Peaceful Dove & Painted Honeyeater as well as the ever present Sacred Kingfisher. Arriving at the Picnic Ground the first bird seen was a juvenile White-winged Triller which baffled us for a time until the male appeared. The adjacent large dam provided a valuable water source as well as a nesting site for an Australasian Grebe beneath an overhanging branch of a fallen tree. Finishing lunch we all split up and investigated the surrounding area. Turquoise Parrot, Fan-tailed Cuckoo, Black-chinned Honeyeater, Masked Woodswallow, Leaden Flycatcher, & Rufous Songlark were all recorded. Having exhausted the possibilities here, we decided to tackle Skelton Hill, squashing everyone into the 4-wheel drives for the trip. The road climbed up & up giving great views of the surrounding countryside. Stopping at the only available spot on the narrow road carved into the hillside we found a Weebill feeding young in a nest. Moving on, the track deteriorated markedly and descended rapidly into a moist creek gully. Here another Bar-shouldered Dove was seen, Whistling Kite & Wedge-tailed Eagle were also seen overhead, as we came down. Returning to the Picnic Area to collect the ordinary vehicles, everyone then decided that another visit to Greenfields dam on the way back to camp was in order. No Regent Honeyeaters came despite patient waiting; maybe the earlier rain had provided an alternative source for water.

Our last day arrived so quickly, in the morning we headed west towards Yarrawonga to Bundalong where there were accessible sewage ponds. At first it looked as if we had drawn a blank but Charles scrambling up the bank & checking out the far ponds located plenty of birds, 7 species of duck & 2 grebes, including Australian Shelduck, Pink-eared Duck & Australasian Shoveler. Walking back towards the cars we saw movement on the rocks at the bottom of the main dam wall. A Sharp-tailed Sandpiper nice & close to get a good look at, but uncooperative for photos. Just as the shutter clicked it hid its head. Leaving the ponds we went to the closest part of Warby-Ovens N P beside the Ovens River. This is an area regularly inundated by high water levels. A Red-browed Treecreeper was recorded, as well as White-winged Triller, Restless Flycatcher and Jacky Winter. Being last day of camp everyone went their own way after lunch, visiting areas they thought looked promising, or like myself returned to camp to begin packing up for an early start the next day as I was leaving to start my journey to Tasmania while Alan Cousins kindly towed my trailer back home. No leaving as usual at 2pm.

Another great camping trip, with several new bird species and plenty of good company. It was nice to be able to welcome Eleanor & Ron Thompson to their 1st IBOC camp.

Bird List for Howlong Camp

Plumed Whistling-Duck	Brown Goshawk	White-throated Treecreeper	Masked Woodswallow
Musk Duck	Swamp Harrier	Red-browed Treecreeper	White-browed Woodswallow
Freckled Duck	Wedge-tailed Eagle	Brown Treecreeper	Dusky Woodswallow
Black Swan	Little Eagle	Superb Fairy-wren	Grey Butcherbird
Australian Shelduck	Nankeen Kestrel	White-browed Scrubwren	Pied Butcherbird
Australian Wood Duck	Brown Falcon	Weebill	Australian Magpie
Pink-eared Duck	Australian Hobby	Western Gerygone	Pied Currawong
Australasian Shoveler	Peregrine Falcon	Striated Thornbill	Grey Fantail
Grey Teal	Purple Swamphen	Yellow Thornbill	Willie Wagtail
Chestnut Teal	Australian Spotted Crake	Yellow-rumped Thornbill	Australian Raven
Northern Mallard	Black-tailed Native-hen	Chestnut-rumped Thornbill	Little Raven
Pacific Black Duck	Dusky Moorhen	Brown Thornbill	Leaden Flycatcher
Hardhead	Eurasian Coot	Spotted Pardalote	Restless Flycatcher
Australasian Grebe	Black-winged Stilt	Striated Pardalote	Magpie-lark
Hoary-headed Grebe	Black-fronted Dotterel	Eastern Spinebill	White-winged Chough
Great Crested Grebe	Red-kneed Dotterel	White-eared Honeyeater	Apostlebird
Rock Dove	Masked Lapwing	Yellow-tufted Honeyeater	Jacky Winter
Spotted Dove	Latham's Snipe	Fuscous Honeyeater	Scarlet Robin
Common Bronzewing	Sharp-tailed Sandpiper	White-plumed Honeyeater	Red-capped Robin
Crested Pigeon	Silver Gull	Noisy Miner	Hooded Robin
Peaceful Dove	Galah	Little Wattlebird	Eastern Yellow Robin
Bar-shouldered Dove	Little Corella	Regent Honeyeater	Eurasian Skylark
Tawny Frogmouth	Sulphur-crested Cockatoo	Red Wattlebird	Golden-headed Cisticola
Australasian Darter	Cockatiel	New Holland Honeyeater	Australian Reed-Warbler

Little Pied Cormorant	Little Lorikeet	Black-chinned Honeyeater	Little Grassbird
Great Cormorant	Australian King-Parrot	White-naped Honeyeater	Rufous Songlark
Little Black Cormorant	Superb Parrot	Blue-faced Honeyeater	Brown Songlark
Australian Pelican	Crimson Rosella	Noisy Friarbird	Silvereye
White-necked Heron	Crimson Rosella Yellow Form)	Little Friarbird	Welcome Swallow
Eastern Great Egret	Eastern Rosella	Painted Honeyeater	Fairy Martin
Intermediate Egret	Red-rumped Parrot	Grey-crowned Babbler	Tree Martin
Cattle Egret	Turquoise Parrot	White-browed Babbler	Common Blackbird
White-faced Heron	Fan-tailed Cuckoo	Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike	Common Starling
Australian White Ibis	Barking Owl	White-winged Triller	Common Myna
Straw-necked Ibis	Southern Boobook	Crested Shrike-tit	Mistletoebird
Royal Spoonbill	Azure Kingfisher	Golden Whistler	Red-browed Finch
Yellow-billed Spoonbill	Laughing Kookaburra	Rufous Whistler	House Sparrow
Black-shouldered Kite	Sacred Kingfisher	Grey Shrike-thrush	Australasian Pipit
White-bellied Sea-Eagle	Rainbow Bee-eater	Olive-backed Oriole	European Goldfinch
Whistling Kite	Dollarbird	White-breasted Woodswallow	

159 Species Recorded including 4 of the 6 Woodswallow species, 16 species of Honeyeaters including the Regent Honeyeater, 13 species of ducks, 11 raptors, 2 owls 3 Treecreepers, & only 1 sighting of a Common Myna 31 members attended for part or all of the week

A detailed bird list showing sightings for each location we went to, has been posted on the club web site.

NSW ORNITHOLOGICAL RECORDS APPRAISAL COMMITTEE

Roger McGovern
1/67 Cremorne Road
Cremorne NSW 2090
Ref: NSWORAC603
Date: 13-01-14

MEMORANDUM TO: Charles Dove

c.c. M. Roderick R. Cooper
A. Morris A. Palliser
C. Brandis A. Rogers
A. Richardson

NSW ORAC CASE 603 – Asian Dowitcher (*Limnodromus semipalmatus*)

This report details the sighting of an Asian Dowitcher by Charles Dove and twelve members of the Illawarra Bird Observers Club at Comerong Island at the Shoalhaven River entrance on November 16, 2013. Although the bird was seen at some distance and the written description does not cover all the identification features, the committee felt that the photographs were adequately diagnostic of this species, particularly as it could be readily compared in size and structure with the accompanying Bar-tailed Godwits.

The committee accepted this record unanimously and thanks Charles for taking the time to prepare a very good submission along with the excellent photographs. This is a very uncommon visitor to NSW and is only the fourth confirmed record for the state.

ACCEPT

NSW ORAC Secretary
Roger McGovern

ARTICLES OF INTEREST

Crows could be the key to understanding alien intelligence

Crows are among the planet's most intelligent animals, [teaching their young to use tools](#) for foraging and [banding together](#) to fight off intruders. Now, the first study of how abstract reasoning works in these birds' brains could shed light on how intelligence works in a truly alien, non-mammal brain.

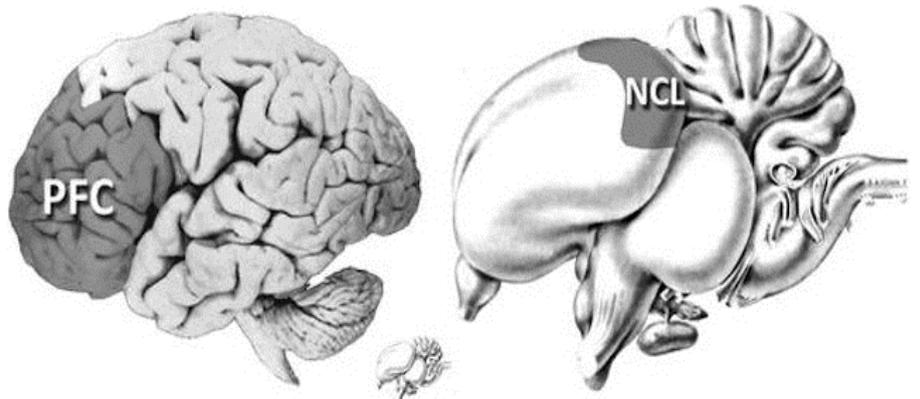
We've studied brain structure pretty extensively in mammals from humans and apes to whales and mice. But German neuroscientists Lena Veit and Andreas Nieder are the first to watch what happens in crow brains as these birds worked their way through a series of brain-teasers. They actually wired the crows' brains up with electrodes, watching as individual neurons fired when the crows did a test that required abstract reasoning. What Veit and Nieder found reveals a lot about what intelligence looks like in a brain that's nothing like our own.



The Evolution of Intelligence

The crow, and some of its relatives in the corvid family (such as jays and magpies), are among the only intelligent species we've encountered outside the world of mammals. But their brains are utterly different from ours. The mammalian seat of reason is in our prefrontal cortex, a thin layer of nerve-riddled tissue on the outside of the front region of our brains. Birds have no prefrontal cortex (PFC). Instead, they have the nidopallium caudolaterale (NCL), which is located toward the middle of their brains. You can see the different regions in the image, below.

The thing that's really interesting about comparing bird and human intelligence is that we did not evolve from a common, intelligent ancestor. Our last common ancestor with birds lived during the Permian period, about 300 million years ago, before the age of dinosaurs. It probably looked like a cross between a reptile and a rodent, and was roughly the size of a big raccoon.



This ancestor's simple brain was ruled by instinct rather than higher-level cognition. Still, lurking inside its rather small skull was a brain part called the pallium, which over millions of years evolved into the PFC in mammals and the NCL in birds. That makes mammal and bird intelligence an excellent example of [parallel evolution](#) — both groups of animals developed intelligence independently of one another.

Despite all their differences, the PFC and NCL have a few features in common. Veit and Nieder [write in Nature Communications](#) that both regions are involved in "working memory, reversal learning and reward prediction." The areas also "share important properties such as dense innervation by dopaminergic fibres and connectivity patterns with multiple sensory input, limbic and motor output regions." What that means is that the NCL and PFC are both packed with neurons, or nerve cells, that respond to the crucial neurotransmitter dopamine. Its neurons are also connected to the parts of the brain that handle memory, emotion, and body movements. The PFC and NCL are brain command centers, synthesizing information from a vast array of inputs and outputs.

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Testing Crows' Ability to Reason

Given that the NCL is the seat of crow intelligence, the researchers decided to see whether they could actually watch in real time as a crow figured out a puzzle. They used crows that had been raised in captivity, and trained to do a test kind of like the *Sesame Street* "which one doesn't belong?" quiz. The crows had to identify whether two images were different or the same.

First, the researchers put electrodes over the crows' NCL, to watch each neuron firing. Then they would present the crow with an image. Next, the crow would be prompted to choose an image that matched or didn't match that image (they had already

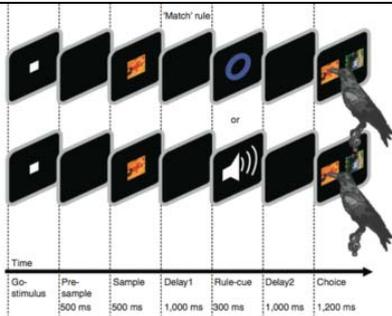


Figure 1 | Behavioural protocol. The birds initiated a trial by moving their heads in front of the screen during presentation of the go-stimulus. A sample stimulus was presented for 500 ms, followed by a 1,000 ms delay. A rule cue (either auditory or visual) instructed the bird about the current rule ('match'/ 'nonmatch'), followed by a second 1,000 ms delay. In the choice period, crows pecked either at the image identical to or different from the sample, according to the previously indicated rule, to receive a reward. All relevant task parameters were balanced.

been trained to do this with a sound or sign that either meant "match" or "don't match"). Finally, the crow would be presented with two images and have to choose the matching or not matching one. This is a test that requires abstract reasoning, because the images change all the time and the crows have to apply the abstract idea of "match" or "not match" to a variety of inputs. In addition, this test reveals that the researchers defined intelligence as an ability to do abstract reasoning. Obviously there are many ways to define intelligence, and this is simply one way to do it. What the researchers found was pretty amazing. They identified what they call "abstract rule neurons" which governed which answer the crows would

give. Basically, the birds' brains assigned one rule (match) to one neuron, then the other rule (don't match) to another neuron. When the crows correctly matched an image, the match rule neuron would fire. When the crow gave an incorrect answer, or became confused, the abstract rule neuron fired only very weakly. Veit and Nieder concluded that this was strong evidence that crows' brains have developed to handle abstract rules, which is why the birds are good at learning and responding to a variety of situations in a flexible way. They note that "the ability to guide behavior by general rules rather than by relying on fixed stimulus-response associations constitutes a survival advantage." This is the same survival advantage conferred on humans due to our intelligence. But our intelligence occupies a very different structure in our brains.

Alien Intelligence on Earth What this experiment suggests is that two dramatically different species might have similar abstract reasoning abilities — even if their brains are completely unlike each other. If we imagine that intelligence can only dwell in a mammal-like brain, we may miss out on discovering smart life forms elsewhere. The crow brain may be the first truly alien intelligence we've been able to study. The crow brain may also help us better understand what's required to build an artificial intelligence, too. We can look at what the crow and human brain share in common, and speculate about what it might take to create an intelligence that resides in a non-brain structure. As I mentioned earlier, both the PFC and NCL contain many neurons connected to other parts of the brain, and they work a lot with the neurotransmitter dopamine. These regions also appear to deal in abstract rules. Most of all, we can find hope in the idea that intelligence isn't just a quirk of one type of brain. Many kinds of brains can become intelligent. We are not alone.



Researchers have found the country's iconic kiwi bird probably descended from an ancestor that flew in from Australia. — AFP pic

WELLINGTON, Dec 17 — In a finding likely to be a bitter blow for many New Zealanders, researchers have found the country's iconic Kiwi bird probably descended from an ancestor that flew in from Australia.

Paleontologist Trevor Worthy of Adelaide's Flinders University said fossilised remains suggested the flightless bird did not evolve from the extinct giant moa, as has long been assumed.

Instead, he said an ancestor of the Kiwi dating back 20 million years discovered in the South Island was more closely related to another giant flightless bird, the Emu, which is still common in Australia. Worthy, himself an expatriate New Zealander, said it appeared the fossilised South Island bird and the Emu evolved from a common ancestor, which originated in Australia but also spread to New Zealand. "If, as the DNA suggests, the Kiwi is related to the Emu, then both shared a common ancestor that could fly," he said. "It means they were little and volant (able to fly) and that they flew to New Zealand." Worthy said it was not uncommon for birds to "jump" from Australia to New Zealand, citing the Mallard Duck, the little Banded Dotterel and the Cattle Egret as three species which regularly fly back and forth. He said the research, published by the Society of Avian Paleontology and Evolution, was not conclusive. "We need to find wing bones to put the theory beyond all doubt," he said. New Zealanders have long complained about their trans-Tasman neighbours appropriating everything from champion race horse Phar Lap to actor Russell Crowe, and any Australian claim to the Kiwi is likely to intensify the rivalry. — AFP- See more at:

<http://www.themalaymailonline.com/features/article/study-new-zealands-kiwi-probably-started-out-an-aussie#sthash.7CcKBltx.dpuf>

2014 Membership Fees are now due

Family: \$35 - Single: \$30 - Junior: \$10

I.B.O.C. PROGRAMME 2014				
Month	Action	Date	Speaker/Leader	Venue
February	Mid week outing	5.02.14	Charles Dove	Lake Illawarra Pelican Reserve Reddall Parade Lake Illawarra South
	Meeting	10.02.14	Peter Fackender	Torry Plains, Murrumbidgee Wetlands
	Outing	Saturday 15.02.14	Betty Hudson	Bellambi Lagoon & Boat Harbour
March	Meeting	10.03.14	Holly Parsons	Birds in Back Yards
	Mid week walk Joint Outing Cumberland BOC With	12.03.14	Charles Dove	R.N.P. Wattle Forest Picnic Area Audley
	Outing	Sunday 16.03.14	Betty Hudson	Bangalee Reserve Nth Nowra
April	Meeting	14.04.14	Andrew Knowlson	Norfolk Island
	Autumn Camp	5.04.14-12.04.14	Betty Hudson	Hat Head Nr Kempsey
	Mid Week Walk	16.04.14	Charles Dove	Jerrara Dam
	No Outing due to Easter			
May	Meeting	12.05.14	Judy Harrington	Olympic Park
	Mid week Walk	14.05.14	Rupert Jarvis	Bombo Headland
	Outing	Sunday 18.05.14	Betty Hudson	Part Mt Alexandrina Ring Track Mittagong
June	Meeting	9.06.14	Members Night	
	Mid Week Walk	11.06.14	Rupert Jarvis	Fred Finch Park & Hooka Point
	Outing	Saturday 14.06.14	Betty Hudson	Dharawal NP & Kelly's Falls
July	Meeting	14.07.14		
	Mid Week Walk	16.07.14	Rupert Jarvis	Mt Kembla Ring Track
	Outing	Sunday 20.07.14	Betty Hudson	Bass Point & Shellcove Wetlands
August	Meeting	11.08.14		
	Mid Week Walk	13.08.14	Rupert Jarvis	Byarong Creek Figtree
	Outing	Saturday 16.08.14	Betty Hudson	Bangadilly N P & Cecil Hoskins Reserve
September	Meeting	8.09.14		
	Mid Week Walk	10.09.14	Rupert Jarvis	Rhododendron Park
	Monthly Walk	Sunday 14.09.14	Betty Hudson	Danjerra Dam Yalwal
October	Meeting	13.10.14		
	Mid Week Walk	15.10.14	Rupert Jarvis	Karoo Bay & Macquarie Rivulet
	No Outing due to camp			
	Spring Camp	18.10.14- 25.10.14	Betty Hudson	
November	Meeting/ AGM	10.11.14		
	Mid Week Walk	12.11.14	Rupert Jarvis	Little Lake Area
	Outing	Sunday 16.11.14	Betty Hudson	Budderoo Fire Trail & Barren Grounds
December	Christmas Picnic	6.12.14		Integral Park
	Christmas Meeting	8.12.14		
January 2015	Committee Meeting	12.01.15		
February 2015	Mid Week Walk	4.02.15		Lake Illawarra
February 2015	Meeting	9.02.15		

MONTHLY SIGHTINGS: September - December 2013 January 2014

compiled by Darryl Goldrick

I would encourage members to avail themselves of the Club's web site to log their sightings as this is the main medium that I have at my disposal to be able to produce the back page of the newsletter- to date there is only a 'handful' of members using this facility. Spring is not far off and bird activity will be on the increase - I look forward to your postings.

SPECIES	NUMBER	DATE	LOCATION	HABITAT	OBSERVER
Brown Quail	5+	11-Jan-14	Kully Bay	Grass	C & J Dove
Magpie Goose	2	20-Dec-13	Berkeley	Paddock	Charles Dove
Hoary-headed Grebe	4	1/01/2014	Primbee PBP	Lake	Charles Dove
Brush Bronzewing	1	19/12/2013	Budderoo	Ground	C & J Dove - T Edwell
White-throated Needletail	150+	23/12/2013	Primbee	overhead	Charles Dove
White-throated Needletail	100+	1/12/2013	Comerong Island	Overhead	C Dove - R Imisides
Nankeen Night-heron	1	10/01/2014	Primbee	Casuarina	Charles Dove
Black-shouldered Kite	1	27/12/2013	Bulli	Over Sand dune	Mike Morphett
Whistling Kite	1	6/12/2013	Bulli	O'head	Mike Morphett
Australian Hobby	1	10/01/2014	Primbee	overhead	Charles Dove
Peregrine Falcon	1	6/12/2013	Thirroul	O'head	Mike Morphett
Peregrine Falcon	1	26/12/2013	Thirroul	O'head	Mike Morphett
Beach Stone-curler	1	1/12/2013	Comerong Island	Shoreline	C Dove - R Imisides
Sooty Oystercatcher	3	26/12/2013	Sandon Point	Rock Platform	Mike Morphett
Pacific Golden Plover	130+	1/12/2013	Comerong Island	Shoreline	C Dove - R Imisides
Greater Sand Plover	1	23/12/2013	Windang Island	Tidal Rocks	Charles Dove
Masked Lapwing	14	26/12/2013	McCauley's Beach	Beach	Mike Morphett
Bar-tailed Godwit	200+	7/12/2013	Comerong Island	Shoreline	Charles Dove
Bar-tailed Godwit	6	29/12/2013	Primbee	Shoreline	Charles Dove
Bar-tailed Godwit	12	1/01/2014	Primbee PBP	Mud Flats	Charles Dove
Grey-tailed Tattler	2	23/12/2013	Windang Island	Tidal Rocks	Charles Dove
Asian Dowitcher	1	1/12/2013	Comerong Island	Shoreline	C Dove - R Imisides
Great Knot	3	1/12/2013	Comerong Island	Shoreline	C Dove - R Imisides
Red Knot	5	1/12/2013	Comerong Island	Shoreline	C Dove - R Imisides
Red-necked Stint	14	7/12/2013	Comerong Island	Shoreline	Charles Dove
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper	20+	1/01/2014	Primbee PBP	Mud Flats	Charles Dove
Little Tern	4	1/12/2013	Comerong Island	Shoreline	C Dove - R Imisides
Little Tern	1 -n/b	14/12/2013	Windang	Shoreline	Charles Dove
Little Tern	1nb	23/12/2013	Windang	Shoreline	Charles Dove
Little Tern	4 Br	4/01/2014	Windang	overhead	Charles Dove
Common Tern	2	1/12/2013	Comerong Island	Shoreline	C Dove - R Imisides
Common Tern	1	23/12/2013	Windang	Shoreline	Charles Dove
Crested Tern	38	1/12/2013	Comerong Island	Shoreline	C Dove - R Imisides
Kelp Gull	2	26/12/2013	Sandon Point	Rock Platform	Mike Morphett
Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoo	3	28/12/2013	Stockland Shopping S'harb	O'head	Mike Morphett
Musk Lorikeet	10+	13/12/2012	W'gong B/Garden	Gum Trees	C Dove - J Quataert
Little Lorikeet	10+	13/12/2012	W'gong B/Garden	Gum Trees	C Dove - J Quataert
Channel-billed Cuckoo	1	6/12/2013	Primbee	overhead	Charles Dove
Fan-tailed Cuckoo	3	8/12/2013	Primbee	Casuarina	Charles Dove
Brush Cuckoo	1juv	7/12/2013	Primbee	Casuarina	Charles Dove
Powerful Owl	1	6/12/2013	Thirroul	Yard	Mike Morphett
Powerful Owl	1 heard	26/12/2013	Thirroul	Residential	Mike Morphett
Powerful Owl	1	28/12/2013	Thirroul	Yard	Mike Morphett
Azure Kingfisher	1	31/12/2013	Korrongulla W/land	Shoreline	Charles Dove
Sacred Kingfisher	2	25/12/2013	Primbee	Casuarina	Charles Dove
Dollarbird	2	27/12/2013	Slacky Flat, Bulli	Tree Canopy	Mike Morphett
White-browed Woodswallow	40+ Br	19/12/2013	Budderoo	Bushland	C & J Dove - T Edwell

Stop press - a Square-tailed Kite sited overhead at 12th and 24th January Balgownie – Tawradgi by Jack Baker