

# Westgate Park Bird Count

By: Andrew McCutcheon, Peter Parrington, Euan Moore, John McRae, Lyn Griffen, Joshua Driscoll, Etham, Sylvia and Tanner			Date: 1 April 2019
Weather: Overcast, no wind.		Temp 14° C – 17° C	
Coverage: Entire survey route completed		Time start: 0930	Time finish: 1415
Species	Number seen	Species	Number seen
<i>Brown Quail</i>		<i>Galah</i>	
Black Swan	<b>5 + 3D(*3)</b>	<i>Little Corella</i>	<i>Unseen birds heard flying over park</i>
Australian Shelduck		<i>Sulphur-crested Cockatoo</i>	
Australian Wood Duck		<i>Rainbow Lorikeet</i>	<b>38 (*10)</b>
Pink-eared Duck		<i>Musk Lorikeet</i>	<b>*6</b>
Australasian Shoveler		<i>Little Lorikeet</i>	
Grey Teal	<b>3</b>	<i>Purple-crowned Lorikeet</i>	
Chestnut Teal	<b>20(*1)</b>	<i>Eastern Rosella</i>	
Pacific Black Duck	<b>34</b>	<i>Horsfield's Bronze-Cuckoo</i>	
Hardhead	<b>3</b>	<i>Fan-tailed Cuckoo</i>	
Australasian Grebe	<b>8</b>	<i>Sacred Kingfisher</i>	
Hoary-headed Grebe	<b>12</b>	<i>Superb Fairy-wren</i>	<b>45+ (3 blue)(*1)</b>
<i>Rock Dove</i>	<b>3</b>	<i>White-browed Scrubwren</i>	<b>9</b>
<i>Spotted Turtle-Dove</i>	<b>18(*1)</b>	<i>Brown Thornbill</i>	
<i>Crested Pigeon</i>	<b>12</b>	<i>Spotted Pardalote</i>	<b>5</b>
Darter		<i>Striated Pardalote</i>	
Little Pied Cormorant 1	<b>4(*3)</b>	<i>Yellow-faced Honeyeater</i>	
Great Cormorant	<b>*1</b>	<i>White-plumed Honeyeater</i>	<b>45+ (*8)</b>
Little Black Cormorant	<b>*11</b>	<i>Noisy Miner</i>	<b>4</b>
Pied Cormorant	<b>*2</b>	<i>Spiny-cheeked Honeyeater</i>	<b>3</b>
Australian Pelican	<b>1</b>	<i>Little Wattlebird</i>	<b>12 (*8)</b>
White-necked Heron		<i>Red Wattlebird</i>	<b>50+ (*10)</b>
Eastern Great Egret		<i>New Holland Honeyeater</i>	<b>30+ (*20)</b>
Cattle Egret		<i>White-naped Honeyeater</i>	
White-faced Heron		<i>Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike</i>	
<b>Nankeen Night-Heron</b>	<b>1</b>	<i>White-winged Triller</i>	
Australian White Ibis	<b>1</b>	<i>Golden Whistler</i>	
Straw-necked Ibis		<i>Grey Shrike-thrush</i>	
Royal Spoonbill		<i>Grey Butcherbird</i>	<b>1</b>
Yellow-billed Spoonbill		<i>Australian Magpie</i>	<b>12</b>
<b>Whistling Kite</b>	<b>1</b>	<i>Pied Currawong</i>	<b>2</b>
Little Eagle		<i>Rufous Fantail</i>	
Brown Goshawk		<i>Grey fantail</i>	<b>9</b>
Nankeen Kestrel		<i>Willie Wagtail</i>	<b>7</b>
Brown Falcon		<i>Little Raven</i>	<b>23 (*3)</b>
Australian Hobby		<i>Magpie-lark</i>	<b>13</b>
Peregrine Falcon		<i>Flame Robin</i>	<b>2</b>
Purple Swamphen	<b>6</b>	<i>Rose Robin</i>	
Buff-banded Rail		<i>Golden-headed Cisticola</i>	

Baillon's Crake		Australian Reed-Warbler	
Black-tailed Native-hen		Little Grassbird	
Dusky Moorhen	<b>31+3 juvenile</b>	<i>Silvereye</i>	
Eurasian Coot	<b>65</b>	<i>Welcome Swallow</i>	<b>50+</b>
Black-winged Stilt	<b>20+2 juvenile</b>	<i>Fairy Martin</i>	
Black-fronted Dotterel	<b>9+2 juvenile</b>	<i>Common Blackbird</i>	<b>13</b>
<b>Red-kneed Dotterel</b>	<b>2</b>	<i>Common Starling</i>	<b>12</b>
Masked Lapwing	<b>4</b>	<i>Common Myna</i>	<b>15</b>
Latham's Snipe		<i>Red-browed Finch</i>	
<i>Painted Button-quail</i>		<i>House Sparrow</i>	<b>35+ (*5)</b>
Crested Tern		<i>Australasian Pipit</i>	
Pacific Gull		<i>European Greenfinch</i>	<b>1 (heard)</b>
Silver Gull	<b>146 (*130)</b>	<i>European Goldfinch</i>	<b>2</b>
<b>Number of Bird Species</b> - Wetland dependent & Raptors.... <b>23</b> Land based .... <b>30</b> Total			<b>53 Species</b>
<b>Other animals:</b> Common Froglet in wetland near the Friend's compound. Two Common Brushtail Possums.			

\* Part of the number 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: After a very dry year and only 3 mm of rain recorded for March at Westgate Park the vegetation throughout the park is extremely dry with lots of dead shrubs and trees, especially Narrow-leafed peppermints and banksias. Some eucalypts including the large Ironbark near the windmill are in flower, but due to the dry conditions appear to be providing little nectar, as very few birds (mostly just Red Wattlebirds) are being attracted to them. We managed to see only three blue male Superb Fairy-wrens out of a total of 45 birds, indicating almost all the male wrens have changed to their brown plumage.

Over March the water level in the Large Freshwater and Saltwater lakes has dropped significantly, with the land bridge to the main island on the Large Freshwater Lake becoming exposed. Water quality in the Large Freshwater Lake appears to be very good and is providing habitat for almost every water bird recorded in today's count. Almost all other smaller water bodies including the dam, are completely dry or very low. The Southern Wetlands remain an exception, holding water of good quality at mid levels, but are not attracting many birds.

The Saltwater Lake continues to be a deep pink with very little bird life on it, just a pair of Black-winged Stilts.

Interesting/notable sightings:

- Two seasonal visitors were seen for the first time this year in the park today, three Spiny-cheeked Honeyeaters (also heard by George on 30/3) and two brown Flame Robins along the Yarra River.
- In contrast to the trees in Westgate Park some eucalypts along the Yarra are in flower and providing sufficient nectar to attract lots of birds including Musk and Rainbow Lorikeets, and the majority of the New Holland Honeyeaters seen today.

<b>Opportunistic Sightings</b> – Interesting or unusual sightings reported between surveys			
<b>Date</b>	<b>Species</b>	<b>Number seen</b>	<b>Observer</b>
1 March	White-faced Heron	1	<i>George Fotheringham</i>
1 March	Eastern Great Egret	1	<i>George Fotheringham</i>

1 March	Yellow-billed Spoonbill	1	George Fotheringham
7 March	Nankeen Night-Heron	2	George Fotheringham
10 March	Little Corella	10	George Fotheringham
10 March	Grey Butcherbird	1	George Fotheringham
12 March	Royal Spoonbill	1	Andrew McConville (eBird)
17 March	Musk Lorikeet	4	George Fotheringham
23 March	Galah	3	George Fotheringham
23 March	Australian Pelican	8	George Fotheringham
24 March	Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike	1	George Fotheringham
24 March	Pink-eared Duck	2	Michael Fuhrer (eBird)
30 March	Spiny-cheeked Honeyeater	1 heard	George Fotheringham
30 March	Spotted Pardalote	1	George Fotheringham
31 March	Grey Fantail	2	George Fotheringham



One of two Black-winged Stilts seen on the Saltwater Lake today.





**Whistling Kite over the southern wetlands.**



**Red-kneed Dotterel on the Large Freshwater Lake**



**One of two brown Flame Robins seen along the Yarra River today**



**One of six Musk Lorikeets and a New Holland Honeyeater feeding in the flowering eucalypts between the Yarra River and Lorimer Street.**