

BIRDWATCHING AROUND BUNBURY

We hope that this brochure will introduce you to the wide range of interesting habitats for birds around Bunbury. Our selection includes ocean, wetlands, estuaries and bushland. Many of the sites are close to the city and others involve a pleasant half-hour's drive. For further information contact the following members of the Bunbury Naturalists' Club.

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George & Rita Watkins (08) 9725 8405
Mike Webster (08) 9795 7978

1. Big Swamp

Big Swamp is situated in the City of Bunbury about 2 km south of the central business district between Spencer Street and the coast. There is open water most of which is fringed with bulrushes, smaller areas of *Juncus* (rush) and stands of paperbark (*Melaleuca*). Most of the remainder is covered with thick deep exotic grasses. There are roads around the lake and boardwalks including one hide.

Thirty-four species of waterbirds have been recorded, and 13 recorded breeding. Swamps are good places to see raptors.

Bush birds make up the remainder of the 64 species and include Little Grassbird, Rainbow Bee-eater, Grey Butcherbird and Red-capped Parrot. Adjacent to Big Swamp is a bird park which is well worth a visit.

2. Leschenault Estuary

This a favourite area for crabbing, fishing and sailing. There are several picnic and BBQ sites, carparks and toilets.

The following are some of the best sites to see the waterbirds:

A Ridley Place at Australind is a good stopping point to view at close hand cormorants, darters, ibis, pelicans, diving birds and waders.

B Australind Swamp has been set aside by SCM Chemicals as a Great Egret colony reserve. Rufous Night-Heron, Little Black Cormorant, Little Egret and Great Egret breed in the paperbarks and feed in the estuary.

C Point Duoro This is a point of land adjoining the Collyer River on the north side at its entry to the estuary. Water level in the channels is dependent on the tide. At low tide there is a sand bank exposed on the north side which is a good area for water birds and waders, including Terek Sandpiper. Some walking is involved to the best viewing point and wellingtons are needed at high tide.

D The Cut and Preston River Mouth Turn into Inner Harbour from Estuary Drive, take the first road right signed 'Northern Inner Harbour' and follow the road to The Cut where a channel has been dredged between Leschenault Estuary and the sea. Parking is available in several places. Preston River mouth is the best birdwatching site on the estuary. Migratory waders include Bar-tailed Godwit, Grey Plover and Great Knot. Waterbirds of all descriptions can be seen close by in the river feeding on the samphire swamp and on the lagoon. Watch for Whistling Kite and Osprey.

From The Cut walk west to the beach. Pied Oystercatchers and Red-capped Plovers breed on the beach and bush birds inhabit the surrounding coastal vegetation.

3. Leschenault Peninsula

Turn left into Cathedral Avenue (scenic drive) from the Old Coast Road (when coming from Bunbury) to Buffalo Road then left to Peninsula Conservation Park. There is an information bay, well-marked roads, picnic areas and a camping area. This is an area of coastal heath and Tuart/Peppermint woodland. It is managed by the Department of Conservation and Land Management. A fox baiting program has allowed the buildup of native animals including Grey Kangaroo, Brushtail and Ringtail Possum and Bandicoot.

Sixty species of birds have been recorded including 13 species of raptor, Sacred Kingfisher, Western Yellow Robin, Golden Whistler and White-winged Triller. You may be lucky in the coastal heath to find Southern Emu-wren. While travelling along Buffalo Road keep a look out for birds including the White-fronted Chat.

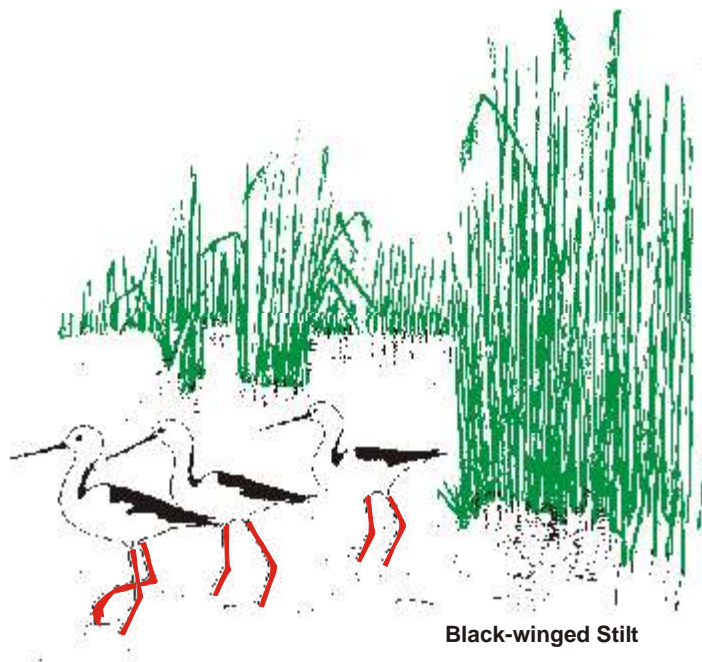
4. Leschenault Inlet

This water body near Bunbury City is well known as the most southerly site in Western Australia for White Mangroves. Most of the waterbirds can be seen here at various times feeding on the mud and in the shallows.

Prepared by Birds Australia
Western Australia Inc.

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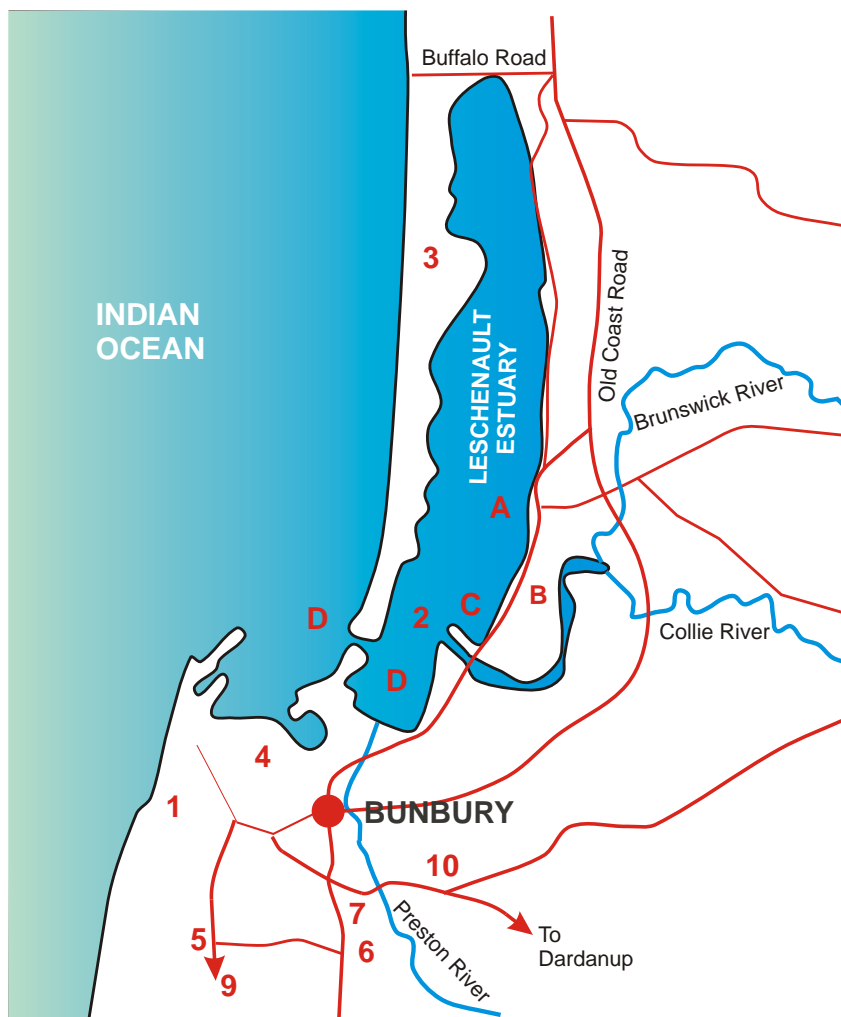
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Black-winged Stilt



Nov 2005



Black-winged Stilt breed in the reed fringes.

5. Hay Park

South of the central business area and opposite the race course is Hay Park, an area of large playing fields and sporting facilities. Travel along Bussell Highway to Parade Street to the parking area adjacent to the sport centre buildings. Habitats include banksia woodland and paperbark swamp and planted avenues of eucalypts. There are some plants flowering at each season of the year.

Twenty-four species of birds were seen in a half-hour visit and included Western Rosella, Australian Ringneck, Red-capped Parrot and Elegant Parrot. Splendid Fairy-wren, Striated Pardalote, Tawny-crowned Honeyeater and Black-faced Woodswallow.

6. Gardens of Agriculture WA and CALM

The grounds of these government departments have been planted with native trees and shrubs and they attract many

species including parrots, fairy-wrens, thornbills and honeyeaters.

Parking is available within the grounds and visitors are welcome to use the gardens but not the restricted areas. At weekends the gates may be shut to vehicles, but entry for birdwatching is possible. Parking is available on the roadside of Verschuer Place off Dodson Road.

7. Dodson Road Swamp

This is a small wetland near the above offices and is best viewed from Eades Street where cars can park. From the Agriculture WA offices follow Dodson Street north, and turn left into Picton Road. Take the next turn into Morrissey Street, then left into Eades Street.

Although small, this swamp has a good variety of waterbirds including possibly several species of duck, White-faced Heron, Yellow-billed Spoonbill, Purple Swamphen and Dusky Moorhen.

8. Wellington Mills

Wellington Mills Campsite is an old forestry settlement set in the bush south-west of Wellington Dam, 36 km from Bunbury. The vegetation consists of tall Jarrah, Marri, Blackbutt and Bullich trees with wildflowers in season.

This is the place to look for Splendid and Red-winged Fairy-wren, Scarlet Robin, Western Yellow Robin, White-breasted Robin and Red-eared Firetail. Parrots, cockatoos and honeyeaters are also to be found.

From Bunbury travel to Dardanup, turn left into Ferguson Road, then left into Pile Road then right into Wellington Forest Road. The campsite is approximately 2 km ahead with parking on the left and walks to the right. After your walk you can continue on Wellington Forest Road following the signs to the King Jarrah Tree and return to Bunbury via Wellington Mills Village.



9. RGC Wetlands Centre

The RGC Wetlands Centre is situated south of Capel and is reached from Bunbury by travelling past Capel turnoff on the Bussell Highway, turning right into Tuart Drive, then left into Low Road. Tours may be made by appointment. Phone (08) 9780 3666. RGC Mineral Sands Ltd are creating the wetlands from old mine sites, with management by Birds Australia and a management committee to guide research and development.

There are good walking tracks, hides and picnic areas with an Environmental Study Centre, which caters for schools and other interested groups.

The bird list records 50 species of waterbirds, including Spotless Crake, Buff-banded Rail, Great Crested Grebe and Whiskered Tern and 61 bush birds including cockatoos, parrots, White-breasted Robin, Western Gerygone, Western Spinebill, Red-eared Firetail and White-browed Scrub-wren.

10. Picton Church

St. Mark's Anglican Church was built in the 1840s by the Reverend John Ramsden Wollaston. A large Moreton Bay Fig tree makes a shady picnic spot. Ducks and Clamorous Reed-Warblers and several species of bush birds can be found here.

WHAT IS BIRDS AUSTRALIA?

Birds Australia's national organisation is for the study, preservation and enjoyment of Australian birds. The WA group of Birds Australia has over 800 members statewide with a wide range of activities and services for members.

Programs include excursions, camp-outs, bird surveys and social activities. We have a library, books for sale and information about birds.

To view our complete range of bird guides and bird lists, visit our web site.

INTERESTED?

Contact us at:
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Phone: (08) 9383 7749
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Emu R 3 9

Stubble Quail C 3 9

WATERFOWL

Blue-billed Duck C 1 7 9
Musk Duck C 1 2 3 7 9
Black Swan C 1 2 3 7 9
Australian Shelduck C 1 2 3 9
Australian Wood Duck C 1 2 3 7 9
Pacific Black Duck C 1 2 3 7 9
Australasian Shoveler C 1 7 9
Grey Teal C 1 2 3 7 9
Chestnut Teal U 2 3 9
Pink-eared Duck U 9
Hardhead U 1 9

GREBES

Australasian Grebe C 1 3 7 9
Hoary-headed Grebe C 3 9
Great Crested Grebe R 9

SEABIRDS

Little Penguin R O
Southern Giant-Petrel C O V May-Sep
Northern Giant-Petrel R O V
Southern Fulmar R O V D
Cape Petrel C O V winter D
Kerguelen Petrel U C V winter D
Soft-Plumaged Petrel U O after winter storms
D
Blue Petrel U O V winter D
Broad-billed Prion R O after winter storms
D
Salvin's Prion U O after winter storms
D
Antartic Prion U-M O V winter D
Fairy Prion R O V winter D
Slender-billed Prion U-M O V winter D
Wedge-tailed Shearwater C O V
Flesh-footed Shearwater C O passage migrant
Black-browed Albatross R O V D
Shy Albatross R O V
Yellow-nosed Albatross M O V winter
Wilson's Storm Petrel M O passage migrant
Apr-Jun
White-faced Storm Petrel U O V May-Feb
Australasian Gannet M O V Mar-Jan

PELICANS, CORMORANTS, ALLIES

Darter 1 2 3 4 7 9
Little Pied Cormorant 1 2 3 4 7 9
Pied Cormorant 1 2 3 4 9
Little Black Cormorant 1 2 3 4 7 9
Great Cormorant 1 2 3 9
Australian Pelican 1 2 3 4 9

HERONS, IBIS

White-faced Heron C 1 2 3 4 7 9
Little Egret U 1 2 3 9
White-necked Heron M 1 9 V July-Dec
Great Egret M 1 2 3 4 9
Cattle Egret U 3 9 several records
Nankeen Night Heron M 2 9
Little Bittern R 3
Glossy Ibis R 2 3
Sacred Ibis C 2 3 5 7 9
Straw-necked Ibis C 2 3 5 7 9
Royal Spoonbill R few records
Yellow-billed Spoonbill M 1 2 3 7 9

HAWKS, EAGLES, FALCONS

Osprey C 1 2 3 4
Black-shouldered Kite M 1 2 3 9 V
Square-tailed Kite U 1 2 3 9 V
Black Kite R 2 3 V
Whistling Kite C 2 3 5 9
White-bellied Sea-Eagle M 1 2 3 9
Spotted Harrier R 9 V
Marsh Harrier C 1 2 3 9
Brown Goshawk C 2 3
Collared Sparrowhawk C 1 2 3 9
Wedge-tailed Eagle M 2 3 9
Little Eagle M 2 3 9
Brown Falcon U 9
Australian Hobby U 1 2 3 9 V
Peregrine Falcon U 1 2 3 9 V
Australian Kestrel C 1 2 3 9

CRAKES, RAILS, BUSTARD

Buff-banded Rail U 9
Spotless Crake M 1 2 3 9
Purple Swamphen C 1 3 7 9
Dusky Moorhen C 1 7 9
Black-tailed Native-hen C 3 9 V
Eurasian Coot C 1 7 9

BUNBURY BIRD LIST

This list is compiled from a number of reliable sources. We would appreciate any reports of sightings of rarer species or any not recorded on this list.

Location O ocean or beach
1-10 sites (see overleaf) where birds recorded by Bunbury Naturalists Club members (1993-1997)
Abundance C common
M moderately common
U uncommon
R rare
V visitor

The Bunbury Naturalists Club

We welcome new members to our club. Our monthly meetings include speakers on a range of topics. Walks and excursions are organised. Contact numbers of members are listed in this brochure.

Painted Button-quail U 3 9

WADERS

Bar-tailed Godwit C 2 3 4 V
Whimbrel M 2 3 4 V
Eastern Curlew M 2 3 4 V
Marsh Sandpiper U 2 3 V
Common Greenshank C 2 3 4 9 V
Wood Sandpiper U 3 V
Terek Sandpiper U 3 V 2
Common Sandpiper M 2 3 4 9 V
Grey-tailed Tattler U 2 3 V
Ruddy Turnstone C 2 3 V
Great Knot M 2 V
Red Knot U 2 3 V
Sanderling R 3 V
Red-necked Stint C 2 3 4 V
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper M 2 3 V
Curlew Sandpiper M 2 3 V
Pied Oystercatcher C 2 3
Black-winged Stilt C 1 2 3 4 9
Banded Stilt U 2 3 V
Red-necked Avocet M 2 3 V
Pacific Golden Plover R 3 V
Grey Plover M 2 3 V
Red-capped Plover C 2 3 4 9
Lesser Sand-Plover U 3 V
Greater Sand-Plover U 2 3 V
Inland Dotterel R 2 3 O vagrant
Black-fronted Dotterel C 1 9
Hooded Plover R 2 3 V
Red-kneed Dotterel M 1 V
Banded Lapwing M 1 3

SKUAS, GULLS, TERNS

Great Skua M O V winter
Arctic Jaegar U O few records
Pacific Gull U 1 2 3 5
Silver Gull C 1 2 3 4
Gull-billed Tern U 3 few records
Caspian Tern C 2 3
Crested Tern C 2 3
Fairy Tern M 2 3 V Sep-May
Whiskered Tern M 1 9

PIGEONS, DOVES

Rock Dove C 1 2 5 6 7
Laughing Turtle-dove C 1 2 3
Common Bronzewing M 2 3 8
Crested Pigeon U 2 3

COCKATOOS, PARROTS

Red-tailed Black-Cockatoo M 8
Short-billed Black-Cockatoo M 8 9 V
Long-billed Black-Cockatoo M 1 3 5 6 8 9 V
Galah C 1 2 3 5 8
Little Corella U 1
Purple-crowned Lorikeet M 3 9 V
Regent Parrot M 5 9 V
Western Rosella C 2 3 5 8 9
Australian Ringneck C 1 2 3 5 6 8 9 10
Red-capped Parrot C 1 2 3 5 8 9
Elegant Parrot M 1 2 3 5 9

CUCKOOS

Pallid Cuckoo U 2 3 V May-Nov
Fan-tailed Cuckoo C 2 3 9
Horsfield's Bronze Cuckoo U 2 3 V Jun-Jan
Shining Bronze-Cuckoo M 2 3 9 V Sep-Nov

OWLS, FROGMOUTHS

Southern Boobook M 3 8 9
Barn Owl U 3 9 V
Tawny Frogmouth M 3 8 9
Spotted Nightjar R 9 V Feb-Jul
Australian Owlet-nightjar U several records

KINGFISHERS

Laughing Kookaburra C 1 2 3 4 6 8 9 10
Sacred Kingfisher M 2 3 5 9 V
Rainbow Bee-eater M 1 2 3 9 V Sep-Apr

Rufous Tree-creeper U 8

FAIRY-WRENS

Splendid Fairy-wren C 2 3 5 6 8 9
Red-winged Fairy-wren U 8
Southern Emu-wren U 3 coastal heath

PARDALOTES, THORNBILLS, ALLIES

Spotted Pardalote U 9
Striated Pardalote C 2 3 4 6 8 9 10
White-browed Scrub-wren C 2 3 9
Weebill M 8
Western Gerygone C 2 3 9
Inland Thornbill C 3 5 8 9
Western Thornbill U 8 9
Yellow-rumped Thornbill C 2 3 8 9

HONEYEATERS

Red Wattlebird C 1 2 3 4 6 8 9 10
Little Wattlebird U 9
Singing Honeyeater C 1 2 3 6 8 9 10
White-naped Honeyeater U 9
Brown Honeyeater C 1 2 3 4 6 8 9 10
New Holland Honeyeater C 2 3 4 6 8 9
White-cheeked Honeyeater M 4
Tawny-crowned Honeyeater U 5
Western Spinebill C 3 6 9
White-fronted Chat C 2 3 9

AUSTRALIAN ROBINS

Scarlet Robin M 8 9
Western Yellow Robin U 3 8
White-breasted Robin U 8 9

Varied Sittella U 8

WHISTLERS, FLYCATCHERS

Golden Whistler C 2 3 6 8 9
Rufous Whistler C 9
Grey Shrike-thrush M 3 8 9
Magpie-lark C 1 2 3 5 9
Grey Fantail C 2 3 5 6 8 9 10
Willie Wagtail C 1 2 3 5 6 8 9 10

CUCKOO-SHRIKES, TRILLERS

Black-faced Cuckoo shrike C 1 2 3 5 8
White-winged Triller U 3 V Jul-Feb

WOODSWALLOWS

Black-faced Woodswallow C 2 3 5 9
Dusky Woodswallow C 2 3

BUTCHERBIRDS, CURRAWONG

Grey Butcherbird C 1 2 3 5 6 8 9
Australian Magpie C 1 2 3 5 6 8 9 10
Grey Currawong M 2 3 5 8
Australian Raven C 1 2 3 5 6 8 9 10

Richard's Pipit C 1 2 3 9

Red-eared Firetail U 8 9

Mistletoebird U nomadic

SWALLOWS, MARTINS

Welcome Swallow C 1 2 3 4 6 9
Tree Martin C 1 2 3 6 8 9
Fairy Martin R 2 3 V

OLD WORLD WARBLERS

Clamorous Reed-warbler M 1 2 3 7 9
Little Grassbird M 1 2 3 9
Rufous Songlark U
Brown Songlark M 8

Silvereye C 1 2 3 5 6 8 9 10