

# The Murrumbidgee Naturalist



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## Objects of the Club

To facilitate and promote the knowledge of natural history, and to encourage the preservation and protection of the Australian natural environment, especially that of the Murrumbidgee River Valley



**MFN Group at Round Hill Nature Reserve ready to plant the *Grevillea illicifolia* seedlings on 18 July - photograph by Rowena Whiting**

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## CONTRIBUTIONS

For the next issue by  
Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> September

To Rowena Whiting

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***Brobenah Hills and the  
Cocoparras are the locations  
for outings this month.***

# Murrumbidgee Field Naturalists Inc. Office Bearers and Annual Subscriptions

<b>President:</b>	Max O'Sullivan	6953 4726	<b>Editor:</b>	Rowena Whiting	6953 2612
<b>Vice President:</b>	Nella Smith	6959 1210	<b>Committee:</b>	Johanna Botman	6963 4855
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<b>Treasurer:</b>	Phil Tenison	6953 4869			

**MEETINGS** ARE HELD ON THE SECOND THURSDAY EACH MONTH, EXCEPT JANUARY, AT THE Yellow Room, Leeton Library, Sycamore Street at 7.30 PM

**FIELD TRIPS** NORMALLY TAKE PLACE ON THE FOLLOWING WEEKEND.

INTENDING NEW MEMBERS, GUESTS AND VISITORS WELCOME.

**Membership enquiries:**

<b>Leeton</b>	Eric Whiting	6953 2612	<b>Griffith</b>	Johanna Botman	6963 4855	
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## Out and About



There are several Nankeen Night-Herons spending their days roosting in the willows at McCaughey Park. The willows have no leaves on them now it is winter it is easy to see them. Today (1 August) I saw about six of them as well as the juvenile also pictured here. Penny Williams



Melanie Baulch has been sketching some of the plants she has seen:  
 Wonga Vine (top left)  
 Early Nancy (male) flowers (left)  
 Dwarf Greenhoods (above).  
 Eric and Rowena Whiting saw all The above at Falcon Falls and photographed the some of the ferns which are flourishing.



## Plantings of Holly-leaf Grevillea at Round Hill Nature Reserve

On Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> July, 8 MFN members gathered with Allan McLean and David Egan of the National Parks and Wildlife Service, and, Bob Makinson of the NSW Botanical Gardens at the Round Hill Nature Reserve. We planted 59 new plants of the critically endangered Holly-leaf Grevilleas (*Grevillea illicifolia subsp illicifolia*).

MFN groups had often stopped at the Nature Reserve to check on the very few remaining plants, assess their health, take photos and hope they continued to survive. The one known remaining plant at Nericon had already died. Bob Makinson explained to me that this little group of plants was isolated from other Holly-leaf Grevilleas which had been found in South Australia and Victoria.

There had been a collection of stem cuttings from the Round Hill Holly-leaf Grevilleas back in 2013. The Blue Mountains Institute of TAFE and the NSW Botanical Gardens had then taken the cuttings and now we had 59 plants struck from those cuttings to plant!

The plants were placed in the ground and protective screens placed around them. The ground at Round Hill was moist from rain to receive the plants! GPS readings were taken of their positions so that they could be checked at a later date.

I enjoyed the day. It is always a pleasure to spend time with the professionals who work in the area of the environment and to learn from them and to assist them. Everyone left with a feeling of a job well done and in the hope that all the plants survive.

**Penny Williams**

Photos from left - (Rowena Whiting) Eric and Andrew checkout one of the plants; (Penny Williams) - David and Allan of the NPWS record GPS readings and Andrew secures the protective screening



## The Story of *Grevillea illicifolia*

It was common knowledge in Griffith that the single plant of *Grevillea illicifolia* at Nericon was unique to the area. Pat Weare put it onto the State's stage by featuring it in one of her books of local flora. The full significance of this plant was not realised until Bob Makinson and David Mallinson (at that time) from the Australian National Herbarium in Canberra began searching for occurrences of this species for the treatment of *Grevillea* for the 'Flora of Australia'.

Bob and David followed up a reported sighting by Geoff Clarke (ACT Society for Growing Australian Plants) and found the Nombinnie Nature Reserve site near Shepherd's Hill in September 1994. They only saw five plants each only 60cm to 100cm tall. Another single report of an occurrence in mallee near West Wyalong could not be verified. There were no other reports of this species from New South Wales although *Grevillea illicifolia* is common in north-west Victoria and in South Australia. The nearest Victorian population was near Swan Hill some 250km from Nericon.

Bob informed John Brickhill at Griffith NPWS of the situation in November of 1994, 'for management purposes'. However it was not until 1998 that John managed to get funding to document the occurrence of threatened plant species, and I was asked to do a limited survey for six species in Nombinnie Nature Reserve including this Grevillea. I spent one full day out of the three on the survey searching around the reported Grevillea site and around Round Hill where it was thought there might be another population. Despite doing four transects 50 metres apart at right-angles to the road and extending in for nearly a kilometre, I only found the five plants. Incidentally I recorded the height of the neighbouring Mallee Cypress Pine then as around 2 metres high. Last month at the planting session the Pine was only up to 4 metres high – an increase of only 2 metres in 17 years! Shortly after my survey another plant was reported to be 'on the other side of the road'. I have never found this plant.

Then came the millennium drought and fear arose that we may have lost the Nombinnie population. The Nericon plant succumbed either to the drought or old age, it had been reckoned to be over 30 years old in 1994. However on the way back from the Yathong campout in September 2013, MFN members were able to locate three plants at the Nombinnie site. All three looked healthy and were in flower but only about 20cm high.



By now Allan McLean had taken up the challenge of managing the species, and by regular monitoring managed to alert Bob and his team that fruit was being set. Grevillea typically set fruit quickly and disperse seed within days of becoming mature. Rapid response from Bob resulted in procurement of seed. Cuttings were also taken and fortunately both methods of propagation were successful this time. Efforts to propagate from the Nericon plant were never successful.

Group erecting wire guards to protect the plantings  
Photo: Rowena Whiting

Hence several MFN members were happy to be able to take part in planting 59 of the progeny back into the original area. Hopefully nature will be kind and assist in the recovery of this very endangered plant.

**Eric Whiting**

## Marsupial Spotted at Nombinee Nature Reserve

There has been a positive sighting of a Kultarr on one of the reserve's infrared cameras. The first time one has been seen in the area for 20 years.

Listed as 'endangered' on the NSW Threatened Species Register, Kultarrs are known for their large ears, long delicate legs and thin brushy tail.

Their small size (about the size of a large mouse) and nocturnal habits make it hard to find.

Image taken from The Mammals of Australia edited by Ronald Strahan – Australian Museum / Reed Books



*The Kultarr resembles a dunnart in most of its features, except its long, brush-tipped tail and very long hindlegs.*

## Bitterns in Rice Steering Committee Meeting Report

On 27 July there was a meeting of the Bitterns in Rice Steering Committee to hear of progress so far and to look at what next year's plans are for Matt Herring and his team – Mark Robb (as in Robbie!) and Neil Bull in particular. Mark is a key part of Matt's work in the field, particularly in the Coleambally surveys and Neil is the financial guru who manages to get the necessary funding so that Matt's surveys can continue until almost everything is known about the elusive Bunyip bird - the **Australasian Bittern**. That may take years still but Matt is determined to find out as much as he can about the behaviour of this very understudied species – both nationally and internationally.



The Bunyip bird belongs to a worldwide family of bitterns known as ***Botaurus*** bitterns. The **Eurasian Bittern**, also known as the **Great Bittern** in the UK, belongs to the group ***B. stellaris*** and extends through parts of Africa, right across southern Europe and into Asia, including Japan. The **American Bittern, *B. lentiginosus***, is found in North and Central America. In Central and South America, ***B. pinnatus*** or the **Pinnated Bittern** is found in suitable habitat similar to that here in Australia – Costa Rica has both the North American and South American form. The one here, in Australia and New Zealand, belongs to ***B.***

***poiciloptilus*** – the **Australasian Bittern**. Basically they all look very similar but ours is of importance because it is classified as a globally endangered species, hence the need for such an intensive study.

Similar work to what Matt is undertaking here in the MIA is being done in the rice growing areas of France and Northern Italy where they are also known to use the rice crops to breed. Bitterns have also been studied in New Zealand and some have been caught and radio tracked to study their habits there.

Whilst Robbie was the only one caught and fitted with a satellite tracking device towards the end of April this year, it has turned out to have had a very positive outcome for the project as so many people have got involved in following Robbie's journey to the swamp in coastal Victoria where he has remained for the past 12 weeks. He is referred to as 'him' as Matt said when he was caught and weighed, he was heavier than what is considered normal for a female bird. However, in case there might be a sex change at the beginning of the next breeding season, Matt is having one of Robbie's feathers DNA tested to determine for sure what his sex actually is! Who knows, he might have a name change to Roberta in the near future!!



Chick in nest  
Photo: Matt Herring

Four satellite tracking devices were initially bought from the USA last season once the correct permits were obtained to catch the birds and fit them. With the drop in value of the Australian dollar each new transmitter now costs about \$4,000 as they are designed specifically to be fitted on bitterns. There are two different systems – one solar powered and the other battery operated. Robbie was fitted with the heavier 30gm battery system and the lighter solar ones were held for females when they are eventually caught. To prolong the life of the battery system, they only transmit the bird's movements for an 8 hour period every 48 hours. That way the battery will last for a couple of years.

The major difficulty Matt and his team found was to try to catch the birds. A mist net fired by a gun was used in April with only Robbie being caught despite many attempts to catch others at the end of the rice harvest when the transmitters arrived. Matt is going to try another method which has been successful elsewhere. It is a wire cage (cat trap size) with mirrors inside that has a call playback of the male's booming call. It will be trialled this spring and rather than attract females, it is most likely to attract 'horny' males who come to chase off the interloper from his territory and, hopefully, will be lured into the trap and caught, fitted with the tracker and let go back into his rice paddy. There to get on with what all the booming is about!

Matt has gathered a wealth of information over the past 3 rice seasons and has got a statistician at Charles Sturt University in Wagga to do some data analysis on the information he has recorded so far. This should enable Matt to show even more clearly the conservation benefits of his work so that the wider community can be informed about the mutual benefits of rice growing to the birds and to rice production itself. Something that has had lots of uninformed criticism over the years along the lines of why Australia should be growing rice when it is such a dry country. We have all heard these comments and I must confess I previously felt the same about the questionable benefits of using precious water to grow such water-guzzling crops as rice and cotton in parts of this country. Since coming to the MIA, I have changed my mind totally about this. Rice growing, as distinct from cotton, provides a wetland environment that has enabled the bitterns and other birds to feed and breed in the flooded paddies – more like an ephemeral wetland that the bitterns have obviously adapted to over the decades since the MIA was initially set up to grow rice.

Not only do the bitterns benefit from the vast areas of wetlands but we all know of the arrival of flocks of **Glossy Ibis** and **Whiskered Tern** that return in the Spring just after the rice is sown. Matt has also shown that other birds such as the highly endangered **Australian Painted Snipe**, migratory waders and various crakes also use the rice for survival over the hot summer months.

Matt submitted an abstract on his work to an American group who are running a seminar/workshop in New York in November and has been officially invited to make a formal presentation. So this is a huge acknowledgement of the benefit of Matt's work



**Painted Snipe**  
Photo: Peter Merritt



over the past three summers and congratulations to him for doing it in such a scientific way to be recognised internationally.

Finally, it is interesting to note that rice/cotton in the MIA is 50/50 at the moment but it is planned to increase cotton production by 5% per year for the next 10 years. Where does that leave rice in the equation I wonder?!

The **Bitterns in Rice Project** booklet launch was held at the Leeton Soldiers Club on Monday evening 27 July when several club members attended. Matt spoke about the project and what has been achieved since the project started in the 2012/13 rice season. Copies of the booklet are available and can be obtained from Penny if anyone would like a copy. Penny will take them to the next meeting on 13 August at the Leeton Library.

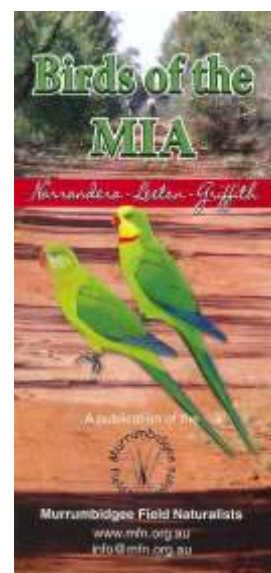
**Max O'Sullivan**

## Bird Brochure

We have finally had the new bird brochure printed and distributed to the three Tourist Information Centres in Narrandera, Leeton and Griffith. It has been a long process and I wish to thank Johanna for doing all the setting-up and combining the three old brochures into one. Nella has also been very helpful in advising what was relevant to be retained and suggested additions to make the various sites more appealing to visitors and I appreciate her input as well.

Thanks also to Neil for his help and suggestions on proof reading the document before the final go-ahead to print was given. And special thanks to Peter Anthony at Narrandera Process Printers whose suggested artwork has made the whole brochure so much more eye-catching and professional looking.

**Max O'Sullivan**



## Save our Species Seminar – 23 July 2015

This Seminar at the Griffith Exies was essentially an overview and update of the State's Save our Species Program now in its third year.



Dieuwer Reynders first introduced the program and its different approach to conserving threatened and endangered species in the State. Previously projects were funded without reference to a Statewide strategy. Save our Species starts by considering all threatened and endangered species (974 are listed under the Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995) and categorised them into six management streams.

1. **Iconic species** – those highly valued by the community (Koala, Brush-tailed Rock Wallaby, Malleefowl, Southern Corroboree Frog and Wollemi Pine). Funding for conservation projects for these will be based on existing recovery plans.
2. **Site-managed species.** These species can be successfully secured by carrying out targeted projects on specific sites. Prioritisation is based on the benefit the project will provide to the species, its likelihood of success and its total cost. By its nature the majority of species in this stream are plants.
3. **Landscape-managed species.** Species in this stream typically travel across the landscape and are not tied to one site. Conservation efforts are therefore broad-scale.
4. **Data-deficient species.** 167 of the listed species have insufficient information to allocate them to another stream, or for appropriate management plans to be devised. There is a need for research organisations and field naturalist groups (ie. us!) to fill the knowledge gaps for these species.
5. **Partnership species.** 163 species have less than 10% of their distribution in NSW. Conservation projects will therefore require cooperation with other states and/or the Federal Government.
6. **Keep watch species.** 99 species are considered to require no further investment because they are either naturally rare, have few critical threats or are more abundant than previously thought.

The overall aim is to have all of the species secure for the next 100 years.

Site-managed species were the focus for allocating funds from the Environment Trust for Round 1 of the program last year. Projects for threatened orchids in the Riverina were described as examples of funded projects from this round.

The Oaklands Diuris is known only from the Oaklands Town Common with only 50 – 100 plants known. To increase the population to a more viable number areas of the common have been fenced off to keep grazing stock out. At the same time seed was collected for propagation by Sydney Botanic Gardens and at Kew, England, with the aim to re-introduce 3000 plants. For natural propagation to occur orchids require the presence of a specific wasp pollinator and fungal mycorrhizae in the soil. Both of these criteria must be overcome to be able to establish populations at other sites so needed to secure survival.

Crimson Spider-orchid occurs in Nail Can Reserve on the outskirts of Albury. The threat to this population comes from predation from animals that find the bulbs in particular a good food source, so funding went to caging all known occurrences.

Round 2 grants opening this year will focus on Landscape-managed species. Possibilities here are for the Black Falcon, Painted Honeyeater, Superb Parrot and Glossy Black Cockatoo. To aid submissions for grants the SoS website has a 'Toolbox' feature.

The final agenda item was a presentation by Matt Herring on the Bitterns in Rice Project. This project (see separate article by Max) illustrated another feature of the SoS program. Funding is often given to initiate a project, prove its viability and worth and thereby gain further funding from other sources to build on.

It was good to see a number of MFN folk there and in addition to the knowledge gained it was a chance to network with the environmental personal from a number of local organisations.

### Eric Whiting

Visit their website for more information -

<http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/grants/sospartnerships.htm>

## Bird of the Month

### NANKEEN NIGHT HERON

### NYCTICORAX CALEDONIS

This very attractive Heron may lack the long legs of its cousins but makes up with its beauty. The plumage is so smooth it looks as though its back and wings are swathed in rufous silk with white angora tufts on its shoulders. The cinnamon throat and white front, a black satin cap with two white slender protruding plumes, green face and metallic black beak gives the bird the appearance of a glazed ornament. Their display is also a thing of beauty as described by Peter Slater who wrote about the head and neck feathers extending to their fullest with the plumes erected while the head sways from side to side.

The birds are mainly nocturnal and roost in colonies near waterways in heavily foliated trees, mainly willows. At "Gilgai" they seasonally roosted by the front gate in willows overhanging a channel and remained fairly restful,

but you could hear the croaky calls in the evening. Most activity is at dusk when they would forage for insects, crustaceans and frogs but have been known to raid the nests of other colonies for eggs and nestlings.

They are found throughout Australia and the Pacific Islands wherever there are waterways and make a twiggy nest usually found rather high in a tree where 2-5 pale greenish eggs are laid. Both parents nurture the chicks by regurgitating food for a short time then the food is dropped into the nest.

Other names; Rufous night heron, Night heron.

Sexes similar 590mm.

Juvenile brown and white flecked.

**Sue Chittick-Dalton**



Photos taken at McCaughey Park, Yanco on 1 August by Phillip Williams – the lower picture is a juvenile.



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## Debate about Currawongs

Contributed by Max O'Sullivan

Recently on the Birding-aus website there has been a series of comments in response to an enquiry about what people thought would be an appropriate collective noun for a group of Currawongs. Some suggestions were:

- |                             |                           |                               |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------|
| A Carry-on of Currawongs    | A Throng of Currawongs    | A Collaboration of Currawongs |
| A Chorale of Currawongs     | A Trash of Currawongs     | A Chorus of Currawongs        |
| A Crowd of Currawongs       | A Cartel of Currawongs    | A Chortle of Currawongs       |
| A Cacophany of Currawongs   | A Meeting of Currawongs   | A Commotion of Currawongs     |
| A Catastrophe of Currawongs | A Carolling of Currawongs | A Slaughter of Currawongs     |
- A Tintinnabulation of Currawongs (I had to look that one up! But very appropriate nonetheless)



Obviously some were positive about the bird but some were not and it prompted one contributor Geoff Ryan to send in this poem in response to the negative suggestions. Geoff has given his permission to reproduce the poem in our newsletter. Following is his comment and poem:

I have been disappointed with some of the misanthropomorphic (?) judgmental suggestions for the collective noun for currawongs. My opinion on the matter is expressed in the little poem I wrote many years ago:

**\*CURRAWONGS \***

There's nothing wrong with currawongs  
 Disliked, I wonder why  
 Is it their black plumage  
 Or their brilliant yellow eye?  
 Is it that they're cocksure  
 Adapt to utilise  
 All novel opportunities  
 As soon as they arise.  
 They may eat eggs and fledglings  
 And thus attract our ire  
 But the same foods are savoured  
 By birds that we admire.



It cannot be their singing  
 It's rollicking, pure and clear  
 Part of our bushland symphony  
 And pure joy to hear.  
 There's nothing wrong with currawongs  
 They may cause a little strife  
 But I've never know a currawong  
 To go home and beat his wife.

## July Meeting

We were pleased to welcome Meredith Billington and Peter Butler to last month's meeting to give an insight into their year spent as volunteers in the Solomon Islands. They engaged us all as they told us about the way life functions there. Many thanks Meredith & Peter for an engaging presentation. Read about their venture in the following article. Rowena.

### A year volunteering in the Solomon Islands

If you are not keen on endless rain, a bland diet of cassava, coconut and fish, and expect to get things done in a reasonable timeframe, you might find a year in a remote part of the Solomon Islands a little challenging like we did!

We volunteered to work for 12 months with a tiny NGO called Kolombangara Island Biodiversity Conservation Association (KIBCA) in the Western Province. We were supported by a living allowance provided to Australian Volunteers International (AVI) by the Australian government. The Solomons relies heavily on Australian aid and volunteering is a way to promote capacity building for future generations rather than the development of specific technology or



infrastructure. Far from the cappuccinos and traffic of Honiara, we learned to do without things we had thought were part of normal life like apples, cars, shoes,



newspapers and television and lived a less complicated, slower way of life in the community.



While you might be excused for thinking the Solomon Islands are all about sandy beaches fringed by gently waving coconut palms, the little town of Ringgi (population ~300) where we lived is essentially a not-very-attractive logging town. It is run by Kolombangara Forest Products Limited, certified by UK-based Forest Stewardship Council to carry out sustainable plantation logging. This company is Taiwan-owned and comes after the clear-felling regime of Levers Pacific which established itself on the island in the 1960s.

The great thing about Kolombangara is that above 400 metres it is too steep to log, and so the cloud montane forests of the extinct volcano have been preserved in a conservation area. It will hopefully become a national

park in the future. Pete's job was to train and support rangers to manage this area. This entailed clearing of hiking tracks in the hot luscious tropical rainforest, providing signs on the tracks, and promoting awareness of conservation.

KIBCA represents the people of Kolombangara who are distributed in about 100 villages round the edge of the island. A Board of 50 representatives meets each year. KIBCA is supported by the American Museum of Natural History and seeks funding for specific projects.

KIBCA has successfully contested illegal logging by rogue logging companies who typically approach chiefs or families in remote villages offering cash for their remaining timber. The Solomons are now all but razed of commercial timber. Unfortunately some unethical operators leave behind them contaminated water supplies, and broken promises of a school or a clinic. We observed instances of poor environmental practice firsthand (see photo).



Meredith's job was to develop sustainable livelihoods as alternatives to logging for communities. This translated into helping with eco-tourism at Imbu Rano Lodge and delivering training for micro-finance projects – small-scale, community-based activities which can produce a small income, such as keeping bees. The Solomons Islanders have lived as a subsistence way of life until very recently. Fuel for boat travel is very expensive. Communications are difficult. Women in particular are keen to generate a little income which will go towards school fees, an exercise book, secondhand clothes (imported in bulk from Australia and New Zealand) or maybe a trip to hospital in Gizo an hour's boat ride away.

The natural environment was real and immediate for us. We travelled everywhere by boat (or by foot!) and snorkelled and scuba-dived over amazing fish-filled coral gardens. The climb up to the highest point of the volcano rim of Kolombangara nearly killed us but was well worth it! – ditto Pete's marathon 15 hour rock-hop along the Vila river to the centre of the crater. We encountered several interesting bird species including the Kolombangara white eye, frigate birds, common sandpiper and Blyth's hornbill but were at a loss when it came to identifying the wealth of wonderful tropical ferns, fungi, orchids and forest plants.

We will always remember fondly the many friends we made, their acceptance of us and their genuine welcome to share their lives with us. All in all, it was a life-changing experience for us – and thoroughly recommended. All it takes is a step outside your comfort zone and you'll find you are able to pass on some of the blessings you have which you are not even conscious of.

**Peter Butler & Meredith Billington**

# MEMBERS' SIGHTINGS

These sightings are from members' observations. Please check with the relevant person before quoting any record.

<b>Tawny Frogmouth</b>	'Myalstone' via Griffith	03/07/15	Melanie Baulch
<b>Wombat</b> [signs of]	'Yarrabimbi' via Leeton	09/07/15	Andrew Thompson
<b>Grey Fantail</b>	Belah St, Leeton	During June	Joy Young
<b>Major Mitchell's Cockatoo</b> [10]	McPherson Range via Griffith	10/07/15	Melanie Baulch
<b>Galah</b> [30+ killed]	Griffith Airport	10/07/15	Sue Chittick-Dalton
<b>White-faced Heron</b> [24+]	Fivebough Wetlands	11/07/15	Max O'Sullivan
<b>Flame Robin</b> [pair]	Fivebough Wetlands	11/07/15	Max O'Sullivan
<b>Flame Robin</b> [male]	'Yarrabimbi' via Leeton	15/07/15	Andrew Thompson
<b>Brolga</b> [4]	Fivebough Wetlands	15/07/15	Max O'Sullivan
<b>Rose Robin</b> [female]	Ingalba Nature Reserve, Temora	16/07/15	Mel B and Dick Green
<b>Grey-crowned Babbler</b> [5]	Ingalba Nature Reserve, Temora	16/07/15	Mel B and Dick Green
<b>Superb Parrot</b> [5]	Burley Griffin Way	16/07/15	Melanie Baulch
<b>Glossy Ibis</b> [9]	Fivebough Wetlands [overwintering]	19/07/15	Max O'Sullivan
<b>Nankeen Night Heron</b> [12+]	McCaughy Park, Yanco township	20/07/15	Max O'Sullivan
<b>Spotted Harrier</b>	Campbell's Swamp, Griffith	23/07/15	Max O'Sullivan
<b>Stubble Quail</b>	Campbell's Swamp, Griffith	23/07/15	Max O'Sullivan
<b>Australasian Bittern</b>	Fivebough Wetlands	25/07/15	Max O'Sullivan
<b>Magpie Goose</b> [19]	Riverina Beef via Yanco	28/07/15	Ben Kschenka
<b>Blue-faced Honeyeater</b>	Jubilee Park, Griffith	29/07/15	Virginia O'Brien
<b>Red Wattlebird</b>	Jubilee Park, Griffith	29/07/15	Virginia O'Brien
<b>Black Swan</b> [406]	Fivebough Wetlands	30/07/15	Keith Hutton
The swans have also started nest building and there are at least 4 under construction in the wetlands			
<b>Eastern Grey Kangaroo</b> [69]	Fivebough Wetlands	30/07/15	Keith Hutton
<b>Pied Stilt</b> [450]	Fivebough Wetlands	30/07/15	Keith Hutton
<b>Red-necked Avocet</b> [65]	Fivebough Wetlands	30/07/15	Keith Hutton
<b>Eastern Rosella</b> [pr]	Fivebough Wetlands (unusual sighting)	30/07/15	Keith Hutton
<b>Purple Swamphen</b> [48]	Fivebough Wetlands	30/07/15	Keith Hutton
<b>Darter</b>	Fivebough Wetlands (unusual)	30/07/15	Keith Hutton
<b>European Goldfinch</b> [50]	Fivebough Wetlands	30/07/15	Keith Hutton
<b>Pelican</b> [20]	Fivebough Wetlands	30/07/15	Keith Hutton
<b>Black-fronted Dotterel</b> [15]	Fivebough Wetlands	30/07/15	Keith Hutton
<b>Australasian Shoveller</b> [40]	Fivebough Wetlands	30/07/15	Keith Hutton
<b>Swamp Harrier</b> [pr]	Fivebough Wetlands	30/07/15	Keith Hutton
<b>Spotless Crake</b>	Fivebough Wetlands	30/07/15	Keith Hutton
<b>Black-tailed Native-hen</b> [2]	Fivebough Wetlands	01/08/15	Max O'Sullivan
<b>Restless Flycatcher</b>	Flakney Springs, south of Wagga Wagga	02/08/15	Melanie B & Dick Green
<b>Peregrine Falcon</b> [4]	Falcon Falls, Cocoparra National Park	03/08/15	Michelle Ballestrin

## Membership subscriptions are due on the 30<sup>th</sup> June

The membership renewal date of the 30<sup>th</sup> June has rolled around again..

Please send your money to the Treasurer, Phil Tenison, promptly to PO Box 541, Leeton, NSW 2705 or make a bank transfer to the MFN's bank account. It is the BSB 062 564, A/c 10039396. (Commonwealth Bank), Don't forget to note your name so Phil can identify it on the Bank Statement.

Any queries Phil can be contacted on 02 69 534869.

Annual subscription rates are currently:-

Family - \$45, Adult/Single - \$35, Journal only/Concession - \$25

# \*\*\*\* COMING EVENTS \*\*\*\*

- 13 August Thursday** **Monthly Meeting** in the Yellow Room at the **Leeton Library**, Sycamore St., Leeton commencing at 7.30pm.  
**Topic: South Central Queensland – Eric and Rowena Whiting**  
(Unfortunately Mike Spinaze is unavailable due to work commitments)  
**Contact:** Penny Williams 6953 3524  
**Email:** [murrumbidgeefieldnaturalists@gmail.com](mailto:murrumbidgeefieldnaturalists@gmail.com)
- 15 August Saturday** **Hehir's property visit**  
**Meet** at Leeton Post Office at 9:00am. Subject to weather  
Bring morning tea and lunch.  
**Contact:** Nella Smith if attending on 6959 1210
- 16 August Sunday** **Rescheduled Tree Planting Day**  
Griffith City Council are hosting National Tree Day at Citrus Road, Collina  
Time: 10am – 12 noon. A light lunch and drinks will be provided.  
Contact: Joanne Tarbit on 02 69 628 140  
**Visit** <http://treeday.planetark.org/> **for more information**
- 28-30 August w/e** **Dubbo Field Nats** are camping at **Cocoparra National Park** and MFN are invited to join them.  
**Meet the group at the Woolshed Flat camping ground at 8.30 - 9am on the Saturday**  
**Contact:** Penny Williams 6953 3524  
**Email:** [murrumbidgeefieldnaturalists@gmail.com](mailto:murrumbidgeefieldnaturalists@gmail.com)
- 2 September Wednesday** **Copy for the September newsletter is due. Please send to Rowena.**  
Email: [ericwhiting4@bigpond.com](mailto:ericwhiting4@bigpond.com). Phone: 6953 2612.
- 10 September Thursday** **Monthly Meeting** in the Yellow Room at the **Leeton Library**, Sycamore St., Leeton commencing at 7.30pm.  
**Topic: Nella Smith on her recent trip to Canada and Alaska.**  
**Contact:** Penny Williams 6953 3524  
**Email:** [murrumbidgeefieldnaturalists@gmail.com](mailto:murrumbidgeefieldnaturalists@gmail.com)
- 12 or 13 September** **Around Narrandera – orchids and other spring flowers**  
**Meet** at Narrandera Information Centre at 9:00.  
Bring morning tea and lunch.  
**Contact:** Nella Smith if attending on 6959 1210
- 18 – 25 September** **Biodiversity Survey at Mandagery Nature Reserve (Forbes area)**  
Contact: Nella Smith 6959 1210 if you would like to participate.
- 25 – 27 September** **Spring Camp at Nangar National Park, Eugowra**  
**Friday - Sunday**  
Accommodation is either camping in the park or at the local Eugowra pub  
Please advise Penny Williams 6953 3524 of your intentions to attend and if you intend to camp or to stay at the Eugowra pub.  
**Note: This will be a self-catering camp.**  
Email: [murrumbidgeefieldnaturalists@gmail.com](mailto:murrumbidgeefieldnaturalists@gmail.com)
- 17 October Saturday** **Livingstone National Park outing, south of Wagga Wagga**  
Dick Green and Helen Wood will conduct a tour of the park with emphasis on plants.  
Details will be made available closer to the time.  
Contact: Penny Williams 6953 3524  
Email: [murrumbidgeefieldnaturalists@gmail.com](mailto:murrumbidgeefieldnaturalists@gmail.com)
- 30 October – 1 November Twitchathon**
- Other events:**
- 9 – 11 October** **Birds of the Bush Festival at Rankins Springs**  
Art and Photography Exhibition, Bird Tours, market stalls, entertainment.  
Information can be found at [www.birdsofthebush.com](http://www.birdsofthebush.com)