

Westgate Park Bird Count

By: Peter Parrington, Rob Youl, Peter and Jenny Petinatos, Euan Moore, Silvy Chan, Bim Graham, Linda Lucas, Alex Nosek, Sarah Alkemade		Date: Monday 5 January 2026
Weather: Initially 8/10 cloud, later clearing – light-medium South wind – 16-28° Cel		
Coverage: Entire survey route completed		Times: 0840 - 1330

Species	Number seen	Species	Number seen
Brown Quail	1	<i>Galah</i>	
Black Swan	2 with nest + 2*	<i>Little Corella</i>	2
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>	8
Grey Teal	25	<i>Little Lorikeet</i>	
Chestnut Teal	66	<i>Purple-crowned Lorikeet</i>	
Pacific Black Duck	22 + family of 11 downy young	<i>Eastern Rosella</i>	
Hardhead	14	<i>Horsfield's Bronze-Cuckoo</i>	
Australasian Grebe	1	<i>Fan-tailed Cuckoo</i>	
Hoary-headed Grebe	13	<i>Southern Boobook</i>	
Great Crested Grebe		<i>Barn Owl</i>	
<i>Rock Dove</i>	11 (+12 racers?)	<i>Sacred Kingfisher</i>	
<i>Spotted Turtle-Dove</i>	11	<i>Superb Fairy-wren</i>	31 incl 15 blue + 6* incl 2 blue
<i>Common Bronzewing</i>		<i>White-browed Scrubwren</i>	2
<i>Crested Pigeon</i>	3	<i>Brown Thornbill</i>	
Darter		<i>Spotted Pardalote</i>	
Little Pied Cormorant	1 + 2*	<i>Eastern Spinebill</i>	
Great Cormorant	1*	<i>White-plumed Honeyeater</i>	35
Little Black Cormorant	2	<i>Noisy Miner</i>	Park 4 + Todd Road nil + CFMEU 6 + 1*
Pied Cormorant	2 + 1*	<i>Spiny-cheeked Honeyeater</i>	
Australian Pelican	1	<i>Little Wattlebird</i>	3
Eastern Great Egret		<i>Red Wattlebird</i>	40 + 1*
White-faced Heron	1	<i>New Holland Honeyeater</i>	8 + 1*
Nankeen Night-Heron	2	<i>White-naped Honeyeater</i>	
Australian White Ibis	65 (incl 2 on ground) + 24*	<i>Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike</i>	1
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>	
Brown Goshawk		<i>Australian Magpie</i>	3
Little Eagle		<i>Pied Currawong</i>	4
Nankeen Kestrel		<i>Rufous Fantail</i>	

Brown Falcon		<i>Grey fantail</i>	
Australian Hobby		<i>Willie Wagtail</i>	7
Peregrine Falcon		<i>Little Raven</i>	7 + 1*
Purple Swamphen	3 + 4 dy	<i>Magpie-lark</i>	13 + 2*
Buff-banded Rail		<i>Flame Robin</i>	
Baillon's Crake		Golden-headed Cisticola	
Australian Spotted Crake		Australian Reed-Warbler	3
Black-tailed Native-hen		Little Grassbird	2
Dusky Moorhen	5 + 1 dy + nest	<i>Silvereye</i>	
Eurasian Coot	116 + nest	<i>Welcome Swallow</i>	40
Pied Stilt	11	<i>Tree Martin</i>	
Black-fronted Dotterel	2	<i>Common Blackbird</i>	3
Red-kneed Dotterel		<i>Common Starling</i>	40
Masked Lapwing	3 + 2*	<i>Common Myna</i>	2
Latham's Snipe		<i>Red-browed Finch</i>	
Crested Tern	3*	<i>House Sparrow</i>	55 + 2*
Pacific Gull	1*	<i>European Greenfinch</i>	
Silver Gull	24 + 30*	<i>European Goldfinch</i>	5
Number of Bird Species - Wetland dependent & Raptors: 26 Land based: 26 Total			52 species
Other animals: Brush-tailed Possum – in usual hollow. Possum drey near carpark occupied. Frog calls not detected.			

* seen at/along Yarra River only

Saltwater Lake level: 0.89 m; Freshwater Lake level: 0.5 m

CFMEU - These are added to the park tally

Rainbow Lorikeet	1	Australian Magpie	1
Noisy Miner	6	White-plumed Honeyeater	4
Australian White Ibis	5	Silver Gull	4
Welcome Swallow	3	Magpie-lark	1

The number of bird species recorded today is high with a good tally of 52 species, but aside from **Brown Quail** they are all species regularly found in Westgate Park. In stark contrast almost every species under Opportunistic Sightings are rare or infrequent visitors to the park, adding another 13 species to the total tally. The most significant was a **Tawny Frogmouth**, not previously recorded here plus some very occasional visitors such as a **Grey Shrike-thrush**, **Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoo**, **Tree Martin** and of course the continuing presence of a male **Powerful Owl**.

Whilst the number of Fairy-wrens was lower than usual, along with Scrub-wrens and Silver Gulls, today's survey was very encouraging with plenty of breeding activity by water birds. Black-fronted Dotterels have returned to the saltwater lake.

Small patches of algae are forming in parts of the freshwater lake, but overall the water quality appears to be good, as it is supporting good numbers of Hoary-headed Grebes and cormorants. Furthermore, evidence that the lake and other freshwater bodies are in good condition is the high number of dragonflies and damselflies present in the park over the last few weeks – see photos of some of them on the last page. They no doubt are a good food source for many birds.

Opportunistic Sightings – Interesting or unusual sightings reported between surveys

Date	Species	Number seen	Observer
3 Dec	White-winged Triller (female)	1	Ursula Dutkiewicz
3 Dec	Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoo	2	Ursula Dutkiewicz
7 Dec	^Brown Quail – Calling	1	Jane Hammond (eBird)
8 Dec	Fan-tailed Cuckoo (immature)	1	Ursula Dutkiewicz
10 Dec	Powerful Owl	1	Ursula Dutkiewicz
12 Dec	Red-browed Finch	1	Ursula Dutkiewicz
15 Dec	^Powerful Owl	1	Ursula Dutkiewicz
17 Dec	^Brown Quail – Calling	1	Ursula Dutkiewicz
29 Dec	Tawny Frogmouth	1	Chen Qi (eBird)
29 Dec	Tree Martin	1	Chen Qi (eBird)
30 Dec	Australasian Shoveler	1	Geraldine King (eBird)
30 Dec	Brown Thornbill	1	Geraldine King (eBird)
30 Dec	Grey Shrike-thrush	1	Geraldine King (eBird)
30 Dec	Australian Wood Duck	1	Chen Qi (eBird)
30 Dec	Galah	1	Chen Qi (eBird)
30 Dec	European Greenfinch	1	Chen Qi (eBird)
Sub-Total			13 Species
Total number of species – Survey + Opportunistic Sightings			<u>65 Species</u>

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

Unless specified otherwise all photographs in this report by Ursula Dutkiewicz



The female White-winged Triller seen in the park on 3 December



Chestnut Teal with dependent young



Pacific Black Duck with eleven downy young. In the lower image this female appears to be taking care of at least two broods, one presumably belonging to another pair – lower image by Peter Petinatos



Purple Swamphen pair with five recently hatched young taken on 5 December



Four chicks have survived up to today's bird count – lower images by Peter Petinatos



Dusky Moorhen with young taken on 10 December



Eurasian Coots were seen building a nest on 10 December, left. When Ursula revisited the nest on 17 December Dusky Moorhens had taken it over, right. There appears to be competition for nesting sites between these two species.



Two species in flight over the park today, single Australian Pelican and one of 89 White Ibis only two of which were seen on the ground - images by Peter Petinatos



**The Powerful Owl which first appeared on 2 June last year is still in the park.
This image taken on 10 December**



The Powerful Owl was seen roosting again on 15 December



Immature Fan-tailed Cuckoo on 8 December



Pied Currawong



Common Ringtailed Possums asleep on top of drey



Australasian Garden Orb-Weavers
Genus *Hortophora*



Genus *Heterodontonyxa*
Tarantula-hawk Wasps and Allies - Tribe *Pepsini*



Masked Bees - Genus *Hylaeus*



Tau Emerald *Hemicordulia tau*



Blue Skimmer *Orthetrum caledonicum*



Wandering Percher *Diplacodes bipunctata*



Red and Blue Damsel *Xanthagrion erythroneurum*



Blue Ringtail *Austrolestes annulosus*