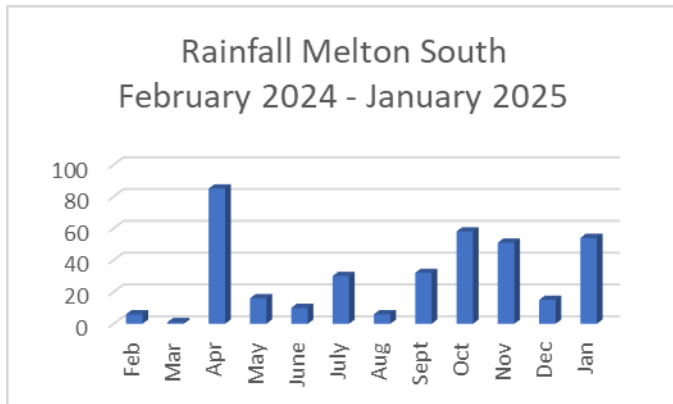




# MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

## February 2025

### RAINFALL



### JANUARY

Rainfall continued to be both low & sporadic:

June	10mm	23 days no rain
July	30mm	23 days no rain
August	6mm	28 days no rain
September	32mm	24 days no rain
October	58mm	27 days no rain
November	51mm	23 days no rain
December	15mm	22 days no rain
January		13 days no rain

No rain from 22<sup>nd</sup> December until 5<sup>th</sup> January (14 days), with several days in high twenties, then 26mm over two cold days! Summer in Melton! Fortunately, the rains seem to have put out the Grampians fire!

Another summer of bushfires! Unfortunately the Grampians are once more ablaze along with the Little Desert, following suit after a heat wave & a wave of violent thunderstorms.

### JANUARY ACTIVITIES

#### Bird watching visit to Western Treatment Plant

On Friday 3d January Mel, Laurie & Daryl were invited by Linda Bradburn (ex-Environmental Education Officer for Melton) on a tour around

Melbourne Water's Western Treatment Plant. We saw 47 bird species. These included several hundreds of small sandpiper-*ish* waders. The WTP was literally alive with possibly hundreds of thousands of birds, mainly waterbirds. Included were thousands of Chestnut-breasted Shelducks, Black Swans, Chestnut Teal, Whiskered Terns (identified by a passing birder). The Black-tailed Goodwit was tentatively identified at T Section by a couple of visiting birders from NSW. Large numbers of Marsh Harriers were flying low over the wetlands. On one occasion a large flock of Chestnut-breasted Shelduck suddenly burst into the air, like an explosion. The cause appeared to be a Marsh Harrier swooping quite low above them. Numerous other Harriers were flying similarly over a multitude of lagoons without spooking the waterbirds so perhaps this Harrier was behaving in a particularly menacing manner; or perhaps the ducks were just a little skittish with all the visitors. Shelducks are known to be shy & nervous. At Pinkerton we regularly see large flocks of Shelducks flying onto the treatment lagoon beside Pinkerton Link numbering sometimes in their hundreds. These are seen to be flying from the south. No doubt they are flying from the Treatment Plant where they possibly spend the night.



We even found a couple of Werribee Wagtails!

At the entrance, near the toilet block, there is a small channel that was noisy with the single clicking calls of Spotted Marsh Frogs. However, a few of these were making the staccato 8-click call. Some Spotted Marsh Frogs in Melton also make this call.

Black-tailed Godwit	Pied Oystercatcher
Pied Stilt	Avocet
Black Swan	Black Duck
Chestnut Teal	Musk Duck
Chestnut-breasted Shelduck	Pink-eared Duck
Cape Barren Goose	Whistling Kite
Black Kite	Marsh Harrier
Hobby	Brown Falcon
Brolga	White-faced Heron
Greater Egret	Swamphen
Coot	A/Asian Grebe
Silver Gull	Whiskered Tern
Pelican	Great Cormorant
Little Pied Cormorant	White Ibis
Yellow-billed Spoonbill	Masked Plover
Latham's Snipe	Crested Pigeon
Blue Wren	Welcome Swallow
Fairy Martin	Singing Honeyeater
New Holland Honeyeater	Starling
House sparrow	Reed Warbler
Golden-headed Cisticola	Little Grassbird
Yellow-rumped Thornbill	Willy Wagtail
White-fronted Chat	Little Raven
Magpie	47



At one point (T Section) there was a group of Cape Barren Geese on the track, refusing to move aside for vehicles. As it turned out, one of the group had a lame leg & was unable to walk quickly. The rest of the group refused to leave it behind, walking at its pace & behaving aggressively to anyone who approached too closely.

Many thanks to Linda for organising this, & for organising such a beautiful sunny day!

### Weeding in Pinkerton Forest

On Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> January Irene & Daryl resumed work in 2025 in Pinkerton Forest by attacking the large Galenia beside the graves carpark. At last we can see where we have made good progress. The dead Galenia patches (the most recent of these bright blood-red after the day's spraying) now vastly outweigh the remaining patches of live Galenia! Irene noticed the healthy patches of Kangaroo Grass in the corner, although they do not appear to be seeding.



### Possum Walk at Hannah Watts Park

On Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> January Eynesbury Environment Group hosted a Possum Walk at Hannah Watts Park. We met in the Hannah Watts Carpark at 7:30 pm. Hannah Watts was a hub of activity with many people picnicking & enjoying BBQ's in the buildings. We had a record attendance of twelve! As well as the usual participants, Debra, (with her grand-daughter Willow) Denise, Lyndal & Daryl, there was another family with four adults & three children. For a while it seemed as though we would be disappointed but as the sky darkened & the Evening Star (Venus) grew brighter low in the

western sky, the Brush-tailed Possums slowly emerged from the many hollows of the Possum Tree. Myriads of stars became visible in the darkening sky, with Venus low in the western sky & Mars glowing brightly high in the northern sky. Sadly we didn't think to look for the comet! It will be back in 160,000 years apparently!!



Brush-tailed Possum at Hannah Watts Park 2024



Surprisingly we also noticed several microbats emerging from the hollows in the Possum Tree. Perhaps the possums & the bats may share the tree! The bats were initially easily visible, silhouetted against the sky, until the sky became too dark to see them. There is another microbat roosting place in a hollow branch adjacent to the Melton Botanic Garden. No doubt others of which we are unaware.

As we returned to the carpark we saw another four or so possums. Most of the picnickers had left so the possums were presumably coming down to feed on picnic & BBQ scraps. Willow had written in her notebook that we saw thirteen possums! The kids were excited to see so many possums so

close & so unafraid. We are fortunate that Melton has retained so many old & hollow trees along our local creeks!



Possum Tree beside Toolern Creek.

Possoms in the bush are usually quite timid but in an urban environment they quickly become accustomed to human presence & have learned to forage on human scraps. This ability to adapt is obviously the secret of their success in managing to coexist with us in an increasingly urbanised environment. Instead of complaining about their presence in our gardens & neighbourhoods for eating the occasional rosebud we should be applauding them for their success in managing to coexist with us, in an environment that is becoming increasingly hostile to native wildlife. Especially as so many of our native mammals have become extinct, or are on the brink of extinction, due our destruction of the natural environment. Sadly, Australia leads the world in wildlife extinctions! Not a record in which we should take pride!! The success of our possums is something we should instead take pride in! The archetypal Aussie battlers!!

The Possum Walk was mentioned in the Star Weekly newspaper on 21<sup>st</sup> January by Faith Macale.

<https://meltonmoorabool.starweekly.com.au/news/a-wesome-possum-walk/>;

### **Weeding in Pinkerton Forest**

On Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> January Irene & Daryl resumed work in 2025 in Pinkerton Forest. The Galenia outbreak has been removed but we now faced the task of preventing the spread of the new sticky grass (known as Love Grass in the Goulburn Valley). It appears to have arrived in a load of mulch from the Riverina several years ago. It briefly took over Pinkerton Link but has been almost eradicated by constant mowing. It has just appeared in the (now eradicated) Galenia patch adjacent to Pinkerton Lane. We will return next week to whipper-snip & rake up as much of the weed as possible. Next summer we will look out for more germination here, now that we know it is here, to hopefully prevent its spread into Pinkerton Forest.

### **FEBRUARY ACTIVITIES**

#### **Eynesbury Environment Group: first meeting for 2025**

**Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> February 2025 7.00 – 8.30**

Ms Peacock & Bar

#### **Cleanup Australia Day**

##### **Cleanup Australia Day 2025**

**Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> March**

*'Clean Up Australia inspires and mobilises communities to improve and conserve our environment, eliminate litter and end waste.'*

*More than 22 million Aussies have participated in Clean Up Australia activities and events over the past three decades.*

*Over that time Clean Up Australia has evolved to provide practical solutions to help all Australians live more sustainably every day of the year, and emerged as one of the country's most recognised, credible and trusted environmental charities.*

*Today our focus is as much on preventing rubbish entering our environment as it is removing what has already accumulated.*

*What was started over thirty years ago, by an "average Australian" who had a simple idea to make a difference in his own backyard has now become the nation's largest community-based environmental event.*

*Of course, Australia's environmental challenges can't be solved in just one day, so Clean Up Australia works with community, government and businesses to provide practical solutions to help us all live more sustainably every day of the year.'*

<https://www.cleanup.org.au/about-us>;

#### **Friends of Eynesbury**

Friends of Eynesbury would like host a 'Clean Up Australia Day' Event to cover Greenhill rd, St Arnaud's rd down to the creek and recreation area bordering on Cobram and Goulburn way In Eynesbury. Friends of Eynesbury is a community of locals who gather independently to pick up random rubbish on a regular basis.

27 Goulburn Way, Eynesbury 3338 BBQ area/Park Meeting Points:

Site 1- Goulburn Way BBQ area and playground..

Site 2 - Corner of Greenhill Rd/St Arnauds Road.

Site 3 - Discovery Centre Eynesbury/Eynesbury Road.

**Site Supervisor:** Samantha Marsh

<https://register.cleanup.org.au/fundraisers/samanthamarsh/friends-of-eynesbury----clean-up-australia-day----event>;

#### **Friends of Eynesbury: Cleanup Event**

**Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> February 09:15 – 12:15**

*'Meeting across the road from Eynesbury kindergarten to clean our beautiful tall windbreaks along St Arnaud Rd*

*Meet up & split into 2 groups- one group behind the schools & the other before the schools. Bring your own pick-up stick- and kids!*

*Dress for te weather. Make a magnificent & memorable local impact.'*

Samantha Marsh

<https://register.cleanup.org.au/fundraisers/samanthamarsh/friends-of-eynesbury----clean-up-australia-day----event>

#### **Melton Botanic Garden**

**Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> March 10:00 – noon**

Meet at FMBG Plant Nursery & Depot  
21 Williams St.

#### **Eynesbury Market**

Eynesbury Environment Group is a regular participant in Eynesbury Market as a stall holder  
Dates TBA

#### **BIRDWATCHING IN MELTON**

Birdwatching activities in Melton are now confined to two groups.

These include:

- Pinkerton Landcare & Environment Group
- Eynesbury Environment Group

### **PLEG / Werribee Wagtails:**

#### **Bird surveys at Pinkerton & Eynesbury**

**Note: PINKERTON/EYNEBURY QUARTERLY BIRD SURVEYS WILL NOW BE CONDUCTED ON THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF THE MONTH IN 2025! .**

Pinkerton Landcare & Environment Group (PLEG) & Werribee Wagtails once again invite the community to join them birding at Pinkerton Forest & Mulla Mulla Woodland (Bush's Paddock) in the morning & Eynesbury Forest in the afternoon. Toilets, café & bar at Eynesbury & composting toilet at Pinkerton. Eynesbury Forest, is one of Victoria's largest remaining stands of Grey Box), We finish around 3 pm. Flat but uneven ground, with no paths in Pinkerton. Part of the Eynesbury walk is on a bush track.

Within the greater City of Melton, over 170 different bird species have been recorded. 134 bird species have been recorded at Pinkerton & 170 at Eynesbury to date. Wedge-tailed Eagles regularly nest in these woodlands. These quarterly surveys provide valuable scientific data as to both bird diversity & numbers in these woodlands. This data helps us make decisions & plan for the protection of our vulnerable birdlife. Citizen science in action! We may see some of the 60 or so kangaroos that live across all three of these adjoining sites as well as the several hundred kangaroos in Eynesbury. Birds of Pinkerton & Eynesbury Forests are recorded on eBird.

Pinkerton is private property located at <http://goo.gl/maps/drFnS.0-p;l/>;  
From Werribee, drive up Tarneit Road, turn left into Boundary Road, then turn right into Mt Cottrell Road. After about 3 Km, just after a rise, there is a group of houses on the left. The gravel track to Pinkerton (behind a locked gate) is just before the first house (1668 Mt Cottrell Road).

Mulla Mulla Grassland (formerly Bush's Paddock) is accessed by the same track. For more info: John McKenzie [jackmack37@hotmail.com](mailto:jackmack37@hotmail.com); or Daryl Akers [jenniferkayakers@outlook.com](mailto:jenniferkayakers@outlook.com); (0438 277 252). Meet at Mt Cottrell Road. Melway Map 221 Ref H8 Gates open 8.45 am, walk starts 9.00

**Pinkerton & Eynesbury bird surveys are held quarterly in February, May, August & November**

Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> February  
Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> August

Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> May  
Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> November

### **Wildlife warning in Pinkerton Lane**

*Visitors to Pinkerton please note:*

There is a Blue-tongue Lizard living in the stone wall beside the lone tree about 100 metres from the Mt Cottrell gate. On sunny days it likes to sun itself on the track. When the sun gets hotter it likes to move into the thin shadow cast by the tree, where it becomes almost invisible. We have had to shift it a few times to avoid running over it! There was a pair here but sadly one was run over last spring. Blue-tongues have no road sense! Perhaps it may need to be re-located to somewhere safer, now that there is only one! There was also one that lived beside the gate at Mt Cottrell Rd, also living just as dangerously. This one was relocated to a safer territory in the Forest, close to a location where there is another Blue-tongue living.

### **Eynesbury Environment Group:**

#### **Nature Walks**

The Eynesbury Environment Group's (EEG) nature walks are back for 2025. Join us for a guided walk through the Eynesbury Grey Box Forest and discover why it is one of the most important woodlands around Melbourne.

Meet outside of the Eynesbury General Store. Bring long pants, walking shoes, water, binoculars (available to borrow), camera. All walks are free! All ages, bird watching abilities and interest levels welcome. More walks and events are added throughout the year. For further details, updates or to join the Group contact us at: [eynesbury.environment.group@gmail.com](mailto:eynesbury.environment.group@gmail.com); or follow Eynesbury Environment Group on Facebook.

#### **Eynesbury Nature Walks 2025 schedule**

Cleanup Australia Day	Sunday 2 <sup>nd</sup> March
Eynesbury bird walk	Sunday 30 <sup>th</sup> May
Eynesbury bird walk	Sunday 27 <sup>th</sup> July
Spring bioblitz	Sunday 21 <sup>st</sup> September
Woodland night walk	Saturday 4 <sup>th</sup> October
Aussie bird count	Sunday 19 <sup>th</sup> October

### **EEG: Melton Bird Walks 2025 schedule**

#### **Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> February Caroline Springs**

Caroline Springs wetland has a rich variety of waterbirds. A birdlife oasis in the midst of the western suburbs. One of Melton's best waterbird sites. A paved footpath is on both sides of the waterway. Meet in the carpark in the new shopping centre beside the large lake at the entrance at Caroline Springs BLVD. Melway 358 Ref G4

**Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> March Eynesbury**

Eynesbury is a 288-hectare Grey Box Woodland with over 170 bird species observed so far, as well as a small ornamental lake rich in wetland birdlife. A rare opportunity to see woodland bird species. A reminder of what the Melton region one looked like! Toilet facilities, general store, restaurant & bar! On Fire Ban Days, walk will be around the lake only. Eynesbury Discovery Centre Melway 226 Ref H1

**Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> April Little Blind Creek**

Little Blind Creek flows through Melton, meeting Toolern Creek at Hannah Watts Park. It is home for large numbers of birds. The many old hollow trees provide nest sites for many hollow-nesting birds & possums. Meet in Guide Hall carpark in Pinkerton St (off Yuille St opposite Melton Golf Course). Melway Map 337 Ref C8

**Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> May Melton Botanic Garden**

Melton Botanic Garden features plants that tolerate a dry climate and low water conditions. It is one of Melton's finest birding sites. Meet at the carpark in Lakewood Blvd, near the public toilets & BBQ shelters. Melways Map 337 Ref: C11

**Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> June Hannah Watts Park**

Hannah Watts Park is a popular park, beside Toolern Creek, in High St, just east of the shopping centre, opposite the golf course. Melway Page 337 Ref D9

**Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> July Toolern Creek**

Toolern Creek (Big Red) There is a footpath that runs along the creek. The creek forms a corridor for birds & other wildlife through Melton, from Toolern Vale in the north to the Toolern Regional Park in the south, thence to the Werribee River. Meet at Tamar Drive Melway Ref 337 C9

**Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> August Strathulloh**

Strathulloh Woodland is a remnant regenerating Grey Box Woodland overlooking Toolern Creek Meet in Strathulloh Circuit Melway 343 Ref A12  
 -Drive south out of Melton along Exford Road, descending to the bottom of the road to the T intersection at Exford  
 -Turn left at the T intersection (*watching carefully for traffic!*)  
 -Head east along Greigs Road  
 -Turn left (north) into Redgum Drive (*opposite Butlers Rd*)  
 -Turn left at the T intersection into Strathhtulloh Cct  
 -Continue along Strathhtulloh Cct. (*Strathhtulloh Cct veers to the right*)  
 -Continue past Greens Road

-There is a footpath here on the left of the road (*just past Greens rd*) leading into Strathulloh Woodland

**Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> September Melton Gilgai**

Melton Gilgai Woodland (Harkness Road Woodland) is a remnant Grey Box/ Yellow Gum woodland. We hope to see a variety of woodland birds. Perhaps also some of the 100+ kangaroos that live here. Meet in Harkness Road Melway map 330 Ref B11

-Drive through Melton along High Street, west along the old Western Highway toward Bacchus Marsh.

-Turn right (north) into Harkness Road, just before descending into the deep Anthonys Cutting.

-There is a woodland a few km down the road.

-Second woodland gate on the right

**Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> October Eynesbury Forest**

Eynesbury is a 200 hectare Grey Box Woodland with over 170 bird species observed so far, as well as a small ornamental lake rich in wetland birdlife. A rare opportunity to see woodland bird species. Toilet facilities, general store, café, restaurant & bar! As this is old growth woodland, on Fire Ban, stormy days, or if lightning is threatened; walk will be around the lake only due to potential danger of falling branches or trees. Eynesbury Discovery Centre Melway 226 Ref H1

**Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> November Long Forest Mallee**

Long Forest Mallee (LFM) is a unique Mallee remnant between Melton & Bacchus Marsh. Long Forest Road Melway 335 Ref E3

-Drive through Melton along High Street, west along the old Western Highway toward Bacchus Marsh.

-Turn right (*north*) into Long Forest Road, after descending into the deep Anthonys Cutting, then ascending once more to the top

-Long Forest Mallee is a few km down the road.

-Continue past Sundew Ave (*on right*)

-Slow down & turn left just after Sundew Ave into a reserve carpark (*hard to see*)

**Melton Botanic Garden: February**

February 4th Tuesday 9.30am  
 Plant Nursery – reopens for public sales

February 9th Sunday 10am-noon  
 Clean Up Day at the Melton Botanic Garden  
 February 9th Sunday 10am-noon  
 National Sustainability Festival - Guided Tour

February 12th Wednesday 6pm

email: [jenniferkayakers@outlook.com](mailto:jenniferkayakers@outlook.com)

Meeting and Speaker: Fiona Jackson, Skylos Ecology  
Topic: Conservation Detection Dogs

February 23rd Sunday 10am - noon  
Grow the Garden at the Melton Botanic Garden

### **National Sustainability Festival - Guided Tour February 9th Sunday 10am-noon**

During the National Sustainability Festival enjoy a guided walking tour through the northern section of the Melton Botanic Garden to see plants that tolerate a dry climate and low water requirements. The gentle tour is about 90 minutes. See sustainability principles and re-purposing in practice. The tour commences at the Depot with refreshments served at the end of the tour. Garden highlights are the natural features, the Dryland Eucalyptus Arboretum, WA and SA garden beds, Bushfoods Garden, Sensory Garden, Southern African, Mediterranean Garden, Californian, Central and South American Garden, and the indigenous plantings along Ryans Creek and beside the lake. Sunday 9 February 2025 - Please book your place at this free event

10.00am – 12.30pm. Tour will finish around 11.30am. Meet at the Depot and Plant Nursery, 21 Williams St, Melton, 3338

RSVP: John Bentley or book your free at ticket at: [fmbg.tidyhq.com](http://fmbg.tidyhq.com)

Phone: 9743 3819 (*please leave a message if unattended*)

Email [friends@fmbg.org.au](mailto:friends@fmbg.org.au); Website:

[www.fmbg.org.au](http://www.fmbg.org.au) also see Facebook, Twitter, Instagram

### **ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES**

#### **2024: hottest year on record!**

According to the Copernicus Climate Change Service 2024 was the hottest year on record! *'The world has been at its hottest for the past 10 years, with 2024 now declared the official record-holder, according to data from the European Union's main climate service released today. It was also the first calendar year in which Earth exceeded 1.5 degree Celsius above pre-industrial levels, which is one of the targets world leaders agreed to limit warming to in the 2015 Paris Agreement. It was a year in which floods gave way to heatwaves and devastating storms dominated the headlines, with several major climate milestones also reached.*

*According to the Copernicus Climate Change Service (C3S), 2024 was 1.6C warmer than pre-industrial times, easily beating the previous record year of 2023.*

*Climate Change Service deputy director Samantha Burgess said the world was now teetering on the edge of passing the threshold of global-warming defined in the 2015 Paris Agreement.*

*"These high global temperatures, coupled with record global atmospheric water vapour levels in 2024, meant unprecedented heatwaves and heavy rainfall events, causing misery for millions of people."*

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2025-01-10/hottest-year-on-record-2024-in-photos-and-charts/104770946>;

### **OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS**

**In search of: *Swainsona behriana***



A team from Melbourne University is searching for a rare wildflower (*Swainsona behriana*) with a view to collecting seeds for propagation. They are hoping to visit Pinkerton Forest to see if there are any here. We don't believe we have seen them, but we are always finding plants there that we have never seen there before. An example is *Templetonia stenophylla* discovered in Pinkerton by Allison & Simon a year or so ago, so there is always hope.

According to Atlas of Living Australia:  
*Swainsona behriana*, commonly known as Behr's swainsona, is a species of flowering plant in the family [Fabaceae](#) and is [endemic](#) to south-eastern continental Australia. It is a prostrate or low-growing [perennial herb](#) with [imparipinnate](#) leaves usually with 9 to 13 narrowly elliptic to egg-shaped leaflets with the narrower end towards the base, and [racemes](#) of 2 to 7 purple flowers.  
*Behr's swainsona* grows in grassland, grassy woodland and forest clearings and occurs on the slopes and tablelands of New South Wales, in scattered locations mostly in the lowlands west of [Melbourne](#) in Victoria, but also in montane areas further east, and in southern districts of South Australia.  
*Swainsona behriana* is listed as "endangered" under the Victorian Government [Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988](#).  
<https://bie.ala.org.au/species/https://id.biodiversity.org.au/node/apni/2915191>;

### **New Environment Group: Trash Patrol Melton**

There is a new volunteer environment group in town!  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/330071463783370/>;

### **MELTON WILDLIFE**

#### **Possible Chough sighting in Eynesbury**

On Australia Day there was a possible sighting of two White-winged Choughs in Eynesbury Forest.

They were In the Forest near the ad hoc carpark at the last bend before entering Eynesbury Township. They were quite distinctive, large black birds with white wings. Stopping the car for a better look was impossible as there were cars close behind. Half an hour later a better look of the vicinity found no sign of choughs!

How they may have found their way there is something of a mystery, if they are indeed Choughs. Birds often appear in Pinkerton Forest after storms. Noisy Miners appeared in Pinkerton

after fierce storms a decade ago; and stayed: their numbers slowly increasing to about seven. However, we have had no storms lately.

The absence of Choughs from Eynesbury has always seemed a mystery, as it is typical Chough habitat, Perhaps they disappeared during the years when it was the policy of the station management to keep the Forest floor clear of 'debris'. The last station manager (when Eynesbury was still a sheep station) lamented that the Forest floor had been 'let go' and had become 'messy', unlike the days he had been in charge and kept the Forest floor 'clean'.

Perhaps the Choughs disappeared along with the Grey-crowned Babblers that disappeared in the seventies (according to local birder the late Peter Gibbons).

The closest Choughs locally are in Long forest Mallee, Melton Gilgai Woodland and the Pyrete Forest between Toolern Vale and Gisborne. There is a small Grey Box Woodland at Five Ways but from the road it seems entirely devoid of understory (except for Boxthorn!). Werribee Wagtails advise they are found at Mt Rothwell (about 80) & "used to be fairly common at Serendip Sanctuary and in the You Yangs" while eBird records them in the Brisbane Ranges  
<https://ebird.org/hotspot/L1858458/bird-list>;

Perhaps future bird surveys may confirm (or discredit) this potential observation

### **HAPPY LUNAR NEW YEAR**

'As the Year of the Dragon draws to an end, millions of people around the world are preparing to welcome the Year of the Snake. For 2025, January 29 will mark the beginning of Lunar New Year. Celebrations will continue until February 12, when the full moon appears.'  
<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2025-01-27/lunar-new-year-2025-snake/104782618>;

Be kind to snakes! They eat rats!!

### **SCHOOL RESUMES**

Kids are back at to school. Take care on the roads!