

Westgate Park Bird Count

By: Peter Parrington, Rob Youl, Peter Petinatos, Bim Graham, Linda Lucas, Lyn Griffen, Elke Link, Chris Lester, Claire Kelly, plus Birrarung Riverfest volunteers			Date: Monday 5 October 2026
Weather: Still, 8/10 cloud cover 12°Cel			
Coverage: Entire survey route completed		Times: 0835 - 1315	

Species	Number seen	Species	Number seen
Brown Quail		<i>Galah</i>	2
Black Swan	2 + 5 dy; another pair is nesting	<i>Little Corella</i>	1
Australian Shelduck		<i>Sulphur-crested Cockatoo</i>	
Australian Wood Duck		<i>Rainbow Lorikeet</i>	4
Pink-eared Duck		<i>Budgerigar</i>	
Musk Duck		<i>Musk Lorikeet</i>	
Grey Teal	2	<i>Little Lorikeet</i>	
Chestnut Teal	9 + 4 dy	<i>Purple-crowned Lorikeet</i>	
Pacific Black Duck	4 + 8 dy	<i>Eastern Rosella</i>	
Hardhead	15	<i>Horsfield's Bronze-Cuckoo</i>	2
Australasian Grebe		<i>Fan-tailed Cuckoo</i>	
Hoary-headed Grebe	8	<i>Southern Boobook</i>	
Great Crested Grebe		<i>Barn Owl</i>	
<i>Rock Dove</i>	7	<i>Sacred Kingfisher</i>	
<i>Spotted Turtle-Dove</i>	12	<i>Superb Fairy-wren</i>	60 inc 25 blue + 4* incl 3 blue
<i>Common Bronzewing</i>		<i>White-browed Scrubwren</i>	15
<i>Crested Pigeon</i>	10	<i>Brown Thornbill</i>	
Darter		<i>Spotted Pardalote</i>	
Little Pied Cormorant	1 + 1*	<i>Eastern Spinebill</i>	1
Great Cormorant	8*	<i>White-plumed Honeyeater</i>	20
Little Black Cormorant	11*	<i>Noisy Miner</i>	13 - 1 Park + 6 Todd Rd + 2 CFMEU + 4*
Pied Cormorant		<i>Spiny-cheeked Honeyeater</i>	
Australian Pelican		<i>Little Wattlebird</i>	1 + 2*
Eastern Great Egret		<i>Red Wattlebird</i>	30 + 4* (one nest seen)
White-faced Heron		<i>New Holland Honeyeater</i>	21
Nankeen Night-Heron		<i>White-naped Honeyeater</i>	
Australian White Ibis	140 + 3* (one on ground)	<i>Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike</i>	1
Straw-necked Ibis	10	<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>	1
Brown Goshawk		<i>Australian Magpie</i>	7 + 1*

Little Eagle		<i>Pied Currawong</i>	4
Nankeen Kestrel		<i>Rufous Fantail</i>	
Brown Falcon		<i>Grey fantail</i>	4
Australian Hobby	1	<i>Willie Wagtail</i>	11 + 1 dy
Peregrine Falcon		<i>Little Raven</i>	65 + 5*
Purple Swamphen	5	<i>Magpie-lark</i>	13
Buff-banded Rail		<i>Flame Robin</i>	
Baillon's Crake		Golden-headed Cisticola	
Australian Spotted Crake		Australian Reed-Warbler	2
Black-tailed Native-hen		Little Grassbird	
Dusky Moorhen	6	<i>Silvereye</i>	
Eurasian Coot	17	<i>Welcome Swallow</i>	15 + 3*
Pied Stilt	2	<i>Tree Martin</i>	
Black-fronted Dotterel	1	<i>Common Blackbird</i>	2 + 1*
Red-kneed Dotterel		<i>Common Starling</i>	8 + 4*
Masked Lapwing		<i>Common Myna</i>	2
Latham's Snipe		<i>Red-browed Finch</i>	4
Great Crested Tern		<i>House Sparrow</i>	21+ 3*
Pacific Gull		<i>European Greenfinch</i>	5
Silver Gull	35 + 170*	<i>European Goldfinch</i>	8
Number of Bird Species - Wetland dependent & Raptors ... 19 ... Land based...31 Total			50 species
Other animals: Brush-tailed Possum – in usual hollow. Possum drey near carpark occupied. Frog calls: Common Froglet heard often.			

* seen at/along Yarra River only

Saltwater Lake level: 0.85 m; Freshwater Lake level: 0.64 m

CFMEU These are added to the park tally

Australian White Ibis	10	White-plumed Honeyeater	2
Silver Gull	14	Willie Wagtail	1
Noisy Miner	2	Australian Magpie	1
Red Wattlebird	5	Common Myna	2

Some 50 mm of rain fell on Westgate Park on Friday 2 – Saturday 3 October. On Monday 5 October, a dozen volunteers joined the regular survey team as part of the Birrarung Riverfest, run by the Yarra Riverkeeper Association to promote greater community interest in, knowledge of and empathy for the river, which has been so important to Victoria over the millennia, including since the arrival of Europeans.

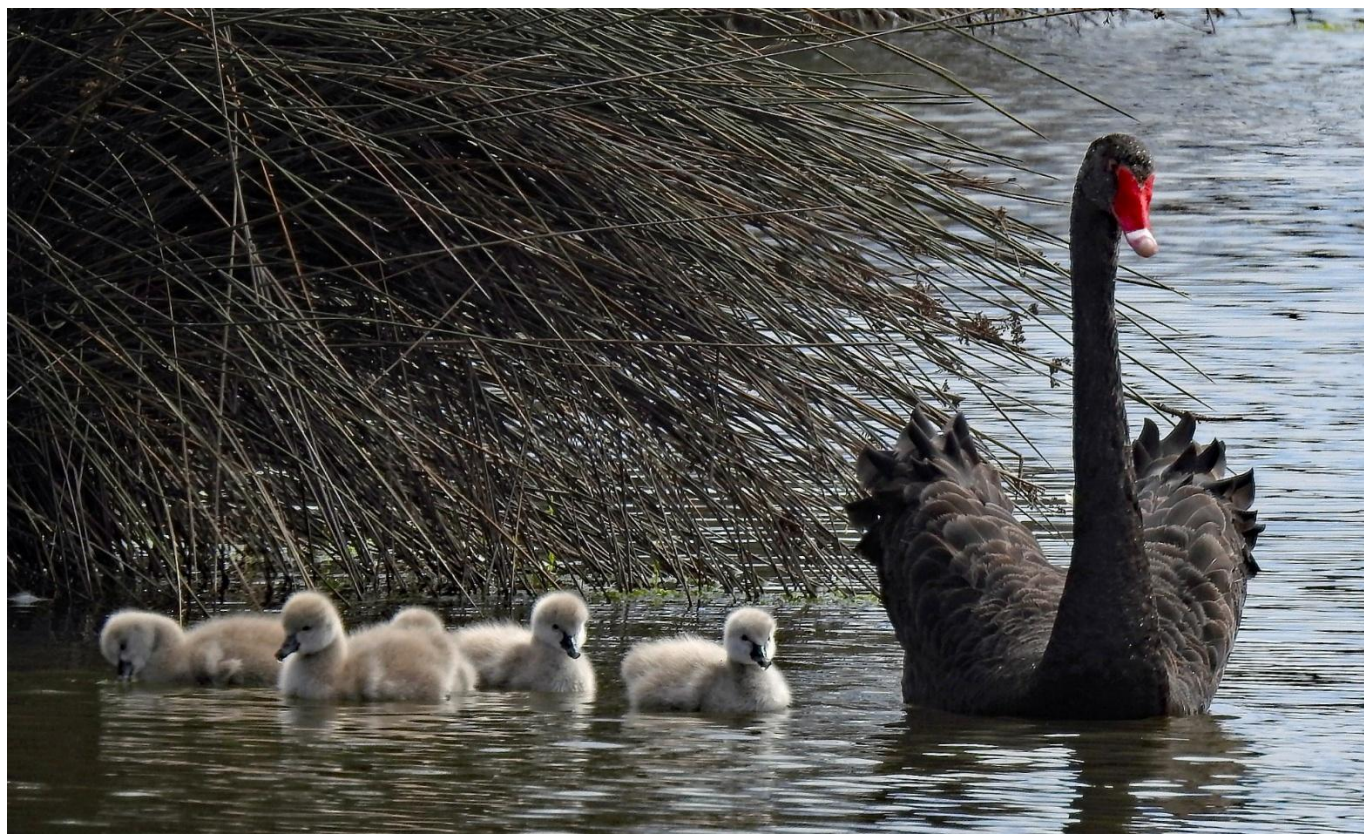
Two of the park's most recent additions are biodegradable art installations 'straw-towers' at Railway Dam at the western end of Freshwater Lake, which double as small nesting towers. We are pleased to report that Superb Fairy-wrens have already seized this opportunity to surmount the housing crisis. No doubt Horsfield's Bronze Cuckoos and Grey Butcherbirds will soon be door-knocking.

This survey is remarkable for the minute number of Rainbow Lorikeets. It seems unlikely such a small number will continue.

Opportunistic Sightings – Interesting or unusual sightings reported between surveys			
Date	Species	Number	Observer
11 Sept	Brown Thornbill	1	Ursula Dutkiewicz
12 Sept	Collared Sparrowhawk	1	John Daniels (eBird)
16 Sept	Little Grassbird	1	Ursula Dutkiewicz
19 Sept	^ Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike	1	John Daniels (eBird)
19 Sept	^ Straw-necked Ibis	5	John Daniels (eBird)
19 Sept	Great Crested Tern	2	John Daniels (eBird)
19 Sept	Pacific Gull – juvenile	1	John Daniels (eBird)
19 Sept	White-faced Heron	1	Samuel Ho (eBird)
21 Sept	Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoo	15 (approx.)	Ursula Dutkiewicz
21 Sept	Brown Quail	1	Jayden Mitchell (eBird)
21 Sept	Grey Shrike-thrush	1	Jayden Mitchell (eBird)
23 Sept	Silvereye	1	Ursula Dutkiewicz
25 Sept	^ Brown Quail - calling	1	Ursula Dutkiewicz
30 Sept	^ Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoo - calling		
30 Sept	^ White-faced Heron	1	Ursula Dutkiewicz
Sub-Total			10 Species
Total number of species – Survey + Opportunistic Sightings			60 Species

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

Unless stated otherwise, all photographs in this report by Ursula Dutkiewicz



Black Swan with five cygnets taken on 16 September



Five cygnets were counted again today, perhaps proving the fox control program has been successful
Images by Peter Petinatos



An altercation between an Australasian Coot and Dusky Moorhen, possibly over territory to construct a nest



Australasian Coot building a nest on 24 September and.....five days later the Coots nest taken over by a Dusky Moorhen. This probably explains what the fight shown on the previous page was about



A very distant view of an Australian Hobby on the CFMEU crane. Once I cropped the photo I spotted what looks like a nest. Fingers crossed, that's true and even more fingers crossed that it will be successful.

Words and image by Elke Link



Two inhabitants of the reeds – Little Grassbird, left and Australian Reed-Warbler, right



These two Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoos were part of a flock of fifteen or so that visited the park



New Holland Honeyeater - Image by Peter Petinatos



Superb Fairy-wren showing interest in a 'straw-tower', recently installed biodegradable art installations beside Railway Dam at the western end of the Freshwater Lake as possible nesting sites.



Willie Wagtail chicks grow quickly. The image on the left of the chick in the nest was taken on 24 September, and the same chick on the right as seen today, fledged and capable of flight.

Left image by Ursula Dutkiewicz – all other images on this page by Peter Petinatos



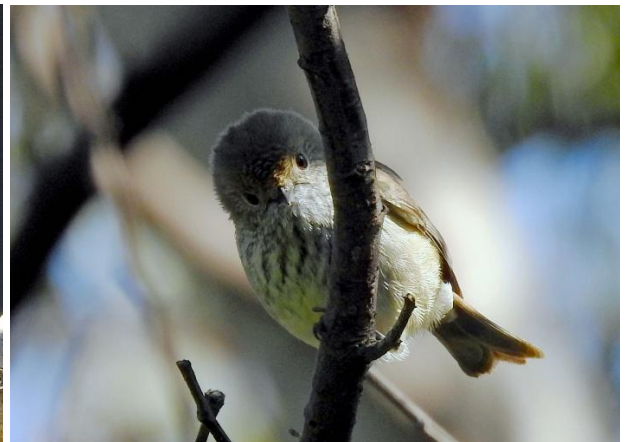
Pied Stilts displaying mating behaviour



Masked Lapwings



Red-browed Finches in an act of courtship. The male is holding a grass stem with seeds as an offer to impress the female. It's interesting to note that this grass is a weed favoured by the finches as a food source.



A nest believed to be that of a White-browed Scrubwren, left was discovered in the storeroom near the toilets earlier in September. The young now fledged are hanging out in the bushes by the BBQ. Brown Thornbill, right



Eastern Snake-necked Turtles are enjoying the weed and plentiful dragonflies on the Fresh Water Lake



Dragonflies are very abundant in their hundreds (or thousands) in the park at this moment. Two species are particularly common– Tau Emerald *Hemicordulia tau*, left and Wandering Percher *Diplacodes bipunctata*, right



Many bird species in the park are enjoying a feast of dragonflies and damselflies. This Grey Fantail and Silver Gull are two examples.



**Two species of butterflies from inland Australia that occasionally migrate south in spring.
Lesser Wanderer *Danaus petilia*, left and a Caper White *Belenois java*, right**



**Blue Ant *Diamma bicolor* is a wasp species, of which the female is wingless and metallic blue.
The smaller black and white male, like most wasps has wings. Both sexes have dark orange legs.**

Yarra Riverkeeper Association acknowledges that the lands and waterways of the Yarra, Birrarung catchment, are the unceded territories of the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung and Bunurong Boonwurrung peoples. We pay our respect to Traditional Owners, who have, and continue to care for Country. We acknowledge that the river now called Yarra has always been known as the Birrarung by its custodians.