



UPPER RIVER TORRENS
LANDCARE GROUP

Data Sheet

Bird Species

and Habitats

The Watercourse systems of the Mt Lofty Ranges with their severely modified understorey and Eucalypt Woodlands still provide a permanent home and seasonal stop-over for an estimated 70 to 120 bird species. The Landscape SA Hills & Fleurieu region is a "hot spot" for bird species.

The region provides the requirements of life... water, food and shelter.

Just as we protect and improve these essentials for ourselves, so too we must consider the same action for the native animals that live with us.

We principally respond to birds' beauty, their calls and their behaviour. But they are important for helping to control the over-population of problem farm insects (e.g. cockchafer larvae and beetles), and to pollinate flowers.

They play a key role in helping to maintain the ecological balance within the catchment.

Some birds are exclusively adapted to pollinating certain plants and so, without these birds, those plants will not survive.

The bird lists on the following pages **are guides only**. They are based on observations taken over a long time but **may not be complete**.

In time, more surveys will probably give a better idea of the species, and the gradual recolonisation of some of the areas by some species absent now.

Though the river zone is the main study area, it is worth noting that within the catchment, large irrigation dams have become a feeding, breeding and resting place for water birds.

All dams may not be suitable to attract all the species seen on large dams or reservoirs.

HABITAT IS SPECIES-SPECIFIC

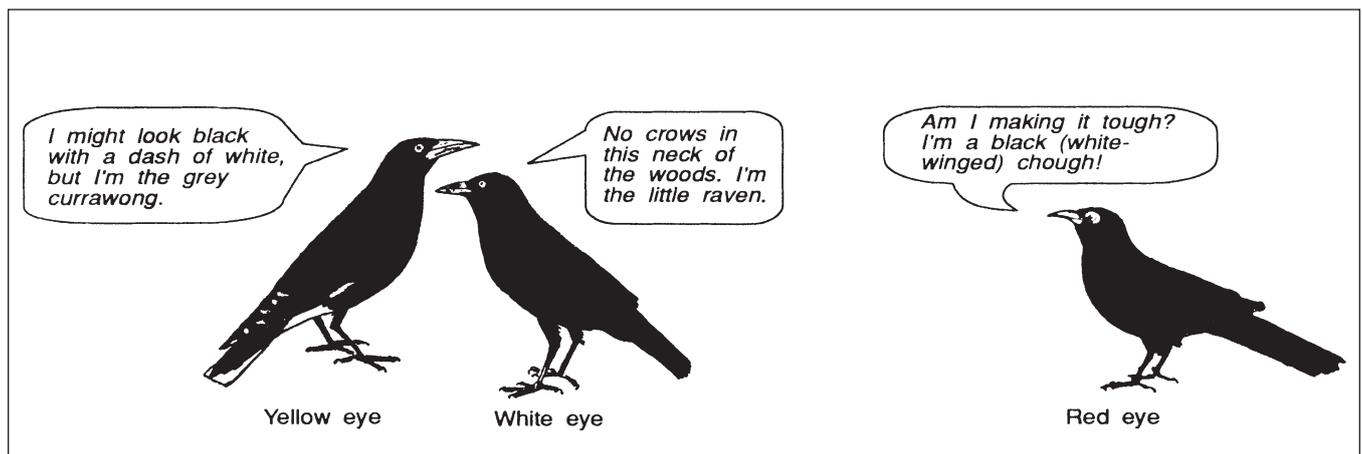
A low structural and floristic diversity is a common feature of habitat for declining open woodland birds, and many birds such as fairy-wrens and Red-browed Firetails like 'kept' gardens, especially lawns. Most declining woodland bird species are ground foragers and require open woodland with little or no understorey.

J. Allan (2020)

Very few areas of Eucalypt Woodland and dry sclerophyll forest have survived the development of our mainly dairying, grazing and horticultural region. However, along with old scattered paddock trees, there is also a lot of regenerating red gums.

But, by replanting the native trees and shrubs that once grew in the area, and in some situations, installing native bird next boxes, we can expect to see more of our usual woodland birds.

Benefits for the pollination of plants and control of insects will follow their increased presence.



Declining birds in the Mt Lofty Ranges

The protection and restoration or reconstruction of habitat is vitally important to reduce the on-going decline and loss of bird species. The decline of woodland birds in the Mt Lofty Ranges is of a concern and has been due to continued habitat clearance which has resulted in fragmentation and decline in habitat quality and type. In South Australia less than 10% of pre-colonisation native vegetation remains. Other threats to bird habitat are climate change, collection and removal of fallen timber, weed invasions and significant habitat loss and tree hollows from bushfires.

Information from BioR (<https://bior.org.au>) states that “about half (approximately 50) of the species of birds inhabiting the Mt Lofty region are predicted to go regionally extinct based on the quantity of habitat that

remains. Ten bird species have already become regionally extinct and another 60 species continue to decline”. Refer to the table Birds: Residents, visiting, breeding locally where known, on page 3 of this datasheet and the Regional Species Status Assessments Report for Adelaide and Mt Lofty Ranges for lists of declining and threatened bird species (refer to NRM resources).

Several long-term habitat restoration and woodland bird projects are occurring in the Mt Lofty Ranges. To read more about them, what is being done to protect our bird species and their status and how you can help, contact your local Landcare group, Natural Resource Centre, non-Government organisations or Department for Environment and Water and/or refer to the available resources.

References

Literature

Allan, J. (2016). Habitat reconstruction guidelines for woodland birds: a detailed focussed bird-oriented approach (Thesis submitted for PhD). Department of Ecology & Environment Sciences, The University of Adelaide.

Field Guides

Menkhorst, P. et al. (2017). *The Australian Bird Guide*. CSIRO Publishing. www.publish.csiro.au

Pizzey, G. and Knight, F. *Field Guide to the Birds of Australia*. (9th ed). (2012). Harper Collins Publishers. Sydney.

Simpson, K. (8th ed). (2010). *Field Guide to the Birds of Australia*. Penguin Books Australia.

Slater, Peter, Slater, Pat, and Slater, R. (2nd ed). (2009). *The Slater Field Guide to Australian Birds*. New Holland Publishers. Australia.

Resources

NRM:

- [Birds of the Mt Lofty Ranges](#)
- [What is happening to the woodland birds of the MLR?](#)
- <https://data.environment.sa.gov.au>
- <https://www.environment.sa.gov.au/topics/plants-and-animals/>
- [Regional Species Conservation Assessment Project](#)

Non-Government organisations:

- <https://birdssa.asn.au/>
- <https://bior.org.au>
- <https://www.ncssa.asn.au/>

Data ID & Collection Apps:

- The Pizzey and Knight Birds of Australia Digital Edition
- South Australian Museum Field Guide to South Australian Fauna
- BDBSA Collect (DEW): <https://biocollect.ala.org.au/>
- iNaturalist: <https://www.inaturalist.org/>

Websites

- Birddata <https://birddata.birdlife.org.au/>
- Bushpea <http://www.bushpea.com/>
- eBird <https://ebird.org/home>
- Eremaea Birdlines <http://www.eremaea.com/>

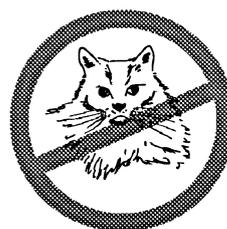
Observer's Basic Kit

1. A small tape-recorder (with an inbuilt microphone) is invaluable:
 - to record the species and numbers of birds seen; plus any useful descriptions,
 - to record a call and have it verified,
 - to play a call as a lure (with discretion).or a note pad in place of a tape-recorder
2. A pair of easily-held binoculars. Many observers find the popular 7x50 and 10x50 too heavy for hours of observing. The new lightweights (eg 7x35, 8x30, 9x20) are quite satisfactory for our conditions. NB 7x = magnification; x20 = field of view and amount of light gathered.
3. A compact Field Guide.

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- Joel Allan (Ecologist, Woodland Bird Monitoring and Analysis, Landscape SA H&F)
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DESTRUCTIVE ALIENS



The cat



The red fox

Birds: Resident, visiting, breeding locally where known

Family Name (Bold) Species	Status	Family Name (Bold) Species	Status
Grebes Australasian Grebe	widespread and breeding on dams	Oldworld Pipits Richard's Pipit	small numbers in farmland
Darters, Cormorants Black Cormorant Little Black Cormorant Little Pied Cormorant	irregular visitor to dams and river course irregular visitor to dams and river course regular visitor to larger dams and river course	Cuckoo-Shrikes, Trillers Black-Faced Cuckoo-Shrike	irregular/seasonal, breeding visitor
Hérons, Egrets White-Faced Heron Pacific Heron	regular visitor to river, dams and wet pasture; breeds irregular visitor to wet pasture	Babblers White-Browed Babbler	small numbers in woodlands, a declining species
Ibises/Spoonbills Sacred Ibis Straw-Necked Ibis Royal Spoonbill Yellow-Billed Spoonbill	winter visitor to river/dams and pastures winter visitor to river/dams and pastures irregular visitor to dams irregular visitor to dams	Old World Warblers Little Grassbird Clamorous Reed-Warbler Rufous songlark	spring-summer visitor to reedbeds, breeds spring-summer visitor to reedbeds, breeds irregular spring-summer breeding visitor
Geese, Swans, Ducks Black Swan Pacific Black Duck Chestnut Teal Grey Teal Australasian Shelduck Australian Shoveler Hardhead Maned Duck	visitor to large dams small numbers breed on dams and river irregular visitor to large dams small numbers breed on dams irregular visitor to large dams irregular visitor to large dams irregular visitor to large dams widespread in pasture, on dams, breed in red gums	Chats White-Fronted Chat	small numbers, status uncertain
Birds of Prey Black-Shouldered Kite Whistling Kite Brown Goshawk Collared Sparrowhawk Little Eagle Wedge- Tailed Eagle Brown Falcon Australian Kestrel	irregular/seasonal visitor, also breeds small numbers, may breed locally widespread in small numbers irregular visitor irregular visitor small numbers breed locally widespread in farmland widespread in farmland	Thornbills Weebill Yellow Thornbill Striated Thornbill Yellow-Rumped Thornbill Buff-Rumped Thornbill Brown Thornbill	small numbers in woodland, status uncertain small numbers in sheoak woodlands, a declining bird small numbers in native forest and woodland; breeding widespread in farmland, breeds small numbers in native forest and woodland; breeding small numbers in native forest
Quails Stubble Quail Painted Button-Quail	spring-summer, breeding visitor to crops/pastures small numbers in native forests, a declining species	Fairy Wrens Superb Fairy-Wren	widespread where shrub cover exists, breeds
Rails, Crakes, Swampheens, Coots Black- Tailed Native-Hen Australian Crane Dusky Moorhen Eurasian Coot	irregular visitor, sometimes in large numbers near dams small numbers in reeds around dams and along river small numbers in reeds around dams and long river; breeds small numbers on dams, may breed	Thrushes, Flycatchers European Blackbird White's Thrush Grey Fantail Willy Wagtail Scarlet Robin Golden Whistler Rufous Whistler summer Grey Shrike- Thrush Crested Shrike- Tit	widespread; breeding small numbers in native forest, a declining species widespread, especially in winter. Breeding status uncertain widespread and breeding small numbers in native forest, also woodlands in winter small numbers in native forest, also woodlands in winter small numbers in woodlands, may be spring-breeding, visitor only widespread in woodlands and forest, breeds small number in woodlands, formerly common
Lapwings, Plovers, Dotterels Masked Lapwing Black-Fronted Plover Red-Kneed Dotterel	widespread in farmland; breeding small numbers around large dams small numbers around large dams	Sitellas, Treecreepers Varied Sitella Brown Treecreeper White- Throated Treecreeper	small numbers in forest and woodland, breeds small numbers in woodland, declining species small numbers in forest; breeding
Pigeons and Doves Peaceful Dove Common Bronzewing Brush Bronzewing species Domestic Pigeon Spotted Turtle-Dove	small numbers in woodland, a declining species small numbers in or near native forest small numbers in native forest, a declining Crested Pigeon widespread in farmlands; breeding near towns widespread	Mistletoe Bird Mistletoe Bird	irregular visitor in small numbers, breeds
Cockatoos, Parrots, Lorikeets Sulphur-Crested Cockatoo Little Corella Galah Musk Lorikeet Purple-Crowned Lorikeet Adelaide Rosella Red-Rumped Parrot	widespread in woodland; breeding widespread in woodland, irregular farmland visitor widespread in farmland; breeding irregular visitor, may breed irregular visitor, may breed widespread in farmland/woodland widespread in farmland/woodland	Pardalotes Spotted Pardalote Striated Pardalote	small numbers in forest, breeds widespread in woodlands, breeds
Cuckoos Pallid Cuckoo Fan- Tailed Cuckoo Horsfield's Bronze-Cuckoo	spring-summer visitor winter-spring-summer visitor to native forest spring-summer visitor	Honeyeaters Yellow-Faced Honeyeater White-Naped Honeyeater White-Plumed Honeyeater Brown-Headed Honeyeater New Holland Honeyeater Eastern Spinebill Noisy Miner Little Wattlebird Red Wattlebird	mostly a winter visitor, breeds small numbers in woodlands, breeds widespread in woodlands, breeds small numbers in forest and woodland, breeds widespread in woodland; breeding small numbers, most in winter; breeding widespread in woodlands, breeds small numbers in woodlands, breeds widespread in woodlands, breeds
Owls, Frogmouths Barn Owl Southern Boobook Tawny Frogmouth	widespread in farmland widespread in woodland and native forest small numbers in native forest	White-Eye, Finches, Sparrows Silvereye Goldfinch Red-Browed Firetail House Sparrow	widespread, more numerous in winter, breeds widespread in farmland, breeds small numbers in woodland, declining, most common bird in the hills along mesic gullies near towns and habitation, breeds
Swifts Fork- Tailed Swift	irregular summer visitor, seen overhead	Starlings Common Starling	widespread, breeds
Kingfishers Laughing Kookaburra Sacred Kingfisher	widespread in woodlands; breeding spring-summer visitor to woodlands/river course	Mud-Nesters Australian Magpie-Lark White-Winged Chough	widespread in farmland, breeds near water small numbers in woodland, now rare locally
Bee-Eaters Rainbow Bee-Eater	irregular spring-summer visitor	Woodswallows White-Browed Woodswallow Dusky Woodswallow	irregular spring-summer visitor, may breed widespread in woodlands and forest, breeds
Swallows, Martins Welcome Swallow Tree Martin Fairy Martin	widespread in farmland/woodlands, breeds spring-summer visitor to woodlands, breeds spring-summer visitor to woodlands and near dams, breeds	Currawongs, Butcherbirds Grey Currawong Australian White-Backed Magpie	small numbers in forest; breeding widespread and breeding
		Ravens, Crows Little Raven	widespread and breeding

Birds and their preferred food and feeding sites

(Adapted from Gepp and Forde (H=hollows for nest sites))

U understorey

Brown Thornbill,
White-browed Scrubwren
Buff-rumped Thornbill
(can forage on the ground)
Red-browed Firetail

Gs ground

but near young trees and scrub

Predators of small insects

Yellow-Rumped Thornbill
Buff-Rumped Thornbill
Brown Thornbill
Superb Fairy Wren
Grey Fantail
Willy Wagtail

Feed on seeds

Common Bronzewing
Bush Bronzewing
Crested pigeon
Goldfinch
Red-Browed Firetail

Larger birds feeding on insects

& small invertebrates

European Blackbird
Bassian Thrush
Grey Shrike-Thrush
White-Winged Chough
Grey Currawong (and fruits and berries)

Feed on insects at night

Southern Boobook H
Tawny Frogmouth H
Owlet Nightjar H

C canopy

Feed on flowers

Musk Lorikeet H
Purple-Crowned Lorikeet H
Rainbow Lorikeet H

Feed on insects

Striated Thornbill
Spotted Pardalote
Striated Pardalote H
Pallid Cuckoo
Fan-Tailed Cuckoo
Horsfield's Bronze Cuckoo

Black-Faced Cuckoo-Shrike
Crested Shrike-Tit
Golden Whistler
Rufous Whistler

Feed on insects on trunks

Varied Sitella
Brown Treecreeper H
White-Throated Treecreeper H

Feed on flowers and small insects

Yellow-Faced Honeyeater
White Naped Honeyeater
White-Plumed Honeyeater
Brown headed Honeyeater
Black-Chinned Honeyeater
New Holland Honeyeater
Crescent Honeyeater
Noisy Miner
Little Wattlebird
Red Wattlebird
Silvereye (and fruits)
Weebill

A in the air

Feed on insects

Welcome Swallow
Tree Martin H
Fairy Martin
White-Browed Wood Swallow
Dusky Wood Swallow
Rainbow Bee Eater

A air to ground

Feed on insects, rodents, birds

Black-Shouldered Kite
Whistling Kite
Brown Goshawk
Collared Sparrowhawk
Brown Falcon
Australian Kestrel
Little Eagle (and rabbits, carrion)
Wedge-Tailed Eagle (and rabbits, carrion)

Gp open ground

Feed on large insects, small invertebrates

Australian White-Backed Magpie
Australian Magpie-Lark

Little Raven
Grey Butcherbird
Laughing Kookaburra H
Sacred Kingfisher H

Feed on seeds, bulbs, small insects

Sulphur-Crested Cockatoo H
Little Corella H
Galah H
Adelaide Rosella (& flowers) H
Red-Rumped Parrot H
Stubble Quail
Painted Button Quail

Feed on insects

Common Starling
Richard's Pipit
Rufous Songlark

W on and beside water

Feed on insects in wet pasture and open ground

Maned Duck (& vegetation) H
Sacred Ibis
Straw-Necked Ibis
White-Faced Heron
Pacific Heron
Masked Lapwing (near dams)

Feed on plant, animal and insect life in the water

Australasian Grebe
Black Cormorant
Little Black Cormorant
Little Pied Cormorant
Black Swan
Pacific Black Duck H
Chestnut Teal H
Grey Teal H
Australian Shelduck H

Royal Spoonbill
Black-Tailed Native Hen
Australian Crake
Eurasian Coot

Feed on insects in sedges, rushes and reeds

Little Grassbird
Clamorous Reed Warbler

