



# The Melbirdian

MELBOCA Newsletter Number 63  
October 2008

## Melbourne Water Wetland Bird Survey: Two New Sites Added!!

Recently, two additional wetlands in the Dandenong Catchment were added to the existing four sites, bringing the total number of sites being monitored by MELBOCA to six. The first of the new wetlands is located near Karoo Road in Rowville (Melway 73 C10). This wetland can be found at the south-eastern end of the Waterford Valley Golf Course; unfortunately, unlike our other sites, access is restricted to the general public. BOCA has obtained permission to access the site monthly from the Waterford Valley Retirement Village. The Survey Team for this site is headed by Colin Barraclough.

The second of the new wetlands is located in Hampton Park and forms part of the Hallam Valley Floodplain Wetland. Unrestricted access to this wetland is located off Hallam Valley Road (Melway 96 A3). The wetland was constructed several years ago when Australia Post required fill prior to building their Dandenong Letter Facility, located just to the north of the wetland. In the years since, an excellent habitat has developed. The Survey Team for this site is headed by Arthur Carew.

You will notice that the attached bi-monthly record of sightings looks a little different. The two new survey sites have been added, and minor modifications have been made to provide additional information. Shaded cells represent birds that have been seen to date at the particular site. Bird species seen during the current survey months are denoted by either an 'X' or an 'N'. An 'X' represents a species seen during the current survey months that has been seen previously at that particular site, while an 'N' denotes a species seen during the current survey months that has not been observed previously at that particular site.

With 111 bird species recorded from the MELBOCA sites to date, it is becoming difficult to add new species. However, the MELBOCA Survey Teams added *five* during July and August: Yellow-billed Spoonbill, Laughing Kookaburra, White-eared Honeyeater, Pied Currawong and Feral Goose. In addition, a Spotted Marsh Frog was heard calling at Frog Hollow.

*Graeme Hosken*

## MELBOCA Conservation Coordinator Announced!

At the August 2008 MELBOCA Committee Meeting, Arthur Carew was appointed as MELBOCA's Conservation Coordinator. Arthur's role will be to provide a contact point for MELBOCA Members for all conservation matters and to liaise with, and assist, BOCA's National Office Conservation Officers, Don Saunders and Jenny Lau.

Currently, MELBOCA provides input into two Bird Surveys, but MELBOCA is keen to increase participation in conservation projects. MELBOCA is interested in hearing of any projects where their input may be of assistance. Arthur may be contacted at [info@melboca.org.au](mailto:info@melboca.org.au)

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## MELBOCA Branch Meetings

MELBOCA branch meetings are held on the fourth Tuesday of every month (except December) in the Evergreen Centre, located at 45 Talbot Avenue in Balwyn, not far from the library (Melway 46 E8). The meeting

begins at 8 pm and features a guest speaker and a bird of the evening segment – so be sure to attend! Entry is by a donation of \$4. Out of town members and visitors are always very welcome.

### Upcoming Guest Speakers

**Tuesday 28 October 2008 8.00 pm**

#### Chris Lester 'Birding in China'

In August, China dazzled the world with the Olympics. Now, it is time showcase China from a birding perspective!

Join us for what promises to be a fascinating evening with Chris as he shares the delights of birding in China with us.

**Tuesday 25 November 2008 8.00 pm**

#### Victor Hurley 'Long-term Monitoring of Victoria's Peregrine Falcons: Life in the Fast Lane is Not Always Easy'

One of nature's boldest predators is the peregrine falcon – and when it comes to speed, no creature on earth can match it.

Victor heads Victorian Peregrine Project and has an insider's view on this amazing raptor...including first-hand encounters with its 'atypical' nesting behaviour (on skyscrapers!). Do not miss this special event!

## Birding Hotspots Near You: River Gum Creek Reserve

In our search for good birding sites, many of us travel up to 2 to 4 hours in a day, forgetting that there are readily accessible sites within the metropolitan area. One such site is River Gum Creek Reserve in the south-eastern suburb of Hampton Park (Melway 96 H9). This is a site included in the on-going survey that BOCA is doing for Melbourne Water in which I am involved. (For further information on these man made wetlands, go to the MELBOCA site and follow the links under Conservation).

During a twelve month period through to June this year, 76 species have been recorded for the site, a pleasing result. I also visit this site on a regular basis, other than survey days, as it provides me with many opportunities for good photography as well good birding. Allow yourself at least 2 hours to properly cover the area (including an hour for the main water site and its surrounds). I am sometimes there for longer, as I am dictated to by the time spent pressing the camera's shutter button.

The site consists of five open water areas, some reed and water rush habitats, with some plantings of local trees and shrubs around the perimeter. There are few formed tracks around the wetlands, but the area is open and walking is easy. Boots should be the preferred footwear, especially after rain. I usually see anything between 30 and 40 species per visit, the variety depending on water levels.

Many of the wetland birds (ducks, grebes, waders and more) are used to people being in the area, allowing time for leisurely identification. Harder to see are the crakes (Baillon's, Australian Spotted and Spotless have all been observed) and some of the smaller birds, such as the Little Grass Bird and Australian Reed-warbler, which are often seen quickly flitting from one reed clump to another. Knowing the calls of these more elusive birds is a bonus for identification. Latham's Snipe can also be flushed when in residence. When the water is low, stints and dotterels are often seen. I have observed six raptors at the site, including Little Eagle, White-bellied Sea-Eagle and Brown Falcon; sometimes they cause panic among smaller birds and sometimes they have to evade being dive-bombed by a variety of others.

## Education Committee: Spring has Sprung!

Spring is here and our outdoor activities are in full bloom. By the time you read this, we will have hosted our first 'Breakfast with the Birds' at Eltham Lower Park for the Nillumbik Council and conducted guided walks around Blackburn Lake on behalf of the Blackburn Library.

On October 11 and 12, we will be spreading the word about Australian birds and BOCA's role as we man the MELBOCA display at the Australian Native Flower Show at Templestowe College. Later in the month (26 October), we will again be providing birding guides for the 10<sup>th</sup> annual 'Breakfast with the Birds at Banyule' to be held at Banyule Flats Reserve.

A number of parrots have been seen, with a recent 'first' for the site being a pair of Scaly-breasted Lorikeets in a Red Gum. They were observed for some time until they both disappeared into a hollow at the end of a broken branch; hopefully they found it to their liking and will breed there. A pair of Galahs was seen mating in the same tree.

Foraging is provided for bush birds with a mix of gums, wattles and melaleucas. There are a variety of honeyeaters, the most prolific being White-plumed Honeyeater and Red Wattlebird. The usual ranges of backyard and open area metropolitan birds also provide sightings.

Best access to the park is available from Coral Drive, off Hallam Road adjacent to the Hallam Park Shopping Centre, or from Gandin Court (a residential street with minimal off-road parking). Note that there are no toilet facilities available at the site. Benches are provided at intervals around the main wetland.

*Arthur Carew*



*Black-winged Stilt seen at River Gum Creek Reserve. Photo by Arthur Carew*

All of these events are widely advertised and provide us with a wonderful opportunity to share our birding enthusiasm and to inspire the community to take action and become involved in bird conservation efforts.

The support of the MELBOCA Committee and members who have kindly volunteered for these (and other) events is most appreciated!

We are always looking for more assistance with our education initiatives. If you would like to get involved and be part of the fun, please contact me.

*Janet Hand  
MELBOCA Education Officer*

## BOCA Bird Week 2008: Raptors Revealed!!

Every October, BOCA hosts Bird Week with the goal of inspiring all Australians to take action and get involved in bird conservation efforts. The celebration of Bird Week dates back almost 100 years when October 28 was designated as the first 'Bird Day'. Each year, BOCA strives to increase public awareness of specific groups of birds that have some species that are doing visibly well – and some species that need our help. This year, the focus is on Australia's wealth of raptors.

Raptors are birds of prey that feed primarily on meat taken by hunting or from carrion. Raptors include diurnal (mainly active in the daytime) birds as well as the nocturnal owl. The term "raptor" is derived from the Latin word *rapere*, which means to seize.

Raptors are often at the top of the food chain in many ecosystems, which makes them ideal indicators of ecosystem health. If raptors in nature are threatened, then other animals in that ecosystem are also at risk – because what happens at the bottom of the food pyramid ultimately affects the top. For this reason, the study of raptors is truly a study of all nature.

Australia boasts 25 diurnal raptor species and 10 owl species. You don't have to go far to find a raptor because they inhabit all types of environs – including urban, suburban and rural. We encourage you to use Bird Week (week of October 26) as an opportunity to learn more about our raptors. You could: take a visit to Healesville Sanctuary to see the fabulous free-flight raptor show and get up close and personal with some of Australia's raptors; stop by the numerous raptor library displays; 'capture' a raptor with your digital camera; or simply keep your eye on the sky. The number of ways you can celebrate Bird Week: Raptors Revealed is limitless!

This year, the MELBOCA Committee has compiled some fun brain-teasers to help you celebrate Bird Week. First, you will find a 'Raptor Quiz' – a series of questions that will enable you to test your 'raptor knowledge'. Secondly, we have put together a word search puzzle. Complete the puzzle to find the secret phrase (hint: the phrase has to do with what makes raptors special!). We hope that you enjoy!

*Chris Wichems*

### Raptor Quiz

- 1) The distinctive straight wing hovering of the Nankeen Kestrel is an easy identification feature. Which other two raptors use hovering as a hunting technique?
  - a) Black-shouldered Kite
  - b) Brown Goshawk
  - c) Australian Hobby
  - d) Brown Falcon
- 2) Owls have a facial disc that helps them to collect sound and direct it to their asymmetrical ears. Owls are the only birds of prey that have facial discs and use hearing to locate prey.
 

True  
False
- 3) Choose an adaptation that an Osprey does NOT possess to hunt fish:
  - a) Rough surfaces on the pads of its feet to hold slippery fish
  - b) A sense of smell that can detect fishy odors from kilometres away
  - c) Nostrils that can completely close when it dives into water
  - d) An opposable toe to help hold its prey
- 4) The Wedge-tailed Eagle is the world's largest eagle
 

True  
False
- 5) During a dive, the Peregrine Falcon can reach speeds in excess of:
  - a) 200 kph
  - b) 250 kph
  - c) 300 kph
  - d) 350 kph
- 6) Which statement is not true about owl's nests?
  - a) Owls may use man-made structures
  - b) Owls build their own stick nests in trees
  - c) Owls sometimes nest in the natural hollows of trees
  - d) Owls may nest on the ground or in burrows
- 7) The black line on the underwing of the Letter-winged Kite is like which letter of the alphabet?
  - a) S
  - b) W
  - c) Z
- 8) When in flight, what is the most prominent feature of the Black-breasted Buzzard?
  - a) Forked tail
  - b) White bulls-eye in wings
  - c) White patch on the rump
- 9) Two species of raptors (worldwide) use tools to assist in feeding. Both species use stones to crack open eggs. The Egyptian Vulture hurls stones at Ostrich eggs and the   ? uses stones to crack open Emu eggs.
  - a) Brown Falcon
  - b) Wedge-tailed Eagle
  - c) Black-breasted Buzzard
- 10) Female raptors are generally larger than males.
 

True  
False
- 11) What is the term for an animal that is active at dawn and dusk?
  - a) Crepuscular
  - b) Nocturnal
  - c) Eternal

### Raptor Quiz cont'd

- 12) Which is the only Australian raptor that shows a decidedly forked tail in flight?
  - a) Pacific Baza
  - b) Swallow-tailed Kite
  - c) Black Kite
- 13) An Osprey can dive feet first into water, be completely submerged and still be able to fly away with prey.
  - True
  - False
- 14) How many true eagles breed in Australia?
  - a) 1
  - b) 2
  - c) 3
- 15) Which raptor is featured in the ANZ advertisement for 'The Falcon'?
  - a) Black Kite
  - b) Peregrine Falcon
  - c) Nankeen Kestrel

S	T	R	B	T	O	O	S	P	R	E	Y	N	G	F	E	E	T	T	T	K	A
L	O	N	R	Y	B	S	N	O	C	L	A	F	Y	E	R	G	I	C	P	O	A
N	D	H	O	T	O	L	I	T	T	L	E	E	A	G	L	E	R	R	O	O	O
K	E	D	W	O	B	E	A	A	K	K	V	D	H	E	R	E	N	E	W	B	P
N	V	R	N	N	N	L	J	C	C	M	I	D	R	C	P	N	R	I	E	O	R
M	D	V	F	I	W	Y	R	L	K	G	W	T	E	U	T	B	J	R	R	O	Y
N	P	D	A	D	J	H	J	M	I	K	S	L	S	M	R	F	V	R	F	B	B
O	F	X	L	A	L	K	I	R	A	E	I	C	H	O	M	M	L	A	U	N	B
C	V	M	C	E	T	L	T	S	K	S	U	T	W	M	G	B	W	H	L	R	O
T	B	H	O	Y	E	S	V	N	T	L	K	N	E	X	P	R	O	D	O	E	H
U	W	P	N	N	F	R	E	L	A	L	G	E	K	T	J	T	G	E	W	H	N
R	G	P	R	X	V	E	M	R	W	O	I	S	D	D	V	L	N	T	L	T	A
N	D	E	D	X	K	N	Q	O	S	O	L	N	S	O	M	P	I	T	T	U	I
A	R	Y	C	N	R	X	N	H	B	Q	S	W	G	A	W	Z	K	O	N	O	L
L	R	K	A	M	K	R	A	M	K	W	P	U	O	K	Y	L	R	P	R	S	A
M	N	N	K	G	A	W	L	W	O	Y	T	O	O	S	I	E	A	S	L	K	R
T	Z	V	K	B	K	P	L	A	N	R	U	I	D	F	S	T	B	Q	R	P	T
N	O	C	L	A	F	E	N	I	R	G	E	R	E	P	U	A	E	N	M	F	S
W	S	W	A	M	P	H	A	R	I	E	R	B	V	P	Z	R	R	C	V	G	U
P	A	C	I	F	I	C	B	A	Z	A	E	I	R	Y	E	C	R	G	P	V	A

Find the following words in the grid. Words can go forwards, backwards, diagonal – all directions! When you are finished, the unused words will spell out a hidden message. Pick them out from left to right, top to bottom line.

- |                  |              |             |                  |                  |
|------------------|--------------|-------------|------------------|------------------|
| Australian Hobby | Barking Owl  | Barn Owl    | Black Kite       | Brown Falcon     |
| Brown Goshawk    | Crepuscular  | Diurnal     | Erne             | Eyass            |
| Eyrie            | Grass Owl    | Grey Falcon | Little Eagle     | Masked Owl       |
| Nankeen Kestrel  | Nocturnal    | Osprey      | Pacific Baza     | Peregrine Falcon |
| Powerful Owl     | Rufous Owl   | Sooty Owl   | Southern Boobook | Spotted Harrier  |
| Strigidae        | Swamp Harier | Tiercel     | Tytonidae        |                  |

Hidden Message (these three characteristics make raptors unique):

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## Interesting Sightings

Entered 02 Sept 2008

Up until now, we have been collecting reports of Currawong, Brown Thornbill, Crested Pigeon, Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoo, Corella, Song Thrush and Little Wattlebird sightings within 60 km of Melbourne, plus other Field Reports. The following reports were received from members attending the MELBOCA monthly meeting (held at Balwyn on 22 July and 26 August 2008), via email or as WEB reports to the BOCA National Office.

With the exception of the Little Wattlebird, data collection for the above listed species has concluded. An article will appear in the upcoming Melbirdian summarizing conclusions reached on each species from the survey. My thanks to all members who have submitted reports.

**As we move forward**, MELBOCA is interested in reports of **White-plumed Honeyeater, Eastern Spinebill, Noisy Miner and Little Wattlebird** sightings. If you are reporting Noisy Miners, we would also be interested to hear if they are displacing White-plumed Honeyeater. As always, please forward this information to MELBOCA, c/o BOCA, PO Box 185, Nunawading VIC 3131 or email [info@melboca.org.au](mailto:info@melboca.org.au). Be sure to include name, address, date of record, location of sighting (i.e., street, suburb, post code, Melway reference) and the number of birds sighted.

Currawong Sightings			
<b>Pied Currawong</b>			
04 Jul '08	20	---	Brighton East
05 Aug '08	3	Royal Botanic Gardens	South Yarra
16 Aug '08	1	---	Armadale
16 Aug '08	9	Arnold St	Princes Hill
18 Aug '08	10	Andersons Creek Rd	Doncaster East
24 Aug '08	2	Moorehead Dr	Mill Park
26 Aug '08	2	Deep Creek Dr	Doncaster East
<b>Grey Currawong</b>			
15 Jul '08	1	Canterbury Rd	Blackburn South
31 Jul '08	1	Yarra Bend Park	Yarra Bend

Brown Thornbill Sightings			
12 Jul '08	2	Halley Ave	Camberwell
15 Jul '08	1	Range St	Camberwell
13, 22 Aug '08	2	Deep Creek Dr	Doncaster East

Crested Pigeon Sightings			
23 May '08	30	Lebanon Reserve	Strathmore
Jun – Jul '08	3	Mountfield Rd	Mitcham
10 Jul '08	2	Blackburn North Square	Blackburn North
27 Jul '08	3	Murdoch St	Camberwell
Aug '08	2	100 Acres	Park Orchard
<i>First sighting in this area</i>			
11 Aug '08	5	Kororoit Creek	Deer Park
18 Aug '08	1	Winters Way	Doncaster
26 Aug '08	30	East Bentleigh School	East Bentleigh
27 Aug '08	1	100 Steps to Federation	Altona Meadows

Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoo Sightings			
12 Jul '08	1	Deep Creek Dr	Doncaster East
15 Jul '08	42	Stafford Ct	Doncaster East
17 Jul '08	8	Deep Creek Dr	Doncaster East
20 Jul '08	22	Royal Botanic Gardens	South Yarra
15 Aug '08	3	Chandler Rd	Glen Waverley
24 Aug '08	6	Warrandyte Rd	Doncaster East
24 Aug '08	60+	Queens Rd	Melbourne

Corella Sightings			
<b>Long-billed Corella</b>			
05 Jul '08	24	Zerbes Reserve	Doncaster East
22 Jul '08	2	Mainwaring Ave	Camberwell
16 Aug '08	2	Deep Creek Dr	Doncaster East
24 Aug '08	1	Westerfolds Park	Templestowe
<b>Little Corella</b>			
05 Jul '08	2	Zerbes Reserve	Doncaster East

Song Thrush Sightings			
Past 10 years	2	Williamson Ave	Strathmore
27 Aug '08	1	Royal Botanic Gardens	South Yarra

## Interesting Sightings Cont'd

MELBOCA is examining the spread of the **Little Wattlebird** from the inner-city, coastal areas to the outer suburbs of Melbourne. The following is a list of Melbourne suburbs recorded so far where Little Wattlebirds have been observed.

### Is your suburb listed?

Airport West	Brighton East	Elwood	Kew	Nunawading	Sunbury
Armadale	Brunswick	Essendon	Langwarrin	Oakleigh	Surrey Hills
Ascot Vale	Burwood	Essendon West	Lilydale	Pakenham*	Templestowe
Balwyn	Camberwell	Ferntree Gully	Lower Plenty	Parkdale	Thomastown
Balwyn North	Camberwell East	Fitzroy North	Lower Templestowe	Parkville	Travancore
Bayswater North*	Canterbury	Frankston	Macleod	Patterson Lakes	Vermont South
Beaumaris	Carlton North	Gembrook	Mill Park	Point Cook	Viewbank
Belgrave Heights	Chadstone	Glen Iris	Mitcham	Reservoir	Westgate Park
Bentleigh*	Cheltenham	Glen Waverley	Mont Albert Nth	Richmond	Werribee
Berwick	Chirnside Park	Greensborough	Montrose	Ringwood	Wheelers Hill
Black Rock	Clifton Hill	Hampton	Moonee Ponds	Rowville	Williamstown
Blackburn	Cranbourne	Hampton East	Moorabbin	Rosebud	
Blackburn North	Croydon	Hampton Park	Mount Eliza	St Kilda	
Blackburn South	Doncaster	Hawthorn	Mount Waverley	Sandringham	
Box Hill	Doncaster East	Hawthorn East	Murrumbeena	Southbank	
Box Hill South	East Malvern	Highbett	Newport	Sth Melbourne	
Brighton	Eltham	Ivanhoe	Niddrie	South Yarra	

\* Suburbs added, July - Aug 2008

### Other Sightings

31 May '08	Flame Robin	1	100 Steps to Federation	Altona Meadows
22 Jun '08	Brown Goshawk	1	Royal Park	Parkville
04 Jul '08	Silvereye	4	Holmes Rd	Moonee Ponds
05 Jul '08	White-plumed Honeyeater	1	Holmes Rd	Moonee Ponds
07 Jul '08	Gang-gang Cockatoo	12	Wolseley Cr	Blackburn
07 Jul '08	King Parrot	2	Wolseley Cr	Blackburn
10 Jul '08	Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike	2		Fitzroy North
				<i>First sighting in this area in 35 years</i>
11 Jul '08	Easern Spinebill	1	Holmes Rd	Moonee Ponds
12 Jul '08	Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike	2	Mill Rd	Oakleigh
23 Jul '08	Blue-billed Duck	5	Wylie Creek Wetland, RBG	Cranbourne
28 Jul '08	White-faced Heron	2	Waramae Hills	Gruyere
Aug '08	Buff-banded Rail	2	100 Acres	Park Orchard
19 Aug '08	King Parrot	1	Chandler Rd	Glen Waverley
27 Aug '08	White-fronted Chat	2	100 Steps to Federation	Altona Meadows
29 Aug '08	Silvereye	2	Holmes Rd	Moonee Ponds
10 Sep '08	Little Eagle	1	EJ Whitten Bridge, Brimbank Park	Brimbank

## Additional Notes

- A small flock of 40 Tree Sparrows was observed on 19 Aug during the monthly survey at River Gum Creek.
- Ring-necked Parakeet: A male was sighted in mid-June and a female sighted in early July on Canterbury Road in Ringwood.
- The Friends of Royal Park conduct Bird Surveys every three to four months. During their winter survey on 22 June, 20 White-plumed Honeyeaters were sighted and 15 were sighted on the 3 August survey. New-Holland Honeyeaters were also seen during both surveys. Noisy Miners are yet to be seen at Royal Park. Will Noisy Miners find Royal Park? We will be eagerly awaiting the results from their next survey!
- My thanks to Rustem Upton for reporting the sightings of many species over the past months. I haven't included all Rustem provided in the above report, but one species is of interest: Mistletoebird. During the winter months you may have noticed deciduous trees in some Melbourne suburbs with 'green' leaves. If so, I'm sure it was Mistletoe and I'm pretty sure a Mistletoebird was the culprit. Do you have any trees with Mistletoe in your suburb? I would like to know.

*Please note that all of the above records cover the area within 60 km of the Melbourne GPO.*

*Refer to Melway Street Directory, Pages 1 and 2.*

All MELBOCA Outing Reports may be found on the MELBOCA website: [www.melboca.org.au](http://www.melboca.org.au)

*Graeme Hosken, Recorder*

## Past Meeting Reports

22 July 2008

Linda Stock welcomed all to the meeting. The Bird of the Evening segment was an illustrated talk by David Plant on 'Black Swans and White Swans.' The explorer William Dampier was the first to describe the Australian Black Swan, but because of his reputation for 'unusual' descriptions, his records were greeted with scepticism in the United Kingdom. However, the production of Black Swan skins proved he was accurate. Swans have now become embedded in Aussie culture with place names, stamps and even football teams being associated with them. The Australian Black Swan can be found over the whole continent with the exception of Cape York and the dry interior. Of the white swans, the Mute Swan is probably the most well known. This species can be found in Europe; it migrates to North Africa, and definitely is not mute. It was introduced to the USA and Australia. David also showed pictures of the Whooper Swan, Berwick's Swan (Tundra Swan) and the Trumpeter Swan.

Our Guest Speaker was Lynne Kelly, a multi-talented professional author and educationalist with a particular interest in science, maths and technology. Lynne is keenly interested in spiders. Her talk entitled 'My Favourite Creatures are Bird Food' was beautifully illustrated with many wonderful photographs taken by her husband, Damian, who is also our MELBOCA website guru.

Previously arachnophobic, Lynne now counts all spiders as her personal friends. She introduced us to several of the spider species we might encounter around our homes. First there was 'Theresa', a very attractive Wolf Spider who was carrying over 100 babies on her back. Then we met another Wolf Spider Lynne named 'Keenie' because this spider lived in the zucchini patch. Lynne then told us that she not only waters her vegetables, but she also waters her spiders in the garden to protect them from dehydrating in hot weather. Unfortunately for Theresa, she met an untimely death when she was eaten by a visiting White-winged Chough; at this point we were treated to a very close up photo of the 'wicked bird'. Interestingly, Lynne noted that White-winged Choughs appear to dig specifically where the spider burrows are in the garden, and this same behaviour had been noted by others as well. Babblers have also been observed seeking out specific burrows. Apart from birds, other predators are frogs and the common mud wasp; the latter captures and paralyzes spiders to store in its mud tube as live food for its larvae.

We were next introduced to 'Flat Guy,' a Flat Rock Spider similar to a Huntsman and often mistaken for the latter. Then we learned that spiders will drop a leg to escape predation; similar to lizards that drop tails. We were introduced to 'Legless', a Black House-spider, who had done just this. A new leg will grow after the next moult, but once the spider reaches maturity and ceases to moult, no new limbs can be generated. Legless eventually succumbed to a mite attack.

Did you know that because female spiders have been known to eat their partners, the male will generate a sperm web and then swiftly deposit it on a female? Also, most spiders found in houses are the male seeking a female. Spiders form a very important part of balancing the food chain and should not be indiscriminately killed – they feed birds, keep insects numbers down and generally act as cleaners up. If you are keen to get rid of a spider, the best way to do it is to blow on it (for those who want to get close enough!) Spiders are deaf and detect movement through the hairs on their body.

The White-tailed Spider has an undeserved reputation for causing nasty wounds, but this has not yet been proven. The trapdoor spider can live up to 20 years and it has been known to waterproof its burrow by 'welding' leaves across the entrance. Lynne is convinced spiders have individual personalities, like 'Uppity,' who delighted in hanging upside down; this being achieved with the special hairs under the body.

The Golden Orb-weaving Spiders build webs at night from an original single strand, and they can produce 7 different types of silk for different purposes. The silk is the strongest material known to man, weight for weight. Many birds use spider silk for their nests, silk being such a strong material. The nest of the Willie Wagtail often consists of 80% spider silk. The Tawny Frogmouth and Owlet Nightjar also appreciate the protein provided by a fat (silk-engorged) spider.

Some spiders show intelligence not usually associated with arachnids. *Portia fimbriata* (a type of jumping spider) can solve mazes and it appears to be able to scan and remember a 3D image. Lynne completed her very amusing and informative talk by mentioning her book, 'Spiders, Learning to Love Them' which will be available in the near future. For those who missed this meeting, they missed the chance to see and learn about these fascinating creatures in a very personal way.

Graeme Hosken is interested to know of any species of bird that is no longer seen in its usual area, or a species that has newly become frequent in an area. It would appear the White plumed Honeyeater has been ousted by Noisy Miners in places, and robins have been seen less frequently.

The Melbourne Water Survey that MELBOCA has been involved in over the past 14 months reports 120 species having been observed.

The new centre at Clarksdale is underway. The foundations have been laid; however, because of the much welcomed rain, the erection of the building has been delayed. Completion was hoped for by the end of July.

Linda Stock

## Past Meeting Reports Cont'd

26 August 2008

Diane Tweeddale welcomed 62 members and visitors to the meeting. The Bird of the Evening segment presented by Bill Ramsay was entitled 'Corncrakes and Their Habitat Management'. During their holiday to the UK in June, Bill and Shirley visited the RSPB Balranald Reserve on North Uist, which is an island located in the Outer Hebrides. They were lucky to have magnificent views of several Corncrakes, a medium-sized land rail that spends the northern winter in Africa and the summer in Europe and Western Asia. Bill and Shirley had the opportunity to take a guided tour of the reserve, where management of this important Corncrake habitat was explained. The last 150 years has seen a major decline in the breeding areas in Britain; the Corncrake is now restricted to small areas of Western Scotland and the Scottish Islands. Although the RSPB owns none of the land at Balranald, it has management agreements with the local crofters (farmers) who each lease up to 25 small parcels of land. Good habitat for the Corncrake is provided by adopting 'traditional farming methods' – no chemicals, no grazing on the reserve, and growing silage. Mowing is adjusted to allow chicks to get mobile and sometimes a field is left uncut for one to two years. Also, fields are mowed in such a pattern to allow the young birds an overland escape route. With good habitat management of soft grasses the Corncrake numbers have increased by 150% since 1993.

Len Robinson introduced our Guest Speaker, Peter Menkhorst, who spoke on 'Mud Island – Port Phillip's best kept birding secret'. Peter graduated from University in 1973 with a degree in Zoology and Botany. He has since worked in various roles for National Parks Service, Fisheries & Wildlife Department, Department of Sustainability and Environment, and he is currently Principal Terrestrial Ecologist at the Arthur Rylah Institute for Environmental Research. His contribution to scientific and wildlife publications are numerous, but he is probably best known as the author of 'Mammals of Victoria: Distribution, Ecology and Conservation' and co-author of 'A Field Guide to the Mammals of Australia'

Peter has visited Mud Island over 70 times. Mud Island is located in Port Phillip Bay and surrounded by sand bars. Peter explained that Mud Island isn't really made of mud; rather it is made of materials like beach rock and shells. Furthermore, it isn't just one island but a group of islands that form a rough circular shape. The northern edge has sea grass beds and the islands are constantly changing their shapes, a point he illustrated with maps and photographs produced over the last century.

Mud Island has a long history of bird study since the early 1900s. Between 1914 and 1919, the first bird banding took place on the island. Annual surveys were conducted from 1955 to 1980 by BOC (now BOCA) and other groups. White-faced Storm-Petrels were banded on Mud Island between 1955 and 1980.

Photos of a 1964 BOC camp showed large trees on the island. Rabbits were finally cleared from Mud Island in 1980. Part of the island, now covered in hollyhocks, became known as the airstrip because it was flat and rabbit eaten. This, and the disappearance of the tall trees, has changed the habitat over the years.

The many species breeding on Mud Island include 50,000 Silver Gulls, 15,000 Straw-necked Ibis (the world's largest rookery), 12,000 Australian White Ibis, 12,000 Crested Terns, 2,000 White-faced Storm-Petrels, Pied Cormorants, Australian Pelicans, Caspian Terns and Royal Spoonbills. Migratory visitors include Bar-tailed Godwits, Grey-tailed Tattlers, Great Knots, Red Knots (up to 500), Double-banded Plovers, Curlew Sandpipers, Grey Plovers and Ruddy Turnstones. Some species have disappeared or declined. Nine other non-seabird species exist on the island including the House Sparrow.

Pat Bingham thanked Peter and many members expressed a desire to visit this bird paradise in our 'backyard'.

The meeting concluded with the usual announcements, a cup of tea, biscuit and a social chat.

Janet Hand

*The Melbirdian is published six times a year*

*Member birding-related stories and articles (up to 800 words) are invited*

**November 1** is the deadline for receipt of information for inclusion in the December issue

*Put pen to paper (or fingers to keyboard) and send in your birding-related stories and articles!*



## Outing Reports

### Weekday Outings

**6 August 2008**

**Yellow Gum Park, Plenty**

With Janet Hand as leader, 33 of us headed off. In the car park, the most common bird was the Red Wattlebird. A Little Raven perched on a dead tree was having a bad morning, as it was being mobbed by a pair of Bell Miners until it had had enough and flew off. A Sulphur-crested Cockatoo investigated a tree hollow – was it time for nesting yet? Long-billed Corellas and Sulphur-crested Cockatoos flew and perched among the same trees, providing a good opportunity to compare their flight patterns and colouring. Both Musk and Rainbow Lorikeets were present near the start of the walk, while Eastern Yellow Robin called 'off stage'. Down by the flooded quarry, the birding became good with Black Swan, Australasian Grebe and Eurasian Coot on the water and New Holland Honeyeater, Yellow-faced Honeyeater and White-browed Scrubwren among the bushes. A highlight was a Spotted Pardalote close to the path, presumably with a nest hole in the bank below the path. Obliging, it remained within camera range and allowed one member to obtain some beautiful footage. Looking down onto the river, there appeared to be a pair of Pacific Black Duck perched on a fallen tree. Closer examination revealed orange legs and feet. Was there a trace of Northern Mallard in their genes? An Eastern Spinebill dashed across the path, almost too quickly for viewing, but a Laughing Kookaburra was more co-operative and gave good views.

Back at the cars, we farewelled a couple of people then the bulk of us drove in convoy to Hawkstowe Park. By now the day was calm and sunny. A toilet break was combined with birding near the park entrance. Birdwatchers are natural multi-taskers and a clear view of a pair of Striated Pardalotes in the tree beside the car park was our reward. Then it was down to lunch near the old homestead. We shared the area with an older bushwalking group and one of their number, a gentleman originally from NSW, remarked on the 'soldier' birds. It turned out that this was a name given to Noisy Miners in recognition of their aggression, tendency to fight and to go around in groups. Has anyone else encountered old common names for this or other species?

After lunch, we walked around the dam and up the hill. The water level was not high, but frogs were calling (as they had been at Yellow Gum). An Australasian Grebe generated amusement when it surfaced covered with pond weed with only its head protruding. Eastern Rosellas were active and Superb Fairy-wrens hopped among the dry lakeside vegetation. A Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike announced its presence by calling and then flew into nearby bushes. A Fan-tailed Cuckoo also called several times but was not seen. The bulk of the group took the steeper woodland walk, which yielded a Brown Goshawk and good views of White-throated Treecreepers, while a

small group separated and walked slowly back to the cars. Once we were reunited, a bird call revealed that the total species count for the day was a creditable 57, with 42 species at Yellow Gum and 50 at Hawkstowe. We thanked Janet for her careful preparation and for successfully introducing us to another good birding area around Melbourne.

*Diane Tweeddale*  
*Convenor MELBOCA Weekdays Outings*

**1 September 2008**

**Long Forest Reserve / Merrimu Reservoir**

Gradually, 21 people assembled and we welcomed those who had not joined our group on previous walks. Despite the forecast of developing rain, we had only a brisk wind to contend with as Graeme Hosken led us into the reserve beside Canopus Circuit. After the years of drought, there's not much understorey, but the recent rain had brought out the green moss patches under the Grey Box. Ants were active and many of their mounds showed Echidna diggings. Superb Fairywrens called and foraged near the start of the walk, while Spotted Pardalotes were vocal but initially unseen. Later, the brilliantly yellow males of the mallee country were close beside the path. Yellow-faced Honeyeaters called and dashed about, often so close as to almost part your hair, and a brief glimpse of a fast-flying Peregrine Falcon rewarded those who were looking in the right direction at that moment. We followed the Long Point Track toward the Pyrites Creek, catching fugitive sightings of White-throated Treecreeper and Eastern Yellow Robin. White-naped Honeyeaters made their "lolly-sucking" calls as they flew among the eucalypts and a Horsefield's Bronze-Cuckoo called but was only seen by a favoured few. White-browed Scrubwrens scolded near an ephemeral creek line and a brilliantly coloured male Scarlet Robin held the attention of several of us. The main party decided to follow the Steep Track while the more cautious returned by the gentler, but longer, Long Point Track. We then entered the cars and convoyed toward Lake Merrimu.

Before entering the lake reserve, we detoured to the north end of the Long Forest Reserve. Here, we were rewarded by good views of Jacky Winters, Yellow-rumped Thornbills and Scarlet Robins - often more than one species in the same binocular view. Superb Fairy-wrens, a Little Raven and a Common Bronzewing joined Yellow-faced Honeyeaters and Varied Sittellas (orange-winged) as we headed towards the hoped-for sighting of an eagle's nest. Before we reached that location, a flock of about 20 White-winged Choughs moved cautiously away from us, calling mournfully. When we reached the overlooking ridge near an old mullock heap, we spotted the enormous eagle nest. We looked down on its location in a eucalypt where it showed the addition of leafy branches, presumably by a Wedge-tailed Eagle. Two white fuzzy objects were

## Outing Reports Cont'd

variously interpreted – were they chicks? prey items? The jury remained out as movement was difficult to detect in the wind and passing sunshine. Back towards the cars, we fanned out in the hope of detecting Speckled Warblers but without success. However, clear views of a female Golden Whistler in a flowering acacia rewarded many near the cars.

Lunch at the picnic area above the dam wall was welcome and new species were added to the day's list. Masked Lapwing flew and shrieked while a colony of House Sparrows used the conifers along the fence line. Galahs and Sulphur-crested Cockatoos were noisy but not so the female Flame Robins perching on the fences and the grass stalks. The water level was woefully low and the only waterbirds identified on the lake were Black Swans, though a flock of Straw-necked Ibis flew overhead. Several White-fronted Chats were foraging on the ground near some stockyards. A walk around the perimeter of the picnic grounds yielded New Holland Honeyeater, White-plumed Honeyeater, Eastern Rosella and Willie Wagtail. European Goldfinches, a Crested Pigeon and Yellow-rumped Thornbills were seen by some. Raptors flying past included Whistling Kite, Peregrine Falcon and also very distant views of a Wedge-tailed Eagle by a couple of

people. The day's bird list totalled 51 species and we thanked Graeme for his leadership and for introducing some of us to a new birding site.

*Diane Tweeddale  
Convenor MELBOCA Weekdays Outings*



*Wedge-tailed Eagle nest at Long Forest – unfortunately, no inhabitants! Photo by Des Wichems*

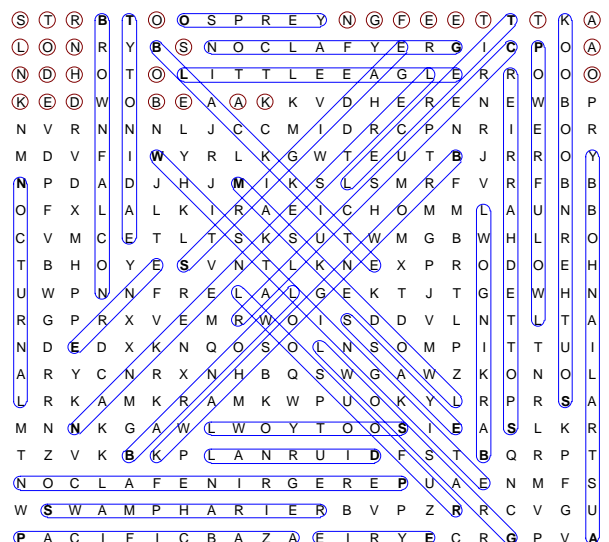
## Raptor Quiz Answers

1. *Correct answer: a)* Black-shouldered Kite and d) Brown Falcon.
2. *Correct answer: False.* Harriers, forest-falcons and some forest eagles also have facial discs and use their sense of hearing to help them locate prey.
3. *Correct answer: b).* Osprey do not have a sense of smell. Vultures are the only birds of prey believed to use a sense of smell to find food.
4. *Correct answer: False.* While the Wedge-tailed Eagle is the largest Australian raptor, it is the fourth largest raptor in the world.
5. *Correct answer: c) 300 kph.* The Peregrine Falcon is the world's fastest flying bird.
6. *Correct answer: b).* Owls do not build their own nests; rather, they use an existing site or an abandoned bird nest.
7. *Correct answer: b) W.* The shape is either a W or an M...depending upon your point of view!
8. *Correct answer: b).* The Black Kite has a forked tail and harriers have the white rump patch.
9. *Correct answer: c)* Black-breasted Buzzard
10. *Correct answer: True.* Did you know that the falconry term for male raptors is tiercel, because they are one-third smaller than the female?
11. *Correct answer: a)* Crepuscular
12. *Correct answer: c).* The other bird on the list with a forked tail is the Swallow-tailed Kite, but that species is found in North America, not Australia.

13. *Correct answer: True.* The Osprey can submerge entirely and still be able to take off from the water with a fish in its talons.
14. *Correct answer: b) 2.* While there are three true eagles in Australia, the only two with breeding records are the Wedge-tailed Eagle and the Little Eagle. Gurney's Eagle is found in the Torres Strait, but there are no breeding records from that location.
15. *Correct answer: b) Peregrine Falcon.* Next time you see the advertisement, have a closer look at the feathered star!

### Word Search Hidden Message:

Strong feet, talons and hooked beak.



## Dates to Remember...

If you would like to get outside, see some fantastic birds, and meet friendly people, then MELBOCA outings are just what you need. Check out some of the outings on offer and we hope to see you in the field!

### Wednesday Wanderings

**Wednesday 22 October – Sweeneys Flats, Eltham.** (Melway 22 B11) 9.45 am. Drive to the south end of Sweeneys Road and park. Nearest toilets are in Eltham. Shortish, flat walk downstream to Griffith Park & return. Last time saw Buff-banded Rail. Join us for lunch after walk, BYO chair & lunch.

**Wednesday 26 November - Candlebark Park, Templestowe.** 9.45 am. Meet in Westerfolds Park car park; the entrance is at Melway 33 F2. Enter from Fitzsimons Lane, turning right and keep the main road on your right. Park near the canoe launch at Melway 33 F1. There are toilets here. This is an easy upstream walk to Candlebark Park and Pettys Orchard, with detour over pedestrian bridge to observation platform at Lenister Farm and return. Please carry water if hot. Join us for lunch afterwards - BYO chairs and lunch.

### Beginners Outings

**Saturday 18 October – Langwarrin Flora and Fauna Reserve** (Melway 103 C10). 10 am. This will be an all-day event. Meet in the main car park off McClelland Drive.

**Saturday 15 November – You Yangs Regional Park, Little River.** 10 am. All day event. Meet in the You Yangs Reserve car park. Take Little River exit off Princes Freeway and follow signs.

### Weekdays Outings

**Monday 6 - Tuesday 7 October – Overnight Weekdays Outing in Daylesford area.** *Please arrange own accommodation.* (Melway 609 C10; Vic Roads 59 C8). **Monday** meet at Sailors Falls 10 am for 10.30 am start. Take Western Fwy (M8) to Ballan - Daylesford Road (C141) turn right and drive 24.5 km. Park near tables. Track is steep, wear sturdy footwear & carry stick if desired. **Tuesday** meet at Daylesford Info Centre on Main Street at 8.30am then convoy to private property. Finish about 2 pm. Bring lunch both days, make own arrangements for dinner and breakfast.

**Tuesday 21 October - Gobur Flora Reserve via Yarck.** (Melway 610 S7; Vic Roads 62 B3). Meet outside Yarck store, Maroondah Hwy (B300). Alternate routes are Maroondah Hwy (B360) through Alexandra then B340 & C516 or take Melba Hwy (B300) to Yea, and then join B340/B300 to Yarck. Toilets are available at Yarck. We will be convoy driving to different sites. All welcome, no need to book.

**Wednesday 5 November - Koomba Park, Wantirna.** (Melway 63 C8) 10am - 3pm. Enter from Mountain Hwy, approx 150m E of junction with Burwood Hwy. Park near info centre. Toilets available.

**Monday 17 November - Sugarloaf Reservoir, Christmas Hills.** (Melway 273 B3) 10am - 3pm. From Eltham-Yarra Glen Road, turn into Simpsons Road and drive ~1.2km to entrance. Park near toilets in Ridge picnic area

**Birdwalk at Yellingbo Reserve** (*we have been conducting monthly surveys at this key habitat for the endangered Helmeted Honeyeater for more than 30 years; Melway 305 G11*)

**Sunday 5 October.** Gates open at 10 am. Walk begins at 10.30am

**Sunday 2 November.** Gates open at 10 am. Walk begins at 10.30am

**Sunday 7 December.** Gates open at 10 am. Walk begins at 10.30am

### Upcoming Coach Tours

**Saturday 18 October – Crosbie Nature Conservation Reserve, Heathcote** (no vacancies; fully booked)

**Saturday 22 November – Yan Yean Reservoir and Kinglake Area** (at print time, there were a few spots available)

**Please consult the Bird Observers' Calendar for additional details about the above walks as well as for additional outings in the Melbourne area**

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Diane Tweeddale  
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We're on the Web!

See us at:

[www.melboca.org.au](http://www.melboca.org.au)



MELBOCA is the  
Melbourne Branch of  
Bird Observation &  
Conservation Australia

## Your Letters ...

### Resident or Immigrant?

In recent issues of our local paper, there has been correspondence regarding the feeding of Sulphur-crested Cockatoos.

One letter raised the point that the observer had not seen these birds in the wild in the Dandenong Ranges before the fires in 1962. Having since spoken to one of the rangers stationed at Upper Ferntree Gully during that period, he was informed that 23 caged birds had been released at the time to avoid their demise.

Subsequent supplementary feeding of the birds together with natural resources makes it appear that the birds are introduced rather than endemic to the area. We have lived in the hills area for 28 years and not heard this story before, but find it an interesting account of opportunistic colonisation. Can anyone confirm sightings of Sulphur-crested Cockatoos in the Dandenong Ranges prior to 1962?

*Arthur and Denise Carew*

## Volunteers Needed!!

### Australian National Waterhole Count

The Friends of Royal Park are looking for volunteers to participate in Birds Australia's Threatened Birds Network's first Australian National Waterhole Count as follows:

**Saturday 11 October 2008**

**Start - just before sunrise**

**Finish - 3 hours later**

They aim to survey at least one fixed point, that being the bird hide at Wetlands Treatment Pond. They would also like to survey one point at the Wetlands Storage Pond if they have enough volunteers.

It is envisaged that volunteers will be paired up for shifts of one hour (subject to final volunteer numbers) - so the workload will be shared and you don't have to be in the park all morning.

If you are interested in volunteering in this bird count at Royal Park, please contact Nicole Spillane on [nicolespillane@optusnet.com.au](mailto:nicolespillane@optusnet.com.au).

## 'Chasing Birds' to Air on ABC1 in October

The film entitled 'Chasing Birds' that debuted at the Sydney Film Festival this past June will be aired on the ABC1 on Thursday 23 October at 9:35 pm.

'Chasing Birds' follows three teams (the Hunter Thickheads, the Wacked-out Woodswallows and the Hunter Home Brewers) as they compete in the 2003 NSW twitchathon. The goal of the twitchathon is to spot as many birds as possible during a 24 hour period. To maximize the number of sightings, contestants will endeavor to cover as

many habitats as possible...so the teams travel huge distances, and they can be seen dashing in and out of rainforest, woodlands and marshes.

The film crew included 12 of Australia's top cinematographers and sound recorders - and by all accounts, they must be congratulated for being able to keep up with the twitchers without scaring off the birds!

So tune in to what will surely be an entertaining show!

Survey site number and location	Melway	Survey site number and location	Melway
1 Frog Hollow Wetland, Endeavour Hills	91 G9	4 South of Golf Links Road, Narre Warren	110 F11
2 Kilberry Boulevard, Hampton Park	96 J9	5 Hallam Valley Floodplain, Hampton Park	96 A3
3 River Gum Ck Reserve, Hampton Park	96 H9	6 Karoo Road Wetland, Rowville	73 C10

Table 1. Bird species observed at MELBOCA survey sites.

Bird species	Site number						Bird species	Site number					
	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6
Black Swan			X	X			Silver Gull			X			
Australian Shelduck							Galah	X		X	X		
Australian Wood Duck		N	X	X			Long-billed Corella						
Pink-eared Duck							Little Corella		X				
Australasian Shoveler			X	X			Sulphur-crested Cockatoo	X		X			
Grey Teal		X	X	X			Rainbow Lorikeet		X	X			
Chestnut Teal		X	X				Scaly-breasted Lorikeet			X			
Pacific Black Duck	X	X	X	X			Musk Lorikeet						
Hardhead		N	X				Eastern Rosella			X			
Blue-billed Duck			X				Horsfield's Bronze-Cuckoo						
Australasian Grebe			X	X			Shining Bronze-Cuckoo						
Hoary-headed Grebe			X	X			Laughing Kookaburra	N					
Rock Dove	X	X	X				Superb Fairy-Wren	X	X		X		
Spotted Dove	X	X	X	X			White-browed Scrubwren	N			X		
Common Bronzewing							Yellow Thornbill						
Crested Pigeon			X				Yellow-rumped Thornbill						
Australasian Darter			N	X			Brown Thornbill				X		
Little Pied Cormorant	X	X	X	X			Yellow-faced Honeyeater						
Great Cormorant			X	X			White-eared Honeyeater				N		
Little Black Cormorant							White-plumed Honeyeater	X	X	X	X		
Pied Cormorant							Noisy Miner		N	X			
Australian Pelican				X			Little Wattlebird	N	X	X	X		
White-necked Heron							Red Wattlebird	X	X	X	X		
Eastern Great Egret			X	X			New Holland Honeyeater	X	X	X	X		
Cattle Egret				X			White-naped Honeyeater						
White-faced Heron	X		X				Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike						
Little Egret							Grey Butcherbird			X			
Australian White Ibis	X		X	X			Australian Magpie	X	X	X	X		
Straw-necked Ibis	X						Pied Currawong	N					
Royal Spoonbill							Grey Fantail						
White-bellied Sea-Eagle							Willie Wagtail	X	X	X	X		
Yellow-billed Spoonbill			N				Little Raven	X	X	X	X		
Whistling Kite			X				Magpie-lark	X	X	X	X		
Black Kite							Flame Robin	X					
Brown Goshawk							Horsfield's Bushlark				X		
Collared Sparrowhawk							Eurasian Skylark				X		
Swamp Harrier							Golden-headed Cisticola						
Little Eagle							Australian Reed-Warbler	X					
Nankeen Kestrel		X					Little Grassbird	X		X	X		
Brown Falcon							Silvereye						
Australian Hobby		X	X				Welcome Swallow	X	X	X			
Peregrine Falcon							Fairy Martin						
Purple Swamphen	X	X	X	X			Common Blackbird	X	X	X	X		
Buff-banded Rail							Song Thrush						
Baillon's Crake							Common Starling	X	X	X	X		
Australian Spotted Crake							Common Myna	X	X	X	X		
Spotless Crake							Red-browed Finch						
Dusky Moorhen	X	X	X	X			House Sparrow	X		X			

Bird species	Site number						Bird species	Site number					
	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6
Eurasian Coot	X		X	X			Eurasian Tree Sparrow			N			
Black-winged Stilt			X				Australasian Pipit				N		
Black-fronted Dotterel	X						European Goldfinch	X	X	X	X		
Red-kneed Dotterel			X				Common Greenfinch	X		X			
Masked Lapwing	X		X	X									
Latham's Snipe							Feral Duck	X			X		
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper							Feral Goose				N		
<b>Total number of bird species seen at each site during the current survey months:</b>							<b>37</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>42</b>			
<b>Total number of bird species seen at each site to date:</b>							<b>65</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>73</b>			
<b>Total number of bird species seen at all MELBOCA sites to date: 111</b>													

**Table 2. Other species observed at MELBOCA survey sites.**

Species	Site number						Species	Site number					
	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6
<b>Frogs</b>							<b>Mammals</b>						
Common Froglet	X	X	X	X			European Rabbit	X		X			
Southern Bullfrog							Brown Hare						
Spotted Marsh Frog	N						<b>Fish</b>						
							European Carp						

**Key:**

**X** Denotes species seen at this site during the current survey months.

**N** Denotes new species added during the current survey months.

(First sighting of this species at any site monitored by MELBOCA)

■ (Shading) denotes species seen at this site on previous surveys.

Compiled by Graeme Hosken, MELBOCA