

Common Name: Rose Robin

Scientific Name: Petroica rosea

Featured bird groups: Small insect-eating birds

Atlas Number: 384

Description:

The Rose Robin is a slender robin with a relatively long tail. Males are dark grey above, with a white patch above the bill (frontal patch), and have a rose-pink breast. The lower part of the underbody and outer tail feathers are white, the wings and upper tail dark grey. Females are mainly brown-grey above with a small white frontal patch, white outertail and wing bars, and off-white below, with occasional pale pink wash across breast. Young birds resemble females, but are streaked



photo by Charles Dove

Wollongong Botanical Gardens

white above, usually lack the white frontal patch, and are mottled darked brown underneath, with less or no pink. Rose Robins are the most acrobatic of the red robin genus (Petroica) with a darting, tumbling flight, and forage higher up in the canopy.

Similar species:

The Rose Robin may sometimes be confused with the other red robins that share its wet forest habitat, with the females and juveniles being the hardest to distinguish. However, it generally tends to be slimmer with a much longer tail and shorter legs. It can be distinguished from the rather similar Pink Robin, *P. rodinogaster*, by the following: the male not as black, and the pink only on the breast (it extends further down abdomen for Pink Robin), while the female is more grey than brown; the Pink Robin also has no white in the tail. Flame Robins (*P. phoenicea*) are generally bigger and bulkier, with males having a distinctive white wing bar not seen in the Rose Robin.

Distribution:

The Rose Robin is found in south-eastern Australia from south-east Queensland, along coast and inland to western slopes of Great Dividing Range in New South Wales and south into Victoria, to eastern parts of Western District. Occasional visitor to South Australia.

Habitat:

The Rose Robin prefers wet forest and rainforest habitats during spring and summer, moving into drier, more open habitats during autumn and winter. Mainly found in the temperate zone, but is found in sub-tropical zone in south-eastern Queensland and north-eastern New South Wales. May sometimes be seen in farm and town gardens when migrating.

Seasonal movements:

Seasonal migrant, moving south into wetter habitats during the spring and summer breeding season and moving north during the colder months, especially from Victoria and the Australian Capital Territory (ACT). Also moves down from higher altitudes in autumn and winter.

Feeding:

The Rose Robin feeds on insects and mainly forages in the upper to mid-canopy, but will also feed from the ground. It is very active, flitting from tree to tree or to the ground, and will not return to the same perch, unlike other robins.

Breeding:

The Rose Robin breeds in pairs, with the female incubating the eggs and both sexes feeding the young. The compact, cup-shaped nest is placed towards the outer end of a branch or in a tree fork, and is made of green moss, with some twigs and bark, lined with plant down or fur and camouflaged with lichen. Three broods can be raised in a single season. Nests may be parasitised by cuckoos, including the Pallid (*Cuculus pallidus*) and Brush Cuckoos (*Cacomantis variolosus*) and the Horsfield's Bronze-Cuckoo (*Chrysococcyx basalis*).

Living with us

Land-clearing for urban development, especially along the coast, has caused local extinctions of Rose Robin populations. Rose Robins are quite sensitive to habitat fragmentation and the loss of understorey. May sometimes be killed by cats.

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

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'ONE GOOD TERN
 DESERVES ANOTHER'

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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**Club Meeting:****Monday 10th June**

Mick Derrington will present a number of Photo Slideshows on Birds from Bellambi Point bushland. Mick Derrington who has been doing photography for about 10 years with a Digital Canon SLR 10 to 15 meg and 500-200mm and 300-70mm 22-10mm lenses and on landscapes, surfing, birds and sunsets-sunrise as a hobby.

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.

Midweek Walk:**Wednesday 12th June****Mount Kembla**

leader Rupert Jarvis

Meet at 9am on Cordeaux Road. To get there drive up through Mt Kembla village, past the Dendrobium Mine and at the start of Harry Graham Drive turn left into Cordeaux Road. (This turn-off is 1.6 kms after passing the Mt Kembla Hotel) 400 metres up Cordeaux Road there is a white house on the left and immediately beyond there is parking on the right side of the road.

Contact Rupert Jarvis 0403 932 635

Monthly Outing:**Sunday 16th June****Coastal Track Wattamolla**

leader Betty Hudson

The June monthly outing will be to the Royal National Park Wattamolla, where we will walk a part of the Coastal Walking Track south towards Garie Beach. This is a walk involving some rough rocky stretches along the tops of the cliffs. Whales can often be seen as we pass by and hopefully Tawny-crowned Honeyeaters will be feeding on the Banksias.

Meet in the Wattamolla Car Park at 9.30am, parking in the parking area furthest up the hill from the kiosk as this is where the track starts.

Bring and carry morning tea and lunch to eat in the vicinity of the cars. After lunch we will visit another area of the park depending on the weather.

Please remember that there is a fee of \$11 to enter the park unless you have a pass. The pay station may not be open when we arrive but the Rangers check the cars during the day and issue notices to pay where required. Payment can be made at the Audley Kiosk/Office on the way home.

Access can be made from either Waterfall or Audley via the Princes Hwy to Sir Bertram Stevens Drive leading to the Wattamolla turn off.

Contact Betty Hudson on 4236 0307 or (on the morning) mobile 0432 892 945

Committee Meeting -**Monday 17th June**

The next IBOC Committee Meeting will be held on Monday 17th June 2013 at 7.30pm at Charles & Janina Doves Unit, 2/39 Purry Burry Ave; Primbee 2502 Ph 0417 422 302

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 **20th June 2013**. 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 13th May 2013

Alan Cousins

This month we were treated to a presentation about the birds and animals of Zambia. Our presenter was David Winterbottom who along with wife Elizabeth are well known members of the club and are extensive African travellers having both been born in Zambia.

David introduced his presentation with a map of Africa showing all the countries (54) that make up this vast continent. (I have done some checking of records and found that Africa is the worlds second largest and second most populated continent of 30,221,532 sq. km (11,668,599 sq. miles) and had a population in 2011 of 1,032,532,974). Our first glimpse of Africa was at BANGWEULU SWAMP where we were introduced to the Shoebill, a huge stork like bird which was followed by Heron, White-faced Whistling Duck, Jacana, Yellow-billed Stork, Cattle Egret, Glossy Ibis, Black-winged Stilt, Grey Heron, Little Egret, Black-necked Plover, White Pelican, Black-headed Gull and Stork. (Some of these birds will be familiar to us). We were also shown a Hippopotamus and David indicated that more people are killed by these than any other wild animal.

The next place visited was LUANGWA VALLEY PARK, an area of 20,000sq.Kms. The birds seen were Guinea Fowl, White-backed Vulture (very common), Egyptian Vulture, Ostrich, Jabiru Stork, Brown Thornbill, Grey Thornbill, Crimson-crested Shrike and Crested Barbet. We were also treated to photos of Lion, Spotted Hyena and Wild Dogs. There are tent safaris which range from luxury tents to simple camps and self-drive.

Next stop was KAFUE FLATS where we saw visitors' tents above ground connected by walkways. In this same area balloon flights are available to see the plains full of wild animals. The birds were Pratincole, Thick-knees, Bustard, Grey-crowned Crane, White Babbler, Little Bee-eater, Red-breasted Swallow, Brown Snake Eagle, Crowned Eagle, Sand Grouse, and Banded Grouse along with Cheetah, Zebra and Wildebeest for good measure.

Then on to the ZAMBEZI RIVER and VICTORIA FALLS with Water Buck, Crocodile and Elephant besides Skimmer, Common Sandpiper, Giant and Pied Kingfisher (David said that there are many of these), Fishing Owl, Barn Owl, White-fronted Bee-eater and different kinds of Roller.

I am fairly certain that I have missed out or incorrectly named a few species but trying to take in this brilliant presentation and write a summary was difficult, so for any inaccuracies I apologise. The large audience was obviously so enthralled with the presentation that questions were few.

Many thanks again to David.

Minnamurra Billabong Walk - Wednesday, 15th May

Sylvia Garlick

The outing was very well attended with twenty members arriving bright and early for a 9.00 o'clock start. Walking along a flat concrete pathway on a beautiful sunny morning made it a pleasure to be outside looking for birds. The Casuarina along the edge of the waterway had Yellow and Brown Thornbills, Eastern Spinebill, Lewin's Honeyeater, New Holland Honeyeater, Olive-backed Oriole, Grey Fantail and White-throated Treecreeper. The understory provided good cover for Fairy-wrens, Superb and Variegated. On the opposite side were paddocks with cattle and numerous Cattle Egrets; a flock of European Gold Finch moved through the tall grass accompanied by a number of Red-browed Finch. On the



White-throated Treecreeper by Charles Dove



by Charles Dove

waterway the Chestnut Teal were highlighted by the brilliant sunlight displaying their colours, changing when they altered direction. The Australasian Darter, Australian Pelican and three different Cormorants were well represented. Peregrine Falcon, Nankeen Kestrel and Whistling Kite flew overhead as well as a mix of our more common birds were seen. It was a rewarding morning walk with 46 species seen. A complete list of birds seen follows. Thank you Rupert for taking the time to organize this walk I'm sure we will come to the Billabong again as it is a very pleasant spot to spend a couple of hours and not too far from home.

Bird List for Minnamurra Billabong Walk 15.05.13		46 Species recorded	20 members attended
Australian Wood Duck	Cattle Egret	Crimson Rosella	Olive-backed Oriole
Grey Teal	White-faced Heron	White-Throated Treecreeper	Australian Magpie
Chestnut Teal	Australian White Ibis	Superb Fairy-wren	Pied Currawong
Pacific Black Duck	Straw-necked Ibis	Variiegated Fairy-wren	Grey Fantail
Australasian Grebe	Royal Spoonbill	Yellow Thornbill	Willie Wagtail
Rock Dove	Whistling Kite	Brown Thornbill	Australian Raven
Australasian Darter	Nankeen Kestrel	Eastern Spinebill	Magpie Lark
Little Pied Cormorant	Peregrine Falcon	Lewin's Honeyeater	Welcome Swallow
Great Cormorant	Eurasian Coot	Little Wattlebird	Red-browed Finch
Little Black Cormorant	Masked Lapwing	Red Wattlebird	European Goldfinch
Australian Pelican	Galah	New Holland Honeyeater	
Eastern Great Egret	Sulphur-crested Cockatoo	Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike	

Monthly Outing – Saturday, 18th May, 2013

Jann Gowans

Tallawarra Ash Ponds

It was a cool and blustery morning as our group of 21 birders gathered at our meeting spot. A small burned-out car greeted us. We proceeded through the gate and parked the cars in a row along the embankment while Charlie locked the gate behind us. Black Swans and Eurasian Coots were quickly spotted at the nearest ponds and we set off in a clock-wise loop around the usual area. As we walked along the corridor of She-oaks, the leading group reported a Shining Bronze-cuckoo which was soon away. Yellow Thornbills and Red-browed Finches were twittering in the trees. It seemed a bit quieter than usual as we made our way around with the wind whipping through the trees.



As the ponds came back into view, more birds were sighted. A Black-winged Stilt was seen over the far side and a Dotterel which sent me back to the books (it was red-kneed but black-fronted came to mind!). Numerous Grebes were seen in the distance with Pacific Black ducks closer in.

We began looking more closely at the ducks as they came into view. A group was clustered on a small island and somehow, despite a few heading further out as everyone gathered to look, they came back to resettle on the island. We had a great close-up look at the Pink-eared and Freckled Ducks and Australasian Shoveler. Usually, it

seems like we are trying to inspect specks out in the middle. Chestnut and Grey Teal were also about. Royal Spoonbills with an Egret and more Black Swans were spotted further around at ponds west of the walkway. We had morning tea along the western edge of the large ponds and continued our loop. A Black-shouldered Kite was seen perching and hovering about the area. A group of Hardheads occupied a smaller pond on the furthest edge. We saw a person on the far side and noted he had binoculars, too. Speculation as to the person's identity ceased as Bruce finally neared. I missed the Grassbird and Cisticola in the grass as we headed back to the cars.



Golden-headed Cisticola David Eddington

Our vehicle procession then went to the farthest eastern gate and we lined up. An unusual looking Swamp Harrier flew overhead. It was good to add another raptor as numbers were down compared to usual sightings. We had a quick foray up a side track and added a few birds but it was quiet. We turned around after reaching a large pile of dark grey material. Back to the cars to pick up our lunches. We walked a short way to a clearing overlooking the lake. By now, most people sought shade as we ate lunch and several great egrets and a Caspian Tern did 'fly bys'. Joan and Bill spotted an Egret

with lighter-coloured legs and photographed it, as did Pam, and identification discussions ensued (still not 100% sure of the outcome). After lunch, we saw numerous Grey Fantails who often accompanied us on our walk. We approached another pond and alarmed birds took flight. Numerous Purple Swampheens crashed about and Little Black Cormorants flew off. We circled around and through the centre of these ponds with Darters and Pied Cormorants in the trees and Coots off in the distance.

More Red-browed Finches were seen in the She-oaks along with Superb Fairy-wrens. We retraced our steps and Betty recollected camping in the area with scouts. The tower for the flying fox that the scouts used was still visible. It is always popular to spend a day at the ash ponds; it covers such a large expanse. We all got our exercise for the day! Tom read the bird list for a tally of 69 but we threw in the Crested Pigeons sighted just outside the second gate and then Anna spotted a Red Wattlebird for a total of 71 species for the outing. However, after closer inspection, the tally was amended back to 69 (darn---we were trying to reach 70!), still an impressive count for the day. Thanks to Charlie for leading the walk and to everyone else for the good company.

Bird List for Tallawarra Walk 18.05.13 69 Species Recorded 22 members attended

Freckled Duck (17)	Eastern Great Egret	Little Corella	Australian Magpie
Black Swan	Cattle Egret	Crimson Rosella	Pied Currawong
Australian Wood Duck	White-faced Heron	Eastern Rosella	Grey Fantail
Pink-eared Duck (60+)	Little Egret	Shining Bronze-Cuckoo	Willie Wagtail
Australasian Shoveler (14)	Royal Spoonbill (4)	Satin Bowerbird	Australian Raven
Grey Teal	Black-shouldered Kite	Superb Fairy-wren	Magpie-lark
Chestnut Teal	Whistling Kite	White-browed Scrubwren	Eastern Yellow Robin
Pacific Black Duck	Swamp Harrier	Yellow Thornbill	Golden-headed Cisticola (2)
Hardhead	Nankeen Kestrel	Brown Thornbill	Little Grassbird
Australasian Grebe	Purple Swampphen	Eastern Spinebill	Silvereye
Hoary-headed Grebe	Dusky Moorhen	Lewin's Honeyeater	Welcome Swallow
Crested Pigeon	Eurasian Coot	Noisy Miner	Red-whiskered Bulbul
Australasian Darter	Black-winged Stilt	Little Wattlebird	Common Myna
Little Pied Cormorant	Black-fronted Dotterel	Red Wattlebird	Red-browed Finch
Great Cormorant	Red-kneed Dotterel	Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike	European Goldfinch (10+)
Little Black Cormorant	Masked Lapwing	Golden Whistler	
Pied Cormorant	Caspian Tern	Grey Shrike-thrush	
Australian Pelican	Silver Gull	Grey Butcherbird	

More pics from the Ash Ponds

 <p data-bbox="236 1585 667 1608">Black Shouldered Kite 1 diving for prey</p>	 <p data-bbox="906 1585 1505 1608">Black Shouldered Kite with Cisticola by Charles Dove</p>	
 <p data-bbox="236 1787 371 1809">Marsh Snake</p>  <p data-bbox="220 2101 387 2154">Mixed ducks on Island</p>	 <p data-bbox="531 1989 754 2056">Swamp Harrier Juvenile</p> <p data-bbox="547 2089 738 2112">Photos by Charles Dove</p>	 <p data-bbox="1329 1742 1513 1809">The Egret Confirmed ID</p> <p data-bbox="1345 1843 1505 2033">Young Little Egret with Yellow Legs by Pam Hazelwood</p>



THE BIRDS IN MY BACKYARD

By Anne Cousins

I would like to share some of my backyard experiences, from my former home in England prior to moving to live in Australia 11 years ago.

We lived in a small village of Kent in the South East (The Garden of England) called Kemsing whose church dates from 1024 AD and nestles under South Downs which are very much like the Illawarra Escarpment, but not so high and not so many trees.

The garden birds were abundant and it is common practice in the UK and Europe to feed garden birds. In summer we put out certified nuts, supplied by the RSPB (*Royal Society for the Protection of Birds*) in special feeders, in an attempt to stop squirrels stealing them in Winter. Usually when the snow is on the ground in winter we made up fat balls and filled circular spread containers with fat and seeds, then hung them inverted on the bird tables in the back garden.

We had many small birds visiting, including Blue Tits, Great Tits, Long-tailed Tits, Coal Tits. Wrens, Robins (known as the Redbreast and is the only Robin to have colour up its breast and onto its face), Chaffinch, Greenfinch, Goldfinch, Song Thrush, Blackbird and Starling to name a few. We also had a flock of Waxwings on the next house's garage roof one Winter but they did not stay long and never came again and a highlight was a once only visit from a Siskin. We had a fish pond in the back garden with 19 large Fantail Goldfish in residence; then, one day, we arrived home from work and we were informed by our neighbours that during the day a lone Heron visited our backyard. He had a good feast on the largest fish as only 7 smaller fish remained, so we had to make up a netting cover to protect them from him/her.



We were also members of the local RSPB group and attended monthly meetings, much the same as IBOC. On our doorstep we had a beautiful wildfowl reserve with several hides, lots of ducks and wader species. A regular sighting from the hides was a Great Spotted Woodpecker. One of the rangers even managed to coax a Robin into taking maggots from his hand. We were also fortunate to have RSPB reserves within easy driving distance; these included Elmley Ferry, Pulborough Brook (over the border in East Sussex) and Dungeness.

When we came to live in Australia 11 years ago we had to start all over again, so enter IBOC



ARTICLES OF INTEREST

Pollution Harms Top Marine Predators

Aug. 28, 2007 — A new study provides some of the first evidence that albatrosses in the North Pacific may be affected by environmental contamination. Alterations in the immune function of the Black-footed Albatross were associated with elevated blood levels of nonpoint source contaminants.

Nonpoint source pollution comes from a wide variety of sources such as farms, cars, roads and highways, and lawns. This kind of pollution is ubiquitous and can pose a significant threat to wildlife.

At particular risk are higher trophic level species such as Albatrosses, which are at the top of the food chain. These long-lived seabirds travel and forage over vast ranges and therefore accumulate chemicals distributed over large oceanographic regions. The Black-footed species, however, breeds mainly on the Hawaiian archipelago.

The study researchers said that although measuring physiological changes in wild populations was challenging, measuring immune function was an important step in linking changes in biomarkers to contaminant exposure. The elevated blood levels found in the albatrosses were due mainly to mercury and various organochlorines.

Because the North Pacific is an area of high biological productivity, results from the study are important for other species as well. Of particular concern is the health of other predators in the high-latitude regions of the Arctic, such as seabirds, Polar Bears, and other marine mammals, that are exposed to contaminants in the marine environment.

This study is published in the latest issue of Environmental Toxicology and Chemistry

A species of Wagtail never before recorded on the Australian mainland has been spotted in the Alice

Read more about the surprise backyard discovery of the Forest Wagtail on [Chris Watson's blog](#)

"It's called a Forest Wagtail," says local birder and photographer Chris Watson.

"It's from a different family to our Willy Wagtail...this bird is more common in the broad leaf forests of Thailand and Cambodia and that part of the world."

The backyard sighting marks the first time the Forest Wagtail has ever been recorded on the Australian continent, and it's causing plenty of excitement in the birding world.

"These birds are sort of short distance migratory birds and they'll come down in Winter maybe as far as Indonesia," says Chris.

"In the case of this sort of vagrancy, they might get a bad wind and they just overshoot their target destination - this one's just a little bit more mind bending because normally you'd expect a vagrant bird to land in Darwin or Broome."



MEMORABLE MOMENTS FROM GILGANDRA

Gilgandra Camp. Barbara Hales

Anne and Alan Cousins made a very good choice in suggesting Gilgandra (birthplace of the Coo-eeeeee Recruitment March, but that's another story) in central west NSW, as a place to hold our camp and the well-kept Barney's Caravan Park/Motel ticked all the boxes in its range of accommodation available plus the friendly, helpful owners enabling us to have our much loved evening campfires under the stars where a Southern Boobook joined the rabble.

Our camps are always so good, just seven days of pure pleasure, so it is not easy to pick the best but of course the Red-capped Robin

always does it for he who shall not be named and this beautiful little bird was so obliging, strutting his stuff for all to see at the Flora and Fauna Reserve just out of town. Further along the red dirt road from here we were able to observe a flock of Glossy Black Cockatoos having a grand old time in the not too high trees (no need for binocs) which was very entertaining and exciting. I had previously only seen single birds. Returning back to town and with the help of others we were lucky enough to spot the Ground Cuckoo-shrike, nearly as exciting as the first sighting at the Leeton Camp, a good find.



We had walks along the rivers and roadsides, stopping at picturesque spots for morning tea or lunch. On one such walk we spent a lovely interlude watching Mr and Mrs King Parrot holding a conversation on the edge of a tree hollow, they looked so happy. Maybe they had found their dream home. Back at camp in the late afternoons we had the pleasure of seeing hundreds of Galahs doing their noisy, screechy flyby competing in sound level with the happy hour revelers.

This was another terrific camp Betty and we appreciate your work in organising it, looking forward to reading the complete bird list. Thanks to all our caring fellow campers for making our time there so enjoyable and laughable, truly good medicine, thanks to the latté set (great coffee and food at the garden centre) and a big thank you to Mark for washing my car when it was well and truly christened on the red dirt roads my G'kids would say you rock and we agree. Roll on Howlong.

**THE BALLAD OF DAY 5 –
GILGANDRA CAMP**

We did a meander all round the Gilgandra countryside far and wide.
 It seemed quite absurd to look for a bird in that forest, we certainly tried.
 We sat down to lunch, a dispirited bunch,
 then on we progress with a will.
 We followed each track till forced to turn back,
 and began to feel horribly ill.
 But through paddock and bush
 we made a big push
 To reach the goal that Bet had set.
 Then Betty's great skill led us over a hill
 and we found the illusive lunette.
 On the map it had orta
 been full of water
 But alas, it was all reeds and mud.
 Our hope for a rail, or a coot or a quail
 came down with a bit of a thud.
 Then our spirits were lifted
 when someone quite gifted
 found spoonbills and ibis and ducks.
 And herons (Pacific)
 looked rather terrific –
 we couldn't believe our good luck.
 We drove home quite cheerful,
 we'd had quite a day full
 of driving and birding and banter.
 Then a cup of good cheer
 (some had a beer!)
 Another great day at Gilgandra!

By Lyndall Dawson and Robyn Cashman

From the Gilgandra and Beyond
Photos By Tera



Well-vented Carrier



" Mobile 3"



Some kind of 'Fowl' they were everywhere out west!

“INSTINCT OR INTELLIGENCE”

Wal Emery

After an enjoyable but active week at the Gilgandra camp, Hazel and I decided that a couple of days relaxing at Dunns Swamp 25kls east of Rylstone would be way to break the journey home.

Since our last visit to the camping area and the adjoining weir, built in 1920 for the Kandos cement works, has been improved, providing more individual camping spots for vans and tents. Weir water is available for washing, but should be boiled if you choose to drink it.

Within 30 minutes of arriving we were surprised to have a Rockwarbler; it walked quietly around our feet for a while then went under the van and proceeded to gather insects from the radiator and underbody. We were alerted to repeat feeding sessions throughout the afternoon and next morning by the constant tapping of its beak against the chassis. During our short stay I observed it using the same method on two other newly arrived vehicles. Unlike its inherited technique of suspended nest building, this bird seems to have learnt that newly arrived vehicles bring with them a ready supply of food. Next morning as we sat enjoying our breakfast in the sun, with the Rockwarbler feeding nearby; we were surprised to see it fly into the ‘Camper Cave’ and hover about the ‘Pop Top’ catching flies and bugs. More effective than Mortein and better for the environment! I was tempted to slam the door and head for home, as I was in a similar situation with a Pitta at Eungella. Common sense prevailed however and the bird departed the van, leaving behind a small deposit on the upholstery. A small price to pay for such an enjoyable experience.

This constant action with the Rockwarbler almost overshadowed a visit on two mornings by a pair of Spotted Quail-thrush quietly picking their way through the annex. In all we recorded in and around camp 50 species, along with late afternoon Wallabies and Spotted Quoll. There are two walks from the camp, One through the picturesque pagoda-like rock formations and another along the edge of the water.

Dunns Swamp is certainly a place I can recommend for a short relaxing stay.

A few Pics from Gilgandra and Beyond Pam Hazelwood

COOLAH TOPS by Pam Hazelwood



Buff-rumped Thornbill

Gilgandra by Pam Hazelwood



Australian Ringneck



Red-browed Treecreeper



Jacky Winter

Gloucester Tops By Pam Hazelwood



Brown Thornbill



Golden Whistler (f)

Gilgandra cont. by Pam Hazelwood



Red-winged Parrot -- Tera & Snake Skin



Weebill

Gilgandra Camp April 2013

Betty Hudson

30 members met at Gilgandra in April 2013 for our Autumn Camp. Gilgandra is a thriving town on the NW Plains of NSW by the Castlereagh River. The river was trickling in a wide deep sandy channel at times reduced to surface pools but obviously flowing through the sand. The weather was fine and very warm every day even the evenings were mild, but the area was very dry and farmers were anxiously awaiting the winter rains. During the camp we visited a number of locations around Gilgandra, in all directions most of which were recommend bird watching sites from Dubbo Field Naturalists, to which we added others which we hoped had birds as they were by the Castlereagh River where we could get access.

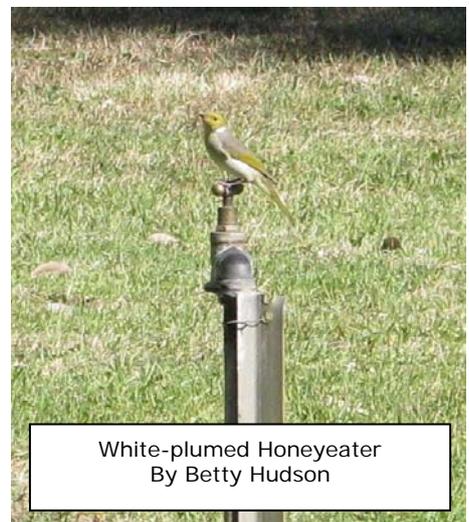
We had to work for our birds but ended the week with 127 species.

We had many special moments, 1,200 Galahs flying into the trees around camp at sunrise & sunset and perching in the trees to catch the first and last rays of the sun which turned their pink breast a deep ruby colour. Due to the flat plains the sunsets were lovely with a range of oranges reds and yellows fading only slowly.

The camp itself was a good place to see birds with a Tawny Frogmouth seen one night silhouetted against the sunset, and a Southern Boobook a regular visitor. Red-winged Parrots flew in one morning, glorious in the early sun, to plunder the ripening olives. Noisy Miners had perfected the trick of getting a drink from the water taps, while Red-rumped Parrots and Eastern Rosella fed on seeds in the grass. White-winged Choughs, among other birds, took advantage of the sprinklers to have a bath and drink.

Sunday saw us walk round the camp block and along the adjacent river bank. Several parrots including Red-winged Parrots and Australian Ringnecks were seen as well as Blue-faced Honeyeaters in the majestic gums beside the road. The river banks and adjacent gardens gave us Double-barred Finches, Peaceful Doves, Black-fronted Dotterels, and several honeyeaters among others. A later walk along the river south of the town was disappointing with few birds due to the heat, however a later walk by the golf course produced Grey-crowned Babblers, Apostle birds Spotted Bowerbird, and Wedge-tailed Eagle as well as a Red-capped Robin.

Monday we headed out to Gilgandra Flora Reserve where Red-capped Robins, 5 species of thornbills, Specked Warbler and Weebill were the highlights. A visit in the spring when the blossom is out would be rewarding. Moving further along the road we disturbed a flock of 10 Glossy Black-



White-plumed Honeyeater
By Betty Hudson

Cockatoos feeding in the roadside Allocasuarina - A great sighting. We continued on to Biden State Conservation Reserve for the afternoon, but stock moving along the boundary track made bird watching difficult, however we recorded the first Woodswallows of the trip, Black-faced and Dusky.

Tuesday saw us heading to the Lucas Bridge across the Castlereagh River at Breelong and then to Breelong NP. The school bus driver must have wondered what he had come across as he had to wait for our convoy of 10 cars to cross the bridge and climb the hill up from the river. Birding was good along the river due to the water and by the farm at the top of the hill with 31 species being recorded, including Black-faced and White-Bellied Cuckoo-shrikes, a Crested Shrike-tit and the only record of Red-browed Finch for the trip. Moving on to Breelong NP, a Callitris Pine Forest, we parked in the camp area beside the river. Common Bronzewing, White-throated Gerygone, Brown-headed Honeyeater, Crested Shrike-tit, were among 36 species seen.

We then decided that the maps showed a patch of denser forest at the other end of the park which looked promising and enjoyed a great drive along well sign posted forest roads to find an area of Iron Bark trees but unfortunately not in flower. Few birds were in evidence except White-browed Babblers. Keeping on we eventually arrived at Balladoran and re-joined the Newell Hwy for the drive back to camp.

Late that afternoon we had a look at Frog Hollow a small wetland on the outskirts of town, which appeared to utilise the treated effluent from the sewage works to provide water and to remove excess nutrients. Birds including a Rainbow Lorikeet, were enjoying the area and the flowering gum in an adjacent garden. White-faced Herons perched on a gate beside the water and Superb Fairy-wrens flitted amongst the grasses. A Bearded Dragon was seen sunning itself and Masked Lapwings paraded in the a-joining paddock.

Wednesday was our long day out, with visits to 2 areas of Coolbaggie Nature Reserve and Old Harbour Lagoon. This meant a drive of 43 km south along the Newell Hwy to Eumungerie and then a further drive on gravel roads to the reserve, a mixed Callitris Pine and Eucalyptus forest with several interesting birds recorded here including Malleefowl. At a brief stop in Eumungerie to let everyone gather we had a flowering gum full of birds mostly White-plumed, Spiny-cheeked & Blue-faced Honeyeaters. Entering the reserve we stopped at a side track where we could park the cars and walked along it. Birds had to be looked for but a Mistletoebird was a new one for the trip. 28 species in all were seen. Moving off we drove down to the creek crossing looking for a track leading to another section of the reserve, but found no sight of it, but we did see a group of several emus in one paddock. We returned the way we came and took the track along the northern boundary of the reserve looking for a parking spot for so many cars. We stopped at an old gravel pit obviously used by the locals for motorbike thrills. Spreading out we saw White-backed Swallows, Superb Fairy-wrens, Striped Honeyeater. Betty saw a large ground bird running very fast away from all the people moving about. Was it a Malleefowl or possibly a Bush Stone-curlew? Who knows, as no one else saw it! It was time to find a lunch spot on the way to Old Harbour Lagoon. We stopped beside the road at the entrance to a farm which provided enough room for us to sit with the advantage of birds to watch. We were encouraged by the road sign "Old Harbour Road".

Following the map we reached the dunes around the lagoon which is a unique geological feature two lunette dunes on opposite sides enclosing a lagoon. Finding the entrance to the reserve was another matter. We stopped at 2 houses on the property to ask but no one was home. Turning back we made a last try on another road, yes, there was the entry track and climbing the dune we were rewarded with a sea of green reeds. A scramble down and over the fallen fences gave us access to a dyke through the middle of the lagoon which was badly churned up by the cattle although it is a designated Wildlife Reserve. Water birds were immediately visible flying or perched in dead trees. Darters, Cormorants, Herons, Egret, Ibis and Spoonbills, as well as Swamp Harrier, Nankeen Kestrel, Purple Swamphen and Welcome Swallows It was with great reluctance that we left the lagoon for the long drive back to camp and our night out for Dinner.

On Thursday Tera led us, as we followed the Castlereagh River towards Coonamble stopping at likely spots along the way. Morning tea was at a shady reserve on the banks of the river at Curban, and lunch at another rest area where the highway crossed the river by a new bridge. And then we went looking for the White-winged Fairy-wrens Tera had seen earlier. Success we found them! The ones here looking much blacker than others I had seen previously.

Friday saw us all split up and visit places we chose: Warrumbungle NP, Goonoo NP, Dubbo Zoo and once again the Flora Reserve.

Kathryn & I went to look at the Warrumbungle N.P. as we had never visited there before and the road had just opened after the fire. Taking back roads we had an interesting trip, bridges that had seen much better days, a petrol pump in Tooraweenah that was a genuine antique but still worked, and a Southern Boobook that had lost a collision with a vehicle. The park was starting to recover with the gums sprouting new green and grass unburnt beside the road. However the pines and the western facing steep slopes looked as if the soil had even been burnt and will take years if ever to recover.

Joan & Bill went looking for Gilbert's Whistler in Goonoo N.P. and were successful, Sue & Ken visited the zoo and everyone else revisited the Flora Reserve and was rewarded after they left by the sight of 50+ Glossy Black-Cockatoos feeding and flying by the road.

This was a great camp in yet another different area of the state, with good weather and good birding. A return visit when the blossom is out in the spring should reward with many more honeyeaters.

Galaha were seen at all but 1 of the places we visited, with Kookaburras & Ringnecks close behind.

Bird List for Gilgandra 127 species recorded			
The full list showing where we saw the birds will be published on IBOC's web site.#			
Emu	Nankeen Kestrel	Western Gerygone	Grey Shrike-thrush
Australian Wood Duck	Brown Falcon	White-throated Gerygone	White-breasted Woodswallow
Grey Teal	Australian Hobby	Striated Thornbill	Black-faced Woodswallow
Chestnut Teal	Black Falcon	Yellow Thornbill	Dusky Woodswallow
Pacific Black Duck	Purple Swamphen	Yellow-rumped Thornbill	Grey Butcherbird
Hardhead	Eurasian Coot	Chestnut-rumped Thornbill	Pied Butcherbird
Australasian Grebe	Black-fronted Dotterel	Buff-rumped Thornbill	Australian Magpie

Rock Dove	Masked Lapwing	Inland Thornbill	Pied Currawong
Spotted Dove	Glossy Black-Cockatoo	Spotted Pardalote	Grey Fantail
Common Bronzewing	Galah	Striated Pardalote	Willie Wagtail
Crested Pigeon	Little Corella	Yellow-faced Honeyeater	Australian Raven
Peaceful Dove	Sulphur-crested Cockatoo	White-eared Honeyeater	Little Raven
Tawny Frogmouth	Cockatiel	White-plumed Honeyeater	Magpie-lark
Australasian Darter	Rainbow Lorikeet	Noisy Miner	White-winged Chough
Little Pied Cormorant	Australian King-Parrot	Yellow-throated Miner	Apostlebird
Great Cormorant	Red-winged Parrot	Spiny-cheeked Honeyeater	Jacky Winter
Little Black Cormorant	Eastern Rosella	Brown Honeyeater	Red-capped Robin
White-necked Heron	Australian Ringneck	Brown-headed Honeyeater	Eastern Yellow Robin
Eastern Great Egret	Blue Bonnet	White-naped Honeyeater	Silvereye
White-faced Heron	Red-rumped Parrot	Blue-faced Honeyeater	White-backed Swallow
Australian White Ibis	Budgerigar	Noisy Friarbird	Welcome Swallow
Straw-necked Ibis	Pallid Cuckoo	Little Friarbird	Tree Martin
Royal Spoonbill	Southern Boobook	Striped Honeyeater	Common Blackbird
Yellow-billed Spoonbill	Eastern Barn Owl	Grey-crowned Babbler	Common Starling
Black-shouldered Kite	Laughing Kookaburra	White-browed Babbler	Common Myna
Square-tailed Kite	White-throated Treecreeper	Ground Cuckoo-shrike	Mistletoebird
Whistling Kite	Brown Treecreeper	Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike	Zebra Finch
Black Kite	Spotted Bowerbird	White-bellied Cuckoo-shrike	Double-barred Finch
Brown Goshawk	Superb Fairy-wren	Crested Shrike-tit	Red-browed Finch
Swamp Harrier	White-winged Fairy-wren	Gilbert's Whistler	House Sparrow
Wedge-tailed Eagle	Speckled Warbler	Golden Whistler -	Australasian Pipit
Little Eagle	Weebill	Rufous Whistler	

Reminder re Payment for Half Day Pelagic Trip Friday 5th July 2013

To date we have 6 Members who have paid from the 22 members who expressed an interest in coming on the trip depending on the date. The 19 places on the trip will be allocated in the order in which payment is received by the treasurer Ken Brown either in person or by posting to P O Box 56 Fairy Meadow 2519. The cost of the trip will be \$50 per person. **This money is payable in full no later than 12th June 2013.** If more than 15 people join the trip there will be a small refund of up to \$10, made on the day of the trip. No Booking will be accepted after 21st June 2013 as the list of names of those going has to be forwarded to SOSSA on 22nd June 2013. Full details were in the April Newsletter

Spring Camp 2013 Howlong Caravan Park 19th -26th October 2013

The IBOC Spring Camp will be held at

Howlong Caravan Park 55 Hume Street Howlong from 19th to 26th October 2013.

Howlong is 581km from Sydney and 25km west of Albury close to the northern bank of the Murray River.

The Manager of the Park has requested that we make our bookings as soon as possible as this is a very popular area for people from Melbourne for a short break due to the proximity of the river.

At this point in time there are plenty of cabins available as also powered sites. All cabins and Villas have ensuite facilities. There are 3 small park cabins suitable for 1 person or a couple; 5 one bedroom spa villas again suitable for 1 or a couple; for people wishing to share a cabin there are the 2 double villas which have 2 bedrooms one with a queen bed and the other with a double bed; and 2 family villas which have 2 bedrooms one with a queen bed and the other with 2 bunk beds. All villas have a full size stove while the cabins have a compact stove oven. You will need to provide linen for the main bed and all bedding for the bunk beds.

I was advised that all sites are powered and that there are plenty available.

As we will be staying for seven nights the 7th night will be free i.e. we only pay for 6 nights

The prices (including the 7th day discount) are as follows:

Park Cabins	\$80per night	i.e. \$480 for 7 nights for 2 people ex linen	Extra persons \$15/ night / person
Spa Villas	\$100 per night	i.e. \$600 for 7 nights for 2 people ex linen	Extra persons \$15 / night / person
Double villa	\$100 per night	i.e. \$600 for 7 nights for 2 people ex linen	Extra persons \$15 / night / person
Family Villa	\$100 per night	i.e. \$600 for 7 nights for 2 people ex linen	Extra persons \$15 / night / person
All sites	\$30 per night	i.e. \$180 for 7 nights for 2 people	Extra persons \$10 / night / person

To book a cabin, Villa or a site phone 02 6026 5304, making sure to tell them that you are with the Illawarra Bird Observers Club or email howlongcaravanpark@bigpond.com

Some additional information, photographs and cabin/villa layouts are available on their web site; www.howlongcaravanpark.com.au

It is important that you let me know as soon as you have booked. (email secretary@iboc.org.au or ph 4236 0307). For late comers there is alternative accommodation in Howlong if required. Contact me for details



Diamond Python – Albion Park - Bruce Coyte



Lyrebird Mt Kembla – Terry Edwell



Diamond Python – Balgownie- Terry Edwell

A few Pythons and other reptiles looking for Winter hideaways – keep your eyes open



“EARLY BIRD CATCHES THE LAZY BIRDO”

Wal Emery

This year I have lazily done most of my birdwatching with a cup of tea in the garden. On the 7th May curiosity and ever expanding waistline prompted me to abandon my lax ways and head up Mt. Keira to see if I could locate the Logrunners before they started breeding.

Alerted by their scratching, the pair was easily discovered about 150metres from last years nest. Then to my surprise both birds darted off to separate Cabbage tree palms. Further investigation revealed they were feeding chicks.

Bad light and thick cover made it difficult to get a good look at them. I returned two days later and found the chicks were quite well developed with prominent wing bars and longish tails. Whilst not scratching like the adults, they were scratching for some food themselves, as well as being fed by the parents. Like last year each adult was feeding their own chick.

Based on previous observations these young have been out of the nest at least 2 weeks; add to that 2 weeks nest building; 3 weeks incubating the eggs and 3 weeks from hatching to fledgling; breeding must have commenced early February. This is very early for Logrunners and perhaps they will have a second brood this year.

So far I have not been able to find the nest and if they built in a Cabbage Palm base like last year. I may not, unless they use the same nest for another brood. Also I can find no trace of last years progeny, even though some reports say the male stays with the parents to help protect the territory for more than 1yr.

I shall now postpone my slack lifestyle and continue to monitor the Logrunners throughout the rest of the breeding season

THE BLACKBIRD

by: Alfred Tennyson (1809-1892)

O blackbird! sing me something well:
While all the neighbours shoot thee round,
I keep smooth plats of fruitful ground,
Where thou may'st warble, eat and dwell.

The espaliers and the standards all
Are thine; the range of lawn and park:
The unnetted black-hearts ripen dark,
All thine, against the garden wall.

Yet, tho' I spared thee all the spring,
Thy sole delight is, sitting still,
With that gold dagger of thy bill
To fret the summer jenneting.

A golden bill! the silver tongue,
Cold February loved, is dry:
Plenty corrupts the melody
That made thee famous once, when young:

And in the sultry garden-squares,
Now thy flute-notes are changed to coarse,
I hear thee not at all, or hoarse
As when a hawk hawks his wares.

Take warning! he that will not sing
While yon sun prospers in the blue,
Shall sing for want, ere leaves are new,
Caught in the frozen palms of Spring.



Bill King’s article ‘How long-lived is a piece of string?’, which appeared in last month’s newsletter, about hazards to marine life, particularly Sooty Oystercatchers, posed by discarded fishing tackle, prompted me to submit a photo I took just last month of a warning sign beside Mallacoota Inlet at Gipsy Point. A small step in the right direction to try to make fisher-people more responsible and careful. Future signage should perhaps feature an Oystercatcher amputee in order to have a greater proactive impact on the fishing public. To press home the point, the artist who painted the mural at Mallacoota Wharf could perhaps be persuaded to insert Bill King’s avian casualty in the bottom right-hand corner of the picture within pecking reach of the rotund fellow’s ankles.

Mike Morphett

Sightings for April-May 2013 - compiled by Darryl Goldrick

Musk Duck	1m	2/05/2013	Korrongulla Wetland	Water	Charles Dove
Freckled Duck	17	18/05/2013	Tallawarra Ash Ponds	Yallah	IBOC
Pink-eared Duck	60+	18/05/2013	Tallawarra Ash Ponds	Yallah	IBOC
Hoary-headed Grebe	37	26/04/2013	Purry Burry Point	Lake	Charles Dove
Crested Pigeon	31	11/05/2013	Thirroul Railway Station	Powerlines	Mike Morphet
Tawny Frogmouth	2	13/05/2013	Tarrawanna	Garden	Peggy McKinlay
Australasian Gannet	30+	12/05/2013	Wattamolla	Ocean	Joan Zealey
Eastern Reef Egret	1 dark morph	23/04/2013	Windang Island	Tidal Rocks	Charles Dove
Straw-necked Ibis	100+	17/05/2013	Jamberoo	Paddock	Darryl Goldrick
Straw-necked Ibis	50+	28/04/2013	Bolong Rd Bomaderry	Cow Paddock	Charles & Janina Dove
Royal Spoonbill	4	15/05/2013	Minnamurra Lagoon	Dunmore	IBOC
Black-shouldered Kite	1	14/05/2013	Woonona	Street light	Mike Morphet
Black-shouldered Kite	1	22/04/2013	Primbee	Overhead	Charles Dove
White-bellied Sea-Eagle	1	12/05/2013	Wattamolla	Overhead	Joan Zealey
White-bellied Sea-Eagle	1	7/05/2013	Unanderra	O'h-Farmborough Rd	Shane Spence
Whistling Kite	1	18/05/2013	Tallawarra Ash Ponds	Yallah	IBOC
Brown Goshawk	1	13/05/2013	Dapto	Garden	Tera Wheway
Swamp Harrier	1	18/05/2013	Tallawarra Ash Ponds	Yallah	IBOC
Peregrine Falcon	1	15/05/2013	Minnamurra Lagoon	Dunmore	IBOC
Double-banded Plover	43	23/04/2013	Windang Island	Tidal Rocks	Charles Dove
Red-kneed Dotterel	1(?)	18/05/2013	Tallawarra Ash Ponds	Yallah	IBOC
Masked Lapwing	1(?)	18/05/2013	Tallawarra Ash Ponds	Yallah	IBOC
Grey-tailed Tattler	1	23/04/2013	Windang Island	Tidal Rocks	Charles Dove
Gull-billed Tern	2	17/05/2013	Karoo Bay	Over water	Rupert Jarvis
Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoo	3	11/05/2013	Thirroul	Thomas Gibson Park	Mike Morphet
Musk Lorieet	20+	24/04/2013	Primbee	Overhead	Charles & Janina Dove
Shining Bronze-Cuckoo	1	18/05/2013	Tallawarra Ash Ponds	Yallah	IBOC
Superb Lyrebird	1	10/05/2013	Mt Kembla	Bushland	M. Rower + T Edwell
Eastern Bristlebird	9+	7/05/2013	Barren Grounds	Various	C Dove & P Butler
Pilotbird	1	10/05/2013	Mt Kembla	Bushland	M. Rower + T Edwell
White-plumed Honeyeater	1	1/05/2013	Primbee	Birdbath	Charles Dove
White-naped Honeyeater	2	6/05/2013	Korrongulla Wetland	Flowering Gum	Charles Dove
Golden Whistler	Several	10/05/2013	Mt Kembla	Bushland	M. Rower + T Edwell
Golden Whistler	2f	29/04/2013	Primbee	Casuarina	Charles Dove
Golden Whistler	1m	5/05/2013	Primbee Sand dunes	Mixed Trees	Charles & Janina Dove
Olive-backed Oriole	1	15/05/2013	Minnamurra Lagoon	Dunmore	IBOC
Olive-backed Oriole	1m	2/05/2013	Korrongulla Wetland	Mixed Trees	Charles Dove
Scarlet Robin	2	10/05/2013	Yallah TAFE	Melaleuca Forest	Ian McKinlay
Rose Robin	2	10/05/2013	Mt Kembla	Bushland	M. Rower + T Edwell
Golden-headed Cisticola	2	18/05/2013	Tallawarra Ash Ponds	Yallah	IBOC
Little Grassbird	1(?)	18/05/2013	Tallawarra Ash Ponds	Yallah	IBOC
Bassian Thrush	Several	10/05/2013	Mt Kembla	Bushland	M. Rower + T Edwell
Red-browed Finch	2	1-2/5/13	Thirroul	Garden	Mike Morphet
Beautiful Firetail	1	10/05/2013	Mt Kembla	Track	M. Rower + T Edwell
Beautiful Firetail	30+	7/05/2013	Barren Grounds	Various	C Dove & P Butler
European Goldfinch	30	15/05/2013	Minnamurra Lagoon	Dunmore	IBOC

Double figure numbers of the Freckled and Pink-eared Duck are being reported from Qld to Phillip Island in Vic. Soil moisture for crop production in the west has been very low, though I have not seen any rural reports on water levels in dams, swamps and lagoons. Obviously there has been a breeding surge for some reason- any explanation(s) anyone?

Larger than usual numbers of Darters seem to be congregating together around the Lake Illawarra, 26 in one lot on the Breakwaters at Lake Illawarra Entrance on 25th May.