

Westgate Park Bird Count

By: Peter Parrington, Rob Youl, Lyn Griffen, Peter and Jenny Petinatos, Ursula Dutkiewicz, John McRae, Mark Stanley, Bim Graham			Date: Monday 2 June 2025
Weather:	Light cloud, slight northerly wind, warming	9° Cel	
Coverage:	Entire survey route completed	Times :	0840 - 1340

Species	Number seen	Species	Number seen
<i>Brown Quail</i>		<i>Galah</i>	
Black Swan	1 + 3 dy + 3*	<i>Little Corella</i>	
Australian Shelduck		<i>Sulphur-crested Cockatoo</i>	
Australian Wood Duck		<i>Rainbow Lorikeet</i>	19 + 2*
Pink-eared Duck		<i>Budgerigar</i>	
Musk Duck	1 ♀	<i>Musk Lorikeet</i>	
Grey Teal	8	<i>Little Lorikeet</i>	
Chestnut Teal	40 + 4*	<i>Purple-crowned Lorikeet</i>	
Pacific Black Duck	14	<i>Eastern Rosella</i>	
Hardhead	10	<i>Horsfield's Bronze-Cuckoo</i>	
Australasian Grebe	4	<i>Fan-tailed Cuckoo</i>	
Hoary-headed Grebe	7 + 1*	Powerful Owl (male)	1
Great Crested Grebe		<i>Barn Owl</i>	
Rock Dove	4	<i>Sacred Kingfisher</i>	
Spotted Turtle-Dove	12	<i>Superb Fairy-wren</i>	62 (2 blue) + 9*
Common Bronzewing		<i>White-browed Scrubwren</i>	13
Crested Pigeon	3	<i>Brown Thornbill</i>	
Darter	1 juv*	<i>Spotted Pardalote</i>	1
Little Pied Cormorant	5*	<i>White-plumed Honeyeater</i>	42 + 1*
Great Cormorant	2*	Spiny-cheeked Honeyeater	1
Little Black Cormorant	10*	<i>Little Wattlebird</i>	2 + 4*
Pied Cormorant		<i>Red Wattlebird</i>	45 + 5*
Australian Pelican	5 + 1*	<i>New Holland Honeyeater</i>	30 + 4*
Eastern Great Egret		<i>White-naped Honeyeater</i>	
White-faced Heron		<i>Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike</i>	
White-necked Heron	1	<i>White-winged Triller</i>	
Australian White Ibis	2	Golden Whistler	1 ♀
Straw-necked Ibis		<i>Grey Shrike-thrush</i>	
Royal Spoonbill		<i>Grey Butcherbird</i>	1
Black-shouldered Kite	1*	<i>Australian Magpie</i>	7 + 3*
Whistling Kite		<i>Pied Currawong</i>	6
Raptor - unidentified	1	<i>Grey fantail</i>	
Little Eagle		<i>Willie Wagtail</i>	5
Nankeen Kestrel		<i>Little Raven</i>	6
Brown Falcon		<i>Satin Flycatcher</i>	
Australian Hobby		<i>Magpie-lark</i>	15 + 3*
Peregrine Falcon		<i>Flame Robin</i>	
Purple Swamphen	11	<i>Rose 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	
Dusky Moorhen	19	<i>Silvereye</i>	
Eurasian Coot	70+	<i>Welcome Swallow</i>	50 + 5*
Pied Stilt		<i>Tree Martin</i>	
Black-fronted Dotterel	6	<i>Common Blackbird</i>	4
Red-kneed Dotterel		<i>Common Starling</i>	5
Masked Lapwing	2*	<i>Common Myna</i>	6
Latham's Snipe		<i>Red-browed Finch</i>	7
Crested Tern	2*	<i>House Sparrow</i>	5 + 5*
Pacific Gull	2*	<i>Australasian Pipit</i>	
Silver Gull	30 + 360+*	<i>European Greenfinch</i>	
Pied Oystercatcher		<i>European Goldfinch</i>	3
		<i>Eastern Spinebill</i>	
		<i>Dusky Wood-swallow</i>	
		<i>Noisy Miner</i>	4 Todd Road + 6 CFMEU + 1* - Nil park
Number of Bird Species - Wetland dependent & Raptors 25 Land based 28 Total			53 species
Other animals: Brush-tailed Possum not in habitat tree			

* seen at/along Yarra River only

Salt lake: 0.4 m **Freshwater lake:** 0.25 m

CFMEU These are added to the park tally

White-Plumed Honeyeater	2	Rainbow Lorikeet	2
Red Wattlebird	4	Welcome Swallow	
Noisy Miner	6	Pied Currawong	
Australian Magpie	2	Magpie-lark	1

An issue of concern as reported by Ursula is that the number of surviving Black Swan cygnets is diminishing and now down to three from an original total of six (5 on 23/5 and 4 on 26/5). The cause of this decline is most likely Red Fox predation with further proof after Ursula located their den in the park. Parks Victoria (or should it be Melbourne CC?) have been informed and hopefully some action will be taken to eradicate these ferals from the park. **This should be followed up by someone representing Westgate Biodiversity to ensure action has been taken, as the survival of many other birds could be at stake.**

The most significant observations over the past month have been brief visits by two Powerful Owls, first a female on 19 May followed by a male that was recorded today. Also, Ursula managed to capture some rarely taken images of the Musk Duck with prey and coming up on land to rest – usually they remain on the water.

The occasional light rain over the last month has brought little relief and scattered trees continue to die across the park. However, the ford to the island in the freshwater lake is still under water. Nevertheless, as the above list shows, the biodiversity of the park continues to be pleasing. Moreover, the number of swallows suggests reasonable insect populations.

Opportunistic Sightings – Interesting or unusual sightings reported between surveys			
Date	Species	Number seen	Observer
7 May	Pied Cormorant	1	Tom Perrett (eBird)
7 May	Little Corella	8	Tom Perrett (eBird)
7 May	Flame Robin ♀	1	Tom Perrett (eBird)
9 May	^Red-browed Finch	16	Ursula Dutkiewicz
12 May	^Spiny-cheeked Honeyeater	2	Ursula Dutkiewicz
19 May	^Powerful Owl ♀	1	Ursula Dutkiewicz
19 May	^Musk Duck	1	Ursula Dutkiewicz
23 May	Nankeen Night-Heron	1	Ursula Dutkiewicz
26 May	Silvereye	3	Tom Perrett (eBird)
31 May	Buff-banded Rail	1	Elke Link (eBird)
31 May	Royal Spoonbill	1	Elke Link (eBird)
2 June	Brown Thornbill	1	Jonathan Tickner (eBird)
Sub-Total			8 Species
Total number of species – Survey + Opportunistic Sightings			<u>61 Species</u>

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

Unless specified otherwise all photographs by Ursula Dutkiewicz



The male Powerful Owl resting in the park today. Males have a wider head with a more flattened crown



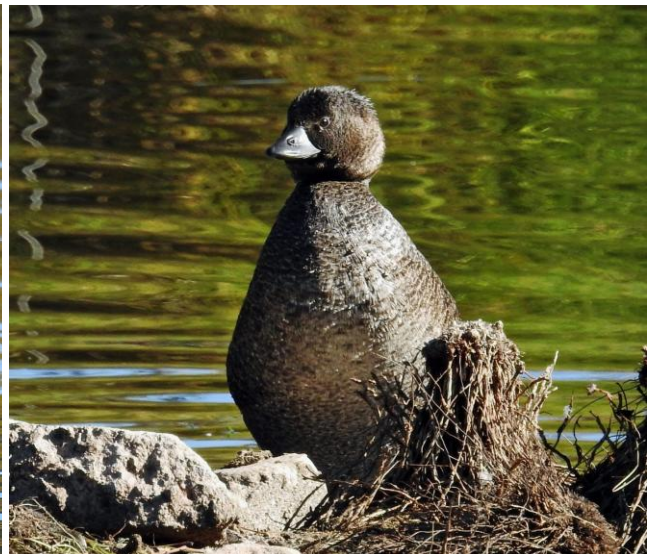
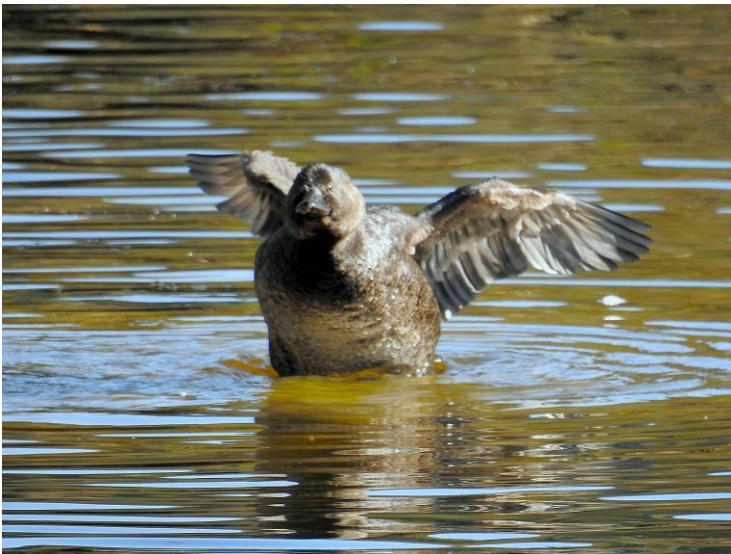
The male Powerful Owl roosting in a Blackwood wattle – image by Peter Petinatos



The female Powerful Owl in the park on 19 May. Note the more rounded and narrower head compared to the male seen today.



The last image taken of the swan family with all six cygnets, before some were presumably taken by a predator most likely a fox. Only three have survived to be recorded on today's survey



**Unusual images of the Musk Duck with prey – a yabby, wings outstretched and on land
– they rarely leave the water.**

Compared to body size the wings are proportionally very small, indicating they are weak fliers and therefore very rarely used if avoiding a predator. They typically escape by diving deep under water where they swim to safety and surface at a suitably distant location.



Nankeen Night-Heron on 23 May



**White-necked Heron today
– image by Peter Petinatos**



Little Wattlebird feeding in a Coast Banksia



Immature Golden Whistler today – image by Peter Petinatos



**Spotted Pardalotes, male left and female right in the burnt area on the side of the hill
They could possibly be preparing to nest here**



White-browed Scrubwren about to consume a caterpillar – image by Peter Petinatos



White-browed Scrubwren on 9 May



Eleven of the small flock of approximately 16 Red-browed Finches seen on 9 May