



# Bird Route Summary

*Baradine - Gateway to the Pilliga*

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**1. The Bugaldie Bird Route (68km):** A picturesque, scenic drive through the Warrumbungle foothills. Take the Coonabarabran Road from Baradine to Bugaldie. Watch for the hippopotamus in the hills as you approach the village! At Bugaldie, take the second road to the right. Look for the white patch in the hills - chalk was mined here for many years and produced some spectacular fish fossils. As you follow this road through to the Guinema sign, enjoy the grandeur of the mountains and a great view of Siding Spring Observatory. Turn right at the sign. Watch for Bullaway Mountain on your left. A variation of habitat and several creek crossings provide a variety of birds along this road. As you enter the better country, beautiful Yellow Box, and later stands of White Box, attract many birds - especially honey eaters when flowering. A ramp brings you onto the sealed Gulargambone - Baradine road - turn to the right - cross another ramp and take the Bugaldie turn. After 12km watch for the Fores By Pass sign. This road provides a by pass for the Bugaldie Creek in times of flood. You will see a picnic area on your left and a forest fire look out tower on your right 1km after the turn. Follow the built up road back on to the Baradine - Coonabarabran Road. Along this drive, sightings of Singing Bushlarks have been recorded.

**2. Caledonia Road Bird Route (64km):** This route travels 30km through some of the best farming and grazing country in the district. Watch for raptors and ground birds along the way. It starts 7.8km from Baradine on the Gulargambone Road at the Caledonia sign. This laned road takes you through private property. Several creek crossings often have small water holes beside the road. Take a left turn at the Caledonia/Barwon sign post. Barwon is one of the old established properties. In the early days it was a very large run. portions of which were cut up for Soldier Settlement after World War 2. The road encircles the Caledonia homestead and becomes the Kinross Road. Caledonia is the districts renowned Merino Stud. The creek crossing at this junction provides good birding. Continue on to the Goorianawa - Munns Road signpost and turn left. This will take you back on to the main road. Turn right here and follow this road for 9kms to The Gap the crest of the Warrumbungle foothills and a spectacular view of the famous Goorianawa Valley, the districts most renowned station. From the turn to

the first ramp, watch for Singing Bushlark. As you cross the second ramp, notice a number of attractive Colane trees (locally called Urungie). At the top of The Gap, turn around and enjoy the view on the way back. When you enter the tree line on your return journey you will be in Stock Reserve and forest country. A great number of our bush birds are found in this area and Spotted Bower Birds and their bowers have been recorded. At harvest time, an early morning or late afternoon drive will reveal most of the districts parrots feeding on spilled grain along the roadside.

**3. Carmel Lane Bird Route (60km):** A combination of bushland, semi-cleared grazing and tree-lined farming country. Two lagoons feature on this drive. They may, however, be dry after periods of low rainfall. Take the Coonamble Road from Baradine. Watch for several tracks into the bush on your right - they can produce some good birding. Turn right into Carmel Lane at the telecommunications tower. Watch for the gate into Carmel Lagoon 4.6kms on the right. This lagoon has produced many interesting sightings - nesting Pacific Heron, Pink-eared Duck, Coot, Little Grebe, Black Swan and Marsh Tern to name a few. The Fitzgerald family live beside the lagoon and have granted permission for visits to this site. Please call and acknowledge their generosity. Returning to Carmel Lane, turn right to continue on your route, a series of left turns will bring you to a crossing over Teridgerie Creek and back onto the Coonamble Road. As you turn back towards Baradine, watch for Teridgerie Lagoon on your right. Whistling Kite nest here. Apostle birds, White-winged Choughs and Blue Bonnet Parrots are a feature of this route.

**4. Pilliga West Bird Route (56km):** Follow Route 3 to the top of Carmel Lane and turn right. This takes you into the Pilliga State Forest where you turn left. The forest road follows semi-cleared grazing country. This combination attracts many birds. Follow the fence line and turn left into Stumpy Lane. When you come to the Baker's homestead, look for the Spotted Bower bird's bower beside the road on the right. Please be careful not to disturb anything - Bower Birds move their bowers periodically, so you may have to search for the new one. A right turn at the end of Stumpy Lane will bring you onto the Western Way. Crested Bellbirds have been seen between here and the first ramp towards Baradine. Follow the Western Way watching for Trap Yard Dam on your left; 33 species of birds have been recorded here in a five minute viewing session. The Western Way will take you out to the Pilliga-Baradine Road.

**5. Dry Sand Road Bird Route (63km):** Take the Pilliga Road to Kenebri. Before the village, turn left over the ramp into Ellerslie Road. Watch for the small water hole beside the gully crossing. White-winged choughs nest here. Open country to the north promotes good birding. Turn right over the ramp onto Western Way and right again onto Dry Sand Road. Take a left turn after 3.4kms and look for a swamp through the trees to your right - it contains water only after good rains. Follow this road through to Western Way. This will take you back to the Pilliga Road where you can turn right back to Baradine or left to commence Route 6.

**6. The Central Pilliga Bird Route (68km):** This route starts just past Kenebri. Turn right over the railway line onto the Pilliga Forest Way. White-backed Swallows and Zebra Finch have been seen at the bridge over Baradine Creek. Follow the Forest Way to The Aloes picnic site; a favoured viewing spot for koalas. The aloes growing beside the wide sandy creek crossing mark the site of an historic homestead. Another 5km brings you to the rocky Creek Mill site - a popular picnic and camping spot. Many birds, including the Barking Owl, have been recorded here. Take Coxes Road from here, returning to Baradine via Sixteen Foot and Cumbil Roads. Watch for the Cumbil Forest Creek crossing. About 200m to the right, rocks in the creek bed contain Aboriginal spear-sharpening grooves. John's Crossing, not far from the town, is a pretty spot on the Baradine Creek. Sacred Kingfishers and Dollarbirds are summer visitors and Honeyeaters are common.

**7. No 1 Break - Salt Caves Forest Bird Route (80km):** Head east along Worrigal Street, on the northern edge of town, over the bridge and follow the sealed road out of town. At the top of the steep rise just before the gravel stop the car and look back - it's worth the effort! After this just follow the map and enjoy this wonderful forest drive. In November/December flannel flowers can be a feature. Bark Hut Dam on No.1 Break is worth a visit.

The last Mallee Fowl was sighted in the forest about 5 years ago - you might see the next one! At the salt Caves camping site, look for a pleasant walking trail to the Salt Caves Dam. If you can be there at sundown, Glossy Black Cockatoos come in to drink; more than 200 were seen here during a drought and about the same number of Common Bronzings were present as dusk fell. Vehicle access to the dam is by Country Line Road. Leaving Salt Caves take Wellyard Road. The map shows a diversion up Pine Creek Road - this takes you through a broom plain. On reaching Coxes Road return to Baradine - see No.6 route. The King Parrot and Turquoise Parrot (endangered species) can be expected on this drive, plus many others.

**8. Butlers Lane Bird Route (52km):** A colony of Yellow-tufted Honeyeaters is a feature of this route - but be prepared to walk. Look for Spotted Quail-thrush, also Turquoise Parrots, Little Lorikeets and many Honeyeaters when the eucalyptus are flowering. Take the Coonabarabran Road out of Baradine for 9.5kms. Turn left into Butlers Lane. After crossing Bugaldie Creek watch for Black Pine Road. Turn right and then left into Swindles Road. Swindles Well Crossing over Yearinan Creek is a pleasant camping spot - no facilities. Azure Kingfisher and Regent Honeyeater have been seen here. A long permanent waterhole is a short distance upstream; opposite this is a long ridge with wonderful views of Siding Spring Observatory and the tumbling rock formation of the Warrumbungles. as per your map, follow Yearinan Road before turning left into Rogers Road. Just past a sharp creek crossing, look for the Nature Reserve sign on the right. This is Punks Trail and is often impassable for vehicular traffic. However, a kilometre or so walk will bring you to the Yellow-tufted Honeyeaters. Crested Bellbirds have been heard calling here. National Park clearance has been granted for this walk. To continue this drive, take Hawk Road to the north of Punks Trail. Watch for the turn onto Odells Well Road. Odells Creek Crossing is a picturesque camping site. Turn right after the crossing to return to Butlers Lane.

*Note: An interesting adjunct to this route can be found on Rogers Road north of Hawk Road. Here you will find a large area of the Ancient Sycads - *Macrozamia polymorpha*. The eastern side of the road was burnt in a major fire in late 1997. The fire was contained along Rogers Road, leaving the western side of the road unburnt. You will see evidence of prolific fruiting by the plants on the east while plants to the west of the road have none. Further north, the road crosses a rocky crest. Rather than cross the crest, look for small hill east of the road. From the top of this hill look out over the tree tops to the Warrumbungle Mountains. An interesting diversion in the heart of the forest.*

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