

Westgate Park Bird Count

By: Peter Parrington, Elke Link, Rob Youl, Lyn Griffen, Ursula Dutkiewicz		Date: Monday 2 October 2023
Weather: 10° C, gradually warming with light cloud and light breeze		
Coverage: Entire survey route completed		Times : 0840 - 1400

Species	Number seen	Species	Number seen
<i>Brown Quail</i>		<i>Galah</i>	
Black Swan	2 + 1*	<i>Little Corella</i>	
Australian Wood Duck		<i>Sulphur-crested Cockatoo</i>	
Musk Duck		<i>Rainbow Lorikeet</i>	9 + 4*
Grey Teal	2	<i>Musk Lorikeet</i>	
Chestnut Teal	6	<i>Eastern Rosella</i>	
Pacific Black Duck	8	<i>Horsfield's Bronze-Cuckoo</i>	
Hardhead	15	<i>Fan-tailed Cuckoo</i>	
Australasian Grebe	3	<i>Southern Boobook</i>	
Hoary-headed Grebe	11 + 2*	<i>Barn Owl</i>	
<i>Rock Dove</i>	7	<i>Sacred Kingfisher</i>	
<i>Spotted Turtle-Dove</i>	9 + 1*	<i>Superb Fairy-wren</i>	64 (incl 27 blue)
<i>Common Bronzewing</i>		<i>White-browed Scrubwren</i>	6
<i>Crested Pigeon</i>	5	<i>Brown Thornbill</i>	3
Darter		<i>Spotted Pardalote</i>	1
Little Pied Cormorant	1 + 1*	<i>White-plumed Honeyeater</i>	54
Great Cormorant		<i>Noisy Miner</i>	5 Todd Road + 9 CFMEU + nil*
Little Black Cormorant		<i>Spiny-cheeked Honeyeater</i>	
Pied Cormorant		<i>Little Wattlebird</i>	2 + 2*
Australian Pelican		<i>Red Wattlebird</i>	57 + 2*
Eastern Great Egret		<i>New Holland Honeyeater</i>	37 + 2*
White-faced Heron		<i>White-naped Honeyeater</i>	
Nankeen Night-Heron		<i>Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike</i>	
Australian White Ibis		<i>White-winged Triller</i>	
Straw-necked Ibis		<i>Golden Whistler</i>	
Royal Spoonbill		<i>Grey Shrike-thrush</i>	
Black-shouldered Kite	1	<i>Grey Butcherbird</i>	
Whistling Kite		<i>Australian Magpie</i>	5
Collared Sparrowhawk		<i>Pied Currawong</i>	
Little Eagle		<i>Grey fantail</i>	
Nankeen Kestrel	1	<i>Willie Wagtail</i>	10
Brown Falcon		<i>Little Raven</i>	21 + 2*
Australian Hobby		<i>Magpie-lark</i>	16
Peregrine Falcon		<i>Flame Robin</i>	
Purple Swamphen	3	<i>Golden-headed Cisticola</i>	
Buff-banded Rail		<i>Australian Reed-Warbler</i>	8
Australian Spotted Crake		<i>Little Grassbird</i>	2

Dusky Moorhen	26	<i>Silvereye</i>	
Eurasian Coot	24	<i>Welcome Swallow</i>	3 + 2*
Black-winged Stilt	8	<i>Tree Martin</i>	
Black-fronted Dotterel	1	<i>Common Blackbird</i>	9
Red-kneed Dotterel		<i>Common Starling</i>	27 + 1*
Masked Lapwing		<i>Common Myna</i>	9
Latham's Snipe		<i>Red-browed Finch</i>	
Crested Tern		<i>House Sparrow</i>	25
Pacific Gull		<i>European Greenfinch</i>	
Silver Gull	65 + 40*	<i>European Goldfinch</i>	2
Number of Bird Species - Wetland dependent & Raptors...18 <i>Land based</i> ...23 Total			41 Species
Other animals: Brush-tailed Possum – in habitat tree; Common Froglet in some water bodies			

* seen at/along Yarra River only

Salt lake level: 0.86 m

CFMEU - These are added to the park tally

Silver Gull	9	Willie Wagtail	1
White-Plumed Honeyeater	1	Common Starling	3
Red Wattlebird	3	Rainbow Lorikeet	2
Noisy Miner	9	New Holland Honeyeater	5

Despite the park still looking in very good condition, the weather on the day was not so favourable for birds as reflected by the results. On the other hand, a combination of observations over the last month on eBird and those by our photographer and artist, Ursula Dutkiewicz, have added many more species to the list. Water levels have dropped somewhat, which may account for the absence of our ever-present Musk Duck.

The team was surprised by the unusually small number of Welcome Swallows, as at ground level there was an abundance of small insects, more than we have seen for at least a year.

As can be seen in the sightings and photographs below, the number of observations for September is unusually high with an additional 22 species. A high proportion are highlighted in red due to these birds being occasional or very infrequent visitors.

Opportunistic Sightings – Interesting or unusual sightings reported between surveys			
Date	Species	Number seen	Observer
7 Sept	Brown Goshawk	1	Rebecca Gelsi (eBird)
7 Sept	Silvereye	2	Josh Gatchalian (eBird)
8 Sept	Australian Wood Duck	5	Cisco Vila (eBird)
13 Sept	Black-shouldered Kite	1	George Fotheringham
15 Sept	Horsfield's Bronze-Cuckoo	1	Ursula Dutkiewicz
15 Sept	Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike	1	Ursula Dutkiewicz
16 Sept	Little Pied Cormorant	30	Ursula Dutkiewicz
17 Sept	Fan-tailed Cuckoo	1	George Fotheringham
17 Sept	^ Black-shouldered Kite	1	Russell Scott (eBird)
17 Sept	White-faced Heron	1	Russell Scott (eBird)
17 Sept	^ Brown Thornbill	1	Archer Gallaway (eBird)
17 Sept	Straw-necked Ibis	62	Archer Gallaway (eBird)
17 Sept	Pink-eared Duck	1	Archer Gallaway (eBird)
20 Sept	^ European Goldfinch	1	Josh Gatchalian (eBird)

20 Sept	^ Little Grassbird	1	Josh Gatchalian (eBird)
20 Sept	Red-browed Finch	2	Josh Gatchalian (eBird)
20 Sept	Galah	2	Josh Gatchalian (eBird)
20 Sept	Masked Lapwing	2	Josh Gatchalian (eBird)
22 Sept	^ Brown Goshawk	1	Ursula Dutkiewicz
22 Sept	^ Red-browed Finch	3	Ursula Dutkiewicz
23 Sept	Grey Butcherbird	1	George Fotheringham
23 Sept	Little Black Cormorant	15	Ursula Dutkiewicz
24 Sept	Little Corella	4	George Fotheringham
25 Sept	White-winged Triller	1	Ursula Dutkiewicz
25 Sept	^ White-faced Heron	1	Ursula Dutkiewicz
29 Sept	European Greenfinch	2	Rohan Clarke (eBird)
29 Sept	^ Horsfield's Bronze-Cuckoo	1	Rohan Clarke (eBird)
30 Sept	Nankeen Night-Heron	3	Ursula Dutkiewicz
30 Sept	White-necked Heron	2	Ursula Dutkiewicz
30 Sept	Australasian Shoveler	1 (male)	Ursula Dutkiewicz
Sub-Total			22 Species
Total number of species – Survey + Opportunistic Sightings			63 Species

^ This species also seen on today's bird count or recorded more than once in Opportunistic Sightings above



A male White-winged Triller in the park on 23 September. They are very infrequent visitors previously recorded twice since our bird surveys began in 2007 - 2 in Dec 2007 and 2 in Nov 2019.



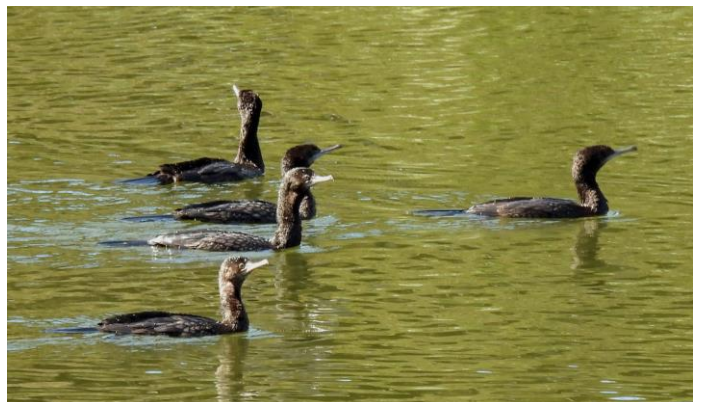
Three Nankeen Night-Herons made a brief visit on 30 September. The image to the left is an adult, and the pair in flight are immature birds due to the streaked underparts.



A pair of Purple Swamphens were appearing to display courtship behavior. Could this be a female displaying her wings to lure the male?



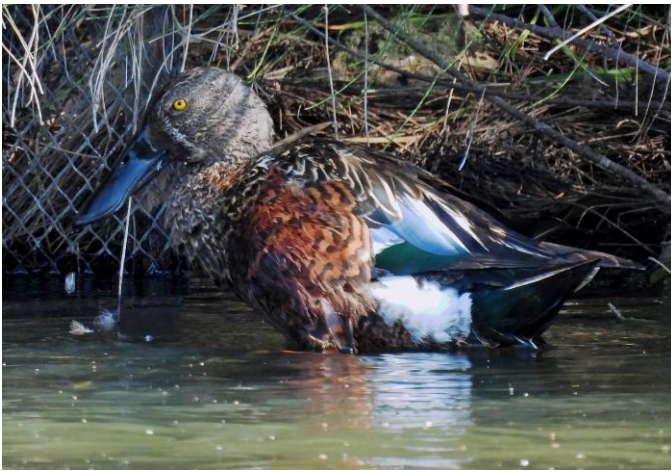
One of two White-necked Herons seen on 30 September.



Part of a group of about 15 Little Black Cormorants swimming in unison on the large freshwater lake, a typical tactic they use in hunting schools of small fish.



A flock of thirty Little Pied Cormorants descended onto the large freshwater lake, but did not stay for long. Unlike Little Black Cormorants, it is unusual for Little Pied Cormorants to move around or work together as a flock.



Australasian Shoveler and Australian Reed-Warbler.



Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike and Brown Goshawk, which was hunting in the area behind the bridge and windmill.



Horsfield's Bronze-Cuckoo seen on 15 September, and Red-browed Finch seen on 22 September. The species of sedge (*Lepidosperma* sp. ??) on which the finch is feeding could be important for the long-term retention of these birds in Westgate Park



Conditions are favorable for the resident Snake-necked Turtles *Chelodina longicollis*, prompting them to breed.

All photographs by Ursula Dutkiewicz