

HAMILTON FIELD NATURALISTS CLUB

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Report to Parks Victoria

TABOR SWAMP WILDLIFE RESERVE BIRD SURVEYS 2008-09



Tabor Swamp Wildlife Reserve, Tabor Siding Rd Tabor, Victoria.

☆ GPS position at the entrance gate off the road reserve (using Aust Geod 84 system) 37-50-12/142-10-55.

Tabor Swamp is a small reserve gazetted after grazing ceased in April 2005. It is 48 ha in area with a further 9 ha still under grazing licence. An estimated 30 ha is subject to inundation. Site works consisted of 6 small log dams constructed across the creek, 7 pools dug in creek bed, 5 earth banks constructed across floodplain and 3 earth banks constructed to hold water coming off the side slopes above the floodplain. Parks Victoria planted 2500 trees & shrubs on higher ground unlikely to be inundated, with some additional plantings in 2009.

The reserve is surrounded by farmland, including a small blue gum plantation on the south side (not shown in the photo above). In addition to the revegetation work there has been some natural regeneration, but pasture grasses and other exotic weeds will need treating for some time into the future.

Wetland habitat loss and degradation is a significant threat to many waterbirds. Although small, Tabor Swamp is a valuable addition to district wetlands as it can hold water well into summer, providing an important drought refuge. It was one of the few local wetlands on crown land to have water during summer 2008/9 and attracted numbers of waterbirds, including migratory shorebirds. The swamp was much drier in spring 2009, apparently due to water seeping out through the earth banks across the creek.

In October 2008, Hamilton Field Naturalists Club started bird surveys for Parks Victoria in the wetland area formed by the earthworks. Several surveys per month were conducted over spring and summer 2008/9, then 1-2 surveys per month thereafter. In all, 80 species were recorded during a total of 24 surveys from October 2008 to October 2009 (see **Appendix**).

Notable species recorded included:

Brolga * pair (VU listed). Nesting attempts in 2008 and 2009 were unsuccessful.

Migratory shorebirds

The Wood Sandpiper (VU) and Pectoral Sandpiper (NT), recorded at the site in December 2008, are uncommon migratory shorebirds. Also seen were 300+ Sharp-tailed Sandpipers and one Common Greenshank.

Australian resident waders

Over 100 Red-kneed Dotterel were using the site in December 2008, an unusually high number of an uncommon species in the district.

Raptors

Black Falcon * VU

Other threatened species

Australasian Shoveler	VU	
Glossy Ibis	NT	
Great Egret *	VU listed	
Hardhead	VU	
Latham’s Snipe		NT
Royal Spoonbill	VU	
Whiskered Tern	NT	

* high priority threatened birds in VVP bioregion

Conservation Status:

- EN endangered
- VU vulnerable
- NT near threatened
- listed = listed under the FFG Act



Red-kneed Dotterel at Tabor Swamp (Photo: Rod Bird, Dec. 2008)

Frogs seen or heard include Growling Grass Frog (EN listed), Common Froglet & Striped Marsh Frog.

Protecting migratory species

Migratory shorebirds of many species are in decline and listed species are matters of national environmental significance under the EPBC Act. The shallow verges along the creek provided foraging habitat for migratory shorebirds in 2008 but the emergent vegetation may become thicker in future, making the site less suitable for these species.



Pectoral Sandpiper at Tabor Swamp (Photo: Steve Clark Dec. 2008)



Sharp-tailed Sandpipers at Tabor Swamp Dec 2008 (Photo Rod Bird, Dec 2008)



Stubble Quail at Tabor Swamp
(Photo: Rod Bird, Dec. 2008)



Striped Marsh Frog at Tabor Swamp
(Photo: Rod Bird, Dec. 2008)

Future works:

We would recommend against further revegetation works at this time. There has been good success with plantings and site now has many trees which will attract woodland species over time. There also has been some natural regeneration, including Tree Everlasting (*Ozothamnus ferrugineus*). When I spoke to Michelle Casanova about the Reserve her general advice was to wait and see what regenerates before undertaking any supplementary planting with wetland species.



Tabor Swamp revegetation looking towards Mount Rouse,
(Photo: Rod Bird, Feb. 2009)



Mimulus repens regeneration at Tabor
(Photo: Rod Bird, Feb. 2009)

Blocking the creek further downstream would be valuable to increase wetland habitat. It could also assist weed suppression and provide a further barrier to retard water seeping from the upstream earth banks.

Ongoing pest and weed control is important, especially fox control in spring and summer when waterbirds are breeding.

Jane Hayes
November 2009

APPENDIX: BIRD SURVEYS AT TABOR SWAMP WILDLIFE RESERVE – OCTOBER 2008-OCTOBER 2009

WATERBIRDS			Oct-08	Nov-08	Dec-08	Jan-09	Feb-09	Mar-09	Apr-09	May-09	Jun-09	Jul-09	Aug-09	Sep-09	Oct-09
	Musk Duck	<i>Biziura lobata</i>			1									1	1
B	Black Swan	<i>Cygnus atratus</i>	45	20	14	9	6			2	26	10	44	12 nesting	11
B	Australian Shelduck	<i>Tadorna tadornoides</i>	16	5		4	4	2	2		12	16		4 ad +dy	11
	Australian Wood Duck	<i>Chenonetta jubata</i>			10							1			
	Pink-eared Duck	<i>Malacorhynchus membranaceus</i>		2											
	Australasian Shoveler	<i>Anas rhynchotis</i>	2	6	6	7					1	8	13	2	3
	Grey Teal	<i>Anas gracilis</i>	200+	800+	200+	300		5			60	200	88		
	Chestnut Teal	<i>Anas castanea</i>	4	2		2						4	2		
B	Pacific Black Duck	<i>Anas superciliosa</i>	21	10	10	7	14	8	3	7	120	50	4	4	9
	Hardhead	<i>Aythya australis</i>		4	6								30		
	Australasian Grebe	<i>Tachybaptus novaehollandiae</i>	2	2		3	5	1					*		
	Hoary-headed Grebe	<i>Poliiocephalus poliocephalus</i>	4	12	21	26	21	2				4	*		
	Little Pied Cormorant	<i>Microcarbo melanoleucos</i>	1	1	5	3	1			1	7	5		1	
	Great Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>					1								1
	Little Black Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax sulcirostris</i>		1											
	White-necked Heron	<i>Ardea pacifica</i>	1	2	1	3	1	1							
	Eastern Great Egret	<i>Ardea modesta</i>				1									
	White-faced Heron	<i>Egretta novaehollandiae</i>	1	5	4	18	16	7	3	2	15	13	1		6
	Glossy Ibis	<i>Plegadis falcinellus</i>		10											
	Australian White Ibis	<i>Threskiornis molucca</i>		2	7	10	7	1			7	7			5
	Straw-necked Ibis	<i>Threskiornis spinicollis</i>	20	15	1	6	32				15	1			9
	Royal Spoonbill	<i>Platalea regia</i>		1											
	Yellow-billed Spoonbill	<i>Platalea flavipes</i>		5	2	6	4	1							
B	Brolga	<i>Grus rubicunda</i>	1	2	2	2							1nesting		
	Purple Swamphen	<i>Porphyrio porphyrio</i>	53	30	15	11	13				6	10	73	50	17
	Baillon's Crake	<i>Porzana pusilla</i>													1
	Dusky Moorhen	<i>Gallinula tenebrosa</i>					2								
	Eurasian Coot	<i>Fulica atra</i>											70		5
	Black-winged Stilt	<i>Himantopus himantopus</i>	100+	300+	100	4	2								
	Red-capped Plover	<i>Charadrius ruficapillus</i>		3											
	Red-kneed Dotterel	<i>Erythronyx cinctus</i>	7	9	100+	10									
	Masked Lapwing	<i>Vanellus miles</i>	8	15	50	56	125	60	4	7	22	22	2		8
	Latham's Snipe	<i>Gallinago hardwickii</i>		2											
	Common Greenshank	<i>Tringa nebularia</i>				1									
	Wood Sandpiper	<i>Tringa glareola</i>			2										
	Pectoral Sandpiper	<i>Calidris melanotos</i>			1										
	Sharp-tailed Sandpiper	<i>Calidris acuminata</i>	8	200+	300+	100									
	Whiskered Tern	<i>Chlidonias hybrida</i>	30	100+	4										
	Silver Gull	<i>Chroicocephalus novaehollandiae</i>	5	3									5		
RAPTORS			Oct-08	Nov-08	Dec-08	Jan-09	Feb-09	Mar-09	Apr-09	May-09	Jun-09	Jul-09	Aug-09	Sep-09	Oct-09
	Black-shouldered Kite	<i>Elanus axillaris</i>					1	1	1	1			1		
	Whistling Kite	<i>Haliastur sphenurus</i>		1			2	1				1			
	Collared Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter cirrocephalus</i>						1					1		
	Swamp Harrier	<i>Circus approximans</i>	1	1	1	1	1								2
	Wedge-tailed Eagle	<i>Aquila audax</i>				2	2								
	Nankeen Kestrel	<i>Falco cenchroides</i>				1	2				1	1		1	
	Brown Falcon	<i>Falco berigora</i>		1	3								1	1	
	Black Falcon	<i>Falco subniger</i>				1	1	1							
	Peregrine Falcon	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>		1											

OTHER NATIVE SPECIES			Oct-08	Nov-08	Dec-08	Jan-09	Feb-09	Mar-09	Apr-09	May-09	Jun-09	Jul-09	Aug-09	Sep-09	Oct-09
Stubble Quail	<i>Coturnix</i>	<i>pectoralis</i>		1 h	7	5 h	2								
Crested Pigeon	<i>Ocyphaps</i>	<i>lophotes</i>				1	1								
Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoo	<i>Calyptorhynchus</i>	<i>funereus</i>		2			2	3							
Galah	<i>Eolophus</i>	<i>roseicapillus</i>					1			h					
Long-billed Corella	<i>Cacatua</i>	<i>tenuirostris</i>													3
Blue-winged Parrot	<i>Neophema</i>	<i>chrysostoma</i>					60	10							
Striated Fieldwren	<i>Calamanthus</i>	<i>fuliginosus</i>		2	2	2	1	1	2		1	1	2		
Yellow-rumped Thornbill	<i>Acanthiza</i>	<i>chrysorrhoa</i>			3							5			
Brown Thornbill	<i>Acanthiza</i>	<i>pusilla</i>					4	2	2						
White-eared Honeyeater	<i>Lichenostomus</i>	<i>leucotis</i>							1						
White-plumed Honeyeater	<i>Lichenostomus</i>	<i>penicillatus</i>					2								
Red Wattlebird	<i>Anthochaera</i>	<i>carunculata</i>					2							3	
White-fronted Chat	<i>Epthianura</i>	<i>albifrons</i>		4	2	3	4	7	2	2	3	2	1		4
Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike	<i>Coracina</i>	<i>novaeollandiae</i>	5												
Grey Shrike-thrush	<i>Colluricincla</i>	<i>harmonica</i>		1 h		1							1		1
Australian Magpie	<i>Cracticus</i>	<i>tibicen</i>	8	5	5	8	14	19	20	15	14	12	9	8	6
Willie Wagtail	<i>Rhipidura</i>	<i>leucophrys</i>	1	2	3		4	2	2	2	1	2	3		1
Little Raven	<i>Corvus</i>	<i>mellori</i>	6	2	15	25	12	24	23	13	8	15	10	50	10
Magpie-lark	<i>Grallina</i>	<i>cyanoleuca</i>			2	13	6	2	4		2	1		1	4
Flame Robin	<i>Petroica</i>	<i>phoenicea</i>							2	3			2		
Golden-headed Cisticola	<i>Cisticola</i>	<i>exilis</i>		2	4	5	8	16	20	7			3	h	4
Little Grassbird	<i>Megalurus</i>	<i>gramineus</i>		2 h	4 h	5							1	h	
Brown Songlark	<i>Cincloramphus</i>	<i>cruralis</i>		1 h			1								2
Silvereye	<i>Zosterops</i>	<i>lateralis</i>							5	60					
Welcome Swallow	<i>Hirundo</i>	<i>neoxena</i>	15	10	30	50	1	2	25	10	15	50	30	10	1
Fairy Martin	<i>Petrochelidon</i>	<i>ariel</i>	5	5	1	4									
Tree Martin	<i>Petrochelidon</i>	<i>nigricans</i>	10	30	150	12							3	4	1
Australasian Pipit	<i>Anthus</i>	<i>novaeeseelandiae</i>	1	4	18	4	19	4	3	3		1	1	2	1
INTRODUCED SPECIES			Oct-08	Nov-08	Dec-08	Jan-09	Feb-09	Mar-09	Apr-09	May-09	Jun-09	Jul-09	Aug-09	Sep-09	Oct-09
Eurasian Skylark	<i>Alauda</i>	<i>arvensis</i>	20	20+	25	18	22	7	26	18	15	17	14	10	30
Common Starling	<i>Sturnus</i>	<i>vulgaris</i>		5		70				100					
House Sparrow	<i>Passer</i>	<i>domesticus</i>			1										
European Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis</i>	<i>carduelis</i>		2	10	4	50+	66	40	3	5	6	12	1	6

B = breeding confirmed

h = heard, ad = adult, dy = downy young

numbers of birds shown in the table are the maximum number counted in a single survey

Sep 09 survey from causeway only to avoid disturbing breeding birds

* grebe
sp. 17

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