

Birdlife Shoalhaven Newsletter

Spring 2016



Photo by Chris Grounds

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If you would like to find out more about the migration of the Bar-tailed Godwits shown above in photos by Sue Tolley and Matt Jones, come along to our first Talk Night at 7pm on December 5th at the St Georges Basin Community Centre in Meriton Street!

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 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 a "What Bird is This" section.

Contributions / suggestions / criticisms / feedback etc. are always welcome.

Acknowledgements

Thank you to all the BirdLife Shoalhaven members who contributed articles to this newsletter, and also to those people who supplied images - Chris Grounds, Matt Jones, Sue Tolley and especially Thea O'Loughlin - a Research Officer at Australian National University - whose Pygmy Possum photo appears on page 11.

In addition, images from the following websites have been used in this newsletter - BirdLife Australia, BirdLife Melbourne, Birds in Backyards, the blog of Sydney Olympic Park and the Rural Fire Service.

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

Disclaimer

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

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

Errors

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

Cover Photo

Spring is that time of year when we need to be even more aware than normal about the needs of our endangered and vulnerable beach-nesting birds like the Pied Oystercatchers photographed by Chris Grounds.

President's Report

- by Rob Dunn

One degree of separation

BirdLife Shoalhaven (BLS) is uniquely placed as a nature conservation group with a membership and focus across the whole of the Shoalhaven, while also being part of a national organisation. Given the geography of the Shoalhaven, nature conservation groups are naturally centred around Milton-Ulladulla, the Bay and Basin, and Nowra. This was the same with the MUD Birders and the Shoalhaven Birders before BLS was formed. This gives us a stronger voice for nature conservation across the Shoalhaven through our own focus on birds. The other thing in our favour is that everyone knows someone in another conservation-minded group. This one degree of separation means we can react more effectively, have more activities to get involved in, learn more and keep spirits up when we need to!

Bird walks, bird talks and more bird outings

A key focus at our August Committee meeting was discussion on **three new initiatives**.

1. In the coming months we will identify and publicize a number of bird walks throughout the Shoalhaven that can be promoted through social media, brochures, signage and bird hides, where appropriate. Once we have developed our ideas, we will seek further input from members, finalize our thinking and look to seek external funds to bring these ideas into reality.



2. We are also aiming to hold four talks through the year on the theme of "Nature Conservation Through Birds". These will be open to BLS members and anyone with an interest in nature conservation and birds. Phil Straw, an expert in migratory shorebirds, who has worked with Australian and foreign governments and conservation groups along the flyway routes, will be our keynote speaker at our first talk on 5th December at 7pm at the St Georges Basin Community Centre in Meriton Street in St Georges Basin - see location map on this page. You will find the details of Phil's talk - "The World's Longest Flight" - later in this newsletter. I hope you can attend.



3. MUD Birders and Shoalhaven Birders continue to be active in running birding outings and MUD Birders also hold meetings in Milton every second month. Brett and Karen Davis are now planning to organize some additional birdwatching outings in the Bay and Basin area, with details in each BLS newsletter - see Calendar.

Through these ideas, we hope to introduce birds to a wider audience, attract more supporters and provide more opportunities for our members.

Shoalhaven City Council

The new (greener) Shoalhaven City Council

The composition of the Council is now very different after the September election, giving me hope that some of the major issues we have been advocating will at least get a full and fair hearing. We will be seeking Council support for our plan to promote bird walks in the Shoalhaven.

I will be inviting the Mayor and some Councillors to our bird talks to discuss bird issues on an informal basis.

Mayor Amanda Findley is planning to attend our December 5 talk to share her thoughts on the challenges and opportunities to maintain an unspoilt Shoalhaven.

The BirdLife Shoalhaven Committee

We have a new Committee member with Yolande Cozijn being appointed at our August Committee meeting. Our Committee already had a good spread of professional skills - business, finance, social media, engineering, education, ecology, the corporate, NGO and government sectors and with Yolande we now cover marketing too. As for geography, six of us live in the Bay & Basin area - perhaps an over-representation? - but with Mike Jefferis in the south and Barry Virtue in the north we can still keep in touch with opportunities and issues from across the Shoalhaven. As for birds, the Committee has birders, ornithologists and ecologists with a wide range of field skills from excellent down to barely adequate in my own case!



Sick of BirdLife Australia fundraising?

At a recent birdwatching outing, a conversation showed that the number of fundraising "asks" from BirdLife Australia seemed to be increasing. I have discussed this with the National Office and they have said that if you do not want to receive this type of correspondence in the future, just send an email to fundraising@birdlife.org.au or call 1300 730 075 or (03) 9347 0757. They will be happy to update their records accordingly. Also each fundraising "ask" that is sent out has 3 ways to request "no more appeals" – the free call number, a tick box for no appeals and the dedicated email address.

Changing your preferences makes sense, because if you do not intend to change your donation contributions to BirdLife in the future, it will save both paper and dollars that could be spent on bird conservation.

However, fundraising is a "science" and the National Office is keen to reassure its members that research shows that the approach being adopted by BirdLife offers the best chance of success. The recent migratory shorebirds and woodland bird campaigns have shown this to be true. With significant cut-backs in Government funding to BirdLife Australia in recent years and severe competition from other causes, BirdLife's focus on private donations and bequests is more vital than ever. Having said that, however, the views of BirdLife's members are also crucial to BirdLife Australia's long-term success, so if you need to change what arrives in your mail or inbox, contact the Fundraising Team in Melbourne.



Getting the word out there

Please forward the link to this and future BLS newsletters to any of your friends and contacts. Many thanks to Jodie Dunn, NPWS's Shorebirds Recovery Co-ordinator, who sent the newsletter on to her own distribution list. The wider the distribution of the newsletter the better, as we do not want to limit it to existing BLS members, but rather use it to attract more.

Spring into Sanctuary Point

SANCTUARY POINT COMMUNITY PRIDE INC. PRESENTS

Spring into Sanctuary Point

Saturday 29th October 2016
9.00 am - 1.00 pm

Francis Ryan Reserve, Sanctuary Point
(located behind the shops on Paradise Beach Road)

This event provides varied family entertainment and showcases services available to residents of Sanctuary Point and surrounding areas.

BirdLife Shoalhaven will have a stall at the "Spring Into Sanctuary Point" community event this year, and will be distributing information about BirdLife Australia and BirdLife Shoalhaven as well as selling and giving away various items such as badges and book marks.

The stall will be manned by BirdLife Shoalhaven members like Sue and Stan Brown and Catherine Campbell who will be engaging with the public and letting them know about the benefits of birdwatching and bird conservation.

Why not drop by and say "hi" and let them know that we really appreciate their efforts!

The World's Longest Flight

7pm on 5th December 2016
at St Georges Basin Community Centre in Meriton Street

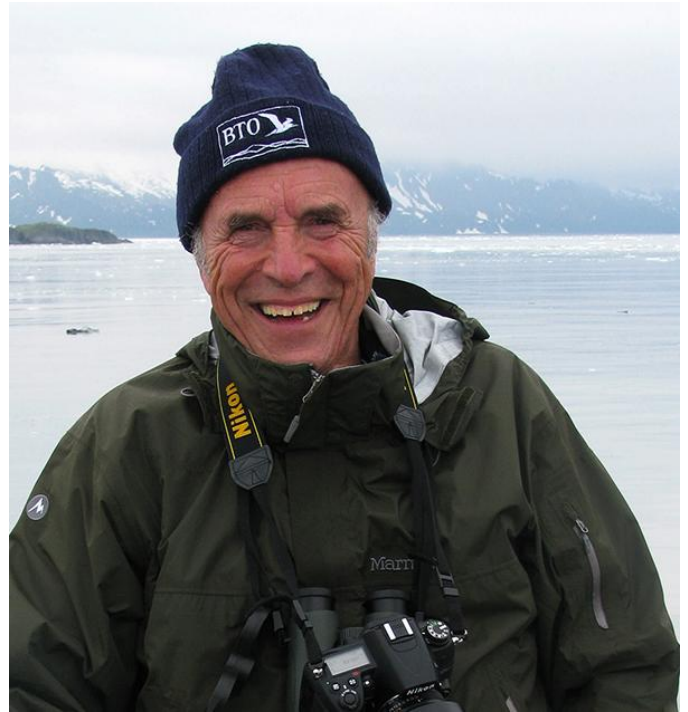
BirdLife Shoalhaven's first talk in a series with the theme of "Nature Conservation Through Birds" (time and place shown above) is entitled "The World's Longest Flight" and will be presented by Phil Straw.

Phil will tell the story of the Bar-tailed Godwit's journey through some of the most threatened habitat in the world in East Asia to then fly non-stop further than any other species of bird directly across the Pacific from Alaska to Australia!

When Phil Straw was young he decided that being an apprentice motor mechanic was not the career path he would follow. Despite everyone saying it was fanciful to expect to be able to make a living by working with birds, Phil has been a professional ornithologist since the age of 18. After spending a year working at a British bird observatory he chanced on the opportunity to volunteer at a research station in the Camargue in the south of France (the Mecca of all European birdwatchers).

It was here that he was offered a full time job, which launched him into a career of wetlands management for waterbirds and the study of migratory birds.

Some years later he took up a job at the Edward Grey Institute for Field Ornithology at Oxford University researching the breeding ecology of woodland birds with the intention of completing a PhD.



After moving to Australia Phil started Avifauna Research & Services, the only company in Australia 100% dedicated to the conservation of wetlands and waterbirds, with a special focus on migratory shorebirds such as the Bar-tailed Godwit, the subject of his upcoming talk.

Also on the talk night agenda is a 15 minute video on the birds of Lake Wollumboola by Frances Bray, and Mayor Amanda Findley is also planning to attend to talk about the challenges of maintaining an unspoilt Shoalhaven



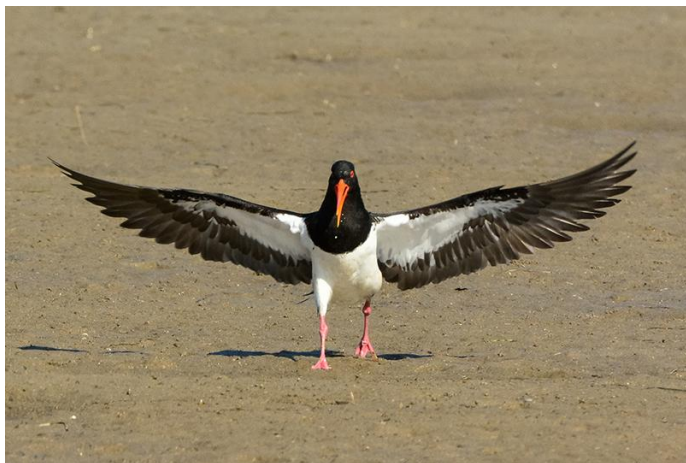
Conservation Officer Report

- by Chris Grounds

Many of our members are off and running with a new season of volunteer shorebird monitoring with NPWS and the Hooded Plovers and Pied Oystercatchers have certainly been busy birds for some time now.



The reconfiguration of beach-dune systems, especially around entrances to lakes and lagoons, during the east coast low of June has changed so many nesting habitats on the Shoalhaven Coast.



Our recent co-hosting with the Jervis Bay Regional Alliance of "Understorey" - the landmark documentary film - proved to be very successful.

Our guests David Gallan (Director) and Jack Miller (Conservationist) were very happy with the Huskisson evening and the reception of our local audience to the conservation story of the south east forests.

The audience of over 100 people was double the figure for the Wollongong screening. For the many supporters who missed purchasing the DVD on the night, stock has now been replenished and is available from Candelo Books via their website.

Branch Treasurer, Karen Davis, has recently taken on a role as a "Guardian Jervis Bay" for BirdLife Australia and

no sooner had her signature dried than she was confronted with the bushfire on the Becroft Peninsula.

This was a control burn that broke containment lines but represented the second major fire in the Becroft heathland within twelve months and made local news headlines.

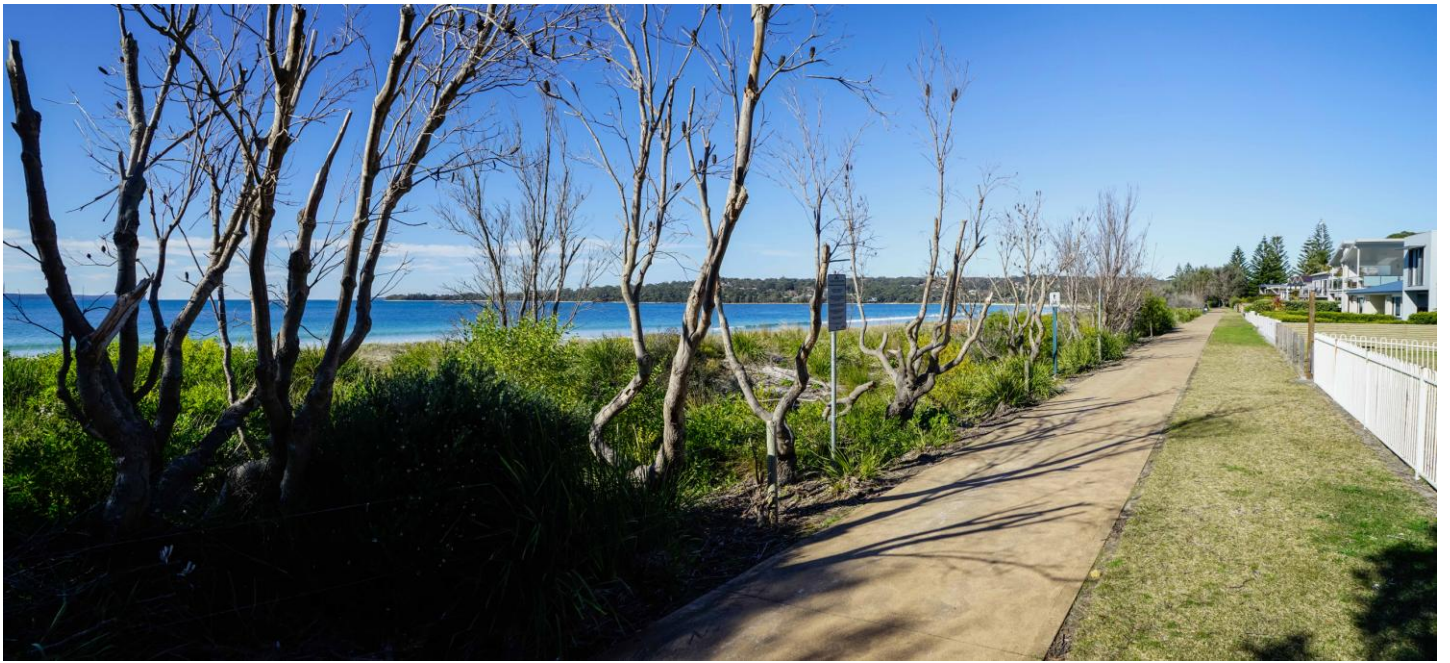
At stake of course is the localized population of the endangered Eastern Bristlebird, which had developed from a reseeding population in a 2003-5 transfer from Booderee National Park on the south side of Jervis Bay.

Karen has taken up this issue for BLS with the Minister for Defence and the response will be interesting. Karen is seeking acknowledgement of inclusion of the conservation of the Eastern Bristlebird and its breeding regime in any future planning of fire actions at Becroft.



BLS is usually very involved in the submission process for conservation issues that we deem to be of some priority for our group. Indeed, it has involved a lot of our time this year.

The Collingwood Beach Dune Vegetation management issue has been on the boil for a long while and is ongoing. BLS has made a lengthy submission to the exhibited Collingwood Beach Dune Management Plan and had written to the former Mayor prior to this expressing our concerns with the proposed demonstration site.



One key matter remains the implications for management of all dune systems on the Shoalhaven Coast that are in Council's jurisdiction. The record on estuary-dredging and dune management, two inter-related elements of coast management, has been controversial to say the least.

BLS members have also been involved in site protests and rallies as well as the "change.org" petition. There has been regular liaison with the Vincentia Matters group and the Jervis Bay Regional Alliance.

Then of course there was our submission to the exhibited and mammoth, 754 page "Coastal Zone Management Plan" of Council. The gist of our submission was that there was insufficient recognition of the place and role of birds in coastal ecology. Council has since indicated that this Plan is to be reconsidered.

BLS also made a major submission on the recently exhibited "Shoalhaven Development Control Plan (DCP) 2014 Draft Chapter G4 Tree & Vegetation Management".

The Draft stated in two separate sections that: "Trees are part of the wider habitat that supports our native wildlife and birds" and "vii. Recognize the intrinsic value of trees to support native birds and wildlife."

BLS suggested that the statement was welcome but very short on detail. It does also seem to be in direct contradiction to the Council treatment of trees (banksias) on Crown Land in the Collingwood Beach dunes.

The Submission Process

The process for developing our submissions involves the preparation of a draft or drafts, which are circulated to our committee for input and proof reading prior to finalization and lodgment with the relevant authority, e.g. Shoalhaven Council.

An important recent initiative of BLS is to include our submissions on our website, thanks to our IT savvy and busy secretary. All of the BLS submissions are listed and stored on the BirdLife Shoalhaven website - under "Submissions" in the "Conservation" menu.



The submissions page can also be accessed by following this link - www.birdlifeshoalhaven.org/submissions.html

Hopefully the Submissions page can also enable our members to access a reference point for conservation issues on the local scene and perhaps support you in preparing your own submission.

Increasingly, BLS is networking with our local partners in conservation in the determination of issues, recommendations and commentary for submissions.

The BLS partners are other community based groups such as Jervis Bay Regional Alliance, the Save Collingwood Beach group, Lake Wollumboola Protection Association Inc., and Shoalhaven Birding groups. The final BLS submissions are usually shared on a confidential basis with such groups.

The BLS submission may also be shared on a confidential, discretionary basis with other groups or organizations if BLS believes there is a shared interest in conservation. The National Parks Association and the National Parks and Wildlife Service would be examples.

This strategy is an excellent way of building strength into our conservation effort and acting to support the broader effort of the community in conservation.

One of the great advantages is the differences in perspective and approach that this brings to our work as the output of the many good environmental minds that are out there is brought to bear on an issue.

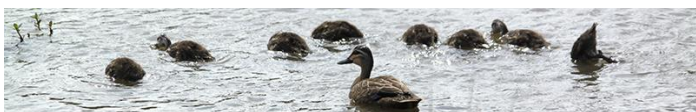
From a BLS perspective this should enable us to be more effective in the interest of conservation of birds and their habitats.

On a positive note it can be noted that BLS has provided a site Bird Catalogue and a collated Select Birds Photograph catalogue for a "Bherwerre Wetland Teaching Resources Kit" prepared for Sanctuary Point Public School.

The school has started to use the Bherwerre Wetland area as an outdoor education – geography study site to support the provisions of the new Kinder – Year 6 Geography syllabus.

Geography with a field study component is now compulsory in these tender years of education, which is music to the ears of this writer as a former high school Geography teacher.

Students will be all the better for such experiences and the improved eco-intelligence that will be developed. More knowledge – more conservation !



Eastern Ospreys Nest Again 2016

- by Chris Grounds

The NSW threatened species Eastern Osprey (*Pandion cristatus*) produced two fledglings in August 2015 in an historic nesting at Basin View.

This was the first documented nesting south of Sydney for this magnificent raptor.

Sightings of this bird are uncommon enough as it is.

It was not possible to repeat the intensive four month monitoring of the nest again this year but a more limited monitoring produced sufficient evidence to record that at least one fledgling was produced this year.

A two week period of observation produced exactly the same actions and behavior of two birds seen last year after the first fledgling left the nest.

The behavior of each of the birds observed in the 2016 nest duplicated the last two weeks of the 2015 nest.

At that time the mother - "Crissy" - stayed with the second fledgling until it was convinced to leave the nest.



Crissy takes a rest from nest duty

That took an eternity of two weeks, accompanied by much nervous noise and antics before the fledgling disappeared into an ominous late evening sky.

It was possible this year to conclude that the similar pairing at the nest over two weeks was a duplicate event of 2015 with one bird eventually leaving the nest and "Crissy" hanging around for a while longer.

However, the big change this year was that nesting occurred six weeks earlier than in 2015.

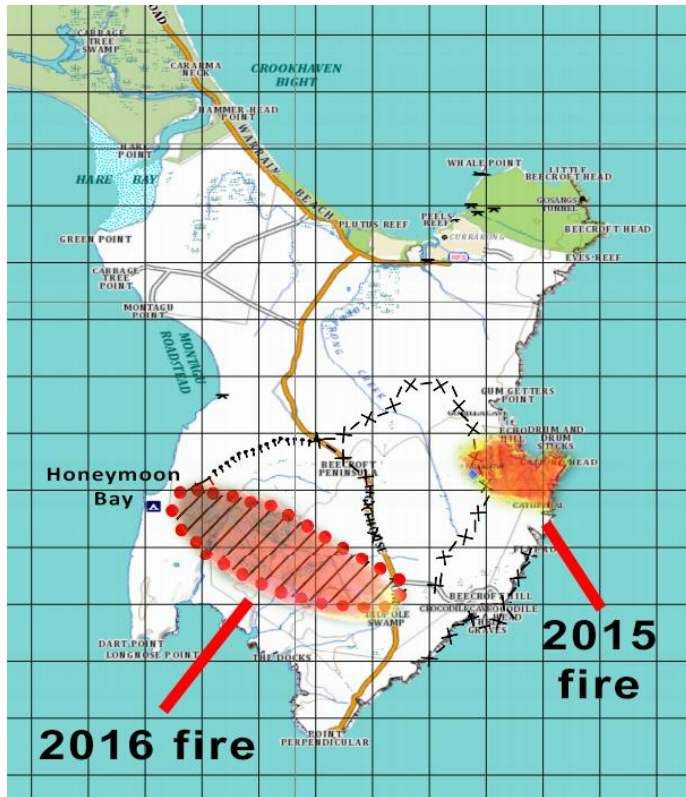
Beecroft Fires and Bristlebirds

- by Brett Davis

As most of you will be aware, there was a major fire on the Beecroft Peninsula earlier this month. It started just to the east of Honeymoon Bay and burned its way in an ESE direction all the way to Lighthouse Road.

This latest fire follows closely on a fire in November 2015 which burned an area on the east coast of the Peninsula and which potentially threatened the town of Currarong.

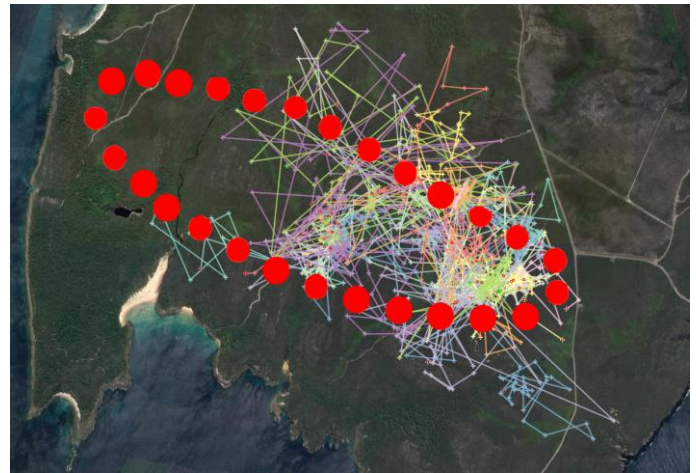
The areas point burned by both fires are shown on the map below.



The latest fire was the result of a hazard reduction burn authorised by the Defence Department (but apparently carried out by contractors) that went out of control due to windy conditions, whereas the 2015 fire was the result of a live firing exercise on the Beecroft Weapon range on a day of high fire danger.

The fires are of concern to BirdLife Shoalhaven due to a population of endangered Eastern Bristlebirds which were translocated to Beecroft from Booderee National Park on the south side of Jervis Bay in 2003.

50 birds were involved in the translocation, and in the ensuing years the population had grown to an estimated 94 birds. Disturbingly, the area burned by the latest fire is the very area where the translocated birds were released in 2003. The map shown in the next column shows the tracks of the Eastern Bristlebirds after their release and the area of the fire as shown by the red dots ...



BirdLife Shoalhaven committee member Karen Davis was interviewed by ABC radio on the morning after the fire. A report on the ABC website the same day stated "Birdlife Shoalhaven's Karen Davis said if similar fires were allowed to continue, the bird colony would be destroyed" and "If they keep having fires escape then it will change the ecology of the burnt areas. It will turn into grasslands instead of heathland, which the bristlebirds won't be able to survive in."

Although the colony may survive the fire, and while it is likely that many of the adult Bristlebirds in the area may have escaped the fire, it is just as likely that many nests and eggs were destroyed, and chicks killed, given that the fire occurred in the middle of the Eastern Bristlebird breeding season which stretches from August to January.

David Bain from the Office of Environment and Heritage who originally organised the translocation of the birds has stated that "the Eastern Bristlebird is one of our most endangered species with approximately 2,000 individuals left in the wild" - before the fires!

The National Recovery Plan for the Eastern Bristlebird states that they are "particularly vulnerable to large-scale, intense fires" and "the main threat to the Eastern Bristlebird is the loss or fragmentation of suitable habitat, which can be caused by inappropriate fire regimes" and "predation is a potential threat to the species, particularly by feral predators and particularly after fire."

BirdLife Shoalhaven emailed the Australian Minister of Defence on October 16 requesting that "planning of any future burn activity on the Beecroft Peninsula takes into consideration the threat to the Eastern Bristlebird and its critical heathland habitat" - with copies to Ann Sudmalis, BirdLife Australia, a representative of the Australian National University and David Bain.

As we go to press a week later, no response has been received ...

Report on BIGnet Meeting

3-4th September 2016

Hosted by Murrumbidgee Field Naturalists

Following the Conservation Officers' meeting on Saturday morning, there were presentations on three major projects being carried out in the area. The first was by David Parker from NPWS on the Plains Wanderer. This was followed by Matt Herring talking about the Bitterns in Rice project. The final talk was by David Egan also from NPWS on his work on the Red-lored Whistler.

On Sunday the actual BIGnet meeting was held. Topics included:

1. Twitchathon. The 2016 funds will go to restore habitat for the Gould's Petrel, which suffered major storm damage recently. This year there are new coordinators for the Twitchathon, and a new format. Details will be circulated separately. Some decisions about the date and destination of funds will need to be made next year when it is planned the Twitchathon will become a national event.

2. IBAs. Important Bird Areas (IBAs) have become Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas, and shortly this will be changed to Key Biodiversity Areas and include more than birds. IBAs will form the bulk of KBAs. Golo Maurer is the coordinator of IBAs in Australia, of which there are 45 in NSW and the ACT. Phil Straw has suggested workshops be held to assist people in monitoring IBAs. Assessment of threats is seen as the most important part of the reporting forms.

Each IBA is meant to have a "guardian", and most of them do. In our area the Ulladulla to Merimbula IBA has a guardian, and the Jervis Bay IBA guardian is Karen Davis.

Business from Minutes of last meeting in April 2016

1. Regent Honeyeater project. A report was circulated. The numbers are remaining steady.



2. BirdFair - to be held on 3-5/11/17. This will be widened to include other wildlife. Phil Straw, the organiser, wants to move from the "converted" to reach the wider public.

3. Financial Report. Approximately \$8,500 in account. At present the larger clubs pay a \$100 levy to belong to BIGnet. This pays for an email coordinator to send out notifications, reports etc. Account managed by CBOC and no one from CBOC at this meeting, so no decisions made, however some will need to be made at the next meeting in April 2017.

4. Feathermap. Participants were reminded to encourage participation in this worthwhile project to collect waterbird feathers for DNA analysis.

5. Clubs' support for projects. Some of the larger clubs generate funds and hold money in accounts that could perhaps be used to support projects. COG has guidelines for providing, and charging for, data, which they are willing to share with other clubs.

6. Databases. The launch of the new BLA Atlas portal is imminent, also the new app. Members were encouraged to switch over to this when available (7/9/16) as both eBird and the Atlas of Living Australia are problematical in regards to the robustness of their data. Jenny Bounds pointed out that more members and others in ACT put data into eBird than into the COG database.

7. Campouts. Participants shared their club's camp schedule and other arrangements with a view to finding out what others are doing. BNNSW uses its two campouts per year as a way of bringing together members from all its sub-groups. A fee is charged and some income is generated. It was agreed that as participants age there has been a trend away from bush camping to using a range of accommodation provided in Caravan Parks. COG pointed out that they have been driven out of State Forest areas they previously used by an increase in illegal shooters and trail-bike riders, and it may be worth looking at Nature Reserves as an alternative.

Next Meeting: 1-2 April 2017 hosted by Illawarra Birders

Bird Surveys in Booderee NP

- by Brett Davis

When Karen Davis recently needed help in her role as guardian of the Jervis Bay Key Biodiversity Area, she called on fellow BirdLife Shoalhaven member Chris MacGregor, Senior Research Officer at the Australian National University (ANU) based at Booderee NP. A few weeks later when Chris needed help with his annual bird surveys, we could hardly say no. Also volunteering was another BirdLife Shoalhaven member, Wendy Hartmann.

Each morning for four days we met at the Booderee Visitor Centre at dawn (5am wake-up calls are not fun!) and paired up with an ANU ecologist to be dropped off at various sites throughout the park. Each site is 100 metres long, with monitoring stations at 20 metres and 80 metres, and pink tape and star pickets marking the way.

At the 20m monitoring station we recorded temperature, wind and cloud cover and for 5 minutes would write down every bird we heard or saw, and how far away they were. This was then repeated at the 80m station, before we were picked up and taken to the next site where the process was repeated. We visited about eight to ten sites each day, with 2 x 5 minute surveys at each site.

The ability to recognise birds by their calls rather than by sight was of paramount importance. For example, I recorded Olive-backed Orioles at almost every site, but did not actually see one for the entire week!

Some species are particularly difficult to tell apart from their calls alone (for me) i.e. Fairy Wrens; Wattlebirds; and a couple of those pesky little brown birds, but occasional actual sightings really helped.

Each monitoring station was easily recognisable because of nearby corrugated iron, wooden sleepers and cement tiles which provided potential "homes" for a variety of animals including lizards, snakes, small mammals and frogs. The ANU ecologists lifted up all the man-made stuff and recorded what they found.



Most days we started at around 6:15am and finished somewhere between 10:30am and midday. Although it was all really enjoyable, by the end of the week it was starting to feel suspiciously like work!

The most common snakes found during the surveys were Eastern Small-eyed Snakes, which I must admit I had never heard of prior to the surveys. They are smallish (around 50cm) black snakes and look relatively innocuous so I was not particularly concerned when one started thrashing about near my feet. It was not until I did some research on the web that I found out they are included in the list of Australia's top ten most deadly snakes and have been responsible for at least one recorded death!



Eastern Small-eyed Snake

The best bird sighting I had during the week was a Southern Emu-Wren. I heard its call in heathland near Jervis Bay Village, but just to be sure I had identified it correctly I played the call on the app on my smartphone at the end of the 5 minute survey. A few seconds later the Southern Emu-Wren hopped up on a bush only a couple of metres away!

Despite seeing good birds, and lots of snakes, the cutest animal found during the survey was a Pygmy Possum, shown below ...



Snippets

Telescope and Tripod for BLS

Greg Tedder, the NPWS Nowra Area Manager, has donated a Nikon spotting scope and Manfrotto tripod to BirdLife Shoalhaven. A group had applied for a grant to buy the scope and tripod but the setup had been seldom if ever used and was sitting in a cupboard gathering dust. Greg was happy for it to go to a public community group.

The scope and tripod will be brought along to all BirdLife Shoalhaven birdwatching activities, as well as Shoalhaven Birders and MUD Birder outings as well where possible, and should also be available to members for special trips or outings. Details will be thrashed out at the next committee meeting.

Thank you Greg for your generosity!



Twitchathon

Birdlife Shoalhaven's team entering this year's Twitchathon is named the "Many-eyed Goat-suckers". This is the translation of the original name for the Spotted Nightjar (*Caprimulgus argus*). *Caprimulgus* is Latin for goatsucker and *Argus* is Greek for many-eyed (*Argus* was an 100 eyed giant in Greek mythology). In ancient folklore Nightjars supposedly sucked milk from goats!

Nightjars seem to be related to strange and sometimes scary folklore all around the world. This is possibly due to the fact they are active at night, not during the day. In Aboriginal folklore, Nightjars are said to steal babies!



Spotted Nightjar - image stolen from BirdLife Melbourne

Nightjars have long pointed wings, short legs and very short bills. They are cryptically patterned which makes them nearly impossible to see as they typically roost on the ground in leaf litter and are often only found when they are flushed and then fly a short distance away. They do not build a nest but lay their patterned eggs (only one in the case of the Spotted Nightjar) directly on the ground. Our Spotted and White-throated Nightjars have amazing calls that consist of a long series of varying "bubbling" sounds. Find the call on an app or website and have a listen so you will know the call when you hear it.

Our twitchathon team will try to see as many species as we can in 24 hours in the Shoalhaven. It will be quite a learning experience - will our plan takes us to enough varied habitats to find all the different species? Will luck be on our side? Will the birds be there when we are? We will let you know how we go.

If you would like to sponsor our team or make a donation to the fundraising effort (which this year goes to the Gould's Petrel and other seabirds in the islands off Port Stephens) please call or email Karen Davis 0487 208437 or karen@brettdavis.com.au.

Breakfast with the Birds

8am Saturday 17th December

Sue and Ronnie have invited us to their bird haven home at 44 Pacificana Drive (continuation of Government Road) Sussex Inlet for a breakfast with the birds. Bring along your choice of breakfast and a folding chair. Outdoor grillers available to cook bacon and eggs etc. Tea and coffee provided. Option to visit Swan Lake for a walk to Cudmirrah bridge afterwards. Parking across from front gate - 300m walk to the house. Look for flags or signs. Sue Tolley 0414 856 965.

WADER CONSERVATION WORLD WATCH

5TH - 6TH NOVEMBER 2016

A celebration of wader conservation and conservationists

Show you care!

SEE AS MANY WADER SPECIES OVER THE WEEKEND AS YOU CAN;

TELL US WHAT YOU HAVE SEEN - waderquest@gmail.com;

WE'LL COMPILE A COLLECTIVE WORLD SPECIES SEEN LIST;

YOUR NAME WILL APPEAR ON A ROLL OF HONOUR ON THE

WADER QUEST WEBSITE;

YOU'LL RECEIVE a WADER QUEST E-NEWSLETTER SPECIAL EDITION

ABOUT THE EVENT WITH YOUR BIRDS AND NAME IN IT.

**SHOW YOUR GRATITUDE AND SOLIDARITY FOR THE WORK
WADER CONSERVATIONISTS EVERYWHERE ARE DOING
SIMPLY BY WATCHING THE BIRDS THEY HELP TO SAVE!**



WADERS NEED LOVE TOO!

2017 BirdLife Australia Calendar

BirdLife Australia's spectacular 2017 "Year of the Parrot" calendar is now available. Spend a month with twelve of Australia's most beautiful parrots - from the dainty Double-eyed Fig-parrot to the raucous Palm Cockatoo - and support our conservation work at the same time. It's an ideal Christmas present or a handy addition to your home or office. This year, BirdLife Australia is also selling limited edition sets of parrot greeting cards too! Click [here](#) to order yours today.



BirdLife Shoalhaven Calendar *

October

Friday 28	Wilfords Lane Wetland (MUD)	Meet: 8am: Back of Harry Higgs Room or 8:15 at Cupitts Winery Leader: Bob Rusk 4455-2169
Saturday 29	Spring into Sanctuary Point (BLS)	BLS stall at Sanctuary Point Community Pride Fair (9am-1pm) at Frances Ryan Reserve (BLS)
29 - 30	National Twitchathon (BA)	Email Karen Davis for details

November

Tuesday 8	General Meeting (MUD)	7:30pm: Harry Higgs Room - activity TBA
Friday 11	North Fishermans Paradise (MUD)	8am: Back of Harry Higgs Room, or at 8:15am: Murrays Rd Turnoff. Leader: Chris Shinton 4454-5584
Sunday 20	Vincentia / Greenfields (SB)	Meet in the Vincentia Golf Course car park at 8:30am.
Friday 25	Yatte Yattah Nature Reserve (MUD)	Meet: 8am: Back of Harry Higgs Room or 8:15am at Yatte Yattah Leader: Geoff Andrews 4454-3580
Sunday 27	Greenpatch area (BLS)	Meet 8am at Hyams Beach turnoff. Bring morning tea.

December

Monday 5	BirdLife Shoalhaven Talk Night	7pm - 9pm at St Georges Basin Community Centre, Meriton St. There will be three presentations - "The World's Longest Flight" - a talk by Phil Straw about the annual migration of Bar-tailed Godwits around the Pacific; a 15 minute video on "The Birds of Lake Wollumboola" by Frances Bray; and Mayor Amanda Findley will also be giving a short talk as well! Members of the public and members of BirdLife Shoalhaven are all welcome!
Friday 9	Xmas Picnic – Burrill Lake (MUD)	Meet: 8am: Lions Park Burrill Lake (by toilets). Leader: Mike Jefferis 4455-5162
Saturday 17	Breakfast with the Birds (BLS)	8am at 44 Pacificana Drive (continuation of Government Rd) Sussex Inlet for a breakfast with the birds. Bring along your choice of breakfast and a folding chair. Outdoor grillers available to cook bacon and eggs etc. Tea and coffee provided. Option to visit Swan Lake for a walk to Cudmirrah bridge afterwards. Parking across from front gate - 300m walk to the house. Look for flags or signs. Sue Tolley 0414 856 965.
Sunday 18	Berry Masonic Hall (SB)	5pm Xmas Party BYO picnic barbecue. Show your 2016 birding pictures on the big screen.

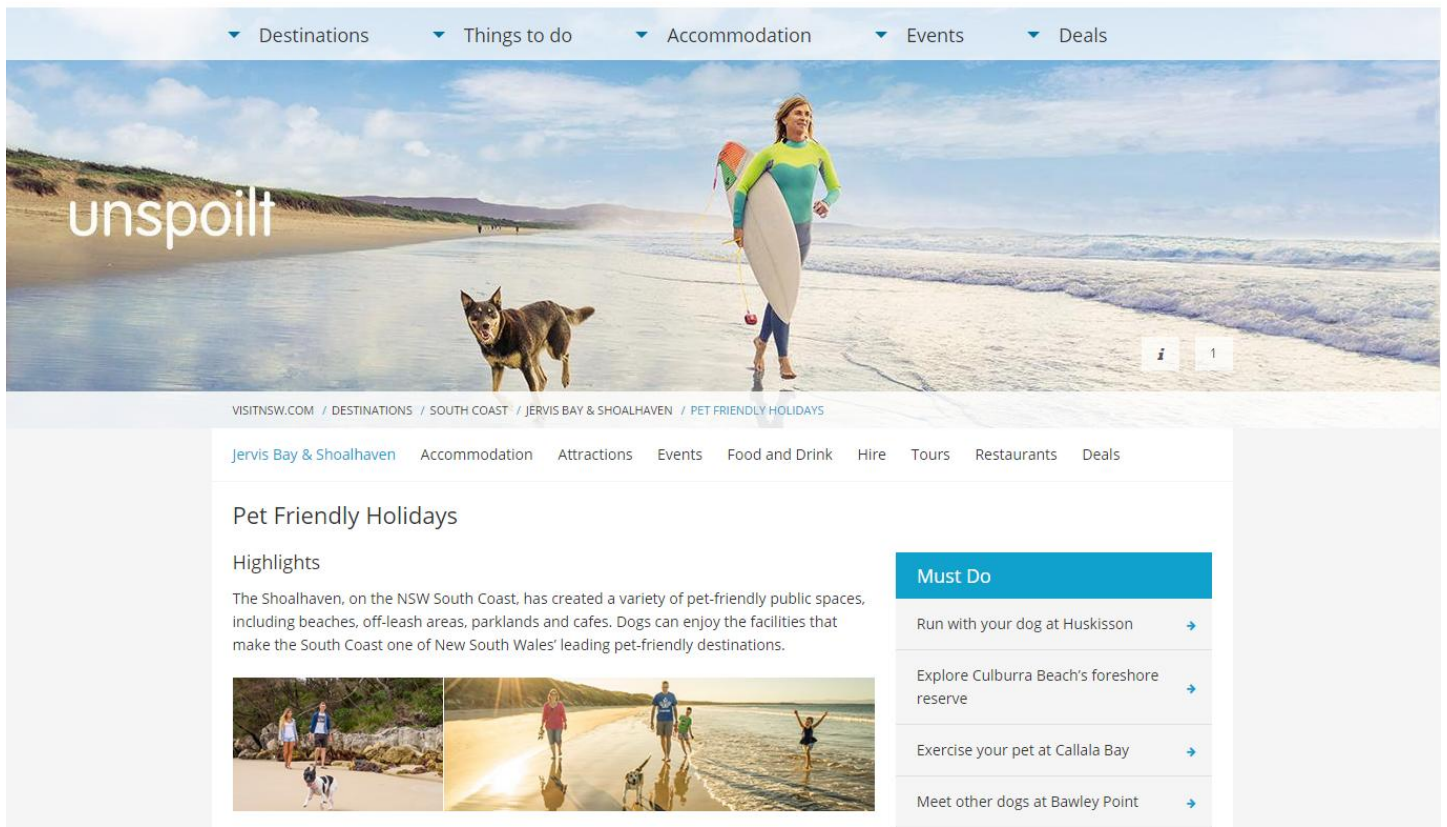
January 2017

Friday 6	Ulladulla Sports Ground (MUD)	Meet: 8am: South end of Camden Street Leader: Charles Dove 0417 422 302
Tuesday 10	AGM (MUD)	Meet: 7:30pm: Harry Higgs Room - activity: TBA
Friday 20	ANU Kioloa Campus (MUD)	Meet: 8am: ANU Campus. Drive almost to Kioloa, watch for ANU sign on right. Leaders: Marg Hamon & Maggie Mance 4457-1129

* The BirdLife Shoalhaven calendar contains activities from the branch (BLS) and two associated birdwatching groups - Shoalhaven Birders (SB) and the Milton-Ulladulla District Birdwatching Club (MUD). Members can attend all activities.

Shoalhaven Birders meet every third Sunday of the month at 8.30am. There are no leaders on their outings, and it is possible that nobody else will turn up, especially if the weather is bad, so be prepared to have your own birdwatching outing. Trips away usually go ahead. Contacts: Stan and Su Brown 4443-4828, Peter and Julie Hale 0402 076 548, Barry and Susan Virtue 4464-1389

MUD Birdwatchers have outings every fortnight on Fridays from 8am until about 11am. Membership of the MUD Birdwatchers club is open to all members of the Milton Ulladulla U3A. For information about joining MUD Birdwatchers, phone Marg Hamon 4457-1129 or Chris Shinton 4454-5584 or email mubirdclub@gmail.com.



The above image is a print of a page on the visitnsw.com website, the official tourism site for "Destination NSW" which is a department of the **NSW government**. The page states the following about Jervis Bay and the Shoalhaven -

"dogs can enjoy the facilities that make the South Coast one of New South Wales' leading pet-friendly destinations"

"run with your dog at Huskisson"

"exercise your pet at Callala Bay"

"meet other dogs at Bawley Point"

BirdLife Shoalhaven understands that there might indeed be dog off-leash areas at all of these locations, but we have issues with the tone of the page which implies that dogs are virtually free to be off-leash everywhere in the Shoalhaven.

Indeed, the banner photo seems to indicate that it is fine to let your dog roam free on the beach while you go surfing.

Or am I just being hyper-sensitive?

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Enjoy the rewards of membership, making a real difference for our native birds
- volunteer**
Contributing your time is one of the most effective ways to help
- donate**
Help us create positive outcomes for birds and their habitats