



ILLAWARRA BIRDING

Official Newsletter of Illawarra Birders Inc.

IB096 FEBRUARY 2026

IN THIS ISSUE...

President's Report	2
Upcoming Activities	3
Rare Illawarra Visitors	5
Conservation News	6
Photo Competition	8
More about Oystercatchers	9
Shorebirds Survey Report	10
Vale Lindsay Smith	13
Mediawatch	14
Right Place, Right Time	17
News and Notes	18
Trip Reports	19
Unusual Sightings	21



PRESIDENT
Ralph Stadius
rstadius@icloud.com

VICE-PRESIDENT
Andrew Wood
amwood1961@outlook.com

TREASURER
Ros Atkins
rozatkins@gmail.com

SECRETARY
Belinda Baccarini
belindabaccarini@gmail.com

RECORDS OFFICER
Dave Rower
daverower@gmail.com

ACTIVITIES OFFICER + WEBMASTER
Andrew Wood
amwood1961@outlook.com

CONSERVATION TEAM
Suze Giuffre
suzegiuffre@gmail.com
Gleniss Wellings
gwellings@live.com.au
Michelle Rower
mrower@ozemail.com.au

MEMBERSHIP
Richard Smart
smartr@internode.on.net

BARREN GROUNDS KBA SURVEYS
Ralph Stadius
rstadius@icloud.com

EDITORIAL TEAM
Martin Potter - Editor
pottxyz@gmail.com
Paul Charlier - Graphic Design
paul.r.charlier@gmail.com

COMMITTEE MEMBERS
Martin Cocker
Catherine Kirby
Penny Potter

AIMS OF ILLAWARRA BIRDERS

Our aims are to promote bird watching as a leisure activity, and to support the conservation of Australian birds and their habitat.

Acknowledgement of country - When we are birding please be aware that we are on the traditional land of the Dharawal people. Please show respect to the land and to the elders past and present.



ILLAWARRA BIRDERS

IB President's Report February 2026

The start of a new year brings opportunity to refocus and perhaps set some goals or new year resolutions. Did you set a birding goal for 2026? It might be to collect a few great photos.

Maybe it is to enjoy your local birds and learn more about their particular habits. For the twitchers, it might be to better your NSW or local LGA list from 2025. And everyone would like to add a few lifers!



My son and his partner live in an apartment in Waverton in Sydney. They have a balcony that overlooks a densely treed gully. So despite being just a few kilometres from Sydney CBD, they enjoy daily visits from a number of species. They had an adult Grey Butcherbird eating from their hand, when it was busy feeding this year's offspring. A pair of Rainbow Lorikeets have become particularly tame and wait patiently as soon as someone is home. But they jealously guard this source of nectar solution from others.

Perhaps in 2026 you might like to get a bit more involved in running our great club. It is always good to rotate people through the committee, bringing fresh ideas and energy. Being part of the committee is not overly arduous as we meet via Zoom once a month. We are considering forming a conservation sub-committee and would welcome anyone interesting in joining that. So I would ask that you have a think about the life skills that you have and how they could benefit the club if you were to join the committee. Also of course there are lots of other more casual ways to help, and walk or camp leaders are particularly welcome. Please have a chat with one of our committee members to find out more.

Wishing you good birding for 2026!

Ralph Stadius
President

Cover Photo: A Spiny-cheeked Honeyeater seen recently at the Tallawarra Wetlands (see story on page 5) — M Potter

MEMBERSHIP

Single \$35, Family \$40, Pensioner \$30. Annual subscriptions due July.

MEETINGS

Illawarra Birders Inc. meets on the first Tuesday each month (except January) at Coniston Community Centre, meetings start at 7-30 pm.

INFORMATION

For more info check out our website at: www.illawarrabirders.org
Follow us on Facebook - Search for Illawarra Birders Community.



UPCOMING ACTIVITIES FOR FEBRUARY AND MARCH

Note: The club has binoculars available for use on our walks. Please contact the walk leader beforehand for details.

Sunday, 1 February 7.45am Macquarie Pass Cascade Falls & Clover Hill Rd trail

Walk Leader: Suze Giuffre - 0414860740. Please text Suze if you plan to attend.

Walk Description: Birding sections of two trails within the Macquarie Pass National Park. Some easy up and down on the Cascades Falls walk, and Clover Hill Rd trail is an easy grade dirt road. Habitat is moist rainforest and turpentine woodland.

Parking: Please note earlier start 7.45am. Carpark for Cascade Falls walk is on the north side (right side) of the Illawarra Hwy after crossing the Macquarie Rivulet Bridge near the start of the Pass.

Toilets/Water : No water. Bush toilet

Terrain/Distance /Time: Approx.3.5 hrs. A lot of shade within rainforest section; Clover Hill Rd has more open sections (good for overflying birds). No seats apart from logs.

Bring: Carry water. Wear sturdy shoes. Morning tea at cars.

Notes: A good walk to identify birds by their calls!

Monday, 2 February 8am Photography shoot - Shoalhaven Heads Inlet

Walk Leader: Ralph Stadius - 0412 244 121 Please text Ralph if you plan to attend.

Walk Description: A waders photography session. Practice lying flat to get the best shots! A short walk to the sand flats, and then an hour or two photographing waders. High tide is 10.30am, so waders will be starting to move with incoming tide.

Parking/Meeting Place: Eastern end of River Road at Shoalhaven Heads.

Toilets/Water: At the car park.

Terrain/Distance/Time: Beach track. 2 km return. Approx. 2 hrs, no shade, the sand can be damp to sit on.

Bring: Carry water, sun protection, hat, and a snack. Morning tea back at cars. Wear beach shoes/sandals. If you like lying flat to take photos bring gear to lie on - wetsuit/swimmers/rash vest.

There is a beach shower and space to change.

Notes: This activity is primarily photography focused. Your best 3 shots to be shown at the next members meeting. Bring morning tea or buy from the Shoalhaven Heads Bakery.

Tuesday, 3 February 7.30pm Evening Meeting - Coniston Community Centre

Chasing Birds - Chasing Birders...in the Wollongong LGA

An interactive discussion on how to bird and eBird in the Wollongong LGA by Club members Fiona Leo and Belinda Baccarini.

Thursday, 5 February 12:30pm Wollongong Botanic Garden

Walk Leader: Martin Potter - 0437 683 677 - please text if attending.

Walk Description: A gentle stroll through the Garden, via the Duck Pond, rainforest and other habitats.

Parking/Meeting Place: Meet at the Discovery Centre. Parking is available in the nearby car park on Madoline Street. However this can fill up quickly at lunchtime; if this car park is full then there may be parking in the Murphys St car park or surrounding streets.

Toilets/Water: Yes

Terrain/Distance/Time: An easy 1.7 km circuit on paved or mulched paths lasting 1-1.5 hours. Some seats.

Bring: Carry - water, hat & sunscreen. Wear sturdy shoes.

Notes: This is a good walk for inexperienced birders and photographers.

Wednesday, 11 February 8am Hooka Point & Berkeley Boat Harbour

Walk Leader: Martin Cocker - 0418 429 132 - please text if you plan to attend.

Walk Description: A loop walk along the shore of Lake Illawarra and along Hooka Creek. Then to Berkeley Harbour Wetland.

Parking/Meeting Place: Car park at cnr Holborn St/Sussex St, Berkeley

Toilets/Water: None at Hooka Point. Yes at Berkeley Harbour

Terrain/Distance/Time: Easy level walking on concrete path and board-

walk. 2-3 hours. Little shade. Some seats.

Bring: Carry water, hat, morning tea. Wear sturdy shoes.

Notes: Wetland and woodland birds. Observation tower for viewing Lake Illawarra. A scope would be useful if you have one. Please contact the Leader if you need to borrow binoculars. Fish and chips afterwards at Berkeley Harbour if you are still around for lunch.

Saturday, 14 February Tallawarra Wetlands - Yallah - 8am

Walk Leader: Michelle and Dave Rowler: 0421 335 037 - please text if you plan to attend.

Walk Description: Walking around the Tallawarra Ponds - looking for shorebirds, waterbirds, and woodland birds.

Parking: Drive into Yallah Bay Rd which leads to the Energy Australia Tallawarra Power Station. Yallah Bay Rd is only accessible from the Princes Highway southbound from Dapto. Meet at the carpark opposite the security gates just before the bridge.

Toilets/Water: No (toilet is available at the Security check in)

Terrain/Distance/Time: 4kms easy walk on wide trails. Minimum shade.

Bring: Water, hat, sturdy shoes, morning tea (carry)

Notes: Path may be muddy after rain. Bring a scope if you have one.

Wednesday, 18 February 8am Lady Carrington Drive - Royal National Park

Walk Leader: Richard Smart - 0414 972 236- - please text if you plan to attend.

Walk Description: Starting at the southern end, walking along a wide track which follows the Hacking River towards Audley. We hope to see rainforest and bush birds such as the Superb Lyrebird, Green Catbird, Bassian Thrush and Azure Kingfishers.

Parking/Meeting Place: Meet at 8:00 am at the junction of Lady Carrington Drive and Sir Bertram Stevens Drive. Coming from the south - turn right off the Princes Highway at Waterfall



UPCOMING ACTIVITIES FOR AUGUST AND SEPTEMBER

and follow McKell Avenue until it crosses the river. Turn left at the T-junction. The parking area is approximately another 500 m from this junction.

NB: Parking fees to enter the Royal National Park are \$12 per day unless you have an annual pass.

Toilets/Water: No toilets available. Bring own water.

Terrain/Distance/Time/Shade/Seats: Easy walking of about 3kms and 3 hours. We should be in the shade for most of this walk.

Bring: Carry water, hat, sun screen, morning tea. Wear sturdy shoes.

Sunday, 22 February 8am

Stafford's Farm Track- Mt Kembla

Walk Leader: Catherine Kirby - 0405 214 480 - please text if you plan to attend.

Walk Description: A wide dirt track through beautiful eucalypt and rainforest sections with small streams. Fabulous views of Mt Kembla and Lake Illawarra. A chance to see some of the rarer birds like Logrunners, Noisy Pitta and Crested Shrike-Tit.

Parking/Meeting Place: Start of the walk is off Harry Graham Drive between O'Briens Management Trail and Wollongong MotorCycle Club. Parking is restricted: 4-5 spots at the start of the walk, otherwise park along Harry Graham Drive.

Toilets/Water: Bush toilet. Carry water

Terrain/Distance/Time: A 3km mainly shaded return trip. Slight incline on the way up. High point has a grassy area with trees. Approximately 3 hours.

Bring: Carry - water, hat, morning tea. Wear sturdy shoes.

Notes: Suggest leech protection if wet. Occasional passing mountain bikes.

Tuesday, 3 March 7.30pm

Evening Meeting - Coniston Community Centre

Simon Cherriman is a renowned wild-life educator and raptor expert who will be talking about some of his recent work.

Thursday, 5 March 12:30pm

Wollongong Botanic Garden

Walk Leader: Martin Potter - 0437 683 677 - please text if you plan to attend.

Walk Description: See details for walk 5 February

Saturday, 7 March 8am

Maddens Plains - Darkes Forest

Walk Leader: Sharon Redman - please text 0413 492 646 - if attending.

Walk Description: Looking for heathland birds, first around the 'pylon track' and then moving on to the Maddens Falls track on Darkes Forest Road.

Parking/Meeting Place: Park on the roadside at the pylon track which is located on the Old Princes Highway 4.6km north of the Sublime Point turn-off, and 1km south of the entrance to the Boomerang Golf Course.

Toilets/Water: No water, bush toilet.

Terrain/Distance/Time/Shade/Seats: 2-3 kms easy walking on wide trails. Minimum shade.

Bring: Carry water, hat, morning tea. Wear sturdy shoes.

Notes: Possible morning tea at Glenburnie Darkes Cider Orchard if open. Path may be muddy after rain.

Friday, 13 March 8am

Tallawarra Wetlands - Yallah

Walk Leader: Michelle & Dave Rower: 0421 335 037 - please text if attending.

Walk Description: See details for walk 14 February

Wednesday, 18 March 8am

Macquarie Rivulet & Koono Bay

Walk Leader: Martin Cocker - 0418 429 132. Please text Martin if you plan to attend.

Walk Description: A return walk along Macquarie Rivulet. Mixed habitat with some open areas, creek line, ponds, wooded areas. Then onto Koono Bay to inspect the tidal flats.

Parking/Meeting Place: Car park - cnr Shearwater Blvd/Spoonbill Place (sign says Macquarie Rivulet Arboretum). Koono Bay - Wilson Memorial Park 50 Koono, St Albion Park Rail.

Toilets/Water: bush toilet. Toilets at Wilson Memorial Park.

Terrain/Distance/Time: Easy level

walking of about 2kms and 2-3 hours.

Bring: Carry water, hat. Wear sturdy shoes. Morning tea along the route. Then easy walking along a path at the tidal flats.

Notes: A good spot for beginners and photography. Contact the Walk Leader if you wish to borrow binoculars.

Sunday, 22 March 8am

Bott's Reserve & Bellambi Lagoon

Walk Leader: Belinda Baccarini - illawarrabirdersinc@gmail.com please email if you plan to attend.

Walk Description: A short stroll along a beach track amongst the Casuarinas then along the bike path to Bellambi Lagoon. An especially good event for new and inexperienced birders

Parking/Meeting Place: Armour St Bellambi - park at Oval

Toilets/Water: 100m away at Bellambi Rock Pool

Terrain/Distance/Time: Sandy beach track then bike path. 4 km return. Approx 3 hours, some shade, some benches at Bellambi Lagoon.

Bring: Carry water, hat, morning tea. Wear sturdy shoes.

Notes: Some of the walk is on the bike path so beware of bikes. Contact the Walk Leader if you wish to borrow binoculars. May be a water crossing depending on the water level.

Friday, 27 March 8am

Mt Kembla Ring Track

Walk Leader: Brian Deans - 0412 730 604 - please text if you plan to attend.

Walk Description: A short stroll through woodland.

Parking: Cordeaux Road - turn left when heading up the hill immediately before junction with Harry Graham Drive. Parking is on the right-hand side opposite start of track and cottage on the right - about 200m from the junction.

Toilets/Water: No

Terrain/Distance/Time: Easy walking along vehicular bush tracks. 2-3kms. Approx 3 hours.

Bring: Water, hat, sunscreen, insect repellent, morning tea (carry)

Notes: A good walk for beginners and for photography.

RARE VISITORS TO THE ILLAWARRA

Words and photos: Martin Potter

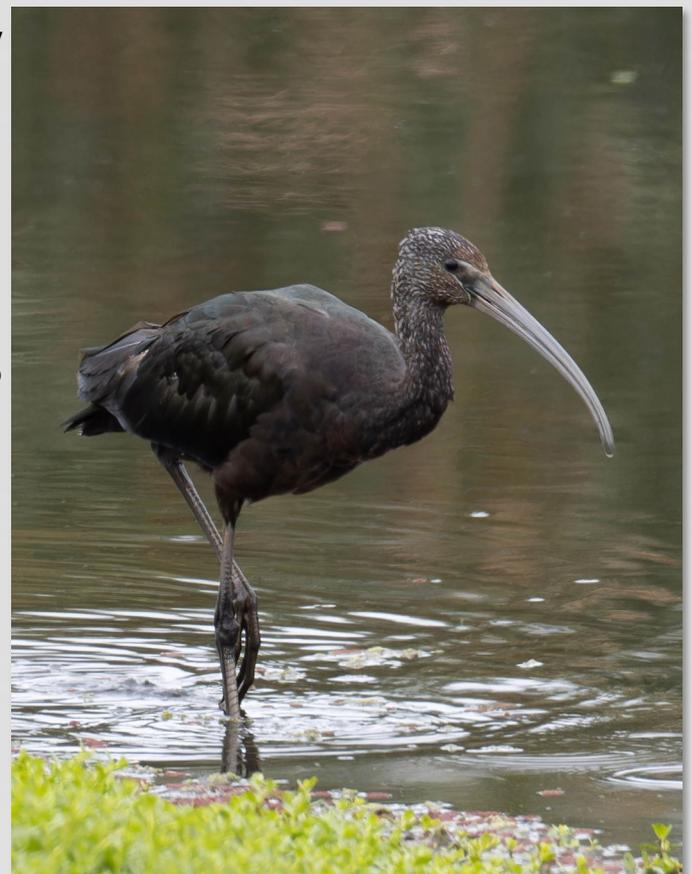
Tallawarra Wetlands – the top birding spot in the Wollongong City Council area – continues to deliver the goods with a great diversity of bird species present and with a few rarities thrown in for good measure. The 19 club members that were present for the club walk there on 11th January came away with a bird list that included an incredible 82 species, with the actual number of birds counted amounting to over a thousand.

The star of the show was undoubtedly the Spiny-cheeked Honeyeater. The bird is classified in Terrill Nordstrom's *Guide to the Birdlife of the Illawarra* as an 'accidental' in this region. This is the next step up from 'rare' and is defined as a bird which has 'one to few observations this century of a species well outside its normal distribution'. The book lists just two known records: at Primbee in 1986 and at Coomaditchie Lagoon in 2002. Since the book's publication, a sighting was recorded at Hayward's Bay in September 2025, and this may be the same bird that was seen on 11th January. The bird was first sighted at Tallawarra Wetlands by Paul Lynch on 13th December, and was last seen there on 12th January. The bird has a vast distribution across mainland Australia but is largely absent from the east coast; it generally replaces the wattlebirds in the country's drier areas. The bird is easily identified by its black-tipped bright pink bill, its rufous/orange throat and its dense white spiny cheek feathers. The plumage is mostly olive-grey above with blackish streaks, and the underside is cream with bold dark brown streaks.

Also present at Tallawarra on the 11th January was another uncommon bird normally found in drier habitats west of the escarpment - the White-winged Triller. Up to 4 of these birds were seen at Tallawarra in December 2025. The male in its breeding plumage is a striking bird, mainly black above and white below, with a large white patch on the wing. The female is mainly brown above, with pale edges to the wing feathers, and white below.

Another of the rarities that graced Tallawarra with their presence was a pair of Glossy Ibis (pictured). They stayed there for about three weeks over December and January and were also spotted at Haywards Bay. This species is categorised as rare in the Illawarra, but globally it is the most widespread of the ibises, with populations in Central and South America, southern Europe, Africa, Asia, India, and Australia. In North America, it is restricted to eastern regions; in the west it is replaced by the widespread and closely related White-faced Ibis.

NB Please see notice on page 18 re access to Tallawarra



CONSERVATION NEWS

Lake Illawarra Bird Life Needs You!

Despite a spirited campaign by Illawarra Birders and other environmentalists, NSW Maritime Transport has granted a permit to *Illawarra Jet Ski Tours* to operate jet ski tours on Lake Illawarra (see more details here: <https://tinyurl.com/3fh3ht4e>).



The company plans to operate initially until May this year, and the operator is required to comply with several conditions relating to the welfare of the Lake's bird life. The potential for disruption to feeding and resting birds by jet skis is well established. Poor behaviour and inappropriate handling of jet skis by users on Lake Illawarra can affect black swans, pelicans, cormorants, terns, and resident and migratory shorebirds.

The potential for future commercial jet ski operations on Lake Illawarra is very real. Reporting of non-compliance is an important role that the community can play in protecting the bird values of the Lake and for maintaining the amenity for other users of Lake Illawarra.

YOUR HELP IS NEEDED! If you see any questionable behaviour from any jet ski users, please report it.

- Maritime Compliance Hotline: 131 236, then press 1
- Water Police (non-emergency): 131 444

Things to note in your report could include:

- The location and time of the incident
- Disturbance to birds
- Irregular driving behaviour of the jet ski user in restricted areas - including unsafe speed, zig-zagging, circling, jumping – 200m buffer zone from the shoreline
- Proximity to other lake users – 60 m no-go zone
- The jet ski registration number; or a description of the jet ski - colour, size etc
- Take a photo or video of the behaviour or the jet ski.

A report of any jet ski incidents should also be sent to the Illawarra Birders email address

illawarrabirdersinc@gmail.com – these results will be collated for reference. Details about the use of jet skis in New South Wales is available in the NSW Personal Watercraft Handbook at <https://www.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/2021-03/Personal-watercraft-handbook.pdf>

Rat poison review results finally released

Commonly available rat poisons known as first- and second-generation anticoagulant rodenticides (FGARs and SGARs) pose unacceptable risks to native wildlife, a long-awaited government review has finally confirmed. However the reviewing body, the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA), has stopped short of recommending a blanket ban on the products. The baits have been found in dead native animals such as Tawny Frogmouths (pictured), Powerful Owls and quolls that had eat-

en poisoned rats and mice. The second-generation products are more toxic – they are banned from public sale in the United States and are highly restricted in the European Union. Wildlife advocates including Birdlife Australia had urged the APVMA to crack down on SGARs since 2019, and have slammed



the proposed regulations as "nonsense", claiming they do not go far enough. The review – which commenced in 2021 – has recommended the cancellation of some products, but a large array of waxes, pellets and blocks could continue to be sold to consumers. Baits containing FGARs and SGARs are widely available in stores such as Bunnings, Coles and Woolworths. However Amazon Australia has confirmed they are pulling SGARs rat poisons off their shelves. The APVMA has invited submissions on the proposed regulations with a closing date of 16 March. Birdlife Australia has drafted an email highlighting the inadequacies of the proposals; please consider making an objection here: <https://birdlife.org.au/stop-the-public-sale-of-lethal-sgar-rat-poisons/> Read more at <https://tinyurl.com/5xduz5hk> Photo: M Potter

More cattle stations acquired for conservation

The New South Wales government has purchased two more properties in the state's west to be converted into national parks. It follows a long list of acquisitions in recent years, with more than a dozen stations being converted from grazing to sole conservation areas. The 71,000-hectare properties, Tasman and Corinya, north of Ivanhoe and about 800 kilometres west of Sydney, were purchased for about \$10 million. About 40 per cent of the cost was paid for in partnership with The Nature Conservancy Australia. NPWS will hire a staff member to live at the new



CONSERVATION NEWS

park site and undertake an extensive operation to deal with feral animals in early autumn. Read more at <https://tinyurl.com/547kuwfx>

Seabird danger zones determined

A new research project has raised hopes of reducing the tragic incidental impacts of commercial fishing on large seabirds between Australia and South America. The study has pinpointed when and where the endangered Antipodean Albatross is most at risk of injury or death from fishing longlines across the South Pacific Ocean. Fieldwork was carried out at the main breeding colony on Antipodes Island, where satellite tracking devices were attached to the backs of 192 albatrosses of various ages and sexes. Results were combined with data on the footprint of commercial fishing activity, together with real-time mapping of ocean features not previously taken into account. It was found that the most intense risk zones occur in the southern winter, among juvenile and female albatrosses, in a latitudinal band near the Tropic of Capricorn from 25 to 40 degrees south of the Equator. The findings led the



team to recommend that seabird bycatch mitigation measures set by Regional Fisheries Management Organisations (RFMOs) such as the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission should be extended to cover risk zones identified in the study. Read more at <https://tinyurl.com/hsx37nat>

Photo: Antipodean Albatross - M Potter

Seeking secretive Scrub-bird DNA

The Rufous Scrub-bird is one of the world's oldest surviving species of songbird, but scientists believe fewer than 2,000 of the birds remain. The bird which has lived in pockets of high-altitude rainforest since the time of the dinosaurs is having its DNA sequenced in a bid to safeguard its dwindling population. The DNA project aims to pinpoint genetic differences between five isolated colonies of the bird. The project sounds straightforward in theory, but the nimble and elusive birds are masters of evading capture. They are almost impossible to see because they live in really dense rainforest understory veg-

etation. The research team is working to gather high-quality DNA from each colony to understand the effect of potentially interbreeding them in the future to improve their resilience or to boost their numbers. Another bad fire season in Rufous Scrub-bird habitats has the potential to wipe out the species, so the research project is critical to safeguarding their future. Read more at <https://tinyurl.com/24hsbeby> Photo: E Percival/ABC



Shorebird habitat Directory updated

The DCCEEW advises that it has recently updated information about Australia's 37 migratory shorebird species in its *National Directory of Important Migratory Shorebird Habitat in Australia*. The Directory sets out critical sites for migratory shorebirds, and is a comprehensive guide to identifying and protecting their key habitats. The directory supports Australia's national and international commitments including: the EPBC Act; the Ramsar Convention, and bilateral migratory bird agreements. This directory brings together 15 years of data from around 3,500 areas across Australia. The 2025 directory identifies 331 areas of importance to 37 species of migratory shorebirds. Lake Illawarra gets a mention in the Directory on account of significant numbers of Sharp-tailed Sandpipers and Latham's Snipe recorded in 2010, and of Double-banded Plovers in 2015. The Shoalhaven Estuary is also listed as an important migratory shorebird location. You can find the Directory and an interactive map here: <https://tinyurl.com/b67c3btc>



Australian National Directory of Important Migratory Shorebird Habitat

Enter Team Bittern

The National Australasian Bittern Recovery Team has officially formed – 12 experts united to protect one of our most endangered and hard-to-find wetland birds. Known for its eerie “Bunyip” boom and incredible camouflage, the Australasian Bittern is declining due to the degradation and alteration of its wetland habitat. This new team, supported by the Australian Government's Saving Native Species Program and coordinated by BirdLife Australia, hopes to change that. See more at <https://tinyurl.com/3azmpc4k>

ILLAWARRA BIRDERS PHOTO COMPETITION 2025

A very big thank you to all who entered, to all who voted and to the organiser Andrew Wood. The 26 participants and 52 members who registered votes made it an excellent competition.

First place: Oystercatchers in action – Martin Potter

I try to get down to Shoalhaven Heads in March or April of each year to photograph the waders when they are coming into their finest breeding plumage, prior to their epic migrations to the far northern hemisphere. It means a very early start to get there at first light and involves getting down onto the sand on one's belly for the best angles. In April 2025 I was there busily snapping away at the curlews, godwits and stints when I was repeatedly photobombed by the Australian Pied Oystercatchers that were parading across the sandflats. I thought I might as well photograph them as they were intruding on my field of view, and I ended up with this shot which featured an individual who is something of a celebrity in oystercatcher circles – Jay-Z (see article on next page). You can tell this is a true pair as the female at the back has a noticeably longer bill.



Second place: Royal Spoonbill with Breakfast - Catherine Kirby

I owe this photo to Belinda Baccharini. She had just come back from a photography course with Georgina Steytler, where she learned the technique of backlighting. We got up super early one morning, headed down to Bellambi Lagoon, and lay on the wet grass shooting birds into the rising sunlight. The technique involves switching to manual mode, which I'm always a bit lazy about. I find shooting fast-moving birds much easier on auto. With the sun directly behind the subject, there's a fair bit of adjustment needed to get the exposure right, and many shots ended up too overexposed. This particular photo was my favourite because the fish is almost transparent due to the backlighting. The spoonbill looks like it's staring straight into the camera, very pleased with itself. The action of catching the fish happened so quickly that if I hadn't taken the photo, I wouldn't have even realised it had happened.



Third place: White Tern – Paul Charlier

Denise and I spent a week on Norfolk Island earlier on in the year. I was able to get quite a few shots of the resident White Terns feeding their almost fully grown offspring amongst the pines. I was fortunate



to get this shot of one coming in with its bill full of tasty treats. Following a recent 'split', the White Tern of the Indian and Pacific Oceans is now known as the Blue-billed White Tern. It is listed in Terrill Nordstrom's *Guide to the Birdlife of the Illawarra Region* as a rare summer visitor to our region.

MORE ABOUT OYSTERCATCHERS

Martin Potter

The Australian Pied Oystercatcher known as JZ (see previous page) was banded in June 2012 as a first-year bird at Mann's Beach in Victoria's far south, not far from Wilson's Promontory. In September 2014 he was sighted by club member Robert Griffin at Botany Bay. That's 650km as the crow flies, but no doubt he would have taken a much longer coastal route. He arrived at Lake Wollumboola in 2017 where he remained until 2021. After a short stay in Currarong he was spotted at Shoalhaven Heads in early 2022 and has remained there ever since. We know that he has successfully raised young there – in December 2025 Ralph Stadius photographed him feeding the fledgling pictured right. The average lifespan of an oystercatcher is around 12 years, so JZ is doing well – long may he thrive in our region! However he still has a long way to go to match the world's oldest recorded oystercatcher – a banded Eurasian Oystercatcher in Norfolk, UK is known to have lived an incredible 43 years and counting.

There are 11 species of oystercatcher worldwide, and they come in one of two colour schemes – black or pied, with the exception of New Zealand's Variable Oystercatcher which comes in both. They form a single family of birds and are all included in the genus *Haematopus*, meaning 'blood-foot' – referring to their pink/red legs. They are found on coasts worldwide apart from the polar regions and some tropical regions of Africa and South East Asia. A few species also venture inland. The largest species is our very own Sooty Oystercatcher which weighs in at over 800g. A striking feature of Oystercatchers is their large, powerful bills which are either bright orange or bright red and are used to prey on limpets, mussels, pipis and other molluscs as well as worms and crustaceans. Some birds with shorter, blunter bills, specialise in hammering their prey through the shell. Others, with longer, pointier bills, prise the shells apart. No other birds can open or dislodge such well-defended molluscs. A UK observer said "next time you're down at the beach, try prising open a tightly clamped cockle with your fingers. It's almost impossible, but watch an Oystercatcher tease one open in an instant and you can see how in one tidal sitting it can eat as many as 500 cockles." The bill varies in shape between species according to their diet, and – because of the intense wear they are subjected to – they continue to grow.

Nearly all species of oystercatcher are monogamous. They are territorial during the breeding season (with a few species defending territories year-round). There is strong mate and site fidelity in the species that have been studied, with one record of a pair defending the same site for 20 years. A single nesting attempt is made per breeding season, which is timed over the summer months. The nests of oystercatchers are simple affairs, scrapes in the ground which may be lined, and placed in a spot with good visibility. Unlike other waders, oystercatcher parents feed their young and teach them how to open shellfish, a skill that takes months to master. But, surprisingly, oystercatchers are sometimes known to practice "egg dumping": like the cuckoo, they have been known to lay their eggs in the nests of other species such as gulls, abandoning them to be raised by those birds.

Sources: Birdlife Australia; RSPB; Wikipedia; BTO; Australian Bird Guide

Photos from top: 1. Offspring of JZ at Shoalhaven Heads—Ralph Stadius 2. JZ at Lake Wollumboola in 2020 eating a prawn—M Potter. 3. The northern race of the Sooty Oystercatcher with its huge yellow eye ring—E. Woehler



ILLAWARRA BIRDERS LAKE ILLAWARRA SHOREBIRDS 2020 COUNT

KOONA BAY SURVEY RESULTS - A report by Andrew Walter

Between January 2016 and October 2021, Illawarra Birders conducted surveys for the BirdLife Australia Shorebirds 2020 project at several sites on Lake Illawarra. The project provided valuable information about the status of Lake Illawarra shorebirds for the period 2016 – 2022. The data was used in the compilation of the 2025 BirdLife Australia/ Commonwealth Government publication *Australian National Directory of Important Migratory Shorebird Habitat*.

The Lake Illawarra project was coordinated by Martin Cocker and survey observations were recorded in the BirdLife Australia database Birdata (<https://birdata.birdlife.org.au/>). The project included two sites at Koono Bay, one near Windang Street and the other at Horsley Inlet. All birds and the number of birds observed were recorded in the surveys. The data was extracted from Birdata on 4 December 2025. This report is in 3 parts and principally deals with migratory shorebirds plus a summary of non-migratory shorebirds and native waterfowl.



PART 1: WINDANG STREET, KOONA BAY

78 surveys were completed in Koono Bay north and south of the lake access at Windang Street. The list of species observed, and the likelihood of observing the species (Reporting Rate) is shown in the table below.

January 2016 – November 2021 Reporting Rate (RR)*

MIGRATORY SHOREBIRDS		NON-MIGRATORY SHOREBIRDS		NATIVE WATERFOWL	
SPECIES	RR	SPECIES	RR	SPECIES	RR
Pacific Golden Plover	40 %	Masked Lapwing	85 %	Black Swan	83 %
Bar-tailed Godwit	40 %	Pied Stilt	73 %	Australian Pelican	71 %
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper	27 %	Great Egret	72 %	Chestnut Teal	55 %
Far Eastern Curlew	6 %	White-faced Heron	60 %	Pacific Black Duck	21 %
Red Knot	4 %	Australian White Ibis	56 %	Grey Teal	21 %
Red-necked Stint	1 %	Royal Spoonbill	37 %	Hoary-headed Grebe	8 %
Grey-tailed Tattler	1 %	Little Egret	35 %	Australasian Grebe	5 %
		Australian Pied Oystercatcher	17 %	Australian Wood Duck	4 %
		Striated Heron	9 %	Dusky Moorhen	2 %
		Cattle Egret	5 %	Australasian Shoveler	1 %
		Black-fronted Dotterel	3 %	Eurasian Coot	1 %
		Yellow-billed Spoonbill	3 %	Purple Swamphen	1 %
		Buff-banded Rail	1 %		
		Plumed Egret	1 %		
		Straw-necked Ibis	1 %		

* Reporting Rate is the number of times that a species was observed expressed as a percentage of the total number of records. Therefore, a Reporting Rate (RR) of 20% indicates that the species was seen on one out of five surveys (and that it could be expected to be seen on one in five visits). Note: Reporting Rate does not give any indication of the numbers of any particular species.

MIGRATORY SPECIES The information for this section was derived from Birdata and is available on request.

Pacific Golden Plover

Pacific Golden Plover (pictured above) arrived in Koono Bay in October – November and departed in about March – April. Moderate numbers of birds were recorded in each year. The highest number of birds were recorded in summer 2018/19 – maximum 30 birds.

Sharp-tailed Sandpiper

Sharp-tailed Sandpiper arrived in October – November and departed in February. Sharp-tailed Sandpipers were commonly recorded in the three years from 2018/19 to 2020/21 with up to 50 birds present.

Bar-tailed Godwit

Bar-tailed Godwit arrived in Koona Bay in September - October and departed in about February – March. The highest number of birds were recorded in October 2021/22 – maximum 60 birds. The number of birds recorded was variable throughout the period. Relatively high numbers of birds were recorded in summer 2019/20, ranging from 14 – 45 birds. The variability in numbers within a summer may be due to birds moving to different locations around the Lake during the period.

One or two Far Eastern Curlew were occasionally observed through the period indicating that the site was not favoured by this species. Red Knot, Red-necked Stint and Grey-tailed Tattlers were observed on one or two occasions.

PART 2: HORSLEY INLET, KOONA BAY

69 surveys were completed at Horsley Inlet, Koona Bay.

ANNUAL REPORTING RATE (RR) January 2016 – November 2021

MIGRATORY SHOREBIRDS		NON-MIGRATORY SHOREBIRDS		NATIVE WATERFOWL	
SPECIES	RR	SPECIES	RR	SPECIES	RR
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper	58%	Masked Lapwing	91%	Australian Pelican	84%
Bar-tailed Godwit	54%	Pied Stilt	84%	Black Swan	77%
Pacific Golden Plover	41%	White-faced Heron	77%	Chestnut Teal	62%
Far Eastern Curlew	23%	Great Egret	74%	Grey Teal	38%
Terek Sandpiper	13%	Little Egret	65%	Pacific Black Duck	23%
Red Knot	4%	Australian White Ibis	65%	Australian Wood Duck	3%
Red-necked Stint	4%	Australian Pied Oystercatcher	33%	Australasian Shoveler	3%
Grey-tailed Tattler	1%	Royal Spoonbill	23%	Pink-eared Duck	1%
Broad-billed Sandpiper	1%	Striated Heron	22%	Australasian Grebe	1%
Curlew Sandpiper	1%	Cattle Egret	3%		
		Nankeen Night-Heron	1%		
		Red-kneed Dotterel	1%		

MIGRATORY SPECIES

The information for this section was derived from Birddata and is available on request.

Pacific Golden Plover

Pacific Golden Plover generally arrived at Horsley Inlet in October and left in February. Low numbers of birds were recorded in each year. The highest number of birds was recorded in January 2016 – maximum 21 birds.

Sharp-tailed Sandpiper

Sharp-tailed Sandpiper (pictured) arrived in Horsley Inlet in October and departed in February. The highest number of birds were recorded in summer 2017/18 – maximum 123 birds. From 2017/18 to 2019/20, the site appeared favourable to Sharp-tailed Sandpipers. No birds were recorded in 2020/21 or 2021/21, although the number of surveys (5) was low.



Bar-tailed Godwit

Bar-tailed Godwit arrived in Horsley Inlet in October and departed in February. The location appears favourable for Bar-tailed Godwits. The highest number of birds were recorded in November 2019/20 – maximum 70 birds. Relatively high numbers of birds were recorded at times through the period, including in summer 2019/20, ranging from 11 – 70 birds. The variability in numbers within a summer may be due to birds moving to different locations during the period. There was no clear trend in bird numbers from year to year.

Far Eastern Curlew

The low number of Far Eastern Curlew records and the different months of the few occurrences through the period indicate that this location was not favoured by this species.

Red Knot, Broad-billed Sandpiper, Terek Sandpiper, Red-necked Stint and Grey-tailed Tattler were observed on one or two occasions in the period.

PART 3: KOONA BAY – WINDANG STREET + HORSLEY INLET

THE MAXIMUM NUMBERS OF SHOREBIRDS

The shorebird habitats at the Windang Street and Horsley Inlet locations on Koon Bay are similar and are relatively close to each other (about 600 m as the godwit flies). It is feasible that birds move between the two locations and consequently there is a risk that the same birds are counted twice in different surveys at the two locations. Therefore, the estimated shorebird numbers presented below are conservative. For example, the Koon Bay total number of Sharp-tailed Sandpipers between 29/11/2018 and 5/12/2018 was estimated at 50 individuals (Windang Street maximum) and not 72 birds (by adding 22 for the maximum number from Horsley Inlet).

Koon Bay combined maximum numbers of Migratory Shorebirds 2015/16 to 2021/22

SPECIES	15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21	21/22
No. of surveys	5	15	16	51	24	6	12
Pacific Golden Plover	21	14	14	30	20	17	7
Far Eastern Curlew	0	2	1	2	2	1	0
Bar-tailed Godwit	1	22	50	6	70	17	60
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper	4	2	123	76	34	12	0

- Pacific Golden Plover showed a slight preference for the Windang Street site compared with Horsley Inlet.
- Sharp-tailed Sandpiper showed a slight preference for the Horsley Inlet site compared with Windang Street.
- Pacific Golden Plover and Sharp-tailed Sandpiper appear to show a decrease in abundance from 2018/19 to 2021/22.
- There is no evidence of migratory shorebirds over-wintering at Koon Bay during the period.

CONCLUSIONS

Koon Bay is an important location on Lake Illawarra for migratory shorebirds, particularly for Sharp-tailed Sandpiper, Pacific Golden Plover and Bar-tailed Godwit. Far Eastern Curlew occurred occasionally at both locations and always in low numbers. A decrease in the number of Pacific Golden Plover and Sharp-tailed Sandpiper may have occurred since 2018/19, however the relatively short duration of the project meant that firm conclusions about species' population trends were problematic.

The Lake Illawarra monitoring project has provided valuable information about the status of migratory shorebirds at Koon Bay. It is important that systematic and regular monitoring of migratory shorebirds is maintained to continue to provide information for the community and stakeholders to help protect the birds of Lake Illawarra and their habitat.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- Martin Cocker for coordinating the project, for highlighting the need for communicating the project's findings to Illawarra Birders, and for reviewing a draft of the report.
- Terrill Nordstrom for reviewing a draft of the report.
- The members of Illawarra Birders who participated in the very significant survey effort.



Bird photos (all taken at Koon Bay) - M Potter

VALE LINDSAY SMITH, OAM

Lindsay passed away peacefully at Wollongong Hospital on 28th November 2025 with his wife Janice by his side; he had suffered many years of ill-health. He was an Australian naturalist, ornithologist and conservationist renowned for his work on the study and conservation of seabirds, especially albatrosses, along the Illawarra coast. He will be fondly remembered by club members who have taken part in pelagic birding trips from Kiama and Wollongong in recent years. Trained as a fitter and turner, he was employed by the Australian Museum in 1987 as an ornithologist to work at the Elizabeth and Middleton Reefs in Australia's Coral Sea Islands Territory. In 1994 he was the founder, with Harry Battam, of the Southern Oceans Seabird Study Association (SOSSA—see item below). In 2004 Lindsay was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia for services to wildlife preservation through SOSSA. In 2006 he was awarded the Serventy Conservation Medal by the Wildlife Preservation Society of Australia for outstanding wildlife conservation work involving seabirds.



From Terrill Nordstrom:

Lindsay was known and respected around the world for his research and conservation work on seabirds. Lindsay believed that if a bird didn't eat squid, then it wasn't really a bird. He spent countless hours catching and banding seabirds in all types of weather. It did not matter to Lindsay how rough the sea was as long as there were birds flying around the boat. His knowledge was legendary; I remember being on a boat trip when Lindsay pointed out an albatross in the distance. He said it was a Campbell as it had a pale eye; I could barely see the bird let alone the colour of its eye, but as it approached the boat, sure enough there was the pale eye. He was always willing to help any new birder and was always happy to share his extensive knowledge. He would argue the identification of a bird without backing down until he was proven wrong, but most of the time he would be right. He would always fight to protect birds, taking on government departments when it was necessary. Lindsay never lost the love for birds that he had a child, and even in his later years with his health failing he would still go on the birding boat trips. He was one of a kind, never to be replaced – there was so much to him and his big personality. Lindsay was also a husband to Janice, a father, and to me a good friend.



Albatross People of the Illawarra

SOSSA was formally established in 1994 by Lindsay Smith and Harry Battam to be an umbrella organisation for groups involved with biological research on, and concerned about the environment of, the Southern Ocean. It organized regular pelagic boat trips for seabird study that continued for 30 years until it was wound up on 30 June 2024. It continued the long-term banding studies of the NSW Albatross Study Group (NSWASG) started by Doug Gibson and Alan Sefton in 1956 at Bellambi and by Bill Lane and Harry Battam in 1958 further north at Malabar. Together NSWASG and thereafter SOSSA undertook the world's longest-running seabird study programme. Doug Gibson's name is commemorated in the Gibson Walking track and Gibson's Albatross; each year UOW presents the Alan Sefton Memorial Lecture. Read more in this interesting article published in RegionIllawarra: <https://tinyurl.com/34mbthyr> Right: Gibson's Albatross



Photos: M Potter

MEDIAWATCH

Recent items in the press that may be of interest

Birds have been around longer than we thought

Fossils of *Archaeopteryx* (pictured) are some of the most famous in history, and for more than a cen-



tury it was the only known bird genus from the Jurassic: the period when birds first evolved. Many other dinosaur-era birds have been discovered over the past few decades, but they are all from later periods. The group's origins remained lost in time. Now, researchers in China have finally found a second genus of Jurassic birds – *Baminornis* – which is quite unlike *Archaeopteryx*. Finds such as these are revealing clues about how birds evolved, and whether they evolved powered flight just once or many times during the age of the dinosaurs. *Baminornis* was a small bird, with a mass of 140–300 grams. Most strikingly, the five lowest vertebrae of the tail had fused together to form a stumpy bone called the pygostyle. This is a feature of modern birds but is absent in *Archaeopteryx*. This was a surprise, given how early *Baminornis* was: one might have expected to find a transitional stage but instead, the team found a Jurassic bird with a fully formed pygostyle. This suggests that the first birds might have predated *Archaeopteryx* and *Baminornis*, pushing back the emergence of birds to a much earlier date. Read more at <https://tinyurl.com/4a9peznc> Photo: Wikipedia

Introducing yellow Limoncello

The National Parks Association of the ACT has reported the sighting of a spectacular Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoo in the Cotter Reserve, and

their social media post has had an ‘overwhelming’ response. The bird has been named ‘Limoncello’ on account of its mainly yellow colouring. The cause of the unusual colour is leucism which, in a bird, results in a partial loss of pigmentation, causing white, pale, or patchy feathers. The condition arises from a genetic defect which prevents pigment cells from developing properly. However the birds’ eyes remain their normal colour, unlike albinos which lack all pigment and have pink or red eyes. See the post at



<https://tinyurl.com/54msh3za>

Photo: NPA ACT/Facebook

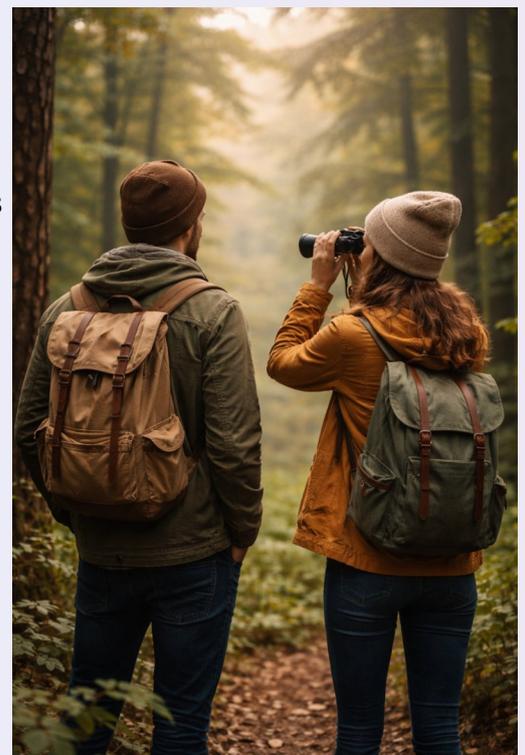
Western wetland awash with birds

In one of the most remote parts of New South Wales – in its far north-west – a desert has turned into an oasis. Water from floods in south-west Queensland early last year have flown down the Bulloo River, through the Bulloo Overflow and into Narriearra Caryapundy Swamp, an ephemeral wetland that only fills every 10 to 20 years. The 70,000-hectare wetland which lies east of Sturt National Park received Ramsar listing in 2021, and is part of the larger Bulloo Overflow. Since the New South Wales govern-

ment purchased the 150,000-hectare Narriearra Station about five years ago, scientists, rangers and local Indigenous people have been able to appreciate its ecological significance and cultural history. It is estimated that around 200,000 to 300,000 birds were in the area when it was surveyed in October 2025. Keen birders will know the area as being home to the Grey Grasswren and the Letter-winged Kite. Read more at <https://tinyurl.com/mvjxk6h>

A birding SOB story

“Being a birder, of course, is not an either/or quality. At one extreme of the “bird interest” scale are people oblivious to bird activity. Others, like me, have a modest interest. On a 1-10 scale of bird interest, I’m a three whereas my wife rates an eight. I just don’t have the innate curiosity and interest that I witness in my wife. I don’t have the ‘fire in the belly’ that I observe in birders, particularly when they gather in groups. Try as I might, I don’t experience the sheer delight in my wife’s eyes upon seeing a new species.” The plight of the SOB – Spouse of Birder – is delightfully explored in



MEDIAWATCH

Recent items in the press that may be of interest

this excellent article and it provides a series of helpful strategies to help prevent birding from becoming a dividing force in a relationship. The author Kim Marvel advises that the strategies are aimed at “the brave non-birder souls who desire to walk the narrow path in the company of serious birders.” You can learn about these strategies here: <https://tinyurl.com/bdp59nx6>



Love is in the air for Kākāpōs

The mass fruiting of a native New Zealand tree has triggered a kākāpō breeding season – a rare event conservationists hope will lead to a record number of chicks for the critically endangered bird. Kākāpō, the world’s only nocturnal and flightless parrot, were once abundant across New Zealand. But their population plummeted after the introduction of predators such as cats and stoats, and by the 1900s they were nearly extinct. A recovery programme established in 1995 rebuilt the population from 51 to 236 birds, including 83 breeding-age females. Kākāpō breed only every two to four years when the native rimu trees “mast” and produce large numbers of berries, so repopulation is slow. This year a “mega-mast” is expected, resulting in a bountiful harvest of rimu berries, which could prompt the birds

to produce more eggs. Read more at <https://tinyurl.com/mwv9p9k6> In other NZ bird news, a pair of rare native takahē birds – who were believed to be infertile – have stunned staff at the world’s largest urban eco-sanctuary, after hatching a “miracle” chick. See <https://tinyurl.com/4yrsp7at> Photo: *M Bodie/Wikipedia*

Gen Z ticking birds with TikTok

A number of articles have appeared in the press recently about how a new, younger generation of birders has been drawn to the hobby. Interest in birding among Gen Z has surged in part due to the ability to contribute bird sightings to online portals such as eBird and Birddata. The ABC reported that avid bird watcher and content creator Jacob DeLeo has amassed more than 250,000 followers on



platforms such as Instagram and TikTok under his handle, *@birdingwithcob*. His content draws from games like Pokemon GO and often sees him “questing” to “collect” bird species in his home state of Victo-

ria and beyond. SBS has reported how a three-time premiership-winning rugby league player Mitch Kenny has become hooked on birding. Environmentalist and host of the *Death by Birding* podcast, César Puechmarin, says birds were “thrown into [people’s] orbit” during Australia’s COVID-19 lockdowns, as many started noticing birds in their local environments while confined at home. “You have a generation of people who grew up playing video games or playing games like Pokémon, and this hobby of bird watching fits perfectly. It’s a never-ending hobby. You can’t finish it. You can’t complete it ... There will always be more birds.” Read the articles at <https://tinyurl.com/3hfbbk87> and at <https://tinyurl.com/2t4rr5sb>

Merlin app taking off big-time

The Guardian reports that the birding app Merlin is ‘having a moment’. The app, developed by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology – home of eBird – listens for birdsong and identifies the species singing. It has been downloaded 33 million times, in 240 countries and territories around the world. In the UK there were more than 1.5 million users in 2024. Every month, there has been



30% increase in new users of the app, whose sound ID function was launched in 2021. As well as identifying birds from photos, Merlin has been trained to identify the songs of more than 1,300 species around the world, with more birds added twice a year. Different songs make distinct patterns on spectrograms and Merlin is trained to recognise these and attribute them to a species. The app still has a long way to go in recognising Australian bird songs – it still only recognises the sounds of around 40% of our birds, but this will improve over time. Read more at <https://tinyurl.com/yeyvknhh>

MEDIAWATCH



radius exclusion zone the last time logging occurred in the area. In a statement, a FCNSW spokesperson said there were currently no plans to log near Big Spotty. Read more at <https://tinyurl.com/5n8y334d> Photo: T Hemmings/ABC

Bulbul SA's public enemy number 1

A single Red-whiskered Bulbul has been on the loose in Adelaide's north for several weeks. You might have thought this bird was a fairly harmless introduction in Australia, but this one bird has become one of South Australia's "most wanted", prompting concerns for the state's horticulture and wine sectors. Authorities have been searching for the bulbul since it was spotted in Adelaide's north in late November; it has likely escaped captivity despite it being illegal to keep in the state. The invasive species has become established in parts of NSW and Queensland, where it is damaging crops, spreading weeds and competing with native birds. A spokesperson from South Australia's Department of Primary Industries said "the Red-whiskered Bulbul is a high-risk pest bird that can damage

Give Big Spotty some space

Local campaigners want the North Brooman State Forest, between Batemans Bay and Ulladulla on the NSW South Coast, designated as a nature reserve. They say the forest is home to the tallest recorded spotted gum, locally known as "Big Spotty", which stands more than 70 metres tall and is believed to be 500 years old. According to the National Register of Big Trees, "Big Spotty" is the tallest recorded spotted gum in the world, and has a girth of just under 12 metres at chest height. The giant gum stands about 100 metres into the bush, off a dirt road; its location is not marked on any local maps. According to the Forestry Corporation New South Wales's (FCNSW) harvest plan, sections of North Brooman State Forest are scheduled to be logged within the next six months. FCNSW has previously designated the tree as significant, and gave it a 60-metre



SA's vineyards and orchards by eating soft fruit, flower buds and insects, potentially reducing yields or causing crop failure and threatening the state's \$1.8 billion wine and \$2.08 billion horticulture industries." Read more at <https://tinyurl.com/4zf5wuy6> Image ABC News/S Gordon

Illawarra Birders Christmas Party 2025



Our Christmas Party was again a great success with incredible food, great company, amazing photos from the photo competition and even a festive sing-song about how the 'eBird reviewers are coming to town!' Many thanks to all the volunteers who put in a huge effort to make the occasion a memorable one!

RIGHT PLACE, RIGHT TIME

Words and photos Brian Deans

I'm sure we've all been surprised by a sighting of a rare bird just by being in the Right Place at the Right Time. These sightings aren't always lifers, but some are. The following examples are times when I have added new birds to my list by being in the Right Place at the Right Time. The first two both occurred in 2015, not long after I started birding. On both occasions, photos taken were helpful in identifying birds I was not sure about. The first one was at Taren Point Shorebird Reserve. Whilst walking behind the mangroves, I came to a clearing which gave me a view of the beach. Standing on the water's edge was a large bird that I had not seen before. Thanks to the photos taken, I was able to identify it as a Beach Stone-Curlew (pictured). Not only was it a lifer for me, but also a rarity for the Sydney area.



Whilst birding the old golf course, opposite the Boomerang Golf Course at Maddens Plains, I observed some birds flying around that I wrongly assumed were Welcome Swallows. It was only when they landed in a tree that I realised my mistake and was able to identify them as White-browed Woodswallows – an uncommon bird in this area (pictured).



The next story is a little different as Ralph and I were chasing a previously reported bird. In January 2021 we headed down

to Lake Wollumboola to find a Buff-breasted Sandpiper. On arrival, we walked out onto the sand flats to a group of birders, that included Terrill and Martin Potter. Asking if they had seen the Buff-breasted Sandpiper, they directed our attention to a spot a short distance away, and keen to find it, I set off in that direction on my own. Meanwhile, after Ralph had set up his scope, I noticed some commotion in the group and thought I should get

back asap. The first bird that Ralph had focused on was not the Sandpiper but a Long-toed Stint, a Right Place, Right Time surprise. On my arrival back to the group, Ralph offered me a look through the scope and literally seconds after seeing the Long-toed Stint, all the birds took to the air. That was definitely a Right Time moment for me. Later on, we got the Buff-breasted Sandpiper and also a Broad-billed Sandpiper. I was stoked to get three lifers in one day.

There is unfortunately another side to this, and that is Right Place, Wrong Time. This usually occurs when twitching a rarity and missing out (or "dipping"). It can also be when you hear of something rare turning up at a location that you were at the day before.

The last story is set in Washington State, where in 2025 I was visiting family. I had arranged for a Facebook friend to take me birding, and we headed up to Semi-ahmoo, near the Canadian border. Three Hudsonian Whimbrels and a Long-billed Curlew had been reported there two days prior, so we thought we'd have a good chance of finding them. As this was December, the weather was very unpleasant, with 50km



winds and a wind chill of minus three. We dipped on the two species we were after, but were lucky enough to see a Yellow-Billed Loon, a rarity and a lifer for me. A Right Place, Right Time surprise. After an hour in freezing conditions, we thought the only sensible place to be was indoors drinking coffee. We headed for the township of Blaine, on the other side of the harbour. Here we found a cafe and we sat at a table near the window, which offered us good views of the marina boat ramp. We noticed some birds feeding on the mud flats next to the ramp, and surprise, surprise, there were the Hudsonian Whimbrels and the Long-billed Curlew (pictured). Later we drove to the ramp for a closer view and some photos. Very happy with three lifers for the day. This was definitely a Right Place, Right Time experience.



NEWS AND NOTES

Vale Peter Stanley

Illawarra Birders is very saddened to hear of the passing of club member Peter Stanley on 23 January. Our thoughts are with Marie and his other family and friends.

Important Notice – Tallawarra Access

If you are intending to book the key and visit Tallawarra Wetlands can you please ensure you give the security office at least 24 hours notice. We were recently informed Energy Australia wish to tighten security and after speaking to their security team I was told they have a day sheet that they prepare the previous day to organise their schedules. *Michelle Rower*

Birds feature in film festival

The Creative Wollongong Short Film Festival will showcase the best entries from the 2025 Short Film competition along with commissioned films, all referencing this year's signature theme item - birds. The festival is taking place on 7th March at Wollongong Botanic Garden. Gates open at 7pm, with musical performances, red carpet photos and Q & A with the film makers. Screenings will start at last light and run for approximately 150 minutes. Entry is free, but spaces are limited and bookings are essential – see <https://wollongongbotanicgarden.com.au/bg-events/sunset-cinema3/sunset-cinema-creative-wollongong-short-film-festival>



Habitat gardening for birds – free online course

Birdlife Australia is offering a free online course where you can learn how to optimise your garden for birds. Whether you're a seasoned gardener or just starting out, by the end of the course you'll be equipped to design, establish and maintain a habitat garden to attract and support a diverse array of local birds, as we guide you through each step of the way. You'll learn from bird experts and garden design gurus while exploring the essential features of a habitat garden and discovering what birds need to thrive. Details at <https://birdlife.org.au/habitat-gardening-for-birds-online/?>

Helping birds in the heat

One of the most effective things you can do to help heat-stressed birds is provide water. Birds can quickly become dehydrated if they don't have access to safe places to drink and cool down, especially in urban areas. Birdlife Australia has produced an online guide with everything you need to know about providing water for birds which you can find here: <https://birdlife.org.au/providing-water-for-birds/>? Photo: A Little Wattlebird taking a bath - MP



Diary Dates

Birdlife Photography Conference 7 - 8 March 2026, Canberra – see <https://tinyurl.com/bewpcypy>

Blue Mountains Camp: 17-21 April 2026 – Contact Suze Giuffre for details

Alice Springs/Newhaven trip: 18-31 August 2026 – contact Belinda Baccarini

Spring Camp Mid North Coast NSW 14-20 October 2026 – contact Andrew Wood

TRIP REPORTS DEC 2025—JAN 2026

Thursday, 4th December Wollongong Botanic Garden

In 30C heat we didn't expect much of a turnout for the monthly bird walk at the Botanic Garden – but we were wrong! Making good use of the shade available we managed some good sightings including that of a Dusky Moorhen attacking an unfortunate Eastern Water Dragon. It was not clear whether there was some competition for a food item, or whether the moorhen just wanted the dragon to get out of the way! Another highlight was a cute ball of fluff - a very young Masked Lapwing, venturing out under the watchful eye of its parents. Overhead



a bird of prey flew past which, after examining the photos was determined to be a Brown Goshawk. *Martin Potter*. Bird list: <https://ebird.org/checklist/S287227194>

Saturday, 6th December Tallawarra Wetlands

A refreshingly cool day brought relief from the recent heatwave and provided ideal conditions for both birdwatchers and birds. An amazing 86 species were recorded on this survey to the delight of the 8 observers. This was a day when ALL of the more common birds put in an appearance. We also saw some really unusual birds for Tallawarra such as 4 White-winged Trillers – 3 males and a female. The Blue-billed Duck was spotted again along with 3 Musk Ducks on the main pond. Latham's Snipe were able to be observed out in the open when several flushed and landed on a sandspit near

the end of the pond. Both Caspian Tern and Silver Gull were found around the main pond and both are very uncommon around the wetland areas. A Whistling Kite kept everyone guessing for a while until it flashed its underwing pattern for a positive ID. As we turned to head down across the bridge back to the car park Belinda spotted Southern Emu Wrens which were an additional highlight to finish the survey. Many thanks must go to Peter for keeping the list as with the number of birds seen it was hard to keep up! *Michelle Rower*. Bird list: <https://ebird.org/checklist/S287584825>

Wednesday, 10th December River Walk - Killalea Regional Park

On a very pleasant morning 10 of us gathered for this well-hidden walk with Killalea State Park. This walk descends the western side of the hill from Mystics Beach car park and then meanders through remnant Littoral Rainforest to Minnamurra River. Andrew Knowlson kindly kept the list for me and recorded 39 species amounting to 262 individuals. 150 Silver Gull made up the individual count, with the next being a flock of 12 Top-knot Pigeon. Other interesting sightings included, 2 Fan-tailed Cuckoo, a Black-faced Monarch, 2 Sacred Kingfisher and 3 Golden Whistler. This is normally a good spot for Large-billed Scrubwren, but we couldn't find one on this walk. After 2.5 hours, we returned to the cars for sociable chat over morning tea in lovely weather. *Ralph Stadus*. Bird list: <https://ebird.org/checklist/S290688337>

Saturday, 13th December Lake Illawarra Southern Circuit

Ten people turned up for the Lake Illawarra southern circuit. We started at Purrah Bay and enjoyed many sightings of the Variegated Fairywren (pictured). We took a while to ID the Fan-tailed Cuckoo which kept hiding. We celebrated with the usual yummy bacon and egg roll at the Passionate Palate and enjoyed seeing the 2 Mag-

pie Geese and baby birds abounded. Recently fledged Dusky Moorhens, Australasian Swampheaven and young Australasian Grebes. No more Rose-ringed Parakeets at Macquarie Rivulet Trail as they have been successfully removed. Good sightings of 3 Dollar-birds and 40 Straw-necked Ibis circling



in the sky. Off to Koona Bay for lunch, then a walk along the boardwalk with a very low tide. 2 Buff-banded Rails were seen, Pacific Golden Plovers, Pied Stilts, Eastern Curlews, Sharp-tailed Sandpipers and Bar-tailed Godwits feeding on the mud flats. 75 species in total. *Belinda Baccarini*. Bird list: <https://ebird.org/tripreport/445897>

Wednesday, 17th December Killalea Lagoon Walk

Five of us set off on the solid almost 3 hr walk from the picnic area done to the lagoon, along the beach and back around the east side of the lagoon. Total distance is about 3.5km. As always at this location the birding was busy with 569 individuals across 52 species recorded. There were many highlights, so here are just a few. 50 Black Swan, 4 Blue-billed Ducks, 1 Musk Duck, 200 Eurasian Coot. Moving on to bush birds, both Fantailed and Sahul Brush Cuckoos, a Green Catbird, good numbers of both Variegated and Superb Fairywren and White-browed Scrubwren tripped a count filter with 12. Raptors were quieter with just distant view of a Brown Goshawk and the resident Swamp Harrier. So excellent birding in very pleasant condition, with an enthusiast group of birders. *Ralph*

TRIP REPORTS DEC 2025—JAN 2026

Stadus Bird list: <https://ebird.org/checklist/S288901753>

Thursday, 1st January 2026 Wollongong Botanic Garden

Our bird walks at Wollongong Botanic Garden take place on the first Thursday of each month. We were unsure about offering a walk on New Year's Day as we thought nobody might turn up. We needn't have worried as over 40 people joined us, including a visitor from Switzerland! We were treated to some great bird sightings; amongst the highlights were Green Catbirds, a



Channel-billed Cuckoo, a Topknot Pigeon and a very cute young Australian Brushturkey. *Martin Potter*. Bird List: <https://ebird.org/checklist/S291505922>

**Wednesday, 7th January
Fitzroy Falls - Morton National Park**
Eight of us turned up despite the threat of very hot weather. Our arrival at the car park was heralded by a Superb Lyrebird who boldly strutted his stuff and at the end of our walk an Australian Rufous Fantail completed our list of twenty-one species. It was nice to see newer members joining this walk. *Martin Cocker*. Bird list: <https://ebird.org/checklist/S293813175>

Sunday, 11th January Tallawarra Wetlands

We again were choosy with the weather and scheduled our walk for a cooler day 17-22°C compared with 47° the previous day. This paid off as we were more comfortable and it seems the

birds were too with 82 species recorded by our 19 observers. The bird of the day was undoubtedly the Spiny-cheeked Honeyeater (AND it was carrying nesting material), but it was just fantastic to watch the Glossy Ibis feeding with 3 species of crakes running around quite close to them. The problem was which bird to focus the binoculars on! As the pond edges dry it makes it easier to see birds like Latham's Snipe and crakes as they come out to feed around the muddy shores. Tallawarra continues to be a hotspot and huge thanks once again to Peter for managing to calmly keep up with the list. *Michelle Rower*. Bird list: <https://ebird.org/checklist/S293581389>

Friday, 16th January Appin Woodlands - Appin

Ten club members set off on the fire trail at the end of Burke Street, Appin, towards the Georges River, catching sight of a Noisy Friarbird as we left. An Eastern Yellow Robin and several Striated Thornbills took advantage of a small puddle in the track to have an early morning bath. Fortunately the river water was sufficiently low to allow us to cross and proceed along the track which follows the river to a weir and a large pool. A great place for morning tea and for a cool-off in the water. There were several sightings of an Azure Kingfisher and a family of Eastern Spinebills (pictured) put on a real show for us, but the highlight of the morning was undoubtedly a very



healthy koala high in a gum tree. Appin is often in the news for koala road deaths – it was great to see one alive (and annoyed at having its sleep disturbed). A total of 26 bird species were recorded during the morning including White-throated Treecreeper and Eastern Rosella. *Richard Smart*. Bird list: <https://ebird.org/checklist/S296095446>

Wednesday, 21st January Jerrara Dam - Kiama

In absolute delightful change from recent weather, 11 of us arrived at Jerrara in perfect birding conditions. It was sunny, 17c rising to 22c, and no wind at all ... and silence except for the birds. Wow!! The birds were calling and bouncing everywhere. 45 species across 170 individuals. The counts were well spread with the two stand-outs being 24 Pacific Black Ducks and 15 Topknot Pigeon.

We had a couple of species feeding young; Golden Whistler and White-browed Scrubwren. Black-faced Monarchs were calling everywhere; we settled on 5, but there may well have been more. Their call carries well making accurate count challenging. The other item of interest were the birds we didn't record. No Sulphur-crested Cockatoo, neither Corella, no Galah, no Bar-shouldered Dove, neither Grass Bird, and no Grebes; I found this interesting. So almost 2.5 hours well spent in a slow enjoyable walk filled with birds. *Ralph Stadus*. Bird list: <https://ebird.org/checklist/S295413489>

Wednesday, 28th January Dharawal National Park – 10 Trail

14 birders turned up on a slightly windy warm day to see what we could find in the woodland and heathland. It was very quiet the first hour, with not many birds seen. Then a little pocket of bush yielded thornbills, Grey Fantail and the Varied Sitella - a Wollongong lifer for many. Also on the track a very large monitor lizard. 22 species in total were recorded. *Belinda Baccarini* Bird list: <https://ebird.org/checklist/S296641969>

UNUSUAL BIRD SIGHTINGS NOV—DEC 2025

SPECIES	QTY	DATE	LOCATION	OBSERVER
Magpie Goose	2	06/11/25	Stanthorpe Drive, Kanahooka (restricted access)	Brian Deans
Australasian Shoveler	20	07/12/25	Tallowarra Ash Pond 3, Yallah (Restricted Access)	Illawarra Birders Inc
Pink-eared Duck	4	03/11/25	Saleyard Ponds, Abattoir Road, Moss Vale	Bob Ashford
Blue-billed Duck	4	17/12/25	Killalea State Park--Killalea Lagoon	Illawarra Birders Inc
Blue-billed Duck	1	07/12/25	Tallowarra Ash Pond 3, Yallah (Restricted Access)	Illawarra Birders Inc
Musk Duck	1	19/11/25	Macquarie Rivulet Delta, Haywards Bay	Brian Deans
Musk Duck	4	24/11/25	Tallowarra Ash Pond 3, Yallah (Restricted Access)	David Rower, Michelle Rower
Brown Quail	1	28/11/25	Garawarra State Conservation Area--North section	B Deans, C Kirby, M Boyley
Brown Quail	2	19/11/25	Jerrara Dam	Louise Summerhayes
Stubble Quail	2	01/11/25	Jennings Lane, Bolong	Bob Ashford
Stubble Quail	1	19/11/25	Macquarie Rivulet Delta, Haywards Bay	Brian Deans
Common Bronzewing	2	22/12/25	Mulgen Creek, Bomaderry	Bob Ashford
Pheasant Coucal	1	14/11/25	Maddens Plains	Illawarra Birders Inc
Pallid Cuckoo	1	22/12/25	Horseshoe Creek at Sopers Road	Bob Ashford
Sahul Brush Cuckoo	2	16/11/25	Jerrara Dam	Andrew Knowlson
Sahul Brush Cuckoo	2	05/12/25	Mount Kembla Ring Track	B Baccarini, C Kirby, P McKellar, B Deans
Tawny Frogmouth	2	01/11/25	Hooka Point Park, Berkeley	Belinda Baccarini, Peter McKellar
Tawny Frogmouth	4	01/12/25	Mount Kembla Coal History Walking Trail	Brian Deans
Tawny Frogmouth	3	06/11/25	Stanthorpe Drive, Kanahooka (restricted access)	Brian Deans
White-throated Needletail	1	28/11/25	Purrah Bay, Lake Illawarra	Illawarra Birders Inc
White-throated Needletail	2	21/11/25	Shoalhaven Heads Inlet	Illawarra Birders Inc
Lewin's Rail	1	28/11/25	Jerrara Dam	Louise Summerhayes
Buff-banded Rail	2	13/12/25	Koona Bay, Albion Park Rail	B Baccarini, P McKellar, S Redman, S Mcintosh
Buff-banded Rail	1	18/11/25	Lindsay Maynes Park, Unanderra	Andrew Wood
Buff-banded Rail	1	22/12/25	Wollongong Botanic Garden	Terrill Nordstrom
Australian Spotted Crake	1	19/11/25	Macquarie Rivulet Delta, Haywards Bay	Brian Deans
Australian Spotted Crake	2	28/12/25	Tallowarra Ash Pond 3, Yallah (Restricted Access)	B Baccarini, M & P Potter, P McKellar
Spotless Crake	1	21/11/25	Macquarie Rivulet Delta, Haywards Bay	Illawarra Birders Inc
Aust Pied Oystercatcher	4	16/12/25	Barrack Point	Michelle Rower
Aust Pied Oystercatcher	4	29/11/25	Lakeside Park, Lake Illawarra, Kanahooka	Brian Deans
Aust Pied Oystercatcher	6	18/11/25	Shoalhaven Heads Inlet	Martin & Penny Potter
Aust Pied Oystercatcher	8	05/11/25	Whyjuck Bay	Martin Potter
Sooty Oystercatcher	8	21/11/25	Barrack Point	David Rower, Michelle Rower
Pacific Golden-Plover	6	26/11/25	Koona Bay, Albion Park Rail	Illawarra Birders Inc
Pacific Golden-Plover	21	17/11/25	Shoalhaven Heads Inlet	Martin Potter
Red-kneed Dotterel	1	24/11/25	Tallowarra Ash Pond 3, Yallah (Restricted Access)	David Rower, Michelle Rower
Eurasian Whimbrel	5	29/12/25	Whyjuck Bay	David Rower, Michelle Rower
Eastern Curlew	1	13/12/25	Koona Bay, Albion Park Rail	B Baccarini, P McKellar, S Redman, S Mcintosh
Eastern Curlew	8	05/11/25	Lake Wollumboola	David Rower, Terrill Nordstrom, Brian Deans
Eastern Curlew	89	05/11/25	Shoalhaven Heads Inlet	Brian Deans, David Rower, Terrill Nordstrom
Eastern Curlew	3	29/12/25	Whyjuck Bay	David Rower, Michelle Rower
Latham's Snipe	6	21/11/25	Macquarie Rivulet Delta, Haywards Bay	Illawarra Birders Inc
Latham's Snipe	11	07/12/25	Tallowarra Ash Pond 3, Yallah (Restricted Access)	Illawarra Birders Inc
Common Sandpiper	1	01/11/25	Berkeley Harbour Wetland	Belinda Baccarini, Peter McKellar
Red Knot	3	05/11/25	Lake Wollumboola	David Rower, Terrill Nordstrom, Brian Deans
Red Knot	15	07/11/25	Shoalhaven Heads Inlet	Ellie Summerhayes, Louise Summerhayes
Sanderling	1	07/11/25	Shoalhaven Heads Inlet	Ellie Summerhayes, Louise Summerhayes
Pacific Gull	1	05/11/25	Black Head Reserve	Brian Deans, David Rower, Terrill Nordstrom
Kelp Gull	1	23/11/25	Bellambi Beach	Peter McKellar
Kelp Gull	2	12/11/25	Minnamurra Inlet	Ralph Stadius
Kelp Gull	1	11/12/25	Woonona Point	Martin & Penny Potter
Little Tern	14	27/11/25	Lake Wollumboola east	Ralph Stadius
Little Tern	125	17/12/25	Shoalhaven Heads Inlet	David Rower, Terrill Nordstrom
Australian Tern	1	17/12/25	Shoalhaven Heads Inlet	David Rower, Terrill Nordstrom
Australasian Gannet	15	18/11/25	Shoalhaven Heads Inlet	Martin & Penny Potter

UNUSUAL BIRD SIGHTINGS NOV—DEC 2025

SPECIES	QTY	DATE	LOCATION	OBSERVER
Glossy Ibis	2	28/12/25	Tallawarra Ash Pond 3, Yallah (Restricted Access)	B Baccarini, M & P Potter, P McKellar
Yellow-billed Spoonbill	1	05/11/25	Jindy Andy Lane, Numbaa	D Rower ,T Nordstrom, B Deans
Nankeen Night Heron	12	30/12/25	Horseshoe Creek at Sopers Road	Bob Ashford
White-necked Heron	4	28/11/25	Glenbernie Orchard, Darkes Forest	B Deans, C Kirby, M Boyley
White-necked Heron	4	17/12/25	Jennings Lane, Bolong	David Rower ,Terrill Nordstrom
Osprey	1	12/12/25	Austinmer Beach	Peter McKellar
Osprey	1	29/12/25	Purry Burry Point, Lake Illawarra	David Rower, Michelle Rower
Osprey	1	17/11/25	Shoalhaven Heads Inlet	Martin Potter
Pacific Baza	1	01/11/25	Highlands Parade, Bulli	Graham Barwell
Square-tailed Kite	1	28/11/25	Maddens Plains	B Deans, C Kirby, M Boyley
Grey Goshawk	2	11/12/25	Cope Place, Bulli	Roger Truscott
Swamp Harrier	2	17/12/25	Bolong Road, Back Forest	David Rower ,Terrill Nordstrom
Whistling Kite	1	27/12/25	Burrawang	Bob Ashford
Whistling Kite	1	17/12/25	Killalea State Park	Ralph Stadius
Powerful Owl	1	10/11/25	Cope Place, Bulli	Roger Truscott
Powerful Owl	2	01/12/25	Mangerton Park	Brian Deans
Azure Kingfisher	2	22/12/25	Horseshoe Creek at Sopers Road	Bob Ashford
Azure Kingfisher	1	08/12/25	North Terrace Wetlands, Dapto	Brian Deans
Peregrine Falcon	1	13/11/25	Austinmer Beach	Peter McKellar
Glossy Black-Cockatoo	1	31/12/25	Box Vale Walking Track, Woodlands	Alistair Lethbridge, Andrew Wood
Glossy Black-Cockatoo	3	04/12/25	Sheraton Reserve	Bob Ashford
Little Lorikeet	1	01/11/25	Huskisson	Brian Deans
Noisy Pitta	1	20/11/25	Jerrara Dam	Louise Summerhayes
Red-browed Treecreeper	3	31/12/25	Box Vale Walking Track, Woodlands	Alistair Lethbridge, Andrew Wood
Red-browed Treecreeper	1	07/11/25	Mount Kembla Ring Track	Brian Deans
Southern Emuwren	2	13/12/25	Barren Grounds Nature Reserve--Griffiths Trail	Ellie & Louise Summerhayes
Southern Emuwren	2	07/12/25	Tallawarra Ash Pond 3, Yallah (Restricted Access)	Illawarra Birders Inc
White-plumed Honeyeater	3	30/11/25	Macquarie Rivulet Delta, Haywards Bay	Andrew Wood
White-plumed Honeyeater	2	08/12/25	North Terrace Wetlands, Dapto	Brian Deans
Tawny-crowned Honeyeater	2	06/11/25	Maddens Plains	Terrill Nordstrom
White-cheeked Honeyeater	1	14/11/25	Maddens Plains	Illawarra Birders Inc
White-eared Honeyeater	1	28/12/25	Appin Bushland Walks	Alistair Lethbridge, Andrew Wood
Brown-headed Honeyeater	3	28/11/25	Darkes Forest	B Deans, C Kirby, M Boyley
Eastern Bristlebird	1	13/12/25	Barren Grounds Nature Reserve--Griffiths Trail	Ellie & Louise Summerhayes
Pilotbird	1	31/12/25	Box Vale Walking Track, Woodlands	Alistair Lethbridge, Andrew Wood
Large-billed Scrubwren	3	20/11/25	Jerrara Dam	Louise Summerhayes
Large-billed Scrubwren	1	09/11/25	Killalea State Park--River Walk	Ralph Stadius
White-winged Triller	1	15/11/25	Integral Park, West Dapto	Martin Potter
White-winged Triller	4	07/12/25	Tallawarra Ash Pond 3, Yallah (Restricted Access)	Illawarra Birders Inc
Sahul Cicadabird	1	31/12/25	Box Vale Walking Track, Woodlands	Alistair Lethbridge, Andrew Wood
Sahul Cicadabird	1	18/11/25	Highlands Parade, Bulli	Graham Barwell
Sahul Cicadabird	1	24/11/25	Mount Kembla Ring Track	Brian Deans
Eastern Shrike-tit	1	10/11/25	Cope Place, Bulli	Roger Truscott
Dusky Woodswallow	6	28/11/25	Garawarra State Conservation Area--NorthH section	B Deans, C Kirby, M Boyley
Dusky Woodswallow	2	31/12/25	Trail 108 Woronora Dam	Catherine Kirby, Fiona Leo
Leaden Flycatcher	2	31/12/25	Box Vale Walking Track, Woodlands	Alistair Lethbridge, Andrew Wood
Leaden Flycatcher	1	27/11/25	Mount Kembla Coal History Walking Trail	Brian Deans
Little Raven	1	31/12/25	Box Vale Walking Track, Woodlands	Alistair Lethbridge, Andrew Wood
Eurasian Skylark	1	14/11/25	Maddens Plains	Illawarra Birders Inc
Brown Songlark	2	05/11/25	Comerong Island Rd, Numbaa	D Rower ,T Nordstrom, B Deans
Brown Songlark	1	02/11/25	Swamp Road, Jamberoo	Graham Barwell
Tawny Grassbird	1	06/11/25	Fletchers Lane, Meroo Meadow	Bob Ashford
Tawny Grassbird	1	01/11/25	Jerrara Dam	Louise Summerhayes
Bassian Thrush	3	16/12/25	Mount Keira	B Baccarini, P McKellar, T Nordstrom
Beautiful Firetail	1	30/12/25	Barren Grounds Nature Reserve	Louise Summerhayes