

BirdLife Australia's Congress and Campout Speakers: Broome 2018

The list below is a brief introduction to the presentations with two or three still to be finalized. We hope you will enjoy the varied subjects to be presented! For bookings contact the observatory at broome@birdlife.org.au



Keynote Address: Danny Rogers

Australasian Wader Studies Group and Arthur Rylah Institute for Environmental Research

Shorebirds of Roebuck Bay and their future prospects

Roebuck Bay is famous for its shorebird populations. But what are they doing there? I will talk about how shorebirds use the site, with frequent digressions into things that interest me: the plumages we see them in, their age at first breeding, how they decide where to roost and feed, how to monitor them and how to look after their habitats. I will try to explain why understanding these things is relevant to conservation of shorebirds and discuss future directions of shorebird research and conservation.

***About Danny Rogers:** A keen birdwatcher and naturalist since childhood, Danny Rogers has been deeply involved in shorebird research and conservation since starting a PhD on migratory shorebird ecology in North-western Australia with Charles Sturt University. Currently, Danny is in a research position with the Arthur Rylah Institute for Environmental Research where he conducts a variety of applied waterbird projects including radio-telemetry studies on waterbirds. He also chairs the scientific committee of the Australasian Wader Studies Group. He is a co-author of the recently published 'The Australian Bird Guide' for CSIRO publishing, as well as the 'Handbook of Australian, New Zealand and Antarctic Birds'. An engaging speaker with a noticeable passion for his area of expertise, Danny's keynote presentation is sure to enthral participants!*

The Dinosaur Trackways of Broome

Dianne Bennett and Micklo Corpus



© Dianne Bennett

The dinosaur tracks around Broome and up the coast of the Dampier Peninsula are of international scientific significance both in amount of tracks and amount of track-maker species. Dianne Bennett will cover the Geology and Geography of the area when the tracks were made. A description of the 4 different groups of dinosaur and the variety of tracks left behind, including photos of some of Broome's many tracks. Micklo Corpus, a traditional owner, will give a short talk on the significance of the tracks to local indigenous groups.

A summary of studies of, and insight into, the biologically diverse benthos of Roebuck Bay and Eighty Mile Beach, North West Australia

*Andrew Storey Adj Assoc. Prof., School of Biological Sciences, The University of Western Australia
And Mr. Grant Pearson, Environmental Consultant.*

Roebuck Bay and Eighty Mile Beach, in the northwest of WA, are Ramsar-listed wetlands recognized for supporting high abundance of migratory shorebirds, being two of the most important non-breeding areas for migratory shorebirds in the East Asian-Australasian flyway. Together, Roebuck Bay and Eighty Mile Beach may form one of the most biodiverse intertidal mudflat systems on the planet. It is the diversity and abundance of this benthic (mud-dwelling) invertebrate fauna that is considered critical to supporting the abundance of migratory shorebirds. Since 1989 there have been repeated studies of the benthic fauna of Roebuck Bay and two studies of Eighty Mile Beach since 1999. In this presentation we will discuss the past studies of the benthic fauna of the mudflats, and present findings from the most recent survey of the system conducted in October 2016.



Engaging the community in Roebuck Bay

Kandy Curran, Roebuck Bay Working Group, Project Manager

A short film fest and science series are new ways to 'infotain' the masses about Roebuck Bay and to enlist their participation in protecting the Ramsar listed embayment. Providing opportunities for the community to express their connection to Roebuck Bay is vital too, and this achieved by active participation and genuine partnerships. Kandy will explain her innovative and successful approach to community engagement.



Luannan Coastal Reserve to protect migratory shorebirds?

Chris Hassell, Global Flyway Network

Chris and GFN colleagues have been studying migratory shorebirds in Northern China for 10 years. The tiny area they monitor is a microcosm of the huge issues facing birds throughout the Yellow

Sea as they migrated to their Arctic breeding grounds. Chris will explain how the area is used with an emphasis on Red Knots that migrate there from Roebuck Bay. He will hopefully bring some rare good news about the establishment of a nature reserve on the Luannan Coast.

Managing threatened species and unique landscapes in the Karajarri protected and jointly managed areas

Wynston Shovellor and Sheen Kitty, Karajarri Rangers

The Karajarri Ranger and Karajarri Indigenous Protected Area programs are in charge of looking after over 30,000km² of country, from the desert to the sea. The

Rangers undertake land, cultural and sea management activities within this area and are fortunate to have many dynamic project partners and collaborators. A fine example of this is the work undertaken on 80 Mile beach around birds, benthos and turtles. The Karajarri rangers will take you through this project and others whilst also discussing the Karajarri cultural database and the rise of an indigenous community run conservation program.



Shorebirds on 80 Mile Beach



The photographic identification manual of benthic macroinvertebrates of Roebuck Bay and Eighty Mile Beach

Sora M. Estrella, Centre for Ecosystem Management. School of Science. Edith Cowan University And Grace Maglio, shorebird researcher, Broome

The intertidal mudflats of Roebuck Bay are amongst the richest in the world for the diversity of marine macroinvertebrates. This is one of the reasons why high numbers of migratory shorebirds use the area as feeding grounds during the non-breeding season. With the aim to help future research and to unify the identification of the numerous marine invertebrates present in Roebuck Bay and Eighty Mile Beach, a photographic identification manual has been developed. As an example of the potential uses of this manual, the preliminary results of a study that describes the foraging behaviour and diet of numerous migratory shorebirds are presented.



The Broome Community Seagrass Monitoring Project: 10 years of citizen science monitoring of the seagrass meadows of Roebuck Bay

Fiona West, The Broome Community Seagrass Monitoring Project

The BCSMP has been utilising citizen scientists to monitor the ecologically and culturally important seagrass meadows of Roebuck Bay for over 10 years. A snapshot of the health and importance of the Roebuck

Bay seagrass meadows will be presented here in context of the international and regional conservation significance of seagrass meadows

Do wild birds catch the flu?

Dr John Curran, Adjunct Professor, Murdoch University, based in Broome

Influenza viruses occur in numerous species of animals including birds. In the previous decade when H5N1 virus emerged and spread around the globe, wild birds were targeted by scientists for influenza testing. In the Kimberley, about 8,000 wild birds were tested for AI viruses with marked differences in results across the range of shorebirds and waterfowl sampled. Could shorebirds, that spend half their life cycle in the northern hemisphere, have a role in the global spread of these viruses?

Shorebirds 2020

Dan Weller and Connie Lee, Birdlife Australia

BirdLife Australia's Migratory Shorebird Program manages Shorebirds 2020, Australia's national shorebird monitoring program, and coordinates a range of migratory shorebird related activities and projects as part of the Migratory Shorebird Conservation Action Plan.

Dan Weller and Connie Lee will give an update on what Shorebirds 2020 is telling us about our migratory shorebirds, efforts to bolster the monitoring program further and opportunities to get involved with shorebird conservation across Australia.



Photo © Nigel Jackett



Yawuru Nagulagun / Roebuck Bay Marine Park

Chris Nutt, Department of Biodiversity Conservation and Attractions

The recent establishment of the of the Yawuru Nagulagun / Roebuck Bay Marine Park (2016) was the result of many years of hard work from Traditional Owners, community members and groups, scientists, multiple government agencies and others.

Jointly managed between the Yawuru Native Title holders and the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions, the marine park secures long term funding and represents a new and exciting stage in the management and protection of the globally significant values it contains. Chris will provide insights into the effort required to establish the marine park, the importance of joint management, and what this all means for the future of the bay and its incredible inhabitants like the 100,000s of shorebirds that call it home every wet season.

The Yawuru Conservation Estate

Yawuru Rangers

Since 2010 The Yawuru Conservation Estate has been managed by the Yawuru Rangers Joint Management program. It is a collaborated approach to land management designed to get indigenous people working and looking after country. The program is the first of its kind with 3 joint

management partners. They are Nyamba Buru Yawuru (Registered Native Title Body Corporate RNTBC), state government (Dept. Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions) and local government authority (Shire of Broome). Through the Yawuru Cultural Management Plan, we manage the terrestrial and marine parks. The Yawuru Ranger program combines western science with traditional ecological knowledge to develop, maintain and assist in protecting the fragile environment from man-made (visitor impacts) and natural impacts and assist in various research projects in the parks.





Photo © Bruce Greatwich

The rediscovery of the Night Parrot in WA

Nigel Jackett and Bruce Greatwich, Broome Bird Observatory and DBCA

Arguably one of the world's rarest bird species, the Night Parrot was last confirmed in WA, when in 1912 an individual was shot in the Gascoyne region. A likely sighting in 2005 in the Pilbara gave hope they continued to persist.

Bruce Greatwich and Nigel Jackett will discuss how they rediscovered the Night Parrot in WA, and share details of what has been learnt about Night Parrot ecology in WA since.

'Roebuck Bay: International Bird Airport'

Jaime Jackett, Broome Bird Observatory

In 2019, the Broome Bird Observatory is excited to be a part of a large-scale, multi-organisation, SNRM funded project building gigantic shorebird and benthic invertebrate puppets in school and public workshops, and then presenting them in a site-specific theatre performance at town beach. The project is the result of a partnership between the BBO, Kimberley Environmental Education Puppets, Department of Conservation Biodiversity and Attractions, Theatre Kimberley, Environs Kimberley, Nyamba Buru Yawuru, and Roebuck Bay Working Group. BBO warden and musician, Jaime Jackett, will discuss this exciting project and it's aims to engage the community and help bring scientific ideas to the broader public.



Photo© Designer/makers/puppeteers - Karajarri (emus) and Goonyandi Rangers (eagle) Puppet Coordinator/facilitator/puppetry designer - Bernadette Trench-Thiedeman



Birding at the Poo Ponds

Chris Hassell, Bird Nerd

The only sector of society who have any interest in Waste Water Treatment Plants other than the Water Corporation are birders. I have been saying this to the Water Corp at various meetings for years. And they were listening! Chris gives a short lighthearted presentation but with a serious message that good will

can bring great results to the community (or bird nerds at least).