

The Belongil Estuary Bird and Field Report – Jan Olley

Report: No12

Date: 10/2/05

Time of visit: 10.00 to 1400

Dear Bird Buddies

The tides are high at the moment, leaving only a small sand spit at the creek mouth for the birds. This morning it was covered in Seagulls, Common, Crested and Little Terns. They were all intermingled and scattered making it difficult to count. My counting efforts were also continually interrupted, firstly by a couple of surfers who rode their surfboards on the outgoing tide from up the creek and then immediately walked through the birds on the spit. Then it was a group of walkers and then a White-bellied Sea Eagle really sent them off in a swirl of wings and cries.

I managed to count 34 Little Terns, but I guesstimate there were twice as many and about the same number of Common Terns. Only 8 Crested Terns and as mentioned in the last report I'm still seeing large numbers over the northern beaches, flying north over the dunes with fish in their beak.

I definitely spotted some yellow legged Little Terns (breeding sign) but I'm not certain about the beak colours and I saw one tagged leg, but due to the dull rainy day, distance and constant movement I didn't get that colour either unless it was black.

Due to the high tide, the feeding grounds were not exposed up the creek hence no birds. The beach was free of dogs when I first arrived. On my way up the creek I, passed a lady on the track going to the beach with two dogs, one a little yappy dog, the other a blue heeler and when I got back to the beach there was a female jogger in the distance with a dog and all the Terns had gone.

The tide had been going out and it was lunchtime so maybe the Terns had gone to get a feed.

I didn't get round to getting my list out last week, but the birds were similar to this weeks count except, no Little Terns (LT). Paul joined me for a while and he reported 34 LTs the day before. Hopefully I'll be there next week but I'm not guaranteeing the time, so maybe if you want to join me best phone on 66803279.

Here's my list of birds for today 10th of February 2005.

Beach

Red-capped Plovers x 13 – (now taken up residence on the stony dune tops further north along the beach.)

Mouth of Creek

Pacific Golden Plovers x 7

Little Terns x 60

Common Terns x 60

Crested Terns x 4

Pied Oystercatchers x 2

Greenshank x 1

Masked Lapwing x 2

Seagulls x 180

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Flying Over

Welcome Swallow
Little Black Cormorants x 3
White-bellied Sea-Eagle
Pacific Black Duck

Inner Creek

Maned Duck x 2

Surrounding Bush

Lewin's Honeyeater, Whipbird, Brush Wattlebird, Noisy Friar Bird, Bar-shouldered Dove, Variegated Wren, Brown Honeyeater, Eastern Yellow Robin, Superb Blue Wren, Brush Turkey, Toressian Crow, Noisy Miner, Spangled Drongo

Regards Jan



Common Terns and Seagulls