

BIRD OBSERVATIONS IN AUSTRALIA SEPTEMBER 2009.

Wim Vader

I flew to Melbourne 27 August, spent a few days with Rose and Bob Butt in Canterbury (with a visit to Healesville) and afterwards took part in the Sunbird Inland Australia trip, led by Phil Maher, and with Alistair Best and Penny McGuire as very pleasant colleagues, and Trisha Maher as the ideal hostess.. This trip made a 5500km loop though inland Australia, first north to Bowra, then west via Cameron Corner and the Strzelecki Track to Lyndhurst, and back via the Flinders Ranges and the mallee in western Victoria. After our return to Melbourne John and Robyn Bradbury took me to their place in the mountains, Towonga near Mt Beauty for three days. Return to Tromsø 30 September.

NB The number for 'days seen' gives the number of days I saw the bird myself. In some extreme cases the number of the days seen by the group (Phil) is added in parenthesis. An asterisk denotes a life bird.

1. **Emu** *Dromaius novaehollandiae* 15 (days seen)
A common bird in the inland, but also present in the wetter areas closer to Melbourne. Regularly birds with from 7 to 14 half-grown young. When we walked through tall lignum on the way to Lyndhurst, a group of emus was clearly curious and came to look us over.
2. **Malleefowl** *Leipoa ocellata* 1
We had found old mounds on several occasions, and even a fresh mound at Hattah-Kulkyne park, but it was not before our second visit to Bronzewing park, that Phil finally succeeded in showing us this magnificent and large bird, while it was working on the mound. We could observe it there for quite some time.
3. **Stubble Quail** *Coturnix ypsilophora* 1
No quails at all this time during the prolonged spotlighting for the Plains Wanderer near Deniliquin, but the ever resourceful Phil drove into a hayfield with long grass in the vicinity of Hawker and eventually flushed up several Stubble Quails, so that we could get reasonable views of the flying birds.
4. **Blue-billed Duck** *Oxyura australis* 3
No bird-trip without sewage farms (often euphemistically called waterworks or some such). And here in the dry inland the birds were concentrated at such places even more. This gave us excellent opportunities to watch these dapper small ducks at leisure.
5. **Musk Duck** *Biziura lobata* 4
Really the 'odd duck out' here in Australia! These blackish, deep-lying ducks give often a first impression of a swimming mammal. We saw several displays, which are as strange as the ducks themselves.
- *6. **Freckled Duck** *Stictonetta naevosa* 1
The 'prickleback' was the only Australian duck I had not seen before, so it was a special occasion when Phil found one in the waterworks at Bourke. It is a special-looking duck, all grey at a distance when the intricate patterns are invisible, but with an unmistakable silhouette: head and long bill look en profile like a ski jump!

7. **Black Swan** *Cygnus atratus* 4
 First seen at the Botanic garden in Melbourne, and at Healesville. At Cobar we saw the first pair with young, a regular sight later on. However, at the lake in S. Australia, near Waikerie, where we saw many hundreds of Black Swans, there were only a few with young.
8. **Australian Shelduck** *Tadorna tadornoides* 1
 Surprisingly few, and all seen on the same day, the first at the 'avocet reservoir', later also at the large 'swan lake' near Waikerie, where one determinedly pursued a White-bellied Sea-eagle.
9. **Australian Wood Duck** *Chenonetta jubata* 8
 A success story, and a species which must have profited enormously from all the paddocks and drinking pools of the farmers. Ubiquitous in the less dry areas, but absent from the dry inland. Several with small pulli.
- **Mallard** *Anas platyrhynchos*
 The variously discoloured mallards in the river at Burra can hardly count as ferals.
10. **Pacific Black Duck** *A. superciliosa* 10
 Found almost everywhere, only absent in the driest areas. Never in really large numbers, though.
11. **Australasian Shoveler** *A. rhynchota* 4
 Common, but not numerous, at the various 'waterworks'.
12. **Grey Teal** *A. gracilis* 12
 The most common dabbling duck of the tour, often in large numbers. A surprise were the pairs of Grey Teals that flew up from the road puddles in the mallee forest at Bronzewing.
13. **Chestnut Teal** *A. castanea* -
 Only seen at the Botanic garden in Melbourne, where there were several pairs.
14. **Pink-eared Duck** *Malacorhynchus membranaceus* 4
 The many hundreds, probably thousands, of Pink-eared Ducks that formation-flew over the sewage ponds at Bourke were one of the absolute highlights of the tour for me. They are excellent flyers and the flocks swerved almost like shorebirds. This is anyway a very special and appealing small duck, with its long bill and patterned face
15. **Hardhead** *Aythya australis* 6
 More common than I had expected, often in largish flocks.
16. **Australasian Grebe** *Tachybaptus novaehollandiae* 9
 First seen in the Botanic garden in Melbourne. On the tour more widespread, but often less numerous than the next species. Now and then in very small and overgrown pools, as a typical dabchick.
17. **Hoary-headed Grebe** *Poliiocephalus poliocephalus* 7
 Often surprisingly common, and swimming in flocks. Most were in 'winter plumage', but a few had changed into almost full breeding plumage.

18. **Great Crested Grebe** *Podiceps cristatus* 1
I saw them only at Leigh Creek, where there were many pairs, with a lot of display going on.
19. **Australian Darter** *Anhinga melanogaster* 3
A few at Bourke waterworks, at the lake at Leigh Creek, and along the river at Morgan.
20. **Little Pied Cormorant** *Phalacrocorax melanoleucos* 5
Regular in the less dry areas, seemingly absent in the driest areas.
21. **Pied Cormorant** *P. varius* 3
Present in some numbers at Bourke waterworks, Leigh Creek and Morgan.
22. **Little Black Cormorant** *P. sulcirostris* 10
The most widely spread cormorant, also seen in the very dry areas along the Strzelecki track.
23. **Great Cormorant** *P. carbo* 4
Not common, but seen at different occasions, also in the drier areas, at Tibooburra.
24. **Australian Pelican** *Pelecanus conspicillatus* 5
Present in small numbers where there is sufficient water.
25. **White-faced Heron** *Egretta novaehollandiae* 5
Surprisingly scarce, only a few seen. Nesting at the Bourke waterworks. There were more White-faced Herons in the valleys en route to Mt Beauty.
26. **White-necked Heron** *Ardea pacifica* 8
Lone White-necked Herons were seen quite often, not always very close to water. Also this species was common in the Victorian mountain valleys.
- **Intermediate Egret** *A. intermedia* -
Phil identified one at long distance one of the first days. But I only saw the bird as a far away white dot.
27. **Great Egret** *A. alba* 5
Regularly seen in small numbers in the less dry areas.
28. **Glossy Ibis** *Plegadis falcinellus* 1
Just one, at the waterworks at Bourke.
29. **Australian White Ibis** *Threskiornis molucca* 4
A few here and there, but much fewer than I had expected
30. **Straw-necked Ibis** *T. spinicollis* 4
Still fewer than nr 30. But there were many hundreds, probably thousands, in the mountains valleys en route to Mt Beauty.
31. **Yellow-billed Spoonbill** *Platalea flavipes* 3
A few, at Cobar and Bourke, and later again at Morgan.

32. **Black-shouldered Kite** *Elanus axillaris* 6
Regularly on agricultural land, mostly in Victoria. Also a few on the way to Mt Beauty.
- *33. **Black-breasted Buzzard** *Hamirostra melanosternon* 3
We saw a pair, possibly the same pair, on two consecutive days near Thargominda. And Phil later showed us a bird on the nest along the Strzelecki Creek. They are impressive birds, easy to recognize also in flight with their broad wings and very conspicuous white 'windows' on the outer wing.
At Healesville a tame Black-breasted Buzzard nicely demonstrated the trick of breaking large eggs by smashing a largish stone down on them, a trick they share only with the Egyptian Vulture.
34. **Black Kite** *Milvus migrans* 14
With the kestrel the most common raptor, but seemingly rare or absent close to Melbourne
35. **Whistling Kite** *Haliastur sphenurus* 10
Also a common raptor, but somewhat more dependent on water, it seems.
36. **White-bellied Sea Eagle** *Haliaeetus leucogaster* 1
A nesting pair at the large lake near Waikerie, only seen from a long distance away.
37. **Spotted Harrier** *Circus assimilis* 5
First seen on the Hay plains, thereafter mostly in the less dry areas, often over agricultural land.
38. **Swamp Harrier** *C. approximans* 2
First seen over the Hay plains, later once more at Morgan.
39. **Brown Goshawk** *Accipiter fasciatus* 1
We almost missed this species, but finally saw one in the Flinders Ranges.
40. **Collared Sparrowhawk** *A. cirrhocephalus* 7
This smaller hawk, on the other hand, we saw a lot of; usually one or a pair flying over woodland or bushland.
41. **Wedge-tailed Eagle** *Aquila audax* 13
Still common, but clearly in much smaller numbers than before the drought and the rabbit crash.
42. **Little Eagle** *Hieraaetus morphoides* 6
Seen quite regularly and also quite well.
43. **Brown Falcon** *Falco berigora* 16
These 'lazy' falcons, that one usually sees sitting on some pole or wire, are among the most common raptors. They are very variable in colour, but their 'habitus' and the special way of flying, with deep wingbeats, are always diagnostic.
44. **Australian Hobby** *F. longipennis* 6
Seen on six days, and several times we had the opportunity to observe sitting birds closely and well. They look in many ways like the European Hobby, and have the same head pattern.

45. **Grey Falcon** *F. hypoleucos* 2
 We were very lucky with this rare and sought after species. We happened first across one along the road between Gunbar and Hillston. The bird sat in a roadside tree, but unfortunately flew up quite soon, so that we mostly watched it in flight. Ten days later we came across a pair along the Strzelecki Creek, a well-known nesting area for the species, and this time we could observe the birds better, and note the dove grey back, yellow cere and eye-ring, and the quite deep wing beats.
46. **Black Falcon** *F. subniger* 1
 On the same day that we saw the second Grey Falcons, we also came across a Black Falcon along the Strzelecki Creek, and we could compare the very different way of flying of this species, with shallow fast wing beats. It is quite a bit larger than the Grey Falcon also.
47. **Peregrine Falcon** *F. peregrinus* 1
 Two birds circling over the river at Morgan were the only observation, but they gave us 'full house' for the Australian falcons.
48. **Nankeen Kestrel** *F. cenchroides* 18
 One of the few birds we saw nearly every day.
49. **Brolga** *Grus rubicunda* 1
 We saw two Brolgas along the road between Bourke and Cunnamulla
50. **Baillon's Crake** *Porzana pusilla* 1
 Several in the reed fringes of the ponds at Bourke, quite easy to see.
51. **Purple Swamphen** *Porphyrio porphyrio* 3
 First seen in the Botanical garden in Melbourne, later in the waterworks at Cobar and Bourke, and again along the river near Morgan.
52. **Dusky Moorhen** *Gallinula tenebrosa* 2
 Common in the Botanic Garden in Melbourne, and in the sewage ponds at Bourke. Also seen in the swamps near Morgan and in the mountain valleys near Mt Beauty.
53. **Black-tailed Native Hen** *G. ventralis* 8
 There clearly was a large influx of these nomadic moorhens, as we saw them in many places and often in large numbers in the 'in between' areas, between the coast and the really dry inland. Altogether we must have seen hundreds.
55. **Eurasian Coot** *Fulica atra* 5
 In the Botanic Garden and at Healesville. Later in the waterworks at Cobar and Bourke, and again in lakes in the mallee region on the return route.
56. **Australian Bustard** *Ardeotis australis* 1
 We saw five of these stately birds in a field between Bourke and Cunnamulla., always a very special experience.
57. **Little Button-Quail** *Turnix velox* 1
 Alistair and I had the good fortune to shush up one of these small rather light-coloured buttonquails in the same field near Hawker, where we also saw the Stubble Quails

- *58 Plains-Wanderer** *Pedionomus torquatus* 1
 This was the bird I missed out on in 1990, and Phil was adamant that this time I should see them. This took c 1 _ hours driving around in the fields and spotlighting, though, and I almost had given up (and would have given up, if I had had to decide) when Phil finally succeeded in getting not only one, but even a pair of these very special birds in view. They were mesmerized by the spotlights, so could be observed at leisure. They have a quite different stance than the quails and buttonquails, more upright, and they have also a much clearer neck. The female has a beautiful stippled neck-collar and a reddish 'breastplate', the smaller male is greyer and has a dark 'cap'. I am very glad I now saw these birds, and so well too.
- **Common Greenshank** *Tringa nebularia*
 Heard by Phil at the Bulloo downs
59. **Red Knot** *Calidris canutus* 1
 A single bird at 'the avocet lake'
60. **Black-winged Stilt** *Himantopus himantopus* 6
 Regular and often quite common, wherever there was sufficient water
61. **Red-capped Plover** *Charadrius ruficapillus* 1
 A few at the avocet lake (without avocets) on day 16
- *62. **Inland Dotterel** *C. australis* 1
 We never saw these birds on the gibber plains (pouring rain along the Strzelecki Track), but fortunately we had by then already seen them well, during the spotlighting night outside Deniliquin. Phil told that they had come here the last years, probably as a result of the drought. Like most of these small Australian plovers, it is a very elegant bird with a beautiful colour pattern.
63. **Black-fronted Dotterel** *Euseyonis melanops* 5
 The most common one of the small plovers, often on the banks of quite small pools.
64. **Red-kneed Dotterel** *Erythronyctes alpinus* 1
 This, the most spectacularly beautiful of the small plovers, we saw only at Leigh Creek, but there very well. The three birds there walked slowly in belly-deep water, and probably now and then also swam, from one clump of vegetation to another. They behaved quite sluggishly for a small plover.
65. **Banded Lapwing** *Vanellus tricolor* 2
 Best seen during the spotlighting for the Plains-Wanderer, when we came several times across lapwings that shielded their young pulli below their wings, an endearing sight. Seen only once thereafter
66. **Masked Lapwing** *V. miles* 9
 These always raucous lapwings were quite common near water; some at the Plains-Wanderer place had small chicks. Also flying around alarming in downtown Mt Beauty.
67. **Latham's Snipe** *Gallinago hardwickii* 1
 We saw 2 quite well at the waterworks at Cobar, as they landed a place where we, with some difficulty, could watch them.
68. **Silver Gull** *Larus novaehollandiae* 2
 Common in and around Melbourne, but later not seen until we came back to the Leigh Creek reservoir, with a few more on the lake at Waikerie.

69. **Caspian Tern** *Sterna caspia* 3
A few on the reservoir at Leigh Creek, later one on the 'avocet lake', and a few over the river at Morgan.
70. **Whiskered Tern** *Chlidonias hybridus* 4
The common tern in the inland, often present in flocks on the various lakes and reservoirs. Some already in full summer plumage, but most were still in change from winter to summer.
71. **Rock Dove** *Columba livia* 8
Common, but absent in the driest inland.
72. **Common Bronzewing** *Phaps chalcoptera* 9
Bronzewings had become very common and tame at Healesville, where they 'scavenged' in the animal enclosures. They were also quite common and widespread in the wooded areas, but absent from the dry inland. Their voice, a penetrating 'oom', was also often heard, even when the birds, which usually were quite shy, remained out of sight. The 'bronze wing' is very beautiful, when seen up close. There were also Bronzewings in the forest at Towonga.
73. **Crested Pigeon** *Ocyphaps lophotes* 17
A very common bird nearly everywhere we went, except in Melbourne itself and at towonga, although we saw several on the way to the mountains. They fly up with even more wing clatter than the other doves, it seemed to me. Not shy, and often present in the villages and small towns. This species has a display flight almost like a *Columba* pigeon, but bows like the *Geopelia*'s.
74. **Diamond Dove** *Geopelia cuneata* 3
This is the dove of the dry inland, and even there it is no longer common, no doubt because of the drought
75. **Peaceful Dove** *G. striata* 11
The most common small dove in the drier woodlands; its little song strophe was heard almost constantly.
76. **Bar-shouldered Dove** *G. humeralis* 1
The characteristic call alerted us to the presence of this large *Geopelia* dove near the waterworks of Cobar, where two pairs were present. Not seen elsewhere.
77. **Spotted Turtle Dove** *Streptopelia chinensis* 1
Common almost everywhere in Melbourne, i.a. in the garden of the Butts, but not seen outside the city and suburbs.
78. **Red-tailed Black Cockatoo** *Calyptorhynchus magnificus* 1
Watched well on the classical locality near Bourke, where several small flocks were feeding in the paddocks. Majestic birds!
79. **Galah** *Cacatua roseicapilla* 19
One of the very few birds we saw every day of the trip, as well as in Melbourne and at Towonga. They embody the spirit of the Australian birds: colourful, loud and unafraid! They are often amazingly numerous, and in the mornings and evenings seem to come from, or fly to, a common roost. Galahs have a very characteristic wingbeat, and at first sight often remind me of gulls, although the wingbeats are maybe still more tern-like.

80. **Long-billed Corella** *C. tenuirostris* 3
This is the *Corella* of the agricultural areas around Melbourne, replaced by the next species across the ranges. I saw no Corellas of any kind at Towonga, but according to John they do occur there.
81. **Little Corella** *C. pastinator* 15
The common *Corella* of the inland, often in large flocks ('trees full of Corellas'). They spend a lot of time on the ground, as do all these cockatoos, and seem fond of the Onionweed bulbs. The crests, when raised, are more obvious than in the Slater illustrations. Like the Galahs, these Corellas followed us all the way into the driest areas.
82. **Major Mitchell's Cockatoo** *C. leadbeateri* 5
We had to wait a long time for these magnificent birds, but when we finally saw the first ones, it was a group of 18 along the road, busily digging for bulbs. Later we met them regularly, but in smaller numbers the next few days, and again a few the last days in the mallee at Hattah and Bronzewing.
83. **Sulphur-crested Cockatoo** *C. galerita* 5
This is a common bird around Melbourne, but it does not penetrate very far into the inland, and we lost them before Cobar.
84. **Cockatiel** *Nymphicus hollandicus* 6
Pleasantly common during the first week of the trip, strangely absent for the rest of the tour. These birds are unmistakable, both in flight and perched.
85. **Musk Lorikeet** *Glossopsitta concinna* 1
We did very badly with lorikeets. We saw a number of Musk Lorikeets the first day of the trip, as well as two small *Glossopsitta*'s that we could not identify in the hurry.
86. **Rainbow Lorikeet** *Trichoglossus haematodus* -
Common enough in Melbourne and Healesville, but not seen at all during the tour.
87. **King Parrot** *Alisterus scapularis* -
King Parrots were constant visitors at the Bradbury home in Towonga, where up till 6 at a time vied for the sunflower seeds. If the feeder was empty, they came and clung to the windows and asked for more!
88. **Red-winged Parrot** *Aprosmictus erythropterus* 4
We saw the first one at Bourke, and afterwards a few in the Thargominda area, no more. A pity, as these are quite spectacularly beautiful parrots.
89. **Superb Parrot** *Polytelis swainsoni* 1
Seen only on the Deniliquin day, but then very well. We stopped the car for a while and watched a group of these parrots feeding in tall grass and forbs on the roadside. They did not take any notice of us, and we could watch them from quite close. These birds have very clear colours, esp. on the head, and well deserve their name.
90. **Regent Parrot** *P. anthoepus* 1
Also these parrots we saw only on one day, along the Murray River at Morgan, but again we saw them very well. In my eyes they are almost too colourful, very gaudy indeed, but the colour pattern is far from subtle.
91. **Crimson Rosella** *Platycercus elegans* 3
Common enough in and around Melbourne, but we lost them quite soon when driving inland, when the Yellow Rosellas took over for a while. In Towonga, on the other hand, they were

very much to the fore, and vied with the King Parrots for the seeds in the feeders. This was a struggle they usually were bound to lose, being much smaller; but every now and then they succeeded through sheer perseverance, jumping from one side of the feeder to the opposite side time and again, until the King Parrot gave up (got dizzy?)

- 92. Yellow Rosella** *P. flaveolus* 3
This was the Rosella of the open woodlands around Hillston, and we saw it again along the Murray River at Morgan.
- 93. Adelaide Rosella** *P. 'adelaidae'* 1
This quite beautiful 'in between' Rosella we found during our walk through Burra, where they seemed to be quite common and relatively tame.
- 94. Eastern Rosella** *P. eximius* 2
Only seen at the beginning (Deniliquin) and near the end of the tour, not too far from Melbourne. They also occurred at Towonga, but were much shyer than the Crimson Rosellas and never came to the feeders. Usually in pairs, as so many of the parrots.
- 95. Australian Ringneck** *Barnardius zonatus* 10
A common and very variable parrot, often quite tame, and seen on most days once we were away from Melbourne. The first days we had the mallee form, which Pizzey calls Eastern Ringneck *B. barnardi*, with greenish heads and not all that much yellow underneath, while in S. Australia we came across what Pizzey calls Western Ringnecks *B. zonarius*, with a much darker head and a lot of yellow underneath.
- 96. Blue Bonnet** *Northiella haematogaster* 12.
Common, but quite shy, and therefore usually seen in flight, a very characteristic flight, but by the way, quite undulating. Usually in pairs. Blue Bonnets followed us all the way to the driest inland, as long as there were some trees and bushes around. Not seen on the first and last days.
- 97. Red-rumped Parrot** *Psephotus haematonotus* 7
Common and often relatively unafraid in the wooded areas of the first and last days, apparently absent from the driest inland (or were we just out of their range?)
- 98. Mulga Parrot** *P. varius* 8
A bird of the mallee and saltbush land, as long as there were some taller trees around to flee to. Long-tailed, surprisingly colourful parrots, very fast fliers.
- 99. Budgerigar** *Melopsittacus undulatus* 7
We had the great good fortune to come across lots of flocks of budgies, and one of the best memories of the trip is a dead tree full of sparkling green budgies in the sun. We saw them first at Cobar and after that on most days until we got to the Murray River again.
- *100. Bourke's Parrot** *Neopsephotus bourkei* 3
A new acquaintance for me, and a subtly very beautiful and elegant little parrot. They are much less exuberant than most other parrots, and are quite unobtrusive (Not for Phil, though! In flight they have quite a lot of subdued blue.
- 101. Blue-winged Parrot** *Neophema chrysostoma* 1
One parrot feeding among the spinifex in the fierce winds near a lookout in the Flinders Ranges was after much deliberation declared to be of this species, because of its clear yellowish underparts, broad blue wingbands and the shape of the blue headband.

102. **Elegant Parrot** *N. elegans* 2
 These small parrots nested in the huge Red River Gums in the Flinders Ranges, and we had to search for a long time before we finally found some pairs and could watch them at leisure. They were apparently feeding young there.
103. **Pallid Cuckoo** *Cuculus pallidus* 2
 First seen (an immature) in the open forest between Gunbar and Hillston, later, and much better, in the Hattah-Kulkyne forest. A typical *Cuculus* cuckoo, although without the ventral barring in the adult. I have already forgotten the call again.
104. **Fan-tailed Cuckoo** *Cacomantis flabelliformis* -
 The Fan-tailed Cuckoo in the aviary at Healesville called so loudly and incessantly, that I had no trouble recognizing the call in the Bradbury forest at Towonga, where there were several birds calling simultaneously now and then. In the end I also got to see one.
105. **Black-eared Cuckoo** *Chrysococcyx osculans* 1
 After many vain playback tries in the Flinders Ranges the always persevering Phil finally succeeded in luring a Black-eared Cuckoo quite close in a bluebush woodland between Burra and Morgan. I was very glad to see this bird well this time, as I had seen it only once before (In the Coorong), from a moving car, and at that time it took a long time before I found out what I had seen, as I had not thought of a cuckoo.
106. **Horsfield's Bronze Cuckoo** *C. basalis* 6
 This was the most common cuckoo of the trip, especially in the mallee, but also in the Ranges.
107. **Southern Boobook** *Ninox novaeseelandiae* 1
 We saw one very well at a farm just before the spotlighting session near Deniliquin. One was also calling in the forest at Towonga.
108. **Barn Owl** *Tyto alba* 1
 Also this owl was seen on the spotlighting night.
109. **Tawny Frogmouth** *Podargus strigoides* 1
 Third nightbird seen on the same spotlighting night. Frogmouths are completely different birds, when you see them at night, when they are active.
110. **Owlet-Nightjar** *Aegotheles cristatus* 1
 Phil knocked on almost hundreds of trees, before finally finding one with an Owlet Nightjar in it. The bird flew a few times from one spout to another, but finally peeped out of one so that we could see it well.
111. **Laughing Kookaburra** *Dacelo gigas* 10
 Common in and around Melbourne, then every day all the way to Thargominda, after which we did not see them again until the last two days of the tour. Also in the Victorian mountains, and a good alarm clock at Towonga
 At Tibboburra (?) a few kookaburras had clearly learned to profit from the insects that were attracted by streetlights, and they hunted there until long after dark.
112. **Red-backed Kingfisher** *Todiramphus pyrrhopygia* 7
 The kingfisher of the dry inland, often drawing attention to itself by their persistent calling,. We saw the first one between Bourke and Cunnamulla, and the last one close to the Murray River at Morgan. In between the group saw it every day.

113. **Sacred Kingfisher** *T. sanctus* 3
A bird of the river landscape at Cobar and Bourke.
114. **Rainbow Bee-eater** *Merops ornatus* 6
First seen at Bowra, thereafter six days out of seven, and often in small flocks. Very slick and elegant birds!
115. **White-throated Treecreeper** *Climacteris leucophaeus* 2
First seen on Gulpa island. Quite common in the forest at Towonga, where its calls were among the most persistent sounds in the woods..
116. **White-browed Treecreeper** *C. affinis* 1
Only seen at Bowra. The white eyebrow and the dingier throat and breast are characters that divide this from nr 115.
117. **Brown Treecreeper** *C. picumnus* 10
The common treecreeper of the tour, as often on the ground as on the tree trunks. Apparently absent at Towonga, also absent in the driest inland.
118. **Superb Fairy Wren** *Malurus cyaneus* 4
Common in the Melbourne area, and on the first and last days of the tour. Also very common in Towonga. Always a pleasure to see again, but somewhat eclipsed this time by the other fairy wrens, which are still more spectacular.
119. **Splendid Fairy Wren** *M. splendens* 6
A fantastic blue bird, much more 'electric blue' than on the illustrations in the books. The females also have blue tails.. These were the fairy wrens of the mallee.
120. **Variegated Fairy Wren** *M. lamberti* 6 (11)
These overlap with the other fairy wrens and were seen (often not by me, though) on most days from day 3 to day 16 of the tour. Easily recognized, when males are present.
121. **White-winged Fairy Wren** *M. leucopterus* 7
This also very beautiful bird is the fairy wren of the dry inland.. We first saw it at Bourke, and from the Sturt NP daily until the Flinders Ranges. The females are even more non-descript than those of the other fairy wrens.
- *122 **Grey Grasswren** *Amytornis barbatus* 1
This was the first grasswren we saw. It lived in the lignum in the Bulloo Overflow, a former swamp, but now pitifully dry. This is a very distinctive grasswren with its patterned face, and it was also surprisingly easy to watch, with some patience. The birds (there were quite many) foraged on the ground, but often also high in the Lignum bushes, and they sang from elevated perches.
123. **Striated Grasswren** *A. striatus* 1
We saw a pair of these birds very very well at Murphy Sunset NP, where they clearly had a nest nearby. The birds were easy to watch in the low bushes above the spinifex clumps, and behaved much more like 'normal birds' than the often mouse-like other grasswrens.
- *124. **Short-tailed Grasswren** *A. merrotsyi* 1
These birds, that lived in the open spinifex hills of the Flinders Ranges, behaved like typical grasswrens, moving very quickly and often unseen, and popping up now here, than there. They are quite similar to 123, but have clearly shorter tails.

- *125. Eyrean Grasswren** *A. goyderi* 2
 These very elusive grasswrens lived in the canegrass remnants on top of some of the sand ridges, W. of Cameron Corner, SA. We sought for them with not too good results one evening, and finally got some better views the next morning. They are the lightest coloured of all the grasswrens, with all the underparts off-white; they also have a different bill than the other grasswrens, almost like a finch. Typical grasswrens in behaviour, that played hide and seek with us for a long time.
- *126. Thick-billed Grasswren** *A. textilis* 2
 One of the 'easier' grasswrens, found in saltbush country near Lyndhurst, together with Rufous Fieldwrens. The birds are somewhat non-descript, lacking the black whisker-stripes of 123 and 124; the thick bill is not immediately obvious, but can be seen if you concentrate. (The Eyrean grasswrens had IMO a thicker bill than these)
- 127. Spotted Pardalote** *Pardalotus punctatus* -
 Seen well at the forest edge at Towonga.
- 128. Yellow-rumped Pardalote** *P. p. xanthopygus* 1
 Seen well at Billat CP, after some searching. These have a yellow, not reddish rump., and a very characteristic call note.
- 129. Red-browed Pardalote** *P. rubricatus* 1
 This is a much more subdued pardalote than 127 or 130, with a pale grey, uniform back. The red brow is not very conspicuous, but the callnotes are.
- 130. Striated Pardalote** *P. striatus* 4 (12)
 Strangely scarce this time. Phil's sharp ears heard them on many days, but we saw them only rarely and never very well.
- 131. White-browed Scrubwren** *Sericornis frontalis* 1
 Only seen at the riverside at Deniliquin, outside our motel. Not noted at Towonga or Mt Beauty, where I had expected them.
- 132. Shy Heathwren** *Hylacola cauta* 1
 Seen in the first mallee forest we visited (Nombinnie RP), where they were not too difficult to watch. They are dapper birds, with a strong white eyebrow, chestnut rump, and strong thrush-like striations on the breast. Very lively and quick-moving, a lot on or close to the ground.
- *133. Rufous Fieldwren** *Calamanthus campestris*
 These shared the saltbushes with nr 124 near Lyndhurst, where they were still easier to see than the grasswrens. They had a pleasant little song, usually delivered from the top of a saltbush. They did not show all that much rufous, in my eyes.
- *134. Redthroat** *Pyrrholaemus brunneus* 3
 I had never realized until now that this is some sort of Scrubwren! We saw them best in the Flinders Ranges, but also earlier in the Bulloo Overflow and later near Morgan. They look a little bit like *Sylvia* warblers, especially the female, which lacks the (not very conspicuous) red throat patch. They have a very pleasant song.
- Speckled Warbler** *Chthonicola sagittata* --
 Only observed by Phil, on our first day

135. **Weebill** *Smicrornis brevirostris* 9
A common bird of the open woodlands, not on the coast or in the mountains, nor in the driest inland. They look and act like small thornbills, but have a completely different bill, and they call, IMO, 'weebill'!
136. **Western Gerygone** *Gerygone fusca* 1
One of my favourites, because of its very musical melancholy 'falling-leaf song'. The bird itself is quite forgettable and somewhat *Phylloscopus*-like. We came across them only once, in Nombinnie RP, but I heard the song there, bringing very pleasant memories.
137. **Brown Thornbill** *Acanthiza pusilla* -
Brown Thornbills were common in Melbourne, i.a. in the Butt garden, but we never saw them on the tour itself. Nor, to my surprise, did I see them in Towonga; overlooked?
138. **Inland Thornbill** *A. apicalis* 3
Another bird we first saw in Nombinnie RP, in my eyes very similar to Brown Thornbill, and I am uncertain if I could identify them on my own. We saw them again in the mallee on the way back.
139. **Chestnut-rumped Thornbill** *A. uropygialis* 13
The most common and numerous thornbill on this tour, seen practically everywhere, except in and around Melbourne. The chestnut rump is a good character.
140. **Buff-rumped Thornbill** *A. reguloides* 2
A bird of the less dry woodlands, best seen at Heathcote. They have more yellow underneath than 139, and a more yellow than buff rump.
141. **Slender-billed Thornbill** *A. iredalei* 1
Seen in Nkargot CP. Very similar to 140, but with maybe some more scalloping on the forehead. I did not see any difference in the bills.
142. **Yellow-rumped Thornbill** *A. chrysorrhoa* 8
This is a 'large' and rather easy to identify thornbill, with a clear and conspicuous yellow rump, easier to see as the birds often forage and fly up from the ground. These birds were common in the drier woodlands, but absent from the coastal areas and the driest inland. They were also present at Towonga.
143. **Yellow Thornbill** *A. nana* 4.
These very small and lively tree-living thornbills were characteristic for the wetter woodlands of the first and last days; they also occurred in the forest at Towonga.
144. **Striated Thornbill** *A. lineata* 2
Only seen on the first and last days of the tour, a bird of the wetter forests. The dominant thornbill at Towonga.
145. **Southern Whiteface** *Aphelocephala leucopsis* 12 (15)
A surprisingly common, but rather inconspicuous small bird, that we saw almost all through the tour.
- *146. **Chestnut-breasted Whiteface** *A. pectoralis* 1
This enigmatic and little-known bird we searched for with success in saltbush country outside Lyndhurst. We saw the bird well; it is somewhat forgettable, I must confess.

- *147. Banded Whiteface** *A. nigricincta* 1
This bird, on the other hand, I liked a lot. We found it in low bushes in very scantily vegetated sandy terrain W. of Cameron Corner. It had also a very nice little song-phrase.
- 148. Red Wattlebird** *Anthochaera carunculata* 5
A common bird in the Butt garden in Canterbury, also elsewhere in and around Melbourne. On the tour not seen after the first day, but on the way back we met the wattlebirds again in the Flinders Ranges and the mallee woodlands south of these. Not seen at Towonga.
- 149. Spiny-cheeked Honeyeater** *Acanthagenys rufogularis* 15
This always active bird followed us during practically the entire tour, except the coastal areas (and the Towonga forest); also present in the driest inland, as soon as there were some trees. Quite noisy birds, with a large variety of often loud calls.
- 150. Striped Honeyeater** *Plectorhyncha lanceolata* 2 (5)
An unmistakable honeyeater, which I nevertheless managed to miss on three of five days
- 151. Noisy Friarbird** *Philemon corniculatus* 2
A still more unmistakable honeyeater, but not very common on the tour, in fact only seen in the Cunnamulla area.
- 152. Little Friarbird** *P. citrogularis* 7
This friarbird, on the other hand, followed us everywhere all the first week of the tour, seemingly especially common in the villages and small towns. Noisy and 'conversational', like all these friarbirds. We saw it also in Morgan.
- 153. Blue-faced Honeyeater** *Entomyzon flavigula* 4
Again a bird of the first week of the tour, with the first observations in the Hillston area. Again, one of the 'easy' honeyeaters.
- 154. Bell Miner** *Manorina melanophrys* -
Not on the tour, but these Bell Miners were much to the fore, and more easily watched than normally, in the Melbourne Botanic Garden. I heard them also at Healesville.
- 155. Noisy Miner** *M. melanocephala* 6
Noisy Miners were common in and around Melbourne, and they followed us for the first days of the tour, after which nr 156 took over
- 156. Yellow-throated Miner** *M. flavigula* 12
THE miner of the inland tour! Seen and heard daily, since we saw the first ones in the forest near Hillston. They were just as aggressive as the Noisy Miners, and e.g. aggregated in great excitement, when Phil played the calls of the Barking Owl
- 157. Yellow-faced Honeyeater** *Lichenostomus chrysops* -
Not on the tour, but one of the most common honeyeaters in the forest in Towonga. In the early morning they foraged on or near the ground in the grass, jumping up time and again apparently flycatching. Later in the day I saw them also flycatch from the higher branches of the trees. It is one of those honeyeaters with a yellow eyestripe, but this one also has a short vertical yellow mark above the eye.
- 158. Singing Honeyeater** *L. virescens* 8 (13)
A rather greyish honeyeater with a striped belly and again a yellow stripe beneath the eye. The 'song' did not impress me much at all! These birds were quite common in the drier parts of the tour.

159. **White-eared Honeyeater** *L. leucotis* 2
I saw these birds first at the Numbinnie NR, where there were many honeyeaters. On the way back we caught up with them again at Ngarkot NR. This is an easily recognized honeyeater.
160. **Yellow-tufted Honeyeater** *L. ornatus* 1
A common bird at Heathcote, but completely absent afterwards. It is one of those honeyeaters, who use so much time chasing other birds, that one wonders how they themselves do find time to feed!
161. **Purple-gaped Honeyeater** *L. cratitius* 1
This bird we saw only at the Billat NR, and unfortunately in very unfavourable light, so that we did not see much more than a silhouette. I saw no purple gape!
162. **Yellow-plumed Honeyeater** *L. ornatus* 3
Again, first seen at the Numbinnie NR, and very well too. These birds are much more stripy underneath than nr 163, and the yellow neck patch is subtly different.
163. **Grey-fronted Honeyeater** *L. plumulus* 2
Watched well on the same day as 162, with grey heads a further difference. Later we saw them only once, in the Flinders ranges, before the dust storms got too bad.
164. **Fuscous Honeyeater** *L. fuscus* 1
A rather non-descript honeyeater, usually discovered by its calls. On the tour we only saw them the first day, in the Heathcote forest. But I got better acquainted with them at Towonga, where frequent tantalizing calls from the trees in the end could be traced to these honeyeaters. They usually stayed high up in the trees.
165. **White-plumed Honeyeater** *L. penicillatus* 16
'Greenies' were first seen at Healesville, and afterwards they followed us during the entire tour, most often seen around habitation, but also often nearly always present in numbers in the Red River Gums along watercourses, and along the 'waterworks' where we searched for waterbirds. They have a large arsenal of in part quite loud calls.
166. **Black-chinned Honeyeater** *Melithreptus gularis* 1
Among the many birds that we only saw in the Heathcote forest
167. **Brown-headed Honeyeater** *M. brevirostris* 2 (4)
This followed us a bit further, i.e. during the first 4 days of the tour.
168. **White-naped Honeyeater** *M. lunatus* 1
The third *Melithreptus* species, and also this one we saw only at Heathcote.
169. **Brown Honeyeater** *Lichmera indistincta* 1 (4)
This indeed quite 'indistinct' honeyeater I only saw well at Cobar, and missed it every time later, partly by not knowing the calls and song.
170. **New Holland Honeyeater** *Phylidonyris novaehollandiae* 2
First seen at Healesville, but during the tour not before the last days in the mallee.
171. **White-fronted Honeyeater** *P. albifrons* 1
Only seen by me along a row of trees somewhere along the Strzelecki Track, not too far from Lyndhurst; the birds were very fidgety, but we saw them well in the end, and they are quite characteristic.

172. **Tawny-crowned Honeyeater** *P. melanops* 1
A common bird in the recently burned *Banksia* heathland in the Nkargot CP, where they obviously were nesting. Not seen elsewhere on this tour.
173. **Eastern Spinebill** *Acanthorhynchus tenuirostris* 1
A single bird seen well in the Heathcote forest, after a brisk chase.
- *174. **Black Honeyeater** *Certhionyx niger* 4
A new bird for me, first seen in the Numbinnie NR, and later at several occasions. A very special, somewhat sunbird-like honeyeater, the males stark black-and-white, the females grey, with darker wings. I have not really seen the songflight described in the field guides, although the birds did fly a lot.
- *175. **Pied Honeyeater** *C. variegatus* 5
Another sunbird-like honeyeater, although the sitting bird at first sight also strongly reminded me of a male Pied Flycatcher: These birds we first saw at Cobar, and thereafter surprisingly often. They had a spectacular display flight, almost like a hummingbird, with a steep dive at the end.
- *176. **Crimson Chat** *Epthianura tricolor* 4 (11)
What beautiful birds! These small birds were much more impressive still than their illustrations in the book, especially the vividly red males. Also this bird we saw first at Cobar (Pied Honeyeaters, Crimson Chats and Budgerigars apparently often migrate together), and afterwards I managed to miss them every day for more than a week, before catching up with them again in the mallee in the south
- *177. **Orange Chat** *E. aurifrons* 4
Also a new bird for me, but less impressive than the other chats, in my book. We saw the first ones near Bourke, and later several times, usually in very open country, the last time in the Flinders Ranges.
178. **White-fronted Chat** *E. albifrons* 3
Also this is a quite impressive little bird. We saw the first ones on the Hay Plains, but later much better in the wetlands near a pipeline S. of Morgan somewhere, where there were many together in the evening light.
- *179. **Gibberbird** *Ashbyia lovensis* 1
A very interesting bird, mostly maybe because it lives on the endless and lifeless-looking gibber plains, where they are very hard to get an eye on (unless your name is Phil!). We found them only once, near the Tickalera station, after a long search, where after much scanning we finally drove through the gibber. Gibberbirds are not very spectacular, they are rather uniformly yellowish-tan, but they are definitely a bird with character, acting a little like wheatears. We saw a pair with a young, and could watch them a long time. Later, along the Strzelecki track, pouring rain prevented further searches.
180. **Jacky Winter** *Microeca fascinans* 10
The archetypical 'small friendly bird' of my first Victorian bird booklets! Common in wooded country, absent from the driest inland. Tame, flycatching with precision, and belting out its 'Peter Peter Peter' song with gusto. They were also present at Towonga.
181. **Scarlet Robin** *Petroica multicolor* 1
Only seen the first day at Heathcote

182. **Red-capped Robin** *P. goodenovi* 11
This very beautiful small robin was seen regularly and pleasantly often every day from day 2 to 7, and again from day 14 to 18, i.e. in the open woodland and mallee, but not in the driest inland
183. **Hooded Robin** *Melanodryas cucullata* 4
A much larger and somberly clad robin, occurring in the same general areas as 182.
184. **E. Yellow Robin** *Eopsaltria australis* 3
A bird of the wetter woodlands, seen on the first and last days, and also common in the forest at Towomga.
185. **Southern Scrub-Robin** *Drymodes brunneopygia* 1
Only seen in the Numbinnie NR, but there these birds were surprisingly common and easily watched: 'tame, inquisitive' says Pizzey, and he is so right! The birds ran around almost without stopping, but did not seem to bother at all about our presence.
186. **Grey-crowned Babbler** *Pomatostomus temporalis* 4
Although apparently not related at all, these birds behave much as the African and Asian *Turdoides* babblers do, closely living together in spirited small flocks, and always active. This species is a babbler of open woodland of various types, and we saw it almost every day during the first week, later never again.
187. **White-browed Babbler** *P. superciliosus* 5
We saw these first on Gulpa Island and on the next two days, then again when we were back in the mallee in the south, days 16-18. Not very shy.
- *188. **Hall's Babbler** *P. halli* 1
A sizeable flock of these quite distinctive babblers was watched in woodland between Bourke and Cunnamulla. They behaved like typical babblers, and were not particularly shy, although quite flighty.
189. **Chestnut-crowned Babbler** *P. ruficeps* 7
This was the babbler of the drier areas; all our observations were between days 4 and 12. It behaves like the other babblers, but these seem to be appreciably shyer, and flee at some distance.
- *190. **Chirruping Wedgebill** *Psophodes cristatus* 8
Another typical inland bird, first seen in the Bulloo Overflow, but clearly quite common in saltbush, mulga or lignum country. The book says they call 'tootsie cheer', but for a long time I only heard the 'Chreer'. When the birds are really close, though, one can hear the entire duet.
191. **Eastern Whipbird** *P. olivaceus* -
Not on the tour, but in the forest at Towonga one could now and then hear the characteristic whipcrack; I did not succeed in seeing the birds themselves, though, amongst all the dense brambles.
192. **Chestnut Quailthrush** *Cinlosoma castanotus* 1
We heard this quailthrush sing in the Nonminnie NR, but never got to see it, despite prolonged playback. Fortunately we got another chance in the Murphy Sunset NP, and this time we all got to see the bird well. They are much darker than the other quailthrushes we saw.
- *193. **Cinnamon Quailthrush** *C. cinnamomeum* 3
This was the quailthrush of the dry areas. We saw the first one at Tibooburra, and later i.a. on the sandy ridges west of Cameron Corner where we sought for the Eyrean Grasswren,

and also in the saltbush country near Lyndhurst. This bird is rather similar to 194, but is paler overall and especially on the breast-band.

***194. Chestnut-breasted Quailthrush** *C. castaneothorax* 1

This one we saw only at Bowra. It is a more colourful version of 193. The birds keep mostly to the ground, but sing from low bushes.

195. Varied Sittella *Daphoenositta chrysoptera* 4

Several times the first three days (and once later in the southern mallee) we came across sizeable flocks of these cozy birds, of a black-capped subspecies, I suppose *pileata*. They have surprisingly broad orange wing-bands when they fly, and a white-tipped tail.

196. Crested Shrike-Tit *Falcunculus frontatus* 1

This is one of my favourite birds, so I was very happy to find one in the Numbinnie NR, after having failed to see the one on Gulpa Island the day before; there I could not even see the nest that Phil told me was there.

197. Crested Bellbird *Oreoica gutturalis* 4 (11)

A common bird in the inland, but because of my reduced hearing I missed out on many days when the birds were only heard. We did have several good observations of both adult and juvenile birds, though. I never saw one with its crest erected.

***198. Red-lored Whistler** *Pachycephala rufogularis* 1

We wandered for a long time seemingly aimlessly through the mallee at the Billar NR, until Phil heard a reaction to his playback. The first time the bird still 'escaped' our attention, but the second time we got to see a pair very well, and also heard the typical whistler song. The red lores are the main feature dividing this bird from nr 199, although the females are more different.

199. Gilbert's Whistler *P. inornata* 2

We had luck on Gulpa Island, when the Gilbert's Whistler that we could hear in song on the other side of the river decided to cross and sing from a tree on our side, where we could see it in peace. It is a very good songster, with a typical whistler song. We found the bird again near the Murray river near Morgan.

200. Golden Whistler *P. pectoralis* 2

We saw this bird only twice, a female one of the first days at Gulpa Island, a beautiful male in the mallee on the way back.

201. Rufous Whistler *P. rufiventris* 10

My old friend, and also here common in all sorts of woodland and only missing in the driest areas. This bird was also common in Towonga, where they sang both in the forest and in the trees along the road near the gate.

202. Grey Shrike Thrush *Colluricincla harmonica* 15.

One of the most regular birds of the tour, only missing during the five days in the driest area. A beautiful songster! In Towonga a shrike thrush came often to the feeder to take some sunflower seeds when the parrots were absent.

203. Restless Flycatcher *Myiagra inquieta* 4

A characteristic bird of the waterside, most often seen near the 'waterworks' at Cobar and Bourke, or along a river in the Red River Gums. They were clearly nesting and bringing food to nestlings; a lot of the foraging was over the water, where they hovered like small helicopters.

204. **Magpie Lark** *Grallina cyanoleuca* 18
Ubiquitous. Also in and around Melbourne, and in the mountains around Towonga.
205. **Grey Fantail** *Rhipidura fuliginosa* 3
Only seen during the two first days and the last day of the tour, in spite of the distribution area in the books. 'Cranky Fanny' was also common at Healesville, and in the mountains near Towonga.
206. **Willie Wagtail** *R. leucophrys* 18.
Ubiquitous, and its 'sweet pretty creature' was usually the first song we heard when we got up for breakfast. Also in and around Melbourne, and at Towonga, although not inside the forest itself. Nested on the house in Towonga.
207. **Black-faced Cuckooshrike** *Coracina novaehollandiae* 13
A common bird over most of the tour, but scarce in the driest part of the journey. Also present at Towonga.
208. **White-bellied Cuckooshrike** *C. papuensis* 1
Seen twice on the first day, in the forest at Heathcote
209. **Ground Cuckooshrike** *C. maxima* 1
We surprised 2-3 of these large birds in the woodland at Bowra, but they flew off before we had seen them really well, and could not be refound.
210. **White-winged Triller** *Lalage sueurii* 14
The ubiquitous and almost daily occurrence of this bird was to me one of the great surprises of this tour. Also these males have a bit of Pied Flycatcher jizz at first sight.
211. **Olive-backed Oriole** *Oriolus sagittatus* 3
A few times during the first week, betraying itself by its yodelling 'orioriole'
212. **White-breasted Woodswallow** *Artamus leucorhynchus* 9
A common bird, often close to water. I am now quite sure that I saw the first already in Deniliquin, outside the motel, and since then we saw them nearly every day, although never in really large numbers.
213. **Masked Woodswallow** *A. personatus* 8
(I still am strongly of the opinion, that the Masked and Black-faced Woodswallows should change names: the Masked has a black face, the Black-faced a mask!.) These were part of the enormous flocks of thousands of wood swallows that we found at Cobar, and the many we saw migrating later on. In flight Masked Woodswallows are very light-coloured underneath, and therefore easy to recognize (Nr 212 has a blackish tail). The proportions between 213 and 214 varied a lot on the different days. In Cobar 214 was by far the commoner, but later flocks often had a preponderance of Masked. All these woodswallows forage much more often on the ground than I had expected.
214. **White-browed Woodswallow** *A. superciliosus* 6
Countless thousands were everywhere in Cobar, also in the street trees in town, and here this species was in the absolute majority. But later, and in S. Australia, I think there were more Masked than White-browed Woodswallows around. This species is quite beautiful, especially the adult males.
215. **Black-faced Woodswallow** *A. cinereus* 8
This was the dominant woodswallow of the dry inland, although also there large flocks of 213 and 214 could move through.. It is clearly more a bird of open country than the other woodswallows.

216. **Dusky Woodswallow** *A. cyanopterus* 4
This is a woodswallow of the less dry forests, where the birds often sat by themselves in the trees, making sallies to catch insects. It is a very appealing little bird! Dusky Woodswallows also occurred in the forest at Towonga, where they now and then hawked high up in the air.
217. **Little Woodswallow** *A. minor* 1
We saw these birds only near Eulo. They look like nr 216 without the white wing streak, and they are maybe clearer brown.
218. **Grey Butcherbird** *Cracticus torquatus* 8
First seen in Melbourne, later off and on during the first and last weeks of the tour; apparently absent from the driest areas. Not noted at Towomga.
219. **Pied Butcherbird** *C. nigrogularis* 10
This, my favourite Australian songster, was seen nearly everyday on the first half of the trip, for so almost to disappear during the rest (one observation only). Also present at Towonga.
220. **Australian Magpie** *Gymnorhina tibicen* 19.
Seen every day, also in Melbourne and in the Towonga area, and often one of the most conspicuous birds present (I also had the impression that they were active long into the evening twilight) The birds in and around Melbourne had mostly white backs, those in the inland black backs, but there were a lot of intermediates most places.
221. **Pied Currawong** *Strepera graculina* 2
Absent for most of the tour, only seen first and last days. They were common, on the other hand, en route to Towonga, and in the meadows around Mt Beauty, the meadows were often full of currawongs; they must find something special to feed on here.
222. **Grey Currawong** *S. versicolor* 2
An uncommon bird in the mallee country of S.Australia, first seen at Alawoona, and thereafter a few times the next day. These birds are quite dark, and have almost no white in the wings.
223. **Australian Raven** *Corvus coronoides* 16
The most common crow on this tour. But I must confess that I often have problems recognizing the crow species from their calls, and still more from their exterior. Of course the 'bleating baby-wail' of this species is often characteristic enough. Also heard at Towonga and on the meadows at Mt Beauty.
224. **Little Raven** *C. mellori* 9
This bird we saw and heard the first and last weeks of the tour, not in the driest areas. I am almost certain that I also heard these birds at Towonga, where large flocks here and there were gathered in the meadows, with the currawongs.
225. **Little Crow** *C. bennettii* 5
These smaller and slenderer crows, with their narrower bills and almost quacking voices, we saw and heard in the drier part of the tour.
226. **White-winged Chough** *Corcorax melanorhamphus* 12
Another one of those birds that are common and often numerous in the woodlands and mallee. We saw them already at Heathcote and thereafter 5 days in a row, as well as the 6 last days of the tour. Also in the forest at Towonga. They are always in flocks and seem to be as social as the babblers.

227. **Apostlebird** *Struthidea cinerea* 8
Common in the first half of the tour, since first seen along the road between Gunbar and Hillston. Flocks of 'apostles' occurred even in gardens in the small towns we came through. Apparently absent in the driest areas, although we saw some in Tibooburra.
228. **Satin Bowerbird** *Ptilorhynchus violaceus* -
Not seen during the tour, but a male had a bower at the gate of the Towonga place, and I also saw both females and immatures in the forest there.
- *229. **Spotted Bowerbird** *Chlamydera maculata* 3
First seen at Cobar, where we were also shown an active bower. Regularly observed the next two days, not later. A not very spectacular bird, with a lot of mostly unpleasant calls.
- **Skylark** *Alauda arvensis* --
Heard from the car, but not by me
- **Singing Bushlark** *Mirafra javanica* --
Observed the first two days, i.a. during the spotlighting for the Plains Wanderer, But I never saw any of them well enough.
230. **Richard's Pipit** *Anthus novaeseelandiae* 11
Seen quite often, often flying up from the roadside. These pipits nested on the very lifeless-looking gibber plains, as well as in agricultural land.
231. **House Sparrow** *Passer domesticus* 13
Common, but quite patchily distributed. Has nevertheless succeeded in colonizing quite isolated places, such as Cameron's Corner, while seemingly absent in some villages. Also present at the house in Towonga
232. **Tree Sparrow** *Passer montanus* 1
A few, among many more House Sparrows, in the atrium of the hotel at Tullamarine.
233. **Zebra Finch** *Taeniopygia bichenovii* 11
A typical inland bird, and there often numerous: we saw them every day between days 4 (Cobar) and 14. Cozy birds! I saw them very well, when sitting in the car at the Chestnut-banded Whiteface place outside Lyndhurst, when a small flock kept coming to a nearby bush, where probably they could drink at a crevice.
234. **Double-barred Finch** *T. bichenovii* 1
We saw these nice finches that always remind me of mini-owls, only at Bowra, where we could watch a small flock along the roadside.
235. **Red-browed Finch** *Emblema temporalis* --
I missed these finches the one time they were seen during the tour. But they were at Healesville, and a few also fed outside the house at Towonga in the early morning.
236. **Diamond Firetail** *Stagonopleura guttata* 1
Seen well on Gulpa Island, a few underneath bushes on the riverside
237. **European Greenfinch** *Chloris chloris* --
Seen in Melbourne.
238. **Mistletoebird** *Dicaeum hirundinaceum* 2 (6)
Seen well in Hillston, often missed later on. The male is a very colourful bird.

239. **White-backed Swallow** *Cheramoeca leucosternus* 6
A dry country swallow, that nests in holes in the ground. Seen very well this time, first at Cobar.
240. **Welcome Swallow** *Hirundo neoxena* 17
Seen on most days.
241. **Tree Martin** *Hirundo nigricans* 12
Common, some places even numerous, always associated with large trees, in which they nest.
242. **Fairy Martin** *H. ariel* 7
Common on days 3-9 of the trip, thereafter for some reason seemingly absent; first seen at Hillston. At the Cobar waterworks one small shed was almost completely covered by their spectacular mudnests..
243. **Clamorous Reed Warbler** *Acrocephalus stentoreus* 5
Seemingly present, as soon as there are suitable largish patches of reed, such as at the various 'waterworks', and along the river at Burra..
244. **Little Grassbird** *Megalurus gramineus* 1
Seen and heard well at the waterworks in Bourke; in Burra I also heard the melancholy song phrase from the reeds, but could not locate the bird itself.
245. **Rufous Songlark** *Cinclorhamphus mathewsi* 7
'Pit-ee-tjee, pit-ee-tjuu': this was a bird that I learned to know quite well during the first week of the tour, when they songflighted nearly everywhere, where there was water around. First seen and enjoyed at the old bridge over the river near the motel in Deniliquin
246. **Brown Songlark** *C. cruralis* 8
Common over open agricultural land, absent from the driest areas. The large dark males have an extensive songflight.
247. **Silvereye** *Zosterops lateralis* 1
Seen surprisingly rarely. My only observation was in the Flinders Ranges, where a few could be watched in a Butterfly Bush.
248. **Common Blackbird** *Turdus merula* 10
Common in woodland and in village and towns outside the driest areas. We heard them sing outside our motels on many mornings---it is a really good songster. Also at Towonga.
249. **European Starling** *Sturnus vulgaris* 11
Like the Blackbirds, common in the first and last week of the tour, absent in the driest areas (but present at Leigh Creek).Also at Towonga
250. **Common Myna** *Acridotheres tristis* 1
In and around Melbourne.