

November 2017 BirdWatch report

Another productive round of bird surveys, at nine sites on 19 and 26 November, recorded a total of 76 bird species.

Among the highlights were a White-winged Triller in wattles at Galada Tamboore, a Sacred Kingfisher sitting on the high-voltage power line crossing the Merri near Brunswick Velodrome, another Sacred Kingfisher at Galgi Ngarrk, and Straw-necked Ibis at Coburg Lake and between Merri and Kirkdale Parks. Interesting fauna sightings included a native Water Rat (Rakali) near the Edwardes Lake spillway, an Eastern Blue-tongue Lizard in East Brunswick, and two Golden Sun Moths at Galgi Ngarrk.

At Galgi Ngarrk, both Merri and Curly Sedge Creeks were flowing strongly and there was plenty of bird breeding activity. Juvenile Australian Reed-Warblers, Chestnut Teal, White-fronted Chats and Australian Hobbies were spotted. A pair of Wedge-tailed Eagles soared overhead.

It was unusual to see only two cormorants at Edwardes Lake, but the algal bloom might explain this. Little Pied or Little Black Cormorants were recorded at five Merri Creek sites. The Hardhead ducks have been slowly increasing in number at the Lake, and now outnumber the Pacific Black Ducks.

Popular favourites the Tawny Frogmouths were seen at two sites, East Coburg-West Preston, and Merri Park. In Clifton Hill, Frogmouths produced one youngster after being on the nest for about three months, and left the nest about two weeks before the survey.

Colourful Eastern Rosellas were recorded in East Brunswick and Clifton Hill, but they always seem to be in low numbers along the Merri. Like many native birds, they are no match for aggressive Common (Indian) Mynas when competing for a nest hollow.

Several species were recorded at all nine sites: Pacific Black Duck, Spotted (Turtle) Dove, Red Wattlebird, Little Raven, and Magpie-lark. The most numerous species was the Rainbow Lorikeet, with an estimated total of 189 individuals across eight sites.

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[photo caption: Eastern Rosellas are colourful ground-feeding parrots. Photo: Peter Mollison.]