

# Birds common to the Adelaide Botanic Garden

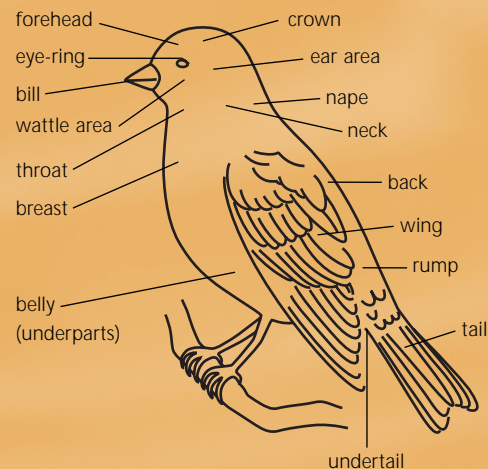
Walking through the 16 hectares of Adelaide Botanic Garden it soon becomes obvious that in addition to the wonderful collection of trees, shrubs and plants, it is also home to a large number of birds.

This brochure has been developed to help identify some of the more common birds that can be seen throughout the Garden and, hopefully, add to the enjoyment of your visit.



- For your convenience provision has been made to record a bird sighting by placing a tick inside the box.
  - Some scientific names will include an additional name shown in brackets. This indicates the bird specific to the Garden where several races may exist throughout Australia.
  - Natural food for ducks is green weeds and grasses of dryland and water. Bread or food scraps are not good for them and should not be fed to them.
- Ducks are also endangered by discarded cigarette butts and plastics: please use the waste bins placed to keep the Garden tidy and help protect birds from such dangers.

## Bird body-parts referred to in the text



Bird length (shown in brackets) is measured from tip of bill to tip of tail.

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 Friends of the Botanic Gardens of Adelaide Inc.



# Birds common to the Adelaide Botanic Garden

Your guide to identifying some of the birds seen within the Garden



Photographs courtesy of Brian Furby

Printed on recycled content paper

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# Birds normally associated with water



**Black Swan**  
*Cygnus atratus* (106–142cm)

This large and graceful black swan has a long slender neck and white-tipped wings. Bill is red with a white bar near the tip.



**Grey Teal**  
*Anas gracilis* (37–48cm)

The nomadic Grey Teal can be seen throughout Australia in all types of wet areas. Plumage is mottled grey-brown: side of head and throat almost white. Red eyes.



**Dusky Moorhen**  
*Gallinula tenebrosa* (35–38cm)

Found mostly in swamps and parklands throughout eastern Australia. Identified by red frontal shield and yellow tipped red bill. Body plumage dark grey, wings brown. Tail black with white patches.



**Australian Wood Duck**  
*Chenonetta jubata* (44–50cm)

Dark brown head and paler body plumage. Male has darker head and neck with short mane. Eyes brown. Females lighter than males having white bars above and below the eyes. Often perches and nests in trees.



**Hardhead (white-eyed) Duck**  
*Aythya australis* (42–49cm)

Male has dark brown head and mottled brown plumage: undertail white. Bill black with tip of grey-blue. White eyes. Female has brown eyes and lighter plumage.



**Eurasian Coot**  
*Fulica atra (australis)* (32–39cm)

Coots feed mainly on vegetable matter but will eat food scraps given by Garden visitors. Easily recognised by white frontal shield and beak, almost black plumage and red eyes.



**Mallard \***  
*Anas platyrhynchos* (52–68cm)

Male has green head, white necking, chestnut brown breast and yellow bill: underparts white. Female head and neck buff, body mottled and streaked dusky brown. Most Garden birds are hybrids being a cross with Pacific Black Duck which is a closely related species.



**Australasian Grebe**  
*Tachybaptus novaehollandiae* (27cm)

During breeding season head black: yellow eyes and facial patch. Main plumage mottled brown. Bill black with white tip. Non-breeding plumage, throat and side of head white, bill paler.



**Masked Lapwing**  
*Vanellus miles (novaehollandiae)* (35cm)

Also known as Spur-winged Plover. Plumage olive brown above, white below. Head and outer wing feathers black: wing has a yellow spur. Bill and face wattle yellow.



**Pacific Black Duck**  
*Anas superciliosa* (47–60cm)

Body plumage and top of head dark brown: face white to buff with black stripes above and below the eyes. Most Garden birds are hybrids of the closely related Mallard.



**Little Black Cormorant**  
*Phalacrocorax sulcirostris* (60–65cm)

Common to inland waters this Cormorant is often seen perching on tree branches or poles. Plumage is black, bill dark grey. Legs and feet black.



**Silver Gull**  
*Larus novaehollandiae* (41cm)

The common seagull of Australian beaches, pastures and parklands. Plumage white with grey back and wings which have outer feathers black, spotted white. Bill and legs bright red.



**White-faced Heron**  
*Egretta (Ardea) novaehollandiae* (67cm)

The most common heron seen throughout Australia feeding in shallow water. General plumage mostly grey: face white. Bill black, legs yellow.

# Pigeons and Turtledoves



**Rock Dove \***  
*Columba livia* (33cm)

Descended from wild Rock Dove (pigeon) of the Northern Hemisphere and now found in most Australian towns. This feral pigeon has variable plumage colours however most are blue-grey with a glossy sheen on the neck.



**Spotted Turtledove \***  
*Streptopelia chinensis* (31cm)

Native to southern Asia the Spotted Turtledove was first released in Adelaide 1881. Recognised by the spotted white black nape and neck feathers. Undertail feathers tipped white.



**Crested Pigeon**  
*Ocyphaps lophotes* (31–35cm)

Common throughout most of inland Australia. Grey body and head with black upright head crest. Wings brown with black bar marking and green/purple iridescent patch edged white. Red eye-ring. Has habit of raising and lowering tail when landing.

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\* Introduced

# Parrots



**Galah**  
*Cacatua roseicapilla* (36cm)

Can be seen in small flocks throughout the Garden eating seeds that have fallen to the ground. This beautiful bird has pink head, neck and breast plumage: wings and tail grey.



**Little Corella**  
*Cacatua sanguinea* (36–39cm)

This very noisy corella is often seen in large flocks roosting in trees. General plumage white with a colouring of yellow under wings and tail.



**Sulphur-crested Cockatoo**  
*Cacatua galerita* (45–52cm)

This large cockatoo generally can be seen in small flocks feeding on the ground. Plumage white with undersides of flight and tail feathers washed yellow. Head crest sulphur-yellow.



**Rainbow Lorikeet**  
*Trichoglossus haematodus* (28cm)

The most colourful of the Australian parrot family. Can be very noisy in a group. Head dark blue: yellow-green collar on nape. Bill bright red. Colour of back, wings and tail green.



**Musk Lorikeet**  
*Glossopsitta concinna* (22cm)

So named because according to some, this lorikeet emits a slightly musty odour. Plumage generally is green, scarlet forehead and ear patches. Blue crown. When in groups the loud chatter is continuous.



**Purple-crowned Lorikeet**  
*Glossopsitta porphyrocephala* (16cm)

One of the smaller lorikeets. Keeps to the treetops and moves very quickly – not easy to see. Crown purple, upperparts green. Throat and breast blue-green. Bill black.



**Crimson Rosella**  
*Platycercus elegans (adelaidae)* (35cm)

Locally known as 'Adelaide Rosella', which is one of the three races of this species. Head and underparts rich red: cheeks and throat blue. Back black and yellow. Tail green-blue.



**Eastern Rosella**  
*Platycercus eximius* (30cm)

Often seen in pairs or small groups searching the ground for seeds. This colourful rosella has red head and breast, white cheeks. Belly yellow-green. Back black edged yellow and green. Tail blue-green.



**Red-rumped Parrot**  
*Psephotus haematonotus* (27cm)

Mostly seen in pairs feeding on the ground. General plumage green with the male displaying a red rump. Shoulder patch and belly are yellow. Female is pale grey-green with a green rump, white belly.

# Birds of woods and gardens



## Laughing Kookaburra

*Decelo novaeguineae* (45cm)

Largest of the kingfisher family whose call is one of the characteristic sounds of the bush. Large bill, head off-white, back dark brown. Wings brown with blue markings.



## New Holland Honeyeater

*Phylidonyris novaehollandiae*  
(18cm)

Easily seen foraging for nectar and insects. Recognised by the distinctive black and white streaked plumage with yellow wing and tail patches. Head black with white eyebrow and ear patches.



## Little Raven

*Corvus mellori* (50cm)

Distributed throughout south-eastern Australia. Little Ravens can be identified from other ravens or crows by the flick of wings above the back when calling whilst perched. Plumage glossy black: white eyes.



## Red Wattlebird

*Anthochaera carunculata*  
(39cm)

The two races of Red Wattlebird are common throughout south-west and south-east Australia. Plumage grey-brown streaked white, crown brown, cheek patch white. Red wattle at ear. Belly yellow.



## Magpie-lark

*Grallina cyanoleuca* (27cm)

Also known as Murray Magpie. Plumage black and white. Bill white. Has distinctive white patches on the wings seen when in flight. Male has white eyebrows and patch on the neck.



## House Sparrow \*

*Passer domesticus* (15cm)

Introduced into Australia from Europe about 1860. This common city dweller has a grey crown, upper parts chestnut brown; white wing bar. Cheeks, chest and lower parts pale grey. Male has black bib and breast.



## Little Wattlebird

*Anthochaera chrysoptera* (30cm)

The smallest of the wattlebirds with a misleading name – it does not have a wattle. Plumage grey-brown with streaks of white. Head darker. Tail dark brown tipped white seen during flight.



## Willie Wagtail

*Rhipidura leucophrys* (20cm)

One of the best known Australian birds that can be found in parklands and most towns and cities. This busy bird has mostly black plumage with white underparts and distinctive white eyebrows.



## Welcome Swallow

*Hirundo neoxena* (15cm)

The swift and graceful flight of the Welcome Swallow can make identification difficult unless flying close by. Upper plumage glossy blue-black, wings and forked tail dark brown. Forehead, and throat chestnut brown.



## Noisy Miner

*Manorina melanocephala* (26cm)

Perhaps the best known honeyeater in Adelaide and, as the name suggests, very noisy when in groups. Crown and face black, rest of head and underparts grey. Yellow bill and skin behind the eyes.



## Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike

*Coracina novaehollandiae* (33cm)

A misleading common name. The Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike is not closely related to cuckoos or shrikes. Upper plumage grey: breast light grey paling to white belly. Forehead, face and throat black.



## Common Blackbird \*

*Turdus merula* (25cm)

Introduced into Australia 1863 and can now be seen throughout the south-eastern part of the country. Male plumage all black: yellow bill and eye ring. Female plumage and bill dark brown.



## White-plumed Honeyeater

*Lichenostomus penicillatus* (17cm)

Common to the Garden in pairs or small groups seen darting noisily about the trees and shrubs. Can be very aggressive. Plumage olive-grey; head yellow-grey. White neck plume behind the ears.



## Australian Magpie

*Gymnorhina tibicen*  
(44cm)

Of the various races of magpie, South Australia has the 'white-backed' which is also the State bird emblem. Plumage black and white. Male back is all white, females and young mottled grey.



## Common Starling \*

*Sturnus vulgaris* (21cm)

Introduced into Australia during the 1850s, the Common Starling now occupies most eastern and south-eastern towns and cities. Plumage glossy black with iridescent patches of purple and green. Bill dull yellow in summer.