



Broome Bird Observatory

Annual Report 2019

Cover photo: Black-breasted Buzzard (Jodi Webber)



Summary

This report summarises observations of all bird species recorded in the Broome region during 2019.

The main factor causing variation in environmental conditions around Broome is always rainfall, and during 2019 this was particularly low. There were 11 days of mostly consistent rain in late January, dropping 180.8 mm into the Broome Bird Observatory rain gauge between the 14th and 25th, but extremely little thereafter: 31.7 mm in February, 40.4 mm in March, 21.7 mm in April, and less than 1 mm in all remaining months until the wet-season rains returned in mid-December. In total the BBO received 300.7 mm of rain during 2019, less than in any other year from 2013 onwards for which we have comparable data.

The inland wetlands on Roebuck Plains Station usually hold most of the available freshwater habitat for birds in the region, but in 2019 they only held water for the first part of the year. We were unable to access Roebuck Plains between mid-January and mid-May due to management changes on the station, and in combination these things meant relatively few records of freshwater specialist birds. By the time we began accessing the station again in mid-May, Lake Champion was completely dry, and Taylor's Lagoon and Lake Eda diminished – though a shallow wetland adjacent to Eda was very productive for a few visits before it dried. All lakes were completely dry by mid-July. Kidneybean Claypan, closer to the BBO and Roebuck Bay in Roebuck Plains's Jabiru Paddock, never supported large numbers of freshwater species (we suggest perhaps because the low rainfall meant it was too saline) and was also dry by mid-July; however, the site did hold its regular population of Yellow Chats throughout the year.

These dry wetlands changed Broome's landscape for birds and birdwatchers. Remaining small areas of freshwater became important for waterbirds. With dry conditions also attracting other species in to drink, birding was often productive at spring-fed wetlands (Nimalaica and Crescent Lake), Roebuck Plains bores (Upper Loomingum and Tagarana) and dams (Ram-Paddock Well), and the town sewage works. Roebuck Bay is always fantastic for shorebirds, but the drought brought species like Sharp-tailed Sandpipers, Marsh Sandpipers and Red-necked Avocets that might otherwise have been around freshwater, making the site even more central to the region's bird-scape. Despite trying conditions for the region's flora and fauna, a creditable 242 bird species were recorded through the year. This included dry-country species like Ground Cuckoo-shrike and several inland honeyeaters that are rarely recorded in the region and may have arrived in response to more severe drought conditions further afield.

A highlight of the year was large numbers of Black Honeyeaters and especially Pied Honeyeaters passing over in nomadic movements between April and July (often accompanying flocks of Masked Woodswallows, which were also unusually numerous). Though previous years (notably 2012 and 2013) have also seen impressive passage of these species, the numbers recorded in 2019 were exceptional. More information is provided in the species accounts below. Shorebird migration is always spectacular, but 2019 saw surprises in this area as well: enormous flocks of Great Knots leaving in late March, and the fascinating sight of Pied Stilts – usually considered resident – heading north in organised flocks. Again, both are discussed in more detail below.

Methods

The body of this report is an annotated checklist, with a brief summary of records provided for each species. Taxonomy follows the Working List of Australian Birds v3.0 (BirdLife Australia 2019; birdlife.org.au/conservation/science/taxonomy). The underlying records come from the following sources.

Broome Bird Observatory Bird Log

The records in the systematic species list are taken from the BBO's bird log. This is a daily record of all sightings made by BBO wardens, assistant wardens, camp hosts and guests, including occasional reports from other local birders and visitors, and occasionally supplemented by any well-documented records submitted to the online platform eBird.org. We review guest records for accuracy: more unusual claims from less experienced observers require higher standards of evidence. The recording area covers everywhere within a 70 km radius of the Broome Bird Observatory. The regular log covers the period from 1st January until the wardens left for the wet season on 6th December; a few noteworthy records have been added from later in the year.

A large number of records come from birding tours led by BBO wardens and assistant wardens to sites around Roebuck Bay and Roebuck Plains. This has two implications for the data underlying this report: (1) as it is not possible to make thorough surveys of a location when leading a tour and interpreting for guests, most records simply document the presence or absence of a species at a visited location, (2) records are biased towards sites visited frequently on these tours. The numbers of records provided for species below therefore give an indication, rather than a definitive measure, of their relative abundance during the year.

Counts

As noted above, counts are not routinely collected as part of the BBO Bird Log because for most records (collected while tour guiding) accurate counting is beyond our ability. However, we often go birding in our free time, and sometimes at these times are able to record counts; records submitted by local birders also often include counts, and we make counts during regular surveys of the pindan, mangroves and plains for BirdLife Australia's recording platform Birddata (birddata.birdlife.org.au). When possible these counts are included in the log, and noteworthy counts are included in the accounts below.

For shorebirds, comprehensive counts of Roebuck Bay were made twice during 2019 as part of the Monitoring Yellow Sea Migrants in Australia (MYSMA) project. The summer surveys, made in late November, counted total numbers of each species after the return of all breeding migrants and juvenile birds. Counters for these surveys were Danny Rogers, George Swann, Nigel Jackett, Arthur Keates, Jane Taylor and Nyil Khwaja. The results are summarised in the shorebird accounts in this report.

Migration Watch

During March, April and May, Roebuck Bay's migratory shorebirds and terns depart from the bay in flocks, usually in the late afternoon, visible from the beach in front of the observatory. BBO wardens, assistant wardens, interested guests and volunteers count these flocks as they leave during watches between 4-6 PM each afternoon from early March until mid-May (ending after three consecutive sessions with no departures). In 2019 the period spanned 4th March until 20th May. Summaries of these counts are noted for each relevant species under **visible migration** in the accounts below.

Contributors

Many people contributed to our records in 2019, including BBO staff and volunteers, visiting researchers and birders, and dedicated locals who made great contributions to our coverage of the area. We would like to thank the following people for their contributions, acknowledged by initials after noteworthy sightings.

AB – Adrian Boyle, AS – Andrew Silcocks, ASR – Allan and Sandy Rose, BB – Bill Brooks, BG – Bruce Greatwich, BH - Bradley Hacker, BJW – Bob and Jean Wallace, CS – Carol Streeter, CJH – Chris Hassell, CGM – Clare and Grant Morton, CM – Clare Marquis, DA – Daniel Aspey, DR – Danny Rogers, GS – George Swann, JD – James Dickson, JH – Jolie Henricks, JT – Jane Taylor, KH – Kerry Hadley, KM – Keith Morris, LA – Lynne Anderson, LB – Linda Bird, LOB – Larry O’Brien, LR – Liz Rosenberg, MH – Mandy Hall, MP – Merryn Pryor, MT – Mattea Taylor, NJ – Nigel Jackett, NK - Nyil Khwaja, PCH – Peter and Christine Holmes, PN – Peter Newberry, RB - Ruth Brozek, RJW – Richard and Jodi Webber, RM – Ray McLean, VS - Vicki Sandage.

Systematic bird list

STUBBLE QUAIL *Coturnix pectoralis* 1 record

A single record from a dry Duck Lake on 4th September (NJ and GS).

BROWN QUAIL *Synoicus ypsilophorus* 16 records

Recorded irregularly but throughout the year, with most records from Roebuck Plains BBO Paddock and the Common.

MAGPIE GOOSE *Anseranas semipalmata* 6 records

With low rainfall and little flooding on Roebuck Plains, this was a poor year for Magpie Geese in the region. Records were limited to a single bird at the town sewage works on 7th March; reports from station staff of up to 50 on the eastern part of Roebuck Plains on 16th and 17th March, and up to 6 birds at a small dam on the Common on 21st September and 9th and 11th October.

PLUMED WHISTLING-DUCK *Dendrocygna eytoni* 174 records

Commonly recorded at wetland sites. Most records were from the town sewage works, where a large flock was present all year. Birds were also heard passing over the observatory after dark, regularly through March and April and occasionally later in the year.

WANDERING WHISTLING-DUCK *Dendrocygna arcuata* 10 records

Recorded early in the year at lakes Eda and Campion, when we were still able to access those sites, with a high count of 550 at Campion on 9th January (NJ). One record from the Broome North sewage works, with 29 present on 18th January (CJH and KH). Present at Nimalaica during March. Through April, up to 28 birds were at a small dam 6 km east of the Roebuck Roadhouse. No subsequent reliable records.

PINK-EARED DUCK *Malacorhynchus membranaceus* 162 records

Seen regularly and in numbers at freshwater sites throughout the region. High count of 800 at the Broome North sewage works on 8th April (CJH and KH).



Freckled Ducks and two Pink-eared Ducks at a dam on the Derby road (Nyil Khwaja).

FRECKLED DUCK *Stictonetta naevosa*

9 records

One was at the Broome North sewage works on 18th January with 36 at the same location on 20th February (both CJH and KH). Seen at Nimalaica on 6th March (NJ and GS). A flock of 68 was found by CGM at a small dam 6 km east of the Roebuck Roadhouse on 4th April, and birds continued there until 12th April. The final record was 6 birds at the town sewage works on 12th June (NJ).

BLACK SWAN *Cygnus atratus*

45 records

Recorded early in the year at Lake Champion, with high counts of 17 on 5th January (CGM) and 6th January (NJ). Seen in Roebuck Bay on 17th and 18th February, 19th June and 27th November. Present at Lake Eda in May and June, and at Nimalaica until 18th July. On 5th September one was at the town sewage works, and this individual continued to be seen regularly for the rest of the year.

GREEN PYGMY-GOOSE *Nettapus pulchellus*

2 records

Dry conditions meant a poor year for this species, with the only records from Lake Champion on 6th January (NJ) and Nimalaica on 6th March (NJ and GS).

AUSTRALIAN WOOD DUCK *Chenonetta jubata*

11 records

Present at Lake Champion in early January, and at Lake Eda through May. Birds were seen at Ned's Dam (opposite the Nimalaica turnoff) from late May until early August. One record from Nimalaica itself on 7th June.

HARDHEAD *Aythya australis*

177 records

Seen commonly at freshwater sites, with most records from the town sewage works, and 224 at the Broome North sewage works on 18th January (CJH and KH). Seen regularly in Roebuck Bay in February, March and April, with the final record from the bay on 16th May.

GARGANEY *Spatula querquedula*

3 records

Three continuing birds at Lake Champion on 3rd January (GS), 5th January (CGM) and 9th January (NJ), originally found by NJ in November 2018.

PACIFIC BLACK DUCK *Anas superciliosa*

148 records

Seen commonly at most freshwater sites, though in smaller numbers than the other regular ducks. High count of 44 at the Broome North sewage works on 18th January. Five records from Roebuck Bay across February, April and May.

GREY TEAL *Anas gracilis***240 records**

Seen regularly and in numbers at freshwater sites, with 2,800 at the Broome North sewage works on 8th April (CJH and KH). Seen regularly in Roebuck Bay until mid-June, with a further two records in July, two in August and one on 1st September.

CHESTNUT TEAL *Anas castanea***5 records**

A single male in eclipse plumage was found by NJ at the town sewage works on 16th September and continued there until 15th October.

AUSTRALASIAN GREBE *Tachybaptus novaehollandiae***112 records**

Seen commonly in freshwater habitats throughout the year, with most records from the town sewage works.

HOARY-HEADED GREBE *Poliiocephalus poliocephalus***25 records**

Seen in freshwater habitats through most of the year, though much less common than the previous species. Records came from a small dam 6 km east of the Roebuck Roadhouse (4th-12th April), the town sewage works (8th April, regularly from 25th May until 22nd August, and 22nd October) and Ram-Paddock Well (10th-12th August and 24th October).

FLOCK BRONZEWING *Phaps histrionica***2 records**

A poor year for the species, with a juvenile or female bird seen at the town sewage works on 22nd June (AB) and a single flushed along the Great Northern Highway on 13th October (KM) the only records.

CRESTED PIGEON *Ocyphaps lophotes***481 records**

Common in pindan and eucalypt woodland, particularly around water sources. Recorded regularly around the BBO grounds.

DIAMOND DOVE *Geopelia cuneata***237 records**

A few records at the start of the year, but only two between 16th January and 7th April. After this the species was commonly recorded in and around pindan woodland, including at the BBO.

PEACEFUL DOVE *Geopelia placida***462 records**

Very common in pindan and eucalypt woodland, particularly around water sources. Recorded daily around the BBO grounds.

BAR-SHOULDERED DOVE *Geopelia humeralis***461 records**

Very common in pindan, eucalypt woodland and mangroves, particularly around water sources. Recorded daily around the BBO grounds.

BROWN-CAPPED EMERALD-DOVE *Chalcophaps longirostris***9 records**

An individual found by LR in a garden in Twelve Mile on 4th May appears to be the first genuine record for the region. It was seen subsequently on 9th May (GS), 10th May (KH and LR), all dates 12th-15th May, 19th May and 26th May (all LR). Conversations between GS and Twelve Mile Bird Park staff on 5th May and 17th November confirmed that no birds of this species went missing from their collection, meaning this was most likely a vagrant from the population further east in the Kimberley.

ROSE-CROWNED FRUIT-DOVE *Ptilinopus regina***1 record**

Four were seen in a garden in Coconut Wells on 3rd March (CM).



Brown-capped Emerald-Dove in Twelve Mile: a first for the Broome region (George Swann).

TAWNY FROGMOUTH *Podargus strigoides*

21 records

Seen in a variety of locations throughout the year, including sightings around the BBO grounds on 23rd February, 30th June, 19th and 28th August, and 6th September.

SPOTTED NIGHTJAR *Eurostopodus argus*

1 record

One heard in Broome on 20th June (KM).

AUSTRALIAN OWLET-NIGHTJAR *Aegotheles cristatus*

3 records

Recorded along Crab Creek Road on 3rd May (CGM), and at the BBO on 8th May (JT) and 2nd November (AB).

FORK-TAILED SWIFT *Apus pacificus*

41 records

Regularly recorded around the BBO and over Roebuck Bay early in the year, with the last record before northward migration on 29th April. The first returning bird was seen over Crab Creek Road on 10th October, and the species was recorded regularly for the rest of the year, in a variety of locations. High count of 88 birds on the plains behind the BBO on 16th January (NJ).

HOUSE SWIFT *Apus nipalensis*

1 record

A single bird seen and photographed at Entrance Point on 25th January (NJ, BG and GS), associated with the passing of Tropical Cyclone Riley. Accepted by BARC as the 14th record for Australia (case 1052). Five dark *Aerodramus* swiftlets that could not be identified to species level were also present.

PHEASANT COUCAL *Centropus phasianus*

71 records

Recorded most days until the end of March. After this records dropped off sharply, likely because birds stopped calling (1-3 records each month from April until November). Most common in pindan and gardens; occasionally seen in mangroves.

CHANNEL-BILLED CUCKOO *Scythrops novaehollandiae*

37 records

Recorded regularly around pindan habitats during the summer, with the last record before northward migration on 5th April. The first returning bird was seen on 2nd October in Broome (NJ).



Juvenile Black-eared Cuckoo at the BBO (Mattea Taylor).

HORSFIELD'S BRONZE-CUCKOO *Chalcites basalis*

78 records

Regularly recorded in a variety of habitats throughout the year, particularly in the early months when birds were often singing around the BBO grounds.

BLACK-EARED CUCKOO *Chalcites osculans*

15 records

Recorded occasionally from a variety of locations through most of the year, though with no records between 30th July and 7th November. A juvenile was found near the adventure toilets on 8th November (MT) and continued to be seen there until 21st November.

LITTLE BRONZE-CUCKOO *Chalcites minutillus*

56 records

Records were quite sparse during the first half of the year and the species only became regular from 1st September, after which it was commonly recorded around the BBO, in the Crab Creek mangroves and in Broome. A juvenile was at the BBO on 4th November.

BRUSH CUCKOO *Cacomantis variolosus*

29 records

Heard calling at the BBO and around Roebuck Plains Station on most days until 23rd February. The species was then scarce, with one record on 18th July at Nimalaica (MP) until somewhat regular records resumed on 19th September.

PALLID CUCKOO *Heteroscenes pallidus*

21 records

Recorded occasionally from a variety of locations through most of the year, though with no records between 1st March and 2nd June. A juvenile was at the BBO on 2nd February (NK).

ORIENTAL CUCKOO *Cuculus saturatus*

6 records

An individual found by NK was seen five times around the BBO Viewing Platform between 31st January and 10th February. The only other record was one in Broome on 3rd December (MH).

BUFF-BANDED RAIL *Hypotaenidia philippensis*

1 record

Two seen at Tagarana Bore on 12th January (NJ).

BAILLON'S CRAKE *Zapornia pusilla*

2 records

One seen at the BRAC ovals on 20th January (CGM) and one flushed from samphire at Nimalaica on 6th March (NJ and GS).



Black-tailed Native-hen around Lake Eda (Nyil Khwaja).

WHITE-BROWED CRAKE *Amaurornis cinerea*

1 record

An adult seen feeding two chicks at Nimalaica on 6th March was a rare breeding record for the region (NJ and GS).

PURPLE SWAMPHEN *Porphyrio porphyrio*

3 records

Unusually, two of the three sightings were of a lone bird (likely the same individual) on the edge of mangroves between One Tree and Little Crab Creek in Roebuck Bay, during monthly mangrove surveys on 27th February (NK, JH and MP) and 27th March (JH and MP). The only other record was from Nimalaica on 29th March (NJ and NK).

BLACK-TAILED NATIVE-HEN *Tribonyx ventralis*

1 record

One individual seen on the edge of a shallow wetland adjoining Lake Eda, when we resumed visits there on 15th May (NK and JT).

EURASIAN COOT *Fulica atra*

148 records

Ever-present at the town sewage works, and 331 were at the Broome North sewage works on 18th January (CJH and KH). The only other regular sites for the species were Nimalaica and Upper Loomingum Bore, with no other deep fresh water available for most of the year.

BROLGA *Grus rubicunda*

255 records

Four records in January, one in February and one in March, after which the species was commonly recorded in open habitats and particularly around fresh water. The greatest concentrations were seen around Lake Eda in May, with at least 300 present on each visit, but these dispersed once the wetland dried up in June. From early August until late October a flock was often present at the Broome end of the Common, providing excellent views from the Roebuck Estate roundabout and prompting a newspaper article in the *Broome Advertiser* (with no little help from MT). The peak count there was 68 birds on 24th September.

AUSTRALIAN BUSTARD *Ardeotis australis*

110 records

Most commonly recorded on Roebuck Plains behind the BBO, with the largest numbers in the late wet season and early dry: at least 10 were in the BBO Paddock during a Bush and Plains Tour on 30th

April. Also seen occasionally at other sites throughout the region. On 29th April, Migration Watch participants enjoyed the unusual sight of one walking right past along the shoreline of the BBO Beach, before disappearing into mangroves to the east.

WILSON'S STORM-PETREL *Oceanites oceanicus* 3 records

The paucity of records of this species and absence of other pelagic birds is probably attributable to low search effort offshore. Seen from Entrance Point on 10th June (NJ), a Broome Whale Watch boat offshore Cable Beach on 22nd July (JH, JT, MP and NK) and a fishing charter offshore Cable Beach on 7th August (RM).

BLACK-NECKED STORK *Ephippiorhynchus asiaticus* 210 records

Seen regularly in Roebuck Bay, on the mudflats at low tide and the northern beaches at high tide, and in association with shallow freshwater at Lake Eda, Nimalaica and Tagarana Bore.

YELLOW-BILLED SPOONBILL *Platalea flavipes* 3 records

Once visits to Lake Eda resumed, up to six Yellow-billed Spoonbills were seen feeding in the adjacent shallow wetland on 15th, 19th and 21st May. However, this wetland dried shortly afterwards and there were no further records for the year.

ROYAL SPOONBILL *Platalea regia* 227 records

Recorded regularly from Roebuck Bay, most commonly seen feeding around Crab Creek outside the high tide period. A flock of up to 50 was often seen loafing at the town sewage works, throughout the year.

STRAW-NECKED IBIS *Threskiornis spinicollis* 320 records

Very commonly recorded at freshwater sites around the region and irrigated lawns in Broome.

AUSTRALIAN WHITE IBIS *Threskiornis moluccus* 752 records

Seen almost every day in Broome, Roebuck Bay and freshwater sites. Not only that, but 2019 became the year of the ibis around the BBO grounds. Two were regular around the Shadehouse early in the year and their numbers steadily grew in subsequent months, peaking around 100 at the bird baths in August.

GLOSSY IBIS *Plegadis falcinellus* 6 records

Recorded from Lake Champion on 6th January, the shallow wetland adjacent to Lake Eda throughout May, and at Nimalaica on 6th March and 7th June. There were no records during the second half of the year as many freshwater habitats dried up.

NANKEEN NIGHT-HERON *Nycticorax caledonicus* 13 records

Most records were of birds flushed from roost sites, including seven records from around the BBO grounds, and one from Crab Creek Road, between January and April. Remaining records were from Roebuck Bay (21st February, 11th March, 12th June and 19th July) and Barred Creek (20th September).

STRIATED HERON *Butorides striata* 230 records

Commonly seen in the Crab Creek mangroves and along Roebuck Bay's northern shores.

CATTLE EGRET *Bubulcus ibis* 1 record

Seven seen on the Common on 23rd September (KM).

WHITE-NECKED HERON *Ardea pacifica***10 records**

A few records from scattered freshwater sites and flying over roads. Two were roosting on the northern edge of BBO paddock on 6th June (MP). The last of the year was seen at Ram-Paddock Well on 23rd August (NK).

GREAT EGRET *Ardea alba***344 records**

Very commonly seen in Roebuck Bay throughout the year, and regularly seen at freshwater sites.

PLUMED EGRET *Ardea plumifera***7 records**

Another species that fared poorly in the dry conditions. Seen at Nimalaica and the BRAC ovals on several dates in March. One seen at Dampier Creek opposite the airport on 6th June (NK) was the last reliable report of the year.

WHITE-FACED HERON *Egretta novaehollandiae***333 records**

Common in Roebuck Bay and regularly seen around all freshwater sites. One of few waterbird species to use Kidneybean Claypan consistently until it dried up in June.

LITTLE EGRET *Egretta garzetta***287 records**

Common in Roebuck Bay, often gathering in numbers around Little Crab Creek as mullet were pushed in by the incoming tide. Mostly absent from freshwater sites in the region, although seen at Crescent Lake on 10th September and 12th October.

EASTERN REEF EGRET *Egretta sacra***238 records**

Common along Roebuck Bay's northern shores and at other coastal sites. Most, particularly on the northern shores, were of the dark morph (though light-morph birds are likely under-recorded due to closer similarity with egrets).

AUSTRALIAN PELICAN *Pelecanus conspicillatus***437 records**

Commonly recorded in Roebuck Bay (high count of 250 on 24th June) and at the town sewage works.

LESSER FRIGATEBIRD *Fregata ariel***57 records**

Seen regularly from the northern shores of Roebuck Bay and other coastal sites, with lone birds, twos and threes occasionally thermalling over the BBO grounds. On 10th March, 25 were seen dipping into the town sewage works to drink (NJ). The highest count was 32 birds, seen close to shore from the BBO beach during Migration Watch on 24th March, around the time Cyclone Veronica was passing offshore.

BROWN BOOBY *Sula leucogaster***130 records**

Regularly seen all year from Entrance Point and west coast sites. Seen from Roebuck Bay's northern shores almost every day from 30th May until 14th September, with occasional records outside this period.

LITTLE PIED CORMORANT *Microcarbo melanoleucos***9 records**

Two seen at Lake Champion on 9th January (NJ). Records were occasional through the rest of the year, with little freshwater habitat available. At least one bird probably stayed around Nimalaica for much of the first half of the year (seen on 6th March and 7th June, during a period in which the site was rarely visited). One was at the town sewage works on 30th June. Other records were from coastal sites: two from Entrance Point, one from Coconut Wells, two from Barred Creek and one from Gantheaume Point.

LITTLE BLACK CORMORANT *Phalacrocorax sulcirostris* 69 records

A group was regularly seen on the Crab Creek mudflats from the BBO Beach during Migration Watch sessions in March, April and May, and the species continued to be seen there regularly until late July. There were few records after this: from Entrance Point on 20th August; Barred Creek on 20th and 21st September; Roebuck Bay's northern shores on 25th October, and Bush Point on 26th November.

GREAT PIED CORMORANT *Phalacrocorax varius* 220 records

Seen frequently in Roebuck Bay throughout the year, and occasionally from other coastal sites. There were no records from any freshwater sites.

AUSTRALASIAN DARTER *Anhinga novaehollandiae* 56 records

Regular at Entrance Point and sometimes seen on the Crab Creek mudflats and other sites along Roebuck Bay's northern shores. Through October, records in the bay became more frequent and up to four were commonly seen at Eagle's Roost. Two records from Nimalaica in March were the only sightings from freshwater sites.

BUSH STONE-CURLEW *Burhinus grallarius* 7 records

Heard around the observatory at night on 9th and 10th June. The remaining records were on the all-weather section of Crab Creek Road, close to the intersection with the Broome Highway. One was flushed from the road in the early morning of 3rd May. Other records were of birds resting under mango trees in the industrial area immediately south-east of the intersection (23rd February, 28th March, 4th April and 20th June).

BEACH STONE-CURLEW *Esacus magnirostris* 72 records

One was present on Roebuck Bay's northern shores from 12th January until 28th April and seen most days during this time, often from the BBO Viewing Platform or on the beach during Migration Watch. Regular records resumed in the bay from 11th-28th June, one was seen on 8th August, it was regular again from 15th September until 29th October, and seen on each of the first three days of December. The only record of more than one individual in the bay was two birds on 27th October. Birds were also seen on most visits to Barred Creek, sometimes in a pair, and one was at Gantheaume Point on 19th October (AB and LB).



A Beach Stone-curlew was a regular feature around the BBO Viewing Platform during the first part of the year (Nyil Khwaja).

AUSTRALIAN PIED OYSTERCATCHER *Haematopus longirostris* 273 records

Recorded most days in Roebuck Bay. During summer MYSMA surveys, 336 were counted at Bush Point (26th November) and 42 on the northern shores (27th November). Also recorded from other coastal sites throughout the region.

SOOTY OYSTERCATCHER *Haematopus fuliginosus* 68 records

Regularly recorded in small numbers from the eastern section of Roebuck Bay's northern shores, with 13 counted there during the summer MYSMA survey (27th November). Also recorded occasionally from other rocky shorelines at Entrance Point, Gantheaume Point and Quondong Point.

RED-NECKED AVOCET *Recurvirostra novaehollandiae* 153 records

Small numbers were seen on Roebuck Bay's mudflats in the early part of the year. From early May, larger numbers were present roosting at high tide on the northern shores (usually at Boiler Point), continuing for the rest of the year, with 50 counted there during the summer MYSMA survey (27th November). Scarcely recorded elsewhere, with little shallow fresh water available, but was present around Lake Eda in May, at Nimalaica on 7th June, at Crescent Lake on 19th August and 12th October, and at Ram-Paddock Well in September and October.

PIED STILT *Himantopus leucocephalus* 419 records

Commonly recorded in Roebuck Bay and freshwater sites throughout the region. Numbers at freshwater wetlands dwindled as they dried up. Probably related to this, the summer MYSMA count on the northern shores was 699 (27th November), the highest recorded since 2012.

Visible migration. One of the stories of 2019. Australian populations of this species are generally considered partially nomadic, but restricted to this country. However, in 2019 Pied Stilts were seen behaving like Roebuck Bay's international migrants: showing classic signs of zugunruhe and taking off in vocal and organised formations. On four occasions these flocks were witnessed to rise high and disappear from sight to the north in the manner of Asian-breeding shorebirds (55 birds on 15th January, 31 on 17th January, 39 on 2nd April and 52 on 26th April). We suspect more flocks on other dates did the same, as these were seen in zugunruhe during Migration Watch with birds then heard over the BBO after dark. With records emerging of Broome-flagged birds seen in Indonesia, this raises the possibility of international movement on a larger scale than occasional vagrancy. These northward movements may have been prompted by 2019's unusually dry conditions, with little suitable breeding habitat in the region.

GREY PLOVER *Pluvialis squatarola* 148 records

Recorded in Roebuck Bay throughout the year, though less regular in winter when breeding migrants were elsewhere. During MYSMA summer counts, 347 were at Bush Point (26th November) and 287 on the northern shores (27th November).

Visible migration. A total of 75 seen departing northwards, often in mixed flocks with Bar-tailed Godwits, Great Knots and/or Greater Sand Plovers. Almost all (69) left in the 3 days from 31st March until 2nd April, with a further 3 on 4th April and 3 late departures on 11th May.

PACIFIC GOLDEN PLOVER *Pluvialis fulva* 151 records

Regular in Roebuck Bay in small numbers during the summer months, and occasionally at other sites such as the town sewage works and Crescent Lake. Recorded infrequently after northward migration (seven records between 19th May and 25th August), with regular sightings resuming from 26th August. Only 24 were counted on the northern shores during summer MYSMA surveys (27th November), with 1 at Bush Point (26th November), though at least 60 were on Wader Beach on 19th September, perhaps indicating that some birds were on passage heading further south.

Visible migration. A flock of 20 seen heading north over BBO Beach on 15th April, and another 16 did likewise on 20th April.

LITTLE RINGED PLOVER *Charadrius dubius*

6 records

All records from Crescent Lake, with the first in non-breeding plumage found by GS on 10th September, continuing for the next two days and seen again on 19th September. A second bird in worn breeding plumage was seen on 27th September (JT and MP), with two birds finally seen together on 1st December (GS).

RED-CAPPED PLOVER *Charadrius ruficapillus*

278 records

Common in Roebuck Bay throughout the year and recorded from other coastal and freshwater sites. Present around Kidneybean Claypan in late May and early June as the wetland was drying out. During MYSMA summer counts 1,656 were at Bush Point (26th November), with a further 509 on the northern shores (27th November).

LESSER SAND PLOVER *Charadrius mongolus*

129 records

Present in Roebuck Bay throughout the year in relatively small numbers, often roosting in large flocks of Greater Sand Plovers at high tide, but foraging separately close to the observatory as the tide went out. During MYSMA summer counts 51 were present on the northern shores (27th November) and 28 at Bush Point (26th November).

GREATER SAND PLOVER *Charadrius leschenaultii*

225 records

Regular in Roebuck Bay throughout the year, in large numbers: during MYSMA summer counts 10,718 were at Bush Point (26th November) and a further 2,781 along the northern shores (27th November).

Visible migration. In total 385 were counted heading north between 5th March and 1st April, with the largest flock 106 birds on 18th March, and most flocks between 30 and 65 birds.



Two Little Ringed Plovers at Crescent Lake in September, one in nonbreeding plumage (Nyil Khwaja, left) and one in breeding plumage (Jane Taylor, right).

ORIENTAL PLOVER *Charadrius veredus***40 records**

Only one record before northward migration, on the western part of Roebuck Plains on 6th January (NJ). The first returning birds were seen on the Common on 28th August (GS), after which they were regular in grassland habitats and cooling off on the shores of Roebuck Bay, including 1,641 at Bush Point on 26th November.

BLACK-FRONTED DOTTEREL *Euseyornis melanops***147 records**

Regular at the town sewage works throughout the year, and often at other freshwater sites such as Taylor's Lagoon and Ram-Paddock Well, remaining longer than most other species as these wetlands dried out.

MASKED LAPWING *Vanellus miles***114 records**

Regular around Broome's irrigated lawns and ovals, and at the town sewage works, with smaller numbers at other freshwater sites.

RED-KNEED DOTTEREL *Erythrogonys cinctus***21 records**

Another species that became somewhat difficult in the dry conditions, but regular at Nimalaica and Crescent Lake throughout the year. Other records were from lakes Eda and Campion while we were able to access those sites in January, and a small dam 6 km east of the Roebuck Roadhouse in early April.

COMB-CRESTED JACANA *Irediparra gallinacea***1 record**

Two birds seen at Lake Campion on 9th January (NJ).

WHIMBREL *Numenius phaeopus***326 records**

Commonly recorded in Roebuck Bay all year. One record from Crescent Lake on 12th October (MP). The first juvenile bird was seen on 13th September (NK). During the MYSMA summer counts, 762 were on the northern shores (27th November) with 344 at Bush Point (26th November). Totals counted on northward migration far exceeded these counts (see below), suggesting either that many were missed on the MYSMA counts or that many migrating birds were on passage from further south.

Visible migration. In total 2,343 were counted migrating north, mostly between 15th and 24th April, with 8 on 28th April and 60 on 30th April. Often in large, vocal flocks, with the largest flock 368 birds recorded on 22nd April.

LITTLE CURLEW *Numenius minutus***44 records**

Seen in Roebuck Bay on a few occasions in January. Once it had rained substantially, all records until northward migration came from the Great Northern Highway section of Roebuck Plains; the last of these was on 17th April. Three likely overwintering birds were at Lake Eda on 15th May (NK and JT), with two still there on 19th May (NK and MP) and 21st May (NK). There were no further records until the first returning bird landed to field at long on during a cricket match at the BRAC ovals on 14th September (NK and NJ). After this they were regular at grassland sites such as the Common and the Broome North irrigated crop field on Crab Creek Road, as well as nearby wetlands, including birds cooling off on the northern shores of the bay. The highest count of the year was 552 on the Broome North irrigated crop on 13th October (NJ).

EURASIAN CURLEW *Numenius arquata***2 records**

One seen from One Tree on the MYSMA survey of 27th November, in flight showing a clear white rump and back in contrast to two accompanying Eastern Curlews (DR and NK). Went to roost in the Crab Creek mangroves around 2h15 before high tide. Presumably the same individual was also seen

the following day exhibiting similar behaviour (NK). This may be the same individual that has been seen on the northern shores and at Bush Point in previous years.

FAR EASTERN CURLEW *Numenius madagascariensis* 263 records

Commonly recorded in Roebuck Bay all year, though in smaller numbers during the winter months. One was at Crescent Lake on 12th October (MP). During the MYSMA summer counts, 547 were at Bush Point on 26th November, with 341 on the northern shores the following day.

Visible migration. In total 222 were counted migrating north; this underrepresents the true number recorded, as many that could not be counted were heard departing over the BBO after dark. Always one of the earliest species, departures in 2019 occurred between 7th March and 9th April.

BAR-TAILED GODWIT *Limosa lapponica* 258 records

Common in numbers all year in Roebuck Bay. During summer MYSMA counts, 20,821 were at Bush Point on 26th November, with a further 2,117 on the northern shores the following day.

Visible migration. A total of 2,635 counted migrating north. All were between 31st March and 20th April except for 11 early birds on 18th March. Often in large flocks (maximum flock size 300 birds on 3rd and 12th April). Unusually, three flocks departed over the BBO between 1200 and 1300 on 12th April (other departures coming in the normal shorebird migration window between 1600 and dusk).

BLACK-TAILED GODWIT *Limosa limosa* 200 records

Regularly seen on Roebuck Bay's northern shores all year, though occasionally notable by their absence from large mixed wader flocks. A lone individual probably on passage was seen on a windy day at the BRAC ovals on 24th September (BJW), and three were at the town sewage works on 5th December (NK). MYSMA summer counts saw a record 3,008 at Bush Point on 26th November (previous high count from that site just 524 in December 2017). There were only 184 on the northern shores the following day. On a Shorebird Tour on 28th November, NK noted large flocks totalling at least 1,000 birds on the northern shores. Overall these records suggest that birds were mobile between northern and southern roost sites.

Visible migration. A total of 1,415 counted migrating north; flocks departed every day between 13th and 22nd April, with none outside this period.

RUDDY TURNSTONE *Arenaria interpres* 224 records

Commonly recorded in Roebuck Bay all year and occasionally at other coastal and freshwater sites (one record from the town sewage works and three from Crescent Lake). The first juvenile was seen on the northern shores on 5th September (CJH). During the MYSMA summer surveys, 427 were counted at Bush Point on 26th November and 322 on the northern shores the following day.

GREAT KNOT *Calidris tenuirostris* 237 records

Common in numbers all year in Roebuck Bay. During the summer MYSMA counts, 17,305 were at Bush Point on 26th November and a further 5,288 on the northern shores the following day.

Visible migration. An early 11 birds departed over the BBO Beach on 20th March. Ten days later on 30th March, we witnessed an extraordinary 5,430 individuals pass high overhead in wave after wave of vocal formations. This was more than had been counted in the four previous years of Migration Watch combined! On 31st March, Public Migration Watch saw a further 1,756 pass over. These huge numbers seem likely to be associated with the recent offshore passing of Cyclone Veronica, during which there was very little migration activity. It seems that Great Knots from around the bay, as well as possibly some that had begun their journeys further south, were waiting out the weather system, and this backlog almost all set off during good conditions on the 30th and 31st. Visible Great Knot

migration was over two days later, with 135 on 1st April and 100 on 2nd April the last recorded departures of the season. The sum total of birds counted on northward migration was 7,432.

RED KNOT *Calidris canutus*

223 records

Commonly recorded in Roebuck Bay all year. During the summer MYSMA counts, 3,700 were at Bush Point on 26th November, with a further 809 on the northern shores the following day; this was far exceeded by a count of 6,130 on Wader Beach on 27th April (CJH), which may have included birds on passage from further south.

Visible migration. A total of 1,695 were counted heading north between 9th April and 14th May in medium to large-sized flocks (largest flock 250 birds on 17th April).

BROAD-BILLED SANDPIPER *Calidris falcinellus*

41 records

Seen regularly on Roebuck Bay's northern shores during the summer months, but the few overwintering birds could be difficult to find, with occasional records in June and July and none in August. The first juvenile was seen in the bay on 27th September (CJH). During the MYSMA summer counts, 91 were at Bush Point on 26th November, with 44 on the northern shores the following day.

SHARP-TAILED SANDPIPER *Calidris acuminata*

155 records

Regular in Roebuck Bay all year, probably due to dry conditions elsewhere: good numbers of overwintering birds were an unexpected addition to mixed roosts of small shorebirds. Also seen at freshwater sites throughout the region. During the MYSMA summer counts 152 were on the bay's northern shores (27th November), with 59 present at Bush Point (26th November).

CURLEW SANDPIPER *Calidris ferruginea*

184 records

Regularly seen in Roebuck Bay all year, with few records from freshwater sites (two records from Lake Eda and three from Nimalaica, all in the first half of the year). The first two juveniles were seen on the northern shores on 28th August (CJH). During the MYSMA summer counts 419 were on the bay's northern shores (27th November), with 303 present at Bush Point (26th November).

Visible migration. Three departing flocks noted over the BBO Beach: 77 birds on 2nd April, 46 on 11th April and 6 on 14th April.

LONG-TOED STINT *Calidris subminuta*

14 records

Four records from assorted freshwater sites prior to northward migration, with the last at Lake Eda on 15th May (JT and NK). The first returning bird was at Nimalaica on 18th August (GS). Following this usually present in small numbers at Crescent Lake, but otherwise scarce: two at Ram-Paddock Well on 6th October (NK and MP) and 18th October (NK, JT and MT), and one record from a saltwater pool on Roebuck Plains on 15th November (GS).

RED-NECKED STINT *Calidris ruficollis*

226 records

Common in Roebuck Bay throughout the year, and occasionally seen at various freshwater sites. The first juvenile was seen on the northern shores on 15th September (CJH). During the MYSMA summer counts, 3,724 were at Bush Point on 26th November, with a further 2,584 on the northern shores the following day.

Visible migration. Three departing flocks noted over the BBO Beach: 20 birds on 18th March, and 24 followed by a further 10 on 22nd April.

SANDERLING *Calidris alba*

15 records

Seen occasionally on various beaches on Roebuck Bay's northern shores, throughout the year. There were few visits to its usually-reliable west coast sites, but one was on Cable Beach on 26th March

(MP), one at Coconut Wells on 29th March (NJ and NK) and an overwintering (or early returning) bird at James Price Point on 21st July (NJ). The first juvenile was seen on 27th September on the northern shores (CJH). During the MYSMA summer counts, 1,669 were at Bush Point on 26th November, with 1 on the northern shores the following day.

LITTLE STINT *Calidris minuta*

4 records

Probably present in tiny numbers throughout summer months, but under-recorded due to close similarity with Red-necked Stint. Three records of single birds found by NJ in Roebuck Bay: one worn juvenile at Tattler Rocks on 13th January, one on Wader Beach on 12th September, and one bird missing a foot seen during MYSMA summer counts at Bush Point on 26th November. One further record from Crescent Lake on 28th September (GS).

PECTORAL SANDPIPER *Calidris melanotos*

2 records

One at the Broome North sewage works on 8th April (CJH and KH), and one at Crescent Lake on 28th September (GS).

ASIAN DOWITCHER *Limnodromus semipalmatus*

15 records

A scarce 14 records from Roebuck Bay's northern shores this year, though this did include 3 winter sightings. The first juvenile was seen on 21st September (CJH). During the MYSMA summer counts, 158 were at Bush Point on 26th November, with none on the northern shores the following day.

Visible migration. One flock of 40 birds seen departing over BBO Beach on 21st April.

SWINHOE'S SNIPE *Gallinago megala*

1 record

One confirmed record of an individual with its tail photographed at the Broome North sewage works on 18th January (NJ). One further record of a *Gallinago* snipe that could not be identified to species level at the town sewage works on 30th March (NJ).

TEREK SANDPIPER *Xenus cinereus*

227 records

Common in Roebuck Bay throughout the year. During the summer MYSMA survey, 1,459 were on the northern shores on 27th November, the highest summer count there since 2003. A further 356 were at Bush Point on 26th November.

Visible migration. Three flocks noted over the BBO Beach: 50 birds on 17th April, a heard-only flock after dark on 19th April (probably 52 birds seen in zugunruhe that evening) and 33 on 27th April.



Little Stint at Crescent Lake (George Swann).

COMMON SANDPIPER *Actitis hypoleucos***271 records**

Regular in small numbers in Roebuck Bay, often seen foraging among rocks at high tide and along Little Crab Creek at low tide. Also at some freshwater sites, particularly the town sewage works. Before northward migration, records continued up until 29th May, and the first returning bird was noted on 15th July at the sewage works. During the MYSMA summer counts 13 were seen on the bay's northern shores (27th November) along with 1 at Bush Point (26th November).

GREY-TAILED TATTLER *Tringa brevipes***243 records**

Common in Roebuck Bay throughout the year. During the summer MYSMA survey, 1,973 were counted on the northern shores (27th November), with 353 at Bush Point (26th November).

Visible migration. A total of 730 counted heading north over the BBO Beach from 13th-26th April.

COMMON GREENSHANK *Tringa nebularia***339 records**

Regular in Roebuck Bay and at many freshwater sites throughout the year. During the MYSMA summer counts 563 were on the northern shores (27th November), with 25 seen at Bush Point (26th November). Totals counted on northward migration exceeded these counts (see below), suggesting either that some were missed on the MYSMA counts or that some migrating birds were on passage from further south.

Visible migration. A total of 742 seen departing occasionally in small to medium-sized flocks through most of the shorebird migration period, from 26th March until 17th May.

COMMON REDSHANK *Tringa totanus***65 records**

Recorded regularly in Roebuck Bay. At least one individual was present throughout the dry season, often roosting in mixed flocks of smaller waders at high tide. One was at Greenshank Corner during summer MYSMA counts on 27th November, but more were present at other times, including four seen at Fall Point on 5th October (KM).



Four Common Redshanks and a Lesser Crested Tern on Fall Point (Keith Morris).

WOOD SANDPIPER *Tringa glareola***39 records**

Recorded from a number of freshwater sites prior to northward migration, with the last seen on a flooded part of Roebuck Plains along the Great Northern Highway on 12th April. The first returning bird was at Nimalaica on 5th August (GS), after which the species was regular in freshwater habitat.

MARSH SANDPIPER *Tringa stagnatilis***75 records**

Regular in Roebuck Bay for much of the year with conditions dry inland; also at scattered freshwater sites. Overwintering birds were often seen roosting in the bay during the dry season as well as at Lake Eda, Nimalaica and Kidneybean Claypan. Nine were at Greenshank Corner during the summer MYSMA count on 27th November.

RED-CHESTED BUTTON-QUAIL *Turnix pyrothorax***1 record**

A poor year for buttonquail, but one of this species was flushed along a fenceline north of One Tree on 14th March (JT).

AUSTRALIAN PRATINCOLE *Stiltia isabella***37 records**

Present at scattered sites around Roebuck Plains Station through most of the year, although with no records during February or March. A high count of approximately 200 near Lake Eda on 21st May (NK).

ORIENTAL PRATINCOLE *Glareola maldivarum***46 records**

Present in large numbers around much of Roebuck Plains early in the year, with a high count of 12,400 birds east of the Great Northern Highway on 3rd January (GS). The last record before northward migration was along the Great Northern Highway on 12th April. One likely overwintering bird was among 200 Australian Pratincoles on a shallow wetland near Lake Eda on 21st May (NK). The first returning bird was seen at Crescent Lake on 1st December (LB and GS).

SILVER GULL *Chroicocephalus novaehollandiae***512 records**

Commonly recorded year-round in Roebuck Bay and around Broome.

BRIDLED TERN *Onychoprion anaethetus***1 record**

Two seen from Entrance Point on 22nd March (AB).

LITTLE TERN *Sternula albifrons***140 records**

Regularly recorded in the bay for most of the year, though scarce between 6th June and 18th September. Three pairs were found nesting at Willie Creek on 9th December (GS).

COMMON GULL-BILLED TERN *Gelochelidon nilotica***210 records**

Commonly recorded in Roebuck Bay throughout the year.

Visible migration. A total of 465 birds seen departing over the BBO Beach usually in small, loose flocks, through most of the migration period, with the first leaving on 13th March and the latest on 9th May.

AUSTRALIAN GULL-BILLED TERN *Gelochelidon macrotarsa***214 records**

Regular in Roebuck Bay throughout the year. Also often seen early in the year on Roebuck Plains behind the BBO, foraging on the grassland or roosting around Kidneybean Claypan and other ephemeral pools before they dried out.

CASPIAN TERN *Hydroprogne caspia***283 records**

Commonly recorded in Roebuck Bay and at other coastal sites and near-coastal wetlands.

WHISKERED TERN *Chlidonias hybrida***289 records**

Common in Roebuck Bay and at freshwater wetlands throughout the year, and also regularly seen hawking over Roebuck Plains in the early part of the year.

Visible migration. One flock of 13 seen departing over BBO Beach on 2nd April, with a single bird in a departing flock of 51 Common Gull-billed Terns seen on 21st April.

WHITE-WINGED BLACK TERN *Chlidonias leucopterus* 46 records

Seen regularly in Roebuck Bay, at the town sewage works and on Roebuck Plains up until 25th April, after which the species was mostly absent following northward migration save for a single possibly overwintering bird seen in the bay on 14th May. The first returning bird was at Gantheaume Point on 16th October (AB), after which there were five further records from the bay and sewage works.

Visible migration. A loose flock of seven birds seen heading north over the BBO Beach on 11th April.

ROSEATE TERN *Sterna dougallii* 2 records

Present during MYSMA summer counts at Bush Point on 26th November. At least 1,500 birds were roosting at Willie Creek on 9th December (GS). Both of these sites were rarely visited and probably hosted the species throughout the summer.

COMMON TERN *Sterna hirundo* 10 records

Seen from Entrance Point on 22nd March (AB). An overwintering individual was on Roebuck Bay's northern shores on 19th June and 1st July (NK). The next record was from Entrance Point on 24th September, after which sightings came from a range of coastal sites.

LESSER CRESTED TERN *Thalasseus bengalensis* 179 records

The first record of the year was on 13th February on Roebuck Bay's northern shores, after which it was commonly recorded in the bay for the remainder of the year.

GREATER CRESTED TERN *Thalasseus bergii* 166 records

Regularly recorded in Roebuck Bay, Entrance Point and west coast sites.

BARN OWL *Tyto alba* 2 records

One seen along the Cape Leveque Road south of the Coconut Wells turnoff on 9th December, and again at the same location on 15th December (both GS).

BARKING OWL *Ninox connivens* 12 records

Seen occasionally throughout the year. All records came from around the town of Broome, where the species roosts in larger trees not present around the BBO.

SOUTHERN BOOBOOK *Ninox boobook* 23 records

Recorded quite regularly until 31st July, with most sightings of birds along Crab Creek Road after dark. The only record after this was one in woodland on the northern edge of Roebuck Plains BBO Paddock on 2nd December.

OSPREY *Pandion haliaetus* 361 records

Commonly seen along Roebuck Bay's northern shores and in Broome, where a pair returned to nest in the Telstra tower visible from the BBO market stall. A pair showed some interest in the smaller aerial near the wardens' house in October and November, frequently landing there, vocalising and carrying sticks there, but seemed eventually to decide not to nest there. Nevertheless, in future years an artificial platform may provide enough encouragement for them to do so.

BLACK-SHOULDERED KITE *Elanus axillaris* 123 records

Commonly seen in open habitats, especially Roebuck Plains behind the BBO, around One Tree, and on the Common. Recorded most days until the last week in August, after which there were seven records in September, three in October and three in November.

BLACK-BREASTED BUZZARD *Hamirostra melanosternon* 38 records

Regularly seen on the eastern part of Roebuck Plains, particularly around freshwater, and on most visits to the Dampier Downs Road. One on Cable Beach on 31st May was feeding with other raptors on a large quantity of discarded meat (KM).

SQUARE-TAILED KITE *Lophoictinia isura* 4 records

All records of single birds: one from the all-weather section of Crab Creek Road on 6th April (CJH), one hunting over woodland at Willaroo Scrape on 23rd August (NK and RB), one over Port Drive on 20th September (JT and MP) and one at Crescent Lake on 26th September (BH and GS).

PACIFIC BAZA *Aviceda subcristata* 1 record

One was seen at Crescent Lake on 18th August, considered likely to be a wandering young bird (GS). Multiple follow-up attempts in subsequent days involving JT, NJ, NK, MP and MT all failed to relocate it. This was only the second record from the Broome region; the other (in 2012) was from nearby Nimalaica.

WEDGE-TAILED EAGLE *Aquila audax* 107 records

Seen often throughout the year, especially around roadkill and other carcasses; individuals clearly move widely and were not reliable at any site early in the year. One was present on most visits to Tagarana Bore once we started accessing the site regularly for Bush and Plains tours from August.

LITTLE EAGLE *Hiaeraetus morphnoides* 21 records

Occasional records from scattered sites throughout the region, between March and October. Most were light morph birds, with three noted records of the dark morph.

SWAMP HARRIER *Circus approximans* 79 records

Seen for most of the year at scattered sites throughout the region, including occasional records from Roebuck Bay's northern shores and mangroves. The final record of the year was an individual on Roebuck Bay's northern shores on 26th September.

SPOTTED HARRIER *Circus assimilis* 77 records

Seen regularly in Roebuck Plains BBO and Jabiru paddocks, especially early in the year when a pair often hunted over lush grass close to the BBO firebreak and the road through the paddocks. Sightings continued around Kidneybean Claypan until 24th October, long after all fresh water there had dried up (birds may have remained even longer as there were few visits to Kidneybean later in the year). Most other records came from further east around bores and dams on Roebuck Plains Station.

BROWN GOSHAWK *Accipiter fasciatus* 330 records

A regular feature around the BBO grounds, with most records from the observatory and of individuals flushed along Crab Creek Road. At least four were sometimes present at the Shadehouse bird baths in February, including two juveniles, suggesting successful breeding nearby.

COLLARED SPARROWHAWK *Accipiter cirrocephalus* 16 records

Much less common than the previous species (and a source of regular ID confusion), but occasionally seen around the BBO grounds including a juvenile male on 10th October. Other records were from the all-weather section of Crab Creek Road, Roebuck Plains BBO Paddock, Tagarana Bore and Upper Loomingum Bore.

- WHITE-BELLIED SEA-EAGLE *Haliaeetus leucogaster*** **472 records**
Commonly recorded in coastal and freshwater habitats. A pair were often heard duetting around the BBO, and seen carrying sticks from the Gurlbinwila boat ramp on 23rd June.
- WHISTLING KITE *Haliastur sphenurus*** **665 records**
Common and conspicuous in all habitats throughout the year. The regular nest in the northern part of Roebuck Plains BBO Paddock was once again used this year, with adults observed sitting on it through September. A young juvenile was seen around the BBO Viewing Platform in late November.
- BRAHMINY KITE *Haliastur indus*** **546 records**
Commonly recorded at coastal and near-coastal sites throughout the year. Inland records from Upper Loomingum Bore on 12th August and Ram-Paddock Well on 6th October. An adult was sitting on a nest close to the BBO beach trail in late September.
- BLACK KITE *Milvus migrans*** **607 records**
Very common throughout the region, becoming abundant around town during the dry season. A breeding pair was seen with a young juvenile in woodland in the northern part of Roebuck Plains BBO Paddock in late May.
- RAINBOW BEE-EATER *Merops ornatus*** **675 records**
Common in all habitats throughout the year, becoming more abundant in the dry season.
- ORIENTAL DOLLARBIRD *Eurystomus orientalis*** **113 records**
Recorded commonly from woodland areas early in the year. The last bird seen before northward migration was at the town sewage works on 9th April. The first returning bird was seen on 1st October along the Broome Highway (JT), after which the species was again common in woodland, often perching conspicuously along roads.
- SACRED KINGFISHER *Todiramphus sanctus*** **256 records**
Recorded in a variety of habitats throughout the region. In the first half of the year the species was abundant in the Crab Creek Mangroves, with up to eight often seen along Little Crab Creek on tours.
- RED-BACKED KINGFISHER *Todiramphus pyrrhopygius*** **35 records**
Seen at Lake Champion on 6th January (NJ), after which there were no records until 14th May when the species became regular in woodland in the northern part of Roebuck Plains BBO Paddock. Records continued there until 28th August. Other sightings were in woodland around Lake Champion on 9th July, and at Willaroo Scrape on 29th July, 27th August and 19th September.
- BLUE-WINGED KOOKABURRA *Dacelo leachii*** **387 records**
Commonly recorded in woodland and scrub throughout the region. Often heard calling at dawn and dusk around the BBO grounds.
- NANKEEN KESTREL *Falco cenchroides*** **203 records**
Common in open habitats throughout the year, most often seen in numbers along the northern fenceline of Roebuck Plains BBO Paddock. A breeding pair were at Tagarana Bore in early September.
- AUSTRALIAN HOBBY *Falco longipennis*** **144 records**
Regularly recorded throughout the year, with most sightings from pindan close to Roebuck Bay's northern shores, and in the BBO and Jabiru paddocks of Roebuck Plains.

BROWN FALCON *Falco berigora***357 records**

Common in pindan and open country throughout the year.

BLACK FALCON *Falco subniger***10 records**

The first of the year was one at Tagarana Bore on 28th July (NK), with five further records at the same location until 4th September. Following this, one was seen on the Common on 15th September and at the BRAC ovals five days later (both NJ). The final sighting was along the Broome Highway west of Twelve Mile on 8th November (CJH). The pattern of records is consistent with just one individual being present.

PEREGRINE FALCON *Falco peregrinus***20 records**

Recorded occasionally throughout the year, though with only two winter records (18th and 25th June on Roebuck Bay's northern shores). On 13 occasions the subspecies was not determined.

Siberian Peregrine Falcon *F. p. calidus*. A continuing bird seen at Lake Campion on 6th January (NJ) and one photographed along the Great Northern Highway section of Roebuck Plains (NK, JH, JT and MP) in the early part of the year. A returning bird was seen and photographed at Lake Campion on 29th November (NK and RJW). This continues a pattern of consistent annual records of this taxon, suggesting it is a regular migrant to the region.

Australian Peregrine Falcon *F. p. macropus*. An immature bird seen on 8th January at Nimalaica (GS), one along Crab Creek Road on 10th April (NK and VS), and one at Tagarana Bore on 23rd September (GS and LA) and 15th November (NK and JT).



Left: Australian Peregrine Falcon at Tagarana Bore, showing full dark hood (Nyil Khwaja). Right: Siberian Peregrine Falcon at Lake Campion, showing clear white cheek patch (Jodi Webber).

COCKATIEL *Nymphicus hollandicus***34 records**

Most records were of small parties on passage over the BBO and nearby sites on the northern shores of Roebuck Bay. This was fairly regular between 27th April and 24th October, with the largest flock 60 birds passing on 2nd August. Birds were also seen coming into drink on visits to Taylor's Lagoon until that site dried in mid-July.

RED-TAILED BLACK-COCKATOO *Calyptorhynchus banksia* 129 records

Regular records, mostly of small parties flying over the BBO or Broome. Present consistently at Ned's Dam while that site still had water, and later in the year at Ram-Paddock Well when we started visiting it on tours.

GALAH *Eolophus roseicapilla* 57 records

Regular but local in the region. Most records were from around the irrigated crop field adjacent to the Broome North sewage ponds, where a flock would often forage, and near water bodies on the eastern part of Roebuck Plains Station.

MAJOR MITCHELL'S COCKATOO *Cacatua leadbeateri* 1 record

One seen along the Dampier Downs Road on 17th October (AB and LB).

LITTLE CORELLA *Cacatua sanguinea* 193 records

Common around the town of Broome, and also recorded occasionally from other sites across the region.

VARIED LORIKEET *Psitteuteles versicolor* 53 records

Sporadic records throughout the year, mostly of small groups flying over the BBO and nearby sites. Occasionally birds were seen feeding in trees, particularly when *Hakea macrocarpa* was in flower in July.

RED-COLLARED LORIKEET *Trichoglossus rubritorquis* 311 records

Common and conspicuous around the town of Broome, with smaller numbers regularly seen at the BBO and other woodland sites, passing over or coming in to feed on flowers.

BUDGERIGAR *Melopsittacus undulatus* 76 records

A lone bird was at Entrance Point on 7th March (JT and NK). Aside from this almost all records were small flocks on passage heading east over the BBO or other sites close to Roebuck Bay's northern shores, between 22nd April and 21st September, presumably part of a general southward movement. The peak period was through May and June, with records almost every day. ASR counted 415 heading south over Quondong Point on 20th May.

RED-WINGED PARROT *Aprosmictus erythropterus* 516 records

Very common in wooded habitats throughout the year, including at the BBO and around the town of Broome. During winter, flocks of up to 200 were seen on the edge of Roebuck Plains behind the BBO, seeming to consist mostly of immature birds.

FAIRY PITTA *Pitta nympha* 1 record

An extraordinary record: the first for the region and only the second in mainland Australia. The bird was found at Matso's by staff on 7th February, temporarily stunned after flying into a window. It then recovered and was released. It was seen by a number of local birders over the subsequent two days and then sadly found dead in a garden, suspected killed by a cat. Accepted by BARC as the third record for Australia (case 1053). At the time there was also a report by a Matso's staff member that another bird of the same species was found dead earlier in the season and buried in the garden. This remained unconfirmed despite best efforts of GS.



Fairy Pitta at Matso's: the second bird of this species recorded to have reached mainland Australia (Connie Grohmann).

GREAT BOWERBIRD *Chlamydera nuchalis* 489 records

Common throughout the region: recorded daily at the BBO and often seen in Broome and along roads. The bower behind BBO Campsite 5 was active once again this year.

BLACK-TAILED TREECREEPER *Climacteris melanurus* 9 records

Regular in the eucalypt woodland at Willaroo Scrape and occasionally in similar habitat around Lake Champion and Taylor's Lagoon, with the low number of records due to relatively few visits to these sites.

VARIEGATED FAIRY-WREN *Malurus lamberti* 193 records

Regular in the pindan habitat at and around the BBO, with occasional records from other sites.

RED-BACKED FAIRY-WREN *Malurus melanocephalus* 197 records

Regular in the pindan habitat at and around the BBO, and also in more open habitats than the previous species, notably around small shrubs in Roebuck Plains BBO Paddock. Also regularly recorded at Willaroo Scrape and Upper Loomingum Bore in the eastern part of Roebuck Plains.

BANDED HONEYEATER *Cissomela pectoralis* 53 records

Five were at Entrance Point after the passing of Tropical Cyclone Riley on 25th January (NJ). There were no further records until 27th June, when a juvenile bird was photographed at the Shadehouse bird baths (LOB). After this the species was regularly recorded at sites throughout the region for the rest of the year. At least 30 were seen feeding on flowers in Minyirr Park on 27th November (RJW).

BROWN HONEYEATER *Lichmera indistincta* 485 records

Very common in pindan, gardens, paperbark groves and mangals throughout the region. Recorded daily around the BBO grounds.

WHITE-THROATED HONEYEATER *Melithreptus albogularis* 58 records

Scarce in the first half of the year, with the only records from the town sewage works on 11th January (NJ), 7th March (JH and MP) and 21st March (JH). One was in the scrub around a dry Lake Eda on 9th July (NK), and following this the species was regularly recorded for the rest of the year. Unusually, up to two individuals were present around the BBO grounds from 24th August until 17th November.

GOLDEN-BACKED HONEYEATER *Melithreptus laetior* 5 records

Seen around Lake Campion on 6th January, and in the town of Broome on 1st and 10th March (all NJ). Later in the year, four were photographed together in the dunes behind Cable Beach on 7th October, with two present in the same location the following day (both KM).

LITTLE FRIARBIRD *Philemon citreogularis* 581 records

Very common and conspicuous in pindan, gardens and eucalypt woodland throughout the year.

SILVER-CROWNED FRIARBIRD *Philemon argenteiceps* 1 record

One (possibly two) found in a garden in Twelve Mile on the afternoon of 6th October (CJH and KH), followed up and photographed that evening (MP and NK). The first seen in the region for 10 years, and the first to be confirmed with a photograph.

BLACK HONEYEATER *Sugomel nigrum* 37 records

An amazing year for this species. Recorded every month until July, unprecedented in the region. The first record was one at Entrance Point on 25th January after the passing of Tropical Cyclone Riley (NJ). One was photographed at One Tree during the AWSG's annual expedition on 21st February (PN), and subsequently reported around the BBO on 22nd and 25th February. Another possibly storm-associated record came from Entrance Point on 23rd March (GS). Then recorded regularly from 23rd April until 26th July, mostly in small flocks passing east over the observatory, and often among much larger numbers of Pied Honeyeaters (see below). ASR counted 400 heading south over Quondong Point during a 3h20 period on the morning of 19th May, and a further 205 the following morning. This recorded passage seems to have been part of a large-scale southward movement, with large numbers of birds reported earlier in the year feeding on flowering trees further north on the Dampier Peninsula (GS). Birds would occasionally stop around the observatory grounds to feed on flowering eucalypts and *Hakea*. There were no records later in the year.

RED-HEADED HONEYEATER *Myzomela erythrocephala* 57 records

Common in the mangroves around Streeter's Jetty in Broome, and occasionally recorded elsewhere in the town. One was seen around the BBO Viewing Platform on 27th February (JT) and one was feeding in a flowering gum in the BBO Paddock on 23rd April (NK).



Left: Silver-crowned Friarbird in a garden in Twelve Mile (Nyil Khwaja). Right: Pied Honeyeater feeding on a flowering eucalypt along the BBO firebreak (Nyil Khwaja).

PIED HONEYEATER *Certhionyx variegatus***84 records**

As for Black Honeyeater, an extraordinary and unprecedented year for the species. The first record was two on the edge of Roebuck Plains from the BBO firebreak on 7th March (JT and NK). Following this there were occasional sightings through March, and similar to Black Honeyeater, a sustained period of southward movement from 23rd April until 31st July. Birds mostly passed over the observatory in medium to large-sized flocks, often numbering in the hundreds. ASR counted an incredible 16,300 passing south over Quondong Point in a 3h20 period on the morning of 19th May, and a further 2,185 the following morning. As for Black Honeyeater the general southward movement perhaps came from an invasion further north on the Dampier Peninsula, where birds were common earlier in the year (GS). Birds would occasionally stop in and around the observatory grounds to rest and feed on flowering trees. Later in the year the species was recorded at the BBO and Tagarana Bore on 22nd October, perhaps blown from inland on strong easterly winds the previous day, and seen again at the BBO on 23rd October. The final record was of a male and female photographed visiting the Shadehouse bird baths together on 14th November (CS).

RUFOUS-THROATED HONEYEATER *Conopophila rufogularis***232 records**

Common in pindan and eucalypt woodlands for most of the year, though comparatively few records in April and May (near-daily at other times). Numerous around the BBO grounds when Kimberley bauhinia was in flower mid-year.

YELLOW CHAT *Epthianura crocea***61 records**

Regularly seen all year in the saltmarsh around Kidneybean Claypan (including once the wetland had dried up); no systematic surveys were made and high counts were around 30, seen when groups took flight during tours. Only one record further east on Roebuck Plains, with birds seen along the Great Northern Highway during our Wave the Waders Goodbye course on 4th April. Unusual records were of approximately 30 among thousands of Tree Martins in the western part of BBO Paddock on 9th June (NK, JT and LOB), and even more remarkably four seen perched on pneumatophores along Little Crab Creek during a Mangrove Tour on 12th June (JH). On 19th November, BBO wardens joined RL, Yawuru rangers and volunteers in a successful catch of 11 birds around Kidneybean to collect feather samples for RL's (Charles Darwin University) doctoral research on population history of the species.



Left: an immature male Crimson Chat in Roebuck Plains BBO Paddock (Cecile Espigole). Right: A breeding male Yellow Chat around Kidneybean Claypan (Jodi Webber).

CRIMSON CHAT *Epthianura tricolor***43 records**

As for other arid-zone honeyeaters it was an unusually good year for this species. Five were at Entrance Point on 25th January after the passing of Tropical Cyclone Riley (NJ). A group of around 20 were found in the northwest part of Roebuck Plains BBO Paddock on 25th April (MP) and up to 30 continued to be seen there regularly until 4th September, often associating with White-winged Trillers. A flock was also regular on the dry bed of Lake Champion through May (also often accompanied by trillers), and they were seen at Lake Eda and the open plains east of the Great Northern Highway during July. The final record was of two seen briefly at Ram-Paddock Well during strong easterlies on 21st October (NK).

WHITE-GAPED HONEYEATER *Stomiopera unicolor***282 records**

Common around parks and gardens in Broome. Present around the BBO grounds in all months, with a pair present until at least 16th August. Recorded in the Crab Creek mangroves on 21st and 27th February.

SPINY-CHEEKED HONEYEATER *Acanthagenys rufogularis***6 records**

First records in the region since 2000. A single bird was found singing where the Spinifex Trail joins the BBO firebreak on the morning of 6th March (NK and JT). One was seen around the BBO grounds on each of the next three days. On 10th March, two were seen and photographed together near the Shadehouse (MP). The final record was from 12th March, also around the BBO grounds.

SINGING HONEYEATER *Gavicalis virescens***467 records**

Very common in woodland, gardens and around fresh water throughout the year; occasionally in mangroves. Daily around the BBO. A pair nested opposite the wardens' house in early August.

YELLOW-TINTED HONEYEATER *Ptilotula flavescens***144 records**

One record from around Lake Champion on 6th January (NJ); there were no further records until we were able to access Roebuck Plains again, but the species was at the same site on 15th May (JT and NK) and found commonly in eucalypt woodland on the station thereafter. There were also regular records from Nimalaica. From 16th July there was a notable and unusual influx of birds to the BBO grounds, with up to 10 seen together in one tree. Records at the BBO continued almost daily until we closed in December. Two probable sightings of the similar White-plumed Honeyeater *P. penicillata* are precautionarily treated as unconfirmed, as this would be a new species for the region.



Left: A Spiny-cheeked Honeyeater on the BBO Spinifex Trail in March (Nyil Khwaja). Right: Yellow-tinted Honeyeaters were unusually common around the BBO later in the year (Jane Taylor).

- GREY-HEADED HONEYEATER *Ptilotula keartlandi*** **3 records**
 Scarce. Seen around the BBO grounds on 17th July (MP) and 1st August (JD) during an influx of nectar-feeders while trees (particularly *Hakea macrocarpa*) were in flower. The only other record was from the Dampier Downs Road on 17th October (AB and LB).
- WHITE-FRONTED HONEYEATER *Purnella albifrons*** **1 record**
 One at Entrance Point on 23rd March (GS) was the first record in the region for several years.
- YELLOW-THROATED MINER *Manorina flavigula*** **1 record**
 Present in the campground at Barn Hill during a visit on 12th July (JT).
- RED-BROWED PARDALOTE *Pardalotus rubricatus*** **2 records**
 One heard calling at Willaroo Scrape on 7th June (NK and MP) and one record from the Dampier Downs Road on 17th October (AB).
- STRIATED PARDALOTE *Pardalotus striatus*** **106 records**
 Common in the town of Broome and at other locations with eucalypts throughout the region, until the end of August. After this there were only two records in September (an unusual record at the BBO and one at Ned's Dam), none in October, and one each on 28th and 29th November (from Broome and Tagarana Bore respectively).
- WHITE-THROATED GERYGONE *Gerygone olivacea*** **296 records**
 Commonly recorded in woodland, especially pindan, throughout the year. Regular around the BBO.
- DUSKY GERYGONE *Gerygone tenebrosa*** **120 records**
 Common in the Crab Creek mangroves and those around Streeter's Jetty in Broome. An unusual record from Crescent Lake on 1st December (GS).
- MANGROVE GERYGONE *Gerygone levigaster*** **39 records**
 Commonly recorded in paperbark groves throughout the region, particularly around Nimalaica and Crescent Lake, but also along the northern edge of BBO Paddock and at sites further east on Roebuck Plains. Generally in small numbers. One was heard singing at the BBO on 18th January (NJ).
- WEEBILL *Smicornis brevirostris*** **18 records**
 Fairly common at eucalypt woodland sites throughout the region.
- GREY-CROWNED BABBLER *Pomatostomus temporalis*** **442 records**
 Common in woodland habitats throughout the region, with a family group frequently observed foraging and nest-building together around the BBO grounds.
- VARIED SITTELLA *Daphoenositta chrysoptera*** **33 records**
 Regularly seen in eucalypt woodland, particularly around paperbark edges. Also recorded around the BBO in most months, with a small group usually staying for a few days before moving on.
- OLIVE-BACKED ORIOLE *Oriolus sagittatus*** **186 records**
 Regularly recorded in pindan and Broome gardens throughout the year, though more conspicuous when birds were singing during the wet season. Regular around the BBO grounds. A few were seen passing south over One Tree with Little Friarbirds on 11th July (AS). A juvenile was at the BBO Viewing Platform on 1st August.
- CRESTED BELLBIRD *Oreica gutturalis*** **1 record**
 One along the Dampier Downs Road on 17th October (AB) was the year's only record.

- RUFIOUS WHISTLER *Pachycephala rufiventris*** **372 records**
Common throughout the region in pindan, eucalypt woodland and paperbark groves.
- WHITE-BREASTED WHISTLER *Pachycephala lanioides*** **143 records**
Common in the Crab Creek mangroves and regularly recorded around Streeter's Jetty.
- MANGROVE GOLDEN WHISTLER *Pachycephala melanura*** **58 records**
Regular in small numbers in the Crab Creek mangroves and those around Streeter's Jetty in Broome.
- GREY SHRIKE-THRUSH *Colluricincla harmonica*** **333 records**
Common in pindan and eucalypt woodland throughout the year, including around the BBO grounds.
- GROUND CUCKOO-SHRIKE *Coracina maxima*** **1 record**
A rare species in the region. A lone bird was seen well by NK and RB on a Lakes Tour at Willaroo Scrape on 23rd August. Not seen on subsequent visits.
- BLACK-FACED CUCKOO-SHRIKE *Coracina novaehollandiae*** **550 records**
Common throughout the region.
- WHITE-WINGED TRILLER *Lalage tricolor*** **253 records**
Commonly recorded in woodland and open country, in particular from late April after which the species was seen on a near-daily basis. Often formed small terrestrial feeding flocks in grassland with Black-faced Woodswallows and Crimson Chats, and elsewhere seen feeding in trees on insects and flowers.
- AUSTRALIAN MAGPIE *Gymnorhina tibicen*** **157 records**
Reported regularly from a number of localised sites throughout the region: in the town of Broome, around the irrigated crop field adjacent to the Broome North sewage works, at and around Tagarana Bore, at the Roebuck Roadhouse, and at a few locations in the eastern part of Roebuck Plains.
- PIED BUTCHERBIRD *Cracticus nigrogularis*** **536 records**
Very common in woodland and on the edge of plains throughout the region, including around the BBO grounds.
- MASKED WOODSWALLOW *Artamus personatus*** **160 records**
This year saw impressive passage of Masked Woodswallows through the region, with flocks sometimes numbering in the thousands mostly seen passing over the BBO heading east, following the shores of Roebuck Bay as part of their southward movement. There were three records in March, after which the species was seen almost every day from 6th April until 25th August, with one further record on 3rd September. There were 12 more records between 21st October and 5th November, possibly due to strong easterly winds on 21st October that may have blown birds from inland. This was during an exceptionally hot and dry period, bringing the rare sight of this species coming to drink at birdbaths around the BBO.
- BLACK-FACED WOODSWALLOW *Artamus cinereus*** **182 records**
Common in open habitats, with most records coming from the edge of plains around and behind the observatory.
- LITTLE WOODSWALLOW *Artamus minor*** **3 records**
Occasional records from eucalypt woodland in the eastern part of Roebuck Plains. Two were around Lake Champion on 9th January (NJ), with another three seen between lakes Champion and Eda on 19th May (NK and MP) and one at Willaroo Scrape on 11th June (NK).



A Masked Woodswallow joins Great Bowerbirds and a Little Friarbird to drink from the wardens' bird bath on a hot day in October (Jane Taylor).

WHITE-BREADED WOODSWALLOW *Artamus leucorhynchus* 324 records

Commonly recorded throughout the region, particularly in Roebuck Bay where birds roost and rest in the mangroves, and around fresh water.

NORTHERN FANTAIL *Rhipidura rufiventris* 8 records

Occasional records from mangroves and paperbark woodland. At Streeter's Jetty on 12th February (JT, NK and MP), 2nd August (RM), 10th October (NJ) and 14th October (NK and JT); at Nimalaica on 18th July (MP); at Barred Creek on 25th August (PCH) and 20th September (JT), and in the Crab Creek mangroves on 23rd September (GS).

WILLIE WAGTAIL *Rhipidura leucophrys* 427 records

Common in all habitats throughout the year, though more abundant in the dry season when the species became regular around the BBO grounds.

MANGROVE FANTAIL *Rhipidura phasiana* 215 records

Very common in the Crab Creek mangroves and regularly recorded at other mangrove sites such as Streeter's Jetty. Also occasionally visited the BBO grounds during the dry season, including one seen almost daily between 16th and 31st August. Heard singing at Ram-Paddock Well on 12th and 23rd August (both NK): unusual inland records.

GREY FANTAIL *Rhipidura albiscapa* 21 records

Dry-season visitor, with the first record on the edge of the BBO Paddock (nearest the BBO) on 25th April and the last from the observatory grounds on 8th September. Most records came from the pindan around the BBO, but also seen three times at Nimalaica. Subspecies were rarely identified with confidence, with one on 25th June noted as possibly *R. a. albicauda*, but most likely to be the regular *R. a. alisteri*.

LEADEN FLYCATCHER *Myiagra rubecula* 18 records

A male first seen from the Shadehouse on 15th April was recorded regularly around the BBO grounds until 28th June.

- BROAD-BILLED FLYCATCHER *Myiagra ruficollis*** **163 records**
Common in the Crab Creek mangroves throughout the year and regularly recorded at other mangrove sites such as Streeter's Jetty. Often visited the BBO grounds (32 records throughout the year).
- PAPERBARK FLYCATCHER *Myiagra nana*** **348 records**
Commonly recorded in pindan woodland and around water sources. Regular around the BBO grounds throughout the year.
- MAGPIE-LARK *Grallina cyanoleuca*** **657 records**
Very common in all habitats throughout the year. A pair successfully fledged three chicks from a nest in the helicopter tree outside the BBO office in February.
- TORRESIAN CROW *Corvus orru*** **639 records**
Very common in all habitats throughout the year. Particularly numerous in the dry season, when adults and young birds became abundant around the observatory grounds.
- KIMBERLEY FLYCATCHER *Microeca tormenti*** **26 records**
Occasionally recorded in the Crab Creek mangroves throughout the year, with two additional records from the mangroves around Streeter's Jetty.
- JACKY WINTER *Microeca fascinans*** **25 records**
Common in eucalypt woodland in the eastern part of Roebuck Plains station, but scarce in pindan, with just four records around the BBO grounds (in April, June and August) and one along the Dampier Downs Road on 10th August.
- HOODED ROBIN *Melanodryas cucullata*** **1 record**
A single bird seen on the western edge of the BBO Paddock during a Bush and Plains Tour on 8th June (BB and NK).
- HORSFIELD'S BUSHLARK *Mirafra javanica*** **83 records**
Common in open habitats, with most records from Roebuck Plains BBO and Jabiru paddocks; also regular on the plains along the Great Northern Highway and the grassland on the Common.
- GOLDEN-HEADED CISTICOLA *Cisticola exilis*** **119 records**
Commonly recorded in grassland and saltmarsh habitats throughout the region.
- AUSTRALIAN REED-WARBLER *Acrocephalus australis*** **9 records**
Regular at Nimalaica, with the only other record from nearby Crescent Lake on 19th August (NJ, MP and MT).
- BROWN SONGLARK *Megalurus cruralis*** **86 records**
Commonly recorded in open habitats, specifically the grassland and saltmarsh in the BBO and Jabiru paddocks and the open plains either side of the Great Northern Highway.
- RUFOUS SONGLARK *Megalurus mathewsi*** **8 records**
Recorded on six occasions on Lakes Tours from eucalypt woodland in the eastern part of Roebuck Plains Station, with the low number of records reflecting low visitation to this area. Also seen on the Common on 10th October (MP) and along the Dampier Downs Road on 17th October (AB and LB).
- LITTLE GRASSBIRD *Megalurus gramineus*** **6 records**
Regular at Nimalaica, with the only other record from nearby Crescent Lake on 19th August (NJ, MP and MT).

WHITE-BACKED SWALLOW *Cheramoeca leucosterna***1 record**

One found around Demco Beach and the town sewage works on 4th July (AB).

FAIRY MARTIN *Petrochelidon ariel***48 records**

Recorded regularly at freshwater sites throughout the region. Occasionally also around the BBO and over open country, though in these cases usually greatly outnumbered by Tree Martins.

TREE MARTIN *Petrochelidon nigricans***241 records**

Commonly recorded in most habitats throughout the year, with large numbers often seen over the BBO and the northern shores of Roebuck Bay between January and May. On a few occasions in May several thousand were seen on the northern and western edges of the BBO Paddock, warming up in the tyre tracks and feeding on flying insects.

WELCOME SWALLOW *Hirundo neoxena***5 records**

All records at the town sewage works: the first on 18th June (DA) and subsequently on 30th June, 1st July, 22nd July and 10th August (all NJ).

BARN SWALLOW *Hirundo rustica***26 records**

Recorded regularly early in the year from around the BBO, along Roebuck Bay's northern shores and the southern part of the BBO Paddock. The last bird seen before northward migration was on 11th April over the observatory. The first returning bird was at the town sewage works on 30th September (NJ), with occasional records around Broome for the rest of the year.

AUSTRALIAN YELLOW WHITE-EYE *Zosterops luteus***483 records**

Very common in mangroves and also often seen in other vegetation at coastal and near-coastal sites. In late February and early March there was an influx around the BBO, with up to 100 often present in the observatory grounds and many hundreds around One Tree. On more than one occasion an Australian Hobby was seen enjoying this bonanza with yellow feathers littered around its perch.

MISTLETOEBIRD *Dicaeum hirundinaceum***425 records**

Very common in the coastal pindan and mangroves around the BBO, and regularly seen around the town of Broome.

PAINTED FINCH *Emblema pictum***6 records**

One heard at Town Beach on 16th March (NJ), and seen at Entrance Point on 23rd March, 24th March (both NJ) and 8th April (NK and VS). Unusually, a pair visited the Shadehouse birdbaths at the BBO on 7th April (JH and MP). The final record (and only one outside this regular period for the species) was a flock of 20 at Entrance Point on 2nd September (KM).

LONG-TAILED FINCH *Poephila acuticauda***102 records**

Fairly common in woodland east of the BBO, particularly around the lakes on Roebuck Plains Station, but disappointingly irregular at the observatory, including a period of no records for three months between 27th May and 27th August. On 28th August a pair were detected at the wardens' bird bath using a camera trap (MT), and the species continued to be seen and heard occasionally around the grounds for the rest of the year.

ZEBRA FINCH *Taenopygia guttata***355 records**

Recorded near-daily at the observatory, and regularly on the edge of the plains behind, as well as in the town of Broome and woodland and freshwater sites further east on Roebuck Plains Station.

DOUBLE-BARRED FINCH *Taenopygia bichenovii* 361 records

As for the previous species, very common around the BBO grounds and also seen on the edge of plains and around freshwater sources throughout the region.

AUSTRALASIAN PIPIT *Anthus novaeseelandiae* 138 records

Commonly recorded in open country throughout the region.

GREY WAGTAIL *Motacilla cinerea* 3 records

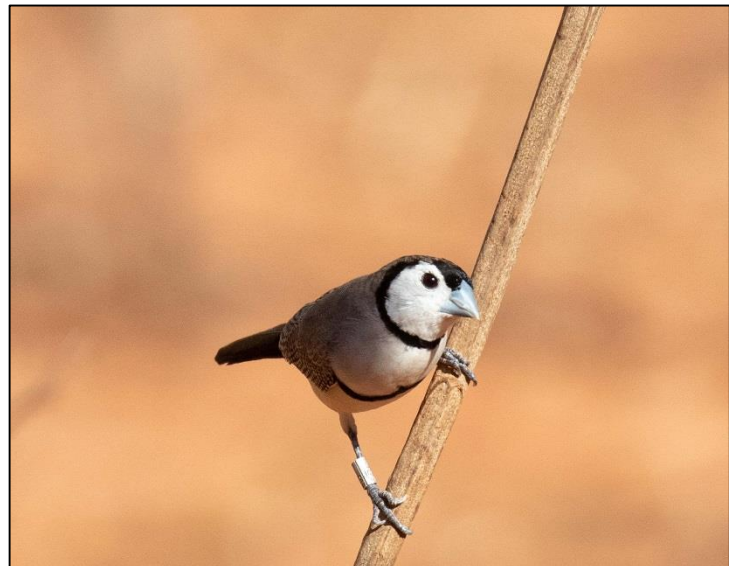
One was found at Ram-Paddock Well during a Lakes Tour on 21st October (NK), a day in which strong easterlies had brought a number of unusual birds to the sites we visited. It was seen at the same site two days later (AB, GS and LB). On 13th November one was at Tagarana Bore (NK); it had similar plumage and seems likely to have been the same bird.

EASTERN YELLOW WAGTAIL *Motacilla tschutschensis* 33 records

Recorded regularly early in the year roosting and foraging behind the Crab Creek mangroves, as well as from Tagarana Bore, the BBO Paddock and the town sewage works. The last birds seen before northward migration were three at the sewage works on 1st May (JT). The first returning birds were heard from One Tree on 28th September (NJ) and there were occasional records from grassland and freshwater sites for the rest of the year. The highest count was 116 behind the Crab Creek mangroves on 3rd January (NJ). On most occasions subspecies were not identified. Birds of *M. t. macronyx* type were seen on five occasions during January (NJ).

East Siberian Yellow Wagtail *M. t. tschutschensis*. Most birds identified to subspecies level were of this regular visitor (likely also to represent most individuals not identified to subspecies). Present on all occasions subspecies were distinguished.

Green-headed Wagtail *M. t. taivana*. Seen accompanying the previous taxon on 3rd January in the Crab Creek mangroves, and possibly on 1st December at the BRAC ovals (all NJ).



Left: A Grey Wagtail seen at Tagarana Bore (Nyil Khwaja). Right: A Double-barred Finch with a metal band photographed from the Shadehouse (Jodi Webber).