

## The Belongil Estuary Bird and Field Report – Jan Olley

Report No 22

Date 30/9/05

Time of Visit 9.00 to 12.00

Dear Bird Buddies,

Welcome to the new bird migratory season and new comers to this emailing list. I hope everyone enjoyed the launch of the migratory season at the Beach Hotel earlier this month and also the party on Sunday at Kathleen's place. I apologise to Kathleen for not being able to make it on Sunday.

Since the last report in August, I've managed several trips to the Belongil but not always on Thursdays, as was my habit last year. At the end of August Sarah and I took a group of North Coast National Park Regional Advisory Committee members on an early morning survey of the site. They were suitably impressed.

Due to the flooding of the creek in June, the situation in the creek at the moment is very different to the conditions last year. It was a very dry year and the mouth was closed to the ocean most of the time and as the practise of the Council the creek was artificially open. Now, since the flood in June the creek mouth has remained open to the sea and is therefore tidal. However slowly over the last couple of months due to the eroding sand and wind action the course of the creek moves closer to the base of the sand dunes that is protecting the Becton property. On my visit yesterday there were only a couple of meters of sand between the base of the dunes and the creek edge. Becton is obviously trying to deal with the situation by discarding all their garden waste onto the face of the dune.

With exposed sand and mud flats in the inner creek the conditions remain perfect for the migratory birds. On September 1<sup>st</sup> I saw the first of the returning birds, an Eastern Curlew and a Whimbrel; these were last recorded between about January & March. Slowly each week other waders are flying in including the Pacific Golden Plovers and as they did last year appear to be residing at the site. The Black-neck Storks sighted in August have not been seen again. I don't think, anyway. The Beach-stone Curlew Paul reported a couple of days ago, I saw again yesterday. The Oystercatcher chick does not look like a chick any more and I also saw the Red-capped Plover chick yesterday, its so small it looks like a moving grain of sand. A Striated Pardalote is building a nest in the newly eroded creek bank and a new bird for my records at the site is a Tawny Grassbird inhabiting the reeds in the inner creek. Paul also reported the first Little Terns sighting for the year on Wed. Sept.28<sup>th</sup>, but like last year, they usually don't visit on Thursdays, so I don't see them.

This year my visits to the site will be random, but I am willing to visit anytime for observation with other Bird Buddies on request. I plan only to write a monthly observation report instead of after each visit but will continue to send out a spreadsheet with detailed records quarterly.

Two dogs observed, unleashed and unattended on the beach from the Byron Township end.

## Bird Sightings for September

### **Mouth of Creek and Beach**

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Red-capped Plovers, Crested Terns, Seagulls, Pied Oystercatchers

### **Flying Over -**

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Australasian Gannet, Little Black Cormorant, Pied Cormorant, Little Pied Cormorant  
Whistling Kite, Osprey, Rainbow Bee-eaters, Welcome Swallow,

### **Inner Creek – on exposed sand/mud flats**

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Australian White Ibis, Australian Darter, Striated Heron, White-faced Heron, Little Black Cormorant,  
Little Pied Cormorant, Pied Cormorant,  
Masked Lapwing, Royal Spoonbill, Dusky Moorhen, Great Egret, Pacific Golden Plover,  
Double-banded Plover, Lesser-sand Plover, Sharp-tailed Sandpiper, Curlew Sandpiper, Common  
Greenshank, Common Sandpiper, Black-winged Stilts, Beach-stone Curlew, Australian Pelican,

### **Surrounding Bush including Golf Course Habitats**

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Lewin's Honeyeater, Grey Fantail, Whipbird, Variegated Wren, Silvereyes, Scarlet  
Honey eater, Spangled Drongo, Little Wattle Bird, Brown Honeyeater, Eastern  
Yellow Robin, Brown Honeyeater, Bar-shouldered Pigeon, Currawong, Varied  
Triller, Noisy Friarbird, Galah, Collard Kingfisher, Azure Kingfisher, Sacred  
Kingfisher, Purple Swamphen, Crested Pigeon, Scaly-breasted Lorikeet, Fan-tailed  
Cuckoo, Striated Pardalote, Tawny Grassbird, Kookaburra, White-browed Scrubwren,  
Willy Wagtail, Torresian Crow, Magpie, Magpie Lark, Superb Blue Wren, Red-  
backed Wren, Noisy Miner, White-cheeked Honeyeater, Figbird, Pied Butcherbird,  
Brush Turkey

Regards Jan



Belongil 18/8/05 a different route to the ocean.

