

## BIRDWATCHING IN THE MILTON ULLADULLA AREA

This guide was prepared by members of Milton Ulladulla Birdwatchers and Birdlife Shoalhaven and is based on their observations and experience in the area.

### Outings:

- MUD Birdwatchers – every second Friday, 8am start with coffee at a local cafe afterwards;
- Birdlife Shoalhaven – every third Sunday, 8.30am start; bring morning tea and lunch.

### Contact for information:

- MUD Birdwatchers – [mubirdclub@gmail.com](mailto:mubirdclub@gmail.com)
- Birdlife Shoalhaven – [shoalhaven@birdlife.org.au](mailto:shoalhaven@birdlife.org.au)



### 1. WARDEN HEAD

From the Princes Highway in Ulladulla, turn east into Deering Street at the round-about at the top of the hill and park at the Lighthouse.

Look out for sea birds, whales (June/July and returning October/November), dolphins and seals around the rocks. The best viewing for birds is in the afternoon with the sun behind you and on calmer days after a strong southerly:

- Fairy Prions, Wedge-tailed & Short-tailed Shearwaters (spring to autumn) and Fluttering Shearwaters (winter);
- Wandering (rare), Black-browed, Shy (type), Indian Yellow-nosed and Buller's Albatross (all during winter and spring);
- Pomarine and Arctic Jaeger (summer);
- Sooty Oystercatcher, Terns & occasionally, Eastern Reef Egret on the rock shelf below;
- White-bellied Sea-Eagles commonly cruise the cliff edges and occasionally a Square-tailed Kite (spring to autumn).

There are good ocean views from the walking tracks in both directions from the Lighthouse and a good range of little birds as well as the ubiquitous Parrots and heathland Honeyeaters:

- White-throated Treecreeper, Variegated Fairy-wren, Thornbills, Spotted Pardalote, Golden Whistler, Eastern Yellow Robin and Red-browed Finch are fairly common;
- Brown and Grey Goshawks and the cryptic Bassian Thrush have been seen along the walking tracks.

### 2. BURRILL LAKE

From the Princes Highway, 4.7 km south from Ulladulla PO, turn left after crossing the bridge and park at the Lions Park. There is usually a good range of water birds on the lake, both sides of the highway bridge. Walk towards the beach, across the bridge over a little creek:

- Teal, Nankeen Night-Heron (often roosting in the trees along the creek), Buff-banded Rail, Azure Kingfisher & Yellow Thornbills (in the Casuarinas);
- A friendly Lewin's Rail took up residence in the creek for several months during 2014;
- When the large fig tree on the beach side of the creek is fruiting, Eastern Koel, Satin Bowerbirds and Figbirds often feed in it.

Walk along the lake edge or drive to the lake entrance for Red-capped Plover, Double-banded Plover (winter) and Hooded Plover (always a good chance).

The little fresh water dam off Bada Crescent is good for a surprising range of water birds. It is the best site in the area for Latham's Snipe (summer). There were up to 30 Freckled Ducks here during winter in 2014.

### 3. LEO DRIVE TO NARRAWALLEE INLET

Follow Matron Porter Drive towards Narrawallee inlet, turn left into Macleay Street just before the inlet and left into Leo Drive. The walking track, constructed by Shoalhaven City Council in 2014, starts beside a little pump station on the right. Walk to the end of the formed track, about 1 km, and then right along the 4WD track to the inlet:

- Common small birds along the track include Fairy-wrens, White-throated Treecreeper, Varied Sittella, Thornbills, Brown Gerygone, Leaden Flycatcher, Black-faced Monarch and Whistlers;
- White-headed Pigeon, Brown Cuckoo-Dove and Satin Bowerbirds are all fairly common;
- At the inlet look for Cormorants, Azure and Sacred Kingfishers and with luck, Striated Heron.

### 4. WILFORDS LANE WETLANDS

Turn west from the Princes Highway at the Milton lights into Croobyar Road then left into Wilfords Lane. Drive to the end of Wilfords Lane (about 3 km) and park before the sharp right turn into private property. Straw-necked Ibis (uncommon around here) and White-necked Heron can be seen along Wilfords Lane.

The wetlands back up from Burrill Lake and there will be more birds after good rains. A scope is useful as the land between the road and the wetlands is private property:

- Common birds on the wetlands include Swans, Teal, Black-winged Stilt, Black-fronted Dotterel, Masked Lapwing and Sharp-tailed Sandpiper (summer);
- Uncommon birds for the area that have been seen here include Pink-eared Duck, Australasian Shoveler, Red-necked Avocet & Wood Sandpiper;
- Look for Nankeen Kestrel on power poles, Brown Falcon and Jacky Winter along fences and Pipits in the grass.

### 5. LAKE CONJOLA ENTRANCE

Turn east from the Princes Highway, at the Lake Conjola turnoff, about 7 km north of Milton PO, and continue 7 km though the township and caravan park to the carpark by the edge of the lake. Follow the boardwalk to the beach and walk northwards to the lake entrance. This is a good location for migrating and resident Shorebirds:

- Common Shorebirds include Eastern Curlew, Bar-tailed Godwit, Pied Oystercatcher, Red-capped Plover, Hooded Plover and Red-necked Stint. Lesser Sand Plover and Sanderlings were recorded here during December 2014;
- Crested and Caspian Terns, Little Terns and Fairy Terns (summer), and commonly, all four Cormorants.

## 6. YATTE YATTAH NATURE RESERVE

Take the access road on the west side of the Princes Highway, six hundred metres north of the Lake Conjola turnoff, 7.7 km from Milton PO, and park on the old highway pavement. Walk downhill through the gate, over one stile and 200 metres or so to another stile leading to the park signage. Continue downhill to the power lines. There are several tracks down into the rainforest gullies but it is usually pretty dark and it may be hard to see birds:

- Wonga Pigeon, Brown Cuckoo-Dove and Green Catbird can usually be head down in the rainforest. Topknot Pigeons often feed in the trees along the margins;
- Common small birds include Thornbills, Brown and White-throated Gerygone, Fairy-wrens and Black-faced Monarch (summer). White-winged Trillers and Satin Flycatchers have been seen occasionally. A Spectacled Monarch was recorded once down in the rainforest;
- The eucalypt forest is a good location for Eastern Rosella, not a common bird in this area.

## 7. LITTLE FOREST PLATEAU

From the Princes Highway, north past the Lake Conjola turnoff and just before the passing lane ends, turn west into Porter's Creek Dam Road. Drive up the escarpment (look for Lyrebirds crossing the road) to a tee intersection 10 km from the highway. Turn left (right goes to Mt Bushwalker carpark) and head towards the dam for 2.5 km. There is a little carpark on the left with a sign "Little Forest Walking Track".

The narrow walking track winds through thick bush for about 500 m then opens up and continues through heathland towards Florance Head. The track to the right goes to Rusden Head. About 1.5 km from the track intersection, there are good views along the coast from the edge of the escarpment.

- This is a good area for a large range of migrating Honeyeaters during autumn – Yellow, White-naped, Crescent, Noisy Friarbird and both Wattlebirds;
- The heathland is the best chance in the area to see the Gound Parrot, Southern Emu-wren and Beautiful Firetail;
- Around the cliffs and boulders beside the road, a couple of hundred metres back from the car park, is a good location for Rock Warblers.

## WHERE TO FIND SOME UNCOMMON BIRDS

- **Wonga Pigeon** – Remnant rainforest patches in Yatte Yattah Nature Reserve and at Milton behind the school.
- **Topknot Pigeon** – When it is fruiting, the huge fig tree in Mick Ryan Park on the Princes Highway at Milton.
- **Black Bittern** – Conjola Creek during summer breeding. Best chance is to canoe upstream a couple of km from the boat ramp at Fisherman's Paradise.
- **Australian Spotted Crake** – Sand flats in Burrill Lake opposite 33 Rackham Crescent.
- **Australian Pied Oystercatcher** – Sand bars in Burrill Lake & Lake Conjola.
- **Sooty Oystercatcher** – Common on the rock shelves around Warden Head & down to Racecourse Beach.
- **Hooded Plover** – Burrill Lake & Lake Conjola entrances and Rennie's Beach most of the year. Look for the fenced areas during the summer breeding season but keep clear.
- **Whimbrel** – Sand bars in Narrawallee Inlet near low tide.
- **Little Tern** – Burrill Lake & Lake Conjola entrances during the summer breeding season.
- **Fairy Tern** – Often with Little Terns.
- **Glossy Black-Cockatoo** – Casuarina trees in South Pacific Heathland Reserve off Dowling Street in Ulladulla.
- **Green Catbird** – Yatte Yattah Nature Reserve.
- **Southern Emu-wren** – Little Forest Plateau heathland.
- **Olive Whistler** – Little Forest Plateau along the gravel roads to Poters Creek Dam and Mt Bushwalker.
- **Beautiful Firetail** – Little Forest Plateau heathland.

## SIGHTINGS OF SOME BIRDS RARE IN THE AREA

- **Freckled Duck** – Up to 30 were in the freshwater dam off Bada Crescent, Burrill Lake during July and August 2014.
- **Wandering Albatross** – Seen offshore occasionally most years during the cuttlefish season (August to October).
- **Lewin's Rail** – The little creek running into Burrill Lake at Lions Park from June to August 2014.
- **Beach Stone-curlew** – The only recent reliable sighting was at the Burrill Lake entrance in December 2012.
- **Lesser Sand Plover and Sanderling** – Lake Conjola entrance December 2014.
- **Red-necked Avocet** – Wilfords Lane wetlands June 2014.
- **Wood Sandpiper** – Wilfords Lane wetlands June 2014.
- **Ground Parrot** – They do exist as a friend of a friend of someone who was once in MUD Birdwatchers saw one on the Little Forest Plateau walking track to Florance Head.
- **Spectacled Monarch** – Yatte Yattah Nature Reserve.

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