



Common Birds of the Macedon Ranges

A guide to identifying birds

1. Maned Duck (Wood Duck)



The male Wood Duck has a head with much darker brown colouring than the female. He also has the signature mane. Often seen next to the road around Gisborne and Macedon townships.

2. Pacific Black Duck



Found close to permanent water. Easily identified by the dark lines across the face and dark brown feathers.

3. White-faced Heron



A tall slender bird, the White-faced Heron is found close to wetland areas.

Individuals are seen around dams and creeks and sometimes in grassy areas where they feed on grasshoppers.



4. Black-shouldered Kite



Often seen hunting along roadsides in the Macedon Ranges. Often seen flapping their wings furiously hovering over grassy areas as they search for prey.

5. Wedge-tailed Eagle



Adult females reach a total height of 1 metre and have a wingspan of up to 2.3 metres. Their feathers get darker as they mature. The wedge shaped tail can be seen clearly when the bird is in flight.

6. Purple Swamphen



Found foraging for food around the edges of water. It often pulls up reeds and grasses to feed on the succulent root systems. The breast feathers are a deep blue colour with hints of purple.



7. Straw-necked Ibis



The Straw-necked Ibis is a large water bird. It has a black head with a long down-curved black bill. It also has glossy blue-black wings and a back with a metallic purple, green and bronze sheen.

It is mainly found in grasslands and swamps as well as being seen in large flocks circling overhead.

8. Dusky Moorhen



The Dusky Moorhen is a medium sized water bird that is mainly found in wetlands and near waterways. It has a red bill with a yellow tip. It also has brown feathers on the wings and rump. Blue-grey feathers on the chest and underparts.

9. Masked Lapwing



The Masked Lapwing has a bright yellow layer of skin on its forehead which hangs down. It also has long reddish legs and feet. They are commonly seen in pairs and are extremely defensive and tend to swoop.



15. Crested Pigeon



The Crested Pigeon has a thin black crest on its head and glossy green and purple patches on its wings. It also has pinkish circles around its eyes. It makes a whistling sound as the air passes over its wings.

16. Galah



The Galah has a rose-pink head, neck and underparts with a much lighter pink coloured crest. They have grey wings and back. Often seen in pairs or larger flocks.

17. Long-billed Corella



A medium/stocky cockatoo with a short crest and tail. It is white with splashes of orange-red on its forehead and throat. It also has a red crescent across its upper breast and a ring of pale grey-blue around its eyes.



18. Sulphur-crested Cockatoo



The Sulphur-crested Cockatoo is a large white bird with a yellow crest and yellow wash on the undersides of its wings. They are mainly found in timbered habitats and human settlements.

19. Crimson Rosella



The Crimson Rosella is mostly crimson (red) with blue patches on its wings and cheeks. It also has black trim on its wings. Juveniles have green-olive plumage.

They are mainly found in tall eucalypt and wetter forests. They are very common in the Macedon Ranges.

20. Eastern Rosella



The Eastern Rosella is a medium sized colourful parrot. It has a red head, neck and breast with white patches on its cheeks. It has yellow and green upper and underparts and bright blue shoulders.

In contrast to the Crimson Rosella, they are mainly found in open country.



21. Rainbow Lorikeet



Extremely colourful bird, with a bright red beak. It has green wings, tail and back, blue head and stomach and yellow-orange breast. They occur in large flocks in flowering eucalypts and are becoming an urban bird in this area, particularly in Riddells Creek.

22. Laughing Kookaburra



The Laughing Kookaburra, the world's largest kingfisher, is best identified by its voice. It is off-white with a brown back and wings. The Kookaburra has a dark brown mask across its eyes. There is a glimmer of blue feathers on the top of the wing.

Kookaburras mainly feed on reptiles and large invertebrates.

23. Superb Fairy-wren



The Superb Fairy-wren is mostly found in areas that have dense cover and low shrubs, such as parks and gardens. The male (pictured) has bright/rich blue and black feathers on the throat and above, with a grey-white stomach and black beak. The females are duller and are usually mostly brown.



24. Red Wattlebird



Red Wattlebirds have a red fleshy spot on each side of the neck. The body is grey-brown body with prominent white streaks and a yellow stomach.

The Red Wattlebird is mostly found in forests, woodlands and parks. They belong to the honeyeater group of birds and regularly seek nectar from native flowers.

25. New Holland Honeyeater



Mostly found in areas where grevillea and banksia plants are located. It is mostly black with white streaks. It also has yellow patches on its wings and tail and white eyes.

26. White-browed Scrubwren



Mostly dark olive brown and has a black mask across its eyes which is framed in a white line. They tend to live in pairs and are usually on or near the ground.



27. Australian Magpie



Australian Magpies have distinct black and white patterns.

Magpies can be easily distinguished from other birds as they have a pale grey beak with a black tip. They also have a very melodious song.

28. Pied Currawong



Mostly black with white patches on its tail. It also has grey legs and bright yellow eyes. They can adapt well to suburban areas, however they prefer mostly woodlands and forest areas.

29. Willie Wagtail



Mostly black with a white stomach. It also has white eyebrows and whisker marks. The wagtail got its name because of its constant sideways tail wagging.



30. Grey Fantail



The Grey Fantail has a grey body with white eyebrows, throat and tail edges. It constantly has its tail fanned and does a range of agile aerial twists and turns.

31. Magpie-lark



The Magpie-lark is a patchy black and white bird with a whitish bill and pale iris. They are very common around urban habitats.

32. Little Raven



Glossy black feathers covering the body, black legs and a white eye iris. These birds are common in urban areas and will often be seen around schools and playground where they search for discarded food items. Sometimes incorrectly labelled a 'crow'.



33. Welcome Swallow



The Welcome Swallow has a metallic blue-black back, head and wings, with a light grey breast and stomach. It also has a rust coloured forehead, throat and upper breast and a long forked tail.

34. * Common Starling



The Common Starling has glossed black feathers with a purple and green shine. The tips of the body feathers have white spots. The bill is yellow and it has pinkish legs. During breeding season the Common Starling will lose its white spots. It's a European introduced bird and is found in large flocks often sitting on electricity wires.

35. * Common Myna



The Common Myna is brown with a black head. It is easily distinguished from other birds by the yellow legs, beak and around the eyes.

The Common Myna is mostly found in urban areas.



36. * House Sparrow



The male sparrow has a grey crown, black throat and head. The upper parts are dark black/brown and the underparts are a pale grey/brown colour. During breeding season the male's colour intensifies. The female is duller with no crown or black face.

37. * Common Blackbird



The male Common Blackbird is solid black with a bright yellow-orange bill with a thin yellow ring around its eyes. It also has dark legs. The female is brown with a dark beak and legs.

The Common Blackbird is usually found in urban areas, such as parks, gardens and along roadsides.

Sources

Slater et al. (1995) The Slater Field Guide to Australian Birds, Ken Fin, Sydney.

*Indicates introduced species

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