

Upcoming Activities

July 2025			
Date	Event	Time and Place	Contact
1 July	Mid-week Outing, Old Brush	Meeting 8.30am at start of Leiberts Lane off Leggets Drive Brunkerville. If late, drive to the end of Leiberts Lane. There will be an entrance fee Postponed to Tue 8 July	Dinah Stehr 0402 091 951
9 July	Club Night	Hunter Wetlands Centre (HWC) 6.30 pm for 7 pm start Ann Lindsey: Her talk will be entitled <i>Overview of Black-necked Stork Breeding in the Hunter Estuary</i> Followed by acknowledgment of Ann's award of the Hobbs Medal.	
20 July	Field Outing, Tahlee area	Meeting 8am. Tahlee entrance gate. (Note: a \$5 visitor fee donation is payable on attendance.)	Stuart Fleming flemster2011@gmail.com
August 2025			
6 Aug	Mid-week outing, Grahamstown Dam	Meeting 8am Finnan Park on Richardson Rd.	Rowley Smith 0417802005
13 Aug	Club Night	Hunter Wetlands Centre (HWC) 6.30 pm for 7 pm start Dr Birgita Hansen <i>Update on the Latham's Snipe Project</i> (talk presented remotely via Zoom).	
17 Aug	Field Outing Woods Road Craven (PP)	Meeting 8.30am Craven Rest Stop	Dave Stuart 0436 488 291

2026 HBOC Bird Calendar

In line with the plan to provide more merchandise options to members, it has been decided to print a 2026 HBOC Bird calendar. This will enable us to highlight the magnificent photos our members take; to provide those members with an opportunity to brag to members, family and others, to raise funds for the Club and to provide an accurate and pictorial example of some of the beautiful birds of the Hunter and to raise the public profile of the club.

To achieve this, we are holding a competition to select photos. The closing date for entries will be August 1. We're looking for a variety of species, habitats and seasons. We want striking photos, with some unusual poses, rather than stock photos. For the photographers of the winning entries, the prize will be to see their photo in an official HBOC publication!

Please have a look at your recent photos and see if there's something that might qualify under the following conditions:

Closing date for submission of photos is August 1, 2025.

Photos should be submitted to the Treasurer by email or on a USB drive.

Files must be in jpeg format; of high resolution suitable for high quality printing; and all images should be in landscape format.

No names or watermarks on photographs, please. This will avoid unintentional bias by the judges.

The email should detail separately the wording of the photographer's acknowledgement to be added to the photograph before printing.

The email must also identify each photo by the name of the bird, the date the photo was taken and the location. A caption may also be suggested.

An acknowledgement of receipt of submitted photos shall be sent to the member's nominated email address; if this is not received within 5 days, contact the Treasurer.

Up to six entries may be made per member.

Only one photo per submitting member will be eligible to appear in the calendar.

The photos must be taken IN THE HUNTER REGION (refer to the map on <https://www.hboc.org.au/resources/hunter-region/>), not just of birds that appear in the Hunter.

All photos must have been taken within the last 12 months.

The Club Code of Ethics (which can be sighted on our website - HBOC has adopted "Birdlife Australia's code of ethics" which is now called the Birdlife Australia ethical birdwatching guidelines) must be followed; the judges have the right to reject any images that they consider may have contravened these guidelines.

The judges' decision is final.

Mindaribba Family Fun Day

The Mindaribba Family Fun Day will be held at Harold Gregson Park in Maitland on Friday 11 July, 10 am to 2 pm. HBOC will be attending and sharing space with birdlife Australia, and Eula McKane, Marg Clarke and Kristy Peters will run children's activities. Members are welcome to attend Mindaribba Local Aboriginal Land Council's event to celebrate culture, community, and connection with them as they honour this year's NAIDOC theme: "The Next Generation: Strength, Vision & Legacy". Lots of fun will be had by all including rides, food, elders' tent, market stalls, craft activities, free sausage sizzle and much more.

Seeking Bird Observers

Seeking bird observers for inventory and monitoring surveys of the Waulinbakh Wildlife Sanctuary near Stroud. Interested bird watchers, the Australian Wildlife Conservancy has approached Hunter Bird Observers Club to see if its members would like to undertake bird surveys of one its newer sanctuaries, Waulinbakh near Stroud on the Mid North Coast.

<https://www.australianwildlife.org/.../waulinbakh...>

The Waulinbakh Wildlife Sanctuary is approximately 4,000 ha in size. It is located on the mid north coast foothills and supports a range of forest communities including rainforest, wet, moist and dry sclerophyll forests. The property has a history of logging but is in good ecological health. The property supports a range of flora and fauna with an indicative list of potentially 150 bird species including a range of threatened species. One significant feature is that the property was not burnt in the 2019-20 bushfires and remains a fire refuge.

The plan is to spend the next 12 months doing an inventory of the property. The Australian Wildlife Conservancy will then use data that to develop an ongoing monitoring strategy for the property. The property offers fantastic opportunities for diurnal and nocturnal bird, mammal, reptile and frog observations and photography.

Informal camping is available on the property, and there are a range of other accommodation options available in the local area including farm stays, airbnb and hotel-motel in Stroud.

Four-wheel drive is required to access the forested parts of the property. We expect people without four-wheel drive will be able to car pool with others to get to sites.

We are seeking interest from Hunter and Mid North Coast bird watchers to contribute to a great opportunity to support the Australian Wildlife Conservancy in protecting Australia's unique wildlife.

If you are interested, please contact Andrew McIntyre at mcintyreandrew334@gmail.com

Worrimi Conservation Lands

Back in February this year a bunch of us did systematic surveys of the dune swales on Worimi Conservation Lands (Stockton Beach). Conditions were very dry. We are doing a second survey on Friday 11 July 2025 to get an idea of birds using the swales in winter. There is a third survey planned for October to capture breeding activity. Teams of 2 people traverse the dunes surveying swales. If you don't feel confident with bird identification, we will be able to pair you with a more experienced birdwatcher. If you are interested in participating, please let me know. Experience from February was that people found the going in the sand dunes easier than what they were expecting, but it still involves a decent amount of walking for a couple of hours. There are some amazing landscapes and great birds.

Details date: Friday 11 July 2025 time: 8:00am

location: meet at the Williamtown McDonalds for briefing and moving onto the beach

Also, we are in desperate need of a 2nd 4wd, with a driver who is comfortable with beach driving.

My contact details are: Andrew McIntyre 0431 196 900 mcintyreandrew334@gmail.com

A Great Day for Urban Conservation in Newcastle

As reported in the *Newcastle Herald* on 28 June, the NSW state government has decided that it will preserve most of a parcel of bushland on the outskirts of Newcastle for conservation rather than for housing. Hunter Bird Observers Club has at least 19 files in our records of our involvement with the campaign to preserve this valuable piece of bushland, commonly known as 505 Minmi Road, including two major submissions. Now only a small section of this parcel of land will now be built on.

Under the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure's rezoning determination the rezoned land could be used to build on 35 to 40 lots compared with 180 lots previously proposed. The area reserved for environmental conservation has increased from about 12 hectares to 22 hectares. This decision completes a plan to create a Green Corridor, connecting national parks and reserves in the lower Hunter to form a 65km long Stockton Bight to Watagans biodiversity corridor. This is one of those all-too-rare victories for nature conservation in the Newcastle area.

New Members

Ian Bailey, Single

Colin James & Nerida Lithgow, Family

Michelle, Matthew, Alice & Harry Hession, Family

Ellie Johnston & Jonathan, Bronwyn & Joanna Li, Family