This guide outlines some of the birding spots east of Echuca. This guide is one of a series produced by BirdLife Echuca District that can be downloaded from the branch’s website, a link to which is on the BirdLife Australia website www.birdlife.org.au

Other local on-line birding guides:
- Barmah Forest
- Bendigo
- Cohuna & Gunbower Island
- Deniliquin
- Echuca-Moama
- Gulpa Island, Mathoura
- Kamarooka Forest
- Kerang
- Perricoota Road, Moama
- Terrick Terrick National Park

For more information, email echuca@birdlife.org.au

Cover photograph: BROWN-HEADED HONEYEATER by Murray Chambers.

A day birding in forests east of Echuca
Tour designed by Dallas Wyatt

This 125km tour of Kanyapella Basin and Wyuna should only be attempted in dry weather. Odometer (trip meter) readings are distances from the new Echuca Post Office, Pakenham Street. A good map (e.g. Hayman’s Barmah-Shepparton-Deniliquin Adventure Map) is needed to help with navigation.

To reach Stop One, cross the railway line and follow Pakenham Street to Goulburn Road. Goulburn Road becomes Bangerang Road.

Stop One: Simmie Road wetlands
Turn left (north) onto Simmie Road. Drive until you come to a lagoon (36º 06’ 40S; 144º 48’ 50E) and park off the road. It is possible to do a circuit walk here. The Murray River is a short distance to the north. This area is good for both bush birds and water birds. It is easy to spend an hour or two birding here.

Return to Bangerang Road and continue driving to the north-east.

If you turn left (north) onto Boileau Road you will see another wetland that is sometimes good for waterbirds.

Ignore the turnoff to Stewarts Bridge and Barmah (10.3km from the post office plus the Simmie Road detour). Continue along Bangerang Road.

Stop Two: Warrigul Creek
It is usually worth a short stop at bushland alongside the Warrigul Creek bridge (11.3km from the post office). Look for Azure Kingfisher and, in summer, Sacred Kingfisher.

Stop Three: northern boundary of Kanyapella
Continue along Bangerang Road for another 7km and turn right onto Watson Road (18.5km from P.O.).

Follow Watson Road for 3km and turn right (west) onto Mitchell Road (21.4). If the road sign and/or information board are missing, look for the name “Hobs” on a post. If the track is dry1, drive west - through a gate, over a grid and alongside a drain - for about 5 kilometres. Note that most large old trees are alongside the road for much of the remaining area was cleared. Stop where Mitchell Road crosses Warrigul Creek (36º 08’ 25S; 144º 53’ 14E) and bird along the levee track that runs alongside the creek. In particular, keep an eye out for Peregrine Falcon, Purple Swamp hen and Black-tailed Native Hen.

Stop Four: grassy Black Box woodland
Continue along Mitchell Road and turn left at Tehan Road (27.2km from the post office). Stop near the intersection and walk south through grassy Black Box woodland. Many birds that rely on a grassy woodland feed here, including Common Bronzewing, Brown Treecreeper, Restless Flycatcher, Varied Sittelle, Diamond Firetail, Red-capped Robin and, in winter, Flame Robin.

Look for Wedge-tailed Eagles soaring overhead.

Stop Five: southern end of Kanyapella
After birding on the grassy Black Box woodland, drive south along Tehan Road to the Murray Valley Highway (B400). Turn left and drive east along the highway for 3.5 kilometres to Castles Road (at a bend). Turn left into Castle Road and drive north for 2.8km. Once through the gate, park and walk through a stand of Box trees and alongside the Tongala Outfall Drain. Bush Stone Curlews live on private property nearby. Keen walkers can do an hour-long walk through a variety of plant associations.

Follow the drain and return via Levee Track & Hicks Track.

Return to your vehicle and drive back to the B400. Turn left onto the highway.

Stop Six: O’Dea Road
Drive south-east for 2.4 kilometres to a road junction. Turn left onto O’Dea Road, drive for about 100 metres and stop. Look for Singing Honeyeater in the planted eucalypts. In spring, when it is in bloom, the indigenous grassland, including Drumsticks and Peas, is very colourful.2

Stop Seven: Yambuna Bridge
Continue along O’Dea Road until it ends at Curr Road. Veer left onto the sealed road and travel north for 4 km. Half a kilometre beyond the end of the bitumen, turn right onto Yambuna Bridge Road and cross the Goulburn River. There are lots of side tracks and the birding here is often good. This area is part of the Lower Goulburn National Park.

Stop Eight: Wakiti Church
Continue on past Wakiti Resort until you see a church on your left (36º 07’ 05S; 145º 02’ 40E). Stop here to look for Grey-crowned Babblers. Unfortunately many of the trees in which the Babblers lived were recently poisoned.

Stop Nine: Wyuna River Reserve
Continue driving along Yambuna Bridge Road and turn right onto the Barmah-Kotupna Road. At Kotupna, the road joins the B400. Follow the highway south over McCoy’s Bridge and turn right (north) at Waradgery Road.

Follow this road for 3.2km to Wyuna River Reserve3 (GPS 36 09 40S; 145 05 25E). Many of the trees are very old, with lots of nesting hollows. Man-made nesting boxes augment the number of natural holes.

There are good camping sites alongside the Goulburn River, but no toilets.

It is about 35km back to Echuca via the Murray Valley Highway.

1 Mitchell Road is a dry-weather only road. If Mitchell Road is wet, return to Watson Road and go to Stop 5.

2 The planner of this drive, Dallas Wyatt, advocated for protected roadside vegetation signs to be erected here. For several years, he lobbied for improved management of the Kanyapella Basin and sat on the Stakeholders Committee for several years until he left the district.

3 Wyuna River Reserve is part of the proposed Murray River Park. It said that “Wyuna” is derived from a koori word, “Waioona”, which means clear water.

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