

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	Galah	
Black Swan	2 with nest + 2*	Little Corella	2
Australian Shelduck		Sulphur-crested Cockatoo	
Australian Wood Duck		Rainbow Lorikeet	8
Pink-eared Duck		Budgerigar	
Musk Duck		Musk Lorikeet	8
Grey Teal	25	Little Lorikeet	
Chestnut Teal	66	Purple-crowned Lorikeet	
Pacific Black Duck	22 + family of 11 downy young	Eastern Rosella	
Hardhead	14	Horsfield's Bronze-Cuckoo	
Australasian Grebe	1	Fan-tailed Cuckoo	
Hoary-headed Grebe	13	Southern Boobook	
Great Crested Grebe		Barn Owl	
Rock Dove	11 (+12 racers?)	Sacred Kingfisher	
Spotted Turtle-Dove	11	Superb Fairy-wren	31 incl 15 blue + 6* incl 2 blue
Common Bronzewing		White-browed Scrubwren	2
Crested Pigeon	3	Brown Thornbill	
Darter		Spotted Pardalote	
Little Pied Cormorant	1 + 2*	Eastern Spinebill	
Great Cormorant	1*	White-plumed Honeyeater	35
Little Black Cormorant	2	Noisy Miner	Park 4 + Todd Road nil + CFMEU 6 + 1*
Pied Cormorant	2 + 1*	Spiny-cheeked Honeyeater	
Australian Pelican	1	Little Wattlebird	3
Eastern Great Egret		Red Wattlebird	40 + 1*
White-faced Heron	1	New Holland Honeyeater	8 + 1*
Nankeen Night-Heron	2	White-naped Honeyeater	
Australian White Ibis	65 (incl 2 on ground) + 24*	Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike	1
Straw-necked Ibis		White-winged Triller	
Royal Spoonbill		Golden Whistler	
Black-shouldered Kite		Grey Shrike-thrush	
Whistling Kite		Grey Butcherbird	
Brown Goshawk		Australian Magpie	3
Little Eagle		Pied Currawong	4
Nankeen Kestrel		Rufous Fantail	

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		<i>Golden-headed Cisticola</i>	
Australian Spotted Crake		<i>Australian Reed-Warbler</i>	3
Black-tailed Native-hen		<i>Little Grassbird</i>	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

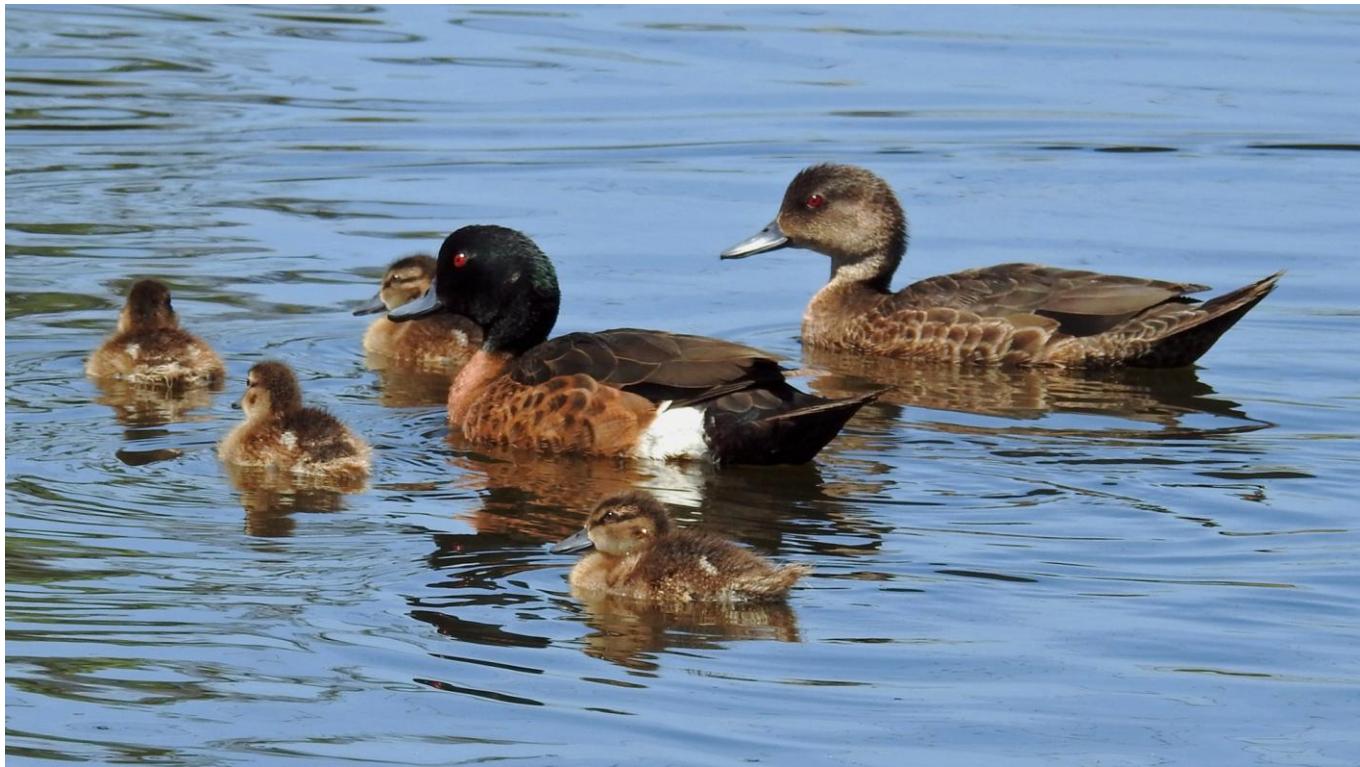
Date	Species	Number seen	Observer
3 Dec	White-winged Triller (female)	1	Ursula Dutkiewicz
3 Dec	Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoo	2	Ursula Dutkiewicz
7 Dec	^Brown Quail – Calling	1	Jane Hammond (eBird)
8 Dec	Fan-tailed Cuckoo (immature)	1	Ursula Dutkiewicz
10 Dec	Powerful Owl	1	Ursula Dutkiewicz
12 Dec	Red-browed 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			65 Species

[^] 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



 Peter Petinatos
PHOTOGRAPHY

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*