

Westgate Park Bird Count

By: Peter Parrington, Rob Youl, Lyn Griffen, Euan Moore, Elke Link, Ursula Dutkiewicz		Date: Monday 15 January 2024
Weather: - Light breeze, cloud 5/10, gradually clearing and warming 21° Cel		
Coverage: Entire survey route completed		Times : 0850 - 1340

Species	Number seen	Species	Number seen
<i>Brown Quail</i>		<i>Galah</i>	
Black Swan	2*	<i>Little Corella</i>	
Australian Shelduck		<i>Sulphur-crested Cockatoo</i>	
Australian Wood Duck		<i>Rainbow Lorikeet</i>	8
Pink-eared Duck		<i>Budgerigar</i>	
Musk Duck		<i>Musk Lorikeet</i>	
Grey Teal	2	<i>Little Lorikeet</i>	
Chestnut Teal	16 + 33+*	<i>Purple-crowned Lorikeet</i>	
Pacific Black Duck	10	<i>Eastern Rosella</i>	
Hardhead	4	<i>Horsfield's Bronze-Cuckoo</i>	
Australasian Grebe	3	<i>Fan-tailed Cuckoo</i>	
Hoary-headed Grebe	16	<i>Southern Boobook</i>	
Great Crested Grebe	1	<i>Barn Owl</i>	
<i>Rock Dove</i>	4	<i>Sacred Kingfisher</i>	
<i>Spotted Turtle-Dove</i>	6	<i>Superb Fairy-wren</i>	53 (incl 22 blue)
<i>Common Bronzewing</i>		<i>White-browed Scrubwren</i>	6
<i>Crested Pigeon</i>	1	<i>Brown Thornbill</i>	
Darter		<i>Spotted Pardalote</i>	
Little Pied Cormorant	1 + 5*	<i>White-plumed Honeyeater</i>	20 + 1*
Great Cormorant		<i>Eastern Spinebill</i>	
Little Black Cormorant	1 + 3*	<i>Noisy Miner</i>	2 Todd Rd + 2 CFMEU + Nil park
Pied Cormorant	2*	<i>Spiny-cheeked Honeyeater</i>	
Australian Pelican		<i>Little Wattlebird</i>	1*
Eastern Great Egret		<i>Red Wattlebird</i>	30
White-faced Heron		<i>New Holland Honeyeater</i>	22 + 1*
Nankeen (Rufous) Night-Heron	1	<i>White-naped Honeyeater</i>	
Australian White Ibis	2*	<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>	4
Little Eagle		<i>Pied Currawong</i>	2
Nankeen Kestrel		<i>Grey fantail</i>	
Brown Falcon	1	<i>Willie Wagtail</i>	8
Australian Hobby		<i>Little Raven</i>	2
Peregrine Falcon		<i>Magpie-lark</i>	11 + 1*

Purple Swamphen	6	<i>Flame Robin</i>	
Buff-banded Rail		<i>Eurasian Skylark</i>	
Baillon's Crake		Golden-headed Cisticola	
Australian Spotted Crake		Australian Reed-Warbler	8
Dusky Moorhen	17	Little Grassbird	5
Eurasian Coot	23 + 1*	<i>Silvereeye</i>	
Black-winged Stilt	2	<i>Welcome Swallow</i>	25
Black-fronted Dotterel	1	<i>Tree Martin</i>	
Red-kneed Dotterel		<i>Common Blackbird</i>	1
Masked Lapwing		<i>Common Starling</i>	18
Latham's Snipe		<i>Common Myna</i>	11
Crested Tern	1	<i>Red-browed Finch</i>	1
Pacific Gull		<i>House Sparrow</i>	10 + 2*
Silver Gull	35 + 130*	<i>European Greenfinch</i>	
Pied Oystercatcher		<i>European Goldfinch</i>	
Number of Bird Species - Wetland dependent & Raptors - 23 <i>Land based</i> 22 Total			45 species
Other animals: Brush-tailed Possum in habitat tree; Common Froglet in several water bodies; plus these butterflies: 6 Spotted Jezabels and 1 Meadow Argus			

* seen at/along Yarra River only

Salt Lake level: 0.93 m

CFMEU These are added to the park tally

Silver Gull	3	Willie Wagtail	
White-Plumed Honeyeater		Magpie-lark	1
Red Wattlebird		Welcome Swallow	2
Noisy Miner	2	Pied Currawong	
Australian Magpie	3	Little Raven	

With such a prolonged series of heavy downpours over the last several weeks, the water bodies in the park are all very full. Indeed, as waterbirds in south-east Australia have a wide variety of current habitat choices, our numbers are fairly low.

It was pleasing to see a Great Crested Grebe on the Yarra just downstream from Westgate Bridge. As a group of 10-30 of this appealing species has been offshore in Hobsons Bay since late November, this observation was not unexpected. This is a new species for the park as none have been recorded since these monthly surveys commenced in March 2007. I (Andrew) do remember seeing a single Great Crested Grebe on the large freshwater lake in late 2006, before we kept any records of birds in the park.

Another equally welcome observation: five Little Grass Birds around the freshwater lake.

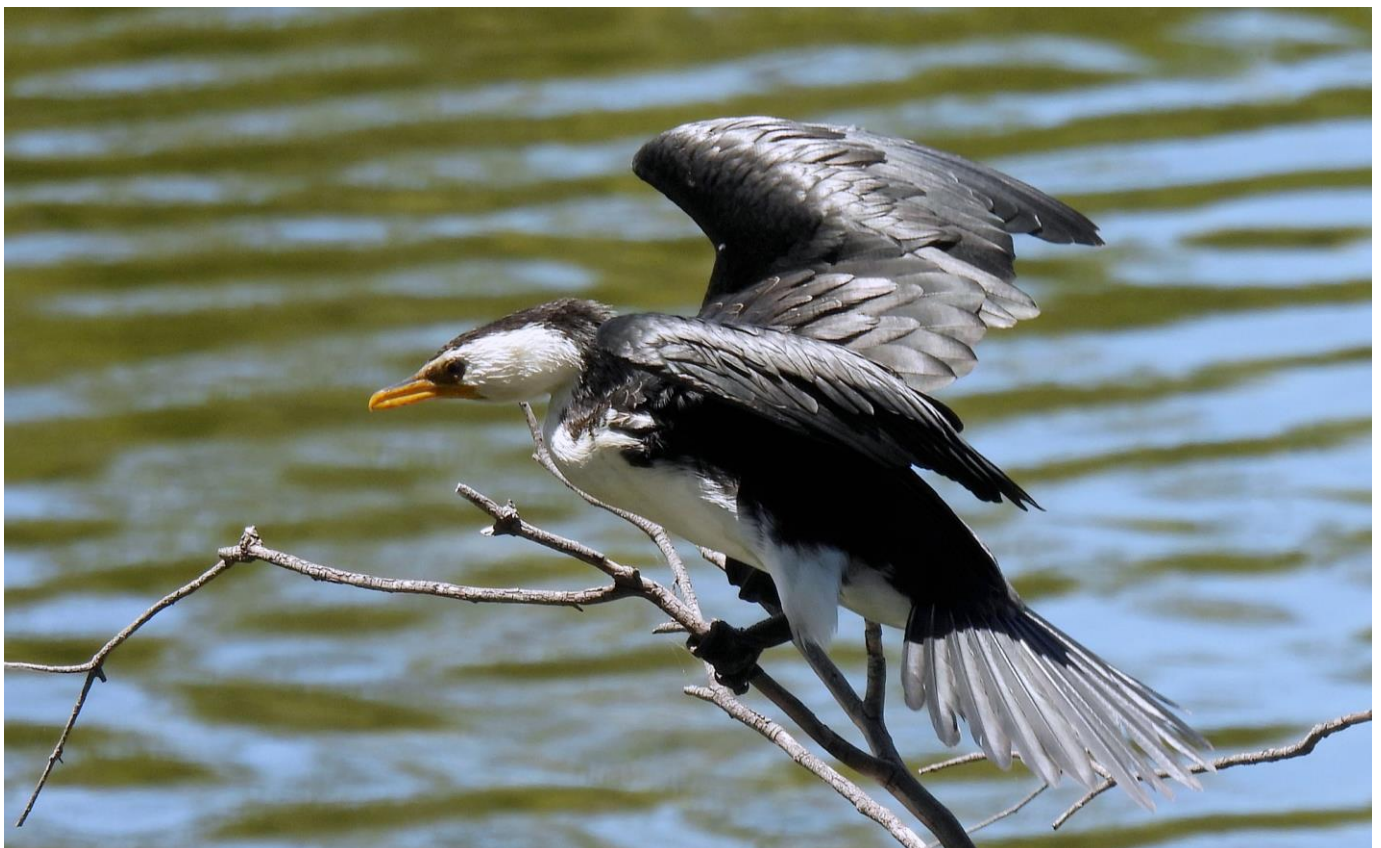
Opportunistic Sightings – Interesting or unusual sightings reported between surveys			
Date	Species	Number seen	Observer
5 Dec	White-faced Heron	1	Christopher Brown (eBird)
5 Dec	European Goldfinch	2	Christopher Brown (eBird)
29 Dec	Brown Thornbill	2	Elke Link (eBird)
29 Dec	Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike	1	Elke Link (eBird)
29 Dec	European Goldfinch	1	Elke Link (eBird)

2-3 Jan	^ Black-winged Stilt (young)	1	Elke Link
4 Jan	Horsfield's Bronze-Cuckoo	1	MR Nation (eBird)
4 Jan	Baillon's Crake	1	Ursula Dutkiewicz
6 Jan	Masked Lapwing	1	Michael Murray (eBird)
Total number of species – Survey + Opportunistic Sightings			53 Species

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



Baillon's Crake at the edge of the large freshwater lake near the works compound



Little Pied Cormorant drying its wings



Pair of Little Pied Cormorants



Australian Reed-Warbler



Juvenile Purple Swamphen



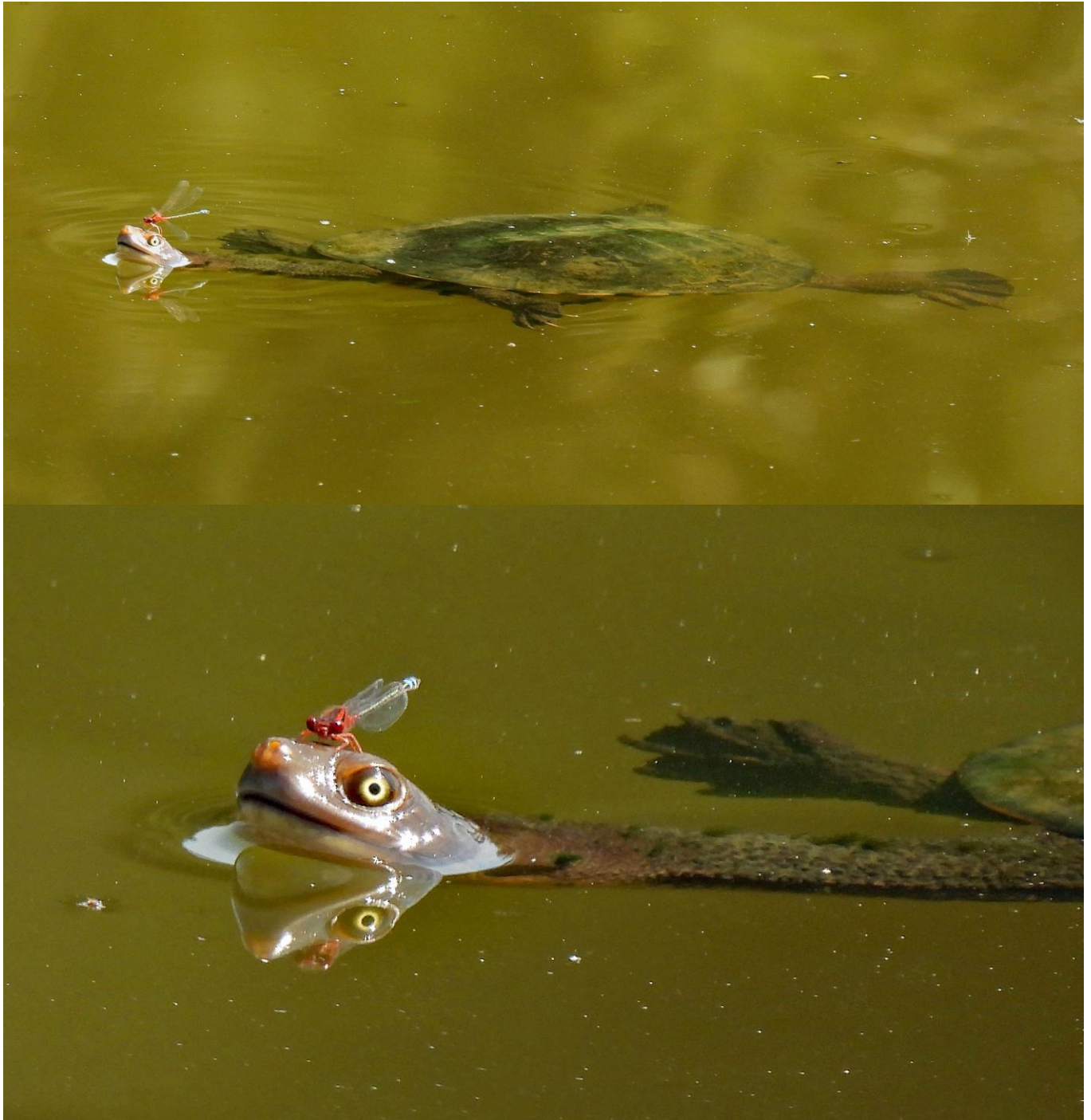
Non-breeding adult Hoary-headed Grebe clearly showing its partially webbed feet well adapted for diving. In non-breeding attire this species can be distinguished from the Australasian Grebe by the dark head cap running just below the eye. Australasian Grebes have the edge of the cap running through the eye.



Black-winged Stilts are currently present in lower than usual numbers for this time of the year. Only two were counted today.



Pair of Grey Teal and Black Swans at rest.



Snake-necked Turtle (*Chelodina longicollis*) with a Red and Blue Damselfly (*Xanthagrion erythroneurum*) resting on its head



Tiger Snake (*Notechis scutatus*)

All photographs by Ursula Dutkiewicz