

# Westgate Park Bird Count

By: Peter Parrington, Rob Youl, John McRae, Kazuki and Saori Kagohashi, Lyn Griffen, Chris Lester		Date: 8 Aug 2022
Weather: Clear, still - 8° Cel and warming		
Coverage: Entire survey route completed		Times: 0840 - 1315

Species	Number seen	Species	Number seen
<i>Brown Quail</i>		<i>Galah</i>	
Black Swan	2 + 7 dy	<i>Little Corella</i>	22
Australian Shelduck		<i>Sulphur-crested Cockatoo</i>	
Australian Wood Duck		<i>Rainbow Lorikeet</i>	120
Pink-eared Duck		<i>Budgerigar</i>	
Australasian Shoveler		<i>Musk Lorikeet</i>	
Grey Teal	2	<i>Little Lorikeet</i>	
Chestnut Teal	17	<i>Purple-crowned Lorikeet</i>	
Pacific Black Duck	5	<i>Eastern Rosella</i>	
Hardhead	7	<i>Horsfield's Bronze-Cuckoo</i>	1
Australasian Grebe	23	<i>Fan-tailed Cuckoo</i>	
Hoary-headed Grebe		<i>Southern Boobook</i>	
<i>Rock Dove</i>	3	<i>Barn Owl</i>	
<i>Spotted Turtle-Dove</i>	6 + 1*	<i>Sacred Kingfisher</i>	
<b>Common Bronzewing</b>	1	<i>Superb Fairy-wren</i>	56 incl 7 blue
<i>Crested Pigeon</i>	2*	<i>White-browed Scrubwren</i>	17
Darter		<i>Brown Thornbill</i>	3
Little Pied Cormorant	1	<i>Spotted Pardalote</i>	1
Great Cormorant	2	<b>Striated Pardalote</b>	2
Little Black Cormorant	5	<i>White-plumed Honeyeater</i>	58 + 3*
Pied Cormorant	2	<i>Spiny-cheeked Honeyeater</i>	
Australian Pelican		<i>Noisy Miner</i>	1 within park
Eastern Great Egret		<i>Little Wattlebird</i>	7
White-faced Heron		<i>Red Wattlebird</i>	40
Nankeen Night-Heron		<i>New Holland Honeyeater</i>	65
Australian White Ibis	1	<i>Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike</i>	
Straw-necked Ibis		<i>White-winged Triller</i>	
Royal Spoonbill		<i>Golden Whistler</i>	
Black-shouldered Kite		<i>Grey Shrike-thrush</i>	
Whistling Kite		<i>Grey Butcherbird</i>	
Collared Sparrowhawk		<i>Australian Magpie</i>	8 + 2*
Little Eagle		<i>Pied Currawong</i>	3
<b>Nankeen Kestrel</b>	1 + 1*	<i>Grey fantail</i>	2
Brown Goshawk	1	<i>Willie Wagtail</i>	7 + 1*
Australian Hobby		<i>Little Raven</i>	13
Peregrine Falcon		<i>Magpie-lark</i>	10 + 1*
Purple Swamphen	2	<i>Flame Robin</i>	
Buff-banded Rail		<i>Eurasian Skylark</i>	

Baillon's Crake		Golden-headed Cisticola	
Australian Spotted Crake		Australian Reed-Warbler	
Black-tailed Native-hen		Little Grassbird	1
Dusky Moorhen	41	Silvereye	2
Eurasian Coot	16	Welcome Swallow	50
Black-winged Stilt		Tree Martin	
Black-fronted Dotterel	2	Common Blackbird	2
Red-kneed Dotterel		Common Starling	20
Masked Lapwing	3	Common Myna	19
Latham's Snipe		Red-browed Finch	
Crested Tern	5* (incl 3 resting on western bank)	House Sparrow	10
Pacific Gull		Australasian Pipit	
Silver Gull	100 + 100*	European Greenfinch	
Pied Oystercatcher		European Goldfinch	6
<b>Number of Bird Species - Wetland dependent &amp; Raptors...21 Land based...30 Total</b>			<b>51 Species</b>
<b>Other animals:</b>			

\* Seen at/along Yarra River only.

Salt lake water level: 0.80 m

The survey was highly successful, partly because of the number of observers and their considerable skill and experience. Amongst this month's team were two Japanese visitors who participate in Landcare in that country.

The park is in excellent condition, volunteers are busy, and visitors frequent. Most water bodies are almost full and hosting common froglets. Our prominent resident possum is still with us, half in and half out of its jagged hollow. Especially pleasing sightings were the three individual raptors, and the number of crested terns.

**CFMEU Block: From now on this site opposite the northwest corner of Westgate Park will be included in these monthly surveys**

Silver Gull		Australian Magpie	<b>Nest</b>
Rainbow Lorikeet	8	Willie Wagtail	
White-Plumed Honeyeater		Magpie-lark	
Red Wattlebird	1		

We note gratefully that CFMEU apprentices are currently producing nest boxes for installation in Westgate Park. We are pleased with this developing relationship.

<b>Opportunistic Sightings – Interesting or unusual sightings reported between surveys</b>			
<b>Date</b>	<b>Species</b>	<b>Number seen</b>	<b>Observer</b>
12 July	<b>^Striated Pardalote</b>	4	Edward Bell (eBird)
16 July	<i>Spiny-cheeked Honeyeater</i>	1	Edward Bell (eBird)
2 August	<b>^Common Bronzewing</b>	1	George Fotheringham
4 August	<b>^Grey Fantail</b>	2	George Fotheringham
5 August	Black-winged Stilt	8	Treeswift Wildlife & Nature (eBird)
<b>Sub-Total</b>			<b>5 – 3^ Species</b>
<b>Total number of species – Survey + Opportunistic Sightings</b>			<b><u>53 Species</u></b>

**^ This species also seen on today's bird count**

### **Note on Noisy Miners**

This species has spread widely in suburban Melbourne, and indeed throughout south-eastern Australia, thanks to the rapidly increasing areas of open grassy woodland that exemplify rural and suburban landscapes, especially parks and roadsides. Noisy Miners are clannish and vigorously exclude other bird species from their domains. Larger birds can generally cope, but smaller species such as honeyeaters, silvereyes, fantails, and wrens, all occurring in Westgate Park are rapidly banished by these aggressive birds. Hence many of these smaller bird species, most notably White-plumed Honeyeaters have disappeared from urban gardens where Noisy Miners are now present.

Obviously, this is still not the case in Westgate Park; its habitat structure, diversity and density allow small birds to evade their bullying adversaries. Almost always our observations of Noisy Miners have been on Todd and Wharf Roads. Those occasional birds seen in the park are probably scouting for new terrain, which the species does ceaselessly, but they cannot find favorable conditions in our bushy thickets.

Hence, Westgate Park is especially important as a source of information on managing and maintaining bird biodiversity. Moreover, much thought is going into the management/minimization of Noisy Miners elsewhere, including in our neighbouring City of Bayside with its Elsternwick Park project.



**White-browed Scrubwren**





**Male Superb Fairy-wren coming out of its eclipse (winter) plumage**



**Australasian Grebe and Eurasian Coot**



**The Black Swan cygnets are growing quickly**



**Pair of Hardheads**

**All photographs by Ursula Dutkiewicz**