



Where good things just come naturally...



Recent Bird Sightings - as at April 25th, 2007

While rainfall has been well below average to start 2007, the rainforest is still looking fresh enough after some moderate summer falls. Expect a different story by spring if we have our usual dry period over the next few months. At this stage anyway there's good activity on our morning bird walks, with O'R guide and keen birder Duncan Fowler recording an impressive 33 species on an hour-long tour last week. Also, during our recent Autumn Birding we made 171 sightings, a good tally for this post-breeding period.

This is also the time of the year for small migratory flocks to be moving through, the most numerous over the guesthouse being Silvereyes and Yellow-faced Honeyeaters.

Here's a brief summary of recent sightings:

Albert's Lyrebird:

Lyrebirds, like most other species, are typically quiet and unpredictable at this time of the year. Of course they'll soon be getting their acts together as the weather cools and they launch into the breeding season, but the warm conditions we've experienced in recent times has kept them quiet. Still, as always, they are still sighted fairly regularly. The male that lives along the first section of the Border Track has been very cooperative at times, allowing a close approach. Sightings in the other usual territories (Elabana Falls junction, Python Rock track) have also been quite frequent. The birds aren't calling much, but listen for their heavy scratching: it won't *always* be a brush-turkey!

Paradise Riflebird:

Riflebird sightings become relatively rare in autumn/winter as they don't call and tend to stay in the canopy. However they aren't particularly shy birds and can be very active when feeding, so persistence should reward the diligent observer. Look for falling material as they tear into epiphytes and rotting limbs.

Noisy Pitta:

A rare sight through the autumn and winter, with the majority of birds probably moving off the mountain. Their movements however are uncertain due to their secretive nature and lack of post-breeding calling. Some certainly stay all year and the odd sighting is made, but luck is required.

Regent and Satin Bowerbirds:

Regents become relatively scarce in late summer when they begin to moult, but a few adult males have started to show themselves again in the last week or so. Sitting out in front of the Discovery Centre sipping tea has proven a good method of finding them, as they've been feeding in the Celerywood trees and the orange-fruited *Celastrus* vine across the road from our reception, as well as frequenting their favourite perches on the tops of the Hoop Pines. Satins remain easy to find around the grounds, and a new bower has been recently constructed across the road from the day-visitor carpark.

Rose Robin:

On the way out of the rainforest now and moving into more open country and down to the valleys for the winter. They rarely sing at this time, but if you are familiar with their soft, buzzing contact call they become much easier to find. We saw two in the eucalypt forest on Duck Creek Road last week

Grey Goshawk:

Being sighted quite regularly around the guesthouse (including on yesterday's bird walk) and the Red Road. Always look up when the parrots go into a panic! Also, Pacific Baza sightings have been reasonably regular, the most recent being at Luke's Bluff. The resident Peregrines have also been seen often at Luke's in hollows in the cliff face.

White-headed Pigeon:

Have been in very good numbers through spring and summer but dropping off a little lately. Still a chance in fruiting trees – listen for their deep, booming call.

Wompoo Fruit-Dove:

Have been in good numbers with Topknots in fruiting trees around the Luke's Farm turnoff in recent weeks but seem to have cleaned out most of that fruit now. Still a chance in any fruiting trees: try the Kamarun Lookout area.

Australian Owlet-nightjar:

Still appearing with reasonable regularity in a large hollow near the Border Track about 500 metres from the guesthouse. Look off to the right to a large dead tree (perhaps 20 – 30 metres off the track) from an old sawn log 80 metres before the end of the bitumen. Also appearing occasionally in the old dead tree at the West Canungra Creek junction (200 metres from the guesthouse) but the bird is skittish and often drops out of view at the crucial moment! The site at the Tree-top Walk/Booyong Walk junction has also been occupied on the odd occasion recently. Ask the guides in the Discovery Centre for directions or the latest sightings.

Southern Boobook:

Still being seen in the guesthouse grounds occasionally, but less frequently now that there's not as much insect activity around the lights. Try the buildings, the flagpole and nearby trees at the back of the guesthouse.

Marbled Frogmouth:

Seen during Autumn Birding but not many other attempts this time of year. Always worth trying in the slightly drier rainforests down the road from the guesthouse.

Spotted Quail-thrush:

Was being sighted regularly on the Duck Creek Road when the grass was long, but now has much greater foraging choice after the extensive fire there in February. May reappear as the grass regrows, but some rain is required to hasten the process.

Glossy Black-Cockatoo:

After being scarce on the mountain for most of this year, several recent sightings have been made on Duck Creek Road, most from around the Kurrajong Lookout turnoff and also at the quarry at the top of the first climb. Can turn up anywhere in drier eucalypt areas in fruiting Forest Oaks. Yellow-tailed Blacks have also turned up on Duck Creek a few times recently and seven flew over the guesthouse yesterday.