

# Westgate Park Bird Count

<b>By:</b> Peter Parrington, Lyn Griffen, Ursula Dutkiewicz, John McRae, Elke Link,		<b>Date:</b> Monday 6 July 2026
<b>Weather:</b> Cloudless, Cool		3 - 13° Cel
<b>Coverage:</b> Entire survey route completed		Times: 0840 - 1305

Species	Number seen	Species	Number seen
Brown Quail		<i>Galah</i>	
Black Swan	<b>3</b>	<i>Little Corella</i>	
Australian Shelduck		<i>Sulphur-crested Cockatoo</i>	
Australian Wood Duck		<i>Rainbow Lorikeet</i>	<b>15 + 3*</b>
Pink-eared Duck		<i>Budgerigar</i>	
Musk Duck		<i>Musk Lorikeet</i>	
Grey Teal		<i>Little Lorikeet</i>	
Chestnut Teal	<b>23</b>	<i>Purple-crowned Lorikeet</i>	
Pacific Black Duck		<i>Eastern Rosella</i>	
Hardhead		<i>Horsfield's Bronze-Cuckoo</i>	
Australasian Grebe		<i>Fan-tailed Cuckoo</i>	
Hoary-headed Grebe	<b>6</b>	<i>Southern Boobook</i>	
Great Crested Grebe		<i>Barn Owl</i>	
<i>Rock Dove</i>	<b>6</b>	<i>Sacred Kingfisher</i>	
<i>Spotted Turtle-Dove</i>	<b>5</b>	<i>Superb Fairy-wren</i>	47 (7Blue) +10 (2)* <b>Total 57(9 blue)</b>
<i>Common Bronzewing</i>		<i>White-browed Scrubwren</i>	<b>16</b>
<i>Crested Pigeon</i>		<i>Brown Thornbill</i>	
Darter	<b>1*</b>	<i>Spotted Pardalote</i>	
Little Pied Cormorant	<b>2*</b>	<i>Eastern Spinebill</i>	
Great Cormorant	<b>3*</b>	<i>White-plumed Honeyeater</i>	<b>18</b>
Little Black Cormorant	<b>4*</b>	<i>Noisy Miner</i>	12 Park, 5 CFMEU, 7 Todd Rd <b>Total 24</b>
Pied Cormorant		<i>Spiny-cheeked Honeyeater</i>	<b>2</b>
Australian Pelican		<i>Little Wattlebird</i>	<b>4 +1*</b>
Eastern Great Egret		<i>Red Wattlebird</i>	<b>45+ 2*</b>
White-faced Heron		<i>New Holland Honeyeater</i>	<b>32+ 2*</b>
Nankeen Night-Heron		<i>White-naped Honeyeater</i>	
Australian White Ibis	<b>32</b>	<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>	
Goshawk/Sparrowhawk ??	<b>1</b>	<i>Australian Magpie</i>	<b>11 +2*</b>
Little Eagle		<i>Pied Currawong</i>	<b>4</b>
Nankeen Kestrel		<i>Rufous Fantail</i>	
Brown Falcon		<i>Grey fantail</i>	
Australian Hobby		<i>Willie Wagtail</i>	<b>7 +1*</b>
Peregrine Falcon		<i>Little Raven</i>	<b>29 +9*</b>

Purple Swamphen	8	Magpie-lark	7 + 1*
<b>Buff-banded Rail</b>	<b>2</b>	Flame Robin	
Baillon's Crake		Golden-headed Cisticola	
Australian Spotted Crake		Australian Reed-Warbler	
Black-tailed Native-hen		Little Grassbird	
Dusky Moorhen	22	Silvereye	
Eurasian Coot	42 + 3*	Welcome Swallow	35
Pied Stilt		Common Blackbird	1
Black-fronted Dotterel		Common Starling	65 + 2*
Red-kneed Dotterel		Common Myna	2
Masked Lapwing	1	<b>Red-browed Finch</b>	<b>7 + 2*</b>
Crested Tern		House Sparrow	8 + 3*
Pacific Gull		European Greenfinch	
Silver Gull	22 + 150*	European Goldfinch	2
<b>Number of Bird Species</b> - Wetland dependent & Raptors -15 <i>Land based</i> - 23 <b>Total</b>			<b>38 species</b>
<b>Other animals:</b> Brush-tailed Possum – usual hollow occupied. Ringtail Possum drey near carpark occupied. Frog calls were detected close to compound, S. Wetland. Fox scent detected near FW Lake			

\* seen at/along Yarra River only

Saltwater Lake level: 0.68 m      Freshwater Lake level: 0.4 m approx.

#### **CFMEU These are added to the park tally**

Noisy Miner	5	Australian Magpie	2
Red Wattlebird	7	Little Raven	12
Silver Gull	2	Willie Wagtail	1

A Cold start with frost on Carpark/Saltwater grassed area. It was a disappointing tally regarding ducks with only Chestnut Teal stepping forward and all other frequently seen species being absent. Sightings recorded on eBird, however during June show that all the usual duck species and one Australasian Grebe were recorded recently in the park by several observers.

A big plus was the sighting of two Buff-banded Rails today. Other notable sightings over June were a Black Kite, Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike and four Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoos.

Noisy Minors were seen on the big Island in the Fresh Water Lake today - something that has not been noticed before. This is an important observation, which possibly indicates these birds are establishing themselves within the park. This will be to the detriment of most of the smaller birds that occur in the park, such as White-plumed Honeyeaters, Superb Fairy-wrens and Spotted Pardalotes just to name three.

As H5N1 bird flu has arrived in Australia, we must be vigilant in the future if we encounter sick or dead birds in the park. Currently the advice is, avoid, record and report any dead or sick birds or other wildlife to the Emergency Animal Disease Hotline on 1800 675 888. I am raising this issue after Ursula found what appears to be a dead young duck (not sure what species) on 17 June.

Authorities have already confirmed H5N1 detections in 7 seabirds in Western Australia, South Australia and New South Wales. While there is no evidence of any mass mortality or wildlife transmission from these sea birds, it is now becoming clear this deadly virus will establish in Australia – more a matter of when, not if.

For species like the black swan — which lack some immune genes to fight viral infections the consequences could be devastating.

<b>Opportunistic Sightings – Interesting or unusual sightings reported between surveys</b>			
<b>Date</b>	<b>Species</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Observer</b>
3 June	<b>Black Kite</b>	<b>1</b>	Elke Link (eBird)
6 June	Nankeen Night-Heron	<b>1</b>	Hilary Monck (eBird)
7 June	Brown Thornbill	<b>1</b>	Ethan Gosnell (eBird)
7 June	Silvereye	<b>2</b>	Ethan Gosnell (eBird)
7 June	Australasian Grebe	<b>1</b>	Thomas E (eBird)
7 June	Black-fronted Dotterel	<b>2</b>	Thomas E (eBird)
9 June	Pacific Black Duck	<b>12 + 9 DY</b>	Elke Link (eBird)
9 June	<b>^ Buff-banded Rail</b>	<b>1</b>	Elke Link (eBird)
10 June	<b>Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike</b>	<b>1</b>	Ursula Dutkiewicz
12 June	Australian Wood Duck	<b>2</b>	Elke Link (eBird)
12 June	Grey Teal	<b>3</b>	Elke Link (eBird)
13 June	Brown Quail	<b>1 (heard)</b>	Elke Link (eBird)
13 June	Crested Pigeon	<b>3</b>	Elke Link (eBird)
15 June	Brown Goshawk	<b>1</b>	Ursula Dutkiewicz
17 June	<b>^ Red-browed Finch</b>	<b>19</b>	Ursula Dutkiewicz
20 June	<b>Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoo</b>	<b>4</b>	Luke Wilson (eBird)
27 June	Hardhead	<b>2</b>	Ashley Loughnan (eBird)
<b>Sub-Total</b>			<b>15 Species</b>
<b>Total number of species – Survey + Opportunistic Sightings</b>			<b><u>53 Species</u></b>

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

**All photographs in this report by Ursula Dutkiewicz**



**At first thought to be a grebe, but on closer inspection of the head and bill this is a deceased duckling (species too difficult to identify). At this stage of the pandemic its highly unlikely H5N1 could be the cause of death.**



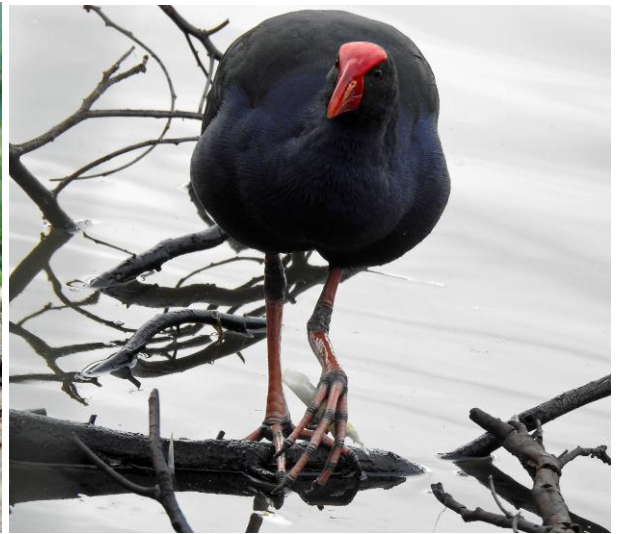
**Black Swans are predicted to be a highly susceptible species should H5N1 take hold over mainland Australia**



**Although Chestnut Teal were the only species of duck seen today. Others were recently present such as the three Grey Teal in this image taken on 24 June.**



One of the two Buff-banded Rails seen today



Purple Swamp Hen holding the base of a reed



Masked Lapwing with a large worm, and a pair with one showing its spur. They were once called Spurwinged Plovers early last century because of their conspicuous spurs, particularly on show when breeding.



Pair of Welcome Swallows



**A nice image of a mature Brown Goshawk. Adults become very wary when approached, making them difficult to photograph, whereas juveniles and immature birds are much easier to approach. For this reason, most photographs of this species taken when perched are younger birds rather than adults.**



**A larger than usual flock of Little Ravens**



**Pair of Little Wattlebirds and regular winter visitor, a Spiny-cheeked Honeyeater**



Part of a flock of 19 Red-browed Finches bathing in a puddle. Numbers of these finches appear to be increasing in the park



Red-browed Finch searching for Casuarina seeds



Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike seen on 10 June



New Holland Honeyeater inspecting correa flowers for nectar content



Pied Currawong drinking from a puddle



Eastern Blue-tongue Lizard *Tiliqua scincoides*



Tussock Skink *Pseudemoia pagenstecheri*. Conservation Status: Endangered in Victoria (DEECA)

Both skinks were found on the hill overlooking the dam and freshwater lake. Maximum care must be taken to ensure the habitat in this general area is preserved in its current state by Park Management and/or its contractors. This includes avoiding ground disturbance and chemical spraying of insecticides or herbicides.