



**Land for Wildlife and Garden for Wildlife
Central Australia Newsletter**

December 2016

From the Land for Wildlife Coordinator

We've had a busy year here at Land for Wildlife! There has been a host of new members (some excellent additions to the team) and a big push towards contacting old members. I've been madly trying to update details of our members and there are still plenty of members I haven't been able to contact. If you haven't heard from us, we would love you to get in touch in the new year (just in case an email went astray due to spam filters or non-current email addresses).

*"The love for all living
creatures is the most noble
attribute of man"*

- Charles Darwin

The Domestic Cat Monitoring and Awareness program has been quite time-consuming but well worth it, with some interesting results coming out of the first round of monitoring (stay posted!).

We look forward to a brand new year in which to assist you with managing your patch of paradise!

Merry Christmas Wildlifers!

**Wishing you a very merry Christmas
and a happy New Year!**

**Thanks for your hard work this year conserving and
regenerating wildlife habitat.
Until next year—
Land for Wildlife & Garden for Wildlife
Central Australia**

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Birdlife Central Australia Shorebirds Survey at the Stabilisation Ponds

Birdlife Central Australia ran a summer Shorebirds count at the Alice Springs PowerWater stabilisation ponds on the weekend. The surveys are a part of the Shorebirds 2020 program, which aims to raise awareness about how incredible shorebirds are by engaging the community to participate in gathering the information required to conserve shorebirds, by conducting national shorebird population monitoring at over 150 key sites around Australia. You can follow [Birdlife Central Australia](#) on Facebook to see what other birds they find around Alice Springs.

Barb Gilfedder, who was organising the event, states that the Bar-tailed Godwit (*Limosa lapponica*) was the most significant bird seen on the day, with the Grey Teal (*Anas gracilis*) coming out on top as most common and runner up of White-headed Stilt (*Himantopus leucocephalus*; marked on the graph under the previous name of Black-winged Stilt, *Himantopus himantopus*).

My personal favourite was a toss-up between the Red-necked Avocets (*Recurvirostra novaehollandiae*) that were swooping overhead, and the Variegated Fairy-wren (*Malurus lamberti*), which is of course not a shorebird but is utterly delightful. Plus, there were a couple of visiting reptiles, such as the Long-nosed Dragon (*Gowidon longirostris*)... not a bird at all!

As coordinator of Land for Wildlife, which is hosted by Low Ecological Services P/L, I am fortunate to enjoy visits to the PowerWater stabilisation ponds on a somewhat regular basis to conduct water testing. It's difficult to stay focused on the task at hand when there is such an amazing array of birds around.

A few chicks have been making their way into the world of late (see last month's [Bird Breeding Bonanza](#) post and the [October/November Newsletter](#)). (cont...)



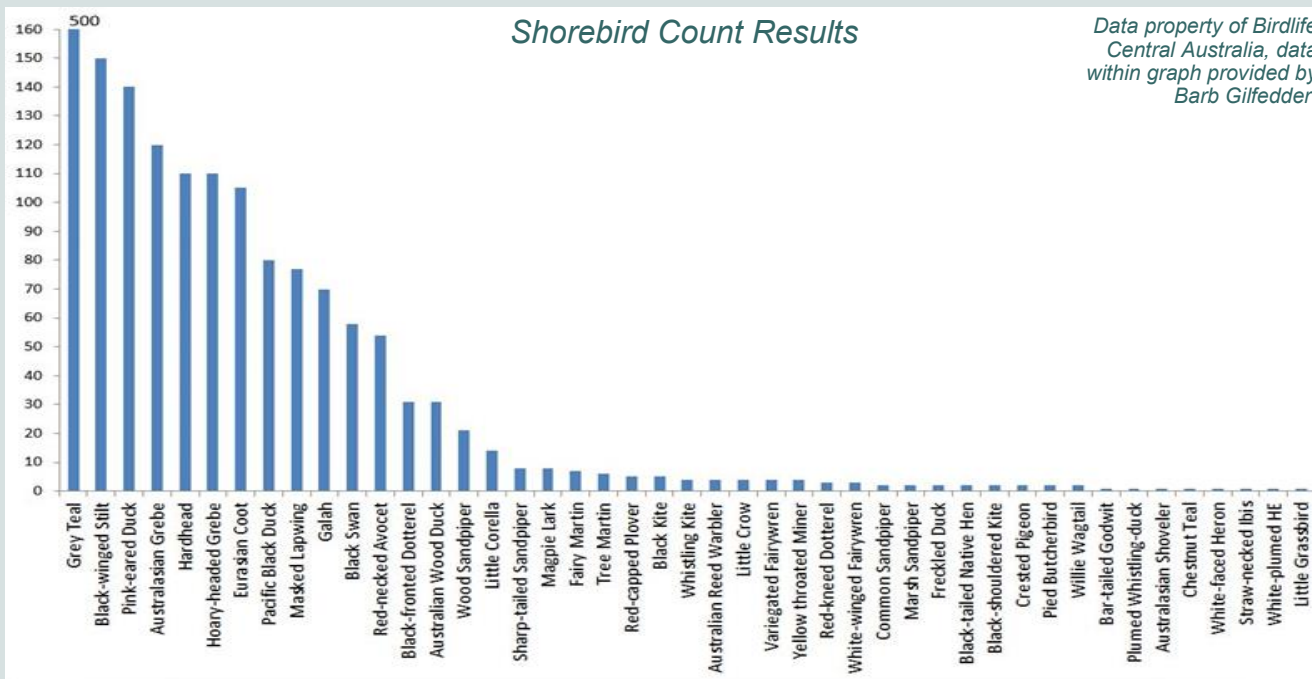
Top to Bottom: Pam Walker and Jocelyn Davies spotting birds on the far side of the pond, White-headed Stilt (*Himantopus leucocephalus*) juvenile, Red-necked Avocet (*Recurvirostra novaehollandiae*), Variegated Fairy-wren (*Malurus lamberti*) being chased around by three very keen females, Pink-eared Ducks (*Malacorhynchus membranaceus*) and a massive brood, Pacific Black Duck (*Anas superciliosa*) family. Above: Long-nosed Dragon (*Gowidon longirostris*)

(...continued from previous page) Birdlife Central Australia has also helped me to identify some of the more common species that I have noticed around the ponds, including the Wood Sandpiper (*Tringa glareola*) and the Common Sandpiper (*Actitis hypoleucos*). A large Wedge-tailed Eagle (*Aquila audax*) is sometimes seen at the ponds (see the [video](#)), along with many Whistling Kites (*Haliastur sphenurus*).

If you want to visit the ponds for birdwatching, see the [PowerWater](#) factsheet for more information. [Blog](#) ►



Clockwise from Top Left: Masked Lapwing (*Vanellus miles*) and chicks, This showy one was swanning around for a good while trying to look pretty (pardon the pun) - Black Swan (*Cygnus atratus*), Wood Sandpiper (*Tringa glareola*), Black-fronted Dotterel (*Elseya melanops*) and Common Sandpiper (*Actitis hypoleucos*).



Wildlife and Water

Summer is going to be a scorcher and just like you and I, birds and other wildlife rely on water to stay hydrated. Now is a great time to install a birdbath or small pond if you are feeling sympathetic to the thirst of nature.

You can prevent the need to refill manually by inserting a micro-line outlet from your irrigation system into the pond and making it part of the regular plant-watering routine.

It's a good idea to put some large rocks or branches leaning into the water supply so that birds or other animals that inadvertently fall in have a route to climb out.

If you don't want to use excess water, situating a ceramic bowl or other device under a dripping drainage line or air conditioner vent can be a useful way of preventing wasted water (though ensure that the water doesn't contain any toxic substances from the source).

Stay hydrated, folks!

Pied Butcherbird (*Cracticus nigrogularis*)
waiting for a drink at the Telegraph Station.



Reptiles and Frogs of Alice Springs

A pictorial field guide to reptiles and frogs of the Alice Springs district, Northern Territory.



Nic Gambold & Deborah Metters

Revised Edition 2016

A report funded by the Alice Springs Land for Wildlife program with support from the Commonwealth Government's Natural Heritage Trust and the Alice Springs Town Council.



Reptiles and Frogs of Alice Springs:

Revised Edition 2016

by Nic Gambold and Deborah Metters

This booklet aims to assist landholders and interested individuals in the basic identification of reptiles and frogs that may occur in and around Alice Springs. Every reptile and frog known to occur within a 50 kilometres radius of Alice Springs has been included, based on confirmed records from the Parks and Wildlife Commission NT Fauna Atlas for the Alice Springs municipality and personal observations by Nic Gambold, Ray Lloyd, Greg Fyfe, Peter Comber, Steve McAlpin, and Mike Gillam. Habitat and dietary preferences are discussed to assist landholders in identifying and protecting micro-habitats that may occur on private properties.

Copies of Reptiles and Frogs of Alice Springs Revised Edition 2016 is available from Land for Wildlife for \$15—contact the office (lfw@lowecol.com.au) or pop in to our stall at any of the upcoming advertised community events.



TeeGee sporting a GPS-tracker and Eyenimal video surveillance camera to determine his movements when away from home (Image S. Barnes).

Land For Wildlife on YouTube

» TeeGee's Escapades

Land for Wildlife was conducting trials this month with the GPS-trackers and video surveillance camera as part of the Domestic Cat Monitoring and Awareness in Alice Springs project. The first cat to trial the camera was TeeGee, an adventurous tabby moggy that was adopted by his owners' pet duck ([Scarfy and Friend](#)), and has since become a part of the family. You can see [TeeGee's](#) escapades on our YouTube channel.

Land for Wildlife is still looking for volunteer cat owners for the Domestic Cat Monitoring and Awareness program in Alice Springs. We will be looking at running another round of monitoring in February so please let us know if you are interested in taking part in the program to see where cats wander and what they see.

This project is supported by Territory Natural Resource Management, through funding from the Australian Government's National Landcare Programme.

[View the Cat Monitoring Video
on YouTube](#)

» Batchelor Institute Trapping

The Batchelor Institute in Alice Springs conducted some cat trapping and camera trapping in November 2016 shows a cat going into a trap for a feed and a couple of inquisitive crows.

[View the Camera Trapping Video
on YouTube](#)



Wedge-tailed Eagle (*Aquila audax*) at the Alice Springs wastewater treatment ponds.

» Wedge-tailed Eagle at the Ponds

Wedge-tailed Eagle (*Aquila audax*) that was seen feeding on some kill at the Alice Springs wastewater treatment ponds earlier in the month. The video shows the bird taking flight.

[View the Wedge-tailed Eagle Video
on YouTube](#)



*MEOWY Christmas
to all of our members,
your families, your
loved pets and the
wildlife that calls
your property home.
May the new year be
filled with all things
wild and wonderful.*

Do you have any stories or images to share? Get in touch! We are always looking for members to share their experiences via our social media and newsletter. Email us with your suggestions of articles or topics that you wish to hear more about.

Cheers,
Caragh and Bill

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