

## Westgate Park Bird Count

By: Andrew McCutcheon, Euan Moore, Rob Youl, Peter Parrington, Leah Kessner and Marc Carrabs			Date: 9 April 2018
Weather: Overcast to fine with a light south wind.		Temp 14° C – 21° C	
Coverage: Entire survey route completed		Time start: 0910	Time finish: 1400
Species	Number seen	Species	Number seen
<i>Brown Quail</i>		<i>Galah</i>	
Black Swan	5 (*3) + 6D	<i>Little Corella</i>	
Australian Shelduck		<i>Sulphur-crested Cockatoo</i>	
Australian Wood Duck		<i>Rainbow Lorikeet</i>	22
Pink-eared Duck		<i>Musk Lorikeet</i>	21 (*1)
Australasian Shoveler		<i>Little Lorikeet</i>	
Grey Teal	3	<i>Purple-crowned Lorikeet</i>	
Chestnut Teal	37 (*7)	<i>Eastern Rosella</i>	
Pacific Black Duck	25	<i>Horsfield's Bronze-Cuckoo</i>	
Hardhead	15	<i>Fan-tailed Cuckoo</i>	
Australasian Grebe	10	<i>Sacred Kingfisher</i>	
Hoary-headed Grebe	20	<i>Superb Fairy-wren</i>	50+ (13 blue)
<i>Rock Dove</i>	2	<i>White-browed Scrubwren</i>	5
<i>Spotted Turtle-Dove</i>	13	<i>Brown Thornbill</i>	6
<i>Common Bronzewing</i>		<i>Spotted Pardalote</i>	
<i>Crested Pigeon</i>	4	<i>Striated Pardalote</i>	1
Darter		<i>Yellow-faced Honeyeater</i>	1
Little Pied Cormorant	9 (*8)	<i>White-plumed Honeyeater</i>	55+
Great Cormorant	*1	<i>Noisy Miner</i>	3
Little Black Cormorant	2	<i>Spiny-cheeked Honeyeater</i>	13
Pied Cormorant	*9	<i>Little Wattlebird</i>	
Australian Pelican	8	<i>Red Wattlebird</i>	150+ (*2)
Eastern Great Egret	1	<i>New Holland Honeyeater</i>	40+ (*3)
<i>Cattle Egret</i>	1	<i>White-naped Honeyeater</i>	
White-faced Heron	1	<i>Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike</i>	
Nankeen Night-Heron		<i>White-winged Triller</i>	
Australian White Ibis	1	<i>Golden Whistler</i>	
Straw-necked Ibis		<i>Grey Shrike-thrush</i>	
Royal Spoonbill		<i>Grey Butcherbird</i>	
<i>Yellow-billed Spoonbill</i>	1	<i>Australian Magpie</i>	
Black-shouldered Kite		<i>Pied Currawong</i>	
Brown Goshawk		<i>Grey fantail</i>	6
Little Eagle		<i>Willie Wagtail</i>	8
Nankeen Kestrel		<i>Little Raven</i>	3
Brown Falcon		<i>Satin Flycatcher</i>	
Australian Hobby		<i>Magpie-lark</i>	13
Peregrine Falcon	1	<i>Flame Robin</i>	3
Purple Swamphen	4	<i>Rose Robin</i>	
Buff-banded Rail		<i>Eurasian Skylark</i>	
Baillon's Crake		<i>Golden-headed Cisticola</i>	

Australian Spotted Crake		Australian Reed-Warbler	
Black-tailed Native-hen		Little Grassbird	
Dusky Moorhen	<b>22 + 1D</b>	<i>Silvereye</i>	<b>1</b>
Eurasian Coot	<b>135</b>	<i>Welcome Swallow</i>	<b>30+</b>
Black-winged Stilt	<b>13</b>	<i>Fairy Martin</i>	
Black-fronted Dotterel	<b>7</b>	<i>Common Blackbird</i>	<b>15</b>
<b>Red-kneed Dotterel</b>	<b>2</b>	<i>Common Starling</i>	<b>35+</b>
Masked Lapwing	<b>2</b>	<i>Common Myna</i>	<b>16</b>
Latham's Snipe		<i>Red-browed Finch</i>	
Crested Tern	<b>*1</b>	<i>House Sparrow</i>	<b>20+</b>
Pacific Gull	<b>*1</b>	<i>Australasian Pipit</i>	
Silver Gull	<b>2 (*100+)</b>	<i>European Greenfinch</i>	
		<i>European Goldfinch</i>	<b>7</b>
<b>Number of Bird Species</b> - Wetland dependent & Raptors... <b>28</b> Land based .... <b>27</b> Total			<b>55 Species</b>
<b>Other animals:</b> Common Froglet heard, Brush-tailed Possum			

\* seen at/along Yarra River only.

Note: For species seen in large numbers, or for which accurate counting was difficult the number seen is rounded off to the nearest of tens or fives followed by a +.

D - Denotes dependent young plus number of separate broods.

Habitat: The water level in the Large Freshwater and Saltwater lakes has dropped considerably over the last month, but conditions in both lakes appear to be good for supporting birds. Six pelicans were observed feeding on the large freshwater lake early in the morning by some of the park volunteers. This indicates that fish, most likely to be Mosquito Fish *Gambusia affinis* are plentiful in the lake. As well as pelicans other small fish eating birds seen today include three cormorants, single Eastern Great Egret and White-faced Heron, and a big increase in the numbers of Hardheads and Hoary-headed Grebes compared to previous months.

Although the park vegetation is very dry there was a diverse range of seasonal migrating land-based birds present in Westgate Park today. Details are outlined in interesting/notable sightings below. Frequent visitors such as Red Wattlebirds were in unusually large numbers with an estimate of 150 plus, after counting well over 100 birds.

#### Interesting/notable sightings:

- A single Yellow-faced Honeyeater was seen today, a new species not previously recorded in the park. It is possibly there were a least half a dozen more present as a small group of unidentified birds with the characteristics of this species were observed in flight before descending into the vegetation immediately behind the dead shrub where the single bird was seen and photographed.
- A single Striated Pardalote was seen in a eucalypt near the windmill. This species has not been recorded in the park since a survey in August 2008 and an opportunistic sighting in August 2012.
- Seasonal visitors present in the park today in addition to those with a special mention above include an unusually high number of Spiny-cheeked Honeyeaters, Flame Robins, Grey Fantails and Musk Lorikeets.
- An interesting combination of bird species was observed by George roosting together on the same fallen tree branch in the Large Freshwater Lake. The group consisted of two Eastern Great Egrets, one White-necked Heron, one White-faced Heron and two Australian White Ibis. It would have made a great photograph but unfortunately George didn't have his camera.
- Other very occasional visitors seen today include a pair of Red-kneed Dotterels on the edge of a dull pink Saltwater Lake, and a single Yellow-billed Spoonbill and single Cattle Egret with what appears to be a broken leg at the edge of the Large Freshwater Lake.

# Opportunistic Sightings – Interesting or unusual sightings reported between surveys

Date	Species	Number seen	Observer
4 March	Pied Currawong	1	George Fotheringham
4 March	Grey Butcherbird	1	George Fotheringham
5 March	Australian White Ibis	3	George Fotheringham
6 March	Australian Pelican	9	George Fotheringham
6 March	White-faced Heron	1	George Fotheringham
7 March	Eastern Great Egret	1	George Fotheringham
9 March	Musk Lorikeet	9	George Fotheringham
11 March	Nankeen Night-Heron	1	George Fotheringham
16 March	White-necked Heron	1	George Fotheringham
16 March	Eastern Great Egret	2	George Fotheringham
16 March	White-faced Heron	1	George Fotheringham
16 March	Australian White Ibis	2	George Fotheringham
19 March	Grey Fantail	2	George Fotheringham
31 March	Spiny-cheeked Honeyeater	1	George Fotheringham



**Australian White Ibis and Yellow-billed Spoonbill were seen together as a pair around the Large Freshwater Lake before flying out of the park later in the morning**





**Black Swan with six cygnets on the Large Freshwater Lake today**



**Three of the thirteen Spiny-cheeked Honeyeaters counted today**



**The first Yellow-faced Honeyeater to be recorded in Westgate Park**



**Spiny-cheeked Honeyeaters chasing insects in flight. The insects they are seeking are just visible in the image on the left**





**A lone Cattle Egret with a damaged or broken right leg was staying close to an Eastern Great Egret on the Large Freshwater Lake**



**Black-winged Stilt at the edge of a dull pink Saltwater Lake today**