

Red-tail NEWS

March 2007 • Issue 23



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Contact details:

Tania or Tim

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Recovery Team

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Red Tail update. . .

Drought has been on everyone's mind and has really moved the debate on global warming and climate change into the public and political arena. The intense dry has helped to fuel major fires – during November 12,500 ha of Red Tail stringybark habitat was burnt in the Casterton area. Predicted more frequent and intense wildfires in the future highlight the importance of protecting and increasing the area and quality of remaining stringybark, Buloke and Red Gum woodlands - for Red Tails and many other species with similar habitat requirements.

Tania Rajic is leaving the recovery team in March to travel through central and Western Australia with her partner and two children. She's hoping to see lots of the central and northern Red Tails while she's away. In the meantime we welcome Tim Burnard back to the team. Tim, who worked as extension officer from 1998 to 2002 will return to this role for the 8 months that Tania is away. See below for his contact details.

Annual Count Saturday, 28 April 2007

It's almost 12 months since the last annual count so it's time to register your interest in participating this year. Last year we had 155 volunteers count 1078 birds. Approximately 30% of volunteers were farmers, many covering their own properties or nearby public land. If you would like to participate in the count on 28 April, please register by phone or email with Tim Burnard (contact details below). If you have a preference for the area you'd like to cover or if it's your property please make a note of this when you contact Tim. Once again a campout will be held at Bailey's Rocks near Dergholm. Last year 35 volunteers concluded their day's counting with a social BYO get together at Bailey's Rocks and the general consensus was that we should do the same in 2007. If you'd like to attend please let Tim know.

Have you seen any Red tails?!

The birds have dispersed since last year's count which is not unusual during the October – February breeding season. However it does mean that we need lots of sightings in order to get a better understanding of where the birds are in the lead-up to the count. So whether you have seen one, two or two hundred birds recently, please either phone in your sighting on freecall 1800 262 062 or email rtbc@birdsaustralia.com.au. Map grid references help us pinpoint the location but road names and distances from key intersections are helpful if that's not possible. Please leave details of the number of birds seen, what they were doing – eg. feeding in stringybark, roosting in Red Gums, time and date and a contact number in case we need to call you back for more information.

Treeplanting

There is something satisfying about planting seedlings, particularly when you know they will start providing food for Red Tails roughly 15 years down the track. A landholder adjacent to Telford Scrub Conservation Park (about 12 km north of Mt Gambier) is keen to replant an area previously planted to pines with local species suitable for Red Tails. The cockatoos are regularly seen in this area and drink and roost on the property when they are about. A Mt Gambier volunteer has generously offered to grow just over 600 seedlings, mainly stringybark, to make a start on the approximately 3.0ha site. Friends of Parks South East will be assisting. If you're interested in helping out please give Tim a call or email (contact details below) to let him know and to find out more. I hear that there may be some morning tea on offer....

When: Sunday, 8th July 2007
9:00am (meeting on-site)
Contact: Tim Burnard
Freecall: 1800 262 062;
Email: rtbc@birdsaustralia.com.au

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Property Management Planning Field Day & Brochure

Links between improved farm productivity and conservation were the focus of two farm planning field days and will feature in a soon to be released brochure on property management planning. These activities were jointly funded by Wynns Coonawarra Winery and the Threatened Species Network (a community based program of the Australian Government and WWF Australia). The first field day was held in Edenhope and focused on work undertaken by the Kowree Farm Tree Group. More recently a day was held at the Bangham Hall with a visit to Glenn Reardon's property. Glenn also chairs the Bangham Vegetation Links Project. Guest speakers on the day included Bindi Hunter

(DPI based Environmental Best Management Practice Officer) who outlined the concepts of EBMP. Jeff Lawes, a private consultant who runs Farming Planning Services talked in more detail about the process of recognizing the different capabilities of your farm and planning accordingly.

Fire and biodiversity was the focus of presentations given by ForestrySA's Bryan Haywood and DEH Bush Management Advisor, Luke Geelen. Glenn demonstrated the practical side of the theory during a visit to his property. He moved to Bangham from the mallee about 7 years ago. He has since prepared

a whole farm plan and has altered fence lines so that instead of the 9 original paddocks he now has 14. In the long term he plans a total of 76 paddocks based around native vegetation protection, pasture improvement and ease of stock handling. Glenn is one of 9 landholders that feature in the Property Management Planning Brochure produced by the recovery team. The brochure showcases on-farm activities which protect Red-tailed Black-Cockatoo habitat. They will be mailed out to landholders in the Red Tail range soon.



Glenn Reardon with field day participants - Glenn's management stems from his father's principal that "your best paddock is only as good as the worst area in that paddock". Glenn fences according to land capability.

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Birds Australia Members Day and AGM May 2007

The South East has been selected as the national location for Birds Australia's next Annual General Meeting and Member's Day in 2007. This is a great opportunity for our region to showcase its unique species and conservation issues. The program for the weekend is:

Saturday, 26th May 2007 – AGM / Members Day held at the Presidential Motor Inn in Mount Gambier. The day will conclude with an optional dinner function

Sunday, 27th May – 5 field trips featuring a variety of bird habitats and species including coastal species, Red-tailed Black-Cockatoo, birds of Bool Lagoon and Mary Seymour Conservation Park and bushland species.

The weekend is being hosted and organised by Birds South East and Birds SA. The Member's Day will feature 12 guest speakers including Tim Burnard who will talk about the Red Tail Recovery Program. There will be opportunity for discussion during morning and afternoon tea and lunch. If you're not a member of Birds Australia you're still welcome to attend both the Member's Day and Field Trips.

For further information refer to the Birds Australia website, www.birdsaustralia.com.au or contact Birds Australia by telephoning 1300 730 075.



Glenn Reardon (left) at the Bangham field day with consultant, Jeff Lawes.

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Australian Government



Birds Australia

Buloke clearing continues in West Wimmera Shire

The decision by Peter O'Leary, presiding member of the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal to permit clearing of about 55 trees (comprising Buloke, Red Gum and Black Box) for two centre pivots in the West Wimmera has serious implications for the Red-tail. Richard Hill, Red-tailed Black-Cockatoo Project Officer was one of three expert witnesses at the December hearing held in Edenhope. Central to the decision was the issue of whether paddock buloke did indeed constitute habitat of high significance - the Native Vegetation Management Framework states that clearing will not be permitted for habitat with very high conservation significance except in exceptional circumstances. While both Richard Hill and Dr Martine Maron gave compelling evidence that

this is the case for paddock buloke, O'Leary decided that this was not adequately demonstrated.

O'Leary also commented on the lack of specific protection for feeding habitat via the planning scheme and referred to the Environmental Significance Overlay (ESO2) for protection of dead, hollow trees as an example of the level of protection DSE should be pursuing to protect buloke feed trees. This identifies a weakness in the Victorian Native Vegetation Framework to protect habitat of the Red-tail and other threatened species. As the framework is intended to protect important habitat of threatened species, there is a clear need to address this exposed problem as soon as possible.

Red-tailed Black-Cockatoo Contact Details

We now have a dedicated Red-tail email address. Please change your contact email address for the extension officer (Tania or Tim) to rtbc@birdsaustralia.com.au.

If you want to contact Tim please phone 1800 262 062 or (03) 5581 2250.

Tim's postal address is
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