

The Murrumbidgee Naturalist



July 2016 - Issue #239

Journal of the Murrumbidgee Field Naturalists Inc.

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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



Phlebopus marginatus
fungus
by Eric Whiting

It was found alongside the Mt Bingar Road in the Cocoparra National Park. It was around 60cm diameter; it can fruit at any time of the year after rain. It is probably Australia's largest terrestrial fungus. Caps can be up to a metre.

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CONTRIBUTIONS

For the August issue by
Wednesday 3 August

To Rowena Whiting

Email: ericwhiting4@bigpond.com.

Phone: 6953 2612

*Outings to the Brobenah Hills
and
Cocoparra National Park*

Murrumbidgee Field Naturalists Inc. Office Bearers and Annual Subscriptions

| | | | | | |
|------------------------|----------------|-----------|------------------------------|------------------|-----------|
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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:

| | | | | | | |
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| Annual Subscriptions: | Family | \$45.00 | Adult/Single | \$35.00 | Journal only/Concession | \$25.00 |

Opinions expressed by authors are their own and do not necessarily represent the policies or views of the Murrumbidgee Field Naturalists Inc.

Images in colour (for those members who get a printed copy with the following pages in black & white)
 Woolshed Falls – the lower falls and the group nearby,
 a view of the green mosses and lichen on the rocks, a
 bracket fungus (Rowena), a Welcome Swallow in North
 Queensland (Neil) and Paika Lake (Nella)



WATER, WATER EVERYWHERE AND GOOD ENOUGH TO DRINK!

What a delight it was to see the magic of flowing water in the Cocoparras although we forded a few floodways across the road to get there.

At one spot at Duncan's Creek there was this amazing sight of crystal clear water pouring from a huge rock and disappearing a few metres away as though gulped by an invisible aquifer for its depleted system. It was a magic trick provided by Nature.

The rains had awoken the Earth's dormancy and a patch of huge yellow fungi the size of a large dinner plate astounded us along with delicate long stalked ones with caps as shiny as polished glass and many more. Ferns and seedlings (of everything it seemed) flourished early, too anxious to wait for spring.

The wonderful waterfalls and streams at Woolshed Flats, the wombat holes with fresh scats at Duncan Creek, the company of good friends and the beauty of a green world made the day memorial.



MFNs exploring a flowing Duncans Creek by Virginia Tarr

Sue Chittick-Dalton

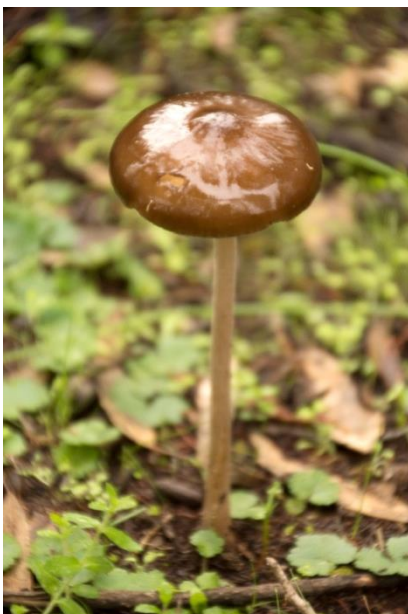
BIRD LIST

- | | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| Emu | Peaceful dove | Brown Falcon |
| Galah | Mallee Ringneck | Striped Pardalote |
| Yellow Thornbill | Inland Thornbill | Spiny-cheeked Honeyeater |
| White-plumed Honeyeater | Brown-headed Honeyeater | White-browed Babbler |
| Yellow Robin | Grey Shrike-thrush | Golden Whistler |
| Gilbert's Whistler | Willy Wagtail | Apostlebird |
| Australian Raven. | | |

The Fungi

One delight of the wet weather has been the number of fungi showing their fruiting bodies above the ground. A number of fungi were found in the Cocoparras; mainly during our walk along Duncans Creek also a couple at Woolshed Falls.

Fungi are not easy to identify, one of ways is to take a spore print and I did this with one of those we found. It is probably a Lepiota. The picture above shows it has white spores enhanced by using green paper.



Rowena Whiting

A bracket fungi below.



Duncans Creek Cocoparra National Park

Our excursion on Sunday 26th June to Duncans Creek was a chilly overcast refreshing day. Soon after pulling up at on a lower part of the Bingar Road, we were treated to a great show of huge fungi x 8, *Phlebobus marginatus*; Australia's largest fungus.

We walked upstream by the swiftly flowing water and through the woodland finding a number of interesting birds, wombat scats and their burrows - some flooded out due to the amount of rain soaked grounds. We saw interesting rock features, springs and colourful tree trunk markings. We also found other fungi very different from the large one.

Back to our vehicles we decided to have an early lunch while there was some sunrays breaking through the clouds. Andrew found a patch of Greenhood rosettes with one stem forming a bud. As the weather was improving we decided to drive to Woolshed Flats and on the way stopped at Steamboat Creek to visit the remnants of the original Whitton Stock route bridge. Also found a huge Wombat burrow on the creek bank.

There were overflows of running water on the road to Woolshed Flats that was fun to drive through.

At Woolshed Flats there were other families visiting the fast flowing water falls and exploring the rocks and woodlands. The place was magical with mosses, lichen, healthy ferns, green grasses and running streams.

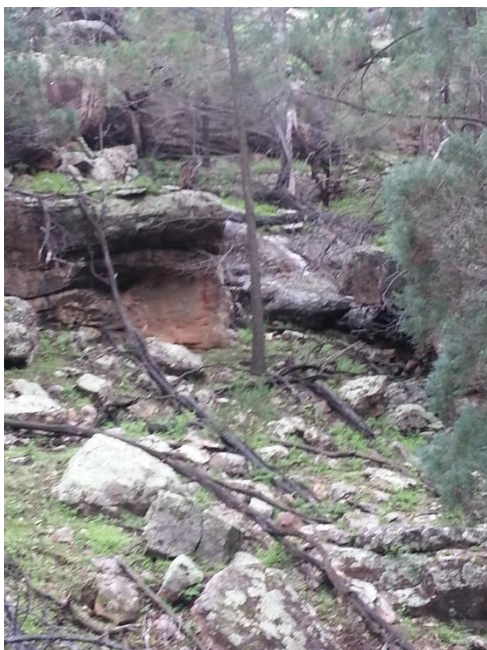
The walking track was easy, well defined with only one small jump over the stream on the short track up to the falls. There had been a few trees blown over near the first waterfall due to strong winds recently.

Overall it was an exhilarating day of wonders.

Virginia Tarr.



Phlebobus marginatus (top),
From left: Animal shelter; layered
sediment of the past; Discussion of
original Whitton stockroute bridge over
Steamboat creek



An Atlas of the Birds of NSW & the ACT: Volume 2 This, the second of 3 Volumes, contains over 670 pages covering 165 resident and migratory species from the Comb-crested Jacana to Striated Pardalote. Details for each species include current distribution, breeding biology and seasons, variations in seasonal and historic range and current status and trends. Members can buy this for \$95. + p&p of \$25 = \$120.00 (Total). Remember, Volume 1 (\$95. + p&p \$25.00) is also still available.

Please contact & order through Dick Cooper treasurer@nswbirdatlassers.org.au

Payment may be made direct to: NSW Bird Atlassers

by EFT- NSWBA- BSB 704 328 account 200434, Please include your name;

Or mail a Cheque: NSW Bird Atlassers, Treasurer, PO Box 717, Woolgoolga, NSW 2456

Commonwealth Environmental Water

This was the topic for our June meeting and we were pleased to welcome Erin Lenon from the Commonwealth Environmental Water Office based at Yanco.

"The functions of the Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder are to be performed for the purpose of protecting or restoring the environmental assets of the Murray-Darling Basin, so as to give effect to relevant international agreements." For example RAMSAR and JAMBA.

Commonwealth water holdings are the direct result of government purchases of entitlements and a substantial investment in more efficient water infrastructure in the Murray Darling Basin. Government purchases were all voluntary sales.

The planning, prioritisation, use and monitoring and evaluation of Commonwealth environmental water is informed by a range of stakeholders including the Department of the Environment and other Commonwealth and State government agencies, scientists, catchment and local natural resource management agencies, environmental water advisory groups, water user associations, Indigenous communities and local landholders.

Following the ratification of the Murray Darling Basin Plan on 21 November 2012, the Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder's decisions on water use, carryover and trade have been made in the context of, and consistent with, the Basin Plan's Environmental Watering Plan, and annual priorities.

The Commonwealth's environmental water entitlements receive the same allocations and follow the same rules regarding carryover and trade as any other water holders. There are strict protocols about water usage. The Commonwealth will not put high flows down the river and can't inundate farmland without permission. Minor flood level is 60 000gl, only 30 000gl is ever sent down the river so there is never a flood except with the grace of God.

The entitlement flow is managed by the MDBA through a combination of unregulated tributary inflows and releases from upstream NSW and Victorian storages.

The water sharing plan drives how water is split up. This shows how basin flows are used for town, stock and domestic, industry, irrigation and environmental flows.

All water starts at Burrinjuck and Blowering Dams which were of course built for irrigation purposes.

After that there are two ways of delivering water: on the river and by using existing irrigation structures. Sometimes irrigation structures are improved to assist both irrigators and the delivery of environmental water.

Environmental water is used to water wetlands and billabongs and to connect them on private land and public land including national parks eg Yanga. The water has successfully increased macro and micro invertebrates which will jump start food chains. Fish breeding and waterbird breeding has increased greatly and the health of the vegetation including rushes and trees has been somewhat restored. At The Junction wetlands environmental water was used to save some huge redgums and riparian vegetation. Waterbird, fish and frog breeding has been very successful in the low bidgee.

A long term monitoring plan has been implemented to check how effective ewater has been. This includes macro and microinvertebrate , vegetation, fish, frog and waterbird surveys. It also involves water sampling and carbon testing.

Decisions about which wetlands or areas are allocated environmental water are based on maximising environmental outcomes, ecological value of the wetland and the long term sustainability and management



of the sites, cost effectiveness and feasibility. CEWO aims to avoid harm or adverse impact.

CEWO use the Murrumbidgee Environmental Water Advisory Group for advice and it uses local knowledge, always negotiates consent from any affected parties and tries to be fair and flexible.

Examples of Environmental flows in our region have been into Yarrada Lagoon near Darlington Point, Gras Innes near Narrandera, Sandy Creek near Sandigo, Fivebough and Tuckerbil Swamps, McCaughey Lagoon, Yanco Creek system wetlands and Mid-Murrumbidgee in-stream flow integrity and fish passage.

Nella Smith



Previous page What happens when there's no water; The Junction.

This page: The Hobblers and Paika Lake at sunset (this has received water (environmental) for the first time in 100 years)

Display at the Griffith Central Mall for Griffith Interagency Expo

I was invited by Landcare coordinator, Kerri Keely if I would like to join them to display our MFN activity. I was glad to be involved and so contacted Nella for the display board and pictures. We were lucky to have the room to spread our display at the IGA supermarket end of two long rows of tables.

The morning was a great success. No sooner we had our display board up that we had people coming by enquiring about our activities. All our newsletters disappeared, many bird pamphlets were taken and mothers asking if their sons, husbands would be interested. We even had a Homecare visiting manager asking if low care clients can join us. We filled them in enthusiastically of our fortnightly bush walks, flora & fauna, and other activities for all ages.

Land care had pamphlets, large bird posters and water bottles to give away.

The morning past by so quickly that we didn't have a moment to eat. 1.30pm came when we were to pack up and even then there were people stopping by asking us about our activities. So hopefully we will be getting some phone calls asking when they can join us on a walk.

Virginia Tarr.

And from Kerri Keely

Hi everyone, I just wanted to express my gratitude to the Murrumbidgee Field Naturalists for being involved in the Griffith Interagency Expo that was held on June 23. The display was very attractive and it was due to the collaboration of MFN, LLS and Landcare. The MFN display board was great-really eye catching and appealed to the people that were in attendance. We were targeting the urban community and it worked.

Virginia and I attended all morning and we were very surprised at the amount of people that were interested in learning more about MFN and wanted to know about upcoming activities. I think all the newsletters went!

There seems to be an interest from schools as well so we will have to build on this interest and plan for an activity in the near future.

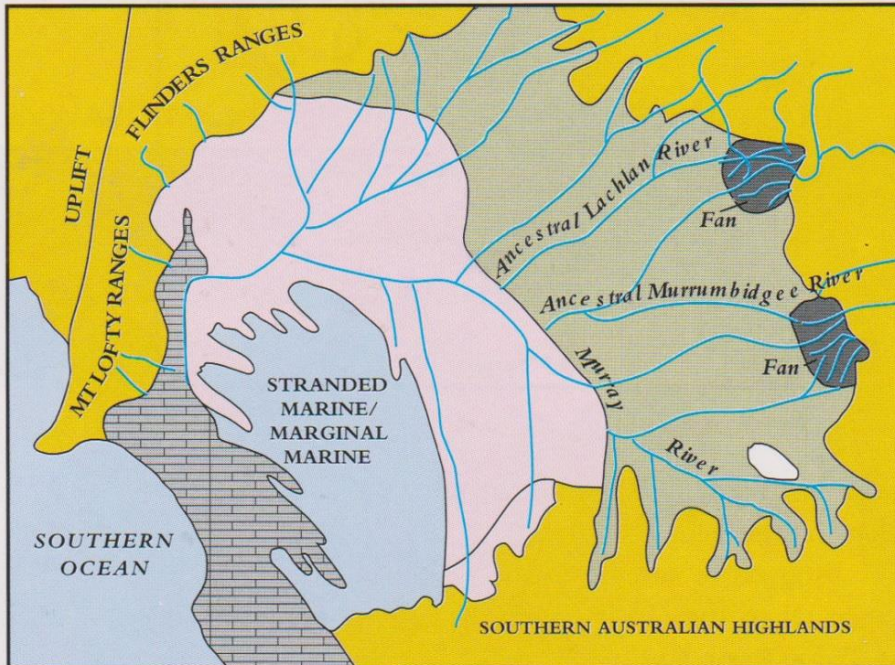


Our Country In Bygone Times Murrumbidgee River History - Part 1

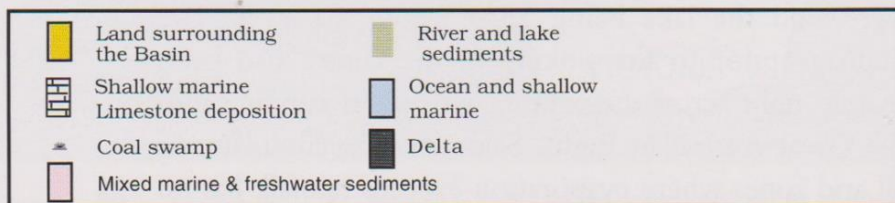
'Ol' man river, he just keeps rollin' along'

That refrain supposes that rivers (here the Mississippi) have always and always will be the same. Maybe true for our life span but not in a geological time frame. It is far from true for our river, the Murrumbidgee. In its present form it is in geological terms very much a recent phenomenon.

In the Pliocene, about 5 million years ago.



After Stephenson & Brown 36



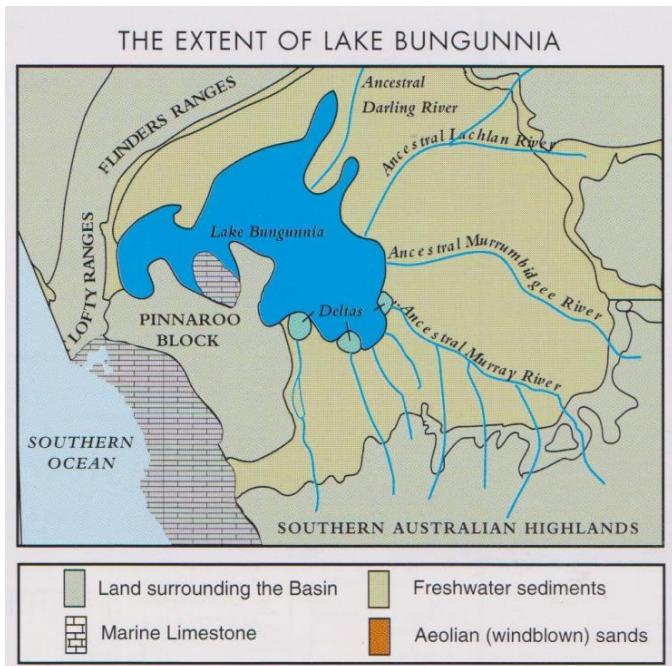
its present position and rotated 270° on its way.] Plate movements then built up mountains to our east. As Australia was still joined onto Gondwanaland to the south, drainage was probably towards the north. We don't really know as later squeezing and granite intrusions also pushed our area up into mountains.

Then came a long period of erosion with the whole of eastern Australia reduced to a low flat plain. It's anyone's guess which direction drainage patterns took.

Finally some 60mya Australia began separating from Antarctica. Sideways pressure buckled the wide plain to begin elevating the Dividing Range and a complimentary down warping formed the Murray Basin. It is only then the Murrumbidgee and other rivers of the Murray Darling flowed westerly from the Dividing Range. However the Basin was deep enough for the sea to cover the western parts as far as Griffith. Above sea level the erosion debris must have formed large floodplains as the new mountains eroded rapidly. Later erosion has removed nearly all trace of these floodplains, the Tertiary gravels that occur in the Buckingham State Forest area being some of the remaining deposits.

Around 5 mya more earth movements raised up a barrier across the south western part of the Murray Basin. The sea had retracted from its high point as the basin continued to fill with erosion material from the east (a layer of sedimentary material 600m thick has accumulated in some parts of the Basin). At first the barrier created a large freshwater lake (Bungunnia Lake) from a line north-south at Balranald eastwards. Eventually around 0.8mya, a drainage channel cut through the barrier and the lower Murray River was formed. Initially it flowed westwards to the St. Vincent Gulf, but 5mya the Mt. Lofty Ranges were elevated causing the river to abruptly divert southwards to the ocean near Gawler.

Rivers are formed from rain falling on hills or mountains, and running down to lower levels. The lower level is often the oceans but as we know in Australia not always so. Rivers also carry erosion debris with them to deposit it further down. By the way the deposits occur and the size of the particles in the deposit, geologists can deduce where the higher ground was. Thus the rocks that form the basement layers underlying (and in parts folded up to form the various ranges) were laid some 370 million years ago (mya) the eastern edge of Australia along that was then at a line roughly down the western border of New South Wales, and that the mountains were west of the line. Rivers of the time therefore came from the west. [I use the present day compass points not those current at the time. Since the Late Devonian times Australia has drifted from around 30°N via the South Pole to



The old Bungunnia Lake partly drained and partly filled up with more sediments to form the virtually flat Riverine Plains over which the ancestral rivers meandered. The form and courses of the rivers were greatly influenced by the comings and goings of the Ice Ages, the first big one being 1.6mya. At the peak of each Ice Age sea levels dropped and arid conditions prevailed. The rivers were low and probably intermittent. The south-westerly winds scooped up dry beds into source-bordering dunes. Then as the ice melted, rainfall increased dramatically and the rivers flowed strongly – four to six times the present flow rates. These stronger flows carved out wider less tortuous paths, often new ones, across the flat landscape. Interglacials saw the change back to warmer, more arid climates. Slower rivers meander more with tighter bends and frequent cutting off of oxbow lagoons, as we see today.

Eric Whiting

Illustrations from *Listen...our land is crying* by Mary E White

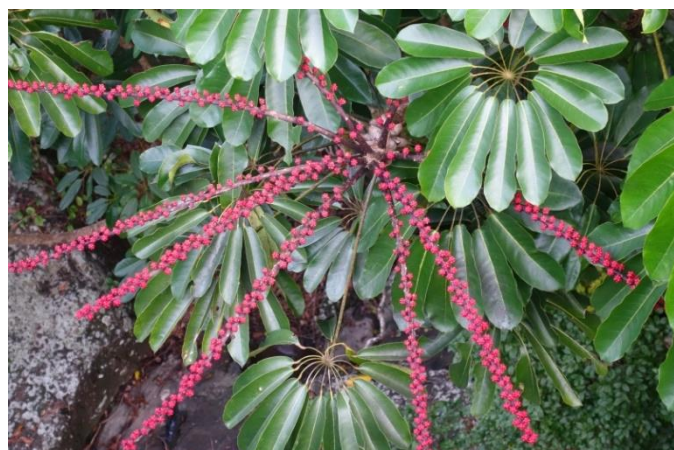
Birding in the Cairns area – 21 to 23 June 2016

Neil Palframan and I had three days of intensive birding in several different habitats in the Cairns area. Neil and Johanna had been on holidays in Cairns the week prior to my visit and Neil stayed on an extra week after Johanna went back to Griffith to work.



I was staying just out of Yungaburra on the Atherton Tableland and Neil picked me up on the Tuesday to visit various spots on the southern end of the tableland. Our first stop was at Hastie Swamp where there were hundreds, if not thousands, of **Plumed Whistling-ducks** and **Magpie Geese**. We searched the flock for any **Wandering Whistling-duck** but didn't find any so we headed for Mt Hipamee National Park towards Ravenshoe to look for the **Golden Bowerbird** in particular. We waited close to the bower with no luck so came back onto the road and found a very tall fruiting tree that had many birds feeding in it. We managed to identify **Tooth-billed Bowerbird**, **Victoria's Riflebird** and several female **Golden Bowerbirds** but sadly no males. On the walk to the crater we found a **Grey-headed Robin** and several **Pale-yellow Robins**. We also identified an **Atherton Scrubwren**.

We then headed to the Nerada Tea Estate just out of Malanda via the Bromfield Crater. At the entrance to the tea plantation there were people looking into the trees and we soon spotted a male **Lumholtz's Tree Kangaroo** feeding in the canopy.



After a late morning tea there, we then visited the rainforest walk at the Malanda Information Centre with few birds but a sighting of a **Red-legged Pademelon**.

On the next day Neil picked me up early and we drove to the Mareeba Wetlands – the infamous site of Nella's taipan encounter last year! With time being a consideration we decided not to do the walk to look for **Black-throated Finch** so remained at the centre where we saw both **Green** and **Cotton Pygmy Geese** on the lake. When we drove out we saw a pair of **Squatter Pigeon** and a single **Little Woodswallow**.

Next was a stop at Lake Mitchell (Quaid Lake) where we searched for **Black-necked Stork (Jabiru)** without success but did see several **Jacana, Brown-backed Honeyeaters** and I saw a **Tawny Grassbird**.



We stopped at Mt Molloy for lunch and had wonderful views of both **Great Bowerbirds** and **Red-winged Parrots**. A stop at Abattoir Swamp Environmental Park with its new boardwalk was very quiet with just a pair of **Yellow Honeyeaters** near the carpark. Neil had been told to go up McDougall Rd at Julatten to look for birds and it was well worthwhile as we saw **Fig Parrots, Figbirds, Spectacled Monarchs, Rufous Fantails, Northern Fantails** and, best of all, a beautiful pair of **Yellow-breasted Boatbills**.

On the Thursday, I met Neil on the Esplanade in Cairns where I saw **Varied Honeyeaters** and Neil had already seen a **Mangrove Robin** before I arrived - I saw a pair in the same spot the next week when I stayed with friends in Cairns before

flying back to Sydney.

A trip to the Cattana Wetlands just north of Cairns on the Yorkey's Knob Road proved pretty frustrating as the mosquitoes were far too friendly and seemed to relish the repellent we put on so we left and headed south of Cairns to Eubenangee Swamp on the way to Bramston Beach. The walk to view the swamp was again very quiet and the swamp itself had only herons and egrets on it. At the carpark, we heard the familiar call of the **Wompoo Fruit-dove** and Neil spotted it sheltering under a palm frond in a heavy shower of rain.



We had lunch at Bramston Beach before driving south past Innisfail to Etty Bay where

I had seen a **Cassowary** last year. On the way into the beach, I spotted a male bird with his four half-grown immature chicks heading towards a house that must feed them. When I was there last year locals reported the male had successfully hatched 6 chicks so it was good to see he had successfully raised 4 of them.

By this time, the day was fading and despite the fact that Neil wanted to press on to Tully to claim to have been to the wettest town in Australia, I persuaded him that we would have got there in the dark so he wouldn't have seen much anyway so he drove me back to Yungaburra instead.

Max O'Sullivan

An addendum from Neil

All the bird books keep mentioning November to April for birding in Far North Queensland which is of course in the hottest and wettest time. So I wondered what June would hold. Well it was still very warm, and humid, and rainy – so much for winter and the dry season! I don't feel any attraction to return in the wet. Birds were obviously much lighter on, and many were absent, but there was enough around that I managed to compile a list of around ninety species that we don't get at home. Add a sprinkling of mammals, the sea life out on the Reef, a variety of vegetation, and it adds up to a productive nature trip.

Photos by Neil Palframan

Hordes of Rainbow Bee-eaters along the Daintree pastures. These may be our Murrumbidgee summer visitors.

The Umbrella Tree (*Schefflera actinophylla*) is a winter fruiter, and often sported honeyeaters

Finding time to eat lunch is difficult at Mt Molloy with the constant traffic of Great Bowerbirds, Red-winged Parrot, Yellow Sunbird, honeyeaters and more

Cairns was having a wet "dry season" but there were plusses, like this rainbow on the Daintree River

We have made a mistake or 2 or 3 or more...

The wombat in the last issue was a Common Wombat – thanks to Keith for pointing this out.

Going back a little further and the snake the Williams saw near their dam on the Koala Count was a Brown Snake. Need to determine the shape of the head. We have to thank some Canberra readers for questioning this.

The orchid in the last issue was at Lake Talbot was *Eriochilus petricola*, and has the same common name. Parsons Bands as *E autumnalis*; looking up the scientific name I took the first one I found in the orchid book. This shows it is necessary to use scientific names, just need to make sure to get them right!

The wattle picture in the Gillenbah report last month found at Lake Talbot is *Acacia iteaphylla* Willow-leaved Wattle – a garden escape.

Some issues that have been in news from the Nature Conservation Council: you may be interested in making your viewpoint heard.

The Biodiversity Conservation Bill

The club has sent a submission objecting to the proposed legislation for land clearing. They report a staggering 5,465 people across NSW made a submission opposing the Baird Government's outrageous plans. That's huge and shows the Government that we're a strong community committed to protecting nature.

With the submission period now over, it's time to take our message directly to the Premier. The Government wants to pass these new laws in October meaning we've got three months to change their mind!

Keen to do more now? Drop Premier Baird's office a quick call on 8574 5000 and ask for his plans to increase land clearing to be scrapped, you can find some useful background information at <http://www.standupfornature.org.au/>

Draft wild horse management plan for Kosciuszko National Park

The NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service is seeking feedback on its [Kosciuszko National Park Draft Wild Horse Management Plan 2016](#). If you would like to make a submission, the Colong Foundation for Wilderness has made available a [submission guide](#) and [draft submission](#). Submissions close **19 August 2016**.

Riverina Priority Weed List

If you know of a weed species that is not recognised by the Weed Risk Assessment (WRA) within your Local Land Service (LLS) region, inform your LLS by completing a WRA form found [at](http://www.riverinaweeds.org.au/) <http://www.riverinaweeds.org.au/>

In 2017, the *Biosecurity Act 2015* will repeal the *Noxious Weeds Act 1993* and the current declaration list will be null and void. A critical part of the implementation of the Biosecurity Act is the development of Regional Strategic Weed Management Plans (RSWMP). The recently appointed Riverina Regional Weed Committee (RWC) will be developing the RSWMP that will clearly explain the weed management responsibilities and obligations of land managers.

Send your WRA to pbosse@greaterhume.nsw.gov.au by **29 July 2016**.

These shots of **Magpie Geese** were taken at the **Lake Cowal Gold Mine** by Tony Glasgow



MEMBERS' SIGHTINGS

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

| | | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|------------|----------------|
| Yellow-throated Miner | "Mountain Dam", via Leeton | 09/05/2016 | Graham Russell |
| Brown Honeyeater [4] | Petersham Rd, Leeton | 21/05/16 | Penny Williams |
| Australasian Bittern [1] | Fivebough Wetlands | 29/05/16 | Keith Hutton |
| Brolga [3] | Fivebough Wetlands | 29/05/16 | Keith Hutton |
| Yellow Thornbill [8] | Cutler Ave, Griffith | 02/06/16 | Virginia Tarr |
| Mistletoebird [2males] | Piccoli Park, Griffith | 02/06/16 | Virginia Tarr |
| Collared Sparrowhawk [male] | Palla St, Griffith | 02/06/16 | Virginia Tarr |
| Black-chinned Honeyeater [2] | Cutler Ave, Griffith | 02/06/16 | Virginia Tarr |
| Virginia was convinced of the identification as she compared their call to the one on her phone App. | | | |
| Red-rumped Parrot [small flock] | Robert St, Narrandera | 07/06/16 | Betty Bradney |
| Wedge-tailed Eagle [1] | Fivebough Wetlands | 12/06/16 | Max O'Sullivan |
| Little Eagle [1] | Fivebough Wetlands | 12/06/16 | Max O'Sullivan |
| Flame Robin [male] | Fivebough Wetlands | 12/06/16 | Max O'Sullivan |
| Australian Reed Warbler [1] | Fivebough Wetlands | 12/06/16 | Max O'Sullivan |
| Little Grassbird [1] | Fivebough Wetlands | 12/06/16 | Max O'Sullivan |
| Superb Parrot [8] | Five Mile, Narrandera | 13/06/16 | Nella Smith |
| Brolga [7] | Tuckerbil Swamp | 14/06/16 | Nella Smith |
| Black Falcon | Koonadan via Leeton | 14/06/16 | Nella Smith |
| Black Swan [280] | Fivebough Wetlands | 26/06/16 | Keith Hutton |

This is a significantly large number of swans and Keith has recorded the nesting list below.

Black Swan nesting records at Fivebough Wetlands: 1 on 26/6, 2 on 28/6 and 12 on 30/6 Keith Hutton

| | | | |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------|----------|--------------|
| White-bellied Sea-Eagle | Fivebough Wetlands | 28/06/16 | Keith Hutton |
| Black Falcon | Hanwood via Griffith | 30/06/16 | Keith Hutton |
| White-bellied Sea-Eagle [pair] | Fivebough Wetlands | 03/07/16 | Keith Hutton |
| Blue-billed Duck [3] | Fivebough Wetlands | 03/07/16 | Keith Hutton |
| Musk Duck [pair] | Fivebough Wetlands | 03/07/16 | Keith Hutton |
| Brown Quail [7] | Fivebough Wetlands | 03/07/16 | Keith Hutton |
| European Goldfinch [40+] | Fivebough Wetlands | 03/07/16 | Keith Hutton |
| Wedge-tailed Eagle [pr] | Fivebough Wetlands | 03/07/16 | Keith Hutton |

A Red-bellied Black Snake Visits

Look what crawled out of the mulch on a freezing winter's day? Our dog was barking and we realised there was a note of hysteria to her tone. To our surprise and delight Scarlet had bailed up this lovely Red-bellied Black Snake but had the sense not to touch him. We suspect the snake had unwittingly poked its head out to get a tad of sunlight but it took him/her a good 10 minutes to warm up sufficiently (or recover from the shock?) to slowly inch back in to a warm spot.

We're happy our little treed acre in the vines was considered a safe haven for a native species ☺ a

Meredith Billington



Appeared out of the mulch in Bilbul at 4:53 pm on 12 June, the day's maximum temperature in Griffith was 13.1 °C

**** COMING EVENTS ****

- 14 July Thursday** **Monthly Meeting** in the Yellow Room at the **Leeton Library**, Sycamore St., Leeton commencing at 7.30pm.
Speaker: Kerri Keely, Landcare coordinator, she will show a short video on paddock trees
Contact: Penny Williams 6953 3524
Email: murrumbidgeefieldnaturalists@gmail.com
- 17 July Sunday** **Outing: "Yarrambimbi" in the Brobenah Hills**
Meet: Leeton Post Office at 8:30am.
Bring: morning tea and lunch.
Please contact: Eric or Rowena Whiting on 6953 2612 or Andrew Thompson 0427 318 447 if intending to come. This may have to be cancelled if the tracks are too wet, we will probably go elsewhere.
- 31 July Sunday** **Activity: "Hollows as Homes"**
at Cocoparra National Park to celebrate National Tree Day and World Ranger Day
Organised by Irrigation Area Landcare Collective and NSW National Parks and Wildlife.
Time: 10.30am-1.30pm. (an email will be sent when the meeting place is known)
Contact: Kerri Keely - kkeely@mli.org.au or 0428 396 826. or Eric or Rowena Whiting on 6953 2612
- National Tree Day** is held every year in July. It is a great opportunity to do something good for the environment and give back to your local community in a meaningful way. Participants from across Australia unite with thousands of generous, green-minded individuals, to reconnect with nature, enjoy and protect Australia's unique natural environment, and just have fun.
- 3 August Wednesday** **Copy for the August newsletter is due. Please send to Rowena.**
Email: ericwhiting4@bigpond.com. Phone: 6953 2612.
- 11 August Thursday** **Monthly Meeting** in the Yellow Room at the **Leeton Library**, Sycamore St., Leeton commencing at 7.30pm.
Topic: TBA
Contact: Penny Williams 6953 3524
Email: murrumbidgeefieldnaturalists@gmail.com
- 16 August Tuesday** **Tree planting at Fivebough Wetlands**
There is a large area near the Fivebough Wetlands Education area that has been prepared for planting.
Contact Kerri Keely - Local Landcare Coordinator (Irrigation areas & surrounding districts) for more information at kkeely@mli.org.au or 0428 396 826.
- Other events**
- 3 -4 September** **BIGnet Conference in Leeton**
MFN are hosting this event – more details near the time.
- 16 – 18 September** **Spring Camp at Rankins Springs**
Camping and Motel weekend. Looking at mallee and wattle in the area
Contact: Graham and Dione Russell
- 26 September onwards** **Yathong - a plant search of the nearby Merrimerrriwa Range**
This will take place over a few days. A reasonable level of fitness is required.
Contact: Nella Smith 69591210
- 7-9 October** **Birds of the Bush Festival at Rankins Springs**
Guest Speaker: Tim Low. A biologist, environmental consultant and writer of numerous books: "The New Nature" "Feral Future" and "Where Song Began".