

Woodlands on the Wing

Issue 16 Autumn 2018

The Great Western Woodlands in Western Australia is the world's largest remaining temperate woodland. The Birds of the Great Western Woodlands (GWW) Project aims to assess distribution, population status, movements and ecology of the bird species there, to better inform the conservation and management of this significant region. The Great Western Woodlands Committee (BirdLife WA) oversees the project, which is now in its seventh year, 2018. The first five years (2012 to 2016) were funded by a partnership between BirdLife Australia and The Nature Conservancy

Spring surveys 2017

Survey Teams visited Frank Hann/Peak Charles, Karroun Hill, Jilbadji and Credo Station.

Most were completed successfully. Parts of Peak Charles were found to be inaccessible due to boggy roads even though the last rainfall had fallen some considerable time previously. Although experienced 4WD drivers with high clearance vehicles could negotiate these sections with care, it was decided not to take the risk.

Earlier this year (2018), Terry Powell surveyed Cave Hill on his own initiative. A rare summer survey discomforted by the weather but providing very useful survey data.

Frank Hann/Peak Charles 2017 Survey Report by Maris Lauva

This survey area consists of two distinct sections. The Frank Hann National Park in the West and Peak Charles National Park to the East. The two areas are connected by the Norseman/Lake King road, a 4WD only track along which several survey sites are located.

The group met up in the early afternoon at Lake King. After a briefing we headed east to enter Frank Hann. The road was well maintained here and the three teams leap-frogged each other doing surveys along the way in to our first campsite. There is a choice of campsites available including one at Lillian Stokes Rock near the entrance to the park where we saw **Shy Heathwren**. However we went on to an old road camp site near FH8 which was Central to our initial surveys. We intended to do most of the Frank Hann portion the next day and then complete it on the way out to Peak Charles the day after. Things went as planned so we were on our way to Peak Charles on day 3.



Shy Heathwren Photo Ray Walker

A survey by Terry Powell earlier in the year indicated the Lake-King - Norseman road was in poor condition and my recce confirmed it needed to be negotiated with caution. Both our assessments were that sections would likely be impassable should they be wet. We split into 3 teams to allow everyone to tackle the poor stretches of road each at their own most comfortable speed and all arrived safely at Peak Charles campground after completing surveys along the way. Due to limited space at the campground the plan was to arrive at the end of a weekend. We saw several vehicles coming the other way and fortunately got the timing right so that the Peak Charles campground was near deserted. A happy night around the campfire followed. The plan was to complete the surveys the following day. It would be a big day but with an early start and a bit of effort quite doable.

There had been a deluge much earlier in the year and it appeared that the effects were still being felt. We managed a few completed surveys but a bog south of PC21 required serious thought.

Although it was probably passable 4 vehicles would have had to make a return trip across the soft, rutted section digging it up each time. It was also likely even worse sections lay ahead.

Reluctantly the survey was cut short. Faced with an unexpected afternoon off, people were able to explore the rest of the (dry) park and do ad hoc surveys elsewhere. Nice birds like **Square tailed Kite** and **Peregrine Falcon** were seen. Return to Perth the next day offered a choice of routes. The Lake King –Norseman road was chosen by some, going south was out, and some returned via the Norseman-Esperance and Cascades roads. A longer route but with some determined driving got back to Perth around dark, adding our first **Emus** to the list.

The Participants

George Shevtsov, Linda Brotherton, Darryl James, Susan Quartermaine, Peter Jacoby, Libby McGill, Digby Knapp, Sue Abbotts, Xenia Dennet, Maris Lauva, Claire Gerrish,



Square-tailed Kite Photo – Maris Lauva

The Bird List:

Emu, Mound builders	Emu
Birds of Prey	Brown Goshawk, Wedge-tailed Eagle
Parrots	Ringneck, Purple-crowned Lorikeet
Night Birds	Southern Boobook, Tawny Frogmouth, Australian Owlet-nightjar
Treecreepers	Rufous Treecreeper
Wrens, Pardalotes	Blue-breasted Fairywren, Spotted Pardalote, Striated Pardalote
Scrubwrens, Allies	Weebill, Inland Thornbill, Yellow-rumped Thornbill, White-browed Scrubwren, Redthroat
Honeyeaters	Brown-headed H' eater, Tawny-crowned H' eater, White-fronted H' eater, Brown H' eater, White-eared H' eater, Purple-gaped H' eater, Yellow-plumed H' eater, New Holland H' eater, Yellow-throated Miner, Spiny-cheeked H' eater, Red Wattlebird
Chats, Robins	Red-capped Robin, Western Yellow Robin, Souther Scrub-robin
Quail-thrush, Allies	Chestnut Quail-thrush
Whistlers	Western Whistler, Rufous Whistler, Grey Shrike-thrush, Crested Bellbird
Flycatchers	Grey Fantail, Willie Wagtail
Cuckoo-shrikes	Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike
Woodswallows	Dusky Woodswallow
Magpie, Butcherbirds	Grey Currawong, Butcherbird, Grey Butcherbird
Ravens, Crows	Little Crow
Swallows	Welcome Swallow, Tree Martin
Thrushes, Allies	Silvereye

Credo Station Spring 2017 –

Survey report – Mark Binns

On the 9th of September Wayne O'Sullivan and I headed out and camped just south of Credo for an early start. Just the two of us so we needed to keep up a cracking pace to get all the required surveys done.

We worked our way through all the fixed sites and a good number of random ones then separated and I headed up to Ballard and Wayne to Coolgardie for other commitments. I later came back down to Credo and added a number more surveys to the data.

This was a remarkable time in Credo. Good rains had put a good amount of water in the lakes and the numbers and variety of waterbirds and waders was a delight, though big numbers to tally up. 140 **Freckled Ducks** amongst them, even **Spoonbill**. I returned a number of times to each lake always finding some more.



Yellow-billed Spoonbill. Not often seen in the GWW.
Photo Mark Binns

The rains had also brought on some blossom and in places the numbers of **Purple-crowned Lorikeets** and **honeyeaters** were very high, along with their noisy business. It was at times difficult to notice the quieter birds with so much going on. One site in particular I gave up counting **Lorikeets** at 70 to try to get other birds of which there were plenty but I could hear almost nothing for the screeching of the flocks of Lorikeets tearing through the site.

One night dogs chased a kangaroo right through the camp and the next morning a Red-backed Kingfisher landed in a tree in the camp and watched me eating breakfast. It was a delightful and interesting trip, seeing the country after the rain with so much life.



Red-backed Kingfisher Photo Mark Binns

The Bird List:

- Emu, Mound builders** Emu
- Birds of Prey** Brown Falcon, Nankeen Kestral

- Pigeons, Doves** Common Bronzewing
- Cockatoos, Parrots** Purple-crowned Lorikeet
- Night Birds** Tawny Frogmouth, Owllet Nightjar
- Wrens, Pardalotes** Striated Pardalote, Spotted Pardalote, Splendid Fairywren

- Scrubwrens, Allies** Chestnut-rumped Thornbill, Inland Thornbill, Western Thornbill, Weebill, Shy Heathwren
- Honeyeaters** Spiny-cheeked H'eater, Brown H'eater, Yellow-throated Miner, Red Wattlebird, Yellow-plumed H'eater, Brown-headed H'eater, Purple-gaped H'eater
- Chats, Robins** Southern Scrub-robin

- Babblers** White-browed Babbler

- Quail-thrush, Allies** Varied Sitella, Chestnut Quail-thrush
- Whistlers, Shrike-thrush** Western Whistler, Gilbert's Whistler, Grey Shrike-thrush, Crested Bellbird
- Magpie-lark, Flycatchers** Willie Wagtail
- Woodswallows** Dusky Woodswallow, Black-faced Woodswallow
- Magpie, Butcherbirds** Grey Currawong

Jilbadji Spring 2017

Survey Report by Lorraine Chyne



Gilbert's Whistler Photo - Maris Lauva

Fourteen keen participants gathered at Southern Cross for briefing before travelling to Jilbadji to start surveying with the sites enroute to the campsite.

Notable birds seen on the way in were several **Gilberts Whistlers** and **Emu** with young.

The next day we split into three teams with one team completing survey points 7,8, 11 and 12 along the Banker Mount Day Road. The others headed south and then west as far as the Forrestania Road.

Our team encountered burnt mallee and *allocasuarina* at sites 6,14 and 15 which required careful steps. Species numbers were low but produced a lifer (the **Shy Heathwren**) for me. One unusual sight at survey point 16 was a **magpie's nest** constructed entirely of grass rather than the usual sticks which were available in the area.

All groups headed south again the next day leap-frogging each other for the final day of surveying along Forrestania road down to Lake Cronin reserve. With recent rainfall in the area Lake Cronin was full. The marker for JR26 could not be found despite Graham's stripping off trousers to look. One team returned to camp via Banker Mt Day road from the west - Roads were confusing with one short stretch signposted "no access" in one direction but not the other - There was traffic on it blythely ignoring the sign.

Our campsite area around JR9 was a great spot. Several **Scrub Robins** were seen here by most of the participants. Most of the Southern sites were completed with a return trip from this campsite as it is centrally located. Jilbadji is a lovely GWW area with varied habitat and some beautiful stretches of sandplain. As a final bonus Claire and Maris saw **Chestnut Quail-thrush** by the side of the road on their way out of the reserve.

The trip was enjoyed by everyone and the L plate leader Lorraine thanks all participants for their patience and understanding. (**Ed** - Lorraine led a well-planned and organised survey which helped our enjoyment greatly.)



Southern Scrub-robin Photo Maris Lauva

The Bird List:

Emu, Mound builders	Emu
Birds of Prey	Brown Falcon, Nankeen Kestral
Pigeons, Doves	Common Bronzewing
Cockatoos, Parrots	Purple-crowned Lorikeet
Night Birds	Tawny Frogmouth, Owlet Nightjar
Wrens, Pardalotes	Striated Pardalote, Spotted Pardalote, Splendid Fairywren
Scrubwrens, Allies	Chestnut-rumped Thornbill, Inland Thornbill, Western Thornbill, Weebill, Shy Heathwren
Honeyeaters	Spiny-cheeked H' eater, Brown H' eater, Yellow-throated Miner, Red Wattlebird, Yellow-plumed H' eater, Brown-headed H' eater, Purple-gaped H' eater
Chats, Robins	Southern Scrub-robin
Babblers	White-browed Babbler
Quail-thrush, Allies	Varied Sitella, Chestnut Quail-thrush
Whistlers, Shrike-thrush	Western Whistler, Gilbert's Whistler, Grey Shrike-thrush, Crested Bellbird
Magpie-lark, Flycatchers	Willie Wagtail
Woodswallows	Dusky Woodswallow, Black-faced Woodswallow
Magpie, Butcherbirds	Grey Currawong

Cave Hill Summer 2018

Survey Report by Terry Powell

On January 20 2018 I travelled to the GWW to commence a survey of the Cave Hill sites. The weather was somewhat unpredictable, Cyclone Joyce had caused many thunderstorms in the area a couple of weeks previously but it seemed there would be a week of reasonable weather to allow travel through the area. However, for much of the time the temperature was around 40 degrees each day and there were numerous severe thunderstorms.

After surveying 7 sites along Victoria Rock Rd (commencing at McDermid Rock), I turned East onto the Cave Hill road. It was in poor condition and I had to dig out of a bog in short order. I decided then that because the road would be progressively worse I should go to the Victoria Rock campsite - bypassing a number of survey sites to be completed later. Whilst at the campsite a violent thunderstorm broke over me.

Next morning I decided to move to the Cave Hill sites (via Coolgardie) and leave the remaining Victoria Rock Road sites to dry out. I managed to survey 4 sites but couldn't reach CH19 or the four sites beyond due to deep water in ruts on the track at 31°37'42"S, 121°08'46"E. Easy turning around at this point as there are flat rocks just off the track although the track from CH20 westwards to this point is badly damaged. Despite further weather delays and having to travel via Coolgardie again I eventually got to and surveyed sites **CH15, CH16, CH14, CH13, CH22** on the 24th.

On the 25th I got through sites **CH12, CH11, CH23** and **CH24**. This left sites **CH12, CH11, CH23** and **CH24** for the 25th. The following day on the way back to Hyden I looked in on Jilbadji reserve and completed a couple of surveys there. Lake Cronin was still inaccessible at that time.

The Bird List:

Emu, Mound builders	Emu
Birds of Prey	Brown Falcon
Cockatoos, Parrots	Australian Ringneck.
Night Birds	Tawny Frogmouth
Wrens, Pardalotes	Blue-breasted Fairywren, Striated Pardalote
Scrubwrens, Allies	Weebill, Inland Thornbill, Chestnut rumped Thornbill, Redthroat
Honeyeaters	White-fronted H' eater, White-eared H' eater, Brown H' eater, Spiny-cheeked H' eater, Red Wattlebird
Chats, Robins	Jacky Winter, Western Yellow Robin, Southern Scrub-robin
Babblers	White-browed Babbler
Quail-thrush, Allies	Varied Sitella
Whistlers, Shrike-thrush	Rufous Whistler, Grey Shrike-thrush
Magpie-lark, Flycatchers	Willie Wagtail
Cuckoo-shrikes	Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike
Magpie, Butcherbirds	Grey Currawong, Grey Butcherbird
Ravens, Crows	<i>Corvid SP</i>
Swallows	Tree Martin

Proposed Training/survey.

Plans are being made to run a birding ID and GPS training school in the GWW later in the year. Efforts will be made to accommodate people not having a 4WD. We are looking for a GWW location where camping is not required. The aim will be to equip interested people with skills needed to identify birds of the GWW and how to carry out the survey process. Part of the training will be out in the bush, taking part in actual surveys, Further details will be Emailed later in the year. If you think you may be interested please advise Lorraine Chyne, or Libby Macgill, surveys coordinators at GWW@birdlife.org.au.

Birds in Focus

CRIMSON CHAT

EPETHIANURA TRICOLOR

Endemic to Australia. A bird of semi-arid Mulga and woodland found in low scrub and tussocky ground. They usually breed in late winter/Spring but can breed almost at any time after substantial rain. They favour low dense shrubs and a flock will



Adult male breeding Photo Les George

breed in large numbers in shrubs scattered across an open space or clustered around a water source. Nests are built low down, deep in the shrub.

Similar in size and shape to Orange Chats

they are easily distinguished by reddish to rufous or pinkish

plumage on uppertail coverts and underbody in adults and immatures. Adults differ greatly between sexes with males having stronger red plumage, Immatures differ less and Juveniles not at all. There are no variations in plumage throughout their range.

Widespread east of the Great Dividing Range, they are absent from the South West, most of the Kimberly and top end. Large irruptions have been recorded following substantial rains. At times it appears nearly every suitable shrub over a considerable area houses a nest. Their movements are variously described as nomadic or seasonal but are known to be present year round in some areas. (Such as Carnarvon). They have been recorded during surveys at all GWW survey areas except for the two most southerly ones, Cave Hill and Jilbadji.

Their diet mainly consists of insects but occasionally includes nectar or seeds. They generally feed on the ground but have been observed in low shrubs, especially *Eremophila*, probing

flowers in search of insects. They drink water when available, being observed at rainwater pools but avoiding stock troughs containing saline borewater. A study saw them drink mainly in the morning, some drank mid afternoon but none during the middle of the day.



Adult female Photo Les George



Juvenile Photo James Mason



Adult Male Non Breeding Photo Tony Paliser

Helena and Aurora Range saved from mining

It's official!

On the eve of Christmas, Environment Minister Stephen Dawson and the WA Government said 'no' to mining at Helena and Aurora Range.

Minister Dawson announced that:

- Mineral Resources' proposal to mine iron-ore at the Helena and Aurora Range would not proceed
- The decision is final and without appeal
- Investigations to create a Class-A reserve over the Helena and Aurora Range to commence

The GWW Committee is thrilled that after years of campaigning, the Government heeded the advice of scientists, stood by the EPA, and listened to the voices of the community.

The Helena and Aurora Range is one of our State treasures. We have always argued that the Helena and Aurora Range is worth more to the people of Western Australia if it is left intact and fully protected.

It is by far the largest, highest, and most spectacular banded-ironstone range in the Yilgarn region. It has unique landforms, is a biodiversity hotspot - with five plants found nowhere else in the world - and has a high number of Aboriginal heritage sites.

"Once mined, these landforms cannot be restored and today's decision means the McGowan Labor Government is preserving this range for future generations. This will ensure that the range can be enjoyed by locals and visitors to the region and maintained as a tourist destination", Mr Dawson said

The Environmental Protection Authority had *twice* rejected mining at the Helena and Aurora Range, deeming it "environmentally unacceptable". It also recommended that the range should be protected in a Class-A reserve.

West Australian Premier Mark McGowan added, "I didn't want to be the Premier who destroyed something that is unique around the world. We don't chop down our old growth forests. We don't harpoon whales. We don't drill for oil in Ningaloo reef. We are not going to knock over that mountain range."

The economic and social benefits of mining the Helena and Aurora Range were always going to be small. Following Minister Dawson's announcement, Mineral Resources announced to the Australian Securities Exchange that its proposal would not have been profitable and few, if any, jobs would be lost.

GWW Committee would like to thank everyone who wrote and met with our State politicians, made a submission to the Public Environment Review, and signed petitions. This decision may have been very different without your support. It was an amazing show of "people power".

Although this is wonderful news, the Helena and Aurora Range still needs to be safeguarded through secure conservation tenure. Until then, it remains vulnerable to mining.

Mr Dawson said, "I will now begin working with my ministerial colleagues to investigate options for creating a class A reserve over the Helena Aurora Range to ensure that this unique location is preserved for future generations."

We are now encouraging the McGowan Government to protect the Helena and Aurora Range in a Class-A reserve or National Park in its current term of government.

Mark Henryon, Shapelle McNee.

Plants of the GWW in Focus

What is an Eremophila?

Andrew Brown

Commonly known as poverty bushes, emu bushes and native fuchsias, *Eremophila* species are easily the best known members of the Myoporeae (formerly the family Myoporaceae), a group of plants that are largely endemic to Australia and also include the genera *Bontia*, *Calamphoreus*, *Diocirea* and *Myoporum*. *Eremophila* is by far the largest of these genera and in the 207 years that have elapsed since Robert Brown named *Eremophila oppositifolia* in 1810 some 250 different species have been discovered. They are particularly abundant in Western Australia where at least 200 species are found and about 80% are endemic.

With the exception of the high rainfall lower south-west corner between Busselton and Albany, *Eremophila* species can be found throughout Western Australia and occupy a variety of habitats from rocky hill tops and saline washes to sand dunes and hardpan flats. They are particularly common in low rainfall inland areas.

Eremophila species can grow as solitary plants or in dense thickets and may be short or long-lived. Short-lived species often germinate following disturbance such as fire or light grading, grow rapidly for a few years during which time they flower and produce copious amounts of seed and then die. Examples of short-lived species are *E. lucida* and *E. microtheca*. Long-lived species such as *E. fraseri* and *E. oldfieldii* are usually fewer in number and are generally more scattered in the landscape.

Eremophila species vary from prostrate ground covers such as *E. serpens*, to small or large shrubs and medium sized trees. Perhaps the most well-known tree species is *E. oldfieldii* which is common in the northern Wheatbelt of Western Australia.

Leaves of *Eremophila* species range from flattened to terete. These may be alternately arranged (most species) or oppositely arranged such as in *E. oppositifolia* and *E. arachnoides*. A few species have leaves arranged in whorls of three. Leaf size varies enormously from 0.5 mm to 100 mm or more in length and 0.2 to over 35 mm wide. Leaf margins may be entire, undulate or toothed. Leaf colour varies from green to grey and leaves may be smooth or hairy.

Although flowers normally appear on new seasons growth a few species produce flowers on old wood, an example is the unusual *E. ramiflora*.

All *Eremophila* flowers have an inner, often tubular, corolla (petals) of five fused segments and an outer calyx (sepals) of five usually spreading segments. These flowers, which are often more than one per leaf axil, are either sessile (lack a flower stalk) or held on a peduncle of varying length. *Eremophila decipiens* for instance has a long S shaped peduncle while *E. glabra* has almost no peduncle at all. Although red, purple, lilac and blue are the most common flower colours and include species such as the red flowered *E. decipiens*, purple flowered *E. strongylophylla*, lilac flowered *E. gilesii* and blue flowered *E. gibsonii*. There are also white flowered species such as *E. interstans* and even green flowered species such as *E. virens* and *E. serrulata*. Some species also have flowers with spectacular combinations of colours. *Eremophila mirabilis* for instance has pink and white flowers with prominent purple blotches and *E. flaccida* has blue, brown and mauve-pink flowers. The most beautiful are the ones with additional

markings such as the purple, brown and cream combinations found in *E. fraseri*.

There are five basic flower shapes within the genus. The most common is the two-three flower shape with two petals above and three below, an example is *E. drummondii*. In this group the stamens are generally retained within the corolla but the style is usually slightly longer than the upper petals. Some 132 Western Australian species have this type of flower shape. The second most common are the four-one flower shape with four petals above and one prominently reflexed petal below, an example is *E. glabra*. In this group the stamens are always much longer than the corolla. Some 30 species with this flower shape are known from Western Australia. Species that have the four-one flower shape were at one time included in *Stenochilus* but the genus is no longer recognised as being distinct from *Eremophila*.

The other three flower shapes, which are essentially variations of the above two, are much rarer and when combined comprise just 36 Western Australian species. These include *E. campanulata* which has unusual bell shaped flowers, *E. latrobei* which has tubular flowers with the petals bent slightly back at the tip and the widespread *E. fraseri* which has very showy, brightly coloured flowers with the four upper petals and one large lower petal bent back away from the corolla tube.

If you want to learn more about the genus *Eremophila*, including how to identify its species, there are two books on the subject – ‘*Eremophila and Allied Genera: A Monograph of the Plant Family Myoporaceae*’ and ‘*A Field Guide to the Eremophilas of Western Australia*’.



Photo Andrew Brown

Eremophila drummondii has flowers with two petals above and three below.



Photo Andrew Brown

Eremophila glabra has flowers with four petals above and one prominently reflexed petal below.

Treatment of Snakebite

Volunteers of the Great Western Woodlands project have not experienced any snakebite incidents. Snakes are a small, but constant risk. With the usual care they do not present much of a threat. Nevertheless we must stay aware and be prepared just in case. Some people are possibly not up to date with the latest advice on first aid so this article gives a brief summary of what should be done in case of snakebite. We strongly urge everyone to please visit the St John Ambulance webpage for the full instructions to ensure you are completely up to date.

PLEASE READ THE FULL ST JOHN INFO SHEET.

<http://stjohn.org.au> :FIRST AID FACTS :SNAKE BITE

If snakebite is suspected the victim should remain perfectly still, preferably lying or sitting down. **DO NOT WALK TO THE CAR OR ANYWHERE ELSE.** Everybody venturing out in the bush should be carrying two crepe bandages. One bandage should be immediately applied starting below the bite and wound tightly up the limb. It must **not** be so tight as to restrict blood flow. **(The venom does not move through the bloodstream).** The second bandage is used to attach a splint to minimise movement of the affected limb.

A purpose made snake bandage

There are products marketed as specifically designed for application to snake bites. The bandages are wider and longer than most standard bandages. They have a set of rectangles printed on them. When the bandage is applied with the correct amount of pressure these rectangles stretch into squares giving a visual guide to how tight it should be.

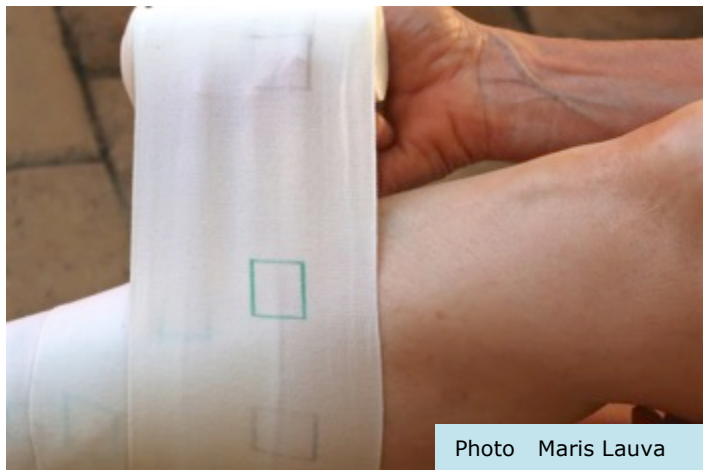


Photo Maris Lauva

Birdlife does not endorse these products. Do your own research before purchase.

Camping Sites for GWW Surveys.

Jilbadji Nature Reserve offers many opportunities for bush camping. Starting with the first area of woodland not far from Great Eastern Highway there are many sites throughout the reserve where camping spots for multiple tents are easily found. The area along each side of the track leading past site JR9 recently accommodated nine tents and campers comfortably. Located centrally the group was able to survey all sites with a couple of days of easy to and fro without moving camp at all. Lake Cronin does not allow camping but there are toilets and picnic facilities. A nice spot to gather when starting or ending a trip.

At the Northern end, just the other side of Great Eastern Highway is Karalee Rock camping ground.

Frank Hann National Park has two convenient sites from which the whole area can be accessed. Lillian Stokes rocks at the Eastern end, and an old road worker camping area near site FH8 (32.58.04.6S 120.17.32.6E) offer room and a nice environment. Which one you choose would depend on how you plan to do your surveys. The group this spring stayed at the woodland site for two nights.

Peak Charles National Park is quite restricted for good camping spots, especially if you have more than a couple of tents. Pleasant, open woodland sites are nowhere entirely convenient to survey requirements. Surveys must be done whilst travelling from Frank Hann or else an "out and back" day trip from Peak Charles along a poor track. The campground at Peak Charles is good with 9 sites and good toilets (some sharing of sites possible) but reservations cannot be made so popular periods are best avoided. Further south near site PC20 a side track opens to some suitable space which, however, is not as central to the survey sites as the campground. We have had trouble locating other suitable sites.

Other survey areas. We will provide information in future issues. If you are thinking about visiting a particular area in the immediate future please contact us for information at GWW@birdlife.org.au.

What's Coming Up? GWW 2018 Surveys

Monday April 23 – 29 Anzac Day Campout to Cave Hill followed by Jilbadji.

Monday May 14 – 20 Fraser Range followed by Dundas.

Monday September 24 – 28 Karroun Hill. This will follow on straight after the Birdlife ReMAP campout.

Monday October 8 – 11 Transline.

This year we will be trialling the idea of doing two reasonably adjacent areas consecutively. We would need some birders who are comfortable identifying the birds of the GWW by sight and by call but provided we have that core of expertise participants with all levels of skill are welcome. These areas are remote, and for safety reasons 4 x 4 vehicles are required. Participants must be completely self-sufficient with regards to shelter, food, water and fuel. Not all areas are suitable for caravans and camper trailers. A minimum of two vehicles for each survey is required.

Monday April 23 – 29 Anzac Day campout to Cave Hill and Jilbadji Great Western Woodlands surveys. These two areas are situated about 80km south of the Great Eastern Highway between Yellowdine and Coolgardie.

The campout will commence with a briefing at the Boondi Rock free campground on Monday April 23 at 6pm. The campground is situated on the north side of Great Eastern Highway 105km east of Southern Cross and 81km west of Coolgardie in the Boorabin National Park. On Tuesday we will travel south on the Burra Rock Road to Cave Hill public campsite where we will set up camp.

After the Cave Hill surveys we will return to Coolgardie to restock then meet at the Karalee Rock free campsite 19km east of Yellowdine before entering Jilbadji. Leader to be announced.

Enquiries: gww@birdlife.org.au.

Monday May 14 – 20 Fraser Range and Dundas Campout Great Western Woodlands surveys. The Fraser Range survey area starts 75km east of Norseman and finishes at Newman Rock, and includes both sides of the Eyre Highway. There is accommodation at Fraser Range Station as well as campsites.

The campout will commence with a briefing at 6pm on Monday May 14 at Fraser Range Station. At the conclusion of these surveys the group will reconvene 17.5km south of Norseman on the track into the Dundas area after resupplying in Norseman if necessary. If rain has fallen access into Dundas may not be possible. Should that be the case we hope to have an alternative area selected. Leader to be announced.

Monday 24 – 28 September Karroun Hill. The GWW survey will follow on after the nearby Birdlife Remlap Campout. The survey will commence on Monday 24 September. Further details be sent closer to the date.

Contact email address: gww@birdlife.org.au

In addition to these "official" surveys we welcome people getting together with friends and heading out to the GWW to do a survey at their own timing and pace. We can let you know the areas most in need of a survey but you are welcome to survey any of the 9 areas you please. We will support individual and group efforts with information and advice. Ours is a long-term project involving multiple revisits to survey sites. The aim is to have surveyed each of the 9 survey areas throughout the widest range of seasonal and climatic conditions possible so the more surveys undertaken the better. If as an individual you are looking for someone to accompany you we will make every effort to find like-minded people to go along with you to form a group. Likewise, if your group could use another participant we'll try to find one for you.

GWW Committee Notes

From Alasdair Bulloch

Oh my goodness, what huge and successful year 2017 has been, thanks to the enthusiasm from our Committee and volunteers.

We, and the community have successfully prevailed on Environmental Minister Dawson to reject mining the Helena and Aurora Range. Our thanks go to Mark Henryon for his magnificent submission to the EPA on behalf of BirdLife WA and to all BLWA members for their support during that campaign. The next step is to have the State Government declare the HAR an "A" Class reserve, hopefully before the next State Election.

The 2017 GWW bird surveys have been a great success story thanks to Maris, Libby and Lorriane's organisational expertise and our wonderful survey volunteers. Over 380 bird data surveys were submitted.

A small subcommittee has commenced analysis of the data gathered since the 2016 report. See the full and summary reports at

<http://www.birdlife.org.au/projects/great-western-woodlands/gww-report>

We anticipate the new analysis being done will give us new insights into the management and conservation of birds in the GWW.

There are a host of other activities that the GWW Committee have been implementing, such as:

- Fund raising so that we can continue supporting our bird surveyors.
- Having the GWW recognised as a "Key biodiversity area".
- Assisting BLWA with "Wheatbelt Community Engagement" scoping study.
- Continuing mentoring new team leaders and conducting training courses, plus many other activities.

My thanks go to John Skillen for his input into the wellbeing of the GWW Committee and its members and to all of you that contributed your valuable time and expertise to the GWW.

HELP WANTED

Editing Woodlands on the Wing

The Great Western Woodlands project committee is looking for a volunteer to help with production of this newsletter. You would edit and proof-read articles, format and arrange their appearance and generally prepare it for publishing. Familiarity with Microsoft Word is an advantage but learners gratefully accepted and you will receive training & support. Commitment would generally be for a 3 or 4 week period Spring and Autumn. Work can be done at home at your own pace. If you do not have access to Microsoft Word, loan of a laptop can be arranged.

Enquiries to Maris Lauva

gww@birdlife.org.au 0403029051

Become a member of the GWW Committee

The Birdlife GWW Bird Project has been continuously running since 2012 and managed entirely with volunteers since 1916. We plan on at least six further years for the project to run. A volunteer committee meets once a month to coordinate and plan activities. There has been a slow turnover of committee members over the years and we are again looking for one or two additional people willing to spend a couple of hours a month at the Birdlife office for an evening meeting. We are a small, congenial group. No especial skills are required, just your willingness to contribute your ideas and a bit of time.

Enquiries to Alisdair Bulloch. bulloch@iinet.net.au