

A LIST OF THE WATERBIRDS OF THE VASSE-WONNERUP WETLANDS

The following species of waterbirds have been recorded on the Vasse-Wonnerup wetlands of Busselton, Western Australia. As is customary in ornithological publications, the birds are listed in taxonomic (approximate evolutionary) order, with the oldest families first and the most recently evolved last*.

Ducks & allies Family Anatidae

Musk Duck	<i>Biziura lobata</i>
Black Swan	<i>Cygnus atratus</i>
Australian Shelduck	<i>Tadorna tadornoides</i>
Australian Wood Duck	<i>Chenonetta jubata</i>
Pink-eared Duck	<i>Malacorhynchus membranaceus</i>
Australasian Shoveler	<i>Anas rhynchos</i>
Grey Teal	<i>Anas gracilis</i>
Chestnut Teal	<i>Anas castanea</i>
Pacific Black Duck	<i>Anas superciliosa</i>
Hardhead	<i>Aythya australis</i>
Blue-billed Duck	<i>Oxyura australis</i>

Grebes Family Podicipedidae

Australasian Grebe	<i>Tachybaptus novaehollandiae</i>
Hoary-headed Grebe	<i>Poliiocephalus poliocephalus</i>

Darters Family Anhingidae

Australasian Darter	<i>Anhinga novaehollandiae</i>
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Cormorants Family Phalacrocoracidae

Little Pied Cormorant	<i>Microcarbo melanoleucos</i>
Great Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>
Little Black Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax sulcirostris</i>
Pied Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax varius</i>

Pelicans Family Pelecanidae

Australian Pelican	<i>Pelecanus conspicillatus</i>
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Herons, Egrets, Bitterns Family Ardeidae

Australasian Bittern	<i>Botaurus poiciloptilus</i>
White-necked Heron	<i>Ardea pacifica</i>
Eastern Great Egret	<i>Ardea modesta</i>
Cattle Egret	<i>Ardea ibis</i>
White-faced Heron	<i>Egretta novaehollandiae</i>
Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>
Eastern Reef Egret	<i>Egretta sacra</i>
Nankeen Night-Heron	<i>Nycticorax caledonicus</i>

Ibises, Spoonbills Family Threskiornithidae

Glossy Ibis	<i>Plegadis falcinellus</i>
Australian White Ibis	<i>Threskiornis molucca</i>
Straw-necked Ibis	<i>Threskiornis spinicollis</i>
Royal Spoonbill	<i>Platalea regia</i>
Yellow-billed Spoonbill	<i>Platalea flavipes</i>

Osprey, Kite, Eagles, Harriers Family Accipitridae

Eastern Osprey	<i>Pandion cristatus</i>
White-bellied Sea-Eagle	<i>Haliaeetus leucogaster</i>
Whistling Kite	<i>Haliastur sphenurus</i>
Swamp Harrier	<i>Circus approximans</i>

Rails, Crakes, Water-hens, Coot Family Rallidae

Purple Swamphen	<i>Porphyrio porphyrio</i>
Buff-banded Rail	<i>Gallirallus phillipensis</i>
Baillon's Crake	<i>Porzana pusilla</i>
Australian Spotted Crake	<i>Porzana fluminea</i>
Spotless Crake	<i>Porzana tabuensis</i>
Black-tailed Native-hen	<i>Tribonyx ventralis</i>
Dusky Moorhen	<i>Gallinula tenebrosa</i>
Eurasian Coot	<i>Fulica atra</i>

Oystercatchers Family Haematopodidae

Australian Pied Oystercatcher	<i>Haematopus longirostris</i>
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Stilts, Avocets Family Recurvirostridae

Black-winged Stilt	<i>Himantopus himantopus</i>
Red-necked Avocet	<i>Recurvirostra novaehollandiae</i>
Banded Stilt	<i>Cladorhynchus leucocephalus</i>

Plovers, Dotterels Family Charadriidae

Pacific Golden Plover ^M	<i>Pluvialis fulva</i>
Grey Plover ^M	<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>
Red-capped Plover	<i>Charadrius ruficapillus</i>
Greater Sand Plover ^M	<i>Charadrius leschenaultii</i>
Black-fronted Dotterel	<i>Elseya melanops</i>
Red-kneed Dotterel	<i>Erythronyx cinctus</i>
Banded Lapwing	<i>Vanellus tricolor</i>

Painted Snipe Family Rostratulidae

Australian Painted Snipe	<i>Rostratula australis</i>
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Sandpipers, Knots, Stint & allies Family Scolopacidae

Pin-tailed Snipe ^M	<i>Gallinago stenura</i>
Black-tailed Godwit ^M	<i>Limosa limosa</i>
Bar-tailed Godwit ^M	<i>Limosa lapponica</i>
Whimbrel	<i>Numenius phaeopus</i>
Terek Sandpiper	<i>Xenus cinereus</i>
Common Sandpiper ^M	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>
Grey-tailed Tattler ^M	<i>Tringa brevipes</i>
Common Greenshank ^M	<i>Tringa nebularia</i>
Marsh Sandpiper ^M	<i>Tringa stagnatilis</i>
Common Redshank ^M	<i>Tringa totanus</i>
Wood Sandpiper ^M	<i>Tringa glareola</i>
Ruddy Turnstone ^M	<i>Arenaria interpres</i>
Great Knot ^M	<i>Calidris tenuirostris</i>
Red Knot ^M	<i>Calidris canutus</i>
Red-necked Stint ^M	<i>Calidris ruficollis</i>
Long-toed Stint ^M	<i>Calidris subminuta</i>
Pectoral Sandpiper ^M	<i>Calidris melanotos</i>
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper ^M	<i>Calidris acuminata</i>
Curlew Sandpiper ^M	<i>Calidris ferruginea</i>
Ruff ^M	<i>Philomachus pugnax</i>

* The common and scientific names used here are those of Christidis, L., & Boles, W.E. (2008). *Systematics and Taxonomy of Australian Birds*. CSIRO Publishing, Melbourne.

Continued overleaf

Gulls, Terns Family Laridae

Fairy Tern	<i>Sternula nereis</i>
Gull-billed Tern	<i>Gelochilodon nilotica</i>
Caspian Tern	<i>Hydroprogne caspia</i>
Whiskered Tern	<i>Chlidonias hybridus</i>
White-winged Black Tern ^M	<i>Chlidonias leucopterus</i>
Crested Tern	<i>Thalasseus bergii</i>
Silver Gull	<i>Chroicocephalus novaehollandiae</i>

Reed-Warblers Family Acrocephalidae

Australian Reed-Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus australis</i>
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Grassbird Family Megaluridae

Little Grassbird	<i>Megalurus gramineus</i>
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^M denotes Migratory species (all transequatorial)

Honeyeaters, Australian Chats Family Meliphagidae

White-fronted Chat	<i>Ephthianura albifrons</i>
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The List

Waterbirds are considered to be those species of birds that are largely dependent upon or make substantial use of wetlands (lakes, swamps, marshes, rivers, estuaries etc.) during their life cycles. Two species (Whistling Kite, White-fronted Chat) not generally regarded as waterbirds have been included in this list as they make substantial use of the Vasse-Wonnerup wetlands.

The list has been derived from records held by Birds Australia (Royal Australasian Ornithologists Union) and the Western Australian Department of Environment & Conservation, as reported by Lane *et al.* (2007). Most are from surveys conducted during the periods 1981-90 and 1998-2000. Eighty-six indigenous species have been recorded, plus domestic varieties of the Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos* and the Greylag Goose *Anser anser*.

The Wetlands

The Vasse-Wonnerup wetlands include the Vasse and Wonnerup “estuaries” (now lagoons) and their floodplains, Malbup Creek, Wonnerup Inlet, the Deadwater and the mouths of the Ludlow, Abba, Sabina and Vasse Rivers. The wetlands extend in a north-easterly direction from the check-board structure on the Vasse River at the Butter Factory Folk Museum, Busselton, to Forrest Beach Road near Ludlow - a distance of fourteen kilometres.

Most of the Vasse-Wonnerup wetland system was listed in 1990, and extended in 2000, as a Wetland of International Importance under the “Ramsar” Convention on Wetlands. Australia has given undertakings to conserve its Ramsar-listed wetlands and to wisely manage wetlands generally.

Selected References

- Government of Western Australia (1990). *Wetlands nominated by the Government of Western Australia for inclusion on the List of Wetlands of International Importance, Ramsar Convention*. Nominating document prepared by WA Department of Conservation & Land Management, Perth. 43pp.
- Lane, J.A.K. (1990). *Swamped with birds*. Landscape 5(2): 17-22.
- Lane, J.A.K., Hardcastle, K.A., Tregonning, R.J. & Holtfreter, G.J. (1997). *Management of the Vasse-Wonnerup wetland system in relation to sudden, mass fish deaths*. Report on behalf of the Vasse Estuary Technical Working Group, Busselton. 55pp.
- Government of Western Australia (2000). *Wetlands nominated by the Government of Western Australia for inclusion on the List of Wetlands of International Importance, Ramsar Convention*. Nominating document prepared by WA Department of Conservation & Land Management, Perth. 48pp.
- Lane J.A.K, Clarke A.G., Pearson G.B. & Winchcombe, Y.C. (2007). *Waterbirds of the Vasse-Wonnerup wetlands in 1998-2000, including Ramsar status and comparisons with earlier data*. Department of Environment & Conservation, Busselton. 51pp.

Information Sheets

The following information sheets are also available.

- Where to Watch Waterbirds on the Vasse-Wonnerup Wetlands
- Monitoring conservation values of a Ramsar wetland: Vasse-Wonnerup wetlands system, Busselton
- Management of the Ramsar-listed Vasse-Wonnerup wetlands

Further information about the Vasse-Wonnerup wetlands may be obtained from the WA Department of Environment & Conservation, 14 Queen Street, Busselton WA 6280. Ph (08) 9752 5555. Fax (08) 9752 1432. Info sheet prepared by JLane in March 1997. Revised in May 1997 and April 2010.