

# Birdlife Shoalhaven Newsletter

Spring 2014



Whistling Kite  
Photo by Sue Tolley



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## Contributions

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

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

## Acknowledgements

Thank you to all the BirdLife Shoalhaven members who contributed articles to this newsletter, and also to those people who supplied images. Apologies to any contributors whose text or images have not been acknowledged

## Disclaimer

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

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

## Errors

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

## President's Report

by Barry Virtue

In August I represented BirdLife Shoalhaven at an 'Office of Environment and Heritage' workshop on 'Saving Our Species'. Threatened species lists for the Shoalhaven and conservation projects can be accessed through the O.E.H. website; [www.environment.nsw.gov.au/savingourspecies](http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/savingourspecies)

This site also outlines the six management streams;

- **Site-managed species.** These are conservation projects for management and monitoring to increase the health and numbers of a species and its habitat. Of particular interest here to BLS are projects for the Eastern Bristlebird.
- **Working together to save site-managed species.** We may have opportunities to work with Council or National Parks to protect threatened bird species in the Shoalhaven.
- **Iconic Species.** There are four iconic threatened species; koala, brush-tailed rock wallaby, malleefowl and southern corroboree frog.
- **Data-deficient species.** There are 180 or 19% of threatened species in this management stream. This is another area where we could add data by logging in sightings of threatened species, maybe to our website, NPWS or to the atlas?
- **Landscape-managed species.** These species, 132 or 14%, are threatened by habitat loss or degradation. We are already involved in this stream at Wollumboola and need to be alert to any other potential impacts in the Shoalhaven.
- **Partnership species.** These are species threatened nationally and have important populations in NSW where conservation projects need to be developed for them.
- **Keep watch species.** These species are rare, have few critical threats or are more abundant than thought, but still need to be watched.

This is how the OEH sees their task and I think BirdLife Shoalhaven can get involved in several of these streams. We need to be aware of the threatened avifauna in the Shoalhaven and take action on habitats under threat.

We could also search for and record threatened species in the area wherever and whenever observed in the manner suggested above. I think this would involve recording the number of birds, where they were seen (GPS), when, and what the birds were doing.

Maybe we need a "sightings" officer. Members simply phone in or email sightings to be added to a database on Atlas or Birdlog or to NPWS?

The other activity we could become involved in would be similar to the Shorebird Surveys. It could be regular surveys / monitoring of particular species. For example Bristlebird and Ground Parrot surveys at Barren Grounds, Budderoo and Jervis Bay / Beecroft. Maybe we could arrange to do this with National Parks and include other species such as the poteroo or amphibians?

In September I took part in Bundanon's Siteworks program and led, with Anne Millard, bird walks with high school pupils. At a later weekend I took birding walks in two areas at Bundanon for their Bioblitz program. These were all well attended and hopefully won some converts to birding and appreciation of our avifauna and the habitats they need protected. The application forms made available to join BA were all taken. Maybe we will get some new members?

### Pick the Species

I've attached here two prize winning reports from two primary school pupils in 'Gould League Notes' of NSW for 1947. I have copies of the 'Notes' from '47 to 1967. There is some interesting reading, with articles by some great birders from that era. These show how local names varied across rural NSW so much until the advent of accessible field guides. What do you think we have here?

#### **TOM-TIT.**

The Tom-Tit is an innocent little bird and never touches other birds. It is a shy bird, but a very happy one, and often is found twittering in the trees. It hops from limb to limb and twitters as it goes. The bird also twitters when flying. The Tom-Tit always twitters before it gives the food to its young.

The note of the Tom-Tit is a sweet little chirrup which can often be heard.

The food of the Tom-Tit consists of crumbs, insects, grasshoppers, grubs and worms. The birds eat cake when they can get it.

The nests are made of grass, feathers, horsehair, and are bound together with spider-webs. The nests hang like little cradles and are very neat.

The Tom-Tits' habits are flying as they sing and staying near clumps of trees.

#### **THE TOM-TIT**

The Tom-tits are little birds about four inches long. They are a greenish grey on the head and back. Their breast is yellowish cream. They are bright yellow under the tail.

They eat little insects which they snap up as they fly in the air.

Their nest is made out of pine needles, wool, grass, cobwebs, cotton, roots and strips of bark lined with feathers. They lay four pale pink eggs with light brown spots on the large end.

Their song is a soft twitter keeping time with their flight.

## Gould League

I recently mentioned the Gould League to somebody and was met with a blank interrogatory look so I thought it may be worth mentioning in our newsletter.



As a primary school pupil I was involved with the school Gould League Club; I still have reward cards and merit badges for participation. Then as a teacher from the sixties to nineties I tried to form clubs in every school I was posted to and get the kids involved in the annual competitions and publications. During the seventies and eighties I took my own children to the annual Gould League Camps in all parts of NSW.

The Gould League has changed considerably over the years. From its beginning in 1909 as an organisation to try to stop widespread bird egg collecting and an interest in bird watching, it has moved into environmental education sponsored by the RAOU and later in the 1900's and into the 21<sup>st</sup> century provided resources, books and posters to schools with an increasing emphasis on sustainability.

From 1935 to 1967 'Gould League Notes' were produced annually providing a forum for researchers, birders and school pupils to submit reports and articles, stories and poems, and to publish an honour roll of NSW schools with 100% Gould League enrolment and those schools and pupils who received awards through the year.

During the 1990s the focus of the Gould League shifted to "Education for Sustainability", with the formation of the first Recycling Education Centre in Australia by the Gould League of Victoria. In addition, the Waste Wise Schools program made large reductions in the amount of waste that went to landfill produced by schools.

The Gould League changed its name from Gould League to Gould Group Ltd. in 2006.

In August 2008, Gould Group had been under voluntary administration. This was attributed to many factors, primarily being lack of funding for projects. The loss of hundreds of thousands of dollars of funding from Sustainability Victoria caused major problems.

In good news though, administrators found a buyer for the ailing organisation, with a NSW land care group, Liverpool Plains Land Management Committee, taking over its running and reviewing the Gould League's operations in a bid to have it continue into the future. 2009 was the 100th anniversary of the organisation. Their website can be found at <http://gould.org.au/>

**Barry Virtue**

## Welcome Swallows

**by Brett Davis**

Have you ever been on a birdwatching outing with other birdwatchers and noticed that when Welcome Swallows are recorded it is never done with excitement or with any enthusiasm but is regarded as more of a chore?

"Oh, and there's a couple of Welcome Swallows flying around too, but where are all the interesting birds?" is the usual response to their sighting.

Get over it! Welcome Swallows are amazing birds!

We should love Welcome Swallows just as we love other iconic Australian birds like Kookaburras and Magpies. They are native to Australia and nearby islands, and some of them even migrated thousands of kilometres to New Zealand in the middle of last century.

And they love people! They breed in southern and eastern Australia almost anywhere, but especially in man-made clearings or man-made structures in urban environments, and they love to perch on wires and posts.

Welcome Swallow nests are amazing - a cup of mud and grass lined with feathers and fur, usually attached to a suitable structure, even on vertical walls!

Welcome Swallows are fast, agile fliers and feed on insects while in flight, carving out large arcs and tight turns in the open, the bristles around their bills helping to guide insects into their open mouths.

Eastern populations are largely migratory - flying all the way to northern Australia for the winter. It is called the Welcome Swallow because people used to welcome its return as a sign of spring in southern parts of Australia.

So the next time you see a Welcome Swallow, don't think it is a boring bird that is so omnipresent it is a chore just to write down its name. Think of just how incredible it is and be thankful you have the privilege of seeing it!



Photo by Sue Tolley

# Conservation Officer Report

**Text and Photos by Chris Grounds**

## **BirdLife Shoalhaven Submission re the Halloran Trust Culburra-Callala Development Proposal**

Shoalhaven Council recently invited preliminary input on the proposed development by the Warren Halloran Trust in the Culburra-Callala area, which involves significant areas of the Lake Wollumboola catchment. BirdLife Shoalhaven has made a submission to Council regarding this development.



Council's Development Committee voted on October 7 to 'Support the PP for the deferred lands at Culburra Beach, Callala Bay and Currarong in principle and commence the process to submit the proposal initially to the Department of Planning & Environment. . .'

Copies of the submission were also lodged with Shelley Hancock, Pru Goward Minister for Planning and Rob Stokes MP Minister for Environment and Heritage & Assistant Minister for Planning.

The formal exhibition period is yet to be announced but BirdLife Shoalhaven will be making a further submission on the proposal at that stage. Our submission is available as a Word document to members on request.

The key recommendations in our preliminary submission were:

*1.10 That the proposal to donate Halloran Trust land holdings in Culburra - Callala area to be incorporated into the Jervis Bay National Park is welcomed, provided that this is not conditional on approval of the continuing proposal to develop the lands of Long Bow Point.*

*1.20 The continuing proposal to develop Long Bow Point is absolutely unacceptable in terms of the integrity and*

*long term health of Lake Wollumboola and its catchment and specifically the status of Lake Wollumboola as part of Jervis Bay National Park and a nationally and globally significant bird habitat.*

*1.30 That the zoning of the Long Bow Point land proposed for "low impact public recreation" [golf course] must, at a minimum, move to E2-Environment Conservation.*

*1.40 The most acceptable planning scenario is for the Long Bow Point land is that it be donated by the Halloran Trust for incorporation in Jervis Bay National Park together with the separate lands proposed for donation to the National Park.*

An interesting aspect of the proposal are the "Offsets" offered for the development. Three are in the St Georges Basin area.

BirdLife Australia has an "Offsets Policy" and the first key provision of it is: "BirdLife Australia maintains that offsets are rarely an appropriate response to proposed diversity or native vegetation loss".

The Offsets Policy is available on the BirdLife Australia website - at <http://www.birdlife.org.au/documents/POL-Offsets-Policy.pdf>



Little Tern

## **Did you know?**

Lake Wollumboola has been identified by BirdLife International as an Important Bird Area (IBA) because it often supports over 1% of the world population of Black Swans.

## Whistling Kite [*Haliastur sphenurus*]

Text and Photos by Chris Grounds



Kite female at nest

The Whistling Kite, named for its distinctive, unmistakable whistle call resides and nests in Booderee National Park. It is a species widespread across much of Australia. The two other kites in the Park, the Black-Shouldered and Square-Tailed, are both 'Threatened species'.

Booderee N.P. is of course part of the Jervis Bay "Important Bird Area" and thus part of a network of formally declared areas across Australia, important for threatened species, habitat and bird conservation.

The Whistling Kite family of the Murrays boat ramp area have been very active in their nesting and breeding again recently, which continued through August and September. The nests are large stick and branch nests with a shallow bowl centre. The female is actually the larger adult bird.



Next generation

The early "sorties" off the nest for the bird shown below were a little amusing as it tended to jump off rather than launch – that's teenagers for you!



This ain't so eeeeeasy!

There were two active nests. One nest produced the one fledgling with the distinctive spotted dark wings. It took to the wing in early September. The birds actually started to build three nests in the same immediate area in 2012 but abandoned two for the one in use now.

The other active nest was a newer nest easily seen from the boat ramp boardwalk though most visitors are quite unaware.

The parent birds of this nest were quite active through August and the developing behaviour suggested at least one hatchling in the nest. The mother was very restless and involved in a range of calls other than the usual whistling.

Residence at this site for the kites requires seeing off the odd sea eagle flying the shoreline and their message is very clear, delivered without fear.



Attentive mum



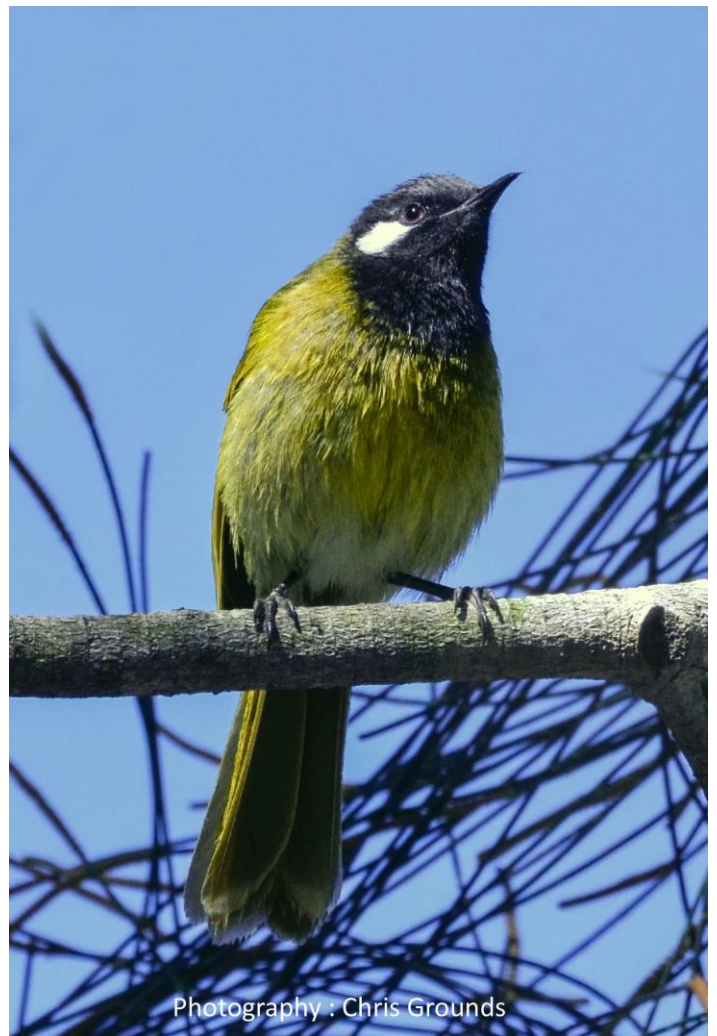
A rest from the nest

To see these birds is always terrific but to observe their active, successful breeding over a number of years is testimony to the value of the Park and its birdlife.



Photography : Chris Grounds

Southern Emu Wren



Photography : Chris Grounds

White-eared Honeyeater



Additionally, recent observations in the immediate area have included the Peregrine Falcon, Southern Emu Wren, White-eared Honeyeater, Golden Whistler, Black Face Cuckoo Shrike, Superb Fairy Wren, Variegated Fairy Wren, Masked Lapwing, Striated and Yellow Thornbills, Yellow-faced Honeyeater and Red-browed Finch.

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### Did you know?

Scientifically, the first name of a bird is the Genus (usually Greek) and the second name is the species (usually Latin) e.g. Falco (genus) peregrinus (species)



## Heritage Estate Update

by Chris Grounds

Some good news is that a 20ha portion of land, which borders the Estate to The Wool Road and Naval College Road has been acquired by National Parks and Wildlife.

The Federal Court decision on the landowners claim for compensation, which concluded in October 2013, has still not been handed down.

This continues to restrict the number of Lots being sold to the Foundation for National Parks and Wildlife, who have been given until December with the residual Commonwealth funding.

Interestingly, a riparian section of land along the most northern of the two stream lines in the Estate is still owned by Warren Halloran, who promised this important piece of land for the national park. This land was never included in any subdivision proposal. The Halloran Trust has proposed this piece of land as an one of the "offsets" for the proposed development at Culburra-Callala, which continues to impose on Lake Wollumboola.

In terms of bird habitat, the Silvertop Ash [*Euc.sieberi*] are in heavy blossom at the moment and are easily seen, particularly along the Naval College Road. These will be followed by the Red Bloodwood [*Cor.gummifera*] in summer proper and the Scribbly Gum [*Euc. Sclerophylla*] in late summer.

Recent bird sightings over the Estate include the Brown Goshawk and the Swamp Harrier.

*Editor's Note:* Chris Grounds is the Co-ordinator of HEST, the campaign fighting the development of Heritage Estates. If you would like to be involved with the campaign or receive the HEST newsletter, contact Chris at [mytcg@optusnet.com.au](mailto:mytcg@optusnet.com.au)

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## Did you know?

As a rule, eggs in hollows are white and round, while eggs in nests are pointier at one end.



## Birdwatching Outings

BirdLife Shoalhaven members may attend the outings of the Shoalhaven Birders and the Milton Ulladulla District Birdwatchers.



## Milton Ulladulla District Birdwatchers

BirdLife Shoalhaven members may also attend the Friday birdwatching outings of the MUD Birdwatchers club. Membership of the MUD Birdwatchers club is open to all members of the Milton Ulladulla U3A. For more information about joining MUD Birdwatchers, please email [mubirdclub@gmail.com](mailto:mubirdclub@gmail.com) or phone Marg Hamon on 4457-1129 or Chris Shinton on 4454-5584.

Upcoming birdwatching events are :

### 31 October - Yatte Yattah Nature Reserve

Meet: 8am: Back of Harry Higgs Room  
Driving: 15km Time: 1 hr Grade: Medium for those wishing to go down into the rainforest valley/ Easy for those staying above.  
Leader: Geoff Andrews 4454 3580

### 11 November 2014: Evening Meeting

Meet: 7:30 pm: Harry Higgs Room  
General Meeting  
Activity: Jodie Dunn on Shorebirds

### 14 November – Eurobodalla Day Out and picnic lunch

A full day outing to a number of locations in and around Moruya and Bateman's Bay, with a picnic lunch stop.  
Meet: 8 am: Lions Park Burrill Lake (by toilets) for car pooling.  
Driving: 155km Time: 2.5 hrs Grade: Easy  
Leader: Mike Jefferis 4455 5162

### 28 November - Wilfords Lane Wetlands

Meet: 8am: Back of Harry Higgs Room or 8:15 at Cupitts Winery  
Driving: 5km Time: 30 min Grade: Easy  
Leader: Bob Rusk 4455 2169

### 12 December - Xmas Picnic – Burrill Lake

Bring binoculars, a plate and an appetite.  
Meet: 8 am: Lions Park Burrill Lake (by toilets).  
Driving: 0 Time: 0 Grade: Easy  
Leaders: John Olsen & Jenny Bryant 4455 1837

### 9 January 2015 – North Fishermans Paradise

Meet: 8 am: Back of Harry Higgs Room, or at 8:15am: Murrays Road Turnoff.  
Driving: 30km Time: 1 hr Grade: Easy  
Leader: Chris Shinton 4454 5584

### 20 January 2015: AGM and Evening Meeting

Meet: 7:30 pm: Harry Higgs Room  
Activity: Annual General Meeting followed by General Meeting. Sue Chatfield (AKA "Sue of the Citrine Wagtail") will show some photographs

### 23 January 2015: ANU Kioloa Campus

Meet: 8 am: ANU Campus. Drive almost to Kioloa, watch for ANU sign on right.  
Driving: 75km Time: 3 hrs Grade: Medium  
Leaders: Marg Hamon & Maggie Mance 4457 1129

### Note:

Driving and Time is approximate car travel from meeting point to destination and return. If any excursion is cancelled because of the weather, we will have a second attempt on the next Friday

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## Shoalhaven Birders

Shoalhaven Birders hold regular birdwatching outings, usually on every third Sunday of the month meeting at 8.30am.

Upcoming birdwatching events are as follows :

### October 19

Bangalee - meet in the car park in Illaroo Rd at northern end of Shoalhaven bridge

### November 16

Conjola and Yatte Yattah - meet at the Bewong Roadhouse

### December 21

Moona Moona Creek at Huskisson at 5pm - BYO picnic bbq / drink to have after a short walk

### Contacts:

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

## Citrine Wagtail

In late August and early September the Shoalhaven Birdwatchers had a week away in the Capertee National Park and Mudgee areas.

The highlight of the week would have to be the bird seen at the Putta Bucca Wetlands on the outskirts of Mudgee. A large group of us turned up there one morning because we had heard it was a good place for birdwatching, when a young man approached us and asked whether we had come to see "the bird".

"What bird?" we asked.

The answer was the Citrine Wagtail. This rare vagrant has only been seen in Australia on a handful of occasions.

On the 12<sup>th</sup> December 2010 the Birds Australia Rarities Committee (BARC) voted in favour of accepting a sighting by Lisa Preston of a Citrine Wagtail on a fresh water pool on Christmas Island on the 5<sup>th</sup> May 2009.

The Citrine Wagtail is a migrant with an extensive breeding range in central Eurasia - basically the old USSR. At the time there had only been two previous records for Australia - the first at Botany Bay, NSW, in July 1962 and the second at Goolwa, South Australia, from 29 May to 5 June 1987.

The Mudgee bird was sighted in late August and was last seen around September 9th.



The photo above was taken by Kay Parkin. Her website can be found at <http://kayparkinbirding.blogspot.com.au/>

Upon hearing about the bird, Kay, who lives in Adelaide, immediately flew to Sydney and drove for 4 hours to the Mudgee wetland, arriving in the middle of the night.

She spotted the bird at 6am, shortly after sunrise. In her own words - "1200 photos later and I was ecstatic!"

How lucky were we to just walk in on it?

## Lake Wollumboola

by Tom Kaar

September: The couple of weeks of rainy weather and southerly winds at the beginning of September caused most of the previously plentiful birdlife to disappear from the northern shoreline of Lake Wollumboola. I am not certain whether this has been due to the birds finding more shelter on the southern side or whether they have actually departed due to the higher water levels.

However a noticeable exception was the flock of Eurasian Coots, estimated at about 1200 birds, still hanging around the launching ramp and the Scout Hall. I recently saw the benefits of their flocking behaviour after a swooping White-breasted Sea-Eagle was unsuccessful in capturing any prey after about a dozen dives. The flurry of beating wings and swirling spray of the birds under attack seemed to be very distracting for the Sea Eagle – so that it was unable to concentrate on a particular individual.

There were also some Black-winged Stilt remaining. This is the by far the longest continuous period of their presence on the Lake since I started keeping my lists in 1988. I have observed them here since August 2013 – and I was away in June and July of that year, so they could have been here for even longer.

October 2: I received a call this morning from Peter Ward, who had just spotted a Great Crested Grebe at Lake Wollumboola. After joining him, the bird eventually came closer to the NE shoreline, allowing us to readily identify all the diagnostic features. Anyway it was well sighted by Peter – as I have never seen one previously on the Lake.

The Eurasian Coots are still here and I saw a dozen Red-necked Avocets at the far NW shore – but only 2 Black-winged Stilts. The Swans are returning to the northern shore in greater numbers – but the Teals are not plentiful.

As regards the waders, this morning I saw 35 Bar-tailed Godwits, 16 Red Knots, 2 Red-necked Stints, 2 Red-capped Plovers – and a pair of Pied Oystercatchers.

## New birds for MUDBirders

The MUDBirders have been sighting some birds not previously seen by them at Fishermans Paradise (19 Sep) and Orient Point and Lake Wollumboola (3 Oct).

19th September - Scaly-breasted Lorikeet

3rd October - Red-whiskered Bulbul (OP)  
Great Crested Grebe (LW)  
Grey-tailed Tattler (LW)

It is always interesting to see new birds appearing in old areas - even though the Bulbul is an introduced bird!

# Join the great Aussie backyard bird count

Bob Ashford is a passionate bird watcher and will be joining many Australians during the week of October 26 for the Aussie Backyard Bird Count taking place during National Bird Week.

Mr Ashford, of Berry, is excited that all Australians will have the opportunity to be part of a project that will make every citizen a scientist.

"The Aussie Bird Count is about how the birds are going. Everyone can contribute," Mr Ashford said.

"You don't have to be an expert, you can have a coffee and sit out in your backyard and watch the rosellas pinching the cherries and apples or the myna birds plucking away the blue pansies and take note."

Mr Ashford said the Aussie Bird Count was an excellent opportunity for families and kids to get out and about and learn more about the wildlife and how birds are faring.

"It's fantastic! You can enjoy the outdoors, love art or be a lover of birds and still take part.

"Children love the different colours and sizes and it is nature at work. It is calming, healthy and adds to our wellbeing," Mr Ashford said.

Mr Ashford said that while the project was lots of fun it was also vitally important.

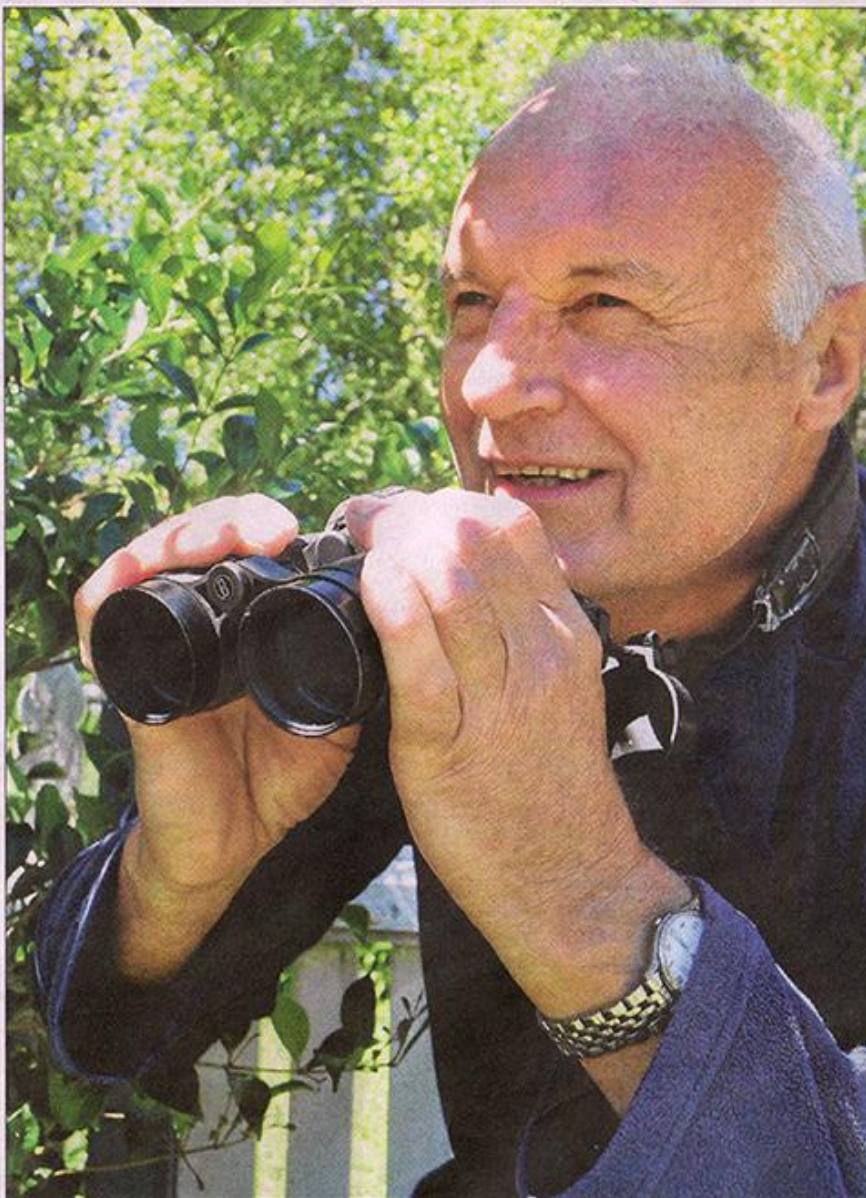
"All you need is 20 minutes to take notes and all of the information we collect will go into a big pool of information," Mr Ashford said.

"Birds are a massive indicator of how our environment is going. If birds are disappearing, there may be something negative occurring in their habitat.

"You don't have to be a 'greenie' but you should care about the big, wide environment that we live in."

All you need to get involved in the science project is a choice of a backyard, park, school playground or your favourite 'green patch' to sit and enjoy some time observing birds.

Simply record the birds you know and look up those you don't on the new website Aussie Bird Count app available from: [www.aussiebirdcount.org.au](http://www.aussiebirdcount.org.au)



Berry resident Bob Ashford is inviting backyard nature lovers to become "twitchers" for a weekend to help document our bird life.

## The Aussie Backyard Bird Count

The South Coast Register recently approached BirdLife Shoalhaven member Bob Ashford to talk about the upcoming Aussie Backyard Bird Count.

Bob believes that he was approached because he used to write articles on birding in the local papers - and he did a great job of promoting the event.

Perhaps BirdLife Shoalhaven needs a Publicity Officer or Media Liaison Officer who can be the branch spokesperson in the media on all birding matters?



Photo by Sue Tolley

## Cat Sightings

### Is Gardening Australia evil?

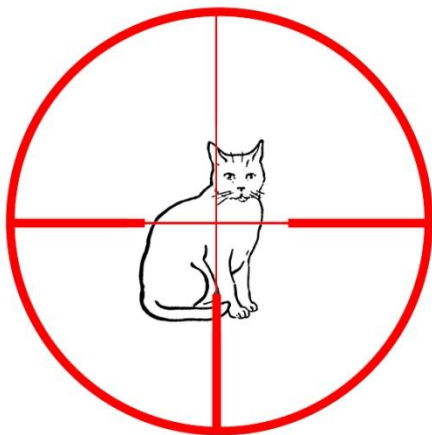
Most people might find it difficult to believe that a seemingly innocuous television program like the ABC's Gardening Australia could arouse passionate debates and heated correspondence, but it is actually true.

Along with habitat reduction, feral cats are arguably the biggest threat to Australian birds. The Australian Wildlife Conservancy estimates that feral cats kill approximately 75 million native Australian animals **every night!**



Feral cats are (or their forebears were) domestic cats that have escaped into the wild or been dumped. Responsible pet ownership should ensure that additional cats are not introduced into any Australian environment, but many television programs including Gardening Australia feel free to irresponsibly show domestic cats wandering loose around Australian gardens - rather than showing them in cat-runs, or better yet, not showing them at all.

If you see any television station showing free-ranging cats, perhaps you too should contact the station - and the sponsors of the show - to voice your disapproval.



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*Editor's Note:* The views expressed in this article are not necessarily those of BirdLife Australia - but perhaps they should be ...

## What Bird is This?

Not many people attempted to identify our last WBIT (shown below). Was it too difficult? Was the photo not good enough? Did nobody know what it was?



The answer is : Rufous-throated Honeyeater

This newsletter's WBIT is an easy one. Look closely at the image below. The bird shown was found dead at a park in Melbourne late in the afternoon of the last Saturday in September. It was part of a group of 22 dead birds suspected to have been savaged by a similar number of Hawks.



This season's What Bird is This?



An Azure Kingfisher watches out for Hawks  
(photo by Sue Tolley)

# Lake Wollumboola...



... a Bird's Eye View

## ART AT THE BEACH

The Lake Wollumboola Protection Association showcases an exhibition of Art works inspired by Lake Wollumboola and in support of its conservation.

Experience the Lake's changing moods, rich and varied bird species, aquatic life and Aboriginal cultural heritage through art, photography, sculpture and other media.

Nowra-Culburra Surf Lifesaving Club—Farrant Ave, Culburra Beach  
Saturday 29 November—10am—4pm—Launch at 11am

Gold coin entry—children free

People's Choice Award \* Silent Auction \* Art works for sale \* Refreshments available

To receive a copy of exhibitor guidelines please contact us by email: [info@wollumboola.org.au](mailto:info@wollumboola.org.au), phone Frances Bray 4447 2185 or go to [www.wollumboola.org.au](http://www.wollumboola.org.au)



Photos: Narelle Wright

# WANTED!

## COMMON “INDIAN” MYNAS



Scientists from the Australian Museum Research Institute, the University of Newcastle and the University of Queensland have commenced a study investigating the invasion and range expansion of the Common Myna (also called the Indian Myna) in Australia. **We need your help collecting tissue samples, or preferably whole dead birds, so that we can analyse their DNA. We will use genetic techniques to answer five key questions:**

- How many separate introductions have occurred?
- What are the origins of particular populations?
- Are some populations more invasive than others?
- Does native vegetation act as a barrier to dispersal?
- Are populations evolving to become more invasive?

Common “Indian” Mynas are an introduced pest, and programs of trapping and humane destruction are being implemented in many locations across eastern Australia. If you are involved in a trapping program or know someone who is, we are appealing to you to help us with our research. **Further information overleaf.**

**To assist us, please contact Dr Richard Major at:**

Australian Museum: t 02 9320 6183 email: [richard.major@austmus.gov.au](mailto:richard.major@austmus.gov.au)



## New Committee members needed!

At the beginning of the year when BirdLife Shoalhaven was formed we did not know how much work would be involved with the branch or how many committee members we would need to run the branch successfully in order to provide the voice for birds in the Shoalhaven.

One year on and the three current committee members now know that our local birds need a bit more help.

The BirdLife Australia Branch Working Arrangements say that in addition to the Convenor (we prefer President), Treasurer and Secretary the branch may establish other Executive Committee or non Committee roles.

They recommend a number of roles such as Conservation Officer, Membership Officer, Education Officer, Webmaster, Newsletter Editor, Communication Officer and (of course) an OH&S Officer to report policy and procedure updates from the National Office OH&S committee. In addition, as mentioned elsewhere in this newsletter, it might be good for us to have a Publicity Officer or Media Liaison Officer, or something similar.

We are not sure that we need to fill all of the roles recommended by Head Office in order to help the cause of bird conservation in the Shoalhaven, but some more help on committee would be appreciated.

Chris Grounds has volunteered to be our Conservation Officer until the position can be formalized at our next AGM, but a few more committee members could really help.

If you would like to become a member of the committee in any capacity at all (even as President, Treasurer or Secretary) please contact the current BirdLife Shoalhaven Secretary at [shoalhaven@birdlife.org.au](mailto:shoalhaven@birdlife.org.au).

There are many committed, enthusiastic, knowledgeable birders within the branch with all the skills required - it would be a pleasure to hear from you.

## Special Birdwatching Outing

### Saturday November 1 - Visit to Tallawarra Ash Ponds

Paul Nesbitt from Illawarra Birders has volunteered to give us access to, and guide us around, this amazing birding location near Dapto. We will meet to car pool in Albert Street on the north side of Apex Park at Berry at 8.15am (promptly). Or you can go direct to the site for a 9am start using the following instructions:

Follow the highway past the Illawarra Regional Airport and take the first turn into Dapto. At the bottom of the off ramp turn Right. Go under the freeway bridge and take the SECOND left, carefully, as it is deceptively tight and there is a concrete barrier. There is a gravel carpark about 200m or so on the left.

Bring morning tea and lunch as we might look at some other sites around Lake Illawarra while we are up that way.

Contact Karen Davis on 0487 208 437 for any queries.

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## New BirdLife Shoalhaven Website

The committee have set up an independent website for BirdLife Shoalhaven, in addition to the page provided on the BirdLife Australia website.

At the moment it is pretty "bare bones" but we are in the process of adding relevant content to it. You can find it at [www.birdlifeshoalhaven.org](http://www.birdlifeshoalhaven.org)

It is hoped that the website will provide information to the public about birds and birding in the Shoalhaven, as well as information about current conservation projects and possible future projects as well.

If you would like to contribute anything to the website, or have any suggestions on how it can be improved, please contact [shoalhaven@birdlife.org.au](mailto:shoalhaven@birdlife.org.au)

## Australia's voice for birds since 1901

BirdLife Australia is dedicated to achieving outstanding conservation results for our native birds and their habitats.

With our specialised knowledge and the commitment of an Australia-wide network of volunteers and supporters, we are creating a bright future for Australia's birds.

[birdlife.org.au](http://birdlife.org.au)

## Add your voice



Enjoy the rewards of membership, making a real difference for our native birds



Contributing your time is one of the most effective ways to help



Help us create positive outcomes for birds and their habitats