



Friends of Pallister's Reserve Inc.

Pallister's Reserve is a 254 ha wetland reserve on Masons Road, Orford, owned by Trust for Nature, & managed by the Friends of Pallister's Reserve Inc. Established January 1990

**April
2026**



Next Meeting: Sunday, April 26, 2026

10am: Working Bee

Noon: Lunch

12:30pm: General meeting

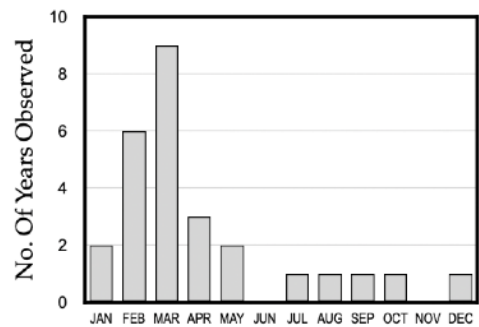
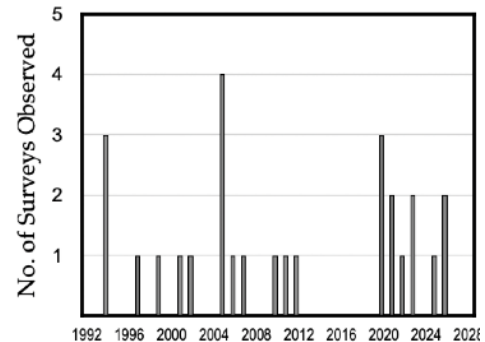
1:30pm: AGM

Two meetings are scheduled for April 26, a General Meeting to be followed by the Pallisters AGM. The principal issue to be discussed - and voted on - is a motion to cancel the incorporated status of the Friends of Pallister's Reserve, allowing members to register with Trust for Nature as independent volunteers.

A 75% majority of currently-financial members is required to pass the dis-incorporation motion. If unable to attend this month's meetings, financial members are strongly urged to promptly sign and return the proxy appointment form previously sent to them by email.

The committee considers that the cancellation of our incorporation provides the only viable pathway for us to continue our effective work.

Without your co-operation, Conservation on the Reserve will come to a standstill.



Pallister's records for Fairy Martin sightings. The top plot shows for each year the number of surveys that Martins were seen. The bottom chart indicates that February and March are the best months for Fairy Martin visits.

Fairy Martins flock to Pallister's

Fairy Martins were seen at Pallister's during January and February: an uncommon sighting, for over the 450-odd separate bird surveys that have been conducted by Friends since early 1990s, Fairy Martins have been listed just 26 times.



Fairy Martins often fly in mixed flocks with Welcome Swallows and Tree Martins. Only Fairy Martins have white rumps; Welcome Swallows also have deeply-forked tail feathers..

Photo: Chris Rehberg | eBird

While the scanty recorded numbers of some avian species can be attributed to their limited presence, evasiveness, or undemonstrative demeanour - e.g. owls - this is hardly the case for the Martins. When Fairy Martins are present they come in large numbers: the flock we hosted in January-February numbered over 50 birds. They are both highly-visible and instantaneously identifiable: conspicuously white-rumped birds actively pursuing airborne insects over open pasture areas of the Reserve.

As our records show, visits to the Reserve by Fairy Martins are sporadic: except for 2004 we have welcomed them for the past seven years, although they were absent for all seven preceding years. Typically they remain on the Reserve for just one or two months, usually between January- April.

During autumn the Martin flocks move elsewhere - usually northwards, although, as indicated, they may sometimes stay year-round.

Pallisters Reserve lies in the traditional Country of the Gunditjmara and Eastern Maar peoples, who never ceded their sovereignty of the Land. We are indebted for their past and ongoing custodianship.

Meetings are held at the Reserve; usually every fourth Sunday except July and December.

Co-leaders: Julia Schlapp 0427 778 265 & Anthony Leddin 0408 333 046 Sec./Treasurer: Trevor Kennedy 5565 8692;

Minute Sec.: Nick Glover; Newsletter Editor: Ross Hicks (pallisters_newsletter@proton.me).

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<http://www.apswarnambool.org.au/pallisters/>

<http://www.facebook.com/pallisters>

Friends of Pallister's Reserve Inc.

Although Fairy Martins raise chicks elsewhere in Victoria, the Pallister's landscape does not favour their nesting here. Traditionally, Fairy Martins secure their mud-bottle nests to the walls of caves or on sheltered river-banks or cliff-faces. But the birds have proven their adaptability by attaching nests under bridges, inside culverts and against building walls, often in close proximity to humans.

The preferred diet of Fairy Martins are airborne swarms of emergent insects, seized mid-flight. Thus, in common with Willie Wagtails, featured in last month's newsletter, Fairy Martins are insectivorous – but in different ways. The insects that sustain Willie Wagtails spend their time on, or close to, the ground, not free-flying in the air. Perhaps it is this difference that renders Willie Wagtails more vulnerable to reduced insect populations.



Fairy Martin mud-bottle nests.

Photo: head-in-the-hive, Flickr

April Working Bee Tasks

- Woolshed maintenance.
- Weeding: Amaryllis, thistle, coast wattle,
- Spray phalaris
- Review First-Aid kit and procedures
- Mowing ...