

From: **ABSA** info@absa.asn.au  
Subject: **ABSA - Newsletter 132 June 2018**  
Date: 21 June 2018 at 10:59 PM  
To: steinbod@pnc.com.au

A

Newsletter of the Australian Bird Study Association

[View this email in your browser](#)



[HOME](#) [ABOUT ABSA](#) [OUR HISTORY](#) [CONTACT US](#)

## NEWSLETTER 132



Editor: Stein Boddington  
<info@absa.asn.au>

ISSN 2202-297X (Online)  
June 2018

### **Contents**

2018 Annual General Meeting

- President's Report
- Treasurer's Report
- Editor's Report
- Election of the Committee

Going Through Glen Innes?

Bird in the Hand Uploads

2018 Australasian Shorebird Conference

Vale Perry de Rebeira OAM

Birdlife Australia Congress and Broome Observatory 30th Birthday

Red-tailed Black Cockatoo Habitat Reprieve

Australian Bird Photographer of the Year

Trip Reports:

- Munghorn Gap
- Agnes Banks Nature Reserve
- Scheyville National Park 14/1/18
- Charcoal Tank, Ungarie and Bowra



### **Editorial**

Another year, another AGM and conference, and we reflect on the effort that goes into making these events happen. Whatever help he/she has (though there has yet to be a female President of ABSA!), and whatever delegations he/she makes, it falls on the President to make it happen.

Similarly, we are mindful of the many hours put in by the Editor, the Sub-editors and the Production Editor of Corella, to make it the meticulously prepared journal that it is - not to mention the hundreds of hours of work that authors/researchers put in to generate the content.

Each office-holder also has their responsibilities, some to the Committee and members, and some to the regulatory authorities under whose auspice ABSA exists. We thank Cat Young for taking on the role of Treasurer over the coming year - and hopefully a few after that. Even the Ordinary Committee members turn up once a quarter to deliberate and decide things. Yet others look after the Facebook page and the Twitter feed.

This is not a whinge - just a reminder that for ABSA to keep functioning, a large group of people give generously of their time and expertise.

*Stein Boddington*  
Newsletter Editor

**Annual General Meeting - 17 March 2018**

### **President's Report**

This report marks the end of my first year as President of ABSA. It's been an interesting year and I've been fortunate to have a great group of people on the Committee to work with. I'd like to thank them all for their support. I'm pleased to report that the while we continue to face challenges, we have also been making good progress on a range of fronts.

During the year we began the process of updating our website. This has proved to be a more substantial task than we first assumed but we are working our way through the issues and I hope to have the process completed in the coming year. The aim is to have a website that is modern, reliable, easy to use and easy to maintain.

Our on-line presence has been enhanced by the continuing great work being done by our Facebook and Twitter team, Cat Young and Amy Greenwood. There has been a steady stream of interesting content which is drawing a lot of interest.

The Bird in the Hand 2 series has been a great success. There are now nearly 500 profile sheets available on-line (free!) and updates, revisions and new sheets continue to appear every month. This initiative has been one of the most useful things to appear for many years and has been a huge personal effort by our past President, Jeff Hardy, to produce. Bird banders in Australia will be in debt to him for many years to come.

Maintaining and growing our membership base continues to be a challenge and this will be a major focus area in the coming year. I thank everyone who has already renewed their membership for the continuing support; and I urge everyone who hasn't yet done that to please do so as soon as possible. If you're having difficulty with the process please don't hesitate to contact any of the Committee directly, we'll do everything we can to help.

The Fund for Avian Research received several very good applications for funding support this year and the Committee had a very difficult time deciding between them. In the end we have supported two projects, one by Dr William Feeney who is looking at nest predators and the other by Fiona Andrews, who is looking at the genetics of the Red-rumped Parrot in SE Australia. I'd like to congratulate both successful applicants and wish them every success in their research.

I'm sad to report that four long-standing members of the Committee have indicated that they will not be re-nominating for another term, namely Jeff Hardy, John Farrell, Stephen Debus and Ken Gover. All four have played a big part on the Committee for many years, Jeff Hardy (as Past President) and John Farrell (as Treasurer) in particular. Let me start by thanking all four for the sterling service they have provided, they have made a huge contribution and they will be sorely missed. Jeff and John, in particular, have been the heart and soul of ABSA for many years and it will be a big challenge for the Committee to carry on without them. I understand that Jeff will continue to look after the Bird in The Hand volume 2 series, which is good news.

I'm looking forward to working with the new Committee in the coming year and continuing the task of support and encouraging research and conservation of Australia's unique and wonderful bird fauna."

*Tony Hunt*, President

### **Treasurer's Report (extract):**

The audit was completed on 4 January 2018 for the financial year ending 30 September 2017 by Ross Fowler & Co.

Annual income received during 2016-2017 financial year (1st Oct. – 30th Sept.) was \$26,451.58. Primary source of income were subscriptions \$14,590.00 - up from \$12,610.83 in 2016), interest from term deposits (2,803.67 down from \$2,914.32 in 2016) and the Mist Net Service (\$5,000). There was an increase in donations to our Fund for Avian Research from \$1,774 in 2016 to \$1,910.00 in 2017. It currently stands at \$2,389.39 for 2018.

Total expenditure was \$19,198.71 with the main cost being publication of Corella. We have been able to reduce the cost of printing the full volume of Corella over the last 5 years but it has now evened out:

2013 = \$ 19,974.09  
2014 = \$ 15,366.45  
2015 = \$ 13,134.23  
2016 = \$ 12,620.97  
2017 = \$ 12,830.39

This gives us a \$7,252.87 surplus.

*John Farrell*, Treasurer

### **Editor's Report:**

In Volume 41, 2017, Corella published 15 original papers and short communications covering topics that included survivorship, breeding biology, vocal behaviour, diet, morphological sexing, spatial ecology, recovery of marked birds, and methods and effects of marking birds. Raptors and Passerines dominated these papers, but waterbirds, seabirds, lorikeets and waders also featured. Volume 41 also included two Seabird Island reports, two book reviews, two banding notes, a banding project report and a Recovery Round Up.

For Volume 42, we have already received a further ten submitted papers. Three are already available on the website and the others are at various stages of review, revision and production. The papers include two emanating from long-term banding studies, two on spatial ecology, one on raptor diets and one on vocal dialects. A book review is already on the website and a further Seabird Island report and two more book reviews are in the pipeline. We are thus already well on the way to having an excellent volume of material for Volume 42.

The Durno Murray Award for the best contribution in Volume 41 of Corella was awarded for the paper: "Recoveries of Little Penguins *Eudyptula minor* flipper-banded at colonies in western Victoria" by F.I. Norman, P. Dann, P. Du Guesclin, D. Drynan and D. Sutherland.

In 2017 and early 2018, three new sub-editors were appointed, Richard Noske and Andrew Ley jointly for Terrestrial Birds and Birgita Hansen for Waterbirds. I thank retiring sub-editor Patrick Guay for his contribution over several years.

To bring Corella into line with other journals and meet the requirements of bodies that publish abstracts of our papers, we established an Editorial Board, which is now listed on the website. This comprises the editor, sub-editors and the production editor.

wrote and placed online a statement of the code of ethics that we use in producing and publishing Corella.

I want to thank all our authors, reviewers, sub-editors, assistant editors, compilers and website aficionados for their contributions in 2017. I also especially thank our Production Editor, Alan Leishman, who does such an outstanding job in getting the journal into print, and the President, Tony Hunt, for his unfailing support for the journal and those who produce it.

Alan Lill. Corella Editor

#### **Election of Committee**

The meeting elected the following members to the Committee:

**President:** Tony Hunt

**Vice President/Hon. Editor:** Alan Lill

**Treasurer:** vacant - (since filled by Catherine Young)

**Secretary:** Genevieve Kyi

**Members (ordinary):** Darryl McKay, Amy Greenwood, Dave Smith, Ian Bailey, James Hunt, Stein Boddington, Michael Franklin, Cat Young and Jo Dessman

**Past President:** Jeff Hardy

#### **Going Through Glenn Innes?**

<https://www.gleninneshighlands.com/bird-watching/> has good info on birding in the Glenn Innes area. If you are ever up that way.....

#### **Bird in the Hand Uploads**

The following new species profile sheets and revisions have been uploaded to the website:

This past month I have update all of the fairy-wren sheets shown below. This was brought about by the recent DNA recognition of the Variegated Fairy-wren *Malurus lamberti* as a monotypic species confined to the east coast. The Purple-backed Fairy-wren *Malurus assimilis* has been elevated to a polytypic species and all of the former subspecies of *M.lamberti* are now subspecies of *M. assimilis*.

I had long suspected that this would eventuate and that is why in 2014 I produced profile sheets for several fairy-wren subspecies. Perhaps we will someday see the elevation of some of the other visually different and geographically isolated subspecies, so I have retained their separate sheets.

Most of the other fairy-wren sheets were updated for consistency in format.

Superb Fairy-wren	<i>Malurus cyaneus</i> (Revised)
Splendid Fairy-wren	<i>Malurus splendens</i> (Revised)
Turquoise Fairy-wren	<i>Malurus splendens callainus</i> (Revised)
Black-backed Fairy-wren	<i>Malurus splendens melanotus</i> (Revised)
Purple-crowned Fairy-wren	<i>Malurus coronatus</i> (Revised)
Red-backed Fairy-wren	<i>Malurus melanocephalus</i> (Revised)
White-winged Fairy-wren	<i>Malurus leucopterus</i> (Revised)
Variegated Fairy-wren	<i>Malurus lamberti</i> (Revised)
Purple-backed Fairy-wren	<i>Malurus assimilis</i> (Revised)
Lavender-flanked Fairy-wren	<i>Malurus assimilis dulcis</i> (Revised)
Lovely Fairy-wren	<i>Malurus amabilis</i> (Revised)
Blue-breasted Fairy-wren	<i>Malurus pulcherrimus</i> (Revised)
Red-winged Fairy-wren	<i>Malurus elegans</i> (Revised)

*Jeff Hardy*

### **2018 Australasian Shorebird Conference**

Call for Papers and registrations

The 2018 Australasian Shorebird Conference will be held at the University of Tasmania, Sandy Bay campus, in Hobart over the weekend of 27 and 28 October. The campus is just 5 minutes by taxi or 10 minutes by bus from the city centre. A full program, registration details and accommodation options will be available soon on the AWSG website at <http://www.awsg.org.au>.

These conferences are held every two years and provide an opportunity for everyone interested in hearing about all aspects of shorebird research, conservation and management. As well as for researchers and conservationists to exchange information, discuss relevant issues and develop strategies for improving the status of these remarkable birds.

The theme of the 2018 ASC will be, "Losing their habitats – conservation and management strategies for migratory and resident shorebirds".

If you wish to present an oral or poster at the ASC, please email the convenor as soon as possible (details below). The Conference will provide a forum for discussions on all shorebird species, and we are particularly keen to see contributions from indigenous researchers and managers.

It is planned to arrange a number of post-conference trips (subject to interest) to visit some of the key shorebird (and other birds) spots in Tasmania. The weekend preceding the ASC sees the holding of the 4th Bruny Island Bird Festival (see details at <http://www.brunybirdfestival.org.au/>) on Bruny Island just south of Hobart – a BirdLife KBA with all 12 endemics species on offer.

In conjunction with the ASC, The Overwintering Project (<https://www.theoverwinteringproject.com/>) will be holding an exhibition of shorebird art at the Moonah Arts Centre <<http://www.moonahartscentre.org.au>>, 23-27 Albert Road, Moonah from October 18 - November 10, with the exhibition's Official Opening to be held on Friday 26 October. It is hoped to hold the ASC welcoming reception/icebreaker at the Centre. Further details to follow.

The Conference convenor is Dr Eric Woehler, Chair of BirdLife Tasmania and AWSG Committee Member. If you would like to be included in all further email announcements, Conference information and post-conference trip details, etc, please send an email to [eric.woehler@gmail.com](mailto:eric.woehler@gmail.com) or call him on 0438 204 565.

### **Vale Perry de Rebeira OAM**

Dr Claudius Pereira de Rebeira, universally known as Perry, passed away on 24 April 2018.

Born in 1933, Perry made a huge contribution to ornithology in Australia, and was awarded an OAM for "services to ornithology". Perry was a founding member of the Western Banders Association, a Regional Organiser for the Banding Office (ABBBS) from 1974 to 1998, a long-time member of Birdlife Australia, and was a regular volunteer at Eyre Bird Observatory, where he ran banders' training courses for over 25 years. He authored a number of publications, and instigated, edited and contributed to The Bander's Guide to the Birds of Western Australia, often referred to as "Perry's Bible".

He is survived by his wife Alma.

### **Birdlife Australia Congress and Campout and Broome Observatory's 30th birthday celebration.**

The Broome Bird Observatory is pleased to be the 2018 hosts for BirdLife Australia's Congress & Campout. The Congress will be held at the beautiful Mangrove Hotel, overlooking the internationally important intertidal mudflats of Roebuck Bay, followed by the Campout at our Broome Bird Observatory - the shorebird capital of Australia!

Broome sits at the entrance to the spectacular Kimberley Region of Western Australia and is a haven for wildlife, particularly birds. By mid-February this year, following three tropical cyclones and a deep monsoonal low, Broome has already broken its annual rainfall record... and big wet seasons lead to exceptional birding!



With water likely to be on the ground until the next wet season, Broome Bird Observatory warden Nigel Jackett says "we're expecting a bumper breeding year for Yellow Chats and Australian Painted Snipe."

As well as shorebirds on Roebuck Bay, the Big Wet will also present good viewing opportunities for waterfowl, like Magpie Geese, Green Pygmy-Geese, and Wandering Whistling-Ducks, as well as Comb-crested Jacanas and Baillon's Crake.

By September the remaining ephemeral pools are guaranteed to be superb for returning migratory shorebirds, perfectly timed to coincide with the BirdLife Australia Campout and Congress, which will be held from 8-11 September.

#### **Red-tailed Black Cockatoo habitat reprieve**

From BA e-news June 2018: Red-tailed Black-Cockatoos in western Victoria received a reprieve recently — the Glenelg Shire has protected the cockies' important feeding and breeding trees against clearing throughout the municipality. And how many Red-tails are there? Click [here](#) for the results of last month's count — and you can hear about the plight of the Red-tails [here](#).

#### **Australian Bird Photographer of the Year**

Birdlife's 2018 Australian Bird Photographer of the Year award is now open! Follow this link to enter.

There are generous cash prizes across seven categories, including:

- Bird Portrait
- Bird Behaviour
- Human Impact
- Birds in the Landscape
- Fine Art
- Youth
- And our special theme: Black-Cockatoos

Our aim is not just to showcase some of Australia's best nature and bird photographers, but also to highlight the need to improve conservation outcomes for Australia's bird species, encourage wider interest in all Australian birds and showcase the beauty of our exceptional wildlife.

For more information on rules, how to enter, FAQs and more, check out the [Australian Bird Photographer of the Year](#) website.

#### **Trip Reports**

##### **Munghorn Gap 11th May to 13th May 2018**

It's amazing how quickly this area changes, October – dry, December – green and now very dry. The country looked poor although there was a green tinge to the grass suggesting that there had been some light rain recently although Gulgong has only 140mm so far this year. Fortunately, the spring is still flowing well and the top reservoir, like last December, was full with a water depth of about 30cm. However, the creek line was dry and the dam at Site 4 had water but the level was low. *Styphelia* was in flower but not prolifically and there was some grey mistletoe in blossom.

We had our usual team consisting of our normal regulars of Liz Cameron, Rob Kyte, Doug Moffat with his grandson and myself as well as Darryl Smedley while a couple of new trainees joined us, Helen Fairlamb and Terry O'Dwyer. Marty couldn't make it this time.

##### **Friday 11th May 2018**

As most of the team weren't arriving until Friday evening we decided to band around the campsite (site 2) on Friday. We set up nets as usual the day before in good weather although the forecast was not good. We woke to miserable conditions, strong cold winds, light showers scudding through – not much chance of banding in such conditions. Later, the showers stopped but it was very cold with strong winds. Doug still come out and because we weren't banding it gave his grandson, Toby a chance to ride his bike! We abandoned any chance of banding that day, so pulled down the nets and went into Mudgee. After lunch in a café and time spent in the library we returned to Munghorn and setup the nets at Site 1 (spring), by this time the weather had improved a little, still windy but not wet and we hoped that the weather forecast of clearing weather would be correct. Most of the team had arrived by evening and it was suggested that we forego our camping meal and adjourn to the Cooyal Hotel for dinner, with no dissenters we had a pleasant evening in the hotel.

##### **Saturday 12th May 2018**

We awoke to drizzle and moderate winds, fortunately, the weather improved so that the nets were opened at 9am. We had a good day although the bird numbers were down with only a few birds caught at the spring, fortunately, the *styphelia* was attracting eastern spinebills which kept us busy. In total we caught 30 birds of which 13 were retraps, a very high retrap rate of 43%. The high retrap rate could be probably attributed to lack of summer migrants, poor breeding season and generally low numbers of insectivorous birds possibly because of the dry conditions. We did have two good retraps – an eastern spinebill 10 years old and a white-throated treecreeper 7 years old. What was also surprising was that we retrapped 5 eastern spinebills and all had been banded at this site, just shows these birds are very faithful to their territories.

##### **Sunday 13th May 2018**

We banded at Site 4 today, in contrast to the previous days, this day was perfect with mild conditions but with some light wind. Not a lot of birds and again water was not attracting many birds, however, we had a big day with fairywrens catching 12 including 8 retraps. Other notable birds included a pied butcherbird and a magpie (good birds for trainees!). None of the retraps were a significant age. Overall we caught 33 birds including 15 retraps, again a high percentage of retraps.

#### **Summary**

Notwithstanding the weather it was a good weekend and our trainees had the chance to handle some different birds and gain valuable experience. However, the most important aspect of the weekend was that we passed the 20,000 records mark of birds

valuable experience. However, the most important aspect of the weekend was that we passed the 30,000 records mark of birds processed at Munghorn. After banding on Saturday we needed another 27 birds to pass the 30,000 mark, so sitting around the campfire we all made guesses on which species it would be. The guesses typically reflected the common birds we catch – however, no one predicted that the 30,000 bird would be a species of which only 8 had been caught previously – a pied butcherbird! Thank you to all the participants who came for the weekend. The next weekend is likely to be in August although Terry is keen to get his numbers up so maybe I might be persuaded to do a winter trip, I will keep you informed.

*Graham Fry*  
15th May 2018

#### **Agnes Banks Nature Reserve, 27th May 2018**

A small team enjoyed an excellent morning of banding at Agnes Banks NR on Sunday. A cold and foggy morning soon warmed up as the sun rose and the birds rose with it.



The first round produced a small rush of birds that kept us busy and a steady stream of birds followed all morning. Only a few Banksias were in flower so honeyeaters were still low in numbers, but we caught three species (Eastern Spinebills, a Yellow-faced Honeyeater and a 7+ retrap White-eared Honeyeater). Two species of fairy-wren (Variegated and Superb), four species of thornbill (Brown, Yellow, Striated and Buff-rumped), several Spotted Pardalotes, a couple of Eastern Yellow Robins and a beautiful male Golden Whistler made for a diverse haul. But the star of the show was a male Chestnut-rumped Heathwren first caught by John Farrell in October 2012, aged 1+, one of only two ever caught at this site. This was 5 years 7 months ago, so it is now aged 6+ years old. A quick check of the ABBBS database tells me that the current record for this species is 4 years 1 month from date of first banding, so (to be confirmed) it looks like a new age record for this species. As an added bonus, it was a lifer for everyone present (except me!). Great work, team!



Special thanks to Cees and McKinley Moens for the great pictures.

*Tony Hunt*

#### **Scheyville National Park 6th May 2018**

The first properly chilly morning of the year met us on Sunday, just 3 degrees C at 0600. Perhaps that explains the small turnout.

A very pleasant morning followed with a steady stream of birds, 22 by the time we finished at midday. It was the day of the scrubwren, with 8 white-browed's dominating the catch, four of them retraps. Other birds caught were four Golden Whistlers (one an 8+ retrap female), a Bell Miner, a couple of Superb Fairy Wrens, a Yellow Thornbill, a lone Silveryeye, Red-browed Finch, a Rose Robin and a Spotted Pardalote. Lots of migrating Yellow-faced Honeyeaters flew overhead but none came down to net

height.

Thanks to Claire, Jacob, Ken, McKinley and Cees for assisting; and special thanks to Ken for the pictures.

*Tony Hunt*

### **Charcoal Tank, Ungarie and Bowra**

A couple of somewhat belated reports from banding at The Charcoal Tank and Ungarie banding sites and a report from the not so successful annual banding trip to Bowra in southwestern Queensland.

The 177th trip to The Charcoal Tank Nature Reserve banding site had regulars Peter D, Els, Rhiannon, Shoshana and "Robbo" arrive early enough on the Friday afternoon to put up the usual sites but the nets were left furred. Ash arrived early on Saturday morning with his friend Grace, who for some silly reason I kept calling Claire (I did have two aunts with the same names) and her mother and brother. The weather, for a change was kind to us and until we pulled down on Sunday morning, we processed 37 birds of 13 species, a far better result compared to trip 176 where we only managed to process 10 birds while banding on water in hot weather!

The list of birds processed is as follows in no particular order. The age of the oldest bird for this trip is given. Rufous Whistler: 0 new, 1 retrap, 1 year 1 month; Inland Thornbill: 3 n, 2 r, 1y 0m; White-throated Treecreeper: 0 n, 2 r, 13y, 0m - this is our oldest WTTC on site and has been caught a number of times; Grey Shrikethrush: 1 n, 0 r; White-eared Honeyeater: 2 n, 5 r, 5y 8m; Eastern Yellow Robin: 4 n, 0 r; Double-barred Finch: 4 n, 0 r; White-plumed Honeyeater: 1 n, 2 r, 1y 8m; Red-capped Robin: 1 n, 0 r; Peaceful Dove: 1 n, 1 r 2y 3m; Weebill: 0 n, 1 r, 0y 7m; Brown-headed Honeyeater: 3 n, 2 r, 1y 4m; White-browed Babbler: 0 n, 1 r, 0y 8m.

We packed up before lunch, but unfortunately not before an Eastern Grey Kangaroo decide to hop through the middle of net 4 on the dam wall and wrecked it, and headed into west Wyalong for a sandwich before we drove up to Ungarie. Els, Shoshana and Robbo, and Grace's mother and brother headed back to home so Rhiannon, Ash and Grace joined me in the Grey Ghost as we headed to Ungarie.

At Ungarie I had expected the Painted Honeyeaters to have left for places unknown but the birds were still active on site. We put up 4 x 60 foot and 3 x 40 nets and waited. A flock of about 40 House Sparrows flew into a clump of dead African Box Thorn on the edge of the first dam on Lochie Rowling's property where most of my nets were and I was beginning to wonder if I had enough size 3 bands should we end up catching most of the flock. There was no need to worry as they all seemed to disappear from the site. Richard arrived on Sunday afternoon and put up another 5 nets in the *Acacia pendula*, across the road from where most of my nets were.

The species caught on this trip are as follows, but I don't have any age records. This is not a problem as we only started banding at the site late last year. Variegated Fairy-wren: (now considered a full species by some authorities, the Purple-backed Fairy-wren) 4 new, 0 retraps; Spiny-cheeked Honeyeater: 3 n, 0 r; White-plumed Honeyeater: 4 n, 1 r; Painted Honeyeater: 5 n, 1 r - the retrap was the first PH banded for this study [I think]; Willie Wagtail: 0 n, 1 r; Mistletoebird: 2 n, 0 r - this is far fewer than one trip where we banded over 30 birds; Yellow-rumped Thornbill: 2 n, 0 r; House Sparrow: 2 n, 0 r; Red-rumped Parrot: 1 n, 0 r - and no blood was spilt!!; Red-capped Robin: 0 n, 1 r; Yellow Thornbill: 3 n, 0 r; and finally Singing Honeyeater: 0 n, 1 r.

I am anticipating that the birds, especially males trying to set up a territory, will be back on site in September. In the mean time Tony or I will organise a stand alone trip to Ungarie before then, not a combined Charcoal Tank/Ungarie trip.

Over the Easter long weekend Peter and Judith D, Stuart, Alistair, Rhiannon, Shoshana, Robbo and I undertook the banding trip to Bowra, an annual event in southwestern Queensland organised by Jon Coleman. Petra and Chris drove up from Adelaide to join the CT team. We were also joined by Oscar Lago and his delightful daughter Raine who had travelled up from Melbourne. Both are not yet licensed trainees but have done banding work with the Victorian Wader Studies Group and a few bush birds. We gave Raine the chance to band and process several birds. Unfortunately Bowra was in the worst condition that I have ever seen it, highlighted by the fact that numerous Western Grey Kangaroos were in extremely poor condition and I personally saw two kangaroos die while we were there. It is a slightly different matter with the Red Kangaroos which, while not in great condition, were looking better than the Western Greys. After crossing the Warrego River on the edge of Cunnamulla to the gate to turn in to Bowra, a distance of about 14 kilometres, there were dozens of Red Kangaroos feeding on the sides of the narrow road. Unfortunately for one it tried to cross in front of the Grey Ghost and met with an untimely end to its life; luckily my 4wd only suffered very minor superficial damage to a small plastic component under the car.

We set up the usual banding site that I have done on all previous trips on what now remains of the old open bore drain near the house. This open drain has been converted to an enclosed pipeline taking water to the adjacent property. The pipeline now has a wide track beside it and a lot of the original vegetation that was good cover for the nets has now been bulldozed aside. We opened the ten nets and caught ten birds of 9 species. It was obvious that this was not going to be a very productive 4 days banding. We packed up and headed to the "Lagoon", an area that still is able to get water from the bore. Our target here were the Bourke's Parrots that were coming in to drink just before sunrise. There were numerous kangaroos trying to make a living out of the meagre grass that was growing on the edge of the lagoon and reasonably large numbers of feral goats coming to drink. The goats

are usually very wary of people but I had one billy that was so thirsty that I walked to within about 2 metres of him and he showed no fear at all. His "harem" were a lot more cautious.

We had one 40 foot net strategically placed in front of a low shrub growing just in front of a small dead tree that was being used by several honeyeater species as a staging point to get a drink. We had to chase several kangaroos away from this site and on one occasion two roos approached the net from different sides of the bush. Unfortunately we didn't see the third roo which went straight through the net - oh dear, two nets destroyed in two trips! Still we did manage to catch 5 Bourke's Parrots out of the at least 34 that we could make out in the predawn light. In the afternoon we travelled to the far western paddock site and set the nets in some quite varied habitats; the nets were left furred and we did not band in the afternoon as there was virtually no activity around the area.

We opened just on dawn the next morning and caught only 8 birds and pulled down by about 10:30 and moved to the Stony Ridge site to set the nets, again furred, for the following morning. Again we opened the ten nets just on dawn and managed to catch a grand total of ..... 3 birds, one of which was Rhiannon's first go at getting a Grey Butcherbird out of a net without supervision!! Only a very minor amount of blood was drawn!! We did bounce a Chestnut-breasted Quail-thrush - six were seen in what was probably a family group - and saw one Budgerigar fly over. Most people managed to see the quail-thrushes which were a lifer for most. We thought that our site was bad but Jon Coleman managed two birds from 13 nets!

The list of birds banded (using Alistair's bands - I banded the two dotterels) are as follows:

Restless Flycatcher: 1 n, 0 r; Rufous Whistler: 2 n, 0 r; Crested Pigeon: 1n, 0 r; Red-capped Robin: 2 n, 0 r; Sacred Kingfisher: 1 n, 0 r; Rainbow Bee-eater: 1 n, 0 r; Singing Honeyeater: 1 n, 1 r; White-plumed Honeyeater: 14 n, 4 r; Australian Ringneck: 1 n, 0 r; Bourke's Parrot: 5 n, 0 r; Willie Wagtail: 3 n, 0 r; Yellow-throated Miner: 1 n, 0 r; Chestnut-rumped Thornbill: 2 n, 0 r; Peaceful Dove: 1 n, 0 r; Splendid Fairy-wren: 2 n, 0 r; Grey Fantail: 1 n, 0 r; Inland Thornbill: 2 n, 1 r; Variegated Fairy-wren: 2 n, 0 r; Grey Butcherbird: 1 n, 0 r; and finally, Black-fronted Dotterel: 2 n, 0 r. This is a grand total of 46 n and 6 retraps. Not a great result given the distance and money involved!!

Most of the Canberra crew packed up before dawn on Wednesday morning to head home. I had toyed with the idea of going back next year just to do the sites that we did this year but I decided not to tempt fate as Easter is much later (and probably cooler) next year and is too close to when I head off on my trip to Japan, Russia, USA (Alaska) and Canada. I am sure at least some of the other CT banders who have nets etc will go back if only to keep the information coming during the drought. I will see what happens weather wise for future trips after that.

For those that are coming to Iron Range I will see if I still have an old copy of what has been banded there. If not I will check with Jon Coleman to see if he has a species list and will pass it on if he does.

*Mark Clayton*

Copyright © \*Australian Bird Study Association Inc\*. All rights reserved.

This email was sent to [steinbod@pnc.com.au](mailto:steinbod@pnc.com.au)

[why did I get this?](#) [unsubscribe from this list](#) [update subscription preferences](#)

The Australian Bird Study Association Inc. · PO Box 1867 · Penrith BC, New South Wales 2751 · Australia

