

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

Report No 24

Date 20/11/05

Observations mid October to mid November

Hi Everyone,

A hazy sky created by a hot northerly wind greeted me yesterday morning on my visit to the Belongil, making visibility very blurry. I imagine it would be very different today with a gale force southerly but at least visibility would be better. The creek is now so wide that observation and identification is a struggle from the northern bank especially if the tide is rising. The creek is also deep, so crossing it is out of the question, unless I hire a boat.

However the birds were not deterred, there were hundreds of them, mostly Common Terns inhabiting the beach and sand spits, both inside and outside the fence.

Reid and I looked very hard to convince ourselves that there were lots of Little Terns, but amidst the estimated 500 Commons and 60 or more Crested, we could only find three. None in full breeding colours but one had yellow legs.

No dogs were present, so the effort, especially by Paul seems to have been effective, but there is a new threat. A couple of groups of “schoolies” were certainly causing the group of birds to fly off in a swirling mass. One group was throwing stones and the other was having great fun just running amongst them. One look at the spotting scope on the opposite bank, that at least seemed to stopped the stone throwing.

Several decoy Terns were placed behind the fence last week and yesterday I saw a Whistling Kite swoop several times and finally secure one in its claws before dropping it. This might explain the puzzle of why most had been disturbed from their original location.

The Beach Stone-Curlew has again taken up position under the Casuarina's. During high tide there are lots of Bar-tailed Godwits and Pacific Golden- Plovers residing at the estuary mouth and then scattering to the inner creek as the tide goes out.

Not much activity in the riparian zone, but the Little Shrike-thrush again seems to be visiting for the summer.

### **Bird Sightings since last month – detailed list will be posted end of December**

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

---

Red-capped Plovers, Crested Terns, Seagulls, Pied Oystercatchers, Ruddy Turnstone, Bar-tailed godwit, Pacific Golden Plover, Beach Stone-curlew, Common Tern, Little Tern, Artic Tern.

#### **Flying Over -**

---

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

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

---

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, Australian Pelican,

**Surrounding Bush including Golf Course Habitats**

---

Lewin's Honeyeater, Grey Fantail, Whipbird, Variegated Wren, Silveryeye, Spangled  
Drongo, Little Wattle Bird, Brown Honeyeater, Eastern Yellow Robin, Currawong,  
Varied Triller, Sacred Kingfisher, Willy Wagtail, Torresian Crow, Magpie, Magpie  
Lark, Superb Blue Wren, Red-backed Wren, Noisy Miner, White-cheeked  
Honeyeater, Figbird, Pied Butcherbird, Tawny Frogmouth

Regards Jan



Beach Stone-curlew

Photo: Reid Waters