

The Kurnell Peninsula

There are a number of wetland sites on the Kurnell peninsula, including one artificial set of retention ponds established to filter water from a housing estate called the Greenhills Estate. It was done to protect the water quality running into Towra Point Nature Reserve

I have visited a number of sites over two days across this week and the combined bird list is as below.

Note that this is early in the season for returning migratory waders and that the first visit occurred at high tide. The second visit occurred half way between low and high and the mudflats were rapidly disappearing. I did not visit the Boat Harbour site and avoided the coastal heath areas this time.

Bird List

1. Australian Brush Turkey
2. Short-tailed Shearwater
(deceased)
3. Australian Pelican
4. Little Pied Cormorant
5. Little Black Cormorant
6. Australasian Grebe
7. Pacific Black Duck
8. Chestnut Teal
9. Hardhead
10. Dusky Moorhen
11. Purple Swamphen
12. Eurasian Coot
13. White-faced Heron
14. Great Egret
15. Australian White Ibis
16. Royal Spoonbill
17. Far Eastern Curlew
18. Bar-tailed Godwit
19. Pied Oystercatcher
20. Sooty Oystercatcher
21. Silver Gull
22. Caspian Tern
23. White-bellied Sea Eagle
24. Crested Pigeon
25. Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo
26. Little Corella
27. Sulphur-crested Cockatoo
28. Rainbow Lorikeet
29. Crimson Rosella
30. Common Koel
31. Channel-billed Cuckoo
32. Laughing Kookaburra
33. Sacred Kingfisher
34. Dollarbird
35. Superb Fairywren
36. Variegated Fairywren
37. Spotted Pardalote
38. Red Wattlebird
39. Noisy Miner
40. Yellow-faced Honeyeater
41. Willie Wagtail
42. Magpie-lark
43. Figbird
44. Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike
45. Grey Butcherbird
46. Australian Magpie
47. Pied Currawong
48. Australian Raven
49. Welcome Swallow
50. Australian Reed Warbler
51. Golden-headed Cisticola
52. Little Grassbird
53. Silvereye
54. House Sparrow
55. Common Myna



River Mangrove - *Aegiceras corniculatum*



Samphire - *Sarcocornia quinqueflora*



Seablite – *Suaeda australis*



Far Eastern Curlew



Stretching



Bar-tailed Godwit, Caspian Tern and a pair of Pied Oystercatchers



Any later and we would have not seen any waders! That tide was coming in quickly!





One of the Shearwaters that fell, exhausted.

Having checked out the potential waders in the rising tide of Quibray Bay, we headed to Bonna Point to check out the entrance of Quibray Bay into Botany Bay and to see what other birds were around. This is Council land. Council has placed up signs about its importance for waders and has “banned” dogs from the actual point but the ban is often ignored.



Male Figbird



Female Figbird



But the highlights of this site were not recorded in the camera: the flock of Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoos and, especially, the Red Wattlebird that drove off the female Koel right before our eyes. I suspect Mrs Koel was planning to find a suitable “parent” for her egg!

And then morning tea at Kamay-Botany Bay National Park before a walk around this, the building site!

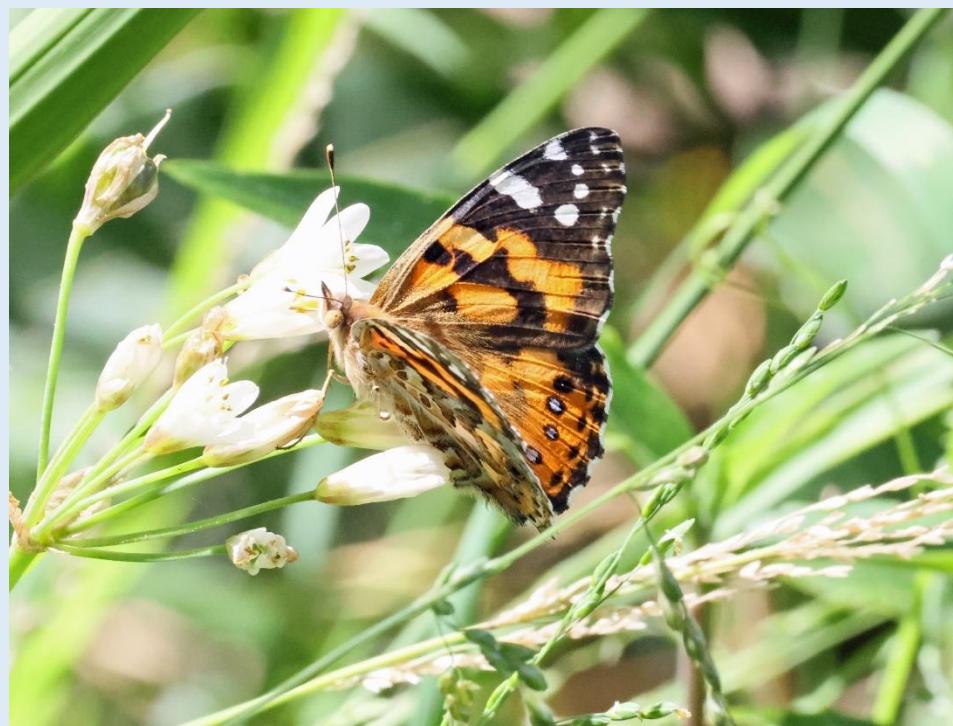
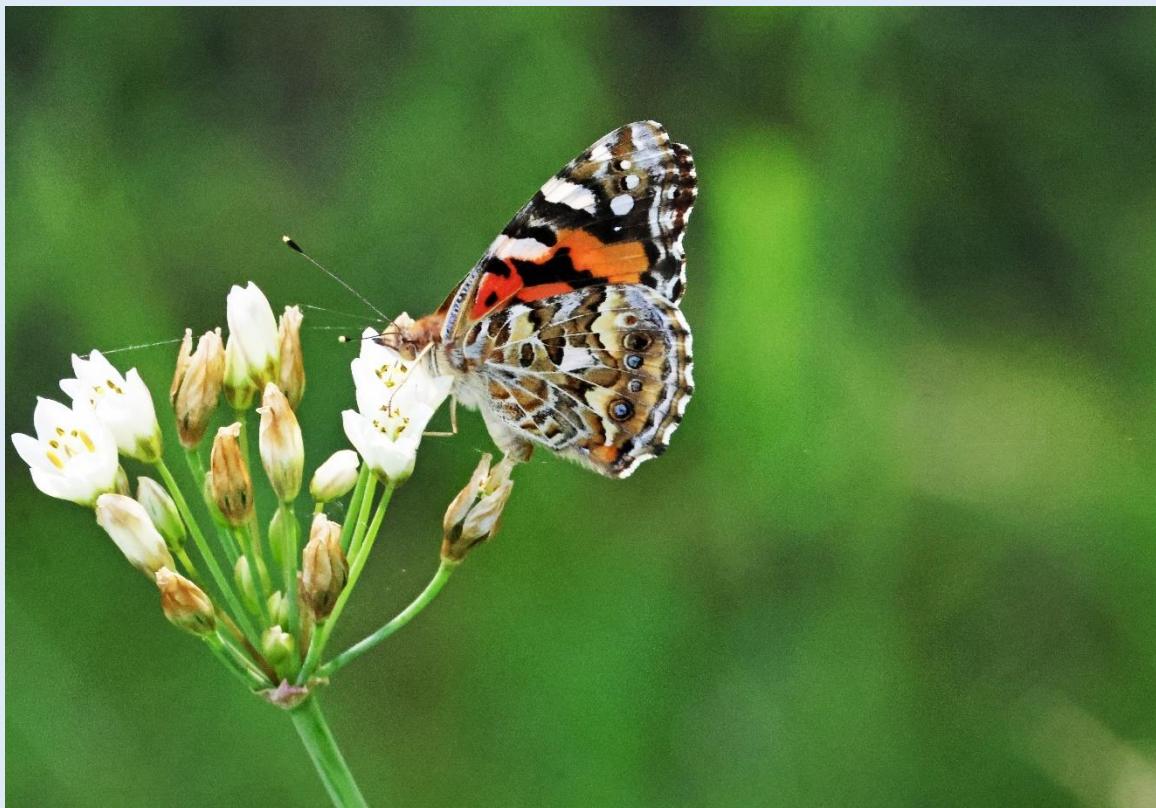


The visitors centre and offices are now closed and being removed. That area is fenced off, as is the “cricket pitch” and demolition and rebuilding will continue right through 2025 and into 2026.

We then walked up over the old, silent soundscape to see the work along the foreshore and the new wharf!

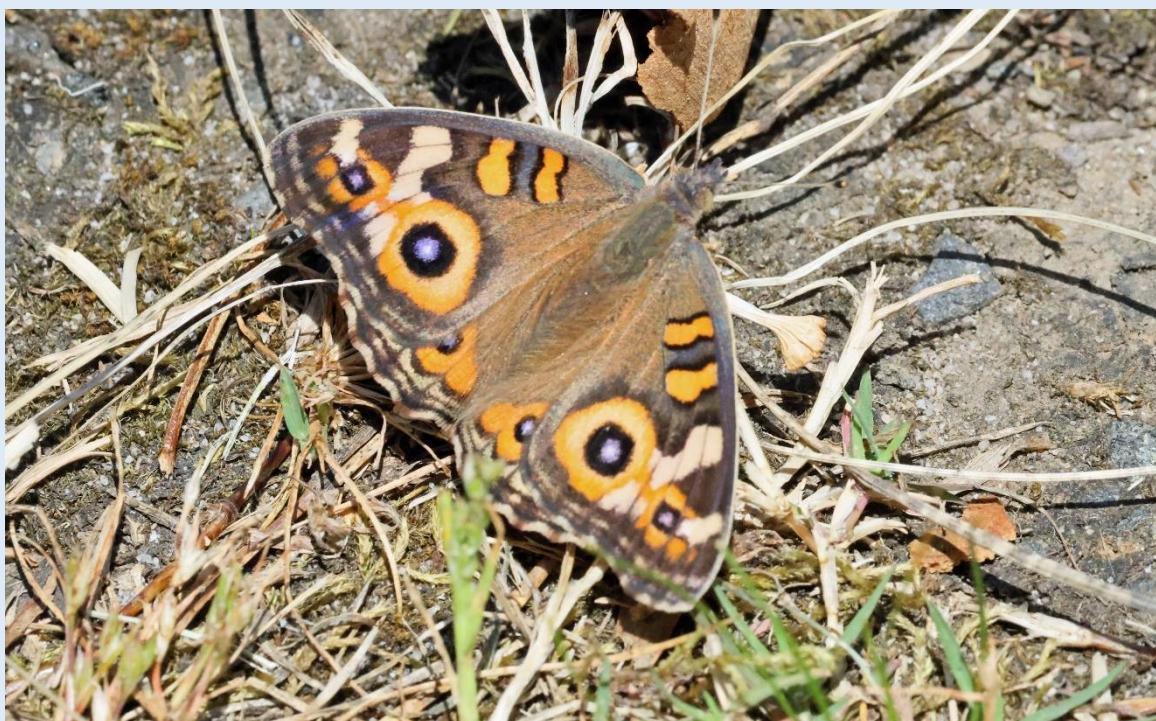
The new southern wharf is well into construction. Presumably the northern one is at about the same stage. What we don’t have yet is any company willing to run a ferry service. Will the government (us) subsidise this linkage?





Australian Painted Lady (*Vanessa kershawi*) on Onion Weed





Meadow Argus (*Junonia villida*)

And after quickly dropping in to Yena Gap and the Whale-watching platform to search for migrating shearwaters – and finding two majestic White-bellied Sea Eagles – we departed for lunch at Bonna Point. I can recommend the grilled fish and chips!

Our last stop was Greenhills site and the retention ponds! They truly are a boon to this new suburb! I declare an interest. A friend of mine was the horticulturist who planned and provided the plantings for this and the fronting barrier to the sand dune.



Hardheads (*Aythya australis*)

The only true diving duck in Australia. The common name "hardhead" has nothing to do with the density of the bird's skull, instead referring to the difficulty encountered by early taxidermists in processing the head.





But apart from the birds - and there were many – it was nice to see the men gathering to race their “yachts” around a route! Apparently, they do it every Wednesday!





A two-headed tortoise?



Willie Wagtail



Pacific Black Duck



Welcome Swallow



Swamp Lily - *Crinum pedunculatum*





Red Wattlebird keeping an eye out for female Koels.