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Coonabarabran & the Warrumbungles, NSW

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To: <birding-aus@vicnet.net.au>

Subject: Coonabarabran & the Warrumbungles, NSW

From: "Alan Morris" <amorris@ceinternet.com.au>

Date: Tue, 15 Jun 2004 12:48:09 +1000

Hi Birders,

I visited Coonabarabran, the Warrumbungle National Park and parts of the Baradine-Pilliga rea over the June long weekend 11-14 June 2004 and was able to do a spot of birding. Unlike some other parts of NSW, the Coonabarabran area in north-central west NSW, has received both good autumn and now winter rains so that seasonal conditions are good. From Binnaway to Coonabarabran and in the basalt soil areas of Coonabarabran at least 10-15% of all White Box was in flower along with some Ironbraks, in some areas, Yellow Box was flowering too. In the Warrumbungles NP White Box, Yellow Box, Mugga and Narrow-leafed Ironbarks were flowering and attracting some birds, like Noisy Friarbirds, Blue-faced, Yellow-tufted & Yellow-faced Honeyeaters. However I saw no Regent Honeyeaters or Swift Parrots. One of the staff of the Park told me that some "bright green" small parrots were observed feeding on the Mugga Ironbark when it first started to flower in Camp Blackman about a month ago but he could not expand on that!

However there were plenty of Red-winged Parrots feeding in some of the flowering White Box at Rosedale HSD, 6 km east of Coonabarabran, and in flowering Lemon-scented Gums in Baradine! Also at Rosedale were Zebra Finches, Cockatiel, Striated Pardalotes & Little Ravens.

There was some water in the creeks within Warrumbungles NP and it was good to see plenty of Brown Treecreepers, Yellow-tufted Honeyeaters, Restless Flycatchers, Striped & Spiny-cheeked Honeyeaters at Camp Pincham. At the Woolshed the usual Speckled Warblers, Inland Thornbills, White-browed Babblers and Turquoise Parrots were soon found, while at the Mugga Ironbarks in Camp Blackman, the Noisy Friarbirds, with lesser numbers of Blue-faced Honeyeaters were very noisy. I saw a Koala at all three sites.

A visit to Pilliga Pottery, 24 km N of Coonabarabran, well and truly in the Pilliga Scrub, found Diamond Firetails, Hooded Robins, White-bellied Cuckoo-shrikes, Mallee Ringnecks, Jacky Winters and Peaceful Doves. The following morning was spent out in the Baradine area at Carmel Lagoon (Yellow-billed Spoonbill, Shoveler, Swan, Yellow-throated Miners and the usual ducks), and along Carmel Lane (Apostlebirds, Cockatiels, Blue Bonnets & Spotted Bowerbird) and Terridgerie Lagoon. Here there was not much in the way of waterbirds although there was one White-necked Heron, but newly

arrived Fairy Martins were checking out the culverts, the local pair of Whistling Kites kept a watchful eye on us, a Little Friarbird and a Rufous Songlark called persistently and 2 Sacred Kingfishers were seen amongst the River Red Gums.

Wedge-tailed Eagles were seen at Gumin west of the Park, good views were had of a Hobby in Binnaway and Brown Falcons were seen a number of places to and from Coonabarabran. All up a good weekends birding in the bush.

Alan Morris

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