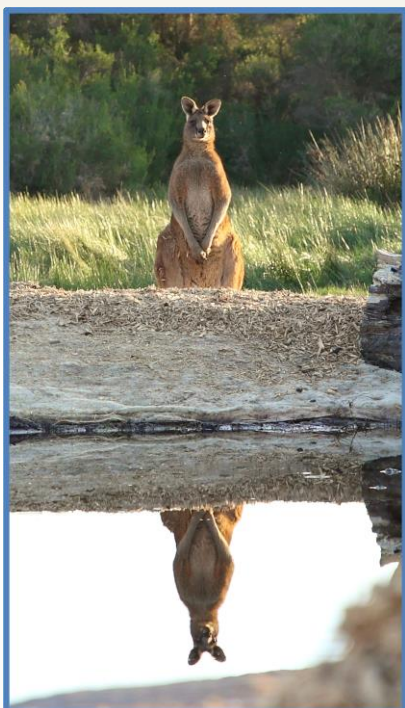


## CAPE CHATTER

### Nature Observations around The Cape

Issue No. 8

15<sup>th</sup> June 2020



The Cape is on the traditional land  
of the Bunurong people

*"When we tug at a single thing in nature,  
we find it attached to the rest of the  
world..."*

*John Muir*

Photography and words by David Hartney

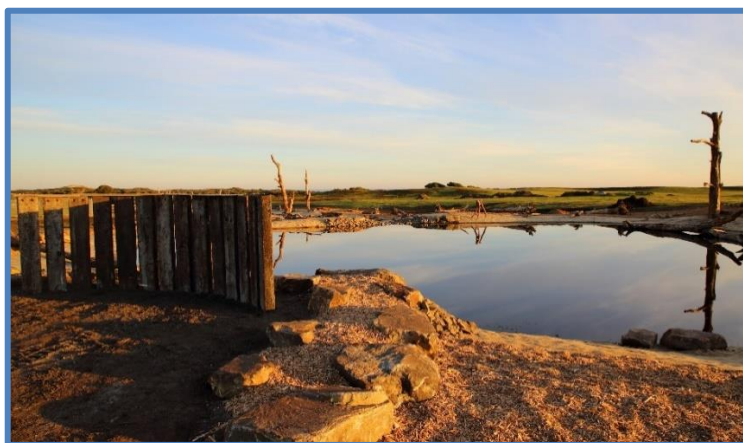
Email: [dwhartney@bigpond.com](mailto:dwhartney@bigpond.com)

Instagram: [@dwhartney](https://www.instagram.com/dwhartney)

## Creek Line Works Look Stunning

Joel and the landscape team have done a heap of work putting the finishing touches to the Stage 3 creek line and habitat restoration. The calm, dry weather has helped them nearly complete the hard earthworks and landscaping – the next phase is the development of the walking tracks and pocket parks alongside the creek with planting scheduled in spring. The local kangaroo mob are enjoying the jute matting and mulch as daytime resting places and last week I saw a flock of about 40 Yellowtail Black Cockatoos investigating the top dam and surrounding stags!

I did a walkthrough last Friday evening in brilliant, still weather and golden sunlight to get a few progress pictures.



**Above:** Looking south-west over the top dam and down the creek line, with the new viewing platform made from recycled railway sleepers.

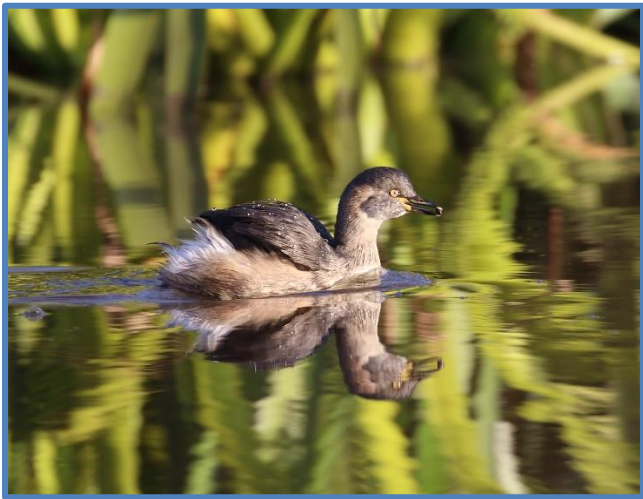
**Left:** Male Kangaroo 'reflecting' on the great work by the landscape team.

**Below:** Looking north-west over the top dam. The jute will be planted with wetland species and the mulch with native shrubs and small trees.



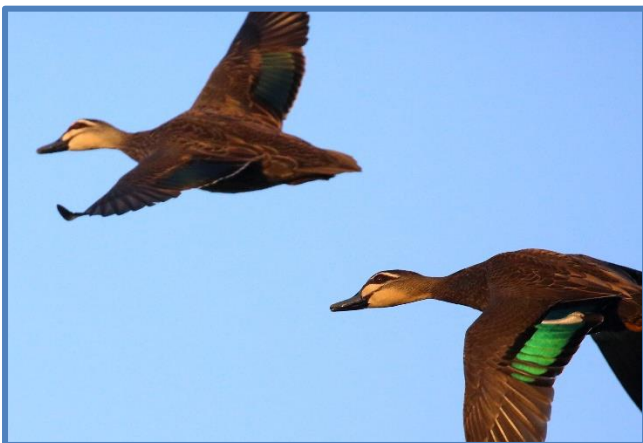
## Bird Observations for the Week

Plenty to report this week. Raptors are still about with daily **Whistling Kite** observations and Ray Farr (Stage 3) spotted a **Collared Sparrowhawk** (thanks Ray). My walks along the coastal bush revealed some nice small bird flocks **including Brown Thornbills, Flame Robins, Superb Fairy-wrens, New Holland** and **Yellow-eared Honeyeaters**, and the lovely calls of **Grey-shrike Thrush** and **Eastern Yellow Robins**. Around the wetlands, an **Australasian Grebe** has returned providing company for **Pacific Black Ducks** and **White-faced Herons**. Large flocks of **Straw-necked Ibis** and **Australian White Ibis** flying over The Cape have been common and **Grey Butcherbirds** have been particularly active feeding around the whole estate. Our resident **Galahs** continue to amuse and make noise along with **Rainbow Lorikeets**, and of course the lovely sight of **Yellow-faced Black Cockatoos**. Keep your eye out for them over the next few months especially along the coastal reserve.



**Above:** **Australasian Grebe** on the main wetland with small snail (?) in the bill after diving to feed.

**Below:** **Pacific Black Duck** pair in flight over wetlands. Note the glossy green speculum seen more normally in flight.



**Above:** **Collared Sparrowhawk**

**Below:** **Brown Thornbill** – Wilson's Rd beach track



**Below:** Part of a **Straw-necked Ibis** flock in flight over The Cape





## A walk along 2<sup>nd</sup> Surf

### No whales ... but Hoodies!

Last Saturday was a stunning day with little wind and clear skies, the perfect opportunity we thought for some whale watching along 2<sup>nd</sup> Surf beach. Unfortunately, none were spotted, but there was some nice seabird activity including feeding **Great Cormorants, Sooty Oystercatchers, Australian Gannets, Pacific** and **Silver Gulls** and three **Hooded Plovers**.

The local **Hooded Plovers** are *ssp cucullatus* and they confine themselves to the beach. These birds are listed as vulnerable in Victoria and there are an estimated 600 birds left. One of their biggest threats are dogs off-lead. Sadly, the dogs off lead count on Saturday while we walked along the beach was six!

We saw two tagged birds feeding along 2<sup>nd</sup> Surf: '13' was alone halfway along the beach and 'AS' was with another adult closer to F Break. They do form small flocks this time of year and I have seen seven together in one group.

**Below:** Hooded Plover '13'



**Above:** Adult Hooded Plover, leg tagged as '13'.

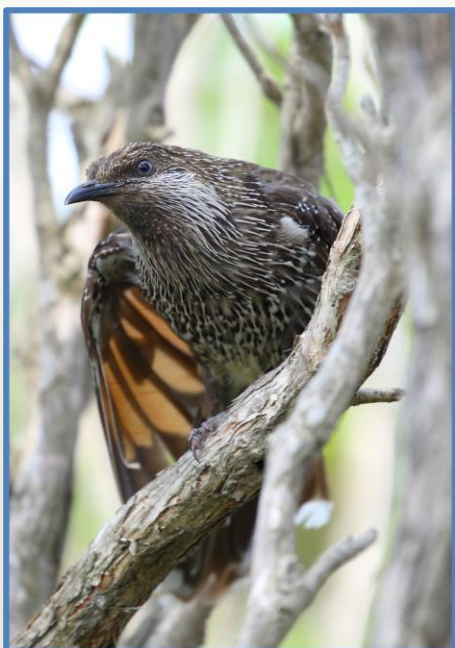


**Above and Below:** Adult Hooded Plover 'AS' and partner feeding.



## Feature Bird - Little Wattlebird

The Little Wattlebird is a common, prominent bird around The Cape, feeding on blossom and gleaning insects amongst the banksia and melaleuca. It is a very active and noisy bird, and along with the Red Wattlebird, can be aggressive toward smaller birds – hence the need to provide protective habitat for our smaller species.

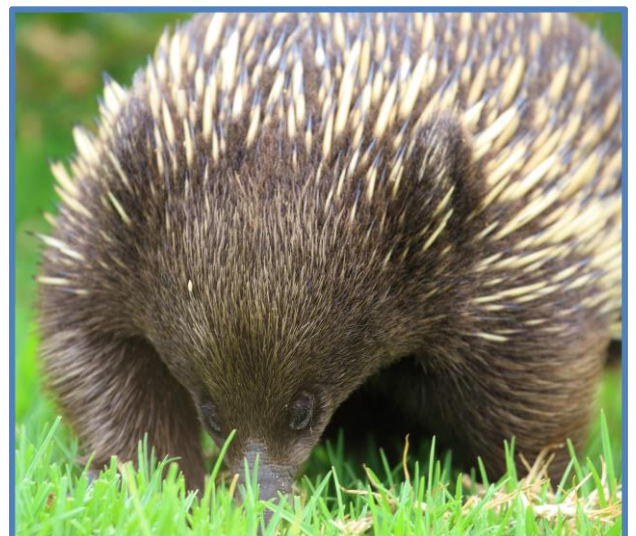


## ... other native animal activity!

One of our newer residents, Robyn (8 Moonshadow) has been involved in frog surveys over the years and hopefully will become a great resource for identifying and monitoring frog activity within The Cape. Robyn sent me a recording of a **Common Eastern Froglet** heard near the Dog Park. We now have three frog species identified along with the **Eastern Banjo Frog** and **Brown Striped Frog** (pictured below). Hopefully we will observe many more – they have a great home!



There have been plenty of **Common Wombats** about so keep your eyes out from around 5 PM onwards at the moment. The **Short-beaked Echidna** (below) seems to have bunkered down a bit for winter and their sightings have diminished.



Remember to send me any sightings to update our list. [button]