

IV BIRDS OF YORNANING NATURE RESERVE

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A vertebrate survey of Yornaning Nature Reserve was undertaken between 19-27 April 1975 and 5-12 September 1975 (Dell, this report). Data on birds were obtained by Harold during the above dates and by Dell during 24-25 April and 11-12 September. This information is presented in the annotated list below. P. Lambert (Fisheries and Wildlife Warden, Pingelly) visited the Reserve on 8 October 1976 and recorded 32 species. Some of his data are included also.

ANNOTATED LIST

Mountain Duck (*Tadorna tadornoides*)

One at farm dam 0.5 km east of Reserve and 9 at farm dam 8 km northwest of Reserve in September.

White-faced Heron (*Ardea novaehollandiae*)

One in shallow farm dam 200 m west of Reserve in September.

Wood Duck (*Chenonetta jubata*)

Three and 5 birds in grass in paddock near dam 0.5 km east of Reserve and 4 on dam 2 km north of Reserve in September.

Brown Goshawk (*Accipiter fasciatus*)

One over granite in loc. 5.1 and a pair in Wandoo (*Eucalyptus wandoo*) 1 km southeast of Reserve in September.

Peregrine Falcon (*Falco peregrinus*)

One flew from paddock into Reserve over heath in loc. 4.2 in April.

Brown Falcon (*Falco berigora*)

One over heath loc. 4.2 in September.

Australian Kestrel (*Falco cenchroides*)

A pair and a single bird over paddock adjacent to loc. 4.2 in April.

Wedge-tailed Eagle (*Aquila audax*)

One over granite at loc. 5.1 in September. Nest with 1 large fully-feathered young in nest in Wandoo tree on 8 October 1976 (P. Lambert, pers. comm.).

Painted Quail (*Turnix varia*)

Moderately common in *Casuarina huegeliana* association, especially common in loc. 1.15. Characteristic *Turnix* scratchings were frequent.

Banded Plover (*Vanellus tricolor*)

One flying over Reserve in April and 1 calling at night in paddock on east side of Reserve in September.

Common Bronzewing (*Phaps chalcoptera*)

Several on north boundary of Reserve, flying along road at dusk, 1 in road verge 0.5 km north of Reserve, 1 in loc. 1.5, 6 in mallet association in loc. 1.7 in April. One in loc. 4.2 and 1 in loc. 1.5 in September.

Purple-crowned Lorikeet (*Glossopsitta porphyrocephala*)

Flock of ca 7 flying over loc. 1.5 in September. Recorded in October (P. Lambert, pers. comm.).

Ringnecked Parrot (*Barnardius zonarius*)

Moderately common in all Wandoo associations in April and September. In April, birds were in flocks of up to six and in September sightings were pairs or single birds. Flocks of up to forty birds feeding in paddocks in April and flocks of up to eight birds in similar paddocks in September.

Western Rosella (*Platycercus icterotis*)

Pair in *Casuarina huegeliana* at granite outcrop in loc. 5.1 in April. Pair in above area, 1 in Wandoo in loc. 1.6 and pair in *C. huegeliana* road verge 200 m north of Reserve in September.

Elegant Parrot (*Neophema elegans*)

Two pairs flying over Reserve loc. 1.5 in September.

Pallid Cuckoo (*Cuculus pallidus*)

One calling in loc. 4.2 and a pair and a single bird over paddock in September.

Fan-tailed Cuckoo (*Cuculus flabelliformis*)

Moderately common in pairs and calling strongly in all *Casuarina huegeliana* associations in April. Fairly scarce in September when a pair and 3 single birds were recorded in *C. huegeliana* and in Wandoo.

Shining Bronze Cuckoo (*Cuculus flabelliformis*)

Two pairs and a single bird in *C. huegeliana* associations in September.

Barn Owl (*Tyto alba*)

Seen and calling prominently in Wandoo in loc. 1.2 and 1.6 in April. Not recorded in September. A mouse plague was evident in April when 69 were trapped compared with only 5 in September.

Boobook Owl (*Ninox novaeseelandiae*)

One sighted in Wandoo woodland in loc. 1.2 in April and several pairs calling prominently in Wandoo in September.

Laughing Kookaburra (*Dacelo gigas*)

Three at granite mosaic in loc. 5.1 in September.

Australian Owlet-nightjar (*Aegotheles cristatus*)

One calling at dusk in loc. 1.5 and 1 perched in Wandoo tree at loc. 1.2 in September.

Tawny Frogmouth (*Podargus strigoides*)

Single birds calling and 1 caught in mist-net in loc. 1.5 in September.

Welcome Swallow (*Hirundo neoxena*)

Two over paddock opposite Wandoo woodland in September.

Tree Martin (*Hirundo nigricans*)

Flock of *ca* 20 over loc. 4.1 and flock of 6 over loc. 1.5 in April. Flock of six over loc. 4.2 and flock of *ca* 15 over paddock in September. Recorded in October (P. Lambert, pers. comm.).

Richards's Pipit (*Anthus novaeseelandiae*)

Frequent in paddocks around Reserve in September.

Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike (*Coracina novaehollandiae*)

Three in loc. 4.2, 1 calling in loc. 1.5 and 3 over paddock 1 km south of Reserve in September. P. Lambert (pers. comm.) recorded it in October.

White-winged Triller (*Lalage sueurii*)

One in loc. 4.2 in September.

Red-capped Robin (*Petroica goodenovii*)

Common in woodland associations including Wandoo and *Casuarina huegeliana* and on edges of Reserve. Male feeding young in nest 3 m from ground in *Banksia attenuata* tree in loc. 4.2 on 12 September.

Scarlet Robin (*Petroica multicolor*)

Pair in *Casuarina huegeliana*/Wandoo/Jam (*Acacia acuminata*) woodland in loc. 1.11. Female was carrying bark for nest building on 12 September. Pair on east boundary of Reserve adjacent to Wandoo woodland in September.

Yellow Robin (*Eopsaltria australis*)

Pair in loc. 1.14 in September.

Golden Whistler (*Pachycephala pectoralis*)

One in loc. 1.11 in April. Apparently much more common in September. One in *Dryandra nobilis* in loc. 3.1; 2 pairs and 2 females in loc. 1.11, and a pair in loc. 1.6 were all in Wandoo/*C. huegeliana* associations.

Rufous Whistler (*Pachycephala rufiventris*)

One in loc. 1.11 in April. More vocal in September. Two pairs in loc. 1.11 and 1 pair in loc. 1.5, 1 bird in granite mosaic in loc. 5.1 and 1 in heath with *Banksia attenuata* trees in loc. 4.1.

Grey Shrike-thrush (*Colluricincla harmonica*)

Widespread and common in most wooded associations including loc. 1.5, loc. 1.6, loc. 1.15 and loc. 1.14. Total of 6 birds recorded in April when they were mainly silent, and 13 in September when they were fairly vocal.

Grey Fantail (*Rhipidura fuliginosa*)

Three pairs and 4 birds in loc. 1.5 and 6 pairs in loc. 1.15 in April. More widespread in September when 3 pairs were in Wandoo/*C. huegeliana* in loc. 1.5, 2 pairs in similar association at loc. 1.11, 1 bird in mallet association loc. 1.6, 1 bird in granite mosaic at loc. 5.1 and a pair in *Dryandra nobilis* in loc. 3.1, Recorded in October (P. Lambert, pers. comm.).

Willie Wagtail (*Rhipidura leucophrys*)

One bird in road verge 0.5 km north of Reserve in April and September.

White-browed Babbler (*Pomatostomus supersilius*)

Three in *Casuarina huegeliana* road verge 0.5 km north of Reserve in September.

Western Flyeater (*Gerygone fusca*)

Widespread in Wandoo throughout Reserve. Pair and 4 single birds in April. Twelve pairs and 2 single birds in September.

Weebill (*Smicrornis brevirostris*)

Widespread and common in all eucalypt associations.

Brown Thornbill (*Acanthiza pusilla*)

Widespread and common in all *Casuarina huegeliana*/Wandoo associations and granite complexes. Particularly common in dense ecotones at base of granites. Most records in April and September were pairs.

Chestnut-rumped Thornbill (*Acanthiza uropygialis*)

Widespread and moderately common in all Wandoo/*Casuarina huegeliana* associations. Mainly in groups of up to 5 birds, but some sightings of pairs in September.

Western Thornbill (*Acanthiza inornata*)

Three feeding in ecotone between laterite breakaway and granite outcrop on edge of *Eucalyptus astringens* woodland at loc. 1.5 in September.

Yellow-rumped Thornbill (*Acanthiza chrysorrhoa*)

Seen in only 4 localities. Groups of 4 birds in April on boundary adjacent to Wandoo/*Casuarina huegeliana* association (loc. 1.11). Four sightings of up to 5 birds in September in *C. huegeliana* associations at loc. 1.5 and loc. 1.15, on edge of Wandoo/*C. huegeliana* association at loc. 1.11 and in granite/*C. huegeliana* complex at loc. 5.1.

White-browed Scrub-wren (*Sericornis frontalis*)

Five pairs recorded in April and 6 pairs in September. Only found in densest vegetation, for example *Casuarina huegeliana* thickets at loc. 1.5 and loc. 1.4, *C. huegeliana/Hakea petiolaris* thickets round granite at loc. 5.1, and in *Dryandra nobilis* in loc. 3.1 with a few Wandoo trees and regenerating *C. huegeliana*.

Redthroat (*Pyrrholaemus brunneus*)

One in *Casuarina huegeliana*/Wandoo association near loc. 1.10 in April.

Calamanthus (*Calamanthus fuliginosus*)

Moderately common in loc. 4.2 and loc. 4.3.

Blue-breasted Fairy-wren (*Malurus pulcherrimus*)

Male seen in loc. 4.2 in September.

Brown Songlark (*Cincloramphus cruralis*)

One over wheat paddock with bare granite outcrops and 1 over stubble paddock in September.

Australian Sittella (*Neositta chrysoptera*)

Several parties in Wandoo and Wandoo/*Casuarina huegeliana* associations.

Rufous Tree-creeper (*Climacteris rufa*)

One in loc. 1.6 in September. Recorded by P. Lambert (pers. comm.) in October 1976.

Spotted Pardalote (*Pardalotus punctatus*)

Moderately common in Wandoo and *Eucalyptus astringens* associations in April.

Striated Pardalote (*Pardalotus striatus*)

Moderately common in all Eucalypt associations in September. Calling prominently. Recorded by P. Lambert (pers. comm.) in October.

Grey-breasted White-eye (*Zosterops lateralis*)

Two in *Casuarina huegeliana* thicket at loc. 1.5 in April. Total of 6 pairs in September in loc. 1.5, granite mosaic at loc. 5.1 and *Dryandra nobilis* in loc. 3.1.

Brown Honeyeater (*Lichmera indistincta*)

Moderately common in *Casuarina huegeliana* at loc. 1.5 and in granite mosaic at loc. 5.1 in April. More common in September when they were widespread, especially common in flowering *Dryandra cuneata* and *Dryandra nobilis* in loc. 3.1 and in loc. 4.1.

Singing Honeyeater (*Meliphaga virescens*)

Uncommon in April and September. Three in granite mosaic at loc. 5.1, 2 in Wandoo/*Casuarina huegeliana* at loc. 1.11 and flock of 8 birds apparently in transit in April. Less common in September when single birds were recorded on edge of paddock at loc. 1.15, granite mosaic at loc. 5.1 and in heath at loc. 4.1.

White-eared Honeyeater (*Meliphaga leucotis*)

Uncommon in Wandoo/*Casuarina huegeliana* and Mallet (*Eucalyptus astringens*) associations. Total of 5 birds in April and 2 in September.

Brown-headed Honeyeater (*Melithreptus brevirostris*)

Moderately common in all woodland associations including Mallet (*E. astringens*) and Wandoo and occasional in *Casuarina huegeliana*. Flocks of up to 7 birds in April and September.

New Holland Honeyeater (*Phylidonyris novaehollandiae*)

Pair on edge of heath at loc. 4.1 and single bird in *Dryandra nobilis* in loc. 3.1 in September. Recorded by P. Lambert (pers. comm.) in October.

White-cheeked Honeyeater (*Phylidonyris niger*)

One in *Dryandra nobilis* in loc. 3.1 in April. Moderately common in heath at loc. 4.2 and six in *Dryandra nobilis* in loc. 3.1 in September. Recorded by P. Lambert (pers. comm.) in October.

Tawny-crowned Honeyeater (*Phylidonyris melanops*)

Uncommon in April, moderately common in September. Two in heath at loc. 4.1 and 3 in heath at loc. 4.2 in April. Common in heath at loc. 4.2 and less abundant in heath at loc. 4.1 in September.

Western Spinebill (*Acanthorhynchus superciliosus*)

Uncommon. Single birds in *Dryandra cuneata* and *Banksia attenuata* in heath at loc. 4.1 and on *Dryandra nobilis* in loc. 3.1 in April. Six birds and a pair in *Dryandra nobilis* in loc. 3.1 in September.

Little Wattlebird (*Anthochaera chrysoptera*)

Pair and 4 birds including a juvenile in *Dryandra nobilis* in loc. 3.1 in September. Recorded by P. Lambert (pers. comm.) in October.

Red Wattlebird (*Anthochaera carunculata*)

Moderately common in April when numbers of birds were moving south-east through the Reserve. One calling in Wandoo woodland at loc. 1.7 in September. Recorded in October (P. Lambert, pers. comm.)

Black-faced Wood-swallow (*Artamus cinereus*)

Five in heath at loc. 4.2 and flocks of 5 and 10 birds in nearby paddocks in September.

Magpie (*Cracticus tibicen*)

Several flocks of up to 9 birds in Wandoo woodland and farm paddocks in April and September.

Grey Currawong (*Strepera versicolor*)

Uncommon. Occasional birds in all woodland associations and in granite mosaic.

Australian Raven (*Corvus coronoides*)

Moderately common. Single birds or pairs throughout Reserve and farm country. One bird, probably incubating, on nest in *Casuarina huegeliana* tree, ca 7 m above ground on 5 September.

DISCUSSION

A total of 67 species were recorded at Yornaning Reserve and adjacent farmland during these surveys. Thirty-four were recorded between 19-27 April and 49 between 5-12 September. Five species were recorded only in April and 28 only in September.

Some species recorded only in September are probably seasonal or nomadic. These include Pallid Cuckoo, Welcome Swallow, Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike, Brown Songlark, Striated Pardalote, New Holland Honeyeater and Little Wattlebird. Three waterfowl, White-faced Heron, Mountain Duck and Wood Duck, were noted in September but not in April, possibly because it was too dry then. Three hawks, Brown Goshawk, Wedge-tailed Eagle and Brown Falcon, were sighted a few times in September only. In addition, 2 nocturnal birds, Tawny Frogmouth and Australian Owlet-nightjar were noted in September but not in April.

The occurrence of a White-winged Triller at Yornaning on 8 September is unusually early for the south-west. Serventy and Whittell (1967) consider this species to be a strict migrant in the southern parts of the state, arriving during the latter part of September or October. Another migrant, Shining Bronze Cuckoo, was recorded in September only. This species is only recorded in the south-west between May and February (Serventy and Whittell, 1967).

The abundance of Barn Owls at Yornaning in April compared with their absence in September is interesting. This was probably due to the House Mouse being more plentiful in April than September; 69 mice were trapped in April but only 5 in September for a similar trapping effort. Although the mouse population was high in April it probably had not peaked. Accordingly, no mice were seen during daylight. This could explain the scarcity of the Kestrel and the absence of the Black-shouldered Kite, both of which were very common in other wheatbelt areas in later months. For example, on 15 July 18 Kestrels and 18 Black-shouldered Kites were recorded between Wilroy and Coorow (G. Harold, unpublished data).

Four species were recorded breeding in September but none in April. These were Australian Raven, Red-capped Robin, Little Wattlebird and Scarlet Robin.