



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

Dec
2025

Next Meeting: Sunday, January 18, 2026

Pallister's Birds 2025

Each month Peter Bolte surveys birds along five transects at Pallister's, and also records additional species not seen on the fixed transects. Supplemented by the observations of others, these records extend back to the 1990s.

The accompanying table summarizes Peter's monthly observations for 2025. Numbers in the bulk of the table indicate – month-by-month – the number of Pallister's sites populated by specific species.

During 2025, sixty species were recorded at the Reserve, with honeyeaters and magpies being most commonly observed. Eighteen species were rare or accidental visitors, seen just once or twice during the year.

While still appreciable, 60 species is the lowest annual total observed in the history of the Reserve. In part, this may be attributed to recent rainfall-deficient seasons that have contributed to the drying of Pallister's wetlands. Nonetheless, the relatively low species count seems to part of a trend continuing over the past decade or so, whereby the biodiversity of avian species at the Reserve has slowly, but progressively, declined. How much of this decline is specific to the Reserve, and how much is a more widespread regional effect?

Additional notes regarding the table:

- The average number of species recorded each month was 28.5.
- Atlas numbers are taken from the [Birdlife Australia](https://www.birdlife.org/australia) data base.

	Atlas No.	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	Annual Total Sites
		18	16	15	27	18	17	20	24	14	25	10	8	
New Holland Honeyeater	631	4	4	5	4	5	3	3	4	2	2	1	2	39
Red Wattle Bird	638	3	4	5	5	4	1	4	4	3	2	1	1	37
Australian Magpie	705	1	3	5	5	3	2	3	4	2	2	4	3	37
White-naped Honeyeater	578		4	2	3	4	2	2	3	4	4	3	4	35
White-throated Tree-creeper	558	4	5	2	3	4	2	2	3	4	1	2	2	34
Long-billed Corella	272	1	3	4	4	3	2	2	4	2	4	2	1	32
Grey Shrike-thrush	408	2	3		1	1		4	4	3	4	4	4	30
Yellow-faced Honeyeater	614	4		1	1		1	2	5	4	4	4	4	30
White-eared Honeyeater	617	2		3	1	2	2	3	4	2	1	1	3	24
Striated Pardalote	976		3	3	1	1	1	1	3	2	3	3	3	24
Galah	273		2	3	3	2		2	2	3	2	3	1	23
Grey Currawong	697	1	2	3	3	2	2		2	1	3	1	3	23
Crimson Rosella	282	2		2	2	2	2	1	1	3	3	2		22
Little Raven	954	1	1	1	2	2	3	3	1	3	2	1	2	22
Grey Fantail	361	2	1	1	2	1	1		1	3	4	2	2	20
Superb Fairy-Wren	529	3	1	1	1	2	3	1	1	1	1	1	2	18
Laughing Kookaburra	322		1	1	1	1		1	2	2	3	1	1	14
Shelduck (Mountain Duck)	207				1		2	3	4	3				13
Golden Whistler	398	1	2	2		1	1	1			1	1	2	12
Common Bronzewing	34	2	1	1		1			1	1		1	1	9
Welcome Swallow	357		1	1	1				1	1	1	1	1	8
Yellow Robin	392	1			1		1		2	1		1	1	8
Eastern Rosella	288	1		1					1	1	1	1	1	7
Sacred Kingfisher	326	1	1							1	2	1	1	7
Brown Thornbill	475		1			1	1		1		1	1	1	7
Spotted Pardalote	565	1			1			1		1	1	1	1	7
Red Browed Finch	662	1	1	1				1	1		1	1		7
Black Duck	208			1	1		1	1				1	1	6
Gang-gang Cockatoo	268	1					1		1		1	1	1	6
Striated Thornbill	470		1		1	1	1					1		5
White-browed Scrub-wrens	488		1	1		1				1			1	5
Olive-backed Oriole	671	1		1						1		2		5
Wood Duck	202						1	1	1	1	1			4
Red-rumped Parrot	295					1			2				1	4
Fan-tailed Cuckoo	338		1						1	2				4
Black-faced Cuckoo-Shrike	424							1			1	1	1	4
Forest Raven	868				1		1		1			1		4
Wedge-tailed Eagle	224	1	1				1							3
Sulphur-crested Cockatoo	269	1						1				1		3
Blue-winged Parrot	306				2							1		3
Rufous Whistler	401											2	1	3
Varied Sitella	549			2					1					3
Black-shouldered Kite	232				1		1							2
Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo	267											1	1	2
Fork-tail Swift	335			2										2
Shining Bronze-cuckoo	344											1	1	2
Silvereye	574			1				1						2
Richard's Pipit	647											1	1	2
Blackbird	991							1	1					2
Starling	999	1								1				2
Masked Lapwing	133										1			1
White-faced Heron	188											1		1
White-necked Heron	189												1	1
Brown Goshawk	221									1				1
Nankeen Kestrel	240									1				1
Boobook Owl	242												1	1
Fairy Martin	360	1												1
Crested Shrike-tit	416				1									1
Brown-headed Honeyeater	583			1										1
Noisy Miner	634								1					1
Total Species		26	24	28	27	22	24	25	32	31	28	39	36	60

Average Species per month = 28.5 (Sample standard deviation = 5.1)

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>

Koala Diet Variations

On Saturday December 13, Pallister's members observed a koala foraging on the leaves of a *Metrosideros excelsa* tree growing in the Portland Botanical Gardens. Commonly known as the pōhutukawa or New Zealand Christmas tree, *Metrosideros excelsa* is a coastal evergreen native to New Zealand that has been widely planted in south-west towns.



Although the koala gut is highly specialized to process eucalyptus leaves, koalas have also been [documented](#) browsing the leaves of other genera, including *melaleucas* (paperbarks or tea trees), *lophostemon* (brush boxes), *corymbia* (bloodwoods), *callistemon* (bottlebrushes), *acacia* (wattles), and mistletoe.

Reasons advanced for koalas foraging on non-eucalypts include medication for digestive stress, to maintain dehydration during prolonged droughts, or merely as experiential explorations of koala young. The Portland Gardens koala was a juvenile.



Pink Fingers orchid (*Caladenia carnea*)

Cloud Resources – Click to Link

[Matthew Hudson's Groundwater Presentation](#)

[Peter Bolte's Compilation of Camera Trap Clips from Pallister's and Kurri Kurri](#)

[Koalas at Pallister's](#)

[Pallister's Reserve Management Plan](#)

[Newsletters: 2023 to current](#)

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Hover flies – genus *Melangyna* pollinating at Pallister's. Look closely to see that fly on the blue pincushion flower is being considered as prey by an ambush predator, a crab spider, possibly genus *Australomisidia* of the *Thomisidae* family. (Nick Glover)



Lush growth after spring rain, October 2025 (Julia Schlapp)