

At the Sanctuary Sep 2011

RDH

Anne worked hard at cleaning on her duty day during the school holidays, and just when she sat down for a rest, a cuppa, and a bite to eat, she heard a nearby call telling her “walk.....walk.....walk....”. It was the Brown Cuckoo-Dove, a beautiful, large fruit-eating pigeon. It has been marvellous to have volunteers assisting visitors during the school holidays. I am told that Ailsa welcomed 80 people on one day!

Over the last couple of months, spending time in the sanctuary has been absolutely delightful. The birds and their songs have been magnificent, and the crabs, insects and reptiles are more active again. We’ve added a few new species to our Fauna List – Restless Flycatcher, Spotted Harrier, and Bar-sided Skink – whilst some species not seen for a while have made their presence known again (Red-backed Button-quail, Australian Owlet-nightjar). I was noticing how many hollows in the paperbarks were obviously in use, and longing to know what was in residence, when suddenly I was rewarded with views of the Owlet-nightjar watching me.

I’ve seen more Grey-clawed Fiddlers than ever before, many of them females, and infinite variety in the marking of the Orange-clawed Fiddlers. At low tide, hundreds of Hardyheads have been in the drain near the far crab hide.

Other birds seen included Azure Kingfisher, Emerald Dove, Eastern Whipbird (close to 20 on one day), Leaden Flycatcher, Spectacled Monarch, Mangrove Gerygone, Large-billed and White-browed Scrubwrens, Grey and Little Shrike-thrushes, Spangled Drongo, Grey and Rufous Fantails, Fantail Cuckoo, Shining Bronze-Cuckoo, and both Golden and Rufous Whistler.



The Brown Cuckoo-Dove which Anne heard



Bar-sided Skink in typical pose



The nocturnal Australian Owlet-nightjar